

**Hunting Laws and Approaches
To
Wildlife Harvesting
Presentation
For
Colville 2020
Public Listening:
Sahtu Region**

**Presented by the
Norman Wells Renewable Resource Council
January 16, 2020**

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Summary

The Norman Wells Renewable Resource Council (NWRRC), representing the Sahtu Dene and Metis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement (SDMCLCA) beneficiaries of Norman Wells, is proud to be working together with the Region and forwarding this presentation to the **Colville 2020 Public Listening**, this January 21 – 23, 2020.

The NWRRC fully supports all the Sahtu Communities with their individual unique issues and concerns, regarding caribou issues in their area. The NWRRC also supports the unique and local homebased Caribou Management Plans in the neighboring Districts and Communities. We fully respect the wishes and initiatives our neighbors are taking, and only support them. This is true, as the members of the NWRRC have hunted and harvested caribou from all herds in the Sahtu.

The NWRRC acknowledges and respects that all the Sahtu Caribou Herds are managed by multi jurisdictions, and when it comes to the Boreal and Mountain Caribou we feel the NWRRC has to express our concerns, and the NWRRC is honored and proud to be working with the Tulita and Ross River People on these issues.

The NWRRC supports the Níó Nę P'ęné Plan, that the Ross River, Tulita and Norman Wells People have been working on, but agree there is a lot more work and consultations to be done.

Background

The NWRRC has been monitoring the caribou herds in the Sahtu since Norman Wells has been here. Our members have subsistence lived off all the herds in the region, the people were known to travel long distances for caribou. The following is how we learned and respected the herds, and how they are managed then and now.

Bluenose East – Deline, Tulita – Belare Wíle Gots'é ʔekwé - Caribou For All Time Proposal 2016 – Deline

Bluenose West – Fort Good Hope and Colville Lake – Dehlá Got'ıne ʔədə Plan, Oct. 21, 2019 – Colville

Boreal Caribou – All of Sahtu Region, ENR

Mountain Caribou – Tulita, Norman Wells, Ross River, FGH - Nío Ne P'ęne Plan-Ross River, Tulita/Norman Wells

Ten years ago, the Bluenose East and West herds started to diminish, getting to unacceptable levels, measures were taken to this day. TK has proven that the Boreal Caribou are somewhat healthy. The quotas and restrictions put on the Bluenose East and West herds, as well as the Bathurst herd quotas, have put more pressure on the Mountain Caribou. The hunting restrictions and lack of game in the Yukon also brings more Aboriginal hunters to our side of the Border.

Principles

The NWRRC's presentation, is based on Respect for all the People of the Sahtu, and all the Land and all the Animals. Our teachings of sharing and caring is what drives us to work together for the betterment of all, the environment, and the animals.

To pass on Traditional Harvesting Practices and Knowledge to the Youth.

To promote Education and help steer the Youth towards Environmental fields of employment.

To promote and implement Harvesting and Monitoring Projects of the Mountain Caribou.

To work closely with Tulita and Ross River, to protect and pursue concerns for the Mountain Caribou, and the Nío Nę P'ęné Plan.

GOAL #1 – Revitalization, Protect, Respect, Educate

To Educate all youth through On Land projects, traditional hunting practices and Dene Laws.

To provide the confidence and attitudes for our youth to get educated in the outdoor fields such as Hydrology and Biology.

To provide correspondence and regulations for Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Hunters, hunting in our traditional areas.

To revitalize and get the Caribou Populations and habitats back to healthy conditions.

To respect all aspects of Caribou, habitat, and each other.

To protect and oversee sensitive areas and herds that are in danger of displacement or dwindling numbers.

GOAL #2 – CONSERVATION APPROACH

The NWRRC believes that any approach for conservation of caribou or caribou habitat, should be initiated by all combined affected parties. The NWRRC fully supports the other and all Caribou Management Plans in the Sahtu Region.

Of course, the priority for the NWRRC is the Mountain Caribou, and the Nío Nę P'ęńę Draft Plan. The NWRRC works closely with Tulita and Ross River, as well as Government Agencies that have jurisdiction in the conservation of Mountain Caribou Habitat. Some of the most important issues to the conservation of Mountain Caribou in the Nío Nę P'ęńę Draft Plan, are brought up in the following pages.

Education on two levels will be a priority in the approach to conservation. Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal hunter education. The NWRRC fully supports the Ross River Dene Council, and the public information initiatives they have been pursuing. Voluntary hunters checklists, notice and law forms, timelines of hunts for Non Aboriginal hunters in the Nío Nę P'ęńę Area. The promotion of traditional hunting practices and respect.

The NWRRC believes that this approach should be taken in the Mackenzie Valley as well.

GOAL #3 – HARVEST AUTHORIZATION AND REPORTING

The NWRRC supports Colville Lake and Deline, and anyone else when it comes to their initiatives and long-term goals of one day being the issuer of licenses and tags for harvested game in their traditional areas.

The NWRRC believes as effected groups develop management plans and educational processes, these educational initiatives should be combined and promoted with and through the GNWT permitting system within ENR. When a resident hunter or a non-resident hunter gets their tags and regulations, they would also get the info and brochures from the effected management plan for that area to be hunted.

BOREAL CARIBOU

Traditional Knowledge and local land users have found that the Boreal Caribou are far and few between. They are around and have their own little ecosystems they hang around. The Boreal Caribou are also very volatile and sensitive.

The NWRRC does not agree with the collaring and helicopter tagging of the Boreal Caribou. Yet, we have approved GNWT Highway Collaring Projects of Boreal Caribou, not to hamper future construction projects. The NWRRC does not feel comfortable being pressured to do things we don't agree with, at the same time, the NWRRC does not want to hamper jobs in these harsh economic times.

MOUNTAIN CARIBOU

The Mountain Caribou habitat and range goes from Norman Wells to the Yukon Border, and from the Nahanni to the Arctic Red River. For this presentation only, we are going to comment on two areas of Mountain Caribou habitat. The southern section of the mountains, (Twitcha River South), and northern section of the mountains, (Twitcha River North).

Members of the NWRRC have reported that the Mountain Caribou in the southern section of the mountains, have dwindled. Especially on the southern end of the Canol Trail, in the Nío Nę P'ęñé Area. Some say, this is due to all the activity in the area for the past ten years, and more so recently.

Members of the NWRRC have also reported more Mountain Caribou in the northern section of the mountains, in the fall and winter. The numbers seem to be rising in the northern sections for the last ten years. Is this a benefit from the activity disturbing Mountain Caribou to the south?

One thing is for certain, the Mountain Caribou have been feeling a lot more hunting pressure over the past ten years. Due to all the other herds in the NWT being closed for hunting. As well, the hunting restrictions are tight in the Yukon, as the game is limited, bringing Aboriginal Hunters from the Yukon as well.

BIG GAME HUNTING ISSUES

Harvest Numbers

The number of Mountain Caribou harvested in the Mountains should be compiled and promoted to the communities of the Sahtu on an annual regular basis. A report consisting of harvested Mountain Caribou by all, resident, non-resident, and Aboriginal Yukon/NWT hunters and outfitters.

Predator Population Control

The NWRRC does not agree with any predator population control in the Mackenzie Mountains.

Hiring Practices

The NWRRC would like to see the Big Game Outfitters start to train and utilize local native guides.

New Species Hunts Muskox, Brown Bear, Geese, (others)

The NWRRC believes that any new tags such as muskox or bears, in the future, should go exclusively to the local RRCs to promote revenues and control to the effected RRCs.

Mile 222 and Nío Nẹ P'ẹnẹ Area Issues

Draft Nío Nẹ P'ẹnẹ Plan

The NWRRC supports the Nío Nẹ P'ẹnẹ Plan development process. The NWRRC would like to see the Nío Nẹ P'ẹnẹ Plan take a more flexible, workable approach with the Mining Industry in the immediate area. If there is to be industry development in the area, there must also be more attention and restrictions for the influx and increase numbers of human activity, and the Nío Nẹ P'ẹnẹ Plan should accommodate.

ENR MILE 222 CHECK STATION

The GNWT (ENR), should continue to monitor and regulate hunting activity at Mile 222, with the Local RRC's, and Ross River People.

The GNWT (ENR), should also work with the Ross River Dene Council, and Sahtu RRC's, to promote local hunting expectations and correspondence, brochures, best hunting practices, notices that need to be shared with all hunters coming through the check station. Even if they are voluntary.

Doi T'oh Territorial Park Corporation (DTPC)

The NWRRC fully supports the development of the DTPC and the Draft Development and Management Plan. The NWRRC believes the Draft Management Plan should be reviewed and revised. Interim measures should be implemented for the Proposed park corridor as soon as possible. This is a priority for the NWRRC.