

SUBMISSION TO THE NWMB

Issue: Environment Canada's listing of Peary caribou as Endangered under the federal *Species at Risk Act* and the collaborative development and consultation to draft a national recovery strategy.

Background

- In February 2011, Peary caribou were listed as Endangered under the federal *Species at Risk Act*.
- The Minister is required to develop a national recovery strategy for a species listed as Endangered or Threatened. A recovery strategy is a high level strategic planning document that deals with three key elements: threats, population and distribution objectives, and the identification of critical habitat.
- Under the *Species at Risk Act*, recovery strategies must be prepared in cooperation with wildlife management boards if the species is found in an area in which a wildlife management board is authorized by a land claims agreement to perform functions in respect of wildlife species.
- The deadline for completion of the national recovery strategy is February 2014 but efforts will be made to complete it earlier.
- Peary Caribou occur in both the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.
- The Government of Nunavut and the Government of the Northwest Territories are the managing authorities for Peary Caribou in their respective territories.
- In Nunavut, there are two communities (Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay) within the range of Peary caribou.
- Communities play a key role in the ongoing co-management of Peary caribou and have developed collaborative working relationships with Environment Canada to undertake stewardship programs for wildlife and wildlife habitat. Both Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay continue to be involved in Habitat Stewardship Program projects focused on Peary caribou.
- The *Species at Risk Act* does not impose automatic prohibitions on Inuit rights to harvest Peary Caribou. Automatic SARA prohibitions would only apply on Federal lands under the authority of the Minister of the Environment, and then only to people who are NOT beneficiaries of the land claim. Any restrictions on Inuit harvest must follow the land claim process and respect the authority of the NWMB. With the listing of Peary Caribou under the federal *Species at*

Risk Act, there have been no restrictions on Inuit harvest of Peary Caribou imposed.

- There are several land managers whose jurisdictions overlap Peary caribou range (Inuit-owned lands, Inuvialuit, Parks Canada Agency, Environment Canada, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development (AANDC/INAC), and Department of National Defense) (Fig. 1).
- In keeping with the spirit and intent of the principles of co-management expressed in land claims, we assume there is a desire by all parties to work collaboratively on the development of the recovery strategy for Peary caribou.
- In July 2011, Environment Canada invited agencies with legal responsibilities for *Species at Risk Act* implementation and caribou management to participate in an administrative group that would provide direction and advice on process, policy, inter-governmental issues, and resources. The organizations invited were: Nunavut Wildlife Management Board, Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT), Parks Canada Agency, Government of Nunavut and the Government of the Northwest Territories.
- In November 2011, introductory HTO/A and public community meetings were held in Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay with staff from Environment Canada, Parks Canada Agency, and the Government of Nunavut. (Presentation attached). Environment Canada will continue to work collaboratively with the Nunavut and NWT communities and respective governments in the development of the national recovery strategy.

Recommendations:

That the NWMB informs Environment Canada of any views or recommendations they have at this time regarding:

- NWMB participation and appointment of member to the Peary Caribou Advisory Group
- how best to cooperate with the NWMB in the development of the national recovery strategy for Peary Caribou
- the collaborative development and consultation process
- existing Inuit knowledge on Peary caribou that could be used to inform the development of the national recovery strategy

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