



KUTZ RESEARCH GROUP  
on SOMERSET ISLAND

# RESEARCH UPDATE

## TOURISM IN THE ARCTIC

Tourism is increasing in the Arctic, and a key consideration of the benefits of tourism is how it can be mobilized in meaningful ways to help engage with local challenges.

The Kutz Research Group partnered with Weber Arctic at Arctic Watch Wilderness Lodge to conduct muskox monitoring using western science techniques. We have also partnered with Canada North Outfitters using hunter-based sampling. As part of this, we also engage tourists in research.

During our research on Somerset Island in summer 2023, we wanted to understand how partnerships between tourism operators and researchers can contribute to Arctic wildlife research and monitoring, and how this impacts the tourist experience.



UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY  
FACULTY OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

### Partners and Funders



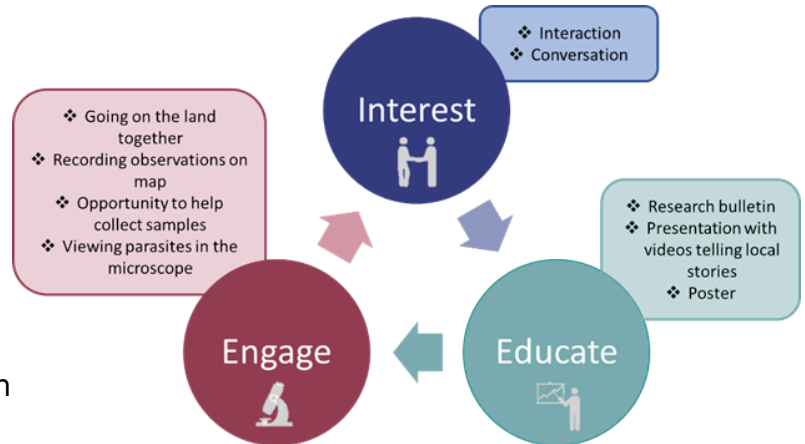
Ransanz Family  
Van Sloun Foundation  
The Arthur French Family Foundation

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## What are we doing?

In summer 2023 we engaged the tourists at Arctic Watch through multiple ways including conversation, presentations and going out on the land together.

After their trip, we sent a questionnaire to tourists to assess their perspectives and knowledge before their trip, how they engaged with research, what they learnt on the trip, and how they think this has changed their perspectives and knowledge after their trip.



*Our approach for engaging tourists in wildlife research and conservation at Arctic Watch Wilderness Lodge.*

## What did we find?

Nearly all of the participants gained knowledge of the threats to Arctic ecosystems due to their engagement in research. Participants enjoyed a range of activities; they found watching the researcher presentation the most valuable, which included a video about Inuit perspectives on muskox health.

As a result of engagement in research participants were more likely to get involved in Arctic conservation in the future. Over half the participants said they would get involved through philanthropy or other personal action.

***“I learned a lot through Dr Eleanor's talk and conversations, thanks for all of the education. I'd like to know more about Arctic conservation efforts.”***

**- Anonymous participant**



*Dr. Eleanor Dickinson with guests from Japan.*

## Why does this work matter?

Engaging people in local concerns is valuable to both the guests, tourism operators and local communities. Tourism operations can be a platform for raising awareness about local challenges, such as wildlife monitoring and research, if they proactively educate and engage tourists.