



GWICH'IN RENEWABLE RESOURCES BOARD

news

Spring 2020



in this issue:

Executive Director's update	1
Board Member appointments and updates	4
GRRB Teleconferences recap	5
February Board meeting recap	6
Staff Updates	
Wildlife Biologist news	7
Species at Risk Biologist news	9
Fisheries & Forestry Biologist news	11
Stakeholder Liaison introduction	13
Summer Student report	13
Office Manager news	14
Technician report	15
Wildlife Studies Fund - 2020/2021 Approved Projects	16
Get in Touch	17
Regional RRC Contacts	17
Upcoming Events	17

who we are

The **Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board (GRRB)** was established under the guidance of the Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement (GCLCA) to be the main instrument of wildlife, fish and forest management in the Gwich'in Settlement Area (GSA).

who we work with

The GRRB works with its co-management partners - Gwich'in Tribal Council (GTC), Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT), Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC), Fisheries & Oceans Canada (DFO) - to communicate with the public and encourage conservation of renewable resources in the GSA. The GRRB works in collaboration with the four Renewable Resources Councils (RRCs) in the four communities (Inuvik, Tsiigehtchic, Fort McPherson, and Aklavik) to educate and promote sustainability of resources within the GSA.

our mission

The GRRB works in cooperation with the Gwich'in people, governments and stakeholders and in accordance with the GCLCA to effectively protect, conserve and manage renewable resources in the GSA. It does this in a respectful, transparent, communicative and inclusive manner, using the best available traditional and scientific knowledge.

our vision

The GRRB is a model of renewable resources co-management. Working with its partners, the Board plays a leadership role in ensuring that the fish, forests and wildlife of the GSA remain healthy and sustainable.

our mandate

The GRRB is the main instrument of wildlife, fish and forest management in the GSA. The Board acts in the public interest, representing all the parties to the Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Settlement - the Gwich'in, the people of the Northwest Territories and all Canadians.

Amy Amos executive director

Personal Mission Statement: I lead a team of dedicated experts to implement the Board's decisions and responsibilities in accordance with the land claim agreement. I am committed to building strong relationships with respect, compassion and integrity.

I am a Nihtat Gwich'in participant who was born in Inuvik and grew up in Halifax with my father, Wallace Thompson. My mother is Susie Thompson (Linklater/Kaye) from Aklavik. I am related to the Kaye and Stewart families.

I moved back to Inuvik in January 2006 to work at the GRRB and to reconnect with my roots. I was hired as a biologist and then promoted to Executive Director in 2009.

My main job is to ensure that the Board's direction is implemented at the staff level. My job description can be broadly categorized into personnel management, financial management, Board administration and liaison activities. This newsletter is a progress report for work activities since our newsletter in November.

COVID-19 update In response to the global pandemic, the GRRB office has been closed since March. We are following the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) **Emerging Wisely Plan (EWP)**, which entered Relaxing Phase 1 on May 15, 2020. Staff are working from home, except for Cheryl who goes into the office to do financial work. When staff need to go into the office, they respect social distancing protocols.

Consultations were planned for the Grizzly Bear Management Plan, Species at Risk, Commercial Use



Photo credit: Black Fly Studios

and annual planning for Bluenose-West and Cape Bathurst caribou. Depending on the NWT's progression through the EWP, we have developed several options to modify how, where and with how many people each consultation will be held.

Fieldwork is anticipated for Dall's sheep and Dolly varden char. We may also be requested to help external researchers that we partner with, given their travel restrictions. Fieldwork will only proceed if there is a contingency plan that ensures the safety of the entire field crew and respects all existing conditions of the EWP. Helicopter considerations are being discussed with GNWT and the helicopter company.

Harvest surveys will proceed in June by conducting telephone interviews.

Commercial use (see page 5) consultations will only proceed after receiving draft text from Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) and if we enter at least Phase 2 of the EWP. This is a very important topic, so we do not want to rush it or risk low participation at meetings.

Personnel management I strongly believe that a positive work environment goes a long way. I am proud of our staff and of how well we work together. We are a dedicated and hard-working team. I encourage you to read all of our staff reports.

Permanent staff Cheryl Greenland (Office Manager) has been with us since 2009. Kaytlin Cooper (Species at Risk Biologist) has been with us since 2015. Sarah Lord (Fisheries & Forestry Biologist) and Édouard Bélanger (Wildlife Biologist) have both been with us since 2017.

Casual staff Leigh'Ana Cardinal is our part-time Student, doing data entry eight hours per week. Jordan Norman-Goose was our full-time Technician until March 31, 2020. Chelsea Hermus manages our website and helps with our communication needs remotely, currently including regulatory and research reviews. Ian Matari helps us with our computer needs after hours and as needed.

Recruitment The GRRB welcomes our new full-time Stakeholder

...continued on next page

Liaison, Steve Andersen! This is a new, permanent role with the GRRB. Steve will be responsible for building relationships with our stakeholders, with an emphasis on our relationship with the Renewable Resources Councils (RRCs). He will lead the harvest survey and community engagements and manage our research and land use reviews. He began working remotely from Alberta on April 20 and will relocate to Inuvik as soon as the office and ferries open.

Laurence Carter has been hired as our Management Plan Coordinator under a one-year term. Her original start date of May 1, 2020 has been postponed to August 1, 2020. She is currently planning to move to Inuvik and have her two-week isolation complete prior to August 1, 2020. Laurence will be responsible for updating the grizzly bear management plan and agreement. If time permits, she will also work on the Dall's sheep management plan and managing commercial outfitting interests.

Contracts These are all funded by outside sources. Nick Westover was contracted again to develop the 2020 GRRB conservation calendar and we continue to offer youth work experience. This includes inviting local youth to attend GRRB meetings, to give youth direct exposure to the work the Board is involved in and hopefully inspire them into this field. The funding comes from the Youth Work Experience Program funds.

Financial management Since the last newsletter, we held three Finance Committee meetings (October 30, 2019, February 3, 2020 and May 25, 2020). The October meeting focused on reviewing the mid-year finances (up to September 30, 2019). The February meeting focused on reviewing the third quarter of finances (up to December 2019), the draft budget for 2020-2021 fiscal year and the recommendations for the GRRB's annual withdrawal from its Wildlife Studies Fund. Recommendations from this committee go to the following GRRB meeting. The May meeting reviewed the finances up to the end of March 31. The current membership on this committee is Sam Bullock, Burt Hunt and Doug Doan, with support from GRRB staff. Roger Fraser is the alternate on this committee.

Staff serve as project leads with my oversight. They help confirm project accounting and we work together to ensure they are presented properly. Over the past year, we have managed 24 projects separately from the Board's core operating funding. This included the wages for our Technician and two Summer Students. Travel is often covered for meetings and conferences that we attend.

Board administration Sarah Jerome (GTC-nominated alternate)'s term expired on February 5, 2020.

The only other vacancy is the GNWT-nominated seat for a full member. Reach out to the GTC or GNWT if you are interested in being a GRRB Board member!

Liaison and Communication

Liaison - Renewable Resources Councils (RRCs) & Gwich'in Tribal Council (GTC) We strive for strong working relationships with all of our partners, with a special emphasis on our relationship with the community RRCs. We plan to add school visits to the community tour that we started in October 2019. We hope to be able to do the tour twice per year, dependent on the COVID-19 situation and government conditions.

We held special meetings on the Commercial Use file in October 2019. We also attended and assisted with the Regional RRC meeting in Inuvik in January 2020. We also continue to work with the GTC office on joint files.

Liaison - Government I attended the *Wildlife Act* Section 15 meetings with Jozef Carnogursky in November 2019 in Yellowknife. I also attended the Fisheries and Oceans Canada annual meeting in Winnipeg with Burt Hunt, Sam Bullock and Sarah Lord in November 2019.

We are working closely with Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) on how we can best consult together on Species at Risk files, or how they can better support us in our consultation process.

We continue to work well with the Inuvik Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) office on wildlife and forestry files. They provide us with support for wildlife research and communication.

...continued on next page



Liaison - Researchers I continue to work with researchers and universities to promote best practices for their research, including aligning their research with our priorities or community interests. I co-authored a paper with two of our research partners (muskrat and whitefish projects). This paper has been submitted to the journal Arctic Science. It describes best practices in community-based research. I co-presented it at the ArcticNet conference in Halifax in December and also co-chaired a session there.

Liaison - Other co-management partners I keep in contact with other co-management boards.

In October 2019, I attended the Porcupine Caribou Management Board (PCMB) meeting to discuss the Commercial Use file. We agreed to work together more on education and communication, especially since the GRRB often hears comments firsthand from harvesters. I plan to work with the Executive Director of the PCMB to find ways to better share this information with them. For now,



DFO Annual Meeting (Winnipeg)

we collated all Porcupine caribou comments heard in meetings from the past year and shared it with the PCMB and GTC.

Liaison - Youth I am passionate about youth. My personal goal is for our youth (especially Gwich'in) to be pursuing education in the sciences

and becoming our future Biologists. We continue to invite youth to GRRB meetings.

Our summer student Leigh'Ana is interested in continuing her education to become a biologist. I have been able to keep her employed on a part-time basis (eight hours a week, when the office is open). She is doing all of the data entry for the remote cameras for the Dall's Sheep project.



ArcticNet Conference (Halifax) Photo credit: J. Lam

Communication We continue to produce newsletters after each GRRB meeting that highlight the major project updates and topics discussed. We produce an annual conservation calendar and distribute it amongst the communities. This year, we increased the quantity to 1100 (from 1000) thanks to financial support from Arctic Borderlands. Our website and Facebook page are also updated regularly.



GRRB Board

Jozef Carnogursky
Chairperson (GRRB)



Order in Council
appointments

Nominating
Agency

Federal
government

Territorial
government

Margaret Begg
Member (GTC)



Sam Bullock
Member (GTC)



William Koe
Member (GTC)



Burt Hunt
Member (Canada)



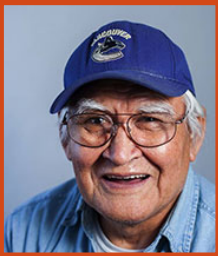
Doug Doan
Member (Canada)



TBA
Member (GNWT)



Charlie Snowshoe
Alternate (GTC)



Roger Fraser
Alternate (GTC)



TBA
Alternate (GTC)



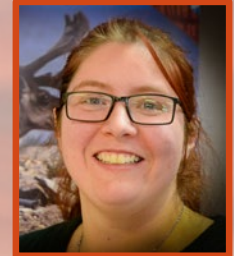
Ron Allen
Alternate (Canada)



Myra Robertson
Alternate (Canada)



Tracy Davison
Alternate (GNWT)



Photos: Black Fly Studios & GRRB

board member updates

GTC-nominated alternate Sarah Jerome's term ended February 5, 2020. Thank you Sarah for all of your hard work on our behalf.

To form the thirteen-member Board, three members and three alternate members are appointed from nominees put forward by each of the Gwich'in Tribal Council (GTC) and the Government (federal and territorial). Nominees are jointly appointed by the federal and territorial governments. The Chairperson is nominated by the Board members and jointly appointed by the federal and territorial governments.

Once appointed, our Board members act in the public interest. They are independent, not beholden to the agency that nominated them.

Our Board members are busy working in many different areas, including the following:

Committees/Working Groups:

- Conference of Management Authorities (CMA)
- Integrated Fisheries Management Plan (IFMP) Steering Committee
- Hiring Committee

Meetings/Training:

- GRRB teleconferences and face-to-face meetings
- GRRB Finance Committee teleconferences
- CMA teleconference
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) Annual Meeting
- Advisory Committee for Cooperation on Wildlife Management (ACCWM) meeting
- Review of Board Orientation materials (new and returning members)
- GRRB Special Teleconference on the ACCWM



Visit us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/grrb.nt.ca

GRRB Teleconferences

The Board held two teleconferences between our face-to-face meetings:

October 30 Teleconference

- Added Burt Hunt to Finance Committee (Sarah Jerome and Roger Fraser remained as alternates)
- Approved mid-year report
- Provided direction for next steps for moose regulation locations
- Discussed attendance for upcoming meetings
- Provided direction for next steps for the process for defining commercial sale of wildlife meat
- Approved management plan for Horned Grebe under the federal *Species at Risk Act (SARA)*
- Approved recovery strategy for the Gypsy Cuckoo Bumble Bee under the federal *SARA*
- Appointments to SAR Committee

December 11 Teleconference

- Reviewed herd status for Bluenose West caribou herd
- Reviewed herd status for Bluenose East caribou herd
- Reviewed herd status for Cape Bathurst caribou herd
- Made recommendations relating to herd statuses

There were two major files for this reporting period:

Commercial Use The GRRB has the power to define what it considers commercial use of wildlife meat (Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement 12.4.16). The intent is that the Board would determine what is no longer traditional sharing and considered a commercial activity. The *NWT Wildlife Act* can regulate this. The Board has a consultation policy that describes how it would approach consultation on this topic. However, the Board decided it was not going to undertake consultation on this topic unless it was requested to do so.

In January 2017, the Regional Renewable Resource Council gave direction to the GRRB to begin this process. In December 2018, we held the first round of community consultations. In July 2019, we held a regional workshop. The direction from the workshop was reviewed the GRRB and provided to ENR to begin drafting a regulation. We will be consulting on the draft regulation. This item was discussed in detail at the February face-to-face meeting ([page 6](#)).

Harvest Data Collection Options for improving the harvest survey were provided to the GRRB in October 2019. Our new Stakeholder Liaison, Steve Andersen, will be responsible for implementing these options.

Working From Home



February 2020 Board Meeting

The GRRB held its winter face-to-face Board meeting in Inuvik from February 4-6.

Board members and staff presented updates on their activities since the last face-to-face meeting in October. Executive Director Amy Amos provided context and background for GRRB's power to define 'commercial use' of wildlife meat and its consultations to date to exercise that power.

Ellen Lea from Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) reviewed DFO's activity over the past year, which included an updated Integrated Fisheries Management Plan for Dolly Varden char. Work continues on the development of the new Arctic Region, which will be rolled out in a phased approach over a number of years. The final boundary has yet to be decided. A number of community coordinator positions are in progress across the North; locations have not been confirmed yet, but will serve as first point of contact with DFO for communities.

Norman Snowshoe provided a brief agency update for the Government of Northwest Territories, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR). Great discussion followed around the Guardians program, wolf harvest and monitoring, Porcupine caribou wastage and hunting regulations, including Let the Leaders Pass and Dempster highway harvesting.

Peter Rodger (DFO) gave a presentation on how the Species at Risk (SAR) Management Plan for Dolly Varden aligns with the revised Integrated Fisheries Management

Plan (IFMP). The Board has already approved the IFMP, but needs to see the entire Management Plan before approving the SAR version of the plan.

Kaytlin Cooper presented on the NWT Barren-ground caribou recovery strategy. The Board passed a motion to approve this strategy.

Sarah Lord provided an update on the Rat River Working Group. Size and age structure suggest current fishing pressure allows population to attain large sizes and older ages. A high proportion of spawners suggests reproductive potential for the population is not limiting. Overall, preliminary results indicate that the stock is stable. There does not appear to be any reason to decrease the recommended voluntary harvest allocation.

Lois Harwood (DFO) spoke about a new initiative: mobilizing, collecting, synthesizing and application of Indigenous knowledge to research and decision-making in DFO's Arctic Region. This has been done a number of ways in the past, including co-management. DFO is formalizing it by creating the framework for a policy for the whole Arctic region to include Indigenous knowledge. Under the revised *Fisheries Act*, DFO may include Indigenous knowledge as considerations for decision making. Lois is collecting comments and direction and will put together a white paper. Solicitation and inclusion of Indigenous knowledge is now a legal requirement for DFO.

Amy Amos and Jordan Norman-Goose presented the 2018-2019 Harvest Survey results for comments and feedback prior to Amy presenting it to the Porcupine Caribou Management Board (PCMB) in Dawson City, YK.

The second day of the winter face-to-face meeting was largely devoted to Wildlife Studies Fund (WSF) presentations. Funding requests were presented for WSF monies. Just under \$72,000 in allocations were approved (**page 16**). The Board also approved the GRRB's 2020/21 operating budget and workplan.

During the Renewable Resource Council (RRC) and Public session, the Chair opened the floor to questions from the RRCs and members of the public.

Amy Amos followed this session with a verbal report on meeting outcomes of the Finance Committee. The Board approved the re-appointment of Paul Teoh & Company as auditors for the 2020-21 fiscal year.

The third day of the meeting began with an agency update from Canadian Wildlife Service, provided by Michael Svoboda. Michael presented an update on federal Species at Risk. He discussed the Hudsonian Godwit (assessed as Threatened) and the Horned Grebe (listed as Special Concern in 2017).

Discussion followed on the process for applying for Aboriginal Fund for Species at Risk (AFSAR) and Habitat Stewardship Program (HSP) funding. Michael then reviewed a table showing all of the Species at Risk in our region and their current status in the management planning process.

Thank you to the community of Inuvik, Board members, staff, agencies and members of the public who took part in this meeting. It is really appreciated. The next face-to-face meeting is tentatively scheduled for September 9-10, 2020 in Inuvik.



Édouard Bélanger wildlife biologist since June 2017

Management Planning

Taking Care of Caribou: the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose West and Bluenose-East barren-ground caribou herds management plan

As a member of the Advisory Committee for Cooperation on Wildlife Management (ACCWM) working group, my work is mainly to continue developing the Communication and Education materials and complete the annual monitoring table.

Last fall, I consulted with hunters that had requested Bluenose-West tags. I provided the information collected for the Annual Status Meeting in November. The meeting was in Inuvik, co-hosted by the Wildlife Management Advisory Council (WMAC NWT) and GRRB. Jodie Maring from WMAC (NWT) and I organized the venue. Doug Doan and I participated in the three-day meeting. Bluenose-West was proposed as orange status and Cape Bathurst herd status needed more discussion

Commercial Use of Wildlife Meat Consultation After the September Board meeting, it was decided that Renewable Resource Councils (RRCs) should be consulted regarding the definition of business. Amy led a quick consultation round in which I participated. We traveled to all of the Gwich'in Settlement Area (GSA) communities and had discussions with the RRCs, which helped clarify the definition of business.

Grizzly Bears Following concerns over grizzly bears and 14 defense of life and property kills between Aklavik and Inuvik in 2019, the GRRB moved to hire a Management



Photo credit: Black Fly Studios

Plan Coordinator – Grizzly Bear. I have worked closely with Amy to create this position. This person will be tasked to update the Grizzly Bear Management Plan and Agreement under my supervision. Tasks include working with co-management partners and creating education and communication products. I am quite excited about this project!

Moose Our approved Moose Management Plan (December 2000) identifies a need to understand the effect of the harvest on the moose population in the GSA. Recent consultations engaged resident hunters (Canadian citizens or landed immigrants living in the NWT for 12 continuous months) about a possible change from voluntary to mandatory resident reporting and input on possible alteration of resident hunting zone to open up new areas.

There were concerns over zones for moose hunting by residents, so we decided to consult with the RRCs and communities to see if they knew why these zones were in place. In October, during the community consultation, communities and RRCs provided

insights into the possible rationale for these hunting zones. The GRRB decided that a letter should be sent to ENR with these insights and our rationale, requesting a response.

Research Dall's Sheep Research Project In 2018, the Dall's Sheep (Divii) Research Project officially started with a total of 15 cameras installed around Black Mountain. Last fall, work on this file mostly involved applying for funding. I have applied to several pots of funding, either by myself or in collaboration. Time was also spent on funding reporting.

Leigh'Ana, the GRRB student, spends a lot of time analyzing the pictures from the camera. She is doing a tremendous job!

Small Mammal Trapping and Hare Survey For several years, the GRRB led the field work relating to these long-term monitoring programs. Due to capacity, the amount of time required to prepare and do the field work, shifting priorities and other field work (Dall's sheep), the

...continued on next page

GRRB is unable to lead this project for the time being. The GRRB will continue to be involved in the project and offer their support, which may include offering our Summer Student or youth work experience to assist with the data collection for these monitoring programs.

Technical Advice General I reviewed several proposed projects in the GSA as part of my usual duties. I also helped Amy for the definition of commercial use venture that the GRRB is taking on. I provided GRRB advice concerning Cape Bathurst and Bluenose-West herd status.

Liaison General Liaison I participated in various RRC meetings. I presented an update on the wildlife files in the GSA and discussed concerns from the communities. I have strengthened my relationship with various researchers for the Divii - Dall's sheep project and for beavers.

Other Training In November, Amy, Kaytlin, Sarah and I took an emotional intelligence training called EQ Foundations Training. This was a course I was looking to do for a long time. I contacted the trainer and

the Aurora Research Institute and helped to coordinate the training.

Conferences and Meetings

In December, I participated in the ArcticNet Annual Scientific Meeting in Halifax. This four-day meeting offered plenary sessions, topical sessions, poster sessions, a student day, networking events and workshops on various topics relating to Arctic research, traditional knowledge, management and development. This conference has gathered leading researchers, graduate students, Northern community representatives, government and industry partners and stakeholders from all fields with a shared interest in the Arctic.

At ArcticNet, I co-presented a talk with Davie Edwards, a representative of the Ehdiiat RRC, about the Dall's Sheep project. It was presented as an example of how to develop, design, implement and communicate community-based monitoring and research in the north. Jim Kay from Aklavik also participated. This provided numerous opportunities to network with established partners, but also to create new partnerships.



This year, I was able to participate in the ENR Regional Biologist meeting in Yellowknife in early January. This meeting provided me the opportunity to present what is happening in our region to all ENR biologists and to learn about the projects that are happening around the NWT. It was an excellent opportunity to network and to strengthen collaboration with other stakeholders.

Funding I applied to the Polar Continental Shelf Project, NWT On-the-Land and GRRB Wildlife Studies Fund.

Personal This fall, I harvested my first moose. I was quite happy and it was an awesome experience. This kept my fall busy with butchering, sharing and cooking. I also spent a lot of time in Québec, visiting my family and friends over Christmas.

Divii (Dall's sheep) remote-camera monitoring near Iyiah (Mount Lang)



Kaytlin Cooper

species at risk biologist
since January 2015

As Species at Risk Biologist, I work with local communities, Renewable Resource Councils (RRCs) and governments (both Federal and Territorial), assisting with species assessments and listings, developing management plans and recovery strategies and administering species at risk programs and research projects (science and Traditional Knowledge) in the Gwich'in Settlement Area (GSA).

Management Planning Boreal Caribou Recovery Strategy and Range Planning Under the NWT Recovery Strategy for boreal caribou and as part of the range planning process, Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) developed a draft document entitled Best Management Practices and Guidelines for Industry in Boreal Caribou Habitat for the NWT, which I reviewed. Following the information in the Range Planning Framework document I consulted on last year, which broadly outlines how each region can manage disturbances such as development and fire to ensure that boreal caribou continue to be self-sustaining, the development of a detailed range plan for the GSA will hopefully begin this fall. This will include members of the RRCs, GRRB, Gwich'in Land Use Planning Board, Gwich'in Land and Water Board, Gwich'in Tribal Council and ENR.

Barren-Ground Caribou Recovery Strategy I presented the results of the NWT barren-ground caribou Recovery Strategy consultations, which occurred this past fall, to the Board in February. The Board approved the document. I completed a table outlining the actions that



Photo credit: Black Fly Studios

the GRRB are doing to assist in the recovery of Barren-ground caribou. These actions are based on the recommended objectives and approaches in the Recovery Strategy. This table will be sent to the RRCs for their information.

Technical Advice I am a member of the Conference of Management Authorities (CMA), the group of wildlife co-management boards and governments that share management responsibility for the conservation and recovery of species at risk in the NWT. I am also a member of the Species at Risk Committee (SARC), a group of science and traditional knowledge experts who assess the biological status of species that may be at risk in the NWT, identifies threats and positive influences to species and their habitats and may recommend conservation actions.

I am also involved in the development and review of documents for the federal (Canada-wide) *Species at Risk Act*. These NWT and federal documents include species assessment reports, management plans and recovery strategies for several species at risk.

Since our last newsletter, the species have included gypsy cuckoo bumble bee, Suckley's cuckoo bumble bee, horned grebe, red-necked phalarope, short eared owl, barn swallow, collared pika, barren-ground caribou, northern mountain caribou, bats and polar bear.

As a member of the NWT Wildlife Care Committee, I provide technical advice on wildlife handling applications and review wildlife handling reports and other documents. Recent applications include bison, barren-ground caribou, boreal caribou, wolves, polar bear, shorebirds and ptarmigan.

After revisions, a paper I co-authored entitled '*Towards actionable, coproduced research on boreal birds focused on building respectful partnerships*' was accepted for publication in *Avian Conservation and Ecology*.

I prepared documents for the Board at their October teleconference, which included the results of consultations held in September and October at our community tour meetings. The Board approved the Management Plan

...continued on next page



Working from home - office assistant

for Horned grebe and the Recovery Strategy for the Gypsy cuckoo bumble bee, both under the federal *Species at Risk Act*.

I also review research and development applications on behalf of the GRRB from the perspective of impacts on species at risk.

Liaison I attend RRC meetings when possible, and enjoy visiting the communities. Every year I attend the January Regional RRC meeting and provide a species at risk update. This year it was in Inuvik. Earlier this year, I met the new staff at GTC and assisted them in applying for Aboriginal Fund for Species at Risk (AFSAR) funding. I look forward to developing relationships with them.

The CMA holds face-to-face meetings every February in Inuvik, and every May in Yellowknife, to discuss the management of NWT species at risk. The SARC holds a face-to-face meeting every April in Yellowknife to assess species and discuss which species may be at risk and need assessing. I attended all meetings; however, the April and May meetings were changed to teleconferences due to COVID-19.

Every year in June, there is a meeting in Ottawa for the National Boreal Caribou Knowledge Consortium (NBCKC). The purpose of the meeting is to provide updates on boreal caribou projects underway across the country, share lessons learned, provide updates on the work completed by the NBCKC over the past year and set the direction for the coming year. As part of this, I am a member of the NBCKC Indigenous Knowledge Circle (IKC). The IKC works to amplify messaging from Indigenous peoples, apply pressure to decision makers, advocate for the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge and advise

on how to respectfully learn from and apply Indigenous knowledge. This face-to-face meeting has been moved to a teleconference this year due to COVID-19.

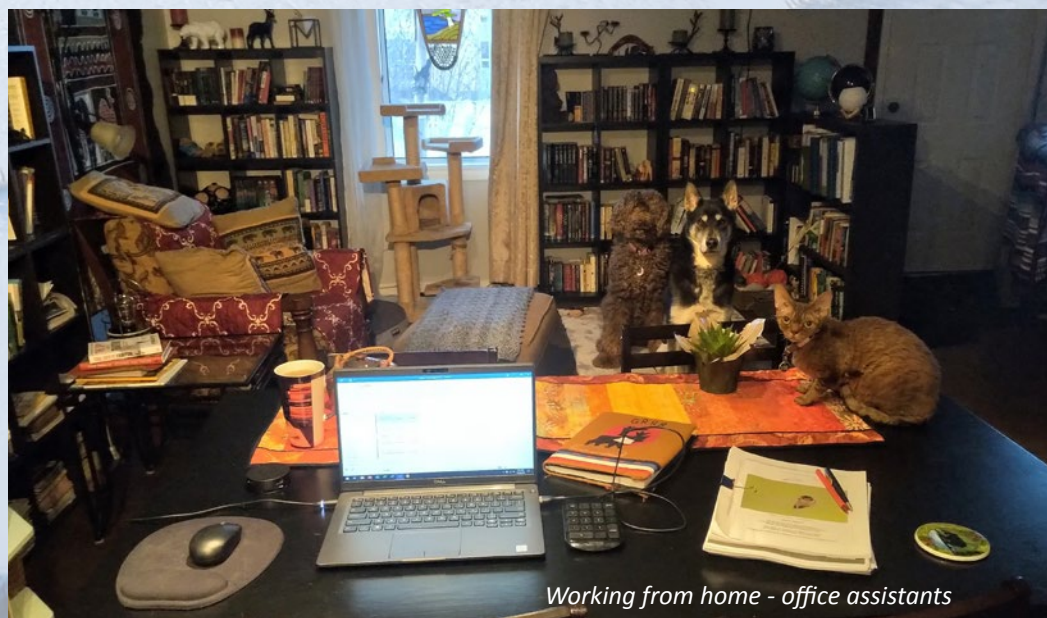
Northern mountain caribou were recently assessed by SARC as Special Concern. Consultations for listing under the *NWT Species at Risk Act* will occur in the fall. The Hudsonian godwit (a shorebird) was assessed by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) as Threatened last year. Consultations for listing under the federal *Act* will also be done in the fall.

Professional Development I attended Emotional Intelligence training in November and Standard First Aid in December.

I also attended several webinars on boreal caribou management across Canada.

In Amy's absence, I was acting Executive Director for a week in November.

I hope to attend ArcticNet at the end of the year, although it is unsure if it will go ahead due to COVID-19.



Working from home - office assistants



Sarah Lord
fisheries & forestry
biologist January 2017

Management Planning Forestry Management The Gwich'in Forest Management Plan Steering Committee met twice (October 22 and November 28) to review the current status of action items and plan future work.

I reviewed the draft Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) Forest Management Framework and drafted a response letter to Environment & Natural Resources (ENR) Director of Forest Management.

Fisheries Management The updated Integrated Fisheries Management Plan (IFMP) for Dolly Varden in the Western Arctic was signed by all parties on December 31, 2019. This revised plan meets the legal requirements of the *Species At Risk Act*. Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) intends for this revised IFMP



Photo credit: Black Fly Studios

to be adopted as the Species At Risk Management Plan for Dolly Varden in the Gwich'in Settlement Area (GSA) and Inuvialuit Settlement Region (ISR).

The revised Rat River Working Group (RRWG) Terms of Reference were approved at their annual harvest meeting on March 3.

Research I offer my support to researchers at many different organizations for projects that address GRRB research priorities. With partners from universities and government, I applied for five external funding sources for fisheries research projects for the 2020-21 fiscal year.

Community-Based Whitefish Monitoring I continue to provide logistical and administrative support for this project with scientists from Simon Fraser University and the University of Maine. This project will help GRRB learn more about where whitefish go during their lives, so we can make sure that we are protecting the areas that are important for them.

Arctic Salmon Project I work with Karen Dunmall, who is the lead on this project. An overwhelming number of salmon were traded in over the 2019 fishing season! Local community members were trained to do the sampling and measurements, rather than shipping all of the salmon south to DFO labs. For more information, check out the project facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/arcticsalmon/>

...continued on next page

DFO Annual Meeting (Winnipeg)



Technical Advice and Liaison

In January, I drafted a letter to DFO regarding GRRB support for the new Arctic Region.

I reviewed and provided comments to our Species at Risk Biologist on a the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) Review Draft Designatable Unit Report for Sockeye Salmon (*Oncorhynchus nerka*) in Canada.

I review and provide comments as needed on permit and research license applications. I review research proposals to provide feedback, often drafting Letters of Support. I inform researchers about research and management needs in our region and connect them with resources in the GSA.

Other Health & Safety I remain active on the Occupational Health & Safety Committee. I participate in meetings, type up minutes and complete safety-related action items.

Fall seine program, Rat River fish hole

Operational I provided advice on computer security and briefed staff on email phishing scams and malware.

Professional Development I participated in Emotional Intelligence training in November.



Photo credit: E. Lea (DFO)





Stakeholder Liaison Steve Andersen April 2020

As the GRRB's new Stakeholder Liaison (a newly-created role), I help to ensure that there is good communication between the GRRB and the Gwich'in people. I also work closely with the RRCs and outside groups, like government agencies and university researchers.

I grew up on the family farm near Grande Prairie, AB. From a young age, my parents took me hiking and camping, so I learned an appreciation for the land early on. When I went to university, I studied environmental sciences, earning

a BSc in conservation biology. I went on to work on wildlife monitoring projects in areas as diverse as the Rocky Mountains of Alberta, the forests of New Brunswick and the Ts'udé Niljné Tuyeta protected area near Fort Good Hope.

While at university, I began volunteering at the campus radio station as a reporter and producer for their environmental news program. Our show gained popularity and was picked up by stations from coast to coast, including throughout NWT on CKLB Radio. I have also done media relations work for a number of non-profits.

I began working for the GRRB in April 2020 and look forward to getting to know the people of the GSA. Expect to hear much more from me in the next newsletter!

GRRB Summer Student Report Leigh 'Ana Cardinal

I was born and raised in Inuvik. I started the GRRB Summer Student position on July 2 and ended on August 30, 2019. During those two months, I learned a lot about how an office operates. It was positive, hands-on experience. In the days before my term was about to be up, Amy sat me down and asked if I wanted to extend my employment and create a new term. I was thrilled and accepted the offer! Now (when the office is open), I work up to eight hours per week on files such as the Dall's sheep project.

Throughout my time with the GRRB, I have learned a lot of important things about how an office operates. It is a positive, hands-on experience. Here are some of the tasks that I have been assigned:

- Library database entry
- File management
- Reception duties
- Overseeing photos for Dall's Sheep photo management
- Attending community meetings/presentations to gain more knowledge about the Gwich'in Settlement Area (GSA)
- Dall's Sheep database entry

I am very grateful for having the opportunity to work with the GRRB. I would personally like to thank Amy Amos, Cheryl Greenland, Jordan Norman-Goose and the rest of the staff at the GRRB for being my role models over the past months.



Cheryl Greenland
office administration
and finances
since February 2009

I am a Nihtat Gwich'in Participant from Inuvik. I was born and raised here in Inuvik. I am responsible for file management, payroll, and all financial entries. I keep track of staff time records. I also cover our reception desk and maintain the front office area. I assist with the development and distribution of the Conservation Calendar each year. Of course, it turned out beautifully this (and every) year!

I continue to be involved with the Finance Committee. I ensure that the reports are ready for the meeting dates. We try to have them one week before the meeting. I work closely with Amy during these times to prepare the financial reports. In September, I attended the GRRB Board meeting in Tsiigehtchic. For September and October, I joined the rest of the GRRB staff in our Community Tour in Tsiigehtchic and Fort McPherson.

I was Acting Executive Director for a time in November while Amy was away at a meeting.

In December, I attended the Administrative Assistants Conference in Whitehorse. It was interesting. Day one consisted of Core Competencies, Successful Time Management, and Effective Management Support. Day two covered Critical Communication skills, Managing Difficult Situations, and Leadership for Administrative Assistants.

We are now renting another office space, which Jordan and I set up for the new casual staff. I rearranged my own office space and have much more room.



Photo credit: Black Fly Studios



GRRB staff at Christmas dinner



Jordan Norman-Goose technician to March 31, 2020

I was born and raised in Inuvik. I am part Gwich'in on my mother's side and part Inuvialuit on my father's side. I graduated high school in June 2016 and enrolled in the Environment & Natural Resources Technology Program (ENRTP) in September 2016. During that summer, I started working with the GRRB as Technician Trainee. I worked in that role for three consecutive summers and then was promoted to full-time Technician during the summer of 2018. I enjoy being active and being outdoors. ENRTP has enhanced my personal knowledge of not only the land, plants and animals, but also my traditional knowledge of travelling, hunting, fishing and outdoor survival. The course allowed me to learn by combining both traditional and scientific knowledge and exercising that knowledge in real-life scenarios.

My main priorities this past fall and winter were to undertake projects assigned to me and assist staff and biologists with ongoing projects. Around the end of September and early October, GRRB staff participated in a community tour throughout the four Gwich'in Settlement Area (GSA) communities. I assisted in financial duties and coordinated logistics for the tour.

In early November, I attended a Transportation of Dangerous Goods at the Environment & Natural Resources (ENR) boardroom in Inuvik. This course allowed me to get a better grasp on trying to properly dispose of our current stock of chemicals that we have no use for anymore.

Also during November, I led the Gwich'in Harvest Survey (GHS) Data project. During this time, I updated



Photo credit: Black Fly Studios

financial agreements, amended the survey forms to current survey dates and communicated with the Renewable Resource Councils (RRCs) in each community to hire interviewers to conduct the surveys and to make sure everything was all okay throughout the survey period. In December, I started entering all of the data from the four GSA communities into an Excel spreadsheet.

In January, I helped Cheryl set up a new office, getting things ready for the new hire. I also assisted staff with other office duties.

Since the last newsletter, I also completed the following tasks:

- Reception duties (answering phones, scanning papers, etc.)
- Office duties (file management, entering and organizing library database, etc.)
- Maintenance around the office, storage units and Sea Can
- Maintenance on the GRRB motorized equipment, ensuring that equipment can operate and run properly
- Community Tour

- Preparation for Porcupine Caribou Management Board (PCMB) Annual Meeting

In my work with the GRRB, I have led projects and coordinated youth programs and activities. I have helped with the logistics for GRRB-related meetings and got to travel, learn and experience different workspaces and environments.

I am very thankful that the GRRB hired me as the full-time Technician. It gave me an opportunity to enhance my experience in this field of work. I have grown personally and professionally during my time with GRRB and have worked with great diligence throughout my terms.



**The GRRB thanks you
for all of your hard work,
Jordan!**

Wildlife Studies Fund Applications 2020/21

Researchers requesting support for the 2020-2021 fiscal year submitted written Wildlife Studies Fund applications to the Board. They gave presentations on their proposals at the February Board meeting. The Board supported the following project proposals at varying levels:

Community-Based Whitefish Monitoring Rachel Hovel (University of Maine) From fish sampled in 2017, we learned what areas the fish use during their lives, between the ocean and Peel, Arctic Red and Mackenzie Rivers. We are developing a dataset that can be used to identify changes over time in whitefish migration timing or relative abundance compared to other species. We are interested in fish growth rates, changes in fish size and contaminants that might occur in fish. We will continue monitoring whitefish at fish camps in the Gwich'in Settlement Area (GSA).

Arctic Salmon: Samplers and Coordination Karen Dunmall (DFO) The Arctic Salmon program is a successful community-based project that monitors changes in the relative abundance and geographic distribution of different species of Pacific salmon in the GSA via voluntary reporting and provision of samples from subsistence harvests. In 2019/20, we developed and tested a coordinated Arctic Salmon sampling effort in the GSA. Due to the success of this program, we are requesting funding to continue to support salmon samplers in each community in the GSA and to pay a fee for salmon handling to the Renewable Resource Council (RRC) in each community. We are also requesting funds to support shipping within the GSA and to purchase gift

cards to exchange for salmon heads from the harvesters.

Tracking Change: Hydrological Change in the GSA Application for Youth Funding Tait Overeem (University of Victoria) This research will address concerns regarding environmental and hydrological change within the GSA. The project will interview Gwich'in traditional knowledge holders about the ways in which waterways in the GSA have changed over their lifetimes. Youth will assist in interview recording, set-up and questioning. **COVID-19 update; funding deferred to 2021/22.**

Dzan-Kivgaluk Muskrat Monitoring Program Application for Youth Funding Jeremy Brammer (Environment and Climate Change Canada) Trappers have reported that muskrat populations have declined in the Mackenzie Delta. Muskrats have been an important source of food and income and changes in their numbers are concerning. We will survey muskrat densities across the Delta and their growth rates and survival around Jackfish Creek. We will compare densities, growth rates and survival of muskrat populations today with those documented in studies from 1953 to 1976 to identify major changes. **COVID-19 update: funding deferred to 2021/22.**

Barren-Ground Caribou and Muskox Survey Tracy Davison (ENR) Barren-ground caribou herds in the NWT have declined from previous historic peaks, including the Cape Bathurst (CB), and Bluenose-West (BW) herds traditionally harvested by the Gwich'in. Harvest management actions have been taken for these herds, guided by the Taking Care of Caribou Management plan (MP), which recommends population estimates every 3-5

years. In preparation for the collaring of caribou for the 2021 photo survey, a late winter distribution survey will be conducted. We are proposing to do a Muskox survey in conjunction with that survey. The last muskox survey in the area was conducted in 2009. There are observations of changes in the distribution of muskox.

Arctic Borderlands Community Ecological Monitoring: Data Sharing for Co-management Heather Ashthorn (ABEKS) Each year, Arctic Borderlands communities document ecological change by conducting lengthy interviews with local experts; people who are spending a lot of time on the land. The answers are recorded in a database which may be used to help communities contribute local knowledge to decision-making. In 2019, we hired a researcher to look for correlations between ABEKS caribou data and other scientific data. This gives the Porcupine Caribou Management Board a tool for use of local knowledge in decision making. We will continue this work in 2020.

Dall's Sheep Research Project Application for Youth Funding Édouard Bélanger (GRRB) The goal of this project is to monitor population changes in Dall's sheep annually by collecting traditional knowledge and scientific information on recruitment, ratio of ewes:nursery, classification of males, habitat changes, predation and other variables that are known to affect population size. This information will assist the GRRB, Gwich'in RRCs, ENR, Yukon Government and other partners listed on the Dall's sheep management plan in monitoring the population.

COVID-19 update: all projects plan to proceed as proposed/with modifications, unless noted above.



GET IN TOUCH!

Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board

PO Box 2240
Inuvik, NT X0E 0T0
Tel: 867.777.6600
Fax: 867.777.6601
www.grrb.nt.ca

Executive Director

Amy Amos
867.777.6600 ext. 2
867.678.0019 (cell)
aamos@grrb.nt.ca

Office Manager

Cheryl Greenland
867.777.6600 ext. 0
office@grrb.nt.ca

Wildlife Biologist

Édouard Bélanger
867.777.6600 ext. 3
ebelanger@grrb.nt.ca

Fisheries and Forestry Biologist

Sarah Lord
867.777.6600 ext. 4
slord@grrb.nt.ca

Species at Risk Biologist

Kaytlin Cooper
867.777.6600 ext. 6
kcooper@grrb.nt.ca

Stakeholder Liaison

Steve Andersen
867.777.6600 ext. 5
sandersen@grrb.nt.ca

upcoming events

GRRB Office Reopens June 15, 2020
(if GNWT enters Phase 2 on June 12)

National Indigenous Peoples Day
June 21, 2020

Finance Committee Teleconference
Late July, 2020

GRRB Teleconference
Late July, 2020

GRRB Fall Board Meeting
September 9-10, 2020
Inuvik, NT (TBD)

DFO Annual Meeting
November 25-26, 2020
Winnipeg, MB

ArcticNet Conference
December 7-10, 2020
Toronto, ON



Regional RRC meeting



Please call your RRC for monthly meeting times:

Ehdiitat RRC (Aklavik)
867-978-2336

Tetlit RRC (Fort McPherson)
867-952-2330

Gwichya RRC (Tsiigehtchic)
867-953-3608

Nihtat RRC (Inuvik)
867-777-6650