



## **Ekaluktutiak Hunters & Trappers Organization**

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### **Ekaluktutiak Hunters and Trappers Organization (EHTO) submission to the Nunavut Planning Commission for the Draft Nunavut Land Use Plan**

To prepare for written submissions to the Nunavut Planning Commission (NPC) and public hearings hosted by them, the Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board (KRWB), with support from Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI) staff, held workshops from 21–22 October 2021 in Kugluktuk, 22 November 2021 in Cambridge Bay, and 6–7 May 2022 in Cambridge Bay, to review maps in the 2021 draft Nunavut Land Use Plan (DNLUP), map important areas, and discuss regional approaches to the land use planning process. Hunters and Trappers Organizations (HTOs) were encouraged to submit written comments to NPC, with KRWB technical support.

Digitized maps were provided to the Ekaluktutiak Hunters and Trappers Organization (EHTO) that were created and/or modified by EHTO staff and board members for the 2021 DNLUP. EHTO also contracted Trailmark Systems Inc. consultants to prepare maps of Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit data in EHTO's database, which includes data from IQ interviews, wildlife monitoring on the land using a mobile app, and other land use related information. These maps were used to inform EHTO discussions and recommendations for the 2021 DNLUP.

In addition to what was shared during public hearings from 12–15 September 2022 in Cambridge Bay, EHTO is making the following recommendations:

- IQ and/or traditional knowledge should be the baseline for all mobile caribou protection, caribou monitoring, and decision-making around activities occurring in caribou ranges.
- Caribou herds are unique on Victoria Island; they cover vast areas, as opposed to specific areas. The mapped calving ground on Victoria Island in the current 2021 DNLUP should be larger and expanded to the southern shoreline of Victoria Island, as indicated in (Figure A).
- EHTO recommends Conditional Use designation for caribou calving grounds, where oil and gas exploration and production; mineral exploration and production; quarries; hydro-electrical and related infrastructure; wind turbines for electrical generation that are over 15m in height and related infrastructure; and linear infrastructure are prohibited during calving and post-calving. Calving and post-calving periods should be determined and verified using IQ, or traditional knowledge as well as scientific information as it becomes available; for example, current dates based on 2015–2022 collar data are 4–29 June and are subject to change based on future consultation and analysis (Government of Nunavut Department of Environment, personal communication).
- Caribou calving and post-calving dates that are the same every year, or determined solely using collar data might fail to take into account seasonal variations and rapid climate change; for example, in years with climate variability, this period can shift 2 to 3 weeks. Calving and post-calving dates should be confirmed by Hunters and Trappers Organizations within the Dolphin-Union range in order for proponents to carry out proposed activities.
- Caribou calving and post-calving should also be considered Valued Ecosystem Components and, hence, taken into account for each project proposal and review.
- The mapped islands in Dease Strait between the mainland and Victoria Island (Figure B) are included in the 2021 DNLUP under the Conditional Use designation "Caribou Sea Ice Crossings" with the condition that ice breaking cannot occur during Ukiaq (October 15 - February 15) and Upingaktsaaq (April 1 - May

31). EHTO recommends no ice breaking from October 15 to June 15. Under the Oceans Protection Plan, restrictions on shipping through a Notice to Mariners are currently in place to protect caribou sea ice crossings from October 15 to June 15 each year. Community members also use the sea ice to travel during this time. These areas should be included under the Conditional Use designation “Community Areas of Interest – On Ice Travel Routes” where ice breaking cannot occur unless municipal councils, HTOs, and RWOs have been consulted. Should shipping activity be absolutely necessary, the EHTO must be notified.

- The following rivers and their tributaries (Figure C) are important char fishing areas for sustenance and should be designated Limited Use prohibiting oil and gas exploration and production; mineral exploration and production; quarries; hydro-electrical and related infrastructure; wind turbines for electrical generation that are over 15m in height and related infrastructure; and linear infrastructure. These areas should also include a 10km buffer zone, as caribou also use these areas as freshwater crossings:
  - Tree River
  - Ellice River
  - Perry River
  - Perry Island
  - Laughlin River
  - Jayko Lake
  - Surrey River
  - Thirty Mile River
  - Wellington Bay
- The Char Potential Fishing Ground, under VEC designation in the DNLUP, on southern Victoria Island should be extended to the southern shoreline of the island (Figure D). This area should include the above mentioned rivers and tributaries.
- The Char Potential Fishing Ground on Kent Peninsula should be extended north to the northern shoreline (Figure E).
- Many of the areas identified by EHTO correspond to areas identified as Polar Bear Denning areas in the 2021 DNLUP. The EHTO requests that NPC include the additional areas mapped in Figure F in the DNLUP. The EHTO is in agreement with the current Conditional Use designation for these Polar Bear Denning Areas in the 2021 DNLUP.
- An additional Marine Ecologically and Biologically Significant Area, under VEC designation in the DNLUP, should be added as an important seal hunting area (Figure G). This area includes Jenny Lind Island and Admiralty Island off the coast of Victoria Island; polar bears are also known to hunt in this area.

Regards,



Peter Evalik  
Chair



