

**Notes from the  
Inter-Agency Coordinating Team (IACT) Meeting  
August 25th, 2000, BHP Offices**

**Participants:**

Roxanne Beavers (DIAND Water Resources)  
Greg Cook (DIAND Environment and Conservation)  
Chris Hanks (BHP)  
John Witteman (BHP)  
Denise Burlingame (BHP)  
Anne Wilson (Environment Canada)  
Christa Domchek (DFO)  
Zabey Nevitt (IEMA)  
Robin Staples (IEMA)

**Absent:**

Matt Bender (Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board)  
Tasha Stephenson (DFO)

Meeting began at 1:30

**Zabey** introduced himself and other participants did the same.

**Greg** noted that Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board (MVLWB) have had trouble making these IACT meetings on Fridays and that other alternatives for participation should possibly be looked at to ensure that information sharing is occurring with the MVLWB.

**John** noted that most of the information that is required of them is being sent to MVLWB first and that it is up to the MVLWB and the Regulatory Departments to reach an agreement on distribution of Water Licence documents.

The other participants noted that they were not entirely satisfied with how this information was being passed on and in many cases were not receiving it at all.

**Roxanne** then discussed how the procedure used to work at DIAND before it became the MVLWB's responsibility.

**John** noted that DIAND and the other involved agencies have to resolve these problems of information distribution, which is occurring with MVLWB.

**Roxanne** said that she would meet with Matt on this issue in the near future.

**John** then discussed the letter that was sent from DIAND regarding the report on reclamation cost variance which is required under the Environmental Agreement. The letter indicated that DIAND wanted a report on reclamation variance by November of

this year. John responded to this by stating that his interpretation of the start of commercial production was April 1999 not October 1998; therefore he would envisage the report being prepared by May 2001. BHP indicated their desire to submit this report by May 1, 2001 but formal concurrence from the Agency, GNWT and DIAND is still required.

John noted that little variation has occurred to the reclamation plans from the original plan and that he believes BHP has been paying more security than they really need to. John also mentioned that there is a need to hold a meeting with all the involved agencies to decide what exactly the variance report should cover. John wanted to determine a time and a place for the meeting and noted that it should be scheduled around the IEMA board of directors meeting so that one or more of the directors could be directly involved. John said that he would send around a letter in the near future on what he thinks should be discussed at the meeting for the variance report

**Zabey** said that he will look into what date is better for the directors to attend this meeting, Friday the 15<sup>th</sup> or Monday the 18<sup>th</sup> of September, 2000.

**Anne** noted that the cost variance report really deals with financial issues rather than changes to their A&R plan, which are reported annually elsewhere.

**John** agreed with this and once again mentioned that BHP is paying too much security and should have it reduced.

**John** then introduced the issue of the BHP environment week workshops. He noted that issues of water and wildlife have been addressed at the workshops for the last 3 years and was interested to know if those should be the only topics of concern at the workshops.

In the past these workshops have included four days of meetings; this year BHP would like to cover the topics in two days.

The workshop is scheduled for Feb 5 and 6, 2001. Invited members from previous and upcoming years include regulatory agencies, representatives from other diamond mining companies and aboriginal groups. Basically, anyone who has an interest in the environment and mining is invited to attend. What then should be the Agenda? John noted that the issue of reclamation could be raised at the workshops.

**Roxanne** said that water issues require a full day at the workshop and reclamation could be covered in ½ a day or at night discussions.

**John** didn't think that there was that much to discuss regarding water issues but would set aside a full day to discuss water issues.

**Chris** then asked if the participants believed if a full day is needed for wildlife.

**Roxanne** then made a suggestion that a session on reclamation be held at the end of each day to make use of time more efficiently

**Denise** said that this year BHP would prepare poster(s) on reclamation and determine the level of interest for future years.

**Chris** added to this by noting that it would also be a good idea to have people involved in reclamation projects present at the workshop to answer questions.

**John** then discussed what had been happening on site recently. He noted that stripping is occurring at Koala North and that they were into ore. Stripping at Koala is also ongoing and a pad has been built at the Misery site. John also mentioned that the road has been constructed up to the pit at Misery and next week blasting and waste rock removal will begin. The first rock to be removed will be biotite schist; this will be placed in what will become the center of the waste rockpile in an attempt to control ARD. A 10 million L fuel tank is also in place at the Misery site, and will be hydrostatically tested with water from Thinner Lake, which will then be discharged to King Pond. John made a special note to mention that they won't be going over their present water limits at the new sites. Two new fuel tanks at main camp are also nearly completed, and will be tested using water from Grizzly Lake, which will be discharged to Koala Sump, The truck warming building and piles for the "G" wing of the accommodations are under construction. The rooms for the G wing will be delivered this coming winter over the winter road.

**John** noted that Caribou traveled to the east of the camp this year and were not much of a concern; small herds of 100+ animals traveled through the camp.

**John** also discussed re-vegetation and noted that plants are growing well on the processed kimberlite. After the 2 years of experimentation, broad planting projects will be started. John noted that BHP wanted to use native plants however Green Foxtail or Squirrel Tail Grass (not native to the site) has been growing extensively as it has been tracked in from workers boots and possibly other methods. Green foxtail is growing well at old camp

**John** mentioned that the researchers are pretty much done and pike were found in a stream near Exeter Lake. The Long Lake study is also still occurring. John wondered if pike moving north might be indicative of global warming.

**Christa** indicated that she would be interested in looking at previous studies that have been conducted around the BHP site (particularly by Buster Welch when he was with DFO) to see if pike were present at those sites.

**Ann** provided additional background about the studies conducted by Buster W.

**Chris** added to this by noting that in the Thelon, pike has replaced much of the trout, which originally inhabited the river/lake.

**John** also noted that they would not be discharging into cell B in the winter but will with cell C. John thinks that they have about 3 summers left of to discharge into cell B. They are also continuing to dewater long lake to below historical natural levels.

**Anne** raised the question of what will happen with Cell A when Cell B is restored.

**John** was not sure if Dyke A is going to be required and noted that the restoration of Cell B will not effect management at Cell A. With the removal of Leslie Pipe from the mine plan the capacity is not required. John made reference to the disposal of processed kimberlite into mined out open pits. He noted that the Beartooth pit would be the first pit to be reclaimed and that it would probably be merimictic (i.e.have a saline layer) and ultra-ultra- oligotrophic as most nutrients would drop through the chemo-cline. John believes that the salinity of the kimberlite will aid in causing this stratification to occur.

John also mentioned that the slopes are not as steep as first thought at Misery pit and noted that this will cause an increase in the size of the waste rock pile. John would rather see the waste rock piles built higher instead of increasing the size of their ecological footprint at this particular site. John also noted what grad students were up at the site and what projects they are working on. He also voiced his concern over the inadequacy of the graduate work on hydraulics and a hard look is being taken as to its utility of this program and BHP's support..

**Chris** then discussed the Environmental Assessment of the new pipes. He mentioned that all the information request responses are done and have been distributed. He also noted that the old schedule of having government responses by August 18<sup>th</sup> and private comments by the September 1<sup>st</sup> would not be met. The MVEIRB has indicated that they want to hold a public meeting (hearing?). BHP, at this time, is unclear regarding the process here and would like more information. The MVEIRB has responded by noting that they couldn't decide on a date for a public meeting and will have to look at this issue again at the next board meeting near the end of August. BHP is worried about the process, especially the length of time the permitting process is taking. They want to build the Sable road next summer and the regulatory time-frame has been much longer than originally expected. They are worried that even by next summer things will not be resolved. Chris and others at BHP noted that the permitting process would take longer than the actual mine operation. Chris mentioned that BHP may become a little more pushy as the time is becoming too long. Chris raised the idea that if the RA's could get together earlier to get some of the background work done before it reaches the permitting stage it would help with speeding things up.

**John** then discussed the need for a type B water license for the new expansion and noted that eventually, the original mine and the expansion, could be permitted under one license at the time of the Type A license renewal 31/12/04.

**Chris** also mentioned which TK work has been done and which is still ongoing. He discussed that it has been difficult to meet with elders in some of the communities.

**Anne** then asked about the seepage survey.

**John** mentioned that no surface flow to Beartooth has been observed, but that there are some low pH levels in area. BHP is continuing with monitoring and may get some more data this summer yet as there has been some significant precipitation. John also noted that three other seepage reports are due out in the near future.

**Roxanne** then asked about Misery land treatment?

**John** noted that if the proposed land treatments work then guidelines could be created for land treatment in the NWT.

**Anne, Roxanne and Christa** said that they would look more closely into this issue.

**Anne** added that the development technical reviews are close to being finished by her department and some comments have been given regarding the Impact 2000 report.. With respect to the Fox Land treatment proposal, the consultant's presentation and site visit were extremely helpful. She was also wondering if the new OEMP requires comments

**John** responded by noting that the OEMP is only an update and does not require comments but indicated that the MVLWB may need to review a couple of things for themselves.

**Christa** mentioned that DFO is still reviewing concerns with the expansion and that comments would hopefully be in by the end of month. In regards to the BHP compensation fund, there has been a delay in approving the first round of proposals from aboriginal groups which has led to a delay in the evaluation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of proposals. She stated that one proposal from the NSMA has been sent to PWGSC for contracting. This proposal deals with habitat work on the Ingraham trail..

**John** wondered if the no net losses for BHP would include work away from the site, like the work on the lakes near the Ingraham trail that is currently being approved through the compensation fund.

**Christa** said that it is up to BHP to propose this and noted that she would raise this as a possible compensation with others at DFO.

**Roxanne** added that she is also working on the BHP expansion review and noted that she enjoyed the site visit.

**Greg** also added that the comments on the environmental impact 2000 report have been sent to BHP, and a reply prepared for the IEMA about their comments, silmiliar letters were being prepared for the 1999 IEMA Annual Report.

**John** then made it known that these reports would be used, as advice for future management and that redrafting of the plans would not occur.

**Greg** then asked if the A&R plan has been agreed to under the EA. If the OEMP has been approved, then has the A&R plan also been included under this and been approved? Is there documentation?

**John** was unsure if there has been a letter on this and didn't think that this was actually required.

**All:** It was agreed that the next meeting would be on October 20, 2000 at Bellanca Building (1:15).

Meeting finished at 3:00.