



July 24, 2020

Carl Sidney, Chair
Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board
Box 31104
Whitehorse, YT Y1A 5P7

Dear Chair Sidney:

Re: Fortymile Caribou Adaptive Provision Recommendations

Thank you for the recommendations on adaptive management of Fortymile caribou.

I agree there is a continued need for a balanced approach that supports the dual objectives of re-connecting Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in with this herd and addressing their subsistence food needs. This balance includes ensuring wise and sustainable use of the Fortymile herd and careful management of local moose populations.

Department staff developed the harvest approach in collaboration with technical staff from Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and the Dawson District Renewable Resources Council. This approach provides a modest licensed harvest opportunity from Yukon's allocation while respecting the opportunities for harvest by First Nation citizens. In this plan we will issue up to 20 permits over successive 5 day periods through August and early September. This will result in no more than 160 permits issued during this season.

With regard to the specific recommendations from the Board:

1.1 That the Yukon government, while facilitating the fall licensed hunt for Fortymile caribou, place a condition on each permit, restricting the hunter to one bull caribou per license year.

I vary this recommendation.

The *Wildlife Act* and Regulations currently provide that only one (1) bull (woodland) caribou may be harvested by licensed hunters, with an exception that a second bull may be harvested, provided it is a Porcupine caribou. As a result, a condition does not need to be placed on the permit to make this recommendation come into effect.

1.2 That a condition be applied to each permit issued, restricting Fortymile caribou hunters to harvesting "caribou only" during their hunt. This condition would

effectively prevent those holding caribou permits from harvesting a moose incidentally.

I reject this recommendation.

A condition placed on a permit is enabling and pertains to the subject of the permit, specifically Fortymile caribou. Where there is a legal authority to harvest other species, as provided for in regulation, a limitation or restriction on such a harvest would be outside of the scope and authority of a *Wildlife Act* permit enabling the harvest of a Fortymile caribou. I also note the design of the hunt minimizes incidental harvest of moose by use of a seasonal date. We will closely monitor moose harvest numbers in the coming years to ensure this mitigation is successful. Although not agreed to at the time of our June 10, 2020 presentation to the Board, the Department of Environment has modified the boundary of the hunt in Game Management Subzone 3-02 to exclude areas where there is a low likelihood of Fortymile caribou, but a higher probability of moose. Attached for your reference, is a copy of the amended hunt map.

1.3 In support of the Dawson District Renewable Resources Council, the Board also recommends the exclusion of the Ladue River Valley from the hunt, to protect moose and sheep from disturbance.

I vary this recommendation.

As illustrated in the attached amended hunt map, the recommendation from the Dawson District Renewable Resources Council has been implemented by excluding the lower Ladue River (lower left corner of the map which falls within Game Management Subzone 3-05). The upper part of Ladue River, which falls within Game Management Subzone 3-04, has been included as a large part of the hunt could take place in the upper tributaries of this river. In support this recommendation, Department of Environment staff will be directing hunters to

areas where caribou may be present and use of alternative ways to access them rather than by river boat via the Ladue River.

Again, I thank the Board for its careful deliberations and recommendations with respect to the management of Fortymile caribou. Pursuant to 16.8.3 of the Umbrella Final Agreement, I am waiving confidentiality on these recommendations.

Mahsi,



Pauline Frost
Minister of Environment

Cc: Ryan Hennings, Director, Fish and Wildlife Branch

Enclosed: *Map - Fortymile Caribou Summer Registration Hunt
(August 1 to September 9, 2020)*