



Wildlife Watch

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL (NORTH SLOPE)
COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Volume 8, Number 3

April 1998

Knowledge Co-op Takes A New Name

At its third Annual Gathering, held in Inuvik March 23-25, the Northern Yukon Ecological Knowledge Co-operative took a new name—the Arctic Borderlands Ecological Knowledge Co-operative.

The change of name is a sign of success. In slightly over two years, the Co-op has expanded to include communities and organizations in Alaska and the Northwest Territories, as well as in the Yukon.

Knowledge Co-op members include federal and territorial governments, Inuvialuit and First Nations agencies and communities, and co-management bodies like the Wildlife Management Advisory Council (North Slope). The Co-op's purpose is to use scientific, traditional, and local knowledge to track environmental change.

As part of the Canadian government's national Ecological Monitoring and Assessment Network (EMAN), the Knowledge Co-op is linked to similar organizations across Canada and around the world.

Past and future on the agenda

Thirty-seven people took part in the three-day Gathering. They discussed the work of the past year, plans for the coming year, and ways to raise money to cover Co-op expenses.

Scott Gilbert reviewed the past year's work on indicators, the things previous Gatherings had identified as ways to track changes in the environment. Several indicators were added to the list, including fur prices, human-bear interactions, humans on the land, ice thickness, and monitoring of ultra-violet light.

Last year's Gathering suggested monitoring the phases of ice melt on lakes. Gilbert reported that information was not available on ice melt. However, since several people considered it important information, the Co-op

Study tracks wolverine range

A Yukon government study of North Slope wolverines indicates that male wolverines' home territories are much larger than those of females.



In 1993, Yukon biologists put radio collars on 13 wolverines. They were able to calculate home territories for six of the animals, two females and four males. The average home range of the males was almost twice the size of the females' home range. Blood samples from eight of the animals were tested for a number of diseases. Four of the five males tested positive for canine distemper, while none of the females showed signs of the disease. The biologists suspect the males' larger ranges expose them to more disease and mortality.

For more information about the study, contact the Yukon Department of Renewable Resources.

will explore the possibility of setting up trial studies in a few communities.

Community monitors report

The Gathering heard reports from the four community monitors who have been collecting information in three northern communities: Carol Arey and Dolly Peterson in Aklavik, Roberta Alexie in Fort McPherson, and Ellen Blake in Old Crow.

Gary Kofinas, who helped organize the community monitoring project, offered a number of recommendations for improving it, including planning as far ahead as possible, having local organizations take care of hiring, and running training workshops for the interviewers.

Aklavik HTC's research priorities

The Aklavik Hunters and Trappers Committee has set its own list of research priorities and submitted them to WMAC(NS).

Many of the priorities are being addressed through the work of the Eco Knowledge Co-op. Among those are monitoring of climate change, monitoring water quality and quantity, and studying bear-human interactions.

The Co-op's community monitoring program covers several other Aklavik research priorities, including the monitoring of animal health and condition.

New sources of money needed

The Co-op's finances were the subject of a lengthy discussion that extended into an unplanned evening meeting.

The Co-op's 1997-98 budget totaled \$64,870, of which \$36,000 came from Environment Canada.

However, participants were told that Environment Canada does not have the resources to maintain this level of funding indefinitely.

Debbie van de Wetering gave a brief overview of the advantages and disadvantages of applying for Charity Status.

Charity status important

After considerable discussion, participants in the Gathering concluded that charity status is important to the continued operation of the Co-op because it will provide opportunities to obtain funding.

So that charity status can be pursued immediately, three Co-op members agreed to act as members of the board - Joe Tetlich of Old Crow, Joan Eamer of Environment Canada, and Billy Archie of Aklavik.

Sources of Co-op Funding in 1997-98

Note: The totals listed here do not include salaries.

Environment Canada (total \$36,000)	
• IFA Wildlife Conservation Project	\$15,000
• Funding from EMAN	12,000
• Other departmental funding	9,870
Yukon Government	
• IFA Wildlife Management Programs	5,000
Government of Northwest Territories	5,000
WMAC(NS)	3,000
Northern Contaminants Program (federal government)	12,000
Northern Research Institute (grant for Old Crow plant monitoring)	3,000
TOTAL	\$64,870

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

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