

WMACNS QUARTERLY MEETING

November 26-28, 2019
Hamlet Council Chambers, Aklavik, NWT

Tuesday, November 26, 2019

Lindsay Staples (Chair), **Evelyn Storr** Inuvialuit Game Council (alternate), **Michelle Gruben** Inuvialuit Game Council (alternate), **Danny C. Gordon** Inuvialuit Game Council, **Billy Archie** Inuvialuit Game Council, **Dave Tavares** Government of Canada, **Tyler Kuhn** Yukon Government, **Kaitlin Wilson** (WMAC NS staff), **Allison Thompson** (WMAC NS Staff)

Call to Order

Lindsay Staples (Chair) called the meeting to order at 9:50 am. Lindsay introduced and welcomed the new IGC-appointed members, Billy Archie and Evelyn Storr (alternate).

Review of Agenda

The Council discussed the agenda for the next three days.

A member raised the linked concern of wildlife harvesting compensation, marine traffic, and the cruise ship incident at King Point this summer. This links to capacity concerns at the HTC level as well as research activities. Certain Inuvialuit would like to see an independent audit of the IFA (and its implementation). It was suggested that as 'Other business' the Council can discuss how to address these concerns.

Motion 2019-11-01 *Approval of Agenda – Moved by Dave Tavares, seconded by Danny C. Gordon.*

Review of Minutes

Motion 2019-11-02 *Approval of Minutes – Moved by Danny C. Gordon, seconded by Matt Clarke.*

Questions about the minutes:

- **EISC:** There was a question about the issue of the EISC screening/pre-screening research proposals. The hope is to make the process more efficient. Since WMAC NS is considering the IFA-funded projects in detail, the hope is that those proposals that are approved by WMAC NS and the local HTC can be exempt from full screening. This is what has happened in the past and is in the EISC's guidelines. There has been an incidence of an IFA-funded, WMAC NS approved research project (one that involved Canada, Yukon and Aklavik HTC collaboration) that had to go through full screening. WMAC NS is trying to ensure that the EISC process of exemption that has applied in the past is maintained.
- **IPCA:** There was a request to review issues of HTC monitoring and compensation - to be covered during the IPCA update.
- **Grizzly bears:** what is the current population status of YNS bears? There was an extensive six year research project completed in 2010. A TK project was undertaken too. These cover the YNS, not Delta bears. There is a lot of concern in Aklavik about bears in town, but the bears people encounter are small and not desirable for harvest. Yukon is engaged in developing less intensive grizzly bear research methods.

The Council will revisit the Java Connection meeting minutes during the IPCA discussion.

Review of Action Items

WMAC NS staff led the review of action items.

Action items related to cruise ship activities and Aklavik:

- ACC sent a letter to Yukon Parks Branch regarding employment opportunities for Aklavik beneficiaries from cruise ship activities
- WMAC NS sent a letter to Yukon Government with recommendations on the same issue - no response has been received
- This topic has also been flagged by IRC and IRC is working on a cruise ship strategy
- Cruise ship visitors only pay a \$300 fee for a Park's permit - none of this money comes to Aklavik

Action item 2019-09-01 cruise ship landing at King Point:

- If IGC and IRC and ACC are all engaged, WMAC NS will track the issue.
- In terms of compensation (for the disturbance to caribou harvesting activities), the IFA does speak to disturbance of harvesting activities in 11(1)

Action item 2019-11-01 Staff to contact Jen Muerer and IRC about next steps in regards to the cruise ship landing at King Point.

Action item 2019-11-02 Staff will work with WMAC NWT to engage Nigel Bankes' academic group in comparing the Inuvialuit/co-management response to the 1002 Lands Oil and Gas Final EIS. Staff will work with Craig on possible outcomes from this review.

Financial Report

Lindsay provided an overview of WMAC NS' current financial situation. Since WMAC NS received Canada Nature Fund monies, the Council is running two separate budgets. WMAC NS received \$349,000 from Canada for 2019-20 with the current understanding from Canada that these funds cannot be carried over. As a result, WMAC NS will be aiming to charge as much of the IPCA project funding as possible to Canada. This is expected to result in a significant carryover in the WMAC NS operating budget.

The Council reaffirmed the importance of communications, especially those that can educate beneficiaries.

Staff walked the Council through the WMAC NS operational budget and the new Canada Nature Fund IPCA budget. Staff indicated that the past few months has been heavily focused on setting these budgets up.

Staff are unsure at this point how much funding will be carried over from the WMAC NS budget. This depends on the future expenditures of many IPCA project contractors and other related activities. These activities will dictate how much funding the staff need to move from the WMAC NS budget to the IPCA budget.

Action item 2019-11-03 Staff set up a teleconference about the idea of a muskox research workshop (including Dave Tavares, Mike Sutor, Laurence Carter, and other interested folks).

Action item 2019-11-04 Staff to brief Stephanie (YG) on the current status of the WMAC NS budget and expected carryover.

WCMP Comments

Craig Machtans (Canada alternate) and Matt Clarke (Yukon alternate) called in for the Council's discussion of WCMP comments.

Lindsay provided an overview of the comments received on the WCMP thus far. Lindsay and staff have reviewed the comments and have drafted potential responses.

The majority of substantive comments received thus far are on objective A (the first 25 pages of the Plan). There are some issues raised that will have to be sorted out in Party to Party discussions. There are a number of comments that are misguided when it comes to the IFA. The Plan is heavily grounded in the legal framework of the IFA and the Council's interpretation of it.

The Council members provided general comments on the WCMP and comments from the parties received thus far:

- It's important for the Aklavik Community Conservation Plan to be represented in the WCMP
- The two major comments appear to be:
 - The relationship between the WCMP draft and the IPCA concept - people reacted to the strong recommendation in the draft Plan; the Council may want to try to decouple these concepts - WMAC NS can use IPCA funding and the meeting of the Parties to work on this concern, while moving the plan to completion
 - What space will there be for development on the Yukon North Slope? This discussion can be clarified in the negotiations for an IPCA. This may need to be responded to using funding for contractors to clarify the issue.
 - The two aforementioned points may just have to be worked through during negotiations but it should be understood how the content of the WCMP relates to that.
- CWS is in support of the 17% protected areas initiative and thus did not have major comments of substance on the Plan
- There are different perspectives within YG, which is reflected in the comments
 - Recognizing the development interest within YG appears to be crucial to getting a signed off Plan; WMAC NS should consider carefully its responses to those interests on the Plan
 - The component about how we incorporate 12(20) is crucial to YG
 - A number of branches within YG were okay with the Plan
- There is an overall sense of needing to bring the Inuvialuit voice more into the Plan

Overall, the sense is that IFA 12(20) and its fit within the rest of IFA 12. should be given special attention in WMAC NS' response to WCMP comments. But, it's imperative not to lose sight of how WMAC NS got to the IPCA recommendation (CCP, community values, TK and science studies, years of mapping). The conversation needs to start at all these values, the legal framework, and the empirical evidence that research has produced, etc., not with potential development.

There was a discussion about how to balance the Aklavik perspective, all the Council's work to describe the conservation requirements of the YNS, and the comments being received related to the Withdrawal Order and controlled development.

- From an Aklavik perspective - there is a reason that the Inuvialuit looked at the most stringent legal tools for the national park during IFA negotiation. Inuvialuit wanted the best protection for the entire YNS. But people aren't on the land as much anymore and there is more interest in economic development like mining. There is a need to make sure people are still aware of the withdrawal order and what controlled development might do to the landscape and caribou.
- IRC just approved a new mineral development strategy for the ISR. Once the strategy is released, WMAC NS should review it so that the Council understands the relationship between this strategy and the draft WCMP for the YNS. The Council's current understanding is that IRC has no immediate plans for development on the YNS, but would like to keep the door open for future opportunities.
- The Community Conservation Plans and community vision/planning documents will both be important components of the discussion of the future of the EYNS
- Legal counsel will need to be present for any development-type discussions that occur at the IPCA negotiation table, as there will be competing legal views.
- It was noted that implementation is a very important part of the planning process, so that all the information gathered gets put to use. The proposed trust fund is the vehicle that the Council hopes will become an Inuvialuit implementation fund for the WCMP.
- Part of Aklavik's role is to hold other bodies accountable to the WCMP. When Aklavik sits at the table, community representatives need to push to make sure Aklavik's interests are represented. The appropriate funding is needed to ensure there is capacity to hold everyone accountable.
- The regulatory process laid out in the IFA provides considerable protection and recognition of values on the YNS as is.
- It's imperative not to lose sight of how WMAC NS got to the IPCA recommendation (CCP, community values, TK and science studies, years of mapping). The conversation needs to start at all these values, the legal framework, and the empirical evidence that research has produced, etc., not with potential development.
- There was a question about the latest mineral assessment type work on the YNS, which is from 1997. There was a study done in 2013, related to the Blow River, but this was focused on understanding the local geological history.
- When it comes to conversations about land use planning on the YNS, WMAC NS' perspective is that Section 12 of the IFA is the land use plan for the YNS.
- To hopefully reduce confusion, in WCMP updates, we can do a better job of weaving the IFA into all the sections, not just the front matter.

Council Discussion of Party Comments:

The Council proceeded to discuss the comments collected in the Excel Spreadsheet that were deemed as 'substantive'.

The Council discussed the idea of de-linking the IPCA concept entirely from the WCMP (removing that as an objective from the Plan). Would this satisfy certain Parties' concerns? It's important to keep in mind that this recommendation is backed up by years of evidence. Ultimately the Council decided not to pursue the removal of the IPCA language altogether. WMAC NS will change the Objective A wording from "establish" an IPCA to "consider" an IPCA. Even with this change, Yukon may still continue to be concerned about future-proofing, e.g. not closing the door on access to the coast or other resources. On the other hand, nothing in the WCMP changes what is laid out in the IFA.

During the process of presenting to YG staff and also based on comments received on the draft WCMP, there remain some misunderstandings within YG. Staff and WMAC NS can do a better job of sharing the Plan and its concepts and recommendations as well as WMAC's responsibilities under the IFA, the management framework and regulatory structure. The YG info session was a good start but we can be doing better.

The staff presented the key takeaways from the conversation thus far on how to edit the WCMP:

- 1) Augment regulatory section (Objective D)
- 2) Augment Inuvialuit voice
- 3) Ensure the IFA is better reflected throughout the whole plan
- 4) Change 'recommend' to 'consider' an IPCA for the Eastern Yukon North Slope in Objective A
- 5) Address 12(20) more directly
- 6) Address land use planning in future discussions with YG
- 7) Better link each section to the conservation requirements and IPCA recommendation
- 8) The staff will emphasize more communications materials.

In addition to these changes, the Council's perspective should be included. This includes content on IRC's position on land use planning, the Council's understanding of the application of 12(20) – these are some of the issues that are not well-understood at YG. The Plan can recognize that 12(20) exists and there are more clauses in IFA 12. that speak to development and the role of EISC and EIRB. The Plan doesn't have to solve the disagreement amongst the parties about 12(20) - this disagreement shouldn't stall the Plan and conservation economy concept. This ties into Yukon's comments regarding 'balanced' development. It's the Council's role to define the conservation requirements in

the Plan which can then inform conversations of 'balanced' development pursuant to the IFA.

Experienced WMAC NS members have a good understanding of the foundations of the Plan and what it's attempting to accomplish. We need to ensure that we share this information with new WMAC NS members and outside commenters.

How will the Council deal with the technical comments? Staff will review all comments. Staff will respond if appropriate, and work with Council members and Round River Conservation Studies when necessary. The Council will meet once the Plan has been revised and circulated to members for internal review.

It's important to convey the strength of the already existing regulatory regime for environmental impact screening and assessment in Objective D. WMAC NS can add to the Priorities in D1 wording about ensuring that the evidence base in the WCMP is considered in any future scenarios. When Allison met with EISC, they recommended expanding on the consideration of the IFA's screening/review process in section D. Lindsay met with Bob DeLury and he emphasized the strength of the EIRB, which relies on EISC to refer projects. EISC needs the best available evidence. Flagging the role of evidence in EISC's process in the Plan would be a way of ensuring that this issue is emphasized in Plan implementation. This is a larger ongoing concern in the IFA. Ideally the EISC should be able to access WMAC NS' spatial information (mapping) that is included in the Plan and understand its implications.

WMAC NS considered the link between the WCMP and the Community Conservation Plans (CCPs) and its categories for spatial areas (A through E, or weak through strongest recommended conservation). WMAC NS' view is that the WCMP provides a body of evidence supporting the recommendations in the Community Conservation Plans. It was noted that in the case of the Inuvik-Tuktoyaktuk Highway, there were category E lands that were still included in the highway corridor. Unfortunately CCPs are not binding. The CCPs are signed by co-management and the Inuvialuit Game Council, whereas the WCMP is expected to be signed off by the Parties to the IFA which ideally should give the Plan more weight.

An opportunity in the WCMP that the Council may be missing is the Community Conservation Plan defining Big Fish Watershed as a conservation area. There could be other pockets of this Plan that come out strongly as being good candidates for additional protection. This could even be applied to the entire EYNS area identified in the CCP - leaning on this to justify the need for conservation of the entire region.

The Hamlet of Aklavik worked on a community Climate Change Adaptation Plan which was run through the University of Victoria and Kaitlin Friendship. This document is from 2011.

WMAC NS has the ability to model scenarios, using all the Round River Conservation Studies data (that's included in the Plan), based on an assigned importance. Lindsay and staff showed some maps to Aklavik and they recommended 100% protection for the Big Fish watershed, Inuvialuit Traditional Use and Porcupine Caribou Herd habitat.

Generally, it may be helpful for the WCMP to describe what types of developments may fit within the conservation requirements for the plan - e.g., specific recommendations for the Big Fish watershed. It was noted that the CCPs do provide specific recommendations for the sites identified. E.g. the Category E area of the Eastern Yukon North Slope recommends "Regulatory bodies should ensure there be is no hydrocarbon activity within the area including pipelines and harbours." (Aklavik CCP 2016). Maybe there is a piece in the Plan that speaks to the future, but this is likely more appropriate for IPCA discussions. WMAC NS' job isn't to consider future scenarios, but to recommend actions that will conservation of wildlife.

The Council discussed IRC's comment pertaining to economic benefits. The draft WCMP speaks to benefits from a conservation-based economy flowing to Aklavik and the region. IRC removed 'Aklavik' from the sentence. WMAC NS believes that it is important that Aklavik, as the main user community, are the primary recipients of the benefits coming from a conservation-based economy. Yukon benefits need to be addressed as well.

Council discussed the implications of changing the wording in the WCMP from 'conservation-based economic opportunities' to 'economic opportunities'. Could this change the meaning of the Plan? One perspective is that the economic opportunities still only fall under what's permissible under the withdrawal order so you still fall in the same place. In a worst-case scenario development is still consistent with the purposes. The Council is agreeable with changing 'conservation-based economy' to 'economy' while emphasizing in the Introduction and A3 what 'economy' actually looks like given 12(2) and the conservation requirements as defined in the Plan. WMAC NS can either adopt a short-hand that describes what IFA 12(2) says. It wouldn't say economic opportunities full stop, but it wouldn't just say 'economic opportunities'.

There was some confusion about YG's comment about with plan's recommendation of maintaining the Withdrawal Order. Part of this may be a matter of emphasizing to YG what 'conservation-based' economic opportunities exist and how these may benefit Inuvialuit and Yukoners. Goal E of the 2003 WCMP might be important for informing the

thinking on this idea. The old WCMP suggested what would be involved if the Withdrawal Order were to be amended.

It's important to ensure that the community of Aklavik has a good understanding of the Withdrawal Order. WMAC NS can develop some communication products. The HTC is involved in the WCMP/IPCA conversations but the community at large may not have such a good understanding. The staff can develop some communications materials around the Withdrawal Order - visuals are good.

The Council discussed the path for generating responses on the Plan as well as responses to the Parties. The staff will update the spreadsheet based on the Council's feedback today. WMAC NS could provide a copy of the spreadsheet to everyone who commented. This would allow commenters to understand how their comments have/have not been incorporated and also where comments may have diverged. It's important to either anonymize the comments or request permission. WMAC NS can filter out some of the grammatical/spelling comments. Staff can generate a draft cover letter as well.

Meeting adjourned at 4:40pm.

Wednesday, November 27, 2019

Aklavik Hamlet Council Chambers, Aklavik, NWT

Lindsay Staples (Chair), **Evelyn Storr** Inuvialuit Game Council (alternate), **Michelle Gruben** Inuvialuit Game Council (alternate), **Danny C. Gordon** Inuvialuit Game Council, **Billy Archie** Inuvialuit Game Council, **Dave Tavares** Government of Canada, **Tyler Kuhn** Yukon Government, **Mike Sutor** Yukon Government (regional bio), **Kaitlin Wilson** (WMAC NS Staff), **Allison Thompson** (WMAC NS Staff)

Meeting called to order at 9:08am. Lindsay provided an overview of the agenda for the day.

The AHTC had a discussion last week about wildlife collaring. The Board indicated there has been enough caribou collaring for the past fifty years and does not support further collaring. Inuvialuit have seen impacts to wildlife from collaring activities (issues with the nets, neck abrasions from collaring, animals displaying fear of helicopters). There is a desire to know more about winter conditions for wildlife, e.g. collapsed dens.

AHTC had two film requests (ArcticWild and BBC). This would be the third time caribou would be filmed. The HTC board felt that the animals should be left alone for a while. AHTC did not support the projects.

AHTC has drafted a letter on these topics but it has not been sent yet. AHTC has not sent a letter on this topic in the past, but there has been verbal concern expressed. This issue has implications for IGC, WMAC NWT, PCMB, etc.

Action item 2019-11-05 Staff to circulate the collaring workshop report to WMAC NS members and the AHTC.

WMAC NS will keep these issues in mind when working through the proposals for IFA funded research.

Decision Items

The Council discussed the proposed IFA funded research projects for 2020-2021.

Assessing the effects of climate-induced variability on the behaviour, distribution and demography of the Porcupine caribou herd (Year 1 of 5) – late-summer field program on Yukon North Slope. - Parks Canada and CWS

There are proposals from Parks Canada and CWS for this same project. This project is a partnership led by the USGS in Alaska and has partners in Canada: Yukon Government, Parks Canada, CWS and others. The aim is to understand how changing habitat conditions are impacting the Porcupine Caribou Herd. The focus right now is on calving and post-calving periods. The hope is to also extend this work through to the late summer period. The second year and onward of the project is to understand caribou nutrition across the landscape and its relationship to caribou movement. This project can also contribute to understanding insect harassment and how it's changing. Heather Johnson is the lead on this project and she has a wealth of experience and expertise.

An Inuvialuit member has noticed that there is more wind and less bugs when out at camp. Maybe there is room for Inuvialuit Knowledge to plug into this project.

Providing video clips (of calves) - is that something the US will be doing? Yukon Government has contributed some collars, Parks Canada has helped by for some as well. USGS has provided some collars.

An Inuvialuit member requested to see more of a strong commitment that the project proponents **will** present to WMAC NS and the community of Aklavik. In the proposal it speaks to "hoping" to present the work. Mike Sutor personally committed to engagement with Aklavik at the level they deem necessary throughout this project.

Will the project be held to the 5-year timeline, or could it extend, without us seeing results? It's expected that the project will stay on the timeline.

Education products for K-12 students? There is a significant amount of educational material from the PCMB thus far and there are ideas from the project organizers for more materials. One idea is to engage students in looking at the camera collar videos and doing some of the work involved.

With regards to insect harassment, is there past work that can be used as a point of comparison? There is older work but it's not as specific. The wealth of Inuvialuit knowledge can contribute to understanding how conditions used to be.

It was noted that this project ties into the Council's draft WCMP in terms of key themes and the importance of the Eastern Yukon North Slope.

It was noted that conditions have changed significantly in the past 30-40 years. There is a longer snow-free season now. This may benefit some wildlife. People and wildlife both need to learn how to adapt.

Yukon North Slope Muskox Survey and Research - Yukon

This project is a continuation of prior work. Yukon is looking to take a slightly different approach this year, focusing on areas where muskox are known to be present. Yukon plans to put more effort there for flights for the late winter population survey.

This project would also piggyback on fixed wing caribou surveys to do calf productivity and ideally yearling recruitment.

Satellite collar fees are covered in this budget.

Fecal sample collection: we are now at a point where we can complete a detailed diet analysis for the whole range (using five years of data).

In general, muskox work is starting to slow down and the budget request next year will be reduced.

It is important to consider this proposal in the context of the Muskox Framework and the Research Plan.

Muskox management is also an issue in Nunavut. There are many muskox there and people working in various fields are trying to address the issue. It's valuable to consider the larger northern context.

Inuvialut prefer caribou to muskox in their diet. These preferences need to be considered in harvest management.

Inuvialuit member concern: will any data or results be held at McGill University (via Laurence) or will it come back to the community?

- Mike: no, none of the results will be locked away at McGill

Parks Canada has been working to implement the muskox research plan (and others) and a big part of that work has been Inuvialuit participation and getting Inuvialuit into the Park/on to the North Slope.

Polar Bear Population Estimate (Yukon Government)

This project is the result of recommendations at the Inuvialuit-Inupiat management meeting in August 2019 (this is a top priority). This will be year two for this project and there are some early results to share, if there is interest.

There is an effort to tighten up the protocols to minimize stress for bears and minimize the risk of separating sows from cubs.

The plan for the 2020 survey is to start at Herschel and move east towards Tuk (same as last year).

The national and international context is a big part of this work - there is a lot of scrutiny of bear management and there is a need for a more confident estimate in the South Beaufort population.

Amend Proposal:

- Be more explicit in the proposal about the benefits and role for Inuvialuit
- Add in ISR Joint Polar Bear Management Plan.

Porcupine Caribou Use of the Yukon North Slope (Yukon Government)

The collars are the foundation to many pieces of work (e.g. adult survival, calf recruitment, etc.), which all gets fed into the harvest management process. This work includes habitat research which supports the WCMP, changes in seasonality, hunt management, etc. The newer GPS collars support many difference research questions.

The project also includes fixed wing work, looking at bull caribou distribution.

There is also some money to support the aforementioned caribou-climate work described earlier.

Inuvialuit member concern: do we have enough information about predation rates?

- Mike: we can use the collar data to understand mortality rates - we don't get cause of death, though.

We aim to maintain 20-25 collars on bulls and 60-70 collars on cows, but this only results in a handful of new captures each year.

Comments included:

- The number of collars deployed is very small compared to the size of the herd.
- It is important that the community concern/voice is heard in management decisions.
- There are pros and cons of the collaring program, it does help some harvesters.
- For a long-term program, it could be problematic to stop and have a gap in data; reporting back and supporting an understanding amongst community members is critical
- It could be helpful for YG to have more engagement with the HTC to address the concerns.
- Caribou are eating blueberries and aqpiqs now - hasn't been seen in the past.

PCMB Update

Joe Tetlich, Kelly Milner, Deana Lemke, Jennifer Smith and Mike Sutor provided an update on the Porcupine Caribou Conservation Plan and the Traditional Knowledge Project.

Porcupine Caribou Herd Conservation Plan (Deana Lemke)

Joe Tetlich introduced the call. The PCMB does not have a range-wide conservation plan, so this is a current initiative. This conservation plan will also address requirements for a population management plan under the federal *Species At Risk Act* because barren-ground caribou are proposed for listing as a Threatened species under the Act.

The components of the Plan were presented, including what information already exists to be included in these sections. There is a wealth of knowledge about the Porcupine Herd. Information gaps were also discussed. One major gap is existing traditional knowledge that hasn't yet been consolidated and made available for use; this is a separate initiative PCMB is pursuing. Through CWS, PCMB has been able to hire Jennifer

Smith to work on a literature review and assist the Board in developing the framework to build the Plan.

A question was raised about sensitive habitat - will this mainly be calving grounds?

- Sensitive habitats are found throughout the range and are important for various reasons.
- Yukon has updated past sensitive habitat work (areas most frequently used by the herd throughout the year) and this will inform the distribution objectives

There is Inuvialuit knowledge pertaining to habitat change over time (good habitat turning to swamps); does this work capture this understanding?

- The work is looking at a lot of the different habitat pieces but haven't looked at very specific changes in habitat type (e.g. development of a swamp)
- This is information PCMB is trying to get at through the TK data mobilization project
- This also ties into a larger topic of inclusion of TK in species status assessment with direct decision-making implications

The Conservation Plan is to assist all PCMB member governments and organizations, managers and users of the herd. An important component is appropriate inclusion of TK.

TK Data Mobilization Project (Kelly Milner)

This work is set in the context of the conservation plan. PCMB is in a facilitating role, pulling together contributions from Inuvialuit, GTC, VGG, TH, and NND.

Priority Knowledge Gaps:

- Changes in habitat
- Changes in range and movement
- Changes in local herd management

Much of this information already exists, documented through other work.

Any information that is collected is only shared with PCMB member governments and organizations (other Indigenous groups do not have access). So far GTC data are completely uploaded and VGG is part way through the process of data inputting. Data sharing agreements with the remaining parties is the next step.

From an Inuvialuit perspective, habitat seems to be the biggest issue with climate change and this should be incorporated into the conservation plan

How does PCMB plan to incorporate the knowledge shared by individuals into Trailmark and eventually the conservation plan, since it's not the same as science data?

- Most of the data are interviews and transcripts - these are made searchable through Trailmark

Inuvialuit comment: do the timelines for the TK project and conservation plan need to line up?

- Yes, they do, which is why there is a focus on gathering the TK now
- The project isn't going to use all TK but rather focus on the three key knowledge gaps

It is expected that in the next year the federal government will decide on the barren ground caribou species status recommendation of COSEWIC, so PCMB is trying to get ahead of the process.

In terms of next steps, there is a desire to pursue a data sharing agreement(s) with the Inuvialuit this winter so that PCMB/Trailmark can start uploading the Inuvialuit data. WMAC NS staff have already provided an overview of the TK data stored in the WMAC NS office. There are some complexities from the consent forms that staff will have to work out with Kelly. Kelly can sit down with staff to understand the requirements for the different projects in terms of being able to share data.

IGC has provided informal feedback to WMAC NS that they support the sharing of PCH TK data and support staff members working with PCMB on mobilizing the data.

Thus far, PCMB has not engaged Arctic Borderlands about their TK data. So far, they have targeted organizations with management authority. For discussions about accessing Borderlands data, WMAC NS indicated that IGC would be the point of contact.

When staff are reviewing the consent forms, it's important to distinguish between aggregated data and individual data.

Action item 2019-11-06 Staff work with Kelly Milner on PCMB/Trailmark accessing WMAC NS' TK Data for the PCMB TK Data Mobilization Project.

Meeting Adjourned at 12:00pm.

Thursday, November 28, 2019

Aklavik Hamlet Council Chambers, Aklavik, NWT

Lindsay Staples (Chair), **Evelyn Storr** Inuvialuit Game Council (alternate), **Michelle Gruben** Inuvialuit Game Council (alternate), **Danny C. Gordon** Inuvialuit Game Council, **Billy Archie** Inuvialuit Game Council, **Dave Tavares** Government of Canada, **Tyler Kuhn** Yukon Government, **Kaitlin Wilson** (WMAC NS staff), **Allison Thompson** (WMAC NS Staff), **Craig Machtans** Government of Canada (by phone)

Lindsay Staples called the meeting to order at 9:06am. Council reviewed the agenda for the day.

IPCA Update and Next Steps

A member asked for the background on the 2003 WCMP why the plan was not approved by the IFA Parties. There was less engagement with the Parties then and some disagreements with some of the content of the Plan that the Parties themselves did not attempt to address and resolve. The new WCMP contains much more evidence - both science and Inuvialuit knowledge – that support the conservation requirements for the area.

Kaitlin presented the staff briefing note on IPCA protect updates. In addition to the engagement sessions, staff have reached out to Vuntut Gwitchin Government, Gwich'in Tribal Council and Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board to share the draft WCMP, along with an offer to present in person.

Lindsay provided an update on the work with Paul Kischuk (consultant re. YNS economic potential study and John Donihee (counsel re. legal reviews):

- Willms & Shier (John Donihee) is finalizing two legal memos for the Council. The first piece is an exploration of IPCA type frameworks around the world. The second is in response to IRC concerns: summarizing a legal view of what types of controlled activities would be allowed under the W/O.
- Willms & Shier is also assembling a draft table of contents for an IPCA establishment agreement, with annotations for consideration of the IFA parties.
- IRC requested a summary of extractive mineral and hydrocarbon potential for the EYNS. Contractors were sought to summarize what is currently known with a focus on Aullaviat/Aunguniarvik.
- Ken Drummond was contracted to summarize the best known estimates of oil and gas potential. The results of that work were that estimates for oil and gas ranged from minor to moderate, but the confidence intervals were quite wide.
- The best available mineral information is from a Geological Survey of Canada 1997 report (as cited by Maurice Kolpron, Yukon's head geologist). WMAC NS has contracted Charlotte Mouget to summarize that report. The outcome is essentially that there isn't much known about mineral potential.

- Paul Kischuk is synthesizing these reports in addition to existing information on economic opportunities through the two parks, tourism, etc. This report is expected by late December.

There was a question about remediation of past developments (eg. Dew line clean-up) on the YNS. Council meeting packages from 2015/2016 should include information on remediation on the YNS.

Action item 2019-11-16 Dave will find the Parks Canada report that summarizes remediation efforts in Ivvavik and share with Billy.

There was a question about preparing for the meeting of the IFA Parties in early 2020. The Council will return to discussing the content of the letter of invite later. Timing:

- Letter of invite to parties sent by December 6th, 2019 latest
- WMAC NS response to WCMP comments (including response to the bigger comments) circulated to Council by Dec 11th, 2019
- WMAC NS response to WCMP comments passed on to John Donihee by the first week of January 2020
- Comments will be provided to the Parties by January 15, 2020

[subsequent to the quarterly meeting, this timeline evolved in response to a number of external factors]

WMAC NS members and the IFA Parties need clarity about the scope and primary objective of the first meeting as it will dictate the participating individuals.

- Focus will be on the components of the WCMP that relate to the IPCA (IFA 12.(20), Withdrawal Order, 'controlled development')
- There will also be a discussion of process going forward
- It's important to avoid a mismatch of expectations and levels of engagement - need to make sure the right people from the respective parties are attending
- Invitational letter and covering letter of WCMP comments need to be clear and carefully crafted
- There are a few key issues that will come up so the letters of invite and response to comments can be written in anticipation of these issues
- Jumping right into the IPCA discussion might be problematic. An alternate path forward is to first address the WCMP comments, soften the language in the Plan and communicate this to the Parties. The treatment of the Withdrawal Order and "controlled development" will require special attention at the meeting.

Would IRC be notionally willing to sign off on a WCMP if some changes (per their comments) are made? If so, Canada could recommend the Plan with changes to their

minister. OR do more fundamental conversations need to be had? If so, Canada would need to find the right person at a higher level to be in the room.

- Don't see any "show stoppers" in the plan but controlled development within the context of what is permissible under the existing conservation regime as established in the IFA requires further attention.
- IRC has indicated that in the far future possibly as a result of climate-driven changes in environmental conditions (ecology, species distribution, etc.), Inuvialuit traditional use, and dramatically different economic conditions that it may be opportune to discuss amendments to the Withdrawal Order.

Same question: would YG support the Plan with the changes the Council has discussed (softening the language)?

- The answer is not clear - there is a fair bit of work to do to get to that point. There is a need for much more formal internal discussions to get to acceptance.
- For YG, it may be sufficient to simply state that there are conflicting views on maintaining the W/O. From a wildlife/TU perspective and based on the evidence it has compiled, WMAC NS recommends maintaining the W/O.
- The historic YG view was that once the IFA's regulatory mechanism is established (EISC/EIRB) then the W/O is no longer needed. This was supported by a YG legal opinion.

From Canada's perspective, there are two main values to the WCMP:

- Spurs a discussion regarding IPCA
- Info that is included in the plan is factored into future discussions of assessment and development
- For now Dave and Craig will attend working level meetings on the WCMP and discussion of the W/O and "controlled development"

Going forward, IRC looks to WMAC NS to facilitate YNS conversations among the parties.

Evelyn noted that it is important to come back to the community of Aklavik regularly. It's also important to keep in mind whom this plan is for. We don't want the WCMP process to drag on.

Following working meetings of the IFA parties and agreement-in-principle on the revised draft of the WCMP, the Council's recommendation of the Plan to the Yukon Cabinet can include a request to proceed to public consultation as well as sign off if there are no major changes identified.

AHTC should be prepared to put forward a name when IGC requests it. Evan Pound will likely be the person representing IRC.

Community Engagement Update from Jen Smith:

- First round is complete, with the exception of Tuktoyaktuk CC and Inuvik CC
- Copy of the plan was sent through WMAC NWT to GNWT
- Comments from second round of engagement are due in January (VGG, GRRB, GTC)
- Record of engagements are being finalized
- Staff are also looking into communications pieces to support the WCMP and engage different groups on it

PCMB is looking for the highest level of protection for caribou in the plan. This will likely be echoed in the response from VGG (forthcoming).

NEXT STEPS FOR THE IPCA AND WCMP:

1. Staff, Lindsay, and Jen Smith revise draft WCMP, draft language (with John Donihee) to clarify idea of W/O and "controlled development" - [target late January 2020](#)
2. Special meeting of WMAC NS to review WCMP revisions – [Early Feb 2020](#)
3. Call special meeting of Parties to review the revised plan with special attention to any outstanding issues including the Withdrawal Order and "controlled development"- [target February 2020; invite sent before the end of 2019](#)
 - Return to IPCA conversation after this meeting (provided the Parties agree)
4. Send revised WCMP to Parties for second round of comments and hopefully approval in principle on WCMP
 - Request that YG start the Cabinet process
5. Public engagement on 2nd draft of WCMP
6. WCMP signoff
7. Continue to move forward with IPCA process

The studies on YNS economic potential requested by IRC would be shared with the parties as soon as they are complete.

Emphasize in the WCMP that in the absence of IPCA designation, the WCMP will still provide conservation requirements for the YNS that is heavily evidence-based and inform future decisions regarding the management of the area. Include at the top of plan.

Kaitlin provided an overview of the economic/conservation-based economies work ongoing and proposed for the Council. Paul's work will cover some conservation-based economy aspects relevant for the YNS. There is the opportunity to do some more

fulsome work on a conservation-based economy, bringing the idea of a trust fund to life. There is likely funding available for this work if the Council approves it.

More emphasis on a conservation-based economy would strengthen the case for what the plan is proposing. Having an analysis of a conservation-based traditional use economy and the significance of it could support future discussions with with foundations like Nia Terro that are supportive of Indigenous cultural survival and maintaining traditional ways of life on the land.

The question is how critical is this work to being successful in establishing an IPCA?

What would a conservation-based economy study consider?

- Material contribution to Aklavik in terms of well-being from TU opportunities
- Cash equivalent value for traditional economy of Aklavik
- Game guardian, land stewardship and environmental monitoring
- Land use monitoring (eg. cruise ship traffic impacts)
- Types of conservation-based employment that work best for people in Aklavik
- Links to benefits for Yukon FN and public and Yukon Tourism, etc.
- Council may be at the fringes of its mandate considering this work

Dave summarized that a contract in in that regard makes a lot of sense. Can even include in WCMP a box that elaborates a bit more on what kind of economic activities would be possible under an IPCA.

There has been a lot of effort put into economic plans for Aklavik. The Council should be mindful of this. Review old economic plans for Aklavik. Focus on enhancing TU. From a cash standpoint, what are the benefits (rangers, guardians, income support, etc.)?

Action item 2019-11-17 Staff produce a statement of work for proposed "IPCA implementation/conservation-based economy" work.

Climate Vulnerability Proposal (RRCS)

The Council reviewed a presentation provided by RRCS on their proposal for climate vulnerability work. This initiative comes from the Nature Fund project, where one of the deliverables is to scope a climate vulnerability analysis. The presentation provided a summary of their work done so far, including a literature review that has been initiated.

Parks Canada has done some climate change vulnerability work with Alfred Wagner Institute and has been working with Elders all along the coast of the YNS on site-specific climate change adaptation. Any future RRCS work should be considered in the context of

what has been, and is currently being done. Timing of the work is important. WMAC NS has other higher priority activities right now.

Interview fatigue is an ongoing issue in the communities. It's frustrating when the same questions are asked multiple times.

Given the nature of the funding, that it is unattached to an academic or government group, there is the opportunity for the work to be driven by community priorities.

The Council agrees that the Map Atlas should be the RRCS priority at this point. RRCS could proceed with a gap analysis literature review and come back to the Council to discuss what future work might look like at a later date.

WMAC NS feedback for moving forward with the Map Atlas:

- Request RRCS to mock up some spatial examples for the Council to consider
 - In terms of the existing information, it's important to understand what kinds of products/tools can be developed given end uses. There are multiple user groups: people on the land, HTC, screening and review, WMAC NS wildlife management decisions.
 - For WMAC NS decision making: members can access the data, but privacy and governance are important. There is a desire for the product to be user friendly, shareable and accessible so members can log in, view different layers and create their own map products for planning, environmental review, etc.
 - YG prefers the raw spatial data to build their own products
 - The raw data owned by WMAC NS, but staff don't have the capacity to do all the data manipulation and database maintenance.
- Schedule meeting with RRCS to go through some options and ideas.

Research Proposals (continued from previous day)

Motion 2019-11-01 Council recommends IFA funding for the Yukon Government projects proposed, with the amendments noted in the Council minutes*, and with the exception of the Porcupine caribou collaring project to be addressed through a workshop with Aklavik - Moved by Dave Tavares, seconded by Billy Archie

*ensure Michelle's comment regarding additional monitors is part of the amendment to the project

Motion 2019-11-02 Council recommends IFA funding for the Government of Canada projects proposed, with the amendments noted in the Council minutes - Moved by Billy Archie, seconded by Tyler Kuhn

Correspondences

Covered elsewhere.

Report from the Chair

Covered elsewhere (WCMP, IPCA updates).

Member Reports

Canada (Craig Machtans)

Porcupine Caribou + 1002 Lands

- The regulatory process has stalled and it isn't clear when it will pick up again. The three-step process to issuing leases will not start until the Record of Decision is issued (this is what we are waiting for).
- Some comments were sent by Canada, VGG, and others following the US federal Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), but nothing major to avoid jeopardizing any future litigation.
- The climate analysis in the EIS was weak, so oil and gas rulings elsewhere in the USA that consider the lack of climate analysis might affect the process in ANWR
- Still a good idea for WMACs to have a review done assessing the treatment of the Inuvialuit/co-management submission in the final EIS.

International Porcupine Caribou Agreement

- Plan is to meet in Old Crow in February 2020 (no meetings could be held during Canadian election season)

Migratory Bird Regulations

- Canada received a very large number of comment submissions and has yet to decide how they will proceed
- The next iteration of regulations cannot be circulated due to Cabinet rules, but can be discussed generally
- How often does Canada need to go through this regulatory review process?
 - This kind of exhaustive review is very rare
- Bag limits and seasons reassessed every 2 years

CWS is partnered in a new project which uses solar powered GPS collars on geese to track movement, including over the YNS.

Yukon (Tyler Kuhn):

- YG has started an implementation review of the current wolf plan (IGC and WMAC NS have been engaged).
- The YG Climate Change Strategy has been released in draft and is out for comment until January 2020.
- The YG Traditional Knowledge Policy is a very slow process - no significant update at this point in time.

2019 Polar Bear Survey Update (Mike Suitor):

- Mike provided a summary of results (pptx included in meeting package)

Upcoming Meetings

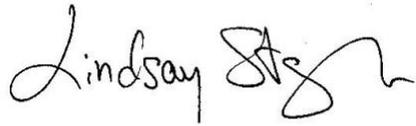
The Council reviewed their upcoming meetings:

- WMAC NS government members meet and discuss the Map Atlas
 - January 2020, at Java Connection (Whitehorse)
- WMAC NS teleconference for a financial update and projected use of ECCC and WMAC NS funds
 - January 2020
- WMAC NS one day meeting to discuss revised WCMP
 - February 2020, KDCC (Whitehorse)
- Meeting of Parties to discuss draft 2 of WCMP
 - March 2020, Whitehorse
- PCH research and collaring meeting in Aklavik
 - YG leading the organization for this meeting
- WMAC NS March Quarterly meeting
 - March 2020, Whitehorse

WMAC NS will also be represented at the PCMB Annual Harvest Meeting (Feb 2020, Dawson) and PBTC (Feb 2020, Ontario).

Meeting adjourned at 3:40pm.

Motion 2019-11-03 To adjourn the November 2019 WMAC NS Quarterly meeting - Moved by Tyler Kuhn, seconded by Danny Gordon.



Lindsay Staples, WMAC (North Slope) Chair

July 14, 2020

Date



Allison Thompson, Staff

July 14, 2020

Date

