

Written Submission No. 20

2016 Draft Nunavut Land Use Plan

Proposed Land Use Designation:

Community Area of Interest – Multiple Values , Admiralty Inlet

To: The Nunavut Planning Commission

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

Background Information:

Protection of the environmental integrity of Admiralty Inlet, Bell Bay and Berlinguet Inlet is critically important to maintain the health, culture and heritage of the Inuit of Arctic Bay. Without protection of these bodies of water 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.

Herein, "Admiralty Inlet" refers to Admiralty Inlet, Bell Bay, Berlinguet Inlet and interjacent marine waters and all islands in these waters (as indicated on the attached map).

Admiralty Inlet provides Inuit with both important cultural and subsistence resources, and year-round access routes to most of Arctic Bay's family and community camp sites and terrestrial harvesting areas.

Admiralty Inlet is a critical area for both summering and migratory narwhal, an extremely important cultural, nutritional and economic resource for the Inuit of Arctic Bay. In summer, narwhal tend to concentrate off the western shores of Admiralty Inlet, and must be protected from industrial development and disturbance by ships, smaller vessels and watercraft that may be involved in non-traditional activities.

Admiralty Inlet is home to many other species that are important components of the environmental integrity and functioning of this complex ecosystem. These species include but are not limited to: Ringed Seals, Bearded Seals, Polar Bears, Arctic Char, Arctic Cod, sculpins, crabs, clams, Greater Snow Geese, King and Common Eiders, Brant, Bowhead Whales, Belugas, Harp Seals, Killer Whales, Red-throated Loons, Peregrine Falcons, Gyrfalcons, Sandhill Cranes, gulls, terns, fulmars, jaegers, seabirds and many others. Many of these species are utilized directly by Inuit.

The Canadian Wildlife Service has identified Berlinguet Inlet as a Key Migratory Bird Habitat Site. Among Inuit, southern Admiralty Inlet is known as a feeding and breeding ‘home’ for snow geese.

There is evidence that military sonar has negative effects on marine mammals (Cressey 2008). A federal US court has found that the US Navy’s use of sonar has illegally harmed numerous populations of whales, dolphins, seals and sea lions (Morell 2015). The Canadian Navy is developing a facility at Nanisivik in Strathcona Sound off Admiralty Inlet. The use of sonar by any military and other ships, and smaller vessels should be prohibited from the time that they enter Admiralty Inlet until they leave.

Source of information: Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit

Proposed Designation: Protected Area

Proposed Restrictions:

Prohibited Uses: The following uses are prohibited:

- Oil and Gas Exploration and Production;
- Seismic testing;
- Disposal at sea;
- Sonar
- Related research except Non-Exploitive Scientific Research

Conditions:

- Closed to all ship traffic, subject to safe navigation, during Ukiaq, Ukiuq, Upingaksaq, and Upingaaq.
- Closed to all ship traffic south of latitude 72°55’N year-round, except for emergency search and rescue purposes.
- Closed to all ship traffic, smaller vessels and watercraft within 10 km of the west shore of Admiralty Inlet during Aujaq and Ukiaqsaaq, except for emergency search and rescue purposes
- Closed to tourism activities without prior, informed, written consent from the Ikajutit Hunters and Trappers Association of Arctic Bay.
- Regulatory Authorities, where appropriate, must incorporate the aerial, marine and terrestrial setbacks in a modified Table 2¹ for all migratory birds, all seabirds, and coastal waterfowl and sea ducks during issuance of permits, licences, and authorizations.

¹ Modified Table 2 refers to a version of Table 2 that incorporates modifications recommended in Written Submission No. 14 from the QWB and its associated HTOs.

- Any project in Nunavut that would violate any of these conditions is prohibited.

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

This Community Area of Interest includes Admiralty Inlet, Berlinguet Inlet, Bell Bay, all adjacent and interjacent bays, inlets and other marine waters, and all islands within these waters, except for Lancaster Sound and Moffet Inlet. See the attached maps and the associated shp files.

References:

Cressey, D. 2008. Sonar does affect whales, military report confirms. Nature.
doi:10.1038/news.2008.997.

Morell, V. 2015. U.S. Navy to limit sonar testing to protect whales. Science.
doi:10.1126/science.aad1763

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