

COASTAL HABITAT RESEARCH PROGRAM

STEERING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE 21ST MEETING

HELD IN MONTREAL ON APRIL 25, 2019

PRESENT: William Blackned – Cree Nation of Wemindji
James Bobbish – Cree Nation of Chisasibi
Norman Cheezo – Cree Nation of Eastmain
Réal Courcelles – Hydro-Québec
Marc Dunn – Niskamoon Corporation
Carine Durocher – Hydro-Québec
Jean-Philippe Gilbert – Hydro-Québec
Louie Kanatawat – Cree Nation of Chisasibi
John Lameboy – Cree Nation of Chisasibi
Ernest Moses – Waskaganish First Nation
Roderick Pachano – Cree Nation of Chisasibi
Ernie Rabbitskin – Niskamoon Corporation
Robbie Tapiatic – Cree Nation of Chisasibi

ABSENT: Jean Rodrigue – Canadian Wildlife Service
Nadia Saganash – Cree Nation Government
Emily Sinave – Cree Nation Government
Alain Tremblay – Hydro-Québec

GUESTS: Mhaly Bois-Charlebois – Hydro-Québec

PROPOSED AGENDA

Thursday, April 25, 2019

10:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

- 1) Approval of the agenda
- 2) Revision of the research proposal for 2019-2020
 - a. Research program on Geese – UQAM (J.P. Gilbert)
 - b. Research program on Oceanography – coastal – UManitoba and UQAR (A. Tremblay)
 - c. Research program on Oceanography – rivers – UQAM (A. Tremblay)
 - d. Research program on Eelgrass – McGill/UNB/UBC (M. Dunn)
- 3) Research program on Cree Knowledge and Land Use (M. Dunn)

- 4) Communication plan, action plan and newsletter
 - a. Report and minutes of the Symposium (M. Bois-Charlebois)
 - b. Newsletter
 - c. Past and upcoming actions
- 5) Next meeting
- 6) Meetings schedule for 2019
- 7) To do list
- 8) Miscellaneous

CHAIR AND SECRETARY

Réal Courcelles chaired the meeting.

Mhaly Bois-Charlebois acted as Secretary. The meeting began at 10:45 a.m. on Thursday, April 25, 2019.

1) APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The Chair reviewed the agenda. No new items were added.

Mr. Dunn said that Zou Zou Kuzyk would call in the afternoon to talk about the University of Manitoba proposal.

2) REVISION OF THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL FOR 2019-2020

a. Research program on Geese – UQAM (J.P. Gilbert)

Mr. Dunn put the document entitled *Use of the James Bay east coast by Canada geese during migration* on the screen. A copy of the report is appended to the minutes. Mr. Dunn said that the research team wanted to compare all the data they had with the data collected by the University of New Hampshire team but they had not receive the team's data. He added that it is something they would like to do with the new research team.

James Bobbish asked what the shaded areas represent on the map on page 8 of the document.

Mr. Dunn answered that they represent the buffer area where it is assumed the eelgrass beds are used if there are birds. He added that it is 5-km wide, so it is quite big.

Jean-Philippe Gilbert agreed that the buffer area is big.

Mr. Dunn said that this whole method could be verified with the land users and asked Mr. Gilbert to inform the team studying the geese. He said that the team told him that a few users had advised them to go to a spring camp, but they do not have enough traditional knowledge. He added that the team would like to go onsite with the traditional knowledge team. Mr. Dunn showed the data of Boatswain Bay on page 13 of the document and said that it was collected primarily using long-necked geese.

Mr. Gilbert said that 7 out of the 24 geese fitted with GPS devices were shot down.

Mr. Courcelles asked if they can recuperate the collars in order to use them next spring.

Mr. Dunn said they would try.

Mr. Bobbish asked what the brown lines on the maps on pages 15 to 18 represent.

Mr. Dunn replied that they represent the trapline boundaries.

Mr. Gilbert said that the results demonstrate the importance of sampling twice. He said that the results show a lower density the first week of sampling.

Mr. Dunn said that the best way is to take samples when there is a peak, but they cannot do that because they agreed to only go on Sundays.

Robbie Tapiatic said that the highest numbers of geese are harvested from May 10 to 15, which is the peak of the migration period. He added that sometimes he has a good 3-day hunt and he captures all the geese he needs. Mr. Tapiatic said that he has friends who observe the same dates.

Mr. Dunn said that it would be best to work with that information because if everybody mentions the same dates, it must be significant.

Mr. Gilbert said that this year they would go in the fall.

Carine Durocher said that it is because Jean-François Giroux is confident that the results show the peak migration period.

William Blackned asked what the numbers on the maps represent.

Mr. Dunn replied that they represent the number of geese counted.

Ernie Rabbitskin said that when they sample, they count on both sides of the helicopter and make an estimate.

Mr. Blackned asked what the dates on the sides of the maps represent.

Mr. Dunn replied that they represent the date the survey was carried out. He added that basically, the fall survey is a better indication of the eelgrass beds since that is the food the geese are looking for.

Mr. Blackned said that they also look for berries.

Mr. Dunn said that the research team would like to do two surveys again in the fall. He added that the ideal situation would be to go with the land users when they say it is the best day, but this would not only be Sundays. Mr. Dunn said that they agreed to go on Sunday because it causes less disturbance, but it is not ideal. He added that the research team said they will only do it if they can survey the entire coast.

Mr. Courcelles asked if Mr. Dunn was referring to next fall.

Mr. Dunn replied that he was.

Mr. Gilbert said it would be two trips with two helicopters.

Ms. Durocher asked if they plan to go back in order to ask the land users if they can carry out surveys.

Mr. Dunn said that they do.

Ms. Durocher asked if they also plan to ask them if surveys could be done on other days of the week and not just on Sundays.

Mr. Dunn replied that he wanted to talk about it with the committee first.

Mr. Gilbert said that they had talked about this in the previous meeting and he thought everybody agreed.

People agreed.

Mr. Dunn asked if they should carry out one or two surveys.

Mr. Gilbert replied that two would be better.

Mr. Dunn summarized the decision, saying they would carry out two surveys regardless of the day and along the entire coast.

Ms. Durocher said that if they can carry out the survey at the right time, one survey would be enough.

Mr. Dunn said that the team will need to spend a week with a land user to identify the best day. He added that one land user would therefore need to be hired for one week.

Mr. Bobbish asked if the helicopter will have to wait onsite for the entire period.

Mr. Dunn answered that it is not that expensive to have the helicopter on standby.

Mr. Gilbert said that they are planning to go to Cape Jones and Chisasibi first, followed by Waskaganish. He added that perhaps they could focus on the north one day and the south the

next day. He said that he had to talk to Dr. Giroux to see if they should do the survey, keep the helicopter, and then wait a couple of days before going to the other area.

Mr. Dunn said that they will have to hire tallymen from the different communities for a couple of days. He said that they will just have to tell them where to go. He added that as Mr. Tapiatic said, there is a 2-week window, but it also depends on the weather.

Ms. Durocher said that the team said they will only do the survey if they can sample the entire coast, but because they were unable to do it before, she felt they should do it even if they cannot sample the entire coast so that there is a comparison with previous surveys. She added that they cannot correlate much with what Fred Shor's team has done, and there will be new results for the eelgrass research this summer, so if they do not have the same geese data for 2019, it could have a negative impact on the analysis. She said that she would strongly recommend that they do the survey even if they have a no-fly zone.

Mr. Courcelles said that he tended to agree with Ms. Durocher and that it is better to have some data than no data.

Mr. Dunn said that they certainly cannot expect to have authorization for the entire coast.

Mr. Gilbert said that this condition warrants interpretation, because Dr. Giroux is really cautious about money. He said that they do not want to spend money to collect the same data that they collected previously.

Mr. Courcelles said that this is not the most expensive budget they have received.

Mr. Dunn agreed and said that this is in part because the analysis of the data is not complicated. He added that Dr. Giroux said that the survey can be done with drones.

Mr. Kanatewat said that it could work, but they do not want to scare the geese.

Mr. Dunn said that other technology for counting geese exists but it is really expensive.

Mr. Cheezo said he did not agree with putting pressure on people saying that they will not do the survey if they do not have authorization for the area north of Chisasibi.

Mr. Gilbert said that scientists in universities are not used to having this amount of money, so for Dr. Giroux, to spend the money to collect the same data that was collected in previous surveys does not make sense. He added that he would probably do it if he knows he has the money to do it.

Mr. Courcelles said that he would probably do it as it is in the perspective to link the data of this year survey.

Ms. Durocher said that Dr. Giroux probably also views it this way because his perspective involves his project only, whereas the SC is considering the entire project.

Mr. Dunn said that they will have to talk to the land users.

Mr. Kanatewat reminded those present that the long-necked geese do not stay onsite for long.

Mr. Dunn said there is a meeting next week with Chisasibi land users, and one with the researchers on June 3. He said that he will talk to the land users about this topic and report the discussion to the researchers on June 3.

Ms. Durocher asked if they are able to see the difference between brant and geese.

Mr. Gilbert replied that they are.

Mr. Dunn said to keep in mind that the areas north of Chisasibi were not surveyed while looking at the graphs of the report.

Mr. Blackned said that they could talk to the land users about compensation.

Mr. Dunn said that they will not do that and that they cannot provide additional compensation just because they go on their traplines.

Ms. Durocher asked if they thought that the June 3 meeting would be sensitive now that they have the data.

Mr. Dunn asked Mr. Gilbert to confirm if Dr. Giroux will be there.

Ms. Durocher said that it would be a good idea to show the land users the data.

Mr. Courcelles said that based on his budget, he did not think Dr. Giroux would be there.

Mr. Dunn showed the graph on page 22 of the document and said that more than half comes from the Mississippi flyways.

Mr. Courcelles said that the report showed good participation by land users.

Ms. Durocher said that they could show the results of the band recoveries for each community in the report.

Mr. Gilbert said that usually when you report the band, it shows when you shot the bird.

Mr. Dunn asked if it was possible to know which community it came from.

Mr. Gilbert replied that it was and that Dr. Giroux did it per community later in the report.

Mr. Dunn said that the results Mr. Gilbert was referring to come from the booklets.

Ms. Durocher said that it could improve the band recovery results.

Mr. Dunn showed the results of the booklets on pages 22 to 25 of the report and said that they show how useful the booklets are. He added that although the participation is low, it is similar to

that seen in other research projects. He said that it is generally like this and that when you go out with the hunters and fill the booklet with them, the results are better, but that it is all a matter of cost benefit.

Ms. Durocher said that the results are very interesting for communication purposes. She said that they should prepare a newsletter with this information because it would help boost participation.

Mr. Dunn said that people often ask why they are doing the research. He said that the preliminary results basically show what hunters had told them.

Mr. Cheezo said that what people say is validated.

Mr. Dunn agreed and showed the Plans for 2019 from page 26 on the screen. He asked Mr. Gilbert if the team is only going to Puvirnituk to install the collars.

Mr. Gilbert replied that this is what they are trying to do.

Mr. Courcelles said that in Puvirnituk, with the 2017 collars, the geese were not from the Mississippi flyway either.

Mr. Dunn said that he does not know where the geese from the Mississippi flyway go.

Mr. Gilbert said they do not know yet, but that the collars will provide this information.

Mr. Dunn continued reading the Plans for 2019. He said that they can be more proactive with the booklets, probably not for this spring survey because it is too late, but for the fall survey, they can give a booklet to each interviewee and fill it out with them.

Ms. Durocher said that it is a good thing to promote the booklets.

Mr. Courcelles said that his only concern was in connection with the budget, because it does not include the number of hours for the helicopter. He added that they have to keep track of this.

Mr. Dunn asked Mr. Gilbert what the total helicopter time was.

Mr. Gilbert answered that it is combined with the river team.

Mr. Courcelles said that Mr. Tremblay should have reported that.

Mr. Dunn said that they can estimate about \$50,000 or \$60,000 for 4 surveys.

Mr. Courcelles said that last year, the helicopter budget was with the oceanography budget.

Mr. Dunn said that the most expensive part was the banding in Boatswain Bay, because they used the helicopter more than they had expected.

Mr. Courcelles said that this will not happen this year.

Mr. Dunn agreed and said that it is possible to do it without a helicopter. He added that assuming an estimate of 4 surveys, an additional \$50,000 should be added to the budget.

Mr. Gilbert said that it is still not expensive.

Mr. Courcelles said he would add \$4,000 more for the meetings.

Mr. Dunn said that it would be good to send Mr. Giroux to fly with the participants to work together on this project. He said that the whole idea is that the Crees should continue to look at the research aspects following the project. He added that this will go on for many years after the research project so it is important that the Crees be involved.

Mr. Gilbert said that he will ask Dr. Giroux to double the amount for the meetings and the SC will add \$50,000 for the helicopter.

Everybody agreed on the budget.

b. Research program on Oceanography – coastal – UManitoba and UQAR (Mr. Tremblay)

The SC decided to wait for Dr. Kuzyk's call before talking of this topic.

c. Research program on Oceanography – rivers – UQAM (A. Tremblay)

Mr. Dunn showed a timeline he had previously sent to everybody on the screen. A copy of the document is appended to the minutes. He said that the River team is managing the money in a responsible way. He added that he showed the timeline to demonstrate that the amount of money they are asking for is fairly low and explained that this does not include helicopter time. He showed the River team's budget on the screen. A copy of the document is appended to the minutes.

Mr. Courcelles said it is fine and that it is the same as last year.

Ms. Durocher asked where the team plans to stay and if this amount was included in the budget.

Mr. Dunn said the budget includes lodging. He said that the only thing they do not know is the helicopter time. He added that they could provide an estimate for the next 2 seasons but that the helicopter costs increase really quickly.

Ms. Durocher asked if the SC had received a progress report from them.

Mr. Dunn said they did last year, but there was not much in it. He added that Paul del Giorgio would like to do the report after the May fieldwork is complete in order to report on a full year and that he would send the report in June.

Mr. Courcelles said that they will have to wait for the helicopter cost, but that \$186,645 is good.

Everybody agreed on the budget.

The meeting paused at 11:45 a.m. and resumed at 1:15 p.m.

The SC came back to item b.

Mr. Dunn said that Dr. Kuzyk would not call after all. He showed the report from the Université du Québec à Rimouski team for each field season. The report is appended to the minutes. He said that Mr. Tremblay commented that there were a lot of holes in the data because the samples were not well dispatched in the study area. He added that with regard to the helicopter, they should always prioritize the land users, but seeing the large area they have to sample, they will have to see how much time they can allow.

Mr. Kanatewat said that they should sample in mid-summer instead of going so late in the year. He said that they would cover a lot more of the area.

Mr. Dunn said that Mr. Kanatewat was right, because they went in August last time. He asked if they should recommend that they go in July instead of August.

Mr. Courcelles asked why they go in August.

Mr. Dunn replied that he did not know.

Mr. Courcelles asked Mr. Dunn to ask them.

Mr. Dunn said that there is feedback they have to provide. He explained that it is important when meeting land users to ask them when they are available to go to the field, rather than telling them when you want to go.

Mr. Courcelles asked if they will meet the land users on June 3.

Mr. Dunn replied that they will.

Mr. Pachano asked why the meeting is on June 3.

Mr. Dunn replied that it is because there is a council meeting.

Mr. Pachano said that is when the second wave of geese comes.

Mr. Dunn said he told the council that and asked them if they were sure land users would be at the meeting. He said that if some are not there, they will meet with them later. He asked Mr. Kanatewat if he will be there.

Mr. Kanatewat replied that he was not sure.

Mr. Dunn said he asked Urs Neumeier to provide a final report for the year and he said they will provide it by June. He showed the project on the screen and said he did not know if it is detailed

enough for Mr. Tremblay. He said that a 40% overhead is high considering UQAM asked for 15%. He added that for a non-profit organization, it is 25%. Mr. Dunn said that the Niskamoon board will have to look into this.

Ms. Durocher said that 40% will need to be justified.

Mr. Blackned asked what this is used for.

Mr. Dunn answered that it is to pay for administrative staff, renting or anything not covered in the budget.

Mr. Courcelles said that normally, a consultant will charge electricity, heating, offices, taxes they have to pay, etc. He said that this covers the fixed costs.

Mr. Dunn said that when you subcontract, this amount is normal, but without subcontracting it is a bit expensive.

Mr. Courcelles said that they will have to discuss this at the next Niskamoon board meeting before the budget can be approved.

Mr. Dunn asked if they all agreed on the total amount, but that the overhead has to be discussed and that this budget does not include helicopter time.

Mr. Courcelles asked how much Manitoba asked for as overhead.

Mr. Dunn said they asked for 40%. He said that the best thing to do is to set a limit and say they will not pay more than this. He said that UQAM asked for 15%, Rimouski for 40% and New Hampshire for 26%.

Mr. Courcelles said that considering those numbers, 25% seems reasonable.

Mr. Dunn said that there was an issue between Dr. Short and the Rimouski team. He showed the email exchange between Dr. Short and Dr. Neumeier on the screen. This exchange is appended to the minutes. Mr. Dunn said that the system for sharing the data was never really carried out and that Rimouski was always really reluctant to send the data, but that the initial idea was to centralize the data in New Hampshire.

Ms. Durocher said that it was New Hampshire's idea and asked if the SC agreed with that.

Mr. Dunn answered that they agreed it had to be centralized but not that Dr. Short's team had to do it. He said he was wondering what could happen with the data if he did not share it and if he does not publish an article. He added that the only thing is that he could use it for the final report.

Ms. Durocher said that he could publish the data on the website.

Mr. Dunn said they should ask Dr. Short what he needs and send him that.

Mr. Tapiatic asked how they can know that the data he wants was not what his team was supposed to sample.

Mr. Dunn replied that they will have to look into this to make sure he does not take credit for that data.

Ms. Durocher said that he published it on the website.

Mr. Dunn said that it is not public.

Ms. Durocher replied that she saw it on the website.

Mr. Courcelles said that they have the budget from the University of Manitoba but asked if they have the proposal.

Mr. Dunn said he will read it. He said he told the team that they have to write one now that they have a direct contract with them.

Mr. Courcelles said he understood they did not write a proposal.

Mr. Dunn said they basically wrote an email saying what they want.

Mr. Courcelles said that the SC needs a real proposal.

Mr. Dunn said that they do not ask the other teams for one.

Mr. Courcelles agreed but said that at least they had asked for it before. He added that now Dr. Kuzyk is on her own, they need a University of Manitoba proposal.

Mr. Dunn read Dr. Kuzyk's email. A copy of the email is appended to the minutes.

Mr. Courcelles asked if her proposal and the Rimouski one will complement each other.

Mr. Dunn replied that he does not know.

Mr. Courcelles asked what the difference on the field is between Manitoba and Rimouski.

Mr. Rabbitskin said that Rimouski carries out more samples and that Manitoba leaves their machines onsite.

Mr. Courcelles said that Dr. Kuzyk should write her proposal indicating how Manitoba is a complement to Rimouski, because otherwise, they will never know if they are duplicating the sampling.

Mr. Dunn said that he understood that there are two parts to her mandate—sampling and team integration. He said that she does not want to rush the process and that she wants to define each researcher's role. He added that she may hire a post-doctoral student. Mr. Dunn said that she suggested giving the job to Virginie Galindo and he said it was not a good idea because Dr. Galindo

has some issues with the Crees. He said he suggested Melanie-Louise Leblanc, but Ms. Leblanc already has a lot to manage. He said that they will leave the budget open. Mr. Dunn said that Dr. Kuzyk does not want to deal with a new person, because she feels there are a lot of people in the project. He asked if they can assume that \$607,166 is acceptable for the moment and discuss the overhead, knowing that once again, helicopter time has not been included in the budget.

Mr. Courcelles said that for June, all the teams should send the helicopter requirements, even Hydro-Québec.

Mr. Cheezo asked Mr. Dunn to recapitulate what is in the budgets.

Mr. Dunn repeated the budget for each team.

Mr. Tapiatic asked to have them in writing.

Mr. Courcelles said that the budgets are for two years.

Mr. Dunn said that this is the last time they have to deal with budgets. He said that it is safe to say they are expecting to have an additional investment of \$3 million. He added that the good thing is that this will bring the study's entire budget to \$6 million and this is what Mr. Tremblay estimated at the beginning of the project.

d. Research program on Eelgrass – McGill/UNB/UBC (M. Dunn)

Mr. Dunn said that during the last meeting, the SC decided not to fund Nick Anderson's tuition until the end of 2019.

Mr. Courcelles said that his contract ends in June, so he should finish in June.

Mr. Dunn said that Mr. Anderson will analyze 33 underwater videos. He showed a video on the screen.

Ms. Durocher said that regardless of the quality of the images, it was never clear what will be analyzed on the videos. She said she remembered asking if they will use a template by color or qualitative interpretation and they never answered. She added that this is a reason why they should not go further with this.

Mr. Dunn said he asked Ms. Leblanc what she thinks of the videos. He said she replied that the videos can be useful for a qualitative assessment. He added that he asked her what she thought about a quantitative approach, because Dr. Short was talking about linking the videos to the biomass and she answered that she had never seen that in the literature.

Ms. Durocher said that even with a qualitative point of view, they do not know what they are basing their analysis on.

Mr. Dunn said that Dr. Short's answer was to ask the land users.

Ms. Durocher said that this is not a good answer.

Mr. Courcelles said that New Hampshire could keep the videos.

Mr. Dunn said that he does not share that opinion, and that the other research teams should have them. He added that they did pay for those videos and the other researchers can probably use them.

Mr. Kanatewat said Dr. Short talked about a quality analysis, but the creatures—the geese and the brant—are the ones that decide if they use the eelgrass or not.

Mr. Dunn said that the SC's answer is still no.

Mr. Courcelles said that if he can do it before June 30, it is fine, but not after that date.

Mr. Dunn said that Dr. Short spent under the estimated budget last year and asked to carry forward the amounts. He said that he should have asked for the expense reports. He added that Dr. Short just came to the meeting, but did not go in the field, so there is probably money left over.

Mr. Courcelles said that it was good news but that this does not change the fact the mandate was until June 2019.

Mr. Dunn asked if the answer will be no if Dr. Short asks to use this amount after June 30.

People replied that the answer would be no.

Mr. Dunn asked if they will still ask Rimouski to send them the data.

Ms. Durocher said that they will because they have to finish what they can with the amount of time they have. She added that they have to complete what they have in the terms or reference. She said that it is good they are finishing their mandate, but they will not be given more money to do more.

Mr. Dunn said that they would not receive additional money and that the goal would be to have them finish their mandate. He added that they would not give them more money, just money that had not been spent.

Ms. Durocher said that, as Mr. Courcelles had said, it is fine as long as they can spend it before June 30, but not after that date.

Mr. Courcelles said they were clear and that they still have May and June to complete their mandate.

Mr. Dunn said he was not making excuses, and that Dr. Short's excuse was that he thought he would have time to finish the analysis after June 30, just like the other teams.

Mr. Kanatewat asked if this was approved.

Mr. Courcelles replied that it was a verbal agreement.

Ms. Durocher said she understands that Dante Torio and Mr. Anderson want to finish the research because it is linked to their studies, but that she is concerned they want to do more analysis than is necessary within the framework of the research.

Mr. Kanatewat asked how long it typically takes to complete a master's degree.

Mr. Dunn replied that it generally takes two years.

Mr. Kanatewat asked how long Mr. Anderson has been working on the study.

Mr. Dunn replied that he has been working on it for two years.

Mr. Kanatewat said that his tuition is for two years in that case.

Mr. Dunn said that it is clear that if you say to someone you will pay their tuition for as long as they need it, they will never finish.

Ms. Durocher said that since all the fieldwork has been completed, they do not need to be paid to do that. She added that their compensation will be their diploma and the publications.

Mr. Dunn asked when they took the last videos.

Mr. Courcelles replied that they did them before the freeze-up period.

Mr. Dunn said that it was late September so the fact that they did not analyze those videos is making him wonder what they are doing.

Mr. Courcelles said that in a nutshell, Mr. Anderson has to complete the analysis by June 30.

Ms. Durocher said that they can help them with the data, but there is no way they will give them more money.

Mr. Dunn read the comments he sent to the new eelgrass team and their response. The document is appended to the minutes.

Mr. Bobbish asked how they can validate the images that were taken years before if it is impossible to go onsite to compare.

Mr. Dunn said that they cannot go and compare, but if the images they took recently are calibrated with the fieldwork, the assumption is that this calibration should work for past years.

Ms. Durocher said that they can try it, but there are serious limitations given that people have said that the plant color has changed over the years. She said that a lot of the calibration is done based on the color, so if the plant has changed it will be a serious limitation.

Mr. Gilbert said he agreed and said they will find out on the field and will have to adjust. He added that he is not sure they will be able to analyze what it was like in the past and that for the purpose of the committee, they should have someone specialized in GIS to explain to the SC in simple terms how they do the calibration, because there are a lot of steps.

Mr. Kanatewat said that recalibration is a better word because the images are already calibrated. They have been readjusted.

Mr. Dunn said he worked a little bit with remote sensing and this calibration is done many times over. He said that what happens in nature will change from one year to the next—it is dynamic. He added that it is difficult to capture those changes. Mr. Dunn said that there is a constant recalibration to match what is seen on the ground. He added that, as he said at the other meeting, it is still a huge improvement in comparison to what Dr. Short's team presented. Mr. Dunn said he does not understand what Dr. Torio is doing considering his training, because it is basic information.

Mr. Lameboy said that if the machine lies, the report lies.

Mr. Dunn said that he does not like to use the word lie, but when you misuse the machine, you have distorted data.

Ms. Durocher said that it is like a lens in that if it is not well calibrated, you cannot see what you are looking at properly.

Mr. Lameboy said that they have to go onsite and see what it is like.

Mr. Dunn agreed that they have to go onsite this summer. He continued to read the document.

Mr. Bobbish asked if they have a hypothesis on the diseases.

Mr. Dunn answered that the current knowledge is that the diseases are always present.

Mr. Gilbert said that there is not a large impact on the eelgrass but it is always there.

Mr. Bobbish asked if the temperature plays a role in the decrease of the eelgrass.

Mr. Dunn replied that it does. He said that Mr. Kanatewat asked many times to have core samples where there is just a satellite image. He asked if they can agree to do it and said that only Mr. Tremblay was against the idea.

People agreed.

Mr. Dunn continued to read the document. He said that Mr. Tremblay thinks they should not do the genetic analysis and they think they should, so Mr. Dunn said they should.

Ms. Durocher said that it is expensive.

Mr. Dunn said that it is not inexpensive, but not too bad and that it is included in their budget. He continued reading and said that if the land users give them 50 sites to sample and they have to choose, they will need to have other criteria, because otherwise, land users will ask why they did not go. He said that their hope is to be able to go to every site the land users told them to, but if they cannot, they should have at least one site per trapline. He added that perhaps the only site that does not necessarily need to be sampled would be the one at the mouth of the Grande Rivière because there is no eelgrass there. Mr. Dunn continued to read the document. He said that they are in a better position to explain how they choose the sites and how they will sample. He added that regarding the Cree divers, he would need the help of Mr. Cheezo to see if they are available and to make sure their qualifications are up to date. If they are not, Niskamoon can fund the update. He asked Mr. Blackned if there are divers in Wemindji.

Mr. Blackned said that there are.

Mr. Dunn asked Mr. Blackned to verify the same information. He continued reading page 5.

Mr. Courcelles asked who Dr. Larocque is.

Mr. Dunn answered that he is a remote sensing expert.

Mr. Courcelles asked what the point of having Dr. Torio there was.

Mr. Dunn answered that it is to allow him to continue the project and for his expertise in remote sensing.

Mr. Courcelles asked if Dr. Torio agreed to participate.

Mr. Dunn said that apparently, he is negotiating with the new team.

Mr. Pachano said that the Cree representatives of the SC feel it would be important that he continue.

Mr. Dunn asked if he can pass along the message to him. He said that he wondered if Dr. Short will have a bad influence on Dr. Torio's decision and said they should share the Cree representatives' positive opinion of Dr. Torio with him.

Mr. Pachano said he is easy to get along with and there is no need to have a new person.

Mr. Dunn continued reading the document.

Mr. Courcelles asked what data loggers are.

Mr. Gilbert answered that it was probably the cast away.

Mr. Dunn said he thought it was the stick with the mirrors that Dr. Short's team built. He added that Ms. Leblanc said that there is a problem with those sticks because they have a limited life.

Mr. Gilbert said that he does not think that the data loggers are those sticks.

Mr. Courcelles said that if they do not receive this material on time it will be a problem.

Mr. Dunn said that they should keep it in the budget anyway.

Mr. Bobbish asked where the sticks are.

Mr. Dunn answered he did not know and read the material list.

Mr. Gilbert said that the ESP refers to the sticks used by Dr. Short's team, not the loggers.

Mr. Dunn said they had data loggers on those sticks.

Mr. Gilbert said that he does not think this is what they want, because it is fragile and you leave it onsite with an anchor.

Mr. Dunn said that he always thought the ESP was the data loggers and Ms. Leblanc said that they do not work after a while.

Mr. Gilbert said that the YSI are the cast away.

Mr. Dunn said that they have two, but in New Hampshire.

Mr. Gilbert said he will confirm this.

Mr. Dunn asked if New Hampshire has some material at the Niskamoon office.

Mr. Rabbitskin replied that they do not.

Mr. Lameboy asked if they have any in the warehouse at the Cree Nation of Chisasibi office (CNC).

Mr. Rabbitskin replied that they never told him about that.

Mr. Tapiatic said that there is equipment at the CNC warehouse. He said to confirm with Dr. Torio.

Mr. Gilbert asked if the researchers have access to the group's Dropbox.

Mr. Dunn answered he did not know, but that they should have.

Mr. Gilbert said that Ms. Leblanc wanted to see the documents.

Mr. Dunn asked Mr. Gilbert to send him an email about this. He continued reading the document and said that according to the research teams, they could get funding from NSERC and MITAC.

The meeting paused at 2:35 p.m. and resumed at 2:50 p.m.

3) Research program on Cree Knowledge and Land Use (Mr. Dunn)

Mr. Dunn said that Julian Idrobo would be there the following day.

Mr. Courcelles asked who he is.

Mr. Dunn said that he is the person the University of Manitoba recommended to do the traditional knowledge study. He added that he has a doctorate and that he worked in Inuit territory, but not with the Crees. He said that he has to do the budget. Mr. Dunn said that some teams would be created with Mr. Rabbitskin, Anderson Jolly and Maxine Mark-Stewart, and that they will be training two people in Waskaganish, Eastmain and Wemindji. He said to tell him if the Cree representatives had any ideas about who could do it.

Mr. Blackned asked for clarification.

Mr. Dunn replied that he would like to know if the Cree representatives had any ideas about who could assist with the interviews.

Ms. Durocher said that many people could have done it 10 years ago. She said that she did not think that those people were still available. The Cree Board of Health sometimes hire people for social science projects, so they could ask them for references. She said that the study will be done differently from other studies. Ms. Durocher said that they talked over the phone, but it would be good to have something in writing, because people sometimes have different expectations. She added that at the end of the following day, they should have a work plan, namely something more tangible.

Mr. Bobbish said that the key is how you talk to the land users or elders. He said that they need to have good knowledge of the concept. He added that they probably know what it is, but they need to understand how the different disciplines work together. He said that they will need their knowledge in order to cover the concerns of the communities and how they see the issue. Mr. Bobbish said that how the hunters and elders are approached is crucial.

Ms. Durocher said that one thing she discussed with Mr. Dunn is that it is going to be a working group with Dr. Idrobo, Mr. Rabbitskin, Ms. Mark Stewart and Mr. Jolly, but there are a lot of ethical questions surrounding the research and at one point, Iain Davidson-Hunt suggested that this group could be supervised by an ethics committee. She said that that is what they discussed at their last meeting. She added that they are proposing a board with university researchers, maybe Fikret Berkes, and some Cree people.

Mr. Dunn said that the committee has not been decided on and that this is just the first meeting they will have with Dr. Idrobo. He added that if the SC goes forward with him, the first task would be to do the terms of reference.

Mr. Bobbish asked what the difference is between an advisory board and a committee.

Mr. Dunn answered that it will be to ensure oversight, because Dr. Idrobo is not connected to any university. He said that peer reviews are important to ensure that the research complies with ethical standards. He added that this would be the committee's mandate.

Ms. Durocher said that it will also be to ensure the research is adapted to the Cree culture.

Mr. Bobbish said that there should be a Cree review.

Mr. Dunn said that he has no problem naming Crees to the board. He said that there is a risk of bringing new people and that it is just a suggestion, not an obligation. He said he thought it was good because they need university oversight. He added that they should first meet Dr. Idrobo and see if people are comfortable with him.

Mr. Bobbish said that all those concerns will be addressed when they know the type of person he is.

Mr. Pachano asked what the objective of the research is.

Mr. Dunn answered it is to deep dive the traditional knowledge, understand the coastal land use, how it may affect the knowledge on the coast, and understand what the land users know about eelgrass now and in the past.

Mr. Pachano asked if the study will focus on eelgrass.

Mr. Dunn replied that it will.

Mr. Bobbish said that sometimes elders no longer go out on the land and that an interview with their sons, who have seen the changes, would be a good way to introduce the concern to the family members who have not seen the changes.

Mr. Tapiatic said that it would be generational research.

Mr. Bobbish said that it would be intergenerational research, because the generations have different views of the situation.

Ms. Durocher said that it is also important to have the proper timeframe, because sometimes people do not remember the exact date but they remember the moment. She said that the researchers need to have a time scale with references that the Cree users commonly use, for example, the year of the northern agreement or the year Chisasibi moved. She said that people can refer to those time references.

Mr. Bobbish said that sometimes elders talk about their experiences with a younger family member who did not see anything. He said it shows how drastic the changes can be.

Ms. Durocher said that the purpose of the following day is just to meet Dr. Idrobo.

Mr. Dunn said that it is to determine the scope of the study and see the role that an advisory board could have.

Ms. Durocher said that the SC could be the advisory board.

Mr. Dunn said that option 1 would be to forget about a board, option 2, have a board with Cree elders, and option 3, have a board with academics or something in between. He said he did not think that it would be a very active board and that they would meet perhaps 3 times a year. He said it would be to look at the big picture and see if they are comfortable. He added that they would not really look at the data, but more what was done on the field. Mr. Dunn said to the Cree members that this is their study and asked them how they wanted to do it.

Mr. Bobbish said he wants to see if he knows the Cree culture.

Mr. Dunn said he knows Inuit culture and some other cultures in coastal areas, but he did not know exactly where.

Mr. Cheezo asked where CERRI would be in the project.

Mr. Dunn said that this is still on the table. He said that what he communicated to Dr. Idrobo is that he would work in Waskaganish, Wemindji and Eastmain. He said that as for Chisasibi, at this point, there is no commitment, but hopefully when they have something in place for the other communities, they can go to Chisasibi and see what will happen.

Mr. Bobbish asked how CERRI would deal with the timeframe.

Mr. Dunn answered that he does not know and that it is certainly not the ideal situation.

Mr. Pachano said that perhaps they should include CERRI at the beginning.

Ms. Durocher said they could work with CERRI, but because there is an ethical concern about the ownership of the data, they have to address this properly. She added that those kinds of questions will be the ones the committee will be working on. She said that if CERRI wants to be involved in this, it would give them a good idea of the research itself.

Mr. Blackned said the study began 3 years ago and that nothing has happened with the traditional knowledge study, so they should try another approach with the people.

Mr. Tapiatic said he wanted to talk to the land users on Monday night about the land use research. He said that he wanted to tell the people where the project is and that the SC is waiting for CERRI.

He added that, hopefully, the Chief and Deputy Chief will be there since they are on the CERRI board. Mr. Tapiatic said that they cannot wait any longer.

Mr. Dunn said that he has spoken to Dr. Davidson-Hunt and Dr. Berkes and that they would prefer to work with an organization like CERRI because they can set clear limits. He said Dr. Davidson-Hunt asked him if CERRI would work in the other communities, and he told them it was not what was discussed. He said you cannot just ask people about eelgrass and note everything they say, you have to give back to the community because they want to hear the results. He added that the concern is how they are going to share the data. Mr. Dunn said that they want something that can be used in a way that is consistent with what people want. He added that some interviewees will not want to share the information if it is not with a local researcher.

Ms. Durocher said that this is why she thinks CERRI has a role to play in the ethics committee.

Mr. Dunn said that the main issue with CERRI is the budget and they have to agree to do less, because Niskamoon does not have that money. He said that he is hearing from them that they will find the money but it was unclear who would provide it. He added that the traditional knowledge would cost more than the entire research project if they agreed to the budget CERRI wants, which is too much. Mr. Dunn said he told CERRI to limit the scope of the study and propose another project to Niskamoon.

Mr. Bobbish said he wondered how CERRI is going to manage the research without staff.

4) Communication plan, action plan and newsletter

Mr. Courcelles said that the interviews to replace Cynthia Taylor were beginning in two weeks.

Mr. Blackned asked how many candidates they were.

Mr. Dunn replied that they have five, one from Chisasibi, one from Wemindji, one from Waswanipi, and two non-Crees: one Anishnabe and someone from Montréal.

a. Report and minutes of the Symposium (Ms. Bois-Charlebois)

Mr. Bobbish asked Ms. Bois-Charlebois if she can send the workshop section of the symposium.

b. Newsletter

Ms. Durocher said that she knows Niskamoon is short staffed and that until the new person is comfortable in Niskamoon matters, she suggested that Hydro-Québec could help with the

newsletter. She said that if they have the template from one of the last newsletters, either she or Ms. Bois-Charlebois could work on it.

Mr. Dunn said that he understood Mr. Tremblay was working on the next newsletter.

Ms. Durocher said he was supposed to prepare something on the river sampling. She said that they had not worked on it as Niskamoon did not have a replacement for Ms. Taylor. She added that seeing the results they had this morning for the goose survey, she felt the most difficult task this summer will be to sell this project in Chisasibi and to have people participate. Ms. Durocher said that she would suggest changing the topic and focus more on the goose survey for the next newsletter. She said they could still do one on the river report, but that it is perhaps not as urgent. She asked if people would be comfortable with Hydro-Québec doing the next newsletter and paying the printing and design costs.

Mr. Dunn said that his understanding was that there is a layout that just needs to be filled in.

Ms. Durocher said that if it is that simple, Hydro-Québec could do it.

Mr. Dunn said that the challenge will be to condense the information of the report in a newsletter

Mr. Gilbert said that he could speak to Dr. Giroux about preparing something.

Mr. Dunn said that he felt that the next newsletter should be on the symposium.

Mr. Pachano said that maybe they should do a newsletter on what they intend to do this summer so that people know what to expect.

Mr. Courcelles asked what it would be about—what they had planned for this summer, the goose survey results from last year or the rivers.

Mr. Dunn said he tended to agree with Mr. Pachano. He said that each of the teams will have to prepare one paragraph.

Ms. Durocher said that they could include an introduction of the new eelgrass team.

Mr. Dunn said they should include one line to wish Dr. Short a happy retirement.

Mr. Courcelles said that Mr. Dunn and Ms. Durocher would coordinate the next newsletter.

Mr. Pachano told Mr. Courcelles what was discussed in the last meeting about giving geese decoys to all the researchers at the end of the mandate to thank them.

Mr. Courcelles said it was a good idea and that they certainly have to do something at the end of the research project.

c. Past and upcoming actions

This item was deferred.

5) To do list

The SC reviewed the list line by line.

6) Next meeting

The next meeting will be held in Chisasibi on June 18, 2019 (pre-meeting in the morning and SC meeting in the afternoon) and on June 19, 2019, if needed. (Look at the possibility of having a charter.)

7) Meetings schedule for 2019


Chisasibi, June 18–19, 2019

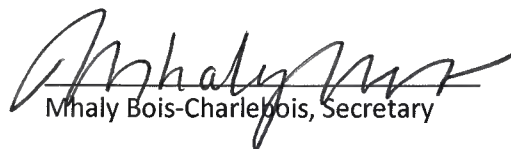
Chisasibi, August 20–21, 2019

8) Miscellaneous

NA

The meeting adjourned at 4 p.m.


Réal Courcelles, Chair of the meeting


Mhaly Bois-Charlebois, Secretary

