

Written Submission No. 38

2016 Draft Nunavut Land Use Plan

Proposed Land Use Designation:

Community Area of Interest – Barnes Ice Cap

To: The Nunavut Planning Commission

From: The Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board (QWB), and
the Hunters and Trappers Organization (HTO) of Clyde River

Background Information:

Protection of the integrity of the Barnes Ice Cap is extremely important to the lands, rivers, lakes, glaciers, fjords and wildlife of northeastern Baffin Island upon which the health and culture of the Inuit of Clyde River depend. Without protection of the Barnes Ice Cap, the Nunavut Land Use Plan would fail in its goal to protect and promote the well-being of all of Nunavut's residents as a primary purpose of land use planning under Article 11 of the Nunavut Agreement.

The elders of Clyde River have always understood the important effects that the Barnes Ice Cap has on the ecology of the highlands, mountains, glaciers, fjords and coastal sea ice of northeastern Baffin Island. As weather systems move from the north and west across Baffin Island, the Ice Cap affects snow fall, rain fall, temperatures, winds and other climatic factors to the east and south. The Ice Cap provides water to maintain rivers and lakes where Inuit fish, affects vegetation that nourish caribou and other wildlife that Inuit harvest, affects the snow cover through which caribou must dig to access forage in winter, and affects the salinity of water in the fjords. Its influence on temperatures and wind affect freeze up, break up and winter ice conditions in the fjords and off the eastern coast of Baffin Island. The Ice Cap also feeds rivers and lakes to the south, west and north.

Human disturbance of the Barnes Ice Cap would have dramatic effects not only on the Ice cap itself but on all areas that it influences. Disturbance of the surface or sub-surface would have devastating effects on all of northeastern Baffin Island.

Barnes Ice Cap is the oldest ice remaining in North America, a remnant of the last great continental glaciation. Recent research suggests that the Ice Cap is now melting at a rate not previously seen due to "an exceptionally warm 21st century Arctic climate" (Gilbert et al. 2017). Any physical disturbance of the Ice Cap will undoubtedly exacerbate this trend.

Source of information: Largely based on Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, and supported by scientific information

Proposed Designation: Protected Area

Proposed Restrictions:

Prohibited Uses: The following uses are prohibited:

- Oil and Gas Exploration and Production;
- Mineral Exploration and Production;
- Ice and Water Excavation and Extraction;
- Quarries;
- Hydro-electrical and related infrastructure;
- Linear Infrastructure; and
- Related research except Non-exploitive Scientific Research

Conditions:

- Closed to all tourism activities without prior, informed, written consent and monitoring by the Hunters and Trappers Organization of Clyde River.
- Any project in Nunavut that would violate any of these conditions is prohibited.

Proposed Boundaries of the Community Area of Interest - Scott Inlet:

See the attached maps and the associated shp files.

References:

Gilbert, A., G. E. Flowers, G. H. Miller, K. A. Refsnider, N. E. Young, and V. Radić. 2017. The projected demise of Barnes Ice Cap: Evidence of an unusually warm 21st century Arctic, Geophys. Res. Lett., 44, 2810–2816, doi: 10.1002/2016GL072394.

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