

Notes from May 08, 2014 conference call with Sahtu Environmental Research and Monitoring Forum to discuss a cumulative effects monitoring workshop for wildlife

James Hodson

Attendees:

Richard Popko, James Hodson, Laurel MacDonald, Angus Smith – GNWT-ENR

Deborah Simmons – SRRB

Michael Neyelle - SRRB

Rodger Odgaard – Norman Wells Land Corporation

Patricia Manuel – Fort Good Hope RRC

Bradley Menacho – Tulita RRC

Cindy Gilday – Sahtu Secretariat Inc.

Loretta Ransom – Environment Canada

Sandra Marken - ConocoPhillips

Wildlife cumulative effects workshop

- James provided an overview of the wildlife cumulative effects workshop that he would like to organize for this summer. The general purpose of the workshop is to pick up where the ERM Forum left off after the January workshop in Yellowknife. The list of wildlife monitoring and research questions developed at the January workshop would be discussed in greater detail to start identifying approaches to answer these questions and to build collaborative monitoring programs, with a view to getting programs up and running by this winter or next fiscal year. Another key objective is for industry to present the results of the wildlife baseline and monitoring work that they've been doing during the past couple of years.
- The workshop was originally proposed for sometime between June 02 – July 06, but it was suggested that late-August might be a better time. Michael identified that he had several other meetings going on in June and early July.
- August 26-28 was proposed as a meeting date and seemed to fit with everyone's schedule
- It was agreed that Fort Good Hope would be the best place to host the meeting
- ENR will organize and host the meeting, and people invited to the meeting would include members of the ERM Forum, ENR biologists, CWS biologists, CIMP (Julian is already a member of the ERM forum), other experts as required
- It was also suggested that Sahtu leaders be invited, but it was cautioned that we should try to avoid the meeting becoming political, and it might be better for RRC reps to report back to their leaders or that they be provided with written plain language summaries of the meeting
- James suggested that this workshop should stay focussed on wildlife and monitoring methods and we should be careful about expanding the scope or list of participants too much to make sure that can get down to details
- Some of the specific workshop objective's outlined in James' original e-mail were also reviewed:

- Overview of ongoing and upcoming development activity in the region
- Discussion of different pathways for cumulative effects on wildlife
- Presentation of methods and results of past and ongoing baseline data collection and monitoring programs conducted by industry
- Presentation of ongoing ENR wildlife programs in the region
- Examples of collaborative monitoring programs from other areas of the NWT
- Re-cap of wildlife concerns and monitoring questions raised at the January 2014 Sahtu Environmental Research and Monitoring Forum in Yellowknife
- Discuss which issues and species/species groups are a priority and how to approach monitoring
- James will try to prepare a monitoring options report for distribution before the meeting which highlights different potential approaches to answering some of the wildlife monitoring questions brought up at the January ERM forum meeting.
- Deb suggested that other people or organizations that are conducting wildlife research and monitoring in the region but who are not affiliated with industry or government should be invited as well
- In addition to Industry and ENR providing updates about their wildlife programs, SRRB should also provide an update of what they are working on
- Cindy and Deb highlighted the importance of including consideration of traditional knowledge approaches to monitoring. We need to have a good balance of science and traditional knowledge.
- Sandra asked if we would also like to discuss groundwater and surface water monitoring at this meeting. James said he would like to keep the meeting focussed on wildlife, but if there are obviously links between the water monitoring and wildlife then these should be included in the discussion. Sandra said that the surface water monitoring has links to wildlife such as waterfowl.

Updates on the ERM Forum and ESRF funded projects

- There will be a meeting of the ERM Forum Support Group on June 04 to review this year's workplan and to discuss funding considerations
- The ESRF technical advisory group (TAG) will be meeting tomorrow (May 09) to discuss Statements of Work under the Wildlife, Habitat and Harvesting theme
- Deb provided an overview of some of the different ESRF funded projects
- It was requested that the ERM Forum be provided with a written summary of all the different projects supported under ESRF funding
- Golder consultants have been hired to do ESRF funded work on surface and sub-surface water. Bruce Hannah (ENR) is overseeing this project.
- A member of the ERM Forum was invited to participate in the ESRF TAG conference call on May 09. Rodger Odgaard volunteered to attend.