

commonground



Bulletin of the Joint Secretariat
Summer 2007 Issue 15

Executive Director's Feature

For me the New Year (2007) started with a MEDEVAC to Yellowknife. This wasn't quite the start I'd expected, but everything seems to be sorted out now, and I very much appreciate the kind thoughts and actions of my family, friends and other well-wishers during that time.

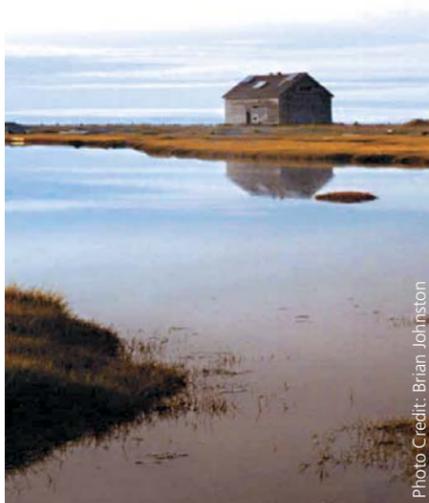
The Joint Secretariat remains involved in the JRP hearings, and as most people are aware, the proceedings have been extended again. There will likely be a further extension following the filing of new project details by Imperial and the other proponents in May. Following the conclusion of the hearings phase, the Panel must finalize, and then file its report with government. This will likely not be until next year.

Our own boards are finally up to strength with the recent re-appointment of Larry Carpenter as Chair of the WMAC (NWT), and we welcome Fred McFarland: an old friend of the IFA, and the new Chair for the EISC. The delays are caused by a mysterious and incredibly slow governmental appointment/consent process, which it seems is impossible to speed up. We do, however, keep trying.

The Joint Secretariat staff situation has also been stabilized following a fairly turbulent time, but there will be further adjustments when two of our admin folks go on maternity leave in the fall.

One of the highlights in this edition is the Yukon North Slope Conference, and I would like to add my congratulations to all involved. Having attended every North Slope Conference, this was one of the best: grand participation; well organized, and well attended – Well done!

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Herschel Island. YT

Photo Credit: Brian Johnston

Keeping Track: Yukon North Slope Conference 2007



Over 150 delegates gathered in Whitehorse for the 2007 Yukon North Slope Conference.

The winter winds blew warmly for the 2007 North Slope Conference, held this year in Whitehorse. Over 150 delegates packed the Westmark Whitehorse Hotel from January 30 to February 1 for three days of dialogue on the conference theme, "Environmental Monitoring and Reporting in Wildlife Management."

The 2007 Conference drew individuals from across the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, Canada and Alaska. It offered panel presentations, plenary speeches, communication workshops and an array of posters. Discussions focused on increasing rates of change to environmental conditions throughout the North, particularly associated with climate change. Conference participants discussed ways to track how wildlife, people and communities are responding and will adapt to their changing world.

The involvement of Inuvialuit harvesters and local and regional managers was an important aspect of the conference. Many community representatives traveled to Whitehorse to offer their unique views and first-hand knowledge on issues related to environmental monitoring.

Randall Pokiak shared his perspectives as an Inuvialuit harvester in a speech titled "The Role of Traditional Users in Environmental Monitoring Programs". Randall spoke about the importance of using information provided by harvesters, challenges that harvesters must overcome, and sacrifices they make to contribute their knowledge to wildlife management and research.

Randall's speech was followed by a panel highlighting the experience of traditional users in monitoring programs. It included facilitators Evelyn Storr and Barney Smith, and panelists Annie B. Gordon, Frank Pokiak, Max Kotokak, Michael Fabijan and Mike Gill. Annie B. Gordon gave a personal account of her involvement with the Arctic Borderlands Ecological Knowledge Co-op. Annie's energy and enthusiasm for her job were obvious; her role as a community interviewer is helping preserve the traditional knowledge of local elders and residents for generations to come.

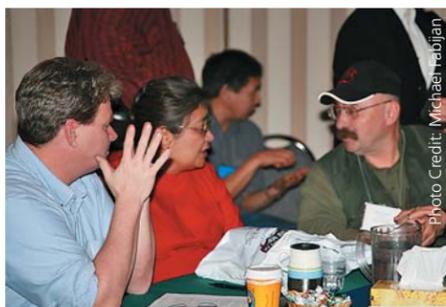
Frank Pokiak spoke about his experience as a beluga whale monitor. Frank's work contributes important information in helping to understand more about the beluga, and what the effects of climate change and other activities may have on them. Max Kotokak shared information about the beluga whale monitoring program.



Frank Pokiak shared his experiences as a beluga whale monitor.

John Alikamak spoke about his experience as a ringed seal monitor at Holman for more than a decade. Panelist Richard Binder discussed the impacts of development in the ISR over the last 30 years. He talked of the need for Inuvialuit to control regional development to make sure they benefit from it. Inuvialuit participation in monitoring programs and resource development decisions are important ways of meeting this need.

Delegates particularly enjoyed a panel focusing on Herschel Island. Park Rangers Richard Gordon and Lee John Meeyok shared their unique perspectives as both managers and community members in monitoring programs that also involve scientists. Park Rangers are involved in conducting research and gathering data for scientific projects. They serve a pivotal role as caretakers of the stories of the past and as protectors of the unique identity of Herschel Island that they hope to preserve for the future.



Participants enjoyed many opportunities for informal discussions.

"It is beautiful...you see life, and you hear life, and you protect life; that's the uniqueness of Herschel Island. It's got so many untold stories that are just waiting to get out there to be discovered, and we are the interpreters of that, and that's what we're going to continue for the next 20 years." Richard Gordon



Lindsay Staples, Chair of WMAC(NS) with John Donihee, Chair of the 2007 Yukon North Slope Conference.

Two researchers known to many in the ISR were in attendance. Dr. Chris Burn of Carleton University gave a speech on the importance of climate change monitoring in northern Canada. He spoke about the special opportunity and benefits of involving Inuvialuit and other Aboriginal communities in this work. Dr. Wayne Pollard of McGill University echoed these views in his presentation.

David Livingstone of DIAND (Yellowknife), an architect of the Cumulative Effects Assessment Monitoring Framework, gave a speech about the important work of bringing arctic researchers together with experienced and knowledgeable traditional users of the land, if Canadians are to improve our understanding of the rapid changes that are occurring in northern environments.

The insights shared by speakers, panelists and other presenters provided participants with a better understanding of the challenges facing environmental monitoring in northern Canada and on the Yukon North Slope – particularly with regard to communicating this information to northern communities and to using this information in wildlife and resource management decision-making.

Thank you to all who participated and made the conference a success!

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Inuvialuit Game Council



IGC Update

The early part of 2007 was a busy time for the Game Council. In January there was a series of meetings that were back-to-back which included the Joint Review Panel hearings, the Caribou Summit in Inuvik, Arctic Frontiers Conference, and the North Slope Conference in Whitehorse. The North Slope Conference had a great atmosphere and saw excellent representation from the co-management boards and other aboriginal organizations from the communities.

Council Chair Frank Pokiak and member Charles (Chucky) Gruben attended the Polar Bear Technical Committee meetings to discuss management issues across the United States, Canada, and Greenland. This meeting was



Polar Bear

especially important in light of the proposal to list polar bears as threatened under the U.S. *Endangered Species Act*. This listing could affect the importation of polar bear hides into the U.S. and in turn affect the outfitters in the ISR. The IGC made a submission to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service opposing the proposed listing of polar bears as well as making a presentation at a public hearing on this issue in Anchorage, Alaska. The IGC is considering a proposal to change the management boundaries for the South Beaufort and North Beaufort populations. This proposed change of boundaries stems from work done over the last few years by Ian Stirling.

The IGC had representatives attend the 1st International Beluga Whale Conference along with members of the Fisheries Joint Management Committee. The Chair of the Council continues to be involved in a Bluenose Caribou Advisory Committee, which is made up of the chairs of

various management bodies from the different regions in the NWT and Nunavut that are users of the Bluenose Caribou herds. The IGC is also involved in the development of a Harvest Management Strategy with the Porcupine Caribou Management Board.

This year (September 2007) marks the end of the term of the current IGC Chair. Notice of the upcoming election will be sent to each HTC Resource Person and nomination forms can be picked up from the HTC offices. The election is scheduled some time in August and all 42 HTC board members will have the opportunity to cast their ballot for the next Inuvialuit Game Council Chair. Until next time, have a safe and enjoyable summer season.

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Environmental Impact Review Board



EIRB Update

The Environmental Impact Review Board held its first meeting for 2007 on March 13 – 15 in Inuvik. The March meeting was highlighted by visits to Hunters and Trappers Committees and Community Corporation representatives in Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk. These visits were part of the EIRB's continuing efforts to finalize criteria for establishing environmental standards in the Husky Lakes region. The discussions with these representatives were productive and the EIRB will be guided by the feedback received.

At its March meeting the EIRB hosted a presentation from Mike Peters, Policy Analyst, with the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP), Calgary.

Mr. Peters outlined the context for northern exploration and production. Despite a decline in existing petroleum resources companies are not rushing to the North. He noted the challenges of limited infrastructure and a complex regulatory environment continues to make the North a high-cost/high-risk operating environment. Companies working in the North are helped by knowing with some certainty what factors trigger environmental assessment. Mr. Peters said CAPP appreciates the opportunity to communicate this message so there can be increased understanding of the business cycle and improved certainty when making planning decisions.

At its March meeting, the Review Board considered investigating in more detail

environmental issues relating to global warming. The Chair also suggested the EIRB undertake a special project that might more definitively examine the methodologies and experience for the disposal of drilling wastes. It is hoped that by completing this kind of work, the EIRB can contribute in a productive manner to the information known on this subject. The Board will make a decision on this project soon.

EIRB members have recently participated in training developed by an initiative of the NWT Board Forum. This has proved beneficial to keeping Board members current with technical and Board governance issues.

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Environmental Impact Screening Committee



EISC Update

Activity Report

The fall and winter periods have been quite active for the Screening Committee. The meetings have been quite busy with project screening. The EISC meetings continued as scheduled, except for one meeting that had to be rescheduled from end of February to beginning of March.

Larry Peckford carried out the duties, as the EISC Resource Person during the time the position was vacant. Therefore, we would like to thank Larry for carrying on with the EISC duties, well done Larry! We now have a new Resource Person Agnes Noksana. Agnes started with the EISC in November 2006, she has been busy with the project applications coming through and is getting settled in her new position.

Bill Klassen retired from his position as Chair on January 2007. Fred McFarland has been nominated and appointed as Chair since



Fred MacFarland, new chairperson EISC

March 20, 2007. Morris George has been nominated and appointed the Yukon Government Member as of December 2006. Members attended screening meetings approximately every five weeks and participated in other activities on behalf of the EISC, as required, to fulfill the mandate of the EISC.

Submissions

It is the responsibility of the proponent to submit a project description to the EISC for environmental screening. Screening decisions are made by a panel of five EISC members. The Panel consists of the Chair, two Inuvialuit members, the Canada member, and the Territorial member nominated by the territory (YT or NT) within which the project is to occur. Decisions are made on a majority vote basis, with the Chair voting in the case of a tie.

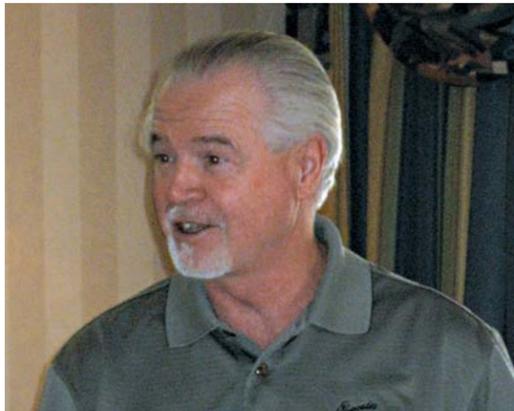
In regard to submissions received by the EISC, 2006/2007 was a relatively busy year when compared with the previous few years. Sixty-three project descriptions were submitted.

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FMJC Update

NEW FJMC MEMBER

The Committee would like to take this opportunity to welcome the FJMC's new Government of Canada appointee: D. Victor (Vic) Gillman. Vic is no stranger to the ISR, having worked with Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) in the Arctic as a Fisheries Management Technician for fifteen years and as DFO Area Manager in Inuvik from 1987 – 1991. Most



Vic Gillman, new FJMC Canada Member

recently, Vic has been DFO Science's Acting Regional Director for Central and Arctic Region in Winnipeg. Vic brings to the Committee a wealth of fisheries management knowledge, and we look forward to his participation in FJMC activities in the years to come. Welcome Vic!

FJMC RESEARCH 2007/08

Each year the Committee allocates approximately \$500,000 for research relating to fish and marine mammals within the ISR. During meetings in January and March of 2007, the Committee reviewed preliminary and full-length research proposals and made their final decisions for the 2007/08 fiscal year. Twenty-four projects were funded this year, including, among others:

- Tagging of Bowhead Whales in the South-East Beaufort Sea
- Sachs Harbour Fish Study
- Fish Survey and Ecosystem Structure of Yukon Nearshore Waters
- Genetic Stock Differentiation of Dolly Varden in the Firth, Babbage, and Big Fish River Systems

COMMUNITY-BASED FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

The FJMC also continues to work with HTC's on community fishing plans. The Paulatuk Char Working Group will be meeting in June to review the plan approved last year. The Ulukhaktok Char Working Group will be approving a "new" plan at their meeting in June. The Sachs Harbour Working Group will be getting together in June as well to work on their new plan. The Rat River Char Working Group met in March and is currently in the process of holding public meetings before they approve a new plan for the Rat River char. Finally, the West Side Working Group continues to work on a comprehensive plan for the waters west of the Mackenzie River as well as further developing the Big Fish Habitat Monitoring program.

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WMAC (NWT) Activities

Mackenzie Gas Project Environmental Assessment

Council presented two recommendations to the Joint Review Panel (JRP): 1. to establish a regional environmental/wildlife monitoring program to study if or how wildlife is affected by development activities (Council will need to know how successful mitigation is and understand the effects of future activities), and 2. that the JRP not restrict harvesting. This can be done, for example, by not establishing "no hunting" areas beyond those required for safety around facilities and work sites. This supports the same recommendation by all six HTC's. Harvest management is the role of the WMAC (NWT) so Council believes that they, and others including the Game Council, can adequately deal with harvest issues within their established processes.

Copies of the recommendations are available at www.jointsecretariat.ca/wmacnwt/aboutus.htm or from our office.

Environment and Natural Resources (ENR), and Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) Research 2007/08

Council approved 18 IFA-funded ENR projects (total \$761,000) and endorsed 13 funded from other sources. Council approved five IFA-funded CWS projects (total \$139,200) and endorsed 12 funded from other sources, three of which include a traditional knowledge component. See article on the IFA Research Day for details.

US Fish and Wildlife Service Hearings on Listing Polar Bears

On March 1st in Alaska, Council provided comments on the proposed listing of polar bears as Threatened under the USA's *Endangered Species Act*. The US system of management resulting from the listing would influence Canadian management. Based on 20 years of successful polar bear management utilizing integrated resource management processes,

Council believes that these processes are able to appropriately deal with changes in the bears' populations. Canada is reviewing polar bears under the Canadian *Species at Risk Act*, with the current listing being Special Concern. Council is participating in that review which will provide information to determine the next management steps.

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Representatives of WMAC (NWT), IGC, GRRB, SRRB, and TNNPMB met April 17 to discuss Bluenose caribou management".

WMAC (NS) Activities

Wildlife Management Advisory Council (North Slope) Focuses on Grizzly Bear Research

WMAC(NS) is currently involved in a six-year grizzly bear population study in partnership with Yukon Government, the Aklavik Hunters and Trappers Committee and Parks Canada. This summer marks the fourth field season for the research project. The study is made up of several different programs, and is designed to learn about grizzly bear population size, birth rate, death rate, where bears can be found at different times of year, and how much they move around.

The study includes projects to gather information from Aklavik Inuvialuit as well as science-based projects. A DNA mark-recapture study is providing information on movement and population size by collecting hair samples from bears using special traps. GPS and radio collars are being used to follow bear movements and to find out what habitat the bears are using at



Grizzly Bear Education Program, Moose Kerr School

different times of year. Researchers have interviewed Aklavik Inuvialuit harvesters to record their observations of bear activity and to gather information on harvesting. Traditional knowledge and involvement are important parts of this study; Aklavik Inuvialuit harvesters are contributing vital information about bear activities, numbers and distribution.

This year, one of the highlights of the project was the development of the Yukon North Slope Grizzly Bear School Program, an educational

resource created especially for Moose Kerr School in Aklavik. Educators produced a series of lesson plans for use by classroom teachers and presented them during a visit to the school in March. The program includes materials, artifacts and lesson plans to teach students about grizzly bears and bear-human interaction. It is inclusive of the perspectives of biologists who work on the North Slope as well as of the traditional knowledge of the Aklavik Inuvialuit.

For more information, you can contact

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Photo Source: WMAC (NS)

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Bulletin of the Joint Secretariat Inuvialuit Renewable Resource Committees Issue 15

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coordination and editing of this issue.



Joint Secretariat provides administrative and technical support to the wildlife and environmental co-management boards set up pursuant to the Inuvialuit Final Agreement and to the Inuvialuit Game Council.

Agnes Noksana started with EISC on November 20, 2006. She is originally from Inuvik, NT and lived in Tuktoyaktuk for the past 20 years.



Agnes Noksana

She has worked with various companies and organizations in the Beaufort Delta Region. Her previous employment was with the Inuvik Native Band as the Executive Assistant. She enjoys spending time out on the land with her family and teaching her children the culture and traditional knowledge. Congratulations and we wish you all the best!

Upcoming Meetings 2007

IGC:
Tuktoyaktuk, June 9 – 12
September and December dates TBA

EIRB:
Mid June
date TBA

EISC:
May 30 – June 1

WMAC (NWT):
Inuvik, June 6 – 7

WMAC (NS):
Whitehorse, June 11 – 13

FJMC:
Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk
June 5 – 8
Aklavik and Sachs Harbour
November dates TBA

Community Support Unit (CSU) Report

Sheila Nasogaluak, Richard Binder and Fred Kuptana provide technical support to the Hunters and Trappers Committees in the ISR. In response to the increased development activities in the Mackenzie Delta, the CSU works closely with HTC's providing updates on any issues that arise relating to the Mackenzie Gas Project.

Richard Binder has been attending the Joint Review Panel hearings in Inuvik and presented interventions on behalf of the HTC's with Steve Baryluk in October/November 2006.

A Crown Consultation Unit meeting in Inuvik was held November 6 and 7 at the Eskimo Inn banquet room with attendees from Aklavik, Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk HTC's. The meeting was very informative and delegates were pleased with the information that was given and

the response to their concerns regarding old sumps, Parsons Lake airstrip and other matters.

Sheila also attended the ArcticNet and the NWT Environmental Contaminants Committee Annual General Meeting in Victoria BC. These meetings were very informative and well represented from the research side.

In January and February 2007 Richard, Steve and members from the Inuvialuit Game Council presented the other topic specific interventions to the Joint Review Panel, on behalf of the HTC's.

HTC board orientation was conducted in the ISR communities. The total budget for the HTC's sessions was \$50,000. The funds were approved prior to the travel and orientation taking place. Facilitators

included Elizabeth Snider, Alen Creighton-Kelly and Sheila Nasogaluak.

Steve Blasco and 11 other presenters started the Nahidik Tour February 5, 2007. The Beaufort Sea Marine and Coastal Activities Community Consultation objectives: the purpose is to brief all the ISR communities of the Beaufort Sea activities results from 2006, present plans for 2007, and incorporate community concerns and requests into planning process.

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NWT Barren-Ground Caribou Summit

From January 23 to 26, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources held the Barren-ground Caribou Summit in Inuvik. The summit was held to try to come up with key actions that would help the caribou herds recover from their population decline.

More than 180 delegates attended the summit, including, Inuvialuit, Gwich'in, Inuit and Dene leaders and elders from across the NWT and Nunavut. There were also representatives from government agencies, outfitters, and industry. There were several MLAs present, including Michael McLeod, Calvin Pokiak, Bill Braden, Robert Hawkins and Michael Miltenburger.

Inuvialuit delegates included representatives of all Hunters and Trappers Committees, the Inuvialuit Game Council, Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, and the Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT).

The four main themes of the summit were: engaging partners, information for management, managing human activity, and addressing hardships.

After three days of meeting, the delegates came up with some key recommendations. It was felt by most that the number one priority was to protect calving grounds in both the NWT and Nunavut. Other key actions included: reducing harvest, using traditional

knowledge in making decisions, developing management plans for the herds and increasing public education about the status of the herds.

It was also suggested that regional conferences for harvesters take place, and that youth be included in the conference.

The summit brought many different people together who shared information, traditional knowledge and expressed their concerns. All delegates present stressed the importance of preserving caribou populations for future generations.

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IFA Co-Management Research Day

The WMAC (NWT), WMAC (North Slope) and FJMC co-hosted the second IFA Co-management Research Day on March 27, 2007 in Inuvik. The purpose of the workshop is to update the members of those three Inuvialuit renewable resource boards and IGC on wildlife projects funded under the IFA. Researchers reported on projects conducted in the previous two years (2005/06, 2006/07), plans for 2007/08 and answered questions. A report with summaries of

each project was distributed to participants and to each HTC office as a reference document. About 30 people participated in the Research Day: viewed the posters and written reports; and listened to the 11 presentations on wildlife research. The presentations addressed where the research originates (e.g. request from a community or priority in a species management plan), what the results mean for the community, and the relationship between the research and management.

Discussions continue on organizing and funding a larger conference for the future, in partnership with other organizations, that would include all wildlife-related research, not just that funded by the IFA. For copies of the report summarizing the projects, download it from www.jointsecretariat.ca/js/doc.htm or contact our office.

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Participants at the 2007 IFA Research Day

GIS Department

Since the fall, the GIS specialist has attended the Yukon North Slope Conference in Whitehorse. It was a chance to meet with other professionals from the North and from across the country.

Work continued with daily maintenance of the Joint Secretariat's website. The GIS department has recently purchased Microsoft Visual Studio 2005. This program suite includes a web design language, ASP Net. By utilizing this language, new features can be added to the Joint Secretariat's and the Beaufort Sea Strategic Plan's websites. Possible

features include increased security and a more dynamic search engine for within the sites themselves.

The Joint Secretariat's data sets have to be configured. Many of these sets were not properly projected. With the release of the latest version of Arc GIS, each data set must be assigned a coordinate system. This will also be a good opportunity to sort through the data and to organize it in such a way that it is based on central themes. Recently Natural Resources Canada has decided to distribute its electronic topographic mapping data free over the Internet.

This means that new base data can be incorporated into the Joint Secretariat's maps.

The GIS department has just taken possession of a brand new plotter. The new plotter is larger than the previous model, now allowing for plots as large as 44" wide. Other benefits of the new plotter include faster print times and increased resolution and colours that are more vibrant.

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