



Kristen Callaghan, GRRB Photo

Cape Bathurst caribou are seen here during the 2015 surveys. The herd's status was put in the red category last year, meaning the population level is low.

Caribou conundrum

Resource management committee seeks community ideas to address diminished herds

by Stewart Burnett

Northern News Services

Three days of meetings next week will help determine the priorities going forward for managing integral caribou herds to the region.

Those herds include the Bluenose-East, Bluenose-West and Cape Bathurst.

Each day will be dedi-

cated to one of the herds, with public presentations in the morning followed by a closed-door meeting of Advisory Committee for the Cooperation of Wildlife Management (ACCWM) representatives, which is made up of chairs from different co-management boards with-

in the Northwest Territories

and Nunavut. Last year, the committee met to set herd status for the first time, following the development of a management plan in 2014 that outlined the need for annual updates.

From last year's meeting, both the Bluenose-East and Bluenose-West herds were

given orange status, while Cape Bathurst was in the red.

Orange is defined as "the population level is intermediate and decreasing" and red is "the population level is low," according to the ACCWM's Bluenose Caribou Management Plan.

Red status for the Cape Bathurst herd means it is in the range of 4,000 population. Orange status for the Bluenose-West herd puts it around 56,000, while orange status for the Bluenose-East herd puts it around 60,000. Both of those numbers are half of each herd's historic highs, while the Cape Bathurst number is less than a quarter of its historic high.

Red status

In the management plan document, red status brings with it the recommendation to increase enforcement of regulations, to work directly with proponents and regulators of resource exploration and development projects and to advise on mitigation protocols.

From Nov. 29 to Dec. 1 next week, community members will have the chance to give their input on the status of the three herds, which will shape the committee's actions.

Local knowledge

"I think it's always nice to have people, especially community people who harvest these herds, to be present at the meetings," said Amy Amos, executive director of the Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board.

"We are interested in knowing what they are observing on the land and (if there are) any community or local knowledge observations they're seeing that could



Stewart Burnett/NNSL photo

Amy Amos, executive director of the Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board, encourages the public to come out and provide input on local caribou herds' statuses.

even result in actions. Maybe there's some priority of an action that comes out of what they observe and they want us to do something to help fix that. It's a way of sharing the information with people who are managing these herds." Any proposed changes to caribou management would still need to go through public hearings, consultation and recommendations to the minister.

Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly
Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures

Public Consultation

Members of the 18th Legislative Assembly directed the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures to conduct a thorough review of the Members' Conduct Guidelines. The Committee is seeking public feedback on questions such as:

- What changes, if any, should be made to rules for candidates running for MLA?
- Should a person who has committed a serious criminal offence be banned from running for office? If so, for how long?
- What changes, if any, should be made to the Members' Conduct Guideline or the Oath of Office?
- How should breaches of the Guidelines or Oath of Office be enforced? Should there be automatic penalties for certain violations?
- What more should be done to promote a culture of ethical conduct?

In addition to soliciting written feedback, the Committee has scheduled a public hearing in Inuvik:

Tuesday, November 29, 2016

Mackenzie Hotel – Permafrost Room

7:00pm – 9:00pm

Coffee and tea will be provided.

Written submissions are welcome and may be forwarded to the Committee Clerk by Tuesday, December 20, 2016.

The Committee Report, along with a discussion paper, can be found on the Assembly website: www.assembly.gov.nt.ca under Documents and Proceedings, Committees, Rules and Procedures.

For more information, contact Cayley Thomas, Committee Clerk at Telephone: (867) 767-9130 ext. 12009 or toll-free: 1-800-661-0784, E-mail: cayley_thomas@gov.nt.ca

If you wish to use any of the official languages of the Northwest Territories other than English, please contact the Committee Clerk before 5pm, November 28, 2016.

