

May 2007



What's new at the Gwich'in Renewable Resource Board?

A monthly update from the GRRB

Introduction

Welcome to our Newsletter for May 2007. We hope that everyone had the chance to enjoy one last shopping trip to Inuvik before the ice roads went out for another year.

The Gwich'in Renewable Resource Board (GRRB) was established under the guidance of the 1992 *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). The powers and responsibilities of the Board are detailed in Chapters 12 & 13, Vol.1 of the Agreement.

This month's newsletter will provide some short updates on Board Activities. Please contact us at the GRRB office in Inuvik, if there are any issues that you would like to see more information on, or if you have additional concerns or information that you wish to

share.

We are always happy to hear from the people living in the communities and those who know the land and resources very well.

Working together we can ensure that the wildlife and resources are managed in a sustainable manner so that future generations will be able to enjoy them.

Mahsi Cho

Bobbie Jo Greenland

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Dall Sheep, Grizzly Bears and Wolves Project By: Catherine Lambert

This spring is a busy time for our Dall Sheep, Grizzly Bear and Wolf Project. We successfully equipped five wolves with GPS collars at the end of April, and we are now monitoring a total of nine wolves divided between three wolf packs in the Richardson Mountains, in the Northwest corner of the Gwich'in Settlement Area (GSA).

The wolves were healthy, and the collars we put on will enable us to learn about the wolves' movements and see where they go, how

large their territory is, and which prey they seem to feed on the most. Some collars will also be deployed on grizzly bears later in May, and we hope to also learn about their habitat use, home ranges, and feeding habits.

A small crew will then go out in the study area for one month in June, to observe Dall sheep behavior, find carcasses, and document the sheep range. This field work is important to understand how the sheep protect themselves from predation, and what their

strategies for habitat use are. Traditional knowledge will also be documented later in the summer. Please enquire if you have any questions or if you would like to be involved in the project. You can contact me at: wildlife@grb.nt.ca or 867-777-6610.

“we are now monitoring a total of nine wolves divided between three wolf packs in the Richardson Mountains.”



Photo: C. Lambert 2007

The Gwich'in word for wolf is Zhoh. Long ago Medicine Men talked to Zhoh and Zhoh spoke like people. When a person “slept to a Zhoh”, the Zhoh became his or her partner and protector. In their dreams, they saw glimpses of the Zhoh. This meant the Zhoh was protecting that person. The person could also ask Zhoh for help. Some people said this ability “ran” in a family, when grandparents, parents and children all dreamed of the same animal.

(Gwich'in Words About The Land, Chapter 9, Page 111)

Dall Sheep Management Plan By: Catherine Lambert

A draft of the Dall Sheep Management Plan for the Northern Richardson Mountains has been distributed to your Renewable Resource Council for comments. Public consultations will be held during the summer to inform residents of the proposed plan, collect any comment, and make changes to the plan if necessary. If the

planning process stays on schedule, we should have a plan ready for Fall 2007. Once again, any input or comment is welcome at any time of the process. Your voice counts!

“Public consultations will be held during the summer to inform residents of the proposed plan, collect any comment, and make changes to the plan if necessary. .”

Beware of the Bears! By: Catherine Lambert

Both grizzly and black bears have started to wake up from their long hibernation. Enjoy the warmer weather as much as you can, but beware of bear encounters. It is always safer to venture on the land with at least one other person, to carry bear spray, and to make noise so you don't surprise

the bears. In most occasions, they are much more afraid of us than we are from them, and they will run away as soon as they hear you coming. If you go out camping, remember to store your food in a bear-proof container, and to keep your food or any attractant at least 100 m from your sleeping quar-

ters. In town, make sure you don't leave any household garbage, dog food, fish scraps, bones and animal hides outside. For bears' sake, remember: a fed bear is a dead bear.

Enjoy the month of May!



Photo: C. Lambert 2007

“Words from our elders”. This months Story is by the Late Elder Johnny Kay

(Copy taken from the COPE Files Archives, 1970’s)

Johnny Kaye and a few other men were hired to go up the river. They left McPherson with three dog teams during the spring. Two men broke trail and the traveling was difficult during the warm days. The toboggans were loaded with food and dog food. Johnny tells us the story as follows:

We camped here and there until we arrived at Trail Creek. We put up a tent beside the police cabin, as the cabin was full of grub we had left there. Next day, we moved on, and a few miles up from Trail Creek, we met the police. They were on their way from Dawson. This is where we turned back - our job was to meet these men. So, we returned to Trail Creek and set up our tent once again. The policemen also set up a tent. The following day we proceeded back to McPherson. At McPherson, we picked up our pay from the police. A couple of days later, Peter Alexie and me left McPherson and went up through Stoney Creek. After camping a number of days, we arrived at a

big camp. We arrived just in time for a feast. The people living there had been killing some moose. In the days that followed, more moose were killed and caribou also was plentiful. I stayed there for two weeks and then went home by another trail. I came out through the Rat River. I had a big load of meat and dropped it off at home where my wife and children were living. I stayed for a while and then came to Fort McPherson again. I told some of the young men in town that I was going to the mountains. They decided to go along with me, so shortly afterwards, we left for the hills again. On the way, we passed some people moving back towards town. A few people were still living at the same camp. These people all went with us and we went on further into the mountains. There were more moose there. I shot five moose. The rest of the men shot some, too, and we



Dzan (Muskrat)

all had loaded toboggans. Everyone came back down from the mountains. It was time for trapping muskrats. I went back to my home and stayed to trap muskrats. We stayed there until

after break-up.

After break-up, we came to McPherson by boat and sold our muskrats at the Bay. We stayed in town and saw all our friends. We played football. In those days, football game was about the only game played in McPherson and it was popular. Dances were held and everyone had a wonderful time.

“In the days that followed, more moose were killed and caribou also was plentiful.”

“Words from our elders”. Another Story by the Late Elder Johnny Kay

(Copy taken from the COPE Files Archives, 1970’s)

In this story, I will tell about how I spent my winter and spring out in the bush.

A large group of people and me left Fort McPherson and moved over to the mountains. Some families moved up the river and others headed through different rivers and creeks through the mountains. After many days of

traveling, we came upon a big herd of caribou. We set up camp and helped ourselves to the caribou. The whole camp was busy making dry meat. Another bunch of people came behind us and left moving further on over the mountains. As usual, the people were very happy and thankful for the large amount of meat we had. Soon people from Old Crow

moved into camp. Everyone enjoyed seeing friends and making new friends. People visited and gave each other gifts. My older brother was a chief at the time and he came along with the bunch from Old Crow. He gave a feast and after the feast, games were played. Everyone had a nice time. After staying a few days, my brother and his people moved on.

continued...(Copy taken from COPE Files Archives 1970's)

He was also going to put up a feast for the other group of McPherson people that moved past our camp. After he did this, he came back to our camp and I went along with him back to Old Crow. In Old Crow, I bought a load of grub. With the load, I went back to my camp. A few days after going home, someone shot a moose and since I had a lot of white man's food, the moose was given to me. We prepared the moose meat, cooked and make several dishes of delicious soups, stews, fried meats, and roasts; we served these with bannock, sweet biscuits, hard tack biscuits, and fruits. The feast was enjoyed by everyone.

I stayed on for a few more weeks and then decided to move back towards the Peel River. Most of the people were moving further on and only a few families came along with me. My family and I went down to the delta to our trapping area and the other families went on to their own trap lines. We were trapping a lot of muskrats. The meat tasted good, too, after living on caribou and moose meat all winter. We had plenty of dry



Dinjik (moose)

meat to eat, too, and were not short of any food. This is how most families lived years ago. Everyone had what we needed. This is the end of this story.

“someone shot a moose and since I had a lot of white man's food, the moose was given to me. .”

Spring Hunting By: Bobbie Jo Greenland

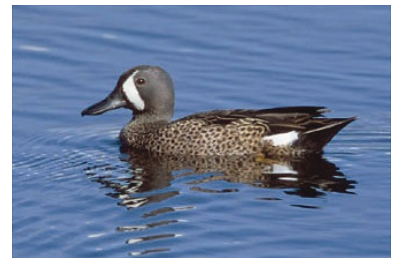
It is coming to that time of year again when young men and sometimes the whole family are going out on the land for spring hunt. There are some families who move out on the land for break-up. Some people are trapping muskrats and others are waiting to hunt geese and ducks.

According to our elders here are some important things for all hunters to remember;

1. Have a hunting partner
2. Travel with caution on the ice
3. Don't take chances on bad ice
4. Don't kill more than you need
5. Share your kill with elders and other people in the community who may not have anyone to hunt for them
6. Respect all animals and birds

7. People long ago use to keep the down and make parkas and blankets from it
8. Don't leave your kill too long as it will spoil fast. You need to work with it right away
9. Don't hunt when under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.
10. Take your time and enjoy the beautiful land

Good Luck to all Hunters and
Have a Safe and Happy Spring!



Dats'an (All Ducks)



Kheh (Canada Goose)

Take Care of your Garbage! By: Bobbie Jo Greenland

May is the month when all winter roads officially close for the year. We all enjoy the use of these roads over the winter months and this year everyone was talking about how good conditions the roads were in.

Another thing I heard people talking about is the amount of garbage some people discard on the ice road. It is so unnecessary for people to do this and I just wanted to encourage people to discard your garbage in town and not on the land or ice roads. It isn't hard to keep your garbage in your car or truck until you get to town.

It's common to hear from people that they were driving along and out of the truck window ahead of

them comes flying pop cans, beer cans and empty cigarette packs. One person told me they even seen an empty takeout pizza box being tossed out! Like how careless and plain lazy is that?

We need to remember that these ice roads are also our water source. What ever we throw onto them will end up in our water. We need to respect our land and waters and take care of it. If we pollute our lands and waters, then we are also polluting ourselves and the living things that live in the water.

So it's really all about common sense and reminding each other that we should take care of our garbage in the right way.

As First Nations People we always talk about respecting the land and waters like our ancestors have always done. We talk about how important our land and wildlife is to our culture and way of life.

This is all very true, so think about that the next time you decide to throw some pop cans or any form of garbage onto the street, ice roads or anywhere on the land. We need to keep our lands clean.

Remember this the next time you are on the River, either by boat in the summer or truck in the winter. Think about the kind of message or example we are setting for the younger generation. Is this how the generations before us cared for the land and water? Definitely not!



Antifreeze Container
Photo: Bridgitte Larocque GCI



Some Garbage on the river
Photo: Bridgitte Larocque GCI

Some links to websites relating to Arctic Indigenous Issues

Gwich'in Council International (GCI)

www.gwichin.org

Indigenous Peoples Secretariat (IPS)

www.arcticpeoples.org

Arctic Council (AC)

www.arctic-council.org

Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC Canada)

www.inuitcircumpolar.com



Some Fish Facts By: Nathan Millar Fisheries Biologist

Gwich'in name: shruh
Common name: coney
English name: inconnu
Scientific name: *Stenodus leucichthys*

Coney are related to whitefish. They even look somewhat similar but are generally bigger than whitefish. Coney can be as long as 120 cm and can weigh up to 40 pounds (18 kg). Coney can live to be 35 years old!

Coney are found in Eurasia (Siberia) and northwest North America. Closer to home, they are found throughout the Mackenzie River, the delta, and its tributaries (the Peel, the Arctic Red, and others). There are two kinds of coney in the GSA.

The first kind migrates to and from the ocean (these are called "anadromous") and the second kind stays in freshwater, never going to the ocean (these coney are called "riverine"). Anadromous coney migrate up the rivers from the ocean to spawn in the early fall (late September) and return downstream in October. Some coney can travel a long ways to

spawn. For instance, one coney was tagged in British Columbia's Liard River and was recaptured in the Beaufort Sea. This coney had migrated upstream over 1800 km!

It takes coney a long time to reach maturity (before they can reproduce): it takes males seven years and it can take females 11 years. Once mature, coney spawn every two to four years. Adult coney are voracious predators, feeding primarily on other fish like stickleback (a small prickly looking fish), whitefish, and ciscoes (herring).

Coney can be caught throughout the summer and fall, but the main catch occur when the coney are migrating, especially when they migrate downstream in the fall. Coney is used for food (dry fish) and to feed dogs. Long ago when people were sick they asked for Shruh cooked from a fire. This helped them to regain their appetite.



Since 2000, there has been a management plan for coney in place. The agreement was signed by the Gwich'in Renewable Resource Board, the Sahtu Renewable Resource

Board, the Inuvialuit Fisheries Joint Management Committee, and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. The management plan commits to incorporating Traditional Ecological Knowledge.

If you have any concerns about coney, address them to your RRC or to the GRRB!

"Coney can be as long as 120 cm and can weigh up to 40 pounds (18 kg). Coney can live to be 35 years old!"



Youth Work Experience Program at the GRRB

The GRRB is now taking applications from students who are interested in the Youth Work Experience Program that runs annually over the summer months. Work placements are short term and youth are paid \$50 per day. The placements can be anywhere from

a few days to a couple weeks. For more information on the Youth Work Experience Program or to request an application form please contact Bobbie Jo Greenland. You can find her contact information at the end of this newsletter.



**A monthly update from
the GRRB**

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*Alex Moses Greenland Building
105 Veteran Way
GRRB can be found on the 2nd floor*

GRRB Mission

To conserve and manage renewable resources within the Gwich'in Settlement Area (GSA) in a sustainable manner to meet the needs of the public today and in the future.

GRRB Vision

We believe that people in the GSA are responsible for using, protecting and conserving their resources, as well as, active partners with the GRRB in managing their resources.

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