



## MEETING MINUTES

WMAC (NS) Quarterly Meeting  
Whitehorse, Yukon · Yukon Inn  
March 27-29, 2012

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**Lindsay Staples** (Chair) · **Rob Florkiewicz** Yukon Government (Member) · **Danny C. Gordon** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) · **Christian Bucher** Parks Canada (Member) · **Ernest Pokiak** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) · **Jennifer Smith** (Secretariat) · **Christine Cleghorn** (Secretariat) · **Stephanie Muckenheim** Yukon Government IFA Policy Analyst (Guest)

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March 27, 2012

### **A. Call to Order**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:14 am and welcomed everyone.

### **B. Review and Approval of Agenda**

The Chair reviewed the agenda and explained that priorities for this meeting included approving the budget for 2012/13, providing comment on the SoPR for Parks Canada, reviewing the muskox plan, finalizing research fund recommendations, PBTK project, and the North Slope conference.

Members supported having three regular-length meeting days instead of two long meeting days, subject to the requirements of the agenda. The former are less stressful and provide more time for a full discussion, particularly with lengthy agenda items.

#### *Motion 03-12-01*

*To approve the agenda for the March 27-29, 2012 meeting.*

*Moved: Danny Gordon*

*Seconded: Christian Bucher*

*Motion carried.*

### **C. Review and Approval of the Minutes**

The Council reviewed the minutes from the Dec 6-7, 2011 meeting and had no changes to suggest.

Danny asked for clarity on the caribou rut count project. Rob explained that it was to look at survival rates of calves, as well as bull/cow ratios. The ratio provides useful information on the productivity of the herd. The project also helps to monitor the impact of a bull-only harvest, in the event that there is one.

The Chair suggested the Council produce a newsletter in July that describes all of the research projects and explains the purpose of the rut count.

The Council discussed preparing a poster to explain what the rut count is, what a census is etc. as they apply to projects designed to determine the population status of the herd.

**Action Item 03-12-01: Write to the PCBM recommending the production of a poster that explains population research techniques including: radio collaring/ satellite collaring, caribou census techniques and rut count techniques and their respective purposes in determining population status of the herd.**

Motion 03-12-02

*To approve the minutes for the December 6-7<sup>th</sup>, 2011 meeting.*

*Moved: Ernest Pokiak*

*Seconded: Rob Florkiewicz*

*Motion carried.*

The Council reviewed the minutes from the January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2012 teleconference and had no changes to suggest.

Motion 03-12-03

*To approve the minutes for January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2012 teleconference.*

*Moved: Christian Bucher*

*Seconded: Ernest Pokiak*

*Motion carried.*

**D. 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. **Retire- with the understanding that PC will remain the Federal member on the Council.** Christian said that there is some confusion in appointments because the IFA is not prescriptive in this regard. He said

that the Parks Canada appointment tends to be heavily influenced by the superintendent at the time.

The Chair spoke about the role of Parks Canada on the Council as an active management presence in the ISR and on the Yukon North Slope..

Christian said that the intention is for his replacement to be from Parks Canada.

Danny echoed that Parks Canada is really involved in the North Slope; Danny said that he meets them on the land often patrolling and they are quite involved. Danny said he likes their presence there.

06-11-06: Secretariat to request final decisions from the IGC on Polar bear quota allocations. **Ongoing.** We have not heard back yet from the IGC.

07-11-02: The Chair will draft a letter on behalf of the JS board to hold a two-part meeting to bring together knowledgeable people to write down some of the history of IFA bodies operations (not described in the IFA or otherwise). The first part would be to codify understandings and the second part would be to educate a broader audience. **Outstanding** June meeting of JS Board will discuss this.

The Chair commented that we are at a point in IFA implementation where it may be helpful to do a workshop in 2012/13 for two days to review the requirements of the IFA and the roles and responsibilities of the IFA-based organizations and government agencies. He pointed out that with the turn-over of people in various organizations and institutions, understandings change and periodically may need to be reviewed and clarified.

Lindsay will bring this initiative forward to the June meeting of the JS Board.

Christian agreed with the initiative, and also suggested that boards have a responsibility to educate their new members so that boards understand their mandates.

Ernest agreed that appoints should understand their mandates and noted that in many cases there is work to be done through education.

Danny said that as soon as new people are elected (on HTC) they decide to have a meeting with new members so that people know their mandates. He said that they deal with it often. They sit with new members for a few hours and explain their roles and responsibilities.

The Chair noted that education products the Council has produced (like the harvesting rights poster) are meant to address the clarification of issues at the beginning. Rob suggested that it may be helpful for the JS to produce a graphic of the decision making tree of the IFA processes. The Council suggested decision trees for

research proposals, and TAH. It could be put into a handbook and organized by subject matter and types of issues.

The IFA gives broad direction, but in many cases the understandings need to be discussed and worked through.

Stephanie mentioned that Yukon RRCs have a model to look to, a handbook that they distribute to new members. The Chair suggested reviewing the proceedings that came out of the last IFA roles and responsibilities workshop as they contributed substantially to the understanding of issues.

**Action 03-12-02 – The Chair to propose to the JS board a workshop on roles and responsibilities within the IFA.** Propose to work from a few pieces (the previous workshop report, a strawman of the current issues). This could be a two- day event after the NS conference or in December. Lindsay will draft a letter to the Chair of the JS board to recommend this. The old proceedings will be appended.

Ernest said that a good model for communications and training is one used by the GNWT Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. They hold a week long workshop every two years for all NWT community senior administrators. It is an excellent course.

Action 07-11-04: Secretariat to develop a 3-5 pager on spatial data and community based monitoring for circulation to Council members. **Outstanding.** Christine explained where we were at with regard to spatial info. She emphasized the need for us to play an archiving role. Christine suggested that we call upon people like Simon Lapointe , Wayne Wysocki and Stephen Kilburn to provide us with advice for Council purposes. There are other organizations that could support that work at well. Check back in June.

The Council's current Wildlife Conservation and Management Plan is thin on spatial information. It is important for us to facilitate the compilation of important spatial information (eg. the habitat requirements for grizzly bears.)

Action 09-11-01: Lindsay will draft a short response to Basile indicating that the Council's would like to discuss the South Beaufort polar bear recommendation with him in October at the ATK meeting. Indicate that after brief discussion amongst the councils it was felt that the response doesn't appreciate the amount of work and the consultation that went into the recommendation. Also it is the range jurisdictions that are the responsible Ministers here. **Completed.**

Action item 09-11-04: Form a working group between the WMACs to work on tag administration and make sure that it has the implementing parties participating. RPs to identify a date for a one day meeting in Inuvik. Joint MOU in Dec, sent to IGC.

**Complete.** There was one outstanding matter to address regarding the role of the HTC's in setting the season.

Action item 09-11-06: To coordinate a joint response from the WMACs on the Parks Canada proposed firearm regulations before December. Lindsay and Larry to draft a joint letter of response. **Complete.** No response has been received. Hope is to get something that is ISR specific.

Action item 12-11-01: Write a letter to the BREA Research Advisory Committee about improving coordination. **In progress** We have a request into Ruth Mckechnie to see if she can offer advice on coordination.

Action item 12-11-03: Secretariat to produce a briefing note on the research proposal process that would go out to the parties and encourage the parties to coordinate their proposals in the early planning stages. **Outstanding.** Produce a graphic with the decision points etc. and process. Include the information with the notification of the Council's annual December meeting to review research proposals.

Action item 12-11-05: Secretariat to develop (with help from YG) Grizzly Bear NDF response and circulate. **In progress.** Rob suggested that the current NDF draft doesn't capture the Inuvialuit system for harvest and that proposed changes have not been incorporated from the first draft. The Chair said that we should respond with any factual corrections. Rob will get this language for the Council to look at.

### **E. Correspondence**

The Chair went through the information items and asked for comments or questions.

*Maclean's article on Polar bear harvest.* Mary Simon (ITK) has been responding actively to this.

*Response from Miltenburgur on Polar bear boundary change and quota.* The Council is now waiting to hear from the IGC re allocation of harvest.

*EISC approval for Herschel cabin building.* The Council recommended this project without reservation.

*Letter from Kent acceptance on Grizzly bear quota recommendation.*

*EC response letter from Virginia Poter re IFA funding.* The council finds the letter inaccurate and will draft a response to respond with the facts as we understand them.

**Action item 03-12-03- write a letter of response to EC Poter letter and have Christian review it.**

*Parks Canada Wild Animals Regulations letter.*

*Letter to Evan Richardson* -regarding the repatriation of polar bear data for the polar bear TK project. The Chair provided the context for the letter that went out.

*Jan 10<sup>th</sup> letter recommending support for the SB aerial work.* Lindsay reviewed the correspondence regarding the polar bear aerial survey. There was a review and discussion of the process around which the SB polar bear survey research program was approved.

\*\*\*1:00pm Peter Armitage joined the council meeting by telephone and Marsha Branigan joined the meeting\*\*\*

#### **F. Polar Bear Traditional Knowledge Study**

Peter Armitage called from St. Johns to provide an update on the project. Members in the room introduced themselves and the Chair gave a brief introduction and background of the steering committee and Peter's recent work.

The Chair suggested that there be a meeting of steering committee in next 4-6 weeks.

Peter briefed the Council on his recent work. He reviewed work to date, explaining the fieldwork was done in two periods (29 informants in first round, 45 informants from the second round), transcribing was done, contractor was hired and he met with us in Dec.

Peter then returned to St. Johns with hard drives of info. He has been assembling and organizing data. He started coding and revising codes. He revised the coding scheme, revised the spatial information and had Steven Kilburn look at the spatial data. He was pressed to get work done by end of fiscal year.

Peter still needs transcripts from round two. He has sent the Council a document on what the coding process is. He said that there is a lot more to be done with the remaining transcripts.

What has to be done next: Need to come up with decisions about report, budget, code remaining transcripts, complete spatial data base, make some decisions on the spatial info. Write a draft report and take the material and maps back to communities, collectively decide on a process for that. A complete report is expected by Christmas 2012.

The Chair clarified that the CITES 2013 report is an analytical as well as a political piece, and that there will be a separate report to assist in management and that will stand the test of time. The management report should be able to assist all of us, in the region, and also in Canada.

Lindsay suggested that a number of additional products may be done related to the project on education (podcasts, etc).

Peter explained he is thinking about the practical applications of the information while working through the documents. One example is location and characteristics of maternity dens that could be helpful in mitigating impacts of climate change and in response to oil and gas developments.

There are many practical uses for the information coming out of the interviews. He explained that there is some overlap between this project and some others he has come across like oral history research.

Peter talked about some initial themes emerging from the interviews. He said that there is a lot of reading on climate change and polar bear, that there are sea ice changes, open water etc. It is having some negative effects on peoples hunting activities. There is a deep concern about the access to harvest because of declining or dangerous ice conditions.

Peter shared an interesting note about gaps in knowledge in geographical areas in relations to management decisions. Before the new border between the ISR and Nunavut, people used to hunt polar bears over there, and that has stopped. So people have stopped learning about polar bears in those areas. Also stopped caribou hunting on Victoria Island and ceased harvesting of polar bear along the way and so knowledge has ceased there.

Peter has added some additional codes that help us understand where the sources of information are from (eg. identifying for Inuvialuit informants how they know what they know, and also a code of knowledge with interactions from western science). He sees that the first source is experience on the land, then knowledge learned from elders, watching other hunters, then workings as a wildlife monitor or working on the 'stinker patrol' with DFO, research with biologists, surveys with caribou biologist, satellite photos, television, radio, telephone conversations across regions, traveling over ice by plane, etc to learn, then management bodies, like WMACS.

Peter said that more recently people are using GPS, and aircraft, so it creates a blended knowledge.

Some other initial findings are that there are stronger winds than in the old days- people have been reporting stronger winds from the East making ices conditions not as suitable for travel. Storms used to be good for opening up leads etc for hunting. Ernest confirmed that winds are more from the East now, but said that the storms are shorter than they used to be. He said that the multi -year ice is gone.

Marsha commented that there are still many steps to complete on the project, and wondered if Peter would be able to get it all done within the timelines. The Council discussed timelines for the community tour. It was suggested that next fall would be an ideal time for this.

The Chair suggested that the steering committee should now be better able to project the timeline and work plan and will have some direction for Peter in the coming weeks.

Peter says that one thing he doesn't know is what the Inuvialuit expectation is, except that CITES is something that may affect them.

Ernest voiced that this package was always intended for CITES and if the work is completed it will be helpful for us. This is a tool that we could use into the future and it is long overdue.

Lindsay suggested that there could be an interesting piece written on the role of TK in decision making processes over time. The role of TK in the research community will be an important section of the report.

Peter spoke about the role of TK in research and that often in the beginning a knowledge base is built from Aboriginal people, then it often disappears in the conversation. Then when crisis happens TK gets picked up again.

Something to note for community consultations will be when contradictory answers arise. Peter said that apparent contradictions need to be handled carefully. Marsha said that depending on what comes up we might have to do the verification in groups. She also noted that we may want to pick certain key questions for CITES.

#### **G. Porcupine Caribou Annual harvest meeting**

Marsha provided a brief update to the Council on the Porcupine caribou annual harvest meeting. She said that recommendations from the PCMB are out now, responses have been received back from many parties already. There is a communications group that is working on messaging and there will be a communications plan in place by May 31st. Marsha will send us the comments from the board. Another meeting is planned for June.

The next caribou census is planned for this summer, and a rut count in the fall. The plan is for the two counts to happen in the same year. Marsha said that people are collaring right now for the photo survey in July.

She said that the harvest data came in from every party. Not all of the data is complete, but it is positive. The general feeling right now is that the harvest is low. She said that the female harvest ratio is about 10% females, so credit goes to hunters for voluntarily taking bulls only. She said that we probably have the least information from the IGC.



Some work has to be done on clarifying timeframes and also what info we are looking for from the parties.

Marsha explained that the strategic framework letter from PCMB needs comment by April 20<sup>th</sup>.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:18pm.

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March 28, 2012

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:11am.

#### **H. Financial Review**

Jennifer reviewed the 2011/2012 budget with the Council, estimating expenditures to fiscal yearend. She provided an overview of projects and their status. She noted that we estimate a \$17,000 rollover from the 2011/12 budget, which leaves us with a \$47,000 carry over (including the \$30,000 planned carry over) into the next fiscal. The Council approved the purchase of second office computer in the amount of \$1500.

The Chair explained that we will close off the books for this year and bring them to the June Council meeting for review and approval.

Jennifer then reviewed the projected budget for 2012/2013, which projects spending down the roll over completely by March 2013. The key in this discussion is, outside of the projects allocation, to ensure that projections reflect our 2012/13 plans in terms of travel and priorities. Stephanie pointed out that there will be a contribution agreement with the Council for the North Slope Conference.

Christian queried the amount of staff time necessary for the NS conference. Lindsay explained that it influences workload, but that we can plan for that. The Council reviewed the "Other Meetings" line item and decided to reflect the circumstance that we have to travel more for meetings, and that travel costs more. The Chair also remarked that in the last year he has tried to travel more with the Secretariat

instead of going to meetings alone, in order to deepen the knowledge base and contacts that the Secretariat holds.

The Council discussed the benefits and costs of traveling to meetings, and ensuring that the meetings we travel to enhance our work instead of being a net drain upon it.

The Council decided to increase the “other meetings” budget by \$8,000 and decrease the projects by the same amount.

The Council discussed options for the summer meeting as they affect the budget. The Council decided to investigate Sheep Creek in June, and then also investigate something closer to Whitehorse such as Primrose Lake, or Wolf Creek Lodge, or Rose Lake.

The Council decided to reduce the costs of council meetings down to \$10,000. Then lower the projects budget by \$2k to bring us to 39k.

The Council decided to add Herschel book launch for \$1000 to the projects line item and grizzly bear communications under educational materials.

**Action Item 03-12-04: The Secretariat to present the Council a refined projects list and description at the summer meeting.**

*Motion 03-12-04:*

*Motion to accept the 2012/13 budget as tabled.*

*Moved by: Christian,*

*Seconded by: Ernest.*

The Chair suggested that Council members surf the website and provide comments to the Secretariat on ways to update and improve the website.

\*\*\*11:30am – 12:00 pm Dan Lindsey participated in the meeting\*\*\*

**I. State of the Parks Report**

The Council discussed responses to the SoPR. Some concerns were raised with respect to the inclusion of traditional knowledge and lack of information about how decisions and assessments were arrived at.

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Adriana Basheschi from Parks Canada, Western Arctic Field Unit joined the meeting, Ifan Thomas, and Lihua Huang joined by teleconference.

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**J. Ivvavik Park State of the Park Report**

Adriana explained that the current Parks Canada Management Plan was tabled in parliament in 2007, and is reviewed every five years. The SPoR is akin to a report

card on implementation of the management plan. The scoping document is an internal PC document that is used to inform the CEO and Executive Management Committee what the main messages are for the next plan.

Overall, the SoPR for Ivvavik says that the park is in good shape. For ecological monitoring the number of data points needed to establish a trend vary. As a rule she says that 10 years of data is what is desired, some of the measures can't be done every year, so it could be 20 years before a trend can be confidently identified. For this reason, there is a rating in the SoPR to communicate to a broader audience, even if a trend cannot be established.

In terms of visitor experience, data has not been collected uniformly over time. We know from comments that visitors have consistently had excellent experiences in the park. However the visitor numbers are low, so a longer amount of time is needed to identify trends.

The Chair asked if there was accommodation for regionally specific variables. For example, the data might be limited but notwithstanding that, there is anecdotal information that it is a very positive experience. Adriana said that northern parks with low visitation are not well integrated into the visitor experience data. There is discussion currently happening within Parks Canada about this.

The SoPR lays out logistical challenges of conducting a monitoring program which applies to all northern parks. Given this challenge, it also challenges the application of a nation-wide protocol for monitoring. However, other ways to inform the indicators could also be used (eg. talking to people in Aklavik).

Ifan commented that it is a learning process and that this kind of knowledge could be used to help flesh out elements of the plan. He said that northern field units could take the approach of incorporating anecdotal information. He commented that it is done to some extent in this SoPR, but could be done more.

Adriana further explained that 'Cultural Resources' are rated: Fair. The management practices and monitoring are stable. "Visitor Experience' is rated: Good, with an undetermined trend. The lowest annual visitation in a long time was last year and the trend is going down, largely due to less rafting on the Firth. We can't rely on Firth River rafting as something that is going to keep driving visitors into the park. We know we need to diversify.

Ecological Integrity is overall rated: good. The EI program that has been ramping up over the past few years, Ifan commented that EI is also rated using anecdotal information.

External Relations are rated: good, with improving trend.

A member noted that there are no references to TEK in the SoPR and wondered how that information was collected or integrated. The document also does not indicate involvement from the community, or the Council until now. Additionally, a large body of work has been completed to date and it is not clear how it has been incorporated into this document.

The Chair asked, with respect to gaps, over and beyond objective, empirical data, how was qualitative data used here?

The Chair suggested a methodology section in the report that describes other sources of information that have been used to generate the rating. He suggested that one source could be the Aklavik HTC. One could read the document as an evaluation done by people within parks, using a very limited data set.

Ifan said that the additional section was an excellent suggestion. He said that the WMAC should be approving the document and should feel that this is an accurate description of the park.

Ifan explained that the SoPR is meant to be a document that is more generally accessible to the public. A compendium document that says how we arrived at conclusions should go along with it. The compendium would be available to the public, but it is heavy reading. The compendium is not yet complete, but being worked on.

The Chair commented that it would be helpful to go through the compendium. For the credibility of the judgment on the state of the park, it would be helpful to validate that judgment.

**Action Item 03-12-05: Request a copy from PC of the compendium that accompanies the SOPR, when it is completed.**

Adriana explained the findings of key Issues in the SoPR as:

- logistical challenges associated with monitoring
- low visitation each year
- community expectation of significant tourism-related economic benefits associated with Ivvavik not being realized.

The Chair asked why low visitation is a critical issue when one of the main reasons for creating the park was to protect the birthing grounds of the Porcupine caribou herd.

Adriana explained that it is their agency's mandate to make parks relevant to people and when they are relevant they are easily protected.

The Council discussed visitation. Christian commented that we don't know about the impacts of visitors on the fishery resource on the Firth River corridor.

Visitation can have an economic impact also. Ifan pointed out that some of the Eastern Arctic parks have around 500 visitors per year each. And they have the same logistical issues.

Adrianna noted that the existing wording in the SoPR looks at a lot at visitation. There is a need to explain the link between visitation, economic benefits, and conservation.

There is a quota on the river for rafting, because there are a limited number of days that people can go on the river; we are nowhere close to filling those.

Ernest suggested that interest in visiting the park is high, just cost prohibitive to get there. He said it is a fairly new park, good management system in place, it is up to the people to visit it.

Ifan said there is flexibility on the timeframe for responding to the SOPR, as long as there is a note that goes to the CEO.

**Action 03-12-06: Council to develop comments on the SoPR, verify by teleconference, and submit. WMACNS to provide comments on the SOPR by the end of May. Redraft and sign off by end of summer.**

Lindsay commented that the areas in the scoping doc that have been flagged are not new to the Council. It may simply be a case of whether or not there are other areas that we are also concerned with. (eg. more attention to the coastal zone.) The Council will likely have something to say about the coastal zone regarding management attention and focus in the park.

A discussion ensued about the sustainability of monitoring programs and the challenges associated with establishing monitoring regimes that are feasible well into the future. The Chair explained that the Council has briefly considered applying the PC monitoring model across the North Slope.

Danny C. noted that his biggest interest is in preserving historical sites along the coast. He was very involved in the Stokes Point clean up. They wanted to remove the family cabins that were there. It took persuading but the cabins will stay where they are with clean up done around them. During the last review on this plan there was interest from Aklavik in preserving the building at Clarence Bay. He explained that in 1946 when he came from Alaska it was already abandoned. At Clarence Bay that building used to be the Hudson's Bay Company, that was run by an Inuvialuit. I was wind-bound there for 10 days in 1972 and I got some pictures and silent movies of the seven sod houses that were there. We went there when Bill Fox (Parks Canada superintendent) was in Inuvik and reviewed the situation with him. They said they

would suggest that the historical site of the store be fixed up. It is now standing in water - in swamps, but the lumber is fir lumber and isn't rotting. He suggested that leveling it and putting a door on it to preserve it could be done pretty cheap. The sod huts are gone but I think there are three that are still visible. He said he did pick up some artifacts when he was there in 1972: polar bear teeth made into fishing hooks, shovel that was hollowed out of driftwood. Other cabins have eroded into the land. We should really try to preserve this building at Clarence Bay. There is nothing that we can do when the land starts to erode, but we should preserve what we can preserve.

#### Proposed Plan Review Approach

Adriana reviewed the possible approaches to the plan's review, based on the fact that there should only be a few changes and the current strategic direction and vision are still very relevant and valid. She noted that page 51 in particular needs to be amended. Also there is a paragraph on page 59 relating to park facilities that needs to be amended.

Parks says that the current plan remain with a few specific actions changed.

She said that there is great potential at the site of Sheep Creek; this is why the plan needs to be amended. Sheep Creek is being used for things that it was not envisioned for when the first plan was developed. Volunteers for monitoring and artists in the park use it. It is very central and accessible. Need to make sure that if we are going to have more visitors come, that we have structures that can handle that, and that we can protect the environment around Sheep Creek. We can't do this right now the way that the wording in management plan is.

The Chair said that at the signing of the first management plan, the downsizing didn't envision the kinds of uses that would eventually come to Sheep Creek.

Ifan mentioned that this is a good example of where Parks Canada has learned to avoid being too prescriptive instead of focusing on broader objectives.

The Chair asked if there is there anything in the plan that precludes us from pursuing the monitoring work in the coastal zone.

#### Sheep Creek Site Plan status

The plan has been put on hold as the recommendations in the site plan did not fit in with the management plan. The overall management plan has to be first addressed before looking at the details of the Sheep Creek site plan.

Adriana discussed the consultation strategy for the plan amendment.

Adriana sought advice from the Council on the stakeholder sectors to engage on the amendments. It is a consultation "lite" compared to the consultation that would be required for a full management plan change. Core groups have been identified as

WMAC (NS) and the IRC (IRC has specifically asked to be a part of this). The Chair noted that PC is already working so closely with the AHTC, there must be a lot of comfort there. Danny says that Aklavik wants to be kept informed. Decision was that the WMAC (NS) would stay involved as a signatory, and then at the end we could jointly go to the IGC and present what we are proposing.

Lindsay asked Ifan for an update regarding the Wild Animal (firearms) Regulations. Ifan has reviewed a response. It is in front of the lawyers right now, for sign off from the Minister soon. Strong interest from all sides to get the work completed. Come out with another set of regulations for a second round of review, towards approval, around this time next year.

\*\*\*Parks left the meeting 3:52pm\*\*\*

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March 29

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:06.

\*\*\* Wendy Nixon and Ross Harris joined the meeting\*\*\*

#### **K. BREA update**

Ross Harris gave a presentation on the BREA project on Coastal and Offshore Birds of the Canadian Beaufort Sea. There are two projects: 1) coastal birds-CWS contract based out of Yellowknife 2) offshore birds -contract with Aboriginal Affairs. Both projects are with Upun-LGL Limited and Ross is the project manager.

He explained that BREA came about because of focus on oil and gas activities and to make assessments easier, and information public.

He explained that there will be three products coming out of the two projects. 1) a database, 2) Atlas report, 3) Analysis of data gaps.

The Coastal Atlas is updating a report from 1988 where areas are categorized by high use etc. The information will feed into an online mapping tool which has been developed by Jason Duffee. Other BREA info will be feed into this process as well. The Offshore project has most of its information collected by ships and is more uniform.

Ross said that they saw ptarmigan and snowy owls when they were offshore 100km out. Danny said that he is aware of this happening.

Ross explained the areas of high and low coverage of coastal surveys and asked for areas that may be of importance to the council.

Wendy mentioned that LGL has done decades of research on the Beaufort and so they have a lot of experience.

The coastal birds project has no original fieldwork and it incorporates past work from a data collection. They attempted to make a common metric to base information against (main sources of data are from CWS and USFWS, Devon, and MGP.)

Lindsay asked about the state of knowledge on the Yukon coast. Ross explained that there is a recommendation that this area be updated. Habitat mapping has been undertaken by Jason Duffee.

Christian asked if there would be a correlation between sightings and habitat mapping, between Jason's project and these projects? Ross explained that it would be helpful, but is unsure about how info will come out.

Danny said that most of the birds come in from Alaska. Offshore atlas will include a section on spring use of the leads.

Danny mentioned Pintails - that they are abundant in the spring and then they disappear. Following Danny's comments, Wendy suggested adding a section on the location of key molting areas.

Ernest mentioned that in Feb he saw a flock of Eider ducks flying over, Feb 12th. Danny said that also in Dec he got Eider ducks and they were almost starved. It was about 20 years ago. 31 they picked up, off Shingle point.

Christian asked how local knowledge is being incorporated into this project, especially for habitat mapping, as it could be a way to fill gaps.

Ross said that hearing from aboriginal people in these kind of forums is very helpful, for example the WMAC (NWT) said they noticed declined Brant populations. Lindsay said that out of the PBTK work, we were hoping to identify some techniques and protocols for collecting TK and also for using and collecting spatial information.

Ross explained that the database created out of the project will be ongoing, and be handed over to CWS. The Council talked about the coordination of databases. During BREA day (Inuvik- December 2011) there were a number of databases and portals that said they were going to be the penultimate data base- how to rectify this? Ross said that the Polar data catalogue is a link to access separate databases. Arctic net is



behind it, and it is hosted at the University of Waterloo. Ruth Mckechnie will know more about this.

The hope is that this project will also make protocols more standardized. This could become the basis for courses at Aurora college etc and these become the standard protocols for collecting this info. Danny mentioned that Wayne Campbell was the one that came and first did the bird studies in 1970s. Lindsay said that he takes comfort that LGL is the project lead on this.

Ross explained that the work they are doing is a sampling program and it could continue to produce contour curves for response to oil and gas.

Wendy said that she hoped that out of BREA these scenarios would be “workshopped” and areas of high importance identified. The Beaufort Sea Strategic Regional Plan of Action calls for scenario based assessments, but the problem, according to Lindsay, is that BREA is not planning to do these assessments..

We would like to see this scenario work completed. The more that we can recommend and push for scenario based assessments, greater focus can be brought to bear on how information is collected and research priorities identified in the future.

#### **L. International Porcupine caribou board**

Wendy briefed the Council on the first meeting of the Board in 11 years. The Board meet in Sept - they went back to the International Porcupine Caribou Agreement, and reviewed it clause by clause, reviewed operational procedures and made some modifications. They didn't get into the details on issues or discuss the PCTC (who did work while the International committee did not meet).

It is a good time for the International board to begin meeting because there is no crisis. There will be a meeting in Fairbanks in April of this year. In April they will be discussing implementation of the Canadian Porcupine Caribou Harvest Management Plan (HMP) and getting an approach together on the Alaskan side. The near term objective of the board will be to get HMP happening on the Alaskan side of the border.

Wendy said that agendas will be circulated so that the Council could provide advise for the agenda.

#### **Action 03-12-07: Send Wendy a copy of our comments on the ANWR plan for the next meeting.**

Danny said that he hasn't seen the herd for so long in his area and he only sees small groups now.

#### **M. North Slope Conference**

The Council discussed the North Slope Conference structure, theme and invitees. The Council reviewed the concept from previous planning efforts to see if it was still relevant.

The Chair suggested that we need the Council thoughts to start putting the program together.

Other groups to add to the ``panel perspective list``: governments, aboriginal authorities, Nunavut Gov, PC, CWS (jurisdictional authorities), researchers (- what are the challenges for them), views from Torngat and Northern Quebec.

Another issue that would be interesting to explore - is the roles of individuals on boards and committees (eg. who do you represent, who's perspective do you present?)

Stephanie provided an update on the logistics for the conference.

The Council discussed the conference fee- \$200, + \$50 for banquet for early registration and \$250 for late registration, + \$50 for banquet.

Ernest suggested a condensed version of how the IFA started and comangement boards began (Bob Bell to speak to this). Also how Yukon North Slope used to be, before land claims. -suggestion from Danny.

\*\*\*Maurice Colpron joined the meeting 1:14pm \*\*\*

#### **N. Yukon Geological survey project**

The Chair welcomed Maurice Colpron to the meeting to brief the Council on the proposed YGS project.

Maurice outlined the scope of the work that includes two summer field seasons and collections of small grab samples. Following his meeting with the IGC last week Maurice may reconsider his first summer of work in order to have a more established program of work to present for the following year, 2013.

The first summer of work is a proposal for one week to 10 days to visit a number of sites as recon, then to establish a firm plan for 2013. In 2013 the plan is to spend six weeks out of a base camp on the Yukon North Slope studying various geological sites. It could be followed by a follow-up period in 2014.

It would be a Helicopter supported program, out of a base camp, possibly Blow river airstrip as there is an old fuel cache there. The work will primarily be observational. Some rock samples will be collected.

Sites cover the entire YNS, currently our basic knowledge is from the early 70s. A geology map has a shelf life of about 20-30 years.

Some of the things we hope to address are around Stratigraphic studies, structural geology, and thermo chronology. The hypothesis is that Brooks Range rocks probably came from northern Norway or Russia.

The understanding of that helps them to learn the understanding of the opening of the Arctic basin. This is an area right now where no one agrees and so it is an opportunity to understand this.

Structural geology is Maurice's specialty and he looks to is to understand how mountains are formed. He will look at the link between the Cordilleran mountain chain and the Arctic. One link is a fault structure that they speculate exists. That work would be Northern Richardson.

Researchers from France would look at the low temp cooling of the rocks, which would tell how and when the landscape evolved on the YNS.

Circum Arctic research is currently active, and there is a convergence of ideas and funding between different research groups, baseline info to guide potential future development east of the Babbage. His funding peaks in 2013.

Lindsay provided some background information on the Council mandate and research requirements. The Chair provided background input for Maurice on the EISC process and explained that the EISC functioned independently and neutrally. EISC meets frequently and fieldwork this summer remains a feasible option. Maurice could meet with the Aklavik HTC in May.

The Council mentioned sensitive wildlife area, and EISC flight guidelines. The Council discussed the options for landing, and the opportunities for local people to be involved as monitor and in the plane. Maurice said that he is willing to consider having a local guide for each group. (ie in teams of three).

Maurice said that he is more interested in the bedrock and not along the coast. He said that there may be potential in the future for someone in his office to do that work.

From a pure geology point of view, there is a lot to be learned in that area with a great team. The rocks will still be there though in the future. It is baseline information that he is collecting. Maurice said that he is open to sharing his camp for wildlife research. Chair suggested that programs like the Grizzly bear project may be one to look to for more info about how to go about this kind of work with the camp and the program.

The Council discussed process issues around the YNS and for research. Maurice said that he would like to see someone in Yukon to guide this process and provide proper guidance. Lindsay offered assistance from the Council if that was helpful.

\*\*\* Maurice left the meeting 2:45pm\*\*\*

Danny said that two years in a row Porcupine caribou have calved at Babbage and the Firth River. The land is dear to me.

Christian said that the issue about collecting samples within the national park is a big issue.

**Action Item 03-12-08: Secretariat to go through the WMAC research guide to ensure that it is current.**

**0. Muskox plan**

The penultimate version of the muskox plan is in the meeting package. The Chair explained that there are a few areas where minor revisions are required. He noted that the harvest management section, on page 15, is one of the key recommendations. These recommendations were presented to the AHTC in Sept when Lindsay and Christine met with them.

The Chair explained the section on Harvest Management and said that in the Canadian range, the recommended TAH of muskox is five.

Christian asked if the Vuntut Gwitchin have the right to harvest muskox on the Yukon North Slope. The Chair clarified that they are not able without a reciprocal harvesting agreement with the IGC.

The Chair clarified the next steps for the plan. The Council is recommending the plan to the Yukon Minister and Parks Canada and providing it to all other agencies for their consideration and advisement.

The plan will be provided to the AHTC one more time for review. The Council would then see YG sharing the plan with GNWT (Rob to send it to Marsha).

After Marsha's input, it would be submitted it to WMAC (NWT). Then we would recommend the plan.

Christine suggested spelling out the details on process in the letter of transmittal.

Rob said that he would send some editorial comments to the Secretariat. Rob has questions on consistencies with flight surveys. Christine said that we can find Alaska's flight survey schedules. Rob will give this some thought.

The Chair invited others to take the plan away and if there are any comments or questions provide them to the office.

**Action Item 03-12-09: Secretariat to gather comments from members (editorial or other) from members on the final version of the muskox plan. Rob to review for technical information.**

Noting Frank's interest in the plan, it was suggested that the HTC invite Frank, if they would like.

#### **P. Wildlife Research Program**

The Council reviewed the wildlife research program proposals and recommendations from December and made the following recommendations:

To conditionally recommend the Herschel ecological monitoring project. The recommendation of the project is dependent on the completion of the 10 year report.

The Moose survey and rut count were conditionally approved, contingent on partner funding.

The moose survey project has identified some external funding from GRRB and GWNT.

The Porcupine caribou collar pick up was recommended in full for 32k.

The Chair noted that many of these projects are related to PC management. He suggested that when YG does its response to the PCMB's recommendations from the Annual Harvest Meeting, that the Council have the opportunity for input. This would also keep the Council informed about the discussion at the PCMB AHM.

The Council recommends commitment of wildlife funding programs as outlined in the research table.

The remaining 18K unallocated will be discussed at summer meeting.

**Action item 03-12-09: Send Wendy a letter regarding coordination of the EC coastal project, inquiring how it lines up with the other work.**

#### **Q. CBM**

The Chair spoke about the CBM project as a Game Council initiative, explaining that its success relies on the communities and the HTCs. The CMB has emerged from the IGC/HTC response to the ABEKS program and the desire for an ISR-wide and ISR-focused program. The Council has had substantial input into the proposed CBM model. The program will be run through the JS and have a field worker in each

community. There is a steering committee - with the chairs of the IFA comanagement committees, as well as a technical committee. The program would have science inputs as well as community interests.

The next steps in the program are to hire a full time coordinator to develop the program. It is costed out at about 1 million dollars a year, if and when it is fully implemented. Between the accrued JS surplus, and possibly the Oceans North money, there is a potential to fund the program for the first two years. These two years are focused on the development of the program and running it for one year as a pilot program.

The Council is supporting the project in-kind. The Chair also suggested that we notionally hold \$5k in this year's budget.

### **R. Updates**

**PBTC-** The Chair briefed the Council on the PBTC meeting, He thought it was a very worthwhile meeting. Northern jurisdictions were strongly represented. Chairmanship has changed and is now shared; the two co-chairs are Marsha Branigan and David Lee (Nunavut). The meeting introduced changes to the TOR. He explained that there continue to be sensitivities and tensions between PBTK and science in their use and application in polar bear management. Management of the Hudson bay subpopulations will likely focus these differences. The PBTC will recommend changes in its TOR to the PBAC for review and approval at its May meeting.

**CITES-** Still not clear whether polar bear will be proposed by a member country for up- listing to appendix 1. Planning between governments and co-management groups in Canada continues..

### **S. Upcoming meetings**

- Herschel book launch - May 9<sup>th</sup>. All are welcome, invites by email.
- IPY Montreal- 3000 people are going to for one week. Ernest is planning to attend.

Ernest reported that he and Danny attended the WWF workshop recently on polar bear. The agenda was somewhat thin, however it was a chance to meet other people, including Inupiat. They learned about a gas blowout in Nuiqsut : it was capped it, but there was no clean up. Ernest and Danny indicated that they heard comments from the Inupiat that they had concerns with their land claim and wanted to renegotiate it. The Chair indicated that the Inupiat never had the opportunity to negotiate a land claim like the Inuvialuit. Their settlement was imposed on them through legislation (Alaska Native Land Claims Settlement Act). In exchange they secured the opportunity to benefit from oil and gas development in Prudoe Bay.

The Chair called the meeting to a close.

*Motion 03-12-05*

*Motion to ajorn the meeting 4:45pm*

*Moved by: Ernest Pokiak*

*Seconded by: Christian Bucher*