



MEETING MINUTES

WMACNS QUARTERLEY MEETING

November 26, 2017

Aklavik Council Chamber, Aklavik

Lindsay Staples (Chair), **Ernest Pokiak** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member), **Matt Clarke** Yukon Government (Member), **Dave Tavares** Government of Canada (Member), **Danny C. Gordon** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member), **Mike Suitor** Yukon Government (Regional Biologist), **Kelly Milner** (WMACNS Staff), **Jennifer Smith** (WMACNS Staff)

Sunday, November 26, 2017

A. Call to Order ^[SEP]

Lindsay Staples (Chair) called the meeting to order at 2:10 pm.

B. Review and Approval of Agenda

The Council reviewed the agenda and key objectives for the Muskox Workshop and the Research Plan. The Quarterly meeting agenda was reviewed. Additional topics around caribou will be added to the meeting.

Approval of Agenda – Moved by Ernest Pokiak, seconded by Matt Clarke.

C. Review and Approval of Minutes

September Meeting Minutes – No comments or additions.

Approval of September 2017 Minutes subject to additional comments from Ernest and Danny– Moved by Matt Clarke, seconded by Dave Tavares

D. Review of Action Items ^[SEP]

Jennifer led the review of action items. The Action Item table is included as an appendix to these minutes.

A question was raised regarding the status of the polar bear/grizzly bear hybrids.

Action 17-11-01 – Mike Suitor will follow up with ENR to see if there is any additional information available.

E. Financial Report

2017/18 Budget - Jennifer presented the running budget. The Council is still waiting for this year's funding. It is currently going through YG's internal process.

Motion 17-11-01 to pursue an audit based on the proposal. Moved by Dave Tavares. Second by Matt Clarke.

F. Correspondence ^[1]_{SEP}

Jennifer led a review of the correspondence. Kelly has requested additional information from PCMB regarding their request for support for a Traditional Knowledge study on the Porcupine Caribou herd.

G. Report from the Chair

Inuvialuit Final Agreement (IFA) 101 ^[1]_{SEP}

Inuvialuit Regional Corporation is currently developing curriculum for schools and committees to help orient Inuvialuit beneficiaries and committee members to the key provisions of the IFA. The Joint Secretariat (JS) is organizing a workshop to orient members to roles, responsibilities and mandates under the IFA. An initial proposal was circulated to the JS Chairs who provided feedback and asked for significant revisions. A new proposal is still outstanding. The workshop is tentatively scheduled for March 12-16. Dave Tavares will help provide some context to the JS organizers and identify some useful elements to the program.

Community Based Monitoring Program

The committee was dissolved in September. No new information about how the program will be managed has been presented to the council. It is expected that some information will be shared on Thursday, Nov. 29.

H. Report from Staff

Arctic Net ^[1]_{SEP}

WMACNS will be part of three presentations at Arctic Net and also will have three posters. We are working with WMAC (NWT) on a polar bear presentation. Lindsay, Danny, Ernest, Jennifer and Kelly will all be attending.

New Contractor ^[1]_{SEP}

WMACNS has hired a new contractor, Kaitlin Wilson, while Jennifer is away. Her contract will run until the end of March 2017.

ADJOURNED at 5:10

SPECIAL MEETING WITH THE AKLAVIK HTC

November 27, 2017

Aklavik Council Chambers, Aklavik

Ernest Pokiak Inuvialuit Game Council (Member), **Matt Clarke** Yukon Government (Member), **Mike Suitor** Yukon Government (Regional Biologist), **Craig Machtans** Government of Canada (Alternate), **Danny C. Gordon** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member), **Richard Gordon** (YG Parks), **Lindsay Staples** (Chair), **Kelly Milner** (Staff), **Jennifer Smith** (Staff), Manny Arey (AHTC), Dennis Arey (AHTC), Billy Storr (AHTC), Patrick Gordon (AHTC), Richard Gordon (Yukon Parks – Observer)

A. North Slope Research

Mike Suitor and Dave Tavares provided the group with a summary of current research projects underway on the Yukon North Slope. Questions were asked about sheep and moose surveys, and track monitoring. Long-term data from wind and weather monitoring stations was raised as a source of potential research. Beaver was raised as a species that is starting to create problems. It was suggested that there be an open season for beaver to help reduce the population. More muskrats are also being observed. Otters are also increasing.

Ideas

- Review weather data and develop a long-term weather study (summer student?)
- Monitor furbearers (beaver, muskrat, otter)
- Researchers working on the North Slope need to report back to the community (Alfred Wagner Institute).
- Interest in keeping the Porcupine caribou research program going.

B. HTC Bylaws and YG Regulations

The Yukon North Slope does not have an bylaw requirement under the IFA, although the Inuvialuit Game Council holds jurisdiction to enable bylaws in the YNS. The IFA also requires that the GNWT create bylaws to support HTC bylaws, but there is no requirement for YG, Parks Canada or DFO to do this. The IFA does not address the application of HTC bylaws outside of the NWT. If an HTC wants to have a bylaw that legally applies to areas outside of the NWT, it would require that the Game Council must agree first. It would also require the Yukon Government and Parks Canada to pass regulations to enforce it.

WMACNS QUARTERLEY MEETING

November 29, 2017

Mackenzie Hotel, Inuvik

Ernest Pokiak Inuvialuit Game Council (Member), **Matt Clarke** Yukon Government (Member), **Mike Suitor** Yukon Government (Regional Biologist), **Craig Machtans** Government of Canada (Alternate), **Danny C. Gordon** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member), **Richard Gordon** (YG Parks), **Lindsay Staples** (Chair), **Kelly Milner** (Staff), **Jennifer Smith** (Staff), **Laurence Carter** (McGill University)

A. IFA Funding Proposals

Yukon Government, Parks Canada and Environment Canada all presented their proposals for 2017/18 funding.

a. Yukon Government

- ***Porcupine Caribou Monitoring - \$52,000***

This is a continuation of previous monitoring programs and will ensure the ongoing monitoring of the Porcupine caribou herd. This year also includes an update and redesign of a database that can support the long term storage and management of Porcupine caribou data.

Discussion: Council had questions regarding the potential for more partners to help share the costs of the database redesign. Mike Suitor answered questions about the need for long-term collaring data. Land use monitoring (information on where the herd is going each year); population monitoring (what is happening with herd numbers over time); and the need to demonstrate adequate monitoring to meet management objectives for barren ground caribou in Canada are all part of the rationale for ongoing monitoring. It was suggested that some additional work on wolves might be interesting to look at.

Action 17-11-02 – Mike Suitor and Kelly will follow up on creating a simple compilation of caribou research based on Mike’s Powerpoint deck.

Action 17-11-03 – Staff will request a copy of the North Slope wolf presentation prepared by Dorothy Cooley and Bob Hayes’s report on his North Slope wolf research. Invite Peter K and other researchers to present at our upcoming meeting.

- ***Camera Trapping on Herschel Island - \$6,000***

This is to document wildlife use patterns on Herschel Island. It would allow for the deployment of more cameras and the hiring of a contractor to classify and manage the photos.

Discussion: The Council asked questions about the application of the results and how the photos will be used. Questions were raised about using the photos for long-term engagements. It was suggested that there could be some collaboration with Parks for the grizzly bear monitoring program. Concerns were raised regarding the long-term planning for the program and how it will be applied to management planning. It was also noted that no final report has been submitted, although this project will be presented in a few weeks at Arctic Net. The need for more coordination with Parks Canada and their program is also a potential way to increase the relevance of the project. It was suggested that this project needs some additional information before it can be approved and that a final report from last year's work needs to be submitted before additional funding is considered.

Action 17-11-04 – Staff to contact Cameron and connect him with Dave Tavares to see if there can be coordination on the two projects.

Discussion: Additional projects to be considered are muskox, polar bear monitoring, and a Porcupine Caribou TK project.

b. Environment Canada

- **Data base - \$?**
This would be a contribution to the work proposed to Yukon Government.
- **Godwit Monitoring - \$7,000**
This is a shorebird that will be assessed by COSEWIC in the next few years and some additional information on the species on the Yukon North Slope would be helpful.
- **Digitize YNS bird book - \$?**
This would be taking the existing bird book and making it available digitally or as an app.

Discussion: This would require more scoping.

c. Parks Canada

Dave Tavares provided a roll-up of all the projects that Parks Canada will be supporting this year in the ISR. Their specific requests for IFA funding include the following projects:

- **Grizzly Bear Occupancy - \$20,000**
This is a continuation of the previous remote camera-based study. It is anticipated that the program will need to be carried on for at least another year.
Discussion: Council raised questions on how it relates to the McCutchen research.
- **Songbird Monitoring - \$15,000**

Monitoring is showing a trend of decline in songbirds. The proposal is to establish recorders at the beginning of the year and determine if there is a change over the seasons.

Discussion: Council discussed the application of IFA funds for non-harvested species and the decision to carry on supporting this type of work. A question was raised on the study design and the statistical rigor in the development of the project. It was noted that the songbird monitoring is also an important indicator for other environmental changes.

No concerns on Parks Canada proposals. Environment Canada will come back to the council with more information, but with a focus on Porcupine Caribou project. Yukon Government's caribou research is supported. The camera trap project needs more information and Matt will get some additional information. An additional \$15,000 was approved to do the polar bear analysis.

Motion 17-11-03 – Council moves to approve the following projects for IFA funding. Letters will be sent to the relevant parties. Moved by Craig Machtans. Second by Ernest Pokiak.

<i>Party</i>	<i>Project</i>	<i>Amounts</i>
Parks Canada	Song bird monitoring	\$15,000
Parks Canada	Grizzly bear monitoring	\$20,000
Yukon Government	Porcupine Caribou monitoring	\$52,000
Yukon Government	Polar Bear Analysis	\$15,000

Additional information was requested on all other projects. The remaining \$88K will be allocated during a conference call in January.

Action 17-11-05 – Environment Canada and Yukon Government will submit their revised proposals to account for the remaining \$88K of funding by the first week of January.

B. Muskox Research Plan

The council discussed muskox research priorities brought out during the workshop in Aklavik. Major topics included population and distribution monitoring; habitat use and alterations; and caribou and muskox interactions. A final research plan will be completed by Laurence and forwarded to the Council. A budget for the research plan will also be created and shared with the Council to see where there are opportunities for sharing resources.

Action 17-11-07 – A research plan and associated budget will be submitted to the Council for review in early January. Laurence and Mike will take the lead but will work in close collaboration with other parties.

C. Muskox Framework

No major issues were identified at the workshop in Aklavik. The Council is now in a position to recommend the framework to Director of Wildlife for the Yukon Government and Western Arctic Region Superintendent for Parks Canada. The framework will also be distributed to the GNWT, GRRB, WMAC(NWT), Vuntut Gwitchin, and Alaskan organizations. A letter will be sent to GNWT and WMACNWT to determine if they would endorse the framework as well. A question was raised regarding total allowable harvest and when that would kick in. The Council discussed the difference between a management plan and a framework.

Motion 2017-11-04- Motion to recommend the framework. Moved by Dave Tavares. Second by Matt Clarke.

Action 2017-11-07 – The framework will be recommended to the Director of Wildlife to Yukon Government and Superintendent of Parks Canada. Forwarded to GNWT and WMACNWT for endorsement. GRRB, VGFN, NS Borough, ADFG, USFWS will also receive copies.

D. Herschel Island Update

Richard Gordon provided the Council with an update on the 2017 Ranger season on Herschel Island. His full report is attached as an appendix. They have hired a new ranger (12 Inuvialuit applicants). This year the season was extended for the cruise ship visit. Concerns about the landing strip were raised again this year. There was discussion around the need for better communication with the Alfred Wagner Institute. Also the need to make sure there is better tracking of research permits and compliance. A concern was raised about the actual management benefit of the AWI work and how useful it is to actual management and net benefit to Herschel and the North Slope. Also was raised that FJMC needs to be connected to their new work. There was also discussion around policy for the management of human remains and their reburial, and how gravel locations will be handled in the future.

Future management collaborations between Ivvavik and Herschel were discussed.

Action 17-11-08 – Staff to contact Alfred Wagner Institute and set up a meeting at Arctic Net to discuss concerns and develop a new engagement plan.

Action 17-11-09 – Parks Canada (Dave) and Yukon Parks (Richard) to meet on a regular basis to discuss areas of common concern and operations.

E. Member's Update

Craig Machtans – Environment Canada

- **Shorebird analysis** – This project is now underway with Round River.
- **Barren ground Caribou** – Environment Canada has requested time on the Council's next agenda to consult on the upcoming listing of barren ground caribou. Council was asked to highlight areas of concern or questions they would like answered to help Environment Canada prepare for that presentation. Questions around harvest and concerns around the consultation process itself were raised.

Action 17-11-10. Prior to the March presentation, the Council will take some time to have an internal discussion to determine the Council's position on the proposed COSEWIC listing.

Action 17-11-11. Staff will forward Porcupine Caribou correspondence to Dave Tavares.

Action 17-11-12. Share PCMB Strategic Plan with Council members

- **COSEWIC Update** – Grizzly Bear, wolverine and polar bear plans are almost complete. For polar bear, only Ontario and ISR have completed their regional plans. It is expected that the federal plan will be presented to PBAC in March. A table of all listed species is included as an appendix to these minutes. Craig described some of the challenges that COSEWIC is facing with some species that are in rapid decline but don't trigger some of the listing criteria.

WMACNS QUARTERLEY MEETING

November 30, 2017

Mackenzie Hotel, Inuvik

Ernest Pokiak Inuvialuit Game Council (Member), **Matt Clarke** Yukon Government (Member), **Mike Sutor** Yukon Government (Regional Biologist), **Craig Machtans** Government of Canada (Alternate), **Danny C. Gordon** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member), **Lindsay Staples** (Chair), **Kelly Milner** (Staff), **Jennifer Smith** (Staff), **Laurence Carter** (McGill University)

F. Herschel Island Heritage Management

Lisa Prosper presented her draft report on Herschel Island heritage management options as established in current legislation. Her presentation and report are attached as an appendix to these minutes. The Council discussed the three options she presented for consideration and identified areas for further research as well as some additional options for consideration. The need for a more wholistic cultural landscape approach was discussed and how that could be incorporated into the management of the site. Several members identified the need to articulate a statement of significance to help

guide the overall management of the site. The Council acknowledged that this is an area that they have not focused on

Action 17-11-13 – Lisa will finalize the report staff will distribute it to council members for their review.

Action 17-11-14 – Staff will work with Lisa to do a review of the Heritage section of the Draft Herschel Island Management Plan.

G. Porcupine Caribou and ANWR

Craig Machtans provided the Council with an overview of the recent activities in the United States regarding legislative changes that if adopted will allow for hydrocarbon drilling in the 1002 lands of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. There are real questions around how much oil and gas revenue they could realistically generate from this area. There are also questions around how much of the area they will actually develop and it is expected that it will be greater than stated. The Americans have included a lot of misinformation about Canada's approach to conservation of lands with the range of the PCH. The Gwich'in have led the campaign to share their perspectives and advocate for the protection of this area. No Inuvialuit representatives were present. It was mentioned that the PCH International Board has been effectively shut down as it has three vacancies within the American membership. A question around the status of the PCH Sensitive Habitats report and it was clarified that the PCTC has carried on this work and will release an updated version within the year.

Question was raised regarding the position of the Inuvialuit Game Council and what they will do regarding next steps. Inuvialuit members suggested that this is an important issue and something that the Inuvialuit need to take a position on. It was suggested that it is important that Inuvialuit as a people take a position. The potential effects of offshore drilling on polar bears was also noted as a concern.

Action 2017-11-15 – Lindsay will present this issue to the Inuvialuit Game Council and will report back to the committee. Inuvialuit members will also confer with the Game Council and ensure they understand the significance of the issue. The outcome will be reported back to the Council.

Craig brought the indicator table from the Ungava herd and asked the question around what types of evidence should be considered in determining herd harvest management. Council discussed different approaches that should be considered. Members noted that native user agreements are an important element of considering how harvest management needs to be carried out and when different management zones are being approached.

The point was made that any funding in support of a range-wide TK project for Porcupine caribou, should be predicated on some codification and criteria of how TK will be used in making management decisions. Inuvialuit TK was acknowledged as the HTCs are an important resource.

Action 2017-11-16 – Council will draft a response to PCMB to respond to their letter regarding the TK proposal. The letter would include the following points:

- **How TK will be used and how it will plug into the harvest management planning**
- **Lines of evidence that would trigger assessment**
- **Consistency across the parties**
- **How will the project support ongoing annual harvest management.**

They will need to have a proposal to send to the parties before anyone can commit money to the project.

H. Parks Canada Presentation- Research and Monitoring Update

Dave Tavares, Payden Lennie, Jay Frandsen, and Nelson Perry presented an update on Parks Canada's research and monitoring program in Ivvavik National Park. Key projects profiled include Firth River stream flow trends, grizzly bear occupancy using wildlife cameras, active layer monitoring, and songbird monitoring. This presentation is included as an appendix to these minutes.

Discussion: Inuvialuit members spoke about their observations on changes in water flow on the landscape. For grizzly bear monitoring, it was requested that Parks look to the results of the North Slope grizzly bear study and see if there is any opportunity for comparative analysis. It was also suggested that Parks provide the results of their grizzly bear monitoring with Round River who may be able to use the results in their habitat analysis. Parks Canada will see if there is an opportunity to install active layer monitoring around the buildings on Herschel Island. Council members made a request to bring recording of the bird songs to the next meeting or share them with members.

I. Porcupine Caribou Harvest Reporting

Catherine Pinard was hired on contract to do some research on the adequacy of current Inuvialuit harvest reporting as required under the Porcupine Caribou Harvest Management Plan. Her review of how the CBMP meets these requirements indicates there are several shortcomings and this program may not be the best vehicle for collecting Porcupine Caribou harvest data to meet the Inuvialuit obligations under the HMP. Problems with the frequency of the interviews and basic flaws with the overall design were raised by several members. Members identified some issues with overharvest and the sale of meat and the challenges that creates. Inuvialuit members suggested a possible tag system per household. Unemployment also factors in and the jobs and participation payments are an important driver for community support for the program. Other options for employment such as game guardians were discussed and rethinking the position. Federal and foundation funding has been available for piloting game guardian programs. Question of what role does the council want to play.

It was suggested that WMACNS could undertake a pilot approach utilizing a focus group

approach with key harvesters to try and determine what the harvest numbers are. Aklavik is a likely community but there are challenges with Inuvik. The important thing is to make sure the study design is solid. Other approaches were discussed, including: incentives and self-reporting; and reporting household consumption levels of Porcupine caribou.

Action 17-11-17 – Write a letter to PCMB with observations and recommendations on how caribou harvest data is collected. Need to ask who is accountable for the project.

Action 17-11-18 – Conduct a pilot project on PCH harvest reporting. Staff work up a study design with a contractor and contributions from Mike Suitor and Dave Tavares. Bring a budget proposal to the Council for 2017-18 funding. [Todd Brinkman – University of Alaska; Murray Humphries – other possible candidates.]

J. Grizzly Bear Bylaws

The Council reviewed Catherine Pinard and John Donihee reports regarding the grizzly bear bylaws. It was noted that the existing ISR Grizzly Bear Management Plan includes a reference to bylaws being enforceable in the Yukon through sundry permits. However, the Yukon Government changed its Wildlife Act in 2001 and removed the ability to use sundry permits and requiring activities that were previously regulated through sundry permits have their own regulations under the Act. Council discussed whether or not the Grizzly Bear Management Plan is still supported by the IGC since it was created so long ago.

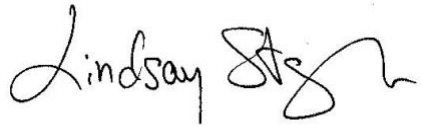
The Council has the authority under the Section 13 of the Yukon Wildlife Act to recommend HTC Bylaws become regulations. The question was raised again about the process that Yukon Government would follow if they received a recommendation from the Council. It was suggested the process being followed for the polar bear regulation currently being developed by Yukon might provide some insight into how this might occur.

Action 17-11-19 - Lindsay will approach the IGC and ask if the ISR Grizzly Bear Plan is still a current document and report back to the council in March.

Action 17-11-20 – Invite someone from YG Policy to provide an update on the polar bear regulations at our next meeting.

K. Adjournment

Moved by Ernest Pokiak; seconded by Danny Gordon.



Lindsay Staples, WMAC (North Slope)
Chair

July 14, 2020

Date



Allison Thompson, Staff

July 14, 2020

Date

