

Hamlet of Repulse Bay Water License Amendment for Construction of the North Pole River Access Road

Application Summary

January 2009

The Hamlet of Repulse Bay has submitted an application to the Nunavut Water Board (NWB) to amend its current water license, NWB3REP0409, for construction of the North Pole River Access Road (the Project). The activities undertaken in the construction of the access road in relation to waterbodies, fisheries and waterbody crossings are described in this summary.

The Hamlet of Repulse Bay needs to develop granular resource sites to allow for municipal road construction and other community projects. Four granular deposits have been identified northwest of the Hamlet and a preliminary design for a road to access these sites was designed in 2002. The proposed access road is 7.68 km long, will be constructed of granular materials, and measure approximately 6 m wide with additional width for shoulders and culverts in some areas.

The proposed access road will cross several waterbodies and authorization from the NWB is required before construction can begin. Six (6) streams (CRS-2, CRS-3, CRS-4, CRS-5, CRS-6, and CRS-7) and a small bouldery area (CRS-1) which drains a small freshwater lake into the marine Tariuraq Inlet will be crossed by the access road. Five (5) small lakes are also present within the Project route, located adjacent to the proposed access road. A well-used ATV trail is also present along the majority of the Project route. This existing trail leads to the North Pole River, an area frequented by community members, and has not been constructed or improved. Stream crossing improvements have also not been installed along the existing trail and ATV traffic traverse directly on the streambed. Impacts from ATV traffic are apparent at all trail crossings.

Three of the six streams crossed are expected to be ephemeral and flow during the freshet or significant precipitation events only. The remaining three streams were reported to flow throughout the ice-free season but would freeze to bottom in the winter. Fish were not observed within any of the waterbodies crossed by the proposed access road, however two fish species were observed in two small waterbodies adjacent to the access road. Fish may be present within the small freshwater lake and Tariuraq Inlet, and the headwater and/or outlet lakes of most streams have may have potential fish habitat.

Culverts will be installed at all waterbody crossings along the proposed access road route. Culverts will be a minimum diameter of 600 mm with varying lengths. The previously constructed portion of the access road presently crosses one stream (CRS-2) and the small bouldery area at CRS-1. A rudimentary culvert was installed at the CRS-2 crossing, however no culverts were installed at the CRS-1 crossing and water presently drains through the large riprap of the constructed road. Culverts will be installed or replaced at these two crossings. The following mitigative measures are planned to protect water quality and potential fish habitat within or downstream of the waterbodies:

- restricting in-water construction to a recommended timing window and to periods of low or no flow;
- using clean equipment and granular materials;
- performing regular equipment inspections for leaks, cracks and weak hoses;
- where water flow is present, monitoring the downstream environment for turbidity/total suspended solids levels;
- hand placement of riprap during culvert installation; and,
- installation of silt fences up-shore of the five small lakes adjacent to the access road.

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