



**NIRB File No.: 12YN034**  
**NRI File No.: 04 007 14R-M**

February 26, 2015

The Honourable Paul Quassa  
Minister Responsible for Nunavut Arctic College  
Government of Nunavut  
c/o Mosha Cote  
Nunavut Research Institute  
PO Box 1720  
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0

*Sent via email: [mosha.cote@arcticcollege.ca](mailto:mosha.cote@arcticcollege.ca)*

**Re: Application Exempt from the Requirement for Screening pursuant to Section 12.4.3 of the NLCA: NEPTUNE Canada's "Cambridge Bay Undersea Observatory" project, Kitikmeot Region**

Dear Mosha Cote:

On February 9, 2015 the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB or Board) received an application from the Nunavut Research Institute (NRI) for an amendment to the Scientific Research License No. 04-007-14R-M-Amended for NEPTUNE Canada's "Cambridge Bay Undersea Observatory" 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.: 12YN034) was received by the NIRB from the NRI on June 18, 2012 and was screened by the Board in accordance with Part 4, Article 12 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA). On August 10, 2012 the NIRB issued the enclosed NLCA 12.4.4(a) screening decision to the Minister Responsible for 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 10, 2014 the NIRB received an application from the NRI for an amendment to the Scientific Research Licence (No. 04-007-14R-M) 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 March 28, 2014.

The current NRI application, the original NIRB Screening Decision Report (File No. 12YN034) 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/2012/12YN034-NEPTUNE%20Canada%27s-Cambridge%20Bay%20Undersea%20Observatory/>

#### PREVIOUSLY-SCREENED PROJECT PROPOSAL:

As previously screened by the NIRB (File No. 12YN034), the "Cambridge Bay Undersea Observatory" project was located within the Kitikmeot region, within the marine area adjacent to Municipality of Cambridge Bay. The proposal involved the installation, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of an underwater instrument platform with associated equipment that were placed at approximately 10 metres depth on the ocean floor. Live data collected by the equipment were made available via internet for local people and researchers. The program was proposed to take place year-round from August 2012 to August 2017 with installation of the equipment to take place in August 2012 and removal of equipment to occur in 2017.

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

- Utilization of Cambridge Bay as the main base of operation;
- Installation of an electrical box on the public wharf to provide power and communications;
- Installation of underwater instrument platform at 10 metres depth along with an underwater camera and microphone, suite of sensors to measure seawater properties and an instrument to measure ice thickness;
- Installation of a cable from the electrical box to the underwater instrument platform;
- Use of a boat to install the cable and the underwater platform;
- Transmission of data to a local Cambridge Bay centre where live information can be accessed, as well as the transmission of data to NEPTUNE Canada via the internet; and;
- Decommissioning and removal of associated equipment upon project completion.

The activities and components associated with the previous February 10, 2014 amendment included:

- Collection of samples of sea water for analyses of oxygen and plankton.
  - Some sample were preserved and transported for analysis at the University of Victoria;
- Collection of specimens of seafloor life (invertebrates) and transport to the University of Victoria for identification;
- Use and storage of chemicals; and
- Use of boat to collect samples and to continue checkup of camera and installations.

#### CURRENT APPLICATION:

NEPTUNE Canada is currently proposing to amend its Scientific Research License (No. 04 007 14R-M) with the NRI to continue its previously-approved research activities with the following additional components/activities:

- Relocation of the current monitoring station further into the bay to increase setback from vessel traffic and related disturbances (new location within 200 metres of current site); and
- Addition of supplementary sensors on the current station to measure pH, CO<sub>2</sub>, and nitrate levels in seawater.

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 amendments 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 August 10, 2012 Screening Decision Report (enclosed).

If you have any questions or require additional clarification, please contact Alex Hizaka, Assistant Technical Advisor, at (867) 983-4621 or [ahizaka@nirb.ca](mailto:ahizaka@nirb.ca).

Sincerely,



Ryan Barry  
Executive Director  
Nunavut Impact Review Board

cc: Kim Juniper, University of Victoria  
Tracey McCaie, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada  
Phyllis Beaulieu, Nunavut Water Board  
Geoff Clark, Kitikmeot Inuit Association

Enclosure: NIRB Screening Decision Report, File No.: NIRB File 12YN034 (August 10, 2012)