



GRRB Strategic Plan **2013-2018**

Approved on May 8, 2013 (Motion number: 2013-18)

GWICH'IN RENEWABLE RESOURCE BOARD

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BACKGROUND

The Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board (GRRB) is the main instrument of fish, forestry and wildlife management within the Gwich'in Settlement Area. The GRRB is responsible for working with Gwich'in communities and the public to ensure renewable resources in the Gwich'in Settlement Area (GSA) are managed in a sustainable manner.

Established as a result of the *Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Settlement Agreement* (GCLCA) in 1992, the Board is entering its 20th year of operation. Building on its previous five-year strategic plan (2008-13), the Board met from September 19th to 21st in Fort McPherson to review the achievements, challenges and lessons learned over the last five years and to establish the Board's strategic focus for the next strategic plan.

The Board members, staff and representatives of each of the four Gwich'in Renewable Resources Councils (RRCs) participated in a structured, facilitated discussion which is the basis for the following document. Co-management partners and other stakeholders were invited but most were unable to attend. A representative from Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) was present for a portion of the session and written input was provided by a local representative of the GNWT's Department of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) (Forestry), which is reflected in this document. It is important to note, however, that the views of all key partners were sought in a full-day discussion on Research Priorities earlier the same week in Inuvik and this input was taken into account during the strategic planning discussion and are detailed in separate report to the GRRB.

GRRB BOARD MEMBERS AND STAFF

The composition of the GRRB is prescribed in the GLCLA (section 12.8.3). The Board is made up of six members and six alternates in total. There are three members and three alternates from the GTC as well as three members and three alternates from the territorial and federal governments (DFO, Environment Canada (EC) and the GNWT). All current GRRB Board Members were present at the strategic planning session, as follows:

- Joel Ingram (Alternate member - EC)
- Johnny Charlie (Member - GTC)
- Cindy Allen (Alternate member - GTC)
- Charlie Snowshoe (Alternate member - GTC)
- Dan Topolniski (Member - DFO)
- Jozef Carnogursky (Alternate member - GNWT)

** Eugene Pascal (Alternate member - GTC) and George Low (Alternate member – DFO) were not in attendance.*

The Board Chairperson position is currently vacant. Eugene Pascal is serving as Interim Chairperson.

All GRRB staff members were present for this session and lent their considerable technical and on-the-ground knowledge to the strategic planning exercise.

- Executive Director, Amy Thompson
- Office Manager, Cheryl Greenland
- Wildlife Biologist, Kristen Callaghan
- Fisheries Biologist, Kris Maier
- Renewable Resources Manager, Janet Boxwell

The Board also works in conjunction with Renewable Resource Council Coordinators (RRC coordinators). Each of the four Gwich'in Communities in the GSA have a coordinator who lives/works in the community. The four RRCs were represented at the strategic planning workshop by the following individuals:

- Gwichya Gwich'in Renewable Resource Council (Tsiigehtchic): John Norbert and Thomas Kendo
- Ehdiiat Renewable Resource Council (Aklavik): , Fanny Greenland
- Nihtat Gwich'in Renewable Resource Council (Inuvik): Barry Greenland and William Francis
- Tetlit Gwich'in Renewable Resource Council (Fort McPherson): Peter Kay and Abraham Stewart

In addition, Steve Kokelj of the Cumulative Impacts Monitoring Program (AANDC/GNWT) and two members of the public: Jane Charlie and Laura Firth were also present for some parts of the discussion.

Mandate

The GRRB is the main instrument of wildlife, fish and forest management in the Gwich'in Settlement Area. 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.

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 Gwich'in Settlement Area remain healthy and sustainable.

Mission

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

The GRRB is provided with a wide range of **powers** and **responsibilities**. The powers and responsibilities of the Board are detailed in Chapters 12 and 13, Vol.1 of the *GCLCA*.

- Establish policies and propose regulations concerning
 - harvesting of wildlife (including fish, birds, plants and animals) by any person within the Gwich'in Settlement Area
 - commercial harvesting of wildlife
 - commercial activities relating to wildlife, including processing, marketing and sale of wildlife, guiding and outfitting and hunting, fishing or naturalist camps and lodges
 - forest management
- Develop and approve plans for the management and protection of wildlife and wildlife habitats, including conservation areas, territorial parks and national parks in the settlement area
- Approve the designation of conservation areas and species at risk
- Approve interim management guidelines, park management plans and policies;
- Approve government regulations;
- Establish rules and procedures for consultations;
- review any matter referred to us by government;

- provide government with timely advice on draft legislation, land use policies or provincial or international agreements that might impact wildlife or wildlife habitat, and on the creation of new national or territorial parks in the settlement area;
- advise government on public education plans on wildlife, harvesting and habitat, on policies concerning research and research evaluation; and on plans for cooperative management and research on species and populations not wholly within the settlement area; and
- advise government on plans for training Gwich'in in management of wildlife and related economic activities.

The GRRB's main activities fall into four broad categories:

- Management planning, harvest allocation and regulation
- Research-related
- Public outreach and engagement
- Community consultations and communications

The Board's operations are closely linked to and guided by a series of ***renewable resource management plans***. The status of these plans at the time this strategic plan was developed is provided as a reference.

- Integrated Fisheries Management Plan for northern form Dolly Varden – *approved 2010*
- Porcupine Caribou Harvest Management Plan – *approved 2011 (GRRB is not a party)*
 - Implementation plan – *approved 2011 (GRRB is not a party but is involved with implementation)*
- Gwich'in Forest Management Plan – *approved 2012*
- Grizzly Bear Management Agreement and Grizzly Bear Management Plan – *approved by GRRB and RRCs, but not likely to be formally approved*
- Bluenose West/Bluenose East/Cape Bathurst Caribou Management Plan – *draft*
- Dall's Sheep Management Plan – *draft*
- Moose Management Plan – *GRRB and RRCs approved 2000 (not approved by governments at this time)*
- Coney Management Plan – *approved 2000 by GRRB, RRCs and governments*

The GRRB's 2013-18 Strategic Plan has **five strategic goals** in order of priority. The goals are detailed in the annex provided.

1. Develop and Implement Renewable Resource Management Plans and Priority Research

The Board, together with the RRCs, is the main instrument of wildlife management in the GSA. The Board has worked hard over the past five years to lead or support the development of management plans for caribou, Dall's sheep, Dolly Varden char and other species. Each of these plans involves a series of implementation commitments for the Board, RRCs and partner organisations. Going forward, the Board will work to communicate these commitments, prioritize the work involved in supporting implementation and carry out meaningful implementation of the actions in each plan. Similarly, the Board will work to ensure that the process it uses to set Research Priorities is predictable and transparent and that these priorities are appropriately communicated and reflected in its activities. The Board must also maintain its ability to limit harvesting if required for conservation.

2. Provide advice to government and work with the RRCs as described in the GCLCA on matters that affect wildlife, wildlife habitat and forests

The GCLCA sets out a long list of initiatives on which Government (Federal or Territorial) is required to seek the advice of the GRRB – laws, regulations, plans for research, training proposals, etc.. The goal is to ensure that the Board has the ability and resources in place to respond in an effective and timely way to government requests for advice based on GRRB priorities. Communicating and using the GRRB's existing Consultation Policy will be critical to achieving this goal.

3. Strengthen and maintain strong, positive and respectful working relationships with Gwich'in participants, co-management partners and stakeholders

This goal was carried forward from the previous strategic plan. At its core, this goal is all about creating and maintaining close collaboration with Gwich'in communities and institutions, with Government agencies and with other stakeholders whose activities might contribute to or impact on wildlife and wildlife habitat management in the Gwich'in Settlement Area (GSA). The GRRB has made great progress in this area over the past five years and has further targeted its efforts going forward.

4. Strengthen Gwich'in Participation and use of traditional and scientific knowledge in research priority management

The collaboration and cooperation of Gwich'in people and institutions at all levels is critical to achieving the overall mandate of the GRRB. Progress has been made over the past five years, but more needs to be done. Community representatives who serve on the Gwich'in Renewable Resources Councils are important partners in this effort and the GRRB will support the RRCs in their efforts to engage with communities. The Board will continue to strive to support and encourage the training and support of Gwich'in in the area of renewable resource research and management. The Board must also work with Gwich'in institutions, including the Gwich'in Tribal Council and the Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute to gather and integrate traditional knowledge in wildlife and habitat research and management activities.

5. Provide Quality Public Service

This goal is maintained from the previous strategic plan and speaks to the quality services that the Board and its management and staff provide to the Gwich'in and general public, and how to make sure that we continue to deliver a high level and quality of service.

GRRB Strategic Plan

Annex A ***Detailed Strategic Goals***

GOAL 1: Develop and implement renewable resource management plans and priority research

Objectives	Target Outcomes	GRRB lead & Potential Partners	Funding Considerations	Timeline
1. The approach to implementing Board-approved Management Plans is based on clear priorities.	<p>1.1. The Board has prioritized work plans for each Management Plan</p> <p>1.2. The Board can show progress on implementation of management plans based on priorities.</p> <p>1.3. Staff, communities and partners understand on which management plan actions they should focus their efforts</p>	<p>1.1 ED + lead staff</p> <p>1.2 Lead staff</p> <p>1.3 Lead staff</p>	<p>1.1 staff time</p> <p>1.2 staff time</p> <p>1.3 communications position required</p>	<p>1.1 one worksheet per year per staff member</p> <p>1.2 ongoing updates on implementation / progress</p> <p>1.3 dependent on funding</p>
2. Approval of existing draft management plans is pursued based on clear priorities.	<p>2.1. The Board has identified which management plans it wants approved by 2018.</p> <p>2.2. The Board has made progress on getting approval of targeted management plans.</p>	<p>2.1 ED & lead staff</p> <p>2.2 Board</p>	<p>2.1 at least \$8K per consultation, need at least 2 consultants per plan</p> <p>2.2 none</p>	<p>2.1 add to Sept 2013 agenda?</p> <p>2.2 by 2018</p>
3. The research the GRRB undertakes and supports is guided by Research Priorities.	<p>3.1. The Board has a consistent and efficient process in place to review and update Research Priorities.</p> <p>3.2. The Board can show how its work aligns with the Research Priorities and what progress has been made in each priority area.</p>	<p>3.1 ED & RRM</p> <p>3.2 RRM to organize</p>	<p>Staff time</p> <p>For supporting – WSF</p> <p>For undertaking – need to secure outside funds (amount is project dependent)</p>	Ongoing
4. The Board effectively communicates with communities, partners and the public about Management Plans and Research Priorities.	<p>4.1. Communities, partners and the public are well informed about how Management Plans and Research Priorities guide the work of the Board.</p> <p>4.2. Plain language tools are in place to inform and educate communities, partners and the public about Management Plans and Research Priorities.</p>	<p>Executive Director</p> <p>or</p> <p>Communications Coordinator (if funded)</p>	<p>Level of effort will be determined by funding for the Communications Coordinator position</p>	Dependent on funding
5. The Board is equipped and ready to limit harvesting if required for conservation.	<p>5.1. The Board was able to limit harvest in a timely and appropriate way in if/when a conservation concern.</p> <p>5.2. The Board looked for opportunities to involve communities in volunteer harvest measures whenever possible.</p>	<p>Board with support from the ED and lead staff</p>	<p>If public hearings are required to legislatively limit harvest, funding will need to be found.</p>	If required

GOAL 2: Provide advice to governments and work with the RRCs as described in the GCLCA on matters that affect wildlife, wildlife habitat and forests

Objectives	Target Outcomes	GRRB lead & Potential Partners	Funding Considerations	Timeline
<p>1. The GRRB actively promotes government understanding of the Board's consultation policy.</p>	<p>1.1. Governments demonstrate an understanding of the consultation policy and adhere to its timelines when requesting advice.</p>	<p>ED & GRRB staff</p>	<p>Staff time, maybe some material cost if communications position in place</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>2. The GRRB chairperson and Executive Director prioritize items for Board response to requests for advice.</p>	<p>2.1. The GRRB staff have an increased understanding of how to respond to advice requests based on GRRB priorities in this area.</p>	<p>GRRB Chairperson and Executive Director</p>	<p>Staff & chair time</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>3. The GRRB provides government with effective, considered advice.</p>	<p>3.1. The GRRB responds to advice requests by governments on legislation, regulations, policies and plans, or other matters, as described in the GCLCA.</p> <p><i>* For action planning, consider broken out into a separate outcome federal, territorial and Aboriginal organizations to reflect the major files and types of advice needed.</i></p>	<p>Board with support from the ED and lead staff</p>	<p>Staff time, need SAR Biologist for SAR files</p>	<p>As requested and as needed</p>
<p>4. RRCs have the tools and support from the GRRB to effectively manage Gwich'in harvesting rights as set out in the GCLCA (e.g. 12.9.4)</p>	<p>4.1. The GRRB develops a policy regarding harvesting by Gwich'in that can be used by the RRCs to manage Gwich'in harvesting in their regions.</p>	<p>GRRB Board members and staff</p> <p>RRCs</p>	<p>Funding required for workshops</p> <p>Required time commitment by Board members and staff</p>	<p>Dependent on funding, by 2018</p>

GOAL 3: Strengthen and maintain strong, positive and respectful working relationships with Gwich'in participants, co-management partners and stakeholders

Objectives	Target Outcomes	GRRB lead & Potential Partners	Funding Considerations	Timeline
<p>1. The GRRB is consulting and assisting the RRCs and communities according to its mandate, and RRCS and communities are providing expertise and advice to the GRRB on management, harvesting and research priorities.</p>	<p>1.1. RRC and community input is clearly documented and reflected in Board work (e.g. management plans)</p> <p>1.2. A strong and positive working relationship exists between RRC staff/members and the GRRB. Examples of supporting activities include participation in RRC orientation and regularly attend RRC meetings.</p>	<p>GRRB and RRC staff</p>	<p>Staff travel to RRC meetings (in 2013-14 budget)</p> <p>Staff time (including OT)</p>	<p>Ongoing in place by 2013-2014</p>
<p>2. GRRB, GTC and related Gwich'in institutions (e.g. GSCI, GLUPB, GLWB) are working together efficiently on all relevant levels.</p>	<p>2.1. GTC and GRRB have a clear understanding and respect for their respective roles and responsibilities under the GCLCA.</p> <p>2.2. GRRB and GTC staff and board have a strong and respectful working relationship which includes the GTC engaging with RRCs in a meaningful way.</p> <p>2.3. GRRB has effective collaboration with GSCI to produce documents such as TK reports on Species at Risk.</p> <p>2.4. GRRB input is reflected in the work of other boards such as the GLUPB and the GLWB and vice-versa.</p>	<p>GRRB Chair and Executive Director</p>	<p>Staff time</p> <p>Chair time</p> <p>Staff & chair travel</p>	<p>Ongoing in place as soon as possible</p>
<p>3. The GRRB and territorial boards and governments (NWT and Yukon) have a strong and positive relationship on management and harvest planning, including transboundary issues.</p>	<p>3.1. The GRRB has clear and effective working relationships with transboundary boards and government departments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o strategic engagement plan is in place o contacts and working relationships are established o regular communication is occurring to provide updates and share information on research priorities <p>3.2. The GRRB has a well-developed, coordinated and effective delivery of joint wildlife management responsibilities in GSA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o consultation policy contributes to understanding of GRRB, RRC, ENR relationships o joint work plans are in place for relevant projects 	<p>Chair, ED and lead staff</p>	<p>Staff time</p> <p>Chair time</p> <p>Travel</p>	<p>Ongoing in place by 2018</p>

GOAL 3: Strengthen and maintain strong, positive and respectful working relationships with Gwich'in participants, co-management partners and stakeholders *(continued)*

Objectives	Target Outcomes	GRRB lead & Potential Partners	Funding Considerations	Timeline
<p>4. The GRRB and federal departments have a strong and positive working relationship on management and harvest planning.</p>	<p>4.1. The GRRB and federal departments share a clear understanding and respect for the roles and responsibilities of each party under the <i>GCLCA</i>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ strategic engagement plan is in place ○ regular communication is occurring to provide updates and share information on research priorities ○ Two-way feedback is taking place 	<p>Chair & ED</p>	<p>Staff/Chair time, travel costs</p>	<p>Ongoing, effectively in place by 2018</p>

<p>4. GRRB integrates TK and local knowledge in its research and decision-making, and with third parties active in the GSA. <i>(* Critical to address this objective in next five years due risk of losing TK and local knowledge due to decreasing number of Elders and full-time harvesters)</i></p>	<p>4.1. Research projects that integrate and capture TK and local knowledge are completed with the GSCI and other partners on priority topics.</p>	<p>Executive Director with staff GSCI</p>	<p>Incremental funding from partners</p>	<p>By 2018</p>
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GOAL 5: Provide quality Public Service

Objectives	Target Outcomes	GRRB lead & Potential Partners	Funding Considerations	Timeline
<p>1. GRRB has a permanent, motivated and trained staff to provide the Board, the Gwich'in and the public with quality advice and services in renewable resources management.</p>	<p>1.1. The Board endorses policies and procedures for staff recruitment and operations (no conflicts).</p>	<p>Board with ED support</p>	<p>On-going Implementation funding</p>	<p>ASAP, ongoing, reviewed every 2-3 years and as required</p>
	<p>1.2. The Board retains staff for a minimum of two years.</p>	<p>Executive Director with Chair/Board</p>	<p>On-going implementation funding</p>	<p>ongoing</p>
	<p>1.3. The Board has clear procedures in place in order to maintain continuity of operations despite staff changes.</p>	<p>Executive Director with Chair/Board</p>	<p>On-going implementation funding</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>1.4. The Board provides competitive salaries and benefits.</p>	<p>Executive Director with Chair/Board</p>	<p>Requires increase in Implementation funding</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>1.5. The Board provides Gwich'in employment opportunities through increased training, job-shadowing and other methods.</p>	<p>Executive Director with Chair/Board</p>	<p>Requires increase in Implementation funding</p>	<p>Dependent on funding, as needed</p>