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2016 - 2017 4<sup>1</sup>5JJ<sup>c</sup> >σ<sup>6</sup>6<sup>c</sup>

**2016 - 2017** Annual Report







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## Overview of the Community -based Monitoring Network

The Community-based Monitoring Network was established by the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board as a pilot study in three participating communities (Arviat, Cambridge Bay and Sanikiluaq) in February 2012. The project brings tog ether respected Nunavummiut harvesters to share their knowledge and observations about wildlife. Participants are trained to use specialized hand-held computers to record wildlife sightings, harvests, and other environmental observations while out on the land.

When harvesters return from the land, trained Data Clerks in each of the participating communities transfer the information into a regional database. In this way, information recorded by the harvesters is combined to create a collective storehouse of knowledge that will be used to improve local, regional, and territorial wildlife management practices in Nunavut.





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## **Project Objectives**

The intent of the Community-based Monitoring Network is to provide decision making bodies with upto-date information directly from those who spend the most time on the land. The data gathered through the project may help address concerns affecting wildlife management, conservation, and Inuit harvesting rights. Using the handheld computers for data collection provides managers and researchers with this information in a format that can efficiently communicate with scientific modeling.

The specific objectives for the Community-based Monitoring Network are:

- To improve the information available for use by the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board and its comanagement partners in establishing, modifying, and/or removing non-quota limitations, and for assisting with decisions regarding the approval of management plans and the approval of the proposed listing of species under the federal *Species at Risk Act*;
- To acquire data, including Inuit and local ecological knowledge, for use in identifying management zones, areas of high biological productivity, critical harvesting areas, documenting species abundance and movement patterns, setting wildlife research and management priorities, and directing further research efforts;
- To maintain a progressive, up-to-date management system which takes into account emerging issues, concepts and principles in wildlife management; and
- To maximize the benefits for the community in achieving these objectives.

#### ΔЬζΥΙΟς ΔΩς σο



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"... my mesa is paying off for me in gear - I'm getting all new stuff.... thank you again...all is good."

#### **Benefits to Communities**

The Community-based Monitoring Network creates training opportunities for harvesters, and employs one part-time Data Clerk in each participating community. Communities have full access to their own data, which they can use to manage local wildlife issues.

The project seeks to improve communication between communities, regions, government, and other wildlife management agencies. This can promote stewardship and cooperative management by:

- Improving understanding of key conservation concerns from the communities;
- Providing participating communities with a greater role in management of their wildlife resources; and
- Providing data that could be used to address issues regarding compensation claims, harvesting rights, land-use, and development.

Short-term benefits for participants include monthly draws for Visa Gift cards (worth up to \$1,000), and twice-yearly draws for a snow machine or all-terrain vehicle in each participating community. Harvesters that collect harvest and observation data for the project regularly, will also receive recognition awards for their contribution.



# Benefits to Wildlife Managers and Researchers

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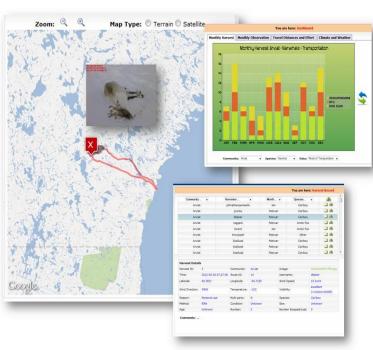
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The Nunavut Wildlife Management Board may include the information collected by the Community-based Monitoring Network when addressing wildlife management issues, especially in developing management plans, identifying important harvesting areas, documenting species distribution, movement, and health, and identifying issues that may require further research.

By bringing together their knowledge and observations over time, participating harvesters will help answer some important questions about wildlife, which may include:

- •How are migration routes or seasonal ranges changing?
- •What are the most effective harvesting techniques?
- •Where are the most important habitats and harvesting areas that should be protected from development?
- •Where are sick or injured animals being observed, and how often?
- •Are populations increasing?
  Decreasing?
  Remaining constant?

Gathering data to document current conditions is an important step in addressing a number of emerging issues in the management of Nunavut's wildlife, including climate change, the introduction of nonnative species, range expansion, and the potential impacts of exploration, development, shipping, or tourism.

## Clyde River

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Clyde River is a community of roughly 1,000 residents located four degrees north of the Arctic Circle on the east coast of Baffin Island. According to the Nunavut Wildlife Harvest Study (carried out between 1996 and 2001) Clyde River's most commonly harvested marine species were ringed seal and arctic char. The community also depended heavily on narwhal, cod, clams, and sculpins. Caribou were the most commonly harvested land mammals at the time of the study (1996-2001), while arctic hares, foxes, and waterfowl also frequently provided residents with food and furs.

Sixteen harvesters from Clyde River collected data for the Community-based Monitoring Network in the past year. Together, they have collected data on 526 trips (totalling over 21,000 km of travel!) and 458 harvesting events since September of 2016. These data suggest that participating harvesters most often leave the community by snowmobile (347 trips) or boat (127 trips) to look for marine mammals (269 trips), to check nets (55 trips), or to go fishing (49 trips).

Ringed seal (194 seals), char (586 fish), and ptarmigan (126 birds) were the species most commonly reported to be harvested in the past year. Most char were caught by net or hook. Seals and ptarmigan were all caught using a rifle. Three narwhal catches are included in the database, and one polar bear. Most of the wildlife observations uploaded recorded catches by hunting partners or family members. Details about some of the other types of observations are included with the data record in the audio file: wildlife tracks, dead wildlife found on the land, or damage caused by bears, for example.



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### Clyde River

Participating harvesters in Clyde River continue to contribute high quality data to the Community-based Monitoring Network each month. The project relies completely on the effort of participants, and their dedication to this work. Some of the highlights of the Community-based Monitoring Network in Clyde River in 2016 – 2017 include:

- Levi Palituq has done an exceptional job uploading the data and communicating between the harvesters and the Project Team at the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board.
- Recognition awards were given out to Esa Qillaq, Joamie Qillaq, Leslie Ashevak, Benjamin Hainnu, Mike Jaypoody, Jamie Kaatuq, Levi Palituq, and Jake Pallus to acknowledge their ongoing contributions to the project. Qualifying harvesters chose gas, gun straps, knives, tents, tools, stoves and lanterns.
- All of the participating Clyde River harvesters are making good use of the option to enter audio data with their harvest and observation records. Extra information recorded by the harvesters can help make sure that anyone looking at the data in the future has a good understanding of the circumstances around a harvest or observation.
- Esa Qillaq won a new ATV in April 2017 in the semi-annual grand prize draw. The previous winner was Joamie Qillaq.
- The first mobile data wi-fi upload from Clyde River was done in August 2017 by Joamie Qillaq.
- Clyde River harvesters have accessed their data online to see maps of their travel routes, access their photos, and more.
- Rebecca Jeppesen, the Project Manager for the Community-based Monitoring Network, met with harvesters in January 2017 to discuss the project in the community.

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## Kugaaruk

Kugaaruk means "little stream" in Inuktitut, and it is also known as Arviligjuaq, meaning "the place of many whales". The community of 770 inhabitants is located on the southeastern shore of Pelly Bay off the Gulf of Boothia. Information collected during the 1996-2001 Nunavut Wildlife Harvest Study shows that caribou, arctic char, lake trout, and ringed seals were the most frequently harvested species.

Fourteen harvesters from Kugaaruk have collected data for the Community-based Monitoring Network in the past year. Between September 2016 and September 2017, participants collected travel route information for a total of 293 trips covering a combined total of <13,000 kilometers. Most of these trips were made to harvest marine mammals (83 trips), terrestrial mammals (77 trips), or to check nets (47 trips). Harvesters travelled most often by snow machine (191 trips), but also went frequently by all-terrain vehicle (56 trips), and boat (46 trips).

Kugaarumiut uploaded data on harvests of 169 arctic char this past year, almost all of which were caught in nets. Data was also entered for 23 caribou, 22 seals, three narwhals, one polar bear, some white fish and trout, and a few ducks and geese. Most seals and narwhals were caught using a harpoon, while other species were caught most often with a rifle. Most of the wildlife observations uploaded to the Community-based Monitoring Network database were records of catches made by other people in a hunting party.



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### Kugaaruk

The harvesters in Kugaaruk are making valuable contributions to the Community-based Monitoring Network. They have collected more data in 2016-2017 than in the first year of the project, with a record being set in June 2017 for the most harvest data to date. Some of the major events for the project in Kugaaruk in the past year include:

- Francis Anaittuq took over the role of Data Clerk in the community. He has been uploading and managing data, and has continued as an active participant in collecting data regularly for the project.
- In recent months, there has been an increase in harvest and observation data collected.
- Angus Inaksajak has been using mobile wi-fi option regularly
- Zachary Oogark won a snow machine in the semiannual grand prize draw, conducted in April at a community meeting. The previous winner was Lionel Tigvareark.
- Recognition awards for consistent entry of harvest and observation data were given out to Francis Anaittuq and Zachary Oogark. Athol Ihakkaq, Angus Inaksajak, Edward Inutinuaq, and Lionel Tugvareark were also recognized for their on-going contributions during the April public meetings.
- Rebecca Jeppesen, the Project Manager for the Community-based Monitoring Network, met with harvesters in December 2016 to discuss the project in the community. At request of the harvesters, she returned with more members of the Project Team in April 2017. During that visit, nine new harvesters were trained, and a group training session was organized on the land.



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#### Moving Forward in 2017-2018

The Community-based Monitoring Network will continue in Clyde River and Kugaaruk until October 2018, which will mark three full years of data collection. Over the next year, participants in these communities can expect to see:

- A visit to the community by members of the project team to review the data collected so far, discuss the project, and offer any additional training and support that might be required (Clyde River Fall 2017, and Kugaaruk Spring 2018);
- Semi-annual grand prize draws in Fall 2017, Spring 2018, and Fall 2018;
- Continuation of recognition awards for harvesters that collect harvest and observation data for the project regularly; and
- On-going communications through monthly newsletters, the NWMB's website, quarterly press releases, and regular posts to the Community-based Monitoring Network's Facebook page.

In January 2018, the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board will be issuing a call for expressions of interest from Nunavut communities interested in participating in the Community-based Monitoring Network. Watch the newspapers and Community-based Monitoring Network communications for details.

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## For more Information

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The **Nunavut Wildlife Management Board** (NWMB or Board) is an Institution of Public Government established in 1994 in accordance with the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement. The Board is the main instrument of wildlife management in the Nunavut Settlement Area. The NWMB and its comanagement partners work together to combine the knowledge and understanding of wildlife managers, users, and the public to make decisions concerning the management of wildlife in Nunavut.







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