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Dear Mr. Mahoney:

It's great to hear that the Newfoundland government is continuing with a 5-year scientific and management caribou strategy. It's the health of the caribou and what toxins the lichens may contain, that are the true indicators of our ecosystems health. Since lichens make up 80% of the caribou diet, and act like a sponge, we should get a good handle on what really is going on in our wild places, as well with our domestic live stock. This brings me to a research report I did as a kid going to high school on the main land. It has to do with research done on humans similar to that done on caribou in the past. The research was done in the late 1970's on toxins and there long term effects on the physical, and mental health of citizens in urban centers, in particularly the United States. This could also apply to any of our Canadian cities. The scientists knew even 30 years ago that we are slowly doing great harm to future generations and ourselves by dumping millions of tons of effluent into the air and consequently contaminating our food supplies. Here are some of the findings that are startling to say the least, and are applicable in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The scientists found that the same toxins that ravaged the health of the human population also are in high concentrations in the kidneys and liver of caribou and moose in our remote wilderness areas. What I found most alarming was the issue of a mother's breast milk. It was stated by the scientists of that time that American mother's milk has reached a level of concentrated toxicity that it would be illegal to transport it across a state line in any container. This is supposed to be the best milk an infant could ever have and yet it's plagued with much of the fall out of industry. The effects of cadmium, mercury and lead that concentrate in the kidneys and liver of humans also affect other mammals in a similar way. Once these toxic metals are in the bodies of humans and other mammals they are usually there to stay, cadmium being one of the worst. The scientists

also expressed concerns in mutagenic change or (induced genetic mutation) because the level of poisons that are bombarding humans and other organisms these days, are greater than any time in history, this is great cause for alarm. The effects of many of these toxins may not show up until the next generation or many generations after. The scientists stated, as organisms evolve the volume of toxins in the environment could also damage the D.N.A of humans or other organisms. WOW! folks, this was in the 1970's. It was stated in the 1970's that urban cadmium levels were at such a dangerously high level in many cities that it may threaten to cause adrenal or kidney damage in people. If the scientific research of that time exposed such grave truths, what's in store for the caribou and the human populations 30 years later? I think it's great that the government of Newfoundland and Labrador want to see the caribou thrive. I believe in the end, we all want optimal health for one and all. I just hope that through this research and the collaboration of the global community that the caribou will always run freely and healthy on the barrens of Newfoundland and Labrador. Good luck to all involved in the conservation of our wild areas and wildlife. Maybe 30 years from now we will see great improvements in environmental health and safety. Maybe a mother's breast milk will be, just breast milk.

YOURS IN CONSERVATION TONY

CC. Premier Danny Williams  
Hon. Charlene Johnson  
The Compass  
Prime Minister Stephen Harper