COMMUNITY GEOLOGICAL MAPPING OF THE KIVALLIQ CORRIDOR

The geoscience character of a proposed Churchill-Kivalliq Hydro-Fibre (CKHF) link corridor, portions of which are poorly known and under explored, should be assessed, updated and integrated by Kivallirmiut to deliver a seamless, modern, time-calibrated, geological map. This will support activities across a region for which access will increase, and on which future land-use decisions can be soundly based. This project targets the southern half of the CKHF corridor, a hard to access, heavily drift-covered region with outdated geological mapping (1969-1978), rare obsolete (K/Ar biotite) age constraints, and no litho-geochemical knowledge with which to correlate units within, and beyond, the region.

This NRCan Geological Survey of Canada-led project aims to:

• refine, update, and produce new geological knowledge of bedrock underlying thick glacial cover of lower Nunavut.

• provide a meaningful way to engage Northerners, especially youth, to experience and participate in science, and enable knowledge sharing and knowledge co-production

• strengthen the capacity of communities within the Churchill-Kivalliq corridor to address geoscience opportunities and challenges related to proposed infrastructure developments.

This community-based mapping approach is being designed in consultation with the priorities of Kivallirmiut. Consultation and engagement began in June 2022 with letters to introduce the activity and initiate Indigenous co-development. A positive response led to constructive in-person meetings (November 19 – December 2, 2022) in Arviat and Whale Cove where fieldwork is planned for July 2023. Activities related to this project are designed to provide a meaningful way to engage Northerners, especially youth, to experience and participate in science, and to enable knowledge sharing and co-production. They are intended to strengthen the capacity of communities within the Churchill-Kivalliq corridor to address geoscience opportunities and challenges related to this region's proposed infrastructure developments.

Field methodology in 2023 will involve planning and execution of community-based, helicopter-assisted mapping based from Whale Cove (2-weeks) and Arviat (3-weeks). Compilation maps and Landsat imagery combined with aeromagnetic data will be analysed with community members to devise a strategy for ground-truthing geophysical anomalies and new data collection. Bedrock mapping will be assisted by interested Northerners, with a focus on youth 20-30 years, carvers and prospectors who will be provided rotational opportunities as paid field assistants. Mapping will involve 10 days (30 hours) of helicopter support from Whale Cove (~July 2-12, 2023) and 10 days (30 hours) from Arviat (~July 18-30, 2023). All equipment needed will fit into a small backpack provided to all field assistants along with a bagged lunch, and will include a hand lens, compass, pen magnet, hammer (to break off a fresh sample) and digital camera. Observations will be recorded on small, hand-held computers with bluetooth GPS, downloaded daily, and plotted on maps for interpretation on a new bedrock map, on which local assistants will be contributing authors.