

# NUNAVUT IMPACT REVIEW BOARD AND You



NIRB Public Guide  
Series: INTRODUCTION

Get involved in the assessment of proposed  
projects in Nunavut from start to finish





Lena Atatahak, Kitigak Lake, Kitikmeot Photo: Li Wan

## NUNAVUT IMPACT REVIEW BOARD AND YOU

The Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) assesses the impact of proposed projects in the Nunavut Settlement Area (NSA). The NIRB makes recommendations to protect the environment, safeguard Inuit rights and promote the well-being of all Nunavummiut.

This overview guide will show you how to get involved in the NIRB process from start to finish. Learn how your input can help protect the land and wildlife and promote the health and well being of your family and community – not just today, but for generations to come.

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# CARING FOR NUNAVUT'S DEVELOPMENT TOGETHER

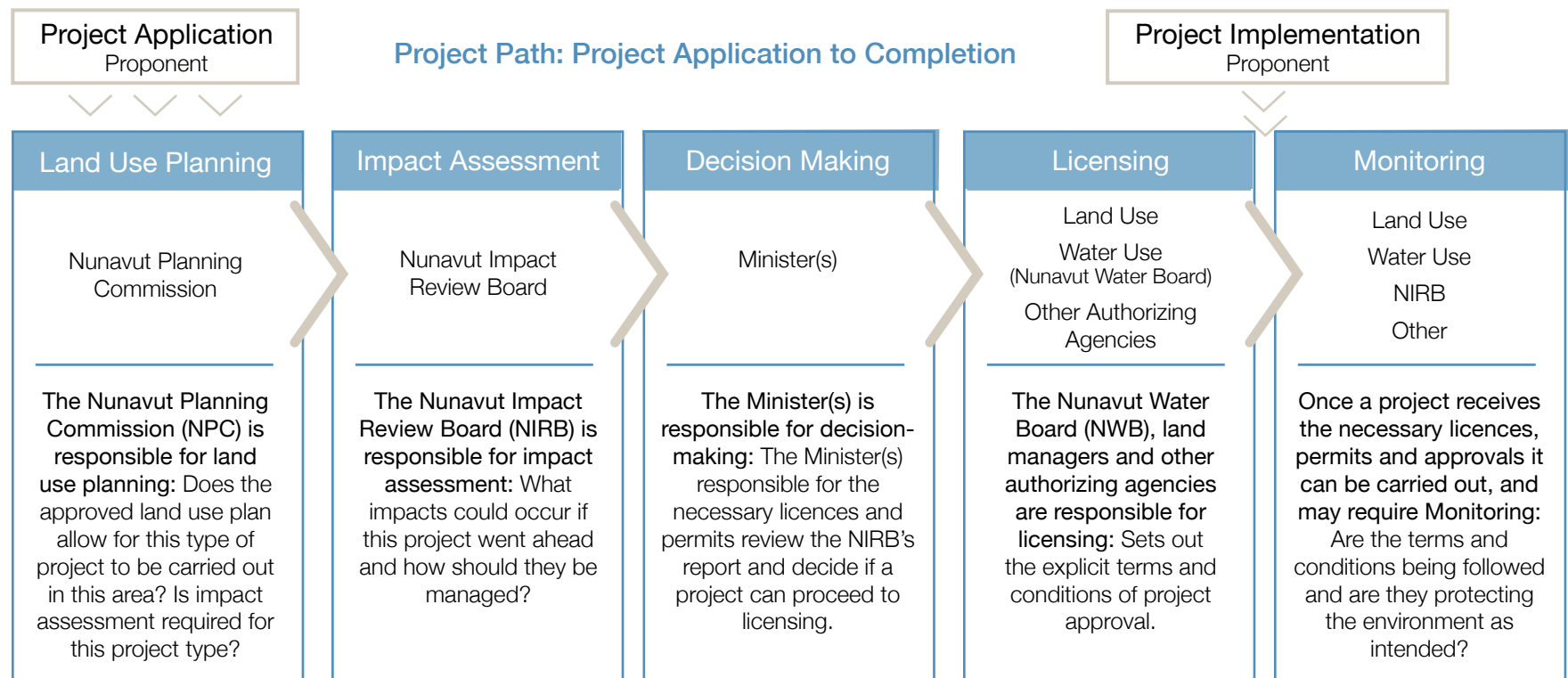
## NIRB: CREATED TO ASSESS THE IMPACT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT IN NUNAVUT

Nunavut is attracting a lot of attention for its energy and mineral potential. With a young, rapidly growing population, people in Nunavut are looking for new economic opportunities, including resource development.

The Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA) created various organizations to manage lands and resources to protect Inuit rights, and support development that provides benefits to

Nunavummiut. These organizations also work to ensure development does not harm the environment or people of Nunavut.

The Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) is one of the organizations created by the NLCA. The NIRB has the very specific role of conducting Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) – an important step in managing Nunavut's future development.







NIRB Open House, Sanikiluaq Photo: Li Wan



The NIRB Board: L-R Guy Alikut, Kaviq Kaluraq, Henry Ohokannoak, Elizabeth Copland, Allen Maghagak, Phillip Kadlun Photo: Sophia Granchinho

## REVIEW PROCESS ENCOURAGES INUIT INPUT

The NIRB provides you with multiple opportunities to make your views known, and ensure your concerns and ideas are addressed throughout the process.

Special efforts are made to ensure Inuit voices are heard in the impact review process. The emphasis on gathering Inuit input is unique in Canada, originating with the objectives of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement.

The Board members are appointed by Inuit organizations and government to make decisions together. The NIRB staff are located in Nunavut and are here to listen and work with you.



### Nunavut Land Claims Agreement

*"...The primary objectives of NIRB shall be at all times to protect and promote the existing and future well-being of the residents and communities of the Nunavut Settlement Area, and to protect the ecosystemic integrity of the Nunavut Settlement Area..."*  
(s.12.2.5)



Look for the Atii icon in each of the guides showing you how to participate.

# PROTECTING CARIBOU

INPUT IN ACTION

Community members were concerned Peregrine Diamonds Ltd's Bulk Sample and Exploration proposals on the Chidliak Project might have negative effects on caribou populations and migration routes over time.

Public input resulted in many project-specific terms and conditions to avoid caribou disturbance, such as "...when caribou are observed within 1 km of project operations, the Proponent shall suspend all operations, including low-level over flights, blasting, and use of snowmobiles and all-terrain vehicles outside the immediate vicinity of the camps..."

*(NIRB Screening Decision Report – "Bulk Sample at Chidliak" Recommendations 10-13, Terms & Conditions 25-27, p. 14 Board Memo)*



Photo: Sophia Granchinho

# ASSESSMENT INCLUDES ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROCESS ADDS VALUE

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is a tool used to identify the environmental, social and economic impacts of a project. Knowing the impacts – both positive and negative – is important so that decision-makers can make informed decisions about if and when a project should go ahead.

The EIA process helps to find ways to reduce negative impacts, and helps shape projects to benefit people. An EIA adds value to a project – by gathering local knowledge and expertise. The process ensures concerns are met so that projects can go ahead with minimal impact to the environment, and maximum benefit to the people.

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The NIRB review process looks at the possible environmental impacts of a proposed project or development on the environment – the land, wildlife, water and air. What are the consequences of these impacts on the environment?

## SOCIAL IMPACTS

The review is not just about the land and water – it is about you. How will a proposed project affect you, your family, and your community?

- What are the expected social impacts of a project?
- Will there be positive social impacts, like more opportunities for training, leading to more access to jobs?
- Will there be negative social impacts, like exposure to more outsiders in communities contributing to a loss of Inuit culture?
- How can the positive impact be assured, and the negative impact be limited?



Courtney Klengenber, near Cambridge Bay Photo: Aliza Weller

## ECONOMIC IMPACTS

New projects are often seen as having positive impacts on economic opportunity because they can bring jobs to Nunavummiut.

- What needs to happen to make sure Nunavummiut are able to participate?
- What are possible negative economic impacts of a project, and how can they be limited?



Paul Koomak Eetak, Millwright Apprentice, Meadowbank Mine Photo: © Agnico-Eagle 2011

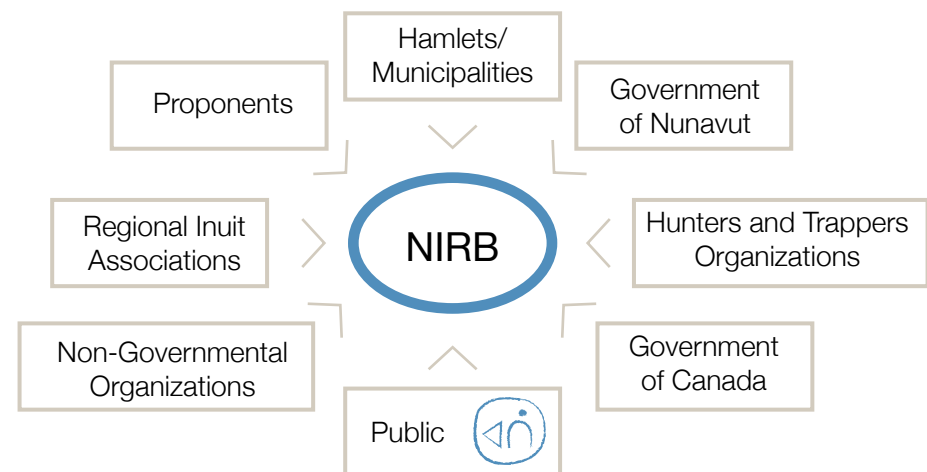
## NIRB GATHERS INPUT FROM ALL

The NIRB gathers input from everyone in the impact assessment process—including proponents, government, non-governmental organizations, regulatory agencies, Regional Inuit Associations, hamlets, community organizations, hunters and trappers associations, and the public.

All jurisdictions in Canada have some form of impact assessment process. But in Nunavut – the process is unique.

Because the NIRB was created by the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, the NIRB has a duty to make extra effort to gather input from Inuit. Inuit knowledge of the environment, and concerns and ideas on social and economic impacts are critical to the success of the EIA process.

### NIRB gathers input from many organizations





# IT'S YOUR RIGHT TO BE INVOLVED

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Paul Quassa and Peter Ivalu at Baffinland Mary River Project Community Roundtable Session, Igloolik Photo: Sophia Granchinho

## GET INVOLVED AT THE START OF THE PROCESS

Public participation is essential for an open, honest, and balanced review process.

The NIRB is responsible for making sure that interested parties in communities affected by a project are aware of the project and its potential environmental, social and economic impacts.

The earlier you get involved in the NIRB process, the better chance a project can be shaped to meet community concerns and needs. Early public involvement means a better review process, resulting in final recommendations that meet the goals of the NLCA in protecting the environment, protecting Inuit rights, and promoting benefits to Nunavummiut.

## INUIT QAUJIMAJATUQANGIT GUIDES NIRB PROCESS

Over the years the NIRB has worked hard to create a process where Inuit feel welcome and confident their knowledge is valued and views understood, guided by Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit principles:

- respecting others, relationships, and caring for people;
- development of skills through practice, effort and action;
- working together for a common cause;
- fostering good spirit by being open, welcoming, and inclusive;
- serving and providing for family and/or community;
- decision-making through discussion and consensus;
- being innovative and resourceful; and
- respect and care for the land, animals and the environment.

For example, the NIRB rules of procedure give a special standing to Elders so they can ensure the NIRB always works in a way that is respectful to Inuit. The spoken word of an Elder is considered by the NIRB as evidence in meetings and hearings.



Mina Inuktaluk at NIRB Open House, Sanikiluaq Photo: Li Wan



## NIRB NEEDS YOUR INPUT AT EVERY STAGE

The NIRB process is made up of three specific stages:

### Stage 1: Screening

The NIRB gathers written input, and the Board recommends if a project needs to go to a full Review, if it can be approved with terms and conditions, or if it should be rejected.  
(45 days)

### Stage 2: Review

The NIRB coordinates a process that gathers extensive written and oral input from all interested parties, the public and proponent, culminating in a full and formal hearing. The Board then makes a recommendation for approving or rejecting a project.  
(2 - 3 years)

### Stage 3: Monitoring

Approved projects are launched, and monitored by the NIRB and other agencies according to the terms and conditions of the licence, for the life of the project.

These Guides are set up to explain each stage in more detail with an emphasis on showing you when, where and how you can participate.

## SCREENING



- \* read NIRB website listing projects
- \* sign up for email notifications
- \* submit your comments to NIRB via email or fax
- \* discuss your concerns with local organizations

See *Screening: Public Guide Stage 1*

## REVIEW



- \* speak out!
- \* attend scoping meeting
- \* participate in technical review
- \* go to information session on Draft EIA
- \* attend pre-hearing conference
- \* go to information session on Final EIA
- \* attend Final Hearing

See *Review: Public Guide Stage 2*

## MONITORING



- \* read updates from project proponents
- \* read annual reports on projects
- \* contact NIRB if you have concerns
- \* attend the NIRB information sessions

See *Monitoring: Public Guide Stage 3*



## Nunavut Land Claims Agreement

*"In designing its by-laws and rules of procedure for the conduct of public hearings, NIRB shall... give due regard and weight to the tradition of Inuit oral communication and decision-making ...."*

(s.12.2.24 (ii))



Remember to look for the Atii icon in each of the guides showing you how to participate.

# TOOLS TO GET INVOLVED

## USING THE NIRB PUBLIC GUIDES

The NIRB Public Guides have been created to encourage and assist you – the public – to get more involved in the NIRB process. There is a Public Guide describing each stage of the NIRB process and instructions for where and how you can participate.

Special emphasis is placed on demonstrating the important role of Inuit and the value the NIRB places on Inuit Qaujimagajatuqangit.



There are also a series of more technical guides for those wishing to review the process in more detail:

- Proponent's Guide
- Authorizing Agencies Guide
- NIRB Rules of Procedure
- Environmental Impact Statement Guidelines
- Terminology and Definitions

## USING THE ONLINE PUBLIC REGISTRY



Josie Tucktoo-Lacasse Photo: Kelli Gillard

All of the NIRB's documents, meeting reports and decisions are public. You are encouraged to visit our online public registry at [ftp.nirb.ca](http://ftp.nirb.ca).

There you will find all the up to date information the NIRB has on all project proposals, review stages and decisions.

## PARTICIPATING AT MEETINGS

The NIRB organizes different kinds of meetings for projects that go to full Review. These will be described in more detail in *Review: Public Guide Stage 2*. There are community information sessions, scoping meetings, technical meetings, workshops and formal hearings.

What is important for you to know is that you are welcome to participate in all of the NIRB meetings – even the technical meetings if you wish.

## GET ON THE DISTRIBUTION LIST

The NIRB maintains a regional distribution list of organizations and people that automatically receive information about proposed projects. You can ask to be added to the list. It's simple. Just fill out a form with details on what kinds of projects you want to know about and you will be added to the list to receive emails directly to your inbox. The form is at [ftp.nirb.ca](http://ftp.nirb.ca).

## STAFF DEDICATED TO GATHERING INPUT

NIRB has a full time professional staff located in Cambridge Bay. The staff works for the Board and is also working for you. You are encouraged to contact the NIRB staff at any time if you have questions or need information about a proposed project.

The NIRB has interpreters on staff, who are always available to assist Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun speakers.

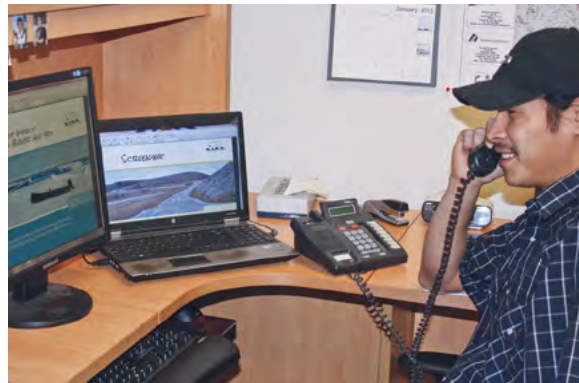
The staff is there to help you and pass on your questions, concerns and opinions to the Board members in their deliberations.

## HOW MIGHT YOU PARTICIPATE?

- Use the NIRB Public Guides
- Monitor the NIRB online public registry [ftp.nirb.ca](http://ftp.nirb.ca)
- Read about the projects that interest you
- Get your name on the distribution list
- Watch for meeting notices
- Attend meetings and speak out
- Visit your Regional Inuit Association or Hunters and Trappers Organization and ask them about projects that concern you
- Call NIRB staff to find out how to participate 866-233-3033



Josie Tucktoo-Lacasse, NIRB Interpreter/Translator  
Photo: Li Wan



Robert Maksagak, Assistant Technical Advisor at  
NIRB office in Cambridge Bay Photo: Kelli Gillard



Aliza Weller & Natasha Lear, NIRB staff at  
Sanikiluaq public meeting Photo: Li Wan



# A FAIR AND BALANCED PROCESS

“I believe that NIRB has done a first-class job in fulfilling its role and responsibility to the people of Nunavut and in particular to the people of the Qikiqtani Region.”

*(Tom Paddon, President and CEO, Baffinland Iron Mines Corporation, in letter to NIRB, September 24, 2012)*

“The community is grateful to be better informed about the project and ready for next step of participation in the EA (Environmental Assessment) process. Previously the public was not as informed as now regarding project development.”

*(NIRB Mary River Public Scoping Meeting Summary Report, p. 63, 2009)*

## THE ROLE OF THE BOARD MEMBERS

The NIRB makes every effort to carry out its mandate with fairness to all partners. In making its determinations, the NIRB Board members follow clear rules and procedures to make sure everyone is treated fairly throughout the process.

The Board must evaluate each proposal on its own merits and with respect to its own context. So even when a new project is similar to another, the Board must look at the new project with fresh eyes, and assess the project's impacts carefully.

Board members obtain input about projects through a formal hearing process, similar to a justice hearing. These formal procedures are to ensure the NIRB provides a fair hearing to every party's perspective.

The NIRB also encourages less formal input, inviting written input to the NIRB staff who then prepare packages of information that ensure all Board members have access to all comments equally.

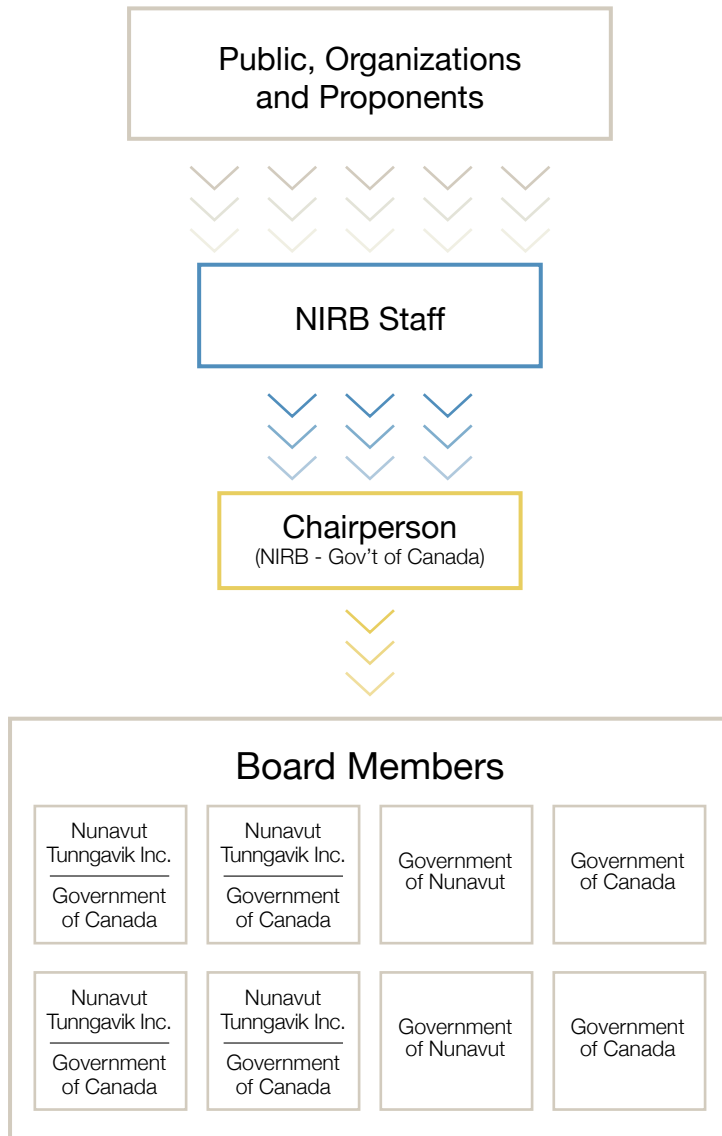


*The NIRB Board at Final Hearing, Mary River Project, Igloolik  
Photo: Amanda Hanson*



*The NIRB board and staff, Sanikiluaq Photo: Amanda Hanson*

## NIRB Organizational Structure



## COMMUNICATING WITH THE BOARD

The public interacts directly with the NIRB's full time staff, and during a hearing, directly with the Board. The NIRB's Chairperson and the NIRB's Executive Director can be contacted by the public at any time.

The NIRB is made up of nine members, one of whom serves as the Chairperson. The Designated Inuit Organizations, Government of Nunavut and Government of Canada make the appointments.

No matter which organization appoints a Board member, that Board member acts independently and in the interests of all Nunavummiut and Canadians. Once appointed, they do not represent their appointing organization – they represent the public interest.

## BALANCING TIMELY REVIEW, WITH APPROPRIATE OVERSIGHT

The NIRB works hard to establish and maintain credibility with its partners, including Nunavut organizations, government, industry and the public. Clear and predictable timelines and procedures make it possible for everyone to participate.

Within its mandated powers, the NIRB strives to exercise due respect for the culture, values, and interests of all Nunavummiut. The NIRB also sets very high standards for how scientific and technical evidence is submitted by a project proponent and reviewers.

## HTO HELPS SHAPE PROJECT SCOPE

During the scoping phase of a NIRB Review, the Kugluktuk HTO requested “more clarification or information on the effect the project will have on wolves as part of the EIA review process [and]...Bathurst caribou herd for project related impacts”...

*(Kugluktuk HTO Scoping Report, High Lake Mine, p. 6, 2007)*

NIRB’s resulting scoping assessment identified additional areas where the proponent needed to study the effects of project activities on musk-oxen, moose, wolves, Bathurst, Dolphin, Union and Peary caribou due to project activities and potential cumulative effects with other past, present and reasonably foreseeable projects in the area.

*(NIRB Scoping List & Scoping Assessment of the Wolfden High Lake Project, p. 8, 2007)*



Photo: Sophia Granchinho

# You CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

## THE NIRB WELCOMES YOUR INPUT

After 16 years of operation, the NIRB has ensured public input has contributed to protecting the environment, and helped ensure positive social and economic impacts from various projects. If you happen to be visiting Cambridge Bay, you are invited to visit the NIRB office to meet staff and check out the NIRB library and public documents. The NIRB also runs a summer internship program for students, so call the NIRB staff anytime to find out more about learning opportunities.

FIND OUT WHAT THE  
NIRB IS DOING IN  
YOUR REGION!



Get the NIRB’s bi-weekly Activity Calendar to learn which project proposals are in which stages, to see comment deadlines, and to learn about upcoming meetings.

- \* visit [ftp.nirb.ca](http://ftp.nirb.ca) to download the calendar
- \* email [info@nirb.ca](mailto:info@nirb.ca)
- \* call the NIRB staff 866-233-3033

NIRB ACTIVITY CALENDAR		January 2013																															
Project/Activity	Stage	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
PROPOSALS																																	
REVIEW																																	
ACCOMMODATION																																	
MEETINGS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES																																	

The NIRB Activity Calendar: [ftp.nirb.ca](http://ftp.nirb.ca)



## Your Input Counts

Make your voice heard in the various stages of the NIRB Environmental Impact Assessment process, from Screening to Review to Monitoring.

Your input can make a positive difference for your family, your community, the environment and for Nunavut's future.

To find out more about how you can get involved in the NIRB Screening, Review and Monitoring process, see the NIRB's Public Guides.

How do you plan to make a difference?



Adrien Amaaq and Neevee Nutarariaq, Igloodik area Photo: Li Wan



# NIRB PUBLIC GUIDE SERIES



## Nunavut Impact Review Board

c/o Executive Director, P.O. Box 1360, Cambridge Bay, NU X0B 0C0

Toll Free Telephone: 1-866-233-3033 Fax: (867) 983-2594 Email: [info@nirb.ca](mailto:info@nirb.ca) Website: <http://www.nirb.ca> FTP Site: <http://ftp.nirb.ca>

## NIRB TECHNICAL GUIDES:

- \* Proponent's Guide
- \* Authorizing Agencies Guide
- \* NIRB Rules of Procedure
- \* Environmental Impact Statement Guidelines
- \* Terminology and Definitions