

Project Proposal Description

Title: Investigating the Tuniit (Dorset Paleo-Inuit) and Ancestral Inuit Inland Settlement Landscape of Amittuq, Nunavut

Location: Igloolik, Sanirajak, and Angmaluktuq Lake, Nunavut

Principal Investigator: Samantha Walker

Affiliation: University of British Columbia

Phone Number: 514-291-7180

Email: sam.walker@ubc.ca

Status: Assistant Professor without review

Time Frame: July 1-August 5

1) Summary

This letter explains upcoming intentions for the prospective archaeology project, which will investigate Tuniit (Dorset) and Early Inuit inland settlement landscapes described in Inuit oral history but not yet recorded archaeologically. In the Summer 2025, the planned work will include an interview component with Knowledge Holders from Igloolik and an archaeological survey with community members of Igloolik and Sanirajak.

The interview work would include the recruitment of up to 10-15 participants to discuss archaeological sites that may have been seen while travelling or hunting in the area, as well as stories about how Early Inuit interacted with Angmaluktuq Lake (e.g. caribou hunting, camping). The interviews would also be an important addition to my preliminary consultations with each community's SAO and HTA and other interested parties, which I am hoping to arrange in person this Spring, to help me understand and address community interests and concerns in the archaeological research design.

I would like to recruit Knowledge Keepers for interviews through Igloolik Hunters and Trappers Association and having them inform the committee at their weekly meeting of my intentions. I also plan to call into the radio station to explain my plans with the broader community and facilitate interest. I will hire an Inuktitut translator and give all interview participants the option of participating in the language they prefer, and I will only audio record interviews with consent. I will otherwise take notes as I ask questions, and make sure individuals approve of these notes (they will be transcribed into Inuktitut on the spot, if needed). I will use coding to protect the personal identities of participants as they wish. The interviewees will be offered a small gift of appreciation (\$100) for their time and knowledge. All data materials will be securely stored on a password-protected laptop and file folder and will be accessible only by me, for 7 years. At the completion of this research I will appropriately dispose of the data or release to participants at their discretion.

The active field research is planned for 3 weeks (July 15-Aug 5) and will focus on two neighbouring areas described by Iglulingmiut Knowledge Holders as having Tuniit (Dorset) settlement remains: Angmaluktuq and Kinngatuaq, located 50–60 km inland from the coastal community of Sanirajak, on the Melville Peninsula. We will travel from Sanirajak on ATV and camp close to the study site. We will mostly walk the site and take pictures with a drone and standard cameras).

From the south, our team will consist of myself, Dr. Samantha Walker (a faculty member at University of British Columbia), Spencer Millar (a BA student at the University of British Columbia), Tess Rongen (an MA candidate at the University of Groningen), and co-investigator Kyle Forsythe (Curator of Archaeology

at the Royal Alberta Museum and PhD Candidate at McGill University). From Igloolik and Sanirajak, we will be accompanied by Michael Irngaut, who will manage transportation to the sites and work as part of the field survey team, as well as a wildlife monitor and an additional local field participant, to be hired from HTO. Finalization of the field team and hiring will take place in Spring 2025 when Dr. Walker travels to Igloolik and Sanirajak for consultations.

In addition to archaeological survey that involved field walking, taking pictures, and drone mapping, we also plan to lay in up to ten 1x1 metre test units to help understand land use in the ancient past, since we do not expect to find many visible house remains. By laying in test units, we may find evidence of animal butchering and tool-making that help inform our interpretations of site use. The intention of the research is to identify Tuniit archaeological sites that have been mentioned in the Igloolik Oral History archives and through prior interviews in Igloolik, and to consider how Tuniit and Early Inuit may have visited Angmaluktuq and interacted with each other.

The research will be disseminated through the archaeological permit report for the Government of Nunavut, non-technical reports to community officials, archaeological journal publications, and through public lectures, including a lecture in Igloolik after the field season and one the following year when I continue project consultations in 2026.

2)Environmental Impacts

Gasoline will be used for our ATV on days that we travel to and from site. We anticipated a maximum of 100 litres of gasoline total for fuel for the duration of our fieldwork. Most days our field team will travel to research areas on foot. No chemicals, fuels or waste will be disposed of on land or in local bodies of water, and wildlife will not be interfered with in any way. No objects or permanent structures will be left behind at the close of the field season in 2025. The flow of water will not be obstructed, nor will any ecosystem be disturbed.

3) Community

All travellers visiting the area will be welcome to tour the site. They can volunteer to survey and/or pilot the drone we use for research depending on their length of stay (teens and adults). Food for the project will be mainly purchased within the hamlet after being pre-ordered (priority given to the Co-op) and we will be hiring a bear monitor and at least two community members as field crew, both positions will be well-compensated. Adult members of the community are also encouraged to participate in the Youth archaeology program we will be running in Igloolik prior to the archaeological fieldwork. We are also planning a public lecture after the field season in Igloolik, and if we can arrange a residence in Sanirajak, a lecture there as well.

I am eager to know the concerns you may have, and to adjust the project design accordingly as needed.