

**Minutes**  
**Regional Wildlife Management**  
**Northern Interior Region**  
**Workshop**  
**January 18, 2005**  
**Prince George Native Friendship Center**

**Chair:** Marvin George

**Co-Chair-** Les Husband

**Minutes-** Christine Hornsberger

**Present-** Robert Antoine- Nak'azdli Band

- Fred Sam – Nak'azdli Band
- Ted Zimmerman - WLAP
- Jane Calvert - Doig River First Nation
- Brent Von Alkier - BCWF, Spruce City Wildlife Association
- Doug Wilson - WLAP
- Jason Lee -T8TA
- Rick Krehbiel – LTTO
- Bert Fillion- GOABC
- Chris Hamilton- WLAP
- Corinne Shepheard - TNO
- Don Cadden – WLAP
- Glen Watts – WLAP
- Jack Askoty – Doig River First Nation
- Ron Seymour – Lheidli T'enneh

Opening prayer held at 9:30am.

Meeting start time postponed from 9:00 am until 10:00 am due to poor road conditions.

**Summary of “DISCUSSION PAPER ON OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A REGIONAL WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PROCESS IN THE NORTHERN REGION”.**

Marvin

- Provides a brief history of the Wildlife Working Group, Wildlife Management Process and the formation of the discussion paper. Information is available in the **Executive Summary**
- Read the intents of the process as listed in the **Executive Summary**
- Read through the Statement of Principles as listed under each heading on pages 9 and 10 of the Discussion Paper.
- Read through each Recommendation as they appear in the Discussion Paper. Clarified that a reason for **Recommendation 1** is to maintain continuity in the decision and information sharing process. Clarified that the priorities listed in **Recommendation 2** are only a starting point, and that other issues have been identified.
- **Appendix A** (map) the boundaries shown have been formed based on a variety of pre-existing boundaries (Management Units, Water Management Boundaries,

Guide outfitter territory etc.) The boundaries have and will continue to expand based on the addition of First Nation interest and involvement in the process.

- Read through **Method of Decision-Making** and **Dispute Resolution**.

Time provided for questions:

- No questions asked.

### **Review of Qualification on Recommendations 1-8 from Nancy Wilkin's Letter**

Les Husband

- Letter from Assistant Deputy Minister: Nancy Wilkin addressed to Robin Junger, Chief Negotiator: Treaty Negotiations Office. Copies of the letter were available at this meeting. This letter consists of Nancy Wilkin's comments on the **Discussion Paper on Options and Recommendations for a Regional Wildlife Management Process in the Northern Interior Region**.
- Positive feedback is noted as none of the recommendations were rejected.
- Read through each recommendation paired with the response received in the letter. The qualified agreement with Recommendation #3 noted as significant because it acknowledges a decision making role, not just an advisory role.

Time provided for questions:

Q: Fred Sam

- Concerning Recommendation #1 who are the "present members" and how is that term defined?

A: Marvin George

- "present members" are anyone recognized as a member. Membership to be discussed later in meeting.

Q: Jane Calvert

- Some of the identified issues are not included in Recommendation #2. Why are they not being addressed?

A: Don Cadden

- Issues have been prioritized and only the top of that list has been included in the recommendation. Success on a subset of issues will allow for other issues to be addressed in the future. Also, success in the early stages may provide for added funding in the future which will help to better address issues requiring research or consultants.

### **Budget**

Don Cadden

- Government has committed to funding throughout the province for a minimum of three (3) years.
- Asked "What will it cost to get the process operational?" Resulting in an estimation of \$25,000 per year for three years. The total is intended to cover:
  1. Running costs (e.g., meeting rooms, travel, food and coffee etc.)
  2. Mapping and GIS analysis
  3. work, projects and/or information gathering in order to begin the process on issues identified in Recommendation #2

- Anticipate covering initial cost of getting participants involved. Hope that an acknowledged value of process will bring funding from participants
- Commitment to provide support by identifying money from budgets and funding for specific aspects (e.g., consulting) on an ongoing basis.

Q: Fred Sam

- Workshop/ presentations in surrounding areas could be beneficial. Possible interest from the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council.

A: Marvin George

- Everyone is invited to participate. Information will be circulated. Other locations for workshops are possible in the future.

### **Membership**

Marvin George

- Read through Wildlife Working Group Membership list (**Appendix C**)
- Group formation: Regional Advisory Committee was the basis. The group expanded, and became the Process Planning Committee and the Wildlife Working Group.
- Read names and affiliations of the Process Planning Committee (**Appendix B**)
- Noted that there are openings for people to join the Process Planning Committee

### **Round Table Discussion:**

Don Cadden

- Process for adding members to the PPC?
- Description of roles and responsibilities of members?
- Process/ guidelines for how to become a new member?

Les Husband

- The terms and conditions of membership do exist. The information is not available at this meeting. Will find and distribute the information.

Don Cadden

- A formal letter should be added to the files in order to ensure who is the contact and what are their responsibilities.

Marvin George

- Roles will be e-mailed to all current members.
- Roles and a letter to officially recognize participation will be sent to all current member.

Jason Lee

- Based on the Boundary line on the map a dialogue with Treaty 8 needs to be opened (will discuss later with Doug Wilson). Possible added membership of Treaty 8 should be discussed.

### **Regional Pilots: DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION; Regional Fish and Wildlife Advisory Groups with Significant First Nations Involvement.**

Chris Hamilton

- Background information provided in the **Introduction**.

- The “three types of public advisory bodies” were named and held nominations for panels, but were never actually formed.
- Challenges in creating a workable and efficient Regional Fish and Wildlife Advisory Group. Emphasis on the importance of a “government-to-government” relationship between the province and First Nations.
- Emphasis on flexibility, sustainability, and co-ordination with populations, territory, conservation region, watersheds, WLAP regions etc.
- Identification of questions around the establishment of a Regional Fish and Wildlife Advisory Group. Listed on page three (3) of DRAFT. Emphasis on establishing and maintaining a government-to-government relationship
- Formation of principles in an attempt to formulate answers to questions.
- **Discussion paper on Options and Recommendations for Regional Wildlife Management Process in the Northern Interior Region** answers many of the questions and provides a good example of process.
- The principles form theories for process but lead to more questions. Example: **Consistency and flexibility:** how do you build regional flexibility while upholding provincial standards and requirements?
- All principles must be addressed when creating terms of reference.
- Recommendation to pursue a variety of groups across the province and compare successes and circumstances. Other groups being formed include: Treaty 8 being facilitated by treaty negotiations; Nisga’a, Vancouver Island, Caribou Tribal Council, Sunshine Coast, etc. Groups are in various stages of formation and progress, and success.

### **Round Table Discussion:**

Jason Lee

- Are all interactions consultations? Is there a legal requirement to ask at start of conversation if it is being counted as a consultation?

Don Cadden/ Chris Hamilton

- All interactions are *parts* of a consultation. A consultation is not complete until an issue is signed off by all parties involved.

Jack Askoty

- Attending as a result of frustration when wondering who to contact with concerns about hunting regulations, oil and gas industry effect on ecosystems, etc. Open lines of communication are necessary to share opinions and experiences. Hope that the group is successful and will listen to First Nations knowledge.

Marvin George

- Purpose and intent of group is to share information. Knowledge from elders is necessary in creating a balance and having full information sharing between all parties involved in decision making.

Rick Krehbiel in response to Chris Hamilton’s **Draft for Discussion**

- “Regional Wildlife Management Process” vs. “Advisory Process” Not all processes are advisory.

Chris Hamilton

- “advisory” is intended as a generic term

Don Cadden

- If standards and policy direction fall within a specific frame a decision can be made. If the issue reaches beyond the limits of the group it is advisory.

Rick Krehbiel in response to Chris Hamilton's **Draft for Discussion**

- Consultations exist for the purpose of infringing on treaty and First Nation rights. "Consultation" is a weapon. Not everything needs to be a consultation. Consultations should be made unnecessary. Treaty Negotiations work without consultations. By removing "consultations" a balance is created which allows First nations to sit equally in a multi-stakeholder situation. Will help in managing a government-to-government relationship.
- What is the authority for the proposal that resident hunters have priority over non-resident hunters?

Chris Hamilton in response to Rick Krehbiel

- Misunderstanding: one does not have priority over the other. Resident and Non-resident hunters are shifted together for allocation. Not sure if legal basis.
- Agreement that "consultation" is bad. It is necessary to sit as equals and colleagues to work together productively and fairly.

Jason Lee in response to Rick Krehbiel

- A written response to Chris's DRAFT would be beneficial to understanding his position on the topics discussed.

### **Regulations/ policies: Harvest Management, Habitat and Inventory**

Glen Watts

- Presentation title: Wildlife Management in a Nutshell from the Fish and wildlife Recreation and Allocation Perspective.
- Mission statement: available on Water, Land and Air Protection website.
- Wildlife Act governs all our activities. Minister and cabinet have ultimate responsibility. Headquarters drafts work towards consistency across the province.
- Habitat management: done by Ecosystems staff (formerly Habitat Protection division of Fish and Wildlife branch). Responsible for: maintaining habitat for species; heavy involvement in land planning; work with clients to maintain Best Management Practices, etc.
- Wildlife allocation priorities
  - conservation of resources
  - sustenance and ceremonial needs
  - Recreational needs
- Harvest objectives
  - maintain sustenance
  - provide hunter days
  - generate direct and indirect revenue.
- Changes to the Regional harvest management regulations:
  - changes are not frequently made unless drastic change in species population.
  - Regulations changes are recommended to Victoria in Jan/Feb.
  - Recommendations undergo hunter/trapper advisory group consultations
  - New regulations approved by cabinet
- Two types of seasons:

- General open season- control- season length, sex, age, bag limit, area closures, vehicle and gear restrictions
- LEH- lottery
- Harvest Monitoring: hunter sample questionnaire provide stats for success.
- Compulsory Inspection: Officer inspects the animal- info on location, sex, age
- No current record or data of First Nation Harvests.
- Inventory Data needs: necessary to properly manage WL populations. Never enough data for the desired level of detail. Level of precision and confidence in decisions based on data is directly related to the amount of funding.
- Moose:
  - demand is high in the Omineca.
  - First Nations harvest rates are not regulated.
  - Have been stable recreationally for 25 years. Average of 3500/year.
  - 13,000 hunters annually, 92,000 hunter days in the Omineca.
  - Provides \$5 million annual provincial revenue.

### **Round Table Discussion**

Jason Lee

- How are the harvest numbers calculated if there are no stats for First Nation harvest levels? Do the data include an estimated harvest level or is it non-inclusive of First Nations harvest?

Glen Watts

- There is a formula used that does account for an approximation of first Nation Harvest levels. Check the formula accuracy by doing physical counts. Stable effort and stable harvest should maintain a stable species population level. Level sought to maintain is 30 bulls per 100 cows.

Jason Lee

- Where does the \$5 million in revenue come from and how is it used?

Glen Watts/ Don Cadden

- Habitat Conservation Trust Fund Surcharge- Special funds for WL habitat management. Tag fees go to general revenue?

Jason Lee

- Discussions with First Nations people should include a visual aspect. They will gain a better understanding if they are shown pictures and graphs. Preferred method of information processing.

Don Cadden

- Visual representation has been frequently used in the past and will continue to be used in the future. (example: graphs to show changes over time)

Jason Lee

- How does the hunter sampling work?

Glen Watts

- Questionnaires are sent to a random sample of hunters. Enough questionnaires are sent to ensure statistically significant results. Surveys have been completed since the early 1970's- long term data.

- Some species require a Compulsory Inspection. This is a legal obligation. The animal is inspected and specific data including age, sex and location of kill are recorded.

Robert Antoine

- Many of the Nak'azdli people do not agree with Limited Entry Hunting because it is a lottery. Do not agree with the amount of 5 year old bulls being killed. Do not agree with many of the hunters being people coming north from the lower mainland.

Glen Watts

- All people in the province have an equal chance of getting an LEH draw. There is no restriction based on a person's location of residence.
- Do track the ages of the moose being harvested and work to maintain appropriate levels.
- First Nations people are not covered by LEH restrictions: can hunt bulls anytime for sustenance.

Don Cadden

- The system has worked for keeping a stable population. Do not see any evidence in the data that there needs to be a change.

Jason Lee

- How is First Nations Knowledge going to impact the system of knowledge used by government? Will First Nations opinions be valued as equal to the process already in place?

Don Cadden

- The purpose of the committee is to share information and work together. First Nations knowledge is valued and will be valued throughout all decision processes. A better understanding of opinions needs to be established.
- Example: Disagreement with LEH. Need to discuss the reasons for the disagreement with the lottery system. Compare the concern regarding harvest levels with the data collected. Discuss the situation with First Nations until a complete understanding is reached and a decision can be made.

Jason Lee

- Clarification needed on the Species At Risk Legislation.

Chris Hamilton

- Impacts everyone. Can legislate to control First Nations harvest actions. But ideally all decisions would be collective agreement for the good of the animal. Must show justifiable need to infringe on First Nations rights. Legal action would be difficult decision to make. Difficult to hold an argument that the killing of a single animal has a large enough effect on the entire remaining species.

Don Cadden

- Example: White Sturgeon. Agreement at band level but if there is a disagreement at an individual level, do we charge the individual or deal with the band?

Jack Askoty

- Too many bull-moose tickets in the fall.
- First Nations will spot moose and spread word to not hunt moose in specific area: Self regulate harvest levels.

- Want to make certain that meat of an animal is not being wasted. Too often trophy is taken and animal is left to be eaten by other animals.

Marvin George

- Note **Recommendation #4** use of indigenous knowledge.

### **January 6/05 Harvest Advisory Group Meeting**

Brent Von Alkier

- Group tries to meet at least once per year.
- Last meeting focused on conservation issues and concerns.
- Get information from those participating in outdoor recreation on possible new/enhanced opportunities.
- Provide insight to the government on the wording, readability/ understanding of the regulations synopsis.
- Discuss how to raise youth interest in outdoor recreation/ hunting. Provide opportunity for youth to be successful by allowing hunt time prior to the scattering and disturbance of animals during regular hunting seasons.
  - open migratory birds to youth hunter only (Waterfowl Heritage Days).
  - Youth only grouse season
  - Youth only doe season.
- Open deer and elk season in MUs 7-16 and 7-23
- Additional permits for moose where population provides. Advised that province is currently reviewing moose population data province wide, and will conclude research before making any new changes.
- Asking for a review of a variety of animal seasons and bag limits in specific locations.
- Suggestions on use of road kill by trappers, fencing highways in specific areas, grizzly management , road restrictions, accidental grizzly trapping
- Minutes from the meeting are still in DRAFT. Will be made available

Marvin George

- Is it necessary to have this separate group discussing and making recommendations on parallel topics or can it join with the Process Planning Committee?

Brent Von Alkier

- Merging the groups would be possible, but how will the flow of information from one body to another be integrated?

Don Cadden

- Changes to regulations have a specific timeframe. Should hold meetings concerning regulations a couple of times a year prior to regulation suggestion deadlines. Other issues without time restrictions should be discussed at a separate meeting.

### **Round Table**

Marvin George

- Issues for discussion regarding Harvest Management, Inventory, Habitat?

No Response.



- Future meetings: each group should come prepared with 2 or 3 priority concerns.

Don Cadden

- The Omineca Environmental Stewardship webpage can post all minutes and documents.
- All concerns are welcome for discussion; but action can only be taken on those within the scope of the membership. Some concerns will need to be discussed with Fort St. John because of the boundary between the Omineca and Peace Regions.

Marvin George

- Terms of reference will be drafted by Les Husband and Marvin George.

Don Cadden

- Need to pick a few less complex issues to begin operationalizing the theory behind the meetings.

Chris Hamilton

- Need to distribute a decision making matrix. All parties need to understand the limits to authority. Specify the scope of decisions vs. recommendations. List of deadlines will dictate meeting dates.

Rick Krehbiel

- Will find and share the decisions deadlines timesheet.

Don Cadden

- Use the list of issues from the Harvest Advisory group meeting (to be provided by Brent Von Alkier) to create a subset of issues for discussion at next meeting. Set meeting date according to applicable timelines.

Corinne Shephard

- Need to regulate the flow of information.
- Information needs to be compiled and easily accessible to all parties.

### **Flow of Information**

- To be compiled by Doug Wilson
- Les Husband- terms and conditions of membership
- Brent Von Alkier- Minutes from the Harvest Advisory Group Meeting Oct 28/04
- Les Husband, Marvin George- Terms of Reference draft
- WLAP- decision making matrix
- Rick Krehbiel- regulations decisions deadline timesheet