



NIRB File No.: 19YN022
NPC File No.: 149103

June 3, 2019

Lyle Whyte
McGill University
21111 Lakeshore Rd
Saint Anne-de-Bellevue, Quebec
H9X 3V9

Sent via email: lyle.whyte@mcgill.ca

Re: Notice of Screening for McGill University's "Evaluation of natural bioremediation potential of Arctic beaches" Project Proposal

Dear Lyle Whyte:

On March 28, 2019 the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB or Board) received a referral to screen McGill University's "Evaluation of natural bioremediation potential of Arctic beaches" project proposal from the Nunavut Planning Commission (NPC or Commission), with an accompanying positive conformity determination with the North Baffin Regional Land Use Plan. Pursuant to Article 12, Sections 12.4.1 and 12.4.4 of the *Agreement between the Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area and Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada (Nunavut Agreement)* and s. 87 of the *Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act*, S.C. 2013, c. 14, s. 2 (*NuPPAA*), the NIRB has commenced screening this project proposal and has assigned it file number **19YN022**.

INFORMATION REQUEST

On March 28, 2019 the NIRB requested that the Proponent complete the online application form through the NIRB's public registry system and ensure, pursuant to s. 144(1) of the *NuPPAA*, that sufficient information is provided to determine the scope of the project activities being proposed and commence screening. On April 16, 2019 the NIRB released formal correspondence requesting that the Proponent provide the Board with the information necessary in order to carry out the screening of the project proposal.

After additional requests by the NIRB (May 15, 2019) including a second formal letter issued on May 6, 2019 pursuant to s. 144(1) of the *NuPPAA*, the Proponent provided the requested information on May 17, 2019. Following a preliminary completeness check of the proposal as submitted, the NIRB determined that the proposal did not contain all the necessary information for the NIRB to carry out its screening and on May 27, 2019 requested that the Proponent provide the

Board with additional information in order to carry out the screening of the project proposal. On May 28, 2019 the NIRB received the required information and commenced the screening pursuant to Part 3 of the *NuPPAA*.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Project Scope:

The proposed “Evaluation of natural bioremediation potential of Arctic beaches” project is located within the Qikiqtani (North Baffin) region, within the municipal boundaries of Resolute Bay. The Proponent intends to conduct research to determine if naturally occurring Arctic bacteria have the ability to degrade shipping fuels under Arctic conditions. The program is proposed to take place from July to August 2019.

According to the project proposal, the scope of the project includes the following undertakings, works or activities:

- Use of a truck and/or an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) to access research sites;
- Sampling chambers (microcosms) to be fully buried in sediment at a beach near Resolute Bay and stored with 0.1 millilitres shipping fuel, with removal of chambers after six (6) weeks;
- Use of a manual corer and hand-held spade to collect beach sediments for further analyses at the McGill University for type of bacteria;
- Use and storage of chemicals for preservation of samples; and
- Accommodations at the Polar Continental Shelf Program (PCSP) Research facilities in Resolute Bay.

Inclusion or Exclusion of Scoping List

At this time, the NIRB has identified no additional works or activities in relation to the project proposal. As a result, the NIRB will proceed with screening the project based on the scope as described above.

REQUEST FOR COMMENTS

All documents received and pertaining to this project proposal can be accessed from the NIRB’s online public registry at www.nirb.ca/project/125469.

The documents received include:

- *NPC Application*
- *NPC Conformity Determination and Screening Referral*
- *NIRB’s Online Application Form*
- *Non-technical Project Proposal summary in English, French and Inuktitut*
- *Maps noting research sites*
- *Community Consultations*
- *Mitigation of Potential Impacts*
- *Project Description*
- *Research Methodologies*

The NIRB will copy you on screening process related correspondence and upload related documents to the NIRB's online registry for public access. The NIRB may request additional information at any time during the process.

The NIRB is copying parties and municipalities potentially affected by McGill University's project proposal with this letter, and we invite interested parties to comment directly to the NIRB by **June 13, 2019**.

The NIRB would like parties to provide comments regarding:

- Whether the project proposal is likely to arouse significant public concern; and if so, why;
- Whether the project proposal is likely to cause significant adverse eco-systemic or socio-economic effects; and if so, why;
- Whether the project proposal is likely to cause significant adverse impacts on wildlife habitat or Inuit harvest activities; and if so, why;
- Whether the project proposal is of a type where the potential adverse effects are highly predictable and mitigable with known technology, (and providing any recommended mitigation measures); and
- Any matter of importance to the Party related to the project proposal.

Please note that *proposed* project-specific terms and conditions, should the project proceed, have been attached for consideration and comment ([Appendix A](#)).

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please send your comments to the NIRB via email at info@nirb.ca, via fax at (867) 983-2594 or via the individual project dashboard for this assessment on the NIRB's online public registry at www.nirb.ca/project/125469.

If you have any questions or require clarification, feel free to contact the undersigned at (867) 983-4622 or info@nirb.ca.

Sincerely,



Mia Otokiak
Junior Technical Advisor
Nunavut Impact Review Board

Attachments: Appendix A: *Proposed* Project Specific Terms and Conditions

Enclosures (4): Public Notice of Screening (English and Inuktitut)
Comment Forms (English and Inuktitut)

cc: Distribution List
Stephen Williamson Bathory, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Jared Ottenhof, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Joel Fortier, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Mosha Cote, Nunavut Research Institute
Tracey McCaie, Crown – Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada

Appendix A

Proposed Project Specific Terms and Conditions

The following is a list of project-specific terms and conditions which, should the project proceed, may be recommended to be attached to any approval.

General

1. McGill University (the Proponent) shall maintain a copy of the Project Terms and Conditions at the site of operation at all times.
2. The Proponent shall operate in accordance with all commitments stated in correspondence provided to the Nunavut Planning Commission (NPC File No.: 149103) and the NIRB (Online Application Form, initial submission May 17, 2019 and May 28, 2019).
3. The Proponent shall operate the site in accordance with all applicable Acts, Regulations and Guidelines.

Waste Disposal

4. The Proponent shall keep all garbage and debris in bags placed in a covered metal container or equivalent until disposed of at an approved facility. All such wastes shall be kept inaccessible to wildlife at all times.

Fuel and Chemical Storage

5. The Proponent shall store all fuel and chemicals in such a manner that they are inaccessible to wildlife.
6. The Proponent shall locate all fuel and other hazardous materials a minimum of thirty-one (31) metres away from the high water mark of any water body and in such a manner as to prevent their release into the environment unless otherwise authorized by the Nunavut Water Board.
7. The Proponent shall ensure that re-fueling of all equipment occurs a minimum of thirty-one (31) metres away from the high water mark of any water body, unless otherwise authorized by the Nunavut Water Board.

Wildlife - General

8. The Proponent shall ensure that there is no damage to wildlife habitat in conducting this operation.
9. The Proponent shall not harass wildlife. This includes persistently circling, chasing, hovering over pursuing or in any other way harass wildlife, or disturbing large groups of animals.
10. The Proponent shall not hunt or fish, unless proper Nunavut authorizations have been acquired.
11. The Proponent shall ensure that all project personnel are made aware of the measures to protect wildlife and are provided with training and/or advice on how to implement these measures.

Migratory Birds and Raptors Disturbance

12. The Proponent shall not disturb or destroy the nests or eggs of any birds. If active nests of any birds are discovered or located (i.e., with eggs or young), the Proponent shall avoid these areas

until nesting is complete and the young have naturally left the vicinity of the nest by establishing a protection buffer zone¹ appropriate for the species and the surrounding habitat.

13. The Proponent shall minimize activities during periods when birds are particularly sensitive to disturbance such as migration, nesting and moulting.
14. The Proponent shall avoid the seaward site of seabird colonies and areas used by flocks of migrating waterfowl by three (3) kilometres.
15. The Proponent shall ensure its aircraft avoid excessive hovering or circling over areas where bird presence is likely.

Caribou Disturbance

16. The Proponent shall avoid interfering with any paths or crossings known to be frequented by caribou during periods of migration.
17. The Proponent shall cease activities that may interfere with the migration or calving of caribou, until the caribou have passed or left the area.
18. The Proponent shall not block or cause any diversion to caribou migration, and shall cease activities likely to interfere with migration such as movement of equipment or personnel until such time as the caribou have passed.

Ground Disturbance

19. The Proponent shall not move any equipment or vehicles unless the ground surface is in a state capable of fully supporting the equipment or vehicles without rutting or gouging. Overland travel of equipment or vehicles must be suspended if rutting occurs.

Other

20. The Proponent should engage with local residents regarding planned activities in the area and should solicit available Inuit Qaujimaningit and information regarding current recreational and traditional usage of the project area which may inform project activities. Posting of translated public notices and direct engagement with potentially interested groups and individuals prior to undertaking project activities is strongly encouraged.
21. The Proponent shall ensure that project activities do not interfere with Inuit wildlife harvesting or traditional land use activities.
22. The Proponent should, to the extent possible, hire local people and access local services where possible.

¹ Recommended setback distances to define buffer zones have been established by Environment and Climate Change Canada for different bird groups nesting in tundra habitat and can be found at www.ec.gc.ca/paom-itmb.