

Caribou methodology

A decline in the bluenose west has been stated by the GNWT regarding the number of caribou. The people would like to confirm those numbers and this methodology was followed to establish an independent number

1. meeting was set with the community
2. elders were consulted as to past behavior of caribou
3. migration routes of past
4. time and corridor estimated to keep aware

Using band radios the trappers from Colville Lake were contacted and asked to keep a look out for caribou thus a determination of pace and a direction was established these trappers had camps established at;

1. Katani'an tu which is located in the area called northend
2. Tuhgone east of Whitefish Lake
3. Whitefish Lake east of Lac de bois
4. Lac de bois
5. Lac Belot

Once the herd passed the farthest camp to the east of Colville which is at Tuhgone a corridor was established this corridor defined the area where the caribou would best be counted with the most efficiency. Which was a point starting from Maunoir Ridge down to the southern edge of Lac de Bois.

Using a helicopter the whole area was over flown to make sure all the caribou were in the same general area the helicopter flew at a height of about a thousand to fifteen hundred feet in the air as they were spotted markings were drawn on the map.

If anybody has watched caribou migrate you will have noticed that the caribou move in clusters so in the air it will seem as fingers moving across the land so it was at the tips of these that we dropped spotters and counters and left them for two days to keep a good thorough count as we dropped off people we used the topographical features of the land to place our people. Meaning using lakes and creeks places where the caribou had an easier way to walk. Some went out using snowmobiles these were to the easy get to places along this corridor.

At this point the caribou stretched from the southern most tip of Lac De Bois to the edge of Colville Lake counted at well over 15,000 +.

Some 5000 + were spotted on top of Maunoir ridge at this point the whole area was over flown again to make sure all caribou were accounted for.

Doing the count in this fashion made sure that the caribou could not be counted twice.
The whole count lasted about ten days or until there was no more caribou being spotted
by people

