



NIRB File No.: 20YN008
NPC File No.: 149332

April 16, 2020

Markus Dyck
Government of Nunavut
P.O. Box 209
Igloolik, Nunavut, X0A 0L0

Sent via email: mdyck1@gov.nu.ca

Re: Notice of Screening for the Government of Nunavut's "Re-estimating the abundance of the Lancaster Sound (LS) Polar Bear subpopulation via genetic mark-recapture sampling" Project Proposal

Dear Markus Dyck:

On March 23, 2020 the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) received a referral to screen the Government of Nunavut's (GN) "Re-estimating the abundance of the Lancaster Sound (LS) Polar Bear subpopulations via genetic mark-recapture sampling" project proposal from the Nunavut Planning Commission (Commission), with an accompanying positive conformity determination with the North Baffin Regional Land Use Plan. Pursuant to Article 12, Sections 12.4.1 and 12.4.4 of the *Agreement between the Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area and Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada (Nunavut Agreement)* and s. 87 of the *Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act*, S.C. 2013, c. 14, s. 2 (*NuPPAA*), the NIRB has commenced screening this project proposal and has assigned it file number **20YN008** - please reference this file number in all future related correspondence.

INFORMATION REQUEST

On March 23, 2020 the NIRB requested that the Proponent complete the online application form through the NIRB's public registry system and ensure, pursuant to s. 144(1) of the *NuPPAA*, that sufficient information is provided to determine the scope of the project activities being proposed and commence screening.

On March 27, 2020 the NIRB received the required information and commenced the screening pursuant to Part 3 of the *NuPPAA*.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Project Scope:

All documents received and pertaining to this project proposal can be accessed from the NIRB's online public registry at www.nirb.ca/project/125513.

Project:	Re-estimating the abundance of the Lancaster Sound (LS) Polar Bear subpopulations via genetic mark-recapture sampling
Region:	Qikiqtani (North Baffin)
Location:	Lancaster Sound
Closest Community:	Arctic Bay, Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord are within the boundaries of the proposed study area (~470 000 square kilometres) while Pond Inlet is the nearest community outside of the proposed study area
Summary of Project Description:	The Proponent intends to conduct a three (3) year study (2021-2023) involving genetic biopsy mark-recapture techniques to reassess the size and status of the Lancaster Sound Polar Bear subpopulation in order to provide appropriate management advice to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
Project Proposed Timeline:	August 2020 to September 2024

According to the project proposal, the scope of the project includes the following undertakings, works or activities:

- Fuel caching activities to occur in 2020 to include:
 - Use of twin otter aircraft to transport aviation fuel to caching locations previously used by the Polar Continental Shelf Program; and
 - Fuel caches to include five (5) to twelve (12) fuel drums, each drum at a capacity of 205 litres.
- Research activities through 2021-2023 to include:
 - Work with local Hunters and Trappers Organizations to design and implement a comprehensive survey using genetic biopsy sampling;
 - Hire of local personnel as field assistants and other personnel as needed;
 - Use of helicopters to conduct aerial surveys of Polar Bears within Lancaster Sound;
 - Collection of DNA samples using biopsy darting techniques on bears found on the Lancaster Sound sea-ice and across smaller islands;
 - Tissue samples for genetic analyses to be collected from bears harvested in Nunavut throughout the study area;
 - Conduct inland-transects to survey locations of bears;
 - Setup and use of temporary camps within the study area (possibly Creswell Bay, Gascoyne Inlet, Polar Bear Pass camp, Fort Ross):
 - Use of water from snow and ice sources for domestic purposes;
 - Use of generators at temporary camps;
 - Transportation, storage and use of fuel for camp purposes (gasoline, aviation fuel, diesel);

- Production of human and grey waste water;
- Use of accommodations and facilities in several communities including Resolute Bay, Grise Fiord and Arctic Bay); and
- Removal of wastes (sewage and garbage) for proper disposal.

Inclusion or Exclusion of Scoping List

At this time, the NIRB has identified no additional works or activities in relation to the project proposal. As a result, the NIRB will proceed with screening the project based on the scope as described above.

REQUEST FOR COMMENTS

All documents received can be accessed from the NIRB's online public registry www.nirb.ca/project/125513 and include:

- *Commission Conformity Determination and Screening Referral*
- *Commission Application*
- *NIRB Online Application*
- *Non-Technical Summary*
- *Spill Contingency Plan*
- *Expected Impacts*
- *Lancaster Sound 2021 caching document*
- *Polar Bear Survey Map*

The NIRB will copy you on screening process related correspondence and upload related documents to the NIRB's online registry for public access. The NIRB may request additional information at any time during the process.

The NIRB is copying parties and municipalities potentially affected by the Government of Nunavut project proposal with this letter, and we invite interested parties to comment directly to the NIRB by **May 7, 2020**.

The NIRB would like parties to provide comments regarding:

- Whether the project proposal is likely to arouse significant public concern; and if so, why;
- Whether the project proposal is likely to cause significant adverse eco-systemic or socio-economic effects; and if so, why;
- Whether the project proposal is likely to cause significant adverse impacts on wildlife habitat or Inuit harvest activities; and if so, why;
- Whether the project proposal is of a type where the potential adverse effects are highly predictable and mitigable with known technology, (and providing any recommended mitigation measures); and
- Any matter of importance to the Party related to the project proposal.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please send your comments to the NIRB via email at info@nirb.ca, via fax at (867) 983-2594 or via the individual project dashboard for this assessment on the NIRB's online public registry at www.nirb.ca/project/125513.

If you have any questions or require clarification, feel free to contact the undersigned at (867) 983-4622 or motokiak@nirb.ca.

Sincerely,



Mia Otokiak
Junior Technical Advisor
Nunavut Impact Review Board

Enclosures (4): Public Notice of Screening (English and Inuktitut)
Comment Forms (English and Inuktitut)

cc: Distribution List
Jared Ottenhof, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Stephen Williamson-Bathory, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Amy Robinson, Government of Nunavut, Department of Environment
Lisa Pirie-Dominix, Canadian Wildlife Services
Jane Chisholm, Parks Canada