

Minister's Wildlife Advisory Council

Meeting #29 Minutes

April 10, 2024 12:30 – 3:30 pm

Via Zoom

Attendees	
Council Members:	Staff:
Simoogit Hleek (Chief Harry Nyce Sr.)	Jen Walker, Director, Strategic Initiatives
Nancy Wilkin	Avril Nagel, Manager, Together for Wildlife Implementation
Adam Ford	Jennifer Psyllakis, A/ADM, Resource Stewardship Division, WLRS
<i>Alyssa Lepka (regrets)</i>	Michael Burwash, Associate Director Wildlife, Fish & Wildlife Brch
Andrea Barnett	Jenn Meilleur, Manager – Partnerships and Engagement
Cailyn Glasser	Mariana Nagy-Reis, North Area Lead, Together for Wildlife
Doug Heard	
Jasper Lament	Guests:
Jason Northcott	Morris Prosser, Co-Chair, First Nations Forum
John Bergenske	Hunter Lampreau, Co-Chair, First Nations Forum
Kari Stuart-Smith	
Megan Hanacek	
Mike Demarchi	Consultants:
Naomi Owens-Beek	Derek Thompson
Shaun Hollingsworth	Judith Cullington

Purpose of Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Learn about draft non-statutory shared decision-making policy ◆ Review MWAC communications ◆ Review the draft RWAC procedures paper ◆ Hear updates from working groups ◆ Start preparation for an in-person meeting in June
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Action items (from April meeting)	Lead	Status
Council to note the importance of the draft non-statutory shared decision-making policy in discussions with the Minister.	Nancy Wilkin	Complete
Update the MWAC key messages and provide additional advice on hosting the MWAC site on a government page.	Avril Nagel	Complete
Provide Naomi Owens-Beek with information on the RWACs ahead of the meeting with the Minister.	Mariana Nagy-Reis, Naomi Owens-Beek	Complete
MWAC to review the draft procedures paper section on communications linkages with regional advisory bodies and provide written feedback to Avril and Mariana.	Council	Ongoing

Jennifer Psyllakis to provide advice on people to invite to a landscape resilience discussion with the Strategies working group.	Jennifer Psyllakis	? future meeting
Jennifer Psyllakis to discuss COS policy further with Adam Ford and return to Council with an update.	Jennifer Psyllakis, Adam Ford	Ongoing
Connect with Alyssa Lepka and bring back a report on the issues to a future meeting.	Michael Burwash, Jen Walker, Alyssa Lepka	Complete
Council members to provide final input to the CWD letter; Judith Cullington to prepare final for co-chairs signature.	Council, Judith Cullington	Complete
Council members to provide Judith Cullington with agenda ideas for the June in-person meeting.	Council, Judith Cullington	Complete

Minutes

1. Welcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Simoogit Hleek (Chief Harry Nyce Sr.) provided a welcome prayer.
2. Approval of February 2024 meeting minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Action items from last meeting completed or in progress. <p><i>Moved by Shaun Hollingsworth, seconded by Megan Hanacek to approve the February 2024 meeting minutes. Approved.</i></p>
3. Co-chairs report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Nancy Wilkin's presentation to the College of Applied Biologists conference was well received. Her messages focused on building public trust as professionals, and the importance of including Indigenous knowledge and partnership with First Nations.
4. Draft non-statutory shared decision-making policy	<p>PRESENTATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Rep'rep'skan Morris Prosser provided an overview of the draft non-statutory shared decision-making policy, prepared by the Forum and staff through extensive discussion. He noted there is a spectrum of shared decision-making. ♦ The policy embraces the challenge of implanting shared decision making and the importance of ethical space and two-eyed seeing. This will look different in different places. ♦ This policy focuses on the non-statutory decisions, i.e., those that do not require legislative change to implement. This will lay a foundation for shared decision-making policy frameworks due to future legislative changes to the Wildlife Act. <p>DISCUSSION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Members asked questions about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The timeline for broader engagement on the draft policy: engagement will start with rights and title holders prior to public engagement. ○ How the Council can support the policy and the broader vision: Council can include this in their discussions with the Minister. ♦ This will be a continual and collaborative learning process for all. Working relationships will be vital.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Much of the implementation of this policy will be at the operational level. ♦ Members congratulated Morris Prosser and Hunter Lampreau for their work on this draft policy. ♦ Hunter Lampreau noted the opportunity for the Forum to return to Council to discuss the principles for implementing this policy. <p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Council to note the importance of the draft non-statutory shared decision-making policy in discussions with the Minister.
<p>5. MWAC Communications</p>	<p>PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Avril Nagel provided an updated version of MWAC key messages. The document includes key messages for Council – who we are, achievements, etc. The second part addresses how the T4W communications team can support this work. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Messaging should reinforce the independent nature of Council. ○ It should be clear that members do not ‘represent’ a sector or industry, just that they have diverse backgrounds. ○ There should be clear examples of MWAC achievements, including funding requests. ○ It should include information on how people can engage with Council. ♦ The MWAC website is currently a non-government site hosted by WordPress. This creates challenges in ensuring it meets accessibility standards and is kept up to date. Avril provided some analytics of visitation to the website. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Moving the MWAC website to a government site could increase visitation. ○ Concern was raised about the role of Government Communications & Public Engagement (GCPE). GCPE would not be involved (e.g., in editing Council letters). ○ It would be good to have a website where all of MWAC’s work remains posted and in the public domain over the long term. ○ If hosted on the gov.bc.ca site the MWAC information page should have a banner that emphasises the independent nature of the Council. <p>ACTIONS/NEXT STEPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Avril Nagel to update the key messages and provide additional information on the role of GCPE in if we were to host the MWAC information on a government page.
<p>6. RWACs</p>	<p>PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Avril Nagel provided an update on progress to establish Regional Wildlife Advisory Councils (RWACs) (Action 2 of T4W), including a regional readiness assessment. A draft RWAC procedures paper was circulated.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ There is a need for a spectrum of models, not a one-size-fits-all approach. Regional readiness and relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous representatives are key. ♦ Linkage between the RWACs and provincial advisory bodies (including MWAC) could happen in several ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Updates on MWAC work, e.g., via regular (e.g., bi-annual) updates from MWAC at RWAC meetings. ○ Reminders of the different roles of MWAC (high-level, strategic) and the RWACs (regional focus) at each meeting. ○ Annual meetings with MWAC co-chairs and all RWAC co-chairs. ♦ Flow of information and advice needs to be two-way: RWACs can seek guidance from MWAC, and get MWAC support to advance certain regional initiatives. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Need to include flow of information to PHTAT. ♦ Important to build the connections and strengthen the T4W team to do more together that is better for wildlife. Engagement of the regional directors is key. <p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mariana Nagy-Reis to provide Naomi Owens-Beek with information on the RWACs ahead of the meeting with the Minister. ➤ MWAC to review the draft procedures paper section on communications linkages with regional advisory bodies and provide written feedback to Avril and Mariana.
<p>7. Working Group Updates</p>	<p>STRATEGIES WORKING GROUP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Kari-Stuart Smith spoke about the very positive meeting they had had with Ian Meier of the Premier's Expert Task Force on Emergencies and Thom Porter with CalFire. CalFire has some good lessons for B.C. ♦ Ian Meier will reach out to MWAC for future discussions. ♦ A Summary of Recommendations from the Premier's Expert Task Force on Emergencies was released in early April. This includes several recommendations made by MWAC, e.g., related to landscape resilience. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Salvage continues to be a challenging issue. ♦ There is a need to work with and support the forest sector to invite fire back onto the landscape in a healthy way that benefits forestry and wildlife/habitat. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Opportunity to invite the Chief Forester (or other senior staff) to a Strategies meeting for in-depth discussion. <p>ACTIONS/NEXT STEPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ WLRS to provide advice on people to invite to a landscape resilience discussion with the Strategies working group. <p>RESEARCH WORKING GROUP</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Adam Ford spoke about his discussions with Forum co-chair Hunter Lampreau regarding the control of species (COS) policy (predator management). This will be further discussed with PHTAT in April. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Aim will be to have the three advisory bodies working together on drafting this policy, together with input from the Caribou Recovery Program. ♦ Lee Foote’s report will be reviewed at the next Research Working Group meeting (date TBD). ♦ Adam Ford noted that Research WG could benefit from learning how the wildfire science centre was established, and thinking about how a similar wildlife science centre could be established. <p>ACTIONS/NEXT STEPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Jennifer Psyllakis to discuss COS policy further with Adam Ford and return to Council with an update. <p>FUNDING WORKING GROUP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Jasper Lament thanked the contributors to the recent letter to the Minister on funding. ♦ He noted that the working group had met with Kaaren Lewis to learn about the BC Conservation Fund, which will support Indigenous conservation initiatives. <p>JOINT WILDLIFE ACT REVIEW WORKING GROUP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ John Bergenske provided an update on the Joint Working Group discussions.
<p>8. Issues raised by Council member</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ This item was deferred to a future meeting. <p>ACTIONS/NEXT STEPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Michael Burwash and Jen Walker will connect with Alyssa Lepka and bring back a report on the issues to a future meeting.
<p>9. CWD</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Council provided comment on the updated draft letter re Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) testing provided by Adam Ford. This includes adequate resourcing as well as testing capacity and speed. ♦ Public education also critical. ♦ Noted that Wisconsin is providing funding for carcass disposal, education and hiring microbiologists to speed testing. ♦ Collaboration with U.S. important because of trans-boundary transfer. Province working with Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies coordinator to coordinate CWD work. ♦ Province looking at additional budget (emergency funding) to appropriately address CWD.

	<p>ACTIONS/NEXT STEPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Council members to provide final input to the CWD letter; Judith Cullington to prepare final for co-chairs signature.
10. Planning for June meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Planning an in-person meeting in Victoria, June 11 – 13. <p>ACTIONS/NEXT STEPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Council members to provide Judith Cullington with agenda ideas for the June in-person meeting.
11. Other Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ n/a
12. Closing	<p>Upcoming meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Meeting with Minister – April 17th ♦ In-person meeting scheduled for June 11-13
13. Closed session	<p>Council continued discussions in closed session.</p>