



**SUBMISSION TO THE**  
**NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD**  
**FOR**

**Information:**

**Decision: X**

**Issue: Kivalliq Muskox (*Ovibos moschatus*) distribution and abundance within muskox management MX-13 (Central Kivalliq Muskox Subpopulation)**

**Background**

- Since their near-extirpation in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, muskox have been re-colonizing much of their former range.
- The first survey of muskoxen in the Kivalliq region occurred in 1999, giving an estimate of  $1,522 \pm 679$  (95% CI).
- Muskox populations in the Kivalliq region have expanded their range to the northeast, north, and south over the past 20 years, according to population monitoring.
- By 2008, seasonal Non-Quota Limitations (NQLs) had been removed and proportions used to set a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) on Kivalliq muskox populations was increased from 3% to 5%.
- The Department of Environment (DOE) has engaged and will work closely with all Hunters and Trappers Organizations (HTOs) and respective co-management partners (Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., Kivalliq Wildlife Board) on sustainably managing the muskox population of MX-13.

**Current Status**

- Local knowledge and *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* on the MX-13 subpopulation was collected during annual consultation visits and used to prepare and conduct an abundance survey in 2016.
- Traditional knowledge pointed to a continued range expansion for MX-10 (Northern) and MX-13 (Central) subpopulations. All HTOs identified the need to reassess the populations regularly, and supported the determination of subpopulation boundaries and the study areas for both abundance surveys.
- A population survey of the MX-13 was flown out of Rankin Inlet in July 2016.
- The central Kivalliq Muskox subpopulation changed little between July 2012 (Estimate = 4,506, 95% CI = +/- 948), and July 2016 (Estimate = 4,437, 95% CI = +/- 1,054). The muskox population in MX13 appears to be stable.

**Consultations:**

- In October 2018, the DOE met with the Kivalliq Wildlife Board (KWB) and its representatives from the communities of Arviat, Whale Cove, Rankin Inlet, Baker Lake, Chesterfield Inlet, Repulse Bay, and Coral Harbour, to discuss all preliminary results and preliminary population estimates for muskox in MX-10 and MX-13.
- The DOE further consulted on the results of the MX-13 survey, and a recommendation to maintain the status quo of the TAH at 182 muskox. A face-to-face meeting was held in Arviat and conference calls were held with the HTOs in Rankin Inlet, Nauyasat, and Coral Harbour. Whale Cove and Baker Lake calls were not possible but the HTOs indicated their support for the results and recommendation. It was not possible to reach the Chesterfield Inlet HTO. All reasonable measures were taken to consult with the relevant HTOs, and each HTO that was reached provided a letter of support for the DOE recommendation.

**Recommendation:**

- *The Department of Environment recommends to maintain the TAH of 182 muskox for the MX-13 subpopulation.*