



NIRB File No.: 25YN009

NIRB Public Registry Link: www.nirb.ca/project/126158

NPC File No.: 150638

June 5, 2025

Danica Hogan
Canadian Wildlife Service
P.O. Box 2310
Yellowknife, NWT
X1A-2P7

Sent via email: danica.hogan@ec.gc.ca

Re: Notice of Screening for Canadian Wildlife Service’s “Marine Acoustic Monitoring in Akpait and Qaulluit NWAs” project proposal

Dear Danica Hogan:

The Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) received a referral to screen Canadian Wildlife Service’s “Marine Acoustic Monitoring in Akpait and Qaulluit NWAs [National Wildlife Areas]” project proposal from:

- The Nunavut Planning Commission on March 3, 2025, noting positive conformity.
- The NIRB received a complete application on March 25, 2025, and assigned it file number **25YN009** - please reference this file number in all future related correspondence.

The NIRB has commenced screening the project proposal pursuant to the *Nunavut Agreement* and *Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act*¹ and by copy of this letter, **invites interested parties and municipalities potentially affected by the proposal to comment directly to the Nunavut Impact Review Board.**

SCOPE OF PROPOSED PROJECT

Location	Qikiqtani region, Akpait and Qaulluit National Wildlife Areas (NWAs), 130 kilometers (km) and 100 Northwest of Qikiqtarjuaq, respectively.
Objective	The Proponent intends to install a marine acoustic recorder at each of the National Wildlife Areas, Akpait and Qaulluit, to collect data about the noise level that vessels give off while traveling through the National Wildlife Areas

¹ 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*)

	and to determine the marine mammal species that occupy these Areas to be used as baseline data for these two Areas.
Timeline	July 2025 to August 2027, seasonal, multi-year (2 days per year).

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

- Researchers would stay at the research facility while in Qikiqtarjuaq,
- Travel to both Akpiat and Qaqqulluit National Wildlife Areas from Qikiqtarjuaq by boat operated by a local outfitter,
- Refuel the boat with gasoline while going to and from the National Wildlife Areas,
- Install a Soundtrap ST 600 marine acoustic recorder at a depth of 30 to 100 meters at each of the National Wildlife Areas attached to a float and a 25-pound iron plate,
- Install an acoustic recorder at both locations to record underwater noise for 5 minutes every 30 minutes for a year. Retrieve the acoustic recorder to collect the data, then to submerge it again for another year of data collection for two (2) years.
- Use of local accommodations.

Inclusion or Exclusion of Scoping List

The NIRB has identified no additional work 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

Documents received and describing the proposal can be accessed from the NIRB’s online public registry at www.nirb.ca/project/126158 and include:

- *NPC Conformity Determination letter,*
- *NPC Project Application,* and
- *Project Description.*

The NIRB may request additional information at any time during the process.

By copy of this letter, the NIRB is inviting interested parties and municipalities potentially affected by the project proposal to comment directly to the NIRB **June 16, 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.

- Any matter of importance to the Party related to the project proposal including if a Review is required any additional factors that should be considered as part of that process.

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 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 online public registry at www.nirb.ca/project/126158. Questions should be directed to the undersigned at (867) 983 – 4618 or rqammaniq@nirb.ca.

Sincerely,

Robby Qammaniq
Impact Assessment Officer
Nunavut Impact Review Board

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

Enclosures (2): Public Notice of Screening (English)
Comment Forms (English, and Inuktitut)

cc: Distribution List
Carson Gillis, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated
Dustin Fredlund, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated
Jorgan Aitaok, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated
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
Lisa Pirie, Government of Canada, Canadian Wildlife Services

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. Canadian Wildlife Services (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.: 150638) and the NIRB (Online Application Form, March 25, 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 ensure that no disturbance of the stream bed, lakebed or the banks of any definable watercourse be permitted, except where deemed necessary for maintaining project-specific operational commitments or approved by a responsible authority in cases of spill management.
7. 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

8. 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

9. 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

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 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.
13. 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.

Marine-Based Activities

14. The Proponent shall not attempt to intersect or interfere with the movements of marine mammals. This includes ensuring that there are no wake zones within 250 metres and a minimum of 100 metre no go zone around marine mammals. Strategic positioning of vessels ahead of the path being traveled by mobile mammals and waiting for the mammals to pass is also prohibited.
15. 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.
16. The Proponent shall report all incidents, injuries or sightings of marine mammals to the appropriate authorizing agencies.

Other

17. 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.
18. The Proponent shall ensure that project activities do not interfere with Inuit wildlife harvesting or traditional land use activities.
19. The Proponent should, to the extent possible, hire local people and access local services where possible.