



**SCREENING DECISION REPORT  
NIRB FILE No.:26YN021**

NPC File No.: 151061

**May 4, 2026**

Following the Nunavut Impact Review Board’s (NIRB or Board) assessment of all materials provided, the NIRB is recommending that a review of VSU’s “Vermont State University” 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 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.

## PROJECT OVERVIEW & THE NIRB ASSESSMENT PROCESS

On March 10, 2026, the NIRB received a referral to screen Ross Lieblappen’s “Vermont State University” project proposal (NIRB File No: 26YN021) from the Nunavut Planning Commission (Commission), with an accompanying positive conformity determination with the North Baffin Regional 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 [www.nirb.ca/project/126430](http://www.nirb.ca/project/126430).

- Project Name: Vermont State University
- NIRB File No.: 26YN021
- NIRB Application No.: 126430

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

Date	Stage
March 10, 2026	Receipt of project proposal and positive conformity determination (North Baffin Regional Land Use Plan) from the Commission
March 11, 2026	Pursuant to s. 144(1) of the <i>NuPPAA</i> the NIRB requested the Proponent complete an online application to address information required for Screening
March 17, 2026	Receipt of online application from Proponent
March 19, 2026	Request(s) to Proponent for additional information in order to carry out screening pursuant to s. s. 144(1) of the <i>NuPPAA</i>
March 19, 2026	Proponent responded to information request(s) and provided additional information
March 20, 2026	Scoping pursuant to s. 86(1) of the <i>NuPPAA</i>
March 20, 2026	NIRB conducted an inclusion or exclusion of scope
March 25, 2026	Public engagement and comment were issued in English with translations provided once available
March 16, 2026	Receipt of public comments
March 15, 2026	Proponent provided with an opportunity to address comments/concerns raised by public
March 16, 2026	Proponent responded to comments/concerns raised by public
May 4, 2026	Issuance of Screening Decision Report

## 1. Project Scope

<b>Location</b>	Qikiqtani region, within the municipal boundaries of the community of Resolute Bay, and at Eureka
<b>Objective</b>	The Proponent intends to conduct scientific research to improve characterization of various polar terrains from the microscale and into the nanoscale using X-ray computed tomography, with the goal of advancing understanding of soil, snow, and ice microstructure and associated microbial processes.
<b>Timeline</b>	June to July 2026

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

### Undertakings, Works, and Activities

- Collection of up to five (5) permafrost cores and up to five (5) ice cores at each of the two project locations;
- Core sampling with each core measuring approximately one (1) metre in length and 7.5 centimetres in diameter;
- Use of truck transportation to access three (3) to five (5) sampling locations in the Resolute Bay area;
- Use of All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) to access three (3) to five (5) sampling locations in the Eureka area;
- Engagement of local services, including ice and wildlife guiding support from Vivitem and a local guide from Resolute Bay, subject to ice conditions;
- Use of existing accommodation and facilities in Resolute Bay and at the Eureka site;
- Use of small quantities of fuel for ATVs and coring equipment, primarily handled and stored at base locations, with limited transport of fuel to field sites if required;
- Implementation of basic spill prevention and response measures, including the use of spill kits and containment during any field refuelling activities;
- Waste generation is expected to be minimal, with all materials brought into the field to be removed and no waste left on site;
- Restoration of disturbed areas, including the filling of coring holes following completion of sampling activities.

## 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

As outlined in Table 1 above, notices regarding the NIRB's screening of this project proposal were distributed to community organizations as well as to relevant federal and territorial government agencies, Inuit organizations and other parties with a request for interested parties to 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 March 16, 2026, the NIRB received comments from the following interested parties:

**Table 2: Comments Received**

<b>Commenting Party</b>	<b>NIRB Doc ID No.</b>
Government of Nunavut (GN)	360801
Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC)	360802
Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)	360804
Transport Canada (TC)	360641

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

The following provides a summary of the comments and concerns received by the NIRB in relation to the Vermont State University project proposal:

**Government of Nunavut (GN):** Government of Nunavut indicated no concerns and provided no comments on the Project as proposed

**Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC):** CIRNAC raised comments regarding the need for additional information related to fuel and hazardous materials management, waste handling and site restoration, consultation with Inuit organizations, and protection of heritage resources.

**Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO):** DFO indicated no concerns or recommendations at this time; however, noted that the Proponent remains responsible for complying with applicable measures for the protection of fish and fish habitat and relevant notification requirements.

**Transport Canada (TC):** Transport Canada indicated no concerns and provided no comments on the Project as proposed

**4. 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.

## 5. Proponent’s Response to Public Comments and Concerns

Due to the comments, and questions received from parties, the NIRB provided an opportunity for the Proponent to respond. The following is a summary of the Proponent’s response to concerns:

- The Proponent clarified that fuel use would be limited to small quantities associated with ATVs and coring equipment, with refuelling primarily occurring at base locations. Spill response kits would be available at both Resolute Bay and Eureka, and any field refuelling, if required, would be conducted using containment measures to prevent spills.
- The Proponent confirmed that no drilling fluids would be used during coring activities and that no hazardous materials would be introduced into the ground.
- The Proponent indicated that no waste would be generated at field sampling locations. All materials, including sample packaging, would be removed from the field, and sites would be left in a clean condition following completion of activities.
- The Proponent confirmed that all coring holes would be backfilled and disturbed areas restored to near pre-existing conditions upon completion of sampling activities.

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 Project is expected to affect a small and localized geographic area, limited to temporary sampling sites near Resolute Bay and Eureka, with minimal and short-term disturbance to wildlife habitat.</li> </ul>
The ecosystemic sensitivity of that area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Project is located within Arctic environments that are considered ecologically sensitive due to the presence of permafrost, seasonal ice, and associated wildlife. However, Project activities are small-scale, temporary, and limited to discrete sampling locations. The Proponent has confirmed that no drilling fluids would be used, minimal fuel would be handled, and disturbed areas would be restored, further reducing the potential for significant disturbance.</li> </ul>
The historical, cultural and archaeological significance of that area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No specific historical, cultural, or archaeological sites have been identified within the proposed activity areas. Given the limited scope and non-intrusive nature of the Project, the likelihood of impacting such resources is considered low.</li> </ul>

Factor	Comment
The size of the human and the animal populations likely to be affected by the impacts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Project is expected to interact with a limited number of individuals, primarily the small local population in Resolute Bay and transient personnel at Eureka. Wildlife presence in the area may include species of importance to Inuit harvesting; however, any interactions are expected to be minimal and temporary.</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>▪ Potential impacts are expected to be low in magnitude, short-term, and localized, primarily related to minor surface disturbance from sampling and temporary increases in human activity and noise. The probability of impacts occurring is low, and any effects are expected to be infrequent, of short duration, and fully reversible through natural recovery processes and are further reduced by the Proponent's commitments related to waste removal, spill prevention, and site restoration.</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>▪ Cumulative impacts are expected to be low, as the Project involves short-term, small-scale scientific research activities. While other research and logistical activities may occur in the region, the incremental contribution of this Project to overall cumulative effects are anticipated to be negligible.</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 factors were identified by the Board that would materially influence the assessment of the significance of potential impacts associated with the Project.; 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

1. The *Fisheries Act* (<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/F-14/index.html>).
2. The *Nunavut Waters and Nunavut Surface Rights Tribunal Act* (<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/n-28.8/>).
3. The *Migratory Birds Convention Act* (<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/M-7.01/>), the *Migratory Birds Regulations* ([https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/C.R.C.,\\_c.\\_1035/index.html](https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/C.R.C.,_c._1035/index.html)) and the *Migratory Bird Sanctuary Regulations* ([https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/C.R.C.,\\_c.\\_1036/index.html](https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/C.R.C.,_c._1036/index.html)).
4. The *Species at Risk Act* (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/s-15.3/>). Attached in **Appendix A** is a list of Species at Risk in Nunavut
5. The *Wildlife Act (Nunavut)* and its corresponding regulations (<http://www.canlii.org/en/nu/laws/stat/snu-2003-c-26/latest/snu-2003-c-26.html>).

6. The *Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act* (<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/t-19.01/>) and the *Transportation of Dangerous Goods Regulations* (<http://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/tdg/clear-tofc-211.htm>).
7. The *Aeronautics Act* (<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/A-2/>) and the *Canadian Aviation Regulations* (<https://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/acts-regulations/regulations-sor96-433.html>).

**Other Applicable Guidelines**

8. Solid Waste Management for Northern and Remote Communities (Environment and Climate Change Canada, 2017) (<https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/managing-reducing-waste/municipal-solid/environment/northern-remote-communities.html>).
9. Environmental Guidelines for the Management of Hazardous Waste, Government of Nunavut, Revised October 2010 ([https://www.gov.nu.ca/sites/default/files/Guideline%20-%20General%20Management%20of%20Hazardous%20Waste%20%28revised%20Oct%202010%29\\_0.pdf](https://www.gov.nu.ca/sites/default/files/Guideline%20-%20General%20Management%20of%20Hazardous%20Waste%20%28revised%20Oct%202010%29_0.pdf)).

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>	Ecosystem, Wildlife Habitat, and Inuit Harvesting Activities
<b>Potential effects:</b>	Temporary disturbance to wildlife and wildlife habitat may occur due to sampling activities, vehicle use (ATVs and trucks), and increased human presence. This may result in short-term avoidance of the immediate area by wildlife that may be harvested by Inuit.
<b>Nature of Impacts:</b>	Impacts are expected to be localized, low in magnitude, and short-term in duration. The Project footprint is limited to discrete sampling locations, and activities are temporary in nature. While the Project occurs within Arctic ecosystems that support wildlife of importance to Inuit harvesting, disturbance is not expected to result in long-term habitat alteration or displacement.
<b>Mitigating Factors:</b>	Mitigation includes limiting activities to small, defined areas, minimizing duration of field presence, and avoiding unnecessary disturbance to wildlife. Engagement of local guides will support awareness of wildlife presence and harvesting activities. All activities are temporary, and no permanent infrastructure is proposed.
<b>Proposed Terms and Conditions:</b>	Wildlife – General: 17 through 20 Migratory Birds and Raptors Disturbance: 21 through 22 Aircraft Flight Restrictions: 23 through 27 Caribou and Muskoxen Disturbance: 28 Other: 37 through 39

<b>Valued Component</b>	Surface Land, Terrain, and Permafrost
<b>Potential effects:</b>	Minor surface disturbance may occur at discrete sampling locations as a result of permafrost and ice coring activities, as well as localized traffic from ATVs and trucks.
<b>Nature of Impacts:</b>	Impacts are expected to be small in scale, localized, and short-term. Disturbance would be limited to temporary sampling sites, with no permanent alteration of land or terrain. Permafrost and ice cores are limited in size, and sampling locations are dispersed. Any disturbance is expected to be reversible through natural recovery processes.
<b>Mitigating Factors:</b>	Mitigation includes limiting activities to small, defined sampling areas, minimizing ground disturbance during access, restoring disturbed areas, and removing all materials from the field. The Proponent has also confirmed that only small quantities of fuel would be used, and that spill prevention and response measures would be implemented.
<b>Proposed Terms and Conditions:</b>	Road and Ground Disturbance: 29 through 30 Land Use and Restoration of Disturbed Areas: 31 through 34 Camps: 35 through 36 Waste Management: 7 through 8 Fuel and Chemical Storage: 9 through 13

<b>Valued Component</b>	Surface Water / Ice (Aquatic Environment)
<b>Potential effects:</b>	Minor disturbance to surface water and ice conditions may occur from ice coring activities and access to sampling locations.
<b>Nature of Impacts:</b>	Impacts are expected to be localized, low in magnitude, and short-term. Sampling activities are limited in scale, and no long-term alteration to water or ice conditions is expected.
<b>Mitigating Factors:</b>	Limited number of sampling sites, small core sizes, and restoration of sampling areas (filling coring holes). No discharge or waste release to water is anticipated and the Proponent has confirmed that no drilling fluids would be used and no waste would be discharged to water.
<b>Proposed Terms and Conditions:</b>	Water Courses / Water Bodies: 6 Road and Ground Disturbance: 30

<b>Valued Component</b>	Air Quality and Noise
<b>Potential effects:</b>	Temporary emissions and noise may occur from aircraft, ATV, and truck use during transportation and field activities.
<b>Nature of Impacts:</b>	Impacts are expected to be localized, low in magnitude, and short-term. Activities are intermittent and limited in duration, with no long-term effects on air quality.
<b>Mitigating Factors:</b>	Short duration of activities, limited number of vehicles and flights, and no continuous or large-scale emission sources.
<b>Proposed Terms and Conditions:</b>	Air Quality: 14 through 15 Noise: 16

**Socio-economic effects on northerners:**

<b>Valued Component</b>	Socio-Economic Effect
<b>Potential effects:</b>	Limited positive socio-economic effects may occur through the use of local services, including engagement of local guides.
<b>Nature of Impacts:</b>	Impacts are expected to be minimal and short-term in duration, with no significant changes to employment, income, or community well-being.
<b>Mitigating Factors:</b>	Use of local services where available and minimal interaction with community infrastructure due to the short duration and small scale of the Project.
<b>Proposed Terms and Conditions:</b>	Other: 37 through 39

**Significant public concern:**

<b>Valued Component</b>	Public Concern
<b>Potential effects:</b>	The Project has the potential to raise public concern related to environmental disturbance and scientific activities in the region.
<b>Nature of Impacts:</b>	No significant public concern was identified during the screening process. The Project is small in scale, temporary, and consistent with similar research activities previously conducted in the region.
<b>Mitigating Factors:</b>	Public notification and opportunity for comment were provided through the NIRB screening process. No concerns were raised by the public or reviewing parties.
<b>Proposed Terms and Conditions:</b>	General: 1 through 5 Other: 38

**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. Ross Lieblappen (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.: 151061), and the NIRB (Online Application Form, March 17, 2026; additional information, March 19, 2026). 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 incinerate all combustible wastes as needed and dispose of 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 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.
10. 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.
11. 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.

12. 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.
13. 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**

14. 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.
15. The Proponent shall eliminate unnecessary idling to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as much as possible.

### **Noise**

16. All construction and road vehicles must be fitted with standard and well-maintained noise suppression devices.

### **Wildlife – General**

17. 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.
18. 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.
19. The Proponent shall enforce safe speed limits for vehicles travelling along the road to ensure drivers have sufficient time to react in a safe manner if wildlife are encountered on or adjacent to the road or trail.
20. The Proponent shall ensure that drivers maintain spacing appropriate for driving and road conditions, and speed limits, to ensure drivers have time to safely react to any wildlife on the road.

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

21. 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
22. The Proponent shall not disturb or destroy the nests or eggs of any birds. If active nests of any birds are discovered or located (i.e., with eggs or young), the Proponent shall avoid these areas until nesting is complete and the young have naturally left the vicinity of the

nest by establishing a protection buffer zone appropriate for the species and the surrounding habitat.

### **Aircraft Flight Restrictions**

23. The Proponent shall ensure that aircraft/helicopter do not, unless for emergency, touch-down in areas where wildlife are present.
24. 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.
25. The Proponent shall not alter flight paths to approach wildlife and avoid flying directly over animals.
26. 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.
27. 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

### **Caribou and Muskoxen Disturbance**

28. 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.

### **Road and Ground Disturbance**

29. The Proponent shall not move any equipment or vehicles unless the ground surface is in a state capable of fully supporting the equipment or vehicles without rutting or gouging. Overland travel of equipment or vehicles must be suspended if rutting occurs
30. The Proponent shall not move any equipment or vehicles without prior testing the thickness of the ice to ensure the lake, river or stream is in a state capable of fully supporting the equipment or vehicles.

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

31. The Proponent shall use existing trails where possible during project activities on the land.
32. The Proponent shall ensure that the land use area is kept clean and tidy at all times.
33. 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.
34. The Proponent shall ensure that all disturbed areas are restored to a stable or pre-disturbed state using Best Available Technology Economically Achievable (BATEA) upon completion of work and/or abandonment.

## Camps

35. 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.
36. The Proponent shall not erect camps or store materials on the surface ice of lakes or streams, except that which is for immediate use.

## Other

37. 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.
38. The Proponent shall ensure that project activities do not interfere with Inuit wildlife harvesting or traditional land use activities.
39. The Proponent should, to the extent possible, hire local people and access local services where possible.

### 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.

#### Bear and Carnivore Safety

4. The Proponent should review the Government of Nunavut's booklet on Bear Safety, which can be downloaded from this link: [http://gov.nu.ca/sites/default/files/bear\\_safety\\_-\\_reducing\\_bear-people\\_conflicts\\_in\\_nunavut.pdf](http://gov.nu.ca/sites/default/files/bear_safety_-_reducing_bear-people_conflicts_in_nunavut.pdf). Further information on bear/carnivore detection and deterrent techniques can be found in the "*Safety in Grizzly and Black Bear Country*"

pamphlet, which can be downloaded from this link: [https://www.enr.gov.nt.ca/sites/enr/files/resources/safety\\_in\\_grizzly\\_and\\_black\\_bear\\_country\\_english.pdf](https://www.enr.gov.nt.ca/sites/enr/files/resources/safety_in_grizzly_and_black_bear_country_english.pdf)

5. There are polar bear and grizzly bear safety resources available from the Bear Smart Society with videos on polar bear safety available in English, French and Inuktitut at <http://www.bearsmart.com/play/safety-in-polar-bear-country/>. Information can also be obtained from Parks Canada's website on bear safety at the following link: <http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/pn-np/nu/quttinirpaaq/visit/visit6/d.aspx> or in reviewing the "Safety in Polar Bear Country" pamphlet, which can be downloaded from the following link: [http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/pn-np/nu/quttinirpaaq/visit/visit6/~/\\_media/pnnp/nu/auyuittuq/pdf/shared/PolarBearSafety\\_English.ashx](http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/pn-np/nu/quttinirpaaq/visit/visit6/~/_media/pnnp/nu/auyuittuq/pdf/shared/PolarBearSafety_English.ashx)
6. Any problem wildlife or any interaction with carnivores should be reported immediately to the local Government of Nunavut, Department of Environment Conservation Office (Conservation Officer of Resolute Bay, phone: (867) 252-3879).

### **Species at Risk**

7. The Proponent review Environment and Climate Change Canada's "Environment Assessment Best Practice Guide for Wildlife at Risk in Canada", available at the following link: [http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca/virtual\\_sara/files/policies/EA%20Best%20Practices%202004.pdf](http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca/virtual_sara/files/policies/EA%20Best%20Practices%202004.pdf). The guide provides information to the Proponent on what is required when Wildlife at Risk, including *Species at Risk*, are encountered or affected by the project.

### **Migratory Birds**

8. The Proponent review Canadian Wildlife Services' "Key migratory bird terrestrial habitat sites in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut", available at the following link: <http://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/317630/publication.html> and "Key marine habitat sites for migratory birds in Nunavut and the Northwest Territories", available at the following link: <http://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/392824/publication.html>. The guide provides information to the Proponent on key terrestrial and marine habitat areas that are essential to the welfare of various migratory bird species in Canada.
9. For further information on how to protect migratory birds, their nests and eggs when planning or carrying out project activities, consult Environment and Climate Change Canada's Incidental Take web page and the fact sheet "Planning Ahead to Reduce the Risk of Detrimental Effects to Migratory Birds, and their Nests and Eggs" available at: [http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection\\_2013/ec/CW66-324-2013-eng.pdf](http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2013/ec/CW66-324-2013-eng.pdf)

### **Fishing Licence**

10. The Proponent shall ensure that all guests partaking in sport fishing activities during their stay at the lodge obtain fishing licences from the Government of Nunavut-Department of Environment.

## CONCLUSION

The foregoing constitutes the Board's screening decision with respect to the Ross Lieblappen "Vermont State University". The NIRB remains available for consultation with the Minister regarding this report as necessary.

Dated May 4, 2026 at Iqaluit, NU.



Albert Ehaloak  
Albert Ehaloak, *Acting* Chairperson

Attachments: Appendix A: Species at Risk in Nunavut

## 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

Terrestrial Species at Risk <sup>1</sup>	COSEWIC Designation	Schedule of SARA	Government Organization with Primary Management Responsibility <sup>2</sup>
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.