



Wildlife Management Advisory Council (North Slope)

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MINUTES

WMAC(NS) Teleconference

December 11, 1997

Present: Lindsay Staples - Chair
Nelson Green - Member -Inuvialuit Game Council
Joan Eamer - Member- Government of Canada
Billy Archie - Member -Inuvialuit Game Council
John Russell - Member - Yukon Territorial Government
Vicki Sahanatien- Parks Canada, Alternate- Government of Canada
Dorothy Cooley- Alternate - Yukon Territorial Government
Aileen Horler - WMAC(NS) Secretariat

1. Review and approval of the agenda

The Chair reviewed the agenda, noting that the items to be considered during the teleconference were those which needed attention before the next regular meeting. Joan Eamer requested that an item regarding coming events be added to the agenda.

Motion:

To adopt the agenda.

Moved: John Russell
Seconded: Nelson Green
Motion carried.

2. Wildlife Act Amendments

In reference to the proposed schedule to be followed in amending the Yukon Wildlife Act, the Chair drew the members' attention to the draft timetable provided by YTG. Everyone acknowledged that the timeline is very tight, with a lot of work to be done,

between January and the end of March, in laying out the basis requirements for amending the Act.

The Chair referred to a letter written in December 1995 to the Deputy Minister of YTG Renewable Resources in which he suggested a process that could be followed in amending the Act. The process and the further suggestion of representation on a Working Group has been accepted by YTG. Parks Canada also has an interest in being a part of the process.

The Inuvialuit Game Council and YTG will be appointing representatives to the Working Group. These representatives are to have the support of legal counsel. The Chair reported that several options for legal counsel were considered at a recent meeting of the Joint Secretariat Board of Directors. After reviewing a number of names, the Board decided that John Donihee, who worked on the amendments to the NWT Wildlife Act, was their preferred candidate. It was recognised that Mr. Donihee has the experience necessary to complete the work within the tight time frame. YTG has sent out a request for an expression of interest in the work and has as yet not made any decisions on legal counsel.

The Chair drew members' attention to a letter, dated December 8, 1997, in which Jim Connell, Acting Assistant Deputy Minister of YTG Renewable Resources, identified the \$13,000 remaining in the IFA Wildlife Management Programs 1997-98 budget and \$10,000 surplus from the 1997 North Slope Conference, as being available to contract the legal counsel. The Chair and all the members agreed that it would be very difficult to justify the expenditure of \$13,000 from Wildlife Management Programs on the amendments. On the other hand, unexpended North Slope Conference funding has been designated for use in the implementation of the Yukon North Slope Conservation and Wildlife Management Plan, which would include amendments to the Wildlife Act.

Billy Archie raised the question of the Council's role in recommending expenditures from Wildlife Management Programs. As the Council has not made any such recommendation for a contribution towards the amendments process, does YTG have the authority to designate it to such a use? The Chair reported that this was also a concern expressed by the Inuvialuit Game Council. YTG is mistaken in assuming that the \$13,000 is surplus funds. Using this money to carry out the amendments would be a bad precedent.

When asked about other possible sources of funding, the Chair suggested that YTG could look at the budgets allocated to their other IFA responsibilities, such as the Environment Impact Screening Committee and Review Board, and Herschel Island, on which the amendments will have a direct bearing, as well as next year's North Slope Conference funding.

Nelson Green commented that there had been a discussion at the IGC meeting that morning during which everyone recognised that the timeline proposed by YTG is very tight. The IGC is very anxious to ensure that this opportunity to carry out the amendments is not missed. They also identified John Donihee as the most qualified

person to get the work completed in such a short time. Nelson Green noted that the IGC had raised the point of not using the Wildlife Management Programs monies to fund the amendment process during its meeting with Alan Kaposky earlier that day. When the same process was undergone with respect to amending the NWT Wildlife Act, each board or council involved in the process covered the costs of its representation. Funding should only be required to contract the legal counsel. The three IGC representatives to the Working Group will be Duane Smith, Herbert Felix and Nelson Green.

In regards to the Terms of Reference, Nelson Green commented that there is a need to address the enforceability of HTC by-laws. He added that Laurie Henderson's work must be reviewed before anything else happens. It was also noted that the contract completion date as written in the Terms of Reference should read 1998, not 1999. Vicki Sahanatien remarked that she has concerns that there is no proposed budget attached to the Terms of Reference. More thought should be given to what the process will cost.

Members agreed that a number of points should be raised with YTG in regards to the amending of the Wildlife Act. In reference to funding, the Council has concerns with the use of \$13,000 from the Wildlife Management Programs budget. YTG should consider other options. In selecting legal counsel, YTG should ensure that the contractor has the experience to do the work within the given timeframe and that he or she will have the goodwill of all parties. Legal counsel must be able to deal freely with all parties, without any undo restrictions being imposed in the terms of the contract. The Terms of Reference must address the issue of the enforceability of HTC by-laws.

Action 97-12-01: The Chair will contact Jim Connell, Acting Assistant Deputy Minister, YTG Renewable Resources to express the Council's concerns and comments regarding the proposed funding, process and scheduling of the Wildlife Act Amendments.

Members questioned whether the Council should proceed with a review of the wildlife management proposals on the agenda, in light of the fact that YTG could use all the remaining funds for the amendments. The Chair commented that there were wildlife research proposals which were before Council for review and recommendation, and that the Council should make the appropriate recommendations.

Nelson Green added that, this week, the IGC will be identifying a representative to the working group being formed to look at implementation issues and expenditures. The Chair noted that this working group needs to be set up early in the new year.

Peter Usher, Chair, WMAC(NWT), joined the teleconference to report on that council's discussions regarding the ISR Grizzly Bear Management Plan. WMAC(NWT) have reviewed the newly formatted draft and approved it as a final version, with some minor changes. WMAC(NWT)'s comments will be forwarded to WMAC(NS). Lindsay Staples reported that WMAC(NS) will review the plan at its upcoming meeting in January. The anticipated release date for the plan is March.

Action 97-12-02: The Secretariat will obtain the reformatted version of the ISR Grizzly Bear Management Plan from John Nagy and distribute it to Council members.

3. 1997/98 Wildlife Management funding updates

a) Muskox Population Survey and Composition Count

As a follow-up to the discussions held at the WMAC(NS) meeting in September, members considered the question of timing for the next muskox population survey and composition count. Vicki Sahanatien expressed her concern regarding the generally poor weather conditions in March. Vicki added that she wants to have all the arrangements for Park's participation in the survey finalised before she leaves her job this month.

Dorothy Cooley reported that the Alaskans will be surveying in April. Regardless of when the survey is conducted in the Yukon, funds are needed in this fiscal year to put the required fuel stocks in place. It was noted that the Council has already recommended \$15,000 to be allocated to this project from Wildlife Programs. Vicki and Dorothy agreed to establish their actual funding needs as soon as possible.

4. 1997/98 Wildlife Management funding proposals

Members noted that approximately \$13,000 remains in the Wildlife Management Programs budget for 1997-98.

a) Community-based Monitoring Program

Joan Eamer introduced this program as a follow-up to last year's successful pilot project. Participants at the Second Annual Gathering had recommended that this community-based monitoring program be continued and that, in the second year, a workshop is held with community researchers as well as researchers from Parks Canada and Herschel Island Territorial Park. It was also recommended that those being interviewed be provided an honorarium.

In reviewing the budget, Joan noted that the requested contribution from Wildlife Management Programs (\$5000) is to be used primarily to cover the costs of the Aklavik participants. Vicki Sahanatien commented that a salary of \$200/ day is quite high. Park's Canada patrol people receive \$100/ day. Billy added that the Aklavik HTC pays \$100/ day as well. He felt that there should be consistency in what is being paid and suggested that the Council consider setting standards for payment at its next meeting. Nelson Green added that it is important to look at the output of the work. When work is being done out on the land \$200/ day is a reasonable amount. Joan said that she would review this salary figure.

Joan reported that she will request recommendations from local agencies when doing the hiring for these positions. Billy Archie added that it is very important that the Council doesn't lose control over these projects.

b) Yukon North Slope Long Term Research Plan

At its September 1997 meeting, the Council recommended a \$4900 contribution from Wildlife Management Programs towards the Yukon North Slope Long Term Research Plan. An additional \$4975 is being requested to cover the costs of follow-up to the workshop (report preparation) plus the costs for Mike Gill to conduct community consultations. All of the anticipated work is necessary in order to formulate the plan.

c) Count of Muskox and Moose on Yukon North Slope

Members reviewed a proposal submitted by Danny C. Gordon to do ground-based monitoring of muskox and moose on the Yukon North Slope in late March. The funding request is for \$8040. The proposal includes a letter of support from the Aklavik HTC. The Chair noted that Danny has been interested in doing this work for a number of years.

Members were generally very supportive of the proposal. There is a need, however, for the Council to establish some criteria/ guidelines to assist those doing this type of work. Billy Archie noted that he and Dorothy have an action item (96-12-16) to establish a muskox sighting reporting system for Aklavik. Joan Eamer and the Chair also have an action item to establish a format for hunters to report ground-based observations (97-09-12).

Nelson Green commented that he is very interested in seeing the results of this type of ground-based work conducted by community members, especially by someone who knows that land so well. It will be a good comparison to the aerial work. Vicki Sahanatien added that the potential for this type of work is encouraging. She agreed that there is a need to develop the experimental design and methods of collecting to ensure that the data is useful. This will provide a good opportunity to work on the research design with the local people. Dorothy Cooley offered to help with the design, and the determination of reporting and collecting methods.

The Chair suggested that the Council make it a priority to get together to discuss this issue of monitoring design and reporting. It would be very useful to include Danny C. Gordon in the discussions.

Action 97-12-03: The Council will consider the issue of experimental design and reporting of ground-based monitoring at its meeting in January, 1998.

Action 97-12-04: WMAC(NS) will write a letter to Danny C. Gordon to express their support of his proposed ground- based monitoring of muskox and moose on the Yukon North Slope.

Members agreed to support all the proposals presented, in principle. The Council will consider the final funding recommendations for the three proposals at the January 1998 WMAC(NS) meeting. The issue of funding for the Wildlife Act Amendments and the muskox survey need to be settled.

Motion:

To accept, in principle, the proposals titled ‘Count of muskox and moose on Yukon North Slope’, ‘Yukon North Slope Long Term Research Plan’ and ‘Community- based Monitoring Program’, with final funding recommendations to be considered at the January 1998 WMAC(NS) meeting.

Moved: Nelson Green
Seconded: Joan Eamer
Motion carried.

5. Financial Report

The Chair reviewed the financial statement, dated November 1997. The following points were noted:

- Expenses for Honoraria, the Wildlife Conservation and Management Plan and Secretariat fees are all within budget and do not require any adjustments.
- Meetings -other and Meetings -regular are both currently underbudget. Expenses incurred in relation to the North Slope Conference can be covered from the surplus in these two categories.
- Funds allocated to ANWR (\$1500) should be moved into Ecosystem Monitoring, as the Council is anticipating expenses related to the co-ordination of the 3rd Annual Gathering.
- Within the category of Secretariat - Administration, it was proposed that \$1200 be budgeted toward a display poster, \$600 towards gifts from the Council to Larry Carpenter, Richard Binder and Vicki Sahanatien, and \$250 towards a new filing cabinet for the office.
- Within the category of Secretariat - Contract Work, it was proposed that funds be moved from ‘financial statements’ and ‘bookkeeping’ to ‘newsletter’.

- Purchase of Assets should be increased by \$3300, to a total of \$4000, to provide funds for the purchase of a lap-top computer, which is needed to assist in presentations and out-of-office work. It is anticipated that this additional funding will be available from the meetings categories.

Motion:

To accept changes to the budget, as noted.

Moved: Joan Eamer

Seconded: Billy Archie

Motion carried.

6. Coming Events

Joan Eamer reported that there are quite a number of conferences and workshops coming up in the next few months.

- January 21-24, 1998 - The National Ecological Monitoring and Assessment Meeting (EMAN) in Quebec.
- January 27-30, 1998 - Northern Contaminants Program Annual Results Workshop, in Calgary
- February 4-6, 1998 - Community Monitoring Workshop, in Inuvik. This workshop will be part of the Northern Ecological Knowledge Co-operative's initiative to carry out ecosystem monitoring in the communities.
- March 3-5, 1998 - Biodiversity Assessment Forum, Yukon College, Whitehorse.
- March 23-25, 1998 - The 3rd Annual Gathering of the Northern Ecological Knowledge Co-operative, in Inuvik.
- April 1-3, 1998 - Traditional Knowledge Workshop, in Whitehorse, being organized by the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board.
- April 20-24, 1998 - 8th North American Caribou Workshop, in Whitehorse.
- May 12-14, 1998 - Sustainable Development in the Arctic: Conference and Workshop, in Whitehorse, being co-ordinated by DIAND.

Joan added that she may be able to secure some funding for airfare if someone from the Council was interested in attending the EMAN meeting in Quebec. Billy Archie expressed an interest.

Action 97-12-05: Billy Archie will contact Joan Eamer in reference to attending the National Ecological Monitoring and Assessment Meeting (EMAN) in Quebec.

7. Next Meeting

Council members agreed to hold the next meeting in Whitehorse January 6-7, 1998. Members were also asked to consider the possibility of holding a meeting, in Inuvik, March 25-27 which would coincide with the 3rd Annual Gathering of the Northern Ecological Knowledge Co-operative.

Motion:

To adjourn.

Moved: Nelson Green
Seconded: Joan Eamer
Motion carried.

WMAC(NS) Chair

Date

WMAC(NS) Secretariat

Date