

Minister's Wildlife Advisory Council

Meeting #24 Minutes

September 14, 2023 12:30 – 3:00 pm
via Zoom

Attendees		
Council Members:		Staff:
<i>Simoogit Hleek (Chief Harry Nyce Sr.) (regrets)</i>		Jen Psyllakis, Executive Director, Wildlife, Habitat & Species at Risk
Nancy Wilkin		Avril Nagel, Manager, Together for Wildlife Implementation
Adam Ford		Pam Doerksen, Director of Strategic Initiatives, Wildlife Act Review
Alyssa Lepka		Jen Walker, Director, Strategic Initiatives
Andrea Barnett		Steve MacIver, A/Mgr Legislation and Policy Section, FOR
<i>Caylin Glasser (regrets)</i>		
<i>Doug Heard (regrets)</i>		
Jasper Lament		Guests
<i>Jason Northcott (regrets)</i>		Celine Davis, A/Executive Director, Ecosystems Branch, WLRS
John Bergenske		Sagarika Saha, Conservation Strategic Initiatives, WLRS
Kari Stuart-Smith		
Megan Hanacek		Consultants:
Mike Demarchi		Derek Thompson
Naomi Owens-Beek		Judith Cullington
Shaun Hollingsworth		
Purpose of Meeting		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Discuss wildfire impacts and the role of MWAC. ♦ Prepare for October in-person/Zoom meetings (MWAC-only and joint meeting) ♦ Receive T4W updates, including progress report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Health Framework 		
Action items (from September meeting)	Lead	Status
Discuss wildfire and advice to the Ministers at the next Strategic Working Group meeting.	Council members	Complete
Send an immediate email to the Ministers, in advance of the Union of BC Municipalities meeting.	MWAC co-chairs	Complete
Seek input on wildfire from PHTAT via Michael Burwash.	Nancy Wilkin	Complete
Think about funding priorities for the coming year in preparation for the October meeting.	Council members	Ongoing
Consider options for regular T4W reporting.	Avril Nagel	In progress
Consider a supportive statement that can be included with the public release of the Biodiversity Framework.	MWAC Co-Chairs	TBD

Minutes	
1. Welcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Nancy Wilkin welcomed members and staff.
2. Approval of meeting minutes (July 2023)	<p>DECISIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Action items from last meeting completed or in progress. <p><i>Moved by Alyssa Lepka, seconded by Shaun Hollingsworth to approve July 2023 meeting minutes. Approved</i></p>
3. Co-Chairs Report	<p>Nancy Wilkin noted that the T4W Co-Chairs are meeting monthly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Co-Chairs discussed the idea of Grizzly Bear as a pilot project for co-management and determined that any next steps should wait until the current engagement phase is completed. ♦ Common messaging (e.g., through the three advisory body websites) would be beneficial.
4. Wildfire	<p>DISCUSSION</p> <p>Jennifer Psyllakis introduced the discussion on wildfire with an overview of steps currently underway. Council noted the following in their discussions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ There has been significant personal loss, and loss of important wildlife infrastructure as well as habitat. This summer's fires have created catastrophic ecosystem change in some areas. ♦ The proposed Premier's task force on wildfire should include someone with wildlife/wildlife habitat perspectives. ♦ Wildfire will be a priority for the Province in the coming months; Council should provide strategic advice on including a wildlife 'lens' in this discussion, in addition to a forestry perspective. ♦ In some areas, firefighting efforts destroyed habitat values, despite these areas having been previously recognized as sensitive. Conservation organizations and First Nations will need to raise significant funds to replace lost infrastructure such as fencing, and invasive species management. ♦ Roads that were created for wildfire management should be rehabilitated quickly. ♦ There is some good news; an example of mule deer that returned to a burned site the following day. ♦ There will not be a one-size-fits-all solution. The approach needs to be proactive, not reactive. ♦ Strategic approaches should include the Biodiversity Framework, and a pan-government approach.

	<p>ACTIONS/NEXT STEPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Council to discuss wildfire and advice to the Ministers at the next Strategic Working Group meeting. ♦ MWAC co-chairs to send an immediate email to the Ministers, in advance of the Union of BC Municipalities meeting. ♦ Nancy Wilkin to seek input from PHTAT via Michael Burwash.
<p>5. T4W Updates</p>	<p>PRESENTATION</p> <p>Avril Nagel provided a PPT update on T4W projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Regional Wildlife Advisory Committees internal workshop ♦ Director’s Report ♦ Funding for 2024-25 <p>DISCUSSION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Annual reporting is important to show progress. This could be simple reporting (e.g., table format), with a more detailed report every 2–3 years to track trends. ♦ Some organizations provide highlights of sample projects in annual reports. ♦ The October meeting will include discussion on funding priorities for 2024-25, including ‘big ideas’ beyond the immediate T4W funding pot. <p>ACTIONS/NEXT STEPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Council members to think about funding priorities for the coming year in preparation for the October meeting. ♦ Avril Nagel to consider options for regular T4W reporting.
<p>6. Biodiversity Framework</p>	<p>Celine Davis provided an update on progress towards the Biodiversity Framework.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Team has heard significant support for the paradigm shift. ♦ Input from MWAC (at several stages) has been very helpful. ♦ Name “framework” being used for now; this could still change. ♦ Hope is to have a draft that is public by the end of October. <p>ACTIONS/NEXT STEPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ MWAC Co-Chairs to consider a supportive statement that can be included with the public release of the Biodiversity Framework.
<p>7. T4W Joint Meeting October 2023</p>	<p>PRESENTATION</p> <p>Judith Cullington and Avril Nagel reviewed the draft agenda for the individual and joint T4W meetings in October.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Mike Demarchi will take the role of “in-person” chair at this meeting, working with Chief Nyce who will be online.

<p>8. Wildlife Act Review</p>	<p>Pam Doerksen and Stephen McIver provided an update on the Wildlife Act Review process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Much work has been done since last September T4W workshop. ♦ A discussion paper is under review, and will (hopefully) be ready to share with the three advisory bodies prior to the October workshop. ♦ At the October workshop, advisory body members will work in their own groups, and collectively, to provide input to key discussion paper questions. ♦ Several interim actions are also proposed, recognizing that changes to the Wildlife Act will be at least 2026.
<p>9. Other Business</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ None
<p>10. Closing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ In person meeting (and via Zoom) October 11 – 12, 2023 in Victoria ♦ Regular Council meeting November 8, 2023 via Zoom ♦ Wildlife Dialogues December 1st and December 5th via Zoom
<p>11. In camera</p>	<p>Following the regular meeting, Council met for informal discussion.</p>