

# Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board

October 1, 2, 2009

## Community Gym, Tsiigehtchic, NT

### Attendance:

**Board Members:** Joel Ingram, Liz Hansen, Dan Topolniski, James Firth, Eugene Pascal, Robert Charlie, Johnnie Charlie (alternate)

**Staff:** Amy Thompson, Kristen Callaghan, Mathew Armstrong, Chelsea Hermus, Cheryl Greenland, Connie Gordon

### Observers:

|                         |                             |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Paul Teoh (Tse Tho Cha) | Auditor                     |
| John Norbert            | Tsiigehtchic RRC            |
| Jason McLeod            | Tsiigehtchic RRC            |
| James Cardinal          | Tsiigehtchic RRC            |
| Anna May McLeod         | Tsiigehtchic RRC            |
| Noel Andre              | Tsiigehtchic Elder          |
| Fanny Greenland         | Aklavik RRC                 |
| Allen Firth             | Inuvik RRC                  |
| Ron Morrison            | ENR                         |
| Martin Callaghan        | ENR                         |
| Tracy Davidson          | ENR                         |
| Marsha Branigan         | ENR                         |
| Glen Alexie             | ENR – Fort McPherson        |
| Tim Byers               | Byers Environmental Studies |
| Margaret Nazon          | GLWB Member                 |
| Kirby Meister           | Yukon Environment           |
| Donald Andre            | Gwich'in Tribal Council     |
| Larry Dow               | Fisheries & Oceans          |
| Terry Stein             | Fisheries & Oceans          |
| Grace Blake             | Mackenzie Gas Project       |
| Charlie Snowshoe        | GLUP Member                 |
| Charlie Eyakfwo         | Tlicho Drummers             |
| George Mackenzie        | Tlicho Drummers             |
| Mark Mackenzie          | Tlicho Drummers             |
| Peter Black             | Tlicho Drummers             |

**Minutes:** Cheryl Greenland and Kristen Callaghan

**Thursday October 1, GRRB bi-annual board meeting. Tsiigehtchic, NWT**

**1. Call to Order**

Robert Charlie called the meeting to order at 10:15am  
Opening prayer by Liz Hansen.  
Introductions from around the table and the room.

**2. Discussion and Approval of Agenda**

**Motion #01/09**

Moved by: Joel Ingram  
All in favour: Carried

**to Approve Agenda**

Seconded by: Eugene Pascal.

**3. Conflict of Interest**

None declared

**4. Discussion & Approval of February 2009 Board Meeting Minutes**

**Motion #02/09**

Moved by: James Firth  
All in favour. Carried

**to Approve February 2009 Board meeting minutes**

Seconded by: Dan Topolniski

**Discussion of Action items**

Amy Thompson reviewed action items from last meeting:

1. **Begin the process to get nominations for Board positions due for appointment in 2010.** Amy has been communicating with the INAC office. Robert stressed that we need to contact the GTC to start the long nomination process for board members whose terms will be ending.
2. **Changes to teleconference minutes to reflect wording change on a motion.** This was done, the minutes reflect the changes.
3. **Access to Gwich'in lands.** Access issues and the need for the public to talk to GTC to get permission to cross Gwich'in lands were discussed.
4. **Water quality at the water station.** Amy checked with George Lennie and others, but it is proving difficult to determine who is responsible for looking at water quality. Amy has talked to researchers about looking at water quality on the Peel River and will follow up on that.
5. **DFO research priorities.** Amy was to send a letter stating that priorities should take into account community concerns from the RRCs. She did not send a letter, but did present these concerns at a recent Senate Committee Meeting in Inuvik and reiterates every time she speaks with DFO.
6. **Char Monitor policies and qualification standardization.** No update.

7. **RRC environmental and wildlife monitoring requirements.** Discussion took place regarding clarification of this motion to use monitors when there is any research activity.
8. **KC would like a copy of minutes from the Wildlife Act.** These were provided.
9. **Followup on SARA with Kristen.** The letter was sent on March 17<sup>th</sup> with the board's response, and then resent again on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. A list of which groups are responsible for what areas will be compiled to give board members and RRCs a better understanding.
10. **Integrated Fisheries Management Plan.** Cal Wenghofer (DFO) has requested comments on how the group is progressing. Larry is involved in the process now.
11. **GRRB Brochure.** Consensus was reached to approve the brochure's release. Joel printed copies that were handed out during the Open House.
12. **10 year report.** Should be released on the internet and colour copies to the printed. This is still being edited so it has not gone to printer yet. Matthew will update this on the website.
13. **GRRB 15 year summary.** We have not had time to address this or to work on the report. Suggest that this be contracted out.

## 5. Financial Update – Amy Thompson, GRRB

Cheryl has a new project that is monitoring how much we are spending on management planning. The copy in the binders does not include that money.

Additions include adjustments to rent. The revised update will be sent out to the board.

**Staffing:** Only the Fisheries Biologist and Communications positions are vacant. A budget was submitted to INAC showing a deficit to account for the need for the Communications position. INAC did not come back with additional funds, so the amount for the Communications position in the current budget has been reduced to zero. Everything else is standard and normal.

**Purchases:** Some new software.

**Rent:** The rent was budgeted for accurately, but on top of that will be about \$30,000 more in operating costs that need to be incorporated into this budget. Discussion followed with regard to rent, operating costs and moving to a new office.

**Benefits Package:** Since the last Board Meeting, we have more staff and can enrol in the plan again. We have done so and it was backdated to February, so all staff are now enrolled.

## **6: Audited financial Statements (2008-2009) – Paul Teoh, GRRB Auditor**

Paul Teoh has been the auditor of the GRRB since the Board was established.

The first part of the workshop took place in Inuvik on the financial role of the Board members. The second part of the workshop (taking place at the Board Meeting today) was a basic review of financial statements and an explanation of the real numbers on the GRRB's financial statements, followed by an examination of the trend over the last 10 years.

Discussion followed on renting versus purchasing an office, the Board's financial situation and the Gwich'in Environmental Knowledge Fund.

(Kirby obtains permission to give his update here, as he is not able to attend the meeting further)

## **12. Agency Update – Kirby Meister, Yukon Environment**

Kirby provided an update on the YTG Interim Measures (IM) that were introduced regarding hunting the Porcupine Caribou prior to the Harvest Management Plan coming into effect. A copy of the regulations was left for the perusal of interested parties.

It was noted that these measures are being implemented prior to the completion of the Harvest Management Strategy that the Porcupine Caribou Management Board has been working on. The IM will come into effect on September 28. YTG Conservation Officers have been tasked with enforcing these measures and also developing an implementation policy. The IM apply to all Porcupine Caribou hunters on the Dempster Highway. The IM applies to all hunters and include the following changes, bull caribou harvest only and hunters must keep evidence of sex of caribou. There is a mandatory reporting of harvest by all hunters. You must report to Conservation Officer or Wildlife Technician. Check stations stop is mandatory. You must report to YTG within 15 days of the next month to report harvest. Minister has advised the CO's to go softly on enforcement for the first year.

The following process will be followed:

1. Encounter a hunter-Verbal warning (education)
2. Same hunter encountered – Written warning (caribou is seized)
3. Same hunter encountered – Issue ticket (caribou seized)

All incidents will be documented and information passed to First nations.  
There is a two year phase in of IM.

In the second year for the 1st violation the officer will issue a warning and caribou will be seized. The 2nd violation will include a Mandatory Court process and caribou will be seized and possibly hunting equipment.

Other Regulations still apply such as Public Safety and conservation and wise use of caribou. Other violations include shooting on the road and littering. They will also check for harvesters who are not allowed to harvest on the Dempster.

For Non Subsistence Hunters the new Wildlife Regulations are as follows:

- Bulls only

- Limit of 1 caribou
- Manatory Report (already in place)

The above will be enforced immediately.

Lunch break at 12:50 PM

Reconvened at 1:30 PM

## **7. Chair's Update – Robert Charlie**

Robert reported on the Rat River Working Group annual meeting, community meetings and recommendations on the Rat River char harvest allocation.

The Wildlife Act Review has been ongoing since the beginning of this year. All co-management boards are involved. The hope is to have an agreement by the end of this government's term.

The elders from the NWT have a workshop October 14-15<sup>th</sup> with ENR to get their perspective on wildlife management and wildlife issues.

Involvement with the ACCWM is directed more at the bluenose herd. A working group and technical aspects of the management plan are established. Community consultation schedules will be the next priority.

Robert attended the West Side Working Group meeting to cooperate on char and fisheries management. WSWG is the Inuvialuit complement to the Rat River Working Group.

Robert is also involved in the Integrated Fisheries Management Plan process.

Questions followed.

## **8. Executive Update (Tab F) – Amy Thompson**

Amy's update is available in hard copy in the meeting binder. She addressed concerns about staffing, management planning, the Senate Committee for Fisheries and Oceans Canada meeting, research planning and funding. Questions followed.

## **9. Staff Updates (Tab G)**

Staff updates are available in hard copy in the meeting binder.

Kristen Callaghan (Wildlife Biologist) has been involved in management planning for the Barren land caribou herds and in field work, particularly with ENR.

Cheryl Greenland (Office Manager) started as the Office Manager in 2009. She has been reviewing the finances and books, trying to reduce costs on the office lease and has started up a benefit package for the staff.

Connie Gordon (Office Assistant) started at the end of August, working closely with Cheryl for financial and administrative functions.

Matthew Armstrong (Renewable Resources Manager) joined the board March 30, 2009. He has been devoting his time to: reviewing all the GSA research and land use applications that we receive; developing rules and procedures for public consultation; developing research priorities for the GRRB and collecting harvest data. He also helped out with Nature Day, both grades 3 and 4 students from Inuvik, Tsiigehtchic and Fort McPherson.

Chelsea Hermus (Acting Fisheries Biologist) started as the GRRB's acting Fisheries Biologist in July. Her main job is to work on the Integrated Fisheries Management Plan for the northern form of Dolly Varden char. She also reviewed and edited the Forestry Management Plan, the COSEWIC draft plan for the Species At Risk status upcoming for Dolly Varden and helped out with Nature Day.

(Robert Charlie gives Chelsea the opportunity to update on other projects here, since she will not be attending Day 2 of the meeting).

### **17. Project Update (Tab L) – Chelsea Hermus**

Mackenzie River Tagging Study – Tagging and tracking of female broad whitefish. Unfortunately, funding was cut this year. Only one day of tracking occurred and no fish were located.

Chelsea presented Zoya's presentation on adaptations and habitat selection during the migration of broad whitefish. It is available in the binder (Tab L). Discussion and questions followed.

Break –Call to order at 3:15PM

### **8. Board member updates**

Joel Ingram – nothing to submit

Dan Topolniski – Dan has been helping in a general way with Board operations and with recruiting the new Fisheries Biologist. He enjoys Amy's management style. He also acts as a liason between the Board and DFO. He stressed the importance of Gwich'in input on the IFMP.

Liz Hansen – Liz raised a concern with discoloration and an abundance of aphids in alder bushes. She also stressed that more Gwich'in language and Traditional Knowledge be used in resource management.

James Firth – James brought up a concern with the birthing ground for caribou and suggested someone look into it further. He stressed the need for the Board to continue to be involved in consultation as much as possible.

Eugene Pascal – Eugene spoke to the odd location of some caribou calving this year. Hunters believe there are different caribou with the Porcupine Caribou herd. He thinks they are from the central herd. He commented that char fishing wasn't good, likely due to high water conditions, but that there were more muskrats, beavers, and rabbits than usual.

Johnny Charlie – Johnny reported on char fishing this year at his camp, during the char run. The char monitor caught 23 and Johnny’s partner got 25 fish. He suggested that some patrols be sent down toward his camp to keep an eye on visitors who may be fishing in the area.

## **11. Renewable Resource Council updates (Tab H)**

The hard copies of the reports are available in the binders.

TRRC (Johnny Charlie) – The council is currently being appointed.

GRRRC (Anna May MacLeod) – There is a concern at Wrangling River. Unknown minnows are being found in beaver dammed water. They may be whitefish.

NRRC – See Tab H.

## **12. Local Agency updates**

CWS (Joel Ingram) - Refer to the binder for Joel’s report. CWS has been involved in banding of White-fronted Geese, consultation on Northern Boreal Caribou Recovery Strategy (see report and insert in Tab K) and waterfowl hunting. A discussion on staffing followed.

DFO (Larry Dow) – Larry did not hand out a report. He provided a staffing update and a financial summary. Larry also spoke about Fisheries Act renewal, separating NWT fishing regulations away from Nunavut’s. Discussion on regulations followed.

DFO (Terry Stein) – Terry is the field supervisor for the conservation program in Inuvik. He provided an update on fisheries enforcement. Discussion followed.

ENR (Ron Morrison) – Refer to the binder for Ron’s report. He provided updates on staffing, compliance on the Dempster Highway and enforcement. Some discussion followed.

ENR (Martin Callaghan) – Martin’s report is available in the binder. Mike Gravel (previous ENR Forests Manager) has relocated to the Hay River office. Martin has striven to maintain prior levels of research and forestry work. He provided an update on the past fire season, Spruce Budworm, Stock Trial Regeneration Survey and the Wood Miser Training Workshop. Questions and discussion followed.

ENR (Marsha Branigan) – Marsha’s report is available in the binder. She provided updates on her research activities for caribou, moose, musk ox, bears, wolves and wolverines. Discussion followed about the Porcupine Caribou herd.

ENR (Tracy Davidson) – Tracy presented on the photo census of caribou. Handouts were given to Board members. Discussion and questions followed.

GTC (Donald Andre) – Donald updated the Board on several issues he is working on: the Forestry Management Plan, NWT Wildlife Act, Yukon Oil & Gas Act, PCHMP, RRC contributions to ENR, staffing and Dall sheep management. Questions and discussion followed.

GSCI (Alestine Andre) – Alestine provided a photo presentation and updated the Board on the work the GSCI has been doing. She has been involved with TK interviews on contaminants in food, a CBC Gwich'in legends radio project, Dempster highway grave signage, the GLUPB Atlas, updating the GSCI Web site, a Gwich'in place names atlas, the James Jerome calendar, a Peel River paleontological study, Steppe bison exhibit, Rat River char Traditional Knowledge report, Tetlit Gwich'in land use history, GLCA implementation and Peel River watershed planning commission, among other projects. Questions and discussion followed.

Mackenzie Gas Project (Grace Blake) – Grace presented an update on the Mackenzie Gas Project. Questions and discussion followed regarding the current state of this project.

Meeting adjourned 6:20 PM

## **Friday October 2, GRRB bi-annual board meeting. Tsiigehtchic, NWT (Day 2)**

### **1. Call to Order**

Robert Charlie called the meeting to order at 10:00am

Opening prayer by Liz Hansen

### **Continuation of item 12. Local Agency Updates**

PCHMP (Sonny Blake) – Sonny updated the Board on the progress of the Harvest Management Plan. Discussion and questions followed with regard to interim measures that are in place until the HMP is passed as well as current estimates of herd numbers.

### **16. Management Planning Updates**

GRRB (Kristen Callaghan) – A summary of Kristen's presentation is in the binder (Tab K). She updated the Board on Barren ground caribou management planning, the Dall's sheep plan and the moose survey. Kristen will present a moose versus caribou proposal to the Board in February.

EC – CWS Yellowknife (Donna Mulders) – Donna addressed the boreal woodland caribou consultation Action Plan and Traditional Knowledge and then presented an update on the status of the Horned Grebe. Her briefing notes and presentations can be found in the meeting binder.

Lunch break.

Reconvened at 12:43 PM

### **17. Project Updates (continued from Day 1 – Tab L)**

**DFO (Kevin Bill)** – Kevin updated the Board on a number of DFO projects:

1. Dolomite (Airport) Lake Assessment – There are concerns that the fish stock is not doing well and that people are targeting fish when they are spawning. A voluntary closure has been suggested during spawning times. A response is expected from the Board.
2. Rat River Dolly Varden research
3. Big Fish River comparison with Rat River Dolly Varden char
4. Rat River Dolly Varden Monitoring Program



5. Rat River Dolly Varden Habitat Research Progress to date
6. Vittrekwa River update

**GRRB (Amy Thompson)** – Amy provided several updates on GRRB projects, including a COSEWIC update (Initial activities to identify a species for assessment through the COSEWIC process), Dolly Varden char status and Traditional Knowledge interview reporting.

## **16. Management Planning Updates (Continued)**

Tim Byers – Tim was contracted by DFO Winnipeg (Jim Reist) to compile all the Gwich'in and Inuvialuit Traditional Knowledge that exists on Dolly Varden char. His report will be used for the COSEWIC assessment. He asked several questions to the GRRB for clarification of his own report before opening the floor to questions and discussion. The report still requires verification. The Board and GRRB staff are expected to review it and provide feedback.

Ron Allen – Ron provided an Integrated Fisheries Management Plan update. He detailed the current state of the Dolly Varden IFMP. Discussion followed.

Amy Thompson – Amy presented on the Gwich'in Forest Management Plan and requested that the board consider accepting the recommended plan as the FMP for the GSA. After questions and discussion, the motion was put forward.

### **Motion #03**

Moved by Liz Hansen

All in favour. Motion carried.

### **To accept the recommended Gwich'in Forest Management Plan**

Seconded by Eugene Pascal

Paul Grech (Take a Kid Trapping Program) – Paul introduced a new program called Take a Kid Harvesting. He updated the Board on the two programs and fielded questions on participation.

Break at 3:00 PM

Reconvened at 3:24PM

## **17. Project Updates (continued – Tab L)**

### **GRRB (Amy Thompson) - Loche Liver Project Update**

Amy reviewed the history of the project and outlined current research and results. There is current collaboration with a researcher in Germany.

### **GRRB (Amy Thompson) – Youth Outreach Project Update**

GRRB provided \$5,000 for this project. Matthew Armstrong has organized Nature Day programs for all communities to commence this month. We have also used this fund to hire youth for the small mammal work that Kristen was helping out with from ENR's project.

**University of Manitoba (Eva Patton) - Fisheries Co-management and Adaptation in a Changing Arctic**

Eva introduced herself and her Masters research that focused on the co-management process. FJMC recommended looking at co-management and fisheries management and so that is what she is now doing. Her community-based research has just begun and will result in a community report.

**GRRB (Matthew Armstrong) – Gwich'in Harvest Data Collection**

Matthew took over the data collection for this project from ENR due to their staffing difficulties. Many interviews have taken place, with mixed results. There will likely be more information available at the February Board meeting.

**18. Research Priorities (Matthew Armstrong)**

Matthew reviewed the briefing note provided and the process of deciding on research priorities leading to a call for proposals and information on the WSF. 24 proposals were presented to the Board for Decision. Discussion followed on how to go about reviewing them.

**18. Consultation Rules and Procedures and Rules for Public Hearings (Matthew Armstrong)**

Matthew talked about the policy development timeline and process, gave a consultation timeline example for a consultation scenario and discussed policy comments and issues. Three items were presented for GRRB Decision: wildlife management plans, consulting the public and commercial opportunities.

**19. Gwich'in Harvest Study (Kristen Callaghan)**

Kristen presented on the Gwich'in Minimum Needs Level and the GMNL for migratory birds.

Meeting adjourned at 5:04 PM

In-camera meeting with the Board and Executive Director was held after the break.

**Motion #04**

Moved by Dan Topolniski  
All in favour. Motion carried.

**To approve 2008-2009 Financial statements for General Operating**

Seconded by Eugene Pascal

**Motion #05**

Moved by Joel Ingram  
All in favour. Motion carried.

**To approve 2008-2009 Financial Statement for Wildlife Studies Fund**

Seconded by Liz Hansen

**Motion #06**

Moved by Eugene Pascal  
All in favour. Motion carried.

**To adjourn in-camera session at approximately 7:00 PM**

Seconded by James Firth