



**NIRB File No.: 24XN038**  
NPC File No.: 150467

December 4, 2024

To: The Honourable Dan Vandal P.C.  
Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and  
Northern Affairs  
Government of Canada  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson  
Minister of Natural Resources  
Government of Canada  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

The Honourable Steven Guilbeault P.C.  
Minister of Environment and Climate Change  
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Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

The Honourable Anita Anand P.C.  
Minister of Transport  
Government of Canada  
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The Honourable Diane Lebouthillier P.C.  
Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and the  
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**Re: Screening Decision for West Kitikmeot Resources Corp.'s "Grays Bay Road and Port" Project Proposal, Kitikmeot Region**

Dear Honourable Ministers

On August 6, 2024, the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB or Board) received a referral to screen West Kitikmeot Resources Corp.'s (WKR) "Grays Bay Road and Port" project proposal from the Nunavut Planning Commission (NPC or Commission), which noted that the project proposal is outside the area of an applicable regional land use plan.

Pursuant to Article 12, Sections 12.4.1 and 12.4.4 of the *Agreement between the Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area and Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada (Nunavut Agreement)* and s. 87 of the *Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act*, S.C. 2013, c. 14, s. 2 (*NuPPAA*), the NIRB commenced screening this project proposal and assigned it file number **24XN038**.

Following the assessment of all material information, taking into account the information the Proponent and parties have provided to date, and taking into account the Board's determination of the significance of potential adverse ecosystemic or socio-economic impacts of the project<sup>1</sup> it is the opinion of the NIRB that as set out in Article 12, Section 12.4.4(b) of the *Nunavut Agreement* and ss. 89(1)(a)(i) and 89(1) (ii) of the *NuPPAA*, the West Kitikmeot Resources Corp.'s (WKR) "Grays Bay Road and Port" project proposal **requires a Review** under Article 12, Part 5 or Part 6 of the *Nunavut Agreement* and Part 3 of the *NuPPAA*.

Accordingly, the NIRB is issuing the attached Screening Decision Report dated December 4, 2024, to the responsible Ministers. The Screening Decision Report provides, among other things, the regulatory framework, project overview, the NIRB's assessment process, factors relevant for the determining significance of impacts, as well as the Board's views, determination, and conclusions.

Please note that the project proposal is not attached; however, an electronic copy of the project proposal is accessible online from the NIRB's Public Registry at [www.nirb.ca/project/125987](http://www.nirb.ca/project/125987).

As a result of feedback provided through the screening process, the NIRB has identified that the following issues may need to also be addressed by the Responsible Ministers:

- Parties have identified concerns with respect to potential cumulative effects resulting from this proposed project associated with increased levels of mineral development in the Kitikmeot Region, noting that this would require further analysis and warrant special consideration during the Review for this Project.
- Other major development projects currently under Review by the NIRB have the potential to confuse or complicate the assessment of the Grays Bay Road and Port Project, specifically the proposed Bathurst Inlet Port and Road (BIPR) Project (NIRB File No. 03UN114) and the Izok Corridor Project (NIRB File No. 12MN043). Given the nature of the proposals, clarification may be necessary from the respective project proponents regarding implications to the feasibility of their proposals, should the Grays Bay Road and Port Project be approved to proceed.
- If approved to proceed, the Grays Bay Road and Port Project may contribute to an increase in shipping and increase the frequency and amounts of goods and fuel being shipped into and through the Kitikmeot Region. Measures for accident prevention, spill response capabilities, and the effects of climate change on the open water shipping season within the Kitikmeot Region will warrant special consideration during the Review for the Project.
- Multiple parties have raised concerns regarding the project's location in relation to the calving, post-calving, and migratory areas of the Bathurst Caribou Herd. Comments received during the screening for this project proposal have demonstrated that potential adverse impacts on caribou and caribou habitat is a matter of significant interest and

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<sup>1</sup>Significance was assessed by the NIRB with regard to the factors outlined in s. 90 of the *NuPPAA*.

concern among members of the public, Inuit, and other Indigenous groups, and other stake holders. The Board has determined that an in-depth assessment of this proposed project and its potential for inducing further development projects is necessary.

- The proposed project has the potential for transboundary effects due to the potential for effects on the Bathurst caribou herd, and the potential connection to a possible all-weather road in the Northwest Territories in the future. Further there is potential for increases in shipping due to resupply for annual fuel and supplies during the open water season.
- It is the NIRB's opinion that there are several important factors associated with the further review of the Proposal that highlight the need for participant funding during the assessment, including: the range and scope of the potential impacts of the Proposal, the impacts to the Bathurst and Dolphin and Union caribou herds, and the capacity issues identified by the Board, community organizations, and community members during recent NIRB assessments. Additionally, many of groups asserting constitutionally protected s. 35 rights within Nunavut have clearly stated that they would require participant funding in order to fully participate in the NIRB's process and the Board recognizes the participant funding as a vital mechanism in promoting effective participation by potentially affected groups in any future Review of this proposal.

The NIRB remains available for consultation with the Ministers regarding this report as necessary. If you have any questions or require clarification, please do not hesitate to contact the NIRB's Executive Director, Dionne Filiatrault at (867) 983-4608 or [dfiliatrault@nirb.ca](mailto:dfiliatrault@nirb.ca).

Sincerely,



Kaviq Kaluraq  
Chairperson  
Nunavut Impact Review Board

Enclosure (1): Screening Decision Report, NIRB File No.: 24XN038 (December 4, 2024)

cc: Lootie Toomasie, Chairperson, Nunavut Water Board  
Robert Greenley, President, Kitikmeot Inuit Association  
The Honourable PJ Akeeagok, Minister of Culture and Heritage  
The Honourable David Joanasie, Minister of Environment