

PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT

PROJECT NUMBER: 4-13-05

RESEARCHER: Evan Richardson

TITLE: Viscount Melville Polar Bear Population Assessment

ORIGINALLY FUNDED: 2013-2014 \$75,000
 2014-2015 \$75,000 (Multi-year funding)

NWMB FUNDING: \$75,000

PROJECT SUMMARY: The project's main objectives are to: 1) conduct mark-recapture to estimate the current population size and demographics of the Viscount Melville polar bear subpopulation; 2) initiate a community based project run by Inuvialuit and Inuit hunters to erect and monitor a series of hair snag stations in a section of the study area to provide additional information on the genetics and number of bears present in the subpopulation; 3) define the current boundaries of the Viscount Melville polar bear subpopulation; and 4) assess polar bear habitat use of changing sea ice habitat in the area of the Viscount Melville Sound.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Amount from NWMB:	\$75,000
Amount from Others:	\$340,336
TOTAL	\$415,336
Expenses:	\$75,000 [†]
Difference	\$0

[†] The interim financial report only showed those budget items funded by Nunavut Wildlife Research Trust.

COMMENTS: This was the third year of a three year mark-recapture program to estimate the current population size of the Viscount Melville Polar Bear Subpopulation. As indicated in the interim progress report, the project is on schedule. Field work took place in April and May 2014. A total of 34 bears were captured, five of which were recaptures from 2012 or 2013. 4 deployed collars were picked up and in all cases no evidence of mortality was seen. An additional 5 collars were deployed on adult female bears. The researcher is currently analyzing the data and once complete, results will be presented to the local users and communities in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region and Nunavut. As indicated in the interim financial report, the \$75,000 from the NWRT was used for air charter services for the purpose of fuel caching.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. NWMB Wildlife staff does not have any recommendations for this reporting period. The project leader has met all of the reporting requirements to date. A final financial report will be required by June 30th 2015 as per the NWRT policy. Project results will be captured in the final project report which is required by September 30th, 2015.

CONSULTATIONS: Sarah Spencer, Wildlife Management Biologist, NWMB
PREPARED BY: Karla Letto, Wildlife Management Biologist, NWMB

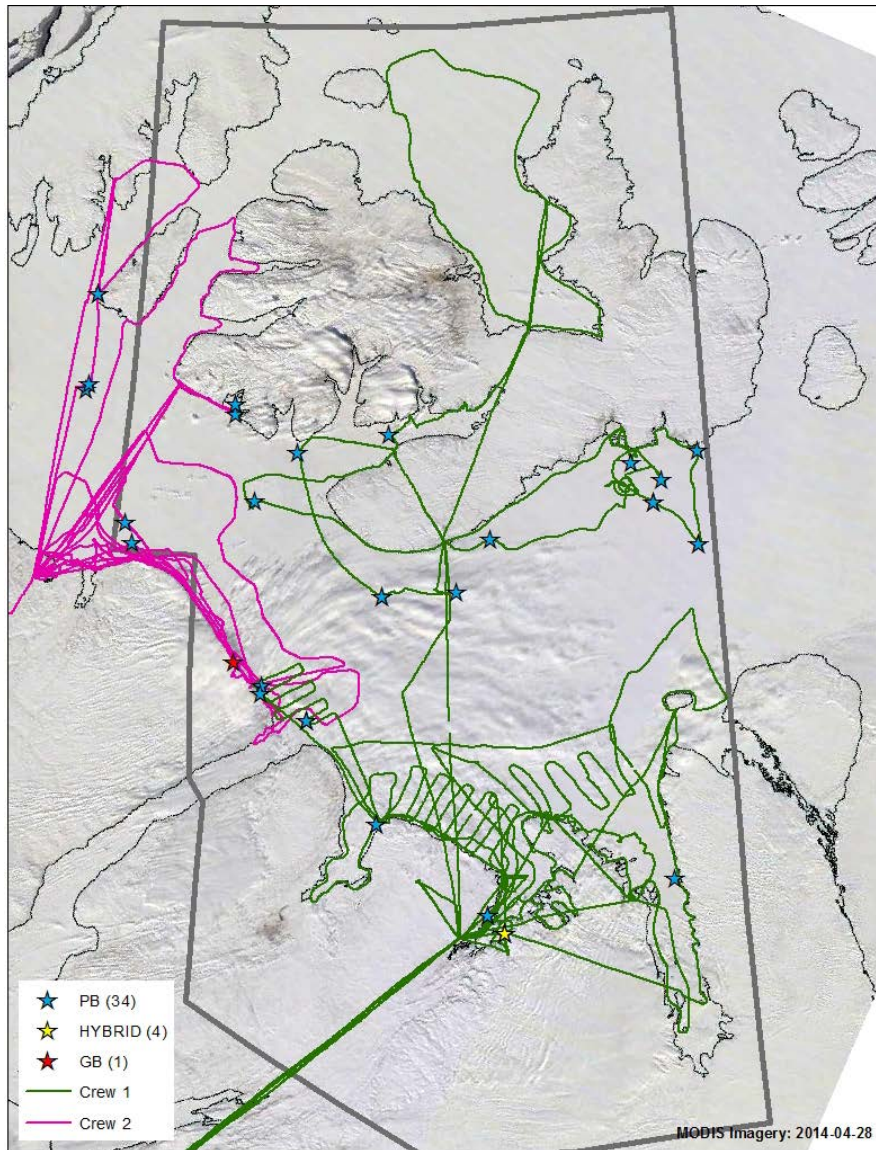


Figure 1: Tracks flown and locations of polar bear, grizzly bear, and hybrid bears captured during spring 2014.