

**Summary Notes from the
Dehcho Watershed Ecosystem Advisory Committee
AAROM Meeting
March 15, 16, 2011
Dehcho Board Room – Fort Simpson**

Preamble:

This was the first regular meeting of the Dehcho Watershed Ecosystem Advisory Committee for 2011. The general purpose of the meeting was to inform Committee members of program progress and receive community input for next year and future year programming. This interaction between the DWEAC members and the Dehcho AAROM Coordinator is important for program direction and development. Committee meetings are the main forum for the exchange of ideas and information between each other as community and organizational representatives. It is also the time to provide the Coordinator with community information and perspective and for the Coordinator to provide updated information on the program. The meetings provide an opportunity to provide program direction to the AAROM Coordinator.

This year's meeting was an important as we are entering into a new phase of the program. To date we have been dealing mainly with capacity building issues such as equipment purchasing, training and developing research and/or monitoring programs. Community-based projects have been initiated in all participating Dehcho communities. We are now entering a phase where some of the work we are doing will result in input into the management of Dehcho waters and Fisheries.

We were fortunate to have Grand Chief Sam Gargan address the Committee at the start of the meeting. He provided some guidance on the future direction of the Committee and the importance of our involvement in several Dehcho initiatives. We thank Sam for his support and Guidance.

Participants

DWEAC Members:

Present:

Angus Sanguéz – Jean Marie River First Nation

David Moses – Pehdzeh Ki First Nation (afternoon)

Joe Lacorne – Deh Gah Gotie Dene Band

Peter Sabourin – Katlodeeche First Nation

Eric Nadli – FPRMB

Richard Laffery – Fort Providence Métis

Danny Peterson – Fort Simpson Métis

Unable to Attend: Fred Simba Or alternate (working) – Ka'A'Gee Tu First Nation
West Point First Nation

Darrel Betsaka – Nahanni Butte Dene Band

Edward Cholo – Liidlii Kue First Nation
Dennis Deneron – Samba Ke Dene Band

No member appointments at this time:

Acho Dene Koe Band (The Coordinator was advised to meet with the Acho Dene to encourage them to participate in our program.)

NOTE: It is important that we encourage all members to attend since we need a quorum of 75% for an official decision making meeting. We suggest that this % be lowered to 60% but we will need a quorum meeting to advise the Dehcho Leadership of this change to the terms of reference.

Resource Management Personnel:

Allan Bouvier – Liidlii Kue Resource Management Committee - ill
Pricilla Canadien – Fort Providence Resource Management Board (Eric Nadali attended in Priscilla's place
Victoria Martel-St Jean – unable to attend

DFN, AAROM Staff:

George Low – AAROM Coordinator/Biologist (meeting facilitator)
Mike Low – AAROM Technical Advisor – Unable to attend - Fishing in Wrigley

DFO, Fisheries Management:

Deanna Leonard – DFO Senior Fisheries Mgmt. Biologist (Unable to attend)

The Committee was advised that Committee business would be concluded at noon on the 15th and the afternoon would be dedicated to a Youth program meeting. Members were invited to attend.

Meeting Summary:

Day One

- Opening Prayer
- Introductions
- Progress to Date
- Project results
- Member input
- DFO input

Day Two

- Opening prayer
- Partners
 - CIMP
 - EC – CABiN, Contaminants
 - AFS – community fishery monitoring
- Work Plan 2011/2012
- Community Meetings

- CIMP Funded
- Review of Youth and Elder program
- Closing prayer

Due to the address of the Grand Chief and the necessity of planning for a noon conclusion of the meeting on day two, all of the items in the agenda were covered in day one. This is a very hard-working Committee which is mostly experienced with the AAROM program allowing information sharing to happen quickly.

Introduction: made as necessary as members joined the meeting.

Address by Grand Chief Sam Gargan; (AAROM Coordinator response in brackets)

Keeper of the Waters Conference;

Sam notified us that the “Keepers conference would be held in the Grand Rapids area of Manitoba this year and the AAROM program should consider providing funding for the travel of delegates. Three or four vehicles should be supported to travel to the conference.

(AAROM - The date on the website is August 10 – 14, 2011 and the community on the website is Lac Brochet which is in the extreme northwest corner of Manitoba. We were planning to drive but I believe this location will also involve a charter flight from somewhere in northern Manitoba. I hope Sam is correct and the location is in a more accessible community. **In Any case, the AAROM program is committed to funding at least a portion of the travel.**)

NWT Water Stewardship Strategy:

Very little of the strategy seems to involve aboriginal involvement according to Sam.

(AAROM – The “Strategy” will apparently be a partner in the community-based Slave River contaminants study with funding from various undisclosed partners.) (Dehcho AAROM was initially excited by the initiative but hasn’t as yet found a place in the process.)

The World Wilderness Congress:

Sam attended the previous Congress in Mexico. The next congress is planned for Japan in 2012. Water has become a humanitarian issue in the absence of government action in a lot of cases. The Dehcho should send a representative for our First Nations rather than a delegate of Canada in order to have more creditability.

Fisheries Management issues:

The Dehcho needs to become more involved in *water and fisheries management issues*.

(AAROM – We had a meeting last week at Katlodeeche with reps from KFN and Fort Providence. A working group has been organized to develop a Great Slave Lake (GSL) Fisheries Strategy which will;

- Increase First Nation involvement in a restructuring of the management of GSL fisheries especially the commercial fishery.
- Develop a fisheries strategy which will involve First Nations in successful fisheries on the lake. Including:
 - Access to licences and/or quotas
 - Feasibility study funding,
 - Training
 - Fishing boats, equipment.

Tar Sands and need for baseline contaminant data.

Need to access existing information; what's happening out there?

(AAROM - Keep track of the results of studies on the Slave River and Athabasca delta).

Concern with Global warming.

Warmer waters and effects on fish and fish quality

Back to the Agenda;

The Coordinator reported our progress on developing the program.

- We were successful in getting “Collaborative Mgmt” funding for AAROM
- Mike Low was hired as the AAROM Technical Advisor (TA) in July.
- The coordinator presented at the Annual General Assembly on mercury monitoring and the GSL fisheries. A follow-up meeting was suggested by Bill Erasmus
- A follow-up meeting was held to discuss GSL issues; a working group was established to find solutions.
- The Coordinator and/or TA made thirty-four community visits
- Each participating community had a research and monitoring project in 2010 – 2011.

Community projects in 2010/2011;

- **Fort Providence;** Mainly concentrated on sports fishery survey due to the large number of anglers fishing in the area. Also set out temperature loggers and collected data on dissolved oxygen, pH, and conductivity.
- **Sambaa Ke, Trout Lake;** Sports fishery survey, effects of climate change – two temperature profile buoys, subsistence harvest survey.
- **Jean Marie River, Liidlii Kue, Nahani Butte;** Monitoring river useage, sports fishing and other activity, temperature loggers, water chemistry – DO, pH, conductivity
- **Ka'a'gee Tu; Kakisa;** Sports fishery survey on the Kakisa River, The Band is putting together a comprehensive monitoring program with INAC and DFO as partners. AAROM is contributing to this process. The Ka'a'gee Tu hosted the CABiN stream assessment course last August.
- **Katlodeeche;** collecting data on an *Independent Sampling Study* on the GSL fishery. Also collaborating in an inconnu study on GSL and at Buffalo Lake

- **West Point First Nation;** Hired a member to work on the *Independent Sampling Program*. The WPFN will be pursuing other initiatives now that they have elected a Chief and Council.
- **Pehdzeh Ki, Wrigley;** Involved in collecting fish for mercury testing this winter. We will work towards getting the program up and running this summer.
- **Fort Providence and Fort Simpson Métis organizations;** Each organization now have members on the AAROM Committee; although they do not have monitoring projects they contribute rich advise to our AAROM program and their members attend training and youth camps etc.
- **The Acho Dene;** The members suggested that the Coordinator meet with the Acho Dene of Fort Liard to see if they want to join our AAROM program. So far they have not responded to written invitations.

Equipment:

- **Insurance;** AAROM will fund insurance for boats this year; Angus Sangus pointed out there is still some owner issues which need to be sorted out. We will need serial numbers of all boats and outboards.
- **Sat phones** were discussed but due to expense we decided to continue using the SPOTS for safety communications
- **Equipment Priorities;**
 - 90 hp Honda to replace 8 year old FPRMB kicker 10 K
 - JMR Garage 18 K
 - Auger and fishing equipment 5 K
 - Props and repairs 5 K

Training:

- **CABiN Stream Assessment course;** (CIMP funding dependent) up to two participants from each organization; will be held at Kakisa.
- **Med 3 and SVOPC – boating courses;** there is still a need for boat training; was this identified in community training plans? Coord. Will check with Mavis – DFN.
- **Environmental monitoring** – no course planned for this year.
- **On the job training;** Mike will be providing monitor training and check for each of the projects.

Partnering:

- **DFO;**
 - **Aboriginal Strategy; (~ 210 K)** This is our best and most consistent partner with ongoing funding; we currently run 4 of our community projects with AFS funding and are able to purchase the equipment mentioned above.
 - **Aboriginal commercial Fishery Development funding;** We will be developing a proposal to address our GSL fishery strategy.

- **INAC – Northern Contaminants program;** This program is currently funding sampling of mercury levels in fish from community selected inland lakes.
- **Environment Canada;** Marlene Evans is our research partner for the mercury study.
- **INAC – CIMP program;**
 - **CABiN training and JMR stream assessment project(applied for 20K)**
 - **Review and strengthening of the AAROM research and monitoring program (applied for 30K)**
- **GNWT**
 - **ENR** – We work in partnership with ENR especially in delivery of the Ecology Camp
 - **ITI** – Provided major funding for the boating courses
 - **MACA** – are receptive to an application for funding for our youth programs.
- **NGO's** – apply to them occasionally for funding or to attend workshops.

Member Input;

- Peter Sabourin – need for core sampling off Pine Point for contaminants
- Jean Marie; - study of fishing creeks such as Jean Marie River
- Fort Providence would like to see work on Willow Lake and Jackfish lakes, as well as Beaver Lake and Mills Lake
- Richard Lafferty discussed his experiences catching clams on a manila rope in the Mackenzie and Horn River. Should get some testing for safety as a domestic food.
- David Moses - Further need for boat training; now a requirement to operate commercial boat
- Joe Lacorne – check spawning areas such as Birch Creek, Providence Creek and Horn River; **check conny run** – discussion on DNA sampling and range of various conny stocks.
- Discussion on Chum salmon, goldeye and other unusual fish and events
- Richard Lafferty described the potential “Dehcho Resource Mgmt. Authority and how AAROM would evolve into this authority.
- Discussion on ecology camps and youth and elder involvement
- Angus Sanguetz mentioned that another “trapping camp” was planned for March 28th if Mike wanted to do the fish and water thing with the youth. (funding from Embridge)
- Etc.

Review of the Dehcho Youth program;

During the second morning the planned changes to the “Ecology Camp” and the AAROM youth program in general were discussed. We discussed meshing our youth programs into the school system, particularly the Grade 10, 11 & 12 Experiential Science program. We would see if this is a possibility in each of Fort Simpson, Fort Providence and Hay River high schools. We also want to maintain our program with younger youth by taking advantage of an AAROM instructor participating in local camps such as the JMR winter “Trapping Camp”. This could be done at very little cost. We also want to

make sure our youth program is extended to the smaller communities both by bringing youth into more regional camps and participating in community activities.

Bruce Townsend, who has been contracted to review our program and is developing science modules for use in our youth program, gave a very detailed presentation on the curriculum science program and how we might fit with our aquatic science and culture models.

There was opportunity for feedback from the members and generally they liked the new approach. They appreciated Bruce's enthusiastic demonstration of some of the modules he is demonstrating. It's not often you get applause at a meeting.

Afternoon meeting on Science and Culture Youth Program.

The Committee members were invited to attend the afternoon "Ecology Camp" meeting chaired by Keyna Norwegian. Richard Lafferty and Angus Sanguetz attended and Chief Stan Sanguetz from JMR sat in at part of the meeting. There will be minutes for this separate meeting so I will not go into much detail.

Attending were representatives from DFN, ENR, Parks Canada, MACA, AAROM Committee and Education. The consensus seems to be to hold a regional "Ecology Camp" at Rabbit Kettle in Nahanni National Park as a part of their celebration of the park expansion.

DFN will be applying for funding from MACA for this camp but also have the opportunity to include further funding for other youth activities in other locations in the same application. (10 K per short term event per location (total 40K)

Parks will be contributing as will ENR and DFN AAROM in funding and aquatic instructors;

During the meeting there was much discussion on the science curriculum program although it remains unclear how our AAROM youth and Elder Science and Culture program will mesh with the school program.

Thanks to the AAROM Committee members for providing valuable information and feedback to the AAROM Coordinator. Your views will be considered when designing the 2011/12 program.

George Low
AAROM Coordinator
13 Riverview Drive, Hay River, NT X0E 0R7, geobarbgeo@hotmail.com
Ph. 867 874-1248