



INDEPENDENT ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING AGENCY

P.O. Box 1192, Yellowknife, NT X1A 2N8 ▪ Phone (867) 669-9141 ▪ Fax (867) 669-9145
Website: www.monitoringagency.net ▪ Email: monitor1@yk.com

April 3, 2007

Mr. Doug Crossley
Chairperson

Environmental Monitoring Advisory Board
Box 2577
Yellowknife NT X1A 2P9

Mr. Johnny Weyallon
Chairperson

Snap Lake Environmental Monitoring Agency
Box 95
Yellowknife NT X1A 2L1

Dear Mr. Crossley and Mr. Weyallon

Re: Joint Review of Bathurst Caribou Herd Monitoring Programs

With the growing concern over the health and status of the Bathurst Caribou Herd, the Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency is of the view that the three diamond mine oversight agencies can play a helpful role in jointly reviewing the current Bathurst Caribou Herd monitoring programs.

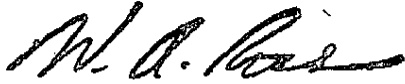
We must of course stay within our respective mandates and recognize that the diamond mines, public and Aboriginal governments and regulators all have a shared responsibility to ensure that the Bathurst Caribou Herd is maintained as a healthy and viable food source for Aboriginal peoples and a critical part of the northern ecosystem. A review of monitoring programs related to the Bathurst Caribou Herd must include both scientific and Traditional Knowledge, and involve all of our respective partners. Such a review should consist of an evaluation of the programs for their use of best practices and how the data collected can and should be used for improved cumulative effects assessment and management. Monitoring gaps can and should be identified along with recommendations on how the various parties can work together more effectively.

The attached draft terms of reference contains our preliminary thoughts on how a joint review might be conducted in a phased approach. We would be most interested in meeting with you to talk about this important work.



What we are seeking at this point, is an indication of whether your organization is interested in pursuing a joint project. We are convinced of its utility and would welcome the opportunity to work together with you on this important work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. A. Ross". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Bill Ross
Chairperson

cc. Society Members

Ray Case, Environment and Natural Resources, GNWT

Rob Marshall, A/Executive Director, Wek'eezhii Renewable Resources Board

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

**A COMPARATIVE REVIEW OF
BATHURST CARIBOU RELATED MONITORING PROGRAMS**

Purpose

Given the level of public concern with the health and population decline of the Bathurst caribou herd, there is a need to ensure that monitoring programs are coordinated, compatible, reflect best practices and provide the necessary information for improved cumulative effects assessment and management. The focus of this review is caribou, but mine and regional monitoring of issues directly related to caribou (e.g. wolves, possibly bears, snow sampling, dust and vegetation/lichen sampling) would also be assessed, only as far as they relate to the Bathurst caribou herd.

The focus on cumulative effects assessment is timely. One of the high priority action items of the Bathurst Caribou Herd Management Plan (The Bathurst Caribou Management Planning Committee 2004) was to prepare and implement site-specific monitoring and mitigation programs to detect and address impacts of industrial development projects on caribou behaviour and movements, and ensure these programs be developed and implemented using standardized monitoring protocols linked to cumulative effects monitoring programs (item 1.3.3). Strategy #10 of the GNWT caribou management strategy (Environment and Natural Resources 2006) proposes to develop models to assess the cumulative effects of human and natural impacts on caribou, including use of a workshop approach to incorporate mine-based monitoring of caribou activity with demographic and environmental information to model cumulative effects. To date, little progress has been made furthering cumulative effects assessment on the Bathurst caribou herd.

The three independent monitoring bodies for the NWT diamond mines (the Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency (IEMA) for the Ekati mine, the Environmental Monitoring Advisory Board (EMAB) for the Diavik mine, and the Snap Lake Environmental Monitoring Agency (SLEMA) for the DeBeers Snap Lake mine) have a special role to play in providing oversight for the mine-specific monitoring programs. The independent monitoring bodies also share responsibilities for the consideration of each mine's contribution to the cumulative effects on the Bathurst caribou herd.

Objectives

The three independent monitoring bodies would like to better fulfill their oversight responsibilities for Bathurst caribou herd monitoring by carrying out a joint review of current mine-specific and regional monitoring programs. This review will:

1. Assess and synthesize current scientific and Traditional Knowledge monitoring programs for the Bathurst caribou herd;

2. Review current scientific and Traditional Knowledge monitoring programs for the Bathurst caribou herd for internal consistency to ensure objectives are being met through the methods and design, use of best practices based on national and international standards for wildlife monitoring, and the potential use of data for cumulative effects assessment and management;
3. Identify opportunities and challenges to better coordination and compatibility of mine-specific and regional monitoring methodology, analyses, and reporting based on both scientific and Traditional Knowledge, for the Bathurst caribou herd;
4. Identify gaps in current scientific and Traditional Knowledge monitoring programs for the Bathurst caribou herd to support more effective cumulative effects assessment and management; and
5. Recommend improvements in implementation and better definition of roles and responsibilities with regard to cumulative effects assessment and management for the Bathurst caribou herd.

The objectives of the study are consistent with Article 5.2 of the Environmental Agreement that sets out the IEMA's mandate including oversight on BHPB's environmental monitoring programs, related government programs, and the integration of Traditional Knowledge.

Methodology

The three independent monitoring bodies will jointly fund a research team to collect information and data on the current diamond mine-specific and regional monitoring programs related to caribou. The study will be jointly funded and managed by an informal steering committee composed of the three independent monitoring body manger/executive directors. The IEMA will serve as the fiscal agent for the study. The three independent monitoring bodies will seek the cooperation of the mining industry and their wildlife consultants, relevant government agencies, and independent researchers and their institutions in supplying relevant documents and information, participating in interviews, and other informal assistance.

The study will involve a phased approach to achieving the objectives outline above, as follows:

Phase I

- Identification of the study team including members with information collection and writing skills, evaluation and conceptual framework development experience; analytical and policy skills, and facilitation experience with multiple stakeholders (Objectives 1-5);

- Collection of published/publicly available regional and mine-specific monitoring program information and reports using existing, publicly available materials for both scientific and Traditional Knowledge based work, all related to the Bathurst caribou herd more specifically (Objective 1);
- Collection of recent and more current Bathurst caribou herd monitoring program information (both scientific and Traditional Knowledge) through interviews with mining industry and consultant staff, government representatives, communities and Aboriginal governments, and other researchers (Objective 1); and
- Synthesis of this documentation and preparation of a descriptive review of Bathurst caribou related monitoring programs (Objective 1).

Phase II

- Development and preparation of a comparative review framework and criteria, including evaluation of monitoring programs against best practices, compatibility of programs, and ability to use data for cumulative effects assessment and management (Objectives 2-5); and
- Application of the comparative review framework and criteria to the current monitoring programs (Objectives 2-4);
- Identification of research and monitoring gaps for improved cumulative effects assessment and management of the Bathurst caribou herd. For example, further analysis of up-to-date collared caribou data in relation to avoidance of human activity sites. Additional potential partners and funding needs may be identified. (Objectives 4-5)

Phase III

- A workshop or series of workshops are tentatively planned to verify and add to the study results from Phases I and II, including the scientific and Traditional Knowledge work. Different workshop techniques or methods may be used to assist in soliciting feedback from various interested parties, but efforts to allow for an integrated and comprehensive review will be pursued. (Objectives 1-5)
- Workshop results will be incorporated into the final study report with recommendations from the research team on the objectives as outlined above. (Objectives 1-5)

Deliverables and Timelines

Phase I—Draft Report on Description of Current Caribou Related Monitoring Programs for the Bathurst Herd

August 2007

Possible Stakeholder Workshop

September 2007

Phase II—Draft Comparative Framework for Caribou Related Monitoring Programs
October 2007

Phase II—Draft Comparative Review of Caribou Related Monitoring Programs
November 2007

Phase III—Workshop(s) to Verify and Add to Study Results
December 2007

Phase III—Draft Study Report
January 2008

Phase III—Final Study Report
February 2008

Budget

Preliminary figures reflecting the scope and emphasis of the work are shown below as estimates only. No decisions have been made on the research team or the selection method that could take the form of a direct contract or a request for proposal approach. Once a team is selected, or based on a proposal, the budget figures with specific tasks and days of work required, can be developed more fully. The IEMA has shown some interest in managing the financial aspects of the project based on partnership approach to funding and overall management.

Phase I--\$30,000

Phase II--\$50,000

Phase III--\$50,000