

GN # 01	
Department	Culture and Heritage
Organization	Government of Nunavut
Subject/Topic	Archaeology & Palaeontology
References	NIRB 126400/26YN016: Notice of Screening and Comment Request for Stanford University's "Testing the impact of early land plants on the Earth system" Project Proposal
CONCERNS	
<p>Project Summary</p> <p>The Proponent proposes one season of scientific research in the Qikiqtani region from July 4 to August 4, 2026, with primary field locations at Read Bay on Cornwallis Island and Twilight Creek on Bathurst Island, and additional potential sites near Resolute Bay at Signal Hill and Cape Martyr, on Somerset Island, and at Truro Island. The scope includes helicopter access to Read Bay, fixed-wing access to Twilight Creek or Truro Island, temporary camps, terrestrial access by foot or bicycle at Signal Hill and Cape Martyr, and collection of approximately 300 to 400 outcrop samples using hand tools such as geological hammers or shovels. The application materials also identify fossil sampling as part of the proposed work.</p> <p>Project-Specific Concerns</p> <p>GN notes that archaeological and palaeontological sites and specimens in Nunavut are protected under the <i>Nunavut Act</i> and the <i>Nunavut Archaeological and Palaeontological Sites Regulations</i>. GN notes further that the NAPSRS require a permit to search for, survey, excavate, alter, disturb, or remove archaeological or palaeontological material.</p> <p>CH notes that the Department has received an associated palaeontology permit application for this project and that the application will be reviewed under the NAPSRS.</p>	
RECOMMENDATIONS	
<p>GN further recommends the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site protection: All heritage sites (archaeological and palaeontological) in Nunavut are protected by law. The Proponent must understand that it is their responsibility to ensure that no archaeological sites are disturbed during the course of Project activities. CH recommends that known or newly recorded archaeological sites are avoided using a minimum 50 metre buffer, or greater where directed by CH. • Chance finds: If archaeological materials or features are encountered, all activities shall cease immediately within the protective buffer area. The site shall be documented (including coordinates, description, and photographs) and reported to CH, and work shall not resume within the buffer area until direction is provided by CH. • General protections: No alteration, disturbance, artifact removal, littering, or defacement of archaeological sites is permitted. No collection or disturbance shall 	

occur unless authorized through the appropriate permitting process. The Proponent shall ensure that all staff and contractors are informed of these legal obligations. The construction of inuksuit is not supported.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Under the *Nunavut Act*, the *Nunavut Archaeological and Palaeontological Sites Regulations* provide for the protection, care, and preservation of archaeological and palaeontological resources. The Department of Culture and Heritage (GN-CH) is the Designated Agency responsible for the administration of the archaeological and palaeontological permitting system, in close coordination with Inuit land claim partners, including the Inuit Heritage Trust (IHT), which serves as the Designated Organization under Article 33 of the Nunavut Agreement. All archaeological and palaeontological sites in Nunavut are protected by law. It is illegal to search for, survey, excavate, alter, or otherwise disturb any archaeological or palaeontological site without a valid permit issued by the Government of Nunavut.