

## PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT

**PROJECT NUMBER:** 3-14-04

**RESEARCHER:** Steven Ferguson

**TITLE:** Eastern Canadian Arctic Killer Whale Research

**ORIGINALLY FUNDED:** 2014-2015

**NWMB FUNDING:** \$30,000

**PROJECT SUMMARY:** This research project was initiated in the eastern Canadian Arctic in 2009. The ongoing objectives of this project are to: 1) determine distribution and movement patterns in the eastern Canadian Arctic and North Atlantic using satellite telemetry and photo identification; 2) study diet using analyses of biopsied skin and blubber samples, including assessment of foraging preferences; 3) estimate population size using photo identification; 4) assess group and population structure using genetic analysis of biopsied skin; 5) develop a network of research teams comprising Northerners in several communities across the eastern Canadian Arctic who are trained and equipped to independently satellite tag, biopsy, and photograph killer whales.

### FINANCIAL REPORT:

<b>Amount from NWMB:</b>	\$30,000
<b>Amount from Others:</b>	\$90,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$120,000
<b>Expenses:</b>	\$92,500
<b>Difference</b>	+ \$27,500

**COMMENTS:** As indicated in the interim progress report, no killer whales were encountered by the field teams in Repulse Bay, Pond Inlet, Arctic Bay and Pangnirtung during the summer 2014 field season. All killer whale images from 2013 have been included in a database which will be reviewed for individual killer whale identification. Research that analyzes overlap between killer whale telemetry from 2009 and 2013 and bowhead whale and narwhals also equipped with satellite transmitters (possible prey items), is currently underway. As indicated in the interim financial report, more expenses are expected and the applicant does not expect that any funds will be returned to the NWMB.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. NWMB Wildlife staff do 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 30<sup>th</sup> 2015 as per the NWRT policy. Project results will be captured in the final project report which is required by September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

**CONSULTATIONS:** Danica Crystal, Wildlife Management Biologist, NWMB

**PREPARED BY:** Karla Letto, Wildlife Management Biologist, NWMB