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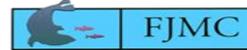
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# Public Meeting – Draft Integrated Fisheries Management Plan (IFMP)

June 30, 2010

Annie G Robert Centre, Fort McPherson, NT

## Attendance:

**IFMP Writing Team:** Amy Thompson (GRRB), Kris Maier (GRRB), Kevin Bill (DFO)

**IFMP Steering Committee:** Amy Thompson (GRRB), Robert Charlie (GRRB)

**IFMP Support:** Billy Archie (WSWG), Kayla Hansen-Craik (FJMC)

## Public:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Affiliation</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Affiliation</i>
Georgina V. Neyando	Tetlit RRC Coordinator	Mary (Frank) Firth	Public
Abe Peterson	Tetlit RRC	Mary Firth	Public
Frank Firth	Public	Martha Snowshoe	Public
Bernice Francis	Public	Martin Vaneltsi	Public
Rachel Stewart	Public	Alice Blake	Public
Andrew Koe	Public	Kaylynn Koe	Public

**Minutes:** Amy Thompson

## 1. Call to Order

Robert Charlie called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM.  
The opening prayer was given by Mary Firth.  
Introductions were made from those around the table.  
Robert provided opening remarks.

## 2. Introduction presentation – Amy Thompson (GRRB)

Amy provided a presentation that included background on Dolly Varden fisheries management in the Gwich'in Settlement Area (GSA) and Inuvialuit Settlement Region (ISR), past research and monitoring, Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC), Species at Risk Act (SARA), and how TK, an IFMP, and community input can help us deal with these processes.

### Discussion

Q1: What about the Vittrekwa River? What work was done and when?

A1: In 2006 and 2007 the GRRB surveyed the river and found some adult char as well as a good number of



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stream-resident char, which are smaller than adult char and mature when they're still very small. The adult spawning population was estimated to be in the low hundreds. Not many char go to the Vittrekwa because it is a very small stream and there is not much overwintering habitat.

Q2: What are the populations like in other rivers, what about the Rat River?

A2: We only have population information for the Rat River. All the other rivers we can only guess at this point, although we assume that since they aren't being harvested much, or at all, they are stable for the time being. The Rat population declined in 2004, but it appears to be increasing this year.

### 3. IFMP presentation – Kris Maier (GRRB)

Kris provided a presentation that summarized all the supporting sections included in the IFMP. This presentation focussed on identifying what an IFMP is used for, why there is a need for a Dolly Varden IFMP and explanations of the many challenges which face Dolly Varden management as well as an overview of how Dolly Varden management has been adapted over time to adjust to the changing needs of both the fish populations and the people who enjoy the fishery.

#### Discussion

Q3: Some of the stocks in the ocean now go to Alaska?

A3: In the spring at breakup the fish migrate down to the ocean to feed. The problem is when they're in the ocean all the different stocks get mixed up and we don't know which ones from which rivers are being caught in the ocean. Many char from rivers in Canada get caught in Alaska so we also need to start talking to Alaska and the Inupiat about how many char they catch.

Q4: Do char always go back to the same fish hole or river for the winter?

A4: Almost all char do. But sometimes they will go to other rivers. We don't know why. Some Rat River fish have been caught in the Babbage, Big Fish, and upstream of the Vittrekwa.

Q5: Are the char healthy?

A5: Yes. There is almost no evidence of disease in char and there is a study ongoing to monitor this issue. Char are in very good condition in recent years due to warmer temperatures and earlier breakup which creates more food in the ocean and more time to spend in the ocean eating. On average, fish are bigger and healthier now than they were 15 years ago.

### 5. Section 7 presentation – Kevin Bill (DFO)

Kevin provided a presentation on section 7 of the management plan which is in essence the "meat" of the plan. He presented the suggested color-coded management zones. It was noted that the suggested color-coding is different than what was included in the original plan circulated in May. We recommend the following changes because they allow us to prioritize stocks that are data deficient. The following color zones are suggested.



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<b>Undetermined</b>	<b>Healthy</b>
	<b>Cautious</b>
	<b>Critical</b>

The following is a table that summarizes the recommended stock status zones and their associated management objectives.

Stock Status Zone	Stocks	Rationale	Management Objectives
Undetermined (Grey)	Firth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No current data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prioritize stock assessments to determine population status and trend</li> <li>Less than 5% removal rate</li> <li>Promote rebuilding of the stock through education and specific management measures</li> <li>Voluntary harvest management</li> <li>Only general legislative requirements and sport fishing limits apply</li> </ul>
	Babbage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No current data</li> </ul>	
	Fish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No current data</li> </ul>	
	Malcolm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No current data</li> </ul>	
	Vittrekwa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small population; more data required</li> </ul>	
Healthy (Green)	None		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5% removal rate</li> <li>Voluntary harvest management</li> <li>Only general legislative requirements and sport fishing limits apply</li> </ul>
Cautious (Yellow)	Rat River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low fish population numbers during last stock assessment</li> <li>Population may be increasing currently</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Less than 5% removal rate</li> <li>Promote rebuilding of the stock through education and specific management measures</li> <li>Voluntary harvest management</li> <li>Only general legislative requirements and sport fishing limits apply</li> <li>Prioritize stock assessments to determine population status and trend</li> </ul>
Critical (Red)	Big Fish River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Historic declines in fish stocks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No targeted harvest</li> <li>Harvest closure in regulations</li> <li>Promote rebuilding of the stock through education and specific management measures</li> <li>Prioritize stock assessments to determine population status and trends</li> </ul>



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## Discussion

Comment 1: We're only allowed 600, but otters will take a lot, whales will eat a lot, bears will eat a lot, habitat loss will kill some, climate change kills some. That's a lot of char to die in one season.

Response 1: We know the concerns with the other variables. These are all under management challenges. The number 600 takes into account natural mortality and is an estimate of how many char can be taken from the population safely without hurting it in the long term. Some variables we can control, others we can't. We are in a good situation now because we know what the impacts are of taking too many. We have a better system in place now and we know what we can take and what we can't. If it continues to work, in the future we might be able to take more.

Comment 2: It's important to get tag returns this year so that we can tell which stocks are being harvested in the ocean. We need to better understand which char are caught in the ocean fishery so we can better manage that fishery.

Q6: With the low number of young fish in last year's catch, is this the first time this has been seen or has it happened before?

A6: We've noticed it before but never this dramatic. There really was a lack of young fish at the fish holes last fall. We may have just missed them, or they weren't there yet, or they were somewhere else, or they just don't exist.

Comment 3: I caught a char in the Peel River last fall. I let it go. Was it going to the Vittrekwa?

Response 3: Yes, it was probably going up to the Vittrekwa if it was caught in the Peel River.

## 6. Next steps – Amy Thompson (GRRB)

Amy explained that we have discussion papers that summarize the plan and are written in more plain language than the full IFMP that was distributed back in May. Copies were given to each person present. Kris also explained there is an action table that summarizes the objectives table and highlights each group's responsibilities. Copies of this document were also handed out to each person. We are working under a tight deadline if we want to have this plan approved before COSEWIC makes its recommendations to the Minister on the status of northern form Dolly Varden. Ideally, the Dolly Varden IFMP should be completed in time for COSEWIC to use in their 2-month assessment report which will be available in September. We request comments back to us within 30 days or after the next RRC/ HTC monthly meeting.

## 7. Door prize draws – Amy Thompson (GRRB)

**First prize:** Camp Stove & Fuel (value: ~\$80)

Winner: Gina Vaneltsi

**Second prize:** Axe (value: ~\$40)

Winner: Abe Peterson

**Third prize:** Knife (value: ~\$20)



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Winner: Mary Firth

## 8. Closing remarks & prayer

Closing remarks were given by Robert Charlie. Closing prayer given by Mary Firth. Thanks were given to those that showed up and to the groups that have worked on the IFMP.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM.

DRAFT