

Acknowledgements

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- Session chairs:* Jan Edmonds, Shane Mahoney, François Messier, Don Russell, Dale Seip, Don Thomas.

Preface

At the fourth North American Caribou Workshop in St. John's, Jim Davis suggested that the next Workshop address the issue of how ecological theory can be applied to practical caribou management problems. In addition to that theme, we also chose to highlight cooperative caribou management boards and the conservation and management of woodland caribou.

All of the papers on cooperative management boards stressed that boards must consider both local knowledge and information collected by scientists and they must attempt to blend native and bureaucratic approaches to decision making. A multicultural approach should expose, and therefore avoid, the unquestioned or unrecognized biases which we all have:

Cultural influences have set up the assumptions about the mind, the body, and the universe within which we begin; pose the questions we ask; influence the facts we seek; determine the interpretation we give those facts; and direct our reaction to these interpretations and conclusions. (Gunnar Myrdal *An American Dilemma* 1944).

Cooperative management boards should not only provide an opportunity for users to participate in the management of the resources that they rely on but also develop better management decisions.

To enlighten caribou researchers to the possibility that «cultural» influences also narrows our view of the world, we invited Gary Belovsky, Lee Eberhart, and Mitch Taylor, who's experience was primarily outside the area of caribou research, to apply their expertise in theoretical ecology to caribou management problems.

As elsewhere, there is a close association between caribou and people in the Northwest Territories. The workshop logo depicted that relationship and maintained our awareness of that fact throughout the workshop. We were happy to see that the public and interested groups from in and around Yellowknife took advantage of the opportunity to learn more about caribou biology and management. The entire second year class of the Renewable Resource Training Program from the Thebacha Campus of Arctic College in Fort Smith attended and both the Denendeh Conservation Board and the Beverly and Kaminuriak Caribou Management Board scheduled meetings in Yellowknife to correspond with this workshop.

These manuscripts were not subjected to peer review and were not edited to scientific content so that flashes of unbridled brilliance would not be excised by unimaginative and repressive editors.

Doug Heard and Mark Williams.