



## MEETING MINUTES

### WMAC (NS) Quarterly Meeting<sup>[L SEP]</sup>

March 21-22, 2017

Whitehorse, YT

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**Lindsay Staples** (Chair), **Ernest Pokiak** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member), **Todd Powell** Yukon Government (Member), **Craig Machtans** Government of Canada (Alternate), **Danny C. Gordon** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member), **Stephanie Muckenheim** Yukon Government (IFA Coordinator), **Richard Gordon** (YG Parks), **Kelly Milner** (Staff), **Aimee Schmidt** (Staff), **Jennifer Smith** (Staff), **Matt Clarke** Yukon Government (Alternate).

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**Tuesday, March 21, 2017**

#### **A. Call to Order<sup>[L SEP]</sup>**

Lindsay Staples (Chair) called the meeting to order at 9:05 am.

#### **B. Review and Approval of Agenda**

Arctic Borderlands was added to the discussion.

***Approval of Agenda – Moved by Ernest Pokiak, seconded by Todd Powell.***

#### **C. Review and Approval of Minutes**

**December 2016 Meeting Minutes** – No comments or additions.

***Approval of December 2016 Minutes– Moved by Todd Powell, seconded by Danny Gordon.***

#### **D. Review of Action Items<sup>[L SEP]</sup>**

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

## E. Correspondence <sup>[1]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>

Incoming and outgoing correspondence was reviewed. The letter regarding World Heritage listing for Ivvavik and Herschel was discussed and confirmed that WMAC-NS is comfortable with it remaining on the Canadian list of potential sites. Porcupine Caribou Management Board letter regarding their offer to develop a proactive management plan for the Porcupine Herd was also discussed.

***Action 17-03-01 – Draft response to PCMB supporting their approach, remind them of the role of WMAC-NS and indicating there are opportunities to collaborate through WMAC-NS work on the Wildlife Conservation and Management Plan.***

## F. Report from the Chair

### Joint Secretariat Update <sup>[1]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>

Lindsay discussed the Human Resources review at the Joint Secretariat. Since the JS was established in 1986, this is the first time the Board has had a significant functional review. Mike Harlow has recently been hired as the new Executive Director. He will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the HR Review. The position of Director of Science and Technology is open for competition.

### Implementation Funding Update

The existing Contribution Agreement has been in place for 14 years. The new federal government indicated they were prepared to renegotiate this agreement and WMAC-NS provided a business case for increased funding in September 2017. A more detailed funding proposal was developed through December 2016 and January 2017. WMAC-NS was informed that Treasury Board approved a new contribution agreement in January 2017. A letter from Canada outlining what the new funding agreement will be is anticipated in the next few weeks.

***Action 17-03-02: WMAC-NS will hold a special meeting in April or May once the new funding agreement is finalized to develop a new work plan and allocate the new budget.***

Yukon Government is also in the process of negotiating their budget increases to support IFA implementation requirements. The current review is based on a 2013 funding package, but additional increases may be considered. However, this could take an additional two years. In the meantime, supplemental funding is available on a yearly basis.

### CEAA 2012 Review <sup>[1]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>

Lindsay has been sitting on the review on behalf of Inuvialuit organizations. The final committee report has been released and is now available for review. There are a few major areas for improvement including strategic and regional environmental

assessments. The chapters on climate change and interjurisdictional coordination are deserving of attention..

## **G. Report from Staff**

### **Office Renovation/Move**

Over the past 3 months, staff has moved offices. The paper filing system has been condensed and the library has been moved to EMR Library. The new location is two doors down from the old office. New office furniture will be installed in the next week.

### **Term Report**

A draft of the 2014-16 Term Report has been completed. It should be finalized by the end of March, except for the addition of a final approved 2016-17 financial statement.

### **Communications**

Several communication pieces are in the process of being completed. These include podcasts, annotated IFA platform, newsletters, website and muskox information.

***Action 17-03-03: Staff will notify Council members when the new website is live and ask for comments before the formal launch.***

### **PBTC**

The Chair and Staff attended the PBTC meeting. A memo outlining the main discussion points was included in the meeting package. There was some discussion around the definition of Traditional Knowledge that is currently a point of debate with the committee.

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## **H. Financial Report**

**2016/17 Budget** - Kelly presented the running budget. The Council is currently projecting a surplus rollover. Year-end financials will be presented at the May meeting.

**2017/2018 Budget** – An interim budget was developed for approval based on last year’s budget template.

***Motion 2017- 01: Approval of 2017/2018 interim budget – Moved by Todd Powell, Seconded by Craig Machtans.***

**Pay Scale** – Under the new IFA funding agreement, federal officials indicated that federal job classifications would be accepted for benchmarking WMACNS staff positions and related pay scales and benefits. On this basis, a new staff pay scale and benefits package was developed and reviewed by the Council. Effective April 1, 2017 the Executive Director position will use a federal PM 5 classification harmonized to the 2017 federal contract settlement including Isolated Post Allowance and Vacation Travel. For 2016/17, staff performance bonus will be subject to funds available at year-end. The cash performance bonus will be removed under the new compensation package. Instead, the Chair will award paid time off as recognition of performance. The rationale

for this change is to adopt a comparable federal package for consistent application to Council wages and benefits.

***Motion 2017-03-02 – Effective April 1, 2017 WMACNS Executive Director position will be based on a Federal PM 5 classification and compensation package including IPA and VTA. 2016/17 performance bonus subject to funds available at year-end. Cash performance bonus removed for new compensation package, but Chair will be award paid time off as recognition of performance***

***Moved by Craig Machtans. Seconded by Ernest Pokiak.***

## **I. Report from Members**

### **Environment Canada** [L] [SEP]

Yukon work for the Canadian Wildlife Service is now overseen by the Yellowknife office which is positive for Northern projects. The WMACNS Canada member appointment is currently being reviewed by the Minister (Environment Canada) and a formal letter is expected soon. Collared pika, horned grebe, and buff breasted sandpiper are now listed as “special concern” under federal Species at Risk legislation. Bank swallow will be listed as “threatened”.

Council reviewed its recommendation regarding funding for the Herschel Island bird book.

**Action 2017-03-04 – Staff will work with Environment Canada to come up with a plan for creating a digital North Slope bird book.**

### **Yukon Government** [L] [SEP]

Surplus funding will go to the muskox collaring program. Additional funds are being requested for developing a study design for muskox research on the Yukon North Slope. Council discussed the idea of a muskox TK study and the need to have a muskox workshop in 2017.

Federal species-at-risk policies are under review and require attention to listing policy, treaty rights, and application on federal/non-federal land.

**Action 2017-03-05- YG will provide a briefing note to WMACNS at their next meeting on what they are trying to achieve through the muskox research program.**

**Action 2017-03-06 – Staff will connect with Aklavik HTC, GNWT and WMAC-NWT to set a time for a muskox workshop for the fall.**

**Action 2017-03-07 – Council members will review Yukon’s draft submission on federal SARA policies and WMAC-NS will endeavor to submit its own letter by the March 31, 2017.**

March 22, 2017

Westmark Hotel, Inuvik

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**Ernest Pokiak** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member), **Todd Powell** Yukon Government (Member), **Matt Clarke** Yukon Government (Alternate), **Craig Machtans** Government of Canada (Alternate), **Danny C. Gordon** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member), **Stephanie Muckenheim** Yukon Government (IFA Coordinator), **Richard Gordon** (YG Parks), **Lindsay Staples** (Chair), **Kelly Milner** (Staff), **Aimee Schmidt** (Staff), **Jennifer Smith** (Staff).

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**J. Sheep Guidelines- Troy Hegel**

Yukon Government presented their new draft sheep management guidelines. The guidelines are used to inform recommendations about harvest, monitoring, and land use decisions. The full presentation is included as an appendix to these minutes.

The Council discussed the new guidelines and agreed it would be timely to complete the North Richardson sheep plan. A new survey of Richardson Sheep will be completed this year.

**Action Item 2017-03-07: Council will review the sheep guidelines with the view to providing an endorsement to YG on them. Include a recommendation to complete the North Yukon sheep plan and have it include the updated guidelines.**

**K. Ecological Land Classification (ELC) – Nadele Flynn**

Nadele provided the council with a presentation of the ELC work that has been completed over the past few years. The draft classification was brought to Akalvik to learn how locals viewed the landscape and could inform the categories. The workshop took the 35 mapped types and simplified them, developed a common language and “cross-walked” the information. A final report and map to be used in the development of a Baseline Ecological and Cultural Assessment for the Wildlife Conservation and Management Plan for the North Slope will be available for use in the next few months. See attached presentation.

**L. Fisheries Agreement**

In the late 1980s, an agreement on how to manage fisheries on the Yukon North Slope was developed between the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) and Yukon Government. This agreement was never finalized and Yukon Government has asked the Council to work with the Fisheries Joint Management Committee to update and revise the agreement. This may require a re-write of the existing agreement and engagement of the appropriate parties.

**Action Item 2017-03-10: WMAC(NS) will organize a working group meeting in September in which each party confirms their respective interests and role in**

## **North Slope fisheries management and potential points of collaboration.**

### **M. Muskox**

Yukon government provided an update on the muskox project noting that there is still a lot of work to be done to find common ground before holding a Muskox workshop in Aklavik. It was noted that many communities still have an anti-Muskox sentiment, particularly by communities who harvest Porcupine Caribou. A muskox workshop should be held Fall 2017.

**Action Item 2017-03-11: WMAC(NS) will work with the Aklavik HTC and Yukon Government to organize a muskox workshop in Aklavik in the fall of 2017.**

### **N. Barren ground caribou status**

Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) has assessed barren ground caribou as Threatened. This status includes the Porcupine caribou herd (PCH). This creates a challenging management circumstance and partners under the PCH Harvest Management Strategy have been so advised at the Annual Harvest Meeting. Given their mandate, the Porcupine Caribou Management Board (PCMB) is suggesting they take the lead on any management planning that should arise from this decision.

**Action Item 2017-03-12: WMAC(NS) will send a letter to PCMB supporting their suggestion for PCMB to lead any management planning process for the PCH.**

### **O. ABEKS- Heather Ashthorn**

ABEKS provided the Council with a presentation on the current status of the program, including the outcomes of its strategic planning, governance review and analysis of its data.

ABEKS will not be conducting interviews this year. They are focusing on further refining their program goals and looking to harmonize with other monitoring programs within the range of the Porcupine Caribou herd. They are also focusing on improving communication with communities.

In December the council made a conditional recommendation to contribute \$13,000 to ABEKS for this year. Council noted that the presentation was a constructive response to the conditions set out by the Council. However, it is clear that the Inuvialuit Game Council would prefer to see Inuvialuit Final Agreement funds go towards Inuvialuit monitoring programs such as the Community Based Monitoring Program. Currently, data produced by ABEKS does not inform WMAC (NS) management and there is still no certainty as to who the end-users of the data are.

The Council discussed the presentation and agreed that ABEKS had met the funding conditions set out by the council. It was suggested that IFA funds could be used to

support ABEKS for this year, but due to the lack of direct value of ABEKS to WMACNS there is no reason to continue supporting ABEKS in future years. Concerns have been consistently raised by the Council regarding inconsistencies in how ABEKS data is collected and the lack of data quality control. It was noted that CBMP now does similar work in the ISR, and the IGC has indicated that IFA-funds should be directed to support of the ISR-wide CBMP.

**Motion: WMACNS recommends IFA funds are used to support ABEKS for the current year (2017-2018) but to discontinue funding in future years. The council endorses the founding principles that gave rise to ABEKS and encourages ABEKS to continue in conversations with other organizations that may benefit from participation in ABEKS.**

**Moved by Craig Machtuns**

**Seconded by Danny C. Gordon**

#### **P. Herschel Island Park update**

The Council was provided with a series of updates from Herschel Island Qikitaruk Park staff.

#### **Operations Update – Richard Gordon**

- All but one of the rangers are coming back and a competition will be held for this position
- Operations will start April 3, 2017.
- Five park permits have been issued so far this year. One is for Muktuk adventures. One cruise ship application has been submitted.
- Parks Canada will continue their trips to Sheep Creek and Herschel
- Alfred-Wegener Institute will commence their research program on July 10, 2017.
- A major weather event over the winter toppled the new outhouses. Cabins were also blown over at Shingle Point
- The final schedule of crew changes and researcher visits will be provided to WMACNS in mid June.
- Elders and Youth program may run this year if application is successful
- Coast to Coast to Coast cruise, (part of *Canada 150*) will land at Herschel on September 12, 2017. A budget has been submitted to Coast to Coast to increase the season length and some planned activities as well as some community engagement
- Polar bear research work this spring will be based out of Herschel
- The human skull discovered on Herschel will be buried this year.
- Steel Drilling Caissons (SDC) will be removed this year. What to do with the sand in them is still being discussed.

### **IFA Funding Request Update – Carrie Mierau**

A funding ask is ready to be submitted when the opportunity arises including increased staff for interpretation, operations, and much more.

A supplementary funding proposal will be submitted to Canada this year for upgrades to snow machines and a risk assessment. The risk assessment will include operations, landscape lever changes, weather events etc.

### **Heritage –Barb Hogan**

- 2017 plan is to repair some of the small buildings and repurpose one of them as research space. Local people will be hired to assist with this work.
- A cleaning crew will also be hired to clean historic buildings to remove black mold and do some work on the travelers cabin. This project is funding-dependent.
- A ventilation pipe is being contemplated for under the community building to get air under the building to assist with preservation.
- There is an initiative being planned with University of Calgary to do 3D imaging of the historic buildings and the icehouse.

### **Management Plan- Carrie Mierau and Gillian McKee**

The Council was updated on the Herschel Island Qikitaruk Park Management plan review. Community and public consultations have been conducted on the strategic direction and will be reviewed by the steering committee at a meeting over the next two days. After this meeting Yukon Parks will begin drafting the plan that will go out for public review. The council requested an opportunity to review the draft before it goes to the public and before it is finalized. Council will be able to review the plan and the public input at the September WMACNS meeting.

**Action Item 2017-03-13: Review the first draft of the Herschel Island Management Plan once is it complete and provide feedback (potentially in May). This may require a teleconference or a special meeting.**

### **Q. Grizzly Bear Quota**

The Council has not yet prepared a written resolution on the grizzly bear quotas discussed at the December Council meeting.

**Action Item 2017-03-14: A draft resolution on a grizzly bear quota will be drafted and circulated to Council for review. A teleconference will be organized to formally make a motion on the resolution.**

The Council reviewed a letter sent by YG inviting WMAC to attend a workshop in May on the Yukon Grizzly Bear Management Plan. YG would like the support of the council to



work together to draft a section in the Yukon Grizzly Bear Management Plan that acknowledges the unique management regime in the Yukon North Slope. The council will reserve the right to make recommendations directly to the Minister as opposed to endorsement through the working group.

**Action Item 2017-03-15: A response will be sent to YG responding to the request to participate in the drafting of a Grizzly Bear management plan.**

## **R. Activity Reports**

Wildlife Conservation and Management Plan - WMACNS will have a workshop with Round River Conservation Studies in May to discuss moving forward with various planning projects and tasks. The TK Habitat report is due March 31<sup>st</sup> and TU draft report is due at the beginning of April.

## **S. Parks Canada Update**

A written update from the Western Arctic Field Unit was presented and included as an attachment to these minutes.

### **Ivvavik Management Plan Update** SEP

Parks Canada will review the final draft of the Ivvavik Management Plan with WMAC(NS) and the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation. The target for the final draft of the plan is March 31<sup>st</sup> 2017. The timeline:

- *March 31<sup>st</sup>* – target for Final draft plan to commence Senior VP Approval
- *May 5* – target for approved draft plan ready for consultation
- *May-July* -Consultation Period
- *July* - (date TBD, during regular WMACNS meeting): review consultation results with WMACNS and IRC; solicit WMACNS endorsement
- *August* – Target for Final Plan preparation
- *September 1* – Target for commence Final Plan review with CEO
- *October* – Target for APPROVE & TABLE in Parliament

Parks Canada is seeking input as soon as possible on Final Draft of Ivvavik Management Plan.

Plan revisions based on the last round of WMACNS comments were reviewed. It was noted that Parks Canada has caps for Firth River outfitters that are self-limiting to maintain wilderness experiences. Visitor caps also exist for Imniarvik due to capacity issues at the camp (no more than 25 people at any given time).

Management plan objectives such as youth involvement require a baseline that allow for assessment to ensure that targets are being met. A statement in the plan could address the need for ongoing monitoring to ensure that yearly targets are met.

There are two options with regard to zoning in the plan: 1) to remain silent on snowmobile use in the park 2) or to explicitly identify zoning as non-conforming use (specific people can use snowmobiles under specific circumstances). Option two would require careful language to ensure that other users in Canada are not upset.

**Action Item 2017-03-16: Council to review Ivvavik Park Management Plan and provide written comments to Parks Canada within 2-3 weeks. (Attention: Steve Blake)**

**T. South Beaufort (SB) Polar Bear Sub Population Survey-Tom Jung**

This is a collaborative multi-party survey planned for this spring April 1-15. There is a tight window before ice breaks up and females are out of dens. Alaskans and Canadians are working together on this survey to generate a population estimate for the SB. This is a positive step for working together and building trust.

The outcomes are unknown of the survey. It is the first time this technique has been attempted in the spring for the Beaufort. The instrument survey planned for 2018 has been delayed.

**U. Upcoming Meetings**

**COSEWIC meeting (April 22, Whitehorse)** – circulate information when available

**RRCS workshop (May 1-2 /May 8-9/end of May)** –meet with RRCS

**Council work planning meeting (end of May)** – 3 day meeting to develop work plan for 2017

**IGC Meeting (June 9-12, Paulatuk)**- No one can attend this meeting

**WMAC Meeting (July & Herschel)**- July 6<sup>th</sup>?; Plan with R. Gordon; 3 day meeting with travel day on each end (July 5-9<sup>th</sup>) ; Todd unavailable

**PBAC Meeting (July 13, Iqaluit)** – Lindsay will attend.

**I&I Meeting (August?, Alaska)** – Danny has an interest in attending..

**Joint WMACs Meeting (Dec)** -

**WMACNS Meeting (Sept 25-27, Whitehorse)** – Danny & Ernest available

**Action Item 2017-03-17: Lindsay to write a letter to IGC about timing of September meeting dates and impacts on Inuvialuit participation**

*Motion: Meeting adjourned.*

*Moved by Craig Machtuns, Second by Ernest Pokiak*

