SUBMISSION TO THE



NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD

FOR

Information: Decision: X

Issue: Advisory Committee for the Cooperation on Wildlife Management (ACCWM) draft management plan "Taking Care of Caribou: the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East Barren Ground Caribou Herds Management Plan"

Background:

ACCWM:

The Advisory Committee for the Cooperation on Wildlife Management (ACCWM) was established through the finalization of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)¹ between a number of inter-jurisdictional co-management boards. The parties to the MOU include the following: the Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board, the Tuktut Nogait National Park Management Board, the Wek'eezhii Renewable Resources Board, the Sahtu Renewable Resources Board, the Wildlife Management Advisory Council-NWT, the Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board (KRWB). To avoid conflict of interest, the Director of Wildlife Management sits on the ACCWM on behalf the NWMB. The ACCWM has been meeting in person approximately twice year and as required by conference call

The Committee was formed to exchange information, enhance cooperation, and make recommendations regarding wildlife and wildlife habitat issues that cross land claim and treaty boundaries (see Appendix I for the jurisdictions of other Boards). As per the MOU, the Committee's mandate includes the following trans-boundary issues:

- a.) The development of a management plan for the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose east caribou herds:
- b.) The development of sub-plans for different aggregations of caribou within these herds;
- c.) The discussion of total allowable harvests;
- d.) The discussion of non-quota limitations on harvesting;
- e.) The discussion of measures for the protection of calving and post-calving grounds.

In early 2009, the ACCWM formed a Working Group to prepare a draft Management Plan for the Cape-Bathurst, Bluenose-West and Bluenose-East caribou herds for submission to the ACCWM. The Working Group include one representative from each of the organizations that are party to the MoU (with the exception of the KRWB who declined to participate), as well as

¹ The MOU was approved by the NWMB at Regular Meeting No. 56.

representatives from the; GNWT Department of Environment and Natural Resources – Inuvik and Sahtu Regions, and GN-Department of Environment². Parks Canada, Dehcho, and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI) declined the invitation to participate in the Working Group. The Working Group, with the assistance of a contractor, has drafted a number of versions of the management plan to the ACCWM for consideration.

Status of Caribou Herds:

The Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East herds occupy a large part of northern mainland Northwest Territories and western Nunavut (refer to Appendix 2 for herd ranges). The calving grounds for the Bluenose-East herd lie within Nunavut and the herd is harvested by hunters from Kugluktuk. The Cape Bathurst and Bluenose-West herd are not believed to be harvested by Nunavut communities.

The following section outlines the current statuses of the herds based on the "best available" scientific information:

Cape Bathurst herd:

The Cape Bathurst herd is estimated to have declined from approximately 20,000 in 1992 to approximately 2,000 in 2005/2006. The 2009 population estimate of ~2000 animals demonstrates that the herd is stable since 2006 but is still low in relation to historic high numbers.

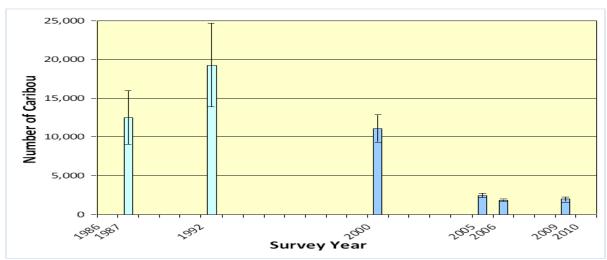


Figure 4 Cape Bathurst Herd Population Estimates

The Bluenose-West herd:

The Bluenose-West herd is estimated to have declined from over 11,000 animals in 1992 to about 18,000 animals in 2005 and 2006. The 2009 population estimate of ~18,000 demonstrates that the herd has been stable since 2006 but is low in relation to historic high numbers.

² Due to workload and other higher priorities the Government of Nunavut-Department of Environment was not able to attend all Working Group meetings;

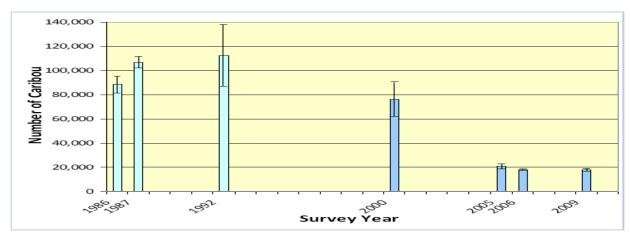


Figure 5 Bluenose-West Herd Population Estimates

The Bluenose-East herd:

The Bluenose-East herd has varied from ~120,000 in 2000 to about 67,000 in 2006, followed by an increased to an estimated 98,600 in 2010.

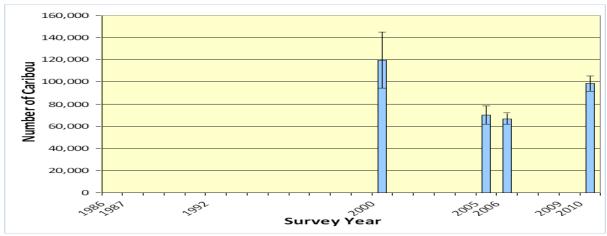


Figure 6 Bluenose-East Herd Population Estimates

On April 27th 2011, the ACCWM had a meeting to review the final draft of the plan; the meeting was attended by representatives from NTI, the KRWB and the Kugluktuk Hunters and Trappers Organization (HTO). The KRWB and the Kugluktuk HTO requested further consultation before considering support for the management plan. It should be noted that during the development of the management plan there were two rounds of consultations in all jurisdictions, expect for Nunavut where only one consultation meeting took place. The Board should also be aware that all other members of the ACCWM indicated support for the plan and indicated that they would proceed with their associated decision processes in their jurisdictions.

Recommendation:

There is a need to further engage the Kugluktuk HTO and the KRWB on the draft management plan in order to address any concerns. To accomplish this NWMB Wildlife Section staff recommend the following:

- 1. That NWMB Wildlife Section staff in cooperation with NTI, the Government of Nunavut-Department of Environment and members of the ACCWM Working Group conduct a consultation with the Kugluktuk HTO. (Please note that at the time of the drafting of this briefing note it was staff's understanding that NTI and members of the ACCWM Working Group were in favor of such an approach. A response from GN-DoE is still pending)
- 2. That the consultation occurs during the week of July 25th to July 29th and that the NWMB be responsible for the coordination and associated costs of the consultation tour (i.e. meeting room and interpretation costs; travel and accommodations for NWMB staff only, honorarium for HTO Board members).

NWMB staff believe that this approach would be consistent with its obligations as a member of the ACCWM and its roles and responsibilities assigned to it through the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA). Upon completion of the consultation and the incorporation of feedback from the Kugluktuk HTO and the KRWB, the management plan would be brought to the NWMB for decision as per s. 5.2.34 (d) of the NLCA.

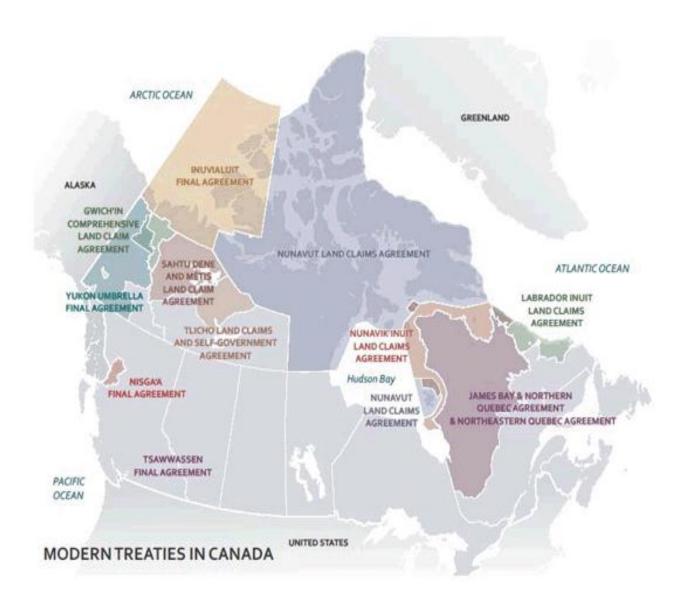
Consultations: Rebecca Jeppesen, Wildlife Management Biologist, NWMB;

Bert Dean, Senior Policy Advisor, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated;

Prepared By: Adam Schneidmiller, Director of Wildlife Management, NWMB

Date: June 2nd, 2011

APPENDIX 1: Other Boards and their jurisdictions



APPENDIX 2: The Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West and Bluenose-East herd ranges

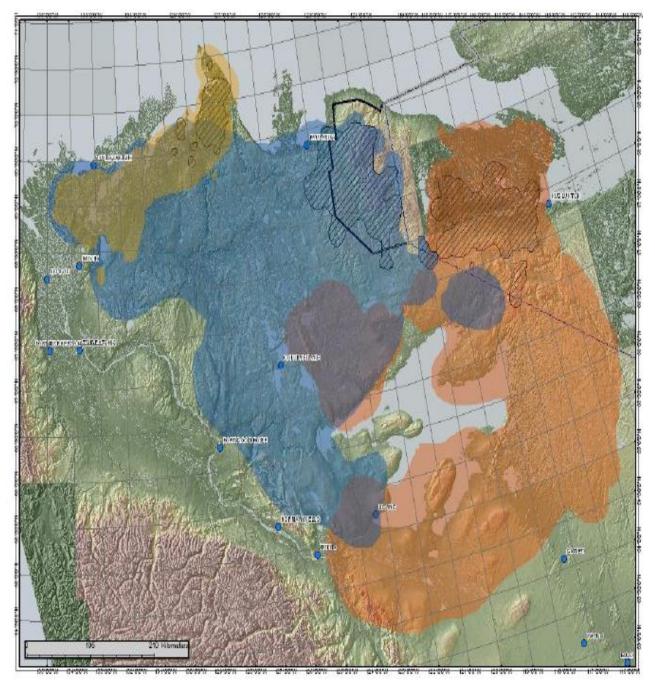


Figure 2 Overlapping herd ranges, based on collar data from 1996 to 2004 (ENR-GNWT)

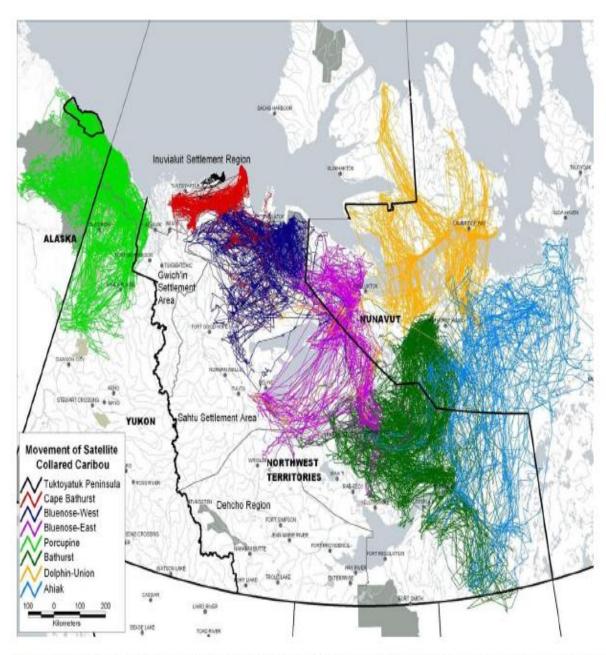


Figure 3 Range of Barren-Ground Caribou Herds in the Northwest Territories (ENR-GNWT)