



September 9, 2019

Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society –NWT Chapter

NWT Territorial Election All Candidates Questionnaire

Sent Via E-mail: All Candidates

CC: Phil Mercredi - Communications Coordinator CPAWS-NWT

Dear Candidate,

Please consider answering the following questions provided by the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society – NWT Chapter (CPAWS-NWT). Our organization is interested in knowing your viewpoint on three (3) questions which are focused on stewardship of our natural environment.

We will post all responses on our website, www.cpawsnwt.org with links through or social media and circulated to our NWT membership.

Who we are:

The Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society – NWT Chapter (CPAWS-NWT)'s mission is to promote the conservation of land, water, and wildlife in the NWT for current and future generations, by working with NWT residents, Indigenous and public governments, communities, and organizations. We are based in Yellowknife where our local staff, members and volunteers have participated in a variety of conservation and resource management initiatives since our establishment in 1996.

Please return your response to nwtadmin@cpaws.org by Monday September 16th, 2019

Thank-you for your time in responding and best of luck with your campaign!

Kris Brekke
Executive Director
CPAWS-NWT

Three (3) questions total -

1. Barren Ground Caribou:

A number of factors are contributing to the decline of barren ground caribou populations across the north. One recovery action that could be championed by the GNWT is to approve a policy that protects caribou calving habitat from the negative impacts of human land use activities.

It would be necessary that the scope of this policy would oppose development on caribou calving grounds in all political jurisdictions because most NWT caribou herds are shared with other jurisdictions including most calving habitat. Although the GNWT has no mandate beyond our borders, the government makes recommendations to other jurisdictions (such as Alaska and Nunavut) in cases where environmental reviews and land use planning processes involve calving habitat of NWT caribou herds.

Would you support a GNWT policy that directs the territorial government to oppose the construction of infrastructure corridors (including roads) or any other industrial developments on caribou calving grounds?

ANSWER: At this time I would not be in support of such a policy. Lets use the road into the slave geological province as an example. I think the road can be a great boost and long term stabilizer for the NWT economy but we need to do it in a way that will limit negative impacts on the herds, especially calving grounds. I think we can rely on working with Indigenous communitites and traditional knowledge as well as with renewable resource boards and our strong regulatory system to help us get it right!

2. Candidate Protected Areas:

Over the past two decades a number of NWT communities have identified lands and waters of significant cultural and ecological value for nomination as candidate protected areas. The GNWT now has a legislative tool to sponsor this work through the NWT Protected Areas Act which provides an opportunity for the GNWT to enter into innovative Nation to Nation partnerships for co-managing and governing protected areas. Two proposals - Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta (Ramparts) and Dinàgà Wek'èhodi (North Arm) could be ready for establishment early in the upcoming 19th Assembly, others could move forward within the term.

If elected will you support the establishment of the previously nominated candidate protected areas?

ANSWER: I enjoyed my position as Chair of the Standing Committee on Economic Development & Environment. Our committee did a lot of work on the Protected Areas Act over the last few months of the 18th Assembly and I was happy to see it pass into law in June of this year. I am a supporter of Thaidene Nene and remain a supporter of the Ramparts and North Arm. Ultimately, Indigenous Governments and organizations are the propoentents that have nominated these areas and in some cases they have been working with the Federal Government and the GNWT for years on getting them this far. Thaidene Nene was a 30 plus year enedvour. I can't say for sure that the NWT will have two new parks by the end of the 19th Assembly but I can say I support the process to get them there.

3. Planning Ahead - Investing in Local Environmental Stewardship Capacity:

There are a number of innovative and exciting land based programs evolving in regions of the NWT, for example “Guardians” which have objectives related to environmental stewardship and could include training for participation in the many facets of land, water and resource management.

Do you support that the GNWT should have a focus on collaborating, promoting and contributing to proposals that bring new investment into innovative programs that increase the local capacity of Indigenous Governments and regional land and resource management departments?

I fully support the efforts to settle land rights and self-government agreements. With self government comes considerable responsibility and most Indigenous governments want to take on the responsibility of managing land, water and resources. I have and will continue to be supportive of providing more cultural, economic and political autonomy to the Indigenous peoples of NWT.