

Notes from the Inter-Agency Coordinating Team August 24th, 2001 Meeting

Participants:

John Witteman	BHP Billiton
Derek Chubb	BHP Billiton
Darren Unrau	DIAND Operations
Julie Dahl	Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO)
Anne Wilson	Environment Canada
Brett Hudson	Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development (RWED)
Raymond Bourget	Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development (RWED)
Zabey Nevitt	Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency (Agency)

Meeting began at 1:20

Round Table Updates:

Darren started by providing an update provided to him by Tamara Hamilton who was unable to attend the meeting. Tamara and Eric Yaxley are making plans to hold meetings in communities to discuss the Environmental Agreements (BHP and DIAVIK) and discuss future plans for environmental monitoring and management. DIAND is currently reviewing the potential for the possible formation of a regional monitoring agency. This has been triggered by an interest from First Nations and both the Environmental Monitoring Advisory Board for the Diavik project and the Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency.

A discussion followed on issues that may arise in the formation of a regional monitoring agency. The different emphasis on monitoring programs by different companies was raised, as well as the varying stages of development of the different projects.

On BHP's Annual Report a letter would be coming from the Regional Director General with recommendations. The Minister would not be issuing a report this year.

Brett indicated that RWED would be providing comments on the wildlife portions of the report directly to BHP Billiton.

Darren continued with Tamara's update by noting that the Fox amendment has been signed by the Minister. Information was provided on an NWT Environmental Assessment Practitioners Workshop being organized by DIAND on September 25 – 27th, 2001 in Yellowknife. The goal of the workshop will be to bring together preliminary screeners and environmental assessment practitioners to create open dialogue and build relationships.

Discussion followed expressing support for the workshop, however the definition of "practitioner" would need to be clarified. Several IACT members expressed interest, however were unsure whether they would be invited.

The Cost-Variance report is still being reviewed and Tamara would be sending her comments to BHP Billiton in the near future, Tamara is planning a meeting in the near future with BHP Billiton, the GNWT, the Agency and DIAND to discuss the report and review.

A Board Relations Unit is being set up by DIAND, a letter regarding its establishment would be sent out in the near future. Marc Prystupa of Aboriginal and Territorial Relations is the contact.

Derek provided an update of current permitting activities being carried out by BHP Billiton: Applications for a class A water license and associated land use permits for the Sable, Pigeon and Beartooth expansion were submitted to the MVLWB this week. The supplementary information requested by the MVLWB for the mining phase of the Fox pipe would be submitted next week. The preliminary screening on Carrie and Desperation was completed and BHP Billiton is currently in the process of negotiating a No Net Loss Agreement with DFO.

A discussion followed on the MVLWB's decision to require a class B water license for BHP Billiton to implement its proposed land treatment of waste-water at Misery.

John followed by providing an update on activities at the mine-site. Large numbers of caribou have been seen on site, some natural deaths have been seen and there have been some reports received by RWED of caribou with broken legs on the Misery Road. A discussion followed on definitions of "wildlife incidents" and when reporting to RWED is required. BHP committed to making any information RWED requires available, and making flights available to officers when required. This is especially true if the RWED officers wish to check on reported injuries to any animals.

Raymond committed to making RWED's policy on what is considered an "incident" available to BHP Billiton.

John continued by describing the university studies currently underway on site: Six studies are underway, including one in association with Environment Canada and the University of Saskatchewan looking at the recolonization of benthic invertebrates into trays of lake sediments and processed kimberlite placed in cell E of the Long Lake Containment Facility.

Seepage has been observed over the summer at stations 18 and 19. The spring seepage survey has been released and another interpretative report is to be submitted in November, but with the amount of data, this report will more realistically be finished in December - January. The final report will include results from the enhanced monitoring and confirmation plan. No flow has been observed through the newly constructed toe berm, which appears to be working well.

A discussion followed on the activities and reporting procedures for this year's seepage and enhanced monitoring programs.

John provided an update on the revegetation trials on cell B, and commented that rye plants are over one metre tall. Buster Welch will be back on site to look at quality control of dissolved oxygen measurements. BHP Billiton will be sending a letter to various departments inviting participation in this process.

Fish out has been happening in Fox, Sable and Two Rock lakes. The results of the studies are expected in two to three months.

Derek noted that the trip planned to look at the proposed mining areas of Sable, Pigeon and Beartooth is likely to be canceled due to lack of interest.

Raymond noted that he will be looking into the reports of caribou with broken legs. A discussion followed on defining wildlife incidents and requirements of BHP personnel and RWED officers in reporting these incidents.

Raymond noted that if more information is provided by companies, (BHP Billiton, DIAVIK and DeBeers) RWED can provide better responses to the public about wildlife incidents on site.

Julie noted that Marc is currently on site reviewing habitat mapping protocols. She noted that the Carrie and Desperation preliminary Screening is complete, and a letter has been sent responding to the Agency's comments and BHP Billiton's No Net Loss Plan.

The Nero/Nema stream crossing designs have been submitted and are undergoing review, and DFO and BHP Billiton are continuing to communicate regarding the fish outs.

Anne provided further information on the Processed Kimberlite Benthic Invertebrates study. Karston Liber of the University of Saskatchewan has a post doctorate in the field, and will be working with a Master's student on the project. The information gained from these studies will provide good information on the effects on processed kimberlite and its possible application to reclamation. Anne continued by indicating that the Environment Canada atmospherics branch had provided some comments on the proposed Misery minewater land treatment plan. She then advised that EC would not be conducting a detailed review of the Operating Environmental Management Plan as plans have evolved to a point where comments are minor compared to the time spent reviewing the plans..

A discussion followed on the review process for the OEMP documents and how it would be very helpful to have changes highlighted or provided separately.

John spoke of the Environmental Workshops scheduled for the first week of February 2002. Discussion followed on the schedule, and the possibility of including reclamation as a specific topic.

The Tailings Characterization Study is at the preliminary draft stage, and the final report

would be released in the next couple of months.

Darren reported that he had been on site during the week. At Misery, water was being pumped out of the pit, through the treatment plant and into King Pond. Pumping had begun to pump water from King Pond to Cujo and sampling showed low levels of suspended solids and ammonia.

Weekly seepage monitoring has been carried out on the Misery pile, which contains schist and a temporary dam has been installed to prevent seepage into the Desperation drainage. Some high levels of ammonia have been noted in the seepage, which is being pumped into King Pond. Thermistors have been installed in the waste rock dump, and some data is expected in the near future.

Two permanent dams are proposed to control seepage, one at the end of Carrie, and one half way between Carrie and Desperation; it is proposed that Desperation be used as a containment pond, however the designs are not yet complete. Once the plans are completed they will need approval by the Board.

The bear fence has been completed at the Misery site, and waste disposal practices at the site have improved. The incinerator has been placed within a Sea-can, and all food wastes are being stored within this area. This should result in fewer wolverine problems. The skirting around the buildings at Misery has also been completed. The fuel pads at Misery are almost complete.

Processed kimberlite is currently being pumped into cell B, and dike C is being raised due to high water in cell B. The reclaim barge is going to be moved from cell C to cell D, discharge is continuing from cell E. A geotechnical inspection was completed on the phase I containment area, and only minor maintenance was identified. Some erosion has been noted at Fred's Channel, and work will be carried out this fall. Information has been submitted to DIAND, EC and DFO. At the Panda waste rock dump, seepage has been seen for seeps 18 and 19, and data are available for these seeps.

Darren noted that his last day of work would be at the end of August, and his replacement would likely be in place by October. Until that time, Ed Hornby would be the DIAND – Operations contact.

Next meeting will be on September 28th, 2001.

Meeting finished at 2:45pm