



EYYOU MARINE REGION WILDLIFE BOARD

Regular Meeting Via Videoconference May 21, 2021

Present: Gordon Blackned
Fred Tomatuk
Peter Hale
Elijassie Kavik

Chairperson
Member (GCC(EI))
Member (ECCC)
Member (Gov. of Nunavut)

Angela Coxon
Félix Boulanger
Stephanie Varty

Wildlife Management Director
Wildlife Management Biologist
Wildlife Management Biologist

Absent: Robbie Tapiatic
G. Daniel Caron

Member (GCC(EI)) (expired)
Member (DFO)

Vacant: Member (GCC(EI))

Guests*:

Anne Provencher St-Pierre DFO Day 1

** all guests participated via videoconference*

Friday, May 21, 2021

1. WELCOME & QUORUM

Members present constituting a quorum, the Eeyou Marine Region Wildlife Board (EMRWB) meeting was called to order at 9:36 a.m.

2. OPENING PRAYER

Eli Kavik opened the meeting with a prayer.



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3. CHAIRPERSON AND RECORDING SECRETARY

The Chairperson was Gordon Blackned, and the Recording Secretary was Stephanie Varty.

4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

After a review of the proposed meeting agenda, it was motioned to adopt and approve the agenda; Peter Hale proposed, Eli Kavik seconded. The motion was carried and the Eeyou Marine Region Wildlife Board adopted the Agenda: **Resolution WB2020/21-4** (In Favour: 4, Absent: 2, Vacant: 1).

6.3 RESEARCH AND PROJECT UPDATES- 2021 DFO Beluga Aerial Survey

Anne Provencher St. Pierre (DFO) shared a presentation titled 'Aerial survey of belugas in James Bay and Eastern Hudson Bay'. She provided an overview of past beluga surveys and the DFO plan for a beluga survey in James Bay during the summer of 2021. She provided background information on the four beluga stocks in the Hudson Bay and Ungava Bay region including stock size, SAR designation, and harvest information. She introduced aerial beluga surveys, including how populations are estimated, where local surveys occur (all of James Bay + north to Inukjuak), and when the surveys occur (summer, every 5 years). Anne explained that the 2021 beluga survey will occur on July 20 and will be based out of Whapmagoostui and Inukjuak.

The Board Members and Anne discussed the frequency of the aerial surveys, methods for improving population estimates, sample area, accounting for overlapping observations (same group in different locations), and belugas response to planes.

The EMRWB Director suggested that Anne and the DFO team create an announcement or poster to inform communities about the survey in case there were questions or concerns if a low-flying plane was observed. Anne indicated that she would prepare a poster once DFO has official approval for the project. The EMRWB Director informed



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the Board that because this was a government-led survey, the project would need approval from the Board to proceed. Eli Kavik motioned, Fred Tomatuk seconded, and the Eeyou Marine Region Wildlife Board (EMRWB) approved the DFO 2021 Beluga Aerial Survey: **Resolution WB2020/21-5** (In Favour: 4, Absent: 2, Vacant: 1).

ACTION ITEM: The EMRWB Director will send Anne Provencher St. Pierre (DFO) an example poster from previous fly-over surveys.

6.1 RESEARCH AND PROJECT UPDATES- Review of Updated Project Commitments for 2021/22

The EMRWB Director shared the '2021-2022 FY Research Fund Commitments' spreadsheet. She summarized the EMRWB financial commitments from the research fund total annual allocation (TAA), including previously approved projects and pending projects. A total of \$184,335 has been allocated to approved projects and pending research fund applications, leaving \$65,665 remaining for the rest of the 2021/22 FY.

6.2 RESEARCH AND PROJECT UPDATES- Review and Approval of Research Fund Applications

The Wildlife Management Biologists presented pending research fund applications. The first application reviewed was submitted by Alexandra Langwieder of McGill University, titled 'Investigating Polar Bear Ecology in the EMR'. A Wildlife Management Biologist summarized the funding application and the EMRWB staff evaluation of the application and a recommendation was made to approve the funding request of \$26,510 for year one of the project.



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The EMRWB Director asked the Board Members if they would like to vote to approve the funding request. Fred Tomatuk motioned, Peter Hale seconded, and the motioned carried, **Resolution WB2020/21-6** (In Favour: 4, Absent: 2, Vacant: 1).

Next, the Board was presented with a second funding application, submitted by the CTA-EMR for year two of the FISHES (Fostering Indigenous Small-scale fisheries for Health, Economy and Security) project. A Wildlife Management Biologist summarized the funding application and the EMRWB staff evaluation of the application and a recommendation was made to approve the funding request of \$53,020 for year two of the project.

The EMRWB Director asked the Board Members if they would like to vote to approve the funding request. Eli Kavik motioned, Peter Hale seconded and the motioned carried, **Resolution WB2020/21-7** (In Favour: 4, Absent: 2, Vacant: 1).

The EMRWB Director asked the Board members if they would like to vote to approve the spending of \$25,000 from the Research Fund to support the contribution from the EMRWB to for year two of the FISHES project. Peter Hale motioned, Fred Tomatuk seconded, and the motion carried, **Resolution WB2020/21-8** (In Favour: 4, Absent: 2, Vacant:1).

The EMRWB Director asked the Board members if they would like to vote to approve the spending of \$6,000 from the Research Fund to support the ARU pilot project. Fred Tomatuk motioned, Peter Hale seconded, and the motioned carried, **Resolution WB2020/21-9** (In Favour: 4, Absent: 2, Vacant: 1).



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5.1 CORPORATE MATTERS- Summary of EMR Organization Structural Review Report

The EMRWB Director presented a summary of the EMR Organization Structural Review Report completed by Raymond Grant Thornton. The structural review provided three options for the future structure of the EMR boards. She summarized why the EMR boards decided to evaluate their structure, how the report was created, the structure of the report, key takeaways from benchmarking against other board structures (NMWB, NMRWB), and the three scenarios that the consultant presented. The three structures presented were (1) maintain the current EMR structure under which the 3 EMR Boards continue to share support staff and resources, but with the creation of several new positions to increase capacity, (2) the EMRWB splits from the other 2 EMR Boards and maintains own staff and resources while the other 2 EMR Boards continue to share support staff and resources, and (3) independent structures for each of the 3 EMR Boards. The EMRWB Director reviewed the advantages and disadvantages of each scenario, as well as input provided from the EMR Directors and the report authors.

5.2 CORPORATE MATTERS- Discussion and Soft Decision on Future EMR Structure

The EMRWB Director informed the Board that the 3 EMR Boards would hold a joint meeting on June 17, 2021, to discuss and make a decision on the future structure of the EMR. However, each EMR Director agreed that their respective Board should arrive at the joint meeting with a preference. The EMRWB Director then asked the Board to discuss the structure scenarios presented and choose which structure would best fit the needs of the EMRWB. The EMRWB Director indicated to the Board that Scenario 2 best addressed the current and future needs of the EMRWB but acknowledged that the other 2 EMR Boards would likely choose Scenario 1 and that a compromise may be needed.



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The EMRWB Board Members discussed office space and staff housing needs under each scenario. Members also discussed the impact that restructuring might have on each individual EMR board. One member noted that staff turnover on the other two Boards impacted the EMRWB and the challenges experienced by the other 2 Boards were sometimes a hinderance to the EMRWB while we are trying to complete a busy mandate. A Member also mentioned the need to further discuss the consultant's specific recommendations once the EMR boards have decided on a structure.

The EMRWB Director asked the Board Members if they were comfortable making a "soft decision" on which future EMR structure scenario they supported. All Board Members indicated that they are comfortable providing a soft decision and voted unanimously in support of Scenario 2 (In Favour: 4, Absent: 2, Vacant: 1).

7. VARIA

The EMRWB Chairperson requested that the EMR Boards send a summary report to share with the CNG and Band Councils for their AGA meetings this year. The EMRWB Director suggested we send our annual report to other entities and the EMRWB Board Members agreed. The EMRWB Chairperson identified that the Waskaganish AGA is on July 20-22 and the CNG AGA is in August 2021.

ACTION ITEM: EMRWB Staff will send the EMRWB annual report to the CNG and local Band Councils after it has been approved.

8.1 NEXT BOARD MEETING- June 17, 9am-5pm (Joint EMR Meeting via videoconference)

8.2 NEXT BOARD MEETING- July 27-29 (Regular Meeting via videoconference)



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9. ADJOURNMENT

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting of May 21, 2021.

The Eeyou Marine Region Wildlife Board meeting concluded at 2:57 pm and Fred Tomatuk closed the meeting in prayer.