Government of Newfoundland and Labrador  
Labrador & Aboriginal Affairs  
Office of the Deputy Minister

August 11, 2015

Re: Your request for access to information under Part II of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act LAAO/009/2015

On July 14, 2015, the Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs Office received your request for access to the following records/information:

"Any and all information with regards to the involvement and input of the LAAO in the decision to suspend non-resident hunting of George River Caribou Herd via Outfitters in Nov. 2010 and a subsequent hunting ban announced in Jan 2013. Information to include, but shall not be limited to, any and all facts/circumstances/assumptions and/or recommendations that were considered in establishing a “valid conservation objective” and subsequent policy decision to impose the immediate Hunting Ban (s)”. Information to further include, but shall not be limited to, all information in connection to the GRCH Consultation Plan."

I am pleased to inform you that a decision has been made by the Deputy Minister for the Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs Office to provide access to some of the requested information. In particular, access is granted to the following records:

The final response document consist of 105 pages in document 1, 64 pages in document 2, 134 pages in document 3 and 12 pages in document 4. For your convenience we removed all totally redacted pages including the following:

- Document 1; pages 1 to 4, 93 to 97 and 102 to 105 using Section 27(1)(h) and Section 27(2)(a);
- Document 2; pages: 15, 16, 19 and 20 using Section 30(1)(a);
- Document 3; pages 65 to 69 using Section 30(1)(a); and,
- Document 3; pages 92 to 96, 112 to 113 and 122 to 124 using Section 27(1)(h) and Section 27(2)(a).
I am pleased to inform you that your request for access to these records has been granted in part. In particular, access is granted to the following records:

- All information regards to the involvement and input of the LAAO in the development of the George River Caribou Herd Information Notes, Consultation Plans, letters to Aboriginal groups and organizations and Aboriginal consulting advise;

Access to the remaining records, and/or information contained within the records, has been refused in accordance with the following exceptions to disclosure, as specified in the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (the Act):

Cabinet confidences

27. (1) In this section, "cabinet record" means
   (a) advice, recommendations or policy considerations submitted or prepared for submission to the Cabinet;
   (b) draft legislation or regulations submitted or prepared for submission to the Cabinet;
   (c) a memorandum, the purpose of which is to present proposals or recommendations to the Cabinet;
   (d) a discussion paper, policy analysis, proposal, advice or briefing material prepared for Cabinet, excluding the sections of these records that are factual or background material;
   (e) an agenda, minute or other record of Cabinet recording deliberations or decisions of the Cabinet;
   (f) a record used for or which reflects communications or discussions among ministers on matters relating to the making of government decisions or the formulation of government policy;
   (g) a record created for or by a minister for the purpose of briefing that minister on a matter for the Cabinet;
   (h) a record created during the process of developing or preparing a submission for the Cabinet; and
   (i) that portion of a record which contains information about the contents of a record within a class of information referred to in paragraphs (a) to (h).

(2) The head of a public body shall refuse to disclose to an applicant
   (a) a cabinet record; or
   (b) information in a record other than a cabinet record that would reveal the substance of deliberations of Cabinet.
Policy advice or recommendations

29. (1) The head of a public body may refuse to disclose to an applicant information that would reveal
   (a) advice, proposals, recommendations, analyses or policy options developed by or for a public body or minister;

Legal advice

30. (1) The head of a public body may refuse to disclose to an applicant information
   (a) that is subject to solicitor and client privilege or litigation privilege of a public body;

Disclosure harmful to intergovernmental relations or negotiations

34. (1) The head of a public body may refuse to disclose information to an applicant if the disclosure could reasonably be expected to
   (a) harm the conduct by the government of the province of relations between that government and the following or their agencies:
      (i) the government of Canada or a province,
      (v) the Nunatsiavut Government; or

Disclosure harmful to personal privacy

40. (1) The head of a public body shall refuse to disclose personal information to an applicant where the disclosure would be an unreasonable invasion of a third party's personal privacy.

As required by 8(2) of the Act, we have severed information that is unable to be disclosed and have provided you with as much information as possible.

In accordance with your request for a copy of the records, the appropriate copies have been enclosed. A copy of these records has also been sent to you by email.

Please be advised that you may appeal this decision and ask the Information and Privacy Commissioner to review the decision to provide partial access to the requested information, as set out in section 42 of the Act (a copy of this section of the Act has been enclosed for your reference). A request to the Commissioner must be made in writing within 15 business days of the date of this letter or within a longer period that may be allowed by the Commissioner. Your appeal should identify your concerns with the request and why you are submitting the appeal.
The appeal may be addressed to the Information and Privacy Commissioner is as follows:

Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner  
2 Canada Drive  
P. O. Box 13004, Str. A  
St. John's, NL. A1B 3V8

Telephone: (709) 729-6309  
Toll-Free: 1-877-729-6309  
Facsimile: (709) 729-6500

You may also appeal directly to the Supreme Court Trial Division within 15 business days after you receive the decision of the public body, pursuant to section 52 of the Act (a copy of this section of the Act has been enclosed for your reference).

Please be advised that responsive records will be published following a 72 hour period after the response is sent electronically to you or five business days in the case where records are mailed to you. It is the goal to have the responsive records posted to the Office of Public Engagement’s website within one business day following the applicable period of time. Please note that requests for personal information will not be posted online.

If you have any further questions, please contact me by telephone at 709-896-1780 or by email at smelindy@gov.nl.ca.

Sincerely,

Shawn Melindy  
ATIPP Coordinator

Enclosures
Access or correction complaint

42. (1) A person who makes a request under this Act for access to a record or for correction of personal information may file a complaint with the commissioner respecting a decision, act or failure to act of the head of the public body that relates to the request.

(2) A complaint under subsection (1) shall be filed in writing not later than 15 business days

(a) after the applicant is notified of the decision of the head of the public body, or the date of the act or failure to act; or

(b) after the date the head of the public body is considered to have refused the request under subsection 16(2).

(3) A third party informed under section 19 of a decision of the head of a public body to grant access to a record or part of a record in response to a request may file a complaint with the commissioner respecting that decision.

(4) A complaint under subsection (3) shall be filed in writing not later than 15 business days after the third party is informed of the decision of the head of the public body.

(5) The commissioner may allow a longer time period for the filing of a complaint under this section.

(6) A person or third party who has appealed directly to the Trial Division under subsection 52(1) or 53(1) shall not file a complaint with the commissioner.

(7) The commissioner shall refuse to investigate a complaint where an appeal has been commenced in the Trial Division.

(8) A complaint shall not be filed under this section with respect to

(a) a request that is disregarded under section 21;

(b) a decision respecting an extension of time under section 23;

(c) a variation of a procedure under section 24; or

(d) an estimate of costs or a decision not to waive a cost under section 26.

(9) The commissioner shall provide a copy of the complaint to the head of the public body concerned.
Direct appeal to Trial Division by an applicant

52. (1) Where an applicant has made a request to a public body for access to a record or correction of personal information and has not filed a complaint with the commissioner under section 42, the applicant may appeal the decision, act or failure to act of the head of the public body that relates to the request directly to the Trial Division.

(2) An appeal shall be commenced under subsection (1) not later than 15 business days

(a) after the applicant is notified of the decision of the head of the public body, or the date of the act or failure to act; or

(b) after the date the head of the public body is considered to have refused the request under subsection 16(2).

(3) Where an applicant has filed a complaint with the commissioner under section 42 and the commissioner has refused to investigate the complaint, the applicant may commence an appeal in the Trial Division of the decision, act or failure to act of the head of the public body that relates to the request for access to a record or for correction of personal information.

(4) An appeal shall be commenced under subsection (3) not later than 15 business days after the applicant is notified of the commissioner's refusal under subsection 45(2).
From: Watkins, Michelle  
Sent: Thursday, August 26, 2010 11:12 AM  
To: Melindy, Shawn D.  
Subject: FW: Caribou Consultation Plan  

Importance: High

Michelle Watkins  
Director, Labrador Affairs  
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador  
Department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs  
Mailbag 3014, Stn. B  
Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NL A0P 1E0  
tel: 709-896-1780 fax: 709-896-0045 mobile: 709-899-1582  
email: michelletwatkins@gov.nl.ca

From: Dutton, Sean  
Sent: Wednesday, August 25, 2010 4:39 PM  
To: Tompkins, John; Gover, Aubrey; Oliver, Val; Watkins, Michelle; Oxford, Krista L.  
Subject: FW: Caribou Consultation Plan  
Importance: High

FYI.

I have printed this material to review this evening.

Sean

From: Firth, Ross  
Sent: Wednesday, August 25, 2010 4:06 PM  
To: Dutton, Sean  
Cc: O'Neill, Melony; Blake, John  
Subject: Caribou Consultation Plan  
Importance: High

Sean

I’ve made changes to the draft document and have attempted to incorporate your comments. The attached document has been revised based on your comments. I’ve left the document in track changes for ease of identifying my edits.

Would you please let me know whether you’re content with the revised plan.

I have also attached, for your information, a copy of the proposed presentation to be delivered at the consultations. This may help illustrate our approach more fully.
Ross Firth
Assistant Deputy Minister - Natural Heritage

Department of Environment and Conservation
P.O. Box 2007
117 Riverside Drive
Corner Brook, NL
A2H 7S1

Ph. (709) 637-2199
Fax (709) 637-2180
Consultation Plan

George River Caribou Herd Harvest Management Plan – 2010/11

Issue
There is growing empirical evidence to suggest that the George River Caribou Herd (GRCH) has undergone a significant population decline. The magnitude of the decline has taken the population of the herd below the capacity to sustain existing harvest management strategies. Preliminary results of the GRCH post-calving aggregation census conducted in July, 2010 supports this assertion. In response, a revised harvest management strategy is required for 2010/11 to ensure that the current year’s harvest does not significantly or irreparably contribute to further population decline. Consultations are required with stakeholders and interest groups, within Labrador, prior to development of these strategies.

Public Environment Scan
There is increasing evidence to suspect that the GRCH, which migrates across the Quebec-Labrador peninsula, has declined significantly. From the first systematic survey conducted in 1958, which revealed a population of 15,000 caribou, it is estimated the population peaked at nearly 800,000 by the late 1980’s. A 1993 estimate placed the GRCH population at approximately 775,000 caribou. By 2001, when the next survey was completed, this estimate had fallen to 385,000 animals representing a decline of approximately 50%. A preliminary result from a July, 2010 census has elevated concerns that this herd has declined to approximately 50,000 individuals (~1-25%). These results are very preliminary and a final population census estimate will not be available until late fall 2010. However, the final estimate will not likely be of a significant difference that would allow continuation of current, liberal harvest strategies.

The current management strategies employed for the GRCH were established in the mid 1980’s during a period when the population was both substantial and increasing. These liberal harvest strategies include the ability of Labrador residents to assign someone else to hunt on their behalf via a transfer licence system, long hunting seasons, two caribou per licence bag limits, and commercial caribou harvesting. Liberal harvest strategies are typically employed when recruitment exceeds harvest. In the absence of an updated survey since 2001, these liberal harvest strategies were maintained. Based on preliminary results of the July 2010 census, it is clear that these harvest strategies are no longer sustainable and, if left in place, would almost certainly contribute to continued decline.

Caribou are a dietary staple in the lives of many Labradoreans, including Inuitt, Inna, NunatuKavut, and other area residents, as well as Aboriginal people in Quebec, many of whom hunt on either side of the border. In addition, there are three active commercial harvesting licenses and non resident recreational hunting activities that support outfitting. In recent years, commercial and outfitting harvests have declined dramatically. Aboriginal and resident harvest is influenced significantly by the southern migration patterns of the herd. During periods where access is readily available, the entire herd is vulnerable to hunter related mortality.
In order to facilitate the development and implementation of a harvest management regime for 2010/11, stakeholder consultations have been recommended.

**Strategic Considerations**
A revised management plan for 2010/11 will provide clear guidelines and legislative grant to the multiple user groups who partake in the harvest of GRCH. A 2010/11 GRCH Harvest Management Plan will be designed with conservation of the resource as its first priority recognizing the important and intricate nature of caribou to northern peoples and economies. It will adhere to the precautionary principle, which involves acting to avoid serious or irreversible potential harm despite lack of scientific certainty as to the likelihood, magnitude, or causation of that harm.

Provincial wildlife staff are confident that the preliminary results of this survey (50,000 +/- 25%) are accurate to a degree that the final result will not be high enough to negate the need to revise existing management approaches. All evidence suggests that the magnitude of decline is significant and will require changes in the harvest management strategies to ensure the long term sustainability of the resource.

The results of these consultations will be used to help formulate harvest management strategies, evaluate the usefulness of proposed strategies and provide feedback in response to the future management of the GRCH. The short time period between the 

issue. Additionally, any harvest management plan for 2010/11 must be finalized and announced before annual caribou migrations bring the resource within access to most 
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hunters which, lately, has been late October/early November.

**Consultation Details**
The Department of Environment and Conservation will lead the consultation process. The department will be represented by John Blake (Director), Wayne Barney (Species Management Coordinator), Christine Doucet (Senior Manager – Research Section) and Gerry Yetman (Senior Manager – Stewardship and Education). Representatives from the Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation and Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs have not been finalized, but it is expected that representatives officials from both departments will be present for all meetings.
Invited representation will be solicited from user groups as outlined in the Target Audience section below. It is anticipated that selective meetings with component group representation will be completed on an individual basis. Public announcements and open public meetings will not occur given the very short time frame required for completing this exercise. Larger scale public meetings may be considered following the receipt of the final estimate and in preparation for longer term (post 2010/11) GRCH management.

In order to deliver a consultation within the timeframe provided, it is essential that this consultation plan be reviewed and approved in an expeditious manner and that participation in consultations is limited to key stakeholders. It will otherwise not be possible to meet the September deadlines.

2010/11 Objectives
1. To engage in stakeholder consultations in order to help inform the decision making process regarding recommended changes to the harvest of GRCH.
2. To invite targeted public and stakeholder participation, within Labrador, in order to discuss both the current status of the GRCH and future harvest management approaches.
3. To invite representation from stakeholder communities within Labrador capable of providing input into and disseminating information required for future management decisions regarding the GRCH.

Potential Target Audiences
Component 1:
Nunatsiavut Government

Component 2:
Torrngat Wildlife & Plants Co-management Board

Component 3:
Innu Nation (pending LAA and ENVC review of ongoing bi-lateral discussions)

Component 4:
NunatuKavut

Component 5:
Labrador resident hunters. There is currently no association that represents the interests of Labrador caribou hunters. It is proposed that representation from this group be randomly selected from previous Labrador caribou hunting license holders and asked to attend one or more meetings.

Component 5:
Outfitters (selected from current operators)
Component 6:
Commercial Operators (selected from current operators)

Messages

- The herding nature of caribou, their range expansion and modern harvesting
  methods has put the George River caribou in a very vulnerable situation. In 2009,
  concern was expressed that the population may be approaching a level that would
  require a review of management strategies.

- The 2010 commercial harvest was reduced by 60% and a census of the herd was
  undertaken in July 2010. Management of the George River herd is a shared
  responsibility between two provincial governments (Newfoundland and Labrador
  and Quebec), as well as Aboriginal governments and organizations.

- The Province of Quebec and the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador led the
  census with partners that included, Nanatsiatnuat Government, Institute for
  Environmental Monitoring and Research, Torngat Wildlife and Plants Co-
  Management Board, and Laval University.

- Caribou populations throughout North America are known to fluctuate
  dramatically. As populations of caribou increase, populations of associated
  predators also increase. Additionally, higher densities of caribou are more
  susceptible to parasites, disease and range over-browsing, all which affect herd
  health and survival. These factors and many others contribute to population
  decline.

- Studies have shown that the population of the George River caribou herd has
  fluctuated dramatically in the past. Modern population studies of the herd began
  in 1958, which revealed a population of 15,000 caribou. By the 1980s, it is
  estimated the population peaked at nearly 800,000. A 1993 estimate placed the
  George River caribou herd (GRCH) population at approximately 775,000
  caribou. By 2001, when the next survey was completed, this estimate had fallen
  to 385,000 animals representing a decline of approximately 50%.

- The George River caribou herd has been in a natural population decline phase
  since the nineties. While, the population decline was not precipitated by hunting,
  at the current population level, hunting is now considered an additional factor and
  continued hunting will exacerbate the decline and affect future recovery efforts.

Ongoing efforts by the Wildlife Division and its partners have detected indices
suggesting a significant population decline in the GRCH. The scale of the population
change since 2001 has not been fully quantified. However, preliminary results from the
July, 2010 census suggest a population level that is substantially below that required to
sustain the existing harvest management strategy. Input from stakeholders is required in
order to help inform the development of a revised management strategy. The new
management strategy must be implemented rapidly, prior to the GRCH entering
accessible areas where they become very vulnerable to harvest. In recent years, this has
occurred in mid to late October when many individuals from the herd approach the
Trans-Labrador Highway.
This consultation process is intended to capture stakeholder input within the Labrador region only. Larger-scale discussions necessary to implement effective co-management with the Province of Quebec and aboriginal groups in Quebec will not be initiated at this time but will be set aside for future consideration. The proposed consultation process will provide information necessary for future co-management discussions.

**Stakeholders**

A list of stakeholder groups and respective contacts to be consulted includes but may not be limited to:

1. **Resident Hunters** - 10 hunters will be selected at random from various regions of Labrador to represent the interest of this user group. These hunters are selected from past activities in GRC harvest via licence sales. Efforts will be made to ensure reasonable regional representation is achieved in the selection process.

2. **Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation**

   Mr. Todd Kent
   Industry Development Officer
   Labrador City
   Ph: (709) 944-5013
todd@nl.gov.ca

3. **Department of Natural Resources**

   Mr. Derek LeBouhon—Regional Compliance Manager,
   Mr. Colin Carroll—Regional Ecosystem Director
   Happy Valley-Goose Bay
   Ph: (709) 866-2232
dereklebouhon@gov.nl.ca

4. **Nunatsiavut Government**

   Mr. William Barbour
   Minister of Lands and Forests
   NainRebecca Wilcott
   Director of Renewable Resources

Mr. Jim Goadie,
Wildlife Manager
Postville Office
General Delivery
Postville, NL, A0P 1N0
Ph: (709) 479-9880
jgoadie@nunatsiavut.com
53. **Hanu Nation**
Mr. David Hart – Community Policy Officer
Ms. Paula Reid
Sheshatshiu, NL
Ph: (709) 497-8398
dhant@inuu.ca
pried@inuu.ca

64. **NunatuKavut**
Ms. Tammy Lambourne
Environmental Officer
370 Hamilton River Road
P.O. Box 460, Station C
Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NL, A0P 1C0
Ph: (709) 896-0592 ext. 229
tlambourne@labradormetis.ca

Wayne A. Russell
Senior Fish and Wildlife Guardian
P.O. Box 198
Town Hall
Port Hope Simpson, NL
A0K 4E0

75. **Tormag Wildlife and Plants Co-Management Board**
Mr. Bruce Roberts, Chair
Mr. Jamie Snook (Executive Director, Torngat Secretariat)
217 Hamilton River Road
P.O. Box 2050, Station B
Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NL, A0P 1E0
(709) 896-6786

6. **Outfitters**

8. **Newfoundland and Labrador Outfitters Association**
Mr. Dean Wheeler, President

Additional Outfitters as identified by TCR.

97. **Commercial**
Drover’s Labrador Outfitters Limited
Mr. Alonzo Drover
P.O. Box 121
Labrador City, NL, A2V 2K3
Ph: (709) 944-6947
Uncle Sam's Butcher Shop
Mr. Randy Battecock
13 Hillcrest Road
Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NL, A0P 1E0
Ph: (709) 896-3736

Northern Light Inn
Mr. Brad Letto
P.O. Box 92
Lansu Au Clair, NL
Ph: (709) 931-2332
Fax: (709) 931-2708

Approach
User group and stakeholder representation will be solicited to meet and discuss future harvest management options for the GRCH and to assist in formulating new strategies. It is proposed that the Wildlife Division staff meet with user groups and present findings on the status of the herd and solicit input on how conservation targets may be revised and/or achieved. Representatives from TCR and LAA will also be invited to assist in conducting the sessions. The results will be assembled by the Director of Wildlife and forwarded to the Executive to assist with the consideration of adopting revised harvest management plans for GRCH in 2010/11 and replace the previously approved plans as outlined in the 2010/11 Hunting and Trapping Guide. [Section 27(1)(i), Section 27(2)(b)]

The Department will work with and accept recommendations from the Torngat Wildlife and Plants Management Board for the management of the GRCH within the Labrador Inuit Settlement Area.

Consultation Materials
Consultation materials will consist of presentations (mostly contained in Power Point format) of biological data, current harvest management strategies, and solicitation of input for discussion on future management options. Traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) will be gathered from both stakeholder consultations as well as discussions between ENVC and local experts through ongoing collaborations. ENVC also gains TEK and LFK (Labrador Ecological Knowledge) from people on a daily basis through informal interaction with the public. The Division also has an excellent collaborative relationship with the NG through the Torngat Secretariat of the Wildlife and Plants Management Board.

A public advisory was placed in the 2010/11 Hunting and Trapping Guide that noted ENVC's plan to conduct a census of the GRCH in 2010, and requested public input and comment on the existing harvest management plan for this herd. This Guide was
released in March, 2010 and distributed to over 100,000 qualified hunters in Newfoundland and Labrador. One submission was received.

**Schedule**

At the present time, exact scheduling dates cannot be established. Once approval in principle is received, the Wildlife Division will begin to arrange the necessary meetings. Given the restrictive timelines, some of the noted participants may be unable to meet, but attempts will be made to facilitate inclusion to the degree possible.

**Communication with Stakeholders**

Direct representation from stakeholders list will be garnered by direct invitation from the Director of Wildlife or Divisional representative. Stakeholder and user group meetings will be scheduled directly with the specific stakeholders/user groups. Open public meetings or co-management meetings with the province of Quebec will not be conducted at this time. Consultation with Quebec Innu will require considerable planning and the deadline for the current consultation exercise precludes such discussions. Consultation with Quebec Innu on the management of caribou in Labrador will follow at a later date.

**Facilitation**

Facilitation of the consultation process will be conducted by staff of the Wildlife Division, ENVC in collaboration with TCR and LAA. Secretarial support for the working group will be provided by the Wildlife Division of ENVC.

**Minister/MHA involvement**

The consultation process is considered to be an operational issue and neither the Minister nor MHA's are expected to be involved directly in this process.

**Recording and Issues Tracking**

Wildlife Division staff will record comments during discussions.

**Media Policy**

The media will not be in attendance at the meetings. There will be no media interviews originating from these efforts without prior departmental permission.

**Post-Consultation Communications Activities**

Communications Plan to be prepared after the 2010 survey results are known.
Hi John,

Myself and Val Oliver are unable to make the teleconference on Monday. We will be traveling to Thunder Bay for FPT meetings. I have apprised Senior Analyst, Shawn Melindy, of the issue and he can participate on behalf of our department in our absence.

Michelle

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Michelle Watkins

Director, Labrador Affairs
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
Department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs
Mailbag 3014, Stn. B
Happy Valley - Goose Bay, NL A0P 1E0
tel: 709-896-1780 fax: 709-896-0045 mobile: 709-899-1582
e-mail: michellewatkins@gov.nl.ca

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From: Blake, John
Sent: Thursday, August 26, 2010 8:02 AM
To: Dutton, Sean; Firth, Ross
Cc: O'Neill, Melony; Gover, Aubrey; Watkins, Michelle; Tompkins, John; Oliver, Val; Oxford, Krista L.
Subject: RE: Caribou Consultation Plan

Ross will add more, but here are some initial thoughts Sean.

Background - if we describe GRCH as "woodland" when woodland caribou are listed on endangered species legislation might be confusing. Can we just say "migratory caribou"?

How about we say Woodland Caribou - Migratory Ecotype. The reality is these are woodland caribou despite slight differing morphological and behavioral traits compared to their sedentary cousins. COSEWIC are currently reconsidering their DU's... Designatable Units, and if their current position stands they will be grouping all sedentary on the Ungava with both GRCH and Leaf River, and doing an assessment on that as one unit. By my rough calculations the combined rate of decline will result in an assessment to list as threatened.

Population Cycles - this graph shows the time line but there could be a vertical line at left showing the numbers so people could have a sense of the scale. I haven't read Bergerud's book so I don't know if he reflected that in his text.

The graph is meant to illustrate relative rates of increase/decrease over a long time frame and to demonstrate that northern caribou population fluctuate dramatically over time. The actual numbers prior to 1950's are speculative at best, and thus no population estimate is illustrated on the y axis. Actual survey numbers from 1950's onward are described in the text and should adequately describe scale. This point will be "talked to" during the meetings.

If we are proposing to ask at all meetings whether/how Aboriginal harvest should be limited, shouldn't we provide some information first about Aboriginal rights? This could get tangle. Not everyone will have an appreciation for Aboriginal rights and NunatuKavut will argue they hold such rights. Maybe say something along the lines of (subject to Aubrey's fine tuning):
ABORIGINAL RIGHTS
Aboriginal people in Canada have a right to harvest for food, social and ceremonial purposes.
Such rights are site and fact-specific.
Conservation and safety take precedence over such rights, but the infringement must be reasonable.
Labrador Inuit rights are set out in Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement.
Labrador Innu rights are to be set out in a land claims agreement.

John

From: Dutton, Sean
Sent: Thursday, August 26, 2010 7:51 AM
To: Firth, Ross
Cc: O'Neill, Melony; Blake, John; Gover, Aubrey; Watkins, Michelle; Tompkins, John; Oliver, Val; Oxford, Krista L.
Subject: Re: Caribou Consultation Plan

I had a look at the deck. Just a few comments.

Background - if we describe GRCH as "woodland" when woodland caribou are listed on endangered species legislation might be confusing. Can we just say "migratory caribou"?

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Labrador Innu rights are to be set out in a land claims agreement.

Sean

Sent Via BlackBerry

From: Firth, Ross
To: Dutton, Sean
Cc: O'Neill, Melony; Blake, John
Subject: Caribou Consultation Plan

Sean

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Would you please let me know whether you're content with the revised plan.

I have also attached, for your information, a copy of the proposed presentation to be delivered at the consultations. This may help illustrate our approach more fully.

Ross

Ross Firth  
Assistant Deputy Minister - Natural Heritage

Department of Environment and Conservation  
P.O. Box 2007  
117 Riverside Drive  
Corner Brook, NL  
A2H 7S1

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Michelle Watkins

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tel: 709-896-1780 fax: 709-896-0045 mobile: 709-899-1582
email: michelle watkins@gov.nl.ca

From: Dutton, Sean
Sent: Thursday, August 26, 2010 7:05 AM
To: Firth, Ross
Cc: O'Neill, Melony; Blake, John; Tompkins, John; Oliver, Val; Watkins, Michelle; Gover, Aubrey; Oxford, Krista L.
Subject: Re: Caribou Consultation Plan

Thanks, Ross.

The Messages are more fulsome but we might still want to say a bit more about why these consultations are occurring. It may be self-evident, but we might add something like, "The population decline necessitates management decisions to protect the herd, and Government is seeking input from stakeholders and Aboriginal groups/governments on the measures to be taken in the interests of conservation."

Rebecca Wicott's contact info was omitted but can be found in my earlier e-mail.

I take your point on the planning required for consultation with Quebec Aboriginal groups. We don't need to spell out that plan in this one, but concurrently we might still gather more information on what consultations Quebec has undertaken or plans to undertake. Is this something Wildlife Division could find out, or would you like me to ask IGAS staff contact our counterparts in Quebec?

Sean

Sent Via BlackBerry

From: Firth, Ross
To: Dutton, Sean
Cc: O'Neill, Melony; Blake, John
Subject: Caribou Consultation Plan

Sean
I've made changes to the draft document and have attempted to incorporate your comments. The attached document has been revised based on your comments. I've left the document in track changes for ease of identifying my edits.

Would you please let me know whether you're content with the revised plan.

I have also attached, for your information, a copy of the proposed presentation to be delivered at the consultations. This may help illustrate our approach more fully.

Ross

Ross Firth
Assistant Deputy Minister - Natural Heritage

Department of Environment and Conservation
P.O. Box 2007
117 Riverside Drive
Corner Brook, NL
A2H 7S1

Ph. (709) 637-2199
Fax (709) 637-2180
From: Watkins, Michelle  
Sent: Thursday, August 26, 2010 11:13 AM  
To: Melindy, Shawn D.  
Subject: FW: Caribou Consultation Plan

Michelle Watkins
Director, Labrador Affairs
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
Department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs
Mailbag 3014, Str. B
Happy Valley - Goose Bay, NL A0P 1E0
tel: 709-896-1780 fax: 709-896-0045 mobile: 709-899-1582
email: michellewatkins@gov.nl.ca

From: Watkins, Michelle  
Sent: Thursday, August 26, 2010 8:38 AM  
To: Dutton, Sean  
Cc: Oliver, Val  
Subject: RE: Caribou Consultation Plan

Hi Sean,

I concur with your comments on questions posed in the deck. Val and I looked at it last evening and although questions need to be consistent, we need to be careful in what we ask depending on the target audience. I would like to see the questions be a little more structured b/c the discussion may not be focused. Val was really concerned that the deck appeared to be hiding the issue of the population decline of the herd. It is pretty much public knowledge, so we need to be transparent.

Michelle

Michelle Watkins
Director, Labrador Affairs
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
Department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs
Mailbag 3014, Str. B
Happy Valley - Goose Bay, NL A0P 1E0
tel: 709-896-1780 fax: 709-896-0045 mobile: 709-899-1582
email: michellewatkins@gov.nl.ca

From: Dutton, Sean  
Sent: Thursday, August 26, 2010 7:21 AM  
To: Firth, Ross  
Cc: O'Neill, Melony; Blake, John; Gover, Aubrey; Watkins, Michelle; Tompkins, John; Oliver, Val; Oxford, Krista L.  
Subject: Re: Caribou Consultation Plan
I had a look at the deck. Just a few comments.

Background - if we describe GRCH as "woodland" when woodland caribou are listed on endangered species legislation might be confusing. Can we just say "migratory caribou"?

Population Cycles - this graph shows the time line but there could be a vertical line at left showing the numbers so people could have a sense of the scale. I haven't read Bergerud's book so I don't know if he reflected that in his text.

If we are proposing to ask at all meetings whether/how Aboriginal harvest should be limited, shouldn't we provide some information first about Aboriginal rights? This could get tangly. Not everyone will have an appreciation for Aboriginal rights and NunatuKavut will argue they hold such rights. Maybe say something along the lines of (subject to Aubrey's fine tuning):

ABORIGINAL RIGHTS
Aboriginal people in Canada have a right to harvest for food, social and ceremonial purposes. Such rights are site and fact-specific. Conservation and safety take precedence over such rights, but the infringement must be reasonable. Labrador Inuit rights are set out in Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement Labrador Innu rights are to be set out in a land claims agreement.

Sean

Sent Via Blackberry

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From: Firth, Ross
To: Dutton, Sean
Cc: O'Neill, Melony; Blake, John
Subject: Caribou Consultation Plan

Sean

I've made changes to the draft document and have attempted to incorporate your comments. The attached document has been revised based on your comments. I've left the document in track changes for ease of identifying my edits.

Would you please let me know whether you're content with the revised plan.

I have also attached, for your information, a copy of the proposed presentation to be delivered at the consultations. This may help illustrate our approach more fully.

Ross

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Ross Firth
Assistant Deputy Minister - Natural Heritage

Department of Environment and Conservation
P.O. Box 2007
117 Riverside Drive
Corner Brook, NL
A2H 7S1
From: Watkins, Michelle
Sent: Thursday, August 26, 2010 2:28 PM
To: Melindy, Shawn D.; Oliver, Val
Subject: FW; George River Caribou Draft Consultation Plan

FYI

Michelle Watkins

Director, Labrador Affairs
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
Department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs
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Happy Valley - Goose Bay, NL A0P 1E0
tel: 709-896-1780 fax: 709-896-0045 mobile: 709-899-1582
e-mail: michellewatkins@gov.nl.ca

From: Dutton, Sean
Sent: Thursday, August 26, 2010 1:17 PM
To: Oxford, Krista L.
Cc: Watkins, Michelle; Hickey, John
Subject: RE: George River Caribou Draft Consultation Plan

Thanks, Krista. I will pass on these points to ENVC.

Sean

From: Oxford, Krista L.
Sent: Thursday, August 26, 2010 1:27 PM
To: Dutton, Sean
Cc: Watkins, Michelle; Hickey, John
Subject: RE: George River Caribou Draft Consultation Plan

Hi Sean,

I just finished meeting with Minister Hickey and he reviewed my draft copy of the consultation plan as you emailed me yesterday. He also reviewed the comments made by both branches of LAA.

Upon his review he suggested the following to both myself and Michelle Watkins:

- The first consultation meetings that should happen are with the 3 aboriginal groups followed by meetings with non-aboriginal groups, in that order.
- He advised that the people of Labrador are going to want to know what is being done on the QC side.
- He advised that Churchill Falls needs to be included in the consultations.

Thank you,
Krista
Krista Oxford
Executive Assistant to
Hon. John Hickey
M.H.A. Lake Melville
Minister of Labrador Affairs
T (709) 896 - 2364
F (709) 896 - 7283
E kristaoxford@gov.nl.ca

From: Dutton, Sean
Sent: Wednesday, August 25, 2010 1:31 PM
To: Oxford, Krista L.
Subject: FW: George River Caribou Draft Consultation Plan

Krista:

Please see below our comments (both Branches of LAA). Minister Hickey is quite interested in this issue so when you have an opportunity could you let him know about this and advise if he has any different or additional comments?

Thanks,

Sean

From: Dutton, Sean
Sent: Wednesday, August 25, 2010 1:36 PM
To: Firth, Ross; Duke, Cathy
Cc: Blake, John; Parrott, William; Gover, Aubrey; Watkins, Michelle; Tompkins, John; Oliver, Val
Subject: RE: George River Caribou Draft Consultation Plan

Ross:

Thanks for the opportunity to review. Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs offers the following comments:

PAGE 1
PUBLIC ENVIRONMENT SCAN
Paragraph 3 – should revise first sentence to say, “Caribou are a dietary staple in the lives of many Labradorians, including Inuit, Innu, NunatuKavut, and other area residents, as well as Aboriginal people in Quebec, many of whom hunt on either side of the border.”

PAGE 2
STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS
Paragraph 1 – what does “legislative grant” mean? Line 5 - delete “it,” before “involves”

CONSULTATION DETAILS
Paragraph 1 – change “Representations to “Representatives”. I would propose Michelle Watkins, Director of Labrador Affairs, and Val Oliver, Communications Specialist, both based in Happy Valley, attend all the bilaterals. Aboriginal Affairs Branch would be represented at the meetings with Innu Nation, Nunatsiavut Government and NunatuKavut – if they are held consecutively I would designate one official, but if they are at different times I might look at assigning different staff to each meeting.

PAGE 3
CONSULTATION DETAILS (continued)

The approach based on individual meetings is probably the better alternative to a single meeting with all stakeholders. By meeting together, everyone hears what everyone else has to say, so there is at least the potential that consensus might emerge. However, there’s the potential that stakeholder groups start pointing fingers at one another. Caribou hunting, in general, is a hot topic in Labrador. Resident hunters beguile some of the assertion of aboriginal hunting rights. This past winter multiple charges were laid for hunting outside of the zones (charges later dropped) which received much media attention. Some wounds still aren’t healed with that one. In a large meeting we would probably not get the information that we are looking for and other issues may dominate the session. It would be difficult to facilitate. Meeting bilaterally would probably be favoured by the Nunatsiavut Government and Innu Nation, as they don’t want to be treated as ordinary stakeholders. However, no one would know for sure what the views were of the other stakeholders, and whether there is a consensus approach. So the suggestion that larger scale public meetings might be considered later on might become a necessity depending on how the bilaterals go.

Suggest deleting paragraph starting with “In order to…”

POTENTIAL TARGET AUDIENCES

Component 3: We suggest the bilateral discussions continue with Innu Nation regarding the open/closed zones, concurrent with the consultations on the George River herd census results and conservation, while reinforcing the conservation messages throughout. If we are not proposing to restrict Innu Nation harvest of GRCH at this time there doesn’t appear to be a good reason to discontinue discussions on the open/closed zones.

Component 5: It is an interesting approach to do random selection of resident hunters based upon previous license holders. There may need to be a mechanism to ensure non-Aboriginal representation from the selection, since there will be further consultation with Labrador’s Aboriginal groups/governments, and recognizing license requirements do not apply to Innu Nation members or Inuit in the Labrador Inuit Settlement Area. There should also be assurances that consultations target the regions in Labrador. Residential caribou hunting activity is heavy in Labrador West / Churchill Falls / Central Labrador. Of course the North Coast activity is strongly aboriginal based. South Coast and Straits residents travel to central to access caribou.

Page 4

MESSAGES

We would suggest a more comprehensive set of key Messages be drafted for media inquiries. There are no messages concerning the consultations themselves – purpose, goals, etc. This issue is already public knowledge - there has already been at least one news print story (Michael Johansen in the Labradorian on August 16) on the decline of the GRCH. Media will likely be seeking input from elected officials when the consultation process begins. If that if that does happen, there could be an impression that Government is rushing to complete the consultation process without engaging the stakeholders in a public forum. So that may need to be addressed in the key Messages. Government may want to consider updating the “public” (not just the stakeholders in the plan) sooner rather than later on where we are with this issue.

The second paragraph indicates “Larger scale discussions necessary to implement effective co-management with the Province of Quebec and aboriginal groups in Quebec will not be initiated at this time but will be set aside for future consideration. The proposed consultation process will provide information necessary for future co-management discussions.”

9) Based on a conversation with Malinuksh-Lac John Chief Real McKenzie on August 19 where he said there were over 500,000 animals in the George River herd, it appears the results of the census have not been communicated widely in Quebec. Given QC Naskapi and Innu hunt in Labrador, to jointly meet with QC Aboriginal groups. This would be helpful (a) to reinforce the conservation message, groundwork that should be helpful should the harvest of Aboriginal groups need to be limited in the future (b) to have first hand knowledge of what they are told and what their views are, (c) to improve the relationship between...
Government and the Bands, (d) to be able to tell Labrador harvesters that the same messages have been delivered to Quebec Aboriginal groups.

Nunavik Inuit – since they have no Aboriginal rights in Labrador outside the Torngat Park, which is federal land. (Nunavik Inuit have a treaty right to harvest in the Park – but does the George River herd habitat include the Park, and are caribou harvested there by their members?)

STAKEHOLDERS

#1 - In light of the aforementioned, 10 hunters may be limiting. There may need to be consideration for resident hunter consultations in both Labrador West and Central Labrador.

#2, #3 - It isn’t clear why TCR and NR would be listed as stakeholders. Perhaps instead they should be invited to attend the appropriate bilateral meetings along with ENVC et al.

#4 - Nunatsiavut Government: The plan recommends that an elected official, William Barbour be consulted, but elected officials from other groups (e.g. Innu Nation) would not be the main point of contact, and the Province’s own elected officials are suggested to not be present at these sessions. There should be consistency, one way or the other. There is no one acting in the Deputy Minister position since Doug Blake’s retirement. The most senior official in the NG re: wildlife matters is Rebecca Willcott, Director of Renewable Resources. Her phone number is 896-8582 and email is Rebecca_Willcott@nunatsiavut.com. We understand that she is not in until Monday, August 30.

PAGE 6

APPROACH

The methodology is sound. From past experience with facilitation, it may be helpful if consultation questions were prepared in advance and reviewed by TCR and LAA. Where possible, consistency in questions asked assists in analysis of feedback. Consulting experienced facilitators for advice may be helpful. LAA received input from the Centre for Learning and Development, in the past.

PAGE 7

COMMUNICATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS

The Plan does not explain the reasoning for the decision to exclude the Quebec Aboriginal groups.

MEDIA POLICY

It states the media are not allowed to attend the meetings but does not explain why this is preferable. On Page 3 it states that “public announcements and open public meetings will not occur given the very short time frame required for this exercise.” We’re not sure why a tight time frame is sufficient justification for keeping any meetings closed to the public.

Sean

From: Firth, Ross
Sent: Tuesday, August 24, 2010 3:13 PM
To: Dutton, Sean; Duke, Cathy
Cc: Blake, John; Parrott, William
Subject: George River Caribou Draft Consultation Plan
Importance: High
I've attached a draft consultation plan that engages both aboriginal and non-aboriginal stakeholders in a review of George River caribou harvest approaches in light of recent preliminary census results. Would you please review the plan and forward me your comments. Given the very tight timeline to deliver the consultations, your timely attention to this issue is greatly appreciated with a response this week preferred.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Ross

Ross Firth
Assistant Deputy Minister - Natural Heritage

Department of Environment and Conservation
P.O. Box 2007
117 Riverside Drive
Corner Brook, NL
A2H 7S1

Ph. (709) 637-2199
Fax (709) 637-2180
Melindy, Shawn D.

From: Dutton, Sean
Sent: Sunday, August 29, 2010 7:26 PM
To: Oxford, Krista L.; Oliver, Val; Watkins, Michelle; Gover, Aubrey; Tompkins, John
Subject: Fw: George River Caribou Communications Plan
Attachments:
GRCH 2010 11-3 week Consultation Plan aug 29 2010.doc; BN GRCH August 29 2010.doc

Fyi.

Sean

Sent Via BlackBerry

From: Blake, John
To: O'Neill, Melony; Moores, Len; Dutton, Sean; Duke, Cathy; English, Tracy; Delaney, Brian; Power, Genda; Howard, Jacquelyn; Cheeseman, Josephine
Cc: Parrott, William; Firth, Ross
Sent: Sun Aug 29 14:34:36 2010
Subject: George River Caribou Communications Plan

At the request of Ross Firth, I am forwarding a revised communications plan for the George River Caribou Harvest Management Plan 2010/11. This plan was substantively modified following the receipt of comments from the Communications Branch on Friday past. Mr. Delaney – our deputy asked that I note final sign off from our Minister will occur pending the receipt of any comment from other departments or communications. Ross also requested I attach an Information note on the consultations.

Regards,

John Blake
Director
NL Wildlife Division
Information Note
Department of Environment and Conservation

Title: George River caribou herd

Issue: The Department of Environment and Conservation (ENVC) has developed a consultation plan to engage stakeholders in a discussion of caribou harvest strategies in light of a recent preliminary census results.

Background and current status:

- The George River caribou herd is a trans-boundary population shared with Quebec.
- In July 2010, a post calving aggregation photo-census was conducted in partnership with the Government of Quebec, Laval University, the Nunatsiavut Government, Tomat Plant and Wildlife Co-Management Board and the Institute for Environmental Monitoring and Research.
- Preliminary analysis estimates the current population of the George River caribou herd to be approximately 50,000 adults, a decline of 335,000 in 9 years. A calculation of the final overall population size will be completed by October / November 2010.
- ENVC, LAA and TCR to consult with targeted stakeholders on revised caribou management approaches in light of the preliminary census results.
- A consultation plan has been produced that has been reviewed by ENVC, LAA and TCR. Subsequent review by Communications Branch resulted in further amendments. The revised plan has now been sent to CS, TCR, LAA, DNR and Communication Branch.

Next Steps:

- The draft consultation plan is being presented to Cabinet Secretariat (CS) for consideration and approval prior to the initiation of consultations.
- Once CS approval has been secured, consultations will begin.
- Information gathered from the consultations will be collated and provided to CS and all other relevant departments.

Prepared by: Ross Firth/John Blake
Approved by:
Ministerial Approval:
Date: 2010.08.29
Consultation Plan

George River Caribou Herd Harvest Management Plan – 2010/11

Issue

- The George River caribou herd (GRCH) is critically important to Labrador and the province as a whole. With the exception of limited harvest from the northern Torngat Herd, this herd contributes almost exclusively to the Aboriginal, resident and non-resident harvest needs within Labrador.

- The Government of Quebec shares joint responsibility with this province for management. There is currently no written agreement or formal understanding concerning the shared management of this resource. At present, wildlife officials from both provinces collaborate on research activities and informally share information and communicate on the status of the herd, but have no formal provisions for co-management.

- The current management strategies employed for the GRCH were established in the mid 1980s during a period when the population of this herd was substantial and increasing. The harvest strategies include: the ability of Labrador residents to assign someone else to hunt on their behalf via a transfer licence system, 9 month long hunting seasons, two caribou per licence bag limits and commercial caribou harvesting.

- It is estimated the GRCH population peaked at nearly 800,000 in the late 1980s, and a 1993 census placed the GRCH population at approximately 775,000 caribou. By 2001, when the next survey was completed, the population was estimated to have fallen to 385,000 animals. The extensive time span between survey periods was due to the high cost of the survey and lack of dedicated resources within both Quebec and Labrador to census and monitor the herd.

- In July 2010, a post calving aggregation photo-census was conducted in partnership with the Government of Quebec, Laval University, the Nunatsiavut Government, Torngat Plant and Wildlife Co-Management Board and the Institute for Environmental Monitoring and Research. Preliminary estimates from the July population census indicate that the herd now consists of approximately 50,000 animals.

- In peak harvest years as many as 35,000 caribou have been harvested from the GRCH. The 2009 harvest was estimated at 9,000 caribou. If GRCH migration patterns place the herd in an open, accessible area during 2010/11, the liberal harvest strategy could have significant negative implications to the long term health of the GRCH.

- This estimate is considered preliminary, and the final census report will be available later this fall. However, the final estimate is not expected to vary by more than 25%, which would not alter the need for harvest management restrictions.

- There has been ongoing illegal hunting activity on threatened woodland caribou in Labrador by mostly Innu hunters from Quebec. These herds include the Lac Joseph, Red Wine and Joir River groups of caribou. While hunting these threatened herds is illegal, hunters are permitted to hunt caribou from the GRCH, which lie generally to
the north of these sedentary caribou. Their participation in the hunt has been based on GRCH numbers between 275,000 and 325,000 animals, rather than the approximate 50,000 that currently exist.

- Proposed provincial consultations are being planned as a means to both inform stakeholders of the potential significant decline and also seek their input into possible management measures that may be required to address this decline.

Public Environment Scan

- On July 15, 2009 the Department of Environment and Conservation issued a press release announcing its plans to conduct a census in 2010 to determine current status and health of the GRCH. It concurrently stated harvest management may have to change pending the results of this census.
- A subsequent public advisory was published in the 2010-11 Newfoundland and Labrador Hunting and Trapping Guide indicating that current harvest management approaches and methods may be reviewed pending the results of the 2010 census.
- On August 9, 2010 a joint news release by the Department of Environment and Conservation and the Department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs announced a delay in the opening of the caribou hunting season in Labrador as the result of preliminary information and ongoing analysis regarding the George River herd.
- The news release stated that an update on the harvest management plan for the George River Caribou is anticipated in early September. Until that time, hunting opportunities for all non-Aboriginal peoples will be suspended.
- On August 10, 2010 Minister Johnson participated in a radio interview with CBC regarding the delay in the opening of the hunting season. It was stated that the ban did not apply to outfitters who had previously booked hunts.
- On or about June 5, 2010 and August 16, 2010 Michael Johansen wrote a newspaper article that was carried in The Telegram, The Labradorian and The Western Star in which he highlighted the declining population of the George River caribou herd and criticized the provincial government’s conservation efforts.
- Both aboriginals and non-aboriginal hunters participated in illegal hunting of George River caribou during the winter of 2008 and 2009. Hunters illegally harvested caribou in an area closed to hunting. The closed zone represented the core range of the threatened Red Wine caribou herd that was designated as a measure intended to help conserve this herd.
- Extensive media coverage (print, radio, television) occurred during the periods of this illegal harvest. This included both provincial and national media outlets.

Strategic Considerations

A revised management plan for 2010/11 will provide clear guidelines to the multiple user groups who partake in the harvest of GRCH. A 2010/11 GRCH Harvest Management Plan will be designed with conservation of the resource as its first priority recognizing the important and intricate nature of caribou to northern peoples and economies. It will adhere to the precautionary principle, which involves acting to avoid serious or
irreversible potential harm despite lack of scientific certainty as to the likelihood, magnitude, or causation of that harm.

Provincial wildlife staff are confident that the preliminary results of this survey (50,000 +/- 25%) are accurate to a degree that the final result will not be high enough to negate the need to revise existing management approaches. All evidence suggests that the magnitude of decline is significant and will require changes in the harvest management strategies to ensure the long term sustainability of the resource.

The results of these consultations will be used to help consider harvest management options, evaluate the usefulness of proposed strategies and provide feedback in response to the future management of the GRCHL. The short time period between the will require immediate attention to this issue. Additionally, any harvest management plan for 2010/11 must be finalized and announced before annual caribou migrations bring the resource within access to most hunters which, lately, has been late October/early November.

The land claim of NunatuKavut is not recognized by the province. As a result, they are subject to provisions under the Wildlife Act that include the requirement to possess a provincial caribou hunting license similar to the requirement of non-aboriginals. They may be unhappy with restrictions that will affect their current harvest approach. Similarly, Inuit land claim beneficiaries may be unhappy with harvest restrictions imposed upon them when hunting outside of LII and LISA.

The elimination of the commercial harvest will impact on the continued commercial viability of the three businesses who currently possess commercial licenses. In 2010 this
allows for a harvest of 420 animals. It may also impact on the availability of caribou meat for the restaurant and retail trade. The economic impact associated with this proposal has not been calculated. In 2009, commercial caribou licences in Labrador were reduced by 60% to 210 licences or 420 caribou. This decision was based on fall classification and collar mortality data that suggested a significant decline had occurred in the George River caribou herd.

The reduction of the number of animals available to harvest on each resident and non-resident license may also impact the outfitting industry. ENVC is currently issuing licenses to outfitters who have confirmed hunts booked for the period beginning August 10, 2010 up until the present in an effort to minimize economic hardship to these companies. The reduction in the number of animals that may be taken on a license may affect the sales of some hunts where hunters had anticipated the harvest of two caribou from a single license.

The majority of the Quebec based harvest on this herd occurs in August and September in the form of outfitter based hunts. Because of their legislative schedules and season dates which open August 1, and because many outfitters are currently in the field with clients, Quebec have advised that they will maintain the status quo respecting their outfitted hunts for 2010. It is anticipated that the harvest implications of this could be in the order of 1,000 caribou. The majority of the harvest of GRC occurs in Labrador.

Beginning in the 2009/10 hunting season, Quebec eliminated all commercial caribou harvest licenses. These licenses were issued exclusively to aboriginals and, in the past, have amounted to a harvest of up to 2500 animals.

No formal consultations have yet been held with the Government of Quebec concerning the implications of such a low herd size. Informal discussions, however, have been held between Quebec and NL wildlife biologists respecting the census results and management implications. The Province’s continue to collaborate on finalizing the census report.

Declines in the population of the GRCYR were observed in 2009 and initial management actions were taken (reduction by 60% of commercial harvest) by the province at that time. In 2009, Quebec approached Newfoundland and Labrador with the proposal to conduct an aerial census of the herd, in partnership with other stakeholders. The planning, logistics and optimal timing dictated that the earliest time available to conduct the census was summer 2010.

**Consultation Details**
The Department of Environment and Conservation will lead the consultation process. The department will be represented by John Blake (Director), Wayne Barney (Species Management Coordinator), Christine Doucet (Senior Manager – Research Section). Representatives from the Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation include Todd Kent (IDO) and Juanita Keel Ryan (Director). Representatives from Labrador and
Aboriginal Affairs include Michelle Watkins (Director) and Val Oliver (Communications).

Invited representation will be solicited from user groups as outlined in the Target Audience section below. It is anticipated that selective meetings with component group representation will be completed on an individual basis. Public announcements and open public meetings will not occur given the very short time frame required for completing this exercise. Larger scale public meetings may be considered following the receipt of the final estimate and in preparation for longer term (post 2010/11) GRCH management.

2010/11 Objectives

A consultation with targeted stakeholders is being proposed in order to provide users with information related to preliminary census results and to discuss management approaches in light of a significant decline in the population. Feedback received from stakeholders will be used by government to inform the decision making process regarding proposed harvest management changes. These management considerations for the 2010/11 hunting season only. Options that may include the development of a co-management model Aboriginal groups and Quebec will be considered for the period beyond 2010/11.

Consultation objectives include:

1. To engage in stakeholder consultations to help inform government decision making regarding recommended changes to the harvest of GRCH for 2010/11.
2. To present preliminary census results to stakeholders as a means of ensuring the accurate dissemination of information.
3. To discuss the current management of the GRCH and future harvest management options via targeted stakeholder participation.

Target Audiences

Internal:

- Premier’s Office
- Cabinet Secretariat
- Communications Branch
- Cabinet
- Ministers and MHAs
- Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation
- Department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs
- Department of Natural Resources
- Department of Environment and Conservation

External:
- Labrador Innu
- Nunatsiavut Government
- NunatuKavut
- Quebec Innu
- Torngat Wildlife and Plants Co-Management Board
- Government of Quebec
- Resident Hunters
- Outfitters
- Commercial Operators
- Institute for Environmental Monitoring and Research
- Media
- General public

Stakeholders

A list of stakeholder groups and respective contacts to be consulted includes but may not be limited to:

1. **Resident Hunters** - 10 hunters will be selected at random from various regions of Labrador to represent the interest of this user group. These hunters are selected from past activities in GRC harvest via licence sales. Efforts will be made to ensure reasonable regional representation is achieved in the selection process.

2. **Nunatsiavut Government**

   Rebecca Willecott  
   Director of Renewable Resources  
   Ph: 709 896-8582  
   Rebecca_Willecott@nunatsiavut.com

   Mr. Jim Goudie,  
   Wildlife Manager  
   Postville Office  
   General Delivery  
   Postville, NL, A0P 1N0  
   Ph: (709) 479-9880  
   jgoudie@nunatsiavut.com

3. **Innu Nation**

   Mr. David Hart – Community Policing Officer  
   Ms. Paula Reid  
   Sheshatshiu, NL  
   Ph: (709) 497-8398  
   dhart@innu.ca  
   pried@innu.ca
4. NunatuKavut
Ms. Tammy Lambourne
Environmental Officer
370 Hamilton River Road
P.O. Box 460, Station C
Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NL, A0P 1C0
Ph: (709) 896-0592 ext. 229
tlambourne@labradormetis.ca

Wayne A. Russell
Senior Fish and Wildlife Guardian
P.O. Box 198
Town Hall
Port Hope Simpson, NL
A0K 4E0

5. Torngat Wildlife and Plants Co-Management Board
Mr. Bruce Roberts, Chair
Mr. Jamie Snook (Executive Director, Torngat Secretariat)
217 Hamilton River Road
P.O. Box 2050, Station B
Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NL, A0P 1E0
(709) 896-6786

6. Outfitters
Newfoundland and Labrador Outfitters Association
Mr. Dean Wheeler, President

Additional Outfitters as identified by TCR.

7. Commercial
Drover’s Labrador Outfitters Limited
Mr. Alonzo Drover
P.O. Box 121
Labrador City, NL, A2V 2K3
Ph: (709) 944-6947

Uncle Sam’s Butcher Shop
Mr. Randy Battcock
13 Hillcrest Road
Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NL, A0P 1E0
Ph: (709) 896-3736

Northern Light Inn
Key Messages

- Preliminary census results of the George River herd indicate a significant population decline since the previous census in 2001. As a result, Government is seeking input from stakeholders and Aboriginal groups/governments on caribou harvest management measures to be taken in the interests of conservation.
- As an initial conservation step to address the perceived decline, the 2010 commercial harvest was reduced by 60%.
- A census of the herd was initiated in July, 2010. The Province of Quebec and the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador led the census with partners that included, Nunatsiavut Government, Institute for Environmental Monitoring and Research, Tomagt Wildlife and Plants Co-Management Board, and Laval University.
- Management of the George River herd is a shared responsibility between two provincial governments (Newfoundland and Labrador and Quebec), as well as Aboriginal governments and organizations.
- Caribou populations throughout North America are known to fluctuate dramatically. The rate of decline being experienced by the GRCH is consistent with recent declines observed in other northern caribou herds across North America.
- Studies have shown that the population of the George River caribou herd has fluctuated dramatically in the past. Modern population studies of the herd began in 1958, which revealed a population of 15,000 caribou. Subsequent surveys placed the herd population at nearly 800,000 in the late 1980s; 775,000 in 1993; and 385,000 in 2001.
- The George River caribou herd has been in a natural population decline phase since the late 1980’s. While the population decline was not precipitated by hunting, at the current population level, hunting is now considered significantly additive to natural mortality and continued hunting will exacerbate the decline and affect future recovery efforts.
- Targeted stakeholder consultations will provide government with information to assist in the revision of harvest management approaches for 2010/11.
- Government will work with other stakeholders to develop a longer term management plan for the George River herd beyond 2010/11.
- Government wishes to share the preliminary census results with stakeholders and work collaboratively to identify revised harvest management approaches.
- Once final analysis of the census has been completed, further communication will be made in order to convey this information to stakeholders.

Approach
User group and stakeholder representation will be solicited to meet and discuss future harvest management options for the GRCH and to assist in formulating new strategies. It is proposed that the Wildlife Division staff, along with TCR and LAA representatives meet with user groups and present findings on the status of the herd and solicit input on how conservation targets may be revised and/or achieved. The results will be assembled by the Director of Wildlife and forwarded to the Executive to assist with the consideration of adopting revised harvest management plans for GRCH in 2010/11 and replace the previously approved plans as outlined in the 2010/11 Hunting and Trapping Guide.

The Department will work with and accept recommendations from the Tornagat Wildlife and Plants Management Board for the management of the GRCH within the Labrador Inuit Settlement Area.

Consultation Materials
Consultation materials will consist of presentations (mostly contained in Power Point format) of biological data, current harvest management strategies, and solicitation of input for discussion on future management options. Traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) will be gathered from both stakeholder consultations as well as discussions between ENVC and local experts through ongoing collaborations. ENVC also gains TEK and LEK (Labrador Ecological Knowledge) from people on a daily basis through informal interaction with the public. The Division also has an excellent collaborative relationship with the NG through the Tornagat Secretariat of the Wildlife and Plants Management Board.

A public advisory was placed in the 2010/11 Hunting and Trapping Guide that noted ENVC’s plan to conduct a census of the GRCH in 2010, and requested public input and comment on the existing harvest management plan for this herd. This Guide was released in March, 2010 and distributed to over 100,000 qualified hunters in Newfoundland and Labrador. One submission was received.

Schedule
At the present time, exact scheduling dates cannot be established. Once approval in principle is received, the Wildlife Division will begin to arrange the necessary meetings. Given the restrictive timelines, some of the noted participants may be unable to meet, but attempts will be made to facilitate inclusion to the degree possible.

Communication with Stakeholders
Direct representation from stakeholders list will be garnered by direct invitation from the Director of Wildlife or Divisional representative. Stakeholder and user group meetings will be scheduled directly with the specific stakeholders/user groups. Open public meetings or co-management meetings with the province of Quebec will not be conducted at this time.
Consultation with Quebec Innu will require considerable planning and the deadline for the current consultation exercise precludes such discussions. A letter from the Deputy Ministers of the Department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs and the Department of Justice was sent to Chief Real MacKenzie, Matimekush-Lac John First Nation and Chief Georges-Ernest Gregoire, LaShat mak Mani-Utenam First Nation on August 27, 2010. The letter committed that officials from the Department of Environment and Conservation would meet with both bands to discuss caribou management and conservation.

It is anticipated that consultation with the Quebec Innu will begin in the Fall of 2010. Correspondence will be sent to Quebec Innu in September, with an invitation to participate in caribou management and conservation discussions with government officials. ENVC will work with the departments of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs, Natural Resources, Justice and the Intergovernmental Affairs Secretariat in developing agreed objectives for these discussions. The role of the Government of Quebec in these discussions will need to be clarified. It is anticipated that Quebec Innu bands will welcome the opportunity to engage in direct bilateral discussions to exchange information and discuss caribou management and conservation.

It is understood that the Government of Quebec does not plan currently on revising their George River caribou management strategies until the final census results have been fully presented and analyzed. In all likelihood, this will result in no change to Quebec’s management approaches for the 2010/11 season. Most recently, the Government of Quebec has held consultations in relation to the 2004-2010 Nord-du-Quebec (Rangifer tarandus) Management Plan.

Facilitation
Facilitation of the consultation process will be conducted by staff of the Wildlife Division, ENVC in collaboration with TCR and LAA. Secretarial support for the working group will be provided by the Wildlife Division of ENVC.

Minister/MHA involvement
Neither the Minister nor MHA’s are expected to be involved directly in this process.

Relevant MHAs will be informed of the progress of consultations and provided with high level key messages.

Recording and Issues Tracking
Wildlife Division staff will record comments during discussions.

Media Policy
The media will not be in attendance at the meetings. There will be no media interviews originating from these efforts without prior departmental permission.
Post-Consultation Communications Activities
Communications Plan to be prepared after the 2010 survey results are known.

Questions and Answers

- Why has government acted only now when it knew for many years that the GRC herd was in decline? Is it too little, too late?

Wildlife Biologists and managers knew the GRCH has been in decline since the late 1980's. However, even in a state of decline the population was well in excess of any number where the harvest was considered additive or significant to population sustainability. Large northern migratory caribou herds cycle naturally from periods of very low numbers to periods of very high numbers over a 40-70 year time frame. Overgrazing of summer range due to an overabundance of animals is the most likely cause cited in declines of northern caribou. This overgrazing results in reduced body size, a poor ability to reproduce and high natural mortality. However, as densities change, so too do the influences of various population regulation factors, including predation, disease and hunting. Thus it was only in very recent years that hunting has been considered a causative factor in the decline.

Full annual surveys of a herd that ranges over a quarter million square kilometers is impossible due to the high cost of the survey and lack of dedicated resources within both Quebec and Labrador to census and monitor the herd annually. Instead annual monitoring is performed which includes harvest estimates, caribou classifications and collar deployment and monitoring. It was these annual monitoring efforts that first detected a possible significant decline had occurred to a point where harvest restrictions may have to be considered and was the impetus for the 2010 joint survey.

Population modeling now suggests that hunting is additive to natural mortality. If all hunting were eliminated the recruitment/mortality schedule suggests a stable or slightly decreasing population.

- If the herd is so low, why are you allowing any hunting?

Based on herd size, recruitment and mortality rates, the George River herd can no longer support harvest if the herd is to stabilize or increase. However, as the harvest of caribou is a pivotal cultural activity in Labrador, allowances have been made to maximize the recovery of the George River herd while minimizing the cultural impact. Allowing very limited harvesting for one year will not significantly alter the rate of decline given the long term cycles of population fluctuations northern caribou typically experience. However, substantial harvest could jeopardize the herd’s recovery.

- When will the season open?
The decision on a harvest management plan for the GRCH including seasons will be made following the engagement of Labrador stakeholders and appropriate government department’s regarding the preliminary census results and government’s subsequent review of options.

- Will Labradorians be able to provide their views on the future management of the GRCH?

Government is initiating immediate stakeholder consultations on the 2010/11 harvest management options in light of the census results. Given the urgency to have an appropriate plan in place by early October before the migration brings the herd within reach of most hunters, these consultations will be directed and limited to specific target groups, including non aboriginal hunters from Labrador. A larger set of public and stakeholder consultations will be required to help government develop a longer term management plan for this herd.

- Will aboriginal hunting opportunities be restricted?

There are no plans to restrict aboriginal harvesting for the 2010/11 hunting season. The full extent of the decline of the GRCH will not be known until later this year, and only then will the implications to aboriginal harvesting be known.

- What is government doing about Quebec aboriginals coming into Labrador to hunt?

Plans to consult directly with the Innu from Quebec on matters of caribou conservation are planned for the fall of 2010.

- What is government going to do if, once again, aboriginals and non-aboriginals are found hunting in the closed zone this winter?

The Government of NL remains committed to the protection of threatened sedentary caribou in Labrador. The harvest management plan for the GRCH, once approved and announced will help inform government’s direction regarding any hunting that might occur in the so-called closed zones.

- What steps will government take to enforce any new harvest approaches for the 2010/11 season?
Once approved, the harvest management plan for the GRCH in 2010/11 will be enforced with the same intensity and commitment as all other provincial hunting laws.

- **Why is NL changing its harvest management approach when PQ isn’t doing anything different for this year? Isn’t this unfair to our hunters?**

  The majority of the Quebec based harvest on this herd occurs in August and September in the form of outfitter based hunts. Because of their legislative schedules and season dates which open August 1, and because many outfitters are currently in the field with clients, Quebec have advised that they will maintain the status quo respecting their outfitted hunts for 2010. It is anticipated that the harvest implications of this could be in the order of 1,000 caribou. NL is likewise proposing to allow the continuation of any pre-booked outfitter hunts this fall in Labrador.

  In recent years the majority of harvesting on the GRCH has occurred in Labrador during the winter. Given this, it is the responsibility of NL to absorb most harvest management restrictions for the 2010/11 year.

- **What are the long term prospects for this herd?**

  Given recruitment and mortality schedules the immediate prospects for this herd are not encouraging. In the absence of any hunting whatsoever the population would be stable or may even continue to decrease slightly. Currently the population is very sensitive to small changes in calf recruitment and female mortality rates which could greatly extend or reduce these recovery periods depending on the trajectory of trends. Recovery of this herd to 1990’s level may take decades, and restrictive harvesting if any at all will likely be the normal for the foreseeable future.

- **What is government doing to ensure the long term sustainability of the herd?**

  Government plans to initiate consultations in an effort to develop a long term management plan for this herd post 2010/11 harvest season. This will include an analysis of possible co-management models for consideration of implementation with the Province of Quebec and Aboriginal groups. In addition a review of harvest management and research needs will be undertaken and a report presented to government with recommendations on necessary resources to ensure sufficient long term monitoring and management of the herd is undertaken.
From: O'Neill, Melony  
Sent: Monday, August 30, 2010 11:41 AM  
To: Power, Glenda; Dutton, Sean; Blake, John; Moores, Len; Duke, Cathy; English, Tracy; Delaney, Brian; Howard, Jacquelyn; Cheeseman, Josephine  
Cc: Parrott, William; Firth, Ross  
Subject: RE: George River Caribou Communications Plan

Hi there,

Please find attached the most recent draft of the George River Caribou consultations plan which I have reviewed and edited based on the recommendations provided.

I look forward to your feedback at your earliest convenience.

Thanks,

Melony

Melony O'Neill  
Director of Communications  
Department of Environment and Conservation  
4th Floor, West Block  
Confederation Building  
(709) 729-2575  
(709) 729-0112 (fax)

From: Power, Glenda  
Sent: Sunday, August 29, 2010 10:30 PM  
To: Dutton, Sean; Blake, John; O'Neill, Melony; Moores, Len; Duke, Cathy; English, Tracy; Delaney, Brian; Howard, Jacquelyn; Cheeseman, Josephine  
Cc: Parrott, William; Firth, Ross  
Subject: Re: George River Caribou Communications Plan

Hi everyone. I just learned that Melony O'Neill didn't review the latest draft before it came to us. I cannot review until the Communications Director has input and edits the plan based on the recommendations provided. Melony, as soon as that happens, review on our end will be a priority. Thanks.

G  
Communications  
Executive Council  
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador  
P.O. Box 8700  
St. John's, NL  
Canada  
A1B 4J6
"Options that may include the development of a co-management model Aboriginal groups and Quebec will be considered for the period beyond 2010/11." - I think there's a word or two missing from this sentence.

Sean

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At the request of Ross Firth, I am forwarding a revised communications plan for the George River Caribou Harvest Management Plan 2010/11. This plan was substantively modified following the receipt of comments from the Communications Branch on Friday past. Mr. Delaney – our deputy asked that I note final sign off from our Minister will occur pending the receipt of any comment from other departments or communications. Ross also requested I attach an Information note on the consultations.

Regards,

John Blake
Director
NL Wildlife Division
Consultation Plan
George River Caribou Herd Harvest Management Plan – 2010-11

Issue
There is growing empirical evidence to suggest that the George River caribou herd (GRCH) has undergone a significant population decline. The magnitude of the decline has taken the population of the herd below the capacity to sustain existing harvest management strategies. The preliminary results of the post-calving aggregation census conducted in July 2010 supports this assertion. In response, a revised harvest management strategy is required for 2010-11 to ensure that the current year’s harvest does not significantly contribute to further population decline. Consultations are required with stakeholders and interest groups prior to development of this strategy.

Public Environment Scan
- In July 2010, a post calving aggregation photo-census was conducted in partnership with the Government of Quebec, Laval University, the Nunatsiavut Government, Tomagt Plant and Wildlife Co-Management Board and the Institute for Environmental Monitoring and Research. Preliminary estimates from the July population survey indicate that the herd now consists of approximately 50,000 animals.
- On August 9, 2010, a joint news release by the Department of Environment and Conservation and the Department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs announced a delay in the opening of the caribou hunting season in Labrador, as the result of preliminary information and ongoing analysis regarding the George River herd.
- The news release stated that an update on the harvest management plan for the George River Caribou is anticipated in early September. Until that time, hunting opportunities for all non-Aboriginal peoples will be suspended.
- Back in July 2009, the Department of Environment and Conservation issued a press release announcing its plans to conduct a census in 2010 to determine current status and health of the GRCH. It also stated harvest management strategies may have to change pending the results of the census.
- A public advisory was placed in the 2010-11 Hunting and Trapping Guide that noted EVC’s plan to conduct a census in 2010, and requested public input and comment on the existing harvest management plan for this herd. The guide was released in March 2010 and distributed to over 100,000 qualified hunters in Newfoundland and Labrador. One submission was received.
- On August 10, 2010, Minister Johnson participated in a radio interview with CBC regarding the delay in the opening of the hunting season. It was stated that the ban did not apply to outfitters who had previously booked hunts.
- In early June and mid-August, Michael Johansen wrote an article that was carried in The Telegram, The Labradorian and The Western Star in which he highlighted the declining population of the George River caribou herd and criticized the Provincial Government’s conservation efforts.
- There has been ongoing illegal hunting activity on threatened woodland caribou in Labrador by hunters from Quebec. However, these hunters are permitted to hunt caribou from the George River herd to the north of the Joff River group. Their
participation in the hunt has been based on George River herd numbers between 275,000 and 325,000 animals, rather than the approximate 50,000 that currently exist.

- Both Aboriginals and non-Aboriginal hunters participated in illegal hunting of George River caribou during the winter of 2008 and 2009. Hunters illegally harvested caribou in an area closed to hunting. The closed zone represented the core range of the threatened Red Wine caribou herd that was designed as a measure intended to help conserve this herd. Extensive media coverage (print, radio, television) occurred during the periods of this illegal harvest. This included both provincial and national media outlets.

- The Government of Quebec shares joint responsibility with this province for management. There is currently no written agreement or formal understanding concerning the shared management of this resource. At present, wildlife officials from both provinces informally share information and communicate on the status of the herd, but have no formal provisions for co-management.

Strategic Considerations

- The George River herd is critically important to Labrador and the province as a whole. With the exception of limited harvest from the northern Torngat Herd, this herd contributes almost exclusively to the Aboriginal, resident and non-resident harvest needs within Labrador.

- The land claim of Nunamikavut is not recognized by the province. As a result, they are subject to provisions under the Wildlife Act that include the requirement to possess a provincial caribou hunting license similar to the requirement of non-Aboriginals. They may be unhappy with restrictions that will affect their current harvest approach. Inuit land claim beneficiaries may also be unhappy with harvest restrictions imposed upon them when hunting outside of LIL and LISA.

- The elimination of the commercial harvest will impact three businesses which currently possess commercial licenses. In 2010, this allows for a harvest of 420 animals. It may also impact on the availability of caribou meat for the restaurant and retail trade. In 2009, commercial caribou licences in Labrador were reduced by 60 percent to 210 licences, or 420 caribou. This decision was based on fall classification and collar mortality data that suggested a significant decline had occurred in the herd.
The reduction of the number of animals available to harvest on each resident and non-resident license may also impact the outfitting industry. In an effort to minimize economic hardship to these companies, licences have been issued to outfitters who have confirmed hunts booked for the period beginning August 10, 2010, up until the present. The reduction in the number of animals that may be taken on a license may affect the sales of some hunts where hunters had anticipated the harvest of two caribou from a single license.

The majority of the Quebec-based harvest on this herd occurs in August and September in the form of outfitter-based hunts. Because of their legislative schedules and season dates which open August 1, and because many outfitters are currently in the field with clients, Quebec have advised that they will maintain the status quo respecting their outfitted hunts for 2010. It is anticipated that the harvest implications of this could be in the order of 1,000 caribou. The majority of the harvest of GRCH occurs in Labrador.

Beginning in the 2009-10 hunting season, Quebec eliminated all commercial caribou harvest licenses. These licenses were issued exclusively to Aboriginals and, in the past, have amounted to a harvest of up to 2,500 animals.

No formal consultations have yet been held with the Government of Quebec concerning the implications of such a low herd size. Informal discussions, however, have been held between Quebec and provincial wildlife biologists respecting the census results and management implications. Both provinces continue to collaborate on finalizing the census report.

While declines in the population of the herd were observed in 2009 and initial management actions were taken (reduction by 60 per cent of commercial harvest) by the province at that time, an aerial census of the herd was not conducted until July 2010 because of planning, logistics and optimal timing.

**Consultation Details**

The Department of Environment and Conservation will lead the consultation process. The department will be represented by John Blake (Director), Wayne Barne (Species Management Coordinator), Christine Doucet (Senior Manager – Research Section) and Gerry Yetman (Senior Manager – Stewardship and Education). Representatives from the Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation and Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs have not been finalized, but officials from both departments will be present for all meetings.

Invited representation will be solicited from user groups as outlined in the Target Audience section below. It is anticipated that selective meetings with component group representation will be completed on an individual basis. Larger scale public meetings will be considered following the receipt of the final estimate and in preparation for longer term (post 2010-11) GRCH management.

While public meetings will not occur at this time as a result of the short time frame to complete this consultations exercise, a news release will be issued to inform the public of the consultations and solicit public input through e-mail and regular mail.
2010/11 Objectives
A consultation with targeted stakeholders is being proposed in order to provide information related to preliminary census results and discuss management approaches in light of a significant decline in the population. Feedback received from these stakeholders will be used by the Provincial Government to inform the decision making process regarding proposed harvest management changes. These are considerations for the 2010/11 hunting season only. Longer-term options that may involve the development of a co-management model that includes Aboriginal groups and the Province of Quebec will be considered for the period beyond 2010-11.

Consultation objectives include:
1. To engage in stakeholder consultations to help inform the Provincial Government in its decision making regarding recommended changes to the harvest of GRCH for 2010-11 in light of the decline.
2. To present preliminary census results to stakeholders, as a means of ensuring the accurate dissemination of information, and discuss management options for the 2010-11 season.
3. To inform and engage the general public regarding management options of the herd and invite their participation through e-mail and regular mail at this time.
4. To ensure appropriate representation from the stakeholder groups regarding future consultations regarding a long-term management strategy for the GRCH.

Target Audiences
Internal
- Premier’s Office
- Cabinet Secretariat
- Communications Branch
- Cabinet
- Ministers and MHAs
- Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation
- Department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs
- Department of Natural Resources
- Department of Environment and Conservation

External
- Labrador Innu
- Nunatsiavut Government
- NunatuKavut
- Quebec Innu
- Tomagt Wildlife and Plants Co-Management Board
- Government of Quebec
- Resident Hunters
- Outfitters
- Commercial Operators
• Institute for Environmental Monitoring and Research
• Media
• General public

Input from the general public will also be sought through a news release that will be issued. The public will be asked to provide feedback through e-mail and regular mail.

Messages
• A census of the George River caribou herd was conducted in July 2010. The Province of Quebec and the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador led the census, along with other partners: Nunatsiavut Government, Institute for Environmental Monitoring and Research, Torngat Wildlife and Plants Co-Management Board, and Laval University.
• Preliminary census results of the George River herd indicate a significant population decline since the previous census in 2001. As a result, the Provincial Government is seeking input from stakeholders and Aboriginal groups/governments on caribou harvest management measures to be taken in the interests of conservation.
• In light of the tight timeframe to establish management measures for the 2010-11 season, consultation sessions will be held with stakeholder groups only at this time. However, the general public’s input will be solicited through e-mail and regular mail while the consultation process is ongoing.
• The Provincial Government will share the preliminary census results with stakeholders during the consultations and work collaboratively to identify revised harvest management approaches. Work will continue with these and other stakeholders to develop a longer-term management plan for the George River herd beyond 2010-11.
• When the final analysis of the census has been completed, along with the compilation of the information gathered through the targeted consultations and public input, an update will be provided as to the management decisions for the 2010-11 season.
• Following a revised management approach for the 2010-11 season for George River caribou, more extensive public consultations will take place regarding a longer-term future management strategy for the herd.

Secondary Messaging:
• As an initial conservation step to address the perceived decline, the Provincial Government reduced the 2010 commercial harvest by 60 per cent.
• Management of the George River herd is a shared responsibility between two Provincial Governments (Newfoundland and Labrador and Quebec), as well as Aboriginal governments and organizations.
• Caribou populations throughout North America are known to fluctuate dramatically. The rate of decline being experienced by the GRCH is consistent with recent declines observed in other northern caribou herds across North America.
Stakeholders
A list of stakeholder groups and respective contacts to be consulted includes but may not be limited to:

1. Resident Hunters - 10 hunters will be selected at random from various regions of Labrador to represent the interest of this user group. These hunters are selected from past activities in GRC11 harvest via licence sales. Efforts will be made to ensure reasonable regional representation is achieved in the selection process.

2. Nunatsiavut Government
Rebecca Willcott
Director of Renewable Resources
Ph. 709 896-8582
Rebecca.Willcott@nunatsiavut.com

Mr. Jim Goudie,
Wildlife Manager
Postville Office
General Delivery
Postville, NL, A0P 1N0
Ph: (709) 479-9880
jgoudie@nunatsiavut.com

3. Innu Nation
Mr. David Hart – Community Policy Officer
Ms. Paula Reid
Sheshatshiu, NL
Ph: (709) 497-8398
dhart@innu.ca
prend@innu.ca

4. NunatuKavut
Ms. Tammy Lambourne
Environmental Officer
370 Hamilton River Road
P.O. Box 460, Station C
Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NL, A0P 1C0
Ph: (709) 896-0592 ext. 229
flambourne@labradormetis.ca

Wayne A. Russell
Senior Fish and Wildlife Guardian
P.O. Box 198
Town Hall
Port Hope Simpson, NL
A0K 4E0

5. Torngat Wildlife and Plants Co-Management Board
Mr. Bruce Roberts, Chair
Mr. Jamie Snook (Executive Director, Torngat Secretariat)
217 Hamilton River Road
P.O. Box 2050, Station B
Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NL, A0P 1E0
(709) 896-6786

6. Outfitters
Newfoundland and Labrador Outfitters Association
Mr. Dean Wheeler, President

Additional Outfitters as identified by TCR.

7. Commercial
Drover's Labrador Outfitters Limited
Mr. Alonzo Drover
P.O. Box 121
Labrador City, NL, A2V 2K3
Ph: (709) 944-6947

Uncle Sam's Butcher Shop
Mr. Randy Batten
13 Hillcrest Road
Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NL, A0P 1E0
Ph: (709) 896-3736

Northern Light Inn
Mr. Brad Letto
P.O. Box 92
Lanse Au Clair, NL
Ph: (709) 931-2332
Fax: (709) 931-2708
Approach
User group and stakeholder representation will be solicited to meet and discuss future harvest management options for the GRCH and to assist in formulating new strategies. It is proposed that the Wildlife Division staff meet with user groups and present findings on the status of the herd and solicit input on how conservation targets may be revised and/or achieved. Representatives from TCR and LAA will also assist in conducting the sessions. The results will be compiled by the Director of Wildlife and forwarded to the executive to assist with the consideration of adopting revised harvest management plans for GRCH in 2010-11 and replace the previously approved plans as outlined in the 2010-11 Hunting and Trapping Guide.

The department will work with and consider recommendations from the Torngat Wildlife and Plants Management Board for the management of the GRCH within the Labrador Inuit Settlement Area.

Consultation Materials
Consultation materials will consist of presentations (mostly contained in PowerPoint format) of biological data, current harvest management strategies, and solicitation of input for discussion on future management options. Traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) will be gathered from both stakeholder consultations as well as discussions between ENVC and local experts through ongoing collaborations. ENVC also gains TEK and LEK (Labrador Ecological Knowledge) from people on a daily basis through informal interaction with the public. The division also has an excellent collaborative relationship with the Nunatsiavut Government through the Torngat Secretariat of the Wildlife and Plants Management Board.

A public advisory was placed in the 2010/11 Hunting and Trapping Guide that noted ENVC’s plan to conduct a census of the GRCH in 2010, and requested public input and comment on the existing harvest management plan for this herd. The guide was released in March 2010 and distributed to over 100,000 qualified hunters in Newfoundland and Labrador. One submission was received.

Schedule
At the present time, exact scheduling dates cannot be established. Once approval in principle is received, the Wildlife Division will begin to arrange the necessary meetings. Given the restrictive timelines, some of the noted participants may be unable to meet, but attempts will be made to facilitate inclusion whenever and whenever possible.

Communication with Stakeholders
The identified stakeholders will be invited to participate in the consultations via an invitation from the Director of Wildlife or a divisional representative, and the meetings will be scheduled directly with the specific stakeholders/user groups. Open public meetings or co-management meetings with the province of Quebec will not be conducted.
at this time; however, a news release will invite public input through e-mail or regular mail.

As consultation with Quebec Innu will require considerable planning, the deadline for the current consultation exercise precludes such discussions. However, a letter from the Deputy Ministers of both the Department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs and the Department of Justice was sent to Chief Real MacKenzie, Matimekush-Lac John First Nation and Chief Georges-Ernest Gregoire, Uashat mak Mani-Utenam First Nation on August 27, 2010. The letter committed that officials from the Department of Environment and Conservation will meet with both bands to discuss caribou management and conservation.

It is anticipated that consultation with the Quebec Innu will begin in the Fall of 2010. Correspondence will be sent to Quebec Innu in September, with an invitation to participate in caribou management and conservation discussions with Provincial Government officials. ENVC will work with the departments of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs, Natural Resources, Justice and the Intergovernmental Affairs Secretariat in developing agreed objectives for these discussions. The role of the Government of Quebec in these discussions will need to be clarified. It is anticipated that Quebec Innu bands will welcome the opportunity to engage in direct bilateral discussions to exchange information and discuss caribou management and conservation.

It is understood that the Government of Quebec does not currently plan on revising their George River caribou management strategies until the final census results have been fully presented and analyzed. In all likelihood, this will not result in any change to Quebec’s management approaches for the 2010-11 season. Most recently, the Government of Quebec held consultations in relation to the 2004-2010 Nord-du-Quebec (Rangifer tarandus) Management Plan.

Facilitation
Facilitation of the consultation process will be conducted by staff of the Wildlife Division, in collaboration with TCR and LAA. Secretarial support for the working group will be provided by the Wildlife Division of ENVC.

Minister/MHA involvement

[Redacted] All relevant MHAs will be informed of the progress of consultations and provided with high-level key messages.

Recording and Issues Tracking
Wildlife Division staff will record comments during discussions.

Media Policy
A news release will be issued regarding the stakeholder consultations and will invite public input through e-mail and regular mail. Should media inquiries arise during the
stakeholder consultations, the outlet will be directed to the Director of Communications for ENVC, as per the usual communications protocol.

The outcome of the consultations and the public input, along with the analyzed census data and management strategies, will be communicated via a news release later in the fall, following the completion of the survey review.

**Post-Consultation Communications Activities**
Communications Plan to be prepared after the 2010 survey results are known.
FYI and review.

R

Ruby Carter
Senior Negotiator
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From: Dutton, Sean
Sent: Sunday, August 29, 2010 8:00 PM
To: Gower, Aubrey; Carter, Ruby
Subject: FW: George River Caribou Communications Plan

Sean
Sent Via BlackBerry

Section 29(1)(a)

---

From: Dutton, Sean
To: Oxford, Krista L.; Oliver, Val; Watkins, Michelle; Gower, Aubrey; Tompkins, John
Sent: Sun Aug 29 19:56:15 2010
Subject: FW: George River Caribou Communications Plan

Fyi.

Sean
Sent Via BlackBerry

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From: Blake, John
To: O'Neill, Melony; Moores, Len; Dutton, Sean; Duke, Cathy; English, Tracy; Delaney, Brian; Power, Glenda; Howard, Jacquelyn; Cheeseman, Josephine
At the request of Ross Firth, I am forwarding a revised communications plan for the George River Caribou Harvest Management Plan 2010/11. This plan was substantively modified following the receipt of comments from the Communications Branch on Friday past. Mr. Delaney – our deputy asked that I note final sign off from our Minister will occur pending the receipt of any comment from other departments or communications. Ross also requested I attach an Information note on the consultations.

Regards,

John Blake
Director
NL Wildlife Division
Information Note
Department of Environment and Conservation

Title: George River caribou herd

Issue: The Department of Environment and Conservation (ENVC) has developed a consultation plan to engage stakeholders in a discussion of caribou harvest strategies in light of a recent preliminary census results.

Background and current status:

- The George River caribou herd is a trans-boundary population shared with Quebec.
- In July 2010, a post-calving aggregation photo-census was conducted in partnership with the Government of Quebec, Laval University, the Nunatsiavut Government, Torngat Plant and Wildlife Co-Management Board and the Institute for Environmental Monitoring and Research.
- Preliminary analysis estimates the current population of the George River caribou herd to be approximately 50,000 adults, a decline of 335,000 in 9 years. A calculation of the final overall population size will be completed by October / November 2010.
- ENVC, LAA and TCR to consult with targeted stakeholders on revised caribou management approaches in light of the preliminary census results.
- A consultation plan has been produced that has been reviewed by ENVC, LAA and TCR. Subsequent review by Communications Branch resulted in further amendments. The revised plan has now been sent to CS, TCR, LAA, DNR and Communication Branch.

Section 27(1)(i), Section 27(2)(b)

Next Steps:

- The draft consultation plan is being presented to Cabinet Secretariat (CS) for consideration and approval prior to the initiation of consultations.
- Once CS approval has been secured, consultations will begin.
- Information gathered from the consultations will be collated and provided to CS and all other relevant departments.

Prepared by: Ross Firth/John Blake
Approved by:
Ministerial Approval:
Date: 2010.08.29
Consultation Plan

George River Caribou Herd Harvest Management Plan – 2010/11

Issue

- The George River caribou herd (GRCH) is critically important to Labrador and the province as a whole. With the exception of limited harvest from the northern Torngat Herd, this herd contributes almost exclusively to the Aboriginal, resident and non-resident harvest needs within Labrador.

- The Government of Quebec shares joint responsibility with this province for management. There is currently no written agreement or formal understanding concerning the shared management of this resource. At present, wildlife officials from both provinces collaborate on research activities and informally share information and communicate on the status of the herd, but have no formal provisions for co-management.

- The current management strategies employed for the GRCH were established in the mid 1980s during a period when the population of this herd was substantial and increasing. The harvest strategies include: the ability of Labrador residents to assign someone else to hunt on their behalf via a transfer licence system, 9 month long hunting seasons, two caribou per licence bag limits and commercial caribou harvesting.

- It is estimated the GRCH population peaked at nearly 800,000 in the late 1980s, and a 1993 census placed the GRCH population at approximately 775,000 caribou. By 2001, when the next survey was completed, the population was estimated to have fallen to 385,000 animals. The extensive time span between survey periods was due to the high cost of the survey and lack of dedicated resources within both Quebec and Labrador to census and monitor the herd.

- In July 2010, a post-calving aggregation photo-census was conducted in partnership with the Government of Quebec, Laval University, the Nunatsiavut Government, Torngat Plant and Wildlife Co-Management Board and the Institute for Environmental Monitoring and Research. Preliminary estimates from the July population census indicate that the herd now consists of approximately 50,000 animals.

- In peak harvest years as many as 35,000 caribou have been harvested from the GRCH. The 2009 harvest was estimated at 9,000 caribou. If GRCH migration patterns place the herd in an open, accessible area during 2010/11, the liberal harvest strategy could have significant negative implications to the long term health of the GRCH.

- This estimate is considered preliminary, and the final census report will be available later this fall. However, the final estimate is not expected to vary by more than 25%, which would not alter the need for harvest management restrictions.

- There has been ongoing illegal hunting activity on threatened woodland caribou in Labrador by mostly Innu hunters from Quebec. These herds include the Lac Joseph, Red Wine and Jour River groups of caribou. While hunting these threatened herds is illegal, hunters are permitted to hunt caribou from the GRCH, which lie generally to
the north of these sedentary caribou. Their participation in the hunt has been based on GRCH numbers between 275,000 and 325,000 animals, rather than the approximate 50,000 that currently exist.

- Proposed provincial consultations are being planned as a means to both inform stakeholders of the potential significant decline and also seek their input into possible management measures that may be required to address this decline.

Public Environment Scan

- On July 15, 2009 the Department of Environment and Conservation issued a press release announcing its plans to conduct a census in 2010 to determine current status and health of the GRCH. It concurrently stated harvest management may have to change pending the results of this census.

- A subsequent public advisory was published in the 2010-11 Newfoundland and Labrador Hunting and Trapping Guide indicating that current harvest management approaches and methods may be reviewed pending the results of the 2010 census.

- On August 9, 2010 a joint news release by the Department of Environment and Conservation and the Department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs announced a delay in the opening of the caribou hunting season in Labrador as the result of preliminary information and ongoing analysis regarding the George River herd.

- The news release stated that an update on the harvest management plan for the George River Caribou is anticipated in early September. Until that time, hunting opportunities for all non-Aboriginal peoples will be suspended.

- On August 10, 2010 Minister Johnson participated in a radio interview with CBC regarding the delay in the opening of the hunting season. It was stated that the ban did not apply to outfitters who had previously booked hunts.

- On or about June 5, 2010 and August 16, 2010 Michael Johansen wrote a newspaper article that was carried in The Telegram, The Labradorian and The Western Star in which he highlighted the declining population of the George River caribou herd and criticized the provincial government’s conservation efforts.

- Both aboriginals and non-aboriginal hunters participated in illegal hunting of George River caribou during the winter of 2008 and 2009. Hunters illegally harvested caribou in an area closed to hunting. The closed zone represented the core range of the threatened Red Wine caribou herd that was designated as a measure intended to help conserve this herd.

- Extensive media coverage (print, radio, television) occurred during the periods of this illegal harvest. This included both provincial and national media outlets.

Strategic Considerations

A revised management plan for 2010/11 will provide clear guidelines to the multiple user groups who partake in the harvest of GRCH. A 2010/11 GRCH Harvest Management Plan will be designed with conservation of the resource as its first priority recognizing the important and intricate nature of caribou to northern peoples and economies. It will adhere to the precautionary principle, which involves acting to avoid serious or
irreversible potential harm despite lack of scientific certainty as to the likelihood, magnitude, or causation of that harm.

Provincial wildlife staff are confident that the preliminary results of this survey (50,000 +/- 25%) are accurate to a degree that the final result will not be high enough to negate the need to revise existing management approaches. All evidence suggests that the magnitude of decline is significant and will require changes in the harvest management strategies to ensure the long term sustainability of the resource.

The results of these consultations will be used to help consider harvest management options, evaluate the usefulness of proposed strategies and provide feedback in response to the future management of the GRCH. The short time period between the will require immediate attention to this issue.

Additionally, any harvest management plan for 2010/11 must be finalized and announced before annual caribou migrations bring the resource within access to most hunters which, lately, has been late October/early November.

The land claim of NurautuKavut is not recognized by the province. As a result, they are subject to provisions under the Wildlife Act that include the requirement to possess a provincial caribou hunting license similar to the requirement of non-aboriginals. They may be unhappy with restrictions that will affect their current harvest approach. Similarly, Inuit land claim beneficiaries may be unhappy with harvest restrictions imposed upon them when hunting outside of LIL and LISA.

The elimination of the commercial harvest will impact on the continued commercial viability of the three businesses who currently possess commercial licenses. In 2010 this
allows for a harvest of 420 animals. It may also impact on the availability of caribou meat for the restaurant and retail trade. The economic impact associated with this proposal has not been calculated. In 2009, commercial caribou licences in Labrador were reduced by 60% to 210 licences or 420 caribou. This decision was based on fall classification and collar mortality data that suggested a significant decline had occurred in the George River caribou herd.

The reduction of the number of animals available to harvest on each resident and non-resident license may also impact the outfitting industry. ENVC is currently issuing licenses to outfitters who have confirmed hunts booked for the period beginning August 10, 2010 up until the present in an effort to minimize economic hardship to these companies. The reduction in the number of animals that may be taken on a license may affect the sales of some hunts where hunters had anticipated the harvest of two caribou from a single license.

The majority of the Quebec based harvest on this herd occurs in August and September in the form of outfitter based hunts. Because of their legislative schedules and season dates which open August 1, and because many outfitters are currently in the field with clients, Quebec have advised that they will maintain the status quo respecting their outfitted hunts for 2010. It is anticipated that the harvest implications of this could be in the order of 1,000 caribou. The majority of the harvest of GRC occurs in Labrador.

Beginning in the 2009/10 hunting season, Quebec eliminated all commercial caribou harvest licenses. These licenses were issued exclusively to aboriginals and, in the past, have amounted to a harvest of up to 2500 animals.

No formal consultations have yet been held with the Government of Quebec concerning the implications of such a low herd size. Informal discussions, however, have been held between Quebec and NL wildlife biologists respecting the census results and management implications. The Province's continue to collaborate on finalizing the census report.

Declines in the population of the GRCH were observed in 2009 and initial management actions were taken (reduction by 60% of commercial harvest) by the province at that time. In 2009, Quebec approached Newfoundland and Labrador with the proposal to conduct an aerial census of the herd, in partnership with other stakeholders. The planning, logistics and optimal timing dictated that the earliest time available to conduct the census was summer 2010.

**Consultation Details**
The Department of Environment and Conservation will lead the consultation process. The department will be represented by John Blake (Director), Wayne Barney (Species Management Coordinator), Christine Doucet (Senior Manager - Research Section). Representatives from the Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation include Todd Kent (IDO) and Juanita Kccl Ryan (Director). Representatives from Labrador and
Aboriginal Affairs include Michelle Watkins (Director) and Val Oliver (Communications).

Invited representation will be solicited from user groups as outlined in the Target Audience section below. It is anticipated that selective meetings with component group representation will be completed on an individual basis. Public announcements and open public meetings will not occur given the very short time frame required for completing this exercise. Larger scale public meetings may be considered following the receipt of the final estimate and in preparation for longer term (post 2010/11) GRCH management.

**2010/11 Objectives**

A consultation with targeted stakeholders is being proposed in order to provide users with information related to preliminary census results and to discuss management approaches in light of a significant decline in the population. Feedback received from stakeholders will be used by government to inform the decision making process regarding proposed harvest management changes. Reflect management considerations for the 2010/11 hunting season only. Options that may include the development of a co-management model Aboriginal groups and Quebec will be considered for the period beyond 2010/11.

Consultation objectives include:

1. To engage in stakeholder consultations to help inform government decision making regarding recommended changes to the harvest of GRCH for 2010/11.
2. To present preliminary census results to stakeholders as a means of ensuring the accurate dissemination of information.
3. To discuss the current management of the GRCH and future harvest management options via targeted stakeholder participation.

**Target Audiences**

**Internal:**

- Premier's Office
- Cabinet Secretariat
- Communications Branch
- Cabinet
- Ministers and MHAs
- Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation
- Department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs
- Department of Natural Resources
- Department of Environment and Conservation

**External:**
• Labrador Innu
• Nunatsiavut Government
• NunatuKavut
• Quebec Innu
• Torngat Wildlife and Plants Co-Management Board
• Government of Quebec
• Resident Hunters
• Outfitters
• Commercial Operators
• Institute for Environmental Monitoring and Research
• Media
• General public

Stakeholders

A list of stakeholder groups and respective contacts to be consulted includes but may not be limited to:

1. **Resident Hunters** - 10 hunters will be selected at random from various regions of Labrador to represent the interest of this user group. These hunters are selected from past activities in GRC harvest via licence sales. Efforts will be made to ensure reasonable regional representation is achieved in the selection process.

2. **Nunatsiavut Government**
Rebecca Willcott
Director of Renewable Resources
Ph. 709 896-8582
Rebecca_Willcott@nunatsiavut.com

Mr. Jim Goudie,
Wildlife Manager
Postville Office
General Delivery
Postville, NL, A0P 1N0
Ph: (709) 479-9880
jgoudie@nunatsiavut.com

3. **Innu Nation**
Mr. David Hart – Community Policing Officer
Ms. Paula Reid
Steshatshiu, NL
Ph: (709) 497-8398
dhart@innu.ca
pried@innu.ca
4. *NunatuKavut*
Ms. Tammy Lambourne
Environmental Officer
370 Hamilton River Road
P.O. Box 460, Station C
Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NL, A0P 1C0
Ph: (709) 896-0592 ext. 229
tlambourne@labradormetis.ca

Wayne A. Russell
Senior Fish and Wildlife Guardian
P.O. Box 198
Town Hall
Port Hope Simpson, NL
A0K 4E0

5. **Torngat Wildlife and Plants Co-Management Board**
Mr. Bruce Roberts, Chair
Mr. Jamie Snook (Executive Director, Torngat Secretariat)
217 Hamilton River Road
P.O. Box 2050, Station B
Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NL, A0P 1E0
(709) 896-6786

6. **Outfitters**
Newfoundland and Labrador Outfitters Association
Mr. Dean Wheeler, President

Additional Outfitters as identified by TCR.

7. **Commercial**
Drover’s Labrador Outfitters Limited
Mr. Alonzo Drover
P.O. Box 121
Labrador City, NL, A2V 2K3
Ph: (709) 944-6947

Uncle Sam’s Butcher Shop
Mr. Randy Battcock
13 Hillcrest Road
Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NL, A0P 1E0
Ph: (709) 896-3736

Northern Light Inn
Key Messages

- Preliminary census results of the George River herd indicate a significant population decline since the previous census in 2001. As a result, Government is seeking input from stakeholders and Aboriginal groups/governments on caribou harvest management measures to be taken in the interests of conservation.
- As an initial conservation step to address the perceived decline, the 2010 commercial harvest was reduced by 60%.
- A census of the herd was initiated in July, 2010. The Province of Quebec and the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador led the census with partners that included, Nunatsiavut Government, Institute for Environmental Monitoring and Research, Nongat Wildlife and Plants Co-Management Board, and Laval University.
- Management of the George River herd is a shared responsibility between two provincial governments (Newfoundland and Labrador and Quebec), as well as Aboriginal governments and organizations.
- Caribou populations throughout North America are known to fluctuate dramatically. The rate of decline being experienced by the GRCH is consistent with recent declines observed in other northern caribou herds across North America.
- Studies have shown that the population of the George River caribou herd has fluctuated dramatically in the past. Modern population studies of the herd began in 1958, which revealed a population of 15,000 caribou. Subsequent surveys placed the herd population at nearly 800,000 in the late 1980s; 775,000 in 1993; and 385,000 in 2001.
- The George River caribou herd has been in a natural population decline phase since the late 1980's. While the population decline was not precipitated by hunting, at the current population level, hunting is now considered significantly additive to natural mortality and continued hunting will exacerbate the decline and affect future recovery efforts.
- Targeted stakeholder consultations will provide government with information to assist in the revision of harvest management approaches for 2010/11.
- Government will work with other stakeholders to develop a longer term management plan for the George River herd beyond 2010/11.
- Government wishes to share the preliminary census results with stakeholders and work collaboratively to identify revised harvest management approaches.
- Once final analysis of the census has been completed, further communication will be made in order to convey this information to stakeholders.

Approach
User group and stakeholder representation will be solicited to meet and discuss future harvest management options for the GRCH and to assist in formulating new strategies. It is proposed that the Wildlife Division staff, along with TCR and LAA representatives meet with user groups and present findings on the status of the herd and solicit input on how conservation targets may be revised and/or achieved. The results will be assembled by the Director of Wildlife and forwarded to the Executive to assist with the consideration of adopting revised harvest management plans for GRCH in 2010/11 and replace the previously approved plans as outlined in the 2010/11 Hunting and Trapping Guide.

The Department will work with and accept recommendations from the Tormagat Wildlife and Plants Management Board for the management of the GRCH within the Labrador Inuit Settlement Area.

**Consultation Materials**

Consultation materials will consist of presentations (mostly contained in Power Point format) of biological data, current harvest management strategies, and solicitation of input for discussion on future management options. Traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) will be gathered from both stakeholder consultations as well as discussions between ENVC and local experts through ongoing collaborations. ENVC also gains TEK and LEK (Labrador Ecological Knowledge) from people on a daily basis through informal interaction with the public. The Division also has an excellent collaborative relationship with the NG through the Tormagat Secretariat of the Wildlife and Plants Management Board.

A public advisory was placed in the 2010/11 Hunting and Trapping Guide that noted ENVC’s plan to conduct a census of the GRCH in 2010, and requested public input and comment on the existing harvest management plan for this herd. This Guide was released in March, 2010 and distributed to over 100,000 qualified hunters in Newfoundland and Labrador. One submission was received.

**Schedule**

At the present time, exact scheduling dates cannot be established. Once approval in principle is received, the Wildlife Division will begin to arrange the necessary meetings. Given the restrictive timelines, some of the noted participants may be unable to meet, but attempts will be made to facilitate inclusion to the degree possible.

**Communication with Stakeholders**

Direct representation from stakeholders list will be garnered by direct invitation from the Director of Wildlife or Divisional representative. Stakeholder and user group meetings will be scheduled directly with the specific stakeholders/user groups. Open public meetings or co-management meetings with the province of Quebec will not be conducted at this time.
Consultation with Quebec Innu will require considerable planning and the deadline for the current consultation exercise precludes such discussions. A letter from the Deputy Ministers of the Department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs and the Department of Justice was sent to Chief Real MacKenzie, Mattimekush-Lac John First Nation and Chief Georges-Ernest Gregoire, Uashat mak Mani-Utenam First Nation on August 27, 2010. The letter committed that officials from the Department of Environment and Conservation would meet with both bands to discuss caribou management and conservation.

It is anticipated that consultation with the Quebec Innu will begin in the Fall of 2010. Correspondence will be sent to Quebec Innu in September, with an invitation to participate in caribou management and conservation discussions with government officials. ENVC will work with the departments of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs, Natural Resources, Justice and the Intergovernmental Affairs Secretariat in developing agreed objectives for these discussions. The role of the Government of Quebec in these discussions will need to be clarified. It is anticipated that Quebec Innu bands will welcome the opportunity to engage in direct bilateral discussions to exchange information and discuss caribou management and conservation.

It is understood that the Government of Quebec does not plan currently on revising their George River caribou management strategies until the final census results have been fully presented and analyzed. In all likelihood, this will result in no change to Quebec’s management approaches for the 2010/11 season. Most recently, the Government of Quebec has held consultations in relation to the 2004-2010 Nord-du-Quebec (Rangifer tarandus) Management Plan.

Facilitation
Facilitation of the consultation process will be conducted by staff of the Wildlife Division, ENVC in collaboration with TCR and LAA. Secretarial support for the working group will be provided by the Wildlife Division of ENVC.

Minister/MHA involvement
Neither the Minister nor MHA’s are expected to be involved directly in this process.

Relevant MHA’s will be informed of the progress of consultations and provided with high level key messages.

Recording and Issues Tracking
Wildlife Division staff will record comments during discussions.

Media Policy
The media will not be in attendance at the meetings. There will be no media interviews originating from these efforts without prior departmental permission.
Post-Consultation Communications Activities
Communications Plan to be prepared after the 2010 survey results are known.

Questions and Answers

- Why has government acted only now when it knew for many years that the GRC herd was in decline? Is it too little, too late?

Wildlife Biologists and managers knew the GRCH has been in decline since the late 1980’s. However, even in a state of decline the population was well in excess of any number where the harvest was considered additive or significant to population sustainability. Large northern migratory caribou herds cycle naturally from periods of very low numbers to periods of very high numbers over a 40-70 year time frame. Overgrazing of summer range due to an overabundance of animals is the most likely cause cited in declines of northern caribou. This overgrazing results in reduced body size, a poor ability to reproduce and high natural mortality. However, as densities change, so too do the influences of various population regulation factors, including predation, disease and hunting. Thus it was only in very recent years that hunting has been considered a causative factor in the decline.

Full annual surveys of a herd that ranges over a quarter million square kilometers is impossible due to the high cost of the survey and lack of dedicated resources within both Quebec and Labrador to census and monitor the herd annually. Instead annual monitoring is performed which includes harvest estimates, caribou classifications and collar deployment and monitoring. It was these annual monitoring efforts that first detected a possible significant decline had occurred to a point where harvest restrictions may have to be considered and was the impetus for the 2010 joint survey.

Population modeling now suggests that hunting is additive to natural mortality. If all hunting were eliminated the recruitment/mortality schedule suggests a stable or slightly decreasing population.

- If the herd is so low, why are you allowing any hunting?

Based on herd size, recruitment and mortality rates, the George River herd can no longer support harvest if the herd is to stabilize or increase. However, as the harvest of caribou is a pivotal cultural activity in Labrador, allowances have been made to maximize the recovery of the George River herd while minimizing the cultural impact. Allowing very limited harvesting for one year will not significantly alter the rate of decline given the long term cycles of population fluctuations northern caribou typically experience. However, substantial harvest could jeopardize the herd’s recovery.

- When will the season open?
The decision on a harvest management plan for the GRCH including seasons will be made following the engagement of Labrador stakeholders and appropriate government department's regarding the preliminary census results and government’s subsequent review of options.

- **Will Labradorians be able to provide their views on the future management of the GRCH?**

Government is initiating immediate stakeholder consultations on the 2010/11 harvest management options in light of the census results. Given the urgency to have an appropriate plan in place by early October before the migration brings the herd within reach of most hunters, these consultations will be directed and limited to specific target groups, including non-aboriginal hunters from Labrador. A larger set of public and stakeholder consultations will be required to help government develop a longer term management plan for this herd.

- **Will aboriginal hunting opportunities be restricted?**

There are no plans to restrict aboriginal harvesting for the 2010/11 hunting season.

The full extent of the decline of the GRCH will not be known until later this year, and only then will the implications to aboriginal harvesting be known. [Section 29(1)(a)]

- **What is government doing about Quebec aboriginals coming into Labrador to hunt?**

Plans to consult directly with the Innu from Quebec on matters of caribou conservation are planned for the fall of 2010. [Section 29(1)(a)]

- **What is government going to do if, once again, aboriginals and non-aboriginals are found hunting in the closed zone this winter?**

The Government of NL remains committed to the protection of threatened sedentary caribou in Labrador. The harvest management plan for the GRCH, once approved and announced will help inform government’s direction regarding any hunting that might occur in the so-called closed zones.

- **What steps will government take to enforce any new harvest approaches for the 2010/11 season?**
Once approved, the harvest management plan for the GRCH in 2010/11 will be enforced with the same intensity and commitment as all other provincial hunting laws.

- **Why is NL changing its harvest management approach when PQ isn’t doing anything different for this year? Isn’t this unfair to our hunters?**

The majority of the Quebec based harvest on this herd occurs in August and September in the form of outfitter based hunts. Because of their legislative schedules and season dates which open August 1, and because many outfitters are currently in the field with clients, Quebec have advised that they will maintain the status quo respecting their outfitted hunts for 2010. It is anticipated that the harvest implications of this could be in the order of 1,000 caribou. NL is likewise proposing to allow the continuation of any pre-booked outfitter hunts this fall in Labrador.

In recent years the majority of harvesting on the GRCH has occurred in Labrador during the winter. Given this, it is the responsibility of NL to absorb most harvest management restrictions for the 2010/11 year.

- **What are the long term prospects for this herd?**

Given recruitment and mortality schedules the immediate prospects for this herd are not encouraging. In the absence of any hunting whatsoever the population would be stable or may even continue to decrease slightly. Currently the population is very sensitive to small changes in calf recruitment and female mortality rates which could greatly extend or reduce these recovery periods depending on the trajectory of trends. Recovery of this herd to 1990's level may take decades, and restrictive harvesting if any at all will likely be the normal for the foreseeable future.

- **What is government doing to ensure the long term sustainability of the herd?**

Government plans to initiate consultations in an effort to develop a long term management plan for this herd post 2010/11 harvest season. This will include an analysis of possible co-management models for consideration of implementation with the Province of Quebec and Aboriginal groups. In addition a review of harvest management and research needs will be undertaken and a report presented to government with recommendations on necessary resources to ensure sufficient long term monitoring and management of the herd is undertaken.
From: Melindy, Shawn D.
Sent: Tuesday, August 31, 2010 8:12 PM
To: Watkins, Michelle
Subject: Fw: Caribou Consultation Plan

Department of Labrador & Aboriginal Affairs
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
P.O.Box 8700
St.John's, NL
Canada
A1B 4J6

Sent Via BlackBerry

From: Gover, Aubrey
To: Blake, John; Dutton, Sean; Firth, Ross
Cc: O'Neill, Melony; Watkins, Michelle; Tompkins, John; Oliver, Val; Oxford, Krista L.
Sent: Tue Aug 31 20:30:56 2010
Subject: RE: Caribou Consultation Plan

From: Blake, John
Sent: Thursday, August 26, 2010 8:32 AM
To: Dutton, Sean; Firth, Ross
Cc: O'Neill, Melony; Gover, Aubrey; Watkins, Michelle; Tompkins, John; Oliver, Val; Oxford, Krista L.
Subject: RE: Caribou Consultation Plan

Ross will add more, but here are some initial thoughts Sean.

Background - if we describe GRCH as "woodland" when woodland caribou are listed on endangered species legislation might be confusing. Can we just say "migratory caribou"?

How about we say Woodland Caribou - Migratory Ecotype. The reality is these are woodland caribou despite slight differing morphological and behavioral traits compared to their sedentary cousins. COSEWIC are currently reconsidering their DU's. Designatable Units, and if their current position stands they will be grouping all sedentary on the Ungava with both GRCH and Leaf River, and doing an assessment on that as one unit. By my rough calculations the combined rate of decline will result in an assessment to list as threatened.

Population Cycles - this graph shows the time line but there could be a vertical line at left showing the numbers so people could have a sense of the scale. I haven't read Bergerud's book so I don't know if he reflected that in his text.

The graph is meant to illustrate relative rates of increase/decrease over a long time frame and to demonstrate that northern caribou population fluctuate dramatically over time. The actual numbers prior to 1950's are speculative at best, and thus no population estimate is illustrated on the y axis. Actual survey numbers from 1960's onward are described in the text and should adequately describe scale. This point will be "talked to" during the meetings.
If we are proposing to ask at all meetings whether/how Aboriginal harvest should be limited, shouldn’t we provide some information first about Aboriginal rights? This could get tangy. Not everyone will have an appreciation for Aboriginal rights and NunatuKavut will argue they hold such rights. Maybe say something along the lines of (subject to Aubrey’s fine tuning):

ABORIGINAL RIGHTS
Aboriginal people in Canada have a right to harvest for food, social and ceremonial purposes. Such rights are site and fact-specific. Conservation and safety take precedence over such rights, but the infringement must be reasonable.
Labrador Inuit rights are set out in Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement.
Labrador Innu rights are to be set out in a land claims agreement.

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From: Dutton, Sean  
Sent: Thursday, August 26, 2010 7:51 AM  
To: Firth, Ross  
Cc: O'Neill, Melony; Blake, John; Gover, Aubrey; Watkins, Michelle; Tompkins, John; Oliver, Val; Oxford, Krista L.  
Subject: Re: Caribou Consultation Plan  

I had a look at the deck. Just a few comments.

Background - if we describe GRCH as "woodland" when woodland caribou are listed on endangered species legislation might be confusing. Can we just say "migratory caribou"?

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Labrador Innu rights are to be set out in a land claims agreement.

Sean  
Sent Via BlackBerry  

---

From: Firth, Ross  
To: Dutton, Sean  
Cc: O'Neill, Melony; Blake, John  
Subject: Caribou Consultation Plan
I've made changes to the draft document and have attempted to incorporate your comments. The attached document has been revised based on your comments. I've left the document in track changes for ease of identifying my edits.

Would you please let me know whether you're content with the revised plan.

I have also attached, for your information, a copy of the proposed presentation to be delivered at the consultations. This may help illustrate our approach more fully.

Ross

---

Ross Firth  
Assistant Deputy Minister - Natural Heritage

Department of Environment and Conservation  
P.O. Box 2007  
117 Riverside Drive  
Corner Brook, NL  
A2H 7S1

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Fax (709) 637-2180
Aubrey:

The NG has made a number of recommendations to the Province respecting the GRCH. These are set out in the attached letter from Minister Shiwak to Minister Johnson. Particularly I would like to draw your attention to the recommendations respecting harvesting by beneficiaries outside the LISA. John Blake has forwarded me a draft response for review and comment. I have prepared some comments on the letter (attached). I would appreciate your views on the draft response and my comments on it. Also, I thought it might be necessary to make the Minister aware of the NG recommendations and the proposed response before it is finalized. I am [available to discuss at your convenience. Thanks.

R
Ruby Carter
Senior Negotiator
Aboriginal Affairs Branch
Department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs
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P.O. Box 8700
St. John's, NL
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Telephone 709 729-7487
Facsimile 709 729-4900

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TELEFAX: 729-0112 DATE: Dec 20/10

TO: Minister Charlene Johnson

FIRM: ____________________________

FROM: Minister Darryl Shoal

RE: George River Carbon

Total Number of Pages: 7 (Including Cover Memorandum)

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We are transmitting on Canon Laser Class 2060. If you do not receive all pages, please call the Nunatsiavut Government Liaison Office in Rigolet @ 709-947-3383

COMMENTS:

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________________________________________________________________________
Nunatsiavut Rigolet Office
Box 47
Rigolet, NL
A0P 1P0

December 20, 2010

Via Fax 1-709-729-0112
Hon. Charlene Johnson, Minister of Environment and Conservation
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
P. O. Box 8700
St. John’s, NL
A1B 4J6

Dear Minister Johnson:

George River Caribou Herd Harvesting Measures
Nunatsiavut Government Recommendations

The Nunatsiavut Government, Department of Lands and Natural Resources has recently completed consultations with our beneficiaries in Upper Lake Melville and the communities in Nunatsiavut on the status of the George River Caribou, to receive feedback on current harvesting practices and to discuss management measures. Though weather caused some delays, we successfully completed consultations on December 7, 2010. We appreciate the support provided by the Torngat Wildlife and Plants Co-Management Board and your department in conducting these consultations.

The George River Caribou herd has traditionally and continues to be a valuable source of food for Inuit. For many, it is the very foundation of their diet. Because the George River caribou are migratory, Inuit often have to travel long distances to access this food source and sometimes, the caribou do not migrate in to the Labrador Inuit Settlement Area (LISA). However, because the George River Caribou are such a vital food source, our beneficiaries have historically travelled and continue to travel where necessary, including outside of the LISA to hunt caribou.
Our consultations have confirmed many of the concerns the Nunatsiavut Government has around the status of the George River Caribou Herd. Our main concerns are as follows:

- Inuit have traditionally harvested the caribou as a main source of food, regardless of whether the herd is accessible within LISA or outside LISA. When you released the new harvesting measures on November 9th, 2010 you also stated in the media that the aboriginal harvest would not be affected this year. However, if the caribou follow the same migratory pattern as in past years they will likely not be accessible in LISA. If the provinces new harvesting measures apply to Inuit who hunt the caribou outside LISA, our aboriginal harvest will be significantly affected.

- There are many different user groups and jurisdictions that depend on the George River caribou herd and conservation measures will only be effective if all parties agree to take steps necessary to ensure the sustainability of the herd. It is extremely important that the province establish the multi-jurisdictional committee right away so all parties can collectively discuss measures that need to be taken and hopefully come to consensus on these measures.

- There is a need for more enforcement and monitoring of the harvesting of the George River Caribou herd. Our beneficiaries have seen many examples of wasted meat and crippled animals on the land. Increased presence by enforcement officers would hopefully reduce these types of practices.

- In every consultation session the beneficiaries were concerned about the Quebec Innu coming to Labrador and taking out tractor trailer loads of caribou without any action being taken by the province. If this practice is permitted to continue, it makes it difficult to convince other hunters and Inuit that it is important to take conservation measures and has the potential to evolve into a larger enforcement issue.

The Nunatsiavut Government has considered the input from the consultations and can now make recommendations to the province on the management of the George River Caribou Herd for this season. One of the issues we need to address is how to get more accurate data on the Inuit harvest of George River caribou. We will work with the Torngat Wildlife & Plants Co Management Board to develop a data collection process to gather harvest information and get an accurate number on our harvest levels. At this time we are not making any changes to the Inuit harvest in LISA for 2010-2011.

The Nunatsiavut Government would like to make the following recommendations to the province on the management of the George River Caribou for this season:

- NG strongly encourages the province to establish the multi-jurisdictional stakeholder group that includes ourselves, NL, Metis, Quebec, Nunavik,
Quebec & Labrador Innu to discuss and agree on management measures for the herd. This stakeholder group needs to be created as soon as possible. All parties and groups need to agree on conservation measures if the viability of the herd is to be maintained.

NG request that the province increase enforcement in Labrador and LISA to ensure there is no overharvesting by non-beneficiaries. Increased enforcement would also mitigate poor hunting and harvesting practices.

Nunatsiavut beneficiaries have traditionally harvested the George River Caribou herd wherever their migration route was for that year. We believe this year’s migration will place the herd outside of LISA for most of the traditional hunting period. We request that the province give special consideration for all Nunatsiavut beneficiaries harvesting in traditional caribou grounds outside of LISA:
- Transfers be permitted
- Request 2 caribou / licence (instead of one caribou / licence)
- Request an allotment of caribou for our community freezers. Our community freezers are important in providing country food to our elders who are unable to harvest for themselves.

I look forward to having the opportunity to discuss these recommendations with you as soon as possible. I can be reached at 709-947-3363.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Darryl Shiwak
Minister of Lands and Natural Resources

cc. Torngat Wildlife & Plants Co-Management Board
Minister Hon. Darryl Shiwak
Minister of Lands and Natural Resources
Nunatsiavut Rigolet Office Government
Box 47
Rigolet, NL.
A0P 1P0

Dear Minister Mr. Shiwak:

Thank you for your letter dated December 20, 2010 concerning recent consultations with beneficiaries of the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement (LILCA) and Nunatsiavut communities within the Labrador Inuit Settlement Area (LISA) on the status and harvest of George River caribou. I think we both agree that swift action is necessary and that the conservation of the caribou herd is of utmost priority.

Like many other caribou herds across the north, the George River herd is in a state of precipitous decline, and harvesting as many caribou as we did in the recent past could make the population decrease further and faster so that it would take many years to recover. For this reason the Province initiated immediate conservation measures that resulted in significant harvest restrictions for the 2010/11 hunting season. While these measures were not directly intended to affect Aboriginal harvesting for this year, we have taken the approach of initiating dialogue and offering assistance to the Nunatsiavut Government (NG) and Aboriginal groups in the development of their own interim harvest measures for immediate conservation needs. The Nunatsiavut Government may not be making any changes to the Inuit harvest for this winter at this time, however, I believe there are still many opportunities for collaboration between our governments in furthering the goal of caribou conservation for both the short- and long-term.

The George River caribou herd is an inter-jurisdictional resource that is vitally important to many different groups. Support in conservation by the NG Government and all other stakeholders is critical to the success of both short and long-term management strategies. For this reason, I will do everything I can to expedite the formation of this multi-jurisdictional body and facilitate the initiation of the co-management process. Although this step is critical to the management of this shared resource, it must be realized that this is a complicated process and any multi-jurisdictional stakeholder group may not be functioning at a level necessary to affect conservation measures in time for this winter. In regards to Quebec, I agree that both the Quebec Government and the Quebec Innu are important participants in a management strategy for the herd. We are currently moving forward with the initial steps in engaging these two stakeholders as well as the Innu Nation in Labrador and will make every effort to ensure they are both made aware of the significant immediate conservation concerns and also are part of a longer term co-management process.

Efforts for the longer term cooperative management of George River caribou need to parallel measures for immediate conservation needs. It is critical that we monitor the
harvest to measure trends and indicators of caribou herd health and to better understand harvester needs, practices, and concerns. I am pleased that the Nunatsiavut Government recognizes the importance of this data and has started to address monitoring efforts for this season. Harvest data is an important component to the sound management of the herd and is an excellent opportunity to incorporate Traditional Ecological Knowledge into monitoring efforts. Consistency in data collection protocols is also important, and I believe there are opportunities for collaboration and information sharing in the development, implementation, and evaluation of harvest monitoring efforts among the Nunatsiavut Government, the Tormat Wildlife and Plants Co-management Board Secretariat, and the Province and I encourage future dialogue among these parties in accomplishing this goal.

In addition to monitoring efforts, every effort will be made to enforce existing conservation measures for the George River caribou herd this winter. However, the significant decline in the herd, the vast land area where caribou are distributed, and the time constraints associated with this year’s hunting season combine to make enforcement challenging and highlight the need for additional conservation efforts. Education by stakeholders to their members about the severity of the caribou decline and use of harvest practices that incorporate sound conservation principles are critical for the ultimate success of any conservation efforts this winter and beyond.

In response to your recommendations respecting harvesting outside of LISA, I understand and appreciate your concerns about low caribou populations, winter distributions and migratory patterns that can at times reduce availability of the George River caribou from the LISA lands. While these are serious concerns, the availability of caribou in the LISA it must be noted that this is not a new issue. Also, brought about as a result of harvest restrictions introduced this past November, as you are aware, the harvest restrictions introduced this past November do not apply to the aboriginal harvest by beneficiaries within the LISA as defined in the LILCA. However, harvesting by beneficiaries outside the treaty rights defined in the LILCA are subject to the same harvest restrictions as non-Aboriginal stakeholders. Therefore, the harvesting restrictions announced this past November are applicable to beneficiaries who harvest outside the LISA.

For this reason, given the above, and in light of the very precipitous decline in the herd and associated significant restrictions on non-Aboriginal other stakeholders, we are unable to provide special consideration to NG beneficiaries to harvest outside the LISA and the provisions of the LILCA.

Thank you once again for your correspondence and I look forward to a continued and expanded collaborative effort on George River caribou management.

Section 29(1)(a), Section 34(1)(a)(v)

Sincerely,
CHARLENE JOHNSON

Minister

cce. Torngat Wildlife and Plants Co-management Board
Merinday, Shawn D.

From: Watkins, Michelle
Sent: Sunday, June 05, 2011 12:16 PM
To: Melindy, Shawn D.
Subject: FW: Note to file caribou workshop June 2-11
Attachments: Note to file caribou workshop June 2-11.doc

Meant to copy you.

Michelle Watkins

Director, Labrador Affairs
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
Department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs
Mailbag 3014, Stn. B
Happy Valley - Goose Bay, NL A0P 1E0
tel: 709-896-1780 fax: 709-896-0045 mobile: 709-899-1582
email: michellewatkins@gov.nl.ca

From: Watkins, Michelle
Sent: Sunday, June 05, 2011 12:15 PM
To: Dutton, Sean; Bowles, Ron; Gover, Aubrey; Harvey, Brian
Subject: Note to file caribou workshop June 2-11

Good day,

A note to file on the recent George River Caribou workshop is attached. Note that I have not forwarded to Minister Hickey, but can do so. There is a reference to article 51 - I am not knowledgeable of this. Please advise if I have it adequately captured.

Michelle
The Workshop was organized and facilitated by the Department of Environment and Conservations’ Wildlife Division (ENVC).

**Purpose:** To provide an opportunity for individuals from various user groups to present views and input regarding future harvest and management options for the George River Caribou.

**Objective:** Gather input from various user groups regarding options for future harvest plans and direction for the future management process.

**Representation:**
- Nunatsiavut Government
- Tormget Wildlife and Plant Co-Management Board
- Nunatukavut
- Labrador Hunting and Fishing Association
- Justice
- NL Outfitters Association
- Natural Resources
- Tourism, Culture and Recreation
- Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs

*Innu Nation was invited and confirmed but did not attend*

**Herd Status:**
ENVC provided an overview of the current status of the herd. The 2010 population estimate was 74,000. The 2011 indications are estimating populations anywhere from 55,000 to 67,000.

Indicators of herd health are confirming negative results. Both calf mortality and the percentage of large adult males are continuing to decrease and adult mortality is increasing. From July 2010 – June 2011, 23 of the 70 radio collared caribou died indicating a 33% mortality rate over the 11 month period.

Hunting does not appear to be the driving factor in the dramatic decline of the herd’s population, however ENVC indicates that hunting activity will be a factor in the future sustainability of the herd considering its current condition.

**Input from Stakeholders:**
Recurring themes included:
1) the importance of engaging the Government of Quebec and the Quebec Innu;
2) need for a formalized harvesting plan;
3) need for further science on the herd; and
4) process should be inclusive and collaborative

The following provides views expressed by select groups:

**Nunatukavut:** Chris Montague, President of Nunatukavut indicated that conservation was priority but referenced the Supreme Court ruling on article 51 regarding legal rights to harvest. He suggested that Nunatukavut was not appropriately consulted and that in order for there to be
successful management of the herd, there needed to be inclusiveness. He also recommended that there needs to be more direct collaboration with Quebec.

**Nunatsiavut Government (NG):** The NG was pleased with the direction taken by the Province, last fall but believes that further restrictions are required. It was strongly felt that all Aboriginal groups should adopt its own harvest management plan and that there needs to be more formalized monitoring of the Aboriginal hunt with accurate data. The Province should establish the total allowable harvest and the NG, as the only Aboriginal group with an acknowledged land claim, should have first access to the allowable harvest.

The NG questions if the science is accurate. The science needs to be incorporated with traditional knowledge.

It was suggested that there needs to be further collaboration with Quebec. The NG is willing to work with all partners to solve the issues.

**NL Outfitters Association:** The Executive Director indicated that the Association was not pleased with the elimination of the commercial hunt. The impacts of the hunt would be minimal. It was frustrating to learn that Quebec did not eliminate the commercial hunt but reduced it by 50% in an effort to minimize the negative impact to the industry. Some outfitter’s businesses are ruined and the impacts on visiting hunters have not been positive because they could not get their deposits back.

**Torngat Wildlife and Plant Co-Management Board:** Acknowledged that the Province followed most of the Board’s recommendations regarding the George River Caribou. It was felt that these restrictions may need to change depending on the condition of the herd. Harvesting plans need to be improved in the interest of the herd.

**Labrador Hunting and Fishing Association:** The Association supports the provincial harvest restrictions but is concerned that Aboriginal harvest practices are not stringent enough. Reporting of harvest numbers can be improved and there is no reason why there cannot be a 100% reporting compliance.

**Management Process:**
ENVC requested input on how the caribou management process should proceed. There was strong support for a formalized co-management/advisory board structure that included Quebec stakeholders. Some felt that there needed to be financial support for such a board. Many stakeholders also felt that there needed to be a clear terms of reference to guide such a process. If the advisory process was followed, consideration should also be given to an independent/objective facilitator or chair to lead the process.

**Actions Forward:**
ENVC advised that it will be developing a harvest plan for the George River Caribou Herd. Upon completion of the plan, they would like to report back to the group. An informal approach will continue until further direction is provided by Government.

A summary of stakeholder views from this session will be developed and distributed by ENVC.

*LAA: George River Caribou Workshop, 02-Jun-11*
Melindy, Shawn D.

From: Watkins, Michelle
Sent: Monday, July 04, 2011 1:26 PM
To: Mehl, Katherine
Cc: Melindy, Shawn D.; Firth, Ross; Blake, John; Bowles, Ron
Subject: RE: GRC workshop input

Good day Katherine,

Myself and Shawn Melindy attended the session in early June, on behalf of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs. The comments should be guided from stakeholders outside of Government. I would, however, think it to be very beneficial if we had an internal discussion upon receipt of all feedback — so that we can discuss the process forward and provide a Labrador Affairs perspective at that time.

I look forward to working with you,
Michelle

Michelle Watkins

Director, Labrador Affairs
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
Department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs
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e-mail: michellewatkins@gov.nl.ca

From: Mehl, Katherine
Sent: Sunday, July 03, 2011 12:43 AM
To: Blake, John; Chris Montague; Coady, Craig G.; Crowley, Shannon; Guy Playfair; Jamie Snock; Jim Goudie; Keith Payne; Kent, Todd; Norman, Katie; Richard Nuna; Roland Kenuksigak; Tony Chubbs; Watkins, Michelle; Jennifer Mitchell; Aaron Dale; Phillips, Frank; McCarthy, Sara; Baldwin, Chris; Barney, Wayne; Leboubon, Derek J; Carl McLean; grussell@labradormetis.ca; Yetman, Hollis
Cc: Firth, Ross
Subject: GRC workshop input

Hi to all,

If you recall, during the workshop, the Wildlife Division had requested input from all user groups regarding their thoughts on an advisory process to guide George River Caribou management. Originally, we were hoping to receive input from everyone by the end of June but, to date, have received input from only one user group.

Please know that your input is extremely important. We plan to incorporate your ideas in the upcoming harvest management plan and recommendations for an advisory process. However, we need your input to do so.

I realize that everyone is busy and full consultations are difficult, especially under the timelines given. However, we are still very much interested in your input and would like to hear your thoughts following even limited discussions within in your organization.

In order to accommodate your input, the Wildlife Division has extended the deadline for submitting ideas by one week. Please return your comments/ideas by 8 July 2011. I have attached the page of suggested topics to
consider in case you may find this helpful. Finally, the Wildlife Division will compile all responses and share these with you – I hope to have this to you by following week, no later than 15 July 2011.

Thank you for your time, thoughts, and response. If you should have any questions, whatsoever, please feel free to contact me.

Have a great week!

Katherine

From: Blake, John
Sent: Fri 6/10/2011 1:38 PM
To: Chris Montague; Coady, Craig G.; Crowley, Shannon; Guy Playfair; Jamie Snook; Jim Goudie; Keith Payne; Kent, Todd; Norman, Katie; Richard Nuna; Roland Kenuksigak; Tony Chubbs; Watkins, Michelle; 'Jennifer Mitchell'; Aaron Dale; Phillips, Frank; McCarthy, Sara; Baldwin, Chris; Barney, Wayne; Leboubon, Derek J; Mehl, Katherine; Carl McLean; 'grussel@labradormetis.ca'; Yetman, Hollis
Cc: Firth, Ross
Subject: GRC workshop outcomes

Folks,

As promised at the GRC workshop in Goose Bay last week we've summarized some of the key discussion points from the session. The attached document also provides some of the background to the issue as discussed and also more detail respecting upcoming monitoring, research and management efforts that will be undertaken. We've taken this approach to help facilitate one of the sessions stated objectives of soliciting further input from stakeholders. We encourage and look forward to anything further you wish to provide in respect to GRC management.

I'd like to re-state how pleased we were with the open, honest and respectful manner that the meeting progressed. I look forward to further such opportunities.

John

John Blake
Director of Wildlife
Department of Environment and Conservation
Wildlife Division
P. O. Box 2007, 117 Riverside Drive
Corner Brook, NL A2H 7S1
Telephone: (709) 637-2008 - Fax: (709) 637-2033
From: Watkins, Michelle
Sent: Friday, July 29, 2011 1:46 PM
To: Melindy, Shawn D.
Subject: FW: NR - Delay Announced for the 2011-12 Caribou Hunting Season in Labrador

FYI

Michelle Watkins

Director, Labrador Affairs
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
Department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs
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From: Bowles, Ron
Sent: Friday, July 29, 2011 1:43 PM
To: Watkins, Michelle
Subject: FW: NR - Delay Announced for the 2011-12 Caribou Hunting Season in Labrador

FYI

Newfoundland Labrador

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c 709-899-0381
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From: Tompkins, John
Sent: Friday, July 29, 2011 1:42 PM
To: Hickey, John; Pottle, Patty; Bowles, Ron; Gover, Aubrey; Oxford, Krista L.; Stokes, Donna
Cc: Dutton, Sean; Oliver, Val
Subject: NR - Delay Announced for the 2011-12 Caribou Hunting Season in Labrador

Please see New release ENVC plans to issue Tuesday:

Environment and Conservation
Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs
August 2, 2011
Concerns with the stability of the George River caribou herd, identified through ongoing research and monitoring efforts by the Department of Environment and Conservation and other stakeholders, will result in the delay of the start of the 2011-12 caribou hunting season in Labrador. The season, scheduled to open on August 10, will be postponed while input from various stakeholders regarding the future management of the herd is reviewed. An update on the hunting season and the management plan for the herd will be provided as additional information becomes available.

"The conservation and protection of the George River caribou herd, as well as all wildlife and habitat in the province, remains a priority for our government, and we will delay the opening of the hunting season while we review the valuable input from stakeholders regarding the future management of the herd," said the Honourable Ross Wiseman, Minister of Environment and Conservation. "The Labrador Caribou Management Initiative, which includes building on collaborative working relationships already established with stakeholders, will assist us in achieving a sustainable future for this herd. It is the collective responsibility of government, Aboriginal peoples, resident hunters and trappers, outfitters and the public to ensure that its management and use are undertaken in a sustainable and responsible manner."

In July of 2010 a census was conducted on the herd in partnership with the Government of Quebec, Laval University, the Nunatsiavut Government, Torngat Plant and Wildlife Co-Management Board and the Institute for Environmental Monitoring and Research. The results of this census identified a total population estimate for the herd at approximately 74,000 caribou, a decline of 81 per cent compared to the previous estimate of 385,000 in 2001.

"As a government, we must continue to ensure the implementation of necessary management measures for the George River caribou in a collaborative manner with all stakeholders," said the Honourable John Hickey, Minister of Labrador Affairs. "Imposing a delay on the hunting season for the George River herd will provide the necessary time to further analyze data that is continuously being collected relating to the causes of the decline, and help ensure that the long-term future of the herd is supported."

"The sustainability of the George River herd is a priority for all Labradorians," said the Honourable Patty Pottle Minister of Aboriginal Affairs. "Caribou have always been vital to Aboriginal culture, customs and traditions. Feedback from all stakeholder groups is an important component in our management of this herd, as well as taking the appropriate time to understand all of the factors surrounding their decline."

Budget 2011 Standing Strong: For Prosperity. For Our Future. For Newfoundland and Labrador allocated $1.9 million for a three-year Labrador Caribou Management Initiative. The initiative involves enhanced data collection of the George River caribou herd to help better understand the factors affecting the caribou population. The George River caribou herd migrates between Newfoundland and Labrador and Quebec with both provinces responsible for management. Work done under this initiative will complement research on northern caribou herds conducted by other jurisdictions.

Ongoing research and monitoring efforts by the Provincial Government and its partners since the 2010 census suggest that a further population decline is occurring, despite major restrictions on harvesting that were implemented last fall. Any further management action that may be necessary to assist with stabilizing the herd's decline will be thoroughly analyzed before a final decision is made with respect to future harvests.
For more information on wildlife in the province, including the opening and closing dates for hunting seasons, visit www.gov.nl.ca/env/wildlife/index.html

-30-

Media contacts:
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CONSULTATIONS

During February 2012 an aboriginal consultation process was developed jointly by ENVC, IGAS, and the Department of Justice staff and lawyers pursuant to direction to engage Aboriginal groups on the management of the George River Caribou Herd (GRCH). In a letter dated March 12, 2012, ENVC requested consultation with Aboriginal groups in Labrador and Quebec. The letter outlined concerns for the current status of the George River Caribou Herd (GRCH) and the need for further management actions to include consideration of a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) for 2012-13.

Consultation requests were followed with the mail out (electronic and hardcopy) of an information package which provided a summary of the GRCH status. Aboriginal groups were requested to provide a written response within 45 days of the consultation. Included in this response was to be: 1) a proposal as an appropriate TAH for 2012-2013; and 2) information on their community’s Basic Needs Level (BNL; exception of TWPCB and NunatuKavut). Government would then have 20 days to respond with 10 days for the Aboriginal group stakeholder to provide a final response.

The March 12 letter stated that strict timelines on this consultation process were necessary in order to allow time for conservation measures to be implemented prior to the 2012-2013 caribou season. Specifically, given the low population level of the GRCH George River Caribou herd, delays in taking conservation steps may have detrimental impacts on the sustainability of the herd.

I would mention the meetings that took place with the NG, NunatuKavut, the TWPCB and others that may not be mentioned here and then provide information on the results of the meeting (i.e., a recommendations on a TAH and BNL, if any.

According to the provisions established under the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement (LILCA), the NG a TAH must be established before the Nunatsiavut Government will provide a recommendation on a TAH (except an Inuit Harvest Level) unless the Minister establishes a TAH. (Note: I would reference the NG correspondence that made reference to the requirements in the LILCA on this issue and explain that the provisions in the LILCA provided the rationale for not providing a recommendation on an IHL. I also understood that the NG did commit to providing a recommendation on a TAH, but it was never received. It might be useful to reference this point).

The Torngat Wildlife and Plants Co-management Board (TWPCB) was established in accordance with the Inuvialuit Final Agreement of the three negotiating parties to the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement and legally established under the Agreement in Chapter 12 of LILCA. The TWPCB, among other responsibilities, is responsible for making recommendations to the Minister on conservation and management measures within the Labrador Inuit Settlement Area including a TAH for caribou. The Minister must respond in writing to either approve, reject, vary or replace recommendations from the TWPCB. Board is empowered to recommend to the Minister conservation and management measures for wildlife, plants and habitat in the Labrador Inuit Settlement Area and subject to disallowance or variance by the Minister of ENVC may establish Total Allowable Harvests for non-migratory species of wildlife and plants. The TWPCB
Tomagt Wildlife and Plants Co-management Board submitted their recommendation to the Minister response to the Province on July 4, 2012 recommending culling a TAH of 350 animals.

In addition a GRCH Stakeholder Advisory Committee meeting was held in HV-GB on June 27. Representatives included ENVC, the Nunatsiavut Government, NunatuKavut, the TWPCA, Newfoundland and Labrador Outfitters Association and Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs (Not sure who attended - if it was the Labrador Affairs office and IGAA we should be specific). The Labrador Innu Nation did not attend the Advisory Committee meeting. Separate discussions between the Innu Nation and the Province occurred through the Arik Committee on June 28, 2012.

Consultations meetings for QC aboriginal groups were held in Sept Iles, QC. IGAA provided funds for grant agreements to cover travel related expenses for aboriginal groups from Quebec. The Naskapi Nation submitted their response to the Province on June 18, 2012 requesting a TAH of 1,727 animals, equivalent to their BNL set by the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement. The Ekuanishit Innu Nation submitted a response to the Province on May 22, 2012. The Ekuanishit response refused the consultation process by the Province and did not include a recommended TAH or BNL.

The QC government, HTFCC (spell out), and the TWPCA organized a separate meeting of all stakeholder groups in QC and NL to discuss declining caribou herds. The meeting was held in Montreal, QC on 11-13 September, 2012. Participants of the following aboriginal groups were in attendance: Nunavik, Cree of Le Tayou Ische, the Nunatsiavut Government, Naskapi Nation, Ekuanishit, Uashat mak Mani-Ucnam, Natashquan, Innu Nation, NunatuKavut.

Aboriginal groups held a separate Aboriginal only meeting on the evening of 12 September. Below is a brief summary of the meeting regarding comments surrounding the GRCH:

- Primary issues raised included that a reduction in harvest was linked to food security, and affects the health, culture and well being of their communities.
- The need for urgent action was recognized by all.
- There was a general consensus that frequent community based meetings are needed in order to gather feedback. Greater communication and more Montreal-type meetings be held.
- Request for monetary support for an aboriginal round table in view of finding a solution, actions and recommendations. This would be an interim measure until co-management board could be established.
- Modifications of management measures would be conditional upon the establishment of a co-management board.
- A formal elimination of non-aboriginal hunt in Labrador was requested.

I would summarize the results of the Aboriginal consultation on the TAH and the BNL. Also, I would mention any planned future consultation.
From: Simms, Herb  
Sent: Wednesday, November 30, 2011 12:15 PM  
To: Gover, Aubrey  
Subject: Nov 16 meeting with QC officials in Corner Brook  

Good afternoon Aubrey,

Please find attached an internal note on the November 16 meeting.

I am following up with QC officials on nature of legal action with Nunatukavut. Any information you may have on this would also be appreciated. Sean was looking for a little more detail.

Have a good afternoon.

Herb Simms  
Senior Policy Analyst  
Resource and Fiscal Policy  
Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat  
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador  
7th Floor, East Block  
Confederation Building  
St. John's, NL  
A1B 4J6  
Tel: (709) 729-2839  
Fax: (709) 729-5038  
HerbSimms@gov.nl.ca
Title: To provide information from a meeting on George River Caribou (GRC) management between officials from ENVC, IGAAS and the Province of Quebec (QC) held in Corner Brook on November 16, 2011.

Attendees:
Natalie Camden – ADM, Wildlife (Ministry of Natural Resources and Wildlife, QC); Guy Hetu - Director General, Northern Quebec (MNRW); Denis Vandal – Director, Energy Wildlife Forestry Mining (MNRW); Herb Simms – Senior Analyst, IGAAS; Katherine Mehl – Senior Manager, Habitat: Game and Fur – ENVC; and, Ross Firth – ADM, Natural Heritage – ENVC.

Areas of Discussion:
Review of Current Herd Status
- ENVC officials provided a presentation to attendees which highlighted current population status, projected trend and management actions to date.

- Some key issues from the presentation include:
  o Severely decreased calving grounds are now likely located primarily in Labrador. QC officials thought this was a particularly salient point because this would mean that management activities aimed at protecting calving grounds may now solely involve lands within NL. Earlier data indicated the calving grounds were shared between NL and QC. QC officials also briefly discussed the potential of some transitory measures for calving grounds such as development restrictions and closed areas.
  o Data acquisition is extremely complex, but new spending on new equipment, and staff as well as a new 3-year monitoring effort by ENVC may help address some current shortfalls.
  o The herd has declined by 80% in the past decade and by 2015 is expected to further decline to 16,000 without harvest and 6000 with harvest. This simple model, however, extrapolates from last year’s hunt which was a particularly low harvest due to poor snow conditions and difficulty in hunters accessing the herd. Better conditions could lead to more pressure and a greater take in future hunts.
  o 2425 animals were harvested last season in NL with 1575 animals out of 1865 taken in Labrador by Aboriginal groups. Outfitters in Labrador accounted for 80, while regular licences accounted for 210. Labrador Innu took 500; QC Innu in Labrador took 100 (conservation officer observations); Nunatsiavut/Coastal Communities took 975. In QC, the Sport Harvest accounted for 360 and QC Innu harvest in QC accounted for 200 (560 total in QC).

Review of Management Activities to Date

Section 34(1)(a)(i), Section 29(1)(a)
Actions taken by QC this season include a shortening of the sport hunt (last year August 15 – October 30, this year August 15 – October 2); a decrease in outfitter permits; closure of certain management zones and reorganization of others in order to manage the Leaf River Herd (healthy herd located entirely within QC) and GRCH separately; a reduction in resident permits and requirements to use a guide in some zones.

A March 18, 2011 press release issued by QC (provided to NL in French) indicated possible further sport hunting closures for 2012/13, subject to biological information collected in 2011/12. QC anticipates an announcement on or about mid-December stating the closure of QC sport hunting of GRCH beginning in 2012/13. Section 34(1)(a)(i)

QC’s management plan for GRCH expired in 2010. Current management measures are transitory until 2012/13 when longer term actions will be proposed and a new management plan presented. QC also asked if there would be more money for enforcement and ENVC indicated that enforcement had been shifted to JUS. There was also some discussion of issues of enforcement including QC Innu hunting endangered woodland caribou in NL.

Aboriginal Engagement and Management Activities Section 29(1)(a), Section 34(1)(a)(i)

In February 2011, the Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Coordinating Committee (HFTCC), a consultative body established by section 24 of the 1975 James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA), (March 18 press release refers).

In April 2011 the HFTCC filed a claim against the QC government alleging consultation omissions associated with the Minister’s decision. A decision handed down by the court on November 4 ruled in favour of QC on all counts. It is likely that the HFTCC will appeal this decision.

The terms of the JBNQA and the related 1978 Northeastern Quebec Agreement (NEQA) assign each of the three aboriginal groups a guaranteed level of caribou harvest including: Inuit - 4,547; Cree - 830; and the Naskapi - 1,030. The guaranteed level of harvest covers both Leaf River herd and the GRCH. For example, the Cree harvest can be allocated internally between the Leaf River and the George River as the Cree see fit.

Nevertheless, two
Future Activities:

- NL discussed the need to gather more data on the hunt (mostly non-aboriginal hunters) while hunt continues. The lack of data on the hunt is a major factor in difficulty in its management.
- The possibility of NL and QC working together on a 2013 population survey was discussed briefly with no final decision made. NL and QC will discuss the matter further in future meetings.
- Both NL and QC reiterated the need to develop and deliver a coordinated GRCH management response and hold more frequent discussions on management initiatives.
- QC enquired whether NL would attend a proposed caribou workshop in Montreal in April, 2012. A letter of invitation dated September 27 was sent to the ENVC Minister requesting financial support from the government of NL. The Tomgats Wildlife Co-Management Board has indicated their interest in taking part in this workshop. QC is funding the workshop in part and indicated it would be beneficial if NL took part in workshop.
- QC was comfortable retaining the current informal relationship between both provinces as it relates to discussions at a technical (Biologist) level and an administrative level (ADM, Director) and did not feel that a letter of agreement or other more formal mechanism was warranted at this time. QC also took the position that the provinces should try to coordinate education and stewardship efforts to obtain support from stakeholders for the management measure likely required.
- NL and QC committed to re-engaging in a conference call in early December. Topic for discussion would be follow-up on the HFTCC meeting and discuss a strategy for a joint NL and QC meeting with QI. A joint NL and QC meeting with QC Innu was also discussed as a possibility for December.

Prepared /Reviewed by/ Approved by: Ross Firth, Katherine Mehl and Herb Simms/John Cowan
Approved by: Note to File
November 30, 2011
Melindy, Shawn D.

From: Gover, Aubrey
Sent: Wednesday, August 31, 2011 1:21 PM
To: Blake, John; Firth, Ross; Carter, Ruby
Cc: Bowles, Ron; Harvey, Brian
Subject: RE: George River Caribou

We will provide our guidance on the Aboriginal piece.

Ruby please develop the plan in light of the scarcity noted below. The LILCA provisions relating to such a shortage will have to be considered.

From: Blake, John
Sent: Wednesday, August 31, 2011 12:09 PM
To: Gover, Aubrey; Firth, Ross
Cc: Bowles, Ron
Subject: RE: George River Caribou

Thanks Aubrey. A complex process that will not, in all likelihood, be accomplished in time for the 2011-12 harvest plan. For clarity, and in keeping with the theme of moving from certain to less certain, I must re-iterate that the TAH recommended from a biological perspective will be no more than 2% of the fall 2012 projected population, which at this point will be approximately 35,000 caribou. Clearly a TAH of 700 (2% of 35,000) will not meet the needs of all aboriginal groups in LB and QC, and so I suggest we develop our path forward on that almost certain assumption.

In reading this message below my memory was tweaked also back.

I bring this up simply to query who all players fit in the work that needs to be accomplished. To achieve any kind of effective implementation of a TAH for next season will require a strategic, collaborative plan involving LAA, JUS, IGA and ENVC, and others?, with someone out front.

Aubrey please let Ruby know if there is anything we can assist with in the fleshing out of a path forward to contact me.

John

Section 27(1)(i), Section 27(2)(b)

From: Gover, Aubrey
Sent: Tuesday, August 30, 2011 9:09 PM
To: Firth, Ross
Cc: Blake, John; Bowles, Ron
Subject: RE: George River Caribou

Thanks for this. I will ask Ruby Carter to put together a process for Aboriginal engagement on this. However, my preliminary thoughts are to proceed from the certain to the less certain. Therefore, on the Aboriginal front we should begin with the procedures in the Labrador Inuit Land Claim Agreement (LILCA).

It appears pursuant to LILCA we will need a recommended TAH from the Torngat Board for LISA.
Again, returning to what is certain, we will have to ask the Nunatsiavut Government for an IBNL pursuant to the LILCA.  

This are just my preliminary thoughts. I will ask Ruby to flesh this out for us.

---

From: Firth, Ross  
Sent: Thu 8/25/2011 3:25 PM  
To: Gover, Aubrey  
Cc: Blake, John; Bowles, Ron  
Subject: George River Caribou

Aubrey

Please see the attached memo.

Regards,  
Ross
Ross Firth
Assistant Deputy Minister - Natural Heritage
Department of Environment and Conservation
P.O. Box 2007
117 Riverside Drive
Corner Brook, NL
A2H 7S1

Ph. (709) 637-2199
Fax (709) 637-2180
Memorandum

From: Ross Firth
To: Aubrey Gover
Cc: Ron Bowles
     John Blake
Date: August 25, 2011
Subject: George River caribou management

During a meeting with Minister Wiseman on August 24, further direction was provided regarding actions related to George River caribou (GRC) management for the 2011/12 hunting season. Effective and timely collaboration between our two departments will be critical to the success of revised herd management approaches for the upcoming season.

As you know, ENVC has recommended two management options for consideration for the 2011/12 season. Hunting of this herd by Aboriginals occurs both in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador as well as the Province of Quebec. In addition, GRC are hunted by non-aboriginals in both provinces. One of the options currently under consideration is the implementation of a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) beginning in either 2011/12 or 2012/13. It is my understanding that the implementation of a TAH will trigger a process under the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement and will also oblige the province to follow certain steps in relation to engaging the remaining aboriginal groups in NL and PQ.

Minister Wiseman has indicated that he wishes ENVC to conduct another meeting of stakeholders that includes the list of participants who were invited to attend the June 2 workshop in Happy Valley-Goose Bay. The purpose of the meeting will be, in part, to inform participants of the result of the 2011 Fall Classification and provide the most recent GRC population modeling projections. The date of this meeting is scheduled tentatively for mid October. Subsequent to the meeting, ENVC will seek the advice of the management recommendations for 2011/12.

Section 27(1)(i), Section 27(2)(b)
I suggest that, as soon as possible, we convene a meeting with senior officials from both departments to discuss the following:

1. The process for the establishment of a Total Allowable Harvest of George River caribou with consideration for the Aboriginal populations in both the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Province of Quebec.

2. Confirmation of the process to be followed prior to and during the October stakeholder workshop to ensure that the province is meeting its treaty and other related Aboriginal obligations.

3. Clarification of the process of engagement with Quebec Innu bands.

4. Any other related business.

I will ask Marilyn Legge to contact your office to arrange an agreeable time and location for a meeting.
Melindy, Shawn D.

From: Bowles, Ron
Sent: Monday, November 14, 2011 1:16 PM
To: Melindy, Shawn D.; Gover, Aubrey
Cc: Watkins, Michelle
Subject: RE: Note to File caribou workshop Nov 3-11.doc

Shawn, very informative. I was interested to see that LHFA were questioning the science of the numbers. A PR campaign to educate the public on the status of the herd will most certainly be required.

Ron

Ron Bowles
Assistant Deputy Minister

Government of
Newfoundland and Labrador

Labrador Affairs Office
Executive Council

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: 709.869.0941
: 709.898.4448
: rbowles@gov.nl.ca

---

From: Melindy, Shawn D.
Sent: Monday, November 14, 2011 1:09 PM
To: Gover, Aubrey; Bowles, Ron
Cc: Watkins, Michelle
Subject: Note to File caribou workshop Nov 3-11.doc

Please see below the note to file for a November 02, 2011 George River Caribou Herd - Advisory Committee meeting that I attended.

Note to File:
George River Caribou Herd—Advisory Committee Meeting, Nov 2, 2011

The meeting was organized and facilitated by the Department of Environment and Conservations' Wildlife Division (ENVC) and chaired by John Blake.

Purpose: To provide an opportunity for various user groups to provide input to ENVC to make informed decisions for this year and future years regarding management of the George River Caribou Herd.

Representation:
Nunatsiavut Government
Nunatukavut
Justice

Torngat Wildlife and Plant Co-Management Board
Labrador Hunting and Fishing Association
Natural Resources
Innu Nation was invited but did not attend

Herd Status update:
ENVC provided an update of herd status since the June meeting with some new information incorporated. The 2010 population estimate was 74,000. The 2011 indications are estimating populations at approximately 50,000 (at the June meeting ENVC estimated the herd to be between 55,000 to 67,000). Next fall the population of the George River Caribou Herd could be down to 31,000. The George River Caribou Herd is in a severe state of decline. The next census is planned for 2013.

ENVC use modeling graphs to predict population trends. The model used indicates the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>74,000 (2010) to 16,000 animals in 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No hunt</td>
<td>74,000 (2010) to 6,000 animals in 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are cumulative effects when the population gets so low. A ‘male only’ harvest would be somewhere in the middle however may not be very effective to reduce decline. All models used indicate a sharp decline. From July 2010 to June 2011, 27 of 71 radio collared animals have died; ENVC is not sure how many were hunted. Getting to the caribou once they die is a great challenge. ENVC plans to use a different type of GPS based collar in the future.

In the 70's the average number of calves per 100 adult females was 52. For the past two years it has been 17.

There were approximately 2500 George River Caribou hunted in 2011; 1700 from Labrador and 800 from Quebec.

Quebec Inuit is interested in being part of a multi-stakeholder group. The Labrador Innu intends to deal with the provincial government uni-laterally.

ENVC needs to make management decisions regarding the George River Caribou Herd whether there is agreement from stakeholders or not.

ENVC stated there is no biological reason to continue to the hunt. Continuing to harvest can promote decline and impede recovery. Harvesting can be expected to be substantially higher if George River Caribou are easily accessible and snow conditions are favorable this year. This was not the case in 2010-11.

Structured Questions
Structured questions regarding harvest numbers, harvest and health monitoring and stewardship and education were asked. Responses were as follows:

Nunatsiavut Government (NG):
NG is interested in a multi-stakeholder group being set up to address the decline in the George River Caribou herd. NG beneficiaries are permitted access to caribou under the Inuit Domestic Harvest Level from the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement. The Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) is a very political
concept. Any management initiatives will be on a volunteer basis since there is no way to enforce it since the Land claims overrides any TAH. The TAH may be compromised when other groups are hunting.

NG agreed that all of their Conservation Officers can attend a training course to collect biological samples if necessary.

NG stated that Aboriginal groups from Quebec is talking the Quebec Government to court as to why the sport hunt for caribou was not shut down in Quebec last year as happened in NL.

Torngat Wildlife and Plant Co-Management Board (TWPMB):
We need a TAH established and that number could be zero. The board has not discussed how to carve up the TAH. ENVC stated that a TAH would be very complex and it would not be in place for the current season. The TWPMB has drafted some recommendations however they will consult with NG before finalizing. If allocations are made per household then it may be difficult to define a household. A census on the George River Caribou every year would be beneficial.

One member of the board said “I would shut it down now, we are arguing over crumbs”. There is a general lack of knowledge from hunters on how to collect samples, ie jaw bone removal. TWPMB is willing to provide funding to develop and distribute a brochure to educate the general public and hunters on the George River Caribou Herd in conjunction with Wildlife, ENVC.

TWPMB has been in contact with another board in Quebec who are interested in a multi-stakeholder George River Caribou management board.

Labrador Hunting and Fishing Association (LHFA):
Total Allowable Harvest will not work unless the people from Quebec agree since caribou will be hunted when they cross the border. There is not enough definitive data to consider a closure of the George River Caribou hunt.

LHFA also stated that much of the estimates being reported are not based on good information; in most cases the data numbers are too low to indicate anything definitive. Some graphs represent a long period of time. Consideration should be given for graphs over the past few years. ENVC responded by saying all models they use indicate a downward trend in the population.

The LHFA suggested that a public forum be held to educate the general population of herd status including distribution of an information brochure.

Natural Resources and Justice
Representatives from Natural Resources and Justices stated that they could help with the collection of samples from hunted caribou along access trails and with enforcement resources.

ENVC stated they would not like to see any more George River Caribou harvested than were last year and that being 2500. But the question was asked “what point in the herd’s declining population do we stop the harvest altogether?” From a science point of view we do not want any harvesting when the population goes down to 30,000 animals. The province can establish a TAH if necessary. ENVC will consider a closure if nothing changes. ENVC clarified that the Minister of ENVC has the power to stop all hunting by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, if necessary. Emergency closure will be discussed internally. It is very important that we get a general agreement to harvest at last years hunting rate (@ 2500) or less. ENVC asked for consensus from the group if this is possible.
ENVC would like all groups to cooperate on collection of data. ENVC stated that very valuable information can be collected about the caribou from hunters. They plan to conduct draws for prizes to offer incentives to cooperative hunters; this was tried last year with some success.

ENVC said they could provide a brochure to educate the general public on herd status as well an explanation for hunters on how to collect biological samples.

Next Steps
The LHFA will be holding its AGM November 3, 2011 and Shannon Crowley, Wildlife Biologist with ENVC will be providing an update on the George River Herd status.

NG stated that community consultations on George River Caribou were delayed waiting on word from the province. Now they will start on November 6, 2011 and NG will put a management plan in place.

ENVC is meeting with the Quebec government on November 16, 2011 to discuss herd status. There is a signing ceremony planned for November 17, 2011.

ENVC stated that bits and pieces of the management plan are being completed, literature reviews, other jurisdictions, etc. However we need direction before we proceed. The structure of the body overseeing the management plan was discussed but no real consensus was established.

ENVC will provide copies of notes from this meeting and they will advise later when the next advisory meeting will take place.
Melindy, Shawn D.

From: Firth, Ross
Sent: Tuesday, December 06, 2011 3:08 PM
To: Dutton, Sean; Parrott, William; Burrage, Don
Cc: Blake, John; Bowles, Ron; Gover, Aubrey
Subject: RE: George River Caribou Management

Sean

I think that the new information would be to convey our management approach for this season and highlight the need to begin discussion on the development of a total allowable harvest. It probably wouldn't hurt to repeat the presentation about the current status and population trend for the herd for the benefit of those who were not able to attend the HVGB presentation in November. As for 'le paix de caribou' I’ll leave that to Don to suggest whether this is an appropriate time and venue.

Ross

From: Dutton, Sean
Sent: Tuesday, December 06, 2011 3:20 PM
To: Firth, Ross; Parrott, William; Burrage, Don
Cc: Blake, John; Bowles, Ron; Gover, Aubrey
Subject: RE: George River Caribou Management

I don’t see a problem with it. Last year’s meeting in Sept-îles turned out very well. Would there be an expectation of signing “le paix de caribou” agreement before or at that meeting? Would there be any new information imparted from NL that the Bands didn’t already get from John and Shannon last month?

Sean

From: Firth, Ross
Sent: Tuesday, December 06, 2011 3:16 PM
To: Parrott, William; Dutton, Sean; Burrage, Don
Cc: Blake, John; Bowles, Ron
Subject: George River Caribou Management

Gentlemen

At a recent meeting to discuss George River caribou management, officials from the Province of Quebec indicated that they would be interested in co-hosting, with the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, a meeting with Quebec Innu Bands to discuss GRCH biology, population trends and management. QC has suggested that the meeting could be held in Sept-îles in January.

I understand that there exists a bilateral agreement to establish a caribou committee between QC and the Matimekush-Lac John First Nation but this committee has never met and the agreement expires in March, 2012. I also believe that there is a growing realization at an Executive level within QC of the importance of a coordinated management approach with NL. The proposal to engage the Quebec Innu Bands in a joint provincial effort will send a clear message to the Bands that the provinces are engaged on this issue and that they acknowledge collectively the need for a coordinated response.
I think that there is value in this approach and would be grateful for your comment.

Regards,
Ross

Ross Firth
Assistant Deputy Minister - Natural Heritage
Department of Environment and Conservation
P.O. Box 2007
117 Riverside Drive
Corner Brook, NL
A2H 7S1

Ph. (709) 637-2199
Fax (709) 637-2180
Melindy, Shawn D.

From: Firth, Ross
Sent: Friday, December 09, 2011 9:38 AM
To: Bowles, Ron
Subject: Re: Province of Quebec and George River caribou

Best of luck.

Sent Via BlackBerry

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From: Bowles, Ron
To: Firth, Ross
Sent: Fri Dec 09 06:33:09 2011
Subject: Re: Province of Quebec and George River caribou

Ron

Sent Via BlackBerry

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From: Firth, Ross
To: Bowles, Ron
Sent: Thu Dec 08 23:46:18 2011
Subject: Re: Province of Quebec and George River caribou

Sent Via BlackBerry

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From: Bowles, Ron
To: Firth, Ross
Sent: Thu Dec 08 23:40:56 2011
Subject: Re: Province of Quebec and George River caribou

Thanks Ross
Ron

Sent Via BlackBerry

---

From: Firth, Ross
To: Parrott, William; Dutton, Sean; Burrage, Don
Cc: Blake, John; Bowles, Ron; O'Neill, Melony; Gover, Aubrey
Sent: Thu Dec 08 23:33:15 2011
Subject: Province of Quebec and George River caribou

Folks
In a conversation this morning with Nathalie Camden - ADM for Wildlife with the Province of Quebec, Department of Natural Resources and Wildlife, she advised me of two recent resolutions passed unanimously last week by the Hunting, Trapping, Fishing Coordinating Committee. They are:

1. The closure of the sport hunt for George River caribou for the 2012/13 season.
2. To create a consultative committee consisting of government officials from QC, NL and all native users that will be asked to submit recommendations to both QC and NL Ministers on management and access to the GRCH.

Nathalie indicated that she will forward me a copy of an English translation of these resolutions as soon as one is made available. She further indicated that a letter from the QC Minister to Minister French will be forthcoming in which the proposal of a consultative committee will be addressed. I understand that no discussion took place regarding the implementation of an upper limit of kill (total allowable harvest). Nathalie stated that she anticipates a "political announcement" from her Minister referencing management actions from the HTFCC on both the GRCH and the Leaf River herd will be made prior to Christmas.

Ross

Ross Firth
Assistant Deputy Minister - Natural Heritage
Department of Environment and Conservation
P.O. Box 117
117 Riverside Drive
Corner Brook, A2H 7S1
(709) 637 - 2199
in relation to my previous email.

From: Blake, John  
Sent: Thu 2/2/2012 11:39 AM  
To: Mellor, Justin S. C.; Gover, Aubrey; Firth, Ross; Gover, Aubrey; Galgay, Taracetta; Edwards, Herb  
Cc: Burrage, Don  
Subject: RE: Quebec Innu & NCC- Caribou

Excellent Justin thank you. I've attached a few initial thoughts and will circulate it to Katherine and Shannon for input as well.

John

From: Mellor, Justin S. C.  
Sent: Thursday, February 02, 2012 11:11 AM  
To: Gover, Aubrey; Blake, John; Firth, Ross; Gover, Aubrey; Galgay, Taracetta; Edwards, Herb  
Cc: Burrage, Don  
Subject: Quebec Innu & NCC- Caribou

Cheers,
JM

Justin S.C. Mellor  B.A.(Hons), M.A., LL.B., LL.M.  
Solicitor- Department of Justice  
Department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs  
4th Floor, East Block, Confederation Building  
P.O. Box 8700 St. John's, Newfoundland A1B 4J6  
Tel (709) 729-6564  
Fax (709) 729-2129

This E-mail may be subject to SOLICITOR-CLIENT PRIVILEGE and contains information intended only for the person(s) named. Any other distribution, copying or disclosure is strictly prohibited. If you have received this E-mail in error, please notify the sender immediately.
From: Mellor, Justin S. C.
Sent: Monday, February 06, 2012 3:04 PM
To: Gover, Aubrey; Blake, John; Firth, Ross; Galgay, Taracetta; Edwards, Herb; Harvey, Brian; Carter, Ruby
Subject: RE: Quebec Innu
Attachments: Caribou Consultation Letter Quebec 6Feb2012JM.doc

Cheers,

JM

From: Gover, Aubrey
Sent: Thursday, February 02, 2012 10:09 PM
To: Blake, John; Mellor, Justin S. C.; Firth, Ross; Galgay, Taracetta; Edwards, Herb; Harvey, Brian; Carter, Ruby
Subject: RE: Quebec Innu & NCC- Caribou

Section 29(1)(a)

Excellent! Justin thank you. I've attached a few initial thoughts and will circulate it to Katherine and Shannon for input as well.

John
Cheers,
JM

Justin S.C. Mellor B.A.(Hons), M.A., LL.B., LLM.
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This E-mail may be subject to SOLICITOR-CLIENT PRIVILEGE and contains information intended only for the person(s) named. Any other distribution, copying or disclosure is strictly prohibited. If you have received this E-mail in error, please notify the sender immediately.
Dear Grand Chief Riche:

I am writing to your organization concerning the critically low population level of the George River caribou herd (GRCH). As you are likely aware, the herd has declined by more than eighty percent over the last decade, dropping from an estimated 385,000 animals in 2001 to an estimated 74,000 in 2010. Current population modeling using key indicators such as adult mortality and calf recruitment suggest that the herd is now below 50,000 animals and is predicted to fall to approximately 30,000 animals by the fall of 2012. While the precise cause of this decline is uncertain, there is evidence that changes in the quality, quantity, and accessibility of food may have been a major contributing factor. Other factors such as predation, disease, parasites and the effects of climate change, may also be contributing to this decline. While the annual harvest is not the reason for initial decline in the herd, hunting when the population is at such low numbers can significantly add to natural mortality, leading to a faster decline and impedging recovery efforts.

Over the past two years the Province has imposed a series of conservation measures on non-aboriginals in an attempt to arrest the herd’s decline. These measures include: a moratorium on hunting by commercial operations, a complete prohibition on outfitter hunting, no transfer of licenses as well as imposing a reduction in limit for license holders from two to one caribou per season. In addition to these measures, the Province has shortened the hunting season for 2011-2012 from eight months to three months. These efforts have significantly reduced the number of caribou taken by non-Aboriginal harvesters.

Unfortunately, despite these measures, further conservation efforts are required if the herd is to be conserved and available for future generations. For that reason, the Province is contemplating imposing a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) for the 2012-13 hunting season. This means that based on the best evidence, the Province will determine what if any, is the appropriate total number of George River caribou that should be taken. We realize that imposing a TAH may impact harvesters in your community, and for that reason we wish to consult your organization on the imposition of a TAH and what your communities’ basic needs level is for George River Caribou.

To that end, we propose the following consultation process:

1. Provincial officials will contact your organization in order to arrange for a meeting with your officials and to coordinate a presentation on the GRCH. Once this meeting is arranged, the Province will provide your organization with an information package containing the most recent population data and outlining the future challenges facing the GRCH.
1-2. Your organization shall have 45 days from the receipt of the information package to provide a written response to the information provided. Included in your response should be: 1) a proposal as to what an appropriate TAH might be for 2012-2013; and 2) what the basic needs level of your community is for George River caribou.

2-3. Within 20 days of receipt of your organization's written comments, the Province will respond in writing to your organization.

3-4. Should your organization have any concerns about the Province's written response, it can request a meeting within 10 days of receiving the Province's response.

It is necessary to impose strict timelines on this consultation process in order to allow time for further conservation measures to be implemented in advance of the opening of 2012-2013 season. Given that the population is nearing critical levels, any delays in taking additional conservation steps will have a detrimental impact on the sustainability of the herd.

I should also note, that in addition to this Aboriginal specific consultation process outlined above, your organization is also welcome to participate in the Caribou Advisory Committee which open to a broader range of stakeholders. If you have any questions or concerns about the above bilateral process, please do not hesitate to contact me.

We look forward to working with your organization in order to ensure the sustainability of the GRHC.

Kindest regards,

Bill Parrott
Deputy Minister
Environment and Conservation
Melindy, Shawn D.

From: Harvey, Brian  
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2015 3:02 PM  
To: Melindy, Shawn D.  
Subject: FW: caribou consultation letters  
Attachments:  
- Torngat Wildlife Board Consultation Letter 8February 2012JM.docx  
- Quebec Caribou Consultation Letter 8Feb2012JM.docx  
- Nunatsiavut Caribou Consultation Letter 8February2012.docx  
- Labrador Innu Caribou Consultation Letter Labrador 7Feb2012JM.docx  
- NCC Caribou Consultation Letter 7 February 2012JM.docx

Brian RM. Harvey  
Director - Aboriginal Affairs  
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador  
(709) 729-1487 (w)  
(709) 693-1612 (c)

From: Gover, Aubrey  
Sent: Thursday, February 09, 2012 10:31 AM  
To: Harvey, Brian; Carter, Ruby; Galgay, Taracetta  
Subject: FW: caribou consultation letters

FYI

From: Gover, Aubrey  
Sent: Thursday, February 09, 2012 10:30 AM  
To: Firth, Ross  
Cc: Dutton, Sean; Blake, John  
Subject: caribou consultation letters

Ross please find the comments of IGAA on the attached draft letters in track changes. Please note on the Quebec letters the need to copy Bill's counterpart in Quebec.
Dear Chairperson:

I am writing to the Board concerning the critically low population level of the George River caribou herd (GRCH). As you are likely aware, the herd has declined by more than eighty percent over the last decade, dropping from an estimated 385,000 animals in 2001 to an estimated 74,000 in 2010. Current population modeling using key indicators such as adult mortality and calf recruitment suggest that the herd is now below 50,000 animals and is predicted to fall to approximately 30,000 animals by the fall of 2012. While the precise cause of this decline is uncertain, there is evidence that changes in the quality, quantity and accessibility of food may have been a major contributing factor. Other factors such as predation, disease, parasites and the effects of climate change, may also be contributing to this decline. While the annual harvest is not the reason for initial decline in the herd, hunting when the population is at such low numbers can significantly add to natural mortality, leading to a faster decline and impending recovery efforts.

Over the past two years the Province has imposed a series of conservation measures in an attempt to arrest the herd’s decline. These measures include: a moratorium on hunting by commercial operations, a complete prohibition on outfitter hunting, no transfer of licensees as well as imposing a reduction in the limit for licensee holders from two to one caribou per season. In addition to these measures, the Province has shortened the hunting season for 2011-2012 from eight months to three months. These efforts have significantly reduced the number of caribou taken by non-Aboriginal hunters.

Unfortunately, despite these measures, further conservation efforts are required if the herd is to be conserved and available for future generations. For that reason, the Province is contemplating imposing a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) for the 2012-13 hunting season.

In accordance with Part 12.9.1(b)(i) of the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement, the Province would like to request a recommendation from the Board as to what an appropriate TAH level is for the GRCH for 2012-2013. In advance of such a recommendation, we would like to meet with Board members to present the most recent population data and to outline the future challenges facing the herd. This information may be of assistance to the Board in making its recommendation.

Officials from the Wildlife Division will contact your office to arrange a meeting. We look forward to working with the Board in order to ensure the sustainability of the GRHC.

Kindest regards,
Bill Parrott  
Deputy Minister  
Environment and Conservation  

cc. Mr. Carl McLean
Dear Chief [XXXXX],

I am writing to you regarding the critically low population level of the George River caribou herd (GRCH). As you are likely aware, the herd has declined by more than eighty percent over the last decade, dropping from an estimated 385,000 animals in 2001 to an estimated 74,000 in 2010. Current population modeling using key indicators such as adult mortality and calf recruitment suggest that the herd is now below 50,000 animals and is predicted to fall to approximately 30,000 animals by the fall of 2012. While the precise cause of this decline is uncertain, there is evidence that changes in the quality, quantity, and accessibility of food may have been a major contributing factor. Other factors such as predation, disease, parasites, and the effects of climate change, may also be contributing to this decline. While the annual harvest is not the reason for initial decline in the herd, hunting when the population is at such low numbers can significantly add to natural mortality, leading to a faster decline and impeding recovery efforts.

Over the past two years the Province has imposed a series of conservation measures in an attempt to arrest the herd’s decline. These measures include: a moratorium on hunting by commercial operations, a complete prohibition on outfitter hunting, no transfer of licenses as well as imposing a reduction in limit for license holders from two to one caribou per season. In addition to these measures, the Province has shortened the hunting season for 2011-2012 from eight months to three months. These efforts have significantly reduced the number of caribou taken by non-Aboriginal harvesters.

Unfortunately, despite these measures, further conservation efforts are required if the herd is to be conserved and available for future generations. For that reason, the Province is contemplating imposing a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) for the 2012-13 hunting season. This means that based on the best evidence, the Province will determine what if any, is the appropriate total number of George River caribou that should be taken. We realize that imposing a TAH may impact hunters/harvesters in your community, and for that reason we wish to consult your organization on the imposition of a TAH and what your community’s basic needs level is for George River Caribou.

To that end, we propose the following consultation process:

1. Provincial officials will contact your organization in order to arrange for a meeting with your officials and to coordinate a presentation on the GRCH. Once this meeting is arranged, the Province will provide your organization with an information package containing the most recent population data and outlining the future challenges facing the GRCH.
1.2. Your organization shall have 45 days from the receipt of the information package to provide a written response to the information provided. Included in your response should be: 1) a proposal as to what an appropriate TAH might be for 2012-2013; and 2) what the basic needs level of your community is for George River caribou.

2.3. Within 20 days of receipt of your organizations written comments, the Province will respond in writing to your organization.

3.4. Should your organization have any concerns about the Province’s written response, it can request a meeting within 10 days of receiving the Province’s response.

It is necessary to impose strict timelines on this consultation process in order to allow time for further conservation measures to be implemented in advance of the opening of 2012-2013 season. Given that the population is nearing critical levels, any delays in taking additional conservation steps will have a detrimental impact on the sustainability of the herd.

I should also note, that in addition to the aboriginal-specific process outlined above, your organization is welcome to participate in the consultation process that is open to the general public. If you have any questions or concerns about the above process, please do not hesitate to contact me.

We look forward to working with your organization in order to ensure the sustainability of the GRHC.

Kindest regards.

Bill Parrott
Deputy Minister
Environment and Conservation

CC to Bill’s counterpart in Quebec.
[Caribou Consultation Letter – Nunatsiavut Government,]

Dear President Lyall:

I am writing to your government concerning the critically low population level of the George River caribou herd (GRCH). As you are likely aware, the herd has declined by more than eighty percent over the last decade, dropping from an estimated 385,000 animals in 2001 to an estimated 74,000 in 2010. Current population modeling using key indicators such as adult mortality and calf recruitment suggest that the herd is now below 50,000 animals and is predicted to fall to approximately 30,000 animals by the fall of 2012. While the precise cause of this decline is uncertain, there is evidence that changes in the quality, quantity, and accessibility of food may have been a major contributing factor. Other factors such as predation, disease, parasites and the effects of climate change, may also be contributing to this decline. While the annual harvest is not the reason for initial decline in the herd, hunting when the population is at such low numbers can significantly add to natural mortality, leading to a faster decline and impeding recovery efforts.

Over the past two years the Province has imposed a series of conservation measures in an attempt to arrest the herd’s decline. These measures include: a moratorium on hunting by commercial operations, a complete prohibition on outfitter hunting, no transfer of licenses as well as imposing a reduction in limit for license holders from two to one caribou per season. In addition to these measures, the Province has shortened the hunting season for 2011-2012 from eight months to three months. These efforts have significantly reduced the number of caribou taken by non-Aboriginal harvesters.

Unfortunately, despite these measures, further conservation efforts are required if the herd is to be conserved and available for future generations. For that reason, the Province is contemplating imposing a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) for the 2012-13 hunting season. This means that based on the best evidence, the Province will determine what if any, is the appropriate total number of George River caribou that should be taken.

We appreciate that Part 12.4 of the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement (LILCA) only imposes an obligation on the Province to consult the Nunatsiavut Government on the appropriate Inuit Harvest Level (IHL) once a TAH level has been officially set. However, we believe that imposing a TAH level for 2012-2013 season is of significance to Inuit harvesters, therefore, we wish to obtain the Nunatsiavut Government’s input on this decision.

You can rest assured, once a TAH level has been established, we will follow the process set out in LILCA to obtain a formal recommendation from your government on the appropriate Inuit Harvest Level (IHL).
To facilitate consultation on the TAH we propose the following process:

1. Provincial officials will contact the Nunatsiavut Government in order to arrange for a meeting with your officials and to coordinate a presentation on the GRCH. Once this meeting is arranged, the Province will provide your organization with an information package containing the most recent population data and outlining the future challenges facing the GRCH.

2. The Nunatsiavut Government shall have 45 days from the receipt of the information package to provide a written response to the information provided. Included in your response should be a proposal as to what an appropriate TAH level might be for 2012-2013.

3. Within 20 days of receipt of the Nunatsiavut Government’s written comments, the Province will respond in writing.

4. Should your officials have any concerns about the Province’s written response, they can request a meeting within 10 days of receiving the Province’s response.

It is necessary to impose strict timelines on this consultation process in order to allow time for further conservation measures to be implemented in advance of the opening of 2012-2013 hunting season. Given that the population is nearing critical levels, any delays in taking additional conservation steps will have a detrimental impact on the sustainability of the herd.

I should also note, that in addition to the Aboriginal specific process outlined above, your organization is welcome to participate in Caribou Advisory Committee, which is open to a broader range of stakeholders. If you have any questions or concerns about the above process, please do not hesitate to contact me.

We look forward to working with your government in order to ensure the sustainability of the GRHC.

Kindest regards,

Bill Parrott
Deputy Minister
Environment and Conservation
Dear Grand Chief Riche,

I am writing to your organization concerning the critically low population level of the George River caribou herd (GRCH). As you are likely aware, the herd has declined by more than eighty percent over the last decade, dropping from an estimated 385,000 animals in 2001 to an estimated 74,000 in 2010. Current population modeling using key indicators such as adult mortality and calf recruitment suggest that the herd is now below 50,000 animals and is predicted to fall to approximately 30,000 animals by the fall of 2012. While the precise cause of this decline is uncertain, there is evidence that changes in the quality, quantity, and accessibility of food may have been a major contributing factor. Other factors such as predation, disease, parasites and the effects of climate change, may also be contributing to this decline. While the annual harvest is not the reason for initial decline in the herd, hunting when the population is at such low numbers can significantly add to natural mortality, leading to a faster decline and impeding recovery efforts.

Over the past two years the Province has imposed a series of conservation measures on non-aboriginals in an attempt to arrest the herd's decline. These measures include: a moratorium on hunting by commercial operations, a complete prohibition on outfitter hunting, no transfer of licenses as well as imposing a reduction in limit for license holders from two to one caribou per season. In addition to these measures, the Province has shortened the hunting season for 2011-2012 from eight months to three months. These efforts have significantly reduced the number of caribou taken by non-Aboriginal harvesters.

Unfortunately, despite these measures, further conservation efforts are required if the herd is to be conserved and available for future generations. For that reason, the Province is contemplating imposing a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) for the 2012-13 hunting season. This means that based on the best evidence, the Province will determine what if any, is the appropriate total number of George River caribou that should be taken. We realize that imposing a TAH may impact harvesters/sunters in your community, and for that reason we wish to consult your organization on the imposition of a TAH and what your communities' basic needs level is for George River Caribou.

To that end, we propose the following consultation process:

1. Provincial officials will contact your organization in order to arrange for a meeting with your officials and to coordinate a presentation on the GRCH. Once this meeting is arranged, the Province will provide your organization with an information package containing the most recent population data and outlining the future challenges facing the GRCH.
1.2. Your organization shall have 45 days from the receipt of the information package to provide a written response to the information provided. Included in your response should be: 1) a proposal as to what an appropriate TAH might be for 2012-2013; and 2) what the basic needs level of your community is for George River caribou.

2.3. Within 20 days of receipt of your organization’s written comments, the Province will respond in writing to your organization.

3.4. Should your organization have any concerns about the Province’s written response, it can request a meeting within 10 days of receiving the Province’s response.

It is necessary to impose strict timelines on this consultation process in order to allow time for further conservation measures to be implemented in advance of the opening of 2012-2013 season. Given that the population is nearing critical levels, any delays in taking additional conservation steps will have a detrimental impact on the sustainability of the herd.

I should also note, that in addition to this Aboriginal specific consultation process outlined above, your organization is also welcome to participate in the Caribou Advisory Committee which open to a broader range of stakeholders. If you have any questions or concerns about the above bilateral process, please do not hesitate to contact me.

We look forward to working with your organization in order to ensure the sustainability of the GRHC.

Kindest regards,

Bill Parrott  
Deputy Minister  
Environment and Conservation
[Caribou Consultation Letter – NCC,]

Dear President Montague:

I am writing to your organization concerning the critically low population level of the George River caribou herd (GRCH). As you are likely aware, the herd has declined by more than eighty percent over the last decade, dropping from an estimated 385,000 animals in 2001 to an estimated 74,000 in 2010. Current population modeling using key indicators such as adult mortality and calf recruitment suggest that the herd is now below 50,000 animals and is predicted to fall to approximately 30,000 animals by the fall of 2012. While the precise cause of this decline is uncertain, there is evidence that changes in the quality, quantity, and accessibility of food may have been a major contributing factor. Other factors such as predation, disease, parasites and the effects of climate change, may also be contributing to this decline. While the annual harvest is not the reason for initial decline in the herd, hunting when the population is at such low numbers can significantly add to natural mortality, leading to a faster decline and impeding recovery efforts.

Over the past two years the Province has imposed a series of conservation measures in an attempt to arrest the herd’s decline. These measures include: a moratorium on hunting by commercial operators, a complete prohibition on outfitter hunting, no transfer of licenses as well as imposing a reduction in limit for license holders from two to one caribou per season. In addition to these measures, the Province has shortened the hunting season for 2011-2012 from eight months to three months. These efforts have significantly reduced the number of caribou taken.

Unfortunately, despite these measures, further conservation efforts are required if the herd is to be conserved and available for future generations. For that reason, the Province is contemplating imposing a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) for the 2012-13 hunting season. This means that based on the best evidence, the Province will determine what if any, is the appropriate total number of George River caribou that should be taken. We realize that imposing a TAH may impact harvesting waters inby members of the NunatuKavk Community Council in your community, and for that reason we wish to consult your organization on the imposition of a TAH.

To that end, we propose the following consultation process:

1. Provincial officials will contact your organization in order to arrange for a meeting with your officials and to coordinate a presentation on the GRCH. Once this meeting is arranged, the Province will provide your organization with an information package containing the most recent population data and outlining the future challenges facing the GRCH.
4.2. Your organization shall have 45 days from the receipt of the information package to provide a written response to the information provided. Included in your response should be a proposal as to what an appropriate TAH might be for 2012-2013.

4.3. Within 20 days of receipt of your organization's written comments, the Province will respond in writing to your organization.

4.4. Should your organization have any concerns about the Province's written response, it can request a meeting within 10 days of receiving the Province's response.

It is necessary to impose strict timelines on this consultation process in order to allow time for further conservation measures to be implemented in advance of the opening of 2012-2013 season. Given that the population is nearing critical levels, any delays in taking additional conservation steps will have a detrimental impact on the sustainability of the herd.

I should also note, that in addition to the consultation process outlined above, your organization is also welcome to participate in the Caribou Advisory Committee, which is open to a broader range of stakeholders. If you have any questions or concerns about the above process, please do not hesitate to contact me.

We look forward to working with your organization in order to ensure the sustainability of the GHRIC.

Kindest regards,

Bill Parrott  
Deputy Minister  
Environment and Conservation
Dear Ken,

Brian RM. Harvey
Director - Aboriginal Affairs
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
(709) 729-1487 (w)
(709) 693-1612 (c)

Looks ok to me.

Firth, Ross

Thanks for your email and offer of funding support. I've attached a draft letter to be sent to Ken Rock outlining the intent of our proposed meeting in Sept Iles. Please review the letter and provide me with your comments. Letters to both the Labrador and Quebec based groups requesting consultation with the province on GRCH management have not yet been sent though I remain optimistic that they'll go out this week. I'll let you know when they're signed.

Regards,
Ross

Sorry if I already sent you this.

Mon 2/27/2012 1:58 PM
Ross, as you will recall we suggested we could cover the travel expenses of 3 or 4 members per community to come to the meeting in Sept Iles in April. Perhaps you or your officials should contact Ken Rock and get him to get an estimate of the costs. We will have to do a grant agreement with one of the bands to pay the costs of the other bands. Perhaps you could get your solicitor to start work on such an agreement. The funds will come from the IGAA consultation fund.
Dear Ken

Thank you for taking the time to meet with Government of Newfoundland and Labrador officials in Montreal on February 22 to discuss matters related to the management of George River caribou. You’ll recall that the province is interested in engaging with six Quebec Innu bands for the purpose of discussing:

1. Whether the respective bands feel that a total allowable harvest (TAH) may be necessary for the 2012/13 season
2. If yes, then what might be an appropriate TAH level?
3. What is the basic needs level of each respective Quebec Innu band?

The province will shortly mail a letter to the Innu Takuaikan Uashat Mak Mani-Utenam (ITUM) First Nation, Unamen Shipu First Nation, Pakua Shipi First Nation, Nutakuan First Nation, Ekuanitshit First Nation, Matimekush - Lac John First Nation seeking consultation on the above noted points.

In order to facilitate engagement with these bands, we discussed in Montreal bringing together representatives from each of the six bands to a meeting in Sept Iles in April. We further discussed that 3 or 4 representatives from each community might travel to Sept Iles and receive financial support from the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador for travel related expenses. You indicated at the meeting that you would be willing to facilitate arrangements to have community representatives’ travel to Sept Iles.

The province wishes to engage in a two part dialogue with Quebec Innu during our time in Sept Iles. Firstly, all community representatives will receive a presentation from Government of Newfoundland and Labrador officials on the current status of the George River caribou herd including current management actions and population trends. Secondly, time would be allocated for Government of Newfoundland and Labrador officials to meet bilaterally with each community to discuss the three questions posed above. As discussed on the 22nd, the province will seek the participation of Government of Quebec officials in the presentation on George River caribou management at our meeting in Sept Iles.

I’d be grateful if you would please confirm your continued interest in assisting with organizing a Sept Iles meeting for April. Please also provide me with an estimated cost associated with bringing 3 or 4 community representatives to Sept Iles over a two day period for the purposes outlined above.

I look forward to hearing from you on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Ross Firth
Aubrey, your review of the attached would be appreciated before I return it to Katherine Mehl.

Best,

Brian
Grand Chief Prose Poker  
Innu Nation  
PO Box 119  
Sheshatshiu, NL A0P 1M0  

Dear Grand Chief Poker:

Thank you for your letter dated 19 February 2013 regarding proposed conservation measures by the Innu Nation to protect the decline of the George River Caribou Herd (GRCH).

On January 28, 2013, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador announced an immediate ban on all hunting of the GRCH in Labrador due to the continuing severe decline of the Herd. We have heard from many Aboriginal groups about the significance and the importance of the caribou, particularly the Innu of Labrador. Given the biological information and the current demographics of the Herd it was imperative for Government to take immediate action to make sure the Herd will be here for future generations. Enforcement Officers will be monitoring the area as they do elsewhere in Labrador to ensure compliance with the Law and will take necessary action to secure the future of this Herd.

As you are aware, the current population of the GRCH is estimated at only about 20,000 animals/individuals. Ongoing monitoring of the Herd indicates that thirty percent (30%) of the adult females die each year. For a stable or growing population to occur, this number would need to be ten percent (10%) or lower. Alarmingly, there are very few, only a total of about 400, older or regal breeding males in the population, (2% of the Herd) and results of monitoring indicate low pregnancy and recruitment rates for the Herd. Given the current demographics and the possibility that such skewed sex ratios can influence pregnancy rates, given the current demographics, a male harvest only would inevitably lead to a faster decline and act to further impede recovery efforts. The above demographics were taken into careful consideration in making the tough decision to stop all harvest.

However, given the biological data and current demographics, it was clear that without drastic action, George River caribou herd could become extirpated. Such a risk would be far more devastating to the future cultural ties for this resource.

My department officials from my Department have offered to travel to both the communities of Sheshatshiu and Natuashish to provide a status update on the George River caribou herd (GRCH) and to answer any questions that you may have. I encourage you to let me know if you have any further questions or if you would like to meet with my department officials. I hope that the Innu Nation will contact the Wildlife Division – Labrador office at (709) 896-5107 to make these arrangements and begin dialogue concerning this important resource.
Finally, please know that the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is committed to conservation and management of the GRCH toward the shared goal of recovery and eventual resumption of a sustainable harvest.

Sincerely,

TOM HEDDERSON, MHA
Harbour Main
Minister
Dear Ken

Thank you for taking the time to meet with Government of Newfoundland and Labrador officials in Montreal on February 22 to discuss matters related to the management of George River caribou. You’ll recall that the province is interested in engaging with six Quebec Innu bands for the purpose of discussing:

1. Whether the respective bands feel that a total allowable harvest (TAH) may be necessary for the 2012/13 season
2. If yes, then what might be an appropriate TAH level
3. What is the basic needs level of each respective Quebec Innu band

The province will shortly mail a letter to the Innu Takuaiakan Uashat Mak Mani-utenam (ITUM) First Nation, Unamen Shipu First Nation, Pakua Shipi First Nation, Nutakuan First Nation, Ekuanitsitsh First Nation, Matimekush - Lac John First Nation seeking consultation on the above noted points.

In order to facilitate engagement with these bands, we discussed in Montreal bringing together representatives from each of the six bands to a meeting in Sept Iles in April. We further discussed that 3 or 4 representatives from each community might travel to Sept Iles and receive financial support from the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador for travel related expenses. You indicated at the meeting that you would be willing to facilitate arrangements to have community representatives’ travel to Sept Iles.

The province wishes to engage in a two-part dialogue with Quebec Innu during our time in Sept Iles. Firstly, all community representatives will receive a presentation from Government of Newfoundland and Labrador officials on the current status of the George River caribou herd including current management actions and population trends. Secondly, time would be allocated for Government of Newfoundland and Labrador officials to meet bilaterally with each community to discuss the three questions posed above. As discussed on the 22nd, the province will seek the participation of Government of Quebec officials in the presentation on George River caribou management at our meeting in Sept Iles.
I'd be grateful if you would please confirm your continued interest in assisting with organizing a Sept Iles meeting for April. Please also provide me with an estimated cost associated with bringing 3 or 4 community representatives to Sept Iles over a two day period for the purposes outlined above.

I look forward to hearing from you on this important issue.

Regards,
Ross

Ross Firth  
Assistant Deputy Minister - Natural Heritage  
Department of Environment and Conservation  
P.O. Box 2007  
117 Riverside Drive  
Corner Brook, NL  
A2H 7S1

Ph. (709) 637-2199  
Fax (709) 637-2180
13.5 This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended only with the written consent of the Parties. An amendment will become effective upon its execution by both Parties, unless another date is agreed.

13.6 This Memorandum of Understanding constitutes the entire agreement of the Parties and supersedes all prior communications, understandings and agreements relating to the subject matter hereof, whether oral or written.

13.7 No consent or waiver, expressed or implied, by any of the Parties, or any breach or default by any Party in the performance of its obligations hereunder shall be deemed or construed to be a consent or waiver to any other breach or default in the performance of obligations hereunder by any such Party.

13.8 Nothing contained in this Memorandum of Understanding shall be construed as creating any agency, partnership or other form of joint enterprise between Innu Nation and the Province or between the Province and a third party.

13.9 This Memorandum of Understanding may be signed in one or more counterparts each of which shall be deemed an original but all of which together shall constitute one and the same instrument.

14 SIGNATURES

14.1 The Innu Nation represents and warrants to the Province that it has the authority to represent the Innu of Labrador.

14.2 The Parties have executed Memorandum of Understanding by the hands of their duly authorized officers as follows.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF our signatures are hereunto inscribed.

Original signed by:

Grand Chief
Innu Nation

[Signature]

Minister of Environment and Conservation
The Province of Newfoundland and Labrador

[Signature]

Minister of Natural Resources
The Province of Newfoundland and Labrador

[Signature]
Brian RM. Harvey  
Director - Aboriginal Affairs  
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador  
(709) 729-1487 (w)  
(709) 693-1612 (c)

From: Firth, Ross  
Sent: Thursday, April 19, 2012 11:54 AM  
To: Blake, John; Harvey, Brian  
Cc: Gover, Aubrey  
Subject: Sept Iles Consultation

John / Brian

Would you please work with Ken Rock to progress the meeting in Sept Iles of the six Quebec Innu communities. His contact details are: 418-962-0327 #5245, cell phone 418-965-7256, email ken.rock@itus.qc.ca I've advised Ken that provincial government officials will be contacting him in the near future.

Please proceed on the basis of a May 8 meeting with the QI. We should consider a venue large enough to accommodate at least 4 delegates from each community along with provincial officials. Ken has indicated that he feels that the communities will wish to discuss the issues of the possible establishment of a TAH and the identification of an IHL as a collective versus our original idea of holding bilateral meetings. As I see it, the day would consist of a presentation to all community reps followed by a Q&A on both the information presented in the PowerPoint plus a discussion on matters related to the TAH and IHL.

We will also need to finalize the grant agreement between the province and the QI. It was suggested that the agreement be structured between the Province and the Uashat. The Uashat would be responsible for distributing funds to other communities to cover expenses. Herb produced an initial draft (see attached) that will need to be reviewed and finalized.

As part of our planning process, we will also need to arrange to meet with representatives from the Naskapi in Sept Iles on the 9th. I've attached a letter from the Naskapi that acknowledges our March 12 letter to them and provides contact details. Discussion will also need to occur regarding travel expense reimbursement for the Naskapi.

Please keep me apprised of progress.

Ross

Ross Firth  
Assistant Deputy Minister - Natural Heritage
KA\AWACHIKAMACH

NASKAPI NATION OF NATION NASKAPI DE
C.P. P.O. Box 5111
KA\AWACHIKAMACH, Nouveau-Qu\'bec
G0G 2Z0

SENDER:
FROM: Mary, secretary/receptionist for Chief Louis
DATE: April 5 2012

TELECOPIER NO: 418-585-3130

RECEIVING:
TO: Mr. Bill Parrott, Deputy Minister
DEPARTMENT: Environment and Conservation
TELECOPIER NO: 1-709-724-0112
NUMBER OF PAGES INCLUDING THIS COVER PAGE: 2

MEMO / INSTRUCTIONS / SUBJECT:


Have a nice day

IF YOU EXPERIENCE ANY DIFFICULTIES CONCERNING THIS TELECOPIER TRANSMISSION, PLEASE CONTACT THE SENDER AT THE NASKAPI NATION OFFICE AT 418-585-2686.
Mr. Bill Parrott  
Deputy Minister  
Department of Environment and Conservation  
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador  
P.O. Box 8700, St. John's, NL  
A1B 4J6

RE: George River Caribou Herd

Dear Mr. Parrott,

Thank you for your letter of March 12, 2012 concerning the critically low population level of the George River caribou herd ("GRCH") and your consultation proposal with regard to a total allowable harvest for the Naskapis for 2012-2013. We are pleased to hear from you in this regard.

Historically the GRCH has been of central importance to the Naskapis and continues to be so. We have been concerned for a number of years about the marked decline of the GRCH and the resulting inability of Naskapi hunters to find and harvest the number of caribou of the GRCH required for subsistence purposes, both in Northern Quebec and in Labrador. Thus the concerns of your government and the concerns of the Naskapis are aligned in this respect and we wish to assure you of our willingness to work with your officials to protect the GRCH.

As the GRCH migrates between Labrador and Northern Quebec, we have always supported a joint management approach between the provinces of Quebec and Newfoundland and Labrador and the Aboriginal groups that traditionally depend upon the GRCH for subsistence. In this connection we understand that representatives from your Department have agreed to attend a GRCH workshop organized by the Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Coordinating Committee established under the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement. We are hoping that the information and views shared in this workshop will assist all concerned parties in reaching the goal of protecting the GRCH, as well as informing our respective officials regarding the consultation process you have proposed.

We think the consultation process you propose in your letter of March 12, 2012 is reasonable and look forward to hearing from you in that regard. For this purpose would you please contact our general adviser Mr. Paul Renzoni. His coordinates are as follows. Atmacinta Inc., 5800 Monkland, 2nd floor, Montreal, (QC), H4A 1G1, e-mail: renzoni@atmacinta.com, Tel: (514) 482-6887, Fax: (514) 482-0036, Cell: (514) 808-5465.

Yours truly,

Chief Louis Erasmus

(by fax (418) 643-1443)
M. Robert Sauvé, Deputy Minister, Quebec Department of Natural Resources and Wildlife
Melindy, Shawn D.

From: Harvey, Brian
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2015 3:07 PM
To: Melindy, Shawn D.
Subject: FW: Meeting with QC Innu

Brian RM. Harvey
Director - Aboriginal Affairs
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
(709) 729-1487 (w)
(709) 693-1612 (c)

-----Original Message-----
From: Harvey, Brian
Sent: Tuesday, May 08, 2012 8:31 PM
To: Firth, Ross; Mehl, Katherine; Crowley, Shannon
Subject: Meeting with QC Innu

Dear all -

Please find a synopsis of today's meeting below, for your review and consideration. Any changes or variances would be appreciated before I convey to my exec, Bill and Don.

Thanks,
Brian

- NL officials met with representatives from four QC Innu First Nations (Ekuanitshit; Pakua Shipi; Unamen Shipu; ITUM). Representatives from Nutsshkuan and Matimekush-Lac John were scheduled to attend, but did not do so. ITUM representatives were expecting the former and could not explain their absence, but were not surprised with the absence of the latter, given the annual goose hunt.

- Each community was represented by 3-5 members, including some councillors, but primarily hunters. [REDACTED]

- The meeting was conducted primarily in Innu-aimun and English, with ITUM officials providing translation services.

- As per other consultations on the George River Caribou Herd (GRCH), the meeting commenced with a presentation from the Province on the current state of the GRCH, with discussion and questions ensuing.

- Many of the participants repeated positions that the Province has previously heard from QC Innu representatives, either in Sept Iles in January 2011, or HVGB in December 2011. The main concerns tended to include some or all of the following messages:
overall, the most common message was that the caribou was the Innu's animal. For time immemorial, they had managed the herd, had only taken what they needed in any given year, and the caribou had always been there. The Innu asserted that they were the proper managers of the herd and that although they were concerned with the government's numbers, would continue to hunt, but in a responsible and sustainable way. The Innu clearly indicated on several instances that they were willing to work for government, but were not willing to let government dictate the terms of their caribou hunt, for if the government would be the ones taking final decisions on who could and couldn't hunt, and how much - the Innu would continue to make their own determinations as to how much to hunt, and when and where. For instance, since 4 years, the QCI have refrained from hunting Joir River and Red Wine caribou, because their numbers were so low. The QCI asserted that although governments wanted to work with them around the issue of harvesting woodland caribou, it was the Innu themselves who chose not to hunt those caribou, and it was the Innu themselves who would choose to hunt or not hunt the George River, too. NL officials chose not to discuss this position, but instead emphasized that its objective was to conserve the herd for the benefit and use of future generations. I note parenthetically that the representation that it was the QCI themselves who stopped hunting the woodland caribou is strictly accurate.

All noted the crucial and central role of the caribou in the lives and culture of the Innu, noting that if there was a complete prohibition on hunting, Innu would be hit harder than anyone else, and especially non-Aboriginals. Although the Innu acknowledged that young Innu were not hunting caribou in the same respectful way of their forebears, the Innu indicated that they would continue to educate their communities, and that any ban on hunting would have serious social effects, including removing a major food supply for communities (some likened it to the white man no longer being able to buy chicken).

Questions were asked about why the caribou was in decline, including whether forage was potentially contaminated by the Chernobyl disaster of the 1980s, or whether low-level flying could have had impacts. NL officials indicated this was possible, but noted that currently, it was thought that the original factor in the decline was habitat-related (including reduced, rather than perhaps contaminated, forage and other density dependant factors), but that once the population was in decline, there were many factors that could influence a continued, or exacerbated, decline, such as predation, poor body conditions, etc.

Many blamed non-Aboriginal hunters for the decline, as well as alleging that non-Aboriginal hunters were wasteful in their hunting, taking only the antlers, or only the antlers and meat, leaving the rest of the carcass on the land. Innu hunters, by contrast, are said to hunt the animals respectfully, and never waste any portion of a killed caribou, using it for food, medicine, clothing, instruments, etc.

Many also asserted that a reason for the decline was because Government sold unlimited licences to non-Aboriginal hunters, and permitted outfitters to operate. The Innu asserted that these practices should have been halted years ago, and in fact, made numerous appeals to NL, QC and Canada to do so, without success. NL officials noted it introduced licence restrictions 2 years ago, and would consider all factors in taking a decision whether to make further changes for future seasons.

Many blamed the increased incidence of plane or helicopter traffic or surveillance for the caribou's decline, asserting that the caribou used to be plentiful, but had been in decline in recent years, coinciding with an increase in air traffic, as well as the use of helicopters and planes by QC and NL wildlife officials in monitoring. NL officials noted that they were sensitive to these concerns, and kept helicopter monitoring of caribou to an absolute minimum, without commenting on the broader assertion that the increased incidence of air traffic by others in Labrador and QC was a contributing factor to the decline.

Most expressed a sense that government was blaming the QCI for the state of the herd. NL officials repeatedly asserted that the hunt was not to blame for the decline, and certainly not the Aboriginal hunt, and reiterated the objectives of the meeting, which were to share the most recent scientific information, and solicit the input and comments of the QCI, as well as their recommendations on a TAH and Basic Needs Levels (BNLs).
o many noted the increase in natural resource exploration and development, and noted that this was impacting the
...longer. NL officials noted that the literature did reveal that human activity could impact the location or migration of
caribou, but that it was not clear that these factors were influencing the GRCH migration or location patterns, or if they
did so influence, whether they were the only factors that led to any changes in migration or location.

o many requested regular meetings in Sept Iles, if not in their own communities, rather than occasional or annual
meetings. In particular, frustration was expressed that government came to Sept Iles in January 2011 to listen to the
Innu, but never followed up with the Innu or communicated how their input had been considered. NL officials noted
open and continued communications were crucial, and would not end when the QCI submitted their TAH/BNL
recommendations.

o some general complaints were made about harassment of QCI hunters in Labrador, if not the apprehension of animals,
firesarms or equipment, but no details were forthcoming. Given that, to the best of my knowledge, there are not pending
prosecutions of QCI, this appeared to be more of a historic, than current, grievance. Moreover, no details or particulars
were provided during the meeting, and ITUM officials later agreed that these concerns were more historic than current,
especially after last year’s decisions were taken not to prosecute certain QCI that had previously been apprehended for
potential violations of the Wildlife Act.

- ITUM officials closed the meeting by advising the Innu representatives that next steps would include a meeting of the 6
Chiefs to discuss the Province’s information and request for input on a TAH and the communities’ BNLs, with a view to
meeting the Province’s late-June deadline for submissions (potentially, with a single, consensus submission from all the
communities). However, ITUM officials noted that it could be difficult to coordinate such a meeting of the Chiefs in a
timely fashion. Although they undertook to meet the deadline, it was indicated that some extension may be necessary, if
the Chiefs were unable to meet in May.

- NL officials thanked all participants for their presence and input at the meeting, and will follow up with correspondence
to each of the Chiefs to that effect, and reminding them of the request for comments on the TAH and BNLs. In the case
of MLJ and Nutashkuan, the followup email will also convey the Province’s presentation from today’s meeting and note
ITUM’s plan to arrange a meeting with all QC Chiefs to discuss the issue. The followup email will also express regret at
their inability to attend, as well as hope that they will still be able to consider the Province’s request.

Brian RM. Harvey

Director, Policy & Planning - Aboriginal Affairs

Intergovernmental & Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat

Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

(709) 729-1487 (w)
(709) 693-1612 (c)

Sent Via BlackBerry
Dear all,

Below, please find a synopsis of today's meeting with the Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach.

We are meeting with six QC Innu communities tomorrow, and I hope to advance a similar precis tomorrow evening.

Best,
Brian

--- This morning, NL officials (Ross Firth, Dr. Katherine Mehl, Shannon Crowley and I) met with the Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach (NNK). Representation was included Chief Louis Einish, Director-General/Band Secretary John Mameanskum, Councillor [REDACTED] (local hunters), and Natalie D. Astous (wildlife consultant retained by NNK).

--- As with other consultation sessions with Aboriginal government/organisations on the George River Caribou Herd (GRCH), after a brief introduction, a presentation was delivered, and discussion and questions ensued, both throughout and after the presentation.

--- On the whole, the meeting was very productive and relations were good. NNK began their remarks by thanking the Province for travelling to Sept Iles for consultations, for funding their participation (by covering travel expenses), and by sending members of the Executive; they noted that this connoted the seriousness with which the Province was approaching the issue.
The primary messages from the NNK included agreement that the GRCH was in a severe state of decline; that conservation measures were urgently needed; and, that the NNK would be happy and willing to participate in any discussions and consideration of conservation measures.

The NNK also stressed the importance of communication, and the Province acknowledged as much, undertaking to ensure that Government's decision on the 2012-13 season would be clearly communicated to all appropriate stakeholders as soon as practicable in late 2012/early 2013. Moreover, Government noted that this meeting was not the only consultation efforts with the NNK in 2012; as per ENVC's consultation plan for GRCH, consulted Aboriginal governments/organisations have been asked to provide recommendations to Government within 1½ months of the face-to-face consultations, and further opportunities for discussion may be available after those recommendations are received and considered by the Province.

The most notable specific concern was raised around the issue of cumulative effects, particularly in the area of the GRCH's calving grounds. Specifically, the NNK asked whether the Province had a portrait of all mining exploration (in particular) and development in Labrador, as compared to the GRCH migration patterns and calving grounds. Several NNK representatives raised concerns around the cumulative impacts, and that Government could not consider these activities on a case-by-case basis, but rather had to consider them in the broader context of other developments in the area, and the potential impacts on wildlife. The Province noted that this was a concern, and undertook to convey that concern to the appropriate officials within Government.

Most of the other points raised, or questions asked, were discrete issues, but the most notable were repeating here: Section 29(1)(a)

Despite stressing the importance of conservation, the NNK's commitment to same, and noting that, in the five years prior to this hunting season, the highest annual harvest of GRCH was five animals this year, when the caribou migrated closer than usual to Schefferville, the NNK took approximately 200 caribou in November/December 2011; and, approximately 20 in April 2012.

When queried whether a quota was imposed on the Labrador Innu or the NG, the Province responded in the negative, and noted that the Province's policy was that Aboriginal people could freely exercise the right to harvest without fear of prosecution if harvesting during the open season in zones that are open for caribou hunting.

When asked whether the NNK had established the community's present Basic Needs Level, the NNK merely noted its caribou quota, and the fact that it had never surpassed the quota.

The NNK's caribou quota is from the James Bay/Northeastern Quebec Agreement; by copy of this email, I will ask Greg to see if he can ascertain what that quota is, but we understand it to be in the 1000s of caribou. The NNK noted that although the caribou quota is not specifically for GRCH, or intended to be split between, say, GRCH and Leaf River herds, the NNK noted that it was effectively a GRCH quota, because none of the other caribou ranged closely enough to the community to be reasonably accessible.
- In concluding, the NNK set out five specific points:
  i. NNK will abide by the principles of conservation, as laid out in the JBNQA.

  ii. NNK reiterated what it said at the LCP Panel Hearings, and echoed what was recommended by the JRP Report: an interprovincial management board should be established, including all stakeholders from both QC and NL.

  iii. NNK recommended that NL appear at the HTFCC workshop in Montreal in September, and deliver its presentation on GRCH.

  iv. NNK intends that its members should be able to go to Labrador to hunt GRCH in times of need without harassment from officials or fear of prosecution.

  v. Over 90% of NNK Members' outposts/cabins are in Labrador, and NNK Members are in Labrador throughout the year, to hunt, fish, trap, etc.
Greg, please note Brian's question on the NKK quota on page 2. Herb, FYI.

-----Original Message-----
From: Harvey, Brian
Sent: Monday, May 07, 2012 9:52 PM
To: Gover, Aubrey; English, Tracy; Burrage, Don; Parrott, William
Cc: Firth, Ross; Crowley, Shannon; Mehl, Katherine
Subject: Naskapi Nation Consultations - George River Caribou Herd
Importance: High

Dear all -

Below, please find a synopsis of today's meeting with the Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach.

We are meeting with six QC Innu communities tomorrow, and I hope to advance a similar precis tomorrow evening.

Best,
Brian

- This morning, NL officials (Ross Firth, Dr. Katherine Mehl, Shannon Crowley and I) met with the Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach (NNK). Representation was included Chief Louis Finish, Director-General/Band Secretary John Mameamuk, Councillor [redacted] (local hunters), and Natalie D’Astous (wildlife consultant retained by NNK).

- As with other consultation sessions with Aboriginal government / organisations on the George River Caribou Herd (GRCH), after a brief introduction, a presentation was delivered, and discussion and questions ensued, both throughout and after the presentation.

- On the whole, the meeting was very productive and relations were good. NNK began their remarks by thanking the Province for travelling to Sept Iles for consultations, for funding their participation (by covering travel expenses), and by sending members of the Executive; they noted that this connoted the seriousness with which the Province was approaching the issue.

- The primary messages from the NNK included agreement that the GRCH was in a severe state of decline; that conservation measures were urgently needed; and, that the NNK would be happy and willing to participate in any discussions and consideration of conservation measures.

- The NNK also stressed the importance of communication, and the Province acknowledged as much, undertaking to ensure that Government’s decision on the 2012-13 season would be clearly communicated to all appropriate stakeholders as soon as practicable in late 2012/early 2013. Moreover, Government noted that this meeting was not the only consultation efforts with the NNK in 2012; as per ENVIC’s consultation plan...
for GRCH, consulted Aboriginal governments / organisations have been asked to provide recommendations to Government within 1 ¼ months of the face-to-face consultations, and further opportunities for discussion may be available after those recommendations are received and considered by the Province.

The most notable specific concern was raised around the issue of cumulative effects, particularly in the area of the GRCH's calving grounds. Specifically, the NNK asked whether the Province had a "portrait" of all mining exploration (in particular) and development in Labrador, as compared to the GRCH migration patterns and calving grounds. Several NNK representatives raised concerns around the cumulative impacts, and that Government could not consider these activities on a case-by-case basis, but rather had to consider them in the broader context of other developments in the area, and the potential impacts on wildlife. The Province noted that this was a concern, and undertook to convey that concern to the appropriate officials within Government.

Most of the other points raised, or questions asked, were discrete issues, but the most notable bear repeating here:

- Despite stressing the importance of conservation, the NNK's commitment to same, and noting that, in the five years prior to this hunting season, the highest annual harvest of GRCH was five animals - this year, when the caribou migrated closer than usual to Schefferville, the NNK took approximately 200 caribou in November/December 2011; and, approximately 20 in April 2012.

- When queried whether a quota was imposed on the Labrador Innu or the NG, the Province responded in the negative, and noted that the Province's policy was that Aboriginal people could freely exercise the right to harvest without fear of prosecution if harvesting during the open season in zones that are open for caribou hunting.

- When asked whether the NNK had established the community's present Basic Needs Level, the NNK merely noted its caribou quota, and the fact that it had never surpassed the quota.

- The NNK's "caribou quota" is from the James Bay / North Eastern Quebec Agreement; by copy of this email, I will ask Greg to see if he can ascertain what that quota is, but we understand it to be in the 1000s of caribou. The NNK noted that although the caribou quota is not specifically for GRCH, or intended to be split between, say, GRCH and Leaf River herds, the NNK noted that it was effectively a GRCH quota, because none of the other caribou ranged closely enough to the community to be reasonably accessible.
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Brian RM. Harvey
Director - Aboriginal Affairs
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
(709) 729-1487 (w)
(709) 693-1612 (c)

From: Clarke, Greg
Sent: Tuesday, May 08, 2012 12:31 PM
To: Harvey, Brian
Cc: Gover, Aubrey
Subject: NNK Consultations - George River Caribou Herd

Brian, you asked for the NNK’s caribou quota. According to a 2010 NNK PPT presentation, the Upper Limit of Kill was last set under the Agreement in 1986-7 at 9000. In 2004 the NNK’s guaranteed level of harvest was set at 1020 caribou. This is the most up-to-date information I could find in short order.


Section 29(1)(a)
Greg Clarke
Senior Analyst
Aboriginal Affairs

Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat
Executive Council
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
Confederation Building, East Block – Sixth Floor
Box 8700, St. John's, NL A1B 4J6

Non-responsive
Brian RM. Harvey

Director, Policy & Planning - Aboriginal Affairs

Intergovernmental & Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat

Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

(709) 729-1487 (w)
(709) 693-1512 (c)

Sent Via BlackBerry

----- Original Message ----- 
From: Harvey, Brian
To: Gaigay, Taracetta; Bugden, Mark; Clarke, Greg
Sent: Wed May 09 08:48:43 2012
Subject: Fw: Naskapi Nation Consultations - George River Caribou Herd

FYI

Brian RM. Harvey

Director, Policy & Planning - Aboriginal Affairs

Intergovernmental & Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat

Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

(709) 729-1487 (w)
(709) 693-1612 (c)

Sent Via BlackBerry

----- Original Message ----- 
From: Harvey, Brian
To: Gover, Aubrey; English, Tracy; Burrage, Don; Parrott, William
Cc: Firth, Ross; Crowley, Shannon; Mehl, Katherine  
Sent: Mon May 07 21:51:47 2012  
Subject: Naskapi Nation Consultations - George River Caribou Herd

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Below, please find a synopsis of today's meeting with the Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach.

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Brian RM. Harvey

Director, Policy & Planning - Aboriginal Affairs

Intergovernmental & Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat

Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

(709) 729-1487 (w)
(709) 693-1612 (c)

Sent Via BlackBerry

----- Original Message ----- 
From: Harvey, Brian
To: English, Tracy; Gover, Aubrey; Burrage, Don; Parrott, William
Cc: Firth, Ross; Mehl, Katherine; Crowley, Shannon
Sent: Wed May 09 08:35:08 2012
Subject: Re: QCI Consultations

Dear all -

Further to the below, it appears that one representative from Matimekush was in attendance, although this representative, a young lady, is not believed to have been either a councillor or a hunter.
She did not speak at any point during the meeting.
I apologise for this oversight.

Best,
Brian

Brian RM. Harvey

Director, Policy & Planning - Aboriginal Affairs

Intergovernmental & Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat

Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

(709) 729-1487 (w)
----- Original Message ----- 
From: Harvey, Brian
To: English, Tracy; Gover, Aubrey; Burrage, Don; Parrott, William
Cc: Firth, Ross; Mehl, Katherine; Crowley, Shannon
Sent: Wed May 09 08:07:39 2012
Subject: QCI Consultations

Good morning all -

Further to my message of Monday evening, which relayed a summary of our meetings with the Naskapi Nation, below, please find a synopsis of yesterday's meeting with the QC Innu in Sept Iles.

Best,
Brian

- NL officials met with representatives from four QC Innu First Nations (Ekuanitsit; Pakua Shipi; Unamen Shipu; ITUM). Representatives from Nutashkuan and Matimekush-Lac John were scheduled to attend, but did not do so. ITUM representatives were expecting the former and could not explain their absence, but were not surprised with the absence of the latter, given the annual goose hunt.

- Each community was represented by 3-5 members, including some councillors, but primarily hunters.

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  o overall, the most common message was that the caribou was the Innu's animal. For time immemorial, they had managed the herd, had only taken what they needed in any given year, and the caribou had always been there. The Innu asserted that they were the proper managers of the herd and that although they were concerned with the government's numbers, would continue to hunt, but in a responsible and sustainable way. The Innu clearly indicated on several instances that they were willing to work with government, but were not willing to let government dictate the terms of their caribou hunt, nor accept that government would be the ones taking final decisions on who could and couldn't hunt, and how much - the Innu would continue to make their own determinations as to how much to hunt, and when and where. For instance, since 4 years, the QCI have refrained from hunting Joir River and Red Wine caribou, because their numbers were so low. The QCI asserted that although governments wanted to work with them around the issue of harvesting woodland caribou, it was the Innu themselves who chose not to hunt those caribou, and it was the Innu themselves who would choose to hunt or not hunt the George River, too. NL officials chose not to discuss this position, but instead emphasised that its objective was to conserve the herd for the benefit and use of future generations. I note parenthetically that although the assertion that it was the QCI themselves who stopped hunting the woodland caribou is strictly accurate,
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o questions were asked about why the caribou was in decline, including whether forage was potentially contaminated by the Chernobyl disaster of the 1980s, or whether low-level flying could have had impacts. NL officials indicated that it was thought that the original factor in the decline was habitat-related (including reduced, rather than perhaps contaminated, forage and other density dependent factors), but that once the population was in decline, there were many factors that could influence a continued, or exacerbated, decline, such as predation, poor body conditions, and greater access by hunters, given the increased technology.

o many blamed non-Aboriginal hunters for the decline, as well as alleging that non-Aboriginal hunters were wasteful in their hunting, taking only the antlers, or only the antlers and meat, leaving the rest of the carcass on the land. Innu hunters, by contrast, are said to hunt the animals respectfully, and never waste any portion of a killed caribou, using it for food, medicine, clothing, instruments, etc.

o many also asserted that a reason for the decline was because Government sold unlimited licences to non-Aboriginal hunters, and permitted outfitters to operate. The Innu asserted that these practices should have been halted years ago, and in fact, made numerous appeals to NL, QC and Canada to do so, without success. NL officials noted it introduced licence restrictions 2 years ago, and would consider all factors in taking a decision whether to make further changes for future seasons.

o many blamed the increased incidence of plane or helicopter traffic or surveillance for the caribou's decline, asserting that the caribou used to be plentiful, but had been in decline in recent years, coinciding with an increase in air traffic, as well as the use of helicopters and planes by QC and NL wildlife officials in monitoring. NL officials noted that they were sensitive to these concerns, and kept helicopter time spent capturing caribou to an absolute minimum, without commenting on the broader assertion that the increased incidence of air traffic by others in Labrador and QC was a contributing factor to the decline.

o most expressed a sense that government was blaming the QCI for the state of the herd. NL officials repeatedly asserted that the hunt was not to blame for the decline, and certainly not the Aboriginal hunt, and reiterated the objectives of the meeting, which were to share the most recent scientific information, and solicit the input and comments of the QCI, as well as their recommendations on a TAH and Basic Needs Levels (BNLs). NL officials stated the goal of working together toward the common goal, to ensure that caribou remained for future generations.

o many noted the increase in natural resource exploration and development, and noted that this was impacting the caribou; in particular, representatives noted the GRCH used to always migrate near Schefferville, but did not do so any longer. NL officials noted that the literature did reveal that human activity could impact the location or migration of caribou, but that it was not clear that these factors were influencing the GRCH migration or location patterns, or if they did so influence, whether they were the only factors that led to any changes in migration or location. QCI noted that if government was serious about the decline and if they asked Innu to stop hunting, government must due their part also by stopping exploration and development in areas important to caribou. It was stated as ethics vs economics.

o many requested regular meetings in Sept Iles, if not in their own communities, rather than occasional or annual meetings. In particular, frustration was expressed that government came to Sept Iles in January 2011 to listen to the Innu, but never followed up with the Innu or communicated how their input had been considered. NL officials noted open and continued communications were crucial, and would not end when the QCI submitted their TAH/BNL recommendations.
o some general complaints were made about harassment of QCI hunters in Labrador, if not the apprehension of animals, firearms or equipment, but no details were forthcoming. Given that, to the best of my knowledge, there are not pending prosecutions of QCI, this appeared to be more of a historic, than current, grievance. Moreover, no details or particulars were provided during the meeting, and ITUM officials later agreed that these concerns were more historic than current, especially after last year's decisions were taken not to prosecute certain QCI that had previously been apprehended for potential violations of the Wildlife Act. However, some representatives did note that protest hunts in the past had been effective because, by hunting in a group of 100 or so Innu hunters, the Innu had avoided arrest because NL officials would not confront such a large group of hunters. These representatives suggested such, if the Province prohibited a QCI harvest of the GRCH, such mass hunts could be organised again.

- ITUM officials closed the meeting by advising the Innu representatives that next steps would include a meeting of the 6 Chiefs to discuss the Province's information and request for input on a TAH and the communities' BNLs, with a view to meeting the Province's late-June deadline for submissions (potentially, with a single, consensus submission from all the communities). However, ITUM officials noted that it could be difficult to coordinate such a meeting of the Chiefs in a timely fashion. Although they undertook to meet the deadline, it was indicated that some extension may be necessary, if the Chiefs were unable to meet in May.

- NL officials thanked all participants for their presence and input at the meeting, and will follow up with correspondence to each of the Chiefs to that effect, and reminding them of the request for comments on the TAH and BNLs. In the case of MLJ and Nutashkuan, the followup email will also convey the Province's presentation from today's meeting and note ITUM's plan to arrange a meeting with all QC Chiefs to discuss the issue. The followup email will also express regret at their inability to attend, as well as hope that they will still be able to consider the Province's request.

Brian RM. Harvey

Director, Policy & Planning - Aboriginal Affairs

Intergovernmental & Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat

Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

(709) 729-1487 (w)
(709) 693-1512 (c)

Sent Via BlackBerry
Brian RM. Harvey  
Director - Aboriginal Affairs  
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador  
(709) 729-1487 (w)  
(709) 693-1612 (c)

---

From: Harvey, Brian  
Sent: Thursday, May 17, 2012 9:51 PM  
To: Mehl, Katherine  
Subject: RE: follow-up GRCH consulations - 2

Hi Katherine—

Sorry for the delay. I made some minor adjustments to the English versions, and provided French translations, for both emails. Please see attached changes to the English versions are tracked for your ease of reference and consideration.

Follow-up Emails  
- French Trans...

I hope this helps.

Best,  
Brian.

Brian RM. Harvey  
Director, Policy & Planning - Aboriginal Affairs  
Intergovernmental & Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat  
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador  
(709) 729-1487 (w)  
(709) 693-1612 (c)

---

From: Mehl, Katherine  
Sent: Tuesday, May 15, 2012 11:18 AM  
To: Harvey, Brian  
Subject: follow-up GRCH consulations - 2
Hi Brian,

Please see below version for Matimekush and Lac—John for your review/translation

Thank you once again.

Katherine

Dear XXX,

We missed you in Sept Iles on 8 May. Input by the XXX will be helpful to the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador in assessing new conservation measures for the George River Caribou Herd. It is our hope that we continue with open dialogue on conservation issues between now and when you submit your recommendation for a TAH, as well as in the years that follow. I have attached copies of the presentation from the consultation in Sept Iles. It is my hope that this, along with copies of the information emailed on 4 May, will provide you with some of the background information on the trends and status of the GRCH, as discussed in Sept Iles.

Per the March 12 letter, the province of NL requests recommendation by the XXX regarding the need to implement a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH), and if a TAH is recommended, what that number would be. The requested TAH refers to the upper limit to all harvesting of the GRCH. If a TAH were to be implemented, this number would apply to Aboriginal harvesters only, as non-aboriginal harvest ceases upon the implementation of a TAH. Also important will be information concerning the Basic Needs Level (BNL) for the XXX.

The following timelines are of critical importance as the consultation process continues:

- **18 June 2012**: deadline for XXX to provide written recommendations for both the TAH and the Naskapi Nation’s BNL;
- **09 July 2012**: deadline for NL to respond in writing to XXX’s recommendations
- **20 July 2012**: deadline for XXX to make any additional observations or pose any further questions to the Province.

Again, strict timelines on the process are necessary in order to allow time for implementation of conservation measures prior to the 2012-2013 caribou harvest season.

If you should have any questions, whatsoever, or wish to discuss any aspect of the process please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you once again for your time. We look forward to working with you.

Katherine

Katherine Mehl, Ph.D.
Senior Manager of Habitat Game and Fur Management
Wildlife Division
PO Box 2007
117 Riverside Dr.
Corner Brook, NL A2H 7S1
Phone: (709) 637-2303
Fax: (709) 637-2004

Our Wildlife, the quarterly newsletter of the NL Wildlife Division, is available on the Environment and Conservation website: http://www.env.gov.nl.ca/env/index.html
E-MAIL TO MEETING ATTENDEES

Dear XXX,

Please know that your time and that of the council members and hunters is greatly appreciated. Input by the XXX is helpful to us and, as stated in our meeting with you, it is our hope that we continue with open dialogue on conservation issues between now and when you submit your recommendation for a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) and your community’s Basic Needs Level, as well as in the years that follow. We remind you that your input on these subjects is expected by 18 June 2012.

Per the March 12 letter, the province of NL requests recommendation by the XXX regarding the need to implement a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH), and if a TAH is recommended, what that number would be. The requested TAH refers to the upper limit to all harvesting of the GRCH. If a TAH were to be implemented, this number would apply to Aboriginal harvesters only, as non-aboriginal harvest ceases upon the implementation of a TAH. Also important, will be information concerning the Basic Needs Level (BNL) for the XXX, which is the lowest number of caribous required to support your community in a year.

The following timelines are of critical importance as the consultation process continues:

• 18 June 2012: deadline for XXX to provide written recommendations for both the TAH and the NaskapiNation’s BNL;
• 09 July 2012: deadline for NL to respond in writing to XXX’s recommendations
• 20 July 2012: deadline for XXX to make any additional observations or pose any further questions to the Province.

Again, strict timelines on the process are necessary in order to allow time for implementation of conservation measures prior to the 2012-2013 caribou harvest season.

If you should have any questions, whatsoever, or wish to discuss any aspect of the process please do not hesitate to contact me or others that were present at the meeting. Thank you once again for your time. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Katherine

Cher XXX,
Dear XXX,

We are sorry you were unable to attend our meeting in Sept-Iles on 8 May. Input by the Matimekush-Lac John First Nation will be helpful to the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador in assessing new conservation measures for the George River Caribou Herd. It is our hope that we continue with open dialogue on conservation issues between now and when you submit your recommendation for a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) and your community's Basic Needs Level (BNL), as well as in the years that follow. We remind you that your input on these subjects is expected by 18 June 2012.

I have attached copies of the presentation from the consultation in Sept-Iles. It is my hope that this, along with copies of the information emailed to you on 4 May, will provide you with important of the background information on the trends and status of the GRCH, as discussed in Sept-Iles.

Per the March 12 letter, the province of NL requests recommendation by the Matimekush-Lac John First Nation regarding the need to implement a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) TAH, and if a TAH is recommended, what that number would be. The requested TAH refers to the upper limit to all harvesting of the GRCH. If a TAH were to be implemented, this number would apply to Aboriginal harvesters only, as non-aboriginal harvest ceases upon the implementation of a TAH. Also important, will be information concerning the Basic Needs Level (BNL) for the Matimekush-Lac John First Nation, which is the lowest number of caribous required to support your community in a year.

The following timelines are of critical importance as the consultation process continues:

- 16 June 2012: deadline for Matimekush-Lac John First Nation XXX to provide written recommendations for both the TAH and the Naskapi Nation's BNL;
- 09 July 2012: deadline for NL to respond in writing to Matimekush-Lac John First Nation's XXX's recommendations;
- 20 July 2012: deadline for Matimekush-Lac John First Nation XXX to make any additional observations or pose any further questions to the Province.

Again, strict timelines on the process are necessary in order to allow time for implementation of conservation measures prior to the 2012-2013 caribou harvest season.

If you should have any questions, whatsoever, or wish to discuss any aspect of the process, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you once again for your time. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,
Brian RM. Harvey  
Director - Aboriginal Affairs  
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador  
(709) 729-1487 (w)  
(709) 693-1612 (c)

From: Harvey, Brian  
Sent: Friday, May 25, 2012 4:20 PM  
To: Mehl, Katherine  
Subject: Re: follow-up GRCH consultations - 2

Wow. Weird. I wrote down Malitenam in my notes. Weird I didn’t notice MLJ.

Brian RM. Harvey  
Director, Policy & Planning - Aboriginal Affairs  
Intergovernmental & Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat  
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador  
(709) 729-1487 (w)  
(709) 693-1612 (c)

Sent Via BlackBerry

From: Mehl, Katherine  
To: Harvey, Brian  
Sent: Fri May 25 16:17:43 2012  
Subject: RE: follow-up GRCH consultations - 2

Matimekush

Katherine

From: Harvey, Brian  
Sent: Friday, May 25, 2012 4:17 PM  
To: Mehl, Katherine  
Subject: Re: follow-up GRCH consultations - 2
Yes, Nutashkuan wasn’t present, you’re right, so they should get a similar letter as MLJ.

What did the girl write on the sheet for her community? Was it ‘matimekush’? Or ‘mellotienam’?

Brian RM. Harvey
Director, Policy & Planning - Aboriginal Affairs
Intergovernmental & Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
(709) 729-1487 (w)
(709) 693-1612 (c)
Sent Via BlackBerry

From: Mehl, Katherine
To: Harvey, Brian
Sent: Fri May 25 16:14:04 2012
Subject: RE: follow-up GRCH consulations - 2

Hi Brian,

Before I send the emails out – I noticed that the Word file that you sent has Matimekush-Lac John as not being present. Not sure if we count the one rep as ‘present’ for them but I also have Natashquan as not being present. I believe that I can make the changes to the French and English versions but I wanted to confirm this with you.

Thank you,

Katherine

---

From: Harvey, Brian
Sent: Thursday, May 17, 2012 9:51 PM
To: Mehl, Katherine
Subject: RE: follow-up GRCH consulations - 2

Hi Katherine –

Sorry for the delay. I made some minor adjustments to the English versions, and provided French translations, for both emails. Please see attached changes to the English versions are tracked for your ease of reference and consideration << File: Follow-up Emails - French Translation.docx >>).

I hope this helps.

Best,

Brian.
Hi Brian,

Please see below version for Matimekush and Lac–John for your review/translation

Thank you once again,

Katherine

Dear XXX,

We missed you in Sept Iles on 8 May. Input by the XXX will be helpful to the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador in assessing new conservation measures for the George River Caribou Herd. It is our hope that we continue with open dialogue on conservation issues between now and when you submit your recommendation for a TAH, as well as in the years that follow. I have attached copies of the presentation from the consultation in Sept Iles. It is my hope that this, along with copies of the information emailed on 4 May, will provide you with some of the background information on the trends and status of the GRCH, as discussed in Sept Iles.

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The following timelines are of critical importance as the consultation process continues:

- **18 June 2012:** deadline for XXX to provide written recommendations for both the TAH and the Neskapi Nation’s BNL;
- **09 July 2012:** deadline for NL to respond in writing to XXX’s recommendations
- **20 July 2012:** deadline for XXX to make any additional observations or pose any further questions to the Province.

Again, strict timelines on the process are necessary in order to allow time for implementation of conservation measures prior to the 2012-2013 caribou harvest season.
If you should have any questions, whatsoever, or wish to discuss any aspect of the process please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you once again for your time. We look forward to working with you,

Katherine

Katherine Mehl, Ph.D.
Senior Manager of Habitat Game and Fur Management
Wildlife Division
PO Box 2007
117 Riverside Dr.
Corner Brook, NL A2H 7S1
Phone: (709) 637-2383
Fax: (709) 637-2004

Our Wildlife, the quarterly newsletter of the NL Wildlife Division, is available on the Environment and Conservation website: http://www.env.gov.nl.ca/env/index.html
Hi to All,

GRC Aboriginal Consultations to include final responses from the aboriginal groups are scheduled for completion on 20 July (see below). This was the process described in the 12 March letter regarding consultations with each of the aboriginal groups. Seeing your involvement in the process, I thought I would send this to all of you an update on where we are so far. Note that, to date, no recommendations have been received.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you each for your input and assistance (past and future).

Katherine

GRC Aboriginal Consultation 2012 schedule.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
<th>Date of Consultation</th>
<th>TAH Recommendation Due Date</th>
<th>Gov’t Response Due</th>
<th>Final Stakeholder Responses Due</th>
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<td>17 APR</td>
<td>31 May</td>
<td>20 JUN</td>
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<td>17 APR</td>
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<td>NG</td>
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<tr>
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<td>14 JUN</td>
<td>4 JUL</td>
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<td>7 MAY</td>
<td>18 JUN</td>
<td>9 JUL</td>
<td>20 JUL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ekuaniqishit</td>
<td>8 MAY</td>
<td>18 JUN</td>
<td>9 JUL</td>
<td>20 JUL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Natashquan</td>
<td>8 MAY</td>
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<td>18 JUN</td>
<td>9 JUL</td>
<td>20 JUL</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Katherine Mehl, Ph.D.
Senior Manager of Habitat Game and Fur Management
Wildlife Division
PO Box 2007
117 Riverside Dr.
Conner Brook, NL A2H 7S1
Phone: (709) 637-2383
Fax: (709) 637-2004
Our Wildlife, the quarterly newsletter of the NL Wildlife Division, is available on the Environment and Conservation website:
Hi All,

The Province is dedicated to the management and conservation of the George River Caribou Herd (GRCH). In order to facilitate successful management and conservation actions for the future, the Province asks that each stakeholder group provide the names and contact information of two individuals that they wish to appoint to the Provincial GRCH Advisory Committee.

The Provincial Advisory Committee will be responsible for promoting conservation of the GRCH and providing management recommendations to the Minister of Environment and Conservation. Invited members include representatives from: Nunatsiavut Government, Labrador Innu Nation, NunatuKavut Community Council, Torngat Wildlife and Plants Co-management Board, Labrador Hunting and Fishing Association, the NL Outfitters Association, and the Province of NL.

The first meeting of the Provincial GRCH Advisory Committee is scheduled for 27 June, from 1:30-4pm at the Friendship Centre in HV-GB. In order for us to plan for the meeting, please forward the names and contact information of the two individuals that you wish to serve as your representatives, along with their availability for meeting on 27 June.

The tentative agenda for the meeting is to provide a status update on the GRCH, to include harvest updates and consultation and management timelines. The input of all groups will be necessary to ensure successful conservation measures and actions.

I would like to thank you for your past involvement with the GRCH Workshops and I hope to see representatives from all groups on 27 June, from 1:30-4pm.

I look forward to hearing from. Have a great week.

Katherine

Katherine Mehl, Ph.D.
Senior Manager of Habitat Game and Fur Management
Wildlife Division
PO Box 2007
117 Riverside Dr.
Corner Brook, NL A2H 7S1
Phone: (709) 637-2383
Fax: (709) 637-2004
Our Wildlife, the quarterly newsletter of the NL Wildlife Division, is available on the Environment and Conservation website: http://www.env.gov.nl.ca/env/index.html
Hi Katherine,

I have a few suggestions for your consideration.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment.

See attached.

H

Herb Simms
Senior Policy Analyst
Resource and Fiscal Policy
Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
7th Floor, East Block
Confederation Building
St. John's, NL
A1B 4J6

Tel: (709) 729-2839
Fax: (709) 729-5038
HerbSimms@gov.nl.ca

Hi to All,

Please find attached a copy of the Ekuaniishit letter to ENVC (English translation) and a draft response for your review. I am hoping to get this out soon – end of week if possible. I realize that everyone is busy, please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you in advance for your review and comments,

Katherine Mehl, Ph.D.
Senior Manager of Habitat Game and Fur Management
Wildlife Division
PO Box 2007
117 Riverside Dr.
Corner Brook, NL A2H 7S1
Phone: (709) 637-2383
Fax: (709) 637-2004
From: Firth, Ross
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2012 2:24 PM
To: Parrott, William; Burrage, Don; English, Tracy; Gover, Aubrey; Blake, John; Mehl, Katherine
Subject: Letter from Jean-Charles Pietacho of Innu de Ekuanitshit to Bill Parrott

Folks

Attached please find a copy of the letter that was translated by the Office of French Services.

Ross

Ross Firth
Assistant Deputy Minister - Natural Heritage

Department of Environment and Conservation
P.O. Box 2007
117 Riverside Drive
Corner Brook, NL
A2H 7S1

Ph. (709) 637-2199
Fax (709) 637-2180
Chef Jean-Charles Piétacho
Conseil des Innus d'Ekuanitshii
35 Manitou Street, C.P. 420
Migan, PQ G0G 1V0

Dear Chef Jean-Charles Piétacho:

Thank you for your letter dated 22 May 2012 in which you outline your community’s concern for the current George River Caribou Herd (GRCH) consultation process established by the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Please know that I am thankful for your time and that of the Ekuanitshii council members, during the recent consultation process held in Sept Iles, PQ Quebec that was held on 8 May 2012.

As the Deputy Minister of Environment and Conservation, I take your concerns seriously and appreciate your concern and that of the GRCH. The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador recognizes the severity of the population decline and is dedicated to working to ensure that this important resource is both sustainable for future generations and which rely upon the herd. It is for these reasons that strict timelines on this consultation process are necessary so that in order for appropriate conservation measures can be implemented prior to the 2012-2013 caribou season. Given the exceedingly low population level of the GRCH, delays in taking conservation steps could have serious and long lasting detrimental impacts on the sustainability of the herd.

It is my hope that Ekuanitshii will reconsider submission of recommendations for a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) and their community’s Basic Needs Level. Recommendation by the Ekuanitshii, regarding the need to implement a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) is important to us for future conservation measures.

Thank you in advance for your time. We look forward to your input and efforts to ensure the sustainability of this vital resource.

Bill Parrott
Deputy Minister
Department of Environment and Conservation
Chef Jean-Charles Piétacho  
Conseil des Innus d’Ekuanishit  
35 Manitou Street, C.P. 420  
Migan, PQ G0G 1V0

Dear Chef Jean-Charles Piétacho:

Thank you for your letter dated 22 May 2012 in which you outline your community’s concern for the current George River Caribou Herd (GRCH) consultation process established by the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. I am thankful for your time and that of the Ekuanitshit council members in the meeting in Sept Iles, Quebec that was held on May 8, 2012.

As the Deputy Minister of Environment and Conservation, I take your concerns seriously. The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador recognizes the severity of the population decline and is dedicated to working to ensure that this important resource is sustainable for future generations. Given the exceedingly low population level of the GRCH, delays in taking conservation steps could have serious and long lasting detrimental impacts on the herd.

It is my hope that Ekuanitshit will reconsider submission of recommendations for a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) and their community’s Basic Needs Level. Recommendation by the Ekuanitshit, regarding the need to implement a TAH is important to us for future conservation measures.

Thank you in advance for your time. We look forward to your input and efforts to ensure the sustainability of this vital resource.

Bill Parrott  
Deputy Minister  
Department of Environment and Conservation
Department of Justice
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
P.O. Box 8700
St. John's, NL
Canada
A1B 4J6

Sent Via BlackBerry

From: Gover, Aubrey
To: Mellor, Justin S. C.; Mehl, Katherine; Blake, John; Bowles, Ron; Carter, Ruby; Crowley, Shannon; Edwards, Herb; Firth, Ross; Galguy, Taracetta; Harvey, Brian; Maloney, James; Melindy, Shawn D.; Simms, Herb; Watkins, Michelle
Sent: Fri Jun 15 09:52:57 2012
Subject: RE: Letter from Jean-Charles Pietacho of Innu de Ekuanitshit to Bill Parrott

I think the final draft should be circulated to everyone for a last review just to ensure everyone is aware of all of the changes.

From: Mellor, Justin S. C.
Sent: Friday, June 15, 2012 9:49 AM
To: Gover, Aubrey; Mehl, Katherine; Blake, John; Bowles, Ron; Carter, Ruby; Crowley, Shannon; Edwards, Herb; Firth, Ross; Galguy, Taracetta; Harvey, Brian; Maloney, James; Melindy, Shawn D.; Simms, Herb; Watkins, Michelle
Subject: RE: Letter from Jean-Charles Pietacho of Innu de Ekuanitshit to Bill Parrott

JM

From: Gover, Aubrey
Sent: Thursday, June 14, 2012 1:51 PM
To: Mehl, Katherine; Blake, John; Bowles, Ron; Carter, Ruby; Crowley, Shannon; Edwards, Herb; Firth, Ross; Galguy, Taracetta; Harvey, Brian; Maloney, James; Melindy, Shawn D.; Mellor, Justin S. C.; Simms, Herb; Watkins, Michelle
Subject: RE: Letter from Jean-Charles Pietacho of Innu de Ekuanitshit to Bill Parrott

JM

From: Mehl, Katherine
Sent: Thursday, June 14, 2012 1:12 PM
Hi to All.

Please find attached a copy of the Ekuanitshit letter to ENVC (English translation) and a draft response for your review. I am hoping to get this out soon — end of week if possible. I realize that everyone is busy, please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you in advance for your review and comments.

Katherine Mehl, Ph.D.
Senior Manager of Habitat Game and Fur Management
Wildlife Division
PO Box 2007
117 Riverside Dr.
Corner Brook, NL A2H 7S1
Phone: (709) 637-2383
Fax: (709) 637-2004
Our Wildlife, the quarterly newsletter of the NL Wildlife Division, is available on the Environment and Conservation website: http://www.env.gov.nl.ca/env/index.html

From: Firth, Ross
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2012 2:24 PM
To: Parrott, William; Burrage, Don; English, Tracy; Gover, Aubrey; Blake, John; Mehl, Katherine
Subject: Letter from Jean-Charles Pietacho of Innu de Ekuanitshit to Bill Parrott

Folks

Attached please find a copy of the letter that was translated by the Office of French Services.

Ross

Ross Firth
Assistant Deputy Minister - Natural Heritage

Department of Environment and Conservation
P.O. Box 2007
117 Riverside Drive
Corner Brook, NL
A2H 7S1

Ph. (709) 637-2199
Fax (709) 637-2180
Hi to All,

Seems that my email has delayed sending a few items, my apologies for any confusion that this created. Please find attached the latest draft version for your review. I hope to send this on by Tuesday afternoon.

Thank you for your comments and assistance,

Katherine

Katherine Mehl, Ph.D.
Senior Manager of Habitat Game and Fur Management
Wildlife Division
PO Box 2007
117 Riverside Dr.
Corner Brook, NL A2H 7S1
Phone: (709) 637-2383
Fax: (709) 637-2004

Don't forget to check out Our Wildlife, the Wildlife Division's quarterly newsletter.

From: Gover, Aubrey
Sent: Friday, June 15, 2012 9:53 AM
To: Mellor, Justin S. C.; Mehl, Katherine; Blake, John; Bowles, Ron; Carter, Ruby; Crowley, Shannon; Edwards, Herb; Firth, Ross; Galgay, Taracetta; Harvey, Brian; Maloney, James; Melindy, Shawn D.; Simms, Herb; Watkins, Michelle
Subject: RE: Letter from Jean-Charles Pietacho of Innu de Ekuanitshit to Bill Parrott

I think the final draft should be circulated to everyone for a last review just to ensure everyone is aware of all of the changes.

From: Mellor, Justin S. C.
Sent: Friday, June 15, 2012 9:49 AM
To: Gover, Aubrey; Mehl, Katherine; Blake, John; Bowles, Ron; Carter, Ruby; Crowley, Shannon; Edwards, Herb; Firth, Ross; Galgay, Taracetta; Harvey, Brian; Maloney, James; Melindy, Shawn D.; Simms, Herb; Watkins, Michelle
Subject: RE: Letter from Jean-Charles Pietacho of Innu de Ekuanitshit to Bill Parrott

[Redacted]

From: Gover, Aubrey
Sent: Thursday, June 14, 2012 1:51 PM
Hi All,

Please find attached a copy of the Ekuanyshit letter to ENVC (English translation) and a draft response for your review. I am hoping to get this out soon – end of week if possible. I realize that everyone is busy, please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you in advance for your review and comments,

Katherine Mehl, Ph.D.
Senior Manager of Habitat Game and Fur Management
Wildlife Division
PO Box 2007
117 Riverside Dr.
Corner Brook, NL A2H 7S1
Phone: (709) 637-2383
Fax: (709) 637-2004
Our Wildlife, the quarterly newsletter of the NL Wildlife Division, is available on the Environment and Conservation website:

Folks,

Attached please find a copy of the letter that was translated by the Office of French Services.

Ross

Ross Firth
Assistant Deputy Minister - Natural Heritage

Department of Environment and Conservation
P.O. Box 2007
117 Riverside Drive
Melindy, Shawn D.

From: Carter, Ruby
Sent: Tuesday, June 19, 2012 8:44 AM
To: Mehl, Katherine; Gover, Aubrey; Meller, Justin S. C.; Blake, John; Bowles, Ron; Crowley, Shannon; Edwards, Herb; Firth, Ross; Gaigay, Taracteta; Harvey, Brian; Maloney, James; Melindy, Shawn D.; Simms, Herb; Watkins, Michelle
Subject: RE: Letter from Jean-Charles Pietacho of Innu de Ekuanitshit to Bill Parrott

Looks ok from my perspective.

R

Ruby Carter
Senior Negotiator
Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat
7th Floor, East Block
Confederation Building
P.O. Box 8700
St. John’s, NL
A1B 4J6
Telephone 709-729-7487
Facsimile 709-729-4900

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From: Mehl, Katherine
Sent: Monday, June 18, 2012 4:48 PM
To: Gover, Aubrey; Meller, Justin S. C.; Blake, John; Bowles, Ron; Carter, Ruby; Crowley, Shannon; Edwards, Herb; Firth, Ross; Gaigay, Taracteta; Harvey, Brian; Maloney, James; Melindy, Shawn D.; Simms, Herb; Watkins, Michelle
Subject: RE: Letter from Jean-Charles Pietacho of Innu de Ekuanitshit to Bill Parrott

Hi to All,

Seems that my email has delayed sending a few items, my apologies for any confusion that this creted. Please find attached the latest draft version for your review. I hope to send this on by Tuesday afternoon.

Thank you for your comments and assistance.

Katherine

Katherine Mehl, Ph.D.
Senior Manager of Habitat Game and Fur Management
Wildlife Division
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Phone: (709) 637-2383
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I think the final draft should be circulated to everyone for a last review just to ensure everyone is aware of all of the changes.

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Sent: Friday, June 15, 2012 9:49 AM
To: Gover, Aubrey; Mehl, Katherine; Blake, John; Bowles, Ron; Carter, Ruby; Crowley, Shannon; Edwards, Herb; Firth, Ross; Galgay, Taracetta; Harvey, Brian; Maloney, James; Melindy, Shawn D.; Simms, Herb; Watkins, Michelle
Subject: RE: Letter from Jean-Charles Pietacho of Innu de Ekuanitshit to Bill Parrott
From: Firth, Ross
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2012 2:24 PM
To: Parrott, William; Burrage, Don; English, Tracy; Gover, Aubrey; Blake, John; Mehl, Katherine
Subject: Letter from Jean-Charles Pietacho of Innu de Ekuanitshit to Bill Parrott

Folks:

Attached please find a copy of the letter that was translated by the Office of French Services.

Ross

Ross Firth
Assistant Deputy Minister - Natural Heritage

Department of Environment and Conservation
P.O. Box 2007
117 Riverside Drive
Corner Brook, NL
A2H 7S1

Ph. (709) 637-2199
Fax (709) 637-2180
Hi to all,

Please see attached letter from NCC and draft response for your review.

Thank you,

Katherine
June 7, 2012

Katherine Mehl, Ph.D.,
Senior Manager of Habitat Game and Fur Management
Wildlife Division
PO Box 2007
117 Riverside Dr.
Corner Brook, NL, A2H 7S1

RE: George River Caribou Herd, Total Allowable Harvest

Dear Ms. Mehl,

I am writing in response to the total allowable harvest (TARH) discussions between your department and our staff on April 17, 2012. We would like to thank you for your presentation on population, migration patterns and an update on the 2011/12 hunting season.

The NunatuKavut Community Council would also like to thank you for the offer of consultations on the Total Allowable Harvest and we are open to discussing a TARH further on a without prejudice basis. We participate with the understanding that our organization is treated equally and fairly along with the other Labrador Aboriginal groups involved. The NCC would also reserve the right to continue the hunt of caribou under our own guidelines. Caribou hunting is an essential traditional activity in our territory carried on since time immemorial.

During the first years in which we issued guidelines for our caribou hunters (2003 onward), we consulted with your department extensively and we are only too happy to now begin that discussion anew.

I thank you in advance for your co-operation on this matter.

Eingootigae,

George Russell Jr., NCC
Environment and Research Manager
Dear Mr. George Russell:

Thank you for your letter dated 7 June 2012 in which you expressed your community’s desire to work with the Province toward management and conservation of the George River Caribou Herd (GRCH). Thank you also for your time and that of the NunatuKavat Community Council (NCC) members for the meeting in Happy Valley – Goose Bay on April 17, 2012 as well as their participation in the previous GRCH Workshops.

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador recognizes the severity of the population decline and is dedicated to working with all stakeholders alike, to ensure that this important resource is sustainable for future generations. Given the exceedingly low population level of the GRCH, delays in taking conservation steps could have serious and long lasting detrimental impacts on the herd.

I realize that NCC elections likely delayed your recommendation for a TAH. However, as expressed during our April meeting and outlined in the correspondence of March 12, 2012, strict timelines on this consultation process are necessary in order to allow time for conservation measures to be implemented prior to the 2012-2013 caribou season. The NCC’s recommendation for a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) is extremely important to the Province.

Please note that only those wildlife and caribou harvest guidelines established by the Wildlife Act and Regulations and set forth in the provincial Hunting Orders or aboriginal harvest established under existing land claim agreements, are considered legal harvest. If you should have any questions regarding the application of the either of the above, please feel free to contact Department of Justice, Gary O’Brien at 709.896.7958.

Thank you in advance for your time. We look forward to your recommendation for a TAH and input on other conservation and management actions as we move forward to ensure the sustainability of this important resource.

Sincerely,

Katherine Mehl
To All,

Please see attached correspondence from the Naskapi Nation. Note that their TAH > BNL....

Any suggestions on preparing a response?

Katherine

From: Paul Renzoni [mailto:renzoni@atmacinta.com]
Sent: Tuesday, June 19, 2012 1:13 PM
To: Mehl, Katherine
Cc: John Mameanskum; Natalie D'Astous; George Guanish; Robin Pratt
Subject: GRCH - Recommendation Regarding Total Allowable Harvest

Dear Katherine,

Please find enclosed a letter to Mr Bill Parrott from Chief Louis Elash dated 18 June, 2012, in regard to the above-cited subject.

The original letter is being mailed to Mr Parrott.

As I stated in a previous email, the Nation appreciated the opportunity to meet with you and your colleagues at the recent consultation session held in Sept-Îles and it looks forward to maintaining open lines of communications with your department.

Should you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours truly,

Paul

Paul Renzoni
General Advisor
Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach
BY MAIL

Mr Bill Parrott
Deputy Minister
Department of Environment and Conservation
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
P.O. Box 8700, St. John's, NL
A1B 4J6

June 18, 2012

RE: George River Caribou Herd – Recommendation Regarding Total Allowable Harvest

Dear Mr. Parrott,

Following our meeting May 7, 2012 with officials of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador ("GNL"), we are writing to you as you requested in your letter of March 12, 2012 regarding our recommendation regarding the total allowable harvest (TAH) for the Naskapis for the George River caribou herd ("GRCH") for 2012-2013.

1. Pursuant to the Northeastern Quebec Agreement, the guaranteed level of harvesting ("GLH") for Naskapis for caribou was established at 1,030 following a study of actual Naskapi caribou harvesting carried out during the period 1989-1993. Naskapi harvesting of caribou is restricted almost entirely to the GRCH. The population of the Naskapi community since that time has increased approximately 60%, namely from 638 to 1070. Based on present population, the Naskapis recommend a Naskapi TAH of 1,727 caribou for 2012-2013.

2. The GNL has asked for Naskapi recommendations for a Basic Needs Level as well as a TAH. However, the Naskapis see the TAH as being similar to the GLH, which, in their view, is a basic needs level, and as such question why they should make any recommendation other than one for a TAH.

3. Under the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement ("JBNQA"), the Quebec Native parties (Crees, Inuit and Naskapis) and the Government of Quebec working together as the Hunting Fishing and Trapping Coordinating Committee may establish the upper limit of kill of caribou for any year. This upper limit of kill is then binding upon the Government of Quebec. The Naskapis would hope that the GNL would agree to establish a similar mechanism whereby the GNL and the Aboriginal communities harvesting caribou of the GRCH would together establish a binding upper limit of kill for the GRCH whenever such a limit was called for. As is the case under the JBNQA, the establishment of such upper limit of kill would always be subject to the principle of conservation. It
It seems imperative that such a mechanism be coordinated between the Government of Quebec and the GNL, given that the GRCH migrates between the two provinces.

4. The Naskapis agree with the concept presented by the GNL officials that the TAH would be taken into consideration only when non-Aboriginal sport hunting was cancelled. Upon such cancellation, the TAH would be guaranteed except to the extent that it was reduced, or even eliminated, for reasons of conservation. The Naskapis would expect to be consulted by the GNL at any point when a reduction or elimination of the Naskapi TAH was being considered in any given year.

IN PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP

[Signature]

Chief Louis Eninsh

Cc. (by email)
Ms. Katherine McGill, Senior Manager, Department of Environment and Conservation
Ms. Natalie D’Astous, HFTCC Advisor
Thanks for the update Michelle
Ron

Sent Via BlackBerry

---

**From**: Watkins, Michelle
**To**: Bowles, Ron; Melindy, Shawn D.; Gover, Aubrey
**Sent**: Fri Jun 29 14:28:44 2012
**Subject**: GRCH Advisory Committee meeting

Good afternoon.

On June 27, I attended the GRCH Advisory Committee meeting on behalf of the Labrador Affairs Office. The meeting was led by ENVC with representation from Nunatsiavut Government, Torngat, Wildlife, Plants and Fisheries Secretariat, Nunatukavut, and NL Outfitters Association.

ENVC delivered a presentation on the latest status of the herd, along with recent and future monitoring activities. The herd population is still very vulnerable with a demonstrated need for further management measures.

The presentation was followed by input on co-management of the herd. There was a strong consensus that in order for a co-management board to succeed, all stakeholders need to actively be involved. Innu Nation has not attended any stakeholder meetings. ENVC, however, has had one-on-one meetings with a variety of groups including the Labrador Innu and Quebec Innu. ENVC did not share results of those discussions with the group.

There was a general discussion on co-management but very little outcomes or solutions were facilitated in the meeting. ENVC anticipates another GRCH Advisory Committee meeting will be organized over the summer.

Michelle

---

Michelle Watkins
Director, Labrador Affairs
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
Labrador Affairs Office, Executive Council
Mailbag 3014, Str. B
Happy Valley - Goose Bay, NL A0P 1E0
tel: 709-896-1780 fax: 709-896-0045 mobile: 709-899-1582
e-mail: michellewatkins@gov.nl.ca
Hi Aubrey,

Katherine Mehl and Shannon Crowley from the Wildlife division and I met with the Atik Committee yesterday as part of the George River Caribou Consultations. Only committee members from Sheshatshiu attended as well as Larry Innes and Guy Playfair.

Overall the meeting was cordial and positive. The Innu expressed the importance of the herd recovery, particularly to preserve their culture by allowing transmission of their culture to younger generations. All noted the crucial importance of the caribou to their people for food and livelihoods. Everyone seemed to acknowledge the herd will continue to decline without conservation measures and seemed willing to work with their communities to ensure self-regulation. One member expressed a need for all the Aboriginal communities to better communicate and to work together to self-regulate the herd.

There were no particular reasons given by members for the current state of the herd but one member referenced climate change and how things are so different now than they use to be. For example, birds that were once prevalent in the country are no longer in existence. Climate change impacts on the environment and caribou was reiterated by several members and the importance of Government involving the Innu in climate change planning. Guy Playfair in particular noted that while the Innu were consulted on the Climate Change Action Plan, it was only after the fact.

The Innu acknowledged hunting as a big driver of caribou mortality during the winter season.

While the Innu did say they will provide a TAH recommendation to the Province, they did not indicate a date. There seems to be hesitance from them to be the leaders. I felt that the Innu are willing to work with the Province to preserve the caribou. One member said they can only control what the Labrador Innu do and the actions of others will have to be dealt with by the Province.

Educating the communities was also mentioned and Wildlife expressed a willingness to give their presentation in Sheshatshiu.

Katherine Mehl said she would be typing up minutes to send out but these are the main messages that I came away with.

Cheers,

T

______________________________
Taracetta Galgay
Senior Negotiator
Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
Brian RM. Harvey
Director - Aboriginal Affairs
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
(709) 729-1487 (w)
(709) 693-1612 (c)

From: Blake, John
Sent: Tuesday, July 03, 2012 8:33 AM
To: Harvey, Brian; Mellor, Justin S. C.
Cc: Mehl, Katherine
Subject: FW:

Section 29(1)(a), Section 30(1)(a)

Section 29(1)(a), Section 30(1)(a)

John

From: Legge, Marilyn
Sent: Thursday, June 28, 2012 11:37 AM
To: Blake, John
Cc: Walsh, Sharron
Subject:

Hi John:

Please draft reply per Ross.

Thanks,
Kim

Marilyn Legge
Secretary to Assistant Deputy Minister
Dept. of Environment & Conservation
Natural Heritage Branch
117 Riverside Drive
P.O. Box 2007
Corner Brook, NL A2H 7S1
Telephone: (709) 637-2199
Fax: (709) 637-2180
BY MAIL

Mr Bill Parrott
Deputy Minister
Department of Environment and Conservation
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
P.O. Box 8700, St. John's, NL
A1B 4J6

June 18, 2012

RE: George River Caribou Herd – Recommendation Regarding Total Allowable Harvest

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IN PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP

[Signature]
Chief Louis Einish

C.c. (by email)
Ms Katherine Mehl, Senior Manager, Department of Environment and Conservation
Ms Natalie D’Astous, HFTCC Advisor
Chief Louis Einish
Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach
1009 Naskapi Road
Kawawachikamach
Nuchimiyushily, Quebec
GOG 2Z0

Dear Chief Louis Einish:

Thank you for your letter dated June 18, 2012 regarding the Naskapi Nation’s recommendations concerning their community’s Basic Needs and Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) for the George River caribou herd. I also thank you for your time in meeting with provincial officials in Sept Isles on May 7, 2012.

During the Sept Isles meeting as well as in previous correspondence with you we have noted the serious and drastic decline of the George River caribou herd over the last two decades. Unfortunately this decline continues at an alarming rapid rate. During the extensive consultative process we have been recently engaged in concerning the George River caribou herd there appears a general awareness and concern for this decline and a willingness to work towards a sustainable solution. Please be assured the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador is dedicated to working with all concerned parties to ensure that this important resource remains for future generations.

Your response and recommendations will be taken into consideration by the Province. If a TAH is implemented, its allocation among multiple parties, across Quebec and Labrador, will be a complex process which must consider recommendations and input of all users, as well as biological concerns necessary to ensure sustainability of the herd.

It is clear that the support by all parties will be critical to the success of both short and long-term management strategies. We believe education and stewardship is pivotal to the success of this process, and we encourage collaboration with our Wildlife Division staff who have both the experience and expertise to help facilitate and support the Naskapi Nation in educating their members about implementing conservation minded harvest practices. I understand provincial officials are planning to attend the proposed meetings in Montreal in early September, during which time I trust continued dialogue on this important subject will advance.

Thank you once again for your correspondence. If you should have any questions, please contact Dr. Katherine Melil, Sr. Manager, Habitat Game and Fur Management at 709.637-2383 or by email at katharinemelil@gov.nl.ca.

Respectfully,

Mr. Bill Parrott
Deputy Minister
From: Harvey, Brian  
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2015 3:09 PM  
To: Melindy, Shawn D.  
Subject: FW: Naskapi Nation CCM34926 draft jtb.docx

Brian RM. Harvey  
Director - Aboriginal Affairs  
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador  
(709) 729-1487 (w)  
(709) 693-1612 (c)

From: Harvey, Brian  
Sent: Wednesday, July 04, 2012 10:38 AM  
To: Blake, John; Mellor, Justin S. C.  
Cc: Mehl, Katherine  
Subject: RE:

Hi John —

I have no problems with the letter which is a good draft. I have made one addition for your consideration, in tracked changes – please see attached.

Justin’s views are needed before we proceed, but I agreed with your letter’s lack of reference to Chief Eishiy’s references to the JBNEQA, to which the Province is not a party.

Best,  
Brian

Brian RM. Harvey  
Director, Policy & Planning - Aboriginal Affairs  
Intergovernmental & Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat  
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador  
(709) 729-1487 (w)  
(709) 693-1612 (c)

From: Blake, John  
Sent: Tuesday, July 03, 2012 8:33 AM  
To: Harvey, Brian; Mellor, Justin S. C.  
Cc: Mehl, Katherine  
Subject: FW:

Section 29(1)(a), Section 30(1)(a)

John
Hi John:

Please draft reply per Ross.

Thanks,
Kim

Marilyn Legge
Secretary to Assistant Deputy Minister
Dept. of Environment & Conservation
Natural Heritage Branch
117 Riverside Drive
P.O. Box 2007
Corner Brook, NL A2H 7S1

Telephone: (709) 637-2199
Fax: (709) 637-2180
Chief Louis Einish
Naskapi Nation of Kawachikamach
1009 Naskapi Road
Kawachikamach
Nuchimiushchily, Quebec
G0G 2Z0

Dear Chief Louis Einish:

Thank you for your letter dated June 18, 2012 regarding the Naskapi Nation’s recommendations concerning their community’s Basic Needs and Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) for the George River caribou herd. I also thank you for your time in meeting with provincial officials in Sept Isles on May 7, 2012.

During the Sept Isles meeting as well as in previous correspondence with you we have noted the serious and drastic decline of the George River caribou herd over the last two decades. Unfortunately this decline continues at an alarming rapid rate. During the extensive consultative process we have been recently engaged in concerning the George River caribou herd there appears a general awareness and concern for this decline and a willingness to work towards a sustainable solution. Please be assured the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador is dedicated to working with all concerned parties to ensure that this important resource remains for future generations.

Your response and recommendations will be taken into consideration by the Province as it assesses all available information, evidence, and submissions to inform decision-making for the 2012-13 season. We will ensure that any such decisions are communicated to you as soon as practicable. It is notable that, if a TAH is implemented, its allocation among multiple parties, across Quebec and Labrador, will be a complex process which must consider recommendations and input of all users, as well as biological concerns necessary to ensure sustainability of the herd.

It is clear that the support by all parties will be critical to the success of both short and long-term management strategies. We believe education and stewardship is pivotal to the success of this process, and we encourage collaboration with our Wildlife Division staff who have both the experience and expertise to help facilitate and support the Naskapi Nation in educating their members about implementing conservation minded harvest practices. I understand provincial officials are planning to attend the proposed meetings in Montreal in early September, during which time I trust continued dialogue on this important subject will advance.

Thank you once again for your correspondence. If you should have any questions, please contact Dr. Katherine Mehl, Sr. Manager, Habitat Game and Fur Management at 709.637-2383 or by email at katherinemehl@gov.nl.ca.

Respectfully,
Mr. Bill Parrott
Deputy Minister
Please see attached 2 page information note on the GRCH aboriginal consultations. By copy to Shannon and Brian, I ask for any deletions or comments. However, I realize that on Friday afternoon there maybe little opportunity for greater input.

Katherine
Information Note
Department of Environment and Conservation

Title: To provide information regarding George River Caribou (GRCH) consultations between officials from the Province and Labrador and Quebec aboriginal stakeholder groups.

Background:
• The GRCH has declined from an estimated 800,000 in the late 1980s to an estimated population of 35,000 in 2012.
• The continued population declines resulted recommendations for further restrictions to harvest.

• In consultation with IGAAS, DOJ, Labrador Affairs, and ENVC, the aboriginal consultation process was outlined. All aboriginal stakeholders be consulted to include those groups in QC.
• A letter detailing the consultation process was mailed to each of the aboriginal groups on 12 March 2012, whereby the receipt of the letter and scheduling of consultation would start the clock for the consultation process. Specific process is as follows:
  o Each group is required to submit their recommendations for a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) and Basic Needs Level (BNL) 45 days from the date of scheduling the meeting.
  o ENVC will be required to respond to each organization within 20 days of the receipt of the written recommendation.
  o Aboriginal organizations can then request a meeting with the Province but must do so within 10 days of receiving the Province’s response.
• Consultations with the following Aboriginal groups took place between 17 April to 8 May, 2012:
  o NunatuKavut Community Council (NCC), Torngat Plants and Wildlife Co-management Board (TWPCB), Nunatsiavut Government (NG), Innu Nation, Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach (NNK) and the following six Innu Bands in Quebec: Ekuannishit, Takuaikan Uashat mak Mani-utenam, Montagnais de Natashquan, Montagnais d'Unamen Shipu, Matimekush-Lac John, and Pakua Shipu.
  o Representatives from Nutashkuan were scheduled to attend, but did not do so. One representative from Matimekush was in attendance, although this representative, a young lady, is not believed to have been either a councilor or a hunter. She did not speak at any point during the meeting.

• Consultations began by ENVC officials providing a presentation to highlight current population status, projected trend and management actions to date.

Key Issues Discussed
• In general, aboriginal groups acknowledged that GRCH had declined in numbers and that fewer caribou were now on the landscape. However, despite the agreed population decline, there remains the desire to continue an aboriginal harvest.
• There was a real need to know why the herd size is declining and there was some concern that collaring caribou may contribute to population declines. ENVC reiterated the short handling time and scientific evidence that supports the safety of the collaring effort.
• The current decline in the herd brought concern for what foods people might eat in the future, given the general dislike for the taste of non-country foods. Also expressed was the impact that a TAH would have on cultural needs.
• If restrictions to aboriginal harvest are implemented, all parties felt that an equal treatment among groups would be necessary.
• There was a general desire for concerted efforts between NL and QC in terms of implementing conservation measures to ensure that the same harvest restrictions would apply to all user groups.
• High importance was placed on ensuring that management activities aimed at protecting the calving grounds would be necessary in order to ensure the recovery of the herd.
• Specific concerns were raised around the issue of cumulative effects, particularly in the area of the GRCH’s calving grounds. There was also interest in greater transparency for Aboriginal groups to be informed of exploration activities with the calving areas.
• Communication beyond a single meeting was encouraged.

Actions Being Taken:
• NL is currently working in conjunction with TWPCB to gather reliable numbers on this year’s harvest via phone surveys.
• Aboriginal stakeholders have been informed of the need for strict timelines on the consultation process.
• The NG and NCC elections may delay the ability of timely recommendations for these groups. ENVC offered to provide the presentation for the new board members, if desired. Both agreed that a deadline of 31 May 2012 should be attainable.
• Recommendations for the TAH and BNL for all groups are expected by 18 June 2012.

Prepared by: K. Mehl
2012.05.11
Good morning all -

Further to my message of Monday evening, which relayed a summary of our meetings with the Naskapi Nation, below, please find a synopsis of yesterday's meeting with the QC Innu in Sept Iles.

Best,
Brian

- NL officials met with representatives from four QC Innu First Nations (Ekuaitshit; Pakua Shipi; Unamen Shpipu; ITUM). Representatives from Nutashkuan and Matimekush-Lac John were scheduled to attend, but did not do so. ITUM representatives were expecting the former and could not explain their absence, but were not surprised with the absence of the latter, given the annual goose hunt.

- Each community was represented by 3-5 members, including some councillors, but primarily hunters. Section 29(1)(a), Section 40(1).

- The meeting was conducted primarily in Innu-aimun and English, with ITUM officials providing translation services.

- As per other consultations on the George River Caribou Herd (GRCH), the meeting commenced with a presentation from the Province on the current state of the GRCH, with discussion and questions ensuing.
- Many of the participants repeated positions that the Province has previously heard from QC Innu representatives, either in Sept Iles in January 2011, or HVGB in December 2011. The main concerns tended to include some or all of the following messages:

0 overall, the most common message was that the caribou was the Innu's animal. For time immemorial, they had managed the herd, had only taken what they needed in any given year, and the caribou had always been there. The Innu asserted that they were the proper managers of the herd and that although they were concerned with the government's numbers, would continue to hunt, but in a responsible and sustainable way. The Innu clearly indicated on several instances that they were willing to work with government, but were not willing to let government dictate the terms of their caribou hunt, nor accept that government would be the ones taking final decisions on who could and couldn't hunt, and how much - the Innu would continue to make their own determinations as to how much to hunt, and when and where. For instance, since 4 years, the QCI have refrained from hunting Jloor River and Red Wine caribou, because their numbers were so low. The QCI asserted that although governments wanted to work with them around the issue of harvesting woodland caribou, it was the Innu themselves who chose not to hunt those caribou, and it was the Innu themselves who would choose to hunt or not hunt the George River, too. NL officials chose to discuss this position, but instead emphasised that its objective was to conserve the herd for the benefit and use of future generations. I note parenthetically that although the assertion that it was the QCI themselves who stopped hunting the woodland caribou is strictly accurate,

Section 29(1)(a)

- all noted the crucial and central role of the caribou in the lives and culture of the Innu, noting that if there was a complete prohibition on hunting, Innu would be hit harder than anyone else, and especially non-Aboriginals. Although the Innu acknowledged that young Innu were not hunting caribou in the same respectful way of their forebears, the Innu indicated that they would continue to educate their communities, and that any ban on hunting would have serious social effects, including removing a major food supply for communities (some likened it to the white man no longer being able to buy chicken). It was also a concern that the caribou was their culture and removing their ability to harvest would impact their ability to pass the traditions/culture on to the younger generations.

- questions were asked about why the caribou was in decline, including whether forage was potentially contaminated by the Chernobyl disaster of the 1980s, or whether low-level flying could have had impacts. NL officials indicated that it was thought that the original factor in the decline was habitat-related (including reduced, rather than perhaps contaminated, forage and other density dependent factors), but that once the population was in decline, there were many factors that could influence a continued, or exacerbated, decline, such as predation, poor body conditions, and greater access by hunters, given the increased technology.

- many blamed non-Aboriginal hunters for the decline, as well as alleging that non-Aboriginal hunters were wasteful in their hunting, taking only the antlers, or only the antlers and meat, leaving the rest of the carcass on the land. Innu hunters, by contrast, are said to hunt the animals respectfully, and never waste any portion of a killed caribou, using it for food, medicine, clothing, instruments, etc.

- many also asserted that a reason for the decline was because Government sold unlimited licences to non-Aboriginal hunters, and permitted outfitters to operate. The Innu asserted that these practices should have been halted years ago, and in fact, made numerous appeals to NL, QC and Canada to do so, without success. NL officials noted it introduced licence restrictions 2 years ago, and would consider all factors in taking a decision whether to make further changes for future seasons.

- many blamed the increased incidence of plane or helicopter traffic or surveillance for the caribou's decline, asserting that the caribou used to be plentiful, but had been in decline in recent years, coinciding with an increase in air traffic, as well as the use of helicopters and planes by QC and NL wildlife officials in monitoring. NL officials noted that they were sensitive to these concerns, and kept helicopter time spent capturing caribou to an absolute minimum, without commenting on the broader assertion that the increased incidence of air traffic by others in Labrador and QC was a contributing factor to the decline.
o most expressed a sense that government was blaming the QCI for the state of the herd. NL officials repeatedly asserted that the hunt was not to blame for the decline, and certainly not the Aboriginal hunt, and reiterated the objectives of the meeting, which were to share the most recent scientific information, and solicit the input and comments of the QCI, as well as their recommendations on a TAH and Basic Needs Levels (BNLs). NL officials stated the goal of working together toward the common goal, to ensure that caribou remained for future generations.

o many noted the increase in natural resource exploration and development, and noted that this was impacting the caribou; in particular, representatives noted the GRCH used to always migrate near Schefferville, but did not do so any longer. NL officials noted that the literature did reveal that human activity could impact the location or migration of caribou, but that it was not clear that these factors were influencing the GRCH migration or location patterns, or if they did so influence, whether they were the only factors that led to any changes in migration or location. QCI noted that if government was serious about the decline and if they asked Innu to stop hunting, government must due their part also by stopping exploration and development in areas important to caribou. It was stated as ethics vs economics.

o many requested regular meetings in Sept Iles, if not in their own communities, rather than occasional or annual meetings. In particular, frustration was expressed that government came to Sept Iles in January 2011 to listen to the Innu, but never followed up with the Innu or communicated how their input had been considered. NL officials noted open and continued communications were crucial, and would not end when the QCI submitted their TAH/BNL recommendations.

o some general complaints were made about harassment of QCI hunters in Labrador, if not the apprehension of animals, firearms or equipment, but no details were forthcoming. Given that, to the best of my knowledge, there are not pending prosecutions of QCI, this appeared to be more of a historic, than current, grievance. Moreover, no details or particulars were provided during the meeting, and ITUM officials later agreed that these concerns were more historic than current, especially after last year’s decisions were taken not to prosecute certain QCI that had previously been apprehended for potential violations of the Wildlife Act. However, some representatives did note that protest hunts in the past had been effective because, by hunting in a group of 100 or so Innu hunters, the Innu had avoided arrest because NL officials would not confront such a large group of hunters. These representatives suggested such, if the Province prohibited a QCI harvest of the GRCH, such mass hunts could be organised again.

- ITUM officials closed the meeting by advising the Innu representatives that next steps would include a meeting of the 6 Chiefs to discuss the Province’s information and request for input on a TAH and the communities’ BNLs, with a view to meeting the Province’s late-June deadline for submissions (potentially, with a single, consensus submission from all the communities). However, ITUM officials noted that it could be difficult to coordinate such a meeting of the Chiefs in a timely fashion. Although they undertook to meet the deadline, it was indicated that some extension may be necessary, if the Chiefs were unable to meet in May.

- NL officials thanked all participants for their presence and input at the meeting, and will followup with correspondence to each of the Chiefs to that effect, and reminding them of the request for comments on the TAH and BNLs. In the case of MLI and Nutashkuan, the followup email will also convey the Province’s presentation from today’s meeting and note ITUM’s plan to arrange a meeting with all QC Chiefs to discuss the issue. The followup email will also express regret at their inability to attend, as well as hope that they will still be able to consider the Province’s request.

Brian RM. Harvey

Director, Policy & Planning - Aboriginal Affairs

Intergovernmental & Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

(709) 729-1487 (w)
(709) 693-1612 (c)

Sent Via BlackBerry
Dear Réal McKenzie,

We are sorry you were unable to attend our meeting in Sept-Ileson 8 May. Input from the Metimekush-Lac John First Nation will be helpful for the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador in assessing new conservation measures for the George River Caribou Herd. It is our hope that we continue with open dialogue on conservation issues between now and when you submit your recommendation for a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) and your community’s Basic Needs Level, as well as in the years that follow. We remind you that your input on these subjects is expected by 18 June 2012.
I have attached copies of the presentation from the consultation in Sept-Îles. It is my hope that this, along with copies of the information emailed to you on 4 May, will provide you with important information on the trends and status of the GRCH, as discussed in Sept-Îles.

Per the March 12 letter, the province of NL requests recommendation by the Matimekush-Lac John First Nation regarding the need to implement a TAH, and if a TAH is recommended, what that number would be. The requested TAH refers to the upper limit to all harvesting of the GRCH. If a TAH were to be implemented, this number would apply to Aboriginal harvesters only, as non-aboriginal harvest ceases upon the implementation of a TAH. Also important, will be information concerning the Basic Needs Level (BNL) for the community of Matimekush-Lac John, which is the lowest number of caribou required to support your community in a year.

The following timelines are of critical importance as the consultation process continues:
- **18 June 2012**: deadline for Matimekush-Lac John First Nation to provide written recommendations for both the TAH and the BNL;
- **09 July 2012**: deadline for NL to respond in writing to Matimekush-Lac John First Nation’s recommendations;
- **20 July 2012**: deadline for Matimekush-Lac John First Nation to make any additional observations or pose any further questions to the Province.

Again, strict timelines on the process are necessary in order to allow time for implementation of conservation measures prior to the 2012-2013 season.

If you should have any questions, whatsoever, or wish to discuss any aspect of the process please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you once again for your time. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Katherine

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Cher Chef Réal Mckenzie,

Nous sommes désolés que vous n’étiez pas capable d’assister à notre réunion à Sept-Îles le 08 mai 2012. L’entrée de Conseil de la Nation Innu Matimekush-Lac John sera utile à la Province de Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador dans l’évaluation de nouvelles mesures de conservation du troupeau de caribous de la rivière George (CRG). Nous espérons continuer un dialogue ouvert sur les questions de conservation avant que vous soumettez votre recommandation pour une Récolte Totale Autorisée (RTA) et le niveau des besoins essentiels de votre communauté, ainsi que dans les années qui suivre. Nous vous rappelons que votre entrée sur ces sujets est attendue d’ici le 18 juin 2012.

J’ai joint des copies de la présentation que nous avons présentée à Sept-Îles. J’espère que cela, ainsi que l’information que je vous ai envoyé le 04 mai 2012 par courriel électronique, fournisse de l’information importante sur les tendances et l’état du CRG, tel que discuté à Sept-Îles.

Comme nous avons exprimé dans notre lettre du 12 mars 2012, la province de Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador demande la recommandation du Conseil de la Nation Innu Matimekush-Lac John sur la nécessité de mettre en œuvre une RTA, et si une RTA est recommandé, le niveau recommandé. La RTA se réfère à la limite supérieure de l’ensemble de récolte du troupeau de caribous de la rivière George. Si une RTA devait être mis en œuvre, ce nombre serait s’appliquer aux chasseurs autochtones seulement, donné que la classe non-autochtones prend fin dès la mise en œuvre d’une RTA. Il est également important de recevoir de l’information concernant le niveau des besoins essentiels de votre communauté, qui représente le numéro minimal de caribous requis pour soutenir votre communauté.

Les délais suivants sont d’une importance cruciale dans le processus de consultation continue:
Brian RM. Harvey  
Director - Aboriginal Affairs  
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador  
(709) 729-1487 (w)  
(709) 693-1612 (c)

Brilliant; thanks so much Katherine!  
Am I able to be formally placed on the committee, for future meetings please?

Brian RM. Harvey  
Director, Policy & Planning - Aboriginal Affairs  
Intergovernmental & Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat  
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador  
(709) 729-1487 (w)  
(709) 693-1612 (c)

Hi Brian,

No worries, John and I were not able to attend as the PAL flights into HV-GB were cancelled that day. Shannon chaired the meeting. A brief summary of the meeting is pasted below:

George River Caribou Herd Meeting held on June 27th, 2012  
Absent: John Blake and K. Mehl due to flight issues

Present:  
Shannon Crowley- Wildlife Division  
Sara McCarthy- Wildlife Division
Key Issues Discussed – Advisory Committee

- There was unified and strong concern for the herd’s decline.
- There was general recognition that today’s harvest practices allow for longer (7 days/week), more intensive pressure on the herd (GPS and snowmobiles).
- Cumulative impacts were raised. Particular concern was raised for the proposed road near the calving grounds.

I hope this helps,

Katherine

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From: Harvey, Brian
Sent: Thursday, August 09, 2012 1:28 PM
To: Mehl, Katherine
Subject: RE: GRCH Advisory Committee

Did I ever respond to this? I fear I did not ...

Brian RM. Harvey
Director, Policy & Planning - Aboriginal Affairs
Intergovernmental & Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
(709) 729-1487 (w)
(709) 693-1812 (c)

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From: Mehl, Katherine
Sent: 12 June 2012 11:07
To: Baldwin, Chris; Barney, Wayne; Blake, John; Bodnar, Cameron; Carroll, Colin; Chubbs, Tony; Coady, Craig G.; Crowley, Shannon; Dale, Aaron; Goudie, James; Harvey, Brian; Jennings, Darren; KeelRyan, Juanita; Kemuksigak, Roland; Kent, Todd; Lebouchon, Derek J.; McCarthy, Sara; McLean, Carl; Mehl, Katherine; Melindy, Shawn D.; Mitchell Foley, Jennifer; Montague, Chris; Noble, Paul; Nuna, Richard; O’Brien, Gary; Payne, Keith; Phillips, Frank; Playfair, Guy; Roberts, Bruce; Russell, George; Schlossek, Tanya; Snook, Jamie; Watkins, Michelle; Willcott, Rebecca; Yetman, Hollis
Subject: GRCH Advisory Committee

Hi to All,
The Province is dedicated to the management and conservation of the George River Caribou Herd (GRCH). In order to facilitate successful management and conservation actions for the future, the Province asks that each stakeholder group provide the names and contact information of two individuals that they wish to appoint to the Provincial GRCH Advisory Committee.

The Provincial Advisory Committee will be responsible for promoting conservation of the GRCH and providing management recommendations to the Minister of Environment and Conservation. Invited members include representatives from: Nunatsiavut Government, Labrador Innu Nation, NunatuKavut Community Council, Torngat Wildlife and Plants Co-management Board, Labrador Hunting and Fishing Association, the NL Outfitters Association, and the Province of NL.

The first meeting of the Provincial GRCH Advisory Committee is scheduled for 27 June, from 1:30-4pm at the Friendship Centre in HV-GB. In order for us to plan for the meeting, please forward the names and contact information of the two individuals that you wish to serve as your representatives, along with their availability for meeting on 27 June.

The tentative agenda for the meeting is to provide a status update on the GRCH, to include harvest updates and consultation and management timelines. The input of all groups will be necessary to ensure successful conservation measures and actions.

I would like thank you for your past involvement with the GRCH Workshops and I hope to see representatives from all groups on 27 June, from 1:30-4pm.

I look forward to hearing from. Have a great week,

Katherine

Katherine Mehl, Ph.D.
Senior Manager of Habitat Game and Fur Management
Wildlife Division
PO Box 2007
117 Riverside Dr.
Corner Brook, NL A2H 7S1

Phone: (709) 637-2383
Fax: (709) 637-2004

Our Wildlife, the quarterly newsletter of the NL Wildlife Division, is available on the Environment and Conservation website:
Brian RM. Harvey
Director - Aboriginal Affairs
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
(709) 729-1487 (w)
(709) 693-1612 (c)

From: Mehl, Katherine
Sent: Friday, August 10, 2012 3:26 PM
To: Gover, Aubrey; Mellar, Justin S. C.; Edwards, Herb; Simms, Herb; Maloney, James; Galgay, Taracetta; Nippard, Melissa; Harvey, Brian
Cc: Blake, John; Firth, Ross
Subject: RE: Reminder GRCH

Hi to All,

Please find below a copy of the agenda for Monday's meeting followed by a brief summary of comments from the Aboriginal consultations.

Thank you in advance for your time and input. I look forward to our discussion on Monday,

Katherine

Katherine Mehl, Ph.D.
Senior Manager of Habitat Game and Fur Management
Wildlife Division
PO Box 2007
117 Riverside Dr.
Corner Brook, NL A2H 7S1
Phone: (709) 637-2383
Fax: (709) 637-2004

Don't forget to check out Our Wildlife, the Wildlife Division's quarterly newsletter.

George River Caribou Meeting
13 August 2012
Department of Environment and Conservation
Main Boardroom, 4th Floor, West Block.
10:30-12:30

- Wildlife Division – Presentation update on the current status of GRCII to include consultation process
- Discussion:
  - Consultation Efforts
next steps – taking into account limited responses/feedback
what to do about the lack of Aboriginal response/engagement
 Release of the July herd estimate (more meetings required?)

- TAH
  - Options considered
  - QC considerations
  - Implementing various options

- Upcoming Events
  - Press release
  - Montreal workshop – intent, QC plans
  - Upcoming COSEWIC assessment – unrelated but may be worth noting as this highlights the national and even international implications at hand.

- Enforcement
  - Challenges

  - Plan Forward

GRCH Summary of Aboriginal Consultations

- A letter detailing the consultation process was mailed to each of the aboriginal groups on 12 March 2012, whereby the receipt of the letter and scheduling of consultation would start the clock for the consultation process. Specific process is as follows:
  - Each group is required to submit their recommendations for a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) and Basic Needs Level (BNL) 45 days from the date of scheduling the meeting.
  - ENVC will be required to respond to each organization within 20 days of the receipt of the written recommendation.
  - Aboriginal organizations can then request a meeting with the Province but must do so within 10 days of receiving the Province’s response.

- Consultations with the following Aboriginal groups took place between 17 April to 8 May, 2012:
  - NunatuKavut Community Council (NCC), Torngat Plants and Wildlife Co-management Board (TWPCB), Nunatsiavut Government (NG), Innu Nation, Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach (NNK) and the following six Innu Bands in Quebec: Ekuanishit, Takuikan Uashat mak Mani-Utenam, Montagnais de Natashquan, Montagnais d'Uranem Shipu, Matimekush-Lac John, and Pakua Shipu.
  - Representatives from Nutashkuan were scheduled to attend, but did not do so. One representative from Matimekush was in attendance, although this representative, a young lady, is not believed to have been either a councilor or a hunter. She did not speak at any point during the meeting.
  - Further consultation with the Innu Nation was held via the Atik Committee on 28 June 2012.

- In addition, the GRCH Advisory Committee (consisting of aboriginal and non-aboriginal groups) met on 27 June 2012.

- Consultations began by ENVC officials providing a presentation to highlight current population status, projected trend and management actions to date.

Key Issues Discussed

- In general, aboriginal groups acknowledged that that GRCH had declined in numbers and that fewer caribou were now on the landscape. However, despite the agreed population decline, there remains the desire to continue an aboriginal harvest.
• There was a real need to know why the herd size is declining and there was some concern that collaring caribou may contribute to population declines. ENVC reiterated the short handling time and scientific evidence that supports the safety of the collaring effort.
• The current decline in the herd brought concern for what foods people might eat in the future, given the general dislike for the taste of non-country foods. Also expressed was the impact that a TAH would have on cultural needs.
• If restrictions to aboriginal harvest are implemented, all parties felt that an equal treatment among groups would be necessary.
• There was a general desire for concerted efforts between NL and QC in terms of implementing conservation measures to ensure that the same harvest restrictions would apply to all user groups.
• High importance was placed on ensuring that management activities aimed at protecting the calving grounds would be necessary in order to ensure the recovery of the herd.
• Specific concerns were raised around the issue of cumulative effects, particularly in the area of the GRCH’s calving grounds. There was also interest in greater transparency for Aboriginal groups to be informed of exploration activities with the calving areas.
• Communication beyond a single meeting was encouraged.
• There was some mention that self-imposed harvest restrictions would be possible but in order for this to be successful, enforcement by the Province would be necessary.

Key Issues Discussed – Advisory Committee
• There was unified and strong concern for the herd’s decline.
• There was general recognition that today’s harvest practices allow for longer (7 days/week), more intensive pressure on the herd (GPS and snowmobiles).
• Cumulative impacts were raised. Particular concern was raised for the proposed road near the calving grounds.
Please TRIM if not already there.

Brian RM. Harvey
Director, Policy & Planning - Aboriginal Affairs
Intergovernmental & Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
(709) 729-1487 (w)
(709) 693-1612 (c)

From: Mehl, Katherine
Sent: 12 August 2012 21:58
To: Harvey, Brian
Subject: Response to Jean-Charles Pietacho of Innu de Ekuanitsit from Bill Parrott

Hi Brian,

Please see attached letter from the Ekuanishit and craft response. I did not find a copy of the final version but ran out of time in my search on Friday. I hope this helps. (note the original letter was in French, the attached is the English translation).

Katherine
Chef Jean-Charles Piétacho
Conseil des Innus d’Ekuanishit
35 Manitou Street, C.P. 420
Migan, PQ  G0G 1V0

Dear Chef Jean-Charles Piétacho:

Thank you for your letter dated 22 May 2012 in which you outline your community’s concern for the current George River Caribou Herd (GRCH) consultation process established by the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. I am thankful for your time and that of the Ekuanishit council members in the meeting in Sept Iles, Quebec that was held on May 8, 2012.

As the Deputy Minister of Environment and Conservation, I take your concerns seriously. The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador recognizes the severity of the population decline and is dedicated to working to ensure that this important resource is sustainable for future generations. Given the exceedingly low population level of the GRCH, delays in taking conservation steps could have serious and long lasting detrimental impacts on the herd.

It is my hope that Ekuanishit will reconsider submission of recommendations for a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) and their community’s Basic Needs Level. Recommendation by the Ekuanishit, regarding the need to implement a TAH is important to us for future conservation measures.

Thank you in advance for your time. We look forward to your input and efforts to ensure the sustainability of this vital resource.
Bill Parrott
Deputy Minister
Department of Environment and Conservation
May 22, 2012

Bill Parrott
Deputy Minister of Environment and Conservation
P.O. Box 8700
St. Johns, NL
Canada
A1B 4J6

Dear Deputy Minister:

Subject: Your March 12, 2012 correspondence
George River Caribou Herd

I am writing to reiterate the position of our Council during the May 8, 2012 meeting, in Uashat, regarding the aforementioned subject when we were accompanied by our Innu elders and hunters.

We reiterate that the meeting was not a consultation as recognized by the Supreme Court of Canada. In our view, it was an information session.

We are deeply concerned by the accelerated consultation process that you have proposed, which forces us to recognize your laws at the end of the process. Your government will be responsible for making the ultimate decision and thus denying us, once again, our title and rights in the Labrador region.

Our management of caribou has been exemplary for generations. Your governments have issued hunting and operating licences that affect our lives and our natural resources. We are not surprised by the critical decline in caribou herds in general. We had informed you of this in the past. Yet, no government deigned to listen because the economy was one of the more legitimate concerns.

We noticed that every time a disaster occurs, we are the last ones to be consulted to find a solution. We know your management has been catastrophic for wildlife, for the ecosystem and, for us, the Innu.

We find it inconceivable that a government is telling us what to do when that same government has always favoured economy over ethics. The animal we revere, "the caribou", is all that is left of our culture because you took everything since arriving on our territory and creating boundaries without our free and enlightened consent.

Your March 12, 2012 letter and Mr. John Blake's, May 5, 2012 letter are forcing us to respond as soon as possible with very strict time constraints and it reminds us of the history of the way you managed cod with the federal government. We are again
being pressured so that you can clear your conscience by informing us. This also
reminds us of the new federal bill that will become a serious obstacle to the current
environmental assessment process.

We demand respect in this matter because the animal, to which our survival is
owed, is very important to the Innu. We do not know if you understand this. We have
always met our responsibility toward caribou and we will continue to do so.

We hope that this letter will be considered appropriately by your government.

In peace and in friendship,

Jean-Charles Piétacho
Ekuanitsht Innu Chief

Enclosure

c.c. Innu council members
Matimekush, ITUM, Unamen Shipu, and Pakua Shipu Innu Chiefs
Chef Jean-Charles Piétacho  
Conseil des Innus d’Ekuanishit  
35 Manitou Street, C.P. 420 Migan, PQ G9G 1V0

Dear Chef Jean-Charles Piétacho:

Thank you for your letter dated 22 May 2012 in which you outline your community’s concern for the current George River Caribou Herd (GRCH) consultation process established by the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Please know that I am thankful for your time, and Ekuanishit council members, during the recent consultation process held in Sept Iles, QC on 8 May 2012.

As the Deputy Minister of Environment and Conservation, I take your concerns seriously. The GRCH is of significant value to the Innu Nation. The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador recognizes the severity of the population decline and is dedicated to working to ensure that this important resource is both sustainable for future generations and which rely upon the herd. It is for these reasons that strict timelines on this consultation process are necessary - so that appropriate conservation measures can be implemented prior to the 2012-2013 caribou season. Given the exceedingly low population level of the GRCH, delays in taking conservation steps could have serious and long lasting detrimental impacts on the sustainability of the herd.

It is my hope that Ekuanishit will reconsider submission of recommendations for a TAH and their community’s Basic Needs Level. Recommendation by the Ekuanishit, regarding the need to implement a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) is important to us for future conservation measures.

Thank you in advance for your time. We look forward to your input and efforts to ensure the sustainability of this vital resource.

Bill Parrott  
Deputy Minister  
Department of Environment and Conservation
Melindy, Shawn D.

From: Firth, Ross
Sent: Monday, August 20, 2012 2:09 PM
To: Galgay, Taracetta
Subject: Letter to Grand Chief Riche
Attachments: InnuNation Caribou Followup Letter 17 August 2012.doc

Taracetta

As discussed.

Ross

Ross Firth
Assistant Deputy Minister - Natural Heritage
Department of Environment and Conservation
P.O. Box 2007
117 Riverside Drive
Cormer Brook, NL
A2H 7S1

Ph. (709) 637-2199
Fax (709) 637-2180
Dear Grand Chief Riche:

I am writing concerning the future management and conservation of the George River caribou herd (GRCH). As you are no doubt aware through your organization’s participation in the Atik Committee, the population of the GRCH has drastically declined in the last decade from 385,000 to 27,600 animals. The Department of Environment and Conservation is concerned that the continued harvesting of the GRCH at present levels will severely jeopardize any recovery efforts. If the herd is to be conserved for use by future generations of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Labradorians, immediate action is required.

The input of the Innu on the future management of the herd is of critical importance to the Province. For that reason, on 30 March 2012 the Province signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Innu Nation to provide funding to assist with the conservation and management of the GRCH. Under the MOU, your organization agreed to monitor the community’s harvest and provide the Province with a report of the total number of caribou harvested by its members during the 2011-2012 season. Pursuant to the MOU, the Innu Nation was required to provide the information by 30 June 2012. We are disappointed that we have not yet received this report. Information of this nature is of great assistance in the effective management and conservation of the herd. I strongly encourage Innu Nation to submit this report as soon as possible.

On 22 March 2012 the Province wrote to your organization outlining a consultation process for the GRCH. At that time we indicated that we would need to advance the consultation process quickly because of the rapid decline in the herd’s population. On 27 April 2012, we provided Innu Nation with an information package containing the most recent population data and outlining the future challenges facing the GRCH. This was followed on 30 April 2012 with a meeting between provincial officials and the Atik Committee. Pursuant to the consultation plan your organization was asked to provide a written response to the information including: 1) the Innu Basic Needs Level of caribou, and 2) a Total Allowable Harvest for 2012-2013. Unfortunately, no response was received from Innu Nation by the 14 June 2012 deadline. A second meeting was held with the Atik Committee on 28 June 2012 in which provincial officials reiterated the importance of receiving a BNL and TAH recommendation. Despite this reminder, we have yet to receive any response from your organization.

The Province values Innu Nation’s input on GRCH management, so despite the expiration of the deadline for a BNL and TAH submissions, we would like to make one final request for Innu Nation’s input. If your organization wishes to make a submission on a BNL and TAH, please provide this to me by 31 August 2012. The short timeline is necessary in order to allow time for conservation measures to be implemented in advance of the opening of 2012-2013 season. The population is now
at a critical level, and further delays in taking additional conservation steps may have a detrimental impact on the sustainability of the herd.

We look forward to continuing to work with your organization in order to ensure the long term sustainability of the GRHC.

Kindest regards,

Bill Parrott  
Deputy Minister  
Environment and Conservation
Hello,

I've tried to analyze and summarize the respective roles of Parks Canada and the Torngat Mountains National Park Cooperative Management Board with respect to caribou management. I've attached my reading of the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement and the Park Impacts and Benefits Agreement. It's my understanding that Inuit may exercise their rights to the Inuit Domestic Harvest inside the Park, as they do outside (the Park being part of the Labrador Inuit Settlement Area). The Inuit Domestic Harvest itself, and Inuit rights to it, are established and modified through processes specified in Chapter 12 of the Land Claims Agreement – I forwarded my reading of that yesterday, and reproduced it here for ease of reference and to better understand the larger picture. I've also attached a copy of the Impact Benefits Agreement for ease of reference – the most relevant Part is 8.1.1.

I hope this helps.

I should add the same disclaimer I added yesterday – this is just my reading. It has not been Board-sanctioned. I did speak with Judy Rowell of Parks Canada, and I understand that my reading is generally consistent with hers, although I suspect she might emphasize or de-emphasize certain aspects. I haven't yet forwarded her a draft of my analysis, but I will do so shortly.

Thanks,

Aaron
1.0 Introduction: Purpose and Intent

The Torngat Wildlife and Plants Co-Management (TWPCB) will co-host a caribou workshop in Montreal in September of 2012. In preparing for those meetings, the Board has undertaken to identify relevant governments, departments, Aboriginal groups, institutions and agencies and to refine an understanding of their respective powers, roles, and responsibilities in co-managing caribou on the Quebec-Labrador peninsula. This specific exercise is focused on the role of Parks Canada and the Torngat Mountains National Park Co-operative Management Board (TMNPCB) with respect to the Torngat Mountains caribou herd. The Torngat Mountains National Park Reserve Impacts and Benefits Agreement (PIBA) and the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement (LILCA) form the basis of this analysis – relevant parts and sections of each are reproduced herein, and a summary analysis follows. The PIBA is intended to be read and interpreted in its entirety – therefore, several peripheral sections of the Agreement are reproduced in Part 2.0 (below) before moving on to the core section (Article 6.1.1).

2.0 Relevant Sections of the Park Impacts and Benefits Agreement (Peripheral)

Part 3.2.1: “the objectives of the National Park Reserve are to: (b) “promote the maintenance of ecological integrity in the National Park Reserve through the protection of natural resources and the natural processes which will contribute to healthy wildlife populations that are capable of sustaining Inuit domestic harvesting needs.”

TMNPCB is an advisory board to the Minister, and the Minister may accept or reject their advice.

The TMNPCB (4.5.1) “may provide advice to the Torngat Wildlife and Plants Co-Management Board, the Torngat Joint Fisheries Board, the Nunatsiavut Government and to other agencies on all matters related to management of the National Park Reserve and any other matters related to the National Park Reserve for which its advice is required”.

The TMNPCB (4.6.1) “may provide advice to the Minister on all matters related to management of the National Park Reserve, by any appropriate means.”

The National Park Reserve Management Plan (Schedule 5.1, Objective (h)) shall seek to “manage visitor use of the National Park Reserve to minimize interference with Inuit Activities as provided for in the final agreement.”

Article 7, Part 7.2 (emergency polar bear kills): “the emergency kill will be deemed to be a loss of a polar bear that the Inuit are entitled to harvest pursuant to sections 12.3.6 and 12.3.7 of the final agreement”.

3.0 Relevant Parts of the Park Impacts and Benefits Agreement (Core)

Article 6, Part 6.1, refers specifically to wildlife resources: (6.1.1) an Inuk...may exercise his or her rights in the Inuit Domestic Harvest and the Inuit Domestic Fishery under the final agreement in the National Park Reserve without requiring any form of licence or permit issued by the Parks Canada Agency.

4.0 Relevant Parts of the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement

This summary analysis of the roles and responsibilities of the TWPCB, the Nunatsiavut Government, and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has been excised from an internal working document of the TWPCB and is reproduced here for ease of reference – it is not a primary focus of this paper. The important point here is that Inuit rights to an Inuit Domestic Harvest are specified in the LILCA, and Chapter 12 specifies at great length the official processes for limiting the Inuit Domestic Harvest if limitations should be deemed necessary.

Inuit of Nunatsiavut have the right to harvest caribou throughout the Labrador Inuit Settlement Area at all times of the year, subject to Inuit laws, a restriction on seasons imposed for purposes of conservation under Laws of General Application, and federal firearms controls (Part 12.3.1).

Inuit have the right to harvest caribou throughout the Labrador Inuit Settlement Area to the full extent of their needs for food, social, and ceremonial (non-commercial) purposes, unless a Total Allowable Harvest is established (Part 12.3.2).

The TWPCB is empowered to recommend to the Minister, conservation and management measures for migratory wildlife (caribou and migratory birds) in the Labrador Inuit settlement Area, including total allowable harvests, and harvesting restrictions (Part 12.9.1 (b)).

The Minister has the authority to approve, reject, vary, or replace a recommendation of the Board – a rejection, variance, or replacement must be in writing, and must include supporting rationalization (Part 12.9.7 (a) and (b)).

If a Total Allowable Harvest is established, the Minister is required to establish an Inuit Harvest Level, which constitutes a first demand. Part 12.4 of the LILCA specifies the roles and powers of the Nunatsiavut Government and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador in establishing an Inuit Harvest Level.

If the Inuit Harvest Level exceeds the Total Allowable Harvest, than limitations on the Inuit Harvest must be in accordance with Part 12.5. All recreational hunting, commercial

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1 At present, there are none. In 2011 the Nunatsiavut Government recommended that beneficiaries limit their harvest to two caribou per household.

2 Seasons were shortened considerably by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador in 2010/11 and 2011/12. These restrictions did not apply to beneficiaries of the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement. The Board has considered this apparent inconsistency and will seek interpretational clarity from the Implementation Committee and the three signatories.
plant operations, and harvesting by persons other than Inuit (and Aboriginal people other than Inuit with an Aboriginal or treaty right to harvest in the Labrador Inuit Settlement Area), must cease if the Inuit Harvest Level exceeds the Total Allowable Harvest.

5.0 Summary Analysis

Several peripheral parts of the PIBA refer management authority back to processes specified in the LILCA — for example, Part 5.1(h) does so generally with respect to Inuit activities provided for in the LILCA, and 7.2 does so specifically with respect to emergency kills of polar bears. Taken together, these peripheral parts and others succeed in emphasizing rights conferred in, and processes specified by, the LILCA.

Part 6.1.1 states specifically that Inuit may exercise their rights to the Inuit Domestic Harvest inside Park boundaries, as they would outside. But their rights to the Inuit Domestic Harvest, and the Inuit Domestic Harvest level itself, are established through the LILCA. This is the case for polar bear — a total allowable harvest and an Inuit Domestic Harvest level (and allocations thereof) have been established by the TWPCB, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, and the Nunatsiavut Government, as per the LILCA: a kill inside the Park is considered to be a part of the Inuit Domestic Harvest, and is subtracted from it.

This analysis results from a technical reading of the PIBA and the LILCA — it should do nothing to detract from the important but unspecified functions that may be well performed by Parks Canada, the TMNPCB, the TWPCB, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, the Nunatsiavut Government, and others. These functions might include research, monitoring, stewardship and education, data compilation and analysis, organization and coordination, communication, etc....
Hi John and Katherine,

As a follow up to our discussion earlier this afternoon I have attached a draft briefing note highlighting what I consider to be the core responsibilities of the Nunatsiavut Government, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, and the Torngat Wildlife and Plants Co-Management Board with respect to caribou management in and affecting the Labrador Inuit Settlement Area. I hope this will help in developing your presentation – I share it in that spirit, but I should add that at present this reflects my reading and understanding of the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement – it has not been Board-sanctioned, and is not necessarily an accurate reflection of their interpretation.

I should add that this is a draft I was working on with the Nunatsiavut Government some time ago, and my reading of the Agreement was mostly in reference to the George River Caribou Herd. I haven’t yet considered the role of Parks Canada and others with respect to the Torngat herd. I will, and I will follow up in a briefing note or we can discuss on Friday.

Aaron
Briefing Note

Title: Caribou Co-Management in Nunatsiavut

Issue: Roles and responsibilities for caribou co-management in Nunatsiavut

General:

- The Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement (LILCA) was ratified in 2005 – it is a comprehensive modern treaty between the Inuit of Labrador, Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Newfoundland and Labrador, and Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada. Chapter 12 of the LILCA specifies the roles and responsibilities of the three signatories with respect to caribou management in and affecting Nunatsiavut.
- Part 12.8 establishes the Torngat Wildlife and Plants Co-Management Board (TWPCB or ‘the Board’) as an institution of public government. The Board is comprised of appointees of the Nunatsiavut Government (3), the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador (2), the Government of Canada (1), and an independent Chair nominated by the Board and appointed by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Inuit of Nunatsiavut have the right to harvest caribou throughout the Labrador Inuit Settlement Area at all times of the year, subject to Inuit laws1, a restriction on seasons imposed for purposes of conservation under Laws of General Application2, and federal firearms controls (Part 12.3.1).
- Inuit have the right to harvest caribou throughout the Labrador Inuit Settlement Area to the full extent of their needs for food, social, and ceremonial (non-commercial) purposes, unless a Total Allowable Harvest is established (Part 12.3.2).

Total Allowable Harvest and Inuit Harvest Levels:

- The TWPCB is empowered to recommend to the Minister, conservation and management measures for migratory wildlife (caribou and migratory birds) in the Labrador Inuit settlement Area, including total allowable harvests, and harvesting restrictions (Part 12.9.1 (b)).
- The Minister has the authority to approve, reject, vary, or replace a recommendation of the Board – a rejection, variance, or replacement must be in writing, and must include supporting rationalization (Part 12.9.7 (a) and (b)).
- If a Total Allowable Harvest is established, the Minister is required to establish an Inuit Harvest Level, which constitutes a first demand. Part 12.4 of the LILCA

---

1 At present, there are none. In 2011 the Nunatsiavut Government recommended that beneficiaries limit their harvest to two caribou per household.

2 Seasons were shortened considerably by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador in 2010/11 and 2011/12. These restrictions did not apply to beneficiaries of the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement. The Board has considered this apparent inconsistency and will seek interpretational clarity from the Implementation Committee and the three signatories.
specifies the roles and powers of the Nunatsiavut Government and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador in establishing an Inuit Harvest Level.

- If the Inuit Harvest Level exceeds the Total Allowable Harvest, than limitations on the Inuit Harvest must be in accordance with Part 12.5. All recreational hunting, commercial plant operations, and harvesting by persons other than Inuit (and Aboriginal people other than Inuit with an Aboriginal or treaty right to harvest in the Labrador Inuit Settlement Area), must cease if the Inuit Harvest Level exceeds the Total Allowable Harvest.

Recommendations:

- On 18 October, 2010, the Board recommended that a George River Caribou Co-Management Board be established, and mandated to establish, remove, or vary Totals Allowable Harvests, and allocations thereof. The Board also recommended a series of harvest restrictions outside of the Labrador Inuit Settlement Area.
- On 21 November, 2011, the Board recommended a Total Allowable Harvest of 2000 for the 2011/12 season. The recommendation was not implemented, but the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has since requested a Total Allowable Harvest recommendation for 2012/13. The Board is currently consulting with the Nunatsiavut Government regarding a possible TAH for 2012/13.
- On 25 November, 2011, the Nunatsiavut Minister of Lands and Natural Resources recommended that the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador establish a Total Allowable Harvest, and recognized that doing so would require that the parties establish an Inuit Harvest Level, in accordance with Part 12.4 of the ILI.CA

Drafted By: Aaron Dale & ________________
Drafted On: 18 June, 2012
TRIM

Brian RM. Harvey  
Director, Policy & Planning - Aboriginal Affairs  
Intergovernmental & Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat  
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador  
(709) 729-1487 (w)  
(709) 683-1612 (c)

From: Mehl, Katherine  
Sent: 17 September 2012 14:47  
To: Harvey, Brian  
Subject: FW: Letter to Chef Jean-Charls Pietacho

Hi Brian,

Attached is a signed copy of the letter. How do you feel it best to proceed? I do not have a copy of the response in French.

Katherine

From: Blake, John  
Sent: Tuesday, June 26, 2012 1:08 PM  
To: Mehl, Katherine; Crowley, Shannon  
Subject: FW: Letter to Chef Jean-Charls Pietacho

fyi

From: Firth, Ross  
Sent: Tuesday, June 26, 2012 1:07 PM  
To: Blake, John  
Subject: FW: Letter to Chef Jean-Charls Pietacho

fyl

From: Hoddinott, Fanny  
Sent: Tuesday, June 26, 2012 12:09 PM  
To: Firth, Ross; Gover, Aubrey  
Cc: Legge, Marilyn  
Subject: Letter to Chef Jean-Charls Pietacho

Please see the attached response letter to Chef Pietacho which you were cc'd on. Thank you.

Fanny
Chef Jean-Charles Piétacho
Conseil des Inus d'Ekuantishit
35 Manitou Street, C.P. 420
Migan, PQ G0G 1N0

Dear Chef Jean-Charles Piétacho:

Thank you for your letter dated May 22, 2012, in which you outline your community's concern for the current George River Caribou Herd (GRCH) consultation process established by the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. I am thankful for your time and that of the Ekuantishit council members in the meeting in Sept Iles, Quebec that was held on May 8, 2012.

As the Deputy Minister of Environment and Conservation, I take your concerns seriously. The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador recognizes the severity of the population decline and is dedicated to working to ensure that this important resource is sustainable for future generations. Given the exceedingly low population level of the GRCH, delays in taking conservation steps could have serious and long-lasting detrimental impacts on the herd.

It is my hope that Ekuantishit will reconsider submission of recommendations for a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) and their community's Basic Needs Level. Recommendation by the Ekuantishit, regarding the need to implement a TAH is important to us for future conservation measures.

Thank you in advance for your time. We look forward to your input and efforts to ensure the sustainability of this vital resource.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

WILLIAM PARROTT
Deputy Minister

cc Ross Firth
Aubrey Gover
Brian RM. Harvey
Director - Aboriginal Affairs
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
(709) 729-1487 (w)
(709) 693-1612 (c)

Sent: Tuesday, October 16, 2012 7:59 PM
To: Kennedy, Julian
Subject: Fw: George River caribou note addendum

Sent Via BlackBerry

From: Dutton, Sean
To: Gover, Aubrey; Harvey, Brian
Sent: Tue Oct 16 19:37:32 2012
Subject: Fw: George River caribou note addendum

FYI. Also forwarded to Minister.

Sean

Sent Via BlackBerry

From: Parrott, William
To: Dutton, Sean
Subject: George River caribou note addendum
From: Firth, Ross
To: Roberts, Edna
Cc: Parrott, William
Sent: Tue Oct 16 14:43:34 2012
Subject: George River caribou note addendum

Edna

Non-Responsive

Ross

Ross Firth
Assistant Deputy Minister - Natural Heritage

Department of Environment and Conservation
P.O. Box 2007
117 Riverside Drive
Corner Brook, NL
A2H 7S1

Ph. (709) 637-2199
Fax (709) 637-2180
Information Note
Department of Environment and Conservation

Title: George River Caribou (GRC)

Issue: To provide an update on the management of the GRC herd

Background and current status:
- The GRC population has declined from an estimated 775,000 in 1993 to 385,000 animals in 2001 to 74,000 animals in 2010 and to 27,000 animals in July 2012.
- Population projections based on adult mortality of collared animals, age and sex ratios collected during fall classification surveys, indicate that the GRC will continue to decline and reach less than 22,500 animals by October 2012.
- The October 2012 projection represents a 70% population decline since the 2010 census and a 97% decline since 1993.
- The census projection is supported by other biological indicators of herd health; including low calf recruitment, low adult survival measured from collared caribou, and reduced size of the calving area.
- Reasons for the decline remain unknown. Biologists believe the current decline was not caused by hunting. However, as the population becomes smaller, hunting adds to natural mortality, leading to a faster decline and impeding recovery efforts. This, along with the historically low recruitment and adult survival, suggests that from a biological perspective all human harvest must be eliminated.
- Continued harvest, even in the short term, significantly increases the risk for extirpation of this herd.

Labrador Caribou Initiative
- As part of the 2011/12 budget process, the Labrador Caribou Initiative was approved with funding of $1.9 million over 3 years.
- The objectives of this initiative are to enhance monitoring and conservation efforts for the herd to include: increased biological monitoring and research efforts, increased harvest monitoring, enhanced licensing administration, education and stewardship programs, the formation of stakeholder working groups, advisory and technical committees, and the development and implementation of a management plan for both the short- and long-term conservation of the GRC.
- Activities carried out so far include:
  - Spring calf condition survey and yearling collaring effort
  - Purchase and deployment of 90 Iridium collars for adult and juvenile caribou
  - Fall classification surveys
  - Complete photo census of the herd
  - Mortality retrievals – however, cause of mortality for all retrievals cannot be established
  - Development of stewardship and education materials
  - GRC management plan in development
  - Filling of one vacant Wildlife Biologist position
Harvest Restriction and Numbers

- Provided direction to maintain harvest restrictions implemented for the 2010/11 hunting season including:
  - the limiting of one caribou per resident licence,
  - no transfer of licences,
  - no commercial or outfitter harvest.
- Additional conservation measures for the 2011/2012 hunting season included:
  - a reduction in the season length for resident harvest,
  - limiting license sales to government offices only,
  - mandatory herd health monitoring program where successful hunters were required to collect and submit biological samples from their animals.
- The start of the 2012/2013 season has been delayed pending a decision on management actions by government.
- Harvest estimates for 2010/2011 and 2011/2012 are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Harvest Group</th>
<th>2010/11 Estimated Harvest</th>
<th>2011/12 Estimated Harvest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Labrador Innu</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quebec Innu in Labrador</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular Licence Holders</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>493*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NG beneficiaries</td>
<td>975</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labrador Outfitters</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quebec Sport Harvest (Outfitters)</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GRAND TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>2425</strong></td>
<td><strong>2243</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*combined NG beneficiaries (12E) & regular provincial licences

- The majority of harvest by NG beneficiaries generally occurs in March and April.

Stakeholder Meetings and Consultations

- The Wildlife Division hosted stakeholder workshops in June 2011, November 2011, and June 2012 in Happy Valley – Goose Bay to discuss updates, options and future needs for GRC management. The information gained from these workshops continues to inform the ongoing management process for GRC.
- Representatives from the following organizations were invited to attend:
  - Labrador Innu Nation
  - Nunatsiavut Government
  - NunatuKavut Community Council
  - Province of Newfoundland and Labrador
  - Labrador Hunting and Fishing Association
  - Newfoundland and Labrador Outfitters Association
  - Torngat Wildlife and Plants Co-Management Board
- In January, 2011 provincial officials from ENVC, LAA and Justice met with Quebec Innu bands in Sept-Iles to discuss GRC management and conservation.
• On November 22, 2011, ENVC officials met with members of Quebec Innu in HVGB. ENVC provided a presentation on & discussed issues of GRC herd status with band members.

• Further meetings to discuss GRC management were held in Sept-Iles on May 7 with representatives from the Naskapi Nation and on May 8 with representatives from four Quebec Innu communities.

• Discussions were held on June 28, 2012 between the Innu Nation and the Province through the ATIK committee; established under an MOU with the Labrador Innu Nation.

• On September 12, 2012 a meeting was held in Montreal to discuss future management of the GRCH. This meeting was hosted by the government of Quebec, the Hunting Trapping Fishing Coordinating Committee, and the Torngat Wildlife and Plants Co Management Board and represented Quebec-aboriginal consultations. Participants included Nunavik Inuit, Makavik, Cree of Eeyou Istchee, Nunatsiavut government, NG Beneficiaries, Naskapi Nation, Ekuanitshí, Uashat mak Mani-Utenam, Nutashkuan, Innu Nation, and NunatuKavut, Torngat Wildlife Plants Co-Management Board and officials from the Department of Environment and Conservation and the Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat.

• Aboriginal groups requested government provide funding to establish an aboriginal round table to act as a forum for exchange and support in view of finding solutions, actions and recommendations built upon consensus and respect.

• Aboriginal groups are interested in the establishment of a Co-Management Board that includes representation from the provinces of Newfoundland and Labrador and Quebec.

**Government of Quebec**

- The Province of Quebec has taken management action by reducing outfitter harvest on GRC by 50% (compared to 2009 levels) for the 2011/12 season and closing the sport hunt for the 2012/2013 season.

- Province of Quebec officials will be hosting a meeting with Quebec Innu community leaders on October 31 – November 1 in Sept Iles to discuss management of woodland migratory caribou.

- Quebec officials have indicated that they will participate in a larger multi-stakeholder working group.

**Consultations on Establishment of a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH)**

- In March, 2012 letters were sent to Aboriginal groups in Labrador and Quebec requesting consultation regarding management of the GRCH, including consideration of a TAH. Timelines for both aboriginal and government response were provided.

- Information packages were sent out to all Aboriginal groups providing a summary of the GRC status.

- Aboriginal groups were requested to provide a written response, including a proposal for an appropriate TAH and information on their community’s Basic Needs Level, within 45 days of the consultation. Response status is as follows:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
<th>Date of Consultation</th>
<th>TAH Recommendation received</th>
<th>Gov’t Response Due</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TWPCB</td>
<td>17 April</td>
<td>4 July</td>
<td>Draft - 17 July</td>
<td>TAH recommendation 350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NunatuKavut</td>
<td>17 April</td>
<td>8 June</td>
<td>27 June</td>
<td>No recommendation provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NG</td>
<td>18 April</td>
<td>No response as of October 15, 2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innu Nation</td>
<td>30 April</td>
<td>No response as of October 15, 2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naskapi</td>
<td>7 May</td>
<td>18 June</td>
<td>Draft - 4 July</td>
<td>TAH recommendation 1,727 for Naskapi Nation only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ekuanitshit</td>
<td>8 May</td>
<td>22 May</td>
<td>Draft - 19 June</td>
<td>No recommendation provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natashquan</td>
<td>8 May</td>
<td>No response as of October 15, 2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITUM</td>
<td>8 May</td>
<td>No response as of October 15, 2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unamen Shipu</td>
<td>8 May</td>
<td>No response as of October 15, 2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakua Shipu</td>
<td>8 May</td>
<td>No response as of October 15, 2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matimekush - Lac John</td>
<td>8 May</td>
<td>No response as of October 15, 2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Actions Being Taken:**

- Section 27(1)(i), Section 27(2)(b), Section 29(1)(a)  

Prepared / Approved by: C. Doucet, K. Mehl, J. Blake, R. Firth
Approved by: October 16, 2012
From: Harvey, Brian  
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2015 3:13 PM  
To: Melindy, Shawn D.  
Subject: FW: George River Caribou Letter to Quebec

Brian RM. Harvey  
Director - Aboriginal Affairs  
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador  
(709) 729-1487 (w)  
(709) 693-1612 (c)

From: Harvey, Brian  
Sent: Thursday, October 18, 2012 12:53 PM  
To: Edwards, Herb; Firth, Ross; Simms, Herb  
Cc: Blake, John  
Subject: Re: George River Caribou Letter to Quebec

Best,  
Brian  

Section 29(1)(a), Section 30(1)(a)

Brian RM. Harvey  
Director, Policy & Planning - Aboriginal Affairs  
Intergovernmental & Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat  
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador  
(709) 729-1487 (w)  
(709) 693-1612 (c)

Sent Via BlackBerry

From: Edwards, Herb  
To: Firth, Ross; Harvey, Brian; Simms, Herb  
Cc: Blake, John  
Sent: Thu Oct 18 12:34:50 2012  
Subject: RE: George River Caribou Letter to Quebec

Hi Ross

Section 30(1)(a), Section 29(1)(a)
From: Firth, Ross
Sent: Thursday, October 18, 2012 12:13 PM
To: Harvey, Brian; Simms, Herb; Edwards, Herb
Cc: Blake, John
Subject: George River Caribou Letter to Quebec

Gentlemen

I have attached a draft letter addressed to Nathalie Camden, the Province of Quebec ADM who is responsible for the George River caribou file. The intent of the letter is to request clarification on the management actions of the Province of Quebec for this coming season: [redacted] The need for clarity on Quebec's current position is critical as is the need to ensure a coordinated management approach between the two provinces.

Please take a look at the attached draft and provide me with your comments. I'd appreciate a quick turnaround.

Regards,
Ross

Ross Firth
Assistant Deputy Minister - Natural Heritage

Department of Environment and Conservation
P.O. Box 2007
117 Riverside Drive
Corner Brook, NL
A2H 7S1

Ph. (709) 637-2199
Fax (709) 637-2180
From: Jamie Snook [mailto:jamie.snook@torngatsecretariat.ca]
Sent: Wednesday, November 28, 2012 1:53 PM
To: Hedderson, Tom; Parrott, William; Ron Sparkes
Cc: Firth, Ross; Harvey, Brian
Subject: Updated George River Caribou Herd TAH Recommendation
Importance: High

Dear Minister Hedderson,

Please find attached official correspondence related to a proposed George River Caribou Total Allowable Harvest for 2012-2013 on behalf of Dr. Ron Sparkes, Chairperson of the Torngat Wildlife and Plants Co-Management Board.

We both welcome you to the portfolio of Environment and Conservation and look forward to an opportunity to meet early in the new year.

Kind regards,

Jamie

Jamie Snook, M.A.  P.Mgr.
Executive Director
Torngat Wildlife, Plants and Fisheries Secretariat

Twitter: @TWPFS
Web Site: www.torngatsecretariat.ca

Phone: (709) 896-6794
Fax: (709) 896-8780

P.O. Box 2050, Station B
217 Hamilton River Road
Happy Valley-Goose Bay, N.T.
Canada, A0P 1E0

This electronic communication is governed by
http://www.torngatsecretariat.ca/home/b-disclaimer.htm
Honorable Tom Hedderson  
Minister of Environment and Conservation  
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador  
P.O. Box 8700  
St. John’s, NL, Canada  
A1B 4J6

Wednesday, November 28, 2012

Re: George River Caribou Total Allowable Harvest (Amendment)

Dear Minister Hedderson,

Allow me to first congratulate you on your recent appointment as Minister of Environment and Conservation. As you are aware, I have been recently appointed as Chair of the Torngat Wildlife and Plants Co-Management Board (hereafter ‘TWPCB’ or ‘the Board), and this letter is my first official correspondence. I look forward to an opportunity to meet and work with you on many files that are important to the people of Nunatsiavut.

On February 7, 2012, your predecessor requested that the TWPCB develop a recommendation for a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) of George River Caribou for the 2012-13 season. The Board met with your officials on April 17, and after much analysis, deliberation, and consultation submitted a recommendation for a TAH of 350 on July 4. By way of this letter we wish to update our recommendation to incorporate recent policy and biological developments.

Amongst these developments was an inter-jurisdictional caribou workshop, a population estimate confirming a continued decline to extremely low levels, and a recent TWPCB meeting on November 13. The inter-jurisdictional caribou workshop was held in September and in addition to our board representation, your Department was represented, as was the Government of Quebec, the Nunatsiavut Government, the Innu Nation, NunatuKavut, the Naskapi Nation, the Cree of Eeyou Istchee, the Innu of Ekuaniqshit, Uashat mak Mani-Utenam and Nutashkuan, the Hunting, Fishing, Trapping Coordinating Committee and other governmental, non-governmental, and industry organizations.

Aboriginal attendees met privately on the evening of September 12th and drafted a consensus resolution, which we’ve appended. They unanimously recognized the need for urgent action and supported restrictions if they are combined with a commitment to establish a co-management board. Everyone understands such a board would take time to organize, however it is important that these issues are linked if the goal is to create buy-in and compliance with harvest restrictions.
In addition to these stakeholder deliberations, the Board is alarmed by the continued steep decline of the resource. At the time of this writing, it is our understanding that the population estimate for the George River Herd, derived from the 2012 aerial census and adjusted by the fall classification, is 22,000. The Board-recommended TAH of 350 was reasoned to be 1% of the projected population estimate of 35,000. Accordingly, we hereby recommend a revised TAH of 220, in keeping with the same principles.

That said, arriving at this decision was by no means a straightforward matter of calculating the new TAH based on a predetermined principle. Rather, the Board approached the question anew and considered three options: 1) no harvest; 2) restricted harvest, and 3) unrestricted harvest. Option 3 was eliminated quickly, but there was a great deal of difficult discussion around options 1 and 2. There are reasonable arguments for an immediate moratorium and we expect to have this difficult conversation again at future meetings. However, at the present time the Board ultimately decided to recommend a greatly restricted harvest, as they did in July, given that a small harvest will:

1. be ecologically insignificant (if sufficiently small);
2. be consistent with the Principles of Conservation and the Precautionary Approach, as each is defined in Part 12.1.1 of the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement;
3. increase the likelihood of buy-in and compliance;
4. provide important harvest information;
5. allow for social and cultural connectivity and continuity;
6. allow for intergenerational knowledge sharing;
7. allow an opportunity to be consistent with the priority of access established by the Sparrow decision and entrenched in the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement;
8. qualify as the maximum extent of legitimate infringement on the Aboriginal right to harvest.

In summary, the TWPCB has considered recent developments and decided that they do warrant a revised submission. We therefore recommend that the Minister establish a TAH of 220 immediately for 2012-13 and in the near term commit to establish a George River Caribou Co-Management Board.

Sincerely,

Dr. Ron Sparks
Chairperson
Torngat Wildlife and Plants Co-management Board
APPENDIX 1
TWPCB TOTAL ALLOWABLE HARVEST RECOMMENDATION FOR GEORGE RIVER CARIBOU
4 July, 2012

Honorable Terry French
Minister of Environment and Conservation
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
P.O. Box 8700
St. John’s, NL, Canada
A1B 4J6

Re: George River Caribou Total Allowable Harvest

Dear Minister French,

Through the last several years the Torngat Wildlife and Plants Co-Management Board has been fully engaged with all aspects of caribou management, from research, to policy recommendations, to stewardship and education. Throughout this process we have consulted regularly with the Nunatsiavut Government, Nunatsiavut Beneficiaries, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, academic researchers, and stakeholders across the range in Labrador and Quebec.

On 21 November, 2011, the Board recommended that the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador establish a Total Allowable Harvest for George River Caribou - the recommendation was not implemented for 2011-12. On 12 March, 2012, the Board received a letter indicating that the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is contemplating a Total Allowable Harvest for 2012-13. The Board has considered the information prepared and presented by the Wildlife Division, and we have attached our recommended Total Allowable Harvest.

Sincerely,

Bruce A. Roberts
Chairperson
Torngat Wildlife and Plants Co-Management Board
George River Caribou Harvest Management

Recommendation:

➢ Establish a Total Allowable Harvest of 350 caribou for the George River Herd.

Background:

• The Torngat Wildlife and Plants Co-Management Board ('TWFCB' or 'the Board') participated in an aerial survey of the George River Caribou (GRC) herd in July, 2010.

• Subsequently, on 18 October, 2010, the Board submitted a series of immediate recommendations intended to reduce harvest pressure, and two intermediate recommendations intended to increase research capacity facilitate inter-jurisdictional decision-making.

• All of the recommendations were accepted, and all were subsequently implemented, except the last. As recently as 28 January, 2011, in a letter to the Nunatsiavut Minister of Lands and Natural Resources, the Minister of Environment and Conservation confirmed his commitment to “expedite the formation of a multi-jurisdictional body and facilitate the initiation of a co-management process”. We understand that this commitment has since been varied considerably, and the Minister is now supporting a “provincial advisory committee” (February 7 response).

• On 21 November, 2011, the Board submitted a primary recommendation - to establish a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) of 2000 - and several secondary recommendations, including the establishment of a co-management board, development of a comprehensive harvest management strategy, and development of a stewardship and education strategy.

• On 25 November, 2011, the Nunatsiavut Minister of Lands and Natural Resources recommended that a TAH be established, and recognized the need to identify an Inuit Domestic Harvest Level.

• In a response to the Board dated 13 February, 2012, the Minister of Environment and Conservation rejected the recommended TAH, but shortened the hunting season for licence holders from eight months to three months. The Minister also requested that the Board further assess the need for a TAH for 2012-13. As a part of that assessment, the Board met with Departmental Officials on 17 April, 2012, in Happy Valley - Goose Bay.

• This recommendation focuses on George River caribou, but the Board is equally concerned with the Torngat Mountains herd, and will be following up separately in the near future.
Recommendation: Total Allowable Harvest of 350

- First and foremost, the Board recognizes that the GRC herd has been in steep decline since at least the mid-1990’s. For the purposes of this recommendation, we do not consider the cause of the decline, and we accept without prejudice the biological information presented by the Wildlife Division: the population is 35,000. Hunting is additive, and current harvest levels are unsustainable. We recognize several sources of uncertainty, and several fundamental assumptions, but in keeping with the Precautionary Principle (Part 12.2.1 of the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement) our recommended actions are based on the best available evidence. We do, however, recommend that the best available evidence (including a discussion of survey and modeling methodologies) be publicly released in the form of a written report as soon as practicable.

- In 2011 the Wildlife Division modeled and presented two harvest scenarios – a harvest of 2,500 and a harvest of 0. An accompanying table illustrated the annual percent difference between these two scenarios. At the request of the TWPCB, the Wildlife Division has modeled a third scenario to illustrate the relative impact of a harvest of 350 (see Table 1).

- If hunting is additive to natural mortality, than a declining population cannot be sustainably hunted, and the GRC have therefore been unsustainably hunted since at least the mid-1990’s. (Although hunting may be more likely to compensate for natural mortality when the population is relatively high). But even when populations are very low and declining, the added impact of hunting trends to 0 as hunting pressure decreases. This point is simple and intuitive, but it legitimizes our recommended TAH of 350. The relative impact of a very small harvest will be negligible, and thus the added ecological benefit of reducing beyond this point will also be negligible. We submit that a TAH of 350 constitutes a 'very small' harvest.

- The recommended TAH of 350 will equate to 1% of the population, which is projected to be 35,000 in the fall of 2012.

- Inuit rights to harvest wildlife at all times of the year, throughout the settlement area, can only be restricted through Inuit laws, restrictions on seasons imposed for purposes of conservation, or federal laws on firearms control (Part 12.3.1). The Inuit right to harvest to the full extent of their non-commercial need can only be limited through a total allowable harvest (Part 12.3.2).

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1 The population model presented by the Wildlife Division on 17 April, 2012, predicts a population of approximately 35,000 in the fall of 2012.
Figure 1: Projected Additive Impact of Three Harvest Scenarios

Figure 2: Percent Difference of Three Harvest Scenarios

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>Percent Difference (No hunt/2500 hunt)</th>
<th>Percent Difference (No Hunt/350 hunt)</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
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<td>6%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Alternatives:

No Additional Restrictions (Harvest ~ 2,500)

- Given the severity of the decline, and the social-economic importance of caribou to people across Labrador and Quebec, it must be our shared goal to slow the decline and enable recovery. In the near-term, this can only be accomplished by reducing harvest pressure. The Precautionary Principle, which is foundational to Chapter 12 of the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement, demands action when there is a threat of serious or irreversible harm. We submit that harvest rates under the current regulatory regime constitute a threat of serious or irreversible harm.
• The Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement prioritizes two principles in decision-making that directly affects wildlife in the Labrador Inuit Settlement Area (Part 12.2.1), each of which is defined in Part 12.1.1 and reproduced here for ease of reference. The principle of sustainable utilization is embedded in the principle of conservation, and both are implicit throughout Chapter 12.

"Conservation" means the management of Wildlife, Plants and Habitat, including the management of human activities in relation to them, to foster Sustainable Utilization and maintenance of natural populations, biodiversity and ecological processes.

"Precautionary Approach" means that, if there are threats of serious or irreversible damage to Wildlife or Plants, measures to prevent the reduction or loss of the Wildlife or Plants should not be postponed for lack of full scientific certainty.

**No Harvest**

• Complicating the foregoing analysis, the concept of sustainable utilization is embedded in the principle of conservation, and must therefore be considered as a principle itself.

"Sustainable Utilization" means the use and management of Wildlife, Plants and Habitat in a manner that does not impair their natural viability in order that the needs of the present may be met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

In the context of caribou populations, which are highly variable and likely cyclic, we integrate the three principles defined in the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement into a single management goal – to identify a harvest level which does not impair natural viability, and variability, that the needs of the present may be met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. This goal will not be achieved – our recommended TAH of 350 will fail to meet present needs. But the needs of the present may be partially met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own.

• Any harvest restrictions will have to be weighed against the likelihood of compliance, and the ability/willingness to enforce compliance. In the context of Aboriginal rights – recognized or asserted – compliance will be a challenge without buy-in from those affected. Community-supported modest restrictions will be more effective than unsupported severe restrictions: better to have total compliance with moderate restrictions than moderate compliance with total restrictions.

• The case of bowhead whale hunting in the Canadian arctic provides an interesting parallel in considering a 'no harvest' scenario. Bowheads were hunted sustainably by Inuit for 1000-1500 years and then unsustainably by European and American commercial whalers for several centuries, ending in 1915. Inuit continued to hunt bowheads intermittently to around 1980, when they were formally protected by the Government of Canada. Beginning around 1990 Inuit began to advocate for a small
subsistence hunt, which resumed in 1991 in the Western Canadian Arctic and 1994 in the Eastern Canadian Arctic. The effects of this hunt are considered ecologically negligible, and the Canadian bowhead population has been increasing. (COSEWIC 2009; COSEWIC 2005; NWMB, 2000; Mitchell and Reeves, 1986; DFO 1980).

- If there is no harvest, there is no harvest information. Harvesting provides important ecological information, and provides tangible benefits in the form of intergenerational knowledge sharing, and less tangible benefits in the form of social and cultural connectivity and continuity. It is important that traditional knowledge, skills, and values be maintained and reinforced through a small subsistence hunt. Again, bowhead provides a parallel:

> "The bowhead whale was very important to the ancestors of today’s Inuit. They were very knowledgeable about it. Nowadays, they do not pay any particular attention to the bowhead. This lack of interest and attention is attributed to the fact that Inuit have not hunted the bowhead whale for a long time. As a result, many Inuit fear that people now possess less-detailed ecological and behavioural knowledge about the bowhead, and that eventually there could be an overall diminution or loss of knowledge about the species" (NWMB, 2000; 55).

**Key Considerations**

- Access to fish and wildlife resources in Canada has been prioritized by the Supreme Court in *R. v. Sparrow* (1990). The Sparrow decision has become a landmark in Canadian Aboriginal-State relations, in that it establishes the primacy of Aboriginal rights over non-Aboriginal and commercial privileges. Although the Sparrow Test allows for an infringement on Aboriginal rights to achieve a legitimate legislative objective (which might include conservation), the infringement must be as minimal as possible to achieve the desired result. The negotiation of the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement was concomitant with the Sparrow decision, and the two are consistent (see Part 12.5.3). This is not a legal analysis, nor have we sought legal opinion, but we do hope to draw attention to two points. First, decisions which have been made (or which were not made) have not reflected the priority of access established by the Sparrow decision and since reflected in Land Claims Agreements and management plans across Canada. We attach Appendix A as a social-ecological timeline linking ecological knowledge with management recommendations and action, and Appendix B, which prioritizes access in relation to GRC population dynamics. We hope that together these can serve as discussion-aid in analyzing the last management cycle (Appendix A), and planning for the next one (Appendix B). Second, the Sparrow decision allows for infringement of Aboriginal rights only to the extent necessary to accomplish a specified legislative objective (in this case, conservation). We have argued that a TAH of 350 is the maximum extent of legitimate infringement, and the effect of restricting beyond this will be negligible and therefore unnecessary.
Workshops and Consultations:

- The Board participated in stakeholder workshops hosted by the Wildlife Division in November of 2010 and June of 2011 - upon request, the Board prepared and submitted recommendations respecting the structure and function of a co-management board on 8 July, 2011.

- The Board partnered with the Nunatsiavut Government and the Department of Environment and Conservation to conduct community consultations throughout Nunatsiavut and Upper Lake Melville in December of 2010 and November of 2011.

- At the request of the Department of Environment and Conservation, the Board met with Departmental Officials on 17 April, 2012, to discuss the potential for a TAH.

- The Board is working with the Hunting, Fishing Trapping Coordinating Committee, the Nunatsiavut Government, and the Government of Quebec, to host a workshop involving all GRC stakeholders. The theme of the workshop is “Shared Concern; Shared Solutions” and it is scheduled for September, 2012.

- The Chair of the TWPCB and members of the Torngat Secretariat staff met with the Nunatsiavut Minister of Land and Natural Resources and staff on June 25, 2012, to discuss this recommendation.

- The TWPCB attended the George River Caribou Advisory Committee meeting in Happy Valley – Goose Bay on June 27, 2012, and presented the decision-support tools appended here.
APPENDIX A: GEORGE RIVER CARIBOU RELATIVE ABUNDANCE AND MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS

Relative Abundance of George River Caribou, Quebec/Labrador

(Adapted from Bergerud et al. 2008, “The Return of Caribou to Ungava”)
APPENDIX B: HERD SIZE DYNAMICS AND PRIORITIZATION OF USES
References:


Summary of Meeting of the Aboriginal Participants to the 2nd Caribou Workshop

During the evening of September 12, 2012, the aboriginal participants to the 2nd Caribou Workshop met to discuss their concerns and views on the status of the three caribou herds of Northern Quebec and Newfoundland and Labrador; the Torngat, George River, and Leaf River herds. The aboriginal peoples have hunted caribou since time immemorial. All of the aboriginal participants stressed that the subsistence harvest of caribou is an issue of food security, and that any changes to the subsistence harvest have direct implications on the health and cultural preservation of the aboriginal populations. Equally, all of the participants recognized the critical situation and the need for urgent action.

All aboriginal participants recognized the need to hold consultations in their respective communities to inform them of the status of the three caribou herds, and to receive feedback upon the best course of action to address the situations of the three herds.

The aboriginal participants reached consensus on their desire to continue discussions regarding the caribou situation. All of the parties are committed to further meetings to discuss possible actions that would address the evolving situations with the Torngat, George River, and Leaf River herds. To this effect, the aboriginal rightsholders who harvest from these three herds would like to request financial support from the governments of Quebec and Newfoundland & Labrador for the establishment of an aboriginal Round Table. This Round Table would act as the forum of exchange and support, in view of finding solutions, actions, and recommendations built upon consensus and respect. In view of the urgency of the situation, the Round Table would act to provide recommendations to management authorities until the establishment of co-management boards is formalized.

All aboriginal participants support the creation of an effective co-management board or boards to address the situations of the three caribou herds. However, any co-management process and the decisions that would flow from it must be given due respect and recognition by the bodies responsible for the management of the herds and reflect an equitable sharing of authority. Furthermore, any modifications of management measures would be conditional upon the establishment of a co-management board.

All of the concerned aboriginal parties agreed that there should be no reduction of the subsistence harvest of the Torngat caribou herd until such time as there is more information on the status of the herd. It was also agreed that there should be a formal elimination of the non-aboriginal (sport/resident) hunt in Labrador.

The participants to the evening session were:
The Inuit of Nunavik
The Cree of Eeyou Istchee
The Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamack
The Innu of Ekuanitsit, Uashat mak Mani-utenam and Nutashkuan
The Inuit of Nunatsiavut
The Innu Nation
The Métis of Nunatukavut
Hi to All,

Please find attached a copy of the minutes from the June 27, 2012 GRCH Advisory meeting. Please accept my apologies for the delay in getting this out. Although the attached minutes do not represent the most up to date record of herd status, we hope to have another meeting early in the New Year to provide updates.

If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask. As always, we appreciate and value your input.

Katherine

Katherine Mehl, Ph.D.
Senior Manager of Habitat Game and Fur Management
Wildlife Division
PO Box 2007
117 Riverside Dr.
Corner Brook, NL A2H 7S1
Phone: (709) 637-2383
Fax: (709) 637-2004

Our Wildlife, the quarterly newsletter of the NL Wildlife Division, is available on the Environment and Conservation website.
June 2012

Informal Update
George River Caribou
Current Population Projections

For the George River Caribou Herd

Year

2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012

Number of Caribou

75,000 50,000 25,000

North

West

Hunt (2000)

Vest

after only five years of her
difference of around 7%
ton lows, with a herd size
sequences at such popul-
aminals can have huge con-
an annual harvest of 2,500

Since the early 1990's, the GRC has been in decline. Recently the decline has been occurring at an alarming rate.

The George River Caribou Herd (GRC), along with other migratory caribou herds across North America, experience large-scale population fluctuations over extended periods of time.

Advisory Committee Meeting

5th June, 2012

Gladstone, BC

http://www.theglobeandmail.com/
Estimated Harvest

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<td>NG Beneficiaries in LISA</td>
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<td>Labrador Licence Holders</td>
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<td>300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quebec Aboriginal Groups</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Combined Inuit &amp; Regular Licenses</td>
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<td>590</td>
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*2011/12 still being updated*

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<th>Total</th>
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<th>2860</th>
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<tr>
<td>Labrador Outilers</td>
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<td>Labrador Licence Holders</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2243</td>
<td>2860</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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...continued in contacting 88% of licence holders.

There were a total of 578 provincial resident and 271 nonresidents to 12-E licences sold in 2011-2012. It was found that 21% of licence holders did not hunt and of those who did, success was around 68%. The total harvest estimate was 49.3 caribou with the minimum being 43.5 and the maximum being 54.4.

Ability and weather from year to year females contributed 69% of the harvest. This reflects a difference in herd movement, location, access of the season. This reflects a difference in herd movement, location, access.

**June 2012**

Gregory River Caribou Information Update
Hunting season Robert Higgins (above) ran a program assessing samples from Caribou Hunter in Labrador submitted carcass. Researchers and biologists focus on decreasing prevalence. Hunters noted participation in 1.4% of the animals, including.

Of November 2022, body condition indices, results are expected by the end. This stress levels, parasites levels, age, body size, and samples will provide information on Influenza virus. Of all samples Reverse transcriptase polymerase chain reaction from the estimated number of lesions, and 10 blood samples. This represents a 38% success rate with 129 sample packages retrieved.

The Caribou Health Monitoring Program has had a very successful first year, with 129 sample packages retrieved.
Monitoring predator movement patterns and wildlife will not help in monitoring predator population sizes, wolves and bears may be a better idea of the impact on both adult and calves. But it will help to determine the impacts of these predators on calves at different stages in their decline.

The predator monitoring program includes the addition of seven wolf and 10 black bear collars to the calving grounds. The advisory committee noted that the black bear population has increased, and offered support for trying to determine the impact of these predators on the calving grounds.

Collar Deployment

New collars allow wildlife staff to quickly identify dead animals. More efficient mortality investigations such as real-time locations and collar deployment models provide many benefits over the older Argos models. Since 2012, new collars were active, and females a threshold to reach a minimum necessary recruitment of around 35 calves per 100

Field Work
Discussion

Committee meeting participants and discussed:

The following issues were brought forward by Advisory

- Identify causes of adult carbon mortality.
Conclusion

The essence of the GCH decline is not fully understood. Hillsborough herds are known to fluctuate, as many wildlife initiatives are being implemented to control their populations. However, the GCH response to such efforts may vary depending on the population of the area.

Now it's our turn...
Brian RM. Harvey

Director, Policy & Planning - Aboriginal Affairs

Intergovernmental & Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat

Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

(709) 729-1487 (w)
(709) 693-1512 (c)

From: Gover, Aubrey
Sent: Friday, December 07, 2012 12:44 PM
To: Harvey, Brian; TaracettaGalgay@gov.nl.ca <TaracettaGalgay@gov.nl.ca>; RCarter@gov.nl.ca <RCarter@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: FW: George River caribou

FYI

From: Firth, Ross
Sent: Friday, December 07, 2012 10:57 AM
To: Gover, Aubrey; Dutton, Sean; Noble, Paul; Lake-Kavanagh, Jackie; Parrott, William
Subject: George River caribou

Folks

In advance of our discussion with Ken Rock this afternoon, please find an attached document that highlights recent engagement with Quebec Innu communities regarding GRCH management.

Ross
Ross Firth  
Assistant Deputy Minister - Natural Heritage  

Department of Environment and Conservation  
P.O. Box 2007  
117 Riverside Drive  
Corner Brook, NL  
A2H 7S1

Ph. (709) 637-2199  
Fax (709) 637-2180
Quebec Innu Meetings and Consultations

- January, 2011 provincial officials from ENVC, LAA and Justice met with Quebec Innu bands in Sept-Iles to discuss GRC management and conservation.
- November 22, 2011, ENVC officials met with members of Quebec Innu in HVGB. ENVC provided a presentation on & discussed issues of GRC herd status with band members.
- In March, 2012 letters were sent to Aboriginal groups in Labrador and Quebec requesting consultation regarding management of the GRCH, including consideration of a TAH. Timelines for both aboriginal and government response were provided.
- Information packages were sent out to all Aboriginal groups providing a summary of the GRC status.
- Meetings to discuss GRC management were held in Sept-Iles on May 7, 2012 with representatives from the Naskapi Nation and on May 8 with representatives from four Quebec Innu communities.
- Aboriginal groups were requested to provide a written response, including a proposal for an appropriate TAH and information on their community’s Basic Needs Level, within 45 days of the consultation.
- Reminder email seeking reply sent to six Quebec Innu communities May 28, 2012
- Due to the lack of responses received, a further request for comment was sent to five Quebec Innu communities in early September, 2012.

- Consultation response status is as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
<th>Date of Consultation</th>
<th>TAH Recommendation received</th>
<th>Gov’t Response</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<td>17 April</td>
<td>Original reply received 4 July.</td>
<td>17 July</td>
<td>TAH recommendation 220 (revised from original submission of 350)</td>
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<td>Revised recommendation rec’d 28 November</td>
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<td>NunatuKavut</td>
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<td>8 June</td>
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<td>7 May</td>
<td>18 June</td>
<td>July</td>
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<td>Ekuanitshit</td>
<td>8 May</td>
<td>22 May</td>
<td>June</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Additional correspondence sent September.</td>
<td>provided</td>
<td></td>
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<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- On September 12, 2012 a meeting was held in Montreal to discuss future management of the GRCH. This meeting was hosted by the Government of Quebec, the Hunting Trapping Fishing Coordinating Committee, and the Torngat Wildlife and Plants Co Management Board and represented Quebec-aboriginal consultations. Participants included the Nunavik Inuit, Makavik, Cree of Eeyou Istchee, Nunatsiavut government, NG Beneficiaries, Naskapi Nation, Ekuaitshit, Uashat mak Mani-Utenam, Nutashkuin, Innu Nation, and NunatuKavut, Torngat Wildlife Plants Co-Management Board and officials from the Department of Environment and Conservation and the Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat. ENVC presented on GRCH population monitoring/projections.
Brian RM. Harvey
Director - Aboriginal Affairs
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
(709) 729-1487 (w)
(709) 693-1612 (c)

From: Harvey, Brian
Sent: Friday, December 07, 2012 2:13 PM
To: Gover, Aubrey
Subject: Re: George River caribou

Thanks. I was going to send you a much more abridged version of this.

The only thing I might add is in respect of the Montreal meeting. I cannot recall if John Blake said so publicly at the meeting, per just as an aside to Katherine Mehl, maybe QC biologists, and I, but I do recall he spoke of the need for the Province to take conservation and management decisions soon for the 2012-13 season.

Brian RM. Harvey
Director, Policy & Planning - Aboriginal Affairs
Intergovernmental & Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
(709) 729-1487 (w)
(709) 693-1512 (c)

From: Gover, Aubrey
Sent: Friday, December 07, 2012 12:44 PM
To: Harvey, Brian; TaracettaGalgay@gov.nl.ca <TaracettaGalgay@gov.nl.ca>; RCarter@gov.nl.ca <RCarter@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: FW: George River caribou

FYI

From: Firth, Ross
Sent: Friday, December 07, 2012 10:57 AM
To: Gover, Aubrey; Dutton, Sean; Noble, Paul; Lake-Kavanagh, Jackie; Parrott, William
Subject: George River caribou
In advance of our discussion with Ken Rock this afternoon, please find an attached document that highlights recent engagement with Québec Innu communities regarding GRCH management.

Ross

Ross Firth  
Assistant Deputy Minister - Natural Heritage  
Department of Environment and Conservation  
P.O. Box 2007  
117 Riverside Drive  
Corner Brook, NL  
A2H 7S1  
Ph. (709) 637-2199  
Fax (709) 637-2180
Melindy, Shawn D.

From: Harvey, Brian
Sent: Friday, December 07, 2012 12:20 PM
To: Montevecchi, Gioia
Cc: Appleby, Christopher. Kennedy, Julian
Subject: Fw: George River caribou
Attachments: Quebec Innu Engagement.doc

---

Brian RM. Harvey
Director, Policy & Planning - Aboriginal Affairs
Intergovernmental & Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
(709) 729-1487 (w)
(709) 693-1612 (c)

From: Gover, Aubrey
Sent: Friday, December 07, 2012 12:44 PM
To: Harvey, Brian; TaracettaGalgay@gov.nl.ca <TaracettaGalgay@gov.nl.ca>; RCarter@gov.nl.ca <RCarter@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: FW: George River caribou

FYI!

From: Firth, Ross
Sent: Friday, December 07, 2012 10:57 AM
To: Gover, Aubrey; Dutton, Sean; Noble, Paul; Lake-Kavanagh, Jackie; Parrott, William
Subject: George River caribou

Folks

In advance of our discussion with Ken Rock this afternoon, please find an attached document that highlights recent engagement with Quebec Innu communities regarding GRCH management.

Ross
Ross Firth
Assistant Deputy Minister - Natural Heritage

Department of Environment and Conservation
P.O. Box 2007
117 Riverside Drive
Corner Brook, NL
A2H 7S1

Ph. (709) 637-2199
Fax (709) 637-2180
Quebec Innu Meetings and Consultations

- January, 2011 provincial officials from ENVC, LAA and Justice met with Quebec Innu bands in Sept-Îles to discuss GRC management and conservation.
- November 22, 2011, ENVC officials met with members of Quebec Innu in IVGB. ENVC provided a presentation on & discussed issues of GRC herd status with band members.
- In March, 2012 letters were sent to Aboriginal groups in Labrador and Quebec requesting consultation regarding management of the GRCH, including consideration of a TAH. Timelines for both aboriginal and government response were provided.
- Information packages were sent out to all Aboriginal groups providing a summary of the GRC status.
- Meetings to discuss GRC management were held in Sept-Îles on May 7, 2012 with representatives from the Naskapi Nation and on May 8 with representatives from four Quebec Innu communities.
- Aboriginal groups were requested to provide a written response, including a proposal for an appropriate TAH and information on their community’s Basic Needs Level, within 45 days of the consultation.
- Reminder email seeking reply sent to six Quebec Innu communities May 28, 2012
- Due to the lack of responses received, a further request for comment was sent to five Quebec Innu communities in early September, 2012.

- Consultation response status is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
<th>Date of Consultation</th>
<th>TAH Recommendation received</th>
<th>Gov’t Response</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TWPCB</td>
<td>17 April</td>
<td>Original reply received 4 July.</td>
<td>17 July</td>
<td>TAH recommendation 220 (revised from original submission of 350)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Revised recommendation rec’d 28 November</td>
<td>In preparation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NunatuKavut</td>
<td>17 April</td>
<td>8 June</td>
<td>27 June</td>
<td>No recommendation provided</td>
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<tr>
<td>NG</td>
<td>18 April</td>
<td>No response</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innu Nation</td>
<td>30 April</td>
<td>No response</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>TAH recommendation 1,727 for Naskapi Nation only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naskapi</td>
<td>7 May</td>
<td>18 June</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ekuanitshit</td>
<td>8 May</td>
<td>22 May</td>
<td>June.</td>
<td>No recommendation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Response</td>
<td>Additional correspondence provided</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natashquan</td>
<td>8 May</td>
<td>No response</td>
<td>September</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITUM</td>
<td>8 May</td>
<td>No response</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unamen Shipu</td>
<td>8 May</td>
<td>No response</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakua Shipu</td>
<td>8 May</td>
<td>No response</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Matimekush</td>
<td>8 May</td>
<td>No response</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>– Lac John</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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Brian RM. Harvey  
Director - Aboriginal Affairs  
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador  
(709) 729-1487 (w)  
(709) 693-1612 (c)  

From: Gover, Aubrey  
Sent: Wednesday, March 21, 2012 1:03 PM  
To: Harvey, Brian; Carter, Ruby; G/lgplay, Taracetta  
Subject: FW: GRCH Consultation Letters  

FYI as a result of today's call.  

From: Firth, Ross  
Sent: Wednesday, March 21, 2012 9:42 AM  
To: Blake, John; Gover, Aubrey  
Subject: GRCH Consultation Letters  

Gentlemen  

Copies of signed GRCH consultation letters attached. I've included both the signed French translation and the English version of the letter to Quebec aboriginal groups.  

Ross  

Ross Firth  
Assistant Deputy Minister - Natural Heritage  
Department of Environment and Conservation  
P.O. Box 2007  
117 Riverside Drive  
Corner Brook, NL  
A2H 7S1
Quebec Innu Letter

Dear Chief [XXXXX]

I am writing to your organization concerning the critically low population level of the George River caribou herd (GRCH). As you are likely aware, the herd has declined by more than eighty percent over the last decade, dropping from an estimated 385,000 animals in 2001 to an estimated 74,000 in 2010. Current population modeling using key indicators such as adult mortality and calf recruitment suggest that the herd is now below 50,000 animals and is predicted to fall to approximately 30,000 animals by the fall of 2012. While the precise cause of this decline is uncertain, there is evidence that changes in the quality, quantity, and accessibility of food may have been a major contributing factor. Other factors such as predation, disease, parasites and the effects of climate change, may also be contributing to this decline. While the annual harvest is not the reason for initial decline in the herd, hunting when the population is at such low numbers can significantly add to natural mortality, leading to a faster decline and impeding recovery efforts.

Over the past two years the Province has imposed a series of conservation measures in an attempt to arrest the herd’s decline. These measures include: a moratorium on hunting by commercial operations, a complete prohibition on outfitter hunting, no transfer of licenses as well as imposing a reduction in limit for license holders from two to one caribou per season. In addition to these measures, the Province has shortened the hunting season for 2011-2012 from eight months to three months. These efforts have significantly reduced the number of caribou taken by non-Aboriginal harvesters.

Unfortunately, despite these measures, further conservation efforts are required if the herd is to be conserved and available for future generations. For that reason, the Province is contemplating imposing a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) for the 2012-13 hunting season. This means that based on the best evidence, the Province will determine what if any, is the appropriate total number of George River caribou that should be taken. We realize that imposing a TAH may impact harvesters in your community, and for that reason we wish to consult your organization on the imposition of a TAH and what your community’s basic needs level is for George River Caribou.

To that end, we propose the following consultation process:

1. Provincial officials will contact your organization in order to arrange for a meeting with your officials and to coordinate a presentation on the GRCH. Once this meeting is arranged, the Province will provide your organization with an information package containing the most recent population data and outlining the future challenges facing the GRCH.
2. Your organization shall have 45 days from the receipt of the information package to provide a written response to the information provided. Included in your response should be: 1) a proposal as to what an appropriate TAI might be for 2012-2013; and 2) what the basic needs level of your community is for George River caribou.

3. Within 20 days of receipt of your organization's written comments, the Province will respond in writing to your organization.

4. Should your organization have any concerns about the Province's written response, it can request a meeting within 10 days of receiving the Province's response.

It is necessary to impose strict timelines on this consultation process in order to allow time for further conservation measures to be implemented in advance of the opening of 2012-2013 season. Given that the population is nearing critical levels, any delays in taking additional conservation steps will have a detrimental impact on the sustainability of the herd.

If you have any questions or concerns about the above process, please do not hesitate to contact me.

We look forward to working with your organization in order to ensure the sustainability of the GRIIC.

Kindest regards,

Bill Parrott
Deputy Minister
Environment and Conservation

CC QC Deputy Minister
Dear Grand Chief Riche:

I am writing to your organization concerning the critically low population level of the George River caribou herd (GRCH). As you are aware, the herd has declined by more than eighty percent over the last decade, dropping from an estimated 385,000 animals in 2001 to an estimated 74,000 in 2010. Current population modeling using key indicators such as adult mortality and calf recruitment suggest that the herd is now below 50,000 animals and is predicted to fall to approximately 30,000 animals by the fall of 2012. While the precise cause of this decline is uncertain, there is evidence that changes in the quality, quantity, and accessibility of food may have been a major contributing factor. Other factors such as predation, disease, parasites and the effects of climate change, may also be contributing to this decline. While the annual harvest is not the reason for initial decline in the herd, hunting when the population is at such low numbers can significantly add to natural mortality, leading to a faster decline and impeding recovery efforts.

Over the past two years the Province has imposed a series of conservation measures on non-aboriginals in an attempt to arrest the herd’s decline. These measures include: a moratorium on hunting by commercial operations, a complete prohibition on outfitter hunting, no transfer of licenses as well as imposing a reduction in limit for license holders from two to one caribou per season. In addition to these measures, the Province has shortened the hunting season for 2011-2012 from eight months to three months. These efforts have significantly reduced the number of caribou taken by non-Aboriginal harvesters.

Unfortunately, despite these measures, further conservation efforts are required if the herd is to be conserved and available for future generations. For that reason, the Province is contemplating imposing a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) for the 2012-13 hunting season. This means that based on the best evidence, the Province will determine what if any, is the appropriate total number of George River caribou that should be taken. We realize that imposing a TAH may impact harvesters in your community, and for that reason we wish to consult your organization on the imposition of a TAH and what your communities’ basic needs level is for George River Caribou.

To that end, we propose the following consultation process:
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3. Within 20 days of receipt of your organization's written comments, the Province will respond in writing to your organization.

4. Should your organization have any concerns about the Province's written response, it can request a meeting within 10 days of receiving the Province's response.

It is necessary to impose strict timelines on this consultation process in order to allow time for further conservation measures to be implemented in advance of the opening of 2012-2013 season. Given that the population is nearing critical levels, any delays in taking additional conservation steps will have a detrimental impact on the sustainability of the herd.

I should also note, that in addition to this Aboriginal specific consultation process outlined above, your organization is also welcome to participate in the Caribou Advisory Committee which open to a broader range of stakeholders. A more formal invitation to participate in the Advisory Committee will be forthcoming. If you have any questions or concerns about the above bilateral process, please do not hesitate to contact me.

We look forward to working with your organization in order to ensure the sustainability of the GRHC.

Sincerely,

TERRY FRENCH, MHA
Conception Bay South
Minister
Mr. Jim Lyall, President  
Nunatsiavut Government  
PO Box 70  
Nain NL A0P 1L0

Dear President Lyall:

I am writing to your government concerning the critically low population level of the George River caribou herd (GRCH). As you are aware, the herd has declined by more than eighty percent over the last decade, dropping from an estimated 385,000 animals in 2001 to an estimated 74,000 in 2010. Current population modeling using key indicators such as adult mortality and calf recruitment suggest that the herd is now below 50,000 animals and is predicted to fall to approximately 30,000 animals by the fall of 2012. While the precise cause of this decline is uncertain, there is evidence that changes in the quality, quantity, and accessibility of food may have been a major contributing factor. Other factors such as predation, disease, parasites and the effects of climate change, may also be contributing to this decline. While the annual harvest is not the reason for initial decline in the herd, hunting when the population is at such low numbers can significantly add to natural mortality, leading to a faster decline and impeding recovery efforts.

Over the past two years the Province has imposed a series of conservation measures in an attempt to arrest the herd’s decline. These measures include: a moratorium on hunting by commercial operations, a complete prohibition on outfitter hunting, no transfer of licenses as well as imposing a reduction in limit for license holders from two to one caribou per season. In addition to these measures, the Province has shortened the hunting season for 2011-2012 from eight months to three months. These efforts have significantly reduced the number of caribou taken by non-Aboriginal harvesters.

Unfortunately, despite these measures, further conservation efforts are required if the herd is to be conserved and available for future generations. For that reason, the Province is contemplating imposing a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) for the 2012-13 hunting season. This means that based on the best evidence, the Province will determine what if any, is the appropriate total number of George River caribou that should be taken.

We appreciate that Part 12.4 of the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement (LILCA) only imposes an obligation on the Province to consult the Nunatsiavut Government on the appropriate Inuit Harvest Level (IHL) once a TAH level has been officially set. However, we believe that imposing a TAH level for 2012-2013 season is of significance to Inuit harvesters, therefore, we wish to obtain the Nunatsiavut Government’s input on this decision.
You can rest assured, once a TAH level has been established, we will follow the process set out in LILCA to obtain a formal recommendation from your government on the appropriate Inuit Harvest Level (IHL).

To facilitate consultation on the TAH we propose the following process:

1. Provincial officials will contact the Nunatsiavut Government in order to arrange for a meeting with your officials and to coordinate a presentation on the GRCH. Once this meeting is arranged, the Province will provide your organization with an information package containing the most recent population data and outlining the future challenges facing the GRCH.

2. The Nunatsiavut Government shall have 45 days from the receipt of the information package to provide a written response to the information provided. Included in your response should be a proposal as to what an appropriate TAH level might be for 2012-2013.

3. Within 20 days of receipt of the Nunatsiavut Government’s written comments, the Province will respond in writing.

4. Should your officials have any concerns about the Province’s written response, they can request a meeting within 10 days of receiving the Province’s response

It is necessary to impose strict timelines on this consultation process in order to allow time for further conservation measures to be implemented in advance of the opening of 2012-2013 hunting season. Given that the population is nearing critical levels, any delays in taking additional conservation steps will have a detrimental impact on the sustainability of the herd.

I should also note, that in addition to the Aboriginal specific process outlined above, your organization is welcome to participate in the Caribou Advisory Committee, which is open to a broader range of stakeholders. A more formal invitation to participate in the Advisory Committee will be forthcoming. If you have any questions or concerns about the above process, please do not hesitate to contact me.

We look forward to working with your government in order to ensure the sustainability of the GRHC.

Sincerely,

TERRY FRENCH, MHA
Conception Bay South Minister
President Chris Montague  
NunatuKavut Community Council  
PO Box 460, Station C  
Happy Valley-Goose Bay NL A0P 1C0

Dear President Montague:

I am writing to your organization concerning the critically low population level of the George River caribou herd (GRCH). As you are aware, the herd has declined by more than eighty percent over the last decade, dropping from an estimated 385,000 animals in 2001 to an estimated 74,000 in 2010. Current population modeling using key indicators such as adult mortality and calf recruitment suggest that the herd is now below 50,000 animals and is predicted to fall to approximately 30,000 animals by the fall of 2012. While the precise cause of this decline is uncertain, there is evidence that changes in the quality, quantity, and accessibility of food may have been a major contributing factor. Other factors such as predation, disease, parasites and the effects of climate change, may also be contributing to this decline. While the annual harvest is not the reason for initial decline in the herd, hunting when the population is at such low numbers can significantly add to natural mortality, leading to a faster decline and impeding recovery efforts.

Over the past two years the Province has imposed a series of conservation measures in an attempt to arrest the herd’s decline. These measures include: a moratorium on hunting by commercial operations, a complete prohibition on outfitter hunting, no transfer of licenses as well as imposing a reduction in limit for license holders from two to one caribou per season. In addition to these measures, the Province has shortened the hunting season for 2011-2012 from eight months to three months. These efforts have significantly reduced the number of caribou harvested.

Unfortunately, despite these measures, further conservation efforts are required if the herd is to be conserved and available for future generations. For that reason, the Province is contemplating imposing a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) for the 2012-13 hunting season. This means that based on the best evidence, the Province will determine what if any, is the appropriate total number of George River caribou that should be taken. We realize that imposing a TAH may impact harvesting by members of the NunatuKavut Community Council, and for that reason we wish to consult your organization on the imposition of a TAH.

To that end, we propose the following consultation process:

1. Provincial officials will contact your organization in order to arrange for a meeting with your officials and to coordinate a presentation on the GRCH. Once this meeting
is arranged, the Province will provide your organization with an information package containing the most recent population data and outlining the future challenges facing the GRCH.

2. Your organization shall have 45 days from the receipt of the information package to provide a written response to the information provided. Included in your response should be a proposal as to what an appropriate TAH might be for 2012-2013.

3. Within 20 days of receipt of your organizations written comments, the Province will respond in writing to your organization.

4. Should your organization have any concerns about the Province’s written response, it can request a meeting within 10 days of receiving the Province’s response.

It is necessary to impose strict timelines on this consultation process in order to allow time for further conservation measures to be implemented in advance of the opening of 2012-2013 season. Given that the population is nearing critical levels, any delays in taking additional conservation steps will have a detrimental impact on the sustainability of the herd.

I should also note, that in addition to the consultation process outlined above, your organization is also welcome to participate in the Caribou Advisory Committee, which is open to a broader range of stakeholders. A more formal invitation to participate in the Advisory Committee will be forthcoming. If you have any questions or concerns about the above process, please do not hesitate to contact me.

We look forward to working with your organization in order to ensure the sustainability of the GRHC.

Sincerely,

Bill Parrott
Deputy Minister
Mr. Bruce Roberts, Chairperson  
Tomurat Wildlife and Plants Co-Management Board  
PO Box 2050, Station B  
Happy Valley-Goose Bay NL A0P 1E0

Dear Mr. Roberts:

I am writing to the Board concerning the critically low population level of the George River caribou herd (GRCH). As you are aware, the herd has declined by more than eighty percent over the last decade, dropping from an estimated 385,000 animals in 2001 to an estimated 74,000 in 2010. Current population modeling using key indicators such as adult mortality and calf recruitment suggest that the herd is now below 50,000 animals and is predicted to fall to approximately 30,000 animals by the fall of 2012. While the precise cause of this decline is uncertain, there is evidence that changes in the quality, quantity and accessibility of food may have been a major contributing factor. Other factors such as predation, disease, parasites and the effects of climate change, may also be contributing to this decline. While the annual harvest is not the reason for initial decline in the herd, hunting when the population is at such low numbers can significantly add to natural mortality, leading to a faster decline and impending recovery efforts.

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Unfortunately, despite these measures, further conservation efforts are required if the herd is to be conserved and available for future generations. For that reason, the Province is contemplating imposing a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) for the 2012-13 hunting season.

In accordance with Part 12.9.1(b)(i) of the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement, the Province would like to request a recommendation from the Board as to what an appropriate TAH level is for the GRCH for 2012-2013. In advance of such a recommendation, we would like to meet with Board members to present the most recent population data and to outline the future challenges facing the herd. This information may be of assistance to the Board in making its recommendation. Officials from the Wildlife Division will contact your office to arrange a meeting. Once this meeting is arranged, the Province will provide your organization with an information package containing the most recent population data and outlining the future challenges facing the GRCH.
I should also note, that in addition to the specific process outlined above, your organization is welcome to participate in the Caribou Advisory Committee, which is open to a broader range of stakeholders. A more formal invitation to participate in the Advisory Committee will be forthcoming.

We look forward to working with the Board in order to ensure the sustainability of the GRCH.

Sincerely,

Bill Parrott
Deputy Minister

cc  Mr. Carl McLean