News Release
February 1, 2016

The Review Board releases its Report of Environmental Assessment for Dominion Diamond's Jay Project, and expansion of the Ekati diamond mine (EA1314-01)

YELLOWKNIFE, NWT – The Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board (Review Board) has completed an environmental assessment of Dominion Diamond's Jay Project proposal. The Board recommends to the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) Minister of Lands (the Minister) that the project be approved subject to the implementation of measures to prevent significant adverse impacts on the environment.

The environmental assessment for EA1314-01, the Jay Project, was completed in nine months of Review Board time, well within the legislated timeline of 16 months for an environmental assessment as allowed by the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act*.

Today the Report of Environmental Assessment and Reasons for Decision (the Report) for the Jay Project was released by the Review Board. This Report describes the Board's findings on the Jay Project.

The Jay Project is an expansion of the Ekati Diamond Mine. It consists of open pit mining within a horseshoe-shaped dike in Lac du Sauvage, transport of ore in trucks approximately 30 km along the proposed Jay Road and existing Misery Haul Road and processing of ore at the existing Ekati site. A waste rock storage area will be located on land adjacent to the Jay Pit and fine processed kimberlite from the mill will be backfilled into the mined-out Koala and Panda Pits at the main Ekati site. The developer of the Project is Dominion Diamond Ekati Corporation.

After careful consideration, the Review Board concludes that the proposed Jay Project should be approved subject to the implementation of measures to prevent significant adverse impacts on the environment and to mitigate the causes of public concern. The measures are designed to mitigate the potential for cumulative impacts from the Jay Project, combined with the effects of other activities.

In order to reduce these impacts so they are no longer significant, the Review Board recommends a suite of mitigation measures. These measures require that the Jay Project will be designed and operated to:

- improve the design and use of the roads to minimize impacts to caribou
- minimize dust from road use
- fund an Elders group to advise on the construction, operation and monitoring of the Jay road

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- offset remaining impacts to caribou from the Jay Project by implementing mitigation at other areas of the Ekati mine site
- ensure clean surface waters at the Jay and Misery pits so the area can be used for Aboriginal traditional uses after the Jay Project closes
- prevent impacts to the Narrows
- engage with communities to better manage social impacts and improve the strategy for employment of women
- use Traditional Knowledge to better design and operate the Jay Project
- create a cultural camp to offset temporary loss of use of the land
- initiate follow-up monitoring and reporting on the implementation and effectiveness of these measures

The Review Board finds that applying these measures will mitigate the causes of public concern. The Review Board recommends, under subparagraph 128(1)(b)(ii) of the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act*, that the Project be approved subject to the measures described in this report.

In the opinion of the Review Board, implementation of these measures along with the developer's commitments as described in the Report of Environmental Assessment will mitigate significant adverse impacts and address public concern.

The Report has been sent to the Minister of Lands GNWT for consideration. Once the Report is accepted by the Minister, the Jay Project can move to the permitting and licensing phase.

The Review Board thanks Dominion Diamond and all parties for their participation during the course of this environmental assessment.

The Review Board's Report of Environmental Assessment and Reasons for Decision document for the Jay Project, EA1314-01 is available online in the public registry at: http://www.reviewboard.ca/registry/project.php?project_id=674

For further information, please contact

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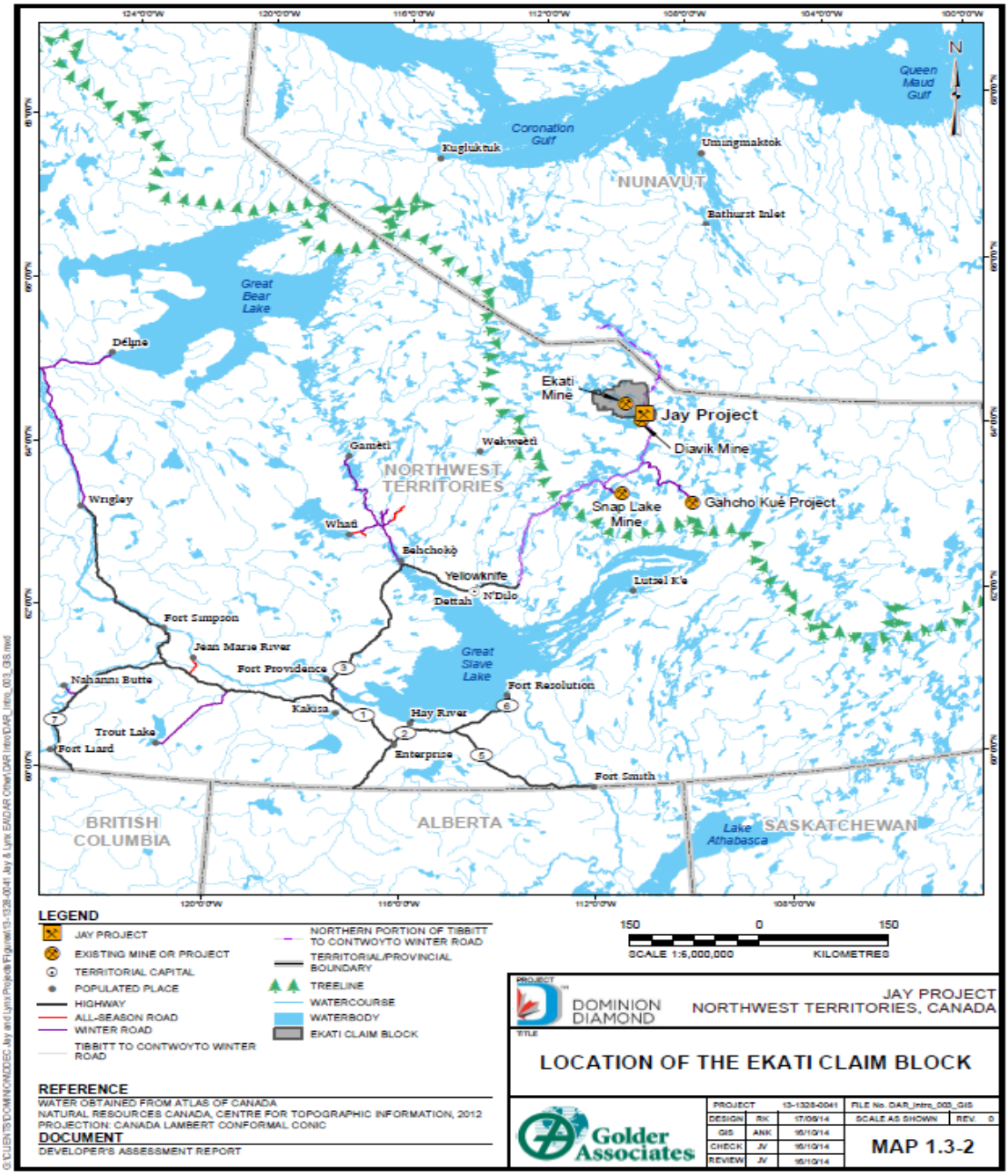
About the Review Board

The Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board was established by the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act in* 1998 as an independent administrative

tribunal responsible for the environmental impact assessment process in the Mackenzie Valley, Northwest Territories. As a co-management board, aboriginal land claim organizations nominate half of the board members, and the federal and territorial governments nominate the other half of the board members. The Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada appoints all members to the Review Board including the Chairperson.



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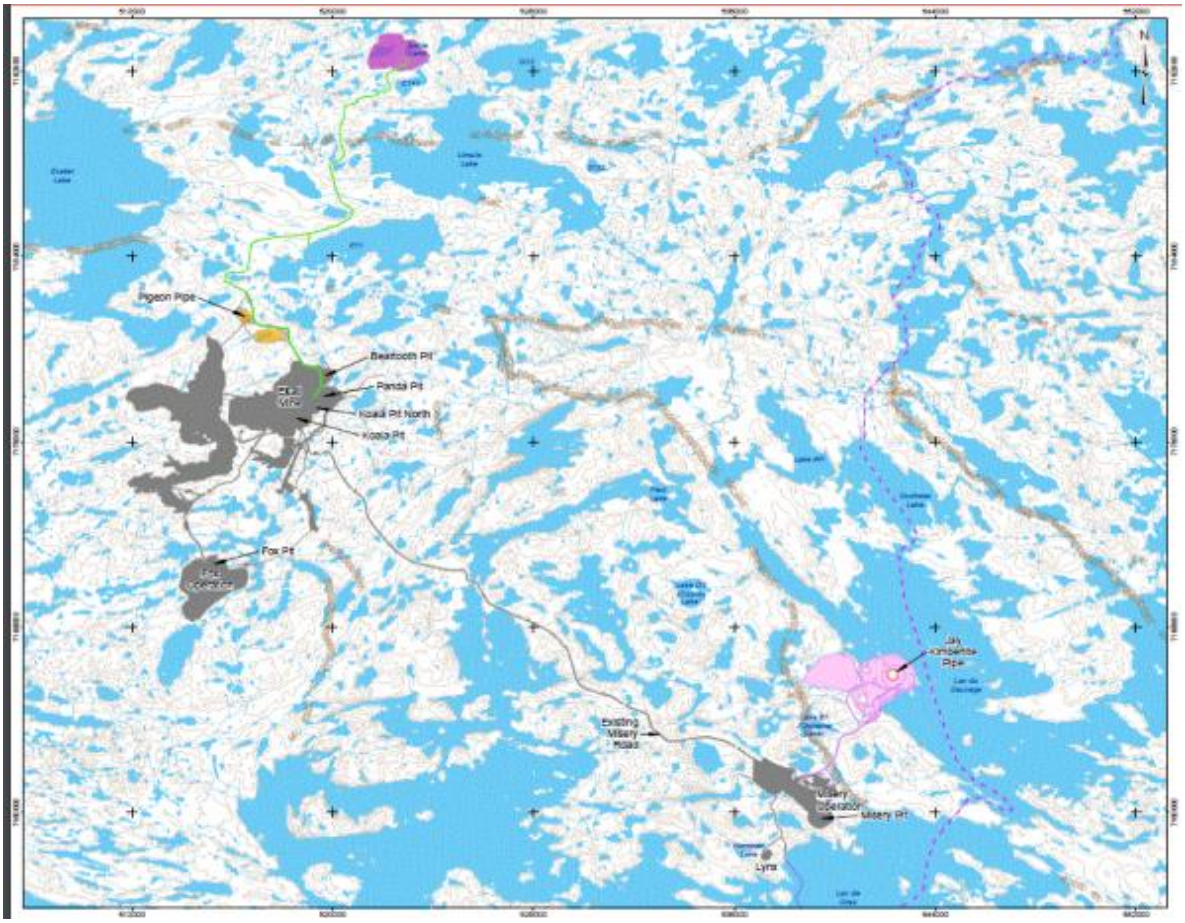
Location of the Ekati mine and Jay Project



Location of the Jay Project at bottom right in pink, and the Ekati main site at middle left

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