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CANADA CONSENTS TO U.S. ICEBREAKER POLAR STAR  
NAVIGATING THROUGH NORTHWEST PASSAGE

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, announced today that the Canadian Government granted its consent to a U.S. request under the Canada-United States Arctic Cooperation Agreement to have the U.S. Coast Guard icebreaker Polar Star navigate through the waters of the Northwest Passage in early August. A Canadian Coast Guard icebreaker will accompany the Polar Star and an officer of the Canadian Coast Guard will be on board the U.S. vessel.

This is the second U.S. request made pursuant to the 1988 Canada-U.S. Arctic Cooperation Agreement, which requires that Canadian consent be granted on a case-by-case basis. The Polar Star transitted the Northwest Passage with the permission of the Canadian Government in October 1988.

The U.S. authorities have undertaken to ensure that the Polar Star will operate in a manner consistent with the pollution control standards and other standards under the Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act and other relevant Canadian laws and regulations. In addition, the United States has provided an undertaking to be responsible for costs incurred in the unlikely event of any pollution caused by the Polar Star.

The Canadian Government has also consented to the conduct of marine scientific research during the Polar Star's voyage. The information obtained in such research will be shared with Canada as envisioned in the Arctic Cooperation Agreement.

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