

SUBMISSION TO THE NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD

FOR

Information:

Decision: X



Issue: Walrus Sport Hunt applications for 2017

Overview: On September 9th 2016, the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB or Board) issued a call for walrus sport hunt applications inviting all Hunters and Trappers Organizations and other interested individuals or organizations to apply to the NWMB for approval of walrus sport hunts. The deadline for submission of applications was October 31st 2016.

Hunt Plans require the NWMB's approval as per *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* Sections 5.2.34(d)(i) and 5.6.48 before licenses are issued. In May 1999, the Board approved an interim policy for evaluating requests for sport hunts (Appendix 1). The Board further requested that those conducting hunts report their struck, lost and landed animals at the time of application the following year. The following summarizes the hunts requested for the 2017 season:

Applicant	Walrus Stock	Hunts Requested
Alex Flaherty, Polar Outfitting, Iqaluit ¹	Hudson Bay-Davis Strait	7
Arviq Hunters and Trappers Organization, Naujaat	Hudson Bay-Davis Strait	4
Jake Netser, JJ Outfitting, Coral Harbour	Hudson Bay-Davis Strait	8
Luke Eetuk, E and E Outfitting, Coral Harbour	Hudson Bay-Davis Strait	4
Aaron Emiktowt, Siku Tours, Coral Harbour	Hudson Bay-Davis Strait	4
Darcy Nakoolak, Coral Harbour	Hudson Bay-Davis Strait	8
Hall Beach Hunters and Trappers Organization, Hall Beach	Northern and Central Foxe Basin	15

¹ As an individual Inuk in Iqaluit, Alex Flaherty is restricted to 4 walrus per year by the current harvesting limitation in the *Marine Mammal Regulations*. However, Mr. Flaherty has indicated that the additional 3 walrus requested will be assigned to sport hunters by another Inuk.

The most recent analysis of aerial survey data by Fisheries and Oceans Canada estimates a stock abundance of 12,500 walrus for the Northern and Central Foxe Basin walrus stocks, with a Potential Biological Removal of between 211 and 422 walrus². This analysis also indicated that average reported harvests in this area are 170 animals per year, resulting in an estimated average annual removal of 243 if a struck and loss rate of 30% is applied. Fisheries and Oceans Canada's analysis has indicated that the reported harvests do not appear to be having an impact on the population as it appears to have remained stable over the last 60 years.

There is currently no scientific estimate of the size of the Hudson Bay-Davis Strait walrus stock; however, Coral Harbour has a community quota of 60 walrus. Both Iqaluit and Nauyasat do not have community quotas for walrus and therefore the individual quota of 4 walrus per Inuk per year, outlined in Section 6(1)(c) of the *Marine Mammal Regulations*, applies in these two communities. The Amaruq (Iqaluit) Hunters and Trappers Organization has provided a letter supporting the walrus sport hunts requested by Alex Flaherty of Polar Outfitting. The Aiviit (Coral Harbour) Hunters and Trappers Organization has provided letters of support for the walrus sport hunts requested by Jake Netser of JJ Outfitting and Darcy Nakoolak. Luke Eetuk and Aaron Emiktowt have not yet obtained support from the Aiviit Hunters and Trappers Organization. All seven applications are summarized in Appendix 2.

Prepared by: Danica Crystal, Wildlife Management Biologist

Reviewed by: Peter Kydd, Director of Wildlife Management

Date: November 16th 2016

² Potential Biological Removal includes removals from the stock from all sources of human induced mortality, including struck and lost animals. Depending on the health and status of a stock, managers may choose to use a recovery factor of 0.5 or 1.0 to calculate Potential Biological Removal, which results in recommended removals of 211 and 422 respectively.

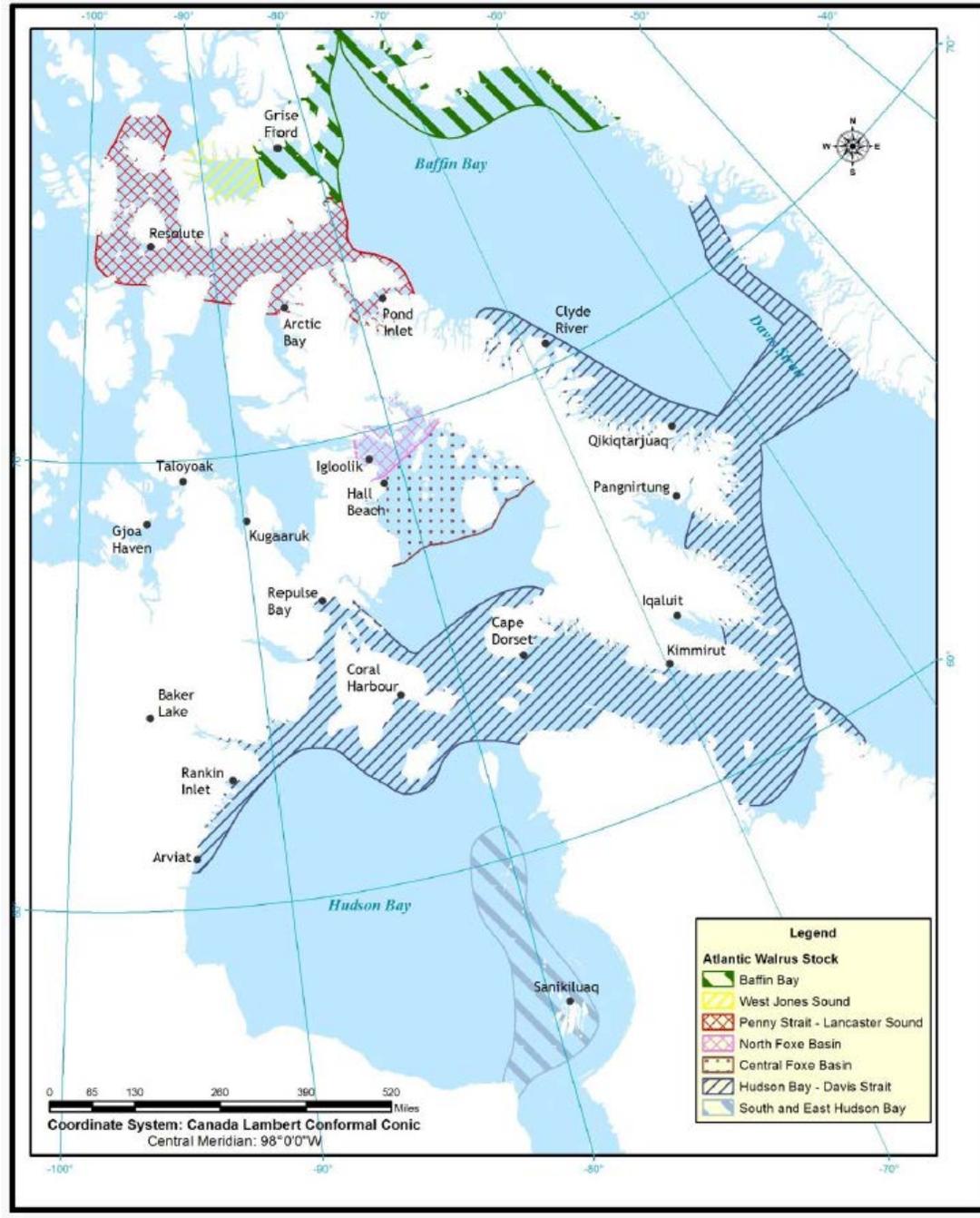


Figure 1. Stocks of Atlantic walrus in Nunavut. Hall Beach harvests walrus from the North and Central Foxe Basin stocks. Coral Harbour harvests walrus from the Hudson Bay-Davis Strait stock.

Appendix 1

In deciding the number of sport hunts to approve for a particular community, it is recommended that the NWMB's policy be to ensure, to the extent reasonably possible, that sport hunting in the community develops in such a manner that the following 4 conditions are met:

- (i) no conservation concern arises;
- (ii) hunter and public safety are maintained;
- (iii) humane harvesting takes place and the whole animal is used; and
- (iv) the developing industry is healthy and will continue to deliver a quality product, thus serving and promoting the long-term economic, social and cultural interests of Inuit harvesters (See *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* Sub-section 5.1.3(b)(iii))

Accordingly, until the Walrus Working Group offers a more detailed analysis and recommendations, it is recommended that the NWMB apply the following 3 criteria in deciding upon the number of sport hunts for a community:

1. In a community that is not subject to a quota (beyond the individual limit of 4), attempt to ensure that the combination of community and sport hunts does not exceed the average total harvest for the previous 5 years (condition i);
2. Ensure that a hunt plan is in place that meets the safety, humane, and other requirements necessary under the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement*, the *Fisheries Act* and the Regulations (conditions ii and iii); and
3. Ensure that the community or enterprise starts with a relatively small and closely monitored number of hunts (the "pilot" stage), prior to permitting an expanded sport hunting effort (condition iv).

In addition, the NWMB may wish to consider what percentage of the overall quota or average harvest for the last 5 years should be allocated to sport hunts.

Appendix 2

Summary of Applications³

1. Alex Flaherty, Polar Outfitting, Iqaluit

Number of Hunts Requested: 7

Does Hunt Plan Address Conservation Concerns: Residents of Iqaluit harvest walrus from the Hudson Bay-Davis Strait stock. Scientific data on this stock are lacking. The Amaruq (Iqaluit) Hunters and Trappers Organization did not identify any conservation concerns.

Consideration of Community's Harvest Levels: Iqaluit does not have a community quota. Over the past five years, an average of 10 animals has been harvested annually in subsistence hunts⁴ and none in sport hunts.

Does Hunt Plan Address Safety Concerns: Alex Flaherty, a qualified guide, will guide the hunts in Frobisher Bay between August 1st and October 30th of 2017. Alex Flaherty (Polar Outfitting) holds the outfitter's license and insurance. Each boat will carry rifles, enough food and fuel for two weeks, and safety equipment including satellite phones, personal floatation devices, radios, flares, first aid, and a fire extinguisher.

Does Hunt Plan Address Humane Harvesting and Wastage Concerns: If the walrus is in water it will be harpooned then shot. If the walrus is on the land or ice it will be shot, then harpooned. If a walrus is struck and lost, the hunter will be given a second chance on another trip. The hunter can take the skin, tusks and head as trophies. The rest of the animal will be distributed to anyone who wants the meat at no cost.

Letter of Support from the Hunters and Trappers Organization: Yes

Number of Hunts Awarded Last Year: 0

³ All five-year averages are based on available data for the 2011/2012-2015/2016 hunting seasons. Not all categories of hunt data were reported in all years.

⁴ Based on 5 years of data from 2011/12-2015/16.

2. Arviq Hunters and Trappers Organization

Number of Hunts Requested: 4

Does Hunt Plan Address Conservation Concerns: Residents of Naujaat harvest walrus from the Hudson Bay-Davis Strait stock. Scientific data on this stock are lacking. The Arviq (Naujaat) Hunters and Trappers Organization did not identify any conservation concerns.

Consideration of Community's Harvest Levels: Naujaat does not have a community quota. Over the past five years, an average of 3 animals has been harvested annually in subsistence hunts⁵ and none in sport hunts.

Does Hunt Plan Address Safety Concerns: The Hunters and Trappers Organization will hire expert walrus hunters to guide the hunts in the area of White Islands and Anarniqtuq during August of 2017. The Arviq Hunters and Trappers Organization will hold the outfitter's license and insurance. Each boat will be equipped with buoys, harpoons, sakku, knives, rifles and proper safety equipment including floater suits, life vests, radios, tents, extra gasoline, and fuel for heating and cooking.

Does Hunt Plan Address Humane Harvesting and Wastage Concerns: Guides will use their discretion to decide whether the walrus will be shot then harpooned or harpooned then shot. If a walrus is struck and lost, the hunter will be given another chance to strike. The hunter can take the head and tusks as trophies. The rest of the animal will be shared with the community of Naujaat.

Number of Hunts Awarded Last Year: 0

⁵ Based on 5 years of data from 2011/12-2015/16.

3. Jake Netser, JJ Outfitting, Coral Harbour

Does the Hunt Plan Address Conservation Concerns: Residents of Coral Harbour harvest walrus from the Hudson Bay-Davis Strait stock. Scientific data on this stock are lacking. The Aiviit (Coral Harbour) Hunters and Trappers Organization has not identified any conservation concerns.

Consideration of Community's Harvest Levels: Coral Harbour has a community quota of 60. Over the past 5 years, an average of 14 animals has been harvested annually in subsistence hunts and 6 in sport hunts⁶, with a total of 20 animals harvested annually.

Does Hunt Plan Address Safety Concerns: Jake Netser is a trained guide and will guide the hunts around Walrus Island between July and September of 2017. Jake Netser has guided walrus hunts in the past. JJ Outfitting holds the outfitter's license and insurance. Each boat will carry harpoons, saku, lines, hooks, rifles, knives, floats, and safety equipment including life jackets, satellite phone, life raft, spot, bilge pump, tools, and depth sounder.

Does Hunt Plan Address Humane Harvesting and Wastage Concerns: Walrus will be harpooned then shot. The hunter will only have one chance to strike and land a walrus. The hunter can take the hide, skull and tusks. The rest of the animal will be given to the community or used as dog food.

Letter of Support from Hunters and Trappers Organization: Yes

Number of Hunts Awarded Last Year: 6

Number of Hunts Conducted Last Year: 2

Number of Landed Animals Last Year: 2

Number of Struck and Lost Animals Last Year: 0

⁶ Based on 5 years of data from 2011/12-2015/16.

4. Luke Eetuk, E and E Outfitting, Coral Harbour

Does the Hunt Plan Address Conservation Concerns: Residents of Coral Harbour harvest walrus from the Hudson Bay-Davis Strait stock. Scientific data on this stock are lacking. The Aiviit (Coral Harbour) Hunters and Trappers Organization has not identified any conservation concerns.

Consideration of Community's Harvest Levels: Coral Harbour has a community quota of 60. Over the past 5 years, an average of 14 animals has been harvested annually in subsistence hunts and 6 in sport hunts⁷, with a total of 20 animals harvested annually.

Does Hunt Plan Address Safety Concerns: Luke Eetuk, Ross Eetuk, and Mark Pootoolik, all of whom are level 2 guides, will guide the hunts around Walrus and Coats Islands in July and August of 2017. E and E Outfitting holds the outfitter's license and insurance. Each boat will carry rifles, harpoons, buoys, ropes, tents, stoves, lanterns and safety equipment including survival suits, satellite phones, anchors, flashlights and flares.

Does Hunt Plan Address Humane Harvesting and Wastage Concerns: The walrus will be shot then harpooned, but if the walrus is on land the harpoon will not be necessary. The hunter will only have one chance to strike and land a walrus. The hunter can take the cape or full mount, skull, tusks, and baculum. The rest of the animal will be distributed to the community.

Letter of Support from Hunters and Trappers Organization: No

Number of Hunts Awarded Last Year: 6

Number of Hunts Conducted Last Year: 5

Number of Landed Animals Last Year: 2

Number of Struck and Lost Animals Last Year: 0

⁷ Based on 5 years of data from 2011/12-2015/16.

5. Aaron Emiktowt, Siku Tours, Coral Harbour

Number of Hunts Requested: 4

Does Hunt Plan Address Conservation Concerns: Residents of Coral Harbour harvest walrus from the Hudson Bay-Davis Strait stock. Scientific data on this stock are lacking. The Aiviit (Coral Harbour) Hunters and Trappers Organization has not identified any conservation concerns.

Consideration of Community's Harvest Levels: Coral Harbour has a community quota of 60. Over the past 5 years, an average of 14 animals has been harvested annually in subsistence hunts and 6 in sport hunts⁸, with a total of 20 animals harvested annually.

Does Hunt Plan Address Safety Concerns: Aaron Emiktowt and Eric Emiktowt, trained level 1 and 2 guides, will guide the hunts around Walrus and Coats Island between July and October of 2017. Aaron Emiktowt (Siku Tours) holds the outfitter's license and insurance. Each boat will be equipped with harpoons, buoys, rope, retrieval hooks, and safety equipment including personal floatation devices, survival suits and satellite phones.

Does Hunt Plan Address Humane Harvesting and Wastage Concerns: Walrus will be harpooned then shot if in water, or shot then harpooned if on land. The hunter will only have one chance to strike and land a walrus. The hunter can take the skin, cape, tusks, skull and baculum. The rest of the animal will be fermented and distributed to the community.

Letter of Support from Hunters and Trappers Organization: No

Number of Hunts Awarded Last Year: 5

Number of Hunts Conducted Last Year: 5

Number of Landed Animals Last Year: 4

Number of Struck and Lost Animals Last Year: 1

⁸ Based on 5 years of data from 2011/12-2015/16.

6. Darcy Nakoolak, Coral Harbour

Number of Hunts Requested: 8

Does Hunt Plan Address Conservation Concerns: Residents of Coral Harbour harvest walrus from the Hudson Bay-Davis Strait stock. Scientific data on this stock are lacking. The Aiviit (Coral Harbour) Hunters and Trappers Organization has not identified any conservation concerns.

Consideration of Community's Harvest Levels: Coral Harbour has a community quota of 60. Over the past 5 years, an average of 14 animals has been harvested annually in subsistence hunts and 6 in sport hunts⁹, with a total of 20 animals harvested annually.

Does Hunt Plan Address Safety Concerns: Darcy Nakoolak is a trained level 1 and 2 guide and will guide the hunts around Walrus and Coats Islands during July and August of 2017. Darcy Nakoolak holds the outfitter's license and insurance. Each boat will be equipped with harpoons, buoys, rope, sakku, hooks, and safety equipment including survival suits, life vests, and satellite phones.

Does Hunt Plan Address Humane Harvesting and Wastage Concerns: Walrus will be harpooned then shot. The hunter will only have one chance to strike and land a walrus. The hunter can take the skull, tusks, hide and baculum. The rest of the animal will be distributed to the community.

Letter of Support from Hunters and Trappers Organization: No
Number of Hunts Awarded Last Year: 0

⁹ Based on 5 years of data from 2011/12-2015/16.

7. Hall Beach Hunters and Trappers Organization

Number of Hunts Requested: 15

Does Hunt Plan Address Conservation Concerns: Residents of Hall Beach harvest walrus from the Northern and Central Foxe Basin stocks. The most recent analysis of aerial survey data for this stock estimates a stock size of 12,500 walrus. This analysis also indicated that the current level of reported harvest for these stocks does not appear to have an impact on the population. The Hall Beach Hunters and Trappers Organization did not identify any conservation concerns.

Consideration of Community Harvest Levels: Hall Beach does not have a community quota. Over the past five years, the average number of walrus harvested annually has been 67 in subsistence hunts¹⁰ and 5 in sport hunts¹¹, with a total of 72 animals harvested annually.

Does Hunt Plan Address Safety Concerns: Experienced hunters and qualified guides from Amittuq Services will guide the hunts in the waters of Foxe Basin during July and August of 2017. The Hunters and Trappers Organization has had hunt plans approved and has conducted sport hunts in past years. Amittuq Services will hold the outfitter's license and insurance. Each boat will be equipped with harpoons, buoys, rifles and safety equipment including survival suits, communication equipment, first aid kit, GPS and safety boat.

Does Hunt Plan Address Humane Harvesting and Wastage Concerns: If the walrus is in the water it will be shot then harpooned. If the walrus is on the ice it will be shot for an instant kill. The hunter will only have one chance to strike and land a walrus. The hunter can take whatever parts of the walrus their province or country of origin allows, including the skull, tusks, and cape. The rest of the animal will be fermented or stored in the community freezer for community use.

Number of Hunts Awarded Last Year: 15

Number of Hunts Conducted Last Year: 6

Number of Landed Animals Last Year: 5

Number of Struck and Lost Animals Last Year: 0

¹⁰ Based on 4 years of reported data from 2011/12-2015/16.

¹¹ Based on 5 years of data from 2011/12-2015/16.