

Government of Nunavut - Department of Culture and Heritage

Tourism Site Visitation Permit Guidelines

- The Government of Nunavut supports the use of heritage sites for public education, recreation and tourism purposes. But in granting access to these sites for these purposes, we also have to make sure that appropriate protection and monitoring measures are in place.

Mandate

- Since 1999, and pursuant to the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement, the Department of Culture and Heritage is the Government **agency responsible** for the management and protection of archaeological and palaeontological sites in Nunavut. This is done through legislation, policy and regulations. These regulations include the requirement to obtain authorization from the Government of Nunavut (in the form of a permit), to conduct any type of activity at an archaeological site - whether it is research, resources development activities and tourism.

2005

- Starting in 2005, the Government of Nunavut is requiring that tour operators proposing to land visitors at historical, archaeological/palaeontological sites must obtain authorization to do so from the Department of Culture and Heritage. This is done through application for a Class 1 permit.
- A Class 1 permit is a **Non-intervention permit** that strictly prohibits any disturbance of a site. Basically this is a **LOOK BUT DO NOT TOUCH PERMIT**.

Why

- This requirement was introduced to address several issues including:
 1. Growth of shipborne tourism and tour operator tourism;
 2. Cruise ships/ tour operators are landing hundreds if not thousands of visitors each year at archaeological/historical sites in Nunavut without the knowledge of the Department of Culture and Heritage or the Inuit Heritage Trust;
 3. Concerns expressed by archaeologists, by tourists, community members about site protection issues arising from tourism; incidents of site disturbance have been reported;
 4. The cumulative impacts of large-scale and unregulated site visits. In any given year several hundred of tourists if not thousands of tourists are landing at the same sites.

What for:

➤ **The permit and subsequent reporting:**

1. Provides a mechanism through which we can obtain information, through the reporting process, concerning the condition of sites, some of which might not have been inspected by archaeologists for many years.
2. Addresses the need for accountability with respect to site disturbance arising from touristic activities;
3. Ensures tour groups from being held responsible for damage to a site that have occurred before and after their visit.

2014:

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- In 2014, the Department of Culture and Heritage in consultation with the Inuit Heritage Trust agree that visitation should be limited to 5 sites, with a provision for 2 alternate landings in case circumstances prevent landing at any of the 5 sites. This does not mean that you can land at 7 sites but only at 5 sites in total. The 5 sites and alternate locations need to be clearly identified in the permit application.

CLASS 1 PERMIT: LOOK BUT DON'T TOUCH

Permit is issue to an individual who is the permit holder permits it is not issued to a corporation or institution. The permit holder is the individual the Government is holding responsible.

The conditions under Class 1 permit stipulate that “**Under no circumstances can the holder of a Class 1 Permit collect artifacts or specimens, or alter or disturb a site in any manner**”. The permit holder’s role (archaeologist or expedition leader) is to make sure that nothing is moved, collected or disturbed during the excursions – only observed and photographed. He or she has to make sure that all passengers and staff are instructed about proper behavior when visiting archaeological sites.

Permit is Free:

Permits process:

Permit comes with a set of requirements and deadlines. Most important date is March 31; this is Permit Application deadline and also Final Report deadline.

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- Early date but it takes a minimum of 90 days for a permit application to be processed. Each application received is sent for translation, then forwarded to the Inuit Heritage Trust, who has **legally 90 days** to review the application. Inuit Heritage Trust then forwards the applications to the communities located along the planned itinerary. IHT send the result to our office, and the permits are then sent for signature to the Minister.

- ### ➤ **Why does it work like this in Nunavut?**

In Nunavut, our Government, the Territorial Government, under the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement, has to work in consultation with designated Inuit agencies. Our Department of Culture and Heritage consults with Inuit Heritage Trust who is more or less the **Watch Dog** for culture. They consult with the communities and provide us with comments and concerns and the Government makes the final decision.

Requirements attached to permits:

Application March 31 (application can be obtained on line or by contacting myself)

1. Permit Application
2. Letters to community
3. Map of Itinerary
4. Site visit protocol: Along with their permit application, most companies provide the government their protocol for site visitation.
 - Briefings of passengers onboard - site visitation guidelines
 - Landing rotations
 - Group size 20-25 people and ratio per guide
 - Supervision of people on-shore
 - Establishment of perimeter around the site

Example of permit applications can be obtained at the Territorial Archaeology Office.

**Sept 30 Non-Technical Report (one-page +2 pictures)
60 days after returning submission of Site Forms**

March 31 of following year final report.

Pay close attention to the deadlines as the issuance of a permit depends on the fulfillment of all the requirements.

I have example on how to fill up a permit report, Site Forms, Non-Technical Reports. This can be forwarded to you upon request.

- See site form QeJl-3

Additional Notes:

- Territorial Parks and Community visits (also need a permit).

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