



Department of Environment
PO Box 2703, Whitehorse, Yukon

December 1, 2021

Carl Sidney, Chair and Randy Taylor, Vice-Chair
Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board
Whitehorse, YT

RE: Sustainable harvest of Yukon's wildlife resources

Dear Carl Sidney and Randy Taylor,

As partners in wildlife management, we share a common interest in and the mutual goal of wildlife conservation. Sustainable harvest management is a complex issue, and we recognize that conservation of wildlife populations and the protection of First Nation subsistence harvest rights are of paramount importance.

Our ongoing discussions with partners and the public point toward the growing need for a new approach to wildlife harvest allocation to guide the sustainable harvest of Yukon's wildlife. Some of the concerns that we have heard are:

- The Government of Yukon's process to determine the licensed harvest should be more transparent and clearly articulate its goals and responsibilities.
- First Nation governments want to be consulted about wildlife management decisions, including in relation to licensed harvest allocations.
- All types of knowledge, including Traditional, local, and scientific, should be part of decision-making.

While we are currently in the early planning stages, we intend to work with First Nation governments, Renewable Resources Councils, the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, the outfitting industry, and the public once we initiate a process towards harvest allocation guidance.

As part of this initiative to establish more transparent harvest allocation guidance, we also intend to review and modernize the *Guidelines to Establish Outfitter Quotas* that have been used to establish moose, caribou, and sheep quotas. The Guidelines are now 25 years old and

require modernization for a variety of reasons, including:

- To bring them into conformity with the Yukon *Wildlife Act*.
- To reflect the Government of Yukon's consultation obligations to First Nations.
- To integrate modern adaptive management tools.
- To increase clarity and reduce conflict, as they are currently interpreted variably by the Government of Yukon, Renewable Resources Councils, and outfitters.
- To bring consistency across outfitting concessions and big game species.

While work is underway on a revised approach to establishing quotas, the department will establish outfitter quotas in conformity with the *Wildlife Act* and the Government of Yukon's obligations. This means, starting with the 2022-23 hunting season, quotas will be assigned annually for moose and caribou for every outfitting concession. Subject to consultation with affected First Nations where required, the department intends to proceed as follows:

- quota terms that have not yet expired will remain in place for the 2022-23 hunting season,
- expired quotas will be renewed annually unless there is a conservation concern, in which case outfitters will be contacted by department officials to discuss amendments to their quotas, and
- outfitters who do not currently have a moose and/or caribou quota will soon receive an invitation to meet with department officials to establish quotas.

At this time, we are interested in your feedback about how we could work together. Marc Cattet (Marc.Cattet@yukon.ca) and Matt Clarke (Matt.Clarke@yukon.ca) are the primary contacts; please do not hesitate to contact them about either the Government of Yukon's approach to wildlife harvest allocation or how we are establishing quotas.

We will follow up with you as soon as possible about the next steps and look forward to working with you on this important initiative.

Sincerely,



Marjón Moreau
Deputy Minister of Environment

c. Brian MacDonald, Assistant Deputy Minister, Aboriginal Relations