

Annual Report 2001-02

Fisheries Joint Management Committee

Under Section 14.(61) of the IFA, the Fisheries Joint Management Committee (FJMC) provides advice to the Minister of Fisheries & Oceans Canada (DFO) on all matters affecting fisheries and management of fish and marine mammals found in the ISR. The FJMC works closely with government agencies, renewable resource user groups in the Inuvialuit communities, and other renewable resource boards in Canada and Alaska that oversee



FJMC Coop Award winner, Lois Harwood with FJMC members, Bell Day, Dowler, Ayles and Ktokak.

common migratory stocks.

The FJMC's implementation funds for Committee operations and research budget totaled **\$717,559** in the year. Implementation funds to support the Committee's operations, provided through a contribution agreement with DFO, totaled \$368,325.00. A second contribution agreement for \$35,000.00 provided support to the Inuvialuit Harvest

Study.

Consultation & Planning

In keeping with the co-management philosophy of the IFA, consultation with local Hunters & Trappers' Committees (HTCs), Inuvialuit Game Council (IGC), Fisheries & Oceans Canada (DFO), and other government agencies formed an important part of the Committee's activities. In addition to holding 5 regular meetings, 7 teleconferences, and one special joint meeting with a multi-agency working group developing a pilot marine protected area in the Beaufort Sea, the Committee also held public meetings in Paulatuk, Holman, and Sachs Harbour to discuss with hunters and fishers issues of concern related to fish, marine mammals, and research priorities for the region. One of our regular meetings was held in Winnipeg at Fisheries & Oceans Canada's Freshwater Institute to facilitate information exchange and project planning with the Department's scientific and management staff. The process by which the FJMC sets our research priorities and develops a workplan is unique among Inuvialuit Joint Implementing Bodies. Community meetings in November, discussions with scientific staff at the Freshwater Institute in January and Committee planning sessions in March, all comprise the essential elements in the Committee's annual

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work plan and budgeting cycle for the new fiscal year.

After almost 2 years of development, the FJMC Vision Statement nears completion. The Vision Statement is a strategic plan that will direct FJMC's activities for the first decade of the new millennium. This important document contains a set of guiding fundamental principles, a clear vision for the future of fish and marine mammal management in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, and a set of milestones for the next decade.

Research & Monitoring

The FJMC was active in numerous research, monitoring, and management programs in 2001-02. A total of 25 projects were conducted through joint efforts between the FJMC and DFO.

We have continued to support charr monitoring projects in Paulatuk and Holman that provide information for existing community-based charr fishing plans which have been implemented for the Hornaday and Kuujua rivers near Paulatuk and Holman respectively. Also in support of the Hornaday plan, the Committee continues to fund contribute to a baseline water quality and quantity monitor project for that river system.

The FJMC allocated operating funds to support the West Side Working Group and its efforts to develop a community-driven integrated fishing plan that will cover numerous fish

species and a range of Yukon North Slope/West Side rivers from the Big Fish River west to the Fish Creek near the Alaskan border. This fiscal year, the Working Group, which includes representatives from the Aklavik HTC and Elders Committee, FJMC, DFO, and Parks Canada Agency, assembled critical scientific and traditional knowledge information on North Slope fisheries that will form the foundation of the future management plan. A traditional knowledge study was completed that collected observations and stories from Inuvialuit fishers of the North Slope and western Delta waters. The local knowledge gathered spans over 70 years and provides valuable insights on trends in fishing site and species usage, as well as changes in the local environment and habitat.

Support of a multi-year program to assess ecology and fisheries resources of Husky and Sitidgi Lakes continues to be a priority of this Committee. These lakes support important local subsistence and recreational fisheries. In coming years, the Committee anticipates growing pressures associated with accelerating hydrocarbon development on surrounding lands and increased public access through seasonal ice roads and a proposed all-weather road to Tuktoyaktuk.

The FJMC continues to allocate funds in support of a satellite telemetry program to monitor the movements of ringed seals. As a follow-up to a

two-year tagging program conducted in Holman, seals were tagged this year in the Cape Perry area near Paulatuk. The Committee also continued to sponsor a long-term project designed to monitor the reproductive status and condition of ringed seals in Amundsen Gulf. The quality of country foods also continues to be a significant concern for the communities. In response to this concern as well as to monitor animal health, the Committee allocated funds for research involving the collection of samples from harvested marine mammals (*including ringed seals and beluga*) for contaminant and disease analysis.

In addition to annual research project funding, the Committee also supports long-term harvest monitoring programs that provide essential harvest data required by the Committee for making sound management decisions.

- In co-operation with the HTC's, the FJMC delivers the beluga harvest monitoring program. Local Inuvialuit whale monitors employed by HTC's are stationed in each of the active whaling camps within the ISR. They collect biological information from each harvested whale. Committee staff provided training, program and logistic support, co-ordination of special sample collection, and data collation. Monitors

also kept track of aircraft traffic over whale camps and filled out detailed incident reports in cases where aircraft harassed/disturbed whales and/or harvesters. At season's end, these harassment incident reports were turned over to DFO Conservation & Protection for follow-up with identified air charter companies.

- Following the cancellation of the Inuvialuit Harvest Study, the Committee continued its support of the collection of Inuvialuit subsistence fisheries harvest data by DFO in 2001-02.

Finally, in accordance with Section 14.(64) of the Inuvialuit Final Agreement, this fiscal year was a time of renewal for FJMC's Private Lands Sport Fishing Registry. Recreational anglers fishing within the Inuvialuit Settlement Region are now being surveyed on an annual basis. Results from FJMC's first annual ISR Spring-Summer Sport Angler Harvest Survey for 2000 were analyzed and communicated back to communities, recreational anglers, and government agencies. Data collection for the 2001 ISR Spring-Summer Sport Angler Survey was completed by the end of the 2001-02 fiscal year. The scope of the 2001 Spring-Summer angler survey was expanded to include both GNWT

sport fishing licence holders and visitors to National Parks within the ISR who held a federal Parks Canada fishing permit. Findings from the 2000 pilot survey helped the FJMC in designing an effective promotional and education campaign for their ISR Private Lands Fishing Registry in 2001-02. The first stage of a promotional campaign to better educate fishing licence vendors, HTC's, and recreational anglers was completed. The campaign featured: large wall displays at major air and road travel gateways into the ISR; new private lands wall maps for all fishing licence vendors and HTC's in the region; information brochures reprinted and distributed to vendors and HTC's; advertisements in NWT Tourism's Explorers Guide / Guide to Hunting & Fishing in the Northwest Territories and Beaufort Delta Attractions Guide.

Hydrocarbon Development

The FJMC continues to be well positioned to provide sound advice on issues related to accelerating oil and gas industry activities in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region. The Committee and staff have been regular participants in pre-submission community and agency consultations by industry. FJMC maintains tightened screening procedures for the review of all industry proposals before EISC that have the potential to impact on fish, marine mammals, and/or aquatic habitat in the ISRT

complement the more technical and scientific efforts of our partners at DFO Habitat, the FJMC provided a more "common sense" and "environmental sensitivity" perspective in our assessments of industry proposals during teleconferences scheduled prior to each Screening meeting. Prior to every Screening meeting, the Committee continues to review all oil & gas proposals before EISC. Throughout the fiscal year, the Committee has been quite concerned for, and even critical of Fisheries & Oceans Canada's ability to meet the challenges related to increased hydrocarbon activities in this region. The FJMC has actively pressed the Department and other federal agencies for increased government staff & resource capacity in the region. In addition, to open lines of communication between DFO and their fisheries habitat regulator counterparts in Alaska during the current hydrocarbon boom, FJMC facilitated an informal meeting between field level biologists and regulators from the Northwest Territories, Yukon, and Alaska. The meeting allowed DFO representatives and their US colleagues to share information, experiences, and mitigation strategies regarding the impacts of oil & gas activity on fish and fish habitat.

Beluga Management and Pilot Marine Protected Areas

The FJMC was pleased to initiate the Beaufort Sea Integrated Management Planning Initiative

(BSIMPI) in co-operation with Fisheries & Oceans Canada. This multi-stakeholder initiative is being facilitated through a Working Group that includes representatives from FJMC, DFO, Inuvialuit Game Council, Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, Indian and Northern Affairs, and the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers. The goal of this Initiative is to establish a pilot marine protect area under the Oceans Act to ensure that traditional Inuvialuit subsistence whaling in sensitive areas identified under the Beluga Management Plan (2001, Amended 3rd Printing) will not be impacted by accelerating development activities in the Beaufort-Delta.

FJMC worked in cooperation with the Inuvialuit Game Council and Inupiat signatories to organize and provide technical support for the first meeting of the Inuvialuit-Inupiat Beaufort Sea Beluga Commission meeting held in Anchorage, AK.

Emerging Commercial Fisheries

In response to increasing interest by business entities from outside the region to develop commercial fisheries in the Beaufort Sea, the Committee has been working closely with Fisheries & Oceans Canada and the Inuvialuit Game Council to lay the foundations for a regionally managed, sustainable commercial fisheries in the Beaufort Sea that will benefit Inuvialuit economically while not adversely impact traditional

subsistence harvesting activities.

COSEWIC and Species-at-Risk Legislation

The FJMC has worked more closely with COSEWIC over the past year to better define the Committee's role in the federal assessment process for endangered species. The Committee participated in the preliminary stages of re-assessment of bowhead and beluga whales.

Communications

FJMC continues to develop its existing website (www.fjmc.ca) as a means to better inform the public, government, and industry about FJMC and fisheries co-management in the ISR. A variety of FJMC reports and other materials are available on the site for downloading by interested parties. The FJMC reaches Inuvialuit beneficiaries within the Inuvialuit Settlement Region through their annual ISR community tour and regular contributions of an FJMC news brief to the Joint Secretariat-Inuvialuit Renewable Resource Committee's newsletter –the JS Bulletin. The Bulletin is widely distributed to every registered Inuvialuit beneficiary each Spring and Fall.

Student Mentoring Program & Inuvialuit Youth

The FJMC's Student Mentoring Program returned for its 5th successful season in 2001-02. The Program

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hosted 4 students (3 from Inuvik and 1 from Tuktoyaktuk), enjoyed new work placement partnerships (including Parks Canada, Natural Resources Canada, Government of the Northwest Territories-Department of Resources & Wildlife, Aurora Research Institute, Kavik AXYS, Inuvialuit Environmental & Geotechnical), an expanding family of funding agencies (including the Territorial Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, and Enbridge Inc.), and welcomed the return of the Boot Lake aquatic science training module featuring a new study manual developed by Fisheries & Oceans Canada. As part of an effort to recruit new students for the 2001 Program, FJMC staff organized and delivered a school tour to high schools in Inuvik, Aklavik, and Tuk in May 2001. This tour involved DFO staff and FJMC Committee members. Through this tour, relationships were established with local science teachers who will be key in the annual recruitment of new academically gifted Inuvialuit students into the Mentoring Program. The FJMC Mentoring

Program is offered in partnership with DFO and is designed to encourage Inuvialuit youth to finish high school and continue with their studies in the sciences so that they can become the ISR's future resource managers and biologists.

FJMC staff and members also participated in a regional career fair - Career Quest 2002- with an FJMC tradeshow display and classroom presentation to junior and senior high school students from around the Beaufort-Delta region.



Aklavik community meeting.