

PROPOSAL REVIEW

Project Number: 3-14-03

Applicant: Steve Ferguson

Title: Abundance of walrus in Hudson Bay and Hudson Strait

Funding Requested: Single Year Funding - \$75,000 for 2014-2015

Rank: 5 / 18

Total Score 82.69 / 100
(no deductions)

Scoring Breakdown: NWMB Priority: 17.50 / 17.50

Regional Priority: 7.50 / 7.50

Quality: 27.25 / 35.00

Consultation: 10.50 / 15

Funding: 19.94 / 25

Project Summary:

The primary objective of this project is to estimate abundance of walrus in south and eastern Hudson Bay, James Bay, and Hudson Strait using aerial surveys. Through extensive coverage of the coastlines of these regions as well as haul-out sites recognized through TEK and previous observations, this project aims to: 1) design a survey acceptable to residents of the Hudson Strait and Hudson Bay communities; 2) hire and train survey crews from local communities; and 3) evaluate the distribution and abundance of walrus in Hudson Bay and Hudson Strait.

Project Contributions:

Requested from NWMB	\$ 75,000	21%
Other Contributions	<u>\$277,500</u>	<u>79%</u>
Total	\$352,500	100%

NWMB Staff Evaluation:

NWMB Priority: #1 - Contributes to the establishment, modification or removal of levels of Total Allowable Harvest (S 5.6.16 to S 5.6.18) for stocks or populations where there is believed to be a conservation concern or that are priority species for harvest by Inuit.

Regional Priority: #1 Baffin – Increase community involvement in wildlife management

Project design:

Three observers, including an observer designated from hunters associations (Hunters and Trappers Organization or Nunavik Hunters, Fishermen and Trappers Association) will be employed on an aircraft to scan the coastline and water for walrus and make visual estimates of their numbers. In addition to visual observations, aerial photographs will be taken and located using a Global Positioning System. Information from the Global Positioning System will be used to map survey tracks and effort. Visual and photographic counts will be used to generate a minimum population estimate for both stocks (Hudson Bay-Davis Strait and South and East Hudson Bay) and results from previous studies will be used to correct these estimates for walrus not hauled out at the time of the survey.

Application of results:

The results of the proposed project will be published in either a scientific journal or a Fisheries and Oceans Canada Canadian Science Advisory Secretariat Report and applied to management initiatives. Findings will allow fisheries managers to determine total allowable harvests based on up-to-date scientific data, which should allow for more effective management of walrus stocks in the Nunavut Settlement Area and the Nunavik Marine Region.

Community involvement / consultation:

The Project Leader has sent a letter requesting support to the affected communities but has not yet provided evidence of support. The consultation requirement set out in the NWRT policy for projects that affect more than five communities (as is this case with this project) is a letter of support from the affected Regional Wildlife Organization.

Consultations are planned for the times when aerial observers are being picked up from the communities. Upon completion of the project, consultations by correspondence are planned in conjunction with the circulation of community reports.

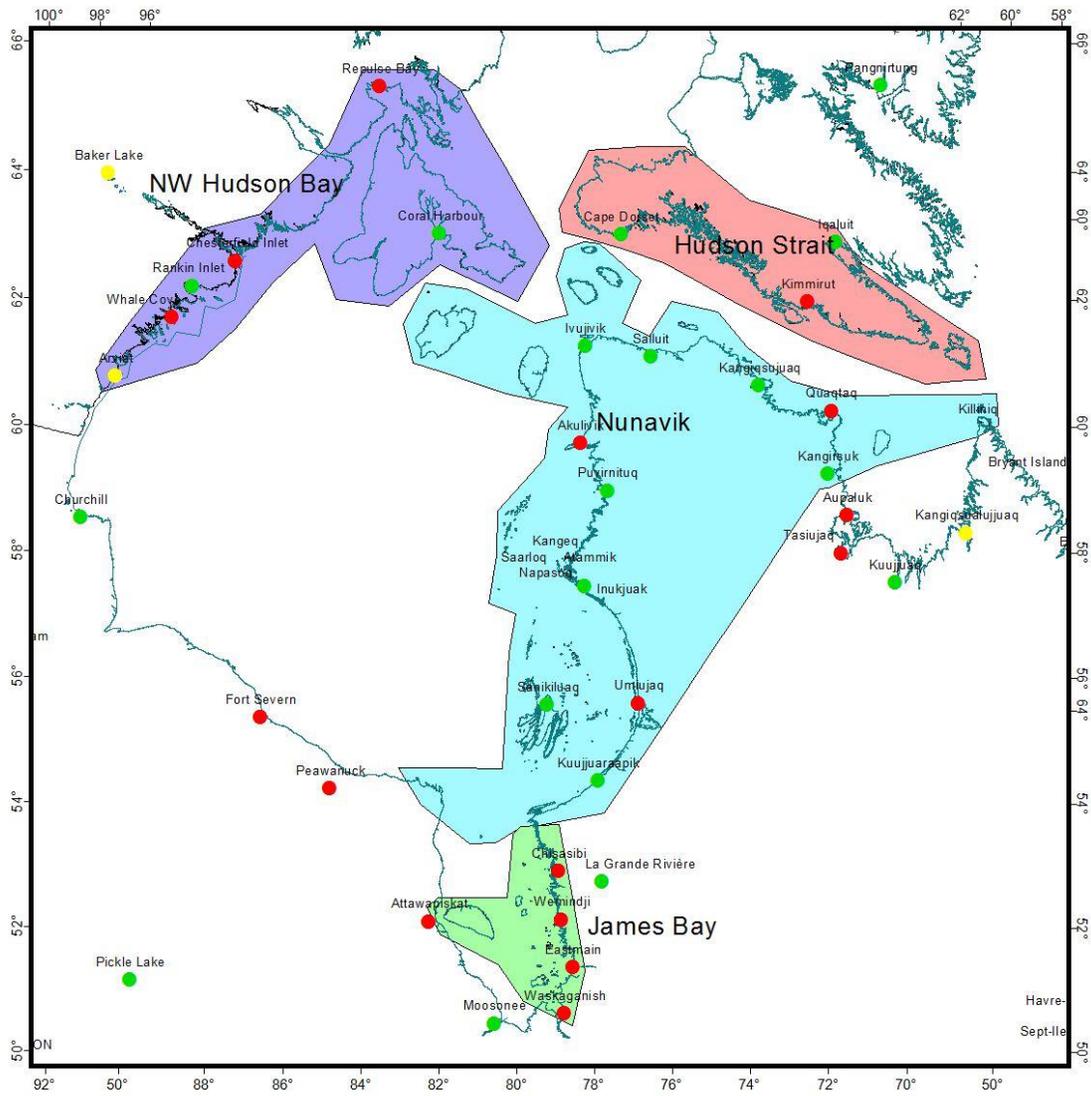
As per the NWRT policy, if the project is funded by the NWRT the project is required to: (1) provide a letter of support from all affected communities by June 30th, 2014; **OR** (2) provide a letter of support from a majority of the affected communities by June 30th, 2014 and provide evidence that the research has done a “conscientious” job of consulting; **OR** (3) provide the required information to demonstrate that “conscientious” consultation has been conducted by June 30th, 2014.

Recommendations: If this project is funded, the following conditions should apply:

1. Funding should be conditional on other funding, as identified in the proposal, being approved. This should be confirmed in writing; and
2. Funding should be conditional on meeting the consultation requirements identified as per the NWRT policy.

Prepared By: Danica Crystal, Wildlife Management Biologist, NWMB

Consultations: Peter Kydd, Wildlife Management Biologist, NWMB



The study area will include three regions in south and eastern Hudson Bay, in James Bay and In Hudson Strait (including Coats Island and Mansel Island). With additional funding to be confirmed, the survey area could also be extended to northwest Hudson Bay (i.e. Southampton Island, adjacent islands and the coast from Repulse Bay to Arviat). The survey will focus on the coastline and islands within these areas.