

HTO Consultation Report Bathurst Caribou Management Recommendations

October 2019



Department of Environment, Government of Nunavut, Kugluktuk, NU

Executive Summary

Government of Nunavut, Department of Environment (DOE) representatives conducted a consultation in October 2019 with the Hunters and Trappers Organizations (HTO) of Kugluktuk, Cambridge Bay, Bay Chimo, and Bathurst Inlet, and with co-management partners, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI). The primary purpose of the consultation was to convey the results of the 2018 Bathurst calving ground photographic survey and to consult on the recommended management actions, Total Allowable Harvest (TAH). During the consultations, feedback was received regarding the management recommendations.

The Bathurst herd is currently utilized for subsistence and economic interests, and this herd is declining in number bringing food security concerns. The rate of this decline is worrisome. DOE implemented a TAH of 30, bulls only on the Bathurst in 2017 and this TAH needs to be adjusted to reflect the new 2018 estimate. This report attempts to summarize the comments made by the co-management partners during that meeting.

Preface

This report represents the Department of Environment's best efforts to accurately capture all of the information that was shared during consultation meetings with the Hunters and Trappers Organizations.

The views expressed herein do not necessarily reflect those of the Department of Environment, Nunavut or Government of Nunavut.

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1.0 Report Purpose and Structure

This report is intended to collate and summarize comments, questions, concerns, and suggestions raised during the consultations held with the co-management partners on the proposed management recommendations for the Bathurst herd. The summary herein only reflect what was shared during the meeting.

2.1 Purpose of Consultations

On October 7th, 2019 a meeting was held with the objective to consult on the proposed management recommendations to adjust the current TAH. The meeting was an opportunity to record concerns, comments from the management partners in order to potentially accommodate their requests. The Kugluktuk, Cambridge Bay, Bay Chimo, and Bathurst Inlet HTO's were made aware of the DOE recommendations as the designated representatives of their hunting communities under the Nunavut Agreement.

2.2 Format of Meetings

The consultation was a full day meeting. Information such as herd status, recommendations from DOE, and other management groups' recommendations were presented. The Nunavut co-management partners' perspectives were recorded. The meeting was facilitated and lead by the DOE. The presentation format by the DOE was informal and the co-management partners were invited to ask questions, raise concerns, and make suggestions on the proposed recommendations. It was an open dialogue.

3.0 Public and HTO Consultation Summary

The objective for this consultation was made clear and pertinent information was given to the HTO's well in advance of the consultation, and at the start of the meeting. There were many questions, concerns, and suggestions raised by the HTO's. The Bathurst herd has an important contribution to the subsistence of two families on Contwoyto Lake (Kugluktuk HTO) and provide for 400 additional individuals, and an outfitter that utilizes sport hunt tags from Bathurst Inlet and Bay Chimo HTO's. Kugluktuk HTO voiced concerns for the economic livelihood for the families on Contwoyto. Bathurst Inlet and Bay Chimo HTOs were concerned about the loss of guide jobs through the outfitter and the loss of food that is provided to members from sport hunts. The following section summarizes the consultation.

4.0. Consultation on TAH recommendation – October 7th, 2019

Issues: Need to update management recommendations (TAH) from the 2018 Bathurst calving ground photographic survey.

Purpose of the Consultations:

A consultation was organized in Cambridge Bay on October 7th, 2019. The primary purpose of the meeting was to engage the co-management partners in an ongoing dialogue on the Bathurst herd future management recommendations. The meeting was an opportunity to inform the audience that the DOE recommend a lower TAH of 0 based on the available new scientific information.

Date: October 7th, 2019

Representatives:

GN-DOE: Kate England, Lisa-Marie Leclerc, Kevin Methuen

NTI: David Lee, Cheryl Wray

NWMB: Kyle Ritchie

Kugluktuk Angoniatit Association: Amanda Rose Dumond, Bobby Anavilok

Ekaluktutialik Hunters & Trappers: Clarence Kaiyogana

Burnside Hunters & Trappers: Connie Kapolak

Omingmaktok Hunters & Trappers: Peter Kapolak

Summary of the Discussion:

The HTO expressed that the current TAH of 30 bull only caribou restricts the harvest to the months of August to October, just before the rut when the condition of the bulls affects the meat. The meat from all 30 tags is used for subsistence to support families at Contwoyto and Cambridge Bay. All meat harvested from sport hunts is distributed to HTO members, it lasts all year. Burnside HTO estimates 10 households, total of 400 people currently rely on this food (includes extended families). All parts of the caribou are considered to be important as they are used for traditional purposes. These sport hunts represent the sole income source for this guides, 8 people employed for these hunts between Omingmaktok and Burnside HTOs. Kugluktuk HTO feels that more of the Bathurst range should be surveyed. There was a suggestion that Muskox might be an option for Franklin family on Contwoyto.

There was a great deal of discussion on predator management and research. Kugluktuk HTO would like to see wolf collaring. A few comments saying that the \$300 payment for the DOE wolf sample collection program is not enough; increase predator harvest incentives before changing TAH. There was lots of discussion about wolf incentive program with the Government of Northwest Territories (GNWT) – harvesters from Cambridge Bay would like to join this winter. HTO members felt that Inuit traditionally kept wolf numbers lower by killing wolf pups at the den. Omingmaktok and Burnside HTOs stated they have been trying for 20 years to get more grizzly bear sport hunt tags. They have also been requesting access to more Beverly caribou sport hunt tags.

Overall, Kugluktuk HTO would like to keep their ten tags as they feel the family on Contwoyto Lake needs these tags. There was a comment from the Kugluktuk HTO to reduce the TAH, but rather than 0 reduce it to 10 with more education on the land. The Burnside HTO said there will still be harvesting whether the

TAH is 0 or 30. The Omingmaktok HTO said they want to keep tags at 30 and predators should be made a main priority. Overall, the HTOs communicated that they felt 30 tags could be justified for cultural importance and it is outrageous to suggest a TAH of 0.

Some general comments from the HTOs were that climate change and predators are perceived to be the top threats to this herd. People reported seeing more bears with three cubs. The Kugluktuk HTO wondered how the government will monitor herd health if there are no samples from harvest. A TAH of 0 will put more pressure on Dolphin Union caribou. They feel that all the burden is placed on hunters, but the government can also control development and roads. They want things to be addressed before taking away from hunters.

Recommendation to the GN:

The HTOs would like to have all the information available to them, not just the survey numbers before any management actions are suggested. The results from the Boots on the Ground program was not presented, as well as insight of elders, and these should both be taken into consideration. The HTOs felt that DOE should develop their own recommendation, impartial from the Northwest Territories. Overall there was significant resistance to the recommendation to lower the TAH to 0. All HTOs would like to see no change to the TAH. The HTOs suggested that a harvest of 30 caribou is a negligible removal from the herd and would have very little biological impact. The communities want a more holistic approach to management. They would like to see additional management actions in place to help the herd recover, such as increasing work on predation.

Comments and questions:

N/A

4.1 Conclusion- Next Steps

This summer, the Bathurst population survey results were shared with the HTOs and other co-management partners. The DOE met with co-management partners for a consultation on October 7th, 2019 where the population survey results were explained and new management recommendations were shared.

The next steps will be to share the final recommendations with Nunavut Wildlife Management Board to ensure that effective conservation measures are currently in place by the community, HTO, and Government level to address the current declining trend of the Bathurst Caribou herd. By working together, it could be possible to help the Bathurst to recover.