

**COASTAL HABITAT RESEARCH PROGRAM
STEERING COMMITTEE**

**SIGNED MINUTES OF THE 10TH MEETING HELD IN MONTRÉAL
ON NOVEMBER 7 AND 8, 2017**

PRESENT:	Alain Tremblay	Hydro-Québec
	Carine Durocher	Hydro-Québec
	Jean-Philippe Gilbert	Hydro-Québec
	Marc Dunn	Niskamoon Corporation
	Merlin Whiskeychan	Waskaganish
	Norman Cheezo	Eastmain
	Nadia Saganash	Cree Nation Government
	Réal Courcelles	Hydro-Québec
	Robbie Tapiatic	Chisasibi/Niskamoon Corporation
William Blackned	Wemindji	
GUESTS	Emily Sinave	Cree Nation Government
	Ernie Rabbitskin	Niskamoon Corporation
	James Bobbish	Cree Nation of Chisasibi
	Josée Rousseau	Hydro-Québec
	Louie Kanatewat	Cree Nation of Chisasibi
	Roderick Pachano	Cree Nation of Chisasibi

CHAIR AND SECRETARY

Mr. Cheezo chaired the meeting. Ms. Rousseau acted as Secretary.
The meeting began at 1:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The Chair reviewed the agenda for the day.

Mr. Dunn asked that item 2b) of the agenda be deferred as he has not received any updated information on this subject.

Mr. Dunn asked that “Communication plan” be added to the agenda as item 7 a) and that “Newsletter” be added as item 7b). The “To do list” will become item 9 of the agenda.

Mr. Courcelles asked that “Contracts with the universities” be added to the agenda as item 8.

Ms. Durocher asked that “Goose harvesting along the coast: voluntary harvesting registry” be added to the agenda as item 2b).

Mr. Dunn asked that “Field laboratory” be added to the agenda as item 3a).

UPDATE ON RESEARCH PROGRAMS – RESEARCH PROGRAM ON GEESE – Terms of reference and proposal for a researcher

Mr. Dunn asked Mr. Gilbert to show the terms of reference on-screen. He said that one of the main points discussed among the Cree participants is methodology, since the flyover will take place in the middle of goose-hunting season. He said that if the land users consent to this, we will have to prove to them that it will work and that we only have one chance to do things right.

Regarding the last sentence of the contextual document, Mr. Bobbish asked whether the communities will be involved.

Mr. Gilbert confirmed that the communities will be involved and that hunters will always participate in the helicopter flyovers. He said that a voluntary goose-harvesting registry may be set up.

Mr. Bobbish suggested adding a sentence on this topic.

Mr. Bobbish also recommended that the research objectives be more specific. The participants suggested a few clarifications and changes, which were duly noted by Mr. Gilbert.

Mr. Pachano suggested that “compensation” be replaced by “remedial measures” in the section on background.

Mr. Dunn suggested adding “to collaborate extensively with the other researchers to ensure that the studies complement one another.”

Ms. Durocher referred to the voluntary harvesting registry mentioned earlier by Mr. Gilbert.

Ms. Saganash referred to the set up by the Cree Trappers' Associations, saying that we could ask them to make sure they are properly filled out. Mr. Dunn suggested another complementary strategy: that land users use a notebook to record their observations on geese whenever they fly to their camps by plane or helicopter.

Ms. Saganash suggested that a map be attached to the CTA booklet.

Mr. Dunn suggested we first look at all the tools available on our end and then check with the CTAs.

Mr. Courcelles said that he and Mr. Whiskeychan had the idea of tagging the geese with transmitters when they stop along the coast in the fall. He added that they had obtained consent from the tallyman in Baie Boatswain. He suggested purchasing 25 collars.

Mr. Gilbert suggested spending a little more to buy collars that are equipped with satellite tracking devices and can collect and transmit data regardless of voltage. He said that the collars used previously (i.e., the ones that use GPS and cell towers rather than satellite technology) automatically go into "saving" mode below 3.7 volts. He estimated that the newer collars cost about \$1,000 more per unit.

All participants agreed with Mr. Gilbert's suggestion.

Mr. Cheezo asked whether we knew that the old collars would automatically go into "saving" mode before we bought them.

Mr. Gilbert confirmed that we did and that it was a question of budget. He said that there was also a concern that the geese might be shot before any data could be collected.

Mr. Pachano said that this data was not useful anyway, as the geese are not flying along the coast. He added that he feels the SC is wasting money.

Mr. Gilbert reminded the participants that the tallymen do not want us to catch geese on their traplines; there is no guarantee that they will catch 25 geese in Baie Boatswain, whereas in the north, they could have caught up to 1,000 if they wanted to.

Mr. Dunn said that he is ok with the collaring in Baie Boatswain. He asked who is going to do the work.

Mr. Gilbert said that the Canadian Wildlife Service would conduct the aerial survey and collaring in collaboration with Crees and experts. He added that the researchers would analyze the data.

Mr. Pachano said that he agrees with the project in Baie Boatswain, since there is a better chance of getting good results there.

Mr. Courcelles stated that in order to get reliable data and minimize the risk of error, it is important to have the same people on board for the aerial survey, i.e., that the same land users be involved year after year.

Mr. Dunn stated that regarding the proposal for a researcher, he is OK with Mr. Jean-François Giroux.

Mr. Gilbert said that Mr. Giroux is going to be in Québec City when the SC meets in December, since he will be presenting a poster at the Arctic Change 2017 conference. He added that Mr. Giroux should be available to meet with the SC and the other researchers on December 12. Mr. Gilbert said that he will send the terms of reference to Mr. Giroux.

UPDATE ON RESEARCH PROGRAMS – RESEARCH PROGRAM ON CREE KNOWLEDGE AND LAND USE – Proposal from the Chisasibi Research Centre

This item was deferred.

Ms. Durocher said that researcher Thora Martina Herrmann is going to be in Québec City to give a presentation at the Arctic Change 2017 conference.

UPDATE ON RESEARCH PROGRAMS – RESEARCH PROGRAM ON OCEANOGRAPHY – COASTAL: Fall 2017 field campaign by UQAR and ISMER

Ms. Rousseau distributed copy of a document entitled “Summary of the Fall Field Campaign 2017 in Chisasibi, by Urs Neumeier and Virginie Galindo (ISMER/UQAR).” A copy was appended to the minutes.

Mr. Dunn said that the researchers had an ambitious program. He added that according to Mr. Rabbitskin, the researchers did not go to the Baie of Many Islands, but to Baie Paul instead. Mr. Dunn and Mr. Rabbitskin said they believe the researchers have only

done about 30% of what they planned to do, due to weather conditions and the availability of boats and land users. He added that the land users' boats have already been stored for the winter.

Mr. Dunn said that Mr. Rabbitskin had encouraged the researchers to go out and meet people in the community, but that they hadn't done so. Mr. Pachano said that the researchers' report isn't very detailed. Mr. Tremblay said that the researchers will produce a more in-depth report once the results are in.

Mr. Pachano said that the researchers should go in early September rather than October.

Mr. Tremblay reiterated that the researchers need to be reminded that they have to survey the entire coast and not just Chisasibi, and that this is stipulated in the terms of reference.

Mr. Courcelles said that he believes this is why the researchers wanted to go by helicopter, to be able to survey the entire coast within the shortest timeframe.

Mr. Dunn asked whether the researchers were clear as to whether they wanted to conduct a field survey in the winter.

Mr. Tremblay said that he would check with the researchers.

Mr. Courcelles reiterated that the researchers must submit their plan to the SC.

Mr. Tremblay said that the SC members need to think about whether they want Ms. Kuzyk to be involved or not and, if so, how.

The meeting paused at 3:00 p.m. and resumed at 3:20 p.m.

UPDATE ON RESEARCH PROGRAMS – RESEARCH PROGRAM ON OCEANOGRAPHY – RIVERS

Mr. Tremblay confirmed that the first field visit will take place in spring or summer 2018.

Discussion followed concerning the need for the researchers to present a plan of what they intend to do.

Mr. Dunn said that Mr. Short had stated that they would present it in Québec City.

Ms. Durocher said that an SC member should be there if the committee must act as leader.

Mr. Courcelles agreed with Ms. Durocher's comment, but said that not all SC members need to be there.

Mr. Dunn said that neither Mr. Short, nor Mr. del Giorgio can be lead researcher, since it has been made clear that neither can take on that role.

Ms. Durocher suggested that Mr. Dunn, Mr. Tremblay and a Cree representative be present at the meeting. Mr. Dunn said that this would be difficult for him, since oceanography is very technical and Mr. Tremblay would be the only one who could follow what the researchers are saying.

Mr. Tremblay said that he would hold another meeting with the researchers. The participants decided that Mr. Tremblay, Mr. Tapiatic, Ms. Saganash and Mr. Bobbish would attend the meeting. Ms. Saganash asked Mr. Tremblay if he could prepare an action plan.

Mr. Tremblay said that he believes we'll have to take the lead to ensure that a summary report is produced, otherwise the researchers won't do it. He added that we will have to make a group decision on which SC member will take that in hand.

Ms. Durocher suggested pairing Ms. Kuzyk up with the researcher in charge of Cree knowledge and land use, as this might help Ms. Kuzyk obtain funding as well as involve her in the research. Ms. Durocher added that we need to be creative.

Mr. Dunn recommended organizing the meeting with the researchers as soon as possible and keeping Ms. Kuzyk in mind as lead researcher.

UPDATE ON RESEARCH PROGRAMS – RESEARCH PROGRAM ON EELGRASS – Document from Mr. Short

Ms. Rousseau distributed a copy of a document entitled “James Bay Eelgrass Monitoring by Cree Trappers 2018.” A copy was appended to the minutes. The participants discussed the document.

Mr. Courcelles reiterated that the SC needs a copy of the Stantec report. Mr. Dunn said that he will remind Mr. Short that the SC needs the following documents:

- Results of last year's program (2016–2017)
- Stantec report
- Raw data from 2016 and 2017

Ms. Durocher asked whether everything in the report forwarded this week is covered by the budget already approved. Mr. Dunn responded that he will ask Mr. Short whether the “needs for 2018,” which include an “inflatable boat with motor,” are covered in the initial budget or are extra items.

Mr. Dunn said he understands that Mr. Short needs a laboratory to analyze the parameters requested by the SC.

Ms. Durocher requested that Mr. Dunn ask Mr. Short what he intends to analyze using the “sediment core” samples the divers will take.

Mr. Dunn said that the SC will have to put its frustration with Mr. Short aside if it wants to move forward. He stated that he has no problem commenting on Mr. Short’s document, but that we have to accept that this is the way he works and stop saying that he is expensive.

Mr. Tremblay said that just because Niskamoon accepts it doesn’t mean that the SC has to accept it as well.

Mr. Tremblay said that although the SC hasn’t yet reached this point, we will have to terminate Mr. Short’s contract if he doesn’t deliver in June 2018.

Mr. Tremblay said that Hydro-Québec has conducted research with a number of university researchers and has never paid them this much.

Ms. Durocher suggested waiting to see the results from 2018.

Mr. Courcelles asked the Chisasibi representatives what Chisasibi’s reaction would be if the SC were to hire another researcher in the event that Mr. Short failed to deliver.

Mr. Dunn reiterated that what Mr. Short is essentially doing right now is carrying out a monitoring program. He said that Mr. Short is not collecting data for the purpose of explaining why the eelgrass has disappeared.

Mr. Bobbish said that the SC has to clearly see to what point we are jeopardizing the results we can get.

Mr. Pachano said that Mr. Short is a world-renowned expert on eelgrass and that what he has done for the Cree Nation of Chisasibi is very good. He added that Mr. Short’s scientific explanations of why the eelgrass has disappeared corroborate the Crees’ observations. He also wondered whether the other options are relevant since we are now halfway through the research program. He said that the SC must ensure that it obtains conclusions from its research. He added that despite what Mr. Short has done for the Chisasibi Task Force, he wants to know what factors have caused the eelgrass to disappear. He suggested letting Mr. Short continue his research for another year before reviewing the situation.

The meeting adjourned November 7 at 4:40 p.m.

The meeting resumed November 8 at 9:30 a.m.

FIELDWORK LOGISTICS – Update from Ernie Rabbitskin

Mr. Rabbitskin referred to the document entitled “Summary of the Fall Field Campaign 2017 in Chisasibi, by Urs Neumeier and Virginie Galindo (ISMER/UQAR).”

Mr. Rabbitskin said that the researchers are planning to come to Chisasibi again in February 2018. He added that he had been in communication with the researchers’ coordinator. He said that the researchers might need to use the helicopter but that he is waiting for details on their plans.

Mr. Dunn said that there need to be Crees with the researchers in the helicopter.

Mr. Tremblay said that if the researchers have to take ice samples, he suggests Mr. Rabbitskin accompany them.

Mr. Dunn said that people need to be aware of what is going on and what the SC is doing. He added that the researchers need to put time into participating in meetings such as a workshop in the community to demonstrate the different tools they are using so the land users have a good understanding of what they do.

Mr. Tremblay asked whether the researchers or the SC should lead the workshop.

Mr. Dunn answered that the researchers should do it.

Ms. Durocher said that it would be preferable that some SC members participate in it as well.

Mr. Pachano said that the SC must make sure the land users feel comfortable and safe with the experts.

Mr. Dunn said that the workshop would be a good opportunity to demystify the research and to involve and educate youth.

Ms. Durocher said that the SC should take the lead in organizing the workshop.

Mr. Tremblay agreed.

Mr. Dunn said that it should be part of the communication plan and suggested mandating a working group to come up with a communication plan by the next SC meeting in December.

The participants agreed that the working group be made up of Mr. Dunn, Ms. Durocher, Mr. Bobbish and Mr. Gilbert.

Mr. Pachano said that yesterday, the Cree representatives had talked about some of the people to be hired by the Cree Trappers' Association (CTA). He added that he wondered if these people should be involved in the research program.

Mr. Cheezo said that he thought the CTA were supposed to be onboard when the SC started.

Discussion followed concerning the involvement of the CTAs.

Mr. Rabbitskin said that he is hoping the researchers will get the land users involved in their field trips.

FIELD WORK LOGISTICS – Field laboratory

Mr. Dunn said that every researcher has mentioned the lack of a laboratory. He said that the researchers cannot collect samples and take them south; they have to be analyzed on the spot. Mr. Dunn said that the SC must find a solution that will work for the whole research project and for the other communities. He added that an old laboratory would be available in Waskaganish for Mr. del Giorgio.

Mr. Dunn asked Mr. Tremblay to make a list of the laboratory equipment the researchers will need and send it to Ms. Rousseau, who will forward it to the SC members. The participants then discussed some suggestions and possibilities regarding the equipment for the researchers.

Mr. Blackned and Mr. Cheezo will check to see if there is any available space in Wemindji and Eastmain where a lab could be set up. This space should be available for two years.

Mr. Tapiatic said that a company who sells mobile trailers exist in Amos and that he will find out how much it would cost to purchase one.

COORDINATION BETWEEN RESEARCHERS: Integrated methodology and summary report

Mr. Dunn said that the SC's comments concerning the document submitted by the researchers and proposing an integrated methodology had been e-mailed to the researchers on October 13, 2017.

Mr. Dunn said that the divers need to make themselves available. He asked all the Cree community representatives to obtain a list of certifications held by the divers in their respective communities.

Mr. Gilbert agreed to find out which certifications the divers will require.
Mr. Tremblay agreed to send additional comments to the researchers and copy Ms. Rousseau.

The meeting paused at 10:45 a.m. and resumed at 11:00 a.m.

FOLLOW UP: ARCTIC CHANGE 2017, QUÉBEC CITY, DECEMBER 11–15

Mr. Tremblay said that the submitted poster was accepted but that he was asked to give an oral presentation instead. He added that Ms. Saganash, Mr. Tapiatic and he will attend the conference.

Mr. Dunn said that the SC's Cree members should also be present during the question period.

Ms. Durocher said that she is disappointed about the poster because it would have been useful for the communication plan.

Mr. Tremblay said that this can be discussed, and that the poster could be prepared for the communication plan.

Mr. Tremblay said that the oral presentation should last 12 minutes. He added that the full conference program is not ready yet.

Ms. Saganash suggested that she and Mr. Tremblay, Mr. Tapiatic and Mr. Bobbish try to hold their meeting with the researchers in Québec City on the evening of December 11.

Mr. Dunn said that it should be made clear to the researchers that their plan has to be finalized before the joint meeting in Québec City on December 12, 2017, and that this meeting is not up for discussion.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS: SCHEDULE FOR 2018

Mr. Courcelles suggested waiting until after the December meeting to plan the 2018 meetings.

Ms. Durocher recommended that at least a first meeting be scheduled in early 2018. The participants agreed to hold a meeting in Montréal on January 23 and 24, 2018, in accordance with the following schedule:

- January 23, p.m.: Pre-meeting for the Cree representatives
- January 24: SC meeting

The participants also agreed to hold a meeting in Wemindji from June 26 to 28, 2018.

Ms. Rousseau reminded the participants that two meetings had already been scheduled at the 9th SC meeting, i.e., one in Eastmain in March, and one in Chisasibi in August.

The rest of the meetings will be scheduled at the 11th SC meeting in Québec City on December 11 and 12, 2017.

COMMUNICATION PLAN

Mr. Dunn said that Ms. Durocher, Ms. Saganash, Ms. Sinave and Mr. Bobbish, Mr. Blackned and Mr. Gilbert will work on a communication plan which, among other topics, must focus on youth, stakeholders, the general public and the communities, and must include open-house events in the communities.

Ms. Durocher said that, as previously discussed, the communication plan should also include a poster.

Mr. Dunn said that Cynthia Taylor, Communication Officer at Niskamoon Corporation, had produced a first draft of the newsletter. He showed it to the participants, who commented on it and made a few suggestions.

Mr. Dunn recommended that the first issue of the newsletter be longer to introduce the researchers and describe their respective involvement. He also suggested that the first issue be translated into Cree.

Mr. Dunn asked Ms. Durocher to obtain a map with better resolution than the one shown in the draft newsletter.

Mr. Rabbitskin suggested changing the images in the draft to include pictures of eelgrass. The participants agreed.

Ms. Durocher said that she would send pictures of eelgrass to Ms. Taylor.

Mr. Bobbish said that the newsletter will have to present the agreement before describing the research program, since the agreement explains the SC's mandate. He added that communication activities will first have to be carried out with small groups such as one made up of the Chief, Council and CTA before going to the communities.

Mr. Dunn said that he will send Ms. Taylor's e-mail address to Ms. Rousseau so that she can forward it to everyone. This will enable all the members to submit their suggestions for upcoming newsletter issues directly to Ms. Taylor.

CONTRACTS WITH THE UNIVERSITIES

Mr. Courcelles said that it would be good if everybody got copies of the contracts with the universities. He added that Mr. Dunn should send them to Ms. Rousseau, who would then forward them to all SC members.

Mr. Dunn said that the contracts are not public documents, but will be sent to the members for the SC's internal use only.

Mr. Courcelles reminded the participants that during a previous SC meeting, the members had mandated the Hydro-Québec specialists on the SC to forge a link with the researchers; Mr. Tremblay would be in charge of the oceanography component, Mr. Gilbert would handle waterfowl and Ms. Durocher would cover Cree knowledge and land use, and Mr. Dunn and Mr. Tapiatic will link with Mr. Short. He reiterated the importance of this mandate and said that Mr. Tremblay, Ms. Durocher and Mr. Gilbert will have to put pressure on the researchers to move the program forward and ensure that they deliver on time. He asked if everybody agreed with this way of working and no one was opposed to it.

TO DO LIST

Mr. Cheezo reviewed the "To do list" and all participants gave their input.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held in Québec City on December 11 and 12, 2017.
The meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'M. Cheezo', is located in the lower right quadrant of the page.