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Comments on draft 2014 Nunavut Land Use Plan for the Nunavut Planning Commission Technical Meetings June 23-25, 2015

Protection for Caribou Calving Grounds

The Kitikmeot Inuit Association (KitIA) would like to be clear on this point: **All** Inuit organizations agreed that some measures need to be implemented to protect caribou during calving, a period of time which Inuit consider to be sacred. The difficulty for Inuit organizations is to select what measures would result in the most effective protection for caribou during this critical period.

The draft NLUP "Core Calving and Post-Calving Protected Area" designation would prohibit development on 10.1% of surface Inuit Owned Lands (IOLs) and 8.6% of subsurface IOLs in the Kitikmeot. As an organization, the KitIA must consider both the environmental and economic wellbeing of Kitikmeot Inuit. The potential prohibition of development on these IOLs could have substantial negative consequences on the economic wellbeing of Inuit without guaranteeing their environmental wellbeing. Therefore, the KitIA does not support the proposed Protected Area designation for core caribou calving and post-calving in the draft Land Use Plan.

Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI) and the Regional Inuit Associations (RIAs) have struggled with two alternatives: (1) to protect a pre-delineated caribou calving ground (i.e., a polygon on a map, or (2) to implement mobile caribou protection measures designed to protect caribou wherever they may be. The KitIA supports the implementation of mobile caribou protection measures because caribou calving should be protected in whatever area calving occurs.

If caribou protection is a significant concern (in light of development), then the responsible agencies and proponents need to bolster their investment in caribou monitoring, information-sharing, and enforcement in order to ensure that caribou are appropriately protected. These partnerships should focus on developing research initiatives geared to identifying adaptive management approaches that allow for the co-existence of caribou and development, especially in Nunavut where pristine wild spaces abound.