



NIRB File No.: 24XN038

NPC File No.: 150467

March 11, 2025

To: *Grays Bay Road and Port Distribution List*

Re: **Commencement of the NIRB's Review of West Kitikmeot Resource Corp.'s "Grays Bay Road and Port" Project Proposal**

Dear Parties:

On February 12, 2025 the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB or Board) received correspondence from the Honourable Gary Anandasangaree, P.C., Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs (the Minister), in coordination with the responsible Ministers (Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Canadian Coast Guard, Energy and Natural Resources Canada, and Transport Canada) in response to the NIRB's December 4, 2024 Screening Decision Report of the West Kitikmeot Resource Corp.'s "Grays Bay Road and Port" project proposal (NIRB File No.: 24XN038) (Proposal).¹ The responsible Ministers accepted the Board's recommendation and referred the "Grays Bay Road and Port" project proposal for further review by the NIRB under Part 5 of the *Agreement between the Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area and Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada (Nunavut Agreement)* and s. 94(1)(a)(iv) of the *Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act (NuPPAA)*.

The objective of this correspondence is to formally commence the Nunavut Impact Review Board's Review of the Grays Bay Road and Port project proposal, to outline next steps and anticipated timelines, and to provide a *Draft Scope* to Parties for information only. As noted in correspondence released by the NIRB on February 14, 2025, regarding the responsible Ministers referral, the six (6) issues or concerns relating to the proposal noted by the Board in the Screening Decision Report will be given careful consideration throughout the Review of the project proposal.

Information associated with the NIRB's Review of this proposal can be accessed online through the NIRB's public registry at www.nirb.ca by using any of the following search criteria:

- Project Name: Grays Bay Road and Port
- NIRB File No.: 24XN038
- Application No.: 125987

DRAFT SCOPE LIST

The requirements of the NIRB's Review process are defined by the *Agreement between the Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area and Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada (Nunavut Agreement)* and the *NuPPAA*. As per s. 99(1)(a) and (b) of the *NuPPAA*, the first step in the Review

¹ NIRB Public Registry Doc. ID no.: 352279

process requires that the Board determine the **scope of the project** proposal, as well as the **scope of the assessment**.

The **scope of the project** shall be defined in relation to the project proposal received by the NIRB from the Proponent, and must include any work or activity identified in the project proposal, as well as any other work or activity that the Board considers sufficiently related to the project. The Board may also exclude any work or activity from the scope that it considers insufficiently related to the project. If the NIRB determines that an inclusion or exclusion to scope of the project should be made, the Board may only do so following consultation with the proponent and after considering any comments from the Proponent. Should the Board make an inclusion to the scope of the project, it must not proceed with its Review until the Nunavut Planning Commission and responsible Ministers have had opportunity to again exercise their powers and perform their duties or functions in relation to the entire project.

The **scope of the assessment** determines the expectations of the process based on significant issues related to the proposed project, defining the components of the biophysical and/or socio-economic environment that could be impacted by the Project and for which there is public concern. This scope confirms which valued ecosystemic and socio-economic components must be considered to determine the potential for impacts associated with the project proposal through all planned project stages of the development, and which the Proponent will be required to examine within its Environmental Impact Statement.

Based on the proposed Grays Bay Road and Port project description as referred to the NIRB for screening on August 6, 2024, the direction received from the responsible Ministers, and the requirements of the *Nunavut Agreement* and the *NuPPAA*, the NIRB has developed the enclosed *Draft Scope List* (**Appendix A**).

By copy of this letter, the NIRB is releasing the *Draft Scope List* **for parties' information only** at this time as the document is currently being translated into French, Inuktitut, and Inuinnaqtun. Once the document has been translated, the NIRB will release the *Draft Scope List* (in all languages) to all responsible authorities, parties with jurisdictional responsibility for aspects of the proposed Project and other interested parties to review the *Draft Scope List*.

For the awareness of parties, until June 3, 2025, Dionne Filiatrault is recusing herself on technical matters for the Grays Bay Road and Port Proposal as required by a Conflict-of-Interest agreement in place with the Board related to the transition of previous work as a consultant to her current role as Executive Director for the NIRB. Dionne will still advise the Board during this time on procedural aspects of the assessment process, but deferring to the Director, Operations on technical matters of the Proposal.

IS GUIDELINES DEVELOPMENT AND SUBMISSION

Section 12.5.2 of the *Nunavut Agreement* and s. 101(1) of the *NuPPAA* direct the NIRB to issue Guidelines to the Proponent in respect of the preparation of a statement [Impact Statement (IS)] of the ecosystemic and socio-economic impacts of the project. The Impact Statement is:

- a document prepared by the Proponent in accordance with the Guidelines issued by the NIRB;
- identifies, predicts, evaluates, and communicates information about the ecosystemic and socio-economic impacts of a project proposal;
- provides for the identification and development of mitigation measures – those provisions or measures, which are designed to control, reduce, or eliminate potentially adverse impacts of an activity or the project.

Section 12.5.2 of the *Nunavut Agreement* and s. 101(3) of the *NuPPAA* contain a list of information to be included within an Impact Statement and gives the NIRB authority to add “any other type of information relating to a matter within the Board’s jurisdiction that the Board considers relevant in the circumstances.” Therefore, the NIRB will include information obtained during the scoping process in the development of the IS Guidelines and will also offer opportunity for public comment (*both* written and oral) into the guidelines development. Once parties have a chance to provide feedback on the draft guidelines, the NIRB will issue the final Impact Statement Guidelines to the Proponent for its preparation of the Impact Statement for the Grays Bay Road and Port project proposal.

The NIRB is currently preparing the *Draft* Guidelines for the Grays Bay Road and Port project based on the requirements of the *Nunavut Agreement* and the *NuPPAA*. As with the *Draft* Scope List, the *Draft* IS Guidelines will be translated into French and Inuktitut prior to public comment being invited. Once the document has been translated, the NIRB will release both the *Draft* IS Guidelines and the *Draft* Scope List (in all languages) to all responsible authorities, parties with jurisdictional responsibility for aspects of the proposed Project and other interested parties to review the documents and provide comments and suggested revisions for the NIRB’s consideration.

PUBLIC SCOPING SESSIONS

The NIRB’s Review process requires the development of a public participation and awareness program intended to initiate engagement with the public early in the assessment and to facilitate meaningful consultation throughout the Review with those communities, groups, and individuals potentially affected by the Grays Bay Road and Port proposal. The NIRB is scheduling public scoping and guideline consultation sessions in Kugaaruk, Taloyoak, Gjoa Haven, Cambridge Bay, Kugluktuk, Yellowknife, and Inuvik to consult with the public and interested parties in person regarding the scope of the Project and the scope of the assessment, with a focus on confirming which Valued Ecosystem Components (VECs) and Valued Socio-Economic Components (VSECs) should be used as the basis for the assessment. In addition, the NIRB will be soliciting oral comments on the *Draft* IS Guidelines to ensure that those aspects of the guidelines which are likely to be (or that have been identified as) “core issues” by Indigenous participants are sufficiently detailed. Details and logistics of these public engagement sessions will be provided as soon as practicable to ensure appropriate notice is given to parties for participation.

The public sessions will be designed to enable potentially impacted communities to participate directly in the NIRB’s process to meet the following objectives:

- Inform the public of the proposed Grays Bay Road and Port project under Review;

- Explain the steps of the NIRB's Review process, including how members of the public can become involved and effectively participate;
- Work with members of the public to identify VECs and VSECs that should be considered in the NIRB's Review of the Project; and
- Work with members of the public to identify information requirements and issues of particular relevance to the community and the public potentially affected by the Project.

NEXT STEPS

For the information and planning of parties, the NIRB has enclosed a more detailed Review process map and anticipated timeline for the Board's Review of West Kitikmeot Resource Corp.'s "Grays Bay Road and Port" project proposal. Please note that this timeline is subject to change based on project-specific circumstances, feedback received from parties, and the NIRB's discretion. The NIRB invites interested parties to provide feedback on the draft process map on or before **April 1, 2025**.

In summary, the following provides an overview of upcoming submission dates:

March 11, 2025	1) The NIRB issues the <i>Draft</i> Scope List for information only. Document sent for translation. 2) The NIRB issues the draft process map for comment.
April 1, 2025	Parties provide comments on the draft process map.
April 2025	The NIRB issues the <i>Draft</i> Scope List and <i>Draft</i> IS Guidelines (in all languages, with hard copies sent to community organizations) for public comment (60 days).
April-May 2025	The NIRB conducts community information sessions in Kugaaruk, Taloyoak, Gjoa Haven, Cambridge Bay, Kugluktuk, Yellowknife, and Inuvik.
May 2025	The NIRB issues summary report on the public scoping/guidelines sessions for information.
June 2025	Parties provide comments regarding the <i>Draft</i> Scope List and the <i>Draft</i> IS Guidelines.
June 2025	The NIRB issues the <i>Final</i> Scope List and <i>Revised Draft</i> IS Guidelines for information only. Documents are sent for translation.
June 2025	The NIRB issues the <i>Revised Draft</i> IS Guidelines for public comment in all languages (30 days).
July 2025	Parties provide comments on <i>Revised Draft</i> IS Guidelines.
August 2025	The NIRB conducts a Guidelines Development Workshop in Iqaluit.

September 2025

The NIRB releases *Final* IS Guidelines in English with translations to follow.

Please direct all comment submissions to the NIRB via fax to **(867) 983-2594** or via email at info@nirb.ca.

If you have any questions regarding the NIRB's Review of the "Grays Bay Road and Port" project proposal, please contact Keith Morrison at kmorrison@nirb.ca or by phone at (867) 983-4617.

Sincerely,



Tara Arko
Director, Operations
Nunavut Impact Review Board

cc: Gavin Law, West Kitikmeot Resources Corp
James Eetoolook, *Acting* President of the Kitikmeot Inuit Association
Fred Pedersen, Kitikmeot Inuit Association
Wynter Kuliktana, Kitikmeot Inuit Association
Tannis Bolt, Kitikmeot Inuit Association
Justin Buller, Government of Nunavut
Dianne Lapierre, Government of Nunavut
Natalie D'Souza, Government of Nunavut
Adrian Paradis, Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency
Melissa Alexander, Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency
Eva Walker, Environment and Climate Change Canada
José Audet-Lecouffe, Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Spencer Dewar, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada
Tracey McCaie, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada
Peter Unger, Natural Resources Canada
Pierre-Olivier Emond, Natural Resources Canada
Transport Canada
Mark Cliffe-Phillips, Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board

Attachment: Appendix A: *Draft* Scope List for the Grays Bay Road and Port Project Proposal

Enclosure (1): *Draft* Process Map for NIRB's Review of the Grays Bay Road and Port Project Proposal

APPENDIX A
DRAFT SCOPE LIST FOR THE GRAYS BAY ROAD AND PORT PROJECT PROPOSAL

The Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB or the Board) is seeking feedback from interested parties to determine the scope of West Kitikmeot Resource Corp.'s (WKR or the Proponent) "Grays Bay Road and Port" project proposal (scope of the project) and the scope of the NIRB's Review of this project proposal (scope of the assessment).

SCOPE OF THE PROJECT

1) Description of the project, the purpose of and the need for, the project

The scope of the project proposal includes all physical works, activities, and/or undertakings, as scoped by the NIRB on December 4, 2024 for the Grays Bay Road and Port Project and encompasses the entire project life.

a. Project Proposal Summary

The proposed "Grays Bay Road and Port" project (the Project) involves constructing, operating and maintaining a port at Grays Bay; a 230-kilometre controlled access all-season road; a station at the Jericho mine site; and an ice road to connect with the south at the Nunavut/Northwest Territories Border. Grays Bay facilities, the all-weather access road and the Jericho Station would be open year-round; however, the port at Grays Bay would accept vessels only during the open water season. The project is proposed to start in December 2029 and be constructed (both pre-construction and construction) over the course of five (5) years, with operations starting in 2034 and continuing for at least 75 years. As the project facilities are designed as permanent, there are no plans for closure and reclamation other than areas used solely for pre-construction/construction activities that are not required for ongoing operations and maintenance.

2) Project Components

1. Port at Grays Bay

a. During Construction Phase

- Stationary construction camp
- Dredging
- Potential disposal at sea of dredge materials
- Temporary winter roads
- An ice-re-enforced fuel barge(s) frozen in annually
- Temporary airstrip
- Temporary storage of explosives
- Marine aids to navigation
- May develop quarries in port area
- May use desalinated marine water as a water source
- Approximately two (2) freighter (sealift) sailings and around 60 to 100 offload barge trips to stage materials for the first season of construction at the port site
- One (1) sealift and barge for resupply annually with resupply volume less than initial mobilization

- b. Operations Phase
 - Permanent accommodations for approx. 80 people with temporary accommodations for 150
 - Two (2) deep water wharves suitable for 100,000 deadweight tonnes ore-bulk-oil vessels (post-Panamax size)
 - One (1) barge berth
 - A small craft harbour including a boat launch and annually installed floating docks, during the open-water season, and may include a breakwater
 - 10 million litres fuel storage including unloading and refueling facilities
 - an 1,800 metre (6,000 foot) airstrip including a loading area, passenger hangar, communication building and aircraft refueling and parking areas
 - Two (2) tugs providing berthing assistance to vessels
 - Transloading infrastructure
 - Provide moorage and support for commercial, government, small vessels as well as community-based travelers
 - Explosives storage, offices, parking areas, laydown areas (e.g., containers and liquids), diesel-fueled power supply, water supply, wastewater, solid waste, administration, communication, maintenance garages, and emergency response facilities
 - Materials storage, staging and handling facilities at Grays Bay Port, with additional areas reserved for future third party users but not included in this application
 - One (1) sealift and barge for resupply annually with resupply volume less than initial mobilization
- 2. A 230-kilometre Controlled All-season Access Road Between Grays Bay (Kogloktokyo) and the Jericho Mine site (Station)
 - a. During Construction Phase
 - Estimated 40 quarries and borrow areas and roads
 - 4 mobile construction camps
 - Temporary winter roads and water crossings to assist with movement of equipment and supplies
 - Potential use of High Lake, Ulu, and their quarry sites to store and maintain equipment and supplies, stockpile granular material, store fuel and provide helicopter landing sites
 - Approximately 230 water crossings including bridges and culverts
 - b. During Operations Phase
 - Approximately every 3rd quarry remaining active, including use of explosives, for aggregate production for road maintenance
 - Maintenance and repair of the road and associated watercourse crossings as needed
- 3. Staging at the Jericho Mine site
 - a. During Construction Phase
 - Staging Construction Camp
 - transshipment facility and laydown area for construction equipment and materials
 - construction materials would be transported from the Nunavut/Northwest Territories border annually on ice road for the duration of construction

- b. During Operations Phase
 - permanent accommodations for approx. 3 people
 - fuel storage and refueling facilities for up to 20 million litres
 - vehicle parking areas, office, weather station
 - resupply would be completed via the road from the Nunavut/Northwest Territories border annually on the ice road
- 4. Annual construction of a winter road to connect the Jericho Mine to the ice road at the Nunavut/Northwest Territories
 - The construction and operation of the winter ice road would start the first winter of construction and continue every winter for the life of the project.

SCOPE OF THE ASSESSMENT

1) Anticipated ecosystemic and socio-economic impacts of the Project

The assessment of the potential for ecosystemic and socio-economic impacts to result from the proposed project components and activities as outlined in the section above will be inclusive of the factors listed below. The assessment of impacts to each valued ecosystemic or socio-economic component shall take into account appropriate temporal and spatial boundaries and draw upon relevant information from scientific sources, Inuit Qaujimaningit², traditional and community knowledge.

- a. Air quality including greenhouse gases
- b. Climate and meteorology
- c. Noise and vibration
- d. Terrestrial environment, including:
 - i) Terrestrial ecology
 - ii) Landforms and soils
 - iii) Permafrost and ground stability
- e. Geological features including discussion of geology and geochemistry
- f. Hydrological features and surface water quality
- g. Hydrogeology and groundwater
- h. Sediment quality
- i. Freshwater aquatic environment, including:
 - i) Aquatic ecology
 - ii) Aquatic biota including representative fish as defined in the *Fisheries Act*, aquatic macrophytes, benthic invertebrates and other aquatic organisms
 - iii) Habitat including fish habitat as defined in the *Fisheries Act*
 - iv) Commercial, recreational, and Aboriginal fisheries as defined in the *Fisheries Act*
- j. Terrestrial vegetation
- k. Terrestrial wildlife and wildlife habitat, including:
 - i) Representative terrestrial mammals to include caribou, caribou habitat, migration and behavior, muskoxen, wolverine, grizzly bears, polar bears, wolves and less conspicuous species that may be maximally exposed to contaminants.

² Inuit Qaujimaningit encompasses Inuit traditional knowledge (and variations thereof) as well as Inuit epistemology as it relates to Inuit Societal Values and Inuit Knowledge (both contemporary and traditional).

- ii) Wildlife migration routes and crossings
- l. Birds and bird habitat, including:
 - i) Raptors
 - ii) Migratory birds
 - iii) Seabirds
- m. Marine environment, including:
 - i) Marine ecology
 - ii) Marine water and sediment quality
 - iii) Marine biota including fish and benthic flora and fauna
 - iv) Marine habitat
 - v) Commercial, recreational, and Aboriginal fisheries as defined in the *Fisheries Act*
- n. Marine wildlife
- o. Terrestrial and marine Species at Risk, including
 - i) Species under consideration for listing on the *Species at Risk Act*
 - ii) Species designated “at risk” by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada
- p. Socio-economic factors, including:
 - i) Economic development opportunities
 - ii) Employment
 - iii) Education and training
 - iv) Contracting and business opportunities
 - v) Population demographics
 - vi) Benefits and revenues (tax, royalties, etc.)
- q. Traditional activity and knowledge and community knowledge including:
 - i) Land use
 - ii) Food security
 - iii) Language
 - iv) Cultural and commercial harvesting
- r. Non-traditional land use and resource use
- s. Heritage resources
 - i) Archaeology
 - ii) Paleontology
 - iii) Cultural
- t. Health and well being
 - i) Individual and community wellness
 - ii) Family and community cohesion
- u. Community infrastructure and public services
- v. Health and safety including employee and public safety
- w. Cumulative effects, giving specific consideration to the project in terms of existing, proposed, and reasonably foreseeable future mining and transportation infrastructure projects. Specific focus is required for ongoing proposals and projects such as the Doris North Gold Mine Project (NIRB File No. 05MN047), Phase 2 Hope Bay Belt (NIRB File No. 12MN001), Back River Project (NIRB File No. 12MN036), Hackett River Project (NIRB File No. 08MN006), and Izok Corridor Project (NIRB File No. 12MN043).
- x. Residual effects

- y. Transboundary effects

2) *Anticipated Effects of the Environment on the Project*

The scope of the assessment will include the potential for the Arctic environment to exert effects on the Project throughout the Project's life, including the following specific factors:

- a. Climate and meteorology including climate change
- b. Permafrost
- c. Geotechnical hazards including slope movement, differential or thaw settlement, frost heave, and ice scour
- d. Subsidence
- e. Flooding
- f. Unfavorable geological conditions

The scope of the assessment will include the potential for conditions in Nunavut's unique socio-economic environment, including the following specific factors:

- a. Limited availability of labour and capacity
- b. Limitations on physical infrastructure

3) *Measures proposed by the Proponent to avoid and mitigate adverse ecosystemic and socio-economic impacts, including contingency plans*

The scope of the assessment will include any contingency plans or risk management plans to avoid and mitigate adverse impacts caused by the proposed project components and activities. These plans must extend, where relevant, through all project phases. These plans shall take into account the appropriate temporal and spatial boundaries and are expected to draw upon relevant information from scientific sources, best practice as well as traditional and community knowledge and are to include, but not be limited to:

- a. Avoidance, Mitigation and Offsetting Measures
- b. Emergency response
- c. Spill response
- d. Hazardous materials management
- e. Accidents and malfunctions
- f. Regulatory requirements
- g. Monitoring and Adaptive Management
- h. Mitigation measures

4) *Steps which the Proponent proposes to take to optimize benefits of the Project, with specific consideration being given to expressed community and regional preferences as to benefits*

The scope of the assessment will include steps that the Proponent proposes to take to optimize benefits of the project, and should include, but not be limited to:

- a. Compensation and benefits
- b. Health benefits
- c. Human health and well-being
- d. Employment

- e. Education and training
- f. Land use
- g. Contracting and business opportunities, and
- h. Any non-confidential details from an Inuit Impact and Benefit Agreement.

5) *Measures proposed by the Proponent to compensate persons whose interests are adversely affected by the Project*

The scope of the assessment will include the steps that the Proponent proposes to take to compensate interests of parties adversely affected by the Project including all non-confidential details pertaining to any Inuit Impact and Benefit Agreement pursued in connection with the Project.

6) *Measures proposed by the Proponent to restore ecosystemic integrity after the permanent closure of the project*

The scope of the assessment will include any closure and reclamation plans to ensure that issues associated with the effective closure and reclamation of relevant Project components are considered at the earliest possible stage in the development process, thereby influencing design to take into account environmental issues related to closure and reclamation. These plans must extend, where relevant, through all project phases. These plans shall take into account the appropriate temporal and spatial boundaries and are expected to draw upon relevant information from scientific sources, best practice as well as traditional and community knowledge and are to include, but not be limited to:

- a. Care and Maintenance
- b. Closure and Reclamation

7) *Any monitoring programs that the Proponent proposes to establish and to manage the ecosystemic and socio-economic interests potentially affected by the Project*

The scope of the assessment will include any programs that would be established to monitor the potential ecosystemic and socio-economic impacts caused by the proposed project components and activities.

8) *The interests in lands, waters and other resources which the Proponent has acquired or seeks to acquire.*

The scope of the assessment will include consideration for any interests in lands, waters and other resources which the Proponent has secured or seeks to secure based on the proposed works and activities or undertakings that constitute the Grays Bay Road and Port project proposal.

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Requirement</i>
Nunavut Impact Review Board	Project Certificate
Nunavut Water Board	Type 'A' Water Licence
Kitikmeot Inuit Association	Land Use Licences, leases, easements, right-of-ways, and Quarry Concession Permit(s)
Government of Nunavut – Department of Culture and Heritage	Archaeology Permit(s) and Palaeontology Permit(s)

Organization	Requirement
Government of Nunavut – Department of Environment	Wildlife Research Permit, Spill Contingency Plan approval
Nunavut Research Institute	Scientific Research Licence
Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada	Class A Land Use Permit, Quarry Permits, and Land Use Lease(s)
Environment and Climate Change Canada	Approval for dredging, Environmental Emergency Plan approval
Fisheries and Oceans Canada	Section 35 authorization under the <i>Fisheries Act</i>
Natural Resources Canada	Licence for a Factory and Magazine
Transport Canada	Navigable Waters Approval(s) and/or Exemption(s) and Oil Pollution Prevention/Emergency Plan as per the <i>Canada Shipping Act</i> , Approval under the <i>Navigation Protection Act</i>
Workers Safety & Compensation Commission	Permit to Store Detonators, Explosives Use Permit

9) Options for carrying out the Project that are technically and economically feasible and the anticipated ecosystemic and socio-economic impacts of those options

The scope of the assessment will include consideration for alternative means of carrying out the Project that might be economically and technically feasible and the environmental effects of those alternative means. This assessment will include alternate timing and development options, as well as presenting the “no-go” or “no-build” alternative, and the “preferred” alternative. The “no-go” alternative is not only a potentially stand-alone option; it also serves as a baseline for comparison with other development alternatives that might reasonably be proposed in the circumstances.

10) Any other relevant information or matters

The scope of the assessment includes any other matters that the NIRB considers relevant:

- a. Technical innovations previously untested in the Arctic including new technology for port and road design and operations
- b. Inuit Qaujimaningit, traditional and community knowledge
- c. Statement of consultation principles and practices
- d. Significant effects analysis
- e. Sustainability analysis
- f. Interactions with Valued Ecosystem Components and Valued Socio-Economic Components
- g. Discussion of similar resource development projects in other jurisdictions
- h. Planned future development and the associated level of uncertainty.