



MEETING MINUTES

WMAC (NS) Quarterly Meeting

Aklavik, Northwest Territories
Moose Kerr School Library / Aklavik Hamlet Council Chambers
December 10-11, 2007

Monday, December 10
Moose Kerr School Library

Lindsay Staples Chair • **Danny C. Gordon** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) • **Ernest Pokiak** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) • **Doug Larsen** Yukon Government (Member) • **Dorothy Cooley** Yukon Government (Alternate) • **Wendy Nixon** Canadian Wildlife Service (Alternate) • **Michelle Christensen** (Secretariat) • **Jennifer Smith** (Secretariat)

A. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 3:15pm. Michelle Christensen and Jennifer Smith were welcomed to their new positions with the Council's Secretariat.

The Chair provided an overview of the events intended to take place over the coming days. He noted that Christian Bucher, Richard Gordon, and Ramona Maraj would be joining the meeting as guests. He also presented the schedule and agendas for the Elders event, the Aklavik HTC meeting, and the IGC meeting in Inuvik.

The Chair requested that Council members flag any issues that arise during this meeting that they feel should be brought up at the IGC meeting

B. Review and Approval of Agenda

Council members agreed to defer the following agenda items:

- **Review of Action Items** - Deferred to the next meeting when a report on the status of these items will be available. In the interim, the Chair will meet with the Secretariat to discuss and provide background on status of current action items.
- **Financial Report** - Deferred to the next meeting or by teleconference.
- **Muskox Research and Management**
- **Species at Risk (COSEWIC)** The Council would like to come forward with a unified response on this topic. The Secretariat will pursue ways to communicate with partners, including WMAC (NWT), in order to gain other agencies' perspectives before the Council provides a comment.
- **Aklavik Harvest Study** Danny C Gordon commented on the importance of the Inuvialuit Harvest Study and raised the merit of re-establishing it in light of the potential for increased oil and gas exploration (e.g. interest of some parties in opening up the offshore waters of the Yukon North Slope to oil and gas nominations).

In a response to a question about why the Council was not meeting with WMAC (NWT), the Chair noted that it has been over a year since the two WMAC's have met. He added that a meeting could not be held at this time as Larry Carpenter is away.

Action 07-12-01: The Secretariat will contact WMAC (NWT) to set up a joint meeting in 2008 to discuss any relevant issues including the grizzly bear project, the muskox plan, and wildlife compensation issues.

The Chair suggested holding teleconferences as required in January to discuss some of the deferred agenda items.

The Chair requested that the **Porcupine Caribou Traditional Knowledge Study** be added to the agenda.

The Chair suggested that the focus of this meeting's Ongoing Business should be the item on grizzly bear research and management. With regard to the draft Grizzly Bear Traditional Knowledge Report, once it is complete, the Chair and Secretariat will seek the most appropriate avenue for the Council to review the report. A copy will be sent to the Aklavik HTC for their review before the report is printed. The Chair commented that as the grizzly bear project moves forward, the Council needs to understand the level of support from the AHTC on the project.

The Chair suggested discussing the issue of Inuvialuit carrying firearms within Ivvavik Park when assisting researchers with Christian Bucher, who will join the Council tomorrow for the Parks Canada presentation. An email was recently circulated that addressed the issue in terms of the rights/ lack of rights of Inuvialuit. The current Ivvavik Park regulations do not permit Inuvialuit members to carry a firearm while guiding or working with researchers in the park. The Council is concerned that if this regulation is not amended, it may be a serious obstacle to Inuvialuit participation in research activities in Ivvavik National Park. Lindsay reviewed the use of firearms in the grizzly bear,

marmot, and butterfly projects. In a recent situation, some researchers requested permission to travel into the park with firearms; they were denied this privilege and proceeded without a gun. Later, another researcher joined the same crew and was permitted to carry a firearm. Ramona has also been granted special permission to carry a firearm in the park due to the type of work she does. There are certain exceptions to the rule. Members indicated that the rules that apply to researchers conducting work in Ivvavik National Park should be clear and known to researchers, and that the views of the AHTC and IGC should be solicited on this matter. The Chair commented that the first step would be to see if the current restriction is consistent with the provisions of the Inuvialuit Final Agreement.

The place to address these regulation concerns would be in the Parks Canada regulation change process. The Council doesn't know what stage Parks is at with the process, but feels that the process has been going on for a longtime. The view of the Council is that northern environments clearly need adaptations that should include the right to carry a firearm in the park for certain purposes.

Ernest reiterated the importance of dealing with this issue, highlighting that safety should be the number one issue. It was noted that CWS has required a firearm for polar bear research in the past.

Danny brought up another issue. He commented that under the current set of regulations and policies there is a prohibition on making a camp fire in Ivvavik National Park. He indicated that if travelers are not able to build campfires in the Park, there are significant risks affecting personal safety.

Ernest expressed his concerns about the unpredictability of bears. Doug suggested that maybe the Workers' Compensation Board could be a channel to deal with the firearms issue; one needs the proper work tools in order to safely do their job.

The Chair suggested that the firearms issue should be addressed.

Action 07-12-02: The Council will prepare a letter to be transmitted to the Minister responsible for Parks Canada concerning the need for new regulations for Ivvavik National Park to further the implementation of the revised National Parks Act, the Inuvialuit Final Agreement, and the management issues that require attention as outlined in the Park Management Plan and by the Council.

Motion

To approve the agenda for the December 10-11, 2007 meeting, as revised.

Moved: Wendy Nixon

Second: Danny C Gordon

Motion Carried

C. Review and Approval of October 23-25, 2007 Minutes

Members reviewed the minutes of the meeting held Oct 23-25, 2007 in Whitehorse, Yukon. Council members requested the following changes:

- Page 7: change to “The working group is comprised of the following individuals: Wendy Nixon, Carol **Domas**, Dick Mahoney, **Doug Esagok**, Roberta Joseph, Wilbert **Firth**, Esau Shafer, Marsha Branigan, **Joe Tetlich**, and **Deana Lemke**.”

“The **Porcupine Caribou Technical Committee** decided..... There will be a need to rely on the computer models **that base population estimates on caribou survival data** if it continues to be impossible to get the census photos.”

- Page 10: “A debate over the **border** between.... It is expected that this **border** will be adjusted to the west.”
- Page 11: “The Council discussed the **potential** cumulative effects The status reports are intended to be **an objective non-political review of existing information**. Socio-economic impacts of listings are **not currently part of the COSEWIC review process; they are part of the recovery strategy development**.” The Council...

Motion 07-10-02

To adopt the minutes from the Oct 23-25 WMAC (NS) meeting, as revised.

Moved: Ernest Pokiak

Second: Doug Larsen

Motion Carried

D. Correspondence

The Council reviewed the following correspondence:

1. *Letter from AHTC to WMAC (NS) regarding Grizzly Bear Compensation.*

The Council concluded that this issue is best addressed through the IGC. The Council wishes to see this issue addressed quickly and also supports reaching a common policy that may be implemented across the Settlement Region.

Action 07-12-03: The WMAC (NS) Secretariat will write to the AHTC to indicate that the IGC is the responsible body to take the lead on wildlife compensation issues. The Secretariat will attach photocopied correspondence history on this issue in order to provide background.

2. *Letter from the Yukon Government regarding the fall 2007 Oil and Gas Call for Bids.*

The Chair explained that Yukon has responded to the Council's request to meet. This meeting has not happened yet. All parties need to decide on a time to meet.

Action 07-12-04: The Secretariat will contact Perry Diamond at the Yukon Government to schedule a meeting to discuss the next Call for Oil and Gas Nominations Bids on the North Slope.

The Secretariat agreed to try to schedule this meeting to coincide with the next Council meeting in Whitehorse. If that is not possible Doug Larsen and Wendy Nixon will attend the meeting and brief the rest of the Council. In preparing for this meeting, the Chair suggested finding out the views of the AHTC and the IGC on this matter. A teleconference could be held to discuss this with the whole Council.

3. *Letter from Parks Canada regarding the tabling of the Tuktut Nogait National Park Plan.*

The Secretariat informed the Council that the letter should read "I am pleased to inform you that the first **Ivvavik** National Park of Canada Management Plan has been tabled."

E. Financial Report

As this item has been deferred, the Chair commented that he will explain any recent changes to the budget in his report.

F. Report from the Chair

The Chair reported that the Secretariat has made a transition from one person to two people. As a result, there has been recent office restructuring. Michelle Christensen added that the office has been shifted into an environment that can now accommodate two people. Changes include a new phone line, computer, and desk as well as a network installation that links the two office computers. The new office expenditures will be under \$4000. Jennifer has a new phone number and will forward it to the Council members. Michelle has signing authority.

The Chair suggested that the Council should internally review the budget by the end of January to discuss any reallocations of budget items that may be necessary.

4:45pm - Richard Gordon (Herschel Island Park Ranger, Yukon Government) joined the meeting.

The Chair reported that he has been working on the Arctic Borderlands Ecological Knowledge Coop (ABEKC) Summary Report project with the recently engaged contractor, Wayne Wysocki. Currently, they are at the data familiarization stage which is helping to paint a picture of what kind of data the Coop really has. Michelle Christensen,

Michael Svoboda, and Jadah Follriott have been participating in teleconferences to discuss these details.

The result of the project will be an analysis of the ABEKC data for utility at a community level for wildlife conservation. Wayne Wysocki will soon have an idea what the product will be. The database design, survey, and methodologies are all being looked at. Wayne is currently running sample queries to see how the database will respond.

Wayne has flagged some of his early observations. There is a possibility that some datasets may be redundant. For example, Wayne is investigating the utility of collecting weather data from community sources when it is already being generated through an objective source (government agencies). The Chair explained that this does not mean personal observations are not important, but rather, how does one work with that data? As an example of the capabilities of a data base query, Wayne ran one query and generated 300, 000 results. This information may not prove very helpful if it cannot be narrowed down more successfully. The Chair stated that the result may have been a mistake, but it still illustrates the importance of sample queries to the database. He added that we also need to ask ourselves if this is information that we can work with.

Wayne is also finding that some datasets are better than others. For example the berry data is much less usable than the caribou data.

Michelle commented that the database is a program that provides information. Queries for the database were designed by Jadah and she is now the one most familiar with it and what it is capable of. Jadah is currently passing on that information about how to work with the database to Wayne. Jadah is also working on a report that will look at all the weather data that has been collected. She plans to present the report to the community of Aklavik in the upcoming year.

The Chair suggested that it may be helpful for the Council to come up with a reasonable list of queries for Wayne to work with.

The Chair noted that ABEKC conducts open interviews and therefore, there is a lot of anecdotal information. Sifting through it is no small job.

The Chair believes that there is a good group of people working on this project and thinks that it will provide the Council with results by March 2008.

The Chair added that his meeting with Yukon Parks regarding proposed regulation changes will be addressed latter on the agenda.

G. Report from Members and Secretariat

Danny C. Gordon

Danny reported on his attendance at the CircumArctic Rangifer Monitoring and Assessment network (CARMA) meeting in Vancouver (Nov 27-29).

Although he missed the three previous meetings, he felt it was worthwhile to attend and was happy to have done so. He was struck by the presence of the Russians attendees and their report on caribou status. They have over 800,000 caribou in Russia where they are known as wild reindeer. Danny was glad to have Don Russell leading this discussion as he is great at it. Danny found it interesting how in past years, Russia was blamed for northern Canada's low numbers of caribou. Today they have more than we do. We should have respect for them. Danny added that some of the discussions were quite technical.

In the last 10-15 years that he has been on the land, Danny has noticed the number of animals have drastically decreased. He noticed changes in their behavior also. There are more small groups of animals and still many unknowns.

Danny talked about the projects and programs that have been running for the last 30 years with collars and discussed their results. He commented on how managers and users are finding out a lot of information that is helping. Ten to fifteen years ago people knew that there were caribou, but didn't know where they went or how many there were.

Danny also talked about reindeer being brought here in 1932.

Danny talked about his first hunting trip inland when he was six years old. In those times hunters used to have to harvest a certain number, His Fathers had to harvest 23. For 23 animals you would likely have only 30 shots, as shells were rationed in those days. They used to get as close as possible to the animals. When there were many caribou his Dad used to say "start screaming" and caribou would surround them. They would be encircled by caribou for ten minutes or so, and were able to observe the animals.

The Porcupine caribou have been closely observed for many years and as a result we know more. For example this year we know that caribou are near Arctic village. In the past we would have thought that caribou had all died off because no one has seen any.

Porcupine caribou are changing their habits also. They often used to be in big herds and today they are scattered more in small groups. This is a change that Danny has seen in his lifetime. He has also noticed that they are having calves in different areas.

Danny noticed that there were no Porcupine caribou users from Alaska at the CARMA meeting. Wendy replied that they were invited but did not come.

Dorothy Cooley talked about the importance of speeding up the Harvest Management Plan as she suspects the numbers of caribou are down quite a bit. There is a need for the plan to be in place quickly.

Education is important, although it is hard to reach everyone. People need to know the numbers. Attempts to educate on caribou numbers are being made in the AHTC's pamphlets in the mail.

Council members remarked that the management situation Inuvik is facing should be avoided. There is now concern that with fewer Porcupine caribou to hunt, increased pressure will be placed on moose populations.

Wendy asked Danny's opinion of the video shown at the CARMA meeting about collecting samples. Danny thought the video was good; it was from Yellowknife. Danny mentioned that there could have been more included in it about use of the animal for example: using the skin for clothes like was traditionally done.

Wendy Nixon

Wendy reported that CWS is currently having difficulty allocating travel funds.

Ernest Pokiak

Ernest reported on his attendance at the Imperial Oil meeting from Dec 5-6, 2007 in Inuvik. Ernest provided a written report titled "Ajurak Seismic Program Environmental Assessment Workshop Dec5-6, 2007 Inuvik" which was included in the meeting binder.

The meeting presented information for a seismic program that will be 2,053 sq km and conducted by Western Geco from mid-August to early October. There were about 65 people in attendance from six communities. He found the facilitated discussion groups where suggestions and mitigations came out to be the most interesting. Some issues discussed include:

- measures should be taken to avoid another Kulluk situation.
- buffer zones should be increased from 500m to 1-2 km.
- monitor roles should be taken on by Elders with young people (although there may be training problems associated with this arrangement).
- noise pollution for whale migration could be a problem.

The Chair inquired whether any experiences in Alaska were discussed. Danny, in discussing with the Chair of the AHTC, at the meeting, suggested that it would be a good idea to hold a meeting with Alaskan boat captains who have experience hunting Bowhead whales. Ernest felt that it was important to get information from the Alaskans. He has concerns about fuel barges. Companies want to use double hulled barges, but currently there are no double hulled barges available. Another point of concern that arose out of the meeting was the monitor's ability to spot anything in the extreme dark conditions. It was suggested that the company use two vessels instead of one in order to cut their work time in half.

DFO discussed whale monitoring and the use of radios in the meeting, but there is a problem and information is not being collected.

The area being discussed is straight out from Campbell, 120 km Northwest of Tuktoyaktuk, in the "sheer zone". This is the zone where shallow water changes to deep water.

Ernest added that another discussion at the meeting was on far-reaching effects due to ocean currents (water travels from the Atlantic to the Arctic Ocean). Seal migration was discussed. It was new information to some people that seals migrate from Alaska. It will be interesting to see if the Alaskans bring forward any comments.

The bottom line is that the company has the right to explore, as they have paid their money. It is the terms and conditions of their program that are now being discussed. Their license is good for nine years of seismic activity, after which time they will likely want to drill and possibly build a pipeline (depending on the results).

Ernest concluded by saying that Danny C Gordon was also in attendance at the meeting.

Dorothy Cooley

Dorothy reported on the CARMA meeting. Things are really beginning to happen. The progress is exciting. For example, the Body Conditioning Manual has been translated into Russian.

Doug Larsen

Doug reported on the progress on the Harvest Management Strategy. The Porcupine Caribou Working Group should see something soon. There have been discussions with Marsha Branigan (GNWT) about including Aklavik in the body conditioning work with the jaw bone/leg bone protocols. Money will be applied for from CARMA to include Aklavik next year. Marsha will also try to work with Fort McPherson harvesters depending on where caribou are.

Darius Elias, MLA, from Old Crow inquired about VGFN rights to harvest muskox near Old Crow and the status of the muskox management plan. He was told that it is within VGFN rights to harvest and use that animal, but that until the management plan is completed, beneficiaries are encouraged not to do so. Also any meat left and not used from a harvest will still be an offence under the wildlife act for meat wastage.

Michelle Christensen

Michelle commented that she is looking forward to working with the Council.

Aileen Horler's Species Status Report update is complete. Aileen would like clarification from the Council about which species to list on the website. The Chair suggested that the Council defer further discussion of the Species Status reports until the next meeting.

The Council discussed contracts in general and agreed that a process should be set up for 'sign off' on products so that contractors may be paid in a timely fashion.

Jennifer Smith

Jennifer thanked the Council for the opportunity to work with them. She reported that she works 3 days per week and will discuss other issues as they arise.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:35

Tuesday, December 11
Aklavik Hamlet Council Chambers

Lindsay Staples Chair • **Danny C. Gordon** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) • **Ernest Pokiak** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) • **Doug Larsen** Yukon Government (Member) • **Dorothy Cooley** Yukon Government (Alternate) • **Wendy Nixon** Canadian Wildlife Service (Alternate) • **Michelle Christensen** (Secretariat) • **Jennifer Smith** (Secretariat) • **Ramona Maraj** Yukon Government (Guest) • **Richard Gordon** Yukon Government, Herschel Island Park Ranger (Guest)

The meeting was called to order at 8:54am.

H. Grizzly Bear Research and Management

Ramona Maraj gave a presentation to the Council on the grizzly bear project. She provided an overview of last year's field work and budget. She also provided an overview of the polar bear work from this past fall.

Ramona reported that the telemetry work could not be done this season due to higher fuel and flight costs than anticipated. No new information on movement and habitat use is currently available.

The Council discussed the problems associated with grizzly tags and the need for management to improve and made the following comments and suggestions:

- Improved monitoring and enforcement is needed. The current system fine; compliance is the issue.
- Issuance of more tags should be looked into – some people are frustrated about not being able to get out on the land.
- It is difficult for HTC office's to enforce rules to fellow community members.
- Tags could be kept at the HTC and hunters could be provided with waivers in order to solve the "I left my tag out at camp and now it's not available for someone else to use" problem.
- A time frame could be issued for the tag to correspond with the period that the hunter is out hunting, instead for fixed periods. This system works in Tuktoyaktuk.

Local/traditional knowledge of population size and movement trends is lacking.
Intergenerational information from specific geographic areas is missing.

The Chair identified the need to clarify the distinction between traditional knowledge versus local knowledge. Local knowledge is not part of the "broader culture" and is specific to a person, time, and place. The Chair identified the need to sit down with

Ramona and come up with definitions for local and scientific knowledge to be used for the purposes of the Council.

The use of both scientific knowledge and community knowledge is important in order to fill in all of the information gaps in the study.

Ramona stated that the grizzly population is relatively stable, though the population close to town is decreasing and bigger bears are disappearing. She estimates the population at 45-50 bears within the study area (margin of error could be ~10 bears). She also noted that most of the harvest of bears occurs within the study area. She also commented that in order to conduct in-the-field interviews and a mapping exercise more funding is needed. The Council commented on the strength of this project, as few studies involving TK are systematically incorporated into management.

A further discussion regarding grizzly bear management raised:

- There is a need to account for unreported harvest (due to defense of life and property, threat to a food source, avoidance of confrontation with authorities).
- It is important to ensure that population information generated from the study is not taken advantage of by the community.
- There is a need to investigate under-harvest. Maybe tag allocation is the problem. Economics and other factors should be considered.

The Chair raised the importance of having a one-day meeting with the AHTC to include such things as a workshop on tags – different quotas for different areas based on the results of the study, including a higher quota further from town. WMAC (NS)'s role is to develop a recommendation that optimizes conservation and harvest opportunities The HTC's role is to decide on the allocation of tags to the harvesters. Consultation is key in order for this process to work. If the Council recommends a quota to the Yukon government it must be for total allowable harvest. A Council member also suggested that the Aklavik HTC could call the Tuktoyaktuk HTC for advice/comparison of tag systems The Chair noted this topic will be addressed further in the joint WMAC (NS) and AHTC meeting later in the day.

10:30 AM Christian Bucher (Parks Canada) joined the meeting

Ramona described the options for the remainder of the project with regards to how to collect information: collaring, lab analysis of hair, telemetry flights, tracking units, and community involvement.

The recommendation from the Council is to implement the first option (collaring) – even though there is a larger upfront cost, this is the only option which would keep the project to 6 years, which is important – funding requirement - \$100,000.

The Chair suggested that during the next meeting the Council should look at any extra funds from Parks Canada and the Yukon Government, that could be re-directed to the grizzly bear project, in addition to the \$5000 left from IFA-funded wildlife programs (CWS) for remainder of fiscal.

The Chair concluded the discussion by reaffirming the Council's support for the project:

- This population of bears is not well studied in the absence of this project;
- Grizzly bears are increasingly becoming a high profile species; and
- Harvest quota for Inuvialuit should be optimized.

Polar Bear Presentation:

The Yukon Government has been absent from polar bear research for 15 years. The GNWT has been doing work in their absence. The Yukon Government is now becoming more involved. Ramona is currently sitting on the Polar Bear Technical Committee.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service paid for the entire north coast survey, except for \$4000 in fuel which was paid by the Yukon government. The project's goal was to come up with an abundance estimate. If coastal surveys are done for 10 years, use of coastal habitat can be correlated with ice movement (freeze up).

Donald Aviugana joined the meeting at 11:40am.

The survey found low numbers of bears in the Yukon compared to Alaska, though there was not a big difference in terms of ice extent offshore.

YTG proposes to support the coastal bear survey, and denning work (sites influenced by climate change – if dens are unstable on the ice they move to land).

I. Wildlife Program Proposals

The Chair requested a brief summary of 2008 wildlife program proposals. Council members agreed to review the full proposals at the next Council meeting

Grizzly Bear Project

As discussed earlier during Ramona Maraj's presentation on grizzly bear research and management, the Council suggested to allocate \$100,000 to this project in order to see its completion on time.

Dorothy Cooley presented the following wildlife program proposals:

- Aklavik Harvest Data Collection- \$2000 for a contractor to conduct interviews in Aklavik

- Herschel Island Ecological Monitoring- \$6000. Council members decided to discuss this project with Richard Gordon to determine if it is necessary.
- Herschel Island Data Report and Website- \$2000. Funds requested would be put towards printing costs. The PCMB summer student would complete the data summarizing work as well as create a report for posting on relevant websites, including taiga.net and wmacns.ca.
- Black Guillemots Project -\$6000. This project is being led by Cameron Eckert. The amount of \$3000 that was earlier discussed has changed.
- Caribou Satellite Program -\$3000
- Muskox Survey. The last count was completed in 2006 by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Dorothy commented that the survey may not be necessary at this time. She added that she is comfortable putting this project off given the current priority of grizzly bear work.
- Muskox Genetics Study. This project requires a notional amount \$5000 to start. The objective of the project is to compare Alaska/Yukon/Greenland muskox populations with wild muskox populations in the NWT. The last work on this was done 20 years ago. No conclusive evidence was discovered in differentiating the genetics. Since then technologies have been refined and improved and it may be a good time to look at the populations again.

Wendy Nixon presented the following wildlife program proposals:

- ABEKC Community Interviews-\$10, 000
- Tundra Breeding Short-eared Owl project -\$5000
This project is looking at the relationship between short-eared owls and peregrine falcons. It ties in with other work already being done on short-eared owls, making use of resources that are already in place.

Project Summary

| Project | presented by | IFA funds requested |
|---|---------------------|----------------------------|
| Harvest Data Collection | Dorothy Cooley | \$2000 |
| Herschel Island Ecological Monitoring | Dorothy Cooley | \$6000 |
| Herschel Island Data Report and Website | Dorothy Cooley | \$2000 |
| Black Guillemots Project | Dorothy Cooley | \$6000 |
| Caribou Satellite Program | Dorothy Cooley | \$3000 |
| Muskox Survey | Dorothy Cooley | - |
| Muskox Genetics Study | Dorothy Cooley | \$5000 |
| ABEKC Community Interviews | Wendy Nixon | \$10,000 |
| Tundra Breeding Short-eared Owl project | Wendy Nixon | \$5000 |
| total of above project | | \$39,000 |
| Grizzly Bear Project –year 6 | Ramona Maraj | \$100,000 |
| total IFA funding requested | | \$139,000 |

12:30 The Council met with Aklavik HTC

Additional minutes of the joint WMAC (NS) and AHTC meeting are available with the Secretariat and the AHTC.

J. Parks Canada

Christian Bucher updated the council on Parks Canada's Activities:

The Ivvavik National Park Management Plan has been signed by Minister Baird and has recently been tabled in Parliament; printed copies should be available by January 2008. This is a five year plan.

The 2006 Annual Report of Research and Monitoring in National Parks of the Western Arctic is completed and printed copies will be available in January.

Christen explained the Parks Canada IPY projects. Parks Canada's Service Centre and National Office submitted an IPY proposal and were successful in obtaining 1.35 M in funding over 4 years. The money is going towards Parks Canada led projects or projects led by individual researchers and/or organizations. The objectives of all IPY projects are to assist Parks Canada in the establishment of a long-term ecological integrity monitoring program for terrestrial ecosystems.

The funds will support two areas of IPY:

1. Freshwater systems -field studies and laboratory analyses carried out to develop knowledge and information to assess the hydrology and ecology of northern freshwater ecosystems
2. Tundra systems -Climate Change Impact on Canadian Arctic Tundra (CiCAT) to develop new knowledge and information to assess climate change impact on Canadian Arctic tundra

Christian stated that for both freshwater and tundra systems Parks Canada scientists developed a variety of subprojects.

- Development of a modular and incremental multi-scale watershed-based monitoring design to assess multiple ecosystems and their linkages (two projects)
- Retrospective analyses of temporal vegetation and landscape changes (one project)

The retrospective analyses of temporal vegetation and landscape changes project will be presented by the project lead Dr. D. Mclelan at an AHTC meeting to be held in Aklavik in early 2008. This is in fulfillment of the public consultation requirements of EISC.

Christen explained the other IPY projects proposed for Ivvavik. Parks Canada is aware of four other IPY funded projects that will take place in Ivvavik but have not yet been approached by any of the lead researchers for these projects:

- Arctic WOLVES –lead by Gilles Gauthier. They were at Komakuk Beach in August 07 and will again be in the park in 2008.

- Climate variability and change effects on Chars in the Arctic and Ivvavik NP- lead by Jim Reist. This project is undetermined for the 2008 year in Ivvavik.
- CARMA project lead by Don Russell. This project looks at Global change, resilience and human-caribou (rangifer) systems of the circum-arctic.
- Understanding environmental change in the national parks and protected areas of the Beringian Arctic- lead by Robert Winfree and USA national parks service.

Wendy Nixon noted that CARMA is involved in some remote sensing work, and Christian may find it helpful to contact them for additional information. She also mentioned that there has been some work done in the Tukut Nogait Park with respect to remote sensing and to ice freeze up and breakup timing.

Christian reported on the Stokes Point DEW line site. He provided an update of the work planned for the upcoming year and on some of the work completed in the past fiscal year.

Christian noted that year two of the Stokes Point contaminants investigation is completed. This year a group of Elders were brought to the site to share their stories of the site with Parks Canada and the investigation team. Also, this year an archaeological investigation of the site was completed.

2008 plans for Stokes Point include:

- A Stokes Point Steering Committee meeting in Aklavik on January 22-23, 2008, to review the work completed in 2007 and discuss clean-up options.
- A public meeting (open house) in Aklavik on March 11, 2008 to consult with the general public on the proposed clean-up plan.
- Two newsletters to all six communities in the ISR
- Bi-annual participation at various boards and committees meetings to update Inuvialuit stakeholder groups.
- An open house in Aklavik in the fall of 2008 to present the final remediation plan.

A Council member inquired about the process for soil remediation at Stokes Point. Christian explained that it will be a form of natural remediation that will go to the public for consultation. It is not yet determined whether the soil will be removed or remain on site.

Christian concluded the Stokes Point discussion by saying that the Stokes site was cleaner than what was expected.

Christian updated the Council on the Sheep Creek Site Plan.

Parks recently hired the services of a site planner to complete the Sheep Creek site plan. The site planner and 12 staff participated in a visioning exercise for the site on November 20-22, 2007. Visioning exercise themes included: creating a place for youth and elders to meet and learn, use of green technologies, outreach and education, a place to celebrate Ivvavik's natural and cultural heritage, a showcase of sound environmental practices, environmental stewardship, etc. A scoping exercise was carried out, where creating the

boundaries of the site plan was discussed and such topics as comfort at the site, safety, cultural resources, placer mining history, building, company uses, access, waste management, vegetation, and site clean-up. The site plan should be ready to circulate to the Council by mid January for comments and feedback. Parks is interested in meeting with the Council to discuss this plan in more depth.

Christian discussed the Sheep Creek fuel spill remediation and noted that he would send an electronic copy of the remediation work to the Council.

The 2007 analysis of the samples taken at the site shows that hydrocarbon concentrations have not yet reached acceptable levels. Based on the recommendations made by IEG, the remediation work for the summer of 2008 will differ from the original work plan. In order to speed up the decomposition of hydrocarbons the cover of the treatment cell will be removed and the soil in the treatment cell will be turned using a backhoe. Water and nutrients will be added to the soil. Samples will again be collected in 2008 to assess whether or not this will work. This process will likely trigger another environmental assessment as loader work will be involved.

Christen updated the Council on continued remediation work at Komakuk Beach after a 2005 private plane crash and fuel spill.

Christen explained that in 2005 a private plane crashed and hit four YG fuel drums causing a fuel spill. An initial assessment of the site was completed in 2006 and recommended a natural remediation approach and monitoring. To date most of the fuel on site has evaporated. In 2008, IEG, the assessment company, plans to bring in a portable drill from Alberta to install six groundwater wells to monitor the site.

Christian discussed cultural resources with the Council. He raised the issue of the eroding sea shore near 'Steffanson cabin'. This cabin, a cultural resource, is heavily impacted by the erosion and there is a good chance that it will end up falling into the Beaufort Sea. Parks Canada is proposing some remediation work at the site including an excavation of the building footing as well as potentially moving the cabin back away from the shore. Parks Canada will be consulting with the ACC regarding what to do with this site.

Danny inquired about plans to restore the historic Hudson's Bay store (dating to 1920-30). The Hudson's Bay store at Clarence Lagoon is in better shape than Steffanson cabin and may be a better building to restore. Christian explained that he did not know about this site and had never seen it, but will investigate it with the Parks historian in Inuvik.

Wendy informed the group that there is a peregrine falcon nest on the ground next to the Hudson's Bay store building.

Christian informed the Council of the Parks Canada definition of a Historic building. The definition says that it is a building that is 50 years and older and has cultural and commemorative value.

The Chair inquired about what types of activities would trigger a site plan. Christian explained that an impact to the cultural integrity of the site or resources could trigger a site plan, although this is just one example.

Christian informed the Council about staff changes within Parks Canada. Interviews for a new Field Unit Superintendent are planned for mid-January in Inuvik. Linda Binder (Administration Manager), Christian Bucher (Resource Conservation Manager), and Pat Dunn (Communications Manager) will take turn acting until a new Superintendent in on staff.

The Resource Conservation Biologist position left vacant when Ian McDonald left the field unit will be staffed in early April. The successful candidate was Keiran O'Donovan. The field unit also hired a new Ecosystem Scientist to start work in mid-April. The successful candidate was Dr. Linh Nguyen.

A council member raised the issue of Inuvialuit member's rights to carry firearms within the park for certain purposes.

Christian provided the following information:

Inuvialuit beneficiaries have the right to carry firearms in the park for traditional harvesting purposes as granted under the IFA. Complexities arise when the carrying of the firearm is for non-traditional pursuits (e.g. when acting as bear monitor).

Inuvialuit beneficiaries are allowed to carry firearms when guiding for commercial sport hunts and transporting visitors and their hunting equipment (including guns) through the park to sport hunt in area outside the park. Sport hunting is not allowed in the Park and cannot be done along the way.

Inuvialuit beneficiaries are not allowed to carry firearms when they are working with researchers and hired as bear monitor. This activity is not considered a traditional subsistence activity, meaning Parks Canada would be held liable should something happen.

There are cases where individuals have been able to carry firearms within the park in research positions. In all of these cases authorization had been granted by the park superintendent, or the individual was already employed as a Park Warden. Before being granted the authorization the individual project has to meet a set number of criteria. Unfortunately the Superintendent's authorization cannot be used indefinitely and if this is an ongoing activity the regulations will have to be amended.

The issue of Inuvialuit beneficiary rights to carry firearms has also been raised by WMAC (NWT) and other groups. Parks Canada started addressing the issue five years ago when revision to, and amendment of, the Wildlife Regulations were initiated. The consultation process with various aboriginal groups was time consuming, furthermore there was a need to reflect not only the rights of Inuvialuit but also the rights granted

other aboriginal groups; therefore the lengthy process. A final draft of the new regulations was ready by the end of 2006. In the meantime, other national parks were created (e.g. Tuktu Nogait National Park extension into the Sahtu) and the rights granted aboriginal users of these new parks, regarding the carrying and use of firearms, had to be reflected in the new regulations as well. The negotiations were re-opened, the regulations re-evaluated and currently there is a stand still.

The chair commented that a positive way to move this process along would be to gather all the co-management boards North of 60 to a joint letter to the Minister to address this situation.

Action 07-12-05: The Secretariat will identify other co-management boards to engage in drafting a joint letter to the Minister responsible for Parks Canada concerning the need for new regulations for National Parks in the ISR to further the implementation of the revised National Parks Act, the Inuvialuit Final Agreement, and the management issues that require attention as outlined in specific Park Management Plans.

A Council member referred to the minister's discretion to not enforce a particular regulation as a possible mechanism.

K. Herschel Island Territorial Park

Richard Gordon provided an update on Herschel Island Territorial Park activities for 2007. Richard noted that more information on the season's activities could be found in the meeting binders.

Park rangers arrived on Herschel on April 16, 2007 and closed the park on September 6, 2007.

Richard reported on visitor numbers to the park, aircraft fly-over's and landings, maintenance by Park Rangers, training, wildlife sightings, harvest data, program involvement by ranger, and expenditures.

Richard also reported on issues related to the airstrip. A large storm caused damage to the airstrip. Sand was build up on the strip at a depth of 8-20" and large and small logs were scattered all over the strip, which had to be cleaned by hand with a chainsaw. This year a nearby feeding lagoon also dried up and is gone. From 2005 to 2007 the airstrip was almost unrecognizable. 2006 was a strange year; the entire strip was flooded with water seeping through the land. The Elders said they had never seen this before. In 2008, the plan is to continue to observe the air strip and have an options plan in place. The problem is that the maintenance of the airstrip is taking resources away from the rest of the park: it places demands on park rangers, as well as contributes to huge budget increases. If the maintenance continues a cat will likely have to be brought in. Richard

says we must have this airstrip for emergency measures; choppers cannot fit a stretcher in them.

The Council discussed the air strip options outlined in the Parks Report:

- Promotion of float plane access.
- Availability of flight companies depends on chosen option and oil and gas activity.
- Try helicopter access for a minimum of 2 years – close airstrip to maintain ecological integrity of island. However, there are bigger issues with noise pollution with this option.
- Cleaning up airstrip not feasible financially and a huge physical burden for rangers whose time could be spent in more productive ways. Could hire other community help for clean up, however the larger funding issue still remains.
- Airstrip maintenance will affect island visitation.
- It is noted that the options outlined in Erik Val’s report could have been expanded.
- Concern over researchers storing equipment in historical buildings.
- Impacts on nesting birds an issue.
- Airstrip issue is a good reason for Environment Canada to keep weather station on Herschel.
- Exploration of boat access may be an option.
- Increase operating budgets of organizations that use Herschel to account for rising access costs.

The Chair proposed that this issue should be dealt with further at the next meeting, and the Council should make a recommendation at that time.

Richard noted that the proposed park regulation changes use the term “First Nations” and that “Inuvialuit” should be included as well. Lindsay will flag this issue with the Yukon Government when he provides his comments on regulation changes.

Action 07-12-06 WMAC (NS) Secretariat will contact Erik Val to request a deadline for the Council to provide comments regarding airstrip options.

L. Upcoming WMAC(NS) Meetings

The Chair agreed to work with the Secretariat to determine how to engage the Council in the following review processes: North Yukon Land Use Plan, Herschel Island regulations, EISC Operating Procedures, Polar Bear Status Report, and Beaufort Sea Strategic Regional Plan of action.

Doug suggested that full wildlife program proposals should be completed by next meeting so that they can be discussed by the Council.

The Council decided to wait until the Chair has his schedule before setting a date for the next meeting. It was decided that members could then discuss dates by email and telephone.

M. Adjournment

Motion 07-10-04

To adjourn the December 10-11, 2007 WMAC (NS) meeting.

Moved: Ernest Pokiak

Second: Doug Larsen

Motion carried

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 pm.