



NIRB File No.: 25YN017
NPC File No.: 150680

May 13, 2025

Dr. Brian Glass
NASA Ames Research Center
Bldg N269, Rm 136
Moffett Field, CA 94035
United States of America

Sent via email: brian.glass@nasa.gov

Re: Opportunity to address comments received regarding NASA Ames Research Center’s “Mars Exploration through Analog-site Drilling” project proposal

Dear Brian Glass:

On March 20, 2025, the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB or Board) received a referral to screen NASA Ames Research Center’s “Mars Exploration through Analog-site Drilling (MEAD)” project proposal from the Nunavut Planning Commission (Commission). On April 29, 2025, the NIRB circulated a public notice of the screening for this project, inviting interested parties to provide comments directly to the NIRB by May 9, 2025.

On or before May 9, 2025, the NIRB received comments from the following interested parties:

- *Government of Nunavut*
- *Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada*

All comment submissions received by the NIRB relating to this project proposal can be accessed from the NIRB’s online public registry at www.nirb.ca/project/126161.

A *summary* of the public concerns reflected in the comment submissions relate to the following:

- Recommendations related to other best management practices to aid in mitigation of potential impacts that might arise from the use of fuels and waste in the proposed activities.
- Concerns regarding the power source for the TRIDENT drill and whether or not high-energy batteries would be used and how the Proponent would deal with cold-weather charging or physical damage that could trigger thermal-runaway fire and toxic-fume release in a remote tent camp.

- Continue to consult with the communities of Grise Fiord, and Resolute Bay, the Iviq Hunters and Trappers Organization, the Resolute Bay Hunters and Trappers Association and any other relevant organizations on the proposed project.

The NIRB would like to provide *NASA Ames Research Center* with an opportunity to address the comments noted above prior to the Board rendering its determination for this screening assessment and issuing its subsequent Screening Decision Report to the responsible Minister(s). The NIRB respectfully requests that a response be provided directly to the NIRB by **May 27, 2025**.

If *NASA Ames Research Center* determines that the time required to supply a written response is significantly greater than two (2) weeks, the Board requests written notification and an anticipated date for submission be provided as soon as possible.

Please send any forthcoming submissions directly to the NIRB at info@nirb.ca, or through the online public registry at www.nirb.ca.

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

Sincerely,



Kelli Gillard PAg, CTAJ
Manager, Impact Assessment
Nunavut Impact Review Board

cc: Distribution List
Jared Ottenhof, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Chris Spencer, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Conor Goddard, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Joel Fortier, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Assol Kubeisinova, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Justin Buller, Government of Nunavut
Dianne Lapierre, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Sean Joseph, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Jonas Azonaha, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
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, Canadian Wildlife Service
Environment and Climate Change Canada
Peter Unger, Natural Resources Canada
Pierre-Olivier Emond, Natural Resources Canada