



# CIRNAC Comments to NIRB

Re: Notice of Screening for York University's  
“Identifying Putative Microbial Drivers of Methane Flux  
on Earth and Mars” Project Proposal



Nunavut Regional Office  
P.O. Box 100  
Iqaluit, NU, X0A 0H0

Your file - Votre référence  
23YN026  
Our file - Notre référence  
GCdocs#114820091

June 21, 2023

Mia Otokiak  
Technical Advisor I  
Nunavut Impact Review Board  
P.O. Box 1360  
Cambridge Bay, NU, X0B 0C0  
via NIRB public registry

**Re: Notice of Screening and Comment Request for York University's "Identifying Putative Microbial Drivers of Methane Flux on Earth and Mars" Project Proposal**

Dear Mia Otokiak,

On June 12, 2023, the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) invited parties to comment on York University's "Identifying Putative Microbial Drivers of Methane Flux on Earth and Mars" project proposal. Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments and offers the responses below as it pertains to the NIRB's request:

**Any matter of importance to the Party related to the project proposal.**

**CIRNAC #1: Storage of Fuel and Other Hazardous Materials**

The Proponent indicates that they will be using a number of hazardous materials, such as bleach, ethanol, barium chloride, zinc acetate, bromobimane, methanesulfonic acid, phosphoric acid, ferrozine reagent, Lifeguard, paraformaldehyde, and sodium hydroxide. CIRNAC recommends that the Proponent stores all fuel and other hazardous materials a minimum of 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.

**CIRNAC #2: Combustible Waste**

The Proponent indicates that solid human waste will be incinerated and liquid waste will be transported to the Polar Continental Shelf Arctic Program logistics hub facility in Resolute Bay. The Proponent also indicates that all waste will be transported back to York University and disposed of according to University procedures.

It is unclear to CIRNAC how the Proponent will dispose of ash generated from the combustion of non-hazardous materials (i.e., removed from the site along with liquid waste, or left at the site).



CIRNAC recommends that ash produced from the combustion of non-hazardous waste should be drummed and removed from the site on a regular basis, or buried beneath no less than one (1) meter of compacted soil.

### **CIRNAC #3: Consultation with Interested Parties**

CIRNAC acknowledges the Proponent's commitments to hiring local wilderness guides, developing bi-directional outreach initiatives to share information related to their project with the Hamlet of Resolute Bay and other residents in Nunavut, and contacting Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and the Nunavut Research Institute. CIRNAC recommends that, as part of any consultation activities, several issues should be addressed, including, but not limited to:

- Incorporation of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit into project activities;
- Mitigation measures designed to prevent any disturbance to wildlife and the environment;
- The experience of community members who participate in traditional and non-traditional activities within or in close proximity to the project area;
- Training and employment opportunities for community members;
- Procurement opportunities for local businesses; and
- Regular updates on the status of project activities.

### **CIRNAC #4: Potential for Positive Effects on Inuit through Employment, Training, and Procurement Opportunities**

CIRNAC appreciates that the Proponent plans to hire local wilderness guides to support their project. CIRNAC recommends that, wherever and whenever possible, the Proponent also prioritize the training of local Inuit, as well as procurement with Inuit-owned businesses, when implementing project activities. Such efforts will allow for positive effects to be realized by community members and the local Inuit population.

CIRNAC appreciates the opportunity to provide comments and looks forward to working with the NIRB and the Proponent throughout any further phases related to this project. Should you have any questions, please contact John MacInnis by e-mail at [john.macinnis@rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca](mailto:john.macinnis@rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca).

Sincerely,



Felexce Ngwa  
Manager, Impact Assessment

