



Fisheries and Oceans
Canada

Pêches et Océans
Canada

Fish Habitat Management
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Your file *Votre référence*

Our file *Notre référence*
BHP-6.4

August 2, 2007

Sarah Baines
Wek'èezhii Land and Water Board
Box 32, Wekweeti, NT X0E 1W0

RE: BHP Billiton request to change AEMP sampling program to August-only lake water quality sampling

Dear Sarah:

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) has reviewed the request by BHP Billiton to change the open water lake sampling from single samples in July, August and September to triplicate samples in August. Additional information has been provided by BHP Billiton to support this change, as required by the WLWB in the conditional approval of the revised AEMP.

DFO agrees that sampling should not be done for the sake of sampling, and supports the concept of more intensive sampling in August. However, prior to approving this change in open water lake sampling, BHP Billiton should demonstrate conclusively that it will not reduce the effectiveness of the AEMP to detect environmental effects. It is the opinion of DFO that the information provided by BHP Billiton is currently inadequate and needs to be expanded upon before an informed decision can be made.

Why were only five parameters (Chloride, Sulphate, TDS, Nitrate, and Total Ammonia) selected for analysis? There is no mention of metal concentrations or their variability within the three months that are currently being sampled even though some metal concentrations have been identified as increasing over time. Analysis should be performed on all water quality parameters identified in the AEMP to determine whether August- only sampling is justified.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (867) 669-4931.

Bruce Hanna
Habitat Biologist
Fish Habitat Management
Department of Fisheries and Oceans - Western Arctic Area