



NIRB File No.: 25YN040

NIRB Public Registry Link: www.nirb.ca/project/126181

NPC File No.: 150780

June 6, 2025

Brent Young
Fisheries and Oceans Canada
501 University Crescent
Winnipeg MB R3T 2N6

Sent via email: brent.young@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

Re: Notice of Screening for Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)'s " ECWG Bowhead Whale Photo Identification and Biopsy Sampling " project proposal

Dear Brent Young:

The Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) received a referral to screen Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)'s " ECWG Bowhead Whale Photo Identification and Biopsy Sampling" project proposal from:

- The Nunavut Planning Commission on April 24, 2025, noting that it conforms to the North Baffin Regional Land Use Plan (NBRLUP), and
- The NIRB received a complete application on April 28, 2025, and assigned it file number **25YN040** - please reference this file number in all future related correspondence.

The NIRB has commenced screening the project proposal pursuant to the *Nunavut Agreement* and *Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act*¹ and by copy of this letter, **invites interested parties and municipalities potentially affected by the proposal to comment directly to the Nunavut Impact Review Board.**

SCOPE OF PROPOSED PROJECT

Location	Qikiqtani region, Foxe Basin and east coast of Baffin Island around Clyde River
Objective	The Proponent intends to conduct research, and the main objectives of this study are to collect biopsy samples for use in updating abundance estimates and the use of drones to collect photographs for use in photo-identification studies. The project will take place in two locations around Foxe Basin based out of the

¹ 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)

	community of Igloolik, and east coast of Baffin Island based out of the community of Clyde River.
Timeline	June 2025 to August 2025

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

- Use of two boats daily to transport personnel and equipment to research sites;
- Hiring of four locals through the Hunters and Trappers Association in Igloolik and Clyde River to support the researchers;
- Use of two (2) drones to be used to take photos and videos of bowhead whales;
- Use of crossbows to collect small skin/blubber tissue samples from bowhead whales;
- Use of approximately 1,600 liters of gasoline to be used for the boats purchased from the communities involved;
- Use of two liters of povidone iodine to clean stainless steel biopsy tips prior to sample collection;
- Non-hazardous waste to be collected and transported back to the Freshwater Institute in Winnipeg to be properly disposed of; and
- Regular garbage to be disposed in the community dump.

Inclusion or Exclusion of Scoping List

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

Documents received and describing the proposal can be accessed from the NIRB's online public registry at www.nirb.ca/project/126181 and include:

- *NPC Conformity Determination*
- *Igloolik HTA Letter of Support*
- *Sanirajak HTO Letter of Support*
- *Nangmautaq HTO Letter of Support*
- *NIRB Application*

The NIRB may request additional information at any time during the process.

By copy of this letter, the NIRB is inviting interested parties and municipalities potentially affected by the project proposal to comment directly to the NIRB by **June 27, 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.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please send 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/126181. Questions should be directed to the undersigned at 1-866-233-3033 or femingak@nirb.ca.

Sincerely,

Francis Emingak
Screening Officer
Nunavut Impact Review Board

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

cc: Distribution List
Dustin Fredlund, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.
Carson Gillis, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.
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
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Lisa Pirie, Canadian Wildlife Service
Jose Audet-Lecouffe, Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Igloodik Hunters and Trappers Association
Sanirajak Hunters and Trappers Organization
Nangmoutaq Hunters and Trappers Organization