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Chuck Hubert
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Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board
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Dear Mr. Hubert:

Gahcho Kué Project Wildlife Monitoring Workshop September 18, 2012

De Beers Canada Inc. (De Beers) is pleased to provide the attached Gahcho Kué Project Wildlife Monitoring Workshop - September 18, 2012 summary report, which was prepared by the workshop facilitator *Momentum Training Services*. This workshop, along with the Wildlife Working Group meetings fulfilled three key commitments made during the May, 2012 Technical Sessions, including:

10. De Beers is committed to using a collaborative approach – with communities and regulators – in developing the Wildlife Effects Monitoring Plan (WEMP).
11. De Beers to commit to forming a working group – with communities and regulators – to develop a management framework for the WEMP, and hosting a workshop – mid to late September.
12. De Beers to provide more detail on the WEMP prior to the workshop mentioned in previous commitment.

The Working Group meetings were held on August 7, 2012 and September 5, 2012, with a workshop on September 18, 2012. The scientific and Traditional Knowledge ideas and suggestions provided to De Beers through these events helped shape the format and content of the WEMP and revised Wildlife Effects Mitigation and Management Plan submitted to the Panel on October 4, 2012.

Please note that following the request made by the Government of the Northwest Territories in their technical report, going forward, these plans will be renamed as the Wildlife Effects Monitoring Program (WEMP) and Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat Protection Plan (WWHPP) respectively.



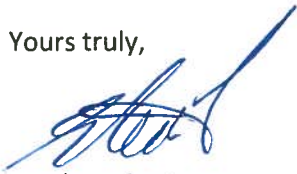


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While the WEMP and WWHPP as submitted provide a high level detail and certainty regarding wildlife monitoring and mitigation actions, the plans will remain flexible and are expected to adapt over time. De Beers will continue to engage with communities and regulators to inform and adapt the program as required.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Yours truly,



Stephen Lines
Superintendent, EA & Permitting

Attachment (1): Workshop Summary Report

c: Mike Tollis, Lands & Wildlife Manager, Lutsel K'e Dene First Nation
Rosy Bjornson, Resource Management Coordinator, Deninu Kue First Nation
Todd Slack, Research & Regulatory Specialist, Yellowknives Dene First Nation
Stephen Ellis, IMA Implementation Coordinator, NWT Treaty #8 Tribal Corporation
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Betty Villbrun, President, NWT Metis Nation
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Marc Lange, Manager, Environment & Conservation, AANDC
Jan Adamczewski, Wildlife Biologist, Government of the NWT
Robert Mulders, Wildlife Biologist, Government of the NWT
Gavin More, Manager, Environmental Assessment, Government of the NWT
James Hodson, Environmental Assessment Coordinator, Environment Canada
Lisa Lowman, Head, Environmental Assessment North, Environment Canada
Suzanne Carriere, Wildlife Biologist, Government of the NWT
Jennie Rausch, Shorebird Biologist, Environment Canada

Summary Report

Wildlife Monitoring Plan Workshop
De Beers Gahcho Kué Project
September 18, 2012

Prepared by



11/1/2012

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Overview

Wildlife Monitoring Plan Workshop De Beers Gahcho Kué Project September 18, 2012

At the Technical Sessions in May 2012, De Beers committed to support Traditional Knowledge (TK) monitoring for the Gahcho Kué Project and implement a collaborative approach with communities and regulators in developing the Wildlife Monitoring Plan (WMP). The Panel's technical advisor on wildlife suggested that De Beers Canada Inc. (De Beers) could coordinate a WMP working group to help develop the WMP in collaboration with community representatives and regulators. The Tłı̄chô Government further suggested that De Beers could hold a WMP workshop to obtain input from a broader audience. De Beers committed to both initiatives, which were carried out prior to the submission of the WMP to inform its content. The WMP working group meetings were held on August 7, 2012 and September 5, 2012 with a workshop on September 18, 2012.

De Beers hosted the workshop at the Explorer Hotel in Yellowknife, NT with the intention to incorporate good science, TK and Environmental Assessment (EA) practice in wildlife management and monitoring for the proposed Gahcho Kué Project.

Attendees included aboriginal community representatives from the Deninu Kué First Nation, Lutsel K'e First Nation, NWT Métis Nation and North Slave Métis Alliance, Tłı̄chô Government, and Yellowknives Dene First Nation as well as representatives from De Beers , Environment and Natural Resources (ENR), Environment Canada, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, and Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board (MVEIRB),.

The Workshop included a combination of information-sharing presentations as well as an opportunity for all participants to form break-out groups to discuss further opportunities to strengthen the proposed WMP for the Gahcho Kué Project.

Agenda

The three main objectives of the workshop included facilitating communication between science and TK holders; sharing information and lessons learned to inform on the scientific approach for monitoring wildlife; and sharing TK and community values on wildlife to inform wildlife monitoring.

The Agenda addressed the following items:

1. Workshop Context
2. Caribou Monitoring Objectives Break-Out Groups
3. Carnivore Monitoring Presentations
4. Bird Monitoring Presentations
5. Next Steps

Workshop Context - Stephen Lines, De Beers Canada

Following the opening prayer, review of the agenda, and sharing of participant expectations, the facilitator invited Stephen Lines from De Beers to present the context of the workshop to the participants.

Mr. Lines (De Beers) began his presentation by highlighting the location of the proposed Gahcho Kué Project and followed with a brief explanation of the work done to date to develop the WMP including the Panel scoping in 2006, the EIS review, the technical sessions, the upcoming WMP draft to be submitted at the end of September 2012, the approaching public hearings and Water License process to follow.

Mr. Lines emphasized to the participants that the WMP is a flexible document and will change over time as needed.

Caribou Monitoring Objectives Break-Out Groups

Context

During the two working group meetings that were held prior to this workshop, participants discussed potential caribou monitoring themes leading into objectives. Draft objectives were presented to the workshop participants who were then asked to review in smaller break-out groups, revise as they saw fit and present their findings to all workshop attendees at the end of the day.

The potential caribou monitoring objectives discussed were as follows:

- To identify instances where the Project presents direct physical hazards to caribou
- To identify risks to the health of caribou that spend time foraging around the mine site
- To determine if caribou behavior changes with distance from the mine (Handley 2010)
- To confirm that the total direct habitat loss does not exceed predictions
- To determine whether the Zone of Influence changes in relation to mine activity (Handley 2010)
- To determine the amount and type of public use of the Project Winter Access Road
- Contribute to the Bathurst Management Plan

Method

The break-out groups were organized to ensure a balance of participants from the past two working group meetings as well as De Beers representatives/consultants to scribe and capture the main discussion points of the participants of each break-out group on flip-chart paper to later present back to all workshop attendees.

After spending approximately two hours discussing the potential caribou monitoring objectives and consideration of local and traditional knowledge, one participant from each break-out group presented the main findings of their group to all workshop participants.

Break-Out Group Findings

The main findings were as follows:

- Employ Aboriginal Environmental Monitors for site duties, carry out monitoring programs with scientists, and monitor the use of the Project Winter Access Road in conjunction with Project protective services;
- Employ a senior level TK Position at De Beers;
- Provide a cabin at Kirk Lake for community monitoring use and TK cultural events;
- If caribou are present near the Project Winter Access Road while the winter road is active, then initiate a survey by community-based monitors;
- Coordinate site visits at key times of the year;
- Facilitate better communication to the communities;
- Develop public education materials and signage on conservation and hunting from the Project Winter Access Road; and
- Include a new objective in the WMP: To facilitate the sharing of TK and science, and to include local knowledge in environmental monitoring.

Carnivore Monitoring Presentations

Robert Mulders from ENR shared two carnivore monitoring presentations with the participants - one addressed grizzly bears in the surrounding area of the Project and the other addressed wolverines.

Carnivore Monitoring - Grizzly Bears

The purpose of this presentation was to review existing grizzly bear monitoring programs undertaken at the mines and in Nunavut and to discuss possible study design options for the future.

Traditional Knowledge and community input will continue to be considered in the design and implementation of the grizzly bear program.

- Community land users will be directly involved in the field selection of sampling locations for all the posts.
- Community members will also be hired to participate in the deployment of posts and collection of hair samples, where their observations will be recorded.
- Elders could also be asked to provide a set of guidelines or criteria for locating posts.

ENR is encouraged by:

- Collaborative approach taken by the mines
- Participation of communities in monitoring
- Adoption of standardized survey protocols
- Broad regional sampling as a more appropriate scale for wide ranging species
- Data will be more robust for detecting changes in abundance and distribution

Carnivore Monitoring - Wolverines

This presentation focused primarily on the value of wolverine hair snagging and the DNA data that it provides to better understand wolverine populations and distribution across habitat in the north.

During 2005 and 2006, BHPB, Diavik and DeBeers collaborated with ENR to use the same DNA hair snagging technique. Experienced northern hunters and trappers participated in these surveys.

This allowed for estimating wolverine population density and trend using DNA-based mark-recapture methods. Similar initiatives would be incredibly beneficial through the life of the Gahcho Kué Project.

Bird Monitoring Presentations

Peregrine Falcons

Suzanne Carriere from the Wildlife Division of ENR presented the Biology Status Surveys of Peregrine Falcons which are currently of special concern on the Species at Risk Act (SARA) due to their low number in overall population.

The presentation focused on the overall implications for industry, which included:

- Nests and cliffs-are protected under SARA as “Residences”
- Nests and birds are protected under NWT Wildlife Act
- Zero disturbance causing abandonment
- Monitoring requirements
- Data-Information sharing

Program for Regional and International Shorebird Monitoring

Jennie Rausch with the Canadian Wildlife Service of Environment Canada addressed the topic of Arctic monitoring and the Program for Regional and International Shorebird Monitoring (PRISM) approach with the workshop participants.

PRISM objectives include:

- Estimate population size
- Monitor trends in population size
- Monitor shorebirds at stopover locations
- Determine distribution, abundance, and habitats utilized throughout the year
- Assist local managers in meeting shorebird conservation goals

There is an opportunity for De Beers to incorporate a shoreline bird monitoring program such as PRISM in the WMP for the Gahcho Kué Project. Surveys could provide previously unknown information on population size and distribution as well as knowledge of migratory bird distribution and abundance in areas not previously surveyed. Surveys also provide baseline bird and habitat data to inform environmental assessments and method for baseline monitoring. The suggested PRISM method allows for community participation in the surveys and is an excellent opportunity to encourage further TK in the WMP.

Next Steps

De Beers is planning to travel back to the communities to continue the Project planning discussions. Engagement activities such as this workshop are part of an ongoing dialogue between De Beers and parties (i.e., Government and Aboriginal groups) that will be undertaken annually as part of the Adaptive Management Committee or similar entity. De Beers values the opportunity to work collaboratively with Aboriginal groups and government on the evolution of management and monitoring programs.

A goal of the WMP and adaptive management will be to facilitate on-going sharing of traditional and local knowledge and science in environmental monitoring to improve communication with communities and regulators. This approach will facilitate De Beers' commitment to support TK for the life of the Project.