



DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

WMAC (NS) Quarterly Meeting
Sheep Creek, Ivvavik National Park · Yukon
July 16-19, 2012

Lindsay Staples (Chair) · **Rob Florkiewicz** Yukon Government (Member) · **Danny C. Gordon** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) · **Christian Bucher** Parks Canada (Member) · **Ernest Pokiak** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) · **Jennifer Smith** (Secretariat) · **Christine Cleghorn** (Secretariat) · **Marsha Branigan** GNWT (Guest) · **Dan Frandsen**, Parks Canada (Guest)

July 16, 2012

A. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 3:45pm and welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially guests: Molly Kirk, Dan Frandsen, Marsha Branigan and Rebecca Kaufman. He further thanked Parks Canada for hosting the Council at Sheep Creek, and Jennifer and Christine for organizing the meeting.

B. Review and Approval of Agenda

Members reviewed the agenda and Danny suggested adding a Grizzly Bear project update to the agenda.

Motion 07-12-01

To approve the agenda as revised for the July 16-19, 2012 meeting.

Moved: Ernest Pokiak

Seconded: Rob Florkiewicz

Motion carried.

C. Review and Approval of the Minutes

The Council reviewed the minutes from the March 2012 meeting and had one change to suggest - strike the sentence " Ernest says that the IRC will be responding to this." on page 5.

Motion 07-12-02

To approve the minutes for the March, 2012 meeting.

Moved: Ernest Pokiak

Seconded: Christian Bucher

Motion carried.

D. Action Items

The Council reviewed the status of action items; updates to action items are shown here:

Action 07-11-04: Secretariat to develop a 3-5 pager on spatial data and community based monitoring. **Outstanding.** The Chair suggested revising the action item to make it more relevant to our own work on the WCMP. The Council discussed having a mini workshop attached to the NSC to discuss spatial data.

The Council further discussed the merits of collecting and managing spatial data. Lindsay suggested that Peter A, through his PBTK work may be in a good position to develop a “lessons learned” piece to inform how to work with spatial data, and how to collect it in interviews appropriately.

The Council discussed how having rigorous spatial data in the area east of the Babbage is particularly important at this time and could complement our WCMP. Rob said that spatial information was important for his department in showing areas of interest and use on the Yukon North Slope.

Danny suggested that we need to get a map that goes from Aklavik to the Alaska border, especially for showing areas during discussion.

Action Item 07-12-01: Secretariat to get foldable, laminated maps (including areas from Aklavik to the Alaska Border) to bring to meetings to facilitate discussions. Secretariat to make two copies and give one to the AHTC.

Danny said that since 1949 (since the first time he went hunting) he has always seen caribou near the Yukon/NWT border adjacent to the police cabin. He said that they are even calving there, right after break-up. They are always there.

Danny said that he has asked CWS to do a study on geese, as they don't land near his area anymore (in Shallow Bay;) they take off from the mountains and go south. Danny said that in March there are a lot of pintails in the delta, but they leave; he wants to know where they go. He wants to know what is happening.

Lindsay said we want to do a better job at understanding where, when and what is happening on the land.

Rob said that the grizzly bear project should produce denning site information. Rob suggested that the WMAC could have an archive or library of maps and keep good track of the meta- data (who has it and were the original is).

Marsha commented that the GNWT has Wildlife Management Information System (WHMIS), which handles point data well, but not polygons. The GNWT is putting a greater effort into data sharing agreements. She said that the current data is being inputted, but the historic information is not all in the system yet.

The Chair suggested that the Council be realistic with respect to spatial data planning and focus on a solution that will work over the long run. He stressed the importance of understanding the North Slope area spatially and underscored the conservation risks for the withdrawn area of not doing so.

The Chair suggested that it would be prudent to go to Aklavik and do a briefing on the withdrawal order to the AHTC, to contribute to their understanding of the issue.

Danny commented that the traditional knowledge base is diminishing over time as not as many people are spending large amounts of time on the land.

Danny mentioned that many people are making statements and opinions, but they are not getting out onto the land anymore.

The Chair suggested getting a focused group of people together from YG, ENR, Danny, etc and holding a one or two day think- tank session to work through the spatial data needs for the area. The suggestion was to keep it small and focused.

Christian said that PC has struggled with similar issues related to using and storing spatial information. Technology changes quickly also.

Rob suggested that we break down what the objectives are. 1) what information is where (where is it stored?), 2) what are our requirements for that information? 3) how do you determine what is more/less important?

Danny said that this year he saw muskox tracks out on the ice, he thinks there was 30, 20 miles out on the ice. He said this was really different.

Action 07-11-04 should be retired and revised to focus on withdrawal order. Any insights out of this work, we can share with others. This relates to goal A and E in the plan.

The Council discussed the role of HTC with respect to this work. The Council decided to revisit the conversation at its next meeting. This could be added to the joint WMAC meeting agenda also.

Danny said that he saw a seal going inland, about 4 miles in on the mainland. This was in April. He was getting frozen and having a hard time breathing.

Action Item 12-11-03: Secretariat to produce a briefing note on the research proposal process that would go out to the parties and encourage the parties to coordinate their proposals in the early planning stages. **Outstanding**. Christine said that this should be combined with the updating of the research guide. In Oct the Council will put out our call for proposals to better coordinate amongst researchers.

Lindsay briefed the Council on the EISC process for the IFA funded research and its recent changes. John Ondrack is looking at this and will look at what is the process for WMACs recommendations.

Action Item 07-12-02: Lindsay to send the EISC info to the council members and review it and provide comment to the EISC. Recommend meeting with the WMAC (NWT) and review the Ondrack correspondence.

Action 03-12-01: Write to the PCMB recommending a poster on research techniques. **Complete**

Action 03-12-02: Chair to propose to the JS a workshop on roles and responsibilities within the IFA. **Complete**. This is a refresher on roles.

Action 03-12-03: write a letter of response to EC Poter letter and have Christian review it. **Complete**. No response.

Action 03-12-04: Secretariat to produce a refined project list for council consideration. **Complete**

Actions 03-12-05: Request a copy of the PC compendiums that accompany the SoPR. **Complete**.

Action 03-12-06: Council to develop comments on the SoPR, verify by teleconference, and submit. **Will be addressed at this meeting**.

July 17th, 2012

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:10am.

E. Correspondence

The Chair went through the information items and asked for comments or questions.

Incoming

- *Federal Hunting and angling advisory panel announcement-* There was discussion amongst aboriginal groups about whether this panel would undercut relationships and rights established under land claims agreements. Christian said that this was a large concern in Nunavut and that the government may be losing sight of the relationships already in place. The Council has not responded on this.
- *Response from Federal minister on the proposed wild animal regs-* Lindsay explained the two dimensions of the regs 1) to allow Inuit guides to carry firearms while guiding for research or other- in Polar bear parks- North of the Arctic circle 2) In the ISR the regulations would allow the minister to issue tags for quota species in National Parks. There used to be no ability to enforce HTC tag in national parks and now there would be an ability to enforce. Danny said that at the HTC level it would be nice to have clarification on what happens to the hides when animal hides are confiscated, or with defense kills. Lindsay suggested the Council prepare a fact sheet or a poster in this. Christian said that if it is a poaching situation the hide is re-appropriated to the crown- but may be available to return to the HTC after the case has been settled. We will expect Parks Canada to be in touch on the redraft. Christine suggested giving special attention to the calibre of firearm to be used, as that wasn't really addressed in the letter.
- *Letter from AHTC to IGC re harvest of females and males polar bear.* Marsha said that the GNWT has an old pamphlet on harvesting female polar bear. Marsha said that the GNWT is working on bringing an expert into each community to give a workshop to describe the difference between males and females.
- *IGC letter- said that they are concerned about the high harvest of females.* Danny expressed concern that workshop may not be of much benefit as people may not come or may not listen. Christian said it is hard to tell the difference.
- *IGC response to PCMB-* IGC is working to produce timely reports on harvest reporting.
- *IGC letter to USFWS in response to polar bear uplisting.*
- *New superintendent announcement for Parks Canada.*
- *AANDC letter response to Chairs letter.*

- *IGC to WMACS re TAH for North and South Beaufort polar bear, and that they agree with TAH.*

outgoing

- *To CWS re NDF for GB- Thanks to Rob and Yukon for assisting on this letter to address inaccuracies.*
- *WMAC letter to all chairs re implementation letter to raise the issue and it made its way onto the agenda of Implementation Coordinating Committee, and it was discussed for most of the day. The outcome was that DIAND would respond in a teleconference with the ICC members on many of the points.*
- *PCH strategic framework - to substitute for the Harvest Management Plan. Marsha explained that the PCMB recently met and went through comments and drafted priorities that should be out shortly.*
- *Poter letter - IFA funding re CWS funding. The Chair explained that there is an ISR-wide problem where there is no delineation between IFA funds and A base within Environment Canada.*
- *Letter in support of C Burns project about communicating research results back to communities in ISR.*
- *Letter to PCMB on educational materials on collaring info.*
- *Letters to the HTC's providing our podcasts*
- *Jeff Hunston letter in support of research Herschel research projects.*
- *Letter to Wendy Nixon, CWS, re coordination of coastal research projects.*
- *Letter of response to Kim, AANDC re IFA funding.*

Information items

The Chair called members' attention to a number of items for their information, including:

- *Annual inspection report from the SDC drilling rig*
- *Aklavik HTC regular meeting minutes*
- *EISC letters re cabin construction on Herschel Island*
- *COSWEIC assessment buff-breasted sandpiper*
- *NTI letter to Harper regarding Bill C-38. The Chair noted that the JS Board has asked for a legal review of C-38 and the aspects that affect the IFA. By the*

Council's next meeting we should have some understanding of how this could affect Inuvialuit rights.

- *Letter from ITK regarding CITES.* It is obvious that there is a major effort underway in the USA to uplist polar bears. The Canadian government has been actively working to educate and advocate that polar bears not be uplisted.
- *Tuk highway review.* Technical hearings commence in August, and public hearings are in October.

F. Financial Report

Jennifer briefed the Council on the financials for this year, based on knowing now that the Council's carryover of the accumulated surplus is \$26,000.

The Activity report is in draft and ready to be finalized. It is part of our reporting requirements for YG.

Jennifer reviewed the 6 -year expense review, and the detailed project list. She pointed out Meagan Perry's quote for podcasting the Yukon North Slope Conference.

The Council discussed the status of the Herschel book, and determined that a low-key approach to future editions or print runs would be the most prudent approach to dispensing future revenues.

It was suggested that a poster advertising the book at Visitor's centre in Inuvik would be helpful. The books could potentially be sold there.

Jennifer tabled the draft financial Engagement Review for the 2011/2012 statements for the Council to review.

Resolution 07-12-01:

To accept as accurate the Review Engagement Report for 2011-2012 (dated March 31, 2012) as prepared by Kim Tanner.

Approved: Christian Bucher

Seconded by: Danny C Gordon

Resolution passed.

Projects budget

Jennifer reviewed the draft projects budget with the Council

Motion 07-12-03

To accept the projects budget as presented, with the assumption that at our next meeting we will refine the spatial data and WCMP components.

Moved by: Rob

Seconded by: Danny

Motion carried.

There is about \$18,000 for projects this year.

G. Report from the Chair

IFA Implementation funding- The Chair reviewed the correspondence that went out to the other Chairs, which found its way into the ICC meeting. There was a follow up phone call, with notes circulated afterwards. Lindsay explained that it is clear that implementing parties can move money from one task to another in the funding agreements, and that they can carry money over the year-end. The two important conditions of implementation funding are 1) the ability to move money between tasks, and 2) carry money over year-end, as long as it is spent in the timeframe of the larger contribution agreement.

Implementation funding is in place because the IFA imposes legal obligations on government and other parties (eg. Parks Canada managing Ivvavik and meeting the requirements in the IFA; the YG requiring funding for wildlife research because the research is required to provide information that justifies conservation restrictions on harvesting).

In the past, to prepare for IFA funding negotiations, all of the parties receiving funds, have gotten together to share their proposals.

The Chair described the recent teleconference with DIAND. The JS Board will get together with the territorial government to share proposals. In the past federal agencies and departments have been part of this conversation. The board chairs asked DIAND to see the requests that Parks and CWS will make. Response from DIAND was that there will no longer be any externally published account of what funding each of the federal parties receives for implementation of the IFA. The openness and transparency is no longer there.

The secretariat and Chair will develop the Council's funding proposal for the October 1st meeting, and circulate it to the Council members for their review and comment.

The Chair also reported that he went to the IGC meeting in Tuk recently. He provided them with a briefing on the North Slope Conference. He also provided them with an overview on the withdrawal order. It is the Game Council that represents the Inuvialuit when it comes to IFA provisions regarding wildlife, and the IRC has obligations regarding the overall implementation.

The Council discussed the merit of doing a financial audit this year and decided that it was not necessary at this time.

The Chair asked the members to think about areas in the Council's budget where increases may be necessary. The Council discussed and thought of the following areas: Other meeting budget (as a result of extra polar bear work), the Chair honoraria (it has been \$350/day since 1988).

Christine mentioned that the building where the Council's office is located has been bought and sold and so we may need to think about rent increases. It was suggested that a line item to support the work of revisions to the WCMP for 2-3 years would be helpful.

Christine suggested an increase in staffing requirements: 1.2 full-time equivalent positions would be preferable to address the work load.

'Other projects' require additional funding to address spatial data and mapping. Christian mentioned the offshore work and participation in that work could be a volume driven increase.

Danny said that we should be meeting in Aklavik more frequently, which can be built into the "other meetings" budget. Lindsay mentioned that he would like to go to Aklavik this fall to brief them on the withdrawal order, and the whole Council will attempt to go to Aklavik in December.

Lindsay suggested to Rob that the Yukon probably requires money for organizing the North Slope Conference as there has been no adjustment since 1984. Danny mentioned that he is still unsatisfied with harvest reporting in Aklavik.

Marsha gave a quick briefing on the harvest reporting program for Aklavik for Porcupine caribou. It is currently being set up. All HTC membership will now be in the database. It also has a data entry form and reports are developed and the program will produce a report for Porcupine caribou management board.

Rob said that the \$5,000 we allocated to wildlife programs for harvest reporting was dedicated to an Inuvik workshop to design harvest reporting for the Porcupine Caribou harvest implementation Plan.

The Council discussed where harvest reporting money should come from and with which organization or agency the responsibilities ultimately lie. has concerns with the accuracy of the data in the harvest reporting program. Lindsay said that after each survey wave, the HTC board of directors is supposed to see the report and sign off on it.

Marsha said that the program is being designed so that their data can be collected, entered and analyzed by the Aklavik HTC. Aklavik and IGC will be the only ones that have a copy of the database, because the name is linked to the hunter information. IGC has accepted the role as administrator on the HMP- but are not taking an active role at this time.

Action Item 07-12-03: send a letter to the PCMB to put out a newsletter updating people on where we are at with the harvest reporting program.

H. Community Based Monitoring Update

Lindsay and Jen described the structure of the program and explained that there is a steering committee and technical working group. The JS should be coming forward with a funding request for this program. A training program is planned to be set up through the Aurora College. The program, when fully operational, is anticipated to require a budget of approximately \$1 million a year.

Ernest suggested communication between HTC offices would be important to the success of this program. Danny said that the funding in the program that is directed towards harvest data collection would be well used.

Action Item 07-12-04: Prepare the IFA funding package to circulate to members in advance of the Oct 1st meeting. This package will outline our proposal for implementation funding package that goes to DIAND. Members will have a chance to review and comment. We will still have opportunities to change what is in our proposal after the October 1 meeting.

The Chair noted that this is Christian's last meeting. He thanked Christian for his work on the Council, and observed that Christian's keen eye for detail, and policy analysis has really helped the Council over the years.

Action Item 07-12-05: send a letter to the EC Minister and the new Superintendent reminding them about the vacancy, and encouraging them to fill the vacancy.

I. Decision Items

i. Wildlife Research Funds 2012/13

Rob reviewed the status of Yukon Government projects:

PCH Satellite Collaring project - underway

Herschel Island Monitoring work – the Council had provisionally approved \$5k contingent on receiving the report from the last 10 years. Rob will follow up with Cameron to confirm what funds he used and confirm the status of the report.

Action Item 07-12-06: Draft a letter about the Herschel Island report and what happened with the Council's recommendation. Rob to verify whether this has already been paid for from IFA funds.

Grizzly Bear project - Communications - This amount is a contingency placeholder. Communications for this project could look at the population estimate and provide some sense of closure as far as implications for the quota. Then there could be a second element to the report that could provide information about the other elements of the project. Danny requested a full briefing in Aklavik of the whole project. People need to be reminded about the methods and purpose of the project. The idea was expressed to include both WMACs at this workshop since it is a shared population.

Action Item 07-12-07: to have a workshop in Aklavik during this fiscal year on the grizzly bear project. Invite both WMACs and Parks Canada. Ramona to present.

PCH Rut Composition Count – this project is shared among a number of agencies. Efforts to conduct census in the last few weeks but were unsuccessful. Conducting a rut count in the fall would be useful to look at calf survival and bull count. The rut count is done by helicopter and costs about \$35k. \$15k is requested here. GRRB gave support for this. The Council recommended the funding for a program that would likely happen in October.

Richardson Moose Survey – is going ahead as planned, with GRRB and GNWT partnerships, for a March survey. Danny observed that there are a lot of moose in the Babbage River area, and that if researchers miss those, they will miss a lot of moose.

Aklavik Caribou Harvest Monitoring Project – is underway. The money was spent on a workshop in Inuvik to develop the reporting program. YG is pleased at the progress with this project.

PCH Sat Collar Recovery Project – is underway.

Polar Bear TK project - this money will be spent this year.

CBM - There are sufficient funds from elsewhere for this project. The project could be removed from the project list.

There is \$18k of YG wildlife research funds left to allocate.

Rob presented the following options:

- Grizzly Bear program: Contaminants work
- Caribou Rut Count - if we don't have partner funding, we could allocate all the money to this.
- Muskox: In March when YG conducts a a moose census, it is economically feasible to get a muskox count in the Richardson's.
- PBTk project –if it has additional funding needs.

Action Item 07-12-08: send a letter to EC regarding their research implementation funds.

The CWS letter could ask, what amount CWS contributing to wildlife research on the North Slope? Letter should be sent to Regional Director Barry Smith, cc'd to Virginia and Wendy.

Rob provided a Grizzly Bear Project update. He said that we are on a firm timeframe to complete the estimate by October, or November 2012.

ii. North Slope Conference

The Chair reviewed the draft outline for the conference. Four major panels will take place - the first looks at co-management boards and lessons learned, the second examines the legal challenges that we are facing, the third focuses on integrating science and communities, and the last session is still in development, but is tentatively titled, "Managing in the Extremes". The Council discussed possible invitees, and agreed that conference planning is progressing well.

Christian to provide names of Parks Canada lawyers. Marsha will investigate someone from NWT who might be appropriate for the legal panel. Danny suggested that Frank might be a good speaker on risk, since it relates so closely to harvesting.

Lindsay raised the North Slope Award, and the notion of awarding it at the conference. It is to recognize individuals or organizations who have made an important contribution to conservation on the Yukon North Slope.

The idea would be to announce the award and its purpose, and award it. A slide show or speaker familiar with the area could introduce the area prior to the award being given. Ernest suggested that Danny would be an engaging speaker for this, since the things he tells the Council about his times on the land are always engaging. Danny agreed to reflect on how things have changed on the coast since the 1940s. He will try to prepare some slides for that as well. He could also do this on the opening morning instead of at the award night.

Danny suggested approaching the IRC for support for the conference. He also noted that the Paulatuk drum dancers are very entertaining. Jennifer will suggest this to Stephanie.

Motion 07-12-04

To recognize Dorothy Cooley, Chris Burn, Richard Gordon, and Mervin Joe through the North Slope conservation award.

Moved by Ernest Pokiak

Seconded by Rob Florkiewicz

All in favour. Motion carried.

iii. Wildlife Conservation Management Plan

This plan is an important instrument for establishing the conservation requirements of the North Slope, and it is these conservation requirements that are paramount over all other requirements. Within the WCMP, it has focused on integrating the park management plans and some broad discussion of the area east of the Babbage, and the treatment of the Withdrawal Order.

The withdrawal order covers the land area from the Ivvavik eastern park boundary to the NWT border, from the ISR southern border to the coastline.

Since the late 1970s this area has been withdrawn from the disposition of subsurface and surface rights. IFA says that the Withdrawal Order shall be maintained subject to the provisions of Section 12

The updated, revised WCMP needs to provide greater guidance about the conservation requirements of the withdrawn area. This includes conservation of Inuvialuit harvesting.

Work to date has mostly focused on the conservation of harvested wildlife species on the North Slope. Greater attention to the habitat requirements on the YNS will require greatly improved spatial information for the area.

It will be important to brief IRC and AHTC on this issue and develop and understanding of their positions on this issue.

Christian raised the idea of ecosystem valuation as a tool that could be applied in this area.

iv. Review draft report on the status of Polar bear in the NWT

Marsha briefed the group on the context of this report. A decision was made to review it by October 5 and share our comments with WMAC(NWT).

v. Parks Canada – State of the Parks Report

****Dan Fransen and Molly Kirk (both from Parks Canada) joined the meeting****

The Chair tabled a draft submission to Parks regarding the SOPR. The letter attempts to point out that 1) Environmental monitoring for Ivvavik and the NS overall are a fundamental pillar of the conservation regime for the NS. This is articulated in the Council's plan. 2) There is a monitoring regime on Herschel Island Territorial park, and we have always had an interest in integration of these two monitoring regimes. 3) Monitoring in the Park can serve as an ecological benchmark to the area east of the Park. We are looking at the monitoring regime for the park as an overall important piece for the NS conservation regime. We recognize that the SOPR is a work in progress, and given that it has been characterized this way, we see this as an opportunity to provide additional input vis a vis the establishment of revised monitoring priorities. Because this monitoring regime is a component of the monitoring regime of the whole Yukon North Slope, it has a statutory basis. It is not completely reasonable to evaluate the success of Ivvavik as a park on the basis of visitation. It was primarily created to protect the calving grounds of the Porcupine caribou herd, and to protect coastal important bird habitat. We need to remain focused on these other purposes, notwithstanding the importance of continuing to attract visitors to Ivvavik.

The Chair reviewed the contents of the draft letter with the Council.

Dan explained the internal process for drafting the SOPR and the criteria that was used in some areas to determine what went into the SOPR. Although the compendiums are not fully ready for circulation, all of the data that was used for the SOPR is in the internal ICE database - however in many instances this information is not in a format that is readily shared or user-friendly for anyone outside of Parks.

Regarding coastal monitoring, there is recognition within Parks about how important it is. Parks is finding it a very difficult zone to delineate and then secondly to find measures that is economically and logistically feasible to measure and is statistically valid. There was some groundwork on this completed this year. Over time, remote sensing could be a data source. The geoEye and Canadian Geologic survey work might also be useful. Dan explained that PC has videography for the whole coast for 2012 that could be compared historically. He explained PC is still looking for wildlife and vegetation indicators that could be used successfully.

A discussion ensued about qualitative and quantitative data for the SOPR, and the availability and suitability of local and/or traditional knowledge for various

chapters. Parks Canada was encouraged to open communication with the Aklavik HTC regarding Park health.

Christian identified the possible developments of oil and gas off the coast as a direct threat to the health of the park. Dan explained that the likelihood of Pauline Cove being suggested as a place used for storage and the subsequent risks of oil leaks as a potential threat. Parks has tried to get money to do work on this and get involved, but the BREA process was not geared for projects of this nature. Dan agreed that one challenge is to try to clearly describe the most sensitive areas on the coastline and document them.

Danny discussed the rapid changes that he has seen on the coast. He has lost 200 ft off the front of his cabin since 1989. He moved it in 1997, and then again last week. There are ice houses that used to be there that are now out in the water. He said that if he didn't have the cabin to prove it, he wouldn't even believe it.

The draft SOPR discusses monitoring, but this was before the federal budget came down. Dan says that the challenges stemming from the 2012 budget cuts are primarily staffing. Other budgets beyond staffing have not been affected. Human capacity is Parks Canada's biggest challenge. Tension between regular resource work and monitoring requirements, will be extremely challenging.

Molly circulated a table outlining the EI monitoring program. The Council learned about the challenges and efficiencies of various aspects of the program.

Danny raised his concern that continued collaring of Porcupine caribou is bothering the herd. People in Aklavik are saying this - wondering if the herd is bothered by this, and noting that collaring them is a kind of harassment. He pointed out that people get used to doing things in the name of research, but maybe someone needs to take a stand and say that it is time for a rest. He noted that some people in Aklavik feel this way but are reluctant to speak up. This is not the first time that Danny has raised this concern.

Marsha agreed that the PCMB hears this often. She understands the sensitivities around this, and one of the roles of the Boards is to decide if the information we get is worth the impact we are having on these animals. The Implementation Plan has a lot of monitoring in it, which means collaring.

****Dan and Molly left the meeting****

The Chair noted that staffing issues place a tremendous constraint on the monitoring program. He commented on the overall status of management plans

and the frequency with which they are prepared (10 year vs 5 year). He noted that if the plans move to 10 years, perhaps they should be less prescriptive and more enabling.

Since the SoPR is a report card related to the implementation of the management plan, the Council should provide some commentary. A member comments that it may be premature to state that the state of the park is excellent when only 50% of the monitoring program is in place. Also, in an environment where Parks Canada's resources are so limited and some of the measures seem to require a fair amount of work, is it realistic to see them accomplished?

The draft letter will be revised to include a measure for visitor impact. Christian noted that there is not a lot of flexibility for superintendents on the format for the SOPR, which makes it difficult to include things like traditional knowledge.

The Visitor impact factor has been missed. A comment on the management plan revisions should reference the pressing need for a revised site plan for Sheep Creek. Time is passing with visitor impacts and the quality of the site is diminishing. The Council commented to this effect several years ago, but have not seen any action.

New comments to add to letter:

- The issue of capacity (financially and personnel).
- There appears to be a shift in focus and function within Parks Canada that is not reflected in the SOPR.
- The periodic review of the Management Plan becomes a more important discussion, particularly with respect to the site plan for Sheep Creek.

The SOPR is still the major document that feeds into the management plan.

Jennifer pointed out that the scoping document is an important document that we need to look at. There is a place on it for our sign-off, and we can use it as a vehicle to focus our thinking and comments.

Action Item 07-12-09: Lindsay to redraft the SoPR letter, incorporating the new comments, and then circulate it to the Council.

Typically after the Council has had a meeting on the land, the Council writes to the agency that hosted to express its appreciation and provide comments. Previously the Council commented on the length of the airstrip. This letter would be an appropriate place to comment on the state of the site. It is clear that the impact on the site is much more visible than previously, yet there is no apparent mitigation plan in place, and the desire to have more people visit Sheep Creek

still exists. The volunteer effort at Herschel could be used as a model for site improvements and maintenance at Sheep Creek.

Action Item 07-12-10: WMAC to write a letter to Parks Canada thanking them for hosting us at Sheep Creek. Also provide general comments with respect to the site (eg. use of tent platforms, improvement to the grey water system and to the outhouse, and the use of old storage batteries).

J. Discussion Items

I. Muskox Plan Update

Rob informed the Council that he had reviewed the document (action item from last time). He explained that there is some clean up needed on how the plan refers to itself throughout the document (is North Slope Muskox Plan, Canadian Muskox Plan, etc). The plan should be downsized with sections of the text being put into appendices.

Rob observed that there is a tension in the plan that includes the animals in the Richardson's. He indicated that if the Council consider the standalone, self-sustaining population in the Richardson's, the Council should acknowledge that most of the harvest takes place there. The Council needs to avoid a high harvest rate on a small number of animals.

The weakest part of the plan is how it applies to the animals in the Richardson's. Marsha pointed out that this muskox population is also shared with the Gwitch'in.

The plan's current approach is to manage on a herd basis, keeping the total population in mind. The Council agreed that the plan is flawed in that it applies a herd management approach that does not sufficiently account for the Richardson's animals in the YNS herd. One solution is to remove the Richardson animals from the population count and treat them as counted in NWT.

Danny said that he doesn't see any muskox harvesting on the Yukon North Slope.

Action Item 07-12-11: revise the muskox plan to manage the 101 animals that are mostly in the Park, and leave the Richardson's animals out of the count. Rob and Lindsay to meet to review further revisions.

II. Parks Canada Ecological Integrity Monitoring Update

Molly Kirk provided an update to the Council in the context of the SOPR. She gave the Council a briefing about the status of the Ecological Monitoring.

Approximately half of the measures are in jeopardy as a result of recent staffing cuts at Parks Canada. She will keep the Council informed as she has more clarity about the resources that Parks will be able to apply to monitoring in the future.

III. Staffing

Christine briefed the Council on her one-year replacement person. Jocylyn McDowell has been hired for a term position for 10 months. The Secretariat is pleased that Jocylyn is on board, as she will make a great addition to the office. Jennifer's hours will increase 0.7 FTE, and Jocylyn will be working half time.

IV. PBTK Project Update

Christine provided an update on the PBTK project. She explained that Peter Armitage has almost completed coding the transcripts, that he has the Evan Richardson maternity denning data, and that he is working with Stephen Kilburn to renovate the spatial data from Evans work as well as the accompanying maps from the PBTK project. By the end of the summer Peter will have a report outline ready and then travel to the communities to confirm what he has heard from people and make any possible map changes. There are a lot of expenditures between now and the end of October. After that Peter will focus on finalizing a report that will be useful towards the CITES COP 16 meeting. The steering committee will meet with Peter by teleconference with Peter in a few weeks to discuss a table of contents for the CITES report and input into the community tour.

This year the program will cost about \$150,000 and \$100,000 has been identified by EC, YG, and GNWT research funds. The extra \$50,000 will have to be identified between now and then.

Currently Peter is reviewing his contract.

Marsha suggested determining a schedule and sending the letters to communities and HTCs to line up the tour.

Action Item 07-12-12: Secretariat to contact Jen Lam to review the JS role in coordination of the community tour.

Marsha suggested that ICG be engaged in the meeting also. It was decided to have a joint WMAC meeting in Whitehorse around the North Slope Conference for a half -day or an evening.

Action Item 07-12-13: Organizing a PBTK meeting in Whitehorse during the North Slope Conference and before Peter departs for his tour.

v. Polar Bear Technical Committee/Polar Bear Administration Committee

Marsha provided an update on the PBTC where she is now the co-chair with David Lee. As co-chairs they attend the PBAC. Neither PBTC nor PBAC has a legal basis. She explained that changes to the TOR. PBTC brought forward the need for harvest data from all jurisdictions. She explained that the national database is not really functioning and there was a discussion regarding who would take the lead on this. Nunavut has agreed to house the national database.

Lindsay said that PBAC and PBTC are re-identifying their roles and responsibilities as they have evolved in an ad hoc way.

Marsha explained that the PBTC is supposed to produce a status report every year and the status report goes to the PBAC. This year, she explained that there was a more major discussion from the PBTC. Its approach to the annual status report is rapidly changing. The Polar Bear Specialists Group meets under the IUCN and their guidelines are established through the IUCN. There is an emerging view that the people on the PBSG are not sufficiently informed about polar bear management arrangements and traditional knowledge in Northern Canada. This has major significance for CITES as PBSG provides advice and judgments on the circumpolar status of polar bears. She mentioned that on a national basis it does not help to have opposing views for international media..

Marsha gave the Council an update about polar bear-grizzly bear hybrids. She said that there are questions about how to deal with these animals, such as: what kind of tags for hybrids? do they need a tag? Need to be clear on what our management direction is on this. Under CITES there is a provision for protection of hybrids. She said that the occurrence of hybrids is increasing. They are viable, as they can reproduce.

Polar Bear status report from GNWT- Marsha explained that the report is coming from the NWT Species at Risk committee. It is an independent body and they have access to the national COSEWIC assessment. The recommendations of SARC, under NWT legislation, then go to the Conference of Management Authorities for their review.

This is the first species assessed under the new NWT Species at Risk Act. The WMAC NWT will have to do conduct public consultation because Perry Caribou will be assessed as well. The status reports are new as is the assessment and listing process, so a community tour will be required.

It is important for the Council to review and comment on the draft status assessment report for polar bears.

Action Item 07-12-14: The Council will prepare a draft response on the polar bear status report and circulate to members before submitting it.

Marsha indicated that the ISR polar bear TK study could inform future assessments.

vi. CITES

The Chair updated the Council on the status of polar bear listing proposals for the upcoming CITES COP 16. The Council will continue to keep the Council briefed on this issue.

The Chair will provide secretariat with revised WHB ppt. The Secretariat will send Danny the final report of the PB ATK workshop as well as send it to Peter Armitage.

K. Upcoming meetings

Joint WMAC meeting is planned for October; topics to discuss include: PBTK project, sharing comments on the polar bear status report, polar bear aerial survey results. All other items would be addressed in Dec at a joint meeting.

Inuvialuit-Inupiat Polar Bear Commissioners meeting - Danny, Ernest and Jennifer to attend on August 7-9 in Tuktoyaktuk.

Fall WMAC meeting- Secretariat to propose meeting date.

The Chair called the meeting to a close at 3:10pm

Motion 07-12-05

Motion to adjourn the meeting

Moved by: Danny C Gordon

Seconded by: Ernest Pokiak

Motion carried. Meeting adjourned.