



ᐃᓂᐸᐃᓪ ᐃᓃᓂ ᑦᓂᓪᑕᐃᓂᐃᐃᐃ ᐃᐃᓂᓂᓂ ᐃᐃᓂᓂ
EYYOU MARINE REGION WILDLIFE BOARD
CONSEIL DE GESTION DES RESSOURCES
FAUNIQUES DE LA RÉGION MARINE D'EYYOU
ᐃᐃᐃ ᑕᐃᐃᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦ ᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕ

2017-18

Annual Activity Report

01-10-2018

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	3
2. MANDATE	3
3. BOARD MEMBERSHIP	3
4. BOARD MEETINGS	5
5. GOVERNANCE	5
6. STAFFING & PERFORMANCE EVALUATION.....	6
7. HOUSING AND OFFICE SPACES	6
8. WEBSITE.....	7
9. DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM	7
10. GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM AND OPEN FILE SYSTEM	7
11. RELATIONSHIP BUILDING.....	8
12. LIAISON WITH THE CREE TRAPPERS' ASSOCIATION.....	9
13. WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT	10
a. Establishment of a Total Allowable Take and Non-Quota Limitations for the Beluga.....	10
b. Establishment of a Total Allowable Take and Non-Quota Limitations for the SHB polar bears	11
c. Quebec Polar Bear Management Plan.....	11
d. Consultations on the Cree Knowledge on Polar Bear	11
e. Species at Risk and of Interest for the Crees	11
f. Literature review on fish stocks.....	12
g. Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada	12
14. WILDLIFE RESEARCH FUND.....	12
15. CONSULTATIONS ON RESEARCH PRIORITIES	12
16. ACTIVITY REPORTING.....	13
a. Activity Progress Report	13
b. Internal reporting	13
APPENDIX A - STATEMENTS OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES (FY 2017-18)	14

1. INTRODUCTION

This annual report of the Eeyou Marine Region Wildlife Board (EMRWB) covers the period from April 1, 2017, to March 31, 2018, subsequently referred to as FY 2017-18. This report outlines the activities as well as the revenue and expenditures of the EMRWB during this period, in fulfillment of its mandate as set out in the *Eeyou Marine Region Land Claims Agreement* (EMRLCA).

2. MANDATE

The EMRWB is an institution of public government that was established pursuant to the provisions of the *Agreement between the Crees of Eeyou Istchee and Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada Concerning the Eeyou Marine Region*, also known as the *Eeyou Marine Region Land Claims Agreement* (EMRLCA), which was signed by the respective parties on July 7, 2010.

The mandate of the EMRWB is set out under Chapter 13 of the EMRLCA, which specifies that the EMRWB is to serve as the main instrument of Wildlife management and the main regulator of access to Wildlife in the Eeyou Marine Region (EMR). The provisions of the EMRLCA, including the establishment of the EMRWB with the capacity, rights, powers and privileges of a natural person, were given effect by the *Eeyou Marine Region Land Claims Agreement Act* and came into force, by Order-in-council of the Government of Canada, on February 15, 2012.

3. BOARD MEMBERSHIP

The EMRWB consists of seven members, including the Chairperson. Three (3) members are appointed by the Grand Council of the Crees of Eeyou Istchee (GCCEI) ; one (1) member is appointed by the federal Minister responsible for fish and marine mammals (DFO¹); one (1) member is appointed by the federal Minister responsible for the Canadian Wildlife Service (EC²); one (1) member is appointed by the Minister responsible for wildlife under the Government of Nunavut (GN). The Chairperson is nominated by the EMRWB members and is appointed by the federal Minister responsible for fish and marine mammals in

¹ Fisheries and Oceans Canada

² Environment and Climate Change Canada

consultation with the federal Minister responsible for the Canadian Wildlife Service and jointly with the Minister of Wildlife of the Government of Nunavut.

During FY 2017-18, the composition of the WB changed; the terms for three Board members ended or expired during the period covered by this report: Isaac Masty’s term as Vice-Chairperson expired in August 2017, Aurélie Bourbeau-Lemieux’s membership expired in August 2017, and Roderick Pachano’s term as Chairperson was ended in October 2017. In September 2017, the Grand Council of the Cree (EI) reappointed Aurélie Bourbeau-Lemieux for another four-year term, and appointed Fred Tomatuk as a new Board member in December 2017. One appointment by the Grand Council of the Cree (EI) remains vacant after Gordon Blackned was nominated as acting Chairperson in December 2017. The appointment by the federal Minister responsible for fish and marine mammals has remained vacant since August 2015, despite repeated requests from the EMRWB for fulfilment of this position. At the end of FY 2017-18, the EMRWB consisted of five members and two vacant appointments, as presented in Table 1.

During FY 2017-18, the EMRWB had only six members, as presented in table 1.

Table 1. EMRWB membership as of March 31st 2018

Nomination party	Position	Incumbent	Length of term	End of term
DFO ³ /ECCC ⁴ /GN ⁵	Chairperson	Gordon Blackned	4 years	June 21, 2022
ECCC	Vice-Chairperson	Claude Saint-Charles	4 years	March 22, 2020
GCC(EI)	Member	Aurelie Bourbeau-Lemieux	4 years	August 1, 2021
GCC(EI)	Member	Fred Tomatuk	4 years	December 19, 2021
GCC(EI)	Member	Vacant	---	---
DFO	Member	Vacant	---	---
GN	Member	Piita Kattuk	4 years	June 23, 2020

³ Fisheries and Oceans Canada

⁴ Environment and Climate Change Canada

⁵ Government of Nunavut

4. BOARD MEETINGS

According to the EMRLCA (section 14.2.3), the Board "shall meet at least twice a year, and may meet as often as it deems fit". During FY 2017-18, the EMRWB held three (3) regular and two (2) special meetings in-person, and two (2) additional meetings by way of conference call (Table 2).

Additionally, the Executive Committee met four times in person and twice over conference call.

These meeting dates and locations are shown in the table set out below.

Table 2. EMRWB meetings and workshop

MEETING TYPE	DATE	LOCATION
Special Board meeting	June 9, 2017	Val-d'Or
Special Board meeting	June 29, 2017	Montreal
Regular Board meeting	July 18-20, 2017	Montreal
Regular Board meeting	July 25-26, 2017	Conference call
Regular Board meeting	September 6, 2017	Conference call
Regular Board meeting	December 19-20, 2017	Montreal
Regular Board meeting	March 20-22, 2018	Montreal

The June 2017 special meeting in Val d'Or was convened to discuss issues related to CTA funding. The special meeting of June 29 in Montreal was related to the examination of a complaint concerning a human resources management issue.

5. GOVERNANCE

The Financial Administrative Policy and the Governance Policy were adopted on February 27, 2017. The goal of these policies are to provide guidance and direction for the Board's daily operations and implementation of the mandate as set out in the Eeyou Marine Land Claims Agreement (EMRLCA).

6. STAFFING & PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

FY 2017-18 was subject to significant EMRWB staffing changes. In October 2017, Sophie Fillion resigned from her position as Wildlife Management Director. The position was posted on two occasions in October 2017 and February 2018. The screening of applications took place in March 2018. To prevent disruption to the EMRWB activities and operations, the position of Wildlife Management Director was offered on an interim basis to the Wildlife Liaison Officer, Felix Boulanger, in December 2017. Finally, a three-month contract was offered to a biologist through the consultant Waska Ressources in February 2018, in order to fulfill temporarily the duties of the Wildlife liaison officer position.

The EMRWB has concluded an Agreement with the Eeyou Marine Region Planning Commission (EMRPC) and the Eeyou Marine Region Impact Review Board (EMRIRB) to share administrative staff. The three EMR entities share an Accountant Administrator and an Administrative Assistant.

In December 2017, Priscillia Wesley, the Administrative Assistant for all three Eeyou Marine Region Boards, left on maternity leave. The position was posted and a 11-month replacement contract was offered to Crystal Brien in February 2018. The Accountant Administrator position remained occupied by Laurianne Iserhoff for the FY 2017-2018.

Due to staff turnover, the performance evaluation of the Wildlife Management Director and Wildlife Liaison Officer could not be performed during the FY 2017-18. Similarly, the performance evaluations of the Accountant Administrator and Administrative Assistant were deferred to the next fiscal year.

7. HOUSING AND OFFICE SPACES

Following negotiations with the Cree Nation Government (CNG) for the lease of office space in the new CNG building located in Waskaganish, an official lease was signed in June 2017. The Wildlife Board moved to its new location in October 2017. The office space is shared with the Eeyou Marine Region Planning Commission and the Eeyou Marine Region Impact Review Board.

During the FY 2017-18, lack of suitable housing prevented the Wildlife Management Director and the Wildlife Liaison Officer from residing full-time in Waskaganish; both staff members travelled to

Waskaganish on a regular basis and stayed at the hotel in Waskaganish, and at other times they worked remotely from home offices located outside of the community. As a solution, two housing units were built by the CNG, with the intention of being leased by the Wildlife Board as permanent staff housing for the Wildlife Management Director and Wildlife Liaison Officer. The construction of the CNG housing units was completed in the summer of 2017. The lease for one house was signed in February 2018, and the Interim Wildlife Management Director relocated to Waskaganish during the last week of March 2018. At the end of FY 2017-2018, the second house remains unoccupied until a permanent Wildlife Management Director is hired.

8. WEBSITE

New content was added to the website and existing content was revised. The content of the website was translated into French in March 2018. It can be seen here: <https://www.eeyoumarineregion.ca>. Development of the website is ongoing.

9. DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The Board is exploring the various applications offered by Microsoft Office 365 as a potential solution to not only store, share and manage its files and data, but also to improve efficiency and team work. All data has been transferred to the “cloud” to ensure long-term storage and increase virtual security. A consultant has been retained to assist the staff in the process and offer technical support and training. An inventory of all computers and tablets has been provided to the IT support consultant. Due to staff turnover, the system is still being implemented and staff training will continue into the next fiscal year. This implementation of the document management system is being undertaken collaboratively with the EMRPC and EMRIRB.

10. GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM AND OPEN FILE SYSTEM

The function of the EMRWB requires the use and production of geographic data and material. Additionally, the Board is required to establish and maintain an open file system for all raw and interpreted wildlife data and information as stipulated in the EMRLCA (Chapter 13.3.3 a). In order to fulfill

these obligations, a consultant was hired to assist the Board with the development of a wildlife database, and also to help increase GIS capacity for both the Board and CTA staff. In addition to the database, topographic and thematic maps were created. An interactive application was also created to be used on the website to display wildlife data and collect information from the public. Additionally, all data collected during the bird surveys conducted by the EMRWB in Boatswain Bay in June and August 2017, as well as from previous surveys that were organized by Nature Canada and the CNG, were cleaned and imported into the database. That data is also now accessible at <http://www.creegeoportal.ca/EMRWB/>, and will be integrated into the website in the near future.

11. RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

Under the provisions of subsection 13.2.1 of the EMRLCA, one of the aspects of the mandate of the EMRWB is “cooperating with other wildlife management institutions which deal with species that are harvested in the EMR and migrate outside the EMR” (paragraph h). In furtherance of these obligations, several presentations were given by the EMRWB to relevant stakeholders during FY 2017-18, and EMRWB participation in relevant conferences provided opportunities for professional relationship building and networking.

In July 2017, a presentation was given by the Wildlife Liaison Officer at the Annual General Assembly (AGA) of the Cree Outfitting and Tourism Association (COTA) that was held in Waskaganish. In addition, a presentation was given by the Interim Wildlife Management Director at the Annual General Assembly (AGA) of the local CTA in Waskaganish in March 2018. Both these presentations outlined the Board’s roles and responsibilities in implementing the EMRLCA, and also focused on other topics of shared interest.

The Interim Wildlife Management Director and one Board member attended the International Arctic Change Conference held in Quebec City in December 2017, organized by the [Network of Centres of Excellence of Canada](#) (ArcticNet). The event gathered researchers, students, Inuit, Cree, Northerners, policy makers and other relevant stakeholders to address the numerous environmental, social, economic and political challenges and opportunities that are emerging from climate change and modernization in the Arctic.

In February 2018, the Interim Wildlife Management Director and two Board members attended the Hudson Bay Consortium Summit, held in Montreal. This meeting was an opportunity to share and learn about current and proposed stewardship projects and research initiatives in the James/Hudson Bay region.

The Consolidated Agreement Relating to the Cree/Inuit Offshore Overlapping Interests Area between the Crees of Eeyou Istchee and the Nunavik Inuit (hereinafter referred to simply as “the Overlap Agreement”) identifies three zones in the overlap area (i.e. the Joint Inuit/Cree Zone, the Inuit Zone and the Cree Zone). For each of these three zones, a unique wildlife management process is provided in the Overlap Agreement, as well as the EMRLCA and the Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement (NILCA). The Board continues to collaborate with the Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board to develop processes and mechanisms necessary to ensure a sound and efficient Wildlife Management Regime between the Inuit and Cree entities.

In order to clarify and reinforce its relationship with the Cree coastal communities, the EMRWB continues to conduct community consultations. The Board met with the Council of Waskaganish, Chisasibi, and Whapmagoostui in FY 2016-2017, and consultations with the remaining communities (Eastmain and Wemindji) were planned to be completed in FY 2017-2018. However, due to staff turnover this fiscal year, the consultations planned for Eastmain and Wemindji have been postponed until 2018-2019.

12. LIAISON WITH THE CREE TRAPPERS’ ASSOCIATION

The EMRLCA specifies, under section 12.6, that funding shall be provided by the EMRWB to the Cree Trappers’ Association (CTA) in order to carry out the powers and functions as set out in Chapter 12, with respect to wildlife management and harvesting practices in the EMR.

Following the June 2017 special meeting, the EMRWB agreed to provide CTA with a temporary six-month funding agreement, from April 1, 2017, to September 30, 2017, and to hold a strategic workshop to discuss CTA EMR functions modalities and funding. This strategic workshop had to be postponed due to many constraints such as CTA election, the end of terms of several members of the Board and the resignation of the Wildlife Management Director.

In January 2018, the EMRWB and the CTA held an Executive Meeting in Waskaganish in order to discuss issues related to the implementation and the funding of the CTA-EMR functions. The EMRWB identified a need to improve CTA comprehension of the respective mandate and responsibilities under the EMRLCA to allow better collaboration and efficiency.

Finally, a Funding Agreement which set out the terms and conditions related to the transfer of funds to the CTA and the reporting responsibilities of the CTA with respect to its 2017-18 EMR activities was prepared in March 2018. The resolution to approve the Funding Agreement was not carried during the March Board meeting.

13. WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

Pursuant to section 30.6 b) of the EMRLCA and section 28.8 of the NILCA, the Board was called upon to collaborate with the NMRWB in the establishment of a Total Allowable Take for polar bear (Southern Hudson Bay subpopulation), and for beluga whale (Eastern Hudson Bay subpopulation).

a. Establishment of a Total Allowable Take and Non-Quota Limitations for the Beluga

In the last few years, the EMRWB collaborated with the NMRWB for the establishment of a Total Allowable Take (TAT) and Non-Quota Limitations (NQLs) for the Eastern Hudson Bay beluga as part of the three-year management regime beginning in February 2017. Written public hearings were conducted by NMRWB in 2016-17 to ensure that the best available information from traditional knowledge of wildlife and the knowledge gained through scientific research would be included in the decision-making process. The new management regime was implemented during FY 2017-18.

Written public hearings were conducted by NMRWB in October 2016 and January 2017 to ensure that the best available information from traditional knowledge of wildlife and the knowledge gained through scientific research would be included in the decision-making process. In March 2017, a joint decision was made by the EMRWB and the NMRWB to which the Ministers provided a positive reply in May 2017. The new management regime will be implemented during FY 2017-18.

b. Establishment of a Total Allowable Take and Non-Quota Limitations for the SHB polar bears

In early 2017, the Minister of Environment for the Government of Nunavut provided a reply to the TAT recommendations that were submitted by the EMRWB and NMRWB back in October 2016. The Minister provided a revised TAT decision. A judicial review by Makivik Corporation has been filed whereas EMRWB has been named a party. The review was in progress during FY 2017-18.

c. Quebec Polar Bear Management Plan

The EMRWB staff participated in two meetings held by the Polar Bear Working Group. The Polar Bear Working Group was established under the Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Coordinating Committee (HFTCC), and has been tasked with preparing a draft Polar Bear Management Plan for Quebec. The meetings took place on September 7 & 8, 2017 in Dorval, QC, and on November 21 & 22, 2017 in Quebec City, QC.

d. Consultations on the Cree Knowledge on Polar Bear

In collaboration with the CNG and CTA, the EMRWB conducted consultations with land users from the coastal communities to collect and document traditional knowledge of the Cree of Eeyou Istchee on polar bears. The consultation was held on September 5 & 6, 2017 in Chisasibi. The information that was collected will be presented to the Polar Bear Working Group and incorporated into the Management Plan to help facilitate decision-making processes related to the management of the species.

e. Species at Risk and of Interest for the Crees

In order to fulfill its obligations under the EMRLCA, the EMRWB needs to acquire data on key species in the EMR. During FY 2017-18, bird surveys of Boatswain Bay were conducted June 16-20 and August 19-25, 2017, jointly with the CNG, the CTA, and Nature Canada. Two Motus Tower units were reinstalled (one on Charlton Island and one in Waskaganish) and two new units were installed (one in Boatswain Bay and one at Black Bear Point).

The purpose of the project was to gather sufficient data to support the designation of the Miinshtuk-Wiinebek Important Bird Area (IBA), which will promote the conservation of bird species and help facilitate the identification of conservation priorities for the area.

f. Literature review on fish stocks

The Board contracted University Laval to conduct a review of scientific and grey literature, and of Cree traditional knowledge of fish stocks and Cree coastal fisheries within the EMR. The purpose of the project, led by Louis Bernachez, Professor in the Department of Biology, is to perform a data gap analysis of the current knowledge regarding fish stocks biology and ecology, Cree traditional knowledge and local fishery activities within the EMR and adjacent estuaries. This initiative is linked to one of the research priorities identified by the Wildlife Board, and seeks to identify research requirements and deficiencies pertinent to local fisheries wildlife management. A preliminary report was submitted to and reviewed by the EMRWB at the end of FY 2017-2018, and a final report is forthcoming.

g. Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada

The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) consulted with the EMRWB on several species currently under reassessment during FY 2017-18, including: polar bear, ringed seal, olive-sided flycatcher, peregrine falcon, and lumpfish. The former Wildlife Management Director attended a meeting held in April 2017, between COSEWIC and numerous Wildlife Management Boards, located in Whitehorse, YK.

14. WILDLIFE RESEARCH FUND

The EMRLCA provides the EMRWB with a \$ 5 M Research Fund. The Board continued investing the totality of the funds managed by Industrial Alliance. The performance of the fund manager is being reviewed by Aon Hewitt. As of March 31, 2018, the market value of the Research Fund was \$ 5,923,000. A draft of a Research Fund Spending Policy was also initiated during FY 2017-18.

15. CONSULTATIONS ON RESEARCH PRIORITIES

In order to determine potential research priorities and develop a relevant communication strategy, a consultation tour of the five coastal communities of the EMR has been ongoing since the FY 2016-2017. The structure of the consultation included a presentation about the EMRWB research program, followed by a public hearing to gather the views and concerns of the community members on wildlife issues and challenges. Consultation was completed with the communities of Waskaganish, Whapmagoostui, and Wemindji in FY 2016-2017. The Board planned to consult with the two remaining communities of Eastmain

and Chisasibi during FY 2017-18, but the consultations were postponed to 2018-19 due to staff turnover. The conclusions of the consultations will be shared amongst the stakeholders and serve as the basis to determine the funding of research activities.

16. ACTIVITY REPORTING

a. Activity Progress Report

The Activity Progress Report and Financial Variance Report for 2017-2018 was prepared during the fall and submitted to INAC at the end of December 2017.

b. Internal reporting

Periodic briefing notes are provided to the Board members by email, keeping them updated with the EMRWB staff activities occurring throughout the year.

APPENDIX A - STATEMENTS OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES (FY 2017-18)

**Eeyou Marine Region Wildlife Board
Statement of Revenue and Expenditures and
Changes in Net Assets**

For the year ended March 31	2018		2017
	Budget (Unaudited)	Actual	Actual
Contributions			
Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada	\$ 1,429,787	\$ 1,074,916	\$ 1,159,244
Expedition program	-	32,914	-
	1,429,787	1,107,830	1,159,244
Expenditures			
Salaries and benefits	339,961	267,118	244,316
Professional fees	213,216	251,951	43,807
Cree Trappers' Association	473,481	225,138	457,208
Travel, meals and accommodations	58,912	136,376	126,090
General and administrative (Note 5)	161,902	89,674	64,482
Honorarium fees	175,276	64,003	65,779
Investment management fees	-	52,543	49,906
Amortization	-	15,630	19,767
Advertising and promotion	7,039	5,397	3,938
Special projects	-	-	83,951
	1,429,787	1,107,830	1,159,244
Excess of revenue over expenditures for the year and net assets, end of year	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.