

Notes from the Inter-Agency Coordinating Team June 15th, 2001 Meeting

Participants:

John Witteman	BHP
Chris Hanks	BHP
Tamara Hamilton	DIAND Environment & Conservation
Darren Unrau	DIAND Operations
Marc Lange	Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO)
Anne Wilson	Environment Canada
Laurie Bruno	Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board (MVLWB)
Greg Smith	Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board (MVLWB)
Zabey Nevitt	Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency (Agency)
Robin Staples	Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency (Agency)

Meeting began at 1:30

Round Table Updates:

Marc noted that he will be visiting the mine site in the near future and will be focusing on visiting the sites where stream crossings are needed along the proposed Sable road. He also briefly mentioned that the preliminary screening for the Carrie and Desperation ponds has begun.

John began by noting that the revisions to the 5 plans required under the BHP Water Licence will be sent to the MVLWB later in the day and he expressed his interest in shortening the plans to reduce the amount of paper used. John mentioned that the freshet has already taken place at the mine site and that due to the high waters this year, some of the aquatic instruments (e.g. flow meters) were damaged or destroyed. The high waters at the mine site also caused a delay in a replacement fish box being placed in the Panda Diversion Channel (PDC). Grayling spawning in the PDC has already taken place and although the fish box was not in place to capture fish moving up the channel it was in place to capture them as they moved back into Kodiak Lake. However, many of the grayling that had spawned swam over the top of the fish box back to Kodiak Lake. John mentioned that a number of trout have also been observed in the PDC. John indicated that the wildlife monitoring program is under way and going well, and at this time the caribou have for the most part completed their migration through the mine site. Observations of fox at Ekati™ are down this year and John noted that a couple of wolverine still frequent the camp.

It was also mentioned by John that a lined pad would be installed under the alternate primary crusher as it has had a significant amount of hydraulic fluid leak from it to date. John indicated that problems with this machine might be due to its inability to effectively crush large volumes of granite. The lined pad will be installed before the August maintenance period.

John noted that aquatic and special monitoring programs have begun, as have the seepage studies. He also indicated that BHP would be performing an in house review of the Carrie and Waste rock dams for the Misery waste rock pile to determine if they are indeed necessary. Although no seepage has been observed from the Misery waste rock pile to date, seepage monitoring will continue. John noted that satellite photos for the Main camp and Misery will be taken shortly to determine the mine's ecological footprint. It was indicated that the resolution of the satellite photo is one metre by one metre, which is comparable to an air photo. He also mentioned that an environmental cleanup around the mine site has recently occurred to collect any garbage or debris. In response to a question on the proposed rehabilitation work at the culvert pond near the airstrip, John noted that a rehabilitation plan is being developed and will be distributed to interested parties shortly.

Anne noted that a productive meeting between personnel from Environment Canada, DFO, DIAND, BHP and the University of Saskatchewan took place dealing with the next phase of studies on Long Lake. She indicated that the focus on this next phase of studies would be on benthic invertebrates and sediments. She is hoping that the studies can begin this year. Anne also noted that she has been reviewing the preliminary screening of Carrie and Desperation ponds.

Chris mentioned that the last group of elders would be going up to the mine site shortly to view the caribou spring migration. Groups from Dogrib Treaty II, Kitikmeot Inuit Association, Yellowknives Dene First Nation and Lutsel K'e First Nation all visited the site this year to witness the caribou spring migration. Environmental staff have been performing the tours this year and the interaction between the staff and elders has been positive. Chris also noted that the consortium of Echo Bay, DIAVIK and BHP would shortly be submitting an application for a renewal of the licence of occupation for the Lupin winter road. Consultation will begin soon after this application has been submitted. A renewal of the Dome Lake exploration camp land use permit has also been submitted recently. Chris noted that the 2000 Environmental Agreement annual report plain English summary has been completed and distributed. He also indicated that the Fox Lake fish out would start on the 17th of July and run for approximately six weeks. Aboriginal contracts have been finalized and Allison Armstrong will be the lead for this project this year. Chris mentioned that ongoing discussions with DFO are taking place to determine if a second fish out next year would be necessary once the lake has been drawn down.

Following Chris's update, a brief discussion took place on the potential of electro-fishing and the parameters that are being studied during fish outs. John noted that due to the low conductivity in many of the lakes and streams up near Ekati™, electro fishing is not an effective alternate approach.

Darren began by noting that he and Laurie visited the site earlier in the week and he had noted the following at the Misery site:

- The King Pond dam is about 2 weeks from being completed. It was high enough to capture the freshet that is mostly complete.
- Dewatering from King Pond into Cujo Lake may occur soon following the

completion of the dam.

- The first round of seepage monitoring has taken place and no seepage was observed. If and when seepage is observed, it will be pumped back into the pit sump.
- Construction of the Saddle dam on the east side of the Misery waste rock pile will begin this summer.
- Thermistor cables have been placed in the waste rock, but as of yet no data has been collected.
- Lake bottom sediments are currently being mined in the Misery pit and pit water is being pumped into the sump.
- The water treatment plant is being moved closer to the pit to treat sump water before it is discharged into the King pond drainage.

Following Darren's update on Misery operations, a discussion on seepage and the potential of including bioassays on standing ponds took place. John indicated that these bioassays could be performed, but did not see the value in such tests. Anne reiterated that if these are seepage, they should be tested whether or not they are flowing.

Darren then continued his update and relayed his observations that were made of the main camp:

- The first round of three for the seepage survey has been completed and the toe berm around the eastern side of the Panda waste rock pile has been completed.
- Thermistor cables are being drilled into the coarse processed kimberlite area.
- Decanting of Long Lake has begun.
- Diversion channel is flowing well and visibility within the channel is good. The replacement fish boxes have also been put in.

Darren completed his update by noting that he expects BHP to submit their exploratory drill program shortly for their claim block and discussed a recent spill at site where the contaminated soil was taken to the till dump rather than the land farm as it did not have enough capacity.

A discussion then followed on the size and effectiveness of the land farm. It was noted that bio-remediation options should potentially be reviewed to possibly improve soil remediation. John noted BHP is performing a hydrocarbon remediation study this coming summer.

Greg mentioned that he would be the contact person for the BHP file as Laurie will be away on holidays from June 21st to the second week in July.

Laurie noted that she recently visited the mine site with Darren and had an opportunity to walk around the waste rock dumps and observe other operations at the site. She also indicated that she is awaiting the revised Water Licence plans. Laurie noted that the MVLWB had recently approved the dewatering and decanting aspects of the Fox pipe water licence amendment, but will wait for further information before approving the mining of the pit. She indicated that this course of action was recommended by many participants at the recent public hearing on the water licence amendment for the Fox

pipe. The MVLWB is also still waiting for the Minister's response to the Environmental Assessment Report completed by the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board (MVEIRB). Laurie mentioned that the recent letter to BHP regarding the enhanced seepage monitoring plan would be sent out to interested IACT members. Laurie finished her update by mentioning that she is reviewing BHP's 2000 Annual report in addition to applications from other projects (e.g. Bio property land use permit).

Zabey noted that the Agency would shortly be sending a letter to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern development on their review of BHP's 2000 Annual report. This letter will be copied to Agency society members and IACT participants. The Agency's annual report has also been recently received and will be distributed shortly in time to be reviewed before the Agency's annual general meeting on June 26th. CD versions of this year's annual report are being produced and it will also be placed on the Agency website. The chairperson of the Agency, Red Pederson, has returned to Yellowknife and has been meeting with various people. Zabey also indicated that the Agency would be interested in receiving CD copies of the revised OEMP and noted that the Directors of the Agency will be visiting Ekati™ on June 28th. John responded to Zabey's request by noting that CD version will be supplied to the Agency.

Robin briefly noted that he has been busy reviewing BHP's annual report, updating the Agency website, and reviewing surveillance network program (SNP) data.

Tamara noted that she is shortly going on a course from June 19th to the 28th and Marie Adams will be filling in for her at the Agency's annual general meeting and for any other issues. Tamara indicated that she has been reviewing BHP's cost variance and annual reports. She noted that the Minister's comments on BHP's annual report would be submitted to BHP by August 7th. Tamara also indicated that following consultation with the MVEIRB, a responsible Minister's response has been drafted and will be reviewed by all the responsible Ministers. This letter should be distributed by the end of June. In regards to the cost variance report, DIAND will be looking at alternatives to study reclamation requirements at the site as John Brodie, DIAND's current reclaim consultant, is not allowed to visit Ekati™. Tamara also noted that DIAND may be participating in the preliminary screening of Carrie and Desperation ponds. In addition, she noted that at a recent board meeting for the Environmental Monitoring Advisory Board (EMAB) for the Diavik project held in Rae, the preference for having just one monitoring board / agency for projects was expressed by community leaders. Tamara also noted that a discussion on cumulative effects took place at the EMAB meeting and the wildlife monitoring work between Diavik and BHP was mentioned. As it has been a while since IACT members were last updated on this cooperative monitoring work, GNWT indicated to Tamara that they would be present at the next IACT meeting to give an update. She also briefly discussed a paper, which she will provide to IACT members in electronic form, on the key commitments arising from the Diavik comprehensive study.

Next meeting will be at Ekati™ Site on July 16th, 2001.

Meeting finished at 2:30pm