



***Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency***

P.O. Box 1192, Yellowknife, NT X1A 2R2 ▪ Phone (867) 669 9141 ▪ Fax (867) 669 9145  
Website: [www.monitoringagency.net](http://www.monitoringagency.net) ▪ Email: [monitor1@yk.com](mailto:monitor1@yk.com)

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Ryan Fequet  
Regulatory Mining Specialist  
Wek'eezhii Land and Water Board  
P.O. Box 32  
Wekweti NT X0E 1W0

Claudine Lee  
Superintendent - Environment Operations  
EKATI Diamond Mine  
BHP Billiton, 1102 4920 52 Street  
Yellowknife NT X1A 3T1

Dear Mr. Fequet and Ms. Lee

**Re: IEMA comments on 2011 Aquatic Effects Monitoring Program (AEMP) Report**

The Agency is pleased to submit this letter and accompanying comment table as our input into the review of the 2011 AEMP report.

We commend BHP Billiton for improving the format of the contaminants figures. For example, Figure 4-1) includes more information on contaminant trends (increasing and decreasing) and magnitude of change than presented in previous years. The figures also delineate the baseline period more effectively for contaminant trends.

We also appreciate the greater use of plankton ecology in assessing biotic changes in mine-affected lakes. Understanding the implications of changes in lake environments for food chain impacts will be greatly improved. The AEMP's new emphasis on gauging food chain impacts in its ecological approach to plankton monitoring is a welcome addition. We will follow the developments in this area of investigation as the AEMP moves forward.

In closing, we note that the AEMP continues to be comprehensive in scope and has the ability to detect changes in the sampled parameters that can alert managers to emerging problems. We look forward to receipt of the next report, with the fish monitoring results being of particular interest.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W.A. Ross". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Bill Ross  
Chairperson

cc. Society Members  
Bruce Hanna, DFO  
Lisa Lowman, Environment Canada