

ORAL QUESTION—KEVIN O'REILLY, MLA FRAME LAKE

**QUESTION 614-18(2): IMPACT OF SLAVE GEOLOGICAL PROVINCE ACCESS
CORRIDOR IMPACT ON CARIBOU POPULATIONS**

February 20, 2017

MR. O'REILLY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I have some questions for the Minister of Transportation on his statement that he gave earlier today. I was really pleased to see that caribou got an honourable mention in his statement on the Slave Geological Province access corridor. That wasn't there last time. In his statement, he says that the corridor has been identified: "It will provide greatest economic benefit to the region in the Northwest Territories." Can the Minister tell me whether this corridor will benefit caribou, specifically the Bathurst caribou herd? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Transportation.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is kind of a unique question. We have committed to working with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to get all the information so we can make a fair decision moving forward on this corridor for the residents of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: I'm glad to hear that. Is the Minister aware whether this corridor, that has already been planned by his department, actually goes through any critical habitat for the Bathurst caribou herd?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I believe that is already habitat of the Bathurst caribou range and probably other ranges of caribou from the Arctic coast.

MR. O'REILLY: I am glad that the Minister recognizes that this corridor will go through the range, the habitat of the Bathurst caribou, but he didn't actually answer my question about critical habitat, like water crossings, calving grounds, and so on, so maybe I will try a different angle here. The Grays Bay Road and Port Project, that the Minister mentioned in his statement here, would link up with our road, and it is all part of one big project now apparently. Is the Minister aware of whether the Grays Bay Road and Port Project would actually go through any critical habitat for the Bathurst caribou herd?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: That is a Nunavut project. I am not the Minister of Transportation for Nunavut. I would have to check with the colleagues in Nunavut. As far as I am concerned, that is a Nunavut project, and I don't have any of that information.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I will help the Minister out here a little bit. How I can help him is that there is a map of the Grays Bay project and the road corridor on our side in my latest constituency newsletter. The Grays Bay Port and Road Project would actually go through the Bathurst caribou calving grounds, what is left of them. Our government has had this position where we have traditionally opposed any development in calving grounds, so is it a position of our government now that we would

oppose this corridor that goes through the calving grounds of the Bathurst caribou herd?
Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I have said, that is a Nunavut process. That is their decision to make. We are worried about our territory. I am worried about the Slave Geological Province and how we move it forward. We will continue to work with Environment and Natural Resources to get all the critical information for how we can propose this corridor to move forward.