

Porcupine Caribou Management Board Minutes of Meeting

March 4, 2013
Whitehorse, Yukon

In attendance

Members/Staff

Joe Tetlich, Chair
Kelly Milner, Government of Yukon
Wilbert Firth, Gwich'in Tribal Council
Steven Buyck, Nacho Ny'ak Dun
Lance Nagwan, Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation
Mike Gill, Government of Canada
Stephen Charlie, Government of the Northwest Territories (Alternate)
Roberta Joseph, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in (Alternate)
Billy Storr, Inuvialuit Game Council

Deana Lemke, Executive Director

Welcome and Opening Prayer

The Chair, Joe Tetlich, called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m., offered an opening prayer and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Review Agenda

The Agenda was reviewed by the Board and approved.

Motion to accept agenda
Moved by Mike Gill
Seconded by Kelly Milner
Carried

Review Minutes and Action Items

The Minutes of the February 11, 2013 meeting were approved by the Board and the action items were reviewed and discussed.

Motion to accept Minutes of the February 11, 2013 meeting as distributed
Moved by Wilbert Firth
Seconded by Roberta Joseph
Carried

Action 12-04: Stephen Charlie said the new Northwest Territories *Wildlife Act* is undergoing second reading this week, focusing on recognizing and respecting Aboriginal harvesting rights. GNWT will be moving toward removing the regulations regarding Dempster Highway hunting/snowmachine use. GNWT will be working closely with the GTC on any hunting regulations moving forward. The HMP Native User Agreements will hopefully address some of the issues related to hunting practices. Education will be a focus, with a new hunter education program being developed.

Administrative and Financial Report

The Executive Director provided an administrative and financial report. The variance report was reviewed.

Motion to approve project funding in the amount of \$15,000 to digitize records and archives.

Moved by Mike Gill

Seconded by Stephen Charlie

Carried

Motion to approve purchase of an LED projector up to \$1,000.

Moved by Roberta Joseph

Seconded by Stephen Charlie

Carried

Motion to appoint M. McKay and Associates as the Auditors for the 2012-13 fiscal year.

Moved by Stephen Buyck

Seconded by Roberta Joseph

Carried

Correspondence/Updates

a) Oil and Gas Disposition Request for Posting

The Board reviewed the information regarding the current oil and gas disposition request for posting from the Yukon Department of Energy, Mines and Resources. Deadline for comments is March 28, 2013. The Board will make a submission regarding concerns related to the Porcupine Caribou Herd and its habitat.

b) Proposed listing of grizzly bear under the *Species at Risk Act (SARA)*

Mike Gill spoke about how every year, a number of species are assessed by COSEWIC, which makes an assessment of whether or not a species is at risk. There are four categories to choose from for listing: extirpated, endangered, threatened or special concern.

One species that has now been assessed as “special concern” is grizzly bear. The assessment is then sent to the federal Minister of Environment, who consults with his colleagues and Cabinet on the listings. The public is also consulted on the proposed listing. Then the Minister decides if it will be placed on Schedule 1 of the SARA. “Special concern” has no critical habitat identified and no prohibition to the killing of animals is in effect for special concern species. Grizzly bear is not doing well in the southern reaches of Canada, and they are sensitive to roads, development, etc. thus the assessment as ‘Special Concern’. Management plans would then be developed to hopefully avoid the subsequent listing to “threatened” or “endangered”. A presentation from CWS will be done at a future Board meeting.

Roberta Joseph said that we don’t have the same experience in Yukon as other provinces in terms of grizzly population declining. There appears to be an increase in population here, resulting in problematic situations between grizzly and hunters. Grizzly are moving from traditional grounds to areas where there are human activity.

Mike said that the focus of “special concern” listing is considering areas of concern. The grizzly bear seems to be healthy in Yukon, so Yukon may not be an area of concern. This will be discussed further at a future meeting.

c) PCMB/YFWMB draft MOU re consultation

The Board reviewed the revised draft MOU regarding consultation responsibilities between the PCMB and the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board. Further revisions will be made based on the discussion, then the revised draft forwarded to the YFWMB for review. The Chair and ED will meet with the Chair and ED of the YFWMB to discuss further.

d) Cumulative Effects letter to Parties

The Board reviewed the draft letter to Parties re the Cumulative Effects project. The letter will be further revised based on the Board’s discussion.

e) Satellite collar location data request

The Board received a request from GRRB (on behalf of the Ehdiitat RRC) regarding receiving satellite collar location data. The Board feels it should not be recommending the location data be released. It is also unclear at this time for what purpose the detailed information would be intended. The International Porcupine Caribou Board may also want to consider this matter.

Harvest Management Plan

The Board's AHM 2013 recommendations were distributed to Parties. They have 30 days to respond (until March 27). The recommendations will be made available to the public on March 12. The AHM newsletter was distributed.

Strategic Framework

The Board sent letters to all stakeholders acknowledging their feedback on the Strategic Framework (SF). The draft SF was sent to stakeholders for review and comment. The Board reviewed the comments received and revised the SF based on the input.

The Board discussed the Workplan for 2012-13 and determined which actions were completed and which remain outstanding. The outstanding actions will carry over to the upcoming fiscal year Workplan. The 2013-14 Workplan will include:

Ongoing activities:

- Harvest Management Plan/IP
- Board communications plan

Carry-over activities:

- Hunter Education package
- Grizzly bear communications
- CE Project

Additional activities:

- Recommend that Parties update *Sensitive Habitats* report (Section D)

Priorities (suggestions)

- Habitat research on North Slope – changing migratory patterns;
- Caribou overwintering in the Upper Peel area (Rat River, Rock River area). Why aren't they joining the others to go to the Arctic Refuge? (Mike Suitor will be requested to follow up with PCTC regarding this);
- Researching changes in habitat (e.g. slumping);
- C.1.1 – provide comments on EA and permitting processes including mitigations for activities on sensitive caribou habitats;
- Historical harvest numbers are important and necessary to develop Native User Agreements;
- The Board has a role in facilitating the discussions re the Native User Agreements;
- Emphasize traditional knowledge; need to define it (consider ABEKS policy on collecting TK);
- Predation research (including eagles);
- Communication and education are key – need to be creative and target and attract younger people (Facebook, Twitter);

- Recommend updating of Porcupine Caribou Herd Sensitive Habitats report;
- Facilitate refining the harvest data collection;
- Research climate change and cumulative effects;
- Porcupine Caribou Schools Program update, focus on reaching younger people;
- B.1.1 – continue implementing the HMP and IP;
- B.1.3 – support continued management of hunting in the Hart River overlap area; and
- D.2 – recommend that Parties update Sensitive Habitats report.

Of the list of possible priorities presented above, the Board agreed on the following key priorities to focus on over the coming year, in addition to the ongoing projects:

- Assist with facilitation of the Native User Agreement discussions;
- Communications and education, targeting hunters, especially youth; and
- Recommend that Parties update Sensitive Habitats report.

Next Meeting and Closing Prayer

The next PCMB meeting will be scheduled once the Board's workload is determined following the receipt of responses from Parties to AHM recommendations.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m. and a closing prayer was offered by Steven Buyck.