



**SCREENING DECISION REPORT
NIRB FILE No.:**

NPC File No.: 150958

January 14, 2026

Following the Nunavut Impact Review Board’s (NIRB or Board) assessment of all materials provided, the NIRB is recommending that a review of Jennifer Galloway’s “Why is mercury rising in some northern lakes?” 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 Ministers 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 November 14, 2025, the NIRB received a referral to screen Jennifer Galloway’s “Why is mercury rising in some northern lakes?” project proposal (NIRB File No: 25YN079) from the Nunavut Planning Commission (Commission), with an accompanying positive conformity determination with the Keewatin Regional Land Use Plan. 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/126250.

- Project Name: Why is mercury rising in some northern lakes
- NIRB File No.: 25YN079
- NIRB Application No.: 126250

Table 1: NIRB’s Assessment Process

Date	Stage
November 14, 2025	Receipt of project proposal and positive conformity determination (Keewatin Regional Land Use Plan) from the Commission
November 14, 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 19, 2025	Receipt of online application from Proponent
November 19, 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>
November 19, 2025	Proponent responded to information request(s) and provided additional information
November 19, 2025	Scoping pursuant to s. 86(1) of the <i>NuPPAA</i>
December 9, 2025	Translated Public engagement and comment request (which included terms and conditions) was issued to the following communities
December 9, 2025	Receipt of public comments (later extended to January 5, 2026)
January 6, 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

Date	Stage
	for the provision of the Board's Report was requested from the Minister of Nunavut Arctic College
January 14, 2026	Issuance of Screening Decision Report

1. Project Scope

Location	Kivalliq Region, four lakes located near Rankin Inlet, identified through consultation with local community organizations
Objective	The Proponent intends to investigate why mercury levels are increasing in some northern lakes while remaining stable in others. The main goal of the study is to understand how mercury has accumulated in lake sediments over long periods of time and how factors such as climate change, watershed conditions, and human activities may be influencing these trends. The findings will support better land-use planning and help reduce potential risks to community health and the surrounding environment.
Timeline	August 1 to August 30, 2026 (short, seasonal fieldwork will occur over a short 7–10-day period)

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

Transportation

- Travel to selected lakes using a helicopter equipped with floats.
- No overland routes, ATVs, or snowmobiles are proposed.

Field Team and Duration

- A small field team operating for 7–10 days.
- Employment of 1–2 local wildlife monitors and a local interpreter.

Camp

- No overnight camp will be established on the land or on ice. Work will be conducted as day trips from Rankin Inlet.

Fuel

- Aviation fuel will be purchased directly from the pump in Rankin Inlet.

Sampling Activities

- Collecting lake-bottom sediment samples using:
 1. A gravity corer (5–10 cm diameter, 0.5–1 m penetration)
 2. A freeze corer (if required), freezing ~3 cm of surface sediment)
- Sub-sampling on site (gravity cores) or in a laboratory (freeze cores)
- No drilling into ground or rock, and no disturbance beyond lake sediments.
- Laboratory analyses will occur in southern Canada, but all field sampling occurs entirely within Nunavut.

Waste Management

- All temporary sampling materials (e.g., gloves, field consumables) will be returned to Rankin Inlet for proper disposal.

2. Inclusion or Exclusion to Scoping List

The NIRB has identified no additional work or activities in relation to the project proposal. As a result, the NIRB will proceed with screening the project based on the scope as described above.

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.

Additionally, proposed project-specific terms and conditions, should the project proceed, were attached for consideration and comment.

On or before January 6, 2026 the NIRB received comments from the following interested parties:

Table 2: Comments Received

Commenting Party	NIRB Doc ID No.
Transport Canada (TC)	358686

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 Why is mercury rising in some northern lakes? project proposal:

TC: Transport Canada reviewed the project proposal and has no comments, as no project components fall within its mandate.

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.

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
The size of the geographic area, including the size of wildlife habitats, likely to be affected by the impacts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The physical footprint of the project is limited to discrete lakebed sampling locations within four lakes near Rankin Inlet, accessed by helicopter. Project activities involve temporary helicopter landings on water and short-duration sediment coring, with no permanent infrastructure, shoreline disturbance, or ground-based activities. ▪ The project is not expected to result in measurable wildlife habitat disturbance. Activities are short-term and localized, and no denning areas, migration corridors, or critical wildlife habitats have been identified within the project footprint. Potential interactions with wildlife are limited to brief helicopter overflights and the presence of a small field team, with mitigation measures in place to avoid disturbance.
The ecosystemic sensitivity of that area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No specific areas of ecosystemic sensitivity have been identified within the project footprint, which is limited to discrete lakebed sediment sampling locations within lakes near Rankin Inlet. Project activities are short-term, localized, and limited in scale, and do not involve shoreline disturbance or permanent alteration of aquatic or terrestrial environments.
The historical, cultural and archaeological significance of that area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No specific areas of historical, cultural, or archaeological significance have been identified within the project footprint. The project involves short-term lakebed sediment sampling only, with no ground or shoreline disturbance. The Proponent has committed to reporting any previously unidentified archaeological resources if encountered during fieldwork, in accordance with applicable requirements.
The size of the human and the animal populations likely to be affected by the impacts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The project is unlikely to affect local human populations. Any wildlife disturbances are expected to be temporary and highly localized, limited solely

Factor	Comment
	to the specific lakebed sampling sites accessed by helicopter. The project does not involve shoreline activities, and no permanent infrastructure will be established.
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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project activities are short-term (7–10 days) and low-impact, limited solely to lakebed sediment sampling accessed by helicopter. No shoreline or land-based activities are proposed, and no permanent infrastructure will be established. ▪ Temporary disturbances may occur from field personnel and helicopters, but these are reversible and localized. Adherence to regulatory requirements and mitigation measures (wildlife monitors, no drilling beyond lake sediments) ensures no significant residual effects.
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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The NIRB has not identified any past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects at this time; however, the Board has recommended terms and conditions along with mitigation measures designed with consideration for the potential for cumulative effects in the Board Views section.
Any other factor that the Board considers relevant to the assessment of the significance of impacts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No additional factors were identified. All activities follow regulatory requirements, including environmental protection, wildlife guidelines, and proper waste management. Temporary field consumables will be returned to Rankin Inlet for proper disposal.

Regulatory Requirements

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

1. The *Fisheries Act* (<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/F-14/index.html>).
2. The *Nunavut Waters and Nunavut Surface Rights Tribunal Act* (<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/n-28.8/>).
3. The *Migratory Birds Convention Act* (<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/M-7.01/>), the *Migratory Birds Regulations* (https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/C.R.C.,_c._1035/index.html) and the *Migratory Bird Sanctuary Regulations* (https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/C.R.C.,_c._1036/index.html).
4. The *Species at Risk Act* (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/s-15.3/>). Attached in **Appendix A** is a list of Species at Risk in Nunavut.
5. 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>).

6. The *Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act* (<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/t-19.01/>) and the *Transportation of Dangerous Goods Regulations* (<http://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/tdg/clear-tofc-211.htm>).
7. The *Canadian Environmental Protection Act* (<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-15.31/>).
8. The *Aeronautics Act* (<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/A-2/>) and the *Canadian Aviation Regulations* (<https://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/acts-regulations/regulations-sor96-433.html>).

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	Wildlife (Migratory and Non-Migratory Birds, Terrestrial Species, and Species at Risk)
Potential effects:	Temporary and localized disturbance to wildlife associated with short-duration helicopter access and field personnel presence during lakebed sediment sampling activities.
Nature of Impacts:	Potential impacts are expected to be temporary, localized, and low in magnitude, limited to short-term sensory disturbance from helicopter activity and field presence. No permanent alteration of wildlife habitat is anticipated, and any effects are expected to be fully reversible upon completion of project activities.
Mitigating Factors:	Potential impacts are minimized by the small spatial footprint, short duration (approximately 7–10 days), and non-invasive nature of the project. No overland travel, camps, or infrastructure are proposed. The Proponent has committed to employing local wildlife monitors and to conducting activities in a manner that avoids unnecessary wildlife disturbance. Any minor field waste will be returned to Rankin Inlet for proper disposal. Project activities will be conducted in compliance with applicable wildlife legislation.
Proposed Terms and Conditions:	Wildlife General – 11 through 13 Migratory Birds and Raptors Disturbance – 14 and 15 Aircraft Flight Restrictions – 16 through 19

Valued Component	Freshwater Quality and Sediment Integrity
Potential effects:	Minor, localized disturbance to lake-bottom sediments during collection with gravity and freeze corers. Small amounts of sediment may be temporarily displaced, but there will be no alteration of the shoreline, lakebed beyond sampling, or contamination of surface water.

Nature of Impacts:	Impacts are expected to be low magnitude, short-term, and reversible. Disturbances are limited to the immediate sampling location and do not affect overall lake ecosystem function or water quality.
Mitigating Factors:	The Project uses careful coring techniques to minimize sediment disruption, limits the number of sampling locations per lake, and follows protocols for sub-sampling and transport. No drilling, fuel storage, or waste generation occurs on-site, and all operations are conducted from helicopters to avoid shoreline disturbance. Laboratory analyses occur off-site.
Proposed Terms and Conditions:	Water courses/Water bodies -6 and 7 Waste Management -8 and 9 Air Quality - 10

Valued Component	Inuit Harvesting Activities
Potential effects:	Temporary, localized disruption to access of lakes or shoreline areas that may be used for traditional fishing, hunting, or gathering. Minimal disturbance from short-term helicopter flights and small field teams. No permanent alteration of land, water, or wildlife habitats.
Nature of Impacts:	Impacts are expected to be low magnitude, short-term, and reversible. Any avoidance by harvesters would only occur during the brief period of field activities (7–10 days) and would not prevent traditional use in surrounding areas.
Mitigating Factors:	Fieldwork is conducted as day trips from Rankin Inlet, with no camps, fuel caches, or waste left on-site. Project activities are communicated to the local community, and local wildlife monitors are employed to ensure sensitive areas are avoided. Helicopter flight paths are planned to minimize disturbance to harvesting areas, and all project activities comply with local land-use agreements and regulatory requirements.
Proposed Terms and Conditions:	Other – 20 through 22

Socio-economic effects on northerners:

Valued Component	Socio-Economic Participation
Potential effects:	Positive, short-term economic benefits to local communities through employment of wildlife monitors, interpreters, and use of local services such as transport and venue rental. No adverse socio-economic impacts are anticipated.
Nature of Impacts:	Impacts are low magnitude, positive, and short-term. Benefits occur only during the 7–10day fieldwork period and are limited to project-related activities.
Mitigating Factors:	The Project prioritizes hiring local personnel where possible, engages local service providers, and coordinates with community organizations to ensure fair compensation and proper knowledge transfer. All expenditures and participation comply with local agreements and regulatory requirements.

Proposed Terms and Conditions:	Other- 20 and 22
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Significant public concern:

Valued Component	Public Concern / Community Awareness
Potential effects:	Community or public concern regarding environmental impacts, mercury levels, or disruption to traditional land use. Misunderstandings about the project could lead to questions or temporary apprehension.
Nature of Impacts:	Impacts are expected to be low magnitude, short-term, and reversible, limited to the period of fieldwork and initial dissemination of project activities. No lasting social or environmental effects are anticipated.
Mitigating Factors:	The Proponent will engage with local communities through consultations, workshops, and public meetings. Results of the study will be shared in accessible formats, and community feedback will be incorporated into project activities. Clear communication and ongoing updates will help maintain trust and transparency.
Proposed Terms and Conditions:	Other- 20 through 22

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. Jennifer Galloway (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.:150958), and the NIRB (Online Application Form, Project Summary, and Additional Information, 24th November 2025). This information should be accessible to enforcement officers upon request.
3. The Proponent shall operate the site in accordance with all applicable Acts, Regulations and Guidelines.
4. The Proponent shall ensure that it meets the standards and/or limits as set out in the authorizing agencies' permits or licences as required for this project.
5. The Proponent shall ensure that all personnel, staff and contractors are adequately trained prior to commencement of all project activities, and shall be made aware of all operational plans, management plans, guidelines and Proponent commitments relating to the project.

Water courses/Water bodies (including fresh and marine waters)

6. The Proponent shall ensure that no disturbance of the stream bed, lakebed or the banks of any definable watercourse be permitted, except where deemed necessary for maintaining project-specific operational commitments or approved by a responsible authority in cases of spill management.
7. The Proponent shall not deposit, nor permit the deposit of any fuel, chemicals, wastes (including wastewater) or sediment into any water body. The Proponent should have in place an Emergency Spill Response Plan that is approved by the appropriate authorizing agency(ies).

Waste Management

8. The Proponent shall manage all hazardous and non-hazardous waste including food, domestic wastes, debris and petroleum-based chemicals (e.g., greases, gasoline, glycol-based antifreeze) in such a manner to avoid release into the environment and access to wildlife at all times until disposed of appropriately or at an approved facility.
9. The Proponent shall dispose of all combustible wastes as required by the appropriate authorizing agencies. All non-combustible wastes from the project site shall be removed to an approved facility for disposal.

Air Quality

10. The Proponent shall eliminate unnecessary idling to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as much as possible.

Wildlife – General

11. 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.

12. 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.
13. The Proponent shall not hunt or fish, unless proper Nunavut authorizations have been acquired.

Migratory Birds and Raptors Disturbance

14. 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.
15. 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 zone appropriate for the species and the surrounding habitat.

Aircraft Flight Restrictions

16. The Proponent shall not alter flight paths to approach wildlife and avoid flying directly over animals.
17. 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.
18. The Proponent shall ensure that aircraft/helicopter do not, unless for emergency, touch-down in areas where wildlife are present.
19. 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.

Other

20. The Proponent should engage with local residents regarding planned activities in the area and should solicit available Inuit Qaujimaningit and information regarding current recreational and traditional usage of the project area which may inform project activities. Posting of translated public notices and direct engagement with potentially interested groups and individuals prior to undertaking project activities is strongly encouraged.
21. The Proponent shall ensure that project activities do not interfere with Inuit wildlife harvesting or traditional land use activities.
22. The Proponent should, to the extent possible, hire local people and access local services where possible.

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: https://www.enr.gov.nt.ca/sites/enr/files/resources/safety_in_grizzly_and_black_bear_country_english.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/pnnp/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 Rankin Inlet, phone: (867) 645-8084.

Migratory Birds

7. 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.
8. 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://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2013/ec/CW66-324-2013-eng.pdf.

CONCLUSION

The foregoing constitutes the Board’s screening decision with respect to the Jennifer Galloway’s “Why is mercury rising in some northern lakes?” The NIRB remains available for consultation with the Minister regarding this report as necessary.

Dated January 14, 2026 at Iqaluit, NU.



Albert Ehaloak, *Acting* Chairperson

Attachments: Appendix A: Species at Risk in Nunavut

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 Risk¹	COSEWIC Designation	Schedule of SARA	Government Organization with Primary Management Responsibility²
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

¹ The Department of Fisheries and Oceans has responsibility for aquatic species.

² 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*³ to issue such permits.

³ P.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.