



## SCREENING DECISION REPORT NIRB FILE No.: 25NY037

NPC File No.: 150772

**July 11, 2025**

Following the Nunavut Impact Review Board's (NIRB or Board) assessment of all materials provided, the NIRB is recommending that a review of University of Saskatchewan's "Assessment of Population Dynamics of Waterfowl in the Central Arctic" is not required pursuant to Article 12, Section 12.4.4(a) of the *Agreement between the Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area and Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada (Nunavut Agreement)* and s. 92(1)(a) of the *Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act*, S.C. 2013, c. 14, s. 2 (*NuPPAA*).

Subject to the Proponent's compliance with the terms and conditions as set out in below, issued in accordance with s. 92(2)(a) of *NuPPAA*, the NIRB is of the view that the project proposal is not likely to cause significant public concerns, and it is unlikely to result in significant adverse environmental and social impacts. The NIRB therefore recommends that the responsible Minister(s) accepts this Screening Decision Report.

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## REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The primary objectives of the NIRB are set out in Article 12, Section 12.2.5 of the *Nunavut Agreement* and are confirmed by s. 23 of the *NuPPAA*. The purpose of screening is provided for under Article 12, Section 12.4.1 of the *Nunavut Agreement* and s. 88 of the *NuPPAA*.

As set out under Article 12, Section 12.4.4 of the *Nunavut Agreement* and s. 92(1) of the *NuPPAA*, upon conclusion of the screening process, the Board must provide its written report the Minister indicating one of three options:

- (a) a review of the project is not required.
- (b) a review of the project is required; or
- (c) the project should be modified or abandoned.

On April 23, 2025, the NIRB received a referral to screen University of Saskatchewan’s “Assessment of population dynamics of waterfowl in the central Arctic” project proposal (NIRB File No: 25YN037) from the Nunavut Planning Commission (Commission), which noted that the project proposal is outside the area of an applicable land use plan. All documents received and pertaining to this project proposal can be accessed from the NIRB’s Public Registry by using any of the following search criteria or <https://www.nirb.ca/project/126184> .

- Project Name: Assessment of population dynamics of waterfowl in the central Arctic

- NIRB File No.: 25YN037
- NIRB Application No.: 126184

**Table 1: NIRB's Assessment Process**

| Date           | Stage   |
|----------------|---|
| April 23, 2025 | Receipt of project proposal and referral from the Commission  |
| April 23, 2025 | Pursuant to s. 144(1) of the <i>NuPPAA</i> requested an application on Public Registry and provide information  |
| May 14, 2025   | Receipt of online application from Proponent  |
| May 14, 2025   | Scoping pursuant to s. 86(1) of the <i>NuPPAA</i>   |
| May 21, 2025   | Public engagement and comment request (which included terms and conditions) was issued in English and translations were issued later to the following communities   |
| June 9, 2025   | Receipt of public comments  |
| June 27, 2025  | Pursuant to Article 12 s 12.4.5 of the <i>Nunavut Agreement</i> and s. 92(3) of the <i>NuPPAA</i> , a ministerial extension requested due to capacity issues, from the Minister of Minister of Environment and Climate Change seeking an extension to the 45-day timeline for the provision of the Board's Report |
| July 11, 2025  | Issuance of Screening Decision Report   |

## 1. Project Scope

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| <b>Location</b>  | Kitikmeot region, Anderson Bay on Victoria Island 40 kilometers Southeast of Cambridge Bay   |
| <b>Objective</b> | The Proponent intends to study the population dynamics of lesser snow geese and Ross's geese annually from June to July, conducting a comprehensive project, following Karrak Lake best practices, to study arrival conditions of birds, nest initiation and fate, clutch size, and other arctic ecosystem components such as vegetation monitoring, sea duck population ecology, and small mammal indices |
| <b>Timeline</b>  | May 2025 to July 2029, seasonal  |

As required under s. 86(1) of the *NuPPAA*, the Board accepts the scope of the project as set out by University of Saskatchewan in the proposal. The scope of the project proposal includes the following undertakings, works, or activities:

- Use of a helicopter for transporting personnel and equipment/supplies;
- Use of a temporary camp that will be taken down annually;
- Daily use of 5m<sup>3</sup> of water for camp use;
- Combustible waste to be buried in latrine pits or flown out by helicopter for proper disposal; and
- Sewage human waste to be buried in latrine pits and covered with material from

the surrounding area

## 2. Inclusion or Exclusion to 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.

## 3. Public Comments and Concerns

Notices regarding the NIRB's screening of this project proposal were distributed to community organizations (Table 1) as well as to relevant federal and territorial government agencies, Inuit organizations and other parties requesting they provide the Board with any comments or concerns 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.

On or before June 2, 2025, the NIRB received comments from the following interested parties:

**Table 2: Comments Received**

| Commenting Party  | NIRB Doc ID No. |
|---|-----------------|
| Kitikmeot Inuit Association (KIA)                               | 355438          |
| Government of Nunavut (GN)                                      | 355662          |
| Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) | 355470          |
| Transport Canada (TC)   | 355908          |

### *a. Summary of Comments and Concerns Received*

The following provides a summary of the comments and concerns received by the NIRB in relation to Assessment of population dynamics of waterfowl in the central Arctic:

#### **Kitikmeot Inuit Association**

- Fieldwork should respect sensitive periods such as bird nesting and caribou calving when scheduling travel and survey activities.
- KIA supports the low-impact seasonal camp and recommends strict “leave-no-trace” practices, including secure storage of all attractants and full removal of materials at season's end.
- Ongoing engagement with the Ekaluktutiak Hunters and Trappers Organization (HTO) and the Cambridge Bay community is expected, especially to incorporate local knowledge on wildlife and land use.

- The project should prioritize Inuit hiring and locally advertise field support roles. Youth mentorship and research training opportunities are also encouraged.
- KIA supports integrating IQ into research design and interpretation, including use of Inuinnaqtun place names and insights from Elders and harvesters.
- Plain-language summaries with visuals and Inuinnaqtun translations are encouraged to ensure results are accessible to local communities and decision-makers.

## Government of Nunavut

- The GN has reviewed the proposed project and related documents and has no comments or concerns to raise with the Board at this time.

## Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada

- Recommends that the Proponent continue consulting with the Ekaluktutiak Hunters and Trappers Organization, the Municipality of Cambridge Bay, and any other relevant organizations or individuals regarding the project proposal. As part of these consultation activities, several issues should be considered, including, but not limited to:
  - Incorporation of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit into project activities.
  - Mitigation measures to prevent any disturbance to wildlife and the environment.
  - Mitigation measures to prevent disturbance to sites of cultural, archaeological, and/or environmental significance.
  - Training and employment opportunities for Inuit and community members.
  - Procurement opportunities for local and Inuit-owned businesses; and
  - Regular updates on the status of project activities.

## Transport Canada

- Transport Canada reviewed the project proposal and does not have any comments to submit, as none of the project components fall within Transport Canada's mandate

### ***b. Comments and Concerns with respect to Inuit Qaujimaningit, Indigenous, and Community Knowledge***

No concerns or comments were received with respect to Inuit Qaujimaningit or Indigenous and Community Knowledge in relation to the proposed project. However, Inuit Qaujimaningit and Indigenous and community knowledge is incorporated into the terms and conditions recommended below based on information collected from prior and similar projects, data collected and mapped by the Commission, and other available sources.

## ASSESSMENT OF THE PROJECT PROPOSAL IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 3 OF *NUPPAA*

In determining whether a review of the project is required, the Board considered whether the project proposal had potential to result in significant ecosystemic or socio-economic impacts. Table 3. The Board took particular care to consider Inuit Qaujimaningit, Indigenous and Community Knowledge in carrying out its assessment and determination of the significance of impacts.

**Table 3: Summary of the Board's Assessment of Factors s. 90 NuPPAA**

| Factor   | Comment  |
|--|--|
| The size of the geographic area, including the size of wildlife habitats, likely to be affected by the impacts.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The physical footprint of the proposed project components is located at Anderson Bay on Victoria Island (~40 km southeast of Cambridge Bay)</li> <li>▪ The proposed project would take place within habitats of far-ranging wildlife species such lesser snow geese,</li> <li>▪ Ross's geese (i.e., light geese) and sea ducks such as king eiders</li> </ul>   |
| The ecosystemic sensitivity of that area.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No specific areas of ecosystemic sensitivity have been identified by the Proponent within the physical footprint of the proposed project. But the Anderson Bay nesting colony for snow geese and Ross's geese is a highly sensitive area, particularly due to its location within the Queen Maud Gulf Migratory Bird Sanctuary (QMGMBS) and the potential for habitat degradation. The colony's presence is a significant factor in the broader conservation efforts for these species and other wildlife that share the same habitat.</li> </ul> |
| The historical, cultural and archaeological significance of that area.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No specific areas of historical, cultural and archaeological significance have been identified by the Proponent within the physical footprint of the proposed project.</li> </ul>   |
| The size of the human and the animal populations likely to be affected by the impacts.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The proposed project is unlikely to result in impacts to local human and animal populations.</li> </ul>   |
| The nature, magnitude and complexity of the impacts; the probability of the impacts occurring; the frequency and duration of the impacts; and the reversibility or irreversibility of the impacts. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ With adherence to the relevant regulatory requirements and application of the mitigation measures recommended by the NIRB, no significant residual effects are expected to occur.</li> </ul>  |
| The cumulative impacts that could result from the impacts of the project combined with those of any other project that has been carried out, is being carried out or is likely to be carried out.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Given the extensive number of past, ongoing, and reasonably foreseeable projects within the region's zone of influence, the board has taken this into consideration as it assessed the file</li> <li>▪ The Board recommended terms and conditions along with mitigation measures designed with consideration for the potential for cumulative effects in the Board Views section.</li> </ul>  |
| Any other factor that the Board considers relevant to the assessment of the significance of impacts.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No other relevant factors were identified; however, see below for Regulatory Requirements mandating mitigation and/or reporting.</li> </ul>   |

## Regulatory Requirements

*The Proponent is also advised that the following legislation may apply to the Project:*

### Acts and Regulations

- **Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994 (MBCA)**  
<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/m-7.01/>
- **Species at Risk Act (SARA)**  
<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/S-15.3/>
- **Impact Assessment Act (2019)**  
<https://laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/I-2.75/>
- **Canada Wildlife Act**  
<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/w-9/>
- **Nunavut Wildlife Act**  
<https://www.canlii.org/en/nu/laws/stat/snu-2003-c-26/latest/snu-2003-c-26.html>
- **Northwest Territories Wildlife Act**  
<https://www.canlii.org/en/nt/laws/stat/sa-2013-c-30/latest/sa-2013-c-30.html>
- **Territorial Parks Act (Nunavut)**  
<https://www.canlii.org/en/nu/laws/stat/rsnwt-nu-1988-c-t-4/latest/rsnwt-nu-1988-c-t-4.html>
- **Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA) – Full PDF**  
<https://publications.gc.ca/collections/Collection/R32-134-1993E.pdf>
- **Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) – NWMB Summary**  
<https://www.nwmb.com/en/resources/acts-a-regulations>
- **Inuvialuit Final Agreement – Crown–Indigenous Relations**  
<https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1100100030601/1542738744002>

### Other Applicable Guidelines

- **Wildlife and Habitat Protection**

Conduct baseline surveys for caribou, migratory birds, and species at risk. Apply seasonal timing restrictions and mitigation measures to avoid disturbance to sensitive habitats.

[Migratory Birds Convention Act \(MBCA\)](#), [Species at Risk Act \(SARA\)](#), [Nunavut Wildlife Act](#)

- **Water and Aquatic Ecosystems**

Avoid fish-bearing waters and implement erosion control, sediment traps, and setback distances from lakes and streams.

DFO Measures to Protect Fish Habitat, [Nunavut Water Board \(NWB\)](#)

- **Cultural Heritage and Archaeology**

Consult the Inuit Heritage Trust prior to any ground disturbance. If cultural or archaeological sites are found, stop work and report immediately. [Inuit Heritage Trust](#), Nunavut Archaeological Sites Regulations

- **Community and Inuit Engagement**

Maintain ongoing engagement with nearby communities. Incorporate Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) and traditional knowledge into mitigation and project design.

[Nunavut Land Claims Agreement \(NLCA\)](#), [IQ – NWMB Summary](#)

- **Cumulative Effects Assessment**

Identify overlapping or adjacent projects within the zone of influence and assess combined impacts on valued components.

[NIRB Public Registry](#), Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act (NuPPAA)

- **Access and Land Use**

Submit detailed maps showing project access routes, staging areas, and camp locations. Ensure compliance with land use zones and community travel corridors.

[Nunavut Planning Commission \(NPC\)](#), [Territorial Parks Act](#)

- **Waste and Spill Management**

Submit a Spill Contingency Plan and Waste Management Plan in line with territorial standards. Ensure secondary containment for fuels and hazardous materials.

Spill and Waste Plans – CIRNAC, Environmental Protection Act (NU)

- **Climate and Permafrost Stability**

Assess permafrost and terrain sensitivity to avoid ground instability. Follow Arctic engineering standards and monitoring protocols.

[Permafrost Watch](#), Arctic Engineering Guide – NRCan

- **Emergency Preparedness and Safety**

Prepare emergency response protocols for wildlife encounters, spills, and evacuation. Share plans with community representatives.

Parks Canada – Wildlife Safety, Government of Nunavut – Emergency Plans

- **Monitoring and Reporting**

Establish a monitoring plan for key environmental indicators and submit regular reports to regulators and affected communities.

NIRB Monitoring Guidelines, [Nunavut Water Board \(NWB\)](#)

## Views of the Board

In considering the above factors, the Board has identified the following and respectfully provides its views regarding whether or not the proposed project has the potential to result in significant impacts. The NIRB has also proposed terms and conditions that would mitigate the potential adverse impacts identified.

### **Ecosystem, wildlife habitat and Inuit harvesting activities:**

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Valued Component</b>               | Migratory birds (lesser snow geese, Ross's geese, sea ducks), small mammals, and their habitats.   |
| <b>Potential effects:</b>             | <p>Disturbance <b>from helicopters</b> may cause stress or temporary displacement of nesting birds, leading to reduced nesting success or increased predation.</p> <p>Camp <b>footprint and researcher movement</b> can disrupt breeding areas and degrade local tundra vegetation, indirectly affecting habitat suitability.</p> <p>Repeated <b>annual activity</b> may result in cumulative habitat avoidance by wildlife over time.</p> |
| <b>Nature of Impacts:</b>             | The potential for impacts is limited due to infrequent and temporary activities and any resulting impacts would be expected to be reversible   |
| <b>Mitigating Factors:</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establish flight restrictions (altitude, timing, paths) near nesting sites.</li> <li>- Time helicopter use outside peak nesting hours.</li> <li>- Use trained staff to monitor nesting areas.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Proposed Terms and Conditions:</b> | <p>Waste Management – 9 and 10</p> <p>Fuel and Chemical Storage – 11 through 20</p> <p>Wildlife General – 21 through 24</p> <p>Migratory Birds and Raptors Disturbance – 25 through 28</p> <p>Aircraft Flight Restrictions – 29 through 34</p>   |

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Valued Component</b>               | Freshwater Resources   |
| <b>Potential effects:</b>             | <p>Water withdrawal may reduce small waterbody levels during dry periods.</p> <p>Improper waste handling may cause localized contamination.</p>  |
| <b>Nature of Impacts:</b>             | The potential for impacts is limited due to infrequent and temporary activities and any resulting impacts would be expected to be reversible   |
| <b>Mitigating Factors:</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Withdraw water from sufficiently large sources.</li> <li>- Monitor water extraction levels.</li> <li>- Ensure proper containment and transport or burial of waste.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Proposed Terms and Conditions:</b> | Water courses/Water bodies (including fresh and marine water) - 6 through 8  |

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Valued Component</b>   | Vegetation and Ecosystem Integrity  |
| <b>Potential effects:</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Camp and foot traffic may damage fragile tundra vegetation and disturb soil.</li> <li>- Helicopter landings and repeated seasonal visits could slow natural recovery.</li> </ul> |

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Nature of Impacts:</b>             | The potential for impacts is limited due to infrequent and temporary activities and any resulting impacts would be expected to be reversible   |
| <b>Mitigating Factors:</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Limit camp footprint; rotate sites if possible.</li> <li>- Use elevated walkways or designated paths.</li> <li>- Restore disturbed areas before camp demobilization.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Proposed Terms and Conditions:</b> | Camps - 41 & 42  |

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Valued Component</b>               | Inuit Harvesting Activities  |
| <b>Potential effects:</b>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Disturbance may lead to reduced wildlife availability during harvest periods.</li> <li>- Project timing may overlap with traditional harvesting.</li> </ul>                                 |
| <b>Nature of Impacts:</b>             | The potential for impacts is limited due to infrequent and temporary activities and any resulting impacts would be expected to be reversible and could be reduced by coordination  |
| <b>Mitigating Factors:</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consult with communities to identify sensitive harvest periods/areas.</li> <li>- Avoid research activity during peak harvest windows.</li> <li>- Share results with communities.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Proposed Terms and Conditions:</b> | Wildlife – General - 21 through 24<br>Caribou and Muskoxen Disturbance – 35 through 37<br>Other - 47   |

#### **Socio-economic effects on northerners:**

|                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Valued Component</b>               | Traditional Land Use and Access   |
| <b>Potential effects:</b>             | Temporary disruption from helicopter noise and camp presence may cause short-term avoidance of key hunting/trapping areas.  |
| <b>Nature of Impacts:</b>             | The potential for impacts is limited due to infrequent and temporary activities and any resulting impacts would be expected to be reversible                        |
| <b>Mitigating Factors:</b>            | Engage early with Hunters and Trappers Organizations (HTOs) to identify sensitive areas and adjust activities accordingly. Schedule work to avoid peak use periods. |
| <b>Proposed Terms and Conditions:</b> | Land Use and Restoration of Disturbed Areas - 38 through 40   |

|                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Valued Component</b>               | Subsistence Harvesting Resources  |
| <b>Potential effects:</b>             | Disturbance may temporarily reduce availability or alter behavior of harvested species (geese, sea ducks, small mammals).                                   |
| <b>Nature of Impacts:</b>             | The potential for impacts is limited due to infrequent and temporary activities and any resulting impacts would be expected to be reversible                |
| <b>Mitigating Factors:</b>            | Implement flight path restrictions and timing to minimize wildlife disturbance. Share research findings with communities to support sustainable harvesting. |
| <b>Proposed Terms and Conditions:</b> | Land Use and Restoration of Disturbed Areas - 38 through 40   |

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| <b>Valued Component</b> | Local Employment and Economic Benefits |
|-------------------------|--|

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Potential effects:</b>             | Small-scale project offers limited seasonal employment and skills development opportunities.   |
| <b>Nature of Impacts:</b>             | The potential for impacts is limited due to infrequent and temporary activities and any resulting impacts would be expected to be reversible |
| <b>Mitigating Factors:</b>            | Prioritize hiring local residents, provide training opportunities, and ensure fair compensation.   |
| <b>Proposed Terms and Conditions:</b> | Land Use and Restoration of Disturbed Areas - 38 through 37<br>Camps - 41 through 42<br>Other - 48   |

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Valued Component</b>               | Cultural Heritage and Practices  |
| <b>Potential effects:</b>             | Limited research presence could be perceived as exclusion if community engagement is lacking.  |
| <b>Nature of Impacts:</b>             | The potential for impacts is limited due to infrequent and temporary activities and any resulting impacts would be expected to be reversible       |
| <b>Mitigating Factors:</b>            | Incorporate Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) principles, involve Elders and knowledge holders in project planning, and hold regular community updates. |
| <b>Proposed Terms and Conditions:</b> | Heritage Sites 43 through 45   |

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Valued Component</b>               | Community Health and Food Security   |
| <b>Potential effects:</b>             | Reduced wildlife availability could impact food security temporarily if disturbance overlaps with harvesting                                 |
| <b>Nature of Impacts:</b>             | The potential for impacts is limited due to infrequent and temporary activities and any resulting impacts would be expected to be reversible |
| <b>Mitigating Factors:</b>            | Coordinate study timing with communities to minimize overlap with harvest seasons; share data to support local food sustainability efforts.  |
| <b>Proposed Terms and Conditions:</b> | Other - 46   |

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Valued Component</b>               | Community Engagement and Participation   |
| <b>Potential effects:</b>             | Lack of involvement may lead to mistrust or opposition to the project.   |
| <b>Nature of Impacts:</b>             | The potential for impacts is limited due to infrequent and temporary activities and any resulting impacts would be expected to be reversible         |
| <b>Mitigating Factors:</b>            | Maintain transparent, ongoing communication; establish partnerships with local organizations; incorporate community feedback into project decisions. |
| <b>Proposed Terms and Conditions:</b> | Other - 46   |

### **Significant public concern:**

- No Specific public concern has been identified associated with this project

### **Technological innovations for which the effects are unknown:**

- No specific issues have been identified associated with this project proposal.

### **Administrative Conditions:**

To encourage compliance with applicable regulatory requirements and assist the Board and responsible authorities with compliance and effects monitoring for project activities, the following project-specific terms and conditions have been recommended: 1-5.

In considering the above factors and subject to the Proponent's compliance with regulatory requirements and the terms and conditions necessary to mitigate against the potential adverse environmental and social effects, the Board is of the view that the proposed project is unlikely to cause significant public concern and its adverse ecosystemic and socioeconomic impacts are unlikely to be significant, or are highly predictable and can be adequately mitigated by known technologies.

### **RECOMMENDED PROJECT-SPECIFIC TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

The Board is recommending the following specific terms and conditions to apply in respect of the project:

#### **General**

1. (the Proponent) shall maintain a copy of the Project Terms and Conditions at the site of operation at all times and make it accessible to enforcement officers upon request.
2. The Proponent shall operate in accordance with all commitments stated in correspondence provided to the Nunavut Planning Commission (NPC File No.: 150772), and the NIRB (Online Application Form, May 9, 2025). This information should be accessible to enforcement officers upon request.
3. The Proponent shall operate the site in accordance with all applicable Acts, Regulations and Guidelines.
4. The Proponent shall ensure that it meets the standards and/or limits as set out in the authorizing agencies' permits or licences as required for this project.
5. The Proponent shall ensure that all personnel, staff and contractors are adequately trained prior to commencement of all project activities, and shall be made aware of all operational plans, management plans, guidelines and Proponent commitments relating to the project.

#### **Water courses/Water bodies (including fresh and marine waters)**

6. 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 appropriate authorizing agency.
7. The Proponent shall ensure that no disturbance of the stream bed, lakebed or the banks of any definable watercourse be permitted, except where deemed necessary for maintaining project-specific operational commitments or approved by a responsible authority in cases of spill management.
8. The Proponent shall not deposit, nor permit the deposit of any fuel, chemicals, wastes (including wastewater) or sediment into any water body. The Proponent should have in

place an Emergency Spill Response Plan that is approved by the appropriate authorizing agency(ies).

### **Waste Management**

9. The Proponent shall manage all hazardous and non-hazardous waste including food, domestic wastes, debris and petroleum-based chemicals (e.g., greases, gasoline, glycol-based antifreeze) in such a manner to avoid release into the environment and access to wildlife at all times until disposed of appropriately or at an approved facility.
10. The Proponent shall dispose of all combustible wastes as required by the appropriate authorizing agencies. All non-combustible wastes from the project site shall be removed to an approved facility for disposal..

### **Fuel and Chemical Storage**

11. The Proponent shall locate all fuel and other hazardous materials a minimum distance away from the high-water mark of any water body and environmentally sensitive areas as required by the appropriate authorizing agencies. The materials shall be stored in such a manner as to prevent their release into the environment.
12. The Proponent shall use adequate secondary containment or a surface liner (e.g., self-supporting insta-berms and fold-a-tanks) when storing barreled fuel and chemicals at all locations.
13. The Proponent shall ensure that re-fuelling of all equipment occurs a minimum distance away from the high-water mark of any water body as required by the appropriate authorizing agencies.
14. All fuel and chemical storage containers must be clearly marked with the Proponent's name for ease of identification.
15. The Proponent shall have a Spill Contingency Plan in place at all fuel storage or transfer locations and shall ensure that appropriate spill response equipment and clean-up materials (e.g., shovels, pumps, barrels, drip pans, and absorbents) are readily available.
16. The Proponent shall follow the authorizing agencies' direction for management and removal of hazardous materials and wastes (e.g., contaminated soils, sediment and waste oil).
17. The Proponent shall ensure that wildlife deterrent systems are utilized at the time of a spill incident in order to avoid wildlife (terrestrial or marine) and migratory birds from being contaminated.
18. The Proponent shall ensure that all spills of fuel or other deleterious materials of 100 litres or more must be reported immediately to the 24-hour Spill Line at (867) 920-8130.

### **Air Quality**

19. The Proponent shall take appropriate dust suppression measures in conducting all activities for this Project including using approved dust suppression additives and techniques as necessary to maintain ambient air quality.
20. The Proponent shall eliminate unnecessary idling to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as much as possible.

### **Wildlife – General**

21. The Proponent shall not substantially alter or damage or destroy any wildlife habitat in conducting this operation unless otherwise authorized by the appropriate authorizing agencies.
22. The Proponent shall not chase, weary, harass or molest wildlife. This includes persistently circling, chasing, hovering over, pursuing or in any other way harass wildlife,

- or disturbing large groups of animals.
23. The Proponent shall not hunt or fish, unless proper Nunavut authorizations have been acquired.
24. The Proponent shall ensure that all wildlife have the right-of-way on any roads or trails. Vehicles are required to slow down or stop and wait to permit the free and unrestricted movement of wildlife across roads or trails at any location.

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

25. The Proponent shall carry out all phases of the project in a manner that protects migratory birds and avoids harming, killing or disturbing migratory birds or destroying, disturbing or taking their nests or eggs. In this regard, the Proponent shall take into account Environment and Climate Change Canada's *Avoidance Guidelines*. The Proponent's actions in applying the *Avoidance Guidelines* shall be in compliance with the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994* and with the *Species at Risk Act*.
26. 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.
27. The Proponent shall avoid the seaward site of seabird colonies and areas used by flocks of migrating waterfowl, a minimum distance away on the recommendation of the appropriate authorizing agencies.
28. The Proponent shall not pursue seabirds or waterbirds swimming on the water surface and shall avoid concentrations of these birds if encountered on the water.

#### **Aircraft Flight Restrictions**

29. The Proponent shall not alter flight paths to approach wildlife and avoid flying directly over animals.
30. The Proponent shall plan flight paths that minimize flights over known habitat likely to have birds or concentrations of wildlife. Aircraft should avoid critical and sensitive wildlife areas at all times by choosing alternate flight corridors.
31. The Proponent shall restrict aircraft/helicopter activity related to the project to a minimum flight altitude of 610 metres (2,100 ft) above ground level except during landing, take-off or if there is a specific requirement for low-level flying, which does not disturb wildlife or migratory birds.
32. The Proponent shall avoid known concentrations of birds (e.g., bird colonies, moulting areas) by a lateral distance of 1.5 kilometre. If avoidance is not possible maintain a minimum flight altitude of 1,100 metres (3,500 feet) over these areas.
33. The Proponent shall ensure that aircraft/helicopter do not, unless for emergency, touch-down in areas where wildlife are present.
34. 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.

#### **Caribou and Muskoxen Disturbance**

35. The Proponent shall avoid interfering with any paths or crossings known to be frequented by caribou during periods of migration as identified by current land use plans in place and/or by Inuit Qaujimaningit.
36. The Proponent shall not locate any operation or undertake activities that could block or cause any diversion to migration of caribou or muskoxen.
37. The Proponent shall immediately cease activities likely to interfere with the migration or calving of caribou or muskoxen until such time as the caribou or muskox have passed.

### **Land Use and Restoration of Disturbed Areas**

38. The Proponent shall use existing trails where possible during project activities on the land.
39. The Proponent shall ensure that the land use area is kept clean and tidy at all times.
40. The Proponent shall remove all garbage, fuel and equipment at the end of each field season and/or upon completion of work and/or upon abandonment.

### **Camps**

41. The Proponent shall ensure that all camps are located durable surfaces, such as gravel or sand that is consolidated and can withstand repeated, heavy use. Measures shall be put in place to prevent erosion, trail formation and damage to the ground.
42. The Proponent shall not erect camps or store materials on the surface ice of lakes or streams, except that which is for immediate use.

### **Heritage Sites**

43. The Proponent shall ensure that archaeological and paleontological sites are not purposely or inadvertently disturbed as a result of project activities.
44. The Proponent shall ensure that all personnel are aware of the Proponent's responsibilities and requirements regarding archaeological or paleontological sites that are encountered during land-based activities. This should include briefings explaining the prohibitions regarding removal of artifacts, and defacing or writing on rocks and infrastructure.
45. No activities shall be conducted in the vicinity (50 metres buffer zone) of any archaeological/historical sites. If archaeological sites or features are encountered, activities shall immediately be interrupted and moved away from this location. Each site encountered needs to be recorded and reported to the Government of Nunavut-Department of Culture and Heritage.

### **Other**

46. 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.
47. The Proponent shall ensure that project activities do not interfere with Inuit wildlife harvesting or traditional land use activities.
48. The Proponent should, to the extent possible, hire local people and access local services where possible.

## **MONITORING AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

In addition, the Board is recommending the following:

### **Environmental Wildlife Mitigation and Monitoring Plan**

1. Prior to the start of project activities, the Proponent shall submit an updated Wildlife Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (WMMP) to the Nunavut Impact Review Board, and the

Government of Nunavut Department of Environment. At a minimum, this plan should include proposed template for a wildlife log/record of observations and proposed mitigation measures for caribou, migratory birds, grizzly bear and other sensitive species that may be encountered within the project area. The Proponent is encouraged to consult with the Government of Nunavut's Regional Biologists during the revision of the WMMP, regarding project schedule and timelines so as to ensure adequate mitigation of potential wildlife impacts.

### **Abandonment and Restoration Plan**

2. The Proponent shall submit a revised and final version of the Abandonment and Restoration Plan to the Nunavut Impact Review Board, Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada and Government of Nunavut- Department of Environment prior to undertaking activities in the potential development area. The revised Plan should include procedures for using native plant species for re-vegetation in order to eliminate risk of introducing invasive species to the area pursuant to the Wildlife Act.

### **Community Consultation Report**

3. The Proponent shall submit a public consultation report to the Nunavut Impact Review Board prior to the commencement of project activities. The report shall include a copy of materials presented to community members, a description of issues and concerns raised, and advice offered to the company as well as any follow-up actions that were required or taken to resolve any concerns expressed about the project proposal.

### **OTHER NIRB CONCERNS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

In addition to the project-specific terms and conditions, the Board is recommending the following:

#### **Change in Project Scope**

1. Responsible authorities or Proponent shall notify the Nunavut Planning Commission and/or Parks Canada as appropriate, and the NIRB of any changes in operating plans or conditions, including phase advancement, associated with this project prior to any such change.

#### **Copy of licences, etc. to the Board and Commission**

2. The NIRB respectfully requests that responsible authorities submit a copy of each licence, permit or other authorization issued for the Project to the NIRB to assist in enabling possible project monitoring that may be required. Please forward a copy of the licences, permits and/or other authorizations to the NIRB directly at [info@nirb.ca](mailto:info@nirb.ca) or upload a copy to the NIRB's online registry at [www.nirb.ca](http://www.nirb.ca).

#### **Use of Inuit Qaujimaningit**

3. The Proponent is encouraged to work with local communities and knowledge holders to inform project design, to carry out the project, and to confirm or validate the perspectives represented in publications, and reports as part of the project. Care should be taken to ensure that Inuit Qaujimaningit and local knowledge collected for the project is used with permission and is accurately represented.

## CONCLUSION

The foregoing constitutes the Board's screening decision with respect to the University of Saskatchewan's "Assessment of Population dynamics of waterfowl in the central Arctic". The NIRB remains available for consultation with the Minister regarding this report as necessary.

Dated \_\_\_\_ July 11, 2025 \_\_\_\_ at Iqaluit, NU.



Albert Ehloak, *Acting* Chairperson

Attachments:      Appendix A: Species at Risk in Nunavut  
                         Appendix B: Archaeological and Palaeontological Resources Terms and Conditions for Land Use  
                         Permit Holders

## APPENDIX A: SPECIES AT RISK IN NUNAVUT

Due to the requirements of Section 79(2) of the *Species at Risk Act*, S.C. 2002, c. 29 (*SARA*), and the potential for project-specific adverse effects on listed wildlife species and its critical habitat, measures should be taken as appropriate to avoid or lessen those effects, and the effects need to be monitored. Project effects could include species disturbance, attraction to operations and destruction of habitat. This section applies to all species listed on Schedule 1 of *SARA*, as listed in the table below, or have been assessed by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC), which may be encountered in the project area. This list may not include all species identified as at risk by the Territorial Government. The following points provide clarification on the applicability of the species outlined in the table.

- Schedule 1 is the official legal list of Species at Risk for *SARA*. *SARA* applies to all species on Schedule 1. The term “listed” species refers to species on Schedule 1.
- Schedule 2 and 3 of *SARA* identify species that were designated at risk by the COSEWIC prior to October 1999 and must be reassessed using revised criteria before they can be considered for addition to Schedule 1.
- Some species identified at risk by COSEWIC are “pending” addition to Schedule 1 of *SARA*. These species are under consideration for addition to Schedule 1, subject to further consultation or assessment.

If species at risk are encountered or affected, the primary mitigation measure should be avoidance. The Proponent should avoid contact with or disturbance to each species, its habitat and/or its residence. All direct, indirect, and cumulative effects should be considered. Refer to species status reports and other information on the Species at Risk Registry at <http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca> for information on specific species.

Monitoring should be undertaken by the Proponent to determine the effectiveness of mitigation and/or identify where further mitigation is required. As a minimum, this monitoring should include recording the locations and dates of any observations of Species at Risk, behaviour or actions taken by the animals when project activities were encountered, and any actions taken by the proponent to avoid contact or disturbance to the species, its habitat, and/or its residence. This information should be submitted to the appropriate regulators and organizations with management responsibility for that species, as requested.

For species primarily managed by the Territorial Government, the Territorial Government should be consulted to identify other appropriate mitigation and/or monitoring measures to minimize effects to these species from the project.

Mitigation and monitoring measures must be undertaken in a way that is consistent with applicable recovery strategies and action/management plans.

Schedules of *SARA* are amended on a regular basis, so it is important to check the *SARA* registry ([www.sararegistry.gc.ca](http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca)) to get the current status of a species.

Updated: September 2024

| <b>Terrestrial Species at Risk<sup>1</sup></b>           | <b>COSEWIC Designation</b> | <b>Schedule of SARA</b> | <b>Government Organization with Primary Management Responsibility<sup>2</sup></b> |
|--|----------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| Buff-breasted Sandpiper                                  | Special Concern            | Schedule 1              | Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC)                                      |
| Common Nighthawk   | Threatened                 | Schedule 1              | ECCC  |
| Eskimo Curlew  | Endangered                 | Schedule 1              | ECCC  |
| Harlequin Duck   | Special Concern            | Schedule 1              | ECCC  |
| Harris's Sparrow   | Special Concern            | Schedule 1              | ECCC  |
| Horned Grebe   | Special Concern            | Schedule 1              | ECCC  |
| Ivory Gull   | Endangered                 | Schedule 1              | ECCC  |
| Olive-sided Flycatcher                                   | Threatened                 | Schedule 1              | ECCC  |
| Peregrine Falcon   | Special Concern            | Schedule 1              | ECCC  |
| Red Knot Islandica Subspecies                            | Special Concern            | Schedule 1              | ECCC  |
| Red-necked Phalarope                                     | Special Concern            | Schedule 1              | ECCC  |
| Ross's Gull  | Threatened                 | Schedule 1              | ECCC  |
| Rusty Blackbird  | Special Concern            | Schedule 1              | ECCC  |
| Short-eared Owl  | Special Concern            | Schedule 1              | ECCC  |
| Porsild's Bryum  | Threatened                 | Schedule 1              | Government of Nunavut (GN)  |
| Transverse Lady Beetle                                   | Special Concern            | No Schedule             | GN  |
| Caribou (Dolphin and Union Population)                   | Endangered                 | Schedule 1              | GN  |
| Caribou (Barren-ground Population)                       | Threatened                 | No Schedule             | GN  |
| Caribou (Torngat Mountains Population)                   | Endangered                 | No Schedule             | GN  |
| Grizzly Bear (Western Population)                        | Special Concern            | Schedule 1              | ECCC  |
| Peary Caribou  | Endangered                 | Schedule 1              | GN  |
| Polar Bear   | Special Concern            | Schedule 1              | ECCC  |
| Wolverine  | Special Concern            | Schedule 1              | GN  |
| Atlantic Walrus (High Arctic Population)                 | Special Concern            | No Schedule             | Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)   |
| Atlantic Walrus (Central/Low Arctic Population)          | Special Concern            | No Schedule             | DFO   |
| Beluga Whale (Cumberland Sound Population)               | Threatened                 | Schedule 1              | DFO   |
| Beluga Whale (Eastern Hudson Bay Population)             | Endangered                 | No Schedule             | DFO   |
| Beluga Whale (Eastern High Arctic-Baffin Bay Population) | Special Concern            | No Schedule             | DFO   |
| Beluga Whale (Western Hudson Bay Population)             | Special Concern            | No Schedule             | DFO   |
| Atlantic Cod (Arctic Lakes Population)                   | Special Concern            | No Schedule             | DFO   |
| Fourhorn Sculpin (Freshwater Form)                       | Data Deficient             | Schedule 3              | DFO   |
| Lumpfish   | Threatened                 | No Schedule             | DFO   |
| Thorny Skate   | Special Concern            | No Schedule             | DFO   |

<sup>1</sup> The Department of Fisheries and Oceans has responsibility for aquatic species.

<sup>2</sup> Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) has a national role to play in the conservation and recovery of Species at Risk in Canada, as well as responsibility for management of birds described in the Migratory Birds Convention Act (MBCA). Day-to-day management of terrestrial species not covered in the MBCA is the responsibility of the Territorial Government. Populations that exist in National Parks are also managed under the authority of the Parks Canada Agency.