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Nass Wildlife Committee Meeting Minutes

1.0 Opening Prayer

- Opening prayer given by Collier
- round of introductions considering new faces

2.0 Old Business

2.1 Reviewed October 19, 2009 minutes

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Nass Wildlife Committee Meeting, May 6, 2013.

Location: MFLNRO District Office, Terrace

Attendees: Blair Stewart (NLG), Harry Nyce (NLG), Frank Alexcee (NLG), Larry Proteau (BCWF Representative), Dana Atagi (MFLNRO), Mark Williams (MFLNRO).

Guests: Mike Demarchi (LGL – Consultant to NLG), Conrad Thiessen (MFLNRO)

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Nass Wildlife Committee – Minutes and Action Items

File: 200-20/Nass Wildlife Committee

BC: Dana Atagi (chair), Conrad Thiessen, Tony Pesklevits & Larry Proteau (Terrace Rod and Gun)
NLG: Franklin Alexcee, Blair Stewart, Ed Desson, and Zane Testawich
LGL: Mike Demarchi and Marc d'Entremont
Regrets: Harry Nyce & Jeff Lough

Date: Friday April 25, 2014

Time: 0900 h to 1500 h

Location: Prince Rupert, BC at Crest Hotel (Harbour Room)

Proposed Agenda:

1. Opening Prayer
 - Done by Franklin Alexcee
2. Agenda
 - s.13,s.16
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3. Review Action Items from May 6, 2013 meeting in Terrace, BC
 - Reviewed items & deferred discussion to agenda items
 - Conrad T. distributed May 6, 2013 minutes and they were accepted.
4. s.13,s.16
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- James Quayle is BC provincial lead/contact and Karen Diemert is the Skeena regional contact.

- Action item (2014-01): Marc to send copy of his talk/PPT & recovery strategy to NWC.
s.13,s.16

- Action Item (2014-02): Mike & Dana to draft a letter requesting federal/Environment Canada participation on the NWC as there are an increasing number of federal issues coming forward. Discussions are no longer limited to Designated Species.
- On May 12, 2014, Canada appointed Mel Kotyk as its representative on the Nass Wildlife Committee. See appended appointment letter.



Signed letter of
appointment - Mel Kotyk

6. s.13,s.16

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7. BC Wolf Management Plan (press release attached)
 - Link to the plan http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/fw/wildlife/management-issues/docs/grey_wolf_management_plan.pdf provided to NWC.
 - Dana A. shared the Ian Hatter summary of changes to the plan.
8. Northwest Monitoring Trust Update (Tony Pesklevits)
 - Tony P. provided update on NW Monitoring Trust
 - Set-up involves numerous procedural matters
 - Offsetting to be used as a mechanism to support conservation related project impacts
 - Summed it up as still a work in progress.
9. 2013/2014 Research and Survey Update (Conrad Thiessen)
 - Conrad provided an update on the radio telemetry research program initiated this past winter : 45 GPS collars deployed on cow moose; 1 wolf mortality so far.
 - Conrad provided brief summary of a number of F&W surveys that were completed in the region (FN Harvest surveys, Kispiox Moose Survey, Kuldo/Atlin Mountain Goat, etc).
 - No NWA-specific projects were undertaken in 2013/2014.
 - Action item 2014-08): Conrad to send Mike D. information (proposal, progress notes) on the moose research project.

10. s.13,s.16

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11. Wrap Up & Next Meeting Date

- Committee discussed the benefits of a fixed meeting schedule and decided that the NWC should meet 2x per year (1st meeting – 3rd Thursday of April and 2nd meeting 3rd Thursday of October).
- Next two meeting dates:
 - October 16, 2014 (Terrace)
 - April 16, 2015 (Smithers)

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MAY 12 2014

Mr. Mel Kotyk
Area Director North Coast
Department of Fisheries and Oceans
1501 East 11th Street
Prince Rupert, British Columbia
V8J 2X5

Dear Mr. Kotyk:

I am pleased to advise you that you have been appointed to serve as a member and federal representative to the Nisga'a Wildlife Committee, which was created under the *Nisga'a Final Agreement*. You have been appointed to serve at pleasure.

The Wildlife Committee facilitates wildlife management within the Nass Wildlife Area. Your knowledge and experience will enable you to provide a valuable contribution as a member and federal representative to the Wildlife Committee.

I thank you for taking on this responsibility.

Yours sincerely,

Gail Shea, P.C., M.P.

Appendix H-2012: Nisga'a Annual Wildlife Management Plan for 2014–16

Basis and Application

The *Nisga'a Annual Wildlife Management Plan* is a legal document as prescribed in the *Nisga'a Fisheries and Wildlife Act* and in the *Nisga'a Wildlife Regulations*. These documents are based on provisions of the *Nisga'a Final Agreement*. In case of any disagreement between the content of this plan and any of the aforementioned documents, the aforementioned document(s) shall prevail.

This plan applies to Nisga'a citizens harvesting wildlife in the Nass Wildlife Area (see Figure H-2012-1). Management of harvests by non-Nisga'a hunters is the responsibility of British Columbia and Canada.

The content of this plan is consistent with agreements reached by the Nass Wildlife Committee (NWC) on DATE.

Summary of the 2014–16 Wildlife Management Plan

- All Nisga'a hunters who hunt in the NWA must comply with the *Nisga'a Fisheries and Wildlife Act*, *Nisga'a Wildlife Regulations*, and the *Nisga'a Annual Wildlife Management Plan*.
- All Nisga'a hunters must carry a Nisga'a Hunting Licence while engaged in hunting activities.
- Legal (and some illegal) harvest methods are defined in the *Nisga'a Wildlife Regulations*.
- Nisga'a hunters can hunt anywhere in the NWA that is opened for hunting by the Director of Fisheries and Wildlife or that is not closed by the province of British Columbia due

to concerns pertaining to: (i) conservation, or (ii) public health or safety.

- A permit is required to harvest Designated Species in the NWA.
- Designated Species are Moose, Mountain Goat, and Grizzly Bear.
- Due to conservation concerns, and pending the outcome of a detailed review in a Moose Recovery Plan, it is recommended that the Moose harvest in the NWA be reduced. Accordingly, a Nisga'a allocation of 25 animals, all of which are to be bulls.
- The proposed Nisga'a allocation of Mountain Goat is 33 animals.
- The proposed Nisga'a allocation of Grizzly Bear is seven animals of which no more than two can be female.
- Hunters are required to submit biological samples of Designated Species for management purposes.
- Angling guiding management plans are still being developed.

Nisga'a Legislation

Nisga'a hunters are required to comply with the *Nisga'a Final Agreement*, *Nisga'a Fisheries and Wildlife Act*, *Nisga'a Wildlife Regulations*, and this *Annual Wildlife Management Plan*. Violators are subject to charges and prosecution.

Identification of Nisga'a Harvesters

According to the *Nisga'a Fisheries and Wildlife Act*, Nisga'a citizens who intend to harvest wildlife in the Nass Wildlife Area (NWA) must obtain a Nisga'a Hunting Licence from Nisga'a Lisims Government for a \$25.00 fee. The licence must be carried

by the hunter when actively engaged in hunting activities. The harvest licence confirms the individual's right to harvest wildlife in the NWA according to the terms of the *Nisga'a Final Agreement* and protects Nisga'a rights to hunt from abuse by unauthorized hunters.

When applying for a hunting licence, those hunters who held a licence the previous year may be required to provide accurate information on hunting activities and animals harvested during the previous year. This information will be made available to the Director of Fish and Wildlife and is a component of harvest monitoring required under the terms of applicable legislation.

Harvest Methods

Modern and traditional methods of harvesting wildlife will continue to be used by Nisga'a hunters to harvest wildlife in the NWA for food, social, and ceremonial purposes. Harvest methods used by Nisga'a hunters to harvest wildlife in the NWA may differ from those permitted under federal or provincial laws. Complete information on harvest methods is provided in the *Nisga'a Wildlife Regulations*.

Regulation of the Harvest

The *Nisga'a Final Agreement* allows all Nisga'a hunters to harvest wildlife from anywhere in the Nass Wildlife Area that is open for hunting. Under the *Nisga'a Final Agreement*, the harvest of wildlife will be monitored and regulated by the Director of Fisheries and Wildlife.

Hunting is permitted on cultivated land, Crown land that is subject to a grazing lease while the land is occupied by livestock, and on enclosed land as defined in the B.C. *Trespass Act* if the hunter has consent of the owner, lessee, or occupier of that land. In addition, the B.C. *Wildlife Act* and its regulations apply with respect to hunting closure and firearms restrictions to those areas in the NWA where hunting is

restricted or closed for (i) conservation concerns, or (ii) public health or safety reasons.

Nisga'a hunters that harvest Designated Species (Moose, Grizzly Bear, and Mountain Goat) must have a Designated Species permit authorizing the hunting of that species. The Director of Fisheries and Wildlife will consider the Nisga'a allocation for each Designated Species, will determine the number of permits to be issued, may specify the sex of the animals to be harvested and the locations from which they may be harvested.

With the exception of Moose permits, permits are available on a first-come-first-served basis from the Director of Fisheries and Wildlife, Nisga'a Lisims Government in Gitlaxt'aamiks. Permits are valid for the period indicated on the permit. To obtain a Moose permit from the allocation available, Nisga'a hunters must submit their names to the Director of Fisheries and Wildlife no later than **s.16** of each year. If the number of names submitted exceeds the allocation then a draw will be made to select Nisga'a hunters no later that **s.16** of each year.

The Director of Fisheries and Wildlife will specify the term of each Designated Species permit issued. When the number of harvests of each Designated Species reported to the Director of Fisheries and Wildlife reaches the Nisga'a allocation for that species or reaches the permitted number of kills of a particular sex of that species, the Director of Fisheries and Wildlife will cancel the outstanding permits for the harvest of that species or for the harvest of a particular sex of that species, as the case may be.

The Director of Fisheries and Wildlife may cancel any outstanding permits for Designated Species or restrict the harvest of non-Designated Species at any time. Notice of cancellation of permits will be delivered to the existing permit holders. Hunters will be notified of any restrictions on non-

Designated Species by one of the following methods: posting, transmission by electronic mail, publishing under Nisga'a laws, or by written or oral notice.

Because it is mandatory that the Nisga'a Lisims Government ensure compliance with applicable laws and this plan, enforcement of Nisga'a harvest regulations will be by persons authorized to enforce federal, provincial or Nisga'a laws in respect of wildlife or migratory birds in British Columbia. It is envisioned that Nisga'a conservation officers will take over the lead role in enforcement when an adequate number of officers is trained and employed.

Designated Species

The *Nisga'a Final Agreement* identified Moose, Mountain Goat, and Grizzly Bear as Designated Species in the NWA. These species remain as Designated Species and no others have been so designated to date.

As this plan concerns only Designated Species, management of Nisga'a harvests of wildlife other than Designated Species will be in accordance with the *Nisga'a Final Agreement*, the *Nisga'a Fisheries and Wildlife Act*, and *Nisga'a Wildlife Regulations*.

Moose

Conservation Status

Moose are the most important wildlife species harvested in the NWA by Nisga'a for food. The most recent (February 2011) population survey indicated that conservation efforts initiated in 2007 (i.e., a reduced, bulls-only harvest) have not been successful in rebuilding the Moose population in the NWA (see Figure H-2012-2). At present, the estimated Moose population (517 animals) remains well below an optimal population size. Consequently, there is a need to develop a Moose Recovery Plan with the goal of returning the population to a level that will support a sustainable harvest level more in

keeping with the harvest demands placed on this species.

The Director of Fish and Wildlife recommends a continuation of the reduced Moose harvest until the results of the Moose Recovery Plan suggest that an increased harvest is sustainable. The Province has recommended a continued suspension of the provincially licenced moose harvest in the NWA for the 2014–16 regulation cycle.

Moose Recovery Plan

A Moose Recovery Plan was drafted in 2013 with the goal of returning the moose population to a level that will support a higher, sustainable harvest over time. The results of that Plan will be used to inform management actions, including, but not limited to: Total Allowable Harvest, Harvest Allocation, Harvest Timing, Harvest Locations, Sex and Age Composition of the Harvest, Education and Outreach, Habitat Management, and Predator Management. Funding for the implementation of the plan may be available from the as-yet-to-be-established Northwest Assessment and Monitoring Trust that is anticipated to be funded by industrial (e.g., mining) operators in and near the Nass Area.

The next moose inventory in the NWA is expected in January–February of 2016 (i.e., 5 years since the 2011 survey).

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Total Allowable Harvest & Harvest Allocation

The total allowable harvest (TAH) of Moose is based on an estimated population of 517 Moose wintering in the NWA. Considering the failure of the moose population to show signs of recovery since 2007, there is considerable uncertainty surrounding the accuracy of the model was used to calculate the TAH in 2007 and at present. In particular, parameters relating to mortality

rates of adults and juveniles are likely in need of adjustment.

Because of the (i) observed decline in the Moose population since 2001 and (ii) uncertainty surrounding the mortality rates of juvenile and adult Moose, until such time as the Moose Recovery Plan suggests otherwise, the NWC recommends a TAH of 32 Moose consisting of 32 bulls, 0 cows and 0 calves. Assuming this TAH is approved by the Minister, then under the *Nisga'a Final Agreement*, a TAH of 32 Moose results in an allocation of 25 Moose to Nisga'a hunters.

Harvest Timing

Moose can be harvested from 1 December through 15 January of each year.

Harvest Locations

All moose harvesting must occur within the NWA in accordance with *Nisga'a Wildlife Regulations* and the *B.C. Hunting and Trapping Regulations Synopsis*).

Sex & Age Composition of the Harvest

The NWC recommends that the Nisga'a allocation of moose comprise 0 cows and calves and no more than 25 bulls in order to conserve and rebuild the moose population according to the assumptions and results of modeling exercises conducted by the NWC. Nisga'a Lisims Government will direct Nisga'a hunters to select bull Moose only.

Mountain Goat

Conservation Status

Mountain goat inventories that have been conducted in the Nass Wildlife Area are now dated and many parts have yet to be formally inventoried.. Despite this, there are no indications of any conservation concerns that would warrant a change in TAH as compared with the 2010–13 period.

Ministry data support the conclusion that the actual harvest is well below sustainable levels. Moreover, during the past several years the average annual Nisga'a harvest is estimated to be approximately one Mountain

Goat with very little hunting pressure directed at this Designated Species.

The Province recently developed a *Management Plan for Mountain Goat in British Columbia*. That plan contains a number of management prescriptions with implications for Mountain Goat management in the NWA. It is expected that following a detailed review and application of that plan to the situation involving Mountain Goat in the NWA, the allowable harvest in each of the Mountain Goat management blocks, in addition to the TAH, may be revised. Such revisions will be presented in a future version of the *Nisga'a Wildlife Management Plan*.

Total Allowable Harvest & Harvest Allocation

The TAH of Mountain Goat is based on an estimated population of 3333 animals in the NWA. Accordingly, to achieve a maximum harvest rate of four percent, the NWC recommends an annual TAH of 133 goats. This population estimate and subsequent TAH remain unchanged from the allocation for the 2010–13 period. If this TAH is approved by the Minister, then under the *Nisga'a Final Agreement*, the Nisga'a allocation will be 33 Mountain Goats.

Harvest Locations

In addition to areas closed for human health and safety (see *Nisga'a Wildlife Regulations* and the *B.C. Hunting and Trapping Regulations Synopsis*), there is no hunting in Mountain Goat Management Blocks 8 and 34 (see Figure H-2012-1). These are permanent closures. These blocks have been closed by the Director of Fisheries and Wildlife in order to protect small, isolated, low-elevation herds of Mountain Goats that occur there. The remainder of the NWA is open to Mountain Goat hunting.

There is little historical harvest data available to determine the specific locations where Mountain Goats have been harvested in the NWA. However, the Nisga'a Lisims

Government recognizes that it is necessary to distribute the hunt over a large geographic area in order to refrain from having an adverse impact on local groups of Mountain Goats occupying specific mountain blocks. If future harvest monitoring notes substantial increases in hunting pressure, efforts to spread the harvest pressure out in the NWA may become necessary.

Harvest Timing

Although some Mountain Goats are harvested during the spring (April to mid-May), the primary harvest season for Mountain Goat is from early September to the end of December. The harvest during the latter part of this period tends to focus on coastal animals that are pushed, by heavy snowfall, to lower elevations where they are more accessible to Nisga'a hunters.

Sex & Age Composition of the Harvest

It is likely that Nisga'a hunters show little selectivity in harvesting Mountain Goat with the possible exception that juveniles (kids) may be preferred by some hunters over adult goats as meat from younger animals is usually more palatable than that of older ones.

Although under provincial law, it is illegal to shoot a kid or a nanny in the company of a kid, this law does not apply to the Nisga'a harvest. Considering the extremely low harvest of Mountain Goat by Nisga'a hunters, there is presently no need to direct hunters to harvest a specific segment of the population (e.g., adult males) as is done elsewhere.

Grizzly Bear

Conservation Status

There have not been any formal attempts to inventory Grizzly Bears throughout the NWA in the past 15 years. Despite this, there are presently no indications that the population is experiencing conservation concerns that would result in alterations to management.

The Province Recently revised the provincial Grizzly Bear population estimates within the Grizzly Bear Population Units. The new estimates are derived from models that were driven by population estimates determined from actual grizzly bear population studies done in B.C. and other parts of North America. Additionally, a recent report for the Province identified a portion of the Cranberry Grizzly Bear Population Unit as a priority for an updated inventory. Should that inventory proceed, its findings and implications will be captured in a future version of this plan.

Over the past several years the actual Grizzly Bear harvest (as per Ministry data) is well below the sustainable annual harvest of an estimated 14 bears. Over the past 3 years the Nisga'a harvest has averaged approximately one Grizzly Bear per year with very little hunting pressure directed at this Designated Species. This level of harvest is well below the Nisga'a allocation of seven bears per year.

Total Allowable Harvest & Harvest Allocation

Until such time as the Province revises the population estimates of Grizzly Bear in the NWA, the NWC agrees that, in light of recent (light) harvest pressures, existing estimates are suitable for the purpose of calculating a TAH.

The TAH of Grizzly Bears is based on an estimated population of 485 Grizzly Bears in the NWA, of which, 423 comprise the "hunnable" population. Accordingly, to achieve the harvest rate set out by the NWC, the NWC recommends an annual TAH of 20 bears per year. This TAH is an increase over that for the 2010–11 period. If this TAH is approved by the Minister, then under the *Nisga'a Final Agreement* the Nisga'a allocation is seven (7) Grizzly Bears, of which no more than two (2) can be female.

Permits to harvest the Nisga'a allocation of Grizzly Bear will be obtained by application to the Director of Fisheries and Wildlife.

Harvest Locations

In addition to areas closed for human health and safety (see *Nisga'a Wildlife Regulations* and the B.C. *Hunting and Trapping Regulations Synopsis*), there is no hunting in the Khutzeymateen Grizzly Bear Population Unit (located on the south side of the Nass River east of Ksi Sii Aks). That area has been closed by the Minister for conservation purposes. The remainder of the NWA is open to Grizzly Bear hunting.

Harvest Timing

There are no restrictions on the timing of the Nisga'a harvest of Grizzly Bear. However, Grizzly Bears are harvested primarily during the fall period, from mid-September until they den in late November. The spring bear hunt usually concentrates on Black Bear, but the occasional Grizzly Bear may be taken during mid-March until mid-May.

Sex & Age Composition of the Harvest

The Nisga'a allocation is seven Grizzly Bears of which up to two can be female. It is believed that two females can be harvested without negatively affecting the Grizzly Bear population according to the assumptions of population size made by the NWC.

As per the Nisga'a Wildlife Regulations, Nisga'a hunters authorized to hunt Grizzly Bear must not shoot a female Grizzly Bear with cubs, a Grizzly Bear under two years of age, or a Grizzly Bear in the company of another Grizzly Bear that is under two years of age.

Harvest Monitoring

Harvest monitoring in 2012–13 will be conducted by periodic interviews of Nisga'a hunters. Harvest monitoring will be facilitated with mandatory return of permits and biological samples to the Director of Fisheries and Wildlife or authorized Nisga'a

wildlife official in each community. All “filled” permits and biological samples must be returned within three business days of harvest.

Harvests will be monitored over a 3–5 year period in order to compare actual harvests to Nisga'a allocations.

The following biological samples are required to inform wildlife management decisions.

- Hunters are required to remit a lower mandible (jaw) or incisor (front) tooth of each Moose or Mountain Goat killed.
- Hunters are required to remit a lower mandible (jaw) or vestigial premolar tooth of each Grizzly Bear killed.
- Hunters are required to remit a segment of hide of each Grizzly Bear killed for DNA analysis.
- Hunters are required to submit the head of each Grizzly Bear killed for measurement of the skull.
- Hunters are required to remit the uterus (reproductive tract) of all female Moose, Mountain Goat and Grizzly Bear killed.
- Hunters are required to submit the horns of each Mountain Goat killed for inspection and measurement.

In the above list, the “remit” is used to indicate that the biological sample required will not be returned to the hunter. The word “submit” indicates that the hunter must provide the required body part or animal for inspection only and the body part will then be returned to the hunter.

Angling Guiding

An angling guiding annual plan is currently being developed by the Director of Fisheries and Wildlife. Until such time as the plan has been completed and approved by Nisga'a Lisims Government and the Province of

British Columbia, no angling guiding by Nisga'a citizens in the NWA will be allowed except under current provincial regulations.

Trapping

Nisga'a Lisims Government currently holds Registered Trapline 0616T014. That area is not currently being trapped. The Director of Fisheries and Wildlife may invite applications for the use of this area in the future. Possible uses include: running a trapper training program for youth, operating the area as individual's trapline, and operating the area for the purpose of trapping research.

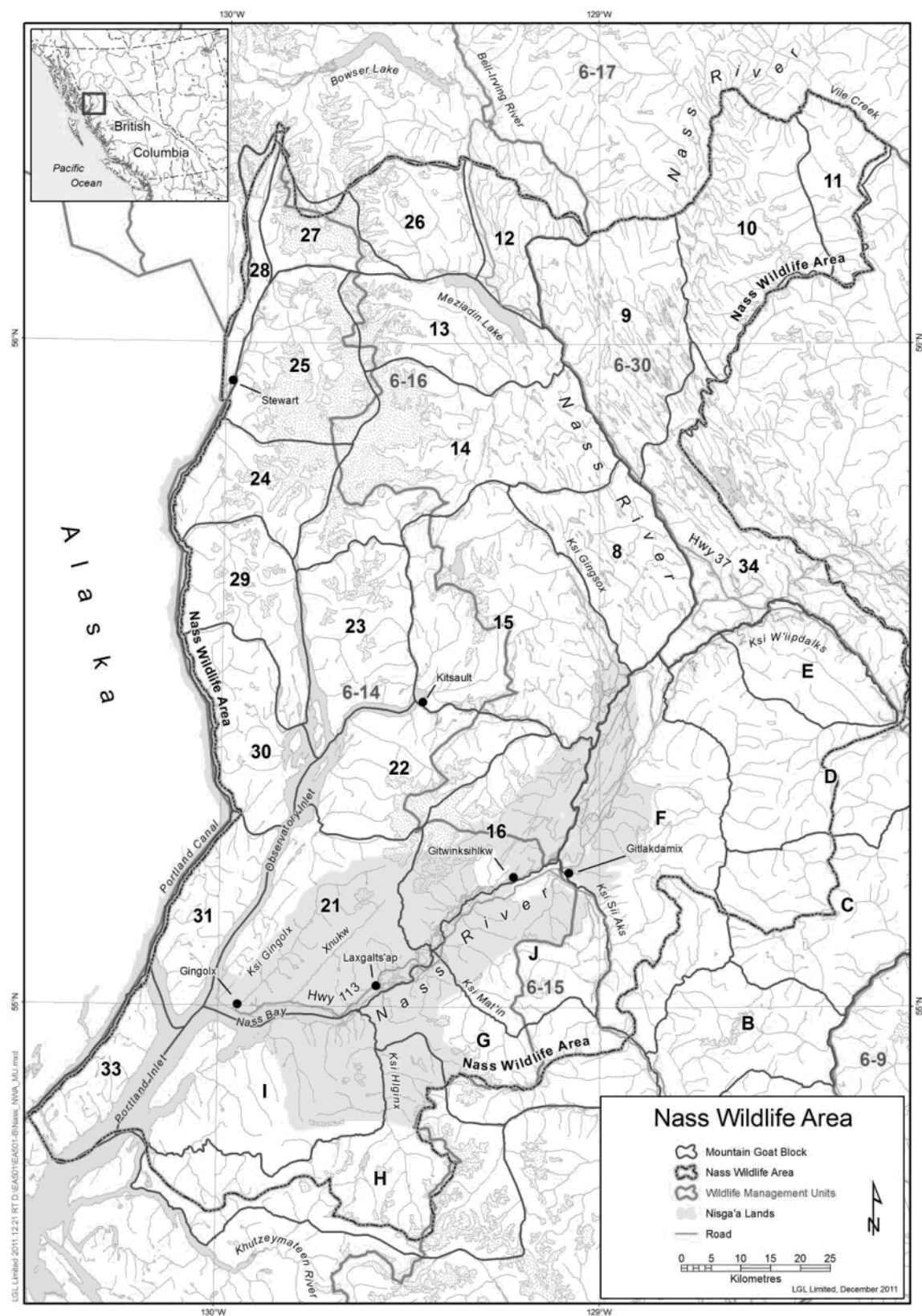
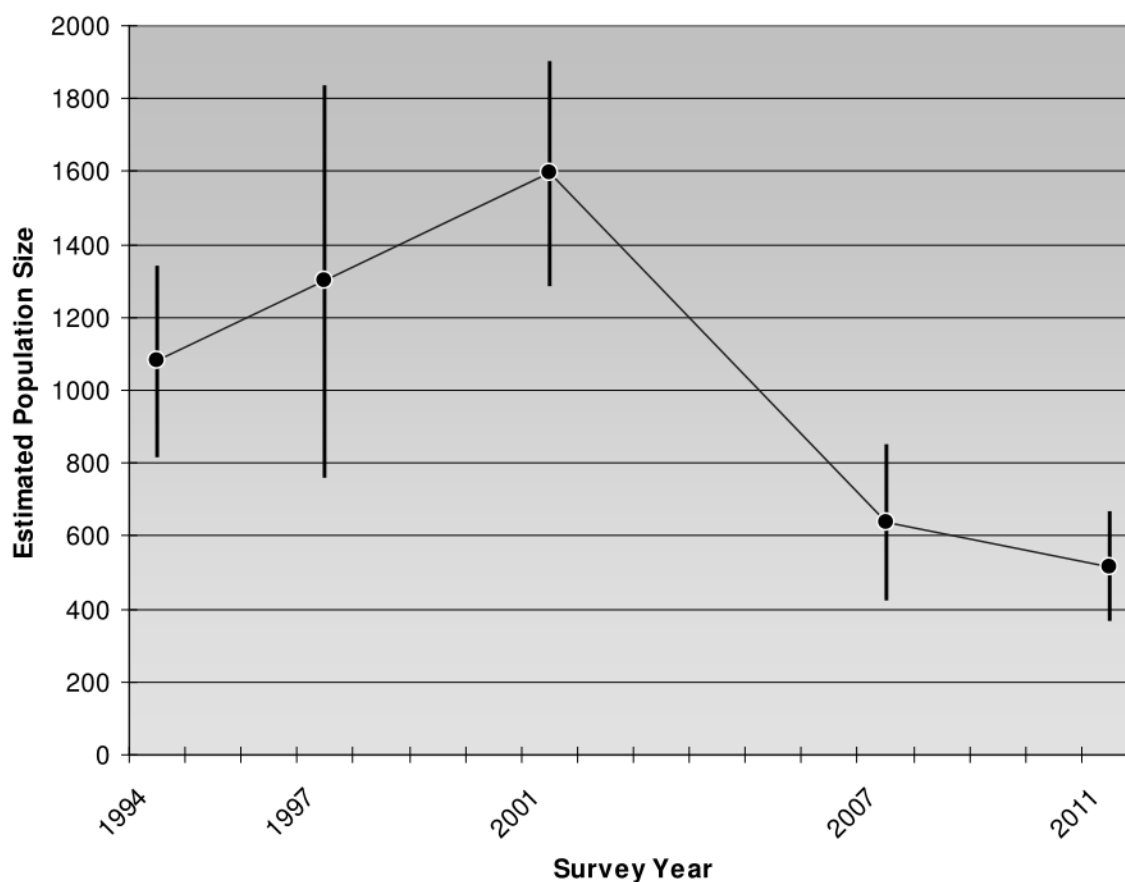
Figure H-2012-1. Nass Wildlife Area.

Figure H-2012-2. Moose Population Survey Results.

Population estimates and 90% confidence intervals using calculated mean moose densities from five moose aerial surveys in the Nass Wildlife Area. Population totals for 1994 and 1997 were not adjusted to account for differences in survey area because it is assumed that the best moose habitats were within the stratified areas each year, and because the survey areas overlap substantially. Because the actual survey areas were the same only in 2001, 2007, and 2011, comparisons of those results are more meaningful than comparisons involving other years. Source: Demarchi and Schultze (2011).

BC Proposal for a Nass Moose Recovery Planning Process

Background:

Between 2001 and 2007, the moose (*Alces alces*) population in the Nass Wildlife Area (NWA) declined from an estimated ~1600 animals to ~500, according to 2011 aerial survey results. In response to this trend, BC has curtailed hunting opportunities for licensed hunters, and the Nisga'a Lisims Government and Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs have respectively implemented their own harvest limits. The cause of the decline is uncertain, but a number of potential factors have been identified, including overharvest, habitat change, and predation.

The BC Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations (FLNRO), Nass Wildlife Committee, and Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs Office have all identified the need for a comprehensive effort to seek to define practical strategies to reverse the decline in Nass moose populations and re-establish a population level that can sustain a desired level of harvest opportunity.

The Nisga'a Lisims Government has initiated work on a draft Nass Moose Recovery Plan. This work provides a solid technical foundation upon which to build in the process proposed here.

Proposal:

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Process:

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Scope:

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Nass Wildlife Committee – Minutes and Action Items

File: 200-20/Nass Wildlife Committee

BC: Dana Atagi (DA; chair), Conrad Thiessen (CT), Krystal Kerckhoff (KK) & Larry Proteau (LP; Terrace Rod and Gun)

NLG: Harry Nyce (HN), Blair Stewart (BS), Ed Desson (ED), and Zane Testawich (ZT)

LGL: Mike Demarchi (MD)

Regrets: N/A

Date: Thursday October 16, 2014

Time: 10:00 h to 15:30 h

Location: Terrace, Coast Mountain Resource District Office

Proposed Agenda:

1. Opening Prayer
 - Done by HN

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10. 2013/2014 Research and Survey Update (Conrad Thiessen)
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11. Wrap Up & Next Meeting Date
- Next meeting date:
 - April 16, 2015 (Smithers)

Nass Wildlife Committee Meeting Minutes and Action Items- Draft #2


File: 200-20/Nass Wildlife Committee

BC: Dana Atagi (chair) and Larry Proteau (Terrace Rod and Gun Club)
NLG: Franklin Alexcee, Harry Nyce, Blair Stewart, Edward Desson, and Zane Testawich
LGL: Mike Demarchi
Regrets: Conrad Thiessen (BC) and Mel Kotyk (Canada); Danielle Prevost (via telephone)
Guests: Blair Hammond (Environment Canada, Delta, BC), Brian Kolman (FLNRO, Smithers), Chris Schell (FLNRO, Smithers), Ryan Gordon (COS, MOE, Terrace), and Kevin Nixon (COS, MOE, Smithers)

Date: April 16, 2015

Time: 900 am – 300 pm

Location: Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations; Caribou Room
3726 Alfred Avenue, Smithers, BC

1. Opening Prayer
 - Conducted by Harry Nyce
2. Housekeeping and Introductions
3. Review Agenda & Additions
 - No additional agenda items were proposed.
4. Review Minutes & Action Items from October 16, 2014 meeting
 - Review of minutes and action items was completed.
 - Dana Atagi to update and revised the action items and resend to NWC members for final review and adoption.
5. Presentation entitled Implementing Canada's Species at Risk Act (SARA) 2015
 - Blair Hammond (Manager, Ecosystems Conservation, Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment Canada, 5421 Robertson Road, RR #1, Delta, BC V4K 3N2; blair.hammond@ec.gc.ca)
 - A copy of the PowerPoint presentation is appended.

NassWMCDeck_2015
0402_HammondB.pdf
 - Blair H. reviewed the legal foundation and the SARA listing process (see PPT presentation).
 - Role of COSEWIC in recommending status (special concern, threatened, endangered, extirpated, extinct etc.)
 - Distinction between Environment Canada (EC; terrestrial) and Department of Fisheries and Oceans (aquatic/fish) for SARA implementation.

- Listing consultations with FNs is a challenge given the often broad geographic scale and species distributions.
- Provincial recovery plans are policy documents and federal recovery strategies are legal documents however federal strategies may use/adopt/incorporate parts of provincial recovery plans.
 - EC designates “critical habitat” and does not consider socio-economic impacts, only biological considerations.
- EC distinguishes between “cooperation” with various stakeholders (i.e. province/ territory, wildlife management board(s), affected FN organizations, and affected organizations/person) in the development of recovery strategies and “consultation” on recovery strategies.
 - Consultation is incremental to cooperative actions.

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6. Nass Moose Scoping Document Discussion

- Brian Kolman (Team Lead, Regional Initiatives, FLNRO, Smithers)
- Summarized the results of the draft report prepared by Brad Pollard (McElhanney Consulting Services)
 - Key factors contributing to the decline of Nass moose (highway 37 mortalities, illegal unreported harvest, reported harvest, habitat suitability/capability changes, increased access, and stochastic environmental events like severe winter of 2006/2007 etc.)
 - This is the first phase of the development of the Nass Moose Management Plan
- 1st draft of scoping document and Brian K. expects next draft in May.
- ACTION ITEM (2015-2): BC (Brian Kolman) to circulate the 2nd draft of the Nass Moose Scoping Document to Nisga’a Fish and Wildlife Department staff for comment when available.
 - Ministry review of the scoping document is taking longer than anticipated but BC remains committed to circulating it for comment when available.
 -
- For 2015/2016, FLNRO will undertake Phase II of the Nass Moose Management Plan project.
 - FLNRO will solicit via Request for Proposal a contractor to deliver the next phase
 - Phase II will involve the more detailed report that identifies strategies and actions necessary for rebuilding of the Nass moose population.
 - Estimated 6-10 months to deliver Phase II.

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11. 2014/2015 FN Moose Hunting Season Review

- Reports from Ryan Gordon (Conservation Officer, MOE, CO Service, Terrace) and Kevin Nixon (Sergeant, MOE, COS, Smithers)
- CO Gordon Moose Season Review
 - 18 complaints relating to moose hunting on Nisga'a Lands this year; reports of illegal harvests and hunting at night
 - COS focussed on public safety issues (i.e. firearms infractions and night hunting etc.)
 - s.16
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 - Terrace COS reported 2 illegal unreported cow moose kills in addition to 12 illegal unreported kills recorded by NLG Enforcement staff
- s.16
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- CO Nixon Moose Season Review
 - Smithers COS reported 2 illegal unreported cow moose harvested and 1 cow moose shot and left; for a total of 3 illegal unreported cow moose kills
- Total Moose Harvest in 2014/2015; 24 moose
 - 9 bull moose harvested by permit holders and reported
 - 3 bull moose harvested by permit holders but not reported
 - 1 bull moose illegal unreported (i.e. harvested without permit)
 - 11 cow moose illegal unreported (i.e. harvested without permit)

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13. Other Items

- Dana Atagi (chair) informed committee that this was his last NWC meeting s.22
s.22
- He shared that working with the Nisga'a, on both fisheries and wildlife issues, has been a real pleasure over the past 20 years and he thanked them for the respectful and positive working relationship.
- NLG (Franklin Alexcee and Harry Nyce) thanked DA for his support and friendship over the years.

14. 2015/2016 Meeting Schedule

- October 20, 2015 (Tuesday) in TBD
- April 14, 2016 (Thursday) in TBD

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