



Wildlife Watch

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL (NORTH SLOPE)

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

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WMAC(NS) Plans Long-term Research

The Wildlife Management Advisory Council (North Slope) hopes to have a long-term research plan completed by the summer or fall of 1998. Long-term research planning is a priority under WMAC(NS)'s *Yukon North Slope Wildlife Conservation and Management Plan* in order to move beyond year-by-year planning, WMAC(NS) Chair Lindsay Staples explained at the recent North Slope Conference.

"We're moving into a new type of research that takes us beyond species-specific management and planning into ecosystem research."

Workshops set the stage

The Council has held two workshops to help develop a 10-year research plan, one in the spring of 1997 and one in October, following the North Slope Conference.

Both workshops included representatives from agencies in the Yukon, the Northwest Territories, and Alaska, as well as people from the communities.

People at the workshops listed areas in which they felt more research is necessary. They also began the work of establishing which research is most urgently needed.

Communities consulted

In December, WMAC(NS)'s Intern, Mike Gill, travelled to Inuvik and Aklavik to gather community comment on long-term research planning. Gill had previously helped organize and conduct the October planning workshop.

During his trip, Gill met with 34 people, including representatives of the Inuvik and Aklavik Hunters and Trappers Committees, the Joint Secretariat, the Aklavik School, and the Gwich'in Renewable Resource Board, as well as various government agencies.

Gill has also produced a gap analysis of past Yukon North Slope research, in order to determine where the greatest need for information lies.

Draft plan in the works

Gill is currently working on the draft long-term research plan for the Yukon North Slope.

The draft plan will be ready for review and comment this spring. Once review is complete, the revised plan should be ready for implementation by the fall.

Muskox, Grizzly Bear On WMAC(NS) Agenda

Management plans for the muskox and grizzly bear populations of the Yukon North Slope were on the agenda when the Wildlife Management Advisory Council (North Slope) met in Whitehorse in January.

At its quarterly meeting, January 6-8, WMAC(NS) decided that a draft management plan for muskox will be presented to communities in the Yukon for consultation in February.

The Council's goal is to complete the review and any necessary changes by the end of February. The revised plan will be recommended to the

Inuvialuit Game Council and the Yukon Government.

If the process goes according to schedule, five tags for hunting muskox should be available to Inuvialuit hunters in March.

An aerial survey and composition count of North Slope muskox will be conducted in April in order to update population information on the animals.

Grizzly plan approved

The Council also reviewed and recommended a draft of the Grizzly Bear Co-Management Plan for the Inuvialuit Settlement Region.

The co-management plan was developed by the Government of the Northwest Territories, in consultation with other agencies and the communities.

Now that WMAC(NS) and WMAC(NWT) have both approved the plan, it goes back to the Government of the Northwest Territories for adoption and implementation.

Yukon Wildlife Act to be amended

The Yukon Government has set a timetable for amending the Yukon Wildlife Act to bring it into conformity with the Inuvialuit Final Agreement.

A working group, including representatives of the Inuvialuit

Game Council, WMAC(NS), and the Yukon government, will review the Act and develop draft amendments by April.

Consultation will take place in April and May, and the revised amendments will be taken to the Yukon Legislature in the fall of 1998.

Two projects funded

The Council recommended funding for two new projects in the ISR.

In March, Danny C. Gordon will spend 12 days travelling by snow machine on the Yukon North Slope. He will survey moose, muskox, and several ecological indicators, such as snow conditions. Funds were also approved for a project on the status of traditional knowledge on the Yukon North Slope. An Inuvik researcher will review existing material to document what traditional knowledge has already been collected and recorded.



Among the materials the researcher will review are taped interviews with elders, recorded years ago during the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry and COPE land claims work.

Bear drawing courtesy of Michael Ramsey's web page at <http://esther.la.asu.edu/personnel/ramsey/>

Wildlife Management Advisory Council (North Slope)

- **Inuvialuit Game Council:** Danny C. Gordon; Herbert Felix; Alternates: Billy Archie, and Carol Arey
- **Government of Canada:** Joan Eamer, Canadian Wildlife Service; Alternate: Alan Fehr, Parks Canada

- **Government of Yukon:** Brian Pelchat, Renewable Resources; Alternate: Dorothy Cooley, Renewable Resources
- **Chairperson:** Lindsay Staples
- **Secretariat:** Aileen Horler

For more information, please contact us at: WMAC (NS), P.O. Box 5928, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 5L6
Tel: (867) 633-5476 Fax: (867) 633-6900

Email: wmacns@web.net Website: www.taiga.net/wmac