

SUBMISSION TO THE
NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD
Sept. 11, 2013

FOR

Information: X

Decision:

Issue: Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada – Operational Update.

Updates:

Resource Management

Staffing:

Joanna Panipak joined Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) in August 2013 and she is currently working with Resource Management, Science, and Conservation and Protection until October 2013 as part of the Inuit Learning and Development Pilot Project.

Marine Mammals:

The 2013/14 narwhal harvest season has commenced and all four communities with seasonal tags have started their summer seasons. Communication with Hunters and Trappers Organizations (HTO) and Regional Wildlife Organizations (RWO) has continued throughout the harvest season. The area office had also issued sixteen 2013 walrus sport hunt licence packages at the time this briefing note was prepared (7 for Coral Harbour and 9 for Hall Beach). We expect to have some additional support in our office in September. This individual will assist with 2013 marine mammal harvest statistic collection.

Turbot and Shrimp:

As of July 31, one vessel has been added to the open water Turbot licence for Cumberland Sound.

In 2013, the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board sub-allocated the entire 100 t inshore exploratory Greenland Halibut (Turbot) quota in NAFO Division 0A to the Nattivak HTO. The HTO, working with the Arctic Fishery Alliance (AFA), hopes to conduct a vessel based longline fishery with this quota, in October. A request from the HTO to use the 100 t to pursue exploratory work adjacent to Qikiqtarjuaq, but outside of the Nunavut Settlement Area (NSA), is being considered by the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB).

The Iviq HTO, working with AFA, plans to conduct an exploratory vessel based longline Turbot fishery in Jones Sound, in August. The fishing plan was approved by the NWMB. The HTO and AFA are working with DFO-Science to produce a survey design. This will be the first vessel based fishery in the area.

As of July 24, 2013, about 2200 t of 2850 t in Division 0B (Davis Strait) had been harvested by Nunavut allocation holders. Vessels have now left 0B to begin fishing allocations in Division 0A (Baffin Bay). As of July 24, about 100 t of 6400 t in Division 0A have been harvested by Nunavut allocation holders.

The 0B Fixed Gear Competitive fishery was open from June 10 to July 11. It is estimated that 898 t of the 900 t quota was harvested by fishery participants.

Shrimp fishing has started in Shrimp Fishing Area (SFA) Davis Strait east of 63°W, by recipients of Nunavut Shrimp sub-allocations.

Changes to the boundaries of the SFAs inside the NSA (around Resolution Island and in Hudson Strait), the Shrimp quotas inside the NSA, as well as the details of the management regime for the mixed fishery (two species of shrimp), have been completed as per the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement decision-making process. Recipients of Nunavut shrimp sub-allocations in the new SFA Nunavut have been notified of their sub-allocations, which were decided for the 2013/14 fishing season only.

Arctic Char:

The 2013 Arctic Char summer fishery in Pangnirtung commenced during the first weekend of August. The 2013 Arctic Char summer fishery in Cambridge Bay commenced in early July. Final harvest statistics should be available in late August.

The Pond Inlet Exploratory Arctic Char fishery plan was formally approved and the applicant was notified. Area staff is currently working with the applicant to determine next steps and finalize logistics.

We are continuing to work with Nunavut fish plants to streamline harvest reporting for char fisheries. We are also continuing to discuss alternative options for data collection for exploratory fisheries.

General Licensing:

The breakdown of licences issued so far in Nunavut by the Iqaluit office in 2013 is the following:

Marine Mammal Fishing Licences – 24 (includes bowhead, walrus, and seal)

Commercial Fishing Licences (finfish) – 12

Domestic Fishing Licences - 4

Exploratory Fishing Licences – 15

Licences to Fish for Scientific Purposes – 30

Testing for the National Online Licensing System that will be used to issue offshore licences is still in progress. Two Nunavut licence holders have registered and passcodes have been issued to all Nunavut licence holders.

Science

Currently, DFO Science is in the process of planning and executing field work for the 2013 season. This is a very busy time with many people travelling to remote locations in Nunavut. At this time DFO Science personnel are on the ground working closely with local communities and Hunters and Trappers Organization to collaboratively collect the best data possible. In the coming months we will have updates for the NWMB regarding this field work.

Conservation and Protection

Currently, at the time this update is being provided, Conservation and Protection is in the middle of our very active field season. Many community visits and monitoring efforts are being planned.

- Fishery Officers attended the community of Pangnirtung to monitor the annual beluga harvest and deliver the licence for the bowhead whale hunt.
- Fishery Officers attended the community of Repulse Bay to monitor narwhal harvesting, certified approximately 30 narwhal tusks, trained Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) in the narwhal tusk certification process and delivered the licence for the bowhead whale hunt.
- Fishery Officers attended the community of Coral Harbour to monitor Atlantic Walrus Sport Hunt, follow up on narwhal tusk certification with the local Conservation Officer and train RCMP in the narwhal tusk certification process
- Fishery Officer attended Meadowbank with Fisheries Protection Program.
- Fishery Officers visited the Kitikmeot Region and attended the communities of Cambridge Bay, Kugluktuk, Gjoa Haven, Taloyoak and Kugaaruk and to monitor recreational and commercial Arctic Char fishery, narwhal harvesting, perform narwhal tusk certification and train RCMP in the narwhal tusk certification process. Additionally, plan to deliver the bowhead whale hunt licence once approved by the Regional Wildlife Organization.
- Fishery Officers attended the communities of Hall Beach and Igloolik to monitor Atlantic Walrus Sport hunting, perform narwhal tusk certifications as required, train local RCMP in the process of narwhal tusk certification.
- Fishery Officers continued to conduct patrols of the Sylvia Grinnell River during peak recreational Arctic Char fishing.
- Participated in Nunavut Day activities in Iqaluit.
- Conducted several aerial surveillance patrols and at-sea patrols to monitor the Greenland Halibut and Northern Shrimp fisheries.

Fisheries Protection Program

The Fisheries Protection Program has one office in Nunavut that is located in Iqaluit. One Senior Fisheries Protection Biologist works on project impacts to fish and fish habitat such as fish passage, sufficient water flow, screening (intakes), destruction of

fish by means other than fishing, destruction of fish habitat (includes marine mammals) and the deposit of harmful (deleterious) substances.

The Fisheries Protection Program operates under the principles of the Policy for the Management of Fish Habitat with a goal of achieving a net gain in productive capacity of fish habitat in support of fisheries. The Fisheries Protection Program also works under the *Species at Risk Act*, and Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA) through Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) environmental screenings and hearings.

Much of the Fisheries Protection Program time is spent reviewing mining projects in Nunavut including (but not limited to):

Baffinland Mary River – NIRB Project certificate issued on December 28, 2012 for the original proposal- railroad construction and shipping via Steensby Inlet. Final Hearing for the Type A Water Licence held in Pond Inlet April 22-25, 2013. Awaiting Nunavut Water Board determination on issuance of Type A Water Licence and finalization of Fish Habitat Off-Setting Plan. Marine Environment Working Group has been established to work on the development of Monitoring and Management Plans.

Baffinland- Early Revenue Phase- New proposal submitted by proponent- 3.5MT/A will be trucked from Mary River mine site to Milne Inlet via the Tote Road for the life of the project. NIRB will reopen project certificate to assess this phase of the project. Draft environmental impact statement expected June/July 2013.

Sabina Back River Project- Will undergo Part 5 Review under NLCA as recommended by NIRB- Ministerial decision has been received, NIRB Scoping Document and Guidelines have been finalized. Draft Environmental Impact Statement expected December 2013.

Xstrata/Sabina- Bathurst Inlet Port and Road Project- With new ownership has re-engaged the NIRB Part 5 review of the project. Draft Environmental Impact Statement is expected July 2013.

Doris North- Project placed into care and maintenance - January 2012.

Hope Bay Phase 2- NIRB scoping document and guidelines developed and finalized. Project now on hold.

Xstrata- Hackett River- No information received on this project.

MMG Izok Corridor Project – NIRB has requested an updated Project Description from MMG prior to initiating public scoping. MMG has indicated submission approximately December 2013.

Agnico-Eagle Meliadine Gold Mine – Regulators currently awaiting submission from the Proponent Agnico-Eagle, to Information Requests provided through NIRB

process. The Proponent anticipates these responses will be submitted to NIRB by August 30, 2013.

Meadowbank Gold Mine – the proponent has recently received an updated *Fisheries Act* Authorization for the main mine site and a new Authorization for operations at Vault Lake. DFO is monitoring the project and will be conducting a site visit this August to ensure compliance with *Fisheries Act* Authorizations.

Areva Kiggavik Uranium Mine – Regulators attended a Technical Meeting in Rankin Inlet May 28-31, 2013 and Pre-Conference Hearing in Baker Lake June 3-7, 2013 to discuss the project. Regulators are currently awaiting submission of a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) from the Proponent to submit to NIRB. The anticipated date is September 30, 2014, with a final hearing in 2015.

Iqaluit Hydro – under Fisheries and Oceans Canada new Fisheries Protection Program, this file is now being reviewed by Winnipeg, Manitoba office.

Shear Diamonds Jericho Mine – DFO is awaiting legal response prior to taking next steps on the project while Shear remains unreachable. There are outstanding *Fisheries Act* Authorization obligations.

Department of Defence (DND) Nanisivik Naval Facility – DFO has confirmed this project does not trigger the Fisheries Act. DFO will await further updates from NIRB to provide mitigation measures if necessary under an environmental screening.

There are changes to the *Fisheries Act* (June 29, 2012) and more are expected to become law (or come into force). The *Fisheries Act* will focus on managing Canada's commercial, recreational and aboriginal fisheries. The new definitions and changes to the *Fisheries Act* are now in place, and future changes will provide direction in decision making, and new prohibitions that may affect *Fisheries Act* Authorizations. DFO is working on updating policies and guidelines to aid regional staff. This work is ongoing and the information is not available yet.

The local DFO Fisheries Protection Program contact in Iqaluit is Elizabeth Patreau. Elizabeth can answer project-related questions and may be reached at: Elizabeth.Patreau@dfo-mpo.gc.ca or (867)979-8019.

Georgina Williston is the DFO Fisheries Protection Program contact for Baffinland, Sabina, Xstrata, BIPAR, Doris North and Hope Bay projects and may be reached at: Georgina.Williston@dfo-mpo.gc.ca or (613)925-2865 x 131

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