

Nę K'ə Dene Ts'ı̄l̄ Forum Meeting Notes

April 13, 2017, 1:00 pm-3:30 pm approximately

Participants

Forum Members

Joe Hanlon, Michael Neyelle, Jordan Lennie, Rhea McDonald, Jennie Vandermeer, Roger Odgaard, Jenica von Kuster, Stephanie Behrens, Frederick Andrew, Deborah Simmons

Other Participants

Ken Caine, UAlberta (visiting Tulít'a), Andrew Spring (Wilfrid Laurier University), Mylène Ratelle (UWaterloo),

Agenda

- Introductions/review of agenda
- Research updates
- Cross-Cultural Research Camp/Mountain Caribou Planning Workshop
- Wilderness First Aid course
- Dene Ts'ı̄l̄ School
- Revised Terms of Reference
- Other initiatives

Research updates

Research license application update

- Delayed until next meeting

Northern Water Futures Proposal (Wilfrid Laurier University)

- Rhea - NWRRRC did not have time to review the proposal before the deadline and Rhea says that is unacceptable.
- Deb - Jen Baltzer had presented about the proposal at the previous Forum meeting; they were inviting feedback, not asking for letters of support from ʔehdzo Got'ı̄nę, but letters of support are valuable nonetheless. There have been difficulties having proper engagement with Wilfrid Laurier, despite an in-person meeting in Waterloo about this. Hope this will improve over time.
- Andrew - the conversation last week is just the first step and nothing is happening on the ground yet, and they want to start engagement with communities and will keep following up.
- Deb – But there was a letter of intent prepared and submitted with the Sahtú in mind and no one that we know of saw that letter of intent. So there's been a longer term process. We

were asked to commit a substantial in kind support to the project although we had no opportunity for input into the proposal, due to lack of lead time.

- Rhea – Requested a copy of the SRRB’s letter of support. I’m hoping within that letter you captured that these processes take time and people need time to review. It’s just got to come to a stop with these research permits coming in and them expecting a response within a week or a couple days. That just is not acceptable and needs to change.
- Deb – The SRRB letter of support really tried to help support the proposal so that it hopefully is funded. If we put critical comments in the letter of support it could hurt the chances of being funded. So I put those comments in a separate email to Jen. I didn’t see any effort to include northern based regional people on the research team, which weakens the proposal.
- Rhea –I just want to bring up the point. It is a repeat occurrence with these applications and it needs to stop.
- Roger – Backing up, since this forum has been set up, we’ve been striving for consultation and participation in these projects. That’s our main priority, communication and participation in these projects. So I commend Deb for bringing it up in Waterloo and I agree with Rhea. I think we should set up a procedure and everyone should abide by it.
- Deb – We can work on developing more detailed guidance for researchers on our website.

Cross-Cultural Research Camp/Mountain Caribou Planning

- Planned for the last week of July, Dechenla Lodge. Focus on Mountain Caribou stewardship with Ross River Dena, Norman Wells and Tulít’a including further development of a cooperative Mountain Caribou Guardian Program
- Other activities happening around the same time:
 - Canol Trail walk: the second week of July, portion of the trail near Mile 0 (across from Norman Wells).
 - Guardian program for youth being planned by Dechenla, third year. They really want to recruit more Sahtú youth. Taking place after our camp.
- Deb – two key objectives of the camp: 1) finalize draft caribou management plan for consideration by aboriginal parties. Reports on 2014 and 2016 workshop reports will be completed soon, and some preliminary text will be prepared prior to the camp. 2) training for camp participants in conservation planning tools drawing from the Australian experience. Trainer Stuart Cowell of the Conservation Coaches Network is facilitating the workshop. There is a different approach to invitations for this year’s camp, emphasizing participation from the three partnering communities.
- Deb - Workshops are also being planned within each of the partnering communities to allow for broader community participation.

Frederick Andrew joined the meeting.

- Rhea – What is the reason for having the meeting at Dechenla? Deb – Ross River wants to host the group, they are active in that area and very concerned. So they offered to host. It was agreed that because this is the area of concern that everyone wanted to witness and be in that place.
- Deb - Janet Bayha was saying there should be a future camp like this at Caribou Flats if mountain caribou more generally are of a concern, partially because it supports a community hunt. So that's something to think about.
- Roger – I believe Tulít'a district owns that mining camp at Caribou Flats, and they should be cleaning it up and looking after it.
- Deb – We want the most lead time possible for ensuring that we have a solid plan in place for the camp. And our team is working to prepare certain things for the camp...we're upping the level of planning insofar as we're trying to have safety plans in place prior to these camps. So we'll work with the Ross River folks on a safety plan. Also, we are going to be having a couple of the SRRB staff, at minimum Jordan and Joe, taking Advanced Wilderness First Aid courses.
- Rhea – ENR sends their officers out to Mile 222, and last year we had a monitor go out with them on some of the shifts. I'm wondering if that could help with the cost of getting people out there and back.
- We are relying on ʔehdzo Got'ıneę (Tulít'a and Norman Wells especially) to do recruitment for Dechenla Lodge camp.

Action

Jennie agreed to check in on possible supports from ENR for the camp at Dechenla.

Wilderness First Aid Course

- Joe – The course will mainly be for Parks and SRRB staff (required for summer work we are both doing), probably no space for community members but Joe will keep Christine in the loop about it.
- Deb - Community participants would be asked to contribute approximately \$1,000 for cost of the course, plus travel/accommodations in Tulít'a.

Dene Ts'ı̨ School

- Deb – We are going to do Wilderness First Aid with Jess Dunkin and gun safety with Pat Bobinski. We'd like to hear from SERM members about courses they like. Will also be doing boat safety. The approach to the camp is cross cultural. There will be a buddy system for trainers, bringing together instructors with Dene and science-based knowledge. Boat safety will be taught by Jimmy Dillon and Audrey Giles; cold water safety will be led by Joe and Benny. Other courses will include navigation, canoeing, youth leadership, hunter education, and digital storytelling. This is all situated in the context of doing a lot of traditional on the

land activities. We are making an effort to take a step forward with working with the youth through this program.

- Deb – provided an overview of announcement of two camps. One letter for each camp will go out to all leadership. There will be a big youth recruitment effort for the Dene Ts'ı̨ı̨ School.

Revised Terms of Reference/Research and Monitoring Strategy

- Deb – Hopefully Forum members, the community Forum members as well as government and SRRB Forum members, consider themselves to be developing advice for leaders, not making decisions on behalf of leaders. The leaders are being supported and not undermined by the Forum, and can be thankful for the Forum's role in providing knowledgeable support. Hopefully the leaders feel confident and trust that they are able to rely on the specialized TK knowledge related to research, and monitoring that is being developed by the people in this forum.
- Michael – there are challenges in understanding how things work in Délı̨ı̨ now that self-government is being implemented.
- Deb – As an advisory group, we can provide advice and can play a strong role in that way, and funders like to see that. Advisors can have a lot of influence even without a vote. We listen to what they have to say. For example, with research license applications, the forum can play a strong role, helping to filter through to real issues of concern. There's no way the leaders have time or energy or expertise to be able to meaningfully evaluate a lot of the research license applications. So the forum members can help to sort through and identify red flags or other things. There may be some things that the leaders don't need to review at all because they are straightforward or reflect priorities that have already been discussed.
- Michael – The license application has to be approved by Land Corporations, First Nations, and other leadership. I don't know if we all follow those processes. In Délı̨ı̨'s case, we'll go through the whole licensing, we would understand it, but for the leaders to understand it is difficult.
- Frederick – Michael raised a good point about leadership. As a forum, we need to support them in the best way we can.
- Michael – I think ʔehdzo Got'ı̨ı̨ really need help too.
- Jennie – A research strategy is really important to show how we would like research and monitoring conducted in our region. Would be key in getting our leaders on board. Mike/Roger agree. Jennie – Get that strategy done! Rhea – thanks for that statement.
- Michael – We should take this to community leaders.
- Rhea – Agree that that is the next step.
- Deb – We have been doing that slowly, we had a 3-4 day session in Fort Good Hope that James helped to convene. That was the intention of having our in-person meeting in Tulı́'a, to incorporate discussions with the leaders, so we had a full day meeting with leaders on Friday. The Fort Good Hope meeting was organised because of a request from James; we're

open to a similar meeting in Norman Wells, outlining what the forum does and focusing on Norman Wells input into the research strategy, licencing, and expanded scope.

- Rhea – For sure, would also have to talk to the Land Corporation and RRC.
- Jennie – Suggestion, summer is coming up and it is usually Annual General Meeting (AGM) season, so even if you can't get a meeting you can send the chair/support staff who can speak to the strategy to have a booth at AGMs.
- Deb – We should also have a written summary document that can be handed out at AGMs. Ideally Leon Andrew and/or Cindy Gilday can present about the Forum.
- Deb – Do you want me to provide a summary of terms of reference changes or does anyone want to flag concerns? If you are willing to see this as a living document that would be approved and finalized at a future meeting, could it be approved on an interim basis at least to show to the Sahtú Secretariat Inc. that we are working on this expanded scope. The basic ideas from our last meeting are there.
- Jenica/Jennie – good to keep up research and monitoring during the lull in industry activity.
- Jenica – Very glad to hear about training because industry cannot operate without properly certified staff.

Action

Deb will prioritize working with Rhea, Roger and Christine on making sure we have a budget for a meeting in Norman Wells to discuss the Research and Monitoring Strategy so we can cover participation costs and figure out the timing.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 3:30 pm.