



NIRB File No.: 25YN003
NPC File No.: 150594

March 14, 2025

Christian Haas
Alfred Wegener Institute
Am Handelshafen 12 Bremerhaven 27570
Germany

Sent via email: chaas@awi.de

Re: Notice of Screening for Alfred Wegener Institute's "IceBird Winter 2025" Project Proposal

Dear Christian Haas:

On January 9, 2025, the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) received a referral to screen Alfred Wegener Institute's "IceBird Winter 2025" project proposal from the Nunavut Planning Commission (Commission) as the project was determined to be a significant modification because of the addition of a new survey area in Victoria Strait near Cambridge Bay. On March 6, 2025, 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 **25YN003** - 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 Public Registry at www.nirb.ca/project/126035.

Project:	IceBird Winter 2025
Region:	Qikiqtani and Kitikmeot Regions
Locations:	Resolute Bay, Pond Inlet, Eureka, Alert, Cambridge Bay, including Dease Strait and Victoria Strait

Distance (approximate)	Up to approximately 300 kilometres (km) radius depending on the area of focus
Summary of Project Description:	The Proponent intends to conduct sea ice surveys using a modified DC-3 research aircraft fitted with scientific instruments (e.g., cameras, radar, electromagnetic induction systems etc) that would be used to observe the variability and change of sea ice and snow thickness and deformation in the Canadian Arctic. The aircraft would take off and land at open airports in communities in Nunavut and fly transects 200 or 300 miles long, flying as low as 200 feet altitude and all protected areas would be avoided.
Project Proposed Timeline:	March to April 2027 (multi-year; initial and repeat survey times referenced)

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

- Use of 1 Basler BT-67 (DC3) airplane, research flight and ferrying fitted scientific equipment and approximately six (6) passengers
 - Electromagnetic induction system (EM system) for estimation of ice thickness
 - Laser scanner for high-resolution surface roughness
 - Snow radar for snow depth on sea ice
- Use of aviation fuel, refueling would take place at community airport;
- A set of air-launchable buoys would be used to mark flight tracks over the drifting sea ice for re-visits by follow-up surveys; and
- Personnel would be staying in local accommodations.

Inclusion or Exclusion of Scoping List

While the Nunavut Planning Commission's referral letter referenced previous assessments and NIRB decisions, the current proposal is a multi-year project with repeated activities at one or more locations and will be assessed on the basis of its current application and not an amendment to previous short-term activities.

REQUEST FOR COMMENTS

All documents received can be accessed from the NIRB's Public Registry at www.nirb.ca/project/126035 and include:

- *NPC Conformity Determination and Application*
- *Nunavut Research Institute License*
- *Airborne Sensors*
- *Expedition Flight Route*
- *Flight Pattern*
- *PAMARCMIP Campaign Schedule*
- *Winter 2023 and 2024 Project Description*
- *NIRB Application*
- *Revised NIRB Application*

The NIRB will copy you on screening process related correspondence and upload related documents to the NIRB's Public Registry. The NIRB may request additional information at any time during the process.

The NIRB is copying parties and municipalities potentially affected by Alfred Wegener Institute's project proposal with this letter, and we invite interested parties to comment directly to the NIRB by **March 24, 2025**.

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, are 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 NIRB's Public Registry at www.nirb.ca/project/126035.

If you have any questions or require clarification, feel free to contact the undersigned at (867) 983-4619 or kgillard@nirb.ca.

Sincerely,



Kelli Gillard PAg, CTAJ
Senior Impact Assessment Officer
Nunavut Impact Review Board

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

Enclosures (6) Public Notice of Screening (English, Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun)
Comment Forms (English, Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun)

cc: Distribution List
Wynter Kuliktana, Kitikmeot Inuit Association
Tannis Bolt, Kitikmeot Inuit Association
Jared Ottenhof, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Chris Spencer, Qikiqtani Inuit Association

Joel Fortier, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Conor Goddard, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Assol Kubeisinova, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Justin Buller, Government of Nunavut
Dianne Lapierre, Government of Nunavut
Natalie D'Souza, Government of Nunavut, Department of Environment
Bradley Pirie, Government of Nunavut, Department of Environment
Michele LeBlanc-Havard, Government of Nunavut, Department of Environment
Darrin Nichol, Nunavut Airport Division
Mosha Cote, Nunavut Research Institute
Tracey McCaie, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada
Marcus Bermann, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada
Lisa Pirie-Dominix, Canadian Wildlife Service
Jose Audet-Lecouffe, Fisheries and Oceans 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. Alfred Wegener Institute (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.: 150594), and the NIRB (Online Application Form, March 6, 2025).
3. The Proponent shall operate the site in accordance with all applicable Acts, Regulations and Guidelines.

Wildlife – General

4. The Proponent shall ensure that there is no damage to wildlife habitat in conducting this operation.
5. 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.
6. 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.

Aircraft Flight Restrictions

7. The Proponent shall not alter flight paths to approach wildlife, and avoid flying directly over animals.
8. Unless otherwise approved by an authorizing agency, 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.
9. 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, unless otherwise approved by an authorizing agency. Aircraft should avoid critical and sensitive wildlife areas at all times by choosing alternate flight corridors.
10. The Proponent shall ensure that aircraft/helicopter do not, unless for emergency, touch-down in areas where wildlife are present.
11. The Proponent shall advise all pilots of relevant flight restrictions and enforce their application over the project area, including flight paths to/from the project area.

Other

12. 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.

13. 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.
14. The Proponent shall ensure that project activities do not interfere with Inuit wildlife harvesting or traditional land use activities.