

The Nunavut Uranium Project to conduct uranium exploration activities on Aberdeen Lake and the vicinity of Gerhard Lake will arouse significant public concern due to the fact that the area is close to the community of Baker Lake. Baker Lake is the only inland community with fresh water in Nunavut. The area of exploration is right by one of the rivers that flow into the community which would be a major concern to the public. The land is also a place where some of our ancestors travelled through before colonization and Inuit still travel to for hunting and fishing purposes to this day. It is a migratory route for caribou which will be disrupted by exploration. The purposed area is also known as calving grounds for caribou. There have been recent declines in the numbers of caribou in Nunavut. The Baffin and the Kitikmeot regions have had restrictions on hunting caribou due to the decline. The public certainly does not want to have the same restrictions. Exploration in the area could disrupt calving in the area. There have been many attempts in the past to explore uranium in the area with no success. It is very clear that Inuit want to protect the area of concern. It is the land of their ancestors, they want to protect the wildlife and the water source. Yes, exploration/mining may have some benefits for the community but that would only last as long as the exploration/mine. The damage to the land would have life long effects. It would never go back to the way it was. There are serious dangers with uranium exploration. Yes, there are procedures to try to prevent any damages but they aren't certain. The last exploration company said they would follow policies and procedures but there is evidence that they didn't follow through. It was said they would clean up the area and wouldn't leave anything behind however, after site visits there were samples left along with some other products. Uranium is a radioactive substance which is unstable and produces dangerous kinds of radiation. Exposure to uranium can result in both chemical and radiological toxicity. Exploration leads to mining and uranium mining has widespread effects contaminating the environment with radioactive dust, radon gas and water-borne toxins. After uranium is extracted from rock, the processes leave behind radioactive waste. The dangers of uranium exploration and mining are too much of a risk for the people of Baker Lake, the wildlife and the environment.