

# Porcupine Caribou Management Board

## Minutes of Meeting

June 2-4, 2009  
Whitehorse, Yukon

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### In attendance

#### Members

Joe Tetlich, Chair  
Billy Storr, Inuvialuit Game Council  
Sonny Blake, Gwich'in Tribal Council  
Lorraine Peter, Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation  
Steven Buyck, Nacho Ny'ak Dun  
Doug Larsen, Government of Yukon  
Marsha Branigan, Government of Northwest Territories  
Ian McDonald, Government of Canada  
Steve Taylor, Tr'ondëk Hwech'in

Deana Lemke, Secretariat  
Dorothy Cooley, Government of Yukon  
Camille Thomas, STEP Student

### Presenters

Doug Urquhart, Facilitator, HMP Working Group  
Dan Lindsey, Government of Yukon  
Boyd Pyper, Government of Yukon  
Shawn Francis, Cumulative Effects Management Consultant

### Welcome and Opening Prayer

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m., welcomed participants to the meeting and offered the opening prayer.

### Review Agenda

The Agenda was reviewed by the Board and approved:

***Motion to accept agenda as presented***  
***Moved by Sonny Blake***  
***Seconded by Steven Buyck***  
***Carried***

## **Review of minutes**

The minutes of the January 24 and 25, 2009, Board meeting were reviewed and approved.

***Motion to accept minutes as presented***

***Moved by Billy Storr***

***Seconded by Sonny Blake***

***Carried***

The minutes of the April 4, 2009, Board meeting were reviewed and approved.

***Motion to accept minutes as presented***

***Moved by Steve Taylor***

***Seconded by Sonny Blake***

***Carried***

## **Administrative and Financial Report – Deana Lemke**

Deana Lemke provided a financial update for last fiscal year and this year to date. Contribution Agreements are in place for most core funding this year. The INAC proposal for project funding was also approved as in previous years.

## **Chair's Update – Joe Tetlich**

Chair Joe Tetlich updated the Board on various aspects of his work with the Board.

- Attended Climate Change workshop in Anchorage in March. Inupiat have similar challenges with caribou harvesting and management that we have in Canada.
- Attended Alaska Wilderness Week in Washington, along with Sonny Blake. There seems to be a changed environment since the US election. Also met with Christina Jutzi (recently taken Sheila Tooze's position) at the Canadian Embassy while in Washington.
- Attended a meeting on the Peel River Watershed.
- Presented to a Yukon College class regarding community leadership and caribou management.
- Attended and presented at a caribou modeling workshop in Yellowknife, hosted by Parks Canada, the Sahtu Renewable Resources Board, and the Wek'eezhii Renewable Resources Board.

The Board discussed reports of other herds in Alaska (Central Arctic and Teshekpuk) that are increasing. The herd increases do not account for the decline in the PCH herd.

## **Herd Update – Dorothy Cooley**

Dorothy provided a Herd Update for the Board, which was also included in the members' information kits.

STEP student, Camille Thomas, was hired by the Board to work with Dorothy over the summer. Department of Education provides partial funding for this position and the PCMB provides core funding for the remainder (Johnny Charlie Scholarship).

Marsha Branigan added that GNWT and GRRB submitted a proposal to CIMP and were approved for funding for a year to gather harvest data in the four Gwich'in communities in NWT.

## **Harvest Management Plan Update – Doug Urquhart**

The PCMB was updated on activities around the HMP and the work of the HMP Working Group (WG) by Doug Urquhart, WG Facilitator. The final draft of the HMP was provided to the Board by the WG.

The HMP is intended to manage the herd through its natural cycles of incline and decline.

The issue of the deadline imposed by the two territorial Premiers was discussed. Doug is here to talk about the WG's draft of the HMP, not the interim measures. Attempts were made to make the HMP simple so it wasn't overwhelmed by scientific information. The layout was also kept very simple.

Doug reviewed the cover letter sent to the Board and the accompanying table identifying outstanding issues that the WG couldn't come to resolution on. No agreement was reached regarding the management actions that would be triggered in the yellow zone. In addition, the population numbers for the upper and lower end of the yellow zone could not be agreed to.

At the Annual Harvest Meeting the Board would discuss the various options and make a decision regarding what zone the caribou are in.

Annual Allowable Harvest would be adjusted, depending on the zone we are in and factors related to that.

The cutoff between the red and orange zones was also not agreed to. Most parties felt 45,000 was a suitable number; others felt that was too high and 25,000 was a better population trigger.

The PCH is very sensitive compared to other barren-ground herds – it takes longer to recover because of low productivity.

Marsha Branigan related that an argument for going lower than 45,000 between the red and orange zone is to allow for a small amount of hunting down to even 25,000 caribou in the herd.

The colour charts starting on page 17 take into consideration the worst-case scenarios with respect to adult cow survival. This is the most responsible way to forecast populations (using the precautionary principle) to determine which zone we are in.

Doug Larsen pointed out that more consideration should be given to how to drive up the cow population.

Steve Taylor added that human harvest is likely the biggest factor in the decline.

Billy Storr said there likely won't be much incentive to change harvesting practices in the communities if that isn't going to have much of an effect anyhow.

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Doug Urquhart responded that harvesting is really the only thing we have direct control over. Something must be done.

Lorraine Peter said education in the communities is critical. A photocensus is important as well. We need to take action and make efforts to try something that could make a difference.

Doug Urquhart emphasized that the communities were in support of doing something, the sooner the better.

Ian McDonald spoke about the need to communicate the message of how calf/cow survival can affect the population and what is put into the Caribou Calculator.

Dorothy Cooley added that at the Inuvik HMP Workshop Don Russell presented three options to run the Caribou Calculator with – the worst-case scenario was chosen by the Working Group to use for calculation purposes.

Billy Storr said education will be critical in the communities. He emphasized that “voluntary” measures work well in his communities (i.e. with the Dolly Varden and the bulls-only caribou harvesting). Once it becomes mandatory; however, he feels it will not be well received by the community members.

There was also no Working Group consensus regarding the Annual Harvest Meeting and who would be sitting at the table making decisions (i.e. PCMB alone or PCMB along with representatives from all Parties).

As a member of the Working Group, Roberta Joseph clarified Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in's position to include representatives at the Annual Harvest Meeting, in

addition to the PCMB. PCMB members do not necessarily represent their communities as another representative would. This would work toward cooperative management to include Party reps in addition to PCMB members.

Doug Larsen said it is worrisome if some believe their PCMB reps are not representing their communities. It's clearly the mandate of the Board, through the land claim process, to represent our communities and make recommendations.

Annual Allowable Harvest Allocation section needs to be finalized as it was not agreed to by the Working Group.

No consensus could be achieved regarding harvest management on the Dempster Highway. Best Practices were agreed to, as included in the HMP starting on page 29.

Steve Taylor questioned whether harvesting bulls only will have that much of an impact. If 4,000 bulls are harvested (some breeding), then those are still taken out of the breeding picture. Doug Larsen clarified that it takes less bulls than cows to affect the breeding potential, so a bull-focused harvest will have less of an impact than harvesting cows.

Doug Urquhart questioned: How are these outstanding issues to be resolved by the Board? The Board could decide to hand over the draft plan as is and leave it to the parties to work out. The Board could also make recommendations based on the options provided by the Working Group.

Sonny Blake commented that it's time for the Board to make recommendations based on the final draft and forward those to the Parties. A bulls-only harvesting will help to keep the caribou numbers from declining further.

Steve Taylor is worried about what happens if the plan doesn't achieve agreement and doesn't go forward. What is our future going to look like? What would be the reason for the Board to be around if we're just getting in the way of the big players?

Doug Larsen stated that we are a recommending Board that recommends to governments. The Board should come to some resolution on the issues if possible, and make a recommendation to governments. He doesn't think that if we go beyond the end of June it will be for naught. This is a work in progress and hopefully the issues will end up being resolved at some point. If the Board can't resolve some of the outstanding issues, then we should pass it on stating why we couldn't resolve them.

Doug Urquhart said there is a difference between resolving the issues at the table and resolving them in a way that all parties are comfortable with and agree

on. He suggested that the Board consider the different positions of the parties and make a decision, perhaps by compromising between the more extreme positions.

Billy Storr added that a compromise seems most appropriate. The plan can be looked at periodically in the future and the thresholds and management activities can be reassessed at those points.

Ian McDonald said the Board's opinion on this subject is going to be very important. He would like to see the Board make recommendations on the outstanding issues. It's important to show that a group is willing to come forward, work together and move forward on this.

Billy Storr added that meeting half-way is worthwhile, especially to hold off any proposed interim measures. We definitely need to come up with recommendations. Doug Urquhart said that part of the job of the Board could be to take that message back to the Parties.

Steve Buyck said it's plain and simple – it's about protecting our caribou for future generations. We need to come up with recommendations by the end of this meeting. It's been a long time and it needs to be concluded.

The Board agreed that it needs to take the draft from the Working Group and finalize it, making determinations on recommendations based on the options presented or compromises, meeting in the middle. A final recommended HMP should then be sent to the governments and all parties as recommended by the Board.

Lorraine Peter mentioned that the Board needs to represent the community members who are the harvesters of the caribou. The Board shouldn't be overly concerned about political positions of the Parties.

There was discussion about mandatory versus voluntary harvesting restrictions. It was felt it could work if some communities make it voluntary and others decide for it to become mandatory. Both have to be enforceable and monitored, however. Education and communication in the communities would be essential.

Doug Larsen felt that if there was some way to have a system that verifies a voluntary harvest, Government of Yukon might be open to considering the options for that. However, there is concern that we are at a point where action must be taken now and it needs to be monitored. Government of Yukon is doing this for the conservation of the herd. It's not clear what is intended by conservation in this HMP. We can't compromise the intent of conservation.

The Board thanked Doug Urquhart for his work as Facilitator of the Working Group and all his effort and hard work on this important project.

## **PCH Interim Measures – Allan Koprowsky, Dan Lindsey, Boyd Pyper, Doug Larsen**

The Board invited the Government of Yukon (GY) staff to speak about the proposed interim measures for PCH harvesting.

GY wants to take action now in terms of implementing hunting restrictions on the PCH. It still supports the HMP process but feels it needs to put something in place in the absence of a finalized plan.

Some discussions were held with Yukon First Nations early in the new year. Steps need to be taken now. The regulatory process can take a year at best. The government is trying to work at a much quicker timeline to have something in place in the fall. Conservation of the herd is a priority politically. It's an important herd locally, nationally and internationally. Harvest limitations and a tag system are felt to be appropriate interim measures.

GY is looking at all available information in its decision making, including scientific and technical information.

Dan Lindsey spoke about how these are sensitive issues. Many people here have thought about these issues at length and have different opinions than Yukon government's. There have been considerable discussions about the biology. Two themes have been focused on: conservation and the precautionary principle. We have many examples of letting things go when we should have addressed them and took action. We are not advancing any hidden agendas; our interest is in the best interest of the herd. GY has a responsibility and is accountable.

The interim measures proposed are discussed in the correspondence from the Minister of Environment, dated March 27, 2009. That correspondence is considered a letter of Notice regarding the proposed conservation and management measures for the Porcupine Caribou Herd, including a mandatory bull only harvest for all hunters and a mandatory tag system for all hunters. The tag system is proposed to be phased in. Government of Yukon indicated that it would also be consulting the public about implementing a harvest limit of one bull only for resident and non-resident licensed hunters (not subsistent harvesters).

Doug Larsen presented the Powerpoint presentation summarizing GY's position on the interim measures proposal (hard copy distributed).

The Board decided that it would not respond formally to this presentation at the meeting. A general question-and-answer discussion was preferable.

Doug Larsen stated that he didn't want to derail what the main intention of this PCMB meeting is – to discuss the HMP.

A joint letter from territorial Premiers was received by the Board stating that if the Board didn't recommend a HMP by the June 30 deadline, interim measures would be considered for conservation purposes. Allan Koprowsky stated that that wasn't the intent of the letter. The interim measures would be considered with or without the HMP. Boyd Pyper stated that the letter's syntax could have been improved with clearer wording. (Note: The next day, GNWT followed up with an e-mail to the PCMB clarifying its position re interim measures. GNWT understood that every effort would be made to deliver a HMP. Only if no plan was completed would GNWT consider interim measures. GNWT has not given a timeline; would follow NWT final agreements and work with co-management boards to produce measures. A formal letter would be issued stating such.)

Billy Storr stated that the interim measures likely won't be supported by the HTC's or the NWT communities.

Marsha expressed concerns about the information being presented. Fall deadline isn't so important since harvesting in fall is mostly for bulls, not cows. It does not appear to be truly consulting with stakeholders. It appears GY already made its own decision. Seems if GY doesn't like the HMP recommendations from PCMB they won't support them anyhow. Billy Storr agreed.

Doug Larsen stated that he can see how that perception might be out there but it's not reality. The GY is more concerned about the herd than the politics around the herd. We are serious about consultation. I wouldn't advocate moving forward if conservation wasn't addressed. GY would be happy if there was a solution that meets the conservation standards that they have to meet as part of their responsibility as GY. It's for the caribou, not politics.

Joe Tetlich said that it's really unfortunate we have to go there with politics in this forum. Earlier, GY proposed we ask the WG for what they had finalized to that date. PCMB rejected that and said the WG needs adequate time to finish their job. Yet GY wanted that info right away, giving an indication of what they wanted to do and direction they were going in. We talk about trust and cooperatively working together – what GY is doing is like breaking that trust and communication bridge to the communities, affecting PCMB's credibility.

Billy Storr mentioned that if GY is concerned about wildlife and conservation, when presenting models, if they have better information, why not pass it on to people doing our models?

Doug Larsen said that's not what happened. It's not that GY is holding back info. Only through my discussion with Don Russell that I started asking questions; he

contacted the architect of model and said some info was missing and could be put in.

Marsha Branigan pointed out that it is monitoring data collected since we put on the workshop in 2007. Since that time, additional info has been collected and added to the model. Indications are that the situation may be improving with the caribou.

Ian McDonald talked about meeting the conservation standard: What is that standard? An increase at some point?

Doug Larsen said the intention is to stop the decline and see an increase.

Ian McDonald asked if there was a rule of thumb re timelines for how long to see the increase. Doug Larsen responded that no, there isn't, but the sooner, the better.

Ian McDonald asked if measures recommended through the HMP were different from interim measures but the model still shows conservation issues are addressed, would that be acceptable to GY? Doug Larsen responded that he thought so.

Lorraine Peter said that this process has been ongoing for a long time with the HMP WG. Now we have a final draft and something to work with. Lots of conflicts and sensitive issues being dealt with respecting the interim measures. However, as rep from VGFN, look at it both ways. We have a process at this table. Other groups and governments have their own processes and own mandates. How are we going to move forward today?

Dan Lindsey said that GY is concerned about its relations with First Nations and communities. We do care about First Nation relations.

Joe Tetlichy pointed out that this is not considered consultation until the Board can discuss this as a group and then we can provide feedback if we want.

Deana Lemke mentioned that this Board already passed a motion on the interim measures. They do not support taking interim actions but instead support the HMP process.

Doug Larsen agreed; however, this Board should keep this information in mind when discussion actions related to the HMP and recommendations the Board will make. Sonny Blake said it's like putting a wrench into this when we're so close to finalizing the HMP.

The Board thanked the GY representatives for this information and discussion.

## Cumulative Effects Assessment – Shawn Francis

Shawn Francis was invited to the meeting to discuss his involvement in the cumulative effects assessment project. He provided a written update that was available in Board members' meeting packages.

More focus has been placed on harvest management to increase the population of the herd; however, other factors that affect the herd and its habitat should be considered at the same time.

Based on the Alberta Caribou Committee's findings for boreal caribou, there is a very strong relationship between the population of the herd and what percentage of the range has been burned, and what percent has been affected by industrial development. They have found this pattern among herds although they are uncertain why there is this relationship. Alberta is moving forward with an extensive wolf control project that will extend into the future since they will not be moving away from development in the future. Alberta also doesn't harvest caribou, so there is no harvest affect on the population.

Relating the population to something that can be mapped regarding the landscape will be important. Shawn feels that we have almost all of the information that we need to build a risk chart for the PCH similar to the Alberta Caribou Committee's.

When there is development that includes corridors, the situation becomes easier for wolves to kill more caribou (they have easier access to the caribou through the corridor areas).

Steve Buyck reminded that traditional knowledge is important to include in this when gathering data.

Predation is an issue (grizzly and wolves) in the range of the herd.

Shawn provided a CE project update:

- Bathurst Herd CE project is moving forward. They are building our CE tools/models. Good progress is being made on technical modeling challenges. On June 15-17 there will be a technical session in Calgary. Work will be done to translate modified behavior/feeding time caused by land use into energetic and reproductive consequences.
- PCH Range Map work has been done. Canada Centre for Remote Sensing has a map that shows 90% coverage of the range. It is of reasonable quality/accuracy for our purposes (must be confirmed). It currently has 35 classes or habitat types (that will probably have to be reduced). We are missing about a decade of fires in this image (2000 to current year).

- Land use feature mapping: first pass GIS themes easy to assemble. Detailed work remains to be completed. Have not addressed 'activity areas' (concentrated hunting areas, etc.).
- Eagle Plain study area has turned out to be more complicated than originally anticipated. Need to figure out if we have enough data to relate to caribou distribution. GPS collars would be a good idea. Detailed work remains to be completed. Study design and methods are very important (snow conditions, fire years, etc.). May not be able to detect any pattern/response to mapped linear features. Does predation risk (or harvest?) increase in proximity to lines/features?
- Project Description/Proposal was included as Appendix 1 of CE Update Meeting Notes. Shawn welcomes all comments/suggestions. What is the proposal for? A single document that can be used for multiple proposals? Who is the audience?

There was discussion about what the final product is for this CE project. Shawn's understanding is that it will provide a higher-level product that can be used for decision making. It could be updated periodically (not every year but perhaps every few years). It needs to be practical at the end of the day and assist in making decisions on specific proposed projects.

Next steps for the CE project include:

- Eagle Plains analysis – determine potential need for GPS collars.
- Habitat Map: quantify accuracy, reduced legend, fire updates.
- Proposal for funding: think about different scenarios.

***Action 09-01:***

***Secretariat will work with Shawn Francis to determine schedule for pitching a general proposal to potential funding partners in the fall. Shawn will update his cost estimate and deliverables for the project.***

## **Harvest Management Plan**

Joe Tetlich provided an overview of where we are to date with the HMP process. The final draft of the HMP was presented to the Board at the meeting yesterday by Doug Urquhart, Working Group Facilitator.

Lorraine Peter: I am representing my people and the best interest of the caribou is paramount for me.

Steve Taylor: quite likely the interim measures will still be implemented by GY even if they receive an HMP recommended by the Board. A lot of work will still need to be done at home. How will the interim measures be enforced and what will the penalties be for not adhering to the new regulation? That will have to be considered. TH will be fine but there is concern for the other communities as well.

Steve B: I hope we can get this plan recommended by the end of the meeting, otherwise we're not doing our job. I feel we should be erring on the side of caution with the population thresholds in the colour charts. I would like to see further recommendations by the PCMB in addition to what's in the HMP. NND would not like to see a mandatory bulls-only harvest initially, but perhaps in the second year with good education being done.

Graphs in the HMP are from a 2007 version of the Caribou Calculator. The input data could be updated using current information.

Doug L: don't have to stick with graphs in HMP as it is now. Perhaps could update the data and include one or two charts based on what the recommendations from the Board are.

A motion was proposed by Doug Larsen; however, this was not accepted by the Board or Chair to be tabled or considered at this time. More discussion was warranted before a Board decision could be made.

After further discussion, the Board felt the red highlighted sections in the draft HMP should be considered by the Board and decided on. The Board should not discuss and reopen the entire plan at this point.

Page 13, yellow zone management actions were discussed. Some members felt voluntary bull-only harvest would be sufficient; others felt mandatory bull-only harvest would be warranted.

NND feels that if there are going to be restrictions, then outfitters and resident hunters should be affected first before aboriginal harvest is restricted.

Marsha Branigan asked a question toward the user communities: If we asked users to take less and please shoot cows, what can we accomplish?

Billy Storr commented that if caribou are scarce, people spend a lot of money and effort to get out. In order to not be skunked and put food on the table, they will likely take a few cows. We do try out best to take bulls but reality is some cows will be taken. The closure forces hunters to take cows because hunting is closed when the bulls are in prime and when it opens, bulls are rutting and cows have to be taken instead.

Steve Taylor said that TH asked for voluntary compliance for bulls only for moose. The reason for voluntary harvest is to leave the door open for poor people. If your only chance is for a cow, go for it. For the Porcupine Caribou Herd on the Dempster, if we ask for voluntary bulls only to be harvested, our citizens would go with bulls only. But they also want to leave the door open a little bit just in case, if you really need it, and the only choice is to harvest cows.

Billy Storr added that in Aklavik, wieners are \$8 a dozen and bread is \$12 a loaf. Most people are good about it; other people would rag on hunters who take cows when they don't have to. This works better than the game warden charging somebody. The one-week closure with conservation officers is okay but the GTC month- or month-and-a-half long closure is harder.

***Motion for yellow zone being voluntary management actions for bull-only harvest.***

***Moved by Marsha Branigan  
Seconded by Billy Storr***

***Doug Larsen: disagree  
Steve Taylor: agree  
Ian MacDonald: agree  
Steven Buyck: agree  
Lorraine Peter: disagree  
Frederick Blake: agree  
Billy Storr: agree  
Marsha Branigan: agree***

***Carried by majority vote (6 in favour, 2 opposed)  
Motion for upper population level in the yellow zone to be 115,000 caribou  
Moved by Billy Storr  
Seconded by Doug Larsen***

***Carried unanimously***

***Motion for lower level of the orange zone to be 45,000 caribou  
Moved by Lorraine Peter  
Seconded by Ian McDonald  
Doug Larsen: agree  
Steve Taylor: agree  
Ian MacDonald: agree  
Steve Buyck: agree  
Lorraine Peter: agree  
Frederick Blake: abstain  
Billy Storr: disagree  
Marsha Branigan: disagree***

***Carried by majority vote (5 in favour, 2 opposed, 1 abstention)***

Note that these decisions do not prevent any Party from implementing more restrictive provisions in any zone for their members if they feel that voluntary measures are not working.

A revised chart 5 will be included in the HMP that will have updated data input.

#### PCTC Membership:

There was discussion about the composition of the PCTC. Sonny Blake will explain to GTC what the technical committee does. Technical committee doesn't make any decisions, only provides information to the PCMB. Biologists on staff at the GRRB could participate in the PCTC; they are happy to include all technical people interested from PCH organizations.

Dorothy clarified that it's an adhoc group of technical people and others can participate in the work of the PCTC. Its mandate comes from the international agreement; since the agreement is not being followed right now, there is informality to this group.

#### **Action 09-02:**

***PCMB to send letter to all Parties to explain what the PCTC does and that they are welcome to participate in the committee at a technical level. Secretariat to work with Dorothy Cooley on drafting and distribution of this letter.***

#### Annual Harvest Meeting:

There was discussion regarding the Annual Harvest Meeting. The intent of this meeting is for the PCMB to review all technical information received by the PCTC and information from all parties (technical, traditional knowledge, or anything at all pertaining to the PCH and its habitat).

Marsha Branigan felt the PCMB should have all parties at the table to review the information received and decide which zone we are in. PCMB would make the initial recommendation regarding the TAH for the herd. Terms of reference for the meeting would set out how it works ahead of time.

Lorraine Peter felt that PCMB is already representing the user communities. PCMB will have the best information coming forward to make a decision and we have to trust that process. Others can be in attendance at meeting as observers. We will take all concerns from the user groups and other management boards into consideration. If the parties have concerns, they can voice them through their representatives on the PCMB.

Roberta Joseph clarified that the reason this is an issue for TH is because it was originally discussed by the WG. TH views PCMB as a board with certain responsibilities under the PCMA. First and foremost is the conservation of the herd. As a party, we have a number of priorities, not just that one. There is flexibility to have the PCMB and parties available at a presentation of technical information at the annual meeting and there is an opportunity to ask questions.

PCMB has responsibility to make decisions on allocation. This would provide transparency. PCMB has to be open to invite FNs to the annual meeting.

The Board members should be sure to inform their communities what is happening here. They have responsibilities as Board members.

Deana Lemke mentioned that the Board has the best representatives from the communities she has seen since she has been working with the Board. There has been a marked difference in the communication between the Board and the communities and this is due to the Board members being more engaged with their communities.

Steve Taylor stated that TH has decided to have their FN and the Dept. of Fish and Wildlife are continually aware of the activities of the Board and involved in the meetings so there is a better link between their community and the Board. He is very happy that the work doesn't just fall to the Board members individually.

Ian agrees with having the PCTC and parties providing information to the PCMB. PCMB should have the final say on TAH. Terms of reference would be good to provide clarification.

Marsha Branigan said we need to set when the meeting is going to be each year.

Steve Taylor spoke about how the salmon management committee meeting reviews information in the communities. They travel to the various communities to compile information. He suggested having several meetings throughout the communities.

Billy Storr stated that when they have their IGC meeting, the first day is open to all presenters. Then there is a directors meeting that follows.

Doug Larsen likes the idea of travelling to the communities; however, this would need to be cost-shared with the organizations as PCMB couldn't fund that scope of work.

Lorraine Peter agrees that a similar model to the salmon committee would work well for the annual harvest meeting. Wouldn't suggest travelling to communities because of the cost and all the other priorities of the communities. Could use teleconference for some meetings. Need to keep the communication flow between the Board and the communities.

Sonny Blake said we should add a sentence that says members should bring appropriate information regarding harvesting to the annual meeting.

Roberta Joseph explained the working of the Yukon River Panel. They have two meetings a year consisting of half reps from Canada and half from the US who

are responsible for the management of Yukon River salmon. In December they review the post-season information on salmon activities (how salmon run was, how many crossed border, ages, how harvest was). Canadian biologist presents Canadian side and Alaska biologist represents the US side. In March they meet to determine escapement and TAH and how much would be for Alaska and how much for Canada. People can ask question during presentations.

The Board agreed that there would be a terms of reference developed. Main points can be in the plan so people know what to expect.

***Action Item No. 09-03***

***PCMB will work on a terms of reference for the Annual Harvest Meeting once the HMP is signed off.***

It was proposed that the Annual Harvest Meeting could be held the second week of February each year for the sake of consistency.

Harvest Allocation:

The Board cannot deal with the issue of harvest allocation at the Board level. This should be determined by the Parties. The GY and users in the Yukon need to come to agreement.

Harvest Data Collection:

NWT communities do not have the financial resources or capacity to collect harvest data. Billy Storr stated that IGC will be meeting to discuss this issue next month.

The Board considers the collection of harvest data to be critical. Funding is an issue; however, the Board felt that "Parties will collect harvest data" would be appropriate to include in the HMP. In the letter of transmittal there will be reference to funding/capacity to collect data (remove last line of page 24, bottom box and use wording in cover letter).

Trade and Barter:

WG asked communities for input on behalf of the PCMB. There is a requirement under the PCMA for the PCMB to do that. Communities were asked for input on various issues related to sale, trade and barter. We did receive feedback that should be considered

Steve Taylor said it's not an issue for TH as it doesn't affect them.

PCMB has a mandate and responsibility to provide the guidelines. We can draft our position on it and send out to parties. Dorothy, Ian and Deana to work on a draft of the guidelines to present at an upcoming meeting.

**Action Items:**

- ***Ian McDonald, Dorothy Cooley and Deana Lemke to work on draft Trade and Barter Guidelines based on the stakeholder feedback, and present to the Board (Action 09-04)***
- ***Marsha Branigan and Deana Lemke to draft letter to send to GRRB and IGC re release of their harvest data. (Action 09-05)***
- ***Deana Lemke to finalize and distribute mail drop regarding the selection of bulls for harvest prior to the upcoming hunting season. (Action 09-06)***
- ***Board to reply to GY on interim measures proposal, reiterating that PCMB does not support the interim measures at this time; instead, it supports the Harvest Management Plan recommendations. (Action 09-07)***

The Board further discussed the proposed interim measures. GY's issue of conservation will not be addressed just by stopping the decline of the herd; it must show an increase to the herd's population and increase it for long-term productivity purposes.

Ian McDonald stated that the conservation test is important to deal with now instead of not later on. Are measures that the HMP will put in place going to help the herd or not? We should set some standards about what we want (inflection in curve or just leveling off). We should not rely entirely on the model because it's not perfect.

Dorothy Cooley added that the model uses the lowest cow survival rate. If inputs we put in the model now levels off the herd and cow survival is higher, yes, the herd should grow. The WG understood the use of the model would be a starting point to figure out which harvest management regime should be put in place.

Doug Larsen is concerned that if there are only voluntary bull-only harvesting practices, how does that get monitored? How do we know, for instance, that only 3,000 bulls will be taken?

Marsha Branigan has seen a noticeable difference in the communities over this past year or two with respect to the importance of reducing or eliminating cow harvest.

Lorraine Peter added that conservation in her community is the number one issue.

Marsha Branigan stated that the intention under the HMP is to try to keep the herd in the green zone with a sustainable harvest.

Ian McDonald stated that if we're asking people to take less in the yellow zone, we need to do that.

Billy Storr said if we go to a voluntary harvest of half, say, then each person knows they have to cut their harvest in half. If they took six caribou last year, take three this year. The reality is unless the hunters support it, no harvest management actions will work anyhow.

The issue of conservation was discussed extensively.

Dorothy Cooley related that the WG dealt with this in part by stating the management goal of ensuring harvest does not negatively affect the herd (page 5 of the HMP).

Steve Buyck added that the communities have already agreed to cut their harvest in half.

Billy Storr said Aklavik has also agreed to alter their harvesting practices.

Doug Larsen asked: how do you convince Government of Yukon that is happening?

There was discussion about what a sustainable harvest is and what conservation is. There are various definitions and understandings about those.

Board members who were available were invited to meet the next day to work on the response letter to GY, outlining the rationale for the Board's decisions on recommendations.

## **Members' Concerns**

Steve Taylor stated his concern about government ignoring land use planning. He thanked the Board for contributing caribou information that is now in the plan. He would really like the parties to the plan to sign it and bring it into effect, especially those with caribou concerns. Hopefully TH Traditional Territory is next to have a plan but apparently has been back shelved because there are two plans still underway.

Sonny Blake is concerned about proposed interim measures. He would like an update in fall from Torrie Hunter about hunting in the Blackstone to clarify hunting caribou there. Thought there was agreement that our FN people could hunt here. We should really try to get a good count of the caribou. PCMB could write a letter to people in Washington to thank them for their work protecting the 1002 lands, to show our gratitude to them.

Billy Storr talked about harvest data collection. The HTCs don't have funds but we are working on a plan with the Aklavik HTC to collect data. That's something we need. The data would be for all species, not just caribou. He is concerned about initiating GY interim measures; we don't want that

Steve Buyck said that Mayo is probably the least affected by the HMP; our harvest is minimal but still want to conserve the caribou. If I do have a concern, it's just how long it's taken us to get here. We should get that recommended plan out to parties. Look forward to moving on to the end of this.

Marsha Branigan apologized if she offended anyone by being outspoken and passionate about the issues. She looks forward to working together with other Board members in the future.

Lorraine Peter said she had a community info session in Old Crow. Hunters are concerned about changes that they see out on the land and how those changes could impact the caribou. They talked about the snow conditions and worried about the food and the body condition of the caribou. Wondered again if we could get a count this year; if no count, what will happen. She gave an update on HMP progress and how the PCMB was going to go over the plan in detail. Only a few people got their caribou this spring, same as last fall. How do we adapt to those changes? They supported GY interim measures and are taking their own conservation measures in Old Crow. She really wanted to come to agreement on the numbers for the colour chart and tie them to mandatory actions.

Doug Larsen said that many of his concerns were addressed in the last two hours and apologized for being edgy today. He reiterated that we are all concerned about the herd. He would like the Board to be clear on why it is making recommendations. Yesterday, he was concerned about the Board putting harvesting rights before conservation. He is concerned that we may end up with two management systems — one in Yukon and one in NWT. Need to ensure the product we put out (HMP) is credible to governments and people on the land. He said although he is now retired, the government asked me to hold onto this file working with the PCMB, and he was happy to do that.

Ian McDonald related he appreciates working with the Board. Even if it takes longer to discuss issues to hear everyone's viewpoints and come to decisions, it's worth the time and effort. He said he appreciates that when sticky or painful issues come up at meetings they are dealt with.

Roberta Joseph said she felt it was an interesting meeting and this is a good Board, good dialog. She looks forward to the final HMP coming to TH government.

Peter Nagano, who observed the full meeting, commented: I know it hard for the Board to make decisions; didn't want to butt into the meeting. I was

uncomfortable at first, but we're here for the caribou and it's good to have these discussions. First Nations are signatories to the agreement, but how are outfitters being affected? When talking about the color chart, about the Forty Mile Caribou, they tried to make a goal of 75,000 or whatever, but it wasn't working. Allowing 500 in AK and 500 in Yukon, Yukon put theirs back into herd but Alaska is not working. Something to compare PCH chart to. Now Alaska will work on predation. The Board can make a recommendation to the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, could leave it the hands of the hunters. Minister set seven wolves per year; I'd suggest opening the season to the end of April or move from September 1 to end of April. This is one way of managing predation; won't get a lot but will get some wolves. If you extend the season, I think you'll see more wolves taken. Thanks for having me and allowing me to speak.

Camille Thomas, PCMB STEP student commented: thanks for letting me sit in; this is my first meeting. It was interesting for me to come to a meeting where I didn't have a bias since I didn't know a lot about any of the groups and I could just to see how negotiations went on and consensus reached.

Joe Tetlichy thanked Doug Larsen for letting us meet here at his residence. It's nice to let us get to know each other. Sometimes we get a little heated up because caribou are close to us all and it's good we can walk out of here and we're still friends. Regarding the letter from the two Premiers, there were some mixed messages; maybe they should have looked over the wording of the letter more closely. These correspondences should be looked over more carefully before they are sent out. I think First Nations are doing a really good job; they're trying to get out there and understand what's going on. When you look at the big picture, back in the 1970s there was a chief and council and a hunters and trappers association; we have come a long way. Hopefully we can walk forward with Government of Yukon. We still need to be a big player with the Porcupine Caribou Herd. There are lots of people who put their heart and soul into this Board. One of the challenges we have is just trying to get everyone to a meeting, we now have the funds to meet more often.

Billy Storr mentioned one additional concern: I come here as a member and am concerned that when I go back to my Party they might say I didn't work hard enough to get an outcome for my party. I want to work hard to represent my Party. Sometimes I say things; it's not meant to be that we don't like you but I'm sent here by my Party.

Marsha Branigan responded to Peter Nagano's comment about predation. One of the HTC's is considering opening wolf hunting to residents in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region. Wolf sport hunting was started two years ago in the ISR. Trying to increase the number of wolves taken. If the herd increases, they may change the wolf hunt in future

## **Next meeting date and location**

The next meeting will be held in Inuvik, NT, the week of September 14, 2009. Marsha Branigan suggested it be held at the Gwich'in camp just outside of Inuvik, up the river.

## **Adjournment and Closing Prayer**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m. and the closing prayer was offered by Sonny Blake.