

Response to Undertaking from Indigenous Leadership Initiative

Prepared by Walter Bezha, Délįnę Got'įnę Government

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Question

What caused the population of Bluenose East caribou herd to decline?

Response

Délįnę historically harvested this herd for as long as anyone can remember. A map showing the latest migration patterns based on caribou collaring data is provided with ENR's slide presentation to this Public Listening Session. There are patterns of population increases and decreases in the past, and this will continue as long as these herds are on our land. There are peak times and low times. We experienced high numbers between 1983 and 2005, where numbers as high as 1700 were harvested within a ten km radius of Délįnę.

There are numerous impacts to this herd that we can only list and hope that someone can frame an answer that outlines the full picture. Impacts from all development, impacts from fires and habitat destruction, impacts climate change, increase of bugs, or decrease. There are few places that this herd can find refuge in all of its range.

There are recommendations we can list to further our knowledge on finding solutions to the situation.

- 1) Knowledge of history both science and TK
- 2) Hunt alternative species
- 3) Educate our children on Dene Conservation.
- 4) Subsidize hunting equipment for harvesters.
- 5) Celebrate and share harvest information with all harvesters.
- 6) Annual gathering of all harvesters to share and pass on information.
- 7) Trade traditional foods, with each other, share what is available.
- 8) Harvester Awards to those that follow the conservation plan.
- 9) Sharing Harvests.
- 10) Hunt fall only.
- 11) Nío Nę P'ęnę recommendations.
- 12) Norma Kassi's comments about wise stewardship as was presented by Ethel Blondin-Andrew at the Colville 2020 Public Listening Session:
 - a. Considering the predictions of the elders
 - b. Take only what is needed
 - c. Protect the cows to maintain herd balance
 - d. Long term conservation of calving grounds
 - e. Keep oil and gas out of the habitat
 - f. Total respect for the caribou