



NIRB File No.: 25YN058
Commission File No.: 150856

July 17, 2025

Ken Jeffries
University of Manitoba
50 Sifton Road
Winnipeg, MB
R3T 2N2

Sent via email: ken.jeffries@umanitoba.ca

Re: Notice of Screening for University of Manitoba’s “Characterizing Contaminant Levels in Softshell Clams in Frobisher Bay near Iqaluit” project proposal

Dear Ken Jeffries:

On July 8, 2025, the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) received a referral to screen University of Manitoba’s “Characterizing Contaminant Levels in Softshell Clams in Frobisher Bay near Iqaluit” project proposal from the Nunavut Planning Commission (Commission), which noted that the project proposal is outside the area of an applicable regional land use plan. On July 8, 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 **25YN058** - 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 online public registry at www.nirb.ca/project/126210.

Project:	Characterizing contaminant levels in softshell clams in Frobisher Bay near Iqaluit
Region:	Qikiqtani region, near the community of Iqaluit within areas in Frobisher Bay and Koojesse Inlet

Summary of Project Description:	The Proponent intends to conduct research activities to assess contaminant levels in clams to quantify the role of wastewater effluent versus atmospheric transport of contaminants into the region.
Project Proposed Timeline:	September 2025

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

- Collect a maximum of 100 clams from three (3) to five (5) locations using a bucket/hand;
- Hire local guide with a boat to access clam sampling locations;
- Conduct research work at the Nunavut Research Institute facilities;
- Purchase samples of other harvested aquatic species (e.g., Arctic char) from locals to track movement of contaminants across the food chain;
- Use of fuel to refuel boat;
- Share scientific research results with community members and made available on public databases; and,
- Use of local accommodations and facilities.

Inclusion or Exclusion of Scoping List

At this time, 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

All documents received can be accessed from the NIRB's online public registry at www.nirb.ca/project/126210 and include:

- *Commission Conformity Determination*
- *Commission Application*
- *NIRB Online Application in English*
- *Non-technical Summary in English, French and Inuktitut*
- *Amaruq Hunters and Trappers Association Support Letter*

The NIRB will copy you on screening process related correspondence and upload related documents to the NIRB's online registry for public access. The NIRB may request additional information at any time during the process.

The NIRB is copying parties and municipalities potentially affected by University of Manitoba project proposal with this letter, and we invite interested parties to comment directly to the NIRB by **July 28, 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, have been 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 individual project dashboard for this assessment on the NIRB's online public registry at www.nirb.ca/project/126210.

If you have any questions or require clarification, feel free to contact the undersigned at (867) 983 - 4618 or rqammaniq@nirb.ca.

Sincerely,



Robby Qammaniq
Impact Assessment Officer
Nunavut Impact Review Board

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

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

cc: Distribution List
Justin Buller, Government of Nunavut, Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs
Dianne Lapierre, Government of Nunavut, Economic Development and Transportation
Sean Joseph, Government of Nunavut, Economic Development and Transportation
Mosha Cote, Nunavut Research Institute
Adrian Paradis, Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency
Melissa Alexander, Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency
José 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. University of Manitoba (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.: 150856), and the NIRB (Online Application Form, July 8, 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 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

7. 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.
8. 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

9. 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.
10. 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.

Air Quality

11. The Proponent shall eliminate unnecessary idling to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as much as possible.

Wildlife – General

12. 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.
13. 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.
14. The Proponent shall not hunt or fish, unless proper Nunavut authorizations have been acquired.

Migratory Birds and Raptors Disturbance

15. 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*.
16. 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.
17. 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.

Marine-Based Activities

18. The Proponent shall ensure that noise be kept to a minimum and shall refrain from making sharp or loud noises, blowing horns or whistles and shall maintain constant engine noise levels.
19. The Proponent shall not attempt to intersect or interfere with the movements of marine mammals. This includes ensuring that there are no wake zones within 250 metres and a minimum of 100 metre no go zone around marine mammals. Strategic positioning of vessels ahead of the path being traveled by mobile mammals and waiting for the mammals to pass is also prohibited.
20. When marine mammals appear to be trapped or disturbed by vessel movements, the Proponent shall implement appropriate measures to mitigate disturbance, including stoppage of movement until wildlife have moved away from the immediate area.
21. The Proponent shall maintain a distance of 100 metres if a Polar Bear is encountered on land or ice while conducting activities from a zodiac or other small craft; all interaction with Polar Bears should be avoided if possible.

22. The Proponent shall suspend all project activities should any dead fish or wildlife (both marine and terrestrial), or any injured wildlife be observed during any works or activities in and around the marine waters. Activities may only be resumed on the recommendation of the authorizing agencies.
23. The Proponent shall report all incidents, injuries or sightings of marine mammals to the appropriate authorizing agencies.

Other

24. 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.
25. The Proponent shall ensure that project activities do not interfere with Inuit wildlife harvesting or traditional land use activities.
26. The Proponent should, to the extent possible, hire local people and access local services where possible.