



Arctic Development
Library

Holman Whaling Pilot Project
Type of Study: Analysis/review
Author: Committee For Original Peoples
Entitlement
Catalogue Number: 2-3-37

E.D.A. Secretariat
P.O. Box 1030
Yellowknife, N.W.T.
X1A 2N7

2-3-37

HOLMAN

WHALING

PILOT

PROJECT

REPORT PREPARED FOR

GENERAL DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND

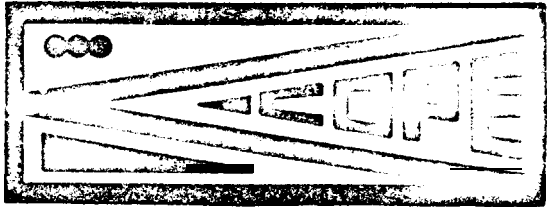
TOURISM

GOVERNMENT OF N.W.T.

BY

C.O.P.E.

DECEMBER 1981



COMMITTEE for ORIGINAL PEOPLES ENTITLEMENT

Post Office Box 2000

Inuvik, N.W.T.

XOE OTO

16 February 1982

Ms. Ester Bertolini
Head
General Development Agreement
Government of the N.W.T.
Yellowknife, N.W.T.

Dear Ms. Bertolini:

I am pleased to submit the report on the Holman Whaling Pilot Project conducted last summer under the GDA program.

Based on the findings of this report, it is our view that a co-ordinated approach to "harvesting, processing and marketing" offers good potential for development of a successful trade in beluga whale products. The utilization of the whale resource in such a manner will create a labour intensive local industry and significantly reduce wastage of the edible portions of the whales now being harvested.

On behalf of the people of Holman Island I would like to thank you for the financial assistance provided by GDA in carrying out this project.

Sincerely,

Nellie Cournoyea

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter of Transmittal

Table of Contents/List of Tables

1.0 Introduction	1
2.0 Conclusions	4
3.0 Recommendations	5
4.0 Participants	6
5.0 The Project	7
6.0 Costs	9
7.0 Economic Feasibility	10

LIST OF TABLES

Table I - Whale Harvest Data

Table II - Project Expenditures by Budget Category

1.0 INTRODUCTION

At present, all the beluga whales hunted in the Western Arctic Region are taken in the shallow, warm waters of the Beaufort Sea at the mouth of the Mackenzie River. The whales are hunted each year by the Inuvialuit of Aklavik, Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk from camps in the coastal Delta. Some from Tuktoyaktuk go out daily from the village. It is estimated that the take is about 150 whales each year. The whaling season lasts about a month and individuals hunt until they have enough muktuk and other whale products to supply their immediate families and relatives. Some muktuk is taken for the purpose of trade within the Western Arctic.

The demand for muktuk and whale products among the Inuvialuit in the Western Arctic has for years exceeded the supply resulting in a highly prized product. The majority of the whale products that are in excess of the needs of the hunter's families are usually consumed within the Delta communities as they are better access to the harvesters. However, traditionally a certain amount of whale products have been set aside for the other Inuvialuit communities of Paulatuk, Sachs and Holman in addition to occasional

supply to central arctic communities. These shipments of muktuk have been collected and sent to other settlements by the country food outlet operated by COPE at Inuvik. The availability of mukt-uk for other communities depends largely upon the success of the hunt. Therefore, the people of Holman are totally dependent upon this source for their supply of muktuk.

This pilot project therefore was designed to assess an alternate way of providing muktuk and other whale products to meet the needs of the Holman people. The project had three principal objectives:

- 1) train the people of Holman in procedures for the collection, handling and storage of beluga muktuk and meat, thus providing the skills necessary for Holman to undertake its own whaling.
- 2) undertake an alternative method of supplying beluga whale products for the people of Holman this year.

3) to investigate the feasibility of this approach for developing a viable economic method of supplying beluga products to Holman.

The project was conducted under the direction of the Inuvialuit Whalers of Aklavik under the harvesting guidelines set out by the Hunters and Trappers Associations of the whaling communities of Tuktoyaktuk, Aklavik and Inuvik with the assistance of the Inuvialuit Game Council.

2.0 CONCLUSIONS

2.1 The approach of Holman people hunting cooperatively with Aklavik hunters proved successful both with respect to a means of providing Holman with beluga products and secondly with respect to the training of Holman in the skills associated with beluga hunting.

2.2 The cost of producing whale products "for Holman in this year's manner is higher than the option . . . Delta communities' hunting and supplying products and likely higher than if Holman were successful . . . at harvesting their own beluga around Victoria Island.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Holman should initiate a pilot project to assess the feasibility of carrying out their own whaling project around Victoria next year as a means of supplying their own community needs.

3.2 That IDC in cooperation with the Delta Whalers should undertake a coordinated whale product feasibility project to ascertain the cheapest and most effective method of harvesting whale products to supply other communities' needs.

Such a project should place special emphasis on the development of procedures for the collection, handling, storage, freight and retailing of beluga whale products and on the development of intersettlement trade in beluga whale originate with the supply communities of Inuvik, Tuktoyaktuk and Aklavik.

4.0 PARTICIPANTS

The communities involved in the whaling project were Holman and Aklavik.

The thirteen people, selected by their respective Hunters and Trappers Associations to participate in the project were:

Ho lman: Peter & Susie Malgokak

John & Emma Alikamik .

"Robert" & Agnes Kuptana

Noah & Winnie Akhiatak

Aklavik: Jacob" & EElizabeth Archie

Andy & Sophie Kayotuk

Frank Elanik Jr.

5.0 THE PROJECT

The whaling was conducted from Birds Camp, a traditional whaling camp of the Inuvialuit people from Aklavik. This site was chosen because this is the location where whales are taken first and the success rate is very high.

The total time spent on the project by the participating whalers was eighteen days; the period June 29 to July 16. Although "the majority of the time was spent at the whaling camp, travel accounted for seven of the eighteen days. The participants came from Holman to Aklavik by chartered aircraft; and Inuvik and Birds Camp was made by boat. The whalers, from Aklavik used their own boats and motors to reach the whaling site, but gasoline and supplies (food) were paid for under the project.

Altogether, fourteen beluga whales were harvested: nine adult males; one adult female, and four calves. Of the calves two were males. Table 1 provides details on the whales taken.

While the men went hunting each day, the women remained in camp to butcher the whales, dry the meat and prepare the muktuk. Practically all of the usable meat from each whale was processed in this manner. Approximately ten thousand pounds of muktuk, 375 pounds of flippers and a small amount of dry meat (mipgoo) resulted from this effort.

Due to the large volume it was not possible to ship all the products with the Holman people on their return trip. Whale products that were not taken back were stored in the COPE freezers at Inuvik. From August to December, the balance of the whale products were shipped from Inuvik to Holman where it was distributed by the individuals who participated in the project.

6.0 COSTS

The costs of the whaling project amounted to \$19,304. which is \$1133. less than the sum (\$20,437.00) specified in the budget. The total expenditures within each category of the detailed budget were less than the projected costs, except for the fifth area of activity which includes support wages, supplies and equipment. Monies spent on supplies and food were the major reason for the cost overrun. Due to the lack of availability of the freezer barge this year. from Tuk to Holman, 'products' were transported by aircraft. "The community contributions of \$3500 fell short of the expected revenues. "There remains" 22 pails of muktuk valued, at \$45 each leaving the project with a projected deficit of \$977.00. Table II indicates the total expenditures for each area of activity within the detailed budget, and the revenues.

7.0 ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY

Based on the approximate weight of the products, it is estimated that the cost of producing both the muktuk and dry meat combined was close to \$ 1.85 landed in Holman. This compares to \$1.57/lb for muktuk supplied from the traditional harvest in the Delta and transported to Holman. The method of supplying whale products to Holman as it was done this year becomes cost effective if 200 pails of muktuk can, be produced and transported to Holman f o r "

less than \$14,130 "From this year's experience

it might be possible to reduce such costs to

about \$13, 500. , gp@stiqn., whic.h would have to be

addressed in calculating the feasibility of this approach would be the extent of financial compensation

that would be attributable to the participating

Aklavik hunters.

TABLE 1

WHALE HARVEST DATA

<u>Date</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Length</u>
July 4/81	White male	13'6"
July 4/81	White male	14'9"
July 4/81	White with grey male	14'7"
July 4/81	White with grey male	15'6"
July 6/81	Grey male	14'9"
July 10/81	White with grey male	14'1"
July 10/81	White with grey male	14'5"
July 11/81	White with grey, female	12'5"
July 11/81	Grey male, calf	6'10"
July 11/81	Grey female calf	12'0"
July 11/81	White with grey male	14'2"
July 12/81	White with grey calf female	11'0"
July 14/81	White with grey, male	14'7"

Source: Bill Ferguson, Fisheries Officer
Department of Fisheries and Oceans
Inuvik, N.W.T.

A. Expenditures

The sum of all expenditures of \$19,304.19. The costs by budget category are as follows:

1. Travel	\$8,074.06
2. Barge Freight	---
3. Transportation	\$3,400.00
4. Containers	\$1,000.00
5. Other	\$6,830.13

B. Revenues:

1. Holman - " community contribution \$3,500.00

2. Inventory - 22 pails of muktuk valued, at \$45/pail \$ 990.00

Balance for project [977.00]