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Council of Canadians – NWT Chapter
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Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society – NWT Chapter
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November 5, 2019

Honourable Shane Thompson
Minister of Environment and Natural Resources
Government of the NWT

by e-mail: Shane_Thompson@gov.nt.ca

Minister Thompson:

Congratulations on your appointment as Minister of Environment and Natural Resources. We are writing to ask that you consider these four items in your new role:

1. NWT-SAR Recovery Strategy for Barren-Ground Caribou

The recovery strategy for barren-ground caribou has been completed by the conference of management authorities and is open for public review until November 1. Then the strategy can be finalized through a consensus agreement that requires support from the GNWT. It is

imperative that implementation of recovery actions is expedited to address severe population declines.

We ask that the GNWT be prepared to pursue the consensus agreement with partners at the earliest opportunity. The urgency can't be overstated, so it is preferred that the agreement be tabled during the first winter session of the 19th Assembly.

2. New Legislation

Start right away with revising the Forest Act in a collaborative manner, using comments heard by the Standing Committee on Economic Development and the Environment (SCEDE) when this was introduced as Bill 44. The Forest Act is extremely important legislation, changing ENRs focus on forest as solely timber industry focus to the recognition of forest ecosystems, with principles of sustainable forest management and use. Re-introducing an improved act early in the Assembly's mandate should be a goal.

Continue to develop the Waters Act and Environmental Protection Act in a collaborative manner.

Some stakeholder funding was provided in the previous assembly in the development of ENR legislation in a workshop fashion. We hope you can continue, and increase, this funding.

3. Developing Regulations

Several acts were passed at the very end of the 18th Assembly, including the *Environmental Rights Act* and *Protected Areas Act*.

Practice within the GNWT regarding stakeholder involvement in the development of Regulations is not as defined as it is in the development of legislation. We ask that you ensure the involvement of stakeholders in developing Regulations for the *Environmental Rights Act* and the *Protected Areas Act*.

We suggest that the development process be workshopped with broad stakeholder involvement. Funding for stakeholder groups such as ourselves is needed since volunteers and unfunded projects cannot be relied on for this type of work.

4. Environmental Profit and Loss Statements

The legislation and regulations are immediate priorities. As a longer term priority, we suggest setting up a system requiring companies to do environmental profit and loss statements. These would ensure companies internalize items, such as air, water, culture, that are now treated as externalities, thereby monetizing more fully the full cost of the business. This will allow northerners to see the magnitude of the impacts of the business beyond money, and where those impacts primarily occur. The GNWT could also do this internally, with the leadership of your department.

Attached is information about our organizations for your background information.

We look forward to working with you and your colleagues on these important matters.

Yours sincerely,

Craig Scott



Executive Director
Ecology North

Lois Little



Co-Chair
Council of Canadians – NWT Chapter

Karen Hamre



Member
Alternatives North

Kris Brekke



Executive Director
Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society - NWT

Ryan Danby

Chair
Canadian Arctic Resources Committee

cc. The Honourable Caroline Cochrane, Premier

Attachment:

Alternatives North (www.alternativesnorth.ca)

Alternatives North is a social justice coalition operating in the Northwest Territories. Alternatives North takes the grassroots approach to democratic change. Our alliance of interests provides a forum and a voice for issues analysis, popular action and social change. Within our ranks are representatives of churches, labour unions, environmental

organizations, women and family advocates and anti-poverty groups. Individual citizens are important participants in our work.

Alternatives North is a volunteer organization, registered under and in good standing with the NWT Societies Act.

Ecology North (www.ecologynorth.ca)

Ecology North was founded in Yellowknife in 1971 (one of the founders was Bob Bromley, former MLA)

Mandate - Healthy Northern Environment Forever

Status - Charitable organization in good standing with NWT Societies

Board - 10 board members - all from NWT

Funding - Over 99% from Canadian (mostly northern) governments, foundations and organizations.

Canadian Arctic Resources Committee (CARC) (www.carc.org)

The Canadian Arctic Resources Committee (CARC) was established in 1971 and is a national public interest, research and advocacy organization dedicated exclusively to northern issues. CARC is committed to ensuring environmentally-responsible northern development, support for the rights of Indigenous peoples, community well-being, and increased international co-operation in the circumpolar world. It has published more than 100 books and monographs, facilitated nationally significant conferences on the Arctic, and has been an instigator of positive change and truly sustainable development in the North.

CARC is currently headed by a seven-member board of directors and employs a part-time program director. Four of the directors are full time residents of either the NWT or Nunavut and have been for the majority of their lives. The three directors from southern Canada have well over 50 years of shared experience working with individuals, governments, and First Nations in each of Canada's territories.

CARC is a charitable organization incorporated under the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act.

Council of Canadians – NWT Chapter (<https://cocnwt.wordpress.com>)

The Council of Canadians (CoC) is a non-profit society that was founded in 1985.

Headquartered in Ottawa, CoC is Canada's largest citizens' organization, with 150,000 supporters and 45 local/regional chapters throughout the country. Chapters like the NWT Chapter function as ad hoc committees of CoC.

CoC works to protect Canadian independence by promoting progressive policies on fair trade, clean water, energy security, public health care, and other issues of social and economic concern to Canadians. Nationally and locally we organize speaking tours, days of action, conferences and demonstrations. We also produce research reports and create popular education materials to ensure that governments know the kind of Canada we want.

CoC does not accept money from corporations or governments, and is sustained entirely by the volunteer energy and financial assistance of its supporters.

The NWT Chapter was established in 2013 as a forum for active and democratic citizen engagement in social and environmental issues of concern and interest to people in Treaty 8 and 11 Territories. We also provide a conduit to regional and national CoC offices so that we can collaborate on issues of shared concern.

All volunteers with the NWT Chapter live in the NWT.

Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society – NWT Chapter (www.cpawsnwt.org)

Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society-NWT chapter (CPAWS-NWT) was established by NWT residents in 1996, and since 1999 it has been supported by a local volunteer Board of Directors, and staff who work with public and Indigenous governments and organizations, communities, other non-government organizations and individuals to achieve collective conservation goals.

CPAWS-NWT is incorporated under the NWT Societies Act and is a chapter of the CPAWS charitable organization which is incorporated under the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act.