

***BQCMB presents on controversial uranium mine project:***

**A**REVA Canada's proposed Kiggavik Project would be, if approved, a large and precedent-setting uranium mining complex near Baker Lake, Nunavut. Caribou from the Qamanirjuaq, Beverly, Ahiaik, Lorillard and Wager Bay herds seasonally use the Kiggavik project area.

The BQCMB has been very involved in all stages of the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) screening and review processes for the Kiggavik Project proposal. In January 2015, the BQCMB submitted extensive detailed comments to the NIRB on AREVA's Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Executive Director *Ross Thompson* explained the BQCMB's position to Nunatsiaq News in a January 22 interview: "Our concern is that uncertainties have not been addressed in the final statement," he said. "Our position is that no development or exploration should be allowed on calving or post-calving areas, and post-calving areas is the one that AREVA is proposing to develop."

Thompson said potential radioactive dust resulting from the project worries caribou hunters and their families. But dust is just one of many issues regarding potential effects of the project on caribou. The Board is concerned that the cumulative effects of the Kiggavik Project (and others that will follow once project roads open the area up for further exploration and development) will threaten the future health of one or more of the caribou herds over time. This concern is shared by many groups representing caribou harvesters.

“Will the caribou be safe? Will it be safe to eat? What can replace the caribou if the impacts of these different variables are so severe that the caribou aren’t available?” Thompson asked. “There has to be a stronger balance of bringing forth those community concerns.”

The BQCMB was one of 15 registered Intervenor at the long-awaited Final Hearing for the Kiggavik Project which took place from March 3-14 in Baker Lake, Nunavut.

Chair *Earl Evans* presented the BQCMB's comments and recommendations on the Kigavik Final EIS and answered many questions. He gave two different presentations, one to the NIRB Board at their Technical Session and one to the Community Roundtable, which included people from Baker Lake as well as representatives from all seven Kivalliq communities.

Both BQCMB presentations included images and text in both English and Inuktitut, and NIRB provided simultaneous translation in Inuktitut throughout the hearing.

Evans began by explaining the BQCMB is NOT against mining. However, AREVA's responses to the BQCMB's comments and recommendations on the Final EIS do not reduce our concerns about the Kiggavik project proposal.



Participants at the Final Hearing for the Kiggavik Project in Baker Lake.

## IN THIS ISSUE

<b>Kiggavik's Long and Winding Road</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Around the Range</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>People and Caribou</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Community Profile: Lutsel K'e, NWT</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>New and Improved:The Evolution of Tracking Collard Caribou</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Meet the BQCMB Member</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Youth and Caribou</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>New Website for BQCMB</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>BQCMB Management Plan</b>	<b>8</b>

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# BQCMB MEETING #79

**MAY 5-7****FLIN FLON, MANITOBA**

**Beverly and Qamanirjuaq**  
**Caribou Management Board**

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## Around the Range

### Bathurst Caribou Range Plan

BQCMB Chair Earl Evans represented the Northwest Territory Metis Nation at two in-person meetings of the Bathurst Caribou Range Plan (BCRP) Working Group held in Yellowknife in December 2014 and February 2015. Contract Biologist Leslie Wakelyn also attended portions of the meetings as an observer for the BQCMB. Although the intent of the meetings is to develop a plan that will help land use decision-making within the Bathurst caribou range, this planning process is relevant to the BQCMB because of the extensive overlap in winter ranges of the Beverly, Qamanirjuaq and Bathurst caribou herds. It is hoped that any approach developed for managing disturbance to the Bathurst herd and its range will benefit the Beverly and Qamanirjuaq herds as well. The next BCRP meetings will be held in Yellowknife from May 26-28, 2015.

### Wildlife Society

The Wildlife Society's Annual Conference is one of the largest gatherings of wildlife professionals, students and supporters in North America. It is being held from October 17-21 in Winnipeg, Manitoba—the first time the event has been held in Canada in a decade. The BQCMB is donating funds as an Affiliate Contributor and has applied to give a poster presentation at the conference describing the Board and its new approach from the 2013-2022 Management Plan. For more information, visit [www.tws-conference.org](http://www.tws-conference.org).

### Collaring Update

The Government of NWT deployed 21 additional collars on the Beverly herd this spring, including 13 on bulls and 8 on cows, according to Bruno Croft, BQCMB alternate from Yellowknife. This is the first time the NWT has placed collars on Beverly bulls—all were on adult females until now. According to Croft, this is to “get a better sense of the seasonal movement and distribution of bulls in relation to cows, as well as the bull mortality rate.”

### Kiggavik Review - cont'd from page 1

A major concern is the proposal for an all-season road. The BQCMB feels this is an unacceptable option that should not be approved, and Evans, a former highway foreman for over 30 years, spoke from experience on the subject: “Providing new access with a winter road and possibly an all-season road means you can drive to the mine, and you can hunt to the mine,” he said. “I’ve seen guys rolling their windows down shooting caribou right out of the truck—that’s what happens on winter roads if nobody’s there to monitor them and to see what’s really happening out there. Suddenly you can go out in your pickup, load 15 or 20 caribou in the back of your truck, and come home the same night. This is the kind of thing that you really have to monitor, because the number of animals that will be taken on the road is going to have a detrimental effect to the herd.”

The decline of the Bathurst herd and reduced availability of the Beverly herd has created more reliance on other caribou herds. More communities from the NWT and Saskatchewan are now harvesting Qamanirjuaq caribou, in addition to communities in Nunavut and Manitoba that have traditionally harvested the herd.

“The herd has moved way west,” explained Evans. “We really have to be vigilant on the amount of harvesting information we can gather.”

The other issues with the Kiggavik Final EIS described in the BQCMB’s presentation were:

1. Many groups need to plan to work together to reduce these cumulative effects on caribou.
2. The experience with uranium mines in Saskatchewan needs to be used more.
3. Changes to caribou death rates, movements and habitat may be greater than AREVA has estimated.
4. Monitoring needs to be planned more carefully to identify when changes are needed to protect caribou and habitat.
5. Wildlife agencies and traditional caribou users within and outside Nunavut need to be involved with planning to protect caribou.
6. An access management plan is needed for roads.
7. If the project is delayed for more than a few years, a new assessment using updated information will be required.

“Thanks should go to Chair Earl Evans along with biologists *Leslie Wakelyn* and *Anne Gunn*, plus Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) for participant funding,” said Ross Thompson. “It took a coordinated, dedicated team to meet very high expectations from communities and government organizations for the BQCMB to step up and speak loudly and credibly for the caribou.”

The BQCMB’s presentations are available on the BQCMB website. Comments by the BQCMB and other intervenors on the Final EIS as well as presentations and transcripts from the final hearing are posted to the NIRB’s public registry at [www.nirb.ca/](http://www.nirb.ca/).

The NIRB’s final hearing report with recommendations regarding if and how the project should proceed is expected to be issued by May 8, 2015. •

***“Providing new access with a winter road and possibly an all-season road means you can drive to the mine, and you can hunt to the mine.”***

BQCMB Chair Earl Evans



Photo by Leslie Wakelyn

# People and Caribou

## Minister's Visit

The BQCMB was pleased to welcome the Honourable *Gord Mackintosh*, Manitoba Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship, to the November 2014 meeting in Winnipeg. The Minister began by congratulating BQCMB member *Albert Thorassie*, from Tadoule Lake, Manitoba on his 23 years of participation on the Board. "That's true leadership," said the Minister.

He also complimented the board on its new Management Plan and the "efforts that have gone into protecting not just the species but the way of life." He also praised the BQCMB, saying "You really are an example of how co-management works—you're a model."

During a round-table discussion about caribou conservation, Minister Mackintosh asked questions about wastage and uses of caribou. BQCMB member *Alex Ishalook* said in his community (Arviat, NU) "We try to use every part of the caribou. Even the bones are fed to mushing dogs, hide is used for mitts and boots...we use it all."

BQCMB member *George Tsannie* (Wollaston Lake, SK) stressed protection of calving grounds is important. "The people of the community are concerned about the calving ground. We're the caribou eaters. Without caribou I don't think we'll survive."

## New BQCMB Member

The BQCMB is pleased to welcome *Napolean Denechezhe* to the Board. Napolean is from Lac Brochet and represents the communities of northern Manitoba. Napolean attended his first meeting last November. "I'm new to this Board, but I've been a hunter and fisherman for years. Caribou is my favourite hunting," he said.

## Shewchuk appointed to NWMB

Former MLA for Arviat, *Dan Shewchuk*, is back in the caribou picture with his appointment to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB). The former Minister of Justice and Minister of Environment for the Government of Nunavut (GN) began his four year term in June 2014, representing the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans. Shewchuk was the GN's member appointed to the BQCMB from 2002 to 2008, prior to his entry into politics.

*"You really are an example of how co-management works—you're a model."*

The Honourable Gord Mackintosh



Manitoba Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship, Gord Mackintosh, congratulated Albert Thorassie for his long service.

Photo by Lynne Berezna

## NPC Welcomes New Chair

Another former Nunavut MLA has been appointed Chairperson of the Nunavut Planning Commission (NPC). *Hunter Tootoo* served as an MLA in Nunavut from 1999 until 2013. One of the NPC's major responsibilities is to develop, implement and monitor the Nunavut wide Land Use Plan for the Nunavut Settlement Area. The land use planning process is currently stalled due to the federal government's refusal to fund last fall's planned final Public Hearing, which is necessary to provide NPC with input required to conclude the public review of the 2014 Draft Nunavut Land Use Plan.

## Tides Canada

*Julie Price* of Tides Canada gave a presentation to the BQCMB during its November meeting. Tides Canada is a national organization that has become "the country's largest public foundation dedicated to social and environmental issues". In 2013, Tides Canada provided funding to more than 250 organizations across Canada and retained \$43 million in funds at the end of that year. The organization has offices in Vancouver, Toronto and Yellowknife.

Price explained that Tides supports communities to do work that make people and the land healthier. As one of its 200 donor advised funds, Tides has developed a Northern Manitoba Food, Culture and Community Fund. The goal is to improve health and well-being of northern Manitoba communities by increasing access to healthy food and supporting community economic development. A pilot project in 2012 was expanded for 2014 and will be further expanded in 2015. •

## Weather causes havoc for NIRB hearings

BQCMB Chair Earl Evans almost didn't make it to Baker Lake for the Final Hearing on the Kiggavik Project. The college camp where he was instructing in southern NWT was delayed due to weather and ended a day later than planned. As a result he almost missed his flight to Yellowknife. "I was still skinning caribou at 1:00 pm!" he says, explaining how he was picked up off the ice, flown home to Fort Smith to change and pack, then raced to the airport to catch his 4:30 pm flight. In his hurry he even forgot his parka and winter boots!

The next day, he landed in Baker Lake at the beginning of a blizzard with -50s wind chills. (The weather resulted in a 1 ½ day delay in the hearings.) To top it all off there was no heat in his room the first night!



Community Profile: Lutsel K'e, NWT

# The Land of our Ancestors

On the south shore near the eastern end of Great Slave Lake, NWT sits the small community of Lutsel K'e. Its name means "place of the Lutsel", which is a type of small white fish, and is pronounced "Loot-sel-kay". Up until 1992, it was also known as Snowdrift (named for the Snowdrift River).

At first glance, Lutsel K'e might seem like many other very small northern communities. About 300 people live here, mostly members of the Lutsel K'e Dene First Nation (LKDFN), which is part of the Akaichto Territory Government. There is a two person RCMP detachment and a health centre with one nurse for the community. There is a grocery store, the Lutsel K'e Co-op, a post office and a few lodges in the area. The community is not accessible by road, but has a small airport with daily scheduled flights from Yellowknife. Approximately 80 students attend Lutsel K'e Dene School (K-12), and there is a community learning centre run by Aurora College.

Sam Boucher is a Lutsel K'e Denesoline (Chipewyan) and BQCMB member who has lived in and hunted around Lutsel K'e all his life. The Beverly, Qamanirjuaq and Bathurst caribou herds migrate near the community, but "there was no fall hunt last year—we cancelled it because we couldn't find caribou," he says. The last community hunt with students and elders was in the spring of 2014. When caribou are scarce, residents hunt moose or muskoxen, which are plentiful in the area. True to its name, the fishing is also good. "East Arm of Great Slave Lake, there's lots of fishing," says Boucher.

What makes Lutsel K'e unique are its people and the area surrounding it, which includes

spectacular cliffs, the deep waters of Great Slave Lake, and both taiga and tundra. This area is the setting for a proposed new protected area called Thaidene Nene—"The Land of our Ancestors."

The people of Lutsel K'e want to establish the park in part to protect the area from mining development. In his book about Lutsel K'e, "The Caribou Feed our Soul", LKDFN member Pete Enzoe wrote "We know the best way to make sure caribou are here forever is to take care of our land. The people of Lutsel K'e have worked hard to keep our land healthy. We have not allowed mining companies to drill for uranium here, because we are worried it will poison the water and the land."

The community hasn't always accepted the development of the park, though—its roots date back to 1969. At that time, the federal government approached Chief Pierre Catholique to try to get First Nation support for the park. The Chief was flown to Ottawa to sign over land for the park to be established, but he felt rushed and isolated in Ottawa, and refused to sign the document. He was also worried that his people would be prevented from practicing their traditional way of life.

Catholique returned home and immediately called for a meeting of Dene Chiefs. He told them "never again will a Dene Chief be alone in a room with a number of government officials. In the future, we must be united—when there are 16 government officials in a room, there will be 16 Dene Chiefs". This group became the Indian Brotherhood, which later evolved into the Dene Nation, which includes the Denesoline.

*"There was no fall hunt last year—we cancelled it because we couldn't find caribou."*

BQCMB Member Sam Boucher

In the 1980s the Government of Canada tried again, and while the same uncertainties remained, the Dene recognized that the park could protect some of its traditional territory from potential mining development. Negotiations continued over the next two decades, and in 2004, Chief—and former BQCMB member—Archie Catholique and his council formed a partnership with the federal government for the planning, operation, and management of a protected area in the traditional territory.

The LKDFN and Parks Canada initialed the draft Thaidene Nene Establishment Agreement in November, 2013 and entered the final stages of negotiations to create Thaidene Nene National Park Reserve. The LKDFN is now also in discussions with the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) regarding land protection adjacent to the National Park Reserve using territorial legislation.

Establishing Thaidene Nene will also create much-needed employment in Lutsel K'e, through development of a tourism economy in the community and management and operations of the park itself. Pete Enzoe wrote that today, even former Chief Pierre Catholique supports the park. "He says the Dene people are in charge and that good jobs will come to his community, and he believes that Thaidene Nene will help keep the land healthy."

And by keeping the land healthy, the residents of Lutsel K'e are ready to welcome the caribou back so they can continue teaching their children and grandchildren their traditional way of life. •

For more information, visit:  
<http://landoftheancestors.ca/>  
<http://cpawsnwt.org/campaigns/thaidene-nene>

Photo by Leslie Philipp



## New and Improved: the Evolution of Tracking Collared Caribou

Most people agree that it is important to monitor the movements of caribou herds. Aboriginal people, scientists, and governments all know that monitoring programs help to keep tabs on herd migration patterns and to show what important habitats are used, including calving grounds. What is not always agreed on are the methods used to collect this information.



In the past, biologists tracked caribou by asking trappers to report how many animals or tracks they saw on their lines in winter, talking to harvesters about their observations, and surveying at certain times of the year using small aircraft. Today, more sophisticated methods are used, including radio collars placed on animals, satellites that monitor movements 24 hours each day, and even miniature cameras on collars that show us when the animal is feeding, what it is eating or perhaps what its predators are.

### How is a caribou collared?

Biologists shoot a net from a helicopter to capture the animal of their choice, pulling the net off and quickly collaring and releasing the animal after landing.

No drugs are used in the process. Caribou are blindfolded to relieve stress, and their heart rate is monitored to ensure it goes down to normal levels before the animals are released.

Noise from helicopters disturbs caribou most in the collaring process. To minimize noise, helicopter engines are either turned off or pilots fly a short distance away during the collaring process.

Dr. Vince Crichton is a wildlife biologist who has been distributing collars from Telonics, Inc. in Canada for over three decades. "When I first started using radio telemetry to monitor caribou, the collars were referred to as VHF collars (each with a specific frequency)," he explains. "Monitoring the caribou's movements meant flying in an aircraft to pick up signals. With an experienced pilot one could pinpoint an animal's location, but this flying was dangerous. Some biologists and pilots have been killed while doing such monitoring."

Thankfully, the technology has evolved tremendously and has gone from the old style VHF units to a new system called the Argos satellite system. Today, the data can be downloaded to a computer in a government office or can be stored on the collar until the animal is recaptured and then downloaded from the collar.

*For now, satellite collaring serves as the best, if not perfect, way to obtain this information.*

Today's collars are also much lighter than their predecessors, weighing less than two pounds—a third less than the older collars. The new technology doesn't come cheap, however—collaring is expensive. "VHF transmitters cost from \$330-\$400, while the collars which use a satellite system can vary from \$2,000 to \$3,000 (but don't result in additional costs for aircraft to track them). There is also a cost associated with capturing animals for any type of collar which varies from about \$800-\$1,500 depending on the number to be captured and their location."

Because these costs are high, hunters are discouraged from harvesting animals with an attached collar—loss of collars severely hampers obtaining much-needed information for management.



Manitoba BQCMB members Napoleon Denecheze and Albert Thorassie inspect one of the new, lighter collars during a demonstration by Dr. Vince Crichton at the November, 2014 BQCMB meeting in Winnipeg.

An important aspect of these collars is that they can be recovered and re-used at about half the cost of a new collar. Crichton explains: "A miniature auto-release mechanism can be fitted on collars and programmed to release the collar at a scheduled time up to five years after placement. Each collar is equipped with a beacon and once dropped, the collar location can be pinpointed and retrieved. This drop off mechanism is essential so that caribou don't have to carry these collars after a project is finished." Many communities will support collaring only under the condition that collars be removed once the study is over.

Collaring adult female caribou (cows) is most common because of the significant increase in the neck circumference of bulls during the rutting period. Now there is a collar that will expand and contract along with the neck circumference of the caribou that allows bulls to be collared more often.

Some people have expressed fears that reproduction is affected in collared caribou, or that a collar makes the animal more vulnerable to predators. Crichton is unaware of any studies that show this, and biologists have not observed scarring or removal of tissue, especially with the new, lighter collars. Even the older, heavier collars have shown no effect on caribou other than matting of fur around the neck.

There remain concerns about collaring caribou, however, so new ways to collect this information are being searched for and examined. For now, satellite collaring serves as the best, if not perfect, way to obtain this information. •



Meet the BQCMB Member:

# Dennis Larocque

There are many qualities of an effective board member. Commitment to the board is important, and so is the ability to work as part of a team. Common sense, being open to new ideas and a sense of humour also help. It is a rare individual that possesses all of these qualities, but *Dennis Larocque* is one of those people. He is a quiet presence on the BQCMB, but when he speaks, others listen.

Larocque has represented the communities of northern Saskatchewan on the BQCMB since 2007. He not only faithfully attends board meetings, but he promotes the BQCMB wherever he goes, distributing newsletters and other BQCMB information to the communities of Camsell Portage and Uranium City, Saskatchewan, and encouraging people to look at the BQCMB website.

After starting out in Camsell Portage, his family moved to the Gunnar Mine area, southwest of Uranium City, in the early '50s. When the mine closed in 1964, they moved back to Camsell, which is much smaller than it used to be—today, the Dene community has a population of only seven people. “Plus three dogs and one cat!” chuckles Larocque. “We’re small but mighty!”

It is also remote—the Northern Saskatchewan Heritage website describes it this way:

*“There are places where people have lived that are among the last and best spots on Earth, places that speak of remoteness, peace and calm. Camsell Portage is just such a community. Though it is not located at the end of the earth, Camsell is so far removed from the hustle and bustle of the contemporary rat race that one would be hard put to find a more serene and tranquil community.”*

Camsell’s location means Larocque and his wife Clare don’t see their five kids or four grandkids as much as they’d like—travel to and from the fly-in community is costly. All the kids finished school and went on to higher education. Now, they have busy lives and careers elsewhere, including one daughter who lives in France, where Clare’s family originated. “The teacher taught them too well—they all left!” Larocque says.

He tells the story of his own Mom and Dad. “Mom was from Alberta and Dad was from Fort Smith. My Mom couldn’t speak English and my Dad couldn’t speak Dene. When someone asked how they communicated, Dad said ‘after you put the light out, who needs language!’” There must be some truth to that, as the couple went on to have a family of 16, and learned each other’s language along the way.

Like many other communities, Camsell Portage doesn’t have access to caribou the way it used to. Larocque used to hunt caribou more often, but now does so only once or twice a year, because the



Photo by Lynne Bereza

caribou are further away. These days, he has to travel at least 100 miles by snowmobile to find caribou.

One caribou must now last his family a whole year, and to supplement that meat source he also hunts moose and rabbit. Raising chickens for fresh eggs and planting a garden ensure the family enjoys fresh food, but even though they don’t eat it every day, nothing can take the place of caribou, according to Larocque.

***“I used to take my kids out looking at caribou, but not anymore...we haven’t seen caribou here for about 20 years.”***

BQCMB member Dennis Larocque

“We have to save caribou as much as we can—we grew up with caribou,” he says. “I used to take my kids out looking at caribou, but not anymore...we haven’t seen caribou here for about 20 years.”

Those memories are the reason Larocque feels so strongly about the need to protect caribou calving and post-calving grounds from mining exploration and development. He also has a quiet way of effectively summing up those strong feelings into words for the benefit of the BQCMB members sitting around the table.

A good example occurred during the spring, 2014 meeting in Regina, Saskatchewan, when the discussion about this issue prompted Larocque to unfold a piece of paper where he had jotted down some notes. The room became quiet as he read what he had written:

*“More exploration projects and mines are popping up and we are very concerned about the calving grounds and what is going to happen to the caribou,” he said. “We have to stop development of any kind on calving grounds—that is where life begins. We the aboriginal people rely on caribou for what it provides us, mainly food.”*

*We are heading into a perfect storm, so we have to stop development of any kind on caribou calving grounds. We need to protect these calving grounds and the land for our future generations to use for many years to come.”*

Those future generations begin with Larocque’s own family. He makes sure that when he does get a caribou, his whole family gets to enjoy it. “My kids like caribou and our grandkids, they like it too,” he says. •

# Youth and Caribou

By Tina Giroux, Athabasca Dene Né Né Land Corporation

From March 16-20, 2015, a Youth and Elder cultural camp was held at Selwyn Lake, SK/NWT. This was the fifth annual Athabasca Denesuline Youth and Elder Culture Camp held to develop language, culture, life skills and proficiency in the barren-ground caribou hunt.

For a week, elders and youth lived out on the land in a traditional way. Caribou were hunted and youth learned how to butcher and prepare the meat, prepare camp, and set traps. They also learned orientation skills, trail systems, and weather patterns as taught by the Elders. Youth from each Athabasca Denesuline community were chosen or requested to attend.

The culture camp was primarily managed by Black Lake Denesuline First Nation, with the Athabasca Dene Né Né Land Corporation assisting Black Lake in securing funding for the camp and providing support in the planning stages.

The youth were between the ages of 13-19 with both boys and girls from each community. This year, for the first time, the provincial Conservation Officers and the RCMP also attended the camp.

Hunts were conducted over three days. Hunters went along with the youth individually or in small groups. After the hunt, most groups butchered the caribou out on the land where the hunt occurred. Some groups were unsuccessful in harvesting caribou, but students also learned how to track caribou and locate them on lakes and in treed areas.

Each hunter/Elder butchered the caribou, explaining each step while the youth watched. The older youth that were a bit more comfortable with the process were able to butcher the caribou hands-on with direction from the hunters. For most students that had been on a hunt previously at their respective communities this was their first chance to be able to cut up meat.

While students were out hunting, the youth that remained at camp were taught proper meat preparation. This included preparing it for meals at camp, but also in cutting meat for drying. Any additional meat was brought to the community of Black Lake to be used at a future Elder Workshop to be held in August 2015. A smoke rack was used to smoke and dry the caribou meat as well as some of the fish that was caught by net.

Camp hunters and Elders also demonstrated trapping and how to survive in the wilderness. They explained what the tracks were and how to choose a good site for setting snares. Traditional traps were also set using only natural features and materials.

A fish net was set close to camp on Selwyn Lake. A group of students set and checked the nets and learned how to check and re-set the nets. They also gutted and prepared the fish for the smoke rack.

Although the weather was cold, with -30-40°C temperatures all week, students enjoyed the experience. The caribou hunts were the highlight of the camp. Most students were able to participate in hunts, and they admitted to learning a lot about the process of hunting caribou. The students also liked the chance to make friends with students from the other communities.

This camp is an annual event, with different host communities. This allows for different terrain and methods of hunting to be taught to the youth, as each community has unique characteristics in the cultural aspects of the hunt. Traditional caribou stories and legends were told in the evening by the Elders, particularly the stories surrounding Selwyn Lake.

This camp was a success and definitely achieved the goal of getting students thinking about the importance of caribou, conservation of the species, science career opportunities and survival in the wilderness while learning the proper technical aspects of handling caribou meat. Most importantly, the camp brought youth and Elders together to learn about respecting caribou and its role in Dene culture. •



Photos by Tina Giroux



Top: Youth enjoys fresh caribou ribs on Selwyn Lake after a successful hunt

Middle: Elders Joe and Elizabeth Martin monitor the dry meat tent. Joe, from Fond du Lac, is an alternate BQCMB member for northern Saskatchewan.

Major sponsors of the camp were the Beverly and Qamanirjuaq Caribou Management Board, Cameco Corporation, AREVA Resources, and the NorthMart, with additional support from the Hatchet Lake Denesuline First Nation, Black Lake Denesuline First Nation, Fond du Lac Denesuline First Nation and Athabasca Denesuline Né Né Corporation.





## New BQCMB Website

The BQCMB is very excited to announce a brand new website at [www.arctic-caribou.com](http://www.arctic-caribou.com). Same address, new site!

The new website contains all of the important information we have always provided, in a new and easy to use format. You can:

- Find out the latest information from the BQCMB
- Read about the important work the BQCMB does to safeguard the Beverly and Qamanirjuaq caribou herds for future generations.
- Learn about our communities with a new interactive map.
- Visit our library to find our newsletters, guiding documents, management plans, and more.
- Check out our many projects past and present.
- Subscribe to receive BQCMB updates right in your email inbox.
- Link to our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/BQCMB>
- And much more.

We hope you visit the new BQCMB at [www.arctic-caribou.com](http://www.arctic-caribou.com) soon, and let us know what you think!•

## Management Plan Update

The BQCMB 2013-2022 Management Plan was completed last year, and the Plan is now widely available. Its three versions—detailed, summary, and overview—along with its maps are all available on the BQCMB website. Creating the plan was a huge task involving significant contributions by many people over several years, but as biologist Leslie Wakelyn put it at last November's BQCMB meeting in Winnipeg, "now the real work begins." From here on, the entire board needs to work together to implement the Management Plan.

### First Steps

There are 9 Goals with 34 Objectives and several possible actions for each outlined in the plan. Specific actions need to be prioritized with realistic timelines. Timing for actions could be in four categories—"immediate", 2-3 years, 4-5 years and 9-10 years.

One of the first "immediate" key steps taken to implement the Management Plan will be to assess the vulnerability of the Qamanirjuaq herd. Information on different factors like range use, population size and trend, productivity, and predator abundance will be used to determine the current vulnerability level of the herd, with possible levels ranging from very low to very high. This needs to take place in order for the board to make sound recommendations to decision-makers about what needs to be done to address threats to the herd.

Education is a key component of the Management Plan as well, with 5 priority actions identified. On the Land camps, scholarships, hunter education, printed materials in plain language, and educating industry and air charter companies are all highlighted for action by the Board during the current term (to 2022).

### What's Next?

A Management Plan working group will meet the day before the May 2015 BQCMB Meeting in Flin Flon, MB to identify the approach that will be used for the first vulnerability assessment for the Qamanirjuaq herd. The full board will conduct the assessment based on input from both harvesters and government members later at the Board meeting.•

## Publisher's Box

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