



Tłıchǫ Government

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Nunavut Planning Commission
P.O. Box 1797
Iqaluit, Nunavut X0A 0H0

The Tłıchǫ Government would like to express its' thanks to the Nunavut Planning Commission on the detailed and comprehensive work that went into the Draft Nunavut Land Use Plan. We are also thankful for being given the opportunity to comment on the Plan. We feel that working with our neighbours will yield best results for all parties involved in resource management. The purpose of this letter is to voice our concerns which specifically pertain to the Bathurst caribou herd. The decline in caribou populations is not news, many of us have felt the effects of not being able to harvest as we have in the past. We must work together amongst ourselves and others to try and mitigate impacts to caribou as much as possible so they are given the best chance to regenerate their populations. Caribou are in many ways the lifeline of the Tłıchǫ people; they are our way of life and culturally, our most important animal.

We know that caribou are very sensitive, especially to human disturbance. Our traditional knowledge studies have indicated the mining boom in our area could very well be a reason why the populations are in decline. In order to have caribou for future generations we have to be smart in the way we share the land with the caribou today.

The Tłıchǫ Government is respectfully asking for the Commission to increase protections on caribou in the Bathurst range, more specifically on the entire Bathurst caribou calving grounds. We see in Schedule A that a large portion of calving grounds are protected and we applaud that but also feel as though there are more grounds that can be protected. When the caribou are calving they are at their most vulnerable, it is therefore crucial that these grounds are awarded full protection against development.

The post-calving summer range of the Bathurst caribou is important as well. We would also like to request that the Commission consider protecting the summer grounds from disturbance. To give some ideas; this protection could be seasonal, based on caribou abundance or based on biological indicators (i.e. low cow-calf ratio). In recent years the Government of the Northwest Territories has taken to using a mobile zone to protect the lands where caribou frequent. Caribou habitat protection could also be temporary; kept until populations increase.

Protecting the caribou is a massive and complex task that requires many different groups to work together. We completely understand the importance of economic development and the challenges that come when combining development and financial prosperity with protecting wildlife. However, once the mines close, indigenous communities both in the NWT and in Nunavut will still need the caribou to continue their ancestral way of life. We thank the Commission for receiving our letter and are hopeful our requests will be seriously considered and actioned.

Masi cho,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tyanna Steinwand". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tyanna Steinwand
Lands Regulator