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Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* Iluqatigiingniq  
Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

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Minister of Environment  
Ministaat Avatiliqiyitkut  
Ministre de l'Environnement

May 22, 2017

Joe Ashevak  
Chairperson  
Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board  
P.O. Box 104, Kugaaruk, NU X0B 1K0

Larry Adjun  
Chairperson  
Kugluktuk Angoniatit Association  
P.O. Box 309, Kugluktuk, NU, X0B 0E0

Connie Kapolak  
Chairperson  
Burnside Hunters and Trappers Organization  
P.O. Box 119  
Cambridge Bay, NU X0B 0C0

Peter Kapolak  
Chairperson  
Omingmaktok HTO  
NIWS Rankin Inlet  
PO Box 219, Rankin Inlet, NU, X0C 0G0

Bobby Greenley  
Chairperson  
Ekaluktutiak Hunters and Trappers Organization  
P.O. Box 1270  
Cambridge Bay, NU X0B 0C0  
Dear Co-Management Partners,

**Re: New regulations concerning the Bathurst Caribou herd harvest management.**

Following a review of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board's decision, consultation with partners, and recognizing the current status of the Bathurst Caribou herd, the Government of Nunavut has established a TAH of thirty (30) male only caribou for the Bathurst caribou herd. The Government also supports the various initiatives aimed at the development of the Bathurst Caribou Management Plan.

The total allowable harvest (TAH) for the Bathurst caribou herd will be effective as of July 1, 2017. The Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board will allocate this TAH among the affected Hunters and Trappers Organizations and advise the Department of Environment of their decision on or before June 15, 2017. This will facilitate the distribution of the appropriate number of tags to each HTO having a share of the Bathurst Caribou TAH.

My Department's regional staff and local Conservation Officers will work with co-management partners, particularly the Burnside Hunters and Trappers Association and the Kugluktuk Angoniatit



Association, to prepare for the implementation and management of this TAH. This will include: the management of the tags, the harvest reporting system, and sample collection.

My staff will also be available to provide technical and field support for the development of any necessary Regional Wildlife Organization (RWO) or HTO rules related to the management of tags and non-quota limitations such as harvest area restrictions and seasonal harvest restrictions that the RWO or HTOs may want to put in place.

Further, my Department will be happy to assist HTOs to finalize their Integrated Community Caribou Management Plan (ICCMP) for the conservation of the Bathurst caribou herd. It would be useful to have this ICCMP finalized by Fall 2017 to align with the territorial and inter-jurisdictional initiatives related to the management of this herd.

On-going communication, meetings, and the recent NWMB public hearing have shown that we all share concerns regarding the declining rate of the Bathurst Caribou herd. I hope that our collaborative work will continue in implementing this TAH and other management actions needed to foster the recovery of this caribou herd.

Best Regards,

Joe Savikataaq  
Minister

- C.C. Daniel Shewchuk, Acting Chairperson, Nunavut Wildlife Management Board;  
Paul Irngaut, Director of Wildlife and Environment, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated;  
Lynda Yonge, Director of Wildlife Division, Government of Northwest Territories  
Drikus Gissling, Wildlife Director, Government of Nunavut



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Building *Nunavut* Together  
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Ministauyuq Avatiliqiyikkutni  
Ministauyuq Avatiliqiyikkutni  
Ministre de l'Environnement

May 22, 2017

Joe Ashevak  
Ighivautalik  
Kitikmeoni Avikturniani Huraanut Katimayiit  
Qiuqutaa 104, Kugaaruk, NU X0B 1K0

Larry Adjun  
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Kugluktuk Angoniatit Ktimayiit  
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Bobby Greenley  
Ikhivautalik  
Ekaluktutiak Anguhiqiyiit Katimayiit  
Qiuqutaa 1270  
Ikaluktutiak, NU X0B 0C0  
Haluu, Munaqhiqatigiiktunut Havaqatigiinut,

### **Talvuuna: Nutaat maligahat pidjutauyut Qingaup tuktuut anguniaqnikkut munagidjutainun.**

Malikhugu ihivgiuqniq Nunavumi Umayuligiyit Katimayiit ihumaliuqtait, katimaqatigiblugit iligiit, uvalu ilitagiblugit tadjamin qanuginiit hapkua Qingaup tuktuut, Kavamatkut Nunavunmi piliuqtut uuminga TAH 30nik anguhaluinaqnik tuktuunik haffumanga tuktuinit. Kavamatkutlu ikayuqhugit aalakiit pinahuagutit tugaaqhimayut havauhigaanun Qingaup tuktuunik Munagidjutighainik Upalungaiyautit.

Attatutimut anguniagahat (TAH) hapkuninga Qingaup tuktuunik atuliqniaqtuq uvani Taaqirmun Aullaqtirvia 1, 2017. Kitikmeoni Avikturniani Huraanut Katimayiit tuniuhgakniaqtut uuminga TAH tahapkununga pidjutauyunun Anguniaqnikkut Ktimayiinun uvalu uniutilugitlu hapkua Avatiliqiyikkut ihumaliugutimingnik tikitinagu Immaktirvia 15, 2017. Una naunaiyudjutiniaqtuq tunighainiq ihuaqtumik qaffiuniit haviktait attatutinun HTOtkunun piqaqtut ilauqatigiiknikkut haffumunga Qingaup Tuktuunik TAHngit.

Havakvima aviktuqniitigut havaktut uvalu nunamingni Anguhiqqiyiit havaqatiginiqatit Munaqhiqatigiiktunut Havaqatigiinut iligiit, hapkualuaq Burnside Anguniaqtit Katimayiit uvalu Kuluktup









*Management Plan) is approved and implemented pursuant to Nunavut Land Claims Agreement Sections 5.2.34(d)(i) and 5.3.7 to 5.3.15;*

- 2. Direct that the Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board – pursuant to Nunavut Land Claims Agreement Subsection 5.7.6(d), in compliance with the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement Section 5.1.5 principles of conservation, and in consultation with the Government of Nunavut - Department of Environment and affected Hunters and Trappers Organizations, with assistance from relevant Qaujimaniliit – promptly determine, on the same interim basis as for the total allowable harvest, the sex ratio of the harvest;*
- 3. Recommend that the Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board, Government of Nunavut - Department of Environment and affected Hunters and Trappers Organizations, with assistance – as deemed necessary or advisable – from other qualified organizations and/or relevant Qaujimaniliit, undertake and complete the development of a draft Bathurst Caribou Management Plan – including careful consideration of a potential predator control program - by no later than the end of September 2017; and*
- 4. Upon submission of the completed draft Bathurst Caribou Management Plan for approval by the NWMB pursuant to Nunavut Land Claims Agreement Sections 5.2.34(d)(i) and 5.3.3, promptly hold a public hearing in the Kitikmeot Region in order to make a decision or decisions concerning the ongoing harvest management regime for the Bathurst caribou herd in the Nunavut Settlement Area.*

## **2. Main points of agreement and disagreement among hearing parties<sup>2</sup>**

In making the above decisions, the NWMB noted the following points of agreement and disagreement among parties at the public hearing:

### *a. Main points of agreement among hearing parties*

- Caribou herds tend to undergo natural population cycles, featuring periods of abundance and periods of decline.
- The Bathurst caribou herd is experiencing a decline, there is an urgent conservation concern, and management action is needed to support the herd's recovery.
- Nunavut-based harvest of Bathurst caribou is currently very low.
- If a total allowable harvest is established, the full allocation should go to Inuit.
- A low total allowable harvest will limit opportunities for Inuit to teach younger generations about hunting, harvesting practices, and traditional ways of life and will have a serious impact on their communities.

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<sup>2</sup> Please note that these points of agreement and disagreement were compiled during the course of the oral hearing process. However, they were not presented to the hearing parties, either during or following the hearing, for their consideration and response. Accordingly, the NWMB relied upon written and oral hearing submissions to support these points.

- Community-based management initiatives, such as the development of a management plan, are a positive step for the herd's recovery.
- Enforcement of a total allowable harvest in areas where the Bathurst herd shares habitat with other caribou herds will be challenging.
- Protecting the herd requires collaboration between governments, communities, and other management authorities.

*b. Main points of disagreement among hearing parties*

- A total allowable harvest is necessary to address the herd's decline, including to restrict resident non-beneficiary harvest.
- Community-based management could be an effective alternative to a government-enforced total allowable harvest in addressing the decline.
- Hunters and Trappers Organizations have the enforcement capacity to ensure compliance with measures associated with community-based management plans (for example, a harvest limit or sex restrictions).
- Implementing a total allowable harvest would remove management powers from Hunters and Trappers Organizations and place all control with government.
- Predator control measures would be a useful and feasible herd recovery strategy.
- Caribou switching from the Bathurst range to other areas or herds may be a relevant factor in the population's decline.
- A small harvest (for example, 70-100 caribou or the current harvest level) will not significantly affect the herd's recovery.
- A bulls-only harvest will benefit the herd's recovery.

### **3. Rationale for the NWMB's decisions**

*a. NWMB's Interim total allowable harvest decision*

In its decision-making, the NWMB carefully considered the best available scientific information and Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit. The Board noted that the Bathurst caribou herd has declined by 95% from its peak population in the mid-1980s and 37% since the 2012 population estimate, as indicated by the results of the Government of Northwest Territories – Environment and Natural Resources spring 2015 population survey. During the public hearing, all parties agreed that the herd has experienced a decline, although not all parties agreed on the severity of the trend. The Board determined that in this circumstance, a total allowable harvest is necessary to manage harvest and ensure the best chance for the herd's recovery. The current estimated harvest by Nunavut harvesters is 70-100 Bathurst caribou annually, of which approximately 70 are through sport hunts. Due to the current distribution of the herd, subsistence harvesting of Bathurst caribou is primarily carried out only by members of the Bathurst Inlet and Bay Chimo Hunters and Trappers Organizations. Given the already very low harvest levels in Nunavut, the Board determined that a total allowable harvest of 70 will be conservative enough to minimize negative impacts to the herd while supporting Inuit harvesting activities.

The Board also determined that an interim total allowable harvest will allow additional consideration of harvest management for the herd when the affected Hunters and Trappers Organizations have completed the development of their community-based

management plan. Many parties at the hearing expressed concern that establishing a total allowable harvest will impede the community-based caribou management measures of Hunters and Trappers Organizations, as exercised under the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* Article 5.7.3,<sup>3</sup> and would place control over harvesting activities with the Government of Nunavut. The NWMB decided that, while the urgent conservation concern necessitates a prompt management response (total allowable harvest), the community-based management plan development process proposed by the west Kitikmeot Hunters and Trappers Organizations could result in a compelling alternative management response and should be given full Board consideration when completed. As such, the Board determined that an interim total allowable harvest will be the best way to address the conservation concern while supporting community-based management.

*b. Sex ratio decision*

In addition to a total allowable harvest of 30 caribou, the Government of Nunavut's *Proposal for NWMB Decision* recommended a males-only harvest non-quota limitation. During the public hearing, participating Hunters and Trappers Organizations and Qaujimaniliit were not supportive of the proposed non-quota limitation. In consideration of this opposition to the males-only non-quota limitation, the Board decided that the Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board should work with affected communities and other co-management partners, including the Government of Nunavut – Department of Environment, to determine an appropriate sex ratio for the interim total allowable harvest that will be acceptable to communities while minimizing the overall impact of harvesting to the herd.

*c. Bathurst Caribou Management Plan decisions*

During the public hearing, representatives from the Kugluktuk, Bay Chimo, Bathurst Inlet and Cambridge Bay Hunters and Trappers Organizations, with the support of the Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board and the Kitikmeot Inuit Association, indicated their intention to develop a community-based Bathurst caribou management plan in the near future. The NWMB encourages community-based management initiatives and recognizes that the creation of a community-based management plan for Bathurst caribou by the west Kitikmeot Hunters and Trappers Organizations represents an opportunity for increased collaboration in wildlife management in Nunavut. The Board looks forward to receiving the completed plan by the end of September 2017 for its consideration as a means of harvest management for Bathurst caribou.

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<sup>3</sup> *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* Article 5.7.3 describes the authorities of Hunters and Trappers Organizations as follows: "The powers and functions of HTOs shall include the following: (a) the regulation of harvesting practices and techniques among members, including the use of non-quota limitations; (b) the allocation and enforcement of community basic needs levels and adjusted basic needs levels among members; (c) the assignment to non-members, including with or without valuable consideration and conditions, of any portion of community basic needs levels and adjusted basic needs levels; and (d) generally, the management of harvesting among members."

*d. NWMB's recommendations to co-management partners*

While the NWMB recognizes that it does not have the authority to direct the activities of co-management partners, the Board's resolution includes several recommendations to the Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board, Government of Nunavut – Department of Environment, and affected Hunters and Trappers Organizations. Upon completion of the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* Article 5 decision-making process, the NWMB will promptly issue follow-up correspondence to the Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board and other co-management partners regarding these recommendations, especially regarding the determination of the sex-ratio for the interim total allowable harvest within a recommended time frame of two months.

**4. Conclusion**

As per Section 5.3.8 of the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement*, the NWMB is hereby forwarding its decisions concerning the harvest management of Bathurst caribou to you for your review and consideration. The NWMB recognizes the importance of this decision to stakeholders across the entire range of Bathurst caribou and looks forward to your prompt reply and the timely completion of the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* Article 5 decision-making process.

Should you or your officials have any questions or concerns regarding the contents of this letter, please contact the NWMB.

Sincerely,



Daniel Shewchuk  
Acting Chairperson of the  
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

**Attached: Summary of public hearing party positions and arguments.**

C.C. Ron Elliot, Executive Assistant to Honourable Joe Savikataaq, Government of Nunavut  
Drikus Gissing, Director of Wildlife Management, Government of Nunavut – Department of Environment

## **Appendix 1 – Summary of Bathurst caribou harvest management public hearing party positions and arguments**

### **Government of Nunavut – Department of Environment**

**Position:** Supports establishing a total allowable harvest of 30 caribou, with a non-quota limitation of a bulls-only harvest. (Department of Environment written submission, p. 3)

#### **Evidence/Arguments:**

- The most recent population estimate of 19,700 caribou, based on the 2015 calving ground survey, is 37% lower than the 2012 population estimate and indicates an annual population decline of 14% (Department of Environment written submission, p. 2).
- Additional observations have also indicated that the adult female survival rate and calf-cow ratios are below what is required for the herd to recover, suggesting that the population decline is continuing (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 30 lines 20-25).
- Available biological information suggests that the herd cannot sustain any level of harvesting; however, a minimal harvest should be permitted to allow the continuation of Inuit cultural practices related to the caribou harvest (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 31-32).
- Targeting bulls only may help females to produce more calves and assist the herd's recovery (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 32 lines 6-10).

### **Government of Northwest Territories – Environment and Natural Resources**

**Position:** Supports a total allowable harvest of 0 caribou across the entire Bathurst caribou herd range (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 164 lines 12-14).

#### **Evidence/Arguments:**

- The herd has declined by approximately 96% from its peak numbers (estimated to be 470,000 caribou) in 1986 (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 164, lines 14-16).
- In comparable situations with other caribou herds in serious decline (for example, the Porcupine herd), a harvest of 0 has been recommended for management (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 165).
- The herd seems likely to decline further based on poor vital rates (cow survival rate, calf survival rate, and pregnancy rate are all estimated to be below the levels associated with stable herds). (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 164 lines 16-22).
- Any harvest from the herd will increase mortality rates and increase the likelihood of further decline (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 164).
- All Aboriginal groups in the Northwest Territories who harvest Bathurst caribou have supported the harvest moratorium implemented in 2014 (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 164-165).

### **Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board**

Position: Supports harvest management implemented through an HTO-led management plan, as opposed to a total allowable harvest (Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board written submission, p. 1).

Evidence/Arguments:

- The Department of Environment has not taken the affected Hunters and Trappers Organizations' harvest management efforts, including the development of a community-based management plan, into account (Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board written submission, p. 1).

### **Kugluktuk Angoniatit Association**

Position: Supports harvest management implemented through an HTO-led management plan, as opposed to a total allowable harvest (Public Hearing Transcript, p. , p. 309 lines 3-11).

Evidence/Arguments:

- A Government of Nunavut-enforced total allowable harvest should be used as a last resort for the herd's recovery (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 309 lines 20-22).
- The Kugluktuk Hunters and Trappers Organization has the authority to implement its own community-based management measures under *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* Section 5.7.3, and intends to use this authority to implement community-based wildlife management initiatives, including a management plan and predator harvest (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 308-309).
- Since 2009, Kugluktuk Hunters and Trappers Organization has stopped sport hunts and commercial and community caribou harvests (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 542 lines 21-24).
- Community-based wildlife management initiatives will be more effective and acceptable to the local community (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 309 lines 9-11).
- Local solutions should be used to manage caribou harvest, through a collaboration of the Kugluktuk Hunters and Trappers Organization, Kitikmeot Inuit Association, and Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 310 lines 2-4).

### **Bathurst Inlet (Burnside) Hunters and Trappers Organization**

Position: Does not support the establishment of a total allowable harvest because consultation has been inadequate (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 365 lines 1-5).

Evidence/Arguments:

- A total allowable harvest of 30 caribou will inhibit Inuit from passing on land skills, traditions, and Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit to younger generations (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 356-357).

### **Bay Chimo (Umingmaktok) Hunters and Trappers Organization**

**Position:** Supports harvest management implemented through an HTO-led management plan, as opposed to a total allowable harvest (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 395 lines 17-24).

#### **Evidence/Arguments:**

- Umingmaktok Hunters and Trappers Organization and other Kitikmeot Hunters and Trappers Organizations are capable of managing caribou harvesting and wildlife themselves (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 395 lines 22-24).
- Umingmaktok and Bathurst Inlet residents have not harvested any caribou from the Bathurst herd for 15-20 years, since the herd's migration route has shifted to less accessible areas (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 395 line 25 and p. 396 lines 1-7).
- Umingmaktok Hunters and Trappers Organization is working on developing a community-based management system with the Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 396-397).

### **Ekaluktutiak Hunters and Trappers Organization**

**Position:** Does not support the establishment of a total allowable harvest because other management options have not been fully considered (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 407 lines 5-7).

#### **Evidence/Arguments:**

- Hunters have observed increases in predators in the range of the Bathurst caribou, but the Government of Nunavut – Department of Environment's proposal does not address predator management (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 405-406).
- Ekaluktutiak Hunters and Trappers Organization has demonstrated its ability to implement community-based wildlife management initiatives in the past with their Arctic char fishery (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 406-407).

### **Qaujimanillit**

**Position:** Do not support a bulls-only harvest (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 427 lines 3-16); support predator (wolf and grizzly) management (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 425-426).

#### **Evidence/Arguments:**

- Bulls are the main breeders, and are susceptible to predators during the breeding season (Public Hearing Transcript, p.426-427).
- The population of bulls in the Bathurst herd appears to have declined in recent years compared to the past (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 427 lines 11-13).

- Predators have a significant impact on the herd. Elders have observed wolves hunting and killing caribou to check the health of the animal without consuming the carcass (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 425 lines 9-10).
- In the past, Inuit hunters successfully managed predator populations by harvesting them (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 431 lines 4-6).

### **Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated**

**Position:** Supports (1) allocating the full amount of any total allowable harvest to Inuit (Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated Letter to NWMB, April 8, 2016); and (2) involving affected communities in the development and implementation of harvest management actions (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 441 lines 3-5).

#### **Evidence/Arguments:**

- Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated's support for the NWMB's decision to postpone striking a basic needs level when establishing total allowable harvest levels for caribou is based on the expectation that all total allowable harvest would be reserved for Inuit in the interim (Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated Letter to NWMB, April 8, 2016).
- Communities are unlikely to be supportive of management approaches if they have not been included in the planning process (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 441).

### **Kitikmeot Inuit Association**

**Position:** Supports (1) community-based management instead of a total allowable harvest (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 461 lines 2-19) and (2) mobile caribou protection measures (Kitikmeot Inuit Association written submission – Request for Adjournment, p. 2).

#### **Evidence/Arguments:**

- Establishing a total allowable harvest transfers control of harvest management from Inuit, as represented by Hunters and Trappers Organizations, to government (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 461 lines 2-6).
- The Department of Environment did not attempt to work with the affected Hunters and Trappers Organizations to establish management approaches under *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* Section 5.7.3, or consider alternative responses to the herd's decline, prior to recommending a total allowable harvest to the NWMB (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 461 lines 7-14).
- There is a precedent for community-based management plans as an alternative to a total allowable harvest, as demonstrated by "Caribou for All Time: A Délı̄ne Plan of Action", released on January 8, 2016 by the community of Délı̄ne to guide management of Bluenose-East caribou (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 462 lines 4-13).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The Government of Northwest Territories is currently in the process of establishing a total allowable harvest for Bluenose-East caribou in the Northwest Territories. During the NWMB Bathurst caribou hearing, the Government of Northwest Territories – Director of Wildlife explained that the Délı̄ne plan was not intended

- There is a strong commitment from the west Kitikmeot Hunters and Trappers Organizations to develop and implement community-led management tools for Bathurst caribou as an alternative to a government-implemented and enforced total allowable harvest (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 468 lines 1-10).
- Caribou calving grounds shift unpredictably and mobile protection measures are more flexible and responsive than designated protected areas (Kitikmeot Inuit Association written submission – Request for Adjournment, Annex 2).

### **North Slave Métis Alliance**

**Position:** Supports a temporary harvest moratorium (total allowable harvest of 0 caribou) (North Slave Metis Alliance written submission, p. 3).

#### **Evidence/Arguments:**

- The Bathurst population has continued to decline despite several ongoing initiatives to mitigate the trend (North Slave Metis Alliance written submission, p. 3).
- Northwest Territories Aboriginal harvester groups have agreed with the Government of Northwest Territories' decision to implement a temporary harvest restriction of 0 caribou, acknowledging the urgent conservation concern (North Slave Metis Alliance written submission, p. 4).
- A moratorium is the best way to give the Bathurst caribou herd an opportunity to recover and to ensure that future generations will have harvesting opportunities (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 510 lines 21-25).

### **Bathurst Inlet Developments Limited/Adventure Northwest Limited**

**Position:** Does not support a total allowable harvest because the current harvest level is not a threat to the herd (Bathurst Inlet Developments Limited/Adventure Northwest Limited written submission, p. 6).

#### **Evidence/Arguments:**

- Sport hunting can help the herd recover because hunters targeting caribou will often hunt wolves on the same trip, with an estimated harvest of up to 15 wolves per year (Bathurst Inlet Developments Limited/Adventure Northwest Limited written submission, p. 3; Public Hearing Transcript p. 544).
- The estimated 95% decline in the Bathurst population since its peak in the 1980s is inaccurate, because the herd referred to as "Bathurst" at that time has since been delineated into multiple separate herds (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 523-524).

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to be an alternative to a total allowable harvest; instead, it complements the overall total allowable harvest and assists Délı̄nę in managing its allocation of Bluenose-East caribou (See Bathurst Caribou Public Hearing Transcript, p. 502-504).

- The current harvest of Bathurst caribou by Nunavut hunters and sport hunters is too low to significantly affect the herd (Public Hearing Transcript, p. 522 lines 16-25).
- The Burnside and Umingmaktok Hunters and Trappers Organizations have already taking informal community-based management measures since 2010, including issuing a limited number of tags for sport hunts and ensuring a bulls-only harvest (Bathurst Inlet Developments/Adventure Northwest Limited written submission, p. 6).

### **Wek'èezhii Renewable Resources Board**

Position: Supports management actions that will protect the herd to enable future recovery (Wek'èezhii Renewable Resources Board written submission, p. 3).

#### Evidence/Arguments:

- Following its own public hearing process in February 2016, the Wek'èezhii Renewable Resources Board decided a total allowable harvest of 0 for Bathurst caribou should be implemented, and also recommended regular monitoring of the caribou and harvesting, the implementation of hunter education programs in all Tłjchq communities, and wolf management actions (Wek'èezhii Renewable Resources Board written submission, p. 2).
- Given the serious conservation concern with Bathurst caribou, all harvester groups must take any possible action to protect the herd (Wek'èezhii Renewable Resources Board written submission, p. 3.).

### **Public written submission – Yellowknives Dene First Nation**

Position: Supports the Government of Northwest Territories position, a total allowable harvest of 0 (Yellowknives Dene First Nation written submission, p. 1).

#### Evidence/Arguments:

- The success of caribou protection and conservation actions in the Northwest Territories depends on trans-boundary collaboration with Nunavut harvesters and management authorities (Yellowknives Dene First Nation written submission, p. 1).
- Without collaborative action, the herd may not recover in the foreseeable future (Yellowknives Dene First Nation written submission, p. 1).

### **Public written submission – Tłjchq Government**

Position: Supports a total allowable harvest of 0 (Tłjchq Government written submission, p. 1).

#### Evidence/Arguments:

- A ban on all hunting activities by users across the entire Bathurst range is needed to enable the herd's recovery (Tłjchq Government written submission, p. 1).









supporting the herd's recovery and ensuring future populations will have opportunities to harvest Bathurst caribou.

Bathurst Inlet Hunters and Trappers Organization: Do not support a total allowable harvest of 30. Local hunters have seen increasing predator populations (wolves and grizzly bears) over the past several years; elders have also commented on increasing predator populations in these areas. Instead of a total allowable harvest, other management options should be considered, such as coordinating hunting trips for wolves and grizzly bears, in order to promote traditional Inuit skills (such as harvesting on the land or preparing skins). Implementing a total allowable harvest of 30 will limit the sport hunts as a source of income for the seasonal residents of Bathurst Inlet and Umingmaktok, who have few ways to support their lifestyles on the land.

Kitikmeot Inuit Association/Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated: Support a temporary total allowable harvest of at least 70 caribou, because the difference between 30 caribou and 70 caribou is not significant from a conservation perspective. Any Board recommendation should specifically state that the recommended total allowable harvest be reserved exclusively for Inuit use.

After completing their deliberations, the Board made a decision to revise their initial decisions and recommendations and passed the following resolution:

*RESOLVED that the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB or Board):*

- 1. Pursuant to Section 5.6.16 and Subsection 5.6.17(b) of the Nunavut Agreement (Agreement), establish a total allowable harvest (TAH) of seventy (70) Bathurst caribou in the Nunavut Settlement Area (NSA) until such time as either (i) circumstances require a revision to that number, or (ii) a comprehensive plan for the management and protection of Bathurst caribou in the Kitikmeot Region (Bathurst Caribou Management Plan) is approved and implemented pursuant to Subsection 5.2.34(d)(i) and Sections 5.3.7 to 5.3.15 of the Agreement.*
- 2. Pursuant to Section 5.6.48 of the Agreement, establish a non-quota limitation of a males-only harvest for Bathurst caribou in the Kitikmeot Region;*
- 3. Recommend that the Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board, the Government of Nunavut – Department of Environment and affected Hunters and Trappers Organizations, with assistance as deemed necessary or advisable from other qualified organizations and/or relevant Qaujimaniliit, undertake and complete the development of a draft Bathurst Caribou Management Plan – including careful consideration of a potential predator control program – by no later than the one year anniversary of the implementation of the above-referenced total allowable harvest and non-quota limitation; and*
- 4. Upon submission of the completed draft Bathurst Caribou Management Plan for approval by the NWMB pursuant to Subsection 5.2.34(d)(i) and Section 5.3.3 of the Agreement, promptly hold a public hearing in the Kitikmeot Region in order to make a decision or decisions concerning the ongoing harvest management regime for the Bathurst caribou herd in the Nunavut Settlement Area.*

## 2. Rationale for the NWMB's decisions

In your November 4<sup>th</sup> 2016 letter disallowing the NWMB's initial decisions and recommendations, the reasons you provided included the following:

1. The Bathurst caribou herd has been in a state of substantial decline for several years and continues to decline. In these circumstances, a total allowable harvest of 70 caribou, especially with no sex-selectivity for males, is unsustainable.
2. A harvest of 30 caribou for Nunavut harvesters is appropriate and will have a minimal effect on Nunavummiut, because the Nunavut harvest is almost entirely for sport hunts, and Nunavummiut hunters rarely harvest caribou from the Bathurst herd.

After carefully considering the evidence and arguments presented by the hearing parties, and your reasons for disallowing the NWMB's initial decisions and recommendations, the NWMB is of the view that its final total allowable harvest decisions and recommendations reflect the best management approach for the Bathurst caribou herd. In acknowledgement of your concerns regarding the lack of a sex-selective non-quota limitation, the Board modified its initial decision to include a non-quota limitation of a males-only harvest, in order to support the herd's recovery. However, the Board maintains its position that a total allowable harvest of 70 caribou is the best option for the responsible management of the herd in order to meet Inuit needs while accounting for the conservation concern, along with the additional recommendations outlined above.<sup>1</sup>

**Consistent with the NWMB's most recent total allowable harvest decisions for other caribou herds (including Baffin Island caribou and Bluenose-East caribou) the NWMB has postponed making a decision on basic needs levels for Bathurst caribou until longstanding issues regarding this process have been resolved with co-management partners. Until a basic needs level decision can be made, it is the Board's position that the entire total allowable harvest for Bathurst caribou should be reserved for Inuit.**

## 3. Conclusion

As per Section 5.3.8 of the *Nunavut Agreement*, the NWMB is hereby forwarding its final decisions concerning the harvest management of Bathurst caribou for your review and consideration. The NWMB recognizes the importance of this decision to stakeholders across the entire range of Bathurst caribou and looks forward to your prompt reply and the timely completion of the *Nunavut Agreement* Article 5 decision-making process.

Should you or your officials have any questions or concerns regarding the contents of this letter, please contact the NWMB.

Sincerely,

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<sup>1</sup> The detailed rationale for the Board's decision is outlined in its initial October 7<sup>th</sup> 2016 decision letter to the Minister, attached.



Daniel Shewchuk  
Acting Chairperson of the  
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

**Attached: NWMB letter to Minister of Environment concerning initial decisions for Bathurst caribou harvest management.**

C.C. Ron Elliot, Executive Assistant to Honourable Joe Savikataaq, Government of Nunavut  
Drikus Gissing, Director of Wildlife Management, Government of Nunavut –  
Department of Environment





Association, to prepare for the implementation and management of this TAH. This will include: the management of the tags, the harvest reporting system, and sample collection.

My staff will also be available to provide technical and field support for the development of any necessary Regional Wildlife Organization (RWO) or HTO rules related to the management of tags and non-quota limitations such as harvest area restrictions and seasonal harvest restrictions that the RWO or HTOs may want to put in place.

Further, my Department will be happy to assist HTOs to finalize their Integrated Community Caribou Management Plan (ICCMP) for the conservation of the Bathurst caribou herd. It would be useful to have this ICCMP finalized by Fall 2017 to align with the territorial and inter-jurisdictional initiatives related to the management of this herd.

On-going communication, meetings, and the recent NWMB public hearing have shown that we all share concerns regarding the declining rate of the Bathurst Caribou herd. I hope that our collaborative work will continue in implementing this TAH and other management actions needed to foster the recovery of this caribou herd.

Best Regards,

Joe Savikataaq  
Minister

- C.C. Daniel Shewchuk, Acting Chairperson, Nunavut Wildlife Management Board;  
Paul Irngaut, Director of Wildlife and Environment, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated;  
Lynda Yonge, Director of Wildlife Division, Government of Northwest Territories  
Drikus Gissling, Wildlife Director, Government of Nunavut



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Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

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Ministre de l'Environnement

May 22, 2017

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Haluu, Munaqhiqatigiiktunut Havaqatigiinut,

### **Talvuuna: Nutaat maligahat pidjutauyut Qingaup tuktuut anguniaqnikkut munagidjutainun.**

Malikhugu ihivgiuqniq Nunavumi Umayuligiyit Katimayiit ihumaliuqtait, katimaqatigiblugit iligiit, uvalu ilitagiblugit tadjamin qanuginiit hapkua Qingaup tuktuut, Kavamatkut Nunavunmi piliuqtut uuminga TAH 30nik anguhaluinaqnik tuktuunik haffumanga tuktuunit. Kavamatkutlu ikayuqhugit aalakiit pinahuagutit tugaaqhimayut havauhigaanun Qingaup tuktuunik Munagidjutighainik Upalungaiyautit.

Attatutimut anguniagahat (TAH) hapkuninga Qingaup tuktuunik atuliqniaqtuq uvani Taaqirmun Aullaqtirvia 1, 2017. Kitikmeoni Avikturniani Huraanut Katimayiit tuniuhgakniaqtut uuminga TAH tahapkununga pidjutauyunun Anguniaqnikkut Ktimayiinun uvalu uniutilugitlu hapkua Avatiliqiyikkut ihumaliugutimingnik tikitinagu Immaktirvia 15, 2017. Una naunaiyudjutiniaqtuq tunighainiq ihuaqtumik qaffiuniit haviktait attatutinun HTOtkunun piqaqtut ilauqatigiiknikkut haffumunga Qingaup Tuktuunik TAHngit.

Havakvima aviktuqniitigut havaktut uvalu nunamingni Anguhiqqiyiit havaqatiginiqatit Munaqhiqatigiiktunut Havaqatigiinut iligiit, hapkualuaq Burnside Anguniaqtit Katimayiit uvalu Kuluktup





