

Agency Recommendations for 2006-07

Recommendation 1:

Closure and Reclamation

BHPB should develop mine component-specific closure objectives as part of the *Interim Closure and Reclamation Plan*. The objectives for each mine component should be linked to the overall site closure goal, and lead to measurable closure criteria.

Response: BHPB provided draft closure objectives and criteria related to each mine component in the recent release of the *Interim Closure and Reclamation Plan* for the Ekati mine site. The Working Group, including representatives from DIAND, GNWT, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), Environment Canada (EC), Aboriginal communities and the Agency, was set up by the Wek'èezhii Land and Water Board (WLWB) to provide comments and suggestions on the *Interim Closure and Reclamation Plan*. These comments and suggestions were incorporated into the final objective and criteria tables to improve clarity and understanding. Input from Laura Johnston from the Agency and guidance from the WLWB were particularly useful in this process.

Recommendation 2:

Closure and Reclamation

Where information uncertainties exist in formulating objectives, options or criteria for any mine component, BHPB should explicitly identify the uncertainties in the text of the *Interim Closure and Reclamation Plan* and link them to that part of the reclamation research plan that addresses them.

Response: BHPB has always recognized that there will be a requirement for additional research in order to clarify the processes, techniques and plans to be employed in final closure of the mine site. While some of this research is currently underway other areas are in the planning stages and all these different areas of research were included in the research plan of the *Interim Closure and Reclamation Plan*. BHPB has provided improved connections and additional cross-referencing to outline the links with the reclamation research plans in the *Interim Closure and Reclamation Plan*. This was a result of input from the WLWB Working Group members during the recent meetings to review the Plan.

Recommendation 3:

Regional Monitoring, Cumulative Effects and Wildlife

There has been a lack of progress on regional and cumulative effects on caribou. The Government of the Northwest Territories and the Government of Nunavut should make greater efforts towards regional and cumulative effects monitoring and assessment, primarily as it relates to caribou.

Response: The GNWT remains committed to addressing cumulative impacts on barren-ground caribou as set out in the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' *Framework for Action*, the *NWT Barren-ground Caribou Management Strategy* and the *Bathurst Caribou Management Plan*. Although implementation of some initiatives has been delayed, the GNWT plans to convene a workshop on cumulative effects in the fall of 2007. The purpose of the workshop is to address potential cumulative effects assessment methodology and the links to regional and mine-specific monitoring programs. The GNWT intends to work with all stakeholders

including, but not limited to, communities, Aboriginal Governments, industry, DIAND and monitoring agencies. A partnership approach will be necessary to address this important issue within the Slave Geological Province and in other areas experiencing increased levels of human activities.

Recommendation 4:

Assessment of BHPB

DIAND, GNWT and BHPB should amend the *Environmental Agreement* to set March 31st as the deadline for submission of the AEMP and WEMP annual reports.

Response: BHPB, GNWT and DIAND acknowledge that this year is a key date for review of the *Environmental Agreement*. It is expected that the signatories to the *Environmental Agreement* will consider a review of reporting requirements amongst other items in the Agreement.

