



MEETING MINUTES

WMAC(NS) Teleconference
May 1, 2007

Lindsay Staples Chair • **Doug Larsen** Yukon Government (Member) • **Ron Larsen** Parks Canada (Member) • **Danny C. Gordon** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) • **Ernest Pokiak** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) • **Dorothy Cooley** Yukon Government (Alternate) • **Wendy Nixon** Canadian Wildlife Service (Alternate) • **Michelle Sicotte** Secretariat

A. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:15 am.

B. Review and Approval of Agenda

The following items were added to the agenda: Yukon Government IFA wildlife research funding recommendations with respect to grizzly bear project and the June 2007 meeting.

Motion to approve the agenda for the January 28 – 29 meeting as amended.

Moved: Ernest Pokiak

Second: Ron Larsen

Motion Carried

C. Financial Report

Michelle reviewed the draft WMAC(NS) budget for 2007 – 2008. Michelle noted the line item for a Summer Student in the Whitehorse office. The Council did not have questions regarding the budget.

Move to accept 2007 - 2008 WMAC(NS) budget as presented

Moved: Ernest Pokiak

Second: Ron Larsen

Motion Carried

D. Ongoing Business

1. IFA Funded Wildlife Research

The Council discussed the IFA wildlife research funding with respect to the Grizzly Bear project. There are cost increases for the project this year, including hiring additional technical help, the analysis of the DNA samples, the increase in helicopter costs, and the possible increase in fuel. There was concern expressed that there was not sufficient funds for the grizzly bear project this fiscal.

During the January 2007 meeting the Council recommended allocating surplus funds from the IFA wildlife budget to the grizzly bear DNA analysis.

The Council agreed that there is a need to continue supporting the project.

It is recommended that \$16,000 of uncommitted funds from 2007 – 2008 Yukon Government IFA Wildlife Research budget be assigned to the grizzly bear project.

Moved: Danny C. Gordon

Second: Ernest Pokiak

Motion Carried

To summarize, the following is a breakdown of the WMAC(NS) funding recommendations for the Yukon North Slope Grizzly Bear Project:

- In January 2007, WMAC(NS) recommended \$100,000 in IFA funding towards the Yukon North Slope Grizzly Bear Project for 2007 – 2008.
- Following a meeting with Ramona Maraj in January 2007, WMAC(NS) recommended that unspent funds in 2006 – 2007 Yukon Government IFA Wildlife Research budget be assigned to grizzly bear DNA work.
- In May 2007, WMAC(NS) recommended that \$16,000 of uncommitted funds from 2007 – 2008 Yukon Government IFA Wildlife Research budget be assigned to the grizzly bear project.

As well, there is \$100,000 remaining from the original Parks Canada contribution to the project. It is anticipated \$50,000 of those funds will be spent in the current fiscal year. The remaining \$50,000 will be spent in the 2008 – 2009 fiscal year.

2. Richardson Sheep Management

The Council reviewed the Draft Management Plan for Dall Sheep in the North Richardson Mountains (March 2007) and made the following comments:

- a. The plan reads well and is well organized.

- b. The Council understands that there were comments provided to plan authors from residents in Aklavik to expand the survey area to include areas that are known to have sheep.
- c. The Council recognizes the following matters for which it assumes some responsibility:
- d. consulting with communities (specifically Aklavik Inuvialuit) and providing recommendations on harvest allocation
- e. participating in the implementation of action items assigned in the plan to the Council (including an annual review and full review every five years)
- f. The Council recommends including budget estimates for the appropriate action items.
- g. There is a conflict in the two goal statements – “ensure long term conservation by making sure human activities do not diminish sheep numbers or reduce the ability of the land to support sheep in the future” and “provide for traditional and other uses of sheep that benefit all people”. The first goal as worded appears to rule out any harvest of sheep (cf. “do not diminish sheep numbers”). The goal should be to ensure that sheep numbers do not decline below what is required for maintaining a sustainable population.
- h. In Principal #1 the meaning of “vital” is not clear. “Productive and abundant” wildlife populations may be clearer terminology. It’s also the definition of “conservation” as defined term in the land claims agreements.
- i. In Principal #9, it may be more appropriate to invoke the concept of “adaptive management” as opposed to “future experience, knowledge and values”. The reference to “guided by... future experience and knowledge” perhaps is getting at this – that the plan must be dynamic and adaptive, as opposed to fixed. Perhaps it’s also referring to the “interests” of future generations (a concept basic to the definition of sustainability). Consider the following restatement: “be dynamic and adaptive in response to evolving past, present and future values, experience and knowledge, and not compromise the interests and needs of future generations”.
- j. Element #1: Population Monitoring. The objective states: “monitor sheep population to ensure conservation”. The objective should be revised in two respects: (a) the plan in itself cannot “ensure” conservation and can only contribute to it; and (b) monitoring is means to an end, not an objective. Restated the objective could read: “Conserve the Richard Mountain sheep population at levels required to maintain a sustainable population”. Delete the reference to “monitor” as it is addressed in the action items that follow.
- k. Element #2 and Element #3 should be re-ordered with “habitat” becoming Element #2 and “harvesting” Element #3. The rationale here is based on the principle of “conservation first”. In other words, in the plan, first address the conservation objectives of population and habitat (ecology), then the use (harvest) of the population.
- l. Based on the Council’s direct experience with and sponsorship of ground-based wildlife monitoring projects in the past, the Council has serious reservations about the effectiveness and soundness of this approach to monitoring, notwithstanding the

obvious attraction of it.

- m. There are sixty-one action items proposed in the plan. This appears to the Council to place a significant obligation on many Plan partners, especially given their other responsibilities. The Council would urge other Plan partners to evaluate their assigned commitments for action items. If the proposed action items cannot be implemented with certainty, all of them should be revised accordingly.

Action 07-05-01: Michelle will draft a letter to the Dall Sheep Management Group to provide WMAC(NS) comments on the Draft Management Plan for Dall Sheep in the Northern Richardson Mountains

3. Stokes Point Steering Committee

The Council discussed the request to have Evelyn Storr appointed to the Stokes Point Steering Committee. In the future, the Council will make the decision on what representative will be appointed to committees. The Council recommends appointing Evelyn Storr to the Stokes Point Steering Committee. The Council understands that Parks Canada will cover the costs of her participation. Evelyn will be asked to provide a written update for Council as appropriate.

Action 07-05-02: Michelle will send a letter to Ed McLean, Parks Canada, officially recommending Evelyn Storr to the Stokes Point Steering Committee.

E. Upcoming Meetings

The Council changed the date for the upcoming meeting to June 11 – 13 in Whitehorse.

F. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11 am.

Motion to adjourn the meeting

Moved: Doug Larsen

Second: Danny C. Gordon

Motion Carried

Approved:

Chair, Lindsay Staples

Date

Secretariat, Michelle Sicotte