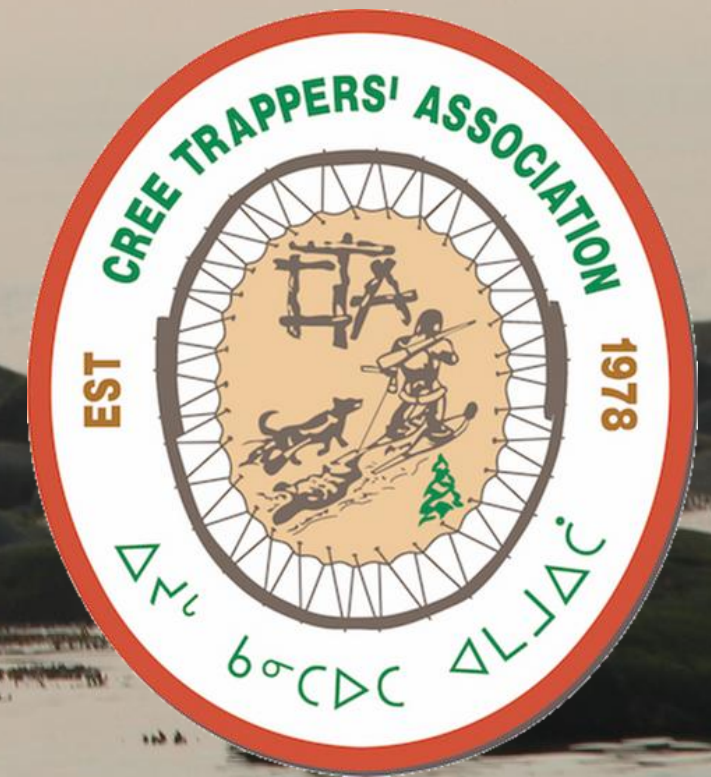




PUBLIC HEARING Phase 2

Consideration for Non-Quota Limitations for polar bears in the Nunavik Marine Region and Eeyou Marine Region Cree-Inuit Overlap Area

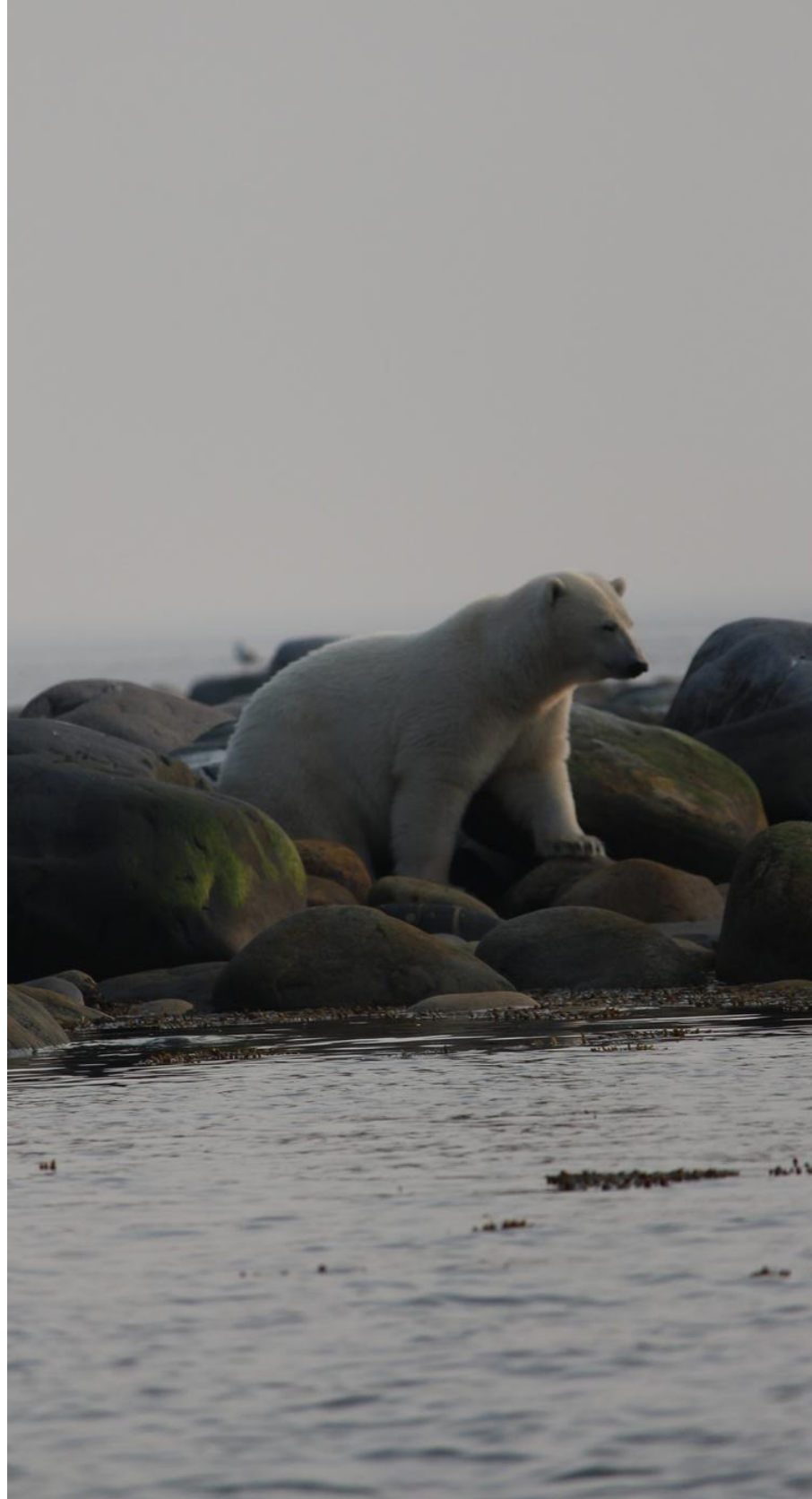


5 February 2025



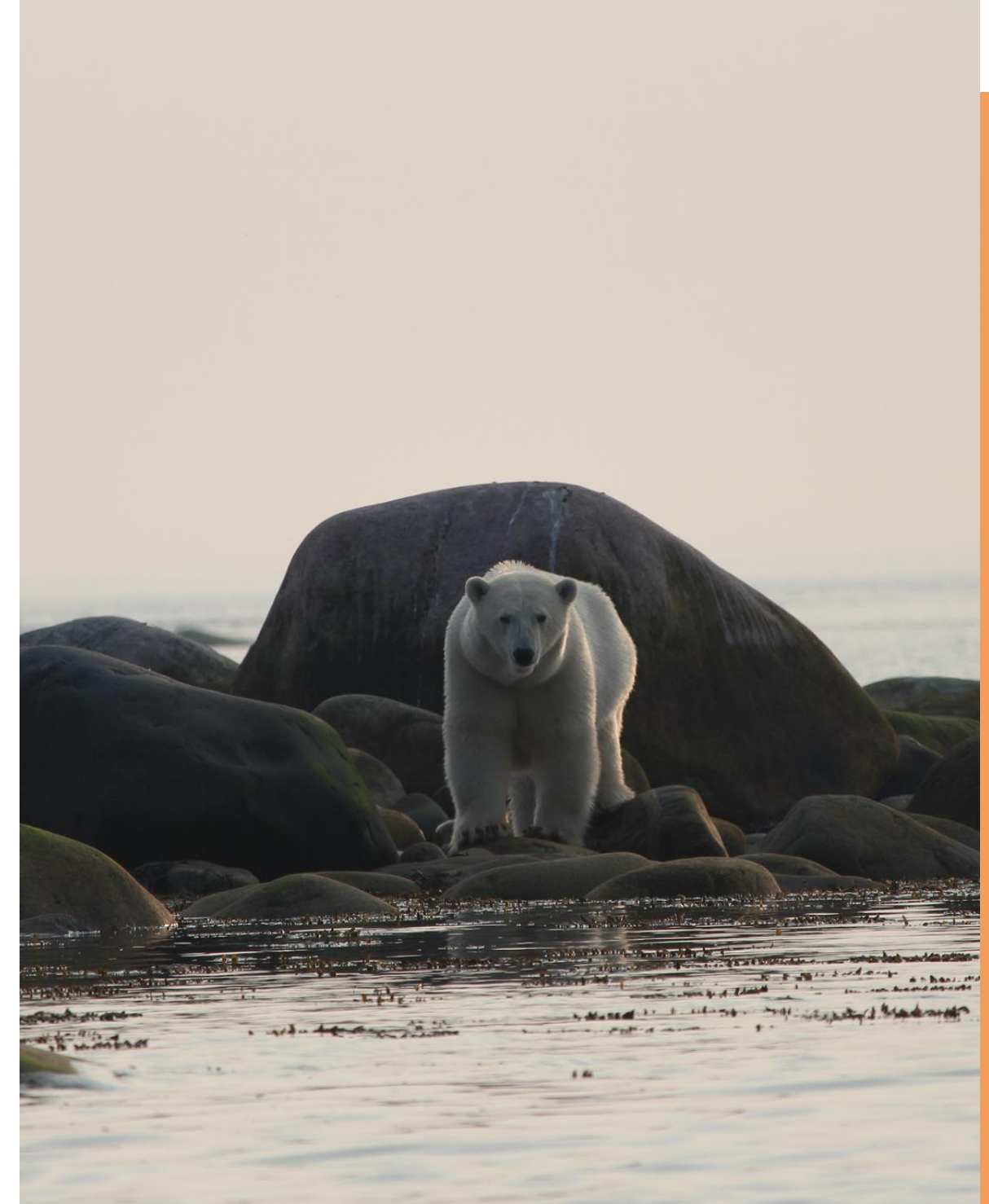
CONTENTS:

- Background
- Current Polar Bear Management Efforts:
 - *Polar Bear Observation and Kill Reporting*
 - *Polar Bear Sighting Notices and Deterrent Services*
 - *Polar Bear Safety Training*
- Current Cree Harvest Levels



BACKGROUND:

- **CTA Mission:** The CTA (1975 JBNQA section 28.5) protects Eeyou/Eenou trappers' interests, manages hunting territories, wildlife and environmental matters, and training programs.
- **Polar Bear Harvesting:** Polar bear hunting is now rare, occurring mainly for self-defense, though encounters with polar bears are increasing.
- **Increased Encounters:** Rising polar bear encounters near communities and hunting camps pose safety concerns.
- **CTA-EMR Department:** Established in 2012 to monitor polar bear interactions and manage complaints, in collaboration with the Eeyou Marine Region Wildlife Board.
- **Safety Training:** The CTA-EMR offers non-lethal polar bear deterrent training for coastal land users.
- **Collaboration with Nunavik Inuit:** The CTA collaborates with Nunavik Inuit communities in the Cree-Inuit Overlap Area to support traditional practices and families.





CURRENT POLAR BEAR MANAGEMENT EFFORTS

■ ■ ■ Polar Bear Observation and Kill Reporting:

- **Polar Bear Monitoring:** Since the establishment of the CTA-EMR Department, local CTA-EMR Officers have recorded polar bear observations, encounters, and defense of life and property (DLP) kills, sharing the data with the EMRWB and MELCCFP for wildlife management.
- **Standardized Reporting Package:** In 2020, a reporting package was developed to ensure proper documentation of polar bear observations, encounters, and DLP kills, including details on the bear's sex, age, body condition, and sampling requirements.
- **Voluntary Reporting:** The reporting system is voluntary and is promoted annually through local presentations, social media, and pamphlets. Encounters and harvests are also monitored through social media and CTA bush radio.
- **High Reporting Rate:** Though reporting is not mandatory, the CTA believes that there is high social acceptance and participation in the reporting process.



Example of EMR polar bear reporting package. ▼



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 CONSEIL DE GESTION DES RESSOURCES
 FAUNTIQUES DE LA RÉGION MARINE D'EYYOU
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POLAR BEAR REPORT FORM Checklist

- Fill out polar bear report form page 1.
- If the observer is reporting a complaint, fill out page 2 of report form.
- If the observer is reporting a kill, fill out polar bear kill form.
- Gather any pictures of the polar bear, tracks, or area of observation.

For Defense of Life/Property Kills:

- Collect ear tag from polar bear.
- Collect jaw bone or pre-molar, fur, and tissue samples from polar bear.

Is the hide being kept?* Kept Destroyed

If the hide is being kept, keep hide and contact EMRWB about getting hide tag.

If the hide is being destroyed, record method here: _____

Is the meat salvageable? Yes No

If the meat is salvageable, contact EMRWB for distribution contacts.

If the meat is being destroyed, record method here: _____

* Note that the hide is not automatically given to the shooter/tallymen. Please make this clear.



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POLAR BEAR REPORT FORM Observation/Complaint Eeyou Marine Region Wildlife Board

1. Report Information:

1. Report ID: _____	2. Report Type: <input type="checkbox"/> Observation <input type="checkbox"/> Complaint	***If you answered "Complaint" in Field 2 (Report Type) fill page #2 of reporting form.***
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2. Observation/Complaint Information:

1. Community: _____	2. Date Observed (YYY-MM-DD): _____	3. Time Observed (HH:MM): _____
4. Location: Coordinates (DD): _____ Description: _____		
5. Recorded By: _____	6. Date Recorded (YYYY-MM-DD): _____	

3. Observer Contact Information:

1. Name: _____	2. Phone Number: _____	3. Address: _____
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4. Observation Type (check all that apply):

Live Bear
 Dead Bear/Kill
 Conflict
 Tracks
 Scat
 Den

5. Bear Details:

1. # of Bears: _____	2. Sex: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown	3. Age: <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Years <input type="checkbox"/> C.O.Y <input type="checkbox"/> Yearling <input type="checkbox"/> Sub-Adult <input type="checkbox"/> Adult	4. Condition: <input type="checkbox"/> 3-Average <input type="checkbox"/> 1-Skinny <input type="checkbox"/> 2-Thin <input type="checkbox"/> 4-Fat <input type="checkbox"/> 5-Very Fat
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6. Additional Observation Details:

■ ■ ■ Polar Bear Sighting Notices and Deterrent Services:

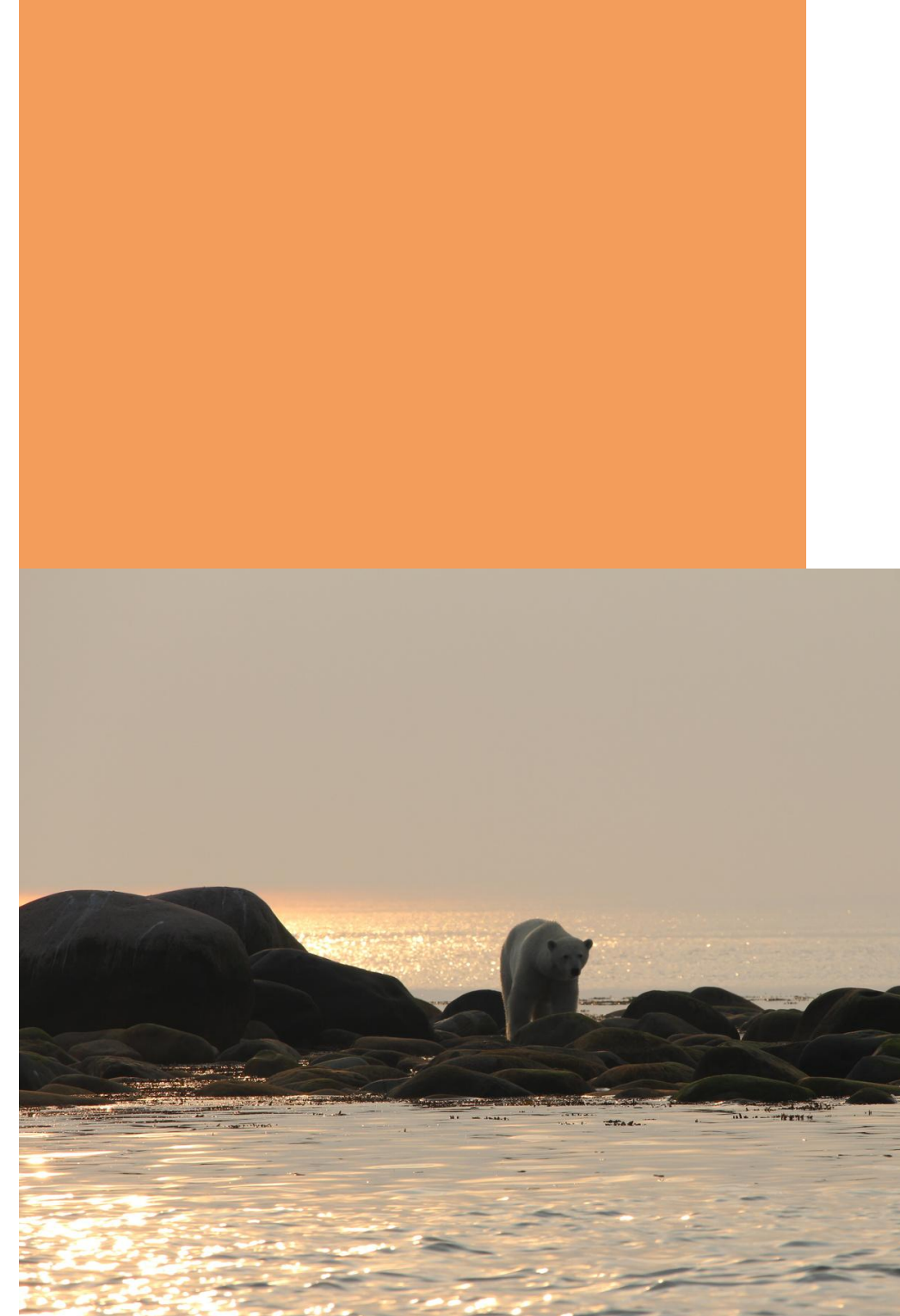
- **Polar Bear Observation Alerts:** The CTA uses the voluntary polar bear observation reporting system to notify land users and community members about polar bear presence near communities or hunting areas via social media and bush radio.
- **Funding for Monitoring and Deterrence:** The CTA has allocated funds to support monitoring and deterrence efforts during the spring goose harvest.
- **Importance of Services:** We believe that these services play a key role in the success of our voluntary reporting program.

Example of social media posting for polar bear sightings near the community of Wemindji.



■ ■ ■ Polar Bear Safety Training:

- **Polar Bear Safety Training:** The CTA-EMR began offering safety training in 2019 in response to land user concerns, partnering with the EMRWB and Andy McMullen's *BEARWISE*. Workshops covered polar bear ecology, encounter prevention, and non-lethal deterrents.
- **Additional Courses in 2023:** Due to increased polar bear encounters in 2022, additional three-day courses were offered in 2023 in Waskaganish, Wemindji, and Chisasibi.
- **Trained Community Members:** The CTA maintains a list of trained individuals who can be hired as polar bear guards for research or tourism purposes.
- **Non-lethal Polar Bear Deterrents:** The CTA-EMR department provides free non-lethal polar bear deterrents to coastal land users.

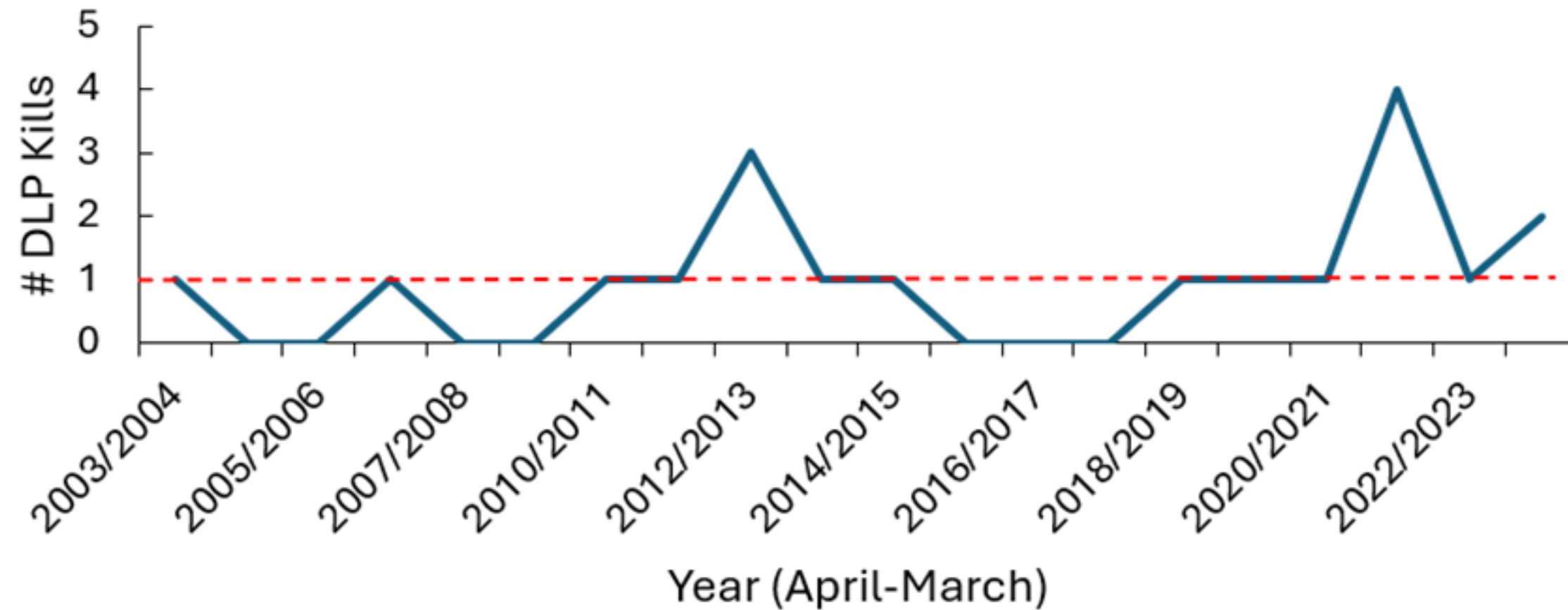


Coastal Tallymen Practicing Non-Lethal Polar Bear Deterrent Methods



Current Cree Harvest Levels:

- **DLP Kill Statistics:** The CTA has recorded an average of one defense of life and property (DLP) kill per year in the Eeyou Marine Region (EMR & Overlap Zones), with a range of zero to four kills annually.

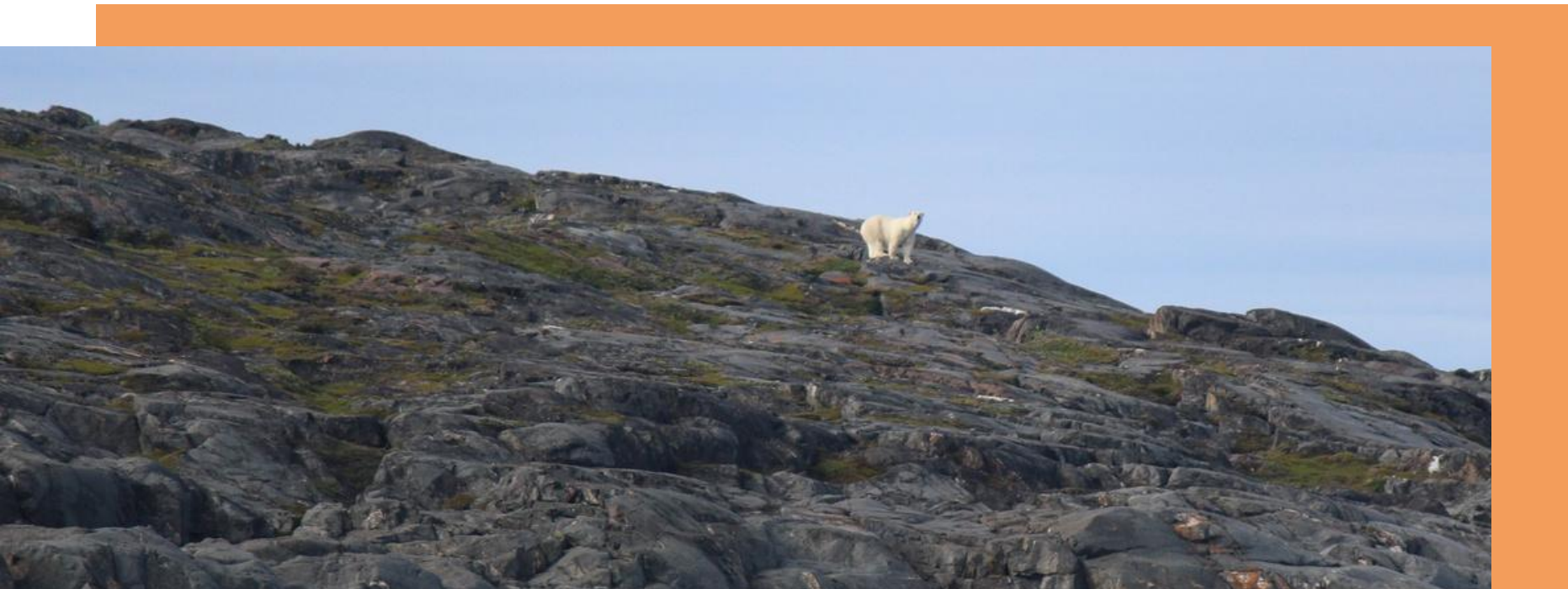


Defense of Life and Property Kills Reported in the Eeyou Marine Region (ENTIRE REGION) (2003-2024) (blue) with average DLP kills (red dash).





- **Impact of Early Ice Melt:** From observation, years with earlier ice melt have led to more polar bear encounters and DLP kills, such as the four DLP kills in 2021.
- **Cause of Encounters:** Polar bear encounters are often linked to bears searching for food, attracted by scents from camps (fish nets, food in cabins) or garbage dumps in communities.
- **Future Concerns:** Encounters may increase if ice conditions and prey availability become more unpredictable.
- **Polar Bear Observation in Overlap Zone:** Within or nearby the EMR-NMR Cree/Inuit Overlap Joint Zone, the CTA has recorded five polar bear observations, including one DLP kill in November 2022 near Cape Jones, where a land user was setting a fish net.



CTA-EMR Polar Bear Observations – Within/Near EMR-NMR Cree/Inuit Overlap Joint Zone (2016-2024).





THANK YOU



Cree Trappers' Association