



MEETING MINUTES

WMAC (NS) Quarterly Meeting
Aklavik, NWT Band Office Boardroom
December 8-10, 2009

Tuesday December 8, 2009

Lindsay Staples (WMACNS Chair) **Danny C. Gordon** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) **Ernest Pokiak** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) **Christian Bucher** Government of Canada (Member) **Michelle Christensen** (Secretariat – by telephone) **Kristina Gardner** (Acting Secretariat) **Dorothy Cooley** Yukon Government (Alternate) **Doug Larsen** Yukon Government (Member) **Ramona Maraj** Carnivore Biologist, Yukon Government (Guest)

A. Call to Order

The Chair welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 9:15am.

B. Review and Approval of Agenda

The Chair reviewed the agenda and meetings taking place over the next few days.

Motion 12-09-01

To approve the agenda for the December 8-10, 2009 meeting.

Moved: Danny Gordon

Second: Doug Larsen

Motion carried.

C. Review and Approval of September Minutes (*Tab 1*)

Doug noted that meetings would be improved if minutes were provided in a more timely manner. The Chair said the operating procedures state that minutes should be provided within two weeks of the meetings they apply to.

The Council discussed the dead caribou found on Herschel Island. Danny clarified that at times he raises issues on behalf of the Aklavik Hunters & Trappers Committee (AHTC) and this was an issue of interest to the HTC.

Action 12-09-01: The Secretariat will ensure that AHTC minutes are received regularly and filed in WMAC (NS) quarterly meeting binders.

The methodology of taking minutes was discussed. The Chair suggested that the current methodology be continued, noting that minutes be reviewed diligently, and that member names be used rather than the term “a member”, unless otherwise requested by a member. The Council agreed. It was also suggested that meeting summaries be produced for dissemination to other groups, including records of decisions, and motions etc.

Action 12-09-02: The Secretariat will routinely review the AHTC, IGC, and all other IFA co-management boards’ minutes, alerting the Council of important developments.

The Council brought forward the following revisions/clarifications:

Page 19: Christian said that because the federal alternate WMAC (NS) position is vacant, and because he works for Parks Canada, the federal alternate should be from a different agency within Environment Canada, such as the CWS, as has been the case in the past.

Motion 12-09-02

To approve the minutes for the September 19-21, 2009 meeting, as revised.

Moved: Ernest Pokiak

Second: Christian Bucher

Motion carried.

D. Review of Action Items (Tab 2) - note that only items updated/changed during the meeting appear below.

Action 08-09-05: The Secretariat will work with Dorothy on the muskox genetics project proposal. Dorothy reported that all samples have been sent to the lab and that as many samples as possible will be processed with available funds. She also said that the lab’s analyst is unable to provide recommendations on genetics. What the Council decides about harvest management and zones is important.

Members discussed genetic variation between populations. Samples from Banks Island and other areas in the N.W.T. have been sent to the same lab for comparison to the mainland and N.W.T. populations.

Analysis of genetic samples is tentatively set to be complete in February. **Retired** - this action to be treated as a project report in future.

Action 08-07-20: The Secretariat will look into the old mapping project to locate past maps including the satellite image created by Jim Hawkings used on the WMAC (NS) poster. The Secretariat will draft a one page outline to describe the project and present it at the fall 2008 council meeting.

The Secretariat asked if the Council would like to purchase copies of the maps, which would cost approximately \$500. The Chair suggested that Yukon Environment can likely produce some maps for the WMAC (NS), especially the habitat maps. Digital maps could be presented at the next WMAC (NS) meeting with the use of a projector. **Retired.**

Ernest suggested that maps be presented in a binder and brought to meetings. The Chair commented that some of the maps are too large in size.

The Chair commented that it is important for WMAC (NS) to have copies of the full Atlas: WMAC (NS) should hold the information as stewards of the North Slope.

Members discussed copyright issues.

Action 12-09-03: The Secretariat will compile/reproduce maps from the 1999 Yukon North Slope Atlas, as well as Jim Hawkings' satellite image map, and bring them forward to the next Council meeting for review.

Action 12-09-04: The Council will discuss mapping work done since 1999 at the next WMAC (NS) meeting.

Action 09-12-06: The WMAC (NS) Secretariat will contact the Joint Secretariat to determine whether or not they plan to appeal for an interim adjustment to implementation funding levels because the current funding cycle was extended from 5 years to 10. Inuvialuit Final Agreement (IFA) surpluses are over \$1 million, and there are no plans to allocate funds.

A member mentioned that this action item originated from a request to increase members' honoraria.

Action 03-08-03: The WMAC (NS) will send a letter to the Canadian Wildlife Service Director General confirming that the Council's recommendation to the Minister would follow the review of results from the SARA consultation. **The Chair requested that the Secretariat determine when the Council must have its letter completed.**

Action 06-09-12: The WMAC (NS) Secretariat will prepare a briefing note later in the fall once Porcupine caribou management plans have been resolved, reviewing the last year and a half of activity. Notes will also be started for grizzly bear, polar bear, and muskox. **The Secretariat will bring a sample of a briefing note to the next meeting.**

Action 06-09-16: The Secretariat will work with the Chair to have the 2010 North Slope Conference draft program ready for the Council's fall meeting. **Retired.** The Chair provided background on cancellation of the Conference. Since the theme of the Conference is co-management, the IGC has proposed that the Conference be delayed by a year. Yukon Government has not yet responded.

The Chair said he received a fax from the Secretariat stating that only two AHTC members are available for Thursday's meeting. The Council agreed to cancel it.

Action 09-09-01: The Secretariat will extend an open invitation to Joe Tetlich for attendance at WMAC (NS)'s future regular meetings.

Action 09-09-03: The Secretariat will respond to the AHTC request for more grizzly bear tags indicating that the quota will not be re-visited until the North Slope grizzly bear project and population re-assessment has concluded next year.

Action 09-09-05: The Secretariat will send Council members Ramona's Annotated Bibliography of Inuvialuit Traditional Knowledge about Polar Bears in the ISR. **The Secretariat will send Doug and Christian copies of the bibliography.**

Action 09-09-06: The Secretariat will look into inviting Andy Derocher or Ramona Maraj to the Council's December meeting to aid in outlining polar bear issues. **Retired.**

Action 09-09-07: The Secretariat will acquire a copy of the recent southern and northern Beaufort polar bear population survey, delineating bear locations. Steve Baryluk indicated he had a copy. **The Secretariat will print Steve Baryluk's response for Council review at the next meeting.**

Action 09-09-09: Action item follow up: The Chair will raise the issue of government members on IFA co-management boards – should they be government employees or members of the public at large - with the Joint Secretariat (JS) board.

Action 09-09-10 (marked as new in action item list): WMAC (NS) will write a letter to Environment Canada (EC) regarding allocation of IFA funds for wildlife research. The Chair explained the apparent confusion at EC regarding allocation of IFA funds.

E. Correspondence (Tab 3)

The Chair commented that proposed digital Joint Secretariat newsletters will be difficult to access by those who do not have computers.

Action 12-09-05: The Secretariat will inquire with the Joint Secretariat whether or not printed copies of their digital newsletter are made available.

The Chair commented that the AHTC newsletter was very informative.

The Chair noted the correspondence on page 21 regarding the role of members on the Environmental Impact Screening Committee (EISC). EISC material indicates that the role of members is serve the broader public interest and that the EISC is to assess potential impacts of potential development in the ISR in an independent manner. However, the correspondence shows that Yukon Government views the EISC as representing the interests of the Yukon.

Action 12-09-06: The Secretariat will determine if the EISC has responded to the two letters from Yukon Government dated October 15 and October 20, 2009, noting whether the Chair's concern regarding representation was addressed.

Doug commented on the Council's letter regarding research permitting. He suggested that the issue cannot be pursued further until such time as the Yukon Wildlife Act is amended.

I. Ongoing Business - IFA Wildlife Research - 2009 Project Final Reports (Tab 10a)

Dorothy updated the Council on Herschel Island Monitoring progress to date. Chris Burn is writing a book on Herschel Island, and people have been approached to provide data for certain chapters. This work contributes to a chapter in the book.

Danny updated the Council on the AHTC's collection of harvest data. He expressed concern about data quality. The Chair discussed how harvest data was collected in the past and suggested that a meeting be scheduled to standardize harvest reporting.

Dorothy updated the Council on caribou helicopter counts in October. The bull ratio is reportedly lower than expected, but is not anticipated to cause problems for the population. This year calf survival was the lowest on record. The final report is anticipated soon.

The Council discussed Cameron Eckert's ecological monitoring work and the need for a multi-year report in order to help determine future funding.

I. Ongoing Business - IFA Wildlife Research - 2009/2010 Project Proposals (Tab 10b)

Richardson Mountain Sheep Survey

Dorothy reported that in the past Richardson Mountain sheep were unofficially surveyed every three to five years. The last time the sheep were surveyed was 2006. The proposed survey would be timely with the potential signing off of the Richardson Sheep Plan. In the past, Yukon Government, the GNWT, and the Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board have shared survey costs.

Doug raised a concern about the project's progress if the other parties do not approve funding, as a small proportion of the area proposed to be surveyed falls within the Inuvialuit Settlement Region.

Porcupine Caribou Breeding Female Population Estimate

Dorothy noted that traditional photo census has been underway for seven years, but has been unsuccessful due to poor weather. The proposed project is an alternative method to count the caribou herd on their calving grounds. In high density areas a plane photographs the caribou; in lower density areas visual searches are conducted. The number of non-breeding cows would be counted in the photo sweeps, and numbers of bulls would be determined from the 2009 bull rut count surveys.

Because the proposed project differs in methodology from previous years, comparing new data to old data will be more difficult. The new method has precision estimates as part of the technique, whereas the photo census method does not.

The estimated budget is now significantly higher for chartered aircraft, with \$90,000 as a minimum. The Alaskans will continue with the photo assessment as planned in previous years, and do not support the proposed new technique. They have estimated a 20% chance of finding the appropriate weather opportunity for the new technique in June.

Doug noted that there is no precision in the photo count. Dorothy mentioned that wide confidence intervals in surveys can affect the zoning, but that the longer we go without a traditional count, the more attractive an alternative technique becomes. Doug mentioned that this method is commonly used with Bathurst Caribou. Dorothy mentioned that the project is high priority for Yukon Government, but that funding is not yet secured.

Porcupine Caribou Satellite Program

WMAC (NS) has supported this program in past years. It is hoped that the number of collars will increase from 12 to 16 this year.

Polar Bear Traditional Knowledge Survey

The Chair suggested dividing project costs: WMAC (NS) could develop the survey instrument and deploy the Aklavik survey and other parties could deploy surveys to other communities. Doug noted that the roles of all participating parties need to be defined. The Chair noted that the WMAC (NWT) has already recommended GNWT funds. Christian asked what the outputs of the project would be.

Action 12-09-07: The Secretariat will clarify with Ramona whether or not the project outputs or reports will be released on a community-by-community basis.

The Chair noted that this project is a joint proposal of Yukon Government and the GNWT and should read that way.

The Chair mentioned that Dan Slavik, a University of Alberta (U of A) student, was contracted to complete a traditional knowledge study on polar bears in preparation for the

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES) Conference of the Parties (CoP). It has been established that this work does not duplicate or replace the proposed polar bear TK project.

Action 12-09-08: The Secretariat will acquire a copy of Dan Slavik's traditional knowledge study results for the Council's review.

3:00pm - Ramona Maraj joined the meeting by telephone.

Review of Grizzly Bear Year-End Report

Ramona reported that since September slides have been sent in for blood sample analysis.

Polar Bear Traditional Knowledge Project

Progress to date:

- Study leadership needs to be further discussed;
- Detailed proposal has been sent to the WMACs;
- Proposal was reviewed at Joint WMAC meeting and comments incorporated into the budget;
- Budget revisions were made in the past week, including additional funds from CWS;
- Frank, Jennifer, and Ramona completed work sessions on key questions; a draft instrument was completed and reviewed by Danny, Frank, and others;
- The draft instrument was sent out to WMAC;
- Contract for Steve Watkinson to develop the survey has been drawn up.

Work to be done:

- Final draft of instrument (scheduled to be complete at end of December) not including harvest data and locations;
- Issuance of license;
- Review of instrument with other experts;
- Arrangement of interviews (will require WMAC (NS) letter of support);
- January - March: interviews, transcription, coding (this will be completed next fiscal year).

Ramona said that interviews in all six communities would be complete by March 2011 – the bulk of which will be complete between January and March 2010. Gaps will be filled in the 10/11 fiscal year.

Ramona said that she would prefer one ISR-wide report, but that it is possible to do community specific reports. She noted that overall harvestable quotas are based on bear populations not communities. The Chair replied that quotas are also established at a community level by the IGC based on the sub-allocation of the harvestable quota as determined by the WMACs.

Ramona affirmed that \$21,000 in IFA funds budgeted for 09/10 would be spent by March 31, 2010 and that funds would be used for contract support, travel and honorariums. Ramona clarified that contractor costs this year are for the instrument, and next year relate to analysis, follow up instruments, identification of gaps, etc.

Ramona explained that the updated budget is broken down by community. The Chair clarified that the \$84,000 for the budget is for the entire year's contribution, of which WMAC (NS) has recommended \$21,000.

The Chair asked if the proposal for \$24,000 was for the Yukon portion. Ramona clarified that this portion covers Aklavik and Inuvik. The Chair inquired if the funds provided by Yukon for 09/10 cover Inuvik. Ramona replied that Inuvik has shared funding.

Ramona explained that next year's costs are higher than this year's because of contractor's time for analysis, and travel and honoraria to conduct follow-up interviews. Next year's budget does not include publication costs for a final report.

Ramona mentioned that WMAC (NWT) would be pursuing funds from oil & gas companies to fund on-the-land surveys and workshops which may extend the project for another year.

Ramona clarified that the study is defined on a community basis, ensuring that the work in Aklavik and Inuvik will be completed, even if challenges arise with the implementation of the project in the other communities.

Ramona said that project data will be owned by the individual and held by the WMACs and HTCs.

Grizzly Bear Project 2010/2011

Ramona highlighted project components: collar removal, lab work, with optional costs for lab work and denning surveys. Ramona noted that the den work is a continuation of 09/10 work, which looks at habitat limitations, characteristics, etc. There is the potential for den collapse if the follow-up work is left too long. Lab analysis can determine diet sources and provides information on what may affect cub survival rates.

Doug noted that these seem to be important components of explaining the population dynamics, but that we do not have the ability to fund all of the optional work this year.

The Chair asked how this program lines up with other studies in Canada. Ramona replied that Alaska and Kluane have some comparable studies. This is the first comparative micro-study of denning in a permafrost environment. The Alaskans are planning to repeat this project on the Alaska North Slope.

Ramona mentioned that den surveys could be done next year with some Polar Continental Shelf funding to offset costs.

Ramona reminded the Council to think about an exit strategy for the study. The Chair suggested that the communications strategy be considered by the WMAC (NS) for the 2010/2011 projects budget.

4:15pm - Ramona Maraj left the meeting.

Action 12-09-09: WMAC (NS) shall consider the grizzly bear communications exit strategy under the 2010/2011 projects budget.

4:30pm - Michelle Christensen joined the meeting by phone.

Arctic Borderlands – Parks Canada

Christian explained that the objective is to use data from the Arctic Borderlands (Borderlands) project for the State of the Parks Report. Dorothy clarified that to date Borderlands data has not been widely available.

Arctic Borderlands - CWS

This project focuses on analysis, survey redesign, and data management. CWS would like to see Borderlands' restructured.

The Secretariat updated the Council on Jocelyn McDowell's monitoring review. Jocelyn's review will culminate in a workshop which will then facilitate survey redesign involving several parties including the Yukon Bureau of Statistics. Monitoring is not proceeding this year – a community tour in March is planned instead, and data will be verified.

Ecological Integrity Monitoring of Forests of Ivvavik National Park

Christian explained that this project studies the impacts of climate and ecology of invertebrates. The Chair noted that this is interesting because the subject matter is not typically studied north of tree-line.

Integrated Freshwater and Dolly Varden Monitoring Plan

Christian clarified that this is the continuation of a previous project, and is in the management plan. Doug noted that WMAC (NS) has never supported a fish project, and suggested it would fit under the Fisheries Joint Management Committee (FJMC). The Chair suggested that we write a letter of support for the project conditional upon the FJMC's support. The FJMC supported the project last year.

Action 12-09-10: The Secretariat will confirm if the FJMC is in support of the Integrated Freshwater and Dolly Varden Monitoring Plan project.

Raptor Survey – Yukon Government

Christian explained that typically every five years raptor surveys are completed. Raptor nest sites are found along the coast, which requires the use of helicopters, which increases costs beyond what Parks has available. The Chair noted that WMAC (NS) supported the survey five years ago. Dorothy noted that Yukon would not be seeking IFA funds for their commitment to the project.

Herschel Island Ecological Monitoring

The Chair clarified that this is part of the larger management program. Dorothy mentioned that WMAC (NS) had asked for the airstrip monitoring component to be strengthened.

The meeting was adjourned for the day at 5:05pm.

Wednesday December 9, 2009

Lindsay Staples (WMACNS Chair) **Danny C. Gordon** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) **Ernest Pokiak** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) **Christian Bucher**

Government of Canada (Member) **Michelle Christensen** (Secretariat – by telephone)
Kristina Gardner (Acting Secretariat) **Dorothy Cooley** Yukon Government
(Alternate) **Doug Larsen** Yukon Government (Member) **Ifan Thomas**
Superintendent, Western Arctic Field Unit, Parks Canada (Guest) **Fanny Greenland**,
Aklavik Renewable Resource Council (Guest) **James Edwards**, Aklavik Renewable
Resource Council (Guest)

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:00am.

I. Ongoing Business - IFA Wildlife Research - 2009/2010 Project Proposals (Tab 10b)

The Chair asked members for further comment or questions about proposed projects.

Danny asked about the Richardson Mountain Sheep Plan's progress. The Chair said that the draft needs to be reviewed and approved, however it is unclear who is responsible for organizing final steps. The Chair clarified that funds for Richardson Mountain sheep are for surveys recommended by the plan. Danny noted that Richardson Mountain sheep are not currently being harvested, to his knowledge.

Christian expressed concern about the project moving ahead if other agencies do not provide funding. Dorothy said that if additional funds are required the project would look elsewhere for funds.

Members discussed project priorities. The Chair summarized that the Council approves all projects in-principle, but that some adjustments may be required with respect to the polar bear traditional knowledge study, the Richardson Mountain sheep survey, and the Dolly Varden project: if needed, they could be deferred by a year.

Motion 12-09-03

To recommend funding for all Porcupine caribou projects, the grizzly bear project, the Ivavik forest monitoring project, the raptor project, and the Arctic Borderlands project. To recommend approval- in- principle at this time for the Richardson Mountain sheep project, polar bear traditional knowledge project, Dolly Varden project, and Herschel ecological monitoring project, subject to review by WMAC (NS) in March 2010.

Moved: Danny Gordon

Second: Doug Larsen

Motion carried.

10:30am - Michelle Christensen joined the meeting by phone.

The Chair summarized the motion and explained that funding amounts for grizzly bear are approved in the amount of \$45,000, and the other projects are recommended for the full amounts listed in tab 10b.

The Chair clarified that the Council would like the approved-in-principle projects to go ahead, but that they may be deferred by a year so that the grizzly bear project can be fully funded in the event that other agencies are not able to provide required funds.

The Chair tabled part B of the grizzly bear project for discussion which includes den surveys, DNA lab work, and contaminants work. Doug clarified that the proposed DNA work is on the biopsy bears, and is not a stand-alone sub-project. These program components are not planned to be completed this year, but for example with the den work, the dens will disappear and collapse over time, hence the need to pursue den surveys next year.

The Chair pointed out that since the grizzly bear project has cost approximately one million dollars (with funding from various sources), part B seems a small amount of money to improve the quality of the data already collected. Members discussed the merits of supporting the work.

The Chair noted that this study will determine population dynamics of bears where there is no industrial development which will allow for comparison with other populations that are impacted by development.

Action 12-09-11: The Council will assess part B of the grizzly bear project as proposed in December 2009 in December 2010.

The Council also remained mindful that the muskox, polar bear and Richardson Mountain sheep projects have merit for next year.

Doug suggested creation of a multi-year plan for research in the summer meeting.

Action 12-09-12: The Council will create a multi-year plan for IFA-funded research during its 2010 summer meeting.

F. Financial Report (Tab 4)

The Chair summarized that the financial statement is accurate, but that the Chair's honorarium is actually 50 - 60% spent, due to an outstanding invoice submission.

The Secretariat reported that Ernest attended CITES meetings in Ottawa and Inuvik on the Chair's behalf, and is shown as an expense under "other meetings". The Chair explained that there has been a large number of unanticipated additional meetings, particularly with respect to the potential up-listing of polar bears under CITES. Doug mentioned the importance of prioritizing meetings. The Chair clarified WMAC (NS) has only attended critical meetings thus far. Doug suggested that in future the budget should be adjusted for meeting attendance with respect to polar bear management.

Doug asked if the federal government is offering funds for meeting attendance. Ernest responded that Susan Fleck was inquiring into funds available for Inuvialuit presence at meetings, including CITES.

The Secretariat noted that Council meetings are underspent because the meeting on the land did not occur this year. She estimates that funds will be half spent by the end of fiscal. The Secretariat noted that funds have been estimated for the Chair to attend the next Joint Secretariat board meeting before March.

The Council approved the purchase of a new computer for the Secretariat. The Secretariat commented that there were some additional costs with communications, namely website administration. The staff category will not reach budget, because additional staff were not hired, however \$500 was allocated to recruitment of a new Secretariat while Michelle is

on maternity leave from April 30 to May 1, 2011. Doug asked if there are maternity leave costs. The Secretariat clarified that the only cost is Secretariat replacement.

The Secretariat reported that the workshop category should be within budget. The project category is slightly over budget, because Aasman required some unexpected time for the Porcupine caribou report. There is the possibility of budget increases for the Arctic Borderlands project in this fiscal year. The grizzly bear project is also slightly over-spent. Costs associated with a legal review of the Yukon Species at Risk Act (YSARA) were not anticipated at budget drafting, and it has been budgeted to spend \$5000 on the review.

The Secretariat updated the Council on the North Slope Conference contractor; because the Conference has been cancelled, the category is under budget. The Secretariat updated the Council on postponement of the Conference and correspondence between the IGC and the Yukon Government.

Action 12-09-13: The Chair will draft a letter to the Yukon Government stating that there is insufficient time to organize the North Slope Conference by mid-February 2010.

The Secretariat reported an estimated surplus of \$44,000 at the end of the fiscal year. Potential additional costs are for the Chair's attendance at the CITES conference in Doha. The Chair noted that CITES meeting honoraria would roughly match the honorarium unused for the North Slope Conference. Ernest said that the number of days spent in Doha is dependent on where polar bears are placed on the agenda.

The Secretariat identified approximately \$5000 in costs for CITES meeting preparation, which includes contracting Dave Brackett who will play an advisory role for the Inuit.

Other budget additions include Kristina Gardner's time coordinating the December meeting, and costs associated with updating the Wildlife Conservation Management Plan (WCMP). With these budget additions, there is an estimated surplus of \$20,000. It may be prudent to carry over an amount to next year for allocation towards North Slope Conference organization. The Chair noted that WCMP updating and monitoring with Borderlands will require the Council's time and funds.

Regarding the Conference, the Chair suggested asking the IGC if they anticipate having it next fiscal year, and what dates.

Action 12-09-14: The Secretariat will ask the IGC when they anticipate holding the next North Slope Conference.

The Chair suggested that two years before the end of the funding period it is important to not carry a surplus forward.

The Secretariat reviewed the Inuvialuit Participation (IP) budget. The amount reported as spent does not include Ernest's attendance at the CARMA meeting or Danny's participation in Canmore's bear conflict workshop, meaning that approximately \$7000 is left to be spent. The Secretariat clarified that the IP budget is managed by the Joint Secretariat, noting that a \$2000 surplus from last year does not show on the statement.

The Secretariat asked for clarification on the mapping project. The Chair clarified that both digital and hard copy maps should be obtained.

Action12-09-15: The Secretariat will obtain a copy of Jim Hawkings' satellite image map that was produced for the Yukon North Slope poster produced by WMAC (NS).

11:30am - Michelle Christensen left the meeting.

I. Ongoing Business - Yukon Species at Risk Act (Tab 8)

The Chair directed the Council to the draft memo prepared by John Donihee. He explained that the memo captures comments made at the October meeting in Calgary, and suggested that the comments be condensed into a letter and sent to Yukon Government. He mentioned that there are many important matters in the IFA not captured in YSARA, especially the co-management process. The Wildlife Act lays out these processes well. The Chair reiterated that the bill will not be moving forward with additional drafting until territorial elections occur. Doug asked if the IGC would respond as well. The Chair responded that there may be a joint letter, but that he would prefer an individual letter from the WMAC (NS), given that the roles of the WMAC and IGC differ. He noted that the legislation does not recognize the IGC's role.

Issues regarding listing and de-listing of species were discussed.

1:00pm - Ifan Thomas joined the meeting.

I. Ongoing Business - Wildlife Monitors in Ivvavik

Ifan provided the Council with a presentation titled "Amendments to National Parks Wildlife Regulations - Firearm Use in Northern National Parks and National Park Reserves," (refer to tab 13) and clarified that he is not looking for substantive comments at this time. The meeting today is part of consultation on proposed regulation amendments for firearm use.

Ifan explained that the current regulations prohibit use of firearms in the parks. Danny asked if Inuvialuit Parks Canada employees can harvest big game while on patrol. Ifan replied that they have a policy against it.

Ernest asked if there is any thought of charging a fee for cruise ship tourists at Herschel. Doug responded that there was. Doug asked if there is a perception that polar bear country is more dangerous than grizzly or black bear territory. Ifan responded that the perception is that polar bear territory is more dangerous.

Ifan explained the distinction between Polar Bear Parks, Northern National Parks, and National Park Reserves, and the firearm restrictions for beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. Ifan explained that in permit areas a firearm can be used for protection against all bears. Ifan and Danny discussed the use of rubber bullets with bears.

Doug asked if Ramona and her crew can work in a polar bear park with a firearm to protect themselves from bears. Ifan explained that she could, however they would have to prove that they could not find or hire a bear monitor. Doug said that he would feel more comfortable if the bear monitor was a trained Aboriginal person. Ifan said that a proper bear monitor is monitoring for bears while the researcher is researching. Doug explained

that Ramona's situation is different. Ifan said there is a certain amount of leeway in the permitting.

Dorothy asked how one is certified as a bear monitor. Ifan explained that the HTC's maintain lists of bear monitors. Ernest explained that the Inuvialuit Land Administration has been training bear monitors and environmental monitors. The Aurora Research Institute encourages applicants to budget for a monitor.

Christian noted that if someone like Ramona works in Ivvavik National Park and cannot find a bear monitor, she can defend herself from a grizzly bear with a firearm, but if she works in Vuntut park without a bear monitor, she cannot, even though this could potentially be the same bear.

Christian noted that often space is limited in helicopters, and that having a bear monitor is a consideration in projects moving forward. Ifan responded that in national parks there are obligations to beneficiaries, and some of those are economic. Dorothy mentioned that ideally research technician are the beneficiary bear monitors.

Ifan explained that the caliber of firearm is something for which Parks is seeking input from the community. The Council discussed firearm calibers, rifles versus side arms, ammunition, and bear charges.

The Chair asked why the distinction was made between Northern National Parks and Polar Bear Parks. Ifan replied that species experts felt the difference was distinct. The Chair asked if there is a rationale for distinction between northern and southern parks. Ifan replied that this is the first step in that rationale. Ifan mentioned that beneficiaries have provided feedback that only beneficiaries should be permitted to carry firearms.

Ifan explained that if Parks Canada is contributing to the project, it is considered acceptable for research to be completed without a bear monitor – Ramona's work would classify here.

The Chair asked about next steps. Ifan responded that submitted comments would be helpful and that a meeting could be scheduled to discuss proposed regulation changes further. He mentioned that unless they receive red flags they are likely to invoke interim measures this summer.

Christian asked how regulations will be implemented. Ifan responded that existing regulations already reference this, but Parks Canada interprets them differently, so the change does not require gazetting, etc. Christian asked how to guarantee to the Inuvialuit that these measures will not be interim forever. Ifan responded that the consultation will go ahead for regulation change.

Danny asked if Inuvialuit beneficiaries can pan for gold in national parks. Ifan responded that it is not permitted; it is not a traditional activity, and so not an activity regulated by the Park. Danny mentioned that this was a right lost by the Inuvialuit when the area was made into a park.

2:30pm - Fanny Greenland and James Edwards (Aklavik RRC) joined the meeting.

I. Ongoing Business - Polar Bear - Bilateral Meeting (Tab 9a), CITES Preparation (Tab 9b), US Proposal for Up Listing (Tab 9c)

The Chair explained that CITES is the committee related to trade in endangered species. The United States has proposed to eliminate the commercial and non-commercial trade in polar bear. This would negatively affect guided hunts for polar bear in the Arctic. It would mean that polar bear hunts could proceed, but that hides and other trophies could not be taken out of Canada. This has a potentially large impact on Arctic economic livelihoods. Eliminating trade in polar bear and shutting down the sport hunt, could increase the subsistence hunt with the goal of selling polar bear hides, in order to derive an income. There is roughly a 50/50 split on sport and subsistence hunting at present. The reason the sports hunt is so important is that the tag is given out only once per season and assigned for the season to a individual sport hunter. Subsistence tags may be used several times in a season by Inuvialuit beneficiaries, so there is a larger chance of a tag being filled.

The U.S. has proposed to up-list the polar bear from Appendix II to I. The EU has yet to make a determination on the proposed up-listing. The majority of the Arctic states are opposed to the up-listing of polar bear. The state of Alaska is also against the proposal. The intent between now and the March meeting in Doha is to engage in a lobbying effort with respect to other countries in the Arctic, to ensure that they will not be supporting the U.S. proposal.

In the western Arctic, WMAC (NWT) and the IGC will join the delegation going to Doha as observers. Either the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) or Inuit Circumpolar Council is anticipated to be the one non-government member of the Canadian delegation. The intent is for non-delegates to lobby against the US proposal. The Council needs to determine if we will be a part of the effort there.

The Chair specified that western Arctic, Inuit organizations both national and international, and many others would be there. Ernest said that the Alaskan Inupiat are involved as well. John Cheechoo of ITK will attend the entirety of the meeting; Dave Brackett and the International Union for Conservation of Nature will help groups prepare to lobby. Ernest stated that the Inuvialuit have a lot to lose, and should send a strong delegation. The Chair mentioned that Arctic Quebec is represented by Makivik.

The Council discussed the merits in sending the Chair to Doha as part of the Canadian delegation.

The Chair asked the Council if they are in support of his attending the CITES meeting in Doha. The Council agreed.

I. Ongoing Business - Conservation Strategy Review (*Tab 9d*), PBAC Update (*Tab 9e*)

Doug provided an update on the Polar Bear Administrative Committee (PBAC). The Committee held a teleconference reviewing the National Polar Bear Conservation Strategy; Doug reviewed his comments with the Council, as noted in tab 9d, and made edits to the draft. The Council's comments are required by December 18, 2009.

3:30pm - Ifan Thomas, Fanny Greenland and James Edwards left the meeting.

Doug pointed out that increased funding will be needed for polar bear management if this Strategy is agreed to. The Chair noted that at the next negotiations with Canada it can be mentioned that the increased workload in relation to SARA requires additional funds.

Doug noted that a paragraph in the Annex requires a re-write. The Chair suggested that it would be important to agree on the new wording of the paragraph with YG.

The Council drafted an amended paragraph for the Annex. The Chair suggested that Doug review the comments with Dan Lindsay and Susan Fleck, and Larry Carpenter.

Action 12-09-16: The Chair will finalize comments on the Polar Bear Conservation Strategy and transmit them to the Polar Bear Administrative Committee by Dec 18, 2009.

I. Ongoing Business - Porcupine Caribou - Harvest Management Plan, Interim Measures (*Tab 7*)

The Chair reported that since the September Council meeting the Porcupine Caribou Management Board (PCMB) has met, and the WMAC (NS) has received responses to letters that were sent regarding the Harvest Management Plan (HMP).

Ernest asked if the Plan would be approved. Doug reported that by November, 2009 the PCMB had received formal response from seven of eight parties. The IGC stated that they will unconditionally sign the HMP. All other parties recommend some changes before signing.

Doug reviewed the responses of the parties to the HMP with the Council. The Vuntut Gwich'in First Nation (VGFN) is willing to sign but believe there are outstanding issues with harvest reporting for the Gwich'in Tribal Council (GTC). The GTC has said that they will not sign the agreement and feel that their rights have not been addressed.

The GNWT is in support and identified areas of work to clarify processes. The Trondek Gwich'in are supportive but would like increased or more formal involvement in the decision process.

YG passed a resolution for Vuntut Gwich'in to hold a Summit in January in Old Crow. The PCMB has postponed meeting until after the Summit to proceed with next steps.

Dorothy commented that it is encouraging that seven of eight parties support the Plan in its general structure. Christian and the Chair suggested that the items outstanding be agreed through the Plan's implementation.

Doug mentioned that there is a strong interest by the parties to remain involved in this process. He noted that YG is heartened because interim measures are in place while the HMP is being finalized. Danny mentioned issues around reporting.

Doug stated that the interim measures include assistance for First Nations to develop wildlife regulations within their own legislation. A memorandum of understanding to collect harvest information is currently being drafted with the Vuntut Gwich'in. There is interest to work with others in developing the appropriate instruments that would give effect to the intent of the interim measures' provisions.

The Chair asked how the interim measures could be lifted. Doug replied that the interim measures' regulations state that they would be lifted when an acceptable harvest

management plan is developed. The Chair noted that some parties may find that statement to indicate a veto on the part of YG.

Ernest commented that individual governments can develop their own interim measures. He stated that it is in the interest of the YG to accept the HMP as soon as possible. Doug noted that Billy Storr stated that most people are harvesting bulls now, and that the Inuvialuit are already applying conservation measures. Doug clarified that the measures only apply in the Yukon.

Doug commented that the interim measures are controversial, but that on a positive note, conservation measures are in place, and important issues are being raised, including the definitions of conservation and consultation.

The meeting was adjourned for the day at 5:20pm.

Thursday December 10, 2009

Lindsay Staples (WMACNS Chair) **Danny C. Gordon** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) **Ernest Pokiak** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) **Christian Bucher** Government of Canada (Member) **Kristina Gardner** (Acting Secretariat) **Dorothy Cooley** Yukon Government (Alternate) **Doug Larsen** Yukon Government (Member)

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:30am.

G. Report from the Chair

The Chair highlighted issues of special concern: the North Slope Conference, the Yukon Species at Risk Act (YSARA), the polar bear traditional knowledge project, and discussions with the Game Council regarding the Yukon's interim measures.

The Chair mentioned that overseeing the polar bear study has been challenging and that by facilitating the project through the two WMACs instead of the governments involved, may expedite progress.

Discussion ensued on who would conduct interviews. The Chair clarified that a contractor would be hired, given Ramona's and Marsha's time constraints. The Chair noted that polar bear harvesters will be on the land when interviews are held. It will be challenging for one person to interview in all six communities.

Danny mentioned that we have lost all the elders who used to hunt bear and knew the ocean and ice conditions. Jack Goose, Moses Kayotuk, Lee John Meyook, the Wolki brothers and David Nasogaluak were suggested as interviewee candidates. Christian mentioned that it may be good to have two people conducting the interviews, one with a knowledge of the background, and another with interview skills. The Chair suggested three people, one person who is on contract to conduct the interviews, another person recommended by the HTC who knows the land, and a youth.

Members discussed possible contractors: Lisa Christensen, Aileen Horler, Jocelyn McDowell, Barney Smith, and Dan Slavik.

The Chair again noted that it may be best for both WMACs to oversee the project. He suggested that Ramona and Marsha produce a survey questionnaire and that it be reviewed by the WMACs. He emphasized that a quality interview guide is critical to the study's success.

Doug suggested that the Chair and Larry develop a terms of reference. The Chair agreed. Doug noted that the terms of reference could include a dispute resolution process. Danny said the interview should be less than two hours.

The Chair noted he would prefer the Joint Secretariat to administer the contract. There are two components: conducting interviews and doing the analysis.

The Council agreed that they want to be involved in the work plan and oversight of the questions asked in the interviews, and in reviewing the product.

Christian said it would be beneficial to have a polar bear hunter review interview questions. The Chair mentioned that test interviews would be conducted.

Action 12-09-17: The Chair will contribute to terms of reference for the polar bear TK project with Larry Carpenter.

Dorothy noted that use of technology in polar bear hunting would be interesting to ask in the interviews.

The Chair drew attention to the firearms regulations. Christian noted that regulations answer several needs, including Inuvialuit rights, but that economic opportunities are mixed. Doug suggested that a broader approach be taken. He noted that the primary objective of the proposed changes did not seem to be human safety. He said he did not understand why species were separated and suggested that a line be drawn where the regulation would apply, considering human safety.

The Chair suggested that the Council look at the regulations through the lens of Ivvavik National Park. He suggested that we ask if we are satisfied with what is proposed as it impacts Ivvavik, and consider other northern parks. Christian noted that Ivvavik is unique, because there is no obligation in the IFA that speaks to guides carrying firearms, etc. He noted that because Ivvavik was established through the IFA, special rights exist. The other two parks were established through negotiations with Parks following the establishment of the IFA. Paulatuk has additional rights and entitlements that are not included in Ivvavik. The Chair clarified that the push for the regulation changes may be driven from other parks such as Tukturnogait. Doug asked if the regulation changes will affect Ivvavik in a way that could be challenged in future. Christian noted that big game outfitters are allowed to cross other parks with firearms, but not Ivvavik. The Chair commented that the Inuvialuit can request the federal minister to allow guided hunting in Ivvavik.

Action 12-09-18: Christian Bucher will develop comments on the firearms regulation changes to submit to the Council by the end of January for their review. The Council will then submit comments to Parks Canada.

Danny asked if Ivvavik is governed under the same laws as Banff (the National Parks Act). The Chair confirmed this was the case plus the addition of the rights and entitlements resulting from the IFA.

Christian clarified the policy around Inuvialuit Park employees harvesting in the park: Inuvialuit beneficiaries can harvest in the park after working hours, because it is their right, but cannot transport products of harvest in government vehicles or aircraft.

I. Ongoing Business - Muskox Plan (Tab 12)

The Chair thanked Dorothy for putting together the documents related to the Muskox Plan. She has included appendices and other Plan documents including workshop comments, and comments from Alaska. The document provided in the binder includes the Alaska Plan, and the status assessment for Alaskan muskox.

The Chair noted that this is a Canadian range plan, not just a North Slope plan. He mentioned that Alaska has had a plan in place for 10 years, and that their population underwent a collapse. In the North Slope and Alaska the animals are moving south and east. In Alaska harvest levels have been at 3% for several years, except in the Refuge, where it is 0%. In the Yukon, muskox are managed as specially protected wildlife with no harvest. In the NWT there are no quotas on North Slope muskox; the government is managing for a muskox-free zone east of the Yukon. The concern is that mixing will occur with native animals in the NWT east of the Mackenzie River. The Plan attempts to come up with a management arrangement for the North Slope, mindful of other parties' views.

Dorothy mentioned that the Plan's new approach requires Council agreement. She explained that the Plan considers all the muskox on the North Slope, the Richardson Mountain population, and those in the Vuntut Gwich'in Traditional Territory (VGTT). The population in Ivvavik provide a seed population for the Yukon. Dorothy suggested that across the population there could be a 3% harvest, or six animals harvested. She explained the proposed quota of one muskox for the VGTT because one in six of the population is found in the VGTT, and the VGFN does not welcome muskox in their territory. The remainder of the proposed quota would be filled in the unregulated hunting in the NWT, leaving no allowable harvest for Inuvialuit in the Yukon.

Dorothy explained the maps in the Plan. She noted that the maps cover muskox sightings over several years.

Action 12-19-19: Dorothy Cooley will include years in the Appendix 1 maps in future revisions of the Muskox Plan.

She stated that the core area is where the satellite collars show the animals live, where the breeding females live. In 1993 a population appeared in the Richardson Mountains. Calves were seen there in 1995, so there is likely an established breeding population there. Doug suggested that muskox sightings be colour-coded to show the movement of the populations across the map, and that the dot sizes reflect group sizes sighted.

Doug suggested that 0% harvest is more appropriate. He mentioned that we should look at the population as a whole, if it is stable or declining, and make recommendations as to what our responsibility is for the Yukon North Slope. Dorothy explained that the WMAC (NS) would sign off on the range plan for its management in the ISR, and send it to VGFN and others. The Chair mentioned that the Plan makes recommendations for the Yukon North Slope, in consideration of all conditions outside the area.

Doug noted that no harvest for the Inuvialuit while the VGFN has a harvest will be problematic, and suggested again no harvest in the Yukon. Ernest stated that we need a

plan that will be accepted by other parties. He stated that harvest is acceptable as long as studies are done in the future to determine if the population is increasing or decreasing.

Dorothy noted that VGFN and others have not seen the draft Plan. The Chair clarified that the goal at this meeting is to approve the draft Plan and send it out for comment by the parties.

Doug responded that it is still unclear if there is a sustainable harvest for this population. He noted that with a population of 180 animals, the population is small and vulnerable, and has no sustainable harvest. Dorothy asked if Doug would suggest a population viability analysis. Doug responded that he would be interested in that.

The Chair noted that the goal is to maintain a stable population of muskox in the Yukon, knowing the harvest levels in the N.W.T. Ernest asked how many muskox have been harvested on both sides. Danny noted that a couple of muskox were taken last year, in an area with no quota.

Dorothy asked what Danny thought the HTC would say about having no harvest on the North Slope, and a harvest in the N.W.T. Danny mentioned that people are more likely to take trips to the Richardson Mountains to harvest muskox, and less likely to harvest at Shingle Point. Dorothy noted that it seems to be an opportunistic hunt at Shingle Point.

Doug outlined a population-based approach, recommending a 0% a sustainable harvest, as an alternative to the current Plan. Dorothy asked if that work is justified if the GNWT is harvesting on their side of the border. Doug suggested that once the genetics question is answered the Plan can be revisited. Dorothy responded that the geneticist will not be able to answer the question.

Christian suggested that we recommend a 0% harvest for the entire range, but that other parties will not follow that. Ernest noted that we are trying to have buy-in to this Plan from others: people will see this plan and shoot muskox anyway.

Danny said that he could support an overall harvest of six animals: 14 is too many for the size of the population.

The Chair noted the concern about animals moving east, hence the muskox free-zone in the NWT. VGFN doesn't want any animals moving south and appears to desire an opportunistic hunt, hence their interest in a taking one animal. That puts the harvest over 3% in Canada, and we might want to assess that. Doug's concern is that the harvest of 3% may be too many to support a viable population in Canada. Doug mentioned that a Yukon Species at Risk Act would likely declare the population to be listed.

The Chair suggested working through the details of the Plan. Dorothy asked for input from the Council on the Objectives on page ten, specifically the target number of muskox. Doug discussed a number versus a range, and noted that the wording implies that we will keep a population stable at a number, when we have no ability to do this. Doug suggested wording the objective "manage to maintain at least 220 muskox." Ernest noted that there would be no harvest below 220. Dorothy stated that the 3% harvest is based on population count numbers. Christian suggested that the wording be to maintain a population within its historical range. Dorothy mentioned that we determine harvest values all the time. Doug noted that in considering recommendations for a sustainable muskox harvest that science-based estimates should be distinguished from policy-based

estimates. He said if that was the case, he would want 200 animals on the Canadian side. Dorothy suggested that we use a target number and assess the utility of conducting a population viability study at a later date.

Ernest suggested that if the population grows much more than the current population they will be spreading out over the border and be harvested with increased intensity.

The Chair proposed that if we are above or below the historical population range of muskox, the Council will review the management actions of the Plan. The Council agreed to this rewording.

Doug suggested rewording of the management goal, to state that the goal should be to provide for conservation of muskox on the North Slope while providing opportunities for Inuvialuit hunters to harvest muskox. This was agreed by the Council.

Dorothy discussed monitoring intensity, and suggested that surveying each three years would allow for a more intensive survey. The Alaskans conduct their count every year. Doug noted that if there is no harvest, perhaps it is not required to survey every five years. Dorothy replied that monitoring each three years is important because the objective for the population is to be a seed population. She stated that GPS collars would be recommended for use, because habitat data can be derived from the collar transmissions. The Council discussed the use and costs of collars and monitoring. The Council agreed to assess collar use at a later time, and that the next survey should occur in 2012.

The Council agreed to delete the highlighted sections of page 16.

Ernest stated that the Inuvialuit should be able to harvest on the Yukon side. He argued that if an Inuvialuit sees a muskox on the North Slope they would harvest it regardless, because it is not endangered.

Danny asked how WMAC (NS) would respond if the Aklavik HTC refused the zero quota on the Yukon North Slope. The Chair responded based on current views and positions that it appears that the only way a quota would be permitted on the Yukon North Slope would be if the NWT regulated their harvest and agreed that a quota is acceptable, or if the management goal was changed to a lower overall goal.

Danny asked if the Inuvialuit would lose the right to harvest muskox. Doug responded that the right can never be extinguished. The Chair explained that in the IFA there are two ways to limit the rights of Inuvialuit (IFA 14.6): for conservation or for public safety. The management of muskox is a conservation matter.

The Council agreed to reduce the proposed quota for VGFN to zero.

The Chair suggested that the Council hold another meeting to discuss the draft Plan before sending it out to other parties. The Council agreed. The Council also agreed to make muskox a priority for the next meeting, and address it early in the meeting.

Christian said that Parks Canada is increasingly finding it hard to plan for the funding of wildlife surveys in the absence of management plans. The Chair responded that WMACs long-term research planning in summer 2010, should help with this. The Council emphasized the importance of developing long term research plans during the summer meeting.

Doug noted that it should be mandatory to harvest bulls only, and that it should be clarified that population estimates are pre-calving. Dorothy agreed to add this as a comment for consideration in the next meeting.

I. Ongoing Business - Parks Canada Update (*Tab 11*)

The Chair directed the Council to the Bar-B site cleanup. Christian briefly walked the Council through the update. Christian mentioned the remediation and action plan for Stokes Point.

Action 12-09-20: The Secretariat will determine if Parks Canada has replied to WMAC (NS)'s comments regarding the Stokes Point remediation project.

J. Upcoming Meetings

The acting Secretariat mentioned that there is an International Congress for Conservation Biology in Edmonton in July 2010.

The Council discussed the March meeting timing. The Council agreed to hold its next meeting in place of the North Slope Conference, in Whitehorse, February 16-18, 2010.

The Council agreed to hold its annual on-the-land meeting, in some combination of Herschel and Sheep Creek, Friday June 18 to Friday June 25, 2010.

Action 12-09-21: The Secretariat will work with Christian Bucher to confirm meeting dates for June 18-25, 2010 at Sheep Creek and Herschel Island.

Action 12-09-22: The Council will ask Ramona for her recommendations for longer term inventory and monitoring work for grizzly bears.

Motion 12-09-04

To adjourn the meeting.

Moved: Ernest

Second: Doug

Motion carried.

K. Adjournment

The Chair wished everyone a Merry Christmas and adjourned the meeting at 2:20pm.