



NOTICE OF SCREENING OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

NIRB File No.: 25YN017

Project Name: The “Mars Exploring through Analog-site Drilling (MEAD)” project
Proponent Name: NASA Ames Research Center
Project Type: Research Region: Qikiqtani (North Baffin) Region
Public Registry: www.nirb.ca Application No.: 126161
Comment Deadline: **May 9, 2025**

PROJECT SCOPE:

The proposed “Mars Exploring through Analog-site Drilling (MEAD)” project is located within the Qikiqtani region, approximately 175 kilometres (km) from Resolute Bay. Proponent intends to MEAD drilling to excite the local surface to create a shallow seismic map and collect small samples to study microbial population changes at different depths. This information would enable future Mars and lunar missions to generate target maps before drilling and sampling. The program is proposed to take place in August 2025. The scope of this proposed project as identified by the NIRB includes the following undertakings, works or activities:

- Use of a low-power drill to drill up to four (4) shallow holes (less than 1 meter) for sampling and local seismic vibration at two (2) sites;
- Use of geophones to create shallow seismic map;
- Use of a tool called SOLID to search for tiny life signs;
- Use of a tool called ARIA to detect minerals and organic changes in crater rocks;

Please visit the NIRB’s public registry online at the link above and look up NIRB File No.: **25YN017** to access all project information, maps, and public comment forms.

REQUEST FOR COMMENTS

You are invited to provide the NIRB with your comments regarding whether the proposed project is:

- likely to arouse significant public concern and, if so, why;
- likely to cause significant adverse ecosystemic or socio-economic effects and, if so, why;
- likely to cause significant adverse impacts on wildlife habitat or Inuit harvest activities and, if so, why;
- a type where the potential adverse effects are highly predictable and can be prevented/managed appropriately with known technology.

Parties are also invited to recommend any specific mitigation measures they feel would be appropriate, and to bring any other matter of importance related to this project proposal to the NIRB’s attention.

CONTACT INFORMATION

The NIRB has recently launched an updated online public registry, and parties can access project information as well as submit comments directly to the NIRB via www.nirb.ca. Comments can still be submitted directly to the NIRB via email at info@nirb.ca or via fax to (867) 983-2594.

If you have any questions or require clarification regarding the proposed project or the NIRB’s screening process, please contact Kelli Gillard, Manager Impact Assessment toll-free at 1-866-233-3033 or kgillard@nirb.ca.