



NIRB File No.: 25YN001
NPC File No.: 150581

March 12, 2025

Randall Scharien
University of Victoria
3800 Finnerty Road
Victoria, BC V8P 5C2

Sent via email: randy@uvic.ca

Re: Notice of Screening for University of Victoria’s “Sikunnguaq – The Likeness or Image of Ice in Maps” Project Proposal

Dear Randall Scharien:

On February 7, 2025, the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) received a referral to screen University of Victoria’s “Sikunnguaq – The Likeness or Image of Ice in Maps” project proposal from the Nunavut Planning Commission, with an accompanying positive conformity determination with the North Baffin Regional Land Use Plan. On February 7, 2025, the NIRB received the complete application from the Proponent.

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 has commenced screening this project proposal and has assigned it file number **25YN001** - please reference this file number in all future related correspondence.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

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/126079.

Project:	Sikunnguaq – The Likeness or Image of Ice in Maps
Region:	Kitikmeot and Qikiqtani Regions
Location:	Dease Strait off the Coast of Cambridge Bay, Rasmussen Basin off the Coast of Gjoa Haven, Eclipse Sound off the Coast of Pond Inlet, and on the Sea Ice south of Qikiqtarjuaq

Closest Community:	Cambridge Bay, Gjoa Haven, Qikiqtarjuaq, and Pond Inlet
Summary of Project Description:	The Proponent intends to conduct research to develop sea ice information for satellite data to allow for safe sea ice travel needs, create image layers for map-makers in communities, and produce satellite and related training materials for satellite remote sensing technologies. This information would support <i>Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit</i> for mapping safe sea ice travel, and may improve health, safety, and climate resilience.
Project Proposed Timeline:	March 4 2025 to May 20, 2026

According to the project proposal, the scope of the project includes the following undertakings, works, or activities:

- Proposed project activities would measure snow and sea ice properties on areas of sea ice near the four (4) participating communities, making day trips by snowmobile from research stations and local accommodations to understand how sea ice features related to safe travel could be identified in new satellite technologies, focused on a radar-based satellite technology called synthetic aperture radar (SAR).
 - Up to 12 snowmobiles to access field sites from project communities in 2025 and 2026;
 - Up to 4 surveying drones to map sea ice surface roughness including a LIDAR drone;
 - Use of various devices for measuring interference regarding the sea ice/slush and water thickness;
 - Up to 4 electromagnet induction (EM-31)
 - Up to 2 Geophex Ltd. multi-frequency electromagnetic sensor;
 - Collection of data related to air, snow, sea ice thickness, water temperature using various tools:
 - Up to 4 thermistor-based stationary sensor (ice buoy)
 - Up to 4 engine drive, kovacs 2-stroke core barrel engine drive;
 - Up to 4 ice coring systems to retrieve 9cm diameter up to 1m long;
 - Up to 4 ice thickness kits - 2 auger flights (50cm each), a 50cm extension rod, a handbrace, and an ice thickness measuring tape;
 - Up to 4 snow pit kit, each kit containing a foldable shovel, ruler, snow grain card, battery operated temperature probe, brush, cloth and notebook;
 - Use of 1 GNSS receiver, an emlid reach RTK GNSS receiver;
 - Up to 2 hydraprobe snow sensor, a battery operated probe for measuring moisture and electrical conductivity of snow for remote sensing studies;
 - Use of 1 SLF snow sensor, a capacitive sensor for measuring snow density in snow pits.
 - Use of 80 liters of gasoline for refueling snowmobiles from research camps or community fuel farms; and
 - All waste would be brought back to the community for proper disposal.

Inclusion or Exclusion of 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.

REQUEST FOR COMMENTS

All documents received can be accessed from the NIRB's online public registry at www.nirb.ca/project/126079 and include:

- *NPC Referral Application*
- *Non-Technical Summary*
- *Community Briefing Note*
- *Community Involvement and Regional Benefits Statement*
- *Ekaluktutiak HTO Letter of Support*
- *Ikirmiut Qikiqtarjuaq Letter of Support*
- *Municipality of Cambridge Bay Letter of Support*
- *NIRB Application*
- *Project Description*
- *Sikumiut Pond Inlet Letter of Support*

The NIRB will copy you on screening process related correspondence and upload related documents to the NIRB's online registry for public access. The NIRB may request additional information at any time during the process.

The NIRB is copying parties and municipalities potentially affected by University of Victoria project proposal with this letter, and we invite interested parties to comment directly to the NIRB by **March 24, 2025**.

The NIRB would like parties to provide comments 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.

Please note that *proposed* project-specific terms and conditions, should the project proceed, have been attached for consideration and comment ([Appendix A](#)).

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please send your comments to the NIRB via email at info@nirb.ca, via fax at (867) 983-2594 or via the individual project dashboard for this assessment on the NIRB's Public Registry at www.nirb.ca/project/126079.

If you have any questions or require clarification, feel free to contact the undersigned at (867) 983 4618 or rquammaniq@nirb.ca.

Sincerely,



Robby Qammaniq
Impact Assessment Officer
Nunavut Impact Review Board

Attachments: Appendix A: *Proposed* Project Specific Terms and Conditions

Enclosures (6): Public Notice of Screening (English, Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun)
Comment Forms (English, Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun)

cc: Distribution List
Wynter Kuliktana, Kitikmeot Inuit Association
Tannis Bolt, Kitikmeot Inuit Association
Jared Ottenhof, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Chris Spencer, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Conor Goddard, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Joel Fortier, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Assol Kubeisinova, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Justin Buller, Government of Nunavut
Dianne Lapierre, Government of Nunavut
Sean Joseph, Government of Nunavut
Jonas Azonaha, Government of Nunavut
Mosha Cote, Nunavut Research Institute
Tracey McCaie, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada
Marcus Bermann, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada
Lisa Pirie, Canadian Wildlife Service
Eva Walker, Environment and Climate Change Canada
Marie-Claude Martel, Parks Canada
Maryse Mahy, Parks Canada
Jose Audet-Lecouffe, Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Ekaluktutiak Hunters and Trappers Organization
Qikiqtarjuaq Hunters and Trappers Association
Gjoa Haven Hunters and Trappers Organization
Mittimatalik Hunters and Trappers Organization
Municipality of Cambridge Bay
Municipality of Gjoa Haven
Municipality of Pond Inlet
Municipality of Qikiqtarjuaq
Ikirmiut Qikiqtarjuaq SmartICE Community Management Committee
Sikumiut Mittimatalik SmartICE Community Management Committee

Appendix A: Proposed Project Specific Terms and Conditions

The following is a list of project-specific terms and conditions which, should the project proceed, may be recommended to be attached to any approval.

General

1. University of Victoria (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.: 150581), and the NIRB (Online Application Form, February 7, 2025). 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.

Water courses/Water bodies (including fresh and marine waters)

6. The Proponent shall not deposit, nor permit the deposit of any fuel, chemicals, wastes (including wastewater) or sediment into any water body. The Proponent should have in place an Emergency Spill Response Plan that is approved by the appropriate authorizing agency(ies).

Waste Management

7. 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

8. 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.

Wildlife – General

9. The Proponent shall not substantially alter or damage or destroy any wildlife habitat in conducting this operation unless otherwise authorized by the appropriate authorizing agencies.
10. The Proponent shall not chase, weary, harass or molest wildlife. This includes persistently circling, chasing, hovering over, pursuing or in any other way harass wildlife, or disturbing large groups of animals.

11. The Proponent shall not hunt or fish, unless proper Nunavut authorizations have been acquired.

Migratory Birds and Raptors Disturbance

12. The Proponent shall carry out all phases of the project in a manner that protects migratory birds and avoids harming, killing or disturbing migratory birds or destroying, disturbing or taking their nests or eggs. In this regard, the Proponent shall take into account Environment and Climate Change Canada's *Avoidance Guidelines*. The Proponent's actions in applying the *Avoidance Guidelines* shall be in compliance with the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994* and with the *Species at Risk Act*.

Caribou and Muskoxen Disturbance

13. The Proponent shall avoid interfering with any paths or crossings known to be frequented by caribou during periods of migration as identified by current land use plans in place and/or by Inuit Qaujimaningit.
14. The Proponent shall not locate any operation or undertake activities that could block or cause any diversion to migration of caribou or muskoxen.
15. The Proponent shall immediately cease activities likely to interfere with the migration or calving of caribou or muskoxen until such time as the caribou or muskox have passed.

Land Use and Restoration of Disturbed Areas

16. The Proponent shall use existing trails where possible during project activities on the land.
17. The Proponent shall ensure that the land use area is kept clean and tidy at all times.
18. The Proponent shall avoid disturbance on slopes prone to natural erosion, and alternative locations shall be utilized.
19. The Proponent shall remove all garbage, fuel and equipment at the end of each field season and/or upon completion of work and/or upon abandonment.

Marine-Based Activities

20. The Proponent shall suspend all project activities should any dead fish or wildlife (both marine and terrestrial), or any injured wildlife be observed during any works or activities in and around the marine waters. Activities may only be resumed on the recommendation of the authorizing agencies.
21. The Proponent shall report all incidents, injuries or sightings of marine mammals to the appropriate authorizing agencies.

Heritage Sites

22. 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.
23. The Proponent shall ensure that all clients and staff are aware of the Proponent's responsibilities and requirements regarding archaeological or palaeontological sites that are encountered during land-based activities. This should include briefings explaining the prohibitions regarding removal of artifacts, and defacing or writing on rocks and infrastructure.

Other

24. The Proponent should engage with local residents regarding planned activities in the area and should solicit available Inuit Qaujimaningit and information regarding current recreational and traditional usage of the project area which may inform project activities. Posting of translated public notices and direct engagement with potentially interested groups and individuals prior to undertaking project activities is strongly encouraged.
25. 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.
26. The Proponent shall ensure that project activities do not interfere with Inuit wildlife harvesting or traditional land use activities.
27. The Proponent should, to the extent possible, hire local people and access local services where possible.