



August 31, 2022

Sharon Ehaloak  
Executive Director  
Nunavut Planning Commission

Sent via email: [submissions@nunavut.ca](mailto:submissions@nunavut.ca)

**Re: NIRB Response to Written Comments on the 2021 Draft Nunavut Land Use Plan**

Dear Sharon:

The Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB or Board) is providing this submission in response to the Nunavut Planning Commission Notice dated July 22, 2022 requesting that parties submit responses to written questions in advance of the hearings on or before August 31, 2022.

In reviewing parties questions, the NIRB identified questions directed to the Board in:

- 21-100E-2022-06-30-GN questions to NPC-ENG-1.pdf
  - Comment #5 - Government of Nunavut to Nunavut Impact Review Board.

Some parties' submissions discussed general items related to the NIRB process, however as these were not expressed as direct questions to the NIRB. This correspondence will not provide responses to those general issues, but the NIRB is prepared to participate in discussion of these, if necessary, at the Commission's hearing in Cambridge Bay, Nunavut.

Should you have any questions or require clarification, please contact Tara Arko – Director, Technical Services at (867) 983-4611 or [tarko@nirb.ca](mailto:tarko@nirb.ca).

Sincerely,

Mark Ings  
*Acting* Executive Director  
Nunavut Impact Review Board

Attached (1): *Appendix A: NIRB response to written question*

**Comment #5 - Government of Nunavut to Nunavut Impact Review Board**

Subject/Topic: *Limited Use Designations*

Reference to 2021 DNLUP and O&R documents/maps: *O&R, Section 2.2.1, pg. 29 O&R, Section 2 DNLUP Sections 2.2.1-2.2.3, 2.2.6*

Reference to Written Submission: *NIRB2017 submission, NPC file 16-051*

Importance of question to the Nunavut Land Use Plan Process: *In the NIRB's 2017 submission they recommend that formalized protection for caribou be included in the land use plan. The rationale was that the regional scope of land use planning is better suited to this issue than the project-by-project basis of impact assessment. The GN has recommended that impact assessment is adequate to address caribou issues when supported by seasonal restrictions in the land use plan.*

**Question #5** *The NPC has used the NIRB's recommendation for formalized protection of important caribou habitat to support designating caribou calving, post-calving, key-access corridors, and winter ranges as Limited Use.*

1. *Can the NIRB comment on how Conditional Use and Limited Use designation in Caribou habitat (plan requirements 2.2.1-2.2.3, 2.2.6) may satisfy NIRB's recommendation for formalized protection?*

NIRB Response: The NIRB indicated the need for formalized (clearly designated) protection around sensitive caribou and caribou habitats for clarity to parties and industry on acceptable uses prior to Proponents investing time and cost into the impact assessment process. The NIRB is not the holder of the knowledge from communities or professional expertise to set the standard for caribou and caribou habitat protection measures but acknowledges that the current plan provides a framework for protection. It is noted by several submissions that these measures may need to be tested on other criteria such as practicality of implementing seasonal prohibitions to operations for major or year-round projects, or defining what uses on Inuit Owned Land may be appropriate, and the NIRB remains involved in the development of a land use plan to support discussions but at this point defers to the Nunavut Planning Commission process and appropriate knowledge holders to determine appropriate caribou protection measures.

2. *Does the NIRB have thoughts on how the Plan could address future environmental changes caused by climate change, such as changes in migration patterns and potential changes in the location of caribou habitats?*

NIRB Response: The NIRB would be available to participate in the regular updating of the Nunavut-wide Land Use Plan as proposed, and which would take into account the reality of any changes occurring in the territory which should be reflected in the Land Use Plan. If, for example, in the fulfillment of the NIRB's assessment and monitoring functions, the NIRB identifies significant changes to the environment at a regional scale, the NIRB may, in its normal reporting and decision-making identify these changes and may provide relevant information to the Nunavut Planning Commission as they may consider relevant to their Plan review processes.

3. *Where NIRB has recommended considering cumulative impacts at a regional scale, what is NIRB's position on large-scale Limited Use designations across Nunavut and its impact on socio-economic well-being of those regions?*

NIRB Response: The NIRB's jurisdiction is to assess these factors related to specific proposals, and the NIRB defers to the other organizations, such as the GN and NTI/RIAs, responsible for promoting the socio-economic well-being of the regions in general. The Board does note that regional strategic impact assessments that may assess ecosystemic and socio-economic effects at a regional level are being considered more frequently under legislation and the NIRB is participating where possible in currently planned strategic assessments as well as planning future assessments where priorities and funding allow. In the circumstances of a regional strategic environmental assessment, the NIRB may conduct assessments at a regional scale, within the defined scope of the specific assessment.