



**NIRB File No.: 23YN002**  
NPC File No.: 150249

March 21, 2024

Adam Csank  
University of Nevada, Reno,  
1664 N Virginia St.  
Reno Nevada (NV)  
89557, USA

Sent via email: [acsank@unr.edu](mailto:acsank@unr.edu)

**Re: Notice of Screening for University of Nevada's "Sampling treeline trees to develop a temperature reconstruction using quantitative wood anatomy" project proposal**

Dear Adam Csank:

On February 9, 2024, the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) received a referral to screen University of Nevada's "Sampling treeline trees to develop a temperature reconstruction using quantitative wood anatomy" 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. On March 18, 2024, the NIRB received the complete application from the Proponent.

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 **23YN002** - please reference this file number in all future related correspondence.

#### 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/125890](http://www.nirb.ca/project/125890).

<b>Project:</b>	Sampling treeline trees to develop a temperature reconstruction using quantitative wood anatomy
<b>Region:</b>	Kitikmeot

<b>Location:</b>	Northern end of the Coppermine River				
<b>Closest Community:</b>	Kugluktuk	<b>Distance (approximate)</b>	80 kilometers (km)	<b>Direction</b>	Southwest
<b>Summary of Project Description:</b>	The Proponent intends to conduct tree core sampling along the Coppermine River to better understand historical climate patterns in the North American Arctic.				
<b>Project Proposed Timeline:</b>	June 21, 2024, to August 21, 2024, project personnel will only be onsite for a ten (10) day period within this time frame.				

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

- Camping at several locations along the Coppermine River;
- Use and transportation of 10.5 liters of propane;
- Use and transportation of 10 liters gasoline;
- Use and transportation of 0.2 liters of WD-40;
- Tree core sampling;
- Sampling deadwood using a chain saw;
- Use of fixed-wing aircraft for drop off and pick up; and
- Collection, use and consumption of 100L of water.

#### ***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/125890](http://www.nirb.ca/project/125890) and include:

- *Commission Application*
- *Commission Conformity Determination*
- *NIRB Application*
- Project Summary (English, French, Inuktitut, Inuinnaqtun)
- Maps of Project location

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 Nevada's project proposal with this letter, and we invite interested parties to comment directly to the NIRB by **April 3, 2024**.

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](mailto: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/125890](http://www.nirb.ca/project/125890).

If you have any questions or require clarification, feel free to contact the undersigned at 867-983-4607 or [cbarker@nirb.ca](mailto:cbarker@nirb.ca).

Sincerely,



Cory Barker, M.Sc.,  
Technical Advisor III  
Nunavut Impact Review Board

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

Enclosures (2): Public Notice of Screening (English)  
Comment Forms (English)

cc: Distribution List  
Wynter Kuliktana, Kitikmeot Inuit Association  
Tannis Bolt, Kitikmeot Inuit Association  
Justin Buller, Government of Nunavut  
Dianne Lapierre, Government of Nunavut  
Michele Leblanc-Havard, Government of Nunavut  
Mosha Cote, Nunavut Research Institute  
Tracey McCaie, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs 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. Adam Csank (the Proponent) shall maintain a copy of the Project Terms and Conditions at the site of operation at all times.
2. The Proponent shall operate in accordance with all commitments stated in correspondence provided to the Nunavut Planning Commission (NPC File No.: 23YN002) and the NIRB (Online Application Form, March 18, 2024).
3. The Proponent shall operate the site in accordance with all applicable Acts, Regulations and Guidelines.

### **Water Use**

4. The Proponent shall ensure that water extraction from any fish-bearing waterbody is done with appropriate care and caution. Small lakes or streams should not be used for water withdrawal unless approved by the Nunavut Water Board.
5. The Proponent shall not use water, including constructing or disturbing any stream, lakebed or the banks of any definable water course unless approved by the Nunavut Water Board.

### **Waste Disposal**

6. The Proponent shall keep all garbage and debris in bags placed in a covered metal container or equivalent until disposed of at an approved facility. All such wastes shall be kept inaccessible to wildlife at all times.
7. The Proponent shall ensure that no waste oil/grease is incinerated on site.

### **Fuel and Chemical Storage**

8. The Proponent shall store all fuel and chemicals in such a manner that they are inaccessible to wildlife.
9. The Proponent shall locate all fuel and other hazardous materials a minimum of thirty-one (31) metres away from the high-water mark of any water body and in such a manner as to prevent their release into the environment unless otherwise authorized by the Nunavut Water Board.
10. The Proponent shall ensure that re-fueling of all equipment occurs a minimum of thirty-one (31) metres away from the high-water mark of any water body, unless otherwise authorized by the Nunavut Water Board.
11. The Proponent shall ensure that appropriate spill response equipment and clean-up materials (e.g., shovels, pumps, barrels, drip pans, and absorbents) are readily available during any transfer of fuel or hazardous substances, at all fuel storage sites and when refuelling equipment.
12. The Proponent shall ensure that all personnel are properly trained in fuel and hazardous waste handling procedures, as well as spill response procedures. All spills of fuel or other deleterious

materials of any amount must be reported immediately to the 24-hour Spill Line at (867) 920-8130.

### **Wildlife - General**

13. The Proponent shall ensure that there is no damage to wildlife habitat in conducting this operation.
14. The Proponent shall not harass wildlife. This includes persistently circling, chasing, hovering over pursuing or in any other way harass wildlife, or disturbing large groups of animals.
15. The Proponent shall not hunt or fish, unless proper Nunavut authorizations have been acquired.
16. The Proponent shall ensure that all project personnel are made aware of the measures to protect wildlife and are provided with training and/or advice on how to implement these measures.

### **Migratory Birds and Raptors Disturbance**

17. 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 zone<sup>1</sup> appropriate for the species and the surrounding habitat.
18. The Proponent shall minimize activities during periods when birds are particularly sensitive to disturbance such as migration, nesting and moulting.
19. The Proponent shall ensure its aircraft avoid excessive hovering or circling over areas where bird presence is likely.

### **Aircraft Flight Restrictions**

20. The Proponent shall not alter flight paths to approach wildlife and avoid flying directly over animals.
21. The Proponent shall restrict aircraft/helicopter activity related to the project to a minimum flight altitude of 610 metres above ground level unless except during landing, take-off or if there is a specific requirement for low-level flying, which does not disturb wildlife or migratory birds.
22. The Proponent shall ensure that aircraft maintain a vertical distance of 1000 metres and a horizontal distance of 1500 metres from any observed groups (colonies) of migratory birds. Aircraft should avoid critical and sensitive wildlife areas at all times by choosing alternate flight corridors.
23. The Proponent shall ensure that aircraft/helicopter do not, unless for emergency, touch-down in areas where wildlife are present.

### **Caribou and Muskoxen Disturbance**

24. The Proponent shall avoid interfering with any paths or crossings known to be frequented by caribou during periods of migration.

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<sup>1</sup> 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](http://www.ec.gc.ca/paom-itmb).

25. The Proponent shall cease activities that may interfere with the migration or calving of caribou or muskox, until the caribou or muskox have passed or left the area.
26. The Proponent shall not block or cause any diversion to caribou migration and shall cease activities likely to interfere with migration such as movement of equipment or personnel until such time as the caribou have passed.

### **Temporary Camps and Land Use**

27. The Proponent shall ensure that all camps are located on gravel, sand or other durable land.
28. The Proponent shall not erect camps or store material on the surface ice of lakes or streams.
29. The Proponent shall ensure that the land use area is kept clean and tidy at all times.

### **Restoration of Disturbed Areas**

30. The Proponent shall remove all garbage, fuel and equipment upon abandonment.
31. The Proponent shall ensure that all disturbed areas are restored to a stable or pre-disturbed state as practical as possible upon completion of field work.

### **Other**

32. The Proponent should consult with local residents regarding their activities in the area and solicit available Inuit Qaujimaningit and information that can inform project activities.
33. The Proponent shall ensure that project activities do not interfere with Inuit wildlife harvesting or traditional land use activities.
34. The Proponent should, to the extent possible, hire local people and access local services where possible.