



NIRB File No.: 25YN043

NIRB Public Registry Link: [www.nirb.ca/project/126201](http://www.nirb.ca/project/126201)

NPC File No.: 150704

July 25, 2025

Les Harris  
Fisheries and Oceans Canada  
501 University Crescent  
Winnipeg, MB R3T 2N6  
Canada

Sent via email: [les.n.harris@dfo-mpo.gc.ca](mailto:les.n.harris@dfo-mpo.gc.ca)

**Re: Notice of Screening and Comment Request**

Dear Les Harris:

The Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) received a referral to screen Fisheries and Oceans Canada's "Monitoring the movement, habitat use, and overall health and function of Arctic fishes across freshwater and marine ecosystems in the Cambridge Bay area" project proposal:

- May 5, 2025, the Nunavut Planning Commission (Commission) noted that this project proposal is outside the area of an applicable regional land use plan, and
- July 9, 2025, the NIRB received a complete application and assigned it a file number **25YN043** - 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*<sup>1</sup> and by copy of this letter, **invites interested parties and municipalities potentially affected by the proposal to comment directly to the Nunavut Impact Board.**

SCOPE OF PROPOSED PROJECT

<b>Location</b>	Kitikmeot region, <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Waters near Cambridge Bay, including Wellington Bay and Ferguson Lake (0-60 kilometres (km) from Cambridge Bay)</li><li>• Jayko River commercial fishery study site (approximately 100 km northeast of Cambridge Bay)</li></ul>
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<sup>1</sup> 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)

<b>Objective</b>	The Proponent intends to conduct comprehensive research on Arctic fish, including studies in ecotoxicology, physiology, acoustic tracking, and habitat use.
<b>Timeline</b>	March 2025, to May 2035 ( <i>multi-year</i> )

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

- **Transportation**
  - Using up to seven (7) all-terrain vehicles and one (1) rental pickup truck for moving personnel, and equipment, between sampling locations and the hamlet.
  - Using four (4) snowmobiles for transportation during winter months to the sampling locations.
  - Using local boats, contracted through the Ekaluktutiak Hunters and Trappers Organization (EHTO), to access receiver locations.
  - Using existing trails maintained by local municipalities to access sampling locations.
- **Fuel**
  - Using 300 liters of gasoline for refueling of equipment with a total summer use of 1000 liters of gasoline for ATVs, snowmachines, rented local boats, and small generators.
- **Sampling, Monitoring, and Data Collection**
  - Using up to eight (8) trail cameras deployed on wooden tripods to monitor the study area.
  - Deploying forty (40) VR2-AR receivers and six (6) VR2-Tx receivers in freshwater and marine environments to track fish movements.
  - Implanting sixty (60) acoustic tags of varying dimensions in fish species (such as Arctic char, Lake trout, Cod, and Sculpin) for tracking via acoustic receivers.
  - Attaching eight (8) Aquatic Passive Contaminant Samplers to a subset of the deployed receiver moorings.
  - Using stainless steel, glass, and/or polyethylene water bottles to collect water samples (40 liters/year).
  - Using whirl-pak bags and/or stainless steel/glass jars to collect sediment samples (20 liters/year).
  - Taking Physiological Measurements to evaluate the impact of temperature and oxygen changes on fish health.
  - Using Environmental DNA (eDNA) methods to analyze seasonal and spatial variations in fish distribution and abundance.
- **Accommodation**
  - Using the Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS).
  - Setting up a small, 4-person temporary camp in the Greiner watershed at Inuhuktok, including one wall tent and four personal tents. Total of 80-person camp days per year.
  - Using water for drinking and cooking directly from the lake.
- **Waste Management**
  - Storing of greywater and disposing of in the municipal wastewater system through CHARS.

- Disposal of camp wastes in the local dump
- Burying of human waste at least 100 metres from any water sources or bringing it back to the community for disposal in winter.

### ***Inclusion or Exclusion of Scoping List***

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

Documents received and describing the proposal can be accessed from the NIRB's online public registry at [www.nirb.ca/project/126201](http://www.nirb.ca/project/126201) including:

- *Commission Referral and Conformity Determination*
- *Commission Application*
- *NIRB On-line Application in English*
- *Non-technical Summary in English, Inuinnaqtun and Inuktitut*
- *EHTO Letter of Support*
- *VR2TX Receiver Information*
- *VR2AR Receiver Information*

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 by **August 13, 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.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Please send comments to the NIRB via email at [info@nirb.ca](mailto: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/126201](http://www.nirb.ca/project/126201). Questions should be directed to the undersigned at (867) 983-4607 or [vnayak@nirb.ca](mailto:vnayak@nirb.ca).

Sincerely,



Varun Nayak  
Monitoring Officer  
Nunavut Impact Review Board

Enclosures (4): Public Notice of Screening (English, and Inuinnaqtun)  
Comment Forms (English, and Inuinnaqtun)

cc: Distribution List  
Wynter Kuliktana, Kitikmeot Inuit Association  
Tannis Bolt, Kitikmeot Inuit Association  
Cory Barker, Kitikmeot Inuit Association  
Justin Buller, Government of Nunavut, Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs  
Dianne Lapierre, Government of Nunavut, Department of Economic Development & Transportation  
Sean Joseph, Government of Nunavut, Department of Economic Development & Transportation  
Mosha Cote, Nunavut Research Institute  
José Audet-Lecouffe, Fisheries and Oceans Canada