



MEETING MINUTES

WMAC (NS) Quarterly Meeting

Whitehorse, YT, Kwanlin Dun Cultural Center

March 17-19, 2015

Lindsay Staples (Chair) · **Todd Powell** Yukon Government (Member) · **Danny C. Gordon** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) · **Ernest Pokiak** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) · **Chris Hunter** Government of Canada (Member) · **Craig Machtans** Government of Canada (Alternate) · **Jennifer Smith** (Executive Director) · **Christine Cleghorn** (Executive Director) · **Stephanie Muckenheim** Yukon Government, IFA implementation and Projects Coordinator and (Guest)

March 17, 2015

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:10. He welcomed everyone to the meeting and reviewed the agenda for the coming two and half days.

A. Review and Approval of Agenda

Motion 03-15-01

To accept agenda as presented.

Moved by: Danny C Gordon

Seconded by: Chris Hunter

Motion Carried

B. Review and Approval Minutes

The members reviewed the December 2014 minutes.

The Council discussed the importance of flight planning for sheep surveys. Todd said Yukon Government (YG) plans to pass over sites at least three times in order to have confidence in their population estimates. YG is using this model in the Southern Lakes region. Danny noted that there have been some sheep seen on the west side of the Big Fish River. He said two sheep have been harvested by Cache Creek, which is far from their normal range.

Motion 03-15-02

To Accept Minutes as revised, contingent upon further comments from Parks Canada
Moved by: Craig Machtans
Seconded by: Ernest Pokiak
Motion carried.

C. Review of Action Items

The Council reviewed outstanding action items.

Action 07-12-07: To hold a Grizzly bear workshop in Aklavik – The council revised this action and are looking to do a workshop in the fall of 2015, and have asked to carry over supplemental funds allocated for the work into 2015/16. Todd indicated that the technical research report would be peer reviewed shortly, and then it should be ready for external review by management partners.

The technical report on the study is limited to methods and findings. The management implications of the study findings will be brought forward to the council prior to the community workshop. The management options scoping exercise would be held in advance of the workshop.

Danny asked whose mandate it is to make a decision about creating a buffer zone for harvesting around the Park, which would mean that people could harvest 5 -10 miles into the Park with a tag from outside the Park. Lindsay indicated that the matter would fall to the council, its management partners and the Aklavik HTC. Buffers around the ISR boundary, such as overlapping with the Vuntut Gwitchin Traditional Territory are addressed in the IFA through the mechanism of reciprocal harvesting agreement.

Action Item 03-15-01: EDs to circulate reciprocal harvesting agreement correspondence with VGFN from around 15 years ago.

Action 3-13-20: Collaring Workshop: this relates to a workshop held two years ago in Inuvik. These notes are completed and have been sent to Marsha to finalize.

06-13-13 Shingle Point Garbage Options – this information has been compiled and is in the meeting package. This issue could come up again in terms of harvest management of grizzly bears. Danny noted that the problems at Shingle generally happen when people leave. Todd noted that there is one component of the Yukon Wildlife Act that relates to wildlife attractants. Conservation officers have the ability to issue orders for clean up.

Ernest noted that education is always important when it comes to individual responsibility for keeping clean camps. Danny noted that there are 55 cabins now at Shingle Point and that this was a bad year for bears breaking into camps. Approximately 20 buildings were broken into.

D. Correspondence

The Council reviewed all correspondence and discussed the following:

The regulatory changes required to fully bring effect to the Polar Bear MOU have been submitted to the YFWMB.

Action Item 03-15-02: WMAC to send YFWMB letter re administrative change to polar bear MOU. Inform them in the letter that this has already been subject to consultation with the affected parties. Inuvialuit have exclusive harvesting rights for polar bear.

IGC/WMAC (NS)/ WMAC (NWT) letter to Richard Elliott regarding a coordinated approach to polar bear research in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region – this letter was sent after the USGS meeting regarding their recent population estimate for the Southern Beaufort population. Richard’s response indicated that he is willing to work towards a meeting prior to the summer.

Lindsay reminded the Council of the context of quotas and regulations in the NWT, and how the GNWT regulations mirror the HTC bylaws, and thus create an enforceable instrument. Regarding grizzly bears, the WMAC (NWT) is suggesting removing the actual number from the bylaws, and having the bylaw merely state that a harvester must have a tag.

Outgoing Correspondence

Sheep Plan – The Council wrote to the GRRB in response to their letter, indicating that our preference is to put efforts into getting closure on the North Richardson Mountain’s Dall Sheep plan. As Inuvialuit harvest of this population is exceedingly low, the Council did not feel that it would be warranted to recommend a voluntary harvest restriction on Inuvialuit at this time. Todd suggested that a framework for management could be a way to get closure on the plan.

A long-standing action item about fuel-caching on the Yukon North Slope was addressed through a letter to the AHTC. A follow-up letter to the EISC and Yukon Government will be forthcoming regarding cumulative effects assessment, and filling the current gap about taking into account existing fuel caches at one site.

Information Items

Lindsay reviewed the presentation received from Environment Canada about polar bear and ringed seals. He noted that the report speaks to the complexity of the polar bear environment, and the many factors that impact their health and distribution.

Danny noted that the last time he went to Shingle Point there were at least several hundred seals between King Point and Kaye Point. He suspects there must be fish in this area that the seals are harvesting. Ernest noted that when there is no ice, the seals need to go ashore to rest. Sometimes they haul out to sunbathe.

E. Report from Members

Danny C Gordon, IGC – Danny attended the BREA workshop and was impressed by a number of presentations. He talked about the weather modeling predictions that were being presented and was skeptical about the precision that has been applied to some of the modeling. It seems like too much confidence in the predictions – we don't know everything about the weather and it is changing all the time.

Ernest Pokiak, IGC – Attended the BREA reporting out meeting, where there were some good presentations. In particular, he noted the presentation on the Blow Out Preventers. He contemplated the risks associated with deep water drilling, and while trade-offs always have to be made, sometimes the risks are not worth the benefits. He appreciated some of the strong leadership in the closing remarks.

Todd Powell, Yukon Government-Todd updated the Council on a number of issues:
Sheep: Mike is working to set up a monitoring program for this summer, involving a mix of cameras on mineral licks, providing spotting scopes to cabin owners who are proximal to lambing areas, some community-based monitoring, and other initiatives.
The ABOVE project: is getting high-resolution satellite imagery for the entire northwest. Anything derived from this imagery will be publicly available. While this imagery will not be at the right resolution or shot at the right time of year for the ELC project, some of the products of this work might be applicable. It is 40cm coverage of the whole area.
Grizzly bear report: still driving towards a fall workshop.
Polar Bear: MOU changes are underway. YG has developed comments to the ISR plan. Still no further communication about the national SARA plan from Canada.
Peregrine work: will happen across the North Slope on July 21-22 this summer. Todd to call HTC to see about having someone from Aklavik on the survey.

Craig Machtans, Canadian Wildlife Service - Craig noted that the Snow Goose overabundance harvest would be in Environment Canada's next round of regulatory changes. He noted that NTI settled out of court last week for \$255 million, related to CWS's expenditures of land claim-related money. The Inuvialuit have sent a letter to Canada regarding \$200,000 per year of IFA funding that should be spent in the ISR, and asking how this money is in fact being spent.

Lindsay provided a brief history of how Environment Canada allocates money regarding IFA wildlife research spending.

Chris Hunter, Parks Canada-Wild Animals Regulations – given changes in leadership of senior management and other urgent legislative priorities, this initiative has been sitting on the back burner. Re-drafting instructions have not yet been sent to the legislative team. There was a commitment by the Minister that after re-drafting, the document would be referred back to the Inuvialuit organizations prior to going to public consultation; this commitment stands. Permitting individuals to carry firearms in a national park is important for safety but also as an economic opportunity for Inuvialuit beneficiary bear monitors. The Wild Animals Regulations also include a section specific to Inuvialuit subsistence quotas, providing a refresh to the existing regulations that pre-date land claim agreements and do not recognize provisions for harvesting in national parks. In order to fully implement subsistence quotas in Ivvavik, this needs to be addressed. This would also allow penalties to occur under regulations that are less severe than infractions under the National Parks Act.

Action Item 03-15-03: Chris to encourage his Superintendent to raise the issue of Wild-animal regulations with other northern Superintendents. He will follow up with the Council.

Sheep Creek Risk Assessment- From the outcomes of the feasibility report, Parks examined what was realistically feasible given the materials and machinery that are on site for an airstrip expansion. An extra 40m of airstrip would cost over \$260k minimum. A risk assessment was carried out on the airstrip as well. The assessment highlighted numerous single engine failure scenarios, none of which would be improved with the addition of 40m of length. Transport Canada verified that 325 m of additional airstrip length would be required to ensure adequate length for these scenarios under all weather conditions. The assessment went back to the Transport Canada report from the crash in the 70s, and the length of the airstrip was not the issue. Instead of extending the strip, Parks is looking at new markers, doing better maintenance of the strip, a larger windsock, moving the shed off the runway, topping a few trees, and creating a safe zone for passengers while they are watching the plane land.

Ernest commented that if 40 meters would cost \$260,000 or so, would Parks Canada be willing to go ahead with it anyways? He thinks that any extension of the strip would make it safer and leave more room for error. Lindsay responded that report indicated that the extra 40 meters doesn't make the strip substantively safer and that this was not raised as an issue by the Transport Canada and Aklak.

Parks is in the midst of procuring two drones for conservation fieldwork. One fixed wing and one rotary wing. Challenges in some of the monitoring work could be addressed through this. For example, peregrine work where the nests in Ivvavik are widespread. Hiking combined with rotary wing drone could be a good solution. Similarly we have had challenges with Dolly Varden reds counts on the Firth in late season. Danny noted that there are some very deep fish holes on the Firth, which might prove challenging for cameras on drones.

F. Reports from Staff

Traditional Use Study-Christine briefed the Council on progress with the Traditional Use study. The interviews in Aklavik will be concluded at the end of this week. The supplementary funding allocated for this project will be spent out in this fiscal year. We have requested an additional \$123,000 to complete this study by December 31.

BREA- Jennifer presented some of the results from the BREA results forum and directed members to the information in their package.

G. Financial report

Jennifer reviewed the current financial picture. We estimate a carry-over of less than \$1000. Our total budget this year was \$408,000.

Lindsay suggested that it would be timely to discuss how to spend the revenues from the Herschel book at the summer meeting.

Christine reviewed the proposed budget for 2015/16. She explained of our \$215,000 budget, \$185,000 is committed. There is only \$2,500 remaining for projects. If we get supplementary funding then the staff will have more time and we will have more money for projects, especially for completing the TU study and towards polar bear management.

Motion 03-15-03 to accept 2015/16 budget as presented.

Moved by: Todd Powell

Seconded by: Craig Machtans

Motion carried

H. Muskox Framework

Lindsay introduced the framework as the result of a 20- year process. The Yukon Wildlife Act had to be amended to accommodate an Inuvialuit harvest on the Yukon North Slope. There has been considerable work done on the population, surveys of numbers, parasites, and genetics.

Since their introduction there has been considerable movement of muskox into new ranges and it was anticipated that there could be a boom in the population, but that hasn't been the case. There was a decline in the numbers likely due to icing events and grizzly bear predation. There has been extreme flux in this population and there are many management partners and users that complicate the drafting of a management plan.

The Council agreed 15 years ago to generate a plan for the Canadian range of muskox and held numerous meeting with all of the jurisdictions. This effort generated a lot of

information, but it was more feasible to generate a framework for the Yukon North Slope that takes into account jurisdictions in the rest of the range.

There have been many drafts over the years; the current framework is a summary. We would also like to include a supplementary volume of material that includes past workshop results and survey reports. The accompanying document could be available on the WMAC website.

Todd suggested generating a short document on the history of the process to get to the framework. Lindsay suggested this could be included in the supplementary piece.

In the NWT there is no muskox quota in the Delta and harvesters can take as many as they like. The historical harvest has been low.

Todd asked about interest in harvest. Danny said that in his memory there have been two taken in Yukon and 10 in NWT (five for research and five for harvest). Danny said that there is a group of muskox that has been behind Aklavik in the Richardson's for the past number of years.

Action item 03-15-04: collect comments on Muskox framework from Todd and Chris, circulate and finalize at summer meeting. Develop supplementary piece and map work. Once the Council is satisfied that this draft is acceptable, we will circulate to appropriate partners.

Danny said that some people in Aklavik still don't know that they can harvest muskox. It used to be illegal and some people still think that it is, they don't want to get into trouble.

Jen suggested that when we meet in Aklavik to present and explain the framework.

Meeting adjourned at 4:30pm

Wednesday March 18, 2015

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:15am.

I. Circumpolar Action Plan (CAP)

The Council talked about the CAP at a high level and will draft and circulate comments.

****Ramona Maraj, Tom Jung, Barb Coppard, and Stephanie Muckenheim joined the meeting****

J. Chair's Report

USGS meeting briefing – The meeting occurred in Vancouver in early January in response to a paper published on the Southern Beaufort (SB) polar bear population. It got wide-spread coverage by media who focused on a 40% decline in the population. NSB, USGS, USFWS, WMACs, YG, NWT, EC and IGC were all there. Environment Canada participants include Basile Von Havre from the population conservation unit and Richard Elliot and Evan Richardson from the science and tech branch. Evan Richardson was one of the authors of the report.

One day of the meeting was focused on the USGS paper and a technical brief on the modeling and technique that was used. Ramona's participation was valuable during the meeting.

Ramona, Marsha Branigan and Jodie Pongracz participated in the technical discussion on the Canadian-side. Eric Regher contributed technical comments as well as USGS. Major concerns were raised with the paper. There was strong merit in having a formal response to the paper. The reason for the formal response is to correct some of the misconceptions in the media from the release of the first paper and to address some of the shortcomings of the paper.

GNWT, IGC, WMAC(NWT) are working together on a response. The key people to organize this response are Ramona, Jodie and Marsha, and WMAC staff or chairs sitting in to assist in organizing it.

Lindsay asked Ramona to describe what a response would look like.

Ramona described the key issues in the paper as the relationship with the population effort and capture effort, suggesting there is likely a strong bias toward negative bias.

She discussed the feasibility to do reanalysis of the data. Two options would be to 1) write a letter to the editor in the form of a rebuttal, 2) a reanalysis of the data, which would be more involved.

The original reviewers weren't privy to the search effort information on the Canadian-side, so the reviewers wouldn't have been able to detect some of the issues.

The lack of notification about the release of the report was also an issue that was addressed at the meeting. There was no opportunity to provide critical comment on the paper prior to its release. The lack of standing of management authorities in receiving advanced notice was discussed.

Also a large part of the report was dependent on Canadian data and there was no opportunity to review how this data was being used.

Data sharing was also addressed as an issue. Skelton protocols were developed during the meeting for communications and protocols for data sharing.

The outcome is that working groups would bring forward work on protocols at the Inuvialuit-Inupiat polar bear meeting in August.

Action item 03-15-05: organize a teleconference between Ramona, Marsha, Jodie to discuss a response to the USGS paper.

Lindsay explained that a letter was subsequently sent to Richard Elliot at EC from the Chairs of the WMACs and IGC to host a Canadian meeting to address internal issues regarding the role of the department in the authorship of the paper and the mandate of EC in conducting polar bear research.

Christine added that a communications strategy has been developed for sharing papers and press releases. This has resulted in more effective notice to date of USGS publications.

The SB polar bear population is in the media's eye, just as the South Hudson Bay and Davis Strait populations have been. We can expect that SB will have increasing public scrutiny on it.

Polar Bear Technical Committee (PBTC) meeting -Was hosted in Labrador, Goose Bay. Christine and Lindsay both attended.

Lindsay explained that the main function of PBTC meetings is to assess and recommend the population status on each of Canada's 13 polar bear populations.

Yukon, Manitoba and Quebec were not able to attend the meeting and PBTC does not allow jurisdictions to call into the meeting. The reason for not allowing call-ins is that it is a complicated discussion and it is too difficult to do it over the phone. PBTC recommended that any jurisdiction not in attendance at PBTC could not raise the issue at PBAC.

The two PBTC co-chairs sent a letter to PBAC indicating that PBTC members must be present at face-to-face meetings.

The new USGS assessment was not included in the PBTC status table discussion as the committee was not in receipt of the study in advance of the meeting. For the next meeting in 2015, the USGS will be included along with the ISR PBTK report in the SB population status assessment. It was discussed that the North Slope Borough should be added to the PBTC as ex officio and have them in attendance at next PBTC meeting.

WMAAC(NS) is hosting PBTC in Whitehorse next year.

Todd assured the council that Yukon does take the polar bear file seriously and plans to have participation in polar bear meetings, now and in future meetings. YG is limited in resources and so is risk managing.

Lindsay suggested that with regard to financing participation at PBTC and PBAC meetings, YG could consider supplemental IFA implementation fund requests to offset some of these costs. Inuvialuit have exclusive right to harvest polar bear and so this is an obligation arising solely from the IFA harvesting rights.

Todd indicated that it is more of a resource management issue for YG and not a money issue.

Ernest spoke about the importance of the polar bear issue and how it is not going to go away and resources have to be made available for polar bear management.

Craig reiterated that the consequence of not attending the PBTC is that you become more of an observer at the PBAC.

Polar Bear Traditional Knowledge report

The TK guidelines will be available soon. The guidelines are an outcome of the report and a guiding document arising from this work with respect to lessons learned and best practices.

Stephen and Peter produced the document and had it peer reviewed by a large audience. The document produced is 120 pages and covers a broad set of recommended practices, including how to map TK, how to ask interview questions and how to differentiate TK-based knowledge from science-based knowledge.

The hope is to take the document that they generated and distil it to a user manual and guidelines for the ISR.

Action 03-15-06: circulate the TK guidelines to members, then distil it into a user manual. Circulate to other IFA bodies and provide a covering letter.

EIRB Review of Deep-water Drilling

Conoco Phillips has pulled out of the Beaufort, although Chevron and Imperial maintain an interest, with every sign that they will proceed.

Imperial is working with the IGC on completing worst-case scenarios and the NEB is looking at the question of equivalencies that might substitute for same season relief wells.

There is a lot of international attention on this review. The National Resources Defence Council is an active intervener and the EIRB registry has all of the interveners listed. No review activity affecting the Council is expected in 2015/16.

It is expected that Chevron and Imperial will be requested an extension on their leases through to 2020 due to delays, for their drilling program.

****Nicole McCutchen arrived at 10:20****

Lindsay mentioned the arctic effort to create a guideline for the collection of TK nationally.

K. ISR Polar Bear Plan

****Marsha Branigan called in at 10:40am ****

Marsha explained that the plan has been sent to the WMACs and then it will go out for public comment and then a community tour.

The WMAC (NWT) reviewed it and commented that section 4.3 on management actions had too much detail. GNWT thought about paring the list back and putting it into a separate document. Tom Jung (YG) suggested that a table could be used or put it into an appendix. Tom prefers to have it in there but have it shortened and a table might be the answer.

Marsha explained that the ISR plan will become part of the national plan and it would be helpful for the two WMACs to provide substantive comments at this stage. She explained that a general species-wide template is being used but it could be modified.

Chris asked if there have been discussions nationally on aligning objectives to make a stronger plan for international community. Marsha commented that it would be difficult to undertake this because the different jurisdictions have different interests as it related to harvest and management strategies. The draft management objectives and approaches were taken to the communities last summer and to the WMACs.

The threat calculator was used to inform the document, but it is no longer in the document.

Marsha is hoping that someone from WMAC(NS) can come on the tour to Aklavik, if not the whole tour.

Lindsay asked about authorship and sign-off. Marsha said that a separate table contained the proposed plan actions. People need to look closely at the table to see if they are willing to take on actions where names are identified. The timeline for comments is April.

Comments from members:

- page 1 table label should change to ISR, not NWT; change all references to tables in the plan to ISR.
- Tom indicated that YG remains comfortable and supportive of doing a plan and a good approach to doing this is to break it out by polar bear subpopulation.
- MB said that under their legislation YG could sign it. Tom indicated that there would have to be a change in the NWT process for YG to be a co-partner and sign off on it.

Lindsay explained that this process is being driven by two pieces of legislation – the NWT SARA obligation and the Canadian SARA obligation for a national polar bear management plan. Right now the drafting is largely responsive to the NWT SARA driver.

Tom indicated that YG would endorse the plan, and send a letter of support upon acceptable final review.

Lindsay suggested including a section in the plan that described the distinction between endorsement and sign-off. He suggested that sign-off is a commitment to implement the measures identified in the plan. Endorsement could mean, agreement with the plan's goals, objectives and approaches and that no actions would be taken that could impede those goals and objectives. Endorsement falls short of a commitment to implement actions in the plan.

Marsha mentioned that the GNWT mandate was to develop a NWT plan, but they got direction to do a joint ISR-wide plan and this is the first species through the NWT –SARA process.

Tom reinforced the idea of having an opening paragraph that provides background: the rationale for the plan with references to the legal basis for its development; and, an explanation of plan endorsement and sign-off.

Ernest asked if all the jurisdictions could work to sign this off in a way that provides for the best management of the species.

Christine suggested that they could use the polar bear management graphic in the document developed for WMAC(NS).

**** Marsha left the meeting by phone***

Comments on sign off-

- Craig said that in addition to proposed language for endorsement, it could clearly state the commitments of Yukon to management of Southern Beaufort polar bears. He suggested that the Yukon's commitment should be transparent and not assumed. Tom indicated that Yukon could also convey that message to GNWT.

Nicole mentioned that this plan is actually not a GNWT plan, but it's a Council of Management Authorities (CMA) plan for species-at-risk. The CMA secretariat is housed within GNWT, but it is independent. CMA limits the scope to parties of the CMA and YG is not a member.

Nicole suggested removing the sign-off section and looking at whether the plan works for both jurisdictions and for management of the species.

Tom suggested it would be helpful to have a workshop at a national level to understand the goals and objectives of the broader federal Canada-wide plan.

Action Item 03-15-07: Draft a joint letter between GNWT, YG and WMACs to discuss the foundational piece (goals and objectives of the national plan)

Lindsay noted that our comments need to address the description of the WMAC(NS) mandate. Given our mandate and that we are already actively participating in the file, there is a strong argument for the Council to sign-off on the plan. Lindsay asked members to think about this. Some members indicated that WMAC(NS) as a signatory to the plan is a good idea.

Todd reiterated the need to delineate the sub-populations for polar bears and indicate how the threats or pressures on the different subpopulations line-up.

****Deana Lemke and Kelly Milner joined the meeting at 1:10****

L. Porcupine Caribou Management Board briefing

Lindsay welcomed Deana Lemke and Kelly Miller to the meeting to discuss the PCMB.

Deana briefly reviewed the mandate and responsibilities of the Porcupine Caribou Management Board. Her experience over many years with the PCMB is that WMAC(NS) is a reliable and valued partner. We are a partner and stakeholder in the work that they do though we are not officially a party.

She explained the harvest management plan (HMP) and the history of it. The herd numbers were thought to be low, but traditional knowledge was saying something different and the PCMB is currently looking at ways of incorporating that information..

She described the HMP and implementation tasks. The annual harvest meetings are held alternating from Dawson to Inuvik.

The Board has better harvest data than it's ever had, but there are still holes in it. It is up to the parties to determine how to collect it and for them to submit it.

There have been some challenges with the participation of IGC. The data has been lacking and not timely. GNWT provided some funding to IGC to help with the collection of data. 2920 is the total estimated harvest this year, but there was not a lot of access to the herd this year.

A big part of the PCMB work is on communications and we are focusing on how to assist parties in getting verifiable and rigorous data.

Kelly explained the focus of communications materials of the PCMB: use TK and hunter assessment through body assessment; creating scorecards; rebranding of the PCMB and becoming recognizable; and simplifying management messaging into graphics and easy to understand info.

The PCMB has a new website that has undergone a significant overhaul. Great feedback has been received and has been paired with social media.

Deana talked about the transition from the management plan to the Board's strategic framework. There was a review and update last month at the annual harvest meeting.

The annual summary report was sent out from the PBTC for review and to make any further additions or submissions. The PBTC falls under the International Porcupine Management Agreement.

The Porcupine herd is the most studied herd of any caribou herd. The international board was reactivated a few years ago. Joe Tetlich, chair of the PCBM, sits on the international board. This is an encouraging step as far as cooperative management with Alaska.

It is almost time for a review of the implementation plan. This matter will be discussed in May in Old Crow for caribou days along with management issues and successes.

In the future, the Board will encourage the development of native user agreements. While this isn't a responsibility of the PCMB, the management circumstance would be stronger if these agreements were concluded.

PCMB will also be coordinating a meeting about computer modeling. This meeting would help to explain what modeling is, how it works, its strengths and challenges.

Chris asked about interest in commercial filming. What kind of role does the PCMB have in shaping or directing the messaging in some of these productions? For instance, the board could develop generic guidelines for filming that could apply to the herd. Notwithstanding permits from regulators, these would be factored into the decisions around the filming. Deena responded that the PCMB commented in the YESAA process. PCMB asked BBC this year if BBC would share their footage with the PCMB to use for education purposes.

Lindsay noted the interest and the requirements under the implementation plan for harvest reporting, and that this responsibility sits with the Joint Secretariat. He committed to raising this with the Joint Secretariat again. He noted that changes in the CBM program and the decision to focus efforts moving forward on harvest reporting. CBM will basically be a harvest-reporting program across all six communities. It is likely that this will start to be implemented in the fall. Hopefully for next year the harvest reporting situation will be improved from this year.

Lindsay offered to share the notes from the collaring workshop that was held in Inuvik in 2013.

He also reminded Deena about the work that Mike would be doing on the eastern North Slope this year about how the herd uses this part of its range. This information will obviously be of interest to the PCMB, and will also be an important piece of research to feed into our efforts to revise the Wildlife Conservation and Management Plan.

Deena noted that the PCMB's future focus is on habitat for the herd. While this is their interest, the Board itself does not have the capacity or mandate to do significant work in this area. They are also interested in cumulative effects, and are engaging with Don Russell to do some work in this area (looking at the range of the herd and where the pressure points are going to be). Deena readily agreed to share this information with us. There will likely be a workshop focused on his work when it is completed.

Jennifer asked how valuable the ABK data is for the PCMB in managing the herd. Deena responded that while there are limitations to the data, it is valuable for the Board.

Break 2:30pm. Celery sticks with Cheez Whiz, smoked salmon, and warm apple pie arrived.

M. CBM

Lindsay briefly updated the Council on the status of the community-based monitoring program, and the emphasis moving forward on harvest data. A new Coordinator will be recruited, and a firm or individual will design the survey.

He noted that harvest data is also collected for compensation purposes under section 13 of the IFA.

Todd indicated that connecting the importance of collecting harvest data with the community's feelings of burnout about giving data is a challenge that is tricky to solve.

Lindsay noted that the Inuvialuit harvest study is still a valuable source of harvest data that can be applied in a variety of decision-making fora if needed. Danny noted that the harvest study work was very valuable, although it could have been better targeted.

N. IFA Research Funds

Todd indicated that YG had previously suggested \$25k in its IFA wildlife programs budget for the Ecological Land Classification (ELC). This was at a time that there was greater uncertainty about how much money would be required for sheep work in the Northern Richardson Mountains. They are now comfortable that \$8000 is a reasonable contribution to sheep work. YG is further able to commit \$50,000 towards the ELC, with \$25,000 earmarked for fuel.

Todd noted that the need is for 22-25 fuel drums at the Blow River site. This would be managed by bringing in drums 5 at a time every few days, and backhauling empty drums at the same time.

Danny and Ernest endorsed the DC-3 as a reliable bush plane, and that Todd should investigate if Aklak would use their DC-3 in moving fuel for the ELC project.

Jennifer updated the Council on the ABEK strategic plan. Craig asked questions of clarification about the role of board members within the ABEK organization. Danny commented that at the beginning the program had a lot of momentum. This seems to have changed in the last six years or so. Several members commented on the important coordinating role that Environment Canada plays for ABEK. Lindsay noted that the governance of ABEK has always been challenging, since it is not a part of the governance framework that is set up in the claims. He reminded the Council of Deena's comments regarding the importance of the caribou data to the PCMB.

****Lindsay left the meeting because of another commitment with the CBM Steering Committee****

Motion 03-15-04: to accept IFA funding table as presented, for 2015 with the caveat that we receive a 2-3-page statement from ABEK of the program's utility, potential, and roles and responsibilities within the organization. Includes \$15,000 towards Borderlands, \$50,000 ELC, \$47,000 Porcupine Caribou North Slope Use, \$8,000 Dall's Sheep, \$8,000 Polar Bear analysis.

Moved by: Craig

Seconded by: Todd

Motion carried

O. Wolverine SARA Plan

Craig explained that Wolverine was re-assessed by COSEWIC, which means it is eligible for re-examination under the Species at Risk Act. It used to be divided into two sub-populations (eastern and western). Now the two populations have been merged into one population for management purposes. While there are genetic differences in wolverine across Canada, COSEWIC analysis indicates that these differences are not sufficiently significant to merit management by subpopulation. From the purposes of the new report, they basically say that the populations are about the same as they were in the last three generations, which means that it doesn't get a high rating under the SAR Act. As a species of Special Concern there has to be some consultation with land claims boards and for feedback on the listing process. Usually there are a few rounds of consultation and feedback. From Craig's perspective, this is the only mammal assessment report he has read and it made extensive use of traditional knowledge. All the fur return numbers from the last 20 years are also included in the report.

It is estimated that there are over 10,000 wolverines in Canada. One generation is considered 12 years. The report indicates that there are 3500-4500 wolverine in the Yukon.

Craig asked if the Council has concerns about listing this species as a species of Special Concern.

The numbers are stable in the Yukon and NWT. Craig noted that the link between the assessment report and the status could be related to the population information not being well known in some area. Most of the information comes from trapping information. There seems to be lots of traditional knowledge that also supports management. However, since there are problems in some parts of the range, this might be the most prudent designation. Since caribou have declined in some parts of the wolverine range, and that is a major food source for wolverine, there is some concern about its future stability. There are different threats to the wolverine at different parts of their range. Todd commented that Yukon would support the listing as a general concept, but let's make sure that the management plan focuses on where the problem is.

Chris pointed out that it is not clear in the document how COSEWIC arrived at Special Concern.

Danny agreed that the population is strong in the Delta. Danny wants to speak to the Aklavik HTC about this in the interim. Ernest also wishes to speak to the HTC in Tuk on this issue as well. Danny questioned the idea that wolverine eat caribou. He wondered if they were just pushing wolves off the caribou kills.

Todd noted that this is the one window to consider socioeconomic effects in the SAR process.

The Council decided to discuss this at our summer meeting, after members have a chance to review the materials. The deadline for comments is October 15, 2015.

Meeting adjourned for the day at 4:58pm.

March 18, 2015

Lindsay briefed the council about the CBM call he had yesterday. Three decisions were made in the course of the meeting:

- 1- not to accept proposal from Kavik-Axys for the harvest proposal design
- 2- to move toward replacing Jennifer Knopp so that there is a new coordinator in place
- 3- to put together terms of reference for a firm or firms to be invited to do a design for a harvest study

Lindsay further reported that John Donihee is presently working on the legal opinion regarding the mandate of the Environmental Impact Screening Committee.

P. Parks Canada update

Staffing: Chris indicated that there continues to be some shifts in staffing at the Western Arctic Unit. Diane Wilson is back in three weeks. Melissa Lennie from Inuvik is acting in the Visitor Experience position for an undetermined amount of time.

Innovation lab– Parks wants to bring together various perspectives about caribou research in a way that will refresh our perspective and explore better ways of doing things. This will likely be in early February 2016, and focus on northern caribou herds in Canada. They have consulted with various individuals and agencies to date. Council members were generally supportive of this initiative, and asked for more information.

Google Streetview – Ivvavik hikes will be on Google street view next week.

Student on Ice – WAFU was able to get two students onto this voyage in the past year.

BBC – Great Race production. This has likely completed both environmental assessment processes. Expecting a decision letter from YESAA. Parks staff will accompany the film crew the entire time. BBC has the technology to film the caribou from a great distance. AHTC supports the project. They are looking for community benefit – they want someone on the ground, and they want the final production to reflect Aklavik's worldview and the importance of caribou to the community. Parks shares their view that this is an important part of the story.

Sheep Creek – the new name is Imniarvik, which means, "Where you harvest sheep." Ernest noted that it is a silent 'r'.

*****Birch Howard and Jay Frandsen joined from Parks Canada 9:43am*****

Monitoring Program Jay spoke to the remote camera-monitoring program in Ivvavik NP. The rationale for the program is to monitor elusive carnivores, it is non-invasive, cost-effective, and it integrates well with what the Mountain parks are doing.

He showed photos of the two ways to set up the camera- by tethering to a tree or to a length of iron. 29 camera locations were active during 2014 field season. 21 of these were randomly positioned in the Firth Corridor and were used for recording species observations. 10 mammal species have been observed. Carnivore monitoring is designed to focus on grizzly bears (although all data has potential for monitoring other Ecological Integrity indicators and measures.

The development of a carnivore occupancy model is being attempted for INP. Yet to be seen if a viable statistical model can be used for Grizzly Bear occupancy in Ivvavik NP. Each camera is programmed to take a photo daily at 12:00am for its entire operation, and includes the temperature when a photo is taken. Can provide temporal and visual data for all seasons.

In 2014, 648 identifiable wildlife observations were made. Some cameras became inoperable due to wildlife interference with them. Caribou were overwhelmingly the species captured. Eight cameras were damaged and two went missing.

Challenges include designing a statistically viable model for either carnivore occupancy or abundance. The migrating caribou herd poses a challenge because the bears tend to follow the herd.

Improvements for the 2015 season include trying to decrease the perceptibility of the cameras so that animals are less likely to notice them, enclosing the cameras in heavy-duty steel enclosures, and to continue improving the modeling work.

Danny noted that setting up cameras like this could also work on the east side of the Babbage. He noted that setting up cameras to look at the peregrine nests on the cliffs on the Babbage would be an opportunity to learn a lot.

The Council looks forward to seeing the power analysis, with an eye to the suitability and applicability of this program on Herschel.

******Jay Frandsen left the meeting ******

Birch Howard introduced himself. He works for Parks Canada in enforcement. Prior to 2009, wardens didn't have a sidearm. Since then, Federal Cabinet said that there could be up to 100 Park Wardens armed. Currently there are about 70 wardens who are armed. They are designated as Park Wardens under the National Parks Act. This same Act allows for Peace Officers from other jurisdictions to be designated to enforce the

law in National Parks. Parks is proposing cross-appointments for Yukon Conservation Officers. This is precedent setting, and sets the groundwork for future designations. Yukon is a logical place for this to work for a number of reasons. We are proposing this because we are already able to enforce the Wildlife Act in the Yukon, with certain stipulations. Three reasons for this:

- 1- efficiencies – for only two officers, it’s a stretch for us to cover this area. Responses to law enforcement can be delayed. It would be more efficient if we could get assistance from other jurisdictions.
- 2- Officer safety – partnering helps others and us. We have Peace Officer status when we are outside the Parks; the idea is that we could help them as well. Often we have to do patrols solo.
- 3- Resource protection – additional peace officers with training and authority to respond to natural resource crimes helps everyone.

Key details:

- Ensure First Nations and Inuvialuit rights are protected.
- Yukon COs would only enforce the National Parks Act during operations that involve a Park Warden, or when requested by a Park Warden.
- Would also have the authority to enforce the Parks Act in the course of their regular duties.
- Could take actions to stop offences from occurring, or take action to stop it from continuing.
- If it was an offense that involved an Inuvialuit or First Nation person, they would not take any action except asking the person for identification and permits, tags, etc.
- In all cases, COs would follow Parks Canada policies, the IFA, and First Nation Final Agreements.
- There would be a significant training component.

Law Enforcement Branch has been in conversation with Yukon. There is agreement to look into the possibilities of these cross appointments. Therefore we are broadening the conversation. If there is agreement that this is a valuable initiative, there would be a letter of agreement between Yukon and Parks Canada and a letter to the Minister of Environment (Canada) to cross-appoint. It is ultimately the Minister’s decision. There is also a role for the IGC in this discussion.

Lindsay pointed out that this discussion has occurred in the past. Plan to revisit this at the summer meeting, with the idea of including in our letter a comment about inadequately resourcing Parks. Chris will brief us in the summer about how consultations with the IGC went.

****11:21 Birch Howard left the meeting****

Chris briefed the Council regarding the camping trips this summer. They are looking for cooks and hosts in Aklavik, and Chris noted that each cultural host and cook and the ACC won a tourism award, recognizing their effort and excellent on those trips last year. 11 trips are planned for this year. 41 or 50% of spots are already sold for this year.

Planning – A new directive for management planning came out last winter. Ivavik is due for a new management plan in 2016, so we need to start this work now. There will be a new template for this – it will likely be a 10-12 page document.

Accommodations – Staff are going to install six wall tents, on pads, this year. These are customized from MacPherson tents, and we are treating this as a pilot project. These are also easier to transport on an otter.

Nationally, Parks Canada received 2.6 billion in infrastructure money. We also have a massive infrastructure issues. The Western Arctic field unit we received modest funding to continue to make improvements at Sheep Creek. We can modify the cookhouse a bit, creating a more efficient space, and a complete upgrade of the bunkhouse. We will also create a better space for artifacts.

Research – Chris indicated that Hugues Lantuit and the Alfred Werner Institute are planning a major program on the Yukon Coast. Chris will encourage them to be in touch with the Aklavik HTC and the Council.

EI Monitoring – We now have two indicators (Freshwater and Tundra), with five measures each. Coast has been dropped as an indicator, although shoreline change will be pursued through the Geological Survey of Canada. Coastal habitat change work regarding Porcupine Caribou Habitat – the remote sensing aspect we still want to fund, but we will do this outside of the core-monitoring program. We still have a line for conservation science we can draw from. The ground transects that we just set up as a pilot will be dropped entirely.

Q. Traditional use study

Christine briefed the council that Peter Armitage has finished the interviews; he completed 40 interviews. He worked with Judy Salmio under the HTC and the administrative arrangements established between the council and the HTC. Peter and Steven Kilburn will start the data analysis and map work in the coming fiscal. A 'lifemap' will be provided back to the interviewees at the end of it that represents their information back to us. We should have a draft ready for the Dec meeting.

R. PBTK media strategy

The PBTK report is currently being printed. We are having 300 copies printed. We are working with Kelly Milner on this for the PBTK release. The release will be March 30, it will be available on our website. Press releases of support are coming from Makivik,

Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, North Slope Borough, and the reach of the press release is international. We have targeted places to send this to.

Larry will likely be the spokesperson primed with key messages and two podcasts before the end of April. Will communicate this to USGS in advance as per protocol.

Jen reported on BREA. It was a significant meeting. Reporting on four years of work and \$21.8 million. Goal was to have efficient and effective oil and gas regulations for the offshore. It was basically a major data collection effort for fisheries, ice, weather, and data storage and data portals. There was a commitment from BREA to have this available on their website, and the data available through the polar data catalogue.

Two community priority areas for research were polar bears in the offshore, and a beluga monitoring project led by Lisa Loseto (DFO). Also an oil spill response curriculum was developed and is going to be delivered through Aurora College.

General feeling was that this initiative went about 40% of the way to meeting the information requirements. There was a resolution at the end to draft a proposal for "BREA 2", which would take the research programs the rest of the way.

S. North Slope Conference

The conference is set for Whitehorse in Oct. The draft conference theme is Traditional knowledge: best practices in research and management. The three days would focus around: Best practices for TK, TU on the North Slope and beyond.

It would be a combination workshop / conference so it can be limited in size and also hands on. There will be working groups and the intent would be to come out of the conference with recommendations. The three main topic areas include: 1)best practices in TK, 2)intuitional prejudices in the treatment of Tk, 3) resolving differences and addressing disagreements in science and TK.

The Council was supportive of the theme and decided to flesh out a draft program to consideration at the summer meeting. North Slope conservation award recipients will be determined at the summer meeting.

A. Summer Meeting Options

The staff presented the options: Herschel, Sheep Creek. The council decided that earlier would be better, the office will scope out options.

Motion 03-15-05: to adjourn the meeting.

Moved by: Danny

Seconded by: Chris

Motion Carried.