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May 20, 2014

Nunavut Wildlife Management Board P.O. Box 1379 Iqaluit, Nunavut XOA 0H0

Re: Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board's Submission to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board on the M'Clintock Channel Polar Request for Tags by HTO's from Gjoa Haven and Cambridge Bay

In June of 2013, the NWMB heard from affected communities, KRWB and NTI about all of the negative social and cultural impacts that the moratorium and reduced harvest of polar bears in the M'Clintock Channel has had on Inuit in the Kitikmeot.

From 2001 to 2004, there was a moratorium placed on M'Clintock Channel. From 2005 until today, the total allowable harvest has been a total of 3 animals which is shared between the communities of Gjoa Haven and Cambridge Bay.

The moratorium and current harvest level has had a huge and negative social impact on Inuit. This has changed the way that elders and hunters teach and pass on their knowledge to their children. It has also changed travel patterns and observations of traditional polar bear hunting areas.

The purpose of the moratorium and reduced harvest was to allow the population to recover. It was Inuit that first alerted the Government of a potential problem. It is again Inuit alerting you that the current situation is not reasonable. For the past seven years, we have communicated numerous times to the Government and to the NWMB that the population has recovered and some level of increase should take place in order to decrease the negative social and cultural impacts on Inuit.

Based on both Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and western science, there is information that indicates that the population has grown (see Appendix). A population viability analysis indicates that the population may have increased to about 400 animals. Therefore, based on multiple sources of information, the KRWB proposes that an increase in total allowable harvest is possible.

Further, the GN is currently conducting a survey in M'Clintock Channel. The communities are cooperating and assisting with this effort. We anticipate that the results of this survey will be coming within the next few years. During this time, the RWO is requesting an increase in the TAH because any risk should be short and tolerable.







APPENDIX

Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and community knowledge:

- 1. Inuit Qaujimaningit Nanurnut/Inuit knowledge of Polar Bears A Project of the Gjoa Haven Hunters' and Trappers' Organization Prepared by Darren Keith with Jerry Arqviq, Louie Kamookak, Jackie Ameralik and the Gjoa Haven Hunters' and Trappers' Organization. This document provides IQ on movements of polar bears and hunter's local observations and thoughts on polar bear natural history in the area.
- 2. Canadian Wildlife Service Nunavut Consultation Report (2009). This report documents comments from communities regarding polar bears in Nunavut.

Western science information:

- According to the 2013 Polar Bear Administrative Committee approved Polar Bear Technical Committee Polar Bear Status table, the recent trend for M'Clintock Channel was assessed as likely increase.
- 2. According to the 2013 World Conservation Union Polar Bear Specialist Group Polar Bear Status table, the current trend for M'Clintock Channel was assessed as increasing.
- 3. Van Coeverden de Groot et al. 2013 detected 59-82 individuals from a relatively small area in M'Clintock Channel using a non-invasive polar bear hair snagging project.
- 4. Two population viability analyses were conducted with RISKMAN (version 1.9.007), which resulted in a result of 390 animals based on a number of assumptions but primarily influenced if a stable age distribution was assumed and 490 animals if a stable age distribution was not assumed. A similar result was obtained with RISKMAN (version 1.9.9.34) for Simulation 1. However, simulation 2 could not be confidently replicated in version 1.9.9.34 due to some technical uncertainties. Please note that version 1.9.9.34 is not publicly available and is not considered to have been completed.
 - a. Simulation 1 projects approx. 380 animals in 2014 based on the following assumptions:
 - i. Initial population = 284 (SE = 59.3)
 - ii. Start with the stable age distribution
 - iii. Total Allowable Harvest from 2000 to 2014 = 3
 - iv. A Sex selective harvest (proportion of females = 0.33)
 - v. Recruitment values taken from Taylor et al. 2006
 - vi. Survival values taken from Taylor et al. 2006







- b. Simulation 2 projects approx. 490 animals in 2014 based on the following assumptions:
 - i. Initial population = 284 (SE = 59.3)
 - ii. Do not start with the stable age distribution
 - iii. Total Allowable Harvest from 2000 to 2014 = 3
 - iv. A Sex selective harvest (proportion of females = 0.33)
 - v. Recruitment values taken from Taylor et al. 2006
 - vi. Survival values taken from Taylor et al. 2006

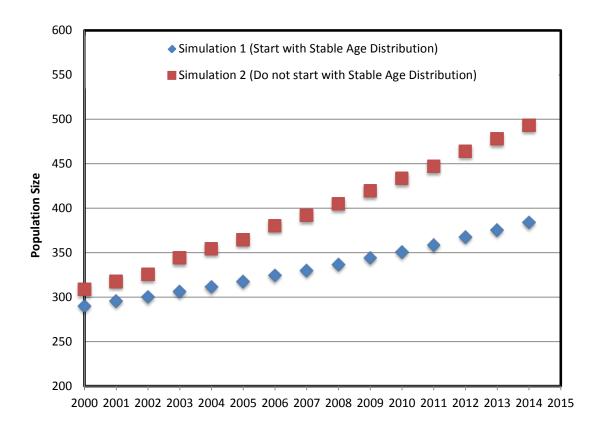


Figure 1. Population Viability Analysis RISKMAN Simulations.