



SUBMISSION TO THE

NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD

FOR

Information: X

Decision:

ISSUE: Community Polar Bear Management Plans

BACKGROUND

Community Bear Management Plans have two primary goals:

1. Ensure that there is clarity on roles and responsibility relating to patrol and deterrent activities.
2. Identify areas and activities that have potential (or a history) of creating bear – human conflicts, and outlining actions to remove or reduce the potential.

The drafted problem wildlife operational directive further outlines the responsibilities of DoE and Hunter's and Trapper's Organizations in deciding what action is most appropriate for dealing with animals which have become "problem" wildlife (can not be deterred, or returning frequently).

Community plans are to be developed with input from Department of Environment, Hunters and Trappers Associations and other members of the community which may interact frequently with bears (e.g. by-law, municipal waste). Development of community plans are based on a template designed to guide the process of identifying problem areas and activities and finding solutions. Plans should be reviewed annually, particularly in communities which experience a high frequency of visits by bears to ensure that actions are being effective and efforts are directed as most needed, for that reason plans rarely leave the draft phase.

CURRENT STATUS

The communities which have higher bear problems have a draft community bear plan or have had a meeting to initiate the process. These include: Resolute Bay, Arviat, Qikiqtarjuaq, Pond Inlet, Clyde River, Igloolik, Hall Beach, Rankin Inlet, Whale Cove*, Chesterfield Inlet* (* initiated by conservation officer).

Plans, and the process of development, have identified a number of key activities which are required to make these communities safer. These often include:

1. Increased patrol and deterrent efforts – in Arviat, Whale Cove, Resolute Bay, and Qikiqtarjuaq beneficiaries have been hired as casual staff for additional patrol and deterrent efforts.
2. Better management of attractants – efforts are ongoing to provide alternatives to prevent loss of cached meat. This includes increased use of community freezers, provision of bear resistant containers, and increased community awareness.
3. Awareness & Knowledge – most meetings have identified the need for people to be more aware about how to prevent problems and react to bear encounters. These have far reaching benefits as they can use this knowledge in the community, at camps, or out on the land. Posters have been developed and distributed. Bear safety workshops were held in Igloolik, Kimmirut, Arviat, & Rankin Inlet (turn-out was low - moderate).