



Norman Wells 2024 ʔelets'ehkwę Godı
Public Listening Session (PLS)
February 20 – 22, 2024
Responses to Round 2 Information Requests

Deadline for responses Tuesday January 30, 2024

This template includes Round 2 Information Requests (IRs) addressed to Norman Wells ʔehdzo Got'ıne, for the Norman Wells 2024 Public Listening Session on ʔelets'ehkwę Godı (*Caribou Conservation, Climate Change and Wildfires*) being held February 20-22, 2024.

IRs are written requests for information directed to a Party or Parties in the PLS. Please submit responses to Round 2 IRs by **January 30, 2024**.

Contact Stephanie Yuill for any assistance you might need completing the questions (planner@srrb.nt.ca or (867) 446.9076).

Round 2 Information Requests (IRs) for Communities

A. Communication about climate change

IRs from the SRRB to all Sahtú Communities:

1. What is the best way for governments and other agencies to communicate information to your community about climate change, changes to the land, and changes to the animals?

There is an overabundance of valuable information about climate change, changes to the land and changes to the animals however sharing and communicating this information is lacking and frustrating on all levels. Information should be coming from the community level and land users, since it is them who are witnessing changes as they happen. Traditional knowledge should be held with the utmost respect and utilized when it comes to these three (3) very important issues. Co-Management boards, different levels of Gov't and other agencies play a significant role in how information is collected, stored and shared. It can be very overwhelming trying to keep up with the exchange of information, how best to use the information and where to get the information. The RRC's are underfunded and don't presently have the capacity to keep up in the information race. There should be ongoing training with co-management boards etc, so their mandates and responsibilities are understood, followed and people will have a better understanding of how, who and where to go for the proper information they may be seeking.

B. Questions about adaptation to changes you cannot control, including climate change and wildfires

IRs from the SRRB to all Sahtú Communities:

1. As land users, has your community changed the way you live, move, or behave on the land, in response to changes you have noticed on the land? What kinds of things are people in your community doing differently?

The impact of climate change and how land users utilize the land have been significant. Freeze up has been taking a lot longer due to extreme temperature changes in our seasons. Water levels have never been so low and forest fires have been extreme. With just these changes, it has impacted how we use the land significantly. It has been unsafe to travel on the river because of open water when in the past it was frozen. Animals are becoming scarce or have moved further away due to forest fires so it is harder to hunt. Berries are not as plentiful because the ground is so dry. We are seeing more and more “ghost” moose (moose with ticks) and the migration routes of caribou have changed. There has been an increase in the muskox population. Indigenous people have a symbiotic relationship with nature and when that is out of balance, that threatens our way of life and how we have existed and thrived for centuries.

2. What role should humans have in helping caribou adapt to changes in the climate?

Humans are the root cause of climate change and have had effects on caribou such as hunting and pollution. With the increase of temperature, there is a very real possibility that there could be an increase in parasites and that can affect their behavior, their condition, and how they reproduce. I don't believe that we should help caribou adapt to changes in the climate because we are the problem. They have no choice but to try and adapt to the situation that they have not created and that is scary because so far the picture of them adapting has not been working that well.

3. Has your community started planning or taking actions related to climate change or wildfires and their impacts on caribou? What kind of actions has your community taken?

The NWRRC is in the process of creating a conservation plan and is involved in projects that are aimed directly in protecting caribou. The planning for climate change and wildfires and the impact that it will have is an ongoing work in progress, not only for caribou but for all species, including us, to ensure we can survive and thrive while trying to adapt to the massive changes that are happening today.

4. What resources does your community need to adapt to and mitigate the effects changes on the land that you cannot control, such as climate change and wildfires?

More educational resources and workshops in the community to help people understand and realize what we are facing with climate change and wildfires. School programs would be beneficial to teach our young ones what they are facing, their responsibilities and roles in nature and with animals. Be more proactive than reactive.

5. Does your community have stories about how communities should respond or adapt to changes on the land that you cannot control? Can you share how you have learned from these stories to guide your community in a good way in the past? Can you share how you learn from

In the past we would travel with the animals, With each season we adapted to what was around us and what we had access to, such as with the smaller prey (Rabbits, Ptarmigans, Weasels, Ect.) that would happen in the winter months. It was a form of monitoring. When we would gather and talk with others in the surrounding communities you would be able to talk about what animal count seems higher that year, how the weather has been and around what area of that land that was on. Harvesting what was plentiful that year. We moved with the land and the animals. We traveled the land. Knowing where to go when we are in certain areas whether it be the mountains, valley, lake's rivers. our people knew where to go, what to harvest.

Now that the world is changing, a lot of these ways of life aren't as explored as they once were. Life is changing; we are constantly adapting to what we have access to and who has access to it. How to access these things. When can we access these or are the conditions well enough to access them?

These things should be explored, taught, and have training opportunities to have that. With this comes a need to access more funding.

6. Do you have any comments about other parties' responses to round 1 IRs? To help us understand your comments, please indicate both the party who gave the response and which of their IR responses you are commenting on. Other parties' responses can be found at: <https://www.srrb.nt.ca/document-repository/public/public-hearings-registry/caribou-conservation-climate-change-and-forest-fire/02-1-submissions-response-to-information-requests>

The Contamination of fire retardant from the water bombers. What are the effects/impacts on wildlife, streams and water? It should be monitored and the data should be collected. To share the information on what creeks, streams, or lakes they have used it so we know.

Fire's are not action'ed and there are concerns of underground burns. How does this affect the permafrost in those areas? How are the plants affected by it when they are regrowing?

C. Observations of caribou and climate change in general

IRs from Déljñę to all Sahtú Communities:

1. Please share any information you have about ticks and other bugs or illnesses impacting ʔəkwẹti

Ticks: They like the warmer weather.

As it's getting warmer earlier in the winter months and no harsh weather/ cold temperatures. It makes it easier for viruses to spread faster. It's not having time to slow down or kill off the sick before they can transfer the illnesses on to the affected species.

IRs from the SRRB to all Sahtú Communities:

1. Please share any changes, if any, has your community observed in:
 - a. Mice and/or other small rodents
 - b. Birds

There have been increased sightings of Magpies. They are not from here ,but more and more are being seen in the summer months.

2. If you have observed changes in bugs/insects, mice and/or other small rodents, or birds, have these changes affected caribou? In what ways?

We have to go far distances in the winter to harvest caribou. We have not seen any changes.

D. Hįdo Gogha Sénęgots'ia (Planning for the Future – PFF) – Planning, Climate Change and Wildfires

IRs from the SRRB to all Sahtú communities

1. How can Hįdo Gogha Sénęgots'ia (Planning for the Future – PFF) help you address and respond to climate change impacts and wildfires?

Indigenous people have always had a very close relationship with the land, water and animals. They are the ones who are the first to see changes that are happening because of that relationship. Change needs to happen where our traditional knowledge is used, how it is gathered and how can that be shared and with whom. The importance of TK and how that can be used as a teaching tool to help make changes and also to understand the changes that are happening now and how can we prevent or try to prevent certain changes. More importantly work together and try and adapt to what seems like the new normal today.

2. What content should be included in a Hı́dó Gogha Sé́négots'ı́á (Planning for the Future – PFF) written plan to address climate change impacts and wildfires?

More resources for capacity building, training and on the land activities would be great to help in understanding what our roles are as we going through adaptive changes. Stronger training positions with our co-management boards in roles and responsibilities and create an educational tool through our Sahtu Dene and Metis Comprehensive Land Claim agreement that is accessible to people in all levels of Government, Industry and other agencies so they understand what our rights and responsibilities are and also gain an understanding of how and why we are so close to the land and all it entails.

E. Hı́do Gogha Sé́négots'ı́a (Planning for the Future – PFF) – Planning Process

IRs from the SRRB to all Sahtú communities

1. How is planning described in your language? Can you share key terms or terminology in your dialect about community planning?

2. What stories does your community have about how your community can work together to make decisions and plan for a good life from the ancestors, grandfathers or grandmothers, or other knowledge holders? Can you share how you have learned from these stories to guide your community in a good way in the past? Can you share how you learn from these stories now?

We listen and rely on our Elder's stories and advice. A lot of our information that is gathered from stories from our Elder's helps us in all that we do today. Things are changing but having their knowledge and know how helps to guide us in making decisions in any situation especially when it comes to taking care of the land and animals. For the most part, their teachings are our foundation for a better tomorrow for our people.

3. What are good ways of community planning according to Dene and Metis? What are good ways of community planning?

There seems to be a better connect when people are out on the land as opposed to sitting in a room learning about how we can help the land and animals. When you are out on the land, you get to see firsthand, what we are trying to protect, what we are learning to take care of and why it is so Important to take care of it.

4. What kind of planning work has your community done for Hı́dó Gogha Sé́négots'ı́á (Planning for the Future – PFF) since the second PLS (April 2022)?

We are making progress in our conservation plan and understanding that this process has to be done correct. We are involved in a lot of work that entails conservation and have been part of the process of learning how we can be proactively involved in all aspects of planning. It has been

hard to try and get out onto the land for a few years due to forest fires and harder to travel on the river, due to severe low water. We do have a lot of projects that are land based and hopeful that we will be able to complete them this coming summer.

5. For communities that have started Hıdó Gogha Séńégots'ıǵá (Planning for the Future – PFF), can you share:
- Your experience with planning as a community; and
 - Any lessons or tips about planning that could help other communities?

You will need a lot of resources, funding and capacity building in order to properly do a good job of just starting this process which will have to thought out well and discussed and guided by our Elders and land users. It is time consuming and not always rewarded but through workshops, on the land programs etc., people are starting to get a better picture of what we are trying to accomplish for them. More capacity!!

6. Do you have any other contributions or comments to share about how communities plan and/or Hıdó Gogha Séńégots'ıǵá (Planning for the Future – PFF) in general

Life lesson learning for our people. We know what our responsibilities are in taking care of the land because we were taught. Now those teachings will be written down to help others who do not know.