

GN-: Archeology	
Department	Culture and Heritage
Organization	Government of Nunavut
Subject/Topic	Heritage resources in the area
References	NIRB Notice of Screening for Somerset Trough Project, NIRB File No 24EN005
CONCERNS	
<p>The Proponent intends to initiate an early exploration program based out of an exploration camp in Western Somerset Island. The 2024 project activities include: the construction of a temporary camp (14 persons), airborne and ground-based geophysical surveys, prospecting, sampling, and geological mapping. No drilling activities or use of heavy machinery are planned for the 2024 program.</p> <p>A search of the Nunavut Archaeological Site Database indicates that there are fifty-four archaeological sites recorded within the proposed project area. Specifically, there is a high concentration of sites near the isthmus between Somerset Island and the Boothia Peninsula. This however does not preclude the presence of unidentified sites or cultural features as to this day no systematic archaeological reconnaissance has been conducted in this area.</p> <p>In prospecting for copper, the proponent must appreciate that native copper was collected and worked in this region of Nunavut since Dorset times (2000 B.P.). Thus, there is a strong possibility that the copper sources the proponent are seeking for development might overlap with archeological sites exploited by occupants of Inuit ancestry for millennium.</p>	
RECOMMENDATIONS	
<p>Based on the presence of several archaeological sites in the vicinity of the Proposed Exploration Area and that no systematic archaeological survey has been conducted in this area, the Department of Culture and Heritage (CH) considers that there are reasonable grounds to believe that there could be sites of archaeological significance on the lands affected by the current project (NA 33.5.12).</p> <p>The Department of Culture and Heritage recommends that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The applicant works with a qualified archaeologist who will apply for a Class 2 permit with the Department of Culture and Heritage;</li> <li>2. An Archaeological Impact Assessment be carried out at the proposed temporary camp location to determine if archaeological sites are in potential conflict and identify any necessary avoidance or mitigation measures. This includes assessment of the</li> </ol>	

camp location and associated components (airstrip, helipad, fuel caches, incinerator, any laydown areas, etc.);

3. The proponent must exercise caution in their movements to avoid archaeological sites, specifically with regards to helicopter landings. It is recommended that landing areas (including fuel caches) be visually inspected prior to landing and takeoff;
4. The Department of Culture and Heritage recommends that the applicant avoids conducting activities in the vicinity (50 m buffer zone) of archaeological/historical sites. If archaeological sites or features are encountered, activities should immediately be interrupted and moved away from this location. Each site encountered needs to be recorded and reported to our office.

A Class 2 Archaeological permit is required

#### **ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

All archaeological and palaeontological sites in Nunavut are protected by law. The applicant must understand that it is their responsibility to ensure that no heritage resource sites are disturbed during the course of their activities. No person shall alter, or otherwise disturb an archaeological site, or remove any artifact from an archaeological site. Moreover, the building of inuksuit is not recommended