



Wildlife Management Advisory Council (North Slope)

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MINUTES

WMAC(NS) Teleconference

April 24, 1997

Present: Lindsay Staples - Chair
John Russell - YTG Renewable Resources, Member-Government of Yukon

Billy Archie- Member -Inuvialuit Game Council
Nelson Green - Member -Inuvialuit Game Council
Vicki Sahanatien -Parks Canada, Alternate- Government of Canada
Dorothy Cooley - YTG Renewable Resources, Alternate-Government of Yukon
Joan Eamer - Canadian Wildlife Service
Aileen Horler - Secretariat (recording secretary)

A. Approval of agenda

The Chair reviewed the agenda. A request was made to add an item regarding the dates for the next WMAC(NS) meeting.

Motion
to adopt the agenda

Moved: Joan Eamer
Seconded: Nelson Green
Motion carried

B. Yukon North Slope Conference

The Chair reported that the conference is organized and hosted by the Yukon Government. The Council needs to recommend to the Yukon Government a date, location and theme. The Game Council and the Yukon alternate the responsibility of appointing a Chairperson. This year it is the turn of the Yukon Government.

The Chair referred to a briefing note that was prepared to present a number of proposed options. These various options were discussed and each member was asked for comments. All members agreed that both the proposed dates (Sept. 29, 30 and Oct. 1, 1997) and location (Dawson City) would be convenient and should be recommended.

The theme was acknowledged as one which recognizes the increase in interest over the past few years in improving international cooperation and communication on the North Slope. With a view to improving the management of migratory wildlife across international, state and land claims settlement borders, transboundary cooperation and planning is essential. It was suggested that the international agreements, such as the polar bear agreement, could be highlighted. When a question arose as to the incorporation of long term research planning, the Chair proposed that a two day session be scheduled to follow the conference.

Members agreed to recommend an international theme: "Building Bridges Across Borders" (territorial/state borders, settlement areas), with suggested workshop/ session topics flowing from theme as follows:

- information sharing and data base access and cooperation
- improving communications
- cooperative wildlife and habitat management across borders:
 - caribou, muskox, grizzly bear, beluga, Bowhead, polar bear.
 - range/habitat protection, special management and protected areas.
- cooperative research and ecosystem monitoring
- sharing traditional knowledge
- issues: ANWR, global warming, hunting rights and the international animal welfare lobby; caribou/muskox, oil and gas exploration, etc.

Other conference topics suggested included:

- status of Yukon North Slope research/ poster sessions
- review of recommendations and priorities from last conference
- review of conservation plan actions

Members agreed that it was important to have a chairperson with a high profile and a connection to the North Slope. After a discussion regarding the merits and experience of each of the proposed individual's, Council member decided to recommend Hugh Faulkner, Steve Cooper and Bob Blair, in that order of preference.

A question was raised regarding the development and make-up of the invitation list. The Chair reported that YTG has the participant list from previous years and the Council

could ask to have the opportunity to review the proposed list for this in order to suggest additions.

Action 97-04-01: The Secretariat will review the participant lists from past conferences, as well as the ecosystem monitoring and research plan workshop, and suggest new participants to be invited to this year's conference.

The Council's recommendations will be submitted to the IGC for their comments before being forwarded to the Yukon Government. The Council agreed to suggest that YTG mail out a notice of the Conference's date and location as soon as possible.

C. Science Horizons Intern

Joan Eamer referred to the document on the Science Horizons Intern. The intern positions were created by the federal government to give young university graduates an opportunity to work in their field. The funding maximum is \$12,000 and will be given for two years. An industry partner must contribute up to one third of the total salary (\$6000). The Council qualifies as an industry partner and would become the official employer.

Joan received approval for the proposal she submitted for a four month position to work on the long term research planning initiative, ecosystem monitoring and organizational aspects of the upcoming Yukon North Slope Conference. The work could be done out of her office. Mike Gill has been suggested as a good candidate for the position.

Billy Archie commented on the need to incorporate traditional knowledge in all aspects of the research to be undertaken as part of this project. Joan agreed that it should be more explicitly laid out in the proposal.

The Chair noted that the need to hire someone to work on the long term research plan had already been identified and that this program is a good opportunity to address this need. Members all agreed that the program provided good value for little expense.

Motion

to approve \$6000 from the Council's budget for funding of the Science Horizons Intern program.

Moved: John Russell

Seconded: Billy Archie

Motion carried.

D. 1997/98 Wildlife Management funding proposals

a) Bird of Prey and Ptarmigan population monitoring.

The Chair referred to a proposal submitted by Dave Mossop for a single air survey for a number of birds of prey and ptarmigan. The proposal does not request any funding, but is asking for the Council's support as an initiative. Vicki Sahanatien noted that the next EISC meeting is June 16, which means that it is too late to have this project approved for this year. She added that she has several concerns with the proposal and will talk to Dave directly about them. Joan Eamer noted that it is an important monitoring project and suggested that Dave come to the June meeting to discuss it.

Action 97-04-02 : Vicki Sahanatien is to contact Dave Mossop to discuss his proposal for birds of prey and ptarmigan population monitoring.

b) Ecosystem Monitoring - Firth River Water Survey Station

Vicki Sahanatien reported that the proposal is a request for further funds for the same project the Council recommended for funding in March 1997. Further funding is required as it was not possible to purchase all the required equipment before year end and because a number of the estimates previously given were too low. As a result, this project requires an additional \$ 4,797. The equipment has already been purchased by Parks Canada, as it was necessary to move ahead with the project. The requested funding would go towards off-setting these costs. As there was no immediate need to consider this proposal, members agree to put it on the agenda for the June meeting.

E. Draft Muskox Management Plan

The Chair referred to the draft Muskox Management Plan which had been circulated to the members for review.

Action 97-04-03 : Members are to submit their comments on the Draft Muskox Management Plan to the Secretariat by May 9, 1997.

F. Next meeting

Council members agreed to hold the next meeting in Whitehorse, June 5 and 6, 1997. A fall meeting was scheduled for September 23 and 24, also in Whitehorse.

Billy Archie raised the question of following up on the invitation extended to the Yukon's Minister of Renewable Resources to join the Council at its next meeting on the North Slope. Even though the Council won't be meeting there in June, there may still be some interest on the part of the Minister to see the region.

Action 97-04-04 : The Secretariat is to contact the office of the Yukon's Minister of Renewable Resources, Eric Fairclough, to assess his interest in and availability to make a trip to the North Slope.

Nelson Green asked if, as a follow-up to the dinner meeting with Eric Fairclough in March, the Council had received a formal commitment from the Yukon Government

regarding the amendments to the Yukon Wildlife Act. The Chair replied that he is following up on this matter.

G. Adjournment

*Motion
to adjourn.*

Moved: Nelson Green
Seconded: Joan Eamer
Motion carried.