

# PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT

**PROJECT NUMBER:** 2-14-02

**RESEARCHER:** Morgan Anderson

**TITLE:** Southern Ellesmere Peary Caribou and Muskox Aerial Survey

**ORIGINALLY FUNDED:** 2014-2015

**NWMB FUNDING:** \$75,000

**PROJECT SUMMARY:** The project's main objectives are to: 1) determine abundance of Peary caribou and muskoxen on southern Ellesmere Island; 2) determine indices of population trend from Bathurst Island caribou and muskoxen, particularly calf recruitment rates; and 3) collect fecal samples to assist in landscape genetics project (separate proposal).

## FINANCIAL REPORT:

<b>Amount from NWMB:</b>	\$ 75,000
<b>Amount from Others:</b>	\$ 155,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 230,000</b>
<b>Expenses:</b>	\$ 120,780
<b>Difference</b>	<b>+ \$ 109,220</b>

**COMMENTS:** After two attempts, the first in April 2014 and the second in August 2014, the southern Ellesmere Island survey was incomplete due to inclement weather. Population estimates could not be obtained from the areas flown, which were roughly half the intended survey area. No Peary caribou were observed in the April survey, but 2 groups of 1 and 7 caribou were seen in August. 244 muskoxen in 33 groups were observed in April and 112 muskoxen in 22 groups were observed in August. Of the observed muskoxen, 28% were short yearlings (10-month old) in April and 20% were calves from spring 2014 in August, suggesting good recruitment compared to the previous survey in 2005. As indicated in the interim financial report, the applicant intends to fly the survey in March 2015 to achieve Peary caribou and Muskoxen estimates and spend the remaining funds.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. NWMB Wildlife staff do not have any recommendations for this reporting period. The project leader has met all of the reporting requirements to date. A final financial report will be required by June 30<sup>th</sup> 2015 as per the NWRT policy. Project results will be captured in the final project report which is required by September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

**CONSULTATIONS:** Sarah Spencer, Wildlife Management Biologist, NWMB

**PREPARED BY:** Karla Letto, Wildlife Management Biologist, NWMB