

NWMB's Regular Meeting No.  
RM 002-2013

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Kitikmeot Regional  
Wildlife Board

VIA FACSIMILE

May 7, 2013

Manasie Audlakiak  
Acting Chairperson of the  
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board  
Box 1379  
Iqaluit, Nunavut  
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Dear Mr. Audlakiak,

**Re: Request for Increase in Polar Bear Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) for the M'Clintock Channel Population**

During our meeting in Taloyoak held in April 2013, the Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board (KRWB) discussed the current TAH of 3 animals for the M'Clintock Channel polar bear population.

As you know, the communities of Cambridge Bay, Taloyoak and Gjoa Haven have been severely negatively impacted and harmed by a moratorium on their harvest that was put in place by the Government in 2001. There is now a limited harvest of 3 animals that is shared between the communities of Cambridge Bay and Gjoa Haven. But, the community of Taloyoak has never had its quota restored for this population. This has put serious social strain on Inuit by restricting opportunities for hunters to teach their children the cultural importance of hunting polar bears and the preparation of polar bear hides and distribution of meat within the respectively communities.

The communities, the KRWB, and NTI have repeatedly asked the Government of Nunavut (GN) to address this issue. The last research for this population was conducted between 1998 and 2000.

Based on the following information, the KRWB requests an increase in the TAH by 15 animals for the M'Clintock Channel for the 2013-2014 harvesting season and by the same number for subsequent harvesting seasons until the information from the GN survey is made available.

The KRWB feels that this is a reasonable request based on the following information:

1. There was a moratorium put in place between 2001-2003 to help the population recover.
2. Since 2003, there has been a quota of 3 shared between 2 communities.
3. An Inuit knowledge study was conducted by the local HTO and other studies have been completed for this area that suggest that the number of bears in this area has increased.

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- 4. Knowledge from hunters indicates that bears move between the subpopulations of Gulf of Boothia and M'Clintock Channel.
- 5. Hunters and local knowledge indicate that there are more bears in this area.
- 6. The GN has begun consultations with communities and is planning to begin a new survey of this subpopulation.

The communities have been impacted for over 12 years and the GN survey will take a few years to complete. We do not feel that there is a conservation concern for this population by increasing the current TAH or that it will harm the population. Further, the polar bear Memorandum of Understanding states that the TAH will be based on the "Guided Harvest Rate" after 7 years when the TAH had been first established based on the "Conservative Harvest Rate". The "Guided Harvest Rate" is based on Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit (IQ), perception of trend, and probability of increase or decline. The KRWB requests that the TAH be increased while the research is being completed based on all of the reasons stated above.

Thank you for your time in reviewing our request; we anxiously wait for your response to this very critical issue.

Sincerely,

Attima Hadlari  
Chairperson