



MEETING MINUTES

WMAC (NS) Quarterly Meeting
Whitehorse, YT · Canada Games Centre Boardroom
March 16-17, 2011

Wednesday March 16, 2011

Lindsay Staples (Chair) · **Rob Florkiewicz** Yukon Government (Member) · **Christian Bucher** Government of Canada (Member) · **Danny C. Gordon** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) · **Ernest Pokiak** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) · **Dorothy Cooley** Yukon Government (Alternate) · **Jennifer Smith** (Secretariat) · **Christine Cleghorn** (Secretariat) · **Richard Gordon** Yukon Government, Herschel Island Park (Guest), · **Billy Storr** AHTC Chair (Guest)

A. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:24am. He welcomed Billy Storr and Richard Gordon as guests to the meeting.

B. Review and Approval of Agenda

The Chair reviewed the agenda.

Motion 03-11-01

To approve the agenda for the March 16-17, 2011 meeting.

Moved: Ernest Pokiak

Seconded: Rob Florkiewicz

Motion carried.

C. Review and Approval of Minutes

The Council reviewed the December 7-9, 2010 minutes. Rob clarified YG's inability to use sundry permits, on page 8.

Motion 03-11-02

To approve the minutes as revised for the December 7-9, 2010 WMAC (NS) meeting.

Moved: Danny C. Gordon

Second: Christian Bucher

Motion carried.

The Council reviewed the February 14th, 2011 teleconference record and had no changes to suggest.

Motion 03-11-03

To approve the minutes as for the February 14, 2011 WMAC (NS) teleconference

Moved: Ernest Pokiak

Second: Rob Florkiewicz

Motion carried.

D. Review of Action Items

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

Action 09-09-09: The Secretariat will inquire with the Canadian Wildlife Service and/or Wendy Nixon to determine how alternate Canada members for WMAC (NS) have been appointed in previous years. **In progress** The issue of alternates has not been worked out, it is Sherri Young who needs to help us clarify this process.

Action 02-10-12: In 2010/11 WMAC (NS) will explore options with the Joint Secretariat regarding hiring Nigel Bankes to prepare a briefing note on jurisdictional issues affecting polar bear management in the Beaufort. **Complete.** Nigel Bankes's work is underway. There are additional references that could be sent to him –the NWT draft AIP since it defines the land-based jurisdiction of the GNWT and Canada and some case law for Nigel to be aware of. Lindsay will follow up.

Action 06-10-06: Revised. Following discussion by the Chair and the Yukon member with the appropriate Yukon Government officials, write a letter to Yukon Government recommending/confirming tag administration for grizzly bears in the Aklavik Grizzly Bear Hunting Area.

Action 06-10-07: Revised. Following discussion by the Chair and the Yukon member with the appropriate Yukon Government officials, write a letter to Yukon Government recommending/confirming tag administration by the Yukon Government for polar bear hunting in the South Beaufort polar bear management zone. **In progress.** The Chair and Yukon member will work on this issue.

Action Item: 09-10-02: Discuss research priorities with the AHTC in December to get an idea of their priorities for research. **Outstanding.** Could not fly to Aklavik in December due to inclement weather. Will revisit when we next meet in Aklavik.

Action Item 12-10-04: Write a letter to the AHTC, Minister, and IGC stating that our Council views the amendment to the trapping concession boundary as administrative and have no

objection to it. **In progress.** Discussed the issue with Billy Storr, who will bring back to AHTC meeting.

Action Item 12-10-08: Secretariat to send a summary to NEB of the studies/documents mentioned in the meeting, a review of the questions list, as well as names of experts that the NEB could be consulting to inform the NEB's review. **Complete** 12.10.08 – Completed. An additional study could be provided- by Ewan Cotteral in the 1980s, who costed out a worst case scenario for a spill. Likely a hard copy in the JS library. Get the reference and pass it on to Brian Chambers.

Action 12-10-09: Send Michael Svoboda a letter outlining the Council decision to pursue option two. Append the options paper on ABEKS. **Complete**

Action item 02-11-01: Get the introduction to the Herschel Island book as well as a draft of chapters to look at for the March meeting. **Complete.**

Action Item 12-10-06: The Chair will follow up with IGC about the possibility of the IGC inviting the WMACs to future BREA steering committee meetings. The Chair will discuss this with the chair of WMAC (NWT). **Complete.** Richard informed the Council that a proposal will be put on waterfowl in workboat passage, it will also address the effect of offshore development on the Park.

Action12-10-12: WMAC (NS) to write a letter to WMAC (NWT) following up on the polar bear quota discussion presented by Marsha B. **Complete**

Billy Storr and Richard Gordon left the meeting

E. Correspondence

The Chair reviewed correspondence and focused on the following:

1. *Porcupine Caribou Herd Numbers Higher than the last Census.* State of Alaska Department of Fish and Game as well, as Yukon Government, released press releases indicating that the final count of the Porcupine caribou herd is an estimated 169,000 animals.
2. *Inuvialuit Game Council presentation to the PCMB Annual Harvest Meeting.* IGC compiled a presentation on caribou movements and traditional knowledge.
3. *Letter from Justine Ray about caribou DU.* The Council will track the progress on this.

4. *Letter from Mr. Nerysoo re the Implementation Plan for the Porcupine Caribou Harvest Management Plan.*
5. *PCMB letter, November 25, on the Porcupine Caribou Sale, Trade and Barter Guidelines.* The Council will provide comments on these guidelines.
6. *WMAC (NS) submission to the NEB, February 25, 2011.*
7. *WMAC(NS) letter to P.Diamond, February 28,2011, re BREA process and involvement of WMAC(NS) in setting research priorities.*
8. *WMAC(NS) letter to D. Lindsey, February 28, 2011.* Requesting an update on the Yukon's Interim measures affecting subsistence harvesting of the Porcupine caribou herd.
9. *D. Lindsey response to WMAC(NS) letter of Feb. 28, 11.* Explaining the Yukon's review process of the regulatory measures affecting subsistence harvesting of the Porcupine caribou herd.

F. Financial Report

The Chair reviewed the 2010/11 budget and the spending over the last year and projection into the coming year.

Jennifer spoke to some of the details in the budget and provided context for variances for the 2010/2011 year. While the Council is underspent in a number of areas, these variances are easily explained: cost-sharing for our charter in the summer, not meeting with the Aklavik HTC because of weather, and the JS board meeting was in Whitehorse so there was minimal cost associated with this. Office costs were low since we did not have any major mailouts this year.

Christian suggested a variance adjustment in September as a check-in point on the budget that would give us enough time to adjust spending prior to year-end.

Action Item 03-11-01: The Council decided to thoroughly review and adjust the budget in September in order to better plan for the end of the year. Add this to the bring forward file.

The Chair advised the Council that we will approve the final financial statements for 2010/2011 at the summer meeting, and there will be a chance for review there. A short discussion followed, noting that we are entering into the 8th year of the 10 year funding cycle. The Chair noted that there has not been a change in the honoraria rate since 1982. The Council reiterated their support for an honoraria increase moving forward into the next Federal-Yukon Contribution Agreement.

The Council reviewed the 2011/2012 budget. There are number of line items that have not changed substantially since 2010/2011. Reviewing the travel budget prompted a short discussion about going to Herschel for a week for the summer meeting. The Chair noted that while the perception may exist that it is expensive to hold meetings on the land, it is normally less expensive than a regular meeting, largely because of the saving in meeting room and hotel costs and per diems.

The Council discussed the possibility of changing the meeting binder system in the context of the budget discussion and purchase of assets. The Council decided to pursue a more digital conveyance of meeting information, likely using the sharefiles and email. The Council discussed the pros and cons of digital vs hard copy material as well as digital media types (laptops, notebooks, tablets). The Council decided to purchase three tablet computers (two for the office and one for Ernest). Danny continues to prefer a hard copy of the binder. Other members have access to laptops already. The Secretariat will proceed with this, recognizing that feedback from members will be important through the implementation.

Jennifer reviewed staffing options in light of Michelle Christenson's notification that she is not returning to her position once her maternity leave is over at the end of April. The proposed scenario would involve Christine and Jennifer working a little more than half time each (working full time around meetings). The Council agreed with the staffing proposal and accepted it as presented with Jennifer and Christine working .6 of an FTE each and budgeting for Michelle to work very reduced hours starting in the fall, on a contract basis.

Jennifer reviewed the upcoming meetings, and Lindsay noted that there are a number of initiatives coming up that will require increased travel. Polar bears, oil spill response, NEB hearings, to name a few. As WMAC(NS) wants to maintain our position on these issues, we will be looking at more travel.

A number of projects were reviewed for the upcoming year, as the Council focused their discussion on the 2011/2012 proposed budget. Minor adjustments were addressed – including a clearer allocation in conferences/workshops line item and an increase in the purchase of assets. The Chair reviewed the projects listed and clarified the intent of the various projects. The Atlas project is designed to ensure that the Council retains a body of spatial data for the North Slope. This is an attempt to redo some work we had done before and also update it. The Wildlife Conservation and Management Plan budget is largely for Christine's time in revising the plan. The proposed project budget allocates funds to discussions in Aklavik on the WCMP, the digital filing of the grizzly bear tapes, and redrafting of the species status reports and muskox plan. Allocations include the activities required to take a project to a milestone or conclusion – both process and product. Educational materials can include any number of products i.e. hunting rights on the North Slope, podcasting, assisting in the design of the monitoring program, and polar bear meetings. He emphasized that if members have other project ideas they should bring

them forward. Minor reallocations were made to distribute the costs of some of the projects into line items that could be allocated above to workshops/conferences.

Action Item 03-11-02: Revisit and allocate 2011/12 project money at the summer meeting.

Motion 03-11-04 to accept 2011/2012 budget as revised.

Moved by: Christian Bucher

Seconded by: Danny C Gordon

Motion carried.

1:30pm Shelly Marshall (YG) and Richard Gordon arrived.

G. Grizzly Bear Quota

The Chair reviewed the request from the Aklavik HTC for a quota increase for grizzly bear. He explained that although we don't have the final results from the grizzly bear study, we are expecting to review the quota at this meeting. He tabled the idea of an interim quota or a quota that would be subject to final write-up of the study analysis and conclusions, but using the best information currently available from the six year study.

The Chair invited Shelly Marshall, Carnivore Biologist, to update the group on the grizzly bear project analysis.

Shelly reviewed the steps required to get an updated population estimate. Once there is a number for the DNA grid, it can be converted into a habitat number, which then can get expanded across the Yukon ISR. When Ramona presented to the Council in September 2010 she showed the results of her work on just the DNA grid. She is now on leave and will be back in the fall. Shelly has conferred with Ramona and preliminary analysis indicates that the population is about 100 bears higher across the whole Yukon ISR. A conservative harvest rate of 1-3% applied to that extra 100 bears would increase the Total Allowable Harvest from 1-3 bears. Initial analysis shows that the density is higher in the park than on the rest of the North Slope. During Shelly's visit to Aklavik she went through all the sign-out info to find out what the hunter success rate is on the tags that have gone out. This was aimed at getting a sense of the hunter success rate since there could be more tags available if there was low hunter success with the tags. This analysis has not been undertaken yet.

The Chair noted that one option on the quota would be to adjust with respect to the 100 extra bears but also look to issue more tags so that there are more opportunities to fully utilize the

quota. Upon review of the harvest information supplied from NWT, it was apparent that in some years the quota was underharvested by 50%. Over the last 5 years, with the exception of 2 years, the quota has been significantly under harvested.

Shelly noted that the years where more bears were taken were the better snow years. Offering extra tags in a great snow year would mean a high harvest year.

1:50pm Billy Storr joined the meeting

The Chair asked the Council for a recommendation with regard to the quota increase. Christian suggested a management strategy of putting out more tags to provide more opportunity to use the quota. He also indicated that in a following year if fewer tags were issued it might be confusing for people.

Richard commented that in Aklavik tags are often taken out for too long and people are left waiting in the community for tags. New additional tags could be reserved for weekend hunters. The Aklavik HTC could manage this. Danny commented that problems and bottlenecks arise when people take a tag and then stay in town, not actively using the tag. This is one reason that less bears are being harvested. Billy mentioned that the Aklavik HTC has been working with the IGC to have a public meeting to change the system so that it could be more like in Tuk. The suggestion to put out more tags would take the pressure off people waiting for tags. If the tags are in town, they should be with the HTC and not in someone's house that is not out hunting. Billy expressed his confidence that, administratively, the HTC could easily handle the extra tags.

A conversation ensued about managing the availability of tags and hunter success over a three year period. The HTC is quick to react to harvest and the community is small enough that everyone knows if someone gets a bear. Christian asked how we reconcile having the regulation refer to the quota of six, but having more tags. Rob suggested characterizing the tags differently so that people's expectations aren't raised, i.e. calling the extra tags 'overquota tags' or 'extra opportunity tags', or some label that indicates they are distinct from the regular tags. Billy commented that a lot of people want to go, but the tags aren't there, and sometimes people go out and they do not successfully harvest.

Ernest expressed that we should be cautious in not releasing too many tags that might result in exceeding harvest quotas. Billy noted that for Aklavik to change the bylaw will take at least a year. Once there is clarity about what the bylaws will look like, then the Aklavik HTC will know what tools are available to use.

Shelly noted that although the North Slope bears are managed on a population basis, it seems that there is a subpopulation dynamic happening that is becoming apparent in the DNA work as it is being analyzed. She advocated for distributing the harvest in a manner that recognizes this and that the quota increase would be centred in the park.

The Chair noted that our mandate is to determine the Total Allowable Harvest and the harvestable quota, and it is the responsibility of the HTC to address harvest distribution. Notwithstanding this, we are managing collaboratively and this will provide a context for the recommendations the Council makes that is based on Inuvialuit rights to harvest and responsible bear harvest management.

Danny raised his concerns about depleting the bears close to Aklavik. He thinks people in Aklavik are harvesting less because they are going to the same places they always go. He suspects bear numbers are being depleted close to Aklavik, and this is why we are seeing less harvest. It takes too much money and too much gas to go farther afield hunting for bear.

Billy commented that what Aklavik is really interested in is a quota increase close to Aklavik. Danny noted that he is hearing comments about more bears being sighted. Three bears were shot this summer in Aklavik – one in town and two at the dump. It seems that more bears are coming into town than 10 years ago when bears didn't come into town. Ernest noted that the HTC could examine lots of different options to make hunting opportunities fair and available.

The Chair focused the group with 2 questions:

- 1) What is the quota recommendation?
- 2) What is the best administrative arrangement to support the recommendation?

Based on the 100 additional bears analysis, a recommendation from the Council for an immediate increase in the quota by 2 bears, and reflect the existing quota distribution by having one extra tag assigned to the park and one extra tag outside of the park east of the Babbage.

The Council will review the quota in one year's time when the analysis and results from the grizzly bear project are complete.

Based on discussions the Council decided to increase harvesting opportunities by issuing 3 extra opportunity tags, 2 in the park, and 1 east of the Babbage, subject to the concurrence of the AHTC. This will also to be reviewed in a year's time. Once the quotas are reached, the extra opportunity tags are immediately removed.

In the letter transmitting the decision, we will mention that we understand that the HTC and IGC are working to address AHTC tag administration issues through bylaw review. The Council will meet with Aklavik HTC board in a year's time to revisit how the system is working. This

recommendation goes to the federal and territorial ministers of Environment. The letter will also mention the importance of the grizzly bear work and that a lot more is known about bears on the North Slope. The project has greatly improved our understanding of North Slope grizzlies. The longevity of the project has paid off, especially since the last study was completed over 30 years ago.

Motion 03-11-03 to increase the harvestable quota of Yukon North Slope grizzly bears for Inuvialuit hunters by two bears from the current quota of 9 to 11 bears, and to provide two “additional opportunity tags” to Inuvialuit hunters subject to the concurrence of the Aklavik HTC.

Moved by: Rob Florkiewicz

Seconded by: Danny C Gordon

Motion carried.

Action Item 03-11-03: Write a letter to the federal and territorial ministers of Environment recommending a quota increase of two bears to convey motion 03-11-03 increasing for Inuvialuit hunters the quota of YNS grizzly bears by two bears.

Action Item 03-11-04: The chair will meet with the AHTC to discuss the quota increase, the distribution of the harvest and option to provide “additional opportunity tags.

Billy Storr left the meeting

H. Polar Bears

I. Polar bear distribution flights project

Shelly reported that she spoke with AHTC in the last month about setting up a meeting regarding the polar bear project. She was advised that it would be best to handle this as a special meeting. Shelly continues to wait for official word back from her policy people, because the policy as she understands it is that YG does not pay for meetings of this nature.

There are various administrative arrangements that can be made to make this work. Shelly and Rob will figure out how to make this work as far as administrative arrangements go. Timeline for this would be to have flights in April and then in the fall.

Action item 03-11-05: To clarify the distinction between regular and special meetings as well as discuss who is responsible for the payment of honoraria.

II. Polar Bear Traditional Knowledge Project

Jennifer reviewed the WMAC (NS) IFA Recommended Funds chart. She discussed the \$5000 allocation in the IFA Research funds, and how to spend the rest of the allocation for the Polar Bear TK study. She also reviewed the budget information that we have on this project in terms of costs moving forward. The project runs until 2013, which is expected to cost an additional \$152,000. To date WMAC (NS) has funded some portions of the project, as has Environment Canada and GNWT.

Action Item 03-11-06: Lindsay to speak with Larry Carpenter to ensure that both WMACs are agreed on the next steps for the study and the final report and product.

The Chair noted that this work is hugely important for the upcoming CITES COP16 in 2013. This needs to be completed in 2012.

I. Herschel Island Park Update

Richard Gordon presented his report from the last field season at the Park. He reported that there was nothing unusual regarding the yearly operations. His report has been circulated to IGC and the HTCs, with no negative feedback. Aircraft schedules, an area of historical concern for WMAC(NS), is being carefully managed. They are still working with 800ft not 1000ft of airstrip. Aklak Air will only take-off if they have good headwinds. The shortened airstrip presents no challenges for landing; only for takeoff. Last year's charr harvest is up from previous years; this is likely related to ice conditions. He discussed the necessity to monitor the O&M budget very closely.

The Chair raised the issue of season cutbacks by eight days to help Tombstone Park. Rob explained that it is not a question of money, but a question of workload and FTEs.

Richard commented that all four Rangers are from Aklavik right now. Literacy is a challenge in continuing to hire from Aklavik.

Thursday March 17, 2011

Lindsay Staples (Chair) · **Rob Florkiewicz** Yukon Government (Member) · **Christian Bucher** Government of Canada (Member) · **Danny C. Gordon** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) · **Ernest Pokiak** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) · **Dorothy Cooley** Yukon Government (Alternate) · **Jennifer Smith** (Secretariat) · **Christine Cleghorn** (Secretariat) · **Richard Gordon** Yukon Government, Herschel

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:10am. He reviewed the day's agenda and noted presentations and guests. Danny asked to ensure that there would be some discussion on northern river otters, as he is concerned that they are overabundant in the Delta.

J. North Slope Trapping Concession Boundary

The Chair explained the background of the trapping concession boundary and explained that the issue is about who has what harvesting rights and trapping rights within the trapping concessions and in the overlap areas. He explained that the trapping concession boundaries were put in place before the IFA was signed. When the IFA was signed, its arrangements became paramount. Arrangements for harvesting rights north and south of the ISR boundary (the "watershed boundary") by the Inuvialuit and Vuntut Gwitchin (reciprocal harvesting) were established. Annex S in the IFA clearly indicates that unless otherwise agreed to by both the Inuvialuit and Vuntut Gwitchin, the VGFN shall harvest south of the watershed boundary and the Inuvialuit shall harvest north of the watershed. The only boundary referred to in the IFA is the ISR boundary.

Stephanie provided and explained maps that demonstrate the settlement region boundary for the VGFN and the ISR, and the trapping concessions. These maps raised another issue: current Yukon Government maps of traditional territories in the Yukon indicate a legal boundary for the VGFN traditional territory that in certain places overlaps and lies north of the southern boundary of the ISR.

The Chair observed that from the standpoint of Inuvialuit harvesting rights, the IFA is clear that Inuvialuit can harvest as far south as the ISR boundary and the VGFN as far north, unless otherwise agreed to by the parties as provided for in Annex S. The clarification of this matter is an administrative housekeeping matter. Billy commented that, for the most part, people know about the height of land and use that as the border. It is the ISR boundary that is the one in effect and it is the watershed boundary.

Danny noted that people in Aklavik can be confused about the boundary lines, and that now, seeing the maps, and since having the discussion, he understands it. Billy mentioned that it is clear now that the ISR boundary is the one to acknowledge. Billy will take the maps back to the Aklavik HTC. Stephanie will write a letter to the Aklavik HTC asking for their support to change the boundary, and develop a briefing a note to summarize the issue and the actions. Stephanie's letter will cc IGC, WMAC(NS), and VGFN.

Action Item 03-11-07: Stephanie Muckenhiem will write a letter to the Aklavik HTC asking for their support to change the boundary, and develop a briefing note to summarize the issue. The letter will be copied to the IGC, WMAC(NS) and VGFN.

Ernest noted the practical aspect that no one really goes into that area anymore. Danny noted that if lynx prices go way up again, then people will start going back in there to get lynx. The area is only around 40 miles from Aklavik.

Billy Storr left the meeting.

10:15 am Perry Diamond and Ella LeGresley arrived

K. Beaufort Regional Environmental Assessment Briefing

Perry provided the Council with a presentation of BREa. He described the history of BREa, indicating that the process started with a letter from IGC in 2004. The letter was a response to an industry proposal. Eventually the Federal Minister responded with the “Beaufort Sea Strategic Regional Plan of Action”. The Plan of Action was developed over two years and its creation involved Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers, industry, NWT Government, Yukon Government, Inuvialuit, and others. After the finalization of BSSrPA, no implementation funding came forward and the initiative was shelved. The Inuvialuit had concerns about the lack of implementation and industry pushed for progress for streamlining the assessment process. A steering committee was produced and a framework document was created, which was similar to the BSSrPA.

The Chair asked Perry to clarify what the product out of BREa is intended to be. Perry said that there are different views amongst people on this but that it is intended to be a process to collect information to help the environmental assessment process related to offshore oil and gas. He said that most of the money available through BREa is for research.

He explained more about the program. He said the process is being managed out of DIAND. The boundaries of the area being looked at are the ISR boundaries though there is language in the framework document that excludes the Yukon North Slope.

The Council had a brief discussion about the exclusion of the North Slope from BREa. The Chair reminded the group that the IFA is clear that the North Slope extends into the offshore.

The Council noted the large body of work that has already been undertaken in the Beaufort since the 1970s, and the magnitude of the task of assembling all of that work.

Some issues of funding were discussed and it was noted that nothing would be released until Treasury Board approval. The call for proposals went out recently and for a project to be approved it has to be linked to the Beaufort sea.

Perry reiterated that the process is trying to address socioeconomic and environmental information gaps. The process is trying to prepare for oil and gas activity in Beaufort Sea.

Ernest talked about timelines, he thinks that this should happen in the next two years as pressure from industry to come into the area is high.

10:40 am Rob left the meeting

Perry informed the Council that BREA is a five year funding program, and that the program is in the second year. Perry mentioned the similarities and differences to the NEB hearings with regard to the matters under consideration.

Perry walked through a presentation on BREA timelines, funding and the break out of allocations across categories.

Action 03-11-18: Letter of clarification to BREA Steering Committee Chair about the North Slope exclusion. The letter will describe the North Slope and request clarification about what is included/excluded. Completed.

He explained the funding profile- Bio-physical science will be receiving 17 of the 21.8 million dollars over five years. The priorities for funding are set by the research advisory committee. Each group including “science” has a working group established and the idea is that the science research money will largely support the learning in the other groups including: cumulative effects and oil spill preparedness.

The funding priorities were set by INAC and the Funding approval is year by year.

The research advisory committee has set its priorities for research by narrowing down a list of priorities/gaps generated from federal regulators. The priorities fall under two tiers and include: Tier one-fish, coastal/marine birds, modeling, and sea ice; and Tier two-effects of sound, geohazards, worst case environmental design limits, and coastal geology.

The Secretariat asked why polar bear had been removed from the tier one list. Perry said that it had been removed at the request of the Inuvialuit and that there is a chance it may appear again at a later date.

Perry spoke to some of the challenges that he has been aware of in setting priorities and timelines.

The Chair and Perry discussed ways that the Council could be involved in comments/priorities for research. The Council discussed their interest in coastal/cumulative effects.

Action Item 03-11-9: Send the BREA Steering Committee a letter to indicate WMAC (NS) areas of concern, including: cumulative effects, waterfowl, and to advise of moorage study.

Perry Diamond and Ella LeGresley depart.

L. IFA Research Funds

Jennifer reviewed the final research allocations for 2011/12. She reviewed the various funding arrangements that have been created to meet the demands of various projects.

She identified a variance of \$3000 which was left unallocated from December. She explained that this amount was held back until the Council could review proofs from the book that Chris Burn is producing on Hershel Island. The Council reviewed the proofs and agreed to recommend the remaining \$3000 to the book, since it represents the most exhaustive treatment to date of the history, ecology, heritage, culture, and geomorphology of Herschel.

The Council reviewed the coastal environmental sensitivity project submitted by EC for IFA funding and proposed requesting additional funding through BREA to realize this project in full.

Christine will follow up with Wendy at CWS in an effort to clarify the scope of work and person to do the work for the \$10k allocated to the coastal work. Perhaps Wendy would draft a proposal to BREA that leverages the 10k funds.

Action Item 03-11-10: Christine to work with Wendy at CWS to clarify and identify opportunities for the “coastal assessment” project as well as investigate opportunities for BREA funding.

The Aklavik Harvest study was allocated \$10,000. The Chair suggested starting with an initial \$5000 payment and then seeing how the other partners support this project.

Discussion ensued about the length of commitment required for an ongoing harvest collection. The Council was clear that this year's contribution was intended to support the model design as well as a contribution toward the data collection in Aklavik.

Motion 3-11-05

To Recommend \$3000 of YG IFA funds towards publication of Chris Burns' Herschel Island: A Natural and Cultural History of Herschel Island book.

Moved by: Ernest Pokiak

Seconded by: Rob Florkiewicz

Motion carried.

L. Report from Secretariat

Christine provided a short précis of the highlights from Research Day that she attended in Inuvik. Research abstracts will be forwarded as soon as they are available. Jennifer provided a summary of the Polar Bear Technical Committee meeting and the Sea Ice Symposium. She noted that there is much to be learned to get up to speed on this issue. She also discussed that the energetics of polar bear are changing and the way they use ice and the land. Alaska is looking at how polar bears are using land, and whether they are shifting their preference for land over ice, denning on land, etc. She suggested that the cause and effect relationships of polar bear habitat and changing sea ice is not well understood or substantiated. Proceedings will be drafted and made available from the Sea Ice symposium in Winnipeg. Danny reflected on his observations the last time he went to Herschel in the winter – he saw four kills of seals by polar bears over six tries.

This weekend is the Arctic Borderlands Gathering - the results of the new survey will be presented. Danny and Dorothy will attend. Christine provided a short overview of some of the analysis work that has been going on regarding the Aklavik information.

M. Non-detrimental finding

The Council and the WMAC (NWT) have been involved with Environment Canada to determine how the Councils work with the process to arrive at a non-detrimental finding. The main point that the groups made to Environment Canada was that under the land claim agreements, the groups do have the right to advise a Minister, at every stage of the process. NDFs are very important regarding international trade in a species. NDFs establish that, based on the health and status of a population, there are no grounds under CITES to uplist a species. When a species is uplisted it means that there is no international trade in that species. The Council went through the process for polar bear and now the same process is underway for grizzly bear. The Yukon has responded to this information request.

Action Item 03-11-11: WMAC (NS) will coordinate NDF comments with the Yukon and have members review, and schedule a teleconference to submit comments.

The Council quickly reviewed the status of the River Otter NDF. The Chair asked if the Council wants to comment on the River Otter Non detriment finding. Danny discussed the views of the AHTC and described that many people in Aklavik are seeing a lot of river otter. He expressed concerns that they are taking muskrats. The NDF report says that the populations across Canada are either stable or increasing.

The council decided that it was not necessary to comment at this time.

O. COSEWIC Status of Grizzly Bear

Members were asked to review the status report and participate in a teleconference to determine the content of our letter on this report.

Action 03-11-12: Organize a teleconference to discuss the COSEWIC Status of Grizzly Bear and the grizzly bear NDF. Members were asked to review the status report and discuss on the call.

P. Information on Migratory Birds and Status of Northern Caribou Populations

The information on Migratory Birds is provided for the information of Council members.

The caribou report is provided for information of Council members. The authors are receptive to comments on this report. It gives a short summary of each herd across the north.

O. Wildlife Conservation and Management Plan

Christine provided a brief overview of her work to date on the Wildlife Conservation and Management Plan revisions. She has met with researchers and various agencies since the meeting in December, in an effort to learn what the current status of research activity is for the North Slope and offshore. Research Day in Inuvik provided a great opportunity to meet a number of people face to face and learn about research and planning activities across the ISR. She has also spent time looking at key wildlife area maps to understand the relative importance of different areas. She got GIS assistance to overlay all of the key wildlife area maps to determine if there were any areas of higher wildlife use. The result was that all areas are important to something at different times of the year. Advice out of this exercise is to look at managing the area as one whole unit. She said that two drivers of environmental effects that potentially can be effectively managed are wildlife harvesting and development. It will be important to gather and consider information that would be helpful in making decisions on these drivers of environmental effects..

She has also investigated which other plans of relevance to the North Slope are now in effect since the last version of the WCMP. At the June meeting she will present a timeline for future planning actions for the updating of the WMCP.

The Chair mentioned that they have talked about bringing together a group of biologists to work through specific areas in the plan.

Christine mentioned that other topics will require the need for the participation of relevant informal working groups.

P. Upcoming Meetings

The Council set meeting dates for the coming year:

The Council will meet the week of July 21- 28th at Herschel Island, September 12-15, including September 14 joint WMACs meeting in Whitehorse, and December 4-5 in Inuvik.

The Council discussed a number of other meetings. Some that the Council plans to attend or consider attending are: ABEKC Co-Op Annual Gathering- March 20; ArcticNet - April 12-15 Inuvik; Monitoring Meeting - April 12-14 in Inuvik; Arctic and Marine Oil Spill Program- Calgary June 7-9; Arctic Ungulates -Yellowknife, August 22-26; South Beaufort Polar Bear Quota and Boundary Consultation - April 8-9: Aklavik, and Inuvik; NEB Hearings - Inuvik, mid-August to Mid-September.

Rescheduling of Marine Mammal Ottawa April 18-19: Ernest is interested. Secretariat to attend Harvest Reporting Administrator's Meeting: June 11-12, Inuvik. Dorothy will attend.

Meeting with Aklavik HTC- The Chair should try to meet with the Aklavik HTC in May, regarding the draft Muskox plan. He can then present it to the Game Council and WMAC (NWT) in June.

CITES Animal Standing Committee: We will not attend this meeting but will keep up to date with its outcomes. .

North Slope Conference: Stephanie affirmed that the 2012/2013 funding will involve funds for the North Slope Conference. She anticipates the conference taking place in fall of 2012. She further asked the Council about attending the Herschel meeting this summer, as an opportunity to work with Richard. The Chair welcomed Stephanie to attend the meeting in July on Herschel.

Motion 3-11-06

To adjourn the meeting

Moved by: Ernest Pokiak

Seconded by: Christian Bucher

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 2:45pm.