



MEETING MINUTES

WMACNS QUARTERLY MEETING

June 4-6, 2019

Northlight Innovation (Co-Space), Whitehorse, YT

Tuesday, June 4, 2019

Northlight Innovation (Co-Space), Whitehorse, YT

Lindsay Staples (Chair), **Ernest Pokiak** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member), **Matt Clarke** Yukon Government (Alternate), **Dave Tavares** Government of Canada (Member), **Tyler Kuhn** Yukon Government (Member), **Danny C. Gordon** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member), **Craig Machtans** Government of Canada (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, **Tom Jung** Yukon Government, **Mike Sutor** (Regional Biologist)

A. Call to Order

Lindsay Staples (Chair) called the meeting to order at 9:08 am.

B. Review and Approval of Agenda

The Council reviewed the agenda. No revisions or additions were made.

Motion 2019-06-01 Approval of Agenda – Moved by Tyler Kuhn, seconded by Dave Tavares.

C. Review and Approval of Minutes

February Meeting Minutes

Financial Review: Ernest noted concern over the lack of increase in the Inuvialuit Participation budget. The Chair provided an explanation of the funding pathway for this budget and the reasons for lack of increase at this time. Stephanie provided further clarification. Negotiating new multi-year funding might have to wait until after federal elections.

April Special Meeting Minutes

Danny noted that there has not been much engagement in the Eastern Yukon North Slope naming competition being run by the Aklavik Hunters and Trappers Committee (AHTC). Name suggestions so far are too similar to *Aulavik*. Danny suggested *Niqivik* – meaning table, but does not want to submit due to his WMAC affiliation. There might be a lack of awareness for the name search.

Motion 2019-06-02 Approval of February and April 2019 Minutes – Moved by Danny, seconded by Matt

Motion 2019-06-03 Approval of April 2019 Minutes – Moved by Earnest, seconded by Tyler Kuhn

D. Review of Action Items

WMACNS staff led the review of action items.

- YG Grizzly Bear Plan (Tyler): deadline of 6th of June for comments, can be extended two weeks - another FN asked for extension, too.
- YG Science and Explorers Permit Process – Stephanie is working on revising the permit application to make it more relevant for Inuvialuit & the Yukon North Slope.

Action 2019-06-01 Stephanie will circulate a draft of the revised YG Science and Explorers Permit for WMAC NS consideration and comment

Action 2019-06-02 Staff will liaise with IGC regarding any additional comments on the draft YG Grizzly Bear Plan

- YG Wetland policy – Tyler provided an update on the file: during the meeting at end of March there was a strong push to shift the process and make room for community involvement. The group will delay the next meeting to receive comments from communities. There will be something to comment on within the next 4-6 weeks.
- Inuvialuit Guardians Program – Ernest emphasized the importance of good governance and oversight for the new Guardians program funding

Action 2019-06-03 Staff will request the final successful proposal for Munaqsi from IGC/IRC, for WMAC NS consideration

Action 2019-06-04 Staff will invite Chloe Brogan (SSU TK Coordinator) to the September meeting for an update on Inuvialuit Guardians and CBMP

Action 2019-06-05 Staff will request CBMP data for past two years to review and discuss before the TK Coordinator presentation in September

Action 2019-06-06 Staff will request a copy of the Shared Services Unit workplan

- CBC filming proposal – CBC start filming in July in Ivvavik. YG/PCBM will receive footage for use. BBC will not be proceeding this year, but may still be interested next year. Their permits will still be in place.

E. Financial Report

WMAC NS 2018-19 Final Accounting

The Council has not yet received a final financial review from the bookkeepers. This year will include a financial engagement report not full audit report like last year. The Council will plan for a July teleconference to review and make a motion to approve the financial engagement report, once available.

WMAC NS 2019-20 Draft Budget

Staff provided a summary of the draft 2019-20 budget. Staff presented a travel budget for the Arctic Ungulate Conference, to send Kayla Arey on behalf of the Council and YG. She has been supporting WMAC NS on a number of files, including social engagement and plan writing. Mike noted that Laurence will also be in attendance. Council suggested exploring JS training funds, but agreed to support this career development opportunity in the absence of external funding.

Motion withheld for July conference call, in anticipation of final statements.

F. Correspondence

Council discussion of Inuvialuit submission regarding oil and gas leasing in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge:

Craig provided a summary of what is happening now that all the submissions have been received. Canada has had further discussions with U.S. representatives to address the concern that the EIS did not fulfill international obligations. U.S. representatives agreed to contact Indigenous people in Canada regarding the effects on subsistence should leases be made available. We can expect a final EIS later this summer. Sale of leases could follow shortly thereafter, but this is also when U.S organizations are expected to launch legal interventions. It is unlikely that the U.S. will identify significant negative effects of the leasing program; therefore, Impact Benefit Agreements are not an applicable tool.

Other correspondence was discussed under Decision and Discussion Items.

G. Chairperson Update

Polar Bear Administrative Committee (PBAC):

Lindsay provided an update on the recent PBAC meeting in Fredericton. The addition of the new column in the status table for management objectives for each population is a significant change. While there is now agreement on the inclusion of these objectives, work still needs to be done by PBAC members to develop or refine them across populations.

Environmental Impact Screening Committee Letter and Legal Position:

Lindsay provided a summary of the history of the issue. There are now two conflicting legal opinions on the interpretation of the IFA as it applies to screening research proposals on the Yukon North Slope. The most recent letter from the EISC Chairperson was discussed by the WMAC NS Council. The screening process this year and last exemplified the lack of consistency and certainty on the issue, particularly for Laurence's muskox work on the YNS.

Dave – moving forward, we need to know: does the EISC have a role in pre-screening wildlife research and gatekeeping conservation-oriented research on YNS? If so, what are the implications at the operational level and for encouraging much-needed research in this region? What might be the financial implications for a conservation economy? It would also be helpful to know the position of other IFA boards and councils.

Action 2019-06-07 WMAC NS Chair will draft a letter identifying the conflicting opinions, to bring the issue to the attention of the Parties to the IFA for discussion and possible resolution

In the interim, WMAC NS will continue to notify the EISC of the projects supported by the Council for IFA research funding.

H. Report from Members

Polar Bear Survey Update (Tom Jung & Mike Suitor):

Tom and Mike provided a summary of the polar bear genetic mark recapture survey, with particular focus on the YNS portion of the South Beaufort population. The survey included four different crews. There were variable ice conditions and a lot of open water. Other crews had challenges with weather and darting issues.

Ernest raise concern about the effect on bears and how they might behave the next time they encounter human disturbance.

The body condition of bears was generally good: on a 1-5 scale most were 3s and 4s in Yukon/NWT range sampling area. A red fox was spotted on the ice (uncommon). Genetic samples are being processed in Nelson BC.

Ernest raised concern about the length of the dart needles for bears without much fat. Tom emphasized that shots are planned very carefully, so bears aren't hit in the ribs etc. where there might not be as much fat as the rump.

Species at Risk Update (Craig):

Craig provided an update on key species at risk work underway:

- Gypsy Cuckoo Bumblebee recovery strategy is underway
- Collared Pika management plan is being developed
- Grizzly bear management plan working group has been formed and working on an engagement strategy with government and Indigenous partners to develop the Management Plan
- Multiple birds getting downlisted (due to listing criteria for species trend, but most are not actually doing better)
- Barren ground caribou federal listing consultations: Nunavut not in support of listing
- June 1st-open to revising migratory bird regulations – modernization of regulations to better express the rights of Inuvialuit for the harvest of migratory bird species
- Ernest – e.g. geese, seasonal, reasonable that waterfowl are hunted, big issue was “egggers”

Action 2019-06-08 WMAC NS to review of language and coordinate with WMAC NWT on drafting a joint letter (Consultation period open until end of July)

Parks Canada Update (Dave):

- Ivvavik has a new superintendent (Linda Binder) on a two-year term.
- This summer the Park has a number of agencies collaborating on research projects. Research and Park operations will include people from Aklavik.
- Three wildlife survey completed in the winter/spring (polar bear dens, moose, Dall's sheep) – data has been provided to RRCS for immediate use and full reports are forthcoming.

YG Update:

Mike provided a summary of the Porcupine caribou program. Large calving area this year, with a late departure from winter range. Hair and scat samples were collected for muskox opportunistically. Post calving survival flights in Alaska will happen soon. Muskox work is planned throughout the summer, with collaborations in a number of places, including Parks Canada.

Porcupine Caribou (PC) Technical Committee – new research is forthcoming on the Central Arctic Herd based on long term datasets, plus there is some additional US funding Porcupine caribou research on the Alaskan side.

PC sensitive habitat report is still forthcoming.

Stephanie provided an update on the ranger program for 2019 on Qikiqtaruk Territorial Park. There are at least 3 cruise ships planned to stop at the Park. YG has \$1.5 million IFA funding (including 10k unspent and uncommitted from the previous year). Additional details have been provided in the meeting package.

Action 2019-06-09 Stephanie will request that Yukon Parks provide an early snapshot of planned activities for HIQ in either the winter 2019 or spring 2020 meeting.

Action 2019-06-10 Staff to invite both Christian (YG) and Ashley (Parks Canada) to present on YNS archeology at September 2019 meeting.

I. Report from Staff

Staff have received notice of engagement on the Yukon Parks strategy and will assess the need for the Council to engage.

J. Decision Items

Discussion by the Council of research projects seeking support.

Motion 2019-06-04 WMAC NS supports Katie Orndahl's Caribou and Vegetation Structure Project, CWS' Gypsy Cuckoo Bumble Bee Survey, and CWS' Boreal Bird Monitoring Project – moved by Tyler Kuhn, seconded by Ernest Pokiak

K. Discussion Items

Aklavik Community Corporation e-mail re: Herschel Island

Lindsay provided a summary of Aklavik Community Corporation concerns regarding the capacity of current ranger program, the need for an additional position, cost recovery from cruise ships, and the location of the office being moved to Aklavik.

Ernest underscored the importance of both of the key issues raised in the ACC letter.

Action 2019-06-11 Staff to send the ACC correspondence to Yukon Parks with a recommendation that Yukon Parks work to address these issues through the implementation of the management plan.

Action 2019-06-12 Staff to follow up with ACC and IRC, explaining path forward and exploring available options of direct relationships between communities and cruise ships.

Wednesday, June 5, 2019

Northlight Innovation (Co-Space), Whitehorse, YT

Lindsay Staples (Chair), **Ernest Pokiak** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member), **Matt Clarke** Yukon Government (Alternate), **Dave Tavares** Government of Canada (Member), **Tyler Kuhn** Yukon Government (Member), **Danny C. Gordon** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member), **Craig Machtans** Government of Canada (Alternate), **Kaitlin Wilson** (WMA CNS Staff), **Kayla Arey** Yukon Government/WMAC NS staff, **Joan Eamer** (contractor), **Mike Suitor** (Regional Biologist)

L. Wildlife Conservation and Management Plan

Meeting was called to order at 9:09am.

Lindsay provided a summary of the plan for the day and the objectives for discussion of the WCMP.

General observations from the Council on the current draft of the WCMP:

- Dave - opportunity for written feedback/input for consideration in draft is an important step
- Joan - biggest change in structure based on the April meeting is section E. We need to be realistic about a June deadline to complete the draft.
- Craig - writing good, good flow, readable.
- Dave - section organization is intuitive; usability lies in action items underneath each strategy; difficulty seeing difference between performance measures and action items; synergy of values in building the argument for landscape scale protection is weak despite their importance – we can definitely make this stronger.
- Ernest - need to double check the use of the name Siglit in the intro piece (Inuvialuit Cultural Institute); need to add an accent on the r's of Inuvialuktun species names
- Mike – in reviewing species accounts, the Council needs to think about what it wants to point to in the conservation requirements

Joan's provided a summary of plan content so far and walked through each objective, its content and status.

- Lindsay: We need to acknowledge public interests, including those of the rest of Canada.
- Council needs to make some a decision about scope and relationship between priorities and performance measures. Consider language other than performance measures (E.g. Parks uses 'targets', outcomes)
- Dave - For each strategy: what does Council want done, we need to be clear to implementing bodies – this clarity should show up in the outcomes

Objective D

- Dave - We need to link conservation needs in other strategies to the regulatory process, as this process must consider the requirements as they have been identified through extensive research.
- Lindsay - other sections also feed into the describing development in relation to the conservation regime (e.g. Objective A).
- Opportunity to address issue of screening process for research

Objective E

- Under E2, provide guidance on process (as opposed to specific recommendations about research). This strategy could provide guidance on how priorities are generated, how to place the community at the center of this process, and how to lean on other existing plans
- This section can provide guidance to researchers, building on existing documents

Implementation/Next Steps

- This section could look very different if the IPCA process proceeds – difficult to address without certainty of Establishment Agreement
- Do to the evidence-based nature of this plan, we cannot leave it on the shelf for 20 years – data will become stale
- It is possible to update it without doing a total overhaul (i.e. principles can remain the same)
- This section also needs to address how implementation relates to Council business/process (i.e where do we work in review?)
- The need to update will also depend on the nature of our performance measures

Mapping Update from Round River:

Julia and Kim provided a summary of all maps intended for plan use for Council consideration.

Joan has noted that our decision about sticking to 1 page per species affects our

decision about both map size and content. General agreement that we should be less rigid on page length so that we can include the appropriate information and useful maps. Currently maps are designed for a half-page layout.

Extended conversations will be deferred to a sub-working group (Dave, Tyler, Joan, Julia, Kim, Mike) – June 13 or 14 conference call.

Grizzly Bear

- lots of progress made, but still some technical decisions to be made; defer to working group

Moose

- arrows of movement are drawn from verbal descriptions from TK interviews
- concern about moose area identified on Qikiqtaruk (this should be considered as moose observation and not a moose area); double check the language used by the knowledge holder
- recommend to remove the hillshade to minimize confusion with modelled areas (HSI/RSF), unless it's a simple polygon

Goose

- Include IBAs as outlines to show that geese don't stop at the shore
- No need to include shorebird model (but include in companion document)
- Remove YNS boundary along the coast (for all maps)

Caribou Calving + Mid-summer

- Council prefers v2 (blue gradient) for calving
- Council prefers including calving and mid-summer expanded outside of YNS
- Council prefers 95% isopleths map for mid-summer
- Include migration map language in the text, but not necessarily the maps in plan (perhaps atlas and companion doc)

Sheep

- HTC to provide refinement in June meeting
- need to stay consistent in colour/symbols and aesthetic
- Make TK areas hatched areas to better visualize overlap and make consistent with moose map
- Include insets for the Richardson and British Mountains
- "Survey Areas" isn't clear – this is where we looked for sheep, but they weren't seen here

Dolly Varden

- Recommend for sub-group discussion

Cliomes

- Defer to sub-group to review projections to different years, legend, etc.

Broad Whitefish

- Combine TK map with occurrence
- Kait to ask Chloe for occurrence data
- Use the EBSA here (the EBSA provides a bit of an umbrella for other species of anadromous and marine fish)

Whales

- Add MPA area
- Waiting on DFO for suggestions on whale map

Muskox

- Collar and observation data would be pretty easy to bring together
- Mike will send data to RRCS

Polar Bear

- Use a narrative description for movement, map for dens (USGS update is coming soon)
- Include TK data

Traditional Use

- Use one TU map including previous TU work
- Staff will follow up on how best to visualize
- Keep it general

Shoreline Erosion

- Needs to be colour-blind friendly
- Some concern about the use of dot representation, consider using arrows
- Defer to sub-group discussion
- This map is mainly for showing the general trend across the coastline
- Include inset show some detail of an important area (e.g. King Point + Shingle Point)

Terrestrial Ecosystems Map

- Remove legend, add insets

Combined Maps

- Defer conservation to sub-working group
- No need to combine the TU and ecological values on to one map

Detailed Walk Through of Plan Content

General Comments

- Language: the goal is not to have more collaboration or use a framework – these

are tools or means to achieve an end, language should be more pointed about the end goal.

- Use “Outcomes” instead of priorities
- Switch placement of outcomes and priorities; consider relationship between them

Introduction

- move requirement for the plan up as starting paragraph
- Staff to add another line - “People...” section – should we have more history?

A1 Eastern Yukon North Slope

- Soften language of PM2 (and related priority) in the event that the IPCA conversation does not proceed
- Include a stronger argument to partner with composite map

A2 Interjurisdiction Cooperation

- The outcome is successful, efficient transboundary management
- Performance measures require some refining
- YESAB and YFWMB overlap with ISR frameworks are good examples of interjurisdictional priorities
- Proactive – build relationships before there is an issue
- Add WMAC NS and EISC/EIRB to table, and bump COSEWIC

A3 Conservation Economy

- Expand conservation economy instead of develop (ensure attention is paid to conservation economy that is already occurring)
- How far should we go with ‘economy’? Open the door for a conservation economy?
- Consider Yukon Government Economic Development strategies that should be added to the table (Tyler to follow up)

Objective B. Wildlife

- Species to be listed by the priority developed by Aklavik
- Remove concept of enhancement, use language of quality, leaning on IFA language
- Double check spelling of species (e.g. tuttu and tuttuvak)
- Key messages from species pages into strategy (e.g. add conservation requirements to featured species table)

B1 Wildlife Habitat

- Performance Measures 1 and 2: what is the intent and how do they relate? Need clearer distinction between them
- Protection of summer caribou habitat should be a specific outcome
- Refer to species requirements from species pages throughout

Thursday, June 6, 2019

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Meeting called to order at 9:00am.

B2 Wildlife Populations

- Additions to plans table (Tyler to send references)
 - Yukon Grizzly Bear Management Plan
 - Dall Sheep YG science-based guidelines
- Reference (without detail) habitat related tools for population management, include minimizing the negative/detrimental effects of human-wildlife interaction (e.g. tourists, defense of life and property)
- Combine Performance Measure 2 and 4

B3 Climate Change Effects

- Link PM 3 with priorities
- Does ISR Polar Bear Plan mention reduction of GHGs? No (“Although climate change is the most important threat facing polar bears and their habitat, and action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is required for the long-term conservation of polar bears, addressing climate change is beyond the scope of an ISR polar bear joint management plan. Alternatively, actions will be taken to ensure that the impact of climate change on polar bears is highlighted through the appropriate regional, national and international fora, and that effects of climate change on polar bears are monitored and mitigation actions taken where possible.”)
- Mention storm surges, ice loss, increase in moose density, increased marine shipping – real changes that are happening now and will continue to change, some research and monitoring is underway, encourage more
- Link shifting landscape of the YNS to the need for adaptive approaches to habitat and place-based wildlife management decisions (this is directly linked to the size of the protected area we are proposing – it needs to be large to buffer against change)
- Emphasize that the YNS is a hotspot for climate change

Action 2019-06-13 Dave will provide Joan and RRCS with a hot spot map that emphasizes the likely degree of change for the region

Species Appendices

- By species, consider noting the information base available to draw from to demonstrate extent of knowledge (but also knowledge gaps)
- Need clarity from the Council on degree of specificity of conservation requirements, during the review of species section
 - Driven by information available
 - Lean on existing plans
 - We need to take a buffered approach due to climate change which means that the requirements should not be hyper-specific

Action 2019-06-14 Staff will review species specific TK studies for additional information

Action 2019-06-15 Joan will revise the appendices and recirculate for the Council to review conservation requirements for each species (consider requirements beyond habitat)

C2 Climate Change and Traditional Use

- Mention loss of infrastructure from extreme weather (often in summer/fall time)

Objective D

- Need to address withdrawal order
- How do conservation requirements affect the regulatory regime?
- Ernest raised concern about waste being dumped into the ocean from cruise ships

D1 Regulatory Regime

- Need for responsive regulatory processes
- Edit language of “all proposed developments” to avoid issue of screening wildlife research programs
- Not a block or encumbrance but enables appropriate development in an efficient and meaningful way
- Address YESAB overlap

D2 Contaminants

No additional comments on this strategy

D3 Land and Water Pollution

- Mention human-wildlife conflict, negative effects on Traditional Use
- Waste management at Shingle Point, education program?
- Bilge water issues
- Marine plastics
- Take a best practices approach to clean up

E1 Knowledge Base

- Development of products by organizations, that inform the environmental assessment process (“mobilization of knowledge”)
- Link to objective A, B, C, and D
- Priority that emphasizes knowledge sharing
- ISR Geospatial Platform
- Focus on processes, needs – less about what is available
- Reframe E2 – how to do research on the YNS, process for setting priorities, YG science and explorers permit

Next Steps/Implementation

- No need to review status
- Plan review and overall assessment of “how are we doing” is more important than having a specific table that tracks responsible parties
- Two-year review is reasonable – *keep it a living document*
- Tabling action items through time
- Possible table under outcomes/strategies
- Periodic update 10 years

Appendices + Supporting Documents

- Atlas
- Glossary + IFA definitions
- Elders statement at introduction would ground plan/series of quotes (2003 plan something similar)
- Plan Summary - Focus on content; does not need to be done for consultations. No summary for draft but include a placeholder
- Companion Document - Joan gave brief update on what she has done so far

Next Step in Process

- Next two weeks get the writing done as complete sections
- In person/by phone review on Wednesday 26th June 1:00PM Whitehorse (staff to book room)

Distribution of Draft Plan

- Council to determine plan distribution on June 26th
- YG-Does not need to go to minister yet – “internal review” (parties: CAN, YT, Inuvialuit)
- End of September – send draft out for public review
- Design and layout after public consult
- Public consultation (via YG) can be as short as 30 days but room for flexibility
- Final plan review- needs to go to cabinet for review and approval (possibly two-month process)

Action 2019-06-16 Staff to circulate draft organization list for consultation in advance of June 26th meeting.

IPCA

Council reviewed the parallel timelines between the IPCA and WCMP. Activities outlined in the proposal may be affected if we don't receive full funding.

Yukon and Canada will consider representative for IPCA negotiations

Economic Assessment:

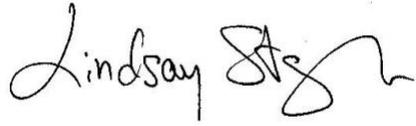
- Economic opportunities assessment on the North Slope is built into proposal.
- Statement of work for economic assessment piece: be aware of legal implications of scope etc. Consider any mineral assessment within the confines of the IFA (especially regarding the withdrawn area)
- Economic benefits have not flowed as anticipated, be mindful of IRC concerns.
- Will there be opportunity for more economic support for Inuvialuit/IRC-economic return for conservation designation? Consider trust fund to address impact benefits
- Consider basic income fund model for Aklavik or Inuvialuit using the YNS – a strong set of criteria and governance model would be required for this approach
- Ecosystem services type approach could also be considered
- Underscore benefits of current conservation economy PLUS how we propose to enhance
 - Yearly average for last 5 years of Inuvialuit hires, local business hired etc. for Ivavik and also for Qikiqtaruk (can't forget the secondary and tertiary economic benefits – e.g. park staff buying goods and services in Inuvik)
- Seeking recommendations for potential candidate consultants to conduct this assessment

M. Upcoming Meetings

- IGC, June 10-13
- Joint Secretariat Board Meeting, Edmonton, July 11-12
- Inuvialuit – Inupiat Meeting, Anchorage, August 20-23
- Arctic Ungulate Conference (Jokkmokk), Aug 12-16
- Mountain Ungulate Conference, Bozeman MT, Sept 10-13

***consider IP budget for Ernest (AUC) and Danny (I-I)

Adjourned at 1:50 PM Moved by Tyler Kuhn, seconded by Danny Gordon.



July 14, 2020

Date

Lindsay Staples, WMAC (North Slope)
Chair



July 14, 2020

Date

Allison Thompson, Staff