



NIRB File No.: 05YN072
NRI File No.: 0204810R-M
EC File No.: NUN-NWA-11-02

June 7, 2011

Honourable Dan Shewchuk
Minister Responsible for Nunavut Arctic College
Government of Nunavut
c/o Mosha Cote, Manger, Research Liaison
Nunavut Research Institute
Iqaluit, NU

Via email: Mosha.Cote@arcticcollege.ca

Re: Application exempt from Screening pursuant to Section 12.4.3 of the NLCA: Kathy Young's "Hydrology of Extensive Low Gradient High Arctic Wetlands: An Examination of Sustainability" project

Dear Mosha Cote:

On May 6, 2011 the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB or Board) received an application from the Nunavut Research Institute (NRI) for an amendment to the Scientific Research License for Kathy Young's "Hydrology of Extensive Low Gradient High Arctic Wetlands: An Examination of Sustainability" project proposal. On May 24, 2011 the NIRB received a positive conformity determination (North Baffin Regional Land Use Plan) from the Nunavut Planning Commission for the new project location proposed in this amendment application.

Please be advised that the original project proposal (NIRB File No.: 05YN072) was received by the NIRB from the NRI on May 3, 2005 and was screened by the Board in accordance with Part 4, Article 12 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA). On June 27, 2005 the NIRB issued the enclosed NLCA 12.4.4(a) screening decision to the Minister of Culture, Language, Elders & Youth indicating the proposed project could proceed subject to NIRB's recommended project-specific terms and conditions.

On February 18, 2009 the NIRB received an application from the Canadian Wildlife Service for a renewal to the National Wildlife Area Access Permit for the above mentioned project. After a thorough assessment of the renewal request, the NIRB determined that the application was exempt from further screening as per Section 12.4.3 of the NLCA, and reissued the enclosed screening decision report on February 20, 2009.

On April 12, 2010 the NIRB received a positive conformity determination (North Baffin Regional Land Use Plan) from the Nunavut Planning Commission for a Type B Water License application with the Nunavut Water Board for the above mentioned project. After a thorough assessment, the NIRB determined that the application was exempt from further screening as per Section 12.4.3 of the NLCA, and reissued the enclosed screening decision report on April 30, 2010.

The current NRI application, the original NIRB Screening Decision Report (05YN072) and related file information are available from the NIRB's ftp site at the following link: <http://ftp.nirb.ca/01-SCREENINGS/COMPLETED%20SCREENINGS/2005/>.

PREVIOUSLY-SCREENED PROJECT PROPOSAL:

As previously screened by the NIRB (File No. 05YN072), the "Hydrology of Extensive Low Gradient High Arctic Wetlands: An Examination of Sustainability" project was located within the Qikiqtaaluk region, approximately 100 kilometres (km) from Resolute Bay with sample sites on Cornwallis Island and Bathurst Island. The Proponent indicated that it intended to conduct hydrological studies of wetlands.

The activities/components associated with this proposal included:

- Conduct hydrologic studies of wetlands including a regional scale study of temporal and spatial responses to water inputs (melt water, rainfall) and losses (evaporation and drainage);
- Use of 3 roving meteorological stations that have a footprint about 1.5 metres to be placed for the duration of the field season; one centrally located, and the other two at either end of the pass;
- Use of existing cabin with the addition of a supply tent and an equipment tent;
- Use of ATVs for transport during the snow-free season, snow machines during the initial snow survey, and walking only access of the wetlands after spring melt.

CURRENT APPLICATION:

Kathy Young is proposing to amend its Scientific Research License to include the following additional components/activities:

- The scope of the project has evolved from wetland monitoring to researching the seasonal hydrology of submerging coastal wetlands and the response to rising sea levels, wave action, and erosion from thick multi-year ice which moves through the Melville-Bathurst Island corridor;
- Addition of six (6) new sample sites in Nunavut, two (2) of which appear to be on Inuit Owned Land;
- Addition of three (3) new sample sites in the Northwest Territories;
- Temporary installation of a 3 metre footprint climate station with most monitoring equipment removed at the end of summer 2011 and the last of the equipment removed by the end of 2015;

- Longer research time frame and climate station deployment from May 1, 2011 to December 15, 2015 and potentially beyond 2020 with the support of local community members from Melville and Bathurst Island; and
- Logistical support through the Polar Continental Shelf Program (PCSP).

Please note that Section 12.4.3 of the NLCA states that:

“Any application for a component or activity of a project proposal that has been permitted to proceed in accordance with these provisions shall be exempt from the requirement for screening by NIRB unless:

(a) such component or activity was not part of the original project proposal; or

(b) its inclusion would significantly modify the project.”

On May 27, 2011 NIRB distributed the current amendment request to a regional distribution list, requesting submission of any comments or concerns related to the application by June 6, 2011. On or before June 6, 2011 the NIRB received comments from the Government of Nunavut – Culture, Language, Elders & Youth and Environment Canada regarding the proposed amendment. The following is a summary of comments received:

- Recommend that the project proposal be processed without a review under Part 5 or 6 provided the Proponent avoid known archaeological sites in the area, and follow the Site Protection and Restoration guidelines if an archaeological or paleontological site is encountered.
- No issue with the Proponent’s amendment request provided they are in compliance with their existing permits.

After completing a review of the information provided in support of the current application as well as the comments received from interested parties, the NIRB is of the understanding that the proposed amendment does not change the general scope of the original project activities, and the exceptions noted in NLCA 12.4.3(a) and (b) do not apply. Therefore, this application is exempt from screening as per Section 12.4.3 of the NLCA and the activities therein remain subject to the terms and conditions recommended in the original June 7, 2005 Screening Decision Report (enclosed).

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Tara Arko, Assistant Technical Advisor, at 867-983-4611 or tarko@nirb.ca.

Sincerely,



Stephanie Autut
Executive Director

cc: Kathy Young at klyoung@yorku.ca and kathylyoung@gmail.com
Jason Akearok, CWS (Jason.akearok@ec.gc.ca)
Phyllis Beaulieu, NWB (licensing@nunavutwaterboard.org)
Aurora Research Institute, HQ (fax 867-777-4264)

Enclosed: NIRB Screening Decision Report, File No.: 05YN072 (June 7, 2005)