



GWICH'IN RENEWABLE RESOURCES BOARD

news

Spring 2017



Photo credit: S. Lord, GRRB

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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 Canada (EC), 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 will do this in a respectful, transparent and inclusive manner, using the best available scientific and traditional 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.



Photo credit: N. Westover, GRRB

Amy Amos executive director

As the Executive Director for the GRRB, 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.

A Nihtat Gwich'in participant, I was born in Inuvik and grew up in Halifax, Nova Scotia with my father, Wallace Thompson. My mother is Susie Thompson (Linklater/Kaye) from the Kaye & Stewart family.

2017 marks my 11th year with the GRRB! I was hired as a biologist and was 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.

Personnel management I am responsible for managing the staff of the GRRB. This is something that

I take very seriously, as I believe a positive work environment and good teamwork are the foundations of a successful workplace. We have a very talented and dedicated staff support team. You will see the evidence of their hard work in their updates throughout this newsletter.

In November, we said farewell to Kris Maier, our Fisheries Biologist from March 2010 to November 2016. The recruitment process to fill this position was held between October 2016 and January 2017. The hiring committee included Ron Allen, Sarah Jerome and myself. Jozef Carnogursky also helped in the preliminary stages. In January 2017, we welcomed our new Fisheries & Forestry Biologist, Sarah Lord.

We are also preparing to say farewell to another long-term employee. Kristen Callaghan, the GRRB's Wildlife Biologist since February 2008, will be leaving us this summer. A recruitment process to replace Kristen is underway, with an expected hire date of June 2017. The Board acknowledged Kristen's hard work at their most recent face-to-face meeting in February.

Kaytlin Cooper's term as our Species at Risk Biologist has been extended until August 30, 2017. We continue to seek permanent job security for this position. Our goal is to secure permanent funding through the new Gwich'in Implementation Plan that will set long term funding amounts.

Once again, we have applied for funding from Service Canada for a Summer Student and Technician Trainee for summer employment.

Financial management I am responsible for ensuring that the Board's finances are managed appropriately. Finances continue to be managed successfully and

within budgets. We meet all our financial reporting deadlines and have managed to secure outside funds to help us deliver additional projects and programs that support the Board's mandate.

The Finance Committee meets quarterly. They review all of the GRRB's finances in detail, then provide a summary and any recommendations to the full Board on a following call. At the last meeting (February 2017), the Board received an updated financial report for April through December 2016, including a variance report of the core funding (general operating) and a summary of all projects for which the GRRB gets funding.

The budget and work plan for 2017-18 were presented and approved at the February 2017 Board meeting. I also prepared two supplemental funding proposals that we are hoping get approved. One is to hold meetings with the communities to define 'commercial use'. The second is to hire a facilitator to help us prepare for a workshop this fall.

Board administration I am responsible for the coordination of all Board meetings and for following up on Board actions and motions. Since our last newsletter, the Board held a face-to-face Board meeting on February 21-23, 2017 in Inuvik. This newsletter highlights some of the outcomes from that meeting. There were GRRB teleconference calls on November 1, 2016 and on March 29, 2017. The next call is planned for June 5, 2017.

We are planning to convert the fall Board meeting into a two-day workshop. Day One would be focused on research priorities and Day 2 on the GRRB's Strategic

...continued on next page

Plan. This workshop will be held in Aklavik from Sept 20-21, 2017.

Liaison activities With GRRB staff, I attended the Regional RRC meeting in Aklavik from January 31 to February 2, 2017. There were two resolutions relating to the GRRB: (1) to begin the process to define "Commercial Use" and (2) to work with the GTC to help them with regional coordination activities. I also met with GTC Legal Counsel and their new Director of Lands & Resources to discuss GRRB projects and how we can work together.

Board member Jozef Carnogursky and I met with DFO and Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) staff while in Yellowknife for Conference of Management Authorities (CMA) meetings in January.

I was back in Yellowknife in March with Sarah Jerome and Ron Allen for Administrative Law training. The purpose was to ensure that NWT Board Forum members and staff have the knowledge and tools required to make effective and independent decisions that meet the requirements under administrative law, as relates to co-management boards in the NWT.

I remain involved with the following committees:

- *Wildlife Act* Working Group
- Conference of Management Authorities
- Species At Risk Stewardship Committee
- Arctic Borderlands Ecological Knowledge Society (ABEKS)
- Advisory Committee for the Cooperation for Wildlife Management (ACCWM)
- Integrated Fisheries Management Plan (IFMP)

Steering Committee

- NWT Board Forum
- GTC Mentorship Program

Communication We all have a role to play in helping to work together better. I attend meetings to help deliver the Board's messages, and we communicate these messages through other venues, such as: this newsletter, our annual Conservation Calendar, our website and our Facebook page.

I plan to do another tour of the schools in the GSA to promote our summer positions and talk about the importance of post-secondary education and careers in this field.

I hope that you enjoy our newsletter. It is one mechanism we use to help communicate the work we are doing. If you have questions or comments about what we do at the GRRB, call me any time.

Hai cho (thank you).



**Eugene Pascal
board chairperson**

I would like to extend a warm welcome to our new Board member, Margaret Begg.

As GRRB Chairperson, I continue to participate in meetings and calls on a variety of subjects. I attended the Porcupine Caribou Management Board (PCMB) annual harvest meeting in Inuvik in February. Of course, I chaired the GRRB face-to-face Board meeting.

I also chaired the Rat River Working Group meeting on March 7 in Inuvik.



I attended the West Side Working Group meeting as an observer on March 9 in Aklavik. Most recently, I chaired the March 29 GRRB Teleconference meeting.

I remain active on the following Committees and Working Groups:

- *Wildlife Act* Working Group
- Conference of Management Authorities (CMA)
- Advisory Committee for the Cooperation for Wildlife Management (ACCWM)
- Rat River Working Group (Chair)
- West Side Working Group (Observer)
- Aboriginal and Northern Development Canada (AANDC)

I continue to work with Amy to give advice to the Board and staff when needed. Thank you Amy and staff for your work to support the Board and for supporting me in my role as Chairperson.

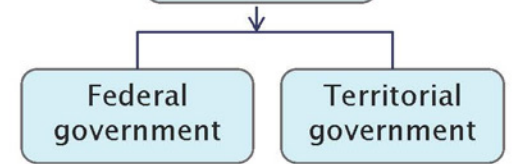
GRRB Board appointments

Eugene Pascal
Chairperson (GRRB)



Order in Council
appointments

Nominating
Agency



Margaret Begg
Member (GTC)



TBD
Member (GTC)



TBA
Member (GTC)



Burt Hunt
Member (DFO)



Doug Doan
Member (EC/CWS)



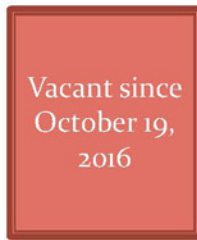
Jozef Carnogursky
Member (GNWT)



TBD
Alternate (GTC)



TBD
Alternate (GTC)



Sarah Jerome
Alternate (GTC)



Ron Allen
Alternate (DFO)



TBA
Alternate (EC/CWS)



Tracy Davison
Alternate (GNWT)



board member updates

As always, our Board members have been active! Since our last newsletter, work has been done on reviewing the GRRB Operating Procedures Manual, starting with the Board section.

Here is a summary of some of the meetings that they have attended, committees they have been involved in, and training courses they have undertaken:

Committees/Working Groups:

- Safety Policy Development Committee
- Signing Authority Committee
- Wildlife Studies Fund Committee
- Species at Risk Committee

- Advisory Committee for Cooperation on Wildlife Management
- NWT Board Forum
- IFMP Steering Committee
- Policy Committee (GRRB Policy Manual)
- Operating Procedures Review

Meetings/Training:

- January 8-12 – Species at Risk Committee, Yellowknife
- January 24-26 – Conference of Management Authorities, Yellowknife
- February 14-15 – Porcupine Caribou Management Group Annual Harvest Meeting, Inuvik
- February 16 – GRRB Finance Committee teleconference
- February 21-23 – GRRB Winter Board Meeting, Inuvik

**Interested in joining the GRRB Board of Directors?
Contact the Gwich'in Tribal Council @ 867-777-7900**

- March 7 – Rat River Working Group, Inuvik
- March 9 – West Side Working Group, Aklavik
- March 22-23 – Administrative Law Training, Yellowknife
- March 29 – GRRB Board teleconference

Staffing Exercises:

- December – Fisheries & Forestry Biologist Competition Application Review and Interviews
- March - Wildlife Biologist Competition (ongoing)



Tracy Davison being sworn in as GNWT alternate Board member



Photo credits this page: J. Boxwell, GRRB

February Board Meeting

The GRRB held its winter face-to-face meeting in Inuvik from February 21-23, 2017. Jozef Carnogursky and Tracy Davison were sworn in as Board members. Jozef previously served the Board as an alternate member. He has now been appointed as the full member nominated by the GNWT. Tracy is now serving as the GNWT alternate member.

Day One of the meeting agenda included Board, staff and agency updates (provided throughout this newsletter). The Rat River Working Group (RRWG) provided a status update on char, including

draft recommendations for the 2017 harvest (see Page 9). The Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) and Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) presented an explanation of the guiding principles for new federal *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) policies and a detailed breakdown of the SARA cycle, policy linkages and the SARA policy suite. Kaytlin Cooper also presented on the proposed federal SARA listing of the barren ground caribou as Threatened, and gave a brief report on the NWT SARA Assessment Schedule and Species At Risk Committee checklist. The day closed with updates and discussion around the caribou herds.

Day Two of the meeting was largely centered around presentations for Wildlife Studies Fund proposals (see Pages 7 and 8). The day wrapped up with an open discussion with the Renewable Resources Councils (RRCs) and the public.

The third and final day of the winter Board meeting had important updates from the Finance Committee (including approval of the 2017-18 budget), safety updates, and an Operating Procedures review that was led by the Policy sub-committee.

If you want a copy of the meeting binder, please contact our office.



Jozef Carnogursky being sworn in as GNWT Board member. Photo credit: J. Boxwell, GRRB

Wildlife Studies Fund Applications 2017/18

Day Two of the February Board meeting was largely devoted to Wildlife Studies Fund (WSF) presentations. Researchers who had previously received WSF support reported on their past research. Those requesting support for the 2017-2018 fiscal year previously submitted written applications to the Board. They gave presentations on their proposals. The Board supported the following project proposals:

Northern Richardson Mountains Dall's Sheep Survey **Kristen Callaghan (GRRB)**

The Northern Richardson sheep population has been surveyed since the 1980s. The number of sheep has declined since 1997 with the last survey in 2014 counting 496 sheep. This is the lowest number of sheep observed since monitoring started.

The objectives of this survey are to monitor population size and structure. The Northern Richardson Mountains will be surveyed by helicopter in mid-June 2017. Contours and drainages will be flown in survey blocks. Two trained biologists and one community assistant will spot and classify the sheep (ewes, lambs, nursery sheep, yearlings, ½ curl, ¾ curl, and full curl rams) and note numbers of each observed and locations.

Porcupine Caribou Rut Composition Count **Mike Suitor**

(Government of Yukon, Department of Environment)

The Porcupine Caribou Technical Committee has identified that a rut composition survey should occur every few years to document the bull ratio. Composition surveys

provide important information about the population structure of caribou herds. The rut period is used to survey the relative number of bulls in a herd, as it is the only time in the year when most bulls are expected to mix with cows, reducing the probability of many small bands of bulls spread out across the range which occurs through most of the year. The bull ratio is a key input to the Porcupine caribou population model. Collecting these data will help ensure realistic population projections are possible. Assessing bull ratios will also help inform whether any effects of a bull-dominated harvest under the Green Zone harvest management regime and recommendations from the Porcupine Caribou Management Board are having a negative impact on the herd.

The bull ratio was first estimated 20 years ago at 60 bulls per 100 cows. In 2010, the bull ratio was estimated at 57 bulls per 100 cows. A rut count was attempted in 2012, but the herd moved quickly east during the rut and many bulls were left at the rear of the herd (biasing results). The recent deployment of satellite GPS collars on a number of bulls, in addition to those already on cows, will allow for a sufficient sample to eliminate this bias and ensure an accurate sex ratio is measured for the herd. Using the bull and cow collars already deployed on the herd, we will classify a sample of caribou around each collar, using a helicopter to arrive at our estimate.



Community-Based Ecological Monitoring in the Range of the Porcupine Caribou Herd **Heather Ashthorn** **(Arctic Borderlands Ecological Knowledge Co-op)**

This funding will contribute to Gwich'in wage costs in the GSA. Since 1996, the Borderlands Co-op has conducted a community-based monitoring program in Porcupine Caribou Herd user communities. Interviews with local experts are conducted each year by community researchers. Observations around caribou, fish, berries, unusual animal sightings, weather conditions, and other aspects of the environment are recorded. These observations are presented and discussed at annual gatherings and at community meetings.

Benefits of the program include:

- Training and experience for community researchers.
- Communication and education on issues such as caribou, environment, climate change, and contaminants.
- Sharing of knowledge and building understanding among communities and between communities, science-based researchers, and managers.
- Systematic recording of annual on-the-land observations and provisions of results in usable formats.
- Long-term data management support for community data.

Much of the Co-op's budget is spent in the communities. Community researchers are paid through a contract with the Borderlands Co-op, with hiring process assistance from the RRCs. A training session is held every year. Payments are also made to local experts who are interviewed.

Monitoring Changes in Muskrat Populations in the Mackenzie Delta

**Jeremy Brammer
(McGill University)**

In recent years, residents of the GSA have expressed concerns that muskrat populations have declined in the Mackenzie Delta Region. Muskrats have been an important source of food and income in this area, and changes in their numbers are concerning. In this study, we will survey muskrat density across the Mackenzie Delta, and compare it to reports from past decades.

To survey muskrat density, we will fly aerial photography surveys of muskrat pushups. As snow melts in the spring, muskrat pushups become visible enough to be counted from an aircraft. Flying and taking photos allows us to count the muskrat pushups in hundreds of lakes in the Mackenzie Delta, measuring pushup density.

Historical reports from the 1950s, 60s, and 70s counted muskrat pushups in ~25 lakes of the Delta. We will survey these lakes in 2017 and compare their pushup density today to previous reports. We would like to repeat this survey annually to determine areas where muskrats are consistently dense, areas where they are consistently sparse, and areas where their densities are highly variable.

Tracking Change Fishing Livelihoods Project

Application for Youth Funding
Tracey Proverbs and Dr. Trevor Lantz (University of Victoria School of Environmental Studies)

Our research explores the current overlap between environmental disturbances and cultural resources in the GSA. We plan to interview Gwich'in traditional knowledge

holders about changes in rivers, fish, fishing practices, and fishing knowledge. To do this, we will travel to summer fish camps. Youth Work Experience Funding (YWEF) will allow us to hire and train youth to assist with this work.

Community-based Long-term Monitoring of the Peel River near Fort McPherson

Application for Youth Funding
**Emma Hodgson
(Simon Fraser University)**

Whitefish make up a substantial portion of fish harvest near Fort McPherson and other areas of the GSA, so it is important to understand how this species responds to ongoing observed changes. We will work with fish harvesters in Fort McPherson to create a community-based data collection program, training harvesters to measure the fish for length and weight and extract the ear bone (that we can use to determine the age and distribution of the fish). Youth participants will take part in camp activities, including fishing, fish data collection and data recording.

GRRB Youth Work Experience & Environmental Education Fund

Application for Youth Funding
Janet Boxwell (GRRB)

GRRB staff have opportunities to bring youth with them into the field, short-term work experience opportunities in wildlife, fisheries, forestry, and education.

GRRB staff will use approved YWEF monies to hire students for short-term work experience opportunities on a project-by-project basis. Participants gain program leadership experience in environmental education activities such as:

- Nature Day with Grade Three students
- GRRB Education Unit
- Summer camp environmental education activities
- Youth and Community Outreach including school visits, career fairs, Science Rendezvous presentations.



Photo credit: J. Boxwell, GRRB

Rat River Working Group (RRWG) Update

Colin Gallagher, DFO and Sarah Lord, GRRB

Role of the RRWG The RRWG meets once per year in late winter to review scientific information and Traditional Knowledge. Based on these reviews, they recommend voluntary sustainable harvest levels of the Rat River char stock. They consult with communities for local feedback and communicate harvest levels to fishermen. They also review and provide feedback on proposals for Rat River research projects.

Data Collection Most of the RRWG's data comes from the Harvest Monitoring Program led by John & Tyler Carmichael, Billy Wilson and Selwyn Kay. The Program provides information on:

- Population estimate
- Char biology
- Age, length, sex
- Muscle tissue
- Gonad weight
- Water conditions

In addition to information gathered from the Harvest Monitoring Program, each fall DFO conducts

a Science Population Assessment in the form of a fall fish seine. Information shared with the RRWG includes:

- Population estimate
- Char biology
- Length
- Sex
- Maturity
- Injury rates
- Tagging

Estimating fish populations can be challenging. Unlike most other Dolly Varden stocks, not all Dolly Varden from the Rat River stock migrate out to sea every year. This means not all of the fish tagged in the fall fish seine are available for the Char Monitors to catch during the Harvest Monitoring Program. Fishing conditions change day-to-

day and year-to-year, and high water levels can make it more difficult to set nets in the best spots to catch fish.

The total 2016 harvest was 556-700 fish (3.5-4.4% of the 2015 population estimate). This means that the harvest was well within the 5% safe level recommended by the Integrated Fisheries Management Plan (IFMP) for Dolly Varden.

Recommendations Harvest levels from 2009-2016 have been less than 6% annually. At its February 2017 meeting, the Board recommended that the harvest continue at 5% or less of the population, as directed by the IFMP. The population appears to be stable: abundance is increasing, and both the Harvest Monitoring Program and the fall seining estimate are trending upwards. Fish health, sex ratios, and body size are good; biological indicators show no signs of decline.

In June, the the RRWG will tour the GSA to communicate the decision on harvest levels to the fishers. Dates for the June tour are proposed as June 13, 2017 in Aklavik and June 14, 2017 in Fort McPherson. Look for upcoming posters and communications to confirm dates.



Photo credit: GRRB



Photo credit: GRRB



2017 Spring Snow Goose Hunt in N.W.T.

Where & When

Banks Island, Victoria Island and Queen Elizabeth Islands: **May 1st - June 30th**

NWT mainland: **May 1st - May 28th**

Who is affected

Does not affect aboriginal hunters

Spring Hunt Details

Permit required: If you purchased a Migratory Game Bird Hunting Permit in Fall 2016, it is valid for the 2017 spring Snow Goose hunt

Permits can be purchased at Canada Post outlets or online at:

<http://ec.gc.ca/rcom-mbhr/default.asp?lang=En&n=182D8E96-1>

Daily bag limit is 50 Snow Geese

No possession limit

A Migratory Bird Sanctuary Permit is required for non-Beneficiary hunting in Migratory Bird Sanctuaries

For more info, contact: Eric Reed

Wildlife Biologist
Environment Canada
(867) 669-4769

Eric.Reed@Canada.ca



Canada



Photo credits this page: K. Callaghan, GRRB



Photo credit: N. Westover, GRRB

Kristen Callaghan wildlife biologist since February 2008

Upcoming Staffing Change

New changes are afoot in the Wildlife Biologist office at the GRRB. I will be handing over the reins, so to speak, to a new biologist this summer and moving on to another adventure. In the meantime, I will be working hard on my files until my departure from the GRRB.

Management Planning

Sheep Draft Management Plan Review RRCs are in review of the draft plan and of comments submitted by all Parties to date (Yukon government/Vuntut Gwich'in, Wildlife Management Advisory Council (WMAC) North Slope). GRRB Board member review of the same will follow the RRC review. This review will better facilitate a comprehensive response from the GRRB and RRCs when re-engaging with other Parties to the plan later this year. Given the recent

population decline and ongoing management actions in the GSA (e.g. voluntary closure of beneficiary harvest), it is important that management actions are approved and implemented by all parties across this population's range.

New! Moose Harvest Management - Harvest Reporting and Zone of Harvest

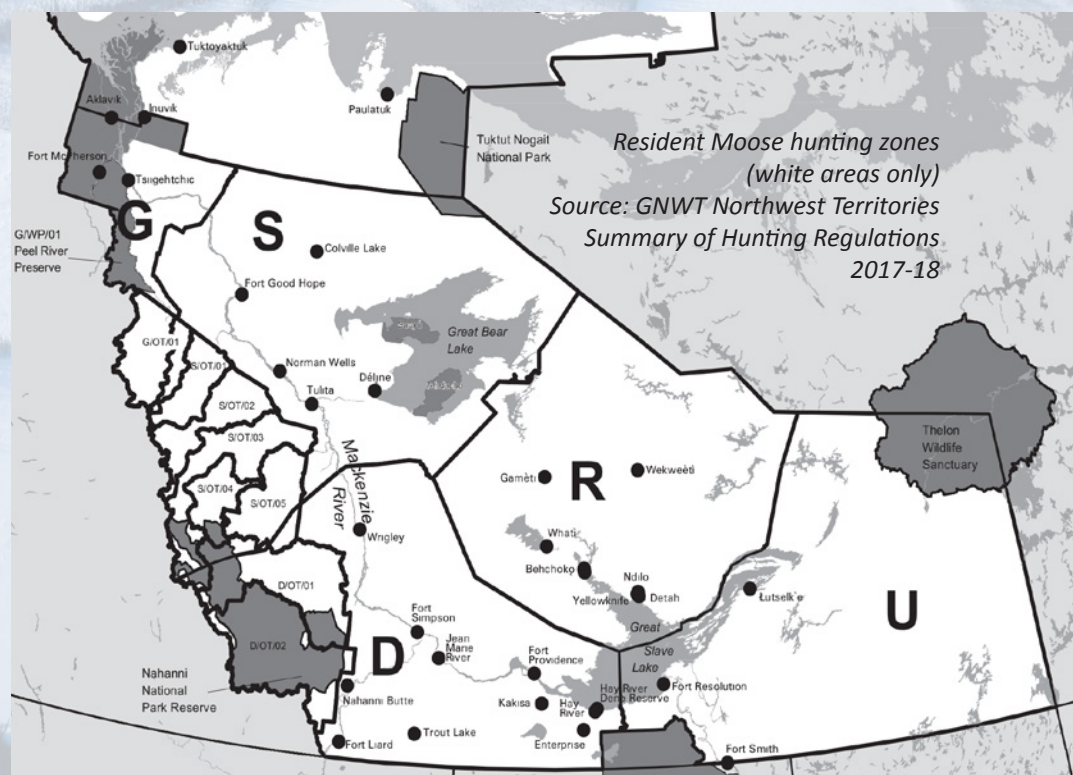
The approved Moose Management Plan (December 2000) identifies a need to understand the effect of harvest on the moose population in the GSA. The GRRB's Gwich'in Harvest Study and ENR mail-out resident surveys are based on voluntary participation. The plan identifies a concern about the lack of mandatory reporting of harvested moose for the majority of hunters (aboriginal and residents). Recent WMAC NWT, GRRB and ENR discussions in 2016 have focused on this issue specifically for resident hunters, while acknowledging the need to improve aboriginal harvest reporting.

This spring and summer, the GRRB will engage resident hunters about

a possible change from voluntary to mandatory resident reporting and about resident moose hunting zones in the GSA. We will speak with RRCs and advertise in communities to request resident hunter and public input. Look to our website, facebook page, and for community posters for this new initiative. Feedback is expected to be ready for GRRB review in the fall of 2017.

Cape Bathurst, Bluenose West and Bluenose East Caribou Herds Management

The three action plans for these herds have been approved and were submitted to the Minister by the Advisory Committee for Cooperation of Wildlife Management (ACCWM) on March 31, 2017. They will have their next annual meeting November 2017 in Yellowknife. The ACCWM Working Group will now focus on implementation of prioritized tasks in these plans. The Action Plans provide details on the types of actions that are recommended based on a herd's status, as well as who is responsible for the actions, and when they should be done.



Resident Moose hunting zones
(white areas only)
Source: GNWT Northwest Territories
Summary of Hunting Regulations
2017-18

Research

Dall's Sheep Aerial Survey A survey of the sheep population in the Northern Richardson Mountains will be carried out in June 2017. This sheep population underwent a significant decline (~30% between 2010 and 2014) to the smallest numbers counted for this population since 1984. ENR and the Yukon Territory Government are contributing funds along with GRRB funds and will lead this survey with GRRB wildlife biologist and community observer involvement.

Collaboration - NASA's Arctic - Boreal Vulnerability Experiment (ABOVE) Dall's Sheep Project The GRRB has shared Dall's sheep collaring, survey and capture data as part of a large-scale research project examining the impacts of environmental change on Dall's sheep. Researchers from the ABOVE group combined GRRB data with

data from other collaborators to form a database of >4,300 surveys from 1936-present. Read about projects at the website <http://dallsheep.weebly.com>.

A sneak peek at one project's results: Postdoc Madelon van de Kerk examined how spring snow conditions affect lamb:ewe ratios, finding that late snow had a strong negative effect and that the effect of snow was quite strong at high latitudes and decreased considerably in strength at lower latitudes. This ABoVE project and others may lead to new ideas for research that can benefit the GRRB and RRCs in management of our local Dall's sheep population.

Moose Survey An aerial survey of selected areas of the ISR and GSA was conducted by GRRB and ENR from March 14-21. A preliminary field report has been shared with RRCs and HTC's while analysis is completed to estimate moose density and population size in the survey areas and broad survey region. This analysis, along with numbers of moose and other wildlife observed, will be presented to the RRCs and HTC's later this year, along with reporting to the GRRB and WMAC NWT. Thanks to dedicated observers Julie-Ann Andre (GRRC), Christine Menno (ENR), Abe Peterson (TRRC), Marvin Snowshoe (TRRC), Peter Archie (AHTC), Davie Edwards (ERRC), William Day (IHTC) and James Firth (NRRC) who joined me and Tracy Davison in the survey flights. Thanks also to pilot Peter Palme and ENR GIS specialist Selena Humphries.

Liaison I continue to be in contact with GRRB partners and RRCs about wildlife research and management issues, as well as with other affiliated organizations and individuals. In

addition to those already described, some of the recent activities and communications I've had since our last newsletter are:

Regional RRC Meeting I attended this meeting January 31-February 2 in Aklavik, presenting information about the proposed sheep survey and sheep management plan review request of the RRCs.

Sheep Management I attended the GGRC and TRRC meetings regarding the proposed sheep survey and to discuss RRC involvement in continued Sheep Management Plan review.

Moose Survey Workshops Tracy Davison (ENR) and I held meetings in GSA communities with participants invited by RRCs and HTC's. Workshop discussions and input were used to help map expected areas of high and low moose density as part of survey methods.

Technical Advice I continue to provide advice and information to the Board and Executive Director when required.

For example, I created and tested a new GRRB Review Request & RRC Response Form to facilitate RRC reviews of various documents when requested by the GRRB or GRRB staff, such as for RRC comments on GRRB policy or management actions, research project proposals, development proposals, government documents, etc.. The form was used for the first time this fall to request RRC comment on the 2008 Draft Sheep Management Plan. It facilitated a quick reply from the ERRC, sharing their motion of support.



Photo credit: K. Callaghan, GRRB



Photo credit: Blackbird Photography

Sarah Lord fisheries & forestry biologist January 2017

I started as the GRRB Fisheries & Forestry Biologist on January 30. Before moving to Inuvik in January, I spent three years at the University of Waterloo as field research program coordinator and lab manager for Dr. Heidi Swanson. Each year, I spent four to five months leading a field team at the Gahcho Kue diamond mine (300km northeast of Yellowknife), studying the movement patterns and habitat preferences of Arctic Grayling using multiple techniques: acoustic telemetry, habitat mapping, and combined visual and electrofisher surveys.

When not in the field, I supervised a team of undergraduate students as we prepared fish, invertebrate, sediment, and water samples for total mercury determinations and other chemical analyses. I was also the laboratory and field safety officer in our lab, and managed the Animal Care permitting process for our field projects. Through Heidi, I had the opportunity to meet and work with many Arctic researchers, so I am lucky to have a head start in getting to know some of the people I am now working with.

My Ph.D. program is supervised by David Schindler through the University of Alberta, where I am investigating geographic and biological patterns of contaminants in Common Loons, and the fishes they eat, over the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains. I have completed all of my field and laboratory work, finished my course work and passed my candidacy exam, so "all" that remains is to finish writing my thesis. I did my undergraduate degree at the University of British Columbia (UBC) in Vancouver, where I studied Ecology with a focus on terrestrial plants. In the summers, I worked for researchers in the Botany Department and the Forestry Department at UBC at field stations at Kluane Lake, Jasper National Park, and elsewhere.

The research programs I have participated in over the past decade have always involved collaboration between many stakeholders. Since I started with the GRRB, I have tried to prioritize building and maintaining relationships with our co-management partners, in addition to orienting myself to the organization and the Fisheries and Forestry files. I am very happy to be here in Inuvik, and I am looking forward to meeting with all of the RRCs and our other co-management partners, and working together over the coming years.

Since I started with the GRRB, I have completed Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission Supervisor Safety Training, attended an Administrative Law training workshop for co-management boards in the NWT, and completed Advanced Wilderness & Remote First Aid. I obtained a Transportation of Dangerous Goods certification for myself, so that one of our office staff is able to ship and receive chemicals and other

research materials with transport restrictions. I am arranging a four-day bear safety training course for GRRB staff through Parks Canada.

Management Planning

Fisheries Management I planned and coordinated the Rat River Working Group (RRWG) meeting in Inuvik on March 7 (see Page 9). I also attended the West Side Working Group (WSWG) meeting in Aklavik on March 9.

Research Contaminants Analysis

I requested and received raw data for mercury concentrations in a set of fishes from the GSA that Kris Maier had collected and sent in for analysis in 2016. Data analysis is in progress. I also went to the Rat River with DFO on March 8 to download temperature logger data and change the batteries in our Reconyx wildlife cameras and satellite cameras that are deployed to watch over critical Dolly Varden habitat.

Technical Advice & Liaison

I attended the Regional RRC meeting in Aklavik during my first week, and have since attended the Ehdiitat (Aklavik), Tetlit (Fort McPherson), and Gwichya Gwich'in (Tsiigehtchic) RRC meetings to introduce myself. I hope to meet the Nihtat RRC soon too!



Photo credit: Sarah Lord, GRRB

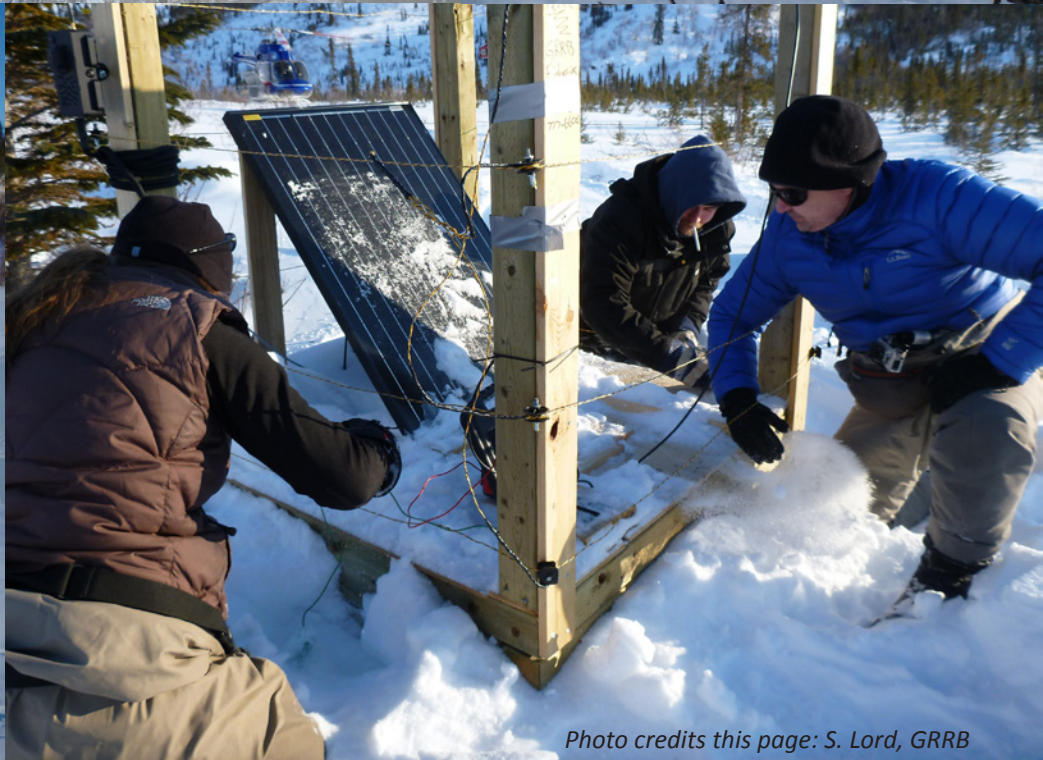


Photo credits this page: S. Lord, GRRB



Photo credit: N. Westover, GRRB

Janet Boxwell renewable resources manager since August 2010

Management Planning I provide advice on the review of management plans, land use plans, policies and reports. I work with our webmaster to maintain a Public Registry so the public has online access to the activities of the GRRB.

Research and Monitoring
Gwich'in Harvest Monitoring Program Harvesters are the eyes and ears on the land! Community interviewers will be going out again in June to interview harvesters for their information concerning species harvested, as well as for their observations on the land. Please report your harvest and help the GRRB make sustainable wildlife management decisions!

Tracking Change This pilot program partnership between the University of Alberta, University of Victoria, GTC and the RRCs is a multi-year fish camp involving youth and elders. The purpose of the program is to record traditional

livelihoods and how they change over time, aiming to incorporate Traditional Knowledge (TK) and science into a community-based monitoring program. I help the GRRB provide logistical and scientific support. Follow-up interviews were conducted by researchers in November. Lessons learned will be incorporated into future programs starting this summer.

Other When I can, I also get out in the field to learn what researchers are doing. This allows me to address some of the questions we receive from RRCs and community members.

Liaison Communication I consult with RRCs, government and co-management partners on a regular basis regarding research priorities, GRRB policies, and harvest studies, as well as applications for research or development within the GSA.

Arctic Net I co-presented the 'GRRB Research Priority Process' with Amy Amos at the Arctic Net research conference in Winnipeg in December. This process informs the research agenda of the GRRB and guides decisions about what level of support to provide researchers. It includes collection of community research ideas. This conference is an ideal place to meet and talk with potential researchers directly. We encouraged researchers to design their projects with our process in mind.

Education/Youth In February, I attended a Gwich'in Youth Council meeting to help answer the questions 'Who is the GRRB?' and 'Why is harvest reporting important?'. I also attended the career fair at East 3 Secondary School with other staff, where we enjoyed meeting youth and

introducing them to some of the careers at the GRRB.

I manage the GRRB Youth Work Experience Program, connecting youth with GRRB biologist staff, (ideally in the field).

Technical Advice Regulatory Review I review regulatory and research applications in the GSA, assess possible impacts on renewable resources, and coordinate responses incorporating comments received from staff and the RRCs. These can be single or multiyear proposals, and range from access permits to license renewals to wildlife studies.

Professional development I appreciate opportunities for professional development that help me refresh old skills or learn new ones. I took two workshops that will help me with providing technical advice. In January, an Ecosystem and Landscape Classification Workshop helped me understand how plant communities can help resource managers identify changes over time. In March, I attended a Climate Change Science and Communications course to be better prepared to explain climate change to non-technical audiences of all ages.



Photo credit: BJ Greenland Morgan

ArcticNet

2016 Annual Scientific Meeting
 Δ^εΓJCL^εΓ▷ΠΓ^b bNLσ^{εb}
 Réunion scientifique annuelle

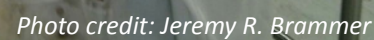
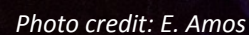




Photo credit: N. Westover, GRRB

Kaytlin Cooper species at risk biologist since January 2015

Management Planning In my capacity as Species at Risk Biologist, I have contributed to the NWT Amphibian Management Plan and the NWT Boreal Caribou Recovery Strategy.

Research Insect Traditional Knowledge I revised the budget requirements for this workshop

and received additional funding from ENR. The workshop was successfully held in Inuvik in February. A report is being finalized and will soon be publicly available. It will also be used in the NWT SARA assessments of several bumble bee species.

Bat Surveys I will be conducting bat surveys in the GSA this summer. Some bat species have been assessed under the *NWT Species at Risk Act*. There are no documented sightings in the GSA, yet we have heard of some possible sightings. The results of this research will help determine our involvement in the NWT Species at Risk process for bats.

Caribou I submitted a proposal to the Aboriginal Funds for Species at Risk (AFSAR) program to hold a *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) workshop for Barren-ground caribou this summer. I also worked with IMG-Golder on their Boreal (Woodland) caribou habitat restoration traditional knowledge workshop planning, and AFSAR funding proposal. We hope to hear whether our funding is approved by June.

Technical Advice Since our last newsletter, I have reviewed a draft (federal) status report for the Peregrine Falcon and the Rusty Blackbird.

I also reviewed the federal SARA Policy Suite (seven policies), the proposed Environmental Emergency Regulations under the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act*, the NWT Species Report 2016-2020, and the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) Preliminary List of Candidates for Review (and rationales) 2017.

In February, the GRRB recommended that I be the alternate member of the Species at Risk Committee (SARC), a group of independent experts who assess the biological status of species that may be at risk in the NWT. James Firth is the full member. I attended my first meeting in April 2017.

Liaison I attend RRC meetings in the communities, including the Regional RRC meeting. I am also involved in meetings of the
...continued on next page



Photo credit: K. Cooper, GRRB

Conference of Management Authorities (CMA). The CMA is a group of wildlife co-management boards and governments that share management responsibility for the conservation and recovery of species at risk in the NWT.

In October, I attended a Wind Energy Development meeting with the Gwich'in Land and Water Board, Gwich'in Land Use Planning Board, and Hemmera. I also took part in the Beaufort Sea Partnership meeting that was held in Inuvik. In November, I participated in the GRRB teleconference meeting and the CMA teleconference meeting. I also travelled to Yellowknife for the CMA - Species at Risk Committee Joint Meeting on Species Assessment Schedule.

I travelled back to Yellowknife in January for the CMA face-to-face meeting and attended the CMA meeting in May in Fort Smith.

Photo credit: N. Westover, GRRB



Cheryl Greenland
office administration
and finances
since February 2009



Photo credit: E. Amos

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 of the Conservation Calendar each year by providing community event dates. I am also involved in the Finance Committee Meeting and have helped Amy review the Terms of Reference.

Since our last newsletter, I spent time cleaning and setting up the office for our new Fisheries and Forestry Biologist, Sarah Lord. I also ensured that she was set up with all internal paperwork and payroll. As the employee representative for the Safety Committee, I met with Sarah to go over housekeeping items for the office, pointing out all exits, fire extinguishers, first aid kit, and muster point. I have also been working with Sarah to prepare our vehicle with safety and travel gear for the summer and winter seasons, to be prepared for any unforeseen complications while traveling to the

surrounding communities.

I set up our staff with online access to Great West Life, so they can now register and access statements over the Internet. In December, Amy and I took an online refresher course to better understand year-end payroll reports. In June, both Amy and I will be participating in a refresher course on Reading and Analyzing Financial Statements and Reports at the Arctic College. We have taken these type of courses before, but I find that it is always an advantage to refresh as we get a different view from other instructors.

We recently completed our 2016/17 financial audit with Andrew Shannon and Emily Teoh from Paul Teoh Chartered Accounting in Calgary. The audit went very well this year; each year we learn and become more prepared by making sure all our entries are added correctly before their arrival. To end their week off, I invited them to my cabin at Caribou Creek (pictured here) for some R&R and a BBQ - a well-deserved break from the books before heading back to Calgary!

GET IN TOUCH!

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upcoming events

GRRB Staff Training: Bear Safety and Practical Firearms Training
May 17-19, 23

GRRB Board Teleconference
June 5

Rat River Working Group Public Meeting
June 13 - Aklavik, NT
June 14 - Fort McPherson, NT

Aboriginal Day
June 21

Northern Richardson Sheep Aerial Survey
Mid-Late June

GRRB Board Teleconference
Late June/early August

GRRB Workshop
September 20-21, Aklavik, NT
Day 1 - Research Priorities
Day 2 - Strategic Planning



Photo credit: N. Westover, GRRB



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

