

Meat wastage case under investigation

Yukon conservation officer asks questions after four dead caribou found

by Sarah Ladik
Northern News Services
NWT/Yukon border

Conservation officers are investigating after four bull caribou were found shot near the Yukon border on the Dempster Highway Oct. 15.

Officer Shawn Hughes was in Inuvik following leads and collecting witness accounts on the situation, and did the same in Fort McPherson.

"We've been getting lots of comments and some names to follow," he told *News/North*. "But I can't give any details, as it's still under investigation."

Hughes said caribou arrived in great numbers in the area Oct. 12 and hunters from all over the region turned out in droves as a result. The four caribou were found at kilometre 461, just a few kilometres on the Yukon side of the border. He said that although they were found on Oct. 15, they were likely shot Oct. 13.

"They weren't gutted or anything," he said. "They were just left to spoil there."

Amy Amos, executive director of the Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board, said not only is meat wastage illegal, it goes against the teachings of elders.

She said although the board is not an enforcement agency, it does condemn the

practice. To that end, Amos said the board has created posters designed to educate the public about good hunting practices and remind people of their traditional duties.

"The poster talks about sharing the land and respecting the caribou," she said. "Report your harvest, don't wound, respect the land. Don't disturb it more than you need to with Ski-Doos and everything else."

She also said the board has created bumper stickers saying "let the leaders pass" for hunters on the Dempster.

"We just got them," she said last week. "So they'll be ready for next year."

For now, Hughes said the caribou have moved on, and with them the hunters. The days following the initial hunt, however, were tense and chaotic.

"People dodging bullets totally happened," he said, confirming some accounts from social media. "That hasn't happened in five years but we haven't seen caribou like this in five years."

He said rules exist for this kind of situation. It is illegal to carry a loaded firearm in a vehicle and it is illegal to shoot across a highway or from a highway.

"In the past that's been a problem," he said. "We have had reports of dangerous hunting practices and we do want to get some more information."



photo courtesy of Environment Yukon

Four bull caribou were found shot dead Oct. 15 near the Yukon/NWT border. An investigation into who is responsible for the meat wastage is underway.

Oil leak may have caused Deline crash

Preliminary report indicates plane engine shut down due to oil leak

by John McFadden
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Deline/Fort Franklin

More details have been released about the tense moments leading up to a Buffalo Airways plane belly-landing at the Deline Airport on Oct 25.

A report from Transport Canada's Civil Aviation Daily Occurrence Reporting System (CADORS) has revealed the plane was forced into the emergency landing after an oil pump failed and oil was seen by the crew leaking from one of the plane's engines.

The crew of four was subsequently able to escape unharmed after the plane landed with its landing gear up and skidded some 215 metres beyond the end of the runway.

The flight was en route to Norman Wells from Yellowknife when the crew noticed a drop in the right engine oil quantity indicator, according to the report, which is preliminary and can be subject to change.

The crew made an adjustment, but the oil indicator continued to drop rapidly.

It was at that time the crew confirmed visually oil was escaping from the engine at an abnormally high rate.

The right propeller speed then became uncontrollable and the crew then shut down the engine.

It was at that time the crew elected to divert to Tulita but quickly determined the descent rate would not permit this as an option.

The only other option for diversion was Deline, where there was reported to be a half mile of visibility and a 300-foot ceiling.

An emergency was declared with the Deline Airport and the plane landed there without deploying its landing gear.

The report states the landing gear was left up to prevent a further loss of airspeed. The plane landed about the midway point of the runway.

Buffalo Airways' initial investigation revealed the engine oil scavenge pump had failed, the report went on to state.

The report states the plane, a Curtiss-Wright C-46 Commando, was destroyed. According to the Buffalo Airways website, its two C-46 aircraft have been in service since 1945.

The planes can carry up to 14,000 pounds of freight into short airstrips, according to the website.

It is not clear exactly what the aircraft was carrying when it was forced to make the emergency landing.

According to John Tavernini, investigator with the Transportation Safety Board, his agency is awaiting results from a Transport Canada investigation into the incident.

"They are responsible for ensuring Buffalo Airways is conducting its duties according to the regulations," Tavernini said.

It is not clear when the final Transport Canada report will be released.



photo courtesy of RCMP

A Buffalo Airways plane rests on its belly, well past the end of the runway after an emergency landing in Deline on Sept. 25 of this year.

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