



## MEETING MINUTES

WMAC (NS) Quarterly Meeting  
Westmark, Whitehorse · Yukon  
Oct 5th, 2012

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**Lindsay Staples** (Chair) · **Rob Florkiewicz** Yukon Government (Member) · **Danny C. Gordon** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) · **Ernest Pokiak** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) · **Wendy Nixon** Environment Canada (Alternate) · **Evelyn Storr** Inuvialuit Game Council (Alternate) · **Jennifer Smith** (Secretariat) · **Jocelyn McDowell** (Secretariat) · **Mike Sutor**, Regional Biologist Northern Region (Guest)

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### **A. Call to Order**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:14am. He thanked everyone for coming and for their support and help throughout the conference. He mentioned that because this meeting follows the conference, the agenda would be briefer than normal.

The Chair welcomed Mike Sutor, YG North Yukon Regional Biologist, to his new job and to the meeting. He explained that Mike is replacing Dorothy Cooley in her position. Mike thanked the Council for the opportunity to attend the meeting. He provided a brief background about himself, explaining that he worked for Parks Canada for a number of years (NWT) and is excited about being in Dawson. The chair welcomed Mike to attend any of our regular WMAC meetings and told him to feel free to call the office for anything he may need.

Lindsay explained that Dorothy was recognized at the banquet for her long service, and received an award for her valuable contributions to the North Slope work. Rob indicated that Dorothy was one of the first regional biologists and started around 1990. Lindsay said she was the first regional biologist to work with the Council as well.

### **B. Review and Approval of Agenda**

The Chair asked for any revisions to the agenda. Wendy suggested adding an update on the International Porcupine Caribou Board.

Motion 10-12-01

*To approve the agenda as revised for the Oct 5, 2012 meeting*

*Moved by: Danny Gordon.*

*Seconded by: Rob Florkiewicz.*

*Motion carried.*

Draft Polar bear status report for NWT

The Council decided to ask for a one- week extension to submit comments on the draft NWT Polar Bear report and also to seek input from the WMAC (NWT).

**C. Review of Action Items**

Jennifer provided an update on the status of action items for members.

Action Item 7-11-04: Spatial Data Project – The Council will **retire** this action item and focus spatial data efforts on the Wildlife Conservation Management Plan, which could also inform the Community Based Monitoring Program once the work is completed.

*\*\*\* Diane Wilson joined the meeting 9:30am \*\*\**

The Chair welcomed Diane, the new Parks Canada superintendent for the Western Arctic Field Unit to the meeting and thanked her for coming.

Action Item 12-11-03: Secretariat to produce a briefing note on the research proposal process that would go out to the parties and encourage the parties to coordinate their proposals in the early planning stages. **In progress.** Christine has updated the Research Guide and a few copies have been printed for the conference. The guide still needs the Council's review as well as photos. The Council also decided to include a section on coordination in the call-for-proposals for IFA-funded research that the Council sends out in Oct.

**Action Item 10-12-01: Council members review the research guide and provide feedback to the Secretariat.**

The Council also discussed producing a briefing note about the process of conducting research in the various regions of the North Slope, i.e. Territorial Park, National Park, withdrawn area. A briefing note like this could be useful for people proposing to work in the area without background of the region. If the area east of the Babbage starts to see more research, or other proposals, the briefing note would be especially useful.

**Action Item 1-12-02: Provide a briefing to HTC about the history of withdrawal order at the December 2012 meeting.**

Diane Wilson expressed interest in receiving a briefing also.

Action Item 03-12-05: Request SoPR Compendiums. Molly is working on getting the Council the rest of the Parks Canada compendiums. The Council requested them to inform comments on the SoPR.

Diane explained the State of the Park Report (SoPR). She explained that the planning cycle begins by looking at how current state of the park. The SoPR evolved not just to be a report on the condition of resources, but also to measure the park management objectives (including visitation and economic benefits). The SoPR (for every national park) describes the condition of the park. Performance is measured in terms of maintenance of ecological integrity, cultural resource management, expectations / objectives for visitor experience, and external relations and communications. She explained that the Ivvavik Management Plan is coming up for review, and they have draft from spring 2012. It was circulated to the management parties.

Lindsay explained that the Council tabled its draft letter of response on the SoPR for council members to review at Sheep Creek this past summer (Dan was there) and have captured some comments and suggestions for additions to letter. He explained that the Council's final submission is outstanding.

The Council members expressed the value of the monitoring program in Ivvavik and concern over a reduced program. Lindsay voiced that visitor numbers should not be the sole factor in determining the success of park. The Park was primarily set up to protect Porcupine caribou herd calving grounds, rather than to serve visitors. The Council discussed what visitor numbers mean to the economic benefits to the ISR and the communities.

Diane explained that the next version of the report should be ready by November and should have agreement on wording, emphasis, and so on, for all parties.

Diane explained that Dan Frandsen and Christian have both retired from Parks Canada. Chris Hunter is the manager of resource conservation until there is a staffing process to replace Dan.

Action Item 03-12-09: Review of the Muskox plan. **In progress.** Rob and Lindsay to prepare it for December.

July meeting Actions:

Action Item 7-12-01: Update research Guide. Research Guide –include a section about agencies communicating and coordinating programs before researchers enter the scene. This notion was prompted by BREA, which highlighted opportunities for synergies and overlap. The Council saw that investigators are not always aware of parallel efforts. There was some discussion of pooling and sharing of funds (i.e. Ramona's grizzly bear project).

Action Item 07-12-04: Put together the IFA funding package to circulate to members by Sept 14th and circulate to others by Sept 21st, in advance of the Oct 1st meeting. **In progress.** The proposal has been started and will be circulated to members.

Action Item 07-12-03: Ask the PCMB to provide and update on the harvest reporting program results. **Complete.** There was a newsletter, posters and at (conference) presentation (by Dorothy).

Action Item 7-12-05: Send a letter to the minister regarding Christian's upcoming vacancy. This issue is in the minister's office. Diane will let us know if we should send a letter.

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Action Item 07-12-06: Draft a letter to Cameron asking about the Herschel 10 year report. His 2012 funding for his activities should have been contingent on our receiving that report. (He did go to Herschel.) Rob said that he is working on the report, and we can expect it by December.

Action Item 7-12-07: Send a letter to Environment Canada (EC) regarding their research implementation funds. **Outstanding**. The Council recommended IFA research funds for 2012/13 contingent on EC's own funding being available (as it did in the previous fiscal year). There is an ABEK proposal and a shorebird proposal. Wendy said the Council would hear a presentation by Jim Hawkings later in the day, to explain the new project that would replace the shorebird proposal.

Action Item 07-12-08: Submit comments on the Polar bear status report. WMAC (NWT) submitted comments on Polar Bear status report and the Council will ask for a brief extension to submit comments. Ramona and Rob will provide input.

Action Item 7-12-09: The council will send a letter to thank Parks Canada staff for hosting us at Sheep Creek and provide comments on the site. The Council said that the site needs tent platforms, outhouse maintenance, and a grey water system. **Outstanding**. Diane explained that the site plan for Sheep Creek was done in Edmonton and still needs some improvement. The Council mentioned, and Diane confirmed, that there is a high level of visitor pressure and plans to increase use of the site, and there is little monitoring of the site. There was a comment that the runway needs to be extended for heavy loads. Ernest can provide some advice on this.

Action Item 07-12-10: Council to produce foldable Yukon North Slope maps for HTC and WMAC as these are helpful to have at meetings. **Outstanding**

Action Item 07-12-11: Lindsay to circulate John Ondrak's comments on the EISC research process. The Council should determine how to respond to the new process.

Action Item 07-12-12: The Council should do a fact sheet with the do's and don'ts (involve COs) about what happens to hides from poached/defense kills, to help hunters in Aklavik and the HTC to understand.

#### **D. Correspondence**

*Funding correspondence*- Lindsay explained that over the last two years the IFA funding model has become less clear. The Council discussed the incoming letter from INAC to Norm Snow regarding the funding model that applies for this year.

Yukon and Parks Canada both received letters describing the new funding model from AANDC, but the messages were different. Lindsay said that the ability to carry-over funds and the flexibility to move money between tasks remains ambiguous.

There has been an indication that AANDC would work toward a flexible arrangement, but the Council questions what the arrangement will be for the next five to ten years. There is also question about whether

the JS would be able to carry money over, as it doesn't receive money directly from Canada, but from GNWT.

Given the scenario wherein the Council has to spend down any accumulated surplus before year-end, Evelyn asked how we would decide to spend surplus funds and what the timeframe be. Lindsay explained that our Council will not be carrying a surplus into the funding negotiation.

Two things learned at the IFA funding meeting on Monday were that:

- 1) DIAND will now speak for exclusively for all federal departments, and
- 2) There will be no financial transparency (explicit funding commitments) on specific federal tasks.

Two meetings were planned following the July teleconference:

- 1) one amongst the co-management boards (Oct 1st)
- 2) one with DIAND at the end of November to present a submission to DIAND in Inuvik.

The Chair explained that the Council submission would be distributed to Council members. The Council will then share it with Yukon to fold into their submission.

One of the areas where the Council has seen an increase in workload is for the polar bear file, which has budget implications.

*CARMA (Circum Arctic Rangifer Monitoring and Assessment Network)* - The Council wrote a letter of support for CARMA.

*Herschel Book nomination*- The Council discussed support for the Canadian Geographic award nomination for Chris Burn's Herschel book. The nomination could come from the Council with a letter of support from a Fellow. Lindsay talked about the NS conservation award and how the recognition was deserved and appreciated by all the recipients. The Council supports this nomination.

*PBTk tour*- There was an information letter to the HTC's from the WMAC's regarding the Polar Bear TK tour.

*Harvest Reporting Program funds*- Jennifer mentioned the Aklavik HTC had written to ask Council for funds for the harvest reporting program in Aklavik. Rob explained how the Aklavik harvest data collection money was spent. He said that the money went to supporting the process of developing the model for harvest reporting for Porcupine Caribou. YG doesn't traditionally pay for harvest info, but they pay to support the collection of it. In the 10-year Inuvialuit harvest study, individuals were not paid for their information. Evelyn said that people are paid for some particular studies, but not for the harvest study.

*CBM initiative*

The Chair talked about the integrated CBM initiative. There was a meeting a few years ago to bring people together, and a two year program was developed, but there was never a commitment beyond that. A coordinator has been hired to work with technical advisors to develop something with the involvement of the six communities across the region. Oceans North wants to contribute \$100,000 towards this

program over several years and would like to sit on a technical committee. IGC has wanted to make sure that IFA bodies retain control over the program.

This initiative could be affected by the AANDC notice regarding carryover of funds. If this is the case, then the strategy would be to spend JS money this year and Oceans North money in the second year. The program would be designed (working with Arctic College) in the first year, and hiring and training in the second year. The secretariat will circulate the program overview to Wendy and Diane.

#### **E. Parks Canada update**

Diane Wilson provided an update on the following:

*Wild animal regulations* – The Council received an update from Dan at Sheep Creek in July 2012. The Council got a response from the Minister regarding our letter about the regulations. PC is working on another version to address concerns. There is no final timeline. PC will let us know when the next version will be ready.

*Management Plans* - With the 2012 Budget, the duration of management plans has changed from five to ten years. So the time frame for review of the Ivvavik Management plan will be adjusted accordingly. The vision for Sheep Creek Site Plan objectives should be discussed this winter. The vision for the Site Plan was fleshed out three years ago. It is reasonable to revise the Facility and Site plans to correlate with current use and demand.

*Torngat event* – The Inuit Labrador hosted representatives from Canadian co-management parks to visit the Torngat base camp – the longest running base camp. IRC sent Carol Arey in late August, and Chris Hunter went for Parks Canada. This fall, there is a plan to bring these and other people together to review success, challenge, etc. with Sheep Creek in mind.

*Visitor Experience Manager* – Parks is looking at rewriting the Firth River Management Guidelines soon.

*Human Resources* – Christian Bucher and Donald McLellan have retired. The responsibilities for the coastal mapping work that Donald was leading were given to Paul Zoran, Serguei Ponomarenko and others. Results are coming from that work this winter and Chris Hunter will be the contact.

*Staffing* – The Western Arctic Field Office has a number of vacancies. Diane explained that local people are on the hiring committee. Resource Conservation Manager, Visitor Safety and Fire Coordinator, GIS tech, Site manager and outreach position (Paulatuk), Historian position, and four Resource Management Technician positions are all vacant. Some positions are in Sachs Harbour and some in Inuvik.

Danny asked Diane about historical sites at Clarence Bay. He explained that there is a store there and he is wondering if it could be renovated or protected and leveled to be preserved. He is wondering if it is still standing as it was getting really wet two years ago. It is 500 yards inside the harbour. Danny has mentioned this for the last 15 years. Diane mentioned that, the historian position, once filled could address this.

Ernest observed (at Sheep Creek) some solar power batteries in the generator station. These are not being used and he wondered if they are still good. They should either be removed or reused before a bear finds them. Diane said she could find out.

The Secretariat will circulate Diane`s contact information to members.

*\*\*\*Diane left at noon\*\*\**

*\*\*\*Jim Hawkings arrived at noon\*\*\**

Jim Hawkings, CWS, presented the project *Landscape Changes on YT Coastal Plain Visible from a Preliminary Examination of High Resolution Imagery 1985-2011*

Jim provided a presentation to the Council about the “Landscape Changes on YT Coastal Plain” project. He explained the new high-resolution imagery available to look at landscape changes on the coast. He provided a number of photographic examples where imagery was compared over a 26- year period. The ability to detect change was obvious from his examples. The new imagery technology is called “ GeoEye and Woldview-2”. Jim compared the new imagery to older aerial photos.

Jim explained that this project has the potential to answer questions about changes in surface moisture. Danny has told the Council about these changes for a long time: the Blow River changed course, King Point, Ptarmigan Bay, etc.

Jim explained that not all ice wedges would become ponds, and lots of organic soil would absorb and retain integrity. He said that extent of coastal plain with ice wedges could be measured, and then the rate of change could be looked at. The next step would be to ask for the implications of the changes to wildlife. Council members mentioned that there could be a wide range of implications of melting ground, including access. Yukon Government may have an interest in this work to inform decisions about coastal access.

Mike Suitor asked if there had been discussion yet with Parks Canada. Jim explained that the intention was to do that, but the images are new, they were only collected last year, and georeferenced last winter. He explained, similar work was done in Nahanni and Paul Dickson (PC) did the same thing with Babbage air photos. Rob asked if the ESspace images could be used with this project. The ESspace images are oblique, while these ones are not, so they cant be directly compared. Jim explained that the ESspace videography is SCAT assessment, to document the shoreline for visual reference, and valuation for oil spill triage. Paul Zorn at Parks in Ottawa would be the right person to contact.

He explained the licensing is the barrier to working with the imagery, especially with partners. It costs 30k to buy the images within the range needed. Another 30% might open the license to distribution. Jim mentioned there is a student available to do preliminary analysis, but access to images is needed. CWS will discuss with YG (YGS and Geomatics) to see if they are willing to adjust their license.

The Council discussed the merits of spending the (shorebird) 9k on the imagery licensing.

There are partnership possibilities with NRCAN, High Arctic research station, YGS, GSC, YGS and the Alfred Wagner Institute. The discussion of who would do the work included suggestions of YGS (Panya Lipovsky), CBMP, and community people who spend time on the land. Jim emphasized working together to avoid duplication of analysis. Licensing issues still need to be addressed.

*\*\*\*Jim Hawkings left the meeting\*\*\**

The Council expressed that before recommending the funds be spent on the project, clarity is needed with respect to who would lead the project, who the partners would be, and what the license parameters are.

*Motion 10-12-02: To recommend (9k) of wildlife research funds be spent on the “Landscape Changes on YT Coastal Plain” project notionally, subject to partner availability and the clarification of licensing issues.*

Moved by: Rob Flokiewicz

Seconded by: Ernest Pokaik

Motion carried.

#### **F. Wildlife Research Funds**

The Council discussed how to allocated the remaining 18k in the wildlife research program budget.

Rob provided an update on the grizzly bear project budget. He explained that the contaminants work requires a decision from the Council. The frozen fat samples expire in December, so the Council wouldn't be able to wait for another funding cycle to look at these: the work would have to be done now or never (There was 20-30 k for the original proposal). Contaminants work could address the inquiry related to observed hair loss in Polar Bears and seals. This condition is also showing up in Southern Lakes Grizzly Bears and the question is whether it is related to contaminants (likely interfering with iron uptake).

Rob further explained that there was a 10k placeholder for communications on the project, which will not be spent in this fiscal.

The other option for the money is the muskox survey in the Richardson's. The Richardson mountain moose survey (60k) could be paired with the muskox work if we contribute the 18 k.

There was a discussion of the importance of the Grizzly Bear work. The Council discussed how the work is important now since the quota is being taken. Danny recommended fully completing the grizzly bear work.

The discussion about the muskox survey concluded that the work needs to be done, but could happen later

*Motion 10-12-03:*

*To reallocate 10K of IFA wildlife research funds from grizzly bear communications to grizzly bear contaminates work. To commit 18k of uncommitted funds to the to grizzly bear contaminants work. A total of 28k from wildlife research funds for 2012/13 is to be committed to grizzly bear contaminants work.*

*Moved by: Danny Gordon*

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*Seconded by: Rob Florkiewicz  
Motion carried.*

### **G. Upcoming meetings**

Jennifer and Jocelyn will canvas members for December meeting dates for Inuvik and Aklavik

- CARMA Vancouver (Danny and Lindsay to go) December 4-6
- IGC meeting - December 11-14
- Joint meeting with WMAC NWT between December 8-10
- check with HTC to see if they also meet on 8-10

*\*\*\*Rob and Jocelyn left the meeting 3:00pm \*\*\**

### **H. Chair's Report**

The Chair briefed the Council on the IFA funding meeting last Monday. He walked the Council through the assumptions for the Council projections and explained the areas in which the Council would like to seek an increase. The office will circulate the package to the Council by late October or early November and Yukon will put it into their submission.

The Council discussed areas in which Yukon may want to seek increases, particularly for research projects, the North Slope Conference, and Herschel Island Park.

The Council discussed the Chair honoraria rate. Ernest said that it is important to pay the Chair a good rate, as the Chair greatly assists the organization's ability to function.

Lindsay explained that he briefed the IGC on the withdrawal order at the IGC meeting over the weekend, and that he would like to do the same with the Aklavik HTC. He has briefed Greg Komaromi (YG EMR Deputy Minister) who understood it well. The Chair explained the withdrawal order for those not familiar. He said that for controlled development to take place in the area certain conservation tests would have to be met. An arbitration board is in place to be used by IRC, Canada, or GNW if necessary to resolve outstanding disputes between the parties regarding the interpretation or implementation of the IFA. He explained that the entire Yukon North Slope was originally intended to be a National park. The IFA as a consequence of the final negotiations set aside half of the North Slope as a national park.

### **I. Update in the International Porcupine Caribou Board.**

Wendy provided an update to the Council on the International Porcupine Caribou Board. She said that April 2012 was first face to face meeting. A key item discussed at the meeting was giving the Porcupine Technical Committee more structure. There is now a draft TOR for identifying membership, etc. and a draft five- year work plan. There is a Harvest Management Plan (HMP) for Canada now and the group is working toward the US developing their plan. Lindsay asked about the view of the Alaskans on the HMP in Canada: Wendy said they think it's a good plan.

Motion 10-12-04:

*To adjourn the meeting*

Moved by: Ernest Pokiak

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Seconded by: Wendy Nixon.  
Motion carried.