



NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD

HIGHLIGHTS OF MEETING #19 25-27 AUGUST 1998

BAKER LAKE

1. This was the nineteenth regular meeting of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board, and the first meeting conducted in Baker Lake.



2. The Board reviewed and approved the Audited Financial Statement for 1997/98.

3. The Board heard an update from the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) on the status of the proposed Canadian Endangered Species Protection Act (CESPA). Several meetings on this matter took place during the summer, and it is expected that this legislation may be re-tabled as early as this fall.

4. The Board was advised by CWS on the status of the greater snow goose population that nests on Bylot and adjacent Islands. This population is estimated to be growing twice as fast (9% per annum) as the Central Arctic population of lesser snow geese. There is concern that these geese may become overpopulated and cause damage to their nesting habitat and areas where they stop during migration. The Board was advised that a formal status report could be expected in a few months.

5. CWS advised that most species of sea ducks are declining in population. However, it is noted that these species have received little attention. A Sea Duck Joint Venture (SDJV) has been initiated between Canada and the USA. The SDJV will bring together interested agencies, pool resources and knowledge, and eventually develop priorities for work on these species.



6. The Board heard an update from RWED on a successful snow goose harvest at Arviat this past spring. One thousand geese were harvested, processed and distributed to various Keewatin communities.

7. The Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) provided an update on the 1998 walrus sport hunts. Igloodik reported eight successful hunts - but the other four communities that were approved for hunts have not yet reported or are not proceeding with hunts this season.

8. DFO along with the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board provided the Board with interim reports on the successful bowhead whale hunt conducted at Pangnirtung in July. Both groups will be providing formal reports on the hunt later this fall.

9. The Board approved the establishment and funding of a Walrus Management Planning Group, which will proceed with the development of a new system of walrus management.
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10. The Board heard an update from the Southeast Baffin Beluga Management Committee. Scientific information received from DFO scientists indicates that Pangnirtung, Iqaluit and Kimmirut all hunt different stocks of beluga whales. The Board considered changes to the present management system for beluga in this area. The Board also made recommendations for further research and consultation.
11. The Board reviewed a proposal by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and DFO to develop a Conservation Plan for Eastern Arctic Bowhead Whales. Similar plans have been developed for other endangered species populations by WWF. The NWMB supported this proposal in principle.
12. The Board was provided an update by its legal advisor on the litigation currently underway between Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI) and the Federal Minister of Fisheries and Oceans regarding the turbot fishery in Davis Strait. Two judicial reviews are still pending in respect to the 1997 and 1998 turbot allocation decisions by the Minister.
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13. The Board heard an update from the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development (DRWED) on the polar bear harvest for 1997/98. A total of 414 bears were harvested, and the quality of reporting has improved from previous years.
14. The Board was presented with polar bear quota recommendations from DRWED for the upcoming season. Nine communities either exceeded their total quota or their sustainable allocation of polar bears, according to the harvesting formulas agreed to in the Polar Bear Memorandums of Understanding between the GNWT and the communities. Four communities had adequate credits from previous years, three obtained enough credits by borrowing credits from other communities, and four communities were recommended for quota reductions. Four other communities were recommended for quota increases. The Board considered these recommendations and made decisions on adjustments to community quotas.
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15. The Board heard from DRWED that the study on Polar Bear Handling Effects is continuing.
16. The Board was advised that a survey of Peary caribou is planned for the spring of 1999 in the Eastern Queen Elizabeth Islands (Ellesmere and Devon). Reconnaissance surveys conducted this summer in the Western Queen Elizabeth Islands indicate no evidence of a winter die-off in the area, and that calving has been successful this year.
17. The Board heard from DRWED that a workshop is planned for this fall to discuss protection measures for caribou calving grounds.
18. DRWED advised that the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) is currently revising its status report on Arctic wolves. DRWED is updating information on harvest levels and trends in prey species.
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19. The Board heard from DRWED that work is progressing on an options paper for development of a Nunavut Wildlife Act. Community consultation on revisions to the Act may begin later this fall.
20. Following the decision of the Minister of RWED to disallow an initial NWMB decision to permit the harvesting of a polar bear by an

Inuk in the traditional manner (that is; using dogs, harpoons and/or spears), the NWMB reconsidered its initial decision in light of the reasons provided by the Minister. The NWMB finally decided to maintain its initial decision, which is also subject to review by the Minister.

21. The Board heard a report from its Harvest Study Coordinator on the progress of the Study. The database is now essentially up-to-date, and reports are starting to be sent out to the communities. Negotiations have begun with a consultant to do a technical review of the Harvest Study.
22. The Board heard from its Director of Wildlife Management that the Inuit Bowhead Knowledge Study requires more time and funds for completion and final reporting.
23. The Board heard from its Director of Wildlife Management that data entry of DFO and DRWED resource materials for the NWMB Resource Centre is underway. Staff turnovers at the DRWED offices have delayed the other component of this project, the development of a Stock Database for Nunavut.
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24. The Board considered an update by its legal adviser regarding the ongoing development of Rules of Practice for Public Hearings of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board. A final draft will be reviewed at the next regular NWMB meeting in November or early December.
25. The Board heard from its Director of Wildlife Management that the NWMB Chairperson and Director of Wildlife Management attended the inaugural meeting of the Nunavut Marine Policy Advisory Committee (NMPAC). The NWMB and NTI signed on as Associate Members of this Committee, while the Nunavut Water Board, the Nunavut Planning Commission and the Nunavut Impact Review Board signed as full members. The NMPAC will be advising the Institutions of Public Government (IPGs) on matters such as marine shipping and reviewing proposed new marine legislation, and will be developing position statements on marine issues pending the possible formation of a Nunavut Marine Council.
26. The Board received the report of the consultant on developing "Qualifications for Big Game Hunting Guides." The Board will review this document over the next few months and discuss it at the next meeting of the NWMB.
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27. The Board approved a donation of \$3,500 to the Clyde River Hunters and Trappers Association to assess the utility of a harpoon gun for hunting beluga and narwhal. The objective being to try and reduce the struck-and-lost rate in open-water hunting.
28. The Board heard a presentation from Raymond Ningeocheak, 2nd Vice-President of NTI. Mr. Ningeocheak advised the NWMB that he recently took over the wildlife portfolio from James Eetoolook and that he looked forward to working with the NWMB. He noted that one important matter on his agenda is to resolve the issue of how to permit subsistence harvesting by Nunavik beneficiaries living in Nunavut, and by Nunavut beneficiaries living in Nunavik. Mr. Ningeocheak also advised that Land Claim Membership Cards are expected to be available by this fall. Bert Dean will be taking on the position of NTI Wildlife Manager and will look at hiring additional staff.
29. During the session Ben Kovic was sworn-in for a second term as Chairperson of the NWMB.
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30. The Board members and staff participated in a public meeting and community feast and dance on the evening of August 26th,

**For further information please contact:
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