

A PUBLIC WATCHDOG FOR ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AT EKATI DIAMOND MINE™



**Independent**  
Environmental  
Monitoring Agency

*Plain Language Annual Report* 2007-08

A PUBLIC WATCHDOG FOR ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AT EKATI DIAMOND MINE™



# Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency

## TABLE OF CONTENTS



**7** Processed Kimberlite and Wastewater Management



**8** Traditional Knowledge



**10** Wildlife Monitoring



**12** Aquatic Effects Monitoring



**17** Air Quality Monitoring



**19** Closure and Reclamation



**21** Regional Monitoring and Cumulative Effects



**22** Review of the Performance of the Government Regulators



**23** Assessment of BHP Billiton

**24** Agency Recommendations for 2007-08

**25** Glossary – A listing of all italicized words used in this publication



**6** Waste Rock



**4** Mining at Ekati



**2** How we do our work

### Regulators

- DFO** Department of Fisheries and Oceans
- DIAND** Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development
- EC** Environment Canada
- ENR** GNWT's Environment and Natural Resources (previously known as RWED or Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development)
- GN** Government of Nunavut
- GNWT** Government of the Northwest Territories
- MVLWB** Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board
- WLWB** Wek'ezhii Land and Water Board
- WRRB** Wek'ezhii Renewable Resources Board

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## Message from the Chairperson

I am pleased to present to you the 2007-08 Annual Report of the Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency. We prepare two versions of our annual report each year. This is the plain language summary version, which presents the environmental issues at Ekati in a way that is easier to understand than our technical report. We hope that you will find both of our reports to be useful.

Once again, our main focus over the past year has been on closure and *reclamation* planning for Ekati. We hope that the plan that is created will outline how to reclaim the Ekati site to make it the best example of mine *reclamation* in the NWT.

Other areas we are working on with the company and the government regulators include air quality and wildlife monitoring. We have heard from the communities that these are priorities, particularly the issue of dust from the mine settling on the land and possible effects of this on caribou.

We received valuable comments from the communities last year when we hosted environmental workshops and our annual general meeting in Yellowknife. We plan to have a board meeting to be hosted in a community in the fall of 2008 and hope to share detailed discussions about Ekati with you throughout the year. ■



**William A. Ross, Chairperson**

March 31st, 2008



# How we do our work

## Highlights:

- 🕒 **Five Agency board meetings, an annual general meeting and an environmental workshop;**
- 🕒 **BHP Billiton (BHPB) agreed with Agency advice to improve air quality monitoring;**
- 🕒 **Agency involvement in the Interm Closure and Reclamation Plan (the Closure Plan) Working Group;**
- 🕒 **Directors reviewed BHPB's technical reports; and**
- 🕒 **Mediation led to an agreement with BHPB on a funding issue.**

## The Agency Board and Membership

The Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency (the Agency) is a non-profit environmental

watchdog of Ekati. We are made up of seven directors appointed to our board by the federal and territorial governments, BHPB and our Aboriginal Society Members. We



*Agency director visiting Lutsel K'e.*

also have an office and two staff in Yellowknife. For a complete list of our directors and how to contact them, please see the back cover of this report.

## How the Agency Operates

We have a schedule that includes about five board meetings each year, plus an annual general meeting and an Ekati site visit. The directors review the technical reports produced by BHPB and provide comments and recommendations for BHPB as well as for the government regulators. Some of our directors travel to Yellowknife frequently to attend key meetings. Last year most meetings outside of our board meetings were related to closure and *reclamation* planning.

## Agency Communication and Consultation Activities

We want to involve our Aboriginal Society Members as much as we can to share environmental information with them about Ekati and to listen to their concerns. We do this by inviting representatives to our annual general meeting

and events we host in Yellowknife and when our directors are invited to visit the communities. Last year we also hosted an environmental workshop before our annual general meeting where we discussed BHPB's wildlife and aquatic monitoring programs and results in much more detail. Our directors are available to visit our Aboriginal Society Members in their communities upon request. We try to have a board meeting in a location other than Yellowknife each year (we plan to meet in Lutsel K'e in the fall of 2008). A complete list of our *consultation* activities can be found in the technical version of our annual report.

## Agency Performance

Our Aboriginal Society Members have complimented the Agency on the technical work we do and for the effort we make to offer comments on BHPB's environmental performance. We have also heard that we can do more to communicate with people in the communities and we are looking into ways to do this better.

The government regulators find our reviews of BHPB reports helpful to them as we often prepare very detailed comments on the key issues. The combined memory and experience of our directors is helpful in discussing regulatory processes such as water licence renewals and when developing research programs. Some of the directors have been on our board since it was formed more than ten years ago.

We do not receive as much feedback as we could benefit from and are planning to have a consultant review the Agency's performance next year. We welcome constructive comments from any of our Society Members and look forward to hearing from you. ■



### Agency Directors

For complete biographies of directors, see the 2007-08 technical report.

- 1) Bill Ross, Appointed April 1997**  
Appointed by BHP Billiton, Government of the Northwest Territories and Government of Canada (in consultation with the Aboriginal governments).
- 2) Tim Byers, Appointed May 2001**  
Appointed by Akaitcho Treaty 8 (Lutsel K'e First Nation and Yellowknives Dene First Nation).

**3) Jaida Ohokannoak**  
**Appointed December 2003**  
Appointed by the Kitikmeot Inuit Association.

**4) Sheryl Grieve**  
**Appointed October 2005**  
Appointed by the North Slave Métis Alliance.

**5) Laura Johnston**  
**Appointed December 2006**  
Appointed by BHP Billiton, Government of the Northwest

Territories and Government of Canada (in consultation with the Aboriginal governments).

**6) Tony Pearse, Appointed March 1997**  
Appointed by the Tlicho Government.

**7) Kim Poole**  
**Appointed December 2006**  
Appointed by BHP Billiton, Government of the Northwest Territories and Government of Canada (in consultation with the Aboriginal governments).

