

02 April 2008

Andrew Nichols
Environmental Specialist, Ekati Diamond Mine
BHP Billiton Diamonds Inc.
#1102, 4920 – 52nd Street
Yellowknife, NT Canada X1A 3T1

Dear Mr. Nichols:

Wildlife Research Permit application NSR 062-08

The Department has reviewed your application for a Wildlife Research Permit (WRP) and we note some similar deficiencies from last year. Specifically, the methodology section is vague. The lack of pertinent detail is important because the application establishes the terms and conditions of the permit. Therefore, there must be sufficient information in the application to clearly understand the activities proposed and how they will be conducted.

An example of a common deficiency in many applications we see occurs when the applicant proposes to conduct surveys. The application should state whether these surveys are aerial or ground based. If an aerial survey, we also expect to see the type of aircraft used, height above ground, speed, and number of flights expected. All are important factors to consider when evaluating proposed methods.

The Department believes the WRP application should be a stand-alone document in plain language that does not require the reader to search for supporting documents. These supporting documents may be referenced if the applicant wishes, but typically the relevant information we seek simply requires a few sentences or paragraphs.

The summary of activities conducted last year is satisfactory and this requirement is considered complete. Therefore, the Department only requires Ekati mine submit an addendum to your application that clarifies the proposed methodology. Once we receive the addendum and consider any comments from the communities, I would be in a position to issue a permit.

Sincerely,



Lance Schmidt
A/Regional Superintendent
North Slave Region

- c. Dave Abernethy, BHP Billiton Diamonds Inc.
Susan Fleck, Director, Wildlife & Fisheries, ENR-Headquarters
Fred Mandeville, Manager, Wildlife & Environment, ENR-North Slave
Dean Cluff, Regional Biologist, ENR-North Slave
Bruno Croft, Bathurst Caribou Monitoring Specialist, ENR-North Slave
Raymond Bourget, Senior Wildlife Officer, ENR-North Slave
Independent Environment Monitoring Agency
Yellowknives Dene First Nation
North Slave Metis Alliance
Wek'èezhii Renewable Resources Board