

## Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board Bi-annual Meeting

Feb 17-19, 2010

### Gwich'in Wellness Camp, Inuvik, NT

#### Attendance:

**Board Members:** Robert Alexie Sr., Robert Charlie, James Firth, Liz Hansen, Paul Latour, George Low, Eugene Pascal, Dan Topolniski

**Staff:** Matthew Armstrong, Kristen Callaghan, Cheryl Greenland, Ron English, Amy Thompson

#### Observers:

*Wednesday, February 17*

<i><b>Name</b></i>	<i><b>Designation</b></i>	<i><b>Name</b></i>	<i><b>Designation</b></i>
Doug Matthews	Consultant to GTC	Allen Firth	GTC
Sarah Baines	SENES Consulting	Susan McKenzie	GLUPB
Marie-Anick Elie	NGPS	Norman Snowshoe	GNWT, ENR –Inuvik
Brian Chambers	NGPS	Joanna Wilson	GNWT, ENR – Yellowknife
Martin Callaghan	GNWT, ENR –Inuvik	Charlie Snowshoe	GLUPB (board member)
Stephen Charlie	GNWT, ENR –Inuvik	Larry Dow	GC, DFO -Inuvik
Mary Rose Tetlich	Tetlit RRC	Kevin Bill	GC, DFO -Inuvik
Ricky Firth	Nihtat RRC ( <i>half day</i> )	Alestine Andre	GSCI
Jason McLeod	Gwichya RRC	Sharon Snowshoe	GSCI
Kris Maier	None –observer		

*Thursday, February 18*

<i><b>Name</b></i>	<i><b>Designation</b></i>	<i><b>Name</b></i>	<i><b>Designation</b></i>
Allen Firth	GTC	Jerome Gordon	Ehdiitat RRC
Dorothy Cooley	YTG - Dawson	Ricky Firth	Nihtat RRC
Kevin Bill	GC, DFO –Inuvik	Marsha Branigan	GNWT, ENR –Inuvik
Sarah Baines	SENES Consultants	Stephen Charlie	GNWT, ENR –Inuvik
Mary Rose Tetlich	Tetlit RRC	Robert Alexie	GLWB
Jason McLeod	Gwichya RRC	Margaret Nazon	GLWB (board member)

*Friday, Feb 19, 2009*

In-camera discussion with Board members and Executive Director only

**Minutes:** Kristen Callaghan and Amy Thompson

## **Wednesday, Feb 17, GRRB Bi-Annual board Meeting, Inuvik, NT**

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

Robert Charlie called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

The opening prayer was given by Liz Hansen.

Introductions were made from those around the table and in the room.

Robert Charlie provided opening remarks.

### **2. Discussion and Approval of Agenda (Tab A)**

#### **Motion #Feb2010-01**

Moved by: Eugene Pascal

All in favour. Motion Carried

#### **to Approve Agenda**

Seconded by: Dan Topolniski

### **3. Conflict of Interest**

None declared.

### **4. Discussion and Approval of October, 2009 GRRB Meeting Minutes (Tab B)**

#### **Motion #Feb2010-02**

Moved by: James Firth

All in favour. Motion Carried

#### **to Approve October 2009 GRRB Meeting Minutes**

Seconded by: Robert Alexie Sr.

#### **❖ Discussion of Action Items**

Amy Thompson reviewed the action items from the October meeting. Action items with comments are included in Tab B.

Questions were asked about the action items and discussion was held.

### **5. Financial Update (Tab C)**

#### **❖ General Office Operations**

Amy Thompson gave a financial update to the Board, highlighting specific information for the Board members found in the variance report included in the meeting binders. (Tab C).

Questions were asked about the report and discussion was held.

#### **❖ Wildlife Studies Fund Update –Robert Charlie**

Robert Charlie gave an update on the status of the Wildlife Studies Fund investments for the board members and took board members' questions on the investments and their returns and use of the funds.

#### ❖ **Draft GRRB Operating Budget**

The Board members will have a conference call prior to the March 31, 2010 to approve the 2010-2011 GRRB Operating Budget.

### **6. Chair update –Robert Charlie**

Robert Charlie provided an update of his activities to the Board. He's been involved in many discussions related to caribou and has been kept busy by his involvement with the Wildlife Act Review, Rat River Char work, work with RRCs and initiatives with management plans (char, caribou, etc..). Robert gave an over view of his work in each of these areas. He also described his work preparing for and meeting with the Implementation Committee and assisting in staff recruitment efforts.

Robert concluded his update and took questions.

**- MORNING BREAK 10:20-10:30 -**

### **7. Executive Director Update**

Amy Thompson mentioned that Robert touched on a lot of topics so she didn't elaborate on some of those items. She addressed her involvement in a number of activities including Rat River TK workshops and report, Dolly Varden char TK verification, Integrated Fisheries Management Plan, Forest Management Plan, COSEWIC assessments, FNFP activities, ACCWM activities, regional RRC meeting, funding related activities including funding assistance from INAC for communications initiatives, relationship building with GRRB co-management partners and other regional authorities and agencies, and the status of staffing at the GRRB office.

Amy concluded her update and took questions.

(Robert Charlie provides permission for the Regulatory update to move up in the agenda).

### **11. Regulatory (TAB L)**

#### ❖ **Regulatory review process of the Mackenzie Gas Project – Brian Chambers**

Brian Chambers (Northern Gas Project Secretariat –NGPS) gave an update on the regulatory review process of the Mackenzie Gas Project. Brian gave handouts and a presentation. His handout was included in the meeting binders.

There was considerable discussion on this topic and Brian took questions from the Board members.

Robert Charlie thanked Brian for his presentation.

### ❖ Environmental Audit Update –Sarah Baines -SENES Consultants Ltd.(Yellowknife)

Sarah presented to the Board, giving information that was to have been presented by Gerd Wiatzka who was to have phoned in (technical difficulties at the meeting prevented this). Sarah did not have written materials for the Board and her oral presentation is summarized below:

Sarah updated the meeting attendees on what the Environmental Audit consists of and how it is being done. There was an audit completed in 2005 by SENES and the second one is just being started. It consists of two components:

1. The Regulatory system under Mackenzie Valley Act & all the boards involved with that. This component looks at that system, addressing the big question: does this system protect the environment from (unacceptable) negative environmental impacts?
2. State of Environment Reporting. This component looks at the state of the environment today and is updated every 5 years to identify trends over the last 5 years. This State of the Environment Report will be more detailed than the last.

Sarah explained that in order to complete the State of the Environment Report SENES requires complete and up to date information, SENES is trying to get all the boards under the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act* (MVRMA) involved as well as the land claim boards, First Nation governments, the public and environmental watch dogs and NGOs. Some of these groups are involved in both components above.

Sara explained that questionnaires have been developed to show all these groups what the audit is looking for. SENES is hoping for as many written responses as possible to help streamline the open house process when the Audit team visits 12 communities . (ISR not participating in the audit. MV act does not apply to their region). The goal is to get a huge library of reports created and knowledge gained through these public meetings and open houses. The audit includes Valued Components identified by Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program. CIMP is required by the MVRMA. There are about 13 valued components (including fish, caribou, air, moose, community wellness and health).

It is important to know that the State of the Environment reporting team does not do their own research but uses the research of others. ***If they don't have this information, it is not included in the Environmental Audit.*** INAC is asking SENES to identify knowledge gaps that need filling as part of the audit.

**SENES is hoping that written responses will be received by March 31st, including a response from the GRRB (Amy received one questionnaire for the GRRB by email). Open houses are to be held in the 12 communities in April and May (Fort McPherson and Inuvik in the GSA.). The final report is due to INAC by December 21, 2010.**

↑ Follow-up from GRRB expected by March 31, 2010.
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Key message: the more information SENES has, the better the audit will be. The questionnaires are long and it is hard to find the time for these reports but the more information and reports received, the better the State of Environment Report will be and this will help to improve cumulative impact monitoring.

Sarah explained that the final report is due to INAC on December 31, 2010, responses to Questionnaires are due March 31. Public meetings will be held in 12 communities in April & May.

Sarah took questions from the Board members and agreed to send the GRRB a copy of the first Environmental Audit and timelines at Robert Charlie's request.

↑ Follow up to GRRB expected
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***-BREAK FOR LUNCH 12PM -1PM-***

#### ❖ **National Energy Board (NEB) Submissions – Doug Matthews**

Doug Matthews reviewed the process developed for the GRRB, GTC, and GSCI to respond to the recommendations from the Joint Review Panel (JRP) Final Report that was released December 31, 2009. Doug explained the tight deadlines and how the tracking document assisted these groups to structure their responses.

Doug did not have a presentation notes or a written submission and so his oral presentation is included below:

Doug: JRP report included 176 recommendations in the report; it was a long report. The Joint Review Panel took 4 years to complete it. Other parties were given 6 weeks by the NEB to comment on the report. These comments were due February 11, 2010. A funding request to DIAND was made by GTC and Doug assisted. Doug developed a response process for the GSCI, GRRB, and GTC to follow to help structure their responses. This assisted these parties in making sure that each recommendation that was made by the GSCI, GRRB, or GTC was followed up and the report reviewed to see what the JRP said and what the proponent's response was.

Kim Hawkins worked with the staff of these parties to help prepare these recommendations. Kristi Benson was contracted to assist GSCI with their response. Kim helped develop the initial recommendations during the JRP Hearings.

GTC and GRRB each filed submissions to the NEB. (See tab L in the binder.) Only the GTC was an intervener with the NEB process so GSCI and GRRB can work with GTC to ensure interests are addressed. Don't know yet if Richard will speak at both NEB hearings or only at the Inuvik hearing. GTC supported positions taken by the GRRB in their response.

Next steps: Richard is limited in what he can say in public meetings. A Public Hearing should take place in April. Expect reasons for decisions in September. However, Doug is under the opinion

that there may be some legal challenges raised with these processes and with Minister Prentice that could delay the NEB's final decision by a few months.

If a federal election takes place in the meantime, this will affect the process as the federal cabinet can deny an NEB "Yes" but not say yes to an NEB "no". If a Yes is given, the certificate will be issued to the proponent. The "sunset clause" may be 5 years but they don't have to give those kinds of restrictions.

Doug will continue to be in contact with GRRB staff in April to work on GTC's submission to the NEB to ensure it reflects the GRRB's initial recommendations to the JRP. Richard can speak to this as much as he wants and the NEB will hear his comments.

Doug concluded his presentation and took questions from the Board members.

#### ❖ **Matthew Armstrong (GRRB's NEB submission)**

Matthew explained to the Board how Kim Hawkins assisted the GRRB staff to go through the initial recommendations made by the GRRB to the JRP, what recommendations were addressed in the JRP report, and what the proponent's responses were.

Matthew walked the Board through the follow-up submission made to the NEB on the GRRB's recommendations to the JRP. Copies of the recent submissions were provided in the binders in Tab L. One letter is to government and one to the NEB, depending upon which agencies are affected by the recommendations.

Matthew spoke to the NEB strict timeframe and took questions from the Board. During the questions Robert Charlie reminded the Board that the Executive Summary of the JRP report was included in their meeting binders.

**During the questions** Liz Hansen commented, saying that "Somewhere down the road, the GRRB, GTC, and GSCI should give feedback to the communities saying what the recommendations are that have been made. It is important to keep the communities informed of what these decisions are. There is also a need for a plain language document when this is shared with the communities.

↑Request for feedback from the GRRB was made.

(Robert Charlie granted permission to GSCI to give their agency update)

## **12. Local Agency Updates**

#### ❖ **GSCI: Sharon Snowshoe, Alestine Andre**

Sharon and Alestine gave an update from the GSCI on its activities and planned projects. Sharon provided a written update to Amy Thompson at the meeting. This is available for interested parties from

the GRRB meeting or they can contact GSCI directly for a copy. Projects that were addressed in their update included:

#### Heritage Projects

1. Arctic Red River headwaters Project –Phase IV
2. Aurora College –ARI TK Interviews (poster)
3. CBC Radio Legacy Project
4. Dempster Highway Grave Signage
5. Historic Places Initiative (HPI) Projects
6. Genographic Project
7. Gwich'in Elders Biography Book
8. Gwich'in Ethnobotany Module for GSCI Website
9. GLUPB Atlas
10. Gwich'in Legends Workshop (Aklavik, Jan. 20-21, 2010)
11. Gwich'in Place Names/ Oral History Atlas
12. James Jerome Photo collection Project –Exhibit
13. National Archival Development Program

14. Rat River Char TK –Phase 2 and Inuvik workshop
15. Review and Process GSCI Research material 1992-present
16. Steppe Bison Fossil Find

#### Projects Related to Implementation of Gwich'in Claims

1. Peel Watershed Planning Commission Northern Governance Policy Research Conference Land Use Permit, Archaeological Permit and Scientific Research License Applications

#### Language Projects

1. Gwichin Language Plan projects
2. Second Language Curriculum projects

After their presentation Alestine and Sharon took questions from the meeting participants and a suggestion was given that they prepare a short booklet listing and describing all the projects being undertaken by the GSCI.

## **8. Staff Updates**

### **❖ GRRB staff: Kristen Callaghan, Matthew Armstrong and Ron English**

Kristen Callaghan, Matthew Armstrong and Ron English provided oral updates on their activities to accompany their written updates in the meeting binders and took questions from the Board on their updates. Chelsea Hermus and casual staff provided written updates in the binders which Amy reviewed with the Board.

(Robert Charlie granted permission for Government of Canada, Department of Fisheries and Oceans and Government of Northwest Territories, Environment and Natural Resources to move up on the agenda)

## **12. Local Agency Updates**

### **❖ Government of Canada: Department of Fisheries and Oceans - Larry Dow & Kevin Bill**

**Larry Dow** gave an office update for the DFO Inuvik region. Larry mentioned that much activity has been focused on the MGP and on DFO's recommendations and subsequent responsibilities & activities in the NEB process. He mentioned that additional funding, as was provided to the GRRB from his office in the past, is dependent on oil and gas funds. He updated the Board on the Oceans program on behalf of Kelly

Eggers and spoke to current staffing issues at the local DFO office. The Integrated Oceans Management Plan (IOMP) is awaiting endorsement from Ottawa. Ian McLeod sits on the Working Group for the IOMP. Larry also informed the Board that there were attempts to put an order forward to Ottawa to renew the Fisheries Act with no luck. He also indicated that the NWT Fishing Regulations were sent to Ottawa last year for review with no response. The NWT Fishing Regulations will not be renewed until Nunavut regulations are also updated.

**Kevin Bill** updated the Board on the fisheries management activities.

Kevin updated the Board on the current emergency measures limiting trout sport fishing in response to low trout numbers and low oxygen levels in Dolomite “Airport” Lake. Part of Kevin’s presentation is summarized below:

Kevin Bill: The main item is Airport Lake (update was provided at GRRB October Meeting). The Lake trout population numbers in the lake are too low for a lake that size. Sport fishing license numbers and catch & possession limits were reduced to 1 and 1 during spawning. **If the GRRB is supportive**, we are proposing to change sport fisher possession limits permanently during spawning (Aug 15-Oct 31) to zero and lowered the rest of the year. This would not be permanently in place until perhaps 2013, given the length of time this process takes. In the meantime the interim limits will still be in place annually during the spawning duration and monitoring of fish numbers and water quality will continue. This does not apply to aboriginal harvesting. Kevin plans to work with the GRRB and NRRC to do a habitat assessment.

Discussion was held between DFO reps, Board members and public in attendance on the Airport Lake measures and oxygen levels in the lake. **Kevin will be sending the GRRB written information on these measures and on proposed permanent measures for the GRRB’s support.**

↑GRRB to receive information and was asked to respond with a recommendation.

Amy Thompson asked DFO if they monitor otter as fish predators in the Mackenzie Delta and if they have plans to do so in response to community concerns about increasing numbers of otters in the delta and their impact on local fisheries. Kevin responded to describe the monitoring of fish scars found on sampled fish that could have been caused by fish predators, including by otters, although those numbers of fish are low from all those sampled. He said that monitoring otters is out of the DFO jurisdiction but that conversations would need to be held with ENR and with GRRB to further investigate this issue. Robert asked him to have DFO keep records of otter observations.

Amy asked if DFO monitors deformed fish that are found by harvesters and what people should do if they find a deformed fish. Kevin responded to say that fish that are turned in to the Inuvik DFO office are sent to the lab in Winnipeg for analysis. The lab will try to identify the source of the problem with the fish that led to the deformity. He said that parasites have been found in some of these fish submitted to date, as well as spinal deformities. Kevin informed the Board that a new fish health pamphlet is expected to be available shortly. **Kevin will provide copies to the GRRB once it is available.**



❖ **Government of the Northwest Territories –Environment and Natural Resources -Inuvik  
–Steven Charlie, Martin Callaghan**

**Steven Charlie (Superintendent -Inuvik Region)** introduced himself as the new regional superintendent of the Inuvik ENR office and gave a short update on staffing & training and of a travel update on his own and staff travel activities. His update was included in the meeting binders in Tab H as well as an update from Bea Lepine (not present at meeting) on the GNWT's Traditional Knowledge Policy.

Steven concluded his update and took questions. During the questions, Steven clarified that the patrolmen's positions do not include enforcement but that there are enforcement officers in each community (at least one in each community) and there are also numerous enforcement officers in Inuvik. Steven said that the GNWT can support training for patrolmen if they wish to move into a compliance/enforcement role. Steven commented that there has been a good response to the patrolmen and their job and good compliance so far.

**Martin Callaghan (Forest Manager –Inuvik Region)**

Martin introduced himself and explained the handout he provided with his update. His written update expanded upon materials given to the Board at its last meeting. He directed attention to specific materials in his written update, describing the spruce budworm monitoring that is ongoing in the Mackenzie Delta and up the Peel and Arctic Red Rivers and noted that the levels are low and dropped last year. Martin described training as a wild fire specialist he recently undertook and updated the board on staffing at the forestry office and course training undertaken and planned by forestry staff.

He described the community protection work undertaken in Tsiigehtchic to expand the fire break around the community of Tsiigehtchic and other planned projects, including some permafrost work to be undertaken.

Martin added that Daryl English has been doing a lot of conservation education work with the students in the region. Last summer there were 4 fires and 3 were human caused. Two were started by youth in Inuvik so it is important to talk to the students about conservation and impact of their actions on the landscape. ENR staff have gone out at least a dozen times with students recently as part of their conservation education work.

Martin concluded his update and took questions. During the question period some questions were asked of Steven Charlie regarding issues with foxes in the communities. In answer, Steven explained that wildlife officers can dispose of foxes with shotguns but it is not preferred to use a firearm in the community. ENR has been using traps around communities to catch foxes and these are monitored to make sure pets are not caught. ENR is also doing routine patrols around the schools. Steven commented that lots of people feed foxes in the communities and this creates more problems. Steven emphasized that the education component mentioned by Martin is important. He emphasized that it is a violation of law to feed wild animals and that while a charge can be laid if necessary, a person found to be feeding wild animals would be talked to first before resorting to charges. Liz Hansen provided a suggested that poster contests could assist with conservation education and enhancing awareness for youth.

## 13. NWT Legislation

### ❖ Wildlife Act Review -Norm Snowshoe (ENR, Inuvik)

Norm introduced himself and the main activities he has been involved in but focussed on his involvement in the NWT Wildlife Act review and mentioned the NWT Species at Risk Act update he is also involved in.

Norm described how the Wildlife Act needs to reflect the provisions of the land claims and what work is being done to incorporate these land claim provisions in the act. Norm's presentation is in the meeting binders.

During the question period the issue of trade and barter came up as well as the Board's authority to set policy and guidelines in this area and how that could be incorporated into the Wildlife Act.

Paul Latour noticed an issue regarding migratory birds in the Wildlife Act and said that he would be following up on this with CWS as a concern.

### ❖ Species at Risk Act in the NWT -Joanna Wilson (ENR, Yellowknife) –Species at Risk Implementation Supervisor

Joanna gave the Board an update on the new *Species at Risk Act* in the NWT, how it relates to the Federal *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) and the timeline for the NWT Act. Her presentation will be added to the binders after the meeting.

Joanna explained that as of February 1<sup>st</sup>, the new Act is in force. This Act provides the tools and framework for the GNWT and responsible bodies (including the co-management boards) to manage these species. The Act creates the Conference of Management Authorities (this includes the federal, territorial government, the co-management boards and the non-settled land claim governments are invited as observers).

Joanna clarified that the territorial listing of a species could differ from the federal SAR Act. She gave an example as if a hypothetical listing for a species in the NWT was considered at a lower risk than by the federal Act, the GNWT would need to show that enough was being done to protect the species in the NWT. If that condition is met, then the federal SARA would only apply on federal lands, such as on National Parks.

A management plan is necessary for a Species of Special Concern and a recovery strategy is necessary for Threatened and Endangered species.

The role of the GRRB was discussed in the formation of the Species at Risk Committee (first meeting in March). The board will need to appoint a member to the SARC for a 5 year term. The boards can discuss proposed appointees from other management authorities to ensure that the right expertise is on the committee. The main role of the board is to participate (with up to 3 representatives) on the Conference of Management Authorities (1<sup>st</sup> meeting of CMA to be held June 2-3).

**Joanna needs the GRRB to decide who they will appoint to the SARC, who to send to the CMA meeting in June and if the GRRB will support inviting the Akaitcho, Dehcho and NWT Metis to participate as observers in the CMA process.**

↑The GRRB is expected to make three decisions and notify the SAR Secretariat of these decisions.

After her presentation Joanna took questions from the meeting participants. Topics addressed included funding to co-management boards to implement new responsibilities associated with the Wildlife Act, clarification of the CMA duties, inclusion of other First Nations as observers and then as management authorities once their land claims are settled and funding for assessments, who will write status reports and how Species at Risk habitat is evaluated and managed on private lands owned by land claim groups. Charlie Snowshoe expressed concern about animal populations in decline around the Fort McPherson area and wanted the Board and the ENR representatives to know about them. His comments were:

“I want to inform you that there is a problem up here with species at risk. There used to be millions of muskrats but today there is almost nothing. There used to be lots of rabbits around but you are lucky to see a rabbit track in Fort McPherson right now. I know why there are no ducks – the big developers in oil and gas are killing them off. I know that. I am bringing this to the Board’s attention and to you as a SARA person to find out why there are no rats in the Delta. People aren’t getting them and we don’t know why and nobody is doing anything about it. This is why I am bringing it to your attention. Need someone with knowledge of that area to be involved. We know we have low water –maybe that is affecting it.”

## **12. Local Agency Updates (Continued)**

### **❖ Gwich’in Land Use Planning Board - Susan McKenzie, Land Use Planner**

Susan updated the board on the status of the Gwich’in Land Use Plan and the recent activities of the GLUPB. She provided the board with her presentation and a map produced as part of the Land Use Plan. These are in the binders under Tab H. Her office is also working with help of GSCI to produce a Gwich’in Atlas. The board is developing a regional plan of action as part of their implementation of the plan.

After Susan’s presentation, the question period included discussion on the development of pit management plans, land use issues surrounding Airport and Campbell Lakes, monetary endeavours being affected by the GLUP, identification of research gaps (such as water monitoring) and a suggestion by a meeting participant for the GTC to hold a board forum with local agencies and boards to better inform one another what everyone is doing in region.

Robert Charlie adjourned the meeting for the day at 5:30pm. The meeting was set to reconvene at 9 AM on Thursday, Feb 18.

**-MEETING ADJOURNED AT 5:30 PM -**

## **Thursday, February 18, GRRB Bi-Annual Board Meeting, Inuvik, NT**

Robert Charlie called the meeting to order at 9 AM with opening remarks.

### **9. Board Member/Agency updates (nominating agency)**

#### **❖ Paul Latour (Environment Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service)**

Paul gave an update on the status of the Inuvik CWS office and staffing situation: the local Inuvik CWS office currently has only one employee (contract biologist). Soon a new biologist & technician will be at the office. The manager, Joel Ingram, left in January and that position will likely not be filled for at least a year. Paul wanted the meeting participants to understand that the Delta area is not being abandoned by CWS but that the hiring process takes time. The local office will be re-staffed and a CWS presence will be kept in the area. Bruce McDonald is the main CWS contact.

Paul briefly spoke regarding the *Species at Risk Act* meetings upcoming in the GSA communities on Boreal woodland caribou (Feb 23 in Inuvik). He had more information to share from CWS but left this for later agenda items.

#### **❖ Dan Topolniski (Environment Canada, Dept. of Fisheries and Oceans)**

Dan thanked Amy for her work involving the Board. Dan has been involved with the Rat River Dolly Varden draft review of TK and the interim fisheries plan (COSEWIC report). Dan also acts as a liaison with DFO. He commented that it is encouraging that there are good relations with the area office and the Board. Dan also commented that the fisheries plan being discussed is helping to build relations with DFO headquarters staff and how Amy's efforts have been helpful in building the Board's credibility. Dan pointed out that the ongoing issues are to get a good process established with DFO science staff.

Dan attended a workshop in Winnipeg in November, sponsored by INAC. This was a workshop examining a risk management framework to identify impacts & liabilities of climate change and how to respond to such risks. There are products still to come from the workshop and these will be shared with the Board and staff. Dan indicated he will distribute the draft document from the workshop once it is completed to the members and staff.

#### **❖ George Low (Environment Canada, Dept. of Fisheries and Oceans)**

George is the alternate DFO Board member and has been trying to keep up on all the issues. He was pleased to be able to make the trip and to meet everyone.

#### **❖ Liz Hansen (Government of the NWT, Environment & Natural Resources)**

Liz thanked Amy for all the information that she provides to the Board and to Matthew for his help with the RRC in Inuvik. As an RRC member, she reminded the Board that the RRCs are asking for more monitors to be used and for more reports to be given to the RRCs after research comes back. On behalf

of the RRCs, she expressed happiness seeing Steven Charlie in the superintendent's position. As a Board member, she's recently helped with GRRB staffing interviews, with Gwich'in translations of the calendar and will attend the Boreal caribou meetings Paul mentioned. She commented that some of the Board's work may become stronger in this regard. Liz did reviews of Tim Byer's report. Liz expressed concern about the ongoing caribou issue that is going on down south (Bathurst herd) and how that could relate to government having the last say in this region, especially given the strength of the TEK of the Gwich'in.

#### ❖ **Robert Alexie (Gwich'in Tribal Council)**

Robert commented that it is good to see Amy in her position. He noted that there are big changes as we go along now compared to 1992. He anticipates some difficult discussions to be had, especially with regard to caribou and climate change. Robert values being kept up to date on the issues that are ongoing. He is concerned about climate change issues (especially with respect to landslides) and what research is being done in that regard. He would appreciate knowing if someone is looking at the slides in the Fort McPherson region and in the GSA generally. He informed the group that a 600-700 ft cliff had a slide down all the way to the river.

#### ❖ **James Firth (Gwich'in Tribal Council)**

James commented on issues raised in the last meeting on caribou regarding birthing grounds and early movement of caribou across the highway. He would like a study to see if there is calving in the Stony and Rat River headwaters area as well as a study regarding wolves and grizzly bear and if that can be addressed. James mentioned the loche study down south that had found contamination and wondered if that should be addressed in the local loche fishery.

#### ❖ **Eugene Pascal (Gwich'in Tribal Council)**

Eugene mentioned a media interview he'd heard with a caribou biologist in Alaska and how it sounded as though they aren't having the same problems with the reindeer as in this region. He felt that the Board would need information on that to compare to what is happening with caribou in our region. The Alaskan reindeer have been studied for a long time. Eugene has requested a copy of the CKLB program that discussed this issue.

Eugene mentioned that he shared concerns about the previous caribou issues that have been mentioned by others at the meeting.

Eugene spoke to conditions in the Mackenzie Delta and around Aklavik: in the Delta, the small animals are healthy; there are lots of rabbits; a few packs of wolves north and south of Aklavik; concerns with the local loche population based on the results of the loche study done in Fort Good Hope; not much snow so far this year.

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After the Board members' updates were completed, Amy spoke regarding the burbot study that was in the news and that James and Eugene had brought up. She is following up on this and contacted the study's author, Dr. Gary Stern. She asked questions about whether the local burbot have the same type of changes and mentioned her contaminant samples collected over one year. His opinion was that based

on the contaminant issue in his study, contaminants are location dependent and localized. He sampled in the same location and time, each time he sampled so has a good dataset. It is possible it could be happening in our region but we would need long term sampling. He gave Amy information on a lab that could do the analysis of the GRRB samples.

## 10. RRC Updates

### ❖ Tetlit RRC -Mary Rose Tetlich

Mary Rose said that the issues or concerns the TRRC had were addressed at the Regional RRC meeting that Robert Charlie (and some GRRB staff) were present at so she had nothing new to add to that.

Robert Charlie commented that the GRRB will follow up once they receive the Regional RRC meeting minutes.

### ❖ Gwichya Gwich'in RRC –Jason McLeod

Jason agreed with Mary Rose that issues of the GRRB were brought up at the Regional RRC meeting.

### ❖ Nihtat RRC -Ricky Firth

Ricky notified the Board that the NRRC is in the process of advertising for new council members. Concerns of the NRRC were brought up at the regional meeting. (Robert Charlie commented that the motions from that meeting are in the board meeting binder.)

### ❖ Ehdiiat RRC

No one was present from the ERRC to give an update when this agenda item came up.

## 11. Local Agency Updates (Continued)

### ❖ Bird Conservation Region Planning in Canada - Paul Latour, Canadian Wildlife Service

Paul gave a presentation on the Bird Conservation Region Planning in Canada and explained how this is a new way of looking at migratory bird management in Canada. His presentation will be added to the binders.

After his presentation questions on the new planning process included discussion of bird diseases such as West Nile Virus, desire that impacts of climate change to animals in the region (not just to marine mammals and arctic ice) would be investigated, songbird declines in the GSA, the large number of plans to be produced as part of the management process and the possibility of at least three management regions overlapping the GSA (meaning that the GRRB could be asked to review 3 management plans for a single species occurring in all three regions). Paul requested to the Board to consider how heavily they want to be involved in this regional planning initiative.

### ❖ US Fish & Wildlife Service & Canadian Wildlife Service Bird counts: Annual aerial surveys – Paul Latour

Paul described what this aerial survey research is, what and how it is being done and why this is an international survey effort shared with the United States. As part of his presentation, Paul pointed out that in the Mackenzie Delta, there are increases documented compared to earlier surveys across all the species. However, there are some species locally that are declining (e.g. black ducks/scoters, scaup) as well as declining nationally. A few species nationally are increasing, such as bufflehead. Paul will mail some of their relevant annual reports to the Board.

#### ❖ **Wildlife Management- ENR, Inuvik -Marsha Branigan, Manager of Wildlife Management**

Marsha provided a written update to the Board and went through her written update with the meeting participants. Her update was added to the meeting binder materials.

There were some particular issues that Marsha highlighted for the Board in her update:

**ENR is looking for feedback from the GRRB on a request for the increase of payment for wolf carcass collections to \$200 from \$100. The RRCs, WMAC (NWT) and IGC support this increase.**

↑ GRRB was asked to make a decision and give a recommendation to GNWT, ENR

Marsha spoke regarding the current status of Porcupine Caribou management planning from an ENR and PCMB perspective. These materials were provided in her written update. **Marsha asked the Board to consider a quick comment to the GNWT on its perspective on the Harvest Management Plan, possibly by conference call following the meeting. GNWT is looking for input on whether ENR should sign the HMP. GRRB should also discuss what they would like to see in an implementation plan.**

↑ GRRB was asked to make a decision and give a recommendation to GNWT, ENR

**ENR has given the GRRB two data requests:**

1. GRRB was given a **harvest data request** for the purpose of producing a harvest report produced by the PCMB. Dorothy & Marsha are hoping for **Kristen's assistance** with the report and assistance working with the GRRB harvest data.
2. ENR has put in a data request to the GRRB for **spatial data to use in the GIS layers for a cumulative effects project**. The GIS layers will include harvest, trails, fires, habitat, landscape features etc... to help in the future to look at cumulative effects on the PC caribou.

↑ GRRB has been given two data requests and a request for GRRB staff assistance.

Marsha informed the Board that there is discussion underway to get the International Porcupine Caribou Management Board running again.

Marsha spoke regarding the use of the Caribou Calculator Model, what it was designed for and how it is being currently used to make future projections. These needs are different and the model needs to be revised to: (1.) Give an estimate of the herd based on all the data available (survival rates, cow-calf estimates etc..) and to give a range around the estimate (a confidence interval of sorts) and (2.) It will allow the managers to see the effect of different harvest management regimes on the herds to assist in making the decisions. The model will not make the decisions but will help provide some necessary information for such decisions.

After her update topics brought up in the question period included the User agreement (for the PC herd), the need for serious consideration of caribou predators (wolves and bears) and their impact to caribou & to hunter safety and bear behaviour, some support for the wolf carcass payment increase, and a question regarding participants and senior officials in the recent Summit of the Parties in Whitehorse for the HMP. A desire for there to be a more local meeting was expressed.

Marsha brought these lists for participants later in the afternoon session of the day's meeting and during the question period after her update commented that Richard Nerysoo had mentioned at the summit that the next meeting should be in this area. She explained that the PCMB has a policy that the meetings alternate between the NWT and Yukon and that the next meeting of the PCMB is next week in Aklavik. Marsha commented that it would be helpful to have Sonny Blake also at these meetings with the GRRB to get an update from both NWT PCMB members.

## **19. Project Updates**

### **❖ Porcupine Caribou Herd Research Program and Priorities –Dorothy Cooley**

Dorothy Cooley spoke regarding the work plan for the Porcupine Caribou Technical Committee (PCTC), the Porcupine Caribou Herd program and research priorities. Dorothy provided copies of the work plan, the PCH program and priorities at the meeting for inclusion in the meeting binders.

During the questions it was clarified that the breeding ground survey is different from the photocensus (there were two surveys being discussed) and that Dorothy sits as the co-chair for the PCTC.

### **❖ Porcupine Caribou rut count in October, 2009 –Dorothy Cooley**

Dorothy updated the Board on the Porcupine Caribou rut count in October, 2009. The count was done to make sure that a bull dominated harvest could be sustained by having an estimate of the ratio of mature bulls in the herd. Preliminary results for the PCH in 2009 showed 40 bulls per 100 cows. Dorothy explained that this ratio is lower than the 60:100 found in 1980 but that this is still a healthy level. Other areas have in the past found ratios much lower than 40 bulls:100 cows with no discernible effect on pregnancy rates.

Questions to Dorothy included male caribou mortality rates as compared to females, Alaskan Gwich'in harvest data and how decisions are made regarding bull-only harvests. Dorothy clarified that instituting a bull-only harvest is not a biological decision but is a decision for the managers to make with the public and the politicians. Dorothy pointed out that from a biological perspective, females are more important



than the males are. The HMP has a graph that shows the effect of taking a bull rather than a cow and there being 23 more caribou in the herd in 10 years just for that one choice of a bull over a cow. A change of just 2-3% in the harvest of cows can have a large impact on the herd size.

## 20. Wildlife Studies Fund Presentations

### ❖ **Porcupine Caribou Breeding Female Population Estimate: June, 2010 - Proposed by Dorothy Cooley in consultation with the PCTC**

Dorothy spoke regarding her research proposal to estimate herd size of the Porcupine Caribou herd. (Her research abstract was included in meeting binders and full project proposal in the Wildlife Studies Binder). She requested \$15,000 from GRRB to support the research.

During questions about her proposal, there was a desire to examine the breeding grounds of the caribou and the possibility of there being breeding areas not documented by radio-collared caribou. Robert Alexie Sr. noted that snow levels are different and that there are caribou wintering now down at Olgilvie and Eagle Plains this year. Dorothy noted that from the collar information this year the caribou seem pretty restless and are moving around.

### ❖ **North Richardson Mountain Dall's Sheep Survey, June 2010 –Proposed by Dorothy Cooley in partnership with Marsha Branigan & Kristen Callaghan.**

Dorothy gave the research presentation which supplemented the binder materials of the research abstract and full research proposal to survey the Dall's sheep population in the Northern Richardson Mountains this June. She requested \$18,000 from the GRRB to support the research and requested the assistance of the GRRB's wildlife biologist with the survey.

↑GRRB was given a request for feedback.

During the questions, harvest measures recommended in the Dall's sheep management plan came up and this reminded Marsha to mention that it would be helpful if the GRRB could think about how to improve the check station for next year and about how to increase the number of samples submitted for caribou.

↑GRRB was given a request for feedback.

Robert Charlie asked if there is a way of doing the calculations in conjunction with the next photo survey to check the accuracy of the caribou calculator model. Marsha said this is planned for and that the estimate obtained (either by one of or both the breeding ground survey and photo census) will be compared to outputs of the calculator.

There was discussion about the caribou sample kits, their distribution at the check station, the \$25 payment for returned samples and how few samples were returned. In response, there was a suggestion by James to hand out the kits when the harvest study interviews are done and to talk about the need for the sampling at the time of the interviews.

↑Suggestion to ENR/GRRB staff regarding protocols for the Harvest Study.

There was discussion about the importance of communication. Mary Rose commented that in Fort McPherson the TRRC goes on the radio every Monday and the different organizations have a chance at the program once a month for an hour. This is a good opportunity to talk about the need for sampling, for harvest data, etc... & to communicate these messages.

↑A suggestion was given to ENR/GRRB to use regular community radio announcements for communication of resource management messages.

Robert Alexie Sr. raised a concern about wolf predation on the caribou and in response Dorothy answered that there was a wolf study done north of the Porcupine and Bell Rivers in 1990 which extrapolated to the entire herd range. Dorothy explained that there are different types of wolves: some that follow the caribou and some that maintain territories and only hunt when the caribou come by their territories. The population model (used for the Porcupine Herd) fits in predation with the mortality rates used. The model can account for higher and lower predation. All of the HMP projections used the highest predation pressure to be conservative. There is a wolf management plan in the Yukon that would need to be followed in the Yukon by government biologists (if any actions were taken to manage predators in the Yukon).

## 12. Local Agency Updates (Continued)

### ❖ Gwich'in Land and Water Board- Robert Alexie, Executive Director update.

Robert gave an update from the Gwich'in Land and Water Board to the GRRB on the recent activities of the GLWB; the binders contain his written update.

**Questions** on his update included the GLWB meeting with the GTC, community consultation when water licenses and permits are granted, Peel & Mackenzie River ferry landings and permits associated with the DOT ferries, the need for community concerns raised about GLWB related issues (such as about gravel from the ferries) to be given to the GLWB and to the responsible agencies (such as DOT). Concerns about water erosion causing land slides and possible future erosion of the road by the Mackenzie crossing and Arctic Red rivers was raised. Gwich'in private land responsibilities for land in this area was also brought up.

***-LUNCH BREAK 12:10-1PM-***

## 20. Wildlife Study Fund Presentations (Continued)

### ❖ Dolly Varden Char Habitat Research – Proposed by Sharon Clouthier (DFO)

Sharon presented a description of her research proposal on Dolly Varden Char to the Board by phone to supplement her written submission in the meeting binders.

**Questions** and comments to Sharon included support for the work as it pertains to the Rat River. Concerns were expressed about the multi-year component of the system modelling and the diversity of species included and Sharon was asked what she would think if the GRRB supported this on a smaller scale and more focused on the Rat River char, as a one time partner for support to this research?

Sharon responded to say that that would be a very feasible approach. She did initially not want to stress out the Dolly Varden populations but in order to answer her research questions, she was proposing to investigate other species including the Dolly Varden Char among them.

Further discussion involved sampling times and protocols.

## 16. Document Approval

### ❖ Consultation Rules and Procedures -Matthew Armstrong

Matthew brought up the main highlights discussed at the last meeting. This last review includes final revisions based on comments by Matthew, Amy & Kristen. Matthew explained that the main highlight for this meeting is on the Appendix containing summaries of the policies and procedures for quick reference. In addition to describing the summaries, Matthew also notified the Board that there were a few disclaimers added at the beginning of the document relating to it being a living document and also regarding instances where the Board must respond to an urgent government request as per GCLCA that could affect the timelines proposed. Matthew reiterated that the summaries are a guide but do not replace the document itself.

Questions after Matthew's presentation included affirmation that a legal review of the document by Brian Crane was made and his comments were incorporated. Matthew and Amy pointed out that a definitions section was added as well as clarification made on procedures related to providing information to government staff versus a government Minister. Matthew noted that the document included a requirement to provide the RRCs with the summaries. Kristen noted that the document does not yet include a section on forestry but that as a living document this could be easily incorporated once it was written and finalized.

Amy affirmed her comfort with the document as a whole and in particular, with its new format making it more easily read and the summary section being of particular help for quick reference and review. She noted that changes to the wildlife management section were incorporated and that it now works well to describe how we would see a management plan be developed, as compared to just how a plan would be approved.

Liz wondered if there were forms to be used in conjunction with the Rules and Procedures, and that creation of these might be helpful, especially for the next person to use the document. Matthew answered that staff haven't foreseen the need for any forms yet.

**Motion #Feb2010-03**

Moved by James Firth

**To accept (1) the *GRRB Rules and Procedures for Consultation* and (2) the *GRRB Rules for Public Hearing* documents.**

Seconded by: Dan Topolniski

All in favour. Motion carried.

## 17. Research Priorities

### ❖ **GRRB Research Priority Setting Update & Discussion on Annual Priority Setting- Matthew Armstrong**

Matthew reviewed with the Board the procedures established for setting research priorities and getting the RRCs' input at community meetings on the research priority guide that was sent out to all the RRCs. Matthew noted that for items not in the GRRB mandate to look at, staff will contact the relevant agency to communicate the research need to them.

Amy explained that under the Consultation procedures, pg. 10. 3.2.5, there is a Research Consultation Committee who will oversee this process. She inquired as to whether there are Board members interested in being part of this committee. She described the duties of the committee and asked for thoughts on this from the Board.

↑GRRB members asked for participation on Research Consultation Committee

Matthew added that the RRCs will be met with twice a year as part of the priority setting process. As the Regional RRC meeting is very soon after the GRRB releases the annual research priorities for that year, the Regional RRC meeting might be too soon to start talking about new priorities, although staff could certainly plan to mention them at the Regional RRC meeting.

**Discussion during the question period** included priorities from management plans, feedback from co-management partners, identification of otters being in the priorities (with regard to their impact on other wildlife such as char, muskrats and beaver) and making sure that the RRCs and communities are aware of the priorities as well as knowing that their concerns are being heard and addressed, even if this is in some cases just to pass the concern on to another responsible agency, such as ENR. There was a suggestion that the Regional RRC meeting could be a good venue to provide an update on this.

### ❖ **Science in support of Fisheries Management - Kevin Bill (DFO)**

Kevin presented how DFO has been developing its research priorities and developing a process for doing so. DFO has been working on identifying their priorities as part of the science planning process for each priority stock/fishery. They've developed checklists to determine if there are gaps to be filled in. The internal process at DFO is being worked on to make sure it is working well.

Kevin showed a flowchart explaining the internal process that DFO is taking to identify their priorities and short and long term plans. (3 year or 5 year plan for Dolly Varden)

Kevin explained that the Research Priority Setting cycle at the GRRB fits well into the DFO's process.

**Questions** to Kevin included ensuring the inclusion of TK, baseline monitoring of regional lakes, how implementation measures in the Dolly Varden plan fit into the DFO process described, identification of

DFO priority stocks in the region, how priorities of the GRRB and FJMC are included in the DFO process and the timing of the GRRB priority setting cycle in relation to the DFO's priority setting schedule.

## 19. Project Updates (Continued)

### ❖ Rat River Monitoring and Research Update (no materials in binder)- Kevin Bill (DFO)

Kevin Bill presented an update on the Rat River char monitoring and research. As there were no written materials provided, his update is given below:

**Kevin:** There is upcoming Rat River work in 2010. We will continue monitoring work at Big Eddy and Destruction City on the Rat River. The numbers taken by each monitor in 2009 were not high; only one monitor actually caught the 75 char they were allocated. High water limited the fishing later in the season and because we asked them to spread their netting out over the season, this affected the number. We will be talking at the spring Rat River Working Group meeting if these numbers will change. Last year we supplied John Carmichael with a sampling kit for the kidneys. He sampled 47 fish but there was a problem with the study design which has now been addressed (by taking the whole kidney as proposed by Sharon Cloutier).

Other Rat River research –last year there was a tagging program at the fish hole in the fall. 462 char were tagged. This fall the plan is to go back and do some seining at the fish hole to get a sense of the population and to do some tagging again this year. We'll do that again for a few reasons: (1.) In support of the COSEWIC assessment, they feel it is good to get a few years of back-to-back population assessment to feed into the management processes (2.) Addressing the contribution of Rat River char to the coastal fishery on the North Slope; there a few programs ongoing to address this. If we can get tag returns from coastal fishery, this will help to assess this. There will also be tagging in the ISR to address this.

Something brought up in some meetings: there may be a portion of the population that goes into the river early to spawn or stays in the river instead of going out to sea. Collin Gallagher and Steve Sandstrom flew over and saw what they thought were char in the Fish Hole in July. We want to get a description of the work to provide to the Rat River Working Group.

Seining at the hole will help determine if these are fish tagged last year or if they are from another population that may not be going out to the ocean. They may want to tag those fish too. Lots of work for the Rat River is being proposed. Neil Mochnacz has also submitted his project description requesting support from the GRRB for his habitat research. His submission is in your binders.

**Questions** to Kevin included clarification of funding requests to the GRRB, clarification that the kidney sampling protocol could be done by a community member properly trained, when results are to be expected from the monitoring program (Kim Howland is in charge of this -catch per unit effort was provided at the earlier meeting and more information to come at the March meeting; lots of spawning females at the Fish Hole when DFO was there -70% were female spawning, 11% were male spawning), and clarification that the new ones staying behind are not dwarf but are large (>400mm) fish.

There was discussion regarding when is there enough information to make a decision and how research activities' potential impact to the char population is a community concern. Kevin responded to say that this concern will be mentioned in Winnipeg and that other less invasive methods such as a sonar camera are being considered. There was also discussion regarding licensing of habitat research and how such research doesn't require a permit (as required when fish will be caught for research). Kevin commented on such research saying that there are other projects that don't catch fish that don't have a license. There is a memorandum of understanding agreement between DFO and ARI so that no ARI permit is necessary. Kevin didn't know if this is formal but expressed hope that if there is a DFO project, (which the local office would know about) that they would let the researchers know that they should be consulting with the communities and the boards on those projects.

## **18. Management Updates**

Kristen Callaghan updated the Board on the status of the Grizzly Bear Management Agreement (GBMA) review, the Dall's sheep Management Plan and the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose West and Bluenose East Management Plan status.

The GRRB is still waiting for all the RRCs to give feedback on the issues discussed at the September 30<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Parties to the GBMA. Kristen has contact the RRCs to remind them and once Kristen receives all RRC input, she will consolidate the responses and circulate them back to the Board and RRCs and initiate further steps to complete the GBMA review.

The Dall's sheep Management Plan Working Group recommended a draft plan to the Plan Parties in June of 2008 but an Implementation Team was not established to oversee finalization of the Plan and to resolve final amendments to the recommended plan suggested by the parties. Kristen will be contacting GSA parties to the plan to consolidate GSA parties' comments and to work out any issues regarding the plan within the GSA and then will contact other parties to the plan to move forward with the Implementation Team and plan finalization.

Kristen gave a presentation on the management planning process for the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose West and Bluenose East caribou herds that is being directed by the ACCWM. She discussed the community engagement meetings that have been undertaken in all the management regions and presented the focus questions presented at these meetings to community members. Board members were each given a draft copy of the community input from meetings in the GSA. Draft regional summaries of ISR and Sahtu community meetings were also provided for viewing at the meeting.

The working group and the consultants will be using the community input to draft a management plan and will be meeting with the ACCWM on February 23<sup>rd</sup> to present an annotated Table of Contents and to receive the co-chairs comment on the work to date and direction on writing of a first draft in the coming weeks.

## 20. Wildlife Study Fund Presentations (Continued)

### ❖ Community Engagement Meetings for Round Two consultations on the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose West and Bluenose East Management Plan –Kristen Callaghan

Kristen described her WSF proposal and how the funds will be used to support the cost of the second round of community meetings in the GSA, in which the first draft of the management plan will be brought to the communities for feedback. Her proposal abstract and budgets were included in the Board's meeting binders.

## 18. Management Updates (Continued)

### ❖ Dolly Varden Char Integrated Fisheries Management Plan (IFMP) -Amy Thompson

Amy updated the Board on the Dolly Varden Char IFMP for Dolly Varden of the GSA and ISR, on the Traditional Knowledge Verification workshop and the COSEWIC process and status for Dolly Varden char. Amy's presentation was in the meeting binders which also included copies of the December draft discussion paper of the IFMP. Amy wanted to know if the Board is satisfied with the current work done on the plan?

↑GRRB opinion requested

Amy pointed out that the full IFMP draft document can be supplied to any interested members or public. A few copies were left at the meeting for those interested.

During the questions, there was further discussion about how much work is enough and how much money can be justifiably spent on a fishery, when to just have the bare minimum done and what is really necessary. There was discussion related to the need for the IFMP and how in light of a potential SARA listing by COSEWIC, the work on the IFMP and the management directives and the community involvement and direction it entails, gives strength to everyone involved that might not be given without the IFMP and by a federal plan as a result of a SARA listing alone.

Discussion also turned to the cost of community engagements and carrying out management actions. Kevin pointed out that if the species was listed under SARA, that this would open up new sources of funding related to protection of species at risk and these could help reduce the financial constraints currently being experienced.

Charlie Snowshoe inquired as to the status of the Rat River char and Amy gave a brief update on the decline in the early 2000s and an increase in 2007 and 2008. She said that she could give Charlie a further update when the next estimate is given this fall.

↑expectation of follow-up by the GRRB

### ❖ Gwich'in Forest Management Plan -Amy Thompson

Amy distributed a two page document on the status of the forest management plan for inclusion in the binders. Amy summarized that document and the process that has been taken to get the plan where it is currently. Amy described the positions taken by the parties (RRCs, GTC, ENR, GRRB) to the plan and motions that have been made to support the plan with final comments or as recommended. Amy described the next steps to be taken in order to proceed with a signing ceremony and there was brief discussion of the need for consideration of activities needed to implement the GFMP.

## **20. Wildlife Study Fund Presentations (Continued)**

### **❖ Water quality and fish health monitoring project - Julie-Ann Andre (Timber Island Enterprises) (In-kind support request)**

Julie-Ann described the rationale for her request of in-kind support from the GRRB to help develop her research proposal. She described her proposed work as a project that will integrate research, culture and science. She will gather information at three locations on baseline fish health and water quality levels. The locations are south of the Mackenzie Gas Project and would be timed in June when the spring run-off is happening. She hopes that this will be a multi-year project after the first year's results are received. The project will promote the Gwich'in cultural way of life, science and healthy living.

Her methods will use Gill nets to capture and sample fish caught. Drying racks will be constructed for preserving all fish that are caught and given back to the community of the employed student(s). Water samples will also be collected and analyzed. Students will become familiar with the knowledge resulting from building a basic camp, gathering camp materials, gill netting, sampling fish, water testing methods, cooking, removal of waste and preserving fish for the communities. Julie Anne wants students to be involved to learn cultural methods and to become familiar with scientific methods and possibly leading to their long term interest in studying science.

Participants at each camp would include an elder, camp attendant, cook, environmental monitor, 3 students and a scientist to participate. ENR & DFO will be invited to do ½ hour presentations to the students. The programs will each last 10 days. Students are to be between the ages of 15 & 25. Julie-Ann wants to give a chance to all students, regardless of whether they are currently in school.

Julie-Ann requested in-kind support by the help of the fisheries biologist to help her develop her project proposal. This would include assistance in the creation of the Summer Camp, support on where to find a scientist, where to send samples within a timeframe to get the best results, and the cost estimates of these essential resources to make the project a reality. She requested 3 weeks' time of the fisheries biologist, but felt that it may not take that much time.

**Questions** to Julie-Ann included the need for identification of what is being analyzed in the water samples, possible assistance from Taiga Labs in Yellowknife and general funding issues to support the project.

### **❖ Community Based Ecological Monitoring - Arctic Borderlands Ecological Co-op, Michael Svoboda**



Robert Charlie presented the WSF request by the ABEC to continue the Community Based Ecological Monitoring in the range of the Porcupine Caribou Herd. This time they are trying a focus group approach rather than individual surveys. There are concerns with the partners to the Borderlands on the usefulness of the information collected. At these meetings, they will get feedback from the communities on the new approach to be taken. The funding request from the GRRB is for \$10,000.

## **19. Project Updates (Continued)**

### **❖ Gwich'in Harvest Data Collection Project - Matthew Armstrong, Marsha Branigan**

Matthew went through the presentation provided in the meeting binders to update the Board on the harvest data collection project (Tab N). Matthew described the history of the GHS and the need for the data. He described the benefits of the current study, how the current study works and provided information on the collection efforts to date. He presented some preliminary data on harvests of the Porcupine caribou herd before and after the emphasis on voluntary bull-only harvests in the GSA.

During the question period, Robert Alexie Sr. commented on the PC harvest data comparison shown and said that at the time of year the data was collected (that demonstrated a potential response to a bull-only harvest emphasis) that most people normally take bulls in September. After rutting season, traditional harvesting is of cows and then back to bulls by April. Paul clarified that Robert's comments suggest that the data is not necessarily showing compliance with the voluntary measures. Paul also noted the different lengths of the sampling period in the two datasets shown.

There was some discussion related to persons' truthfulness when answering harvest survey questions and how this could vary depending on the perception people wanted to give. There was a suggestion to use the radio to communicate how important this (accurate) information is to management.

Discussion was also held regarding the survey methods and analytical strength in comparison to the GHS and how it is important that super-harvesters be included in the survey. Matthew and Marsha acknowledged that there are differences between the two studies and that this is mostly a result of the difference in money and consequent efforts involved so that we can't expect to have the same kind of data set. More work is certainly needed, and in particular with regard to the Porcupine herd when it will be closely scrutinized.

In response to discussion about issues related to collection efforts, there was discussion around the idea of involving the RRC coordinators as interviewers for the study. There was also discussion around focusing the efforts on a reduced number of species rather than getting harvest information for all species being harvested.

Discussion turned to funding needs for implementation of the PC Harvest Management Strategy as well as establishing and integrating communication messages before the check station starts up again and the need for current education messages. There was some discussion related to collecting harvest information at the check station as well as by the harvest study and possible comparisons that could be made as well as possible issues of reporting bias with two avenues for reporting. James commented that

the hunter could be given the harvest data form at the check station and be informed of the study there. He expressed a desire to see a check station also on the other side of the Peel to be sure to catch all harvesters.

## **20. Wildlife Studies Fund Presentation (Continued)**

### **❖ Gwich'in Harvest Data Collection Project - Matthew Armstrong**

Matthew continued his Harvest Study update, presenting the need for WSF funds to support the study in the next year. His WSF proposal summary is included in the binders under Tab O. He provided a description of the next steps for the harvest study and funding sources being applied to for support of the project's continuance in 2010-2011. The funding request of the GRRB was for \$25,000 out of the total of \$76,500 (46%). His proposal was included in the meeting binders and in the WSF binder.

### **❖ Moose Abundance and Composition Survey –Kristen Callaghan & Tracy Davison (ENR)**

Kristen presented a proposal to do a aerial survey of moose in the GSA and in portions of the ISR in March, 2011 in partnership with ENR. The survey proposal abstract was included in the meeting binders and the full research proposal was supplied in the WSF binder. She requested \$20,000 from the GRRB to support the research.

### **❖ GRRB Wildlife Biologist GIS Training –Kristen Callaghan**

Kristen presented her proposal and rationale for receiving funds from the GRRB for upcoming GIS training offered by ESRI Canada in Whitehorse. Her proposal abstract was included in the meeting binders.

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Robert Charlie thanked the meeting participants for their involvement in a successful meeting and adjourned the meeting for the day. He indicated that as agenda items 1-20 had been completed that Friday's meeting would include the remaining (mostly in-camera) agenda items.

***Meeting adjourned at 5PM,***

***In-camera session to begin at 9AM Friday, Feb 19.***