

Conference of Management Authorities (CMA)
Meeting Minutes, September 27, 2019
Conference Call

Attendees	Organization
Jody Pellissey	CMA Chairperson, Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board
Brett Elkin	Environment and Natural Resources
Rita Mueller	Environment and Natural Resources
Joanna Wilson	Environment and Natural Resources
Rob Gau	Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT)
Larry Carpenter	Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT)
Sam Bullock	Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board
Kaytlin Cooper	Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board
Brooker Barber	Acho Dene Koe First Nation
Deb Simmons	Sahtú Renewable Resources Board
Leon Andrew	Sahtú Renewable Resources Board
Sean Richardson	Tlicho Government
Stephanie Behrens	Tlicho Government
Jessica Hurtubise	North Slave Metis Alliance
Bruce Laurich	Environment and Climate Change Canada
Claire Singer	Species at Risk Secretariat
Michele Grabke	Species at Risk Secretariat

Decision on amending the Stewardship Program funding/scope for future years

The purpose of this conference call is to discuss Stewardship Program-related action items. At the February 2019 meeting, the Conference of Management Authorities (CMA) discussed the importance of implementing recovery strategies and management plans for species at risk. Members at that meeting agreed that the CMA focus should, as much as possible, shift from process to implementation. In May 2019 a proposal for funding/scoping this program for future years was presented to the CMA. The CMA requested additional time to consider ENR's proposal for future fiscal years, and to discuss re-naming the Stewardship Program. The proposal included:

- Increasing the annual amount available under the Stewardship Program to at least \$60,000.
- Re-profiling the Stewardship Program – funding available annually through a territory-wide application call (as happens currently); all projects must link to actions in a published recovery strategy or management plan.
- The Sub-committee will remain responsible for evaluating applications and will provide ENR with recommendations on approving projects.

Further to this, the CMA had asked the Secretariat to consider re-branding the Stewardship Program, as the word 'stewardship' was thought to be unclear. In the context of the above, **does the CMA have any ideas for different names with which to replace 'Stewardship Program'?**

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As per CMA Action Item #A2019051601, the Management Authorities had discussed ENR's proposals for altering the Stewardship Program internally prior to this conference call.

Is this proposal acceptable to the Conference of Management Authorities?

Is the additional funding confirmed?

- ENR confirmed that the intention is to keep the funding amount at a minimum of \$60,000.

Stewardship Subcommittee includes:

- Brett Elkin (ENR), Jessica Hurtubise (NSMA), Amy Amos (GRRB), Jodie Maring (WMAC (NWT) plus Michele Grabke (SAR Secretariat).

During the meeting, different options were discussed regarding the scope of the program:

- Narrow scope: funding focused on species listed under NWT legislation
- Tiered approach: NWT-listed species and actions linked to management plans/recovery strategies are given highest priority for funding; projects for other species at risk and/or other actions will also be considered for funding but given lower priority

Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board

- The GRRB expressed concerns regarding future funding availability for this program. The upcoming election could lead to a change in government and programs like this may be cut back.
- The board discussed the proposal in May 2019. Regarding species eligibility, the board suggested adding species up for assessment (i.e. in addition to listed species). This would allow additional opportunities to fill knowledge gaps (surveys or TK collection). They also suggested including species that have been considered data deficient.
- GRRB also suggested clearly describing whether federal species at risk are eligible for funding under this program. It was suggested that including federal species would be useful and would increase the number of eligible species (e.g. gypsy cuckoo bumblebee).
- There was also a reminder of potential conflicts of interest (e.g. if the applicant is a management authority who is also a member of the review subcommittee). Recall that in the event that the applicant is also a stewardship subcommittee member that the individual is excused from the review of that application.
- GRRB asked if there are any requirements for proposals to link to a local/traditional component. At this time this is not an explicit requirement. However, a letter of support is requested if your project takes place on lands owned or managed by a Renewable Resources Board, Renewable Resources Council or a Band, and you are not the owner or manager. GRRB suggested incorporating efforts to include traditional knowledge and connecting people.
- Regarding a different name for the program, GRRB suggested: break down the word stewardship, focus on matters of value, possibly an indigenous word that could reflect

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stewardship/guardian/keeper. Suggestion: Guardians of the land. Mission: Guardians of the land and water which give life.

Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT)

- WMAC (NWT) agrees with the proposal and agrees that projects should be linked to management plans and recovery strategies. It is not a huge amount of money and priority should be given to species that have already been listed. Regarding federally listed species, there are funds elsewhere that can be accessed for federally listed species, so this program should just be about NWT species.
- Regarding incorporating traditional knowledge – nobody is going to disagree with including TK and TK can be encouraged. But this funding is here to promote the recovery of species at risk. The program can do a better job highlighting the need, but can't require a TK component when we're already having a hard time finding applicants.
- Regarding the name: Stewardship covers what we want to cover. And it would be hard to use an aboriginal name as there are so many groups involved. WMAC (NWT) suggests including the word *recovery* in the title.

North Slave Métis Alliance

- Agreed that we need clarity on whether funding is available for both NWT and federally listed species. NSMA suggested including federally listed species in this program.
- NSMA supports a tiered system.
- Regarding a name, Stewardship is best and focusing on communicating the program effectively would be a better use of time and effort.

Sahtú Renewable Resources Board

- The amount of funding is small for the size of the NWT. So it makes a lot of sense that clear priorities are set on how those funds get expended. Priority setting makes a lot of sense, but the concerns raised by the GRRB with regard to data gaps are real. Difficult to access federal funding for species research for species that have not been listed federally yet. A real challenge in the NWT is that there is a lot of work to be done especially on the TK front.
- With respect to the amount of funding available, the program could consider not advertising the total amount of funding to address concerns with funding not confirmed for future years.
- Agree with GRRB on incorporating traditional knowledge.
- Challenge with a tiered approach will be that the funds are minimal and people could put a lot of work in a proposal and it may not fall under a priority tier. Solution – make that hard decision to make the scope narrow. Proponent of strategic funding that makes a real impact.
- Supports a narrow approach (linking to management plans).

Tlicho Government

- Species eligibility preference is for territorial species over federal. Some of the issues they're dealing with nationally are not necessarily what we are dealing with up here.

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- Supports the proposal. No comments on the name.

Environment and Climate Change Canada

- Likes the idea of putting funding towards data deficiency.
- Regarding funding, if the amount available is uncertain then an option is advertising that there is \$30k with the option of additional funding.
- Support going with tiered approach especially because we are upping the amount available and number of proposals has historically been small.
- Go with the majority as well on the name.

Environment and Natural Resources

- At this time we can confirm we do have \$60K in the budget now for this program.
- Slight modification to eligibility suggested – in addition to published management plans and recovery strategies we could also include linking projects to draft management plans and recovery strategies. Finalizing these plans and strategies take time, the CMA has already reviewed and provided input on draft plans, and they still contain good ideas/guidance.
- Would like to see recovery actions prioritized, but we do not want to exclude other ideas for other species. Rather than making the link to management plans mandatory, it could be approached more as a priority thing. This also addresses the risk from a small number of applications. Historically the number of applications has been small and we don't want to shut the door to other options.
- Eligibility is currently limited to people/organizations that are based in the territory. Would it make sense to have projects based in the NWT? That would mean applicants do not necessarily have to have an NWT address.
- Supports focusing on species recovery using tiers to help prioritize. Highest priority for actions linked to NWT management plans/recovery strategies. Also consider projects on:
 - species that are NWT Listed but no management plan yet,
 - species assessed by SARC as at risk but not listed yet,
 - species that are data deficient in the NWT,
 - species that are assessed or listed as at risk federally (SARA/COSEWIC).
- Supports being creative. Some ideas for names include:
 - Should include NWT or Northwest Territories
 - NWT Species Preservation Fund
 - Conservation, recovery, preservation
 - NWT Species Conservation Fund

Wek'èezhìi Renewable Resources Board

- Agree to have a territorial wide call. No issues with linking projects to published recovery strategies and management plans. However, we also do not want people to feel uncomfortable that their potentially great idea may not fit the scope of the program. A way to get around that is making it clear in the material that if people are interested in funding to contact the secretariat to identify what their project is and make sure it meets the requirements of the program.

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- No issues with the subcommittee and ENR doing the final decision. Supports the tiered approach. Including data deficient species would be a good thing to add if the rest of the CMA agreed to it.
- Regarding names and the suggestion of incorporating the term “guardianship”, the WRRB has concerns about conflict/confusion with community led guardianship programs.

Decision:

- The majority of the CMA supported a tiered approach.
- The Stewardship subcommittee will proceed with the following:
 - new funding amount of \$60,000,
 - territorial wide call out for applications,
 - look for ways to encourage incorporating traditional/community/local knowledge in projects,
 - the subcommittee and ENR will make the final evaluation/selection decisions.

Highest priority for funding will be actions linked to NWT management plans/recovery strategies (final or proposed draft). Will also consider funding projects on:

- species that are NWT Listed but no management plan yet,
- species assessed by SARC as at risk but not listed yet,
- species that are data deficient in the NWT,
- species that are assessed or listed as at risk federally (SARA/COSEWIC).

- The program subcommittee will collectively decide on the possible program name change keeping in mind that the name should clearly represent the program.

Action Item #A2019092701: Send Michele a word or phrase in the indigenous language you represent to potentially be incorporated into the Stewardship Program.

The Secretariat also reminded the CMA that the consultation period for the barren-ground caribou recovery strategy and the bats management plan is from August to November. For the Secretariat to effectively do the re-write in December and January we will need consultation results by the end of November.

-End of meeting-