

**NWSF Project Number  
224-10-01**

Project Title  
Western Hudson Bay Polar Bear Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Survey

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NWSF Final Report

The following is a non-technical summary of the project

Inuit Traditional Ecological Knowledge of Western Hudson Bay

Of the

Western Hudson Bay Polar Bear

IQ SURVEY 2010 to 2011

Rankin Inlet Nunavut

September 30 2011



Prepared for  
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Nunavut Wildlife Management Board  
Iqaluit Nunavut

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## Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Methods
3.0	Participants for Churchill Workshop
4.0	Western Hudson Bay Polar Bear IQ Survey Participants Listings
5.0	Interview Results

## **1.0 Introduction:**

The Kangiqliniq H.T.O. had initially attempted this project January 15, 2009 and found out that it was just too vast of an area for one organization to go it alone. So even though the project was approved at first attempt the cost were too astronomical for one community so it was decided to approach the Arviat HTO to help in outlining a new assistance of collecting IQ in providing a direction for assigning future quotas.

So a meeting was held with the Arviat HTO on June 29, 2010 when a plan was established to hold a workshop in the Town of Churchill Manitoba. That was when the two projects were announced and the Kangiqliniq H.T.O started our survey. The participants are listed on a sheet which effected all levels of Government of Nunavut, Government of Manitoba, Kivalliq Wildlife Board, and Nunavut of Tunngavik Inc.

This report presents the findings of traditional and local knowledge study undertaken from the Town of Churchill, Whale Cove, Rankin Inlet and Chesterfield Inlet. Arviat has done its own objective as the community is the annual byway when most of the Polar Bears start their migration north and take the ice pan ride south in the spring in the Western Hudson Bay Polar Bear's cycle of life.

## **2.0 Methods:**

The Kangiqliniq H.T.O had hired Robert Hickers who had previous experience's and dealings with his work experience with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and his information is included. He was involved with the Town of Churchill workshop then he started his interviews shortly after the meeting.

Interviews with hunters and elders were conducted in the Town of Churchill between July 19, 2010 to July 22, 2010 in which 5 people participated. Whale Cove between July 27, 2010 to July 30, 2010 where 15 hunters were involved. Rankin Inlet had 30 hunters participated and interviews were done between August 25, 2010 and September 03, 2010. In Chesterfield Inlet there was a questionnaire that was used as a outlined used for specific questions listed by the Kangiqliniq H.T.O was completed in June 30, 2011.

### **3.0) Participants for Western Hudson Bay Polar Bear Workshop**

#### **Arviat HTO**

Alex Ishalook  
Laurent Angidlik  
Louis Angidlik II  
Gordy Kidlapik  
Thomas Alikashuak  
Paul Kattau  
Thomas Ubluriak

#### **Rankin HTO**

Jack Kabvitok  
Harry Ittinuar  
Paul Kanayok  
Norman W. Ford KHTO Manager  
Ollie Ittinuar- Elder  
Simon Kowmuk- Elder

#### **Whale Cove HTO**

Lewis Voisey  
Agatha Ekwalak

#### **Kivalliq Wildlife Board**

Ross Tatty – regrets

#### **Kivalliq Inuit Association**

Joe Kaludjak  
Peter Kriterkliluk

#### **GN – Department of Environment**

Dirkus Gissing  
Stephen Atkinson  
Seth Stapleton  
Dave Vetra  
Joe Savikataaq

#### **Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.**

Gabriel Nirlungayuk  
David Lee  
Bert Dean

#### **Manitoba Government**

Daryll Hedman  
Jack Dubois  
Steve Kearney

#### **Environment Canada**

Basile van Havre

## **4.0 Interview Participants**

### **Town of Churchill, Manitoba: (5) A.I to A.V**

Dennis Compayre, Stanley Spence, Morris Spence, George Lundie, Jim Lundie

### **Whale Cove, Nunavut: (15) B.I to B.XV**

Lewis Voisey, Leopold Ekwalak, George Okalik, Daniel Kriterdluk David Kritterdlik, Jackie Napayok, Solomon Voisey, Roy Kriterdluk, Mary Nangmalik, Louis Okalik, Philip Sheetoga, Willie Araluak, Stanley Adjuk, Andrew Alikashuak, George Ulurksit

### **Rankin Inlet, Nunavut: (30)C.I to C.XXX**

Paul Kanayok, Tommy Tudlik, Ollie Ittinuar, Harry Ittinuar, John Towtongie, Jack Kabvitok David Oolooyuk, Moses Aliyak, Tommy Misheralak, Annie Tatty, MaryAnn Tarparti, John Tatty, Roger Pilakapsi, Pierre Karlik, Francis Kaput, Joseph Kaludjak, Muckpa Kaludjak, Patrick Kaludjak, Tommy Makkigak, Ross Tatty, Andy Aliyak, Catherine Pilakapsi, Joachim Kavik, Salome Kalaserk, Yvo Airut, Fabien Tatty, Harry Towtongie, Gabriel Niglungayuk, Phillip Noolook, Jerome Tattuinee, Bobby Hickes, Tommy Sammok, Celestino Muckpa, Barney Tootoo, Noah Makayak

### **Chesterfield Inlet Nunavut: (10)D.I to D.X**

Barney Aggark, Jay Kimmarliardjuk, Joe Issaluk, Louis Autut, Charles Issaluk, Eli Kimmarliardjuk, Nipi Alogut, Mark Papak, Terry Putulik, Marjorie Autut,

## **5.0 Interview Results:**

All information received in the interviews presented here were recorded and restated in context and any other information given. Most participants are full time hunters and shared some oral history and stories. Below is an example and all others will be forwarded to NWMB.

## **Churchill Manitoba:(A.I to A.V)**

A.I) My name is *Dennis Compayre*, I am from Churchill Manitoba and I was born here in 1951. Lived here all my life except for about 7 or 8 years. I will go through the questionnaire that Robert gave me and I will go through every question.

### **#1 What area's would be good for doing a Polar Bear Survey?**

**b) Along the shore here in this part of the country.**

This area is very good cause there is lots of bears around in the Hudson Bay coast here.

### **#2 Is the changing ice condition having an effect on where the Polar Bears usually spend their Summers?**

**b) No**

From what I can see I don't think so, they still hang out east of town here in the summer and all the way down to the Isle river. Some of them get off right close, I know right about now we always get some Polar Bears around town coming off from the ice. There's Polar Bears all over town now probably about 15 around the area so lots of Polar Bears around.. I don't think the changing ice is having a effect where the Polar Bears spend their summer.

### **#3 Are there more Polar Bear's in the fall and spring now compared to 5 or 10 years ago?**

**a). Yes**

and I will tell you yes they are. I've been looking at these Polar Bears few years I've been with my buddy Lens Smith who built the buggy's and I was the first guy he ever hired to drive one so I've been looking at these Polar Bears now for 30 years and I can tell you there's more now than there ever was before. For what reason I don't know but I know the population has grown. Now the biologist are saying its down by 2 or 3 hundred but I can't agree with them. There's as many Polar Bears now as there ever was 25 years ago or 10 years ago, so I can't really see the difference.

### **#4 Should the Polar Bears be tranquilized during a survey?**

**b.) No**

I don't know how to answer that I don't like aah I've seen them when they are tranquilized and I don't like the reaction of the Polar Bear like I don't like using drugs to any Polar Bears. Especially females who's nursing who knows what the effects are with that so ? If there's an alternate way of doing the survey without using any tranquilizer that's what you should do. So that's my opinion.

### **5) Would you recommend a different method to doing the survey?**

a). Yes

If that means not tranquilizing them there has to be a better way to do a proper survey without any interference with the Polar Bear at all.

**6) Who should be involved with the survey?**

**Biologist & Locals**

**7) Any other comments?**

I don't know how to answer that either but obvious the **biologists** who are doing the survey you gotta use the knowledge of the people or the community or the area or the people who know the area where the Polar Bears are I mean it makes sense you have to talk to **the locals** in order to do a proper survey.

**8) Have you seen Polar Bears around your community?**

Yes

Well I am in Churchill there's Polar Bears all over the place. Well when I was growing up we did not see as many Polar Bears. That was probably because of the huge Army presence you know they had the population cut down cause they would shoot them as often as they had to.

**9) Have you Harvested a Polar Bear?**

No

I've had to shoot a couple to save myself out on the land but I've have never harvested the Polar Bear for the hide.

**10) How many years have you been Hunting for Polar Bears?**

None

**11) Do you know where the Polar Bears have dens?**

Yes

I've guided lots of film makers, photographer's in and around the Dens south east of Churchill here around Fletcher lake as a matter of fact I know exactly where there dens are.

**12) Have you notice changes in Polar Bear Populations?**



The only change I see is there is more around and this population around here is getting bigger and bigger every year.

**13) If so what do you think caused the change?**

Well you know they claim that these Churchill Polar Bears that their body weight is down and its effecting the birthing population and its effecting the over all health of the animal but you know every time I see a mother she has two cubs and its rare to see a mother and one cub. So that's a bunch of Healthy Polar Bears so were seeing triplets quite often too. I can't see where the problem is with these Polar Bears. They are heathly as hell.

**14) When did you first notice these changes.**

I don't know in the last 10 years I guess its gradual.

**15) Do you know when the Polar Bears start arriving?**

In this community now there's only a couple of months in the Winter time when you don't see a Polar Bear.

Maybe middle of December , January and part of February after that the Polar Bears start showing up again .

**16) Do you know when the Polar Bears start leaving**

Well soon as the bay freezes over any time from second week of November to the first week in December.

**17) Have you noticed any changes in their arrival and departure patterns?**

No I haven't

**18) Do you know when you first noticed these changes**

I haven't seen much changes, I just know there's more arriving and leaving then before

**19) What do you think caused these changes?**

**20) On a map mark where you have lived and years you lived in each place**

I don't have a map here Robert

**21) Where have you hunted and caught Polar Bears in the Past**

I haven't:

Other than all I can say is that I have been around these Polar Bears and worked with them for 30 years, looking at them for 30 years studying their behavior and I know that what I see is healthy Polar Bears they are sparing more and more. The females are healthy their cubs are healthy there's a few occasions when the mothers are not really good moms they appear to be skinny and bit starving and in the fall of the year their looking for food. Other than that from what I can see the population is healthy and there's nothing wrong with them. I don't know what else to say Robert. (just say whatever else you want)

Other comment:

I will give you my opinion how's that? (yeap that's even better)

I think there are organizations that get huge amounts of dollars claiming that they are conservation organizations. That the money that they are getting is for the benefit and well-being of the Polar Bear. There's an organization up here called the Polar Bear's International who collect thousands upon thousands of dollars to conserve the Polar Bear. Their sponsors for this Polar Bear conservation organization, are every one of, most of the sponsors exploit the Polar Bears in some way. The biggest corporate sponsors for the Polar Bears International is British Petroleum, they are the ones who are spilling all the oil in the Gulf of Mexico. They are the biggest sponsors for Polar Bear's International is the Tundra Buggy Tours the biggest tourist company in the area. Most of the associates of Polar Bear's International are the Zoos who make their money off captive Polar Bears. So all the research grant money they hand out and the information they get back are fine tuned to reflect their agenda. Their agenda is that the Polar Bears are starving and dying off you know they have to do something to save them. To me that is a bunch of crap I think it's just a big money scheme that's scare mongering and it's not doing any good unfortunately this organization is the one that most of the journalist or who people who write about Polar Bears take reference from. So they are not doing anyone or the Polar Bears any favor's, the well-being of the Polar Bears is not first and foremost it's that they look after their sponsors and associates before the Polar Bears.