

“We have been living with the caribou all our lives...”



A report on information recorded during community meetings for:

‘Taking Care of Caribou - the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East Barren-Ground Caribou Herds Management Plan’

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Advisory Committee for
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About the ACCWM:

The Advisory Committee for Cooperation on Wildlife Management was established to exchange information, help develop cooperation and consensus, and make recommendations regarding wildlife and wildlife habitat issues that cross land claim and treaty boundaries. The committee consists of Chairpersons (or alternate appointees) of the Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT), Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board, ʔehdzo Got'Inę Gots'ę Nákedı (Sahtú Renewable Resources Board), Wek'èezhii Renewable Resources Board, Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board, Tuktut Nogait National Park Management Board, and Nunavut Wildlife Management Board.

About this report:

The ACCWM has developed a plan for the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East barren-ground caribou herds, addressing the needs to: develop a cooperative approach to managing for the herds; protect the habitat in the herds' range; and make decisions on the shared harvests in an open and fair manner. The plan was developed in consultation with most of the communities that harvest from the three herds. The ultimate goal was to ensure that there are caribou today and for future generations. The Management Plan is a working document used in developing specific management tools such as Action Plans.

This report is a companion document to the Management Plan that provides further community knowledge. A second report summarizing scientific knowledge about these caribou herds also supports and informs the Management Plan.

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Cover – Caribou antlers at sunset in Sahtú, Robert Kershaw; p. 19 – Community engagement meeting in Tsiigehtchic, GRRB; p. 63 – Meeting in Aklavik, ENR, GNWT; p. 83 – Training session with Kugluktuk harvesters, Mathieu Dumond, GN; p. 127 – Caribou feeding in Bluenose-West range, Dave Stewart, Inuvialuit Communication Society.

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Executive Summary

The Advisory Committee for Cooperation on Wildlife Management (ACCWM) developed a plan for the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East barren-ground caribou herds to address caribou management and stewardship over the long term. The plan is called '***Taking Care of Caribou – the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East Barren-ground Caribou Herds Management Plan***'. It is a working document used in developing specific management tools such as Action Plans.

The process to develop the plan involved meeting with most of the communities that harvest from the three herds. Between 2007 and 2013 a series of public engagements were held in communities of the Northwest Territories and the western portion of the Kitikmeot Region of Nunavut. Seventeen communities in six land claim areas took part in the meetings:

- Inuvialuit Settlement Region – Tuktoyaktuk, Aklavik, Inuvik, Paulatuk
- Gwich'in Settlement Area – Aklavik, Inuvik, Tsiigehtchic, Fort McPherson
- Sahtú Settlement Area – Colville Lake, Fort Good Hope, Norman Wells, Tulít'a, Délı̄ne
- Wek' èezhii (Tłı̄chǫ Region) – Gamètì, Whatì, Behchokǫ
- Dehcho Region – Wrigley (Pedzeh Ki First Nation), Fort Simpson (Liidlii Kue First Nation)
- Kitikmeot Region – Kugluktuk, Nunavut.

Meetings were also held with members of the Northwest Territories Métis Nation and the North Slave Métis Alliance. Other members of the public were engaged through direct involvement of interested users groups and making the draft plan available online.

This report is intended to be a companion document to the Management Plan. The information presented here was recorded by note-takers during the meetings and should not be seen as a complete record of the traditional and community knowledge that exists about these caribou. Instead, we suggest that the report be used as a reference for the Management Plan – a source that contains a fuller account of the information that was recorded during the engagement sessions.

Because the engagement process was under the direction of each of the ACCWM members, it differed somewhat from region to region. This resulted in differing quantities and qualities of information that were available to include in this report. Readers will find that a lot of the information comes from four regions: the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, the Gwich'in Settlement Area, the Sahtú Settlement Area, and the western portion of the Kitikmeot Region of Nunavut (Kugluktuk). Due to lower engagement levels there was less information that resulted from the Wek' èezhii (Tłı̄chǫ Region), the Dehcho Region, and Métis organizations.

There are four main sections to this report, based on focus questions used during the engagement sessions. Within each of these four sections information has been organized into sub-topics and is presented by region. Some of the main themes that arose in the four main sections of this report were:

1. *Have you seen any changes in the herds?*

- Caribou go through natural cycles, and populations tend to come and go, or increase and decrease, then recover on their own over time – these changes are not unusual to Aboriginal people
- Harvesters did not see evidence of large declines that the scientific surveys indicated in recent years
- Some caribou migration patterns and timing have changed
- There have been some shifts in caribou distribution and possibly calving areas
- Herds were further away from many communities around the time of the engagements
- Predators increased in number and were thought to be impacting caribou populations
- People have seen changes in weather and climate conditions, such as increases in fires and icing events, changes in break-up/freeze-up timings, etc.
- Caribou habitat has increasingly been impacted by development activities and human disturbance
- Muskoxen have been expanding their range and could be competing with caribou in some areas.

2. *What changes how you harvest caribou?*

- Overall, harvest levels are thought to have gone down, however harvest pressure did increase in a few areas
- Increasing harvesting costs (e.g., the price of gas and distance to travel) have had a big influence on harvesting patterns in most communities
- In some areas, harvest restrictions have impacted peoples' ability to meet their needs and to share their harvests with others
- Harvest restrictions impacted traditional harvesting practices in some areas, such as influencing where and when harvesting occurred
- While increased road access and new technology have tended to make harvesting easier, people have also restricted their harvesting because of conservation concerns.

3. *What information is needed for management? How can your knowledge be best used in management?*

- Traditional knowledge has played an important role in sustaining caribou
- Traditional knowledge needs to be more fully researched and its use promoted in management
- Good management needs to accommodate both traditional/community knowledge and scientific knowledge
- Harvest regulations need to accommodate traditional knowledge and practices
- Education may achieve conservation better than imposing restrictions
- Education should include messages about conservation, as well as traditional knowledge and harvesting practices

- Research needs to address the cause of caribou population decline or cycles, ‘inter-herd’ movements, cumulative impacts to habitat, predation rates and the impact of predation on herds
- There is a need for harvest monitoring programs and the information needs to be shared with other communities and other regions
- Local people would like greater involvement in many aspects of caribou research and monitoring and Management Planning
- Better communication and cooperation between regions and between communities and government is needed.

4. *If management actions limit the harvest of caribou, how should the herd be shared?*

- Management needs to be cooperative and any negotiations based on respect
- Stricter harvesting regulations may be necessary, but Management Planning will need to consider how people will meet their needs under those conditions
- Enforcement of harvest restrictions is necessary and will require resources
- Past harvest restrictions didn’t seem fair within communities, between communities, and between regions
- Hardship caused by hunting restrictions affected people unequally; quotas must be fair and consider or accommodate regional effects
- A consistent approach to harvest restrictions and management is needed across all neighbouring regions
- Communities will need to define and act on commercial harvesting
- Limiting industry and protecting habitat need to be part of Management Planning
- Communities want to see restrictions on activities that impact caribou negatively, such as low level flying, seismic activity, mining exploration and development, pollution and garbage
- There was some concern that sport hunting activities could be negatively impacting herds by removing prime bulls
- The Management Plan will need to be adaptive, to change as herd size changes.

Throughout the report, there are some regional differences that are notable. However, for many topics, there were also strong similarities in the information recorded across most or all regions. It is important to note that this report can only provide information that represents a snapshot in time from the people that took part in the community engagements between 2007 and 2013. Clearly, as conditions change, the information in this report will not remain current. Continuing research and dialogue with these communities and other interested user groups will be the best way of ensuring relevant and current information can be used in caribou Management Planning.

Acknowledgements

Hundreds of people attended the community engagement sessions conducted during the development of *'Taking Care of Caribou – the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East Barren-ground Caribou Herds Management Plan'*. They shared their time, knowledge and experience with the ACCWM with a goal of creating a plan that would help ensure that caribou would be sustained for future generations. We would like to acknowledge and appreciate their input and interest.

The ACCWM would also like to thank the members of the Bluenose Caribou Management Plan Working Group, who dedicated significant time and energy into drafting the plan and ensuring that community voices were represented at all stages in its development.

Introduction

This report presents information that was recorded during community meetings to draft ***'Taking Care of Caribou: the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East Barren-ground Caribou Herds Management Plan'***.¹ Meetings were held over six years, in 17 communities, in six land claim areas, with people that know about and harvest these caribou. During this process, many different voices and perspectives were heard about caribou, their habitat, the issues facing caribou herds and harvesters today, and how best to manage actions and conditions that impact caribou. This information strongly shaped the Management Plan and is included in it as much as possible, but many details could not be included there. This report was written as a companion document to be used with the Management Plan. There is also a scientific report which accompanies the plan that includes results from scientific studies about these caribou.²

Background

The Caribou

Barren-ground caribou occupy a large part of northern mainland Northwest Territories (NWT) and Nunavut (NU). They are named by Inuit, Inuvialuit, Gwich'in, Dene and Métis peoples in their languages as a single kind of animal.³ Names for barren-ground caribou in the range of the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West and Bluenose-East herds include:

- tuktut (Inuvialuktun and Inuit)
- vadzaih (Teet'it and Gwichya Gwich'in)
- ɔekwé/ɔepe/ɔedə (Dene of the Sahtú Region)
- ekwò (Tłıchɔ)
- etthén (Dënesųłíné)
- nódi/nodi (South Slave Dene).

¹ Advisory Committee for Cooperation on Wildlife Management. 2014. Taking Care of Caribou: the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East barren-ground caribou herds management plan. Yellowknife, NT. Available from ACCWM members, ENR and most member board websites.

² Department of Environment and Natural Resources. 2014. Technical Report on the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East Barren-Ground Caribou Herds. Supplement to *Taking Care of Caribou: Management Plan for the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East Barren-Ground Caribou Herds*. Government of the Northwest Territories, Yellowknife, NT. Available from ACCWM members and on ENR website.

³ There are also complex naming systems within that concept that demonstrate knowledge of social relationships within herds (e.g., words for bull, young bull, pregnant female, barren female, etc.)

Starting around the 1960s, these barren-ground caribou were considered a single herd and referred to by scientists as the 'Bluenose caribou herd' based on a known calving ground near Bluenose Lake, NWT. Since the mid-1990s, new scientific information and analyses have identified three distinct subpopulations, now known as the Cape Bathurst herd, the Bluenose-West herd, and Bluenose-East herd within the range of the historical 'Bluenose herd'. The three herds were named after the traditional calving areas that they use in June. More information on how distinct calving grounds, migration patterns, habitat use patterns, and relationships between individuals are used by biologists to understand how caribou herds are structured is included in the scientific report that accompanies the Management Plan.

Understanding changes in caribou populations can be difficult. However, traditional and scientific knowledge agree that caribou numbers generally cycle up and down over decades – this is defined as a 'population cycle'. The length of the phases varies, particularly the length of time that a population stays at a low level. Scientific evidence, the journals of missionaries and trading post managers, and traditional knowledge all suggest that barren-ground caribou populations go through cycles that are 30-60 years long. The cycle itself is not 'neat and tidy', nor is the cycle the same each time or easily predicted. The causes for these population cycles in caribou are not well understood, but likely result from several factors such as habitat quality and quantity, predator populations, climate, parasites and disease.

The People

Due to their large range, these caribou cross through many regions over the course of a year and are commonly harvested by a variety of people including Inuit, Inuvialuit, Gwich'in, Dene, Métis, and non-Aboriginal harvesters. There are long-standing relationships between the people and the caribou of these regions. History, culture, knowledge and experience have shaped and continue to inform these relationships as well as understandings of caribou and land and resource management today. While the location and movement of caribou does change over time, generally, these caribou are known about and harvested in the following communities and regions:

- The Cape Bathurst herd usually migrates through two settlement areas/regions and is typically harvested by four communities in the course of its annual cycle: Aklavik, Inuvik, Tsiigehtchic and Tuktoyaktuk;
- The Bluenose-West herd usually migrates through three settlement areas/regions and is typically harvested by 13 communities: Aklavik, Fort McPherson, Tsiigehtchic, Inuvik, Tuktoyaktuk, Paulatuk, Colville Lake, Fort Good Hope, Norman Wells, Tulít'a, Déljñę, Ulukhaktok, and Sachs Harbour;
- The Bluenose-East herd migrates through four settlement areas/regions in the Northwest Territories and into the western portion of the Kitikmeot Region, Nunavut. The herd may be harvested by nine communities: Wrigley, Norman Wells, Tulít'a, Déljñę, Whatì, Gamètì, Behchokò, Paulatuk, and Kugluktuk.

These caribou may also be harvested by people from other communities with rights to access the herd. These communities and regions are shown in relation to the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West and Bluenose-East caribou range in Figure 1.



Figure 1: Map showing communities and land claim areas that have knowledge of the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West and Bluenose-East barren-ground caribou herds. Caribou range data are from ENR, based on information from collared cows, 1996-2008. (Nagy, J., D. Johnson, N. Larter, M. Campbell, A. Derocher, A. Kelly, M. Dumond, D. Allaire, and B. Croft. 2011. Subpopulation structure of caribou (*Rangifer tarandus* L.) in Arctic and sub-Arctic Canada. *Ecological Applications* 21(6), 2011: 2334-2348).

The Plan

In 2005, the herd estimate results from aerial photography indicated that the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East caribou had declined. After a series of community meetings in 2005/06, the Wildlife Management Advisory Council (WMAC_NWT), the Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board (GRRB), and the ʔehdzo Got'jne Gots'ę Nákedı (Sahtú Renewable Resources Board [SRRB]) recommended harvest restrictions to the Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) Minister. All resident, non-resident, and commercial harvesting stopped in March 2006 in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region (ISR), and in October 2006 in the Gwich'in Settlement Area (GSA) and the Sahtú Settlement Area (SSA).

Based on recommendations from the Boards, ENR flew aerial photographic surveys to estimate the number of each of the three herds again in 2006. The WMAC and GRRB made further recommendations to restrict Aboriginal harvesting of the Cape Bathurst (no hunting) and the Bluenose-West (tag required) herds. These were implemented in September 2007. The SRRB held a Public Hearing in November 2007 to determine whether a Total Allowable Harvest for the Bluenose-West herd was warranted and has since made recommendations on a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) for the SSA to the Minister of ENR. These recommendations in the SSA and ISR included changes to the barren-ground caribou hunting zones to better reflect the geographic distribution of each of the three herds. Resident and non-resident hunting last occurred in the Wek' èezhii (Tłıchq Region) in 2009.

A “Caribou Summit” was held in Inuvik January 2007 with representation from all the users and Aboriginal governments across the NWT and parts of Nunavut. The goal was to identify priorities for action over the next four years to help caribou herds recover. One of the top priorities identified by users was the need for an updated Management Plan – a priority that had also been identified in previous meetings, including an impacts workshop in Inuvik, the SRRB public hearing, and during community consultations.⁴

In 2008, the Advisory Committee for Cooperation on Wildlife Management (ACCWM) was established to “exchange information, help develop cooperation and consensus and make recommendations regarding wildlife and wildlife habitat issues that cross land claim and treaty boundaries.” The ACCWM⁵ consists of the Chairpersons (or alternate appointees) of:

- Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT) (WMAC_NWT);
- Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board (GRRB);

⁴ Results from the impacts workshop and Caribou Summit are available in two summary reports: 1. Walking Together, Finding Solutions for the Future: A workshop on impacts caused by the decline in the Bluenose-West and Cape Bathurst barren-ground caribou herds. November 1-2, 2006, Inuvik, NWT. 2. Caribou Forever... Our Heritage, Our Responsibility: NWT barren-ground caribou summit. January 23-26, 2007. Inuvik, NWT.

⁵ The Dehcho First Nations organization is part of the Working Group. There is an outstanding invitation for them to join the ACCWM.

- ʔehdzo Got'ıne Gots'ę Nákedı (Sahtú Renewable Resources Board [SRRB]);
- Wek'èezhii Renewable Resources Board (WRRB);
- Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board (KRWB);
- Tuktut Nogait National Park Management Board (TNNPMB); and
- Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB).

The ACCWM decided to develop a plan for the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East barren-ground caribou herds to address management issues over the long term. The ACCWM identified the need to:

- Develop a cooperative approach to managing for the herds;
- Protect the habitat in the herds' range; and
- Make decisions on the shared harvests in an open and fair manner.

The ACCWM formed “The Bluenose Caribou Management Plan Working Group” (BCMPWG or the Working Group) to help develop the plan. The Working Group is responsible for:

- Preparing the draft plan for herds and their habitat for recommendation to the ACCWM;
- Recommending an approach with respect to the shared responsibility for implementing the plan; and
- Promoting and strengthening communication and sharing of information among all groups interested in, or responsible for, the management of these herds and their habitat.

The Bluenose Caribou Management Plan Working Group is made up of representatives of:

- Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT);
- Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board;
- ʔehdzo Got'ıne Gots'ę Nákedı (Sahtú Renewable Resources Board);
- Wek'èezhii Renewable Resources Board;
- Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board;
- Kugluktuk Hunters and Trappers Association;
- Dehcho First Nations;
- Tuktut Nogait National Park Management Board;
- Tłıchq Government;
- Environment and Natural Resources (ENR), GNWT;
- Department of the Environment, Government of Nunavut;
- Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB); and
- Parks Canada.

The Management Plan is now complete. It is called “***Taking Care of Caribou***” and describes:

- Principles and goals for taking care of the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East caribou herds;
- The need for a plan and the importance of working together;

- Current population estimates and trends;
- Roles and responsibilities of the wildlife co-management boards and agencies;
- Information required to effectively take care of the herds;
- How to make management decisions that can impact herds;
- A framework for determining what management actions should be taken; and
- How to communicate with communities, harvesters, youth, and others.

The Process

Between 2007 and 2013, meetings to gather information for the Management Plan were held in the following regions and communities in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut:

- Inuvialuit Settlement Region – Tuktokyaktuk, Aklavik, Inuvik, Paulatuk
- Gwich'in Settlement Area – Aklavik, Inuvik, Tsiigehtchic, Fort McPherson
- Sahtú Settlement Area – Colville Lake, Fort Good Hope, Norman Wells, Tulít'a, Délıne
- Wek' èezhii (Tłıchǝ Region) – Gamètı, Whatı, Behchokǝ
- Dehcho Region – Wrigley (Pedzeh Ki First Nation), Fort Simpson (Liidlii Kue First Nation)
- Kitikmeot Region – Kugluktuk.

The Management Plan was drafted using community input received during three main 'Rounds' of engagement. Each member/Board represented at the Working Group decided how the meetings and engagement would take place in their region, and so the process differed somewhat from region to region. The general approach to the engagements is described below; exceptions to this approach are explained later in this section.

The main purpose for **Round 1** engagements was to:

- Share the best available information on the current status of the herds. This included scientific information, traditional knowledge and harvester observations;
- Identify the key issues and concerns from each community's perspective (e.g., What do you think is happening to the herds? Why?);
- Discuss possible solutions (e.g., What can we do to address these issues and concerns? How can we include this in a plan?);
- Outline the next steps in developing a plan.

The Working Group had prepared a number of questions to focus discussions for the first round of community engagements. Similar questions were posed in most regions and communities to help identify the key issues that needed to be included in the Management Plan. The focus questions identified by the Working Group were:

- Have you seen any changes in the herds?
- What changes how you harvest caribou?
- What information is needed to manage the herd – and how can your knowledge be best used to manage the herd?

- If management actions limit the harvest of caribou, how should the herd be shared amongst different settlement areas?

It was emphasized that people needed to think about tough questions such as:

- When do we need to take management actions? and
- When can we remove the restrictions?

There were also additional questions or input on other topics that were provided by participants.

The information that was heard in the first round of engagements was used to prepare a draft Management Plan. Once this draft plan was ready, it went through two more rounds of community engagement that were intended to:

- Provide communities with an opportunity to review the content of the drafts and comment on how well the Working Group had captured previous community input, and
- Receive feedback on the draft plan being presented.

Information received during **Round 2** engagements was used to further revise the plan and then produce a revised or second draft Management Plan. **Round 3** was the last round of community engagement done; this was an opportunity for community members to review the revised draft, ask questions and provide feedback.

During **Round 3**, the revised draft was also released for public review online and in public meetings hosted by Environment and Natural Resources. It was distributed directly to over 100 key audiences in the NWT that included Aboriginal governments and organizations in non-land claim areas, resident harvesters, as well as other interested parties (see **Appendix A** for a distribution list). These audiences were invited to review the revised draft and submit comments; offers to hold meetings on request were also made. During this round of review, the draft plan was also reviewed by government and made available on ENR's website for the general public to review and comment. The major steps of community engagement involved in drafting the Management Plan are diagrammed in Figure 2.

After this last stage of review, the plan was finalized by the Working Group, and submitted to the ACCWM for review. After this assessment, each co-management board of the ACCWM then completed their individual procedures as laid out in their respective land claim for review and approval of the final plan. After consideration and acceptance by the Minister, the approved plan is to be implemented by Government and co-management partners.

Because the community engagement process was at the discretion of the individual working group members, it varied somewhat between regions. Following Figure 2 is a brief description of how the process unfolded in each region. A summary table in **Appendix A** lists details of when and where meetings were held, what type of meetings they were, how many people participated in the meetings, and what information resulted.

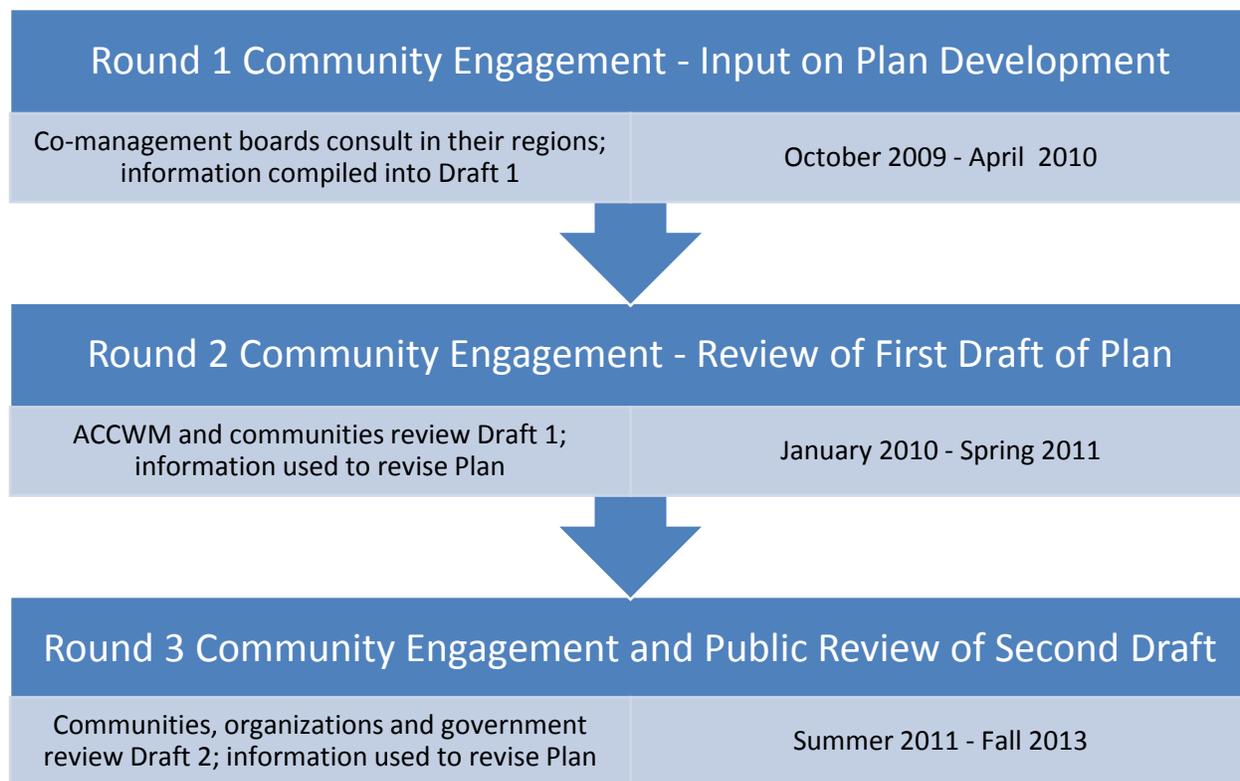


Figure 2: Flow chart showing the community engagement process in developing 'Taking Care of Caribou – the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East Barren-Ground Caribou Herds Management Plan'.

Inuvialuit Settlement Region (ISR)

For **Round 1** of the community engagements, meetings were held in four Inuvialuit communities in October and November 2009. The ISR communities visited were Tuktoyaktuk, Aklavik, Paulatuk and Inuvik. The IGC and WMAC decided to not do engagement in Ulukhaktok and Sachs Harbour as part of the Management Plan; while these communities are provided tags, any remaining tags are usually reallocated by the Inuvialuit Game Council. The objectives of the meetings were:

- To review the current status of the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East herds of barren-ground caribou;
- To hear people's concerns and opinions as to what is happening with barren-ground caribou in the ISR; and
- To discuss what people would like to have included in a Management Plan for the herds.

Comments from those community meetings were documented in similar summary reports for both regions.⁶ School tours were also done in Aklavik, Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk during Round 1.

For **Round 2** of the ISR community engagements, the first draft Management Plan was sent to the Hunters and Trappers Committees (HTCs) for comment. Meetings were held in Inuvik, Aklavik, Tuktoyaktuk and Paulatuk in January and February 2011. During Round 2 engagements the focus of the meetings was on discussing thresholds and management actions in the plan.

At the start of **Round 3** engagements, a public meeting was held in Inuvik in August 2011. For this meeting, resident hunters were the specific target audience (mail-outs with meeting information and a brochure were sent to all hunters in the Inuvik region) but all members of the public were invited, and Inuvialuit, Gwich'in and non-Aboriginal harvesters were in attendance. Summary meetings notes were provided to the ACCWM and the Working Group for use in further development of the draft.

In late 2012, the WMAC (NWT) informed the ACCWM of their decision to conduct community meetings on the second or revised draft Management Plan. **Round 3** meetings were held in the four mainland ISR communities between April and June 2013. The meetings were arranged with the HTCs, but were advertised and open to the public. During each meeting a presentation was made by WMAC (NWT), and comments on the draft plan were recorded. These meetings differed a little from other Round 3 engagements in that people were asked the following four questions:

- Please describe your understanding of barren-ground caribou movements on the landscape, including seasonal ranges (summer, fall, winter and spring), calving grounds, and migration routes. How has this changed over time?
- Based on the distinction of three herds, how much exchange occurs between them? How often does the exchange occur? When and where does the exchange happen?
- 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?

Summary meetings notes were provided to the ACCWM and the Working Group for use in further development of the draft.

⁶ Developing a Management Plan for the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East Barren-Ground Caribou Herds: Summary of phase 1 community engagements in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region. December 2009. Available from ACCWM members.

Gwich'in Settlement Area (GSA)

For **Round 1** of the engagements, meetings were held in four Gwich'in communities between October and December 2009. The GSA communities visited were Aklavik, Inuvik, Tsiigehtchic and Fort McPherson. The objectives of the meetings were:

- To review the current status of the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East herds of barren-ground caribou;
- To hear people's concerns and opinions as to what is happening with barren-ground caribou in the GSA; and
- To discuss what people would like to have included in a Management Plan for the herds.

Comments from those community meetings were documented in similar summary reports for both regions.⁷ School tours were also done in GSA communities in Round 1.

For **Round 2** of the community engagements, public meetings were held with the Gwich'in Renewable Resource Councils (RRCs) in February 2011 by the GRRB to review the first draft Management Plan and receive feedback. During Round 2 engagements all sections of the draft plan were reviewed for comment and feedback. There was additional discussion and request for input on thresholds and management actions in the plan. RRCs provided comments formally following the meetings, and the plan was reviewed by the Gwich'in Tribal Council, who provided written comment.

At the start of **Round 3** engagements, a public meeting was held in Inuvik in August 2011. For this meeting, resident hunters were the specific target audience (mail-outs with meeting information and a brochure were sent to all hunters in the Inuvik region) but all members of the public were invited, and Inuvialuit, Gwich'in and non-Aboriginal harvesters were in attendance. Summary meetings notes were provided to the ACCWM and the Working Group for use in further development of the draft. Further **Round 3** engagements were done in the GSA in December 2011 by the GRRB. The second or revised draft Management Plan was reviewed with RRCs and GRRB and meetings were also open to the public. Comments were recorded during meetings and provided to the ACCWM and the Working Group. The RRCs and GRRB also responded to the draft formally in writing following these meetings.

Sahtú Settlement Area (SSA)

Round 1 community engagements were held in Normal Wells, Tulít'a, Colville Lake, Fort Good Hope, and Déljñę in December 2009. The objectives of the meetings were:

⁷ Developing a Management Plan for the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East Barren-Ground Caribou Herds: Summary of phase 1 community engagements in the Gwich'in Settlement Area. December 2009. Available from ACCWM members.

- To review the current status of the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East herds of barren-ground caribou;
- To hear people’s concerns and opinions as to what is happening with barren-ground caribou in the GSA; and
- To discuss what people would like to have included in a Management Plan for the herds.

A summary report was produced with information documented during these meetings.⁸

Only one **Round 2** community engagement occurred in the Sahtú. This was a public meeting held in Déljñę in March 2011, to develop a Management Plan for the herds. Comments were recorded during the meeting and provided to the ACCWM and the Working Group.

Round 3 engagements took place in Tulít’a, Colville Lake, Déljñę, Fort Good Hope and Norman Wells between August and October 2011. These meetings were public meetings held by ENR to review the revised or second draft Management Plan. ENR also did presentations and held discussions in five schools of the Sahtú to engage high school students. Comments were recorded during all meetings and provided to the ACCWM and the Working Group.

Wek’ èezhii (Tłjchq Region)

No **Round 1** engagements were done in the Wek’ èezhii (Tłjchq Region). This was at the request of the Tłjchq Government, as they had recently started dealing with a decline in Bathurst caribou at that point in time and were concerned that having meetings about the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East herds could cause confusion.

For **Round 2**, meetings were held in Gamètì, Whatì, and Behchokò in February 2011.⁹ This round of engagements included information that was presented and discussed with other regions in Round 1, as well as a presentation of and an opportunity for community members to review the first draft Management Plan. The discussions focused for the most part on factors affecting the herds, and less on thresholds or management actions that were discussed in Round 2 in other regions. Comments were recorded during meetings and a summary provided to the ACCWM and the Working Group. The Tłjchq Government also provided a formal written response to the draft.

In November 2011, **Round 3** engagements occurred in the Whatì, and Behchokò. These were largely information sessions on the second or revised draft Management Plan that had been

⁸ Developing a Management Plan for the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East Barren-Ground Caribou Herds: Summary of phase 1 community engagements in the Sahtú Settlement Area. December 2009. Available from ACCWM members.

⁹ Because Wekweètì harvesting is almost exclusively Bathurst caribou, the WRRB and Tłjchq Government jointly agreed to not conduct engagements in that community.

submitted to government. Aircraft mechanical difficulties prevented the meeting scheduled for Gamèti from taking place.

Dehcho Region

No **Round 1** or **Round 2** engagements occurred in the Dehcho Region. It was not possible to arrange full engagement with Dehcho First Nations because meeting fees requested of the WRRB could not be accommodated within the available budgeted funds. In January 2012, meetings were held with Pehdzeh Ki First Nation in Wrigley, and the Liidlii Kue First Nation Harvester's Committee (Denedeh Resources Committee) in Fort Simpson to review the second or revised draft Management Plan. Comments were recorded during meetings and summaries provided to the ACCWM and the Working Group.

Kugluktuk, Nunavut

In February and March 2007 a workshop was held in the community of Kugluktuk, in the western portion of the Kitikmeot region, Nunavut. Because Kugluktuk residents rely nearly exclusively on the Bluenose-East and Dolphin-Union herds, the information presented focused on these caribou. The workshop was to provide an opportunity for participants to share their knowledge of the caribou herds, as well as discuss actions that could promote the recovery of the caribou herds and help the community during this period of low caribou availability.

The workshop was organized with three main topics:

- Fact finding and discussion about the current situation and factors that could influence this situation;
- Suggestion and discussion of actions that could either promote the recovery of the caribou herds or help the community to deal with the scarcity of caribou;
- Assign priorities to the various actions proposed.

Many of the topics covered during the workshop paralleled those of the NWT community engagements. A report summarizing the findings of this workshop was published and was provided to the Working Group and most members of the ACCWM to help inform the drafting of the Management Plan.¹⁰

In February 2010 a 'Public Hearing on Caribou Herds Decline' was held in Kugluktuk. During this meeting, the same focus questions used for **Round 1** community engagements in the ISR, GSA and SSA were asked. The objectives of the meetings were:

¹⁰ Western Kitikmeot Caribou Workshop, February 28 to March 2, 2007. Kugluktuk, NU. Available from ACCWM members.

- To review the current status of the Bluenose-West, Bluenose-East, Ahiak, and Dolphin-Union herds of barren-ground caribou;
- To hear people’s concerns and opinions as to what is happening with barren-ground caribou in the region; and
- To discuss what people would like to have included in a Management Plan for the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East herds.

A summary report was produced with information documented during these meetings.¹¹

For **Round 2**, no community engagements took place, but meetings of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board were provided. In August 2011 **Round 3** community engagements were done in the Kitikmeot Region with the Kugluktuk HTO. During this engagement the draft plan was reviewed section by section by the HTO. Comments were recorded during meetings and a summary provided to the ACCWM and the Working Group by the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board.

Other Contributing Regions and Organizations

Meetings were held with representatives of the Northwest Territories Métis Nation and the North Slave Métis Alliance during Round 3 of the engagements. That information has been included in this report along with what was heard during the regional community meetings. Numerous individuals and organizations were also provided with opportunities to comment on draft versions of the plan. During the public review phase of the plan, ENR’s distribution list included more than 100 organizations (see **Appendix A**), and the draft Management Plan was also available for public comment on the ENR website since June 2011. In addition, ENR did a mail-out of a summary brochure on the recommended plan inviting the public to submit comments on the plan. ENR held meetings in Inuvik, Tulít’a, Colville Lake, Déljñę and Norman Wells during this round of engagements also.

Written feedback on the plan was provided by the following organizations:

- Environment and Natural Resources, GNWT
- Gwich’in Renewable Resources Councils (Ehdiitat, Gwichya Gwich'in, Nihtat, and Tetlit)
- Gwich’in Renewable Resources Board
- Gwich’in Tribal Council
- Inuvialuit Game Council
- Kugluktuk Hunters and Trappers Organization
- North Slave Métis Alliance

¹¹ Developing a Management Plan for the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East Barren-Ground Caribou Herds: Summary of phase 1 community engagements in Nunavut. February 2010. Available from ACCWM members.

- Northwest Territories Métis Nation
- Northwest Territories Wildlife Federation
- Parks Canada
- Tłı̨chǫ Government
- Tuktut Nogait National Park Management Board
- Wek' èezhìi Renewable Resources Board
- Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT).

Written feedback was incorporated into the Management Plan, but is not included in this report. Readers wishing to review any of the written materials are requested to contact the ACCWM.

Limitations

This report does not attempt to include all the information held in traditional and community knowledge sources in the range of the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West and Bluenose-East barren-ground caribou herds. It is strictly a compilation of what was recorded during community meetings that were held between 2007 and 2013. We recognize that the communities and cultures that were asked about their knowledge of caribou for the Management Plan have a long-term relationship with the caribou, and are able to provide information and insights that go back many years. Because much of this information is passed down through oral histories, relatively little has been recorded and printed in reports. It was not possible to undertake research into these topics in all these regions and communities as part of the Management Planning process. However, we acknowledge that there is a strong need to support both the continuation of traditional knowledge systems as well as further effort put into documentation, so that it can be more readily shared with other people with an interest in caribou.

Further limitations include:

- Because the community engagement sessions were recorded by note-taking, the information should be seen as only a summary of what was said; audio recordings or full transcripts were not provided. In addition, very few notes were detailed enough that we could use direct quotations to build this report. In some cases, meetings were held in a language that was not the first language of the note-taker. At other times, an interpreter was present and a meeting held in a first language, but only summary information was translated for the note-taker. In many cases, it is likely that some important information, nuances and details were missed.
- It is also important to recognize that each time notes are taken, a level of interpretation has already taken place – what the note-taker hears and records has already filtered some of the dialogue that took place. Again, we can only present what was provided to us.

- As detailed in 'The Process' section, the methods for the community engagement were decided upon by the member organizations that make up the ACCWM, and as a result the process was done a little differently in each region. This resulted in a variation in the quantity and quality of information that was documented during the meetings. It also means that unfortunately, it is not possible to get equal representation from each region in this report. We have tried our best to include information from all regions when/where available and to make sure all voices get heard, but in some cases very little information was provided. Because of this it would not be appropriate for any further quantitative analysis of the information.
- Not all of the information in this report has been validated, verified or peer-reviewed. In some cases, input was either provided or reviewed by councils who have a role to represent communities (e.g., RRCs and HTC). In other cases, the information presented can only represent the point of view of the individual speaker, and may not reflect other viewpoints in the community.
- Because speakers were not identified, it is not possible to know the timespan, history, or experience of the speaker (for example, whether it is an elder, youth, experienced or new hunter).
- The comments included in this report only represent peoples' perspectives during the time period of the engagements (2007-2013). Perspectives may have changed since, given changing experience, knowledge and relationships with the caribou.
- The general meeting format used during engagements (a presentation of information followed by discussion of focus questions) is not a preferred methodology for documenting traditional and/or community knowledge. Discussions were strongly shaped by the information that was presented to the participants and there was little opportunity for community members to influence topics and/or meeting structure based on their knowledge systems or cultural practices.
- The way that questions were framed and the terms or language used by meeting facilitators or presenters may not have been those that would normally be chosen by some participants. For example, in many Aboriginal cultures, the terms 'herd' and 'management' would not normally be applied to populations of caribou. Neither the term nor the concept may translate well across cultures and/or across languages, but community members will often adopt the outside language and/or concepts necessary to have a dialogue. This distorts the information provided to some degree.

Despite these limitations, we feel that the information contained in this report is very valuable, and is especially useful and interesting for barren-ground caribou Management Planning. At the present time, there is no other source that contains such a comprehensive record of current traditional and community knowledge that spans the entire range of these herds.

At the very end of the report we have included several ideas in a section called 'Considerations for Future Community Engagements' to assist in work of this type.

Methods

How this report was put together

This report only contains information recorded during the 2007 to 2013 community engagements that were part of developing the Management Plan. All information from the Round 1 summary reports, as well as notes taken during public meetings and later rounds of engagement were reviewed and the community comments sorted by theme and by region. Comments came from the individuals attending these meetings and do not represent organizations' formal perspectives.

For the most part, the information is presented here with very little editing or interpretation; it is presented in the words of meeting participants as much as possible. When comments have been edited for clarity, these changes are shown with square brackets []. Following each comment, the name of the community where the information was recorded is provided in round brackets ().

We have tried to include everything that was recorded during the meetings, as accurately as possible. Some comments that were very technical or specific to the draft plan (i.e., that suggested edits to written text or adjusting other details in the plan) have been omitted from this document, but were taken into account in edits made to the plan as it developed. One example is suggested edits to management actions in the plan – while a comment recommending a change may not be included here, the plan was adjusted according to input from communities.

Written comments and other feedback received on drafts of the report through writing (e.g., emails) have not been included here for several reasons:

- Written comments expressing an organization's perspective on the draft plan were reviewed and addressed by the Working Group during editing of the plan, and
- Written comments that were technical and related to specific sections of the plan were considered by the Working Group as it edited the plan.

Most of the information presented here was recorded during the initial meetings that took place in communities of the Northwest Territories in 2009 and in Kugluktuk, Nunavut in 2007. Discussions that took place during the second and third rounds of engagement were focused on the management actions and thresholds that were included in the draft plan.

How to use this report

This report is intended to be used as a reference document. It was organized to help the reader find information quickly based on community/region and by topic. The report is made up of four main sections based on the focus questions identified by the Working Group in Round 1 engagements:

Section 1: Have you seen any changes in the herds?

Section 2: What changes how you harvest caribou?

Section 3: What information is needed for management? How can your knowledge be best used in management?

Section 4: If management actions limit the harvest of caribou, how should the herd be shared?

Input from the next two rounds of engagement was also organized into these four sections. Because the goal of these later meetings was to review the content of the draft plan, ask for feedback, and see how well the Working Group did at including earlier input, the information did differ somewhat from that resulting from Round 1. However, for the most part, we found that it was possible to sort the comments into these existing categories, rather than creating new themes and/or trying to fit them into sections that correlated more directly to the plan.

To help the reader keep track of where they are in the document, each of the four main sections has a coloured sidebar that corresponds to these four questions or colours. Within each of these sections, information is organized into topics. Each topic starts off with an **Overview** – a short, interpretive introduction that helps highlight the similarities and differences in the information from each region. Within each topic, information is then organized geographically, roughly moving from the northwest to the south and east (e.g., Inuvialuit, Gwich'in, Sahtú, Wek' èzhii (Tłı̄chǫ Region), Dehcho, NWT Métis organizations, and Kugluktuk, NU).

One exception to this is in regards to some information recording during Round 1 meetings in Aklavik and Inuvik, where there were community members present from both the Inuvialuit and Gwich'in settlement regions. Because the input received at these meetings was not always identified as either from Gwich'in or Inuvialuit participants, some comments could not be sorted by region. In these cases, we have included separate sub-sections for this information throughout the report; these sections are entitled '**Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1**' and are placed between the Inuvialuit and the Gwich'in sub-sections.

The main themes for each region are summarized in bulleted points in blue sidebars on each page to further help the reader compare information from different regions at a glance. If there were three or fewer comments from a region for a particular topic, these were not summarized in a sidebar. Naturally, there is some overlap between topics, and while we tried to minimize redundancy, comments that touch on several topics are often included in more than one section of the report.

Results from Community Engagement Sessions:

1. *Have you seen any changes in the herds?*



Topics:

- *A. Changes in Caribou Population, Distribution and Migrations*
- *B. Changes in Predators*
- *C. Changes in Environment*
- *D. Changes in Development*
- *E. Changes in Competitors*
- *F. Changes in Caribou Health and Physical Condition*

1a. Changes in Caribou Population, Distribution and Migrations: *Overview*

The total range of the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West and Bluenose-East caribou spans a large part of the Northwest Territories and part of Nunavut. Observations about caribou numbers differed in different regions, but community members in many places said that caribou numbers did not seem to have declined as much as the scientific surveys showed. While declines were reported in Fort Good Hope and Kugluktuk, caribou were being seen more and more around Paulatuk, and people in Gamètì said that the population there had stabilized or was increasing. In Behchokò, there was an indication of a large decline, as elders said that a migration that used to take ten days took only two days in more recent years. For other communities the caribou had moved away and people were not seeing them as much. As a result, they couldn't say whether there had been a change in abundance. This was heard in parts of the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, the Gwich'in Settlement Area, the Sahtú Settlement Area and in Kugluktuk, Nunavut.

People that took part in the community engagement sessions consistently said that caribou do cycle in abundance and change where they go from time to time. These changes are natural and are often in response to changes in feeding conditions. Because these cycles take place over several decades, it is difficult for short-term scientific studies to see them. It is also difficult for surveys to see large scale changes in migrations. This means that it can sometimes look like there is a decline, but it is actually part of what are considered natural cycles and changes in movement patterns. It is natural for caribou to 'go away' for some time and then come back again. Generally, people said that while caribou populations may go down at times, they should also be able to recover on their own.

Changes in population, distribution and migration can also be driven by changes in habitat, human activities or weather patterns. In many places, people had similar observations:

- Weather had become unpredictable
- Increased activity out on the land had affected caribou migrations
- Migration timing had changed, and
- Sometimes caribou were seen calving in unusual areas.

Seismic activity and mining were mentioned in particular as influencing caribou movement patterns. However, it was also noted in several communities that in areas where human disturbance had decreased, caribou had moved back into those areas.



Since the 1970s, a change in distribution has happened around Paulatuk. In recent years, caribou have stayed around Paulatuk longer in the fall and winter than they used to. They were reported to be there year-round during the time of the ISR community engagements (2009-2013). There were also observations that caribou had changed their migration routes, and were spending more time in the treeline and less time out on the tundra.

Interestingly, people in Colville Lake also said that caribou had come back to the area in the 1970s after being away for many years. Other distribution changes were noted in the Sahtú, where caribou were not being seen in some of the places they used to be in the past, and they were found further north and east than before. Déljñę participants said that the timing of the migration had shifted to be two weeks later in the fall. In Behchokò, migration timing may also have changed by as much as one month later in the fall. In both the ISR and in Kugluktuk, caribou were being seen in smaller groups than in the past.

Harvesting was not mentioned as having a negative influence on caribou numbers. In most communities, people said that fewer caribou were being harvested than in the past, whether due to harvest regulations, difficulty of the harvest, or changing traditions. There was just one comment in Déljñę about harvesting levels having increased. However, while human harvests might have been impacting caribou less, other changes on the land – such as fire, mining exploration and development – have increased and could have been impacting caribou more than before.

A lot of the information on these topics comes from the Inuvialuit Settlement Region. Round 3 of community engagements was done later there than in other areas (2013) and different types of questions were asked. Specifically, ISR communities were asked about caribou movements, exchange of animals between herds, and whether Management Planning should be based on defining these caribou as one or three separate herds. While the ACCWM had originally decided to define and develop a Management Plan for these caribou as three herds based on information from science, this is not necessarily how Aboriginal cultures think of caribou. As the plan developed, it became important to have a discussion about how caribou herds are defined by biologists, how they are viewed by indigenous peoples, and what the implications for management might be. There is a subsection on this topic here, with information for the ISR only, as these questions were not asked in the other regions.

Themes:

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

1. Distribution had changed around Paulatuk – more caribou were seen around the area, they stayed there year-round and calved in different areas than in the past
2. Migration routes changed in the 1920s, the 1970s, and the 1990s
3. Caribou often change their migration routes and move away for a while – this can look like a decline

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

- There are more and more caribou being seen around the area. (Paulatuk)
- The collar data is inaccurate and does not represent caribou locations around Paulatuk since there are more and more caribou being seen around the area. (Paulatuk)
- Caribou are staying in our area all year-round now. There have been changes in distribution, as they used to be out past Anderson River. This year, the herd was having calves in different areas. (Paulatuk)
- The migration routes in the last year are very close to town. Caribou are staying around town more and more. (Paulatuk)
- We have seen the caribou changing their migration routes from the 1970s. In July caribou are now up in the hills since the summers are colder and the caribou don't have to hit the beach. Fall also comes later now and caribou stay longer into the fall and winter. (Paulatuk)
- In the early 1990s there used to be a lot of caribou by the lake here. It's just that they are moving; they aren't extinct. They are migrating, maybe because of global warming. It is different migrations routes or something. (Paulatuk)
- The generations before me were always taught to 'take what you need'. Herds are migrating using different routes. We've been living as Inuvialuit with caribou – that's what we've been harvesting for maybe a couple thousand years – and they are still there. (Paulatuk)
- In 1921 the caribou went away. In the 1970s they came back. Now they have gone away again in the 1990s. Caribou do not follow the same trails or they would starve. They change their migration route and they move away. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- Migration patterns have changed; there is no decline in the caribou. [The apparent decline] is due to their changes in migration routes. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- We more than any other community with exception of Paulatuk know the cycle. We experienced it; we saw the caribou come back. We know what it's like to be without and to have lots. We have so much traditional knowledge of caribou coming back and declining again. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- You have to remember that it originated from one herd. They didn't have caribou near Tuktoyaktuk. In the 1970s we were lucky to get caribou. 1972 was the first time I got caribou; we got two and we were lucky. (Tuktoyaktuk)

- The condition of the caribou also determines where they go. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- We have gone through cycles. The calving ground around Cape Bathurst was known before my grandfather's time – the area was named for that. They are back again. My grandfather never saw caribou calving in Cape Bathurst. Our traditional knowledge tells us the calving moves away from Cape Bathurst, but in future it will come back. A lot is beyond our control. It is hard to say that when caribou reach this number, harvest. It is a natural cycle known to our people and it's not alarming. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- Caribou have been coming back close to Tuktoyaktuk for the past 40 years. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- Someone will blame it on roads or development, but I believe regardless of what we do the caribou will leave again. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- There is less activity now [out on the land] and the caribou have spread out. The Tuk Peninsula caribou herd returned after the reindeer was removed from the Peninsula. Now that the caribou have come back to the peninsula, the other caribou have spread out. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- In the 1980s and 1990s there were no caribou in the bush, but now you can see caribou in the trees in December [in the Kugaluk and Wolverine Rivers areas]. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- During the period 1989 to 1996 I spent a large amount of time out on the land during both the summer and the fall; during that time I saw caribou predominately in larger groups. Now we only see them in smaller groups. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- The number of caribou [are] going down and [they're] not looking after [them]... (Aklavik)
- Numbers are going up. Cows know when there isn't enough food to nurse. Scientists are not studying habitat. They say, 'How come this is going down and then going up?' The same thing happens with Porcupine caribou – their calving ground moves closer this way and it looks like their numbers drop. (Aklavik)
- Elders used to say caribou went away and then came back. Now they're going away again. (Aklavik)
- The caribou stay more around the treeline and don't move north and out onto the tundra [maybe because there are more wolves on the tundra now]. (Community not identified)

Themes:

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

4. Caribou naturally cycle in abundance over decades, and come back or recover on their own
5. Caribou change distribution in response to things such as industrial activity, competitors or physical condition
6. Caribou have stayed in the treeline more than the tundra since the 1990s
7. Caribou have been in smaller groups since the mid-1990s
8. It was not clear if the number of caribou was increasing or decreasing in some areas.

*Themes:*Inuvialuit
Settlement Region
– Herd Definition

1. Caribou were traditionally thought of as one herd
2. There were differing opinions on whether the management plan should address these caribou as one or three herds
3. Caribou from different herds mix and shift their distribution over time

Herd Definition, Exchange and Management Planning (ISR only, 2013)

- [What] if we have one herd, but manage numbers every three or five years so we don't have to live with the tag system? We would go back to the traditional way of harvesting, not taking more than you need. I wouldn't mind saying we would like to revert back to one herd. (Paulatuk)
- We are concerned that splitting the Bluenose herd into three herds [the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-East, Bluenose-West] makes it appear as if there are less caribou. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- We want one herd; we don't know why you are trying to persuade us. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- We want one herd; maybe we will have no more caribou in our area but there will be caribou in other areas. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- Why have we split the herd when it is one big herd? The Cape Bathurst herd mixes with the other herds. We should manage the caribou as one herd. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- The old draft Bluenose Caribou Management Plan shows a population number for the Bluenose-East caribou herd [for the 1992 time period] that is no longer being mentioned. This number should be included in the information in the new Bluenose Caribou Management Plan. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- People think they are one herd, all the same caribou. Traditional knowledge has got an important role; if people are saying it's the same herd, it should be. (Aklavik)
- When you're talking about Porcupine [caribou], people in Dawson thought the 40 Mile herds came back but it was actually Porcupine. We see it all the time – they split and go other places. [If they] haven't come over here, [maybe they went] over to Arctic Village. They go where easiest feeding conditions are. When caribou numbers are low, the animals went with the others. (Aklavik)
- If Cape Bathurst moves and goes with others, then you say we lost whole herds. Maybe the land couldn't sustain them. They go where it's easiest. (Aklavik)
- Why don't they continue keeping it on three? You say all over the world calving areas define herds. How did the Game Council come to this one herd? (Aklavik)
- One herd, I think it would be better. (Aklavik)
- After talking about all this, I think [we should] do the things the way everyone else does [based] on calving grounds. Maybe if it was three herds, you would be able to set up the Management Plans and they would be different. (Aklavik)

- COSEWIC will be assessing the status of the herds but splitting the Bluenose herd into four sub-herds means that the Cape Bathurst herd will almost certainly be considered endangered. But beneficiaries just see it as one big herd. (Inuvik)
- Would it be easier to manage as three [herds]? There are three calving areas. I think we have to keep it as three, the numbers show it. Yes they mingle, the elders told us that. (Inuvik)
- If you treated it as one herd, it would completely demolish our area [Inuvik]. If numbers were in the green, anyone could harvest from our area. It should be managed based on our area, the ISR. (Inuvik)
- The Management Plan doesn't address that when the Bluenose-West and Cape Bathurst started to decline, the Bluenose-East increased. This indicates a shift, but that opinion is not represented in the plan. They find other areas to calve. These new maps show they expand to different areas. (Inuvik)
- Traditional knowledge recognizes that caribou move; people just want that recognized. They are not saying the caribou didn't decline. (Inuvik)

Themes:

Inuvialuit Settlement Region – Herd Definition

4. Calving grounds are just one way of defining caribou herds
5. Traditional knowledge about caribou needs to be acknowledged.



Photo courtesy ENR, GNWT

Themes:

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

1. Caribou naturally cycle in abundance over decades, and come back or recover on their own
2. Hunters didn't see evidence of a large decline
3. Caribou from different herds mix and shift their distribution over time
4. There were fewer observations of caribou as people weren't hunting as much as in the past
5. Caribou changed migration and distribution in response to things such as industrial activity.

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

- The caribou do cycle though. This is part of their cycle. (Aklavik)
- We've always heard in the past that it's just a cycle, is it? If it is the population should come back up. (Aklavik)
- Climate change may be having an effect on migration. (Aklavik)
- [I am] commenting on the numbers [in the presentation dropping] from 1992 – high numbers to really low numbers now. I hear people saying they don't notice a decline in the herd. Hunters for sure would have seen this. I haven't heard any evidence of there being less caribou. If there was that big a decline, for sure hunters would see carcasses. To lose 10,000 in ten years? I'm sure the users of the herd would say that something was going on. (Aklavik)
- In the summer woodland caribou come up as far north as Husky Lakes. I've seen them with barren-ground [caribou] running around in the barrens. A population shift is happening. What about 'crossover' of herds? Is this being studied? (Inuvik)
- [People] say they see different caribou herd completely up near Rankin Inlet. Some people think it is a part of our herd that crossed over. (Inuvik)
- We don't see any herds. How can we answer, ['Have you seen any change in the herds?'] when we are not going out hunting? Never seen any since they put the zones in. So how do you expect us to answer that? (Inuvik)
- There have been changes since the seismic program in the Parsons Lake area around six years ago. That's where they winter for a while before they move to the tree line. The seismic happened in December/January right when the caribou were there. Ever since then the caribou don't really go there and they changed their migration. I just heard last year they may be back there again. (Inuvik)

Gwich'in Settlement Area

- Like the Porcupine caribou, the Bluenose herds are changing their migration. The herd still ends up somewhere on the coast, mostly together. (Aklavik)
- Population cycles can be driven by factors like changing weather patterns, bringing higher temperatures and possibly more large fire years. Weather is unpredictable now. (Inuvik)
- The history of surveying the caribou is short in terms of cycles that can last 60 years. (Inuvik)
- In the old days, some years there was hardly anything. It declined by itself and then after a few years it goes back up again. So, you know that's nature. (Tsiigehtchic)
- [The caribou population cycle] goes up and down and up and down. (Tsiigehtchic)
- With climate change, the Porcupine caribou herd are calving before they get to their calving grounds. I wonder if a lot of them stay in the areas they travel in the winter months – maybe that is happening in this area too. (Tsiigehtchic)
- A few years back caribou used to come not far from here... [I] shot few by the river there. [We] don't see any more. This year [we] didn't see any. (Tsiigehtchic)
- [I] remember when there was no caribou in this area for 30 years. (Fort McPherson)
- There were always caribou but I remember elders saying there was no caribou. The Tuk and Bluenose and this Porcupine caribou. I just want to talk about caribou, not one specific herd. (Fort McPherson)
- I don't know too much about Bluenose, but caribou is caribou. (Fort McPherson)



Photo courtesy Kristen Callaghan, GRRB

Themes:

Gwich'in Settlement Area

1. Migration patterns have been changing
2. Cycles in abundance are natural and driven by things like changing weather patterns
3. Weather was becoming unpredictable and climate change could be impacting caribou
4. Scientific surveys don't capture natural, long term cycles or changes well
5. There were stories of caribou not being in some areas for 30 years.
6. Caribou were not being seen in some of their usual areas.

*Themes:***Sahtú Settlement Area**

1. There were differing perspectives about whether caribou numbers were declining
2. Caribou distribution and migration changed in some areas
3. Caribou returned after industrial activity stopped
4. Fewer caribou were being harvested

Sahtú Settlement Area

- There seems to be plenty of caribou around; we haven't seen any big changes. The only thing I notice now is that they come here from a different direction. There's never a time lately when people go out and don't see any tracks at all. What's new is that we shoot less caribou now. There were no stores then; we shoot less now because we have the store. (Colville Lake)
- For the last few years there's been no development [around Colville Lake] and the caribou are moving back. (Colville Lake)
- Gassend Lake [SSA/ISR border north of Colville Lake] and way further [north] is where you start seeing these bulls that are much bigger and brownish. (Colville Lake)
- The elders say that the cycle might be low when they are being disrespected, such as when you hit them with a stick and then the caribou go away for seven or eight years. Around here before 1941, that's when the caribou moved over here, about 70 years ago. (Colville Lake)
- One big change we've seen is that now that the oil and gas companies are gone, the caribou have come back closer. When the oil companies were here, there were no caribou close by. They were way up past Aubry Lake [north of Colville Lake]. (Colville Lake)
- They are getting further and further away from Fort Good Hope and so we can hardly notice if there are any changes. We used to travel only 50 km and see lots of caribou. (Fort Good Hope)
- When you say the herds are in decline – personally I believe it. (Fort Good Hope)
- I am wondering if ENR has information on caribou from back in the 1960s. I remember going out with my Dad to Burnt Lake where there were a few families living and a few caribou. Then around Colville Lake there were also a few caribou. But suddenly in 1972 there were many caribou and we went out on community hunts with everyone harvesting caribou. Nobody was monitoring them but where did they come from and where were they all of those years? Is there a cycle going on? Or is the population going down because there are more people, more wolves and more grizzly bears? (Fort Good Hope)

- We used to have caribou come up here before all of those drill rigs around Colville Lake; maybe they disturbed the herds. (Fort Good Hope)
- We used to go up to harvest caribou around [Déljñę] but now they are much further north. For the last two winters [2007-2008] I have seen tracks past my cabin but only a small bunch heading north and west, and I haven't actually seen the animals and don't know where they go. (Fort Good Hope)
- Some of the caribou travel to Little Albert Lake towards Inuvik and they used to go by Little Doctor Lake [NE of Norman Wells] but there is nothing anymore, just a few woodland caribou hanging around. I don't know why that is. (Fort Good Hope)
- Caribou are now going to places where they shouldn't go. The changes may not necessarily be man-made; effects from industry may be part of the answer but we really don't know. Do you think it may have something to do with climate change? (Fort Good Hope)
- I watched a show about two couples who followed the caribou from Old Crow. It showed that the caribou couldn't cross a river because of the river volume when it got too warm too fast. What I am wondering is if the caribou are not making it to their calving area; if they just have their calves wherever they are? That makes sense to me. (Fort Good Hope)
- Caribou have cycles like rabbit and foxes. (Norman Wells)
- Years ago there were [barren-ground] caribou on the [winter road] towards Fort Good Hope. Now there is nothing left. (Norman Wells)
- All the herds used to go in a circle through the year. One year the Bluenose-West came right to Norman Wells and to the Enbridge road [west side of the community]. They are not doing those circles anymore. That's why you can't get a good count because the caribou are spread all over. Blame it on industry, mines, muskoxen, and fires – the fires burn caribou feed and it takes 100 years to grow. That is why Aboriginals were once nomadic because the caribou migrated. (Norman Wells)
- Caribou are away from us right now so we can't really say how they are doing today. I traveled the winter road between Tulít'a and Déljñę last year and didn't even see one track. (Tulít'a)
- I think that the caribou – the Bluenose-East – came back because there wasn't so much work – no noise like there was around Fort Good Hope or Colville Lake. (Tulít'a)
- Caribou used to come as far as Mating River in the winter. Why are the caribou not around Déljñę anymore? (Tulít'a)

[29]

Themes:

Sahtú Settlement Area

5. Caribou moved away from some Sahtú communities and some areas so people weren't seeing them as much
6. Changes in cycles or caribou distribution can be in response to things such as industrial activity or changing weather patterns
7. As development has stopped, caribou have been coming back to their former areas

Themes:

Sahtú Settlement Area

8. Caribou naturally cycle in abundance
9. Caribou arrived two weeks later in the fall than in the past
10. More people in Déljñę were harvesting caribou.

- Bluenose-East – they are going very far east [into Tłjchq lands] these last few winters. It is out of the question for us to hunt them? (Tulít'a)
- They come along in September – two weeks later now. That's too late. Do a study on the weather. Most time to hunt is now because of access over the frozen lakes. (Déljñę)
- Maybe in the future – in 20 or 30 years – the caribou will go down again. The elders have beliefs, signs that something is going to happen to the caribou. There are other signs too about what is going to happen to the caribou. Sometimes there are signs that it will be a good harvest of caribou, but you see signs from the ptarmigan or the grouse that will tell you that there will be no caribou there – if you don't look at these signs, you will starve. (Déljñę)
- Caribou don't really come near. Some people have to go far for hunting. It hurts to see less caribou because we need them for so much. We here have caribou as food – we just take what we need. (Déljñę)
- We really have to think about our harvesting. A lot more people are out there harvesting now. (Déljñę)
- Animals are like human beings – if you bother them too much they don't like it. How many times have we got to keep telling ENR this? They should treat animals like human beings and with respect. In the old days when there was no ENR, animals roamed anywhere they wanted. It seems now with all the activity and the flying around, that's why the migration route has changed and we must acknowledge that. (Déljñę)
- In the fall [Sahtúot'jñę] go to the north shore of Great Bear Lake. Last few years we didn't see any caribou up there – no caribou at Caribou Point, Clearwater Bay [north shore Great Bear Lake]. We're right in the middle of all the activity that surrounds us; we're central. In the summer time and fall time we don't see them. (Déljñę)

Wek' èezhìi (Tłı̨chǫ̨ Region)

- The population is a fair size. When the caribou migrated back to the calving grounds the tracks are so huge; there are maybe 100,000 for sure. We tend to challenge that the caribou is increasing or stabilizing. All we hear is they are in decline. Since there is a ban in place, the population should have gone over 100,000 by now. (Gamètì)
- We have never heard of the caribou declining. Our ancestors and forefathers they had really taken care of the caribou. And anything that is harvested and killed they used to put everything on their toboggan. Everything was taken. The only thing that was left was the antlers on the head. (Whatì)
- The caribou is not in one spot; they are always moving so they find good feeding areas. That is why our ancestor moved with caribou as well. Back in the day there was no such thing as decline. It was just a matter of finding another herd. Today one herd declines and then a second herd declines; it causes problems in our region. Our ancestors used caribou for clothing, hide to make tents. They even made their own ropes and pack sacks out of it. Caribou meant a lot to them. (Whatì)
- They are not dying off; we are not seeing dead carcasses on the land. Caribou move around on the land. In other areas like Alaska and they say they have lots of caribou and the Bluenose-West is in decline by the same amount. We are not monitoring all herds in a single year and migration routes change; this could be cause of the decline. We need to monitor this. We need to monitor the increase and declines in adjacent areas, like Ahiak and Bathurst. (Behchokò)
- When herds were in trouble in the past they went away and moved to other areas. When they recovered they came back. (Behchokò)
- The population dropped and it caused us concern. (Behchokò)
- Back in 1954 the caribou herd was pretty low back then. Remember when a chief make a ruling to take what you could for the next three years. The chief said something and it was done. In 1957 the caribou had picked up again. In 1951 I started hunting caribou and I hunted on the land together with my wife. Came back from harvesting caribou ... took two weeks to get caribou. It took a while to settle down to find a good herd to harvest. ... Some years we went out hunting but last year we didn't hunt as much as we wanted to. (Behchokò)

Themes:

Wek' èezhìi

1. There were differing perspectives about whether caribou numbers had declined
2. Caribou often changed their migration routes and move away
3. If there were big declines hunters would have seen evidence of this
4. Scientific surveys don't capture long term cycles or changes well, so sometimes it looks like there's a decline when there might not be
5. Caribou naturally cycle in abundance over decades, and come back or recover on their own

Themes:

Wek' èèzhì

6. Migration timing may have changed
7. Fewer caribou were being harvested in recent years
8. Industrial activities such as mines impacted caribou migrations
9. Distribution and migration routes changed in some areas.

- I have been hearing that the migration is one month late coming south. It means they are going further north than the historic calving grounds... when they hit Bathurst Inlet they go either east or west. They have to go further to go away from the insects. They are not being counted because they are not in the same areas. (Behchokò)
- Records show that there is less human harvest – more people are working and using store-bought food – therefore the effect on caribou is positive, but there are other impacts such as forest fires affecting them. (Behchokò)
- The elders always told us that the caribou migration route is in the heart of where the mines are located now. The impact on the caribou migration has to occur because they run into the mines. Certainly people are aware – most of us that are collecting all the information from the elders. The elders are the sole keepers of the caribou. In the past, when elders were talking about migration, they said it used to take ten days but now it's only two days. Why is the population so low? Certainly it's pretty hard to speculate what caribou might do. It looks after its own living. Some years it might grow and some years it might decline; there are reasons for that ... the caribou decline – it's not that they end up in another part of the world. (Behchokò)

Dehcho Region

- There is agreement about an underlying cycle of caribou populations, or more accurately, peaks and troughs over a 30 to 60 year period. (Wrigley)



Photo courtesy D. Allaire – ENR, GNWT

NWT Métis Nation

- With climate change and new modern ways of hunting, caribou populations may never increase again to the number recorded in the past and we should not automatically use past historic records to come up with thresholds. (Community not identified)

Kugluktuk, NU

- The caribou herds have changed for sure. It's harder and harder to hunt caribou close to the community of Kugluktuk. (Kugluktuk)
- In the past, we had choices on which caribou herds to hunt, because they were close by. But nowadays, we have no choices anymore, the herds are no longer close to the Kugluktuk area. The caribou herds are further away, and the migration routes have changed. (Kugluktuk)
- It's harder now, to see mainland caribou close to the Kugluktuk area. A few years back, there was plenty of caribou close by, but that is not the case anymore. (Kugluktuk)
- During the spring and summer, the caribou are close by. During the winter season, there are no caribou to be seen, or [they are] not around and very far away. (Kugluktuk)
- People, especially the younger generation, don't travel as far now to harvest caribou as they used to, and they don't go as often – they tend to follow the coast in the summer rather than going inland. This could affect the number and locations of observations that are reported. (Kugluktuk)
- In the 1980's, the Bluenose-East caribou went towards the northwest from their calving ground and stayed far from the community. (Kugluktuk)
- Mines and explorations are like enokhok on the land and maybe 90% of the herd will avoid that. In my opinion these developments disrupt the migration and alter migration routes. That's what I noticed at Pellate Lake – there are a lot of caribou but in small groups spread out. This is compared to in the past when there was one big herd. (Kugluktuk)
- When the snow is hard or crusty in some areas, it can change the migration pattern of a herd. (Kugluktuk)
- In recent years, herds have turned around on their migration paths and gone back towards the south where they are able to reach their food through softer snow. (Kugluktuk)
- If they shoot all the bulls maybe it is why the caribou are down. We don't see many bulls these years. (Kugluktuk)

[33]

Themes:

Kugluktuk, NU

1. The caribou had not been close to Kugluktuk for several years
2. Distribution and migration routes have changed
3. Changes in caribou migration patterns can be in response to things such as industrial activity or weather events
4. Harvesting patterns have changed and this has affected how often people see caribou.



1b. Changes in Predators: *Overview*

People in all regions commented on predators and how they might be impacting caribou populations. Some caribou predators were reported to be increasing in number – wolf, grizzly, and eagle populations were all mentioned as increasing. Possible increases in wolverine numbers were also noted in more than one area.

Of all caribou predators, wolves were mentioned most often as playing a role in caribou declines. People reported very large wolf packs in many areas during the community engagements (2007-2011). However, it was also noted that wolf populations naturally go up and down like caribou populations. One community member in Tuktoyaktuk said that people used to see more wolves when the caribou were more plentiful, and that they were actually seeing fewer wolves in recent years. In the Sahtú it was noted that since the muskoxen moved in, there had been more wolves and no caribou. In the Dehcho region, some hunters pointed out that the increase in wolves is only in certain areas, and in other areas they see few or no wolves.

Grizzlies were also mentioned in relation to predation of caribou calves. In both the Inuvialuit and Gwich'in settlement regions people said that they see grizzly bears following caribou and feeding at calving grounds.

In several places, community members suggested that the increase in predators may in part be due to the fact that there are fewer people out on the land hunting and trapping predators these days. While wolves were recognized as having a natural role in maintaining caribou populations, there were also suggestions that possible ways of controlling wolf populations may have to be considered at times when predator numbers are high and caribou numbers are low.

Predator control is very controversial and the effects are not well understood by ecologists. While there were numerous strong opinions supporting predator control expressed during the community engagements, there were also some equally strong opinions against it. Overall, many people suggested that predation needs to be studied more, so that there is a better understanding of its impacts on caribou numbers. There is more on this topic in section 3c of this report, *Research Questions and Suggestions*.

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

- The blame [for decreasing caribou numbers] should be spread out. Wolves eat caribou too. (Paulatuk)
- What are the causes of caribou decline? We need to see if it is wolves, grizzly bears or habitat. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- People want to see more done about predators. (Aklavik)
- We are seeing more predators in August and September. I saw 12 grizzly bears in a three kilometer radius, all following the caribou. (Paulatuk)
- The community of Paulatuk has not seen this many bears before. Bear densities have been very high. (Paulatuk)
- Some hunters are seeing many more wolves. (Paulatuk)
- We used to see lots of wolves when the caribou were plentiful. Now we don't see as many. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- When I was collaring caribou, there were many wolf packs ranging as high as 12 to 22 animals in each pack. We were flying along and followed the wolf tracks and sure enough we ran into caribou. There are predators all over. (Inuvik)
- We also need to consider wolf populations and their pressure on caribou. (Paulatuk)
- I don't want to see wolf bounties. They are not the way to go. Incentives for wolf hunting would be preferable to bounties. (Paulatuk)
- Incentives for wolverine and wolf harvesting don't work; people don't take more. (Inuvik)
- Wolves take healthy animals as well as sick. (Inuvik)
- I would like to see actions and not just studies on wolves and grizzlies. Defence kills are increasing. (Paulatuk)
- There was a balance when caribou were hunted without the tag system. People would shoot other things and this would reduce the wolf population as well. Now with two tags wolves are not harvested in many areas [with few tags people do not travel into as many areas]. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- There are more bald eagles now. (Paulatuk)

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

- We are hearing a lot of wolves now. (Inuvik)
- Someone caught 12 wolverines between Husky Lakes and Inuvik; this is the largest they ever heard of. (Inuvik)
- There are way too many grizzlies too. (Inuvik)

[35]

Themes:

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

1. Impacts of predation on caribou populations need to be better understood and considered in management
2. Most people said there were more predators than before, including wolves, wolverines, bears and eagles. There were mixed impressions of the effectiveness of bounties and incentives for harvesting predators
3. Harvesters took fewer predators once caribou hunting was restricted.

Themes:

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

1. There were more wolves, bears and wolverines in some areas

Themes:

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

2. More bears and eagles were preying on caribou
3. Impacts of predation on caribou numbers need to be better understood and considered in management
4. Wolves were in the delta in the 1980s and returned in recent years.

Themes:

Gwich'in Settlement Area

1. Wolf numbers increased, also wolverine and grizzlies
2. With fewer trappers, may need to consider predator bounties or incentives.

- There are more eagles and bears predating on calves. (Inuvik)
- We need to know predation rate over harvest rate. I think the predation rate on the herds is more than harvest. We need to know this to manage better. (Inuvik)
- Even then, in winter three years ago, there were quite a few wolves in the delta killing off moose. We'd see kills everywhere. The packs were hard to catch in the delta because of the trees but the people out in the delta at their camps are hearing the wolves. They were around in the 1980s and then went away and now they are back again. I don't know if they go into the hills and then come back into the delta or not. (Inuvik)

Gwich'in Settlement Area

- Wolf populations are really climbing now. (Tsiigehtchic)
- It has a lot to do with weather and wolves. Moose are really suffering right now [from wolves] – there is no snow. (Tsiigehtchic)
- Wolf populations are going up – we need to look at this, especially when there is deep snow. One time we had a bounty on wolves; I think it worked. (Tsiigehtchic)
- We used to have trappers all over before so it kept the wolves and wolverines down – I think the numbers are up now because no one is out now. (Tsiigehtchic)
- Long ago there were a lot of trappers out on the land. They could make a good living trapping. Today there is nobody out there, so all those predators are growing, especially the wolves. They are really migrating. I don't like saying that but it is true. And the wolves, they are bad for caribou and moose too. (Tsiigehtchic)
- They [wolves] kill a caribou and they clean it right up – they are a big cause of the decline. (Tsiigehtchic)
- [When caribou numbers are low] give lots of incentive to get rid of the predators. (Aklavik)
- And grizzly bears have a lot of impact on the population of newborns. In the springtime, one hunter up near Herschel Island, when the cows are dropping their young ones, the grizzly bears would just clean them up – nice and juicy. The bears are following the caribou. That is one impact on the newborns. I learned that from an elder in Fort McPherson telling a story from Aklavik. (Fort McPherson)

Sahtú Settlement Area

- Lots of changes are affecting caribou. I have seen an increase in the number of wolves. (Norman Wells)
- There are a lot of wolves out there. You see them in the thick bush. I think they are increasing – I have found them right in town beside my dog. They are hungry; they are coming into town. (Tulít'a)
- The big issue for caribou is wolves – they are the biggest issue. (Tulít'a)
- Lots of wolves are after caribou. I had one pack up along the lake – 50 wolves howling at night. \$200 is too little for a wolf; we need to increase this. (Déljñę)
- I would like to see [the incentive] for wolf carcasses extended to year-round. (Tulít'a)
- I've seen wolves near Burnt Lake past Carnwath River and I could see a wide trail of wolf tracks, but they heard the skidoo coming and left the road. It is hard to see and harvest wolves – they are so shy. (Fort Good Hope)
- The changes affecting caribou are climate change, vegetation, migration routes, new animals like cougar and muskoxen. (Norman Wells)
- Around Déljñę they used to have a lot of caribou. The muskox are coming in, and now there are a lot of wolves and caribou are not coming close anymore. (Tulít'a)



Photo courtesy of Richard Popko, ENR, GNWT

Themes:

Sahtú Settlement Area

1. Wolf numbers increased and pack sizes were large
2. Wolf predation was the biggest issue for caribou
3. May need to consider predator bounties and incentives.

Themes:

Wek' èezhìi

1. Impacts of predation on caribou populations needs to be better understood
2. Some form of predator control may need to be considered

Wek' èezhìi (Tłı̨chǫ Region)

- We didn't see a big hunt take place last year. In the past when we used to go out we used to be free to kill any amount of caribou you wanted. Even we as elders, when we were young out on the land. We got predators like wolves, I agree with you. We as hunters on the land, we see them just about every time. The wolf has to do his own living on the caribou. In the summer he goes out fishing, including bear. They do the same thing too. We go out hunting Bluenose towards Grandin Lake, there is a lot of wolf out there. The population is so big. I'm not afraid to say it because other hunters have seen it. ... One time I was out hunting I saw a big herd along the lake shore. I saw what I thought was a caribou but it was a big pack of wolves. I got scared and took my binoculars out and they all got up and I counted them up to 30. I turned back; I was scared. They all depend on caribou. Easily they could kill 20 caribou to feed on. And even in summer time where there is fall snow coming off rivers and creeks, the wolf hangs around to find fish in pools of water. So we should monitor the wolf and keep the population down as much as possible. They take a lot of our caribou. (Whati)
- A lot of elders have spoken about the wolves – if there is a bounty, or how to reduce the wolf population – knowing that they follow them when the caribou migrate to the calving ground. How do officers report back? (Behchokò)
- The population of wolves, we should concentrate on reducing their number. How many female wolves are out there producing every year? Multiple that by those that are born and how many come into the pack. We should monitor the wolf condition, monitor the amount of caribou that wolves are consuming. (Gamèti)
- We never heard of the decline. We have Renewable Resource Officers to control who should be out hunting. Back in the early days in order to have wolf control they used to have poison bait. There is a ways and means; we should try to reduce the impact of wolves. (Behchokò)
- The wolf population – as it is higher the more caribou it will consume. It will be costly to solve the problem but somehow we have to do something. (Behchokò)

- So we should monitor the wolf and keep the population down as much as possible. They take a lot of our caribou. The report shows that some years they are in decline, then they try to put a ban in place. (Whatì)
- We know that the wolves are increasing every year. We assume that a lot of wolves take a lot of caribou to feed on. Every year if the wolves produce young they get about eight pups. (Gamèti)
- There are predators such as wolves affecting the herd. How to manage wolf control? How effective is that going to be? The predators are the ones that they should be concentrating on, to reduce the size of the wolf packs. We need a way to reduce the wolf population. They take a big toll on the caribou. (Behchokò)
- Aside from what the wolf does, it depends on caribou. I was told that wolves only take the weak and sick caribou so it doesn't matter how much they take and consume for food. They tend to tell us that they leave a lot of healthy ones. I don't know who to believe. (Gamèti)
- You said the wolf decline when the caribou decline. I bet we have to control predators, manage them. (Behchokò)
- And predators such as wolves, we should try to eliminate the wolf packs as much as possible. The wolf is not something that is new. We just recently lost an elder a month ago. When he hunted in the past he said that he saw that a lot of people must of hunted caribou and left a lot of debris on the lake. How come there was a hunt that we didn't know about? When I checked it out it was a place where the wolf had taken 30 or 40 caribou at one time. I didn't know a wolf could do that. These are not monitored. He mentioned that we should bring it to the proper authority. (Whatì)
- There are other predators such as grizzlies, wolverines and wolves. There must have been many in those days too. (Behchokò)

Themes:

Wek' èezhìi

3. Wolves have a role in keeping caribou healthy
4. People did things to reduce wolf numbers and/or pack sizes in the past.

Dehcho Region

- I've been trapping out there [Spruce Lake] all my life; there is hardly any wolves out there. There are a lot of wolves along the Mackenzie River. (Wrigley)
- Grizzly bears, and to a lesser extent black bears, were pushed into the Mackenzie Delta by extensive fires in Alaska and the Yukon. There is more predation on barren-ground caribou in the northern part of the range by bears than is accounted for. (Wrigley)
- Predator control should occur in the red zone if considered but not acted upon in the orange zone. (Wrigley)

North Slave Métis Alliance

- There is concern about the wolf population status as it appears to be low. (Community not identified)
- The payments for wolves are not needed. Call it what it is, a bounty. (Community not identified)
- The wolf bounty should be abolished. It is outrageous and disgraceful. (Community not identified)

Kugluktuk, NU

- Grizzlies kill young caribou and harass the herd but are not dependent on caribou. Grizzlies have been increasing. In the past when a bear was seen, it was shot for food, skin and grease. Nowadays, very few are harvested. (Kugluktuk)
- There were not too many grizzly bears in the past, but nowadays whenever you go out, you are seeing bears and they are everywhere. (Kugluktuk)
- There are not many wolf hunters anymore. You have a rise of people that can hunt caribou but a decrease of people that hunt wolves. (Kugluktuk)
- The younger generation does not hunt predators as often as in the past. (Kugluktuk)
- Wolf numbers are very high, individuals are healthy, and the packs are large – there are more than 30 in some packs. The elders have reported that when this happens they will kill indiscriminately, taking more than they will use. This is of concern especially when the caribou numbers are low. (Kugluktuk)

Themes:

Kugluktuk, NU

1. Predator numbers have increased (wolves and grizzlies), partly because few people harvest them now

- Wolverines also present a problem; harvesters have reported seeing them chase small herds of caribou to near exhaustion. (Kugluktuk)
- When wolf numbers are lower they help keep the herd strong by killing off the old and weak individuals. This is not always the case in the early fall, during the rut, when the bulls often get tired and can't move. Sometimes two males will get their antlers [locked] together as well. Both of these things make even the stronger bulls more susceptible to predation. (Kugluktuk)
- Bounties can help with high harvesting costs and to decrease the number of wolves. There were similar programs in the 1960s and 1970s [poison bait stations, killing pups] that elders feel were effective. (Kugluktuk)
- Wolves are the reason why the caribou herds have declined. The wolves are not hunted as much anymore. When I moved to the community of Kugluktuk, I never saw wolves around the shorelines. Nowadays, the wolves are all along the shoreline and around the islands, and there are many packs of wolves, and when you travel, you can run into five to six packs in a day. The wolf packs are following the caribou to the shorelines now, when they normally would stay inland. (Kugluktuk)
- Wolves keep the caribou in good health. If there would be no wolves, there would be lots of sick caribou. (Kugluktuk)
- Wolves can keep caribou numbers down. Big packs of wolves will circle groups of caribou and kill them all. One time 30 wolves killed four caribou. (Kugluktuk)
- Why not kill start the wolf cub (kill off) program again, and this way decrease the wolf population and help the caribou population increase again. Nowadays, wolves are not being hunted and are increasing by population. Why not start the bounty program again, this can help lower the wolf population. Hire young people to do the job, and this can create well needed jobs in the community. It is not hard to find funding to run a program such as this. (Kugluktuk)
- The increase in predator numbers can also present a safety concern to people. (Kugluktuk)
- It could be worth it to collar wolves to estimate predation rates. It would be expensive, but what if we run out of caribou? (Kugluktuk)

Themes:

Kugluktuk, NU

2. Wolves have a role in keeping caribou healthy, but can kill indiscriminately when pack sizes are large
3. Pack sizes were large and causing caribou declines
4. Bounties and other measures were used to control wolf numbers in the past
5. Impacts of predation on caribou populations need to be studied
6. Some form of predator control may need to be considered.



1c. Changes in the Environment: *Overview*

During the community engagements, people expressed a lot of concern about changes in weather patterns and the resulting impacts on caribou habitat and behaviour that they are witnessing. In several places, climate change was said to be the biggest problem facing caribou. There was information documented on this topic in all regions except the Dehcho, and there were a lot of similarities in the types of information that was documented.

Overall, people said that weather has become unpredictable and this has impacted the ability of caribou to access their usual feed and follow their usual seasonal cycles. In the Inuvialuit and Tłı̄chǫ regions, as well as in Kugluktuk, the timing of freeze-up and break-up were reported to have changed. This is important because later freeze-up can cause more caribou to die by drowning, if they break through the ice during migrations. People in several regions also reported thinner ice or snow packs than in the past.

Another concern is the occurrence of ‘icing’ events – these are generally caused when a period of warmer, rainy weather follows a period of snow. Once temperatures drop again, and a crust forms on the snow, it becomes much more difficult for caribou to get to their feed. Harvesters have seen caribou die of starvation when the weather has followed this pattern. This type of event was noted in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, the Gwich’in Settlement Area, the Sahtú Settlement area, and Kugluktuk. There are concerns that the frequency of icing events is increasing in some places.

Changing climate conditions were also noted to be directly impacting vegetation and the firmness of the ground. This was most often mentioned in the Gwich’in Settlement Area, where permafrost has been melting faster and the ground has become ‘swampier’ in certain places. People said that caribou avoid the changed vegetation and swampy ground.

Another main message was about the impact of fire on caribou – in all regions except Kugluktuk people said that forest fires are not being fought enough to protect caribou habitat, and caribou do not return to burned out areas for many years. This seemed to be of greatest concern in Wek’ èezhìi, where most of the comments recorded about changes in the environment centered on the impact of fires. Comments about forest fires impacting caribou habitat were echoed by members of the NWT Métis Nation, who stressed that forest fire management should always be part of caribou habitat management regardless of population status.

In all regions, there were strong messages that the impacts of changing weather on caribou need to be studied, and that it is critical to protect caribou habitat to protect caribou.

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

- When I spoke about one of the changes we are seeing on the environment, that includes habitat. I spoke about it because I have concern about the ice melting a lot sooner than usual and it's much thinner. If we don't manage what we have now, what is the point of taking care of the animals that survive on that stuff? That's why I'm concerned with the changes of the environment and the atmosphere with the wildlife. I want the scientists to back this up. In the end what really matters is what we breathe and the food we eat from the land. If we don't address that then forget about the wildlife. (Paulatuk)
- That's another thing that has been debated: Ottawa decides how much money you get to battle fire. It's burned hectares and hectares that the caribou lived on. (Inuvik)
- For a lesson learned look at the Yukon – Eagle Plains area – they have let it burn, burn, burn. Now, the last few summers you don't see the caribou there anymore. It's tougher to hunt along the highway. It's going to put pressure on this other herd because it's going to be easier to get to them. (Inuvik)

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

- Icing events – this spring found dead caribou on Herschel Island, starving. How do you tell how far this is happening? Can you monitor icing? How many died – how do you tell? (Aklavik)
- My mother has told me that in 1936 there was caribou running off and many of them drowned. North Slope lots starved between Shingle Point and Herschel Island because of weird weather in January and February. (Inuvik)

Gwich'in Settlement Area

- Don't forget to measure the weather trends. With lots of rain in the winter of 2004 to 2005 lots of caribou starved, then [there was] a hot summer and a boom in predators. They got hit all at once, the caribou. (Aklavik)

Themes:

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

1. Timing of break-up and thickness of ice have changed
2. It is necessary to look after the environment and caribou habitat better
3. Forest fires have impacted caribou habitat – once an area is burned caribou don't go there anymore.

Themes:

Gwich'in Settlement Area

1. Weather affected caribou in 2004-2005; many starved in winter rains

*Themes:*Gwich'in
Settlement Area

2. Climate change may be impacting caribou habitat and behaviour
3. Forest fires have impacted caribou habitat – once an area is burned caribou don't go there anymore.

- Weather is harsher in the east and is affecting caribou there. (Inuvik)
- Because they live on moss, with icing events in the fall, maybe they can't get to their feed. (Tsiigehtchic)
- Global warming is a big impact. Mother Nature is taking over to look after herself. They'll be back. It happened before – moose, marten – 60 years later now they are overpopulated. The Wildlife Department back then took beavers from here and moved them to the delta and now they are overpopulated. Leave nature alone. (Tsiigehtchic)
- With climate change, the Porcupine caribou herd are calving before they get to their calving grounds. I wonder if a lot of them stay in the areas they travel in the winter months – maybe that is happening in this area too. (Tsiigehtchic)
- We heard an interesting story from Aklavik about more and more swampy ground because of permafrost melt and how the caribou stay away from that. That would affect habitat. (Fort McPherson)
- When [we] talk with our grandfathers, we hear from them how the land is turning mushy and the caribou don't like it. As it gets swampy the caribou don't like it. (Aklavik)
- With this global warming too, there are shrubs on the mountains – the shrubs used to only grow a foot tall. Now we have shrubs way high. The caribou have a hard time to feed and move through [the shrubs and they are] insulators for permafrost... (Fort McPherson)
- And forest fires [might be causing a decline]. (Tsiigehtchic)
- Long ago if a fire started somewhere they'd attack it right away. Now they don't do that; they let it burn and it burns a lot of caribou feed and young birds. (Tsiigehtchic)
- Sure don't sound like protecting animals if saying [there is] no money to fight fire. Let the fire go through where caribou feed and then turn around and say caribou [are] decreasing? (Tsiigehtchic)
- ...One thing never talked about is forest fire. Every community, you know, they only fight fire 60km [outside of] the community. That is all. If you go down the highway and look, every summer it is burning... Fire is a nasty thing. (Fort McPherson)

Sahtú Settlement Area

- The development is a scary part, the climate change. We're in the center; the lake surrounds us. We can't go anywhere until the lake freezes, like now. (Déljñę)
- Do you study the weather changing? One time we had caribou all over. One October we had ice and rain on the snow and the caribou went away. In the olden days [we] had dog teams – no noise. Now it's all airplanes, mining, and exploration all around Great Bear Lake. What I'm trying to say is that the weather is important. That's how come they go down to Wrigley – they're trying to find good feeding grounds. The weather, the climate change – that's the biggest problem we have. (Déljñę)
- Maybe sometimes it snows too much and then it rains. This makes it hard for the caribou. Today with the warm weather.... it's all changing. An elder said that all the wind now comes from directions other than the north. When it's from the north it is cold. Now it comes from the south and east. (Colville Lake)
- I watched a show about two couples who followed the caribou from Old Crow. It showed that the caribou couldn't cross a river because of the river volume when it got too warm too fast. What I am wondering is if the caribou are not making it to their calving area; if they just have their calves wherever they are? That makes sense to me. (Fort Good Hope)
- I work on firefighting crews. The 'Values at Risk' don't affect how we need to manage for the caribou. It takes lichen 100 years to grow back. (Fort Good Hope)
- People do point out the differences in current fire management as opposed to how things were done in the past. They say that today we are not fighting all of the fires and that may be one of the reasons that we see a decline in caribou herds. (Norman Wells)
- But if you look at your map of the ranges of these herds there are no fires in these areas [near the coast]. Also, I have been in [fire management] for a long time and we would fight fires here in the valley, but leave fires to burn elsewhere – we couldn't fight them. The only places we would put out a fire was 20 miles around the community of Colville Lake, and there hasn't been a fire there since the early '90s. The rest of the area was an observation area; we have never fought fires there. (Norman Wells)

[45]

Themes:

Sahtú Settlement Area

1. Weather has changed
2. Climate change has impacted caribou habitat and behaviour
3. It is necessary to look after the environment and caribou habitat better
4. Forest fires have impacted caribou habitat – once an area is burned it takes a long time for lichen to grow back.

*Themes:***Wek' èezhì**

1. Climate change has impacted caribou habitat and behaviour
2. Late freeze up increased mortality when caribou fell through ice during migration
3. Forest fires have impacted caribou habitat – once an area is burned caribou don't go back there for years.

Wek' èezhì (Tłıchq̓ Region)

- There are other ways that the caribou are seeming to disappear. Late freeze-up causes deaths by falling through the ice. Are you monitoring these things? (Gamèti)
- Burned out land, increased rain, early freeze-up influence feed. Caribou is a wise animal – it doesn't go back to the area that is burnt out but back to green patches to feed. We as human beings we had to talk to our superior. Caribou are somewhat the same. (Behchok̓)
- ENR from this day on should change how they fight fires. We have lost a lot of land. Not only on Tłıchq̓ lands but all areas. We have to fight those fires – caribou feed on those islands, whatever is in their path. You don't see caribou tracks in burned areas; they are sensitive to smell. It can be five or six years before you see caribou tracks in a burned area. (Behchok̓)
- Fire is the big one... forest fire and predator management are the two keys. (Behchok̓)
- Lots of land has been burned. What is forestry doing? We know that Forestry has their own sets of policy and rules to follow. It would help if we stopped fires in the vicinity. (Behchok̓)
- We should try to convince the federal government to do forest fire protection. There are a lot of good feeding areas that are burning. A lot of bird nests and eggs are burned out, including caribou habitat. There is no preservation when the forest fire claims the land. (Whatì)

NWT Métis Nation

- Forest fire management should always be a part of caribou habitat management regardless of population status, not only when it is in the orange or red zone. (Community not identified)
- With climate change and new modern ways of hunting, caribou populations may never increase again to the number recorded in the past and we should not automatically use past historic records to come up with thresholds. (Community not identified)

Kugluktuk, NU

- A single bad year for weather – a bad fall, an icy winter, and poor snow – can affect a lot of caribou; the population can decrease dramatically in one year. (Kugluktuk)
- Early warm weather followed by cold weather is hard on the vegetation. (Kugluktuk)
- Elders say when there is a lot of rain and lightning, it is very good for the animals because the vegetation grows. (Kugluktuk)
- Long ago we used to get lots of rain. Now the ground is drying very fast in the summer. (Kugluktuk)
- Caribou start eating greening willow, and then grass in the summer, and then lichens in the fall and winter. They need the good food to grow... we need the rain, the sun, and the cool. If it's too hot the plants dry up and caribou have to feed on something of low value. If the weather goes up and down, the animals suffer too. The weather has become more unpredictable. (Kugluktuk).
- During the fall season and after the snow has fallen, there are times when it rains and the snow becomes crusty and the caribou cannot get to the vegetation. Because of this, the herds tend to head south towards the tree line. This is a change that we notice more and more – it rains after it snows, the snow becomes frozen, making it harder for the caribou to get to their food. (Kugluktuk)
- After the snowfall, and after it rains and the snow hardens to crust, Peter noticed that the caribou he has caught in the fall, and early winter have empty stomachs. (Kugluktuk)
- In recent years, herds have turned around on their migration paths and gone back towards the south where they are able to reach their food through softer snow. (Kugluktuk)
- Last year, the ice was only three feet in winter compared to ten years ago when it was six to seven feet. (Kugluktuk)
- We are not able to control the weather, so the focus should be on collecting good information on it and how it is changing. Local weather records can be compared to data on caribou observations to get a better understanding of the effects of changing weather on caribou. (Kugluktuk)

Themes:

Kugluktuk, NU

1. Climate change has impacted caribou habitat and behaviour
2. Icing events have been happening more often
3. It is necessary to look after the environment and caribou habitat better
4. Late freeze-up has increased mortality
5. Need to understand impacts of climate change on caribou better.



1d. Changes in Development: *Overview*

There was information recorded on this topic for all regions, and there were many similarities between comments from different regions. Mostly, people were concerned that industrial development activities were impacting caribou habitat and causing changes in caribou behaviour. Some of the factors commonly identified as having a direct negative impact on caribou and/or caribou habitat were:

- Aircraft
- Pollution and dust
- Noise
- Physical developments like roads and camps.

Overall, people said that caribou were most sensitive to noise and would try to avoid it.

In both the Inuvialuit and Gwich'in settlement regions seismic work has changed caribou movement patterns. However, it was also noted that the caribou do return once this work is over. Some of the other specific activities associated with development that are impacting caribou in the ISR included: mining, helicopters, recreational traffic, and low level flying.

In the Sahtú, people were also concerned about industrial development and impacts of human activities on caribou. They mentioned very similar activities as those listed in the ISR as impacting caribou negatively, such as air and land pollution, helicopters, mining, and drilling. Again, caribou have been observed to avoid areas of pollution and noise created by these types of development.

For communities of Wek' èezhii and Kugluktuk, most of the concerns raised around development and disturbance centered on mining activities. People mentioned blasting, truck traffic, air/water/land pollution, noise and impacts on vegetation.

Members of the NWT Métis Nation suggested that it was necessary to monitor industrial activity – especially mining exploration and operation.

Apart from these direct impacts of industrial development on caribou, there can also be indirect impacts – such as increased access for hunters when new roads are built.

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

- There are concerns about mining, helicopters, overflights, recreational traffic, development and low level flying. (Paulatuk)
- Four years ago at my camp on Tasseriuk Lake, caribou were feeding very close and were tame. This decreased after Darnley Bay Resources completed their chopper based research in the area. (Paulatuk)
- Darnley Bay Resources is saying that there are no caribou in their development area. This is wrong. (Community not identified)
- We are going to allow development with these calving areas; it is going to play a big role in their lifespan. Development is going to make more access and it will be harder and harder on these animals. Our knowledge of today, the change between today, then, and tomorrow... we are going to be the last generation to make decisions like they did in the past. We are basing our decision on scientific and traditional knowledge. (Inuvik)

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

- There have been changes since the seismic program in the Parsons Lake area around six years ago. That's where they winter for a while before they move to the tree line. The seismic happened in December/January right when the caribou were there. Ever since then the caribou don't really go there and they changed their migration. I just heard last year they may be back there again. (Inuvik)
- Caribou have very good smell and sight so any industrial development scares them away. (Inuvik)
- Caribou used to be on Richardson Island but since industry started up, no caribou in that area. [There is] a similar problem with Husky Lake area. [They] never crossed Husky Lake for a few years after they did seismic there. (Inuvik)

Themes:

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

1. There were concerns about many types of industrial development and activity that have impacted caribou
2. Impacts are direct (e.g., planes, noise, pollution, etc.) and indirect (e.g., impacts to caribou habitat)
3. Development increased access to caribou for hunters and changed caribou behaviour.

Gwich'in Settlement Area

- In Alaska [they] built the pipeline three feet off [the] ground, but in this area they are burying everything in [the] ground so caribou can walk right over. If built three feet off [the] ground, [caribou] can't go over or under but this one [is] not like that. (Tsiigehtchic)

Sahtú Settlement Area

- Some of the elders think maybe some of the problem is air pollution. The land breathes. When you spill sewage on the land it is hard for it to breathe. If we get running water and sewage now where are we going to put it? [It] could be polluting the land and the animals. Let the young people know they should not make decisions they might regret – could be destroying their own land. (Colville Lake)
- Now we have a generator for power, when you're coming home from out on the land you can smell that generator from five miles away. I think that's why the caribou are staying away. That's why it's better to burn wood because it doesn't smell so bad. (Colville Lake)
- When you mention maintaining caribou habitat that means you have to lobby against the industry that is coming in. They are the major concern. Without them, things will be okay. (Tulít'a)
- For the next few years, Husky is going to be the problem; they are going to ruin the habitat. (Tulít'a)
- The industry is really affecting the caribou. The helicopter is the worst, not only for caribou but for all animals. (Tulít'a)
- Across from Déljñę we had a lot of caribou. PetroCanada came in and did drilling and the caribou left. Now they are over at Hottah Lake area. Caribou avoid noise – they hear noise and they go away. Before the oil company the caribou were even on this side of the lake. (Déljñę)
- Now look at the Tłjchq – they are really into mining and minerals and the caribou are in dire straits again. Now caribou are concentrating in the Colville Lake-Fort Good Hope area. There are thousands of caribou in that area. Now we have to go a long way to get caribou. Maybe we should say no to development, make it quiet [the land around Déljñę]. (Déljñę)

Themes:

Sahtú Settlement Area

1. There were concerns about many types of industrial development and activity that have impacted caribou
2. Impacts are direct (e.g., helicopters, noise, pollution, etc.) and indirect (e.g., impacts to caribou habitat).

Wek' èezhìi (Tłı̨chǫ Region)

- With the winter road it is easier for those from other regions to harvest. They have killed a lot of caribou and brought them to communities outside our region. (Whatı)ı
- Another factor is mining activity and other disasters that have created the problem and the population decline. (Behchokò)
- Mining companies make noise and affect caribou migrations – all the noises, blasting or diesel plants, trucks running all night – caribou are affected for sure. Smoke from the blast goes through the air and falls back on the ground like acid rain. The concern is that it is impacting the caribou. We as human beings are not to be blamed. (Behchokò)
- The elders told us not to open too many mines at one time, as it would block the migration route. (Behchokò)
- We have a lot of mining in our area and also a lot of outfitters, and today is not like it was in the past when there was not mining exploration. Today there are a lot of mines. The caribou that goes to the barrens, there is some that went to a calving ground on the south side and the north side. (Behchokò)
- The elders always told us that the caribou migration route is in the heart of where the mines are located now. The impact on the caribou migration has to occur because they run into the mines. Certainly people are aware – most of us that are collecting all the information from the elders. The elders are the sole keepers of the caribou. (Behchokò)

Dehcho Region

- There is a concern about staking [for minerals] that continues in the calving grounds of barren-ground caribou populations. (Fort Simpson)

NWT Métis Nation

- The influence of industrial activity and mining exploration and operation should be closely monitored at all stages of population status and with the same intensity, not change according to population status. (Community not identified)

Themes:

Wek' èezhìi

1. Roads increased access to caribou, especially to people from other regions
2. Mining activities negatively impact caribou through noise, traffic and pollution.

Themes:

Kugluktuk, NU

1. There were concerns about mining activities that have impacted caribou
2. Development changed caribou habitat and behaviour
3. Impacts can be direct (e.g. planes, noise, pollution, etc.) and indirect (e.g. impacts on caribou habitat).

Kugluktuk, NU

- I don't like the planes flying low. It's like no caribou are going to the shore because of too many flights. Mines are too close to Kugluktuk and there are too many planes. In the past there were not many planes and lots of caribou. Now there are lots of planes and less caribou. (Kugluktuk)
- When we give away lands to development, the animals move away and maybe that's why the animals are scattered. (Kugluktuk)
- The air pollution and the dust from mine sites make plants grow very slowly if there is no rain. (Kugluktuk)
- Tailing ponds from mining camps near Contwoyto used to be very bad and are bad for caribou. There is either no vegetation around or it is possibly contaminated. There is no vegetation five miles around the tailing ponds. (Kugluktuk)
- There are resident caribou at the mine site using mainly the road to avoid bugs and also stay close to the mine to avoid predators. These caribou stay around all summer. (Kugluktuk)
- There are so many mining camps and exploration camps being built around the calving grounds lately. Maybe it is time to limit the exploration camps. We can go to KIA (Kitikmeot Inuit Association) or the organizations who permit these activities. This may be one solution. (Kugluktuk)
- In the past the mining or exploration camps never used to affect the caribou herds. (Kugluktuk)
- There is a practice that was used at the mines, where the caribou were chased away from around the mine sites, instead of allowing them to pass through, like the BHP Mine. The Environment Department at BHP keep the caribou away, and will not allow the caribou to pass through the camp, like they did at Echo Bay Mines. (Kugluktuk)



1e. Changes in Competitors: *Overview*

Communities in four regions commented on how changes in competitors may be influencing caribou – these types of comments were heard in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, the Gwich'in Settlement Area, the Sahtú Settlement Area and Kugluktuk. Most of the information on this topic was heard in the Sahtú, where many of the comments focused on the impacts of muskoxen on caribou.

People from Aklavik, Tulít'a, Fort Good Hope, and Déljñę all talked about either an expansion of muskox range into new areas or an increase in numbers of muskoxen in recent years. There was a message from many places that once muskoxen moved into an area, caribou tended to move out. Muskoxen were seen to compete for caribou habitat. They can destroy the lichen the caribou depend on, by pawing it down to the ground. There was also an observation that once the muskox moved in, the predators seemed to follow. In Kugluktuk, people mentioned community hunts to try and reduce numbers of muskoxen where they are seen to directly compete with caribou for food.

In Inuvik there was also a comment that reindeer compete for caribou habitat by eating the food preferred by the caribou. There were no comments about caribou competitors recorded for the other regions that took part in the community engagements.

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

- Muskoxen do compete with caribou. I saw them charging the caribou on the beach. (Paulatuk)

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

- A lot of us used to go around the island – go to the mainland and count the caribou when the park was opened. Muskox herds are coming from Alaska – caribou don't like muskox. One year there were muskox on the island and there were no caribou there. We need to bring this traditional knowledge from the land and give it to ENR. (Aklavik)
- Reindeer are eating all the caribou food. There is nothing for them to eat when they go to those areas. Don't seem to cross Husky Lakes anymore. (Inuvik)

Gwich'in Settlement Area

- What about muskox, do they have anything to do with this? (Tsiigehtchic)



Photo courtesy of Kristen Callaghan, GRRB

Sahtú Settlement Area

- According to elders, muskoxen are a problem for resident animals. They drive caribou out and eat their food. (Norman Wells)
- At Mahoney Lake they have noticed that since muskoxen have moved in, there are no caribou. (Tulít'a)
- Muskoxen are moving from the barren lands to below tree line. They should be moved back to the barren lands. (Tulít'a)
- There are a lot of muskoxen in that area. Last year in North Bay all I saw was herds and herds of muskoxen. They are pretty stinky animals – you can smell them even a week after they have gone by and maybe that's keeping caribou away. (Fort Good Hope)
- One of the principles of the plan is to protect the lands important for caribou. A few years ago, you were protecting the muskox and now the muskox are everywhere. How are you going to protect the caribou? Muskox are really overpopulated. They are in Colville Lake, they have come inland, they are all over the place. (Fort Good Hope)
- Another issue is muskox – no one talks about it. You have areas where there are caribou, the muskox comes in and then the caribou are gone. (Tulít'a)
- We have to come back to the muskox problem. We are told by the elders that the muskox are supposed to be on the tundra. The caribou eat the food, the lichen, down to the ground. But the muskox they paw it right through to the ground so nothing grows back. Maybe you should be paying for muskox like you do for wolves. (Tulít'a)
- Around Déljñę they used to have a lot of caribou. The muskox are coming in, and now there are a lot of wolves and caribou are not coming close anymore. (Tulít'a)

Kugluktuk, NU

- The caribou compete with the muskoxen for habitat and food. There are currently too many muskoxen in the region, and they are driving away the caribou by destroying the caribou's food source. Kugluktuk has been conducting community muskoxen harvests to help reduce the hunting pressure on caribou or when the caribou become too scarce. (Kugluktuk)

Themes:

Sahtú Settlement Area

1. Muskox directly competed with caribou by eating their food
2. When muskox moved in to new areas, predators also moved in and caribou moved out
3. Muskox destroy lichen – they paw it down so it doesn't grow back.



1f. Changes in Caribou Health and Physical Condition: Overview

People that go out on the land often have very keen observations of caribou health and physical condition. For example, the amount of fat on a caribou can be a good indicator of the animal's health. Some years caribou have more fat than others –fat levels can be affected by habitat conditions, parasites or disease levels, and events like freezing rain. Harvesters also often comment on how healthy caribou joints and/or organs look, and whether an animal has a lot of warble flies or evidence of nose bots.

The amount of disease or caribou health condition varies from year to year. Overall, hunters in Kugluktuk said that caribou seemed to be healthier in the past than in recent years. They reported seeing more signs of disease and more types of disease in recent years and noted that predators have an easier time getting the weak or diseased animals. In both the Sahtú and Tłı̄chǫ people said that caribou were not as fat at the time of the community engagements (2009-2011) as they used to be.

Another indicator of health can be the number of calves seen with cows. In Paulatuk, harvesters saw more calves per cow caribou in recent years (2002-2008). This can be a sign of relatively good caribou health or physical condition. In contrast to this, Kugluktuk harvesters reported that caribou cows used to have more than one calf, but in 2010, people were only seeing one calf per cow.

Questions about caribou health or physical condition were not part of the list of focus questions developed by the Working Group and so were not usually asked during the community engagement sessions. This means that there were very few comments recorded about whether people have seen changes in these things. This does not mean that there is not much information on this topic in community and/or traditional knowledge systems, just that the relevant questions were not asked. In this section, a lot of the information came from Nunavut, as these topics were discussed more in the Kugluktuk engagements. However, there were also some comments in the Wek' èezhii (Tłı̄chǫ Region) and from the North Slave Métis Alliance that people were concerned about caribou health.

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

- There are some years that the caribou are fat and some years that they are not. Therefore they must be going somewhere else and coming back later. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- Last year [2008] the herd looked in good shape but freezing rain lowered their condition and as a result people did not go out hunting as much [in the late winter and spring of 2009]. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- In the last few years [2002-2008] I am seeing more calves to cows [a ratio of 2:1] than in the past and the young are a good size in July. (Paulatuk)
- There are predators all over. The damned things are eating better than us. There was nothing on these caribou but skin and bones. (Inuvik)

Sahtú Settlement Area

- The caribou are not as fat now. (Déljñę)

Wek' èezhii (Tłı̨chǫ Region)

- The caribou is not fat as it once was. Is it because of the burnt area or contaminants? For the last nine years I've been talking about this. I don't want caribou to go into contaminated areas. Because of the mineral exploration and mining there is a big impact on caribou. The caribou would be hard to eat. (Behchokò)

North Slave Métis Alliance

- [People are] concerned about the health of caribou. (Community not identified)

Themes:

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

1. Caribou are fat some years, other years not
2. People saw more calves with cows 2002-2008.

Themes:

Kugluktuk, NU

1. People saw more sickness in caribou, especially when their abundance was high
2. There were more types of disease seen
3. Predators increased in number and had an easier time getting the weak caribou during the rut
4. Warble flies were around at different times, not just July
5. Cows were only having one calf in 2010.

Kugluktuk, NU

- In the recent years, we observe more sickness in caribou. During the rut, the animals are weak and it is easier for predators to get them. Predators have increased. In the past caribou seemed healthier. (Kugluktuk)
- The warble flies seem to be present at different times during the summer now, instead of only in July. (Kugluktuk)
- Also the nose bot flies drive caribou crazy. (Kugluktuk)
- The level of warble fly infestation differs among caribou. Some have lots and some don't. (Kugluktuk)
- We observe warble flies on the caribou skins mainly in the spring and caribou seem skinnier. (Kugluktuk)
- Young males usually have more warble flies. (Kugluktuk)
- There are more diseases nowadays on the Bluenose-East caribou. (Kugluktuk)
- [Disease] has to go up and down. In the past there were less diseased animals. Nowadays there seem to be more diseases especially when caribou abundance is high. (Kugluktuk)
- The number of diseased caribou is increasing and there are different types of diseases being reported now – lungs stuck to rib cage, pus in joints, tape worm cysts, and sandpaper skin. (Kugluktuk)
- Caribou cows used to have more than one calf, but [in 2010] they are only giving birth to one calf. (Kugluktuk)



Photo courtesy Mathieu Dumond, Government of Nunavut

Results from Community Engagement Sessions:

2. *What changes how you harvest caribou?*



Topics:

- *A. Harvest Traditions and Timing*
- *B. Meeting Needs and Sharing*
- *C. Harvest Regulations*
- *D. Cost and Distance of the Harvest*
- *E. Conservation Concerns and Ease of Access*



2a. Harvesting Traditions and Timing: *Overview*

From year to year, caribou harvesting patterns may change in response to things like changing needs, ability to access other food sources, weather conditions, the price of gas, location of the herd, and so on. However, there are some aspects of harvesting that do not change as much from year to year – these harvesting practices tend to become traditions or even rules over time as they are passed down from generation to generation. Harvesting traditions are usually based on seasons, the landscape, food or taste preferences, understandings of human-animal relationships, and other cultural factors that are slow to change. Harvesting traditions throughout the regions of the north are usually based on principles of sustainability and respect, such as taking only what you need, not wasting food, and sharing the harvest with others. These traditions are part of how Aboriginal societies have taken care of caribou.

The type of information that was discussed about harvesting traditions during the community engagements was mostly directly related to management scenarios (such as harvest composition, timing, etc.). Two inter-related topics that were often mentioned were:

- How caribou were traditionally harvested according to season, location and condition
- How choices to selectively harvest (i.e. bull or cow, young or old caribou) were made.

There was some information from every region for this topic, and there are several common themes among what was said. In most communities, people said that season and caribou location both influenced harvest composition and pressure. For example, people said they took more cows if cows were closer to communities at the time that bulls were not desirable. In the spring, cows were sometimes targeted because the fetus was desirable, but otherwise bulls were hunted at that time of year. Bulls tended to be targeted more towards by summer as they got fatter. Overall, traditional harvesting practices did not usually target bulls, but it was stressed that keeping a balance of bulls and cows in the population was very important. It was also emphasized that bulls play an important role as the leaders of the herd and it is important to keep enough strong bulls around. Management actions need to take these types of traditional knowledge and harvesting practices into consideration to be successful.

Not following traditions of respectful behaviour can affect how caribou behave as well as hunters' success in harvesting. An important part of maintaining and passing on traditions like these is being out on the land. There is more information on some of these topics in section 3 of this report (see *'Traditional Knowledge and Harvesting Practices'* and *'Education'*).

It is important to note that the information recorded on this topic is quite narrow in scope due to the type of questions that were asked during the engagements. Generally, Aboriginal communities have very rich harvesting traditions, but the meetings were not a suitable setting for people to share more cultural aspects of their harvesting.

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

- The generations before me were always taught to ‘take what you need’. Herds are migrating using different routes. We've been living as Inuvialuit with caribou – that’s what we've been harvesting for maybe a couple thousand years – and they are still there. (Paulatuk)
- If we go with harvesting bulls only, you’ve got to look at the time of season and where they are, when they are in the best shape. During the rut they are no good. If it’s too far and you can’t afford it, by the time they get there the bulls are no good, so that is why [people] are taking more cows. (Aklavik)
- People take young bulls in spring, not cows. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- Hunting pressure is year-round, not just seasonal as it used to be [used to be mostly August-September and January-March]. It is constant pressure on the herds year-round now. (Paulatuk)

Inuvialuit and Gwich’in Shared Meetings, Round 1

- Targeting only bulls is the stupidest thing ever. Killing all the bulls – when it’s time to breed there won’t be any prime caribou for breeding. They are needed in the rut. We were taught to hunt by the seasons. (Inuvik)

Gwich’in Settlement Area

- Cold weather [changes how I harvest caribou]. (Fort McPherson)
- How did people used to hunt? In the fall it’s bulls, then in November and December it is cows, then in March bulls – as they are fat. It used to be like that. No way are you going to stop what our people are doing. (Fort McPherson)
- When I go hunting, there is always a certain time of the year to go hunting. If we mess up that timeline it changes where the caribou go – [you have to] let the leaders pass – more education is needed. (Tsiigehtchic)
- Divide it up into seasons and not get bulls in the rut. Maybe put a season on it when you are talking about bulls-only. (Aklavik)

Themes:

Gwich’in Settlement Area

1. Harvesting did not traditionally target just bulls but a mix of bulls and cows depending on season, location and condition of the caribou

*Themes:*Gwich'in
Settlement Area

2. Harvest restrictions needed to accommodate traditional practices
3. People used to live and be taught on the land more.

- ...Myself, I see in spring time when people go hunting, caribou pregnant and going to have young ones and they shoot at these caribou... People from way back they like to eat mixed caribou, including cow caribou. Early in September or some time in there they could have an opening to shoot two or three cow caribou per family. It is important that they look at spring hunting and fall hunting. Can't shoot cows in spring but can in September and October. (Fort McPherson)
- [They say] hunt only bulls because of the measures, but we can't shoot bulls because of the time of year [the rut]. If we shoot cows on the Yukon side they will take our guns and everything away. It makes me scared. (Fort McPherson)
- [I have] concerns with [bulls only] because it interferes with genetics. I don't agree with shooting all the bulls. You take certain kind of bulls at different times of the year – in the rut take younger bulls. Should do more scientific studies. (Fort McPherson)
- I had an elder complain about the bulls-only – [they] need bulls to break the trails. Don't want bulls during the rut because the meat stinks. (Aklavik)
- You know what? You've come here to sit in the office here and talk, but some of these guys they don't even come to these meetings or anything. If you take them out in the bush and put them aside and let them make their own fire or do something, they wouldn't know what to start with... Make [it] like when we were kids. We lived in the bush and never came back 'til spring time. Nowadays people [are] in town every day. The store is right there. They can buy candy, they are happy for the rest of the week. In our days you'd never see that. I know all the time I'd spend in the bush, boy. You'd go in the bush and never come back 'til Christmas – Christmas or New Year's – and then you'd be back in the bush until spring or Easter time. You're lucky. You know in them days, you'd go by dogs. Now you can go by skidoo. No sweat! Our days were never like that. I see it. Days when I was a kid. Now I'm old and I'm still younger than a lot of young guys. (Tsiigehtchic)

Sahtú Settlement Area

- Everyone looks for cows at this time of the year [December] because the bulls are skinny and the meat is 'rotten'. Bulls do not get fat again until July or August so we need to concentrate on fall hunts, not the spring. (Tulít'a)
- Cows are usually shot this time of year [November to December] because they are fat and the bulls are not. (Norman Wells)
- In the fall we mostly get the bull moose and we don't bother the cows and that is why we have all the moose now. (Fort Good Hope)
- [They] should have open season for barren-ground caribou only in March and April when both the bulls and the cows are fat. Caribou are the only mammals that can gain fat two times in one year and bulls are fat again in spring. Hunters won't shoot bulls this time of year [November/December] as there is no fat on them, but will shoot bulls in spring instead of cows because [there's] more meat. (Norman Wells)
- I hunt a lot and I think we should decide on shooting the bulls and not shooting too many of the cows. 'Harvest more bulls and leave the cows alone' – remember our SRRB t-shirts. Depends on fat and time of year and cultural interest in harvesting cows to be able to eat the fetus for example. (Fort Good Hope)
- You have to keep a good balance in the bull to cow ratio. (Tulít'a)



Photo courtesy Sarah Gordon

Themes:

Sahtú Settlement Area

1. Harvesting did not traditionally target just bulls but a mix of bulls and cows depending on season, location and condition of the caribou
2. It was important to keep a balance of bulls and cows.

Themes:

Wek' èezhìi

1. Harvest traditions were taught on the land
2. People traditionally only took what they needed and used all parts of the caribou
3. Not following traditions of respect can affect how caribou behave.

Wek' èezhìi (Tłı̨chǫ Region)

- I was raised on the land and grew up with the caribou. I was taught how to look after my hunting and take what I have to. I was taught on the land. The caribou is a really sensitive animal and we do respect it. (Behchokǫ)
- Most of the elders have spoken about how we are taught on the land, only taking what we need. The ancestors really lived off the land and used every part of the animal for various reasons. The hide was used for coats, bones for chisels or other tools. I know that there are a lot of commercial purposes for caribou parts – selling antlers to other countries that we heard about. That took a toll on our caribou in the past. (Whatì)
- Our ancestors taught us how to look after, to butcher, and items to leave behind, [like] part of the caribou stomach. The elders always reminded us that caribou have their own superiors to report to when they do migrations. It depends on how we handle them – they report back favourably. But if they don't they won't come back to the same hunters. This is what we learned from our elders. (Behchokǫ)
- We have never heard of the caribou declining. Our ancestors and forefathers they had really taken care of the caribou. And anything that is harvested and killed they used to put everything on their toboggan. Everything was taken. The only thing that was left was the antlers on the head. (Whatì)

Dehcho Region

- Why take the big bulls? They should hunt the small or medium bulls instead. The big bulls are the leaders and breeding bulls. (Wrigley)
- There is a concern that the older bulls leading the herds in their migrations to different parts of the range should not be harvested, so that migration pattern and timing is not changed – something like the letting the leaders of the Porcupine caribou fall migration pass by before harvesting, instead of potentially scattering the leaders. (Fort Simpson)

Kugluktuk, NU

- I look for nice fat healthy caribou. We know what's good and bad. (Kugluktuk)
- Summer times, we shoot bulls by selecting carefully one or two bulls, nice and fat. You watch for sometimes 20 minutes to pick the ones you want. (Kugluktuk)
- During rutting season, we don't harvest bulls. (Kugluktuk)
- In the spring time, I know I don't shoot much bulls because the meat is tough. So when I was young I would shoot a cow for my elders without selecting between pregnant and non-pregnant cows. (Kugluktuk)
- During the community hunts last year, we tried to take our time to select the good caribou. To select carefully may help the herd. (Kugluktuk)
- During winter things change. After the rut bulls are not healthy anymore. People usually don't shoot bulls in the middle of winter. They start again in the spring. In the middle of winter people tend to shoot females. Also the meat of bulls is not that good in the middle of winter. Good hunters take their time and select carefully. In summer people select for the hides. They wait for the right thickness of the hide in middle – late August for mattresses. People plan for how many skins they need and also get the meat. (Kugluktuk)
- It's not only the condition of the caribou but also for the quality of the hide. Certain times of the year, mainly in summer time, you select for the hide – how thick is the hair, the colour and quality of the hide. It's not only the hide and hair but the meat too is different according to the season. Sometime you want calves for the clothing and the meat. (Kugluktuk)
- When we shoot cows, we select for the ones that are not pregnant when possible, so it doesn't affect the population so much. (Kugluktuk)
- From my father, I would shoot Island caribou bulls in the spring – they still have fat on them – but no mainland bulls. Some people shoot bulls in the spring for the bone marrow. (Kugluktuk)
- People have traditionally hunted males in August and September, but not later during the rut because the meat smells too strong. Females are in their prime during the winter. Hunts tend to be seasonal this way, although sometimes there is no choice when people need the food. (Kugluktuk)

Themes:

Kugluktuk, NU

1. Harvesting did not traditionally target just bulls but a mix of bulls and cows depending on season, location and condition of the caribou
2. Harvesters traditionally took the time to carefully select which caribou to harvest; this can help the herd.



2b. Meeting Needs and Sharing: *Overview*

In most parts of the north, harvesting caribou is a very important way that people provide meat for their families. Imported foods are very expensive, and there is a strong cultural tradition of sharing within communities that ensures peoples' needs are looked after. Many of the comments on this topic directly or indirectly relate to the next one, ***'Harvest Regulations'***.

There was naturally a lot of overlap between this topic and the next. They are different in that this topic includes more comments about how peoples' needs drive or influence their harvesting; the following topic focuses more on comments about how harvest restrictions have impacted peoples' ability to meet their needs. Harvesting restrictions and/or caribou scarcity were identified as the underlying cause of changes in how well people were able to meet their needs and their ability to share and pass on traditions.

Most of the information on this topic came from engagements in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, nonetheless, there some themes common to most regions. In the Inuvialuit, Gwich'in and Tłı̨chǫ regions as well as Kugluktuk, it was stated that harvest restrictions and caribou scarcity had impacted values and limited sharing – sharing had declined as restrictions were introduced and more emphasis was placed on the dollar value of the meat. In some communities, people that couldn't get enough caribou had to take part in the wage economy more to be able to support their families. In the Sahtú region, people stressed that traditionally, caribou was not sold but shared, and that for management to work, it would be necessary to work on improving ways of sharing.

Overall, there was a message that traditionally, harvesters tended to only take enough caribou to meet needs – whether their personal needs or the needs of an extended family and/or people that couldn't hunt. As these needs can change from year to year, so can harvesting levels and practices. However, it was also pointed out that harvesting activities could also depend on factors such as how close the caribou were to communities or how accessible they were to hunters, as well as what other species were plentiful. There is more information on these topics in a later sections, such as 2d ***'Cost and Distance of the Harvest'***.

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

- Long ago people harvested a lot – they had to harvest for their dogs... (Aklavik)
- The pressure to hunt is based on your own household needs and the needs of other households. But with only one or two tags, these caribou have to last two to three months. Sharing becomes very difficult. It is very stressful if I don't share. (Paulatuk)
- I don't think we've ever over-harvested or not sent tags back to ENR. We want to get out of the tag system. It is not good for the social issues of the communities – choosing this person over this person to giving meat. (Paulatuk)
- [Because of restrictions] my brother asks for caribou I tell him to get his own. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- Think education first before restriction. People start selling once [caribou are scarce because the price goes up]. Before, caribou was to share but once restrictions came on all they see is dollar signs. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- 'Bootleggers' are selling caribou for higher prices. Restrictions on caribou harvesting are causing an increase in the amount of caribou poaching and the price per carcass. The younger generation sees this and, as a result, they don't see the value of sharing caribou in the community; they simply see caribou as representing dollars. (Paulatuk)
- Now that caribou are under a tag system some people are not sharing as much and other people are spending much more so that they are still able to share. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- In the 1990s community hunts were held in Inuvik because it was so difficult to get caribou around Paulatuk. Elders got the last choice of meat then. It should be elders choosing first but this is how scarcity affects sharing. (Paulatuk)
- As a single person I get one tag therefore to get more caribou to share I have to travel further east where I can get four caribou that can supply 14 different households. Without sharing there is no circle. It costs more now to share. (Paulatuk)
- If I have tags then the price of beef is the deciding factor. If I need meat, and if I have a tag, then I go hunting. The cost of living now decides. (Paulatuk)
- The Northern store is responding to the tag system by getting more meat selection, but prices are also higher [for meat] in the last few years. (Paulatuk)

Themes:

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

1. Harvest restrictions and scarcity impacted values and limited sharing
2. Sharing declined and more emphasis was placed on the dollar value of the meat
3. People that couldn't get enough caribou needed to take part in the wage economy more to be able to support their families.

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

- We're seeing the same hunters going out and getting lots of caribou, and people see those hunters coming in with caribou, and they are asked for the meat. They give it out so they go out again. ... For those who are successful, they are being asked for meat. (Inuvik)
- If I am limited by tags, why am I not compensated like wheat farmers down south? I work at two jobs every day to support my family because I can't hunt. (Inuvik)
- Fewer harvesters are sharing the meat with elders. (Inuvik)

Gwich'in Settlement Area

- There is a concern about the high cost of grocery foods. When there is caribou in town, people will share and that's a big boon. Especially when you pay \$400-\$500 to fill a freezer. (Aklavik)
- Not taking too much! Today it is not like years ago where you had to feed yourself and your dogs. Today you don't need that. One or two caribou – I go through three and from spring to now and I still have caribou left – three in the spring and that is all a guy needs. (Tsiigehtchic)
- If we don't manage the caribou pretty soon they will put a quota on us – this will affect our people and eating store meat – we can't afford it. (Fort McPherson)

Sahtú Settlement Area

- It hurts to see less caribou because we need them for so much. We here have caribou as food – we just take what we need. We talk among the community and discuss what's needed. (Déljñę)
- We usually go to the mountains to hunt and only take advantage of the Bluenose-East when they are close by. Barren-ground caribou are not relied upon as the main source of food. (Community not identified)
- What's new is that we shoot less caribou now. There were no stores then; we shoot less now because we have the store. Lots of families here go out on the land. People really respect the land and the caribou. (Colville Lake)
- We really have to think about our harvesting. A lot more people are out there harvesting now. (Déljñę)

[68]

Themes:

Sahtú Settlement Area

1. Traditionally, people just took what they needed and hunted when caribou were close to communities

- Caribou don't really come near. Some people have to go far for hunting. It hurts to see less caribou because we need them for so much. We here have caribou as food – we just take what we need. (Déljñę)
- The only time we go to get caribou is when we're having a carnival or feast. We just hunt barren-ground caribou when they are available [and take five or six]. (Norman Wells)
- The government – they want to put a limit on it, but we live with the caribou. We have some laws that we keep. We really don't want to put a limit on it. In fall, we go out on the land. People think that we shoot a lot, but we don't. We only take what we need. (Colville Lake)
- Sometimes young people shoot too many. Most of the people around here don't do that; they listen to the elders and parents and know not to do this. A lot of elders around here and people don't sell caribou for money. In other places you do get people selling them. It is disrespectful to sell them. Maybe that is part of the problem. (Colville Lake)
- Back in the 1950-60s, you did not hear about declines in caribou because Aboriginal people were managing properly. We used community freezers which were filled with bulls from fall community hunts. People were allowed to take meat once a week from the freezer. We need to go back to the old ways of managing things. (Tulít'a)
- We don't sell the meat. I don't know what they do when they bring it up [to other communities] – maybe sell it? (Colville Lake)
- We need to have more on meat sharing among people, including where non-Aboriginal people hunt with Aboriginal people. If two guys hunt together they should split the meat no matter what. (Norman Wells)
- If there is no caribou I'll starve. (Fort Good Hope)

Wek' èezhìi (Tłı̨chǫ Region)

- If the whole family ever went out together a lot of caribou would be taken. Back in the early days we used to hunt as a family. We would take about 500 animals. (Behchokǝ)
- Records show that there is less human harvest – more people are working and using store-bought food – therefore the effect on caribou is positive, but there are other impacts such as forest fires affecting them. (Behchokǝ)

Themes:

Sahtú Settlement Area

2. There were mixed impressions about whether people were harvesting more or less caribou
3. People need to work on mechanisms for respectful harvesting and sharing.

Themes:

Dehcho Region

- 1. People just took what they needed and shared with those who couldn't hunt
- 1. More caribou were harvested when they were close to the community.

Themes:

Kugluktuk, NU

- 1. Harvest levels changed from year to year
- 2. Harvest practises also changed
- 3. Harvesting rates depended on who the hunter was feeding and what other species were plentiful.

- Harvest restrictions affect how traditions are passed down to younger generations. If we cannot harvest we cannot teach our youth. We normally teach our youth to harvest over three years. (Behchokò)

Dehcho Region

- I take what I need. I don't shoot everything I see. (Wrigley)
- To my understanding, some harvesters shoot 20 to 30 caribou. They distribute it when they get home. Not everyone can hunt or have transportation to hunt. (Wrigley)
- The most we took from there is 50 to 60 caribou. When they came close to here, people got excited and I think they took too much. (Wrigley)
- Liidlil Kue people often go with Wrigley people to hunt barren-ground caribou together. Some years if the caribou do not move in to the northwest Dehcho harvest is very little, but on years when they are more accessible, a good 50 would certainly be harvested. (Fort Simpson)

Kugluktuk, NU

- I shoot lots of caribou because I have lots of relatives and old people. If there is a limit on caribou, how will these old people survive? (Kugluktuk)
- Maybe the harvest level is not the same but practices have changed and the impact of the change of practices could be the main thing. (Kugluktuk)
- Nowadays not many people live outside the communities. I think we get less caribou than in the past. (Kugluktuk)
- Long ago in Kugluktuk, people from the coast whenever they get caribou they didn't give it to the dogs. They would feed the dogs only seal and fish because caribou was too precious. Inland people were giving caribou to their dogs. Now there is nearly nobody inland. Now people are all in Kugluktuk but they harvest mainly caribou. (Kugluktuk)



2c. Harvest Regulations: *Overview*

Since the introduction of government harvest regulations, there have been four categories of harvesting recognized in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut – subsistence, resident, non-resident (i.e., outfitted), and commercial harvests – for these caribou. Most of the comments on this topic came from the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, as people were experiencing subsistence harvesting restrictions at the time of the community engagement sessions. There was very little information recorded on this topic in the Sahtú and Tłı̄ch̄q regions, and nothing from the Dehcho Region, Métis organizations or Kugluktuk.

The regulatory setting in the Inuvialuit, Gwich'in and Sahtú areas was described as follows:

All non-resident, non-resident alien, resident, and commercial hunting was stopped in March 2006 in the ISR and in October 2006 in the GSA and Sahtu Settlement Area. The WMAC and GRRB made further recommendations to restrict Aboriginal harvesting of the Cape Bathurst (no hunting) and the Bluenose-West (tag required) herds. These were implemented in September 2007. The SRRB held a Public Hearing in November 2007 to determine whether a Total Allowable Harvest for the Bluenose-West herd was warranted and has since made recommendations on a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) for the SSA to the Minister of ENR. These recommendations in the SSA and ISR included changes to the barren ground caribou hunting zones to better reflect the geographic distribution of each of the three herds.¹²

In Wek' èzhii, resident and non-resident hunting last occurred in 2009.

During the community engagements it was clear that in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, people were hunting less because of the regulations and felt they had a hard time filling their quotas because of the closed zones. Restrictions on harvesting impacted the passing on of harvesting and sharing traditions and increased poaching activities. As in the ISR, people in the Gwich'in Settlement Area also had a hard time filling their quotas because of the closed zones – they reported having to travel further to hunt. There was some uncertainty expressed about regulations, and people feared being charged for accidentally hunting in closed zones. Another theme was about how regulatory or management settings that promote a bull-dominated harvest can impact harvesting and conflict with traditions. However, because there are currently no harvest restrictions based on gender in the range of these caribou, these comments were included under *'Harvesting Traditions and Timing'* (2a).

¹² Developing a Management Plan for the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East Barren-Ground Caribou Herds: Summary of phase 1 community engagements in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region. December 2009. Available from ACCWM members.

*Themes:***Inuvialuit Settlement Region**

1. Restrictions made it harder to harvest, share and pass on traditions
2. Harvest restrictions or scarcity changed the value of caribou and made poaching a concern.

*Themes:***Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1**

1. People in Inuvik and Aklavik had a hard time filling quota due to closed zones
2. People were hunting less, in some areas due to regulations and or zones

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

- Tags are interfering with our livelihood – that's meat off the land – we've been living off the land for generations. It's like we don't misuse what we get. I know we don't overhunt. (Paulatuk)
- The quota and tags are impacting on the teaching of sharing to young people. (Paulatuk)
- Think education first before restriction. People start selling once [caribou are scarce because the price goes up]. Before, caribou was to share but once restrictions came on all they see is dollar signs. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- The restrictions on caribou are changing values on both sharing and poaching. (Paulatuk)
- 'Bootleggers' are selling caribou for higher prices. Restrictions on caribou harvesting are causing an increase in the amount of caribou poaching and the price per carcass. The younger generation sees this and, as a result, they don't see the value of sharing caribou in the community, they simply see caribou as representing dollars. (Paulatuk)
- Young people are getting wiser now and hunting caribou without calves [because of tags]. (Paulatuk)
- If we [in Aklavik] don't get our meat from the Porcupine caribou herd there is still reluctance from Aklavik people to harvest Bluenose caribou due to uncertainties over the new regulations. (Aklavik)
- We have only 75 tags, why make it harder for us to give us tags where we can't hunt? At least give us a chance to fill our quota. Right now with the zones it is pretty tough to go. You have to go in a group to go hunting and go for a few days. If you could hunt where it was more accessible... (Inuvik)

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

- There is very little harvesting by the community. The 30 tags, allocated each year are not being used. (Aklavik)
- Like what was said: why make it harder for us to give us tags where we can't hunt? At least give us a chance to fill our quota. Right now with the zones it is pretty tough to go. You have to go in a group to go hunting and go for a few days. If you could hunt where it was more accessible... [with] legislated zones – now it will be tough to change. (Inuvik)

- Since the regulations came in, a lot of people from Inuvik have changed their practices and reduced their harvest of Bluenose caribou but increased their harvest of Porcupine caribou and people are hammering moose. (Inuvik)
- A big issue that came out when I attended the big workshops [Caribou Summit, etc.]... was that the government would be turning honest people into criminals. Where it is open to hunting there is not caribou. There could be a herd of 5,000 just inside the no hunting zone. No one is going to pull out their map to check. If they are intercepted by wildlife officers, there would be charges laid. This is a fear that people have. A buffer was mentioned around the zones, 1/2 a mile wide. [There is] fear there will be charges laid even when you aren't aware that you are in a closed zone. (Inuvik)

Gwich'in Settlement Area

- It has been 15-20 years since I harvested [Bluenose caribou]. (Aklavik)

Sahtú Settlement Area

- Caribou is caribou. How would you know if you hunted Bluenose-East or Bluenose-West caribou? (Tulít'a)
- What if the other communities will not give us a tag? This is affecting our land claim rights. We do not want to be charged if hunting Bluenose-West caribou and we have no tags. (Tulít'a)

Wek' èezhii (Tłıchq̓ Region)

- Harvest restrictions affect how traditions are passed down to younger generations. If we cannot harvest we cannot teach our youth. We normally teach our youth to harvest over three years. (Behchokq̓)

Themes:

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

3. People switched to other foods as harvesting became restricted
4. People feared being charged for hunting in closed zones unintentionally.



2d. Cost and Distance of the Harvest: *Overview*

Similar information was recorded on this topic in communities of three regions – the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, the Gwich'in Settlement Area, and the Sahtú Settlement Area. Generally, people said that caribou are harvested most when they are close to the communities and less when they are further away. This theme was also heard in Wrigley and in Kugluktuk.

Two other common themes heard in the Inuvialuit, Gwich'in, and Sahtú communities were:

- The cost of harvesting increased as people had to go further and gas was more expensive (hunting zones changed distance to travel)
- People were not harvesting as much caribou as a result of cost increases.

In the ISR and GSA hunting zones had an effect on the average distance harvesters had to travel to hunt caribou. This was not the case for people in Paulatuk or Colville Lake; both of those communities reported caribou being the same or easier to access as they were close to the community.

There were no comments recorded for Wek' èzhii on this topic.

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

- Gas is the number one factor. Buying beef is cheaper. (Paulatuk)
- We are seeing caribou staying in our region year round. This information affects how we hunt. (Paulatuk)
- We need to travel further to harvest caribou therefore the costs are higher. It is more expensive, for example, for Aklavik residents to have to travel to Inuvik to harvest Bluenose caribou. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- Harvesting costs have increased and the resulting impact of these costs is to limit harvester activities. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- Since the regulations came in, a lot of people from Inuvik have changed their practices but now this is affecting the Porcupine caribou. What happens if they reach [a] critical point? What about moose? Since that quota came in, we've never filled it. We managed to harvest 40 out of 75 we were allocated. Caribou are farther away and hard to access because of deep snow and thick timber. (Inuvik)

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

- If harvesting conditions are challenging you need to get a big group together for travel for a few days. (Inuvik)
- For Inuvik, it is really hard to go up there to Tuktoyaktuk. It is so far. (Inuvik)
- We are the ones that are always suffering and trying to get meat for our elders but last two years we can't do it. They are too far for us. (Inuvik)
- In response to the location of the zones where the tags can be used, it really is cheaper [for those in Aklavik] to buy beef than hunt Bluenose caribou in the identified harvest zone. The cheapest cost for a hunt is now approximately \$500. (Aklavik)
- One change to how we harvest caribou: I brought my foster brother with me to hunt caribou and there was so much shooting up in the mountains; so much that I came back here because I was afraid of being shot, and lost \$180 in gas. Next time I had to go on the other side of the mountain, spending \$500 to go way over on the highway even when there are caribou right here; but we are not allowed to hunt them. (Inuvik)

Themes:

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

1. Cost of harvesting increased as people had to go further and gas was more expensive (hunting zones changed distance to travel)
2. People were not harvesting as much.

Themes:

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

1. Cost of harvesting increased as people had to go further and gas was more expensive (hunting zones changed distance to travel)
2. People were not harvesting as much.

- The price of gas is higher. (Inuvik)

Gwich'in Settlement Area

- Cost is limiting people from going over there – when there are no caribou on this side we used to go over there to get caribou. (Aklavik)
- We don't really harvest those herds up there – it's too far to go. We have tags but it's too far and too expensive. We mostly hunt the Porcupine caribou and the boreal herd close by – even those we seldom get one or two. (Tsiigehtchic)
- For community hunts, no one wants to hunt if they don't get paid for harvesting. If we can't pay them through the RRC, no one will hunt. Gas is so expensive. (Tsiigehtchic)
- It costs more money, there is more wear and tear on the vehicles as we have to go much farther. This makes it really hard to get out there. The justice committee [should be] providing money for gas to get people out to hunt caribou for elders. (Fort McPherson)

Themes:

Sahtú Settlement Area

1. In some areas there was no change in harvesting
2. In other areas, the cost of harvesting increased as people had to go further and gas was more expensive

Sahtú Settlement Area

- It hasn't changed much how we harvest around here. (Colville Lake)
- We haven't had any organized hunts for the last few years; it is just too far away and too costly. A couple of weeks ago we considered a community hunt but we would be looking at \$700/skidoo for the gas and supplies. We decided we couldn't afford this. (Fort Good Hope)
- We used to travel only 50 km and see lots of caribou but now they are just too far away; we can't afford to hunt them. (Fort Good Hope)
- Tulít'a mostly hunts moose and mountain caribou. Our experience with barren-ground caribou is limited to when they are close to the community. (Tulít'a)
- We cannot hunt in the summer because the caribou are too far away. (Tulít'a)
- Hunters from Tulít'a do not really go to Fort Good Hope or Colville Lake to hunt. We usually only hunt the herd around Great Bear when they are close; it's too far to go to Hottah Lake [SE of Great Bear Lake]. When barren-ground caribou do not come close to Tulít'a, we do not harvest them. (Tulít'a)

- Norman Wells people don't bother about barren-ground caribou much, but others disagreed and said that Norman Wells people 'hunt all over' the Sahtú. Certain families hunt more moose than caribou or hunt in the 'hills' [west side of Mackenzie River]. Caribou are harvested when they are close and available. (Norman Wells)
- It's very expensive getting to there. A jerry can of fuel costs \$40 and won't get you too far. We only hunt when the caribou come close and only take enough to feed your family. It's a different story now; we don't harvest as much. The harvest is low because of the distance. (Déljñę)
- It's 100 gallons for me to go to north shore of Great Bear Lake. The point is that it's hard for people. (Déljñę)

Dehcho Region

- Some years, if the caribou do not move in to the Spruce Lake area, the harvest is very little. On the two consecutive years [around 2007-2008] that caribou were down as far as Fish Lake, people got excited and they took too many. On normal years when they are found around Spruce Lake 50 to 60 caribou are generally harvested. (Wrigley)
- Liidlii Kue people often go with Wrigley people to hunt barren-ground caribou together. Some years if the caribou do not move in to the northwest Dehcho harvest is very little, but on years when they are more accessible, a good 50 would certainly be harvested. (Fort Simpson)

Kugluktuk, NU

- When the herd is close everybody goes hunting and shoots any kind of caribou. (Kugluktuk)
- People, especially the younger generation, don't travel as far now to harvest caribou as they used to, and they don't go as often – they tend to follow the coast in the summer rather than going inland. (Kugluktuk)

Themes:

Sahtú Settlement Area

3. People were not harvesting as much
4. People mostly harvested when the caribou were close to the communities.



2e. Conservation Concerns and Ease of Access: *Overview*

While there was a strong message during the community engagements that in most places, people were harvesting fewer caribou than in the past, there were also some concerns stated that people may need to temporarily restrict their harvesting to help conserve the caribou when their abundance is low. In most regions, people mentioned concerns that there may have been too much harvesting pressure on the caribou during the time of the community engagements.

In communities of the Inuvialuit, Gwich'in and Sahtú regions, there were three main themes heard during the community engagements on these topics:

- Some people had already changed their harvesting to conserve caribou;
- Skidoos and ATVs made it easier to hunt;
- Roads increased access to caribou.

Some harvesters mentioned the need to adopt stricter conservation measures or harvesting restrictions. In the Sahtú Settlement Area, it was suggested that disrespectful practices (like wasting caribou) need to be addressed to protect the animals. In Kugluktuk, some harvesters were trying to select barren cows so that the population could recover more quickly.

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

- Paulatuk does not like the tag system but we have complied with it for conservation. (Paulatuk)
- Hunting pressure is year-round, not just seasonal as it used to be [used to be mostly August-September and January-March]. It is constant pressure on the herds year-round now. (Paulatuk)
- The concentration of hunting on Tuktoyaktuk Peninsula is spooking the caribou. They run as soon as they see a skidoo. It makes harvesting much more difficult. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- We have skidoos and ATVs now. It is so much easier to hunt now, even as compared to the 1970s. (Paulatuk)
- ...with the road it will increase access in the fall to the bulls. (Inuvik)

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

- Some people have stopped hunting hoping that this will help there be more caribou for grandchildren. One harvester has stopped for six years now. (Inuvik)
- The decline might help teach people to realize they can't just do anything [kill caribou and not even use them]. Need to educate young people, not bigger guns and skidoos. (Inuvik)
- Now go hunting around Inuvik and there are so many people and so much gunfire. (Inuvik)
- We need to consider the problem of constant hunting pressure on caribou. (Inuvik)
- Today we have more harvesters, more pressures, climate change. (Aklavik)
- I'm thinking about the future of our caribou. I've not hunted caribou for the last six years. I'm trying to abide by this. I think there should be a temporary ban on hunting all caribou until a Management Plan is in place. Don't wait for the Minister to act. We are at a critical stage and if we want to keep our caribou we are going to have to move all at once. (Inuvik)
- There should be restrictions put on the highway. People take 30-40 caribou, even this winter, then they try to sell it. It's not fair they have easy access. (Aklavik)

Themes:

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

1. Some people changed their harvesting to conserve caribou
2. Hunting pressure increased in some areas
3. Skidoos and ATVs made it easier to hunt
4. Roads increased access.

Themes:

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

1. Some people changed their harvesting to conserve caribou
2. Education and cooperation were needed
3. Roads increased access.

*Themes:***Gwich'in Settlement Area**

1. Need to consider increased access with all-weather roads
2. May need adjust actions to conserve caribou

*Themes:***Sahtú Settlement Area**

1. Need to adjust actions to protect caribou
2. Skidoos and ATVs made it easier to hunt
3. Roads increased access in some areas.

Gwich'in Settlement Area

- In the near future, the Tuk road is going to be going right through there, right through the winter range [of the Cape Bathurst caribou] from here to Tuk. There are going to be a lot of people using that road. Has there been any research done on that? On any effects that that may have? ... with an all-weather road, there will be more industrial activity and so and so forth. (Inuvik)
- Even in the past elders self-conserved, didn't rely as much on caribou. (Aklavik)
- We have bigger skidoos, bigger guns, and more roads to hunt caribou. (Inuvik)
- You can't expect the caribou to go up when we are killing, killing, killing. (Tsiigehtchic)

Sahtú Settlement Area

- Years ago there was a drop in marten around Whitefish River area [north of Déljñę] and we voluntarily shut down trapping in that area for a few years. (Déljñę)
- We really have to think about our harvesting. A lot more people are out there harvesting now. (Déljñę)
- Sometimes young people shoot too many. Most of the people around here don't do that; they listen to the elders and parents and know not to do this. A lot of elders around here and people don't sell caribou for money. In other places you do get people selling them. It is disrespectful to sell them. Maybe that is part of the problem. (Colville Lake)
- We have to keep the caribou protected. If we don't then they will move away. (Colville Lake)
- In Fort Good Hope there were four truckloads wasted. Some of these young people go kind of crazy. We really have to respect and not bother them [the caribou]. (Colville Lake)
- There is increased use of motorized vehicles in hunting now. People are not abiding by the rules and more people are using motorized vehicles than years ago [it's too easy to hunt]. (Norman Wells)
- Today we have skidoos and can go way far. If you travel too much where the caribou like to go they may go away. (Colville Lake)
- [There is] easy access and with more exploration, there will be even more access. (Norman Wells)

- Hunting is much easier today with so much access by road and planes. (Tulít'a)
- We don't have roads; we don't have access. (Déljñę)

Wek' èezhii (Tłıchų Region)

- I am 84 years old, in the past we used to conserve our animals and take what we need. Our ancestors really relied on the caribou; they make every part for clothing, tools, meat and food. That's how important the caribou were to them. (Behchokò)
- The most we took from there is 50 to 60 caribou. When they came close to here, people got excited and I think they took too much. (Wrigley)

Kugluktuk, NU

- When we shoot cows, we select for the ones that are not pregnant when possible, so it doesn't affect the population so much. (Kugluktuk)
- How many caribou are harvested per Inuk? A lot of people kill lots of caribou. There should be a limit because some people kill a lot of caribou just for themselves. Some of the people kill lots of caribou and waste it. (Kugluktuk)

Photo courtesy Jody Snortland-Pellissey, WRRB



Results from Community Engagement Sessions:

3. What information is needed for management? How can your knowledge be best used in management?



Topics:

- *A. Traditional Knowledge and Harvesting Practices*
- *B. Education*
- *C. Research Questions and Suggestions*
- *D. Harvest Levels and Hunting Pressure*
- *E. Scientific Knowledge and Research Practices*
- *F. Using Local People*



3a. Traditional Knowledge and Harvesting Practices: Overview

The community engagements were not intended to be thought of as traditional or local knowledge research. Nonetheless, some of this type of information was shared and documented during the meetings in all regions. Under this topic we have compiled some traditional and community knowledge that was recorded about these caribou that did not fall under other topic headings in this report. This section cannot provide a comprehensive look at all the traditional and/or community knowledge that exists about these caribou; we can only present what was heard at the meetings about the Management Plan.

The following themes were heard across five regions:

- There is a long relationship between caribou and Aboriginal people, based on respect and principles that foster sustainability or wise use (e.g. no waste, switch to other prey during low abundance, use all parts of the caribou, etc.)
- Knowledge about animals like caribou is usually gained and/or shared while out on the land
- Traditional knowledge (TK) has played an important role in sustaining caribou
- More TK needs to be documented and its use promoted
- Harvest regulations need to accommodate traditional practices, such as letting the leaders pass
- Traditionally, people hunted by the seasons and according to the condition of the animal
- Good management needs to accommodate traditional knowledge, community knowledge and scientific knowledge
- ENR and communities need to cooperate to use both sources of information effectively.

Importantly, it was also pointed out in more than one area that knowledge systems and knowledge gained on the land are negatively impacted by harvest restrictions. That is, if people are not going out to harvest as much, less new information is being built into knowledge systems and is available for monitoring and research, and fewer traditional practices are being passed down.

There is some overlap between this topic and information included in section 2 of this report. This section focuses primarily on information needs for management. Most comments about how traditional knowledge affects how caribou are harvested (e.g. by season, condition, location) is included in section 2a (*Harvesting Traditions and Timing*).

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

- Traditional knowledge is being lost. Animals will have a better chance of survival if this traditional knowledge is circulated and passed on. (Paulatuk)
- The plan needs to have more traditional knowledge. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- We should seek our elders and what they have seen regarding the ups and downs of the population before they are gone. (Inuvik)
- Would it be easier to manage as three [herds]? There are three calving areas. I think we have to keep it as three, the numbers show it. Yes they mingle, the elders told us that. (Inuvik)
- People think they are one herd, all the same caribou. Traditional knowledge has got an important role. If people are saying [it's the] same herd, it should be. (Aklavik)
- [What] if we have one herd, but manage numbers every three or five years so we don't have to live with the tag system? We would go back to the traditional way of harvesting, not taking more than you need. I wouldn't mind saying we would like to revert back to one herd. (Paulatuk)
- How do we bring in TK and science and make it work? Those values and trying to set thresholds [don't] really click. (Paulatuk)
- Why are we putting so much faith into the old reports or the old plan when they did not incorporate traditional knowledge? (Tuktoyaktuk)

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

- What is the plan to meet that number one priority from the summit to use more traditional knowledge? (Aklavik)
- Targeting only bulls is the stupidest thing ever. Killing all the bulls –when time to breed there won't be any prime caribou for breeding. We were taught to hunt by the seasons. (Inuvik)
- Think of the elders and how they do things – not in a rush. They thought about it and took their time before deciding. [We] need to respect that. (Inuvik)

Themes:

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

1. Traditional knowledge and practices have played an important role in sustaining caribou
2. More TK needs to be documented and its use promoted
3. Harvest regulations should accommodate traditional practices.

*Themes:***Gwich'in Settlement Area**

1. Traditional knowledge and practices have played an important role in sustaining caribou
2. More TK needs to be documented and its use promoted
3. Harvest regulations should accommodate traditional practices
4. Traditionally, people would let the leaders pass.

Gwich'in Settlement Area

- Use traditional knowledge: our way of hunting [to develop the Management Plan] – [it's] very important to our way of hunting. (Fort McPherson)
- Educating the young – take it all, keep it clean, take everything home. Basically that is what they do. (Fort McPherson)
- Do a TK study, survey or something, door to door for these three herds. The most knowledgeable and wise people prefer to stay at home, not to come to meetings. Ask them the same question. (Tsiigehtchic)
- If harvesting is not allowed, then harvesters don't travel, so who are you going to ask? (Inuvik)
- Climate change, where the caribou are travelling, the weather [this is part of the knowledge we use]. (Fort McPherson)
- Just thinking back – way back as far as I can remember – we didn't have lots of moose, caribou. People lived on fish. Moose were scarce. [You could] spend three or four days on the trap line and get nothing. [We] didn't care because we were physically fit. [We] need to manage the best we can. It won't just take one or two communities. It will take all the NWT. (Tsiigehtchic)
- Our parents used to move with the caribou, they had to follow the caribou and guess where the caribou would be. They also would use all the parts. Right 'til the fall, until they saw the caribou again. [We] really need to have education programs for the caribou again. (Fort McPherson)
- One year you will hunt in a certain area, another year somewhere else. [We] should have hunting in different areas. Spread it out and change it so [we're] not over hunting within each area. (Fort McPherson)
- When I go hunting, there is always a certain time of the year to go hunting. If we mess up that timeline it changes where the caribou go – [you have to] let the leaders pass – more education is needed. (Tsiigehtchic)
- Let the leaders go. Don't shoot the leaders. Teach harvesters to know who the leaders are so they are not killed. [This is] hard to teach, [that the] leaders need to stay there. (Tsiigehtchic)

Sahtú Settlement Area

- My grandfather says that we were once caribou and caribou were once people. We switched when there was starvation. There are a lot of stories. In the past, not too long ago, some years [there was] no caribou, no meat. Before some elders were born, some years [there was] no meat. (Colville Lake)
- We have been living with the caribou all our lives. (Colville Lake)
- In the past the elders knew the caribou. The caribou made laws for themselves. We have to respect that – like the legend about the young boy that turned into a caribou. He told the other people not to worry about him. [They] can make clothes from his skin. When you harvest a caribou, don't throw anything over your head. You have to respect that. Caribou, when they give birth they usually only have one calf, two is rare. Last fall a hunter had a cow with three calves – there is a Dene name for this. [They] killed one cow years ago that when they cut it open had three fetuses. The elders said that this was a good sign, that [they] would have lots of caribou. [It's the] same as a few years ago when we had thousands of caribou here, so [it] is the same recently when we had the cow with the three calves – [it] might be a sign there will be hundreds and thousands of caribou. Across the lake here is a good feeding ground for caribou. This is why they travel thousands of kilometers to [come] here. ... We have beliefs like that. (Déljñę)
- We see lots of our grandfathers' signs out there on the land. We go there to visit the caribou – it's like when you visit where you came from. We need to protect the caribou but we don't really agree with limiting the caribou. If you look back at our history, we have caribou all the way. We look after the caribou. It's kind of not safe if we put the caribou in the hands of the government. (Colville Lake)
- The government – they want to put a limit on it, but we live with the caribou. We have some laws that we keep. We really don't want to put a limit on it. In fall, we go out on the land. People think that we shoot a lot, but we don't. We only take what we need. (Colville Lake)
- The elders of the past taught us that the caribou knows when people disrespect the other caribou; they have a lot of power. (Colville Lake)

Themes:

Sahtú Settlement Area

1. There is a long relationship between caribou and people, based on respect
2. Traditional knowledge and practices have played an important role in sustaining caribou
3. More TK needs to be documented and its use promoted
4. Harvest regulations should accommodate traditional practices

Themes:

Sahtú Settlement Area

5. Good management needs to use both TK and SK; ENR and communities need to cooperate
6. Traditionally, people would let the leaders pass.

- You should combine scientific and traditional knowledge. I keep saying to the government that my people have doctorate degrees in their knowledge. If you come here and say you know more than these people, then you can just go away. Where are our papers that say we have degrees? (Déljñę)
- The elders say that the cycle might be low when they are being disrespected, such as when you hit them with a stick and then the caribou go away for seven or eight years. Around here before 1941, that's when the caribou moved over here, about 70 years ago. (Colville Lake)
- Lots of families here go out on the land. People really respect the land and the caribou. People from other communities shoot too many caribou and bother the caribou. Maybe you guys don't know as much as the elders do! We need to work together. (Colville Lake)
- It's very hard for elders to express their feelings when they are asked about caribou. I have feelings for the caribou. We really take care of the caribou. Every time we ask for money to address these things, the people from the government who come don't understand the Dene way and how we relate to the caribou. (Déljñę)
- How [do you] tell what herd a caribou is from? The elders say they can tell about the caribou from the way that they look – they can tell a caribou that is 'not from around here.' (Colville Lake)
- Maybe that's part of the problem with the caribou... many of the old ways not being practiced. (Colville Lake)
- There is a loss of culture – maybe that's part of what's going on with caribou. In the past what the elders taught was really respected. They took it all in. Now [that's] not happening. Maybe we should bring it into the school. There's always no funding for language. (Colville Lake)
- A lot of the young people here in Colville Lake know the respect that should be given to caribou. But young people from other places don't know this respect; they aren't being taught. Maybe that is why we still have caribou around, because the respect is still there. (Colville Lake)
- Around here, people understand the caribou... in October a lot of caribou went by. You let them go – even if there are lots – you respect the animals (Colville Lake)
- People can't take the first caribou that come through [during migration]. (Tulít'a)

- The elders just want to leave it the way that it is. Many of the elders just don't feel comfortable talking about it. If you hit one caribou [with a stick] – how do the other 100,000 caribou know? They all move away. So, it's hard for us. (Colville Lake)
- The caribou are their own boss. The animals take care of themselves. (Déljñę)
- You eat all the meat off of the neckbone – that is respect. The caribou will come back then because they know you will use them. We have to watch how we waste. Don't throw it out. (Déljñę)



Photo courtesy Deb Simmons, SRRB

*Themes:***Wek' èezhì**

1. There is a long relationship between caribou and people, based on respect
2. Traditional knowledge and practices have played an important role in sustaining caribou

Wek' èezhì (Tłı̨chǫ Region)

- I was raised on the land and grew up with the caribou. I was taught how to look after my hunting and take what I have to. I was taught on the land. The caribou is a really sensitive animal and we do respect it. (Behchokǫ)
- Harvest restrictions affect how traditions are passed down to younger generations. If we cannot harvest we cannot teach our youth. We normally teach our youth to harvest over three years. (Behchokǫ)
- We love it because we live by it. I have walked the land and even traveled by dog team, snowmobile and plane so I am really knowledgeable about caribou. You people just recently got here. Dene people are very knowledgeable we can teach you very well about the caribou issue. (Behchokǫ)
- It is great with the help of elders and communities, with agencies – we probably could revive the herd in no time. (Whatì)
- I think that most of us know exactly what the caribou knows because our ancestors give us indication of how that animal related to the human being. An Aboriginal person is not allowed to hit a caribou with a stick or the caribou will not come back to the same spot for 30-40 years. I agree with the elders about wolves. There are some techniques that the wolves have their own way of hunting. They know how to corral the caribou and kill them all. A lot of communities, they live by animals and exchange ideas about how best to hunt and preserve the animals and butcher, these types of things. We learn from one another and share information. They learn from us too. (Whatì)
- Today we pretty well have to have greater respect for animals. You don't feed them, control them, look after their health, or them when they are sick. We as human beings shouldn't say how we should administer the caribou. Caribou are wise. If they know the land is all burned out they don't go back to that area. They come back to humans because they have respect for humans. In some ways they have to relate to the humans. Today we are not following that. It is problematic for everybody. (Whatì)

- I am 84 years old, in the past we used to conserve our animals and take what we need. Our ancestors really relied on the caribou; they make every part for clothing, tools, meat and food. That's how important the caribou were to them. (Behchokò)
- It's always good to have elders and scientists working together, incorporating traditional knowledge. Those of us living off the land learned from our ancestors, survived solely on the caribou. The caribou start migrating in the near future, until then we try to control and preserve caribou to migrate back to the barren-lands. That's how much respect we have. (Whatì)
- If you keep on insisting on what you want for yourself, that will not solve anything. The elders told us not to open too many mines at one time; it would block the migration route. We are trying to speak for the future generations. In the past the elders had to break trail for us to preserve the caribou. This is part of what we have to do for our children. We do have to appreciate one another. We support one another and share meat among us and use it wisely. I'm sure the caribou need our support as well. Don't expect the young to come up with solutions by themselves. You need elders as well as officers, hunters. (Behchokò)
- Let us help one another and support the herd. Show the young people how they can use caribou wisely. I have taken a lot of young hunters, students out on the land. We wouldn't know without biologists looking after the herd – we should appreciate what they have done on our behalf. ... Compared to olden days there has been a lot of change. It's always good to confirm with one another. (Behchokò)
- We have to work together, as the caribou users. We have some people that work for us as resource people like ENR to monitor. The harvesters and renewable resource officers work together rather than making excuses or taking blame. Our ancestors taught us how to look after, to butcher, and items to leave behind, [like] part of the caribou stomach. The elders always reminded us that caribou have their own superiors to report to when they do migrations. It depends on how we handle them – they report back favourably. But if they don't they won't come back to the same hunters. This is what we learned from our elders. (Behchokò)

Themes:

Wek' èezhii

3. Good management needs to use both TK and SK; ENR and communities need to cooperate

Themes:

Wek' èezhì

4. More TK needs to be documented and its use promoted.

- The question is how to monitor the caribou. You just recently got here. My elders that are here can also speak. We are very knowledgeable about where they migrate. Do you know what kind of caribou we harvest? Are you aware of whether a calf is male or female? There is a name for caribou of different ages and gender, and dry cows... (Behchokò)
- ... like most of the previous speakers they say they were raised by living with the animals and eating the meat for food. We as Aboriginal people from this part of the country we live by caribou and other meat such as moose occasionally. Non-Aboriginal people live by cattle. Our diet is caribou and moose, mostly. Since I was a little child I remember how I was raised by the animals such as caribou. In the days when I grew up there were no such thing as cattle. All our ancestors had was tobacco, rifles and ammunition, that's all they needed and raised their families. Caribou means a lot to their family as they use it for food and the hide for clothing. Most of us traveled to Grandin Lake area. It is quite a way by dog team. There was nowhere else to get caribou. If you had to break trail with snowshoe we did that too. That was how we were taught. Our ancestors did the best in hunting. It was part of our life and there was competition in it, always tried to outdo our partner. We listen to our ancestors, who don't want us to eat bone marrow from thigh bone. They claim that the caribou might outrun you. You don't take the delicate stuff yourself. That is how we are taught. Today there is no teaching like that in our community. A lot of good information is not being taught. Even then when the caribou don't come back in an area, our elders right away know the reason. Maybe someone hit them with a stick. You have to find a new location to hunt. They always follow the herd. And the caribou is not in one spot, they are always moving so they find good feeding area. That is why our ancestors moved with caribou as well. (Whati)

Dehcho Region

- In the education part it would be useful to have something that encourages hunter feedback about where caribou are, and what condition they are in. (Fort Simpson)

Kugluktuk, NU

- It should be a priority to collect traditional knowledge from our elders – we are losing them quickly. (Kugluktuk)
- Why not arrange a class with the elders to teach about the caribou herds and how to manage them. (Kugluktuk)
- How come they don't invite the elders at this meeting? They know a lot about caribou and what happened in the past. (Kugluktuk)
- Young people don't know how to hunt or manage caribou, they don't know the best seasons to hunt caribou, and a caribou camp with elders would help to teach the young people how to properly harvest caribou. (Kugluktuk)
- The information held by members of the communities is a great resource. (Kugluktuk)
- It is important to address the concerns and incorporate the input of the communities and to promote the Management Plan as such. It will help increase compliance, allowing the herds to respond positively. Hunters and elders have always managed the herds in their own way – to have a Management Plan that is effective, you have to respect these principles. (Kugluktuk)
- In the past everything was used, even bones. I had a dog team pretty much all my life. Dogs used to be given broth but a dog spoke up and asked the man to have the bones. Caribou bones are good for dogs. There is a lot to eat in the bones. People used to pound any bones from a caribou and cook it. There is a lot of food in the bones. Nowadays bones are thrown away. It's alright, foxes will eat them, but it's different. (Kugluktuk)
- Wastage has gone way down compared to past years due to education. However, we used (with my parents) to use even the legs right down to the hoofs but I don't do that anymore. I still bring the legs but we give them away to other people or the dogs. [It's the] same for the caribou heads. (Kugluktuk)
- When the first caribou are passing through an area, it is important to let them pass without harvesting them. These animals lead the group, while the ones behind follow their tracks and their scent. If the first caribou are caught, the others don't know where to go and the group can be diverted. To maintain their natural migration path it is important to let the leaders pass by unharmed. (Kugluktuk)

Themes:

Kugluktuk, NU

1. Traditional knowledge and practices have played an important role in sustaining caribou
2. More TK needs to be documented and its use promoted
3. Harvest regulations should accommodate traditional practices, such as letting the leaders pass.



3b. Education: *Overview*

This arose as a priority topic during the community engagements even though it was not directly asked in the focus questions identified by the Working Group. A lot of information was documented in all regions. Overall, there was a very strong message from the communities that a greater emphasis on education – especially lessons about how to harvest caribou respectfully – should be the first approach to management. Then, if education was not found to be successful enough, harvest restrictions should be considered.

The common themes documented for most regions were:

- Good education may achieve conservation better than imposing restrictions
- The Management Plan should emphasize conservation education
- Education should include traditional knowledge and harvesting practices for caribou
- Educate about respectful harvest practices and safety in school and out on the land.

It was also commonly stressed that it's not just youth, but also adults who need education about respectful caribou harvesting practices. There were ideas about using radio, video, flyers, YouTube, Facebook, meetings and television for education as well as communication. For example, it was suggested that the radio could be used to inform harvesters on thresholds and harvesting requirements, and the television could be used to show videos on how to butcher properly.

Some of the messages that people said they would like to see included in educational programs were:

- Proper hunting and butchering techniques (e.g., how to sight rifles and select caribou, how to use all parts)
- How to reduce waste and wounding loss
- How to harvest with the seasons
- How to dress and share meat
- Leaving pregnant cows alone
- Only take what you need, and
- How to recognize and not harvest leaders of the pack.

It was suggested that many people have a role in education – ENR, RRCs and family responsibilities were all mentioned. In addition to educating the public, it was stressed in Kugluktuk that it is also important to educate industry on minimizing disturbance and proper monitoring of caribou.

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

- Think education first before restriction. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- Conservation education should be emphasized in the plan at all stages, not just when the herd is declining. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- Traditional knowledge is being lost. Animals will have a better chance of survival if this TK is circulated and passed on. (Paulatuk)
- Young people don't know how to cut up caribou now. (Paulatuk)
- For education, take kids trapping, hunting caribou... learning to hunt, dress, use all parts. (Paulatuk)
- I want to teach other people how to harvest and cut the meat properly [they might put less effort into shooting animals and more into helping others]. (Paulatuk)

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

- Education is the key to cooperation, respect, and compliance. Get it into the school. (Aklavik)
- We have failed to get the need for [participation in] harvest studies and the co-management process into the schools. It should have been there ten years ago. (Aklavik)
- Education for young harvesters to properly hunt is an important part of conservation education. [We need continued] hunting education in the school system. (Aklavik)
- Since we lost the caribou I was glad initially because it might help people to realize they can't just do anything [kill caribou and not even use them]. It makes people wake up and realize that caribou might not be around forever. [We] need lots of education and to educate the young people. (Inuvik)
- Teach our people how to harvest properly – according to season – fall bulls, after rut, dry cows, then back to bulls again to leave birthing cows alone. (Inuvik)
- Education is important – [I] always say at meetings we have to educate our harvesters how to hunt caribou – we need to do that. (Aklavik)
- Educate the young hunters – [I was] listening to the news today about caribou being wasted – especially about wastage. (Aklavik)
- Set up a program and make up a video of it and hand it out. (Inuvik)

Themes:

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

1. Good education could be more effective than restrictions
2. The plan should emphasize conservation education
3. Educate children in respectful harvest practices, TK, and safety in school and by taking them out on the land.

Themes:

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

1. Educate children in respectful harvest practices and safety in school
2. Proper hunting techniques are part of conservation education

*Themes:*Inuvialuit and
Gwich'in Shared
Meetings, Round 1

3. Education should include traditional knowledge and harvesting practices for caribou
4. Use videos for education.

- [We] can let ENR guys go in the school and make presentations. I'm not going hunting but I have 22 grandchildren [who might]. Put it in the system. Put it in the school and make it mandatory that they watch how to harvest, how to cut it up, how to store it. Put it on channel five and run it on there. (Inuvik)
- Now you see lots of new harvesters that you haven't seen before. Sure they can go out with a gun but maybe they aren't doing it in the proper way. Maybe there could be a program about how to harvest caribou properly in the field and safely. This needs to show the youth too. The programs are now just for youth and elders but not for the middle-aged people. [They] need to include them too. A good program would be how to harvest any kind of animal, but caribou is most important. [They] might as well do it right and then everybody is on the same page with how to harvest caribou, and then no one will be complaining. (Inuvik)
- I am passing on how to harvest the caribou. If he'd gone out by himself he may have butchered the meat, but now he knows [the traditional way and no waste]. (Inuvik)



Photo courtesy Lawrence Norbert

Gwich'in Settlement Area

- Some of these things should be taken to school to educate them about caribou... especially the elderly school pupils. Some people take their children out of school on the weekend and go out hunting. This is where they need to be taught: how to handle and take care of caribou, don't harvest too much. They need to be taught this in school. This should be one of their education programs all over the NWT. This should be taught in school. They are going to be the next people who will take care of caribou. (Fort McPherson)
- Get into the school – together with Take Kids Harvesting Programs. [The] same thing with the RRC – get youth involved – [a] captive audience at school. Get into bed with programs, sponsor them. Kids can get [their] parents involved. (Fort McPherson)
- I wonder about going into the schools and making sure younger students know about it. They can talk to their families that way. (Fort McPherson)
- Strategize more on communication and education programs – for example, education on leader of the pack. Use flyers or something, elders coming in to talk, potluck dinners, prizes – whatever to bring them in. (Tsiigehtchic)
- A lot of people hunt with scopes on their guns. They shoot from too far away with scope guns and tip them off. Do away with that – reduce the number of caribou taken. (Fort McPherson)
- To me, it is basically sport hunting, doing that. A lot of these young people, they don't know what to shoot. The first caribou they see, they will shoot it. Not only that, but they don't know how to tell what caribou is good. We know which one is fat, which one is good. So that kind of education is needed too. (Fort McPherson)
- There needs to be more communication about caribou and hunting practices. How much education is going into this? This is really important. There are some bad examples out there. For example, the [Bathurst] caribou found dead... everybody [was] going crazy and shooting the herds. [I'm] not blaming anybody because we all need to be aware of it. [There is the] story of kids [snowmobile] breaking down and having to walk. Somehow we aren't getting the education to them. (Inuvik)

Themes:

Gwich'in Settlement Area

1. Educate youth in respectful harvest practices and safety in school and by taking them out on the land
2. Education should include traditional knowledge and harvesting practices for caribou
3. Use flyers, talks with elders, potluck dinners, prizes, etc. to bring people in for communication and education
4. Adults also need education about respectful harvesting practices (e.g., no waste, proper sighting, let leaders, pass, etc.)

*Themes:***Gwich'in Settlement Area**

5. ENR could do conservation education in the schools.

- Educating the young: Take it all, keep it clean, take everything home. Basically that is what they do. (Fort McPherson)
- When I go hunting, there is always a certain time of the year to go hunting. If we mess up that timeline it changes where the caribou go – let the leaders pass – more education is needed. (Tsiigehtchic)
- What we are trying to tell the young people, is that the first bunch is always poor caribou because they have been travelling steady... They just want to shoot caribou. They don't care if it is poor caribou or five caribou, as long as they shoot it. (Fort McPherson)
- I don't know about Fort McPherson, but they have some hunting education and trapper education programs. When I used to work for ENR, there was trapper education and teaching young people how to trap. They were good at this and on the right side of it. Need to have hunter education for the young people. They would learn fast. This fellow's young boys – he takes them hunting out on the mountain since they were young. They take their truck down the mountain and hunt caribou – that is education right there. If they have programs like that every year, this would help. People go hunting and they go out there, they may not know how to do it properly. They just go up there and sink it out. Hunter education is important. Important for young people to learn. (Fort McPherson)
- Talking about education, I believe that we should meet with other groups, like the Inuvialuit and other people that go on the highway to inform them what we are trying to do about the caribou in our region. (Fort McPherson)

*Themes:***Sahtú Settlement Area**

1. Educate children in respectful harvest practices and safety in school and by taking them out on the land

Sahtú Settlement Area

- A lot of the elders in this community really believe what they learned from their elders and parents. If they learn something, it is like the Ten Commandments. (Colville Lake)
- The change is that the new generation needs to be taught. The teaching has to be there – it has to start with the family – safety, everything. Single parents need more help. (Déljñę)
- Harvesting – it is hard, it is our way of living for Dene people. Now, we have a lot of non-Aboriginals taking animals. They don't know how to skin the animals. That is one of the things that needs to be looked at. (Tulít'a)

- Many of the old ways are not being practiced. There is a loss of culture – maybe that’s part of what’s going on with the caribou. In the past what the elders taught was really respected. They took it all in. Now that’s not happening. Maybe we should bring it into the school. There’s always no funding for language. (Colville Lake)
- Could this type of course be taught through the schools, then bring in the RRCs to help? It must be hardwired in somewhere, if it is going to last. The funding needs to be there every year. (Norman Wells)
- The age of the hunter also comes into it too. You can’t be too young; you have to be strong enough to move the animal. I don’t like the age 14. It should be 18, 19, or 21. (Tulít’a)
- In Fort Good Hope there were four truckloads wasted. Some of these young people go kind of crazy. We really have to respect [the caribou]. (Colville Lake)
- [We] need hunter education on things like proper use of meat, sharing, meat wastage, and conservation. (Norman Wells)
- I have seen a lot of people going out to hunt without ever having sighted in their rifles – they just go out and hunt. There needs to be education for all hunters. I done the training, I learned a lot from it. Today, I see kids going out without anyone to teach them; they take their gun and learn on their own. There should be a hunter safety and education course through the school – make it part of the curriculum. (Déljñę)
- A hunter awareness course could teach targeting, so people know where the vital organs on the animal are, etc. (Déljñę)
- About a month ago I went out on the land and saw a moose that was shot in the leg and was bleeding pretty bad... I shot it and brought it back here. (Colville Lake)
- Use YouTube and FaceBook, or also radio – have radio contests. (Déljñę)
- It would be good to get signs on the winter road to remind people to respect caribou. (Community not identified)

Themes:

Sahtú Settlement Area

2. Adults also need education about respectful harvesting practices (e.g., no waste, proper sighting, let leaders, pass, etc.)
3. Education should include traditional knowledge and harvesting practices for caribou
4. Use media (like radio) and road signs to remind people to respect caribou.

Wek' èezhìi (Tłı̨chǫ Region)

- Show the young people how they can use caribou wisely. I have taken a lot of young hunters, students out on the land. (Behchokò)

Dehcho Region

- In the education part it would be useful to have something that encourages hunter feedback about where caribou are, and what condition they are in. (Fort Simpson)

NWT Métis Nation

- Waste and people who waste should be denounced publically in the community with photos of waste put in public places. Peer pressure is a good way to address waste issues. (Community not identified)

Kugluktuk, NU

- Before changing everything, you should inform everybody and teach hunters how to harvest properly, before imposing limitations. If it works well then we don't need to impose limitations. If it doesn't work then you try something else [more restrictions]. (Kugluktuk)
- We know we have to teach our young people how to shoot caribou, to select non-pregnant cows. If we shoot one pregnant caribou it's like shooting two animals. I would like to see more education through the school for hunting. Caribou are getting low, how can we control the harvest so pregnant cows are spared? We need to teach the young people. (Kugluktuk)
- A few years ago, there were lots of caribou around. I saw young people shooting caribou just like they were just doing it for fun, just to kill the caribou. I want to look after these kinds of behaviour. In the future, when caribou are getting low, I would like to see people at a public meeting so the information can be communicated to the people. We have to care for our caribou for the future. I want the wildlife people to work closely with young people more than ever in these days of caribou decline. (Kugluktuk)

Themes:

Kugluktuk, NU

1. Good education could be more effective than imposing restrictions
2. Educate children in respectful harvest practices and safety in school and by taking them out on the land

- This education should include school visits starting in kindergarten, but there is also a need to reach those that are older and have finished school. It was recognized that the education is largely a community responsibility – it should be learned from parents and grandparents – but it was suggested that sponsors of the Management Plan could assist with some of the costs of these educational sessions and workshops as part of their community involvement and education. (Kugluktuk)
- There should be evening classes to educate older people that are not in the school anymore. We're going to have to start educating these peoples. (Kugluktuk)
- The southerners need as much teaching as young hunters. Now after three months a resident can buy his tags. It would be good that they spend some time with elders to learn how to hunt up here. (Kugluktuk)
- This year is good – no wound and loss because no caribou. Two years ago people were finding dead caribou. Quite a few of them walked and died after being shot. That year was high but not as high because it was close to town. [It] depends on the type of rifle they are using, like a 22LR or magnum. (Kugluktuk)
- There is a need for education on how to properly track animals, kill them efficiently, and skin them, prepare the meat, and reduce waste. This should include when to harvest what types of caribou (for example, the meat from males is not good in the fall during the rut). The younger generation doesn't have as many of these skills, or they are not as well developed as they should be. There is too much waste as the entire animal is not used very often any more. (Kugluktuk)
- Why not set up a mine site visit with the elders to talk to the environment departments to discuss our concerns with the caribou herds, to teach them? Environment departments are harassing the caribou too much, to keep them away from the mine sites. (Kugluktuk)
- It is also important to educate industry on how to avoid harassment and to properly monitor and record wildlife observations. These records should be shared with the local HTO offices. (Kugluktuk)
- The Management Plan is intended to manage people, but it is impossible to manage everybody everywhere all at the same time. We have to focus education to where it is needed the most. (Kugluktuk)

Themes:

Kugluktuk, NU

3. Adults also need education about respectful harvesting practices (e.g., how to select caribou, decreasing wounding loss)
4. Industry/developers also need education about how to protect caribou.



3c. Research Questions and Suggestions: *Overview*

As noted under '*Traditional Knowledge and Harvesting Practices*' at the beginning of this section, communities in all regions stressed how important it is to use traditional knowledge in Management Planning. For this to happen, the information first needs to be researched and/or documented. This is considered an 'information gap' in many areas – a lot of knowledge is held by community members, but it has generally not been communicated or shared very effectively with management organizations, nor has it been accommodated very well by regulatory regimes. During the community engagements and Management Planning process, it was repeatedly emphasized – by many different people, in many different places – that it is critical that this work gets done and the resulting information helps shape Management Plans.

Many of the comments recorded in the Inuvialuit, Gwich'in and Sahtú settlement regions were similar for this topic. Some common research suggestions in these areas were to:

- Document traditional knowledge on many topics
- Improve understandings of caribou population decline or cycles
- Study 'inter-herd' movements
- Look at cumulative impacts to habitat, including impacts of climate change and human disturbance
- Study predation rates and the impact of predation on herds.

Additional research topics that were suggested involved looking into calf mortality, researching caribou health, and monitoring insect populations. It was also stressed in several areas that traditional knowledge should inform how and when scientific surveys are done; for the most part, these comments have been included in '*Scientific Knowledge and Research Practices*' (3e).

During the public review, members of the NWT Métis Nation suggested that the influence of industrial activity and mining exploration and operation should be closely monitored at all stages of caribou population status. It was also suggested that winter roads be added to the zone of influence on caribou and ways to monitor and assess how trucks travelling disturb migrating and staging caribou be developed.

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

- We should seek our elders and what they have seen regarding the ups and downs of the population before they are gone. (Inuvik)
- Are there softer, quieter ways of doing recruitment surveys? (Paulatuk)
- The time of year for the survey flights should be reconsidered [to minimize stress on the herd]. People would like to see surveys in October and November. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- I want to see caribou surveys in April to determine routes, population, and herd identity. You need more locals to count and/or photograph caribou. (Paulatuk)
- Count caribou when they are migrating at traditional water crossing sites. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- The plan must state the need for studies to determine the extent of inter-herd movements of caribou (i.e., ‘herd shifting’). (Tuktoyaktuk)
- The plan must address more fully the need for habitat and disturbance studies to address the management of long-term cumulative impacts on the herd – the need for habitat studies is acute in the Tuk Peninsula where reindeer have been held and grazed for many years. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- We need other studies on climate change and on habitat. Timing of green-up may have changed and we can use satellite images to be able to look at changes in climate and habitat. (Paulatuk)
- The organization of caribou, their numbers and range location, and fidelity in winter can be applied to research and management questions. (Community not identified)
- What are the causes of caribou decline? We need to see if it is wolves, grizzly bears or habitat. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- We also need to consider wolf populations and their pressure on caribou. (Paulatuk)

Themes:

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

1. Need to document traditional knowledge on caribou cycles
2. Traditional and local knowledge and perspectives should inform how surveys are done
3. Research needs to look at ‘inter-herd’ movements
4. Research needs to look at cumulative impacts to habitat, including impacts of climate change and human disturbance
5. Predation rates and impact on herds should be studied.

Themes:

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

1. Caribou population decline or cycles need to be better understood
2. Traditional and local knowledge and perspectives should inform how surveys are done
3. Predation rates and impact on herds should be studied
4. Research needs to look at cumulative impacts to habitat, including climate change effects and habitat studies
5. Research needs to look at 'inter-herd' movements.

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

- I have heard that this [the caribou population decline] is just a cycle. Is it? What else do we need to know and what do you need to know [to understand it]? (Aklavik)
- Surveys should be done in spring and fall when caribou are migrating because they are easier to count when they are in groups. (Community not identified)
- We see caribou migrate in the fall and spring. Why are they doing surveys at the wrong time of the year? (Inuvik)
- What is the proportion of Aboriginal harvest to predation? (Inuvik)
- We need to know predation rate over harvest rate. I think the predation rate on the herds is more than harvest. We need to know this to manage better. (Inuvik)
- Predation – [there are] no real studies on numbers of wolves, bears, eagles. (Aklavik)
- Take a break from collaring and studying caribou – we know they are there. Take some of that caribou research money and put it elsewhere – maybe a bounty on wolves or bears. ENR estimates that one wolf could take about 20 caribou in a year – imagine what one of those big packs could do. No matter who you talk to, there are lots of wolves and they eat lots of caribou. (Inuvik)
- [We] need access to other research – climate change research, habitat studies – [these are] going to be a big factor. People need to know that information to make the best plan. (Aklavik)
- One of the things they predicted for the Porcupine caribou herd is that there will be more insects – scientists predict this. This year there were very little bugs but there is also more winds... ENR biologist mentioned about measuring warble flies in the hide – I don't see the information. Do you notice more when you are getting them in the spring? This is why I think we need to get more information about the caribou. (Aklavik)
- In the summer woodland caribou come up as far north as Husky Lakes. I've seen them with barren-ground [caribou] running around in the barrens. A population shift is happening. What about 'crossover' of herds? Is this being studied? (Inuvik)

Gwich'in Settlement Area

- Use traditional knowledge: our way of hunting [in the Management Plan] – [it's] very important to our way of hunting. (Fort McPherson)
- Do a TK study or something, door to door for these three herds. The most knowledgeable and wise people prefer to stay at home, not to come to meetings. Ask them the same question. (Tsiigehtchic)
- What is the most important detrimental factor for caribou – [what is] causing declines? (Inuvik)
- Research – [I've] heard that there is enough information to make decisions on that. [I] don't want to do too much research without actually managing and making decisions. (Inuvik).
- Scientists ... aren't looking at habitat. Like the Porcupine caribou, the Bluenose herds are changing their migration. The herd still ends up somewhere on the coast, mostly together. (Aklavik)
- Do the [population estimate] at least every five years... [Doing it every three] would be really good. (Fort McPherson)
- Do the [population estimate] survey every three years but more often [when the numbers are low] – every two years. (Fort McPherson)
- The population survey is okay every three years. (Inuvik)
- Change the [monitoring survey] frequency based on how many. If high, don't spend money to monitor so much. If not many, then [do it] more often to see if they are making a come-back. (Aklavik)
- [The] area survey, annual recruitment – put it towards monitoring – [those are] stressing caribou. Put resources into monitoring. (Inuvik)
- ...It is an ambitious plan. But I don't see it. Based on, if there are capacity issues now – which everyone has, but you know realistically some of that stuff could be done. Maybe use the annual flight money to put money into this [monitoring body condition and health]. I'm not sure. (Inuvik)
- Assess predator management needs. [In the] late '80s to early '90s near Parson's Lake and that, we would find dead caribou shot and left in order to bring the wolves into town. We saw eight to ten caribou shot and left and then people went and shot the wolves. Need to monitor that too. (Tsiigehtchic)

Themes:

Gwich'in Settlement Area

1. Need to document and use traditional knowledge in management planning
2. Caribou population declines or cycles need to be better understood
3. Studies need to look at habitat and changes to migration
4. Monitoring frequency should be based on population status and should consider traditional and local knowledge
5. Some research stresses caribou; put money into other types

*Themes:*Gwich'in
Settlement Area

6. Predation rates and impact on herds should be studied; may need to consider predator control as part of management

7. Need to research and monitor impacts of developments like all-weather roads

8. Need to research impacts of management actions such as bull-only harvesting

9. Research needs to look at changes in habitat, including cumulative impacts of climate change, human disturbance and fire

- We know around here there are lots of wolves around. Any surveys done on wolves? (Fort McPherson)
- You hear about it when the caribou are declining, the wolf population is doing what? The wolves must be doing something and be somewhere! (Tsiigehtchic)
- We always make mention that wolves are responsible for the decline of animals and no one wants to seem to listen to that part. So for the management actions, maybe they should start managing those wolves too. Not get them extinct, but manage their population because you know one pack of wolves could have a moose as just one meal. You know? You have seven to either wolves and they could eat a whole moose in one sitting. (Tsiigehtchic)
- ...So realistically, we may never harvest Cape Bathurst caribou again? In the near future, the Tuk road is going to be going right through there: right through the winter range [of the Cape Bathurst caribou] from here to Tuk. There are going to be a lot of people using that road. Has there been any research done on that? On any effects that that may have?... With an all-weather road, there will be more industrial activity and so and so forth. (Inuvik)
- [There has been] bulls only harvesting for [a] few years. Has [there] been studies on the harvest impact of bulls only? (Inuvik)
- [I have] concerns with [bulls only] because it interferes with genetics. I don't agree with shooting all the bulls. You take certain kind of bulls at different times of the year: in the rut take younger bulls. Should do more scientific studies. (Fort McPherson)
- With climate change, the Porcupine caribou herd are calving before they get to their calving grounds. I wonder if a lot of them stay in the areas they travel in the winter months – maybe that is happening in this area too. (Tsiigehtchic)
- Habitat – [we] need to look at [that]. Caribou manage their habitat – the caribou move to other areas and then move back to that area. We need to include more about habitat. (Tsiigehtchic)
- [When they are declining] ...do you try to find out what is going on? Do you guys look for them or do you check their feeding or where they are going? Their feed will affect them. All the lichens, eh? Those things take a long time to grow so if they overuse certain areas, then the caribou move. (Tsiigehtchic)

- Lichens growing back, 10 to 20 years after a fire, it can take to come back. [It is] important to monitor fire impacts to habitat (Tsiigehtchic)
- Is there anyone looking into immigration and emigration between herds? (Fort McPherson)
- If [the collars] were different colours for each herd, then people would know which herd they were looking at and they could tell if they were mixing. (Aklavik)
- ...DNA testing. Do they do this with caribou? (Aklavik)
- Historically, [there] have been more harvested than they are now. Overall [you've] got to look at the harvest factor and what impact it has. Look at the big picture. Maybe harvest is not having an impact. (Inuvik)

Sahtú Settlement Area

- Ask elders about past cycles of herds – not so much numbers, but remembering when the herds would come into their communities, or were plentiful, as opposed to the times when they could not find them. (Norman Wells)
- The government is spending thousands of dollars on counting caribou but are they spending any money on trying to understand why the numbers are changing? (Fort Good Hope)
- We are missing 20,000 caribou, so maybe that [satellite collars] is part of the problem. (Colville Lake)
- Do you study the weather changing? One time we had caribou all over. One October we had ice and rain on the snow and the caribou went away. In the olden days [they] had dog teams – no noise. Now it's all airplanes, mining, and exploration all around Great Bear Lake. What I'm trying to say is that the weather is important. That's how come they go down to Wrigley. They're trying to find good feeding grounds. The weather, the climate change – that's the biggest problem we have. (Déljñę)
- If we are out there collecting data we should be collecting information on water and insects and predators and habitat. (Fort Good Hope)
- Maybe the wolves are killing more? (Colville Lake)
- Nunavut too, [there is] lots of development there – mining. That should be a study too – the development effects on caribou. (Déljñę)

Themes:

Gwich'in Settlement Area

10. Need to research the relationships between herds or 'inter-mingling'
11. Need to understand impact of harvesting on caribou numbers.

Themes:

Sahtú Settlement Area

1. Need to document traditional knowledge about barren-ground caribou
2. Caribou population declines or cycles need to be better understood
3. Need research looking into habitat, insects and predators
4. Research needs to look at cumulative impacts, including climate change, competitors and human disturbance

Themes:

Sahtú Settlement Area

5. The effects of development need to be better understood
6. Research needs to look into interactions between species
7. Research needs to look into herd 'mixing' or 'inter-herd' movements
8. Predation rates and impact on herds should be studied.

- Last few years we didn't see any caribou up there – no caribou at Caribou Point, Clearwater Bay [north shore Great Bear Lake]. We're right in the middle of all the activity that surrounds us; we're central. In the summer time and fall time we don't see them. For us, instead of studying the caribou, we think they should study the climate change, the weather patterns. (Déljñę)
- Nobody is monitoring the junior exploration companies that punch holes in the ground. Nobody is monitoring outfitters. Nobody is monitoring the ships that come into town, the helicopters flying over our land, the planes that come up from BC and Alberta. Nobody is monitoring who shoots the caribou. These junior companies – no one is watching them. Someone could come in and kill a few hundred caribou, or infest them with a disease. We need to monitor them more carefully. We need to monitor the nutritional value of the caribou, look at their blood. Where are the caribou getting their nutritional value from – the trees, cranberries, what? This should all be in the Management Plan. (Fort Good Hope)
- ... Wouldn't it be beneficial to identify and document the migratory routes of the caribou and map it out over a five year span? I think it would be beneficial because it would give the Management Plan more strength. (Fort Good Hope)
- Research the impact of muskoxen on caribou, moose [we need to look at them before they are in crisis], mountain caribou and Dall's sheep [we need to know population size and health]. (Tulít'a)
- About the mixing of the herds, maybe the Bluenose-East has gone to the Bluenose-West herd range? (Déljñę)
- Are there any surveys on wolves in the Sahtú Region? Since the herd numbers are going down, can we monitor where the cows are having calves on the tundra? And maybe we could keep all of the wolves and grizzly bears away from them in the calving grounds. Maybe that will help the herds come back. (Fort Good Hope)
- We could learn a lot by having monitors out there. For example, watching if calf mortality is caused by wolves, or grizzlies, or ice, etc. (Fort Good Hope)
- The calving areas are so sensitive – I wonder if monitors will help – monitoring the predators. I wonder if that help. Set up a monitor far out with a tripod and spotting scope to keep an eye on predators. It only takes a week or two then they are okay. (Tulít'a)

Wek' èezhìi (Tłı̨chǫ Region)

- We should monitor the wolf condition. Monitor the amount of caribou that wolves are consuming. We tend to pinpoint the hunters – we have been penalized for overkilling – but there are other predators like wolves. (Gamètì)
- How about [having] present industry and blasting activities underground? Have we collaborated with industry to determine changes in migration? (Behchokò)

NWT Métis Nation

- Winter roads should be added to the zone of influence on caribou and come up with ways to monitor and assess how truck travelling disturb migrating and staging caribou. (Community not identified)
- The influence of industrial activity and mining exploration and operation should be closely monitored at all stages of population status and with the same intensity, not change according to population status. (Community not identified)
- Health and condition sampling should be conducted across a large area that covers the entire distribution of wintering caribou; it should not be conducted only in one spot. (Community not identified)
- Not allowing more collars to be deployed on caribou for monitoring winter distribution is not responsible. More collars are needed. (Community not identified)

Kugluktuk, NU

- It should be a priority to collect traditional knowledge from our elders – we are losing them quickly. (Kugluktuk)
- The information held by members of the communities is a great resource. (Kugluktuk)
- The warble flies seem to be present at different times during the summer now, instead of only in July. We need more study on that. (Kugluktuk)
- Caribou health should be monitored on an on-going basis. (Kugluktuk)

Themes:

NWT Métis Nation

1. Need to monitor and assess impacts of winter roads and traffic on caribou
2. It is important to monitor industrial impacts and caribou health consistently
3. More collars are needed for winter distribution studies.

Themes:

Kugluktuk, NU

1. Need to document traditional knowledge
2. Changes in insects and caribou health should be studied.



3d. Harvest Levels and Hunting Pressure: *Overview*

Caribou harvesting is recorded differently for different categories of hunters. For example, land claim agreements set out requirements for subsistence harvest reporting for those with Aboriginal harvesting rights, and resident and non-resident hunters' harvests are usually recorded through other programs, such as territorial tag programs and/or General Hunting Licenses. As a result, there are some differences in harvest reporting between areas.

Most of the land claim mandated studies that were done in the range of these caribou were done for a set period of time and took place between the late 1980s to the early 2000s. Since then, co-management boards have started new programs documenting harvests in areas such as the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, Gwich'in Settlement Area and the Western Kitikmeot Region. While their methods differ somewhat, each program does record barren-ground caribou harvests. The Sahtú, Wek' èezhii and Dehcho regions do not currently have comprehensive harvest monitoring programs in place but caribou harvests are recorded in some areas.

Most of the information recorded on this topic came from the Gwich'in and Sahtú Settlement Areas. There was less information available from the Wek' èezhii and Dehcho regions, but there was support expressed for some of the same ideas. In many communities people stressed that accurate harvest reporting is necessary for Management Planning. This opinion was echoed by the NWT Métis Nation. In some areas, people felt so strongly about the importance of harvest monitoring that they suggested reporting should be mandatory. It was also commonly stressed that to get accurate information, harvest surveys need good promotion and education programs, as well as the use of local labour.

In addition to monitoring caribou harvesting levels, the need to monitor pressure on other species and populations was also mentioned. There was also a lot of interest in communities and neighbouring regions cooperating and sharing harvest information. All types of harvest monitoring require a budget, so funding would have to be found for any type of program.

In both the ISR and GSA people taking part in the community engagement sessions stated that hunting pressure had increased in some areas, and that the impacts of these changes in hunting pressure need to be considered. Harvesters in Kugluktuk also said that impacts from changes in hunting practices need to be looked at. Both of these topics could be informed by harvest data, so those comments are included here.

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

- We need a specific Management Plan for each area and within these plans we need accurate harvest reporting. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- We have found that not all people report on their harvest. But this can be improved by hiring local harvest study field workers. I have been a harvest study field worker. It is very necessary to have local workers for accuracy. (Aklavik)
- To get accurate data [you] need to hire people – people know who is hunting – not everyone is going to go to the office to report their harvest. In order to get proper data you are going to have to spend some money – hire people. (Aklavik)
- Hunting pressure is year-round, not just seasonal as it used to be [August-September and January-March]. It is constant pressure on the herds year-round now. (Paulatuk)
- The concentration of hunting on Tuktoyaktuk Peninsula is spooking the caribou. They run as soon as they see a skidoo. It makes harvesting much more difficult. (Tuktoyaktuk)

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

- I think everybody that goes through [the ferry check station] should stop. If we want to make a difference, we have to get serious. I think everyone who goes through there should be monitored and asked how many, from where, and for whom. If it has to be a volunteer, get them to volunteer. Most people don't understand why harvest data is important to conserve the herd. May have some people say take a hike, but education may be helpful here. (Inuvik)
- You know when you do those harvest studies, some people may lie – give more or less depending on the perceptions wanted, 'I'm a good hunter', or 'I don't want to tell you how much I [got]'. Some of the biggest harvesters don't report and others may exaggerate one way or another when they do report. (Inuvik)
- We're seeing the same hunters going out and getting lots of caribou, and people see those hunters coming in with caribou, and they are asked for the meat. They give it out so they go out again. ... For those who are successful, they are being asked for meat. (Inuvik)

Themes:

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

1. Accurate harvest reporting is needed for management
2. Harvest surveys need to use local people
3. Hunting pressure has increased in some areas.

Themes:

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

1. Accurate harvest reporting is needed for management
2. Some harvesters take a lot of caribou because they share the meat

Themes:

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

1. Hunting pressure has increased in some areas
2. Need to also monitor pressure on other species and herds

- Now go hunting around Inuvik and there are so many people and so much gunfire. (Inuvik)
- We need to consider the problem of constant hunting pressure on caribou. (Inuvik)
- One change to how we harvest caribou: I brought my foster brother with me to hunt caribou and there was so much shooting up in the mountains; so much that I came back here because I was afraid of being shot, and lost \$180 in gas. (Inuvik)
- Today we have more harvesters, more pressures, climate change. (Aklavik)
- Other species are being targeted. What about the moose numbers? I just heard quotas aren't being filled but also heard there is more pressure now on the Porcupine herd from this Inuvik side. Are we watching that? (Inuvik)

Themes:

Gwich'in Settlement Area

1. Harvest reporting from all users is needed
2. Harvest reporting should be mandatory

Gwich'in Settlement Area

- [Use] harvester information – the harvesting knowledge that they can give out. (Fort McPherson)
- Use harvester information and get information from other users. (Fort McPherson)
- Get the harvester survey going again – just for caribou. [At the] end of the year do the survey for all the users and figure out how many used. [Bring the] harvester survey back again for a couple of years – until we see [the caribou] coming back up again – even then we still have to manage. (Tsiigehtchic)
- Harvest levels came up in Inuvik – we need to make sure that harvesters get that information about monitoring. (Tsiigehtchic)
- We need to talk to people that harvest caribou on the highway. There was people from Inuvik that went hunting and no one ever took care of that. They go up there and harvest a whole bunch and there is no reporting about their kill. Reporting harvest – anyone who goes to harvest – this is very important for caribou count. (Fort McPherson)
- I would suggest mandatory reporting and use of tags for all [colour zones]. If not tags, for sure mandatory reporting of all harvest. I liked seeing the check station along the highway. That doesn't affect the harvest but gives us an idea of the harvest sex ratio.(Aklavik)

- They said some people drove through [the check station]. It should be mandatory to stop and everyone should have to report their harvest. (Aklavik)
- ...Regarding better monitoring of the herds. I don't know if this is a good idea or not, but we have the check station for the Porcupine caribou. Would check stations be a good idea for these other herds? (Fort McPherson)
- [When the herd is declining and getting low] there should be someone monitoring the hunters, keeping everything under control. (Fort McPherson)
- Have monitors on the highway – RRC members and from the community – watching to make sure hunting is proper, safe, and [people] are taking only what they need. (Fort McPherson)
- When caribou were migrating back up on the highway there was people in Fort McPherson talking about caribou [and] at 8 Mile talking about how many we're taking. After they had passed there was no talking about caribou. ... [Then] not too long ago, news on the radio. They were counting.... It was the first time in the New Year I heard talking about caribou. After [the] harvest study at 8 Mile it went quiet. [I] don't know if anyone told anyone to report their harvest. [It is] very important to do that. Talk about caribou all the time. (Fort McPherson)
- Up at 8 Mile [check station] lots of people, they zoom past saying, 'It is my right to hunt'. This needs to be explained really good to all the communities. We need to explain this is for the future. They think we are after them but we need the information for the future. This needs to be explained for our future generations. (Fort McPherson)
- Historically, [there] have been more harvested than they are now. Overall [you've] got to look at the harvest factor and what impact it has. Look at the big picture. Maybe harvest is not having an impact. (Inuvik)
- People from the Yukon are now coming up to hunt to hunt the same caribou we hunt. Now it is closer, easy access and cheaper for them because the caribou are closer to them and further away from us – [this is] different from the past. (Fort McPherson)

Themes:

Gwich'in Settlement Area

3. Monitoring hunters and hunting levels are most important when caribou numbers are low
4. Harvest surveys need good promotion and education programs to be successful
5. Need to better understand impacts of harvesting on herds.

*Themes:***Sahtú Settlement Area**

1. Accurate harvest reporting is needed for management planning
2. Harvest reporting should be mandatory
3. Harvest surveys need good promotion and education programs to be successful

Sahtú Settlement Area

- An accurate record of harvest should be mandatory as it is important to know how many caribou are being harvested from each herd. (Norman Wells)
- I would suggest that ... there be mandatory reporting of all harvest for all three of these herds and that the Sahtú harvest study be reinstated (Déljñę)
- Every year, you have a count of how many caribou are being shot; this is very good. We should keep this sort of thing going. (Colville Lake)
- If a harvest study is restarted in the Sahtú, everyone should have to provide information. It should be the RRCs collecting and inputting the data but they need the SRRB to coordinate. There should be a public meeting by the RRC to let people know what it is trying to do by collecting the information. (Norman Wells)
- We need more monitoring and need an officer. Right now there is no monitoring system except for what comes from ENR. My point is to get a monitor – [SRRB], are you trying to get money for this? [There is] better management with the community. Right now it is just the government. You can have the best monitor in place, but you need to have the community support. (Déljñę)
- It'd be good to have a monitor for the RRC, but we have no money – someone to do work with ENR. The RRC gets so little money. We have meetings and get a little payment. I know ENR has said they will get a young man to work on this. (Colville Lake)
- [We] need harvest study information for the subsistence hunting. This record has not always been accurate because not everyone is reporting. (Norman Wells)
- If I go hunt west side [Bluenose-West] I have to talk to Colville Lake. In 1996 I was up there and they monitored us. After the first day they said, 'They're good.' People here haven't seen the calving grounds. (Déljñę)
- If we know what each community harvests maybe we can agree on something and go ahead with tags. (Fort Good Hope)
- It should be mandatory for the people from Fort Good Hope to report their harvest. (Colville Lake)
- We need to know harvest information from other communities like Kugluktuk, Wrigley, and Gamètì before we can make decisions. (Tulít'a)

- There should be some funding for monitors to determine how many caribou are being hunted. We need someone to be out there and figure out how many animals are being taken, for example in Colville Lake. (Fort Good Hope)
- Having a wildlife monitor is a good idea. There are stories of people taking a lot of caribou and people selling the meat. They don't believe caribou should be sold. (Colville Lake)
- We would like monitors this year. There were people coming from the other communities shooting the caribou on the road then taking it back, without coming through Colville Lake. People were taking too much. Would like a monitor reinstated this year. (Colville Lake)
- We need to know about harvest in the Tłı̄chǫ. (Déljı̄ne)
- What about the Dehcho people? Wrigley people are shooting caribou. We don't know how many they are taking. Are you asking them the same questions as you ask us? The caribou go down to Keller Lake and then to Fish Lake. (Déljı̄ne)
- For many years big game hunters hunted in the mountains and paid \$10,000 for sheep. Is there any way we could use some of that money for monitors or a harvest study? (Fort Good Hope)
- Services and fees are being paid from big game hunters to the GNWT. Could we look to managing our own fees in the Sahtú? (Fort Good Hope)



Photo courtesy Deb Simmons, SRRB

Themes:

Sahtú Settlement Area

4. Information needs to be shared between communities and regions
5. Need to find funding sources for harvest monitoring.

Wek' èezhìi (Tłı̨chǫ Region)

- If you look in the community if you want to monitor caribou we should concentrate on monitoring the hunters. There is a lot of young people and different hunters. (Behchokò)
- We have to work together, as the caribou users. We have some people that work for us as resource people like ENR to monitor. The harvesters and renewable resource officers work together rather than making excuses or taking blame. (Behchokò)

Dehcho Region

- There is a need to have harvest studies to find out how much is harvested by the community for caribou and other wildlife like moose. (Wrigley)
- Active management really needs to happen with the human activities and especially those associated with harvesting because action can be taken there that is proactive. We know that not all communities harvesting caribou have or account for wounding loss. Some communities are very good and responsible with community hunts, taking only what is required and making sure wounded animals are found and harvested. Other communities take more than is needed, have high wounding losses which are not accounted for and have admitted such. (Fort Simpson)
- Liidlii Kue First Nation is definitely supportive of harvest monitoring. There is the need not only for caribou, but other subsistence harvested animals. (Fort Simpson)

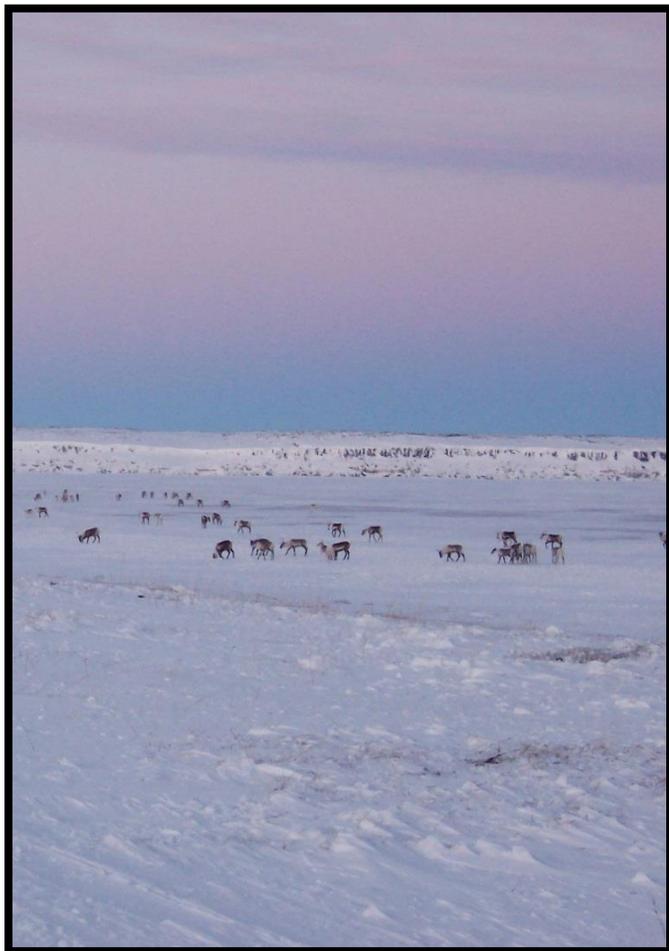
NWT Métis Nation

- Better harvest monitoring and reporting [is needed] at all times. (Community not identified)

Kugluktuk, NU

- How many caribou are harvested per Inuk? A lot of people kill lots of caribou. There should be a limit because some people kill a lot of caribou just for themselves. Some of the people kill lots of caribou and waste it. (Kugluktuk)
- Maybe the harvest level is not the same but practices have changed and the impact of the change of practices could be the main thing. (Kugluktuk)
- We need the reporting of the harvest and wounding loss. We used to have calendars. We can access BHP funds or other funds to put a program like that in place. (Kugluktuk)
- Harvest data collection should be continuous. (Kugluktuk)
- All of the HTOs should issue books or calendars for harvesters to record their information, which would be useful to both traditional knowledge and science. (Kugluktuk)
- The data will be invaluable to the communities if a TAH is ever established as well as in many other management applications. (Kugluktuk)

Photo courtesy of Mathieu Dumond – Government of Nunavut



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Themes:

Kugluktuk, NU

1. Accurate harvest reporting is needed for management
2. Need to find funding sources for harvest monitoring.



3e. Scientific Knowledge and Research Practices: *Overview*

Most of the comments on this topic were recorded in the Inuvialuit, Gwich'in and Sahtú settlement regions. In those three areas, there were two main themes that were shared:

- There were concerns that some ENR surveys missed caribou and were therefore not accurate
- Many people were worried that scientific research was stressful for caribou.

It was suggested that research methods should be adapted to minimize stress on caribou at sensitive times. For example, there was a common interest in seeing caribou surveys take place during migrations. People also suggested that collaring in seasons other than spring could cause less stress to pregnant cows.

At the same time, there were also a number of comments suggesting that scientific surveys should occur more often, so that there could be population estimates available more than every three years.

People in Kugluktuk raised the point that there needs to be better communication between scientists and harvesters on issues around caribou parasites or disease and meat safety. More information on communication and education can be found in other sections of this report.

There is some overlap between this topic and the previous topic, '*Traditional Knowledge and Harvesting Practices*' (3a), especially comments that suggest cooperation between the different knowledge systems is necessary for management.

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

- It's good that people have traditional knowledge but western science has to be included. ...Talk about species we use in the north, we have to keep in mind that it's good to have Management Plans in place. The Porcupine Caribou Herd Management Plan is a good plan; it took a long time and it has thresholds. [We] have to have a Management Plan if three or one herd. ... I think a Management Plan with thresholds won't hurt. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- There are caribou on the Brock Peninsula but there has never been a collar location up there. This proves collars aren't representing the whole herd, but we rely on them for our counts. (Paulatuk)
- There are more caribou out there [Paulatuk area] than you see on surveys. (Inuvik)
- Herd management in winter time [April] is important. Is ENR referring to survey counts in winter while caribou are on their migration routes? (Paulatuk)
- Results from survey counts will vary between years and this variation must be taken into account. As long as there are some caribou [in an area] there will always be more caribou brought in [attracted by these resident caribou]. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- Sometimes caribou drop their calves off of the calving grounds. ENR should consider this when they plan their surveys. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- There were no surveys in our parents or grandparents time yet we still have caribou. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- Leave the caribou alone from December to May; it causes them less stress. Capturing caribou to collar in March is not good because the cows are pregnant and the calves inside them could be injured and cause birth defects or death. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- Your question [how often should surveys be conducted?] would get a mixed response in Paulatuk. Nobody likes net gunning and the required chasing of caribou. (Paulatuk)

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

- If you collar too many caribou in one group you may be missing others. [For] example, radar showed no caribou in an area but there were lots! (Inuvik)

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Themes:

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

1. Management plans need to include both scientific and traditional knowledge
2. People were concerned that some ENR surveys missed caribou
3. There were mixed feelings about how stressful scientific surveys were for caribou
4. Research methods should be adapted to minimize stress on caribou at sensitive times.

Themes:

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

1. People were concerned that some ENR surveys missed caribou

Themes:

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

2. There were some concerns about how stressful scientific surveys were for caribou
3. Research methods should be adapted to minimize stress on caribou at sensitive times.

- We see caribou migrate in the fall and spring. Why are they doing surveys at the wrong time of the year? (Inuvik)
- If you collar too many animals from one group, it doesn't account for the whole herd very well. Groups travel together, so you need to split up the collars to track what the whole herd is doing. If you throw collars on too few animals, you'll miss caribou so you can't really count on the [information] and all the caribou are not being counted. (Inuvik)
- Curiosity might kill the caribou. Leave the animals alone for a while – don't collar them for now. We ask why these southerners are so damn curious. Lay off the collaring for a little while. Let them have a rest for a while. I wouldn't want to be collared. (Inuvik)
- If collars are good until 2012 why is ENR still doing collaring in that timeframe? To reduce the impact to the herd, it should just stop until they need it again. You ask us to just harvest bulls but then just collar cows? Just leave the collaring alone until it is necessary to re-collar. You are making more impacts at the same time you are asking people to leave them alone and you are creating more stress. (Inuvik)
- Is putting collars on in March bad for the cows, possibly causing birth defects if cows are pregnant when collared? (Inuvik)

Themes:

Gwich'in Settlement Area

1. People were concerned that some ENR surveys missed caribou

Gwich'in Settlement Area

- What we're noticing with the Porcupine Caribou herd in the fall is that there are caribou already in the mountains – they don't all go to the calving areas. Are you guys checking in all the areas for caribou? (Fort McPherson)
- ... caribou don't stay in one place they move around. Maybe they increase in an area that no one knows about, like Travaillant Lake, if no one is checking there. Make sure that we are looking for the caribou in all the places they could be. We don't want them to be missed. (Tsiigehtchic)
- Let people know how many cows and bulls are there. Then they could tell the hunters how many to get of each. If just get straight bulls and take them all then what are the cows going to do? Make sure that is counted. (Tsiigehtchic)
- So many surveys – take some of those resources for patrols. Monitoring harvest and land use directly relate to

health of herd. No point to go out every year. [Do] more interaction with people. Don't bother caribou so much. (Inuvik)

- A lot of monitoring and with collaring a lot of stress. Remember that respect for caribou needs to be highlighted in this plan. (Inuvik)

Sahtú Settlement Area

- Follow the migration routes of the caribou; build corridors or corrals to help monitor them more closely. (Norman Wells)
- We really have to respect them and not bother them [the caribou]. When ENR do the count it's okay once in a while with the chopper, but not too much. The caribou wants to be free. (Colville Lake)
- Animals are like human beings – if you bother them too much they don't like it. How many times have we got to keep telling ENR this? They should treat animals like human beings and with respect. In the old days when there was no ENR, animals roamed anywhere they wanted. It seems now with all the activity and the flying around, that's why the migration route has changed and we must acknowledge that. (Déljñę)
- It would be nice to get a figure [population estimate] every year. (Déljñę)



Photo courtesy Mathieu Dumond –
Government of Nunavut

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Themes:

Gwich'in Settlement Area

2. There were some concerns about how stressful scientific surveys were for caribou.

Themes:

Sahtú Settlement Area

1. Surveys should be done during migrations
2. There were mixed feelings about how stressful scientific surveys were for caribou
3. Research methods should be adapted to minimize stress on caribou at sensitive times.

Themes:

Kugluktuk, NU

1. Surveys should be done more frequently
2. Scientific studies can be stressful for caribou
3. There needs to be better communication between scientists and harvesters on issues around caribou disease and meat safety.

Wek' èezhìi (Tłı̄chǫ Region)

- It is the only way we can be knowledgeable and teach each other. I've been out on the land for two years doing the caribou survey. When I first went out I went to Contwoyto Lake and the second time it was to the calving ground past Contwoyto. We saw a lot of caribou, like out on the barrens and the tundra. There are a lot of hills. Any caribou that you see is all counted. You only count what you see. There could be some caribou around the hill that you do not count. They usually guess how many caribou are out there. (Behchokò)
- We pretty well have to gather information from every sector of human life, the young and the old, especially the elders. The elders always told us that the caribou migration route is in the heart of where the mines are located now. The impact of the caribou migration has to occur because they run into the mines. Certainly people are aware. Most of us that are collecting all the information from the elders, the elders are the sole keepers of the caribou. (Behchokò)

NWT Métis Nation

- Not allowing more collars to be deployed on caribou for monitoring winter distribution is not responsible. More collars are needed. (Community not identified)

Kugluktuk, NU

- Three years between surveys is too long; if the population can decrease in a single year, surveys need to occur more often. (Kugluktuk)
- Caribou are being harassed during research programs. (Kugluktuk)
- Community members need information from scientists about some [caribou] diseases – it isn't always known if the meat is safe for consumption or not. (Kugluktuk)
- Past health monitoring programs have often not reported the results to the community or to the harvester that submitted the sample, and when results were reported it was seven or eight months later. This is too long to wait when the meat is needed for food. Shorter waiting times and better feedback to the community and the reporting harvester would help increase reporting rates. (Kugluktuk)



3f. Using Local People: *Overview*

Overall, communities in all regions pointed out that local residents could be employed to have a greater role in many aspects of caribou research, monitoring, and Management Planning. Increased involvement in field surveys, traditional knowledge interviews and harvest surveys were mentioned most often.

It was also noted that locals should be trained and employed to document and share information about things such as meetings and Management Planning events, and that adequate training would be necessary for this.

Some further information on this topic is included in *'Harvesting Levels and Hunting Pressure'* section (3d).

*Themes:***Inuvialuit Settlement Region**

1. Locals should be employed to do field surveys, traditional knowledge interviews and harvest surveys
2. Locals should be trained and employed to document and share information also.

*Themes:***Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1**

1. Locals should be employed to do field surveys, traditional knowledge interviews and harvest surveys
2. Locals should be trained and employed to document and share information also.

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

- ENR and other researchers should hire resource people to conduct surveys and interviews from within the community. Do not bring outsiders in when collecting traditional knowledge. You also need to use the same language as the person that you are interviewing. (Paulatuk)
- It should be a condition that local people are taken on surveys. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- To get accurate data [you] need to hire people – people know who is hunting – not everyone is going to go to the office to report their harvest. In order to get proper data you are going to have to spend some money – hire people. (Aklavik)
- There should be a person hired in the community to spread the word about upcoming meetings. (Tuktoyaktuk)

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

- Use local people for spotters and counters on surveys since they will know where the caribou are, based on where the people are hunting them. (Inuvik)
- Hiring local people as harvest study workers – people who can speak the same language – improves hunter participation and accuracy of the surveys. (Inuvik)
- We have found that not all people report on their harvest, but this can be improved by hiring local harvest study field workers. I have been a harvest study field worker. It is very necessary to have local workers for accuracy. (Aklavik)
- It needs to be written down so that we can pass it around the community. We need local, trained, resource people to go out and collect and disseminate information. (Inuvik)

Gwich'in Settlement Area

- What about training people [as wildlife monitors], to do that work? (Fort McPherson)
- Are we going to be able to do some of the [monitoring] work too or just ENR? (Inuvik)
- Go to the airlines for observations. They are flying regularly over the land and can tell you where they see caribou... Maybe circulate a questionnaire for the pilots to fill out. They could tell you if they saw caribou. (Aklavik)

Sahtú Settlement Area

- When you do that monitoring you should get a couple of community guys out there. (Déljñę)
- It would be good for us to be involved in the count. They want to put a limit on the [caribou harvests] – two per person. We took the elders to Fort Good Hope [to SRRB Public Hearing, Nov. 2007]. The elders just want to leave it the way that it is. Many of the elders just don't feel comfortable talking about it. (Colville Lake)
- Environmental monitors should have the proper training. There have been courses put on through the Aurora College ... the graduates of these programs and only the graduates should get the monitoring jobs. (Norman Wells)

Wek' èezhìi (Tłıchǫ Region)

- If they're going to do the survey they should have quite a number of Tłıchǫ involved. It would be nice. Let us get involved in the caribou survey. (Behchokǝ)
- Most of the native population rely on the caribou and I for one happen to help, went to monitor caribou on the calving ground. The Bathurst and Bluenose East are the ones we covered on the calving grounds. I feel that the herd is so huge that when I heard about the decline I didn't believe it. I was concerned because I was one that took part in calving ground [survey]. (Behchokǝ)

Dehcho Region

- In the education part it would be useful to have something that encourages hunter feedback about where caribou are, and what condition they are in. (Fort Simpson)

Kugluktuk, NU

- The communities should be credited for having more capacity to assist in monitoring activities than is currently recognized in the plan. The harvesters can provide more specific information, such as assisting with sample collection, surveys, and detailed mapping information on caribou movement patterns. (Kugluktuk)
- There was interest in Kugluktuk hunters participating in a health monitoring program, and consensus that samples should be collected by hunters using kits that could be provided to them (bags, gloves, and labels) and submitting the samples for testing. (Kugluktuk)



Photo courtesy of D. Allaire, ENR, GNWT

Results from Community Engagement Sessions:

4. *If management actions limit the harvest of caribou, how should the herds be shared?*



Topics:

- *A. Making Tough Decisions*
- *B. Communication and Cooperation among Regions*
- *C. Switching Foods and Sharing Harvests*
- *D. Tags and Quota Systems*
- *E. Fairness*
- *F. Development and Disturbance*
- *G. Non-Subsistence Hunting*
- *H. Enforcement*



4a. Making Tough Decisions: *Overview*

A lot of the information in this section comes from four areas – the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, the Gwich'in Settlement Area, the Wek' èzhìi (Tłı̄chǫ Region), and Kugluktuk, Nunavut.

There was a strong recognition in most of these communities that as a result of land claims, community members, as well as Aboriginal organizations and governments, have the responsibility to make some difficult decisions in regards to sustaining caribou. Many people in the community engagements stressed that it is important to think about the future of the caribou, as well as the future of today's youth, and to manage actions accordingly.

Some of the other themes commonly heard on this topic include:

- Communities need to be more involved in management and not just wait for action from a Minister
- Management needs to be cooperative, and negotiations need to be based on respect and good faith
- Stricter harvesting regulations may be necessary
- Communities will need to define and act on commercial harvesting
- The Management Plan will need to be adaptive, to change as herd size changes
- To be successful, the Management Plan will need to consider peoples' ability to meet their food needs
- It is important to act quickly with the Management Plan.

Another main theme was that communities, regions and governments must act cooperatively to make these difficult decisions and to manage actions that affect the caribou. There is more on this topic in 4b, '*Communication and Cooperation among Regions*' later in this section.

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

- The number of caribou [are] going down and [they're] not looking after [them], so who are they going to blame when there are none? They could say to other user groups, 'We have tags, why [does] no one else?' if really want to save the caribou. Why would Paulatuk agree to anything in the plan when there isn't the good faith? The other user groups are not following it. The Sahtú say they are taking below numbers, you are trying to push on, where is the trust going to be from the government in the Sahtú? (Aklavik)
- In the ISR, here and Tuk and Paulatuk, how are we going to recognize this herd, as one, as two or as three? We are going to allow development with these calving areas; it is going to play a big role in their lifespan. Development is going to make more access and it will be harder and harder on these animals. Our knowledge of today, the change between today then and tomorrow... we are going to be the last generation to make decisions like they did in the past. We are basing our decision on scientific and traditional knowledge. (Inuvik)

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

- User groups could end up having tension – some groups are a lot more dependent on the caribou than others. (Aklavik)
- You are still going to bump into the same problem as the [Porcupine Caribou Herd Management Plan] which was that users disagreed, and couldn't get consensus for future restrictions. (Aklavik)
- The quicker you work on it and have a timeframe to have it done... after you do the initial one [there are] always ways to make it better, but get it done – time is important. What happened with the Porcupine caribou herd [Management Plan] [was it] dragged out. The communities' main interest is to have the herd around for a long time. The quicker you get it together the better. (Aklavik)
- The Inuvialuit are doing their part to restrict harvest but the ENR Minister is not. How can we manage between settlement regions when the Minister does not do his part? (Inuvik)

Themes:

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

1. Management needs to be cooperative, and negotiations need to be based on respect and good faith
2. Increasing development was expected to continue to impact caribou.

Themes:

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

1. It is difficult to get cooperation and consensus on caribou management plans
2. Communities should take action and not just wait for action from Minister

Themes:

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

3. Communities will need to define and act on commercial harvesting
4. Peoples' ability to meet their food needs will have to be considered in the management plan.

- I'm thinking about the future of our caribou. I've not hunted caribou for the last six years. I'm trying to abide by this. I think there should be a temporary ban on hunting all caribou until a Management Plan is in place. Don't wait for the Minister to act. We are at a critical stage and if we want to keep our caribou we are going to have to move all at once. It takes too long when it goes to the Minister, sitting on their desk for years. Let's get it done. (Inuvik)
- There's no point having a plan in place if the government isn't motivated to do anything because of other interests, for example, economic development. If they won't abide by the rules, it's no good. If an animal is in decline it is up to the minister to decide what to do. He could throw it back to COSEWIC or say it is not in decline for economic reasons. (Inuvik)
- This is more of a concern or advice. I think it is about time that the WMAC and the boards start trying to decide what they consider is commercial. People are harvesting and selling their caribou. [I] know of someone shooting 15 caribou on the highway and getting paid \$4,000. No good will come of this. This is a touchy issue but we need [to consider it]. People are sadly mistaken if they think it is not happening. I know of someone who came up from Fort Smith and shot and sold so many caribou that he paid off his VISA. The only way it is going to work is if we all work together. (Inuvik)
- It's really scary to think about that you are going to be limited and to think you might not get it. It is very scary – I have to have caribou. [We] could have reindeer but what else? It's too expensive to go to Inuvik side. [There have] got to be other ways to replace the meat if you are going to limit caribou – we have to have meat. I have also thought about reindeer. Hunting in Inuvik is too expensive. Are there other ways that we can get help to the people? You have to think about this in your plan. (Aklavik)

Gwich'in Settlement Area

- You know we all settled our land claims so we could make decisions rather than government. We have responsibilities that government had in the past. Now we may need to make some difficult decisions as part of the Management Plan. (Inuvik)
- [I'm] not sure if it is a natural cycle or other reasons but I guess our job is to try to manage the best we can. (Tsiigehtchic)
- Another thing that bothers me is we used to go up to the headwaters [Arctic Red River] to get caribou – [we] don't know what the herd is doing because no one goes up there anymore – [this] should be looked at. Everyone needs to be involved to manage caribou. (Tsiigehtchic)
- Thinking about high or low [population cycles] – you still have to take care of our caribou. These people are doing studies on the caribou. People like us still have to take care of the caribou, no matter if it is high or low. I guess that is what you call Management Planning. (Fort McPherson)
- If you know they are increasing, I think you should still be careful – be sure the numbers are going up. After you hear about this volcano erupting all winter all over the place. Like you said before, the caribou then had a tough winter during the eruption. The whole world is changing. (Tsiigehtchic)
- That time they reported that caribou count 123,000 and still counting up to 160,000. I was really happy for that. A lot of people were down-hearted because of the thought of losing caribou and this count is really good this time. I talk to people, caribou [are] up. This is good news for us but we still have to practise what we are here doing today. It is up to guys like me to understand that and look after my caribou. No going to Stony Creek and killing 30; I just need 5 for my family. That is my own Management Plan. With the other people, we all care for our caribou. I know those people along the coast really care for their caribou but what happened there? (Fort McPherson)
- ... maybe if [the herd] is decreasing and it gets so bad, maybe just cut [hunting] right off for a few years. We've got to manage this somehow. That's where we are heading for. (Tsiigehtchic)
- You can't expect the caribou to go up when we are killing, killing, killing. (Tsiigehtchic)

Themes:

Gwich'in Settlement Area

1. Land claims recognize Aboriginal organizations' responsibility for some of the 'tough decisions'
2. Everyone needs to be involved in management
3. Management should apply the precautionary principle
4. Stricter harvesting regulations may be necessary

*Themes:*Gwich'in
Settlement Area

5. Need to think about the future of the caribou and manage actions accordingly
6. The management plan will need to be adaptive, to change as the herd size changes.

- It is an arrogant attitude, 'It's my right,' but they are not thinking of the bigger picture. (Fort McPherson)
- Those numbers [thresholds] are so low [when the herd is declining and low]. That is the concern that I have: Why are these herds still being harvested from when they are so low? If you look at one, it is probably only 15% of what it was at its original size. ENR is clearly not taking this seriously. (Inuvik)
- It seems like there is a higher standard set for the Porcupine herd than these herds. It seems like there is a lower standard for them. The numbers are so low. You know, from 112,000 to 18,000 in that estimate for the Bluenose West and then 2,000 from 19,000.... So you are looking at these... They're not going to recover for a while! So, these herds are pretty much off limits to us and so the Porcupine caribou herd is going to be under more pressure. Hunters from here and from [other areas]... Why isn't there more emphasis on these herds? It seems like as much as we don't like the Yukon, their [threshold] standard is a lot higher. (Inuvik)
- People close to herds should have the last say. We are way far away; I don't waste my gas to get there. (Tsiigehtchic)
- People are still harvesting and this is putting these herds at risk. This is also putting us at risk too. Because ultimately they are going to come over here and start taking our resource and you are talking about trade and barter and where are those caribou going to come from?... We are here, our kids are here and they're going to be here for a long time and so you know, what happens 20 or 30 years down the road? There's going to be nothing left. Or they're going to be at such low levels because these standards are not as high... Just look at what's happened over in the Yukon, you know? There are regulations and all these new standards that they are trying to put on us and that herd is like at 170,000! And then you look at these guys and they're like... nothing's happening. (Inuvik)
- If we're going to do a Management Plan with all the groups and the herd gets bigger, would this plan change? We've been dinged by government before – [we] need an amendment clause so we can change them at later dates when the herds get better. [We] see so many co-management boards all over the place. (Tsiigehtchic)

Sahtú Settlement Area

- Maybe there should be limits [placed on harvest of barren-ground caribou] right now. (Norman Wells)
- We really have to think about our harvesting. A lot more people are out there harvesting now. (Déljñę)
- We need a consistent approach and law for all regions that share the same population of caribou. If we don't apply the same rules the population will decline and the most we will be able to say is, 'What happened?' This Bluenose-West, Bluenose-East, and Cape Bathurst caribou herds is the perfect example of that need to work together and use the same rules. (Fort Good Hope)
- It's not good to always talk about the caribou or bears. They might stay away because we are talking about them. We can't make decisions on behalf of the animals because we don't own them. The caribou has its own mind and should be free. We should also be free. We shouldn't be told we can shoot only three. [It's] not good to be putting laws down. (Colville Lake)

Wek' èezhìi (Tłı̨chǫ Region)

- The population doesn't seem to be healthy. We know that young people are sitting idle and not hunting. The caribou are being monitored. Through our treaty rights we are allowed to harvest caribou. But the agreement is somewhat broken to us. If it is to carry on, what kind of a life will we have. Talk about the agreement Monfwi made with Government of Canada. If we don't comply with the rules there is a penalty, it wasn't in our agreement at all. Newcomers really ruined our landscape and lands. Today we let them do what they want. We can't sit idle and do nothing about it. There are not many elders in community – the only wise people that the young people relied on. It would be great to have elders advising decisions on the future of the caribou. We still rely on caribou because our ancestors really survived on it. Our ancestors had travelled all the way to the barren lands to harvest caribou for clothing. When our leaders like Monfwi allow us to harvest caribou as much as you want and restrictions have been imposed on us there is a change in our life that we are not happy with. (Behchokǫ)

Themes:

Sahtú Settlement Area

1. Stricter harvesting regulations may be necessary
2. Management needs to be cooperative and restrictions need to be followed by each region.

Themes:

Wek' èezhìi

1. Land claims recognize Aboriginal organizations' responsibility for some of the 'tough decisions'

Themes:

Wek' èezhìi

2. Communities need to be involved in management
3. Need to think about the future of the caribou and manage actions accordingly

- Caribou is important to us and really sensitive. Hides are used for drums and babiche, even the antlers we have great respect for. We learn all these things from our elders. As a hunter we would cover a large tract of land to hunt caribou. It's kind of sad to know that our own herd is in decline and we have to use someone else's herd to live by. (Behchokò)
- Our ancestors and forefathers, they struggled and worked very hard for caribou. We do believe that caribou will never go away or decline, but then we will ask ENR some questions – when people get together they make use of each other. I am 83 years old... what will the population of our caribou be next time? How much caribou will there be next year? This is what we should talk about. We also have to think about the future of our youth and kids that are coming, [and] talk on their behalf. The caribou that we are talking about, our forefathers... in the month of May we used to go to Hottah Lake area, at the time when caribou start to migrate. It would be nice for you to go to see them. You should see them and then talk about them. (Behchokò)
- It is the caribou we are talking about. It is a fairly big issue. We also have to think about the future of our youth. We do not want the caribou to further decline. ... I am very happy – the only thing on my mind is to help the regrowth and population of the caribou. I'm pretty sure the elders here are thinking the same way. We want to make sure there are caribou for the kids growing up today. I'm pretty sure the same issue will be brought up – we don't want further decline. By listening to your presentation, the only way we can do it is to work with one another. Also there will be no more people from other regions, outfitters and commercial harvesters – this will help the regrowth of the population. These elders that are here we do not read or write, [or] understand English. So we all have to work together and do something that will be right. The caribou that we are talking about, we want to help the regrowth. Even though the population is not increasing I am thankful we are helping. The elders will be speaking their mind. (Whatì)

- We have to work together, as the caribou users. We have some people that work for us as resource people like ENR to monitor. The harvesters and renewable resource officers work together rather than making excuses or taking blame. Our ancestors taught us how to look after, to butcher, and items to leave behind, [like] part of the caribou stomach. The elders always reminded us that caribou have their own superiors to report to when they do migrations. It depends on how we handle them – they report back favourably. But if they don't they won't come back to the same hunters. This is what we learned from our elders. When I was chief in the past the herd was quite healthy. If we don't try to revive the herd, who's going to do it? We have to make a strong stand so we can be able to have good harvesting and monitoring. (Behchokò)

Themes:

Wek' èezhii

4. Management needs to be cooperative.



Photo courtesy Jody Snortland-Pellissey, WRRB

Dehcho Region

- Active management really needs to happen with the human activities and especially those associated with harvesting because action can be taken there that is proactive. We know that not all communities harvesting caribou have or account for wounding loss. Some communities are very good and responsible with community hunts, taking only what is required and making sure wounded animals are found and harvested. Other communities take more than is needed, have high wounding losses which are not accounted for and have admitted such. (Fort Simpson)

NWT Métis Nation

- The NWT Métis have harvested Bluenose-East caribou for a long time and want to have access to animals of that herd in the wintertime regardless of status of the herd when it is above the red zone. (Community not identified)

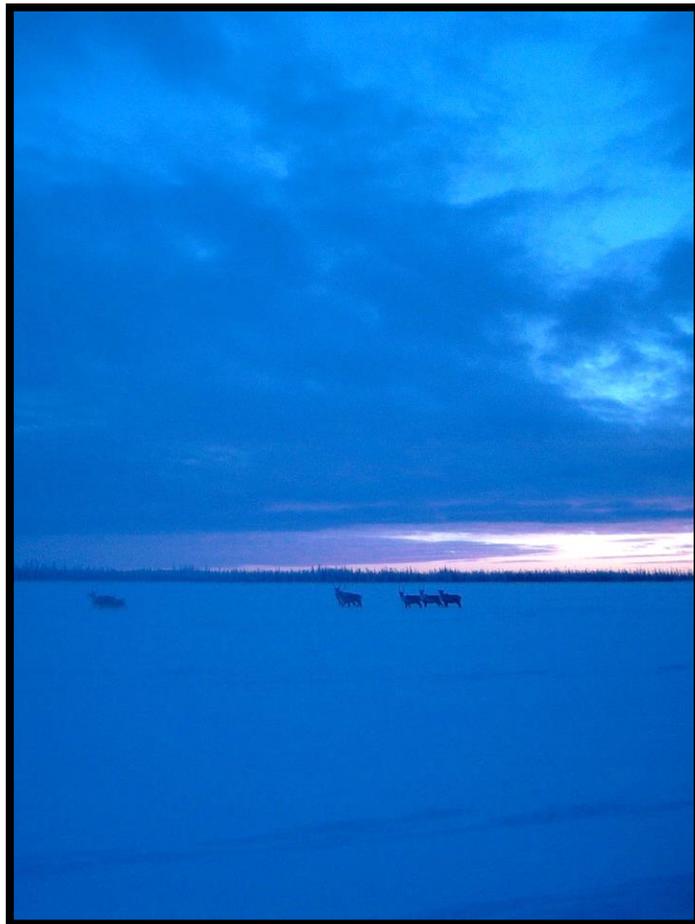


Photo courtesy of D. Allaire, ENR, GNWT

Kugluktuk, NU

- We see these land-use permits all the time and make comments. But many times it is not put in the report and it's discouraging. When it's something important I talk to [the HTO] because they have a lot of power. Look at the Bluenose-East calving ground, the Government of Nunavut looked at protecting it but it takes a lot of time. (Kugluktuk)
- The communities should be highly involved in the decision making process – this will increase buy-in and compliance as there will be more respect given for regulations that are developed internally. (Kugluktuk)
- Communities should consult with their local HTOs about how to limit their harvests; it can be done at a community level so that it can be changed again when the herds rebound. (Kugluktuk)
- It's a hard issue to think about or deal with. Harvesting caribou is a tradition. I hunt for my family and people in other communities, and share my hunt. (Kugluktuk)
- All herds are declining. We are not traditional hunters anymore. There are more hunters than before, and younger hunters. We can't say there are many caribou, and we can just hunt what we please. We need to think about our future generations. (Kugluktuk)
- Nunavut communities are small, and the number of people in these communities who harvest caribou is small compared to the larger communities in NWT. Placing limits on resident and Inuit subsistence harvesting in Nunavut likely won't have an effect on the herds. (Kugluktuk)
- How many caribou are harvested per Inuk? A lot of people kill lots of caribou. There should be a limit because some people kill a lot of caribou just for themselves. Some of the people kill lots of caribou and waste it. (Kugluktuk)
- Before changing everything, you should inform everybody and teach hunters how to harvest properly, before imposing limitations. If it works well then we don't need to impose limitations. If it doesn't work then you try something else. (Kugluktuk)
- The problem is that these plans aren't developed until there is concern for the species or population and then it takes so long to get to the Action Plan, which has the details that are needed to begin acting. By then, the population has often changed. (Kugluktuk)

Themes:

Kugluktuk, NU

1. Management planning will need to be adaptive and regional, to change as the herd size changes
2. Communities need to be more involved in management
3. Management needs to be cooperative among communities and regions
4. Need to think about the future of the caribou and manage actions accordingly
5. It may be necessary to have some limits on harvesting, but should start with education first.



4b. Communication and Cooperation among Regions: *Overview*

The comments included on the previous topic set the stage for some of the types of difficult decisions and discussions that may need to take place in order to help sustain caribou for the future. This section focuses on comments about regional communication and cooperation, what is needed, and how it might occur.

There is information from four regions on this topic: Inuvialuit, Gwich'in, Sahtú and Wek' èezhìi (Tłı̨chǫ Region). People taking part in community engagement sessions in these regions stressed some of the following points:

- All caribou users need to come together to talk about Management Planning
- Communication needs to improve within communities (for example, there need to be more harvesters and elders attending meetings), between communities in a region, as well as amongst or between regions
- Accurate and up-to-date information about caribou needs to be shared, so that good plans can be negotiated among the different regions
- Issues around management actions can be sensitive and all parties need to come to the table with respect.

There were suggestions that communication about the plan, the co-management process, and information on regulations or harvesting restrictions needs to be improved and that locals could be the ones to do this. Some of these suggestions are similar to the ones presented in *'Education'* (3b) and *'Using Local People'* (3f).

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

- It is necessary to come to the table with respect when there are hard issues such as the char fisheries closure, then you will get resolution. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- More people need to come to meetings to share their knowledge and get education about what is going on with caribou. More effort should be made to get more people out to participate. (Paulatuk)
- We are concerned that there are different messages being presented to different user groups. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- We would like to see another visit with the final plan, to see if our input is included as we said it. (Paulatuk)
- The elders and others in the community are not getting this information [about the Management Plan development] and this is a problem. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- There should be a person hired in the community to spread the word about upcoming meetings. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- Use the radio as a tool to inform harvesters on thresholds and requirements. (Paulatuk)

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

- Are there plans to come back and report on all this stuff? Are there any plans to come together collectively with all the four user groups? It would be good to have us all together so that we can hear all views and maybe be able to resolve differences. (Inuvik)
- [An] example is the Rat River plan – [if you] come to the table with respect you are going to get agreement. There was one nasty meeting regarding the closure but once they get an understanding things change – [we] still have elders that are scared when a conservation officer arrives. [I am] surprised how successful voluntary measures are, how successful you were when you shut down in 2005. (Aklavik)
- Call all groups together – Sahtú, Gwich'in, Inuvialuit – so we can work together. It need not involve a hundred people but we need to start talking. (Inuvik)
- Be positive and put some recommendations in the plan; have some confidence and be optimistic. Have some faith in the system. We have to work together to make things happen. We are all in this together. (Inuvik)

Themes:

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

1. All users need to come together with respect to talk about what to do
2. Need to improve communication about the plan and co-management process; use locals to do this
3. Use radio to inform harvesters on thresholds and requirements.

Themes:

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

1. All users need to come together, with respect, to talk about what to do

Themes:

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

2. Need to improve communication about the plan and co-management process; use locals to do this.

- It's hard to sit down with Sahtú people but let's at least have a frank discussion with the Sahtú Chair or the Board so we can make decisions together and quickly. (Inuvik)
- We've been on a quota system for two years now but we don't know what the Sahtú are saying and they don't have a quota yet. Is the Sahtú buying in to this? We always hear that Inuvialuit and Gwich'in are leading; we may be leading the way but we may also be shafting ourselves. What I heard when we were all together was that Sahtú was on-side with us but now they have not bought in. (Inuvik)
- The plan must meet the needs of the people. The managers must listen to the needs of the people. (Aklavik)
- It needs to be written down so that we can pass it around the community. We need local, trained, resource people to go out and collect and [spread] information. (Inuvik)
- Caribou are too far but yet they are out our back door. We have a no hunting zone that industry can go in [but we can't]. We can't even harvest in our back yard but another community can. Is that fair? Maybe we should scrap the Management Plans. In our history we never extinguished a species until white man came and now other countries are telling us how to harvest [for example, polar bear]. The co-management boards aren't working because they aren't coming to the people and letting them know what is working. (Inuvik)
- People from here if they don't get Porcupine caribou are reluctant to go over the other side because they are unsure of the regulations. (Aklavik)

Themes:

Gwich'in Settlement Area

1. All users need to come together to talk about what to do

Gwich'in Settlement Area

- Talking about education, I believe that we should meet with other groups, like the Inuvialuit and other people that go on the highway to inform them what we are trying to do about the caribou in our region. (Fort McPherson)
- [We need to] talk about it. [We] need to meet together, everybody in the region, to think about this together. [We've] talked about it a few times and [it's] getting to the point where it is getting scary – mentioning limiting caribou, people will think about it. In the past this was not done. Is it going to be done now? (Fort McPherson)

- I've been through this before and lots of people who should have been there weren't there – sports hunters, everyone who is a user should be at the meeting. (Tsiigehtchic)
- [Timing of] public meetings: try to avoid the end of the year. [The] fall time is hunting time. Maybe when families [are] back in for school. (Fort McPherson)
- Give more advance notice of when you are coming [for meetings and community engagements]. (Fort McPherson)
- Communication will be so important, so will enforcement. 90% play by the rules but 10% don't attend meetings and don't play by the rules. (Aklavik)
- It is free to put things on the radio. Maybe council members could go on the radio and talk about this and make announcements. (Fort McPherson)
- Good communications are important. Use radio stations. Bring translators to the meetings for elders. For instance, there are three elders sitting here tonight that travelled all over the area and we are talking really fast for them. It is hard for them to understand. (Fort McPherson)
- Up at 8 Mile [check station] lots of people, they zoom past saying 'It is my right to hunt.' This needs to be explained really good to all the communities. We need to explain this is for the future. They think we are after them but we need the information for the future. This needs to be explained for our future generations. (Fort McPherson)
- They decrease and increase. The important thing is how you take care of the caribou too. People going to school now, that is our next generation. When people worked on settling [our] land claim I was the next generation. My dad helped negotiate the claim. During that time I was the next generation and now today I am here talking now for our next generation. We need to talk about the caribou and make sure there is some for them when we're gone. (Fort McPherson)
- Elders watch CBC and APTN, so get [it] announced on TV. Get [the] community events calendar with CBC or APTN. (Aklavik)
- [We] need to educate about what is happening, what might happen, what actions are or could be. When it's green or yellow if you don't get communication until orange or red, you get everybody annoyed with you if all of a sudden you ramp it up. Everyone should understand what's going on. (Aklavik)

Themes:

Gwich'in Settlement Area

2. Need to improve communication about the plan and co-management process; use locals to do this
3. Use tools like the radio and newsletters to spread information
4. Communicate the plan through videos.

Themes:

Sahtú Settlement Area

1. All users need to come together to talk about what to do
2. Good information (like harvest data) should be shared and plans negotiated among different regions
3. There was a need for better communication about regulations

- Make CDs of plan for the zones. People can watch them at home and learn about the plan. People like CDs better than papers. Make a video explaining the plan. (Tsiigehtchic)
- Communication – newspapers – the GTC has a newsletter every so often. It is good to know that you are doing this. Put it in the newsletter. This gets mailed to all the beneficiaries of the claim. This is a good way to get the story out to the public. (Fort McPherson)
- Make the regulations known [when caribou numbers are low]. Even just the presence of a monitor [should] be known. (Fort McPherson)

Sahtú Settlement Area

- I think there should be discussion; the parties should meet. We are only 3000 people compared to the Tłı̨chǫ. (Déljı̨ne)
- If we know what each community harvests maybe we can agree on something and go ahead with tags. (Fort Good Hope)
- These caribou come from the same place; I don't know who hunts down there but what do the Inuvialuit or the Gwich'in think? I am interested in hearing about their thinking. (Fort Good Hope)
- Sometimes there are things going on around Paulatuk; they try to make Colville Lake aware of these things. Last year they heard about a company going between Paulatuk and here. The chief stopped it so that the caribou wouldn't be affected. It is good to work with each other for these reasons. (Colville Lake)
- We need to know about harvest in the Tłı̨chǫ. (Déljı̨ne)
- I don't go to Norman Wells and tell them what to do. I know they have oil. They shouldn't come here and tell us what to do. (Déljı̨ne)
- When they do that flying around it would be good to know. We seem to be the last to know. If Tłı̨chǫ makes [an] announcement about caribou we should be aware of it. (Déljı̨ne)
- If there is a restriction someplace we should be aware of it. If we shut down a section for hunting it would be nice to know ahead of time. That's why the SRRB should work with the other boards. We need a plan – a Management Plan. (Déljı̨ne)

- I don't want an invasion [of hunters from other areas] here. It's pretty hard for us to go to Hottah Lake this time of year, we don't have mutual ground to talk to Tłıchq̓. (Déljıneq̓)
- In 1995 we tried to set up a committee with Nunavut [to discuss some form of protected area status for Bluenose-East caribou calving grounds]. ENR said they would fund it, but it didn't happen. Nunavut government is 100% behind development. (Déljıneq̓)
- We should involve the Dehcho. They hunt Bluenose-East. If I go hunting in the Tłıchq̓ I have to ask. People come here to hunt; nobody tells me. If we have to coordinate our hunt in April with Gamètì... (Déljıneq̓)
- All the other [land claim agreements] are different than Sahtú. The leadership needs to get together. (Déljıneq̓)

Wek' èezhìi (Tłıchq̓ Region)

- In the past it was with other communities that have harvested in this area. With the winter road it is easier for those from other regions to harvest. They have killed a lot of caribou and brought them to communities outside our region. (Whatì)

Kugluktuk, NU

- Co-management and cooperation between parties is key to the success of a plan like this. Discussions should occur regularly between managers and resources users from different jurisdictions if they are going to effectively co-manage the same resources/herds. (Kugluktuk)
- It is important to keep the community updated on research results and management decisions. There has to be emphasis on maintaining constant contact with the communities. (Kugluktuk)
- It would be best to use community radio to provide updates and information when there are more people listening [e.g. to 'North Beat']. The stations are often looking for people to do 10-15 minute interviews – this would be a great way to get the information out to as many people as possible. It should also be done when it is peak caribou harvesting season. (Kugluktuk)

Themes:

Sahtú Settlement Area

4. There was a need to coordinate with neighbouring regions.



4c. Switching Foods and Sharing Harvests: *Overview*

For most regions, the comments recorded about switching to different sources of meat and sharing or re-distributing harvests in the community were very similar. However, no comments were recorded for this topic in the Wek' èezhii or Dehcho regions, nor during meetings with Métis organizations. For the other areas, in times when fewer caribou were available, people said they would traditionally switch to other foods. Depending on the region, some other food sources that were identified were different types of caribou, reindeer, Dall's sheep, muskox, fish, moose, buffalo or geese. It was noted that if switching harvesting to other species is recommended, the impacts on other species will need to be considered.

In each region, people stated that for the Management Plan to be successful, it would need to consider how people will meet their needs for meat during times when caribou are not plentiful. It was stressed that it would be especially important to ensure that the needs of elders are met. As noted in earlier sections, harvest restrictions can negatively impact how food is shared. Sharing is extremely important in all Aboriginal communities and it is essential that this practice continues. Some type of compensation or assistance to harvesters, community-organized hunts or meat purchases could help people meet their needs and take some pressure off caribou. While people said there can be a tendency to purchase more store-bought meat during caribou shortages, this is usually more expensive than hunting and not always possible.

There is some overlap between this topic and 2b, '*Meeting Needs and Sharing*'. In the earlier section, most of the comments focus on how needs influence harvesting patterns; here, we have included comments that focus on possible solutions or alternate approaches to meeting needs when caribou are scarce.

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

- We grew up with no caribou; [if they] decline we go to other resources. This is a white man thing – when there’s no money in the bank, to get worried – but we accept things. We accept that one day [there] might be no caribou. These borders and stuff just create hardship. If my kids have no caribou, they have no caribou; they’ll find other things. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- [We need to] get additional funds for harvesters to go elsewhere to hunt, provide compensation for limits on caribou harvest, or arrange alternate food or meat packages from Stantons. [We] have to look at compensating community members; it’s not like living in the Delta where you can hunt moose every day. (Paulatuk)
- We have discussed the possibility of a community hunt with Tuktoyaktuk, but the communications did not get completed. (Aklavik)
- I always eat caribou; I have to buy caribou. People should hunt for elders and single parents, or have a feast and give meat to elders and singles. Elders have to now buy it. Gwich’in and Inuvialuit [should] work together, do a community feast. [This would] save money and [we would] know how much is taken. My nanuk is tired of buying caribou; [they could] compensate with fish. People that can go out – give them gas. I am in a single parent family. There should be some help from the community to me and to the elders. It has to be cheaper to pay for community hunts and fishing rather than to buy meat. (Aklavik)
- What are the plans to increase the reindeer herd to provide meat? That is what it is they are there for. (Aklavik)
- Peary and Bluenose-East caribou have been used in the past, but depending on the zone there may or may not be alternatives for species use. (Paulatuk)
- Island [Peary] caribou are harvested more now around Paulatuk. (Paulatuk)
- We [in Paulatuk] are starting to talk more about [harvesting muskoxen, char, moose, and geese]. (Paulatuk)
- We had the ENR Minister telling us how to hunt moose and muskoxen; this was both amusing and offensive. (Paulatuk)
- We want to get out of the tag system. It is not good for the social issues of the communities, choosing this person over this person to giving meat. (Paulatuk)

Themes:

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

1. When caribou are not available, people usually switch to other foods
2. The management plan will need to consider how people will meet their needs to be effective
3. Forms of compensation, organized hunts or community meat purchases could help people meet their needs and take pressure off caribou
4. Other foods could be different types of caribou, reindeer, muskox, fish, moose, geese and store-bought meat.

Themes:

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

1. The management plan will need to consider how people will meet their needs to be effective
2. Reindeer could be an alternate species to harvest
3. Need to consider impacts on other species also, if people switch from caribou.

Themes:

Gwich'in Settlement Area

1. Forms of compensation, organized hunts or community meat purchases could help people meet their needs and take pressure off caribou

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

- How are you going to stop people from harvesting, even this year? There is no work. People need to feed their families. You need to start thinking about this right now and bringing questions like that to the people. With no work it will be very tough. (Inuvik)
- It's really scary to think about that you are going to be limited and to think you might not get it. It is very scary – I have to have caribou. [We] could have reindeer but what else? It's too expensive to go to Inuvik side. [There have] got to be other ways to replace the meat if you are going to limit caribou – we have to have meat. I have also thought about reindeer. Hunting in Inuvik is too expensive. Are there other ways that we can get help to the people? You have to think about this in your plan. (Aklavik)
- Is anything else being done for other species [like Dall's sheep or woodland caribou] to which hunters will turn to replace caribou meat? (Inuvik)
- Last year in Aklavik I heard people saying we should kill all the muskoxen up behind Aklavik and I warned them that they may need to eat them one day and depend on them. (Inuvik)

Gwich'in Settlement Area

- It costs more money – [there is] more wear and tear on the vehicles – [because we] have to go much farther [to hunt now]. This makes it really hard to get out there. The justice committee is providing money for gas to get people out to hunt caribou for elders, people go up and then share the meat. [We] recommend having programs in communities that give gas and that help us out so elders can get meat. (Fort McPherson)
- For community hunts, no one wants to hunt if they don't get paid for harvesting. If we can't pay them through the RRC, no one will hunt. Gas is so expensive. (Tsiigehtchic)
- Quite a few years ago had a community hunt for Sachs Harbour over at Red River. They have trouble with their caribou. That is one thing we need to do – [if the] herd gets low, [we've] got to move or get government to charter a big plane to go wherever there is caribou. (Fort McPherson)

- [When you have no harvesting it could be] like at Christmas when everyone gets a turkey at the Gwich'in office in Inuvik. When you have no harvest and caribou is so low, the board should start giving out turkeys. If we are short of meat, we need some steaks. I hope it doesn't go that low. (Fort McPherson)
- [When the caribou are low] maybe harvesting could go to another herd that is stronger and leave these ones. (Tsiigehtchic)
- Long ago people used to go out hunting for others. Inuvialuit used to hunt for people in Fort McPherson. Maybe [we] could do community hunts for [the] caribou herd over there. (Fort McPherson)
- If we don't manage the caribou pretty soon they will put a quota on us. This will affect our people and eating store meat – we can't afford it. (Fort McPherson)
- People should eat buffalo instead of caribou, especially down south. (Tsiigehtchic)
- [When the caribou are low] set up to take someone out and take kids out and get rabbits for everyone in town. The communities are going to have to get creative. [There are] traditional ways to get ptarmigan. (Aklavik)
- [When the caribou numbers are low] maybe help getting other species like muskoxen or reindeer. (Aklavik)
- I have a hard time eating moose now after eating Porcupine caribou meat. Muskox is darn good meat – like beef. If worse comes to worst we'll all have to eat muktuk! (Tsiigehtchic)
- Put a quota on them. Back in the 1940s and part of the 1950s you were allowed only one bull moose. If [you were] caught shooting a cow you would be in big trouble. We need to save the caribou so put a quota on them. Back in the old days stores never sold meat. We adapted. Now a lot of the kids don't eat caribou, only us old folks. The stores sell lots of meat. (Tsiigehtchic)
- We know the tough times we had. They were tough times, but we managed. That's because we had different fish every year. You know? Not just one kind of fish, we go to different ones and the same with every other animal. We'd go to different country to trap, so we don't clean the country right out where we are. The next year we'd use a different place. Us old-timers used to do that and it was a long way to caribou – 300 miles maybe! That's where we'd get our caribou from. (Tsiigehtchic)

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Themes:

Gwich'in Settlement Area

2. Other foods could be different herds of caribou, buffalo, muskox, reindeer, Dall's sheep, rabbit, ptarmigan, fish, moose, store-bought meat and produce from community gardens

Themes:

Gwich'in
Settlement Area

4. Need to consider impact on other species also.

- [When the herd is decreasing] ...there should be lots of rabbits around here. So maybe if it is decreasing and it gets so bad, maybe just cut it [hunting] right off for a few years. We've got to manage this somehow. That's where we are heading for. In the old days, some years there was hardly anything. It declined by itself and then after a few years it goes back up again. So, you know that's nature. (Tsiigehtchic)
- [Regarding alternate food, it is] hard to tell someone to get a moose if they don't know how to cook it right. It would be good to think about a down-home recipe book with instructions for how to cook it. (Aklavik)
- Other species are being targeted. What about the moose numbers? I just heard quotas aren't being filled but also heard there is more pressure now on the Porcupine herd from this Inuvik side. Are we watching that? (Inuvik)
- We also need community gardens to help supplement and make sure that we are getting a balanced diet. ... When there is lots of caribou, lots of people – like me – can just eat caribou but ... we can supplement with garden grown vegetables. With the increased cost of groceries, we need something we can grow at home. We need sustainable community gardens. If you did it right, you would have extra to sell. This would relieve a lot of the pressure on the caribou, if vegetables were cheaply available. (Aklavik)



Photo courtesy Kristen Callaghan, GRRB

Sahtú Settlement Area

- The ACCWM should look into selling caribou among settlement areas. The Dene practice is to share meat with elders and other people in the community, including non-Aboriginal people. (Norman Wells)
- Back in the 1950 and 1960s, when there was a lot of activity out on the land, you did not hear about declines in caribou because Aboriginal people were managing properly. One thing that really helped to keep the harvest constant is the community freezer. You can't control everybody when they have their own freezer to fill up. We used community freezers which were filled with bulls from fall community hunts. People were allowed to take meat once a week from the freezer. We need to go back to the old ways of managing things. You have to look at that; you have moved to a system that doesn't work. We should go back. (Tulít'a)
- These past few years we received meat from [Mackenzie Mountain] outfitters – send some of this to other communities. Most of the meat was in better condition this year than in past years. Some [are] sending in plastic which is why the meat is spoiling. Sharing the meat – this should continue. (Norman Wells)
- [We] need to have more meat sharing among people, including where non-Aboriginal people hunt with Aboriginal people. If two guys hunt together, they should split the meat evenly no matter what. (Norman Wells)
- The newer generations have other sources of food – the store, fish, and moose. I think there should be discussion; the parties should meet. (Déljne)
- [I am] happy that the plan mentions encouraging harvest of alternate species – this [is] important. Barren-ground caribou aren't always accessible. They do move out of sight, away from the guns. (Norman Wells)
- If there is no caribou I'll starve. (Fort Good Hope)
- We don't traditionally hunt barren-ground caribou, we hunt in the mountains. People who traditionally hunt barren-ground caribou may turn to hunting in the mountains. (Tulít'a)
- Elders say that if it is hard to get caribou, then we should go to the mountain lakes for fish. (Community not identified)
- [People should] harvest more boreal woodland or mountain woodland caribou. (Norman Wells)

Themes:

Sahtú Settlement Area

1. The management plan will need to consider how people will meet their needs to be effective
2. Forms of compensation, organized hunts or community meat purchases could help people meet their needs and take pressure off caribou
3. Need better distribution of meat from outfitters
4. Sharing is important in the community and should continue
5. Other foods could be other types of caribou, fish, moose and store-bought meat.

*Themes:***Kugluktuk, NU**

1. People that can't hunt – especially elders – need help to meet their needs
2. Forms of compensation, organized hunts or community meat purchases could help people meet their needs and take pressure off caribou
3. Other foods could be muskoxen
4. Harvest restrictions can impact how food is shared
5. Sharing is important in the community and should continue.

Kugluktuk, NU

- The number of caribou you need can change between years – it depends on who you are feeding, such as elders and others in the community that cannot harvest for themselves, as well as what other species are abundant in a given year. (Kugluktuk)
- I shoot lots of caribou because I have lots of relatives and old people. If there is a limit on caribou, how will these old people survive? (Kugluktuk)
- It is a good idea to share meat between communities when it is available in one area and not another, but to send enough to help the people in another community is extremely expensive, even with the reduced shipping rate on country foods. (Kugluktuk)
- In Taloyoak one elder goes with three young hunters. The HTO pays the elder. They shoot two caribou each. The meat is distributed to the ones that need it in town, like widows, etc. They have to bring everything back to town – head, guts. The program costs \$6000 [approximately \$100 per caribou, when 6 caribou were harvested]. (Kugluktuk)
- The concept of community freezers should be revisited. People who need the meat can go there and get some, it promotes sharing, and older hunters can meet others there to help show them how to prepare and preserve the meat properly. (Kugluktuk)
- The caribou compete with the muskoxen for habitat and food. There are currently too many muskoxen in the region, and they are driving away the caribou by destroying the caribou's food source. Kugluktuk has been conducting community muskoxen harvests to help reduce the hunting pressure on caribou or when the caribou become too scarce. (Kugluktuk)



4d. Tags and Quota Systems: *Overview*

There were comments recorded on this topic from community engagements in all regions except Wek' èezhìi.

In the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, it was very clear that most people were unhappy with the tag system and would rather rely on traditional harvesting rules and practices than the recent management regime. The tag system was seen to be influencing how people shared and whether people could provide for elders and others in the community as well as they had before. This was a very sensitive issue for people. There was an additional comment that once a quota is imposed, people tend to hunt fewer caribou, but they also tend to hunt fewer predators, allowing those populations to increase. In the Gwich'in Settlement Area, people were also unhappy with the system of closed zones for hunting and finding it harder to meet their needs.

In the Gwich'in and Sahtú Settlement Areas, there was some support for imposing a quota to conserve caribou. However, it was also mentioned that having a quota in some areas was impacting other neighbouring areas and impacting user groups unequally. It was stressed that quotas need to be fair and consider or accommodate regional effects. Harvesters in Kugluktuk stressed that introducing a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) is a complicated process – the elders need to be consulted, the population estimate needs to be accurate, and the TAH needs to respond to changing population levels.

There were several comments from the NWT Métis Nation in regards to allocation issues. Members felt that the use of tags should be mandatory for all hunters at most population levels, but that a harvest quota should not be used. In addition, the NWT Métis wanted to be recognized as an Aboriginal group if a Total Allowable Harvest was ever put in place.

There is some overlap between this topic and the next (*'Fairness'*), as well as 2c *'Harvest Regulations'*.

*Themes:***Inuvialuit
Settlement Region**

1. People were unhappy with tag system and would rather rely on traditional harvesting practices
2. The tag system was influencing how people shared and whether people could provide for elders and others in the community
3. With restrictions on caribou hunting, people were also hunting predators less.

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

- If we have one herd, but manage numbers every three or five years, [then] we don't have to live with the tag system. We would go back to the traditional way of harvesting, not taking more than you need. I wouldn't mind saying we would like to revert back to one herd. (Paulatuk)
- [I'm] not going by the tags anymore. I have a young family. I don't have anyone to go hunt for me. Tags are interfering with our livelihood – that's meat off the land – we've been living off the land for generations. It's like we don't misuse what we get. I know we don't overhunt. (Paulatuk)
- We want to get out of the tag system. It is not good for the social issues of the communities, choosing this person over this person [for] giving meat. (Paulatuk)
- It is very difficult for elders in the bush when they can't hunt caribou. Is there a way of HTCs giving more tags to people who live on the land? (Tuktoyaktuk)
- I think we should do away with the closed zone and just leave us with our quota. The closed zone should not exist because we are on a tag system and we won't go over our [total allowable harvest]. (Inuvik)
- For the quota versus zones, with zones people cannot always get the caribou they need. Harvesters can't even fill their quota sometimes. (Inuvik)
- Paulatuk does not like the tag system but we have complied with it for conservation. (Paulatuk)
- There was a balance when caribou were hunted without the tag system. People would shoot other things and this would reduce the wolf population as well. Now with two tags wolves are not harvested in many areas [i.e. people were not travelling into as many areas]. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- The quota and tags are impacting on the teaching of sharing to young people. (Paulatuk)
- What is the 'safe' herd size? When will we know we don't need quotas or tags? (Paulatuk)
- The word 'tag' is becoming much more common. It is becoming more accepted. (Tuktoyaktuk)

Gwich'in Settlement Area

- Have a quota system put in place so we can increase the herd. (Fort McPherson)
- Put a quota on them. Back in the 1940s and part of the 1950s you were allowed only one bull moose. If [you were] caught shooting a cow you would be in big trouble. We need to save the caribou so put a quota on them. (Tsiigehtchic)
- In the Gwich'in Land Claim no one can make up a quota system without talking to the GTC. The RRBs should consult with GTC first. (Inuvik)
- The 22 Gwich'in tags – how was the proportion allocated? Based on what? Some said the harvest study; some said not. The allocation decision needs to be thought about in the plan. (Inuvik)
- You need to look at the number of people in each community and take this into account in determining quotas. We need to be fair. For example, we have 25 caribou for all four communities [Gwich'in] but no one goes out as it isn't worth it. (Inuvik)
- If in trying to manage how people hunt (especially for those from outside with other hunting practices) and they don't respect that we are trying to manage the herd for future generations, do you think that we might limit the number of caribou that would be taken? Do you ever think it would come to that? (Fort McPherson)
- [From the] RRC perspective, the colour chart is important. These numbers have to clearly reflect the number of caribou before you designate them in the zone. Or it will be like [the] harvest Management Plan in the Yukon: interim-measures when too extreme, when no need to. (Inuvik)
- [With the] quota on Inuvik, Aklavik and Tuktoyaktuk, now they are all coming down here and taking caribou. We'll be suffering too pretty soon if that continues. (Fort McPherson)
- [When the population is high] population is going up there – saying not to shoot the cows. This is the time of year not to shoot them... [when numbers are high]... cow harvest could be permitted, but don't take too many cows. Don't make a habit of shooting all the cows. Regulate the cow harvest a bit. (Tsiigehtchic)
- I think that mandatory bulls only can [apply when herds are increasing]... don't wait to do that. Move it up to [when herds are in higher numbers/yellow zone as in draft 1] for subsistence harvesting.(Fort McPherson)

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Themes:

Gwich'in Settlement Area

1. There was some support for a quota to help increase caribou numbers
2. Tag/quota allocations in some areas impacted other nearby areas and user groups differently; quotas need to be fair and consider regional impacts
3. People were unhappy with the closed zones

*Themes:***Gwich'in Settlement Area**

- Depending on herd status, may need to set harvest regulations based on caribou sex.

*Themes:***Sahtú Settlement Area**

- Tag/quota allocations in some areas impact other nearby areas and user groups differently; quotas need to be fair and consider regional impacts.

- I agree with the shut-down of resident, outfitting and commercial [when caribou are starting to get low]. Subsistence should go down too. Maybe one caribou per family. (Tsiigehtchic)
- [When the caribou are low] no harvest is pushing it because there is always the traditional feast. Not absolutely no harvest. (Aklavik)

Sahtú Settlement Area

- If there was a limit on how many caribou you can shoot, I don't think it will work. If you shoot just one caribou, you share it. (Colville Lake)
- People in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region should have tags because the caribou calve right next to Paulatuk. (Norman Wells)
- If there are tags for Bluenose-East then they should be allocated to all five communities in the Sahtú – not like Bluenose-West. (Norman Wells)
- Why are there no Bluenose-West tags for Tulít'a? Does this mean that Tulít'a is not restricted from hunting Bluenose-West caribou? (Tulít'a)
- If we know what each community harvests maybe we can agree on something and go ahead with tags. (Fort Good Hope)
- What if the other communities will not give us a tag? This is affecting our land claim rights. We do not want to be charged if hunting Bluenose-West caribou and we have no tags. (Tulít'a)
- Tags should have been also given to Tulít'a – at least five. A commitment was made by the SRRB to add Tulít'a's request to the [January 2010] board meeting agenda for consideration. Tulít'a RRC should provide a formal written request to the SRRB. (Tulít'a)
- [There] should be some way to limit the number of people that come here to harvest caribou or to limit these guys to three caribou. They are taking more than we do. (Colville Lake)

Dehcho Region

- Total Allowable Harvest is a very important part of the management. (Fort Simpson)

NWT Métis Nation

- The use of tags should be mandatory for all hunters, including Aboriginal, at all phases of population status except when the population is in the green zone. (Community not identified)
- The use of a target for harvest quota should never be used as it was the case in the Bathurst joint proposal. (Community not identified)
- The NWT Métis want to be officially recognized as one of the Aboriginal groups that will be considered if a Total Allowable Harvest is put in place. (Community not identified)
- [In the Management Plan] it is unclear as to how harvest limits will be reduced as population status changes. (Community not identified)

Kugluktuk, NU

- If we have to use TAH, the Kugluktuk HTO needs to discuss this with the elders. They are not used to hunt without restrictions and may not like it. I suggest you talk to the elders first. (Kugluktuk)
- There was disagreement with placing a Total Allowable Harvest on caribou in these herds because it is too early to know what is really happening with the populations – it has just recently been discovered that the Bluenose East herd is increasing for example. The information has to be complete and accurate before these decisions are made given the degree of impact they will have on the communities. (Kugluktuk)
- Putting a TAH in place takes time [as per the decision process outlined in the Nunavut land Claims Agreement]. By the time it is in place it may not be needed anymore. Also, it takes a long time to change the TAH again when the situation improves. (Kugluktuk)

Themes:

NWT Métis Nation

1. Use of tags should be mandatory for all hunters at most population levels
2. Harvest quota should not be used
3. NWT Métis wanted to be recognized as Aboriginal group if TAH was put in place
4. Needs to be clearer in the management plan how harvest limits will be adjusted with population status changes.



4e. Fairness: Overview

Most of the comments recorded on this topic came from community engagements in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region and the Gwich'in Settlement Area. There were few comments from the Sahtú on this topic, and no comments from the Wek' èezhii or Dehcho regions, nor from Kugluktuk. Many of the comments here relate to the harvest regulations discussed in 2b, as well as comments about tags and quota systems in the preceding topic (4d).

Comments recorded in the Inuvialuit and Gwich'in regions were similar for this topic. Some of the common themes heard at the meetings were:

- Harvest restrictions didn't seem fair within communities, between communities, and between regions
- Meat/quota distribution appeared unequal
- Hardship caused by hunting restrictions affected people differently
- Community members suffered hardships related to area closures and harvest restrictions while industry did not.

Participants in the Sahtú suggested that to be effective, a consistent approach to harvest restrictions and management is needed across all neighbouring regions. In addition, resident hunters didn't feel it was right that they be penalized when they took only 50 caribou a year.

Comments about fairness were also recorded during meetings with Métis organizations, but these were of a different nature than those heard from other regions. The North Slave Métis Alliance were not represented on the ACCWM and were frustrated that they were being excluded from having a seat in that part of the planning process. The NWT Métis expressed frustration about access to the herds, saying that they have harvested Bluenose-East caribou for a long time and want to have access to animals of that herd in the winter time regardless of the status of the herd when it is above the red zone.

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

- There are inequities in how harvest restrictions have been applied. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- There [are] no caribou this winter. Those caribou get smart, they know. You know it makes us all criminal because caribou know where to go where we can't go. [We] go through hardship, why, when there are animals right out their door? (Tuktoyaktuk)
- To me, when people go out, I see the caribou meat being cut into whole pieces and given to dogs. Sometimes I won't have meat; it's not right for people to give it to animals. I see that all the time. (Paulatuk)
- It is a hard thing to live with so few tags. Maybe we should be given more tags. Only 129 tags isn't enough. We are the only community that is feeling the hardships the most. (Paulatuk)
- It is very difficult for elders in the bush when they can't hunt caribou; is there a way of HTCs giving more tags to people who live on the land? (Tuktoyaktuk)
- People used to come to Tuk to hunt caribou. That is really unfair. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- Paulatuk needs more tags. More tags up front (30 more tags) are preferable to a redistribution of tags at a later date each year. Adjustments to the season dates would be necessary for redistribution to work. (Paulatuk)
- Is it possible to have a reallocation of existing tags, currently held by the Sahtú, after they have their quota imposed and given that they already hunt from the both the Bluenose-East and the Bluenose-West herds? (Paulatuk)
- We should get more tags from the Sahtú because they have access to the Bluenose-East herd. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- There is a quota system in place for the Bluenose-West yet the Sahtú is not following the tag system and this leads people to question the fairness of the situation. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- The lack of restrictions [a quota and tags] in the Sahtú means that people there are holding 348 tags hostage, which cannot be used by the Inuvialuit. The Sahtú could also be over-hunting. Both sides need to be restricted [for conservation and for fairness]. (Paulatuk)
- Inuvialuit get restrictions but not Sahtú. (Inuvik)

Themes:

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

1. Harvest restrictions don't seem fair within communities, between communities, and between regions
2. Meat/quota distribution appears unequal
3. Hardship caused by hunting restrictions impacted people differently.

*Themes:***Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1**

1. Harvest restrictions don't seem fair within communities, between communities, and between regions
2. There needs to be better cooperation and communication regarding harvest restrictions and management planning

- We're the only ones that have tags. That's not right. Inuvialuit are abiding by what was decided a while ago. Why should we sign onto an agreement to abide by something when other groups aren't abiding by other regulations? (Paulatuk)

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

- If you put a quota on people, restrictions have to be applied fairly. There should be more restrictions put on the highway. People take 30 to 40 caribou even this winter, then they try to sell it. [It's] not fair they have easy access. (Aklavik)
- The quota system wasn't done quite fairly. This needs to be done fairly – whatever we come up with in the end. How can this little group here make a decision for all the Inuvialuit and Gwich'in in this community? (Inuvik)
- You have to hear from everybody; need to set quotas for everybody to make it fair. [It's] not fair to have Tuk [without restrictions]. Management means being fair to everybody, whether it is Gwich'in or Inuvialuit or what. Tuk may be [upset]... but we can't have that. This is happening because of how things are structured now [how the zones are set up]. Need to be fair to Inuvik, to McPherson, to Tuk, for everybody. Wherever the caribou are, you need to be fair. If you go to a quota system, you have to be fair to everybody. We have to work together to make things work together. We are all in this together. (Inuvik)
- Caribou are too far but yet they are out our back door. We have a no hunting zone that industry can go in [but we can't]. We can't even harvest in our back yard but another community can. Is that fair? Maybe we should scrap the Management Plans. In our history we never extinguished a species until white man came and now other countries are telling us how to harvest [for example, polar bear]. The co-management boards aren't working because they aren't coming to the people and letting them know what is working. (Inuvik)

- I heard before that on Tuk side, they can hunt as many as they want without a quota. [This needs] to be fair to the Inuvik side, where the community is suffering most for meat. We are always the community that suffers most for caribou but we go by the rules and regulations they set before us. [We're] in the no hunting zone, but industry can go right in. When other communities want it changed, they get it right like that. They changed the rules for Tuk? Why can't they change the rules for Inuvik? (Inuvik)
- Sahtú harvesters get a big proportion of the harvest and don't have to report. (Inuvik)
- We have been on a quota system for two years but the Minister hasn't made a decision for the Sahtú yet. (Inuvik)
- For the last few years only the Gwich'in and the Inuvialuit have been under harvesting restrictions. The Sahtú has not been under any harvesting restrictions. (Inuvik)

Gwich'in Settlement Area

- We're limited to 20-25 [Bluenose-West] animals for the Gwich'in in [the Inuvialuit Settlement Area] but they can come down to the Dempster and harvest all they want. Why can't Gwich'in hunt the Tuk Peninsula herd? (Inuvik)
- You need to look at the number of people in each community and take this into account in determining quotas. We need to be fair. For example, we have 25 caribou for all four [Gwich'in] communities but no one goes out as it isn't worth it. (Inuvik)

Sahtú Settlement Area

- We need a consistent approach and law for all regions that share the same population of caribou. If we don't apply the same rules the population will decline and the most we will be able to say is, 'What happened?' This Bluenose-West, Bluenose-East, and Cape Bathurst caribou herds is the perfect example of that need to work together and use the same rules. (Fort Good Hope)
- Resident hunters in the Sahtú don't feel they should be penalized when they take less than 50 caribou a year. (Norman Wells)

Themes:

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

3. Harvesters were restricted but industry wasn't
4. Hardship caused by hunting restrictions impacted people differently.

North Slave Métis Alliance

- There are no Métis on the ACCWM. (Community not identified)
- [I find] it disturbing that the Métis aren't on the ACCWM [and] believe there is a legal obligation to consult with the Métis. (Community not identified)

NWT Métis Nation

- The NWT Métis have harvested Bluenose-East caribou for a long time and want to have access to animals of that herd in the wintertime regardless of status of the herd when it is above the red zone. (Community not identified)



Photo courtesy Richard Popko, ENR, GNWT



4f. Development and Disturbance: *Overview*

There were comments recorded during community engagement sessions in all regions about the importance of addressing the impacts of development and human disturbance on caribou and caribou habitat.

Not all types of development impact caribou to the same extent and impacts vary over time. For example, while seismic work was observed to disturb caribou, animals were also seen moving back into disturbed areas once the activity had stopped. Some of the activities or developments that were mentioned as disturbing to caribou were:

- Low level flying and helicopter traffic
- Seismic activity
- Mining exploration and development
- All-weather roads and highways
- Fire
- Pollution, dust and garbage.

There were mixed opinions in the GSA as to whether pipelines impacted caribou.

Quite often, harvesters expressed frustration that while their harvesting had been restricted in order to help sustain caribou, industry was seen to be allowed to continue its activities. There was a strong message that without protecting caribou habitat, there would be little point in trying to protect caribou. People stressed that limiting industry and protecting habitat need to be part of any Management Planning – critical habitat such as calving grounds, feeding areas and migration routes were mentioned in particular. It was also suggested that land use activities that impact caribou be monitored more carefully, and that people should be compensated for the negative impacts that resulted from development.

Section 1d ('Changes in Development') presents comments about how development and disturbance were observed to be impacting caribou. This section present comments on any potential management actions that could address those impacts. Comments on cumulative effects on habitat such as climate change are included in 1c '*Changes in the Environment*'.

Themes:

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

1. Some types of development activities impacted caribou, changed their behaviour, and may need to be restricted to protect caribou and their habitat (e.g. seismic work, low level flights)

Limiting industry needs to be part of the management plan (not just limiting hunters)

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

- The Prime Minister of Canada, he is backing up oil companies... even if we come up with low levels of harvest, development is still going to have a lot of impact on animals. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- How do you put things like the highway into a Management Plan? (Inuvik)

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

- There have been changes since the seismic program in the Parsons Lake area around six years ago. That's where they winter for a while before they move to the tree line. The seismic happened in December/January right when the caribou were there. Ever since then the caribou don't really go there and they changed their migration. I just heard last year they may be back there again. (Inuvik)
- Caribou used to be on Richardson Island but since industry started up, [there are] no caribou in that area. [There is] a similar problem with Husky Lake area. [They] never crossed Husky Lake for a few years after they did seismic there. (Inuvik)
- You need to restrict development and low level flying that buzzes the caribou. We have seen [these activities] along the coast. (Aklavik)
- We are always the community that suffers most for caribou but we go by the rules and regulations they set before us. [We're] in the no hunting zone, but industry can go right in. (Inuvik)
- Industry plays a big part in this and is affecting the migration routes of the caribou. I don't know how we could do anything about industry but [we] need to mention this concern and put something in the plan. [Industry] are pretty happy with all the restrictions in this area [because no one can do any hunting in those areas] so there is no one there to bug them. (Inuvik)
- You see all these plans and all you see is targeting harvest. It never considers industry impacts. Why is that? It is obviously impacting movements of caribou and other species. I wouldn't support the plan if it [misses this]. Why is this not being considered? (Inuvik)

- If [development] negatively impacts harvesters then they should be giving compensation, but not just to individuals. [You] need to look at cumulative impacts. (Community not identified)
- Everybody will be impacted when industry comes, not just one individual [as compensation is decided now]. Cumulative impacts are huge. Remember there used to be caribou on Airport Road but now they are really far away. [You] need to take camping gear now but [you] used to be able to do it in a day trip. Will we be compensated if we never see caribou again once the pipeline comes in? (Inuvik)

Gwich'in Settlement Area

- [I] worked around industry all my life – DEW lines – it doesn't affect the caribou at all. Some people think that is the cause. I've seen pictures of [Prudhoe Bay, Alaska] with the caribou right under the pipeline – it is above ground. In my opinion it isn't the cause. (Tsiigehtchic)
- In the future the Mackenzie highway and development like that should be considered... and the pipeline. (Fort McPherson)
- Land use activity – I'd like to see more [monitoring. There is] not enough. (Inuvik)
- ...So realistically, we may never harvest Cape Bathurst caribou again? In the near future, the Tuk road is going to be going right through there – right through the winter range [of the Cape Bathurst caribou] from here to Tuk. There are going to be a lot of people using that road. Has there been any research done on that? On any effects that that may have?... With an all-weather road, there will be more industrial activity and so and so forth. (Inuvik)
- [The impact of the Tuktoyaktuk highway,] that's where the Management Plan needs to be strong. If you have a land claim on both sides of it, things can be done. The Inuvialuit would have more jurisdiction on their side of it. That's where wildlife management and self-government has to come into it. More protection is needed. (Fort McPherson)
- [You] mentioned fires. Under habitat management, call for protection of habitat. (Inuvik)
- [The draft plan during round two] never mentioned anything about critical habitat. (Inuvik)

Themes:

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

2. Negative impacts from development should result in compensation.

Themes:

Gwich'in Settlement Area

1. Not all types of development negatively impacted caribou
2. Impacts of industrial activities and developments on caribou need to be considered and monitored
3. Habitat protection needs to be part of the management plan.

Themes:

Sahtú Settlement Area

1. Impacts of industrial activities and developments on caribou need to be considered and monitored
2. Habitat protection needs to be part of the management plan
3. Industry can negatively impact caribou habitat
4. Limiting industry needs to be part of the management plan.

Sahtú Settlement Area

- Nunavut too, [there is] lots of development there – mining. That should be a study too – the development effects on caribou. (Déljñę)
- When you mention maintaining caribou habitat that means you have to lobby against the industry that is coming in. They are the major concern. Without them, things will be okay. (Tulít’a)
- For the next few years, Husky is going to be the problem; they are going to ruin the habitat. (Tulít’a)
- We have to keep the food places [for the caribou]. (Colville Lake)

Wek’ èezhìi (Tłı̄chọ Region)

- How about [having] present industry and blasting activities underground? Have we collaborated with industry to determine changes in migration? (Behchokò)

NWT Métis Nation

- Forest fire management should always be a part of caribou habitat management regardless of population status, not only when it is in the orange or red zone. (Community not identified)
- The influence of industrial activity and mining exploration and operation should be closely monitored at all stages of population status and with the same intensity, not change according to population status. (Community not identified)

Dehcho Region

- Pehdzeh Ki First Nation questions why there is no consideration of ceasing with industrial activity – not just talking about mitigating effects – by the time the population has reached the orange or red zone. The management of industrial activity through the different zones is weak. (Wrigley)
- Priority areas that need to be protected for healthy caribou populations are places where they congregate to eat, areas where they calve, and major travel corridors. (Fort Simpson)

Kugluktuk, NU

- We should limit exploration and low flying aircraft during calving. (Kugluktuk)
- There should be a moratorium on industrial activity on or near calving grounds at any herd status. (Kugluktuk)
- For aircraft and mainly choppers, the minimum altitude should be increased. A lot fly right to the ground, especially above calving grounds and Kugluktuk area. (Kugluktuk)
- Maybe planes should have routes away from hunting areas. (Kugluktuk)
- A lot of places where people are camping there is a lot of garbage. We should keep our environment clean so wildlife has a clean environment and will come back to the area. (Kugluktuk)
- We see these land-use permits all the time and make comments, but many times it is not put in the report and it's discouraging. When it's something important I talk to [the HTO] because they have a lot of power. Look the Bluenose-East calving ground, the Government of Nunavut looked at protecting it but it takes a lot of time. (Kugluktuk)
- When we give away lands to development, the animals move away and maybe that's why the animals are scattered. (Kugluktuk)
- We need the HTO and the community to tell the Government of Nunavut: we need the calving ground protected because that's where our food comes from. We don't want developments in this area. (Kugluktuk)
- It is important to identify critical habitat like calving grounds and protect it. (Kugluktuk)

Themes:

Kugluktuk, NU

1. Some types of development that impact caribou need to be restricted (e.g. exploration and low level flying)
2. Environment needs to be kept clean
3. Limiting industry and protecting habitat need to be part of the management plan.



4g. Non-Subsistence Hunting: *Overview*

For this topic, information was documented for every region within the range of the Bluenose caribou. There was a very strong message in the Inuvialuit, Gwich'in, and Sahtú regions, as well as Kugluktuk, that commercial caribou hunts and meat sales need to be addressed. People in several communities noted that they had seen or heard of large scale caribou hunts done for profit. It was suggested that communities and Aboriginal organizations need to have conversations around what is considered 'commercial' and how to regulate these activities. Hunting for profit seemed to be of concern more in some areas than others. As a result, it was suggested that more control is needed in certain locations, but not in all areas. Nonetheless, it was also pointed out that the issue will need consistent regulations that go across boundaries to be effective.

In Kugluktuk and some communities of the Gwich'in, Sahtú, and Wek' èezhii regions, sport hunting for caribou also came up as a topic that some people were concerned about. People raised questions about whether sport hunting could negatively impact the herds. Specifically, there were concerns around impacts on herd structure that could be caused by removing big bulls from the population. As noted in previous sections about traditional knowledge and harvesting practices, bulls are not usually specifically targeted by Aboriginal hunters, but many harvesters feel it is important to take a balance of cows and bulls to maintain leaders in the herd and healthy populations.

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

- People are harvesting and selling their caribou. I think it is time that the WMAC and the Boards start trying to decide what it is that they consider commercial. People are harvesting and selling their caribou. I know of someone shooting 15 caribou on the highway and getting paid \$4000. No good will come of this. This is a touchy issue but ... people are sadly mistaken if they think it is not happening. I know of someone who came up from Fort Smith and shot and sold so many caribou that he paid off his VISA. The only way it is going to work is if we all work together. (Inuvik)

Gwich'in Settlement Area

- [I] met a chief from down there and he said the same thing – people are doing it. He bought caribou from someone; [it's] too easy. I am concerned about how many people are doing that – a guy comes to the door and asks how many do you want, going door to door. Hopefully that don't happen here. (Fort McPherson)
- The biggest impact to the herd is sport hunters taking caribou. Put a stop to that to get an increase in herd numbers. Just like hunting on the highway near Yellowknife – they shoot them from the road. Hunting along the lake, [they] hunt and throw it in the truck. That's why there are so many people there. [There is] big money in it for sport hunting and commercial use. [They] don't want to kill them for nothing. I see this near Yellowknife. [We] need to stop sport hunting and commercial hunting. (Fort McPherson)
- I have a problem with commercial harvesting, not with outfitting. I don't like to see a price put on the caribou. It creates a financial incentive for hunting caribou for selling. There are more rules with outfitters. Because they are limited to one or a few tags, they aren't just going to blast away. This would more than likely be the biggest impact on the caribou, if allowing commercial harvesting. Subsistence and resident harvesters are not out to make profit. They harvest for the needs of their community. There is always the temptation to make more money if there is commercial harvesting. (Aklavik)

Themes:

Gwich'in Settlement Area

1. There was a need to address commercial sales/hunts that were taking place
2. There were mixed opinions about whether sport hunting negatively impacted the herds.

*Themes:***Sahtú Settlement Area**

1. There were some concerns about outfitter methods, harvest rates and impacts on herd structure (i.e., taking big bulls)
2. There was a need to address commercial sales/hunts that were taking place
3. Selling caribou was not considered a traditional activity.

- If there are tags given out and used [for commercial harvesting] that would be better and would restrict abuse of the system. (Aklavik)
- ...If I went out hunting caribou last week and I got five and a month later I got another five, am I going too far? One person can't eat ten caribou – this is my example – unless you go out for a community hunt; that would be different. A person taking more than they could eat is probably trying to sell them. (Tsiigehtchic)

Sahtú Settlement Area

- [With] outfitting, people don't like the idea of the commercialization of wildlife in any way. [They] really don't like killing animals for heads and not taking the meat; it shouldn't be allowed. [There are] some questions as to what happens to the meat – mostly moose and caribou – from the outfitters. (Déljñę)
- Go back 60 years, since the first outfitter came out. Is there any way to shut them down for one year or two? I know they are making their money off trophies. They are slowly affecting the future generations – they are taking a lot of moose, sheep, etc. It is hard for us to do anything about it because we make money off of them. (Tulít'a)
- The outfitters they aren't walking anymore; they are using choppers. (Tulít'a)
- I would suggest that the resident hunters be given two tags for bull Bluenose-East animals for Unit S [hunting zone in the Sahtú], and that a commercial quota of 30 bulls go to Déljñę. (Déljñę)
- There are simply no jobs in Tuktoyaktuk. One of the only ways of making money is harvesting caribou and selling the animal or selling dry meat. I've heard the going price for a caribou is \$200 in the ISR and hopefully, we don't have to go to that extent here. (Fort Good Hope)
- Having a wildlife monitor is a good idea. There are stories of people taking a lot of caribou and people selling the meat. [We] don't believe caribou should be sold. (Colville Lake)
- We have to keep the caribou protected. If we don't then they will move away. Other communities, they sell caribou. That's not our way; we don't do that. The caribou know what we do. (Colville Lake)

- Was any thought given to a poaching policy? Say you jump on a plane in Edmonton – you should see a sign saying that if you harvest a caribou illegally, you get one year in jail and a big fine. (Fort Good Hope)
- [Resident harvesters] shouldn't be penalized here in the Sahtú, where we don't take a lot of caribou. (Norman Wells)

Wek' èezhìi (Tłı̨chǫ Region)

- Giving restrictions to big game outfitters, you've done a good job. They take a big toll [on] the caribou. (Whati)
- The industries came into our area, commercial activities such as outfitting. And they sell antlers to various countries for making medication. The outfitters only kill bulls, the trophy hunters. It causes the caribou to decline for sure. We'd like to preserve the animal for future generation. (Whati)
- We want to make sure there are caribou for the kids growing up today. I'm pretty sure the same issue will be brought up – we don't want further decline. By listening to your presentation, the only way we can do it is to work with one another. Also there will be no more people from other regions, outfitters and commercial harvesters – this will help the regrowth of the population. (Whati)

Dehcho Region

- There is a concern that the older bulls leading the herds in their migrations to different parts of the range should not be harvested so that migration pattern and timing is not potentially changed. Something like the letting the leaders of the Porcupine caribou fall migration pass by before harvesting instead of potentially scattering the leaders. Also there is concern that if the old bulls are leading the fall migrations that outfitter camps not be stationed on the same migratory routes because if the old bulls [trophy animals] are harvested the same problem of disrupted migration paths and times will occur. (Fort Simpson)
- Commercial use of wildlife is not something that the Dehcho favours. (Fort Simpson)

Themes:

Kugluktuk, NU

1. There were some concerns about outfitter methods, harvest rates and impacts on herd structure (i.e., taking big bulls)
2. There was a need to address commercial sales/hunts that were taking place.

NWT Métis Nation

- No non-resident outfitting should even be considered at any stage of population status or colour zone. (Community not identified)

Kugluktuk, NU

- We should cut commercial harvests except community hunts. (Kugluktuk)
- Instead of taking commercial hunting out of the picture, the composition of the commercial hunts could be regulated [how many of each sex and age]. (Kugluktuk)
- Shooting only bulls is very dangerous. Sport hunters shoot the good breeding bulls and it can affect the population. (Kugluktuk)
- I used to work as a guide for sport hunts. Caribou hunting camps select the best looking bulls. That could be having an impact on today's caribou population. (Kugluktuk)
- If they shoot all the bulls maybe it is why the caribou are down. We don't see many bulls these years. (Kugluktuk)
- Sports hunters don't understand that the bulls are important to the herd. They tend to go for the largest, strongest bulls, but they should be left in the herd to pass on their genes. The practices involved in sports hunts contradict the law of 'survival of the fittest' and removing the best bulls will weaken the herd. (Kugluktuk)
- The NWT cancelled sports hunts years ago, but this didn't apply to Nunavut, so sports hunters moved to the Nunavut side of the border. This doesn't make sense since they are the same herds – we need to have consistent regulations across the range of the herds to protect them effectively. (Kugluktuk)
- In recent years, there have been upwards of 60 export permits issued to sports hunters, which translates to 60 of the best bulls being removed from the herds. One community member who worked with an outfitting company in the past reported an average of 140 bulls being shot within a six week period every year. The Kugluktuk HTO recently passed a motion to stop sports hunting in the area for this reason. (Kugluktuk)



4h. Enforcement: *Overview*

As mentioned in the preceding topic, during the community engagement sessions there were some concerns expressed about commercial caribou hunts or meat sales that have been taking place, that 'poaching' has been increasing as harvesting has become restricted, and that these issues need to be addressed. However, comments regarding needs for enforcement of harvest regulations were only recorded in the Inuvialuit, Gwich'in and Sahtú regions.

In all three areas there were many suggestions that the harvest of caribou for sale needs to be monitored and/or regulated within communities. There were also concerns that harvesters coming into a region from neighbouring areas need to be monitored and/or regulated similarly. It was recognized that regulations may be difficult to enforce if they differ for different herds, and that more enforcement will require more resources and funding. However, it was also stressed in several communities that education can help with compliance.

One additional concern that was raised was the question of how to better regulate or enforce rules with industry.

*Themes:***Inuvialuit Settlement Region**

1. There were suggestions that there needs to be greater monitoring and/or regulation of commercial meat sales
2. Education could help with compliance.

*Themes:***Gwich'in Settlement Area**

1. There were concerns about making sure enforcement of rules takes place, especially when caribou numbers are low

Inuvialuit Settlement Region

- Ban people that sell caribou, nobody [is] doing anything about that. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- [There is a] need for the plan to address enforcement requirements in Tuk for compliance with caribou harvest regulations. (Tuktoyaktuk)
- It is only a handful of people who are poaching, but what is the use of [objecting] if there is no way to penalize these people to make them stop poaching? (Tuktoyaktuk)
- If you put a quota on people, restrictions have to be applied fairly. There should be more restrictions put on the highway. People take 30 to 40 caribou even this winter, then they try to sell it. [It's] not fair they have easy access. (Aklavik)

Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Shared Meetings, Round 1

- People are still afraid of conservation officers. Education in the schools is the key to cooperation, respect, and compliance. (Aklavik)

Gwich'in Settlement Area

- You can't stop a person from killing a caribou but [you] could have community monitors out there checking and informing hunters of the caribou status. Maybe even wildlife officers. There is going to be hunters out there. No harvest for sure [in the red zone]. (Fort McPherson)
- [When the herd is declining and getting low] there should be someone monitoring the hunters, keeping everything under control. (Fort McPherson)
- [When the caribou numbers are low] give fines for the stubborn ones – the human predators. They will say it is my right, but need the enforcement to say no you can't. We need to save the caribou for another generation. (Aklavik)
- When we are in the low part of the population, is there any way we can enforce what is being suggested? If people don't do what they are supposed to do, we should fine them or throw them in jail. [We are] trying to protect caribou and people don't care. (Fort McPherson)

- Communication will be so important, so will enforcement. 90% play by the rules but 10% don't attend meetings and don't play by the rules. (Aklavik)
- This plan needs the teeth behind it. [You] need enforcement to be able to assist the people collecting data. (Aklavik)
- [When the caribou are low and the plan calls for increased enforcement], say with the mines, would it be up to the ENR office to go to them and speak with them? What would that enforcement look like? When the mines first opened, that was a big question – what is going to happen to the animals and to the caribou habitat? And sure enough, in that area the caribou is declining. It's been happening for about ten years – so about how long the mine has been open... (Fort McPherson)
- Today it is not like years ago where you had to feed yourself and your dogs. Today you don't need that. One or two caribou – I go through three and from spring to now and I still have caribou left – three in the spring and that is all a guy needs. They really should go after the people – even though it is Aboriginal, I know some are and some Aboriginals do that too –they overkill. That shouldn't be so. You should be allowed so much. At least ten anyway, you know – I don't even know – that's 80 or 90 caribou. That's not right. Even though it is an Aboriginal right. We have to manage these caribou too. (Tsiigehtchic)
- [The Yukon] are watching on their side. They are really strict on their enforcement, not lax like in the NWT. (Aklavik)
- [The] patrols or enforcement of ENR; [there is] nothing there for land patrols. (Inuvik)

Photo courtesy of ENR, GNWT



[173]

Themes:

Gwich'in Settlement Area

2. More resources were required for effective enforcement
3. There were concerns about how to regulate or enforce rules with industry.

*Themes:***Sahtú Settlement Area**

1. There were suggestions that there needs to be greater monitoring and/or regulation of commercial meat sales
2. There were concerns about harvesters coming in from other areas to harvest and how to regulate those activities
3. It could be difficult to enforce when regulations differ by herd.

Sahtú Settlement Area

- I was just in Inuvik where I was talking with a young guy from Tuktoyaktuk who said that although they have a tag system, there are some people who are going out and killing as many caribou as they want [30 or more]. There is no one there to enforce or patrol; [there is] only one woman officer but she does no patrols. I figure that in Paulatuk they have easy access in the calving areas and I wonder what they are harvesting. (Fort Good Hope)
- We really need more enforcement, especially where there is easier access like on calving grounds or where people are selling animals. Maybe you can monitor them more, watch night and day, check on harvesters. (Fort Good Hope)
- Those guys that come in here with trucks. That's not included [in the harvest statistics for Déljñę, 1940s-2000s]. That's where Renewable Resource Officers come in. (Déljñę)
- I believe it is getting out of hand in Tuktoyaktuk because the herd is so close to the community and many people are going out and getting as many as they can. I know that on the Dempster Highway there were check points, counting and sampling but there is nothing like that happening near Tuktoyaktuk. This is something that should be done. (Fort Good Hope)
- Caribou is caribou. How would you know if you hunted Bluenose-East or Bluenose-West caribou? (Tulít'a)



Photo courtesy Richard Popko, ENR, GNWT

Conclusions

The community engagements that were conducted as part of developing '***Taking Care of Caribou – the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East Barren-ground Caribou Herds Management Plan***' were an important way of ensuring that people living within the range of these caribou had an opportunity to inform and shape the Management Plan. Overall, sixteen communities in the Northwest Territories and one in the western portion of the Kitikmeot Region of Nunavut took part in the engagement process. The purpose of the initial engagements was to share information, identify key issues and concerns, discuss solutions, and outline next steps for the Management Plan. The second and third rounds of engagements provided opportunities for community members to fine-tune versions of the draft plan. During these stages, people were able to review the plan, assess how well their input had been included, and suggest further changes.

This report presents as accurate a record as possible of what was heard and documented during the community engagement sessions. It is not intended to be a comprehensive report on traditional and/or community knowledge of these caribou, as the meetings that informed it did not take the place of doing formal traditional and/or community knowledge research on caribou. There is still a need to facilitate the access to and sharing of this type of information throughout the range of the caribou, so that it can play a larger role in Management Planning. We recognize that there is a wealth of knowledge held in these communities and this report is limited in the depth and extent of this type of information.

Effort on researching and documenting community knowledge about caribou is required – traditional knowledge in particular can span periods of time much longer than most scientific research is able to. Active community members often spend long periods of time 'in the field' and have rich observations that can support, refute or enhance scientific findings.

Considerations for Future Community Engagement

1. Facilitation and Documentation

Increasingly, community engagements such as workshops, small group sessions, and public meetings are helping to inform Management Planning in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. In our experience we believe the following would assist and improve efforts to faithfully include community information recorded during these sessions. Facilitation and documentation of meetings should be formalized – ideally, sessions should be facilitated by people with local knowledge (and language) and with experience doing social research and reporting. It is important to have a dedicated note-taker, as the person facilitating cannot do both effectively. Audio or video-recording (with the permission of participants) can support note-taking and fact-checking, as well as be used to identify speakers, and provide more in-depth information for quotations. While costly, transcription of these recordings is extremely valuable and provides the greatest quantity and quality of information. This is especially important in sessions

where elders are present, ensuring that valuable traditional knowledge is not lost and that the wording used by participants can be maintained.

2. Recognition of Cultural Context

Questions, terms, language, conceptualizations and meeting structure should be designed within an appropriate cultural context and/or defensible research setting. All discussions during the meeting need to be interpreted and translated – this should occur during the meeting, but could also be done after the fact if audio-recordings are made and participants agree to this.

3. Community Information

Community members should have some authority over how a session is recorded, which parts are recorded, translated and/or transcribed, and ultimately how information they share is interpreted, shared and used. Communities should also have opportunities to review how their inputs have been documented and interpreted. This should happen at minimum through documentation and review of key messages as formal comments or recommendations on flip charts or projectors at the engagement meeting, and review of engagement reports which provide context (methods, participant listing, analysis of key messages, conclusions/recommendations). In addition, information should be verified in some way by those who provided it.

4. Early Involvement

It is important to identify and involve interested or affected user groups early on in the engagement process so that they can have input at all stages of a developing plan. Engaging people as early as possible ensures that their interests are best represented.

5. Best practices

It is important to develop and/or follow standards or ‘best practices’ for ethical community engagement at all stages of the process.

Appendix A: Summary Table for Management Plan Engagement and Review Process

Date	Region	Community (#participants)	Engagement Round, Meeting Type or Objective	Outcome or Products
Feb. 28 – Mar. 22, 2007	Western Kitikmeot Region, NU	Kugluktuk (12)	Workshop intended to provide an opportunity for participants to share knowledge of caribou herds, as well as proposing several actions that could promote the recovery of the caribou herds and help the community during this period of low caribou availability.	Workshop focused on Bluenose East and Dolphin-Union herds. Report produced (Dumond 2007).
ROUND 1			COMMUNITY INPUT AND ENGAGEMENT	WORKING GROUP AND CONSULTANT HOLD COMMUNITY MEETINGS
Oct. 20 – Nov. 3, 2009	ISR	Aklavik (23), Inuvik (14), Paulatuk (11), Tuktokyaktuk (17)	Community engagements to review status of herds; hear concerns and opinions as to what’s happening with BGC in the region; discuss solutions and what to include in a Management Plan. Also did school tours in communities.	Summary report produced for ISR. Inuvik and Aklavik meetings were shared with GSA participants; comments from these community members were not sorted into Gwich’in or Inuvialuit but only by community.
Oct. 21 – Dec. 18, 2009	GSA, ISR	Aklavik (23), Fort McPherson (11), Inuvik (14), Tsiigehtchic (8)	Community engagements to review status of herds; hear concerns and opinions as to what’s happening with BGC in the region; discuss solutions and what to include in a Management Plan; RRCs invited to provide comments at meeting and formally afterwards if desired. Also did school tours in communities.	Summary report produced for GSA. Inuvik and Aklavik meetings were shared with ISR participants; comments from these community members were not sorted into Gwich’in or Inuvialuit but only by community.
Dec. 1 – 18, 2009	SSA	Colville Lake (17), Deline (11), Fort Good Hope (15), Norman Wells (5), Tulit’a (14)	Community engagements to review status of herds; hear concerns and opinions as to what’s happening with BGC in the region; discuss solutions and what to include in a Management Plan. Also did school tours in communities.	Summary report produced for SSA.
Feb. 17, 2010	Western Kitikmeot Region, NU	Kugluktuk (12-15)	Community engagements to review status of herds; hear concerns and opinions as to what’s happening with BGC in the region; discuss solutions and what to include in a Management Plan	Summary report produced for Nunavut.

ROUND 2			COMMUNITY FEEDBACK ON FIRST REPORT DRAFT	ACCWM MEMBERS CONSULT IN THEIR RESPECTIVE REGIONS.
Jan. – Feb. 2011	ISR	Inuvik (6), Aklavik (5), Tuktoyaktuk (12), Paulatuk (13)	Community meetings to review first draft of Management Plan	Meeting recorded in notes.
Feb. 14- Feb. 16, 2011	GSA	Aklavik(5), Inuvik (7), Fort McPherson(10), Tsiigehtchic(10)	GRRB Public meetings with Gwich'in RRCs to review first draft of the Management Plan to get input on the draft plan, the management actions and thresholds for actions; ENR WG member invited to help present plan with GRRB staff; RRCs invited to provide comments at meeting and formally afterwards	Summary report of all GSA consultations; summary does not include GTC comments. Themes identified to help review comments. Additional comments received from Gwich'in Tribal Council in March, 2011 on Dec 2010 version of draft plan.
Feb. 22 – 24, 2011	WRMA (Tłjchq)	Bechoko (40), Gameti (5), Whati (25)	In this region, Round 2 engagements included information conveyed to other regions during Round 1, as well as presenting information in the Draft Plan.	Notes produced for each community.
Mar. 2011	SSA	Deline (6)	Public meeting to develop a Management Plan for the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West and Bluenose-East caribou herds	Meeting notes provided, but no translation of discussions in North Slavey.
Aug. 2-4, 2011	Western Kitikmeot Region, NU	Kugluktuk HTO	Community consultations on draft Management Plan	Meeting notes provided.
ROUND 3			CONSULTATION ON SECOND DRAFT	ACCWM MEMBERS CONSULT IN THEIR REGIONS. ENR RELEASES DRAFT FOR PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT.
Jun. 2011			Draft plan posted on ENR website for public review, sent to key audiences*, and provided at following assemblies: Dehcho FN (Wrigley), Akaitcho Territory Government (Lutsel K'e), Tłjchq (Whati), Dene Nation (Fort Providence), Gwich'in (Tsiigehtchic), Sahtú (Colville Lake).	Written comments provided to ACCWM.
Aug. 9 2011	GSA, ISR	Inuvik (10)	ENR public review meeting on the draft Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East Caribou Herds Management Plan.	Summary notes provided.
Aug. 2- Aug. 18, 2011 & Dec. 7, 2011	GSA	Aklavik (8), Fort McPherson (5+8), Inuvik(6), Tsiigehtchic(3)	GRRB community consultations on draft Management Plan with RRCS and open to the public.	Community notes include list of participants and affiliation

Aug. – Oct., 2011	SSA	Tulit'a (11), Colville Lake (9), Deline (13), Fort Good Hope (16), Norman Wells (7)	ENR public review meetings on the draft Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East Caribou Herds Management Plan.	Summary notes provided.
Nov. 2011	WRMA (Tłı̄chq)	Bechoko, Whati	Information session on draft plan.	No information available.
Nov. 2011	NWT MN	(unknown)	ENR meeting with NWT MN for comments on draft Bluenose Management Plan	Summary notes provided.
Nov. 2011	NSMA	(unknown)	ENR meeting with NWT MN for comments on draft Bluenose Management Plan	Summary notes provided.
Jan. 2012	Dehcho	Wrigley (5), Fort Simpson (7)	ENR public review meeting on the draft Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East Caribou Herds Management Plan	Summary notes provided.
Apr. – Jun., 2013	ISR	Paulatuk (9), Aklavik (7), Inuvik (6), Tuktoyaktuk (24)	WMAC presentation and meetings to review draft plan and address IGC concerns with plan	Summary notes provided.

*In addition to the meetings and presentations conducted as part of the engagement process, ENR solicited public input on the draft Management Plan by posting it online (June 2011 – present). While no broader distribution occurred in Nunavut, the draft plan was sent to the following NWT organizations for review and comment:

Aklavik Hunters' and Trappers' Committee	Caribou Pass Outfitters Ltd.
Aklavik Métis Local #56	Charter Community of Arctic Red River
Arctic Safaris	Charter Community of Délı̄ne
Association of Mackenzie Mountain Outfitters	City of Yellowknife
Aurora Caribou Camp	Community Government of Behchokò, Tłı̄chq Government
Ayoni Keh Land and Dugha Financial Corporation	Community Government of Gamèti, Tłı̄chq Government
Barren Ground Caribou Outfitters Association	Community Government of Gamèti, Tłı̄chq Government
Behdzi Ahda First Nation Band Council	Community Government of Wekweèti, Tłı̄chq Government
Behdzi Ahda First Nation Economic Development Corporation	Community Government of Whatı, Tłı̄chq Government
Behdzi Ahda Renewable Resources Council	CPAWS Northwest Territories
Beverly and Qamanirjuaq Caribou Management Board	Deh Gah Gotie Dene Council
Canadian Arctic Resources Committee	Dehcho First Nations
Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers	Dehcho Land Use Planning Committee

Déłjñę First Nation	Jean Marie River First Nations
Déłjñę Land and Financial Corporation	Joint Review Panel Manager
Déłjñę Renewable Resources Council	Ka'a'gee Tu first Nation
Denehdeh National Office	K'ahsho Got'ine Charter Community Council
Deton' Cho Corporation	K'atlodeeche First Nation
Ecology North	Liidlii Kue First Nations
Ehdiitat Gwich'in Council	Mackenzie Gas Project (Regional offices)
Ehdiitat Renewable Resource Council	Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board
Enodah Wilderness Travel Ltd.	Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board
Environmental Impact Review Board Joint Secretariat – Inuvialuit Renewable Resource Committees	MLAs
Fort Norman Métis Land/Financial Corporation	Nahanni Butte Dene Band
Fort Providence Métis Local #57	Nihtat Gwich'in Renewable Resource Council
Fort Providence Resource Management Board	Norman Wells Land Corporation
Fort Simpson Métis Local #52	Norman Wells Renewable Resources Council
Fort Smith Métis Council	North Slave Métis Alliance
Gwich'in Land and Water Board	Northern Gas Project Secretariat (Yellowknife and Norman Wells)
Gwich'in Land Use Planning Board	Northwest Territory Métis Nation
Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board	NWT and Nunavut Chamber of Mines
Gwich'in Tribal Council	NWT Tourism Association
Gwichya Gwich'in Renewable Resource Council	NWT Wildlife Federation
Hay River Aboriginal Métis	Paulatuk Hunters' and Trappers' Committee
Hay River Fish and Game Association	Pehdzeh Ki First Nation
Hay River Métis Council	Qaivvik Ltd.
Inuvialuit Game Council	Rabesca's Resources Ltd.
Inuvialuit Joint Secretariat	Resident hunters
Inuvialuit Land Administration	Sachs Harbour Hunters' and Trappers' Committee
Inuvialuit Regional Corporation	Sahtú Land and Water Board
Inuvik Métis Local #62	Sahtú Land Use Planning Board
J. Group (Peterson's Point Lake Lodge)	Sahtú Renewable Resources Board

Sahtú Secretariat Incorporated
Sambaa K'e Dene Band
Tetlit Gwich'in Council
Tetlit Gwich'in Renewable Resource Council
Tłı̨chǫ Renewable Resources Committee
True North Safaris Ltd.
Tuktoyaktuk Hunters' and Trappers' Committee
Tulít'a Dene Band
Tulít'a Land and Financial Corporation
Tulít'a Renewable Resources Council
Wek'èezhii Land and Water Board
Wek'èezhii Renewable Resources Board
West Point First Nation
Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT)
Yellowknife Shooting Club
Yellowknives Dene First Nation (Dettah)
Yellowknives Dene First Nation (N'Dilo)
Yellowknives Dene First Nation

