

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
6TH COUNCIL, 38TH SESSION**

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REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE INVESTIGATING
HUNTING OF MUSK-OXEN

Yellowknife, Northwest Territories
January 20, 1969.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE INVESTIGATING
HUNTING OF MUSK-OXEN

At the 35th Session of the Northwest Territories Council it was proposed that a Committee of Council be selected to undertake an investigation into the subject of hunting of musk-oxen. Three Council members were appointed by the Commissioner to form the Committee and were entrusted with this investigation.

Committee members appointed were John H. Parker, Deputy Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, Lyle R. Trimble, N.W.T. Council representative for Mackenzie Delta and Simonie Michael, N.W.T. Council representative for the Eastern Arctic.

In compliance with Council's request, meetings were held with residents of Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay in April, 1968, and with Dr. N.S. Novakowski, of the Canadian Wildlife Service and Dr. John Teal of the University of Alaska in October, 1968. Attached as Appendix I and Appendix 2 are the minutes of meetings held.

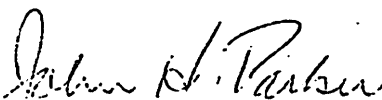
RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of discussions held with the people concerned and experts in that field, the Committee is now prepared to make the following observations and recommendations.

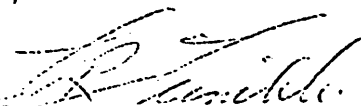
1. a) We recommend limited hunting of musk-oxen with the quota based on the herd size or what it can support in a given area.
- b) We recommend that this initially be a resident hunting program to be expanded as and if the Eskimos feel it to be feasible and desirable. Residents should be given a quota, either for their own use or for sports hunting.
- c) For 1969, we recommend a total quota of 12 animals for Ellesmere and Devon Islands. An estimated 5,000 musk-oxen inhabit the two islands and considering this quantity and the percentage of natural increase a greater number could be taken. It is likely, however, that hunting would be restricted to residents since a sports hunting program could not be developed properly by the people before this summer.
- d) We recommend that the quota be flexible so that it can be re-assessed annually, either increased or decreased.
- e) We recommend that the hunting area may be extended or altered by order of the Commissioner on the advice of the Game Management Service after the necessary study of the animal population and views of the residents have been recorded.
- f) We recommend that the Game Management Service undertake the collection of data on musk-oxen to develop a biological history. In this regard we suggest that Eskimos be encouraged to bring to the Game Officer the lower jaw of the musk-oxen and that remuneration be provided for this service.

- g) We recommend that the season for resident hunting be year-round. If the residents decide on sports hunting we recommend the season be of one month's duration, preferably from late July to late August.
 - h) We recommend that no restriction be placed as to sex or age of musk-oxen hunted.
 - i) We recommend that the disposal of meat and hides of animals shot by sports hunters, be left to the discretion of the residents.
 - j) We recommend that a clause be placed in the regulations to prevent the undue harassment of musk-oxen by sports hunters and photographers; and further, as a means of controlling harassment that sports hunters and sports photographers be required to use resident guides.
 - k) The purpose of the opening of hunting should be to bring the greatest possible benefit to the residents of the areas where musk-oxen herds exist.
2. We recommend that a study be initiated of the economics of domestically breeding musk-oxen at "stations" or "farms" to be located within the Northwest Territories, and to observe existing experiments. (Fort Chimo in particular)
3. We recommend that a policy be developed on the granting of scientific licences to zoos and scientific agencies for purchase of exotic species such as musk-oxen, polar bears and caribou, which would outline purchase price, ownership of the animals and progeny and the requirement for annual reports on any animals sold. We believe that a proper "market" price should be charged for animals taken for or otherwise supplied to zoos.

Respectfully submitted:



John H. Parker, Chairman



Lyle R. Trimble



Simonie Michael

Yellowknife,
Northwest Territories,
January 20, 1969.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE OF MUSK-OXENREPORT OF MEETINGS WITH THE RESIDENTS OF
RESOLUTE BAY AND GRISE FJORD

Chairman - John H. Parker, Deputy Commissioner

Members - Lyle R. Trimble, Member for Mackenzie Delta
Simonie Michael, Member for Eastern Arctic

Secretary - Peter S. Jull, Northwest Territories Government

Acting on directions received from Council at its 35th Session, the Committee on Musk-oxen visited Resolute Bay and Grise Fjord in April, 1968, to ascertain the views of the residents on Musk-oxen, with particular reference to the proposed program of allowing sports hunting of the animal. Two meetings were held in each community and the views of the people are summarized below. An interpreter from Resolute, Johnny Amagoalik, was used at all four meetings.

Resolute Bay - April 21 - 9:30 p.m.

(Attendance: 16 men, 7 women)

Mr. Parker explained to the people that biologists had reported an increase in Musk-oxen numbers since the ban in 1917 of all hunting of the species. He thanked the Eskimos for their strict observance of conservation measures and said that their scrupulous respect for the law had resulted in the possibility of limited harvesting of the species. He said that the Northwest Territories Council thought that a few animals could now be hunted and that Council is most anxious that the Eskimo people receive all possible benefit from any such hunting.

Mr. Parker said that one suggestion was that hunters from the south be allowed to visit and hunt one Musk-ox, and that another suggestion was that the Eskimos themselves should be permitted to shoot a very limited number of the animals when travelling far from the settlements and in need of additional food. He then said that the purpose of the Committee's visit was to determine the views of the people on the best plan for utilization of the species.

The people said that Mr. Kwaterowsky, Superintendent of Game, had visited the community the previous fall and had taken four men to Bathurst Island to train them as guides. Mr. Kwaterowsky taught the men fine points of guiding, and explained how they could make money from the operation. The people said they thought Mr. Kwaterowsky had been very helpful, and in general they felt the sports hunting proposal was a very good idea.

Speaking for the people, Sudlovnick expressed concern that Musk-oxen had been taken from Ellesmere Island to the south, ignoring the interest of Eskimo residents of the high arctic. He reminded the Committee that he and many other of the people at Resolute had been moved from Port Harrison to Resolute because game species were more abundant there, but that now the Government seemed to be taking the game species back to Arctic Quebec where the people had come from. Mr. Parker explained that the small herd had been moved from the Eureka Area, where no Eskimos live or hunt, to Fort Chimo to help the Eskimo people there, and explained Dr. Teal's experiment with herding and wool utilization. The people then said they understood the move, that they approved of it, and added that they also thought Mr. Kwaterowsky's plan was very good and a good way to help the people of the community to make money.

Mr. Parker explained the considerable public protest at the proposed sports hunting scheme, and the concern of persons living in the south - the people thought this was very funny.

The meeting concluded at 11:10 p.m. after a discussion of other game matters.

Grise Fjord - April 22 - 7:30 p.m.

(Attendance: 11 men, 10 women plus 2 RCMP)

Mr. Parker introduced the subject of the meeting the same way he had at Resolute.

The people said they had heard that a sports hunting program would provide money for Grise Fjord if allowed, and they asked if this was true. They added that they thought it would be a good idea if both Eskimo and white people could hunt a few Musk-oxen each year. They explained that sometimes last year Musk-oxen were the only game around and they would have liked to have killed a couple for emergency food. Mr. Parker asked what annual quota would be appropriate for such emergency use and they replied that 8 would be sufficient if there were no white hunters. They added that they thought white hunters should be allowed to hunt also, and that this would be a great help to the local economy.

The people said the kill should be spread out over a period of time and that the Government should set a hunting season on the species. They said that August would be the best time to start the hunting, and that May would be a particularly good time because the other trapping and hunting would be over. They also said that May would be the best time for sports hunting as the people were not otherwise occupied, there is light 24 hours a day, and aircraft would have no difficulty with landing or with the weather.

Mr. Parker said that any sports hunting would take place some distance from the community and would be reached by aircraft.

The people reported that in recent years some Musk-oxen have died, but whether of starvation or old age they could not be sure. They suggested that a mixture of animals be killed, (some young, some old, some male, some female) because to kill only the old animals (who have much wisdom) would be to remove the defence of the herds. (They added that they thought the former practice of killing only male caribou had caused the decimation of caribou herds in their area by removing the protectors.)

The people said they thought Mr. Kwarcrowsky's guiding and training, which was carried out near Grise Fjord, was very successful and they expressed full approval of it. Replying to a question by Mr. Parker, the people said they did not know whether sports hunting should be run by the Co-op itself, but agreed it should be a co-operative venture. They said they thought it would be fine for white hunters to hunt other species, providing the species were not in any way depleted. (They insisted that walrus should be the one species not available under any circumstances to white hunters.)

They spoke strongly against the presence of white photographers, who they say chase game, and drive it farther from the communities. They felt that photographers were not utilizing resources, and were very wasteful and detrimental.

The meeting concluded at 10:00 p.m., again after a discussion of other game matters.

Grise Fjord - April 23 - 10:30 a.m.

(Attendance: 7 men plus 1 RCMP)

The people reiterated the views expressed at the first meeting relative to Musk-oxen. They explained that the reason that they would like to be able to shoot Musk-oxen in cases of emergency as early in the year as August is because there are no caribou available then. Some people present felt that even if the local people could shoot a total of 5 Musk-oxen in emergency situations they would be satisfied.

They modified their statement of the previous evening on walrus hunting somewhat by saying that outsiders could shoot a few, perhaps up to 25 per year provided that the meat was not wasted and was used locally. They anticipated being guides and helpers in such a hunt, thereby gaining further revenue.

The Committee Members saw a young (4 or 5 year old female) Musk-oxen which one of the hunters had found dead several miles from Grise Fjord. The animal was very thin, and apparently died from starvation. The unusually heavy snow fall experienced this past winter had made feeding more difficult for the animals.

Resolute Bay - April 23 - 7:30 p.m.

(Attendance: 11 men, 7 women)

The people reiterated views expressed at the first meeting, and added that they understood sports hunting would begin this season, but had later heard that the matter was not settled. They asked if the Committee could now give definite word and Mr. Parker explained the steps to be taken, involving reporting to Council on the Committee's findings, and then Council's consideration of the whole matter, possibly resulting in enabling legislation at a later time. Sudlovnick, speaking for the people, said he didn't mind the white man's slowness, so long as his grandchildren could hunt Musk-oxen!

Again the people expressed interest in the Fort Chimo Musk-oxen transplant and asked if the Quebec Musk-oxen were to be hunted. Mr. Parker said that hunting had not been the intention of the transplant, although game laws in Quebec were under the control of the Quebec Government.

The meeting closed at 9:15 p.m.

MINUTES

COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON MUSK-OXEN

BOARD ROOM, CUNNINGHAM BUILDING, YELLOWKNIFE, NWT

OCTOBER 9th and 10th, 1968.

CHAIRMAN: John H. Parker, Deputy Commissioner of the N.W.T.
MEMBERS: Lyle R. Trimble, Member of the N.W.T. Council
Simonie Michael, Member of the N.W.T. Council
SECRETARY: J.J. Ootes, Government of the Northwest Territories
GUEST: Paul Kwaterowsky, Superintendent of Game,
Government of the Northwest Territories.

The Committee continued its investigation on the possibility of hunting of musk-oxen as directed by the Council of the Northwest Territories at its 35th Session. Meetings were held with Dr. N.S. Novakowski of the Canadian Wildlife Service and Dr. John Teal of the University of Alaska to obtain their views on resident and sports hunting of musk-oxen.

Dr. N.S. Novakowski, Canadian Wildlife Service, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development

Dr. Novakowski pointed out that the Canadian Wildlife Service is not against sportshunting providing that as much data as possible is collected prior to starting any hunting. He suggested that a game biologist and field man spend a summer on Ellesmere Island to collect data.

A great many musk-oxen died last winter on Cornwallis and Bathurst Islands, and with this in mind Dr. Novakowski suggested that consideration of hunting in that area be delayed. He suggested that the Thelon Game Sanctuary herd was in a healthy state but that little data was available. He felt that this herd should continue to receive complete protection. He spoke of the possibility of a transplant from the Thelon to Artillery Lake to start a herd which would be accessible to people from Snowdrift and Resolution. However, it was decided at the Federal-Provincial Conference in Whitehorse, said Dr. Novakowski, that there should not be any unnatural extension of their range. When questioned on the best season for sports hunting, Dr. Novakowski suggested that control be maintained over the season so that it could be shortened or lengthened as the need required. He suggested the season be before or after the rutting season - perhaps July 15 to August 15. On Ellesmere Island the rutting season is from mid-August to the end of September. The prime time for the wool is spring. He pointed out that tourists would only shoot mature bulls (over the age of five) but that Eskimos should not be limited by sex or age of the animal for their own hunting.

On the question of quantity to be hunted Dr. Novakowski did not object to the suggestion by Mr. Kwaterowsky of 16 animals for sports hunting and 5 to 8 animals for Eskimo resident hunting.

Dr. Novakowski mentioned that photographing is becoming more of a sport and that in order that Eskimos benefit from the visits of photographers that they act as guides. He suggested that the hiring of Eskimos could be enforced by instituting an harassment clause in the regulations which would apply to hunters and photographers.

Dr. Novakowski agreed strongly with the points put forward by Committee members that the greatest possible benefit should go to the Eskimo people from sports hunting, and that resident hunting, if any, should be open the year round.

Because many scientific requests are received Dr. Novakowski suggested that a new policy be developed on scientific licences outlining Territorial Government rights, prices, and so forth, on musk-oxen. At the present time the Commissioner has the prerogative to decide on scientific requests, however, the animals, and fifty per cent of the progeny of animals donated to zoos, remain the property of the Crown. The Governor General-in-Council reserves the right to disposal of species in danger of extinction such as musk-oxen, caribous and polar bear. A price list should be established for any animals purchased for scientific purposes. Dr. Novakowski mentioned that the Canadian Wildlife Service has already compiled such a list and will make it available to the Territorial Government on request.

Dr. John Teal, University of Alaska, and Institute of Northern Agricultural Research

Dr. Teal stressed that non-residents who wish to hunt musk-oxen should pay a high price - about \$10,000 per animal. He advised that the current price of a musk-oxen calf in a zoo is \$6,000. He also urged that zoos and research stations be forced to prepare annual reports on musk-oxen they have. A need exists for more data on life span, cause of death, etc.

Before sports hunting is instituted, Dr. Teal said, residents should be instructed on the behaviour of the animals. For example: guides should know how to drive the animals away from a fallen or dead musk-oxen (when a musk-oxen is killed the others often will encircle the animal and do so for at least a day); guides should also know how to distinguish male calves from females. Dr. Teal said he would provide his services should they be required.

Dr. Teal emphasized that consideration should not be given to sex or age when hunting the animals, instead hunting should be at random. He referred to photography as a growing sport and felt that should this prove true with musk-oxen, the residents should capitalize by acting as guides on safaris for photographers.

Both Dr. Teal and Dr. Novakowski stressed that the psychological effect on the Eskimos of hunting should be considered. They should be made to feel that they are in charge of the project. It was suggested that the Eskimos set the year sports hunting is to start and so on. Dr. Teal felt that sports hunting should follow resident hunting by a few years.

Dr. Teal, who operates a musk-oxen research station at Fairbanks, Alaska, with sub-stations at Vermont, U.S.A., and Fort Chimo, Quebec, spoke to Committee members about the behaviour of the animal and also of the wool industry being established at the research station in Alaska. Each animal grows from four to six pounds of wool annually valued at \$50 per pound. Wool of the musk-oxen is finer than cashmere and Dr. Teal said it is very valuable when made into clothing. The wool production at Fairbanks provides some local people with an industry. He showed samples of clothing made from the wool.

When Dr. Teal was asked if herding could be established in other Arctic communities he stated it was probably possible at a place like Baker Lake where the animals could be obtained from the Thelon Game Sanctuary. However he pointed out that in many places farming would be uneconomical or unsuitable because hay has to be shipped in while the calves are young and a proper range located. Also, the only type of dog suitable for herding is the border collie. If interest in herding is shown Dr. Teal will provide his assistance and cooperation, and a prospectus of the operation in Alaska.

He described the Fort Chimo operation in some detail and also outlined the relationship between the Institute of Northern Agricultural Research and the research stations. He advised that musk-oxen eat very little and are extremely well adapted to eating poor quality hay or grass. The Institute of Northern Agricultural Research operates the research stations. The Institute is privately endowed, and is "people" oriented in that development of indigenous populations is of great concern to its members.

On speaking of domestication, Dr. Teal suggested that efforts be initiated to officially declare musk-oxen a domestic animal so that in the event an animal is accidentally shot by a hunter the farmer or research station which is breeding the animal has recourse for payment.

Dr. Teal issued an invitation for the Committee members to visit the research station at Fairbanks and urged the exchange of visits to various areas where musk-oxen are located.

Following the discussion Dr. Teal screened the film he had made on musk-oxen at Fairbanks, Vermont and Nunivak Island.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m. and was resumed the following day at 2:00 p.m. The Committee members summarized their views.

Recommendations were drawn up and the attached Recommendation to Council was prepared.