

BRIEFING TO THE

NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD

FOR



Information: X

Decision:

Issue: Harvester Gathering on the Bathurst Caribou Herd, Bechoko, NWT, January 29th to 31st, 2013.

Background: The issue of caribou management throughout the Bathurst Caribou range is one of great importance to the well-being of all Northern Peoples in the Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Saskatchewan.

Management planning processes must use all sources of information, including traditional and scientific knowledge. During initial meetings about short and long-term management planning processes for the Bathurst Caribou herd, organization representatives discussed a “grassroots approach” in which harvesters from the Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Saskatchewan would gather to exchange information about the herd and provide guidance for management activities.

In order to facilitate this approach a harvester gathering with hunters, elders and youth from all three regions was held in Bechoko, NWT, January 29th to 31st, 2013.

Overview:

During the workshop participants discussed the caribou herd, and came up with several common goals. These goals included healthy caribou and communities for future generations, maintaining healthy and respectful relationships with caribou and renewing and honoring obligations to each other as nations. The following recommendations were made after two days of discussion and sharing:

- Any discussion about plans for the Bathurst caribou must be held in a forum with all nations affected having the opportunity to be present.
- All nations must be recognized as stewards of the caribou, playing a leading role in any management plans.

- Sponsoring organizations, including aboriginal governments and co-management boards should support the participation of harvesters, elders and youth in the development of plans to protect Bathurst caribou.
- On the land curriculum and programs should be established and supported to ensure that new harvesters are properly trained in traditional harvesting ways and laws.
- Traditional systems of monitoring should be implemented as a means of understanding the health and well-being of the caribou and as a basis for making decisions about harvesting.
- Aboriginal researchers and traditional knowledge holders should be involved in every step of scientific research planning by governments and co-management boards.
- Co-management boards and aboriginal governments should engage with communities about options for coordinating participation in the management of the Bathurst herd by September 2013.
- An inter-regional body is needed to discuss changes in the Bathurst caribou and make recommendations for common action to conserve the caribou for future generations
- The next forum to discuss the management of the herd should be held in January 2014.

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Date: February 25, 2013