

Délıne 2021 ʔełets'éhkwę Godı
Public Listening Session (PLS) - February 1-3, 2022

Responses to Round 2 Information Requests

NORMAN WELLS RENEWABLE RESOURCES COUNCIL



Délıne 2021
Public Listening
Tıch'ádıı hé Gots'edı
Living with Wildlife



Deadline for responses October 15, 2021

This template includes Round 2 Information Requests (IRs) addressed to **Norman Wells Renewable Resources Council** for the Délıne 2021 Public Listening Session on *Tıch'ádıı hé Gots'edı (Living with Wildlife) – Predators and Competitors* being held on February 1-3, 2022. The SRRB encourages those Parties that wish to add submissions related to Round 1 IRs (see Appendix A) in their submissions for this round.

IRs are written requests for information directed to a Party or Parties in the PLS. Please submit responses to Round 2 IRs, along with additional submissions for Round 1 IRs (see Appendix A) by **October 15, 2021**. IR1 responses already submitted are available on

Parties are also encouraged to submit information requests for other parties that will be included in Round 3 IRs (to be issued on December 1, 2021). Reminders of other opportunities for Public Registry submissions are also included in this template.

Information Request (IR) 2.1: *Tıch'ádıı he Gots'edı – Caribou, Predators and Competitors*

2.1.1 The Conservation Picture: Caribou, People, Planning, and the Public Listening Session

Fort Good Hope and Tulıt'a IRs to all Parties

- ENR and other Parties presenting scientific information at the Délıne 2021 PLS are requested to prepare a glossary of terms with plain language definitions.

SDMCLCA – Sahtu Dene & Metis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement
WLA – Wildlife Act
GNWT – Government of the Northwest Territory
CCP's – Community Conservation Plans
ITK – Indigenous Traditional Knowledge
TK – Traditional Knowledge
Mountain Caribou – Shu'hta Gosepe
NWRRRC – Norman Wells Renewable Resources Council
IMA – Interim-Management Agreement
NNP CCP – Nio Ne P'ene Community Conservation Plan

TEK – Traditional Ecological Knowledge
IHR – Indigenous Harvest Relationships
ENR – Environment & Natural Resources (GNWT)
LCA – Land Claim Agreement
SRRB – Sahtu Renewable Resources Board
PLS IR's (2) – Public Listening Session Information Requests Round Two

3. Does the concept of conservation and modern western conservation institutions conflict with our Indigenous knowledge systems and practices, and infringe upon our collective rights as Indigenous peoples? If it does conflict, how does it conflict?

Yes, the modern concept of conservation conflicts with Indigenous knowledge systems and practices. Conservation is a broad concept, and is applied broadly across regions. It is not specific to each community or region. The rules and regulations are not specific to any one area, but are rather generalized. Traditional knowledge is only now beginning to be used and recognized as important. In addition, not all beliefs and factors are integrated into conservation plans. The idea of “conservation” does not allow for the human activities that have been practiced by Indigenous people for thousands of years. Engagement with Indigenous people is just beginning. Western conservation institutions only make funding available to specific targeted projects with specific activities, and with no consultation.

4. Do you think community conservation plans or the *Wildlife Act* affect our rights as Indigenous peoples?

Community conservation plans are becoming a more significant. Our beliefs are totally different than from the scientific side. Indigenous people do not own the land but we are entrusted to take care of it and all that it entails. In order for community conservation plans to start working, traditional knowledge must be integrated into each plan. With Indigenous people, there is a broad scope and general understanding in regards to TK. For example, in the Sahtu region, which is comprised of 5 communities, most of our beliefs and customs have similarities; however, each community is unique in their customs and beliefs just like our language has 5 dialects but categorized as the same language, North Slavey. Similar but there are differences. In order for the CCP's to work, there has to be change in the recognition of TK in legislation and the way the consultation process goes.

Wildlife Act

Absolutely. The residency requirement for a hunting licence is one year. There was a lot of opposition to this change from the Indigenous communities in the Sahtu region. Again, the 5 Sahtu communities come into play as each is different. For example, Norman Wells is the “hub” of the Sahtu region and along with that, the community is more diverse. We have deal with

Tourism, Outfitting companies, Industry, Oil and Gas and now the highway. There was no regard given to the Indigenous people about the length of residency. It is unfair because Norman Wells has such a small Indigenous population and there are a lot of transient workers. The updated WLA is to ensure the wise use and conservation of WL however they did not take into consideration that Indigenous treaty rights span across Canada, so it is conflicting.

5. Please share your knowledge about any caribou plans that have been developed outside the Sahtú region.

We have heard about caribou plans in the Yukon, in the Dehcho and the South Slave region. For me, the plans need to be multi-jurisdictional plan with Aboriginal people taking a lead, since they are the land users.

There are many ideas and approaches being suggested about caribou planning. Caribou conservation plans should be developed from grassroots perspectives. Land users are very important to developing these plans. Go to the people to ask your questions, and you'll get your answers. The work needs to be driven by the people. Renewable Resource Councils have such a huge role to play in conservation as they represent membership that uses the land.

NWT Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) IR to Sahtú community Parties

6. What support can ENR provide in your planning work?

- Include integrate mentor support ongoing youth and guardians involved in all aspects of CCP and allocate extra funding to the NWRRC as we are in a more diversified area, examples Mile 222, outfitters, national parks. To help train and educate, produce written materials to educate non-indigenous people on issues such as CCP, land claim rules and regulations, etc.
- Integrate Indigenous Knowledge and indigenous harvesting relationships and protocols into decision making processes. TEK must be recognized and accommodated in decision making – and usually it is not included or not to the extent necessary. Indigenous people and animals have played an integral role managing the environment. We only take what we need and not more. Respect is reciprocal.
- ENR Staff should take SDMLCA course or SDMLCA review should be mandatory, specifically chapters 1, 3, 13 – land claim laws overrule territorial and federal rules. Share knowledge and information about harvest data, reporting, harvest species numbers, etc. Come up with a collaborative plan to ensure that any information that is collected, methods that are used, and community participation (RRC members and beneficiaries especially). Have incentives for participation given high cost of living and also getting out on the land.

- Work on a monitoring strategy for harvesting, special harvesting areas within the LC area and family areas. Work on co-management mechanisms. Ongoing support and help general areas of the CPP, especially in amending laws that pertain to residency requirements and harvest regulations, enforcement measures.
Help to find alternative measures and support to help with an interim management agreement with the CCP and a regulation under the wildlife act giving more power to NWRRC. Support and help with harvesting plan and proposal for mountain caribou.

SRRB IRs to all parties

7. As of the deadline for Round 2 IRs, it will have been eight months since Parties made submissions on the conservation picture (through Round 1 IR responses). Please provide updates on the status of caribou, people and planning.

People are more aware of the concern and issue of caribou conservation in the Sahtu region, especially with the work of Colville Lake and the progress of Deline. CCP's are so important and the light is finally shining on them however there is so much more work to do. It will be an ongoing process. We have been fighting for our rights for centuries and we will continue to do so. The planning stages are already in motion with the Deline and Colville Lake communities taking the lead, so that is inspiration to keep moving forward for CCP for tomorrow. It is a positive step for conservation, the care of our people, caribou and all other species that we share the land with.

SRRB IRs to all Sahtú community Parties

15. If your local ʔehdzo Got'Inę (RRC) has convened ʔekwé/ʔədə (Caribou) Working Groups and/or appointed technical teams to support Working Groups, please explain how your Working Group operates (such as membership selection, approach to community conservation planning, and division of roles between Working Group and technical teams)?

The NWRRC (Caribou) working group members are Rhea McDonald – President of the NWRRC, Lisa McDonald – Member, Jaryd McDonald – Board of Director and Youth rep, Jasmine Plummer – Board of Director and SYN member, Margaret McDonald – NWRRC Office Manager & Elder, Krista Robertson – Legal Council

Technical Team – Lisa McDonald, Jaryd McDonald

- Duties include assisting with the PLS Information requests, drafting and researching the process and components using the CCP guide and help with the process and planning of the Strategic plan for the NWRRC other technical work.

Legal Team – Krista Robertson, Rhea McDonald, Jasmine Plummer

- Duties include reviewing, submission and knowledge on the draft PLS's and IR's, Guidance on the process and planning according to the CCP guide, implementing the strategic plan.

Office Support – Margaret McDonald, NWRRC Office Manager & Elder Knowledge Holder, Alyssa Bougie, Research Manager, SRRB

- Administration support for the Technical and legal team, assists of coordination of meetings, etc.

The NWRRC Working group keeps an open dialogue with all team members and makes sure members are included in all stages of the PLS IR's, the CCP and other work, as their input is vital to the success of the work being done and their participation is critical.

16. What, if any, are lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic that are relevant to consider in discussions about caribou and people?

The COVID-19 pandemic slowed down activity in the Sahtu via outfitters, tourism, etc. In effect, this has been a benefit to the wildlife in the area. To get a perspective on how wildlife is affected, it is a good time to take a look at how we do things and what affects the have on wildlife.

17. What is the review and approval process for wildlife, habitat and harvesting planning within your community? Is your planning shared with ENR?

All non-participants must submit a written request to the NWRRC to harvest (gathering (wood, berries, plants etc.) hunting, trapping or fishing) on Sahtu private lands. The NWRRC has up to 60 days to approve or deny the request. If approved, terms and conditions can be included. There is no fee for permission to access SPL to harvest. Planning is not shared with ENR, at least to the extent that it should be. The exchange of information is minimal.

18. Are there tools that the SRRB can provide to assist in building awareness and understanding of the Public Listening process in your community?

The PLS's are in the second (2) round of five (5) topics, which together, constitutes a Sahtu region-wide public hearing on emerging caribou stewardship conservation issues and community conservation planning processes. It would be more beneficial for building awareness and understanding if the PLS were more advertised through posters, local radio stations, information pamphlet's etc. It can be hard to decipher information from the internet and not everyone is privy to this kind of information or has a clear understanding of it. It needs to be broken down into simple terms and written in plain language. Also, if it was advertised over a radio station in our Dene language, it would hit a wider audience, such as Elders. The

NWRRRC PLS submissions are directly for participants. However, if the community of Norman Wells is to properly understand the process of the PLS and CCP's, information needs to be shared with all community members for a better understanding of the big picture. The information should also be shared with organizations, companies, Industry etc., that are directly involved with Indigenous groups or have a stake in the process.

2.1.2 Predators

SRRB IR to all Sahtú Parties

10. Please provide any relevant information you have on the issue of baiting as an approach to wolf harvesting.

The NWRRRC does not approve of baiting as an approach to wolf harvesting. Wolf reduction should be a last resort management tool. There are other alternatives such as harvest restrictions, habitat restoration and conservation. There is no guarantee that baiting wolves will increase the caribou population. Wolf control is a short term solution that requires substantial resources for implementation and long term monitoring. Wolf populations quickly rebound when the management program is finished due to migration from surrounding areas and high reproductive rates. The impact of predation on caribou populations need to be studied more because of the vastness of the Sahtu region (Mackenzie Mountains) and also considering overlapping issues. This management plan should be a multi-party collaboration and only considered as a last resort due to the fact that there is no guarantee that such a plan will work. Other factors need to be looked at such as climate change, habitat change and human activities. As Indigenous people, we are taught to respect all wildlife. Wolves are held in high regard and we all have a shared responsibility to take care of all animals. We only harvest what we need and nothing is wasted.

2.1.3 Competitors

Tulít'a IRs to all Parties

4. Do you know if ɾəjire crossed Dəgho (Mackenzie River) or Sahtú Də (Bear River)?

No, we have not heard as of yet. But some of our Elders are worried that it will not be good if they do cross.

5. How might ɾəjire impact shúhta goɾəpé (mountain caribou) and doe (sheep) if they go into the mountains?

TK holders have said that muskox compete with caribou for food and space. It is said that muskox will move into a certain area and eat all the food that caribou eat; this causes the caribou to migrate to other areas to feed. Muskox have a feeding habit that tends to dislodge some plants at the root, or they may paw the lichen into the ground, disturbing the soil and causing damage to the delicate caribou lichen. With the increasing numbers of muskox, it seems that they may be forcing the caribou to change their migrating routes due to food shortages, habitat intrusion, the smell of the muskox etc.

For sheep, muskox tend to use habitat such as valley bottoms and grassy, lower slopes but as their number increases, they may move higher up valley slopes. With that information, it does not seem that muskox will have an impact on sheep, as their habitat seems unsuitable for the muskox.

Information Request 2.2: Harvest Regulation

As described in the SRRB's July 7, 2021, Resumption Notice, the following questions arise from the Colville 2020 Public Listening session on *Sahtú Ragóza (Hunting Law) and Approaches to Wildlife Harvesting*.

2.2.1 Harvest Regulation Planning Toolkit

Note: the SRRB provided a draft Hıdó Gogha Sėnégots'ızá (Community Conservation Plan – CCP) Guide for review by Parties and the public on September 14, 2021. The deadline for comment on the CCP Guide is November 15, 2021.

SRRB IRs to all Parties

1. The SRRB provided a Harvest Regulation Planning Toolkit on January 15, 2021. What is missing from the toolkit?

The CCP idea toolkit on Harvest Regulations is more of a guide that is subject to ongoing modification and will change based on feedback from CCP's. Since it is a working/living document and some of the toolbox ideas are still under review, it is hard to say if anything is missing. It will be a work in progress with changes as CCP are developing in the Sahtu region. Other ideas may come from other jurisdictions, such as Lutsel K'e and the Kugluktuk plans that will be useful in the progression of the CCP's.

2. Do you think any parts of the Toolkit should be changed?

While reviewing the Toolkits, it is not as self-explanatory as it seems. The questions and ideas for consideration should be broad and not specific to one plan (Deline,CL). It is understood that the CCP's will follow a similar guide; however, the information provided can be confusing.

3. Are there additional components that would be relevant for conservation planning for predators and competitors?

Again, additional components probably will be added as the CCP's progresses.

2.2.2 Stewardship Roles

SRRB IRs to all Parties

1. How is the stewardship role of a community that is a primary harvester of a certain caribou population different from the role of a community that might not have the same access to that caribou population?

The stewardship role of a community that is a primary harvester of a certain caribou population probably has more stringent harvesting rights/issues and rules as opposed to a community that might not have the access to that caribou population. A community that primarily harvests caribou has more information on the specific species because of access they have (eg: CL, Deline) to the caribou. If you were to ask a member of the NWRRC, the answers given would probably be the same, because we do not directly deal with caribou unless we go into the mountains. There are a few around Norman Wells but not in abundance like CL or Deline. The stewardship remains the same for the region as Indigenous people but the rules and regulations (be it gov't, community gov't, traditional rules etc.) may change do to the diversity of the caribou.

2.2.3 ʔehdzo Got'ıne (Renewable Resources Council) Powers

SRRB IRs to all Parties

1. Describe the role of the local ʔehdzo Got'ıne (RRC) in your experience.

The role of the NWRRC is to encourage and promote wildlife harvesting rights, it also has the right to participate in decision making concerning wildlife harvesting and management and also to participate in decision making concerning the use, management, protection and conservation of the land, water and natural resources. It is also promotes and delivers programs for members to practice their traditional culture, on the land programs, and provides incentives to ensure that membership can participate in programs they provide.

2. How does the local ʔehdzo Got'ıne (RRC) manage harvesting?

Harvesting is a respectful and traditional activity. As Indigenous people, there are traditional protocols and dene laws that are taught and respected from a young age, which are not written down but are followed, respected and used in all aspects of our life for the most part. Most members of the NWRRC have traditional hunting areas and those areas are respected by other Indigenous land users. It is out of respect, that if we want to harvest in another traditional area, we contact the community or the Indigenous family of that area to notify them.

Other ways the NWRRC manages harvesting is through programs provided by contribution agreements by agencies such as the SRRB as well as the GNWT. These contribution programs provide assistance to the NWRRC members to harvest wildlife, purchase equipment and supplies needed to get out on the land, fuel and also air support. There are also incentive programs to promote and get families out on the land to practice our culture and traditions as well teach our young one to hunt for their families and/or the community.

The NWRRC also receives meat from the outfitter companies in the fall time and that meat is distributed to families, elders and other community members. If there is abundance, the NWRRC distributes the meat to other communities.

3. How is the local ʔehdzo Got'Inę (RRC) accountable, and to whom it is accountable?

The NWRRC is accountable to its members to encourage and promote local involvement in conservation practices, traditional harvesting, wildlife management, employment through environmental or wildlife monitoring and limited financial support and incentives to make sure members have the means of getting out on the land or to participate in educational programs. The NWRRC is also accountable to its funders such as ENR, SRRB and other parties by way of contribution agreements.

2.2.4 Hunter Education

SRRB IRs to all parties

2. Are there harvesters that come from other places to your community's harvesting area? What are the different kinds of harvesters? Describe any protocols for harvesters visiting your area. How do they learn about these protocols?

Norman Wells is the hub for the Sahtu region, we are more diverse and have a transient population and have to deal with more activities compared to the other communities such as WL outfitting companies, Industry, Tourism, Oil & Gas and the new proposed highway. The Indigenous population is not big in Norman Wells and we do get harvesters that come from other places to harvest. For the most part, non-indigenous, non-residents etc. are notified by ENR when they get there tags to hunt, that they have get permission from the NWRRC if they want to hunt in a traditional area. There is an information "flyer" provided by ENR that explains

the rights and rules in regards to hunting and harvesting on Private lands. There is information available on the internet via the GNWT website, also the SSI website, amongst other sites. Information will soon be available for harvesters from the NWRRC to inform them of protocols, rules and regulations as well as contact information if they have questions.

3. Do harvesters from your community go outside your community's harvesting area to harvest? Describe any protocols for visiting other areas. How do people learn about these protocols?

Yes and if we do, we notify the community or the traditional land user in that area that we want to harvest in. It is out of respect that we do this. Asking permission to harvest wildlife on private lands shows respect and harvesters and land owners know area's to avoid such as culturally sensitive areas or where there they can go to harvest a particular species. It is best to ask before entering another traditional area as they may have traps or know of areas that are of concern due to safety factors. Harvesters are ultimately responsible for knowing where they are on the land, following the law, and meeting the terms and conditions specific to land claims in the area a non-beneficiary wishes to hunt. The office of ENR helps in providing information to the general public.