Kivalliq Wildlife Board
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Kivalliq
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Arviat
ᐊᕐᕕᐊᑦ
Baker Lake
ᕿᒪᓂᑦᑐᐊᖅ
Chesterfield Inlet
ᐃᒃᑐᓕᒫᕐᔪᒃ
Coral Harbour
ᓴᕐᓕᖅ
Rankin Inlet
ᑲᖏᖅᓱᓂᖅ
Repulse Bay
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Whale Cove
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March 7, 2016

To: Members of the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

RE: Government of Nunavut's support for mining in caribou calving grounds

I am writing to you today to express my disappointment in the Government of Nunavut's (GN) decision to support mining and mineral exploration in caribou calving grounds. The Kivalliq Wildlife Board (KWB) has long supported protection for caribou calving grounds, and was very happy that the GN supported our position. It was very disappointing to learn that the GN changed its mind, and no longer wants to protect calving grounds.

The KWB believes that the GN has made a very irresponsible decision. Mining in caribou calving grounds could have detrimental impacts on hunters in the Kivalliq region. For many communities, especially Baker Lake and Arviat, caribou is the main staple. Based on information presented by wildlife biologists, Inuit elders, and Kivalliq Hunters and Trappers Organizations (HTOs), the KWB does not believe it is appropriate to allow mining and exploration activities in caribou calving grounds.

The KWB and Kivalliq HTOs have passed many resolutions and written countless letters opposing development in Nunavut's calving grounds. So have numerous Dene and Metis communities, the Beverly and Qamanirjuaq Caribou Management Board, and the World Wildlife Fund of Canada.

I am also very disappointed in the way this decision was made. The perspectives of Kivalliq hunters do not seem to have been meaningfully considered. If they had, I do not believe that the GN would have passed a policy that provides no real protection for caribou habitat.

I previously wrote to the Premiere and Minister of Environment, requesting that they work with Kivalliq HTOs and the KWB on the issue of caribou habitat protection. I had hoped that the GN would consider Kivalliq HTO perspectives on land use planning, and consult with us on any policy changes and decisions. I have yet to receive a response to this letter.

Last week, HTOs from Chesterfield Inlet, Arviat, and Baker Lake wrote to MLAs, expressing their views on land use planning. One of these letters was tabled in the legislative assembly by MLA Tom Sammurtok. Mr. Sammurtok said he would be asking detailed questions about the issue later in the sitting. However, a decision was made by cabinet to support mining in calving grounds before Mr. Sammurtok was able to ask questions.

This is an incredibly important issue, and one surely worthy of proper consultation and public discussion. However, this discussion did not take place. We were given no official notice that the GN was considering changing its position on mining in calving grounds. There was no

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discussion about the issue in the legislative assembly. And there was certainly no engagement with the public on this question.

I sincerely hope our regular MLAs will read up on this issue and take a stand. It is not right for government to make major decisions about wildlife protection without consulting the Inuit who depend the most on that wildlife. Please, table this letter and attached documents in the legislative assembly, and discuss this issue for all Nunavummiut to hear.

If you require further information about the KWB's position on caribou habitat, please do not hesitate to contact me at kwb@niws.ca.

Stanley Adjuk
President
Kivalliq Wildlife Board

cc:
Cathy Towtongie, President, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated
David Ningeongan, President, Kivalliq Inuit Association
James Qillaq, President, Qikiqtalluk Wildlife Board
Simon Qingnaqtuq, President, Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board
Andrew Nakashuk, A/Chair, Nunavut Planning Commission
Elizabeth Copeland, Chair, Nunavut Impact Review Board
Ben Kovic, Chair, Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
Earl Evans, Chair, Beverly and Qamanirjuaq Caribou Management Board
Paul Crowley, Director of Arctic Program, World Wildlife Fund Canada

Attachments:
KWB March 2016 Submission to NPC
Baker Lake HTO Letter to MLAs
Arviat HTO Letter to MLAs
Chesterfield Inlet HTO Letter to MLAs
List of Letters and Motions Opposing Mining in Calving Grounds