



**NIRB File No.: 05AN018**

CWS File No.: NUN-MBS-14-02, NUN-SCI-14-02

AANDC File No.: N2014N0021

NWB File No.: 3BC-KAR1316

May 6, 2015

The Honourable Leona Aglukkaq  
Minister of Environment  
Government of Canada  
c/o Mia Pelletier, A/Habitat Specialist  
Canadian Wildlife Service  
P.O. Box 1714  
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**Re: Application Exempt from the Requirement for Screening pursuant to Section 12.4.3 of the NLCA: Environment Canada's "Assessing Variation in Egg Mercury Levels in Bird Species from a Low Arctic site" project, Kitikmeot Region**

Dear Mia Pelletier:

On April 1, 2015 the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB or Board) received an application from the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) for a new *Migratory Bird Sanctuary permit* and *Scientific permit to take and salvage or disturb migratory birds* for Environment Canada's (EC) "Assessing Variation in Egg Mercury Levels in Bird Species from a Low Arctic site"<sup>1</sup> project proposal. The Board notes that a conformity determination from the Nunavut Planning Commission was not required for this file, as the proposed project is located within a region that does not currently have an approved land use plan in place (Kitikmeot Region).

Please be advised that the original project proposal (NIRB File No. 05AN018) was received by the NIRB from the CWS on February 18, 2005 and was screened by the Board in accordance with Part 4, Article 12 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA). On May 6, 2005 the NIRB issued the enclosed NLCA 12.4.4(a) screening decision to the Minister of Environment, Government of Canada, indicating that the proposed project could proceed subject to the NIRB's recommended project-specific terms and conditions.

Additional authorization and extension requests associated with the "Assessing Variation in Egg Mercury Levels in Bird Species from a Low Arctic site" project have also been reviewed by the

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<sup>1</sup> Originally named the "Population Ecology of Arctic Breeding" project.

NIRB following screening of the original project proposal (NIRB File No. 05AN018). In each instance the NIRB confirmed that the applications were exempt from the requirement for further screening pursuant to Section 12.4.3 of the NLCA and that the activities therein remained subject to the terms and conditions recommended in the original May 6, 2005 Screening Decision Report. A summary of the additional applications associated with NIRB File No. 05AN018 is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Additional applications associated with NIRB File No. 05AN018**

Authorization	Application Received by the NIRB			NIRB Decision	
	Date Received	Type	Reason for Application	Date Issued	Type
CWS (NUN-MBS-08-01, NUN-SCI-08-01)	February 20, 2008	Renewal	Continue research activities	March 10, 2008	Reissued May 6, 2005 SDR
AANDC LUP (N2008N0028)	May 1, 2008	New Land Use Permit Application	Camp and research activities on Crown lands	May 7, 2008	Reissued May 6, 2005 SDR
AANDC LUP (N2008N0028)	February 18, 2010	Extension	Continue research activities	February 23, 2010	Reissued May 6, 2005 SDR
AANDC LUP (N2008N0028)	March 8, 2011	Extension	Camp and research activities	March 22, 2011	Reissued May 6, 2005 SDR
CWS (NUN-MBS-11-02, NUN-SCI-11-03)	March 8, 2011	Amendment/ Extension	Continue research activities		
AANDC LUP (N2008N0028)	May 3, 2012	Extension	Continue research activities	May 11, 2012	Reissued May 6, 2005 SDR
AANDC LUP (N2008N0028)	May 23, 2013	Extension	Continue research activities	May 28, 2013	Reissued May 6, 2005 SDR
CWS (NUN-MBS-14-02, NUN-SCI-14-02)	February 11, 2014	Extension	Continue research activities	February 28, 2014	Reissued May 6, 2005 SDR
AANDC LUP (N2014N0021)	November 17, 2014	New Land Use Permit	Replace LUP (N2008N0028)	December 2, 2014	Reissued May 6, 2005 SDR
AANDC LUP (N2014N0021); CWS (NUN-MBS-14-02, NUN-SCI-14-02)	February 9, 2015	Amendments	Continue research activities increase sample collection and film wildlife.	February 26, 2015	Reissued May 6, 2005 SDR

Notes: AANDC=Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada; CWS=Canadian Wildlife Service; LUP=Land Use Permit; NIRB=Nunavut Impact Review Board; SDR=Screening Decision Report

The current CWS application, the original NIRB Screening Decision Report (NIRB File No. 05AN018) and related file information are available from the NIRB's online public registry at the following location:

<http://ftp.nirb.ca/01-SCREENINGS/COMPLETED%20SCREENINGS/2005/05AN018-Ray%20Alisauskas/>.

#### PREVIOUSLY-SCREENED PROJECT PROPOSAL:

As previously screened by the NIRB (File No. 05AN018), the “Population Ecology of Arctic Breeding” project was located within the Kitikmeot region, approximately 200 kilometres (km) southwest of Gjoa Haven and approximately 205 km southeast of Cambridge Bay, in the Queen Maud Gulf Migratory Bird Sanctuary. Environment Canada indicated that it intended to carry out a multi-year research program, seasonally from May to August, including harvesting of birds and small mammals; live banding, ear-tagging, and nesting studies of Ross’ Gulls, Geese, and King Eiders.

The activities and components associated with the previously screened proposal included:

- Studies based primarily out of the Karrak Lake and Perry River areas;
- Nesting studies including finding nests, counting and possible removal of eggs, determining nest success and gosling and duckling survival;
- Banding studies including:
  - Capture and banding of up to 120 King Eiders and 30 Long-tailed ducks,
  - Capture and banding of up to 15,000 geese using corral-type nets deployed with helicopter assistance,
- Harvesting and collection of geese for measurements and evaluation of body condition, nest success, and productivity of waterfowl populations:
  - Harvest 100 Ross’ Geese and 100 Snow Geese,
  - Harvest 50 King Eiders and 50 Long-tailed ducks,
- Capture and ear tag up to 40 arctic fox;
- Sampling of small mammals (collared and brown lemmings, red-backed voles) using eight trap-lines over 10 consecutive nights;
- Access via fixed wing, helicopter, motorized boats, and on-foot travel;
- Establishment of temporary camp(s) and permanent buildings (cabin) at project sites (Karrak Lake and Perry River);
- Transportation and storage of fuel (up to 14,000 litres) and other hazardous materials;
- Generation and disposal of domestic, sewage, and non-combustible wastes;
- Backhaul of empty drums and non-combustible wastes; and
- Use of water and production of grey water.

The activities associated with the previous 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014 extension applications were to extend the AANDC Land Use Permit and Canadian Wildlife Service Migratory Bird Sanctuary Permits to continue the previously approved research activities.

The activities and components associated with the previous November 17, 2014 application were to replace the previously issued Land Use Permit No. N2008N0028 with a new AANDC Land Use Permit No. N2014N0021 to continue the previous approved research activities.

The activities associated with the previous February 9, 2015 application were to renew permits through 2017 to continue previously approved activities as well as:

- Tissue sample collection and analyses, anatomical dissections of migratory birds;
- Tissues sample collection of arctic foxes, geese, small mammals, and collection of ectoparasites (fleas, lice, ticks) isolated from the selected dead animals; and
- Host film crews or photographers.

CURRENT APPLICATION:

Environment Canada is currently applying for a new *Migratory Bird Sanctuary permit* and *Scientific permit to take and salvage or disturb migratory birds* from the CWS to continue previously approved research activities for up to two years, including the following additional components:

- Conduct preliminary surveillance of mercury concentrations in eggs of migratory birds at Karrak Lake seasonally in June and July to evaluate factors such as wintering areas, and dietary differences that might influence egg concentrations of mercury; and
- Collect an additional one egg per nest, up to a maximum of 10 eggs per species per year, from Arctic terns, herring gulls, glaucous gulls, King eider, cackling geese, Lesser Snow geese, Ross's Gulls, long-tailed duck, red-throated loon, semipalmated sandpiper, long-tailed jaeger, and parasitic jaeger.

Please note that Section 12.4.3 of the NLCA states that:

*“Any application for a component or activity of a project proposal that has been permitted to proceed in accordance with these provisions shall be exempt from the requirement for screening by NIRB unless:*

*(a) such component or activity was not part of the original project proposal; or*

*(b) its inclusion would significantly modify the project.”*

After completing a review of the information provided in support of the current application, the NIRB is of the understanding that the proposed activities do not change the general scope of the original project activities, and the exceptions noted in NLCA 12.4.3(a) and (b) do not apply. Therefore, this application is exempt from the requirement for screening pursuant to Section 12.4.3 of the NLCA and the activities therein remain subject to the terms and conditions recommended in the original May 6, 2005 Screening Decision Report (enclosed).

If you have any questions or require additional clarification, please contact Solomon Amuno, Technical Advisor, at (867) 983-4603 or [samuno@nirb.ca](mailto:samuno@nirb.ca).

Sincerely,



Ryan Barry  
Executive Director  
Nunavut Impact Review Board

cc: Ray Alisaukas, Environment Canada  
Phyllis Beaulieu, Nunavut Water Board  
Geoff Clark, Kitikmeot Inuit Association

Enclosure: NIRB Screening Decision Report, File No.: 05AN018 (May 6, 2005)