

Sahtú ERM Teleconference

September 8, 2016

Notes from the meeting

Present:

Gordon Yakeleya, Michael Neyelle, Jimmy Dillon, Frederick Andrew, Diane Conrad, Christine Wenman, Deb Simmons, Joe Hanlon, Thom Stubbs, Ceilidh Stubbs, Audrey Giles, Brenda Parlee Chelsea Martin

1) Review of Agenda (1:00 PM)

- a) Christine presented the agenda. Two items were added – Deb is going to talk about a research application that she is submitting with Karen Rice and there will be some update on on-going youth initiatives.

2) Intro to new member of the SRRB team - Ceilidh Stubbs (1:10 PM)

- a) Working with SRRB for next four months, law student in Victoria, coming to Tulít'a from October-December.
- b) Previously did work with Tulít'a Readiness Initiative
- c) Working on issues including consultation guidelines, revisions to Fisheries Act.
- d) Michael – asks for clarification on fisheries act work. Deb – provides info on work DFO is doing (Kim Howland / guests at CCRC) so there is a lot of interest from our research partners as well as the SRRB to ensure that the Fisheries Act is able to ensure the conservation of fisheries in the Sahtú. Ceilidh is just finding out what the scope of that work may be; it isn't clear yet if there may be some funding to involve some community discussions about the topic. Ceilidh is only on day two of her position so we will hear lots of updates from her and it is great to know that there is so much interest and enthusiasm in her work from Forum Members.

3) Thom Stubbs, presentation of project: "Sahtú Environmental Monitoring Decision Support Tool" (1:20 PM)

- a) Overview of 3 year CIMP project, sponsored through SRRB, using ALCES to support decisions.
- b) Sahtú ERM is key partner to give guidance on how to direct work of the tool being built.
- c) Communications materials over the next few months.
- d) Meeting in October in YK to talk with scientific experts about changes in landscape / factors.
- e) Workshop with forum at some point this year, tbd, sometime in February.
- f) Comments from Michael and from Frederick (with Michael interpreting) – Can we involve elders in that meeting? Thom – Open to suggestions, but cautious about jumping in to methods too quickly. Want to discuss how to incorporate Dene/local

knowledge at workshop in February. The meeting in October will be with about three people – Thom, Jean Polfus and a representative from GNWT. The meeting will inform the big meeting in February where the focus is on engaging Forum Members and talking about how Traditional and local knowledge can guide the project.

- g) Gordon – Question about lakes drying out, climate change or impacts on animals, are you considering that too? Thom – Yes, some information is being considered. We won't have answers at the first meeting, but we'll get ideas from the meetings we have with the forum and then will have a couple years to focus on specific questions. So I'm really enthused by your ideas and interests.

4) Health and Social Services proposal – Audrey Giles

- a) Research on men and boating safety, has worked in NWT
- b) Attended CCRC and taught pleasure craft operator course
- c) Applying for a 2016-2017 for a project about making healthy choices
- d) Idea is to do a needs assessment with each community – what kind of safety equipment is needed? Float coats, flares, rope, etc? Identify needs and try to use the grant to buy equipment to meet those needs.
- e) Cold Water Rescue course – Joe and Audrey doing in September. Could bring people together to do Pleasure Craft Operator training and then also the Cold Water Rescue course and then talk about needs assessment in each community, and then have participants go back and be advocates for boat safety.
- f) Partnership with NWT parks association, RRCs, UofOttawa... Three partners are needed.
- g) Gordon – Hamlet too, they get funding from transportation for boat stuff. You can provide life jackets on the shore so people can take them, they do that in Norman Wells. It is a very good program. I think people should take and keep the equipment. It is very important with people traveling, and a lot don't have pfd's on. Fred – And they save lives. Gordon – I really support and want to see this happen.
- h) Audrey will email around brief 300 word proposal, will probably do block fund for each community to come up with their own plan for how they want to address the issue and spend fund. This isn't research, this is for everyone's use. We need to identify the groups that want to be partners, and then I could circulate draft, and then we could get letters of support.
- i) Joe – just get RRCs for input, then can get additional partners afterwards.

5) Diane Conrad – Question for the ERM for feedback

- a) Doing work in FGH with kids in school
- b) Question – Is there a priority in First Nations communities around digital literacy? Digital literacy being adults/kids using technology for information and communication purposes.
- c) Deb – This would link really nicely with work that Heidi Brown is doing related to digital mapping. Diane – yeah, that would be part of it. Deb – We are in process of coordinating

with Carleton University about project with researchers/youth to develop curated exhibits about mapping caribou knowledge, to make educational tools about caribou. Fred – likes the idea.

- d) Diane – Any input from the community members? Fred – Yes, definitely interested in this.
- e) Mike – Really support the idea.
- f) Diane is going to put the researcher who was interested in this topic in touch with the Forum for more follow-up.

6) Deb on other research updates

Deb has been working with Karen Rice on a small proposal to do further work on Dene language. This small proposal, if successful, could hopefully lead to the development of larger multi-year initiatives. Karen did research on language in the Sahtú years ago and developed a book that explains the grammar of the Sahtú dialects. The Sahtú is the only region in the NWT that has had that type of work done.

- i) Michael – need some sort of tool for people to use and listen to an elder speak in their language.
 - ii) Gordon – Also need people to learn to write it too, not just learn how to pronounce it. I can speak 100% but I can't read it. Reading and writing is important.
 - iii) Jimmy – To Gordon, in Dene language.
 - iv) Michael – Jimmy's grandma said one time that the dene language is going to disappear. But it is still around and we have to live with it. Jimmy was saying that it is possible to regain it, just have to work on it and try it. So that is one way that we can try and get it back. Gordon – Said there was a lady here in Tulít'a who did classes where she taught them to speak, read, and write Dene language. Jimmy – when they left the community for school, they didn't speak as well, so he took his grandchildren on the land and only spoke dene language and now they work at the mines and phone and speak dene language fluently now. So he's really proud of that.
- b) SYN also getting another push, with an on-the-land camp at Bennet Field in February.
 - c) Mountain caribou stewardship workshop, that has a research and monitoring element.

7) Research License Application updates (Joe)

- a) Four currently outstanding:
 - i) 3465 – Glacial Lakes / Fossils – Dr. Duane Froese, University of Alberta. Fort Simpson moving down the river.
 - (1) Main comment – invitation to participate in ERM forum, request to talk to RRC before and after.
 - (2) Gordon / Fred – comments about land/water use (safety, involving community, consultation – Joe points out that SRRB does ask for this at a basic level, but that community orgs could ask for greater levels).
 - ii) Tracking Change – SRRB is partner.

- iii) Biomonitoring – SRRB is partner.
 - iv) Nahanni freshwater streams – Parks Canada is partner (with involvement/support of NWRRRC and TRRC), SRRB supported.
- 8) Sahtú ERM Forum Reports proposals and work planning (C. Wenman update)
- a) Wrapping up Cross Cultural Research Camp with lots of report writing. Focus in early summer was on getting funding for the camp.
 - b) The Forum has two priority objectives this year that you have all identified – the first is the development of a regional environmental Research and Monitoring Strategy and the second is to continue dialogues about how the research licensing process in the region can be handled more effectively and efficiently.
 - c) Funding these two initiatives as well as these on-going calls that support research communication and coordination is a current priority. We have 50k confirmed from ENR but are trying to work on submitting some funding proposals to other GNWT departments, namely ITI and Aboriginal Affairs (the latter because the research licensing question can be seen as a claim implementation issue).
 - d) We have mapped out a work plan for the year, 1 in person meeting and then these ongoing calls. Earlier we talked about meeting in person in the fall but we can't afford this and also we don't really have a draft research strategy ready yet. If we meet in the new year then we can have community meetings in November that can inform the draft strategy.
 - e) Workshops in each community about two topics – research licensing and research/monitoring strategy – hopefully in November.
 - f) Diane – that exchange about giving feedback for the licensing. Interesting that communities interested in safety of people doing research, how to involve that in the licensing process? Christine – noted and agree that the issues that the research licensing solicits feedback for and the topics that are important to the communities don't always align so these are the sorts of things we can look at as our discussions about research licensing continue.
 - g) Gordon – Feedback on the proposed work plan – worried about dates in November for workshop, people like to get on the land. Better time in October. Fred – Nov/Dec is when people are moving around in and out, in October is good. Mike – Our manager, Ed, is out on vacation at the moment so you can talk to me about this kind of correspondence.
 - h) Deb – got the idea of another funding source for the forum, will talk to Christine about it. Polar Knowledge Canada. The Forum really needs to diversity funding as ENR as indicated it may not be able to provide funding next year.
 - i) Christine will look into pushing the community meetings up in time but that means starting to plan them next week! She will be in touch right away.
- 9) Cross-cultural research camp debrief (C. Wenman and others)

- a) Lots of positive feedback, very well organized, cooks, Michael as interpreter, intergenerational involvement, beautiful location – all many positive things.
- b) Some sort of planning / resource document for the next camp to be developed by Joe (maybe) or somehow through the SRRB.
- c) Some areas for improvement – youth schedule/involvement
- d) Diane – fantastic time, beautiful spot, definitely attending next year, want to bring co-investigator as well. More so than research, we had a really good conversation about complexities/challenges of education, found that really valuable. Really curious to know how things progress with self-govt in Délı̨nę around education, and a way to keep the dialogue around that going.
- e) Mike – 8 days since self-govt, sure we’ll get a chance to meet with new govt as RRC, to do a lot of these on the land programs. Jimmy really would support something like that.
- f) Gordon – Really grateful that I went, being on the land makes you feel good, we grew up like this and we love living out there and doing things, working, hunting. Would be great if someone could tell a story about the area we’ve been in, how we grew up on the land, history of the area so we can understand, to teach our younger people to understand the land, so in the future they know where they went, what it looked like, and what the story behind it is. Had some nice, beautiful food, very happy about that. Just wanted to say that, thank you.
- g) Michael – agrees, likes the idea. Chris – will make sure that goes in the binder. Deb discussed the discussion about the place where this camp was held outside of Délı̨nę – Qk’aibə – for days we were trying to figure out the source of the name and it really demonstrated the challenges of doing good TK work because it was only the result of conversations over many days that we were able to discover the meaning – it required talking with everyone there and building on discussions related to the meaning of language. It turns out that Qk’aibə is named for a bird – the Parasitic Jaegar – that used to flock in that area but is no longer there so it demonstrates the changes that have occurred over time. It took a long time to narrow in on what bird that was referred to because it Whiskey Jack is a similar word (but in Dene language has the word small added). So in english it has been translated as Whiskey Jack Bay when in fact it referred to a different word. So there was a lot of discussion about place at this camp and that discussion was really fruitful and extraordinarily interesting.
- h) Chris – any thoughts on how to encourage youth participation in all activities? All of the young people were great but sometimes getting everyone out of bed in the morning was a challenge so it would be good to have a shared idea of what expectations are. How can we communicate that? Mike – need to make sure we get young people out there. Some of the research they learned about, need to do more traditional type skills/teaching, like trapping and making deadfalls or shelters or stuff like that, where it will help them. We didn’t really show kids how to test the water, sampling. One lady was there (Mylène)...talks about water samples from lake. Christine mentioned that ENR waters program would have liked to participate – they contacted her after and were

disappointed to not have participated so we will be sure to contact them early next year. There was also some water quality work done with the DFO researchers who were at the camp.

- i) Gordon to Joe – could do course on how to pack a boat/truck/skidoo with safety stuff and what to do if it breaks down.
- j) Mike – question about location next year. Chris – Tulit'a district gets first offer. Gordon/Fred – Kelly Lake or Willow Lake are good ideas. Gordon – Around Aug 20, whitefish run below Kelly Lake. Emphasis that the camp planning should start EARLY!

10) Tracking Changes - Brenda Parlee and Chelsea Martin

- a) Brenda – 6 year program, SSHRC, looking at water, fish, livelihoods, wellbeing.
- b) Idea came from elders of TK steering committee of Mackenzie River Basin Board. Current member of that group is Leon Andrew.
- c) Funded projects around the basin this year, all asking the same questions – collecting oral histories and current observations from land/water users.
- d) Gordon – asks for more info about project; Deb says Joe can provide that.
- e) Project team meeting next week to think about involving more participants and/or talking about next steps and roles and responsibilities.
- f) Deb – Brenda works on a bunch of projects, one of them involves the Sahtú Youth Network
- g) Deb – invites Chelsea to be on mailing list/teleconferences for Sahtú ERM Forum

11) Other agenda items (if identified by other Forum Members)

- a) None

12) Next call date

- a) Christine will figure out and send info to everyone. Deb mentioned that the 3rd and 4th week there may be an SRRB workshop so the first two weeks will work. Christine – will check with Cindy as we haven't had SSI involvement for a while. Will probably look to the first two weeks of October.