



UPCART Press Release

Historic Agreement Reached Among 7 Indigenous Nations on Preservation and Management of Ungava Peninsula Caribou

Montreal, QC – Tuesday October 17, 2017 – The Ungava Peninsula Caribou Aboriginal Round Table (UPCART) is pleased to sign today an historic agreement to preserve and manage caribou in the Ungava Peninsula. The Agreement is between the seven Indigenous peoples who traditionally share this important food and cultural resource.

The management strategy is a unique collaboration in response to the critical population declines in both the George River and Leaf River caribou herds. The George River Herd peaked in the early 1990s and has been in steep decline since then. The caribou population fell from an estimated 770,000 in 1993, to 385,000 in 2001, to 74,000 in 2010, to 22,000 in 2012, to 14,000 in 2014, to 9,000 at present. The Leaf River Herd peaked at 628,000 in 2001, and has declined to 430,000 in 2011, 332,000 in 2015, and 199,000 in 2016.

“This is unprecedented,” said UPCART Co-Chair Adamie Delisle Alaku, and Executive Vice-President of Makivik Corporation, Resource Development. “We believe there is no other agreement of this kind in Canada between Indigenous peoples for cooperative wildlife management. Caribou has always been a vital part of our Indigenous culture – spiritually, culturally, as well as providing food, shelter, and clothing.”

The seven groups that make up UPCART are signing an agreement to implement a long-term caribou management strategy - the result of four years of meetings held in northern locations stretching across the 1.5-million square kilometer Ungava peninsula. The management strategy is called “*A Long Time Ago in the Future: Caribou and the People of Ungava*”.

The 55-page strategy has the following stated goal: “To adapt to population highs and lows to the extent possible, while accepting natural variability and working within its confines, and making the right decisions at the right times to optimize social, spiritual, economic and cultural benefits for all Peoples, while respecting priority of access for Indigenous Peoples.”

It chronicles the history of caribou in the Ungava peninsula from 8000 B.C.E. to 2015 in three time periods. The strategy is grounded in Indigenous Science and Knowledge, defined in the plan as “moral, relative to long time scales, holistic, inclusive, qualitative, relative, and inductive.” The strategy contains member statements from the seven Indigenous Peoples who make up UPCART.

“This strategy is vital for our peoples,” said Innu Nation Representative Mark Nui, UPCART Co-Chair, and IBA Negotiator. “It is intended to provide high level strategic direction for caribou management across the Ungava Peninsula. Collectively we have identified five Action Plans, contained in the strategy, to accomplish our ultimate goal of proper management of this resource for generations to come.”

The five Action Plans, in priority order are: 1) Indigenous Sharing Agreement, 2) Research and Monitoring Plan, 3) Habitat Management and Environmental Impact Plan, 4) Stewardship, Education, and Communication Plan, and 5) Social and Economic Plan.

The strategy is dedicated “to future generations of Indigenous Peoples living in Ungava, in honour of our ancestors. Indigenous Peoples from across Ungava have come together to draw on our shared values and experience, to celebrate our relationship with each other, with our ancestors, with our children, and with caribou.”

About the Ungava Peninsula Caribou Aboriginal Round Table (UPCART)

The Ungava Peninsula Caribou Aboriginal Round Table membership is composed of: the Inuit of Nunavik (represented by Makivik Corporation), the Inuit of Nunatsiavut (represented by the Nunatsiavut Government), the NunatuKavut Community Council, the Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach, the Grand Council of the Crees of Eeyou Istchee/Cree Nation Government (GCCEI/CNG) represent the Cree Nation Government, the Innu Nation of Labrador, and the Innu communities of Québec are represented by the “Nation Innue”.

Media Contacts:

Makivik Corporation

William Tagoona, Communications Coordinator and Media Relations

Tel. 819-964-2925

wtagoona@makivik.org

www.makivik.org

Innu Nation

Donna Paddon, Innu Nation Media Advisor

Tel. 709-899-5799

Email: donna.paddon@kashkuan.ca