

Nasaruvaalik Island 2018 – Plain Language Summary

Project title: Recover tracking devices from seabirds

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NOTE: PREVIOUSLY SCREENED BY NIRB AS 06YN024, 06YN015 AND 16YN020 AND

Personnel: 3

Project objectives: Tiny tracking devices have been deployed on seabirds nesting at Nasaruvaalik Island, the site of a >10 year study on the birds. In 2018, we need to return to the island, find the birds with those tracking units on them, catch them, remove the unit, and release the bird. Then we return south with the tracking units to download them and map where the birds move through the year. This will help us identify what risks they face during migration and in their wintering area. We will also be sealing up much of the camp as there are no plans to return in 2019.

Project location: Nasaruvaalik Island, 75.8 N, 96.3 W



Date and time: Approx. 1 – 20 July

Transportation: We fly to the site from Resolute Bay either by Twin Otter or helicopter. At the site we walk to sampling locations.

Summary of activities and rationale:

We fly from Resolute Bay and land at our small camp on Nasaruaalik Island where there are already 3 small cabins. From there we walk to the nesting sites at the ends of the island, spot birds carrying tracking devices, identify where they are nesting, and then set a trap over their nest. Once the birds settle on the trap, we spring it, catch the bird, remove the tracking unit from its leg, take a small blood sample, and release it. We expect that there are between 25 and 30 birds for us to catch this way, and then we will be done. Once we have those (or all that seem like we can catch them), we will close the camp up solidly and fly back to Resolute Bay, as we do not plan on being back in 2019.

Waste disposal: We will bring our water in from Resolute Bay in blue barrels, and pack out all waste (garbage), except for sewage which will be deposited in the sump under the outhouse by the main cabins. It is > 200 m from water.

Environmental impacts and mitigation: We have been working at this site for more than 10 years so we have well established protocols to minimize effects. In 2018 there will be no new construction; it is just a short trip to take some tracking equipment off of birds. Fuel storage will be minimal, probably 2 gerry cans of gasoline and 2 gerry cans of kerosene maximum. These are stored at the camp and we have fuel emergency spill kits on hand. At the colony we use routes to minimize scaring birds and only operate for short periods in an area so birds can return to their nests. All personnel on site have first aid and firearms experience.

Measures to avoid dangerous wildlife encounters: Any wildlife attractants (food, etc.) are kept inside the cabins if we stay at the camp. We carry firearms when at work. We encounter bears every year and have successfully scared them off them each time.

Community consultation and involvement: Amie Black has visited Resolute Bay the past 3 years (including 2017) to provide updates on the seabird projects. Prior to that, Mark Mallory visited Resolute Bay almost every year since 2006 to give updates. In previous years we have had local residents working with us but this year the seabird team is trying to hire Uluriak Amarualik for Prince Leopold Island, not this site (short trip, small team).

Community follow up: After our work this year we will summarize the field findings and send a translated report to Resolute Bay, and a representative from Environment and Climate Change Canada will provide a summary at the annual ACMC meeting.

Future plans: This is the last year of work planned at Nasaruaalik Island.