

PORCUPINE CARIBOU MANAGEMENT BOARD

MINUTES OF MEETING

**October 29-30, 2003
Fort McPherson, Northwest Territories**

In Attendance

Joe Tetlich, Chair
Doug Larsen, YTG
Art Christiansen, Trondek Hwichen First Nation
Frank Edwards, Gwich'in Tribal Council
Carl Charlie, Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation
Tim Devine, GNWT
Gerald Buyck, Nacho Ny'ak Dun
Dorothy Cooley, YTG
Deana Lemke, Secretariat

Regrets

Bob Lewis, Government of Canada (Parks)
Shane Goesen, Inuvialuit Game Council

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Joe Tetlich, Chair, at 8:30 a.m.

WELCOME/OPENING REMARKS

Joe Tetlich invited Chief Abe Wilson to make some opening remarks. The chief welcomed the group to Fort McPherson and to the Tetlit Gwichin traditional territory. Among his comments were that the workshop held in Fort McPherson went well; corridor issue is important consideration; education is a critical area where changes are needed; and aboriginal rights don't come without responsibilities.

Joe Tetlich welcomed participants. He mentioned that there is a lot of administrative work to be done. Shane Goesen represents the IGC at these meetings and is quite vocal in deliberations. IGC were given ample notice of this meeting; however, the meeting would carry on without IGC's representation.

Action: A letter will be drafted to inform IGC of the current situation regarding their representation on the Board.

PREVIOUS MINUTES

The minutes of the previous Board meeting held April 29 to May 1, 2003, were reviewed. The following changes were noted:

- Dorothy Cooley clarified the first sentence on page 14 and explained that it's not the census that would tell how restrictive the new measures would be. That would be outlined in the harvest plan. There is no plan in response to census numbers yet. The Board agreed to delete that sentence.
- On page 21, under the March work, the second sentence should read, "One recaptured cow had some neck abrasions and she was not recollared," not "recaptured". The following sentence, "satellite collars were deployed on 40 caribou".

Motion by Doug Larsen, seconded by Carl Charlie:

THAT the minutes of the April 29 and May 1, 2003 meeting be approved as amended.

Carried.

REVIEW STATUS OF ACTION ITEMS

Discussion and updates included:

- Conservation awards were discussed. Joe Tetlichy said Board is looking for more names for nominations; no decision has yet been made.
- Harvest Information: Doug Larsen said formal letter needs to be sent to communities requesting information, stating how it would be used and explaining black box approach. Joe Tetlichy said this should be done in collaboration with RRCs; it should come from RRCs to the RRB and then submitted to the Board. Doug Larsen said there should be a request to GRB for that information. On the Yukon side, the requests should go to First Nations or local RRCs.

Action: To draft, issue, letter to all user communities requesting that they submit harvest data. Deana Lemke to draft request.

- Outstanding debt: Joe Tetlichy will discuss this matter with the individual in question. How to deal with this matter was discussed, including options for legal action.

- Game Guardian has been approved this year for \$1,500.
- Joe Tetlich and Deana Lemke met with the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board regarding public consultation. The Board acknowledged their presentation and committed to following-up.

Action: Board to follow up with Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board to clarify a process for joint public consultation.

PORCUPINE CARIBOU MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT UPDATE

Joe Tetlich presented information about his meeting with the Council of Yukon First Nations at the Chiefs' Leadership meeting. A follow-up meeting with the Grand Chief was held a few weeks ago. CYFN are in a position to take next steps and would initiate a meeting between the parties.

Joe Tetlich and Deana Lemke will attend the upcoming leadership meeting and make a presentation about the agreement in general and the current status of a potential meeting of the signatories.

Art Christiansen expressed a concern that opening up the agreement for these matters might open it up for other matters as well. Doug Larsen spoke to this concern saying that YTG has a similar concern. He suggested that at a potential meeting of the signatories, each representative bring a list of issues they would like to see addressed. The risks can be better assessed by the signatories if their intentions are outlined, and then they can decide if they want to proceed with further discussions regarding opening the agreement for revisions or other options.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCESS

Discussion centered around the public consultation process, for example implementing changes to the *Wildlife Act*?

Deana Lemke and Kelly Hayes, executive director of YFWMB, prepared a process flow chart, which was distributed and reviewed by the Board members.

Doug Larsen explained the process of making changes to the regulations that go with the *Wildlife Act*, which includes public consultation, proposal development, internal government review, and public meetings.

Tim Devine had a question regarding the Board taking on too much responsibility by opening this beyond the user communities. Integrity of the mandate of the Board must be respected.

Discussion ensued, and this will be discussed further at the next meeting.

Action: Doug Larsen and Tim Devine agreed to work together to discuss the differences in regulation processes within the territories. They will bring information and a process chart back to the next meeting of the Board.

HARVEST MANAGEMENT PLAN

Doug Larsen described the history of the Harvest Management Plan. Deana Lemke consulted with Lindsay Staples, Northwest Resource Consulting Group, and asked him to prepare a proposal on how to approach developing a harvest management plan.

Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation funding has approximately \$9,000 remaining, which the foundation has agreed could be allocated to work on the process of preparing a harvest management plan.

Moved by Doug Larsen; seconded by Tim Devine:

THAT the Board contract Lindsay Staples of Northwest Resources Consulting group for the purpose of developing the first phase of developing the harvest management plan, utilizing the remainder of the WDG Foundation funds by March 31, 2003.

Carried.

Action: Gary Kofinas' workshop report will be provided to Lindsay.

The following concerns were raised and discussed by the Board:

- RRC and Dempster corridor – with road closure, increased hunting activity results in excessive which drives the caribou further from the highway and has caused them to alter their natural migratory routes.
- Snow cover – accumulation of adequate snow cover (six inches) is difficult due to wind conditions.
- Large vehicles and increased traffic contributes to the caribou becoming skittish.

HART RIVER CARIBOU HERD

Doug Larsen provided extensive background information on the status of the potential Hart River Caribou Herd proposals, including the positions of the Dawson District Renewable Resource Council (DDRRC) and YTG proposals.

Discussion ensued, and the following issues need to be addressed:

- The number of Hart River Caribou is undetermined
- There is confusion around the process for consultation.
- It is difficult to differentiate between the Porcupine caribou and Hart River caribou

It was noted that THFN supports the DDRRC proposal, as indicated by their letter received by the Board.

DEMPSTER HWY SECOND ONE-WEEK HUNTING CLOSURE

There was extensive discussion regarding a potential second one-week closure to hunting on the Dempster Highway. Issues discussed included:

- Joint proposal in December
- Support for separate closures
- Tourism jeopardizing First Nations' hunting rights
- Respect for the animals is imperative
- Public meeting to discuss the second one-week closure is scheduled for December 2, to be held in conjunction with the YFWMB consultation.'

The Board will meet via teleconference to discuss results from the public consultation on this matter and next steps. The Board will decide at that time what will be the recommendations to the ministers.

PORCUPINE CARIBOU HERD UPDATE

Dorothy Cooley provided an update on herd-related matters as well as activities of the Technical Committee.

The following points were highlighted:

- Tara, a new biologist with US Fish and Wildlife in ANWR, will do over-winter mortality study.
- Review of Kofinas model by Technical Committee
- Aedes Scheer, a veterinary technician has come across what appears to be an unknown parasite in the Porcupine Caribou herd
- Blaze orange vests and blaze orange toques are recommended for hunter safety
- Dempster Highway 25th Anniversary is coming up this summer – many activities will be planned to celebrate the anniversary

Action: PCMB to send a letter requesting a copy of the harvest model on disk from Gary Kofinas.

Action: PCMB to send a letter to User Communities and co-management boards advising of request for voluntary compliance with no cow harvest.

Action: Provide safety vests for the north end check station, if possible per Tim Devine's request.

WORKPLAN

The Board's work plan for 2003-04 was distributed and reviewed and updated as appropriate.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL REPORT

Deana Lemke provided a report on administrative activities (attached), and noted that she worked with Linda for a week and reviewed files, which were packed up and sent to Whitehorse.

Linda Hoffman will continue to prepare the financial reports until the end of the fiscal year. There was some discussion about the format of the budget, and Dean was requested to simplify the presentation and separate expenditures into appropriate projects or categories.

NORTH YUKON LAND USE PLANNING COMMISSION

Dave Brekke and Shawn Francis from the North Yukon Land Use Planning Commission presented information regarding the recent establishment of a commission in north Yukon. The commission is interested in building a positive working relationship with the Board to ensure that joint issues respecting the PCH and its habitat, as well as any potential impacts, will be considered and managed cooperatively.

MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Board reviewed the draft interim management plan and made numerous editorial changes. An updated and edited management plan will be completed by Dean Lemke and distributed to members. This will be further discussed at the next Board meeting.

Action: Deana Lemke to liaise with Joan Eamer of Arctic Borderlands to develop a website to submit Unusual Sightings with respect to the Porcupine Caribou Herd, its habitat or other changes observed.

Action: Deana Lemke to produce and distribute flyer describing methods used to count caribou and why biologists believe the herd is declining.

MEMBERS' CONCERNS

The following was related by Board members as concerns raised in their communities:

- Outfitters are allowing hunting of bulls in the rut. There is concern about meat wastage and this is obviously a bad practice
- Resident hunting restricted to three months per season

- There should be consideration given to allowing snow machine usage on frozen ground without the requirement of a specific amount of snow cover
- PCMB correspondence (regarding recommendations or specific positions) should be circulated to all members so they have an opportunity to provide comments prior to finalization and distribution
- Constructive criticism helps to build a stronger board.

Action: Board requested meeting information be organized with coloured tabs and distributed to Board members a week prior to meetings

NEXT MEETINGS

The next Board meeting will be held via teleconference with a purpose of drafting and finalizing recommendations that will go forward to the ministers. The next regular Board meeting will be hosted by Nacho Ny'ak Dun in Mayo sometime in May. Deana Lemke will work with Gerald Buyck to coordinate the details and logistics once the dates have been confirmed.

ADJOURNMENT

The closing prayer was offered by Frank Edwards and the meeting was adjourned at 3:35 p.m.