

# **PIONEER HIGH ARCTIC BUNDLE (HAB) PROJECT**

## **NON-TECHNICAL EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **1. BACKGROUND**

The Government of Canada has implemented the Federal Contaminated Sites Action Plan (FCSAP) to clean up federal contaminated sites which pose risks to human health and the environment. Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) is the custodian of a number of these contaminated sites, and sometimes, the contamination on some of the sites could be linked to past military operations by CIRNAC or the Crown on the sites. Pioneer High Arctic Bundle (HAB) Project or Pioneer (HAB) Project is a collection of seven (7) such sites, in Nunavut. The seven (7) sites, which are Playfair Point, Pioneer Island, Stupart Island, Skybattle Bay, Kristofer Bay, Cape Isachsen, and Cape Ahnighito, are all on Crown land. Consequently, CIRNAC applied for, and received funding approval under FSCAP, to clean up the sites under one project.

Some of the seven sites of the Pioneer Bundle are relics of historic oil exploration drilling activities, while others are former scientific research stations. All the seven sites presently contain remnants of debris, solid and liquid wastes, and fuel drums used in support of the past exploratory and research activities, and which are now major contaminants to the environment where they are located.

Bundling of these seven sites into one Project was done in the interest of efficiency in the logistics of accessing the sites and cost savings in the various components of the site remediation processes (site assessment, tendering/procurement of contracts, regulatory approvals, remedial plan implementation and project closure).

### **2. SITE LOCATION/ACCESS**

The Pioneer (HAB) Project's seven sites are located in the High Arctic at distances of between 160km to 570 km from the nearest community of Resolute Bay (approximate latitude, 74° 41' 45" N; and longitude, 94° 49' 45" W), Qikiqtaaluk Region, Nunavut. The population of

Resolute Bay, according to the 2021 census is 183 people. The city has resources to stage out and support remediation activities on the project sites.

The sites are accessible by airplanes (mainly limited to twin Otter), and helicopter which can be used to move light equipment, personnel and supplies/resupplies. Between Resolute Bay and southern locations, there are sealift services that could be mobilize supplies and materials in large quantities in to Resolute and wastes to be disposed out of Resolute.

### **3. PROJECT ACTIVITIES & SCHEDULE**

Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs) were completed on the seven sites over a 2 year period (2020-2021 and 2021-2022). Based on the results of the ESAs, a draft remedial action plan was developed for the seven sites to propose the strategies to be adopted for the remediation or risk management of the sites. Following the development of the draft plan, a community consultation, in the form of public meeting, was held in Resolute Bay on January 11, 2023. The meeting was well attended by members of the community of Resolute Bay. The feedbacks from the meetings were considered when the plan was finalized during the fiscal year FY 2022-2023. Project tendering/contract procurement and regulatory applications started in FY 2022-2023 and are continuing in the current FY 2023-24.

The final Remedial Action Plan (RAP) have been concluded for all the seven sites. Also completed on the sites was Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) leading to a Project Proposal Report (PPR) to identify the effects of the proposed remediation plan on each site and its environs. The PPR indicates that the proposed strategies will have long-term positive impacts on the sites and their environs. The project completion is currently planned for March 31, 2025.

The implementation of the RAP is planned for the FY 2024-2025. Summary of tasks to be completed at the site include: mobilization to site; improvement of site access routes, site internal roads and airstrips; Camp set-up and operation; and the actual remediation of the site. Full details of works to be completed are contained in the remedial action plan (RAP) previously submitted to the regulatory bodies via Nunavut Planning Commission (NPC) with a copy

attached to this application. Final demobilization from the site will take place by September/October 2024.

Prior to the start of the remedial works, authorizations will be obtained from the following regulatory bodies: Nunavut Planning Commission NPC (Conformity Check – already granted); Nunavut Impact Review Board (Screening); CIRNAC Land Administration for the Land Use Permit. There will be no usage of on-site water on this project and consequently we will be asking for exception from water use licence from the Nunavut Water Board (NWB).

Since the strategies on this project are walk-away strategies, there will be no need for long-term monitoring post remediation.

#### **4. SOCIAL IMPACT OF THE PROJECT**

As much as possible, the project has adopted and will continue to adopt solutions tailored to the northern environment and its inhabitants, by using local knowledge and including the unique needs of northerners and their environments in the remediation work plan.

Public community consultation meetings will continue to be held in Resolute Bay as the site cleanup activities progress to discuss employment and sub-contracting opportunities and the progress of site works from time to time. The meetings will invite community members, members of the Hamlet Council and local Inuit organizations.

The contracting/procurement procedure that will be adopted for this project will maximize the benefits of the project to the closest northern community (Resolute Bay) by employing local and northern employees and engaging the services of local and northern sub-contractors.