



## Beverly and Qamanirjuaq Caribou Management Board

14 May 2015

Kelli Gillard  
Technical Advisor  
Nunavut Impact Review Board  
Cambridge Bay NU X0B 0C0

By e-mail: [info@nirb.ca](mailto:info@nirb.ca)

Dear Ms. Gillard:

### **NIRB 15YN013: BBC “One Planet: Grasslands” project proposal**

I am writing on behalf of the Beverly and Qamanirjuaq Caribou Management Board (BQCMB) to provide comments and recommendations concerning the proposal by BBC to film caribou during June 2015 on the Beverly calving ground in the Queen Maud Gulf Migratory Bird Sanctuary (Kitikmeot Region) and on the Qamanirjuaq calving ground in the Kivalliq region. The BQCMB is commenting on this proposal because of concerns related to the location and timing of the project with respect to barren-ground caribou, as the Proponent proposes to operate in sensitive habitats (i.e., calving grounds) during a time when caribou are extremely vulnerable to disturbance (i.e., calving and immediate post-calving periods). It is crucial that this project not cause disturbance to these animals.

We have reviewed the permit application materials and expect that the project proposal may cause significant public concern, generally because of the location and timing of the proposed activities, and specifically because the Hunter's and Trapper's Organizations (HTOs) and regional wildlife organizations (RWOs) will be worried about disturbance that the project could cause to caribou cows and their newborn calves. We understand that the advanced technology to be used will allow the filmmakers to stay a long distance from the caribou being filmed and that they will not intentionally cause any disturbance to the animals. Nevertheless there is still a risk that there will be some disturbance, including that caused by the use of helicopters, which the BBC acknowledges in their applications.

The BQCMB also expects that the project proposal may cause significant concern to the HTOs and RWBs because of the nature of the documentary's theme (i.e., portraying “the struggles Caribou face”, “caribou population decline” and “and conservation issues”) and the unknown “angle” or viewpoint that the show's producers will take. There is concern specifically around the uncertainty regarding how BBC *One Planet* will portray the relationship between Aboriginal peoples (including traditional harvesters) and caribou.

As a result, the BQCMB believes that meaningful consultation by the Proponent with the relevant Kitikmeot and Kivalliq HTOs and wildlife boards is essential, and that their support for the project must be confirmed before authorizations are issued. The project should only be given approval to proceed if the HTO, RWO and Government of Nunavut - Department of Environment (GN-DOE) wildlife specialists are satisfied that:

- the project can be conducted without harming caribou, and
- the value of caribou and the multi-faceted relationship between caribou-using peoples and caribou (i.e., spiritual, cultural and economic) will be described in a respectful manner that includes caribou harvester's perspectives.

The following BQCMB recommendations will apply only if the HTOs, RWOs and GN-DOE agree that the project should proceed. In that case we would suggest that the following directions and restrictions be included with other terms and conditions that the NIRB recommends for protection of wildlife to the regulatory agencies who would provide authorizations for the project.

- 1) Helicopters should not hover at altitudes of less than 610m above ground level in areas with caribou cows and calves, and no overflights by any aircraft at less than 300m above ground level should occur while in transit (e.g., between camp and areas with cows and calves).
- 2) The Proponent should be required to inform the HTOs (including Baker Lake, Chesterfield Inlet, Rankin Inlet, Whale Cove, and Arviat) about their final plans prior to beginning their activities in the calving areas.
- 3) The Proponent should be required to hire people from HTOs as monitors to observe the filming operations, to provide advice for avoiding disturbance to caribou and to report back to their HTOs on project activities. (Note that this is broader than the Proponent's plans to work with HTOs in areas of logistical support and bear deterrence.)

The BQCMB also suggests the NIRB ensure that the Proponent:

- is made aware of the extreme vulnerability of caribou cows and newborn calves during June and that disturbance during this period could be deadly for calves,
- is planning to take the utmost care to avoid disturbance to caribou while the film crews are in any areas where cows and calves are present,
- include as part of the documentary a description of the value of caribou to local people and the importance of caribou harvesting to Inuit and other Aboriginal peoples (economically, culturally and spiritually), and
- provide the HTO, RWO and GN wildlife specialists with the opportunity to review and provide input on the script that is developed for the documentary about caribou and conservation issues.

Finally, the BQCMB requests that a brief report on the filming project be provided before mid-November 2015 for discussion at the fall 2015 BQCMB meeting.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project proposal. If you have any questions about these comments and recommendations, please contact BQCMB contract biologist Leslie Wakelyn ([wakelyn@theedge.ca](mailto:wakelyn@theedge.ca)).

Sincerely,



Earl Evans  
BQCMB Chairperson

cc. Mitch Campbell, Nunavut Department of Environment  
Leah Muckpah, Kivalliq Wildlife Board  
Ema Qaggutaq, Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board