

WMAC NS June Teleconference

June 10, 2020

By Phone

Attendees: **Dave Tavares** (Parks Canada), **Tyler Kuhn** (Yukon Government), **Billy Archie** (IGC Representative), **Craig Machtans** (Canada Alternate), **Kaitlin Wilson** (WMAC NS staff), **Allison Thompson** (WMAC NS staff), **Lindsay Staples** (WMAC NS Chair), **Danny C. Gordon** (IGC Representative), **Mike Sutor** (Yukon Government), **Matt Clarke** (Yukon Government Alternate)

Meeting called to order at 1:10pm.

A. Agenda

Lindsay Staples provided an overview of the agenda. Two additions were made under chair/member/staff updates: muskox research program update and polar bear update.

Motion 2020-06-01 to accept the agenda as modified – Moved by Danny C. Gordon, seconded by Tyler Kuhn.

B. Minutes

Defer acceptance of past minutes to June 24th meeting to allow time for review.

C. Action Items

Kaitlin provided an update on the action items since the last WMAC NS meeting.

Lindsay provided an update on his plans for reaching out to IRC on the WCMP and Canada Nature Fund project. The main messaging will be that all other Parties are awaiting direction from IRC on proceeding with both initiatives.

Billy expressed concern about the lack of coordination and communication between IRC and IGC. It leads to confusion as a member of local governance (HTC). Lindsay will follow up with Billy to chat about this.

D. Discussion Items

Map Atlas

Kaitlin led the discussion of the Map Atlas.

Key points and Council feedback:

- The map atlas will be a public document and there are some data sensitivities that should be considered
- This digital map atlas is one of a suite of proposed map products (including paper maps targeted at land users). It is inherently limited - it can't be printed, or used meaningfully

out on the land. The staff have been working with AHTC to explore additional map products that will benefit the HTC and community of Aklavik.

- YG (Tyler) comments:
 - The maps work and present the large amount of data that exists. The TK map was very interesting.
 - YG would likely find these maps quite useful, especially for the non-GIS users within YG.
 - The TerraGo toolbar does not add that much usability.
 - The font size could be bigger
- Canada (Dave and Craig)
 - The maps worked and were easy to use.
 - Did not notice any info too sensitive to share.
 - The point data for moose and Dall's sheep are included, but they are also in the WCMP so there is no concern.
 - TerraGo bar did not add much.
 - The only thing lacking is the ability to introduce transparency between layers.
 - Request one additional map (Map 3, in the draft WCMP: a standalone map with the conservation value layers from the WCMP, so you can turn on/off those values to see different ways of overlaying that information.
 - Technical comment: the water layer is so dominant when you turn it on, it would be helpful to have a simpler hydrography layer.
 - Mike has a good one that his office uses.
- Data sensitivity considerations:
 - Mike (YG) noticed some data on one of the maps (GPS collar locations and den locations) that should not be released to the public. For public maps, the following steps should be taken:
 - Remove all GPS collar data
 - Obscure den data
 - Request permission from Vuntut Gwitchin Government to use the wildlife corridor maps; they are the owners.
 - Canada suggested that, based on this reasoning, the Ivvavik GPS collar data should be removed too
 - The Council suggested two separate sets of maps: one for internal use (which can contain sensitive data) and one for public use (no sensitive data)
 - The wildlife key areas data is okay to leave in.
 - Tyler clarified that YG is having internal discussions about confidential wildlife information. Legally, if you share confidential wildlife data without explicitly stating that it's confidential, that renders it legally non-confidential because the recipient can share it. For any of the data that Mike has flagged as sensitive, this is confidential wildlife info from a YG perspective, and YG asks that WMAC NS doesn't share these data.

TK User Guide

- Taking TK data out of context and sharing it publicly is a very sensitive process. Staff have been working with RRCS to find a way to give some context to the TK that would be included in the digital maps.

- RRCS have developed a draft TK information sharing approach, which includes a large amount of additional contextual information.
- The TK map does include quotes, which are not attributed by name, but are individual quotes. They provide helpful context but could potentially be problematic, if someone sees a quote that says, for example, “lots of moose here” others might be tempted to refute that or question the TK. It’s a tricky issue - staff don’t have a recommendation on this - welcome Council feedback.
- Billy expressed concerns about how data were confirmed, and potential for misinterpretation
- Danny wants to see the map atlas on the computer. Aklavik HTC could view the digital maps, too, so they can provide guidance.
- Lindsay: the knowledge holders are protected if a Personal Identification Number is used, but in a small town, sharing verbatim quotes can be problematic
- Tyler: the additional information in the TK documentation provides backing for the Council’s thought process and map development. The TK Data User Guide was very helpful.
- Dave: nothing to add.
- Mike: reviewed the TK maps. Agree with previous comments.
- Lindsay suggests further consideration of Kait’s suggestion to create a video explaining how to use the map atlas that can be used for outreach purposes with WMAC North Slope’s partners.
- Kait: Suggest that we package up the WCMP, companion doc, map atlas and provide in-person presentations to relevant organizations, once we have the ability to travel.
- Tyler: YG Staff can share the products internally, but there is more value in having WMAC NS staff come present the products and showcase their work.
- Craig: Presentations to CWS would also be appreciated.
- Dave: Webinar could work too.

Action Item 2020-06-01 Staff to relay the Council’s feedback on the map atlas to Round River Conservation Studies.

Action Item 2020-06-02 Staff to work on a plan to present the map atlas, via video conference, to the Aklavik HTC and other relevant organizations, travel and technological capacity permitting.

Final Conservation Assessment Report Table of Contents (ToC)

The final conservation assessment provides the underlying data sources and methods for the work Round River Conservation Studies undertook in support of the WCMP.

Feedback on the Table of Contents:

- YG and Canada - No feedback, will wait until there is more content to review.
- Billy: We should think about how we can use this to support other documents (e.g. Community Conservation Plans), and contribute to research planning. Make sure FJMC is aware of the fish sections.

Key questions:

- Does Council want to keep this report as a technical document, or add in the Inuvialuit voice via stories, quotes, etc.?
 - Suggest that the report stays technical for now, then add a plain language summary and address places where the report may benefit from enhanced Inuvialuit voice.
 - The report would naturally include a description of how the Inuvialuit perspective informed the work.
 - Billy: Indigenous knowledge is grounded in language and culture, stories. The stories have to be told, to explain who the Inuvialuit are and how critical the area is. Hope that at the beginning of the report, there is an overview of the YNS ecosystem - the wealth of wildlife is eye-opening.
- There's a lot of content, how to structure it so it's not too long?
 - With the ToC as presented, it will likely end up as a several hundred page document.
 - If something's already been written up or published, don't need to repeat it.
 - Suggest that RRCS take a "less is more" approach.

Action Item 2020-06-03 Staff direct RRCS to proceed with the Final Conservation Assessment as a technical report, but limited to material not previously published in technical reports.

Companion Document (WCMP)

All chapters should be completed by late July; some (6 of 14) are already available. The Council previously decided to not undertake a systematic external review process, because these reports are not state of the environment reports. The chapters do need to be reviewed. Staff are proposing that each member volunteers to review at least two chapters.

Folks are good with the approach. Dave will ensure that Ellen and Colin from DFO are able to review the chapters.

When should the chapters be reviewed by? A month after each chapter is shared; or, all reviews completed by the end of August. If you start reviewing a draft, give the staff a heads up.

- Mike will review most terrestrial mammal chapters.
- Danny agreed to read Traditional Use and furbearers.
- Billy will read Traditional Use and decide on other chapters to review and let staff know.
- Tyler can read anything that needs to be done, like whales and seals.
- Parks Canada will review Dall's sheep and muskox

E. Member + Staff + Chair Updates

Muskox Update (Mike)

- Polar Knowledge Canada grant has been approved
- Uncertainty with how to proceed on population estimate - didn't have enough collared animals left in the population (deaths, collars releasing).
- Leaning toward collaring this year, then undertaking a population estimate next year.

- Could go out in September, and next spring

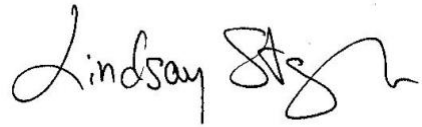
Billy mentioned historic caribou collar data and spatial harvest data and how this could be compared with IK related to climate change and caribou movements.

Polar Bear Update (Allison)

- Informal working group has been struck to handle all of the various aspects of polar bear in the ISR, in the near term. Allison is participating.
- A new report from USFW was released on the likely effects of oil and gas leasing in ANWR. It is focused on individual bears as opposed to effects at the population level. This report is included in the meeting package.
- WMAC NS staff and Chair have been contributing to a proposed PBAC letter to PBSG, highlighting several of the shortcomings in polar bear management at the international level. The letter was tabled first at the PBTC meeting. Staff will keep Council apprised of the ongoing discussions on the topics raised in the letter.
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) - A new Norwegian report that relies heavily on the information shared at PBSG (some of which is concerning), casts doubt on the polar bear management approach in Canada. The report itself is also problematic and derogatory. There is now work to be done to combat false information prior to the next CITES meeting, where uplisting of the species is a real concern. If polar bear are uplisted, polar bear hide export from Canada would come to a stop.

Motion 2020-06-02 to adjourn the meeting: Moved by Dave Tavares, seconded Billy Archie.

Meeting adjourned at 3:50pm.



Lindsay Staples, WMAC (North Slope) Chair

July 14, 2020

Date



Allison Thompson, Staff

July 14, 2020

Date