

# Notes from the Inter-Agency Coordinating Team October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2001 Meeting

## Participants:

John Witteman	BHP Billiton
Derek Chubb	BHP Billiton
Tamara Hamilton	DIAND Environment & Conservation
Craig Broome	DIAND Operations
Sevn Bohnet	DIAND Waters
Marc Lange	Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO)
Anne Wilson	Environment Canada
Raymond Bourget	RWED - North Slave Office
Lionel Marcinkoski	RWED
Robin Staples	Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency (Agency)

Meeting began at 1:30

## Round Table Updates:

**Tamara** began her update by discussing the cost variance report review. She noted that John Brodie, DIAND's reclaim consultant, had his colleague - David Harpley visit the mine site for him and she indicated that Phase II of Brodie's review for cost variance would be submitted to BHP Billiton, GNWT and the Agency on November 2<sup>nd</sup>. A tentative meeting date of November 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> has been set to discuss both John Brodie's reclaim review and BHP Billiton's cost variance report. John Brodie and potentially Komex, BHP Billiton's consultant, will be presenting their reports at this meeting.

She noted that consolidated comments from government departments and the Agency regarding BHP Billiton's 2000 annual report would be provided to the company shortly. As well she noted that she attended a seminar on acid rock drainage and metal leaching in Whitehorse and the notes would be available to anyone who was interested. Tamara also mentioned that she would be attending the upcoming Northern Impact Assessment Seminar, being hosted by the Environmental Impact Review Board (EIRB), which is dealing with the environmental assessment process in the north. In addition, Tamara noted that she, Anne, Zabey and Robin would be going to the mine site to tour the process plant on November 6.

**Tamara** then initiated a discussion regarding the possibility of BHP Billiton 'red-lining' the changes to the Operating Environmental Management Plan so that the changes could be more easily reviewed.

**John** agreed to have the changes put in 'red-line' for the updated plans during the review process (CD copies only) and would re-publish the plans without the 'red-line' additions once the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board (MVLWB) accepted the plans.

**Marc** noted that he has been spending a majority of his time drafting up the fisheries authorization for Carrie and Desperation ponds. He has been working closely with Derek during this process and mentioned that this particular fisheries authorization will be used as a template for those authorizations required for the Sable, Pigeon and Beartooth development. He provided the first draft of the fisheries authorization to the Agency as was requested and also noted that he has not been up to site recently but is looking to get up soon, potentially with the DIAND inspector.

**Sevn** noted that he is continuing to review the water licence and land permit applications for the Sable, Pigeon and Beartooth development and mentioned that Water Resources would have their comments in to the MVLWB by the November 9<sup>th</sup> deadline.

**Craig** noted that DIAND Operations hopes to fill the Ekati™ inspector position by Christmas. He also mentioned that he is going to inspect the site next week and has discussed the details of this site visit with Jim Millard of BHP Billiton.

**Derek** gave a brief permitting update and noted that the fisheries authorization work is ongoing (as noted by Marc), the Fox dewatering plan has been submitted to the MVLWB but as of yet has not been sent out for review, and the review period for commenting on the additional information regarding the Fox amendment to water licence N7L2 –1616 has expired and should be addressed by the MVLWB in the near future. Derek also mentioned that he was discouraged to see an extension granted for the review period of the Sable, Pigeon and Beartooth applications, as he thought all the major issues would have been addressed by this point in the review.

**John** gave an update on recent activities at the mine site and noted the following:

- Kodiak Lake froze October 14<sup>th</sup> this year, almost a full month later than last year (18/09/00).
- The wildlife monitoring program has now been completed.
- Small groups of caribou are still been observed passing through the claim block. One caribou carcass was recently found by the Koala Pit and wolves apparently killed it. After consulting with RWED it was moved and buried in the Panda waste rock pile.
- The dates for next aquatic and wildlife monitoring workshops have been set for the first Monday and Tuesday in February 2002. If anyone is interested in discussing any other topics at the workshops (e.g. reclamation) then John would like to know ASAP so that time can be set-aside during the two days that are scheduled.
- BHP Billiton is looking into getting Buster Welch back up to site to look at dissolved oxygen (DO) under ice. Buster will be using the Winkler method instead of probes to determine DO levels.
- The risk assessment workshop on copper in the Koala watershed is being held this upcoming Monday, October 29<sup>th</sup>. It was indicated that winter sampling is taking place in the 2001 Aquatic Effects Monitoring Program (AEMP). The written risk assessment report for copper will be distributed shortly.
- BHP Billiton is interested in constructing an emergency shelter near Slipper Lake for safety reasons. They will discuss this with the MVLWB.
- The AEMP and Wildlife Effects Monitoring Program (WEMP) reports will once again be shortened this year as certain sections such as methodology will be placed in the appendices.

- A workshop on stream surveys ‘working in streams’ is to be put on by Dillon Consulting potentially in November. DFO has indicated a strong interest in participating in this workshop.
- The Misery mine plan has changed and it appears that less waste rock will be produced, as the pit is not going to be as deep as previously thought. Underground mining at Misery is still a potential and will be reviewed by the company in the near future.

In response to a question regarding the seepage workshops it was noted that no date has yet been set, but it will most likely take place the same time as last year (i.e. April).

**Anne** began her update by noting that she is currently reviewing the applications for the Sable, Pigeon and Beartooth development and has finished her review of the additional information for the Fox amendment to water licence N7L2 –1616. She also noted that she is attending the November 6<sup>th</sup> tour of the process plant. In addition, Anne mentioned that Environment Canada in cooperation with Karsten Liber (University of Saskatchewan) is looking into further research on the residual toxicity of flocculants and the how to best test for residual concentrations.

**Derek** noted that checking with the companies that manufacture flocculants might be a good place to start this research, as they may have already done some of this work.

**Lionel** noted that this was his first IACT meeting and that he has been invited by Karl Lauten of the MVLWB to sit on a technical committee for BHP.

**Raymond** mentioned that he has been discussing the protocol for reporting wildlife incidents with BHP Billiton. Raymond noted that he is the contact for the RWED regional office. Raymond also proposed the possibility of keeping the electric fence at Misery operating during the winter to help deal with problem wolverines.

**John** responded to Raymond by noting that food-handling concerns have been dealt with at Misery and the buildings all have skirting placed around them. Therefore, keeping the fence electrified is not really an effective option of controlling wolverine in the winter. John will report back to Raymond on the protection of the sewage line outside the building from wolverines.

**Robin** noted that the Agency has submitted its comments on the additional information provided for the amendment to the water licence for Fox and is currently reviewing the applications for the Sable, Pigeon and Beartooth development. Robin also mentioned that he would be visiting the mine site on November 6<sup>th</sup> with Tamara and Anne. In addition, the sixth (October) issue of the Agency newsletter has been completed and distributed.

*Next meeting will be held in the Agency boardroom on Friday November 30<sup>th</sup> at 1:15pm.*

**Meeting finished at 2:00pm.**