



NOTICE OF SCREENING OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

NIRB File No.: 22YN021

Project Name: The “Passive Acoustic Monitoring and UAV Assessment of the Impacts of Shipping and Development on High Arctic Beluga Whales and Narwhals” Project

Proponent Name: Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)

Project Type: Research Region: Qikiqtani Region

Public Registry: www.nirb.ca Application No.: 125688

Comment Deadline: **May 18, 2022**

PROJECT SCOPE:

The proposed “Passive Acoustic Monitoring and UAV Assessment of the Impacts of Shipping and Development on High Arctic Beluga Whales and Narwhals” project is located within the Qikiqtani region, approximately 218 kilometres (km) from Resolute Bay. The Proponent intends to use drone video and photographs to look at the body size of whales, measure ship noise and beluga and narwhal vocalizations, observe beluga and narwhal behaviour in the presence and absence of vessels, assess interactions between narwhal and beluga, and collect biopsy samples to look at hormone levels and genetics in the whales. The program is proposed to take place from July 2022 to August 2022. The scope of this proposed project as identified by the NIRB includes the following undertakings, works or activities:

- Twin Otter used for pick up and drop off of equipment and personnel;
- Use of a CO2 air rifle to collect tissue samples from whales;
- Use of two (2) zodiacs to collect tissue samples, deploy hydrophones, and to operate drones for video and imagery; and
- Use of two (2) drones to take videos of whales.

Please visit the NIRB’s public registry online at the link above and look up NIRB File No.: **22YN021** to access all project information, maps, and public comment forms.

REQUEST FOR COMMENTS

You are invited to provide the NIRB with your comments regarding whether the proposed project is:

- likely to arouse significant public concern and, if so, why;
- likely to cause significant adverse ecosystemic or socio-economic effects and, if so, why;
- likely to cause significant adverse impacts on wildlife habitat or Inuit harvest activities and, if so, why;
- a type where the potential adverse effects are highly predictable and can be prevented/managed appropriately with known technology.

Parties are also invited to recommend any specific mitigation measures they feel would be appropriate, and to bring any other matter of importance related to this project proposal to the NIRB’s attention.

CONTACT INFORMATION

The NIRB has recently launched an updated online public registry, and parties can access project information as well as submit comments directly to the NIRB via www.nirb.ca. Comments can still be submitted directly to the NIRB via email at info@nirb.ca or via fax to (867) 983-2594.

If you have any questions or require clarification regarding the proposed project or the NIRB’s screening process, please contact Mia Otokiak, Junior Technical Advisor toll-free at 867 (983)-4622 or motokiak@nirb.ca.