



From: NTI Wildlife & Environment
Subject: NWMB Public Hearing on Foxe Basin walrus
Date: Tuesday, December 16, 2014

Communities immediately expressed their concerns about the proposed population boundaries and the population estimates developed by DFO science. The boundaries did not agree with their knowledge of walrus movements. Further, communities and HTOs expressed that the survey design and other logistical problems such as weather had affected the survey results. They have expressed that the surveys were incomplete due to lack of coverage.

The Working Groups established a timeline for completion of the Walrus Integrated Fisheries Management Plan by January 2016.

Current Status and Concerns:

The management plan has not been finalized and the establishment of a TAH will likely compromise the management plan and the effort by DFO and Inuit to achieve long term conservation goals for walrus as initially planned.

Communities are supportive of the management plan process but do not support the total allowable harvest recommendations due to lack of communication and consensus on management boundaries, survey design and survey results.

The suggested harvest restrictions do not consider or recognize Inuit systems of wildlife management and work against the conservation of wildlife and protection of critical habitat (ss. 5.1.2) as they are not supported by the communities and the respective Hunter's and Trapper's Organizations and Regional Wildlife Organization. HTOs have expressed that proceeding with the harvest recommendations would produce more challenges than solutions.

The communities and HTOs do not feel that there a valid reason to restrict or limit Inuit harvesting as per 5.3.3: (a) to effect a valid conservation purpose, (b) to give effect to the allocation system outlined in this Article (NLCA Article 5), to other provisions of this Article and to Article 40; or (c) to provide for public health or public safety

Recommendation:

Any consideration of establishment of management units and restrictions of Inuit harvesting of walrus for Foxe Basin should be postponed until adequate consultation has occurred with the affected communities and the management plan has been finalized.