

**SPRING SURVEY OF CARIBOU IN THE VICINITY OF SCHEFFERVILLE
MAY 2009**

Prepared for:

NEW MILLENNIUM CAPITAL CORP. AND LABRADOR IRON MINES LIMITED

FINAL REPORT – WITHOUT PREJUDICE

ADDENDUM CONCERNING BLUE 331

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D'Astous and Trimper (November 2009: 7) reported that an adult female caribou, designated as "Blue 331", was fitted with an Argos GPS collar (PTT53572, VHF signal 149.970 MHz) and catalogued as GR2009001 (T. Chubbs, pers. comm.) on May 6, 2009 (Figure 1). The capture location was revisited on May 8, at which time it appeared that Blue 331 and her three companions (an adult female, a yearling male and a calf) had moved off towards the northwest.

D'Astous and Trimper (November 2009: 16) recognized that the ecotype affiliation of the caribou in question was uncertain, but they were inclined towards the possibility that they belonged to the migratory ecotype.

No signal was ever received from the collar (J. Neville, pers. comm.), and no observations of Blue 331 were ever reported.

On February 6, 2010, Blue 331 was legally shot by a hunter in the Caribou Management Area known as the Grand Lake Extension Zone on the Naskaupi River (approximately 400 km to the east of the capture location at 53°51'N x 60°52'W) (T. Chubbs, pers. comm.) (Figure 1).

Based on the migratory route of the George River Caribou Herd during the fall of 2009 and winter of 2010, the Senior Wildlife Biologist for Labrador considered this animal to belong to the migratory ecotype rather than to the sedentary ecotype (T. Chubbs, pers. comm.). The body length of this animal (i.e., 192 cm) is consistent with the foregoing interpretation (T. Chubbs, pers. comm.).

Conversations between the Wildlife Division and the supplier of the collar (i.e., Telonics) suggested that the failure of the collar to transmit may have been caused by a process called passivation, in which a stored collar develops a corrosion layer that may block signal transmission. Interestingly, the collar started functioning soon after Blue 331 was shot, perhaps because the physical handling of the collar may have caused the corrosion to fall away, completing the battery circuit and starting the duty cycle (T. Chubbs, pers. comm.).

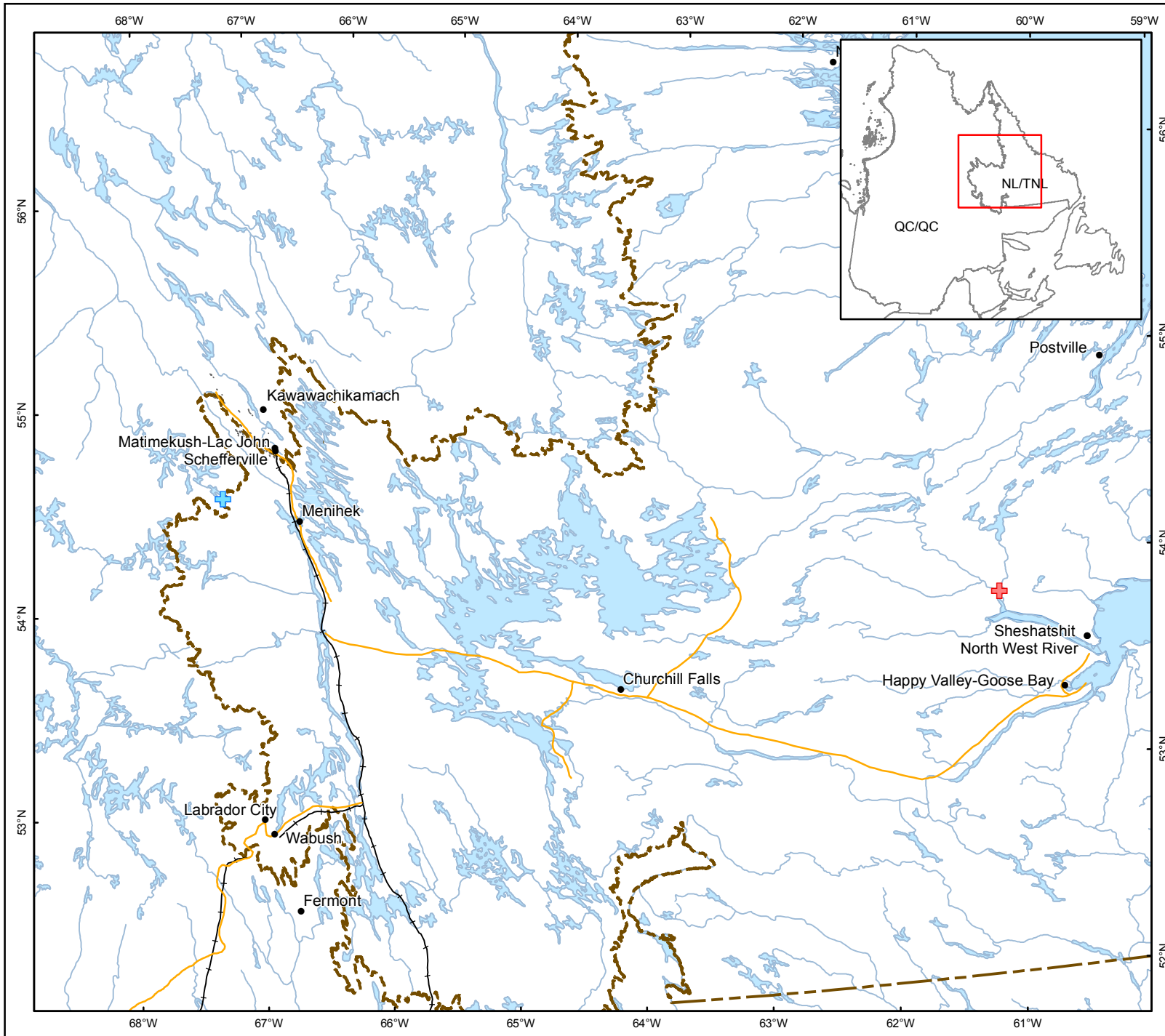
Based on D'Astous and Trimper (November 2009), this addendum and such sources as Bergerud et al. (2008), there is no recent evidence of sedentary caribou in the Schefferville area. Work is ongoing to address this conclusion, including genetic analysis of a tissue sample collected in May 2009 and another aerial survey planned for April-May, 2010, but it appears that the group of four animals identified in May 2009 were migratory and not sedentary caribou.

REFERENCES

T. Chubbs Senior Wildlife Biologist, Newfoundland and Labrador Wildlife Division, Goose Bay, NL.

J. Neville Wildlife Biologist, Newfoundland and Labrador Wildlife Division, Corner Brook, NL.

Bergerud, A.T., S.N. Luttich and L. Camps. 2008. The Return of Caribou to Ungava. McGill Queen's University Press, McGill-Queen's Native and Northern Series 50.



Location of capture and death of Blue 331
Lieu de capture et de mort de Blue 331

LEGEND/LÉGENDE

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Event/événement | ● Populated place/ lieu peuplé |
| ⊕ Capture/ capture | — Railway/ voie ferrée |
| ⊕ Killing/ abattage | — Road/ route |
| | — Watercourse/ cours d'eau |
| | — Border/fronrière |
| | ■ Deposits_DSO_polygons |
| | ■ Waterbody/ plan d'eau |

SOURCES:
Government of Canada, Natural Resources Canada, The Atlas of Canada, 1:2,000,000 and 1:7,500,000, 1985
Gouvernement du Canada, Ressources Naturelles Canada, L'Atlas du Canada, 1/2 000 000 et 1/7 500 000, 1985

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