



NIRB File No.: 21YN030
NPC File No.: 149408

July 14, 2021

Jason Gobat
University of Washington
1013 NE 40th St
Seattle Washington 98105
United States

Sent via email: jgobat@uw.edu

Re: Notice of Screening for the University of Washington’s “Capturing and Understanding Arctic Change with Renewed Observations” Project Proposal

Dear Jason Gobat:

On June 7, 2021 the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB or Board) received a referral to screen the University of Washington’s “Capturing and Understanding Arctic Change with Renewed Observations” project proposal from the Nunavut Planning Commission (Commission), which noted that the project proposal is outside the area of an applicable 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 **21YN030** - please reference this file number in all future related correspondence.

INFORMATION REQUEST

On June 7, 2021, 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 June 18, 2021, the NIRB released a formal correspondence, pursuant to s. 144(1) of the *NuPPAA*, requesting that the Proponent provide the Board with the information necessary in order to carry out the screening of the project proposal. On July 12, 2021, 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/125623.

Project:	Capturing and Understanding Arctic Change with Renewed Observations				
Region:	Qikiqtani (South Baffin)				
Location:	Davis Strait				
Closest Community:	Qikiqtarjuaq	Distance (approximate)	40 kilometres (km)	Direction	Northeast
Summary of Project Description:	The Proponent intends to conduct research on Davis Strait to document and understand the exchange of fresh water and heat between the Arctic Ocean and the North Atlantic. Measurements of ocean temperature, salinity and currents, and sounds made by marine mammals to be collected by a line of 12 moorings (strings of science instruments suspended from a float that is anchored to the sea floor). The moorings are to be serviced every other year using a research ship; during the mooring service cruise the proponent intends to collect measurements of temperature, salinity, and chemical properties at multiple sites from southern Baffin Bay, Davis Strait, and the northern Labrador Sea.				
Project Proposed Timeline:	August 1, 2021 to October 10, 2024				

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

- Use of Research Ship RV *Sanna*;
- Deployment of two (2) oceanographic moorings off Cape Dyer to measure salinity, temperature, and ocean currents with semiannual visits for servicing;
- Conduct CTD (conductivity, temperature and depth) operations to measure ocean water properties at various sites during the 2022 and 2024 operation years.

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 at www.nirb.ca/project/125623 and include:

- *Commission Referral & Application*
- *NIRB Application*
- *Cruise Plan*

- *Ballast Water Management Plan*
- *Mooring Diagrams*
- *Project Maps*
- *International Oil Pollution Prevention Certificate*
- *Non-technical summaries in English and Inuktitut*

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 University of Washington project proposal with this letter, and we invite interested parties to comment directly to the NIRB by **July 23, 2021**.

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.

Please note that *proposed* project-specific terms and conditions, should the project proceed, have been attached for consideration and comment ([Appendix A](#)).

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/125623.

If you have any questions or require clarification, feel free to contact the undersigned at (867) 983-4616 or femingak@nirb.ca.

Sincerely,



Francis Emingak
Junior Technical Advisor
Nunavut Impact Review Board

Attachments: Appendix A: *Proposed* Project Specific Terms and Conditions

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

cc: Distribution List
Carson Gillis, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.
Stephen Williamson Bathory, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Jared Ottenhof, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Natalie O'Grady, Government of Nunavut – Department of Economic Development and Transportation
Amy Robinson, Government of Nunavut – Department of Environment
Moshia Cote, Nunavut Research Institute
Tracey McCaie, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada
Lisa Pirie-Dominix, Canadian Wildlife Service
N. John Olyslager, Environment and Climate Change Canada
Daniel Coombs, Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Veronique D'Amours-Gauthier, Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Transport Canada

Appendix A: Proposed Project Specific Terms and Conditions

The following is a list of project-specific terms and conditions which, should the project proceed, may be recommended to be attached to any approval.

General

1. University of Washington (the Proponent) shall maintain a copy of the Project Terms and Conditions at the site of operation at all times and make it accessible to enforcement officers upon request.
2. The Proponent shall operate in accordance with all commitments stated in correspondence provided to the Nunavut Planning Commission (NPC File No.: 149408), and the NIRB Online Application Form, July 7, 2021. This information should be accessible to enforcement officers upon request.
3. The Proponent shall operate the site in accordance with all applicable Acts, Regulations and Guidelines.
4. The Proponent shall ensure that it meets the standards and/or limits as set out in the authorizing agencies' permits or licences as required for this project.
5. The Proponent shall ensure that all personnel, staff and contractors are adequately trained prior to commencement of all project activities, and shall be made aware of all operational plans, management plans, guidelines and Proponent commitments relating to the project.

Water courses/Water bodies (including fresh and marine waters)

6. The Proponent shall ensure that water extraction from any fish-bearing waterbody is done with appropriate care and caution.
7. The Proponent shall not deposit, nor permit the deposit of any fuel, chemicals, wastes (including wastewater) or sediment into any water body. The Proponent should have in place an Emergency Spill Response Plan that is approved by the appropriate authorizing agency(ies).

Waste Management

8. The Proponent shall manage all hazardous and non-hazardous waste including food, domestic wastes, debris and petroleum-based chemicals (e.g., greases, gasoline, glycol-based antifreeze) in such a manner to avoid release into the environment and access to wildlife at all times until disposed of appropriately or at an approved facility.

Fuel and Chemical Storage

9. The Proponent store all fuel and other hazardous materials in such a manner as to prevent their release into the environment.
10. The Proponent shall have a Spill Contingency Plan in place.
11. The Proponent shall ensure that wildlife deterrent systems are utilized at the time of a spill incident in order to avoid wildlife (terrestrial or marine) and migratory birds from being contaminated.

12. The Proponent shall ensure that all spills of fuel or other deleterious materials of 100 litres or more must be reported immediately to the 24-hour Spill Line at (867) 920-8130.

Wildlife – General

13. The Proponent shall not chase, weary, harass or molest wildlife. This includes persistently circling, chasing, hovering over, pursuing or in any other way harass wildlife, or disturbing large groups of animals.

14. The Proponent shall not hunt or fish, unless proper Nunavut authorizations have been acquired.

15. The Proponent shall avoid the seaward site of seabird colonies and areas used by flocks of migrating waterfowl, a minimum distance away on the recommendation of the appropriate authorizing agencies.

16. The Proponent shall not pursue seabirds or waterbirds swimming on the water surface and shall avoid concentrations of these birds if encountered on the water.

Marine-Based Activities

17. The Proponent shall ensure that noise be kept to a minimum and shall refrain from making sharp or loud noises, blowing horns or whistles and shall maintain constant engine noise levels.

18. The Proponent shall not attempt to intersect or interfere with the movements of marine mammals. This includes ensuring that there are no wake zones within 250 metres and a minimum of 100 metre no go zone around marine mammals. Strategic positioning of vessels ahead of the path being traveled by mobile mammals and waiting for the mammals to pass is also prohibited.

19. When marine mammals appear to be trapped or disturbed by vessel movements, the Proponent shall implement appropriate measures to mitigate disturbance, including stoppage of movement until wildlife have moved away from the immediate area.

20. The Proponent shall maintain a distance of 100 metres if a Polar Bear is encountered on land or ice while conducting activities from a zodiac or other small craft; all interaction with Polar Bears should be avoided if possible.

21. The Proponent shall report all incidents, injuries or sightings of marine mammals to the appropriate authorizing agencies.

22. The Proponent shall implement measures designed to minimize disturbance to seabed sediments and benthic communities and marine wildlife when carrying out project activities within the marine environment.

Other

23. The Proponent should engage with local residents regarding planned activities in the area and should solicit available Inuit Qaujimaningit and information regarding current recreational and traditional usage of the project area which may inform project activities. Posting of translated public notices and direct engagement with potentially interested groups and individuals prior to undertaking project activities is strongly encouraged.