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Dear Mr. Mahoney:

As a participant in last years 2007 Caribou Monitoring Program I am truly concerned about the rapid population decline of our caribou herds. I am a hunter who consumes a fair amount of caribou and other wild game every year and have no problem collecting a sample for scientific research. The over all health of the herd for future generations is paramount for future generations. I have heard people blame the caribou decline on poachers, coyotes, and brain worm. However, there could be a more sinister menace that could have plagued the animal's fate. You are probably aware of the atomic bomb tests of the 1950's and 60's and the toxic affects artificial radiation and other toxic metals are having on our ecosystems. Maybe the animals resistance has given into decades of industrialization .The prevailing winds have been blowing toxins from the mainland for generations. The lichens are like a sponge that absorbs all of this. Is the amount of toxins building up in the caribou's bodies reaching a point that it won't even be safe for human consumption? Have we poisoned the caribou to death? Will it be safe for folks to eat the caribou on the Cape Shore when the two refineries are going 24 and 7? (Given their proximity, and the prevailing winds blowing directly on the Cape Shore, will we have an accumulative increase of toxins)? The amount of toxins and heavy metals are increasing every year in our ecosystems. Will this new refinery next door put more strain on the Cape Shore caribou and possibly sealing its fate? Don't get me wrong I want nothing but prosperity for Newfoundland and Labrador. It would just be devastating to see such a fine animal go down the path of gradual extinction. Is there such a thing as a safe level of toxins? I have addressed these issues before it becomes too late. If someone asks me if I would eat caribou I would want to say," I'll stake my life on it". I am interested in any feedback on this issue. For you are what you eat.

I am aware that caribou around the world have been tested with above normal levels of Cadmium, Lead, Mercury and artificial radiation, in kidneys and liver. This is at different times over the years.

YOURS IN CONSERVATION TONY

CC: Newfoundland Sportsman

