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Attn: Jonathan Savoy, Senior Planner
Nunavut Planning Commission
P.O. Box 2101 - Cambridge Bay, Nunavut
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June 1st, 2015

RE: Application for Participation in the Nunavut Land Use Plan Technical Meeting

Name: WWF-Canada **Address:** Building 959A, P.O. Box 1750, Iqaluit, Nunavut, X0A 0H0
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Representatives: Brandon Laforest, Senior Specialist Arctic Species and Ecosystems, and Rachel Theoret-Gosselin, Specialist Eastern Arctic. Contact information same as listed above.
Language preference: English

Applying for: Participant status and an oral presentation for the NLUP Technical Meeting from June 23rd to 26th, 2015, and participant status for the Pre-Hearing Conference from July 14th to 16th, 2015.

WWF is an international conservation organization that was established in 1961. Our mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature by conserving the world's biodiversity, ensuring that the use of natural resources is sustainable, and promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption. WWF is not an anti-hunting organization, and over the past 50 years we have worked hard on many community-based projects with northern communities to help ensure that sustainable well-managed hunting can continue to bring huge benefits to northerners.

WWF has supported community-based conservation initiatives in Nunavut since its inception, by helping to collect, document and share the knowledge needed to make the best possible (short- and long-term) decisions about land use in the territory, including scientific knowledge and Inuit Qaujimanituqangit. In 1999, at the suggestion of Inuit leaders, WWF-Canada issued a Statement of Commitment to Nunavut—co-drafted with those leaders on the occasion of the founding of Nunavut. We opened an office in Iqaluit at that time for a period of five years and then re-opened a full-time office in 2012.

Currently, WWF has three permanent staff members in Iqaluit, Nunavut, and is committed to community-based conservation measures that safeguard the natural world while promoting economic prosperity in the territory of Nunavut. WWF also recognizes the global significance of the Nunavut Land Use Plan (NLUP). This plan will set the long-term frame for both conservation and economic development in a highly significant portion of the world's Arctic. Therefore it is important to consider the NLUP in the context of Canada's and Nunavut's international responsibility to lead by example and inspire responsible land use planning elsewhere in the northern polar region.

WWF has been actively involved in the development of the NLUP since the inception of the formal planning process. Over the past five years, WWF has submitted three letters to the Nunavut Planning Commission (NPC) outlining specific recommendations for improvements to the plan, participated in two formal meetings with NPC (in Ottawa and Cambridge Bay) to discuss WWF conservation initiatives that could inform the plan, participated in two plan workshops (both in Cambridge Bay) to inform the drafting of the plan, and most recently submitted a comprehensive response to the draft NLUP on February 14th, 2014.

WWF's previous submissions to the Nunavut Planning Commission (NPC) have provided both general and specific advice along the following lines:

- a) The benefits of "Conservation-First Planning", including the ecological basis upon which to establish a representative network of protected areas in Nunavut;

- b) Tools for planning that consider the impacts of rapid climate change, including tools that anticipate opportunities for conserving ecosystems that are resilient today and, if carefully managed, likely to remain so for decades to come; and
- c) Specific recommendations for the protection of caribou calving areas, polar bear denning sites, polynyas and other key marine areas, and the sea ice habitat of the Canadian Arctic Archipelago.

To continue our involvement in the NLUP process, we are seeking participant status for the NLUP Technical Meeting from June 23rd to 26th, 2015 and the Pre-Hearing Conference from July 14th to 16th, 2015. We believe our consistent record of involvement in formulating the draft NLUP strongly reflects both our investment and respect for this process.

At the Technical Meeting, WWF would be represented by Brandon Laforest MSc., PhD candidate, Senior Specialist of Arctic Species and Ecosystems, and Rachel Theoret-Gosselin MSc., Specialist Eastern Arctic. Brandon Laforest is a biologist who has studied polar bears for the past five years, and has conducted research with Traditional Knowledge holders in the James Bay region during his doctoral studies. Rachel is a biologist with a background in population biology and is the WWF community liaison for the communities of Nunavut. Both Brandon and Rachel are residents of Iqaluit, as is the director of the WWF Canada Arctic program, Paul Crowley. In addition, our oral presentation will include contributions from WWF-Canada employees Monte Hummel, caribou expert and President Emeritus, Pete Ewins, Arctic species expert and Lead Species Specialist, and James Snider, GIS expert and Acting Director of the WWF-Canada freshwater program.

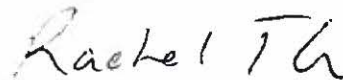
The wide variety of species and ecosystem-based expertise possessed by our team will lead to an informed, practical presentation that will address considerations for improvements to the NLUP in the interest of healthy wildlife populations and responsible resource development. Particularly, our presentation will highlight the importance of protecting caribou calving and post-calving grounds through a discussion of the current protection measures offered in the draft NLUP. We will also discuss the importance of considering marine shipping routes within the scope of the NLUP to safeguard healthy populations of globally significant marine mammal and seabird species, and highlight the importance of providing additional protections for polar bear denning areas. More generally, our presentation will review the strong work that NPC has already done in identifying key protected and special management areas across the territory, while highlighting practical and reasonable areas for further improvement.

WWF is aware that the NLUP is being prepared at a crucial time for Nunavut, as Nunavummiut at the community level are trying to find the balance between taking care of the land and responsibly engaging in new industrial development for a more prosperous future. Ultimately, the specific choices that go into that balance will--and should--be up to the people of Nunavut. It is with this in mind that WWF respectfully applies for participant status, and to give an oral presentation outlining our views on the current draft NLUP.

Sincerely,



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