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Office of the 2nd Vice-President

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Qikiqtaaluk
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Arctic Bay
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Cape Dorset
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Clyde River
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Hall Beach
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Kimmirut
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Pangnirtung
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Pond Inlet
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Resolute Bay
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Sanikiluaq
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Arviat
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Baker Lake
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Chesterfield Inlet
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Coral Harbour
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Rankin Inlet
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Repulse Bay
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Whale Cove
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Kitikmeot
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Cambridge Bay
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Kugluktuk
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Gjoa Haven
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Pelly Bay
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Taloyvak

December 12, 2008

Harry Flaherty, A\Chair
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
Iqaluit, Nunavut.

Re: NTI request NWMB as per NLCA 5.2.33(d) modify or remove level of total allowable harvest for Bowhead Whales.

The Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) as per NLCA 5.6.16 has the sole authority to establish, modify or remove, from time to time and as circumstances requires, levels of total allowable harvest (TAH)..... Further to its previous requests dated November 5, 2007 and November 18 2008, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI) requests that the NWMB remove the TAH on Bowhead Whales in the Nunavut Settlement Area (NSA) for the following reasons:

Abundance of Bowhead Whales;

- Bowhead whales were considered an “endangered species”, based on scientific reports from the 1980’s that estimated that there were two populations of bowhead whales in the NSA and the total population was no greater than 500.
- Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) science staff completed aerial surveys of bowhead whales in 2004. DFO concluded from this scientific research that there is only one population of bowhead whales and the total population is estimated at 16,000.
- The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) has reviewed the available scientific and traditional knowledge. The COSEWIC recommendation to the Minister is that bowhead whales be down listed from “threatened” to “special concern”.
- The DFO has recommended that the potential biological removal (PBR) for the Eastern Canadian Bowhead Whale population is 18 per year. It should be noted that this is recognized as a very conservative PBR.

Current Inuit harvesting levels for Bowhead Whales;

- Wildlife Policy Advisory Committee (WPAC) has by motion identified a needs level for a five year period ('08-'12) of three bowhead whales for the NSA.
- The Inuit of Greenland have been allocated one bowhead per year for five years ('08-'12) by International Whaling Commission.
- The Inuit of Nunavik harvested their first bowhead whale in 100 years in July 08; there are plans to continue harvesting one bowhead whale per summer.

The NLCA 5.7.29, requires that Inuit obtain a license to harvest bowhead whales from the Minister of Fisheries. NLCA 5.3.3 requires that the NWMB or a Minister shall restrict or limit Inuit harvesting only to the extent necessary. Based on this information and the objectives of the NLCA, NTI on behalf of Inuit of Nunavut respectfully submits that there is no valid conservation purpose, public health or public safety reason to have a TAH on bowhead whales in the NSA and requests that the NWMB remove the TAH on bowhead whales.

Sincerely,



Raymond Ningeocheak
Vice President of Finance, NTI