

**Project title**

Inuinnait Heritage

**Applicant name and contact information**

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**Number of personnel and/or visitors that will be covered under the permit**

1 - Helicopter pilot  
2 – Mabel Etegik, Elder  
3 – Mary Kaotalok, Elder  
4 – David Kaosoni, Elder  
5 – Emily Angulalik, Executive Director, PI/KHS  
6 – Darren Keith, Senior Researcher, PI/KHS  
7 – Max Friesen, Professor, University of Toronto  
(please note: if helicopter capacity allows, we may bring one or two additional Elders or interviewers)

**Project objectives**

The Inuinnait Heritage Project is a long-term collaboration between the Pitquhirnikkut Ilihautiniq / Kitikmeot Heritage Society (PI/KHS) of Cambridge Bay, with archaeologists from the University of Toronto, focused on heritage research in Nunavut. We have been working together since 1999, reconstructing history in the area through Traditional Knowledge with Elders from Cambridge Bay, and archaeology. The primary objective of the proposed 2025 work in Ahiak Migratory Bird Sanctuary is to record oral histories with several Inuinnait Elders who spent their younger years here. The information will be used for PI/KHS programming.

**Project location**

Ahiak Migratory Bird Sanctuary. We will be concentrated in a limited area near the north end of the Perry River, and at Innakhagvik (Perry Island). Please see attached map.

**Proposed date and duration of visit to each protected area**

July 11 and 12, 2025. If the 2025 project is a success, we also may return for two additional days in summer 2026 or 2027.

**Method of transportation(s)**

Helicopter. We plan two separate day trips from Cambridge Bay. On each day, we will spend approximately 5 hours in Ahiak Migratory Bird Sanctuary. The helicopter will only be used for brief ferrying between stops, and will be shut down most of the time.

### **Summary of activities and rationale**

For each of the two days, a helicopter with 4-5 people (pilot, 1-2 Elders, 1-2 PI/KHS researchers) will fly to Ahiak. We will set down at approximately 3 locations each day and interview Elders there. If any of the Elders indicate that an interview location should be recorded, we will map and photograph archaeological features there. For example, there is an Inuit goose drive structure consisting of stone walls and caches near the CWS camp – we will record this if time permits. However, the Elders interviews are the priority.

### **Waste disposal**

These will only be day trips, so all garbage will be removed back to Cambridge Bay daily. We will not generate significant amounts of sewage. Helicopter fuel will be cached at the CWS Perry River camp landing strip, with other helicopter fuel used in annual goose banding operations. Empty fuel drums will be removed at the end of the summer.

### **Potential environmental impacts and mitigation measures**

The main type of potential environmental impact will be disturbance of birds from the helicopter flights. To reduce these impacts we will follow all CWS guidelines for flights, including avoiding areas with dense nesting sites. We will fly as little as possible while in Ahiak; the helicopter will be used to fly between interview locations, but will be shut down for most of the time. Also, our helicopter and pilot will be supplied by the Polar Continental Shelf Project; this helicopter will be the same one used for Canadian Wildlife Service goose banding at Ahiak, so the helicopter company and pilot will be aware of special procedures to be used in Ahiak.

### **Measures to avoid dangerous wildlife encounters**

We will avoid all potential encounters where possible, particularly with bears. If bears are seen from the air, we will not land at a particular location. No food will be stored outside the helicopter. We will carry a firearm for protection, but will not use it unless absolutely necessary.

### **Community consultation and involvement**

This project was initiated by the Pitquhirnikkut Ilihautiniq / Kitikmeot Heritage Society (PI/KHS) of Cambridge Bay, and represents Inuinait research priorities. Over the years, we have collected Traditional Knowledge with Elders in many locations, but Perry River is a top priority. Many Elders grew up at Perry River, and wish to record their memories soon. A majority of the individuals on the helicopter flights will be Inuinait from Cambridge Bay. The knowledge gained from these trips will be kept by the PI/KHS in Cambridge Bay, and used for public programming.

### **Future plans within the protected area**

Our initial plan is for these two day-trips in 2025. However, if they are successful we may wish to return for an additional two days in 2026 or 2027. Therefore, we are applying for a 3-year permit.