



NIRB File No.: 26YN027  
NIRB Public Registry link:  
[www.nirb.ca/project/126442](http://www.nirb.ca/project/126442)  
NPC File No.: 151129

June 11, 2026

Evan Richardson  
Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC)  
Unit 510-234 Donalad Street  
Winnipeg MB R3C 1M8

Sent via email: [evan.richardson@ec.gc.ca](mailto:evan.richardson@ec.gc.ca)

**Re: Notice of Screening and Comment Request for Environment and Climate Change Canada's (ECCC) "Observations of polar bear habitat use and foraging behaviour in Navy Board Inlet/Eclipse Sound" project proposal**

Dear Evan Richardson:

The Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) has commenced screening<sup>1</sup> the project proposal.

**By copy of this letter, NIRB invites regulators, interested parties, and community members or groups potentially affected by the proposal to view the application and comment directly to the NIRB by July 2, 2026.**

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.

The application can be viewed on NIRB's online registry [www.nirb.ca/project/126442](http://www.nirb.ca/project/126442) where a comment form is available, or comments can be also submitted to [info@nirb.ca](mailto:info@nirb.ca), or by fax.

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<sup>1</sup> 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)

## Scope of proposal

<b>Location</b>	Qikiqtani region, Navy Board Inlet and Eclipse, Sound approximately 15km from Pond Inlet
<b>Objective</b>	The primary objective of this project is to work with local Inuit hunters in the community of Pond Inlet to observe polar bear habitat use and foraging behaviour in Navy Board Inlet/Eclipse Sound using tracking surveys and direct observations of bears. The Proponent will work with local guides to track bears through different types of sea ice habitat and make observations of polar bear foraging behaviour.
<b>Timeline</b>	Operations Phase: from May 1, 2026 to June 30, 2026.

The scope of the project includes the following undertakings, works or activities:

- Use of up to four (4) snowmobiles to travel on sea ice with local Inuit guides to track polar bears in different types of sea ice habitat and observe polar bear foraging behavior;
- Use of handheld GPS units, spotting scopes, binoculars, and direct observations from distances greater than 300 meters to record polar bear movements, habitat use, hunting behavior, and seal kill observations;
- Harvest and placement of up to 20 ringed seals on the sea ice by local hunters as part of a polar bear foraging observation experiment to record:
  - o How long it takes for polar bears to detect and locate the seal;
  - o Which parts of the seal polar bears prefer to eat first;
  - o How multiple bears interact at the kill site;
  - o What other animals, including arctic foxes, gulls, and ravens, scavenge the remaining seal; and
- How long it takes for the seal to be fully consumed.
- Use of motion-activated trail cameras at seal kill sites to record polar bear foraging behavior and scavenger activity;
- Opportunistic use of narwhal carcasses from Inuit hunters, if encountered on the sea ice, to observe scavenging activity;
- Use of audio equipment, visual cues, and olfactory cue stations to assess how polar bears detect potential food sources;
- Establishment of a temporary base camp on the sea ice, with all waste collected in sealable drums and returned to town for disposal; and
- Use of approximately 100 gallons of gasoline, stored in 5-gallon jerry cans, to refuel snowmobiles during project activities.

### ***Inclusion or Exclusion of Scoping List***

The NIRB has identified no additional works or activities in relation to the project proposal; as a result, the NIRB will proceed with screening the project based on the scope as described above.

Questions about the NIRB's work should be directed to the undersigned at 1-866-233-3033 Ext 570 or [femingak@nirb.ca](mailto:femingak@nirb.ca).

Sincerely,



Francis Emingak, Screening Officer  
Nunavut Impact Review Board

cc: Jared Ottenhof, Qikiqtani Inuit Association  
Chris Spencer, Qikiqtani Inuit Association  
Conor Goddard, Qikiqtani Inuit Association  
Assol Kubeisinova, Qikiqtani Inuit Association  
Justin Buller, Government of Nunavut  
Dianne Lapierre, Government of Nunavut  
Natalie D'Souza, Government of Nunavut  
Sean Joseph, Government of Nunavut  
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Drikus Gissing, Government of Nunavut – Director Wildlife Research  
Eva Walker, Environment and Climate Change Canada  
José Audet-Lecouffe, Fisheries and Oceans Canada  
Mittimatalik Hunters and Trappers Organization