

**Alsek Renewable Resource Council
Regular Meeting 01-09
12 January 2009
6:30 p.m. ARRC Office**

Participants:

Paul Birckel-Chair	Claudia Heath
Patt Delaney	Dave Heath
Greg Eikland	Rich Cherepak
Boyd Campbell	Lorne Larocque- Yukon Gov't
Wade Istchenko	Graham Boyd - CAFN
Susan Desjardins- Recorder	Shawn Taylor – Yukon Gov't
Troy Hagel – Yukon Gov't	Todd Heath

Delegation-

Dave and Claudia Heath- Marshall Creek Agricultural Application

Claudia Heath offered a brief summary to Council about their agricultural application for land at Marshall Creek. They have moved to Haines Junction from Dawson and have started to establish a small farm operation and hope to offer riding lessons and trail rides. 140 acres at Marshall Creek has been applied for and YESAB is currently requesting any views and submissions of such for this application. The Heath's have applied for this land to grow hay on and, and not to reside on. Claudia met with YG about this land and was informed that this land is a key area for grizzly bears in the spring, summer and fall. The Heath's had previously applied for land in the CATT and the parcel applied for was denied as a result of a cumulative effects assessment, mainly moose. The Heath's have enquired about the Yukon Government Agricultural Subdivision and informed Council that YG have been making this available through a lottery system, and is being released in phases. The road to the agricultural subdivision is slated to be built in 2009, and the next lottery for land held in 2010. The Heath's informed Council that they want to have their business running sooner than that, and require land to start. The Council and Heath's discussed their mutual concern about agricultural lands being applied for, and not being used for agricultural purposes. Council asked about the feasibility of selling hay. The Heath's felt that it was feasible as there is no one in Haines Junction that sells hay, and that they had to buy it from Whitehorse for their 8 horses. Council discussed with the Heath's why the Alsek RRC feels that land use planning is so important to this area, and the importance of retaining wildlife corridors.

YG Regional Biologist Update- Lorne Larocque and Shawn Taylor

A moose survey was conducted in November 2008 within Zone 7. The boundaries of this survey were Haines Junction to the BC border, Haines Rd. to Kusawa Lake approximately 4500 sq. km. Conditions were favourable, 2 helicopters were used, 65 hours of flying time, and the survey team consisted of members from CAFN and YG. Calf ratio was 27 calves to 100 cows and is considered to be on the bottom edge for calf survival to maintain a healthy moose population. Most calves were sighted in the southwest portion of the survey area, and this was also the only area where twins were

spotted (11%). Bull ratio averaged 43 bulls to 100 cows, which is the lowest that has ever been seen in this area, average in the Yukon is 68 bulls to 100 cows. Lorne explained that when the average falls below 30 bulls to 100 cows, there is concern that during the first estrus cows won't get bred, and calves don't get born, or that cows don't get bred until a later estrus, and calves get born late, resulting in lower calf survival. Low bull ratios indicate high mortality for that population possibly as a result high predation and hunting. Resident harvest for 2008 was 5 moose which is higher than the average of 3 per year. Yearlings were spotted at an average ratio of 16:100 cows, indicating a low calf survival last year. It is estimated that there are 143 moose per km sq. in the survey area, the Yukon average is 180 per km. sq. this is the lowest density that has been seen since surveying this area began in the 70's. YG at present is comparing the information presented to other surveys performed in the past (ie. Dez. Range) and hope to be able to do some comparisons. The community has brought forward concerns about fewer bulls in this area in the past and this survey has shown this as well. Incidentally Kluane National Park saw a very different trend, with high moose numbers, comparable to the 70's. Council will have a second report from YG closer to April.

Shawn Taylor, Kluane Regional Biologist, informed Council that funds have been set aside by YG for work with the Council, CAFN and the community towards reducing bear and human conflicts in the communities. Council told Shawn that knowing how the individual communities want to deal with bear conflicts is important, and that getting information to the communities about this remains paramount. Council also stressed that this needs to move swiftly and should not be a long project.

Shawn also asked Council if they had anymore thoughts about a Grizzly Bear population inventory. Council agrees that a population inventory is something that could possibly be visited at a later time, but stressed that there is no support from the community to use a method that collars and drugs bears. Council supports using Ground Based Monitoring methods, DNA collection through noninvasive means like the barb wire method, and listening to local people who are out on the land. YG suggested that the partners of the draft Integrated Wildlife Management Plan sit down together to discuss a plan of action around bear human conflicts. Shawn also suggested that YG is hoping to bring some people to the Yukon that have worked with bear human conflicts in their own communities to share their knowledge.

Aishihik Caribou Census - Troy Hagel- Caribou Biologist YG

Funds have recently been made available to perform a census on the Aishihik herd. This census was an action item put forward in the draft CATT-Integrated Wildlife Management Plan. A mark-resight method will be used, where the caribou will be marked with a temporary dye during one helicopter flight. Following flights back will look for those marked caribou and the unmarked animals with them to come up with an estimated number. This approach works well with favourable snow conditions or not, and this method should give a more precise estimate, than using the usual stratified random block approach as is used most often for moose. Currently there is an estimate of 2000 caribou, based on the rut count performed in 2007, and using government computer models. This mark-resight method has been used successfully for caribou, and mountain goats in the past in BC.

YESAB

Council and Graham Boyd- CAFN Lands Manager discussed the recommendations from the Kluane Land Use Working Group, to develop a planned agricultural subdivision and direct all agricultural applications to that area. These agricultural lots have been dispersed through a lottery system by YG, and more lots are expected to be released in 2010.

General discussion and concerns were noted around the length of time that it takes to get an agricultural lot through the lottery process, allowing spot land applications outside of planned areas, applications that request agricultural lands for one purpose and then being used for another, and about permanent land dispersal, community and economic benefits of agriculture. Land use planning and the lack of it continues to be a concern for Council

2008-0094

Council reviewed this application and had concerns around increased access resulting from the proponent's wilderness business, on preexisting trappers trails and further into the hinterland was noted. Trapline #268 would be impacted by this as well, the proponents should also contact the trapper. Council suggests that all spot land agricultural applications be directed to apply within the planned agricultural subdivision. Council is unable to support this land application in the absence of a land use plan.

2008-0201

Council reviewed this application and concerns were noted around grizzly bear habitat, the proponents need to contact the trapper of trapline #266 as much of that trapline would be affected should the full 140 acres be granted. Council suggests that all spot land agricultural applications be directed to apply within the planned agricultural subdivision. The Council also Council is unable to support this land application in the absence of a land use plan.

2008-0287

Council reviewed this application and noted that any new access roads should be decommissioned after logging activities have ended. Council also requests that no spot land applications be accepted for this area once logging operations cease, but that land applicants be directed to "nodes" to allow for regeneration for habitat.

2008-0295

Council reviewed this application and noted that any new access roads should be decommissioned after fuel abatement activities have ended. Council also requests that no spot land applications be accepted for this area once fuel abatement operations cease, but that land applicants be directed to "nodes" to allow for regeneration for habitat.

2008-0220

Council reviewed this application and is unable to support this land application in the absence of a land use plan. Council noted that this application is close to a node of residential housing (Nygren subdivision).

YESAB 5 Year Review

Graham informed Council that Gord Allison will represent CAFN for the YESAB 5 year review. Council has received an invitation to meet with the YESAB Review Team. Susan will contact them to set up a time and date.

Action Item 01-01-09- Susan will contact the YESAB Review Team to set up a time and date to participate in the YESAB 5 Year Review.

Old Business

Bison

Carmacks RRC would like to meet with Alsek RRC to discuss concerns about bison. Susan is drafting a letter to be sent to YG outlining concerns around the bison, the current hunting season, and the process currently being used to allocate harvest.

Trapping

In light of the low numbers of moose counted in Zone 7, Council suggested that wolf trapping and courses to teach people need to snare wolves needs to be increased. Lorne mentioned that there are people in the area that would be willing to trap and snare wolves but that the difficulty was with accessing a trapline to do it on. It was noted that there is a great degree of skill and time required to skin a wolf properly, and that often when the hide goes to be sold, skinning mistakes can cost dearly. Lorne also noted that wolf trapping throughout the Yukon is low, with less than 15 trappers of over 300, trapping more that 3 wolves per year. Council is exploring some incentives to offer to trappers. Shawn asked Council what some of the issues around trappers having an assistant trapper were, Council explained that it does have

Review and Approve Agenda

Motion 01-01-08 – Boyd moves to accept Agenda 01-09 as presented. Wade seconds the motion. Approved unanimously.

Finance and Administration

Review and Approve Minutes 08-08

Motion 02-01-08-Boyd moves to accept Minutes 08-08 as presented. Patt seconds the motion. Approved unanimously.

Review and Approve Minutes 09-08

Motion 03-01-08 Greg moves to accept Minutes 08-08 as presented. Wade seconds the motion. Approved unanimously.

Review and Approve Minutes 10-08

Motion 04-01-09 Patt moves to accept Minutes 08-08 as presented. Boyd seconds the motion. Approved unanimously.

Finance Update

Council remains in a positive financial position.

