

2015 Sahtú ʔekwé and Harvesting Workshop



The Sahtú ʔekwé and Harvesting Workshop was held at the Délı̨nę Cultural Centre, January 27-29, 2015. The Workshop was jointly hosted by the ʔehdzo Got'ine Gots'e Nákedı̨ (Sahtú Renewable Resources Board) and the Délı̨nę First Nation. Over 40 delegates representing community organizations as well as regional and territorial levels of government were invited from four land claim areas.

LIST OF WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

Daniel Tutcho, SYN, Colville Lake
Richard Kochon, RRC, Colville Lake
Sharon Tutcho, SERM, Colville Lake
Jimmy Dillon, SERM, Délı̨nę
Leonard Kenny, SRRB, Délı̨nę
Mandy Bayha, SYN, Délı̨nę
Michael Neyelle, RRC, Délı̨nę
Deborah Simmons, SRRB, Délı̨nę
Walter Bayha, Facilitator, Délı̨nę
Camilla Rabesca, SRRB, Fort Good Hope
George Barnaby, SRRB, Fort Good Hope
Gilbert Turo, SERM, Fort Good Hope
Mary Masuzumi, SYN, Fort Good Hope
Roger Boniface, RRC, Fort Good Hope
Douglas Esagok, WMAC, Inuvik
Jenn Lam, IGC, Inuvik
Catarina Owen, SRRB, Norman Wells
Heather Sayine-Crawford, ENR, Norman Wells
Jaryd McDonald, SYN, Norman Wells
Jeff Walker, SRRB, Norman Wells
Johnny McDonald, RRC, Norman Wells

Ray Ruben, ITC, Paulatuk
Charlie Apples, Tłı̨chǫ Nation, Tłı̨chǫ
Joseph Judas, Tłı̨chǫ Nation, Tłı̨chǫ
Louis Zoe, Tłı̨chǫ Nation, Tłı̨chǫ
Violet Mackenzie, Tłı̨chǫ Nation, Tłı̨chǫ
Sjoerd Van Der Wielen, Tłı̨chǫ Nation, Tłı̨chǫ
Frank Pokiak, IGC, Tuktoyaktuk
Angela Bavard, SYN, Tulı́t'a
Frederick Andrew, SERM, Tulı́t'a
Jean Polfus, SRRB, Tulı́t'a
Joe Hanlon, SRRB, Tulı́t'a
Frank Andrew, SRRB, Tulı́t'a
Kristen Yakeleya, SRRB, Tulı́t'a
Leon Andrew, SERM/SSI, Tulı́t'a
Lori Ann Lennie, SRRB, Tulı́t'a
Alicia Legat, Yellowknife
Leslie Allen, SRRB, Yellowknife
Paul Latour, SRRB, Yellowknife
Jack Bird, ENR, Yellowknife
Peter Sinkins, Parks Canada
Janet Winbourne, Sahtu Harvest Study

In addition to the invited delegates, 30 to 40 people attended the workshop as observers each day, participating in discussions about caribou and harvesting as well as feasts, drumming and story-telling events.

The Workshop was structured mostly as an adapted talking circle / discussion format, with individuals leading discussions on certain topics, and a lot of

involvement from the public. People were encouraged to speak in their first language or regional dialect; interpretation was provided by Violet Mackenzie and Michael Neyelle. The Workshop was audio-recorded so that transcripts of the proceedings could be prepared. There were also dedicated note-takers.

Following the meeting, the SRRB sent a letter to the minister with consensus recommendations from the participants.

WORKSHOP AGENDA

Day 1 – Understanding ʔekwé Ecology and Stewardship

Feeding the fire and opening prayer
Welcoming remarks
Histories of caribou in North America and beyond
Wolves and caribou had a meeting: understanding population cycles
Stewardship locally, across regions, and across Canada
Is there a crisis? Stewardship for the short and long term
Group photo!

Day 2 – Stewardship and Management

History of caribou management
Rebuilding relationships
Your planning process: community engagement in the NWT
Introduction to the Bluenose Caribou Management Plan
Action Planning for Bluenose Caribou
Approaches to research and monitoring
Feast and Caribou Storytelling Contest!

Day 3 – Harvesting

Traditional harvesting round
Harvesting in the present
Living by caribou law
Harvest studies and land claim agreements
Overview of the Sahtú Harvest Study and experiences in other regions
Knowledge, harvesting, and relationships
Closing remarks and prayer

WORKSHOP RESULTS

Many people spoke during the three-day Workshop. While the facilitators and leaders introduced topics, it was the active involvement of the many participants and observers that most strongly shaped the discussions. Their recounting of

personal stories and experiences enriched the dialogue and kept lines of communication open even when sensitive topics arose.

After the Workshop, the notes were reviewed for themes and key messages. The main points are presented in bullet form here. More detailed information is included in the transcripts.

Key messages: ***"We have to protect the caribou our way"***

- At this point, there are long histories and experience not just with caribou coming and going over time, but different management regimes
- Now, all levels of government are included in the management planning, from the community level up. There are opportunities to show leadership
- How to move on from history now? How do we move forward across land claim boundaries, with harvesters and all the different groups, and grounded in Dene information and traditions?
- There is concern that the same population decline and harvest restrictions that affected the Bathurst herd could soon happen with Bluenose caribou
- Need to look to the future – to make sure caribou are there for future generations
- Caribou makes its own living; Dene need to talk about their actions and actions of others
- It's time to do something, to decide on the right actions; come up with some strong statements and recommendations
- What does it mean to be good Dene people? Go back to what the elders know and rediscover the Dene way of doing things
- Dene role is to take good care of the caribou and maintain their special relationship with caribou
- People are here to discover the best ways of managing for the herds/protecting the caribou
- Stewardship should be rooted in Dene culture and traditional laws – need to listen to and learn from the elders
- Any restrictions, rules or laws need to come from the people – leaders want to hear from people what they should do
- Everyone has to be in it together for it to work; need all areas to be treated the same
- Need to communicate better (with each other and other regions)
- Important to work on education
- It's important to share food and share information
- Maintain connections by being out on the land and using the trails
- Teach the youth; help them find a way back to their culture

- Language is important; work on developing Dene language tools about caribou to help spread TK and better educate hunters
- Hunting methods have changed – need to emphasize respectful harvesting methods
- Harvest management is not just numbers but timing and areas for harvesting too
- Need to look at more areas than just harvest management
- Consider having monitors at calving grounds
- People can use other foods; shift to other areas/other traditional foods or more abundant foods (like muskox)

Key message: *“It’s time to make some tough decisions”*

- Need to decide what to do about predators.
- Need to talk about all the different things that are affecting caribou.
- How to do monitoring, with Sahtu dene and with people from other areas.
- How to implement allocations? Tags?
- How to enforce restrictions across all communities/all regions fairly?
- Need to come up with a set of principles to guide decisions on allocation.
- How to deal with resistance to harvest reporting and monitoring?
- How to maintain the 20:80 cow:bull ratio?

Key message: *Traditional Laws*

- Let some parts of the land recover
- Let the caribou move where they need to – let them get to their grazing grounds before harvesting
- Let some pass in the fall
- Don’t shoot pregnant cows
- Don’t shoot leaders/breeders
- Don’t waste
- Track wounded caribou
- Don’t overharvest – only take what you need and share the caribou
- Don’t chase caribou with skidoos.