

NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD

Minutes: Regular Meeting No. 57

Rankin Inlet, September 11th, 2008

Members and Staff Participating:

| | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| Harry Flaherty | Acting Chairperson |
| Robert Moshenko | Member |
| Kevin McCormick | Member |
| Peter Awa | Member |
| Makabe Nartok | Member |
| Pitseolak Alainga | Member |
| Joannie Ikkidluak | Member |
| Willie Nakoolak | Member |
| Joe Justus | Director of Wildlife Management |
| Tom Demcheson | Director of Finance and Admin |
| Charlotte Sharkey | Wildlife Management Biologist |
| Adam Schneidmiller | Wildlife Admin Biologist |
| Michael d'Eça | NWMB Legal Advisor |
| Evie Amagoalik | Interpreter |
| Lazarus Arreak | Interpreter |

Not Available:

| | |
|-----------|-------------------------|
| Jim Noble | Chief Operating Officer |
|-----------|-------------------------|

Other Participants at Various Times:

| | |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| Raymond Ningeocheak | NTI, Sec-Vice President, |
| Glenn Williams | NTI, Wildlife Advisor |
| David Lee | NTI, Wildlife Biologist |
| Bert Dean | NTI, Associate Dir. Wildlife |
| Gabriel Nirlungayuk | NTI, Dir. Wildlife Management |
| Holly Cleator | DFO, Species at Risk Biologist |
| Drikus Gissing | DOE, Dir. Wildlife Management NU |
| David Verta | DOE, Dir. Regulations/Operations |
| Dustin Fredlund | DOE, Dir. Wildlife Management Kug. |
| Chris Hotson | DOE, Management Biologist |
| Richard Connelly | NIWS, Executive Director |
| David Aksawnee | KWB, Chairperson |
| Paul Kanayuk | Elder, Rankin Inlet |
| Matthew Inukshuk | Elder, Rankin Inlet |
| Unidentified Others | Elders |

1. Call to Order and Opening Preliminaries

The Chairperson opened the meeting at 9:06 a.m.

2. Opening Remarks

The Chairperson welcomed the members, staff and guests to the 57th meeting of the NWMB in Rankin Inlet and requested introductions from all participants.

3. Agenda: Review and Approval

A motion was brought forth to adopt the agenda as presented. The Chairperson noted that Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) was not available to give the presentations outlined in the agenda. Joe Justus stated that he could present the information on behalf of CWS and the Board concluded that Joe Justus would present the CWS agenda items for CWS for information only. DFO items 17 and 18 were removed from the agenda. The Board decided (**Resolution 2008-068**) to approve the revised agenda as discussed.

4. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

No conflicts of interests were noted.

5. Minutes of Meetings: Review and Approval

A. Conference Call No. 111

Minutes were approved as presented (**Resolution 2008-069**)

B. Conference Call No. 112

Minutes were deferred for approval until clarification could be sought for resolution number 017 regarding bowhead whales.

C. Conference Call No. 113

Minutes were approved as presented (**Resolution 2008-070**)

6. Financial and Administrative Business

A. Review/Approval of August 31st, 2008 Variance Report

The Director of Finance and Administration presented the variance report for the period from April 1, 2008 to August 31, 2008. The Director noted an overall variance of less than a percent (0.9%). The harvest study budget was reduced by \$700,000 and was carried over. The total carry-forward balance for the planning period up to

2013 is now totalled at \$2,521,533 which is to be used for the harvest study. The Board decided (**Resolution 2008-071**) to approve the variance report as presented.

7. Chairperson, Staff and Members' Report

A. Chief Operating Officer Report

A summary of activities from June 1 to August 31, 2008 and objectives for the next quarter were presented.

B. Director, Finance and Administration Report

A summary of activities from May 17 to August 22, 2008 and objectives for the next quarter were presented.

C. Director of Wildlife Management Report

A summary of activities from May 16 to August 27, 2008 were presented

D. Wildlife Management Biologist Report

A summary of activities from July 10 to August 18, 2008 were presented.

E. Wildlife Administrative Biologist Report

A summary of activities from July 2 to August 18, 2008 were presented.

F. Legal Advisor Report

A summary of activities from May 20 to August 20, 2008 were presented.

G. Member / Staff Reports and Concerns

Robert Moshenko requested that wildlife staff give a brief overview of the two bowhead whale hunts that took place this summer. Joe Justus outlined that the two hunts were completed successfully and the muktuk was distributed to communities.

Peter Awa expressed concerns regarding conference calls, specific concerns mentioned were: (a) being informed earlier; (b) problem of timing (i.e. calls being pushed back); (c) honoraria for time. The Chairperson noted that it would be put to the executive committee.

Pitseolak Alainga asked if staff are up to date with regards to backlog. Joe Justus responded by stating that the process has begun but staff are still behind and the workload is increasing due to more demands from co-management partners and Nunavummiut. The Chairperson noted that the issue would be brought up with the executive committee.

Makabe Nartok asked when a wildlife officer would be available in his community. Dustin Fredlund responded stating that a training system is in the works that would eventually place a wildlife officer in his area.

Pitseolak Alainga asked if Board members could be trained and get their own laptops to keep up with the information flow of the organization. The Chairperson acknowledged that this will be considered.

Peter Awa also noted that his community did not have a wildlife officer and requested when the position would be filled. Drikus Gissing responded by stating that they are currently in the interview process and that a wildlife officer would be hired in the next two or three weeks.

8. Assignments: Progress, Review and Discussion

The status of past assignments were not reviewed

9. Environment Canada – Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS)

The Chairperson noted that Joe Justus would be presenting the CWS information on behalf of CWS and that there would not be a chance to ask questions due to a CWS representative not being available. Glenn Williams requested that before the presentations proceed, he wanted confirmation that the presentations would be repeated so that NTI would have a chance to ask questions.

A. Proposed Listing of Polar bear as Special Concern under SARA

Polar bear was reassessed by COSEWIC in April 2008 and was again recommended to be listed as Special Concern as a single species. Polar bear has been assessed by COSEWIC in 1991, 1999 and 2002, each time recommending a status of Special Concern. Justification put forth was that although loss of sea ice due to climate change is predicted to be a threat to the long-term survival of the species, there are other subpopulations that are stable or increasing.

The briefing note presented is notification by the Minister of the Environment of the results of the polar bear assessment and corresponds with step 3.5 of the SARA/NLCA MOU. In the spring of 2009 Environment Canada is proposing to contact all Nunavut communities and other jurisdictions (i.e. Northwest Territories, Ontario, Quebec, etc.) to provide them with general information on the Species at Risk Act and the polar bear proposed listing. Consulted communities will be asked to respond with any questions, concerns, information and provide their opinion or position about the proposed listing. Environment Canada recommended that the Board provide any views or recommendations regarding the proposed consultation approach, however recommendations were not put forth due to a CWS representative not being available.

B. Proposed Listing of Short-eared Owl as Special Concern under SARA

Short-eared owl was assessed by COSEWIC in April 2008 and was recommended to be listed as a species of Special Concern. Sightings of short-eared owl have been recorded in Nunavut, however information on the population status or trend is non-existent. The species is known to be widely distributed across Canada and is most likely to occur in the Kitikmeot and the southern Kivalliq regions in Nunavut. The rationale for the assessment provided by COSEWIC was that the population has decreased by 23% in the past decade; habitat loss and degradation of wintering grounds and breeding grounds; and pesticide use.

The briefing note presented is notification by the Minister of the Environment of the results of the short-eared assessment and corresponds with step 3.5 of the SARA/NLCA MOU. Environment Canada will be contacting communities within the range of the owl to inform them of the proposed listing and to request that they provide any information, questions or concerns and to obtain their formal position on the proposed listing. In the spring of 2009, the results of the community consultations will be presented to the Board and a formal request for a decision from Environment Canada will be made at that time. Environment Canada recommended that the Board provide any views or recommendations regarding the proposed consultation approach, however recommendations were not put forth due to a CWS representative not being available.

C. Proposed Listing of Red Knot (*islandica*) as Special Concern and Red Knot (*rufa*) as Endangered under SARA

The red knot (*islandica*) species was assessed by COSEWIC in May 2007 as a species of Special Concern. The rationale for the assessment provided by COSEWIC was concern about the potential effects of contaminants being used in the wintering grounds. It was noted that listing a species under the Species at Risk Act does not restrict harvest or regulate habitat for species of Special Concern.

The red knot (*rufa*) species was assessed by COSEWIC in May 2007 as Endangered. The rationale for the assessment provided by COSEWIC was due to major population declines and a severe decline of their food source at an important migration feeding area. It was noted that listing the *rufa* species as Endangered would require a recovery strategy.

In May 2008, CWS briefed the Board on the proposed listings and indicated that they would be consulting with communities. As of August 2008, one community had replied in support of the listing. As of September 2008, Coral Harbour and Resolute Bay have also indicated that they support the listing under SARA. It was noted that an updated list of responses would be presented at the next Board meeting and that a formal written request for a decision would also be sent from the Minister of Environment before the next Board meeting.

D. Proposed Listing of Peregrine Falcon as Special Concern under SARA

Peregrine falcon was assessed by COSEWIC in May 2007 as a species of Special Concern. The rationale for the assessment provided by COSEWIC was concern regarding the effects of environmental contaminants in the species wintering grounds. It was noted that there are no requirements to restrict harvesting under the proposed listing, however a national management plan would be developed if listed. In May 2008, CWS briefed the Board on the proposed listing and indicated that they would be consulting with communities.

As of 2008, two communities replied in support of the listing, two were indifferent and one community did not support the listing. It was further noted that a formal written request would be sent to the Board requesting a decision on the listing before the Board's next Regular Meeting.

10. Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO)

A. Cumberland Sound and Eastern High Arctic Beluga SARA Listing

As recommended by the Board at RM.56, DFO was requested to re-consult with the relevant Hunter and Trapper Organizations to determine whether or not they support the listings and report back to the Board on the results. The request was made due to a three-month shift in the time line for the SARA/NLCA MOU requested by DFO.

In May 2008, DFO sent consultation letters to six HTOs, the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board (QWB), Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI), and the Nunavut Inuit Wildlife Secretariat (NIWS). DFO reported that for the Cumberland Sound beluga, the Pangnirtung HTO and the QWB sent letters strongly opposing the listing during the consultations in 2008 and in 2005. NTI supported the listing in 2005 but did not respond during the 2008 consultations.

For the Eastern High Arctic beluga population, Grise Fiord HTO, Resolute Bay HTO, Taloyoak HTO, Arctic Bay HTO and Pond Inlet HTO, along with QWB, NTI and NIWS were consulted. The Taloyoak HTO and the Resolute HTO both replied in 2008 in opposition to the listing. Consultation results from 2005 indicated that NTI and QWB did not support the listing.

DFO stated that they feel they have met step 3.8 of the SARA/NLCA MOU and will be proceeding on to step 3.9, which is where the Minister provides the Board with what he is considering with respect to the listing of the two populations as well as the best available information for the two populations. At the same time the Minister of Environment will request a Board decision on the listing of the two populations. It was noted that step 3.9 of the SARA/NLCA MOU may be delayed due to the federal election.

In addition, DFO requested that the Board resend a letter to DFO changing the timeline extension from three to five months, which would accommodate the NWMB

requested consultations that took place in the summer and would bring the timeline up to date. The Chairperson directed NWMB wildlife staff to resend the letter.

DFO also corrected a statement made at RM 56 regarding that DFO had plans to conduct further analysis of the genetic samples for the eastern High Arctic beluga population to address whether the population should be split into two separate populations. It was stated that this research has been delayed due to other pressing issues and that the re-analysis has not been rescheduled.

11. Department of Environment-Nunavut (DOE-NU)

A. Increase in Compensation for Meat of Chemically Immobilized Polar Bears

In response to community concerns with regards to bears that have been chemically immobilized and harvested, DOE-NU recommended to increase the compensation value from \$300 to \$1000 to offset the losses incurred by hunters for contaminated meat. DOE-NU noted that compensation would be available to harvested polar bears that were immobilized in the previous year and that this would be determined when hunters submit the required samples to conservation officers. Conservation officers will have a record of all the bears that were chemically immobilized for research purposes in the previous year. DOE-NU noted that this change would have to be agreed upon by all signatories of the polar bear Memorandum of Understandings (MOU). DOE-NU requested an NWMB decision on the issue.

Board discussion noted that because the NWMB is not a signatory to the polar bear MOU's an NWMB decision is not required and that the RWO's and HTO's would have to be advised of the change. Joe Justus advised that he would draft a letter outlining the Board's position on the matter to DOE-NU.

B. Wildlife Symposium

DOE-NU noted that over the past years their department has received a number of correspondences from HTOs and RWOs expressing dissatisfaction with the state of wildlife management in Nunavut. In the past years the disconnect between harvesters and scientists has grown and DOE-NU wishes to address this issue. The Minister has therefore requested the participation of the Wildlife Secretariat, NTI, and the NWMB to collaborate on a wildlife symposium with a broad goal of reviewing and renewing the co-management system and relationships. The proposed issues to be discussed at the symposium include: (a) rebuilding trust and relationships; (b) effective communication; (c) consultation; (d) wildlife handling and research methodology; and (e) Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit. DOE-NU also noted that the management practices within Nunavut must be representative of the values of Nunavummiut but must also instil confidence at the national and international level. Preliminary planning for the symposium has started and it is planned for early 2009.

C. The Nunavut Caribou Management Strategy

DOE-NU noted that the "Nunavut Caribou Management Strategy" is a response to hunter observations and scientific research that there is a general decline occurring in caribou numbers in most Nunavut herds. Specific examples of these declines provided by DOE-NU include: (a) Bathurst herd has declined from 249,000 in 1996 to 128,000 in 2006; and (b) Bluenose West herd which declined from 78,000 in 2000 to 18,000 in 2006. The other herds noted were Peary and Dolphin Union which have been assessed by COSEWIC as Endangered and Special Concern, respectively. The "Nunavut Caribou Management Strategy" will essentially be guidelines which will give co-management partners advice on how to manage caribou and will indicate specific "triggers" as to when an increase in research would be required. The strategy has been drafted and is undergoing final internal reviews in preparation for consultations. DOE-NU is also planning to consult with industry before bring the strategy to the cabinet for a decision in 2009.

D. Peary Caribou and Muskoxen Survey, Devon Island; Results and Implications

DOE-NU provided an update on the research project regarding Peary caribou and muskoxen located in Devon Island. DOE-NU did an aerial survey this spring and only 17 caribou were observed. With regards to muskoxen, 63 clusters were observed, representing 357 animals and 58 newborns. It was noted that the final component of the research would be completed this year and that a final report would be available in February 2009. Community consultations would follow the completion of the final report.

12. NWMB Internal Items

A. Quttinirpaaq National Park Management Plan- Edits and Extension

Parks Canada requested that some changes be made to the Quttinirpaaq National Park of Canada Management Plan, which the Board approved in December 2005 (decision letter sent October 2006), before the management plan is submitted to the Minister. Technical staff reviewed the proposed edits, and a briefing note regarding some concerns was presented to the Board. Major edits presented were: motorized access to all zones of the park for the Department of National Defence; vegetation damage was deleted from the plan; introduction of exotic species has be deleted from the plan; local impacts are no longer to be monitored in the revised plan; and the revised plan has removed the statement that no additional facilities would be developed in the park.

A September 4, 2008 letter from Parks Canada requesting a further extension until June 30th, 2009, for the Minister's reply to the NWMB's approval of the Quttinirpaaq Management Plan, was also presented to the Board.

The Board did not make any formal resolutions regarding these issues however, wildlife staff were directed to 1) contact Parks Canada staff to seek any explanations regarding the proposed edits that were of concern; and 2) communicate to Parks Canada that the Board was not opposed to the proposed extension.

13. Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI)

A. Removal of Bowhead Total Allowable Harvest

NTI submitted a follow-up to a request for a decision to the NWMB at RM 54 in December of 2007 regarding removal of the bowhead TAH. NTI indicated that when the NWMB made an interim decision in March of 2008 to allocate two bowhead whale to be harvested in Nunavut, the NWMB indicated that a decision on NTI's request would be considered in the fall of 2008 in order to make a decision in advance for the summer of 2009. It was further noted that NTI would like to do three bowhead hunts in Nunavut next year.

NTI stated that during the preparation for the bowhead whale hunts in 2008 the issue of the bowhead whale hunt plan approval process and the bowhead whale licensing conditions were raised by NTI with the NWMB and DFO staff. NTI noted that there was agreement that those issues should be resolved when considered the bowhead TAH for 2009.

NTI formally requested that the NWMB prepare for a public hearing on the removal of the TAH for bowhead whales in the Nunavut Settlement Area (NSA) and review the hunt plan approval process and licensing condition to ensure compliance with Inuit harvesting rights in the NSA.

The Board discussed the issue and recommended that NTI break down the requests into two separate proposals as advised by the NWMB's legal advisor, which would be a request for: (1) the removal of the bowhead TAH and (2) a review of the hunt plan approval process. Wildlife staff were also advised to write the DFO Minister requesting the most up to date information regarding bowhead whales and the results of the International Whaling Commission review of DFO's bowhead research. The Chairperson also directed NWMB staff to organize a meeting with NTI and DFO staff to discuss the licensing conditions with regards to bowhead whale hunts.

B. Proposed Polar Bear Research Foxe Basin

NTI brought forth its concerns with regards to the proposed and ongoing polar bear research being conducted in Foxe Basin by DOE-NU. NTI noted that RWOs, HTOs, Inuit Organizations and some councils have passed resolutions and have written letters to government ministers to terminate all intrusive research and handling of wildlife not consistent with IQ. NTI stated that the DOE-NU proposal was amended from the 2007 proposal, further noting that there were approximately 18 amendments from the 2007 submission.

The project amendments that NTI considered were substantial are the following: (a) HTO's in the Kivalliq have reported that the consultations on the project were limited to the research being done by Parks Canada and did not include the mark-recapture and deployment of the 30 satellite collars and handling of up to 300 bears per season; (b) a pilot project for an aerial survey, which is to be designed in 2008 and occur in 2009-2010; (c) the 2008 proposal does not have a schedule for IQ collection; (d) an increase of 30 adult female bears to 38 adult female bears to be collared in the 2008 proposal; (e) mark-recapture is rescheduled for 2008-2010; (f) more samples are to be taken including blood and fecal matter; (g) no meetings are scheduled for 2008; and (i) addition of satellite ear tags to an unknown number of male polar bears.

Apart from the amendments of the proposal, NTI also noted concerns with the project methodology of giving every bear the opportunity to be captured due to concerns of bears being killed on the multi-year moving ice. Further, NTI expressed concern that Inuit have not been consulted on the changes to the research project and that NTI wildlife staff have not had a chance to identify the concerns with NWMB staff. NTI noted that they believe that sections 5.2.37 (b), 5.2.37 (c), 5.2.38 (d) and 21.5.7 of the NLCA have not been met.

NTI recommended that the NWMB withdraw their support of the project as per S 5.2.37 (c) of the NLCA and suspend financial support to the project until there has been a full, open, and transparent consultation with affected DIOs, RWOs, HTOs and the NU-DOE and the NWMB can demonstrate that they have met their obligation to consult and accommodate Inuit concerns.

The Chairperson advised staff to look at NTI's 18 concerns regarding the changes in the project proposal and provide advice to the Board on how to address the issue.

14. Other Presentations

A. Nunavut Inuit Wildlife Secretariat (NIWS)- Update on Funding Concerns

Richard Connelly presented various accomplishments and funding issues for RWOs, HTOs and NIWS. It was noted that the RWOs do not have the adequate level of funding and are currently operating at a "crunch level". Major accomplishments include mentioned were: (a) have addressed 21 Revenue Canada files and repayment has been completed for all but one HTO; (b) have completed three manager training sessions; (c) have completed three board of directors training sessions; (d) approved a directors stipend policy; (e) research applications are now being reviewed on a regular basis; and (f) created a centralized payroll system.

Specific concerns noted are the following: (a) due to increasing requests from HTOs / RWOs the NIWS office have an increased workload, lack of capacity, lack of resources, staff losses and staff changeover; (b) specific loss of NIWS finance director; (c) increase of HTO issues and HTO changeover and (d) lack of staff in finance.

Richard concluded that he would be coming back before the Board with specific number for the hiring of a finance position by the next Board meeting.

B. Kivalliq Wildlife Board (KWB)-Western Hudson Bay Polar Bears

The KWB's concerns were expressed regarding the TAH reduction for Western Hudson Bay polar bear from 38 to 8 for the 2008 harvest season. KWB noted that they wrote the Minister of Environment on May 22, 2008 and on July 31, 2008 but they have not received a response. Concern was noted regarding the Western Hudson Bay survey and how it was conducted, as KWB did not feel that it was completed nor conducted correctly. Three elders expressed their concerns with the reduction in the Western Hudson Bay TAH, as they do not feel that the polar bear population is decreasing and they felt that the research survey was not completed adequately.

Discussions were held between all participating parties regarding the survey and the implementation of the NWMB's decision. NTI noted that they are prepared to work with the NWMB and the Government on this issue and that they would be putting their position and KWB's position in writing. The Chairperson recommended that the KWB and other parties await the response from the Minister, which was identified as having being sent, before further discussing the issue.

15. Executive Committee Report and Recommendations

It was noted that a number of items will not be discussed and will have to be discussed in an internal in camera session. Staffing issues were noted pointing out that a new secretary receptionist and a new wildlife biologist was hired. The Executive Committee discussed the establishment of the Nunavut Marine Council and directed staff to investigate the situation further. The training situation on Microsoft Word 2007 and the filing system were discussed. The Executive Committee also discussed the hiring of a chairperson and chief executive officer. Progress and staff involvement on the policy manuals were also discussed.

16. Meetings, Workshops and Other Pertinent Events

A. Reports and Briefings: Past Events (Recent)

No reports or briefings were presented or reviewed.

B. Review and Participation: Upcoming Events

Joe Justus presented the list of upcoming events to the Board. It was noted that the NWMB does not usually attend the COSEWIC subcommittee's. The Nunavut Regulation Review Committee with DFO is to be attended by the NWMB's legal advisor and Chief Operating Officer (COO), it will be held in Iqaluit, October 7-9. The DFO Science Advisory Council will be attended by the NWMB Director of Wildlife Management to provide scientific advice to the department which is to be held in New

Brunswick October 21-23. The administrative law and regulations meeting will be attended by the NWMB legal advisor which is to be held in Ottawa, October 29-30. The environmental law and regulations meeting which is to be held in Edmonton, November 13-14 and the North Atlantic Fish and Workboat Show to be held in St. John's, November 21-22 were not decided upon due to a lack of details. The fisheries and aquatic culture workshop was not decided upon until discussions with COO could be held to discuss the value of NWMB staff attending. The Species at Risk Workshop will be attended by the Wildlife Administrative Biologist which is to be held in Iqaluit, November 25-27. The wildlife symposium will be attended by all wildlife staff which is to be held in January, 2009. The Canada Greenland joint commission on narwhal, beluga and walrus will be attended by Robert Moshenko which is to be held in Winnipeg, February 16-20.

17. Date and Location of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was decided unofficially for December 2-4 in Iqaluit. Only one Board member had a schedule conflict, Kevin McCormick. No motion was put forth.

18. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned (**Resolution 2008-072**) at 5:05 p.m.

Minutes Approved by:


A/Chairperson


Date

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 2008-068: RESOLVED that the NWMB approve the revised agenda for Regular Meeting No. 57

Moved by: Pitseolak Alainga
Carried

Seconded by: Joannie Ikkidluak
Date: September 11th, 2008

Resolution 2008-069: RESOLVED that the NWMB approve the minutes for Conference Call No. 111

Moved by: Kevin McCormick
Carried

Seconded by: Makabe Nartok
Date: September 11th, 2008

Resolution 2008-070: RESOLVED that the NWMB approve the minutes for Conference Call No. 113

Moved by: Pitseolak Alainga

Seconded by: Willie Nakoolak

Carried

Date: September 11th, 2008

Resolution 2008-071: RESOLVED that the NWMB approve the variance report for the period from April 1, 2008 to August 31, 2008

Moved by: Pitseolak Alainga
Carried

Seconded by: Kevin McCormick
Date: September 11th, 2008

Resolution 2008-072: RESOLVED that the NWMB adjourn the meeting

Moved by: Joannie Ikkidluak
Carried

Seconded by: Willie Nakoolak
Date: September 11th, 2008