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For Immediate Release

Nunatsiavut Government applauds recognition of traditional land users for parks legislation

The Nunatsiavut Government welcomes the commitment by Honourable Steven Guilbeault, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada to review provisions in Senate Bill S-14 to amend the *Canada National Parks Act*.

These provisions would have granted permanent rights to the members of the NunatuKavut Community Council (NCC) within the Akami-Uapishk^U-KakKasuak-Mealy Mountains National Park in Labrador, despite the fact that NCC is a group whose claim as a section 35 Indigenous collective has not been proven and which is rejected by First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples.

NCC is not an Inuit rights-holding organization and has no affiliation with the four Inuit Treaty Organizations that collectively represent all Inuit in Canada. Earlier this month, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami President Natan Obed released an open letter condemning the attempts to advance claims to Inuit identity by the NCC, which was supported by Nunatsiavut and the Innu Nation of Labrador.

Nunatsiavut has an Impacts and Benefits Agreement (IBA) with Parks Canada, which was negotiated between the Government of Canada and the Nunatsiavut Government with clear parameters, including the Land Transfer Agreement, which sets out who traditional users are and what constitutes traditional activities.

Should Bill S-14 proceed with wording that recognizes NCC, this action would change the basis on which Nunatsiavut negotiated its IBA with the Crown.

“Canada must not make the change to include a specific reference to a group that remains unrecognized by its own government – as well as all Inuit,” said Nunatsiavut President Johannes Lampe. “To do otherwise undermines our nation-to-nation relationship and places the Crown’s relationship with a group that is falsely claiming Indigeneity over the unified position of Inuit throughout Canada.”

Media Contact:

Bert Pomeroy
Director of Communications
(709) 896-8582