



**NIRB File No.: 07LN014**

AANDC File No.: N2012N0018

*Previous AANDC File No.:* N2003J0001

NWB File No.: 3BC-MAR1014

NRI File No.: 0200803N-M

March 19, 2015

The Honourable Bernard Valcourt  
Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development  
c/o Tracey McCaie  
Manager, Land Administration  
Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada  
P.O. Box 100  
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0

*Sent via email:* [tracey.mccaie@aandc.gc.ca](mailto:tracey.mccaie@aandc.gc.ca); [landsmining@aandc.gc.ca](mailto:landsmining@aandc.gc.ca)

**Re: Application Exempt from the Requirement for Screening pursuant to Section 12.4.3 of the NLCA: Mars Society's "Flashline Arctic Research Station on Devon Island" project, Qikiqtani Region**

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Dear Tracey McCaie:

On March 6, 2015 the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB or Board) received an application from Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) for an extension to AANDC Land Use Permit No. N2012N0018 for Mars Society's (the Proponent) "Flashline Arctic Research Station on Devon Island" project proposal. On March 9, 2015 the NIRB received correspondence from the Nunavut Planning Commission (NPC) indicating that the extension request does not change the scope of the originally reviewed project to an extent that would warrant further review by the NPC.

Please be advised that the original project proposal (NIRB File No.: 07LN014) was received by the NIRB from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) now Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) on February 20, 2007 and was screened in accordance with Part 4, Article 12 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA). On April 3, 2007 the NIRB issued a 12.4.4 (a) screening decision to the Minister of INAC (now Minister of AANDC) indicating that the proposed project could proceed subject to the NIRB's recommended terms and conditions.

Additional authorization and extension requests associated with the “Flashline Arctic Research Station on Devon Island” project have also been reviewed by the NIRB following screening of the original project proposal (NIRB File No. 07LN014). In each instance the NIRB confirmed that the applications were exempt from the requirement for further screening pursuant to Section 12.4.3 of the NLCA and the activities therein remained subject to the terms and conditions recommended in the original April 3, 2007 Screening Decision Report. A summary of the additional applications associated with NIRB File No. 07LN014 is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Additional applications associated with NIRB File No. 07LN014**

Authorization	Application			NIRB Decision	
	Date Received by NIRB	Type	Reason for Application	Date Issued	Type
AANDC Land Use Permit (N2003J0001)	June 27, 2008	Extension	Amendment to include activities from 03YN005 and 05YN077	July 8, 2008	Reissued April 3, 2007 SDR
AANDC Land Use Permit (N2003J0001)	April 27, 2009	Extension	Continue with previously screened research activities	May 5, 2009	Reissued April 3, 2007 SDR
NRI Research license (0202507R-M)	June 9, 2009	Renewal	Continue with previously screened research activities	June 9, 2009	Reissued April 3, 2007 SDR
AANDC Land Use Permit (N2003J0001)	June 23, 2010	Extension	Continue with previously screened research activities	July 5, 2010	Reissued April 3, 2007 SDR
AANDC Land Use Permit (N2012N0018)	October 29, 2012	New Land Use Permit	continue with the same project activities as originally screened	November 5, 2012	Reissued April 3, 2007 SDR

Notes: AANDC = Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada; NRI= Nunavut Research Institute; NIRB= Nunavut Impact Review Board; SDR= Screening Decision Report

The current AANDC application, the original NIRB Screening Decision Report (File No. 07LN014) and related file information are available from the NIRB’s ftp site at the following link:

<http://ftp.nirb.ca/01-SCREENINGS/COMPLETED%20SCREENINGS/2007/07LN014-Robert%20Zubrin/>.

**PREVIOUSLY-SCREENED PROJECT PROPOSAL:**

As previously screened by the NIRB (File No. 07LN014), the Mars Society’s “Devon Island Research Facility” project was located on Devon Island within the Qikiqtani region, approximately 168 kilometres (km) northeast of Resolute. The proposed research facility and

related activities were to be located at the Haughton impact crater site on Devon Island, within the general vicinity of a separate research camp operated by the Mars Institute. The Proponent had originally identified three main goals of the project:

1. To provide a testbed for studying the many aspects of field exploration operations on a human mission to Mars;
2. To provide a capable field research laboratory to help further our understanding of the Arctic, the Earth, Mars and the possibilities and limits of life on our planet and beyond; and,
3. To inform and inspire people around the world to greater interest in space and science by bringing before them in a tangible form the vision of human exploration of Mars.

The activities/components associated with the previously screened proposal included:

- Land lease for existing research facility on Devon Island;
- Simulate landed spacecraft on Mars;
- Six or seven person crew living and working in a habitat/laboratory module;
- Research activities;
- Use of on-site mechanized vehicles and storage of fuel associated with these vehicles; and;
- Grey water disposal and incineration/removal of combustible/non-combustible wastes at the facility.

#### CURRENT APPLICATION:

The Mars Society is currently proposing to extend its Land Use Permit with AANDC to continue with previously approved research and exploration activities in 2016 or 2017.

Please note that Section 12.4.3 of the NLCA states that:

*“Any application for a component or activity of a project proposal that has been permitted to proceed in accordance with these provisions shall be exempt from the requirement for screening by NIRB unless:*

*(a) such component or activity was not part of the original project proposal; or*

*(b) its inclusion would significantly modify the project.”*

After completing a review of the information provided in support of the current application, the NIRB is of the understanding that the proposed extension does not change the general scope of the original project activities, and the exceptions noted in NLCA 12.4.3(a) and (b) do not apply. Therefore, this application is exempt from the requirement for screening pursuant to Section 12.4.3 of the NLCA and the activities therein remain subject to the terms and conditions recommended in the original April 3, 2007 Screening Decision Report (enclosed).

If you have any questions or require additional clarification, please contact Solomon Amuno, Technical Advisor, at (867) 983-4603 or [samuno@nirb.ca](mailto:samuno@nirb.ca) .

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ryan Barry". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ryan Barry  
Executive Director  
Nunavut Impact Review Board

cc: Robert Zurbrin, Mars Society  
Phyllis Beaulieu, Nunavut Water Board  
Joel Fortier, Qikiqtani Inuit Association  
Mosha Cote, Nunavut Research Institute

Enclosure: NIRB Screening Decision Report, File No.: 07LN014 (April 3, 2007)

