



NIRB File No.: 22YN043
NPC File No.: 149812

September 1, 2022

Alexandre Langois
Universite de Sherbrooke
2500 blvd. de l'Universite
Sherbrooke Quebec J1K 2R1

Sent via email: a.langois2@usherbrooke.ca

Re: Notice of Screening for Universite de Sherbrooke's "Multidisciplinary Observatory for Arctic Climate Change and Extreme Events Monitoring (MOACC)" Project Proposal

Dear Alexander Langois:

On June 13, 2022, the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) received a referral to screen Universite de Sherbrooke's "Multidisciplinary Observatory for Arctic Climate Change and Extreme Events Monitoring (MOACC)" 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 **22YN043** - please reference this file number in all future related correspondence.

INFORMATION REQUEST

On June 13, 2022, 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 August 22, 2022, 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 August 26, 2022, 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/125734.

Project:	Multidisciplinary Observatory for Arctic Climate Change and Extreme Events Monitoring (MOACC)				
Region:	Kitikmeot				
Location:	Cambridge Bay				
Closest Community:	Cambridge Bay	Distance (approximate)	15 kilometres (km)	Direction	northeast
Summary of Project Description:	The Proponent intends to undertake research to develop a permanent multidisciplinary scientific infrastructure that enables long-term observations of Arctic climate change, bringing together experts from a wide range of expertise and institutions.				
Project Proposed Timeline:	June 2022 to March 2026				

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

- Accommodation by the Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS);
- Use of temporary camp owned and managed by CHARS;
- A monitoring strategy will be applied within the context of four research themes:
 - TH1 – Snow Remote Sensing and Ecological Applications,
 - TH2 – Snow Modeling and Hydrology,
 - TH3 – Atmosphere,
 - and TH4 – Permafrost;
- Use of four Skidoo to transport personal and equipment to site;
- Use of two ATVs to transport personal and equipment;
- Use of a permafrost drill to drill boreholes;
- Use of a two UAVs to conduct ariel surveys; and
- Use of 300 liters of gasoline for generators, skidoo, and ATV’s.

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/125734 and include:

- *Commission Application, Conformity Determination*
- *NIRB Application*
- *Project Report*

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 Universite de Sherbrooke's project proposal with this letter, and we invite interested parties to comment directly to the NIRB by **September 12, 2022**.

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/125734.

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
Technical Advisor I
Nunavut Impact Review Board

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

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

cc: Distribution List
Geoff Clark, Kitikmeot Inuit Association
Wynter Kuliktana, Kitikmeot Inuit Association
Agnes Simonfalvy, Government of Nunavut
Alexander Stubbing, Government of Nunavut
Michele LeBlanc-Havard, Government of Nunavut
Mosha Cote, Nunavut Research Institute
Tracey McCaie, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada
Environment and Climate Change Canada
Jody Small, Environment and Climate Change 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. Universite de Sherbrooke (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.: 149812), and the NIRB (Online Application Form, August 23, 2022. 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 no disturbance of the stream bed, lakebed or the banks of any definable watercourse be permitted, except where deemed necessary for maintaining project-specific operational commitments or approved by a responsible authority in cases of spill management.
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 shall locate all fuel and other hazardous materials a minimum distance away from the high-water mark of any water body and environmentally sensitive areas as required by the appropriate authorizing agencies. The materials shall be stored in such a manner as to prevent their release into the environment.

10. The Proponent shall use adequate secondary containment or a surface liner (e.g., self-supporting insta-berms and fold-a-tanks) when storing barreled fuel and chemicals at all locations.
11. The Proponent shall ensure that re-fuelling of all equipment occurs a minimum distance away from the high-water mark of any water body as required by the appropriate authorizing agencies.
12. All fuel and chemical storage containers must be clearly marked with the Proponent's name for ease of identification.
13. The Proponent shall have a Spill Contingency Plan in place at all fuel storage or transfer locations and shall ensure that appropriate spill response equipment and clean-up materials (e.g., shovels, pumps, barrels, drip pans, and absorbents) are readily available.
14. The Proponent shall follow the authorizing agencies' direction for management and removal of hazardous materials and wastes (e.g., contaminated soils, sediment and waste oil).
15. 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.
16. 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

17. The Proponent shall not substantially alter or damage or destroy any wildlife habitat in conducting this operation unless otherwise authorized by the appropriate authorizing agencies.
18. 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.
19. The Proponent shall not hunt or fish, unless proper Nunavut authorizations have been acquired.
20. The Proponent shall ensure that all wildlife have the right-of-way on any roads or trails. Vehicles are required to slow down or stop and wait to permit the free and unrestricted movement of wildlife across roads or trails at any location.

Migratory Birds and Raptors Disturbance

21. The Proponent shall carry out all phases of the project in a manner that protects migratory birds and avoids harming, killing or disturbing migratory birds or destroying, disturbing or taking their nests or eggs. In this regard, the Proponent shall take into account Environment and Climate Change Canada's *Avoidance Guidelines*. The Proponent's actions in applying the *Avoidance Guidelines* shall be in compliance with the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994* and with the *Species at Risk Act*.
22. The Proponent shall not disturb or destroy the nests or eggs of any birds. If active nests of any birds are discovered or located (i.e., with eggs or young), the Proponent shall avoid these

areas until nesting is complete and the young have naturally left the vicinity of the nest by establishing a protection buffer zone¹ appropriate for the species and the surrounding habitat.

23. 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.

Road and Ground Disturbance

24. The Proponent shall not move any equipment or vehicles unless the ground surface is in a state capable of fully supporting the equipment or vehicles without rutting or gouging. Overland travel of equipment or vehicles must be suspended if rutting occurs.
25. The Proponent shall not move any equipment or vehicles without prior testing the thickness of the ice to ensure the lake, river or stream is in a state capable of fully supporting the equipment or vehicles.

Land Use and Restoration of Disturbed Areas

26. The Proponent shall use existing trails where possible during project activities on the land.
27. The Proponent shall ensure that the land use area is kept clean and tidy at all times.
28. The Proponent shall avoid disturbance on slopes prone to natural erosion, and alternative locations shall be utilized.
29. The Proponent shall remove all garbage, fuel and equipment at the end of each field season and/or upon completion of work and/or upon abandonment.
30. The Proponent shall ensure that all disturbed areas are restored to a stable or pre-disturbed state using Best Available Technology Economically Achievable (BATEA) upon completion of work and/or abandonment.

Camps

31. The Proponent shall ensure that all camps are located durable surfaces, such as gravel or sand that is consolidated and can withstand repeated, heavy use. Measures shall be put in place to prevent erosion, trail formation and damage to the ground.
32. The Proponent shall not erect camps or store materials on the surface ice of lakes or streams, except that which is for immediate use.

Heritage Sites

33. The Proponent shall ensure that archaeological and paleontological sites are not purposely or inadvertently disturbed by clients or staff as a result of project activities.
34. The Proponent shall ensure that all clients and staff are aware of the Proponent's responsibilities and requirements regarding archaeological or palaeontological sites that are encountered during land-based activities. This should include briefings explaining the prohibitions regarding removal of artifacts, and defacing or writing on rocks and infrastructure.

¹ Recommended setback distances to define buffer zones have been established by Environment and Climate Change Canada for different bird groups nesting in tundra habitat and can be found at www.ec.gc.ca/paom-itmb.

35. No activities shall be conducted in the vicinity (50 metres buffer zone) of any archaeological/historical sites. If archaeological sites or features are encountered, activities shall immediately be interrupted and moved away from this location. Each site encountered needs to be recorded and reported to the Government of Nunavut-Department of Culture and Heritage.

Other

36. 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.
37. The Proponent shall ensure that project activities do not interfere with Inuit wildlife harvesting or traditional land use activities.
38. The Proponent should, to the extent possible, hire local people and access local services where possible.