

**Wolf Conservation and Management Plan Review**  
**Community Meeting, Faro**  
April 18, 2011

The following summary sets out key points discussed at a two-hour meeting of the Yukon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan Review Committee and community members in Faro, Yukon. Major points or themes were also reviewed by the facilitator in an oral summary at the conclusion of the meeting.

The discussion focused on proposed changes to the 1992 Yukon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan and current issues associated with Yukon wolf conservation and management.

**Community:** Robert Lafleur, Russell Guspie, Pawl Kelly, Lester Boyle, Donald Taylor, Doug Langila, Dave Rogerson, Jim McLachlan, Robbie Morris, Bob Raymond, TJ Grantham, D Bakke, Judy Freake, Neil Freake, Matt Clarke  
**Review Committee:** Karen Clyde, Frank Thomas, Doug Larsen, Harvey Jessup, Wayne Jim, Mark O'Donoghue  
**Staff:** Lindsay Staples (facilitator), Will Young

**Management context – roles and responsibilities and current conditions**

- Faro has no local RRC, but has worked with the Yukon Fish and Game Association in the past
- The mine keeps a record of wildlife observations around the mine site.
- Many expressed the view that moose numbers had declined in the area, even from times when 2000 people lived in Faro.
- Wolves are the number one predators on moose and caribou most of the year. Grizzly bears are significant predators in the spring.
- The large area benefits from limited access (by road) to moose. However, all of Yukon is putting hunting pressure on the area. This will increase as more roads are opened up (e.g. opening of Cantung Road). Managing this pressure is one of the biggest challenges.
- Much of the area around Faro is not being trapped.
- Government supports other industries; why not trapping?
- Vacant lines need to be assigned by government

**Wolf conservation and management – general approach**

- Trapping is the most inexpensive and socially acceptable way to manage wolf populations.
- Wolves have a right to exist. Don't want to see wolves disappear.

- Implement an approach that would (a) provide financial incentives for trapping wolves; (b) provide community-based training to facilitate participation by interested individuals in trapping wolves; (c) improve access to unassigned traplines and increase opportunities for harvesting wolves.
- Once a balanced approach to wolf and moose management is lost, it is difficult to restore a balance between wolf and moose/caribou populations.
- Hunters are upsetting the balance between predators and prey

### **Management of hunting and trapping of wolves**

- Find ways to help trappers trap wolves (e.g. provide bait (roadkill?))
- Wolves are under harvested; there is no need for bag limits.
- Outfitters have incentives to shoot wolves, however their hunters are limited to 2 wolves, and this bag limit should be removed.
- Incentives should be \$250 and the trapper keeps the hide.
- Not asking for money to pay for gas. Only need to create the opportunity to trap.
- Remove bag limits on wolves - restricts limited opportunities to hunt wolves. Wolves are hard to hunt and success is low, so quotas are not required.
- Can take up to 3 years to get money from the fur market.
- Public use of trails affects trappers' abilities to set snares for wolves.
- Trappers spend considerable time and expense to establish new trapping trails and public use affects their ability to trap in these areas. Change legislation to restrict trails to the use of the trappers who established them.
- Proper pelt care and skinning takes ~6-7 hours per pelt.
- Wolves are very hard to trap.
- Use well-trained wolf trappers to trap on unassigned lines or as assistant trappers on assigned lines.
- Trappers should get the benefit if others trap on their trap line.
- Trapper training programs are effective and should continue.
- Training young trappers with more experienced trappers for a season provides further (and better) learning of trapping techniques.
- Is the Government willing to offer incentives for wolf pelt handling, just as YOA and TTC currently offers?
- Taxidermists are asking more from the trapper (additional care and skinning) however trappers are not seeing increased prices for their work.
- The YOA's pelt handling incentive has too many requirements making the incentive difficult to collect.
- People want access to unassigned traplines and basic information about how to apply for and access these lines. This information needs to be more available to facilitate getting people on the land.
- Offer trapper assistance (financial) to get people on the land.

- Changes to the Wildlife Act to enable assistant trappers on traplines weren't effective because trappers tend not to trust others trapping on their lines.
- Trappers are their own conservationists/game guardians on their traplines.
- In the Faro area, are seeing more middle-aged people wanting to try out trapping; had been out as kids with their grandparents.

### **Management of ungulates**

- In areas closed to big game hunting, open predator hunting. Specifically, GMS 4-51 should remain closed to sheep, caribou, moose, but open wolf and bear hunting so that people can harvest predators feeding in the sheep lambing areas.
- For Faro, the local Fannin sheep population is an important population to maintain (tied to annual Sheep and Crane Festival). Spring predation of sheep by bears (and wolves) is a local concern.
- Moose and caribou should be more widely managed on permits.
- Faro sees a lot of hunting pressure from Whitehorse.
- Voluntary no-harvest measure is not effective in this area.

### **Conditions for wolf population reduction**

- Finlayson program stopped abruptly; wolf reduction needs to continue every couple of years after a large program like that to sustain the effects of the wolf reduction.
- Sterilization is expensive and inefficient so do not consider this as an option. Instead, invest the money in trappers.

### **Education and outreach**

- Community-based trapper training and the introduction of the best available information and knowledge would greatly assist trapping as management tool.
- The focus could be on middle-aged people. This group appears to be more interested in participating in trapping and re-learning knowledge that they have lost.
- Make better use of local knowledge.