

*in Brief*

# Protect important habitats before it's too late

A black and white photograph of a young mountain goat kid resting on a rocky, grassy slope. The kid is looking towards the camera with its ears perked up.

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## Around the Range

### Nunavut Wildlife Harvest Study

The final report of the massive Nunavut Wildlife Harvest Study was published in November, providing a long-term wildlife management tool for setting basic needs levels and total allowable harvests of animals, where necessary. The study collected data from Inuit hunters in Nunavut between 1996 and 2001, helping glean a picture of animals and plants in the near two-million-square-kilometre territory – among them, caribou, muskoxen, polar bears, seals, walruses, narwhal, beluga, bowhead whales, and more. Copies of the report are being distributed to hunters and trappers organizations in Nunavut, as well as regional wildlife boards. To obtain a copy, phone the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board at (867) 975-7300 or fax (867) 975-7320. Copies are \$40 each.

### Hunter observer cards

Given all the time they spend out on the land, hunters are valuable frontline witnesses to changes in wildlife. Now the BQCMB plans to capture those insights regularly in pocket-sized observation cards. It's producing 1,000 dual-purpose cards that feature both a form for observer notes, and a detachable BQCMB postcard complete with the Board's logo. Communities on the Beverly and Qamanirjuaq caribou ranges in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut will receive 250 copies each, distributed by each province or territory's environment department.



Photo by Anne Kendrick

Community support and interest at the Fond du Lac monitoring indicators workshop in September was high, reports Anne Kendrick, the community liaison for the BQCMB caribou monitoring program. That's been the norm in other workshops, too. "There were 10 elected participants but more people . . . just kept popping in to see what was going on," says Kendrick. In both Fond du Lac and Lac Brochet, "fire was a huge topic of discussion." For more details, see story on page 7

### Management plan due out soon

With some small changes, Board members have approved the text to appear in its *Beverly and Qamanirjuaq Caribou Management Plan 2003-2008*, an easy-to-read overview of the long-term management strategy that will guide the BQCMB. Print copies should be out in February, with an online version available from [www.arctic-caribou.com](http://www.arctic-caribou.com)

The 17 or more detailed action plans that flow from the management plan overview are currently being developed.

### BQCMB meetings

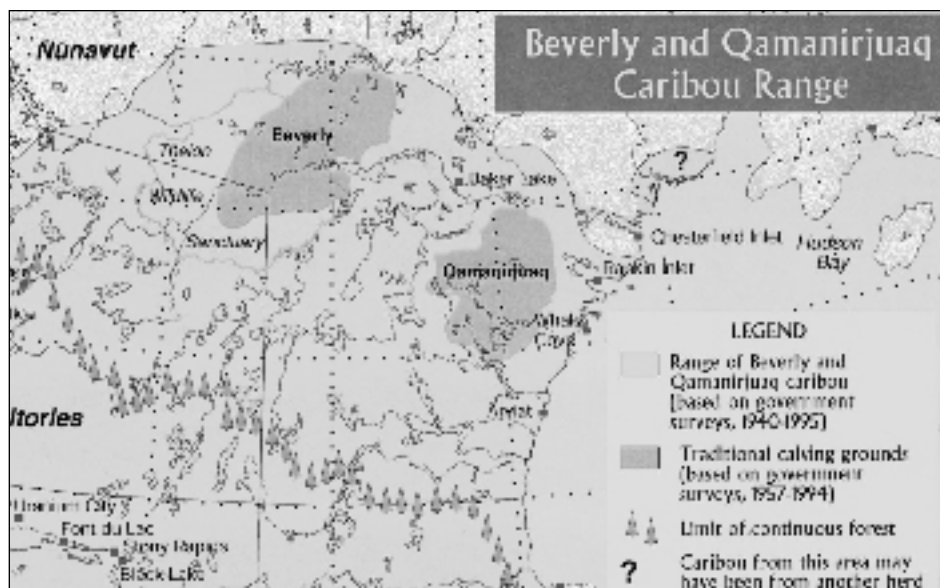
The BQCMB's spring 2005 meeting in Rankin Inlet will take place either mid-May or end of May. The Board is trying to co-ordinate it with the Hudson Bay Neighbours Regional Round Table, which is meeting in Rankin Inlet at the same time, so that consultation on the proposed Manitoba-Nunavut road can take place with these two key stakeholders concurrently. Meanwhile, the BQCMB's fall meeting in Winnipeg is Nov. 24 – 26, 2005.

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Most of the Beverly and Qamanirjuaq caribou ranges in both Nunavut and the NWT are Crown land held in right of the federal government.

The BQCMB's position paper says current government policies aren't adequate to safeguard the Beverly and Qamanirjuaq herds' traditional calving grounds and other important habitats. That includes Caribou Protection Measures (CPMs), conditions added to land use permits for developers to meet.

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) introduced CPMs in 1978. They impose seasonal controls on land use operations inside Caribou Protection Areas (CPAs), specific areas that used to be identified yearly based on the areas caribou used during calving and post-calving periods in the previous five years. INAC cut funding to the caribou-monitoring portion of the program, which provided information required to identify CPAs, in 1991. CPAs used today by INAC and others to determine where land use should be restricted to protect caribou are based on outdated information. What's more, boundaries of the annual calving areas used by Beverly and Qamanirjuaq herds have not



The Qamanirjuaq herd's traditional calving grounds and post-calving areas are in the Kivalliq region of Nunavut, while those of the Beverly herd stretch from Nunavut across southeastern NWT

been mapped during calving ground surveys since 1994.

## Key recommendations

The BQCMB's position paper makes five major recommendations.

- Provide traditional calving grounds and post-calving areas with long-term legislated protection.
- Determine if improved CPMs can provide meaningful protection for these herds during other life cycle periods (such as fall and spring migration) and while at water crossings. If so, these improved Measures should be included in regional land use plans across the caribou ranges.

- Conduct cumulative effects assessment/modeling to minimize destruction of caribou habitats outside traditional calving grounds and post-calving areas.
- Map the boundaries of calving grounds and post-calving areas regularly.
- Set up a range-wide system of conservation planning to protect the herds across all seasonal ranges.

The BQCMB hopes that the five governments responsible for managing the Beverly and Qamanirjuaq herds, as well as pertinent regulatory and planning agencies, will start to take action to address the Board's recommendations before the 2005 calving period. Consultation with communities and others with an interest in the herds, and much planning by governments in tandem with communities and industry, are necessary before the recommended actions could be put in place.

To download a copy of the BQCMB's position paper, visit [www.arctic-caribou.com](http://www.arctic-caribou.com)

Photo by Deb Johnson



# Low-flying pilots scare caribou

Baker Lake RCMP are investigating a complaint lodged this fall of low-level flying over caribou by an aircraft working for the local mining industry. Cpl. Rod Rudiak says if a charge is laid under the Nunavut Wildlife Act, it could carry a fine of up to \$500.

This is the third complaint of low-level flying this year, but two earlier complaints were dismissed when the aircraft could not be positively identified.

Police did not receive any low-level flying complaints in 2003. The swarms of aircraft that accompanied increasing mineral exploration this past year, however, appear to have changed that.

"We have all these helicopters this past summer and fall," says Baker Lake Community Aerodrome Radio Station (CARS) operator Keith Pudnak, who recalls 66 flight movements one particularly busy day. (CARS stations provide air navigation services.)

"We've had numerous – and I mean numerous – complaints about them.

"There were people saying, 'They were flying so low that we could reach out and touch them.' "

## Closing in on caribou

Pudnak and his brother Richard witnessed a similar incident while hunting at their camp at Clearwater River, southeast of the community of Baker Lake. After spotting caribou around a hill, they waited almost an hour for the animals to approach them. "Just as they were getting about halfway to our camp from the hill, I noticed a small plane," recounts Pudnak. "(The pilot) seen these caribou and started flying low, say about 50

feet from the ground, going back and forth over the hill. It made the caribou run away."

Baker Lake teacher and former commercial pilot Orin Durey has twice seen a helicopter travelling between Baker Lake and the nearby Meadowbank mineral exploration site "drop down to a 10-foot hover" over a caribou. "I know how dangerous that type of flying is," says Durey. "These tourist pilots are taking a risk in order to get that photo-of-a-lifetime because they don't know if they're ever coming back out here on the Barrens."

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**"There were people saying, 'They were flying so low that we could reach out and touch them.' "**

**- Keith Pudnak, Baker Lake**

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According to Cpl. Rudiak, some charter companies say their pilots fly close to hunters on snow machines to make sure everybody on the ground is safe. Still, RCMP investigate complaints on a case-by-case basis to see whether the pilot crossed the line between extending a courtesy and unnecessarily disturbing caribou.

The BQCMB and enforcement agencies request that people who observe the scaring or harassment of caribou by aircraft or other vehicles report this, and note the registration of the offending aircraft.

## Development permits on the ranges

Increasing aircraft are one sign that development is snowballing. Development permits are another.

Growing mining activity in the Kivalliq portion of the Beverly and Qamanirjuaq caribou ranges, and west down the Mackenzie Valley, mirrors the early pattern of development on the Bathurst caribou range over the past decade, BQCMB members heard at their November meeting in Winnipeg.

Consulting biologist Leslie Wakelyn showed Board members a map tracking industrial developments in Nunavut and the Northwest Territories. Among other things, it revealed that:

- in the Kivalliq, prospecting permits exist on roughly half of the Qamanirjuaq traditional calving ground, and one-fifth of the Beverly traditional calving ground outside the Thelon Game Sanctuary
- active mine claims exist on the Qamanirjuaq traditional calving ground and the Beverly traditional calving ground outside the Thelon. There are also several large blocks of active mineral claims around the Qamanirjuaq calving ground border.

Details on prospecting permits issued Dec. 1 by INAC will be made public in February. According to a Nov. 1 *News North* article, mining companies appeared to be paying people to line up around the clock outside INAC's Iqaluit office in the first come, first served procedure. Early contenders were in place almost five weeks before the deadline.



# A big helping hand from WWF-Canada

After lavishly praising the BQCMB's September 2004 position paper on protecting calving grounds and other important habitat for the Beverly and Qamanirjuaq caribou herds, World Wildlife Fund-Canada (WWF-Canada) has contributed \$60,000 to help the Board communicate the paper's findings and recommendations to caribou-range communities, and to fund community meetings so that the BQCMB can meet with residents and build a case for implementation of these recommendations.

"To me, (the position paper) was a landmark piece of work," says WWF-Canada president emeritus Monte Hummel. WWF, the largest conservation organization in the world, operates in more than 100 countries.

Noting the tone of urgency in the BQCMB position paper, Hummel called its recommendations "very clear and powerful."

"They were precedent-setting for intelligent conservation of barren-ground caribou anywhere in Canada. They apply to the BQ herds, obviously, but why wouldn't they apply to other caribou herds?"

WWF-Canada shares with the BQCMB the goal to conserve vast northern spaces for the welfare of caribou. Several northern communities would like various parts of the central Barrens to be protected (this Central Barrens Conservation Vision is outlined in Alex Hall's book *Discovering Eden*). WWF-Canada has been working mainly with Baker Lake and Lutselk'e to link the Queen Maud Gulf Bird Sanctuary and the Thelon Wildlife Sanctuary with adjacent proposed special management areas, the Hanningajuaq area and the east arm of Great Slave Lake proposed national park in a 50-million-acre protected swath of land.

"We're focused on exactly the same pieces of turf as this Board is focused on for the same reason – caribou," says Hummel. The Beverly calving grounds fall within the special management area northeast of the Thelon Wildlife Sanctuary. The Central Barrens Conservation Vision area is also home to the Ahiak and Bathurst caribou herds.

The BQCMB's position paper spurred Hummel to attend its November meeting to learn more about the implementation of recommendations, to tell BQCMB members about work that WWF-Canada is doing, and areas of overlap. He was also looking "for how we might collaborate in the future because our concerns are so mutually reinforcing."

WWF-Canada wants to provide money



WWF-Canada's Monte Hummel (left) with BQCMB chairman Jimmy Laban

so that the BQCMB can have input into the next edition of the Nunavut Planning Commission's Kivalliq Regional Land Use Plan, as well. Hummel says his organization can also help the BQCMB in an area it doesn't have a lot of experience in – the implementation of recommendations.

## A web evolution

The BQCMB's website, [www.arctic-caribou.com](http://www.arctic-caribou.com), has shed its trademark black and gold look in favour of a simple green, blue and taupe design with improved navigation at the top and left-hand side of the screen. Visitors no longer have to scroll to the bottom to click through to the next page.

There are several new features on the site. Visitors can sign up to receive free BQCMB updates via e-mail, or drop in to a discussion forum to chat with others concerned about caribou. A "Future Directions" page sums up immediate BQCMB goals, such as protecting important caribou habitat before galloping industrial development harms the herds. A PowerPoint Presentation illustrates the Board's history, its achievements since starting out in 1982, its ongoing projects and the challenges that lie ahead.

"Scholarship Fund Research" looks back at projects the BQCMB's Caribou Management Scholarship Fund has helped finance since 1989. "Herds in the Headlines" provides links to recent news stories about other caribou herds in Canada and around the world while "Tracking the Caribou by Satellite" reveals the history of satellite collars, improvements seen in the latest GPS models, and the effects of collars on caribou.

## Watching caribou worldwide

An international caribou monitoring network, set up as a result of the Arctic Council's concern over dramatic global change, kicked off this fall with a Vancouver workshop that drew scientists, government and community representatives from Canada, the United States, Greenland, Norway, Finland and Russia.

The Circumarctic Rangifer Monitoring & Assessment Network (CARMA) is a way to mesh information from community monitoring, climate stations, remote sensing, field studies, socio-economic data and development activity to fully understand the effects of change on caribou/reindeer and humans. Circumarctic is the term for the global arctic region, including North America, Europe and Asia. Rangifer, meanwhile, is the scientific name for caribou and reindeer (for now, CARMA examines only barren-ground caribou and wild reindeer).

Several years in the works, CARMA operates through the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna under the eight-government Arctic Council uniting Arctic nations such as



Photo by Todd Brinkman

Left to right: Greg Finstad (Alaska), Christine Cuyler (Greenland), Paul Whitfield (Canada), Gary Kofinas (a CARMA co-ordinator) and the BQCMB's Jimmy Laban

Canada, the United States and Russia.

Among the 35 delegates on hand to hash out objectives were BQCMB chairman Jimmy Laban and consulting biologist Leslie Wakelyn.

The Oct. 31-Nov. 1 inaugural session was a productive one, says CARMA co-ordinator Don Russell – “we more than met our objectives.” Participants sketched out an idea of how the network will function, developed a list of indicators that could be tracked, and appointed steering committees and groups to get moving on certain goals (Laban is on the

community working group).

CARMA brings the BQCMB several benefits, Wakelyn says. A frequent assessment on what is changing across rangifer herd ranges, as well as common standards to make comparisons simpler and stronger, are two advantages. Another is that membership in a larger program like CARMA will help justify the continuation of monitoring programs, or the establishment of new ones. This, in turn, makes raising money for programs such as the BQCMB's caribou monitoring program easier.

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## Road consultations set for early 2005

Negotiations to hire the consultant who will manage the \$1.1-million Manitoba-Nunavut road route selection study are now expected to wrap up by the end of December, with consultations with northern communities beginning in early 2005. Tadoule Lake, Lac Brochet, Brochet, Lynn Lake, South Indian Lake, Gillam, Thompson, Churchill, Baker Lake, Chesterfield Inlet, Rankin Inlet, Whale Cove and Arviat are on the roster.

Earlier plans had pegged mid-July as a start date for the consultant (see *Caribou News in Brief*, July 2004). However, by early December, input was still to come from Manitoba Justice and Nunavut's Department of Justice on “how the money will flow,” said Kivalliq Inuit Association (KIA) executive director Bill Logan. INAC is expected to sign off after that, and the contract then inked with the consulting group.

KIA, INAC, the governments of Nunavut and Manitoba, and Transport Canada are paying for the route selection study for a Manitoba-Nunavut winter road to be rebuilt each year until demand warrants an all-season road. Spanning more than 1,200 kilometres, the road would start either in Lynn Lake, Thompson or Gillam. All paths would wind up in Rankin Inlet.

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# Workshops for monitoring priorities wrap up

Fond du Lac, Lac Brochet, Arviat and Baker Lake residents have spoken up.

Now two final BQCMB community workshops, part of a series of meetings carving out the most logical caribou monitoring indicators in regions around the ranges, are set to go ahead in January and, at latest, February.

Tadoule Lake and Fort Smith will host the last of the brainstorming sessions. The goal of these workshops has been to make the 44-page questionnaire plus mapping exercise that was part of the BQCMB's 2001-

2002 caribou monitoring project in Baker Lake and Arviat much smaller and custom-tailored to regional concerns. Communities and community board representatives have voiced their desire to see the BQCMB's community-based caribou monitoring program spread across the Beverly and Qamanirjuaq caribou ranges.

The project would also create links between traditional and scientific knowledge, and tie mapped data from Baker Lake and Arviat hunters in with vegetation and/or satellite-collaring data collected on the Qamanirjuaq range by Nunavut's Department of Environment.

## Video release this summer

Anne Kendrick, the community liaison for the BQCMB caribou monitoring program, says the Lutselk'e Wildlife, Lands and Environment Committee, which has run its own wildlife monitoring program for several years, will also be interviewed.

Kendrick won't be able to draw up a list of indicators until the last two workshops are done, she says. Everything must be completed by the end of June 2005, when project funding ends. Workshops have been videotaped and the final product will be edited into one video, available in English, Inuktitut and Dene. Communities and board members are providing feedback on rough cuts for their particular district. The final video will be distributed to communities and government departments following the BQCMB's May 2005 meeting.

## Between the tundra and the trees

Fond du Lac's workshop took place in early September. Jules Lidguerre co-chaired with Kendrick, while Clement Pische provided translation and Allan Mercredi videotaped the proceedings.

While communities on the tundra focused on changing weather and caribou body conditions, residents below the treeline spoke out mainly on mining activity, roads and the influx of southern hunters, and fire.

Photo by Anne Kendrick



A teepee at Fond du Lac, site of the latest BQCMB regional workshop

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While the order of community visits hasn't been determined yet, consultation will be extensive with several visits to each community slated. "(One visit) really does not constitute adequate consultation," says Logan. What's more, there will be an ongoing dialogue with an advisory committee of key community representatives, as well as other stakeholders. Given issues of special concern, such as wildlife and habitat,

the route study selection team wants to "ensure the consultation process is full and adequate," adds Logan.

Community visits on different parts of the caribou range are likely to be scheduled at the same time, rather than visits that begin at one end of the range and plow through to the other end. Making sure translator/interpreter services are part of community consultations is another priority.

Following public consultations, the study will analyze social/economic, transportation and environmental issues, explore road development standards and investigate how construction could be funded. A 1999 prefeasibility study priced a winter road at \$17 - \$21 million with \$6 - \$7 million in annual maintenance costs.

The route selection study could take a couple of years, Logan predicts.

# People and Caribou

It was a crowded house at the BQCMB's November meeting in Winnipeg. Guests included Prince Albert Grand Council vice-chief **Don Deranger**, Black Lake chief **Fred Throassie**, BQCMB alternates **Pierre Robillard** and **Joe Martin**, **Monte Hummel**, president emeritus of WWF-Canada, Fort Smith outfitter and author **Alex Hall**, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. wildlife department associate director **Bert Dean**, **Peter Kusugak** of INAC's Nunavut Regional Office, **Robert Moshenko** of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board, Nunavut Department of Environment biologist **Mitch Campbell**, **Amar Chadha** and **Dave Duncan** of Manitoba Transportation, Manitoba Conservation wildlife director **Jack Dubois**, **Steve Kearney**, Manitoba Conservation regional director (Thompson), the University of Manitoba's **Micheline Manseau**, BQCMB caribou monitoring program community liaison **Anne Kendrick**, and BQCMB consulting biologist **Leslie Wakelyn**.

BQCMB member **David Aksawnee** is busier than ever these days. In May, he was chosen as president of the Kivalliq Wildlife Board and in early December, he was elected mayor of Baker Lake as well.

Courtesy of David Brown, Overseas Development Institute



Here, we call it "country food." In Africa and other hot-weather countries, the food that local subsistence hunters depend upon is called "bushmeat" and right now, it's in crisis. Subsistence hunting in tropical forests in Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean and Asia-Pacific has been hurt by an increase in logging, major wars in these areas, and more. To learn how people in northern Canada manage subsistence



BQCMB secretary-treasurer **Ross Thompson** spoke about managing subsistence hunting in northern Canada at a London, England conference on bushmeat hunting

development at a conference it sponsored with the Zoological Society of London on bushmeat and livelihoods in late September.

"They are much more dependent on wild meat than here in Canada," Thompson observed. In many places, there are no animals left to hunt. Due to competition for land from forestry, mining and agriculture, wildlife has to be made economically relevant as the BQCMB found in its early development. Canada's advantage, though, is that it has lots of natural resources. Thompson said conference-goers were interested in the BQCMB's community-based planning, with its ground-up approach to its management plan and projects. There was great interest, he added, in *Caribou News in Briefs* and the Board's former schools program. Said one participant, "Your presentation was timely and made an impact because it gave us *hope*."

"Ross's session went down extremely well, even his jokes," quipped ODI research fellow **David Brown**. "I thought it of immense relevance to the African situation, and the African participants."

"Every African I spoke with was impressed with the experiences from the Arctic," added conference organizer **Andrew Hurst**. Some felt co-management was easier for a wealthy country like Canada "but all appreciated the presentation since it highlighted the importance of factoring in local livelihoods in wildlife management."

## Publisher's Box

*Caribou News in Brief* is funded by the Beverly and Qamanirjuaq Caribou Management Board. It is produced twice a year by M.E.S. Editing and Writing Services. ISSN 1489-3436. Opinions expressed are those of the editor and contributors. Back issues available in microform from Micromedia Limited. All comments and suggestions are welcome, and may be sent to:

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hunting, a London, England think-tank, the Overseas Development Institute, brought BQCMB secretary-treasurer **Ross Thompson** overseas to speak about co-management and community