

Barren-ground Caribou Survey Results Released

Yellowknife (September 12, 2005) - Results from a July 2005 survey show a decline in populations of the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose West and Bluenose East caribou herds. The results were presented to the Wildlife Management Advisory Council (Northwest Territories) at meetings in Whitehorse on September 10th and 11th.

The photocensus survey, completed in July, 2005 shows that the three barren-ground caribou herds, harvested mainly by hunters in the Inuvik and Sahtu regions of the Northwest Territories, have declined from peak numbers observed last decade.

- The Cape Bathurst Herd has declined from an estimate of 17,500 in 1992 to an estimated 2,400 in 2005.
- The Bluenose West Herd has declined from an estimate of 98,900 in 1987 to an estimated 20,800 in 2005.
- The Bluenose East Herd has declined from an estimate of 104,000 in 2000 to an estimated 66,600 in 2005.

Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) Minister Michael Miltenberger stated, "The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) is working closely with co-management boards to develop and implement management and action plans."

Presentations to co-management boards and affected communities will occur throughout September and will also include the Sahtu and Gwich'in Renewable Resources Boards.

ENR Technical Support Manager Dr. Ray Case says, "The observed declines were not unexpected as declines have also been observed in the neighbouring Porcupine and Bathurst caribou herds and the caribou herds tend to increase and decrease in size together. Working with the co-management boards to identify and implement management options is the first step towards ensuring sustainability of the herds."

Minister Miltenberger added, "The GNWT will continue to work with all our partners to ensure the herds stay healthy, viable and able to meet the needs of harvesters today and in the future."

For more information please contact:

Ray Case – ENR
Manager, Technical Support
(867) 920-8067

Ron Morrison – ENR
Superintendent, Inuvik Region
(867) 777-7295

