

TGS/PGS/MKI NorthEastern Canada 2D Seismic Exploration Survey

National Energy Board Request No. 3eoOp-M711-555-4587 02

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3.1 Reference: Letter of Comment to the NEB from the Quikitanitani Inuit Association (QIA) dated 16 May 2012.

Request: Please respond to the comments and recommendations provided in the letter from the QIA specifically

The QIA offers some interesting and valuable information, however we believe that some clarification may help resolve their concerns regarding the timetable for the community presentations and the expected outcomes of these sessions.

- a) Please comment on the concerns expressed by the QIA regarding the timing of consultations.

With respect to the suggestions for the timetable for community presentations we have given careful consideration to the timing of community presentations. It is our understanding that community presentations should provide opportunity for input and interaction with a broad cross section of the community. While many hunters will be preparing to return to the land during the short summer season, we have observed that June offers a window when both hunters and other community members, including hamlet government representatives, business operators, teachers and youth can be present.

We agree that a short one day community presentation provides only limited opportunity for full discussion with all interested parties. However, our experience with community engagement activities has demonstrated that the level of attendance at a public presentation is only one factor in effective engagement. We will be leaving project literature and contact information in the communities, and ensuring that continued input through email and other written correspondence will provide all interested residents with an opportunity to have their issues, concerns and ideas presented and addressed. Our intention is to build a positive ongoing working relationship with the communities. The community presentations are an important part of this process, but by no means the only part of the relationship building.

In addition, we will be holding follow-up meetings with key organizations, such as QIA, to ensure fluid communication and exchange of information, project activities and results. The location and timing of these meetings will be defined by the mutual schedules of the organizations and MKI.

- b) Please describe how MKI will advertise their meetings.

It is intended that an advertisement be placed in the Nunatsiaq News providing community members with the dates of the local presentations. This notice will be in both English and Inuktitut. Bilingual notices will also be posted in the local Hamlet offices. The community engagement specialists will also arrange for radio announcements on the day before and day of the public meetings.

- c) Please indicate whether technical staff will be available at the community meetings to address questions regarding impacts to marine mammals.

These meetings are being coordinated and facilitated by NEXUS Coastal Resource Management who has considerable knowledge and experience in community engagement, particularly with aboriginal communities, and technical expertise in marine resources, including fisheries and marine mammals. That said, any issues raised in the community sessions that cannot be fully addressed at that time will certainly be responded to by the appropriate expertise through follow-up correspondence.

- d) Please comment on the recommendation for a multi-stage consultation process, including MKI's response to concerns regarding how Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit will be verified by knowledge holders and how the information will be used in the design of the program.

It is not MKI's intention to conduct a full Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit (IQ) study, but to continue to present the findings of the EA to the communities of Kimmirut, Pangnirtung, Qikiqtarjuaq, Clyde River, Pond Inlet and Iqaluit. However, information presented to the public presentations by attendees will be used to inform MKI as to the structure, approach and focus of a traditional knowledge study, should a full study be necessary or desirable in the future.

MKI recognizes the importance of studies documenting aboriginal knowledge systems, commonly referred to as Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge (ATK) studies. When completed successfully, ATK or IQ studies have been proven to be an effective means of consultation that engage and empower Aboriginal communities. However, in most instances, research in aboriginal knowledge systems has viewed IQ as a source of "data" that can be "captured", often using the IQ as empirical information for scientific analysis. Most of these studies

use IQ as a source of information on environmental condition, often using the IQ as an informal time-series dataset that is measured against “scientific” knowledge for accuracy and use. MKI understands that this approach does not acknowledge the distinct nature of IQ as a system that includes diverse sources and types of information and culturally relevant knowledge transfer mechanisms which are important to decision-making.

Partnerships between researchers and Inuit communities can bridge the gap and advance knowledge sharing. Collaboration between participants within the diverse knowledge systems can provide valuable and much needed insight into how management can better inform decision-making. This collaboration goes beyond the scope of any one project proponent, community organization or government department.

With the proper methodology and cultural sensitivity, an IQ study can document knowledge that can be used to inform ongoing engagement, consultation, accommodation and monitoring on projects. We agree with a growing number of scholars and aboriginal researchers that the means by which local traditional knowledge is generated, transmitted and effectively used is dependent on the rules governing “how an institution gathers information, processes ideas, reaches decisions, and formulates and implements policies (as noted in White 2006, p. 401¹). These rules are further reinforced by the worldviews and values embraced by these institutions and are affected by aspects of valuation, ownership and control of the knowledge, i.e. the “knowledge system”.

If and when MKI seeks to undertake a full IQ study, it will be in keeping with these principles articulated in the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, which means the communities, particularly the knowledge holders, will be involved in the design and implementation of the study with full ownership of their own information. In the meantime, information presented by participants at the community presentations, which will be collected on maps, may be used in identifying approaches and partners in the design of an effective IQ study. We look forward to further discussions with all parties to determine how an effective IQ project can be developed and implemented that can address the long term resource development and management objectives

¹White, G. 2006. Cultures in Collision: Traditional Knowledge and Euro-Canadian Governance Processes in Northern Land-Claim Boards. *Arctic* 59 (4): 401– 414.

- e) Please confirm MKI's plans for conducting follow-up community meetings for the purpose of communicating the results of the previous seasons' program.

MKI will conduct follow up community meetings to share the results of the previous season's program, as noted previously are long term objective is to develop a relationship with these communities. These meetings will be advertised as previously explained in (b) above.

We appreciate the interest that QIA has shown on this project and look forward to further interaction with their representatives in the near future.