



True North Safaris Ltd.

To The Mackenzie Valley Revue Board
Attention; Vern Christiansen & Allen Ehrlich

From; Gary Jaeb
True North Safaris Ltd.

May 13, 2009

Re; Screening and timing for a permit to bait black bears.

Please be advised that only yesterday we were informed that the MVRB is asking till May 26, 2009 to revue the screening process that ENR has undertaken regarding our request for the issuance of a Wildlife Permit which will permit us to use baits for hunting black bears.

I am writing MVRB to ask that you do anything possible to speed up the approval time for this year. We have scheduled our first hunters and a Television Production crew and two travel writers starting June 2nd and finishing June 15th. This schedule has been confirmed for months with Airline tickets and Hotels as well as assistance from NWT Tourism. It is the best time frame for harvesting big bears before they loose their winter fur and it is impossible for us to change the schedules and delay the hunts without loosing complete credibility with our clients and colleges.

While we had a trial, baiting project last year for the first time in the NWT, baiting of bears has been practiced for generations in other jurisdictions and provinces. It is commonly accepted and understood that the baits have to be established at least two weeks prior to the hunts. Some of the clients, writers and TV produces that we have scheduled, have years of experience hunting bears, and again, our credibility is on the line in that the baits will have to be established and producing bears when they arrive.

We recognize that ENR has the lead role in the screening process, however; even though it is our application that is being screened, we do not know what they have included in the screening information. We offer the following background for your consideration.

True North Safaris Ltd. is owned by Tlichio citizens and has been outfitting in the NWT since 1983. The largest part of our business evolved around fall caribou hunts and we employed about 30 seasonal Dene and Northerners until ENR reduced the caribou quotas

in 2007. Now the reduction in numbers of caribou hunts, compounded by problems in the world economy, has left us in a very uncertain financial position.

The bear baiting, spring project has been viewed as a way for us to diversify, however, we do not have the financial resources to delay current initiatives or rebuild our credibility if we cannot deliver on current commitments.

We have done extensive community consultation on this new initiative just as we have always attempted to respect community concerns and benefits in our outfitting operations over the past 26 years.

We have maintained our current Outfitters License for unit "R" since 1989 and the southern boundary of unit "R" marks the southern boundary for our bear hunting area. We also have a Tourism License, which allows us to offer aurora viewing, bison viewing and cultural tourism from the base camp that is used for the bear hunts. We have been licensed and have been operating in the area for a number of years.

In 2007, we hired a consultant with the help of some DIAND funding and have developed a business plan that involves the spring, shoulder season baited bear hunts. Expanding to baits and stand vs the spot and stalk hunts we have been doing will allow us to be competitive with southern operations and increase numbers of hunters and prices over time. We can create 6-8 seasonal jobs.

The consultant has also helped us understand and apply some of the traditional knowledge that has evolved in other jurisdiction regarding the establishment and use of baits for black bears.

Prior to the business planning exercise, we began the consultation. We got letters of support from the Tlicho Government and WRRB. We applied for and received a Federal Land Lease for the base camp at kilometer 170.5 and we applied for and received a Land Use permit from WLWB. The land use permit involved another round of public consultations including News Paper advertisements/notices.

We have negotiated a list of conditions to our Wildlife Permits/ Baiting permits that are designed to ensure public safety and reduce any perception of danger or threat.. These include approval of bait sights by an officer and minimum distances from public areas that baits sights can be established, the requirement to have bait sights clearly marked with warning signs and the requirement to remove all baits within one week of completion of the hunts. Other conditions can/may be added to include any concerns expressed through public consultation.

The permits are re-applied for and issued annually so that a report and review is done annually and any problems or new concerns are addressed.

We now have applications in to ITI for product Development and Marketing Assistance program that will be conditional on us receiving the permits.

We have learned from this process that we need to get an earlier start on the renewal applications for next year but we ask your support and early consideration for this year.

Masi Cho

Gary Jaeb

C/C

Lance Schmidt

ERN
GNWT