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Fish and Fish Habitat Protection Program

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Dear Calvin Ehaloak, Mosha Cote, Cory Barker, Richard Dwyer, Natalie D'Souza, Fisheries and Oceans Canada and Tamzin Blewett:

RE: NPC File # 150991 [Assessing the ecological risk associated with critical mineral extraction and low-sulfur fuels in Northern ecosystems]

The following works and activities have been proposed in the above-noted project proposal:

1. **Primary land use:** Scientific Research
2. **Project summary description:** The proponent plans to study how Arctic sea-ice algae, copepods, and Daphnia from the Cambridge Bay region respond to key metal contaminants (copper, zinc, cobalt, nickel, lithium) and oil-related chemicals, including PFAS, under controlled Arctic-like conditions at the Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS). The research will identify the most sensitive species, track contaminant buildup and long-term effects, and will be conducted in secure containment with advanced water treatment, alongside ongoing engagement with local communities and Indigenous organizations.

3. **Summary of modifications:** The proponent is seeking a two-year renewal to repeat and complete previously approved contaminant sampling and experiments, with no changes to sampling locations, routes, or contaminants. Fieldwork will occur in May–June and July–August of 2026 and 2027, with teams based at CHARS and Greiner Lake, and includes renewals of existing multi-year permits and new applications for expiring authorizations.
4. **Associated NPC File.:**150563; **NIRB File.:**25YN039
5. **Location:** Kitikmeot Region; [several sites near Cambridge Bay]

A complete description of the project proposal reviewed by the NPC can be accessed online using the link below.

The NPC has completed its review of the above-noted project proposal. The NPC has determined that this project proposal is outside the area of an applicable regional land use plan, and the works and activities listed above were previously screened by the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB File No.: 25YN039).

The above-noted project proposal is exempt from screening by the NIRB because the NPC is of the understanding that the renewal activities proposed to repeat and complete previously approved contaminant sampling and experiments (with no changes to sampling locations, routes, or contaminants) does not change the general scope of the original or previously amended project activities, and the exceptions noted in Section 12.4.3 (a) and (b) of the Nunavut Agreement do not apply.

By way of this letter, the NPC is forwarding the project proposal to the regulatory authorities identified by the proponent. Project materials are available at the following address:

<https://lupit.nunavut.ca/portal/registry/registry.aspx?appid=150991>

This decision applies only to the above-noted project proposal as submitted. Proponents may not carry out projects, and regulatory authorities may not issue licenses, permits and other authorizations in respect of projects if a review by the NPC is required.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (867) 447-4563.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S.A.', with a horizontal line extending from the end of the 'A'.

Solomon Amuno, PhD
Senior Planner
Nunavut Planning Commission