

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?

The calving grounds for important herds like the Bathurst and Bluenose-east herds – herds that sustain the Tłı̄chǫ and Akaitcho – are in Nunavut. Nunavut has its own land use planning process and other legislative and environmental processes like the Nunavut Impact Review Board that must address the importance of these calving grounds and yes, it is crucial that the calving grounds are protected. The importance of these herds to the Tłı̄chǫ and Akaitcho ways of life cannot be understated. Obviously, the impact on the calving grounds cannot be overlooked. The levels of calving ground protection should correspond to the proposed activity. NWT should be in very close touch with Nunavut on these issues.

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?

The new Protected Areas Act has a process for establishing nominated protected areas. It is the NWT Cabinet that, by regulation, establishes protected areas in the NWT. I would commit to learning about the two nominated areas so that I can support the proposals. I already know that both proposals are important to the Indigenous peoples whose traditional territories extend into the areas and that will guide any considerations.

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?

Absolutely. this would be a good initiative for everyone.