

**Norman Wells Renewable Resources Council**

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Dr. Deborah Simmons  
Sahtu Renewable Resources Board  
P.O. Box 134  
Tulita, NT X0E 0K0

March 1, 2021

***Re Support for Dehlá Got'ıne Community Conservation Plan***

Dear Dr Simmons,

We are writing on behalf of the Norman Wells Renewable Resources Council ("RRC") in respect of the *Public Listening: Sahtú Ragóʔa and Approaches to Wildlife Harvesting* proceeding.

We are in full support of the positions taken by Dehlá Got'ıne in this proceeding. We have had a chance to review their *Critique of Minister's Response to the Board Report and Reasons for Decision*, filed February 25, 2021, and we support what they are saying.

We note the hard work that Dehlá Got'ıne has put in to get their Community Conservation Plan before the Board. They are exercising the rights that they have as a Sahtú community and as Sahtú participants, to be true to our culture and way of life and to manage wildlife according to the time-tested ways of our people.

We are frustrated to see the Minister's response to Dehlá Got'ıne's proposal. Dehlá Got'ıne has played by the rules and engaged in good faith to develop their Community Conservation Plan. It is disappointing to see the Minister reject Dehlá Got'ıne's plan to practice our traditional conservation systems.

We are in support of Dehlá Got'ıne's proposal to conserve the caribou herd through community conservation planning measures.

We also support Recommendation 4.1 for the Colville Lake RRC to be granted the power to issue authorizations to all types of harvesters in the entire Sahtú Barren-ground caribou area 01 (S/BC/01).

What is being proposed in Recommendation 4.1 is in line with the idea in Sahtú Dene culture of the local community having stewardship responsibility for their local area. It is just about asking hunters to respect other people and their land. In our culture we have always asked for

permission of our neighbours if we went on to their lands to hunt. This is a matter of basic respect as well as of safety.

The system that Dehlá Got'ı̄ne is proposing also happens to be more effective than what the Minister is proposing. Our system is based on respect and accountability and we know it is better for protecting the caribou herd, because it has worked for thousands of years. We have never hunted out the caribou by following our own ways.

Because this system of respect and accountability based on primary stewardship of our local lands is a part of our culture, and because the power of the local RRC to practice this system is recognized in our Land Claim, we see it as part and parcel of our Treaty right to harvest. We do not agree with the Minister that Dehlá Got'ı̄ne is imposing an infringement on our rights as participants under the Sahtú land claim.

We urge the SRRB to reject the Minister's attempt to change your initial decision in this proceeding, and we also urge the Minister to reconsider their opposition to Dehlá Got'ı̄ne's very reasonable plan.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "R. McDonald", is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Rhea McDonald  
President