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Dear Mr. Cote

As requested, we are providing you with a summary of activity regarding the “Science and Indigenous partnerships in action: mobilizing Indigenous knowledge and building capacity to participate in research during the implementation of an ecosystem approach to fisheries resource assessments” project

Transit to Nunavut: St. John’s Newfoundland to Kinngait, Nunavut

Ahead of travelling to Newfoundland, the two crew members from Nunavut were required to forward copies of their COVID-19 vaccination proof to Qikiqtaaluk Corporation. It was also ensured that all staff from the Marine Institute participating in training activities were fully vaccinated against COVID-19. All Marine Institute staff flying into Nunavut successfully obtained Isolation Exemption letters from Nunavut’s Chief Public Health Officer (CPHO). Qikiqtaaluk Corporation collaborated with the Government of Nunavut to develop COVID-19 protocols for research vessels entering Nunavut. This proposal was submitted to the CPHO ahead of the research season.

On July 19th 2021, two Inuit from Nunavut: Maatiusi Manning and Edward (Ted) Irniq arrived in St. John’s Newfoundland from Kinngait Nunavut and Iqaluit Nunavut, respectively. During their stay in Newfoundland, the two crew members from Nunavut met the rest of their crew from the Marine Institute. During this time, they participated in the following activities: learning about the various pieces of scientific research equipment aboard the vessel, how to prepare a vessel for a transit, marine safety procedures and COVID-19 protocols. They also purchased PPE such as boots, rain gear and other gear required for their transit North. They departed St. John’s on July 25th 2021.

During their time in Newfoundland and over the course of the transit North, both crew members completed training on the following

- An overview of vessel operations and equipment;
- At-sea navigation training;
- Deckhand training; and
- Vessel communications training.

During the transit they also learned how to splice rope and tie appropriate knots for different situations. The trainers from the Marine Institute noted that both crew members participated fully during training exercises and were helpful crew members during the transit. On August 7th the crew arrived to Kinngait, Nunavut.

Kinngait

Upon arrival into Kinngait, the additional trainers from Marine Institute were delayed arriving into Kinngait due to airline weather cancellations. However, Maatiusi, Ted and Philip Walsh prepared the towed camera system and multi-beamed a number of areas outside of Kinngait harbour. They also set six pots to collect sample marine organisms. Once the rest of the Marine Institute crew arrived, the group immediately called a meeting with the Kinngait Hunters and Trappers Association to hire Inuit from Kinngait to participate in training and assist with the research program. All trainees from Kinngait were required to show proof of their COVID-19 vaccination status. In addition to the Marine Institute instructors, Maatiusi Manning and Ted Irniq, an additional 5 Inuit crew members were hired in Kinngait. Their names are: Taukie Ashevak, Johnny Bou Ashevak, Takiasuk Toonoo, Mathewise Ashevak and Timoon Toonoo. Community support vessels were rented from Timoon and Mathewise.

From August 16 to September 1st the instructors from the Marine Institute and the Nunavut crew members collected six hours of video of the sea bottom for analysis using the underwater camera system and a significant number of hours recorded using the multi-beam system. The crew set fishing pots, towed a small dredge to collect organisms.

During the research program and training in Kinngait, the Nunavut crew members successfully gained understanding of the experimental design process: how to design and set up experiments and collect data. They learned how to use all equipment on board the R.V. Ludy Pudluk as well as the community vessels.

The community vessels were outfitted with electric haulers and a GPS (global positioning system) and depth sounders. Maatiusi and Ted worked from the RV Ludy Pudluk and the other Inuit crew worked from the support vessels (Taukie, Johnny Bou, Takiasuk).

Transit to Sanikiluaq from Kinngait

The initial plan for the transit from Kinngait to Sanikiluaq was to include two Inuit from Sanikiluaq to join the transit. However, QC was unable to identify Inuit who held SVOP (Small Vessel Operators Proficiency) and were also available for the transit. Moreover, Maatiusi and Ted were not available for the transit. Therefore, it was decided that all of the Marine Institute staff would transit the vessel rather than travel via airplane. On September 3rd 2021 the vessel departed for Sanikiluaq and arrived on September 6th 2021.

Sanikiluaq

The Marine Institute staff arrived into Sanikiluaq on the RV Ludy Pudluk on September 8th 2021. The Marine Institute staff met with the Sanikiluaq Hunters and Trappers Association and hired four Inuit from Sanikiluaq to participate in training and the research program. The following individuals were hired from Sanikiluaq: Alex Puasi Ippak, Lazarussie Iquluq, Philipoosie Arragutainaq and Jobie Arragutainaq. All team members hired were required to show proof of their COVID-19 vaccination status. The team were

able to complete training and survey work from September 8th to September 15th 2021. Due to impending inclement weather, the team decided it was best to depart Sanikiluaq earlier than anticipated.

Transit back to Newfoundland

Philip Walsh, Kirk Regular of the Marine Institute and Philipoosie Arragutainaq from Sanikiluaq departed Sanikiluaq on the evening of September 15th. They travelled to Nunavik where Ted Irniq and James Greig joined them. James Greig is an Inuk resident from Nunavik with extension marine training and experience. At this point Kirk departed and rejoined the group once they arrived in Nain Newfoundland. Due to COVID-19 entry requirements into Nunavik (PCR testing and wait time for the result), Ted Irniq was delayed arriving to the vessel. Similarly, to the transit North, Ted, James and Philipoosie were trained to use the vessel equipment and overall vessel operations, they also took part in learning at-sea navigations skills, deckhand training, vessel communication and safety.

During the transit, the team also completed multi-beam work around Nain, Newfoundland. On October 13th 2021, James Greig, Philipoosie Arragutainaq, Ted Irniq and Philip Walsh arrived into Holyrood, Newfoundland. From there, the crew members from Nunavut and Nunavik returned home. Since the vessel has landed in Newfoundland, it has been undergoing routine maintenance and overwintering procedures. QC is currently preparing for the upcoming 2022 field season. QC is in the process of evaluating the option of conducting inshore fishery survey work and training in Sanikiluaq while awaiting the ice conditions to clear for additional survey work in the high arctic communities of Igloolik and Sanirajak as planned.

We look forward to continue working on this file and we thank you for your ongoing support.

Sincerely,



Jesslene Jawanda

Research/Project Officer, Qikiqtaaluk Corporation

CC: Jerry Ward, Director of Fisheries, Qikiqtaaluk Corporation