

Preface

The 13th International Arctic Ungulate Conference was held in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, Canada, from 22-26 August 2011. This biennial conference is the primary venue for meetings of the International Arctic Ungulate Society. Over 200 delegates attended the conference with representation from Canada, the United States, Norway, Sweden, Greenland, Finland, Russia, and Japan.

The theme of the conference was “Challenges of Managing Northern Ungulates”. The goal of the conference organizers was to address the difficulties of managing ungulate populations that are faced with the unpredictable effects of climate change and an ever-increasing human presence on the land. The conference also focussed on the challenges associated with developing recovery actions for declining caribou and reindeer populations that are an integral part of Aboriginal cultures and ways of life.

Prior to the conferences technical presentations, a number of pre-conference seminars and workshops were held including an Indigenous Talking Circle, Wildlife Necropsy and Health/Condition Sampling Techniques, Conservation Education, and Caribou Demographic Modelling. Post-conference field trips were also held including a tour of Yellowknife, fishing on Great Slave Lake, and a tour of the Canadian Shield. During the conference, a number of events open to the public were also held including a storytelling session on the importance of Arctic ungulates to northern people (hosted by Paul Andrew) and a visual demonstration of how caribou populations are counted (John Nishi).

Opening the technical presentations was a plenary session chaired by Don Russell (Circum-Arctic Rangifer Monitoring Network) and Joe Tetlich (Porcupine Caribou Management Board) related to the conference theme and titled “What are the challenges of managing caribou and reindeer?” Following this a panel session was convened comparing caribou and reindeer management across the circumpolar North. Over 60 oral presentations and over 30 posters were presented during the three days of technical sessions. Session topics ranged included Health and Disease, Management, Range and Habitat, Status and Population Ecology, Behaviour, Genetics and Evolution, Predators and Prey, Disturbance and Climate Change, Nutrition and Physiology, Incorporating Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge into Management, and a session presenting find-

ings from CARMA. To conclude the conference Monte Hummel (World Wildlife Fund Canada) delivered a presentation titled “A circum-arctic conservation plan for caribou and wild reindeer” and the technical session chairs participated in panel sessions related to research and management priorities for northern ungulates.

The national and cultural diversity of the delegates to this conference greatly enhanced the exchange of information and brought new approaches and perspectives to the management and conservation of northern ungulates. On behalf of the organizing committee I would like to thank all the delegates to the conference for their participation, as well as the numerous volunteers who were instrumental to the overall success of the conference.

I look forward to seeing you at the 14th International Arctic Ungulate Conference in 2015 in Røros, Norway.

Troy Hegel

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