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Media Release

First Polar Bear Guard Training Course Offered in Iqaluit

IQALUIT, Nunavut (November 27, 2013) The Government of Nunavut (GN), World Wildlife Fund (WWF), and Parks Canada have partnered to develop a new comprehensive Polar Bear Guard Training course that will help further reduce polar bear-human conflicts in Nunavut.

“We have a shared interest in ensuring that people living and working in Nunavut can safely coexist with polar bears,” said the Steve Pinksen, Acting Deputy Minister of Environment for the Government of Nunavut. “The new course will provide trainees with the necessary skills to help protect Nunavummiut and aid in the conservation of one our most valued species.”

The Government of Nunavut’s bear deterrence program works collaboratively with communities, WWF, industry, other government departments and individuals to significantly reduce the number of bear-human conflicts. The new training course, which builds on the Polar Bear Guard Training course developed by Parks Canada as part of the International Polar Year, is another example of how partnerships help communities, businesses, industry, researchers, and government agencies across the territory. The new training resources will focus on the protection of people, property and polar bears through the use of proven detection and deterrent methods.

Recognizing the need for a standard training for polar bear guards, WWF has worked with the Government of Nunavut and Parks Canada over the past year to develop the new training package.

“We are pleased to continue the partnership with the delivery of the first Polar Bear guard training course, supported by funds from Coca-Cola’s Arctic Home campaign,” said Martin von Mirbach, Director of WWF-Canada’s Arctic Program. “This work is an important contribution to WWF’s interest in reducing human-bear conflict in Canada and across the Arctic.”

The first polar bear guard training course will be offered in Iqaluit from November 29 through December 1, 2013 for prospective community polar bear guards, territorial and national parks staff, GN field staff, and students from the Arctic College Environmental Technology Program.

The Government of Nunavut, WWF, and Parks Canada will continue to work together and collaboratively with others to increase both human and polar bear safety in Nunavut.

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About WWF

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