



AWG INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE ANNOUNCES POSTPONEMENT OF THE 2022 ARCTIC WINTER GAMES IN PROACTIVE RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

March 3, 2021

The Arctic Winter Games International Committee announces the postponement of the Wood Buffalo 2022 Arctic Winter Games.

March 3, 2021 (Whitehorse, YT) – The Arctic Winter Games International Committee (AWGIC), following discussions with Wood Buffalo 2022 Arctic Winter Games Host Society, the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (RMWB) and the Government of Alberta, has made the decision to postpone the Wood Buffalo 2022 Arctic Winter Games in a planned and proactive response to the global COVID-19 pandemic. The Games, originally scheduled to take place in Wood Buffalo from March 6-12, 2022, will be rescheduled to a later date to be announced.

Held every two-years, the Arctic Winter Games is the premier circumpolar sport and cultural event for youth hosting up to 2,000 participants and an equal number of volunteers.

The decision to plan the postponement of the Games was made to ensure the health and safety of all the participants, coaches, volunteers, staff, spectators, and the host community. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic would likely prevent the Arctic Winter Games International Committee from delivering on their mission to host a meaningful Arctic Winter Games experience.

The health and safety of our circumpolar participants, coaches and volunteers is of paramount concern, and although it is a great disappointment that we must postpone the 2022 Arctic Winter Games, we are steadfast in our decision. The International Committee engaged in an extensive consultative process with both the Wood Buffalo 2022 Host Society and our valued Chefs de Mission from Participating Units. We considered their critical feedback, we analysed the relevant risks and considered our tolerance for those risks, and we learned from best practices employed by other Major Games leaders to come to this difficult decision.

John Flynn, President, Arctic Winter Games International Committee

The Wood Buffalo Arctic Winter Games Host Society supports the decision of the AWGIC and understands the significant considerations involved in the planned postponement of the Games. We would like to thank the community and our volunteers for their continued support as we prepare to welcome the Circumpolar North at a later date. As a Host Society, we will continue to collaborate with the AWGIC and our stakeholders to ensure a successful and safe event for visitors and the community.

Melissa Blake, Co-Chair, Wood Buffalo 2022 Arctic Winter Games



I share in the collective disappointment that will be felt by our athletes, coaches, officials, games organizers and fans by this announcement. The Arctic Winter Games International Committee and the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo Host Society had the unenviable task that so many event organizers are making in light of the continuing threat posed by COVID-19. We support their decision to keep the health and safety of the athletes and their communities as their primary focus. We also remain committed to working with the host society to ensure a safe and enjoyable games in Wood Buffalo once new dates are established.

Leela Sharon Aheer, Minister of Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women

No decision has been made at this time on the new dates for the Arctic Winter Games in Wood Buffalo. The Arctic Winter Games International Committee and the Wood Buffalo Host Society are diligently working together to determine an appropriate date for the Games to be rescheduled and intend to announce that date in the near future. Both organizations will continue to prioritize the health and safety of all Games participants while monitoring the global pandemic and providing updates to all stakeholders on the Wood Buffalo Arctic Winter Games, as they become available.

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About the Arctic Winter Games International Committee

The Arctic Winter Games International Committee is the rightsholder, and responsible for the long-term stewardship and management, of the Arctic Winter Games, a biennial premier circumpolar sport and cultural event for youth.

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About the Wood Buffalo 2022 Arctic Winter Games Host Society

The Arctic Winter Games is an international biennial celebration of circumpolar sports and culture taking place in the Wood Buffalo region. The Games will highlight the region and its culture through the spirit of sport to an international audience and visitors from around the world. The week-long event will see athletes from our own backyard along with international Circumpolar north regions during their time to shine.

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