



**Manitoba Model Forest
Committee for Cooperative Moose Management
Meeting Minutes
June 28, 2012
Winnipeg River Learning Centre**

Present

Brian Kotak (MBMF)	Kelly Leavesley (MB Conservation & WS)
Daniel Dupont (MB Conservation & WS)	Dennis Brannen (MB Conservation & WS)
Trevor Barker (MB Hydro)	Earle Simmons (MB Conservation & WS)
John Williams (MB Wildlife Fed)	Jim Hoard (Pinawa Game & Fish)
Ivan Lavoie (Sagkeeng FN)	Paul Millan (Brokenhead Game & Fish)
Vince Keenan (MBMF)	Bob Austman (MBMF)
Ken MacMaster (MB Wildlife Fed)	Stu Jansson (MB Trappers Assoc)
Cam Neurenburg (LdB Wildlife Assoc)	

Introductions

Committee members introduced themselves at the beginning of the meeting.

Additions to Agenda

There were 3 additions to the agenda:

- Brain worm in deer in GHA 26 (Daniel Dupont)
- Moose recovery planning (Kelly Leavesley)
- Status of programs (Stu Jansson)

Minutes from the Last Meeting

Page 4 The minutes mentioned that MC is planning to increase patrols in fall. There was a question from the committee with respect to how much of an increase? Earle indicated that there are now 3 officers in Pine Falls. NROs from other regions will be brought in as well this fall.

Page 4 Moose survey in GHA 26. There was a question of whether there will be money allocated by MC for an aerial survey in GHA 26 this winter. Kelly indicated yes.

Page 4. The minutes indicate that discussions on the “managed moose management” concept should be started up again. The comment in the minutes was from Rene Barker. Kelly indicated that people on the west side of the province wants to take a more lead role in management, and several years back discussions on a managed moose hunting concept were initiated in eastern Manitoba. Some people on the committee voiced concern about the difficulty in establishing such a system of management. How do you allocate tags? How do the First Nation communities allocate their tags internally?

Kelly indicated that in the next few months, a provincial moose strategy will be developed, as well as regional strategies. The province does not want to develop a draft of the strategy internally and then take it out for public comment. Is it better to start with a blank slate and let the public help build it. Better buy-in this way. A discussion paper is being developed for the provincial strategy first. It will not suggest what should happen. The discussion paper will be out in approx next month. The public can respond. There will be opportunities for meetings. Idea is to get feedback from people first. For established committees (such as the CCMM), recovery planning will be initiated. The recovery plans could be specific to a GHA or more regional in scope. There will be a consultation process with FN, and meetings with stakeholders. The managed moose hunting concept could be brought forward by FN at that time, should they want to. Ivan stated that joint management with FN should be a component of the regional strategy.

The MB Wildlife Federation expressed concern about ensuring equality when talking about the distribution of tags between FN and licensed hunters. There needs to be a better understanding of what the community needs are. Then to figure out what the land base can support in terms of hunting. Hollow Water & Black River were pursuing the managed hunting concept several years ago, but did not get funding to pursue the idea further.

All stakeholders need to have the opportunity to have a say in the process.

Cam brought up the question about resource management, specifically the prohibition of logging in provincial parks. How will the forest be renewed, especially without fire? Kelly indicated that the decision to prohibit logging in parks was made at a high level in government. Logging can however, happen for management purposes (e.g., in response to a fire or blow down event).

Cam indicated that this is an opportunity for moose committee to be relevant to MBMF re: forestry and fire management. The moose committee should put together a position statement on moose restoration and management of habitat. Kelly suggested that the upcoming moose recovery strategy would be the opportunity to put forth such recommendations. Cam indicated that logging can be done in an appropriate way for wildlife. He gave the example of the Black Hills in South Dakota.

Kelly indicated that human disturbance (logging) can be done in parks. For example, there was a fire in WP Watson WMA last year – harvesting was done.

Presentation – Lake Winnipeg East System Improvement Transmission Project – Trevor Barker, Manitoba Hydro

Trevor provided a presentation on the proposed new transmission line from Pine Falls to Manigotagan, which will also includes the development of a new transmission station

east of Manigotagan and upgrades to the transmission station south of the Pine Falls generating station.

There was a question about MB Hydro's trapper compensation policy. Would it apply here? Trevor was not sure, as the policy is applicable to individual trap line holders. Most trap lines that this transmission line will cross are community lines.

Trevor indicated that preliminary meetings with FN were held last year. Based on those meetings, the proposed routes for the transmission lines (there are 3 alternative routes under consideration) were altered so that they are now much closer to HWY 304. This removed one previous potential route that was close to the Owl Lake caribou range. It would not be possible to follow HWY 304 completely, as the highway is very windy, and would make the project too expensive. There was a question about the cost of the project. Just over \$40 million.

A map was handed out of the project area, with a comment sheet on the back. People can hand the sheets in to Trevor or mail them in. They can be given to Vince or Brian as well, and they will forward them on to Hydro. There will be an open house on July 30 at the Paper Town Motor Inn as well. There will be a number of meetings with FNs, other communities, and other interested stakeholders, and government.

Update on MBMF Programs and Funding – Brian Kotak

Brian provided a presentation on the impacts of the federal and provincial budgets on the funding to the MBMF. Funding this year has been reduced significantly, and the federal funding program will be phased out over the next 2 years. The MBMF is currently operating on only about 1/3 of its typical annual budget now. Next year will be worse, as there is currently only \$75,000 in funding confirmed to the MBMF. In response, the MBMF has either eliminated or postponed 19 of the 23 projects that they have been working on over the last 5 years. A small amount of money will be available for moose committee meetings, but the MBMF will no longer be able to contribute its own money for wildlife surveys and programs. Brian did indicate that MB Conservation and Water Stewardship will now provide \$5,000 to the moose committee, that can be used for paying mileage for meetings. The mileage will be retroactive to the last meeting (May 10). Brian will pass this information on to Rene Barker, who can then inform our First Nation partners.

Brian spoke about the new direction for the MBMF. While the MBMF will try to keep some of its flagship programs going (moose, caribou, TAACs, education projects), there is a large opportunity to work with 2 forest product companies (Prendiville Industries – Winnipeg, and Ainsworth Energy – Vancouver). Both are interested in building mills based on innovative forest products (e.g., cross laminated timber) and biomass products (e.g., diesel fuel and other chemicals produced from wood biomass). There is a potential to bring almost 850 direct jobs to eastern Manitoba and northwestern Ontario, and another 1600 indirect jobs. Annual payroll would be about \$113 million. As part of the project, the MBMF will help create a joint venture forest management company, owned

jointly by communities in our region and by the 2 forest products partners. A similar joint venture forest management company (Miitigoog) already exists in northwestern Ontario between Prendiville and 4 First Nation communities. It is an opportunity for our communities to have direct input into the forest management process, and be shareholders of the company. A steering committee has been established and their first meeting will be on July 18.

Cam asked if the forest management company will be managed by the MBMF. Brian indicated that he did not know. The forest management company could end up being a main funding mechanism to the MBMF, or the MBMF could be a direct manager. This would have to be explored by the MBMF Board.

Letter to the Minister – Brian Kotak

Brian still needs to write the draft letter to Gord Mackintosh re: new regulations in Atikaki Provincial Park. Brian indicated that he has been very busy in the last 2 months getting their federal funding in place and working with the 2 new forest products companies. He indicated that he would draft up a letter on the weekend and send it out to the committee for their review.

MWF indicated that they will be meeting with Minister on Tuesday. Atikaki will be on the agenda.

Re-configuration of GHA 17 – Kelly Leavesley

The idea behind re-configuring GHA17 is to create areas that are much more manageable in terms of size. Part of it is cost (it is prohibitively expensive to do an aerial survey on the whole GHA17), but splitting the GHA up into smaller ones would also allow for improve management, as MC could have different management strategies in the different areas. Right now, GHA17 is about 20,000 km², which is very large. In comparison, GHA 26 is 7,000 km²

Kelly indicated that the creation of a GHA takes into account the wildlife species that are there, habitat types, and social considerations (mines, mills, hunting patterns).

There are different types of habitat in GHA17. Surficial geology (soils) is an important factor that influences the types of vegetation, and thus, wildlife species found in an area. For example, surficial geology that includes rock and peatlands (organic soils) provide habitats that are good for caribou. These types of surficial geologies and associated vegetation not support large numbers of moose. Mineral soils support vegetation that is more conducive for moose. This is not to say that moose are not found in “caribou” areas. Moose are found all over, but higher moose densities occur in mineral soil areas.

Using GIS, Kelly showed how surficial geology and soils can influence wildlife distribution. Kelly overlaid geology/soil data layers with that of caribou and moose in

GHA17A. Generally, caribou and moose are separated on the landscape. There is some overlap, but not a lot.

For reconfiguring GHA17, what would make sense from a species point of view?

Most of better soils (e.g., mineral soils) that moose prefer, are associated with river corridors. The all-weather road would be an example of an important social consideration in re-configuring the GHA. The road will likely have impacts on wildlife in the region. First along the corridor, and then further out over the years.

One option could be to split GHA7 into 2 areas, using an east-west line. This would result in a north and a south area. Another split could be made using a south-north line, creating an east and a west area. This would produce 4 areas. By splitting, you can manage the areas differently.

Kelly indicated that she will bring a proposal forward at the MC season setting meeting in August.

Where should the dividing lines be? Berens River makes sense for a north/south split in GHA17, as it is a prominent natural feature that almost splits the GHA in 2 halves.

Trevor mentioned that we must account for the hunting activities of the FN communities along the Lake Winnipeg eastern shoreline. They hunt inland (east) of the lake.

There aren't any natural features to use when trying to create a line to split GHA17 into an east and west half. Trevor suggested to use a longitudinal line (e.g., township lines). There was discussion that perhaps the community trap lines could be used as boundaries as well. The committee suggested that the GHA should be subdivided in one step (creating 4 GHAs), not in a phased-in approach (e.g., creating 2 GHAs first, and then later, splitting these up again to create a total of 4)

Trevor indicated that there are many local winter trails north of Berens River. With the all-weather road being constructed to Berens River, more people could go up to hunt and fish in the area. There must be a balance between providing opportunities for Manitobans to use the area, and protecting the moose resource. Re-configuring GHA17 should not be used as a tool to totally restrict access to the area.

Update on Moose/Wildlife Curriculum project – Bob Austman

Bob is working on the manuscript. He hopes to have a draft by sometime in the fall. He will be working with the committee as it is being developed and would like to include traditional knowledge from the FN communities. He hopes to roll out the curriculum next year by piloting it in several schools.

Brain Worm in Deer –Daniel Dupont

Last fall Daniel was provided with about 20 deer heads from hunters. All came from GHA26. Brain worm was present in 19 of the 23 deer heads. 2 of the deer that did not have brain worm were fawns. Therefore, it appears that brain worm is quite prevalent in GHA26. Brain worm was found in 2 deer as far north as the Black River. The parasite could be present further north, but no deer heads were collected from more northern locations.

Daniel also showed the committee the GPS relocation maps for the 2 collared moose. The 2 cows split apart this spring. One stayed close to Quesnel/Caribou Lake and had her calf there. The other cow moved north (just south of Bissett).

When the 2 cows were captured during the collaring event, blood samples were taken. These blood samples could be analyzed to see how closely they are related.

Moose Recovery Planning –Kelly Leavesley

This was discussed earlier in the meeting. We can expect to hear more in the next month.

Funding of Programs – Stuart Jansson

Stu asked Kelly if the trapper incentive program for wolves was still in place for this year – yes, the plan is to do it exactly the same as last year. When talking with other wildlife people across the country, Kelly learned that our wolf program was one of the most successful programs in Canada last year. Approximately 45% of wolf population was taken out of GHA 26, based on MCs understanding of what the wolf population is. Stu indicated that there are likely more wolves out there than MC knows.

Stu mentioned that there is a potential for testing wolf traps for the Fur Institute of Canada. Maybe FIC could supply traps (for only 2-3 trappers). Kelly suggested that Stu talk to Dean or Barry. Stu just came back from a trip to Iqaluit. There is a similarity between here and Iqaluit with respect to the impacts of anti-fur campaigns on the community. The fur bans are destroying communities.

An article was written in the Free Press on MTA. The article was very misleading and was not based on accurate information.

Next Meeting

September 13