



Northwest Territories Environment and Natural Resources

MAR 06 2008

MR. TIM MERCER
CLERK, LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Petition 1-16(2) - The Buffalo Problem in Fort Liard

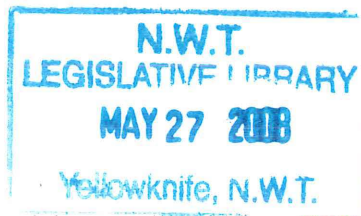
Attached is the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' response to the petition tabled by Mr. Kevin Menicoche on February 7, 2008.

J. Michael Miltenberger

c. Ms. Heather Riviere
Legislative Officer

① Noted March 25/08 ✓

② for tasting in May/June.



Petition tabled by Mr. Kevin Menicoche on February 7, 2008

Response by the Honourable J. Michael Miltenberger
Minister of Environment and Natural Resources

The Buffalo Problem in Fort Liard

This petition calls upon the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) to act immediately to deal with the potentially dangerous bison problem in Fort Liard.

Actions taken to date to control the presence and movement of bison within Fort Liard have included public education, daily patrols, and herding the bison out of town. Hazing operations by ENR involve the re-location of bison by the use of sounds, physical force, and herding by vehicle. Care is taken not to create a more dangerous situation by causing the bison to stampede.

Recognizing the unique and potentially dangerous situation in the community of Fort Liard, ENR is taking the following actions aimed at alleviating the situation:

- Under a Wildlife Research Permit, ENR will harvest up to 10 animals in the Liard region for disease testing prior to March 31, 2008. Local people will be hired to assist. Meat from the harvest will be distributed primarily in Fort Liard and other Deh Cho communities if quantities allow.
- ENR will erect a specialized electric fence system (braided rope) to control bison movements on a test basis in the community in the spring of 2008.
- A legislative proposal to increase the annual hunting quota from one male to six males has been forwarded by ENR to the community (Acho Dene Koe Band, Metis Local 67, the Hamlet of Fort Liard, and the Nahanni Butte Dene Band) for consultation and input.
- ENR will work with Deh Cho communities to develop a draft management plan specific to the Nahanni bison herd that will incorporate the communities' goals with respect to bison management.

- Over the next year, the Department will also develop a long term Northwest Territories-wide strategy for the management of bison. A draft of this strategy is expected prior to April 2009.
- ENR will continue to monitor the presence of bison in the community and take daily action as required.
- Community meetings will be held to inform the public about the status of the bison and actions taken by ENR.