

News Release

Seismic Survey Approved

IQALUIT, Nunavut (July 26, 2010) – The Honourable Daniel Shewchuk, the Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College and the *Scientists Act*, has today announced that a Scientists License was issued for Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) to conduct research work mapping the geology of Lancaster Sound and Baffin Bay using ship-based seismic.

The Minister acknowledged the community concerns that were expressed regarding the project and notes amendments to the project made by NRCan in response to those concerns. "I'm pleased to see that the community consultation recommended by the Nunavut Impact Review Board ensured additional measures were being taken to protect the marine environment, resulting in several changes including following Department of Fisheries and Ocean's (DFO) seismic noise reduction guidelines, increasing the mammal safety zone around the ship to 1000 meters, and ensuring that two marine wildlife monitors are on duty at all times," said Minister Shewchuk.

In addition to detailed terms and conditions set out by the Nunavut Impact Review Board, the Scientist License adds the further condition that two Marine Mammal Observers be employed at all times during the research project, one to monitor towards the front of the ship and a second to monitor the wake.

Mary Ellen Thomas, Executive Director of the Nunavut Research Institute and Senior Science Officer, notes that both the National Energy Board which is responsible for regulating seismic work in Canada, and Fisheries and Oceans Canada, responsible for marine mammals, are confident that this project has no significant potential for negative environmental impacts. The project will follow Fisheries and Oceans guidelines for marine seismic surveys as outlined in the *Statement of Canadian Practice on the Mitigation of Seismic Noise in the Marine Environment*.

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