

SUBMISSION TO THE NWMB
FOR

Information: X

Decision:

Issue: Proposed Legal Listing of Grizzly Bear (Northwestern Population) and Wolverine (Western Population) as Special Concern

Background: Grizzly Bears were assessed by COSEWIC in May 2002, Wolverines in May 2003. The Committee recommended that these species be listed as Special Concern because of concerns about habitat loss and population disturbance in the southern portion of both species' range; and because of potential threats to habitat due to increasing development in the north.

Environment Canada requested NWMB approval for the proposed listings in October 2004.

NWMB did not approve the listing because community consultation required under the NLCA had not been conducted, and because the SARA requirement for inclusion of aboriginal traditional knowledge in the assessment had not been met.

The federal Minister of Environment accepted NWMB's decision and did not list the grizzly bear and wolverine.

Environment Canada held consultation meetings with the HTO Directors of Kugluktuk (April 13, 2005), Cambridge Bay and Bathurst Inlet (May 3, 2005), Baker Lake (May 17, 2005), Arviat (May 18, 2005) and Rankin Inlet (May 19, 2005). Based on harvest data, these communities have the highest traditional harvest of this species.

The purpose of the consultation meeting was:

- to provide information about the Species at Risk Act and the listing process in the context of the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement
- to provide information about the status assessment of grizzly bears and wolverines
- to request feedback on the proposed listings and their possible impacts on the community

Under SARA, there are no requirements to restrict or regulate harvest for species that are listed as Special Concern.

Meeting Results:

Kugluktuk: The HTO supported the listing of the grizzly bear and wolverine as Special Concern. They state that past and present harvesting levels are sustainable, however they point out the lack of evidence that the population will remain sustainable in the face of future changes in the environment and human activity. A copy of their letter is attached.

Baker Lake: The HTO did not support the listing of the grizzly bear and wolverine, indicating that these species are more abundant in the Baker Lake area than they were in the past. A copy of their letter is attached.

Rankin Inlet: The HTO did not support the listing of the grizzly bear and wolverine, indicating that these species are more abundant in the Rankin Inlet area than they were in the past. A copy of their letter is attached.

Cambridge Bay and Bathurst Inlet: The Directors indicated that there is a need for management of these species, and that they are concerned that harvest allocations be fairly distributed among communities. However, no formal position on the species listing status was expressed.

Inquiries were made to the HTO by email, fax and/or phone (in June 2005, July 2005, October 2005 and January 2006) whether or not they would provide a written position with respect to listing of the species. No formal response has been received.

Arviat: The Directors indicated that these species are more plentiful now than they were in the past, but did not express a formal position on the species listing.

Inquiries were made to the HTO by email, fax and/or phone (in June 2005, October 2005 and January 2006) whether or not they would provide a written position with respect to listing of the species. No formal response has been received.

Next Steps:

The Minister of Environment Canada is considering the results of the community consultations. The NWMB will be informed of the Minister's position on the listing of these species. The Minister will approach the Board for a decision on the listing of Grizzly Bear and Wolverine as Special Concern at a future date.

A Special Concern listing will not result in harvesting restrictions for these species. It will require preparation of a national management plan. It will enable national coordination for management of the species to reduce the risk for populations in southern Canada.

Prepared by:

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Prairie and Northern Region

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