



**Manitoba Model Forest
Committee for Cooperative Moose Management
Meeting Minutes (Final Version)
October 13, 2011
Winnipeg River Learning Centre**

Present:

Kelly Leavesley (MB Conservation)	Cam Neurenborg (LdB Wildlife Assoc.)
Paul Millan (Brokenhead Game & Fish)	John Willams (MB Wildlife Federation)
Rene Barker (MBMF)	Helen Thomas (Manigotagan Council)
Jean Desrosiers (MB Metis Federation)	Orton Ramsey (Black River FN TAAC)
Eugene Bear (Hollow Water FN TAAC)	Ivan Lavoie (Sagkeeng FN Trapper)
Ron Missyabit (MB Conservation)	Stu Jansson (MB Trappers Assoc)
Vince Keenan (MBMF)	Bob Austman (MBMF)
Ernest McPherson (Black River FN TAAC)	Mitch Walker (MB Conservation)
Daniel Dupont (MB Conservation)	Jonathon Williams (MB Conservation)

1. Introductions

Introductions of the committee members were made.

2. Additions to the Agenda

An update on wolf incentive program was added

3. Minutes from August 10, 2011 meeting

Page 3. It was mentioned that consultations in BRFN and HWFN are on-going. No decision yet on support for closure yet by Chief & Council. The committee approved the minutes.

4. Access decommissioning tour on August 11

There was a discussion that there was good decommissioning on the Garner/Gem road, but it wasn't long until people cut an ATV trail around the road. The committee stressed the need for both rigorous decommissioning and enforcement. Kelly indicated that a mining exploration company, which re-opened the road, paid for the decommissioning.

Stu Jansson indicated that there are many alternate routes into areas in the eastern region. Enforcement/general travel restrictions are needed.

Bob Austman described the method for road decommissioning that is used in the Duck Mountains: Louisiana Pacific crisscrosses trees across the road for about a km. It seems to be a good deterrent.

Kelly indicated that the decommissioning at Garner/Gem was quite extensive. However, a new trail was quickly cut by people. Road ripping does keep trucks out. ATVs are a challenge.

Jean indicated that RCMP can enforce ATVs regulations (for example, riding double).

Kelly provided an update on decommissioning in the region: 9 roads were decommissioned by last fall. Some weren't done. The work did stop a lot of truck traffic. Tembec removed some of their assets (culverts, bridges). Longer-term process is in place. Tim Swanson is consulting with communities and stakeholders.

Cam asked if there are any decommissioning plans for the Translicense Rd? Tim is looking at it right now. It is a public road, and MB Conservation is investigating to determine if there are private interests in the road. Tim is giving a presentation at a wildlife club. The Translicense Rd provides quick access to the area. The decommissioning of the Translicense Rd would create hardships for many people.

Ron indicated that there must be meaningful input by communities on management activities. MB Conservation asked Black River FN and Hollow Water FN for closure of Happy Lake to moose hunting. The communities question how the closure was a benefit to them. Black River FN said that effective co-management is needed.

Ivan indicated that decommissioning of roads creates a hardship for his trapping activities. He has been using those roads for trapping since he was a kid.

Subsistence hunting does not create a problem. The problem is when a few take advantage of the system and hunt to sell meat.

Government to government relationships are important. When treaties were signed, it was the start of the relationship. Consultation with a rights holder is perceived as a negative. Needs to be positive.

Kelly stressed that road decommissioning and consultations are because Tembec is gone, and this creates a long-term liability issue. The closures aren't only to curtail moose hunting. Rainy Lake road was used recently as a fire guard in the fire this fall. It will not be decommissioned until consultations are done.

Cam stated that risk management in a crisis situation is needed. But it is not a long-term solution. We need long-term thinking into the future.

5. Letter to Minister Blaikie

Brian indicated that a follow up letter was sent on August 11, on behalf on the Moose Committee to the Conservation Minister. We received a response from Jack Dubois, on October 12. The response thanked the Moose Committee for our work over the years on moose management and for our recent management recommendations. The letter also

indicated that a full conservation closure for GHA 26 would not be undertaken at this time due to on-going consultations with Aboriginal communities, particularly with Sagkeeng FN.

6. Aboriginal Consultation Process

MB Conservation had hoped to meet with Sagkeeng FN a while ago. But it has taken longer than expected to get the consultation process going. The first meeting was held on Sept 15. A second meeting was held on Sept 28. MB Conservation has found that large community meetings are not conducive to good discussion. Many people are not willing to speak. MB Conservation wants smaller meetings. It is also hard to have discussions with a community, when there is no relationship as a basis.

Since the provincial election, there has been no announcement of who will be the new Conservation Minister. No decisions will be made regarding the moose situation in GHA 26 until the consultation process is more advanced. The community is concerned about the moose population, but want to be involved in the solution.

There is a steering committee within MB Conservation to oversee all consultations on the east and west side of the province. Jack Dubois leads the committee. There are also separate east and west teams.

There is no target date to complete consultations. There are still consultations going on with Black River FN and Hollow Water FN.

There is support at the top of MC for the consultation process. Forms of accommodation need to be developed during the consultation process.

Ernest indicated that 8 years ago there were lots of moose in area. The problem in his opinion is that there were too many licenses sold each year. Nobody listened to the community's concerns back then.

Kelly indicated that this is a very complicated issue. The government wants to discuss with FN communities and to negotiate a resolution. There are a lot of people in Sagkeeng that have stopped hunting already.

Kelly mentioned that maintenance and grader operators around the Nopiming loop have observed very few gut piles.

Jean asked why did the government not shut down licensed hunting in the whole province? People are shifting hunting to other areas. There are a lot of Americans hunting in the north. Métis rights now also need to be considered.

Bob stated that education must be part of the strategy. Knowledge by Elders, science/models will all help.

7. Wolf Incentive Program

An announcement was made in February that MB Conservation would fund a wolf program. Meetings were held with trappers (in both the east and west). MB Conservation is paying \$250/wolf for wolves trapped on RTLs in GHA 26. \$25,000 is allocated for the program in GHA 26. This represents a target of 100 wolves. This includes community trap lines in this area.

Each trapper has to be set up as a vendor by the Province. Could MTA do this as a vendor? MB Conservation does not want to use any of the money for admin fees. MB Conservation will be accepting samples in their Lac du Bonnet and Pine Falls offices. MB Conservation would like to set up a trappers meeting to discuss.

4 samples are needed: meat, hide, bone and a tooth per wolf. Trapper needs to bring the wolf in. Trapper will then take the wolf back. Can be a combination of healthy and mangy wolves. A student at U of M wants to look at parasites.

Trappers can keep the hide.

The program is on a 1st come, 1st served basis for RTLs and community lines in GHA 26.

A question was asked with regard to what do you expect to learn from the samples? By looking at bone, meat and hair, we can understand what the wolves are eating: deer, moose, bear, beaver.

Paul suggested that MB Conservation should send out info to hunting clubs re: for hunters to provide samples for analysis (e.g., for deer). Also the deer head, for brain worm parasite.

Stu indicated that Non status people need a permit to possess deer or parts of a deer if not taken under a hunting license. There is a need to phone MB Conservation if you come across a kill. For heads, it would be difficult, as it leaves it open to abuse.

Kelly indicated that the incentive program starts effective this trapping season. MB Conservation is still working on setting it up.

8. Moose observations

Eugene indicated that 2 moose were taken this fall near Sandy River

Berens River – Bob said that the pilot for WAM Air indicated that Berens River FN and Little Grand Rapids FN held a moose trophy derby (\$10,000 top prize) for the biggest bull. The pilot indicated that 60 bulls taken from along river. Bob indicated that on his

recent moose hunting trip on the Berens River, there were FN guys going up and down the river at night, using night lights. Is this subsistence?

A lack of data in GHA26 was a problem. This will be a problem for GHA 17 as it is a huge area to survey, and little data exists for this area.

Cam indicated that MB Conservation has not been given adequate resources to manage the resource. This is a sentiment expressed by MB Wildlife Federation as well.

Brian indicated that our letter to Minister stressed the need for proper resources to MB Conservation in order to manage the resource.

An aerial survey in GHA 17 should be done. Kelly indicated that it would be very expensive, probably \$250,000. With closing of GHA26, we knew there would be additional pressure on 17.

What about 17A? No evidence that there is increased pressure so far. The moose population appears to be stable.

It was noted that air carriers can and do provide info on licensed moose hunting success.

9. Endangered Species Fund (ESF) Proposal

Kelly indicated that a funding proposal for collaring of moose was submitted. How do moose use the landscape? SDIF has dried up, but ESF can be for species at risk of local extirpation. The proposal wasn't successful. The Proposal was to collar 6 moose. Recommended is to use a drug when capturing moose. Can't eat meat for 30 days. East Side Road Authority couldn't find anyone who wants to collar a moose without drugs.

What would we learn? We haven't done much relating to habitat. We can investigate habitat use. Could get info from Elders and resource users.

Collaring of moose – good to show that our committee supports reinvesting in our resource.

Kelly indicated that the tender for caribou capture is going out soon. Built into tender is for caribou, wolves, and up to 6 moose.

MB Conservation has money set aside for 4 collars. They could trade caribou collars for moose collars with ESRA. Moose committee could pay for the capture work. We could allocate \$9,000 from the moose committee budget. The committee thought this would be a good use of our funding.

What about calves? Can you collar calves? They grow, and the collar might strangle the calf. Would be good to know about calf mortality. Bears could be a major source of calf mortality. It was suggested that outfitting for bears may alter the bear population

dynamics. Cubs are surviving more now. Kelly said she could look into what we can do for both adult and calves with respect to collaring.

10. Projects for this fiscal year

Brian provided a handout with potential budgets for projects/activities for this fiscal year. It was suggested by the committee that the \$3,000 identified for aerial moose surveys in GHA 26 should be used to increase the budget for the GPS collaring of moose. This would bring the moose collaring budget to \$9,000. Everyone thought this was a good idea.

For the wolf diet study in GHA17A, it was suggested that we put the full \$4,000 into funding for trappers on Hole river section (as opposed to spending \$2,000 on trappers and \$2,000 on sample analysis. The whole \$4,000 would be available for wolf samples, payable to trappers.

11. MBMF 5 Year Strategic Plan

Brian indicated that the MBMF will be developing a new 5 year strategic plan over the next several months. Moose will likely continue to be a priority in the new Model Forest program. There is a strategic planning workshop that will be held on November 1. Members of the MBMF Board and others (FN TAAC committees, Ducks Unlimited, etc) have been invited.