

INDEPENDENT ENVIRONMENTAL  
MONITORING AGENCY



# 2017-2018 PLAIN LANGUAGE ANNUAL REPORT

A PUBLIC WATCHDOG FOR ENVIRONMENTAL  
MANAGEMENT AT EKATI DIAMOND MINE

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# Recommendations for 2017-18

## Recommendation No. 1

Dominion Diamond use 'Effective Neutralizing Potential' for determining the availability of neutralizing potential in waste rock.

## Recommendation No. 2

Dominion Diamond initiate and enhance monitoring programs needed to support development and verification of Waste Rock Storage Area water balance and thermal models.



## Recommendations for 2017-18, continued

### Recommendation No. 3

Department of Lands work with Environment and Natural Resources to develop a legal or policy framework which enables land and water-related reclamation securities to be managed under a single regulatory instrument.

### Recommendation No. 4

Fisheries and Oceans Canada improve the level and rigor of their participation in the assessment, review and monitoring of activities, programs and management plans related to fish and fish habitat at the Ekati mine.



# Agency Activities

## Meetings and Visits

- 3 Board meetings
- AGM and workshop in waste rock management
- Community Visit – Kugluktuk (May, 2017)
- Annual site visit to Ekati (September, 2017)

## Water Licence Amendments

- Misery Underground
- Potassium Effluent Quality Criteria

## Technical Reviews and Input

- Waste rock management
- Water and fish
- Caribou
- Closure and reclamation



# Wildlife

## Highlights

- Over 52,000 caribou were observed at the mine in 2017, the highest ever recorded.
- Most caribou observations occurred along the Sable Road.
- Wildlife Effects Monitoring Plan and Caribou Road Mitigation Plan approved.

## Agency Assessment

- ✓ Wildlife incidents and deaths about the same as other years
- ✓ Abundance and behavior studies
- X Timely reporting of camera monitoring study
- X Caribou and roads



# Water and Fish

## Highlights

- An increase in the Water License Potassium Effluent Quality Criteria (EQC) was requested by Dominion.
- Selenium in Leslie Lake sediments increased to levels that may impact aquatic life.
- Sable Aquatic Effects Monitoring Program Design Plan found inadequate.

## Agency Assessment

- ✓ No new major water quality issues
- ✓ Numerous AEMP Response Plans developed or updated
- X Decreasing trend in water quality downstream of the LLCF



# Regional Monitoring and Cumulative Effects

## Highlights

- GNWT ENR released a revised Bathurst Caribou Range Plan discussion document for community and public engagement and review.
- The Caribou Zone of Influence Technical Task Group will be producing a revised guidance document.
- Dominion providing funding to study Bathurst caribou.
- Dominion and Diavik cooperating on grizzly bear monitoring.
- GNWT developed a landscape change viewer web map



# Traditional Knowledge and Community Engagement

## Highlights

- Traditional Knowledge Elders Group established and is active
- Ekati Mine Engagement Plan updated

## Agency Assessment

- ✓ Creation of TK Elders Group promise many positives
- X Outstanding concerns over 'engagement' commitments and how TK is accessed and used in environmental management





# Air Quality

## Highlights

- Air Quality and Emissions Monitoring and Management Plan for the Jay Project was approved
- GNWT recommended an interim dustfall objective for the Ekati Mine

## Agency Assessment

- ✓ Air quality generally continues to meet GNWT standards
- ✓ Monitoring program continues to be robust
- ✓ Testing of Envirokleen continues
- X Dustfall along the Lynx Road exceeded the dustfall objective at 300m
- X Greenhouse gas emissions are increasing.



# Waste Rock Management

## Highlights

- Sable design and Pigeon expansion WRSA proposals were approved.
- Geotechnical investigation of the Misery WRSA was initiated.
- 3-Year Seepage Report was approved with a number of directives to address concerns raised.

## Agency Assessment

One of the most significant challenges to successful closure planning

X Unresolved issue: 'Total' or 'Effective' neutralizing potential

X Reduction in number of Sable WRSA ground temperature cables



## Expansion Projects

### Highlights

- Water licence for Jay Project received Ministerial approval in July 2017.
- Construction of Jay Project 'Early Works' road and project support buildings was largely completed in fall 2017.
- Updated plans and reports required by WLWB for Jay and Sable project water licences were submitted by Dominion on time.
- WLWB completed amendment application process review of Misery Underground Project in February 2018; water licence approval is expected by fall 2018.
- Greater emphasis being placed on exploring for new kimberlite pipes



# Closure and Reclamation

## Highlights

- Closure financial security for the mine site was \$285 million (Dec 2016)
- A timeline for an updated Interim Closure and Reclamation Plan has been established.
- The Reclamation Research Plan is to be revised as part of the updated ICRP.
- Reclamation of the Old Camp area has been largely completed.

## Agency Assessment

- ✓ WLWB review of closure and reclamation continues to be strong
- ✓ Closure of Old Camp location is nearing completion
- X Lack of a single, updated closure and reclamation plan is troubling





## Assessment of Regulators

- Wek'èezhìi Land and Water Board
- Environment and Natural Resources
- Canadian Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada
- Environment and Climate Change Canada
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada



# Questions?

