

Conference of Management Authorities (CMA)
Meeting Minutes, February 19-21, 2019
Inuvik, NWT
Mackenzie Hotel, Permafrost Room

Attendees	Organization
Jody Pellissey	Chairperson, Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board
Earl Evans	Beverly and Qamanirjuaq Caribou Management Board
Leslie Wakelyn	Beverly and Qamanirjuaq Caribou Management Board
Christian Bertelsen	Environment and Climate Change Canada
Isabelle Duclos	Environment and Climate Change Canada
Joanna Wilson	Environment and Natural Resources
Troy Ellsworth	Environment and Natural Resources
Cathy Wilkinson	Facilitator (day 2)
Amy Amos	Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board (days 1 and 2)
Jozef Carnogursky	Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board
Kaytlin Cooper	Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board
Sam Bullock	Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board
Chanda Turner	Joint Secretariat (observer, day 2)
Jessica Hurtubise	North Slave Métis Alliance
Catarina Owen	Sahtú Renewable Resources Board
George Barnaby	Sahtú Renewable Resources Board
Sean Richardson	Tł'chǫ Government
Jimmy Kalinek	Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT)
Jodie Maring	Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT)
Larry Carpenter	Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT)
Rob Gau	Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT)
Rosemin Nathoo	Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT) (days 2 and 3)
Claire Singer	Species at Risk Secretariat

Opening prayer – George Barnaby

1. Introductions – *led by Jody Pellissey (Chairperson)*
Round table introductions.
2. Contact information and distribution lists – *led by Jody Pellissey (Chairperson)*
Verification and update to email distribution lists and contact information.
3. Agenda – *led by Jody Pellissey (Chairperson)*
Review of agenda.

Agenda approved, but with addition of consideration of World Wildlife Fund observer request and consideration of the Species at Risk Committee's (SARC) threats assessment letter.

4. Minutes – *led by Jody Pellissey (Chairperson)*

Review and approval of draft minutes from September 12 and November 14, 2018.

September 12, 2018 and November 14, 2018 meeting minutes approved with no changes.

5. Action items since last meeting – *led by Claire Singer (Secretariat)*

Review of action items from previous meetings and earlier outstanding action items.

6. Decisions made since last meeting – *led by Claire Singer (Secretariat)*

Review decisions made by email since last meeting and write them into the minutes.

Decision #D2019021901: Re-appointment of Arthur Beck to Species at Risk Committee.

7. Letters sent and received since last meeting – *led by Claire Singer (Secretariat)*

Review of letters sent and received since the last meeting.

Review of letter sent to the CMA by SARC, requesting direction on threats assessment approaches. SARC presented three options: (1) IUCN threats calculator, (2) modified threats calculator used by the Inuvialuit Settlement Region (ISR) for the polar bear management plan, and (3) a grounded theory approach. SARC is interested in pursuing all three approaches on an experimental basis to determine the best approach. SARC is seeking direction on the content, method, involvement, and when in the process it's best for this to take place.

The first two methods can be conducted by SARC in preparation for the assessment, but the grounded theory approach involves community workshops to identify key threats and might require return to communities for verification.

The IUCN threats calculator has been attempted on a number of occasions in the NWT, but generally, people feel that it's difficult to use and isn't particularly representative of the threats in the NWT. There is little appetite to pursue use of this tool.

The second approach was developed in the ISR and is generally considered easier to use and understand. It's still quite a bit of work and isn't considered ideal, but has more support than the IUCN threats calculator.

With respect to the grounded theory approach, SARC doesn't conduct consultation/engagement or primary research so it's unclear who would conduct this work, and when in the process that work would be conducted. Generally, although it's recognized that SARC has a desire to do more, it was felt that the grounded theory approach is outside SARC's purview. There are also concerns with the additional time and expense that would be involved to complete this approach.

With these factors in mind, the CMA felt that the second approach was the best option for SARC to pursue. However, the grounded theory approach could still be used by Management Authorities, at their discretion, as part of their consultation/engagement processes. At that point, the assessment is done – what's heard in the communities can't influence the assessment, but it can be reflected in the listing decision or recovery strategies/management plans.

Action #A2019021901: Secretariat to draft response to SARC recommending integration of the modified threats calculator in future assessments.

8. Updates – *led by Jody Pélissey (Chairperson)*

Updates from Management Authorities and participating organizations.

Environment and Natural Resources

- Regrets from Rita Mueller and Brett Elkin, who have unavoidable conflicts.
- Wood bison:
 - The draft Nahanni herd management plan has been prepared. ENR was recently in Fort Liard to discuss this. The next step is the completion of an internal review.
 - A management plan for Slave River Lowlands bison is being prepared. The draft is almost ready to go out for consultation.
 - A survey of the Mackenzie herd is being planned for March.
- Dolphin and Union caribou: Workshop coming up in Edmonton.
- Boreal caribou:
 - We're getting ready to sign the section 11 agreement with Canada. We received feedback from some Renewable Resource Boards (RRBs) and other organizations and edited accordingly.
 - ENR is in the process of hiring additional staff.
 - Currently in the process of deploying additional collars for population monitoring in the area north of Wrigley.
- Barren-ground caribou:
 - The GNWT and Tł'cho Government jointly submitted a proposal to the WRRB for Bluenose-East and Bathurst caribou. Now we're engaged in the hearing process.
 - The GNWT has also completed extensive engagement on the Bathurst range plan.
 - For Porcupine caribou and the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), the GNWT has been working with Canadian parties to the Porcupine Caribou Management Agreement to respond to the opening of ANWR to oil and gas exploration. We'll be commenting on the draft Environmental Impact Statement.
- We're also preparing for a polar bear subpopulation survey and surveys of Peary caribou and muskoxen.

- Bats:
 - We received support from the federal Habitat Stewardship Program, so we're having acoustic data analyzed and written up.
 - An outreach campaign is planned for this coming fiscal year. Ecology North will be delivering a bat education program in some Dehcho communities.
 - We also received a report from two cave experts who were in the Sahtú region looking for possible hibernacula, so we'll share that with the board there.

Government of Canada

- The national recovery strategy for little brown myotis and northern myotis was posted on the public registry on December 21, 2018. The national management plan for short-eared owl was posted on October 4, 2018.
- Nine migratory bird species, including evening grosbeak and red-necked phalarope, just finished their Canada Gazette 1 public consultation period on February 12, 2019. The federal Minister of Environment will take into account the comments and make a listing recommendation for each species to the Governor in Council.
- The pre-listing consultations on the proposed down-listing of common nighthawk (Special Concern), olive-sided flycatcher (Special Concern), and peregrine falcon (Not at Risk) have just started (end in October 2019).
- Pre-listing consultations for the proposed up-listing of Dolphin and Union caribou should start soon. We will likely conduct in-person consultation this April. We're currently reviewing the presentation deck with WMAC (NWT) and the Inuvialuit Game Council (IGC). Hopefully we'll be able to start translation next week. As soon as that's done, we'll send the package around and start discussing when is a good time for in-person consultation.
- The pre-listing consultations for barren-ground caribou are ongoing. We don't have a specific timeline for now, but we are aiming to consult with the remaining wildlife management boards and other partners in the next few months.
- Hairy braya: The goal is to adopt the NWT recovery strategy; however, we need to add some sections. To do this, a steering committee will be formed, and the members will consist of a number of NWT co-management partners (WMAC (NWT), Tuktoyaktuk Hunters and Trappers Committee (HTC), IGC, GNWT, and Inuvialuit Land Administration (ILA)). The committee will discuss the process of adoption, and also discuss and decide on the content of the sections we need to add to the federal recovery strategy. The sections that will be discussed for addition are the population and distribution objectives, and the critical habitat section.

Tłı̨chǫ Government

- When the draft wood bison recovery strategy first came out, it was decided to work just with the communities who were directly affected. But since the approval

decision has to go to the Chiefs Executive Council (CEC), it appears we should have gone to all the communities. So we're just preparing an update for CEC in preparation for the consensus agreement.

Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT)

- Staff: Allison Thompson accepted a position with WMAC (North Slope) and resigned as the Wildlife Biologist with WMAC (NWT) in October. In November, Rosemin Nathoo was hired and started working as the Wildlife Biologist.
- Council activities:
 - WMAC (NWT) met November 28-30, 2018 in Inuvik. During the meeting, Council passed a motion to support the CMA's Dolphin and Union caribou implementation consensus agreement.
 - WMAC (NWT) conducted a species at risk community tour in September, October, and November in all six Inuvialuit communities (Inuvik, Aklavik, Tuktoyaktuk, Paulatuk, Sachs Harbour, and Ulukhaktok).
 - Since the September CMA meeting, WMAC (NWT) members and staff have attended a number of wildlife/species at risk-related meetings: north boreal caribou range planning framework, *Wildlife Act* section 15 meeting, *Wildlife Act* working group meeting, ACCWM annual status meeting, Arctic Net, Tuktoyaktuk Peninsula/Cape Bathurst calving ground working group meeting, Dolphin and Union caribou working group meeting, and the Polar Bear Technical Committee.
- Tuktoyaktuk Peninsula/Cape Bathurst update: The working group members discussed ideas for a position paper expressing Inuvialuit interest in habitat and calving ground protection, in preparation for the eventual recovery strategy for barren-ground caribou. The next working group meeting is planned for March 27, 2019 in Inuvik.
- Dolphin and Union caribou user-to-user working group meeting: The IGC and WMAC (NWT) held the initial meeting in August 2018 and formed this working group. In October, the Joint Secretariat received AFSAR funding for additional support. The first working group meeting was February 2-4, 2019 in Edmonton. The objective of this working group is to implement the management plan for Dolphin and Union caribou. The next working group meeting is to be announced.
- The next WMAC (NWT) meet is scheduled for March 4-6, 2019 in Inuvik.

Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board

- Eugene's term as Chairperson ended in November. Jozef Carnogursky is now the Chairperson. We do also have several board terms coming up soon.
- Held a board meeting on February 5-7, 2019 in Inuvik covering fisheries, caribou, muskoxen, harvest survey results, commercial use consultations, plus updates from governments.
- Have been conducting lots of work on boreal caribou – range planning and knowledge consortium.

- Participated in the development of management plans/recovery strategies for collared pika, barn swallow, and bank swallow.
- Assessment reviews and data requests - bumble bees, lesser yellow legs, Hudsonian godwit, short-eared owl, barren-ground caribou.
- Kaytlin remains a member of the Wildlife Care Committee.
- The bat data's been sent off for analysis so hopefully we will have an update on that soon.
- Taking Care of Caribou: the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East barren-ground caribou herds management plan - continue developing the communication and education materials and completing the annual monitoring table. Participated in the 2018 ACCWM annual status meeting in Yellowknife.
- Participated in a moose management meeting organized by ENR.
- First round of consultations completed for defining commercial use of wildlife meat.
- Dall sheep research project – This is a species of concern in the Gwich'in Settlement Area. 13 cameras were installed around Black Mountain. We're applying for funding to continue this work next year.
- Dolly Varden char – Mapping new potential habitat using eDNA, harvest monitoring programs, monitoring of water temperatures, installation of remote cameras, opportunistic underwater filming of fish in their natural habitat to contribute to communications materials.

Sahtú Renewable Resources Board

- Continuing to work on the mountain caribou plan and preparing for a guardianship program this summer. We hope to have a joint leadership meeting this spring.
- Worked on the range planning framework for boreal caribou.
- Participated in the knowledge consortium.
- Working with Tulít'a, Colville Lake, and Délı̨nę on community consultation plans for barren-ground caribou.
- Developing a strategic plan for 2019-2024, building on lessons learned during the board's 22 years of existence and Bluenose-East caribou hearings.
- Working with Dr. Bayne in establishing an acoustic monitoring program that is targeting birds, amphibians, and bats.
- A guardianship training program (Keepers of the Land) is currently happening in Fort Good Hope. There are 18 trainees involved in this 4 week on-the-land camp.
- We hired a new community conservation planner and a new on-the-land program manager.
- The board is very small now, with a number of vacancies. However, we benefit from having special advisors and are, at this time, still able to achieve quorum.

Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board

- The board has appointed a new Chairperson – Joseph Judas.
- We too are waiting for federal board appointments. At this point, the DFO position has been vacant for 3 years and ECCC's positions have been vacant for 16 months.
- The board is part of the boreal caribou range planning framework and are looking towards the upcoming March meeting.
- Participating in the boreal caribou knowledge consortium.
- The board has also be participating at great length in barren-ground caribou projects and processes.
 - The ACCWM and the recent updated status for these three herds – action plans were submitted to governments last week.
 - Also received proposals for the Bluenose-East and Bathurst herds. The Bathurst is undergoing a level 2 proceeding (outside comments through written submissions; due March 15). Bluenose-East, because of the requested reduction to the total allowable harvest, is undergoing a level 3 proceeding, which means a public hearing, scheduled for March 8-11, with a final decision submitted before June.
 - The board's Conservation Biologist is completing reviews of COSEWIC reports and assessments.
 - The board has just recently commented on the Tłı̨chǫ All-Season Road (TASR) Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan (WMMP) that was developed by the GNWT for that project. We had 30+ comments to submit. There's a little bit of work to be done there still.
 - The renewable resources boards (Sahtú, Gwich'in, and Wek'èezhì) have been working together to submit comments on legislative initiatives (protected areas and forestry legislation in particular). We will do a joint presentation on these initiatives.

Beverly and Qamanirjuaq Caribou Management Board

- Members have many questions about the listing of barren-ground caribou, as well as the process after listing. Hunting is the biggest question. Where can people go to hunt?
- If listing stops hunting, members will never support listing. We're in support of conservation, but not like this.
- An area of particular concern was related to the implications of the listing on harvesting within the new Thaidene Nene protected area. This area will be protected largely through federal legislation, which would mean that harvesting would not be permitted within the area following the federal listing. However, the Łutsel K'e Dene First Nation are under the impression that they will be able to continue hunting in the protected area. This question has to be addressed clearly.
- The most difficult thing is how to navigate the species at risk process. Our members want a visual. Many of them don't understand the process. We need a

better explanation for how the whole system works, including how it affects people, time limits, etc. The whole system needs to be simpler to use. There's also a lot of confusion about the two processes going on (federal and territorial). It's even more confusing to people outside of the NWT. They're not really getting any information.

- The board invited ECCC to provide a presentation on the federal listing. Part of the complicating factor is that the board is multi-jurisdictional, so both the northern and prairie regions of ECCC are involved. We had a lot of questions that didn't get answered. We haven't yet gotten a response to the questions they took home with them, so we sent them a letter in January with follow-up questions. We hope they will bring answers to some of those key questions to our April 30-May 2 meeting. We'll submit a position on the federal listing once we get those answers.
 - There was interest from the ECCC representatives attending the CMA meeting in receiving a copy of that letter and in helping the BQCMB pursue answers to their questions.
- Following the spring 2019 meeting, our next scheduled meeting is October or November, hopefully in Arviat, although we require additional funding for that.
- A board representative attended the North American caribou workshop. It was noted that despite the threat presented by chronic wasting disease, and the impact of disease on caribou health, there were no presentations about disease.
- The board is trying to do what it can in terms of harvest reporting. We started a pilot project in Kivalliq communities within the caribou range. It's been a long, slow process to get something happening because the HTOs have very little capacity and because federal funding keeps getting delayed. We're trying to make it very straight-forward so the HTOs themselves can run the programs and data collection. The work is patterned after a similar project the Athabasca Denesuline has done in Saskatchewan.
- We're trying to do more communications and education because we see this as a really big gap at the moment in showing why harvest reporting and conservation measures are important and needed. This work will include poster contests, a harvest calendar, etc. This is, in part, related to the funding we received from the Stewardship Program. We're hoping to do another contest in the other NWT communities, and want to do them in other jurisdictions as well.

North Slave Métis Alliance

- Introduction of Jessica Hurtubise, the NSMA's new Regulatory Analyst.
- The NSMA submitted comments on the boreal caribou s11 agreement.
- Continuing with Stewardship Program eDNA project. Some sampling was done last summer and staff was trained in the process. A few samples have been sent out for processing, but the bulk of the sampling is planned for this summer. We did also receive AFSAR funding for this project.
- We were part of the range planning survey in June 2018 and part of the framework working group. We submitted comments to ENR.

- Currently reviewing barren-ground caribou management proposals.
- Commenting on TASR.

9. Stewardship Program – *led by Amy Amos (Stewardship Sub-committee)*
Update on 2018/19 projects and 2019/20 call for proposals. Presentation of action items (weighting, 'implementation' and 'stewardship' definitions, data sharing). Fill vacancy on sub-committee.

The 2019/20 call for proposals went out on January 15, 2019. Applications will be accepted until March 1, 2019.

Report on Action Item #A2018051501 (Stewardship Sub-committee to amend application package to include weighting for how well an application meets the program objectives). This is complete and reflects the desire to ensure that projects that either meet multiple objectives, or meet one objective particularly well, should score higher than those that do not. To support this, applicants will now be asked to describe how their project meets the program objectives. This will be scored out of 5 points; applicants scoring 0/5 will be ineligible for funding.

Report on Action Item #A2018091201 (Stewardship Sub-committee to provide recommended definitions for the terms 'implementation' and 'stewardship' to the CMA for discussion at the February 2019 meeting). The definitions were presented to the CMA and approved. The definitions are as follows and will appear in future application materials:

- Implementation: The obligations and activities outlined in land claim agreement implementation plans, or that are within the scope of core functions/responsibilities of Management Authorities under the *Species at Risk (NWT) Act* (e.g., development of management plans/recovery strategies, development of consensus agreements at any phase, consultation and community/public engagement work associated with the development of these documents), are outside the scope of the Stewardship Program. Projects that link to actions outlined in management plans or recovery strategies developed under the *Species at Risk (NWT) Act* and that support the long-term protection and recovery of species at risk in the NWT are eligible, provided they fall within the scope of 'stewardship' activities, as defined below.
- Stewardship: Typically grassroots efforts, led by individuals or communities, that are designed to conserve, recover and/or protect species at risk in the NWT, and/or educate members of the public about species at risk in the NWT. These activities are often undertaken at the local or regional level.

Report on Action Item #A2018051505 (Stewardship Sub-committee to consider the idea of making project reports/data publically available and present their decision to the CMA at the February 2019 meeting). The Sub-committee discussed various options while trying to remain cognizant of the importance of discretion, respect for protection of

sensitive information, applicant reservations, storage responsibilities, and ensuring that information is appropriately referenced. It was decided that the best path forward would be to publish an email address for the applicant and encourage interested individuals/parties to contact the applicant directly for access to data.

A vacancy was created on the Sub-committee as a result of the withdrawal of Shin Shiga. Jessica Hurtubise was approved to fill this vacancy.

Decision #D2019021902: Consensus for Jessica Hurtubise to replace Shin Shiga on Stewardship Sub-committee.

10. Liability insurance – *led by Claire Singer (Secretariat)*

Final guidance from GNWT regarding coverage of SARC/CMA members for work under the Species at Risk (NWT) Act.

The Secretariat provided information on insurance requirements for SARC/CMA members. Earlier advice had indicated that SARC/CMA members would not be covered by either the GNWT's liability or travel insurance programs. Further advice provided by the government's risk management group has shown that, because SARC/CMA were created under GNWT legislation, all members would in fact be covered by GNWT insurance programs. Many SARC/CMA members are already provided insurance coverage through their organizations; however, for those without insurance, this means that they do not need to purchase travel insurance for attendance at SARC/CMA meetings. Further, a blanket waiver of the general liability insurance requirements in contribution agreements has been sought and approved given the low-risk nature of the work, so this clause will no longer appear in SARC/CMA contribution agreements.

11. Workshop – *led by Cathy Wilkinson (Facilitator)*

The SmartProsperity Institute's report, *Species in the Balance*, was shared with the CMA in spring 2018. This report focuses on the biological and cost-effective implementation of the federal *Species at Risk Act* (SARA). However, many of the recommendations are applicable to species at risk programs in general, whether federal, provincial, or territorial. A preliminary discussion of the recommendations in the report was held during the May 2018 CMA meeting. At that time, the CMA asked the Secretariat to set up a facilitated discussion on the report, its recommendations, and the relevance of those recommendations to the CMA.

Four broad themes were discussed during the workshop: shifting focus to implementation, amending/expanding the Stewardship Program, evaluating progress, and resourcing. A project report is being written by the facilitator and will be circulated to CMA members once it is complete. The below text captures discussion themes as well as any decisions/action items.

Ultimately, the end goal is recovery of species, not just going through the motions. However, CMA members noted a number of barriers to effective implementation, including: increasing workloads, limited capacity and funding, working effectively with other jurisdictions (for transboundary species), legal responsibilities v/ community conservation priorities, meaningful and effective communication with communities, and confusion at the community level with respect to species at risk processes. In this context, members felt there was a strong need to identify efficiencies, beyond funding and staffing.

Commitment to conservation:

- One particularly important concern that was expressed included being willing to take the difficult steps necessary to protect species and their habitat, especially those in critical situations. It was felt that there was a strong inconsistency in government messaging in this respect – on one hand, governments speak to the importance of conservation and their commitment to conservation, while on the other hand continuing to issue permits for development, even within areas identified as important habitat (e.g., barren-ground caribou calving grounds). Members want to see concrete commitments from government to promote recovery, not just the development of plans. Of utmost importance, recovery actions cannot just focus on harvesters.

Supporting research:

- Organizations, including Management Authorities, are often constrained by capacity and funding limits. However, there are many people interested in conducting research in the NWT, or conducting research that is relevant to the NWT. Members felt that resourcing constraints could be addressed somewhat by encouraging this kind of independent research, perhaps by providing CMA letters of support and by better communicating our research priorities.
- Making existing information more useful was also raised as a possible way of improving information availability (e.g., Arctic Borderlands Ecological Knowledge Co-op).

Multi-species processes:

- Most organizations are dealing with many species at any given time. Each species/process typically has its own requirements for consultation, engagement, and community meetings. By giving careful consideration to the species workplans, efficiency could potentially be gained by conducting annual or semi-annual community tours, comprising multiple species/projects. This is already done in the ISR and this process could perhaps be used as a model.
- Efficiencies could perhaps be gained by considering commonalities in species management actions or threats (e.g., harvest data collection, mining pressures, etc.). Focusing on a few high priority actions/threats and prioritizing resources/time, rather than spreading out resources, could help. This work can be done without needing to develop additional plans.

Raising the profile of the NWT Species at Risk program:

- Consider ‘re-branding’ of the NWT Species at Risk program and pursuing a broad advertising/communications campaign. The aim is to effectively communicate the goals of the program to the public, emphasize successes, and make information more accessible and prominent. We want people to understand what this program is about and what purpose it serves.
- For the Stewardship Program, change the word ‘stewardship’ as members feel this doesn’t really resonate with people in the North. Also consider building a map of funded projects. This helps raise the profile of the program, shows people what kinds of projects are being funded, and helps show regional variation in funding.
- Status reports are needed by SARC and Management Authorities to do their work effectively; however, these documents are often too long and detailed to be used effectively by communities, or by Management Authorities during consultation/engagement processes. Develop a plain language summary of the species status reports, including SARC’s assessment and how they arrived at the assessment, for inclusion in Management Authority information packages for species listings. Along the same lines, ensure that the PowerPoint presentations provided to Management Authorities for consultation/engagement are more focused on the species and implications to people, rather than on front-end processes.

Action #A2019022001: Secretariat to look into cost/time considerations for re-branding of the NWT Species at Risk Program, and the development of an outreach campaign.

Action #A2019022002: Secretariat to ensure that future information packages for listing include a plain language summary of the status report, and revise PowerPoint presentations (in consultation/engagement packages) to focus more on the species and implications to people.

Shifting focus to implementation:

- Members agreed that it was important to ensure that high priority actions receive concerted focus, despite being more difficult, long-term, and expensive to implement. It will take collective effort and agreement to focus on these larger, high-priority items. It was felt that the CMA could work as a collective towards the achievement of these kinds of actions, leaving smaller actions to individual Management Authorities and partners.
- CMA meetings should, insofar as is possible, shift focus from process to implementation. Each February face-to-face meeting should include an agenda item to discuss member implementation of management plans/recovery strategies. This time would be used to discuss what we are doing, what we’re not

doing, and opportunities for collaboration. It should also focus not just on what actions we've taken, but on what we've learned (including species recovery indicator results). All CMA members should come prepared to have this conversation each February. This allows for an annual check-in, and will ensure that the CMA is prepared for the 5 year implementation progress reports. It will also help ensure that lesser known species remain prominent on the agenda.

- In advance of the May 2019 meeting, identify commonalities in management plans/recovery strategies and schedule time to discuss prioritization based, in part, on those commonalities.
- Analyze which actions are already being taken and encourage continued progress. It may also be possible to align actions being taken by different agencies.
- Encourage meetings between Management Authorities, outside of normally-scheduled CMA meetings, to discuss common species, common issues, share information, regional successes, etc.
- Kaaren Lewis workshop in May – pan-Canadian framework for priority places, species, and threats. Addresses prioritizing finite resources.

Decision #D2019022001: Updates on implementation activities will be presented by all relevant CMA members at each February face-to-face meeting. Updates should be prepared ahead of the meeting and submitted to the Secretariat for inclusion in the meeting binders.

Action #A2019022003: For May 2019 face-to-face meeting, Secretariat to prepare an analysis of commonalities among actions in management plans/recovery strategies.

Action #A2019022004: Secretariat to organize presentation by Kaaren Lewis on the Pan-Canadian Framework for the May 2019 face-to-face meeting.

Resourcing:

- It may be possible to approach ECCC for grants and contribution funding when we have specific recovery ideas we wish to pursue. Section 11 agreements can be used for more iconic species.
- Consider 'outside the box' funding ideas for building funding for implementation. Specific ideas included directing a percentage of all harvesting revenue to the species at risk program (e.g., Manitoba's Wildlife and Fish Enhancement Fund), working with a brewery to develop a branded beer with partial revenue going to the program (this has already been done in Quebec, Saskatchewan, and Nova Scotia), pursuing branded stamps through Canada Post (e.g., Canadian Wildlife Service through Wildlife Habitat Canada), soliciting funding through the upcoming 2020 *Species at Risk (NWT) Act* legislative review, or having the CMA apply for external funding as an organization (with one Management Authority holding received funding in trust for the organization).

Action #A2019022005: Secretariat and ENR to consider options for securing resources through the 2020 legislative review process.

Action #A2019022006: Secretariat to consider possibilities for funding tools, including percentage of harvesting revenue and a species at risk beer and/or stamp.

12. Wood bison recovery strategy – *led by Jody Pellissey (Chairperson)*

Consultation/engagement by Management Authorities should now be complete (GNWT, Tłı̨chǫ Government, WRRB). Legal deadline for completion/submission of recovery strategy and consensus agreement: April 13, 2019.

Management Authorities are preparing to sign the consensus agreement accepting the wood bison recovery strategy. Consultation and engagement by the GNWT and WRRB is complete. Some communities were left out of the Tłı̨chǫ Government's consultations (Wekweètì and Gamètì), so they needed some additional time to prepare for signing. However, it was suggested that in order to ensure the timely completion of the recovery strategy and consensus agreement, the Tłı̨chǫ Government bring the final recovery strategy to the Chiefs rather than the current draft.

The Tłı̨chǫ Government will write to the Secretariat indicating that their consultation and engagement resulted in no further changes to the recovery strategy. The Secretariat will finalize the recovery strategy and draft a consensus agreement to send to the Management Authorities for approval. Management Authority approval is required prior to the end of March to ensure that the consensus agreement can be signed before the deadline of April 13, 2019. To complete the consensus agreement, each Management Authority (GNWT, TG, and WRRB) needs to send the Secretariat their Annex B summaries.

Action #A2019022101: Management Authorities to send completed Annex B summaries to the Secretariat by March 1, 2019 for the wood bison recovery strategy acceptance.

Action #A2019022102: Secretariat to arrange conference call for formal Management Authority approval of the wood bison recovery strategy.

13. Barren-ground caribou – *led by Jody Pellissey (Chairperson)*

First draft of the recovery strategy circulated in early January 2019. Discuss draft and provide feedback/instructions to preparer. Review of workplan and reminders of upcoming deadlines.

Members generally felt this was a good first draft recovery strategy. High-level direction to the Secretariat for completion of the second draft follows. Smaller comments and editorial comments should be sent to the Secretariat in writing before the end of

February. The second draft will be provided in May, at which point additional comments can be submitted. The final draft will be sent to members in July.

Specific comments:

- Ensure the recovery strategy includes local knowledge and supports local management actions.
 - Perhaps already adequately covered under Objective 5, approach 5.2 – supporting community-based conservation and monitoring plans.
- The federal government has the option of adopting this recovery strategy as part of its recovery requirements under SARA. Therefore, ideally, this territorial recovery strategy would include the sections required by SARA to facilitate a smooth adoption. Alternatively, Canada would add the relevant sections after the fact, and call it a federal addition. The sections that would need to be added if the CMA was interested in pursuing the first option are (1) critical habitat and (2) population and distribution objectives. To inform the federal processes, this recovery strategy could, for instance, include descriptions of important habitat or key habitats necessary for the survival and recovery of the species. This could be an opportunity for CMA members to define what you think is critical habitat.
 - There were concerns expressed with this suggestion, including the significance of this kind of undertaking. Identifying critical habitat and developing population/distribution objectives would require a lot of work. Further, barren-ground caribou is a transboundary species, so this work would require the participation of many parties, which could be exceedingly complicated.
 - Some value was seen in identifying critical habitat as part of this process, but there was less enthusiasm about the integration of population/distribution objectives. Ultimately, these are things CMA members are interested in, but don't necessarily feel the CMA should lead this work.
 - With respect to critical habitat, many members felt that important/key habitats had already been clearly identified through other forums (e.g., calving grounds, water crossing, post-calving habitat), but that protection was still lacking.
 - Suggestion to amend Objective 1, approach 1.4 to include the idea of working with ECCC and CWS on the development and implementation of the federal recovery strategy, including the identification and protection of critical habitat.

Action #A2019022103: Management Authorities to discuss the possibility of adding critical habitat and population/distribution objectives to the CMA's barren-ground caribou recovery strategy with their boards/councils and come to the May meeting prepared to discuss their positions. ECCC to provide a written summary of their proposal to facilitate these discussions.

- Objective 1, approach 1.1 – Completing and implementing herd-specific management plans could be two very different things. Consider splitting this into two approaches. Also consider naming the herds in each approach as appropriate. Also add, "...and update existing plans as required" to this approach.
- The threats section should be laid out in a manner that prioritizes the threats. Will follow-up with a suggested order in written comments. If it's not possible to prioritize the threats, then a disclaimer should be added, similar to in the status report, indicating that threats are in no particular order.
- There was a general observation that the recovery strategy didn't clearly link to the herd-specific management plans. For example, the herd-specific management plans talk about increasing understanding of the importance of conservation, but those kinds of actions aren't reflected in the recovery strategy. In this sense (missing the connection to herd-specific management plans), this still reads too much like a government plan. It's focused on goals and objectives, but misses the point of getting buy-in from communities.
 - Suggestion to add this kind of approach to Objective 5. Also consider including a focus on youth here. Wording could perhaps be drawn from the PCMB harvest management plan.
- The role of partners (other than Management Authorities) is not apparent in the draft. How can they support the recovery strategy? Where can people take on implementation themselves?
- Objective 3 focuses on monitoring and managing impacts, but leaves out a lot of contributing factors. Would like to see acknowledgement of key factors that should be monitored. Even though you can't manage them all at the moment, the factors themselves should still be monitored and tracked to help inform future management.
- The habitat stewardship section includes focus on caribou as well as their habitat. It's a bit mixed. Maybe the objective itself needs to be reworded or broken down.
- Table 3 – The CMA needs to decide what level of detail should be included in this table. All organizations involved (i.e., down to the local level)? Or should it be more regionally focused? Consensus that the table should remain though, as it showcases the collaborative nature of wildlife management in the NWT, but no clear consensus on level of detail. The table should also be referenced directly in the text so people can more easily refer to it.

Action #A2019022104: CMA members to submit preferences for content of table 3 to Secretariat in their written comments. The Secretariat to proceed with the majority vote.

- With respect to the associated adoption of herd-specific management plans, it is unclear whether they will be formally adopted, or whether the recovery does/should simply point to them. The CMA had originally discussed adopting

the herd-specific management plans, but this raises questions/difficulties in terms of implications for the associated management plans (e.g., updating post-adoption), consulting/engaging on those separate plans, and navigating the issue of having only some herd-specific plans completed. For the time being, the Secretariat will proceed with the same approach that was taken for the wood bison recovery strategy. The CMA will consider this further in May.

Action #A2019022105: CMA members to send any written comments on the first draft of the barren-ground caribou recovery strategy to the Secretariat by February 28, 2019.

Action #A2019022106: Management Authorities to confirm that the timelines in the barren-ground caribou recovery strategy work plan are agreeable. Deadline is February 28, 2019.

14. Bats – *led by Jody Pellissey (Chairperson)*

First draft of management plan expected in April 2019. Review of workplan and reminders of upcoming deadlines.

Overview of workplan – First draft of management plan will be provided to CMA members in April 2019. Members will provide feedback to the report preparer in May. The proposed draft management plan will be provided to Management Authorities in June. Consultation/engagement is scheduled for August-November 2019.

Concerns were expressed with respect to being able to pay for consultation/engagement costs this year. This may impact how consultation/engagement is undertaken.

15. Peary caribou – *led by Isabelle Duclos (Environment and Climate Change Canada)*

Federal recovery strategy progress update.

Still working on the protection component of critical habitat. The federal policy addressing the identification and protection of critical habitat when habitat loss/degradation is not the main threat is not complete and we don't know when it will be finalized. Meanwhile, ECCC will meet with the IRC to discuss their concerns regarding the identification and protection of critical habitat for Peary caribou. For these reasons, ECCC is not able to start the public comment period in the short term, which might have impacts on the CMA process. The steering committee will soon be contacted to discuss the critical habitat issue and next steps.

The potential need for an extension to adoption of the recovery strategy in the NWT will be discussed further at the May 2019 face-to-face meeting. ECCC believes it will be possible to determine whether an extension is required within the next few weeks.

16. Annual/periodic reviews of progress – *led by Jody Pellissey (Chairperson)*

2018 annual review of progress on implementation of hairy braya, boreal caribou, and amphibian recovery strategies/management plans.

Hairy braya

- Objective 1: Secure future existence of hairy braya seeds/plants.
 - Work is underway to complete the genome sequencing. This work is being coordinated by Dr. Jim Harris with the University of Utah.
- Objective 2: Monitor hairy braya population, range and habitat.
 - A population survey is being scheduled for 2020. This is earlier than the 10-year frequency mentioned in the recovery strategy, but allows for the survey to be completed prior to re-assessment. In preparation, permits and logistical arrangements will be completed this year.
- Objective 3: Obtain information to inform sound management decisions.
 - Not identified for implementation.
- Objective 4: Minimize detrimental effects of human activities on hairy braya and its habitat.
 - Interested in having a conversation about the possibility of addressing some hairy braya protection needs as part of the work being completed on the Cape Bathurst calving grounds. It may be beneficial to discuss federal critical habitat requirements for hairy braya proactively if that overlaps with other work. WMAC (NWT) will raise the question at the March meeting of the Cape Bathurst working group; although it's a possibility, there's some potential for resistance. Ultimately, protection of the Cape Bathurst calving ground will likely also be relevant for hairy braya.
- Objective 5: Adaptively co-manage hairy braya in accordance with the best available information.
 - This discussion helps fulfill approaches under this action (annual meeting).

Amphibians: Some objectives/approaches have not yet been addressed by Management Authorities. This meeting serves as a check-in and reminder of work that needs to be completed.

- Objective 1: Fill knowledge gaps and enhance understanding of NWT amphibians, including traditional, community, and scientific knowledge, to inform sound management decisions.
 - J.-F. Bienentreu is conducting research in the Fort Smith area on amphibian diseases. This is independent research, but still worth noting.
 - ENR has been doing some work to develop eDNA as a monitoring tool to detect these species and their pathogens.
 - Management Authorities in general do collect observations and ask that observations be reported. There's been a fair amount of local information reported to ENR that's helping to inform management.

- Objective 2: Identify and maintain key amphibian habitats.
 - ENR work to date has been fairly specific to the western toad. One approach is to reduce vehicle mortality near a gravel pit where western toads breed. This wasn't highlighted as a priority in the implementation agreement, but became an issue this past year. There are now toad crossing signs up on the highway and we're planning a public awareness campaign for the region in the spring. ENR has spoken to the Department of Infrastructure about guidance for their staff and contractors because they use that gravel pit and work on the highway. ENR is also developing some draft guidance for industry.
 - The GRRB provides standard advice to individuals conducting water sampling in order to minimize the spread of disease and encourage equipment sanitization.
- Objective 3: Mitigate, monitor, and manage the effects of disease and other important threats to amphibians.
 - No updates.
- Objective 4: Increase public awareness and stewardship of amphibians and their habitats.
 - ENR's work on this objective was covered in responses to earlier objectives.
 - No further updates.
- Objective 5: Manage amphibians using an adaptive and collaborative approach, and the best available information.
 - No updates.

Boreal caribou

- Objective 1: Ensure there is adequate habitat across the NWT range to maintain a healthy and sustainable population of boreal caribou.
 - Upcoming range planning meeting in March 2019. ENR continues to map fires in the NWT and update the calculations of habitat disturbance. The department is now using a more precise mapping of fire (national burned area composite dataset), which has resulted in changes to the total disturbance number. Previously, the mapping tool included smaller areas of unburned habitat and included water bodies (other than large lakes/rivers). This new, more precise mapping tool, doesn't capture these features.
 - Over a 5 year period, based on Canada's Landsat analysis, we saw ~1% new human disturbance in the NWT.
 - Work is being done by ENR to produce guidelines for industry, as well as WMMPs.
- Objective 2: Ensure the harvest of boreal caribou is sustainable.
 - ENR is pursuing changes to harvest regulations (splitting boreal and mountain caribou tags), which are directly linked to the actions in the recovery strategy. There is a reasonably good understanding of

resident/non-resident harvest in the NWT, but details on Indigenous harvest are considered a knowledge gap.

- ENR is pursuing the completion of a sustainable harvest assessment. The contractor is going to consider the population information that is available, and provide a range for sustainable/not sustainable harvest. Despite some information gaps, this will provide a frame of reference for defining sustainable harvest.
- ENR has been working with the Kátl'odeeche First Nation (KFN), Inuvialuit, and Gwich'in on gathering accurate and complete harvest information. The department is open to working with others as well. There may be funding available next fiscal year to help facilitate harvest reporting initiatives. It was also noted that the KFN are considered guardians of the harvest data derived from this work in their area. Their concerns as managers include integrity of the data, confidentiality of the data, and engagement with harvesters. Also a note that this information is available for the Gwich'in Settlement Area; the GRRB will send this information to ENR.

- Objective 3: Obtain information to inform sound management decisions, including boreal caribou ecology, key habitat, and population indicators and cumulative effects.
 - ENR is looking to expand the Dehcho monitoring area to north of Wrigley. This kind of monitoring program is not active in the northern part of the NWT.
 - There are slight declines in population in the southern NWT, but most areas have been stable or increasing over the past 3 years.
 - ENR has been trying to capture ongoing research and traditional knowledge work to help address some of the knowledge gaps. Tracking progress to fill knowledge gaps is considered beneficial in preparation for the 5-year progress report.
- Objective 4: Manage boreal caribou collaboratively, using adaptive management practices and the best available information.
 - This is done an ongoing basis.
- Objective 5: Exchange information with NWT people about boreal caribou in all regions.
 - There were questions under this objective regarding the role of Parks Canada: What is their role in this? What kind of monitoring do they do?
 - Parks Canada has been involved with range planning and critical habitat protection. However, it's unclear what their monitoring program for boreal caribou consists of.
- Objective 6: Further to the national recovery strategy, ensure recovery obligations for protection critical habitat and maintaining a self-sustaining population are met or exceeded in the NWT.
 - Based on the information available, the NWT's population is still considered likely self-sustaining.

Action #A2019022107: CMA members to submit their updates/further details on their 2018 implementation activities related to the hairy braya recovery strategy, amphibian management plan, and/or boreal caribou recovery strategy to the Secretariat by March 15, 2019. The Secretariat will compile updates and circulate to the CMA in April 2019.

17. Chairperson/Alternate Chairperson appointments – *led by Jody Pellissey (Chairperson)*
Current appointments expired in January 2019. These positions are selected for 2 year terms by CMA representatives. Terms may be renewed. These positions shall be filled by individuals, not organizations.

Decision #D2019022102: Decision to re-appoint Jody Pellissey to the position of Chairperson for a 2-year term. Decision to appoint Jozef Carnogursky to the position of Alternate Chairperson for a 2-year term.

*Extra agenda item – Observer request by World Wildlife Fund (WWF). They had requested observer status for this meeting; a decision was made to discuss the request in-person in preparation for future requests.

- Concerns were raised with the request. Members felt this could set precedence for other special interest groups to request observer status and that such attendance could be perceived as influencing the outcomes of meetings. Despite their interest, it was felt that there are other ways in which they can participate and contribute to the CMA's work, including through public engagement opportunities or bilateral discussions. Overall, there was agreement that observer requests should only be considered where there is clear benefit to the CMA.

Action #A2019022108: Secretariat to respond to WWF declining their request, emphasizing the attendance should be of benefit to the CMA, and that if the CMA feels their attendance is warranted for a particular topic, an invitation will be issued.

18. Next meetings – *led by Jody Pellissey (Chairperson)*
Schedule meeting for spring/early summer 2019. No other meetings scheduled for this calendar year to date.

Next meeting scheduled for May 16-17, 2019 in Yellowknife.