

Notes from the Inter-Agency Coordinating Team December 8th, 2000 Meeting

Participants:

John Witteman	BHP
Derek Chubb	BHP
Roxanne Beavers	DIAND Water Resources
Greg Cook	DIAND Environment & Conservation
Tasha Stephenson	Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO)
Marc Lange	Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO)
Anne Wilson	Environment Canada
Laurie Bruno	Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board (MVLWB)
Zabey Nevitt	Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency (Agency)
Robin Staples	Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency (Agency)

Meeting began at 1:30

Round Table Updates:

John began by giving an update on BHP operations. He noted that the second seepage report on the Panda Waste Rock Storage Area study has been delivered to the MVLWB and the report for the area around Beartooth is due to come out in January. BHP is continuing to sample waste rock at Panda, Koala and Misery pits. Temperature cables have been installed in the Panda waste rock pile, and ABA done. At the Misery Pit they are sampling after each blast. John also pointed out that he is hesitant to give raw data from the waste rock sampling to reviewers before BHP performs their own analysis.

King pond is partly dewatered as approximately 170 000 cubic meters of water (i.e. around half the volume of the lake) has been removed. BHP then began treating and transferring water from Misery to King pond but the pipes froze within a day of use. They are thawing out the pipeline and anticipate restarting the pumping of the Misery sump in early January. BHP is currently mining around the ice. Approximately ½ million cubic meters of water is still left in Misery and the remaining water can be fairly turbid (i.e. high degree of silt and organics). He also noted that the water level in King Pond would be kept low and that the Dam will be constructed this winter.

Koala North ore (300,000 tonnes) has been processed for valuation and BHP has begun pre-stripping at Koala. John also noted that ten meters of organic lake bottom sediments at Koala would be stockpiled and saved. John hopes that this sediment is useful for reclamation and will be taking samples for analysis.

Decanting is continuing at cell E in order to ultimately draw down cell C by increasing the head across dyke C. Dyke B had a hole in the filter, so they are using beached tailings on both sides.

John noted that BHP is still looking at land treatment for Fox and Misery and said that he will be sending an information package soon to the MVLWB. John also mentioned that his goal is to remove as much nitrogen as possible from King Pond effluent through land treatment, resulting in little nitrogen entering Cujo Lake. John noted that BHP is meeting with a number of their consultants to discuss a delivery system for releasing the water onto the land. In addition, phosphorus may also be remobilized from the sediments at Cujo Lake under anoxic conditions and therefore it is necessary to limit nitrogen entering the system to limit potential eutrophication. BHP is proposing a number of sampling points for Cujo Lake, to be selected in consultation with the MVLWB and government.

John also briefly mentioned that it is reporting season and that the Aquatic Effects Management Plan (AEMP) is being reviewed in house, the Wildlife Effects Management Plan (WEMP) is out for review and the Panda diversion channel and Kodiak reports are also coming in soon.

In regards to the February 5&6 workshops being held at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Center, John mentioned that there would be poster displays (e.g. reclamation) and Traditional Knowledge presentations on the first day, in addition to presentations on Aquatic effects. Nick Jones, a researcher working on the Panda diversion channel from the University of Alberta will also be presenting his work. John noted that he has yet to produce a brief description on what all the graduate researchers are studying at the site but will do so shortly. He also briefly mentioned that Fox Lake would be fished out next July.

Derek gave a brief permitting update. He noted that there is nothing new to report on the Sable, Pigeon and Beartooth development. He noted that he has been putting together packages for applications and leases and has been involved in preparing for permitting of the Lupin road with Echo Bay. Derek also noted that BHP and DIAND lands have met to discuss leases that will be needed for the Sable, Pigeon and Beartooth development.

A brief discussion then took place on the potential need for a preliminary screening on Carrie and Desperation water bodies associated with the Misery pit development. It was determined that BHP is waiting for clarification from DFO if a preliminary screening is needed and if an independent Fisheries Authorization is needed separate from the Sable, Pigeon and Beartooth development. Tasha committed that DFO will provide a response.

Tasha began her update by noting that Julie Dahl is back from maternity leave and Marc Lange, the new area habitat biologist, will now be the official IACT representative from DFO as he will be working on the BHP file.

She also agreed to push for analysis of original fish out data to be completed, in order to assess requirements for the Fox Lake fish out studies next year. Tasha also briefly noted that it was the end of the first week of the BHP – DFO preliminary court hearings.

Roxanne noted that the Operating Environmental Management Plan (OEMP) is being reviewed within Water Resources and they are only commenting at this point on the reports that are required in the water licence. They are also currently reviewing the seepage survey report.

A discussion on the MVLWB public registry (i.e. protocol & access) then took place and the possibility of supplying CD's was brought up as a method of facilitating increased efficiency for distributing and sharing resources.

Laurie noted that she is still busy reviewing background information and has recently asked for input on the OEMP. She would like to put the OEMP before the board sometime in February. She also mentioned that she has met with BHP recently to discuss other issues relating to the water licence and is planning to visit the Ekati™ site with Darren Unrau on Monday for the first time.

Greg said that he is collecting input on the OEMP, specifically those plans required under the water licence, but is also soliciting comments on the entire OEMP, although no one is formally required to comment. He is also planning to copy Roxanne on any comments received for her roll up of comments for the MVLWB.

He also noted that the Federal departments have responded to the Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency's annual report. In addition, Greg mentioned that Dave Nutter would be acting as the interim director of Operations in the New Year for DIAND NWT Region, as Floyd Adlem is retiring.

John noted that the entire OEMP will probably not be re-written until after the Sable, Pigeon, and Beartooth development has been approved and can be incorporated into the new plan.

General discussion then took place regarding the inclusion of the benthic and aquatic sampling techniques in the QA/QC plan and John noted that BHP would like to know if the MVLWB wants these sampling techniques included in the QA/QC plan.

Anne commented that QA/QC for the non-water components are covered in the various reports and Roxanne noted that if the plan has significantly changed then Taiga labs should possibly be contracted to review it.

Greg also briefly discussed the cost variance / reclamation issue and what the formal date would be for this to come out. DIAND is still waiting for confirmation of commercial production in writing.

John confirmed that the report would come out May 1st, 2001.

Robin then gave an update on the Agency and noted that the Agency has recently moved it's office up to the second floor beside Our Place Restaurant and that the Agency's most recent newsletter has been completed and is being distributed.

Zabey asked John to pass on the Agency's thanks to Scott Williams and Dale Sooley for their cooperation in the Agency's office move. Zabey also noted that the directors are currently reviewing the OEMP and comments should be out soon. The Agency will be reviewing the seepage study as well. Director Marc Stevenson is working with Chris Hanks on traditional knowledge and Director François Messier will be attending the Bathurst Caribou Management board meeting in Rae on December 14&15. The Chairperson, Red Pederson, is also spending more time in Yellowknife and communities in response to the recommendations from the Agency's society members in the McLeod report.

Anne had nothing new to report.

Next meeting will be at the Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency's Boardroom at 1:15pm on January 19th, 2001.

Meeting Finished at 3:00pm