

Conference of Management Authorities – meeting minutes, approved

**Conference of Management Authorities (CMA)
Meeting Minutes, May 16-17, 2019
Yellowknife, NWT
Nova Hotel, Lynx 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
Bruce Lauritch	Environment and Climate Change Canada
Isabelle Duclos	Environment and Climate Change Canada
Kaaren Lewis	Environment and Climate Change Canada (agenda item 11 only)
Michael Svoboda	Environment and Climate Change Canada (parts of days 1 and 2)
Joanna Wilson	Environment and Natural Resources
Rita Mueller	Environment and Natural Resources
Rob Gau	Environment and Natural Resources
Kaytlin Cooper	Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board
Sam Bullock	Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board
Jessica Hurtubise	North Slave Métis Alliance
Melissa McLellan	North Slave Métis Alliance
Arthur Beck	NWT Métis Nation
Deborah Simmons	Sahtú Renewable Resources Board
Kyanna Lennie-Dolphus	Sahtú Renewable Resources Board
Leon Andrew	Sahtú Renewable Resources Board
Aimee Guile	Species at Risk Committee (agenda item 19 only)
Sean Richardson	Tłı̨chǫ Government
Jodie Maring	Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT)
Larry Carpenter	Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT)
Rosemin Nathoo	Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT)
Claire Singer	Species at Risk Secretariat
Michele Grabke	Species at Risk Secretariat

Opening prayer – Leon Andrew

1. Introductions – *led by Jody Pellissey (Chairperson)*
Round table introductions.
2. Agenda – *led by Jody Pellissey (Chairperson)*
Review of agenda.
3. Minutes – *led by Jody Pellissey (Chairperson)*
Review and approval of draft minutes from February 19-21, 2019.

February 19-21, 2019 meeting minutes approved with revisions.

4. Action items since last meeting – *led by Claire Singer (Secretariat)*
Review of action items from previous meetings and earlier outstanding action items.

Conference of Management Authorities – meeting minutes, approved

5. 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 #D2019051601: Decision to extend completion deadline for wood bison recovery strategy from July 13, 2019 to July 30, 2019.

Decision #D2019051602: Consensus agreement to accept the wood bison recovery strategy was signed and submitted to the Minister on April 29, 2019.

6. Letters sent and received since last meeting – *led by Claire Singer (Secretariat)*
Review of letters sent and received since the last meeting.

7. Updates – *led by Jody Pellissey (Chairperson)*
Updates from Management Authorities and participating organizations.

Environment and Natural Resources

- Wood bison:
 - In April, ENR reached consensus with the other Management Authorities to accept the wood bison recovery strategy for the NWT.
 - ENR is carrying out engagement and consultation on two draft management plans, one for the Slave River Lowlands bison herd and one for the Nahanni bison herd. ENR expects to finalize these plans in July or August.
 - A survey of the Mackenzie population was done in March 2019. Results will be shared with co-management partners when they are available.
- Polar bear:
 - In March and April, ENR collaborated on a genetic mark-recapture survey of polar bears in the Beaufort Sea. This was a large undertaking involving many partners in the NWT, Nunavut, Yukon, and Alaska. The next steps will be genetic analysis, data analysis, and reporting to co-management partners starting this summer.
- Peary caribou:
 - ENR currently has a crew on northwest Victoria Island. They are re-attempting the survey for Peary caribou and muskoxen that was not able to be completed last year.
- Barren-ground caribou:
 - ENR submitted joint management proposals with the Tłı̄chǵ Government to the Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board regarding Bathurst and Bluenose-East caribou management, and participated in the board's April 2019 hearing on Bluenose-East caribou.
 - ENR is submitting the Bathurst Range Plan to the Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board for review per the Tłı̄chǵ Agreement. The goal is to finalize the range plan this summer.

Conference of Management Authorities – meeting minutes, approved

- Wildlife Act regulations:
 - In April ENR submitted the package of phase 2 regulations to the renewable resources boards for review and approval. The department is working to have the regulations in place by July 1; the start of the next hunting season.
 - Guidelines for Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plans were completed as part of the phase 2 Wildlife Act regulations package, and should be in place by July 1.
- Boreal caribou:
 - The phase 2 package of regulations includes changes to boreal caribou harvest regulations for Resident Hunting License holders and General Hunting License holders. This includes a male-only harvest and shorter hunting season, as well as a division between mountain woodland caribou and boreal caribou that will enable better tracking of harvest.
 - On March 13, ENR signed a section 11 agreement with the federal government to strengthen conservation of boreal caribou, with a commitment to complete range planning for boreal caribou within five years. The agreement includes funding to support the conservation work within the agreement, which is based on the CMA's recovery strategy, as well as engagement of indigenous partners.
 - The draft Framework for Boreal Caribou Range Planning was revised and improved in response to feedback received at six working group meetings as well as written comments. The revised framework will be submitted to renewable resources boards for their final review at the beginning of June. ENR's goal is to finalize the framework this summer, and then begin the process to develop 5 regional range plans.
- Western toad:
 - ENR has been working with the Department of Infrastructure to raise awareness about western toads that cross the Liard Highway near the Muskeg River Bridge, in order to reduce roadkill. The department is also working with them to avoid negative impacts to the toads that could be associated with gravel pits.
 - ENR is planning a western toad survey for this summer to better understand the distribution of western toad in the Muskeg River area.
- Bats:
 - ENR recently worked with Ecology North to deliver a bat outreach program to schools in six southern NWT communities.
 - This summer, ENR will be conducting outreach in the southern NWT to promote best practices for how to deal with bats in buildings without harming the bats. The department also plans to carry out some monitoring at bat maternity colonies in the South Slave region.
 - This work is being supported by federal Habitat Stewardship Program (HSP) funding.

Conference of Management Authorities – meeting minutes, approved

- National recovery strategies: ENR has been providing input into Canada's development of a recovery strategy for gypsy cuckoo bumble bee, as well as their federal addition to the recovery strategy for hairy braya.

Government of Canada

- Gypsy cuckoo bumble bee: First jurisdictional review of draft recovery strategy is underway and ECCC staff are now working to incorporate comments received.
- Yellow-banded bumble bee: Draft management plan is being developed and will be sent out for first jurisdictional review later this year.
- Collared pika: Working group has been formed and is working on a management plan. A traditional knowledge expert survey will be going out next week.
- Grizzly bears: Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) grizzly bear working group has been formed and is working on an engagement strategy with governments and indigenous partners to develop the management plan.
- Barren-ground caribou: The pre-listing consultation period has been extended; there is no end date for consultation. Ongoing consultations in a number of jurisdictions. ECCC won't go to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) until next March.
- Downlisting of peregrine falcon, olive-sided flycatcher, and common nighthawk: Comment period is open for communities, with comments due by July 31, 2019. After that date, ECCC will ask wildlife management boards and territorial governments for decisions on whether they support the downlisting (deadline for decision is October 14, 2019).
- Aboriginal Fund for Species at Risk (AFSAR)/HSP proposals: Two projects from the NWT. Decisions on funding expected to be finalized in next few weeks.
- Little brown bat: A statement describing how critical habitat for little brown myotis is legally protected within Nahanni National Park Reserve was posted on April 4, on the public registry.
- Staffing: CWS northern region is welcoming three new species at risk biologists. Bruce replaces Dawn, who will be moving to another position. Two new species at risk biologists in our Iqaluit office.

Tłıchǫ Government

- No updates.

Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT)

- WMAC (NWT) had their regular board meeting March 4-6, 2019 in Inuvik. At this meeting, the Council made the following decisions:
 - To support ENR's recommendation to create a harvesting season for deer for all license holders in the NWT, for which tags will be required.
 - The Council supports conservation in accordance with the ACCWM Bluenose-East action plan, but defers comments on impacts to rights to the Inuvialuit Game Council (IGC).

Conference of Management Authorities – meeting minutes, approved

- The Council had a special meeting on May 15, 2019 in Yellowknife, and at this meeting the Council passed a motion to support the phase 2 Wildlife Act regulation amendments are discussed the ECCC request to add critical habitat and population/distribution objectives to the CMA barren-ground caribou recovery strategy.
- Since the CMA February meeting, WMAC (NWT) members and staff attended:
 - SARC meeting (Fort Simpson)
 - ECCC community consultation tour – proposed uplisting for Dolphin and Union caribou (Paulatuk and Ulukhaktok)
 - Dolphin and Union caribou update community meeting (Ulukhaktok)
 - Tuktoyaktuk Peninsula and Cape Bathurst working group meeting (Inuvik)
 - Dolphin and Union caribou user-to-user meeting (Kugluktuk)
 - Polar Bear Administrative Committee (Fredericton, NB)
- Tuktoyaktuk Peninsula and Cape Bathurst update: The working group members met in Inuvik on March 27, 2019 and had discussions on sensitive habitat mapping sessions. The next working group meeting is planned for June 19 in Tuktoyaktuk and this meeting will be to pan out the mapping session with the THTC members. The IHTC and AHTC members will provide their support to the decision by THTC and will not be attending this meeting.
- Dolphin and Union caribou user-to-user working group meeting: IGC and WMAC (NWT) co-hosted a meeting May 7-8, 2019 in Kugluktuk, NU. The objective of this user-to-user working group is to implement the management plan for Dolphin and Union caribou. The next user-to-user working group meeting is November 17-19, 2019 in Inuvik.
- The next WMAC (NWT) meeting is June 7-9, 2019 in Sachs Harbour.

Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board

- Produced spring newsletter outlining what the board has been doing since the fall.
- Created videos for release on Facebook and YouTube about traditional practices and science research in the Gwich'in Settlement Area (GSA). They should be released soon.
- Reporting for the Stewardship Program and other funding.
- End of year financials resulting in a fairly busy schedule.
- Kaytlin attended the SARC meeting in April and has been quite involved in management planning for several federally-listed species.
- Sarah recently attended the Tracking Change conference in New York – representing the whitefish project we partner on with researchers from the University of Maine and Simon Fraser University.
- Ed is continuing Dall's sheet field work (remote cameras).
- At the end of March, the board help a workshop with the RRCs and public about the harvest survey – Janet and Jordan working on revitalizing it, to include more than just harvested ungulates (observations of species at risk for example).

Conference of Management Authorities – meeting minutes, approved

- Bat data was analyzed – no bats. Still getting told of sightings though, so will deploy some detectors again, but surveys will be less of a priority.
- Upcoming work includes: boreal caribou knowledge consortium meeting in Ottawa in June; boreal caribou range planning consultations in June; Jordan (technician) working on Nature Day in schools; Ed will be conducting more sheep and muskoxen field work plus a possible Sight in Your Rifle event to educate the community about response harvest of barren-ground caribou; Sarah will be conducting Dolly Varden field work; everyone is hoping to go to ArcticNet this year – funding is being solicited.
- Have been speaking with Rosemin at WMAC (NWT) regarding meeting to discuss common species issues, share information, regional successes, etc., as suggested at the CMA workshop in February.

Sahtú Renewable Resources Board

- Participating in boreal caribou range planning framework discussions. Look forward to starting implementation of that work in the region using a community conservation planning approach.
- The board attended the WRRB's Bluenose-East hearing.
- The board is moving into an intensive period of working with communities to ramp up community conservation planning.
- There have been several meetings with Délı̄ne, and the caribou working group has been re-established by the Délı̄ne RRC and the Délı̄ne Got'ı̄ne Government. The hope is to be able to have some messages for neighbours and communities within the Sahtú regarding Délı̄ne's approach to dealing with declines.
- Meetings planned June 4-5, 2019 with Colville Lake regarding their caribou plan.
- The board is planning for an looking to secure funding for a series of hearing events on species topics: harvesting, caribou ecology, wolves and predator/prey relationships, and wildfires and their impacts on caribou habitat. These have been referred to in the Taking Care of Caribou plan as hot topics. This allows the board to consider them in more depth and allows them to hear evidence from scientists and traditional knowledge holders and communities on these topics in order to move forward on some of the recommendations/decisions made for Bluenose-East caribou and how they relate to other caribou populations as well.

Wek'èezhìi Renewable Resources Board

- Involved with signing off the wood bison recovery strategy consensus agreement.
- The board has been involved in two proceedings in the last few months (Bluenose-East and Bathurst). The board met last week and is working on reasons for decision for Bluenose-East and Bathurst recommendations; this will be available to the GNWT shortly.
- The Bathurst range plan has been received for review and approval by June 10.
- Expect the boreal caribou range planning framework to be submitted to the board shortly.

Conference of Management Authorities – meeting minutes, approved

- The board reviewed the phase 2 Wildlife Act regulations last week, and will be forwarding an approval to the GNWT.
- The WRRB has been involved with developing an offset plan for the Tłıchq All-Season Road. A working group has been putting in time to get that plan submitted to the WRRB 30 days prior to the start of construction.
- The board recently gave a presentation to the Standing Committee on Economic Development and the Environment (SCEDE) to provide comments on the draft protected areas and forest legislation.
- A new wildlife management biologist will be starting on May 21, 2019.
- A new board member has been appointment – Isabelle Duclos, who is a federal appointment.

Beverly and Qamanirjuaq Caribou Management Board

- Regular board meeting on April 30-May 2, 2019 in Winnipeg.
- ECCC came and talked about the barren-ground caribou proposed federal listing in response to BQCMB questions asked verbally following an ECCC presentation at a May 2018 meeting and by letter in January 2019. The board still has many unanswered questions, but one of the things that was clarified was that automatic prohibitions would not affect s35 or indigenous harvesting rights. So that clarifies one issue that the board raised at the February CMA meeting regarding harvest in Thaidene Nene. The question still remains about the safety net possibilities down the road.
- Still working towards a November 2019 meeting in Arviat. There's a caribou workshop being planning by Mary Gamberg (contaminants researcher from Yukon) and the Government of Nunavut at that same time, so we're looking to collaborate on that.
- Based in part on funding we received from the CMA Stewardship Program, the board will be doing more poster and prose contests in the NWT. Other funding from a Saskatchewan organization will allow for another contest in that province.
- Got renewed funding to continue harvest reporting project in Nunavut working with Hunters and Trappers Organizations (HTOs) in up to five communities. World Wildlife Canada is funding the communication portion of the project and ongoing work with the Arviat HTO. Will be producing a new harvest calendar for July 2019-June 2020 under this work. The Nunavut General Monitoring Plan is also providing funding.
- Very interested in how the barren-ground caribou recovery strategy discussion goes during this CMA meeting.

NWT Métis Nation

- No updates.

North Slave Métis Alliance

- Busy with financial reporting.

Conference of Management Authorities – meeting minutes, approved

- Attended the Bluenose-East public hearing in Behchokq in April. Were very happy to join in that conversation. We were unfortunately unable to be present, but were able to provide some comments.
- Annual member gathering at Old Fort Rae.
- Stewardship Program funding received for eDNA project this summer. Will be working with members to identify areas of interest in which to do the sampling.
- Attended Tłıchq All-Season Road offset plan meeting.
- Applied for some more funding to do a wolf ecology survey this summer, specifically on wolf den locations. Originally were going to do this project with ENR, but there were some changes in funding, so the NSMA will try to do this ourselves, with a reduced scope. It will be a preliminary pilot project type of study. Maybe one aerial survey and mainly identification of areas where elders know of wolf dens in the area.

8. Work plan – *led by Jody Pellissey (Chairperson)*

Review of process work plan.

9. Annual reports – *led by Jody Pellissey (Chairperson)*

Review draft 2018-19 CMA annual report. Receive ENR's 2018-19 Species at Risk (NWT) Act annual report.

2018-19 CMA annual report approved with edits. Will be submitted to the Legislative Assembly for tabling this fall.

10. Species at Risk Committee – *led by Jody Pellissey (Chairperson)*

Review and approve SARC's proposed 2020-2024 Species Assessment Schedule. Reminder on upcoming SARC appointment expiry dates.

The CMA was asked to review and approved the proposed assessment schedule, noting that there are several other species that SARC has concerns with, and that cranberries (*Vaccinium vitis-idaea*) may be included for assessment in 2025. If you have information available about the status of cranberries, please pass this on to either SARC or the Secretariat.

Decision #D2019051603: Decision to approve 2020-2014 Species Assessment Schedule as submitted.

Six SARC appointments expire next spring. Please consider this a reminder if this is relevant to your board/agency.

Conference of Management Authorities – meeting minutes, approved

11. Presentation – led by Kaaren Lewis (*Environment and Climate Change Canada*) *Pan-Canadian Framework for priority places, species, and threats.*

Presentation was circulated to CMA members. Questions and answers:

- Q: One question about how the species, places, and threats are seen to intersect, or if they are supposed to intersect. If you look at barren-ground caribou, there are no priority places identified in many jurisdictions, and there are no northern threats identified for northern barren-ground caribou habitat. How do you foresee that moving forward?
 - A: They were planned as three separate streams. For species, we were looking for those really wide-ranging, ecologically important species. You're not seeing priority places in those ranges likely because they range so widely. For threats, we expect the three threats identified to be major influencers in the south, although we recognize that there are certainly other threats. The silo that fits best in the north is likely priority species. Over the next five years, we'll be able to access resources to invest in actions on the ground for barren-ground caribou where that makes sense.
- Q: Who was consulted on the development of the framework?
 - A: The word is engagement here, not consultation. That's speaking to the direction in terms of path forward. This will determine how best to move forward together. There was no formal consultation process around the identification of these priorities.
- Q: What is meant by the 'indigenous stream'?
 - A: Under the Canada Nature Fund, there are four funding envelopes where there's notional allocation of money. Indigenous conservation partnerships – this is directed funding to partners to support indigenous conservation partnership work. There won't be a funding call because it's directed funding. Those partnerships can be worked out at the regional level, and then CWS would lead requesting that money.
- Q: Is that targeted for indigenous governments, or does it encompass the idea of co-management boards?
 - A: There's a lot to it, and we're still trying to formalize the program design around it. Objectives might include increasing capacity, fulfilling legal obligations to consult more effectively, or to permit leadership roles. It's targeted at First Nations organizations in general.
- Q: Were no applications received from the north for community-nominated priority places?
 - A: None were received for northern regions.
- Comment: It's essential to understand that the north is not the same as anywhere else in Canada. Depending on how that funding is made available, and the application process, it could actually cause different indigenous organizations and governments to compete with each other in a way that's not beneficial to any of them. When you think about how this will look, it's really important to consider

Conference of Management Authorities – meeting minutes, approved

the opportunity for co-management boards to apply for funding of common interest.

- A: Thank you. This is a critical point and we have to think very carefully about it. It will be brought back to the group that's responsible for furthering the design piece.
- Q: Given this discussion, is there any possibility for there to be a more focused, northern discussion about this whole picture? I'm thrilled to hear about this re-design, but there's some customizing that's required. If there was no response from the north on the community-nominated places piece, I'd be interested in knowing why and figuring out whether there's some kind of barrier.
 - A: There was interest shown during the Expression of Interest stage, but these groups decided for whatever reason, not to go ahead with the proposal. Some of the priority places have well-established networks of people. It's not something easy to just push out a proposal and get everyone on side to put the concept forward. Its application in the north might not be as advanced as it is down south. However, the priority species piece seems to be where the traction and attention needs to be over the next few years. As the years go on, there may be the opportunity to have more detailed discussions, especially as more of the money in this fund becomes available.
- Q: How is the negotiation with non-land claim organizations in Atlantic Canada going compared to here?
 - A: There are a lot of negotiations going on. Some indigenous-focused working groups meet on a regular basis. They have been exposed to the framework. In terms of communications here, I would say there's general support for the direction but they are wanting to see greater reflection of indigenous priorities. They would have liked to have been engaged earlier on in the identification of priorities. Moving forwards, we've received a very strong message that we will not be successful if we do not engage. Also, to not effectively protect species at risk effectively extinguishes the right to harvest, and that's unacceptable.

12. Stewardship Program – led by Stewardship Sub-committee and Secretariat Report on 2019-20 Stewardship Program projects. Funding availability update.

Overview of projects approved for funding in 2019-20 provided by Sub-committee.

\$30,000 in additional funding has been confirmed by the Government of the Northwest Territories (in addition to the funding that was provided to approved 2019-20 projects, noted above). This money has been ear-marked for recovery/management implementation activities in the 2019/20 fiscal year (April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020). This funding is being made available to members (Management Authorities or participants) of the CMA. If you have a project in mind that you feel meets the criteria circulated during the meeting, please send a short description of the project and any

Conference of Management Authorities – meeting minutes, approved

proposed deliverables, and a proposed budget, to the Secretariat by no later than June 15, 2019. Please note the below definition of ‘implementation activities’:

“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.”

Note that ‘normal’ activities, such as the development of management plans/recovery strategies, development of consensus agreements at any phase, and consultation/public engagement work associated with the development of these documents, are not considered eligible.

ENR anticipates that the additional \$30,000 confirmed for this year will likely be available in future fiscal years as well. Given the recognized and agreed-upon importance of actually implementing recovery strategies/management plans, ENR has proposed:

- 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.

Is this proposal acceptable to the CMA?

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’?

The CMA requested additional time to consider ENR’s proposal for future fiscal years, and to discuss re-naming the Stewardship Program.

Action Item #A2019051601: Management Authorities to discuss ENR’s proposals for altering the Stewardship Program and come prepared to provide their positions at a September conference call.

13. Wood bison – led by Jody Pellissey (Chairperson)

Press release for completion of recovery strategy. Development of implementation agreement. Legal deadline for completion/submission of implementation consensus agreement is April 29, 2020.

Conference of Management Authorities – meeting minutes, approved

CMA reviewed draft press release announcing completion of the recovery strategy. The press release will go out after the July 29, 2019 completion timeline. No concerns were raised with the press release.

Management Authorities need to consider their required actions to prepare for the consensus agreement on implementation. Please review and revise as necessary the draft document provided by the Secretariat.

14. Bats – led by Jody Pellissey (Chairperson)

Review and verify timelines in work plan. Actions needed to prepare, including consultation/engagement plan for August-November 2019. Deadline for management plan consensus agreement submission is April 11, 2020.

Completion of the first draft of the management plan has taken a bit of a back seat to the barren-ground caribou recovery strategy, but it should be ready to circulate to the CMA shortly. Once you receive that, all partners are requested to provide comments by late June 2019 (to be confirmed). The report preparer will revise the management plan in July and the proposed draft will then be ready for the August-November 2019 consultation/engagement period.

Management Authorities need to consider their required actions to prepare for the consensus agreement accepting the management plan. Please review and revise as necessary the draft document provided by the Secretariat.

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

Discussion of second draft of recovery strategy. Decide whether critical habitat and population/distribution objectives should be added. Deadline to submit comments on second draft is June 7, 2019. Actions needed to prepare, including consultation/engagement plan for August-November 2019.

The CMA discussed initial impressions and comments on draft 2 of the recovery strategy. There were concerns that this review would generate comments whose resolution ought to be reviewed by the CMA again prior to the onset of consultation/engagement. It was agreed that a conference call in late July was needed to discuss the proposed recovery strategy. Comments on this second draft are due to the Secretariat by June 7, 2019.

Regarding ECCC's proposal to incorporate, in some manner, information to support the later identification of critical habitat and population/distribution objectives, although there was some hesitation about the scope and time it could take to accommodate this request, it was generally considered to be a good idea. ENR submitted a proposal for integrating these ideas into the recovery strategy. Their proposal, which is outlined in the following bullets, was accepted.

Conference of Management Authorities – meeting minutes, approved

- The identification and detailed description of critical habitat is better led under the federal process; however, this is an opportunity for the CMA to advance barren-ground caribou conservation by identifying certain areas we all agree are of particularly high importance. There seems to be broad consensus that calving grounds and post-calving grounds are essential, across herds. A few other key range types were identified through the Bathurst range planning process – water crossings, land bridges, centers of habitation, and large areas of mature forest on the winter range. We could add some text to emphasize their importance, recognizing that there is some variation among herds. It would provide a starting point for further ECCC investigations and wouldn't be as time-consuming as identifying more detailed habitat functions, features, and attributes.
- Under the population/distribution objectives, we were asked to elaborate on the natural range of variation in herds and, if possible, to provide targets to quantify this. While we know there have been previous highs and lows in populations, we only have population estimates for the last 50-60 years, so we can't say how low or how high herds have gone in the past. This also varies by herd. However, we could talk about known low or high numbers in herds as long as it's clear that it's not the complete natural range of variation. This would involve adding some text to the goal of the recovery strategy that provides context and links it back to the highs and lows.
- Next, we were asked to consider immediate short-term steps to move towards the goals for each herd (e.g., maintain trend, stop decline, etc.). This could be fairly straight-forward for the CMA to agree on for each herd. The CMA agreed that this was doable, and the following herd-specific targets were approved:
 - Tuktoyaktuk Peninsula: More information needed.
 - Cape Bathurst: Maintain current trend.
 - Bluenose-West: Achieve an increasing trend.
 - Bluenose-East: Stop the decline.
 - Bathurst: Stop the decline.
 - Beverly: Stop the decline.
 - Ahiak: More information needed.
 - Qamanirjuaq: Stop the decline.
- Regarding distribution objectives, distribution has changed over time for at least some of these herds. It would make sense to recognize the need to maintain the historic distribution of the herds, even if all historic range for each herd is not in use currently, because caribou herds may need to use those areas in the future. Possible wording for a goal: "Barren-ground caribou to continue to occur in the areas where they have historically been found." "A barren-ground caribou population that moves freely across its historic range." "Barren-ground caribou are able to move freely on the land within their historic ranges to ensure natural habitat use and migration."
 - In this context, it was noted that it will be important to add a caveat to the map currently in the recovery strategy indicating that these annual ranges do not show the full extent of historical range use. It may also be possible

Conference of Management Authorities – meeting minutes, approved

to include the traditional and community knowledge range map used in the species status report.

Management Authorities need to consider their required actions to prepare for the consensus agreement accepting the recovery strategy. Please review and revise as necessary the draft document provided by the Secretariat.

16. Dolphin and Union caribou – led by Isabelle Duclos (Environment and Climate Change Canada).

Update on federal consultations.

Consultation on the proposed federal change of status (Special Concern to Endangered) has started. In April, ECCC visited Kugluktuk, Cambridge Bay, Ulukhaktok, and Paulatuk. For the NWT tour, WMAC (NWT) was present with ECCC. ECCC still needs to meet with some groups, including the IGC, Inuvialuit Land Administration (ILA), Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board (KRWB), and Kitikmeot Inuit Association.

Based on consultation thus far, the proposed status change is not supported and communities feel the species should remain Special Concern.

This does not directly affect the status of Dolphin and Union caribou under the *Species at Risk (NWT) Act*. The species is listed as Special Concern and there is no proposal to change that at this time. The proposal being considered by ECCC at the moment relates to the recent re-assessment of this species by COSEWIC.

17. Hairy braya – led by Isabelle Duclos (Environment and Climate Change Canada)

Potential adoption of NWT recovery strategy for federal requirements. Does the CMA approve the adoption of the NWT recovery strategy as part of the national recovery strategy?

ECCC is currently working on the second draft of the federal sections of the recovery strategy, including critical habitat, population/distribution objectives, etc. In order to reduce duplication, ECCC would like to adopt the CMA's recovery strategy as part of the national recovery strategy. Approval is being solicited for this request.

The CMA approved the adopting of the NWT recovery strategy by ECCC, as part of the federal recovery strategy.

Questions arose as part of this conversation regarding the importance of recovering hairy braya, given that it is not harvested and its role in the ecosystem is not known. Points were raised about the importance of not losing any part of our biodiversity; however, the Secretariat will prepare a document summarizing the importance of protecting this species.

Conference of Management Authorities – meeting minutes, approved

Action Item #A2019051602: Secretariat to summarize and circulate reasons for protecting hairy braya.

18. Peary caribou – *led by Isabelle Duclos (Environment and Climate Change Canada)*
Federal recovery strategy progress update. Recovery strategy and consensus agreement must be submitted to Minister of ENR by September 30, 2019. Is an extension needed?

Since the last CMA meeting, ECCC has considered all comments related to critical habitat received during the last jurisdictional review. To address those comments, ECCC is currently developing a work plan that they should be able to share soon, which will include options for identifying critical habitat and specific timelines. They are planning on submitting a final draft to the NWMB in March or June 2020.

This means that an extension on the recovery strategy will be required (the recovery strategy and consensus agreement must be submitted to the Minister by September 30, 2019 under the CMA's current timelines). Given the time that the NWMB may require to conduct their own review/approvals, a 2 year extension was agreed upon.

Decision #D2019051604: Decision to extend completion deadline for Peary caribou recovery strategy by another 2 years, to September 30, 2021.

19. Bumble bees – *led by Aimee Guile (Species at Risk Committee)*
SARC presentation re: bumble bee assessment results from April 2019 meeting.

SARC provided a presentation summary of the recent assessment results for western bumble bee (Data Deficient), yellow-banded bumble bee (Not at Risk), and gypsy cuckoo bumble bee (Data Deficient) in the NWT.

SARC also provided a number of recommendations for bee, and more broadly, pollinator, management in the future. These can be considered by Management Authorities as desired. It was noted that ENR is working on getting more information on the import of non-native bees. People are bringing bees into every region of the NWT. Our discussions with other departments include achieving better tracking of these bees.

If you would like to submit a request for clarification on these assessments, these should be submitted to SARC by June 5, 2019. SARC will respond within 30 days.

20. Polar bears – *led by Claire Singer (Secretariat)*
Re-assessment is scheduled for April 2021. Do Management Authorities have new information they want the contractors to consider?

Secretariat presented the timelines for re-assessment of polar bears, and asked that any new information to be considered be forwarded as soon as possible

Conference of Management Authorities – meeting minutes, approved

21. Next meetings – led by Jody Pellissey (Chairperson)

- July 25, 2019 teleconference, 1-4pm – to discuss proposed draft barren-ground caribou recovery strategy.
- September 27, 2019 teleconference, 10am-12pm – to discuss Stewardship Program approvals.
- December 13, 2019 teleconference, 9am-12pm – to discuss consultation/engagement results for the barren-ground caribou recovery strategy and the bat management plan.
- February 18-20, 2020 face-to-face meeting in Inuvik – regular meeting, will include consensus agreement approvals for wood bison implementation, bat management plan, and barren-ground caribou recovery strategy.