



NIRB File No.: 10YN058
CWS File No.: NUN-SCI-14-01

March 4, 2014

The Honourable Leona Aglukkaq
Minister of Environment, Government of Canada
c/o Jason Akearok, Habitat Biologist
Canadian Wildlife Service
PO Box 1870
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0

Sent via email: jason.akearok@ec.gc.ca

Re: Application Exempt from the Requirement for Screening pursuant to Section 12.4.3 of the NLCA: Carleton University's "Community-Based Monitoring of Sea Ice and Eider Duck Populations around the Belcher Islands, Nunavut" project, South Baffin Region

Dear Jason Akearok:

On January 22, 2014 the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB or Board) received an application from the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) for an amendment to the Permit for Scientific Take or Disturbance of Migratory Birds (No. NUN-SCI-14-01) for Carleton University's "Detecting Avian Cholera in the Hudson Bay Common Eider (*Somateria mollissima sedentaria*) in the Belcher Island Archipelago, Nunavut" project. The name of the proposal was also amended within the application to "Community-Based Monitoring of Sea Ice and Eider Duck Populations around the Belcher Islands, Nunavut" project.

Please be advised 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 (South Baffin Region).

The original project proposal (NIRB File No. 10YN058) was received by the NIRB from the CWS on December 14, 2010 and was screened by the Board in accordance with Part 4, Article 12 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA). On January 14, 2011 the NIRB issued the enclosed NLCA 12.4.4(a) screening decision to the Minister Responsible for the Nunavut Arctic College, Government of Nunavut which indicated that the proposed project could proceed subject to the NIRB's recommended project-specific terms and conditions.

On February 23, 2012 the NIRB received an application from the CWS to amend the Permit for Scientific Take or Disturbance of Migratory Birds (NUN-SCI-11-01) for the above mentioned project. After a thorough assessment of the amendment request, the NIRB determined that the application was exempt from the requirement for further screening pursuant to Section 12.4.3 of the NLCA, and reissued the enclosed screening decision report on February 28, 2012.

On November 13, 2013 the NIRB received an application from the CWS for an amendment and extension to the Permit for Scientific Take or Disturbance of Migratory Birds (NUN-SCI-11-01) for the above mentioned project. After a thorough assessment of the amendment and extension request, the NIRB determined that the application was exempt from the requirement for further screening pursuant to Section 12.4.3 of the NLCA, and reissued the enclosed screening decision report on December 2, 2013. The CWS issued a new permit in December 2013 for the amendment and extension as Permit No. NUN-SCI-14-01.

The current CWS application, the original NIRB Screening Decision Report (File No. 10YN058) 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/2011/10YN058-Carleton%20University-Amie%20Black/>

PREVIOUSLY-SCREENED PROJECT PROPOSAL:

As previously screened by the NIRB (File No. 10YN058), the "Detecting Avian Cholera in the Hudson Bay Common Eider (*Somateria mollissima sedentaria*) in the Belcher Island Archipelago, Nunavut" project was located within the South Baffin region of Nunavut on the southern area of the Belcher Island Archipelago, approximately 90 kilometres southwest of the community of Sanikiluaq. The Proponent indicated that it intended to collect samples of Common Eiders, test them for avian cholera to assess whether the disease had reached the birds' Nunavut wintering grounds and, if the disease was detected, to possibly determine where the disease had originated. The samples were to be collected in 1-2 weeks and the entire program was to be finished by the end of March 2011.

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

- Use of snowmobiles to move five people and scientific equipment from a previously established camp near Sanikiluaq to the study area;
- Use of helicopter for site to site pick-ups and drop-offs;
- Collection and preservation of blood, feather, cloacal and choanal swabs, and tissue (liver, kidney, and lungs) samples from birds harvested by local hunters;
- Opportunistic collection of any dead eiders found in the study area; and
- Shipment of samples to a laboratory at the Veterinary College in St. Hyacinthe, Quebec for cholera analysis.

The activities and components associated with the previous 2012 amendment to the Permit for Scientific Take or Disturbance of Migratory Birds (CWS File No. NUN-SCI-11-01) included the following activities and components:

- Deployment of additional remote time-lapse photography equipment at polynya and floe edge habitats to collect information on the dynamics of sea ice extend throughout the winter, and the associated distribution, abundance, and behaviour of eider ducks and other wildlife using these habitats;
- Deployment of oceanographic equipment such as salinity metres in winter sea ice habitats to provide additional information to evaluate sea ice dynamics in relation to eider foraging behaviour;
- Sample testing conducted at the University of Saskatchewan's, College of Veterinary Medicine lab facilities; and
- Removal of all equipment deployed prior to spring melt season.

The activities and components associated with the previous 2013 amendment and extension to the Permit for Scientific Take or Disturbance of Migratory Birds (CWS File No. NUN-SCI-11-01) included the following activities and components:

- Continue multi-year research on eider populations using time lapse photography and oceanographic monitoring (salinity meters and tide current meters);
 - Time lapse photography to take place between January and June;
 - Oceanographic monitoring to take place between January and March at Agiararaluit, Lucassie Island polynya, Quipaluq polynya as well as at several floe edge habitats used by eiders on the Belcher Islands;
- No collection of Common Eiders samples but introduction of more passive-monitoring techniques, such as assessing foraging behavior.
- Activities to take place from January 1, 2014 to March 25, 2017.

CURRENT APPLICATION:

Carleton University is proposing to amend its current CWS Permit (No. NUN-SCI-14-01) for Scientific Take or Disturbance of Migratory Birds to include the following additional components and activities:

- Employ local hunters to collect up to 60 Common Eider Ducks (male and female) using a 12 gauge shotgun and bird shot;
- Samples to be frozen and shipped to the National Wildlife Research Centre in Ottawa to be analyzed for contaminant loads and parasites;
- Opportunistic collection of any dead eiders found in the study area and sent to laboratory for analyses; and
- Activities to take place from January 2014 to March 2017.

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.”

On February 4, 2014 the NIRB distributed the current amendment request to a regional distribution list, requesting submission of any comments or concerns related to the application by February 14, 2014.

Please be advised that the NIRB did not receive any comments regarding the proposed amendment for Carlton University.

After completing a review of the information provided in support of the current application, the NIRB is of the understanding that the proposed amendment does 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 January 14, 2011 Screening Decision Report (enclosed).

If you have any questions or require additional clarification, please contact Sophia Pohl, Assistant Technical Advisor, at (867) 983-4622 or spohl@nirb.ca.

Sincerely,



Ryan Barry
Executive Director
Nunavut Impact Review Board

cc: Amie Black, Carleton University
Jeff Mercer, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada
Tracey McCaie, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada
Phyllis Beaulieu, Nunavut Water Board
Bernie MacIsaac, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Mark O'Connor, Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board

Enclosure: NIRB Screening Decision Report, File No.: 10YN058 (*January 14, 2011*)