

Keeping people in touch with the Beverly and Qamanirjuaq Caribou Management Board (BQCMB), and with issues affecting caribou.



in Brief

BQCMB Meeting #90
May 11-13, 2021

The Beverly and Qamanirjuaq Caribou Management Board (BQCMCB) held its 89th meeting from November 17-19, 2020. The meeting, originally scheduled to occur in Yellowknife NWT, was held virtually due to COVID-19 restrictions.

The Board discussed several items related to the conservation of the Beverly and Qamanirjuaq caribou herds, both of which are in decline. Of greatest concern was a number of proposed developments across the range that have the potential to impact the herds and their habitat, including:

- A 50 km all-weather road that would extend Highway 914 between mine sites in northern Saskatchewan;
- The Slave Geological Province Corridor, a 413 km all-weather road that would increase access to existing mines and support future mining northeast of Yellowknife, NWT;
- The Taltson Hydro Project Expansion, to connect and expand existing hydro systems in the South and North Slave regions of the NWT; and
- A Kivalliq Hydro-Fibre Link that would extend from northern Manitoba through the Kivalliq region of Nunavut.

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Photo courtesy of Thomas Sammurtok
Rankin Inlet, NU



- **Planning the Future of the BQCMB**
- **Tracking the Caribou: Why satellite collaring programs and harvest reporting are so important**
- **Meet the BQCMB Member: Joe Marten**

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Around the Range

Proposed Developments on the Range

The BQCMB met virtually on January 22 to hear presentations on some proposed developments on the Beverly and Qamanirjuaq range.

Representatives from the Government of Northwest Territories Department of Infrastructure (GNWT-INF) presented information about two proposed developments. Presenters emphasized economic opportunities as the biggest driver behind these projects.

Slave Geological Province Corridor (Northwest Territories)

The Slave Geological Province Road Corridor consists of a 413 km access corridor into Slave Geological Province (SGP) north from Yellowknife to the Nunavut Border. Road, energy and communications infrastructure will all be included, with a possible future connection to the proposed Grays Bay Road to extend hundreds of kilometres further north to a port on the coast in the Kitikmeot region of Nunavut.

The road project is in early stages, with \$40 million secured from the federal government for environmental assessment for the first of 3 road segments and planning for the other 2 segments. Funding for project construction has not been secured. The GNWT is currently consulting with Indigenous governments, conducting engineering and environmental studies and wildlife research, and investigating construction best practices.

More information: <https://www.inf.gov.nt.ca/en/SGP>

Taltson Hydroelectricity Expansion (Northwest Territories)

This project is also in very early planning stages with 3 project phases: connecting two existing NWT hydro systems; providing clean energy for resource development in the Slave Geological Province; and eventually connecting the NWT electrical grid to the rest of Canada. Phase 1 of the over \$1 billion project includes adding a 60 megawatt generation facility next to existing NWT hydro systems, upgrading the existing reservoir with no new flooding, and establishing a new transmission line. Options for the line include crossing Great Slave Lake using a combination of overhead lines across land and submarine cables across the bottom of the lake, or taking a route across land around the west side of the lake.

Presenters said the project needs to be done with Indigenous partners as owners and key participants. They have \$18 million from the federal government to study the feasibility of Phase 1. If everything goes as planned, including obtaining required funding, construction would begin around 2025 and finish by about 2029.

Chair Earl Evans noted, “These are huge projects – land changing, animal altering, wildlife disrupting projects. I understand there is economic benefit to people in the north, but it will be at the expense of the caribou and other wildlife - we have to look at that too.”

Evans also highlighted the high water levels that have flooded cabins and traplines in recent years, having a devastating effect on trappers. “This is their way of life. You can’t put a dollar figure on the cultural aspect of this. Kids have so many distractions already, and we are trying to teach our kids so these lessons aren’t forgotten as elders pass on. We are having a hard enough time keeping our children on the land, never mind having their cabins under water.”



Proposed Taltson Hydroelectricity Expansion showing the 3 planned project phases. Map courtesy of Government of Northwest Territories Infrastructure

Jimmy Laban and Dennis Larocque, BQCMB members from northern Saskatchewan, both highlighted that Indigenous rights extend beyond political boundaries and consultation should also.

More information: <https://www.inf.gov.nt.ca/en/Taltson>

Highway 914 Extension Project (Saskatchewan)

Highway 914, which is about 268 km long, goes north through scenic parts of Saskatchewan, including Pinehouse Lake and Gordon Lake. Representatives from the Saskatchewan Ministry of Highways and Stantec made a presentation on this project, a 50.7 km long all-weather roadway between Cameco's McArthur River and Cigar Lake mine sites. The purpose is to create an alternate route for northern Saskatchewan residents, as well as an efficient travel route for traffic to access mines and exploration sites.

Consultations and community engagement activities began in 2010. Environmental assessment is currently underway and the Ministry of Environment has requested an additional round of consultation, which is in progress. A construction timeline is not yet known.

Presenters noted that the project may interact with woodland caribou but has limited potential to interact with the Beverly and Qamanirjuaq herds. They also listed a number of proposed mitigation measures for caribou.

BQCMB members and other meeting participants were concerned about social and indirect effects on caribou this road would provide. “It will bring in more people from down south who don’t usually come into the region and hunt,” explained Tina Giroux-Robillard. “The communities are very concerned about this, where people are expanding their harvesting range for a variety of reasons. If this road makes that easier by connecting communities, and being a public road, it’s something that should be addressed.” Others stressed it has not been possible in other jurisdictions to limit or control access once a road is created.

Stantec emphasized the need for the BQCMB to be consulted throughout the process.

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Planning for the Future of the BQCMB

A highlight of the BQCMB's November 2020 virtual meeting was Tina Giroux-Robillard's presentation titled "BQCMB Planning: Preparing for the Future". Giroux-Robillard explained the work that will be undertaken over the coming months, including development of a new Management Agreement, a review of the Caribou Management Plan, and succession planning.

She explained that the BQCMB has operated much the same for almost 40 years and updates are required. So is increased funding.

Establishing a new management agreement by the time the existing agreement expires in April 2022 is the Board's biggest short-term challenge.

Chair Earl Evans noted Giroux-Robillard has an ambitious schedule, a short time frame, and a pandemic making work more difficult. T. Giroux-Robillard agreed the work requires community engagement, which is more difficult due to COVID; however, she will find creative ways to ensure community members have the ability to contribute.

It is expected the draft management agreement will include many changes. In addition to increased funding, these could include funding to cover honoraria and travel expenses for community members to attend meetings, having other potential funding partners sign on to the agreement, listing communities on the Beverly and Qamanirjuaq range as equal partners, and other improvements. •



Photo courtesy of Tina Giroux-Robillard

Welcome to Tina Giroux-Robillard

The BQCMB is happy to announce Tina Giroux-Robillard, M.Sc. (Biology) has agreed to lead development of the new Beverly and Qamanirjuaq Barren Ground Caribou Management Agreement that will take effect on April 1, 2022. Following completion of this work, Tina will prepare to transition into the position of Executive Director of the BQCMB, due to the impending retirement of Ross Thompson.

Tina is well known, having attended BQCMB meetings for many years as technical advisor to the Athabasca Denesuliné board members. For over 15 years, Tina has been working with First Nation communities as a wildlife biologist, regulatory officer, policy analyst, and advocate. This has been through her work with the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations in fish habitat protection, and predominately with the Athabasca Denesuliné on barren ground caribou stewardship, using Traditional Ecological Knowledge as a primary source of data in various studies and monitoring programs, and assisting communities in the protection of Treaty and aboriginal rights.

Tina is currently working as project manager with Ya'thi Néné Lands & Resources, for the creation of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs) in Nuhenéné, the traditional territory of the Athabasca Denesuliné. They will serve to protect important caribou wintering habitat, while ensuring the Athabasca Denesuliné culture and way of life is conserved. Once implemented, these will be the first IPCAs in the province of Saskatchewan, but hopefully not the last!

Tina is currently living near Paddockwood, SK with her husband and dogs, and enjoying her new role as a grandmother. •



"These are huge projects - land changing, animal altering, wildlife disrupting projects. I understand there is economic benefit to people in the north, but it will be at the expense of caribou and other wildlife - we have to look at that too."

BQCMB Chair Earl Evans, BQCMB

Habitat Protection continued from p. 1

The BQCMB's concern with roads stems not only from their potential to impact caribou migration, but the inevitable increased access for harvest, including harvest by hunters from other regions. The Board heard presentations on three of these projects on January 22, 2020 (see 'Around the Range' on p. 2), and hopes to hear a presentation on a proposed Kivalliq Hydro-Fibre Link running from northern Manitoba through the Kivalliq region of Nunavut in the near future. The project proponents, the Kivalliq Inuit Association, were planning to present to the November 2020 board meeting but were prevented from doing so by the coronavirus outbreak.

The Board also received an update on the Seal River Watershed Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area (IPCA) in Manitoba and agreed to support the Athabasca Denesuliné's IPCA, which is proposed in part to protect barren-ground caribou winter range in Saskatchewan.

In addition, the Board agreed to support a proposal to provide stronger protection to wildlife habitat in the Ahiak (Queen Maud Gulf) Migratory Bird Sanctuary in the Kitikmeot region of Nunavut, given its inclusion of the calving grounds of the Beverly and Ahiak herds. •

Tracking the Caribou: Why satellite collaring programs are so important



Why are collars needed?

Collars provide key information on caribou and help the GNWT to:

- Define areas for population surveys and other monitoring surveys
- Determine key habitats such as calving grounds, migration corridors and core ranges, and changes in habit whether caribou cows return to the same calving ground each year (herd fidelity)
- Understand how caribou respond to mines, roads and other human activities
- Create the weekly Mobile Core Bathurst Caribou Management Zone and assess harvest of individual herds

What kinds of collars are used?

The collars used today are much lighter than they used to be. They weigh 800 grams, compared with older collars, which weighed more than a kilogram. In comparison, a snowmobile helmet typically weighs 1-2 kilograms.

How do satellite collars work?

To fit the collar on the caribou, the animal is captured using a net fired from a helicopter. Specialized helicopter capture crews are able to reduce stress to the caribou with quick pursuits and short handling times. Within 15 minutes of capture the caribou is collared and released back into the herd.

No drugs are used and specific animal care and safety guidelines established by the NWT Wildlife Care Committee are followed.

The collars have a GPS, which collects and stores the animal's exact location at intervals during the day. The location data are stored in the collar until they can be sent by satellite and emailed to the caribou biologist's computer.

Timed programmable release mechanisms are built into each collar, so the collar will drop off the animal when it is nearing the end of its battery life. Once the collar is on the ground, it can be tracked and retrieved. Collars are often refurbished and used again in future studies.

How many collars are needed?

The GNWT needs at least 40 collars to get good information on a caribou herd's distribution at any time of year, but the number could be as high as 100 collars. Biologists in the NWT have used up to 50-60 collars per herd, while biologists in Alaska have used up to 100 or more collars for each of their herds.

While more collars can provide better information, any decision to increase the number of collars on the herd must be balanced with the need for respectful behaviour towards caribou as recommended by Indigenous Elders. •

Source: Government of Northwest Territories fact sheet: Satellite Collaring Barren Ground Caribou

<https://www.enr.gov.nt.ca/en/resources>

In order to understand the caribou, their movements must be monitored. Currently, the best way to get this information is through the use of satellite collars. The information collected via the satellite collars helps to broadly monitor the movements of the wide-ranging Beverly and Qamanirjuaq herds.

The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) has used satellite radio collars to track movements of barren-ground caribou since 1996. Caribou are usually collared in the late winter and their movements are tracked throughout the year.

Around the Range continued from p. 2

BQCMB Recommends Population Surveys

As previously reported in Caribou News in Brief, the Qamanirjuaq herd significantly decreased in size between 1994 to 2017. Government of Nunavut Department of Environment (GN-DOE) surveys since 2015 also point to relatively low numbers of calves per 100 cows in recent years. As well, the proportion of breeding cows on the calving ground decreased from 2008-2017, while the proportion of bulls increased. The Beverly herd has seen an even greater rate of decline since 1994.

Due to these concerns, along with the BQCMB's vulnerability ratings of the herds as 'medium-high' (Qamanirjuaq) and 'high' (Beverly), the BQCMB has recommended the GN-DOE conduct a Qamanirjuaq population survey in June 2022 and a Beverly population survey in June 2023

Is Lead from Ammunition a Health Hazard?

Research scientist Mary Gamberg has been studying contaminants in arctic caribou for a number of years. This year, Gamberg also hopes to study whether lead from ammunition is a potential health hazard for those consuming wild game. She hopes to do some targeted sampling of the Qamanirjuaq caribou, taking samples at varying distances from the path of the bullet to look at the contamination of the meat as the bullet passes through the animal.

BQCMB Chair Earl Evans is very interested in Gamberg's latest research. "There are several factors that can contribute to lead shot being found in big game taken by lead bullets," he explains, "I think the most important one being the type and weight of the bullet used to shoot the animal with. Bullets come in hundreds of different types and weights depending on the caliber of gun they are loaded for. Light hollow points usually go to pieces if used on big game. They fragment even more if they strike heavy bone."

Harvest Reporting: The importance of knowing how many caribou a community needs each year.

One of the major roles of the BQCMB is to provide a summary of caribou harvests each year, so that the Board can:

- Protect herds from serious declines
- Determine numbers of caribou that communities need
- Figure out the economic value of caribou
- Tell the difference between traditional and non-traditional uses of caribou, and
- Make sure caribou-range communities are involved in caribou conservation.

Kivalliq Harvest Reporting Project

The BQCMB's Kivalliq Harvest Reporting project is in its third year, thanks to funding from the Nunavut General Monitoring Plan (NGMP) and WWF-Canada. Project Manager and BQCMB biologist Leslie Wakelyn says the project is an effort to eventually have a range wide program in place to record caribou harvest. While other successful harvest data collection programs do exist, such as the program in the Athabasca Denesuline communities of Saskatchewan described below, there is currently no regional program in the Kivalliq.

This year three of the five Hunter and Trapper Organization (HTO) communities involved in the project were onsite to conduct harvest data collection work – Arviat, Baker Lake, and Whale Cove. Although COVID-19 and other factors have slowed progress, a caribou harvest calendar (pictured) has again been created and distributed to the participating HTOs, thanks to funding provided by WWF-Canada.



Harvest Reporting Work – ADNLC

Since 2012, Saskatchewan's Athabasca Denesuliné NeNe Land Corporation has conducted a harvest reporting project. Barren-ground caribou harvest information is collected in order to understand how many caribou are needed in order to sustain healthy, vibrant communities that can participate fully in harvesting traditions.

This year's interviews took place over the phone due to COVID-19. The ADNLC contracted its sister organization, Ya'thi Nene, to do the harvest data collection. Ya'thi Nene has four local community land technicians (CLT's) who conducted the interviews. This way the community also had a chance to learn about the role the CLT's are playing in land protection.

For CLT Ian Donard, his first year doing data collection came with a learning curve. "The first time doing the data collection with the hunters I was hesitant to ask them for information. Some of them had concerns. 'Why are these people wanting to know how much caribou we kill?' There was a bit of confusion, but after explaining the data collection once, they understand and want to cooperate."

Participating harvesters are entered into a draw for a 45 gallon drum of fuel and other prizes as an incentive. All hunters are anonymous and data are confidential. ADNLC will share general summaries of harvest information with the BQCMB based on a signed data sharing agreement. •

"I have seen even well constructed ammunition shot from a large caliber rifle (300 Winchester magnum) go to pieces when striking a large bison shoulder bone!" he adds. "I have piles of bullets I retrieved from animals while butchering all in different states of destruction. It is not uncommon to find bullet fragments far away and distributed throughout the meat."

Manitoba First Nations Awarded Project Review Funding

Northlands Denesuline First Nation and Sayisi Dene First Nation of northern Manitoba were recently awarded funding to participate in the Nunavut Impact Review Board's (NIRB) assessment of Agnico Eagle Mines Limited's (Agnico Eagle) "Saline Effluent Discharge to Marine Environment" Project Proposal. Agnico Eagle has proposed laying 40 km of double pipes to carry the salty water from its Meliadine gold mine to Melvin Bay, near Rankin Inlet, instead of trucking effluent from the mine to the coast. The Manitoba Denesuline First Nations are participating in the review because of their concerns about possible effects of these mining activities on the Qamanirjuaq caribou herd and its habitat. Hunters and Trappers Organizations for five Kivalliq communities on the Qamanirjuaq caribou range, as well as the Kivalliq Wildlife Board and Kivalliq Inuit Association, were awarded participant funding in fall 2020.

The review process has been delayed because of meeting and travel restrictions due to COVID-19. Community round-table meetings took place in Rankin Inlet February 11-12th 2021, with most Kivalliq participants present and others joining virtually. A Public Hearing will be scheduled following those meetings. Agnico Eagle is hoping to begin construction in August 2021. •

People and Caribou

Photo courtesy of Outdoor Canada



Farewell to Dr. Vince Crichton

The BQCMB was saddened to hear of the passing of Dr. Vince Crichton on December 3, 2020. Vince – widely known as “Doc Moose” throughout North America – was a frequent guest at BQCMB meetings. Over his 40-year career with the Province of Manitoba, from which he retired as Manager – Game, Fur and Problem Wildlife, he developed an intense passion for moose and spent much of his career focused on moose biology and management.

After retirement, his passion turned into advocacy to protect the moose he loved so much, never missing an opportunity to inform, educate and work to get people “into the same canoe, paddling in the same direction”. On November 7, Vince’s 78th

birthday, CBC aired the documentary titled – “Giants of the Boreal Forest” which documents Vince’s work and passion and will serve as a special legacy for generations to come.

Nunavut and COVID-19

The BQCMB’s fall 2020 Board meeting was missing some members due to COVID-19 outbreaks in Nunavut. Mitch Campbell, BQCMB member representing the Government of Nunavut noted a public health order put into place in mid-November closed offices and forced people to scramble to set up home workspaces. “It all happened very suddenly so we are trying to adapt,” said Campbell, who was self-isolating at home in Arviat with his family. “We are all in good spirits but a bit stir crazy!”

In Whale Cove, BQCMB members Stanley Adjuk and Simon Enuapik were also isolating at home. “It is an eye-opener for us,” noted Simon. “Please pray for the people of Whale Cove and the rest of Nunavut.”

The Whale Cove outbreak was declared over by the Government of Nunavut on February 4th, and by February 14 the only active cases of COVID-19 were in Arviat, where a second outbreak began in late January.

Lessons from a Great Leader

Back in October, friends Danny Acton and Avery Parle, from Yellowknife, came across BQCMB Chair Earl Evans on the trail.

Danny described the encounter in a Facebook post: “We hit it off right away and he invited us in for coffee and tea. After some hunting stories and meeting his family, we set off for a load of wood. What a joy it was to learn some bush skills and travel the land with Earl. He is a great leader and skilled bushman who is not shy to teach the young fellas a thing or two. Thanks to this man for the great experience down near Fort Smith!”

Danny agreed to let CNIB share the story with readers. But it doesn’t end there. In a Facebook post from February 3, the friends were again learning from Evans.

“What a ride, over the last 72 hours we have travelled over 300km on a snowmobile in search of North America’s largest game, the bison. I can’t thank the hunting gods enough as we successfully harvested some amazing animals. Earl Evans has taken us under his wing and taught us his bush knowledge to sharpen our hunting skills again. Avery Parle or the “big 13” and myself “gun jam Dan” have had some wild adventures in the past but this one has been the best so far!”

Update from Tadoule Lake

BQCMB member Ernie Bussidor reported in early December that Covid-19 is well in hand in Tadoule Lake, MB. “Things are pretty secure right now. There were 3 cases but people isolated and now things are safe. Staff at the nursing station trained a pandemic team of 12 who make sure guidelines are being followed, including staying within the family group, wearing masks, and monitoring traffic, with 14-day isolation for people coming into the community. We even have compliance officers monitoring the situation.” Apparently, some hunters from nearby were observed near the community and advised to stay away as Tadoule Lake was on lockdown.

Although caribou are accessible this year, ice and slush conditions are making travel difficult. Creeks and streams are still flowing. The lakes had six inches of ice, covered by about a foot of snow, then the weather turned unseasonably warm. Mobility of the caribou is affected as well, since crusting causes wounds to the feet. “Scars from years ago can be seen on their lower legs, and it will likely happen again,” added Ernie. •



L to R: Avery Parle, Earl Evans and Danny Acton
Photo courtesy of Danny Acton

Meet the BQCMB Member: *Joe Marten*

Elder Joe Marten, from Fond du Lac Denesūliné First Nation in northern Saskatchewan's Athabasca region, has spent his life hunting, trapping, fishing, and serving his community. Few of his 85 years have been spent working indoors - most has been on the land. The long-time BQCMB member has spent his life learning about the land and sharing his knowledge with others.

Although he has worked at the Gunnar Uranium mine and mill (now decommissioned), he found those jobs were not for him. "I like to be outside all the time," he explains. So he made a living from the land, commercial fishing and trapping. "I've trapped all my life."

Although Joe doesn't go hunting anymore - "I'm too old" he explains - he recalls hunting caribou in his earlier years. "Some years there was hardly any caribou," he says. "Some years there's nothing, and some years there's lots and they're all over the place."

He recalls using dogsleds to hunt caribou years ago, when there were so many caribou that they fed the meat to the dogs as well. "Now they use skidoos, and they don't kill as much caribou as before when we used to have dogs."

Joe maintains there are still plenty of caribou - they just can't get to his community anymore because much of the land has been burned in recent years due to unprecedented wildfires. "There were just a few spots that were green, everything else was burned," he explains. "The caribou used to come down, but everything for about 80 miles was burned, and when they hit the burnt area, they had no food, so they just turned around and went back up north."

He blames Saskatchewan's 'let it burn' policy for the situation. "When the fires started, nobody did anything - they just let them go. It made it really bad not only for the people, but the animals too." Although the Government of Saskatchewan maintains it does not have an official 'let it burn' policy, elders like Joe feel the focus should be on protecting the land as much as populated communities.

"One year, it burned all the way down to the lake," he recalls. "We could see about five moose in the water, trying to swim across. Three went back...we don't know what happened to the other two, they probably got burnt." He says his son, who was working at a camp on the other side of the lake, saw owls and other wildlife floating in the water. "This 'let it burn' policy - it's good for nothing."

Born in Fort Chipewyan, Alberta, Marten has been in Fond du Lac for most of his life. He was orphaned at the age of 5 and on his own for good from the age of 17. "It was kind of hard, being on your own, with no one to depend on," he recalls.

Joe is no longer on his own. In fact, when asked how many children he has, he doesn't miss a beat before replying convincingly "about 40." After having a good laugh at his interviewer's shocked response, he clarifies that he actually has 12.

Most of his kids and grandkids remain close by, and one of his sons is carrying on Joe's work by teaching traditional knowledge to local youth. "They learn how to trap, how to live in the bush," Joe explains. "They take about eight kids out every month for a couple of days to show them how to set traps, how to make dry meat, everything."



Elder and BQCMB member Joe Marten, from Fond du Lac Denesūliné First Nation in northern Saskatchewan, has spent his life hunting, trapping, fishing, and serving his community.

Photo courtesy of Canada North Environmental Services (CanNorth)

Joe is one of the few remaining elders in Fond du Lac, and the second oldest. He is proud of all the work he has done in and for the community over the years. In addition to serving on the BQCMB, he's served on the police board, was a band councillor for 20 years, and is a former chief.

He is also a longtime volunteer with the Athabasca Working Group (AWG) environmental monitoring program, in which residents test the environment around their communities for issues that could come from the former mine and mill. Marten has collected water and plant samples in the spring and fall to be tested for copper, lead, nickel, uranium, arsenic, and other minerals potentially harmful to human health.

When asked if he had anything to add, he laughs "I don't want to talk about caribou because I've got no meat and it makes me hungry!" Hopefully that will soon change, as some local hunters had recently headed up north to find caribou. Joe was hoping to see them return in a week or so with some caribou meat for the community.

"Usually when the caribou is a long ways away like that, the band will pay for the hunters to go and get some meat," he explains. "That's kind of hard right now - we've got no chief." The election for band council that was supposed to take place in August is still on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic, like so many other things.

Thankfully, an outbreak that took hold in the community in November seems to be under control, and Elder Joe Marten is staying safe at home, where he will hopefully soon enjoy a meal of fresh caribou meat. •

Youth and Caribou

Involving youth in caribou issues is a topic of discussion at every BQCMB meeting. While many BQCMB members are elders who mentor youth in their communities to teach them to respect the caribou, members agreed youth involvement in BQCMB meetings must be emphasized, too. “Youth is our future,” explains Chair Earl Evans. “When we are no longer around youth will take charge, and they have to learn to do it in a positive way.”

During the BQCMB’s January 2021 virtual meeting, Board members discussed the need to revisit the ‘10 Traditional Protocols for Hunting Caribou’ (see sidebar). BQCMB alternate Member for Northern Manitoba, Joe Dantouze, remembers being at the meeting in Black Lake, SK in 2016 when the Athabasca Denesuline and Manitoba Denesuline developed the protocols. “It’s there, it’s not going away – and it needs to be followed,” he stated. “We need to practice those protocols and carry them through with our younger generation. Maybe teach the protocol in schools.”•

Photo courtesy of Sharon Ookowt, Baker Lake, NU



Athabasca Denesuline **10 Traditional Protocols for** **Hunting Caribou**

1. Use the caribou drum
2. Do not chase caribou
3. Harvest only what you need
4. Respect cows
5. Do not play with food or wildlife
6. Use all parts of the caribou, do not waste
7. Bring all waste to land, do not leave on the lake
8. Store meat properly
9. Teach the future generation
10. Do not hunt under the influence of drugs or alcohol

Heard around the BQCMB Board Table

“There is a lot of work people don’t see. You have to go out there and break trail, cut wood, haul water, skin caribou, it’s not easy to do. So those people who are out there hunting for the community I applaud them. A lot of elders have no way of getting meat, so if those people don’t go out and hunt for them they don’t get any. I really respect those people.”

*BQCMB Chair Earl Evans
Northwest Territory Metis Nation*

“Any roads on the landscape that have heavy traffic have the potential to be one of the most serious things that will affect migratory caribou.”

*Jan Adamczewski, BQCMB member
Government of NWT*

“We see a lot of wastage from outside hunters, especially when caribou are plentiful, so we are trying to get word out that hunting needs to be respectful. Animals before industry – show restraint, and show respect.”

*Ernie Bussidor, BQCMB alternate
Saysi Dene First Nation, MB*

“How do we reach the government to let them know we don’t want anything to happen that will hurt migration?”

*Napoleon Denechezhe, BQCMB member
Northlands Denesuline First Nation, MB*

“Where I come from we’ve got some young guys monitoring summer and winter. I do a lot of travelling along the lake, and it’s very clean. Hunters are told to clean up once they leave camp, and they are doing it.”

*August Enzo
Lutsel K’e Dene First Nation, NWT*

“Southern hunters come in with trucks and take away a lot of caribou; we need to keep track of that. And they don’t have the knowledge to clean caribou; they don’t understand the culture.”

*James Laban, BQCMB member
Black Lake Denesuliné First Nation, SK*

Publisher’s Box

Caribou News in Brief is published by the Beverly and Qamanirjuaq Caribou Management Board.
ISSN 1489-3436.

Opinions expressed are those of the editor and contributors. Back issues available at www.arctic-caribou.com. Comments and suggestions are welcome, and may be sent to:

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