

Notes from the
Inter-Agency Coordinating Team (IACT)
June 14th, 2002 Meeting

Participants:

John Witteman	BHP Billiton (BHPB)
Chris Hanks	BHP Billiton (BHPB)
Laurie Cordell	MVLWB
Latisha Heilman	MVLWB
Tamara Hamilton	DIAND Environment Conservation
Andrea Cole	DIAND Environment Conservation
Clint Ambrose	DIAND Operations
Anne Wilson	Environment Canada
Marc Lange	DFO
Lionel Marcinkoski	RWED
Jane McMullen	RWED
Zabey Nevitt	Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency (Agency)
Robin Staples	Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency (Agency)

Meeting began at 1:15pm

Round Table Updates:

Tamara opened the meeting with a comment on the purpose of IACT and how best the goals of IACT could be achieved during the meeting.

Clint noted that his last full inspection of Ekati took place on May 28th. He was pleased to report that a majority of his concerns from a previous inspection of the site had been addressed. Clint also mentioned that he dropped by Ekati on June 13th to inspect the Fox bridge at the Nero-Nema crossing and Norm's camp. He was satisfied with the work done by BHPB at Fox bridge, to limit the amount of silt and gravel moving into Nero Lake. Clint concluded his update by mentioning that communication lines between BHPB and the DIAND inspector need to be improved. Different inspectors have different reporting expectations that need to be addressed.

Marc noted that he has been very busy recently dealing with the Diavik and De Beers files. However, a meeting is scheduled with BHPB in the near future regarding the work plan for the Sable, Pigeon and Beartooth fisheries authorization(s). Issues such as the need for public consultation will be addressed at that time. Marc is also expecting BHPB's response to DFO and Agency comments on the fish habitat compensation concepts document submitted previously by BHPB. Marc also requested that Clint add DFO to the DIAND inspection report distribution.

Robin regrettably informed members of IACT that he has been offered and accepted a position with the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and thus has

resigned his position with the Agency. He wished everyone the best and thanked them for all the support they have offered over the last two years.

Zabey noted that the Agency Directors and staff recently had a board meeting in addition to visiting Ekati over the weekend. Zabey noted that the site visit was very informative and useful. However, after visiting the large Pigeon culvert on the Sable road, the Agency has become very concerned that the culvert, while protecting aquatic habitat, will provide a significant barrier to caribou movement. Zabey requested more detailed construction drawings for the culvert from BHPB. Zabey continued his update by noting that the Agency and the Environmental Monitoring Advisory Board (EMAB) have initiated discussions on jointly hosting a traditional knowledge workshop. A tentative date in Mid-July has been set. Details and objectives of the workshop still need to be worked out. Zabey also mentioned that the Agency is looking forward to BHPB's closing comments to the public hearing for the Sable, Pigeon and Beartooth applications. Zabey also reminded John of the Agency request for a map showing the total regional survey area for the wildlife effects monitoring program.

Laurie began her update noting that she and Latisha also visited the Ekati site this past weekend with members of the Agency. They too found the visit very informative and useful. The size of the Pigeon culvert came as a bit of surprise to everyone on the site visit. The drawings submitted by BHPB perhaps did not give a clear picture of what the structure would look like in person. It appears that fisheries issues may have outweighed wildlife issues in this case. Improved lines of communication between regulators appears to be required to ensure that these issues are better balanced in the future. Regulators have recently met to discuss outstanding concerns and issues with the Ekati project and will continue to do so in the future. Laurie noted that transcripts from the public hearing for Sable, Pigeon and Beartooth would be sent out early next week in both paper and digital form. The MVLWB is also expecting BHPB's final closing comments on the public hearing early next week. She will distribute these comments to all interveners once they are received. Following the drafting of the licences and permits for Sable, Pigeon and Beartooth further meetings will be held to discuss outstanding concerns. Laurie also reminded John of her request for the mind map that Jim Millard (BHPB) produced during the AEMP re-evaluation meeting.

Latisha added that BHPB's application for a type 'B' water licence for watering Misery road has been sent out for review and comments are due by June 26th.

Lionel noted that the RWED Remote Sensing and BHPB staff have been working together to determine the footprint of Ekati using satellite imagery. He also noted that RWED has installed air-monitoring equipment at the Daring Lake research camp. In addition, Lionel requested that Laurie or John send him the final proposed changes for the 2002 aquatic effects and waste rock seepage programs.

Chris noted that BHPB would be submitting its final comments to the MVLWB on the Sable, Pigeon and Beartooth hearing prior to the deadline. Chris mentioned that the MVLWB and senior staff visited the Ekati site during this past week. The site visit focused on issues relating to water, waste rock and dust management. Chris also noted that production of BHPB's annual report plain English summary is late but should be completed and submitted

in the near future. In regards to the five-year review of the Environmental Agreement, Chris indicated that the lawyers are discussing the appropriate wording for the proposed amendments. BHPB is interested in a regional monitoring agency that potentially addresses part 6 of the MVRMA, as long as government contributes significant resources and cost savings are seen by the company. Chris also made mention of a couple of very large trout entering the Panda Diversion Channel.

John gave an update on recent activities at the mine site and noted the following:

Road watering:

- Sump water collected around main camp has been used for road watering this and in past springs. This was an acceptable practice in the past according to the previous inspector.
- BHPB is currently using water from cell C of Long Lake to water roads around main camp.
- BHPB is doing its best to control dust at site using water and approved dust suppressants. In order to better control dust on the airport runway, Boeing will need to approve the dust suppressant being used to ensure that corrosion of plane parts does not result.

Numerous IACT members expressed concern that sump water used for road watering may not have met licence limits. It was recommended that water used for road watering be sampled. Clint also noted that he would like to further discuss his concerns on this issue with BHPB.

Wildlife:

- Invitations have been sent to communities to visit Ekati both during spring and fall caribou migration periods. Aboriginal groups have shown interest in coming up to observe fall migration.
- A peregrine falcon pair is nesting on the fox fuel tanks. BHPB staff is being careful not to disturb these birds. Ruff legged hawks have also been observed nesting in both Misery and Koala Pits.
- During this past weekend, three ducks landed in a pond of contaminated water collecting in the land farm. The Canadian Wildlife Service was contacted to help clean up the ducks, but despite the effort, they all died. To ensure that this type of incident doesn't happen again flagging tape is permanently being put across the pond to deter ducks from landing and the water that collects in the land farm (i.e. oil / snow mixture) will be pumped out earlier in the spring. This incident will be written up formally in a wildlife incident report. BHPB is confident that the land farm is not an attractant to other animals.
- Wolves killed a caribou recently by the Nero-Nema bridge. The carcass was moved by helicopter, as per instructions from RWED, to prevent animals being attracted to the construction area.

General:

- The pigeon culvert was built to avoid disrupting fish habitat and having to apply for a DFO fisheries authorization.

- The Fox bridge at the Nero-Nema stream crossing is nearing completion. Gravel that was deposited near the stream during construction was extensively cleaned-up and the area was covered and sandbagged to prevent erosion and additional gravel entering the stream.
- Once the Fox bridge is completed, the minewater pipe will be installed to allow the decanting of water from Fox Lake to be pumped to Long Lake when it no longer meets licence limits.
- Hydrology monitoring on Exeter and Ursula Lakes continues in order to provide information for pit infilling purposes.
- The freshet has already finished at Ekati and its observation indicates it to be a very low flow year.
- An updated scope of work, resulting from the May re-evaluation meeting, for the aquatic effects and Panda diversion channel monitoring programs will be sent out shortly.
- Dr. Dennis Gregor is writing up the comprehensive air quality report for BHPB and providing recommendations on future air quality monitoring.

In response to a question from Marc, John noted that water did not move from Desperation pond into Carrie Pond during freshet. The pumps were able to keep up with freshet with little difficulty. The second coffer dam will likely be constructed during this upcoming summer leaving enough time for it to freeze next winter before next year's freshet. In order to construct it however, a road will have to be constructed that infringes into Desperation pond. Further discussions with DFO are needed on this issue.

Tamara noted that a cost variance meeting was held today with BHPB, GNWT, DIAND, MVLWB and the Agency. It was a positive meeting resulting in some action items to be carried out before the next meeting in July. She also noted that the official 45-day review of BHPB's annual report will not begin until the plain English summary has been received by all reviewers (including the aboriginal communities). As well, she mentioned that the minutes from the last Environmental Agreement review meeting would be sent out soon. Tamara concluded her update by noting that during the recent regulator meeting for Ekati (as described earlier by Laurie) a coordinating tracking system was discussed. This tracking system would be an amalgamated approach that would potentially track reporting / regulatory requirements and due times under the various regulatory instruments (i.e., environmental agreement, fisheries authorizations, water licences).

John noted that the development of such a tracking system requires a great deal of resources and time. However, BHPB would be willing to give advice on such a system if asked.

Next meeting: August 16th at 1:15 in Agency board room.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm