



February 15, 2013

Larry Carpenter, Chair
Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT)
Email: wmac-c@jointsec.nt.ca

Frank Pokiak, President
Inuvialuit Game Council
Email: igc-js@jointsec.nt.ca

Via Email

wmac-c@jointsec.nt.ca

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Re: *Taking Care of Caribou: the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East Barren Ground Caribou Herds Management Plan*

Dear Mr. Carpenter and Mr. Pokiak;

The Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board (WRRB) has been asked to write this letter on behalf of the following Advisory Committee for Cooperation on Wildlife Management (ACCWMM) Members: Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board (GRRB), Sahtu Renewable Resources Board (SRRB), Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB), Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board (KRWB), and the Tukut Nogait National Park Management Board (TNNPMB).

The ACCWMM met January 24-25, 2013 in Yellowknife to discuss revisions needed for the draft *Taking Care of Caribou: the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East Barren Ground Caribou Herds Management Plan* (May 9, 2011) (the "Draft Plan"). As part of that process, the Members discussed at length the Inuvialuit Game Council's (IGC) letter dated April 19, 2012 and the Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT)'s (WMAC (NWT)) letter dated January 10, 2013. WMAC (NWT) informed the Members of the ACCWMM that they would not take part in further work to revise the Draft Plan until it has consulted the Inuvialuit communities on herd exchange and whether there is one or three Bluenose herds. It is the hope of the ACCWMM that common ground can be found while continuing to work on the Draft Plan with both organizations. Sustaining the herds will require the continued collaboration of all of the co-management bodies in the ACCWMM. The ACCWMM shares your concerns and recognizes that:

1. the voice and relevant traditional knowledge of the affected communities must be incorporated in the Draft Plan;
2. the issue of exchange of caribou between the herds, the population implications of such movements, and whether there are indeed one or three herds should be further discussed and analyzed in the Draft Plan;
3. the reliability of pre-2000 survey data for all herds, including the Bluenose-East herd (issue raised by the IGC) should be addressed in the Draft Plan; and
4. the issues that were brought up in community consultations should be addressed in the Draft Plan.

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The ACCWM Members recognize the need to consult their respective communities and to incorporate both traditional and scientific knowledge to achieve wildlife conservation. However, the GRRB, SRRB, NWMB, KRWB, TNNPMB and the WRRB believe that the interests of all communities will be best served by continuing to work on the Draft Plan — including further work on the issues raised above. The May 9, 2011 version of the Draft Plan was prepared on the understanding that a relatively short Management Plan was desired. Now it is understood that more detail is required. To this end, the ACCWM has directed the Working Group to:

- A. review their consultation notes to date and other sources of relevant existing information;
- B. revise the Draft Plan to address a range of issues, including 1-4 above; and
- C. complete its analysis by the end of June/13.

The Members also believe that the precautionary principle is the best approach for proceeding and that the distinction of the three herds is consistent with that approach, thus ensuring the long-term conservation of these herds. The distinction of the three herds was one of the fundamental bases for all of our organizations' work to date on the Draft Plan. If WMAC and IGC are now questioning the distinction of three herds, the ACCWM suggests that the consultations with Inuvialuit communities should focus on the following questions:

- Please describe your understanding of caribou movements on the landscape, including seasonal ranges (summer, fall, winter and spring), calving grounds, and migration routes.
- Based on the distinction of three Bluenose herds, how much exchange occurs between them? How often does the exchange occur? When and where does the exchange happen? Does exchange happen equally between the Cape Bathurst and Bluenose-West herds, the Cape Bathurst and Bluenose-East herds and the Bluenose-West and Bluenose-East herds?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of managing on a one herd vs. a three herd basis?
- How can stewardship actions reflect both traditional and scientific perspectives equally and appropriately?

The timing of Inuvialuit consultations is up to WMAC (NWT). The Members would be happy to share the revised Draft Plan with WMAC (NWT) and IGC, as soon as it becomes available in late June 2013, if the updated Draft Plan would be useful in WMAC (NWT)'s planned consultations. We thank the WMAC (NWT) for coming to our January 24, 2013 meeting and for explaining why and on what issues they must further consult Inuvialuit communities. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Joseph Judas
Chair

Cc ACCWM Members
Bluenose Caribou Management Plan Working Group