

# The EKATI MONITOR

Newsletter of the Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency

Issue 15, June 2016

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## Director and Staff Changes

The Agency consists of 7 Directors and 2 staff. The 3 Directors are jointly appointed by DDEC, Government of the Northwest Territories and the Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada.

2015 brought many staff and Director changes to the Agency. In February 2015, the three directors jointly appointed by the parties to the Environmental Agreement were notified that their appointments would end March 2015. These Directors were Laura Johnston, Kim Poole and Bill Ross.

Effective March 13, 2015, the Agency welcomed Doug Doan and Emery Paquin as new Directors. Bill Ross was re-appointed and continued to serve as Agency Chairperson until the annual general meeting December 10, 2015 when the Agency's Society Member elected a new executive committee.

Tony Pearse, a Tlicho Government appointee, retired. The Tlicho Government appointed Kim

Poole in his place effective August, 2015. And, April 1st, 2016, Jesse Jasper was appointed to the Agency as a Director.

The Agency wishes to thank all departing Directors for their many years of dedicated service. Because of their skills and expertise, the Agency has contributed to effective environmental management at Ekati Mine.

In October 2015 The Agency welcomed back Jessica Simpson from her maternity leave as Agency's communications and Environmental Specialist. We would like to thank Tee Lim for filling in admirably during Jessica's absence. The Agency also welcomes Marc Casas as Executive Director. Kevin O'Reilly resigned as a result of his election as the MLA for Frame Lake South. We would like to take this opportunity to thank him for all of his hard work over the years.

## 2014-2015 Annual Report

In September 2015, the Agency completed the annual reports and distributed it amongst the Society Members and other interested people and organizations.

The annual report is available in technical and plain language versions. It can also be viewed online at [www.monitoringagency.net](http://www.monitoringagency.net).

For a copy, contact Jessica at 867-669-9141 or [monitor2@yk.com](mailto:monitor2@yk.com).





Revegetation project in Cell B of the Long Lake Containment Facility



Learning about the new composter.

## IACT Site Visit

The Inter Agency Coordinating Team consists of the Agency, DDEC, and a group of government regulators including Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Environment Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories. They work together to share information about environmental management of the mine.

In July 2015, IACT had a mine site tour, which Kevin O'Reilly (Executive Director) and Doug Doan (Director) attended. Before the tour, there was a lot of rain, so there was no dust. The group had a helicopter tour to view Misery and Lynx Pits, a visit to the Pigeon Stream Diversion where there was a lot of work done and there are now quite a bit of fish moving through. The group also saw the new composter at the incinerator building.

The last area visited was the Cell B revegetation and rock cover test area. The Agency noted that the area it looked quite a bit greener than when the Agency visited the site in June. Some work on stabilizing the erosion channel has been undertaken. Dwarf birch started from seed in the enclosure area appears to be doing quite well.

## Ekati Expansion: Sable

In September 2015, Dominion Diamond Ekati Corporation announced positive results from a preliminary economic assessment of the Sable Project.

Sable Pit is already fully permitted under the existing water licences and land use permits, but has remained undeveloped.

According to the company, Sable and Jay could share haul trucks, loading equipment, and support equipment during development and operations. Combining Sable with Jay would also provide increased mine planning and processing flexibility.

The Sable pipe is located beneath Sable Lake, 17 kilometres north-northeast of existing mine infrastructure. The Sable Project will require construction of an access road, site infrastructure, and sedimentation pond allowing Sable Lake to be dewatered ahead of the start of pre-stripping operations.

The Agency's main concerns of the Sable Project are the construction of the new road as it will create a larger mine footprint and create a potential barrier to caribou

<http://ddcorp.ca/investors/news-single?id=2087142>

**Annual report  
for 2015-16**

The Agency is currently working on the 2015-16 Annual Report, scheduled to be published September, 2016.

## Jay Project - Update

The Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board (Review Board) has finished their environmental assessment (EA) of the Jay Project. Their Report of Environmental Assessment and Reasons for Decision was sent to the GNWT Minister of Lands February 1, 2016. The Minister then gave the Aboriginal parties to the EA time to offer their considerations.

On May 19, 2016 the Ministers agreed to adopt the Review Board's recommendations, and so the project will proceed. The Agency is now looking forward to the water licence process set to begin very soon and will lay out all of the terms and conditions that the DDEC must comply with so that significant impacts are reduced.

Throughout the EA, the Agency's most important issues were finding ways to reduce the impacts of the Jay Project on the Bathurst caribou herd which has declined a lot, and making sure that the water released by the Jay Project is safe for Lac du Sauvage by ensuring there are good plans in place if predictions are not accurate. We are also concerned about the new approach to the Jay Project waste rock pile and whether it will freeze as planned. Dust from Jay Project traffic is also an issue we believe needs careful attention.

Although DDEC believes that the impacts of the Jay Project are not significant, the Agency is of the view that there is a lot of uncertainty around some of the predictions, a lack of details on some monitoring programs to detect changes, and the need for better plans to take actions when monitoring results give early warning signs of potential problems. The Agency believes that Measures are required to prevent a significant adverse impact to the environment from the Jay Project.



Jay Project Public Hearing, Behcho-ko. September 17,

## Environmental Impact Review



The Ekati Mine site, June 2015

The Environmental Agreement requires that DDEC produce an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) every three years. It has been 4 years since the last review, as DDEC requested from the WLWB that the EIR be delayed a year so they can incorporate the results from the AEMP.

The EIR's are a very important management tool. The purpose is to report on the longer term effects of the Ekati Diamond Mine by reporting on the results of the monitoring programs and comparing that to what was predicted in the 1995 Environmental Impact Statement. DDEC's adaptive management is also evaluated.

The Agency was disappointed with the 2009 EIR. So, in 2011, the Agency released a discussion paper called 'Building Consensus: Towards a Shared Understanding of the Ekati Environmental Impact Report.' This paper improved the quality of the EIR's by building a consensus on the process and substance of the EIR's.

In January 2016, DDEC held a meeting to review the content and process for this year's EIR. The Report was to be compiled for May 2016, DDEC will be hosting technical sessions in July and Public Workshops in August. The final report is scheduled to be submitted to the GNWT Minister of Lands, the Agency and the Aboriginal parties to the environmental agreement in September.



# Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency

## CONTACT US!

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## DIRECTORS

**Jaida Ohokannoak**  
(Chairperson)  
Appointed by  
Kitikmeot Inuit Association

**Emery Paquin**  
(Vice-Chairperson)  
Appointed by DDEC/  
Canada/GNWT

**Kim Poole**  
(Secretary/Treasurer)  
Appointed by Tłı̄chǫ Government

**Tim Byers**  
Appointed by  
Akaitcho Treaty 8

**Doug Doan**  
Appointed by DDEC/  
Canada/GNWT

**Arnold Enge**  
Appointed by  
North Slave Métis Alliance

**Jesse Jasper**  
Appointed by DDEC/  
Canada/GNWT

## STAFF

**Marc Casas**  
Executive Director

**Jessica Simpson**  
Communications and En-

The Agency is a public watchdog for environmental management at the Ekati Diamond Mine. The Agency was set up in 1997 under the Environmental Agreement. It requires Dominion Diamond Ekati Corp. (DDEC) and the federal and territorial governments to protect the environment and land-based way of life of Aboriginal peoples of the area.

The Agency reviews DDEC's environmental reports and plans for the Ekati Mine, visits the mine site and listens to community and public concerns. We make recommendations to DDEC, government and regulators on how best to protect the environment at Ekati.

We are set up as a non-profit society in the Northwest Territories. The Agency's Board has seven Directors appointed by our Society Members:

- Akaitcho Treaty 8 (Łutsel K'e and Yellowknives Dene First Nations)
- Tłı̄chǫ Government
- Kitikmeot Inuit Association (KIA)
- North Slave Métis Alliance
- Government of Canada (AANDC)
- Government of the Northwest Territories
- Dominion Diamond Ekati Corp.

Please visit our website at [www.monitoringagency.net](http://www.monitoringagency.net) to see photos, meeting minutes, correspondence, the Ekati Timeline and other information about Ekati.

Our Directors are independent of the appointing parties and work together in the best interests of the environment and the people affected by Ekati.

We have two staff members and a resource library filled with information about Ekati in our office in Yellowknife. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have questions or concerns about the Ekati Mine.

## Director Profile: Emery Paquin

Emery Paquin has more than 35 years of experience in environmental management. He began his career in the Northwest Territories with Cominco Ltd. where he was responsible for water license monitoring and compliance at the Con Gold Mine. Emery joined the Government of the Northwest Territories in 1983 serving in many capacities with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources until his retirement as Director of Environment in 2008. Since leaving government, Emery has provided independent environmental consulting services in Yellowknife and served six years as a Member on the Inuvialuit Water Board.

