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INVITED PANELISTS: Florence Catholique, Joe Tetlich, John Mameamskum, Roy Ashenfelter, Leonard Lampe, James L Davis, Caleb Pungowyi, Palmer Sagoonick, and Joseph Haluksit.

INTERNET REGISTRATION: Brian Lieb at Alaskamade.com.



## Preface

Approximately 180 people attended the 10<sup>th</sup> North American Caribou Workshop which was held immediately following the annual meeting of the Northwest Section of The Wildlife Society. Participants came from Canada, Greenland, Finland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and the United States (primarily Alaska). Over 80 papers and posters were presented and about 25% of those are published here in this special edition of *Rangifer*. Many of the papers, including the keynote address by Dr. Gunter Weller, concerned climate change and global warming. The large body of evidence on climate change and the strong link to increased CO<sub>2</sub> strongly suggests that caribou in most areas will be dealing with warmer temperatures and changed patterns of precipitation (with the possible exception of Northern Quebec and Labrador). How caribou will be affected is still largely unknown and the subject of a great deal of interesting speculation. There were many interesting formal and informal discussions on these subjects at the caribou workshop, and some of these will undoubtedly lead to some new ideas for future research.

In addition to the poster and oral papers, there were two panel discussions involving experienced hunters and field biologists from Alaska and northern Canada and these addressed the issues of "Coping with change: caribou management and indigenous peoples of North America" and "Effects of severe storms on caribou in North America." Caribou are still an important part of northern cultures and economies, despite an increasing reliance by northern people on government spending, the cash economy, and importation of nonlocal products. People are rightly concerned about how escalating global consumption of energy will affect life in the north. At this juncture, biologists have little information to contribute, but hopefully, research over the next decade or two will begin to shed some light on the positive and negative effects of climate change on caribou across the circumpolar north.

A primary function of workshops such as this is to provide a forum for discussion among biologists who usually have little contact with others because of geographic separation. Over the last 20 years an increasingly important function of the North American Caribou Workshop is to provide a forum for interaction between biologists and resource users who often have little contact because of both geographic and cultural separation. In both these regards the workshop appeared to be a great success.

*Patrick Valkenburg, Conference Chairman*