

PORCUPINE CARIBOU MANAGEMENT BOARD

MINUTES OF MEETING

**March 16 and 17, 2005
Whitehorse, Yukon**

IN ATTENDANCE

Members

Joe Tetlich, Chair
James Andre, Gwich'in Tribal Council
Gerald Buyck, Nacho Ny'ak Dun
Donald Avuigana, Inuvialuit Game Council
Roberta Joseph, Tr'ondek Hwech'in
Harvey Jessup, Government of Yukon
Tim Devine, Government of Northwest Territories
Ian McDonald, Government of Canada
Dorothy Cooley, Government of Yukon

Deana Lemke, Secretariat

Regrets: Dennis Frost, Vuntut Gwitch'in First Nation

Presenters

Shawn Francis, North Yukon Planning Commission
Sara Nielsen, Environment Yukon
Don Russell, Environment Canada
Lindsay Staples, WMAC(NS)

Welcome and Opening comments

Joe Tetlich, Chair, welcomed all participants to the meeting and the meeting was opened with a prayer.

Review Agenda

The proposed agenda was reviewed and approved, with the addition of debriefing from meeting with minister and next steps, to be discussed today at 4:00.

Motion:

***It was moved by James Andre and seconded by Tim Devine
That the agenda be accepted as amended.***

- Carried -

Minutes

The minutes of the previous meetings held on September 28 and 29, 2004, were reviewed and approved as presented.

***It was moved by Harvey Jessup and seconded by Donald Aviugana
That the Minutes from September 28 and 29, 2004 meeting be approved as
presented.***

- Carried -

Review Action Items

Status of action items were reviewed.

Correspondence

Recent correspondence was referred to in Tab 5, and some specific information was reviewed. The draft letter on the sale and bartering of caribou was reviewed. It was agreed that it would be sent out, requesting comments from user communities, with a deadline.

Action: Deana to send out letter regarding sale and barter of caribou.

Operating Procedures

The Board's Operating Procedures were reviewed, and the honorarium for travel days was discussed.

***It was moved by James Andre and seconded by Donald Aviugana
That the rate of honorarium for travel days be increased to \$200/day,
effective this meeting.***

- Carried -

A draft policy on board member absence was reviewed. This policy contained provisions for anticipated expenses paid to the Board members to be reimbursed to the PCMB.

There was a discussion about Board member responsibility in Dawson and the observation that communication is awkward. It was noted that it is members' responsibility to communicate with their representative organizations and their

communities. An additional day's honorarium is provided each meeting to assist in compensating members' communication between the Board and their community.

North Yukon Planning Commission

Shawn Francis was in attendance to provide an update on the status of the North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan. This is a Chapter 11 process of the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Final Agreement.

The North Yukon Planning Commission was established in June 2003. It is a public board jointly nominated by Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation and Government of Yukon. The Commission works at arm's length to the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation and the Government of Yukon.

The Commission's planning region is within the traditional territory of Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation. The Vuntut National Park, Fishing Branch SMA and the Old Crow Flats SMA are not part of the areas of recommendation that the NYPC will be dealing with. The "B" Overlap area will not be considered for recommendations unless the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation and Tr'ondek Hwech'in agree.

Overview of the planning process includes:

- Phase 1: Commission Start-Up (2003-04)
- Phase 2: Issues and Information Gathering (2004-05)
- Phase 3: Planning Region Assessment (2004-05)
- Phase 4: Plan Scenarios (2005-06)
- Phase 5: Plan Production and Consultation (2005-06)
- Phase 6: Plan Implementation and Strategies (2006-07)

Information is being collected on:

- Regional ecosystems
- Fish and wildlife values
- Heritage and cultural values
- Land use
- Mineral potential
- Oil and gas potential
- Forest resources
- Tourism and recreational potential

Information is being collected using:

- Community workshops
- GIS overlays and analysis
- Biophysical mapping
- Compilation and technical assessments

The planning region overlaps entirely with the core wintering area of the Porcupine Caribou herd. Sustainability of the herd is a core regional issue the Commission is endeavouring to deal with.

The Commission's wildlife-planning approach contemplates several factors, so that the plan will:

- focus on 1) caribou, 2) moose, and 3) marten
- utilize seasonal key area and habitat suitability approaches
- rank biophysical units for relative values
- recommend minimum amounts of high value habitats be maintained within given landscape units
- manage human development through land use indicators (footprint)
- employ a cumulative effects strategy

Schedule:

- They are currently completing Phase 3: Planning region assessment (May 2005 presentations)
- In June 2005 – Plan Scenarios workshop. Plan partners and stakeholders will interactively develop potential land use scenarios and desired evaluation criteria for use in ALCES modeling exercise (working with Northern Ecosystems Initiative on this project)
- June-August 2005 – scenario evaluation
- September-November 2005 – develop preferred land use scenario (i.e. draft plan) for consultation

The Commission anticipates the PCMB would be very helpful in the planning scenarios phase, and the PCMB is invited to attend the workshop, which will likely be held in Whitehorse.

A joint planning office with the Peel River Watershed is being worked on.

Meeting with GY Minister of Environment

There is a real need for clarification on the regulation process and what the roles of the various players are in this process. Minister Jenkins said the Board needs to clearly document why changes to regulations are being proposed.

The Minister is willing to fund education programs to encourage voluntary use of safety vests for 2005. He indicated willingness for the department to work closer with the Board. He said he had funds for education and consultation.

The Minister requested that the Board repackage its recommendations with more detail (including wider public consultation) and resubmit for implementation in 2006.

Update on Devon Activity

Harvey Jessup related a brief update on oil and gas activities going on in the Eagle Plains area with Devon Canada. In order to meet their license requirements, they had to drill. They took up 40 trucks with the drill and set up their rig 9 kms off the road. The crew is staying at Eagle Plains. They have to get done before the road bans come into effect on the highway. Then they will dismantle the rig and bring the trucks out.

It was suggested that the Board consider inviting someone to the meeting from the Department of Economic Development to discuss exploration processes and best practices.

Shawn Francis requested Board members to contemplate potential scenarios to consider at the upcoming NY Land Use Planning Workshop. For example, oil drilling bringing 40 trucks a day, etc.

Action: Deana to advise Board members when the NY Land Use Planning Workshop will be scheduled to canvas availability and interest in attending.

Wildlife Viewing Program

Sara Neilson with Environment Yukon presented information on the wildlife viewing program proposed. Wildlife viewing staff have traveled to the Dempster to monitor and manage viewing for the past few years. The intent is not to promote viewing the week of the closure, but to manage the viewing that already happens.

Herd Update

Dorothy Cooley provided information updating the Board on activities related to the Porcupine Caribou herd (attached), including:

- Satellite location program/Signals of Spring
- Dempster Check Station (2004)
- 2004 Questionnaire responses
- Regulation implementation (one-week closure and snow depth) for 2004
- Dempster Shooting Workshop
- Over-winter mortality study
- March 2005 Fieldwork
- Plans for the coming year
- Snowmachine and vegetation proposal.

CARMA

Don Russell reviewed climate change impacts on caribou.

International Polar Year is 2007-08, and the CARMA concept fits into funding proposals – good opportunity to guarantee success of this network.

Don proposed five questions to deliberate on to provide information to the network – being done throughout network, would provide valuable information. Arctic Borderlands asks these questions in their community-based monitoring program.

PHC has the least ability to increase in North America. It is felt that spring conditions (climate change affects) have impacted population and contributed to a decline in the herd.

Arctic Refuge – International Agreement

Don updated the Board regarding activity around the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge – 1002 issue. International Agreement (legal opinion): Don related that the PCMA doesn't provide an absolute bar to activity in Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Chair's Report

Joe attended IGC meeting in Inuvik in December. Their concern is with potentially opening up the agreement since the PCMA is included in the IFA.

Update should be provided to the acting Grand Chief of Council of Yukon First Nations. A meeting should be set up to discuss the PCMA and any progress on the signatories coming together to discuss potential of opening the agreement.

Action: Deana to schedule meeting A/Grand Chief Eric Morris and Joe Tetlich.

Joe traveled to Fort McPherson for a community visit. He related the Harvest Management Strategy plans and current activities of the Board.

Joe was not able to attend meeting with Tr'ondek Hwech'in in Dawson. He briefly attended the Chief and Council meeting there in January. Their concern was with unhealthy hunting practices along the highway. Joe requested something in writing; however, that was not forthcoming.

Dempster Highway patrol: Joe spent a weekend during the spring hunt along the highway. He used the opportunity to discuss issues and raise awareness with hunters. There seemed to be good compliance with corridor regulations. Joe related his concern about the aesthetics of gut piles on the highway.

Roberta Joseph mentioned that Tr'ondek Hwech'in's first hunt will be advertised next year, so the safety concerns will be better related for the kids who are involved.

Board Member Conduct and Expectations

Joe referred to the board information manual, specifically the operational procedures dealing with member responsibilities.

It is a challenge to work as a board with the various perspectives and positions. It is important that any messages to the media from the board represent positions of the board in a unified and consistent manner, especially in light of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge issue coming to the fore as well as other management issues that could arise.

The Chair is the official contact for media relations and may designate this to other board members, where necessary.

Motion:

***It was moved by James Andre and seconded by Ian McDonald
That the last paragraph regarding Board member responsibilities under
Section 6.3 in the Board's Operational Procedures be deleted.***

- Carried -

A one-page summary will be produced at the end of the each meeting to take back to the communities.

Action: Deana and Joe will produce a one-page summary at the end of each meeting for members to take back to their communities.

WMAC (North Slope)

Lindsay Staples, Chair of the Wildlife Management Advisory Council (North Slope), was invited to update the Board on activities of WMAC-NS. He advised the Board that the PCMA is an appendix to the Inuvialuit Final Agreement. The Wildlife Conservation and Management Plan was developed by WMAC-NS, and Vol. 1 and 2 was provided to each Board member. One big issue considered was how to deal with resource development within the context of conservation management. Many scenarios were considered in drafting the section on development issues, for example, how to deal with land withdrawal orders.

Lindsay encouraged the Board to consider their plans when undertaking their own work on preparing management plans. There are also several references in the WMAC management plan to PCMB because of their role in Porcupine Caribou herd management.

Action: Deana to get action item matrix from Aileen Horler.

Administrative Report

Administrative Activities Update

Deana provided an updated on Administrative Activities (attached) which included information regarding:

- Poster/Writing Contest
- Arctic Borderlands Meeting in Alaska
- Johnny Charlie Scholarship – STEP student to work with Dorothy Cooley as Wildlife Technician Trainee
- Conservation Awards
- Annual Report
- Funding

Financial Report

The financial report dated March 11, 2005, was presented and reviewed.

Budget for 2005/06

The Draft Budget for 2005/06 was presented and reviewed.

Conservation Awards

Board members discussed candidates for Conservation Awards:

- Lianne and Karsten Hauer – Being Caribou (national)
- Andrew Gregg — Locked Horns (international)
- Joan Eamer — Arctic Borderlands (northern)
-

Hunter Education Program

After last September's meeting, a meeting was held in Dawson to discuss the Hunter Education Plan. Sections of the plan were submitted and compiled. A basic draft (framework) has been developed. It now needs to be brought to the communities for input.

A draft will be prepared and provided to the Board for (hopefully by the next meeting in September). Then it can be edited and materials can be produced with a view to starting delivery in the fall. The intent is to deliver the program to the classrooms in other public forums. There will be three components: NWT Inuvialuit and Gwich'in, Yukon First Nations and Yukon resident hunters.

A framework will be important in seeking funding for further development of the plan. It was suggested that a list of resource people will be attached to education binder information.

Next meeting:

The next meeting will be scheduled for the fall (September/October), dates to be determined.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m. on March 17, 2005.