



DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

WMAC (NS) Quarterly Meeting
Whitehorse · Yukon
March 19-21, 2013

Lindsay Staples (Chair) · **Rob Florkiewicz** Yukon Government (Member) · **Danny C. Gordon** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) · **Ernest Pokiak** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) · **Chris Hunter** Government of Canada (Member) · **Jennifer Smith** (Secretariat) · **Rosa Brown** (Secretariat),

Guests:

Stephanie Muckenheim, Yukon Government, IFA Implementation and Projects Coordinator · **Richard Gordon**, Yukon Government, Senior Park Ranger - Herschel Island · **Grant Zazula**, Yukon Government, Yukon Paleontologist · **Dorothy Cooley**, Yukon Government, Harvest Coordinator · **Cameron Eckert**, Yukon Government, Conservation Biologist · **Sara Nielsen**, Yukon Government, Parks Interpretive Planner · **Wendy Smith**, Imperial Oil · **Jim Hawkings**, Imperial Oil · **Katherine Thiesenhausen**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:12am, and welcomed everyone to the meeting. He extended welcome to Stephanie Muckenheim (IFA analyst) and Richard Gordon (Herschel Island Park). He updated members that Rob would be joining the meeting in the afternoon.

The Chair described the schedule for the upcoming days, reviewed the agenda and asked for any revisions. Richard offered to provide a verbal update on start up plans for Herschel Island.

Motion 03-13-01

To accept the agenda as revised.

Moved by: Chris Hunter

Seconded by: Danny C. Gordon

Motion carried.

A. Review and Approval of Minutes

The Council reviewed the December 2012 minutes and had the following revisions:

- Chris Hunter is the *Government of Canada member*, not the *Parks Canada member*;
- Page 2- *Paul Zorn* (name spelling correction);
- Page 6- insert *Aklavik Canadian Rangers* in front of *Rangers*.
- Page 7- for the Yukon fuel cache project, clarify that the containment space is at Komakuk.

Motion 03-13-02

To accept the December 2012 minutes as revised (subject to approval by Rob).

Moved by: Ernest Pokiak

Seconded by: Chris Hunter

Motion carried.

*** Grant Zazula joined the meeting at 9:45***

The Chair asked for any revisions or comments to the January 2013 teleconference minutes. None were raised

Motion 03-13-03

To accept the January 2013 teleconference minutes as revised (subject to approval by Rob).

Moved by: Danny C Gordon

Seconded by: Chris Hunter

Motion carried.

The Chair asked for any revisions or comments to the Joint WMAC Meeting Minutes (Dec 2012). None were raised.

Motion 03-13-04

To accept the Joint WMAC Meeting Minutes (subject to approval by Rob, and pending WMAC (NWT) review).

Moved by: Ernest Pokiak

Seconded by: Chris Hunter

Motion carried.

The Chair asked for any revisions or comments to the Aklavik HTC/WMAC(NS) Meeting Minutes (Dec 2012).

- Page 2 Remove the sentence “ ... *there are claims currently...* ”

Motion 03-13-05

To accept the December 2012 AHTC/WMAC(NS) meeting minutes as revised (subject to approval by Rob, and pending AHTC review).

Moved by: Danny C Gordon

Seconded by: Chris Hunter

Motion carried.

*** Dorothy Cooley joined the meeting at 10:00am***

*** Cameron Eckert joined the meeting at 10:00am***

B. Herschel Island 10 Year Report

Cameron Eckert, Conservation biologist, Yukon Parks presented the 10-yr Herschel Island report.

The Chair thanked Cameron for presenting and remarked that the completion of the report is a major achievement; the data sets in the report represent the compilation of multiple people's work.

Cameron thanked the Council for its persistence in requesting the report, and the hope is to update it more regularly (possibly every two years). Though he considers the report to be final, he welcomed comments, questions, or concerns from the Council.

Cameron described his role at Yukon Parks to coordinate monitoring programs across all of Yukon parks. He described the origins of the Herschel program with the early work by Dave Mossop and others. He said Dorothy played a large role in starting the program. The program on Herschel was in place before the monitoring programs in other parks in the Yukon. The program has been running since 1980's. The results to date are summarized in the 10-year report. Dorothy added that if there were any questions related to the program prior to Cameron's involvement, she could answer them.

Cameron explained that there are variations in datasets over the years, due to different time periods and different projects. The analysis of some of the data on Herschel shows landscape level changes, as well as biodiversity changes. The results show rapid erosion in places, and dramatic changes with willow encroachment and vegetation cover. The bird data is showing a disappearance of Ruddy Ternstones, and Phalaropes. As a result of willow encroachment, more willow-dwelling species, like white crowned sparrows, are being observed. There is an upward trend in muskox observations. There is variation in red and arctic fox populations and occurrence, and some questions about whether red foxes are replacing arctic foxes.

In the early 2000's, there were very few Black Guillemot chicks for two years. As a result, monitoring increased for the past seven years, and includes food sources. The island is an important nesting area for birds of prey. Peregrines and rough legged hawks nest on cliffs. Cameron observed that it appears that many of the cliffs are washing into the sea, before the chicks can hatch and fledge.

A dramatic increase in marine traffic has been noticed; more cruise ship traffic. Also, larger ships are visiting the Herschel basin. The potential damage from offloading 100-200 visitors at a time on the island is being reviewed, and a protocol is being developed. The tourism department is involved as well.

Cameron talked about monitoring the beach landing strip, and potential concerns with cruise ship traffic and the opening of the Northwest Passage. He said that the monitoring plan should be responsive to the management plan and the long-term research and monitoring plan and the Wildlife Conservation and Management Plan.

Cameron spoke to the benefits of involving students in the monitoring program; many have been involved over time. It is especially beneficial to have younger Rangers involved as it adds capacity and skill development. This year there is an interest to involve a student from Aklavik.

Cameron said that the monitoring program fosters an array of research on the island. Dorothy referred Dave Mossop and others who initiated programs for the Rangers, and that much of the monitoring hinges on the Rangers doing the works. The Rangers have collected 90% of the data presented in the report; without them and the support of their supervisor, Richard, the work wouldn't get done. Cameron acknowledged the workload of the Rangers and that monitoring activities have to be balanced with other responsibilities.

Dorothy commented that a lot of researchers go to Herschel Island because the data already exists, and is showing interesting results. Cameron described Richard's role in supporting researchers. As the number of researchers on the island increase, they will have to gauge what the island could accommodate.

Ernest referred to one season that was really hot. A lot of erosion started that year, and it is continuing. Cameron said the Beaufort is ice free a lot longer than before, and this affects temperature and erosion.

Cameron said one thing he looks for in the data is trends, for example, *are polar bears showing up more in the summer now?* (This is not a trend supported by the data, yet. Herschel is an important site for polar bear denning. Rangers record den site locations.) Cameron spoke about the benefit of long-term datasets and how annual variations can skew our understandings - "the long term data set is like talking to our Elders".

Danny said his interest is seeing wildlife on the island. Some people say there were always caribou on the island, but that is not accurate; caribou have not always been there. It is in the last 30 years that they are coming more. He said there were some families living on Herschel in the 1970s, and there were no caribou at that time. Richard said there is a large year-to-year variation (zero – 75) in the number of caribou on the island.

Grant Zazula said that the Yukon Paleontology Program might be able to provide a longer history of caribou on the island. They have records of caribou on the island from thousands of years ago. He said he could correlate some of that information.

Cameron said that there was a report of seeing muskrat on the island. Danny agreed that in the inland lakes, there are muskrat.

Cameron said that in early June there are a lot of ringed seals around the island - someone could do monitoring in that area.

The Chair asked Cameron about the essential or 'core' elements of the program if there were funding constraints.

The Chair spoke about development pressure in the offshore and the potential moorage of vessels at Herschel Island. Elements of the Herschel 10-year report, or the monitoring program itself could inform work as it relates to marine information. Wildlife key areas have been delineated for fish and wildlife for the North Slope, but there are major areas of knowledge that have to improve - mapping for beluga, ringed seals and black guillemots is lacking in content and are not useful for reviewing potential impacts of development in near shore waters or off towards Tuk. Workboat Passage used to be off limits to development (not subject to nomination bids). The report could help confirm the case for this type of condition to be placed on potential bids.

The Chair emphasized the importance of recording incidental accounts and sightings. A sighting of 60 belugas is not insignificant and could be useful information when responding to oil and gas development applications.

Danny described taking a school group out in April (-20C) and seeing a lot of Eider ducks. Cameron said that even in early June, along the ice by Collision Head, he has seen lots of sea birds. They dwell there before they move east. Danny said he once (April 23) saw eagles throwing a King Eider up in the air, ten miles inland. Ernest said he has seen Eider ducks in Feb (in the 1950s) in the arctic islands. Cameron said there are quite a few records of King Eiders showing up late on the land (early April).

The Chair asked Dorothy and Cameron for their perspectives on how to move the program forward – for example, use the report as a template and update it frequently, or update sections on a rotation, i.e. every three years update the vegetation component, wildlife component, etc.

Dorothy said that when she was writing her sections (data summery with a bit of interpretation), most of the programs were recommended to continue. It's possible that not all programs will be able to continue based on Ranger availability etc. There is an opportunity to talk to the people of Aklavik etc. to help interpret the data, and provide context for the information. The Chair suggested sitting down with a TK holder on a particular topic to incorporate and include TK into the report by section, it would help to build context etc.

Cameron spoke about updating the report every other year. He talked about ways to make the data available to boards and researchers. He wants to get it into a form that can be accessed online, data housed and available.

Grant Z. said that there were archaeology digs in the '80s and he didn't think that the associated wildlife data had ever been compiled and analyzed. He said that there is a possibility to provide info from the past 2000 years. Cameron suggested that a university student could do that kind of work. Grant agreed.

Dorothy talked about the Taiga net website, the ABEK site that houses everything related to one monitoring topic, it is all there and you can "click" layers away. This could be a good way to house the data and make it available. The info could be updated as it comes available.

The Chair asked Grant if there were certain species or data sets the Council could focus on. Grant said the wash-out site that Max Friesen was working with has specimens, with all their bones, that would good a give snapshot over time. Grant is looking at walrus and muskox now. It is feasible and not very expensive to look at the info on Herschel. For example, they could look at hunting diversity, muskox, caribou and fox. Dorothy suggested involving DFO on the marine components, as they could be interested in it.

Action Item 03-13-01: The Council will prepare a written response to Cameron Eckert regarding the Herschel Island 10 Year Report.

Sara Nielsen joined the meeting at 11am, Cameron and Dorothy left

C. Herschel Island Interpretive Strategy

The Chair introduced Sara Nielsen and welcomed her the meeting. He introduced Danny as someone who was involved in the preparation of the original Herschel Island Interpretive Plan.

Sara told the Council that Yukon Parks is addressing an action in the Herschel Island Management Plan, to review the interpretive plan from the 1990's. The plan is to update the interpretive strategy while keeping to the original intention of the document. Updates will be made to visitor types (audience) and to include themes around climate change etc. Sara wants to bring more attention to original themes such as Inuvialuit lifestyles. The revised plan will be done by March 31st. The updates will be incorporated into the training manual used by the Rangers.

Sara is also working on developing a new brochure for Herschel Island. It will be available in print and on the Internet.

Sara arranged with Danny for the contractor working on the plan to contact him directly. She said that the stories the Rangers use are in the training manual. Additional stories will be added to manual. The Chair suggested that podcasts are an opportunity to share information more publicly. Sara said that the management plan makes mention of communication opportunities, some of which have not been explored.

The Chair asked who the target audience is, aside from visitors to the island. Sara said Yukon residents, the Canadian public, cruise ship passengers before and while on the island. Jen asked if there would be a new section in the plan focused on cruise ship interpretation. Sara explained that a policy is being developed to deal with cruise ship visitors. Richard said most cruise ship visitors are German speaking and different age groups, and that they present challenges. Currently they are dealing with one or two ships/season, but this may be increasing quite a bit.

Jen asked about cost recovery. Stephanie said this is a challenge. Richard said another challenge is dealing with cruise ships that arrive after the closing of the park. Stephanie said they are striking a working group to address cruise ship traffic (the maximum number of ships/season, visiting dates etc.).

Richard said he would like the opportunity for the Rangers to comment on the draft interpretation strategy, not just him.

Sara said, most Yukoners would not make it to Herschel Island; the focus is on the message we want them to hear. Most of the interpretation will be offsite. Richard is currently working with Marten Berkman to make a video that should correspond with the interpretive strategy.

Ernest asked if old photos would be included. Sara said there are a lot of photos in the training manual and on Herschel Island. There are printed versions with photos, and now photocopies or images. The Chair asked about the Herschel island book, with photos etc.– is there a copy of this book anywhere else? Sara said yes, it is at Historic Sites. The Chair suggested these images could be presented in other places – it is the most complete set, they tell as a story and give us the opportunity for a rich photo experience. Sara referred to the Virtual Museum with three pages of Herschel Island photos and information (RCMP, Explore, the Bishop who ate his Boots).

Sara said the core recommendations that still need to be implemented in the plan include the recreation of a sod house on Herschel. Richard said that this could be done, except for time and expenses. Sara thought this could be excellent community experience with stories etc. External funding for this project might be available. Richard said a priority should be to save the last ice house on Herschel. The Chair said that with respect to the IFA implementation negotiation, a line item could be factored in for these projects.

Danny asked how you build sod house; we don't know how they did it 300 years ago. He has seen imitations of sod houses, but they are not real because modern tools were used. Danny has seen sod houses with sealskin bladder for window, and parts of the stomach.

***Sara left the meeting at 11:50am**

Action Item 03-13-02: The Council will send Sara Nielson a letter that outlines the WMAC (NS) involvement in the management of Herschel Island and role in reviewing the draft Herschel Island Interpretive Plan.

Wendy Smith, Jim Hawkings, and Katherine Thiesenhausen joined the meeting at 1pm

D. Imperial Oil Preliminary Information Package (PIP)

Wendy thanked members for the opportunity to present and explained she and her colleagues are seeking feedback on the program.

Rob Florkiewicz joined the meeting at 1:15pm

She explained that the National Energy Board (NEB) recently completed their Arctic offshore drilling review. The review showed the NEB, and the operators competent as regulators. She emphasized the need for the company to be in the North, talking to people of the North and to provide many opportunities for people to express their ideas.

The regulators and NEB determined no new applications would be accepted while the NEB review was in progress. NEB will decide if a license will be granted and what the conditions will be. Imperial will have spent 10 years trying to get license for one well due to the delays associated with the NEB's offshore drilling review. The drilling program would need to be completed within a nine year period. They propose three seasons (which will extend beyond nine years).

Wendy and Jim explained the process for drilling approval. It is about a three year process.

- PIP (high level, consultation about general ideas to garner input)
- 1st real application – EISC – project description, will screen proposal for environmental impacts, may refer to environmental review
- EIRB environmental impact statement (end of 2013). EIRB will decide which process, i.e. public hearings (most likely) 2014. Public hearings for people in north, Canada and beyond to submit thoughts and concerns. EIRB will make recommendation to NEB (cannot issue permits until receipt of recommendations). EIRB recommendations will include conditions.
- Then submit application to NEB (2014) (mostly safety issues as environmental already covered) could include another set of public hearings. NEB will have 'public process' but the details have not been clarified (2015).
- With regulatory approval, Imperial can begin awarding contracts.

The Chair asked if they envisage NEB participation in the EIRB process? Jim thought this was unlikely, probably they would just advise on scope. The EIRB will have to satisfy requirements of the Canadian Environmental Act and the IFA.

Jim presented the list of northern groups that will be ‘talked to’ at every step along the way. There will be many opportunities for people to contribute, outside of a formal review processes. Jim explained that the consultation process has been very helpful to them and they are making the project better as they go; it is not just a matter of “checking consultation boxes” off.

The Chair asked how TK would be incorporated into the project. Jim said that the TK component was being done through a joint venture with BP (Andrea Hansen). In 2010 they went to Inuvialuit and asked who to involve. They decided HTC’s would appoint a person from each community to look after TK interviews, and decided who would be interviewed. They did follow up to the interviews in the fall and released their report. Another study looked at traditional use (fish on the offshore). He said that the study meshed nicely with Beaufort Regional Environmental Assessment’s fishing study last summer.

The Chair asked, with respect to proprietary conditions, if the TK study would be submitted as part of any filings at screening or review. Jim said that the knowledge stays with its holders. To get a copy of the report one would have to go to the HTC’s for permission. He said that they would use the results in filings, but would not disclose reports without permission from the HTC. There was a report for all six ISR communities.

Jim explained that the PIP is high-level description of what could occur and it will likely alter as time goes on. Over 400 PIPs have been distributed and it is posted on Imperial’s Internet site (952 visits). Therefore, it is serving its purpose, which is a mechanism to begin talking about the program.

Wendy referred to the schedule: 2012 - PIP release; mid 2013 - project description; early 2014 - environmental impact; late 2014 - drilling operation; 2015 - decision re proceeding; 2019 - well approval.

Communications and consultations are planned to be early, open and transparent. There is an office in Inuvik as a resource for public, consult with regulatory bodies, co-management, public, tours, open houses, meetings with HTC’s, Elders’ committees, regulatory and co-management boards. An ISR tour is being planned to bring information as requested.

Wendy explained opportunities to work with stakeholders – business, training and employment workshop. Jim listed business opportunities: rigs from international waters with international crews (i.e. not many local opportunities). Northern opportunities include support vessels, shore based warehousing (probably in Tuk), and shoreline environmental protection pieces. He explained that this is a major contrast from Imperial operations in the 80’s that was owned, operated and staffed (rig, warehouse, support vessels etc.) with very little interaction with people in the north. Since the IFA and local

business development, they plan to take full advantage of local opportunities, for example, fly exclusively on Canadian North when in the ISR.

Jim explained that workshops would be held on regaining lost well control. The Chair noted that there is a lot of interest in this topic at a community level and suggested that they might want to consider a series of workshops instead of just one. Jim said that the meetings have been hit and miss re. how well they work. Lindsay said, it is such a sensitive issue, might go a greater distance to inform and educate if presented as a series. Jim said that they rely on people to share info with their communities.

Ernest asked about horizontal drilling. If vertical drilling fails and you drill horizontal, how far do you have to go to plug. Jim said that a relief well would be drilled parallel until close to the area of repair, then would go horizontal.

Ernest said he would take more comfort if two drill ships working simultaneously in case of a blowout. In the arctic, one day is too much to have oil spilling. One blow out is too much in the north, Arctic Ocean. It is important to me and to a lot of people. People say that simulations drilling costs is too much but he has also heard that cost doesn't matter. Jim explained that there are complications with drilling two wells at the same time. They are having problems finding one drill rig, much less two. He agrees that one spill is too many and most of time has been spent planning so this won't happen. Drilling relief wells is not best way to deal with blowout. Going back into the same well is preferred. NEB says that a blow out should be stopped within the same season. Jim said that a blowout should to be stopped as quickly as possible, at lease in the same season, if not quicker. Jen ask how far along they are with regard to equivalencies.

Jim said that they are looking at capping stack that look like a blow out preventer, put on top of blowout preventer. You use the capping stack to close well in. There have been a number built, and one was eventually used in the Gulf of Mexico. Top of the list is having this technology available (same season) and knowing that we can use it. They are working on deciding the best place to have the capping stack. Ernest asked how long it takes to put it in place. Jim said that in the Gulf it took just a few days. It is much quicker than drilling a relief well.

Ernest asked if crew changes would be out of Tuk or Inuvik? He also said that before drilling starts, an oil spill response plan must be in place. Jim said Imperial would insist on this as will the environmental regulator.

Lindsay said there is a distinction between perceived and distinct risk. He suggested a statistical risk analysis to compare distinct and perceived risk. The PIP talks about risk analysis and assessment, but models might be better to show this. We may not always understand the model, but people need to be pushed to start thinking about pre-conceived notions.

Jim said that sharing numerical risk calculations and models could be a challenge.

Dorothy Cooley joined the meeting at 2:30

Lindsay explained that the Council's interest includes near and off shore interests, not withstanding jurisdictional disputes. The PIP talks about storage capability and servicing from Tuk. He asked if there is any contemplation of service sites along the coast that will be addressed in the proposal. Jim said not in the current plans, but it will be considered if its suggested by the communities. They have heard in previous meetings that this is not preferred.

Lindsay expressed the importance of the spits and coastal lagoons re. spills and blow outs. Jim said that they are plugged into BREA and have received some information through that process.

Danny asked about the length of the drill shaft and how much movement is possible before risk? Jim said that the calculation is 3% of water depth is how far sideways the pipe can travel. So if one was drilling in 100m, 3% is 3m. On top of the blowout preventer is a ball joint to allow this movement. Ernest asked how the ship would be anchored. Jim said that Imperial hasn't decided yet – might be anchored or have underwater propellers (thrusters) to keep ship in place, or both.

The Chair asked about the deepest water depth planed for drilling in the Beaufort. Jim said 90m. The maximum depth drilled internationally is 10,000 feet. What is being proposing in the Beaufort is not deep-water drilling; the challenge is that it is in ice. The Chair said the Council is very interested in the development of an ice management plan.

The Chair asked for questions from the Council. Jim reminded the group that this is not the last chance for questions or dialogue.

Jim Hawkings and Wendy Smith left the meeting at 2:40pm

Action Item 03-13-03: The Council will draft a follow up letter to Imperial to thank them for the meeting and to highlight key concerns of the Council.

Ernest talked about the difficulty in finding a balanced approach. Lindsay mentioned that there are jurisdictions that have a moratorium on drilling in certain areas.

E. Herschel Island discussion

The Chair thanked Dorothy and Richard for attending the meeting. The Chair summarized the morning presentation from Cameron. *Herschel Island-Qikiqtaruk Inventory, Monitoring and Research Program: Summary of Recommendations* was distributed to Council members

The Chair said the Council is looking for suggestions and guidance on key aspects of the report. He emphasized the importance of the work and constraints of the Rangers, and reminded members of the purpose of the monitoring program, and it's bearing on the

entire North Slope. In light of the discussion with Imperial, does any of the info in the Hershel report serve offshore interests?

He mentioned that the reasoning behind the monitoring program was missing from the report and should be clearly stated, as well as linkages to other institutions. Herschel has benefited from researchers working there. Is there a way to solidify the relationship with researchers over the long-term?

Richard said that his review of the report is based on the management plan, and comparison of the report to the plan. The Rangers haven't seen the report, and he would like their input.

Richard said that Dorothy's contribution to Hershel was valuable. At the beginning of each season, she would have the data summarized from the previous years – this kept the Rangers interested. It is important that this process continue.

Richard clarified the Step program is a student hiring program with funds outside of Inuvialuit implementation funds. Akalvik has requested summer student employment in the past, but the Step program couldn't provide funding to hire an NWT (Aklavik) resident. This should be clarified in the report, as it may raise some questions.

The Chair asked how many people are on the island and for how long during the summer. Richard said there are the four Rangers from May to September.

Richard said the Rangers' observations and interpretation of the 10 year report will be important as they have the context behind the observations. The Chair suggested it would be a useful exercise for the Rangers to review the report, section by section. Dorothy said this is what she envisioned doing with the Rangers too, and integrating the comments, they are the data collectors.

Richard said that Rangers record the temperature four times/day, but this data is not included in the report. Why are they collecting this data if its not being used? He said that pilots have come to depend on this info.

Chris Hunter said Parks Canada is always challenged to defend its monitoring programs. He said the key questions are: What are the challenges to ensuring the Herschel monitoring program continues? And, what are the challenges to getting the information out?

Richard said that ten years was too long to get the information out to people. Changes are happening fast (weather, environment, climate change, cultural lifestyles). Richard said recommendations about data collection could be important to balance the work load of the Rangers as monitoring work can be heavy for two people to manage. The Rangers are taking over many of the researchers' programs after the researchers leave, and the Rangers have asked why they are continuing some of the data collection,

for example, an 8 hour hike to collect bird data. Richard said he needs to know the priority for data collection and that all options should be considered, including bringing interpretive staff back to the park if more time is needed for the Rangers to do monitoring work.

Dorothy outlined her perspectives on the core/essential components of the program:

- Limiting factors are the Rangers' time and available funding.
- Prioritizing monitoring work is necessary. Some of the monitoring work could possibly be done by other people/researchers (e.g. W. Pollard, Hughes and C. Burn). Maybe the Rangers don't need to do all the monitoring; can some of the researchers contribute? (Richard said researchers do a round table with the Rangers the day after they arrive at Herschel - so this might be achieved.

(The big slump is now being monitored by W. Pollard from satellites. There is a risk in getting Pollard to take this over fully, as they (researchers) may come and go. One of the benefits of getting the "pros" to do this is that they are tied into their peers and have expertise.)

- Recommendations on continuing monitoring programs include:
Abiotic - deep permafrost temperatures; thaw slump growth; snow depth and ground temp (C Burn project).
Wildlife - wildlife observations (recorded by the Rangers April – September, continuously); breeding bird survey (budget and time implications).

Richard commented that timing the breeding bird survey is important because if it's cold, they need to go again. The Chair asked if the survey could be done less frequently. Dorothy said there is a lot of variation with the bird data, so it is important to do it every year. It is important to continue the breeding bird survey to better understand the impact of cruise ship visits. There are more cruise ships now, which could result in more vegetation damage. Richard said the data could help us determine when and how to allow cruise ships in the area.

The Chair asked for confirmation that impact monitoring is a clear objective of the monitoring program. He asked if the original objective for the breeding bird surveys is still relevant.

Rob suggested the need to clarify what needs to be done and what the Rangers can do; what's important, and if it is - who should be doing it. What is directed by the park plan, and what is directed by other agencies (monitoring human and visitor effects is clearly in the plan)? Some of this is legacy monitoring, D. Mossop's work.

Richard said that some direction is needed about a comfortable number of people for the island to handle and by which method, cruise ship, dog team, plane.

Dorothy noted that there is a research plan as well for Herschel (2005). There is also an instruction manual.

Action Item 03-13-04: Secretariat staff will locate copy of Herschel Island research plan.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10pm

Wednesday March 20, 2013

Lindsay Staples (Chair) · **Rob Florkiewicz** Yukon Government (Member) · **Danny C. Gordon** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) · **Ernest Pokiak** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) · **Chris Hunter** Environment Canada (Member) · **Jennifer Smith** (Secretariat) · **Rosa Brown** (Secretariat),

Guests:

Stephanie Muckenheim Yukon Government, IFA Implementation and Projects Coordinator · **Richard Gordon**, Yukon Government, Senior Park Ranger - Herschel Island · Barb Coppard, Yukon Government, Policy Analyst · Peter Armitage (by phone) · Ramona Maraj, Yukon Government, Carnivore Biologist · Maurice Colpron, Yukon Government, Project Geologist Christen Bucher Doug Larson Wendy Nixon

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9am.

F. Polar Bear Traditional Knowledge Project (PBTk)

The Chair introduced the PBTk project. He said that a report would be ready by the third week in April, and that the January workshop caused a delay in the writing.

Peter Armitage joined the meeting by telephone at 9:10am

Lindsay introduced the people in the room and gave an overview of expectations for the call: to give an update on activities since December (PBTk workshop in Inuvik), and on the table of contents.

Peter updated the group on the January workshop with 13 TK knowledge holders regarding changes to polar bear numbers, distribution and health. Some observations and propositions from the 2010 interviews were contradictory as they relate to change. Peter did not know enough about polar bear or sea ice to interpret, and did not think it was appropriate to do so. The Steering Committee decided to bring together a group of experienced TK holders, and ask them to do the interpreting. Peter plans to take the observations and build them into the report. Participants found the workshop useful, and it covered a lot of ground. From all the other Arctic TK research Pete reviewed, he thinks this approach is unique.

Ramona Maraj joined the meeting at 9:15

Lindsay explained the intent of TK holder workshop was not to resolve differences, but to understand the differences. Peter said that sometimes information appears to be

contradictory, but in reality the apparent contradictions are due to local conditions etc. Peter said he came to better understand that he is dealing with an extremely complex environment, and so much depends on ice conditions. The overall conclusion is that despite climate change, respondents do not see any trends in polar bear numbers and condition, rather there is annual variation and the numbers are dependent on ice conditions.

He is now working on the report, which will be data rich and include Inuvialuit voices as much as possible. It is time consuming to select the appropriate narrative, edit it and use it in summary and interpretation. There are other approaches to presenting indigenous TK, this project is unique because takes a narrative and cartographic approach. Peter is writing the report to be readable by a general audience. With regard to the mapped information, it is difficult to map certain aspects of TK, especially with regard to ice features. The location of pressure ridges and ice edges change from one year to the next. The data was not rigorously dated when collected. The maps will be used to back up the individual narratives and to tell the story. Maps will show areas of abundance, maternity dens and harvest points, so it will be a blended approach to cartography – with illustrated features and composites.

The table of contents is a work in progress; it has to be flexible to accommodate change when text is put together. The Chair told Peter the Council would get back to him with ideas or concerns. What has been presented is comprehensive and provides a good sense of what content will look like.

The Chair mentioned that after this work is complete, Peter plans to produce a piece on lessons learned and considerations for future research.

Ramona asked how the polar bear technical committee will look at applying results of the product, how will the divide (Beaufort north and south sub-populations) be dealt with in the report? Peter said that except when dealing with them as separate populations for modern management considerations, he would deal with them as one polar bear group. Sampling methods (interviews and questions) do not lend themselves to quantitative analysis by sub-population. He commented that the north/south division was not necessarily an Inuvialuit vision. Conclusions from the report will speak to the combined Beaufort sub-populations.

Lindsay asked about community-by-community reporting (for example, variation in sea ice). Community specific matters with spatial representations will tell us about sub-populations (N/S). Peter said that there was not a large difference from one community to the next with sea ice conditions.

Lindsay asked if there are examples of variability between communities (for example, hunting areas). Some of this interest can be keyed spatially, which will be helpful to managers. Are there other examples of information with a community specific driver?

Peter reported on some region wide comments with respect to sea ice. He said that when harvesting bears, everybody except Inuvik, are reporting that they cannot harvest where they used to because flow ice is not as close to land, and they are not venturing as far out as they used to.

Jen reminded the group that this report is not the end of the project; educational products can come from the report and speak specifically to sub-population differences. The Chair said the group had talked about organizing the report with ISR treatments and community treatments. He asked if material be organized on a community specific way? Peter said that questions were not asked systematically in every community, so when data are looked at on a community-by-community basis, there are gaping holes. The Chair said that apart from the report, there will be a database, which could be accessed by community. This could be helpful from a management perspective.

Ernest commented that with this TK study, he expected to hear about two-three generations past, but most information is about 40-80 years ago; most of this information is within the current generation. Peter said that the knowledge tapped with this project is within living memory of people interviewed, the oldest was born in 1905 and people interviewed were around 50 years old. Many made frequent reference to what they were told by fathers and uncles, blended with their own experience.

The Chair said the report would be coming out near the end of April and then circulated for review (HTCs would be included in the review).

****The call with Peter ended at 9:55am****

*****Maurice Colpron joined the meeting *****

G. Yukon Geological Survey

Maurice re-capped the history of the project. He explained that his group was proposing to do a reconnaissance project last year but decided to pull out for a few reasons, partly because of the sharp learning curve for doing work on the YNS, and he had another big project on the go. He explained that they intent to do work on the North Slope this summer and then maybe a smaller program for 2014. This is the year when the funding comes together to do the work.

He explained that the work he wants to do is geological science research. Some of the big questions he proposes to look at are: the age of rocks and origins (either formed in place (700,000 years ago) or they could have come from the arctic islands or Norway. The western Brooks Range rocks are from Norwegian origin, so it is a possibility. Many of the German crew members are recognizing major fault zones and there is interest to go and look at the area around the Blow river. Maurice's interest is to tie things they know from further south to the evolution in the arctic. He thinks there are strong linkages and opportunities to learn from looking at the pacific. There are outstanding questions in the Arctic. There is a group from Paris, working on the cooling of rocks

"thermochronology": which is the closest proxy we have to understand the evolution of the landscape. Structural geology is another component.

He is working with an international team and this study is part of a bigger circum-arctic research program, work on Greenland is planned for next year. The key person is in Germany (Karsten Piepjohn), and that's where a lot of the money is coming from. Most are from universities. Karsten works for the German equivalent of the Yukon Geological Survey (BGR). This work is part of the CASE (Circum-Arctic Structural Events) program. The team is very experienced in the area of research in the arctic. Maurice said that just the aircraft for the summer would be more than a ½ million dollars.

Maurice showed the Council the areas of interest on the map and described the hypothesis of where the rocks have moved from. The clues are that there are fossils in some of the rocks and events in the rocks that don't match what we know in western North America. There are clues in the magnetism in rocks at dislocations. Going back 5-700 million years ago and shifts in the earth's crust. He explained the shifting of tectonic plates. They were together, and then separated, then formed Pangia. In hundreds of thousands of years, it is expected to come back together again. He explained subduction zones and the modern tectonic picture. The opening of the Arctic Ocean is one of the big unknowns in understanding our planet, there are a lot of questions still unanswered. In a geological time scale, oceans are ephemeral and last a couple of moments in that time scale, except for the Pacific which is an anomaly. The big question amongst geologists and others in the field is what is happening with the Arctic Ocean and the opening of it. This is an unknown.

He explained the program for this year and the possible follow up for 2014. He went to Aklavik and got some feedback on where to camp, the Blow River air strip was suggested. Three grad students will be working with the team. Some of this work will be in the Park. They will record the nature of the rocks, and collect some samples, (fist size samples most likely) and 10 cm shallow drill holes to test the magnetism on the rocks. The samples will be for dated for geochemistry. If they come across fossils, they will figure out what the method for collecting these may be. They would likely be catalogued in Whitehorse with Grant Zazula; if the work in Ivvavik National Park there may be a different process.

He presented the site locations that they would like to visit. He said they will postpone work until July, so as to not disturb the caribou migration. They will hire one or two wildlife monitors. The crew will be in radio contact.

Maurice explained that there is interest in doing the work now because there is a lot of money available for arctic research, partly due to UNCLOS (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea). Baseline information should be able to guide future land use decisions.

The Chair asked about when reports would be available from the work. Maurice said that in a year from now there would be a basic field report, with no analysis. Analytical work will take place over two years and results will be written up as scientific articles in journals in about two-three years. Some key funding partners are: Germany, YGS, universities and some in kind contributions (lab work etc.). All information will be publicly available.

A project summary was submitted to EISC last year, which led to a full project description completed this winter. At that time they required only a project summary, now EISC is deciding if detailed project description is required. Maurice went to Aklavik in December and last week met with the AHTC and the public. He made a formal request for a letter of support from the AHTC (he is committed to hire people from Aklavik as wildlife monitors). Has/will present to WMAC (NS) and the IGC as well. A YESAB application is required because the project is exceeding 100 man-days in one camp. A Parks Canada application needed as well.

There was discussion regarding the redundancy of YESAB and EISC.

Maurice said that his goal for the camp is to have a minimal footprint, leave only trampled vegetation, and he is open to suggestions for more effective ways to manage impact. There was a discussion regarding human waste in continuous permafrost (Shadow Lake Outfitters, PETT were suggested for use.).

Danny commented that in July people are harvesting at Shingle point. Maurice said that for the most part, they will be inland from the coast and will avoid overland flights. They will be in radio communication in case project activity impacts others on the land. Danny said the caribou use the high mountains for flies and go to coast to cool off. He is worried about blocking caribou movements.

Maurice said that when full results are published, they would write and present a plain language report, if there is interest.

Ernest reiterated Danny's point about caribou and disrupting their movements. He suggested working in mid-august. Maurice said that would be difficult to push the work to August because of scheduling and weather, but that he would like to do all he can to minimize impact of the flights. Lindsay said that having wildlife monitors and radio communication is important. He also suggested consulting the Firth River rafting schedule to avoid over flights when rafters are there.

Jen told Maurice about the old fuel drums at the Blow River site and said it would be much appreciated if he had the opportunity to backhaul empty barrels. Maurice agreed there should be an opportunity to do this when the camp is being setup.

Rob noted the importance of using an electric fence around the camp to exclude grizzly bears as all bear mortality is a direct loss to the quota. He also suggested reporting back

to the community at season-end, well before a peer review report. Maurice said this was not a problem and could happen as soon as next fall. They can report on what was found, but interpreting what it means will probably take a couple years.

Chris told Maurice that wildlife monitors with firearms will need permits if they are in the Park. This is an interim guidance for protection in northern national parks, and the permitting process takes about four weeks and is consistent with the process laid out in the interim guidelines for the use of firearms in northern national parks.

The Chair said they might need to remind pilots of minimum flying distances re. over flights as these guidelines are often not followed.

***Maurice Colpron left the meeting ***

Action Item 03-13-05: The Council will send Maurice Colpron (Yukon Geological Services) a letter recommending that in the interests of public disclosure, the Council and the public should be informed of field season outcomes, discoveries and results of future analyses and interpretation.

Rob mentioned that YESAB is another vehicle to provide comments re. electric fencing and recording wildlife observations. Lindsay suggested the Council request a report from the wildlife monitors re. daily observations.

H. Eastern Yukon North Slope data gap contract – Katherine Thiesenhausen

Lindsay introduced Katherine Thiesenhausen as the contractor working on the area east of the Babbage, and explained the work that she has undertaken. Katherine described the work done to date, and what she proposes to do. She walked the Council through ideas about narrowing the list of species down by a valued ecosystem component (VEC) approach, and the criteria for picking the VECS. She described the list of species she is working with and said she is looking for suggestions/comments from the Council on them and the criteria for choosing them (for example, where there are gaps or a protected species by legislation). She suggested adding wolverine to the furbearer list.

*** Christen Bucher (guest) arrived at 11:50pm***

The three broad categories for the contract are 1) wildlife, 2) traditional use and, 3) development interests. Her work is to identify the information that exists and where it is located.

Danny asked if this would include marine areas, and how far off shore. She said the YNS Withdrawal Order includes islands within three statute miles, so spits and lagoons are included.

*** Doug Larson joined the meeting***

Chris mentioned that fish and Dall sheep are important and beluga whales. It is challenging to narrow the scope. Lindsay said that for whales, they fall within the waters of the North Slope, but the waters themselves don't fall within the area of the Withdrawal Order. Nesting areas on spits and lagoons do apply.

Richard suggested that community conservation plans (CCPs) need to be considered. The Chair said the level of detail in the CCPs is very general for the WO area and the Council needs a more specific plan supported by the best available information for this area.

The Chair asked for additional guidance for Katherine as it relates to her research (wildlife, development and Inuvialuit use).

Depending on the information that comes from Katherine's review, detailed information of the area east of the Babbage could give rise to a mapping project. This could help to get more specific information from what is described in the conservation plan (using point data instead of referring to entire area).

Danny talked about the harbor at Shingle Point - they used to go in with schooners, but can't anymore because ice came in and scooped up the gravel, and it has never been open since. This area is ideal for dolly varden/char. Fish come from the Babbage to Herschel and migrate back. It is good for caribou and fishing. Equipment would be needed to open it up again, which is too expensive.

Rob suggested looking at the key species that could be impacted from a road to King Point, for example, caribou and grizzly bear denning habitat. Wolverine are more tied to their prey, like wolves.

The Council discussed potential stressors related to removing the WO: linear features, access to rivers, access to fishing areas and quota species (management control). Raptors are difficult to assess because they have access to the entire NS. The Chair mentioned the need to distinguish between landscape and local effects.

Richard Gordon joined the meeting at 2:05pm

Danny said wolverine is valued commodity for people. "There is no wildlife like wolverine, not afraid of anything, will chase wolf away, a scavenger, - the most handsome, no wildlife gallops like wolverine 'I tell you, he's something else'. I read that wolverine is threatened, or going to be impacted by global warming. I don't think he's threatened by global warming, so I want to know why. In winter we get snow 20-30 feet deep, that's his home. Once I got a wolverine and his house had an upstairs and downstairs and 3 (!) caribou pelts, which he used for his bed. He's probably one of the wisest wildlife we have in our country. The report said people are harvesting male instead of female, but I don't think this is the fact. They avoid little ones. Without snow, they would have a hard time. I track wolverine, and when they are ready to bed down, they dig in the snow, and its impossible to find them in the snow. Sometimes sleeps out on the

snow, like fox. He can pack a caribou hind quarter. All you see is the tracks, he grabs it in his mouth and walks, eats it away from danger. Very strong, he's all muscle."

Action Item 03-13-06: Secretariat staff will work with Danny in reviewing the COSEWIC report on wolverine.

Katherine asked about shorebirds, waterfowl and songbirds. The Council discussed the value of songbirds and decided to focus on shorebirds and waterfowl. Katherine said that a lot of info is not species specific; it is broad.

Lindsay mentioned that some of the best work might be the work from the '70's oil and gas industry research. There has been no development driver since that time to reproduce those studies. They would probably be in the old DIAND (new Yukon EMR) library and the Parks library. Rob asked if a literature review was done during preparation of conservation plan. Lindsay said that the plan was high level. In the absence of hard data, the attempt was to integrate plans.

Richard left the meeting at 2:30

Katherine reiterated that she welcomes comments from Council members.

*** Wendy Nixon joined the meeting at 1:30pm ***

I. International Porcupine Caribou Board

Wendy Nixon presented on the International Porcupine Caribou Board. She reported that the board has been dormant for a decade; the first full meeting was a year ago in Fairbanks. Currently the board members are:

Canada Members: Barry Smith, Regional Director, CWS (Canada Co-chair); Kelly Milner, Manager Regional Programs, Yukon Government; Joe Tetlich, Chair, Porcupine Caribou Management Board, Lynda Yonge, Director of Wildlife, Environment and Natural Resources.

U.S. Members: Geoffrey Haskett, Alaska Regional Director, US Fish & Wildlife Service (US Co-chair); Craig Fleener, Deputy Commissioner, Alaska Department of Fish & Game; Edward Rexford, Inupiat Villages; Edward Frank, Alaska G'wich'in Villages

The Board is focused on developing a communications strategy, and reviewing the terms of reference and workplan for the Porcupine Caribou Technical Committee. The Board will meet next in Dawson City in early summer; the exact date has not been set.

Face-to-face meetings will likely be less frequent due to financial cutbacks, but video and teleconferencing will be used. The Board has been working with the technical committee finalizing a terms of reference (worked two years without TOR). She expects they will be completed prior to the summer meeting and finalized at the summer meeting. They are

currently working on long term work plan for the committee (Kelly was working on communication strategy for the board).

The Chair asked about communication between the PCMB and the international committee. Wendy said a PCMB member sits on the international committee (Joe Tetlich) and this provides a good link between them.

Other bodies will be identified as advisory (filling a working role, as needed) including both WMACs. The core members of the technical committee are agencies with mandates to do management work. The Dawson regional biologist in on tech committee.

Wendy updated the Council that Environment Canada is updating the migratory bird regulations with changes to language and words, but not content. Wendy offered to discuss this at the next WMAC meeting.

Wendy mentioned that she will be retiring within the year; so another federal appointment will be needed as an alternate on the Council.

****Katherine Thiesenhausen left the meeting at 2:30pm****

J. Financial Report

Jen presented the quarterly financial update to the Council. She outlined spending to March 8 and projected spending to the end of the fiscal year.

She explained the Herschel book revenue (\$900) and that it is separate from the Council's operating budget. Money has not been received from the distributor yet. Revenue was intended to be directed back to Herschel (for example, taking Elders to the island) or to reprint the book.

She explained the meetings category and that variation from the original budget was related to attendance and location of meetings. The Chair explained that this is a major challenge with respect to the future funding request because one meeting can represent \$5-10,000.

She said that projects have been assessed throughout the year. The wildlife management conservation plan project is underway. Katherine's work will continue past the end of this fiscal.

Jen provided an update on the podcast series and the Council decided to continue the series with some TK podcasts. The Secretariat staff will work on laminating maps and some in-house material. The Secretariat will produce stats on podcast hits, and alert the NSC attendees of the podcasts.

The PBTK project is basically on budget. Peter Armitage and Stephen Kilburn will bill next fiscal, which leaves the Council in a better financial position. Money is ear-marked for next year (just under 50K from WMACS and 50K from EC).

The high carry-over to next fiscal is partially because Katherine's work will not be completed.

Community Based Monitoring

The Chair informed the Council that the scheduled phone call with Jenny Knopp was cancelled due to time constraints. A project Steering Committee meeting is needed to provide direction to Jenny. An update will be provided to Council following the Steering Committee meeting. Jenny has been active with community visits, collecting existing ISR monitoring and research data, and attending the annual Arctic Borderlands meeting.

K. Polar Bear

*** Barb Coppard joined the meeting at 3pm**

The Chair referred to the morning discussion with Peter Armitage, saying he anticipates the PB TK Report would be distributed to the Steering Committee and the Councils, and for technical review by Ramona, Marsha and Jodi. Next steps with regard to using the report for internal purposes will to be discussed in the fall.

PBTK Holders Workshop:

Danny said this workshop was one of the best, with lots of detail and good information. He learned a lot from people he never talks to - the way they harvest and their TK which is different from Danny's because they are right on the ocean, there all the time with polar bears coming in. Peter did a really good job and used language like, 'this is not my project, it is yours'.

Jen agreed the workshop was interesting and a valuable experience, especially the stories. People said the same things across the communities, but observed variation in the weather. The workshop helped make sense of what is in the report (for example, bears are changing direction in where they go, obviously, because wind has changed direction and bears don't walk into the wind). There are no obvious statements that can be made regarding how climate change is affecting polar bears. The link to sea ice is very strong and must be interpreted with the lens of what is sea ice doing at the time. There seems to be a lot of variation with numbers, but communities are not making direct link to climate change because they have seen this variation in the past. In the past couple of years, people have seen things never seen before and there are changes since the 2010 interviews. The opportunity to talk between communities was very interesting. Peter now has audio recordings, notes and flip chart notes to use. He plans to use direct quotes, verbatim, in the final report. Peter spoke strongly about interpretation by people in the room. Inconsistency will follow what people in the room interpreted. There are a couple instances where information might not have been collected accurately, but in most cases, apparent conflicts are due to regional differences. People talked about polar bears on

land, and that they expect to see more as polar bear may adapt to a land environment. There was some discussion of warmer temperatures and instances where polar bear may do better. Peter seemed to take a lot of guidance from the workshop and made effort to capture the Inuvialuit interpretation, as he would like this to be an Inuvialuit report.

Danny said there is a risk with people stating that polar bear might get used to being on land, as this is not his home. He needs to be out on the ocean, on the ice.

Ernest said there is a lot of talk about climate change when talking about polar bears. We need to know our traditional knowledge from further back, as he has said before and is worth repeating. Inuvialuit say they cannot interpret if polar bear is a land or sea animal because they live on both. Ernest relayed a story of polar bear in Greenland, back in Viking days when Greenland was green.

The Chair said there is strong paleontological evidence that polar bears were brown, and climactic conditions led to the tinting of their hair. There is a tremendous amount of material out there and a lot of hypotheses are presented as facts. Some scientific papers present findings as conclusive, not speculative. They are then picked up by third parties and presented as fact, especially with regard to causal relationships. This was confounded at CITES with regard to scientists and TK holders. It is a crisis in confidence and trust in the scientific community, especially regarding the credibility of predicted time horizons for population changes

Polar Bear Technical Committee:

The Chair briefed the Council on the January PBTC meeting. It was a good meeting, especially with regard to dialogue, and relationships between jurisdictions and the scientists, managers and aboriginal co-managers. It was much more collaborative (not as confrontational). There was an excellent series of presentations on techniques for estimations of polar bear abundance and distribution. There is growing sensitivity to mark/recapture work especially with regard to polar bear health and condition. Different methodologies can be applied depending on the management question – aerial, biopsy and mark recapture. Need to be really clear on management objectives before deciding on survey technique and moving toward less invasive, less handling techniques. Mark recapture work is still needed, but in many cases is not necessary. Major part of the PBTC work is to develop a status table for each sub-population in Canada. PBTC reworked categories and criteria as it affects status. PBTC has been working on this for some time and for the first time have a status table that may be finalized. A big component is TK (TK holders do not need to distinguish between subpopulations but this info can still have value for management purposes. The criteria used for projections (assessment, trend lines and forecasts) are very important. Based on best available info for each sub-population, overall polar bears aren't doing that poorly in Canada. There is some local declines, but not catastrophic. Canada may be in a different position at the next Ranges States meeting with the status table. We now need to be thinking about this at the upcoming meeting in Victoria. The status table will have a different effect than previous years.

Action Item 03-13-07: Secretariat staff will send a disk of PBTC presentations to Chris Hunter.

The US (AK) is ex-officio member of PBTC and provides very helpful comments in the discussions.

Following the PBTC meeting there was a one day meeting in Ottawa, a very productive strategy meeting in preparation of CITES. The most important outcome was clear messages from the Inuit world regarding communications at CITES. A series of large posters was developed for the booth at CITES. In the few weeks leading up to CITES, regarding information in the press, the anti-hunting rhetoric was extremely negative and ignored or distorted the facts.

CITES:

Ernest recounted his experience at CITES (and his relief to be away from the heat). He thanked Lindsay and the Canadian delegation. They worked as a team and met their objective.

People from different regions worked really well together. Twenty-nine were in the Canadian delegation and meet for a briefing in the mornings.

The EU was split and abstained as a block (removed 40-45 votes). (At EU meetings within the EU parliament, the labour party voted against the proposal, but the majority voted for it. There was a fracture and no consensus among the EU. Late in the game, the EU came forward with middle position that was equally damaging because it allowed for monitoring of quotas by CITES on a sub-population basis. It would have given CITES a role in what is a matter of exclusive Canadian jurisdiction.

A lot of people came by the booth. It was pretty steady but slowed down the second week. It was important to have the right people at the booth. Effort was made to make information available in many languages – Spanish, French and English.

The proposal to uplist will likely be brought forward again in 3 years.

Ernest ended by saying thank you for the opportunity. However, it was an exhausting experience.

Action Item 03-13-08: Secretariat staff will work with Megan Perry to produce a podcast on CITES.

The Chair said the attendance at CITES was important because, 1) there is a harvest rights issue (re. the protection of Inuit harvesting of polar bears provided by the land claims agreement and backed by the s.35 of the Canadian Constitution): and, 2) there is a conservation issue. There are significant misperceptions of Canada's management of

polar bear. Canada is a leading nation with regard to polar bear research and management of sub-populations. CITES is a tremendous amount of work, but there is a lot at stake. Loss of the polar bear commercial harvesting opportunities would have been similar to the anti-seal campaign and loss of the seal economy. It would result in significant economic impacts at the village level.

As a consequence of how CITES unfolded, there are now ruptures between the science and Inuit communities that will take a long time to recover. In some instances, the work of scientists was released two weeks before CITES and damaged scientists' credibility with Inuit. Long-term scenarios were treated as if solid empirically based accounts and resulted in hysteria.

Coke has donated 1million dollars to WWF for polar bear studies.

Lindsay said the Russians raised the issue that false Canadian polar bear export permits were used in Russia, and for this reason Russia was opposed to trade in polar bear.

Ernest said poaching in Russia is a big concern because of lack of enforcement

The Chair said there is a lot of work to be done in the years before the next CITES, especially with regard to education and working with range states.

The meeting adjourned at 4:15pm

March 21st, 2013
Yukon Wildlife Preserve

Lindsay Staples (Chair) · **Rob Florkiewicz** Yukon Government (Member) · **Danny C. Gordon** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) · **Ernest Pokiak** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) · **Chris Hunter** Environment Canada (Member) · **Jennifer Smith** (Secretariat) · **Rosa Brown** (Secretariat),

Guests: **Stephanie Muckenheim** Yukon Government, IFA Implementation and Projects Coordinator · **Richard Gordon**, Yukon Government, Senior Park Ranger - Herschel Island · **Dorothy Cooley**, Yukon Government, Harvest Coordinator · **Ramona Maraj**, Yukon Government, Carnivore Biologist

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

L. Community Based Monitoring

The Chair informed the Council that the telephone call with Jennie Knopp (Community Based Monitoring Program staff), an agenda item from the previous day, was cancelled in the interest of time. The Chair and Jennifer gave a brief overview of the program and will report back to the Council following an upcoming steering committee meeting. Jennie presented information about the CBM program at Borderlands Annual Meeting

recently with the goal to ensure both programs mesh. It is unclear if the CBM will include harvest reporting; this will be resolved by the steering committee. The FJMC funded the recent community tour. A Technical Advisory group has not been formally established yet.

Dorothy reminded the Council that she has an interest in CBM, especially as it applies to Porcupine Caribou.

M. Herschel Monitoring Program (continued)

The Council discussed the recommendations as outlined in the 10 Year Monitoring Report. Key points from that discussion are listed below:

- Dedicated training with the Rangers should be prioritized in the annual work plan, and as a commitment to the program. Training should happen as soon as April when the Rangers start, and definitely before June 30th when visitors and researchers arrive
- Rangers know the wildlife species, but need training for bird species. Educational tools would make the task of learning birds easier (e.g. a book of most common birds). Questions arising around the involvement of the Rangers in bird monitoring include: How do Rangers deal with new species? Is bird monitoring accomplished through annual bird surveys, or by the Rangers? What is the value of bird monitoring and who should be doing it? Are the Rangers consistent enough in bird ID and observations to say monitoring is taking place?
- Results of previous year monitoring should be presented back to the Rangers (as a component of annual training).
- Incidental wildlife observations are clearly a role for the Rangers.
- The Rangers provide a valued service in bear awareness training
- Questions arising about program as a whole include the need to break out initiatives and decide who has the lead responsibility, especially with regard to the capacity of the Rangers.
- Raptor survey - be clear of objectives, is it ecological monitoring done with rigor or is it observations for the sake of being out on the land and improving individuals knowledge of ecology. (Raptor observations could be included as part of the incidental wildlife survey.)
- The area that is monitored needs to be reviewed. There could be inventory work done in more areas - need to look at the whole island. Is effort too concentrated on Pauline Cove, should it extend beyond?
- There is opportunity for researchers to contribute to the monitoring program, especially with regard to wildlife observations and unusual occurrences.
- There needs to be a better understanding of why some of the information is being collected. For example, the Rangers record the weather five times/day. This information was not included in the report. What is its value?
- Broad questions about the program include better understanding general knowledge vs. monitoring to detect long term change over time (monitoring plan/management plan). What can we do each year consistently? Need to use info from community to look at trends over time, but needs to be done constantly year after year. Key

species/components of the ecosystem – what is the core info needed? Systematic approach to observations

- Focused survey work on species is realistic with easily recognized species, but is a challenge when the amount of effort spent identifying and recording unknown species varies between individuals.
- Vegetation component (transects and plots) is the most scientific and should be continued, along with wildlife observations and deep permafrost measurements.
- Information about traditional sacred values should be included in the Rangers annual training

The Council discussed the need for a broader forum to discuss the objectives of the monitoring program and the capacity of the Rangers in contributing to the program. The Ivvavik monitoring program went through a similar program review, but not in the same level of detail. Chris outlined several successful aspects of the Ivvavik program: standard wildlife observation cards for visitors and researchers, a systematic approach to capturing opportunistic data, emphasis on the importance of data collection protocol training over rare species training, bear awareness training mandatory as part of trip orientation.

The Chair suggested the next step in reviewing the monitoring program could be a refinement of the core program, one that looks at the broader monitoring regime for the North Slope, possibly integrating goals of the Community Based Monitoring Program. Follow up to the monitoring report should be at a technical level, and should include the Rangers, park ecologists and the regional biologist. There are three key documents to tie together, (the Herschel Island Monitoring Plan, the Herschel Island 10 Year Monitoring Report and the Herschel Island – Qikiqtaryuk Interpretive Plan).

The goal of the review would be to rationalize the program (in the context of Herschel as a park in the greater conservation scheme for the North Slope, not just as another park in a series of Yukon-wide parks) to make sure that we have a program that can go forward. The review will consider:

- What information is important and why (recognizing this is a long term program and justification must be able to withstand budget cuts);
- Roles and responsibilities of everybody involved in the program (recognizing the valued contribution of the Rangers, and their limitations);
- The opportunistic role of outside researchers
- The importance of training and orientation.

Refinements to the monitoring program would be based on the outcome of this discussion. The monitoring plan should be updated and monitoring tools and instruments (e.g. incidental observation cards) considered in the discussion. Individuals to include in the review should include the people who are currently involved in the program (Cameron Eckert and Mike Suitor).

Action Item 03-13-09: Prepare a letter to the Director of Parks to recommend a review of the Herschel Island Monitoring Plan (and program)

with suggestions for the inclusion of other parties in the review (Rangers, park ecologists and the Regional Biologist, National Parks).

The program review should consider: what information is important to collect and why; the roles and responsibilities of multiple groups and individuals in collecting, storing and utilizing the multi-year data; the capacity of the Rangers; and, opportunistic opportunities to utilize researchers and other Park visitors for data collection.

N. Herschel Island Update (Richard Gordon)

There will be no preseason training this year (except ice submersion training). Equipment maintenance work includes sleigh repairs and the long shaft on the boat. The PCMB will be meeting on Herschel in July. The Minister will also be visiting this summer. Two cruise ships are scheduled to visit. One in August (116 people) and one in September, after the park is closed (240-260 people). There are concerns with late season impacts (vegetation trampling with no time to recover). The AWI (Alfred Wegener Institute) has confirmed they will be returning. They will be using the old rangers cabin and in return will be purchasing a new solar system (17k). The new building has been primed, but needs more paint and linoleum. Climate change has made landing on ice unsafe because of water on the surface, and not knowing how thick ice is. This is a safety issue, along with maintenance and care of the beach landing strip. A couple fuel drums will be stored on the island for safety. The Elder and youth program, funded through Brighter Futures, is ongoing – youth film and edit. Timing for crew changes is affected by oil and gas industry, so crew changes are now on Friday. Martin Berkman and Sally Robinson are working on a DVD of pre-visit info for visitor centres and cruise ships.

The Council could address visitation numbers and thresholds for Herschel. The park had five requests for cruise ships last year. Does the management plan have threshold for visitors? 900 visitors in a single season was the highest number to date. Can handle 160 people within a two hr window. More ice free days will lead to more cruise ships. Will be observing the September cruise ship very closely to understand impacts.

Another issue raised by concerns the application for a September cruise ship visit to Herschel Island that was screened and approved without consultation with Yukon or WMAC(NS). A letter was written re. YG involvement in screening.

Rob noted that the management plan mentions a levy or fee with regard to the impacts of cruise ships. Stephanie told the Council that a working group has been established to address cruise ships, to develop a strategy or policy. The working group will look at a fee that is directed back to Herschel, and will consider the number of visitors the island can sustain. Parks is taking the lead (Kate Moylan), other members of the working group include Richard Gordon, probably Tourism, Economic Development and other government branches. The working group will be talking to the Council in the future.

The Chair said the Council has discussed this in the past and recommended the establishment of park fees that would go directly back to the park.

Action Item 03-13-10: Secretariat staff will locate earlier correspondence from WMAC (NS) to Yukon Parks regarding Herschel Island visitor fees.

Chris said there was a working group to discuss a cruise ship that was planning to stop at northern communities. The community stops are now off the agenda, but he expects this will come up again, and when it does, YG should be at the table.

Ernest said he is concerned with the amount of traffic into Herschel. There are ways to deal with this, such as season closures. It is a matter of coordinating with travel agencies; visitors will prefer to be there when nobody is there. People who sign up for cruises can afford to pay park fees. Coordination is the issue - back-to-back cruise ship visits are difficult to manage and challenge the capacity of the rangers.

O. 2013/14 Budget Approval

Jen presented the proposed budget for the next fiscal year to the Council. The carry over is 11K (needed because the Council is operating on cash flow basis). Contribution agreement with YG is 242K. Most categories remain the same from previous year (Chair honorarium, council meetings, other meetings, JS, office costs etc.), communications is down a bit because no money was allocated for a species status report. The difference in project funding is determined by what is left over in budget. Previous years have shown higher amounts because we have been spending down the accumulated surplus.

The Chair said that the project line is a rough estimate and can be discussed with more detail at the next Council meeting, with proposals to sub-allocate funds. The costs for Council Meetings are a reflection of where the meeting is held and costs such as shared flights. Other Meetings are a major budget expense, for example, PBTC in Iqaluit. Jen pointed out that the budget matches the funding submission with regard to spending priorities and an emphasis on Other Meetings.

Jen told the Council that staff health benefits, described in the personnel policy and letters of offer are not included in the budget as an expense item (as staff currently have no health benefits).

Action Item 03-13-11: Secretariat staff will continue to research options for staff health benefits and will develop a financial resolution to present to the Council.

Motion: To accept the provisional 2013/14 Budget, as tabled.

Moved: Rob Florkiewicz

Seconded: Ernest Pokiak

Motion approved.

Action Item 03-13-12: Secretariat staff will send the 2013/14 Budget to Stephanie Muckenheim.

Rob noted the high expense of food for Council meetings relative to the cost for accommodations. Jen said that this is because there is no cost for accommodations for on-the-land meetings, but food costs are high as it is shipped in and purchased for everybody.

P. PCMB Annual Harvest Meeting

Rosa explained that Rob, Danny, Ernest, Dorothy and herself were all in attendance at the annual harvest meeting.

The Chair said this is important information for the Council in terms of harvest priorities. There was a request for funding from the AHTC in December for harvest reporting. The Council told the AHTC that it doesn't have money to contribute. Danny mentioned that ENR does harvest reporting twice a year.

The Chair asked Dorothy to provide comments from her perspective, as Harvest Coordinator for Yukon First Nations and the Inuvialuit. This was her third annual harvest meeting since the signing of the Harvest Management Plan. It was shortened to roughly two days this year. The first day was for presentations from anyone who wants to present to the Board. There was also a closed session for the Board.

The harvest data collection component of the harvest management plan is being implemented and this year an estimated total harvest for the herd was calculated. Harvest data collection in Aklavik includes the monthly drop-in program, plus the door-to-door interviews (twice a year) by ENR. The HTC sees value to people dropping-in. Dorothy is trying to provide advice to the HTC to make that program stronger. Dorothy said that they are able to compare the data sets from the door to door and the monthly interviews.

Marsha (ENR) is interested in running the interviews at least for the next year. There is no progress in collecting PCH harvest info from Inuvik and from Tuk (but it is a small harvest).

The Chair asked if she thought the info was satisfactory. She thought that the interviews that Marsha did were satisfactory and in accordance with the HMP. The drop-in data wasn't used, nor presented for the meeting.

A member indicated that the drop-in program draws people in for the gas draw and is likely not accurate.

The GNWT interviews are twice a year, for multiple species; the AHTC is monthly for drop-in draws.

The HTC is supportive of harvest reporting and will make a decision on their preferred method. Currently their preference is to do the drop-ins if they can collect more reliable information because it provides contact with hunters on an ongoing basis.

Dorothy said that at the last meeting, they made a commitment to present all historic data on the Porcupine caribou, and they got permission from the IGC to use the harvest study data and the Aklavik data set. They have those data sets to use and it will be presented and then go to the Porcupine Caribou Management Agreement parties before the public. They aren't planning to do an estimate, but present what's in the study. The GRRB is doing their own analysis on their own data, so they will combine the data sets.

Danny said that in Aklavik, they don't often meet with the Gwitchin, so they don't see the Gwitchin harvest info.

Following the Steering Committee meeting, the Chair will report back to the Council and Dorothy and have a bigger discussion at a Council level to inform the work of the program. It is important to be clear about the Council needs and expectations' of the program.

*** Ramona Maraj joined the meeting at 1:25pm***

Q. Grizzly bear program update- Ramona Maraj

Ramona explained the objective of the study - to estimate grizzly bear survival and reproduction rates. She listed the partners and explained why the study area was chosen. Various methods that were employed, including TK interviews, contaminates work, etc. Data analysis will be complete in September.

Population assessment methods included 7'x7' barbed wire stations (bated with scent lure) to capture hair tufts. Stations ran two years (2006/07). Cameras were used to count cubs, but didn't work well (got stepped on). Ran four sessions each year: there were 107 stations. Collected a lot of hair samples. Sampling showed more activity on the west side of the study area. This was interpreted as meaning there is a higher population density on the west side of the study area than the east. Density is lower where people like to harvest, the area to the west can sustain more harvest.

Danny asked how far inland the study area went (about 50 km inland). He asked if the bears were bigger on the west side. On average the bigger bears are on the west side, although the biggest bear was in the Babbage River area. In the study area (in-land), they found a sub-population of blonde grizzly bears. The darker bears seem to be more west. Danny asked how many silver tip bears they found. They didn't find any. Danny said the last one he shot was 30 years ago, and he doesn't see them anymore. This could be due to the higher harvest rate in the eastern part of the study area. Silver tips develop with age.

Results – used a sub-sampling method and randomized selection process. Ran individual ID analysis. Counted 177 individuals in the study area (DNA identification). Population analysis was completed for the study area, and the North Slope.

Danny asked how long it takes hair to recover on collared bears. It takes about a week, as the hair is just flattened. There were no cuts on collared bears and only one bear showed signs of rubbing damage.

Analysis indicated that there are roughly 400 bears on the North Slope. John Nagy estimated 316 bears. The model accounts for heterogeneity and includes cubs. The analysis was peer-reviewed and comments received spoke to the importance of determining the cause of heterogeneity. Ramona has determined that Porcupine caribou are causing the heterogeneity. Porcupine caribou calved in the study area in 2006 and 2007. Bears were eating caribou calves, and there was a lot of movement of bears. Ramona explained the movement patterns of caribou and bears and how it affects heterogeneity.

Ramona described demographic analysis and how to monitor population trends. Bears are long lived so can be studied frequently, but it is very expensive to do this work.

This study estimated a higher number of bears than the previous study, but this is probably due to inaccuracy in the previous estimate. Analysis shows a decline in the population of about 5% per year. Reynolds and Nagy also thought the population was in decline. Cub survival is high, but yearling survival is low which is very odd for a bear population.

Maximum sustainable yield is used to calculate harvest. When the population growth is at a maximum, we can harvest those bears. Right now we don't have a growth rate that we can harvest from; there is a need to figure out why that population is declining. It could be due to an environmental stressor (PCB's) or, a decline due to natural variation (i.e. the population is near its carrying capacity).

Carrying capacity is a population limit based on how much food there is. In 2006 and 2007 there was a lot of food in the study area (caribou). In 2007 they started seeing a lot of cubs, but there were also a lot of yearlings that died due to inadequate food resources.

The Council discussed what this means for tags this year. One bear was killed at Shingle Point last year that was above and beyond quota. Danny commented that in the last two years, the quotas have been filled - he wondered if this was too much. Ramona explained that in the original quota it was anticipated that one tag may or may not be used (an opportunity tag). The terms 'tags' and 'quotas' are often used interchangeably, which confuses matters because they have different meanings: the number of tags issued can be higher than the harvestable quota for instance. The quota needs to be clearly articulated to everyone.

Danny said he wants to be cautious of increasing the quota, and not to take too many. Lindsay explained that the Council has already increased the quota by two animals, and the population won't likely increase to support more than that. Ramona explained that the

quota is usually set at 2% and agreed that an increase would not likely be supported by the study results.

Ernest asked about why the bears always go back to their own area and don't just move around a lot. Ramona explained that they have a familiarity with an area; they are not truly territorial, but have affinities.

The Chair suggested it would be helpful to create a short video from Ramona's presentation. It could be housed with the AHTC, and used to explain the information to HTC members and the Aklavik public.

The Chair thanked Ramona for coming.

*** Ramona left the meeting***

The Chair asked Rob for his comments on the minutes.

Jan teleconference.

Page 5. Rob updated the Council on the grizzly bear report and confirmed Ramona's analysis of an increased overall population that the current quota is based upon.

December Aklavik HTC minutes.

Page 5 top of page 5, last sentence. Remove the sentence "muskoos are specially protected species...."

R. Parks Canada Update – Chris Hunter

Coastal Monitoring Workshop (February 27, Aklavik)

There was good participation at the workshop, but not as many government and research representatives as hoped for, as this was a busy time of year. Participants included representatives from Parks Canada (Inuvik and the national office), Geological Survey Canada, Environment Canada – eSpace, and 12 community members of 18 select invitees identified by WMAC (NS) and the AHTC (including Danny) for approximately 25 total participants. Presentations on coastal change were made throughout the day by Parks Canada, GSC, eSpace and Danny C Gordon. The purpose of the workshop was to explore three questions: what are climate change observations and concerns; what should be monitored; and, where should the monitoring take place? The goal was to roll up information gathered and prioritize it. Parks staff learned a lot from people who are out on the land all the time and heard great observations about currents, fresh water flows etc. Caribou and char were identified as top priorities. Parks Canada will now produce a map and workshop summary that will be sent to workshop participants and other organizations to inform possible research and monitoring projects. Although they could have used more time for discussion, Parks Canada is very positive about the outcome of the workshop.

Danny said there was a good mix of participants including ordinary people and the sessions went well. It really helps that Parks Canada goes to Aklavik to share information.

Rob asked how caribou and char link to coastal habitat. Chris said that a lot of subtopics were raised, for example, habitat, vegetation, travel and ice. Parks Canada will use the experience to contribute to the development of measures for monitoring the Ivvavik coast.

The Chair commented that with regard to caribou and the coast, an oil spill may have negative effects. An off shore spill may have far reaching impacts beyond the marine or off shore environment.

Chris said Parks Canada plans to implement some initiatives tested in 2012. Fieldwork details will be more refined by April, and Parks Canada will provide information along the way. Prior to the workshop, Parks Canada had determined seven measures, which would work together to monitor the coast. Ground based and remote (satellite) measures give a good cross section of biodiversity, stressors and ecosystem functions. They will be looking at subtle vegetation change, i.e. shrubbiness (resulting in a decrease in Porcupine caribou habitat) and coastline change (Are areas losing or gaining ground? And, change with regard to specific cultural artifacts, shrub cover and height, and subtle elevation change at estuaries.). Changes in vegetation communities will require updates to an existing vegetation classification map, (improved with GeoEye data). Salt water encroachment (looking at seaweed and driftwood) will be verified along transects with imagery every 5 years.

The Chair commented that while coastal monitoring is taking place because the Ivvavik Park includes a coastal area, information gained and lessons learned will go beyond what is pertinent to the park.

Chris said that Parks Canada's plans are not set in stone and they are open to suggestions. Results of the workshop will feed into the monitoring program

Danny said that since participating in workshop, he did a quick inventory of fish in Ivvavik. No other park in Canada has five different fish holes that char/dolly varden use. Ivvavik Park is rich, and feeds other areas.

Sheep Creek

The grey water system might not get installed this year if the tendering process does not completed in time to allow for field work in summer 2013. It will definitely be completed 2014. Options to improve the airstrip are being considered. Extension of the strip would require a lot of fill, but there is no gravel there except what is in the creek. Parks Canada does not have the finances or people to do the work at this time, but understands the concern. They are looking hard at other options. It is a big undertaking with no feasible solution at the moment.

Ernest said that it is all about safety. The park will be there a long time; the sooner the runway is improved, the better. Parks Canada should not wait for a nasty accident. Damage to aircraft might result in operators refusing to use the airstrip. A lot of the area was disturbed with previous mining activity; maybe gravel could be extracted with a small crusher, sandpits could be used for fill.

Chris commented that these suggestions are complex and costly. Danny suggested the job could be completed with manpower, picks and shovels.

Fee Consultation

National consultation has finished. Fees were frozen for five years. Backcountry permits have increased by three dollars, and there are new fees for group use of Sheep Creek and air craft landing. Three questions arose from local consultation: fees for back county camping (Aklavik residents pay no fee), how to collect fees from aircraft operators, and fees for Pingo National Park.

Ivvavik Visitor Weekend

Five weekends (2013) have been advertised and one is already full. Twenty people have signed up. Ivvavik visitor weekend will be offered as a prize in a contest run by Mountain Equipment Co-op (2013 or 2014) as part of their Camping Campaign. The contest will be run through Facebook and the prize will include transportation for four people to Yellowknife and Inuvik with GNWT, Canadian North and Northwest Territories Tourism contributing.

Designation of Yukon Conservation Officers

Discussion regarding the collaboration and cooperation on law enforcement is taking place (Park Wardens would be given powers under the Yukon Conservation Act and visa versa). The IFA suggests that the IGC will advise governments on the administration of law enforcement through the WMACs. Chris said he is raising the subject as a concept and is interested in hearing the views of Council members. Parks Canada will introduce the concept to the IGC next week during the regular meeting in Inuvik. It is not a new concept; there are already examples in place.

The Chair commented that this program has never been an issue for Council, but that education is needed so people understand the right to exercise authority. Council has a fact sheet that was generated for Aklavik residents. Jen said that the fact sheet had been pulled following a review and unsuccessful update, because it was causing confusion.

Rob commented that the concept is a good idea, and jurisdictional authorities should be described.

Chris will present the concept to the IGC. The Chair commented that the model is not new and that as the topic can be confusing; people need education around what it means.

Rob asked for confirmation that dialogue with YG Conservation Officers was taking place. Chris affirmed.

Porcupine Caribou Video

Chris showed the Council a short video of Porcupine caribou created through the compilation of images captured by a wildlife camera in Ivvavik (2.5 min). The video is a tool to bring awareness to caribou and the Park.

Firth River Management Guidelines

Traditionally there were 40 start dates for river trips, but there have never been more than 10 trips/year total. The peak year was 2007-08. Recently there have been 5 or 6 groups and some years, 2 or 3. The quota is not being met and Parks Canada wants to maximize use of the opportunities. Under the new guidelines, trips may be booked 24 hrs apart, but operators and private groups will still be encouraged to book 48 hrs apart. Commercial operators with historical dates will continue with those dates. If an Inuvialuit business starts up, it would have preference of dates (i.e. it would bump others). The maximum group size was removed because it was rare to get large groups, although interest has been expressed. There is potential to accommodate large groups and it is in Parks Canada's best interest to allow different group sizes based on what they can logistically fit in charters. Parks Canada believes they can mitigate effects of increased traffic on the river as they are so far from thresholds, and want to encourage people to get out on the river. In part to mitigate a potential increase in traffic, campsite monitoring will be required by commercial operators.

The draft guidelines are reduced to a more succinct, four or five page document. Parks Canada is worked with existing commercial guides, and has presented to and received support for the draft guidelines from the AHTC, ACC and existing Firth River Guides. The goal is to introduce the new guidelines this season (2013).

S. Species Status Report

Jennifer gave the Council a brief summary of the process for signing off the Species Status Report. It has existed in draft form for quite a while and has been ready to be signed off since September. Rob has reviewed it, but the Secretariat has not received any comments from other Council members. The Species Status Report is keyed to the North Slope Conference and is revised every 3-5 years. Although the report is now close to a year old, the goal is to sign off on it as written instead of revising it to today's date. The Chair suggested that Council members, who had not yet reviewed the document, submit their comments within four weeks.

Action Item 03-13-13: Council members will submit comments on the Species Status Report to the Secretariat by mid-April. Secretariat staff will follow up directly with Danny.

Species at Risk

The Council deferred discussion on the grizzly bear until the next meeting and decided not to comment on the collared pika) except to possibly report occurrence for revising maps) buff-breasted sandpiper or bank swallow.

T. EISC

The Council reviewed recent screening decisions by the EISC. Rob asked if the EISC had responded to the Council's letter regarding review exemption for research projects supported by the Council. No there has been no response.

Action Item 03-13-14: Secretariat staff/Chair will follow up with the EISC regarding screening exemption for research projects.

Action Item 03-13-15: Secretariat staff /Chair will submit comments to the EISC on the North Slope Geoscience project (Geoscience studies of the Yukon North Slope).

Polar Bear Tag MOU

Rob updated the Council. YG Justice Dept. has reviewed the MOU and suggested a few language changes. He has not heard from GNWT Justice.

Action Item 03-13-16: Secretariat staff will send Marsha Branigan an email inquiry regarding the status of GNWT Justice review of Polar Bear Tags MOU.

Rob raised the notion of implementing a harvest ID number (not personal identifiers) in the interest of tracking harvest patterns through time. He put the question to Council, 'Is there an appetite for sharing reference to hunter activity as part of the package of information that is reference in the MOU?' This idea is of interest to YG.

Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway

The Chair updated the Council on the Tuk Hwy review. The project proposal review is complete and report (*FINAL REPORT of the Panel for the Substituted Environmental Impact Review of the Hamlet of Tuktoyaktuk, Town of Inuvik and GNWT-Proposal to Construct the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway*) has been released. The project was recommended, subject to long list of conditions including the recommendation for a monitoring regime for the road, as it relates to the delta (cumulative effects). As recommended by the EIRB, an independent monitoring body would be established to monitor construction of the highway, and both WMAC's were identified as potential participants.

Jen said that she had heard concerns by Joint Secretariat staff regarding the time and workload this would entail. The Chair commented that this is a recommendation only at this time, and still needs Ministerial approval.

Jen said the wildlife surveys proposed by the GNWT re. baseline data, are not supported by the communities because of the wildlife collaring and handling involved. The communities understand how the information will be used, but feel such a study is not worth the risk to the animals. Ernest mentioned the example of Lois Harwood and her

monitoring work of approximately 20 years, and how it involved the Inuvialuit Land Administration.

U. Action Items

Jen reviewed outstanding Action Items:

Research guide

- Another discussion is needed regarding how to move the project forward.

Grizzly bear project and workshop in Aklavik

- There is a lot of anticipation in Aklavik regarding the potential for an increased harvest. It will be some time yet before the report is completed. A presentation in the community will lead to a better understanding of the population and less negativity.

Action Item 03-13-17: Rob will confirm potential dates for Ramona's travel to Aklavik. The Council will write a letter to the AHTC to provide an update on the project, and to explore/suggest options for a community briefing.

IFA funding submission

- Not complete, the Secretariat is finalizing meeting numbers and the CBM line item. Each committee has included CBM as part of their submission. It will exist as its own line item.

Action Item 03-13-18: Secretariat staff will contact the JS regarding a narrative on the CBM project that can be inserted into the funding submission.

Rob asked about the potential for ambiguity in what is being funded. Canada has provided an itemized response in the past

The Chair updated the Council on the process to date. There was a funding meeting planned with DIAND prior to Christmas that did not happen due to competing commitments. Nellie has been in contact with the Minister's office re the funding process, however, since then, the Minister resigned. DIAND officials will be in Inuvik April 3 to discuss future funding. Other Chairs have said this is not enough notice and there are conflicts with schedules.

The JS submission to DIAND does not include all committees.

Roles and Responsibility Workshop

Lindsay will follow up with Norm. (The idea was to try something this fiscal, funded by JS, but there was no money available).

V. Summer Meeting Dates

The Council discussed potential meeting dates in late June. Potential locations include Herschel Island (depending on the condition of the airstrip) and Sheep Creek based on possible cost share opportunities (airstrip good by late June).

June 10-July 15 Ernest not available. Danny not available first week June.

The fall meeting date will coincide with Game Council (Sept 26-29) and WMAC (NWT) in Whitehorse.

Danny announced that he resigned as an alternate member from Game Council in December.

W. Upcoming Meetings

I&I, WWF trans-boundary meeting and Beluga whale meeting – end April/early May
Danny commented that the people who attending the first session in Anchorage last year should attend the meetings this year.

X. Meeting Updates

BREA Workshop (Ernest, Danny and Jen) – Information was delivered in plain language; good questions, good information and good reports from researchers. The Polar Data Catalogue is the data portal for IPY and BREA.

Action Item 03-13-19: Secretariat staff will establish a link to the Polar Data Catalogue on the WMAC (NS) website.

Collaring Workshop (Ernest, Danny and Jen) – The workshop included breakout sessions and big group discussion. The workshop was long overdue. Some of the information presented had never been compiled before (e.g. the number of deaths after capture). Participants watched a video demonstration of a complete caribou capture. Presented material included information about collaring mishaps (not usually reported). Danny said he was very disappointed to learn what is going on. Information from other communities was good, as they sometimes do things differently. A lot of things that came out have been heard in the past. The workshop got people thinking of tradeoffs. In the end, people recognize it's not good to see caribou with hair damage, but agree it is needed and people have to accept it. The group made suggestions for other ways to get info, and Marsha is planning to incorporate some of these ideas. The group was more concerned with collaring and research on bears than caribou.

The Chair commented that the same concerns regarding research on polar bears have been raised at the PBTC.

Action Item 03-13-20: Jen will write up main points and recommendations arising from the collaring workshop and will establish links to presentations on the WMAC(NS) website.

The Chair informed the Council that Chris Burn had been nominated for a RCGS Gold Medal Award by the Council.

The Council agreed to produce more podcasts.

In closing, the Chair thanked the Council members for their time and participation.

Motion 03-13-06

To adjourn the meeting.

Moved: Danny C. Gordon

Second: Chris Hunter

The Chair called the meeting to an end at 5:15pm.