

Non-Technical Project Summary – English

The mission of Pristine Seas is to help protect the last wild places in the ocean. This includes not only preserving areas that are pristine or near pristine, but also helping to bring closer to pristine (i.e. to restore) areas that may have suffered some human impacts but still harbor unique features such as large animals, healthy bottom communities, and outstanding biodiversity. Climate projections forecast the total disappearance of summer sea ice in the Arctic by 2040 – except in one place: the “last ice area”, north of Greenland and Ellesmere Island in Nunavut. This area will likely harbour the largest concentration of Arctic wildlife that depends on the sea ice edge for their survival. That includes bowhead whales, seals, narwhals, and polar bears. Less sea ice also means the northward expansion of fishing, shipping, mining and drilling. These emerging threats will affect not only the wildlife but also the Inuit communities that have traditionally based their survival upon these animals. To raise awareness about this dramatic changes in the high Arctic, National Geographic Pristine Seas will partner with the World Wildlife Fund and work closely with Inuit communities to document their stories and traditions. Pristine Seas will evaluate how the Inuit culture intertwines with extraordinary wildlife, and how the disappearing ice will impact these populations and their relationships. Pristine Seas will conduct several expeditions to Greenland and Canada in 2015, to film Arctic wildlife and the traditional way of life of the Inuit, and to record their stories and opinions on the ongoing environmental changes, one of which is planned to be conducted to Lancaster Sound, Nunavut (June 14 – July 19): to film the natural history.

Arctic Kingdom has been hired by Pristine Seas to facilitate and outfit this expedition. The plan is for a 20-25 person temporary camp made up of portable tents to be set up on land on the northwest shore of Navy Board Inlet, near the community of Pond Inlet. To facilitate transportation, location scouting and aerial filming, a helicopter, single otter and twin otter will be chartered. In addition, snowmobiles, ATVs and a Zodiac will be used for land and water transportation of passengers and equipment and to facilitate filming. The purpose of this base camp is to provide support for the Pristine Seas film crew. Support will include remote camp set up, maintenance and break down; meals and transportation; and guidance and regional knowledge. The main goal is to film the wildlife in the area. The crew will use the various modes of transportation to scout for locations and then transfer people and gear to areas that contain the wildlife they want to film. Filming will be conducted topside from the land, underwater and from the air from a camera that is mounted on the helicopter. Camp set up will begin around June 9th and will be broken down around July 21st.