

Gwich'in Renewable Resource Board Meeting Recreation Complex, Fort McPherson, NT September 11 & 12, 2008-09-11

1. **Call to Order** at 9:15 a.m. Quorum recognized.

Opening Prayer – Robert Alexie

Dan Topolniski was sworn in as a GRRB Member

Robert Charlie welcomed Dan to the Board as a full member and welcomed community members, RRC members and other participants to the meeting.

Liz Hansen is unable to attend this meeting.

Joel Ingram was advised not to attend due to the election.

Still looking for alternate members for the GRRB – Robert Charlie will follow up on the status of the appointments.

Everyone attending introduced themselves.

2. **Approval of the Agenda**

Motion #0908-1

To approve the agenda as presented.

Moved by: James Firth

Seconded by: Dan Topolniski

All in favour: CARRIED.

3. **Conflicts of Interest**

None declared. Conflicts may also be declared as the agenda proceeds.

4. **Approval of Minutes – February 28 & 29, 2008 Meeting.**

Minutes were included in the meeting binder.

Motion #0908-2

To approve the minutes as presented.

Moved by: Eugene Pascal

Seconded by: Johnny Charlie

All in favour: CARRIED

It was noted that minutes were reviewed and revised at a teleconference meeting in April.

Charlie Snowshoe asked if Land Use Planning would be coming to this meeting . They were invited and may be here tomorrow, they have not confirmed yet. There is a conflict with the Implementation Meetings also being held this week.

5. **Financial Update 2008/2009**

BREAK – 10:25 a.m.

Since staff have not arrived from Inuvik, Board Member Updates & Presentations were moved up on the agenda.

9. Board Member Updates & Presentations

Dan Topolniski – Commented that we will hear lots from DFO later in the meeting. One of the big jobs for Dan is to form a liaison and contact between DFO and GRRB board and staff. The strategic plan exercise is key. Other agencies such as DFO need to hear what the priorities are – to help sort out their priorities to help the Gwich'in achieve their plan.

Have heard positive messages from DFO senior managers. Rat River fishing plan is a big item, but there are other things. Gap analysis that is being initiated by Melody Nice-Paul is an important step. Will be meeting at the end of October with other DFO representatives to other management boards – will be helpful to be able to take a copy of the Strategic Plan.

The Fisheries Act Renewal that was discussed at previous meetings will not be passed due to the election. The process will have to be restarted in the new Parliament.

Very happy that George Low is the alternate for this Board. He has a wealth of experience. Some of his early work was done here. He will be useful contributor to the workings of the Board, so we have to find a way to draw him into the process of the Board.

Melody Nice-Paul/ GRRB office will help put together a package for the alternates for the October meeting.

Robert Alexie - Have comments for DFO, caribou etc, but will cover them later in the meeting.

James Firth – Commented he has heard the ENR trailer is in the wrong spot. Talking to the hunters, they would like to be able to fill in the questionnaire and leave it in a box if there isn't someone there. Re alternate members from Tribal Council – this should be actioned right away to get them involved in the GRRB to find out how we operate.

There are a lot of grizzly bears on the highway. Possibly need to look at a quota again.

Re what happened yesterday in the press, sometimes it is better to make a statement and then just leave it rather than getting into a debate in the media.

Eugene Pascal – The caribou came early, berries ripened early. May be just an odd year, but maybe a trend.

10. Staff Updates

Amy Thompson – **Fisheries Biologist** reviewed her report which was provided in the meeting binder.

Robert Alexie asked about the 1999 contamination study – in 1999 it was concluded it was safe to eat the fish. It might be interesting to compare the numbers. Robert Alexie commented he would be interested in a study for white fish and Coney on the Peel and Mackenzie and suggested that studies continue to be done every 5-10 years.

Robert Charlie commented that this is a good example of getting the young people involved in the sciences. Commend the staff for all the good work that they are doing engaging the youth. Possibly could tie how the Land Claims Chapter 12 & 13 relate to what we are doing.

Angela Horbatch – Office Manager reviewed her report which was provided in the meeting binder.

Robert Charlie thanked Angela for her hard work in bringing office records up to date.

Linda Wright – Communications Coordinator – reviewed her report provided in the meeting binder.

A copy of the 2009 Harvest Conservation Calendar was distributed – any corrections should be noted before the Calendar is produced for distribution.

A copy of the Get Wild about Nature logo was presented. Pins, buttons, etc will be developed to help promote the GRRB to youth and community members.

Kristen Callaghan – Wildlife Biologist reviewed her report provided in the meeting binder.

Abe Wilson asked about the location of the human bones that were found.

They are close to the Yukon border and nearer to Aklavik. The find was reported to the RCMP, GSCI and GTC. Don't know much more about the find re age, etc.

Nicole Lights Thomas – Environmental Scientist – reviewed her report provided in the meeting binder. Was previously working in the Sahtu doing similar work.

Dan Topolniski commented that he liked the process being followed re permits. Nicole commented that this process was adapted from the process her office used when she worked in the Sahtu. The process keeps the GRRB better connected with the research being done in the region.

Melody Nice-Paul commented that Nicole is presently a casual employee with the Board. Nicole has also had the experience of participating in public hearings in the Sahtu region. This will be a great resource for our office.

Robert Charlie commented that Nicole has done an excellent job in engaging the coordinators from the RRCs in each community.

Chris Greenland – Summer Student has returned to school for the year. Melody Nice-Paul reviewed his report provided in the meeting binder. Chris has finished his first year in environmental studies. He is from the area – parents are Peter and Angela Greenland. Melody Nice-Paul commented this was a very successful experience for Chris.

Melody Nice-Paul thanked the staff for all of their hard work. They are very willing and dedicated to take on whatever comes up.

11. RRC Updates

Gwich'in Renewable Resource Board – September 11 & 12, 2008

Fort McPherson, NT

Abe Wilson – Fort McPherson RRC The RRC continues to work with the management plan and write up issues that come up. Recently received some funding for Peel River Watershed. Need to identify exactly how to use the funding.

One of the concerns is the need for environmental monitors for all projects within the GSA. The concern was brought to the GTC.

Would like to see a study of Vittrekwa Creek fisheries. It has been an important area in the past.

Water quality is another important issue. Water sampling should keep going.

The items in the news will be an ongoing topic for discussion.

The harvest management plan is also important – education on these topics is important.

Good to see the checking station again.

Robert Charlie commented there is an opportunity when reviewing applications for the RRC to insist the companies provide an environmental monitor on all projects. Will be going through a priority setting exercise over the next few months, so a letter should be done to outline the work that Fort McPherson would like done in the Vittrekwa River area.

Fanny Greenland commented the human remains were found near Bear Creek.

Jerome Gordon – Aklavik RRC Reported that since Nicole started at the GRRB, she has really helped the RRCs by providing technical support. When we need information to help understand applications, she is very helpful.

John Norbert – Tsiigehtchic RRC Arctic Red River is a heritage river. From the Yukon side had a couple of paddlers this summer. Whatever happens up that river, we should be notified. When people go up there, should be notified in case there are accidents, same also with the Mackenzie River.

Robert Charlie commented anyone accessing GTC Lands is supposed to contact us, but this does not always happen. This should be addressed.

Peter Ross – re the Caribou Management Plan. Caribou numbers are declining very fast and have a concern about predators such as bears and wolves. Last night with the group in Tsiigehtchic, comments were made that it is time to have a quota on caribou. Also bears and wolves are part of the decline of the caribou numbers. Know that bounties on bears and wolves make some people upset, but they are killing caribou as well as humans. It is something that we should look into. A lot of our people rely on the caribou, but it is better to save them now and have them later on.

Robert Charlie commented the GRRB will be following up on the items raised.

Melody Nice-Paul reported that jackets have been ordered for all RRC Coordinators as well as GRRB Board members. The order has already shipped but was not received in time for this meeting.

LUNCH BREAK – 12:15 p.m.

12. Management Priorities (2007/2008)

Porcupine Caribou Management Plan Presentation – Board Approval Process for the PCMP plan

Joe Tetlichy 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 Tetlichy 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:

Sara Jerome – Commented that 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.

Neil Colin – 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.

Robert Alexie – 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.

Johnny Charlie – 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.

Charlie Snowshoe – 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.

Robert Alexie – 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.

BREAK 2:55 p.m.

Gwich'in Harvest Study – Board Approval

Ian McDonald reviewed a PowerPoint presentation on the Gwich'in Harvest Study Final Report

Dan Topolniski congratulated Ian on behalf of the Board for producing a very high quality product in a very professional way. Not many people would take on a data analysis project of this scale in their leisure time. It is important for the Board to consider how to continue with the next steps. There will be questions on what kinds of information we produce, what the summary report and final report will look like, how to handle requests for information.

Robert Charlie commented the actions to be proceeded with from this presentation will be discussed further in the in camera session. Hopefully in the next board meeting will be able to approve the final draft of the report. Thank you to Ian for his work in completing this work. This study will give the Gwich'in support in setting the minimum needs level.

Cal Wenghofer – Beaufort Sea Integrated Ocean Management Planning

Cal made a presentation on the Ocean's program for DFO. The plan is similar to a land use plan or management plan, where users come together to identify goals and objectives for an area.

Forest Management Plan – Status Update

Amy Thompson gave an update on the status of the plan. A copy of the most recent version of the plan was distributed. Last year a MOU was signed to say that there was agreement to move forward to finalize the plan, funding has been received for consultation on the plan. There is nothing in the plan that will change what we are currently doing. The plan has not really changed since 2001, but with staff changes, etc., it has bogged down. Board members are asked to review the draft and make comments prior to the consultation. Mike Gravel has commented that he is in support.

Page 5 has roles and responsibilities listed including some for the GRRB.

Another item is monitoring of harvest on Gwich'in lands – there is currently no policy in place for that.

Will make another status report at the next meeting – hopefully will be able to present a motion to approve the final plan.

Melody Nice-Paul commented that there are a number of plans that have not gotten to the stage of approval and implementation. We need to set timelines for moving the process ahead as the plans will assist the Board in their responsibilities.

Draft Dall's Sheep Management Plan – Board Approval

Kristen Callaghan reviewed a PowerPoint on the draft Management plan.

This item will be discussed in the in camera session, to provide Kristen with direction for next steps to follow in getting the approval.

Dan Topolniski asked if there is any sense that there are budget levels available to address the action items in the plan. *Some items have already been taken out of the plan – the various elements can be reviewed as time continues. Probably not everything in the plan will be done, so possibly a clause could be put in to provide for priorities and budgeting. Monitoring is necessary to implement the plan, but other things may not be implemented in the next five years. Right now there may not be enough information available in the monitoring information to make a useful population "calculator".*

Grizzly Bear Management Agreement – Status Update

Kristen Callaghan reviewed a PowerPoint on the Grizzly Bear Management Agreement.

Marsha Branigan commented that ENR has been providing information to the Board on the Grizzly Bear Harvest.

Abe Wilson asked about tags being issued to sports hunters. Marsha commented that right now there are no tags being issued to non-beneficiaries.

Robert Charlie stated that he cannot recall ever issuing any tags. All problem bear tags have been taken from the communities.

A question was asked about what the population of grizzly bears is in the Mackenzie Delta. There will be information given about this tomorrow. The estimate is 82 bears – but there is no estimate for the Delta as a

whole. There is a concern about the number of bears that are causing problems in the Delta, hunting moose, and causing problems for the public.

Robert Charlie commented that the GRRB will be following up with the Grizzly Bear Management Plan as the plan is getting dated.

Meeting adjourned for the day at 4:45 p.m.

Friday, September 12, 2008

13. **Call to Order** at 9:08 a.m. Recognition of Quorum.

14. **Project Updates**

Dall's Sheep, Wolves and Grizzlies in the Northern Richardson Mountains

Kristen Callaghan reviewed a PowerPoint presentation prepared by Catherine Lambert
A copy of the presentation was included in the meeting binder.

John Norbert commented about the wolves and grizzly bears in the Richardsons. Long ago there were trappers out there and a bounty for wolves, now there is no one hunting out there, you don't know how many there are. It's not safe for hunters out there.

That is one reason ENR offers a payment for wolf carcasses.

Peter Ross asked what the population of the Dall Sheep herd is. *Including the Yukon and the Inuvialuit Settlement Region there were about 700 sheep in 2006 – which is slightly declining from earlier years.*

Up the ARR in the mountains there are sheep up there – is there a survey up there? *Not at the moment, it was mentioned in the management plan that studies should be done.*

Robert Charlie commented the Board will be looking at potential research projects - these are things we could potentially look at. We did have staff working out of Kelly Hogan's camp a few years ago.

Peter Ross - What happened in Aklavik with the plan for big game hunting for sheep? *There is some community interest, but nothing has come forward with that. The management plan is going to take into account.*

What is the life cycle of sheep? *Catherine would be better at answering that – probably no more than 10 years.*

Eugene Pascal – There were two sheep that in the Yukon – Yukon government was going to issue tags on it, but they have agreed not to.

Robert Charlie commented There was a lot of concern about them issuing tags while we were creating the management plan.

Peter Ross - What is the cause of the low population? *That is what we are trying to find out, possibly a hard winter, predation or both together. That was the reason for the interviews, it could point at possible answers.*

John Norbert – What about caribou, people used to come from Good Hope to get caribou in that area, don't know whether anyone is getting some in that area any more. Thought maybe something should be done since there is a problem.

Robert Charlie and Kristen Callaghan confirmed there has not been any work in that area, could coordinate with Sahtu RRB on that.

Loche Liver Project 2007/2008

Amy Thompson reviewed a PowerPoint presentation.

Dan Topolniski mentioned that DFO's contribution of \$15,000 should be acknowledged.

James Firth asked as long as the livers look good, it is safe to eat? *Yes Are there other samples from up the river? Will be looking at that with Maureen Evans because she does collect loche as well.*

Melody Nice-Paul asked if there is a date for the final analysis on contamination? *They are in process now.*

Waiting for some people to arrive. Will cover items under New Business.

15. New Business

Robert Charlie mentioned yesterday that he participates in a group of chairs of the co-Management boards. Did not have a formal process, so developed an MOU on cooperation GRRB, Kitikmeot Regional Wild Life Board (they also harvest Blue Nose caribou) Nunavut RRB, Sahtu RRB, Tuktu Nogait Wild Life Management Board, Wild Life Advisory Council NWT, WINESE – it is an agreement to work together to and cooperate together. A copy of the letter is in Tab W of the binder. Would like a motion from the GRRB giving approval for Robert Charlie's participation. Trying to get commitment from GNWT to get funding for development of a management plan for the Blue Nose Caribou herd because those herds are declining and harvests have already been limited. Want to establish this group and hopefully spur the government to provide funding to develop a management plan and harvest. Did have a management plan in the past, but because the herd was in a good situation, did not follow up on it, so need to revive it and follow up. Want to follow a similar format to PCMB. Next meeting for October in Yellowknife. Hoping that Ron and his dept will find some money to start working on a management plan. May not take much work to update what we already have, plug in information that we have. MOU is going to be for 3 years starting in September 2008. If you look at the two page, item 6 – it does not detract from the Land Claim Agreement, it is not a legally binding agreement.

Motion #0908-05 **To approve the participation of the GRRB Board Chair in the co-Management Board Chairs working group as described in the MOU provided in the meeting binder.**

Moved by: Dan Topolniski Seconded by: Johnny Charlie
All in favour: CARRIED

We pay for our participation, but hopefully ENR will fund this to start a management plan.

GTC through Norm Snowshoe wanted our office to investigate a few things such as "Commercial Use" – some people had commented people were selling caribou meat. Melody Nice-Paul invited Brian Crane to give a clearer definition and explain what the intent was in the claim under 12.4.16 and 12.7. A copy of the letter received from Brian Crane is included in the meeting binder.

Needed this opinion because we might need to hold public hearings, and pass a motion to approve the plan prior to advising the GTC to sign off on it. This process may also come up on fish management plans.

16. Agency Updates & Presentations

CWS Inuvik – Joel Ingram

Not available for this meeting due to the election

DFO Inuvik

Larry Dow, Area Director Mike Hecimovich, Acting Area Director, Mike Lange

General Operations Update, Current Issues

We have a new area director – he could not be here because of a prior meeting in Calgary. Wants to come up in October for GRRB. He will be at the February/March meeting.

Talked to Bart Hunt on the Dolly Varden – have not heard about the status. Tried to get a hold of Ron Allen, but was not successful.

With new election coming, the Fisheries Act will die on the order table.

Early November there is a Dolly Varden meeting in Winnipeg, will see about co-management boards attending.

Robert Charlie – Was there any response from Neil McNotch? *Told him his habitat work was not going to happen. Anything in terms of catching fish is not going to happen. In the Rat River work will be catching, look for tags, and release again.*

Dan Topolniski – What will happen with the meeting for Mike? *Will get his schedule and then coordinate with the board.*

Robert Charlie – We definitely need to be at the meeting re the Dolly Varden. *That will be the message.*

Melody Nice-Paul – We were fortunate to have a meeting with Bob Lamb and directors for research last February. One of the commitments received from DFO was that we would inform them of the fisheries priorities for the GSA. It is advantageous for us to know what DFO priorities are so we can coordinate. Board members should consider what our priorities are, so we can coordinate with DFO. Can Larry get back to me from Michele Wheatley or someone else, so we can find out the timing for when they are making decisions on research priorities? *Kevin has that information.*

Amanda Joynt – Creating a Photographic Baseline for Dolly Varden Habitat on the Rat, Big Fish and Vittrekwa Rivers.

Amanda reviewed a PowerPoint presentation.

Amanda has maps of the area. People can look at them and see if there are other areas to be looked at.

Johnny Charlie - Sho Creek is known better as Sheep Creek.

Further downstream on the Rat there was indications of blockage or slides.

Abe Wilson – Below Bear Creek there are slides, water is low all the time.

Will be going up in about 2 weeks. Went about this time last year.

Charlie Snowshoe asked about water levels. *The water looked pretty low.* Wondering if the fish make it up to the fish hole with low water levels for many years now. *That is a really good question. DFO habitat crew will be looking at these pictures and then picking out where they want to go to take measurements.* Reason asking is because no one seems to know why the char declines. In the 50s, even then the water was pretty low.

Wondering if there has been a big change making it so they can't get there to spawn. There are no problems with white fish, lots of Coney, how come all of a sudden the char are dropping but no one knows about it. In the past, people used to fish right along, lot of people at Destruction City, up the Husky River, all of a sudden we have to quit fishing. *There are a lot of people who want to figure that out.*

Mentioned 3 fish holes, one below Aklavik – it is supposed to be damaged. They had a slight earth quake in that area – is that fish hole still good? *Water has dropped in that one.*

Robert Charlie commented everyone has been working on the problem for the past 15 years, still working on it, there is lots of information, but we still haven't got the answer. It's a combination of different things – high harvest level in the past, predators, climate change. Hopefully we will get answer, we are actively working on it.

Kevin Bill – Fisheries Management Biologist, DFO

Research activities and proposed priorities in the GSA

A copy of the priorities for the next 3-5 years was distributed.

There is a meeting in November to discuss the SAR process, COSOEWIC coming up.

The Board can review the priority levels identified by DFO Science, they have a meeting at the end of November, so if there are projects that the GRRB would like done, that either are not listed or have a lower priority, contact Kevin Bill and he can pass on the information.

Dan Topolniski – These are potential only? *Some are funded, some are ongoing, some are just a priority list. Not sure how far along they are on some of the projects.*

Melody Nice-Paul – Do you also collect information on water quality? A number of members have requested information or asked if it had a significant impact in the past. *Amanda Joynt – That is a habitat issue, Neil is collecting some information. Sometimes water temperature is collected, but not always necessarily water quality.*

Jerome Gordon – We were the ones that raised the concern about water. Looked at the research that has been done, there wasn't too much on water quality. Our council thought that the applications should focus on water more, especially with McPherson and Aklavik because we are connected to the water and activities happening upstream may be collected.

Melody Nice-Paul asked has there been a lot of research on habitat along the proposed pipeline? I know our office has done research in the Travaillant Lake area. *Amanda Joynt – Know that MGP group has done a photo survey. Kevin Bill – There has been a lot of work done and published papers. Can get the information to the Board.*

Robert Charlie – Have heard the concern about water quality, impact of the development around the Fort McMurray area.

Jerome Gordon – Will there be a conference like what happened in the Sahtu. When we got the information it was short notice and there wasn't a lot of time.

John Norbert – I was at the meeting in Ft Good Hope, they haven't had any plans yet, but the next meeting will be November in Yellowknife – everyone should plan to go there.

Rat Char Working Group Update

Kevin reviewed a PowerPoint presentation which was distributed at the meeting.

Neil Colin – Commented there is a concern that tagged fish die after they are released.

Kevin Bill – At the working group, they decided not to do any more of that. Will do different methods such as a fish weir to gather fish and count them. This is a concern not just with fish but with other animals.

Robert Alexie – Commented that it is important to find out what is happening with the char now and for the future. The Alaskan government is studying char and herring – possibly could get some of their information.

Kevin Bill – There is a lot of work going on in Dolly Varden as well. One of the things brought up is how many fish from here are caught there and vice versa, they are looking at fish populations to see where they are from. Some of the fish they catch in Alaska are from Canadian rivers.

Charlie Snowshoe – In Alaska they have a problem, they are doing commercial fishing, that is why they have a problem. The States never listen to the concern on the fishing. Along the W Coast of BC they closed commercial fishing, but in Alaska still commercial fishing. Having commercial fishing at mouth of Yukon for our fish – something is wrong.

Do you keep track of char in Tree River close to Coppermine? *Eastern Arctic DFO take care of it. Are they having a decline or problem over there? Could follow up on that.*

That is a big drop in population from 2002 to 2005 – 12,000 population dropped to 3,000. What happened to 9000 fish in three years? That is why I'm asking questions about Tree River. Possibly someone was doing commercial fishing at the Beaufort without our knowledge. Another thing I heard was there are a lot of seals on Herschel Island – heard that from Aklavik, so maybe that is part of the problem.

Peter Ross – Because the Rat River fish holes are small bodies of water, with global warming and climate change, will blockage have impact on char? maybe change the migration route, too, because the Mackenzie River is very low. *Flew back in the mountains and see a lot of erosion going on. All this flowing into the small streams – That is part of what Amanda is working on and other habitat work being done. There have been comments about pools filling in and that could have an impact. You see sandbars and river channels changing, big islands gone – moving down. They could have changed their migration too.*

Rat River Dolly Varden Population Assessment 2008-2009

Kevin Bill reviewed a PowerPoint presentation.

John Norbert – Maybe Palmers Lodge should be checked into. Sometimes they go through 50-70 guests per week. They go fishing, sometimes with light lines, maybe losing lures.

Neil Colin – Have you got information about otters, bears feeding on the char. *There are a few places in the Delta now with otters. Maybe the otters moved down because of no char in the mountains. Don't know about grizzly bear.*

Abe Wilson – On the char, Fish Creek, how many areas do you check? *Mainly the fish holes doing the population stuff. For the habitat stuff go all the way to the head.*

Could there be more than one fish hole? Maybe next time you should go past Fish Creek to Summit Lake, Loon Lake they are moving all over the place. It's not very far from Fish Creek. Abe will point out the areas on the map to Amanda.

Charlie Snowshoe – We've known from way back, we talk about fish, we say trout, then char, now Dolly Varden – are all the names the same fish? *Dolly Varden are char. Not trout.*

When I first saw this fish it was called dog salmon. *The names change.*

Robert Charlie suggested that Gwich'in traditional names be used for fish during presentations so that everyone understands which species is being discussed.

Robert Alexie – What is the population on the trout in the summer? How was the run this summer? *It was steady each day. He said it was a good run this year. The monitors caught all their fish. Someone I was talking to said we should open it up. Think we should hold tight. That was talked about at the last working group meeting. Have to think about the future for the Rat River.*

Charlie Snowshoe – Commented that checking the Rat River would be a good job for local boys. Is really concerned about the Rat River, might be blocked from erosion, slides. *Amanda Joynt – That is going to be done in a couple of weeks.*

Robert Charlie – As Kevin mentioned tag returns were not good enough to monitor population this year, so will be going up to the pools to net fish to determine population. Will be getting a report at the next meeting to determine further action at that time. Whole object is to ensure future generations have access to the fish.

Conservation and Protection

Terry Stein – Fishery Officer

We did 3 patrols on the Rat River voluntary closure. Each time we did see some nets – most around Aklavik, first time 5 nets, 7 nets around Aklavik, September 9 there were 10 nets – 8 around Aklavik, 2 nets further up. Most of the nets set up were not set up where they would get char and most were using larger mesh to hopefully miss char, but some people did get some.

Melody Nice-Paul - What is the procedure? *At Aklavik everyone there knows about the closure. Ian McLeod has spent more time there. If I find people fishing the nets I will ask them to respect the closure, if the nets are unattended, I check to see if they are properly marked and to see they are attended.*

Jerome Gordon – Are all the nets checked for tags? *Ian tells me they are all properly marked. Nets around Aklavik are very well marked now.*

Robert Charlie – One of the things that Kevin had mentioned, due to the lack of consultation in Ft McPherson, did not put up posters about the closure. It is a voluntary closure, depending on the good will of the people to help the char recover.

Melody Nice-Paul – We have had a significant loss in Bay of Fundy salmon, has had a significant impact on the First Nation. We have a counter system, have people count all the fish that come through. Has there ever been any consideration to put in a counter system. We use it pretty commonly on the East Coast, wonder if it would be used here? *Larry Dow – Suggested that to the Working Group and DFO – there are some issues at accuracy, less invasive and a weir.*

GTC Inuvik – Jozef Carnogursky

Gwich'in Tribal Council Update

GTC continues to participate in the drafting of the management plans mentioned yesterday. Also NWT Species At Risk, Yukon Wild Life Act Amendments, NWT Wild Life Act Amendments, Yukon Species At Risk Act. Increasing our presence on the Dempster Highway when there is caribou out on the road – hiring community members to talk to people to ask them to hunt safely.

Continue to work with the RRCs.

Management Plans are a priority for GTC to get them completed in a timely fashion.

Another priority is the implementation of the Land Claims Agreement. Will continue to work on that.

Concerns raised by GTC re the buying and selling of caribou meat; lack of enforcement presence on Dempster Highway when caribou are moving through – we have no enforcement authority, so can only talk to people.

Another issue – water quality from oil sands up river. GTC about 5 years ago under N Contaminants did sampling. Are trying to get water samples and sediments.

Robert Alexie – Asked if there was anyone to report on the sampling of water and water quality. They should be here doing a presentation. They have been sampling water all summer on the Peel ARR and Mackenzie.

Tried to set up a couple of meetings DIAND, there were scheduling problems. Will try to have it here this month for the Peel.

Water Survey has been here.

Robert Charlie – Will follow up with them, they have a check station at Scraper Hill. Know there has been work done on the Peel River Watershed.

Robert Charlie – Mentioned the presence on the Dempster Highway – what is the reception from hunters?

Have not had any problems, last couple of weeks, there haven't been that many.

Johnny Charlie – August 18/19 – saw trucks up there, there were about 100 caribou in the area. There should be a check station so there is backup about the number of caribou being shot.

Melody Nice-Paul - As soon as we heard the caribou were coming through, went to ENR, they were in middle of setting up new offices, insisted they get someone up around there right away. Was told they were sending enforcement officers that day – it was about the 8th of August. They were killing caribou the weekend before that at Midway Lake. In the past there had been some resources available to hire people from McPherson.

Robert Charlie – Everything happened quickly this year.

Jozef Carnogursky – As soon as the caribou come, get the trailer up there to count the caribou that are caught.

Robert Charlie – Maybe need to be more proactive and get ready ahead of time.

LUNCH BREAK

ENR Inuvik – Ron Morrison & Marsha Branigan

Research activities and proposed priorities in the GSA

Proposed activities and research priorities in the GSA

Marsha Branigan reviewed a PowerPoint presentation on and distributed several more detailed supporting documents.

Peter Ross – 11% reindeer shown in one of the slides – do they mix in with the herd, cross breed?

That slide was about the Tuk Peninsula, Lloyd Binder had moved the herd from the Tuk Peninsula, but they have moved back there for calving. Don't know about crossbreeding – reindeer rut and calve about a month earlier, so there are some indications there would be less interbreeding. We are working on genetics work and have more samples to look at it to see if there has been interbreeding. It is difficult because they are genetically quite similar.

Melody Nice-Paul – Is there another option to collaring caribou?

Not right now. Looking at satellite imagery, but don't know if that will be accurate enough. The collars are the only way to do it to get a good estimate on population. Probably looking at between 80 and 100 collars on all 3 herds. Have to get enough out there on both males and females to do it. It is also important to do the studies the same way as before, so that we can compare the results from year to year.

Kristen Callaghan – What information do you get from collars?

We put so many out to get the photo census done. They did an analysis on 60 for Blue Nose West and 30 for the other herds. Have to have both males and females so we count both part of the herds. You have to be able to find both groups. You also use them for the other studies – productivity, recruitment. We use them to find the animals for all surveys, and also use them to monitor movements and use of habitats for selection of areas they use or avoid.

Robert Alexie – Re polar bears, there was some spotted in the Yukon on the Dempster Highway this year – did you hear about it? Near Engineer Campground. Spoke to a tourist who saw one. Spoke to locals who saw it at the same place. *Did not hear about that.*

Jozef Carnogursky – Re the Grizzly bears and polar bears. The hybrid that was captured, in the last couple of years, there is a really white or blond bear back behind Aklavik. Has any sample been taken from that?

I'm not aware of anybody mentioning a particularly white bear. In the program before, we have caught bears that were pretty blond before, and nothing was ever mentioned before. We have photos from YaYa taken by Denny Lennie that looked like a hybrid, so maybe there are more of them out there, but we don't have definitive proof.

Neil Colin – What about the cougar – don't know where it was seen but have you heard about it?

First time I heard was in 98 or 97, Jacob Archie said that there was one stealing from his trap line. A guy from Gwich'in Helicopters who said he saw one near Chuk Park with long tail. They come from BC or Southern Yukon.

Typically they follow white tailed deer, because the hunt the deer. If they are here, don't know what would attract them. We've heard incidental stuff about cougars for a while.

Robert Alexie – How would they take the weather? *Maybe that would keep them away.*

Robert Charlie – Possibly with climate change the range may be changing and moving north. *We document this kind of stuff, so call us if you see anything unusual.*

Charlie Snowshoe – Ed Nichol when he first came at his fish camp, he got up early in the morning and heard a noise and there were two mountain lions playing – with long tails. People are saying, elders are saying seismic lines, weather and everything is drawing them up. Pelly Crossing sees deer in that area, willows and plants are growing up further.

Operations and Update

Blue Nose West Working Group Update

Ron Morrison

Staffing – Really under-resourced. At one point only had 1 Wild Life Officer for the region. Trying to keep up with all the issues, especially moving into harvest season has been difficult.

Had Kevin Allen working as a casual, has now been a direct appt to RO2, have one vacant position in Inuvik should be going out to staffing. RO2 position in Ft McPherson here is still vacant – Glen is working on a casual basis until it is filled. Jenny Andre is working at Tsiigehtchic doing a good job. Also have a check station at Mile 222, Sahtu is also short on staff and they help cover that position.

Caribou came earlier, so were caught, assumed there would be a closure. Daryl English has been up there working, Joseph too.

Compliance perspective – have been short handed. Always one or two that don't listen, but generally there has been a lot of compliance with voluntary and legislated things.

Wild Life Management – Staffing – Brian Milosevic and Rose Adams (from Ft Chip – has since resigned due to personal reasons). RO1 here, RO2 here, RO2 Inuvik, Wild Life Tech.

Johnny Charlie – What happened to cabin assessment?

Bear fencing program still in place. Will come out and make sure the cabin and area are bear safe, will come out and install an electric bear fence. Installed 17 in the Delta, one in Tsiigehtchic, one here. Very successful, just did a patrol, met with cabin owners who were against fences, but cabin owners were so happy because they can tell they do work. If we eventually get those fences in place, we should see less nuisance bear kills. No charge to the cabin owner. If someone is interested in a bear fence no problem – funded through Conoco Phillips and ENR. Have installed fences at Sandy Point, so no problem where it is. Do that when we are doing something else. The process is an application form, then an officer goes out to the cabin, then once you pass the assessment, they will install the fence.

Daryl English – Conservation Education Officer

Have been at Midway Lake and Dempster Highway. Will be taking students on the land.

Over the last 10 years have worked with elders, done trapper training, hunter education on the Dempster Highway. Have been working with Jozef and Kristen on initiatives on the Dempster Highway. Work with elders,

try to incorporate traditional knowledge, safety. In the last 10 years, have not had a large budget. Work through the schools – 3rd party funding – they provide funding, we provide personnel. Have worked on posters, etc with Marsha Branigan. Would like to work to improve programs.

Talked with Melody Nice-Paul re GRRB – would like to see more funding for Conservation Education initiatives. Would like two camps per year, trapping training, Sunny Lake fires and how it affects/benefits trapping. Eco-camp, wild life issues. Costs money, in the last few years, were only getting a month's notice, so now request at least 2 month's notice.

Only Conservation Education officer in the NWT, but other areas are looking at it. Possibly setting up a department again. They look at what is done up here and want to duplicate what we do.

Charlie Snowshoe – Have been hearing about people getting money to take young people out. Just came back from Fort Good Hope, talking about getting money to go out on the land, mentioned \$10,000 – is there anyone in this area getting that kind of money for taking people out? *Not here – there is a Take a Kid Trapping, there is land skills programs, but typically those programs in total don't run more than \$5-7,000. Usually they will have a cook, maybe an elder that gets paid. This summer Julie Andre was applying through her business. Most times do work through the schools. First time it was done as a business.*

He put a proposal in to YK and got it – something like this has to be brought up in the public, because someone else may be interested in the same thing. *Ron will talk about it later.*

Melody Nice-Paul – Comment for Board members, Daryl mentioned camps. Mike Gravel & I put in an application to IPY for multi-year camps, but it was refused. A number have heard or seen on APTN, that Inuvialuit have a program for Outward Bound, primarily supported by Outward Bound Canada, but it does take a lot of support and coordination and resources pooled from other areas. It is something we can take an interest in in the future.

Robert Charlie - Look forward to working more with you in the future.

Sue McKenzie – Update on the GLUPB Activities

Will be coming out to the RRCs and communities for consultations.

Just had a meeting earlier this week, looking at some proposed changes to the land use plan. The Gwich'in Settlement Area is the only area in the NWT that has an approved Land Use Plan. It was approved in 2003. We have to review every 5 years. Charlie Snowshoe is Vice Chair, Bob Simpson, Fanny Greenland are on the Board Dillon Spencer & Sue McKenzie staff.

Proposed changes came from rounds of community visits most recently in March and April. Doing the technical work on the information collected. Next step is to make formal contact with government groups and industry.

Other things that the Board will be looking at: Sahtu put together an Atlas. The planning board submitted an application for funding and did receive it. Will be working with GRRB, GSCI and GTC for an atlas. Also take an interest in youth education, so put together a teacher resource package – will be touching base with the teachers again this year. Also contributed money towards a project that Mindy Willett and Tessa McIntosh did – putting together children's story books – two for the Gwich'in Settlement Area – one by Julie Ann Andre and one by Tom McLeod. Once they have all the stories for the Territories, will be doing a teaching resource. Books are available at local stores. Were reviewed.

Is there a date for the draft plan? *Will be coming to you with specific questions. Can put conditions to restrict development on critical habitats.*

Will you be doing with the RRCs as well? *Have already met with the RRCs about 3-4 times. Will be meeting with them again.*

17. Meeting Wrap-Up

Thank you to everyone that has attended for the past couple of days - RRC Coordinators, Staff, people behind the scenes cooking the meals Louisa Kay, Bella Greenland, Dorothy Alexie. There has been a lot of good discussion. Thank you for the input that provides us with direction for priorities on research. Encourage the RRCs if they have any priorities to bring them to our attention because will be going through that exercise in the meeting in February.

Melody Nice-Paul Will be identifying our list of priorities as we go along over the next few months. Will keep coordinating our lists until we get it right.

BREAK

18. In Camera Session

Motion #0908-06

To go In Camera.

Moved by: Johnny Charlie
All in favour: CARRIED

Seconded by: Robert Alexie

Motion #0908-07

To end In Camera session.

Moved by: James Firth
All in Favour: CARRIED

Seconded by: Johnny Charlie

19. Next Meeting Date and Location

Inuvik suggested for Research Allocation meeting - first or second week of February.

Next fall meeting for Tsiigehtchic.

Conference call – there will be one to look at research proposals.

20. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.