

CARIBOU NEWS

in Brief

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



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BQCMB MEETING #83

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PRINCE ALBERT, SASKATCHEWAN

Nunavut Land Use Plan enters **Final Stages**

“Some places are so important that people should not harm the land or bother animals there. To stop caribou AND the land from being harmed, we need to keep some land uses away from these places.”

BQCMB Chair Earl Evans presenting at the Qikiqtani (Baffin) Regional Hearing

The latest, and most important, round of meetings on the Draft Nunavut Land Use Plan began in Iqaluit in late March. The Plan has been under development by the Nunavut Planning Commission (NPC) since 2005, and when finalized, will apply to all of Nunavut.

At first, 67 participants were scheduled to present over eight days (three 3-hour sessions per day) in a single territory-wide informal Public Hearing. That was changed to smaller hearings for each of the three regions, starting with the Qikiqtani (Baffin) Regional Hearing, held in Iqaluit over five days from March 22-26.

Three representatives from each Qikiqtani community were funded by NPC to attend and speak on behalf of both their community and their Hunter and Trappers Organization. Other participants, including the BQCMB, were invited to attend any or all of the hearings and speak on any portion of the Draft Plan.

The BQCMB has provided input to NPC since 2010, and was again on hand to present at the Qikiqtani hearing. Chair *Earl Evans* (pictured at right) began his presentation by stressing the Board is NOT against mining. However, it does have strong concerns about the harm that some land use activities, like mineral exploration and mining, could cause for caribou and their habitat over time. The BQCMB wants to see clear rules and careful management of land use across the caribou range, but especially on calving grounds and post-calving areas.

The BQCMB believes that “some places are so important that people should not harm the land or bother animals there,” explained Evans. “To stop caribou AND the land from being harmed, we need to keep some land uses away from these places.”

Need for Protected Areas

Overall, the BQCMB agrees with much of the proposed Plan, including making Protected Areas for core calving and post-calving areas, key access corridors, and freshwater caribou crossings.

These Protected Areas would make sure that the land use activities that could harm caribou and habitat are not allowed in the most important areas for caribou. This would mean identifying these areas on maps and making rules in the land use plan that keep specific land use activities out of these areas.

The NPC has recommended using Protected Areas in the land use plan to protect core calving and post-calving areas even when

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Unrealistic Expectations?

The expectations for the NPC's hearing in Iqaluit was a problem for some, including Mayor Madeleine Redfern. “We simply do not have the manpower or the time, unfortunately, to develop a submission to this body for the whole community,” Redfern told the NPC. “If we were tasked with that, we would have required additional resources to hire someone to do that research and to do those consultations, but none of those were provided to us.”

Two on-line commenters responding to an article on the hearing in Nunatsiaq News questioned the late June date of the upcoming Kivalliq hearing in Rankin Inlet.

- “NPC will not be getting the results they want from the Kivalliq region. The time slotted is the worst time of year to try and consult people in the region. Most families are away at their spring camps at that time.”
- “Worst possible time of the year to visit Kivalliq - way too many are very busy with caribou harvests and making nikku in their spring camps and many are very busy with harvesting walrus' and stocking up on food supplies. You need to amend the dates for your consultations to this very active and very vocal region!”

In early April the BQCMB asked NPC staff if they would reconsider the timing of the Kivalliq hearing. Their response was that the hearing date was selected by the NPC's Commissioners and “any consideration regarding change in location or date of the hearing would have to be made by the Commissioners”. No changes in hearing dates has been issued by NPC by the end of April.



Photo by Jody Pellissey/WRRB

Nunavut Land Use Plan

Other Voices



There is a range of viewpoints on the Nunavut Land Use Plan. While the three signatories – the Government of Canada, the Government of Nunavut, and Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI) – must approve the plan in order for it to go forward, many other parties from Nunavut and from outside the territory also have made presentations and submitted written comments to NPC. Following are some excerpts from written submissions by the signatories and Nunavut wildlife boards regarding their views on protection of caribou habitat as proposed by NPC in the Draft Nunavut Land Use Plan.

The Government of Canada: “In our view, establishing protected areas for caribou habitat that prohibits exploration and development activities year round, as the draft Plan proposes, would unreasonably impact economic opportunities. Mineral exploration, in particular, is a significant contributor to economic activity in the areas the draft Plan currently designates as protected for caribou habitats.”

Government of Nunavut (GN): “Does not support the proposed level of land use restrictions associated to zoned caribou habitat within the 2016 DNLUP”; “Supports development within calving grounds, key access corridors, post-calving grounds, and freshwater crossings on a case by case basis, provided that there are sound mitigation plans, with seasonal restrictions on activities that are vetted through the appropriate regulators”; and “proposes the following immediate interim designation and conditions for caribou habitats within the first generation DNLUP: The GN recommends a Special Management Area designation for calving grounds, key access corridors, post-calving grounds, and freshwater crossings.”

Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI) and Regional Inuit Associations (RIAs): “NTI and the RIAs recommend that caribou post-calving areas be placed in Special Management Areas with terms and conditions.”; “NTI and the RIAs recommend that the approach of each RIA regarding caribou populations in its region be respected and accommodated.”; and “NTI will be recommending to the Regional Inuit Associations that proposed caribou designations that overlap with existing Mineral Exploration Agreements be placed in Special Management Areas, with associated terms and conditions.”

Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB): “The NWMB supports full area protection for caribou calving and post-calving grounds (which include key access corridors leading to and from the calving grounds). Full area protection includes the prohibition of industrial activities, including mineral, oil and gas exploration and development, construction of transportation infrastructure and related activities.”

Kivalliq Wildlife Board (KWB): “The full protection of caribou calving grounds is a matter of vital importance to the KWB, and the KWB is pleased that caribou calving grounds and water crossings are afforded full protection in the draft land use plan. However, the KWB recognizes that many of our members depend upon the mining industry for employment. As a result, the KWB is concerned with the large amounts of land protected for caribou post-calving and the large buffers around caribou water crossings. The protection of caribou habitat goes well-beyond what the KWB envisions for a ‘balanced’ land use plan for our region.”

Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board (KRWB): “The KRWB views assigning a Protected Area Land Use Designation that prohibits incompatible uses to all core caribou calving areas, key access corridors, and post-calving areas as a positive step towards safeguarding caribou and critical habitat.”

Informal public hearings have been scheduled in each of Nunavut’s other two regions:

- **Kivalliq Rankin Inlet: June 23 to 27**
- **Kitikmeot Cambridge Bay: Oct. 24 to 27**

The BQCMB is planning on participating actively in the Rankin Inlet hearing, and strongly encourages Kivalliq Hunters and Trappers Organizations and area residents to participate.

Final Stages - cont’d from page 1

they might have value for mining also. The BQCMB fully agrees with this. “The most important places for caribou, especially areas used for calving and taking care of young calves, should be given higher value in the land use plan than their possible value for mining,” said Evans.

Other methods being considered by some, such as mobile protection measures and seasonal protection measures, are far less effective. “Mobile protection measures only protect caribou, not the land, and are expensive,” he said. “Seasonal protection measures are even more limited. Both of these methods only attempt to manage harm to caribou, for instance by reducing disturbance from land use activities. They do not avoid harm to caribou or stop damage to the land in the most important areas, such as where calves are born and where cows take care of young calves.”

The BQCMB also agrees with the NPC recommendation that all-season roads should not be allowed in Protected Areas, and proposals for roads outside of Protected Areas should be reviewed very carefully, including looking for other options that would avoid harm to caribou.

Great opportunity for Nunavut

In closing, Evans stressed that NPC should be very careful with the first territory-wide land use plan for Nunavut and not take chances that might result in harm to caribou. “NPC can always make changes later if Nunavummiut decide that they have been too careful,” he said. “But we have to recognize that many of the most important places for caribou in Canada are in Nunavut, and this Plan is a great opportunity to use land use planning wisely. Using the land use plan to help safeguard caribou and the traditional cultures of Inuit and other Indigenous peoples that have shared the caribou herds for thousands of years should be viewed as a big success.”•

BQCMB Launches

“Caribou for the Future” Campaign

The BQCMB has launched a communications campaign called “You Can Make a Difference – Caribou for the Future” aimed at strengthening support for caribou conservation. The campaign has been in development for close to a year and includes a video, posters and fact sheets all zeroing in on three central themes: respectful harvest, the importance of harvest reporting, and cumulative effects on caribou.

The need for this type of information is growing due to the increasing challenges faced by the herds, according to BQCMB Executive Director *Ross Thompson*. “In 2011 there were about 124,000 Beverly caribou, which is less than half the size estimated in 1994,” he said. “The Qamanirjuaq herd is also declining. In 2014, the herd was estimated to be about 265,000, down from about 344,000 in 2008.”

While the BQCMB’s job is to make recommendations for conservation of the herds and their habitat, this project focuses on what people can do to help ensure there are enough caribou for everybody. “We do need to know how many caribou are being harvested,” says BQCMB Chair *Earl Evans*, who appears in the video along with other BQCMB members and Elders. “But it’s about more than that. We also want to promote a respectful harvest, and let people know about some of the stresses that can affect the caribou herds and ultimately the number of caribou available for harvest, and what people can do to reduce those stresses.”

“Our goal with this campaign is to make sure people know that their efforts can make a difference to help ensure we have caribou for the future”

BQCMB Executive Director Ross Thompson

The campaign was made possible with funding from WWF-Canada. “WWF-Canada is proud to support the BQCMB in this initiative,” says *Brandon Laforest*, senior specialist, Arctic species and ecosystems for WWF-Canada. “The worrying trends we are seeing in caribou herds across the country underscore the need for educational messages and products outlining ways we can all safeguard these animals for generations to come. This communications campaign will inform communities, governments, industry and regulators about the steps they can take to support recovery of the herds.”

The video, posters and fact sheets are available on the BQCMB website and will be widely distributed across the Beverly and Qamanirjuaq caribou ranges in the coming weeks. Targeted audiences include schools, hunters and trappers organizations, band councils, regional wildlife organizations, community members, aircraft charter companies and passengers, outfitters, the mining industry, and others.

“The BQCMB’s conservation efforts are vital for the welfare of Dene, Inuit, Métis, Cree and other caribou-range residents who have always hunted Beverly and Qamanirjuaq caribou,” stresses Thompson.

“Our goal with this campaign is to make sure people know that their efforts can make a difference to help ensure we have caribou for the future.”

You can view and download the products at arctic-caribou.com/caribou-for-the-future/•



Around the Range

Traditional Caribou Hunting Protocols

The Athabasca Denesuline Né Né Land Corporation (ADNLC) has developed a document called “10 Traditional Protocols of Caribou Hunting” that can be shared across the range.

ADNLC has distributed the protocols to schools and other locations around Saskatchewan for posting, but they would also like to see it promoted in all communities that hunt caribou, not just Dene communities.

According to BQCMB member *Ron Robillard*, the need for the protocols arose from a situation in Spring 2016 when people from Saskatchewan harvested caribou near Tadoule Lake, Manitoba. They had to travel long distances to hunt and concerns were raised by local Sayisi Dene regarding the influx of hunters from SK. Media became involved, and “it was a very sensitive issue,” Robillard told the BQCMB at its November meeting.

The leaders of the respective Saskatchewan and Manitoba communities met in Saskatoon last year to talk about how to avoid similar situations in the future. That meeting resulted in a sort of “Elder’s caribou workshop” in Black Lake, SK in September—the Athabasca Dene Caribou Sector Meeting—that included people from Tadoule Lake. Participants talked about traditional caribou hunting and the need for a protocol, which was then developed.

BQCMB member *Alex Ishalook* from Arviat, NU agreed the protocols are useful for all communities, and noted they are similar to those of the Inuit. BQCMB members around the table expressed thanks for this important work and agreed that improper hunting, especially along winter roads is an issue.

Both the 10 Traditional Protocols of Caribou Hunting and a longer version, that includes comments by elders, can be downloaded on the BQCMB website at arctic-caribou.com/10-protocols/.

Manitoba to assist Nunavut with Qamanirjuaq Herd Survey

During its spring, 2016 meeting in Saskatoon, the BQCMB passed a motion recommending the Government of Nunavut conduct a full population survey of the Qamanirjuaq herd in 2017. The Board also issued a news release following the meeting that stated more needed to be done to conserve the Qamanirjuaq herd.

The survey is in the works, and Manitoba is partnering with the government of Nunavut to assess the state of the herd. A March 15 order in council says Manitoba Sustainable Development will assist Nunavut in the caribou survey “to ensure the long-term sustainability” of the herd, using scientific aerial photography to assess it.

The province will also support the survey financially. (Source: *CBC News Manitoba*).


BQCMB Comments on Bathurst Caribou Range Plan

In mid-April, the BQCMB submitted comments to the Government of the Northwest Territories on the Bathurst Caribou Range Plan Discussion Document. The Board is interested in the Bathurst range planning process because more than half of the Bathurst caribou

Athabasca Denesuline

10 Traditional Protocols for Hunting Caribou


(as taught by our Elders)



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

Prepared by the Denesuline Né Né Land Corporation

For more information, contact us at: athabascareception@adnlc.ca Phone: 306-953-7287 or Facebook: Denesuline Né Né Land Corp



range overlaps with the ranges of the Beverly and Qamanirjuaq caribou herds. This means any measures taken to protect Bathurst caribou habitat could also protect habitat important to the Beverly and Qamanirjuaq herds.

The Bathurst herd is in poor shape and at very low numbers. We need to avoid adding more disturbance on the caribou range while the herd is in such poor shape to provide the best conditions possible and increase the chance that the herd will recover.

The BQCMB’s comments urged the GNWT and the range plan Working Group to focus on the goal for conservation of caribou and habitat, as tough choices need to be made to take care of caribou, and some action must be taken now.

The BQCMB’s full comments are available on our website at arctic-caribou.com/library/comments-on-issues/.

COSEWIC, NWT SARC say Barren-Ground Caribou Threatened

Last November, the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) assessed 40 wildlife species in Canada and decided that 13 of them are currently Endangered, 6 are Threatened, and 11 are of Special Concern.

Barren-ground caribou were rated as Threatened, which is defined as “A wildlife species that is likely to become Endangered if nothing is done to reverse the factors leading to its extirpation or extinction.” Endangered is defined as “A wildlife species facing imminent extirpation or extinction”.

According to *Justina Ray*, co-chair of the Terrestrial Mammals Subcommittee, “Caribou are, sadly, very sensitive to human disturbances, and we are disturbing Caribou more and more. These stressors

“Caribou are, sadly, very sensitive to human disturbances, and we are disturbing Caribou more and more. Many of the great northern Caribou herds have now fallen to all-time lows, and there is cause for concern that they will not rebound in the same way they have before.”

Justina Ray, co-chair of the Terrestrial Mammals Subcommittee, COSEWIC

seem to be interacting in complicated ways with rapid warming in the North. Many of the great northern Caribou herds have now fallen to all-time lows, and there is cause for concern that they will not rebound in the same way they have before.”

COSEWIC’s 2016 assessments will be submitted to the Federal Minister of the Environment and Climate Change in fall 2017. Canada’s consultation on the listing of barren-ground caribou as a threatened species under the federal Species at Risk Act is expected to take at least a year and will likely result in prohibitions to protect the species and its habitat on federal lands as well as requirements for provinces and territories to identify and protect critical habitat. For more information, visit cosewic.gc.ca/

An independent assessment process for wildlife species in the NWT is underway as well. In April the NWT Species at Risk Committee (SARC) assessed the territorial status of barren-ground caribou and rated them (excluding the Porcupine caribou herd) as Threatened. If the NWT co-management committee (Conference of Management Authorities) accepts SARC’s recommendation, public consultations on the listing of NWT barren-ground caribou (excluding the Porcupine herd) as a threatened species under the NWT Species at Risk Act will begin this summer.

The BQCMB has been invited to review the SARC assessment report and other materials and participate in the CMA process. Board representatives have attended two CMA meetings in 2017 so far. For more information, see www.wtspeciesatrisk.ca/.



Photo by Mitch Campbell

Beyond the BQ Range

Nunavut sets harvest limit on Bluenose East caribou herd

Nunavut’s Department of Environment has announced a total allowable harvest (TAH) limit for the Bluenose East caribou herd. The quota is the first ever imposed for the Bluenose East herd in Nunavut.

A maximum of 340 caribou may be harvested from the herd within Nunavut. The government says hunters should get a tag from the Kugluktuk wildlife office before they hunt to prove that they have an allocation from the TAH.

The Bluenose East herd, which ranges in NWT and Nunavut, was estimated at between 35,000 and 40,000 animals in 2015, down from 104,000 animals in 2000.

The decision follows a consultation process, during which the Nunavut government suggested a quota of 340 bulls.

The NWT government’s management proposal for the herd last year had suggested an annual total allowable harvest of 950 bull caribou divided between Indigenous groups in the N.W.T. and Nunavut, with 339 animals allocated to Nunavut. (Source: *CBC News North*)

Boreal Caribou herd being moved to Quebec zoo

The decision by the Quebec Government to move a caribou herd in Quebec to a zoo is drawing criticism from environmental groups. With the Val-d’Or herd only consisting of about 15 individuals, proponents of the move, including Minister of Forests, Wildlife and Parks, Luc Blanchette, says the objective of the move is to “protect and ensure the survival” of the herd. (Source: *Huffpost Quebec*)

Critics believe the herd will not survive in an enclosed space, primarily due to its migratory nature. Greenpeace Canada says the government is setting a dangerous precedent for other caribou herds as well as other vulnerable species, and has been calling for the strengthening of the federal Species at Risk Act to promote the recovery of caribou through appropriate habitat management. The organization has also created a petition, which can be found at greenpeace.org/canada/en/blog/Blogentry/sending-wild-caribou-to-a-zoo/blog/59253/.

Norway to cull reindeer herd to stem CWD

Alarmed by the appearance of chronic wasting disease (CWD) in Norway, the country’s agriculture and food minister has approved a plan for hunters to cull an entire herd of 2,000 reindeer (*Rangifer tarandus*). The plan would eliminate nearly 6 percent of the country’s wild reindeer population in an effort to contain the disease, which was found in three individuals in the herd. The reindeer’s habitat will be kept under quarantine for at least five years in an effort to prevent infection. CWD was first detected in Norway in March 2016. It was the first appearance of the deadly disease in Europe. Source: wildlife.org/norway-to-cull-reindeer-herd-to-stem-cwd/

Weather, starvation to blame for caribou die-off

The cause of death of almost 50 caribou on Prince Charles Island, just west of Baffin Island, NU last summer has been blamed on starvation likely caused by weather-related events.

The Government of Nunavut discovered the caribou last July and after analyzing samples from the animals, stated: “The results confirm extremely low fat reserves, indicating starvation as the cause of death. A spring storm preventing access to forage is the most likely cause of the die-off.”

BQCMB member *Mitch Campbell*, Kivalliq regional wildlife biologist for Nunavut’s environment dept., said conditions on Prince Charles Island make its caribou prone to die-offs. With little food or shelter and frequent storms, migrating caribou can become trapped over winter with nothing to eat.

Campbell knows first-hand the powerful impact of late-winter blizzards in the area, as his group was stranded on nearby Nikko Island in late April. He described the experience to Nunatsiak News’ Steve Ducharme: “The snow was pouring in the sleeping cabin and worse in the afternoon, also the door opened out and we would have been trapped inside. For safety’s sake, we had to abandon the A-frame sleeping cabin and move all gear into the kitchen cabin.” His team was forced to take shifts during the heaviest part of the storm shovelling out their shelter’s seven-foot tall doorway. “Within an hour it would fill right back up to the top,” he said, noting that the caribou on Prince Charles Island would have experienced the same conditions.

The full story is available on Nunatsiak News Online: nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674weather_starvation_to_blame_for_nunavut_island_caribou_die-off/

Meet the BQCMB Chair:

Earl Evans

Earl Evans made it clear, during a recent telephone call, that he didn't have much time to waste. "You just caught me; I'm heading out into the bush for five days to hunt caribou," he said. The point was taken – make it quick!

It was a well-deserved five days for Evans. As Chair of the BQCMB, he had just returned home to Fort Smith, NWT from Iqaluit, NU where he presented at the first Public Hearing held by the Nunavut Planning Commission (NPC) on the Draft Nunavut Land Use Plan. The hearing took place from March 22-26, 9 hours each day between 9 am and 9 pm. It was an exhausting schedule for community members from the Qikiqtani (Baffin) region and others who attended the full hearing, with participants listening to other presentations and waiting for hours (or days) for their turn to speak.

Evans attended the final few days of the hearing, as they were most relevant to the BQCMB. "I think the Iqaluit hearing went well," he says. "And now we have to take a strong position at the next hearing."

Evans was a big hit at the Iqaluit hearing, earning a round of enthusiastic applause and plenty of personal "thank you's" from people from the Baffin communities for his statements. This is no surprise to anyone who knows Evans; when he speaks, people tend to listen.

That is likely why he was tapped to Chair the BQCMB in the first place. Coming up to his five-year anniversary at the helm of the co-management board, Evans initially replaced

his cousin, Richard Mercredi, as the BQCMB member representing communities in the South Slave region of the NWT back in 2003. When Albert Thorassie decided to step down as Chair in 2012, it was Evans who others felt should step into his footsteps.

Well-spoken and very knowledgeable about numerous facets of caribou and wildlife conservation (among many other things), Evans is keenly interested in the Board's work, and in hearing from others around the table. When it is time to share what is happening around the range, he asks questions and takes plenty of notes, especially when the Elders are speaking, although he thinks there are fewer Elders attending meetings these days. "We're probably the elders now!"

"When I go to teach at the college, for the few days I'm there, the students are really interested in what we've seen over the years."

As the son of a well-known Metis Elder, he is likely right. John James Evans and his wife, Seraphine Mercredi, raised their 16 children to be hard workers. John ran a trap line and hunted, and taught his boys how to hunt when they were old enough.

For decades Earl has been teaching younger generations the hunting and trapping skills he grew up learning. He and his wife Marlene are raising their grandson Ty, who at 14 years

old is a long-time hunting companion for Evans. "He's been in the bush since before he could walk," says Evans. "I started taking him to caribou camps when he was three years old; he used to clean all the fetuses for the old people." Some Elders enjoy eating caribou fetus (it is considered a delicacy). "That was his job from the time he was about five years old."

It's not only his grandson who is benefiting from Evans' knowledge; he has been taking groups of students from Aurora College to camp each spring for many years, showing them bush skills, how to hunt and field dress caribou. "They're always interested in what you have to say," he says. "When I go to teach at the college, for the few days I'm there, the students are really interested in what we've seen over the years. Sometimes I'll put pictures on a Powerpoint presentation to show them, so when they do go out to camp they have an idea of what to expect."

Evans wears plenty of other hats, too. He does a lot of wildlife work for the Northwest Territory Metis Nation, of which he is a member. He sits on the Bathurst Range Planning Working Group, is on the board of the new Northwest Territories Wildlife Act, and participates in several other committees or boards – six or seven altogether. He estimates he spends at least two weeks out of every month at meetings, both in his region and across the caribou ranges. And, in the summer, he does fireline work for GNWT Environment and Natural Resources.

But he still finds time to hunt. And when he does have a bit of downtime, Evans has one



“His time and effort are things the BQCMB doesn’t take for granted; its members and staff realize it is an enormous sacrifice, and worry about the day Evans decides he’s had enough.”

thing on his mind. “I get out in the bush every chance I get. If I’m not at a meeting, I’m in the bush.”

Evans enjoys any kind of hunting, but particularly likes hunting buffalo. He has fond memories of many community caribou hunts over the years. “We’d stay out for a week and get all the meat for the community; I’d take my son and grandson out, and it was a good time.”

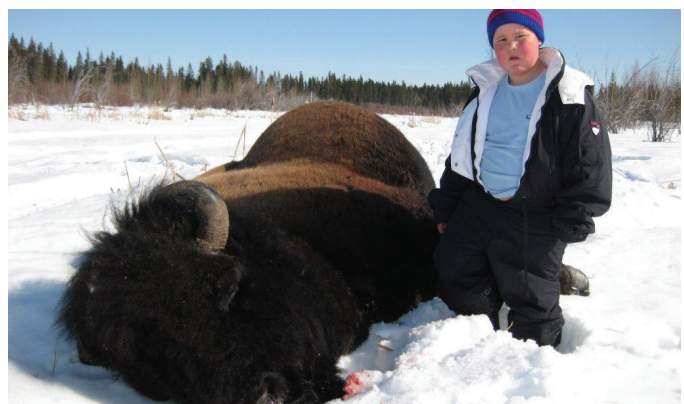
“We still hunt for all the Elders at Fort Smith; we have a program where we feed around 400 people overall,” he says. “When caribou were close to the community, I’d hunt almost every weekend and bring home caribou. The people used to make a lot of dry meat.”

His community, like many others, can no longer do that. “The caribou are too far away now. Last trip we went on, it took us 29 hours from the time we left home on skidoo until we got back. We travelled all night, had to skin caribou in the dark.” That hunt was successful; Evans got 14 caribou, which he packed into his 10-foot sled and brought back home.

Those hunts are becoming fewer and farther between for Evans, who has had to forego many activities to attend meetings on behalf of the BQCMB. His schedule isn’t getting any easier, either. Not only did he participate in the Iqaluit NPC hearing, he will Chair the spring BQCMB meeting in Prince Albert, SK from May 9-11, present at the next NPC hearing in Rankin Inlet, NU from June 23- 27, and then head back to Iqaluit in mid-July to present at the Canadian Wildlife Director’s meeting.

His time and effort are things the BQCMB doesn’t take for granted; its members and staff realize it is an enormous sacrifice, and worry about the day Evans decides he’s had enough.

What keeps him going, for now, is the Board’s ability to bring all the parties together. Evans appreciates the way “everyone respects each other,” and admits he attends plenty of other meetings where that isn’t the case. The BQ Board, he says, “is striving for one common goal, working together in a way that’s good for the caribou.”•



Opposite page, L to R:

Earl and his cousin Richard Mercredi at a winter caribou camp. Mercredi was Earl's predecessor on the BQCMB.

Earl's grandson Ty filleting a fish.

Marlene Evans and grandson Ty.

This page, top: to bottom

Earl and Ty heading out on the sled.

Grandpa teaching Ty everything he knows.

Ty with a buffalo.

L to R: August Enzoe (Lutsel K'e, NWT) Chair Earl Evans and Napoleon Denechezhe (Lac Brochet, MB) chat before the start of the BQCMB's 82nd meeting in Winnipeg.

All photos courtesy Earl Evans, except where noted.

Photo by Lynne Bereza

People and Caribou

Farewell

The BQCMB was saddened to hear of the passing of Baker Lake, NU Mayor *David Aksawnee* in early March. Members of the Nunavut legislature paid tribute to Aksawnee the following week and recognized him as a well-respected leader in the community and throughout the Kivalliq.

David was a past member of the BQCMB and did much good work over many years to support traditional caribou harvesters and their families, the Baker Lake HTO, his community and others, remembers BQCMB biologist *Leslie Wakelyn*. "I had the privilege of working with David and his wife Betsy on the BQCMB caribou monitoring project about 15 years ago and found him to be very knowledgeable, helpful and supportive, extremely dedicated to his community and a very kind man," she said.

BQCMB Board Meeting Special Guests

Rick Wowchuk, Manitoba MLA for Swan River, attended the November 2016 BQCMB meeting in Winnipeg. Wowchuk is also the Legislative Assistant for Minister of Sustainable Development, *Cathy Cox*, who was unable to attend the meeting.

Need to protect NU caribou nurseries

Earl Evans joined *Alex Ishalook*, BQCMB member and Chair of the Arviat Hunters and Trappers Organization, *Barnie Aggark*, Chair of the Chesterfield Inlet Hunters and Trappers Organization, and *Paul Crowley*, VP Arctic for WWF-Canada to submit a compelling letter to the editor to Nunatsiaq News on December 2. The letter noted most of Canada's barren-ground caribou herds are in a dangerous state, with some having declined more than 95 per cent.

The authors noted there are more than 241,000 square kilometres of land identified as having high mineral potential in Nunavut, with seventy-five per cent of this land outside of the protected areas proposed for caribou calving and post-calving habitat in the Nunavut Land Use Plan.

The letter also highlighted a recent survey across Nunavut, NWT and Yukon showing 77 per cent strongly supported protecting caribou calving grounds, and called on political leadership by the Government of Nunavut.

Read the letter at nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674we_need_to_protect_nunavuts_caribou_nurseries/.



Top: The late David Aksawnee. Photo by Nunatsiaq Online.

Bottom, L to R: Guests Rick Wowchuk, MLA for Swan River, Province of Manitoba and Vince Crichton, retired Manager of Game, Fur and Problem Wildlife, Province of Manitoba visit with Chair Earl Evans during a break in November's BQCMB meeting in Winnipeg. Photo by Lynne Bereza

Heard around the BQCMB Table

On respectful caribou harvest:

"We have to talk to our young people. When I talk to young people, I tell them 'when you go hunting, don't take more than you need.' They say ok, but I don't know if they do it or not."

Joe Martin, Fond du Lac Denesuline First Nation, SK

BQCMB Alternate Member representing communities of Northern Saskatchewan

"My grandparents were raised with caribou skin clothes, and had caribou hide bedding, and they needed a lot of caribou. The nomadic lifestyle of that time may have been the reason my mother was born at Edolah Tuwe (Edehon Lake NU. which was NWT at that time). It's different now, but the past shouldn't be forgotten."

Geoff Bussidor, Sayisi Dene First Nation, Tadoule Lake, MB

BQCMB Member representing communities of Northern Manitoba

On the increasing sale of caribou meat:

"I've never sold a caribou. How did this get out of control?"

Alex Ishalook, Arviat, NU

BQCMB Member representing communities in the Kivalliq Region of Nunavut

"We've worked with the Hunter and Trapper Organizations (HTOs) and they are really concerned and working hard. Most hunters in our communities (NU) are aware of this problem and that's from the HTOs spreading the word."

Mitch Campbell, Arviat, NU BQCMB Member representing the Government of Nunavut

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Executive Director: Ross Thompson
P.O. Box 629, Stonewall MB R0C 2Z0
E-mail: rossthompson@mymts.net

or
Editor: Lynne Bereza
E-mail: caribounews@outlook.com
Website: www.arctic-caribou.com

