



## MEETING MINUTES

### WMACNS QUARTERLY MEETING

September 17-19, 2019

Northlight Innovation (Co-Space), Whitehorse, YT

#### Tuesday, September 17, 2019

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**Lindsay Staples** (Chair), **Ernest Pokiak** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member), **Danny C. Gordon** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member), **Craig Machtans** Government of Canada (Alternate), **Michelle Gruben** Inuvialuit Game Council (Alternate), **Allison Thompson** (WMAC NS Staff), **Kaitlin Wilson** (WMACNS Staff), **Kayla Arey** Yukon Government/WMAC NS staff, **Stephanie Muckenheim** Yukon Government, **Harmony Marcotte** Yukon College student, **Mike Sutor** (Regional Biologist)

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#### Call to Order

Lindsay Staples (Chair) called the meeting to order at 9:10 am. A round of introductions was held and Harmony Marcotte explained her coursework at Yukon College and how it relates to the Council.

#### Review of Agenda

The Council discussed the agenda for the next three days.

#### Review of Action Items

WMACNS staff led the review of action items.

It was noted that the JS is in the process of updating its internal policies (e.g. the travel policy).

There is some interest in seeing the statistics about who is accessing the WMAC NS website and when.

It was noted that there is an update from the Joint Secretariat Committee Program Manager (Jen Lam) in the meeting binder.

A cruise ship landed at King Point around September 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> and had about 300 people go onshore. Aklavik harvesters were there for caribou, but there were people from the ship on the beach. Their harvest activities were interrupted at a cost of about \$1,000/harvester boat in gas. The cruise ship project description that moved through screening did not mention landing at King Point. This would be a Yukon Government issue – there are clear regulations with respect to commercial ship landings and permitting requirements.

The cruise ship that was scheduled to land at Herschel and meet some Inuvialuit from Aklavik arrived about five hours late. Cruise ship staff were rude to the Inuvialuit, and they didn't have their coast guard paperwork completed.

A smaller sail boat off Herschel decided to go off course to follow a bowhead whale. There are no wildlife monitors on board these ships. These issues are expected to increase in the future.

***Action item 2019-09-01 Stephanie to look into the impromptu cruise ship landing at King Point around September 6<sup>th</sup> and report back to WMAC NS + AHTC.***

## **Report from Members**

### Inuvialuit Inupiat Annual Meeting:

Danny reported on the Inuvialuit-Inupiat meeting in Anchorage in August. This was the 29<sup>th</sup> annual meeting. Danny has attended about six times. It's very valuable to meet with the Alaska side; it's a continual learning process. The Inupiat commissioner Taqulik Hepa invited Danny to sit in the commissioners' meeting. The scientist in Point Barrow (Raphaela Stimmelmayer) is doing good work with polar bears and seals. The ice conditions are changing a lot. When polar bears lack ice, they will come on land. Kaktovik is assisting polar bears by leaving bowhead bone piles outside of town. This helps the bears put on fat before the winter. Danny thanked WMAC NS for sending him to this meeting. Polar bear meant everything to people in the past, and it still does today.

Black and grizzly bears are an important issue too. In Aklavik, they had to kill eight bears this summer because bears were in the dump. This issue will come up again.

This summer, someone was charged in Kaktovik with killing a bear that was not a defense of life kill – this event was not discussed at the Inuvialuit-Inupiat meeting. The Council discussed the difference between the land claim in Alaska and the IFA.

Allison supported Danny's Inuvialuit-Inupiat Meeting update. The genetic mark recapture survey for the South and North Beaufort populations began last winter/spring (2019) and technical staff discussed how to improve on this study for the following year. There was also an update from NOAA regarding an instrument-based survey – a test run will occur on the US side next year. This work is in response to the need for less invasive methods for polar bear research. Plastic and other garbage continue to be an increasing issue. These are being found in the stomachs of polar bears.

The Commission has issued 16 recommendations flowing from the 2019 meeting. Some of these included: increased communication among advisors, formalizing the technical working group structure, education, and employment of Indigenous knowledge more regularly in the technical work.

#### Arctic Ungulate Conference:

Ernest attended the Arctic Ungulate Conference in Jokkmok, Sweden. Kayla attended too. The conference was well organized. Climate change was a prominent issue. There was some interesting research on reindeer. It was good to have youth presence.

Kayla felt that the conference was a great opportunity. Researchers spoke about the impacts of icing events on reindeer. It was great to meet the researchers. There was a lot of high-level technical information, e.g. population genetics. There was a language barrier issue as well. Kayla learned from Ernest as an elder with indigenous knowledge and gained confidence in asking questions and speaking to researchers. There were a few Sámi presentations. The only other Inuit in attendance was someone from Greenland. The conference was reindeer-heavy, but there were caribou and muskox presentations as well.

Ernest and Kayla connected with Dr. Susan Kutz at the conference.

#### Michelle Gruben (alternate and HTC RP) - Aklavik Updates

This summer, the HTC worked on a project in Shallow Bay. They went 45 nautical miles from King Point and they saw one dead bowhead whale. It was sampled.

Michelle was part of the group who went to observe a cruise ship landing at Herschel Island. The experience was very rushed and unprofessional. Muriel Nagy was on the cruise ship as part of the crew.

Lots of salmon were harvested along the YNS this year – close to 200. Last year was only a few. They are mostly chum salmon. If you harvest salmon from the YNS you get the full \$50.

HTC did an on the land program at Herschel. It was great to see the Youth and the Elders interacting.

There was a shark harvested in Kugluktuk. Michelle has heard from Elders that they used to see sharks along the YNS coast many years ago.

There is an ongoing issue with researchers. The HTC supports the project but then the researchers don't come back to give an update, claiming they don't have any funding. Two Inuvialuit HTC members are going to France to meet with Hugues and attend a workshop (Hugues is paying with IRC contribution for honoraria).

The caribou did come around Aklavik this summer. Not as many people harvested. The caribou didn't stay long so the timing of harvesting activities has to be just right. Right now Aklavik is doing a community moose hunt but not a lot of people have been successful.

Eight bears were destroyed at the dump this summer. How will this impact the local harvesters, when Defense of Life and Property kills come out of the tag system? Also, the hides may not be good. Usually compensation comes from the sale of the hides and those proceeds go back to the HTC. Who is going to compensate the harvesters for those eight bears if the hides are not good for sale?

Michelle has received Inuvialuktun words for the Eastern YNS but needs to check on the spelling. The words mean 'where they travel' (wildlife travel routes) and 'where they harvest' – both names fit the region. The HTC will submit this to WMAC NS in a letter.

There have been five bowhead whales found washed up dead in Canadian waters.

#### Mike Suitor and Kayla Arey – Regional Biologist Update

This summer there was a lot of collaborative effort for Yukon North Slope research. Kayla came on as staff in May and is on until the end of September. The field work team also involved Sonny Parker who was a STEP student this summer for PCMB, Katie Orndahl (caribou PhD student), her assistant Rachel, Laurence Carter (muskox grad student at McGill), Martin Kinsler (the field technician from Dawson).

Kayla provided a PowerPoint giving an overview of her summer work. Kayla helped WMAC NS with a social media plan and pre-writing some posts. She then participated in a few different field work projects (waterfowl, caribou, muskox). In August she attended the Arctic Ungulate Conference in Jokkmok. Kayla was very interested in the cultural relevancy component of the conference and understanding the relevancy of reindeer and land to the Sámi people. This September, Kayla has been working on her own project as a YG staff – community muskox perspectives. The end product will be a video.

Mike provided an update on the Porcupine Caribou Herd. For the last 4-5 years, the caribou have been leaving the North Slope within about a week. The caribou movements this spring were quite different from previous years back to ~1971. Usually after post-calving, the caribou cut through the mountains and cross over to the Yukon. This year was different because they went along the coastal plain into the Yukon. This happened back in 2002 as well. In 2002 there was a major drowning event on the Firth River. This happened again this year at the Firth. The drowning event was not likely significant to the overall population size (approximately 130 drowned caribou were counted but there were likely more calves that were not found). The caribou that drowned were young bulls (~3 years, with their first big rack), calves and a couple old cows. The crew left the meat in the river. There were also some calves that likely died from trampling. After this, almost the entire herd ended up around Big Fish River area.

Question: Is it possible that grizzly bear population on the YNS has increased, given the increase in caribou in the past few years? Yes it's quite possible. Other ungulate populations have increased as well.

Question: Was calving good this year? It was about average.

Mike provided an update on the muskox field work. The aim long-term is to find a cheaper method to do muskox count and composition work. This year there was good productivity and recruitment in the muskox population. The YNS has been quite productive the past few years. In collaboration with Dr. Susan Kutz's lab, qiviut and fecal collection have continued.

Kayla provided an update on the muskox work in collaboration with Laurence Carter, the grad student with McGill. Over the last two summers, 334 plots have been sampled (129 were done in 2019). The sites were selected according to the GPS collar data and land cover classification. Sampling was done in each site. There were many people involved in this project, including summer students, community members, and other academic researchers. Kayla showed an animation of annual muskox movement based on collar data. Thus far, it seems that muskox prefer riparian herb-willow habitats in Ivvavik. Data analysis will continue, a couple more variables will be added. Hopefully in future this work can be combined with the caribou resource selection function work that Elie Gurarie has undertaken. Mark Hebbelwhite, who specializes in interspecies interactions, will help guide this work.

## Report from Chair

Lindsay provided a verbal update.

### JS Board Meetings

- There have been two meetings since WMAC NS last met

- The JS Board is still trying to improve management at the Joint Secretariat overall. The Committee Program Manager and Office Manager have been job-sharing the Executive Director role.
- The JS Board have engaged a new firm to do a Canada-wide recruiting search for an executive director.
- The auditor's report took a long time – this is related to long-term overhaul of JS internal paperwork.
- There is a personnel policy overhaul ongoing.
- The Joint Secretariat currently has a deferred revenue of approximately \$1 million. One of the policies under development is how to manage the surplus.
- The next JS Board meeting is in October and will include a JS board-staff meeting

#### Engagement with IRC

- WMAC NS has been trying engage IRC on the WCMP and IPCA proposal
- In late August, Lindsay was able to meet with Duane Smith (IRC Chair and CEO), Kate Darling (legal staff) and Bob Simpson (senior staff).
- Within the IRC Board and constituency there are different interests when it comes to the Yukon North Slope – from conservation-focused to development-focused.
- IRC is still interested in an economic assessment for the Eastern YNS. WMAC NS can work with IRC to develop a terms of reference for this work.
- Lindsay also shared with IRC that the IPCA proposal involves building interest in a long-term multi-million dollar fund for conservation-based activities on the EYNS. IRC is interested in this initiative, especially as it pertains to comparison with different options for economic development on the EYNS.
- The major takeaways are:
  - o We now have IRC's engagement and they are committed to formally responding to the draft WCMP and IPCA proposal.
  - o For the IRC, it's important to have the economic analysis complete before the parties meet. We should aim for IRC sign-off on the Terms of Reference for the economic assessment.
- While in Inuvik, Lindsay also met with Roger Connelly, who IRC has engaged to review the Plan and IPCA proposal and draft a response. The Council can expect a formal response from IRC on the plan by early October.

#### Other IPCA updates:

- Given the late start of the project, the timeline is worth revisiting. In terms of political timing, spring 2021 would be the latest possible deadline to get an IPCA established.
- On August 28<sup>th</sup>, Lindsay and Allison went to meet with the Tuktoyaktuk HTC. The Tuktoyaktuk Community Corporation Board was invited too, but wrote to say that they would not meet with WMAC NS until they see the mineral assessment of the YNS from the 1970s (pre-IFA). That report could not be found, but WMAC NS received a 1995 report that included information from the 1970s report. This

- report was shared with the HTCs, CCs and IRC. The Tuktoyaktuk HTC meeting notes will be shared with IRC once the HTC Directors have approved them. The HTC was conservation-focused and in support of the initiative.
- The Aklavik CC and HTC are aligned in their support of the IPCA initiative.
  - WMAC NS has been clear that Inuvialuit must be at the table on this initiative. This would include the IRC and IGC, at a minimum. If Aklavik wants someone to participate, the door is left open (there is funding available).
  - Ernest noted that economic progress is important to the Inuvialuit but there is the cycle of boom and bust. There are Inuvialuit harvest assistance programs (IHAP) and the community gets some money. In the situation now, there's not a lot of jobs. People in Tuktoyaktuk rely a lot on country food (fish, geese, caribou). When it comes to economic opportunities, there needs to be a balance. Wildlife and the environment are so important.
  - Michelle noted that during the Ivavik management planning process, Inuvialuit were asking about the potential for Guardians programs.
  - Ultimately, if a fund is established, it would be up to Inuvialuit to define how it should be administered. There are lots of possibilities.
  - Stephanie asked about the economic opportunities assessment – will it just be conservation-based opportunities, or broader?
    - o WMAC NS has invited IRC to provide input into the scope of the assessment, which could broaden it. It would not be a mineral assessment in the traditional sense, though.
  - An important question that came up during the Tuktoyaktuk meeting was about the implications of the fact that the Eastern YNS is crown land. Therefore, as it stands currently, the Inuvialuit would not have any preferential access to revenues deriving from activities on these lands.
  - Under the Withdrawal Order, there is no staking of land on the EYNS. IRC is interested in knowing what kind of uses would be permissible under the Withdrawal Order in layman's terms. This is an important question and warrants legal research.

## Correspondence

Kaitlin provided an overview of some of the key incoming and outgoing letters:

- There was an early engagement letter from Yukon on the federal grizzly bear management plan (stemming from the federal *Species At Risk Act* listing grizzly bear as special concern).
- There was an invitation from IRC to attend an Inuvialuit research agenda workshop. WMAC NS was unable to attend. IGC was also unable to attend but may be meeting with IRC in the upcoming weeks.
- Jen Lam provided a written update of her activities as the Committee Program Manager at the Joint Secretariat.
- The EIRB applied for funding from Canada to harmonize the IFA (Sections 11 and 13) with the federal Environmental Assessment Act.

## Staff Updates

### Migratory Bird Regulations:

Allison provided a summary of the work done to date, including the legal analysis provided by Willms & Shier, in preparation for a response to the proposed changes to the federal Migratory Bird Regulations.

Craig provided a perspective on the legal analysis. It seems to have glossed over some of the detailed concerns raised by Inuvialuit organizations. The intent from Canada is to reinforce indigenous rights.

To be discussed in greater detail at the joint WMAC meeting.

## Discussion Items

### IGC Data Request:

The IGC has requested a lot of moose TK data from WMAC NS. This has led to discussions of permissions for TK data, how to appropriately share data, capacity for sharing data, etc. There will be a preliminary meeting next week for relevant individuals (IGC, WMAC NWT, WMAC NS, FJMC chairs and staff, and other JS staff) to start to discuss this topic. Kaitlin requested input from the Council members; that conversation included the following points:

- The data request was very general which makes it difficult – WMAC NS has a lot of different TK data
- With the Inuvialuit Harvest Study, three tiers of users were established and permissions/protocols were developed based on the tiers
- When it comes to the knowledge holders, if the data are aggregated and non-personal, what does it mean to have/need the consent of the knowledge holder in the context?
- The political landscape of data ownership/holding and sharing is evolving over time
- If the Council's approval is required, the Council needs to be completely comfortable with releasing the data. One consideration might include the recipients' ability to properly house the data that is shared.
- It is important to find capacity to analyze data, rather than just letting it pile up
- It's important to mobilize this knowledge and share it if we are able to. There is a growing urgency to bring TK to the table, but currently there are the aforementioned (and other) barriers to this
- Consent forms can be used to ensure that if the knowledge holder passes on, their knowledge can be used in future projects
- There is an Inuvialuit Traditional Knowledge policy that has been drafted and approved by IGC but not yet by IRC – this policy may be able to provide guidance for these types of requests in future

### CBMP Update:

Allison provided a summary of the contents of the CBMP information package and requested Council members to review in greater detail before Friday, when Chloe (CBMP Coordinator) will be presenting to the Council. Items were broken down into key items (to be discussed) and informational pieces to inform future discussions.

Allison also walked the Council through the WMAC NS briefing note on CBMP, including considerations and key questions for Council discussion.

CBMP Infographic – provides a summary of six programs currently housed within CBMP and nests CBMP within the ISR/IGC structure.

## Wednesday, September 18, 2019

Northlight Innovation (Co-Space), Whitehorse, YT

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**Lindsay Staples** (Chair), **Ernest Pokiak** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member), **Matt Clarke** Yukon Government (Alternate), **Danny C. Gordon** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member), **Michelle Gruben** Inuvialuit Game Council (Alternate), **Craig Machtans** Government of Canada (Alternate), **Kaitlin Wilson** (WMACNS Staff), **Kayla Arey** Yukon Government/WMAC NS staff, **Mike Sutor** (Regional Biologist), **Stephanie Muckenheim** Yukon Government Staff, **Richard Gordon** (Yukon Parks), **Jessica Norris** (Yukon Government)

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### Review and Approval of Agenda

The meeting was called to order at 9:06am.

**Motion 2019-09-01** *Approval of Agenda – Moved by Ernest Pokiak, seconded by Craig Machtans.*

### Review and Approval of Minutes

**Motion 2019-09-02** *Approval of June 2019 Minutes – Moved by Matt Clarke, seconded by Danny Gordon*

**Motion 2019-09-03** *Approval of June 2019 Special WCMP Minutes – Moved by Craig Machtans, seconded by Matt Clarke*

### Special Presentations

Hugues Lantuit (Alfred Wegener Institute) provided a summary of work on the North Slope in 2019 and recent results.

Results of note:

- Permafrost in our region is warming at a rate of 0.8 degrees per decade.

- Valleys play a unique role in the movement of organic carbon through the landscape and between land and sea. Soil organic carbon (SOC) is highly variable in valleys on Herschel Island.
- The lab has been monitoring snow melt in catchments, looking at the effect of earlier snow melt on the mobilization of SOC. This work also documents the type and depth of snow which has relevance for wildlife. The method is experimental and is limited by the bandwidth of the satellite and German Space Agency access – could be extended to the rest of the YNS. Researchers in Nunavik are already working on something similar with caribou and snow.
- When permafrost soil is placed in sea water and resuspended (imitating wave action) for extended periods of time the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions may actually be greater than exposure to air.
- Spring sampling trip occurred in 2019 to look at what happens before melt and runoff.

Nunataryuk General Assembly is taking place in France next week and there will be five representatives from the western arctic (as well as elsewhere in the north).

One of the issues that requires further consideration is researcher needs for boat charters. There is an opportunity for the HTC to collaborate.

Hugues provided an early assessment of the 1980s King Point geotechnical report and the possibility of a port at this site. Ultimately, this location is experiencing considerable erosion that will likely continue, making it unsuitable for coastal construction. He can provide a more in-depth assessment if the Council would find it useful, but it would require some lead time.

### **Financial Report**

Allison provided a summary of the quarterly report to the end of July 2019. The only significant change is the additional 10k in rollover, which was distributed throughout the budget into accounting costs and consulting/legal costs. This 10k was confirmed after the June meeting.

### WCMP Companion Report Discussion

Kaitlin provided an overview of the work the staff has done with Joan Eamer and Round River to scope out the supporting documents for the WCMP. The staff will take over editing of the Plan itself and Joan will shift over to drafting the Companion Report.

The staff suggest streamlining the Companion Document with some components of Round River's final conservation assessment. Some Council direction on the scope of the companion report would be helpful in figuring out Joan's budget.

Previously, when WMAC NS was developing the concept of the WCMP, direction was provided to keep the Plan readable, with a backing document that can compile the information that informed the plan so that it isn't lost.

Council feedback:

- The companion report will likely not be essential to IPCA negotiations
- In ten years, when we want to update this report, these chapters won't capture 'why we did things the way we did' – documenting this type of thing now would be valuable (e.g. why did we pick that # of focal species, etc.)
- The companion report is a good opportunity to document what researchers we worked with, community priorities, etc. this can provide context for this work for future council members and researchers to use as a reference document
- Inuvialuit member perspective: it's always good to have a resource, this is analogous to the Aklavik Community Conservation plan type work, this can be a similar tool

Currently the Companion Report is proposed to be a living document – is that desired?

- Frequently updating could be a waste of time (e.g. updating every 3 years when you are using a 30-year dataset)
- In the past, the council generally updated the species status reports on a 3-year basis in sync with the North Slope conference
- Could add a special section for addendums to add newer pieces of relevant work – this would avoid the need for a rewrite
  - o Everyone likes this idea, something like this would mean there may actually be staff capacity to do an update
- This is written as a management guide for each species (looking at the table of contents)

How to capture need for monitoring on the land in the companion document?

- Can include a section in 'issues, concerns, stressors' on human footprint issues and need to monitor

So far, we have been approaching this document on a species basis. Would the companion document have a section on traditional use? These types of studies happen every couple of decades. Same for section in current WCMP on monitoring. Need to think about what sections of the WCMP require additional backup chapters.

There's also the issue of file management in the office and how members can access it. Membership will need to know that the information is in a specific spot. Should our effort in the office be more focused on information management?

A different way of looking at this is: how/have we used the 2003 report?

Round River Conservation Studies

Round River has proposed providing WMAC NS with a final 'conservation assessment' report that would provide more maps and documentation of methods, assumptions, etc. This would constitute the final report on all the work they have done for the Council in support of the WCMP.

In conversation with Kim from Round River, the staff discussed how to move forward with the companion report, conservation assessment, map atlas, spatial data library, etc. One idea is to have some of Round Rivers documentation (of analysis, etc) included in the companion report. The more technical methodological information could be included in the map atlas. Another piece is the spatial data library, which would be how WMAC NS would house and control the RRCS-developed data.

Questions for Council:

- 1) What do you think about documenting methods (modeling, other elements of the Plan)?
  - 2) Is there a place for RRCS' reporting on their work within the Companion Report (and map atlas)?
  - 3) Is a map atlas useful?
- From an HTC perspective, maps are always useful. The maps can also help document how we came to a certain decision.
    - o There could be a printed atlas and digital version of the document
  - As long as the information is somewhere, from a technical perspective, that is satisfactory
  - Maps are useful; YG normally builds their own maps and would be interested in accessing the data on an as needed basis
  - Re point 1, likely if we need to tweak a map in the short term, we'd go back to RRCS. In a year or two, we may want to use new maps. Important to have the data compiled somewhere secure and accessible, with well-documented metadata.
  - RRCS is interested in publishing some of their pieces so would need detailed documentation on that, E.g. by the time we got a final grizzly bear map, there was a lot of intermediate back and forth generating assumptions, etc. some of that would likely come out in a publication.
  - At some point in the next year, the Council can generate some guidance in terms of data sharing and management
  - Kim has already generated a high-level methods statement with respect to the cultural/ecological models that they were looking to build at the beginning of the project. For question #1, a high-level treatment is useful – not bothered about where it goes
  - It's useful to be informed by what work was done previously
  - Spatial data – store with Yukon and the Council. Should be stored a couple of places. Parks Canada and the Joint Secretariat may be interested.

- Plain language writing is good for now
- Strategies for the companion document to mirror in the plan?
  - o Species, TU, contaminants, climate change - outside of that (interjurisdiction cooperation, etc.) can all be accessed in Council documentation

### Canada Nature Fund Budget

The Council has received approval of their proposal under the Canada Nature Fund Target 1 Challenge. The monies received from Canada (\$349,000 in 2019-20 and \$70,000 in 2020-2021) must be used within those years – there is no rollover allowed. The matched funds are more flexible. The plan is to account for this project separately from the Council’s internal budget accounting. To be discussed further later in the week along with the contribution agreement.

### **Member Reports**

#### Species at Risk update for WMAC NS

Saleem Dar and Syd Cannings, Canadian Wildlife Service

Syd provided an overview of the species moving through the federal *Species At Risk Act*. Barren-ground caribou were assessed as threatened three years ago; pre-listing consultation is ongoing in Nunavut, although it is complete for Yukon and NWT. CWS are looking for the desired level of involvement in recovery planning for grizzly bear, which were listed as special concern in 2018. Wolverine were also listed as special concern in 2018, but recovery planning engagement has not yet begun.

It was clarified that harvest management for species such as bears and caribou is not a federal process – it’s managed through the land claim process. Rights provided to Inuvialuit through the IFA prevail over anything in the federal SARA. Indigenous groups across Canada were engaged in the development of the federal SARA legislation and are also engaged at every step of the SARA process. The federal SARA is designed to get people working together on recovering species.

For the collared pika management planning process, there was a TK survey done in 2019. Unsure if it went down to the community level. Saleem can find out who the survey went to and share that information with the Council.

Red necked phalarope was re-assessed as a species of special concern. There used to be a lot around Ptarmigan Bay and Kay Point, but Danny hasn’t seen them for about 5-7 years. The farther west you go, the more you see. There are so few they are not harvested any more.

The management plan for the red-necked phalarope is being drafted; a first draft may be provided this winter. The draft buff-breasted sandpiper management plan will likely be this fall.

Consultation on downlisting peregrine falcon to “not at risk” is open until October 2019. Council input is welcome.

A Council member asked why bearded seal isn't on the list of species at risk? Saleem expects that the species will be assessed in the next 3-4 years.

#### Syd Cannings - Bumblebees

Syd Cannings provided an updated on the gypsy cuckoo bumble bee recovery strategy development. The gypsy cuckoo bumble bee has been found on the YNS historically although not in the past 10 years. There may have been one sighting in Ivavik this summer. On the YNS, they would occur near the Firth River.

#### Craig Machtans – CWS update

##### Funding

- ECCC gives out money in two ways: 1) specific programs e.g. AFSAR, Canada Nature Fund 2) Directed – no specific application, for a set of ongoing priorities (species). In the future, the focus will be on providing “directed” funds

##### Priority Species

- Under the Pan-Canadian framework/approach - more information to come
- Want to get away from single species management and work on processes that cover more species and habitats at the same time
- Under that framework, there is a list of tier one species
- There will be some money for caribou in Yukon, but other species may not get funded

##### ANWR

- On September 12th, the final Environmental Impact Statement was released for oil and gas drilling in ANWR
  - o The most development-friendly option was recommended
- That recommendation started a 30-day clock for a “Record of Decision” (October 10<sup>th</sup>), which is the date for the final document where they say what they will do.
- As soon as they issue the Record of Decision, they can move forward with lease sales.
  - o A lease sale provides rights to the company purchasing. The sale could take a couple months. The courts could prevent permitting processes from moving forward (although an injunction is unlikely). If the courts stopped development, there could be a need for retroactive compensation to the company(ies) that purchased leases.

- When the Record of Decision is issued, all the lawsuits are expected to be filed against the US Federal Bureau of Land Management
  - o The hope was that the lawsuits would ask the court to stop the lease sales until the court cases are settled. In order to stop the lease sales, lawyers would have to make a special case saying that just undertaking sales is creating harm that cannot be undone – this would be a tough argument to win.
  - o The lease sales will likely occur while the government is being sued, so companies will have rights in ANWR while the lawsuits are being settled.
- Next week the Porcupine Caribou Technical Committee will meet and discuss a path forward.
- Organizations in Canada can sue the US government if desired. The federal government is unlikely to sue, but may join in on a US NGO suit.
- The American Gwich'in are planning on filing their own set of lawsuits, likely different from American NGOs.
- Do the Inupiat in Alaska have any rights to the 1002 lands?
  - o They own some of the lands in the 1002 area and have their own development corporations that are looking to drill on their own land

***Action item 2019-09-02 Staff to review the contents of the Final EIS for the 1002 lands oil and gas development proposal and compare with Inuvialuit/co-management response to the draft EIS.***

## Special Presentations

Christian Thomas – Yukon Heritage

Heritage resource management is now being heavily influenced by climate change. Flooding, longer, stronger storm seasons, and coastal erosion are putting heritage structures at risk. Permafrost melting also destabilizes structures. There is an effort to preserve the archeological components when possible. There is also repairs and mitigations to existing structures. Laser scanning buildings helps to document resources that may be lost or damaged in the future. Sometimes artifacts are documented and removed when they may be lost otherwise.

26% of inventoried cultural features have been affected by erosion. That will increase to 45% - 60% by 2100.

Climate modelling is helping to predict where efforts for heritage conservation need to focus. Drone flights help to collect additional data.

Excavations of a sod house at risk is planned based on modelling. This work will occur in the summer of 2020. Other work could include Adalvak Spit. There are also opportunities for education and bringing digital results to classrooms, including through virtual reality.

YG is looking to work with the community to determine the needs and perspectives on how to document the impact of climate change – this work would be over a medium time scale (5 years).

Ashley Piskor – Parks Canada

*Ikpikyuk Reburial (Stokes Point)*: There was a reburial of repatriated bones in 2006. It was recently discovered that a bear had dug up the contents of the site, reburial is planned for next summer (2020) in consultation with Aklavik Community Corporation.

*Management Tool and Online Story Map*: Spatial information paired with heritage site information, aiming to mobilize existing data, Clarence Lagoon has been used as a trial for this approach to sharing.

*Clarence Lagoon Documentation*: This site is known to be at risk based on coastal erosion research. It is also a site of significant Inuvialuit and settler history, as such documentation has occurred in a variety of spatial and visual forms, this winter will include consultation with people in Aklavik about how to treat each artifact (the story map above will support this work), consultations will inform 2020 workplan.

*Inuvialuit Living History*: ongoing content development by Inuvialuit, linking to heritage resources, partnership with IRC and Inuvialuit Communication Society

*Sheep Creek Interpretive Panels*: currently under review, meant to provide learning opportunity for park visitors particularly on the history of Inuvialuit gold mining in the region

Katie Orndahl – Caribou vegetation work

- Relationship between caribou and vegetation – how are caribou affecting their environment?
- Field work includes cover, height and biomass measurements and 1-2cm resolution UAV flights
- These are paired with satellite imagery then integrated with caribou satellite collar data to explore the effect of caribou on vegetation
- Data collection across Alaskan caribou herd ranges
- Goal of improving our understanding of density dependent effects over time

Cameron Eckert – Herschel Qikiqtaruk

Update on wildlife monitoring on Qikiqtaruk:

- Remote cameras are the most recent addition to the ways Yukon Parks is collecting information about wildlife
- Cameras are positioned around the edges of Qikiqtaryuk to capture animal movement along the shoreline and between the island and mainland

- This network is now integrated with the Ivvavik camera trap network for estimating grizzly bear occupancy
- Kayla and Jessica, as Inuvialuit students, have supported this field work through installation and monitoring
- Data are being shared between the two parks
- Important link between Yukon College students and researchers working on the island

#### Richard Gordon – Qikiqtaruk 2019 Season Update

- 657 visitors this season
- This year was an important one for containing visitors due to danger from bears and limited visibility
- Richard will provide a comprehensive written report at a later date (as he had just returned from the island)

## Thursday, September 19, 2019

Northlight Innovation (Co-Space), Whitehorse, YT

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**Lindsay Staples** (Chair), **Ernest Pokiak** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member), **Matt Clarke** Yukon Government (Alternate), **Michelle Gruben** Inuvialuit Game Council (Alternate), **Danny C. Gordon** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member), **Craig Machtans** Government of Canada (Alternate), **Kaitlin Wilson** (WMACNS Staff), **Allison Thompson** (WMAC NS Staff), **Mike Suitor** (Regional Biologist), **Stephanie Muckenheim** Yukon Government staff, **Christine Cleghorn** Yukon Government staff, **Jen Muir** Yukon Government Staff, **Jennifer Smith** WMAC NS Contractor, **Richard Gordon** Yukon Parks staff

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Meeting started at 9:05am. Lindsay provided an overview of the day's schedule.

### IPCA/WCMP Planning

Jennifer Smith provided an overview of the activities that have occurred related to the Council's Yukon North Slope Wildlife Conservation and Management Plan and Canada Nature Fund proposal, including:

- her trips to ISR communities
  - Jen visited Inuvik to meet with the Joint Secretariat staff, and Aklavik to meet with the HTC and Community Corporation directors and Elders Committee.
  - Allison and Lindsay traveled to Tuktoyaktuk and met with the HTC directors but not the Community Corporation
- Engagement of IRC
- Engagement of US foundations – for contributing to a long-term, multi-million dollar trust fund where the interest could be used to run programming in a conservation area on the Eastern Yukon North Slope.

- WCMP feedback so far:
  - Aklavik has been largely supportive of the draft Plan
  - IRC is focused on Section A, which pertains to the recommendation for a conservation designation on the Eastern YNS
  - The Joint Secretariat staff had some concerns about language

The IPCA and draft WCMP are intertwined. The Plan, though, does not aim to pre-determine the IPCA negotiations. The Council's groundwork has resulted in the ability to project different scenarios for the EYNS, e.g. 80% protection vs 60% or 100%. The version in the plan is derived from recommendations by Aklavik CC directors, HTC directors and Elders.

In conversations with IRC, two requirements have come out:

- 1) Inuvialuit control
- 2) Funding for Inuvialuit

In its letter of support for the IPCA proposal, IRC provided support that was contingent on an economic assessment being done for the EYNS. Money has been identified in the Contribution Agreement to see that work undertaken. Within the Council's mandate and existing legal regime on the North Slope given the Withdrawal Order, the Council would be looking at conservation-based economic activities. Within the IRC Board, there is interest in other types of economic opportunities outside of this scope. IRC will be invited to provide input into the terms of reference of the assessment.

WMAC NS needs to sign a contribution agreement with Canada in the next week.

Allison provided a high-level summary of key activities included in the draft federal contribution agreement.

Yukon Government was advised to consider their involvement in the drafting of terms of reference for the economic opportunities assessment. It will be important to have all parties feel that this piece of work is useful for the negotiation process.

Leveraging Nature Fund money to access other Yukon Government funds is a possibility going forward. Once the trust is in place, there will likely be other opportunities to leverage this significant fund and the new Inuvialuit-led conservation area for additional funding contributions. Operationalizing the trust – there are models for how to do this that could guide how Inuvialuit would like to manage this fund.

Should an IPCA be put in place for the EYNS, the role of WMAC NS wouldn't deviate from the IFA mandate. The trust would not be managed by the Council. It would look similar to how the Council engages with the park on Herschel Island. During the

negotiation of the establishment agreement, the Council will play a facilitating role for the IFA parties and supporting the review of the WCMP. The Council also brings funding to the table (the Nature Fund contribution is tied to the Council) along with significant amount of research, mapping support for establishing boundaries etc.

There are three main issues to be discussed during the negotiation: Drawing boundaries on a map, economic opportunities, and what is reviewable at what point in time (boundaries, level of designation, legislative tools in use).

The first negotiation meeting would be to look at the comments and major issues for the WCMP, including interest in the IPCA. The parties could then agree to several more meetings in the new year.

Jen Muir noted that many of these topics are on the agenda for the ICC meeting. YG would also appreciate informational meetings with Jen Smith.

It is expected that all parties will bring their own legal counsel to each meeting, at their own expense. Legal funds in the Nature Fund budget are intended to cover preparatory and support work by John Donihee, for example, the development of a conceptual agreement for consideration during negotiations or the legal definition of scope of allowable development on the EYNS under the withdrawal order.

CPAWS has also shown interest in the IPCA work.

#### Canada Nature Fund Contribution Agreement

Council reviewed the draft contribution agreement: the wording for expected results and project activities, and the budget.

For Canada, the perspective is to schedule a meeting for as soon after the election as possible (November).

WCMP comments from Canada are coming from CWS and Parks, and maybe DFO.

How flexible is the funding? It's the staff's understanding that we can move around costs as long as we've indicating using some ECCC funding in that general category.

There were some questions about WMAC NS' ability to spend all the funds by March 2021. If WMAC NS anticipates not being able to spend all of Canada's funding in year one, we notify Canada as soon as possible. There were some suggestions for how to reallocate the funding in year one to maximize effort and budget use.

WCMP approval – how long would it take?

- Canada: Endorsement of the plan - Ministerial approval – a couple months

- Yukon – Endorsement of the Plan – unsure, but good that its going through preliminary review now

**Resolution 2019-09-01** *To approve the signing of the Canada Nature Fund Target One Challenge Contribution Agreement, as revised by WMAC NS on September 19, 2019, for the negotiation of an Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area on the Eastern Yukon North Slope. As tabled by Ernest Pokiak, seconded by Matt Clarke.*

Question: Any preliminary thoughts on how Aklavik would be plugged in to the negotiating table? IRC and IGC will each provide a negotiator. Aklavik can provide someone too if desired. The person coming out of Aklavik needs to be very knowledgeable. And there needs to be continuity – one person over the length of the entire project. There needs to be balance between having representation, without too many negotiators at the table.

#### Round River Conservation Studies Finances discussion

Allison led the Council through a review of RRCS' September 18<sup>th</sup> 2019 briefing note on their proposed budget and projects for the remainder of 2019-20. The RRCS budget is notional and numbers are estimates.

The Council recommended ensuring that there is a clear delineation for when Round River's support for the WCMP is complete. The additional projects for the IPCA project should also be bounded in terms of scope and when they will be completed.

Discussion of manuscript on Bayesian RSF:

- There should be funds available in academic world, so money for this work shouldn't come from WMAC NS core funds
- Staff to provide feedback to RRCS that they should remove "and manuscript" from the description of the grizzly bear work

Needs assessment and study design for traditional use climate assessment:

- This line item may open the window to an additional, ongoing project
- Is there a need for this study? It was included in the Council's Nature Fund proposal and is referred to in the draft contribution agreement as well
- The Council will work to ensure that this project remains bounded in scope

**Action Item 2019-09-03** *Staff to update the language in the contribution agreement and RRCS budget to reflect the following substitution: change "Undertake a climate vulnerability and resiliency analysis for the Eastern Yukon North Slope..." to "Scope a climate vulnerability and resiliency analysis for the Eastern Yukon North Slope..."*

Companion report/map atlas:

- Is there still a need for a decision-support tool?
  - o Given the IPCA negotiations should decide what happens on the EYNS long-term, the DST is likely not needed
  - o For future needs, YG can provide ongoing analysis.
  - o In terms of an atlas, there could be a series of PDFs where you can turn on and off layers. The emphasis is on not creating unnecessary overhead and capacity burden on staff.

***Action Item 2019-09-04 Staff to organize a discussion on the integration of RRCS reporting into the companion document (Kim, Joan, YG/Mike to be included)***

## Special Presentations

### Stephanie Muckenheim – Yukon North Slope Conference

It's Yukon Government's responsibility to run the North Slope Conference. 2020-2021 is the next cycle to hold the conference. The budget is \$50,000 – same as it was in 1984. Stephanie has set aside some dates at KDCC. Time to start scoping out a theme and a possible Chairperson. January or February 2021 are the suggested dates. It was suggested to use an Inuvialuktun word for the title of the conference. Usually the organizing committee is just Stephanie and the office staff. Planning starts about a year out, including picking a theme and a chair. It is likely that there will be no supplementary funding available for this conference. Registration fees have varied in the past but it is nice to keep them low. It is worth mentioning to the federal government that \$50,000 from 1984 is worth over \$100,000 today. Could ask for current dollars.

There is a beluga summit planned for Inuvik in February 2021 – important to make sure the two don't overlap.

### Cassandra Elliott – Traditional and Local Knowledge Coordinator at the Joint Secretariat

Cassandra provided a presentation to the Council about her position, how it is funded, and the programs she is running.

One of the big pieces of work right now is leveraging funding for the TLK coordinator position to continue. There are project funds available but it's more difficult to get salary funding. Cassandra is hoping to receive some salary dollars from the Canadian Wildlife Service.

ABEKS – IGC has requested that the JS store copies of the ABEKS data because the data contain Inuvialuit (and Gwich'in) knowledge, and the future of ABEKS is always up in the air. They still need to sort out issues around having combined Inuvialuit/Gwich'in data. Another initiative is to catalogue the ABEKS audio recordings (tapes) and possibly digitize them. There's a desire to combine future efforts with the Inuvialuit Harvest

Study to have the same staff and training and reduce community member burnout. This could help with continuity for ABEKS.

There was a question about the content of the audio tapes. ABEKS is unsure of the content, but the ABEKS surveys used to be a lot longer and contained some narrative type questions.

Cassandra will be receiving NVivo expert training so that she can train people in NVivo eventually.

Cassandra is looking at building an interim JS TK repository in anticipation of a larger data management structure with IRC. This would have consent forms, NVivo files, etc. all stored together for easy access.

IRC and the Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Centre each have their own archives. Neither have direct access to consent forms so they are not good storage options right now. The hope is eventually to work more closely with both of them.

Cassandra is working on repatriating data – e.g. if researchers do a TK study and the community owns the data, but there are no copies of the data in the ISR, the JS repository can provide a place to house the data and Cassandra can provide support to the community in accessing their data.

ISR TLK policy:

- The aim is to have Inuvialuit retain ownership of their data
- After the policy is done, there will be presentations to all organizations including co-management

How does this work affect the permitting process by Aurora Research Institute (ARI) for TK projects in Inuvialuit communities, recognizing they have an ethics committee too?

- IRC is looking at re-vamping some of the research procedures with ARI and how licensing happens in the ISR
- Unsure if the timing of this policy will match up with that exercise
- When someone applies for a license, Cassandra will get an email and she can communicate directly with the researchers about the policy. The IRC research advisor can also make comments about the project based on the policy.

Cassandra presented the TK policy, which contains a series of policy recommendations. There are a set of procedures that would help the researcher meet these recommended policies.

Cassandra will share the draft policy with the Council – it is not to be distributed though.

It was noted that researchers should be providing the HTC advanced notice regarding any proposed projects – e.g. not a month before the project is supposed to start. Respecting the capacity issues of the HTC and their meeting cycle.

Cassandra will review the draft WCMP.

Have you been able to locate the TK studies by Imperial Oil that are really old?

- For the beluga TK project coming up, wanted to stop collecting new information
- Cassandra did a literature review and gaps analysis for beluga and wants to expand this to other species

Cassandra provided an overview of three of the four Traditional Knowledge RSEA projects:

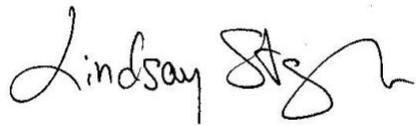
- Understanding the importance of ice
  - o Collective mapping sessions for winter travel routes in the ISR
  - o There was some on the land verification
  - o The end goal is to connect this project with other mapping initiatives in the eastern arctic and Alaska to show overlap of all trails
  - o Not meant to be comprehensive
- Inuvialuit cultural life out on the land
  - o Did a workshop to ask what kind of questions to ask, who to interview, what product to give back to community
  - o People wanted something back for the schools, so Cassandra is doing a podcast for the schools
  - o There will be a separate report produced on this project with a broader scope about barriers to harvest
    - This report that's in the binder focuses on the role of harvest – culture, education, relationships, wellbeing and survival
  - o It was noted that sometimes with verification, the TK holders don't read and write properly and this can be a barrier (e.g. with online verification)
    - The best practice would be to have technicians sit down with people and review the interview transcriptions
- Inuvialuit place names (being worked on by a Michael O'Rourke (post doc, Prince of Wales))
  - o Trying to compile place names onto a single map that people can use

It's clear that there is a large amount of research fatigue and also frustration from people that don't know how their information is used after the interviews. More feedback and communication is required.

With the travel routes project, it would be interesting to see travel routes that were collected prior to the claim for the use and occupancy studies.

When it comes to travel routes, it was noted that there's quite a bit missing in the historic data – e.g. old schooner routes all the way over to Alaska. In April and May Aklavik comes alive with snow machines. The whole country all the way to Alaska and Kaktovik has been traveled, and all the way down the Blow River. Cassandra responded that it's generally recognized that there are gaps in the travel routes mapping work and it would be great to fill them in eventually.

**Motion 2019-09-04** to adjourn the September 2019 quarterly WMAC NS meeting –  
*Moved by Ernest Pokiak, seconded by Matt Clarke*



July 14, 2020

Date

Lindsay Staples, WMAC (North Slope)  
Chair



July 14, 2020

Date

Allison Thompson, Staff



Wildlife Management Advisory Council  
North Slope