Aboriginal leaders of Québec and Labrador unite to protect the Ungava caribou

Kuujjuaq and Nain, April 24th 2013 – It is with great pride that the Aboriginal governments and Nations of Québec and Labrador stand together and formerly announce the creation of the Ungava Peninsula Caribou Aboriginal Round Table, a united and powerful voice that will endeavor to preserve caribou and the deep relationship that aboriginal people have long held with it.

Following an initial historic meeting in Kuujjuaq in January, the Inuit, Innu and Inuit/Metis living in Labrador as well as the Inuit, Innu, Naskapi and Cree living in Quebec gathered together again in Uashat mak Mani–Utenam last week to formalize the Ungava Peninsula Caribou Aboriginal Round Table. The Round Table has been created to respond to the decline of the migratory caribou and will strive to develop a conservation and management system in a way that respects all cultures and traditions. This gathering is a strong step towards aboriginal leadership and responsibility towards the preservation of the land and animals on which they depend.
The Round Table has elected two Co-chairs, Ms Sarah Leo, (Government of Nunatsiavut), and Mr. Adamie Delisle Alaku, (Makivik Corporation) as well as an executive committee composed of representatives from each Nation namely Réal McKenzie (Innu of the Québec region), George Guanish (Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach), Todd Russell (NunatuKavut Community Council), Prote Poker (Innu Nation) and Isaac Masty (Grand Council of the Crees of Eeyou Istchee/Cree Regional Authority (GCCEI/CRA) as well as the Co-chairs.

A technical Committee has also been assigned to support the activities of the Round Table and initiate the development of a Conservation Plan for the Ungava Caribou Herds including a process for recommending the sustainable sustenance and cultural allocation of caribou while respecting the sovereignty and independence of each member nation.

“The caribou has brought us together; we are united and committed to preserving caribou and our relationship with it for our present and future generations” says Sarah Leo, President of Nunatsiavut and co-chair of the Round Table.

As stated in a joint declaration (need website), caribou is central to the Aboriginal Peoples of the Ungava Peninsula. It is an integral part of the Aboriginal cultural, physical and spiritual well-being, as well as the food security of our nations. All members of the Round Table share deep respect and responsibility towards the caribou, and agreed that actions must be taken to respond to this critical decline of the George River Caribou Herd and the uncertain future of the Leaf River and Torngat Caribou Herds.

“The Round Table is a true testament of the respect for the individual realities and sovereignty of each participating aboriginal nations.” says Adamie Delisle Alaku of the Makivik Corporation and co-chair of the Round Table. “I have great faith in the power of our unity, and that we will achieve our goal of preserving caribou while protecting our cultural well-being” he added.

-- 30 --

About the Ungava Peninsula Caribou Aboriginal Round Table

The Ungava Caribou Aboriginal Round Table membership is: the Inuit of Nunavik, the Inuit of Nunatsiavut, the NunatuKavut Community Council, the Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach, the Grand Council of the Crees of Eeyou Istchee/Cree Regional Authority (GCCEI/CRA), the Innu Nation of Labrador and all the Innu communities from the Québec region. The Round Table will be developing a website in the near future.

Contact:
Sarah Leo, Co-Chair  
(709) 922–2942

or

Adamie Delisle Alaku, Co-Chair  
(819) 964-2925