



EYYOU MARINE REGION WILDLIFE BOARD

Regular Meeting

Held in Waskaganish, QC

August 3-5, 2021

Present:	Gordon Blackned	Chairperson
	Fred Tomatuk	Member (GCC(EI))*
	Peter Hale	Member (ECCC)
	Robbie Tapiatic	Member (GCC(EI))*
	Daniel Caron	Member (DFO)**
	Elijassie Kavik	Member (Gov. of Nunavut)**
	Angela Coxon	Wildlife Management Director
	Félix Boulanger	Wildlife Management Biologist
	Stephanie Varty	Wildlife Management Biologist
Vacant:	Member	(GCC(EI))
Guests**:		
	Mark Mills	ECCC Day 1
	Felix Dionne	DFO Day 1
	Alexandra Langweider	McGill University Day 1
	Aurélie Bourbou-Lemieux	MFPP Day 1
	Natasha Louttit	CTA-EMR Day 1
	Qajaq Robinson	EMRWB Day 1 Legal Counsel
	Maya Longpointe-Cr	CNG Day 1
	Mario Delisle	Aon Day 3
	David Pluta	BDO Day 3
	Alan Penn	CNG Day 3

* *joined mid-morning Day 1*

** *participated via videoconference*



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Tuesday, August 3, 2021

1. WELCOME & QUORUM

Members present constituting a quorum, the Eeyou Marine Region Wildlife Board (EMRWB) meeting was called to order at 9:15 a.m.

2. OPENING PRAYER

Eli Kavik opened the meeting with a prayer.

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, the EMRWB Chairperson requested that the EMRWB Directors performance evaluation be added to the agenda under 'Varia'. It was motioned to adopt and approve the agenda; Daniel Caron proposed, Peter Hale seconded. The motion was carried, and the Eeyou Marine Region Wildlife Board adopted the Agenda: **Resolution WB2021/22-11** (In Favour: 3, Absent: 2, Vacant: 1).

5.1 CORPORATE MATTERS - EMRWB Membership Updates

The EMRWB Director provided an update on EMRWB memberships. She highlighted that there are no official updates on the reappointment of Robbie Tapiatic or Fred Tomatuk. Both the EMRWB Director and Chairperson contacted the Chief of Waskaganish who then raised this issue with the CNG lawyer Jean-Paul Murdoch. There has been no update since then, and the EMRWB Director has asked EMRWB Legal Counsel to continue contacting the CNG lawyer.



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Mark Mills (ECCC) mentioned that the federal government created a post for applications to create a candidate pool for Ministerial and Governor-in-Council appointments to improve efficiency of replacing federal government members. He mentioned that if a current federally appointed board member would like to continue their membership after their term expires, they will need to apply to the membership pool previously mentioned. A board member suggested that the EMRWB/CNG adopt the same process for renewing board membership.

The EMRWB Director mentioned that over the duration of the meeting there would be observers joining from the NMWRB (Mark Basterfield), DFO (Felix Dionne), CIRNAC (Eve Gendron), CNG (Maya Longpre-Croteau). Maya and Eve, the new observers, introduced themselves. The EMRWB Board members and staff introduced themselves to the new observers.

5.2 CORPORATE MATTERS - Approval of Meeting Minutes

a) March 2-4, 2021, and in-camera session

The EMRWB Director reviewed the meeting minutes from March 2-4, 2021. An EMRWB Board Member suggested that EMRWB staff could add a glossary for list of acronyms for new readers. EMRWB staff agreed to incorporate his suggestion. The EMRWB Chairperson asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes of March 2-4, 2021, Eli Kavik motioned, Daniel Caron seconded and the EMRWB Board adopted **Resolution WB2021/22-12** (In Favour: 3, Absent: 2, Vacant: 1).

ACTION ITEM: EMRWB Biologist will add a glossary for acronyms in meeting minutes.

The EMRWB Director reviewed the in-camera meeting minutes from March 2-4, 2021. After some minor edits, the EMRWB Chairperson asked for a motion to approve the in-camera meeting minutes from March 2-4, 2021, Peter Hale motioned, Daniel Caron seconded and the EMRWB Board adopted **Resolution WB2021/22-13** (In Favour: 3, Absent: 2, Vacant: 1).

b) May 21, 2021

The EMRWB Director reviewed meeting minutes from May 21, 2021. The EMRWB Board Members did not have any questions or comments.



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The EMRWB Chairperson asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes of May 21, 2021, Eli Kavik motioned, Peter Hale seconded and the EMRWB Board adopted **Resolution WB2021/22-14** (In Favour: 3, Absent: 2, Vacant: 1).

ACTION ITEM: EMRWB Director and Biologist will work together to have these meeting minutes (August 3-5) within the next 3 weeks.

5.3 CORPORATE MATTERS - Director's Update

The EMRWB Director provided a verbal update on EMRWB corporate matters.

She summarized the DFO SHB aerial polar bear survey planned to occur in the EMR this summer. She mentioned that current survey plans include the offshore islands in the EMR and that the EMRWB was not asked to provide any funding. She highlighted the importance of supporting the survey because it will not be able to occur for another 4 or 5 years if it is not completed in 2021. She concluded by stating that more information on the survey will be provided in a presentation later in the day.

An EMRWB Board Member mentioned that there were safety concerns and issues with previous surveys in Sanikiluaq and highlighted that some Nunavut organizations would not be providing support for the survey. The EMRWB Director added context, explaining that there were some preliminary meetings between management bodies and that there were concerns that there was not enough community consultation for the SHB aerial polar bear surveys to occur this year.

The EMRWB Director shared the EMRWB Action Item tracking table and reviewed each action item including, deadlines, date of completion and additional notes. She then shared the EMRWB Q1 financial report. She summarized the staff expenses, office expenses, and carry forward budget, highlighting that the EMRWB expenses are currently on track for this FY.

8.10 RESEARCH/PROJECTS - Comments on the Recovery Strategy for Bank Swallow

The EMRWB Biologist presented a briefing note on the request to comment on the recovery strategy for Bank Swallow submitted to the EMRWB Chairperson by Environment and Climate Change Canada. She summarized the background of the



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federal Species at Risk Act registry, contact between ECCC and the EMRWB regarding the proposed recovery strategy for Bank Swallow, background on Bank Swallow biology, and the Bank Swallow federal at-risk status. She also provided information on the current documented knowledge of Bank Swallow in the EMR and a summary of the proposed ECCC recovery strategy. The EMRWB Director highlighted the steps that the NMRWB have taken to identify critical habitat, collect information through land users, and to hold public hearing. She suggested that we follow the same steps as the NMRWB and participate in a joint public hearing regarding the Bank Swallow. Mark Mills (ECCC) mentioned that it is currently too late to change the critical habitat in the recovery strategy but if land users identify critical areas, it could be included in the action plan for the recovery of the Bank Swallow. After some discussion, Maya Longpointe-Croteau (CNG) and Mark Mills (ECCC) confirmed that they will discuss the protection of the Bank Swallow in the CNG's jurisdiction.

An EMRWB Board Member mentioned that the Bank Swallow was very common in the coastal communities in the 70's and 80's (100's) but were present in much smaller amounts in the 90's (5-6 a year), he suggested that the EMRWB continue to add species of concern to EMRWB bird surveys. He mentioned that the bird nested along the south shore of the Eastmain River halfway between Eastmain and the first Gorge and between Sheep River and Jack River on north-east shore of Jack River (high island with cliff). He also mentioned that churches and the Hudson Bay Company in the 80's used to have many bird houses, and this could be an idea to explore for other bird species.

An EMRWB Board Member asked for a clarification about how the EMRWB will respond to ECCC's request for comments on the recovery strategy for the bank swallow. The EMRWB Director suggested that because we know this bird is confirmed in the EMR, the EMRWB should make a posting on Facebook asking land users to comment any information on Bank Swallow sightings. Any sightings reported between the date of the posting and September could be included in the EMRWB response letter to ECCC. She also suggested that the EMRWB includes in their response letter to the ECCC that the EMRWB will work with the NMRWB to host a public hearing. Finally, she mentioned that the EMRWB would request sightings in the communities through posters and social media sites. An EMRWB Board Member suggested that we also use the CTA-EMR local officers to communicate with land users in person.



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ACTION ITEM: EMRWB Staff will contact ECCC about posting Bank Swallow information in EMR communities.

ACTION ITEM: EMRWB Biologists to discuss with CWS and CNG (Maya) to encourage nesting boxes in the communities for birds like tree swallows.

The EMRWB Director asked if the EMRWB Board Members would support the EMRWB joining in a public hearing on the Bank Swallow with the NMRWB. Mark Mills (ECCC) estimated that the ECCC Bank Swallow process would not occur until December 2020 or later. The EMRWB Chairperson asked the EMRWB board members if they would like to exercise its decision-making authority for the Bank Swallow recovery strategy through a joint public hearing with the NMRWB, Fred Tomatuk motioned, Peter Hale seconded and the EMRWB Board adopted **Resolution WB2021/22-15** (In Favour: 4, Absent: 1, Vacant: 1).

8.11 RESEARCH/PROJECTS - Federal SARA Listing Process & Updates on Ringed Seal and Killer Whale

Felix Dionne (DFO) joined the call to discuss the Ringed Seal SARA listing process. He summarized that the SARA listing process for Ringed Seal is just starting and that they are listed as a species of Special Concern, meaning there is no harvest provisions on the seal. He mentioned that the area of distribution for the Ringed Seal includes EMR and that EMRWB input would be important for upcoming community consultations. He asked if the EMRWB would be interested in participating in consultations for the SARA listing process for the Ringed Seal. The EMRWB Board Members agreed that they are interested.

Mark Mills (ECCC) introduced Sybil Fienman (NRC) who works on the SARA listing process. Mark Mills (CWS) presented the document on the listing of three whale species (killer whale, bowhead whale, northern bottlenose whale) under the SARA with a specific focus on Killer Whales. He summarized the SARA listing process, he stated that the DFO has suggested to the Minister of ECCC that these three whale species are listed under the SARA. ECCC is now reaching out to relevant WB's for their input. Mark summarized why the Killer Whale is designated as a Special Concern, including consultation with Inuit communities in 2015.



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The EMRWB Board Members and ECCC representative discussed the potential for observations of the Killer Whale in the EMR, future EMR community consultation on Killer Whale, presence of Killer Whale in the NMR, and the ECCC's timeline for listing the Killer Whale. Based on the discussion the EMRWB Director asked that ECCC include EMR community consultation on species range in the management plan for the Killer Whale.

6.1 FINANCES AND ADMINISTRATION - 2020/21 FY Annual Activity Report Review & Approval

The EMRWB Director presented the 2020/21 FY Annual Activity report and reviewed the content. She read the sections of the report on board membership, board meetings, staffing and human resources, activity reporting, website and communication, document management system, geographic information system & open data file system, relationship building, wildlife management, and research and projects. The EMRWB Director had to cut the report review short and the topic will be revisited the morning of August 4.

The topic was resumed at 9:30 am on August 4. The EMRWB Director reviewed the 2020/21 FY Annual Activity report starting at section 13 g, Polar Bear Defense of Life and Property Kills and Reporting. She then reviewed the wildlife research fund section, and the Cree Trappers Association section.

The EMRWB Board Members discussed details about the publication of the report and if some content will be legally restricted. The EMRWB Director indicated that she would ask EMRWB Legal Counsel.

ACTION ITEM: EMRWB Director discuss the content of the FY 2020/21 annual report with EMRWB Legal Counsel before making it public.

The EMRWB Director shared the updated version of the FY 2020/21 Workplan, which is required for the EMRWB approval of the FY 2020/21 Annual Activity Report. She reviewed the status of completion for each workplan item.

The EMRWB Chairperson asked the EMRWB Board Members if they would like to approve the Annual Activity Report and Workplan Progress Summary from FY 2020/21,



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Fred Tomatuk motioned, Robbie Tapiatic seconded, and the EMRWB Board adopted **Resolution WB2021/22-17** (In Favour: 4, Absent: 1, Vacant: 1).

7.1 CTA - 2020/21 FY CTA Annual Activity Report

Natasha Louttit (CTA-EMR) shared a presentation summarizing the FY 2020/21 CTA-EMR Annual Activity Report. She summarized CTA-EMR projects, including Wemindji bird surveys, MOTUS towers, FISHES project, beluga sightings, and polar bear defence of life and property kills.

The EMRWB Board Members and CTA-EMR representative discussed sampling methods for fish and goose projects, as well as the use of bird tracking.

8.1a RESEARCH/PROJECTS - Public Hearing Process for the QC Polar Bear Management Plan (In-camera)

***** In-Camera Discussion*****

8.1b RESEARCH/PROJECTS - SHB Polar Bear Aerial Survey

Aurelie Bourbeau-Lemieux (MFFP) shared her presentation titled 'Southern Hudson Bay polar bear subpopulation aerial survey'. She summarized the management units for polar bears, the SHB polar bear population status (surveys and traditional knowledge), movement patterns, and ice breakup patterns in Hudson Bay. She provided information on SHB population aerial studies including previous studies results, aerial survey methods (addressing transect gaps, flight distance, secondary observers), population health to date, and an update on the 2021 survey. The 2021 survey is planned to occur August-September 2021 and is funded by MFFP and Makavik Corporation, and coordinated between Ontario and Quebec governments. She highlighted that this survey would provide up to date information on the SHB polar bear population to base TAT decisions on. Finally, she summarized the incorporation of indigenous knowledge into survey planning.

The EMRWB Board Members and Staff asked the MFFP representative questions about survey location, variations in survey methods between years, the need for EMRWB support for the project, the incorporation of indigenous knowledge in the



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surveys and reports, and other organizations supporting the survey (ECCC, Gov. Nunavut).

The MFFP representative provided some information on the timeline of the survey, highlighting that the project was planned very quickly because new funding was provided on short notice and that the survey will only occur if all parties involved approve the survey.

The EMRWB Chairperson asked the EMRWB board members if they would like to support the Government of Quebec's 2021 SHB Polar Bear aerial survey in the EMR, Robbie Tapiatic motioned, Peter Hale seconded and the EMRWB Board adopted **Resolution WB2021/22-16** (In Favour: 4, Abstained: 1, Vacant: 1).

8.1c RESEARCH/PROJECTS - McGill EMR Polar Bear Ecology Project Update

Alex Langwieder (McGill University) shared her presentation titled 'Polar Bear Ecology in the EMR: Project Updates'. She summarized the project objectives, including using hair snares and camera traps to record bear health, diet, and genetic information and gathering information on denning locations. She introduced the sampling methods, including site selection, hair snare set up, and modifications throughout the field season. She then provided updates on the current field season, including the deployment of 37 hair snags and camera traps, a map of the deployment areas, samples collected to date, and identification of denning locations. She finally presented plans for the fall including finishing summer sampling, removing the equipment, sample analysis, and Cree knowledge interviews.

EMRWB Board Members and the McGill researcher discussed methods that could be used to improve the project, the integration of Cree knowledge into the project, and other topics about the future field work for the project.

8.1d RESEARCH/PROJECTS - EMR Polar Bear TEK Report Review & Approval

The EMRWB Biologist shared the final version of the Polar Bear Traditional Ecological Report. He reviewed the report including a summary of each of the items in the table of contents. He also presented the summary tables from the results. Finally, the EMRWB



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Director highlighted the final sentences of the report encouraging land-users to report sightings and mentioning EMRWB future work regarding polar bears.

The EMRWB Board Members agreed that the abstract and other sections of the report should be translated into Cree before the document is made public.

The EMRWB Chairperson asked the EMRWB Board Members if they would like to support the EMR Polar Bear TEK Report, Robbie Tapiatic motioned, Peter Hale seconded and the EMRWB Board adopted **Resolution WB2021/22-17** (In Favour: 4, Abstained: 1, Vacant: 1).

ACTION ITEM: The EMRWB Biologist will contact a Cree translator for the report.

6.3 FINANCES AND ADMINISTRATION - 2020/21 FY Audited Financial Statements

The EMRWB Chairperson opened day 3 of the meeting and introduced David Pluta (BDO) to review the 2020/21 FY audited financial statements. David Pluta shared the EMRWB audited statements, reviewing investments, capital assets, liabilities and net assets, income statements, contributions, and expenditures. He highlighted that the EMRWB has only spent a fraction of the deferred contributions from carryover and of the research fund revenue. Finally, he summarized the cash flows from operating activities, accounting standards, a comparison of the 2020 to 2021 research fund revenue, related party transactions, commitments (lease & housing), and risks arising from financial instruments.

The EMRWB Director asked what the CTA strategic planning line item represents. David Pluta clarified that the line items should be filed under EMRWB special projects and not CTA strategic planning and that he will update this in the final statement.

David Pluta (BDO) asked for questions and explained that the next step is to approve the statements. The EMRWB Board Members and staff discussed tax performance and provided a minor edit to the audited financial statements.

ACTION ITEM: EMRWB Director will confirm that David Pluta has updated the CTA strategic planning line item to reflect EMRWB special projects.



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The EMRWB Chairperson asked the EMRWB board members if they would like to approve the 2020/21 FY Audited Financial Statements provided by BDO, Peter Hale motioned, Fred Tomatuk seconded and the EMRWB Board adopted **Resolution WB2021/22-18** (In Favour: 5, Vacant: 1).

6.2 FINANCES AND ADMINISTRATION - Investment Fund Asset Mix Review Report (AON)

Mario Delisle (Aon) joined the meeting and shared a presentation to review the asset mix of the EMRWB Research Investment Fund. He provided some background, including alternative investment portfolios and the asset mix review. He explained that our current investment portfolio is quite conservative, and a change from passive to active management could generate more revenue from emerging markets. He also suggested that there are benefits associated with the global direct real estate market. He presented a table of the current asset mix compared to three alternative asset mixes. He summarized that the key takeaways are the net nominal returns compared to volatility of the investment strategies. He then shared the final recommendation from Aon, including changes in the asset mixes and recommended investment sectors, highlighting that a decision about the future asset mix will be required from the EMRWB Board Members.

The EMRWB Board Members and the Aon representative discussed increased investment fee estimates, inflation, reasoning for the suggested investment allocations, the stability of certain markets, and ethical investing.

The EMRWB Director summarized that Aon suggested recommendation 2 which increases revenue, does not increase risk, but slightly increases investment fees. The Aon representative added that even though investment fees will increase the increase in revenue will cover these costs plus add additional revenue. He also suggested that the next review of the portfolio would be recommended for 2026 and the adopted asset mix would be in effect until then.

The EMRWB Chairperson asked the EMRWB Board Members if they would like to adopt the EMRWB Investment Fund asset mix recommendation 2 provided by Aon, Fred Tomatuk motioned, Robbie Tapiatic seconded and the EMRWB Board adopted **Resolution WB2021/22-19** (In Favour: 4, Absent: 1, Vacant: 1).



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Mario (Aon) then presented more information on the proposed changes in investment amount and portfolio for each investment section. He also presented information on specific funds and why they are being recommended, he briefly reviewed the qualitative and quantitative support for each asset class and fund that was recommended by Aon.

The EMRWB Chairperson asked the EMRWB board members if they would like to adopt the recommended fund line up associated with the Investment Fund Asset Mix recommendation 2 provided by Aon, Peter Hale motioned, Fred Tomatuk seconded and the EMRWB Board adopted **Resolution WB2021/22-20** (In Favour: 4, Absent: 1, Vacant: 1).

ACTION ITEMS: EMRWB Director will be in contact with Mario Delisle (Aon) about the revised asset investment fund and policy statements.

8.2 – 8.7 RESEARCH/PROJECTS - Project Updates (FISHES, James Bay Expedition, Mission DNA Youth Outreach, ARU Pilot Project, Hudson Bay Ecosystem Change, Brant Goose Study, Canada Goose/Eelgrass Study)

The EMRWB Biologist provided an update on the Brant Goose study led by Mitch Weegman (University of Saskatchewan) including future fieldwork plans in the EMR for 2022. He also provided an update on the Canada Goose study by Melanie LeBlanc (McGill University) including funding updates, current fieldwork in Chisasibi, and fall sampling plans. Finally, he presented an update on the ARU pilot project for breeding birds in Wemindji.

EMRWB Board Members and Staff discussed sampling methods, including determining what geese are eating in the EMR, locations for goose staging areas, and breeding success in recent years. Mark Mills (ECCC) indicated that he would send more information on goose population status to the EMRWB Director.

The other EMRWB Biologist provided a project summary, progress to date, communication efforts, and plans for the FISHES project, the James Bay Expedition, the Hudson Bay Ecosystem Change project, the EMRWB Youth Outreach Initiative, and the EMRWB Wildlife/Invasive Species Observation Database. Additionally, she informed the EMRWB Board Members of the EMRWB's successful AFSAR application



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for a project titled 'Filling Data Gaps and Gathering Traditional Ecological Knowledge for Avian Species at Risk in the Eeyou Marine Region.'

9. FOR INFORMATION

10. VARIA – Directors Review

The EMRWB Chairperson asked for two volunteers from the board to help in the 2020/21 performance evaluation of the EMRWB Director. Fred Tomatuk and Peter Hale agreed to participate in the evaluation on August 12, 2021, at 9:30 am over Teams. The EMRWB Director indicated she will share the evaluation templates.

11. NEXT BOARD MEETING

October 19-21, 2021, in Montreal, QC.

12. ADJOURNMENT

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting of August 5, 2021.

The Eeyou Marine Region Wildlife Board meeting concluded at 3:00 pm and Gordon Blackned closed the meeting in prayer.

Robbie motioned, Daniel seconded and the EMRWB adopted **Resolution WB2021/22-21** (In Favour: 5, Vacant: 1).



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ACRONYMS

AFSAR	Aboriginal Fund for Species at Risk
ARU	Autonomous Recording Unit
CNG	Cree Nation Government
CTA-EMR	Cree Trappers Association-Eeyou Marine Region
CWS	Canadian Wildlife Services
DFO	Department of Fisheries and Oceans
EMRWB	Eeyou Marine Region Wildlife Board
ECCC	Environment and Climate Change Canada
GCC	Grand Council of the Crees
MFFP	Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs du Québec (Quebec Ministry of Forests, Wildlife and Parks)
NMRWB	Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board
NRC	Natural Resources Canada
NQL	Non-quota Limitation
SARA	Species at Risk Act
SHB	Southern Hudson Bay
TAH	Total Allowable Harvest