

YUKON FISH AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING
October 19 to 21, 2021
MINUTES
Zoom Video Conference

DAY 1: Tuesday, October 19, 2021 – Regular Meeting

PRESENT: Carl Sidney (Chair), Randy Taylor (Vice-Chair), Cheyenne Bradley, John Burdek, Michelle Dawson-Beattie (Zoom), Sebastian Jones, Dawn Kisoun, Franklin Patterson Jr. (Zoom), Ken Taylor, Blanche Warrington (Zoom),

REGRETS: Dennis Dickson, Danny Cresswell,

STAFF: Graham Van Tighem, Diane Sheldon, Steve Hossack

SUPPORT: Colleen Henry/Sharon Kerr (Minute Takers)

IN ATTENDANCE: Marc Cattet, David Dickson, Dennis Zimmermann, Meghan Larivee, Melina Hougen, Justin Hooper (Laberge RRC), Deana Lemke (PCMB), Jen Smith (Wildlife Management Advisory Council), Cassandra Wheeler (Alsek RRC), Karlie Knight (Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in)

WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER

Carl Sidney welcomed everyone to the meeting. He confirmed quorum and said the opening prayer.

ADMIN AND FINANCES (TAB 01)

A. AGENDA REVIEW— C. Sidney

Carl Sidney reviewed the agenda. There were no changes or additions.

Motion – 2021-08: That the Board accept the October 19 to 21, 2021 agenda as presented.

Moved by: Ken Taylor

Seconded by: Dawn Kisoun

Passed by: Consensus

B. EXECUTIVE REPORT (TAB 02) — G. Van Tighem

Graham Van Tighem reviewed the Executive report provided in meeting kits.

Comments/Discussion:

- Jim Bishop Report – Graham Van Tighem distributed the Jim Bishop report and Dave Joe's analysis. Dave agreed with the Bishop report. Graham expanded on the main points and provided clarification.

- Beaver River and ATAC Road letter — The Board wrote the letter, but it hasn't been sent yet. NNDFN has taken Yukon government to court and the process stopped. Yukon Land Use Planning Council wrote an analysis on the Beaver River sub-regional planning that was in violation of the final agreements and chapter 11. The Board needs to send the letter.
- Elk Plan — Government is reviewing the elk plan. Government provided the Board with an elk plan charter which is basically a detailed work plan/agreement. The Board will review it together to determine time commitments and specific items to be engaged in. This is more than just a review; it is going to result in a new plan.

Action Item – Graham will finalize and send the Beaver River and ATAC Road letter.

FINANCIAL UPDATE AND AUDIT (TAB 03) – D. Sheldon, M. McKay, J. Therriault

AUDIT REPORT

Janna Therriault reviewed the audit report provided in the meeting kits. Graham Van Tighem thanked Diane Sheldon for all her hard work preparing the audit.

Motion – 2021-09: That the Board accept the financial audit as presented.

Moved by: John Burdek

Seconded by: Ken Taylor

Passed by: Consensus

Comments/Questions:

- Q) If the government is late making a payment to the Board, do they have to pay interest to the Board?
 - A) The financial working group is established and can address that issue.

VARIANCE REPORT UPDATE

Diane Sheldon reviewed the variance report to September 30, 2021, provided in meeting kits.

Comments/Discussion

- Why are the working groups going overbudget? Are they more active than usual?
 - A Executive Committee has done more work than normal. Members of Executive are from out of Whitehorse. Working groups are difficult to budget and it will vary.
- Does the remote work make a difference? CAST is a big working group, and it is active. The habitat working group also has a lot of issues.
 - A. We used to have five meetings a year. Now we have five meetings plus interim monthly meetings via Zoom and we're managing to stay under budget. It is an affordable and effective way to meet if we continue virtually.

Motion – 2021-10: That the Board accept the variance report as presented.

Moved by: Randy Taylor

Seconded by: Sebastian Jones

Passed by: Consensus

CORRESPONDENCE REVIEW TAB (4) – G. Van Tighem

Graham Van Tighem reviewed correspondence to and from the Board. The correspondence and a correspondence list were provided in the meeting kits.

Comments/Questions:

- Letter #4, Indigenous knowledge to the federal bear management plan — They are asking how the Board how to do this at a national level. The Board and other partners will provide a response. They are looking at workshops which should work well.
- Letter #7, CAST — Dennis Zimmermann’s contract is to the end of the fiscal year. It may be renewed. Still lots of work to do on that file.
- Letter #10, First Nation hunting concerns in Kaska asserted traditional territory — Fish and Game stated they were pleased that the government publicly stated that they didn’t have the legal right to close their hunting area and that the law of general application would apply. The Board met with the Kaska Chief once a year and a half ago as a follow up to the Yukon Forum, and to discuss shared priorities, concerns, and issues. Graham provided an overview of the issues the Kaska relayed to us.
- Letter #11 & 12 Yukon *Wildlife Act* — The Board did receive a letter from the Minister. There were no real commitments. The letter discusses commitments to successor resource legislation. It is up to First Nations to push this issue at the Yukon Forum. The Board did get a letter of support from the Carcross/Tagish First Nation. Kluane First Nation committed to sending the letter as well. Graham will send reminders. The Board can attend CYFN Leadership and encourage First Nations to get on board. They Board will work throughout the year to gain support from CYFN Leadership and to get a resolution at the CYFN GA. The Board can also invite the minister out onto the field to give him a better understanding of why fish and wildlife management is so important. The Board can also invite him to an on-the-land meeting in 2022.
- Letter 18, Fortymile caribou bag limit — There have been no coalition meetings since the border has been closed and because of the perception of population decline. Government of Alaska has taken over and switched to a completely different management regime. The Board should request an update from Mike Suiter. Graham provided a brief overview. We wrote a letter to the Alaska Fish and Game Department to call for a meeting. Graham will follow up with Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in, the Dawson RRC, and Yukon government.
- Letter #3, Management Board Transfer Agreement — The last paragraph is incorrect. It suggests that the Board receives funding for only the activities it agrees on with the minister. Yukon government transfers UFA Implementation funding to appropriate bodies under the UFA. The Finance Working Group is targeting this exact topic with the aim of presenting to the Minister and Deputy Minister. The includes our working group members, the Yukon Land Use Planning Council, the Heritage Resources Board, and the Laberge RRC, and a few others who have similar issues. Board members discussed education of government employees, the UFA, and documentation of working to maintain corporate knowledge. This will be further discussed during the Financial Working Group update later on the agenda.

June YFWMB MINUTES (TAB 05) – D. Sheldon

Diane Sheldon reviewed the June minutes provided in the meeting kits.

Motion – 2021-11: That the Board accept the June meeting minutes as amended.

Moved by: Sebastian Jones

Seconded by: John Burdek

Passed by: Consensus

Comments/Questions:

- Corrections: Michelle’s name should be corrected. The Tuesday, June 8, 2021, should be corrected.
- Page 4, last bullet point — Q) “Elk are not really an issue...” Was there any discussion? CAFN would like tags. They were popular. A) That was an update from CAFN. There was a discussion about the approach to bison that related to the approach to elk. This comment was directly from a CAFN Staff member, however it was not well expanded in the minutes.

OPERATING PROCEDURES – ADMIN POLICY UPDATE – G. Van Tighem

Graham Van Tighem provided an overview of the Board’s operating procedures and the administrative policies. He reviewed the *Admin Policy Review Brief Final* provided in meeting kits.

Graham proposed removing Section 4.6.3(C) under “Resignation from Employment” of the Admin Policy. The admin policy also refers to a specific amount for honoraria for board members to attend board meetings. Graham suggested rewriting it to say that members would receive honoraria each day of board meetings to avoid being out of line with procedures and/or policies.

The Salmon Sub-committee is currently working on their policies, and they want to work with the Board. This will be further discussed.

There is a request for travel support in and out of the territory. Currently, the operating procedures don’t reflect language to support that request. The Board will discuss this during Members Time.

Motion – 2021-12: That the Board agree to remove section 4.6.3(C) of the Admin Policy.

Moved by: Sebastian Jones

Seconded by: John Burdek

Passed by: Consensus

Comments/Questions:

- This should go back to the Personnel Committee meeting and then return to the board at the next meeting.

- How do the staff feel about the change? The staff will be asked individually.
- There was a request to revisit the in-camera procedures and define these in our Operating Procedures better.
- The Board will review capping wage increments following evaluations. Right now, there is no cap.
- Statutory holidays need to be reviewed, there are two new stats that are not in the Admin Policies.

DIRECTOR OF FISH AND WILDLIFE UPDATE – M. Cattet

There was a roundtable of introductions. Marc Cattet provided a high-level update on program areas. He reviewed the *Director Fish and Wildlife Update* PowerPoint presentation provided in meeting kits.

Comments/Questions:

- Aboriginal versus Indigenous, First Nation, or Inuit — We don't use the word "aboriginal". Use Indigenous, First nation, or Inuit instead.
- Bears, wolves, predator surveys — Bear surveys are being done in Beaver River. There is a carnivore program that does surveys on wolves and bears. Given the entire land area in Yukon, it takes so long to cover and there is no way to get an accurate population estimate for the entire year. A combination of factors determines where the surveys will be done, including community interest.
- Southern Lakes — What is the status of the wolve survey? That survey came to a halt. The RFC asked for it to stop. It was not to try to count wolves. The focus shifted to looking at kill sites and collect tissues to determine if they were moose or caribou.
- There was another survey on the interaction between caribou and people (snowmobilers). YG gathered data and it was sent to YukonU. YG can't analyze data that includes humans due to privacy issues. It is at YukonU, but nothing has been published yet.
- Regional moose surveys —There are six regions. The surveys in communities vary year by year. This year is Southern Lakes, TTC traditional territory, and Dawson. The survey location depends on community requests and concerns. For instance, a community may have local or traditional knowledge that says the population is lower than it used to be. The moose survey schedule is over a 10-year interval. We talk to First Nations. The information exchange varies depending on the relationships with First Nations. We have data from non-residents and licensed residents.
- Core principles of management
 - Q) There is a struggle to balance the core principles of naturally self-sustaining populations that have a n
 - Natural range of variation to managing human activity as a primary tool, when the management of the human activity comes in after the population is below the natural self-sustaining level or is not within a natural range of variation. One example is the Southern Lakes moose which, historically, were quite abundant in the Yukon. In that case, does the Department ever consider making allowances

for something like a moose recovery program which would not just be about managing human activity as far as harvest and so forth?

- A) The bottom line is these are guiding principles. It is a case-by-case basis. Predator control is going to happen. It must be a decision made at the community level and it must be something that the community carries out.
- Q) Habitat enhancement is also an option. A) It's a possibility. There are agencies across North America that have made the decision to manage animals and not the people. Saskatchewan is an example. By putting food out on the landscape, they disconnected deer from all the natural processes that normally regulate the population and they are now paying the price. Those are not the principles we're operating by. We must sit down and determine the most effective ways in terms of recovery and sometimes it does include managing animals.
- A) The branch is having a team meeting and they are discussing community-based wolf harvest.
- Q) Do you think management of humans is strictly harvest management, or is it related to how humans are using the land? What tools do you have for land use management? A) We have limited tools. We have plans that we try to develop with communities, but we have other departments, like EMR, that have more pull than we have. The only tools are recommendations to other departments or YESAB. It is extremely frustrating.
- Marc wants to get the principles signed off within government so that change can begin. Changes within government are slow.
- Was there increased harvest due to COVID — We heard about increased harvesting due to COVID. Does the data indicate an uptake in harvest? It started with bear, then moved to bison and moose. Is anyone raising the alarm?
- A) There has been anecdotal information. The data reports on harvest covered caribou, moose, and bison. There weren't any concerns. All the results will be in mid-December but it looks like there was no real increase in harvest.
- Harvest data — Graham requested that Catherine attend the December Board meeting to present data she presented to the Yukon Ourfitters.
- Sheep survey — Catherine won't be reporting any data until the second survey results are in. The second survey goes out the beginning of November. The data will come back in the spring.
- Angling working group — There will be a meeting on Friday. The angling working group's new name is CAST which stands for Conservation Angling Stewardship Team.
- Moose survey in Dawson — There is a request for local observers in each area. COVID concerns are an issue. YG can't ask people from communities if they are vaccinated. They can recommend observers are fully vaccinated. The branch needs to figure out how many staff consider the risk low enough to continue with surveys.
- Grizzly bear encounter — Marc didn't have any additional information besides what was reported in the news.
- Harvest reporting — Is there any appetite for Yukon government to record harvest effort, not just harvest?
- A) Yes. Over the last few years, there has been an increasing focus on human dimensions. There was a recent bison survey that looks at human dimensions including efforts individuals make to harvest.

- How are surveys used in decision making processes? A) The surveys are new. We don't know how it will play out. Decision making happens at a different level.
 - How do you use traditional knowledge and laws in decisions? A) This requires cooperative work. There is a recognition for traditional knowledge, local knowledge, and scientific knowledge. The challenge is to look at it in a holistic way. There is a willingness in the branch to work toward integrating these different sources of knowledge in a way that does not place one source over another. We must work together to figure it out.
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DAWSON REGIONAL LAND USE PLAN – S. Jones, C. Sidney, G. Van Tighem

Graham Van Tighem provided a brief introduction. Sebastian Jones assembled information for the Board to review. The documents included the Dawson LMU analysis and recommendations, a draft plan for public release June 9, 2021, a briefing note for the Board, and a notice for community conversations for October 2021, were included in meeting kits. Sebastian reviewed the highlights from the briefing note.

The commission is holding a community meeting on October 19, 2021, from 12:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Yukon Inn.

If the Board develops a submission, it will be sent to Board members in advance for review and comment. Graham provided an overview of the draft analysis provided in meeting kits. He proposed that the Board provide general submissions plus specific items that represent the Board's vision.

Comments/Questions:

- Q) Is the briefing from the conservation society? Is the Board providing comments on the plan? A) Sebastian works for the conservation society, but the briefing note is purely for the Board.
 - Carl Sidney and Sebastian Jones provided an overview of the cumulative effects framework workshop that they attended. They discussed moose, caribou, salmon, water, economic development, and economic values with respect to a risk management plan. The framework has not been completed yet. There is still a lot of work to be done.
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MEMBERS TIME — IN CAMERA

The discussion was in camera. No minutes were recorded.

DAY 2: Wednesday, October 20, 2021 – Regular Meeting

PRESENT:	Carl Sidney (Chair), Randy Taylor (Vice-Chair), Cheyenne Bradley, John Burdek, Michelle Dawson-Beattie (Zoom), Sebastian Jones, Dawn Kisoun, Franklin Patterson Jr. (Zoom), Ken Taylor, Blanche Warrington (Zoom),
REGRETS:	Dennis Dickson, Danny Cresswell,
STAFF:	Graham Van Tighem, Diane Sheldon, Steve Hossack
SUPPORT:	Colleen Henry/Sharon Kerr (Minute Takers)
IN ATTENDANCE:	Marc Cattet, David Dickson, Dennis Zimmermann, Meghan Larivee, Melina Hougen, Justin Hooper (Laberge RRC), Deana Lemke (PCMB), Jen Smith (Wildlife Management Advisory Council), Cassandra Wheeler (Alosek RRC), Karlie Knight (Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in)

THINHORN SHEEP MANAGEMENT UPDATE – M. Larivee, M. Cattet

Meghan Larivee introduced herself and provided a brief background. She reviewed a PowerPoint presentation that covered the following topics: sheep management program; status inventory knowledge; development of sheep management units in GMZ 5 and 7; harvest rates; overview of PHA distribution and permits; radio collaring project update; herd concerns; 2022-23 aspirations. She agreed to provide the presentation to Steve Hossack for meeting kits.

Comments/Questions:

- Q) What percentage of rams are legal every year? How do you stop harvest at four percent? A) You must manage in the likelihood you will go above the four percent based on population trends over time. We use the best knowledge we have for the population dynamics and the trajectory of that population. If the harvest rates stay high over time, that's a flag. There are other indicators such as the number of eight-year-old sheep versus older sheep. Additional reference is included in the presentation.
- Q) As you close accessible areas and with the social media advantage, you are setting yourself up for the potential of every legal sheep being harvested. Why not permit all accessible areas and encourage harvest in inaccessible areas? A) That is up for a bigger discussion. Meghan will do some analysis to get answers and will address this in her next talk and present her findings to the Board.
- C) Areas that are on permit right now have adaptive management practices which allow us to move more quickly. It doesn't always address areas outside of that. A discussion about a broader harvest management strategy in the territory is necessary.
- Q) Do you have permit numbers, relative success rates, and trends? A) The department has sent out hunter effort surveys for the permit areas. They can estimate the number of sheep seals purchased and the amount of harvest and make some correlation. Katherine has that data.

- Q) If there are discrepancies in the sheep management units, will you verify and make changes? A) It is important to look at the local knowledge and see what was missed in the first attempt at delineation and she plans to review that.
- Q) Do you consider accessibility of game management subzones? A) Meghan is looking at creating an index of accessibility which will help determine how to distribute permits. It will be helpful to have folks who know those areas contribute to that conversation on how to define accessibility.
- C) This is a lot of information to absorb. The board policy is to provide meeting kits to board members a week before the board meeting. Over the past year, presentations have not been provided and members are unable to absorb the material and ask questions.
- A) Marc acknowledged the board member's request and will make that change in his department.

PCMB UPDATE RE: TK AND CONSERVATION PLAN UPDATES – D. Lemke

Graham Van Tighem introduced Deana Lemke, Executive Director of the Porcupine Caribou Management Board. Deana reviewed the *Porcupine Caribou Management Board: Overview and Update* PowerPoint presentation included in meeting kits. Topics included: PCMB mandate and structure; key objectives of the PCMB; MOU between PCMB and YFWMB on regulation change proposals; harvest management plan and strategy; annual harvest meeting; and implementation plan for the harvest management plan and reporting.

Mike provided an update on: The range of the Porcupine caribou herd; population; calf birth rate and survival; adult female survival; population model; research and examples; and next steps. The published research papers can be provided to the Board if members are interested.

Jennifer Smith provided an update on the Traditional Knowledge data mobilization project and the conservation plan. She reviewed a PowerPoint presentation on the traditional knowledge data mobilization project and how it feeds into the Porcupine caribou conservation plan development. Jennifer provided a copy of the presentation for meeting kits.

Comments/Discussion:

- Annual Gathering — The PCMB works closely with NWT and the annual gathering alternates between Dawson and Inuvik. This year's will be held virtually.
- Predator Management/Harvest Incentives — Decision making on management programs are left up to the parties. Predation is not considered in the harvest management plan. Predation does affect the population, and the PCMB supports a party's choice to have an incentive for hunters or trappers to try to manage a population, but the PCBM doesn't make recommendations. The PCMB participates in discussions on grizzly bear management or wolf management but doesn't take a hard position on managing predators.
- International Agreement and 10-02 Lands — Has there been any equivalent to setting up an Alaskan equivalent of the PCMB? The international board was established a year after the PCBM. The PCMB sits on the international board long with the governments of Canada and the US and community representatives. There have been discussions about

setting up a board like the PCMB in Alaska, but there is a different landscape. They don't have self-government agreements and the relationship between subsistent users and the government is a barrier. There is no collaboration like there is in Canada.

- Calf weights are monitored with Fortymile herd, but not the Porcupine herd because the Fortymile is more intensively managed. The Porcupine herd is too large and too remote. They do capture animals when they are nine months old, and they do weigh them. With the Fortymile caribou they also monitor parturition rates of three-year-old caribou.
- Birth survival — Will you develop a trend to see how it correlates with the weather, climate change, and food?
- A) Don Russell has done a lot of work with this over the years. A report on the 10-02 lands was completed on behalf of the federal government, Yukon government, and NWT. We need to understand the relationship between the environment, the herd, and calves, to understand the impacts to the herd and how it will change in various climate scenarios.
- Do you gather information on wolves, bears, and harvest? A) The harvest management plan outlines actions communities and parties agree to. They try to work with communities to get harvest data. It varies yearly. They get some information from Alaska, but they only have a coarse estimate.

Deana would like to have a further discussion with Graham and Steve about public engagement and feedback and the kiosk that Jen mentioned.

YFWMB CALENDAR UPDATE – S. Hossack

Steve Hossack provided an update on the calendar process including the photo submissions, calendar design, survey selection, and bottom bar topics and partners. The Board has four bottom bar topics which highlight the new website, the wetland policy, bison management principles, and late season bear awareness. Board members were asked to provide feedback on bottom bars. The deadline for completion for the bottom bars is October 22.

Comments/Discussion:

- Members commented on tearing when hanging the calendars.
- There have been some issues with proofing. Dark black colours tend to misprint. The working group has been very careful selecting photos that aren't too dark.
- The October bottom bar features the wetland policy which has been a controversial topic. We should be careful about what we will put in. It will be more of a PSA and not an endorsement.
- One suggestion was to promote the Board activities instead of the wetland policy or bears. One example would be the Board's efforts to reach out to RRCs and First Nations.
- July — Have animal facts like moose calving seasons and education items for the public. The Board also uses social media for information pieces. The link could be included on the bottom.

Steven Hossack will email bottom bar revisions to the Board for review.

FISH AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PLANNING UPDATE (Bison - Elk) — G. Van Tighem

Graham Van Tighem provided an update on the elk management plan, the elk conflict harvest, and the Board mandate for involvement. The *Management Plan for Elk in the Yukon* document was provided in meeting kits. It is a good time redo the plan and to build a plan that commits the partners to staying within the guidelines, goals, and objectives. This is more of a plan rewrite, not a review.

Graham Van Tighem and John Burdek provided an update on the Aishihik bison plan review. Graham encouraged board members to review the plan and provide feedback. Graham provided an overview of harvest management principles as part of the plan and the intention of sharing these through the communication working group. The next bison meeting is October 26. The latest version of the plan and the interim Bison harvest guidelines were included in meeting kits.

Comments/Discussion:

- Has there been any discussion about making the elk a subsistence species? There is BC case law that speaks to an established population becoming a subsistence species after 50 years. The herd was introduced in Yukon in 1951.
- Bison issues are mostly related to heavy concentration of hunters in a small area. Trappers, traplines, trail usage, and traditional hunting may not be considered. Those are all large issues that were overlooked.
- Did the Board raise concerns about the plan? At each meeting, concerns were discussed but they weren't addressed – impacts of bison hunters on the land and native species.
- Government often addresses management plans but there is not enough follow through.
- We need to start doing the hunter effort surveys to focus on addressing community issues.

YUKON FORUM FISH AND WILDLIFE UPDATE — C. Sidney, R. Taylor, G. Van Tighem

Carl Sidney discussed the Yukon Forum Fish and Wildlife update. The focus now seems to be on the Yukon government. The working group includes Lawrence Joe, Dan Lindsay, Lindsay Staples, Kiri Staples, Brandi Mayes, and Emmie Fairclough. The workshop will give direction on responsibilities and decision-making. The workshop was scheduled for December 2 and 3, 2021. Because of COVID rules, the workshop may be postponed. Zoom is not an option. This must be an in-person meeting.

Randy Taylor provided additional information on the steering committee and the focus which is now on the roles of federal government, First Nation government, RRCs, and the Board.

Graham Van Tighem said that signatories are being brought forward into the conversation about overlapping, complementary or competing mandates for managing fish and wildlife in the Yukon and essentially, we will finally sort out our Roles and Responsibilities.

The fish and wildlife backgrounder, a facilitators agenda, and the fishing and wildlife working group draft agenda were included in meeting kits.

FINANCIAL WORKING GROUP UPDATE – G. Van Tighem, D. Sheldon

Graham Van Tighem provided an overview of the transfer payment funding agreement (TPFA) issues. Following the June board meeting, Graham had informal conversations with other UFA boards. It was agreed to have a strategic response to issues with the budget and work plan.

The 2021 TPFA email, a letter to Carl Sidney from Minister Clarke, a May 17, 2021, letter from Dave Joe on the TPFA, a letter from Tim Gerberding, and a Board letter to Kathleen Zimmer on the TPFA were included in meeting kits.

Comments/Discussion:

- From now on, the Board will deal with the minister or deputy minister, but not the bureaucrats.
 - The working group needs to meet. Graham will coordinate.
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MEMBERS TIME — IN CAMERA

Minutes were not recorded.

DAY 3: Thursday, October 21, 2021 – Regular Meeting

PRESENT: Carl Sidney (Chair), Randy Taylor (Vice-Chair), Cheyenne Bradley, Michelle Dawson-Beattie, John Burdek, Sebastian Jones, Dawn Kisoun, Franklin Patterson Jr. (Zoom), Ken Taylor, Blanche Warrington (Zoom),

REGRETS: Dennis Dickson, Danny Cresswell,

STAFF: Graham Van Tighem, Diane Sheldon, Steve Hossack

SUPPORT: Sharon Kerr (Minute Taker)

IN ATTENDANCE: Marc Cattet, David Dickson, Dennis Zimmermann, Justin Hooper (Laberge RRC), Cassandra Wheeler (Alsek RRC), Karlie Knight (Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in), Elizabeth MacDonald (YSSC)

YUKON FISH AND WILDLIFE ENHANCEMENT TRUST

Refer to the Enhancement Trust minutes.

YSSC UPDATE – E. MacDonald

Elizabeth MacDonald provided an update on salmon populations, fishing closures, and YSSC projects and activities. She also provided an update on the financial administration, the executive secretary position, the new anti-harassment policy, and her new position at CYFN which starts on November 1. Carmen will cover the executive director position in the interim. The executive director position has been posted online and in newspapers.

The YSSC presentation was not included in meeting kits.

Comments/Discussion:

- Selkirk provides daily sonar updates and uses the sonar to manage their fishing.
- In Alaska, the commercial fishery was shut down all season and the subsistence fishery were shut down in the coastal area for the first time. Alaska state law has strict thresholds to meet before they allow any fishery to open. Alaska did a good job of enforcement on the river.
- The ocean fisheries are managed by NOAA or ADF&G in the state waters. They were held to a lower bycatch limit. They still proceeded. Elizabeth discussed the fishery and genetic testing in the Bearing Sea-Aleutian Islands and the impact to Yukon River salmon. Alaska asked for those fisheries to be closed. Alaskans testified to ask for the bycatch to be zero. The subcommittee made a similar statement. Serena Fitka of the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association is in Washington to discuss this with Senators. Elizabeth expects to see new management in most fisheries and stricter measures.

- A lot of people for Alaska subsistence fisheries are posting pictures of salmon. People also fished in Pelly Crossing area. It has a domino effect, “If they can fish, we can fish.” We are losing a generation of fishing to teach kids.
- Q) Was there any discussion about a multi-year funding agreement with DFO? A) Yes. The subcommittee has a five-year agreement with DFO. They are supposed to get the funding April 1. It is sometimes problematic to get the funds on time, especially between contribution agreements.
- Q) Is there a way to reach out to DFO and help on how to incorporate traditional knowledge on management decisions? A) It has been an issue for some time. The subcommittee has brought it up many times. DFO is receptive, but slow to change. It is always lumped in with consultation or after products and not used upfront to direct the work and it is not included in science. Some people have offered to assist DFO, but this is an ongoing issue which Elizabeth may tackle in her new AAROM position at CYFN.
- Dennis Zimmermann provided information on the Annual Salmon Ceremony Gathering which may help as well. It brings western scientists and academics together and First Nation lands managers, technicians, knowledge holders, and ceremonial aspects to shape management and policy to influence these processes. Dennis will continue provide updates on that group.
- Graham Van Tighem provided information to Elizabeth on the PCMB traditional knowledge work. He will connect Elizabeth to Jen Smith.

Carl Sidney thanked Elizabeth for all her work with the subcommittee.

CAST UPDATE – D. Zimmermann, R. Taylor, G. Van Tighem, S. Hossack

Graham Van Tighem provided an introduction and overview of the historical angling working group, the land-based activities and stewardship. The group includes YSSC members, RRCs, and Yukon government. Randy, John, Steve, Carl, and Graham attend meetings as well.

Dennis Zimmermann provided an update on CAST and the Fishing Education and Ethics Development (FEED) project. His presentation was included in meeting kits. Dennis demonstrated the online FEED course demo site. Dennis hopes it will be released in March 2022 following a focus group, demonstrations to RRCs and First Nations, and modifications. Focus groups will begin between now and December.

The AWG Meeting Insights documents for April 29, June 4, and July 29, and a terms of reference document were provided in meeting kits.

Comments/Discussion:

- Q) Will the FEED program be required for certain people? A) Kwanlin Dün is the project proponent, and they would like this to be a required course. It’s not a YG course so there is flexibility.
- Graham provided an overview of the differences between HEED which is based on the *Wildlife Act*, and FEED which includes First Nation perspectives and traditional knowledge.
- It would be nice to include ice fishing in the FEED program.
- When people finish the FEED program, they should get a sticker or a decal.

- There is criticism from some First Nations when they just hear the words “catch and release”. However, licensed anglers can release fish. It’s in our management regime.
 - It would be good to give away something like a hat when the angler completes the FEED course because it gives added incentive. Dennis can apply to the Enhancement Trust for funding when.
 - There is a concern with a predator fish in all the lakes that has become a prize fish.
 - The website should have a different title if people find the term “catch and release” distasteful. The FEED program is much more than catch and release. It’s about reconciliation and ethics. Emphasize additional aspects other than catch and release.
 - In other areas, catch and release is taught as the best thing and if you don’t catch and release, something is wrong with you. Yukon’s population demographic is changing, and people are importing those deeply entrenched ideologies.
 - There are two distinct issues with catch and release, the regulatory and the recreational/voluntary. The recreational/voluntary spawned from the regulation. “The government regulation is saying catch and release is good, therefore I can just keep catching fish and releasing them.”
 - This is about bridging. The course uses the word “excessive”. If we say catch and release is bad, we will use 50 percent of our audience. We need a balanced approach.
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MEMBERS TIME — IN CAMERA

MEETING ADJOURNED.