

NWT WILDLIFE CARE COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee – The Government of the Northwest Territories' (GNWT), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR), Director of Wildlife shall establish a committee called the Northwest Territories Wildlife Care Committee (NWT-WCC)

1. Goals & Objectives

- 1.1 To establish an approved animal care committee under guidelines provided by the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC).
- 1.2 To ensure safe and humane handling of all live wildlife (as defined by the NWT *Wildlife Act*) under the jurisdiction of the ENR.

2. Membership

- 2.1 The NWT-WCC shall consist of at least 7 members with representation from the following categories:
 - a) 3 ENR Wildlife Biologists/Specialists
 - b) 1 ENR Wildlife Technician
 - c) 1 ENR Renewable Resource Officer
 - d) 1 ENR Wildlife Veterinarian
 - e) 1 Technical Advisor not affiliated with ENR
- 2.2 The Director of Wildlife will appoint committee members for terms of three years, and the chair of the committee for a term of five years. Terms of members will be staggered to maintain a mix of new and existing members. Individual members may be renewed at the discretion of the Director of Wildlife.
- 2.3 The Director of Wildlife from shall appoint a Chair within the committee's membership.
- 2.4 The Chair of the committee will provide or arrange organizational and administrative support for operation of the NWT-WCC.
- 2.5 Where necessary, the NWT-WCC shall consult with and obtain input from any individual or group who can provide information and expert advice needed to make a decision.

3. Authority

- 3.1 The NWT-WCC will act on behalf of ENR to ensure the safe and humane treatment of wildlife under the authority of the NWT *Wildlife Act* and Regulations.
- 3.2 The NWT-WCC shall report to the Director of Wildlife as the issuing authority for wildlife research permits.
- 3.3 The NWTWCC has been delegated authority by the Director of Wildlife to review and provide approval, changes to application prior to approval or not recommended for approval based on animal handling protocols developed by ENR personnel, and by individuals that handle wildlife under license, permit or authorization from ENR.
- 3.4 Projects that have been approved by other government, university or institutional animal care committees must still be reviewed by the NWT-WCC.
- 3.5 All ENR personnel and individuals from outside organizations applying for a permit or authorization to handle wildlife from ENR must submit an application to handle wildlife.

4. Responsibility

The NWT-WCC shall:

- 4.1 Ensure that no research or management program that involves needing a permit or a license to handle wildlife and is listed in Schedule A is commenced without prior NWT-WCC approval of a written animal use protocol.
- 4.2 Require all projects involving the handling of wildlife to complete an application to handle wildlife protocol form, and ensure that all of the following information is presented (in addition to information required for a wildlife research permit):
 - a) Principal investigator, organizational affiliation & address;
 - b) Project title, description and objective;
 - c) Categories of invasiveness and project type based on primary use;
 - d) Proposed start and completion date;
 - e) Species and numbers of animals to be used and justification thereof;
 - f) A summary of the animal handling protocol & post-procedure monitoring;

- g) An indication of whether the project has been peer reviewed for scientific merit;
 - h) A description of animal capture, handling, sampling & marking procedures;
 - i) Anesthetics, analgesics and other drugs to be administered, including dosages and measure taken to ensure meat from drugged animals does not enter the human food chain;
 - j) The method of euthanasia to be used if necessary, and how the carcass will be disposed of;
 - k) A list of any dangerous goods that may be used in the project; and
 - l) Any other information considered important or pertinent.
- 4.3 Review and assess all applications to handle wildlife within a 14-day period following receipt of the application. Where necessary, the committee can request further supportive information from the investigator or meet with the investigator to assure that all members of the committee understand the procedures to be used on the animal.
- 4.4 Ensure that all proposed procedures comply with CCAC's Guidelines on: The Care and Use of Wildlife¹, CCAC's Guide to the Care and Use of Experimental Animals², CCAC's Ethics of Animal Investigation³, and NWT-WCC Standard Operating Procedures⁴. If the proposed protocol is at variance with those guidelines, require justification for the variance on scientific grounds.
- 4.5 Committee members will forward their review and comments to the committee Chair, who will document all NWT-WCC comments and recommendations for each project on an individual protocol review form.
- 4.6 Provide approval, changes recommended prior to approval or rejection of application to handle wildlife to the Director of Wildlife.
- 4.7 Consider appeals to NWT-WCC recommendations on the request of the Director of Wildlife, who can ask the committee to reconsider an application in light of any new information provided by the applicant.
- 4.8 Once a project has been approved and is underway, the NWT-WCC can provide recommendations to the Director of Wildlife on the following:

¹ Online, URL: <http://www.ccac.ca/english/gdlines/wildlife/Wildlife.pdf>

² Online, URL: http://www.ccac.ca/english/gui_pol/guides/english/TOC_V2.HTM

³ Online, URL: http://www.ccac.ca/english/gui_pol/policies/ETHICS.HTM

⁴ Online, URL: <http://www.nwtwildlife.com/Research%20Permits>

- a) Recommend that any objectionable procedure be stopped if it considers that unnecessary pain or distress is being experienced by the animal;
 - b) Recommend immediate termination of use of animals which deviates from the approved proposal, causing pain and distress to such animals;
 - c) Review the circumstances of any animal fatalities or injuries during animal handling projects as reported by the investigator, and investigate further as required; and
 - d) Investigate third party reports of animal suffering during research or other animal handling projects.
- 4.9 Review completed wildlife handling report forms that must be submitted by successful applicants on completion of a project, or on an annual basis for continuing projects. Applications, protocol review and final reports will be posted on the NWT-WCC website unless the applicant does not agree to posting. This information is to be posted only and will not be published.
- 4.10 In the case of continuing projects, review and approve any modifications to a previously approved protocol before the changes are implemented. For ongoing projects where there will be no significant changes to the animal handling protocol, the NWT-WCC can recommend approval of the existing protocol. If any significant changes are planned, the NWT-WCC will require the applicant submit a new application to handle wildlife for review.
- 4.11 Maintain records on each application to handle wildlife, and keep a copy of all documents associated with the application, review and recommendation process on file for at least five years.

5. Meetings

- 5.1 The NWT-WCC shall meet at least once annually, and as often as necessary to fulfil their terms of reference (TOR) and be satisfied that all wildlife handling projects being done within ENR's jurisdiction are in compliance with the TOR.
- 5.2 Meetings may be conducted in person or by teleconference as deemed appropriate by the Chair.
- 5.3 A quorum for NWT-WCC meetings or application review decisions will be four members including the Chair.
- 5.4 Committee members will advise the Chair if they will be unable to participate in a committee meeting, or will be unable to participate in the review of applications for any period of time.

- 5.5 If a committee member is a project leader, team member or otherwise affiliated with an application to handle wildlife that is being reviewed by the NWT-WCC, the committee member will declare a conflict and remove themselves from any deliberations and recommendations on that specific project.
- 5.6 Reviews of individual applications to handle wildlife will generally be conducted by fax or email, and will not require a committee meeting to review a proposal unless requested by a member of the committee.
- 5.7 Wherever possible, committee decisions will be made on a consensus basis. Where consensus is not possible, committee decisions will be made by majority vote with the Chair breaking any ties.

6. General

The NWT-WCC shall:

- 6.1 Maintain an informal liaison with the CCAC secretariat and other animal care committees where applicable.
- 6.2 Regularly review its TOR to ensure they address changes and advances in standards of animal care and scientific techniques.
- 6.3 Evaluate existing policies, protocols, and procedures for wildlife handling and develop new ones where necessary to ensure appropriate care during all research and management procedures that includes:
 - a) Avoidance of unnecessary pain or distress;
 - b) Effective anesthesia and analgesia when appropriate; and
 - c) Due consideration to all aspects of animal welfare.
- 6.4 Serve as a point of contact for ENR personnel on wildlife handling and welfare issues. Where possible, the NWT-WCC will assist ENR personnel as requested in obtaining information or advice from appropriate sources on issues such as CCAC's guidelines and policies, relevant wildlife handling recommendations, and educational and training opportunities.
- 6.5 Be prepared to cope with criticism, which may develop from time to time.

Schedule A. NWT ENR Permits that are subject to review by the NWT-WCC:

- 1-Wildlife Research Permit
- 2-Wildlife Management Permit
- 3-General Wildlife Permit
- 4-License to Import Live Vertebrates
- 5-Licence to Export Live Wildlife
- 6-Special Wildlife Export Permit

7-Wildlife Transport Permit
8-Game Farm Licence
9-Fur Farm Licence