

## **Colville Media Statement – SRRB BNE Hearing Decision**

The people of Colville Lake are advocates of Indigenous communities managing their own caribou harvesting. Therefore, we are very pleased that the SRRB Final Report from the Bluenose East Caribou Hearing 2016 is recognizing Deline's right to manage their harvest of Bluenose East caribou on their traditional territory.

The people of Colville Lake will continue to manage the harvest of caribou on our traditional territory, according to our traditional laws, as we have for centuries. The harvest of caribou by Colville people has always been conducted for sustenance in a sustainable and respectful manner.

We are happy that the SRRB is moving toward rejecting the idea that the regulation of Indigenous people by the government will help the caribou population to increase. The idea that Indigenous people need to be regulated is racist and dangerous.

The idea is dangerous and racist because it:

- 1) implies that Indigenous people are causing caribou populations to decline by overhunting caribou;
- 2) suggests that if Indigenous people are managed then caribou populations will increase;
- 3) directs attention away from the real causes of caribou population declines which are:
  - a) natural population fluctuations;
  - b) calving grounds disturbance by industry; and
  - c) habitat destruction by industry and climate change.

The Colville Lake leadership will be working with SRRB, ENR and other Indigenous people to provide our traditional knowledge on the life giving relationship between caribou and Indigenous people, and using our traditional knowledge we will work to protect caribou calving grounds and habitat. We are hopeful that the work we do collectively will improve caribou populations not only in our traditional territory but around the world.

For further comments, please contact:

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