



SCREENING DECISION REPORT
NIRB FILE No.: 19EA019

Related to NIRB File No.: 07EN067 and 14EN033

NPC File No.: 150893

NPC File No.: 149485, 149067

KIA Licence Number: KTL311C013

CIRNAC File Number: N20220006

NWB Water Licence: 2BE-HRP1932

March 30, 2026

Following the Nunavut Impact Review Board’s (NIRB or Board) assessment of all materials provided, the NIRB is recommending that a review of Blue Star Corp.'s "Hood River" is not required pursuant to Article 12, Section 12.4.4(a) of the *Agreement between the Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area and Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada (Nunavut Agreement)* and s. 92(1)(a) of the *Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act*, S.C. 2013, c. 14, s. 2 (*NuPPAA*).

Subject to the Proponent’s compliance with the terms and conditions as set out in below, issued in accordance with s. 92(2)(a) of *NuPPAA*, the NIRB is of the view that the project proposal is not likely to cause significant public concerns, and it is unlikely to result in significant adverse environmental and social impacts. The NIRB therefore recommends that the responsible Minister accepts this Screening Decision Report.

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REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The primary objectives of the NIRB are set out in Article 12, Section 12.2.5 of the *Nunavut Agreement* and are confirmed by s. 23 of the *NuPPAA*. The purpose of screening is provided for under Article 12, Section 12.4.1 of the *Nunavut Agreement* and s. 88 of the *NuPPAA*.

As set out under Article 12, Section 12.4.4 of the *Nunavut Agreement* and s. 92(1) of the *NuPPAA*, upon conclusion of the screening process, the Board must provide its written report the Minister indicating one of three options:

- (a) a review of the project is not required;
- (b) a review of the project is required; or
- (c) the project should be modified or abandoned.

PROJECT OVERVIEW & THE NIRB ASSESSMENT PROCESS

On December 8, 2025, the NIRB received a complete application and as the proposal containing activities that are sufficiently related to previously assessed activities under NIRB file number 07EN067 and 14EN033, the NIRB views this project proposal as an amendment and has assigned this proposal with this previous file number. The previously screened project activities can be found at www.nirb.ca/project/123823 and www.nirb.ca/project/125461. All documents received and pertaining to this project proposal can be accessed from the NIRB's Public Registry by using any of the following search criteria or www.nirb.ca/project/126236.

- Project Name: Hood River
- NIRB File No.: 19EA019
- NIRB Application No.: 126236

Table 1: NIRB's Assessment Process

Date	Stage
August 15, 2025	Receipt of project proposal and referral from the Commission
August 15, 2025	Pursuant to s. 144(1) of the <i>NuPPAA</i> the NIRB requested the Proponent complete an online application to address information required for Screening
November 18, 2025	Receipt of online application from Proponent
December 12, 2025	Request(s) to Proponent for additional information in order to carry out screening pursuant to s. s. 144(1) of the <i>NuPPAA</i>
December 12, 2025	Proponent responded to information request(s) and provided additional information
December 8, 2025	Scoping pursuant to s. 86(1) of the <i>NuPPAA</i>
January 13, 2026	Public engagement and comment request (which included terms and conditions) was issued to the following communities
February 3, 2026	Receipt of public comments

Date	Stage
January 16, 2026	Pursuant to Article 12 s 12.4.5 of the <i>Nunavut Agreement</i> and s. 92(3) of the <i>NuPPAA</i> , an extension to the 45-day timeline for the provision of the Board's Report was requested from the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations
March 30, 2026	Issuance of Screening Decision Report

1. Project Scope

Location	Kitikmeot region, approximately 200 kilometers northwest of Kugluktuk
Objective	To expand the property by 3 new claims and conduct the same activities as described for the previous screening (07EN067, 14EN033, and 19EA019) on those properties.
Timeline	May 2026 to June 2032 (seasonal)

As required under s. 86(1) of the *NuPPAA*, the Board accepted the scope of the project as set out by Blue Star Corp. in the proposal. The scope of the project proposal includes the following undertakings, works, or activities:

- Add 3 new mineral claims; and
- Conduct the same exploration activities as listed in the NIRB's decision released June 19, 2019, in the 3 additional mineral claims.

2. Inclusion or Exclusion to Scoping List

The NIRB has identified:

- that the previously assessed activities listed above will be considered in the current assessment especially for potential of cumulative impacts where previous approvals may still be in force.
- The NIRB is not including activities identified NIRB File No: 20EN001.

3. Public Comments and Concerns

As outlined in Table 1 above, notices regarding the NIRB's screening of this project proposal were distributed to community organizations as well as to relevant federal and territorial government agencies, Inuit organizations and other parties with a request for interested parties to provide the Board with any comments or concerns 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

On or before February 3, 2026, the NIRB received comments from the following interested parties:

Table 2: Comments Received

Commenting Party	NIRB Doc ID No.
Government of Nunavut (GN)	359300
Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC)	359324
Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)	359327
Transport Canada (TC)	359239
Beverly and Qamanirjuaq Caribou Management Board (BQCMB)	359325

a. Summary of Comments and Concerns Received

The following provides a summary of the comments and concerns received by the NIRB in relation to the Blue Star Corp. project proposal:

Government of Nunavut

- Requests that the Proponent revise the Wildlife Plan to:
 - consolidate all caribou-related group sizes and setback distances, including those for aircraft, ground-based activities, airstrip procedures, and cow-calf specific measures, into an expanded version of Table 4, ensuring internal consistency and ease of use for Project personnel.
 - Align narrative mitigation measures with the setback distances presented in the tables, ensuring that all mitigation thresholds are clearly captured within a single comprehensive table.
 - Remove the terms “immediate area” and “immediate vicinity” and replace them with clearly identified thresholds.
- Recommends the Proponent to document material storage area inspections and confirm whether the Spill Plan has been reviewed and updated annually since November 2023.
- Recommends that the NIRB includes project-specific Terms and Conditions in the Screening Decision Report to ensure compliance with the *Nunavut Act* and the *Nunavut Archaeological and Palaeontological Sites Regulations*.

CIRNAC

- Recommends that the Proponent consider:
 - Clarifying how runoff from waste rock pads and other disturbed surfaces is distinguished from non-contact runoff prior to discharge, including whether additional containment or conveyance controls are required beyond upland sumps;
 - Expanding erosion and sediment control measures beyond culvert locations to disturbed pads, roads, edges, and drainage pathways; and
 - Describing how water quality from sump water and runoff collection is evaluated prior to release, particularly for flows associated with waste rock and disturbed pads.
- Recommends that the Proponent provide additional information on how long-term controls of acid generation and metal leaching from sulfur waste rock would be achieved.
- Recommends that the Proponent consider:

- Clarifying how landfill performance would be assessed following closure, including inspection frequency and indicators of stability; and
- Describing how waste segregation practices are verified during operations to prevent hazardous materials from entering the inert landfill.
- Recommends that the Proponent consider clarifying whether material-specific considerations for saline substances are addressed within existing spill response and environmental management planning.
- CIRNAC recommends that the Proponent continue its efforts to engage with potentially interested parties regarding its project proposal. These parties include the Hamlet of Kugluktuk, the Kugluktuk Angoniatit Association / Hunters' & Trappers' Organization, the Kitikmeot Inuit Association, and any other relevant organizations or individuals.
- As part of these consultation activities, several issues should be considered, including but not limited to:
- Incorporation of Inuit Qaujimaningit, Inuit Qaujijimajatuqangit, Traditional Knowledge (NIRB, 2018), and Community Knowledge, in addition to scientific ways of knowing into project activities;
 - Mitigation measures to prevent any disturbance to wildlife and the environment;
 - Mitigation measures to prevent disturbance to sites of cultural, archaeological, and/or
 - environmental significance;
 - The experience of community members who participate in traditional harvesting activities
 - within or in close proximity to the project area;
 - Training and employment opportunities for Inuit and community members;
 - Procurement opportunities for local and Inuit-owned businesses; and
 - Regular updates on the status of project activities.

DFO

- Noted that, in accordance with DFO's mandate, it has no comments or recommendations at this time. However, it remains the Proponent's responsibility to review and follow DFO's protective measures for fish and fish habitat and standard codes of practice which can be found on DFO's website (<https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/pnwpppe/measures-mesures-eng.html> and <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/pnw-pppe/practice-pratique-eng.html>).
- It is also the proponent's duty to Notify DFO if it has caused, or is about to cause, the death of fish (other than fishing) and/or the harmful alteration, disruption, or the destruction of fish habitat. Such notification should be directed to DFO.ARCEMTriage-TriageGEARC.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca.

Transport Canada

- Recommends that the Proponent to self-assess using the Navigational Protection Program (NPP) Project Review Tool at <https://nppsubmissionsdemandesppn.tc.canada.ca/projectreview-outildexamenduprojet>.
- Recommends if the waterway is navigable, he tool be used to assess works against the CNWA Minor Works Order (<https://tc.canada.ca/en/programs/apply-navigation-protection-program/understanding-different-works>).

- If the intakes meet all the criteria of the CNWA Minor Works Order, the proponent must proceed with deposit of information and publication of a public notice but does not require an approval.
- If the intakes do not meet all the criteria of the minor works order, the proponent may Submit a voluntary application or; proceed through the public resolution process.
- Once the tool has been used, the results can be saved as a PDF and submitted to TC.NPPPNRPPNRPN.TC@tc.gc.ca.

Beverly and Qamanirjuaq Caribou Management Board

- Noted that the Proponent listed the Beverly and Qamanirjuaq Caribou Management Plan 2013-2022 (2014) as a relevant guidance document and that the BQCMB has since released the updated 2023-2032 Beverly and Qamanirjuaq Caribou Management Plan, which can be found at (<https://arctic-caribou.com/wp-content/uploads/BQCMB-Caribou-Management-Plan-Report-2023-2032.pdf>);
- Recommends that the Proponent work with the community of Kugluktuk Hunters and Trappers Organization to hire Inuit wildlife monitors to ensure culturally informed and effective monitoring;
- Recommends that the Proponent adopt clear, precautionary aircraft operating practices to minimize disturbance, and notes that the Kivalliq Inuit Association’s Mobile Caribou Conservation Measures provide guidance that can be applied for this purpose; and
- Recommends that the Proponent use the Kivalliq Inuit Association’s Mobile Caribou Conservation Measures as they provide a strong, Inuit-led framework for minimizing disturbance to migrating and calving caribou.

4. b. Comments and Concerns with respect to Inuit Qaujimaningit, Indigenous and Community Knowledge

No concerns or comments were received with respect to Inuit Qaujimaningit or Indigenous and Community knowledge in relation to the proposed project. However, Inuit Qaujimaningit and Indigenous and community knowledge is incorporated into the terms and conditions recommended below based on information collected from prior and similar projects, data collected and mapped by the Commission, and other available sources.

5. Proponent’s Response to Public Comments and Concerns

Due to the comments, and questions received from parties, the NIRB provided an opportunity for the Proponent to respond. The following is a summary of the Proponent’s response to concerns:

The Proponent has noted that the Project Management Plans are currently undergoing annual review and revision, Blue Star Gold Corp. further advised that it will incorporate the recommendations provided by the commentors and submit revised plans with its Annual Reports.

ASSESSMENT OF THE PROJECT PROPOSAL IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 3 OF *NUPPAA*

In determining whether a review of the project is required, the Board considered whether the project proposal had potential to result in significant ecosystemic or socio-economic impacts.

Table 3. The Board took particular care to consider Inuit Qaujimaningit, Indigenous and Community Knowledge in carrying out its assessment and determination of the significance of impacts.

Table 3: Summary of the Board’s Assessment of Factors s. 90 NuPPAA

Factor	Comment
<p>The size of the geographic area, including the size of wildlife habitats, likely to be affected by the impacts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The proposed exploration area identified by the Proponent is approximately 16,137 square kilometers (km²). Activities would include the use of a temporary camp site and helicopter-assisted travel routes to proposed drilling sites. However, direct disturbance from this Project is expected to be localized and temporary within the broader mineral claim area; the Project is also situated within an active regional exploration landscape where overlapping seasonal activities may contribute to broader-scale disturbance for wide-ranging wildlife. ▪ The proposed activities may take place within habitat of far-ranging wildlife species such as migratory and non-migratory birds, terrestrial wildlife such as caribou (Barren-Ground), muskox, wolves, wolverine, arctic fox, arctic hare, and Species at Risk (Grizzly Bear, Wolverine, Peregrine Falcon, Short-eared Owl and Red-necked Phalarope). As such, project activities may potentially affect terrestrial animal migratory patterns.
<p>The ecosystemic sensitivity of that area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Proponent did not identify specific areas of ecosystemic sensitivity within the physical footprint of the proposed project. The Proponent further stated that any negative effects caused by the project would be mitigable. ▪ As noted above, the proposed project area may overlap habitat for several Species at Risk. ▪ According to the Nunavut Planning Commission Community Values mapping, the broader Hood River region includes caribou calving grounds and migration corridors for the Bathurst and Beverly Caribou herds. ▪ Given the presence of caribou calving and migration features in the broader region and the number of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects, cumulative disturbance (particularly from aircraft activity and repeated seasonal access) may occur at a regional scale for wide-ranging wildlife.
<p>The historical, cultural and archaeological significance of that area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ According to the Nunavut Planning Commissions community values mapping, the broader Hood River region is identified as supporting traditional

Factor	Comment
	<p>harvesting areas, including hunting grounds for caribou, muskox, and grizzly bear, as well as fishing areas for Arctic grayling and lake trout.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In addition, the presence of mapped harvesting values suggests potential for cultural and archaeological sensitivity, particularly along travel corridors and near waterbodies
<p>The size of the human and the animal populations likely to be affected by the impacts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Human populations are not likely to be affected, due to distance from the proposed project activities to the nearest community. However, traditional land-use activities may be affected where project components occur in areas used by harvesters, including near the outpost settlements of Umingmaktok and Bathurst Inlet. ▪ As noted above, these regions include traditional hunting and fishing grounds and are vital habitat for several identified species. As a result, the proposed project may also potentially affect traditional harvesting activities by community members from Cambridge Bay and Kugluktuk who use the broader area.
<p>The nature, magnitude and complexity of the impacts; the probability of the impacts occurring; the frequency and duration of the impacts; and the reversibility or irreversibility of the impacts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Board considered potential effects within the localized activity footprint (e.g., camp area, drill sites, fuel caches, and any access routes) and the broader area potentially influenced by aircraft-supported access and travel corridors, particularly where sensitive wildlife may be present. With adherence to applicable regulatory requirements and the Terms and Conditions set out in this Screening Decision Report, significant residual effects are not expected
<p>The cumulative impacts that could result from the impacts of the project combined with those of any other project that has been carried out, is being carried out or is likely to be carried out.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Board recognizes that the proposed Project is situated within an active regional mineral exploration and development landscape. Past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects and activities occurring in the broader area are summarized in Table 4. These include multiple mineral exploration programs as well as larger-scale developments, which collectively contribute to ongoing regional activity levels. ▪ In this context, the Project’s contribution to cumulative effects is most plausibly associated with overlapping seasonal activity, aircraft-supported access and travel corridors, and repeated, intermittent disturbance in areas used by wide-ranging wildlife and by harvesters. While the direct physical footprint of

Factor	Comment
	<p>exploration activities is expected to remain localized and temporary, the combined effects of multiple projects operating within the same regional landscape may occur at a broader scale, particularly for sensitive receptors such as caribou and other far-ranging species, and for traditional land use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Board has considered this cumulative context in its assessment and, where appropriate, has included project-specific Terms and Conditions and mitigation expectations in the Board’s Views section to support avoidance and minimization of potential cumulative effects.
<p>Any other factor that the Board considers relevant to the assessment of the significance of impacts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Board considered the inherent uncertainty associated with early-stage mineral exploration, including that specific activity locations (e.g., drill sites, temporary camps, access routes, and staging areas) may change between field seasons as exploration results inform program design. The Board also considered the seasonal nature of proposed activities and the potential for timing overlap with sensitive wildlife periods. In addition, the Board considered the importance of mitigation measures being clearly defined and operationally implementable (e.g., measurable setback distances and triggers), to support consistent application by field personnel and effective compliance verification through monitoring and reporting. ▪ The Board further considered the broader regional context, including other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable developments identified in Table 4, including the Grays Bay Road and Port Project (24XN038), which is currently undergoing assessment. This regional activity context was considered as part of the Board’s overall assessment of potential effects and significance.

Regulatory Requirements

The Proponent is also advised that the following legislation may apply to the Project:
Acts and Regulations

1. The Proponent is advised that the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act* (<http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/C-15.31/>) lists calcium chloride (CaCl) as a toxic substance. The Proponent should assess alternatives to the use of CaCl as a drill additive, including biodegradable and non-toxic additives.
2. The *Fisheries Act* (<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/F-14/index.html>).

3. The *Nunavut Waters and Nunavut Surface Rights Tribunal Act* (<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/n-28.8/>).
4. The *Migratory Birds Convention Act* and *Migratory Birds Regulations* (<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/M-7.01/>).
5. The *Species at Risk Act* (<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/S-15.3/index.html>). Attached in **Appendix A** is a list of Species at Risk in Nunavut.
6. The *Wildlife Act (Nunavut)* and its corresponding regulations (<http://www.canlii.org/en/nu/laws/stat/snu-2003-c-26/latest/snu-2003-c-26.html>).
7. The *Nunavut Act* (<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/N-28.6/>). The Proponent must comply with the proposed terms and conditions listed in the attached **Appendix B**.
8. The *Transportation of Dangerous Goods Regulations* (<http://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/tdg/clear-tofc-211.htm>), *Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act* (<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/t-19.01/>), and the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act* (<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-15.31/>).

Other Applicable Guidelines

1. Fisheries and Oceans Canada Protocol for Winter Water Withdrawal from Ice-covered Waterbodies in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut (http://registry.mvlwb.ca/Documents/W2010C0005/W2010C0005%20-%20Land%20Use%20Permit%20Application%20-%20DFO%20Water%20Withdrawal%20Protocol%20-%20Aug%2025_10.pdf).
2. Environmental Guideline for the General Management of Hazardous Waste, Government of Nunavut, Revised October 2010 (https://www.gov.nu.ca/sites/default/files/Guideline%20-%20General%20Management%20of%20Hazardous%20Waste%20%28revised%20Oct%2002%2001%29_0.pdf).

Table 4: Past, Present, and Reasonably Foreseeable Projects Considered

NIRB Project Number	Project Title	Project Type
<i>Proposed Developments – undergoing assessment</i>		
25EN075	Coppermine Project	Mineral Exploration
25EA086	Coppermine River Drilling Program	Mineral Exploration
24EN047	Rae Copper Exploration Project	Mineral Exploration
24XN038	Grays Bay Road and Port	AWR/Access Trail
<i>Present Projects – approved or in operation</i>		
25EN034	Izok Corridor Project	Mineral Exploration
12MN036	12MN036 Back River Project Energy Center	Mine Development
<i>Past Projects</i>		
20EN001	Ulu Gold Project	Mineral Exploration
21EN013	Pistol Lake Project	Mineral Exploration
22EN057	South Kitikmeot Gold Project	Mineral Exploration
22EN007	TTMG Project	Mineral Exploration

VIEWS OF THE BOARD

In considering the above factors, the Board has identified the following and respectfully provides its views regarding whether or not the proposed project has the potential to result in significant impacts. The NIRB has also proposed terms and conditions that would mitigate the potential adverse impacts identified.

Ecosystem, wildlife habitat and Inuit harvesting activities:

Valued Component	Migratory and non-migratory birds, terrestrial and Species at Risk
Potential effects:	Potential negative impacts to terrestrial wildlife (including caribou), migratory and non-migratory birds, and associated habitats due to noise disturbance generated from mineral exploration activities, including aircraft operations (helicopter and fixed-wing), transportation of personnel and equipment, and temporary camp establishment.
Nature of Impacts:	Potential effects are expected to be concentrated within localized activity areas (e.g., camp, drill sites, and aircraft travel corridors). Noise and the presence of aircraft and field activities may result in disturbance or displacement of wildlife and birds, including in adjacent areas where individuals move through or use habitat beyond the immediate work sites.
Mitigating Factors:	Due to the size of the exploration project, and the short and intermittent nature of the project activities, the potential negative impacts to affected terrestrial wildlife and birds would be expected to be minimal, temporary and reversible, based on the mitigation measures described in the application and management plans. However, the Project occurs within an active regional exploration landscape, and overlapping seasonal activities (particularly aircraft use) from multiple projects may contribute to broader-scale cumulative disturbance for wide-ranging wildlife.
Proposed Terms and Conditions:	Wildlife General – 24 through 29 Migratory Birds and Raptors Disturbance – 30 and 31 Aircraft Flight Restrictions – 32 through 37 Caribou and MuskoX – 38 through 44

Valued Component	Surface water, and fish and fish habitat
Potential effects:	Potential negative impacts to surface water, and fish and fish habitat from exploration activities, including establishment of a temporary camp, water withdrawal for camp operations, drilling activities (both land and on-ice) and the handling/deposition of drill cuttings, as well as accidental releases (e.g., fuel or chemical spills).
Nature of Impacts:	Potential effects on fish and fish habitat are expected to be largely confined to localized activity areas (e.g., the temporary camp footprint, water withdrawal locations, drill sites, and fuel caches). Any effects,

	should they occur, are anticipated to be reversible, given the temporary and seasonal nature of activities.
Mitigating Factors:	The Proponent has committed to following Fisheries and Oceans Canada's regulations associated with the any works within water. Further, the Proponent has also committed to implementing a Spill Response Plan, and a Waste Management Plan for the project and to storing all fuel storage containers in secondary containment structures, to prevent the spread of any fuel spill incidents and to implement appropriate fuel spill precautions and safety measures The Proponent remains responsible for compliance with all applicable legislation and regulatory requirements relevant to the project.
Proposed Terms and Conditions:	Water courses/Water bodies (including fresh and marine waters) – 6 through 9

Valued Component	Vegetation, land, soils, terrain stability, permafrost
Potential effects:	Potential negative impacts to terrestrial vegetation, soil quality and ground stability from the mineral exploration activities, including transportation of personnel, camp set-up and use, fuel storage and drilling activities. Land vegetation being disturbed during drilling activities and camp set-up as well as operation activities could have adverse impacts on the terrestrial vegetation of the project area. Further, the activities proposed for the project, including establishment of temporary camp and fuel caches, and the exploration drilling activities, may result in degradation of permafrost which would negatively affect ground stability.
Nature of Impacts:	The potential adverse impacts to vegetation, ground stability and soil quality are considered to be of low magnitude, short-term and reversible. The potential for impacts is limited to the footprint of drill sites, temporary camp area, and fuel caches, which are also temporary in nature.
Mitigating Factors:	The Proponent has committed to implementing a Waste Management Plan and removing all materials brought to the site upon demobilization. Measures also include progressive clean-up and restoration of disturbed areas, where practicable, during and following field activities. It is recommended that potential adverse impacts to terrestrial vegetation, ground stability and soil quality be mitigated by such measures as requiring the Proponent to not move any equipment or vehicles unless the ground surface is in a state capable of fully supporting the equipment or vehicles without rutting or gouging.
Proposed Terms and Conditions:	Waste Management – 10 and 11 Fuel and Chemical Storage – 12 through 21 Drilling – General – 45 through 47 Drilling on Land – 48 through 52 Land Use and Restoration of Disturbed Areas – 53 through 57 Camps – 58 and 59

Valued Component	Air Quality
Potential effects:	Potential negative impacts to air quality from the transportation activities, mineral exploration operations, use of heavy equipment, and incineration of combustible wastes including potential emissions of particulate matter and combustion by-products (e.g., dioxins and furans)
Nature of Impacts:	The potential adverse impacts to air quality would be limited to within the project footprint with a low probability of extending beyond the geographic area depending on operating conditions and weather.
Mitigating Factors:	The potential adverse impacts to air quality are considered to be of low magnitude, short-term, and reversible. The NIRB is recommending terms and conditions to mitigate any potential impacts of activities to air quality.
Proposed Terms and Conditions:	Waste Management – 11 Air Quality – 22 and 23 Aircraft Flight Restrictions – 32 through 37

Valued Component	Public and traditional land use activities
Potential effects:	No specific concerns or impacts to public and traditional land use activities in the area have been identified, however, the Board is recommending terms and conditions to ensure project activities are informed by available Inuit Qaujimaningit and that project activities do not interfere with Inuit wildlife harvesting or traditional land use activities.
Nature of Impacts:	The use of aircraft and mineral exploration activities could have a direct effect on community members who use established routes in the region.
Mitigating Factors:	The Proponent has committed to working the community of Kugluktuk to ensure these routes are identified and that there is no obstruction to travellers or traditional hunting activities. The Board is recommending terms and conditions 54 and 55 to ensure project activities are informed by available Inuit Qaujimaningit and that project activities do not interfere with Inuit wildlife harvesting or traditional land-use activities.
Proposed Terms and Conditions:	Other – 63 and 64

Socio-economic effects on northerners:

Valued Component	Historical, archaeological, and heritage sites
Potential effects:	Potential effects to historical, archaeological, and heritage sites include accidental disturbance of known sites and the chance discovery of previously unidentified archaeological materials during ground-disturbing activities (e.g., drill site preparation, temporary camp establishment, access routes, fuel caches, and borrow/quarry areas).
Nature of Impacts:	The potential impacts on historical, archaeological, and heritage sites are expected to be low, given the use of mapped buffers.
Mitigating Factors:	The Proponent would avoid known archaeological sites using mapped buffers, implement best management practices during quarry operations,

	and immediately stop work and notify the Nunavut Department of Culture and Heritage if any previously unidentified archaeological resources are discovered.
Proposed Terms and Conditions:	Heritage Sites – 60 through 62

Valued Component	Local hiring, contracting and economic impact
Potential effects:	Potential positive impacts from the hiring of local community members for various projects and activities.
Nature of Impacts:	Potential for impacts is considered to be positive if the Proponent adheres to its commitment to hiring locally to the extent possible.
Mitigating Factors:	The Board is recommending terms and conditions to ensure that the Proponent continues to inform the communities of the ongoing site activities and to ensure community members are aware of and best able to successfully connect with hiring opportunities.
Proposed Terms and Conditions:	Other - 65

Significant public concern:

Valued Component	Public concern during commenting period
Potential effects:	No significant public concern was expressed during the public commenting period for this file.
Nature of Impacts:	The potential impacts are expected to be of low magnitude and low probability, localized in scope to the project area, temporary in duration, and reversible if the Proponent follows the recommended terms and conditions and adheres to its commitments.
Mitigating Factors:	The Board recommends mitigation measures to protect Inuit wildlife harvesting and traditional land use activities, incorporate Inuit Qaujimaningit, and support local employment and use of community services.
Proposed Terms and Conditions:	Other – 63 and 64

Technological innovations for which the effects are unknown:

No specific issues have been identified associated with this project proposal.

Administrative Conditions:

To encourage compliance with applicable regulatory requirements and assist the Board and responsible authorities with compliance and effects monitoring for project activities, the following project-specific terms and conditions have been recommended: 1-5.

In considering the above factors and subject to the Proponent’s compliance with regulatory requirements and the terms and conditions necessary to mitigate against the potential adverse environmental and social effects, the Board is of the view that the proposed project is unlikely to cause significant public concern and its adverse ecosystemic and socioeconomic impacts are

unlikely to be significant, or are highly predictable and can be adequately mitigated by known technologies.

RECOMMENDED PROJECT-SPECIFIC TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The Board is recommending the following specific terms and conditions to apply in respect of the project:

General

1. Blue Star Gold Corp. (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.: 150893), and the NIRB (Online Application Form, November 21, 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 not extract water from any fish-bearing water body unless the water intake hose is equipped with a screen of appropriate mesh size to ensure that there is no entrapment of fish. Small lakes or streams should not be used for water withdrawal unless otherwise authorized by the appropriate authorizing agency.
7. 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.
8. The Proponent shall implement erosion and sediment suppression measures on all areas during all project activities in order to prevent sediment or fugitive dust from entering any water body or surrounding environment. Erosion prevention measures may include berms or silt fences.
9. 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

10. 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.
11. The Proponent shall incinerate all combustible wastes as needed and dispose of as required by the appropriate authorizing agencies. All non-combustible wastes from the project site shall be removed to an approved facility for disposal.

Fuel and Chemical Storage

12. The Proponent shall locate all fuel and other hazardous materials a minimum distance away from the high-water mark of any water body and environmentally sensitive areas as required by the appropriate authorizing agencies. The materials shall be stored in such a manner as to prevent their release into the environment.
13. The Proponent shall use adequate secondary containment or a surface liner (e.g., self-supporting insta-berms and fold-a-tanks) when storing barreled fuel and chemicals at all locations.
14. The Proponent shall ensure that re-fuelling of all equipment occurs a minimum distance away from the high-water mark of any water body as required by the appropriate authorizing agencies.
15. Fuel and hazardous material storage areas and fuel lines should be clearly marked with signs or flagging to avoid accidental breaks and punctures, and to ensure areas remain visible during the winter months.
16. All fuel and chemical storage containers must be clearly marked with the Proponent's name for ease of identification.
17. The Proponent shall routinely inspect and document the conditions of fuel and hazardous material storage containers and containment areas as required by the appropriate authorizing agencies. Fuel containment areas shall be kept clear of debris, water and snow to facilitate inspections for leaks.
18. The Proponent shall have a Spill Contingency Plan in place at all fuel storage or transfer locations and shall ensure that appropriate spill response equipment and clean-up materials (e.g., shovels, pumps, barrels, drip pans, and absorbents) are readily available.
19. The Proponent shall follow the authorizing agencies' direction for management and removal of hazardous materials and wastes (e.g., contaminated soils, sediment and waste oil).
20. The Proponent shall ensure that wildlife deterrent systems are utilized at the time of a spill incident in order to avoid wildlife (terrestrial or marine) and migratory birds from being contaminated.
21. 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.

Air Quality

22. The Proponent shall take appropriate dust suppression measures in conducting all activities for this Project including using approved dust suppression additives and techniques as necessary to maintain ambient air quality.
23. The Proponent shall eliminate unnecessary idling to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as much as possible.

Wildlife – General

24. The Proponent shall not substantially alter or damage or destroy any wildlife habitat in conducting this operation unless otherwise authorized by the appropriate authorizing agencies.
25. 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.
26. The Proponent shall not hunt or fish, unless proper Nunavut authorizations have been acquired.
27. The Proponent shall ensure that all wildlife have the right-of-way on any roads or trails. Vehicles are required to slow down or stop and wait to permit the free and unrestricted movement of wildlife across roads or trails at any location.
28. The Proponent shall enforce safe speed limits for vehicles travelling along the road to ensure drivers have sufficient time to react in a safe manner if wildlife are encountered on or adjacent to the road or trail.
29. The Proponent shall ensure that drivers maintain spacing appropriate for driving and road conditions, and speed limits, to ensure drivers have time to safely react to any wildlife on the road.

Migratory Birds and Raptors Disturbance

30. The Proponent shall carry out all phases of the project in a manner that protects migratory birds and avoids harming, killing or disturbing migratory birds or destroying, disturbing or taking their nests or eggs. In this regard, the Proponent shall take into account Environment and Climate Change Canada's *Avoidance Guidelines*. The Proponent's actions in applying the *Avoidance Guidelines* shall be in compliance with the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994* and with the *Species at Risk Act*.
31. The Proponent shall not disturb or destroy the nests or eggs of any birds. If active nests of any birds are discovered or located (i.e., with eggs or young), the Proponent shall avoid these areas until nesting is complete and the young have naturally left the vicinity of the nest by establishing a protection buffer zone¹ appropriate for the species and the surrounding habitat.

Aircraft Flight Restrictions

32. The Proponent shall not alter flight paths to approach wildlife and avoid flying directly over animals.

33. The Proponent shall plan flight paths that minimize flights over known habitat likely to have birds or concentrations of wildlife. Aircraft should avoid critical and sensitive wildlife areas at all times by choosing alternate flight corridors.
34. The Proponent shall restrict aircraft/helicopter activity related to the project to a minimum flight altitude of 610 metres (2,100 ft) above ground level except during landing, take-off or if there is a specific requirement for low-level flying, which does not disturb wildlife or migratory birds.
35. The Proponent shall avoid known concentrations of birds (e.g., bird colonies, moulting areas) by a lateral distance of 1.5 kilometre. If avoidance is not possible maintain a minimum flight altitude of 1,100 metres (3,500 feet) over these areas.
36. The Proponent shall ensure that aircraft/helicopter do not, unless for emergency, touch-down in areas where wildlife are present.
37. The Proponent shall advise all pilots of relevant flight restrictions and enforce their application over the project area, including flight paths to/from the project area.

Caribou and Muskoxen Disturbance

38. The Proponent shall avoid interfering with any paths or crossings known to be frequented by caribou during periods of migration as identified by current land use plans in place and/or by Inuit Qaujimaningit.
39. The Proponent shall not locate any operation or undertake activities that could block or cause any diversion to migration of caribou or muskoxen.
40. The Proponent shall implement mobile caribou conservation measures and immediately cease activities that may interfere with the migration or calving of caribou or muskox, until the caribou or muskox have passed.
41. The Proponent shall not construct or operate any camp, cache any fuel or conduct blasting within ten (10) kilometres, or conduct any drilling operation within five (5) kilometres of any designated caribou water crossings.
42. During the period of May 15 to July 15, the Proponent shall suspend all operations and activities outside the immediate vicinity of the camps. Restricted activities include, but are not limited to, air and vehicle traffic, loud or repetitive noise or vibration disturbances, low-level over flights, blasting, and use of mobile equipment including snowmobiles and all terrain vehicles, and personnel walking within sight of the caribou group(s), until the caribou are no longer in the immediate area. Should the results of localized monitoring satisfy the land use inspector the project operations may resume without disturbing pregnant caribou cows or cows with young calves the suspension may be lifted for the periods specified.
43. Should pregnant caribou cows, cows with young calves, or groups of 50 or more caribou be observed within one (1) kilometer of project operations at any time, the Proponent shall suspend all operations in the vicinity, including low level overflights, drilling,

¹ Recommended setback distances to define buffer zones have been established by Environment and Climate Change Canada for different bird groups nesting in tundra habitat and can be found at www.ec.gc.ca/paom-itmb.

blasting/trenching, and use of snowmobiles and all terrain vehicles outside the immediate vicinity of the camp, until caribou are no longer in the immediate area.

44. During the period of April 14 to June 1 when muskoxen are present, the Proponent shall not approach muskoxen closer than one (1) kilometer. This includes all operations, including low-level over flights, blasting, and use of snowmobiles and all-terrain vehicles outside the immediate vicinity of the camps.

Drilling – General

45. The Proponent shall not allow any drilling wastes to spread to the surrounding lands or water bodies.
46. The Proponent shall ensure that that any deleterious substances (as defined in the *Fisheries Act*) resulting from its activities do not enter into any water bodies frequented by fish.
47. The Proponent shall ensure that all drill areas are constructed to facilitate minimizing the environmental footprint of the project area.

Drilling on Land

48. The Proponent shall not conduct any land-based drilling or mechanized clearing activities a minimum distance of the normal high-water mark of any water body as required by an authorizing agency.
49. If an artesian flow is encountered, the Proponent shall ensure the drill hole is immediately plugged and permanently sealed.
50. The Proponent shall ensure that all sump/depression capacities are sufficient to accommodate the volume of wastewater and any fines that are produced. The sumps shall only be used for inert drilling fluids, and not any other materials or substances.
51. The Proponent shall not locate any sumps within a minimum distance of the normal high-water mark of any water body as required by an authorizing agency.
52. The Proponent shall ensure all drill holes are backfilled or capped prior to the end of each field season. All sumps must be backfilled and restored to original or stable profile prior to the end of each field season.

Land Use and Restoration of Disturbed Areas

53. The Proponent shall use existing trails where possible during project activities on the land.
54. The Proponent shall ensure that the land use area is kept clean and tidy at all times.
55. The Proponent shall avoid disturbance on slopes prone to natural erosion, and alternative locations shall be utilized.
56. The Proponent shall remove all garbage, fuel and equipment at the end of each field season and/or upon completion of work and/or upon abandonment.
57. The Proponent shall ensure that all disturbed areas are restored to a stable or pre-disturbed state using Best Available Technology Economically Achievable (BATEA) upon completion of work and/or abandonment.

Camps

58. The Proponent shall ensure that all camps are located durable surfaces, such as gravel or sand that is consolidated and can withstand repeated, heavy use. Measures shall be put in place to prevent erosion, trail formation and damage to the ground.
59. The Proponent shall not erect camps or store materials on the surface ice of lakes or streams, except that which is for immediate use.

Heritage Sites

60. The Proponent shall ensure that archaeological and paleontological sites are not purposely or inadvertently disturbed by clients or staff as a result of project activities.
61. The Proponent shall ensure that all clients and staff are aware of the Proponent's responsibilities and requirements regarding archaeological or palaeontological sites that are encountered during land-based activities. This should include briefings explaining the prohibitions regarding removal of artifacts, and defacing or writing on rocks and infrastructure.
62. No activities shall be conducted in the vicinity (50 metres buffer zone) of any archaeological/historical sites. If archaeological sites or features are encountered, activities shall immediately be interrupted and moved away from this location. Each site encountered needs to be recorded and reported to the Government of Nunavut-Department of Culture and Heritage.

Other

63. 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.
64. The Proponent shall ensure that project activities do not interfere with Inuit wildlife harvesting or traditional land use activities.
65. The Proponent should, to the extent possible, hire local people and access local services where possible.

MONITORING AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

In addition, the Board is recommending the following:

Wildlife Mitigation and Monitoring Plan

1. Prior to the start of project activities, the Proponent shall submit an updated Wildlife Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (WMMP) to the Nunavut Impact Review Board, Government of Nunavut Department of Environment. At a minimum, this plan should include proposed template for a wildlife log/record of observations and proposed mitigation measures for caribou, migratory birds, grizzly bear and other sensitive species that may be encountered within the project area. The Proponent is encouraged to consult with the Government of Nunavut's Regional Biologists during the revision of the WMMP,

regarding project schedule and timelines so as to ensure adequate mitigation of potential wildlife impacts.

Abandonment and Restoration Plan

2. The Proponent shall submit a revised and final version of the Abandonment and Restoration Plan to the Nunavut Impact Review Board, Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada and Government of Nunavut- Department of Environment prior to undertaking activities in the potential development area. The revised Plan should include procedures for using native plant species for re-vegetation in order to eliminate risk of introducing invasive species to the area pursuant to the Wildlife Act.

Annual Report

3. The Proponent shall submit a comprehensive annual report with copies provided to the Nunavut Impact Review Board, by March 31st of each year of permitted activities beginning March 31, 2027. The annual report must contain at least the following information:
 - a) A summary of activities undertaken for the year, including:
 - a map showing the approximate location of drill sites;
 - a map showing the location of the fuel cache;
 - a description of local hires, contracting opportunities and initiatives;
 - flight altitudes, frequency of flights and anticipated flight routes;
 - site photos;
 - b) A work plan for the following year, including any progressive reclamation work undertaken;
 - c) A summary of community consultations undertaken throughout the year, providing copy of materials presented to community members, a description of issues and concerns raised, discussions with community members and advice offered to the company as well as any follow-up actions that were required or taken to resolve any concerns expressed about the project proposal;
 - d) A log of instances in which community residents occupy or transit through the project area for the purpose of traditional land use or harvesting. This log should include the location and number of people encountered, activity being undertaken (e.g., berry picking, fishing, hunting, camping, etc.), date and time; and any mitigation measures or adaptive management undertaken to prevent disturbance;
 - e) A discussion of issues related to wildlife and environmental monitoring, including the number of cease-work orders required as a result of proximity to caribou and any other wildlife;
 - f) A brief summary of WMMP results as well as any mitigation actions that were undertaken. In addition, the Proponent shall maintain a record of wildlife observations while operating within the project area and include it as part of the summary report. The summary report based on wildlife observations should include the following:

1. Locations (i.e., latitude and longitude), species, number of animals, a description of the animal activity, and a description of the gender and age of animals if possible.
 2. Prior to conducting project activities, the Proponent should map the location of any sensitive wildlife sites such as denning sites, calving areas, caribou crossing sites, and raptor nests in the project area, and identify the timing of critical life history events (i.e., calving, mating, denning and nesting).
 3. Additionally, the Proponent should indicate potential impacts from the project, and ensure that operational activities are managed and modified to avoid impacts on wildlife and sensitive sites.
- g) An analysis of the effectiveness of mitigation measures for wildlife;
 - h) Summary of any heritage sites encountered during the exploration activities, any follow-up action or reporting required as a result and how project activities were modified to mitigate impacts on the heritage sites;
 - i) Summary of its knowledge of Inuit land use in/near the project area and explain how project activities were modified to mitigate impacts on Inuit land use; and
 - j) A summary of how the Proponent has complied with conditions contained within this Screening Decision, and all conditions as required by other authorizations associated with the project proposal.

Spill Contingency Plan

4. The Proponent shall update its Spill Contingency Plan to include the up to date emergency contact numbers for the Government of Nunavut-Department of Environment, Manager of Environmental Protection (867-975-7748) and Environment and Climate Change Canada, Enforcement Branch (867-975-4644).
5. The Proponent shall implement the recommendations found in the 2003 CCME Guidance Document PN 1326 entitled “*Environmental Code of Practice for Above Ground and Underground Storage Tank Systems containing Petroleum Product and Allied Petroleum Products*”.

OTHER NIRB CONCERNS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to the project-specific terms and conditions, the Board is recommending the following:

Change in Project Scope

1. Responsible authorities or Proponent shall notify the Nunavut Planning Commission and/or Parks Canada as appropriate, and the NIRB of any changes in operating plans or conditions, including phase advancement, associated with this project prior to any such change.

Copy of licences, etc. to the Board and Commission

2. The NIRB respectfully requests that responsible authorities submit a copy of each licence, permit or other authorization issued for the Project to the NIRB to assist in enabling possible project monitoring that may be required. Please forward a copy of the licences,

permits and/or other authorizations to the NIRB directly at info@nirb.ca or upload a copy to the NIRB's online registry at www.nirb.ca.

Use of Inuit Qaujimaningit

3. The Proponent is encouraged to work with local communities and knowledge holders to inform project design, to carry out the project, and to confirm or validate the perspectives represented in publications, and reports as part of the project. Care should be taken to ensure that Inuit Qaujimaningit and local knowledge collected for the project is used with permission and is accurately represented.

Bear and Carnivore Safety

4. The Proponent should review the Government of Nunavut's booklet on Bear Safety, which can be downloaded from this link: http://gov.nu.ca/sites/default/files/bear_safety_-_reducing_bear_people_conflicts_in_nunavut.pdf. Further information on bear/carnivore detection and deterrent techniques can be found in the "Safety in Grizzly and Black Bear Country" pamphlet, which can be downloaded from this link: http://www.enr.gov.nt.ca/sites/default/files/web_pdf_wd_bear_safety_brochure_1_may_2015.pdf.
5. There are polar bear and grizzly bear safety resources available from the Bear Smart Society with videos on polar bear safety available in English, French and Inuktitut at <http://www.bearsmart.com/play/safety-in-polar-bear-country/>. Information can also be obtained from Parks Canada's website on bear safety at the following link: <http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/pn-np/nu/quttinirpaaq/visit/visit6/d.aspx> or in reviewing the "Safety in Polar Bear Country" pamphlet, which can be downloaded from the following link: http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/pn-np/nu/quttinirpaaq/visit/visit6/~/_/media/pn-np/nu/auyuittuq/pdf/shared/PolarBearSafety_English.ashx.
6. Any problem wildlife or any interaction with carnivores should be reported immediately to the local Government of Nunavut, Department of Environment Conservation Office (Conservation Officer of Kugluktuk, phone: 867-982-7450).

Species at Risk

7. The Proponent review Environment and Climate Change Canada's "Environment Assessment Best Practice Guide for Wildlife at Risk in Canada", available at the following link: http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca/virtual_sara/files/policies/EA%20Best%20Practices%20004.pdf. The guide provides information to the Proponent on what is required when Wildlife at Risk, including *Species at Risk*, are encountered or affected by the project.+

Migratory Birds

8. The Proponent review Canadian Wildlife Services' "Key migratory bird terrestrial habitat sites in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut", available at the following link: <http://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/317630/publication.html> and "Key marine habitat sites for migratory birds in Nunavut and the Northwest Territories", available at the following link: <http://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/392824/publication.html>. The guide provides information to the Proponent on key terrestrial and marine habitat areas that are essential to the welfare of various migratory bird species in Canada.

9. For further information on how to protect migratory birds, their nests and eggs when planning or carrying out project activities, consult Environment and Climate Change Canada's Incidental Take web page and the fact sheet "Planning Ahead to Reduce the Risk of Detrimental Effects to Migratory Birds, and their Nests and Eggs" available at <http://www.ec.gc.ca/paom-itmb/>.

Incineration of Wastes

10. The Proponent review the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment's "Guidance Document for Canadian Jurisdictions on Open-Air Burning", available at the following link:
http://www.ccme.ca/files/Resources/air/wood_burning/pn_1548_CCME%20Guidance%20Document%20on%20Open%20Air%20Burning%20FINAL.pdf as a guidance document for best practices associated with open-air burning.

Transport of Dangerous Goods and Waste Management

11. Environment and Climate Change Canada recommends that all hazardous wastes, including waste oil, receive proper treatment and disposal at an approved facility.
12. The Proponent shall ensure that proper shipping documents (waste manifests, transportation of dangerous goods, etc.) accompany all movements of dangerous goods. Further, the Proponent shall ensure that the shipment of all dangerous goods is registered with the Government of Nunavut Department of Environment, Department of Environment Manager. Contact the Manager (867) 975-7748 to obtain a manifest if dangerous goods including hazardous wastes will be transported.

Caribou Management

13. Territorial and federal government agencies in Nunavut should work together with Regional Inuit Associations, co-management boards and industry to develop an action plan to identify and mitigate potential cumulative effects of human land use activities, including mineral exploration, on barren-ground caribou. This assessment of cumulative effects should occur at a regional scale (i.e., larger than individual project areas).

Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada

14. Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) impose mitigation measures, conditions and monitoring requirements pursuant to the Federal Land Use Permit, which require the Proponent to respect the sensitivities and importance of the area. These mitigation measures, conditions and monitoring requirements should be in regard to the location and area; type, location, capacity and operation of facilities; use, storage, handling and disposal of chemical or toxic material; wildlife and fisheries habitat; and petroleum fuel storage.
15. CIRNAC consider the importance of conducting regular Land Use Inspections, pursuant to the authority of the Federal Land Use Permit, while the project is in operation. The Land Use Inspections should be focused on ensuring the Proponent is in compliance with the conditions imposed through the Federal Land Use Permit.

Kitikmeot Inuit Association

16. The Kitikmeot Inuit Association impose strict mitigation measures and/or conditions upon the Proponent pursuant to the Inuit Owned Lands License in regard to fuel and chemical storage, drilling, water conditions, ground disturbance and wildlife on Inuit owned land.

Nunavut Water Board

17. The Nunavut Water Board impose mitigation measures, conditions and monitoring requirements pursuant to the Water Licence, which require the Proponent to respect the sensitivities and importance of water in the area. These mitigation measures, conditions and monitoring requirements should be in regard to use of water, snow and ice; waste disposal; access infrastructure and operation for camps; drilling operations; spill contingency planning; abandonment and restoration planning; and monitoring programs.

Crown Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada – Water Resources Division

18. INAC – Water Resources Division should consider the importance of conducting regular inspections, pursuant to the authority of the *Nunavut Waters and Nunavut Surface Rights Tribunal Act*, while the project is in operation. Inspectors should focus on ensuring the Proponent is in compliance with the conditions imposed through the Water Licence.

CONCLUSION

The foregoing constitutes the Board's screening decision with respect to the Blue Star Corp.'s "Hood River". The NIRB remains available for consultation with the Minister regarding this report as necessary.

Dated March 30, 2026 at Iqaluit, NU.



Albert Ehloak, *Acting* Chairperson

Attachments: Appendix A: Species at Risk in Nunavut
Appendix B: Archaeological and Palaeontological Resources Terms and Conditions for Land Use Permit Holders

APPENDIX A: SPECIES AT RISK IN NUNAVUT

Due to the requirements of Section 79(2) of the *Species at Risk Act*, S.C. 2002, c. 29 (*SARA*), and the potential for project-specific adverse effects on listed wildlife species and its critical habitat, measures should be taken as appropriate to avoid or lessen those effects, and the effects need to be monitored. Project effects could include species disturbance, attraction to operations and destruction of habitat. This section applies to all species listed on Schedule 1 of *SARA*, as listed in the table below, or have been assessed by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC), which may be encountered in the project area. This list may not include all species identified as at risk by the Territorial Government. The following points provide clarification on the applicability of the species outlined in the table.

- Schedule 1 is the official legal list of Species at Risk for *SARA*. *SARA* applies to all species on Schedule 1. The term “listed” species refers to species on Schedule 1.
- Schedule 2 and 3 of *SARA* identify species that were designated at risk by the COSEWIC prior to October 1999 and must be reassessed using revised criteria before they can be considered for addition to Schedule 1.
- Some species identified at risk by COSEWIC are “pending” addition to Schedule 1 of *SARA*. These species are under consideration for addition to Schedule 1, subject to further consultation or assessment.

If species at risk are encountered or affected, the primary mitigation measure should be avoidance. The Proponent should avoid contact with or disturbance to each species, its habitat and/or its residence. All direct, indirect, and cumulative effects should be considered. Refer to species status reports and other information on the Species at Risk Registry at <http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca> for information on specific species.

Monitoring should be undertaken by the Proponent to determine the effectiveness of mitigation and/or identify where further mitigation is required. As a minimum, this monitoring should include recording the locations and dates of any observations of Species at Risk, behaviour or actions taken by the animals when project activities were encountered, and any actions taken by the proponent to avoid contact or disturbance to the species, its habitat, and/or its residence. This information should be submitted to the appropriate regulators and organizations with management responsibility for that species, as requested.

For species primarily managed by the Territorial Government, the Territorial Government should be consulted to identify other appropriate mitigation and/or monitoring measures to minimize effects to these species from the project.

Mitigation and monitoring measures must be undertaken in a way that is consistent with applicable recovery strategies and action/management plans.

Schedules of *SARA* are amended on a regular basis, so it is important to check the *SARA* registry (www.sararegistry.gc.ca) to get the current status of a species.

Updated: September 2024

Terrestrial Species at Risk²	COSEWIC Designation	Schedule of SARA	Government Organization with Primary Management Responsibility³
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	Special Concern	Schedule 1	Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC)
Common Nighthawk	Threatened	Schedule 1	ECCC
Eskimo Curlew	Endangered	Schedule 1	ECCC
Harlequin Duck	Special Concern	Schedule 1	ECCC
Harris's Sparrow	Special Concern	Schedule 1	ECCC
Horned Grebe	Special Concern	Schedule 1	ECCC
Ivory Gull	Endangered	Schedule 1	ECCC
Olive-sided Flycatcher	Threatened	Schedule 1	ECCC
Peregrine Falcon	Special Concern	Schedule 1	ECCC
Red Knot Islandica Subspecies	Special Concern	Schedule 1	ECCC
Red-necked Phalarope	Special Concern	Schedule 1	ECCC
Ross's Gull	Threatened	Schedule 1	ECCC
Rusty Blackbird	Special Concern	Schedule 1	ECCC
Short-eared Owl	Special Concern	Schedule 1	ECCC
Porsild's Bryum	Threatened	Schedule 1	Government of Nunavut (GN)
Transverse Lady Beetle	Special Concern	No Schedule	GN
Caribou (Dolphin and Union Population)	Endangered	Schedule 1	GN
Caribou (Barren-ground Population)	Threatened	No Schedule	GN
Caribou (Torngat Mountains Population)	Endangered	No Schedule	GN
Grizzly Bear (Western Population)	Special Concern	Schedule 1	ECCC
Peary Caribou	Endangered	Schedule 1	GN
Polar Bear	Special Concern	Schedule 1	ECCC
Wolverine	Special Concern	Schedule 1	GN
Atlantic Walrus (High Arctic Population)	Special Concern	No Schedule	Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)
Atlantic Walrus (Central/Low Arctic Population)	Special Concern	No Schedule	DFO
Beluga Whale (Cumberland Sound Population)	Threatened	Schedule 1	DFO
Beluga Whale (Eastern Hudson Bay Population)	Endangered	No Schedule	DFO
Beluga Whale (Eastern High Arctic-Baffin Bay Population)	Special Concern	No Schedule	DFO
Beluga Whale (Western Hudson Bay Population)	Special Concern	No Schedule	DFO
Atlantic Cod (Arctic Lakes Population)	Special Concern	No Schedule	DFO
Fourhorn Sculpin (Freshwater Form)	Data Deficient	Schedule 3	DFO
Lumpfish	Threatened	No Schedule	DFO
Thorny Skate	Special Concern	No Schedule	DFO

² The Department of Fisheries and Oceans has responsibility for aquatic species.

³ Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) has a national role to play in the conservation and recovery of Species at Risk in Canada, as well as responsibility for management of birds described in the Migratory Birds Convention Act (MBCA). Day-to-day management of terrestrial species not covered in the MBCA is the responsibility of the Territorial Government. Populations that exist in National Parks are also managed under the authority of the Parks Canada Agency.

**APPENDIX B: ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND PALAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES TERMS AND
CONDITIONS FOR LAND USE PERMIT HOLDERS**



INTRODUCTION

The Department of Culture and Heritage (CH) routinely reviews land use applications sent to the Nunavut Water Board, Nunavut Impact Review Board and the Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada. These terms and conditions provide general direction to the permittee/proponent regarding the appropriate actions to be taken to ensure the permittee/proponent carries out its role in the protection of Nunavut’s archaeological and palaeontological resources.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- 1) The permittee/proponent shall have a professional archaeologist and/or palaeontologist perform the following **Functions** associated with the **Types of Development** listed below or similar development activities:

	Types of Development (See Guidelines below)	Function (See Guidelines below)
a)	Large scale prospecting	Archaeological/Palaeontological Overview Assessment
b)	Diamond drilling for exploration or geotechnical purpose or planning of linear disturbances	Archaeological/Palaeontological Overview Assessment and/or Inventory and Documentation and/or Mitigation
c)	Construction of linear disturbances, Extractive disturbances, Impounding disturbances and other land disturbance activities	Archaeological/Palaeontological Overview Assessment and/or Inventory and Documentation and/or Mitigation

Note that the above-mentioned functions require either a Nunavut Archaeologist Permit or a Nunavut Palaeontologist Permit. CH is authorized by way of the *Nunavut and Archaeological and Palaeontological Site Regulations*⁴ to issue such permits.

⁴P.C. 2001-1111 14 June, 2001

- 2) The permittee/proponent shall not operate any vehicle over a known or suspected archaeological or palaeontological site.
- 3) The permittee/proponent shall not remove, disturb, or displace any archaeological artifact or site, or any fossil or palaeontological site.
- 4) The permittee/proponent shall immediately contact CH at (867) 934-2046 or (867) 975-5500 should an archaeological site or specimen, or a palaeontological site or fossil, be encountered or disturbed by any land use activity.
- 5) The permittee/proponent shall immediately cease any activity that disturbs an archaeological or palaeontological site encountered during the course of a land use operation until permitted to proceed with the authorization of CH.
- 6) The permittee/proponent shall follow the direction of CH in restoring disturbed archaeological or palaeontological sites to an acceptable condition. If these conditions are attached to either a Class A or B Permit under the Territorial Lands Act Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada directions will also be followed.
- 7) The permittee/proponent shall provide all information requested by CH concerning all archaeological sites or artifacts and all palaeontological sites and fossils encountered in the course of any land use activity.
- 8) The permittee/proponent shall make best efforts to ensure that all persons working under its authority are aware of these conditions concerning archaeological sites and artifacts and palaeontological sites and fossils.
- 9) If a list of recorded archaeological and/or palaeontological sites is provided to the permittee/proponent by CH as part of the review of the land use application the permittee/proponent shall avoid the archaeological and/or palaeontological sites listed.
- 10) Should a list of recorded sites be provided to the permittee/proponent, the information is provided solely for the purpose of the proponent's land use activities as described in the land use application, and must otherwise be treated confidentially by the proponent.

Legal Framework

As stated in Article 33 of the *Agreement between the Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area and Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada (Nunavut Agreement)*:

Where an application is made for a land use permit in the Nunavut Settlement Area, and there are reasonable grounds to believe that there could be sites of archaeological importance on the lands affected, no land use permit shall be issued without written consent of the Designated Agency. Such consent shall not be unreasonably withheld. [33.5.12]

Each land use permit referred to in Section 33.5.12 shall specify the plans and methods of archeological site protection and restoration to be followed by the permit holder, and any other conditions the Designated Agency may deem fit. [33.5.13]

Palaeontology and Archaeology

Under the *Nunavut Act*⁵, the federal government can make regulations for the protection, care and preservation of palaeontological and archaeological sites and specimens in Nunavut. Under the *Nunavut Archaeological and Palaeontological Sites Regulations*⁶, it is illegal to alter or disturb any palaeontological or archaeological site in Nunavut unless permission is first granted through the permitting process.

Definitions

As defined in the *Nunavut Archaeological and Palaeontological Sites Regulations*, the following definitions apply:

“archaeological site” means a place where an archaeological artifact is found.

“archaeological artifact” means any tangible evidence of human activity that is more than 50 years old and in respect of which an unbroken chain of possession or regular pattern of usage cannot be demonstrated, and includes a Denesuline archaeological specimen referred to in section 40.4.9 of the Agreement between the Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area and Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada (Nunavut Agreement).

“palaeontological site” means a site where a fossil is found.

“fossil” includes:

Fossil means the hardened or preserved remains or impression of previously living organisms or vegetation and includes:

- (a) natural casts;*
- (b) preserved tracks, coprolites and plant remains; and*
- (c) the preserved shells and exoskeletons of invertebrates and the preserved eggs, teeth and bones of vertebrates.*

Guidelines for Developers for the Protection of Archaeological Resources in the Nunavut Territory

(Note: Partial document only, complete document at: www.ch.gov.nu.ca/en/Archaeology.aspx)

Introduction

The following guidelines have been formulated to ensure that the impacts of proposed developments upon heritage resources are assessed and mitigated before ground surface altering activities occur. Heritage resources are defined as, but not limited to, archaeological and historical sites, burial grounds, palaeontological sites, historic buildings and cairns. Effective collaboration between the developer, the Department of Culture, and Heritage (CH), and the contract archaeologist(s) will ensure proper preservation of heritage resources in the Nunavut Territory. The roles of each are briefly described.

⁵ s. 51(1)

⁶ P.C. 2001-1111 14 June, 2001

CH is the Nunavut Government agency which oversees the protection and management of heritage resources in Nunavut, in partnership with land claim authorities, regulatory agencies, and the federal government. Its role in mitigating impacts of developments on heritage resources is as follows: to identify the need for an impact assessment and make recommendations to the appropriate regulatory agency; set the terms of reference for the study depending upon the scope of the development; suggest the names of qualified individuals prepared to undertake the study to the developer; issue an archaeologist or palaeontologist permit authorizing field work; assess the completeness of the study and its recommendations; and ensure that the developer complies with the recommendations.

The primary regulatory agencies that CH provides information and assistance to are the Nunavut Impact Review Board, for development activities proposed for Inuit Owned Lands (as defined in Section 1.1.1 of the *Agreement between the Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area and Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada (Nunavut Agreement)*), and the Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, for development activities proposed for federal Crown Lands.

A developer is the initiator of a land use activity. It is the obligation of the developer to ensure that a qualified archaeologist or palaeontologist is hired to perform the required study and that provisions of the contract with the archaeologist or palaeontologist allow permit requirements to be met; i.e. fieldwork, collections management, artifact and specimen conservation, and report preparation. On the recommendation of the contract archaeologist or palaeontologist in the field and the Government of Nunavut, the developer shall implement avoidance or mitigative measures to protect heritage resources or to salvage the information they contain through excavation, analysis, and report writing. The developer assumes all costs associated with the study in its entirety.

Through his or her active participation and supervision of the study, the contract archaeologist or palaeontologist is accountable for the quality of work undertaken and the quality of the report produced. Facilities to conduct fieldwork, analysis, and report preparation should be available to this individual through institutional, agency, or company affiliations. Responsibility for the curation of objects recovered during field work while under study and for documents generated in the course of the study as well as remittance of artifacts, specimens and documents to the repository specified on the permit accrue to the contract archaeologist or palaeontologist. This individual is also bound by the legal requirements of the *Nunavut Archaeological and Palaeontological Sites Regulations*.

Types of Development

In general, those developments that cause concern for the safety of heritage resources will include one or more of the following kinds of surface disturbances. These categories, in combination, are comprehensive of the major kinds of developments commonly proposed in Nunavut. For any single development proposal, several kinds of these disturbances may be involved

- *Linear disturbances: including the construction of highways, roads, winter roads, transmission lines, and pipelines;*
- *Extractive disturbances: including mining, gravel removal, quarrying, and land filling;*

- *Impoundment disturbances: including dams, reservoirs, and tailings ponds;*
- *Intensive land use disturbances: including industrial, residential, commercial, recreational, and land reclamation work, and use of heritage resources as tourist developments.*
- *Mineral, oil and gas exploration: establishment of camps, temporary airstrips, access routes, well sites, or quarries all have potential for impacting heritage resources.*

Types of Studies Undertaken to Preserve Heritage Resources

Overview: An overview study of heritage resources should be conducted at the same time as the development project is being designed or its feasibility addressed. They usually lack specificity with regard to the exact location(s) and form(s) of impact and involve limited, if any, field surveys. Their main aim is to accumulate, evaluate, and synthesize the existing knowledge of the heritage of the known area of impact. The overview study provides managers with baseline data from which recommendations for future research and forecasts of potential impacts can be made. A Class I Permit is required for this type of study if field surveys are undertaken.

Reconnaissance: This is done to provide a judgmental appraisal of a region sufficient to provide the developer, the consultant, and government managers with recommendations for further development planning. This study may be implemented as a preliminary step to inventory and assessment investigations except in cases where a reconnaissance may indicate a very low or negligible heritage resource potential. Alternately, in the case of small-scale or linear developments, an inventory study may be recommended and obviate the need for a reconnaissance.

The main goal of a reconnaissance study is to provide baseline data for the verification of the presence of potential heritage resources, the determination of impacts to these resources, the generation of terms of reference for further studies and, if required, the advancement of preliminary mitigative and compensatory plans. The results of reconnaissance studies are primarily useful for the selection of alternatives and secondarily as a means of identifying impacts that must be mitigated after the final siting and design of the development project. Depending on the scope of the study, a Class 1 or Class 2 Permit is required for this type of investigation.

Inventory: A resource inventory is generally conducted at that stage in a project's development at which the geographical area(s) likely to sustain direct, indirect, and perceived impacts can be well defined. This requires systematic and intensive fieldwork to ascertain the effects of all possible and alternate construction components on heritage resources. All heritage sites must be recorded on Government of Nunavut Site Survey forms. Sufficient information must be amassed from field, library and archival components of the study to generate a predictive model of the heritage resource base that will:

- allow the identification of research and conservation opportunities;
- enable the developer to make planning decisions and recognize their likely effects on the known or predicted resources; and

- make the developer aware of the expenditures, which may be required for subsequent studies and mitigation. A Class 1 or 2 permit is required.

Assessment: At this stage, sufficient information concerning the numbers and locations of heritage resources will be available, as well as data to predict the forms and magnitude of impacts. Assessments provide information on the size, volume, complexity and content of a heritage resource, which is used to rank the values of different sites or site types given current archaeological knowledge. As this information will shape subsequent mitigation program(s), great care is necessary during this phase.

Mitigation: This refers to the amelioration of adverse impacts to heritage resources and involves the avoidance of impact through the redesign or relocation of a development or its components; the protection of the resource by constructing physical facilities; or, the scientific investigation and recovery of information from the resource by excavation or other method. The type(s) of appropriate mitigative measures are dictated by their viability in the context of the development project. Mitigation strategies must be developed in consultation with, and approved by, the Department of Culture and Heritage. It is important to note that mitigation activities should be initiated as far in advance of the construction of the development as possible.

Surveillance and monitoring: These may be required as part of the mitigation program.

Surveillance may be conducted during the construction phase of a project to ensure that the developer has complied with the recommendations.

Monitoring involves identification and inspection of residual and long-term impacts of a development (i.e. shoreline stability of a reservoir); or the use of impacts to disclose the presence of heritage resources, for example, the uncovering of buried sites during the construction of a pipeline.