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Nunavunmi Anngutighatigut Aulapkaijitkut Katimajiat
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

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Conserving wildlife through the application of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and scientific knowledge

July 06, 2018

Honourable Jeannie Ehloak
Minister of Environment
Government of Nunavut

James Qillaq
Chairperson
Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife
Board

Jaykolassie Killiktee
Chairperson
Mittimatalik Hunters and
Trappers Organisation

Dear Colleagues:

Re: NWMB Decision on the Proposals to Modify the Harvest Management of Baffin Island Caribou

1. Overview

At the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board's (NWMB or Board) Regular Meeting (RM 002-2018) in Iqaluit on June 6, 2018, the NWMB considered two Proposals for Decision (Proposal) on the management of Baffin Island Caribou; one from the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board (QWB) and the other from the Mittimatalik Hunters and Trappers Organization (HTO). Although the two Proposals were submitted separately, the NWMB considered the Proposals jointly as they were both related to the harvest management of Baffin Island Caribou.

The Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board's Proposal was to increase the total allowable harvest (TAH) from 250 male caribou to 245 male caribou and 35 female caribou resulting in a regional TAH of 280 caribou.

The Mittimatalik HTO's Proposal set out the following concerns and recommendations regarding harvest management of Baffin Island caribou in Pond Inlet:

- Annually increase the TAH by 10% until there is new science or Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit showing a decline in the population size
- Lift the male-only non-quota limitation
- Set a non-quota limitation of "zero male-caribou harvest" during the mating season in October and November. Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit directs that male caribou should not be harvested during the mating season
- Compensation of wolf harvesters
- Carry out population surveys annually. Previous population surveys have not covered the entire range of Baffin Island Caribou, including calving areas



management of Baffin Island Caribou. Furthermore, the Mittimatalik HTO is requesting an increase to the community (i.e. Pond Inlet) portion of the TAH. Given that the NWMB makes decisions at the stock or population level, the NWMB does not have the authority to change the TAH allocation for one community or one sub-region as any such harvest changes could potentially affect the overall population. The NWMB encourages the Mittimatalik HTO to address changes to the allocation of regional TAH with the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board and with the Department of Environment.

The NWMB would like to thank the Mittimatalik HTO for passing along Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit informing the NWMB that male caribou should not be harvested during the mating season. The NWMB wishes to inform the Mittimatalik HTO of its authority pursuant to Section 5.7.3 of the *Nunavut Agreement*, to establish a community restriction on the harvest of male caribou during the months of October and November, if it so desires.

On the issue of compensation of wolf harvesters, the NWMB is aware that the Government of Nunavut runs a fur subsidy program. Any such request should therefore be directed to the Department of Environment.

The NWMB also wishes to inform the Mittimatalik HTO about two NWMB funding streams—the Nunavut Wildlife Studies Fund and the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Research Fund—potentially available to the HTO for community caribou surveys. The NWMB staff can provide more information on the two funds available from the Board.

On the need to complete the Nunavut Baffin Island Caribou Management Plan:

The current Proposals by the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board and the Mittimatalik HTO on harvest management of Baffin Island Caribou and two previous Proposals by the Department of Environment to: 1) modify the geographic distribution of the Baffin Island Caribou TAH; and 2) implement inter-annual flexibility in the sex ratio of the Baffin Island Caribou non-quota limitation, point to the high level of public interest in the management of Baffin Island Caribou and underscore the importance of a Management Plan (Plan). In March 2016, the Department of Environment presented a Baffin Island Caribou Plan to the NWMB for approval. The NWMB considered the Plan during its In-Camera Meeting (IC 003-2016) on March 16, 2016 and decided to send a letter to the Department of Environment to outline concerns on its content (attached). The NWMB encourages the Department of Environment to work with its co-management partners to make progress toward completing the Plan. In doing so, the Department of Environment should consider the management options proposed by the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board and the Mittimatalik HTO.



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Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

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On the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board proposal to modify the TAH and non-quota limitation:

The Board understands the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board’s concern that the limited number of caribou on Baffin Island and the establishment of a TAH in 2015 has placed a burden on harvesters. The Department of Environment has informed the Board that it is in the process of consolidating results of recent Baffin Island Caribou compositional surveys and will submit a report to the NWMB by December 2018. The compositional survey results do not provide a population estimate; however, these results will provide indices for potential population status and trends. The NWMB anticipates being in a better position to consider options, alongside its co-management partners once the Board reviews the compositional survey results.

The NWMB would like to recognize the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board’s leadership and commitment to the sustainable recovery of the Baffin Island Caribou Herd.

If you or your officials have any questions or concerns regarding the contents of this letter, please do not hesitate to contact the NWMB.

Sincerely,

Daniel Shewchuk
Chairperson of the
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

Attachment:
NWMB Consideration of GN Draft Baffin Island Caribou Management Plan

cc: Drikus Gissing, Director of Wildlife Management, Nunavut Department of Environment;
Jason Mikki, Acting Executive Director, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board; and
Daisy Koonoo, Secretary Manager, Mittimatalik Hunters and Trappers Organization.



The Honourable Jeannie Ehloak

JUL 16 2018

Mr. Daniel Shewchuk
Chairperson
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
PO Box 1379
IQALUIT, NU X0A 0H0

Dear Mr. Shewchuk:

Thank you for your letter dated July 6, 2018 outlining the decisions of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) concerning two proposals; the first from the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board (QWB) and the other from the Mittimatalik Hunters and Trappers Organization (HTO); for decision on the management of Baffin Island Caribou following the NWMB in-camera meeting (IC 002-2018) on June 7, 2018 in Iqaluit.

NWMB submitted the following final decision(s) and recommendations:

- a) *“Inform the Mittimatalik Hunters and Trappers Organization that, pursuant to subsection 5.6.17(b) of the Nunavut Agreement, the total allowable harvest (TAH) for Baffin Island caribou is a Baffin regional TAH, and that the allocation or reallocation of the harvest among communities must be decided by the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board (QWB);*
- b) *Recommend that the Nunavut Environment Minister renew working with its co-management partners to promptly complete the draft Baffin Island Caribou Management Plan, including through consideration of recommendations raised by the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board and one or more Qikiqtaaluk Hunters and Trappers Organizations; and*
- c) *Invite the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board to consider re-submitting its Proposal for decision (“Amendment of the Total Allowable Harvest for Baffin Island Caribou”) dated May 3, 2018- duly revised if necessary or advisable- for the NWMB’s December 2018 quarterly meeting (RM 004-2018).”*

.../2

I am in support of NWMB's decisions regarding the management of the Baffin Island caribou herd.

Further to this, the Department of Environment (DOE) is currently working on the final summary report for the Baffin Island Caribou Composition surveys. The final report for the long-term composition study is almost complete and will be circulated to our co-management partners in fall 2018.

Once the report is complete, DOE will conduct Baffin-wide HTO consultations to address the next steps for the management of Baffin Island caribou including DOE's Draft Baffin Island Caribou Management Plan, potential collaring to answer questions of caribou movement, and future survey work. The final Baffin Island Composition summary report and consultation report is anticipated to be submitted for the December 2018 NWMB quarterly meeting (RM 004-2018).

I wish to thank the board for their hard work and careful consideration of this important conservation and management issue.

Yours truly,



Jeannie Ehaloak

cc: Mr. Pauloosie Suvega, Deputy Minister, Department of Environment

Mr. Drikus Gissing, Director, Wildlife Management Division, Department of Environment