



Wildlife Management Advisory Council (North Slope)

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Minutes

WMAC(NS) QUARTERLY MEETING

**Alpine Bakery
Whitehorse, Yukon
October 28 and 29, 2004**

Thursday October 28, 2004

Present: Lindsay Staples – Chair
Herbert Felix- Member- Inuvialuit Game Council
Ernest Pokiak- Member – Inuvialuit Game Council
Harvey Jessup – Member - Yukon Government
Dorothy Cooley - Alternate- Yukon Government
Stuart Macmillan – Observer - Government of Canada (Parks
Canada)
Wendy Nixon- Alternate – Government of Canada (Environment
Canada)
Aileen Horler- Secretariat

Guests: Richard Gordon - Herschel Island Territorial Park
Barney Smith -Community Knowledge Programs, NatureServe
Yukon, YTG Environment
Cameron Eckert -Conservation Biologist, Parks Branch, YTG
Environment
Syd Cannings - Coordinator - NatureServe Yukon, YTG
Environment
Bruce Bennett - Botanist - NatureServe, YTG Environment
Dave Ladret – Parks Branch, YTG Environment

A. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9 am. Ernest Pokiak and Stu Macmillan were welcomed to the meeting. Ernest was introduced as the new member representing the Inuvialuit Game Council. Stu was sitting in for Ron Larsen as the representative of Parks Canada.

The Chair suggested that the Council take some extra time over the course of the meeting to ensure that the recently appointed members are provided with some background on each topic being covered.

The Chair noted that there has recently been a change in the federal representation. A representative of Parks Canada will now sit as the member and the Canadian Wildlife Service representative will now be the alternate member.

B. Review and Approval of Agenda

The Chair reviewed the agenda and outlined some of the issues to be covered during the meeting. These include the Council's budget for 2004-2005 as well as grizzly bear and muskox management issues. The Chair proposed the addition of an information item on the Withdrawal Order. Wendy Nixon requested the addition of an item related to the International Polar Year.

Motion

To adopt the agenda, as revised.

Moved: Herbert Felix
Second: Harvey Jessup
Motion carried

For clarification, the Chair gave a brief summary of the Council's relationship with the Porcupine Caribou Management Board, the Inuvialuit Game Council, and the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board.

The Chair welcomed Richard Gordon to the meeting.

C. Review and Approval of Minutes of May and August 2004 meetings

a) May 2004

No changes to the May 2004 minutes were requested.

Motion

To adopt the minutes of the May 2004 meeting

Moved: Herbert Felix
Second: Dorothy Cooley
Motion carried

b) August 2004

The Chair explained that the August 2004 meeting was a planning meeting. It was held so that members would have an opportunity to identify priority areas for the Council to focus on over the next few years.

The following changes to the draft were requested:

Page 4- Change \$5000 to read \$4500 in the motion to reallocate funds to the grizzly bear project.

Page 7- item #10 to be changed to read 'Status of bird populations associated with wetlands'

Motion

To adopt the minutes of the August 2004 meeting, with noted changes.

Moved: Herbert Felix
Second: Harvey Jessup
Motion carried

D. Review of Action Items

The Secretariat referred to the summary in the binders and further reported on the status of the action items as follows.

Action 04-05-01: The Secretariat will confirm with the Aklavik Hunters and Trappers Committee that they no longer think it is useful for YTG to hold a Trapper Education Workshop as no one in the community is currently trapping on the Yukon North Slope. The Secretariat will inform Helen Slama of the situation once confirmed.

Complete.

Action 04-05-02: The Secretariat will prepare a document that summarizes the type and extent of the authority of different agencies to regulate and enforce conservation related acts and regulations on the Yukon North Slope.

Complete. The Secretariat distributed the summary document. The Chair commented that the IFA binds the NWT to legally enforce the HTC bylaws. This is not the case in the Yukon. As a result of the recent review of the Yukon Wildlife Act there is now a provision to enable the Yukon Government to do so at the request of the WMAC(NS). The role of the two Wildlife Management Advisory Council's is to recommend quotas. The

HTC lays out the terms and conditions for their members and administers the quota. Any HTC draft bylaw goes to the IGC to make sure it is acceptable and is then it is forwarded to the GNWT if applicable to that jurisdiction. It is at this point that the GNWT becomes part of the administration and enforcement of the bylaw. In relation to Parks Canada regulations, they can be enforced outside of the national parks if there is a relationship to something that happened inside the park.

Action 04-10-01: The Secretariat will work with Ron Larsen to expand the regulation and enforcement summary table to include the RCMP, DFO and others, as required, and to produce a poster that summarizes the responsibilities and authority of the different agencies.

Action 04-05-03: The Secretariat will contact Catherine Pinard regarding the establishment of a protocol for the harvest information being collected in Aklavik.

Complete. Harvey Jessup commented that he would bring a copy of the Inuvialuit Harvest Study protocol to the meeting the following day for the Council to review and discuss how it could be adapted for the Aklavik study.

Members agreed that it is important to have something in place if a request is made for information. A protocol will provide guidelines for the release of information.

Action 04-05-04: The Secretariat will contact the EISC to find out what conditions were attached to the permit for the SSDC and inquire as to what program is in place to monitor the compliance of the permit conditions.

Ongoing. The Secretariat has requested the information from the EISC.

Action 04-05-05: WMAC(NS) will write to DC Marine to enquire about Inuvialuit participation of inspection tours of the SSDC.

Ongoing. The Chair commented that the regulatory bodies have the authority to place terms and conditions on any permits they issue. It has only been recently that the EISC has been able to do this. At the time of the SSDC decision the EISC was only able to say yes or no to the project and had no authority to add terms or conditions.

Council members and others continue to question how long the SSDC will be parked at Herschel Island. It was moved to Herschel with the expectation that it would be used by Devon but Devon is still not sure they will use it.

Richard Gordon reported that he has been in contact with DFO in order to get pictures of the sea floor around the SSDC. It is important to see how the vessel is affecting the area.

Action 04-05-06: The Secretariat will distribute to all members the record of the discussion regarding the IFA research forum held during the joint WMAC(NS) / WMAC(NWT) meeting in September 2003.

Complete. Information included in the meeting binder.

The Research Day will be held in Inuvik on December 8. It will be an opportunity for the members of all the co-management committees and the IGC to learn about the research currently underway in the ISR that is funded through the IFA. The Aurora Research Institute has been asked to sponsor a larger research forum in the spring that will cover all the research going on in the ISR.

Action 04-05-07: WMAC(NS) will write to Frank Pokiak acknowledging the receipt of his letter about the ISR Research Forum. The letter should note that the issue has been added to the agenda of the upcoming Joint Secretariat Board of Directors meeting, in early June. The results of the discussion will be reported to the Inuvialuit Game Council at their June meeting.

Complete.

Action 04-05-08: Wendy Nixon will ask Martin Raillard for an update on the status of the Recovery Planning Manual. The Secretariat will follow-up by supplying the members with any new information on the development of the manual.

Complete. Discussion deferred to later in the meeting.

Action 04-05-09: The Secretariat will contact Gloria Goulet to find out when the next draft of the COSEWIC Operating Manual will be ready for review. The Secretariat will follow-up by distributing the next draft to all members once it is available.

Complete. Discussion deferred to later in the meeting.

Action 04-05-10: The proposed WMAC(NS) personnel policies will be distributed to Council members.

Complete. Discussion deferred to later in the meeting.

Action 04-05-11: The Secretariat will compile a record of the Council's and others' activities related to the issue of clean-up of garbage at Shingle Point.

Complete. Information included in the meeting binder.

E. New Business

1. North Yukon Rare Species Projects - NatureServe Yukon

The Chair welcomed Barney Smith (Community Knowledge Programs, NatureServe Yukon, YTG Environment), Cameron Eckert (Conservation Biologist, YTG Environment Parks Branch), Syd Cannings (Coordinator - NatureServe Yukon, YTG Environment) and Bruce Bennett (Botanist NatureServe, YTG Environment).

Barney explained that he and the others had come to the meeting to provide Council members with some information about the three rare species-related projects that the Yukon Government hopes to conduct on the North Slope next summer. The need to conduct projects on rare species was identified in the Yukon North Slope Long-term Research Plan and during the traditional knowledge interviews conducted in Aklavik in 2003. Bruce will lead two projects to look at rare plants on the coast and Cameron will lead a project on birds along the Blow River. NatureServe Yukon wants to apply for some IFA funding for these projects and also wants to have a chance to talk about ways in which the Inuvialuit residence of Aklavik can provide support.

Cameron introduced the bird project by explaining that bird surveys have been done in other areas of the North Slope with support from the Canadian Wildlife Service. The areas that have been covered include Clarence Lagoon, and the Firth, Running and Babbage rivers. These studies have been looking at all the bird species that inhabit these different areas in the breeding season. However, there is still a gap in what is known about birds in the Blow River area. It has never been inventoried and not much is known about the habitat. The proposed work is similar to that which has been done in the other areas. It would be helpful to have some baseline data for the Blow River, especially when trying to monitor the impact of climate change. It will be important to be able to look back in ten years time to see what changes have occurred. The work would be conducted between the first and third week of June. Cameron added that he hopes to have a resident of Aklavik participate in the fieldwork. Ernest Pokiak commented that it is important to have local people involved in research projects on the land.

Bruce explained that there are a number of rare plants known to occur on the North Slope with most of them growing near the coast. There is a need to sample the area properly to know what rare species are occurring. The study will cover both the area between the Babbage and the NWT border as well as Ivavik National Park. It will take about 7 to 8 days. Both areas will be surveyed at the same time. The study will provide some good baseline data on the general

vegetation as well as on rare species. There will also be an opportunity to get some information on insects, snails and slugs, and nesting birds at the same time. Part of the work will also be to record what plants are not found in the area. The timeframe for the vegetation work is between late July and early August. The field crew hopes to travel by boat along the coast and set up a base camp.

The Chair confirmed that this kind of work has been identified as a priority in the Yukon North Slope Long-term Research Plan. The Research Plan provides a good context for why this kind of work is important. The Yukon North Slope Wildlife Conservation and Management Plan also identifies the coastal zone as an important place to direct more studies. We need to learn more about this area. People are seeing the effects of climate change already. Getting some baseline information will help to document the changes over time. The new Species at Risk legislation requires a better understanding of rare species across the country. All these factors justify the kind of work that is being proposed by NatureServe.

The Chair added that the Council would be reviewing all the IFA funding proposals at its spring meeting. The Council would like to ensure that information about the projects, including the results, is available to all interested parties. If such a product requires more funding then these additional costs should be included in the overall research budget.

The Chair noted that there might be an opportunity to present some information on the proposed projects at the Research Day workshop to be held in Inuvik December 8. A poster may also be a good way to introduce the work at this time.

F. Ongoing business

1. Herschel Island Territorial Park

The Chair welcomed Dave Ladret to the meeting.

a) Herschel Island Management Plan update

Dave reported that the plan is currently going through the pre-approval process. The document hasn't changed since the Council last saw it. It should only be a short time until this process is completed. Once Cabinet has accepted the plan it can go to WMAC(NS) for a formal sign-off and recommendation.

In reference to the hiring protocol, Dave reported that it was developed for use when hiring rangers for Herschel Island. The protocol was not followed on two occasions when it was necessary to do a direct hire as a result of rangers suddenly quitting during the field season. The Parks Branch is looking at adding and clarifying some details in the protocol. YTG will work with the IRC in making

these changes. Everyone hopes to have this work completed in the next few weeks. Dave added that the draft Herschel Island Management Plan states that the hiring protocol should be used.

b) Report on 2004 and 2005 activities - Richard Gordon

Richard distributed a document titled "Seasonal Operational Report 2004". Richard suggested the Council read over the report and if anyone has any questions he can address them at the December meeting.

Richard referred to the lists on the last two pages of this report. These are the activities planned for the following months and next field season (2005). The priorities for the next few months include reviewing and updating the park ranger job descriptions, revising the hiring protocol and hiring two new rangers. Richard added that he also wants to review all the information that is being collected with Dorothy. It is important for the Rangers to know why they are collecting the data and as well as the results.

Richard showed Council members pictures of the water levels on the island during last summer's storm surges. He also distributed copies of two new pamphlets that have been developed for the island- "Flora of Herschel Island Territorial Park" and an updated visitors' guide.

Action 04-10-02: The Secretariat will add the "Flora of Herschel Island Territorial Park" brochure, the updated Herschel Island visitors' guide and a link to the Herschel Island monitoring information on the Cantex website to the WMAC(NS) website.

Visitor numbers were up in 2004. The twin otter landed 37 times over the summer. This plane is primarily used by rafters but Arctic Nature Tours has used it for tours as well. They are all landing on the airstrip. Richard noted that before any planes are allowed to land the strip is surveyed to make sure there aren't any eider nests. If any nests are found, planes are not allowed to land and disturb them.

Unusual sightings this year included a crab that was found on the shore, a rusty blackbird, a marten and slugs.

The Chair commented that it would be good to have a discussion at the December meeting about the workplan for 2005. At that time the Council should go through the Management Plan in relation to the workplan.

2. Withdrawal Order

The Chair reported that YTG has communicated their interest to the IFA Implementation Committee, the IRC and the IGC in discussing the future status

of the Withdrawal Order on the Yukon North Slope. This will be a lengthy process.

The Chair provided Council members with the following information on the Withdrawal Order. The presentation titled “Amending the Yukon North Slope Withdrawal Order: Issues and Approaches” was prepared by the Chair for presentation to the IGC at their recent meeting in Yellowknife.

- The Withdrawal Order was put in place by a federal Order in Council and covers lands in both the ISR and the Vuntut Gwitchin Traditional Territory.
- In 1980, crown lands in the North Yukon, from the Bell and Porcupine rivers north to the Beaufort Sea (including Herschel Island) were withdrawn from disposition under the federal Territorial Lands Act and prohibited from entry under the federal Yukon Placer Mining Act.
- As a result no development of any kind is allowed in the withdrawn area that requires the use or occupation of lands. This includes any mineral staking, prospecting, and mine development, oil and gas exploration or the removal of gravel.
- This action was taken before the signing of the IFA in 1984. The reason given at the time was that the lands were required for a national park and other conservation purposes.
- The area covered under the Withdrawal Order was amended in 1985 to facilitate the establishment of Ivvavik National Park and Herschel Island Territorial Park.
- Further amendments were made to the area in 1993 to facilitate the establishment of Vuntut National Park and Special Management Areas in the Vuntut Gwitchin Traditional Territory.
- The Withdrawal Order was maintained under Yukon legislation with the introduction of the Yukon Oil and Gas Act.
- In 2003 devolution transferred the ownership and management responsibilities for most federal lands to the Yukon Government. The Yukon Government agreed to mirror the federal Withdrawal Order after devolution until Yukon developed its own territorial legislation.
- The IFA requires the establishment of a special conservation regime for the Yukon North Slope with the conservation of wildlife, habitat and traditional use as its dominant purpose – section 12(2).
- The IFA requirements for a YNS conservation regime include (i) the establishment of Inuvialuit harvest rights in Yukon and federal laws, (ii) the establishment of Ivvavik National Park and Herschel Island Territorial Park, (iii) the establishment of EISC and EIRB, and (iv) the establishment of YNS Wildlife and Conservation and Management Plan.
- As long as Withdrawal Order remains in force on the Yukon North Slope, it is a conservation measure, comparable to the dedication of two areas as wilderness parks.

- Questions have been raised about how the Withdrawal Order fits into the conservation regime. Is it possible to maintain the Withdrawal Order while still allowing some controlled development?
- Section 12(4) of the IFA says that the Withdrawal Order shall be maintained. However section 12(20) says that controlled development is allowed on land east of the Babbage. What is the relationship between 12(4) and 12(20)? Should the Withdrawal Order be maintained in whole or in part?
- The IFA puts limits on development. All developments must be screened. Before any commercial development proceeds on the YNS, amendments must be made to the Withdrawal Order.
- Other uses (other than conservation) may be considered and permitted as long as there are no significant impacts on conservation. Other uses that may have significant impacts may be permitted if public convenience and necessity outweigh conservation interests. This means that certain projects may outweigh conservation interests.
- Development proposals with a significant negative impact must be subject to public review. A public review process would be used to determine if development interests outweigh conservation interests or visa versa.
- The main issue related to the Withdrawal Order is how are the two requirements of the IFA to be met? Section 12(4) says the Withdrawal Order shall be maintained but section 12(20) says that controlled development may take place east of the Babbage.
- The Yukon North Slope Wildlife and Conservation Management Plan suggests an approach to address controlled development.
- Since the signing of the IFA in 1984, conflicting interpretations have arisen between the parties and within government as to the intent and meaning of the provisions in the agreement. These will need to be resolved between the parties if any development is to occur in the withdrawn area. The Yukon North Slope Wildlife and Conservation Management Plan says the IFA parties need to address the matter.
- YTG is currently proposing that all parties meet to discuss a process to resolve the issue. This would be a non interest-based approach as proposed in a letter from the Yukon Government Leader Dennis Fentie to the IRC and IGC in July 2004. The IGC wrote back agreeing to proceed with preliminary discussion. WMAC(NS) may assist in facilitating the process but the responsible parties to the IFA must share lead responsibilities.

D. Review of Action Items (continued)

Action 04-05-12: Dorothy Cooley will update the survey information in the draft muskox plan. The Chair will incorporate suggested revisions based on written comments and the discussion at the muskox meeting in Inuvik in June 2003. A revised draft will be tabled at the October Council meeting.

Ongoing. The updated survey information has been compiled. A further discussion about the Muskox Plan was deferred until later in the meeting.

Action 04-05-13: WMAC(NS), in consultation with the HTC, Parks Canada and YTG, will develop a proposal for community involvement in the grizzly bear project.

Complete. A discussion of a draft of the Community Involvement Strategy was deferred until later in the meeting.

Action 04-05-14: The Secretariat will develop an outline for a multi-year communication strategy for the grizzly bear project.

Complete. A discussion of a draft of the Communication Strategy was deferred until later in the meeting.

Action 04-05-15: WMAC(NS) will write to the Inuvialuit Game Council in response to the letter written to the IGC by the GNWT regarding compensation for mortalities or hide damage as a result of grizzly bear research.

Complete. A discussion of this issue was deferred until later in the meeting.

Action 04-05-16: The Chair will contact Alan Fehr to suggest that Parks Canada consider developing an interim measure for the issuance of grizzly bear tags in Ivvavik National Park until such time as the proper regulations are put in place.

Complete. Stu Macmillan reported that YTG has designated tags for the park and that they will soon be available. The AHTC will administer the distribution of the tags.

The Chair commented that Parks Canada still has to develop regulations that will allow for the issuance of legally binding tags in the ISR's national parks.

YTG and Parks Canada currently have an arrangement that provides a mechanism for the issuance of grizzly tags for Ivvavik National Park.

In reference to the changes in the grizzly bear quota recommended by WMAC(NS) the previous year, Harvey Jessup reported that YTG will not be making any changes to the wildlife regulations for 2005. This has raised concerns with both the PCMB and the Fish and Wildlife Management Board. YTG will be looking at some administrative changes but an adjustment in the grizzly bear quota would not be one of these. The Chair added that the Council received a letter from the Environment Minister in July saying that he accepted the Council's recommendation to increase the quota by two bears and to remove the zero quota from

Herschel Island. The Secretariat was asked to bring copies of the correspondence to the meeting the following day so that the members could discuss this topic further.

Action 04-05-17: WMAC(NS) will prepare a summary of research projects supported at the May meeting and forward the summary along with the Council's funding recommendations to Parks Canada, the Yukon Government, the GNWT, the Environmental Impact Screening Committee and the Canadian Wildlife Service. A copy of the summary will be sent to the Aklavik Hunters and Trappers Committee, the Inuvialuit Game Council, and WMAC(NWT) for their information.

Complete.

Action 04-05-18: WMAC(NS) will forward the summary of research projects supported by the Council at the May meeting to Richard Gordon. The covering letter should say the Council recognizes and supports the use of Herschel Island as a base camp for researchers associated with three of the projects (Grizzly Bear Populations and Movement in the Yukon North Slope and the two muskox projects).

Complete.

Action 04-05-19: The Secretariat will prepare a briefing package for Council members to provide information on what types of projects need what types of permits on the Yukon North Slope. The package should include all letters related to the subject (EISC, IGC, WMAC(NWT)) as well as any communication from YTG, documents related to the Yukon Scientific and Explorers permit, Parks Canada's environmental assessment requirements and the process for obtaining and issuing Herschel Island permits. Members will review this issue at the October meeting.

Complete. A discussion of this issue was deferred until later in the meeting.

Action 04-05-20: WMAC(NS) will write a letter to Dorothy Cooley conveying the Council's support of the 2004 Porcupine caribou herd caving survey and photocensus, and the expansion of the study area into the Yukon if required.

Complete.

Action 04-05-21: WMAC(NS) will write to Erik Val seeking assurance that the Herschel Island hiring protocol will be used when recruiting for the permanent ranger positions in the Territorial Park later in the year. A copy of the letter should be sent to YTG Human Resources.

Complete. Dave Ladret provided a letter of response to the Council from Erik Val, which addressed the issues of the use of the protocol, and the revision process that is currently underway.

Action 04-05-22: WMAC(NS) will draft an Attendance Policy for review by the Inuvialuit Game Council. If supported by the IGC, the Council will adopt the policy and include it in the WMAC(NS) Operation Procedures.

Complete. Policy in the binders for adoption.

Action 04-05-23: The Secretariat will prepare a summary of the status of the action items in the Long-term Research Plan.

Complete. Prepared for the August meeting.

Action 04-05-24: Members will identify which action items (in the Long-term Research Plan, the Conservation and Management Plan and from the North Slope Conference) they consider to be the priorities for the Council, prior to the meeting in August.

Complete.

Friday October 29, 2004

Present: Lindsay Staples – Chair
Herbert Felix- Member- Inuvialuit Game Council
Ernest Pokiak- Member – Inuvialuit Game Council
Harvey Jessup – Member - Yukon Government
Dorothy Cooley - Alternate- Yukon Government
Stuart Macmillan – Observer - Government of Canada (Parks Canada)
Wendy Nixon- Alternate – Government of Canada (Environment Canada)
Aileen Horler- Secretariat

Guest: Richard Gordon- Herschel Island Territorial Parks Canada

F. Ongoing business (continued)

3. Grizzly bear research and management

a) Grizzly bear quotas

Harvey Jessup explained that last year Doug Larsen submitted a Wildlife Regulation Proposal to change grizzly bear quotas on the North Slope as a result

of the recommendation made by WMAC(NS). The proposal states that this change is to permit hunting on Herschel Island by allowing for a quota of one bear, with the intent of limiting the number of bears harvested on Herschel Island and in Ivvavik National Park to three bears. The proposal also includes the addition of one more bear to the rest of the Yukon North Slope (east of the Babbage).

Due to current government policy, this proposal won't go through in 2005. However, as an advisory body it is possible for the Council to make a recommendation directly to the Minister regarding these changes. Any recommendation would have to go through a Yukon consultation process. A recommendation would have to be submitted to the Minister in January in order to obtain a Cabinet Order in Council by February.

The Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board will be making a decision in November about how they are going to proceed with their regulation requests, in light of the government's current policy. It may be possible to include a WMAC(NS) regulation proposal in a package brought forward to a public process by the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board. The Council should contact the Board to see how they are going to proceed and find out if WMAC(NS) can add its proposal for a regulation change. If the Board is not going to proceed then the Council can make a decision about its course of action.

Action 04-10-03: The Secretariat will contact the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board to find out how they have decided to proceed with their regulation proposals.

G. Correspondence

No questions were raised about any of the items of correspondence in the meeting binder.

D. Review of Action Items (continued)

b) August 2004 Planning Meeting action items

The Secretariat referred to the list of initiatives and priorities identified at the August 2004 planning meeting. Not all of these are action items. Some are areas where no actions have been identified as yet. For example, in reference to #8 (Coastal sensitivity mapping), 14 (Traditional knowledge studies) and 15 (Human Use Mapping), the Council hasn't discussed how it is going to proceed in these areas.

In reference to #4 (the Arctic Borderlands Ecological Knowledge Co-op) - *“WMAC(NS) should consult with the Coop to determine ways that the Council can further support the Coop’s work”*, the Chair reported that Joan Eamer would be attending the meeting the following day to discuss this matter. The YNS Wildlife Conservation and Management Plan identifies the importance of ecosystem monitoring. There are lots of action items in the plan that are related to the Borderlands Co-op and ecosystem monitoring. The Council should consider how it could support the work of the Co-op and how the Co-op can generate some deliverables related to the Yukon North Slope.

In reference to #20 (Regulations and enforcement)- Harvey Jessup commented a meeting should be held this winter to discuss further changes to the Yukon’s Trapping Regulations. The December meeting could be an opportunity for the IGC to be briefed on the current status of this issue.

In reference to #24 (Off-shore development/ oil and gas development)- The Chair reported that since this list was made, Devon has made a proposal to proceed with off-shore drilling. WMAC(NS) should monitor the proposed development.

Action 04-10-04 : The Secretariat will reformat the list of initiatives and priorities identified at the August 2004 planning meeting. These items will be presented as ‘Strategic Initiatives’ and their progress updated for every meeting.

H. Report from the Chair

The Chair reported that he had recently attended the IGC meeting in Yellowknife where, in addition to giving a presentation on the Withdrawal Order, he provided an update on the Council’s planning meeting in August and the progress of the Muskox Management Plan. He told the IGC that completing this plan is a priority and that a meeting is to be held in Anchorage with Alaskan representatives to discuss common interests and concerns.

F. Ongoing business (continued)

4. WMAC(NS) Personnel Policy

The Chair explained that it was necessary for the Council to develop a Personnel Policy when the Secretariat position changed from a contract to a staff relationship. Conditions of employment had previously been defined as terms of the contracts that were put in place for the Secretariat and others. The WMAC(NS) policy is modeled on the one used for the Joint Secretariat staff. A few modifications have been made to suit the circumstances of the position in Whitehorse. The policy was circulated to the members for their comments in

May. Specific conditions of employment, such as salary level and holiday time, are detailed in the letter of employment.

Members requested a change be made to section 3.01. The section should be changed to read:

“All employees of the Wildlife Management Advisory Council (North Slope) are hired with the understanding that should funding not be available, or reduced, for the position occupied by that employee, the employee may be laid off or their terms of employment adjusted.”

Motion

To adopt the Wildlife Management Advisory Council (North Slope) Personnel Policy, with noted changes to section 3.01.

Moved: Harvey Jessup
Second: Ernest Pokiak
Motion carried

Motion

To appoint the Yukon Government member as the Chair’s designate to fulfill the responsibilities identified in the Council’s Personnel Policies.

Moved: Herbert Felix
Second: Wendy Nixon
Motion carried

Motion

To add Harvey Jessup as a signatory to the Council’s bank account.

Moved: Earnest Pokiak
Second: Wendy Nixon
Motion carried

5. Attendance Policy

The Chair explained that the policy in the binder was developed by the Council in the spring and is modeled on the policy that the IGC has for its members. The proposed WMAC(NS) attendance policy was sent to the IGC for their feedback. The IGC reviewed the document and have forwarded their approval. Once adopted by the Council this policy will become part of WMAC(NS)’s Operating Procedures.

Motion

To adopt the attendance policy for the Wildlife Management Advisory Council (North Slope).

Moved: Harvey Jessup

Second: Herbert Felix

Motion carried

6. Parks Canada report

Stu Macmillan provided the report for Parks Canada. The update for September 2004 in the meeting binder provides information on the Western Arctic Field Unit as well as for the three National Parks in the ISR.

Stu provided additional information as follows:

- Stokes Point Clean-up - Parks Canada is currently applying for funds to do a more thorough evaluation of the landfill. This evaluation will determine how much contamination there is and how wide spread it is. Parks is hoping to do some test pits next summer.
- Parks Canada has a new fuel caching protocol to address the better management of fuel caches. The protocol applies to all locations in the parks as well as the activities of all Parks Canada personnel and contractors outside of the parks. The permitting includes a removal plan. Full drums can stay in place for 3 years and empty ones for 4 before they have to be removed. Only certain locations will be designated for fuel caching. There is a two-year implementation period for this policy to allow for adjustments and/ or amendments. By 2006 everyone will be required to meet the new standards. Parks is planning to contact the Department of National Defence to explore their acceptance of the protocol.
- Parks Canada is moving forward with its ecological integrity modeling. The country has been divided into five bioregions. The Northern Bioregion mostly contains the parks north of 60. There are five monitoring initiatives: (i) climate change and impact monitoring, (ii) freshwater ecosystems, (iii) marine ecosystems (iv) remote sensing, and (v) data management. Parks is developing approaches over the winter to see how they can move forward with these initiatives. For example, in relation to climate change, what should be monitored? What kind of indicators should be put in place?

The Chair commented that the issue of fuel caching is identified in the Yukon North Slope Wildlife Conservation and Management Plan. It would be helpful to consider a protocol like this that covers the entire North Slope. Council members agreed to add a further discussion of this topic to the agenda for the December meeting in order to consider the implications for the North Slope.

Action 04-10-05: The Secretariat will obtain and circulate a copy of YTG's Environmental Protocol to Council members.

Action 04-10-06: The Council will review all protocols related to the management of fuel caches on the North Slope at its December meeting

7. Arctic Borderlands Ecological Knowledge Co-op

The Chair welcomed Joan Eamer to the meeting. Joan provided an update on the following action items related to the Borderlands Co-op in the Yukon North Slope Wildlife and Conservation Management Plan.

A.1.2. Government, Inuvialuit and other aboriginal organizations and co-management bodies should continue to work cooperatively to coordinate and maintain the Arctic Borderlands Ecological Knowledge Co-op as an ecosystem monitoring system for the Yukon North Slope to understand ecosystem dynamics, integrity and health, and to determine threats to it and to human health.

The Co-op has expanded into four new communities- Inuvik (Gwich'in and Inuvialuit), Tsiigehtchic and Tuktoyaktuk. The Department of Fisheries and Oceans are providing funding for the program in Tuk. So far funding has been sufficient to keep the Co-op going but little of it has been consistent or long-term.

A.2.4. Inuvialuit harvesters should provide information on the quality of harvested wildlife to the Aklavik HTC, the WMACs, the FJMC and the Arctic Borderlands Ecological Knowledge Co-op.

The Co-op is getting some of this kind of information through the Community-based Monitoring Program. It would be possible to take a look at the quality of the wildlife information. It's also possible to compile regional information.

A.3.2. Continue to maintain and update the two existing databases (the Arctic Borderlands Ecological Knowledge Co-op Database of Information Sources and the Sources of Documented Yukon North Slope Traditional Knowledge) as comprehensive computerized databases of research material and other relevant information, including scientific data and traditional ecological knowledge, for the Yukon North Slope.

The Database of Information Sources was updated last year and expanded to include information on the coastal zone. There is a need for WMAC(NS) to update the database of Sources of Documented Yukon North Slope Traditional Knowledge.

B.2.3. Federal and territorial agencies should work cooperatively to identify contaminant sources and how they affect wildlife on the Yukon North Slope.

The Co-op did a review of contaminant sources in 2000 and continues to ask questions.

B.2.4. Government, Inuvialuit and co-management bodies should work cooperatively to educate Yukon North Slope community residents on the effects local pollution may have on wildlife and habitat.

The Co-op did provide some information to participants at the last Gathering.

B.4.2. The Arctic Borderlands Ecological Knowledge Co-op, Parks Canada's State of the Parks Report, Parks Canada's Ecological Monitoring Report and the Yukon's State of the Environment reports should continue to report on the status of wildlife, habitat and the North Slope environment.

This is another area where the Co-op could compile a regional summary.

B.5.2. Review the indicators used by the Arctic Borderlands Ecological Knowledge Co-op and other initiatives to monitor climate change.

The indicators are reviewed at the Annual Gatherings. An extensive review was done at the 2003 gathering.

D.3.2. Inuvialuit harvest studies and the annual community-based monitoring of the Arctic Borderlands Ecological Knowledge Co-op should be used for the reporting of unusual environmental events, threats and changes.

The Co-op has set up a reporting form for usual sights or occurrences that is web-based. Questions are asked in the interviews but they don't catch them all.

Joan added that the Co-op is still weak in its mapped work. The Co-op needs to figure out the best way to summarize the information and how to put it on the maps.

The Chair commented that the Council wants to find a way to support the work of the Co-op. Recognising that a lot of information has been collected, the Council would like to assist the Co-op in compiling and analyzing the findings in a report for the North Slope.

3. Grizzly bear research and management (continued)

a) Grizzly bear quotas (continued)

The Secretariat distributed copies of the correspondence related to the Council's recommendation to increase the quota by two bears and to remove the zero quota from Herschel Island (a joint letter from the Council to the Minister of the Environment (Yukon) and Minister of Canadian Heritage that included the Council's resolution, one from the Yukon Minister saying that he accepts the Council's recommendation and one from the federal Minister also supporting the Council's recommendation).

A discussion was held about the authority of the Aklavik HTC, their bylaws and the allocation of tags provided under the quota. Harvey Jessup clarified that right now Herschel Island is closed to hunting. It is incorrect to say that it has a zero quota. To open the island to hunting requires a regulation change. If it was a zero quota it could be modified without a regulation change. As the distribution and allocation of tags is a decision and responsibility of the HTC, the regulation change proposed by Doug Larsen is not necessary.

Action 04-10-07: Harvey Jessup will work with the Secretariat to ensure that two extra grizzly bear tags are issued to the Aklavik Hunters and Trappers Committee. One of these tags is for use in the Yukon and one in the NWT.

Action 04-10-08: Harvey Jessup will find out if there is a mechanism to allow for the distribution of three tags across the two parks (Ivvavik and Herschel Island)

b) YNS grizzly bear project summer field work results

After successfully collaring ten bears in June, the researchers found out that the batteries that power the VHS locator in the collars are faulty. The batteries will begin to malfunction sometime this winter. This means that it will not be possible to locate the collared bears in the spring using the VHS signal.

Ramona and Aileen went to Aklavik in September to explain the situation to the HTC. The HTC agreed to support the recollaring of the bears in October. The HTC also requested that Lee John Meeyok accompany the field crew when possible on behalf of the HTC. Lee John is a Herschel Island ranger and accompanied the field crew during one of the captures in June.

The field crew spent over 3 weeks in Inuvik trying to get out and recollar the bears. All ten bears were located but only two were recollared due to very poor field conditions. The field crew was able to locate the den sights of all the bears. They hope that knowing the location of the dens will make it easier to return in the spring to recollar the remaining bears. The collar manufacturer will not charge YTG for any returned collars. The recovery of the two collars will cover the costs of this recent fieldwork.

c) Communications Strategy

The Secretariat referred to the draft Grizzly Bear Research Project Communications Strategy in the meeting binders. Council members supported the proposed initiatives outlined in the strategy.

Action 04-10-09: The Secretariat will provide more information on budget, timeline and partnerships possibilities for the Grizzly Bear Research Project Communications Strategy.

d) Framework for community involvement

The Secretariat referred to the draft community involvement strategy in the meeting binder. Council members agreed that it is important to have community people involved and employed in the project. The more people who know what's going on the better.

Action 04-10-10: The Secretariat will send the draft community involvement strategy to the Aklavik Hunters and Trappers Committee for their review with a request that it be discussed at our meeting with them in December.

Action 04-10-11: The Secretariat will obtain more information about funding for student programs in the NWT.

d) Compensation

The Chair reported that there isn't a formal policy in place in the ISR related to compensation for grizzly bear research-related mortalities. The GNWT has tried to frame a policy for loss or damage. They are anxious to get a policy in place. The Council has written to the IGC suggesting that any policy should cover the entire ISR so that circumstances are the same in both the NWT and the Yukon. The Chair also raised the issue of a need for an IRS-wide policy at the recent IGC meeting in Yellowknife.

All parties need to be involved in a discussion about a compensation policy. If all parties can be brought together it should be used as an opportunity to discuss a multi-species policy as same issues affect other species.

It is important to consider the IFA and what it says. For example, section 13(3) of the IFA states that the Inuvialuit shall be compensated for actual wildlife harvest loss resulting from development in the ISR. The definition of development includes 'any government project, undertaking or constructionexcept wildlife enhancement projects'. How does this relate to wildlife research?

Council members agreed that it is not a good idea to have a situation where different agencies have different policies and interpretations. There is a need to distinguish between development and research. Research is conducted for long-

term benefit. This is different from a bear monitor having to shoot a bear. Other factors that need to be considered include the compensation for animals that can't be eaten because they have been drugged. When a bear is killed it comes off the quota. However, if the quota isn't filled why should any compensation be paid?

Stu Macmillan noted that there is a compensation policy in place for bears in Tuktut Nogait National Park. The Tuktut Nogait Agreement says that the Department of Heritage (Parks Canada) will compensate the Paulatuk HTC for the loss of any of Paulatuk's bear tags for any bears killed by employees or independent contractors of the Department while acting in the performance of their duties. Compensation is calculated at 70% of the average market value of a guided sport hunt from Paulatuk the previous season. This policy is part of the Tuktut Nogait Agreement and can't be changed.

Harvey Jessup reported that the Yukon Government doesn't pay compensation for hide damage for furbearers but does pay for the return of collars and ear tags. Dorothy Cooley added that there is no compensation paid for caribou however the GNWT does pay for the return of collars.

It is important for WMAC(NS) to work with the GNWT, Parks Canada, the Yukon Government, WMAC(NWT), the IGC and the HTCs to resolve this issue. All parties should get together to discuss and develop a policy that would apply across all jurisdictions and include multiple species.

Action 04-10-12: WMAC(NS) will write to the Inuvialuit Game Council to relay the Council's interest in participating in a multi-agency workshop to develop an ISR-wide policy for wildlife compensation.

Harvey Jessup noted that it is against the law in the Yukon to shoot a collared animal although this provision is not strongly enforced. The GNWT is telling hunters not to shoot a collared bear. The Yukon Government should be giving the same message. It costs a lot of money to collar a bear and it is lost to the study once it is shot.

8. Muskox research and management

a) 2004 Survey Results

Dorothy Cooley reported that another aerial survey and composition count was done in July. It was the second survey of the year and was paid for by Parks Canada. It wasn't possible to cover the entire survey due to limited helicopter time. The total count was 66 muskox. There were fewer calves found than before but the number of yearlings was fine. There were eight collars put out in July 2002. There are now only two collars working. Dorothy noted that the

survey crew didn't find any collared bears. They did see bears but none of them were collared.

Dorothy also reported that John Nagy recently counted 54 muskox in the Richardson Mountains, including six calves. This herd is becoming much more substantial. It is time for all relevant parties to look more seriously at the management of this herd.

b) Draft Canadian North Slope Muskox Co-management Plan

The Chair summarized a number of steps that need to be taken to complete the plan. The latest survey results need to be incorporated into the existing draft. The meeting with the Alaskans planned for the following week will be an opportunity to discuss the management of the shared population. There are questions about the decline in the size of the herd in Alaska that need to be researched. Also there is a need to communicate again with the various local parties that have an interest in the management of the herd such as the Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board and the Aklavik RRC.

The Chair reported that the Yukon Government did not give permission for Dorothy Cooley to attend the meeting in Alaska. The Council wrote a letter to the Deputy Minister Department of Environment asking that the decision be reconsidered. The Council hasn't received a response.

Action 04-10-13: The Secretariat will forward a copy of the Council's letter written to Deputy Minister Department of Environment regarding Dorothy Cooley's participation in the Anchorage muskox meeting to the IGC.

9. 2004-2005 Wildlife Management and Research Updates

a) Porcupine caribou herd satellite data

Dorothy Cooley commented that this is an ongoing project to maintain collars on caribou cows in the Porcupine caribou herd. There are currently 11 collars on cows in the herd that are transmitting location data to the satellite.

b) Aklavik Harvest Data Collection

Harvey Jessup reported that Catherine Pinard has again been contracted to coordinate the data collection. Catherine will be returning to Aklavik in November and will hire a field worker to do the interviews. These interviews will include questions about the moose, sheep and caribou harvest.

Members agreed on the importance of getting an information sharing protocol in place as soon as possible. Harvey agreed to make appropriate modifications to the protocol that was developed for the Inuvialuit Harvest Study to suit the circumstances of the Aklavik study. As soon as this is complete, the Secretariat will distribute the draft to the members and to the HTC for their review and feed-

back. It would be good to have the protocol ready in time for the HTC to sign off at the December meeting.

Action 04-10-14: Harvey Jessup will modify the protocol that was developed for the Inuvialuit Harvest Study to suit to circumstances of the Aklavik study. As soon as this is complete, the Secretariat will distribute the draft to the members and to the HTC for their review and feed-back.

c) Herschel Island

Dorothy Cooley reported on the summer fieldwork on Herschel Island. This work was funded by NatureServe Yukon. The permanent vegetation plots set up in 1999 were remeasured. One of the data loggers was lost so there is a need to think about replacing it. A study was conducted to look for snails and slugs that could act as secondary hosts for some parasites found in caribou and muskox. There was lots of excitement when the small slugs were found. More slug studies are planned for next summer.

There was a total failure in the number of live guillemot chicks produced this year. Only eight nests were used containing a total of 13 eggs. None of these survived. Dorothy met with Richard Gordon and Cameron Eckert to discuss what can be done. The birds may be having problems related to the retreat of sea ice and how far they have to go to feed. There are also some problems related to the tar paper on the roof of the building where they nest.

Dorothy added that there is an interest in developing posters on the plants of Herschel Island that would include samples and information on their use.

E. New Business (continued)

1. Habitat Stewardship Program (HSP)

Wendy Nixon explained the purpose of the Habitat Stewardship Program. HSP funds projects that support the conservation and recovery of species at risk listed by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC). Activities eligible for funding include:

- habitat securement (protecting habitat by securing it)
- habitat improvement
- program planning and development
- outreach, education, extension, and technology transfer
- developing/modifying technology (to reduce harm to wildlife)
- project evaluation
- surveys, monitoring and inventories

In the ISR, grizzly bears, polar bears, peregrine falcons, wolverines and short-eared owls are some of the species listed as being of special concern. An eligible project must be related to one of these species. WMAC(NS) is eligible to

apply and could apply for funding for the outreach and educational component of the grizzly bear research project.

Proposals for funding for 2005-2006 are due November 8. Wendy has forwarded a copy of the proposal guidelines to WMAC(NS).

Action 04-10-15: The Secretariat will review the HSP proposal guidelines and will develop a funding proposal for relevant components of the grizzly bear research project.

2. International Polar Year (IPY)

Wendy Nixon provided information on initiatives related to the International Polar Year (2007-2008). The goal of the IPY is to enhance links between community and science. The intent is to develop programs that would start in the IPY but would last for years to come. There are six international themes:

1. to determine the present environmental status of the polar regions by qualifying their spatial and temporal variability
2. to quantify and understand past and present environmental and human change in the polar regions in order to improve predictions
3. to advance our understanding of polar-global interactions by studying teleconnections on all scales
4. to investigate the unknowns at the frontiers of science in the polar regions
5. to use the unique vantage point of the polar regions to develop and enhance observatories studying the Earth's inner core, the Earth's magnetic field, geospace, the Sun and beyond.
6. A sixth draft theme on social sciences and humanities is currently being discussed.

Wendy added that the Canadian Steering Committee (CSC) for the IPY would like to have preliminary project ideas and proposals in early December. The CSC will examine these pre-proposals, provide feedback to the proponents, and compile them for submission to the IPY Joint Committee by January 10, 2005.

Action 04-10-16 : The Secretariat will compile some ideas for the Council's involvement in the International Polar Year for discussion at the December meeting.

3. Resource Managers Information Exchange

At the request of Martin Raillard, Wendy Nixon provided some information on the Resource Managers Information Exchange. This group was initiated by Martin Raillard (Environment Canada) and Brian Pelchat (YTG Environment) and includes a number of people who are involved in resource management in the Yukon. Its goal is to coordinate how information is managed, determine ways to collaborate on fieldwork and identify geographic areas and species that are priorities for investigation. Although no specifics have been identified to date

there is an interest in considering woodland caribou as a species to collaborate work on and the Peel Plateau as a geographical area of priority.

I. Financial Report

a) 2004/ 2005 WMAC(NS) Budget

The Chair explained that the Council has already approved a budget for 2004/ 2005, using the budget categories assigned by the federal government when they approved the Council's new 5-year funding agreement. However, the Secretariat was asked to take these figures and break them down further into the categories historically used by the Council, in addition to creating some new ones to reflect the changes in the funding. The budget in the meeting binder is the result. One of the major differences from previous years is the addition of the categories related to the staff position. Some of the funding for specific projects has been allocated. The remainder of the unallocated funds will be assigned once other projects and activities are further defined.

Motion

To adopt the Wildlife Management Advisory Council (North Slope) budget for 2004- 2005, as tabled.

Moved: Ernest Pokiak
Second: Harvey Jessup
Motion carried

b) Revenue and Expenses October, 2004

The Secretariat explained the statement of Revenues and Expenses in the meeting binder. This statement breaks down the Council's spending and shows how much has been spent to date in each category and how much is remaining.

F. Ongoing business (continued)

10. Species at Risk

a) COSEWIC Operating Manual

The Chair explained that the Wildlife Management Boards, set up under various land claims across the country, have several new roles under the Species at Risk legislation. In relation to COSEWIC (the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada), this role involves providing input to species assessments. COSWEIC makes recommendations to the Canadian Minister of Environment on the status of wildlife in Canada. COSEWIC can designate species as endangered, threatened or of special concern. Each of these designations leads to a variety of actions that governments must undertake according to the legislation. Concerns have been raised that these COSEWIC legislated

responsibilities could reduce the responsibilities of the co-management boards. However the role of the co-management boards is recognized in the Species at Risk legislation. Representatives of COSEWIC and the Co-management Boards have met to determine their roles and how they will operate in relation to one another. This has led to some changes being made to COSEWIC's Operating Procedures. A copy of the resulting appendix that has been accepted by all parties is included in the meeting binder.

b) Recovery Planning Manual

The Chair reported that the Species at Risk legislation also requires the development of recovery strategies. There is a need to consider the role of the Co-management Boards in the recovery process. A meeting or teleconference needs to be held to finish up the work of defining the role of the Co-management Boards. There is an expectation that something will be done.

Action 04-10-17: Wendy Nixon will ask Martin Raillard to provide the Council with a briefing on the issue of defining the role of the Co-management Boards in the Species at Risk recovery process.

J. Upcoming meetings

Members agreed to hold the next WMAC(NS) meeting in Aklavik, December 6 and 7. There will also be a joint dinner meeting with the WMAC(NWT) in Inuvik December 7. The Research Day will be in Inuvik December 8. The Chair will be reporting to the IGC on December 9.

K. Adjournment

Motion

To adjourn the meeting.

Moved: Herbert Felix
Second: Harvey Jessup
Motion carried

WMAC(NS) Chair

Date

WMAC(NS) Secretariat

Date