



**Safeguarding Caribou**  
since 1982

**Beverly and Qamanirjuaq Caribou Management Board**

## *Beverly Caribou at High Risk of* **Continued Decline**

**APRIL 30 - MAY 2, 2019**  
**WINNIPEG, MANITOBA**

The Board also looked at the preliminary results of a June 2018 Beverly calving ground survey conducted by the Government of Nunavut. The results show that the herd has continued to decline since the last population survey in 2011, which causes serious concern for the BQCMB.

Evans also stressed that change will only come from all parties working together, which was a strong theme running through the Board's latest meeting. "We heard over and over from community and government representatives alike that we have to work together, now more than ever before. That is why this Board was created in 1982, and why it still exists today."

“We heard over and over from community and government representatives alike that we have to work together, now more than ever before.”

BQCMB Chair Earl Evans



The project is meant to be part of a larger initiative that uses Qamanirjuaq harvest information from across the herd's range, including reports from northern Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Northwest Territories. The BQCMB received funding from the Nunavut General Monitoring Plan and World Wildlife Fund Canada for 2018/19 project activities.

# Around the Range

## Barren-Ground Caribou Classified as 'Threatened' in NWT

Eight of the nine herds of NWT barren-ground caribou have been added to the NWT's list of species at risk, the territory's Conference of Management Authorities (CMA) announced on July 11, 2018. The NWT Species at Risk Committee (SARC) submitted recommendations for listing these herds under the NWT Species at Risk Act to the CMA in April 2017.

The NWT listing includes the Tuktoyaktuk Peninsula, Cape Bathurst, Bluenose West, Bluenose East, Bathurst, Beverly, Ahlak, and Qamanirjuaq herds. The Porcupine caribou herd has been classified as "not at risk in the NWT" and is therefore excluded.

The herds have been classified as threatened, meaning that they are likely to become endangered if nothing is done to reverse the factors that are contributing to population loss. The classification means that an NWT recovery strategy is now required within two years. The CMA will be discussing recovery strategy planning at its meeting in Inuvik in February 2019.

The barren-ground caribou are the latest type of caribou to be added to the territory's list of species at risk, joining the Dolphin and Union caribou (Special Concern), Boreal caribou (Threatened), and Peary caribou (Threatened).

Source: <https://www.nwtspesiesatrisk.ca/news/barren-ground-caribou-little-brown-myotis-and-northern-myotis-added-nwt-list-species-risk>

## Federal Species at Risk (SAR)

During the BQCMB's fall meeting, the Board received an update on the proposed Species-at-Risk "Threatened" designation under federal

legislation by the Government of Canada for all barren-ground caribou herds in the country.

The general consensus around the Board table was that the consultations conducted with the BQCMB in May 2018 and in Nunavut and northern Saskatchewan communities to date were lacking in scope, and progress was hampered because federal government staff sent to conduct the consultations didn't have answers to various complex and crucial questions posed to them.

There are positive implications to the proposed "Threatened" designation – including requirements for recovery plans and critical habitat protection – that have been overshadowed by the unsatisfactory experiences people have reported through the consultation process. Specifically, the statement that caribou would be protected on all federal lands caused great confusion and alarm, since Indigenous harvesting rights were not clearly explained.

It was decided that the Board would send a letter to the federal government seeking clarity on some of the unanswered questions raised during the consultation process.

## Whale Cove Area Mineral Exploration Projects

In January 2018 the BQCMB submitted comments to the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) regarding the Agnico-Eagle Huckleberry mineral exploration project near Whale Cove, NU in the area of the Qamanirjuaq calving ground.

The Board called for no exploration or development activities on calving and post-calving areas of the Qamanirjuaq herd, and asked for a review of the proposal to give interested parties the opportunity to present their views. This would include the Kivalliq communities of Arviat, Baker Lake, Rankin Inlet and Whale Cove, as well as others such as the Manitoba and Saskatchewan Denesuline and the BQCMB.

Comments submitted by others on the proposal included:

- The Kivalliq Inuit Association (KIA), Rankin Inlet HTO and Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) all called for community consultation;

- The Hamlet of Whale Cove and Issatik (Whale Cove) HTO both expressed support for the project;
- The Baker Lake Hunters and Trappers Organization (HTO), Athabasca Denesuline Ne Ne Land Corporation, and WWF-Canada all opposed permitting the project, and
- The Government of Nunavut (GN) recommended measures to reduce disturbance to caribou.

On March 23rd the NIRB issued its decision, consisting of recommendations for project approval without a review and terms and conditions including measures intended to reduce disturbance to caribou and interference with harvesting activities, use of independent wildlife monitors, and public consultation and involvement.

## New application for more exploration and second camp

In May 2018, soon after its first application for exploration was approved, Agnico-Eagle submitted a new application that included new exploration areas and a second camp near Whale Cove, in the area of a spring pre-calving migration route described by the GN as a "key access corridor".

On June 3, 2018, the BQCMB submitted comments to the NIRB, including the following:

- The proposed activities could disturb pregnant caribou cows, reducing their chance of calving successfully.
- Permitting increasing amounts of exploration on the pre-calving migration route and calving areas would set a precedent.
- This increase in human-caused disturbance will contribute to continuing the decline of the herd.

The BQCMB also stated that the project was likely to lead to significant adverse impacts on crucial caribou habitat if results lead to development of a mine and roads, also potentially leading to a network of exploration areas. All of these factors would be a major problem for an already declining herd.



*continued on p. 7*

# A Reminder to Hunters



**D**uring the fall 2018 Board meeting, Dennis Larocque, BQCMB member from Camsell Portage SK, had some words of wisdom to share.

*This is a reminder to the young hunters, and some not so young. Caribou hunting season is here, and hunters should be following their traditional ways of hunting. Take only what you need and can carry on your toboggan, don't waste. If you believe in your tradition and respect the Elders, caribou and the land, then you should believe in willpower, the willpower to put your gun away after you got your load. Don't overkill, don't be trigger-happy. Leave something for tomorrow, for the future.*

*I remember going hunting caribou with my parents, I was about 11 or 12 years old. We walked for about a couple of miles before we saw about 50 caribou bulls, this was in March, and my Dad shot one caribou and skinned it. While we were having lunch on the shore, caribou meat, the rest of the caribou were still standing around. I asked my Mom, are you going to kill more, or shoot them all? She looked at the caribou, looked at me and said, "you think you could eat them all today?" Now that's respect and willpower.*

*I learned a good lesson that day, and it's still with me today. Just because you see 40 caribou, you don't have to kill 20. If at all possible, try not to kill the cows – cows are carrying future caribou. Because one day, Elders voices will be echoing out on the land, calling for caribou, and the thousands of empty caribou trails out on the tundra. We don't need that, we don't want that.*

*So take pride in your tradition, traditional knowledge, respect and willpower. If you don't, someday you'll find the caribou might not be coming back. Mother nature is doing her best to keep caribou around, and we too could do the same.*

*Remember, look after the caribou, and the caribou will look after you. •*

## Facebook post goes viral

The wise words of BQCMB member Dennis Larocque had a huge impact – one only needs to see the BQCMB's Facebook page for proof.

Within 24 hours, the post had been shared 171 times, received 163 "likes" and 26 positive comments. It had reached 11,641 people in total.

One week later, the post had more than doubled that reach. It had generated 246 likes and 42 comments and had been shared 258 times – reaching a total of 22,537 people!

Please like and share the BQCMB's Facebook page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/BQCMB/>



*“Just because you see 40 caribou, you don't have to kill 20. Remember, look after the caribou, and the caribou will look after you.”*

Dennis Larocque



# People and Caribou

## Etthén Heldeli: Caribou Eaters

The Athabasca Denesuline have been featured in a documentary called “Etthén Heldeli: Caribou Eaters” that was recently commissioned by and broadcast on Citytv Saskatchewan in late 2018. This visually stunning documentary does an excellent job in highlighting the importance of caribou to the Dene people. The documentary is 45 minutes long and well worth the time.

View the 3 minute trailer: <https://youtu.be/rL4DnS9TEY8>

Entire documentary: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yo5sAmZq0t8>

There are also some short webisodes on the website [www.cariboueaters.com](http://www.cariboueaters.com) that feature BQCMB members and caribou people from Saskatchewan and beyond, including webisode #1 on the BQCMB. Worth checking out!

## Sharing of a legend

BQCMB Chair Earl Evans shared two similar Indigenous legends at the latest BQCMB meeting. Using an antler carving (pictured below) by Métis artist *Mike Labine* of Fort Smith, NWT he first described the Inuit legend, told to him by former BQCMB member *David Aksawnee*, the late father of current Board member *Richard Aksawnee*. “Inuit used to have a carving of a hand with a hole in the middle and the Inuit used to say when the caribou come through, you always let some pass. That was the significance of the hole in the middle of the carving.”

The Dene legend was told to Evans by BQCMB member *Joe Martin*, an Elder from Fond du Lac, SK. “According to Joe, the legend says when the caribou come through hunters should let the cows and calves go by, and only take the bulls. And that sometimes, when the caribou were really scarce, the Elders used to say the caribou would go in a hole in the ground, or away somewhere where nobody can reach them for awhile.”

Evans also presented the legends at an Indigenous Talking Circle during the recent North American Caribou Workshop held in Ottawa.



## Students learn from BQCMB

University of Manitoba Environmental Studies student *Connor Faulkner* (below left) from Rankin Inlet, attended the November 2018 BQCMB meeting. Connor wants to work in the field of wildlife biology and management. He was encouraged to attend by *Clayton Tartak*, who works for the Rankin Inlet HTO, and also by *Mitch Campbell*, who represents the Government of Nunavut on the Board.

“Mitch said it would be great if I could come out, sit in on the fall meeting, meet each other and start a network to kick-off my career path. So, I went to the meetings and met Mitch, and it was just phenomenal the information at that meeting I gained.”

According to Connor, the main thing he took from the meeting was that “before you can kick off any species-recovery plan you have to spread the word that the herd is declining. Everyone on that board has realized that there is an issue with the caribou herds and they are working with their communities to spread that message. They’re trying to get everyone on board, such as wildlife management boards, HTOs, and mining companies to first realize that there is an issue and be willing to do something about it.

He grew up in the Kivalliq with Inuit culture, it’s a huge part of his lifestyle, and he’s lived off of that lifestyle. “I know you’re feeding your family but you have to realize if you don’t do it sustainably, your family will not be eating or benefitting off of this caribou herd after this generation is over.”

BQCMB Executive Director *Ross Thompson* encouraged Connor to apply for some support for his studies from the BQCMB’s Gunther Abrahamson Caribou Research and Management Award (see P. 7 for more information).

Fellow U of M environmental studies student *Brandon Leost* (below right) also attended the meeting. •

Source: Kivalliq News



# BQCMB Meets with Minister



L to R: Rob Olson, Manitoba Director of Wildlife and Fisheries; Darryl Hedman, BQCMB Vice-Chair; Earl Evans, BQCMB Chair; the Honourable Rochelle Squires, Minister of Sustainable Development; Geoff Bussidor, BQCMB member; Bruce Gray, Deputy Minister of Sustainable Development; and Ross Thompson, BQCMB Executive Director..

**B**QCMB representatives met with the Honourable *Rochelle Squires*, Manitoba Minister of Sustainable Development, at the Manitoba Legislature on November 19, 2018. The purpose of the meeting was to update the Minister on the current challenges facing the Beverly and Qamanirjuaq herds, and to follow-up on the Manitoba government's financial commitments to the Board.

Chair Earl Evans shared the Board's history with the Minister, and explained the need for conservation of the herds, as well as the importance of Indigenous peoples' cultural and spiritual connections to the caribou. He emphasized the importance of having all community members at the table when the Board meets to deal with important issues.

The Minister presented a cheque for part of this year's funding and has since provided further financial support to assist with the Board's latest meeting costs.

The BQCMB greatly appreciates the opportunity to meet with Minister Squires and looks forward to continued open dialogue between the Board and the Government of Manitoba. •



## BQCMB Member Update

### Saskatchewan

*James (Jimmy) Laban*, from Black Lake Denesuline First Nation (Black Lake, SK) has been appointed to serve the BQCMB, representing the Communities of Northern Saskatchewan. Laban was a former BQCMB member and Chair, who is happy to return to the Board, and expressed the concerns facing his communities. "We live off caribou, it's been part of us all our lives. I wanted to ask the Board to really think about that. We need to find a way to work together and speak with one voice."

### NWT

NWT Minister of Environment and Natural Resources *Robert C. McLeod* has appointed *Dean Cluff*, from Yellowknife, to represent the Government of the NWT, and reappointed *Earl Evans* and *Ken Hudson*, from Northwest Territory Métis Nation (Fort Smith, NWT).

### Manitoba

Manitoba Sustainable Development has confirmed appointments of government members *Darryl Hedman* and *Vicki Trim* (Alternate), both from Thompson MB; *Geoff Bussidor* and *Ernie Bussidor* (Alternate) from Sayisi Dene First Nation (Tadoule Lake MB); and *Napoleon Denechezhe* and *Joe Dantouze* (Alternate) from Northlands Denesuline First Nation (Lac Brochet MB).

A band councillor from Brochet Manitoba also attended the meeting and requested information on how the Barren Lands First Nation (Brochet MB) could become involved with the BQCMB.

A complete list of BQCMB members is available at <http://arctic-caribou.com/about/board-members/>.

Pictured at left: Board members and alternates around the table include Chair Earl Evans, Northwest Territory Métis Nation; Vice-Chair, Operations Darryl Hedman, Government of Manitoba; Alternate Rob Harmer, Government of Nunavut; Vice-Chair, Administration Tim Trotter, Government of Saskatchewan; Jimmy Laban, Black Lake Denesuline First Nation, Saskatchewan; Dennis Larocque, Camsell Portage, Saskatchewan



# Youth and Caribou

## NWT Poster & Prose Contest results

During the BQCMC's 86th meeting, Board members were called upon to select the winners of the BQCMC fall 2018 Poster and Prose Contest. This time, the contest was open to Grade 7 to 12 students from Fort Resolution, Fort Smith, and Lutsel K'e NWT.

The contest theme was once again the BQCMC's "You Can Make a Difference – Caribou for the Future" campaign. The students were asked to focus their posters on one of the campaign's three themes: respectful caribou harvest, the importance of harvest reporting, and cumulative effects on caribou.

The contest was made possible with generous funding from the Government of Northwest Territories Species at Risk Stewardship Program.

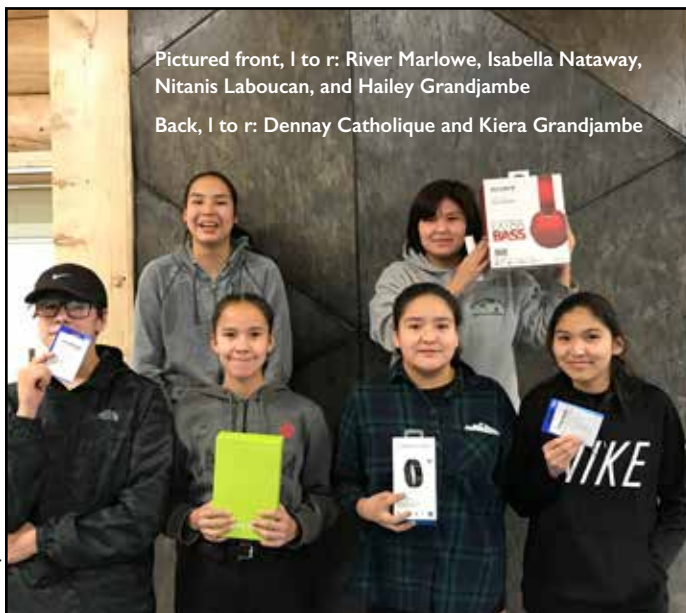
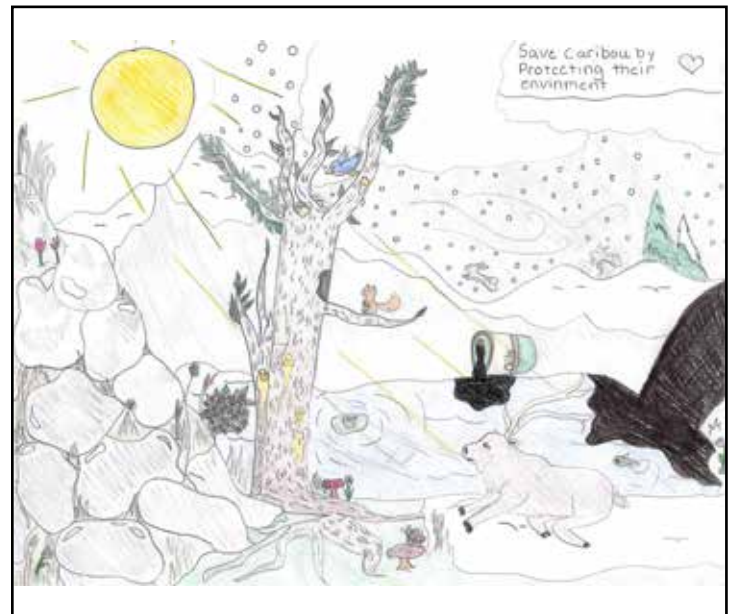
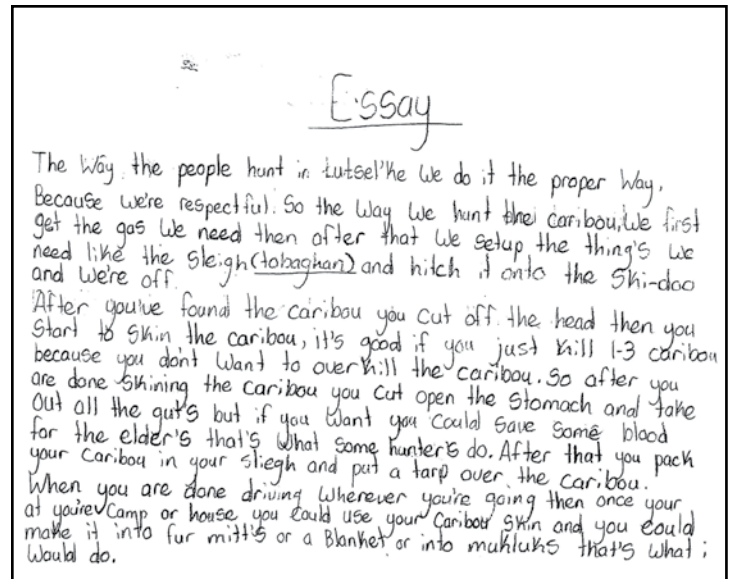
The BQCMC congratulates all winners and thanks all students from Lutsel K'e Dene School who submitted artwork and essays!

### Winners (entries pictured top to bottom)

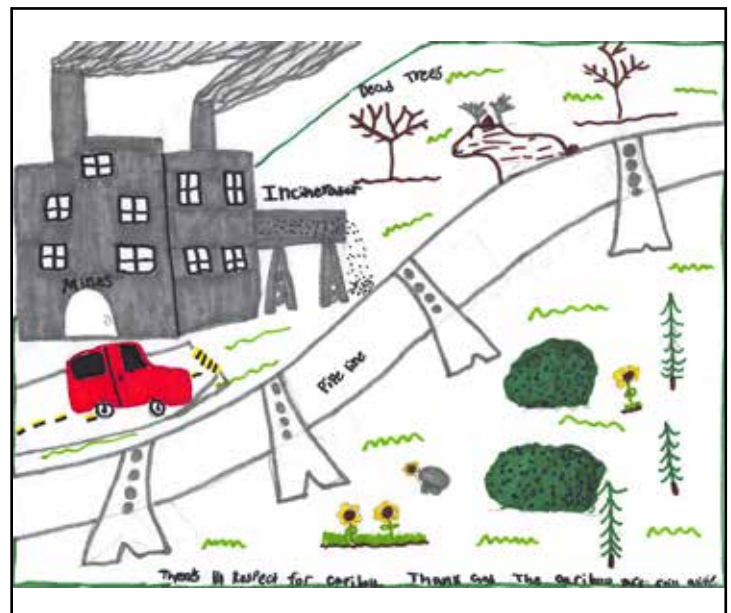
- 1st – Isabella Nataway, Grade 8 (essay) - Samsung tablet
- 2nd – Kiera Grandjambe, Gr 7 (poster) - Sony wireless headphones
- 3rd – Nitanis Laboucan, Gr 7 (poster) - Fitbit

### Honourable Mentions (\$50 iTunes cards):

- Dennay Catholique – Gr 9 (poster)
- Hailey Grandjambe – Gr 9 (poster)
- River Marlowe – Gr 9 (essay)



Pictured front, l to r: River Marlowe, Isabella Nataway, Nitanis Laboucan, and Hailey Grandjambe  
Back, l to r: Dennay Catholique and Kiera Grandjambe



## Gunther Abrahamson Caribou Research and Management Award

Since 1988, the BQCMB has helped post-secondary students learn more about the management and conservation of barren-ground caribou and their habitat through its Caribou Research and Management Award, sponsored by the BQCMB Scholarship Fund.

In 2016, the BQCMB renamed the Award the Gunther Abrahamson Caribou Research and Management Award, in honour of a BQCMB founder and long-time Secretary-Treasurer, the late Gunther Abrahamson.

The award is administered annually by the Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies ([www.acuns.ca](http://www.acuns.ca)).



Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies

For more information on these BQCMB educational funding opportunities, visit:

[arctic-caribou.com/projects/education/](http://arctic-caribou.com/projects/education/)

### On-the-Land-Program Funding Still Available - Apply Soon!

Each year, the BQCMB earmarks some funds to caribou-range community-based projects that target school-age youth. This gives kids a chance to gain new knowledge by learning from seasoned hunters, trappers and elders. In recent years, these “on the land” experiences have taken place with youth from Lutsel K’e NWT; Black Lake, Fond du Lac, and Hatchet Lake, SK; and Tadoule Lake and Lac Brochet, MB among others.

So far this year a grant has been awarded to the Arviat Young Hunters Program, but additional funding is still available for camps from any region of the caribou ranges (NWT, NU, SK and MB).

Thank you to Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) for providing additional funding for this year’s camps!

*Around the Range continued from P.2*

The Board further noted that Agnico-Eagle’s proposed caribou protection and monitoring plans were inadequate and strongly recommended that cumulative effects to caribou from industrial activities be minimized.

The Kivalliq Inuit Association and Whale Cove HTO both supported the new application, while the GN recommended additional mitigation measures to reduce disturbance to caribou, and Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) pointed out a lack of community consultation.

On July 31st the NIRB issued its decision and recommendations that the terms and conditions previously recommended in March 2018 for the original project application continue to apply to the expanded project.

The BQCMB’s comments are available at <https://bit.ly/2B9Ea5N>.

### Herds Shrink by Half since 2015

The Bathurst herd of barren-ground caribou, once numbering almost half a million, is down to fewer than 10,000 animals and has declined almost 60% since 2015, new figures show.

On November 20, 2018 the Government of the Northwest Territories (NWT) released the latest caribou survey results to the public, stating

that there are now approximately 8,200 caribou in the Bathurst herd, whose range spans part of the eastern NWT and southern Kitikmeot region of Nunavut, and previously extended much farther south, into northern Saskatchewan.

At its peak, in 1986, the herd had some 470,000 animals, but by 2015 there were only about 20,000 animals in the herd.

The Bluenose-East herd, which ranges through central mainland NWT and western Kitikmeot, has declined nearly 50% since 2015, from about 39,000 to 19,000 animals.

“The news is not good,” said Robert C. McLeod, the NWT’s Environment and Natural Resources minister. “The Bathurst and Bluenose-East herds continue to decline dramatically.”

Harvest restrictions on barren-ground caribou herds in the NWT are set by the Renewable Resource Boards. Restrictions were initiated in 2010 with closure of all resident, commercial and outfitted harvesting of the Bathurst herd.

No harvest has been allowed for Bathurst caribou in the NWT since 2015, when a no-hunting zone was established (Mobile Core Bathurst Caribou Management Zone). A limited harvest is currently allowed from the Bluenose-East herd.

Source: <https://www.enr.gov.nt.ca/en/services/barren-ground-caribou>



### Chronic Wasting Disease

Vince Crichton, former Co-Chair of Canada’s National Wildlife Disease Strategy, made a presentation to the BQCMB at both its fall 2017 and 2018 meetings on Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD).

A sister to BSE or ‘mad cow disease’, CWD is threatening deer, elk, and potentially caribou. An incurable, always fatal degeneration of the brain, CWD can be transmitted by body fluids of infected animals, is highly contagious and can be spread to and through wild ungulate herds.

The Alliance for Public Wildlife has published a report called “The Challenge of CWD: Insidious and Dire. It can be downloaded at <http://ap-wildlife.org/publications/>.



## Around the BQCMB Table

"In my community, we depend on caribou every year. We can't do without it – people do struggle."

*Joe Dantouze, Northlands Denesuline First Nation, Lac Brochet, MB*

"It doesn't matter what jurisdiction we're from – we have to find a way to work together. And the young people keep saying 'we have the right to hunt'. I say 'yes you have the right, but if you're not careful you'll end up with nothing'."

*Archie Catholique, Lutsel K'e Dene First Nation, Lutsel K'e, NWT*

"First Nations people are really scared about this, they want to see the herds come up, not decline."

*James (Jimmy) Laban, Black Lake Denesuline Nation, SK*

"It's really hard to keep up. It's the economy. We live with the caribou, we were the caribou, we eat the caribou. We really want to help the caribou, but if we stop all development, what are we going to do? We need jobs. It's really hard to balance right now."

*Stanley Adjuk, Kivalliq Wildlife Board, Whale Cove, NU*

"Our ways, our traditions are not taken seriously. If we are to keep on harvesting there should be some type of schooling or 'caribou 101' on how to skin the animal and how to respect the animal."

*Ron Desjarlais, Lutsel K'e Dene First Nation, Lutsel K'e, NWT*

"The only way I can see we can prevail is through education."

*Brian Sigurdson, Kivalliq Wildlife Board, Rankin Inlet, NU*

"One of the major problems we have to address is researchers going out on the land, relying on community people and nickel and diming them. The community people are looking after you. Respect them and don't take advantage of them."

*Earl Evans, BQCMB Chair, Northwest Territory Métis Nation, Ft. Smith, NWT*

"It's truly a blessing to continue to work for the board. As relationships develop and we tackle important issues together we can become friends while respecting each other's different viewpoints."

*Ross Thompson, Executive Director, BQCMB*



### Publisher's Box

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Top: BQCMB Board members and alternates gathered for a group photo during its fall 2018 meeting. Pictured L to R are Board Biologist Leslie Wakelyn; Archie Catholique; Ron Desjarlais; Chair Earl Evans; Richard Aksawnee; Mitch Campbell; Dennis Larocque; Tim Trottier; Rob Harmer; Dean Cluff; Jimmy Laban; Stanley Adjuk; Joe Dantouze; Vicki Trim; Executive Director Ross Thompson; and Brian Sigurdson.

Middle L to R: Board Members review a map of the Qamanirjuaq caribou range.

Bottom L to R: Board members and alternates Stanley Adjuk, Ron Desjarlais, Archie Catholique and Geoff Bussidor.