

Inter-Agency Coordinating Team (IACT) for Ekati Diamond Project

January 23, 1998
Meeting #5

Attendance:

Mary Tapsell (Chair)	DIAND -Env. & Conservation
Kathryn Emmett	RWED
Maria Healy	DFO
Scott Williams	BHP
John Witteman	BHP
David Newton	BHP
Anne Wilson	EC
Darren Unrau	DIAND -South Mackenzie District
Greg Cook	DIAND - Waters
Hal Mills	Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency

Regrets: John Ramsey, NRCAN

Round Table Updates:

Greg Cook: Currently have received and passed out 6 plans submitted by BHP for review. Plans were submitted on time. Working on returning the BHP security deposit for the B Licence. The next Water Board meeting is January 30.

Darren Unrau: Nothing major to report. Inspections are ongoing - was up to site last week. The winter road is now open.

Anne Wilson: Nothing to report.

Hal Mills: The Agency met January 10 & 11. DFO made a presentation and formally asked the Agency to reconsider their position on the habitat rehabilitation fund. The Agency has promised to revisit this issue and get back to DFO on their decision.

The Agency's policy on information exchange has been approved - but important to note that this can be changed if/when required in the future. The Agency is not satisfied with the response they received from the Water Board and feels that the Water Board did not address the main issue of concern - giving permission to BHP to release documents to the Agency. Hal Mills recently met with David Livingstone, David Milburn & Mary Tapsell to further discuss a solution to this problem. A letter is currently being drafted under David Livingstone's signature and will be sent to all the regulatory agencies.

There have been frequent meeting and discussions with Golder & Associates about the Wildlife

Monitoring Plan and upcoming February workshop. Darrel Beauleau (Treaty 8 Dene) has provided an name of a person they would like to nominate to sit on the Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency. The nomination is currently under review and we will be informed if an appointment is made.

Next Monitoring Agency meeting is scheduled for the weekend - March 14 & 15/98.

Kathryn Emmett: Nothing major to report, discussions have been on-going between Golder & Associates and staff in the Wildlife & Fisheries Division.

Maria Healy: Repeated DFO's involvement in the last Agency meeting, and mentioned that at least three DFO staff will be attending the Aquatic effects Monitoring workshop in February.

Mary Tapsell: Mary gave a quick update that the conditions stated in Article XIII of the Environmental Agreement have been met (i.e. Security Deposit was received on time, and after a wee bit of hunting, Mary was able to receive the correct documentation showing that BHP has met their requirement of providing an irrevocable guarantee in the amount of 20 million).

Mary made reference to the recent letters written by BHP inviting participation in the upcoming February meetings. Mary pointed out to BHP that they should not lose site of the primary purpose of these workshops . . . that being to fix up the Wildlife and Aquatic Effects Monitoring Plans as requested in the last review of the Construction Phase Environmental Management Plan. Mary was asked by several members of IACT to bring this to BHP's attention.

Mary reiterated what Hal had mentioned about a letter that would be forth coming from DIAND to the regulatory agencies addressing the issue of BHP and regulatory agencies releasing documents relating to Environmental issues directly to the Monitoring Agency.

Mary will be on holidays from Jan.28 - Feb 27. She will write to members (i.e. federal) regarding the way information flow should be handled in here absence.

Scott Williams: Scott reported that construction is on schedule. There are a lot of winter construction projects such as the rebuilding of Grizzly Creek, frozen core dams, etc. BHP plans to invite some senior people from DFO, DIAND, EC and hopefully one person from the Monitoring Agency to the site sometime around March 10 or 11, so they can show people directly up front the progress and explain their environmental management techniques on some of these projects.

Scott has already received a draft copy of the Annual Report, and it is progressing on time.

BHP is presently confirming workshop participation. Regret to inform members that the Traditional Knowledge Workshop has been canceled. BHP did not get sufficient support for participation from the aboriginal groups. BHP will try a small more individual approach in consulting with the aboriginal groups, as they claimed they would not ne comfortable discussing this topic in such a large forum.

John Witteman: Provided a brief update on the progress for the upcoming Wildlife and Aquatic Effects Monitoring Workshops. Hal Mills asked if there would be some form of a draft monitoring program released prior to the AEM workshop. John and Hal discussed this issue and Scott concluded that he agreed with the need of some kind of "working document" and they would see what they can pull together. John introduced David Newton, a BHP employee who has been brought tot the NWT to work specifically on the development of the Operating Environmental Management Plan. Reference was made to the Jan. 20/98 letter signed by Scott Williams. This letter outlines an approach BHP plans to take for the development of the OEMP. Mary mentioned that the IACT group can be the conduit for passing information on to their respect agencies, but they are not the official body to comment on this approach.

David Newton: David reviewed the contents of the Jan. 20/98 letter. He explained that he has been brought on to coordinate the program and he believes in an open, two-way flow of information. The OEMP will be taking the same format as the CPEMP. David informed members that he will be developing a schedule for reviewing portions of the document. The question of an electronic format was raised by Hal Mills. Scott mentioned that they are working towards producing an electronic format - this is something BHP would like to have too.

Next meeting is scheduled for Friday, 1:00pm, February 27/98. BHP boardroom - 11th Floor Precambrium Bldg. Maria Healy has kindly volunteered to act as the interim Chair. Please let Maria know if you have any specific items you want put on the agenda - otherwise, we will continue in an informal manner with a round table discussion on activities.