



## News Release

### Community consultations get underway for new Wildlife Act

**IQALUIT, Nunavut (April 15, 2002)** – Sustainable Development Minister Olayuk Akesuk today announced that extensive community consultations on creating a new Nunavut Wildlife Act are about to begin.

“The Wildlife Act will affect every single person in Nunavut, and we want Nunavummiut in every community to have the opportunity to personally tell us their concerns and provide us with comments to help us draft the new Act. Our consultation panels will travel to 25 communities during April and May,” Minister Akesuk said.

The development of a made-in-Nunavut Wildlife Act is a priority of the Nunavut government. The current Wildlife Act was passed in 1978 by the Northwest Territories, and was adopted by Nunavut on April 1, 1999. It does not meet the needs of Nunavut.

The goal is to replace the current Wildlife Act with legislation that:

- Is modern and consistent with wildlife provisions of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA);
- Incorporates Inuit Quajimajatuqangit, and
- Is consistent with national and international agreements on the protection of biodiversity, species at risk, and habitat.

The government has adopted a partnership approach to develop the legislation. A working group consisting of representatives of the government, Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI) was formed to guide development of the Act.

Ben Kovic, Chairperson of the NWMB, praised the government for its collaborative approach in creating a new Act. “The NWMB welcomes the opportunity to participate in the development of a new Nunavut Wildlife Act. It is essential that the hunting rights and the management system set out in the NLCA be fully reflected in the Act,” he said.

Raymond Ningocheak, NTI’s Second Vice President, stated: “I am extremely pleased that public consultations are taking place and Inuit will have the opportunity to state what they would like to see in the Nunavut Wildlife Act. In the past we would just see the finished product. Today we have the opportunity to have our voice heard. This is an

exciting opportunity to incorporate Inuit Quajimajatuqangit and Traditional Knowledge as per Canada's obligation under the NLCA and the International Agreement – Convention on Biodiversity.”

The community meetings will be hosted by two travelling consultation panels made up of representatives from the three parties. In addition, a number of special facilitators have been brought in by the department to help ensure that meetings are effective in gathering public comments.

The panels will begin community consultations April 16 in the Baffin Region with the first meeting being held in Iqaluit. Meetings begin April 18 in the Kivalliq Region, and May 9 in the Kitikmeot Region. Since February, the department's Wildlife Officers, working with Hunters' and Trappers' Organizations, have been holding discussions in communities to prepare residents for the panel meetings.

In addition to the consultation meetings, a comprehensive discussion paper in Inuktitut, Inuinnaqtun, English and French will be circulated throughout Nunavut, and to interested parties across Canada. A toll free phone number, a web site, and an email address have been set up to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to comment. Newspaper ads and community radio programs will also be used to disseminate information throughout the territory.

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Additional information on the Wildlife Act consultations can be obtained by writing to: New Wildlife Act, Department of Sustainable Development, Government of Nunavut, Box 1000, Stn 1170, Iqaluit, NU, X0A 0H0, by emailing [wildlifeact@gov.nu.ca](mailto:wildlifeact@gov.nu.ca), or by calling 1-866-887-5927 (toll free.) Information is also available at [www.Nunavutwildlifeact.ca](http://www.Nunavutwildlifeact.ca)