



Wildlife Management Advisory Council (North Slope)

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MINUTES

WMAC(NS) QUARTERLY MEETING

**Aklavik, NWT
June 25-26, 2001**

Monday June 25, 2001

Present: Lindsay Staples – Chair
Danny C. Gordon- Member – Inuvialuit Game Council
Doug Larsen – Member- Yukon Government
Joan Eamer – Canadian Wildlife Service - Member - Government of
Canada
Dorothy Cooley –Alternate – Yukon Government
Aileen Horler – WMAC(NS) Secretariat

A. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 3 pm.

B. Review and Approval of Agenda

The Chair reviewed the agenda and highlighted the items that will need the most attention. The primary focus of the meeting will be to review the revised draft of the Wildlife Conservation and Management Plan and to further discuss the proposed muskox management workshop to be held in Aklavik in the fall. Norm Snow will give an update on the recent delta gas activity, future scenarios and offshore pipeline development. Added to the agenda was a presentation on behalf of the Alaska Gas Producers Pipeline Team.

Motion

To adopt the agenda.

Moved: Joan Eamer

Second: Danny C. Gordon

Motion carried

The Chair distributed the following documents:

- the minutes from the Joint Secretariat Board meeting, Inuvik January 25, 2001 (for the information of the members)
- the Joint Secretariat Inuvialuit Renewable Resource Committees financial statements for the year ending March 31, 2001 (for the information of the members)
- the draft WMAC(NS) 1999-2001 Term Report for review by the members.
- copies of two project descriptions filed 7 June 2001 with the Environmental Impact Screening Committee by the Alaska Gas Producers Pipeline Team. One document describes the terrestrial environmental studies while the other covers marine and coastal environmental studies.
- Revisions to Wildlife Conservation and Management Plan based on comments received during the Plan's review.
- A summary of the Roles and Responsibilities Workshop held in Inuvik in April.

Members decided to spend the rest of the afternoon reviewing the revisions to the Wildlife Conservation and Management Plan and the proposals filed with the Environmental Impact Screening Committee from the Alaska Gas Producers Pipeline Team.

Tuesday June 26, 2001

Present: Lindsay Staples – Chair
Danny C. Gordon- Member – Inuvialuit Game Council
Herbert Felix- Member – Inuvialuit Game Council
Doug Larsen – Member- Yukon Government
Joan Eamer – Canadian Wildlife Service - Member - Government of Canada
Dorothy Cooley –Alternate – Yukon Government
Aileen Horler – WMAC(NS) Secretariat

Guest: Ron Larsen, Parks Canada, Inuvik
Norm Snow, Executive Director, Joint Secretariat, Inuvik
Graham Baird, Lands and Resources Office, Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation

C. Review and Approval of Minutes of the May 8-9, 2001

Members reviewed the minutes of the May 8-9, 2001. The following changes to the minutes were requested:

Page 12- remove Doug Larsen's name from the reference to the memo of YTG's harvest information requirements and change Action 01-05-08 to read "WMAC(NS) will obtain a copy of YTG's past correspondence regarding information requirements and forward it to the other co-management bodies and the Chair of the Inuvialuit Harvest Study Management Committee."

Page 15- At the end of the paragraph describing the project titled 'Richardson Mountain Grizzly Bear Population Estimate', add "or once YTG has hired a new bear biologist who would be able to undertake the work."

Pages 19 and 20 - Add – "Inuvialuit Harvest Study- \$10,000" - to the list of projects supported and recommended for funding by the Council. The balance remaining should then read \$28,565.

Motion

To accept the minutes of the May 8-9, 2001 meeting, as revised

Moved: Doug Larsen
Second: Herbert Felix
Motion carried

Danny C. Gordon raised a concern regarding the issuance of an extra grizzly bear tag in April for the Yukon North Slope. Danny explained the circumstances and commented that the Aklavik Hunters and Trappers Committee were pursuing the matter further. Although not resulting in an over-harvest of the total North Slope quota, the harvest did result in the over-harvest of the quota for the area east of the Babbage River. Doug Larsen and Dorothy Cooley provided members with more information on what they understood to be the circumstances of the tag issuance, the switching of tags (an Ivvavik bear tag was used to tag the over-limit North Slope bear) and the resulting temporary seizure of the hide. Dorothy added that a letter is soon to be sent by Sharon Keaton, the YTG Conservation Officer for the Old Crow District, indicating that YTG will be issuing one less tag for the area next year in response to the over-harvest. A discussion was held regarding the course of action to be taken by YTG. It was agreed that this issue should be raised during the meeting with the HTC Directors later in the day.

Members suggested that WMAC(NS) write to the Aklavik Hunters and Trappers Committee and Ted Devine, GNWT, regarding the issuance of the extra grizzly bear tag. The letter should express the Council's concern and stress that the system currently in place needs to be administered properly. It is the responsibility of the HTC and the GNWT to ensure the process is maintained. The action taken by the GNWT in issuing the extra tag has an number of implications for the future and should be addressed.

Action 01-06-01: WMAC(NS) will write to the Aklavik Hunters and Trappers Committee and the GNWT regarding the issuance of an extra grizzly bear tag for the Yukon North Slope in April 2001.

D. Review of Action Items of the May 8-9, 2001 meeting

The Chair suggested that, given the short elapsed time since the last WMAC meeting, the review of the action items be done at the next meeting. The Secretariat noted that follow-up materials related to actions 01-12-03 and 01-05-11 are included in the meeting binder.

Members discussed how the Council should respond to the list of Yukon species assessed by COSEWIC (action 01-05-11). A question was raised as to how species get on the list, as some species such as beluga whales and ring seals are not there and perhaps should be.

Action 01-06-02: WMAC(NS) will contact COSEWIC to obtain information on their species assessment process.

Members suggested that the process of reviewing and commenting on the COSEWIC list could be done in a workshop format at the same time as the proposed traditional knowledge assessment of the Council's species status reports. This could be done over two days in the fall with a small group in Aklavik, selected from people who spend a lot of time on the land. It would be useful to have COSEWIC representatives at such a workshop.

Action 01-06-03: WMAC(NS) will write to COSEWIC to inform them of the Council's intention to hold a workshop to assess the Yukon species list and invite them to participate.

E. Correspondence

The Chair explained the background to the review of the February 2001 draft of the Yukon Development Assessment Process legislation prepared by Robert Gibson. This review was done with regard for the implications for assessment of projects in or involving the Yukon North Slope. The review makes some suggestions as to how to address the gaps in the legislation.

The Chair noted that the review was done of the February draft. Another draft was completed in May. The Council needs to look at the May draft to see if any of the concerns raised by Gibson were addressed. Any outstanding concerns should be conveyed to the Minister of DIAND.

Action 01-06-04: WMAC(NS) will write to the Minister of DIAND to convey the concerns raised by Robert Gibson in his review of the draft of the Yukon Development Assessment Process legislation.

In reference to a document in the binder on Bill C-10, the Chair explained that it is a submission prepared by the Joint Secretariat to Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development on the proposed legislation respecting National Marine Conservation Areas of Canada. The submission recognizes the need for consultation with organizations and co-management bodies representing aboriginal groups with land claim agreements over the selection of areas to be considered for conservation. A discussion was held regarding the levels of protection that would be provided under this legislation.

Action 01-06-05: Ron Larsen will send WMAC(NS) an electronic copy of Bill-10 and provide members with an update on the legislation at the next Council meeting.

F. Financial Statements

a) Review Engagement Report

The Secretariat explained the nature of the Review Engagement Report and why it is conducted each year. It was noted that the Council had already approved the year-end financial statement at the May 2001 meeting. The Council's financial records are reviewed in more depth as part of the preparation of the Review Engagement Report. These are the financial statements that are included in the term report.

Motion

To accept the 2000-01 Review Engagement Report, as prepared by Kim Tanner.

Moved: Joan Eamer
Second: Herbert Felix
Motion carried

b) WMAC(NS) 2000-01 budget

The Secretariat noted that there is an unassigned balance in the WMAC(NS) budget for 2000-01 of \$17, 080. Members agreed to consider the allocation of these funds at the next Council meeting.

F. Old Business

1. 1999-2001 Term Report

The Chair explained that this is the report which is prepared by the Council every two years. Members need to review the draft and send their comments to the Secretariat.

Action 01-06-06: WMAC(NS) members will review the draft of the 1999-2001 Term Report and send their comments to the Secretariat by July 27.

2. Muskox Management Workshop

Members discussed the objectives of the proposed workshop to be held in Aklavik in the fall. It was agreed that the workshop should bring together communities, co-management boards and government representatives to exchange information and document local observations of muskox. The workshop would also be a forum to share information on muskox behaviour and biology and to complete the Yukon North Slope Muskox Management Plan. It will

be an opportunity to determine a strategy for the Plan's implementation and to allocate the allowable harvest.

The workshop will last for three days. It is proposed that, on the first day, local people from Aklavik, Paulatuk, Sachs Harbour, Kaktovik and possibly other Alaskan communities have an opportunity to exchange information on their experiences and observations of muskox. The effect of muskox interactions with caribou remains a very high concern in northern communities. This workshop would provide a forum for community concerns to be presented and documented and to be addressed by the those responsible for the region's management of muskox. There would also be an opportunity for government representatives (YTG, GNWT, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Alaska Fish and Game) to provide communities with information on muskox behaviour, biology and the results of current research. The second day would be a review of the draft Yukon North Slope Muskox Management Plan with relevant participants, in order to complete the consultation on the Plan and determine strategies for its implementation, as well as each agencies' or board's responsibilities. The third day would be to assess and determine the allocation of the allowable harvest. As each day will cover different subjects, not all participants would be expected to attend for all three days.

A discussion was held about the cost of the workshop. It was noted that \$16,000 had been recommended by the Council from IFA implementation funds for this project. Members considered which invited participants should be offered funding support to attend the workshop. It was agreed that community participants attending as resource people should receive some funding support for their expenses. Representatives from communities that have concerns about muskox in their area should be supported by those communities if they want to participate.

Members agreed that the workshop should be held in October. Dorothy Cooley and Doug Larsen agreed to determine what materials should be available at the workshop and/ or distributed beforehand.

Action 01-06-07: WMAC(NS) will prepare and distribute an initial announcement letter regarding the proposed Muskox Management Workshop in Aklavik to all prospective participants.

Action 01-06-08: Dorothy Cooley and Doug Larsen will be responsible for the preparation of information materials for the Muskox Management Workshop in Aklavik.

Action 01-06-09: Dorothy Cooley will work with Ian McDonald and WMAC(NS) to prepare a draft agenda for the Muskox Management Workshop in Aklavik.

Meeting with the Aklavik Hunters and Trappers Committee Board of Directors

The Chair welcomed AHTC Board of Directors members Danny A. Gordon, Pat Kassok, Dennis Arey, Dean Arey, Jacob Archie and Donald Aviugana. Danny C. Gordon, also a member of the HTC Board of Directors, was already present at the Council meeting. The following is a summary of issues that were discussed:

Grizzly bear hunting and quota

- Danny A. Gordon expressed his concerns about the confiscation of a grizzly that he shot near Canoe Lake. At the time when he shot the bear, he was unaware that he was no longer in the ISR, as there are no markers or other indication of the boundaries.
- There is a lot of confusion over the location of the Gwich'in/ Inuvialuit hunting boundaries.
- There is a need to address reciprocal harvesting rights with the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, so that it will be possible to hunt in each other's traditional territories.
- The Chair commented that there are provisions in the IFA to establish a reciprocal harvest agreement between the Inuvialuit and the Vuntut Gwitchin and joint planning.
- It may be more straight forward to deal with this issue by establishing overlapping hunting areas than to try to put boundary markers in place.

Action 01-06-10: WMAC(NS) will obtain information on the issue of establishing a reciprocal harvesting agreement and/or joint wildlife management planning agreement between the Inuvialuit and the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation and report back to the AHTC Board of Directors at the next meeting.

- It was reported that some hunters are not able to get grizzly bear tags because other hunters are holding on to them for too long. It doesn't look good when someone who wants to make a living from the land is left out and can't get a tag. The HTC Directors acknowledged that there is a need for the HTC to look at the distribution of tags.
- The HTC Directors were asked to comment on the recent issuance in Aklavik of an extra tag and the resulting over-harvesting by one bear on the Yukon North Slope. No comments were expressed regarding this issue.

Grizzly bear population survey

- The Chair explained the scheduled grizzly bear population survey was postponed as the GNWT biologists are too busy this summer responding to the demands of the recent oil and gas initiatives. In addition the Yukon Government is currently without a bear biologist who could possibly take the lead or participate in the surveys. The surveys will take place next summer.

- Concerns were expressed about the collaring of bears in the spring when they aren't very fat. As they fatten up over the summer the collars become too tight.
- The HTC Directors commented that there are lots of grizzlies in the delta. It should be possible to hunt them there. There should be a quota that covers the delta.
- The HTC Directors also commented that the geographical distribution of the quota on the Yukon North Slope should be reconsidered. There shouldn't be a line between the national park and the area to the east of the Babbage. The Chair responded that the allocation was set up in a way to ensure that the full quota was harvested over a broad area.
- Meeting participants agreed that the issue of quota distribution should be reassessed. WMAC(NS) will put this topic on the agenda for their next meeting.

Muskox Management Workshop

- The Chair reported on the objectives of the workshop which is to be held in Aklavik in the fall.
- Part of the workshop would be to address the community's concerns about muskox / caribou interactions. Local people from Paulatuk, Kaktovik and Sach's Harbour would be invited to speak about their experiences with muskox. Biologists from the Yukon, GNWT and Alaska would be asked to provide information on recent research.
- The workshop would also be an opportunity to consult with the HTC on the draft Yukon North Slope muskox management plan and to determine the harvest allocation.
- The HTC Directors supported the workshop and agreed that late October would be a good date to hold it.

Yukon North Slope Species Status Reports

- The Chair reported on a project the WMAC(NS) wishes to undertake in the fall.
- The Council wants to hire a number of local hunters and people who spend time on the land to assess the Yukon North Slope Species Status Reports on the basis of their traditional knowledge.
- This assessment would be done over a couple of days in a workshop format. There are currently 26 species in the report.
- It has also been suggested that the list of species in the Yukon assessed by COSEWIC be reviewed at the same time.
- The HTC Directors expressed their support for the project.

Parks Canada

- Ron Larsen distributed a written update from Parks Canada, Western Arctic Field Unit. The update included information on activities in Ivavik National

Park and the other two Western Arctic National Parks as well as Park's historic sites.

The Chair thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.

3. Wildlife Conservation and Management Plan

The Chair distributed copies of past correspondence regarding the Withdrawal Order, for the information of the members.

A discussion was held as to how to proceed with the revisions to the draft of the Plan and the preparation of the final version. The Chair suggested that, in the final version, the list of actions should include who would take the lead role and when the actions should be undertaken. The Chair also suggested that the Species Status Reports be included a part of the Plan and printed under the same cover.

The Chair began to lead members through a review of the individual revisions. The process could not be completed due to lack of time. Members agreed to review the remainder of the suggested revisions and provide their comments to the Secretariat. The Chair proposed that he meet with Doug Larsen to review how the YTG comments had been addressed in the revisions. The Chair agreed to meet with Joan Eamer as well, if she felt it was necessary.

Action 01-06-11: The Secretariat will distribute electronic copies of the revised draft of the Wildlife Conservation and Management Plan to Doug Larsen and Ron Larsen.

Action 01-06-12: Members will provide their comments on the revised draft of the Wildlife Conservation and Management Plan to the Secretariat by July 21, 2001.

The Chair stressed the importance of having the final version of Plan completed and available as soon as possible. Members recognized that the Species Status Reports still need to be updated and assessed on the basis of traditional knowledge, a process that will not be completed until later in the fall. In addition, the final layout and printing of the Plan will take some time. Both of these will delay the release of a printed version.

Members agreed that in order to expedite the release of the Plan the final text version should be put on the Council's web site as soon as it is ready. Written announcements can be sent to select agencies and interested parties to notify them of the Plan's availability. This will allow for the release of the Plan in the

early fall. The final printed version can be completed once the Species Status Reports are updated.

Presentation by Norm Snow, Executive Director, Joint Secretariat

Norm Snow provided members with an update on the recent delta gas activity, future scenarios and offshore pipeline development. A summary of the presentation is as follows:

- The Alaska gas producers are seriously considering the construction of an 'over-the-top' pipeline. The other route being considered would see a pipeline follow the Alaska Highway.
- The producers will be spending \$100 million (Canadian) to examine all the factors which would effect the construction of the northern route before making any decision.
- They will be using seven "lenses" to examine the options. These include technical feasibility, economic factors and environmental screening requirements.
- The decision as to which route will be build is expected to be announced by the end of the year.
- At about the same time the producers will file an application with the National Energy Board. This will illustrate the seriousness of their intent to build.
- The pipeline would come on-shore somewhere east of King Point.
- A compressor station needs to be build near to where the pipeline comes on shore or possibly off-shore near King Point.
- The construction of the entire line would take 2-3 years. It is a 48" pipeline.
- The Delta producers still see themselves as a stand-alone enterprise. Their interest in building a Mackenzie Valley pipeline is not tied to the construction of an over-the-top pipeline from Alaska. Regardless of the construction of an Alaskan originating pipeline, Mackenzie gas would be transported in a separate pipeline due to the differences in pre-shipping processing.

Presentation on Behalf of the Alaska Gas Producers Pipeline Team

The Chair welcomed Derek Melton (Golder and Associates), Michael Fabjian (KAVIK /AXYS) and Chuck Newjar (Golder / IMG).

Derek explained that the Alaska Gas Producers Pipeline Team consists of ExxonMobile Resources Ltd. , BP Canada Energy Company and Phillips Petroleum Resources Ltd. The main environmental consultant for the AGPPT is AGA (a consortium of Amec, Golder and AXYS). Derek is the AGA EIA Co-ordinator (Mackenzie Valley Route) for the AGPPT feasibility study.

Derek distributed copies of two project descriptions filed 7 June 2001 with the Environmental Impact Screening Committee by the Alaska Gas Producers Pipeline Team. One document describes the terrestrial environmental studies while the other covers marine and coastal environmental studies. Derek also distributed an overview and status of the project and an overview of ISR environmental studies.

The focus of the project is on a pipeline to transport Alaskan gas. It is a feasibility study which is being conducted in order for the producers to choose one of two routes. Seven lenses will be used to evaluate the suitability of each route. The producers will make the choice as to which route will be taken by December.

The pipeline is to follow the forty foot contour line off-shore. It may come on-shore east of Ivavik National Park and head down the west side of the delta. Or another possibility is that it will not come on-shore east of the Park but will continue off-shore and come on land east of the delta.

There will be a compressor station in Alaska and another one in the region of King Point, either on- or off-shore depending on the route taken by the pipeline. The Aklavik HTC has expressed its concerns about the noise of a compressor station located so close to Shingle Point. This concern is being addressed.

Derrick outlined the planning activities that have taken place between April and June. He also relayed a number of comments made by the HTC's regarding the proposed studies, one of which being the need of incorporating traditional knowledge.

Proposed land studies include aquatic studies that will look at potential crossings and habitat. They will return later to do the fish studies. Wildlife sign, vegetation and soils ground surveys will be conducted. CWS and DRWED vegetation maps will be used. Surveys will be done to confirm soil types and vegetation. Wildlife aerial surveys will be done to determine the area's use by fall geese and other water birds, fall beaver and muskrat and winter ungulate. Telemetry surveys of the Porcupine caribou herd will also be undertaken. Proposed land studies also include an archaeological and a traditional knowledge component. The on-land section of the pipeline would be built in winter so they are most concerned about species that would be disturbed during the construction.

Off-shore construction would take place in the summer. Proposed off-shore studies include bathymetry, an assessment of coastal processes at the various land fall options, late summer whale surveys and molting waterfowl surveys.

Community assistants will be hired. All the work undertaken will be done to help make the decision as to which route to take and to begin the preparations for the Environmental Impact Assessment.

Lindsay Staples relayed the Council's intention to undertake a traditional knowledge assessment of the Species Status Reports. Lindsay suggested that as this is an area of mutual concern, it may be possible to work cooperatively. Members stressed the importance of sharing information rather than having a number of different groups doing the same work. A lot of work has been done in the past that can be built on. Members commented that there is a need to do more than just look at the narrow corridor where the pipeline would be situated. There is a need to consider the regional perspective.

Members agreed that they would like to have an update on the pipeline included in the agenda of the next Council meeting.

Action 01-0613: WMAC(NS) will inform Derek Melton of the dates of the Council's next meeting, as soon as they are known.

G. Next meeting

A summary of the workshops/ meetings proposed for the fall was given as follows:

- Muskox Management Workshop – Aklavik in late October
- Assessment of the COSEWIC list and the traditional knowledge component of the Species status reports – Aklavik in November
- WMAC(NS) Quarterly meeting- late October – date to be determined shortly by the Secretariat

H. Adjournment

Motion

To adjourn the meeting

Moved: Danny C. Gordon

Second: Doug Larsen

Motion carried

WMAC(NS) Chair

Date

WMAC(NS) Secretariat

Date