



SUBMISSION TO THE

NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD

FOR

Information:

Decision: X

Issue: Bluenose-East Caribou herd population estimate from 2018 calving ground photographic survey and harvest recommendations.

Background:

- The Bluenose East caribou herd (BNE) is a shared herd harvested by hunters in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.
- The BNE has shown a declining trend since 2000, with a continuous decline from 2010 to 2015. During this period, the herd declined from 120,000 to 38,500 caribou (2015).
- During the January 20, 2016 Bluenose-East Allocation meeting, the HTO of Kugluktuk recommended an allocation of 35% instead of 36% to allow for a minimal 2% harvest for each of the five small communities of NWT.
- The Minister of Environment implemented a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) of 340 caribou for the BNE in 2016 and supported the development of a community management plan.
- The Kugluktuk HTO has worked with Conservation Officers to implement and enforce the TAH. The full TAH of 340 was never met, and the current harvest from the Kugluktuk community averages approximately 170 caribou (e.g. in 2015/2016 the harvest was 265 (pre-TAH), in 2016/2017 the harvest was 232 animals, in 2017/2018 the harvest was 174 animals, and in 2018/2019 the harvest was 93 animals).

Current Status:

- The June 2018 aerial photo survey results confirm that the BNE has continued to decline, with a total population estimate of 19,249 caribou. This is a significant decline from the 2015 population estimate of 38,592 caribou.
- Additional observations show conditions indicative of a declining herd: there is a below normal adult female survival rate (0.72) and low calf productivity (0.19).
- During the Advisory Committee for Cooperation on Wildlife Management (ACCWM) November 2018 meeting, the 2018 survey results were presented and the board members proposed a red status for the BNE.

- The Kugluktuk Hunters and Trappers Organization (HTO) has developed a community-based management plan for the Bluenose-East herd. The HTO has been working with the Department of Environment (DOE) to finalize the plan with intentions to submit the plan to the NWMB regular meeting in December. Since 2016, the Kugluktuk HTO has already implemented the following management actions:
 - No organized community or sport caribou hunts
 - HTO does not support sale/purchase of caribou under the country food distribution program
 - HTO supports shift in harvest to alternate species like muskoxen
 - Creation of a no harvest zone for the BNE around the community.
- On January 14, 2019, The Tłı̄ch̄ Government (TG) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Government of Northwest Territories (ENR-GNWT) submitted a joint management proposal for to the Wek'èezhii Renewable Resources Board (WRRB). Management recommendations included a 1.5% harvest rate, which resulted in a recommended herd-wide TAH of 300 bulls.
- On June 16, 2019, the WRRB determined that a total allowable harvest of 193 bulls only should be implemented for all users for the BNE for 2019 to 2021 (harvest rate of 1%). The WRRB decision only applies to users within the Wek'èezhii region.
- The WRRB communicated that “a serious conservation concern exists” for the Bluenose-East Caribou herd
- The DOE has engaged with and continues to work closely with the affected community and respective co-management partners (Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., HTOs, and Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board) and the Northwest Territories on management actions needed to address the Bluenose-East caribou decline.

Consultations:

- On February 20 2019, the 2018 survey results were communicated to the Kugluktuk HTO. This was an information meeting.
- On June 12, 2019, the survey results were communicated again. DOE informed co-management partners of its recommendation to change the TAH to 107 with a Non-Quota Limitation (NQL) of bulls only. The Kugluktuk Hunter and Trapper Organization (KHTO) responded that since the establishment of the TAH in 2016, harvesting has been kept under 340 caribou.
- On August 29, 2019, the Kugluktuk HTO held a public meeting to discuss the DOE harvest recommendations for the BNE herd. At this meeting, the public voted to have a TAH of 250 with a 1:1 harvest sex ratio. Some community members feel that there

should not be any harvest restrictions for Kugluktuk harvesters of the BNE herd, and that the harvest could be managed through a community based management plan.

- On October 2, 2019, a second consultation took place with the HTO. The Kugluktuk HTO were not clear on their recommended a limit; some agreed with community recommendation of 250 caribou while others recommended 150 caribou. There was consensus from the HTO and community that they would prefer to have a 1:1 sex ratio. The sex ratio is requested for cultural and food security reasons, as a 1:1 ratio could allow harvesting different sexes at different times of the year for bedding, clothing, or taste preferences. The HTO feels that a bull only harvest will limit harvest of caribou to August and September when bulls are locally available. A higher TAH was proposed due to the concern of food security and scarcity for Kugluktukmuit that has resulted from the decline of the BNE caribou herd.

Recommendations:

- *The Department of Environment recommends the NWMB reduce the TAH for the Bluenose East caribou herd to 107 caribou with the Non-Quota Limitation of a male only harvest.*

Appendix B

RULES FOR THE NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD IN-PERSON PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER THE PROPOSAL TO REDUCE THE TOTAL ALLOWABLE HARVEST OF BLUENOSE-EAST CARIBOU FROM 340 to 107 AND TO ESTABLISH A MALE-ONLY HARVEST NON-QUOTA LIMITATION

December 13, 2019

THE PURPOSE of this Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) in-person public hearing is to consider the Government of Nunavut's *Proposal for Decision* (Proposal) to the Board seeking to Reduce the Total Allowable Harvest of Bluenose-East Caribou from 340 to 107 and to establish a Male-Only Harvest Non-Quota Limitation. The Proposal, along with other documents comprising the best available information to date, is available for review or download from the NWMB's website (www.nwmb.com).

HEARING RULES:

1. The NWMB (the Board) shall provide notice to the public at least thirty (30) days prior to the deadline for filing hearing submissions.
2. Any interested person or body may file with the Board a written submission and supporting documentation¹ in response to the Bluenose East caribou management Proposal duly translated into Inuktitut/Innuinaqtun or English as the case may be – by no later than 5:00 p.m. (Iqaluit time) on February 14th, 2020.
3. Unless advance persuasive written and translated reasons are provided to the Board for late filing, the Board will not consider materials for this hearing that are not filed on time.
4. The requirements for translation of submissions and supporting documentation filed with the Board does not apply to individual members of the public.
5. For all others who file supporting documentation with the Board, the requirement for translation does not apply to such documents over ten (10) pages in length, as long as each supporting document that is not translated is accompanied by a

¹ “*Supporting documentation*” refers to one or more studies, articles, opinions or other documents separate from a person's or organization's written submission, filed as additional evidence and/or arguments in support of that person's or organization's submission.

concise, translated summary (English and Inuktitut) at least two (2) pages in length.

6. The Board shall ensure that all materials filed with it or produced by it are made publicly available, subject to relevant confidentiality or privacy concerns.
7. The NWMB shall provide simultaneous English and Inuktitut/Innuinaqtun translation at the hearing, to the extent reasonably possible.
8. A quorum of NWMB members shall be present at the hearing.
9. Any representative or agent of the Government of Canada or Government of Nunavut, any Hunters and Trappers Organization or Regional Wildlife Organization, and any Inuk shall be accorded the status of party for the hearing.
10. Unless invited by the Board to be a party, any other person or body wishing to be named as a party by the Board shall make an appropriate request in writing to the Board.
11. All parties and other participants at the hearing are required to treat one another and the NWMB with respect.
12. The NWMB shall provide a reasonable opportunity for oral presentations from each of the parties at the hearing by their choice of official, expert or counsel.
13. Any member of the NWMB, the NWMB's Executive Director, Director of Wildlife or the NWMB's Legal Counsel may ask relevant questions of any other party at the hearing.
14. Any party may ask relevant questions of any other party at the hearing.
15. The NWMB shall provide members of the public in attendance at the hearing a reasonable opportunity to make statements and to ask questions of the parties and the NWMB.
16. Every person at the hearing wishing to speak or ask a question shall raise his or her hand, and shall only speak once the NWMB Chairperson has recognized him or her.
17. The NWMB Chairperson reserves the right to place reasonable time limits on presentations, statements and questions.
18. The NWMB shall make an audio recording of the hearing available upon request.