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July 09, 2021

Honorable Nils Clarke
Minister of Environment
Government of Yukon
Box 2703
Whitehorse, Yukon
Y1A 2C6

Dear Minister Clarke,

Re: Bringing Yukon's *Wildlife Act* into conformity with the *Yukon First Nations Final Agreements*

We extend our appreciation to yourself and the Department of Environment staff for meeting with us and discussing the priorities of the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board (hereafter, 'the Board').

We intend to initiate a process to review and modernize Yukon's *Wildlife Act* to bring it into conformity with the spirit and intent of the Umbrella Final Agreement. The Yukon *Wildlife Act* is a key legal instrument through which human actions are managed in order to conserve, protect, and maintain healthy wildlife populations.

The Board consistently hears feedback from First Nations, Renewable Resources Councils, and the general public that the language and restrictions contained within the *Wildlife Act* are antiquated. For example, the Umbrella Final Agreement, along with the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board and the Renewable Resources Councils are not mentioned anywhere within the *Wildlife Act*, as it is currently written.

As per 16.6.13 (UFA), "The Minister shall recommend to the Yukon Legislative Assembly an amendment to the Wildlife Act, R.S.Y. 1986, c. 178 to enable the Council to establish bylaws under the Wildlife Act, R.S.Y. 1986, c. 178 pursuant to 16.6.10.6.". This is a Treaty obligation of the Yukon Government which remains outstanding after 30 years.

Another example is the *Act* does not recognize section 16.6.10.6 (UFA) which states [each Council], “may establish bylaws under the Wildlife Act, R.S.Y. 1986, c. 178, in accordance with 16.11.0, for the management of Furbearers”.

This lack of conformity greatly impedes Fish and Wildlife Management, by effectively restricting both the Board and the Renewable Resources Councils from implementing and fulfilling our mandates.

The Board understands that legislative amendments require considerable time and effort, and we hope this letter is the catalyst for a broader discussion about how the Board and the Department can work together to bring about modernizing of the *Act*.

As the Yukon Government is committed to reconciliation, it must embody the spirit and intent of the Yukon First Nations Final Agreements. Amending the *Wildlife Act* to bring the Legislation into conformity with the constitutionally entrenched Final Agreements shall honour this commitment.

The Board will be sending letters to all Yukon First Nations seeking their support in opening the *Wildlife Act* for amendments. This commitment is long overdue.

Thank you for your consideration and if you have any questions please contact our Executive Director, Graham Van Tighem at 667-5835.

Sincerely,

Carl Sidney, Chair

Cc: Ed Shultz, Director of Fish and Wildlife, CYFN