

**KEVIN O'REILLY—MLA FRAME LAKE**

**Barren Ground Caribou**

**Committee of the Whole—2016-2017 Operating Budget Review**

**Dept. of Environment and Natural Resources —June 9, 2016**

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I've noticed that, on this page, the Caribou Strategy work, there was \$627,000 expended back in 2014-15 but nothing last year and nothing in the budget for this year. So is there some other place in the budget where work related to caribou is found? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. Campbell.

**MR. CAMPBELL:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. In 2014-15, the \$627,000 was for grants and contributions for the Barren-ground Caribou Strategy. That strategy sunsetted, and we no longer have that funding. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Campbell. Any further questions, Mr. O'Reilly?

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. So surely, though, we must be spending some money on caribou by ENR. I know they are developing a Bathurst Caribou Herd Range Plan. They have some aerial surveys that they work with the Government of Nunavut on the calving grounds, so is the money for that work found somewhere else in here? Or am I just not seeing it somewhere? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. Campbell.

**MR. CAMPBELL:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, the money is found elsewhere in the department to carry out some of the work the Member identified. So we know that around every three years the large surveys are undertaken, so we then look at other programs in the department to undertake those surveys. And then, on the off years, we go back and the money for the other programs is used for processes such as surveys, monitoring, et cetera, for other species. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Campbell. Any further questions, Mr. O'Reilly?

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. So just wanting to go back to the Minister's introductory remarks for the department, and there was a line in here that ENR "will continue to collaborate with Aboriginal governments, co-management boards and neighbouring jurisdictions to protect and conserve our barren-ground and boreal caribou populations and their habitat, as well as other wildlife species." So there has been some public concern expressed about resource development in calving grounds for barren ground caribou herds, and those calving grounds are found in Nunavut. What is the position of the GNWT with regard to resource development in the calving grounds of barren ground caribou? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. Campbell.

**MR. CAMPBELL:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The position of the GNWT over the last number of years regarding calving grounds for barren ground caribou is that we are not supportive of developing calving grounds. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Campbell. Any further questions, Mr. O'Reilly?

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. So just to follow up on that, so when there is an environmental assessment of a project going on, or a wildlife management plan, or something that's being developed

on the Nunavut side of the boundary, does our Government actually express those views to co-management bodies or governments on the other side of the boundary on a regular basis? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. Campbell.

**MR. CAMPBELL:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The answer is yes. Through the environmental assessment processes, we do come forward with that message. Currently the Nunavut Land Use Planning Board is undertaking hearings as well and, again, our message through that process is consistent. And as well as through other hearings; there are hearings coming up next week with the Nunavut Land Use Planning Board -- Wildlife Management Board, sorry -- and, again, our position remains consistent there as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Campbell. Any further questions, Mr. O'Reilly?

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. No. I do want to commend the Department for bringing forward that position. I think it's really important for residents here that continue to rely on caribou that we have a very strong, consistent position on that. So I really encourage the department to continue to bring that forward, and thank them for their work to date. Thanks very much, Mr. Chair.