

Submission to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

August 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 (MPA). 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.

Updates:

- DFO and partners are planning to engage five communities in the Kivalliq region (Baker Lake, Chesterfield Inlet, Coral Harbour, Naujaat and Rankin Inlet) on two community tours to present and seek feedback on the Southampton Island Area of Interest (AOI) MPA proposal. These are the five communities adjacent to or near the AOI. The first tour will be in Fall 2023, and will help refine the draft MPA proposal based on consultations. The second community tour is scheduled for Winter 2024, and will be to seek feedback on a more finalized MPA proposal.
- DFO and partners have been working closely with the adjacent communities of Chesterfield Inlet and Coral Harbour, and these tours will broaden engagement to include Baker Lake, Naujaat and Rankin Inlet.
- The draft MPA proposal will be a document and presentation outlining the AOI's proposed boundary, conservation objectives, key information from AOI assessments, and proposed measures to mitigate potential negative impacts from activities on species and habitats. The proposed measures may regulate, restrict, allow with conditions or allow activities, while respecting the Nunavut Agreement. Proposed measures will be based on the Southampton Island AOI Ecological Risk Assessment and AOI assessments.
- All Inuit rights under the Nunavut Agreement, including harvesting rights, would be respected in establishment and management of an MPA. The Nunavut Wildlife Management Board's (NWMB) powers, duties and functions would be respected.
- The first set of consultations (Fall 2023) will include an overview of all the assessment reports completed to date (Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit Workshop, Biophysical and Ecological Overview, Socioeconomic Overview, Fisheries related info and analyses, quantitative Resource Assessment of petroleum potential, and Marine Vessel Traffic Review), conservation objectives, and a draft MPA proposal most likely with options.
- The second set of consultations (Winter 2024) will be to seek feedback on a refined MPA proposal, based on what was heard during the first community tour. Following

these two tours, a summary report will be submitted to parties (DFO, KIA and the Government of Nunavut) for recommendation to proceed with a regulatory process to establish a Marine Protected Area. If MPA establishment is recommended, partners would aim to designate an MPA by 2025. Obligations under the Nunavut Agreement will apply, including establishment of an Inuit Impact and Benefit Agreement.

- Concurrently to the community consultations, partners will seek stakeholder feedback on the draft MPA proposal. Identified stakeholders include the shipping, mining and fishing industries and cruise operators. To date, the above stakeholders have been engaged for awareness of the AOI and process, but have not yet been provided the opportunity to review the relevant AOI assessments or draft MPA proposal.

Request:

At this time, DFO is inviting the NWMB to provide any recommendations on the above approach to consultations.

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