



**Independent Environmental  
Monitoring Agency**

# **Wildlife Effects Monitoring Program**

**Community Session, Kugluktuk, NU**

**August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2004**

# Topics of Discussion

- What is the Wildlife Effects Monitoring Program (WEMP)?
- Findings in 2003
- IEMA comments
- Open discussion

# What is the WEMP?

- It monitors wildlife and habitat of greatest importance and concern
- Monitoring is conducted through aerial and land-based techniques
- Traditional knowledge plays a role in the WEMP, wolverine tracking is an example

# **BHPB looks at the following effects on Wildlife**

- Vehicle and Aircraft Collisions
- Habitat losses from mine development
- Landfill and waste management problems – for attractiveness to wildlife
- Wildlife deaths and accidents at the mine
- Number of animals around the site during specific time periods

# What animals are monitored?

- Caribou
- Grizzly
- Wolverine
- Wolves
- Upland Breeding Birds and Falcons
- And their habitats

# How are impacts reduced?

- Wildlife awareness training is given
- Animals have right-of-way on roads
- Roads have speed limits
- All sightings of wildlife are reported
- Roads are closed when there are lots of caribou around
- Caribou are removed from airstrip
- Improved waste management practices

# Findings in 2003

- **Vehicle and Aircraft Collisions**
  - no deaths from vehicles
  - no road closures
- **Habitat Loss**
  - is associated with roads, buildings and pits
  - is less than 2% of any single type of habitat
  - also due to animals avoiding the site
  - will be different for each animal

# Findings in 2003

## Landfill and Waste Management

Currently, animals are rarely attracted to landfills





# Findings in 2003 – Wildlife Incidents

- 42 sightings of grizzlies, with 7 cases requiring action
- 6 caribou deaths reported (compared to 7 in 2001 and 13 in 2002)
- 5 deaths were near mine infrastructure

# Findings in 2003 – Caribou

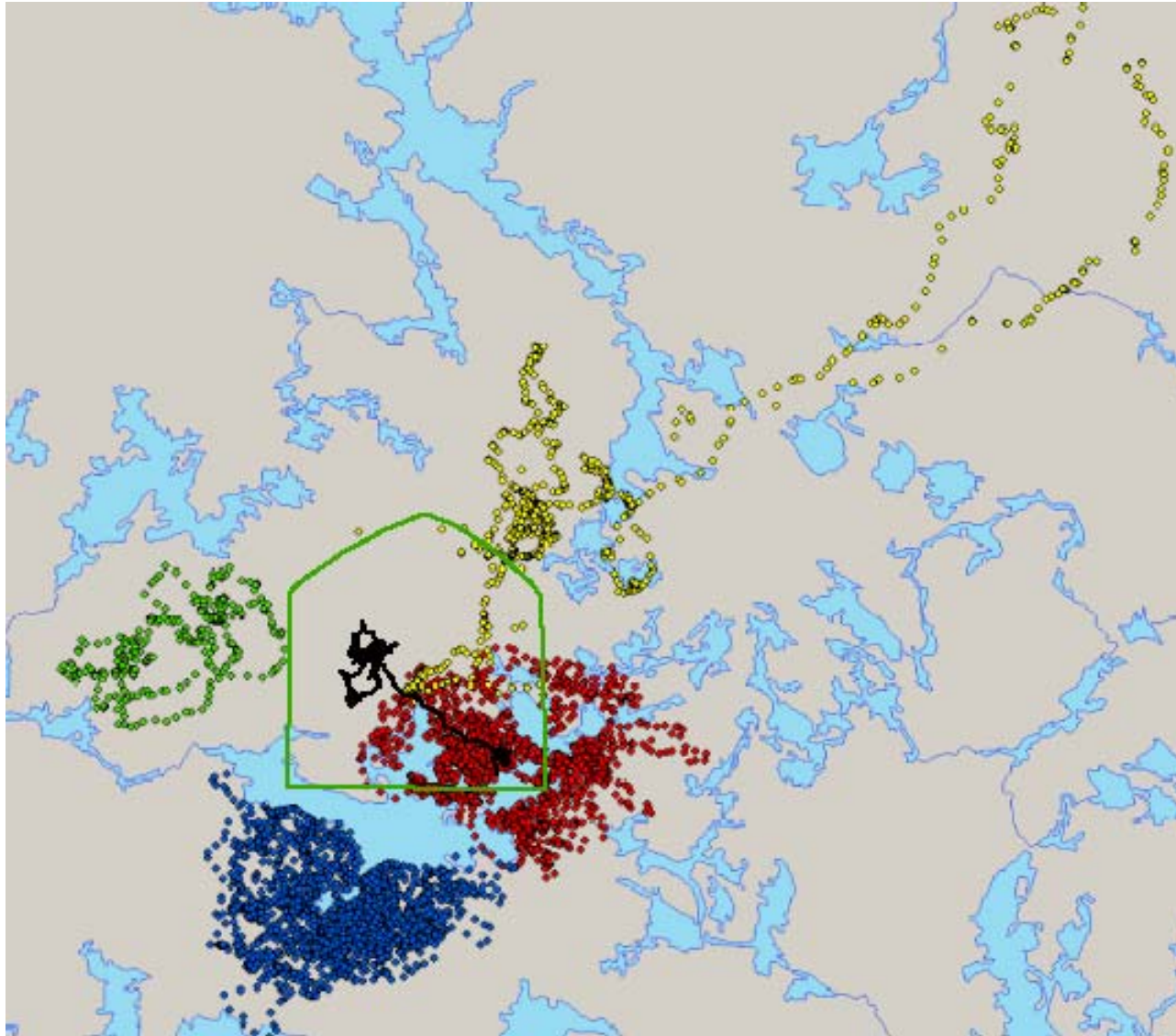


- Some habitat areas have decreased around the mine
- Caribou numbers appeared to decrease for the Bathurst herd

# Findings in 2003 – Grizzlies

- Grizzly signs are recorded in 60 random plots and 4 have collars



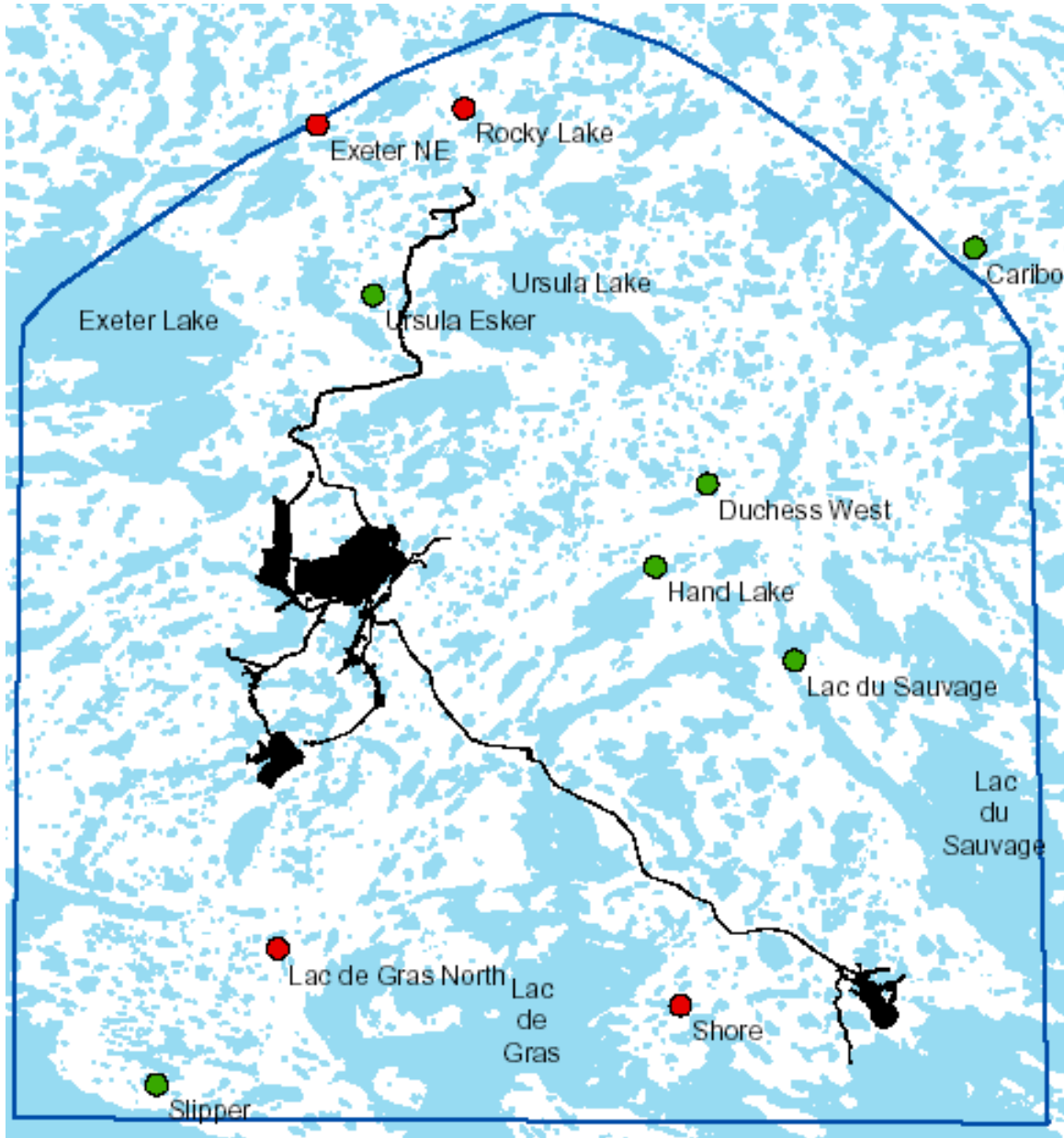


**Movement of  
4 collared  
grizzly bears  
in 2003**

# Findings in 2003 -Wolves



- 54 wolves were observed
- No actions were necessary
- No wolves seen in the landfills



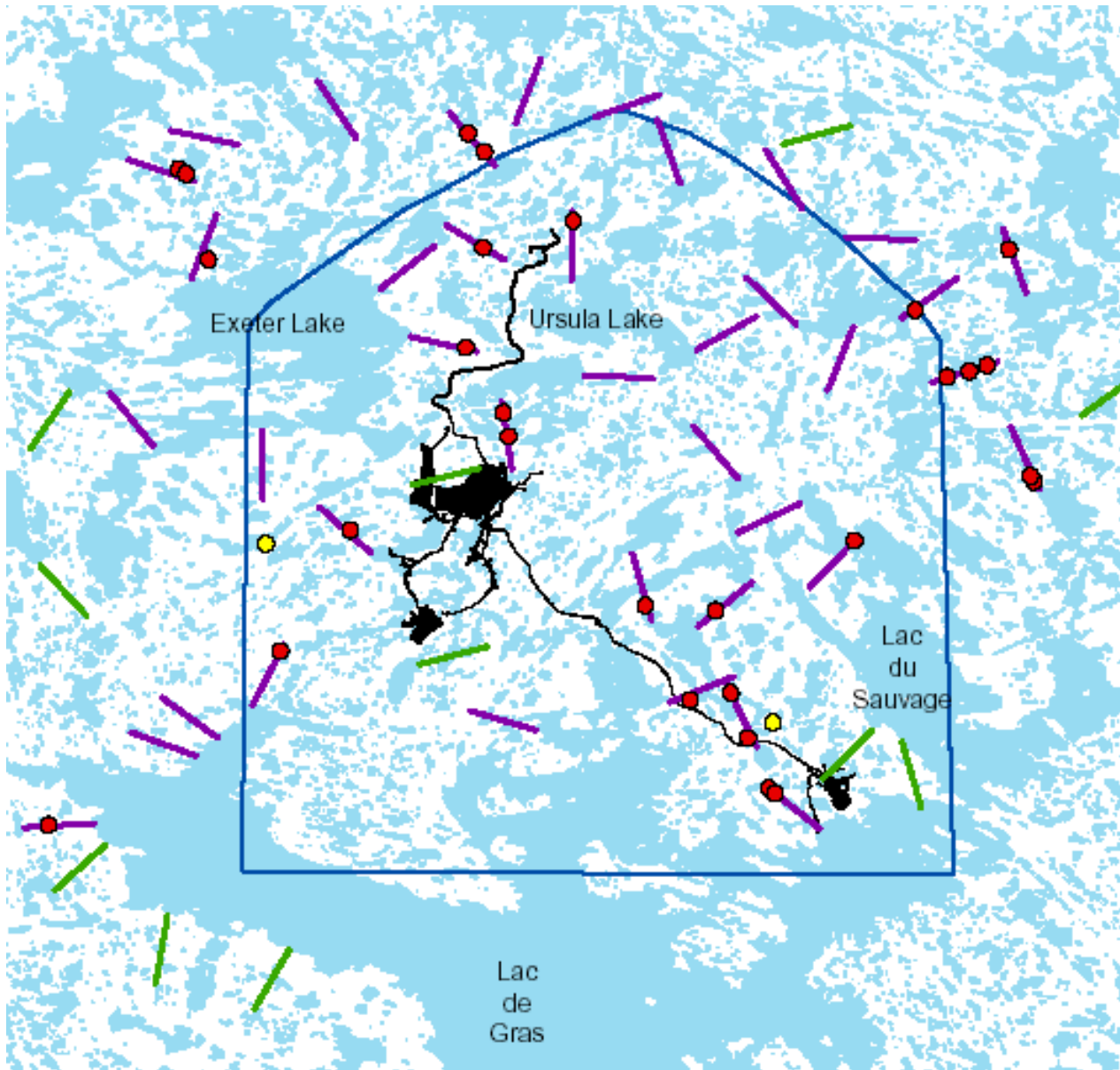
Active wolf dens – red

Unused wolf dens - green

# Findings in 2003 -Wolverine

Wolverine are studied using a snow tracking program

- 50 lines were selected throughout study area
- Snow machines used to check tracks
- Aboriginal expertise used to identify gender



Signs of  
wolverine:  
Tracks – red  
Dens - yellow



# Findings in 2003 - Wolverine



- 14 wolverines sighted
- No actions or relocations were taken
- Overall conclusion: wolverines continue to be present in the study area

# Bird Monitoring

- Density and numbers of birds are monitored
- Ptarmigans, small birds and shorebirds
- Birds near infrastructure have not been affected, although some bird habitat has been lost

# Falcon Monitoring

- Gyrfalcons and Peregrine Falcons are monitored



- 10 nests were occupied but only 1 had chicks

# Agency Comments

- The most important animals are being monitored; things look OK
- There has been habitat lost for all animals
- BHPB has adapted its practices to protect animals, when necessary
- The number of negative interactions has decreased

# Agency Comments, Continued

- The agency believes that wolves use roads, pits and rock piles to corner caribou
- Recent changes to waste management practices have been successful in reducing attraction of animals such as wolverines and foxes
- Hair sampling of wolverine may be preferred

# Agency Recommendations

- Wolverine monitoring - potential to use DNA from hair collection
- Regional caribou monitoring adaptations - cumulative effects concern
- Breeding bird monitoring - every second year rather than every year (support CWS suggestion)