



New

Scientific Research

Saturday, April 12, 2025

from 2025-05-26 to 2035-03-22

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ᐅᓂᓕᓴᓄᓪᓗ: Arctic char, a culturally and economically vital species, is the most harvested species of wildlife in Nunavut, serving both subsistence and commercial needs for Inuit. Despite this importance, many knowledge gaps remain with respect to Arctic char biology and ecology, especially regarding movements and habitat use in both freshwater and marine environments. To address these knowledge gaps, we are continuing a 2023 project using acoustic telemetry to study the migratory ecology of sea-run Arctic char in Rankin Inlet, Kivalliq region, Nunavut. Specifically, we will continue acoustically tagging and subsequently tracking Arctic char from two river systems (Diana and Meliadine) using a fixed-acoustic array in Rankin Inlet to address key questions regarding the migration, dispersal, home ranges, and habitat use of this species. These results will provide critical insights into key marine habitats and migration timing, all of which will provide important baselines for future monitoring as habitats in the area continue to be influenced by climate change. Further, we will continue to study the migratory ecology of biologically important marine fish species, including Greenland cod, marine sculpins, lumpfish, and capelin within the area to examine critical marine habitats and movement patterns within Rankin Inlet and along western Hudson Bay more generally to assess how these species may be influenced by climate change. All told, these results may have important implications for informing management strategies pertaining to assessing the mixing of Arctic char populations harvested at discrete locations in the region, and furthering our understanding of marine and freshwater movements and habitat use by these species, including areas critical for feeding, spawning and overwintering. Additionally, microplastic pollution is a contaminant of emerging Arctic concern. These small particles (<5 mm) have been identified in environmental compartments ranging from glacier ice to the stomachs of Arctic fishes. While it is clear microplastics are present in the Arctic, it is unclear which organisms are most susceptible, and whether ingested microplastics can expose organisms to toxic plastic additives. This is of concern for Northern communities given their reliance on traditional country food sources and the environment. Therefore, our team has worked closely with the Kivalliq Wildlife Board and the communities of Rankin Inlet and Sanikiluaq to better understand the burden of microplastics and plastic additives in the Hudson Bay marine food webs. Here, we build on existing work in the area to better understand the prevalence of microplastics and their additives as co-contaminants in Arctic marine fishes in Rankin Inlet (northwestern Hudson Bay) and Sanikiluaq (southeastern Hudson Bay). We propose to conduct field sampling of Arctic char, Greenland cod, marine sculpins, capelin, and zooplankton in collaboration with northern partners to help address these questions.

▷ΔΑΝΩ: N/A.

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Operations Phase: from 2025-05-26 to 2035-03-22

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ᑲᓴᑦᑎᑭᑦᑭᑦ	Andre Aokaot	Kangigliniq Hunters and	2025-01-23

		Trappers Organization	
ᑲᓐᓴᓐᓴᓐᓴᓐ	Kivalliq Wildlife Board	Stanley Adjuk/Amy Kaludjak	2024-11-16
ᓴᓐᓴᓐᓴᓐᓴᓐ	Luccasie Arragutainaq	Sanikiluaq Hunters and Trappers Association	2024-11-26

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Hunters and Trappers Associations/Organizations	The Kangiqliniq Hunters and Trappers Organization supported our proposed research in Rankin Inlet.	Active	2025-01-23	2026-04-01
Hunters and Trappers Associations/Organizations	The Kivalliq Wildlife Board supported our proposed research in Rankin Inlet.	Active	2024-11-16	2026-04-01
Hunters and Trappers Associations/Organizations	The Sanikiluaq Hunters and Trappers Association supported our proposed research in Sanikiluaq.	Active	2024-11-26	2026-04-01
ᐃᕐᕐᕐ ᐃᕐᕐᕐᕐᕐ ᐃᕐᕐᕐᕐᕐᕐᕐ	Applied to the DFO Arctic animal care committee for an approved animal use protocol for all sampling and work that will be conducted within our research project. Committee has reviewed our application and will provide a decision in April 2025.	Applied, Decision Pending	2025-02-18	2026-04-01
ᐃᕐᕐᕐ ᐃᕐᕐᕐᕐᕐ ᐃᕐᕐᕐᕐᕐᕐᕐ	Applied to the DFO Arctic licensing group for an approved license to fish for scientific purposes for all sampling and work that will be conducted within our research project. Committee has reviewed our application and will provide a decision upon approval of our projects by the	Applied, Decision Pending	2025-02-18	2026-04-01

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Additional Information

SECTION A1: Project Info

SECTION A2: Allweather Road

SECTION A3: Winter Road

SECTION B1: Project Info

SECTION B2: Exploration Activity

SECTION B3: Geosciences

SECTION B4: Drilling

SECTION B5: Stripping

SECTION B6: Underground Activity

SECTION B7: Waste Rock

SECTION B8: Stockpiles

SECTION B9: Mine Development

SECTION B10: Geology

SECTION B11: Mine

SECTION B12: Mill

SECTION C1: Pits

SECTION D1: Facility

SECTION D2: Facility Construction

SECTION D3: Facility Operation

SECTION D4: Vessel Use

SECTION E1: Offshore Survey

SECTION E2: Nearshore Survey

SECTION E3: Vessel Use

SECTION F1: Site Cleanup

SECTION G1: Well Authorization

SECTION G2: Onland Exploration

SECTION G3: Offshore Exploration

SECTION G4: Rig

SECTION H1: Vessel Use

SECTION H2: Disposal At Sea

SECTION I1: Municipal Development

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In both Rankin Inlet and Sanikiluaq, there are trails from the community to our locations of sampling in each respective community. These trails are maintained by the local municipalities for use to access subsistence harvesting locations near the communities.

[illegible]

Typical Arctic species (caribou, polar bears, seals, whales, fish, birds, small mammals, medium mammals, mosses, lichens, flowers) can be found in proximity to all of our sampling sites in Rankin Inlet and Sanikiluaq.

[illegible]

Our locations of sampling in each community are areas of local importance for subsistence and economic harvesting of fish species (majority being for Arctic char). These locations have been selected by the respective community HTO/HTA's to learn more about the wildlife species they harvest and consume through the examination of movement patterns, diet, and contaminant loads. Given unemployment rates in both Rankin Inlet and Sanikiluaq are moderate, our research project will hire up to three local individuals from the respective communities to assist with all field-related work.

Miscellaneous Project Information

Our scientific research is developed and guided alongside co-management partners (HTO/HTA/RWOs). We DO NOT conduct any research that these bodies have not been in support of, nor at locations that they have not been supportive of. We are in constant communication with the respective local bodies throughout the year, providing dates research will occur, research plans (that have already been approved), providing updates on work completed to date and results when available in the form of plain language summaries and reports shared to local HTO/HTA/RWOs and the communities as a whole.

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There are no foreseeable impacts of this research that are negative - all impacts of our scientific research are positive as they assist in the conservation, management, and understanding of marine species such as fish and invertebrates.

Cumulative Effects

There are no foreseeable cumulative effects of this research that are negative - all effects of our scientific research are positive as they assist in the conservation, management, and understanding of marine species

such as fish and invertebrates.

Impacts

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($P = \langle b \rangle_{\mathcal{A} \cap \mathcal{C} \cap \mathcal{B} \cap \mathcal{D}}$, $N = \langle b \rangle_{\mathcal{A} \cap \mathcal{C} \cap \mathcal{B} \cap \mathcal{D}}$, $M = \langle b \rangle_{\mathcal{A} \cap \mathcal{C} \cap \mathcal{B} \cap \mathcal{D}}$, $U = \langle b \rangle_{\mathcal{A} \cap \mathcal{C} \cap \mathcal{B} \cap \mathcal{D}}$)



List of Project Geometries

- 1 polygon Location where sampling with occur in the large lake in the Sanikiluaq area.
- 2 polygon Location where sampling with occur in the southern extent of the Sanikiluaq area.
- 3 polygon Location where sampling with occur in the northern extent of the Sanikiluaq area.
- 4 polygon Location where sampling with occur in the northern extent of the Belcher Islands.
- 5 polygon Location where sampling with occur in the Rankin Inlet area.