

NORTH SLAVE MÉTIS ALLIANCE

PO Box 2301 Yellowknife, NT X1A 2P7



September 5, 2007

David Abernethy
BHP Billiton
David.R.Abernethy@bhpbilliton.com

RE: Ekati's 2006 Wildlife Effects Monitoring Program (WEMP) Report

Dear Mr. Abernethy,

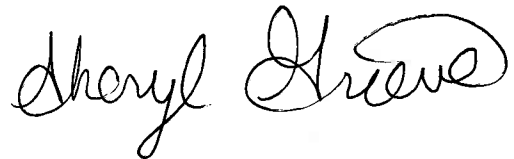
The North Slave Métis Alliance (NSMA) staff have reviewed the aforementioned report, and provide their preliminary comments and concerns below. Please take note that the NSMA expects Ekati to organize a community meeting with the NSMA to present the 2006 WEMP report to members. Only following such a meeting could the NSMA provide its final comments and concerns.

- **Wolf Mortality:** The NSMA is disappointed that they learned of this case of extreme starvation of a middle aged adult wolf at the Ekati mine site over a year after the occurrence. The opportunity to provide traditional knowledge at this autopsy has long since passed and after reading ENRs report in Appendix 3-9 we are still left with questions on what may have been the true cause of death. Caribou were in the "vicinity" of Ekati over a week before the death of the wolf, even so "vicinity" is not defined. The wolf had no signs of physical injury, parasites or disease, but was an adult in the prime of its life who resorted to eating garbage the last few days of its life. However, it seems as if no blood test or chemical test of the animal's tissues was conducted. We understand that wolf populations are on the decline due to declining caribou numbers and that this wolf mortality could have been the result of this normal decline. However, we feel that a major source of long term knowledge that would have provided the best answers has been completely ignored and the ENR's report leaves more questions than answers.
- **Wildlife Incidents:** The NSMA notes that many of the wildlife incidents were the result of employees having left doors open. NSMA has received reports that doors are propped open in the travel way between the accommodations and office building, even though they display a sign stating they must remain closed. NSMA suggests this is a safety issue that should be addressed further by Ekati and an education and monitoring program should be implemented.
- **Caribou and Roads/Incorporation of Traditional Knowledge into WEMP:** We feel the Caribou and Roads program involving KIA elders, and previously having involved Yellowknives Dene elders, is a great way of incorporating Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit into the WEMP. NSMA requests that BHP provide an opportunity to NSMA members to participate in this program or a similar one so

that Métis traditional knowledge can be included in the WEMP and specifically caribou monitoring at Ekati. One of the recommendations from participants in the 2005 Caribou and Roads report (May 2006) asked for “a program that involves elders from all communities within the regular Environmental wildlife monitoring program during the spring, summer and fall.”

- **Management Triggers:** We would like to be provided with more details on wildlife management plans and specifically management triggers described in the WEMP. What level of effect must be observed by the WEMP before it triggers a management action? In addition, these triggers must be determined only after consultation with the NSMA and other interested parties.

Sincerely,



Sheryl Grieve
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North Slave Métis Alliance
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