

Porcupine Herd

Canadian and American government officials are to engage in cooperative planning for the future of the Porcupine caribou herd, according to recent announcements. The idea of international cooperation to discuss the future of the Porcupine herd is fine. We wish officials of both governments success in their deliberations.

Like many valuable resources, it is possible that the fate of the Porcupine herd may be too weighty a subject to be left solely to the bureaucrats, American or Canadian.

If any group is to have meaningful discussions on the Porcupine herd, perhaps it had ought to be Native villagers in the small communities on both sides of the border who have been concerned about the caribou resource for a lot longer than the U.S. and Canadian governments have been in existence.

We applaud the recent efforts of the Tanana Chiefs Conference to assemble a conference of villagers to discuss how villagers feel the calving grounds of the Porcupine herd may best be protected. We hope Natives from both sides of the border will get together and apply their collective wisdom to a meaningful solution. And, we hope that, for once, officialdom will take its lead from the people who are intimately familiar with the area and the resources.