

**SUBMISSION TO THE**  
**NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD**

**FOR**

**Information:**

**Decision: X**

**Issue: Approval of the Integrated Fishery Management Plan for the  
Cambridge Bay Arctic Char Commercial Fishery (effective 2014)**

**Background:**

This Integrated Fisheries Management Plan (IFMP) addresses the Cambridge Bay Arctic Char commercial fishery. Commercial fishing near the Community of Ekalluktutiak, also known as Cambridge Bay, first began in 1960 with a gillnet operation on nearby Freshwater Creek. To avoid over-exploitation of this system from the competing pressure of the local food fishery, the commercial fishery was relocated in 1962 further from the community to the mouth of the Ekalluktok (Ekalluk) River, where the river empties into Wellington Bay. At different times over the past fifty years, approximately twelve waterbodies have been commercially harvested. Today the commercial fishery targets searun Arctic Char at five locations: Paliryuak (Surrey), Halokvik (Thirty-Mile), Palik (Lauchlan), Ekalluktok (Ekalluk) and Jayko (Jayco) rivers. Commercial quotas for these waterbodies total 53,500 Kgs, and represent the largest commercial Arctic Char fishery in Nunavut.

Arctic Char play an important role in the nutrition and social culture of the community – fostering the continuation of traditional culture and lifestyles, provision of traditional foods, and local self-sufficiency. The economic contribution of the Cambridge Bay Arctic Char commercial fishery is significant for both the local economy and the Territory, providing stable employment opportunities for local beneficiaries and a current market value estimated at \$1,159,636.

The Cambridge Bay Arctic Char commercial fishery is managed under the *Fisheries Act*, the *Fishery (General) Regulations* and the *Northwest Territories Fishery Regulations*. The fishery is managed consistent with the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA)* and in a collaborative manner with co-management organizations, resource users and stakeholders. The Ekalluktutiak Hunters and Trappers Organization (EHTO) recognized the importance of developing a management plan to highlight the long history of successfully co-managing the Cambridge Bay Arctic Char commercial fishery in a sustainable manner, using effective management measures and best practices. The Integrated Fisheries Management Plan (IFMP) was initiated in 2010 and developed by the Cambridge Bay Arctic Char Working Group (Working Group).

IFMPs are an important reporting tool and valuable source of information on how a fishery is managed. They provide a clear and concise summary of the characteristics of the fishery, stock status, management objectives, management measures used to achieve those objectives, and

criteria by which objectives are to be measured. Management objectives have been developed by the Working Group and other stakeholders, and all management measures including shared stewardship arrangements and best practices outlined in the IFMP are currently in place for the fishery.

The draft Cambridge Bay Arctic Char commercial fishery IFMP has been developed in support of a longer term planning approach to fisheries management. Key to this is the adoption of “evergreen” IFMPs (i.e. no set end date). Information requiring regular updates is to be contained in appendices and the main body of the IFMP is to be revised only if there are major changes to the fishery or a significant number of changes accumulate over time.

Members of the Working Group include the EHTO, Kitikmeot Foods Ltd., commercial fishers, community elders, Nunavut Department of Environment – Fisheries and Sealing Division, and Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO). Youth from the local high school are encouraged to participate as a sitting member of the Working Group. Co-chaired by the EHTO and DFO, the Working Group developed a Terms of Reference to guide the development of the IFMP for the Cambridge Bay Arctic Char commercial fishery (provided in both Inuktitut (Attachment 1) and English (Attachment 2)). A letter of support from the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) was received by the Working Group in 2011 expressing support for the initiative of the Working Group and development of a management plan (Attachment 3, Inuktitut and English). The Working Group reports its progress to its member organizations as well as the NWMB, Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board, and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated.

The draft Cambridge Bay Arctic Char commercial fishery IFMP has been developed through the collaboration of co-management organizations, resource users and stakeholders. This initiative has been led by the EHTO through a series of Working Group meetings since March 15, 2010. Working Group meetings have occurred regularly and each meeting has been accompanied by public consultations with resource users and stakeholders. Discussions focused on stock conservation of Arctic Char populations, monitoring of fishing activities, licence conditions, compliance and harvest reporting. These discussions highlighted the key management issues, formulated the long-term and short-term objectives of the fishery, and demonstrated the importance of the management measures and best practices currently in place in the fishery. Various sections of the IFMP were presented as they were drafted, and revised according to discussions and feedback at Working Group meetings and public consultations.

The complete draft IFMP was provided to Working Group members in advance of the most recent Working Group meeting (October 30, 2013). Each section of the draft IFMP was reviewed in details and approved by the Working Group. It was agreed that the IFMP would be co-submitted by the EHTO and DFO on behalf of the Working Group, reflecting the successful collaboration, engagement, and contribution of the community and the various resource users and stakeholders that make up the Working Group. Along with meeting minutes, on November 13, 2013 the draft IFMP was distributed to the NWMB, NTI and other stakeholders for their information and further consideration.

Written comments on the draft IFMP were requested by all recipients by November 27, 2013. The final draft reflects the goals, issues and objectives identified by the EHTO, commercial fishers, and

the local community of resource users and stakeholders. The final draft IFMP was distributed to the Working Group, NWMB, NTI and other stakeholders on December 19, 2013 for final consideration in advance of this co-submission by the EHTO and DFO.

A timeline of meetings and engagements, participants and outcomes are outlined in Attachments 4 (Inuktitut) and 5 (English). An executive summary of the draft Cambridge Bay Arctic Char commercial fishery IFMP is provided in both Inuktitut (Attachment 6) and English (Attachment 7); the complete draft IFMP is provided in Attachment 8 (English).

## **Decisions requested from NWMB**

The EHTO and DFO request the Board approve the Cambridge Bay Arctic Char commercial fishery Integrated Fishery Management Plan pursuant to its discretionary authorities under NLCA s. 5.2.34(d) (i).

DFO urges the NWMB to consider approval of the Cambridge Bay Arctic Char commercial fishery Integrated Fishery Management Plan at its upcoming March 2013 meeting, instead of at a subsequent meeting. As the Board is aware, it is becoming increasingly important for Canadian fisheries, including Cambridge Bay Arctic Char commercial fishery, to be able to demonstrate sustainability. The EHTO, with the full support of commercial fishers and the other members of the Working Group, recognizes the importance of having an up-to-date IFMP to help maintain a healthy Arctic char population, ensure the sustainable harvest of Arctic char consistent with the principles of conservation set out in the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, and supports economically prosperous Arctic Char commercial fisheries in Cambridge Bay. As such, it is important to have an approved IFMP in place for the 2014 fishing season, which typically begins in July.

### **Submitted by:**

Ekaluktutiak Hunters and Trappers Organization; and  
Resource Management, Central and Arctic Region, Fisheries and Oceans Canada

**Date:** January 27, 2014

### **Attachments:**

- 1) Cambridge Bay Arctic Char Working Group Terms of Reference (Inuktitut)
- 2) Cambridge Bay Arctic Char Working Group Terms of Reference (English)
- 3) NWMB Letter of Support (Inuktitut and English)
- 4) Engagement Timeline (Inuktitut)
- 5) Engagement Timeline (English)
- 6) Summary – Cambridge Bay Arctic Char commercial fishery IFMP, Effective 2014 (Inuktitut)
- 7) Summary – Cambridge Bay Arctic Char commercial fishery IFMP, Effective 2014 (English)
- 8) Cambridge Bay Arctic Char commercial fishery IFMP, Effective 2014 (English)