

Submission to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

June 2023

FOR

Information : X

Decision:

Issue: Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) Update – Southampton Island Area of Interest

Background

DFO and the Kivalliq Inuit Association (KIA) have partnered to advance the Southampton Island Area of Interest for potential designation as a new *Oceans Act* Marine Protected Area. The Southampton Island Area of Interest encompasses the nearshore ocean around Southampton Island and Chesterfield Inlet in the Kivalliq Region of Nunavut. The final boundary of a potential future Marine Protected Area will be based on assessments and consultation.

Current Status

- The Southampton Island Area of Interest Co-Development Committee met most recently in October 2022, to provide input on the process to consider a Marine Protected Area. The Co-Development Committee has representation from Aiviit and Aqigiq Hunters and Trappers Organizations, Irniurviit Co-Management Committee, Government of Nunavut, KIA, and DFO. This year the plan is to supplement in person meetings with virtual meetings, so the committee can meet more frequently.
- DFO is working towards finalizing various assessment reports, including the Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit Workshop Report, the Socioeconomic Overview Report, and Resource Assessment. An ecological overview report and spatial analysis of vessel traffic are completed.
- An Ecological Risk Assessment has been written for the Area of Interest. A DFO Canadian Science Advisory Secretariat (CSAS) meeting was held in November 2022, and a local experts' meeting was held in March 2023, to review this assessment.
- In the coming year, partners will be further refining conservation objectives, and developing regulatory intent.
- DFO will continue to engage with partners and stakeholders throughout the Marine Protected Area establishment process.

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