



## SCREENING DECISION REPORT NIRB FILE NO.: 09YN028

May 13, 2009

Honourable Daniel Shewchuck  
Minister of Environment  
Government of Nunavut  
Iqaluit, NU

Via email: [dshevwchuck@gov.nu.ca](mailto:dshevwchuck@gov.nu.ca)

**Re: Screening Decision for Jim Hamilton's "Arctic Ocean Climate Change" Project Proposal**

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Dear Honourable Minister:

The primary objectives of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA) are set out in section 12.2.5 of the Land Claims Agreement. This section reads:

In carrying out its functions, 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. NIRB shall take into account the well-being of the residents of Canada outside the Nunavut Settlement Area.

Section 12.4.4 of the NLCA states:

Upon receipt of a project proposal, NIRB shall screen the proposal and indicate to the Minister in writing that:

- a) the proposal may be processed without a review under Part 5 or 6; NIRB may recommend specific terms and conditions to be attached to any approval, reflecting the primary objectives set out in Section 12.2.5;
- b) the proposal requires review under Part 5 or 6; NIRB shall identify particular issues or concerns which should be considered in such a review;
- c) the proposal is insufficiently developed to permit proper screening, and should be returned to the proponent for clarification; or
- d) the potential adverse impacts of the proposal are so unacceptable that it should be modified or abandoned.

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### NIRB ASSESSMENT AND DECISION

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After a thorough assessment of all material provided to the Board (please see *Procedural History* and *Project Activities* in **Appendix A**), in accordance with the principles identified within Section 12.4.2 of the NLCA, the decision of the Board as per Section 12.4.4 of the NLCA is:

**12.4.4 (a):** the proposal may be processed without a review under Part 5 or 6; NIRB may recommend specific terms and conditions to be attached to any approval, reflecting the primary objectives set out in Section 12.2.5.

**RECOMMENDED PROJECT-SPECIFIC TERMS AND CONDITIONS**  
(pursuant to Section 12.4.4(a) of the NLCA)

The Board is recommending that the following or similar project-specific terms and conditions be imposed upon the Proponent through all relevant legislation:

**General**

1. Mr. Jim Hamilton (the Proponent) shall maintain a copy of the Project Terms and Conditions at the site of operation at all times.
2. The Proponent shall forward copies of all permits to the NIRB obtained and required for this project prior to the commencement of the project.
3. The NIRB shall be notified of any changes in operating plans or conditions associated with this project prior to any such change.
4. The Proponent shall operate in accordance with all commitments stated in the applications provided to the Nunavut Research Institute and the Nunavut Planning Commission.
5. The Proponent must avoid traveling within the boundaries outlined as UTM zone 15 NAD 83 535329.972E, 8289703.617N; 535329.972E, 8287706.489N; 533330.442E, 8289703.617N; 533330.442E, 8287706.489N. It is recommended that the Proponent contact Douglas Stenton at the Government of Nunavut, Department of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth, for additional information.

**Wildlife**

6. The Proponent shall not harass marine wildlife. This includes persistently worrying or chasing marine mammals, or disturbing large groups of marine mammals and sea bird colonies. Deliberate feeding of any wildlife is prohibited.
7. The Proponent shall not hunt or fish, unless the proper Nunavut authorizations have been obtained.

**Waste Management**

8. The Proponent shall not deposit oil, wastes or any other substances harmful to marine wildlife and sea birds in waters or on ice, or in areas frequented by sea birds.

**Safety**

9. The Proponent shall take all necessary measures to notify other vessels which pass through or conduct fishing operations in the project areas during the periods when the project is being conducted.

**Restoration**

10. The Proponent shall recover all devices deployed for supporting the project activities prior to the expiry date of the permit.

## Other Recommendations

11. The Proponent should consult with local residents and organizations regarding their activities in the region.

### Other NIRB Concerns and Recommendations

In addition to the project-specific terms and conditions, the Board is recommending the following:

The Proponent review safety recommendations for working in areas with polar bears, such as those available from Nunavut Parks at the following link <http://www.nunavutparks.com/english/visitor-information/suggested-resources.html> and the "Safety in Polar Bear Country" pamphlet from Parks Canada, available at the following link <http://www.pc.gc.ca/pn-np/nu/auyuittuq/pdf/PolarBearEnglish2007final.pdf>.

### Regulatory Requirements

The Proponent is also advised that the following legislation may apply to the project:

1. The use of water, disposal of wastewater or waste as a result of the project proposal activities require a Nunavut Water Board license and the project cannot proceed until this is obtained (<http://www.nunavutwaterboard.org/en/legislation>).
2. The *Fisheries Act* (<http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/showtdm/cs/F-14///en>).
3. The *Migratory Birds Convention Act* and *Migratory Birds Regulations* (<http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/showtdm/cs/M-7.01>).
4. The *Species at Risk Act* (<http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/showtdm/cs/S-15.3>). Attached in **Appendix B** is a list of Species at Risk in Nunavut.
5. The *Nunavut Act* (<http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/showtdm/cs/N-28.6>). The Proponent must comply with the proposed terms and conditions listed in the attached **Appendix C**.
6. The *Nunavut Wildlife Act* which contains provisions to protect and conserve wildlife and wildlife habitat, including specific protection measures for wildlife habitat and species at risk.
7. The *Navigable Waters Protection Act (NWPA)* (<http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/N-22/index.html>).

## Validity of Land Claims Agreement

### *Section 2.12.2*

Where there is any inconsistency or conflict between any federal, territorial and local government laws, and the Agreement, the Agreement shall prevail to the extent of the inconsistency or conflict.

Dated May 13, 2009 at Sanikiluaq, NU.



Lucassie Arragutainaq, Chairperson

## **Appendix A**

### **Procedural History and Project Activities**

#### ***Procedural History***

On March 23, 2009 the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB or Board) received Jim Hamilton's "Arctic Ocean Climate Change" project proposal from the Nunavut Research Institute. On April 16, 2009 a positive conformity determination (North Baffin Regional Land Use Plan) was forwarded to the NIRB from the Nunavut Planning Commission in respect of this project proposal. NIRB assigned this project proposal file number **09YN028**.

This project proposal was distributed to the Hamlet and Hunters' and Trappers' Organization (HTO) offices in the communities of Grise Fiord, Resolute, Arctic Bay and Pond Inlet, and also to interested Inuit Organizations, and Federal and Territorial Agencies. The NIRB requested that interested Parties review the proposal and provide the Board with comments by April 29, 2009 regarding the following:

- 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 and socio-economic effects; and if so, why;
- Whether the project is of a type where the potential adverse effects are highly predictable and mitigable with known technology, (please provide any recommended mitigation measures); and
- Any matter of importance to the Party related to the project proposal.

On or before April 29, 2009, the NIRB received comments from the following interested Parties (see Comments and Concerns):

- Government of Nunavut – Department of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth (GN-CLEY)
- Environment Canada (EC)
- Transport Canada (TC)

All comments provided to NIRB regarding this project proposal can be viewed on NIRB's ftp-site, at the following location: <http://ftp.nirb.ca/SCREENINGS/COMPLETED%20SCREENINGS/>

#### ***Project Activities***

The proposed research project is located at Eastern Barrow Strait, Lancaster Sound and Regent Inlet, in the North Baffin Region of Nunavut. The project is a continuation of a long-term study designed to quantify and understand the variability of heat exchange and fresh water movement between the Arctic Ocean and the Northwest Atlantic, to assess global warming impacts and examine impacts on the ecosystem due to changes in the environment. The proposed research activities would be conducted from July 20 to August 30, 2009 with completion of the entire program expected in 2011.

The project activities in this project proposal include:

Use of a Canadian Coast Guard ship to deploy (in August) and recover (the following August) one tide gauge and 6 moorings along hydrographic survey lines. These moorings are used to support current and CTD (Conductivity, Temperature and Depth) meters required for this project.

## Appendix B

### Species at Risk in Nunavut

This list includes species listed on one of the Schedules of SARA (*Species at Risk Act*) and under consideration for listing on Schedule 1 of SARA. These species have been designated as at risk by COSEWIC (Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada). This list may not include all species identified as at risk by the Territorial Government.

- 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.

Schedules of SARA are amended on a regular basis so it is important to periodically check the SARA registry ([www.sararegistry.gc.ca](http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca)) to get the current status of a species.

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Updated: January 3, 2007

Species at Risk	COSEWIC Designation	Schedule of SARA	Government Organization with Lead Management Responsibility <sup>1</sup>
Eskimo Curlew	Endangered	Schedule 1	EC
Ivory Gull	Endangered <sup>2</sup>	Schedule 1	EC
Peregrine Falcon (subspecies anatum)	Threatened	Schedule 1	Government of Nunavut
Ross's Gull	Threatened	Schedule 1	EC
Harlequin Duck (Eastern population)	Special Concern	Schedule 1	EC
Felt-leaf Willow	Special Concern	Schedule 1	Government of Nunavut
Peregrine Falcon (subspecies tundrius)	Special Concern	Schedule 3	Government of Nunavut
Short-eared Owl	Special Concern	Schedule 3	Government of Nunavut
Fourhorn Sculpin	Special Concern	Schedule 3	DFO
Peary Caribou	Endangered <sup>3</sup>	Pending	Government of Nunavut
Beluga Whale (Eastern Hudson Bay population)	Endangered	Pending	DFO
Beluga Whale (Cumberland Sound population)	Threatened	Pending	DFO
Beluga Whale (Western Hudson Bay population)	Special Concern	Pending	DFO
Beluga Whale	Special Concern	Pending	DFO

(Eastern High Arctic – Baffin Bay population)			
Bowhead Whale (Hudson Bay-Foxe Basin population)	Threatened <sup>4</sup>	Pending	DFO
Bowhead Whale (Davis Strait-Baffin Bay population)	Threatened <sup>4</sup>	Pending	DFO
Porsild's Bryum	Threatened	Pending	Government of Nunavut
Atlantic Walrus	Special Concern	Pending	DFO
Narwhal	Special Concern	Pending	DFO
Rusty Blackbird	Special Concern	Pending	Government of Nunavut
Barren-ground Caribou (Dolphin and Union population)	Special Concern <sup>3</sup>	Pending	Government of Nunavut
Grizzly Bear	Special Concern	Pending	Government of Nunavut
Polar Bear	Special Concern	Pending	Government of Nunavut
Wolverine (Western Population)	Special Concern	Pending	Government of Nunavut

<sup>1</sup> Environment Canada 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. EC = Environment Canada, DFO = Department of Fisheries and Oceans

<sup>2</sup> Designated as Endangered by COSEWIC in April 2006 and it is expected that the category of concern in SARA will also be changed from Special Concern to Endangered.

<sup>3</sup> Peary Caribou was split into three separate populations in 1991: Banks Island (Endangered), High Arctic (Endangered) and Low Arctic (Threatened) populations. The Low Arctic population also included the Barren-ground Caribou - Dolphin and Union population. In May 2004 all three population designations were de-activated, and the Peary Caribou, *Rangifer tarandus pearyi*, was assessed separately from the Barren-ground Caribou (Dolphin and Union population), *Rangifer tarandus groenlandicus*. The subspecies *pearyi* is composed of a portion of the former "Low Arctic population" and all of the former "High Arctic" and "Banks Island" populations, and it was designated Endangered in May 2004. Although SARA lists Peary Caribou on Schedule 2 as three separate populations, the most current designation is the COSEWIC designation of the subspecies *pearyi* as Endangered.

<sup>4</sup> The "Eastern and Western Arctic populations" of Bowhead Whale were given a single designation of Endangered in April 1980 by COSEWIC. These were split into two populations to allow separate designations in April 1986. The Eastern population was not re-evaluated in April 1986, but retained the Endangered status of the original "Eastern and Western Arctic populations". The Eastern Arctic population was further split into two populations (Hudson Bay-Foxe Basin population and Davis Strait-Baffin Bay population) in May 2005, and both these populations were designated as Threatened. Both these populations are under consideration for addition to Schedule 1. Although SARA lists the Eastern Arctic population as Endangered (Schedule 2), the most current designation is the COSEWIC designations of the Hudson Bay-Foxe Basin and Davis Strait-Baffin Bay populations as Threatened.

**Appendix C**  
**Archaeological and Palaeontological Resources Terms and Conditions for Land Use Permit Holders**



**BACKGROUND: Archaeology**

*As stated in Article 33 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement:*

The archaeological record of the Inuit of Nunavut is a record of Inuit use and occupancy of lands and resources through time. The evidence associated with their use and occupancy represents a cultural, historical and ethnographic heritage of Inuit society and, as such, Government recognizes that Inuit have a special relationship with such evidence, which shall be expressed in terms of special rights and responsibilities. [33.2.1]

The archaeological record of Nunavut is of spiritual, cultural, religious and educational importance to Inuit. Accordingly, the identification, protection and conservation of archaeological sites and specimens and the interpretation of the archaeological record is of primary importance to Inuit and their involvement is both desirable and necessary. [33.2.2]

In recognition of the cultural, spiritual and religious importance of certain areas in Nunavut to Inuit, Inuit have special rights and interests in these areas as defined by Article 33 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement. [33.2.5]

**BACKGROUND: Palaeontology**

Under the Nunavut Act<sup>1</sup>, the federal Government can make regulations for the protection, care and preservation of palaeontological sites and specimens in Nunavut. Under the *Nunavut Archaeological and Palaeontological Sites Regulations*<sup>2</sup>, it is illegal to alter or disturb any palaeontological site in Nunavut unless permission is first granted through the permitting process.

**Definitions**

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<sup>1</sup> s. 51(1)

<sup>2</sup> P.C. 2001-1111 14 June, 2001

As defined in the *Nunavut Archaeological and Palaeontological Sites Regulations*, the following definitions apply:

“archaeological site” means a place where an archaeological artifact is found.

“archaeological artifact” means any tangible evidence of human activity that is more than 50 years old and in respect of which an unbroken chain of possession or regular pattern of usage cannot be demonstrated, and includes a Denesuline archaeological specimen referred to in section 40.4.9 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement.

“palaeontological site” means a site where a fossil is found.

“fossil” includes:

- (a) natural casts
- (b) preserved tracks, coprolites and plant remains; and
- (c) the preserved shells and exoskeletons of invertebrates and the eggs, teeth and bones of vertebrates.

#### Terms and Conditions

- 1) The permittee shall not operate any vehicle over a known or suspected archaeological or palaeontological site.
- 2) The permittee shall not remove, disturb, or displace any archaeological artifact or site, or any fossil or palaeontological site.
- 3) The permittee shall immediately contact the Department of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth (867) 934-2046 or (867) 975-5500 or 1 (866) 934-2035 should an archaeological site or specimen, or a palaeontological site or fossil be encountered or disturbed by any land use activity.
- 4) The permittee shall immediately cease any activity that disturbs an archaeological or palaeontological site encountered during the course of a land use operation, until permitted to proceed with the authorization of the Department of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth, Government of Nunavut.
- 5) The permittee shall follow the direction of the Department of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth and DIAND in restoring disturbed archaeological or palaeontological sites to an acceptable condition.
- 6) The permittee shall provide all information requested by the Department of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth concerning all archaeological sites or artifacts and all palaeontological sites and fossils encountered in the course of any land use activity.
- 7) The permittee shall make best efforts to ensure that all persons working under authority of the permit are aware of these conditions concerning archaeological sites and artifacts, and palaeontological sites and fossils.
- 8) The permittee shall avoid the known archaeological and/or palaeontological sites listed in Attachment 1.



9) The permittee shall have an archaeologist or palaeontologist perform the following functions, as required by the Department of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth:

- a. survey
- b. inventory and documentation of the archaeological or palaeontological resources of the land use area
- c. assessment of potential for damage to archaeological or palaeontological sites
- d. mitigation
- e. marking boundaries of archaeological or palaeontological sites
- f. site restoration

The Department of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth shall authorize by way of a Nunavut Archaeologist Permit or a Nunavut Palaeontologist Permit, all procedures subsumed under the above operations.