Appendix 4:

DRAFT PORCUPINE CARIBOU HARVEST MANAGEMENT PLAN

Community Engagement meeting notes, 2008

Meeting page

International Gwich'in Gathering, Old Crow, YT 1
North Yukon RRC, Old Crow, YT 5
NND, RRC, public meeting, Mayo, YT 7
RRC, public meeting, Tsiigehtchic, NT 8
Gwich'in Renewable Resource Board, Ft. McPherson, NT 14
Public meeting, Ft. McPherson, NT 17
HTC / public, Tuktoyaktuk, NT 25
HTC, RRC, public Meeting, Inuvik, NT 33
HTC, RRC, public, Aklavik, NT 48
WMAC NS and WMAC NWT joint meeting, Whitehorse, YT 56
Public meeting, Whitehorse, YT 63
Inuvialuit Game Council, Whitehorse, YT 73
Yukon Regional RRC Meeting, Teslin, YT 81
FN / RRC / public meeting, Dawson City, YT 87
Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, Whitehorse, YT 97

Notes:

- In this document, every effort was made to ensure no names were attached to specific comments except those of the presenters or the resource people.
- A smaller, customized version of the presentation was made to YG staff and to the Renewable Resources class at Yukon College – these presentations are not included in this package.

HMP Discussion

Meeting:
International Gwich'in Gathering, Old Crow, YT
Date: July 14, 2008

3:15 to 4:05 presentation; 45 minutes discussion following.
52 people in attendance

Working Group / resource people attending:
Dorothy Cooley
Marsha Branigan
Deana Lemke
Joe Tetlichi
Shel Graupe

No copies of the plan were available as they were bumped from the plan.

Slideshow (PPT presentation slides). Discussion following PPT included:

Dorothy: 8 questions the WG would like feedback from the public, communities and organizations.

Closure of hunting on Dempster – thought that was a really good idea. I listen to radio all the time; big invitation put out by the government (game department, I imagine), big invitation for people to go up to Dempster and take pics when caribou crossing. Find that very disturbing. Didn't agree with that, that they should open whole area up to tourists, think that's interference with natural movements of caribou. Why would they do that; government said whole area is open now for hunting again, whereas there was that closed period for that? Why did that happen?

Joe Tetlichi response: we are tasked with representing all parties, including residents and non-residents. People harvest, some people like to view and they have a right too. We have to try to accommodate them too. Maybe for educational purposes, families want to see, or people want to go out and see, public education. Everybody has their views. That is an example of challenges we as a board has. Can be viewed one way by a community, but by others, as educating young students or children. Some who see good harvesting practices, sharing with elders, they have a totally different perspective about why traditional people harvest the way they do.

I live in southern Yukon; caribou used to cross on both sides in past, just like the PCH, to point now that whole area is closed to hunting caribou and moose for non-aboriginals. Think about your caribou; be deliberate in everything you do, because one day it may be closed to you, too. I hope not.

Thank you for excellent presentation; caribou important to all of us. How much discussion revolved around social and cultural impacts around limiting harvesting. Nursing mothers, others who can't get the meat they need, affected nutritionally. One question in plan should be to harvesters and users: when get to certain level (i.e. 50k), special occasions, when else may be necessary to hunt the caribou?
Is there going to be education in communities to encourage them to hunt moose, sheep, trap rabbits, reindeer? These are just as nutritional as caribou.

Dorothy: Social and cultural value of caribou coming to WG through their community reps on WG. Special occasions – WG is looking for feedback. Under what conditions (ie large gatherings like this, special ceremonial reasons), looking for feedback. Education is big part of plan – when we do larger community tours, talking to people and chiefs and councils, RRCs, larger public, will go through in detail. Communication very large part of plan and significant.

Thank you to Dorothy. Thank established separate committee, thank you for their work. This is very, very important work that you are doing. Hoping we can be able to accomplish something and do something immediately because of the urgency. I go to Crow Flats every year and see the changes in caribou. Got a couple bulls this year – very fat like fall time fat, probably for many factors, residing in one place, not traveling too much. We were questioning about whether the herd came over the mountains – do you know that?

Dorothy: You mean the ones by Arctic Village – did they come back? No , we didn't see that.

NWT working on Working Group – great. Jurisdictions have to work together – issue here is what about Alaska and what is going to happen there if and when we adopt this management plan. Find it very interesting about bull versus cow; 1 = 23 in 10 years.

If no consensus reached by user groups, is there a level this can go above the PCMB agreement to engage in agreement by governments, concerned chiefs of user groups. What are next steps – concerned about lack of consensus building on this issue.

Conservation is number one issue – if consensus can't be reached; conservation is critical – agreement by governments, not much cooperation between some native governments; can take legal actions (VGFN can pressure YTG to take action).

Youth formed a resolution on this – can be brought forward on Friday.

Thank you for your hard work. Time is running out – find it hard when in 1991 there was less money floating around than today, but really in fairness, I would like to know how we can say that caribou – all have an idea – but how can we say the caribou herd is less now although we haven't had a recent count? Asking our people – got to get some money and get this count done. Red, green zones – tells something but I don't understand a lot. How can we say it's a certain number when we haven't had a count

yet. This is a hard job, need help from everybody. In fall we don't have to tell everybody to harvest bulls, that's what they're going to do. We have to educate people and help each other to try not to kill too many cow caribou. At different times like this gathering, weddings, funeral, should be acceptable to kill caribou. We lived on it for a long time, sounds like we're getting scared. Thank you very much.

Dorothy: census is not only a matter of money; need weather to warm up on coastal plain, bugs come out, so caribou group up. In recent years, the weather hasn't warmed up, they go into mountains, then we have a very low chance of getting a count. PCTC will be meeting in next month; we will look at other methods to getting count; pros and cons to changing methods. Your question about how do we know there are only a certain number of caribou; we don't know that for sure; caribou calculator helps us with that. Continuing to decline; about 100k animals in herd now; best knowledge.

Under no circumstances meat should be sold. We hear that is happening. Old Crow until now has been good, but we don't want to start because others do that (applause).

Thank technical committee for coming together on this. I was involved in getting the agreement finalized. Not an easy job. As long as acknowledgement of international agreement, good enough on that issue. Remind them an agreement is in place. International agreement has say in allocation; need to make that decision at some time. Study on traditional food in Old Crow. Vickie Josie carried out that study in Old Crow; basis for looking at traditional food, think other communities should do the same thing. Turns light on in a way. Another matter is the model jumps from 75K to 125K and then….need to rework as technical committee. There was no restriction on cows and we are here today. Look at having a minimum restriction on cows and maximum restriction on cows – even in good years. Some have been traditional users of muskox, moved over to caribou and now don't want to go back to muskox on Banks Island, for example. Should be reducing cows even in good years. Dempster issues with public health and safety. Some FNs didn't agree with regulations on Dempster, only some individuals. We don't want to end up in that situation. FNs have agreement in principle on PCMA, this is possible to do; need political support on that but it can be done. Today, we can't just think for ourselves; need to think for our future generations. Leave something for the future.

What is the rationale using the numbers you use for the colour zones – background provided? What is tipping point for caribou – at what point can't they recover? Interesting to know that. Be more conservative with numbers – the more conservative you are, the more chances you will have to ensure ther are caribou in the future.

Marsha: got a couple days? There was a lot of discussion on it – difficult question and we don't have all the answers. Took into consideration many factors. In land claims need to prove there is a conservation issue, need to be able to prove that if we are imposing restrictions. Mandatory restrictions – what does that mean? Quota, requirement for a tag and charges if you don't have a tag. Other FNs could enforce differently. Could be challenges legally, that was considered. We don't have all the

information right now but with the precautionary principle we still need to make decision even if we don't have all the information. Everything depends on what is going on with the herd; decisions will have to be made by the board annually.

Shel: expand on a couple points: as member of WG, advocated strongly that mandatory bull-only management should happen at 100K, other communities didn't agree. I compromised and went with those numbers; they aren't set in stone, need feedback. Some harvesters don't think there is any problem with the herd whatsoever.

Joe – lots of discussion going on – will be coming back.

Thank the board. I see changes in caribou herd, in migration; it's a lot faster, sometimes late, and a lot less time. This year only five days, very small herd; years before it used to be 2-3 weeks. In previous years, cows usually came through first and then big bulls; now turned around, hardly see cows, older bulls mixed with younger ones. Some day it's going to leave us; the land is changing. Lake drained out last year, I see the caribou they came to that lake and turned off, they didn't cross that anymore; the land takes care of them. Global warming affects them and us. I say to NWT, Dawson, all the users, got to work together on this issue; no more fighting over this. We don't need to be bad friends over this; work together because some day it's going to leave us; the world is changing. Thanks for trying to do something; people have to be involved in it.

Robert Bruce: I am chair of RRC, and council can meet with you in the morning and over this and consult with hunters. Can take information back and do best we could for you.

Joe: working group more than willing to meet with you; good idea. Very good discussions. Thanks for all your comments, suggestions and recommendations. Norma's question: what about Alaskans?

Dorothy: this is important question, they have interest in harvesting as well. PCMB and WG agree to take care of our own business first, develop plan for Canadian side, then talk to Alaskans. This draft will go to Alaskans, communities, governments, they can comment if they wish.

We look forward to your comments on this plan; they are so important.

Discussion on RRC interviews with local people re HMP

Meeting:
North Yukon RRC, Old Crow, YT
Date: July 14, 2008

Working Group / resource people attending:
Dorothy Cooley
Shel Graupe
Deana Lemke

In attendance:
Joel Peter
Robert Bruce Sr.
Shaun Bruce
Harvey Kassi
Stan Njootli Jr.

Robert Bruce said the RRC would like to take an active role to bring the HMP to the Old Crow citizens. He could personally assist with translation to the local elders and talking with hunters from house to house.

Shel Graupe said he appreciated his offer and agreed this would be a good role for the RRC. It is a very busy time in Old Crow so assistance from the RRC would be very valuable, any way the council can offer help. It is critical to dig in and look at the plan so we can get feedback on the entire plan, including the questions attached to the plan. RRC can take on a more expanded role to help get feedback between now and September. It's a serious situation – if we can't make the HMP and Native User Agreement work, we will be forced to leave it up to the Government of Yukon to decide the fate of the caribou. We will plan to hold a couple community meetings.

Robert asked if all user groups will be coming together. Dorothy responded that the WG team will be going to all user communities to explain it. We can come back to Old Crow to do that – approximately a three-hour meeting to explain the plan, if requested. Everyone liked that idea and agreed that it should be done sooner rather than later, as a VGFN GA is being planned for August 9. It was agreed that the WG team could come back Monday, July 21. Robert agreed to give people a heads-up to citizens in the meantime, then it could be discussed further at the GA.

Outstanding questions: Should a coordinator be hired in the community to assist with citizens completing questionnaires and providing written comments? Shel will need to discuss options and logistics further with the RRC.

Dorothy spoke briefly about the computer model used to predict certain scenarios. The colour chart is the meat of the plan and people need to understand them and provide feedback about them.

Predator control was briefly discussed. Dorothy said the WG felt it should not be included in the HMP.

Deana is sending a box of draft HMPs and accompanying questionnaires to the community (Shel). They should be on Wednesday's plane to Old Crow. Shel will work with the RRC to distribute them.

HMP meeting

Meeting:
NND, RRC, public meeting, Mayo, YT
Date: Sept. 4, 2008

Working group / resource people attending:
Marsha Branigan
Dorothy Cooley
Deana Lemke
Dawna Hope
PCMB members

Attendees:
Frank Patterson
Chief Simon Mervyn
Jimmy Johnny
Shawn Francis
Barb Shannon (RRC)
Robert Hager
Christine Hager

Recommends getting this info into the schools – re CSI and hunter ed. Info. He suggests signs on the Dempster Highway like fire signs.
Too many times we let this important stuff sit on the shelves and gather dust. This is important. It should be worked out between the FNs and RRCs re administrative processes and who will cover the costs and figure out how best to get people involved and informed.

We do yearly sit downs with the community members to see if there are any issues. NND doesn't harvest a great deal of caribou; maybe 20. Primarily, harvest is moose. Northern people count on the herd for traditional knowledge, food supply, etc. I can see with agreeing with this for now, but things are always changing. For example, ticks could be an issue that needs to be addressed in the future. Smaller animals are carriers. Global warming will affect the wildlife and fish even more in the future. We are being told to not harvest as much as we usually do, but we will be impacted by that, and those who we fish and harvest for will be affected (such as elders). This Plan will work for now. We are community driven. I chair the RRC and we are neutral – to give an answer tonight would be premature. We need input from the community. We have to do something – we know the caribou is depleting.

Annual meeting will be held on Sept. 29, 30 and Oct. 1 in Teslin. Frank will see about inviting the WG.

Annual general workshop agenda is just starting to be put together. She will check about putting the WG presentation on the agenda.

HMP community meeting

Meeting:
RRC, public meeting, Tsiigehtchic, NT
Date: September 10, 2008, 6:20 p.m.

Working Group / resource people attending:
Joe Tetlichi
Deana Lemke
Marsha Branigan
Dorothy Cooley
Jozef Carnogursky
Steven Baryluk

In attendance:

Anna May MacLeod
Peter Ross
George Niditchie
Phillip Blake
Russell Andre
Jason McLeod
Jenny Andre
Douglas Kendo
Itai Katz
Alestine Andre
John Norbert
James Cardinal
John Itsi

Joe Tetlichi opening comments re PCMB mandate and update on activities, focus on HMP.

Comments:

- What is the critical number before the re is no return? A: There isn't really a critical number. This model is looking at everything else in the population being the same; the only alteration is the harvesting (numbers and sex ratios)
- How much impact do predators have on the herd? A: We'll touch on that later in the presentation.
- I don't think harvesting will make it change much because no one is harvesting predators. The bigger the packs, the more they eat. Maybe PCMB can recommend changes to open hunting of grizzlies and wolves.
- Grizzlies have been here for thousands of years and the caribou have always survived. Hard to put blame on those. They have been here thousands of years.
- In our days, the moose population was right down, so were beavers. Them days were tough. You were allowed 5 beavers and 10 marten, one moose, one wolf. The

- We brought up the quota system years ago and nothing happened with it. I've been saying this for years.
- Where is there the right that aboriginal people have right to hunt? I never read that? A: Your land claims says that, for subsistence, aboriginal rights.
- We are in the yellow – it looks like we might need to be in the orange. A: we want feedback from everyone about the numbers for the zones and where different management actions kick in.
- We should be taking precautionary measures and take other wildlife and fish.
- It's not the elders out there anymore, it's the youth. You have to duck when they shoot on the Dempster. Four years ago I went out and shot four caribou; I had to go early in the morning to avoid the young ones. They should have left that corridor in the highway. Relates past experience – not safe for people. If you want to make a decision on how many caribou our people take, must consider all the other users, native and non-native. White people hunting caribou in July – I seen it. A: season opens August 1. If you see otherwise, need to report it.
- We're not the only ones taking the caribou. Also wolves and bears. One wolf takes 2 caribou a week. They keep disappearing by the packs of wolves. Need to get rid of wolves; need management to control the destiny of the herd. It's not how many you're going to get. Do survey properly, come back to communities and say how much is out there and how much communities can take, from Old Crow to Tuk. This is old news to me. I would like to see something happen like that. Disappearance of corridor is sad news – that's not hunting, it's not safe. Put something there in place so we know we can control that. There are also disasters, fires, We have to start thinking about all these things. It's not just almighty gun by man, it's the predators too. Can't just wish for it and it's not there.

- Community hunt would be good idea. Special reasons, for feast, etc. to get their meat and come back home. That's fine, but there always has to be someone out there doing the count.
- Have to go to a tag system.
- Not hard to try to figure out who should get tags between Gwich'in communities – we gave all ours to Inuvik for the Bluenose.
- What impact does the muskox have on the caribou? A: This is classic case – scientists don't think there is any effect at all. Community members say differently – we don't agree. We've never studied it; it would be really hard and expensive. We know there is the group in the Richardson Mtns that has grown. In Ivvavik Park they have stayed the same.
- Hunters take grizzly bear pkgs [tag kits] for safety. Then they open them and see all the information that is requested – it's so much. A: some is mandatory some is voluntary. We pay hunters for samples. We're asking for help with samples for the monitoring program. Grizzlies can be shot when it's in defense of life or property, it just needs to be reported and hide turned over to GNWT.
- Are there going to be more officers on the NWT side? A: HMP calls for that. A lot of the role of the check station is education. Elders are out there, hired through GTC.
- What impact would opening of the 1002 lands have on this? A: PCMB has started to work on cumulative effects assessment. If we work on that – if calving range is developed, etc. it gets pretty worrisome. CE assessment is a huge job.
- A bull would sire many cows. If you shoot the bulls you will have less calves? A: no, it's the opposite. Only a small portion of bulls breed. The bulls can sire many cows and the cows have calves. Small bulls are best animals to take. Cows are incredibly important. The next important factor is calf survival.
- Quite a few years ago, in 1986, doctors came around McPherson taking samples of people. They were getting that from the caribou. If you had so much, it caused cancer. A: I think you're talking about Chernobyl disaster; they were monitoring for a radioactive chemical transferred through the atmosphere. They were worried it was being deposited over here. They were testing all across the north. Radio cesium – results from that showed almost zero effect; very little radio cesium coming over to here. We have researchers analyzing samples for contaminants such as cadmium. We are monitoring that.
- Disease monitoring should be included in the indicators assessed annually.
- Predators concerns could be a community-led initiative.
- Weather conditions should be part of the indicator list. A: yes, like icing events, fall storms, rain in the winter.
- Also forest fires should be looked at.
- Harvest allocation should be based on percentage of users. The more users, the more tags.
- Should go by the percentages outlined in the "Harvest Information" pie chart presented.
- Is the population higher in NWT than Yukon (First Nation harvesters)? A: need to check.

- The percentage may go up for Inuvialuit since they can't hunt other herds now. You have to watch the Inuvialuit – they should take it all back, not leave it out there. I saw them leave 6 caribou out there. I told them to pick them up and they did. It has to be managed. If hunters go out in parties someone has to go along with them. Somebody from here should accompany them. If you want to look after something, you have to manage it.
- How often Yukon officers go in the mountains? A: Not often; focus is Dempster since that is where the focus of the hunting is.
- Once these measures are implemented, need to have check stations on both ends of the highways, count vehicles, count hunters, check the hunting.
- We see more Inuvialuit going there now.
- When is our next meeting on this going to happen?
- Let the leaders pass – if we don't they will change their path. They don't have no choice anymore. The only place they have to go is east.
- When road closed for hunters, should be closed for traffic for one week to allow the leaders to pass. When big trucks pass the caribou stay way off. Everyone can prepare for one week closure.
- When drilling, caribou stay way off there; they wouldn't even come near there. I saw it – four different places they were drilling from camps on Dempster. Eagle Plains to past Ogilvie – they were just going up that Rock River.
- From experience, using ATV, does a lot of damage for caribou habitat. Not like snowmobile – you can't find your trail. ATVs rip up the land. I see it all over the mountains on the tundra; the tracks.
- Yukon is not managing caribou on your side – need the regulations re snow cover for snowmachine use; 8 km corridor.
- How can you enforce hunting within the 500 m corridor? Pace it out? A: this is for public safety, not caribou conservation.
- How far does a bullet go? A: a lot further than 500 m.
- Blaze orange is a good idea. Sometimes the fall come up and waiting for the caribou; when you see the bright orange vest on hunters, you stop right now.
- Should mail blaze orange vests to each harvesters home.
- Should have hunter safety hats – orange ones. A: PCMB produces those toques. Vests can be loaned out at the check station. Right now, it's voluntary for hunters to wear them.
- Sale of caribou is a big problem. You hear things going on in different towns. One caribou is going for $500 in some places. That's enough incentive to send people out. Selling for actual profit should be illegal. A: Board is trying to figure out how to draw line – widowers/mothers who need meat; cover gas.
- That's different. Cash should not be used. If they want to chip in for gas, that's different. Then give a portion of meat. Different than a load of caribou in back, knocking on door and trying to sell meat. It's all arranged before they go hunting – that's where the slaughters come in. If people want it, they go out and get it.
- Should go door to door about this. Elders spending $250 a caribou; they didn't know they weren't supposed to buy them. They need to have regulations explained to them. Really good way to educate them.

- Used to be traditional community hunts; that kind of harvesting was meant for single people with families or those without ability to hunt. With that, there is less wastage. RRC could organize it, as has been done in the past.
- Yes, that's for the needy. Issues with not enough gas. RRC could help with communication if going door to door. We're such a small community – ask for a few dollars to help.
- Are they implementing strategy on the Alaska side? A: Not yet, but the PCTC know this is happening and the Alaskans will be informed; we're sending copies of the draft HMP to them.
- Where did we get the harvest numbers? A: we are in touch with Alaskans often and we get 12 different sources of information on harvest data. Only info we have is estimates from biologists around Alaska communities.
- Kits gave out, can one harvester take whole thing? Each harvester should have few bags. A: check at check station and get bags. We haven't limited it in past.
- How long do monitors stay in check station? A: depends. We are trying to lengthen it; trying to engage the GTC to assist because we don't have manpower in our office.
- Enforcement will be critical otherwise plan won't be worth paper it is printed on. Communication and education will be important. A: community responsibility is critical. If that's done at a community level, enforcement requirements will be minimal.
- There is a difference between being serious with your mouth and being serious by getting down to the dirt and doing something about it. The chiefs and leadership, if they think it's important, will be going up and down the highway. All they do sometimes is talk, it could happen for another 10 years if there is no enforcement.
- Sometimes the work is put on you when the work is coming up – maybe be creative and hire a CO on the local level here. You could pay them, they're qualified. A: that's what we're doing.
- Jozef: We're hiring them, paying them. A: we gave money to the tribal council.
- should have an annual gun site-in project for all the four Gwich'in communities to come together in one place or in each community. Target practice should be done.
- Also should have harvesting workshops.
- Make sure you have your FAC and your legal gun before you do any practice.
- Nobody has talked about caribou wastage at garbage dump.
- Nobody talks about how I get offered old meat every year.
- There is wastage of caribou meat and fish every spring. This must be considered as well.
- That happens in Inuvik and all communities.
- RRC has lots of pictures of that. I reported it to Tim Devine. All this meat was being thrown out at the dump. You can throw whole caribou away except hind legs. We reviewed the Wildlife Act and that's what it says. We need workshop to understand the Wildlife Act.
- Steve Baryluk said he was making note of that because there will be revisions to the Wildlife Act.
- Revisions need to be done at the community level, with consultations.
- Yes, you are going in the right direction. You have the okay stamp.

- Next big meeting, should invite all user groups to sit down together and work this out together, rather than just individual groups.
- After you're finished with this plan, should bring everyone together.
- Bears are getting nasty.
- Bears hear shots and start coming down to see. They're getting very aggressive. A: Grizzly bear tags should be utilized – some are never used by the communities.
- We can't talk anymore; we have to start taking action now.
- Do you have a plan in place? I have a plan in place. I'm going to quit eating caribou meat and start eating hotdogs.
- People really don't know the land so the only place they can really hunt is the Dempster. They have to be shown how to hunt on the land.
- Like to see taking kids out on the land, to the mountain. A: If RRC wants to do an on-the-land program, can contact Darryl English from GNWT. We have funding for public information, hunter education.

9:00 pm

HMP meeting

Meeting:
Gwich'in Renewable Resource Board, Ft. McPherson, NT
Date: 11Sep08

Working Group / resource people attending:
Joe Tetlichi; Marsha Branigan; Dorothy Cooley; Jozef Carnogursky; Steven Baryluk

In Attendance: Robert Charlie; Sara Jerome; Neil Colin; Robert Alexie; Johnny Charlie; Charlie Snowshoe; Dan Topolinski, James Firth, Eugene Pascal, Abe Wilson, Jerome Gordon, John Nortbert, Peter Ross, Melody Nice-Paul, Kristen Callaghan

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Joe Tetlichi made a presentation re the PCMB & Management Plan.

International Caribou Management Board was formed in 1995, but Bush has not reappointed the American representatives since he was elected in 1999, so the Board is not functioning at the present time.

There has not been a count since 2001. Number in 1989 was 178,000, in 2001 the count was 123,000. Based on the caribou model, feel the population now is around 100,000.

Because of the decline in the Blue Nose caribou herd, there is more pressure from hunting along the Dempster.

In 1993 started working to combine traditional knowledge with science to work on the Dempster Highway regulations. Last year the Government of the Yukon lifted the regulations in the Yukon due to issues with the consultation process that was used.

The PCMB try to work with the communities, update them, distribute education packages to the schools re good hunting ethics.

Three years ago, started to look at what it takes to make a management plan. First phase was to get a protocol – everyone had to agree. Got signatures by June.

Draft Management Plan was established through the meeting in Inuvik last year. Held a stakeholders meeting, funded by ENR. At that meeting, came up with various scenarios and ways to deal with each one.

Last phase is the Native User Agreement – they will have to agree on the plan.

Dorothy Cooley and Marsha Branigan are on the working group for the Harvest Management Plan. They reviewed a presentation on the draft of the Harvest Management Plan for the Porcupine Caribou Herd in Canada. Copies of the draft plan along with a questionnaire were distributed.

Each of the signatories have a member on the working group.

In Canada, the range includes five land claim agreements and two national parks.

There are eight questions that the working group would like feedback on. They are also interested in any other comments people might make on the draft plan.

Many of the initiatives presented in the plan are already under way, but a lot more will need to be done before the plan is complete.

Joe Tetlichi commented that this is a very sensitive plan, if we do all the work, but don't have the cooperation of the communities, it will fall flat.

There will be a community consultation meeting tonight after the feast.

Discussion & Questions:

This was an excellent presentation. A lot of people are harvesting now because there was no caribou last year. There are a lot of left-overs being left behind in the hunting area – there are people who are tanning and using the other parts of the caribou, so hunters should be encouraged to bring them home for other people to use.

Since the highway came in, it changed hunting. Today there was big talk on the radio about hunting on the highway. It comes down to the food that we eat. Leaving heads, skin and guts should stop – Elders tell us that we use it all. Feel that these are Delta caribou and not for people from somewhere else. Also need more signs on the highway about caribou. From the border to James Creek, people should not be stopping at all – not even to take a picture.

Very good presentation. We have come a long way. The questionnaires are very important and we should pass them on to other people so they can answer. There are a lot of people hunting now – there are a lot of grizzly bears out there now. Wolf population is high now. It used to be in the good time, it used to be $40 bounty for a wolf, now there is $100 per carcass during the trapping season. The bears and wolves take a part of the harvest. We enjoy hunting and eating our traditional food. Have to think of our children and grandchildren – would like to see them enjoy it too.

Think it is time to include predator control. The government is not involved, the land claim agreements should set up a working group between the parties.

One of the biggest headaches we have is the Dempster Highway. At one time, no one used to hunt in the summer time. The only way we will get something done is to put it in a law. Have to do something to slow the hunting down.

I asked one of the leaders about closing hunting on the Dempster Highway and he said it can’t be done. If there was no more hunting on the highway from here to Dawson, we would get back to the old traditional ways of hunting.

Robert Charlie commented that more discussion will be held at the evening meeting. There is some urgency to complete this plan, so we have a strategy for dealing with the caribou.

HMP meeting

Meeting:
Public meeting, Ft. McPherson, NT
Date: 11Sep08

Working Group / resource people attending:
Joe Tetlichi
Marsha Branigan
Dorothy Cooley
Jozef Carnogursky
Steven Baryluk
Mary Beckett (hired to take notes)

In Attendance:
Jay Wright
Cassandra Francis
Peter Ross
Megan Robert
Abe Stewart
Robert Alexie
Sarah Jerome
John A. Snowshoe
Herbert Firth
Robert Charlie
Dan Topolinski
Eugene Pascal

Call to order by Joe Tetlichi at 6:45 p.m.

Joe Tetlichi gave a short presentation on the PCMB and their activities.

Question about the caribou – last year had a lot of caribou at Husky Lake, there was nothing all through here. Don't know where they ended up – was it in Alaska? They kill quite a few over there – does anyone know how they made out?

Joe Tetlichi – Last year they started on the southern migration and 3rd week in September they were north of Aklavik then turned past Crow Flats and ended up around White Stone Fishing Branch. Some were around the Dempster Highway area. 12 collars were around Arctic Village.

Dorothy Cooley – They don't do harvest studies in Alaska, but it is a very small village, so they don't take that many.

If they didn't harvest much last year, there must be a bit of a jump ahead (in population)?

Dorothy Cooley - We figure about 4000 taken per year. The population estimate is about 100,000. In 89 it was 178,000. 2001 was 123,000 at the last count.

So there would have been a gain on birthing?

Dorothy Cooley – The birth rate wasn't that spectacular. There was a bit of hunting in the early part of the year, so there was less taken over the year.

What wasn't harvested would have been gained, but about 25% of the calves die in the first month, 2/3 in the first year. That is usual all through the years.

Someone mentioned today there was 200 caribou spotted today?

Joe Tetlichi – That was west of Aklavik. There were also caribou spotted on the Dempster Highway in the summer.

If there are 200 caribou west of Aklavik, you don't know what is happening today. All we want to know is what is happening. We would like to find out. It used to be September over at Rat River long ago, now it is end of July. It's pretty hard to figure out.

Dorothy Cooley – We hear about sightings of caribou where most of the caribou are somewhere else. Don't know why that is.

What happened to all the reindeer that went missing?

Marsha Branigan – They found some and took them to Richards' Island for the summer. Probably in the Cape Bathurst area wandering around.

Tuktoyaktuk lost their caribou as well.

Joe Tetlichi – Sometimes they get swept into other herds. Met a guy in Alaska that was a reindeer herder. One day he had 6000 reindeer, the next day nothing because the Western Alaska herd took it all – never did get them back.

In that case would they interbreed?

Marsha Branigan – Don't know if we have a clear answer. The reindeer breed earlier than the caribou.

The reindeer have their calves in April at Swimming Point. Caribou up here at the coast in June. There is a big difference.

Marsha Branigan – So they are breeding earlier in the fall.

Joe Tetlichi – One thing we are trying to initiate, because the herd has declined for 14 years, and we haven't had a count for 7 years and because the herds around Inuvik, Cape Bathurst and Bluenose West are not to be hunted, there is more pressure on the Dempster Highway and harvesting the Porcupine Caribou now. We are thinking ahead. Our mandate is to make sure the caribou is always healthy. The way the decline is happening, more pressure, the mortality of the calves and cows, the population is going down. We are creating a harvest strategy, like they have a fire chart. What do you think about that?

Sounds good – has to be protected some way.

Joe Tetlichi – Do you think, if we said that the caribou are getting too low, how would people respond if we said today, no more hunting?

Don't think people will agree if they don't understand with the management. We will need really close monitoring, so that people that are over-harvesting are spoken to. Last year, there were so many times when I bought store meat, and other people were harvesting caribou and not sharing it. Will have to monitor it closely.

The main killers, you never see them around a meeting, they don't know what is going on. There is just a hand full of us wanting to protect the caribou. Those guys don't want to come up.

Joe Tetlichi – We get that comment – the main users, the people making the kill are never at the meetings. If we create this plan, and they don't know about it, what are we going to do?

Based on these past two comments, there needs to be a lot of communicating with the users, the Board, the RRCs hammering the numbers in. Hammering how it should be handled, taking what they need, sharing what they have, using all the parts. Glad there is education component. The main ones aren't here.

Today when they did the presentation, there was a survey, there was a survey about whether the allocation should be done on historical levels or some other way? What could that be?

Marsha Branigan – One was based on the size and remoteness of the community. For the Gwich'in claim, they have a Gwich'in needs level. We don't know. For the Bluenose West herd, used historic use data based on a percentage allocation.

Was that controversial at the time?

Marsha Branigan – A bit because we didn't do enough consultation, because we did not plan ahead. We had to move quickly, it was an emergency situation. Decisions were made, not everyone was happy, but never will everyone be happy.

Interested in the Gwich'in stepping forward and saying the historical numbers make the most sense.

With the allocation on the Bluenose the Gwich'in lost out, but their use of that herd historically wasn't that high. In the Porcupine Caribou, if you went that route, the Gwich'in would get most of the harvest.

Suggest that you put really firm timelines in the plan rather than just rolling it out. It seems like there is some urgency to complete it and let the communities know.

Marsha Branigan – Suggest if you have any suggestions, you can put them forward. Difficult for us to put it forward in the land claim areas.

In the situation where you come to a community and no one shows up, you have to take a stand and move ahead.

Dorothy Cooley – On the Yukon side, the question about the Total Allowable Harvest, they have a prescription for how the quotas maybe set. Want to make sure that everyone understands everyone else's situation.

Maybe should have a table showing the different scenarios / options – Gwich'in minimum needs level, Yukon harvest levels, then have to come up with something for everyone.

Marsha Branigan – We could do that for further meetings. Could do a separate background document for people to see.

Dorothy Cooley – A lot of times people don't have good confidence in the harvest studies – yours is an exception. You can only do the best with what you have.

Curious with the Yukon agreements – what are the other considerations?

Dorothy Cooley – Minimum needs levels are not necessarily historic harvest, most talk about changing needs, growth of community, more than simple math – it's a social decision.

It is the whole objective of Land Claim agreements to protect resources for the future.

Marsha Branigan – Usually that is at the beginning of the slides.

Marsha Branigan – What if no one shows up – example is Old Crow – they grabbed this thing and ran off with it and had a public meeting without us and then went door to door to get comments on the plan. They have 30-40 people that they have talked to so far. The RRC has taken it on to get comments from their members.

In Old Crow and McPherson, they never get anything done because of the fighting. Can't get nothing done because of the fighting. Old Crow don't want to come here. When we want to do something about it. Tuktoyaktuk should be here too. The only time we see them is when they are in the muskeg skinning caribou, have to start getting along good.

Marsha Branigan – Suggestion was we have to have another meeting once the working group has a plan to have another meeting

Caribou Summit II.

Marsha Branigan – Will have to propose something in the 2nd draft.

Last year, in the winter some time. The meetings were terrible. Asked someone why don't they just completely shut the Dempster Highway down for hunting, he said you can't do it, there is no way. Now the caribou, we never had trouble before the Dempster Highway. This time of year, with the highway in, that's all the trouble. You cannot close the Dempster Highway for hunting caribou, you know it will pick up if they stop hunting on the Dempster Highway, absolutely closed. In the 60's my father-in-law walked up the seismic trail on Stony when the ice was starting to move, with dogs, believe that could be done yet. The caribou – you know any laws on that. Richard Nerysoo told me you can't do it (close hunting on the Dempster Highway). Is it law to be able to hunt on the highway.

Joe Tetlichi – My interpretation is that if the Dempster Highway is shut down, you can't stop someone for going on it.

Suggest no hunting on the Dempster Highway.

Joe Tetlichi – You would be infringing on aboriginal right to harvest if you do that, so that is why we are trying to do this plan.

That is why I think we need monitors from both sides, monitors to get out and do it.

Must monitor it.

We are the spokespeople. If the main users are not going to participate, know that I represent the opinions of some of the women in the communities, heard about caribou at Midway Lake Festival, I was sick that people would start hunting then. Hope that I am gone long before the herd is gone. My decision now speaking on behalf of the people who are not here now, so that the Dempster Highway is monitored to see who is there and who is up there hunting.

Another thing is the size of shells you use. I use 130 grain at Northern and Coop – it is too small. 30-30 used to be 170 grain. The shot is too small. Should check into that.

Joe Tetlichi – That is one of the things in the hunter education program to give to the schools and the communities. That is one of the things being addressed. They recommended that because of the low grain in the shell, 30-30's are not recommended to hunt caribou, because they go right through, felt that wounding loss is a problem. Dorothy Cooley and the Executive Director are getting the education package ready.
Herbert Firth – All they have to do is go to the Coop or Northern and tell them not to order 130 grain, order 170. 130 is for rabbits.

Joe Tetlichi – Your comments are being written down.

170,000 caribou herd, and it shows that it is declining, there is a heavy duty on the harvesting, seem to get the blame for it. In the past, the guys that went last year, they just turned around and shot back again, there is a lot of forest fire in the country, in the Yukon, you look and there is a fire there every summer. Last winter the caribou turned around – asked the reason why that is. Why don't they go up and check the forest fire how much it burned and see what burned. Should charter a plane and look up there. Harvest caribou in the last couple of years, people were getting some and then caribou went back to Alaska. Forest fires might have something to do with it.

Want to ask Marsha Branigan a question, seems like the communication can't get out the users. Seems like we could put out a package, what time does the government step in and say no more hunting. Should be doing the management ourselves – at what stage will they do that? Maybe if you get a pamphlet out, inform the people that if we don't do something right away, the government will step in. I like all the stuff you have up there, even though that technology – last count was in 2001 – even using the technology of using the model – that's not accurate I don't think. I think the caribou might be under a 100,000 – don't know. Strongly believe we have to do something now - before we get into trouble. Better to save the caribou now, better to sacrifice now than later have no caribou at all.

Think that Robert Alexie and Herbert Firth knows about this, in our days, the Game Warden stepped in and put a quota on moose – 1 per year. In those days, you could not buy any meat in the store, did it with beaver and marten as well. Couldn't find a moose track in a 100 miles, lucky if you got a moose. At that time, had no input into it. Now we have all our organizations working together and now today you see the moose are pretty healthy, there are a lot of beavers, lot of martens. If they didn't do that at that time, it wouldn't be here. I speak on behalf of Tsiigehtchic.

Have to get everyone working together.

If we get it in the NWT, I'm quite concerned, seeing the chart there (population chart), it's going down steady, with all the forest fires, may get a bad fall or bad spring, freezing rain. Look what happened to the Muskox in Sachs Harbour a few years ago – they died off when they could not feed. Could look at that way of informing the people, if we don't get this running now, government may step in and stop hunting altogether. Have to try

and inform the public so they come out and have their input. We're concerned, want to save the herd.

Marsha Branigan – Think there is a different mentality between the Yukon and NWT governments. On our side we have GRRB, WMAC, PCMB that make recommendations, there is a lot of pressure on the Yukon side to take action. They are waiting on this plan to take action, but if it does not work, they may move quite quickly. We are going to all users on the Canadian side of the herd, to get everyone on side, to get the plan in place, know there is a conservation issue. It's great we are hearing really positive things in the communities. One of the things is the numbers right – is 75,000 the right number? We are trying to get people to take bulls, as the working group, want to know if the communities agree, and if they do or don't want to hear about it. Second thing is how to divide Total Allowable Harvest.

If we got together and said would take 5 caribou in the fall, that would be good, but there are people from other communities who don't follow. People on the ferry see who is not obeying. There are 5 or 6 people who don't give a hoot. Maybe can bring them to a meeting. Have to get together to get something done.

Comment re the chart – without anything else to base our experience on, it is a good first step, it's a work in progress, we can change it as we go along, may have to take drastic action, if it doesn't work. Education is key, Land Claim objectives are key. We want to be the ones to initiate action and not have government come down on us. Don't want that – message has to be out there. Communications is key. Everyone at these meetings has to go out and let the community know about it. As we go along have to readjust the plan.

Before the government goes that far to shut it down, they have to at least put it 3 caribou or something.

Joe Tetlichi – There is a clause on ceremonial purposes.

Now is the time to get the bulls before they start mating. Once mating starts, stop hunting altogether. That is another way. It's just an idea. There is all kinds of ways, have to have the public out.

The discussion we are having here on harvesting seems like it is out of control. With boys sitting here, when we were young, our parents were out there with us, hunting, trapping, with our parents. Everybody in the Delta my age still talks about it. When we were young people hunting, me and my brother hunting muskrat, we would go June 15 at 12 o'clock, took shells out of the gun and went home. Clean the gun and don't use the gun until September. That is the way we were brought up. Since then everything is out of control. This is where we are now. If we had the education way back, maybe it would be working today. Boys talk about harvesting caribou, get this thing over and do something about it now.

Already said how I felt about it, don’t want to wait until 75,000, think the plan should go into place right now. Education in the schools, if we can educate the younger people, it’s important, they are hunting now and need to realize they can’t over kill and not waste.
Joe Tetlichi – All the information is being written down. Marsha Branigan & Dorothy Cooley are going to Tuktoyaktuk, Aklavik, Dawson, Whitehorse to get feedback. At the RRC office there are questionnaires to fill out. All the information is good to feed back. Will tinker all of this, fine tune it, then take it back to the signatories. People are anxious to get the plan going because it is becoming serious.

Just thinking that Marsha Branigan and Dorothy Cooley have gone to communities, should get statements from communities you have been to, so that can show that to the next communities you go to. Might spur agreement.

One more camera on the highway.

Marsha Branigan – Asking for comments back by the end of October.

PCH HMP presentation

Meeting:
HTC / public, Tuktoyaktuk, NT
Date: 16 Sep 08

6:00 pm Hamlet Chambers

Working Group / resource people attending:
Marsha Branigan
Dorothy Cooley
(both taking notes)
Richard Binder, IGC

Start approx 6:20 pm

In attendance:

James Pokiak, HTC Chair
Chucky Gruben, HTC Director
Charles Pokiak, HTC
Eric Cockney, HTC
Lennie Emaghok HTC
Lila Voudrach, ENR, HTC member
Veryl GrubenHTC member
Eddie Dillon, HTC member
Daryl Nasogaluak, HTC member
Calvin Pokiak (part of meeting)
Patricia Voudrach, Hamlet, HTC member
Jozef Carnogursky GTC WG - regrets

Q: what happens if we run into a situation eg Bluenose where Inuvialuit and Gwich'in agree but Sahtu doesn't
A: hopefully worked out ahead of time by this plan

Q: There are concerns that the PCH will be used more because of NWT limitations, this is already happening. That is why we are here today; need to figure this out ahead of time
A: Bluenose decline brought it into perspective, the need for planning ahead yes, but the PCH process began years ago. Bluenose is a driving force behind this.

Q: Does the 4,000 harvested include Alaska?
A: yes, annual estimate. Not good reporting but it's all we have.

Q: 4000 – could be more, could be less?
A: yes, some years more, some years less. We think on average each year = 4000

Q: should have more accurate number before we move forward with this plan.
A: precautionary principle, yes we need that number but if we wait to get it, we might be too late. We want to move forward in the process.

Q; Years back before caribou problem, ENR used to give collar info and everyone knows where they used to park at James creek – giving that info was really hard on the population
A: no not on web anymore, not NWT or PCH at all.
people use vehicles and trailers, easy access on Dempster. Should be reduced in the future
A: we'll get to that later in presentation

Q: Is this for info only? We don't use PCH much. Hard for me to recommend on how they (Aklavik, Inuvik, Ft McPherson, Tsiigehtchic) should hunt.
Inuvialuit <u>have</u> increased their usage of PCH already.
A: remember you have the right to harvest PCH. Tuk HTC might say they defer to Inuvik and Aklavik but we want to hear from everybody. Working Group wants feedback from communities as you'll see later in the presentation.

Q; example couple years ago Inuvik HTC community harvest for Sachs – permission to go and harvest so many from that herd.

[continue with presentation – TAH slide]

Q: why not include Alaska right away? Don't make sense not to talk to them right away.
A: at some point, will be included. Possibly natives users from Canada could go over there to talk to them, not governments.

[Dorothy went through questions quickly then break]

Q: 3% resident harvest is taking food out of the freezer [the land is our freezer].
Q: non-aboriginal hunting is about 10% - same as Alaskan natives

Q: "That is our bank out there. Can't afford food from the Northern – it costs too much"

A: 1 in 5 years caribou winter around Arctic village – only about 90 people there so high estimate is 500 caribou harvested.

Q: Non-aboriginal harvest should go [when TAH is instituted and can't meet aboriginal needs].

A: about 200 Yukon resident per year taken

A: Non-resident Yukon is outfitters – approx 20 per year
Yukon Final Agreements, there is sharing with the resident hunters

12% includes all the native villages in the Alaskan side of the range, Kaktovik and Gwich'in villages

Q: News [paper story] and finger pointing – need to be very careful how we do this Don't have access to that; we don't hunt there [Dempster]

Q: Since 2002 been hunting up the peninsula herd is getting healthy, more cows and calves, everyone taking bulls so herd is growing

Q: if you base the TAH on historic harvest levels how soon can you look at this?

Q: population estimates every year?
A: Every 2-3 years but it has been 6 years so far. Something is changing and caribou are moving off coastal plain into the mountains before the census. Still annual monitoring (went through list of indicators including new bull ratio so we can plug it into the model)

A: Yukon FN harvest data collection is responsibility of the First Nations – all are collecting data. We [govt, PMCB] do get some of that.

Q: If we can get this plan signed we'll be doing something that has never been done before.
Q: we're living with this now [NWT herd management actions]

Q: New slogan and you don't even know it – THAT'S NO BULL

End presentation 7:20 pm

Dorothy: Any advice how we can handle this? You guys have been through this.

Q: Do you know historically approximately a number of caribou in the past – they were higher in the past and they are coming back to normal?

A: Old Crow elders remember times when there were no caribou and people were starving and other times when there were more.

Q: Do some elders say there are lots so not worry while others say the numbers are low

A: Don't really hear that but we hear that historically harvest was a lot higher – feed the dogs etc

Q: People numbers are less too.

Q: Do you know why the numbers are dropping – No. Studies when the herd was increasing, adult cow survival was higher. Calf productivity and survival are important.

2000 and 2001 springs – calved south of Porcupine River. People don't remember that happening before – lots of snow, spring very late those years – very low calf survival Ivvavik National Park was created to protect the Canadian side of the calving ground 1990 and 1991 also low calf survival – started decline but can't account for decline continuing past 1995. Based on the model, we know that a couple of % change of adult female survival can cause a change in the model population from increase to decrease. Problem is we can't detect a change of 2%

Q: And that makes all the difference?
A: Yes, Precautionary Principle comes into play here - because we don't know doesn't mean we shouldn't act

Q: Commercial caribou on the menu in Yellowknife – yet we have none. It is all the same herd – they mingle together

A: Regulations – yes there is still a commercial hunt – outfitters etc. in Yellowknife. In the NWT, herds are designated herds based on calving grounds. Between 1996-99 collared cow caribou migrated to same calving grounds. Since then to now we have seen a 2.5% exchange rate of collared cows between herds – many times, cow go to different areas and come back again. Some times the collar falls off or caribou dies and can't see for sure they come back. Not monitored to see if they're calving in other range. Hard to take but with the Bluenose herds, up here, co-management boards said to stop commercial hunting.

Q: But we didn't tell you, ENR told us that's what was going to happen
A: No, WMAC and GRRB recommended this to minister after ENR presented the results of the census during the first community tour 2005. Gov't didn't just do that, it came from co-management board.
Q: boards brought those recommendation after ENR said.
A No, ENR brought the census results and noted the sustainable harvest could no longer meet aboriginal needs

Q: 99% of community support lower harvest, adopted really well by most of the community.
A: yes, Tuk was ahead of everybody else. You guys held a special meeting and were looking at restrictions before others
Q: still seems unfair that Yellowknife could do that yet we can't

Q: how would we avoid this type of situation with PCH?
Q: Start with certain percent, then negotiate community to community. PCMB will have other people too.
A: remember all users are represented on board. Make sure you have a good rep on that board.

Q: Users should not limit themselves. Alaska too. We did this to ourselves but now we see other groups, outfitters/commercial are still getting meat, not us. We thought it was NWT wide. All parties including Alaska to have to sign on. All for one.

Q: People are always concerned about caribou. We hear we can't do any commercial activity. PCH plan should be no commercial activity for all over [range]. Caribou forever; we should not be sport hunting.
Richard; isn't commercial use always reduced first?
A: yes, in the NWT if we can't meet aboriginal needs, commercial use drops off. That's what happened with Cape Bathurst and Bluenose-West.

Q: Do they have commercial hunting in Alaska?
A: Yes. A recommendation on TAH is no good if they are still sport hunting in Alaska. Need to get all these numbers set.

Q: Everyone needs to be involved from the start. Yes, low numbers [Alaska harvest] but low numbers speak loud sometimes.

Q: Should 'hit' the areas that harvest lots. Yellowknife have lots of hunting, here not much. Outfitter tags were cut ½ - ¾ but still outnumbering the [outfitting] numbers harvested here.
ENR says but that's a different herd.
Q: Gov't needs to be consistent.
A: We try to manage herd by herd (population) basis. We know they move around a bit but some areas will have more animals, some less. Imagine the herds here have recovered. If another herd somewhere else is low - gets all shot, should there be harvest restrictions here if the herds are doing well? Herds in the NWT are identified based on calving grounds.

Q: Outfitters still hunting in Yukon. Ironic because PCMA was set in IFA. We put that in the PCMA.
A: yes, ironic. One of reasons why the plan recommends to amend PCMA

Q: sooner or later, community needs to start saying no to regulations. Sooner or later we'll have limited ourselves out of resources – can't use any animals. What's the fairness in that?
A: you guys should be proud to be one of the first communities to take management actions to help the herds recover. Need to keep in mind that if we have no restrictions, we may not have any caribou to harvest.

Q: hard to understand about caribou. Living in bush, in my lifetime, needed to go far to get caribou. [move around to get caribou]. Caribou have been around forever, they just change their routes and stuff.

Q: All these changes, enforcement hard to do. There will always be people who don't comply – makes it hard for other people

Q: wish you guys success in this but stress that the more people at our meetings, the better. Need elders, leaders there. Need questions like should elders be able to shoot 1 or 2? One area we really missed out on is hearing from elders. We are always told to listen to our elders. If they have big concern, they should come to our meetings to let us know. Once this is regulated, we'll hear more and more of this [concerns]. It's hard for the elders to be regulated. Meeting such as this, open to whole community.
A: maybe should have invited elders and community corp specifically to the meeting?

Q: We have been going out – this year bad for weather. Too much boundaries on ourselves. Have to go a long way to harvest.

Q: re: enforcement; elders could be respecting rules but some young guy shooting around the corner. Really should try to work these things together (enforcement). Young people overloading their boats with 4 wheelers etc [they need to learn how to hunt properly]

Marsha; may be we should be put up more posters on Report-a-Poacher
A: as long as something is done about it [officer respond to reports].
Marsha; that is done [officer respond]. With report a poacher people can report anonymously
A: they want an officer to check it out
Marsha: they do but need more details [names etc] and people won't report that

Q: I'd be pretty upset if someone here got charged for shooting a caribou yet somebody can buy caribou in a restaurant in Yellowknife.

Q: rules are in place, should be more enforcement. Maybe that's what it takes to stop the few people that are breaking the rules. The anonymous phone line could work because people don't like to leave names.

Q: What was intended is working. Majority of people are following the rules.

Q: now that the [NWT] management plan is in place, regulations are in place. Up to ENR now to enforce.
A: we DO try. We do recognize the need, even the presence of officers, people know they're out there.
Q: PCMB should know that enforcement is very important. In Alaska they have officers who are pilots – they fly around and are checking things out all the time.

Q: Of the 4,000 caribou harvested, how many people are being fed? It's about a ¼ caribou each person.
A: yes, it's not much each. One comment we've heard was to base TAH on # of people.

Q: we did that and the smallest community got the most tags [Paulatuk for BW].

A: historically they did harvest more. Depends on where the caribou are year to year. Not always – there use to be no caribou around Paulatuk for a while
A: yes and lately there are caribou there all year round so it is hard for some people to believe there is a decline

Q: could you break data down [# ca per hunter per year]?
A: yes we can for some of the data I.H.S., G.H.S.

Q: I have seen hunters go through with truckload of caribou – he's gotta be selling it. Can't be eating it all.
A: yes, selling or giving it away.

Q: should up the surveillance on Dempster. If a guy's got 30 caribou he's gotta prove he's hunting for this person, that person etc.
A: yes but right now there is no limitation on # of caribou. He can't be charged as long as he's not wasting meat.
Q: Yea but other people suffer because they're doing that.

Q: Shooting caribou 100 feet from road should be illegal.
A: in NWT voluntary, used to be enforced in YT waiting for this plan.

Marsha; On NWT side, if we get into the orange zone and have TAH, would likely implement a tag system. Don't know how else we'd do it. Parties need to think about how we'd actually implement a TAH, what process, who's going to do what ahead of time?

Q: unless Alaska involved, take 10%
A: we WILL bring this to them. Small portion of harvest but will bring it to them. We need to figure out our side first.

Marsha: process = In NWT, allocation to Inuvialuit, then IGC allocates to community?
Q: Tell them the Inuvialuit and Gwich'in get 65% of harvest, going by these 3 years of info.
Marsha: the harvest pie is just what we know about harvest, not our recommendation on allocation. Tell your IGC rep how you see that happening [deciding on allocation] – we meet with IGC later this month.

Q: How long for you to visit all communities?
Mb; Most by September, all by October.
Q: Alaska too?
No.

Q: during October 2007 workshop they estimated # of caribou harvested. Later showed a graph were we cut the harvest to 30%, herd would level off for time immemorial.
Marsha [showed bull only/50 harvest graph]

Dorothy: Is that good enough for you though – ok with harvesting at 1/3 of you do now for time immemorial?
Q: what we are trying to achieve is to level the herd off until it starts to grow again. Is this what are we doing? What we are doing now is we have to convince all other users to do this too?
A: yes, that's the whole point of this plan. That's the urgency. We are doing some things already.

Q: are you ok if people can answer only 3 questions on that questionnaire?
A: yes, that's ok…. Please, looking for any comments.

Q: Where to submit comments?
A: Email address, HTC, IGC rep on Working Group and PCMB.

Q: There was a graph showing 1972 [bought up slide] What's with the 1972 population size?
Dorothy: Same method since 1972. Yes herd has grown from 105,000 caribou but also has been shown to decline from 178,000.
Marsha: that's the reason why I advocated the low of 50,000 before instituting TAH. We know it can recover from 100 or 105,000 caribou with no regulated management actions. The 1972 estimates are not on the other graphs because there was not enough data to feed into the modeling back then.

Q: Just hope we're not pointing fingers in wrong direction.
A: yes, which reminds me of the unfortunate timing with that article during these meetings. There was a lot of finger pointing when there really was nothing wrong happening that day as far as we know.

Marsha Also re the comment about a guy taking 30 caribou – if you think there should be a limit to how many caribou should be taken, you should say so.

Q: Should put their own harvest limits in too [user groups]
Marsha; Yes, that could be a recommendation.

Q: blaze orange not needed here. Good idea for highway though.

End meeting ~ 9 pm

HMP Public Meeting

Meeting:
HTC, RRC, public Meeting, Inuvik, NT
Date: September 17, 2008, 6:20 PM

Working Group / resource people attending:
Marsha Branigan
Dorothy Cooley
Deana Lemke
Jozef Carnogursky
Richard Binder

In attendance:

- Liz Vittrekwa
- Allen Firth
- Mervin Joe
- Jimmy Kalinek
- Frank Stefansson
- Herbert Blake
- Julie-Ann Andre
- Neil Firth
- Leonard Debastien
- Liz Hansen
- Ellen Smith
- Ricky Firth
- Chris Harbord
- Pat Gruben
- Roy Goose
- Kevin Allen
- Frank Edwards
- Charles Elias
- Melba Mitchell
- Tim Gordon
- Donald Andre

Presentation – then quick coffee break, come back for comments.

Q: Is there any data that tells what an adult wolf requires in a given year?

Dorothy: There were studies done that covered the northern part of the PCH range – two parts (one whole are and one NS in ISR). They estimated wolf predation rates and it supported number they have been using – natural mortality is about 16 percent. There have been two estimates of adult cow survival. When herd was increasing, higher than

it is now. When decreasing, quite similar or lower. Good guess that more caribou being taken by predators.
Q: That is one step to take: predator control. Good if user groups would consider that option.

Dorothy: Lethal predator controls by government is not an option YG would entertain. Communities encouraged to try to hunt predators.

Marsha: We have started something – wolf carcass collection program - $100 for hunters. Incentive program for hunting wolves and provides biological information. A lot of work to get wolves.

In terms of predator control what are your results to compare what you support in terms of predator control and what has been done and what the level is today. Predators are non-selective. Common belief is that predators go after the weak and we know otherwise. We have seen examples of that: Banks Island, Victoria Island, etc. We know predators are taking all kinds of animals. How do we say how many predators we should get? They are living off the herd; we are as well. We also make the voluntary decision to go after bulls only certain times a year.

Marsha: we haven't had predator control for many years. They have tried some stuff in Yukon but it hasn't been successful. There has been some work on the Bathurst herd in Yellowknife – the number of wolves has decreased with the decline of caribou. Wolf population fluctuate with caribou populationa. We don't know that here. Many say they are seeing more wolves, more packs, more aggressive. So far we haven't done anything about that.

That is happening in NWT and Yukon, you can hear it daily. Dogs are being nabbed out of their communities. Bear population on Dempster has increased.

Marsha; No specific estimates have been done. There have been trend estimates. We have two years of wolf samples taken but haven't done analysis. Grizzly bears, [NWT side] upped the quota. There are a lot of bears seen on the Dempster. When the bears hear gunshot, seems they come. There is no bear hunting in 8 km zone [between the border and eagle plains] where it's closed. Possibility to see if that can be opened. You have right to shoot bear for life/property. It's not safe how they've been behaving. Right now, there is no legal hunting on Dempster [in that area] for bear.

What about invasive species like muskox?

Dorothy: Scientists disagree with local knowledge. Every scientist says there should be no concern. Hershel rangers say they see trampling on Hershel.

We see that as invasive species here.

Dorothy: Muskox has been removed as specially protected species [in the Yukon]. That was done to enable a hunt on the North Slope but we are awaiting a management plan being done by WMAC NS.

They are trampling snow, making hard for caribou to eat.

Dorothy: the muskox have been on the calving grounds for 30 years. There were 350 in the Arctic Refuge and they declined to about 9. They can increase rapidly and then crash in population. Yukon population estimated in 2006 was estimated to be 95 animals. Muskox showed up in the Richardson Mountains. They have grown from 24 to about 45. It's not really clear what effect the muskox would have on caribou. Haven't seen effects so far but potential is there.

Marsha: population is low but it is expanding apparently. Don't really know what impact they have.

Why scientists don't agree with TK?

Dorothy: it's just that we haven't seen effects yet.

We should have listened to TK long ago – prefer to kill muskox instead of caribou.

Dorothy: WMAC would probably like to hear your comments.

Each year I see them and they're increasing in the same area.

I have done a lot of hunting in Banks Island, etc. every time I see them out there, they are increasing, spread all over the place, walk all over the place. At times we hunt the Bluenose, right to the mainland and we see increasing amounts of muskox over the sea ice. Somehow they know how to cross and they're out there where they shouldn't be. We see increasing numbers on the mainland. Some area headed to other places. We see large herds. In terms of muskox chasing the caribou away we have seen that on Banks Island and Victoria Island. They both eat different vegetation. All the ground they [muskox] upturn like a rototiler takes time to rebuild (muskox). This is TK as we have seen it. They are pushing the caribou away. This is what we believe and what we know.

I need clarification re grizzly – increasing bear population. Your solution is giving out tags and killing animals. Example of hunters giving up caribou because it becomes the grizzly's property. When we get into red zone, restriction on how much caribou able to harvest – if grizzly took their two allocated, can kill bear if attack them, but could they go back out and get their two caribou after that?

Marsha: can't answer that.

That's something affecting our caribou.

Marsha: agree, bears are issue there, have seen an increase. They could be becoming trained to the hunting season. It's an issue we need to think about. Predator control is probably not the solution for the grizzly. We either increase to hunting, put in tag system. Predator control is more aggressive. There are other options to dealing with predators, not just wipe out wolves, bears.

Aboriginals cannot kill animal unless they eat it. Traditionally they eat the meat. Now few would kill black bear to feed. Grizzly bears, they don't bother to harvest it, not pick up tag to kill it because we only take what we need.

Marsha: different philosophy in GSA – they aren't using their tags. Nobody hunts bears. Maybe those who want to go hunt can use those perhaps. Hide can be sold and we are getting rid of aggressive bears.

Can we get tag to shoot bear in Yukon?

Marsha: No.

Can keep hide? [of a defense of life and property kill]

Marsha: Skin out and report to officer – can ask to get hide back in Yukon [and NWT].

I'm not going to skin out and not benefit from it.

Marsha: here, you are responsible to make sure hide doesn't spoil.

Too much work, not worth it.

Marsha: Can voice concerns to RRC – recommend that season be opened. No harm in asking. Then you can go out and harvest. If that's a concern, let's bring it forward. Not everybody wants to hunt bears. If open [in Yukon], would probably be open to resident hunters too. Shouldn't matter who is doing it as long as it achieves our objective.

Estimate of grizzly bears across Yukon border?

Marsha: They don't have an estimate.

I worked with Grizzlies in past.

Marsha: There is population work happening on North Slope. On Dempster and at the border, no studies have been done; we don't know how many bears are there.

I think it's dangerous to talk about going up there and shooting bears. It can get out of hand even now; more dangerous and we could have wounded bears out there.

Marsha: Can say that anywhere. We should be hunting properly whether hunting bears or caribou. Anyone can get tag to hunt bears on our [NWT] side.

If going to open that area, don't agree with that. It's an area – yes, a lot of bears, but can't just open it up to anybody. Traditionally, that's what people didn't do. Can't just issue tag. You're asking native people to reduce harvest. Traditionally, this is our food. At least put something in plan that says take away from others who didn't traditionally use it.

Marsha: that is in the plan – much has to be determined re allocation. On NWT side, if there is a TAH, then there will be no resident harvest. On Yukon side, different, provision for sharing in land claims and PCMA. This is difficult – those answers are going to be in there when the plan is finalized. All users have to figure this out, put in plan and figure out what is going to happen. It will already be figured out before we hit that situation.

I understand – it's dangerous to use predator control. Traditionally, there are animals that __[could not hear]__ – must consult. Can't say we're going to go and start killing grizzlies.

Marsha: that is an option that is out there – only one option.

One point: that is dangerous way to introduce idea – issue tags to kill grizzly bears.

Marsha: that's the way it is in certain areas.

Dorothy – residents with tag, 500 m out, south of Eagle Plains.

I don't agree with regulations myself. You take hides away. I disagree with that. If part of the plan incorporates that.

Marsha: that's not in the plan.

Why talking about it?

Marsha: people are talking about predator control as an option.

Other commenter: Well, it should be part of plan – it's all part of harvesting. It's all part of the decline of caribou. Trying to keep at sustainable level.

It has to be done in proper manner, done respectfully.

Dorothy: This is one good point – different points of view. Submit written comments to board. Agree to disagree.

We used to trap white foxes – code of silence after shooting.

Q: I want to make comment that part of the harvest gathering – people with trucks are main harvesters in communities. People who don't have trucks usually don't get anything. Gone are days when there was sharing. We live out of Northern. People who are getting the caribou are the ones who can afford the gas for their trucks. The number of trucks determines the number of hunters.

Marsha: that is well recognized, hunters in trucks on Dempster. That is reason for opening a check station on the North end.

Sale of caribou happens because there is no sharing anymore. That's a way to get more gas. That's fine.

Dorothy: that's not so much the problem, to cover gas. It's people who go and get 10 caribou and sell them for $250 each; that's more than just gas. The board is looking for balance. Where is the line crossed where it's not a good idea anymore?

People monitoring should be on highway before caribou get there. They came early this year. Should be monitors out there doing data gathering. No data gathering happened for two weeks.

Marsha; we need to figure out how we can do that, with RRCs and HTCs collect data.

[Check station open] Just M-F 8-5?

Marsha: Not lately. We have had someone living up there in check station for 3 weeks. Working with Jozef.

Ask ferries to record harvest?

Marsha: too much to request from them, difficult position for them to be on.

One of your guys could be on ferry.

Marsha: sometimes check station is right there. We also want to be there for education, and that has to be on the highway. We may need to have one there and one at the ferry. Can't ask them [workers] to work 24/7.

How does this affect aboriginal rights? In land claim book, option of management. If individual told not to hunt anything, then goes up to hunt because he doesn't have any food, that's his right to hunt.

Marsha: Land claim gives GRRB authority to restrict harvesting for conservation or safety. At what point is it a conservation issue that we need to take serious management actions for in order to stop the decline?

If an individual goes hunting when restrictions are in place, do you take them to court?

Marsha: based on what happened with Bluenose-West, if we get into a TAH situation, only way to keep track of that is with tag system. GRRB and WMAC would have to recommend – agree with PCMB, that we will abide by this and all harvesters need tag, then written in Wildlife Act and enforceable.

Don't want to see something challenged later.

Marsha: that's why we're doing it this way. Can restrict based on conservation.

Right after put restrictions on, charged guy quick, changed attitude about how to treat regulations and rules set out. Some of these guys were my friends from Tuk. Their attitude really changed when a guy got charged. It's a learning curve people have to go through.

Marsha: That's why it's really important to understand what this plan lays out, then we have already figured out prior to situations so we can take action faster. We heard in Tuk that if we put regs in place, everyone has to agree and it has to be enforceable.

I've had this plan a couple weeks now and it appeared that it was another government document that deals with rights. We have to be extremely cautious, it's almost like legislation. No mention of outfitters' harvest and numbers they are taking, special guide harvesting. More focus on enforcement by Yukon COs who complain they don't have enough ability to enforce. We should contract out to users. Increased patrols, enforcement by our own. FNs can respond to their own a lot better. If we shut down highway for leaders to pass, should also shut down for hunting. Treaty rights trump land claim agreements. We should look at seriously closing highway for hunting, then reduce negative comments. Focus seems to be on the highway but the harvesting practices are throughout the areas. Others are doing the same things, not just NWT. We need to be clear about the number taken by Alaska.

Dorothy: definitely not a government document. Governments are on the WG, we have the same voice as every other claimant group. Definitely not a government document. Yukon COs – I've never heard they have limited resources. They mentioned they didn't go up the Dempster because no laws were being broken.
Issue with PCMA and LC agreements – many want to amend the PCMA. Language doesn't mesh with 5 LCAs over range of herd. Some supportive of amending PCMA but some are leery of opening up.
This is harvest info we have. Alaska residents are on tag system. Their harvest is low – about 75 per year; very remote and expensive. Alaska native harvest do not have harvest studies. They have in past and we have tried to access that info but we were not able to. It's a fairly low harvest. Caribou are only in Kaktovik in summer. When caribou winter in Arctic Village, more taken. It's a small village. Even if took the highest harvest we have guesstimated from Alaska agencies, about 500. They winter there about 1/5 years. Outfitters – we call them licensed hunters; Yukon residents and non-

resident. They have to submit their harvest numbers and other info. Any ideas on how to deal with non-aboriginal harvest when in a TAH situation, would love to hear from you.

Marsha: exactly right that we have to be careful what we are signing. This will call for TAH when population at certain level. If against it, now is time to speak. If don't agree with levels, this is time to put forward. The co-management boards have responsibility to conserve wildlife, maintain wildlife populations. They can recommend restrictions to aboriginal harvesting.

If going to keep talking about LCs, no WMAC, RRC here. Suggest you involve them more at every level. Can use for enforcement, consensus, put all in their hands. Would respect that more. I follow rules but some don't like the rules. If you want better, need to involve these orgs and local people right at beginning. If you don't do that, people aren't going to agree. That's why these groups exist. Caribou is important, that's why I'm here. I want my kids and everybody's kids – we need to use our organizations. Need to build up to capacity and then hand over. It's not all the government that can do this. We're the biggest users, but we have the smallest say.

Marsha; decisions come from co-management boards. Co-management boards recommend decisions.

That last decision is not ours.

Marsha: GRRB are here. They are all part of this – signatories are PCMA but other organizations are involved. Whole point we are here is to work together.

GRRB wasn't consulted.

Marsha: We can't get agreement with 100 people around the table. Protocol signed by signatories. All groups are definitely involved in this. This is first kick at can. This is first step. WG consists of 5 aboriginal groups and 3 governments.

When do you plan to do another census?

Dorothy: we have been trying over the years. Need right condition on the coastal plain. Plane flies over.

Have you tried satellite data?

Dorothy: we have data. Only other remote sensing is Quickbird. Have to know where caribou are going to be when so you can order imagery in advance. Can't do that. The PCTC looking at other methods ie non-breeding females in calving grounds. Will be discussing this further. Many don't want us to go on sacred calving grounds, they don't want researchers there. Going to keep trying censuses.

Harvest info from 3 years is 4K?

Dorothy: average reported harvest is 2,400. What makes the model work is 4K.

I don't even think there was 1,000 taken last year.

Dorothy: exactly. They didn't pass by Old Crow last year.

That's been doing that for several years. That's why Bluenose lower, when PCH not come by.

Dorothy: this is average over time.

Since last census, could be way out of whack. What if find steep climb in population?

Marsha: then we move to the green zone, doing good.

How much affect can brucellosis have?

Dorothy: been monitoring diseases since 1972, brucellosis since 92, haven't seen big spikes. Most on the collared animals, blood samples. Really small sample size. Would like to get hunters to help sample.

Workshop in October – how are you managing with the other herd? Talk about how almost wiped out in mountains.

Dorothy: Hart River?

Yes, that should be talked about.

Dorothy: that is woodland herd, really low. Never was a count on that herd. Overlap with PCH. Did count in Sept. 06, estimate was 2200 caribou. Last year we implemented emergency closure.

Some years they want males to be killed, some females. Gotta hear this.

Dorothy: 40 Mile caribou huge in gold rush days – 500 to 600K, they crashed in 1970s to about 5K. As crashed, range shrunk to around their calving grounds. Millions of dollars has been spent to try to recover the herd. Stable now at 43K.

That's what could happen around here. How many years to take to get up? 20 some?

Dorothy: Yes, still counting. Really hard to get these herds to grow again.

A lot of people don't understand that.

Dorothy: yes, we are trying to summarize that.

Sale of meat question – confusing. Some orgs buy meat from caribou – not just one or two, it's 20 or 30 for widows and people without vehicles in communities. They set precedent on price. Some people don't meet criteria for free caribou. Unfair. If I don't meet requirements I am going to buy it. Orgs shouldn't be able to do that. Incentive is good but not fair for others. Is that going to be allowed for other orgs to buy caribou for whatever reasons?

Dorothy: we're here to get feedback; it you think that shouldn't be allowed, submit those comments. It can be touchy. Board has asked for suggestions for guidelines.

This has been going on for a long time.

Marsha: working group and board has heard that.

I can't go buy caribou, but this org can.

Marsha: technically, you would think they aren't buying caribou, they are paying for gas.

They are paying per caribou.

Marsha: supposed to be paying for expenses, not a money making thing. What are reasonable expenses? How do we define? What is criteria?

Here you are saying that they shouldn't make a profit, but these orgs are paying a profit.

Dorothy: want them to stop?

No, just lower price.

Marsha: you think price is too high, we've recorded that.

What about community hunts?

Jozef: there should be no commercial sale. Would like all parties to come together to revise the PCMA to define expenses.

Does that mean you do away with community hunt?

Jozef: we would have to define that if PCMA revised.

Should be shared freely.

Under Yukon non-resident, you have been using guides and outfitters for hunting caribou.

Dorothy: two kinds of outfitters.

That was something all land claims fought strictly against. Should not be a sale of caribou. Should not be doing that with PCH. That was something they didn't want to happen. Yukon is still allowing that.

Dorothy: yes, 23 registered outfitters are in Yukon, only allowed to hunt in their area. They are grandfathered in.

They have to amend their agreement. Under requirements for orange vest, why not just make available at check points, pick up and drop off, not an expense for hunters.

Dorothy: PCMB makes vests and toques, we send everywhere. On south check station there are vests there to borrow and drop off.

Marsha: we have a couple at check station in north too, trying to promote. But should it be mandatory on Dempster or not? Anyone can voluntarily wear.

Can see pretty easy if wear orange.

Dorothy: caribou can't see orange; hunters see for safety.

Need to explain that better so we understand.

Q: for me, methods of hunting has changed. Everybody evolves. I see a lot of people who go out on snow machines. We are always talking about highway, but on coast they use snow machines. I use boat too. It's a regulation on highway, why can't it be regulation on coast?

Marsha: It can be if you want it to.

Makes sense. We can see orange but explain caribou can't.

Would you consider having open show on CBC?

Marsha: call-in show?

Everybody talks to the media to get your point out. You talk about education; we are visual learners; need to show us some pretty pictures. That's how we learn, we see something. APTN is popular channel, powerful tool.

Marsha: we need to get it out.

Marsha: working on video for Bluenose because it's hard to explain.

This is an international herd; Alaska doesn't have the highway.

Would like to see this questionnaire sent to the schools – high school students. This will affect their lives and maybe you would hear other comments. Next time you have something set up like this, use microphone.

Dorothy: will be presenting to Yukon College Renewable Resource students, but like your idea of community schools.

Marsha: concerns about the colour zones and numbers we are using – too high, low?

Put yellow and orange together maybe.

Marsha: we started out with three then added another colour.

What population at now?

Marsha: we think about 100K, still going down, but not sure.

Can you use percentages?

Marsha: of what? Highest it's ever been?

Go ahead and use these numbers, change in the future. This is starting point.

Numbers are visual – people can understand it. ??

Throughout the plan, can it be changed? Or is it going to be written in stone and then we have to take to court and fight?

Marsha: in plan, five year review. Could be other clauses, ie. If a party wants to change something….Plan is only as good as paper it is written on and parties agreeing to it.

When we were doing the Bluenose one, we said PCH would be impacted. Is anyone keeping track of how many more hunters are there?

Marsha: I have been working with RRCs and HTCs – I don't think we are there yet, we need to work with them to get better data. Check stations are asking those questions. Hopefully they are getting some of that info. More people are going down the highway, esp more residents.

You're right, it's voluntary for hunters to provide info. If they were made to stop and provide that info it would help everybody. I am young but I do a lot of hunting. I respect caribou and take what I need. It's up to all users. Let's not wait five years for something to happen with this plan. Help the herd now to get back up, to help the caribou out. There are lots of different ways. We shouldn't wait five years.

Dorothy: any suggestions on what we could be doing in zones?

Depends. Hard to say with numbers now, but we can say they are declining now. More information to help with the numbers – check stops and that. But it's up to the individuals to give that information. Colour sign from Esau is good idea.

Is that regulated?

Marsha: it's just idea now, but once signed it's an agreement.

If somebody hunts 5 caribou – maybe suggest they give up portion of their harvest to local HTCs. This would get away from prices, paying $500 or $1,000, get away from profit but going back to sharing. Going to elders and single moms. Then the HTCs and RRCs would have more to give. Then the hunter would leave because there was no profit. Community hunt can be costly for HTCs as well. This will get away from that altogether.

I get what I need and a little more because people back home are always asking. You can only do so much. There is a lack of people being shown how to hunt, where to go, etc. You always see a handful of people going out hunting, asked all the time to keep going. In end you get tired, just can't please everybody. Sometimes you have to say no.

Someone might get five, someone else 20, but they might not be wiling to give them up.

I think we need to use tags.

Marsha: even in the yellow zone?

Why not – it's a way of finding out how many caribou are harvested.

That's what I thought. It's a way of recording harvest.

10 tags for the year for a family, then if they can't use, let someone have tag. Maybe someone from another community.

Gas costs money – hunter gave caribou to elders. I suggested HTC or RRC could assist. We want to go again to helping others.

Marsha: what is reasonable expense? Just enough to cover gas?

Hard to have someone do something for nothing, it costs a lot for gas now.

Education – bull only harvest. Some education needs to be taught to some hunters about how to identify bulls – bulls have horns. In different seasons there can be no horns. Even in spring, bulls lose hair on neck.

Marsha: that will be part of our education.

Involve elders in meetings like this. They have knowledge, not just the HTCs. That's where we get our TK.

After freeze-up nothing tastes good on bull.

Marsha: that's part of what we need to do for education. Some suggested a closed period during rut.

Marsha: What about TAH?

Are you here for two weeks?

Dorothy: you want to talk about it now not in crisis situation.

We can provide input on questionnaire.

How get everyone to follow it? Ie those in Sahtu –

Marsha; we didn't have a plan. This is a new situation.

You're asking what percentage?

Marsha: should it be based on traditional harvest or something else, size of community, community needs?

Use historical data.

You have to come with some numbers so we can comment on it.

Historical data – from dog team days?

Marsha: No, from traditional harvest.

Maybe use from since highway opened.

Marsha: we don't have it.

We have some. Whatever we have, we use.

Marsha: Gwich'in had harvest study.

From Inuvialuit we learn, forget about the population growth. Over 10 year period, doubled, with no plan.

Marsha: harvest certainly played role in Cape Bathurst herd.

They used to do whatever they want first.

Marsha: we aren’t talking about other factors such as development in this HMP. There is another Management Plan for the herd deals with other issues.

Q: Encourage to complete questionnaires and send in comments.

Finish: 9:15 PM

HMP meeting

Meeting:
HTC, RRC, public, Aklavik, NT
Date: September 18, 2008, 6:00 PM

Working Group / resource people attending:
Marsha Branigan
Dorothy Cooley
Deana Lemke
Jozef Carnogurksky
Richard Binder

In attendance:

Fanny Greenland
James Edwards
Danny Greenland
Eddy McLeod
Richard Ross Sr.
Annie Buckle
Eva Gordon
Eugene Pascal
Billy Archie
Donald Aviugana
Louisa Kalinek
Wally McPherson
Annie B. Gordon
Gil Kogiak
Robert Buckle
Joe Arey
Thomas Stewart
Roxanne John
Hugh Papik
Ian McLeod
Chris Gordon
Norman Kendi
Jim Kaye
Jerome Gordon

Introduced by Billy Archie.

Comments following presentation.

How come you have no mention of seasons in there? All these numbers and percentages, no one understands that. Seasons work. Season while bulls good, close when not. You talked for two hours, no one understands that. Seasons would be simple:

Marsha: That has been suggested – closed season during rut. That is a possibility. Remember that caribou are at different places at different times, limited access at certain times. One season for whole range probably wouldn't work.

Why aren't Alaska part of this?

Marsha: Will be in end, hopefully.

Right now a caribou harvest going on right now, everyone hunting bulls.

Dorothy: Good to hear.

Season would be easier than what you said.

Marsha: even in orange zone, doesn't suggest certain amount. We need to say a certain number of caribou. Maybe in yellow zone talk about not taking bulls during rut.

Marsha: What do you think about numbers? Concept of colour chart?

Good place to start.

When you get your numbers, will it be how many bulls, cows?

Dorothy: During population estimate?

Yes.

Dorothy: During estimate, it's the number of cows and calves. This year we will try to estimate number of bulls out there. Might go to bull-only harvest.

Everybody want to hunt bulls, come up here and no bulls here.

Marsha: What about indicators we talked about? Anything people could provide to board to indicate how population is doing?

[No response]

Dorothy: What do you consider when thinking about how healthy this herd is?

[No response]

Marsha: Disturbance on range was raised by another community, should be taken into consideration how much is actually happening in range.

That was mentioned in Tuk, about the development in the range.

Marsha: Both HTC, RRC – Borderlands does interviews on some body condition info. Can feed in.

Marsha: How should be decide how to divide TAH and who gets what?

Best to decide based on what has been taken. More difficult now with more people from Inuvik hunting.

Marsha: If we use historic data, Bluenose issue. In plan, we could say how much to Inuvialuit, how much to Gwich'in, then GRRB and IGC decide who gets what. Based on data from graph, hunters on NWT side take 65 percent of harvest.

Maybe a tag system.

Marsha: If we get to TAH, pretty hard to see how to do it otherwise; hard to keep track of harvest any other way than tags. Suggested at another meeting that maybe we should go to tag system earlier (unlimited, but must apply to every caribou you take).

Can it be enforced though?

Marsha: We could make it mandatory under Wildlife Act, would be unlimited.

Would have to prove conservation concern first?

Marsha: No, we wouldn't. Not a limit, just institute tags to keep track of harvest easier – to insist on every animal having a tag when harvested; no limit depending on where we are. If in that system already, then people will be used to using a tag, easier to implement management actions.

Dorothy: Yukon FN agreements have provisions for basic needs level, calculation of how much caribou/moose FN needs. That number may not match how much they've harvested in past. Takes into account past harvest but also population growth, and a variety of different things that may occur in future. Lots of distrust about the reported harvest system; some feel it isn't accurate. We're looking for options. One suggestion was to divide harvest by population size.

In some years we don't get caribou here; same thing for McPherson, like last year. Harvest was less because they didn't go in that area. Who knows what will happen in future? How would tags work?

Marsha: Good question. Do you go over to the other areas to hunt to use tags or give tags to others? It does vary. When looking at harvest data, we're talking average harvest; some years more and some years less. Last year not many taken because the caribou were near Arctic Village. Can think about that and suggest how to handle it. Think about in advance and decide hot to handle it.

Percentages – how much percent do the wolves get?

Dorothy: Between 16 and 18 percent; that's already taken off before this.

Marsha: When we talk about the modeling, that's what is input in the computer model. Predation is already taken into account. Wolves do take caribou, so do eagles. There has been work done on Bathurst range, that population is also declining. They are already seeing decreases in number of wolves, related to the population of the caribou.

Wolves must take cows and calves?

Marsha: Maybe in late pregnancy.

Dorothy: Wolves are largest predator on herd. Golden Eagles and grizzlies take more calves. Over entire year and entire range, wolves are biggest predator.

Marsha: Is this plan doable?

(lots of nods in audience)

Marsha: Do we need it?

(lots of nods in audience)

Marsha: we went through this with Bluenose West and we didn't have a plan; took time to figure out what to do and how to react; maybe if we had a plan and decided on how to act, maybe would have been done faster. We are trying to be ahead of the game and figure out how all user groups would actually do this if we need to take action. Already decide because it's been talked about.

Dorothy: Haven't shown this to other communities – slide on current rate of decline. 6-10 years; need to be prepared to move really quickly.

Marsha: this is based on fact that we're going to take about 4K animals year. Emphasizes fact we need to take action and be ready. We're acting like we're in yellow zone and taking action. Already working toward it, bull only. There is urgency for this. We haven't had census in years. Models aren't perfect. Maybe we'll be lucky and next census will be higher, but it could show lower.

What about bounties on bears and wolves too?

Marsha: bounties are bad word.
We do not talk about predators in this plan.

Fur incentives.

Marsha: Yeah, harvesting incentive program. If you think there are more wolves out there, take them. We pay $100 per carcass. Wolves are part of ecosystem, don't want to take them all out. If communities think wolf population is too high, can talk about that.

In GSR and ISR, everyone has to have wolf mitts (joke!).

Marsha: Should bring forward issues to IGC and GRRB.

Lots of bears out there now. Haven't been that many like we seen this year. More at dump.

Marsha: We have put quota system in place. There is work being done on Yukon North Slope.

People stop hunting wolves in about three weeks now because of __[could not hear]__.

Marsha: Right now it's not law, it's education.
Many have reduced harvest.

Depends on who you're talking to, if their mouths are moving, lying (joke).

Marsha: Need to talk about it and bring it out to the communities. We think the herd is declining quite seriously.

since they stop putting caribou locations on PCMB site, no one goes to site anymore. Should put satellite information back on.

Marsha: reason satellite collar information taken off, to protect caribou from hunters.

couldn't really see, because where dots are.

Marsha: often hunters knew where caribou where before we did.
There are two sites – with satellite collars.

no real attraction to the site anymore.

Should be limit on caribou. In December, when caribou doesn't have food they starve, there is bigger impact. Even a suggested limit based on population.

Marsha: suggesting that every year when board has meeting, suggest number of caribou per household based on population.

Feds are currently reviewing food mail order thing; because of the island caribou, should be expanded to include communities that depend on caribou and make affordable and easier to access; take pressure off other caribou. Help people have easy access for other types of food.

Marsha: another thing challenging for us is some of the stuff in press about Dempster hunting. Timing is unfortunate. Article in Yukon News totally unsubstantiated. Have to think about it collectively as users of herd, stop trying to point fingers. In order for this to work, we have to work together.

Easy access from highway.

Marsha: People who hunt on highway are under greater pressure; we can't shut down highway now, it's there. Old Crow put 500m corridor on the road they put in north of town. If you have access road, makes it easier to hunt. We have to start working together.

Need manned check points all the time.

Marsha: we're working on that.

If we are serious about caribou in future, need to start educating our young hunters re bull only and gun sighting.

Marsha: It's everyone's responsibility to get it out there. Need to talk to others about this. This is biggest turnout we've had. Hard to get word out. It's important that we all do our part.

Use radio station before Bingo starts.

8:00 PM

Two comments following meeting:

Cost of harvesting in this community is extremely high and it would be very difficult if limitations were put on harvest. For instance, if a family got two tags and it cost $900 to get to the coast (compared to $300 to go down the highway from Inuvik). There is a significant cost differential.

Marsha: This is something that should be thought about in the plan. Is it all right to provide your tags to another harvester and have them harvest your caribou for you? This is a question that should be answered ahead of time.

We need to be thinking about the lobbying effort happening to keep development out of ANWR. If we don't take management actions if the herd falls, say below 60K animals, how is that going to look? We won't be able to defend our lobbying if that happens.

Call-in show following meeting, Aklavik radio station:

Marsha presented brief summary of plan (10 minutes), followed by a phone-in and answer session for 40 minutes total. **Callers' comments included:**

Do you think wolves and bears have an effect on the population going down?

Dorothy: Predators aren't part of plan. In draft plan, predators are not included, no actions related to predators are part of the plan. If it is a concern from the communities, must be community-driven initiative. Yes, wolves and bears take caribou, 16-18 percent per year taken by predators. Survival of adult females was higher when herd was increasing compared to when the herd was decreasing. Possible that wolves and bears do have an affect on the population but we can't do much about that. We can control our harvest.

Hunters are going down the river every two days – the same young people taking a lot of caribou. I think it is being sold. Can we do anything about that? Can you please encourage the people to not take too much?

Marsha: according to the PCMA, not supposed to be commercial sale of caribou. People can recover reasonable cost. Caller is please encouraging people not to take too much.

Jerome: If people need help filling out the forms, come to HTC or RRC office.

When people go out, they should take two or three caribou per family, not too many. Or at least they should share.

Speaking of harassment of the caribou, why is it that people always have to use skidoos to hunt caribou in spring and fall? We should ban the use of skidoos at that time of the year because I see it happen. It chases the caribou back and they're not thinking about other people who don't have skidoos. Traditionally, we hunted, we walked in and packed it out. Caribou will come close enough without skidoos. We need to think about Darius Elias and his lobbying efforts and we have to do stuff to help conserve the caribou. What about climate change? Higher snowfalls are in the Richardson Mountains and we are getting more avalanches. Maybe more caribou are dying in avalanches.

Marsha: What do you think? Should we ban the use of snowmobiles? Call in and let us know what you think.

Yes, ban the use of snowmobiles when hunting caribou because it’s hard for those who don’t have a skidoo to get caribou.

I’m wondering if the caribou is declining because of the noise of the skidoos and the disturbance.

Dorothy: We do know that caribou avoid areas where there are lots of noise and lots of human activities like skidoos and hunting. But I don’t think caribou would actually die from it. There is no direct mortality but they do avoid those areas.

I have a concern about skidoos. My boy went hunting in a boat and he walked in to get caribou. The caribou ran away; they just took off. That happened four times. Better do something about skidoos.

Dorothy: Do you think we should think about walking instead of using skidoos? So, do you mean the caribou are running away because of the skidoos? Is that what you’re saying?

Yes, long ago we used to walk. People with no skidoos have to walk and walk and walk.

On the board, there are no youth. The youth will be the hunters, and they are not being educated to help preserve the caribou. They should find out from the elders how to hunt and follow traditional ways. I also want to know what the hunters do with hides. Also, elders like the inside of the stomach. Hunters should bring back the inside of stomach because every part of the caribou is important.

9:00 end

HMP meeting

Meeting:
WMAC NS and WMAC NWT joint meeting, Whitehorse, YT
Date: Sept. 21, 2008, 10:30 a.m. Canada Games Centre,

Working Group / resource people attending:
Dorothy Cooley
Marsha Branigan
Deana Lemke

In attendance:
WMAC NS
Lindsay Staples
Jennifer Smith
Michelle Christiansen
Doug Larsen
Danny C. Gordon
Ernest Pokiak
Christian Bucher

WMAC NWT
Larry Carpenter
Frank Pokiak
Jack Akhaitak
Donald Inuktalik
Rob Gau
Bruce Hanbidge
Christine Inglangasuk

Other
Stephanie Muckenheim, YG
Richard Gordon, YG

Following presentation, comments were invited.

Q: Alaska – been talking to the people about the decline of the caribou?

Dorothy: yes, we have talked with them at an operational level. They are aware of the decline; not sure what the community perspectives are. Their residents are on a tag system; they take about 75 a year. 152 people in Arctic Village; when the caribou overwinter there, they take the most, obviously, but it is still limited. They also harvest from other herd. Overall, Alaska is very small.

Marsha: We gave a presentation at the Gwich'in Gathering in Old Crow; there were Alaskans there.

Q: maybe Arctic Village is in the same position as we are with Paulatuk – they don't feel there is a decline because they see all kinds of caribou in that area. At some meetings I went to in earlier years, they started seeing the caribou come back in those areas. Is there any studies done on Alaska side? When you look at map of PCH range, very big range. Is there work being done in that Alaska portion?

Dorothy: Arctic Village, Venetie, is part of caribou winter range. On average, they winter over there once in about 5 years or so. They are real PCH users. Caribou increasing is with the Central Arctic and Teshekpuk, which they do have access to.

Q: are there caribou studies in the Alaska side.

Dorothy: PCTC made up of people who also work on herd in Alaska, everything is cooperative in Alaska, count in March, etc. They give us that information. We have a good relationship with agencies. What is missing is harvest info. We guessimate it.

Q: closure for hunting on Dempster, you don't close to traffic. Perhaps that affects the caribou too.

Dorothy: The concern when board heard it in 1993 was people were concerned that it was the hunting activity, not the traffic. Traffic doesn't deter them from crossing.

Q: closure was to allow caribou to cross?

Dorothy: Yes. That wasn't enforced last year and won't be this year.

Marsha: the closure was based on when certain number hit the highway, not at certain week each year. Still enforced in NWT.

Q: Has it been defined what the leaders are?

Dorothy: Really interesting question because that is the key. Who the caribou leaders are and how we can protect them is important. When doing interviews, we got different answers all the time to that question.

Q: _____??

Dorothy: Implemented on Yukon side was based on when the big groups hit the highway, somewhere in that group is the leaders. On NWT side, it was based on 200 hitting the highway.

Q: Total harvest on Dempster?

Dorothy: approx. 60 percent.

Q: Congratulate WG on group on work done. Presentation top notch, clear. This is most challenging wildlife management issue I've dealt with. Not an easy task. Glad we got this far. Re the process – the PCTC reporting to the PCMB and then PCMB to WMACs. Think it will be different in Yukon. PCMB make recommendation to GY and all other governments, not to the WMACs.

Marsha: My understanding is that the PCMB would recommend TAH, then WMAC and IGC recommend on how to implement in NWT.

Q: That recommendation would go to governments, then would be implemented as appropriate. We had discussion as WMACNS previous, will have letter to WG. What are we doing now? If we don't do anything other than harvest reduction and switch to bulls, will still be a decline. Need something more aggressive to happen now. PCTC recommendation to PCMB every year might not be practical – may not have all the data. Perhaps meet every two or three years. PCMA will also need to be updated, but not sidetrack this discussion. Signatories would have to initiate the renegotiation of PCMA.

Q – needs to be an explanation of why PCMA needs to be opened. Achieving agreement .. This issue is complicated enough without dealing with the PCMA issue. Some don't like the fact that the PCMA trumps their land claim agreement but that is a separate issue from the management. Mistake to go through that door with this HMP.

Marsha: attempt for all of us to sit down and talk about what we want for the herd and how to achieve that. Acknowledging that there are issues with the PCMA that cannot be addressed in the HMP.

Q: this council will ask WG how it arrived at that conclusion [not clear what question was asked]

Marsha: If we restrict aboriginal harvesting, it needs to be for conservation issues. We can say we justify it by saying things have changed. Better hunting technology, etc. But the herd has recovered from 100K in past. We have to prove conservation issue.

Q: I have no problem arguing it's a conservation issue. We know the population fluctuates. There is no doubt in my mind there is a conservation issue. Even the PCMA talks about long-term viability of the herd.

Marsha: arguments on both sides.

Dorothy: Yes this herd has grow, but it has declined from 178K too.

Q: George River herd has inclined and declined. Keep that in mind; read some of the studies that have come out.

Marsha: What can we do as harvesters to minimize the decline.

Q: We've been living in north long time; herds decline and then come back and leave again. We were always told when caribou started coming in region, they will leave again one day. Could be moving to different areas. We have hard time to explain that to researchers. We expect them to leave at times. For example, the Bluenose herd. We were fortunate to have it for over 30 years.

Q: Picture to me is a highway issue – is that what we're addressing? Not really Aklavik they harvest at coastline at beginning of migration. Don't see monitoring how many taken and wounded on NS. When first snow comes, some from Aklavik will be in that area, running up with skidoo, young kids. Elders are concerned. No one has done anything to date. Bull caribou rutting will be shot. Goes back to community education. Is there money down the road to hire monitor to monitor what is going on in West channel? Focus is on the highway. If Inuvaluit agree to what happens in their region, how would that work in other parts of the range. People are tearing up the feeding area in our hunting area. No one walks in; they take in their ATVs and skidoos; they are swamp areas now. No issues raised about that.

Dorothy: You just raised them. This is not a Dempster plan. Lots of issues around that, but this is a Canadian range-wide plan. Aklavik concerns – WG does want to hear those. If you want specific actions outside Aklavik, make recommendations.

Q: Area closures – say, shutting down the Dempster? Have you done that?
Then you bring in these other areas Richard talked about, it's focusing on management in regions.

Marsha: some didn't want to put in Dempster Qs.

Q: _____??

Marsha: monitoring on the hills – we need harvest data, no matter where it is. Check station – public education. Tag system – no limits in green/yellow, but ability to monitor harvest. Need to report – these suggestions came out in meetings.

Q: What info do you have for the spatial distribution of harvest over range?

Marsha: We have done some harvest studies.

Dorothy: harvest is recorded by subzone in Yukon.

Q: Problem with tags – possibly making criminals of those who can actually legally hunt caribou.

Marsha: It's a suggestion from more than one community.

Q: Hunting on highway – easy to go out there with four-wheel truck and hunt but it's not the old way of hunting caribou. We need to include Dempster in plan somehow. More people are out there, better access, better machines. If there is a decline, takes a longer time to increase. Highway system gives access. Dempster is big issue, has been for a long time. Maybe we should close hunting on Dempster for good.

Dorothy: That would be a really big recommendation – What would McPherson hunters say? It would really affect them. Consideration has to be given to all users for any management action. Part of the whole purpose of the plan is understanding other users and working together.

Q: Leaders have to work with their people. The need to take the lead on this.

Marsha: point about hearing things on the Dempster. Article in Yukon News, not based on fact. Need to work collectively as a group.

Q: Plan is very much numbers driven. Alaskan harvest is tagged?

Dorothy: Resident. Missing is the subsistence harvesters.

Q: When last effort for census?

Dorothy: (goes over previous attempts in past years)

Q: article re community hunts – will that be addressed in plan? Might be issue down the road. If doing a community hunt, need to address how it should be managed.

Marsha: that has been discussed – re limit. If ended up in tag system, can someone go hunt for you? These questions should be addressed as collective users.

Dorothy: option I heard is in TAH, that would be the entire management regime, could be taken in community hunt and distributed to community.

Marsha: I see that as something that wouldn't be in plan. Inuvialuit Game Council decide how distributed in the ISR.

Q: Say Tuk wanted to do hunt on Dempster caribou – agreed by parties. Now we're talking jurisdictions of land claims.

Marsha: could be a general outline of how this could be done.

Q: if you're saying we have to get ready for this, if the Inuvialuit want to do hunt down the road, would this be agreed to that we could hunt on Dempster?

Dorothy: Perhaps be in Native User Agrmt.

Q: clarification on page 23, indicate allocation by NWT would be according to IFA, also include recognition of the Inuvialuit hunt in Yukon.

Marsha: that's my understanding.

Q: This needs to say that.

A: It does at the bottom.

Q: as plan is currently laid out with respect to managing harvest by areas, looking at management in certain areas? Harvest pressure being redistributed? Contemplated using that as tool?

Dorothy: WG hasn't really discussed that, looking at management on a range-wide basis. Focusing on harvest limits wherever the caribou are. Any recommendations would be appreciated.

Marsha: the WG was hoping to get idea on how implement recommendations and process to sign plan.
Q: IGC has to sign, as recommended by WMAC NWT.

Marsha: final community tour with final draft?

Q: Is that what planned?

Marsha: didn't talk about that.

Q: important to bring back to communities.

Q: may want to talk about this. PCMA assigns lead responsibility with PCMB. PCMB would consult with council with respect to our views of the plan. If councils don't like that recommendation, can write to minister.

Dorothy: PCMB is interested in how claimant groups will go about signing. Will take time.

Q: at end of day, no matter how good plan is, management authorities must be satisfied to be willing to implement agreement.

Q: not be surprised that parties would have to get together and decide as governments how they would implement management actions. Once that is done, would there be another round of consultations?

Marsha: Currently my understanding is if IGC and WMAC endorses, GNWT would sign. When recommend TAH, then our government would likely Consult.

Q: really important, could unravel unless everyone understands the steps. Parties will have to decide how they will work through signing.

Q: view from YFNs re TAH implementation?

Dorothy: only done Mayo and Old Crow so far; accept. Only concern seems to be not doing enough soon enough.

If don't have census, still use model?

Dorothy: Yes, still get estimate from model.

Could be challenged.

Marsha: anything could be challenged. That's the best info we have.

Dorothy: could look at the numbers and when management actions are triggered.

Marsha: This has never been done before.

Q: After pkg ready, would go to Game Council?

Marsha: need to have it all figured out ahead of time.

Q: should not be another round of community meetings by WG with revised draft. It should be left up to the PCMB to recommend to parties and then they can discuss and decide.

12:15 finish.

HMP Meeting

Meeting:
Public meeting, Whitehorse, YT
September 25, 2008 7:15 PM High Country Inn

Working Group / resource people attending:
Joe Tetlichi
Marsha Branigan
Dorothy Cooley
Deana Lemke
Wendy Nixon
Carol Domes

In attendance:

- Lynn Martin
- Corliss Burke
- Darcie Matthiessen
- Dana Atagi
- Tami Hamilton
- Manfred Hoefs
- Brian Smart
- Ross Leef
- Robert Bruce Ross
- Elise Maltin
- Doug Larsen
- Sharon Keaton
- Darius Elias
- Tina Elias
- Richard Hartmier
- Dan Jones
- Brian Bell
- John Thompson
- Norma Kassi
- Greg Charlie
- Gordon Gilgan
- Chuck Tobin
- Don Russell
- Gord Zealand

Brief opening comments by Joe Tetlichi

Brief coffee break – 5 minutes.

Comments following presentation:

- Key point is to ensure good numbers to work from; some communities look at not cooperating and providing info on the other caribou herds (Colville Lake ie giving notice they will not be providing harvest info). How deal with that issue?
- Marsha: no user groups saying that for the PCH. Don't know what would happen if they decided to do that. Recommendations are going to be implemented. None of those communities are users of the PCH.
- 65 percent of harvest taken by NWT; if some communities don't cooperate, how will that affect other communities? Esp. when dealing with cut backs and people don't want to do that.
- Marsha: we have been talking about other communities. We've been hearing about need to enforce it; governments need to be ready to enforce. We haven't heard about a lot of negative from communities about this plan. Haven't heard many arguments that it's not in decline. Some of the other herd users are in different situation.
- Dorothy: one goal is to bring everyone together. If a user group has different ideas, can be discussed. We want everyone to do things at same time. Native user agrmt will define these things.
- Marsha: good point; we didn't have a plan in NWT. Each different land claim implemented management actions independently. Maybe wouldn't have taken so long if we had plan in advance.
- You have done well here in terms of setting things out. Need to add a bit more.
- Observation re model. We should recommend doing more re harvest limitations. Looking at model, there is a huge decline. Need to make management actions sooner. 65 percent of harvest in NWT; user groups must reduce overall harvest. We can't legislate because hasn't worked before re enforcing. Even though all user groups sign, more like a voluntary agreement. Enforcement will be an issue. Must be some sort of way to penalize a user group. Right now, they do whatever they want to do because there is no legislation and enforcement. How this agreement will be implemented is an issue. Limited respect there is obvious. How will PCMB involve the governments to come up with solutions to enforcing these recommendations?
- Marsha: good question. Need to have groups figure out now how they will implement it. On NWT side it may be more clear; we would likely legislate, tags used. TAH to NWT would be legislated. NWT hunters going to Yukon hasn't been discussed. Maybe a tag system that could be used on both sides of border. Need to work these things through. Even though highest portion of harvest is by NWT, mostly taken in Yukon.

Joe: PCMB has created a working group; trying to get responsibility from the communities so they can take it on. If communities don't agree it won't work. That's why we wanted the protocol. Glad Dempster regs went through in 1999, gave indication of what could come in the future. People getting concerned. There are always some bad apples in basket – need to work together.

I understand this; I was part of workshop re the plan. 75K figure threw me off. I though the yellow was closer to 90K than 75K. If wait until January to gather comments, process will be lengthy, making adjustments, etc. When you look at caribou calculator, in 2009, will be below 75K, in orange zone. Will be mandatory harvest, etc. next fall. Can't get there to put that in place. Herd will continue to decline for next 5-6 years. How far does it go down? If we get harvest limit, bull only by 2010, could be looking at 65K animals. Don't know how you can step up process so that by Aug. 1 in Yukon we can put bulls only harvest in with a limit. Groups have to sit down and come to agreement on that – it's a huge, huge task. We know what it took to get here and how long it takes for government to regulate. In 2.5 years, will be in a lot more trouble.

Joe: before we started draft HMP, some communities already telling people bulls only – it takes a while to get used to it. We are already getting a buy-in from the communities. We are already seeing some bull-only harvest.

Do we have a check station on north end of Dempster? Then we will get good idea of what is heading north to NWT. Maybe from people who can't harvest other herds.

Marsha: Yes, there is a check station. There is additional pressure on PCH. The check station is not open 24/7; we are working with communities to get harvest data. Agree communities are starting to make a change. If we don't get buy-in, it won't work either.

I recall some conversations in Inuvik, that wasn't an easy process. Some even didn't buy in then. Perhaps this year if the caribou don't show up on Dempster, we won't have as much of a problem. If we don't do enough we will still be in the decline. We have to stop that slide; sooner the better for the herd. Whether that means legislation for resident hunters and outfitters now, maybe that has to be looked at.

Marsha: On NWT side, residents have to be bull only, 2 limit. Resident harvest was quite low on PCH although it is somewhat higher now.

Resident harvest is probably only 4 percent of total harvest in Yukon.

This is a big step for the PCMB to be taking now. Should have happened much longer ago than this. I have similar concerns with respect to the zones. We are in the yellow but it's not enough, not fast enough; we are still seeing herd decline. Something needs to happen much faster than it is now. I have watched the herd since I was small. This herd has been declining since way back. There used to be hundreds of thousands of caribou walking by us at Crow Flats. River crossings were full when people were just starting to count them. I have saw a fast decline. I see changes in caribou – biologically as well, in the body (lesions ie). I see changes in Old Crow Flats. This is one of the most important wetlands and big lakes are disappearing. Fish and muskrats are gone as a result and moved to the surrounding lakes and now are becoming diseased. The VGFN are going to be facing some very serious issues with respect to food security in the next 10 years because of the decline of the caribou and the way the caribou is now and the changes in the habitat (covered with willows where caribou don't go). Vast changes are

taking place. This is very serious. My people are isolated in Old Crow and we will have to look seriously our survival with respect to food security. Can't even harvest up river when it's too dry. Concerned this is too slow. When did land claims ever supersede the conservation of the PCH? Never seen that before. There was a Dene National Assembly in Fort McPherson where the aboriginals were not going to comply with the quota systems set with respect to their herds. That is also a concern. If that is the discussion there, there will be tremendous difficulty to enforce this and even come to consensus. Hoping in my heart that it will happen. Also have to look at the recovery programs when the caribou was so low and stringent measures were put in place to do recovery program. We are there now – we need to do conservation and protection and recovery for the PCH. Even if we follow this measure, it will still be on a decline. I am talking about 40 years of watching this PCH closely. I know a lot of others feel the same way. This is something the governments need to take control of this seriously right now – including the FNs governments – for the recovery of this herd. Commend you for your hard work. In my heart, hope it can happen. Harvesting data won't come from a lot of the communities. They just don't want to come forth. Has to be some real, honest effort. Time for the powers that be step in and do something now.

Dorothy: We are getting really good, positive feedback in communities that we are not doing enough fast enough. Thank you for that. For land claims, we are not saying they trump. The management plan is recognizing the structures and processes that were negotiated in the land claim agreements. Making sure the PCMA fits together with land claim agreements and the HMP.

I have watched the rights – we have to look fundamentally at our rights to survive. That is the basis for our whole land claims agreement. It was based on our right as indigenous people to survive. That is the bottom line for the land claim agreements. Then it works up through other regimes. I have respect for those agreements for our rights to survive into the future. It's our human right to survive. We must now protect the PCH so it can last for a long time for our children.

Under Ch 16 of the agreements, there is language for conservation. Specifically in implementation plan there is conservation language. This group should analyze and use similar language in this plan. All parties – the FN parties and the governments – have to implement that collectively. It is in the governments' best interest to do that. Don't know what is in the NWT agreements.

Marsha: They both speak to conservation and safety. When do we think it's a big enough conservation issue to restrict aboriginal harvesting.

I think it's critical to use that language to help implement that because they are obligated to implement that agreement.

Marsha: It's been very rare that we've heard "It's my right to harvest caribou" so it's good.

The corridor was lifted based on the rights to harvest.

We have just over 20 years of data. With model and data, that's good. I don't see a cycle yet. This is a HMP but it sounds more like a recovery plan. We wait until it hits so low and then we do something. We need to do something now. I understand about buy-in but we need to be stronger now. We have the decline. To turn that around will be more difficult when it gets lower. I would like to see the bull only in a zone sooner. Will you fluctuate between yellow and green continuously?

What measures are you taking to get herd to an incline? What are you planning to do to bring the herd's numbers up?

Marsha: this is a model with a very low adult survival rate. When herd was increasing, adult female was higher; when declined, adult female changed too. We're hoping this will happen but we are looking at doing something re harvesting in the meantime. We do need something to happen in the population for it to recover. We can change our harvesting practices to help the herd recover faster. How long do we want to wait for the herd to recover to a green zone? We are proposing this for responses.

When we are talking about HMP, hard to not keep in your mind that harvest is not what is driving the herd down. We have a bigger problem: climate change. There is a change in treeline and tundra that affects the caribou. How much effect can 4K harvest really have on population? Minimal. It would be great to see PCMB working with other organizations to bring issues to international stage (UN). I like this HMP initiative but I would like to see more work done at various levels. Would be great to work more with you (Climate change).

Wondering about the models – are there other limiting factors in model?

Don Russell: this is a population projection. It keeps track of births and deaths and tries to mimic the census. There is no climate change other than making assumptions that it will turn to worse or better. If you look at all herds in North America, they are all going down. Some cycle dramatically. PCH is least productive and declines slower. This herd doesn't go up or down very fast. Prediction is that they will start coming up again. But there are a lot of changes since the last drop in the cycle. Are these herds going to be driven down unnaturally that low – then the cycles will be expanded and there will be scarce resources for longer. This model keeps track of births/deaths. Not making any assumptions about cycles. No one can know future.

Echoing sentiments of people here – not knowing where we are going with climate change, we should be doing whatever we can now to help the population grow. It's on a path of destruction.

Marsha: Other limiting factors would be in what we end up with as a calf birth rate and adult survival rate – maybe that's why we have those low numbers and maybe they won't turn around. Something has to change here – we're hoping it will.

Be stronger, faster – it reminds me of another enforcement issue in 1970s with seat belts. Certain number wearing already, certain number who will listen to stats and start wearing, a number who need a fine and then will start wearing them. Need to approach it similarly. Those buying in is like preaching to choir. Need to control the others. COs in Yukon are minimal. We have more people working at Canadian Tire than there are COs in Yukon. Also noticed on harvest scale that Yukon is only place where non-resident harvest is allowed.

Marsha: It is not prohibited in Alaska but it is quite hard to get to PCH range in Alaska. Very expensive, fly-in.

That one percent is only 40 caribou. Taking non-residents right away is 40 off your books right away. All information is awesome, by the way – particularly the bulls only stat. Simple, fantastic – shows how many caribou you can save.

Question for Don: what would happen if we closed all hunting on Dempster and decommercialized hunting on NWT side.

Don Russell: Theoretically there is no commercial harvest on PCH. We played around with that scenario and go to green in about 10 years.

Would that have a positive effect?

Don Russell: Yes, in terms of what we can control. Some people are confident they are coming back and in 2016 there will be a lot of caribou. Based on elders comments, they will go back.

I go along with Norma, this is more emergency than people want to admit. There is responsibility to do things that will have an effect first.

Marsha: Large proportion of harvest taken from highway. We have heard that suggestion. A couple user groups depend on this.

They won’t be doing that with four wheelers, trucks, etc.

Marsha: What?

They would have to walk in.

Marsha: Saying they shouldn’t be able to use snow mobiles on highway but they should on other parts of range?

Yes.

Marsha: On NWT side they aren't allowed. Need to look at it from perspective of other users and their access to caribou.

Define back yard.

Marsha: Their traditional hunting area.

How many caribou on Yukon side are being taken by NWT hunters?

Marsha: Large proportion. In end, does it matter? We are looking at overall harvest and reducing that. Doesn't matter how we're getting them and who is taking them. Pointing figures is bad. Article in Yukon News was crap, blown out of proportion. Need to stop pointing fingers and start working together.

Joe: Add on – at summit we had full cooperation from all stakeholders. When we get negative comments like that – it's already a challenging task to initiate this. WG has very challenging task. If we come out of meeting on different sides, what is that going to tell public? That we can't even walk together. We have to be able to walk together.

If you took access to that habitat from Dempster and everybody walked in, would that be a good idea for herd?

Joe: I think that would be a good idea. Dempster put in without any consultation. To try to get people away from highway will take time, but they are already working on different ways. These are steps we're working on. PCMA was put in in 1985. Like idea people are saying today that we have to act now. We are just the messengers. We have to take this info back to communities. We are moving in right direction.

When is next draft due out?

Marsha: Hoping January.

Joe: WG coming together in November.

What is overall goal of HMP?

Dorothy: Re conservation?

What is trying to achieve?

Marsha: Sustainable harvest of the herd.

Are we drafting a HMP to ensure a harvest or a healthy herd?

Dorothy: Both.

Marsha: There needs to be a healthy herd to harvest.

We could be in orange already – I'm concerned about where colour zones are (re numbers). If we take too long to initiate management actions and other things happen that are unexpected, we will be past the point of no return. The numbers need to be adjusted for the zones. In Old Crow, I remember hearing 100K number to initiate management actions, and a phased-in approach re who gets preferential harvesting rights. For example a lottery system for residents, if got low, for those in need. This HMP shows 50K and no one hunts. Where do the results from those other discussions come in re a phased in approach? Where are the confidence levels in the model?

Don Russell: Further you are away from last census, the lower confidence in the model. Problem is that since the last count, the herd goes up to the traditional calving grounds but they don't stay there and aggregate. No census is possible when that happens. Another approach is being planned re a census.

Dorothy: Trying to remember – the 100K number was from a workshop with Kofinas in 2001.

Joe: those were scenarios thrown out.

Dorothy: an earlier version of a similar computer model. 100K seemed to be a kind of magic number to do something to change management actions and have an effect on the herd. The lower we get the harder it is to come back. I don't have any knowledge about the phased in thing.

Reason I mentioned it is because it's an ecosystem approach. A healthy ecosystem needs to have 100K caribou in the range to be productive. Is the goal to make sure the caribou is healthy or that there is a harvest? Those are two different things. I would like to see the management actions moved up. Other things are at play here.

I spent my whole career on Dempster Highway working, living, trapping. Public education is part of a big strategy that should be included in plan. Hunting pressure is from across the border in NWT. I would like to see more of the FN governments across Yukon and NWT work together to implement programs that will work for all of us to help us in the future. This is another enforcement program that needs to be serious. Need to get FNs involved and part of the enforcement and make it work; we need to train our kids and educate them in conservation and science and have them involved in managing our caribou. Need to include our young people and work with the users of that caribou. Harvest reporting will be big part of the plan. It's not working now. We need to work at how it will work for our people re enforcement.

I don't have the knowledge that others who have spoken have. Education is important. Having the arrow in yellow is giving opposite message. It's saying we are okay and it should say we are in trouble. I agree with everyone who has spoken. This is too little too

late if implemented this way. Very serious action needs to be taken. Many factors are unknown. We know climate change is happening and will have a negative effect on herd. This document shows the best case scenario and it's not realistic.

Joe: Agree. Sacrifice is important. We've tried to get communities to take responsibility. The caribou doesn't need to be managed as much as the people. Education is critical. Communities have to take responsibility. We have already started working on education program. Communities are taking on the responsibility.

You are working with the Canadian side now – would like to also see Alaskans brought in. Even if not in the agreement – they need to be informed. If anything happens in the calving grounds and then something else is affected in the habitat to affect their nutrition, it will affect our calf and cow survival rate. This is really important to keep Alaskans informed, brought in at the table, informed asap.

Joe: At Gwich'in Gathering they have good idea what is happening.

Political will is challenge to success of this program. Governments have vested interest in outcome but discussion has been about community engagement. All this costs a lot of money – science, education programs – what is commitment from various governments and resources that go along with it? There is a very large public process but what about the science and teaching in communities to switch? In BC would not be likely to get something like this to advance (HMP). Have you secured funding to move this forward? This is not a two-year program.

Dorothy: On Yukon side, feel there is good political will. We are under pressure from Premier and minister to move along. Monitoring program is shared among all three jurisdictions (with Alaska, who funds the bulk of the work).

Marsha: Right now there is the political will. The caribou is the big issue there right now. We have to work through same process with other herds. The HMP for the PCH is the most complicated one.

You guys have same debate as we have in BC re conservation. FNs have ability to harvest and sustain themselves vs. conservation. The PCH is not going extinct here; they might be at low levels. Everyone wants access to animals. We struggle with same issues of conservation; not get hung up on that.

Comment on Darius' worry about numbers – that really hit me. The numbers are pretty low re the zones. They should be higher for all the zones. Enforcement is important. Harvest limits and bull-only – how many harvesters have a valid FAC? That should be added as part of your harvest enforcement program. I'm a user from NWT – Fort McPherson. I've harvested caribou, helped people. I don't have a valid FAC so I can't shoot.

Dorothy: From Yukon side – I'm not enforcement officer – it's a grey area about COs being able to enforce that law. They monitor hunters to ensure they following hunting regs, nothing to do with firearms regs.

Marsha: Same on our side. Need that when you want to buy a firearm. Grey area about that, not being enforced on aboriginals of a certain age.

It's a federal piece of legislation. Shouldn't be carrying a gun without a FAC.

Outfitters harvest and those not part of claim are not included. Based on Yukon hunters (harvest)?

Dorothy: We have estimated numbers of harvest for all user groups for three years.

Questions included in questionnaire – also on any aspect, please submit comments.

9:30 p.m.

HMP presentation

Meeting:
Inuvialuit Game Council, Whitehorse, YT
Sept. 27, 2008, 9:00 a.m. Willow Room, Yukon Inn.

Working Group / resource people attending:
Joe Tetlichi
Marsha Branigan
Dorothy Cooley
Deana Lemke
Carol Domes
Steve Baryluk

In attendance:
Lawrence Amers
Stan Rueben
Chucky Gruben
Billy Storr
Frank Pokiak
Steven Baryluk
John Alikmaik
Doug Esagok
Richard Binder

----------Notes by Steve Baryluk--------

Dorothy went through her presentation. Most user communities have been visited now with this presentation, just Dawson and the GTC left. They are only going around the Canadian side of the range for the time being; with the number of users in Yukon and NWT it's complicated enough on its own. Marsha went through the main points of the draft plan with the Council. The Chair asked how long they have been trying to do a census? Marsha said that they have been trying every year since 2003 [should be 2001], but have not been successful. The Chair suggested that they should look at alternative ways to get a population estimate. Marsha indicated that the biologists have been discussing this already. Dorothy went through some specific questions from the PCMB that they want feedback on. There were comments around the question about the sale of caribou meat for profit, and the edible vs. non-edible parts. The PCMA states that there should be no commercial sale of Porcupine Caribou for profit, but where is the line drawn between the right to trade and barter, and the sale of meat for profit.

A question arose about what would happen if one or two claimant groups decide to not sign the plan. Marsha answered that they plan would be dead and could not proceed if that happened. Marsha said she felt they've only got one try at putting

something in place, and if it does not work then she feels the Yukon government might take action on its own.

Stan asked how the allocation of a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) would be divided. Marsha said that the IGC would be involved in division among user groups, and then would be responsible for allocating among the Inuvialuit communities.

Marsha mentioned that the Porcupine Caribou Technical Committee has been discussing what to do about getting a population estimate. They have discussed doing a breeding ground survey similar to what is done with the Bluenose herd, but weather is an issue for this. The Alaskans do a lot of the work. They are working on putting cameras on all their planes (rather than just one) so they have more planes available to do a census.

Billy asked about the use of satellite for taking images. Marsha answered that they are testing this with the Cape Bathurst herd to see if it can even work. But it would be more difficult with the PC herd as they don't always calve in the same place. Getting an estimate is a high priority for the Canadian and Alaskan governments.

Doug asked at what point resident hunters would be cut off from harvesting? Marsha said that it is not an easy answer on the Yukon side, but on the NWT side as soon as there is a TAH in place resident hunting would stop.

Lawrence felt that use of motorized vehicles off the highway should be totally banned. People are already using vehicles to get out there. Marsha said that there are regulations already in effect on the NWT side, but on the Yukon side they are not currently enforcing this. The original legislation on the Yukon side was targeting only snowmobiles. It's a bit confusing.

Doug talked about older hunters go out to harvest and they have to follow the Dempster 500 meter corridor, which can be a long way to pack an animal. He wondered if there could be an exemption to this rule for elders. Dorothy said that this was discussed in the original talk about the corridor, but it was felt to be a public safety issue and they ended up deciding to not have any exemptions. Marsha pointed out that on the NWT side the corridor is not in legislation.

--------- remaining notes by Deana ------
I have a question about the census

Dorothy: Census is done at post-calving, end of July after calving. We know we don't count all the caribou. Given we used the same method over and over, we re confident in numbers.

What about the Hart River herd.

Porcupine caribou come down there in the winter and then they leave. We have data on PCH since 1972 so we are confident in the numbers.

Marsha: On NWT side we've looked at that, there is some movement between herds (2.5 percent) but mostly they stay.

You try to give us data best you can but we don't have Alaska data, outfitters who are allowed a couple tags each, for example. We should be getting the Alaska side data too. Maybe also cut sport hunting here and keep harvest for beneficiaries.

Dorothy: We get Alaska information. 75 caribou on average. Very expensive to hunt in Alaska, fly-in. Venetie and Kaktovik can be high if caribou overwinter there, perhaps 500. You're right, we do need to bring Alaska in on this asap. We have to get our own act together first. Politics there is complicated.

Alaska native take on herd is not included – community of Kaktovik?

Dorothy: this information includes Kaktovik, they hunt in summer as well when water is high. This info is from 3 years when we had data. Alaska is a small percentage.

I have friends there – they do get some caribou sometimes in winter.

Going back to census – would this be idea? When you can't go somewhere, you still want pictures, some kind of data – video and time lapsed photos over traditional trails and valleys, motion sensitive to animals passing. We have traditional trails and see where caribou go. They will pass by there at some point in time. So if you can't get pics from census, you could still get valuable data from these other cameras.

Dorothy: People recognize that not the entire herd goes through certain areas.

Set up all over the place.

Dorothy: You're talking 260K kms in range.
What if counted only 40K caribou? Sometimes bad info is worse than no info.

Marsha: generally we don't get nothing – last year photos taken but late in the day, so didn't see caribou in those places. One camera could take pics of shadows and one the other side – through changing technology might allow that though. Will be talking about it with people who know.

If setting quotas down road, would be good model to go by – excluding resident and non-resident hunters.

Everything we bring forward, you shoot down. You should start listening to user groups. Information on Tuk peninsula – few times when you did actual survey, came up with numbers, then user groups would go out there and the numbers conflict. You say you see nothing and we see thousands. Really confusing sometimes.

It is true – in Nunavut, hunters hunting caribou – work Anne Gunn and Frank Miller were doing on survey – when they got back to community they saw nothing. People hunting saw lots – even saw the plane. When came back to the plane they [the biologists] saw

no caribou. Difficult to see things from the air even if going low. Unless your eye catches it, that's the only time you see it.

Marsha: Point is well taken. Idea Stan brought up about cameras might be good for trend information, not for estimates of population. What we really need is an estimate of the population.

You guys did count in I/BC/08 in July. Harvest takes place Aug/Sept and there were lots of caribou – where all these caribou are coming from.

Marsha: Should be about 4K caribou there according to last census. We didn't census in 2005; since then we have been. Last census is 3800 adults.

AT some point in time, you have to start listening to user groups. ????

Marsha: Not sure I would put it that way. Different groups will be able to put forward information to the Board for their decision making under plan.

Caribou how old to have calves?

Dorothy: females bred at 2 years, give birth at 3 years old, typically.

In chart, take into consideration birth rate and calf survival.

Marsha: Yes, that is in model. In future predictions we are setting at one value and keeping it there, changing the harvest.

Survival rate is 1/3 out of 100; have 4K harvested each year – taken into consideration?

Marsha: Yes, that is all put into model, including harvest.

Marsha: Idea of colour chart in this whole thing – is everybody okay with concept? What do people think?

75K is a lot to start to limit harvest. Think it should be lower – 50K from our point of view. After 50K that's when mandatory harvest of bulls only should come into place. If our overall take is only 4K animals, to stop hunting once goes under 50K. Feel it should be lower – maybe around 40K or 35K animals.

If we don't do nothing now, we are going to be in the same boat as Bluenose West. I don't want to get there.

Marsha: It's all a matter of how long you want to wait for the herd to recover. It's a risk analysis you have to take in decision making and where you want that to be.

Times of harvest – traditionally, people in Aklavik and McPherson harvest bulls in fall time. I do a lot of hunting on highway also. Just go up sometimes to watch and see what everyone else is doing. Those people calling for closure were those up there shooting caribou. Time they close is the time they get bulls for family. Some people would go out and 6 bulls – but they closed highway and when opened, the bulls were rutting. Would need to take 12-13 cows; maybe 90 percent pregnant. Like killing 20 caribou instead of six. We tried to tell them that, but they wanted to let leaders cross on closure. If they want to go to the other side they would at night when no cars. Management needs to go to bulls only. 20 cows is a lot of caribou. Always going to be enough bulls to impregnate the cows anyway.

Dorothy: Those suggestions will be good for the WG; how to manage bull-only harvest is important (more ideas).

Bulls stink so you don't shoot them, then they go after cows. Like shooting yourself in foot.

Marsha: one suggestion is for bull only harvest, season closure during rut.

Getting census is harder – some information from communities when you don't have true census – got to start somewhere. Can count caribou at different times of year. It's up to you guys but you don't listen.

Industries doing activity there, why didn't you tell us this beforehand.

I think they should seriously stop hunting caribou in springtime because too many cows are being killed. They need to give birth. We see a lot of caribou being taken in springtime; wrong time to hunt caribou for me.

Aside from all that data re tagging, how big they are, where they go – any studies on behaviour of animals. Why they migrate where, what they do in the herd. If there is a dominant cow, she will push others aside and forces other animals to try to search again for food. Dominant animal will overtake other ones.

Dorothy: Very little studies like that done. Some limited interviews with hunters (1999). More could be done on that.

Seems like – how do you do that and study that? I watched video of a couple studying herd. What kinds of findings did they have?

Dorothy: committee working on hunter ed pkg. Important to include things like that. Hunters seeing caribou in groups, who are the leaders, what drives the herd….really interesting.

Sometimes you have to shoot dominant bull and dominant cow.

Dorothy: we have heard that before. Important to include points like that in the hunter education pkg still being worked on.

Marsha: will come to this group (hunter ed pkg).

Native people told them they do see that happening, driving off smaller cows and calves. Stan's question is really important – maybe should have follow up with the Alaskans to see what is driving them off.

Stan pointed out in workshop – Donner never bred?

Dorothy: No – she's at least 15 now. She was adult when we collared her. For past 5 years, no calf. We think these animals will breed for entire lives until they die, but this doesn't seem to be happening with her.

Marsha: Oct. 31 deadline for comments from IGC or individually.

With regard to my earlier question: according to our claim, conservation and safety are reasons to restrict. Can using a model be used to prove there is a conservation issue?

Marsha: Not using model alone, with other information as well. A lot of concern is coming from community re numbers down.

What I'm getting at – in order to restrict Inuvialuit harvesting, would need to prove conservation issue.

Marsha: We are asking collectively to users: when is it a conservation issue and when do we take management action? If we are at 75K animals and we are taking 4K harvest a year – sustainable harvest is an issue. Need to decide collectively when there is a conservation issue. Other meetings they said it should be sooner.

Caribou that hasn't bred – could you test if that was an animal that could have produced?

Dorothy: Maybe could see if she went into season.

No other reason than she can't produce.

She could be grumpy, shunning the bulls. Could test if she went into season.

Might be a time limited on her too.

Dorothy: Yes.

Time for conservation is when people have issues and concerns. Doesn't have to be a number. When people have concerns, that's when.

Agree but possibly one or two go out, get charged and then case is lost.

Glad this is happening now, could help the users of this herd. If it's going to be sustainable over next 50 years – it's good now because Gwich'in are main users of herd. Anyone impacted is going to be them.

Dorothy: Want to hear any advice re NWT herds, lessons, advise of what went right/wrong.

Better ways to do your census, suggest explore all options.

Get harvest data. People started harvesting before check station trailer there. Need to get better information from communities.

Marsha: Concerned people think check station is going to be be-all end all for collecting harvest data. The guy has to sleep. Role of station is awareness and education. Will not give us harvest data.

Will give better idea.

Marsha: it will help.

Will have to interview people in other communities not along the Dempster.

Maybe check station should be right on ferry at Peel River.

Marsha: That has been suggested. Don't think the ferry guy would be okay with that.

People have to know that the info they are providing would be very valuable. Some don't like to give it for person reasons. They have to know it is not going to negatively affect them.

Many people in past never reported their harvest for fear something was going to happen. Some in Tuk never reported. We talked about reasons it may be important – ie for compensation. The persons said, gee, I didn't know. Then it could backfire because others over report. Should be explained better to get real information.

Goes like that for trapping and fishing areas too.

Marsha: question about using historic information for calculating TAH. All land claims are having an issue re accurate harvest data. Need to figure out how to calculate TAH.

Predation – grizzlies always around water. Between border and Arctic Circle, at least 14 grizzlies seen on one trip. People shoot caribou and grizzly is there within 10 mins, then

they have to shoot another one. They've been doing that for past 10 years, pushing people off meat. Not allowed to shoot them. Good to think about those things.

Grizzly instincts – May when calves born they are aggressive, kill whatever they can. In fall, they need to get fat. When we hunt caribou – they will come to get that meat. If you set seal aside for them, better option than to lose meat. They will kill anything vulnerable.

Try to count when people start seeing them.

Dorothy: we started trying to count the numbers that crossed the highway – very hard to determine that. Would need to enlists all hunters to keep track of where they are and help count That idea has come up before.

If bear learns he can take carcass away, he will do in continually.

Was talking with Billy Archie he said grizzly was chasing two vehicles with caribou.

Dorothy: getting to be an issue for sure.

Grizzly jumped in back of someone's truck because of caribou – hard time getting out of there.

Marsha: we need to hear about these things. Get people to call our offices to know how serious situation is there and send conservation officers where there are aggressive bears. Can kill them in defense of life and property. Something is going to happen there in short order and then we're going to be sorry. Need to report these things.

10:55 pm ended.

HMP meeting

Meeting:
Yukon Regional RRC Meeting, Teslin, YT
Date: September 29, 2008

Working Group / resource people attending
Marsha Branigan
Dorothy Cooley
Deana Lemke
Carol Domes
Dawna Hope

Presentation

Comments:

How much faith do you have in your reporting system from AK? Those numbers look really skewed to me. I say that because what happens on the Dempster Hwy compared to the Steese Highway, it's a Sunday afternoon picnic compared to that. There are 700K people in AK, 32K in Yukon – include NWT and push to 50K to be liberal. There are 700K people in AK, a lot of people hunting caribou. 3 percent by non-residents, don't buy that.

Dorothy: AK residents are required to get license and tag – where they hunt is remote – fly-in. Range goes over to Dalton Hwy but they rarely get that far out. Averages about 75 caribou a year. Native harvest is by Inupiat, Kaktovik – harvest is accessed in summer when high enough. The largest group is Arctic Village, coming up through Porcupine River. They most access in winter when the caribou over-winter there. Average of that is 1/5. Harvest is relatively low. Hunting pressure on other herds is there. We are sort of comfortable with their stats.

I hope this doesn't end up like fish. We've been through this with fish. AK doesn't listen. We've been through this with salmon – hope it doesn't turn into that. If these people don't come on board, what happens then? They are notorious for not signing anything. They go along with everything but don't agree with anything. How do you deal with that?

Dorothy: That's a bridge we will have to cross.

Marsha: Could go user to user to talk about need for protecting caribou. That has worked for Inuvialuit and Inupiat at times. Users talking among themselves instead of the AK government. They haven't named anyone to the International Board, there are issues. They know what we're doing and we do have to involve them at some point.

Marsha: Any of our harvest data is at issue. We don't have good harvest data. Plan says we need to get that. Not just AK.

Are they saying onus is on us to restrict harvest? (AK)?

Marsha: No.

Dorothy: No, not at all. There has been no formal communication at this point. There has been some communication at the user level. They know it's happening and they will be informed.

In regard to user communities, would encourage involving AK people. Being in Arctic Village, they never had caribou for many years. I was there when a lot of the herd was there. They have a rule that there is no hunting around the community even when there is lots around the community. One time hunter came with toboggan load of caribou, he hunted from two days away. There are traditional laws followed.

You are coming to Dawson to present to our council – when?

Dorothy: Oct. 15

That is not enough time. We have to have council meetings with enough members. This is too soon.

Dorothy: This plan has been out since July; know it's a short timeframe. If you can give us better date for comments, would be great.

Marsha: There will be other opportunities to comment on other drafts.

You've got a management plan and process working now, but there are other issues from hunting perspective of Dempster – have issue with six month hunt. Anywhere else in Yukon is 3 months. Also harvest limit of 2 per hunter. We are looking at being in the orange zone with a limit of bulls, but haven't heard any discussion about reducing the harvest time and limiting to one bull.

Dorothy: This is a draft – if you want to comment on that, certainly. We've only heard one comment about seasons.

Marsha: Assumed that if we go to TAH, there would be a proportion going to that user group – maybe by draw system. Everyone would be under TAH, and harvest would be restricted to some degree. Assumed it wouldn't be unlimited as it is now.

My question to you is – you come up with this HMP, you want to do this TAH – how much percentage is by predator harvest? We always get the axe, but you can't tell that to wolves, grizzlies. I get sick and tired of being told can't do it anymore. That should be in the plan – predators.

Marsha: We have heard that quite a bit – predator control is not part of this HMP, but doesn't mean there can't be other initiatives by others.

What is predator rate on herd – impact?

Dorothy: Study on this heard in late 80s, early 90s, the numbers in model based on that study. When herd increasing, it was 2 percent higher. Population makes a difference. 260sq kms in range, would be difficult to do something about predators, even if public appetite was there. Wolves are the biggest predators.

You guys are going on about bulls only – need to take both bulls and cows.

Dorothy: It's something to consider. Two things: adult cow survival is big driver in population because they're the ones producing calves. Bulls can breed a lot of females. Lots of excess males.

You mentioned you had meeting in Mayo – what was public feedback?

Dorothy: Wasn't many from public there. That was our first meeting.

Dawna Hope: Mayo is not a big user of that herd.

I know Mayo don't want to go to meetings sometimes. They should have been there in the first place.

Dorothy: Questionnaire is being circulated by RRCs.

Game dept and fish dept. don't let people know in enough advance time. I sit on the salmon board and it was the same way. Same way with caribou herd, not only with PCH, but here. We seen them on the lake the first time in 35 to 40 years, then we don't see them again. No one says anything about them and where they are. We used to see them all the time before the highway. Nobody has been hunting caribou. I think you should put something in the paper and let the public know about that caribou, because it concerns us as FN people. We like caribou too. We haven't touched caribou for about the last 10 years. They are decreasing because of the wolves. Why isn't there something done about that? Same thing with fish. You wait until it's just about gone and then you speak up on it. Make a report and then let the 14 communities know. This coming year, no one is going to be catching salmon. We should be going to each community and talking about these things. You should get elders and knowledgeable people coming to the communities and talking about that. Caribou will keep depleting unless you do something about it. You should have community meetings and inform people what is happening at least every 3 or 6 months. We are all concerned about the caribou.

Dorothy: Good point; thank you. The PCMB has a fairly extensive communication program. Everything could be improved. The three user communities are well aware that the population be declining. If you think it's appropriate, we can add the other RRCs to distribution list. Can check with the Board and internally do that.

Are we prepared for pipeline? We need to be prepared for those animals. We are going to be losing more. We need to come together and talk about it. Need to go to the communities and talk about the depletion of our animals.

Wondering about climate change. If hunting stopped tomorrow, would herd go back to 70s population? Would numbers ever realistically get back over 200K?

Dorothy: Graph shows where population would level out. Model predicts population would level out at about 75K. Calf survival numbers are at the lower end. Something would have to change in adult cow survival and calf survival rates in order for the herd to grow. This is worst case scenario. We are not sure. We're hoping that by minimizing harvest will help herd recover faster. Circumarctic herds are on a roughly 40 year cycle. We could potentially see that herd grow again – possibly higher. This herd is unique – grows slower than other arctic herds, and declines slower. CARMA – network of caribou researchers throughout circum arctic.

Hunters have been taking 4K – 90 percent is FN, been going on long before 1980. I don't see the herd declining because of harvest management. Are we not taking wolves anymore? What is the reason for decline? It's not harvest? All you're doing is looking at the herd from the view of the hunters – it's not them. FNs have been doing this for years – can't tell them not to do it and get beef from Alberta. You're not addressing the problem if you don't know what is causing the decline.

Dorothy: WG is aware of that. You're right this herd has declined by itself. But the earlier graph showed it climbed.

Still taking 4K a year – can't blame it all on harvest. Why is it declining?

Dorothy: One it decreased there – in 1991-92, bad springs, deep snow, low calf survival rates – can't account for decline since 1995. There was something else happening. We don't monitor predation over long term. This plan is trying to minimize the effect of harvest to allow the herd to be in a better position to recover. Even cutting harvest in half doesn't allow the herd to grow.

Marsha: If we take these management actions seriously, hopefully we don't get to the red zone.

But you don't mention wolves.

Marsha: That is out there. In Bathurst, decrease in herd has meant decrease in wolves.

According to chart, we've lost 20K more than have been harvested. I don't buy the theory that we don't know so we can deal with nothing other than hunters. It's too simplistic. In NWT, I sat in on the mountain caribou plan meeting to draft the strategy, there was a man who said 1K wolves trapped in NWT where there was a problem with declines. In 3 year time period he took out 1K wolves. That can be done – doesn't cost govt a lot of money and we don't have to wait until public agrees. Just acknowledge there are things we can do. Why don't we ever go there?

Dorothy: That would have to be a community initiative. A recommendation could come in that encourages harvest of wolves.

It's a huge concern, everyone talks about it. Any science that determines why we lost 20K more caribou? Where did they go?

Dorothy: decline kicked off by bad springs. Adult cow survival in 96; something possibly happening with adults in general. Couple theories that maybe something is happening in summer. Summer survival was lower than we expected. When they were doing NWT counts in July – the caribou were bags of bones in summer. AK has found relationship with calf survival and dry summers. It's a complex system and huge range to do studies on this.

Colour graph – how does that plan fit in with the PCMA? Will there be a conflict? In agreement, brings in steps how the user groups are faded out or back in – and non user groups.

Dorothy: One of the recommendations was to amend the PCMA. One reason people think that's important is because of that question – how does PCMA fit together with this and other land claim agreements. Unresolved at this point. What most people are thinking is that some things aren't working in PCMA, but this is how everyone will agree to manage and agree on a common approach and vision.

In sense, this chart would not be able to go into effect on Oct. 31 – the first step would be the PCMA?

Dorothy: If you want to wait that long? We don't have that long to wait.

Marsha: I don't think anything in the plan conflicts with PCMA. The principle of sharing is there and the plan still allows for that -- ie how to divide the TAH. If we wait to work out all the legalities of that, will be too long and we won't have anything in place to manage in the meantime. Will need to come up with solution that will work for everybody – to be implemented within their own systems.

I feel worried about how we are going to live in a few years time if we don't come up with some answers. I was looking at your graph – how much TK was involved with draft you have. I mentioned to you before that in the early days when the wolves?? was introduced to north here, was in wintering grounds of the caribou herd. Everybody

knows the old people's stories. Some hunters were starving and the caribou moved away to AK. Story about caribou – so much caribou that the winter range was covered with tracks. I could get my own graph in my community. The highway came through in 1970s and ever since then we've had a lot of problems. Our own native people – two final agreements, you have management plans for different species and a lot of recommendations. I'm tired of hearing about this caribou all the time. A lot of people are getting tired also. We have scientists that try to help find out what the caribou are doing – we have this large number of wolves people are complaining about. This Dempster highway was put in – solid footing for the wolves, road into Old Crow – the wolves are able to adapt. What kind of policy are we going to come up with to deal with the wolves? No one wants to listen. They are taking a lot of caribou and people are getting blames. There are a lot of views re hunting techniques. FN people don't have to count, don't have to answer to nobody. People are getting three or four caribou, letting the check stations know but others aren't doing it so we don't have accurate numbers. Climate change is taking a toll on us. We have to get the user groups to reach some solutions otherwise we are heading for a long starving future.

Facilitator: predators are not part of this plan but can make a recommendation.

Marsha: Yes, that is what we're here for.

Facilitator encouraged completing the questionnaire.

3:05 p.m.

HMP meeting

Meeting:
FN / RRC / public meeting, Dawson City, YT
October 15, 2008, start at 6:20 p.m. TH Community Hall

Working Group / resource people attending:
Marsha Branigan
Dorothy Cooley
Deana Lemke
Roberta Joseph

In attendance:

- Angie Joseph Rear
- Linda Taylor
- Isaac Henry
- Nick Rear
- Sylvia Far
- John Semple
- Will Fellers
- Mike Warville
- Victor Henry
- Ronald Johnson
- Rachel Hunt
- Mark Essiembre
- William Henry
- Robert Rear
- Ed Taylor
- Wayne Potoroka
- Dennis Frost
- Julia Morberg
- Gared Clarke
- Alexander ??

Presentation, coffee break, then Q&A

Q: It seems there are a lot of caribou taken in NWT. Is it because they have a larger population or they harvest more animals per capita?

Marsha: That is pretty much McPherson's main diet. They don't take much moose. Same for Inuvialuit. There is more pressure now because other areas are closed; more pressure on highway now as well, from Inuvik, Tuk. There is a larger population – Inuvik is approx 4500 – more people. Inuvik is 2/3 aboriginal. Now in NWT, resident hunters can only take 2 caribou, bulls. We can only hunt the PCH, no others which means increased pressure.

Q: Talking about numbers – 1,000 in McPherson, 1,000 in Inuvik, 1,000 Old Crow?

Dorothy: Numbers were population size. Harvest info now (shows slide). NWT would be about 2,000 animals among all Gwich'in communities.

Q: What type of solutions did they come up with?

Marsha: This is a plan for them too. We've had good feedback on the plan.

Dorothy: In most meetings, in general, they say we're not doing enough soon enough. Even limited harvest has to be.

Marsha: Even implementing a tag system all the time to collect harvest data was suggested. Some feedback on TAH, based on harvest levels, consider isolation of community, how much it costs to go and get a caribou, how much to replace caribou with meat, consider population size (aboriginal people).

Q: Collar caribou and monitor them – females, through pregnancy and calf survival rate – are you up on that? How healthy is it?

Dorothy: We've been monitoring birth rates since 1980s. Calf birthrate and survival have recovered and the decline since 1995 is unexplainable.

Q: How explain caribou decline to current, figures?

Dorothy: It's all plugged into computer model and it projects population size.

Q: Really isn't accurate number then. Last year and this year, caribou migrated elsewhere.

Dorothy: Yes, majority of herd migrated to Alaska for third year. (shows modeling of population chart slide). It fits good with censuses. We have good confidence this is a decline.

Q: Still so confusing when they reroute, take turn and go away – maybe better feeding pasture, route. Don't believe Dempster Hwy has impact. See in your picture.

Dorothy: That was actually taken during closure.

Q: With trucks and stuff, more of a danger to truck drivers crashing into them. 13 percent on Yukon native hunters – how much of that harvest is Old Crow harvest? Half or more?

Dorothy: First re changing migration route – not unusual to winter in AK. On average, 1/5 years herd will winter there. Individual caribou doesn't winter in same place every

year necessarily. They change around. Not all of the herd will winter in exactly same place each year. We hear from communities, the caribou know where to go to not wipe out all feed. We can't account for that with science. Majority of Yukon harvest taken from Old Crow. We only have three years of harvest data from all Y native hunters. Majority were taken in Old Crow. Old Crow is largest user groups. There is a reason why the community is there – that caribou is located there, long-standing relationship VGFN with caribou.

Q: TH has wildlife act in place. Don't feel – I have to look at these questions and sit as group with the committee to review. We do have wildlife act in place.

Dorothy: That would be good to know how this fits in with how the FN is run here. The WG also wondered how this would be handled.

Q: We have good First Hunt program.

Dorothy: First Hunt is model we hear about – take pride in that.
Q: Do we know how many have been in herd over the last 100 years?

Dorothy: No way to know that for sure. CARMA studies herds and looking throughout that info, there is certainly a cycle. For northern barrenground caribou, the cycle is about 40 years. We don't have any good way of telling where we are re record high or low number of caribou. Some TK shows that there were times when caribou disappeared and people starved. This info helps us try to understand.

Q: What effect of climate change on herd other than icing up food source – is that a variable?

Dorothy: For sure – CARMA looking at different weather events. Low calf survival in every population in bad weather. Would have to capture it in population model – change calf survival in model. Currently the model is taking into consideration the worst case scenario – low calf survival.

Q (Old Crow resident): Any chance of – if don't get a census – that PCMB can make recommendation to try another time of year when caribou are heading to calving grounds? Sometimes we do flying around, see mountain tops are black from caribou migrating north. May be an idea to consider in future. Also, how is the WG going to be – are you going to be going to AK to remote villages and speaking to people. Arctic Village is totally dependent on herd. Going to be to a point where if we don't come to some solution and agreement, we will be faced with something harder than we ever dreamed of. Our leaders will have to push harder to do a lot of sacrificing in each community. This year there were two cows killed, both by young inexperienced hunters. Other than that, nothing but bulls were harvested – we have the number as of yesterday. This is an eye opener for what might be down the road. Each community must work to come to a solution and then come together and decide where we should

be sitting, and work things out. I don't want somebody else to make these rules and laws, I want to see us make our own.

Dorothy: PCTC looking at other ways of census. We need caribou to aggregate, bugs come out, makes herd get into tight groups. Plane takes pictures. There were difficulties in past, recently. PCMB has requested PCTC to look at other methods. We need to get a number accurate to 20 percent; really difficult to do. PCTC met recently, considering method used to count Bathurst herd, couldn't get that accuracy. We decided we cannot use that method. Still looking for other methods.

Marsha: Weather is an issue (Bathurst is inland herd). As Dorothy said the range on number wouldn't be good enough for what we need here.

Marsha: We have sent plan to AK. They were at the Gwichin Gathering in OC. We are discussing options of how to bring to AK. Situation is different there; different relationship between native users. I suggest it should be user groups to go to AK. Inuvialuit have good relationship with Kaktovik native users. US gov't not supporting anything to do with caribou now. Need to get support from the communities – perhaps arrange a tour for the user groups to go in and speak to user groups in AK.

Q: You do go out in coast every year, no chance to do count?

Dorothy: Yes, there are attempts.

Q: You see them in a huge herd, but poor visual?

Dorothy: No, that only happened in one year (2004) – satellite collars were all together but we couldn't fly because of the forest fire smoke. We need to have them group up together outside of mountains. In 2007 they started to group up but were spread out still, started to group in mountains so we tried to get photos but there were shadows in the mountains.

Q: some elderly people spoke of – because of climate change we won't see caribou in large numbers anymore. That's TK. Won't get a count again. Need to find other ways.

Dorothy: Alaskans bought digital camera, old film one takes photos 9x9, high resolution. They will test the digital camera next week under different lighting conditions. If this works, ideally fairly soon every plane out there will be fitted with these cameras to take photos. Actually get a photocensus done in matter of hours not over day and worry about shadows.

Marsha: AK will have more planes out there getting photos.

Roberta: respond to having our people make sacrifices re harvesting and making rules for yourselves – we have had those discussions at the WG meetings. Different on NWT side; they have RRCs making decisions. We have self-governing FNs who will be

responsible for managing their harvest (legislation). In terms of making sacrifices, many FNs have been providing education programs for the last couple years. TH has been doing this for 10 years. NWT aboriginal people have expressed they are starting a number of education programs, monitoring and collecting harvest. There is a start in the communities. VG also promoting other education programs. Another matter discussed at meeting was that as FNs, especially having land claim and self-government agreements, we have to take responsibility for managing harvesting. We can't keep talking about it. Need to take care of it ourselves. The HMP is respecting that in a way.

Q: wondering if they looked into heat sensing infrared camera?

Dorothy: Only thing I heard of is in BC – couldn't tell difference between trees/caribou because caribou are well insulated.

Marsha: During the photocensus period there is a lot of radiant heat to interfere with photos. Some herds with small calving grounds, we are supposed to do photocensus for Cape Bathurst, looking at satellite imagery. See if we can count caribou and compare with traditional results. Not sure if technology is there yet. Hoping to try this summer; would have to be on the coastal plain, on sunny hot day.

Q: Have 4,000 average – past three years?

Dorothy: We know this is an underestimate. This number makes model work.

Q: What number are you looking at?

Marsha: TAH would be recommendation from board; would be a risk analysis. If herd is declining, there really isn't any sustainable harvest. Need to weigh hardships in community with how we can help herd; have to live with decision. Will be hard to figure out – have to decide that. We should be able to see how fast population is growing with/without harvest and the board make recommendation based on that. If we think we are harvesting 4 percent – if herd is doing well, generally thought of as a reasonable harvest rate.

Q: Wondering, way pie chart, 10 percent are non-aboriginal. Seems to me that FNs have most to lose if hunting is restricted. Has WG considered making harvest thresholds different for non-aboriginals?

Marsha: On NWT side, definitely it is. If we get into TAH, will only be aboriginal harvest. Our land claims are clear about preferential rights for aboriginals. Different on Yukon side. Provision in PCMA as well. Will need to be balance struck and decision make on when hunting should stop. Outfitting should stop before residents, residents before aboriginal. Need to figure out what those proportions are.

Dorothy: need to get feedback from people for WG.

Q: How much resident NWT hunters?

Marsha: less than 1 percent.
Need to hear feedback from all groups, when certain groups cut off.

Q: 4 percent of 75K is 3K – looking at knocking down 1K?

Marsha: What you want the herd to do is recover; may not want to take 4 percent. When herd is doing well, 3-5 percent thought about as being reasonable. When we want herd to recover, would likely recommend a different harvest amount. Also based on all info provided that year – ie calf survival, icing, late spring. Will be tough decision on annual basis. Has been suggested that annually might be too often.

Q: Any studies on predator population? Wolves increasing?

Dorothy: one study that looked at wolves on PCH. Predation rate calculated from that. Two types of wolves on PCH range - ones that follow the caribou and ones that are territorial. Wolves are largest predator because they hunt year-round. On calving grounds, golden eagles and grizzlies are greatest predators. That was only study done. We haven't monitored at all.

Q: That study is 20 years old.

Marsha: Our understanding is the wolves are increasing. Monitoring dens on Bathurst range.. When caribou high, wolf numbers up; converse also.

Dorothy: Interesting for us because it has been shown that wolves will kill same number. When herd reaches 100K, 10 percent is taken.

Q: Any talk about trying to control predators?

Dorothy: Wolf control (predator) by govt is not an option (Government of Yukon). Would need to be a community initiative. If they want to reduce predators would have to be done by community. The cost involved is also important to take into consideration – big range size. Trying to reduce wolves is huge effort, very costly. Would need to take about 80 percent of wolf population every year.

Marsha: We have heard this issue in many communities. In NWT we have been doing some wolf carcass collection to look at age/sex/diet/productivity. Haven't done data analysis yet. Driven based on concerns in communities re wolves/caribou.

Q: What about wolves overlapping (types).

Dorothy: Do territorial ones kill wolves hat follow the herd? No, didn't see any impact…

Marsha: Any comments about the colour chart and management actions at different population levels?

Q: When take a look at green area, fact we are here today talking about this and cows can still be harvested, that blows my mind. Number of 125K should be raised to 150K.

Marsha: What about other numbers?

Q: If we go to voluntary bull only – would have that anyway.
Don't have issue with 75K.

Marsha: Idea with plan is when we get to orange zone, take action to keep us from red.

Q: I understand concept, good work. Have issue with cow harvest.
What are your thoughts?

Dorothy: This is only herd allowing harvesting females [for Resident hunters]. Shows ability to grow and decline.

Q: if there is a cycle – we have greater impact, technology today.

Marsha: What about the TAH? How allocated? Do you have confidence in harvest data we have? We know it's incomplete.

Q: Coastal plain pictures – on Dempster they are stragglers. Spent over 20 years on Dempster. How many count to add into there? A couple years ago 400 stayed up there all summer. How do you count? How many do you add in?

Dorothy: We figure about 5K. We know we don't count all caribou. No way to ever do that. That's what we're talking about with the accuracy. In current census, look at plus/minus 5 percent. If move to sampling only, margin of error gets wide; can get really wide really fast and that's a concern. If we move away from photocensus, will be hard to compare those two numbers. Can't tell for certain if number we get is accurate.

Q: Involved in 40 mile herd, went down to 5K, then up to 60K. How get up so fast? River frozen, herds mixed. They were in Arctic Village last year – could happen again. Then you put closure on Porcupine Caribou.

Dorothy: Fortymile herd population figures [management plan started at herd size of about 22,000 or 23,000, not 5,000 caribou. Stablized and perhaps is now declining at just over 40,000 caribou]

Q: comments about mixing up herds.

Dorothy: We had one central arctic caribou came to Porcupine Caribou range. We know that kind of thing happens.

Marsha: we did analysis on our side – about 2.5 percent exchange rate. We have also heard that traditionally. Precautionary principal is in plan – need to still take management actions taking into consideration info we have.

Q: Wolves – why doesn't Government of Yukon open up season for grizzlies? High count 17-22. Can't even pick blueberries up there. They kill caribou. In couple hours, someone saw a grizzly get 4 caribou. One had a grizzly come between him and his truck. Issue with corridor.

Dorothy: We've been hearing lots about grizzlies. They are easy to see in open area. Concern for high potential in 1970s for high harvest. Heard that they are learning to come to gunshots, to get reliable source of food. Heard even more serious stories. Will have to figure out something – maybe more education. We would rather consider other options before killing bears. There is no outfitting harvest up that high. Would have to be a resident or aboriginal harvest. Would have to kill so many bears to even make a difference.

Marsha: A number of reports on our side as well. Almost like bears recognize hunting season open, going for gut piles. Hunters lost animals to bears. Article in paper, they were involved with bear issues, had to get ATV. We hear a lot – need to get it all reported, figure out where it is happening. Anybody has right to kill bear in defense of life/property if bear is aggressive.

Q: What is situation on Bluenose herd?

Marsha: It's actually 3-4 different herds (Bluenose) – management actions have been taken on Bluenose; recommendations made for tag system; harvest shut down on some. Have been serious management actions taken on two herds. Will look at in July and maybe readjust management actions.

Q: Inuvialuit harvesters, when their herds build up, maybe ask them to cut back more on PCH. If their herds are up to where they want it, are we going to be allowed to harvest the other herds?

Marsha: Hard for you to get to Bluenose.

Q: People from Sachs are hunting the PCH on Dempster.

Dorothy: They have harvesting rights.

Q: Lots of stuff done behind people's backs.

Marsha: Overlap agreement between Inuvialuit/Gwich'in.

Dorothy: They hunt on N. Slope and Richardsons.

Shared harvest rights could be put into Native User Agreement.

Dennis: I would like to see that happen. Also share with other people who use Porcupine Caribou.

Marsha: Percentage is likely larger now.

Q: Bears – if get control – maybe make money by taking people in there, in controlled manner. Bears are an issue.

Dorothy: One of the justifications for closing subzones was for wildlife viewing. Get to see a lot of bears.

Q: Almost ended up in Supreme Court – expected us to obey the 500 m caribou but we have status rights.

Dorothy: Justification for caribou hunting corridor was not for wildlife viewing. Was for public safety.

Q: Court case almost happened. Documents said people don't like to see caribou being shot. Aboriginal rights.

Dorothy: Justification in document from Board to minister was for hunter safety, not wildlife viewing.

Q: last fall saw hunters take 42 caribou – impressed with young ones skinning. Had to watch the 500 m caribou, they were shooting toward road; doesn't matter with 500 m corridor.

Dorothy: Every good hunter should know that.

Q: everything I heard here goes back to WG, TH act when gets into orange zone. Should be stopping shooting cows right now.

Q: Yukon non-residents, who are they?

Dorothy: outfitters – other Canadians or non-resident aliens. Most are outfitters in their outfitting areas. Three main ones have access to Porcupine Caribou. There are some special guided hunts by Yukon residents not limited to certain areas; under laws of general application.

Q: Would that be first to go then?

Dorothy: Are you suggesting that?
Is that something you want the WG to consider?

Dennis: People need time to fill in.

Dorothy: Can give to WG member, to me or to PCMB.
WG trying to organize meeting for early Nov. Comments due by Oct. 31. Pressure to get this done; get comments in as soon as you can.
Comments on anything in plan – not just questions on questionnaire.

Roberta: thanks for attending. Comments to me or Dorothy or PCMB. Good turnout.

End at 8:30.

HMP meeting

Meeting:
Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, Whitehorse, YT
October 23, 2008, start at 9 am, Yukon Inn

Working Group / resource people attending:
Marsha Branigan
Dorothy Cooley
Deana Lemke
Carol Domes

In attendance:

Don Hutton
Graham Van Tighem
Diane Sheldon
Randal Tetlichi
Georgina Sydney
Dan McDiarmid
Jim Haney
William Asp
Terry Wilkinson
Art Johns
Rebecca Bradford-Andrews

- Presentation

- Questions/Comments

Q: What is the estimate on predation on herd? Predator control not an option for government – is this policy option from Government of Yukon?

Dorothy: was an estimate on predation in 1974, study on wolves north of Porcupine River. Worked out to 27 caribou per wolf per year; built into natural mortality rate that feeds into the model. 16 percent taken by natural mortality. Adult female study show 18 percent taken in decline stage. Predation probably had fairly large effect.

Q: 4 times harvest?

Dorothy: Yes, typical. About predator control, I don't think it's a policy from government. At operational level, trying to effect predation in such a huge range is not reasonable, not effective. Not just wolves the issue, also golden eagles and grizzlies during calving period but agree wolves have largest impact overall.

Q: How confident are you in 4K harvest level?

Dorothy: Reported harvest is 2500 on average. 4K makes the model work. The annual harvest depends where caribou are. If caribou don't show up in Richardsons, ie, harvest low there. Same for Arctic Village, Old Crow. Variable. We are missing key user groups for data. Way model fits census numbers is amazing for wildlife population models. Feel very comfortable using that 4K figure.

Q: Find interesting to work backwards to make model work. What happens to model in plan if census is considerably different than model? How will that affect your plan? Is it adapted to where it can change immediately or do you have to go back to the drawing board because it's not accurate?

Dorothy: We haven't had that happen.

Q No recent census.

Dorothy: But it fits – very confident. If showed up different, would have to go back to consider. Would have more confidence in actual census rather than model.

Marsha: It would depend on if the census number came back higher or lower than the model. If the number is higher than the model it may be due to lower harvest like what happened last year. If census comes back way below model, will have to reanalyze the model. According to plan, Board would base decisions on census first, if no census, would be based on model. Alaskans do census, we're [GNWT] not that involved in it. PCTC working on alternate plans to count herd. Normally they have one plane that has a large format camera. With new digital cameras, will be able to take pictures rapidly, and get the census done quicker so don't have to worry about shadows. If works out this year, more planes with these types of cameras.

Q: Speaking of Alaskans, how factor into it? Are they willing to buy into it? What will happen when we get into orange, yellow and reds? What will happen over there?

Marsha: Alaskans are aware of it, partly because at the Old Crow gathering it was presented. Operationally, they definitely are aware of it. Harvest is lower percentage – overall, 15 percent. If caribou go near Arctic Village could be slightly higher.

Q: Maybe we in Yukon will have considerable leverage at sometime in the future when they want to build a pipeline. Strikes me you would want to be prepared, poised, and maybe try to use that. That's what Americans and Alaskans understand. They put themselves first always. In a case like this, they would understand that clearly. Maybe want to have big club, not necessarily shutting down ANWR but other ways, start asking questions that get filtered up. Money drives everything. They're talking about the largest agreement in North America, maybe talk about a transboundary agreement.

[…missed one comment – couldn't hear…]

Q: When talking about corridor on highway, apply to all hunters?

Dorothy: Yes.

Q: In plan, when population reaches certain level, encouraging hunters to hunt other species like moose? We feel we are walking the fence re moose harvest now. Issue with asking to hunt moose.

Dorothy: We know it's an issue. Deflected harvest is happening. Increased hunting pressure on other herds, animals. What are the options?

Q: Agree that would happen, concern about seeing it encouraged in the plan.

Dorothy: Agree. Would help to see if projects could be done in other areas, Old Crow.

Marsha: Those are questions that came up in NWT – other species also in NWT – beluga, fish, geese, encouraging to trade and barter those species. Big concern about moose in the area.

Q: NWT take bulk of caribou. Entity there that sells caribou legally?

Marsha: No. Commercial tags for Bluenose herd are no longer available in Inuvik region. Reindeer meat sold.

Q: total different area?

Marsha: Yes, north of Cape Bathurst.

Q: No way PCH?

Marsha: No. Not in the range of the PCH. There is also concern about hybridization re reindeer. Sometimes herded, sometimes not since 1936. But with other caribou not the Porcupine.

Q: Even though it's not allowed, it's normal trade and barter does happen with all species.

Marsha: don't know if can't trade and barter, you can in NWT, inside NWT.

Q: Sale actually happens?

Marsha: Yes, not sure how much – hard to charge someone for that – fine line between trade and barter and sale.. In Yellowknife, can still buy caribou meat in restaurants, from different herd. Cambridge Bay they have meat processing plan, can sell.

Q: Not filter in PCH in that system?

Dorothy: Not anymore. In past, concerns were raised, hard to tell for sure which herd unless investigate, do DNA testing. Not an issue really anymore.

Q: You did a lot of work; however, how much did you use in terms of TK?

Dorothy: This is a draft; If you have info you think should be in this, should bring it forward now. Any aspect of plan is open to feedback.

Q: I'm probably last generation when we were involved, elders involved. Can't start hunting until elders started talking to you, who is going to do shooting? There are 10 of us there. Not everyone gets to shoot. They tell us how much you need, how much you can shoot, how it will go. I remember those days because I was one of those fast people on the snowshoes. Before it gets to TAH, wonder if we get some kind of elders council in there to decide if that's the way to go. This diagram used in Alaska for fishing (chart). Think about using elders council before going to TAH. Would like to see that. TK is very important. People have hard time to understand it because all the people with TK are gone now. That's what I would like to see. When you say education and regulation, I think we need to educate our young people on the caribou. There's not only bull and cow, there are 8 different names and categories for caribou. I know all those names. When I go to Crow Flat, I teach about that. We need to do that with young people and teach them how to approach animals, dress them, that's up to the grandparents and parents to do that, don't need a lot of money.

Q to another board member – You said caribou explain which caribou to take – would they explain which ones to take from those categories?

Answer from board member: Yes. Words for different cows – elders would identify. Where people get this idea about bulls only, I don't know. They did that with moose and now there's no moose. Bull caribou mate with 30-35 cows. When you shoot bull, you are actually killing 30-35 caribou. I encourage people to shoot cows. Simple thing to figure out.

Q – that assumes those cows are not going to be bred by another bull.

Answer from board member: Yes, that's why it's important to identify which cows to shoot. I think it's important to do education.

Dorothy: Can I explain why bull only?

Answer from board member: I know why you are doing it – but those are my comments. You are on the right track. Get elders council.

Q: I like the plan; I like the sign you have there. When Randall talks about bulls only, we have elders in our area saying we are shooting too many bull moose, exactly what Randall talking about.
You talked about predation – concern about leaving it in the community. What about resources? I think everybody has to get involved and try to work with that. What about the condition of the habitat – I don't know what condition the caribou are in. What about the lobby effort? How is that working out?
You talk about waiting 5 years. If something not working right, not wait five years.

Marsha: If something not working right, would look at sooner; minimum 5 years.

A: Long time to wait.

Dorothy: Will be used at the annual meeting.

Q: good this is coming up. Herd is declining and that is scary. Got to be a big effort, including political people. Big heavy education process that has to take place. Different hunting practices in NWT than Yukon. Education is really critical. People sometimes carry on and they don't realize they are doing something wrong. Unless somebody comes and tells you you're making a mistake and pointing out what you might look at – then you change your behaviour. Education is important. FNs are first managers of the land. If something needs to be changed they will do it. Have education and an elders council set up to assist. Need TK. Like Randall talking about, 8 ways to call a caribou. We are losing our elders fast, need to get info asap.

Dorothy: We don't monitor range conditions, we monitor body condition since 1987. CSI – continuation of that. We got outside funding to add to it. Results from that monitoring indicate the range is not a problem. Caribou are in good conditions, fat, still having calves. We hear a lot about fires; don't know if those fires might affect caribou over the longer term; we are watching.

Q: Might affect food source – moss, lichen.

Marsha: Bull only – re moose. That is partly why we want to do fall composition counts to monitor the number of bulls and cows in herd.

Deana – comments about lobbying; more education, awareness.

Q: With regards to predators and keeping it with the community, you are on right track. FWMB may be able to assist with this in future. May be avenue for board to assist.

Dorothy: Good.

Marsha: When say community initiatives, not saying government is not going to help, but must be community initiative. On NWT side because of the decline of caribou, we started a wolf carcass collection, $100 per wolf to collect biological information. Also

request to increase in fur incentive price for fur pelts. Not our department anymore, but bringing up with other depts.

Q: is trapping subsidized in NWT?

Marsha: Yes…comments on different programs.

Q: Was herd at 75 or 80K in 70s?

Dorothy: 105K lowest.

Q: is this unnatural decline or natural?

Dorothy: Maybe natural not right word. All wildlife populations cycle. Other barrenground herds show a 40-year cycle. This herd increases/decreases at slower rate, not likely looking at really steep crashes.

Q: do they know cause of crashes?

Dorothy: NWT most recent examples.

Marsha: We don't have clear indication, combination of all things you mentioned and more. Harvest was definitely having impact at low end; we were harvesting more than we should have.

Q: going to go down anyhow and back up; do want to control harvest.

Marsha: It's a risk assessment. It will take longer to recover if more harvest. We also have impact from climate change, faster snow machines, technology, etc.

Dorothy: part of people you speak for is licensed hunters – think about how licensed hunters will be deal with in this plan. How will we deal with outfitters in TAH situation? Get back to Working Group.

Q: Want to look at your model – different option. Everything seems to bottom out before you reach the TAH, right? What about mandatory bull harvest instead of voluntary? How work with licensed and FNs now? If not working as well as it should, what about initiating bull only harvest before taking action to eliminate harvest?

Dorothy: On Yukon side, VGG encouraged citizens to take bulls now, with good success. TH has always advocated bull harvest for any species. For licensed hunters, not sure because has not been a concerted effort until this year. Would likely be good compliance.

Q: For few years, cows discouraged. Hunting reports must be in. Has there been a decrease in number of cows?

Dorothy: No caribou on Dempster – this is first year in three, will be test for resident hunters.

Marsha: In NWT residents only allowed to take 2, bulls. Aboriginal hunting, we're not bull only but things are happening. In some of the other communities, there is a shift. Many are not hunting. We're not there yet. We have heard suggestion to implement bull only earlier in other meetings.

Q: How would that change your model?

Marsha: That is what's in the model.

Q: Model talking about what to do right now, but plan doesn't talk about that.

Dorothy: This is where we're starting from.

Q: Voluntary bull only and that's it?

Marsha: And asking them to reduce.

Don Hutton: We're way over our time. Continue on coffee break? We have full day.

Thank you for coming. If we have anymore to say, will respond to your July letter. We have busy period until end of Nov. Please use input you got here.

Q: Looks really good.
Q: Elders council.
Marsha: We got that.

10:35 finished.

- Marsha spoke to a person about model after meeting ended. Wanted to know if the model results would change if you implemented say a bull only at 75K not at 100K. Said she thought, based on how the model works that the result would be similar just lower but we should check that.

- Same person thought the comments about people should be taking cows was taken out of context.