



SCREENING DECISION REPORT NIRB FILE No.: 24YN026

NPC File No.: 150407
Parks Canada Exemption

August 2, 2024

Following the Nunavut Impact Review Board's (NIRB or Board) assessment of all materials provided, the NIRB is recommending that a review of Government of Nunavut's "Estimating the abundance of the Foxe Basin polar bear subpopulation" is not required pursuant to Article 12, Section 12.4.4(a) of the *Agreement between the Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area and Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada (Nunavut Agreement)* and s. 92(1)(a) of the *Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act*, S.C. 2013, c. 14, s. 2 (NuPPAA).

Subject to the Proponent's compliance with the terms and conditions as set out in below, the NIRB is of the view that the project proposal is not likely to cause significant public concerns, and it is unlikely to result in significant adverse environmental and social impacts. The NIRB therefore recommends that the responsible Minister(s) accepts this Screening Decision Report.

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The primary objectives of the NIRB are set out in Article 12, Section 12.2.5 of the *Nunavut Agreement* and are confirmed by s. 23 of the *NuPPAA*:

Nunavut Agreement, Article 12, Section 12.2.5: In carrying out its functions, the primary objectives of NIRB shall be at all times to protect and promote the existing and future well-being of the residents and communities of the Nunavut Settlement Area, and to protect the ecosystemic integrity of the Nunavut Settlement Area. NIRB shall take into account the well-being of the residents of Canada outside the Nunavut Settlement Area.

The purpose of screening is provided for under Article 12, Section 12.4.1 of the *Nunavut Agreement* and s. 88 of the *NuPPAA* which states:

NuPPAA, s. 88: The purpose of screening a project is to determine whether the project has the potential to result in significant ecosystemic or socio-economic impacts and, accordingly, whether it requires a review by the Board...

To determine whether a review of a project is required, the NIRB is guided by the considerations as set out under Article 12, Section 12.4.2(a) and (b) of the *Nunavut Agreement* and s. 89(1) of *NuPPAA* which states:

NuPPAA, s. 89(1): The Board must be guided by the following considerations when it is called on to determine, on the completion of a screening, whether a review of the project is required:

- (a) a review is required if, in the Board's opinion,
 - i. the project may have significant adverse ecosystemic or socio-economic impacts or significant adverse impacts on wildlife habitat or Inuit harvest activities,
 - ii. the project will cause significant public concern, or
 - iii. the project involves technological innovations, the effects of which are unknown; and
- (b) a review is not required if, in the Board's opinion,
 - i. the project is unlikely to cause significant public concern, and
 - ii. its adverse ecosystemic and socioeconomic impacts are unlikely to be significant, or are highly predictable and can be adequately mitigated by known technologies.

It is noted that under Article 12, Section 12.4.2(c) and s. 89(2) of the *NuPPAA* provides that the considerations set out in s.89(1)(a) prevail over the considerations set out in s. 89(1)(b) of the *NuPPAA*.

As set out under Article 12, Section 12.4.4 of the *Nunavut Agreement* and s. 92(1) of the *NuPPAA*, upon conclusion of the screening process, the Board must provide its written report the Minister. The contents of the NIRB's report are specified under *NuPPAA*:

NuPPAA, s. 92(1): The Board must submit a written report to the responsible Minister containing a description of the project that specifies its scope and indicating that:

- (a) a review of the project is not required;
- (b) a review of the project is required; or
- (c) the project should be modified or abandoned.

Where the NIRB determines that a project may be carried out without a review, the NIRB has the discretion to recommend specific terms and conditions to be attached to any approval of the project proposal pursuant to paragraph 92(2)(a) of *NuPPAA* as follows:

NuPPAA, s. 92(2) In its report, the Board may also

- (a) recommend specific terms and conditions to apply in respect of a project that it determines may be carried out without a review.

PROJECT REFERRAL

On May 24, 2024, the NIRB received a referral to screen Government of Nunavut's (GN) "Estimating the abundance of the Foxe Basin polar bear subpopulation" project proposal from the Nunavut Planning Commission (Commission), which conforms to both the Keewatin Regional Land Use Plan and the North Baffin Regional Land Use Plan. On July 11, 2024, Parks Canada notified the NIRB that the project proposal was exempt from screening for the portion occurring in Ukkusiksalik National Park.

Pursuant to Article 12, Sections 12.4.1 and 12.4.4 of the *Nunavut Agreement* and s. 87 of the *NuPPAA*, the NIRB commenced screening this project proposal and assigned it file number **24N026**.

PROJECT OVERVIEW & THE NIRB ASSESSMENT PROCESS

1. Screening Process Timelines

The following key stages were completed for the screening process:

Date	Stage
May 24, 2024	Receipt of project proposal which conforms to both the Keewatin Regional Land Use Plan and the North Baffin Regional Land Use Plan.
July 11, 2024	Receipt of an exempt from screening notification from Parks Canada for the portion occurring in Ukkusiksalik National Park
May 24, 2024	Request to complete public registry online and provide information pursuant to s. 144(1) of the <i>NuPPAA</i>
June 18, 2024	Receipt of online application from Proponent
June 18, 2024	Scoping pursuant to s. 86(1) of the <i>NuPPAA</i>
June 20, 2024	Public engagement and comment request

Date	Stage
July 11, 2024	Receipt of public comments
July 19, 2024	Proponent responded to comments/concerns raised by public
August 2, 2024	Issuance of Screening Decision Report

2. Project Scope

All documents received and pertaining to this project proposal can be accessed from the NIRB's online public registry at www.nirb.ca/project/125939.

Project:	Estimating the abundance of the Foxe Basin polar bear subpopulation
Region:	Within all three regions: Kitikmeot, Kivalliq and Qikiqtani (South Baffin)
Location:	Aerial surveys within the entire Foxe Basin area, within the municipal boundaries of the communities of: Baker Lake, Chesterfield Inlet, Coral Harbour, Naujaat, Igloolik, Sanirajak, Kinngait, and Kimmirut.
Summary of Project Description:	The Proponent intends to conduct research to estimate the population abundance of the Foxe Basin polar bear subpopulation and characterization of polar bear movements between surrounding subpopulation boundaries.
Project Proposed Timeline:	July to August 2024

As required under s. 86(1) of the *NuPPAA*, the Board accepts the scope of the project as set out by Government of Nunavut (GN) in the proposal. The scope of the project proposal includes the following undertakings, works, or activities:

- Use of 2 helicopters for aerial surveys as well as travel between sites;
- Use of dart guns and biopsy darts to collect DNA samples (<5mm diameter) from polar bears from 0-15 meters distance;
- Set up and use of steel posts with barbed wire to collect hair samples from bears;
 - Use of scented bait to attract bears (no meat or food reward, ONLY scent)
 - Use of camera trap with security box to collect images of polar bears that hair is collected from.
- Possible use of up to 78 fuel caches (8 existing), each storing from 2 to 10 drums of fuel and up to a total of 324 drums, all throughout the Foxe Basin area;
- Use of 2 existing Environment and Climate Change Canada camps: Niko Camp and Prince Charles Island Camp during the life of the project;
 - Use of gasoline for generators at the camps.
- Hiring and training of local community members to lead community-led hair snare stations within municipal boundaries of the communities of Baker Lake, Chesterfield Inlet, Naujaat, Igloolik, Sanirajak, Coral Harbour, Kinngait, and Kimmirut; and
- Use of local community services and facilities while in the eight (8) communities during the life of the project.

3. Inclusion or Exclusion to 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

The NIRB has identified no additional works or activities in relation to the project proposal. As a result, the NIRB proceeded with screening the project based on the scope as described above excluding the portion occurring in Ukkusiksalik National Park.

4. Public Comments and Concerns

Notice regarding the NIRB's screening of this project proposal was distributed on June 20, 2024 to community organizations in Baker Lake, Chesterfield Inlet, Coral Harbour, Naujaat, Kinngait, Igloolik, Kimmirut and Sanirajak, as well as to relevant federal and territorial government agencies, Inuit organizations and other parties. The NIRB requested that interested parties review the proposal and provide the Board with any comments or concerns by June 11, 2024 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.

On or before June 11, 2024 the NIRB received comments from the following interested parties:

- **Government of Nunavut**
- **Crown Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada**
- **Fisheries and Oceans Canada**
- **Transport Canada**
- **Hamlet of Coral Harbour**
- **Public Comments**

a. Summary of Public Comments and Concerns Received during the Public comment period of this file

The following provides a summary of the comments and concerns received by the NIRB:

- Government of Nunavut, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Transport Canada have no comments or concerns to raise with the Board at this time.

Crown Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada

- Stated concerns related to the fuel caches for the project related to fuel handling such as secondary containment, spill prevention and response measures, what the environment was around fuel caches and refueling and recommended that the proponent follow best management practices.
- Noted that the mitigation measures for the project on the environment should be implemented if impacts are unknown in the Environmental Impact Matrix.
- Recommended consultation with community members and relevant organizations that may have interest in the project proposal and incorporate any Inuit Qaujimaqatuqangit or community knowledge learned.

Community of Coral Harbou

- What information do you have regarding polar bear movement between the 13 subpopulation zones or adjacent zones from previous programs
- How can this program with 2 helicopters cover such a large area between July and August of this year?

b. Comments and Concerns with respect to Inuit Qaujimaningit, Traditional, and Community Knowledge

Community of Coral Harbour

- People do not like helicopters on any survey of animals, as the noise affects all wildlife species
- Support hiring and training community members to assist in the snare stations and is a good way with minimal wildlife interactions with the human populations
- Questions about how Inuit Qaujimaqatuqangit is incorporated as community members saw a lot of bears and this does not appear to be in your materials. Further, why is Baker Lake included in the survey as we have not heard about polar bears there.

Coral Harbour Community Member

- Concern expressed about the noise that the helicopter will make and the impact on hearing for bars interacted with during the survey.

5. Proponent's Response to Public Comments and Concerns

On July 19, 2024, due to the concerns and questions identified in the comments received from parties, the Proponent responded to community concerns raised during the commenting period. The following is a summary of the Proponent's response to concerns as received on July 19, 2024:

- The concern from the Hamlet of Coral Harbour and the community member was raised in all the community engagement conducted for the project so far. There are mitigation strategies to limit the amount of stress and hearing damage to the bears including limiting time flying around and working with the bear. A letter of support was received from the Coral Harbour Hunters and Trappers Organization like other communities.

- The Government of Nunavut is proposing these surveys as the last polar bear count was completed in 2010 as this method of understanding the movement of bears does not align with Inuit values so alternative methods needed to be assessed. Aerial surveys give an understanding of numbers of bears, but not where they are travelling. Aerial surveys are a way of balancing between Inuit values and concerns and scientific methods while also balancing logistical and financial constraints.
- Biopsy darting allows some analysis on the tissue to estimate travel and DNA for information regarding polar bear genetic “fingerprints” with the least impact to the polar bear.
- The Government of Nunavut engages with communities as part of the information collection for the project to ensure that what communities are seeing with polar bear populations are included in the survey results and provides a more all-inclusive understanding of the subpopulations. The Government of Nunavut uses information submitted to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) and other organizations as part of the survey as the Government of Nunavut does not have the appropriate resources to conduct an Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit study.
- Baker Lake is included in the proposed survey as Baker Lake is included in the total allowable harvest for the Kivalliq region. To distribute polar bear tags to the region, the Government of Nunavut makes a Total Allowable Harvest recommendation to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB). The NWMB then decides the polar bear Total Allowable Harvest and reports to the Minister of the Environment. If accepted would then be communicated to the Regional Wildlife Board and local Hunters and Trappers Organizations. If communities have knowledge, questions, concerns with results of the scientific study or public safety, communities can write submissions to the NWMB.
- The last polar bear survey was conducted in 2009-2010 and the Foxe Basin polar bear population was determined to be stable. Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and Community Knowledge are collected at various times during the proposed survey and Local Hunters and Trapper Organization members would be participating in both the aircraft and community surveys. The Government of Nunavut would be returning to each community to discuss results.

ASSESSMENT OF THE PROJECT PROPOSAL IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 3 OF *NuPPAA*

In determining whether a review of the project is required, the Board considered whether the project proposal had potential to result in significant ecosystemic or socio-economic impacts.

Accordingly, the assessment of impact significance was based on the analysis of those factors that are set out under s. 90 of the *NuPPAA*. The Board took particular care to take into account Inuit Qaujimaningit, traditional and community knowledge in carrying out its assessment and determination of the significance of impacts.

The following is a summary of the Board's assessment of the factors that are relevant to the determination of significant impacts with respect of this project proposal:

Factor	Comment
The size of the geographic area, including the size of wildlife habitats, likely to be affected by the impacts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The physical footprint of the proposed project components covers the Foxe Basin and a portion of Hudson Bay. The proposed project would take place within habitats of far-ranging wildlife species such as migratory and non-migratory birds, Arctic fox, Arctic hare and Species at Risk such as polar bears.
The ecosystemic sensitivity of that area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No specific areas of ecosystemic sensitivity have been identified by the Proponent within the physical footprint of the proposed project.
The historical, cultural and archaeological significance of that area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No specific areas of historical, cultural and archaeological significance have been identified by the Proponent within the physical footprint of the proposed project.
The size of the human and the animal populations likely to be affected by the impacts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed project is unlikely to result in impacts to local human and animal populations.
The nature, magnitude and complexity of the impacts; the probability of the impacts occurring; the frequency and duration of the impacts; and the reversibility or irreversibility of the impacts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With adherence to the relevant regulatory requirements and application of the mitigation measures recommended by the NIRB, no significant residual effects are expected to occur.
The cumulative impacts that could result from the impacts of the project combined with those of any other project that has been carried out, is being carried out or is likely to be carried out.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The mitigation measures recommended by the NIRB have been designed with consideration for the potential for cumulative effects to result from the impacts of the project combined with other past, present and reasonably foreseeable projects.

Factor	Comment
Any other factor that the Board considers relevant to the assessment of the significance of impacts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No other relevant factors were identified.

VIEWS OF THE BOARD

In considering the factors as set out above in the screening of the project proposal, the NIRB has identified a number of issues below and respectfully provide the following views regarding whether or not the proposed project has the potential to result in significant impacts. In addition, the NIRB has proposed terms and conditions that would mitigate the potential adverse impacts identified.

The NIRB has listed specific Acts and Regulations below that may be applicable to the project proposal but this list should not be considered as a complete list and the Proponent is responsible to ensure that it follows all Acts and Regulations that may be applicable to the project proposal.

Ecosystem, wildlife habitat and Inuit harvesting activities:

Valued Component	Wildlife such as migratory and non-migratory birds, Arctic fox, Arctic hare and Species at Risk such as polar bears.
Potential effects:	Potential adverse effects to migratory and non-migratory birds, Arctic fox, Arctic hare and Species at Risk such as polar bears from noise and visual disturbance from use of aircraft, and research activities.
Nature of Impacts:	The potential for impacts is considered to be limited due to infrequent and temporary activities and any resulting impacts would be expected to be reversible
Mitigating Factors:	The Proponent stated that interaction with wildlife will be minimized. Research on polar bears such as darting will be limited and carried out away from communities in such a manner as to minimize disturbance to individual polar bears. The Board has added additional terms and conditions to minimize disturbance to wildlife.
Proposed Terms and Conditions:	Waste Management - 6 Fuel and Chemical Storage – 7 through 13 Migratory Birds and Raptors Disturbance – 15 and 16 Aircraft Flight Restrictions – 17 through 22
Related Acts and/or Regulations:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The <i>Migratory Birds Convention Act</i> and <i>Migratory Birds Regulations</i> (http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/M-7.01/). 2. The <i>Species at Risk Act</i> (http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/S-15.3/index.html). Attached in Appendix A is a list of Species at Risk in Nunavut. 3. The <i>Wildlife Act (Nunavut)</i> and its corresponding regulations (http://www.canlii.org/en/nu/laws/stat/snu-2003-c-26/latest/snu-2003-c-26.html).

Valued Component	Vegetation, land, soils, terrain stability, permafrost.
Potential effects:	Potential impacts from storage, use, and transfer of fuel, and generation of waste materials.
Nature of Impacts:	Negative effects from fuel spills expected be mitigable through use of proper spill mitigation measures.
Mitigating Factors:	The Proponent would use secondary containment for all fuel storage and transfers and provide a Spill Response Plan
Proposed Terms and Conditions:	Waste Management - 6 Fuel and Chemical Storage – 7 through 14
Related Acts and/or Regulations:	N/A

Socio-economic effects on northerners:

Valued Component	Historical and archaeological sites.
Potential effects:	No specific concerns or impacts to historical and archaeological sites.
Nature of Impacts:	N/A
Mitigating Factors:	The Board is recommending terms and conditions to ensure that archaeological and paleontological sites are not purposely or inadvertently disturbed should they be encountered.
Proposed Terms and Conditions:	Heritage Sites – 23
Related Acts and/or Regulations:	1. The <i>Nunavut Act</i> (http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/N-28.6/). The Proponent must comply with the proposed terms and conditions listed in the attached Appendix B .

Significant public concern:

Valued Component	Public concern and local hiring
Potential effects:	No significant public concern was expressed during the public commenting period for this file; however, the Board is recommending terms and conditions to ensure that to the extent possible hire local people and access local services where possible, and to ensure planned activities in the area utilizes available Inuit Qaujimaningit. The proponent has received letters of support from communities for this project.
Nature of Impacts:	The potential for impacts is considered to be minimal as long as the Proponent follow the recommended terms and conditions.
Mitigating Factors:	Recommended terms and conditions
Proposed Terms and Conditions:	Other – 24 through 26
Related Acts and/or Regulations:	N/A

Technological innovations for which the effects are unknown:

- No specific issues have been identified associated with this project proposal.]

Administrative Conditions:

To encourage compliance with applicable regulatory requirements and assist the Board and responsible authorities with compliance and effects monitoring for project activities, the following project-specific terms and conditions have been recommended: 1-5.

In considering the above factors and subject to the Proponent's compliance with the terms and conditions necessary to mitigate against the potential adverse environmental and social effects, the Board is of the view that the proposed project is unlikely to cause significant public concern and its adverse ecosystemic and socioeconomic impacts are unlikely to be significant or are highly predictable and can be adequately mitigated by known technologies.

RECOMMENDED PROJECT-SPECIFIC TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The Board is recommending the following specific terms and conditions to apply in respect of the project:

1. Government of Nunavut (the Proponent) shall maintain a copy of the Project Terms and Conditions at the site of operation at all times and make it accessible to enforcement officers upon request.
2. The Proponent shall operate in accordance with all commitments stated in correspondence provided to the Nunavut Planning Commission (NPC File No.: May 24, 2024 and the NIRB (Online Application Form, June 18, 2024). This information should be accessible to enforcement officers upon request.
3. The Proponent shall operate the site in accordance with all applicable Acts, Regulations and Guidelines.
4. The Proponent shall ensure that it meets the standards and/or limits as set out in the authorizing agencies' permits or licences as required for this project.
5. The Proponent shall ensure that all personnel, staff and contractors are adequately trained prior to commencement of all project activities, and shall be made aware of all operational plans, management plans, guidelines and Proponent commitments relating to the project.

Waste Management

6. The Proponent shall manage all hazardous and non-hazardous waste including food, domestic wastes, debris and petroleum-based chemicals (e.g., greases, gasoline, glycol-based antifreeze) in such a manner to avoid release into the environment and access to wildlife at all times until disposed of appropriately or at an approved facility.

Fuel and Chemical Storage

7. The Proponent shall locate all fuel and other hazardous materials a minimum distance away from the high-water mark of any water body and environmentally sensitive areas as required by the appropriate authorizing agencies. The materials shall be stored in such a manner as to prevent their release into the environment.
8. The Proponent shall use adequate secondary containment or a surface liner (e.g., self-supporting insta-berms and fold-a-tanks) when storing barreled fuel and chemicals at all locations
9. The Proponent shall ensure that re-fuelling of all equipment occurs a minimum distance away from the high-water mark of any water body as required by the appropriate authorizing agencies.

10. All fuel and chemical storage containers must be clearly marked with the Proponent's name for ease of identification.
11. The Proponent shall have a Spill Contingency Plan in place at all fuel storage or transfer locations and shall ensure that appropriate spill response equipment and clean-up materials (e.g., shovels, pumps, barrels, drip pans, and absorbents) are readily available.
12. The Proponent shall follow the authorizing agencies' direction for management and removal of hazardous materials and wastes (e.g., contaminated soils, sediment and waste oil).
13. The Proponent shall ensure that wildlife deterrent systems are utilized at the time of a spill incident in order to avoid wildlife (terrestrial or marine) and migratory birds from being contaminated.
14. The Proponent shall ensure that all spills of fuel or other deleterious materials of 100 litres or more must be reported immediately to the 24-hour Spill Line at (867) 920-8130.

Migratory Birds and Raptors Disturbance

15. The Proponent shall avoid the seaward site of seabird colonies and areas used by flocks of migrating waterfowl, a minimum distance away on the recommendation of the appropriate authorizing agencies.
16. The Proponent shall not pursue seabirds or waterbirds swimming on the water surface and shall avoid concentrations of these birds if encountered on the water.

Aircraft Flight Restrictions

17. The Proponent shall not alter flight paths to approach wildlife and avoid flying directly over animals.
18. The Proponent shall plan flight paths that minimize flights over known habitat likely to have birds or concentrations of wildlife. Aircraft should avoid critical and sensitive wildlife areas at all times by choosing alternate flight corridors.
19. The Proponent shall restrict aircraft/helicopter activity related to the project to a minimum flight altitude of 610 metres (2,100 ft) above ground level except during landing, take-off or if there is a specific requirement for low-level flying, which does not disturb wildlife or migratory birds.
20. The Proponent shall avoid known concentrations of birds (e.g., bird colonies, moulting areas) by a lateral distance of 1.5 kilometre. If avoidance is not possible maintain a minimum flight altitude of 1,100 metres (3,500 feet) over these areas.
21. The Proponent shall ensure that aircraft/helicopter do not, unless for emergency, touch-down in areas where wildlife are present.
22. The Proponent shall advise all pilots of relevant flight restrictions and enforce their application over the project area, including flight paths to/from the project area.

Heritage Sites

23. The Proponent shall ensure that archaeological and paleontological sites are not purposely or inadvertently disturbed by clients or staff as a result of project activities.

Other

24. The Proponent should consult with local residents regarding their activities in the area and solicit available Inuit Qaujimaningit and information that can inform project activities.
25. The Proponent shall ensure that project activities do not interfere with Inuit wildlife harvesting or traditional land use activities.
26. The Proponent should, to the extent possible, hire local people and access local services where possible.

OTHER NIRB CONCERNS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to the project-specific terms and conditions, the Board is recommending the following:

Change in Project Scope

1. Responsible authorities or Proponent shall notify the Nunavut Planning Commission and/or Parks Canada as appropriate, and the NIRB of any changes in operating plans or conditions, including phase advancement, associated with this project prior to any such change.

Copy of licences, etc. to the Board and Commission

2. The NIRB respectfully requests that responsible authorities submit a copy of each licence, permit or other authorization issued for the Project to the NIRB to assist in enabling possible project monitoring that may be required. Please forward a copy of the licences, permits and/or other authorizations to the NIRB directly at info@nirb.ca or upload a copy to the NIRB's online registry at www.nirb.ca

Use of Inuit Qaujimaningit

3. The Proponent is encouraged to work with local communities and knowledge holders to inform project design, to carry out the project, and to confirm or validate the perspectives represented in publications and reports produced as part of the project. Care should be taken to ensure that Inuit Qaujimaningit and local knowledge collected for the project is used with permission and is accurately represented.

Bear and Carnivore Safety

4. The Proponent should review the Government of Nunavut's booklet on Bear Safety, which can be downloaded from this link: http://gov.nu.ca/sites/default/files/bear_safety_-_reducing_bear-people_conflicts_in_nunavut.pdf. Further information on bear/carnivore detection and deterrent techniques can be found in the "*Safety in Grizzly and Black Bear Country*" pamphlet, which can be downloaded from this link: https://www.enr.gov.nt.ca/sites/enr/files/resources/safety_in_grizzly_and_black_bear_country_english.pdf.
5. There are polar bear and grizzly bear safety resources available from the Bear Smart Society with videos on polar bear safety available in English, French and Inuktitut at <http://www.bearsmart.com/play/safety-in-polar-bear-country/>. Information can also be

obtained from Parks Canada's website on bear safety at the following link: <http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/pn-np/nu/quttinirpaq/visit/visit6/d.aspx> or in reviewing the "Safety in Polar Bear Country" pamphlet, which can be downloaded from the following link: http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/pn-np/nu/quttinirpaq/visit/visit6/~/_media/pn-np/nu/auyuittuq/pdf/shared/PolarBearSafety_English.ashx

6. Any problem wildlife or any interaction with carnivores should be reported immediately to the local Government of Nunavut, Department of Environment Conservation Office.

Species at Risk

7. The Proponent review Environment and Climate Change Canada's "Environment Assessment Best Practice Guide for Wildlife at Risk in Canada", available at the following link: http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca/virtual_sara/files/policies/EA%20Best%20Practices%202004.pdf. The guide provides information to the Proponent on what is required when Wildlife at Risk, including *Species at Risk*, are encountered or affected by the project.

Migratory Birds

8. The Proponent review Canadian Wildlife Services' "Key migratory bird terrestrial habitat sites in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut", available at the following link: <http://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/317630/publication.html> and "Key marine habitat sites for migratory birds in Nunavut and the Northwest Territories", available at the following link: <http://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/392824/publication.html>. The guide provides information to the Proponent on key terrestrial and marine habitat areas that are essential to the welfare of various migratory bird species in Canada

Heritage Resources

9. During the assessment, the NIRB has identified that no archaeology surveys have been conducted in the proposed project areas and that potential for the presence of archaeological resources is likely, therefore the Proponent shall contact the Department of Culture and Heritage to initiate a field archaeology assessment program prior to undertaking any land disturbance activities.

Transport of Dangerous Goods and Waste Management

10. Environment and Climate Change Canada recommends that all hazardous wastes, including waste oil, receive proper treatment and disposal at an approved facility.
11. The Proponent shall ensure that proper shipping documents (waste manifests, transportation of dangerous goods, etc.) accompany all movements of dangerous goods. Further, the Proponent shall ensure that the shipment of all dangerous goods is registered with the Government of Nunavut Department of Environment, Department of Environment Manager. Contact the Manager (867) 975-7748 to obtain a manifest if dangerous goods including hazardous wastes will be transported.

Aircraft Identification

12. The Proponent shall provide the impacted communities the planned helicopter activities, including photo(s) of the helicopter to be used, approximate flight paths, plans and times as available prior to commencement of activities to ensure community members are aware of the planned activities.

CONCLUSION

The foregoing constitutes the Board's screening decision with respect to the Government of Nunavut's "Estimating the abundance of the Foxe Basin polar bear subpopulation". The NIRB remains available for consultation with the Minister regarding this report as necessary.

Dated _____ at Baker Lake, NU.

Kaviq Kaluraq, Chairperson

Attachments: Appendix A: Species at Risk in Nunavut
Appendix B: Archaeological and Palaeontological Resources Terms and Conditions for Land Use Permit Holders

APPENDIX A: SPECIES AT RISK IN NUNAVUT

Due to the requirements of Section 79(2) of the Species at Risk Act (SARA), and the potential for project-specific adverse effects on listed wildlife species and its critical habitat, measures should be taken as appropriate to avoid or lessen those effects, and the effects need to be monitored. Project effects could include species disturbance, attraction to operations and destruction of habitat. This section applies to all species listed on Schedule 1 of SARA, as listed in the table below, or have been assessed by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC), which may be encountered in the project area. This list may not include all species identified as at risk by the Territorial Government. The following points provide clarification on the applicability of the species outlined in the table.

- Schedule 1 is the official legal list of Species at Risk for SARA. SARA applies to all species on Schedule 1. The term “listed” species refers to species on Schedule 1.
- Schedule 2 and 3 of SARA identify species that were designated at risk by the COSEWIC prior to October 1999 and must be reassessed using revised criteria before they can be considered for addition to Schedule 1.
- Some species identified at risk by COSEWIC are “pending” addition to Schedule 1 of SARA. These species are under consideration for addition to Schedule 1, subject to further consultation or assessment.

If species at risk are encountered or affected, the primary mitigation measure should be avoidance. The Proponent should avoid contact with or disturbance to each species, its habitat and/or its residence. All direct, indirect, and cumulative effects should be considered. Refer to species status reports and other information on the species at risk Registry at <http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca> for information on specific species.

Monitoring should be undertaken by the Proponent to determine the effectiveness of mitigation and/or identify where further mitigation is required. As a minimum, this monitoring should include recording the locations and dates of any observations of species at risk, behaviour or actions taken by the animals when project activities were encountered, and any actions taken by the proponent to avoid contact or disturbance to the species, its habitat, and/or its residence. This information should be submitted to the appropriate regulators and organizations with management responsibility for that species, as requested.

For species primarily managed by the Territorial Government, the Territorial Government should be consulted to identify other appropriate mitigation and/or monitoring measures to minimize effects to these species from the project.

Mitigation and monitoring measures must be undertaken in a way that is consistent with applicable recovery strategies and action/management plans.

Schedules of SARA are amended on a regular basis so it is important to check the SARA registry (www.sararegistry.gc.ca) to get the current status of a species.

Updated: September 2019

Terrestrial Species at Risk¹	COSEWIC Designation	Schedule of SARA	Government Organization with Primary Management Responsibility²
Migratory Birds			
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	Special Concern	Schedule 1	Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC)
Common Nighthawk	Threatened	Schedule 1	ECCC
Eskimo Curlew	Endangered	Schedule 1	ECCC
Harlequin Duck	Special Concern	Schedule 1	ECCC
Harris's Sparrow	Special Concern	Schedule 1	ECCC
Horned Grebe	Special Concern	Schedule 1	ECCC
Ivory Gull	Endangered	Schedule 1	ECCC
Olive-sided Flycatcher	Threatened	Schedule 1	ECCC
Peregrine Falcon	Special Concern	Schedule 1	ECCC
Red Knot Islandica Subspecies	Special Concern	Schedule 1	ECCC
Red-necked Phalarope	Special Concern	Schedule 1	ECCC
Ross's Gull	Threatened	Schedule 1	ECCC
Rusty Blackbird	Special Concern	Schedule 1	ECCC
Short-eared Owl	Special Concern	Schedule 1	ECCC
Vegetation			
Porsild's Bryum	Threatened	Schedule 1	Government of Nunavut (GN)
Arthropods			
Transverse Lady Beetle	Special Concern	No Schedule	GN
Terrestrial Wildlife			
Caribou (Dolphin and Union Population)	Endangered	Schedule 1	GN
Caribou (Barren-ground Population)	Threatened	No Schedule	GN
Caribou (Torngat Mountains Population)	Endangered	No Schedule	GN
Grizzly Bear (Western Population)	Special Concern	Schedule 1	ECCC
Peary Caribou	Endangered	Schedule 1	GN
Polar Bear	Special Concern	Schedule 1	ECCC
Wolverine	Special Concern	Schedule 1	GN
Marine Wildlife			
Atlantic Walrus (High Arctic Population)	Special Concern	No Schedule	Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)
Atlantic Walrus (Central/Low Arctic Population)	Special Concern	No Schedule	DFO
Beluga Whale (Cumberland Sound Population)	Threatened	Schedule 1	DFO
Beluga Whale (Eastern Hudson Bay Population)	Endangered	No Schedule	DFO

1 The Department of Fisheries and Oceans has responsibility for aquatic species.

2 Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) has a national role to play in the conservation and recovery of Species at Risk in Canada, as well as responsibility for management of birds described in the Migratory Birds Convention Act (MBCA). Day-to-day management of terrestrial species not covered in the MBCA is the responsibility of the Territorial Government. Populations that exist in National Parks are also managed under the authority of the Parks Canada Agency.

Terrestrial Species at Risk¹	COSEWIC Designation	Schedule of SARA	Government Organization with Primary Management Responsibility²
Beluga Whale (Eastern High Arctic-Baffin Bay Population)	Special Concern	No Schedule	DFO
Beluga Whale (Western Hudson Bay Population)	Special Concern	No Schedule	DFO
Fish			
Atlantic Cod (Arctic Lakes Population)	Special Concern	No Schedule	DFO
Fourhorn Sculpin (Freshwater Form)	Data Deficient	Schedule 3	DFO
Lumpfish	Threatened	No Schedule	DFO
Thorny Skate	Special Concern	No Schedule	DFO

APPENDIX B: ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND PALAEOONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR LAND USE PERMIT HOLDERS



INTRODUCTION

The Department of Culture and Heritage (CH) routinely reviews land use applications sent to the Nunavut Water Board, Nunavut Impact Review Board and the Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada. These terms and conditions provide general direction to the permittee/proponent regarding the appropriate actions to be taken to ensure the permittee/proponent carries out its role in the protection of Nunavut's archaeological and palaeontological resources.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- 1) The permittee/proponent shall have a professional archaeologist and/or palaeontologist perform the following **Functions** associated with the **Types of Development** listed below or similar development activities:

	Types of Development (See Guidelines below)	Function (See Guidelines below)
a)	Large scale prospecting	Archaeological/Palaeontological Overview Assessment
b)	Diamond drilling for exploration or geotechnical purpose or planning of linear disturbances	Archaeological/Palaeontological Overview Assessment and/or Inventory and Documentation and/or Mitigation
c)	Construction of linear disturbances, Extractive disturbances, Impounding disturbances and other land disturbance activities	Archaeological/Palaeontological Overview Assessment and/or Inventory and Documentation and/or Mitigation

Note that the above-mentioned functions require either a Nunavut Archaeologist Permit or a Nunavut Palaeontologist Permit. CH is authorized by way of the *Nunavut and Archaeological and Palaeontological Site Regulations*³ to issue such permits.

³ P.C. 2001-1111 14 June, 2001

- 2) The permittee/proponent shall not operate any vehicle over a known or suspected archaeological or palaeontological site.
- 3) The permittee/proponent shall not remove, disturb, or displace any archaeological artifact or site, or any fossil or palaeontological site.
- 4) The permittee/proponent shall immediately contact CH at (867) 934-2046 or (867) 975-5500 should an archaeological site or specimen, or a palaeontological site or fossil, be encountered or disturbed by any land use activity.
- 5) The permittee/proponent shall immediately cease any activity that disturbs an archaeological or palaeontological site encountered during the course of a land use operation until permitted to proceed with the authorization of CH.
- 6) The permittee/proponent shall follow the direction of CH in restoring disturbed archaeological or palaeontological sites to an acceptable condition. If these conditions are attached to either a Class A or B Permit under the Territorial Lands Act Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada directions will also be followed.
- 7) The permittee/proponent shall provide all information requested by CH concerning all archaeological sites or artifacts and all palaeontological sites and fossils encountered in the course of any land use activity.
- 8) The permittee/proponent shall make best efforts to ensure that all persons working under its authority are aware of these conditions concerning archaeological sites and artifacts and palaeontological sites and fossils.
- 9) If a list of recorded archaeological and/or palaeontological sites is provided to the permittee/proponent by CH as part of the review of the land use application the permittee/proponent shall avoid the archaeological and/or palaeontological sites listed.
- 10) Should a list of recorded sites be provided to the permittee/proponent, the information is provided solely for the purpose of the proponent's land use activities as described in the land use application, and must otherwise be treated confidentially by the proponent.

Legal Framework

As stated in Article 33 of the *Agreement between the Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area and Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada (Nunavut Agreement)*:

Where an application is made for a land use permit in the Nunavut Settlement Area, and there are reasonable grounds to believe that there could be sites of archaeological importance on the lands affected, no land use permit shall be issued without written consent of the Designated Agency. Such consent shall not be unreasonably withheld. [33.5.12]

Each land use permit referred to in Section 33.5.12 shall specify the plans and methods of archeological site protection and restoration to be followed by the permit holder, and any other conditions the Designated Agency may deem fit. [33.5.13]

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Under the *Nunavut Act*⁴, the federal government can make regulations for the protection, care and preservation of palaeontological and archaeological sites and specimens in Nunavut. Under the *Nunavut Archaeological and Palaeontological Sites Regulations*⁵, it is illegal to alter or disturb any palaeontological or archaeological site in Nunavut unless permission is first granted through the permitting process.

Definitions

As defined in the *Nunavut Archaeological and Palaeontological Sites Regulations*, the following definitions apply:

“archaeological site” means a place where an archaeological artifact is found.

“archaeological artifact” means any tangible evidence of human activity that is more than 50 years old and in respect of which an unbroken chain of possession or regular pattern of usage cannot be demonstrated, and includes a Denesuline archaeological specimen referred to in section 40.4.9 of the Agreement between the Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area and Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada (Nunavut Agreement).

“palaeontological site” means a site where a fossil is found.

“fossil” includes:

Fossil means the hardened or preserved remains or impression of previously living organisms or vegetation and includes:

- (a) natural casts;*
- (b) preserved tracks, coprolites and plant remains; and*
- (c) the preserved shells and exoskeletons of invertebrates and the preserved eggs, teeth and bones of vertebrates.*

Guidelines for Developers for the Protection of Archaeological Resources in the Nunavut Territory

(Note: Partial document only, complete document at: www.ch.gov.nu.ca/en/Archaeology.aspx)

Introduction

The following guidelines have been formulated to ensure that the impacts of proposed developments upon heritage resources are assessed and mitigated before ground surface altering activities occur. Heritage resources are defined as, but not limited to, archaeological and historical sites, burial grounds, palaeontological sites, historic buildings and cairns. Effective collaboration between the developer, the Department of Culture, and Heritage (CH), and the contract archaeologist(s) will ensure proper preservation of heritage resources in the Nunavut Territory. The roles of each are briefly described.

CH is the Nunavut Government agency which oversees the protection and management of heritage resources in Nunavut, in partnership with land claim authorities, regulatory agencies, and

⁴ s. 51(1)

⁵ P.C. 2001-1111 14 June, 2001

the federal government. Its role in mitigating impacts of developments on heritage resources is as follows: to identify the need for an impact assessment and make recommendations to the appropriate regulatory agency; set the terms of reference for the study depending upon the scope of the development; suggest the names of qualified individuals prepared to undertake the study to the developer; issue an archaeologist or palaeontologist permit authorizing field work; assess the completeness of the study and its recommendations; and ensure that the developer complies with the recommendations.

The primary regulatory agencies that CH provides information and assistance to are the Nunavut Impact Review Board, for development activities proposed for Inuit Owned Lands (as defined in Section 1.1.1 of the *Agreement between the Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area and Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada (Nunavut Agreement)*), and the Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, for development activities proposed for federal Crown Lands.

A developer is the initiator of a land use activity. It is the obligation of the developer to ensure that a qualified archaeologist or palaeontologist is hired to perform the required study and that provisions of the contract with the archaeologist or palaeontologist allow permit requirements to be met; i.e. fieldwork, collections management, artifact and specimen conservation, and report preparation. On the recommendation of the contract archaeologist or palaeontologist in the field and the Government of Nunavut, the developer shall implement avoidance or mitigative measures to protect heritage resources or to salvage the information they contain through excavation, analysis, and report writing. The developer assumes all costs associated with the study in its entirety.

Through his or her active participation and supervision of the study, the contract archaeologist or palaeontologist is accountable for the quality of work undertaken and the quality of the report produced. Facilities to conduct fieldwork, analysis, and report preparation should be available to this individual through institutional, agency, or company affiliations. Responsibility for the curation of objects recovered during field work while under study and for documents generated in the course of the study as well as remittance of artifacts, specimens and documents to the repository specified on the permit accrue to the contract archaeologist or palaeontologist. This individual is also bound by the legal requirements of the *Nunavut Archaeological and Palaeontological Sites Regulations*.

Types of Development

In general, those developments that cause concern for the safety of heritage resources will include one or more of the following kinds of surface disturbances. These categories, in combination, are comprehensive of the major kinds of developments commonly proposed in Nunavut. For any single development proposal, several kinds of these disturbances may be involved

- *Linear disturbances: including the construction of highways, roads, winter roads, transmission lines, and pipelines;*
- *Extractive disturbances: including mining, gravel removal, quarrying, and land filling;*
- *Impoundment disturbances: including dams, reservoirs, and tailings ponds;*

- *Intensive land use disturbances: including industrial, residential, commercial, recreational, and land reclamation work, and use of heritage resources as tourist developments.*
- *Mineral, oil and gas exploration: establishment of camps, temporary airstrips, access routes, well sites, or quarries all have potential for impacting heritage resources.*

Types of Studies Undertaken to Preserve Heritage Resources

Overview: An overview study of heritage resources should be conducted at the same time as the development project is being designed or its feasibility addressed. They usually lack specificity with regard to the exact location(s) and form(s) of impact and involve limited, if any, field surveys. Their main aim is to accumulate, evaluate, and synthesize the existing knowledge of the heritage of the known area of impact. The overview study provides managers with baseline data from which recommendations for future research and forecasts of potential impacts can be made. A Class I Permit is required for this type of study if field surveys are undertaken.

Reconnaissance: This is done to provide a judgmental appraisal of a region sufficient to provide the developer, the consultant, and government managers with recommendations for further development planning. This study may be implemented as a preliminary step to inventory and assessment investigations except in cases where a reconnaissance may indicate a very low or negligible heritage resource potential. Alternately, in the case of small-scale or linear developments, an inventory study may be recommended and obviate the need for a reconnaissance.

The main goal of a reconnaissance study is to provide baseline data for the verification of the presence of potential heritage resources, the determination of impacts to these resources, the generation of terms of reference for further studies and, if required, the advancement of preliminary mitigative and compensatory plans. The results of reconnaissance studies are primarily useful for the selection of alternatives and secondarily as a means of identifying impacts that must be mitigated after the final siting and design of the development project. Depending on the scope of the study, a Class 1 or Class 2 Permit is required for this type of investigation.

Inventory: A resource inventory is generally conducted at that stage in a project's development at which the geographical area(s) likely to sustain direct, indirect, and perceived impacts can be well defined. This requires systematic and intensive fieldwork to ascertain the effects of all possible and alternate construction components on heritage resources. All heritage sites must be recorded on Government of Nunavut Site Survey forms. Sufficient information must be amassed from field, library and archival components of the study to generate a predictive model of the heritage resource base that will:

- allow the identification of research and conservation opportunities;
- enable the developer to make planning decisions and recognize their likely effects on the known or predicted resources; and
- make the developer aware of the expenditures, which may be required for subsequent studies and mitigation. A Class 1 or 2 permit is required.

Assessment: At this stage, sufficient information concerning the numbers and locations of heritage resources will be available, as well as data to predict the forms and magnitude of impacts. Assessments provide information on the size, volume, complexity and content of a heritage resource, which is used to rank the values of different sites or site types given current archaeological knowledge. As this information will shape subsequent mitigation program(s), great care is necessary during this phase.

Mitigation: This refers to the amelioration of adverse impacts to heritage resources and involves the avoidance of impact through the redesign or relocation of a development or its components; the protection of the resource by constructing physical facilities; or, the scientific investigation and recovery of information from the resource by excavation or other method. The type(s) of appropriate mitigative measures are dictated by their viability in the context of the development project. Mitigation strategies must be developed in consultation with, and approved by, the Department of Culture and Heritage. It is important to note that mitigation activities should be initiated as far in advance of the construction of the development as possible.

Surveillance and monitoring: These may be required as part of the mitigation program.

Surveillance may be conducted during the construction phase of a project to ensure that the developer has complied with the recommendations.

Monitoring involves identification and inspection of residual and long-term impacts of a development (i.e. shoreline stability of a reservoir); or the use of impacts to disclose the presence of heritage resources, for example, the uncovering of buried sites during the construction of a pipeline.