

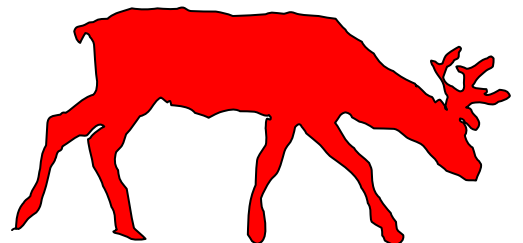
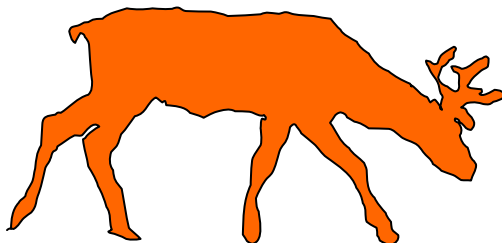
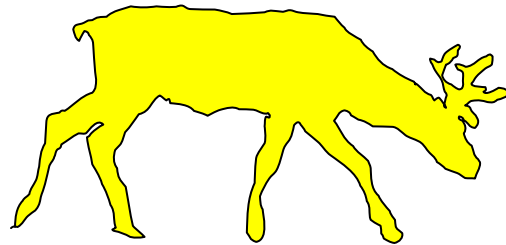
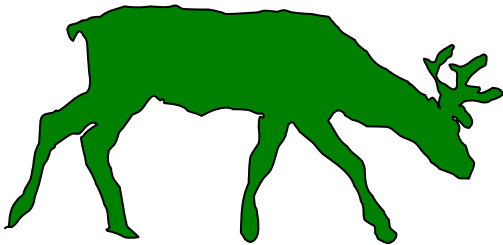
“Setting a good trail for the younger generation”

HARVEST MANAGEMENT PLAN (HMP)

for the Porcupine Caribou Herd in Canada

PUBLIC DISCUSSION DRAFT
July 2008

Prepared by the HMP Working Group
IGC/GTC/VGG/TH/NND/GNWT/GY/GC



Contents

Changing times	3
Why make a plan now?.....	3
This herd feeds us.....	4
Harvest Information	5
Who is involved in this plan?.....	5
How was this plan put together?	7
Management using Indicators and the Colour Chart	7
A. Indicators of How Well the Herd Is Doing.....	7
B. Colour Chart.....	9
B. Colour Chart.....	10
The Caribou Calculator	11
Combining the Colour Chart & the Caribou Calculator.....	13
Management using the Colour Chart	15
C. Annual Harvest Meeting.....	18
Precautionary Principle	20
Essential Requirements for the Plan	20
Key concepts of the plan.....	21
Bulls Only	21
Total Allowable Harvest	21
Education and Communication.....	23
Essential Requirements for the Plan	24
Dempster Highway	25
Law-Based Solutions	25
Awareness-Based Solutions.....	27
What about predator control?	28
What about the sale of caribou?	28
What about Alaska?	28
Porcupine Caribou Management Agreement.....	28
Recommendation regarding the PCMA	29
Implementation and Review	29

Comments on this Draft Harvest Management Plan can be forwarded to pcmb@taiga.net or to your appropriate “party” to the Harvest Management Plan (See Page 6)

Photos in this report courtesy of Government of Yukon and Canadian Wildlife Service

Changing times

Times have changed from the old days when native people hunted by dog team and snowshoe or waited by river crossings to harvest caribou. Today, all hunters, both native and non-native, use high-powered rifles and travel by truck, snowmobile and motor boat. Hunters can move more quickly from one place to another, and no matter where the caribou are we can find them. For these reasons we must all make sure that such mobile and efficient ways of harvesting do not cause undue hardships for the herd, especially when they are struggling to cope with natural stresses in their environment.



Why make a plan now?

The Porcupine Caribou herd is a magnificent population of migratory caribou that we must conserve for all time. When the herd is large, harvesting caribou poses little or no threat to it. When the herd is declining it can get to a point where hunting could become a serious problem.

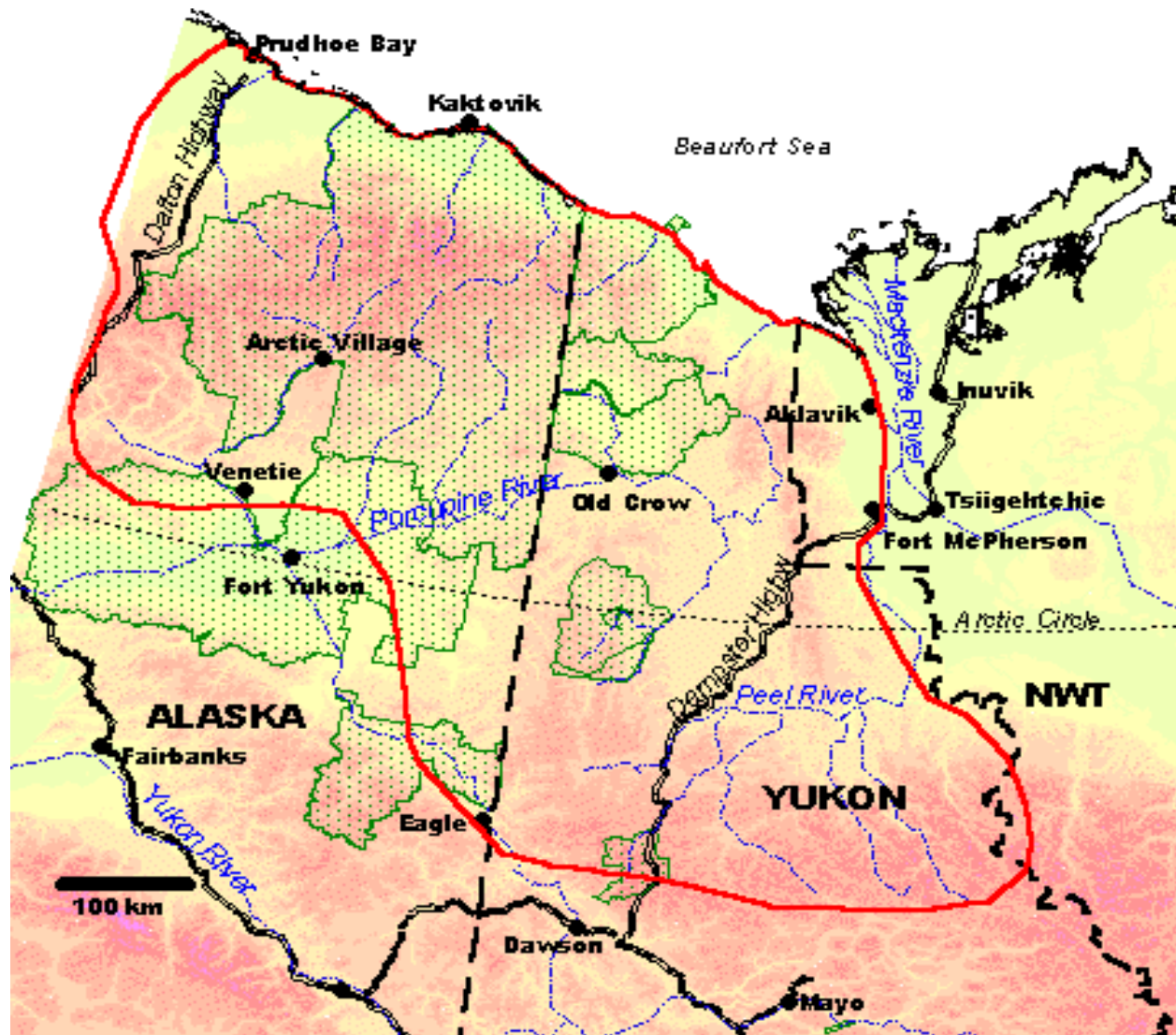
Harvesting like normal could make the population of the herd go down further and faster so that it would take many, many years to recover. We do not want this to happen. That is why it is really important that we get this plan going now.

We want to provide as many harvesting opportunities as we can while not pushing the numbers of caribou down by too much harvesting.

The timing for a plan is also right because land claims have been settled everywhere on the herd's range, so now we can bring all the parties together to make a plan that will be very strong.

This herd feeds us

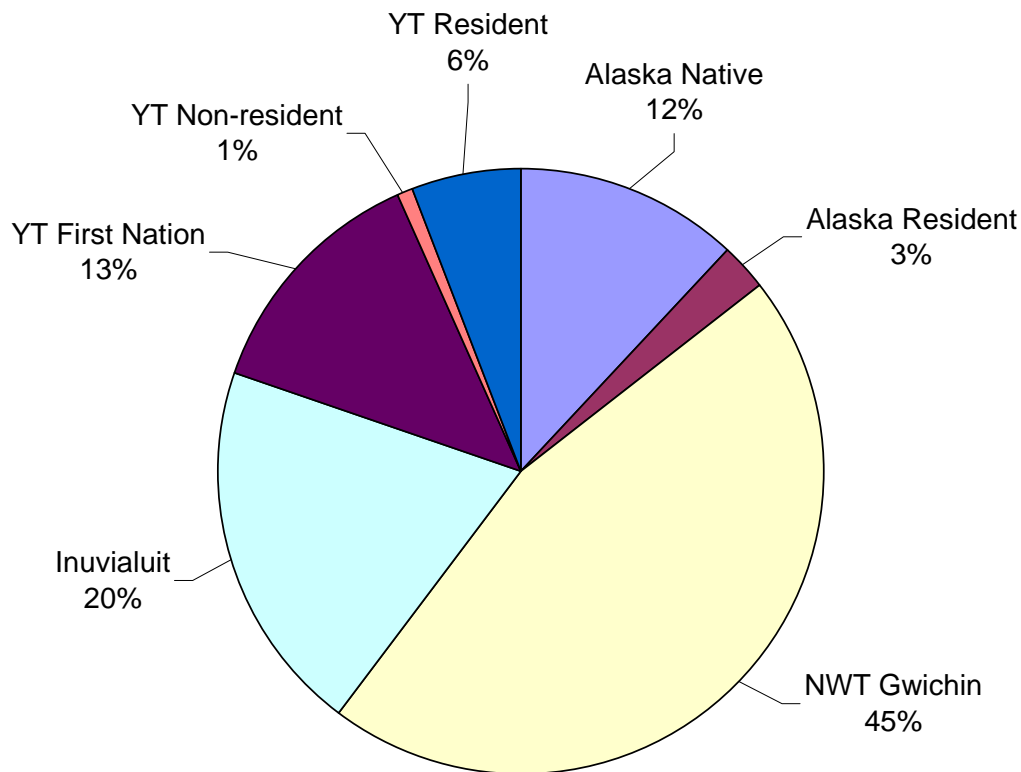
Porcupine caribou feed people - lots of people. Most of the hunters live in or near the herd's range and others come from farther south in the Yukon.



Harvest Information

In the past, we have had a hard time figuring out just how many caribou are being harvested because good information has not been available from hunters in all the communities all of the time. We do have three years where data is available for all harvesters. The biggest harvest was about 6,000 caribou and, in general, we assume that an average of 4,000 caribou are taken each year. For the plan to work really well, such information is not good enough. Good harvest information is needed *every year*.

Average Portion of Harvest of Porcupine Caribou herd



A few NWT residents also harvest (<1%)

Who is involved in this plan?

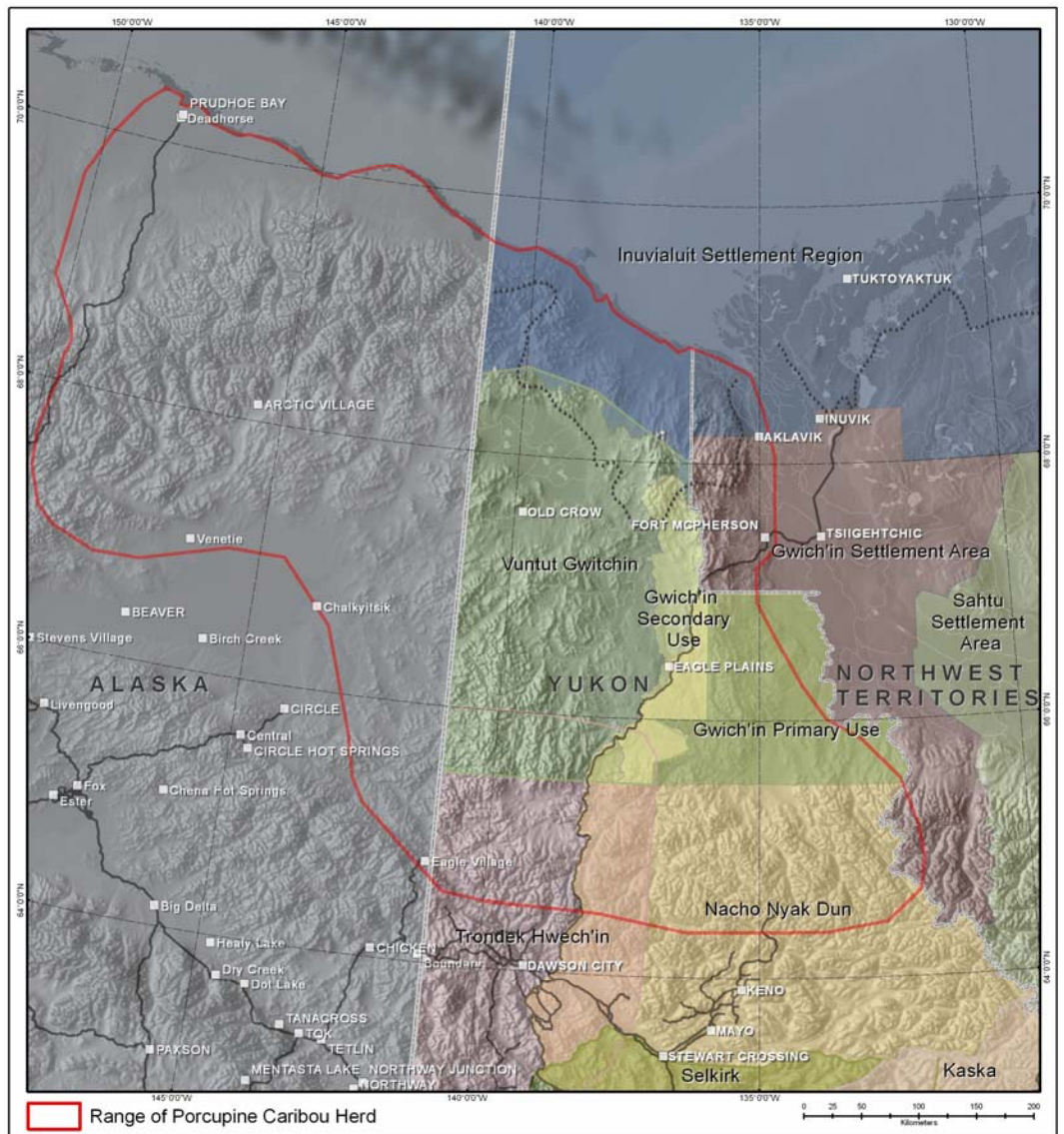
If you look at the table on the next page, you will see that there are eight parties responsible for managing hunters and caribou within the Canadian range of the Porcupine Caribou herd. The first five come from land claim settlements. Involving so many parties makes it tricky to do things right, yet not step on anyone's toes. But it will work if everyone agrees on the main things to do and then each party works out the details for their own hunters.

Parties to Harvest Management Plan

Inuvialuit Game Council **IGC**
 Gwich'in Tribal Council **GTC**
 Vuntut Gwitchin Government **VGG**
 Tr'ondek Hwech'in **TH**

First Nation of NaCho Nyak Dun **NND**
 Government of the Northwest Territories **GNWT**
 Government of Yukon **GY**
 Government of Canada **GC**

In addition to the parties, there are two management boards that deal solely with this herd. The Porcupine Caribou Management Board (PCMB) was established in 1985 by the Porcupine Caribou Management Agreement (in Canada). The International Porcupine Caribou Board (IPCB) was established in 1987 by the International Porcupine Caribou Agreement. The IPCB deals with international caribou management coordination and could become involved with this plan if the plan is later expanded to include Alaska.



How was this plan put together?

This plan is part of the Porcupine Caribou Harvest Management Strategy. The PCMB initiated the strategy, which has three parts:

1. The Harvest Management Protocol Agreement;
2. The Harvest Management Plan (this Plan); and
3. The Native User Agreement.

The Protocol, signed by all the parties, sets out how the Plan will be developed. This includes the formation of a Harvest Management Plan Working Group to draft the Plan. The Working Group is made up of a representative from each of the eight parties. The Protocol also includes a separate Native User Agreement. This agreement will deal with allocation issues and harvest commitments for First Nations and Inuvialuit.

Management using Indicators and the Colour Chart

In October 2007, PCMB coordinated a workshop in Inuvik on behalf of the Working Group to discuss how to:

- A. Decide what factors are used to say how well the herd is doing **(INDICATORS)**
- B. Decide what harvesting should take place depending on how the herd is doing **(COLOUR CHART)**
- C. Establish a means of agreeing on the above decisions and carrying them out **(ANNUAL HARVEST MEETING)**

A. Indicators of How Well the Herd Is Doing

When you talk about what is happening with the herd you are basically discussing **indicators**. Indicators are expressed either as numbers or descriptions and allow us to better understand how the herd is doing overall.

Indicator numbers

The following indicators are collected for the Porcupine Caribou herd on a regular basis:

1. **Estimated herd size** — Biologists from Alaska and Canada count caribou from photos they take of the herd when it is all bunched up together in July. These counts are used to estimate the total number of caribou in the herd. In many years a count is not

possible for various reasons. Still, an estimate of herd size must be made. This is done by starting from the last good estimate and trying to predict whether the population has been going up or down using a computer model and all the other indicator information. The last good estimate based on a photocensus was 123,000 in 2001. In 2007, the herd size was estimated to be around 100,000 based on all the indicator information since 2001.

2. **Harvest information** — This is the number of caribou killed by hunters each year. This indicator seems like it would be the easiest to get, but, as noted above, it is not. In the absence of good information, it is estimated that 4,000 caribou are taken each year.
3. **Adult cow survival** — This tells us what percentage of cows survive each year. This is done by putting radio-collars on a number of cows and checking them every year to see how many died. (The collar itself has essentially no effect on the cow survival.) If more than 86% of the cows survive year after year, the herd is probably increasing. If less than 86% of the cows survive each year for several years, the herd is probably decreasing.
4. **Calf birth rate** — The birth rate is measured by following the radio-collared cows on the calving ground until they give birth or are judged not pregnant. This has been measured for the past 21 years. Over all those years, the average proportion of cows giving birth was 81% — but, of course, this varies every year. Comparing information from a number of years provides some insight into long term up or down ‘trends’ in the herd size. For example, if, year after year, the birth rate is low, then it is likely that the herd is going down.
5. **Calf survival to nine months** — This shows roughly how many calves will be entering the adult population to replace those adults that have died. It is measured by counting as many calves and adults as possible in March. Over the 14 years this has been measured, there was an average of 36 nine-month-old calves for every 100 cows.
6. **Body condition** — This shows how healthy the herd is. It is done by measuring the depth of back fat and marrow in the lower leg bone of the caribou that hunters take and also by recording hunters’ observations.

Indicator descriptions

There are also many other descriptive indicators that come from people out on the land. Some of these are:

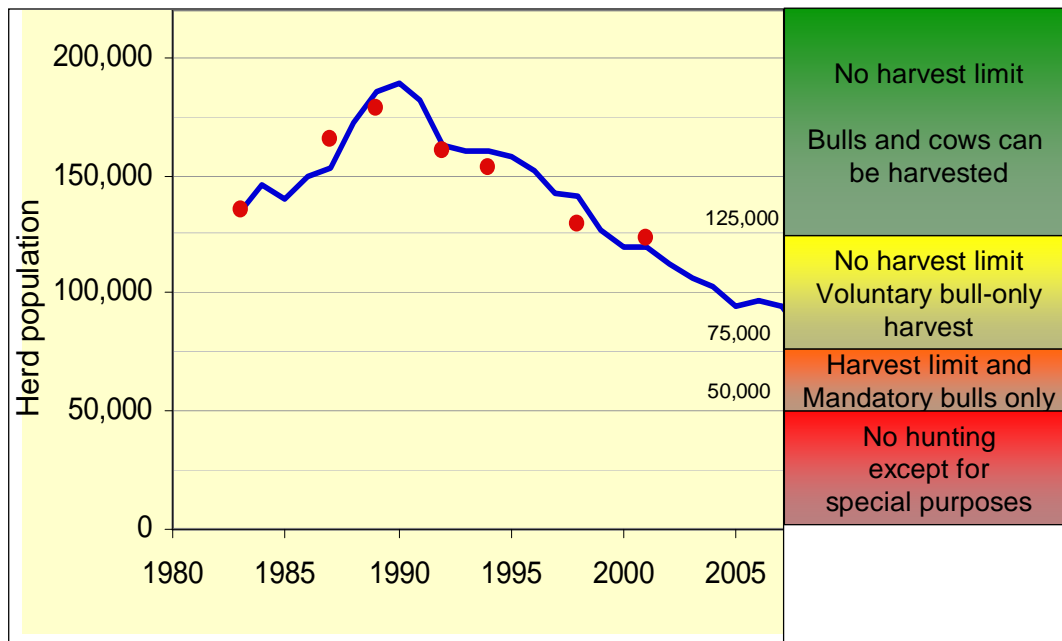
1. **Caribou health** — Hunters are very aware of the health of the animals, and their observations are an important part of deciding how well the herd is doing.
2. **Hunting success** — Hunters from different communities keep in touch with each other and are always talking about how the hunting is. Such information shows which communities are getting caribou and which are not.
3. **Weather** — People on the land watch the weather and they know what conditions (like snow depth and hardness, winds, etc.) are good or bad for caribou. The weather conditions over the year gives some idea of what kind of year it was for the herd.



B. Colour Chart

At the Inuvik workshop it was agreed to use a colour chart for showing what the harvest should be in relation to how big the herd is. Such colour charts are already used for fire management and salmon management, and so many people understand what they mean and how to use them.

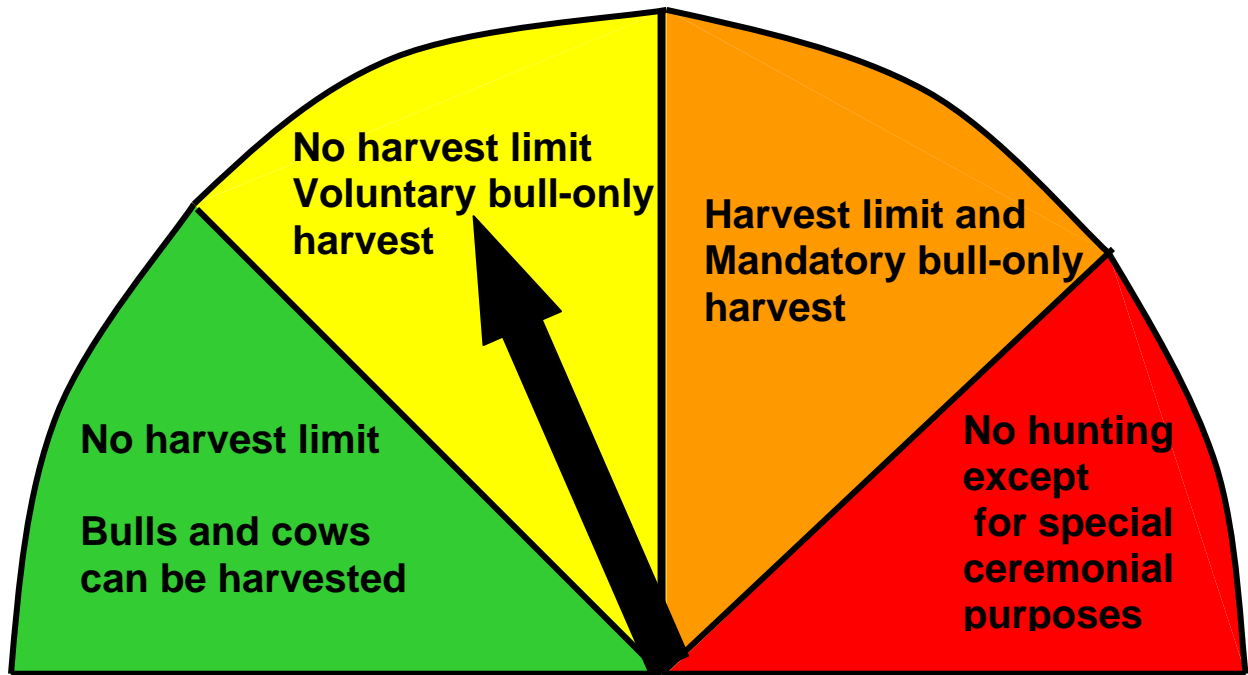
Harvest Management Colour Chart



Red dots are caribou population estimates (photocensus)

Blue line is computer-generated population trend. Future predictions assume annual harvest of 4,000 caribou

- Green** 'Business as usual' — This means no harvest restrictions; in other words, nothing special would be done, and people could hunt for what they need. Of course, respect for the caribou would always be emphasized.
- Yellow** 'Voluntary bulls only' — This means hunters would be strongly urged to take only bulls and take fewer.
- Orange** 'Mandatory bulls only and harvest limits' — This means that each party would take steps to ensure their hunters took only bulls. 'Harvest limits' means that a total allowable harvest would be agreed upon by all parties.
- Red** 'No hunting' — This means all hunting would cease, except for special ceremonial purposes.

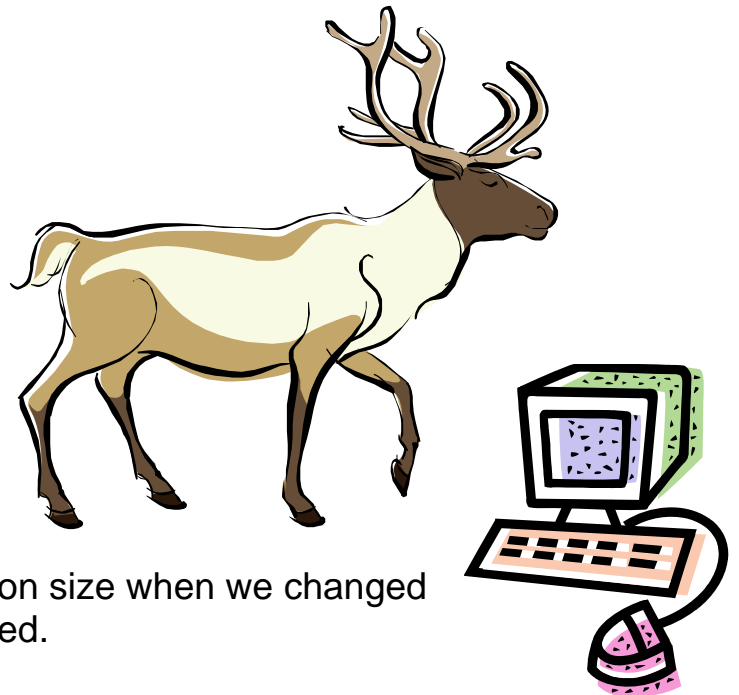


Signs like this will appear in the communities and along the highway to advise hunters about the status of the herd and hunting requirements.

The Caribou Calculator

Many of the number indicators have been put into a computer program called the Caribou Calculator. This program shows what might happen to the herd depending on how the harvest was changed.

At the workshop we worked with the Colour Chart and the Caribou Calculator together over and over to see what would happen to the population size when we changed the number and sex of caribou harvested.



The colour boundaries you see in the following charts are the result of many hours of discussion, not only at the workshop, but later at Working Group meetings. What it all boils down to is how comfortable you feel about changing the harvest in relation to the effects that change will have on the

population in the next 10 years. This is called 'risk management'; meaning you can help reduce the risk of the herd becoming smaller by adjusting the level of harvest when the herd drops to a certain size.

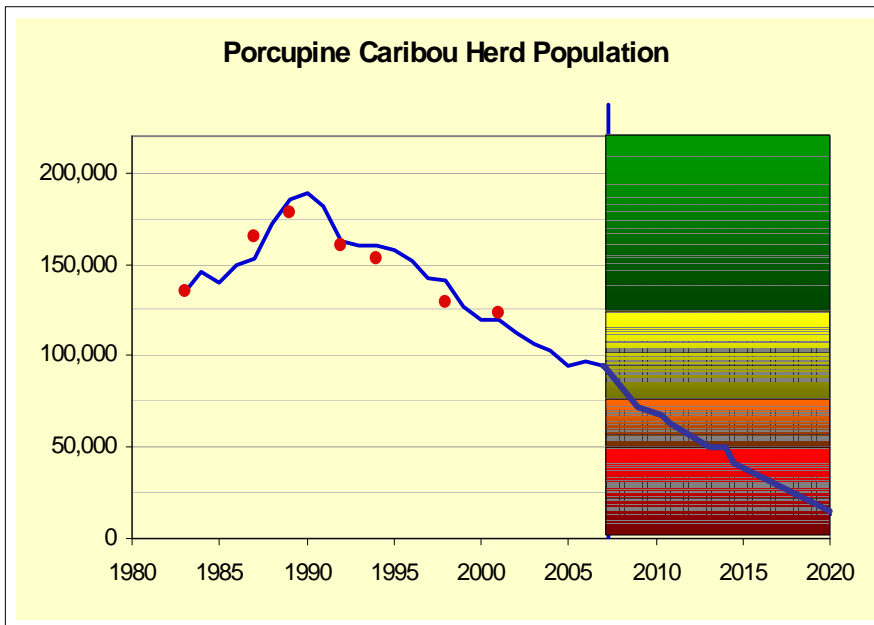
The next two pages show some of the results from the caribou calculator. In each graph the red dots are the photo census results and the blue line is the prediction of herd size from the computer model.



Combining the Colour Chart & the Caribou Calculator

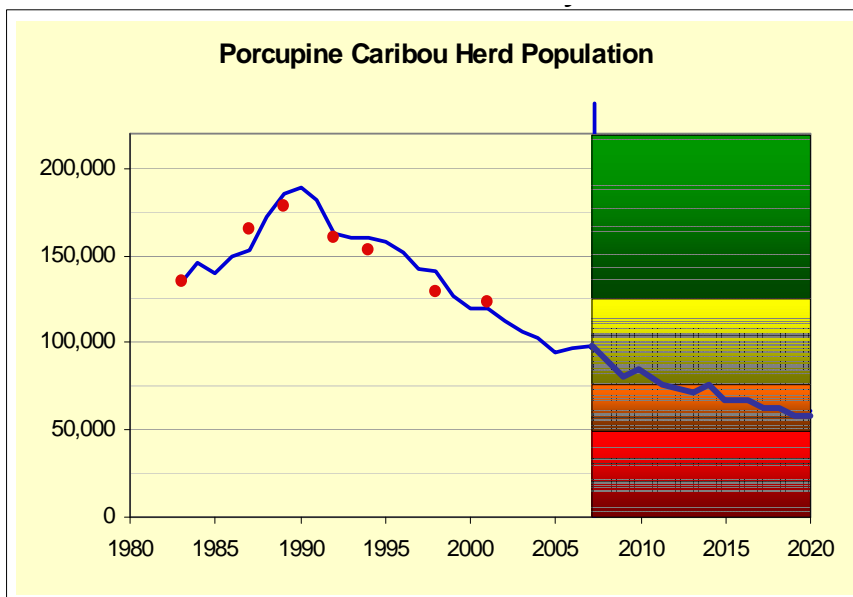
to predict what might happen to the herd

Chart 1: No Harvest Restrictions (Average annual harvest 4,000)



If we continue to harvest as we currently do, the herd is predicted to continue declining to under 20,000 caribou in less than 15 years.

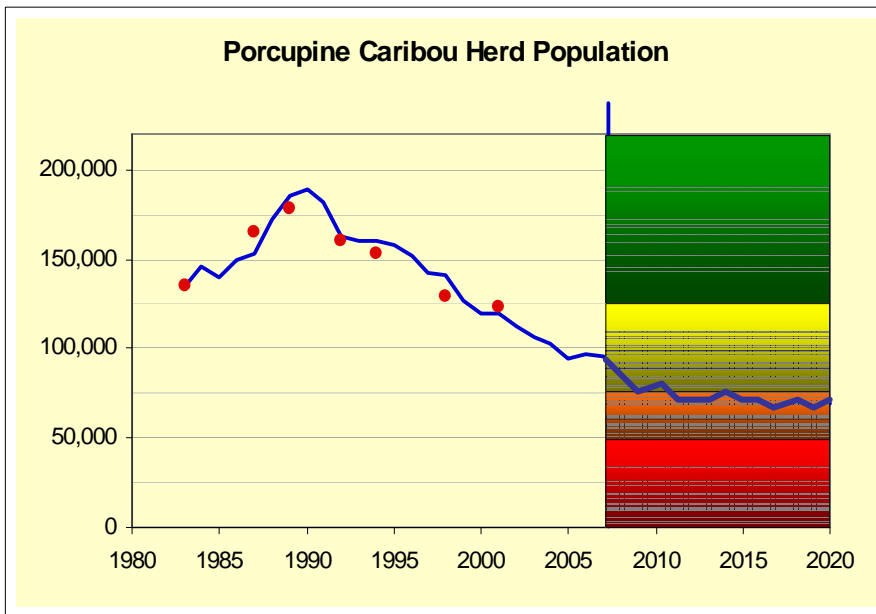
Chart 2: Harvest Reduced from 4,000 to 2,000



If we reduce the harvest to 2,000 caribou as of today, the herd will still decline and be in the orange colour by 2010.

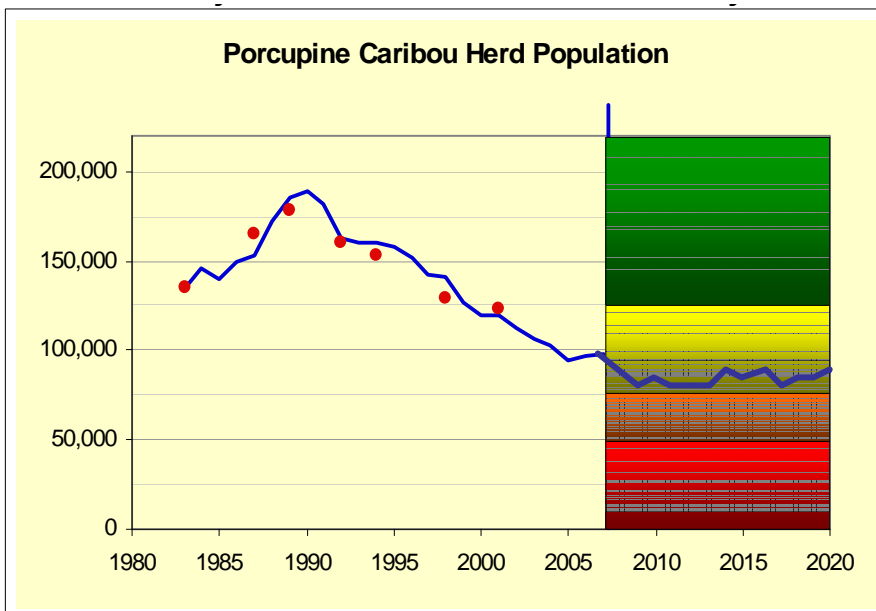
*The blue line is the Caribou Calculator, and the red dots are actual herd counts

Chart 3: Harvest Bulls Only (Average annual harvest 4,000)



If we started a bulls-only harvest today, the herd is predicted to continue declining and enter the orange colour by 2010.

Chart 4: Harvest 2,000 Bulls Only



If we could start a harvest of only 2,000 bulls per year right now, the herd is predicted to stabilize and stay in the yellow colour.

*The blue line is the Caribou Calculator, and the red dots are actual herd counts.

COLOUR CHART QUESTION

After many hours of discussion, the Working Group agreed to set the boundaries as you see in the charts and bring these suggestions to the users for consideration in the DRAFT Plan. One of the things considered, when deciding the zone boundaries, was that Settlement Agreements only allow for mandatory restriction of aboriginal harvesting rights when there is a conservation or public safety reason. The Working Group also considered the Precautionary Principle which is: in the absence of complete information, where there are threats of serious or irreparable damage, the lack of complete certainty shall not be a reason for postponing reasonable conservation measures.

This is to be a plan for all times but it is difficult to agree on a plan without considering what it would mean for the herd and users of the herd now. Using the population estimates suggested by the Working Group the herd is currently in the yellow zone. The plan calls for a voluntary bulls only harvest. Harvesting is one of the only factors we can change to slow the decline and to try to help the herd recover.

WHAT MANAGEMENT ACTIONS DO YOU THINK SHOULD BE APPLIED TO HARVEST NOW AND IN THE NEAR FUTURE?

Management using the Colour Chart

Each year, the Porcupine Caribou Technical Committee will summarize the available information related to the herd and provide the summary to the PCMB and user groups.

The number of caribou (by photocensus or computer model) will provide an idea of which colour zone we might be in. Other indicators are then used to determine how conservative management actions should be. For example, say the herd size has been estimated at 76,000 animals. The initial indication might show we are in the yellow zone; however, if other indicators show that the herd is still considered to be declining, and there is a very low birth rate and low calf survival rate, it might warrant a decision to use orange management actions instead of yellow.

This list of indicators is not a recipe book but the indicators need to be taken into consideration when making decisions about how vulnerable the herd is and which management actions are appropriate. Both traditional and scientific information will be considered.

Indicators for Harvest Management Assessment	
<p>Population size and trend</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population size • Estimated population • Population trend 	<p>Population dynamics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult cow survival • Calf birth rate • Calf survival to nine months • Peak of calving
<p>Harvest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total harvest • Percentage of females in harvest • Hunters' needs met? 	<p>Body condition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average backfat • Hunter assessment • Health
<p>Habitat and other considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snow conditions (Dempster) • Major fires • Weather events 	

Indicators for Harvest Management Assessment

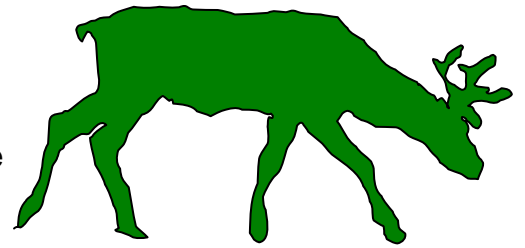
The table above outlines the type of information used to decide which colour zone the herd is in and then if necessary the Total Allowable Harvest (TAH). Both Traditional knowledge and scientific information will be considered together during the Annual Harvest Meeting to make these difficult decisions.

Can you think of other things that should be included when deciding the zone the herd is in and the TAH?

GREEN The estimated herd size is above 125,000

Harvest

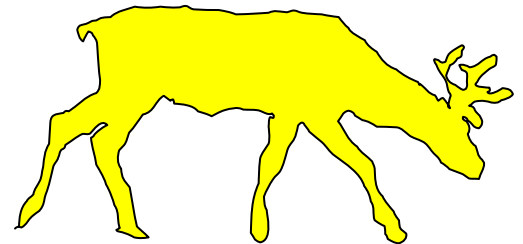
- Hunters can shoot cows and bulls
- Families can get what they need
- Hunting will be accurate and wounded animals will be retrieved
- Harvests will be reported to the appropriate parties



YELLOW The estimated herd size is between 125,000 and 75,000

Harvest

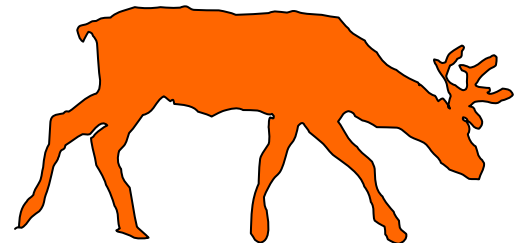
- Hunters are encouraged to take a bit less
- Hunters are strongly encouraged to take bulls only
- Hunting will be accurate
- Wounded animals will be retrieved
- Harvests will be reported to the appropriate parties



ORANGE Estimated herd size is between 75,000 and 50,000

Harvest

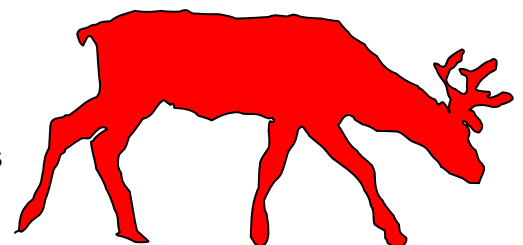
- Hunting will be accurate and wounded animals will be retrieved
- Harvests will be reported to the proper party
- Hunters **MUST** only shoot bulls. If they shoot a cow, their party will take appropriate action. Depending on the party, the hunter could be charged and fined or, they may be subject to traditional justice
- A total allowable harvest will be recommended by the PCMB to the eight parties.



RED Estimated herd size below 50,000

Harvest

- All hunting by individuals stops
- Only a limited number caribou are taken under direction of the appropriate party for special purposes only
- People would be focusing more on hunting other animals like moose



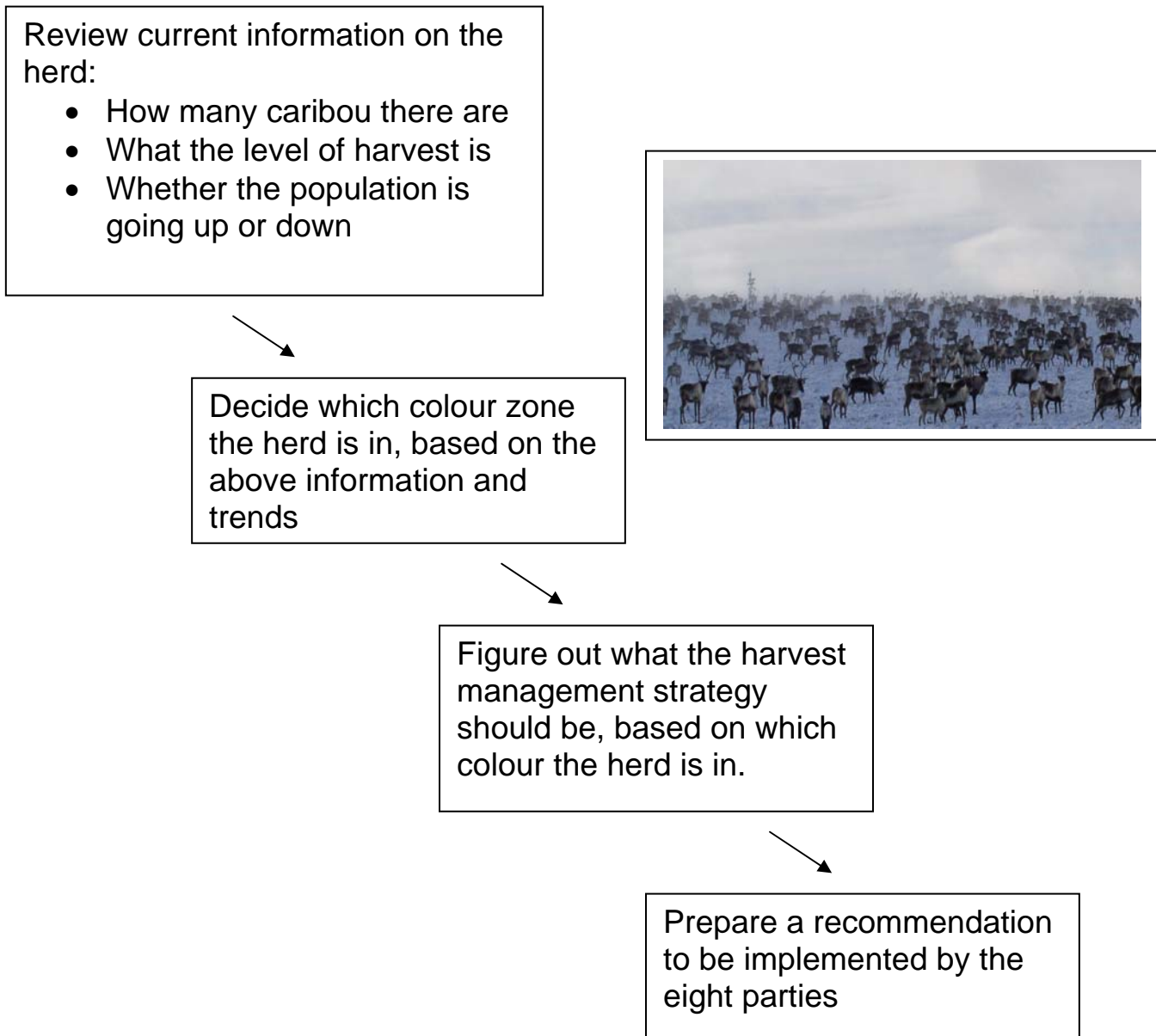
C. Annual Harvest Meeting

The Harvest Management Plan uses a hands-on approach through the Harvest Management meeting every year, which will involve the following:

1. The Porcupine Caribou Technical Committee will prepare an annual summary report by November 15 with the most current information about the herd.
2. This report will be sent by the PCMB to all eight parties with a request to provide additional information to the Annual Harvest Meeting held by the PCMB.
3. At the meeting, the PCMB will work through the steps in the flowchart on the following page:



Annual Harvest Meeting Review by PCMB



When all parties get the recommendation, they will review it and decide how best to make the management commitments work with their hunters.

Each party will also keep track of how well their actions are working and will report this to the PCMB. The PCMB will make sure this information goes into the next status report and is available to all parties prior to the next annual meeting.

Precautionary Principle

The plan support the use of the Precautionary Principle which is; in the absence of complete information, where there are threats of serious or irreparable damage, the lack of complete certainty shall not be a reason for postponing reasonable conservation measures.

The decision of which colour zone the herd is in will be made very carefully. The parties will err on the side of caution. When making the decision to change the zone the herd is in, reports from people on the land will be very important. Imagine if the population estimate is 76,000 and the herd appears to be rapidly declining. In a case like that, if observations on the land confirm the decline, the Plan might allow for transition into the Orange zone right away. By us acting quickly, the herd will get the best chance at recovery. In another example, if the herd had been at 70,000 and had recovered to 77,000, descriptions on the land can help determine whether the herd still needs a little more protection in the Orange area or whether it can be safely moved to Yellow.

Essential Requirements for the Plan

Up-to-date “indicator” information is essential, and without such information the plan cannot function. Therefore, by adopting this plan, it is agreed that the parties are committed to the following:

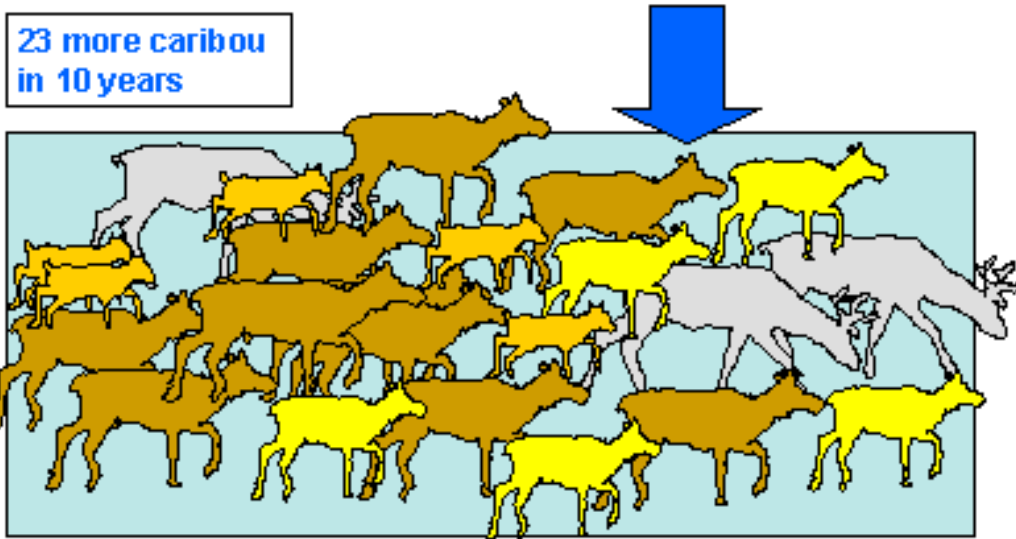
1. **Census** Participation by Yukon and NWT government staff in planning the annual caribou census conducted by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Once a successful census has been completed, another census will be attempted in two to three years.
2. **Indicators** The parties will continue to cooperate in the collection of all relevant indicator information including adult cow survival, calf birth rate, calf survival to nine months and body condition. Further, the parties will provide local observations to the annual PCMB harvest meeting.
3. **Harvest Information** The Yukon and NWT governments work with the other parties to undertake a cooperative five-year study of the Canadian Porcupine Caribou harvest and that this study begin no later than 2009. This is essential because accurate harvest information is needed to ensure the harvest is sustainable.

Key concepts of the plan

If you shoot 1 bull instead of 1 cow it will mean...



23 more caribou in 10 years



Bulls Only

Harvesting bulls only is the best thing we can do for the herd and still give hunters maximum opportunities to get meat. For each young cow that is killed, this amounts to about 23 **less caribou** being available in the population over 10 years, based on her offspring, and their offspring, and so on. Normally, the harvest is over 50% cows. If this could be switched to mostly bulls instead, we might be able help the herd's recovery.

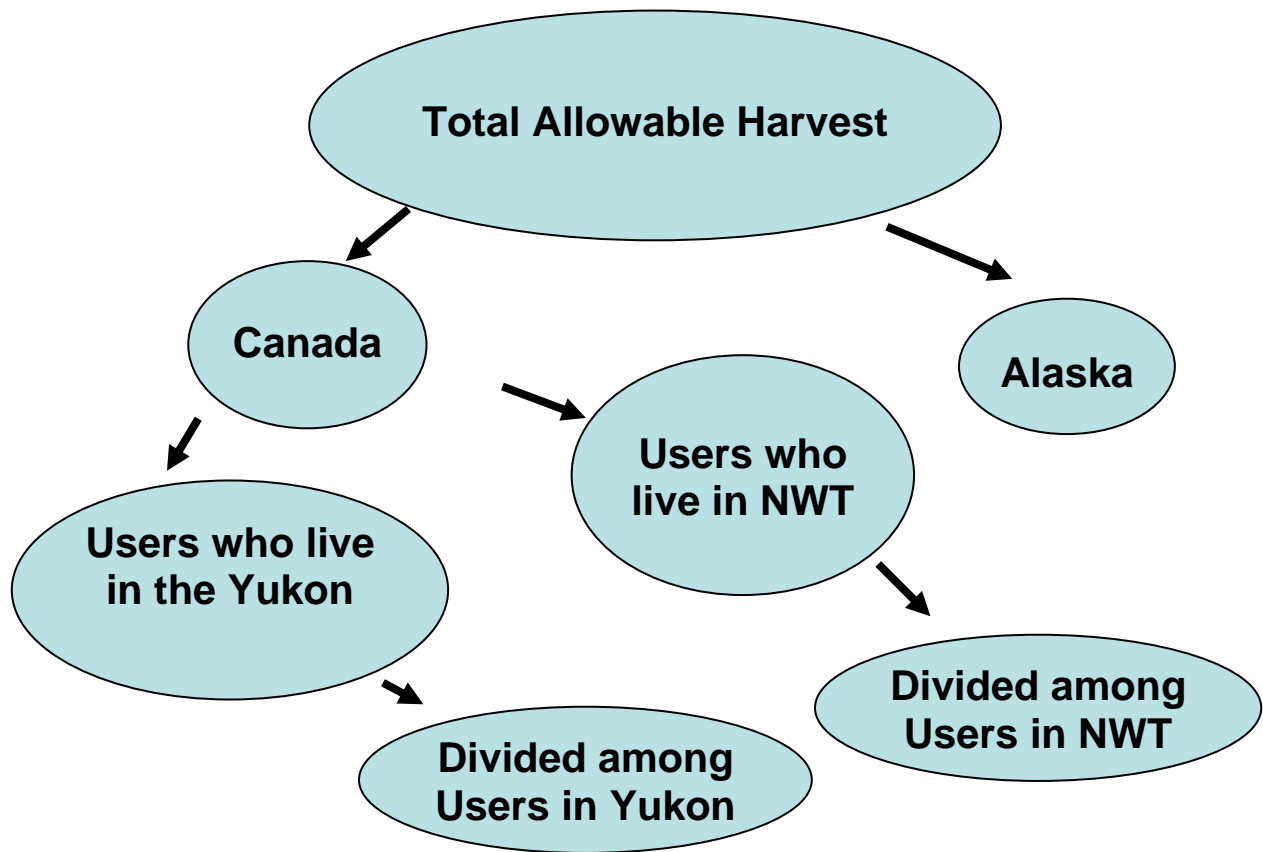
Total Allowable Harvest

There has never been a total allowable harvest required for the Porcupine Caribou herd, and it would be a very big thing to put into action.

If we enter the orange zone, this plan calls for a male only total allowable harvest (TAH). The plan assumes the PCMB, at the Annual Harvest Meeting, would determine a harvest rate based on the reports from the parties and the Porcupine Caribou Technical Committee and recommend a TAH. Again, that decision would require looking at the most current

information about the herd and how it is doing. However, a harvest limitation will have a real impact on the communities and that a fair way of distributing that allowable total is extremely important.

Example of Harvest Allocation:



The flowchart above describes an EXAMPLE framework for dividing a total allowable harvest between user groups. Again, the decision on what the actual total allowable harvest would be is determined according to the Plan at that time based on the most current information. A process (such as a recommended percentage) for the allocation of the TAH to the different users should be part of the final plan or part of the Native User Agreement depending on the comments and how we decide to divide a TAH. NOTE: the final plan will have a process in it. The WG is looking for advice on this aspect.

TOTAL ALLOWABLE HARVEST QUESTION

If the herd is in the orange zone, this plan calls for the establishment of a total allowable harvest. There needs to be a process decided ahead of time on how we would share a total allowable harvest among users. The distribution needs to respect all settlement agreements and the *Porcupine Caribou Management Agreement* for:

- Users who live in the NWT
- Users who live in Yukon
- Users who live in Alaska

Allocation in the NWT would be according to the *Inuvialuit Final Agreement*, the *Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement* and the *Porcupine Caribou Management Agreement*. Allocation in the Yukon would be according to the *Umbrella Final Agreement*, *Vuntut Gwitchin Final Agreement*, *Tr'ondek Hwech'in Final Agreement*, *NaCho Nyak Dun Final Agreement*, *Inuvialuit Final Agreement*, *Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement* and the *Porcupine Caribou Management Agreement*.

Do you think the allocation should be divided based on the historical harvest levels or based on some other criteria?

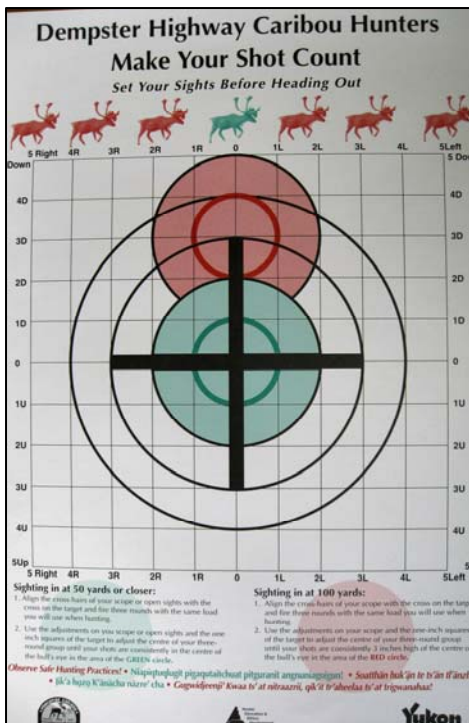
Education and Communication

These can be pretty empty words in a plan unless there is some way to put teeth into them. It is vitally important that such efforts are given top priority if this plan is going to succeed. So much depends on the cooperation and understanding of the hunters and their families. Fortunately, the Porcupine Caribou Management Board has a lot of experience in both education and communication and can be a sustaining and coordinating force for all such work.

Essential Requirements for the Plan

By adopting this plan it is understood that the parties will support the Porcupine Caribou Management Board in devoting a large portion of its time and resources toward working closely with the communities on education and communication that:

- Improves marksmanship and use of accurate, flat-shooting rifles (reduces the use of underpowered rifles) so that fewer caribou are wounded and die without being found.
- Makes all hunters try their hardest to go after a wounded animal rather than letting it run off.
- Helps hunters identify bulls from cows.
- Makes people aware of the extreme need to report their harvest.
- Encourages hunters to participate in projects that keep track of the health of the herd.



Dempster Highway

The Dempster Highway is very important because it is the only road that cuts through the range and makes it easy for hunters to get to the caribou. Over half of the entire caribou harvest comes from the Dempster and concentrated hunting can increase the potential for a conservation or safety issue. Management of the harvest near the highway involves both laws and hunter awareness. Law-based solutions are extremely complex because they involve hunters from claimant groups on both sides of the Yukon/NWT border.

The other side of management is not law-based but awareness-based. This involves making hunters *aware* of the best conduct for the good of the caribou and the safety of other hunters. The following sections deal with law-based solutions and awareness-based solutions.

Law-Based Solutions

There are several Law-based “solutions” currently in place and these “solutions” are not always the same across the range. There is not general consensus on the need and appropriateness of these. This section of the plan cannot be completed without further input from the communities.

Let the leaders pass

For some time now, when the caribou first reach the highway in the fall, hunting has been closed for a week, sometimes just on the north end but also, sometimes, on the south end as well. This was to let the caribou reach their winter ranges east of the highway. In the fall of 2007, the closures were not enforced. In the NWT the legislation continues to be enforced but there was no closure in 2007 due to lack of caribou on the highway.

Do you think hunting from the Dempster Highway has any impact on caribou movements? If yes, what are they? And how would you take steps to make sure caribou are not bothered by the highway?

Motor vehicles and habitat damage

Currently the governments of Yukon and Northwest Territories have laws prohibiting the use of snowmobiles by hunters in an 8 km corridor until the snow is at least six inches deep. Snow depth is determined by measurements at six locations along the highway (NWT and Yukon).

Do you think that motor vehicles damage caribou habitat when there is not enough snow cover? If yes, how would you prevent this?



Essential Requirements for the Plan

The Dempster Highway cuts through the Yukon and NWT, and the laws for everybody change at the border. This adds to the confusion for hunters and frustrates good management. Both governments are aware of this problem but have not reached a solution yet.

In the interests of making laws about caribou hunting as straightforward as possible, it is essential that the NWT and Yukon laws match each other. By adopting this plan, those parties agree that they will take necessary steps to harmonize their laws regarding hunting on the highway.

Awareness-Based Solutions

Clearly, law based solutions are tricky. But a great deal can be accomplished through making hunters aware that harvesting caribou on the Dempster Highway is a big deal.

A person who is hunting must:

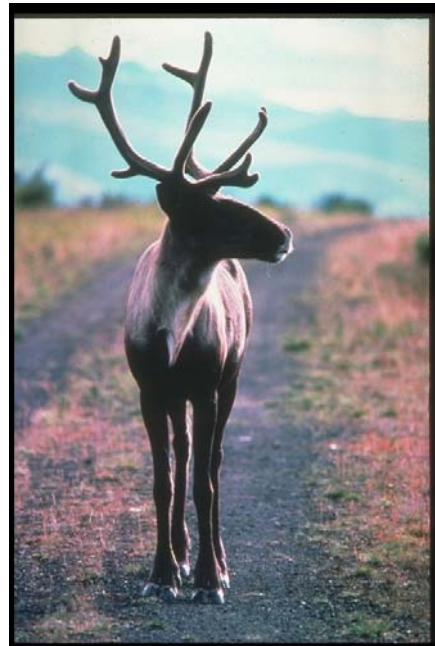
- Know how to tell a bull from a cow even after the bulls have shed their antlers
- Be a good shot and hunt with a flat-shooting rifle that is sighted in
- Realize that other people are out there and a stray shot is very dangerous
- Understand that leaving gut piles along the highway is disrespectful to the caribou and attracts predators
- Teach young people the right ways and be a good example
- Make sure to report their harvest



Essential Requirements for the Plan

Given the extreme necessity of making hunters — particularly those on the highway — as skilled and careful as possible, through adoption of this plan, the parties are committed to:

1. Increasing highway patrols during the hunting period by GY/GNWT officers in company with representatives from the other parties (Yukon First Nations/NWT Gwich'in/Inuvialuit)
2. Check stations at both the north and south end of the highway
3. Caribou signs advising hunters of the status of the herd and harvest requirements
4. Hunter Education Programs that, to the extent possible, deliver the same information across herd's range in both the NWT and Yukon communities



What about predator control?

Harvest Management does not involve predator control. Active predator control programs are no longer conducted by the Yukon or NWT governments. The Inuvialuit, NWT Gwich'in and Yukon First Nations may consider such programs, but predator control is not called for in this plan.

What about the sale of caribou?

The *Porcupine Caribou Management Agreement* provides for the trade and barter of caribou meat among users. It also provides for the sale of meat to disadvantaged users, but the cost is **only** to cover expenses **and not for profit**. According to Section L of the PCMA, commercial sale of meat is not permitted but there are reports of this happening. At this time, we are not sure if or how much commercial sale of meat is going on. This issue will be dealt with in the Native User Agreement.

What about Alaska?

Alaskans harvest about 15% of the caribou. Ideally, the Alaskan caribou communities would have been part of this plan from the beginning. However, we felt that it would be a big enough challenge just to get all the Canadian parties coordinated, so we took this as a first step. Meanwhile, we are in touch with the Alaskan communities, and we will be encouraging them to participate as soon as practical.

Porcupine Caribou Management Agreement

Up to the 1950s, the Porcupine Caribou herd was just another caribou herd being harvested by a whole bunch of communities in Canada and Alaska. However, when oil exploration began in Alaska it appeared that development could have a big impact on these caribou. So, on the Canadian side, everybody decided to form a management board to deal with all issues affecting the herd, like oil development and hunting. The *Porcupine Caribou Management Agreement* (PCMA) was signed in 1985. It has been a huge benefit to the herd and the people who depend on it. But that was 23 years ago, and a lot has happened since then, mostly with respect to land claim settlements. The *Porcupine Caribou Management Agreement* is now out of date and needs to catch up with the times.

Recommendation regarding the PCMA

Recognizing that the PCMA has done much in the past to benefit the caribou and the people who rely on them, and that this agreement needs to be amended in order to continue to serve everyone's best interests, the Harvest Management Plan recommends that all parties agree to initiate a process in 2009 to amend the *Porcupine Caribou Management Agreement*.

Implementation and Review

Through the Annual Harvest Meeting, this plan is guaranteed to be used every year. So, there is no way it is going to gather dust on some shelf. After five years, there will be a review of how the plan is working and an opportunity provided to make revisions where necessary. The success of this plan requires the respective parties to implement it through a cooperative management process. From time to time this may require that they enter into separate arrangements for the effective adherence to the plan. We need to ensure all parties are kept informed about issues that are important to the continued longevity of the Porcupine Caribou herd so as to ensure the ability of the herd to provide for the people in the future.

