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August 11, 2019 **By Email**

Mark Cliffe-Phillips
Executive Director
Mackenzie Valley Review Board
Box 938
#200 Scotia Centre, 5102-50th Avenue
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2N7

RE: Depositing Processed Kimberlite in Pits and Underground EA1819-01

Dear Mark Cliffe-Phillips,

The Yellowknives Dene First Nation (YKDFN) herewith submit two (2) reports:

1. **Weledeh Yellowknives Dene a traditional knowledge study of Ek'ati, 1997**
2. **Lands that are Wide and Open: Traditional Knowledge Report, 2015**

Both reports are submitted for full public viewing and are to be posted as part of the public record.

YKDFN sincerely thank the Mackenzie Valley Review Board its facilitation.

M. A. Thomas

Machel A. Thomas
Regulatory Research Officer
Yellowknife Dene First Nation
Department of Land and Environment

cc.: Johanne Black, YKDFN Land and Environment (By email)
Kate Mansfield, MVEIRB (By email)
Catherine Fairbairn, MVEIRB (By email)

Dedication

This history is dedicated to Weledeh Yellowknives Elders,
and especially to former Chief, *Elder Joseph Charlo*,
who passed their knowledge to the next generation.

NOTE

Traditional knowledge of Weledeh Yellowknives Dene in this report is not to be split up, placed in databases, or taken out of context; neither is it to be combined with the traditional knowledge of other indigenous peoples. Information in this report is not to be considered as part of either "Phase I" or "Phase II" of BHP's traditional knowledge project. Neither Phase I or Phase II has been defined or described so that participants in this project might understand what BHP intended by them.

CITATION OR REFERENCE TO THIS REPORT

Weledeh Yellowknives Dene (1997). "Weledeh Yellowknives Dene: a traditional knowledge study of Ek'ati". Dettah: Yellowknives Dene First Nation Council.

Weledeh Yellowknives Dene
a traditional knowledge study of Ek'ati

Contents

Note that maps from mining companies and photographs are separate from this report.

Weledeh Yellowknives Dene:
a traditional knowledge study of Ek'ati

Maps in this Report

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Report Introduction

Since 1995, Weledeh Yellowknives Dene have been gathering the knowledge of their ancestors, primarily for use in assessing potential impacts on their people and territory from rapidly increasing development by government and industry. Until very recently, such knowledge was taught to young Dene by their Elders from a very early age. Five- to nine-year-olds would listen to Elders speak repeatedly of their lives, of the ways they have lived on the land. These youth would then learn by doing, pursuing their people's ways as they had been told, guided by Elders and experienced land users as they learned to use the land. In the past, as adults gained knowledge of their own, they would in turn teach the children of their community.

These patterns changed abruptly when, from 1959, Dene were relocated off their lands and moved into towns and their children taken forcibly to residential schools. There, young Dene were taught ways that were not traditional to their people. Most Elders and some young men continued travelling and living on the land, using their town homes as a base, much as they would have used summer fish camps in the past. The gap between the traditional knowledge of such experienced land users and young people in communities near Yellowknife has grown to the point where tape recorders and video cameras now capture the words that used to be repeated around camp fires.

Weledeh Yellowknives Dene are claimed by anthropologists to be extinct. For this reason, part of this report briefly recounts the history of the people and the impact this unfortunate claim has had on them and the lands they have occupied and used since time immemorial. The people live in communities located in what used to be their summer-use lands – Weledeh-Cheh. The name of this area and the people comes from a fish, *welèh* in the people's language, that is now extinct from overfishing by non-Dene soon after they came to the area in the 1930s. Other than missionaries, traders, the indian agent/doctor, and occasional police officers – all rare visitors – the people had not seen strangers in their territory for almost a hundred years since a trading post in Weleh-Cheh closed in the early 1800s. The arrival of mining prospectors brought sweeping changes to the people's lives and to the lands on which they had always relied for survival. These events and impacts are included in this report.

In the past and until very recently, Weledeh Yellowknives Dene spent the majority of each year in the open spaces of the barrens north of the treeline. The traditional territory of these people and their T'satsaot'ine relatives extended from what is now called Great Slave Lake to the Coppermine River and, on rare occasions, as far as the

Arctic coast. The lake identified on official maps as Contwoyto is called by Weledeh Yellowknives Dene "Lake with many camps", referring to the winter hunting settlements of their forefathers. Late each summer, Weledeh Yellowknives families would paddle and portage along trails used by hundreds of generations to winter hunting camps, just below the treeline and farther north. The people know the barrens are a place where life is difficult – but not barren of life. Plants, birds, fish, and animals sustain the people to this day. This northern part of the people's territory had been free from industrial development until a gold mine was built on Contwoyto Lake. In the 1990s, diamond mining projects are being developed at Lac de Gras, called *Ek'ati* (*trans.* "Fat lake") by Weledeh Yellowknives Dene. Until then, the only industrial activity this lake and the lands surrounding it have known is the construction and use of a winter road across the eastern part of the frozen lake. Each year, this winter road is built on top of a traditional Weledeh Yellowknives trail from Mackay Lake to Contwoyto Lake.

The Ek'ati area, where nine (to date) open-pit diamond mines are planned, is significant to Weledeh Yellowknives Dene. The people call the westernmost peninsula of the large island in the lake "pointing in the direction of Great Slave Lake", referring to where the people stay in summer. The people also have traditional names for the lands around Ek'ati, placing the lake at the centre of their territory: the name for the lands south of Ek'ati means "under the sun"; names for lands in the other directions mean where the east, west, and north winds blow. Ek'ati is at the heart of Weledeh Yellowknives history and life. Hunting and trapping at Ek'ati by Weledeh Yellowknives Dene has been less frequent since 1986, when it became too difficult for hunters to go there for a long time without their family.

During the federal government's environmental assessment process for five of these mines, it became apparent that no true baseline data could be collected for Ek'ati in order to measure cumulative effects from mining impacts. Scientific information describing the pre-development state of the environment was not available because there had been considerable disturbance to the area before any data were collected. Scientists doing fieldwork on behalf of mining companies for brief periods of time in the barrens cannot report environmental patterns on the scale known by indigenous Elders who have used the land all their lives. The federal government recognises that the traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples can contribute to environmental assessment reviews of development projects on their traditional lands.

This report is a result of documentation of traditional knowledge collected and analyzed by Weledeh Yellowknives Dene from 1995 to 1997. The report is much shorter than the information gathered. Weledeh Yellowknives knowledge of ancestral and more recent occupation and use of the land is pervasive, and the people recognise that some of it is of greater interest to their community than to mining companies and government. Because this project was conducted after the 1994–96 environmental

assessment process, information in this report was not available to the specialists selected to determine whether or how the first five diamond mines at Ek'ati could proceed. Elders participating in this project are profoundly disappointed that their lands are to be destroyed to obtain diamonds, something that has no use or value to the people. Weledeh Yellowknives Dene hope that this report can help keep impacts from approved diamond mines at Ek'ati — and any additional mining projects being planned — to a minimum.

Weledeh Yellowknives Dene:
a traditional knowledge study of Ek'ati

Recommendations

Recommendation #l

Weledeh Yellowknives Dene Elders have already seen the impacts from mining - in Weledeh-Cheh and in Akaitcho Territory. The Elders and Dene land owners in this project, who believe in coexistence, do not want this kind of exploitation to continue in their territory. When Treaty 8 signed by our former Chief Sizeh Drygeese of the Yellowknives with the Crown in Right of Great Britain, the Queen requested the right to live in our territory in a spirit of coexistence. The Weledeh Yellowknives continue to maintain the Treaty relationship that is binding on the state of Canada and any party who enters into our territory. Therefore, it is recommended that a percentage of profits, jobs and compensation for loss of land use go to the Weledeh Yellowknives Dene First Nation.

The Elders and Dene land owners of this project strongly recommend that Weledeh Yellowknives Dene land owners must participate actively in developing mechanisms in monitoring and in monitoring impacts from mining operations and their effects on their territory . Participants in this Weledeh Yellowknives project want to see a formal agreement in place that the mining companies will work together with their people throughout mining projects (including reclamation and closure) to develop, implement, and monitor ways to protect the water, land, animals, the people's continued use of their lands, and the evidence of the people's ancestral use of the lands.

Recommendation #2

Weledeh Yellowknives Elders and Dene land owners in this project have made recommendations in four major areas on ways to reduce impacts from mining in the Akaitcho Territory barrenlands.

Recommendations:

A - Ancestral evidence of Weledeh Yellowknives Dene
B - *Ndeh* (ie, the environment: land, animals, fish, birds, plants) and the Peoples' continued use of their traditional lands
C - Water (ie, Ek'ati, streams flowing into and out of it, and groundwater)
D - Water or land as a result of construction

As the Indigenous Peoples of these territories, Weledeh Yellowknives Dene want to be continually and fully informed prior to giving their consent to any mining or any changes to mining projects, including the location of **any** minerals.

Recommendations
A - Ancestral Evidence of Weledeh Yellowknives Dene

Recommendation #2-A-1
Mining companies must get the consent of the Weledeh Yellowknives Elders for the use of their territories, lands and water and to monitor the impacts of mining operations. There are particular areas of the territory which has particular significance to the Weledeh Yellowknives Dene that must be respected by any group wishing to enter into the territory in the spirit of co-existence.

Recommendation #2-A-2
In summer 1998, mining companies - particularly BHP - should take Weledeh Yellowknives Elders and Dene land owners to sites previously identified and to sites known to the people where ancestral evidence can be found.

Avoidance of burials and significant sites

Recommendation #2-A-3
On the sensitivity map, areas identified as "green space" are to be totally avoided by the mining companies and their employees and subcontractors and their employees. These areas include burial sites, caches, and ecologically and environmental sensitive areas of great importance to animals and fish.

Recommendation #2-A-4
Weledeh Yellowknives burial sites must be marked so that anyone from the mines can easily see and respect them. Graves can be marked with large rocks placed at each corner and rocks in the shape of a cross placed over the grave. Rocks placed like this are not likely to be moved by caribou.

Indigenous Peoples' identification of sites

Recommendation #2-A-5
Mining companies shall fund Weledeh Yellowknives Dene to identify significant areas on shorelines, islands, and other places the companies are not telling their contract archaeologists to investigate.

Recommendation #2-A-6
All Weledeh Yellowknives Dene archeological and ancestral camp sites within the BHP block and surroundings are to be identified by Dene and protected. There will be no activity on identified camp sites, especially for road building.

Recommendation #2-A-7
Mining companies must carry out a strong policy to forbid anyone from the mines disturbing graves, artifacts and especially, to forbid the collection and removal of artifacts, caribou antlers, and bones.

Contract archaeologists

Recommendation #2-A-8
Mining companies can use government archaeologists in the verification of information for reports

and monitoring. These archaeologist must be confirmed by the Yellowknives Dene prior to going into the territory.

Recommendation #2-A-9
All contract archaeologists working for mining companies shall have at least ten years' experience, with half of that time in working with Indigenous Peoples. An acceptable alternative might be for the mining companies to authorize and fund Indigenous Peoples to select specialists they believe they can work with for results satisfactory to their Peoples, governments and the companies.

Recommendation #2-A-10
Evidence of Weledeh Yellowknives Dene ancestors' occupation and use of their territory is not to be called "heritage resources" as the term is disrespectful and diminishes the connection of such evidence to Indigenous Peoples. Ancestral evidence will not be considered exploitable "resources". Elders and Dene land owners in this project have a range of ideas about how mining companies and government should handle evidence of their ancestors, therefore, mining companies need to hold a community workshops with Yellowknives Dene to develop plans for presentation to the First Nation Council for approval or use.

Recommendation #2-A-11
Yellowknives Dene First Nation have developed guidelines for the companies and contract archaeologists to follow in their relationship with the people and their ancestors' evidence. Therefore the companies and contract archaeologists must get permission and operational guidelines from the Chief and First Nation council.

Recommendations
B - *Ndeh* (ie, the environment: land, animals, fish, birds, plants) and the peoples' continued use of their traditional lands

Recommendation #2-B-1
Mining companies must use Weledeh Yellowknives Dene land owners to monitor impacts from mining operations on the water quality, plants, fish, and animals (including fish, birds, wildlife) and all roads, airstrips, barges, snow machines and other mechanical impacts to be used by mine companies.

Habitat damage

Recommendation #2-B-2
Mining companies must take responsibility for damage to *ndeh* (land) and environment. Since there is to be continual damage through exploration and mining, the companies shall be responsible to protect areas of great significance to animals and other wildlife, such as good caribou habitat and good fish spawning areas.

Recommendation #2-B-3
Mining companies must pay for regeneration of wildlife and aquatic habitat. Therefore the Elders and

Dene land owners of this project recommend that preventative policies and mitigating measures be put in place along with adequate reclamation funds to be used for these purposes. The funds will be jointly managed by the Yellowknives Dene and the company. This is in keeping with the numerous international legal instruments that require such measures.

Animals

Recommendation #2-B-4
Before there is any more disturbance of Ek'ati Ndi (the island where Diavik plans to mine diamonds), all animals - including fox and ground squirrel - must be live trapped and moved to a suitable habitat away from Diavik and BHP mine sites. If mining companies decide to use lands directly to the west of their sites (ie, where dust will be most dense), or decide to increase their activities (and increase the amount of dust blowing to the west) - every effort must be made to keep animals, birds, fish and vegetation from being covered with thick dust and going into the water.

Recommendation #2-B-5
There should be no vehicle movement or blasting or other dust- and noise-producing activities during bird and animal migrations and birthing periods.

Recommendation #2-B-6
To protect animals from human activity and contaminants, mining companies shall take great care to keep animals off their sites with fences. Fences must be built around mining sites, especially where animals are migrating. Fences must be very high (about four metres or 12 feet high) so that animals do not get caught in the top of fences in winter when snow blows against them.

Recommendation #2-B-7
Diavik should limit its mining activities to the east island of Ek'ati Ndi and leave the west island (the one that points to Great Slave Lake) for animals. The island where mining operations are planned should be entirely fenced, leaving a wide corridor (at least 100 metres) around the shore so that wildlife can continue to use the island to rest while crossing the lake. The Elders and land owners of this project recommend that monitoring be especially enforced by the Land and Environment personnel in spring, summer, fall and winter.

Caribou

Recommendation #2-B-8
Mining companies shall fund Weledeh Yellowknives Dene land owners experienced in caribou deflection to change the migration of caribou out of the entire operating area near Ek'ati. During the next three caribou migrations, experienced land owners, directed by the Elders, can set up stone markers and stand by them to chase caribou away. After three migration seasons, caribou will have learned to avoid the markers (and, therefore, the mining operations). People will not have to man the markers after that time, as long as no one disturbs the markers.

Recommendation #2-B-9
Mining companies must avoid the Narrows between Ekati and Lac du Sauvage and the esker that passes through La Pointe de Misere and crosses Ek'ati because they are key caribou migration routes.

Recommendation #2-B-10
Mining companies will have to pay Weledeh Yellowknives Dene to improve the Narrows between Ek'ati and Lac du Sauvage, since increasing numbers of caribou will use the narrows to avoid the mining operations. The crossing is dangerous because gaps in the rocks can break caribou legs, especially those of very young calves. Some become trapped and die, particularly in springs (like the one in 1997), when caribou cows leave the calving grounds early with calves not yet hardened for travel. Land owners could fill dangerous gaps in the rocks. This work to be done at the same time as the work being done in Recommendations #2-B-8.

Recommendation #2-B-11
Weledeh Yellowknives Elders strongly recommend that all caribou calving grounds become Protected Areas. They urge BHP, which has gold mining interests near Bathurst Inlet, to support the protection of the caribou calving grounds in the area. Halting gold mining operations - to stop noise, dust and contamination - during calving would benefit the caribou and other animals, such as birds in the nearby waterfowl sanctuary. Caribou cows, if they feel more comfortable, might stay in the calving grounds long enough for their calves to be properly ready for migration.

Recommendation #2-B-12
Diavik must leave room for migrating caribou on the north part of the island, where they are planning to build an airstrip.

Fish

Recommendation #2-B-13
Mining companies must protect fish in Ek'ati. There are some very old, large fish in this lake. They could be damaged by boat motors as well as dyke construction and, potentially, from any spills resulting from trucks going through the winter road. Many fish also migrate to Ek'ati - particularly to spawn - from the Coppermine River and could suffer from construction activities, spills, and dust contamination.

Recommendation #2-B-14
People from the mines will not hunt or fish in the Ek'ati area. Mining staff and contractors go to Ek'ati to work; if they want to hunt and fish, they can go to nearby lodges.

Recommendation #2-B-15
Weledeh Yellowknives Elders warn against the catch-and-release of fish. It is not a good practice because fish can die from wounds inflicted by large hooks or from starvation when hook wounds in the mouth prevent them from feeding. Fish can also die from hypothermia when fish are handled by humans so much that the slime covering the fish is removed.

Recommendation #2-B-16

Government specialists and an independent environmental monitoring agency picked by the Yellowknives Dene and the company should verify environmental information for reports and monitoring of mining effects. Contractors working for mining companies in these areas must have at least ten years of field experience - most of it in northern environments, and field staff working for such contractors must have at least two years of experience collecting field data. Contracts scientists or fisheries and aquatic specialists researchers will hire Yellowknives Dene land owners for fish monitoring and related work.

Protection of Aboriginal & Treaty Rights

Recommendation #2-B-17
Mining companies will compensate Weledeh Yellowknives Dene for disrupting their Akaitcho Territory land rights and affecting their way of life.

Recommendation #2-B-18
Mining companies that cause a large loss of animal, fish, and bird habitat will compensate the Indigenous Peoples, including Weledeh Yellowknives Dene, for loss of use of territory resulting in destruction of harvesting areas.

Recommendation #2-B-19
Indigenous Peoples such as Weledeh Yellowknives Dene must continue to have access within their complete territory for their traditional pursuits. The Elders and Dene land owners of this project recommend that an open door policy be put in place for managers of the mine site to give emergency help to hunters and travellers who may need assistance when in the area.

Recommendations
C - Water (ie, Ek'ati, streams flowing into and out of the lake, and groundwater)

Recommendation #2-C-1
Mining companies and government specialists must continue to verify where water flows from Ek'ati. Monitoring of water flow and levels must be continual throughout and after mining operations.

Recommendation #2-C-2
Mining companies must involve Weledeh Yellowknives Dene in the monitoring impacts from mining on water quality, water flow, water level, fish, aquatic plants, and wildlife relying on water - including monitoring for dust and contaminants from waste rock stockpiles.

Elders are very concerned about dust from mine pits and roads that will be carried westward by wind. Dust will settle in streams that flow into Ek'ati and these contaminants will flow into the larger lake. Rain will also wash dust into the lake. The nine open-pit mines planned to date will all produce huge amounts of dust. Dust from Diavik's planned mines (in the lake itself) and the BHP mine closest to Ek'ati (at La Pointe de Misere) is likely to have the greater impact on water and the plants, birds, fish, and animals that depend on it than pits farther inland from Ek'ati.

Recommendation #2-C-3
Mining companies' waste water must be well filtered, and the outflow of waste must be monitored constantly (24 h/d, 365 d/yr). Weledeh Yellowknives Elders are concerned that soap, sewage, and other toxins from mining camps will enter the water and harm plants and animals. Although mining companies are treating this waste, it can still seep into the lake. Elders want to know the effects of such seepage on wildlife, plants, and people that use the water. What is the composition of the tailing ponds. There should be strict criteria developed with the Yellowknives Dene for the construction and maintenance of tailing ponds including their location.

Recommendation #2-C-4
Mining companies must take responsibility to secure their fuel storage from spills, explosions, and other disasters. Fuel storage must be far from shorelines and creeks to reduce seepage. Fuel tanks should be placed in retainers with cement bottoms and walls so that, if tanks leak, any leaks can be contained. Fuel storage should be located at a safe distance from camp facilities to reduce impacts (and lives) from potential fires resulting from lightning strikes.

Recommendation #2-C-5
Every effort must be made to prevent damage from salt and acid drainage to spawning grounds and fish habitat. Because salt and acid drainage that may occur during drilling for mining operations can be devastating for fish and water plants, mining companies must be very open about informing Indigenous Peoples about where they plan to drill so monitoring impacts from drilling can take place in an orderly fashion.

Recommendation #2-C-6
Mining companies must monitor for seepage of contaminants, including those from waste rock stockpiles, into groundwater.

Recommendations
D - Water or land as a result of construction

Recommendation #2-D-1
Mining companies planning major changes to the Akaitcho Territory environment - such as the draining of small lakes or the building of expansive dykes in large lakes - should be restricted to only one site initially. At this site, mining companies, government agencies, and Indigenous Peoples can find out what impacts actually occur and which mitigation attempts work best. Development on this scale has occurred in the barrenlands in Russia and Mongolia with devastating impacts. It is better to have methods of construction and monitoring developed before additional sites are attempted.

Recommendation #2-D-2
If Diavik has the consent of the Yellowknives Dene to proceed there are a number of things which must be done. To have the least negative impact on fish and fish spawning grounds near Ek'ati Ndi, Diavik should start building dykes in Ek'ati in late October or November, after fish have migrated to deep water. In spring, fish travel to and live in shallow areas along shores, bays, and islands in order

to feed. In summer and fall, fish spawn in these shallow areas. Diavik's plans to construct dykes will disturb these shallows.

One Elder suggested that, if dyke construction begins very cautiously in July (before spawning starts), leaving channels near the shore, the fish would be able to leave the shallows through these channels in late fall. The remainder of the dykes could be then built in late October or November. This process might still cause problems for whitefish because lake sediment will be disturbed and will cover plants that whitefish feed on.

Recommendation #2-D-3

Diavik must protect the important fish spawning ground in the narrow inlet that almost separates the northern part of east Ek'ati Ndi from the rest of the island. One of Diavik's drawings (dated July 1997; *see* Appendix 1) shows this inlet being closed off at the eastern shoreline. Since dykes in the lake will cut fish off from other spawning grounds in shallows around the island, it is vital that the spawning area in this inlet be preserved.

Recommendation #2-D-4

If Diavik puts an airstrip on the northern part of this island, it would be advisable to fence the inlet so that fish are not disturbed.

Eskers

Reasons why development should not occur on and east of the "Misery" esker and the shore of Ekati include:

a) There is at least one visible archaeological camp site and there are burials in this area.
b) The esker is important to animals making dens in the soft gravel.
c) The shallow, rocky shore is an important fish spawning habitat.
d) Caribou migration and plans for deflection require the esker to remain in place.
e) Regardless of deflection, some caribou and other migrating animals will continue to try to use the shore associated with the esker.
f) Animals denning in the esker should not be disturbed by direct human contact.

Recommendation #2-D-4

Mining companies should leave **all** eskers in the Akaitcho Territory undisturbed. If companies believe they have to disturb an esker, they must consult with the Indigenous Peoples to do a comprehensive investigation of the esker, especially for burials and animal habitat, before the esker is disturbed or altered in any way.

Recommendation #2-D-5

Mining companies should use waste rock from pits or granite stockpiles (if they can be proven not to produce contaminants), instead of using material from eskers for construction of roads.

BHP's "Misery" Mi Site

Recommendation #2-D-6

BHP's "Misery" camp and mine operations must be constructed west of planned locations: instead, they should be located inland away from water and away from the "Misery" esker. Materials from the esker should not be used to build roads or other construction. Waste water and sewage from the camp should flow toward the unnamed lake between La Pointe de Mis@re and Paul Lake, rather than into Ek'ati to prevent the runoff which is presently occurring at Mackay lake and Pine Point. (This unnamed lake is surrounded by higher land and, there, the Elders feel such wastes can be contained.) Camps should be built on sites with lots of boulders, to deter caribou from entering. Waste rock piles must be located so that potential acid drainage does not enter Ek'ati as runoff.

Recommendation #2-D-7
Elders are concerned that the planned distances between camps and mining operations should not too great. They say that, if these sites are not closer together, workers will face potentially fatal challenges walking between the sites during blizzards. Project participants recall a man working at the Tundra/Salamita mine on Mackay Lake about ten years ago; he had intended to walk through a storm to an electrical shed only one hundred feet away: he did not return and searchers never found his body. Lightning is also a hazard for anyone walking or working on the barrens.

Recommendation #2-D-8
The access road from the BHP mining lease to the winter road that crosses Ek'ati should be constructed to the west of the small lake that will become the open pit mine - rather than, as planned, near the esker used by migrating caribou and over a clearly visible Weledeh Yellowknives ancestral camp site. A small valley to the west of the mine site would be suitable.

Recommendation #2-D-9
Elders also feel strongly that BHP should not build roads from mining camp sites to water, especially to Ek'ati, for people from the mines to fish, bother animals, or collect ancestral evidence as souvenirs.

Winter road(s)

Recommendation #2-D-10
Mining companies and government will get the consent of the Weledeh Yellowknives Dene on a more appropriate route for the winter road constructed every year to bring supplies to an increasing number of mine sites. When the first road was built in the 1970's, it was built without the consent of the Yellowknives Dene. This road uses a traditional trail of our people and, as a result, goes through some of the people's most important trapping and hunting areas. Elders and land owners in this project strongly recommend that the winter road from Tibbett Lake be moved to follow another route - particularly if there are plans to build a permanent, all-weather road.

Recommendation #2-D-11
Mining companies will use Weledeh Yellowknives Dene land owners during winter road construction to identify currents and channels in lakes, so that ice over them does not become part of roads. Ice over currents and channels remains thin because of continual water action; thin ice results in trucks crashing into lakes with their loads of supplies, such as diesel fuel.

Recommendation #2-D-12
To reduce the possibility of more fuel spills into lakes crossed by winter roads to and on Ek'ati, mining companies must have and enforce contracts with trucking companies stating that transport trucks must stay off winter roads when the ice is under two feet thick.

Recommendation #2-D-13
Mining companies that depend on winter roads crossing Weledeh Yellowknives Dene territory shall put up bonds against spills, contamination and other damage to water, lands, wildlife and cultural sites. The monies will be held in trust by the Yellowknives Dene for cleanup purposes.

Recommendation #2-D-14
Mining companies must find acceptable alternative ways to handle garbage that cannot be incinerated such as styrofoam and many plastics, as burning them results in contaminants polluting the air. At present, all garbage from the kitchens and camps is incinerated.

Recommendation #2-D-15
There are to be no public tours of the mine and no construction of permanent towns on the barrens. Tours and town would increase human activity in the area and increase the negative impacts and cumulative effects on an environment that is extremely vulnerable. It is recommended that aspects of knowledge of this report not be taken out of context or placed on a data base. Elders are aware that their knowledge in English does not have the same clarity, meaning, or significance that it does in their own language or to their own people who are familiar with the language and the history or their territory.

Weledeh Yellowknives Dene
a traditional knowledge study of Ek'ati

A – Weledeh Yellowknives Dene: Tribe of the T'satsąot'inę

This section introduces the indigenous peoples who have always occupied and used their traditional territory, from the northern barrens to lands around the Yellowknife River and Bay (called Weledeh-Cheh). This territory includes sites leased to mining companies for exploration and mining in Weledeh-Cheh and in the barrens, so far, at Lupin (for gold) and around Ek'ati (for diamonds). Because the report is in English, the peoples' traditional knowledge is not as rich as it is in the Weledeh Yellowknives Dene dialect. As directed by Weledeh Yellowknives Elders, the report begins by introducing their people.

Weledeh Yellowknives Dene are one of the peoples of the T'satsąot'inę (*trans.* metal or copper people). The peoples were known for the pots, knives, and other tools they made from copper collected in the northerly parts of their territory. Before trapping for the fur trade changed traditional occupancy and land-use patterns north of Tinde'e (Great Slave Lake), the traditional territory of the T'satsąot'inę consisted of lands around Great Slave Lake north to the Coppermine River, and east to the Thelon River. Since 1959, descendants of the T'satsąot'inę tribe have lived mostly at Denínu Kúę́, Rocher River, Łutsel K'e, Reliance, Ndilǫ, Dettah, and Enodah. Today, the peoples call themselves and their territory after the great T'satsąot'inę leader Akeh-Cho: the Akaitcho Peoples and Akaitcho Territory.

Weledeh Yellowknives Dene call themselves after the river (the Weledeh) in the southerly parts of their territory, where they traditionally spent summer. The *Weledeh* (*trans.* Coney River) is shown on government maps as the Yellowknife River. In the Weledeh Yellowknives dialect, *wèleh* in English means the fish known as coney (or inconnu) and *deh* means flowing water or river. Weledeh Yellowknives Elders tell a story in which Alexander Mackenzie decided to call the river "Yellowknife" after what the European explorer thought the people camped at the mouth were calling themselves. Elders today believe their ancestors and the interpreter were actually informing Mackenzie about the copper knives they held in their hands at the time.

Written records about T'satsąot'inę come largely from nineteenth-century European explorers, traders, and missionaries, and from twentieth-century North American anthropologists. European explorers who visited the peoples' territory included Hearne (1769–72), Mackenzie (1789), Franklin (1819–22, 1825–27, 1845–48), Back (1833–35), Dease and Simpson (1837–39), and Richardson and Rae (1847–49) (Duncan 1989). In written records, T'satsąot'inę were called many names by explorers, missionaries, and anthropologists: Base-tho-tinneh, Birch-rind Indians, Birch-Rindmen, Copper Indians, Copper-Mine, Cuivres, Dènè Couteaux-Jaunes, Gens de Cuivres, Indiens Cuivres, Red-knife Indians, Red Knives, T'altsan Ottiné, Tansawhot-dinneh, Täl-soté-e-nä, Tantsan-hoot-dinneh, Tantsa-ut'dinnè, Tantsa-whoots, Tantsawhot-dinneh, T'attsan-ottinè, Tauts-wot-dinni, Thatsan-o'tinne, Tran-tsa ottinè, Yellowknife Indians, Yellow Knife people, and Yellow Knives (Hodge, 1910).

Most early explorers and some missionaries (ie, Petitot) assumed the T'satsąot'inę were one of the Chipewyan peoples (the Denesųłinë). Missing from the written record is the encounter between the earliest of the explorers, Captain Cook, and the T'satsąot'inę. Weledeh Yellowknives Dene suggest that Cook missed an opportunity to name Deh Cho (ie, the Mackenzie River) after himself instead of the man who came later. Mackenzie, in the winter of 1787-88, met Francois Beaulieu who guided him to Weleh-Cheh (ie, Yellowknife Bay) where the explorer found people to take him to the mouth of the Deh Cho. His Weledeh Yellowknives guides left him there, as the river and its lands were outside their territory.

With Matonabee, a Denesųłinë who understood the T'satsąot'inę language, the young explorer Samuel Hearne travelled through T'satsąot'inę territory on the advice of a Weledeh Yellowknives woman. Known in historic records as some variation of "Thandulthur", her own people call her Wetsi Wekǫ (*trans.* hearts on fire). Captured by Cree, she was taken to Fort Prince of Wales on Hudson Bay. On hearing from Wetsi Wekǫ that her people used copper, the captain wrote to Britain of the need to search for the copper deposits. Hearne arrived the next year and travelled with Wetsi Wekǫ and some of her relatives north to the Arctic Coast. Weledeh Yellowknives Elders recall the return of Wetsi Wekǫ to her people and the history of her life among them.

Early in the twentieth century, anthropologists who began to study the peoples and their culture included explorers' records with their own observations (eg, Russell 1898, Mason 1914). As Dene languages are difficult to master, these visitors are likely to have relied on interpreters and non-indigenous people who had lived among the Dene for some time. American anthropologists Beryl Gillespie and June Helm visited the Yellowknife area in the 1960s and early 1970s; they have become well known for their writings about the Dene, contributing to such major records as the Smithsonian Institution's *Handbook on North American Indians*. Gillespie wrote her master's thesis on the "Yellowknife Indians" (Gillespie 1969; 1975), and Helm has produced many articles

and books on the Tłı̨chǫ (Dogrib) Dene, the people whose territory lies to the west, adjacent to that of the Akaitcho Peoples (*see* Helm references).

These anthropologists often mistake T'satsąot'inę, especially Weledeh Yellowknives Dene, for Tłı̨chǫ Dene. Many Weledeh Yellowknives Elders speak their own as well as other Dene languages. In fact, the T'satsąot'inę and Denesųłinë languages are similar enough that one is likely a dialect of the other. It is likely that, if visiting anthropologists brought with them Tłı̨chǫ Dene interpreters, Weledeh Yellowknives Elders would have used the language they spoke: perhaps their fluency in other Dene languages confused the anthropologists. Linguistic confusion remains to this day: modern Tłı̨chǫ dictionaries translate "Tetsǫǫt'i" as "Chipewyans" rather than "T'satsąot'inę" or "Yellowknives Dene". Denesųłinë who speak the language called Chipewyan (such as Matonabee) came from lands to the south of the T'satsąot'inę.

Weledeh Yellowknives Elders remember the sole visit to Dettah by Gillespie, who spoke with one person (Pierre Smallnose Drygeese) and then left for Tłı̨chǫ villages. It may be that her view of Yellowknives Dene was formed through Tłı̨chǫ sources rather than being guided by the peoples about whom she was writing. Gillespie claims that Yellowknives Dene as a people are extinct. The Akaitcho Peoples know that Gillespie's claim is inaccurate: she did not verify with the present peoples her data, observations, or conclusions before making them public. Although Helm's work focuses on the Tłı̨chǫ, she sometimes refers to events of significance to their neighbours, the Yellowknives Dene. However, like Gillespie, Helm did not verify her data, collected stories, observations, or conclusions about Weledeh Yellowknives Dene with the present people. As a result, much of her writing is also inaccurate. Weledeh Yellowknives Elders suggest that she relied too much on one informant who was not very knowledgeable about their people.

It was not until the late 1970s that the people became aware they were supposed to be extinct. Since then, Weledeh Yellowknives Dene have experienced difficulty persuading federal and NWT administrators of their existence, language, and traditional territory. School materials, museum displays, tourist information, the official language bureau, and local media fail to recognise Weledeh Yellowknives people, culture, and lands. Lack of official recognition has resulted in government making use of Akaitcho Territory without the consent of the peoples and in other indigenous peoples attempting to claim Akaitcho lands as their own territory. Unfortunately, archæologists with the NWT administration and under contract to companies interested in developing Yellowknives Dene lands continue to rely on the written record of anthropologists such as Gillespie and Helm – even after they have been informed by the people of the inaccuracies about them.

1 – Akeh-Cho, Sah-Tłı̀, & Kah-Teh-Whee: Traditional Leaders

Because Akeh-Cho met and travelled with the explorers Mackenzie and Franklin, he is included in official records. *Akeh-Cho* (*trans.* big foot), recognised by all T'satsǫ̨ot'inę̨ as their leader, is known to Dene as a fierce warrior, a tireless tracker and hunter, and the leader who took his peoples into the fur trade. Akeh-Cho is buried in Weledeh-Cheh. When he knew he was dying, Akeh-Cho asked his two elderly wives to take him from the barrenlands for burial at the mouth of the Weledeh. They built a sled and pulled him across the melting ice from the Ta-Cheh (the East Arm) to Weleh-Cheh; however, when they were in the area of Tadeh Cho (Wool Bay) the ice broke and they could not carry him farther.

At the time of Akeh-Cho, the leaders of Weledeh Yellowknives Dene were Kah-Teh-Whee and Sah-Tłı̀. They were acquainted with the explorer and trader Peter Pond, who built a cabin near Tadeh Cho. Pond was permitted to build a cabin close to Sah-Tłı̀'s camp because the powerful medicine man could watch him and take care of him. Pond, who arrived in Weledeh Yellowknives territory in 1778, stayed in the area trading for about thirty years, while Fort Providence was located nearby. Pond worked with Akeh-Cho for much of that time, teaching him about trading pelts and meat for muskets and gunpowder. As well as introducing Weledeh Yellowknives Dene to trading and firearms, Pond showed them how to build log cabins and stone fireplaces, held together with a mixture of grass in clay and mud. So strong are these fireplaces that a few can still be seen today.

Weledeh Yellowknives Elders say that Kah-Teh-Whee is the most important leader of their people. He was named for the ice forming in the late fall — likely when he was born — as it creates sharp blades on the shore. As a mediator and interpreter, Kah-Teh-Whee played a significant role in fur trade negotiations. Kah-Teh-Whee was the warrior who most encouraged peace between Akeh-Cho and his brother-in-law, the Tłı̀ Chǫ̀ leader, Edzo. Kah-Teh-Whee's people, Weledeh Yellowknives Dene, occupied the lands between the other T'satsǫ̨ot'inę̨ peoples and the Tłı̀ Chǫ̀. As a result, Kah-Teh-Whee's people had been the ones most affected by the generations of intertribal wars. Akeh-Cho himself stayed, often with Sah-Tłı̀, in Weledeh Yellowknives camps, where they watched for and repulsed tribal enemies.

Kah-Teh-Whee is most remembered for his role in the most notable event between the T'satsǫ̨ot'inę̨ and Tłı̀ Chǫ̀ Dene. On a journey through Tłı̀ Chǫ̀ territory, near Mesa Lake, Akeh-Cho and Kah-Teh-Whee found themselves near a camp of Edzo. Kah-Teh-Whee persuaded Akeh-Cho to let him try to mediate with Edzo, to bring the two powerful leaders together to speak of peace. Edzo and Akeh-Cho made peace between their peoples, so that they could share their lands and the benefits of trapping for the white people. After the Akeh-Cho—Edzo peace agreement in 1823, marriages between the peoples resulted in linguistic sharing. Children of a Weledeh Yellowknives and a

Tłı̀ Chǫ̀ parent may learn one or both languages. To this day, Weledeh Yellowknives Dene are a people, a nation, using their traditional territory.

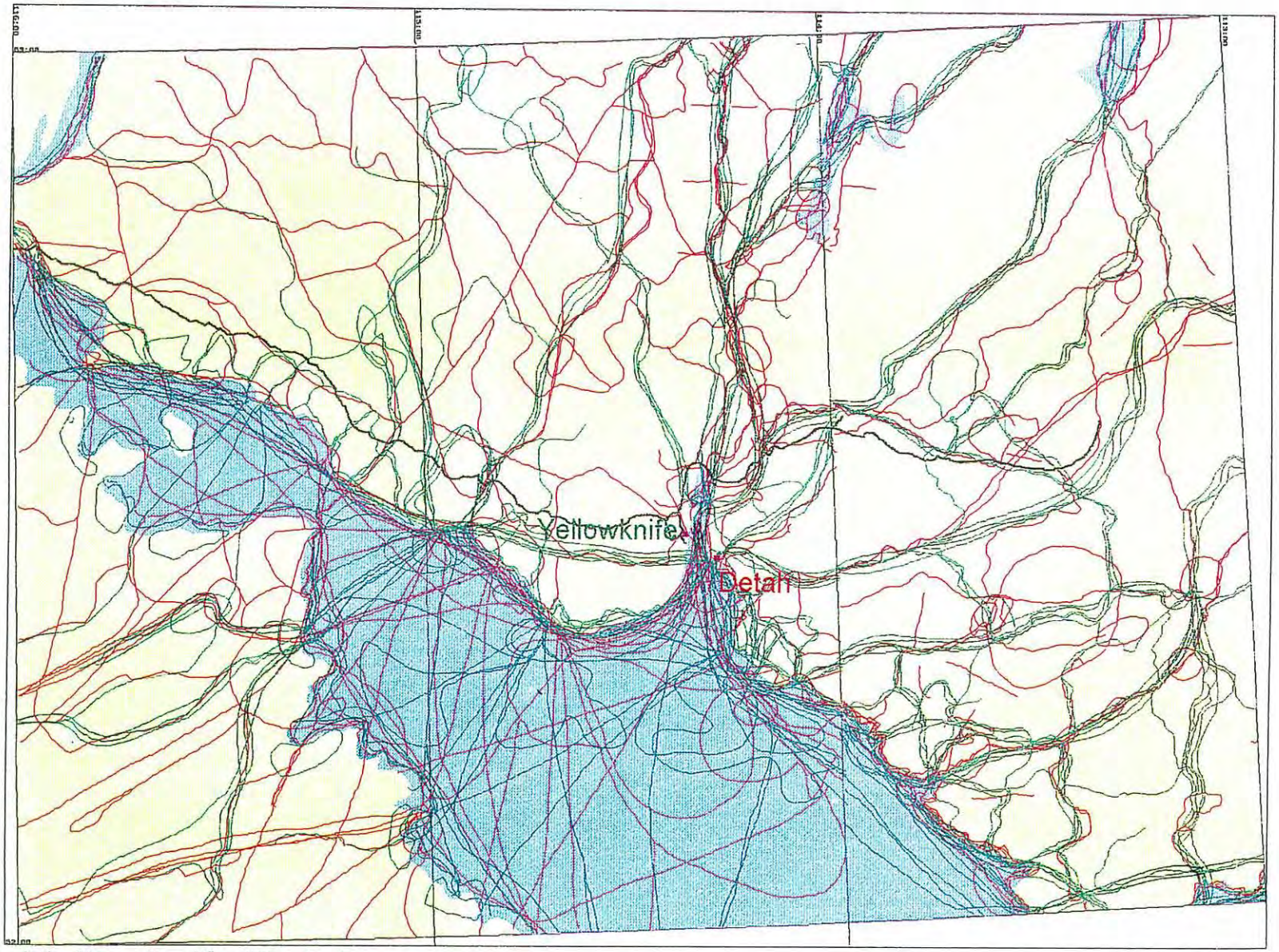
2 – Weledeh Yellowknives Occupation of their Traditional Territory

At the time of the making of Treaty 8 in 1900, Weledeh Yellowknives Elders say that their people's tents could easily be seen along the northern shores of Tinde'e (Great Slave Lake). It is usual for the people to continue staying in the same camp sites selected by their forefathers. The fish used to be so plentiful at the mouth of the Weledeh that up to ten large families could stay there. Families would stay in small groups, usually on islands or points near (but not in) hunting areas, as illustrated by the travel patterns on the map on the next page. This map, recorded in the mid-1970s, shows trails used by about twenty families at Weledeh Yellowknives traditional fish camps in much of Weledeh-Cheh. Traditional fish camps can be found from the mouth of the Weledeh along the shores south to Nècha Go Dò (Gros Cap), and west to Enodah as well as along the opposite shore from Whitebeach Point. Highly favoured sites were at Gros Cap, Moose Bay, Drybone Bay, Wool Bay, Akaitcho Bay, Burwash Point, the mouth of the Weledeh, Latham Island, Joliffe Island, Ptarmigan Point, Enodah, and Whitebeach Point.

Elders discouraged families from living where animals, especially moose, would come because the animals would stop coming there. Otter and mink, for instance, leave a river where people camp or settle on the banks; moose eventually leave an area where people stay. Thus, Weledeh Yellowknives families did not stay or build log homes in such places as the present-day Giant mine site, the townsite of Yellowknife, or recreation areas along the Ingraham Trail. In the past at these places, the people could find plentiful caribou (October to December, March and April), fur-bearing animals all winter, and moose, fish, berries, plants, and trees vital to survival year-round.

The banks of the Weledeh from the mouth to the rapids had always been preferred sites for fish camp settlements. For generations, the people have been telling their youth a story about the Weledeh. This story occurred in the time of Yamozhà, the very powerful medicine man of the Dene. Yamozhà was pursuing a giant beaver that lived at the mouth of the Weledeh, in order to help the people for two reasons. The giant animal dragged people under-water when they were canoeing and the beaver had blocked off the flow of the Weledeh into Tinde'e (Great Slave Lake) by building a huge dam across the mouth. Yamozhà had a giant snow shovel, much like smaller ones used by Weledeh Yellowknives Dene for ice fishing. Snow shovels had mesh made from woven babiche, like a snowshoe, and could be used to scoop pieces of ice out of the fishing hole. Yamozhà struck his huge snow shovel into the giant beaver's lodge. The giant beaver pushed the huge lodge to one side of the Weledeh, swimming into Tinde'e to escape from Yamozhà. The river flowed freely, as it does today.

Map 1 – shows representative community trails of Weledeh Yellowknives Dene as the people moved from camp to camp along the shores, and along hunting trails. Trails at the mouth of the Weledeh and at Enodah show the start of two traditional canoe/portage routes the people used to and from their hunting grounds in the barrens (*see* Map 3). This map is one of many developed with about twenty Weledeh Yellowknives land users during the original Dene Mapping Project, 1974-76 (Nahanni 1974).



The giant beaver's dam became stone and to this day it exists on the point of land at the mouth of the Weledeh. This place is known by Weledeh Yellowknives as Kweh kah tswa. Yamozhà's huge snow shovel in the beaver dam became a large spruce tree, which grows there to this day. This tree is known as Tsi-wah cho. The tree and the land around it is a very sacred site to the Weledeh Yellowknives Dene. Many of the peoples, past and present, have paid their respects at the site of Kweh kah tswa and Tsi-wah cho. The tree site – and the hill to the north of it – were strategic lookout points for Akeh-Cho; he would stand next to the tree or on top of the hill watching the bay for tribal enemies or strangers.

Since time immemorial, Weledeh Yellowknives Dene have occupied and used the river and the lands surrounding it. The only exception was the years following the devastating six-week influenza epidemic in 1928, when some survivors stayed in camps below the treeline or in the barrens year-round until they felt it was safe to return – four or five years. The people's occupation and full use of the area stopped only when non-indigenous development occurred and damaged the people's land to such a degree that they no longer felt comfortable in their traditional places along the river banks.

Weledeh Yellowknives Elders remember the names and relationships of at least four generations of many of their families who lived along the Weledeh. Chief Willie Crapeau and his very large family were born and brought up along the river. Many generations of the Kemelli, Drygeese, Sangris, Martin, Paper, Liske, and Crookedhand families grew up there. A male member of the Drygeese family was born in 1926 on the east bank where the present-day bridge is located. Although Crookedhands were the last family to live near the Weledeh mouth year-round, many families continued to use the area seasonally. Today, the people use their cabins along the river banks when time allows.

"Alàa Tǫ": Travel Through the Territory

In the past, the moose and rabbit hunting was good enough in Weledeh-Cheh for some families to stay year-round. However, most Weledeh Yellowknives families left the Tinde'e camps and paddled to their camping sites in the northern parts of their territory. Map 2 on page 9, also recorded in the mid-1970s, shows trails shared by Weledeh Yellowknives Dene and their T'satsǫot'inę relatives from their Tinde'e camps to the barrenlands. Travel trails, unlike trapping trails, are used by the entire community and are shared with other Dene.

Weledeh Yellowknives Dene refer to travel on the big lakes as *alàa tili* (*trans.* boat trails on water or lake). Canoe routes on rivers and lakes with portages are called *alàa tǫ*. The major canoe/portage trails are shown on Map 3 (on page 10). A single canoe/portage route has many names: the people named each section of a route from

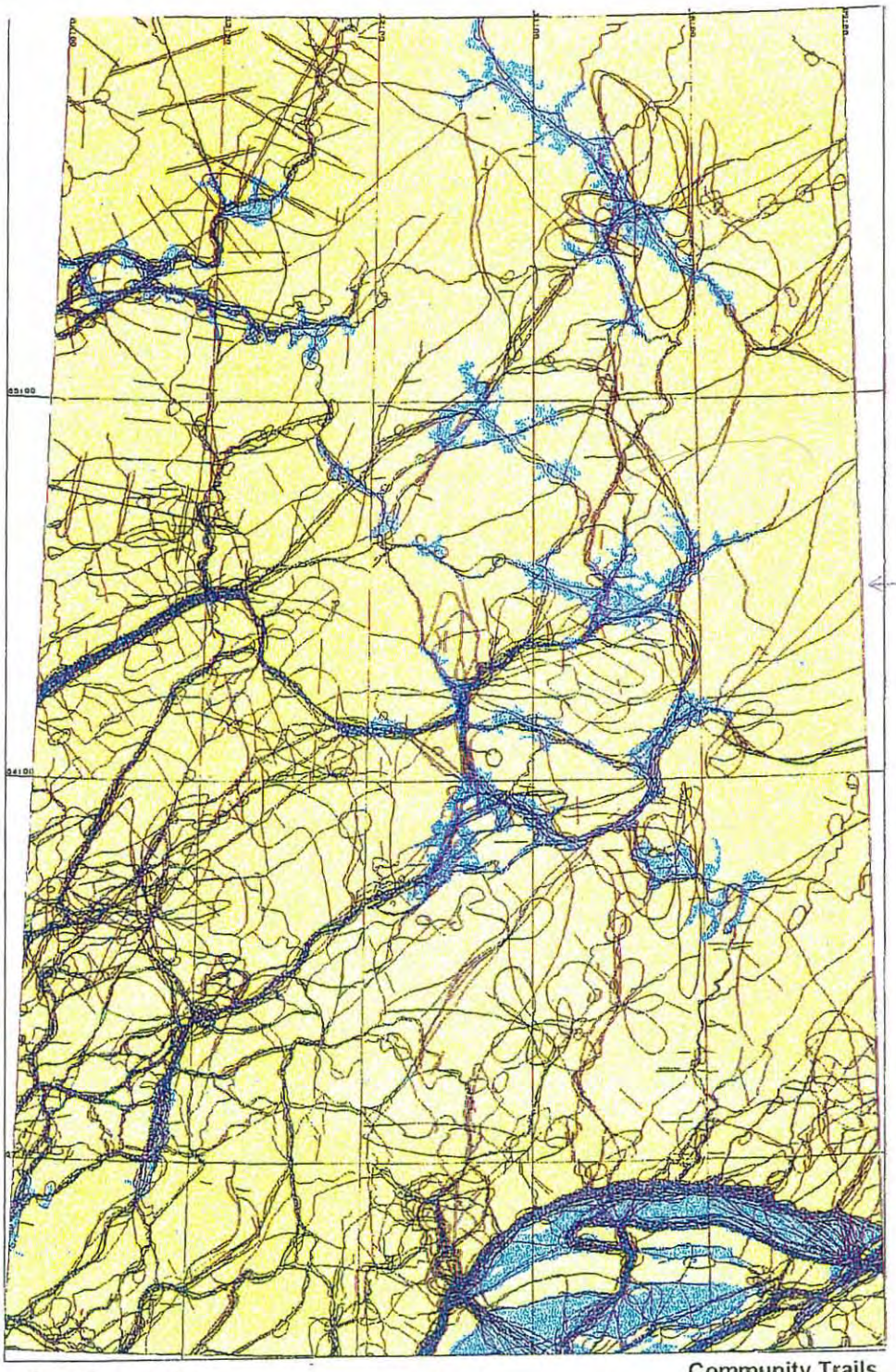
the place where a river leaves a lake. The river most used was the Weledeh (#2 on Map 3): the route north was called *Weledeh alàa to* from the mouth of the river up to Duncan Lake. The Cameron River route starts in Prelude Lake: there, it is called *Tehti alàa tǫ* (#3 on Map 3). The people also took canoe routes year-round from Enodah (#1), along the Barnston River (#6), and along the Artillery Lake portage, *Ta-Cheh hote'e alàa tǫ* (#7). The people around Nècha Go Dò usually took the Beaulieu River route, called *Teghi ti deh alàa tǫ* (#4), referring to its starting point as the river leaving Mink Lake. The McKinley River route (#5), called *Łiwe-Cheh alàa tǫ*, was used only as a winter trail, as the many boulders in the river made summer navigation difficult.

There are as many as fifty portages on most of the routes between Weledeh-Cheh and the barrens. Portages trails used for hundreds of generations of Weledeh Yellowknives Dene are winding trails: if a tree is in the people's path, they go around it. If families travel when there is snow on the ground, the people usually walk the portage on snowshoes, guiding the dogs that are in their traditional, narrow harnesses. Some branches and small bush were broken by toboggans pulled by dogs: they would be picked up by families following the trail and used for firewood.

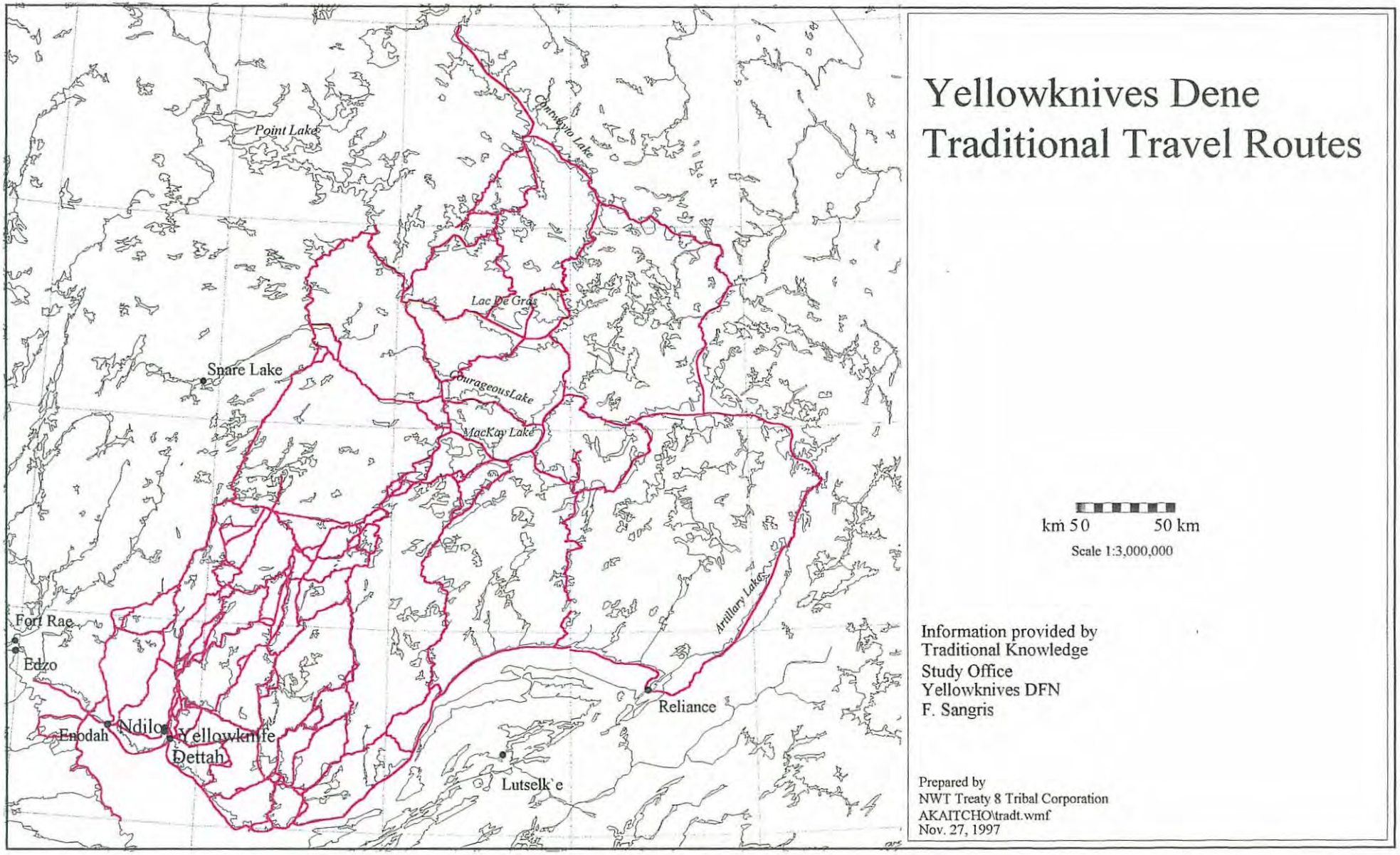
Treeline & Barrenland Camps

From late summer to early fall each year, hunters took their handmade birchbark (and, later, canvas) canoes up the Weledeh and several other rivers, their dogs running along shore. Making camps below the treeline, hunters gathered firewood and made toboggans, snowshoes, and tentpoles. Leaving caches of meat for their families who could stay in these camps, the hunters headed farther north to caribou migrating south through the lakes – Courageous, Mackay, Lac de Gras, Lac du Sauvage, and the Coppermine River. Caribou provided the families with new clothing, toboggans, tipi, floor mats, meat, and fat vital for winter survival. The *gras* (French for fat) in Lac de Gras refers to the smell of caribou fat from fall hunts burning in camp fires: the people could find one another by this smell. The rest of the winter was spent travelling through the barrens hunting and trapping. Some hunters left camp first, making a trail of meat caches for others to follow. After the people were engaged in the fur trade, trappers would make occasional trips to the posts at Reliance and Resolution. Weledeh Yellowknives traditional use of their lands is discussed in Section D of this report.

Map 2 – shows trails by which T'satsaot'inę, including Weledeh Yellowknives Dene, travelled between their summer fish camps and the barrens.



Weledeh Yellowknives Dene at Ek'ati 9


Yellowknives Dene
Traditional Travel Routes
Point Lake
Lac De Gras
Snare Lake
MacKay Lake
Fort Rae
Edzo
Enodah
Ndilo
Yellowknife
Dettah
Lutselk`e
Reliance
Artillary Lake
km 50
50 km
Scale 1:3,000,000
Information provided by
Traditional Knowledge
Study Office
Yellowknives DFN
F. Sangris
Prepared by
NWT Treaty 8 Tribal Corporation
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Nov. 27, 1997

3 – Making Treaty 8 with the Crown

Early in 1900, officials from the government of Canada came to the Weledeh fishing camps to ask the people to meet mid-summer in Denínu Kúé. Representatives of the T'satsąot'inę (Akaitcho's peoples) from around the northern and western shores of Tinde'e — at Enodah, around Weleh-Cheh, at Reliance, Rocher River, and Gros Cap — gathered there in July. Although government numbers recorded at the time suggest there were only a few hundred people from the Weledeh-Cheh, current Elders remember that there were about three thousand Weledeh Yellowknives Dene at that time. Only a few travelled to the Treaty gathering in 1900.

At the gathering in 1900, interpreters informed the peoples that the Indian Agent Conroy was a Commissioner representing the Queen of England, the British Crown. He was there to make a Treaty between the Crown and Akaitcho Peoples, who were familiar with Treaty making, having made peace with the neighbouring Thı̀ Chǫ̀ in the time of Akeh-Cho. For two days, the peoples spoke among themselves before agreeing to have a peace and friendship agreement with the Crown. Old Man Drygeese made Treaty 8 on behalf of his people. He became the first Chief of the Weledeh Yellowknives Dene recognised by the Crown, although, up to that time, the peoples had had their own leaders governing their territory.

T'satsąot'inę recall the terms of Treaty 8 differently from the written versions Canada uses. The terms in the written version make reference to things that held no meaning for the peoples, such as extinguishment and expropriation. Akaitcho's peoples understand the Treaty to mean that they could go on living their lives on their own land in their own way as long as the sun shines, the river flows, and the grass grows. By 1920, there had been much interference with the peoples' ability to hunt, especially the imposition of the Migratory Birds Convention without the peoples' consent or their knowledge. In 1920, the Weledeh Yellowknives leader decided that something more had to be done.

Joseph (Susie) Drygeese had been attending the yearly Treaty meetings on behalf of Old Man Drygeese since 1901, when the respected Elder was too ill to travel across Tinde'e to Denínu Kúé. In 1920, Chief Susie Drygeese informed the Indian Agent that his people would not accept Treaty money unless there was mutual understanding of the Treaty. After much discussion, he had the local trader write down the terms he could agree to and asked for a translation. Satisfied, he had three other copies made, so that there was one for his people, one for the Crown, one for the church, and one for the trading post. A strong young paddler named Potfighter memorised the terms of the rewritten Treaty and hurried to the camps in Weledeh-Cheh to inform the people. Weledeh Yellowknives Dene remember what Chief Drygeese said: that the lands shared by the T'satsąot'inę and the Thı̀ Chǫ̀ since the Akeh-Cho–Edzo peace agreement were to remain forever for the use of the indigenous peoples. He drew a map of those

lands and assured that Indian Agent that the Dene would share with newcomers, as long as there was no interference with the peoples' way of life.

That winter, Chief Drygeese met with Montfwi, the leader of the Tłı̀ Chǫ̀, to inform him that the Treaty Commissioner would visit his people the next summer and to tell him of the new terms he thought he had negotiated that summer. Of all the communities asked to make Treaty 11 in 1921 and 1922, only Montfwi refused to sign until the Commissioner agreed to his terms and the map he drew — just as Weledeh Yellowknives Dene had done in 1920. (*See* Fumoleau 1974 for reports of these events.) In 1924, the Weledeh Yellowknives Chief asked that Treaty payments be made at Dettah, because many of his people were going to Rae rather than cross Tinde'e to Denínu Kúé. Years later, Treaty 8 Dene in Dettah and Ndilǫ were startled to learn that Ottawa was wrongly classifying the First Nations in the Yellowknife area as Treaty 11, as in an Indian Affairs press release issued in July 1972 listing all Denendeh communities within Treaty 8 and Treaty 11. Likely, this administrative error occurred when Treaty 8 Dene went to Rae, a Treaty 11 community, to receive Treaty money between 1921 and 1925.

The years following 1925 were sad ones for the Dene. Surveyors and prospectors, eager to gain quicker access to the peoples' land, set fires that forced changes to migration patterns. Poisoned meat set out for fur-bearing animals resulted in untold deaths of sled dogs and people: an entire Weledeh Yellowknives community at Smoky Lake became victims of greedy trappers. Hearing of the pressures on the indigenous peoples' food and fur sources, the federal government established game preserves throughout the Dene, Inuit, and Inuvialuit homelands. The Yellowknife Game Preserve was presumably named for the Dene living on the Yellowknife river and bay, since the town did not exist then. The lands comprising this game preserve resemble the description Weledeh Yellowknives Elders remember of the lands Chief Susie Drygeese put in his map and revised Treaty in 1920. Many people died in a series of epidemics, the worst of which occurred in 1928, when an estimated ten to fifteen percent of the entire indigenous population of Denendeh died in six weeks during the summer. Some Weledeh Yellowknives survivors, fearing a return of disease in Weledeh-Cheh, stayed in the barrenlands year-round for four or five years. When they returned, they discovered newcomers in their traditional lands.

4 - Weledeh Yellowknives Traditional Knowledge

> [*Translation*] What we're doing is collecting our traditional knowledge, and we're doing it to protect our environment. I am doing this for our children and the next generations. That is how we Elders help each other toward the end of our lives. ... We have been collecting our traditional knowledge on video tape and all our Elders want to discuss it together. I think that, once the information is all collected, then we can put it together. We are doing that.
>
> [Weledeh Yellowknives Elder Joseph Charlo, Ndilǫ: CARC 1995]

Indigenous peoples coexist with the lands they are born to, that they have always used. The relationship is so close because the people and the land have always been together. The traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples includes everything there is to say about the people — who they are, how they live, what they know, and how they know it — as well as about their lands and the patterns of the living things on their lands. "Tradition" in English comes from a Latin word meaning "to pass over", and that describes what traditional knowledge is to the people: it is everything there is to know about them that they pass over to the next generation. For indigenous peoples, traditional knowledge is current: it is what their land users rely on to travel and live on their lands.

Weledeh Yellowknives traditional knowledge in their own language reflects their identity, their living culture, and their lands. While the land rights of Weledeh Yellowknives Dene are in doubt, the people need their traditional knowledge to prove who they are and which lands they have always used. For this reason, the people have become very assertive about who can collect and use the knowledge of Elders and experienced land users. For many years, Dene have been questioning the increasing requests from scientists to include translated "raw data" of traditional knowledge in the analysed reports of scientific studies. Dene Elders feel strongly that scientists should not take pieces of their knowledge and interpret them using perspectives from science. Rather, they want their knowledge recorded in their own language for use by their own people, as it has always been used. "Keep our knowledge in our community", the Elders are always urging. For this project, Elders asked that information such as the location of burials remain in the community and not be written in reports that present their knowledge in English.

Because of writing by anthropologists, many officials and specialists have expressed doubt about Dene occupation and use of their lands. Very little evidence of the Dene can be found because the peoples cared for their lands so carefully, to ensure that their children's children could continue to live and survive on them. The Dene have always taken care not to damage the land, to use only what they needed, carrying their goods with them. Therefore, little evidence — particularly evidence in the form of damage —

exists of the peoples indigenous to lands in the barrens before industrial developers and governments began to take an interest in them. Likewise, Weledeh Yellowknives used all the lands around the north shore of Great Slave Lake, even though there are few visible signs of their occupation. Although the once-prosperous Weledeh Yellowknives settlements along the river-mouth banks are overgrown with willows and plants, today's Elders can identify their location, the birth and burial sites, spiritually significant places, and former family camps of their people.

Aspects of the traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples can be useful in an environmental assessment of a proposed development project, at the least, to:

- describe the pre-development landscape, water flows, and natural patterns
- assess possible impacts and cumulative effects from changes to pre-development conditions
- describe the significance of the land as the indigenous peoples express it
- assess impacts and cumulative effects on indigenous communities and cultures
- suggest ways to limit or avoid negative impacts and cumulative effects

Where the peoples have been, how they have used their lands, and what changes the peoples have observed are remembered by the peoples: that is the essence of the traditional knowledge of peoples indigenous (born) to their lands. This knowledge is passed from an experienced generation to the next, so that the peoples learn accumulated patterns of change. They use this knowledge to plan the paths they need to take to ensure their survival. In the years since Treaty 8, Dene have had to share their lands with increasing numbers of incomers. There have been rapidly increasing changes — with impacts causing serious concern. Indigenous peoples have observed these impacts on their lives and lands, and can describe them.

Seasonal activities of Weledeh Yellowknives families between their winter camps in the barrens and their summer fish camps around Great Slave Lake have been the peoples' way of life for thousands of generations. In the 1990s, Yellowknives Dene First Nation began documenting their knowledge of their history, cultural heritage, and lands. Passing on this traditional knowledge to younger generations and the general public may help the people get official recognition of their existence and their traditional lands, Akaitcho Territory.

As well as this report, genealogy, canoe/portage, and filming projects, Yellowknives Dene First Nation has reports of other traditional knowledge projects:

Weledeh Yellowknives Ancestral Place Names
Map and audio cassette (with Weledeh Yellowknives dialect pronunciation) of ancestral names of major lakes, rivers, and significant locations

The Weledeh: Principal River of Weledeh Yellowknives Dene
A report produced in response to 1996 plans to replace a bridge built in 1962 near the mouth of the Weledeh

Research to prepare this report was done using the long interview, workshops, and field trips with Elders and experienced land users. The mouth of the Weledeh and other significant sites around Weledeh-Cheh, as well as locations in the barrens – Mackay Lake, Lac de Gras, Lac du Sauvage – have been visited to record Weledeh Yellowknives Elders' knowledge (*See* Photo 1). Researchers were also able to draw on transcripts from the BHP environmental assessment hearings (1994–96), taped meetings of Elders and land users on the First Nation Land & Environment Committee (1994–97), and BHP water licence hearings for additional information. The project was fortunate to be led by a Weledeh Yellowknives land user with language skills in English and several Dene languages, including the Weledeh Yellowknives dialect of his family.

No research project is without its difficulties and limitations. The project did not begin until two years after it was initially discussed: some Elders who had wanted to contribute knowledge passed away in that interval. Using modern technology in the barrens poses many challenges. Wind and rain can be heard in most tapes recorded in tents, and wind often carries away the voices of Elders taped outdoors. Sometimes, equipment did not function and researchers had to rely on their notes at the time and the memory of individuals able to listen in the peoples' language. Not all interpreters and translators are familiar with the words that Weledeh Yellowknives Elders use; not all the most qualified ones – especially those trained by the NWT language bureau – are familiar with either the Weledeh Yellowknives dialect or the names of places known to the Elders. As a result, transcripts had to be read very carefully, and often verified, by the researcher familiar with English and the Elders' language. In fact, the English transcripts are so worrying that researchers considered destroying them once the inventory and report were completed. Perhaps the greatest difficulty was finding sufficient time to conduct the project: participants were asked to take part in other processes related to these mining developments at the same time they were supposed to be doing this research.

This report could not have been completed without the contribution of traditional knowledge and the full support of Weledeh Yellowknives land users. In particular, the following land users participated in the gathering and verifying of information used to compile this report: Elders Joseph and Judith Charlo, Isadore Kemelli Sangris, Isadore and Bennie Tsetta, Michel Paper, Jonas Fishbone, Joseph Martin, Philip Crapeau, Benoit Noel, Sophia Potfighter, John Drygeese, Elise Liske, Noel Crookedhand, Noel Crapeau, Gabriel Akaitcho Doctor, Edward Sikyea, Rose Betsina, Alexis and Helen Mackenzie, Therese Sangris, Paul Drybone, and Paul and Frank Drygeese, and land users Paul Mackenzie, James Sangris, Noel and Edward Doctor, and Fred Sangris. Everyone was

inspired by the Weledeh Yellowknives youth who, in 1996, retraced the traditional canoe and portage trail from the mouth of the Weledeh to the barrens.

Research assistance for recording traditional knowledge for this project was provided by Jennifer Bowen, Jolene Grey, Rachel Crapeau, Tasha Heeler, Christine Ishoj, and Erin Eacott. Recordings were translated by Lena Drygeese, Christine Allen, Maryrose Sundberg, Violet and Margaret Mackenzie, and Fred Sangris. Traditional place names were documented and verified by Christine Ishoj and Erin Eacott. Clayton Balsillie, of NWT Treaty #8 Tribal Corp., assisted Fred Sangris and the Elders to prepare maps. Research methods and draft reports were provided by Susan Quirk; drafts were meticulously reviewed and verified by Erin Eacott and Fred Sangris. Special appreciation is due to Sally Paul and the late Jim Evoy. Fred Sangris and Christine Ishoj made every effort to co-ordinate project activities to respect the participants, the authenticity of information recorded, and the people's intellectual property rights.

In the next section, this report introduces mining developments at Ek'ati and the path that led to traditional knowledge being documented for the mining companies. Following sections present Weledeh Yellowknives use of their lands in Weledeh-Cheh and the barrens, then presents land users' recommendations – drawing on traditional knowledge – for mining in the barrens.

B – Mining Development at Ek'ati

[*Translation*] Most of us Elders are over seventy and we know what we are talking about. We have been here before the White people and we have seen the changes. We never used to have any kind of disease on our lands; right now, we need doctors to cure our sickness. But you researchers just have to look around these two mines here and you can see what those mines have done: that's what you have to do to protect the environment. I think we should check out what's out there first before we can agree to do anything, and find out how it will be affected later. I think we should look at the land first and then start talking about it. It seems like right now we can't really say, because we cannot tell what they [ie, the mining companies] have said about that [ie, what damage has already been done to the land].

[Weledeh Yellowknives Elder Joseph Charlo, Ndilǫ: CARC 1995]

Another concern we have is about reclamation. We have had a lot of development in our area: the Talston dam has caused a lot of damage to our lands, the proposed damming of the Lockhart River, and the uranium mines that were on our lands in the 1950s — none of this damage has been reclaimed. And there has been no compensation to us for land damage. And yet what I have heard is there's to be a huge development in the Lac de Gras area and ... reclamation in that area is not properly addressed. Our position is that we need to participate directly and, in order to participate effectively, we need more resources.

[Łutsel K'e Dene First Nation Chief Florence Catholique, Ndilǫ: CARC 1995]

The search for minerals and other nonrenewable resources has been going on in Akaitcho Territory since the time of the European explorers. Samuel Hearne made his trip through the lands of the T'satsąot'inę in the late eighteenth century to search for the copper from which the peoples made their pots and knives. T'satsąot'inę did not dig in their lands for copper, amber, and soapstone that they used: the peoples used unrefined minerals where they occurred at the surface. The wisest of their Elders have always taught their peoples not to dig deep under their lands, as digging could release the evils captured and imprisoned there in the time of Yamorìa.

Following the gold rush in the Yukon at the turn of the twentieth century, prospectors found gold around Great Slave Lake and the government of the time ordered official geological surveys. Oil and other minerals were rapidly discovered. Treaties 8 and 11 were made between the British Crown and the peoples indigenous to the resource-rich lands. The Canadian government's view of these treaties was that any aboriginal title was extinguished and transferred to the Canadian government. Ever since, the right to use and exploit these lands has been in dispute. (*See* Yellowknives Dene First Nation 1993 and 1996, and transcripts of the 1995–96 review panel hearings into the Dia-Met project at Lac de Gras).

1 – Mining Development in Weledeh Yellowknives Territory

Weledeh Yellowknives Dene recall encounters with the first prospectors in Weledeh-Cheh. Just before the disastrous influenza epidemic of 1928, a group of four strange men were met by Weledeh Yellowknives Chief Joseph Drygeese and several travelling companions and warriors at Walsh Lake. One Weledeh Yellowknives man spoke some English through his work with the trading post, and he asked the strangers what they were doing there. The strangers replied that they were looking for rocks. Chief Drygeese told them that his people had never seen strangers before in this area; he informed them that they must leave the area and never come back. Although the four men packed and left, they were the same ones who later found mineral deposits at Burwash Point — much closer to the people's camps. By 1934, the first of many gold mines in that area was operating at Burwash Point.

The influenza epidemic in 1928 had a very bad effect on survivors in the Weledeh Yellowknives communities. Some fled Weledeh-Cheh and stayed in the barrens year-round for four or five years. When they returned to their southern fish camps, they found many prospectors there and cabins built at what became the Giant mine, the Con mine, and "Old Town" in Yellowknife. Elders remember many stories of rescuing incomers who became lost, cold, and hungry. Sometimes, prospectors struck uneven deals with Weledeh Yellowknives people, who helped them place stakes around claim blocks. By the mid-1930s, with poor economic conditions in southern Canada, strangers had become common as far as Gordon Lake, where the Camlaren mine opened. The southern parts of the people's land were dotted with mining stakes and small, mostly gold, mines.

Very large mining companies had been exploring in Denendeh and Nunavut for more than twenty years before the Australian multinational corporation, Broken Hill Propriety (BHP), made public its intention to develop several diamond mines near Lac de Gras in the barrens. When officials from BHP approached federal administrators to discuss their project, they were not told that the lands around Ek'ati were in Akaitcho (Treaty 8) Territory. As a result, BHP held discussions with other indigenous peoples

until 1994, when they were informed by the Dene Nation Environment Manager at a federal government meeting that they ought to discuss use of the land with the T'satsąot'inę whose traditional territory it is: the peoples who are today members of Yellowknives Dene, Łutsel K'e, and Denínu Kúę First Nations. Company officials began discussions in 1994 but did not open impact/benefit negotiations until late in 1996.

In the past seventy years, Weledeh Yellowknives Dene have had much experience with incomers exploring for minerals on their lands, and with the effects of mining. In their hunting grounds around Mackay Lake, there are the Tundra/Salamita mines. Weledeh Yellowknives trappers have found rabbits poisoned by the abandoned tailings of this mine, which can be seen seeping down into the previously pristine waters of Mackay Lake. Each year, a winter road is built across Weledeh Yellowknives lands to supply mines and exploration camps. In Weledeh-Cheh, the people have considerable experience in assessing impacts on their communities from the many changes, including the development of mines and Yellowknife.

When Weledeh Yellowknives Elders speak of damage done to their lands by mining, they refer most often to their experience of impacts in Weledeh-Cheh. Companies mining minerals, such as diamonds, have responded that their extraction process and tailings do not involve the kind of toxic substances that gold mining in the Yellowknife area requires. However, the Dene Elders are referring to much broader impacts and effects than just the potential contamination of air, water, soil, and anything living that comes into contact with such pollutants.

2 – Impacts from Development of the People's Lands

[*Translation*] Ever since it started, I have never heard one good thing about mining: it destroys the land. We survive by the animals: all our ancestors lived by the animals on the land, and the animals were healthy. If we don't take care of the animals, if the mining starts up and the animals get contaminated, the people will also. They [ie, the mining companies] should be careful as to how they work with the Dene and how they should work to protect the environment. And my wife, she remembers when she used to go berry picking in the Giant Mine area; she used to go there with her grandmother. Right now, you can't put anything in your mouth from that area: everything is contaminated. It's as if they've killed everything around here [ie, the Yellowknife area]. We need to make a statement that we don't want to destroy anything on this land: we should protect it before it gets contaminated. Everyone knows that the land around here is contaminated, no one can do anything about it any more because the mining has destroyed it. So we are here to help the land in the barrens from not being destroyed.

[Weledeh Yellowknives Elder Joseph Charlo, Ndilǫ: CARC 1995]

Weledeh-Cheh

Weledeh Yellowknives Dene have observed the impacts from development of the Weledeh and surrounding lands since non-indigenous people began coming to the area in the 1930s and 1940s. Explosions of dynamite by prospectors, air traffic, the development of mines and towns, the building of commercial fish plants, a prison, and roads, and the use of the land and waters for recreation. These developments contributed to the gradual withdrawal of moose and other animals, and to caribou changing their migration route through the area. In spring, Weledeh Yellowknives Dene used to wait for caribou returning north where the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre now sits on Frame Lake. Although now it is rare to see moose near the Weledeh, these animals used to be common and could be relied on by Weledeh Yellowknives for food and clothing.

These developments also resulted in the steady erosion of the people's aboriginal and Treaty rights to hunt, trap, and fish. The building of a prison on the east bank of the Weledeh meant that no one could shoot there and hunters were no longer able to use that area. Worse, hunters could not even travel through the site, as they once did, to traditional hunting grounds beyond the prison site. After the prison was removed, the Dene were not told that this law was removed. In the 1990s, a no-shooting corridor by the NWT Ministry of Renewable Resources — for the safety of permanent residents — further restricted Weledeh Yellowknives hunters.

In the 1940s, a government program was carried out to lay poisoned meat on the land with the intent to kill wolves that, supposedly, were responsible for declining caribou numbers. Later, it was realised that early estimates of caribou numbers were exaggerated, and the many caribou killed to provide meat for fur traders was likely more responsible than wolves for any decline. This program, which had a serious impact on wolves, was also disastrous for many other fur-bearers: fox and lynx populations were very badly reduced near Great Slave Lake and in the barrens. Coyote suffered so greatly that they were soon extinct in Weledeh-Cheh: the last coyote was seen in the area in 1979. Fisher, which had been trapped very extensively for the fur trade, were killed off as a result of the poison program. Although a few fisher exist elsewhere in Denendeh, they are now extinct north of Great Slave Lake.

In the 1950s and 1960s, incomers began to use the people's portages, and the rivers and lakes along the Ingraham Trail for recreation. With the building of the first bridge across the Weledeh in 1962 and the construction of a wider road along the trail, recreation became more frequent and permanent. The roads cut off portages and trails used by animals, such as moose. Even though year-round residential housing was not permitted, some was built, as well as a lodge and many seasonal-use cabins. Cabin-users and visitors removed artefacts found or dug up. Weledeh Yellowknives families, forced to travel farther for hunting, would return to find their tipi and drying racks taken down or removed from the river banks. The people lost access to their sacred sites, to the places the people would visit to pay respect to the land that provided for their survival. Although otter and mink had left the area near the mouth of the Weledeh, fur-bearing animals used to be common enough that Weledeh Yellowknives trappers could make a reasonable living in this area. Soon, other land users chased out the trappers, and non-indigenous sport hunters competed with Weledeh Yellowknives harvesters for occasional moose or caribou.

At that time, Weledeh Yellowknives fishing camps could still be seen on both banks of the Weledeh. But with noise from road traffic and powered boats whose engines tore at fishing nets, along with exhaust fumes and fuel spilling into the water, the once-peaceful fish camps changed. Migrating ducks and geese no longer stopped at the mouth of the Weledeh, forcing traditional hunters to go farther upriver for them. Weledeh Yellowknives fishermen no longer trusted the fish from near the mouth of the river, preferring to set their nets elsewhere. Catches of coney and trout became rare as the commercial fish plants built in the 1940s caught schools flowing downstream. As a result of year-round commercial fishing, lake trout also became nonexistent at Trout Rock and other sites on the north shore. Expanding recreation has virtually driven out Weledeh Yellowknives trappers and fish harvesters. Neither coney nor trout spawn or swim any longer in the Weledeh and smelt numbers are decreasing seriously.

Water level and flow in the Weledeh are affected by a hydroelectric plant on Bluefish Lake, built to serve the gold mines, and a pumphouse for municipal water supply. Weledeh Yellowknives land users have noticed that fish get caught in the suction pipes near the pumphouse and that, as a result, water there tastes fishy. Recreation tourists cut the people's fishing nets and complain to NWT officials about the indigenous people using the river and surrounding lands. While the two-lane bridge was being built during the fall 1996 spawning season, a First Nation Land & Environment manager set a net (provided as a Treaty benefit) across the Weledeh to monitor fish; this net was removed by federal officials and returned – in pieces.

The addition of an NWT park on the eastern point at the mouth of the river brings even more boat traffic. The people can no longer put up their tipi, or camp and eat their catch wherever they want to. Since the park was created, many of the people have been told by government officials not to camp along the shore, or to move their camp fires into grates. Parks officials cut wood the people used to depend on and store it behind a fence in an enclosure built without the knowledge and consent of the people. The park – established without consultation with or the knowledge of Weledeh Yellowknives Dene – stopped the indigenous people from using their traditional camps on that side of the river mouth; the other bank – where the best moose hunting used to be – is contaminated by mine tailings. The rights of Weledeh Yellowknives Dene are being ignored: the indigenous people have been chased off their own lands.

The development of the Giant mine before there were environmental regulations resulted in air-borne arsenic dissolving in the water and settling in sediment of nearby lakes, bays, and rivers, including the Weledeh. Further air-borne arsenic entered these water bodies through runoff of melting snow and ice. To this day, sediment and river banks of the Weledeh contain large amounts of arsenic. Any disturbance of the sediment – such as for bridge construction or repair of water intake pipes buried under the Weledeh – carries with it the risk of releasing arsenic into the water.

Before the Weledeh Yellowknives Dene understood what arsenic was, they were aware of changes that made them wary of the water, fish, berries, and plants near the mine sites. When land users took their sled dogs through the tailings ponds that crossed their traditional trails, the dogs would lose the fur on their paws within a day or two. The Elders can recall people falling off their sled into the tailings ponds, which stayed open year-round, and becoming ill, losing their hair soon after. After many of their sled dogs died without obvious cause, dog owners stopped feeding them fish from Weleh-Cheh. People, too, started dying from cancer at a rate previously unknown to Weledeh Yellowknives Dene.

The people were never warned about impacts and risks from living near mines. In late December of 1949, a massive emission from the Giant mine dispersed huge amounts of arsenic into the air, settling into the ice and snow. Melting snow in the

spring of the following two years was so toxic that notices were printed in Yellowknife newspapers warning people not to drink or use the meltwater. Few Weledeh Yellowknives Dene could read the notices. Anyone who washed their hair with arsenic-laden meltwater in the next two springs went bald. A dairy herd, horses, chickens, and dogs were among the domesticated animals that died from drinking meltwater in spring 1950. But the greatest tragedy occurred in spring 1951: four children in family camps in Ndilo died. The mine owners gave their parents some money, as if it could compensate for the loss. Women stopped picking medicine plants and berries, which used to grow thickly in the area of the Giant mine. The people moved away, avoiding the mine area for some years, although it had once been so important to them. To this day, they refuse to use water from Weleh-Cheh for soaking caribou hides or making dryfish. (*See* statements to Parliamentary Standing Committee hearings: Canada 1995.)

Relocation into Town

In 1959, when the Indian Agent and RCMP made their annual visit to Dettah to give out Treaty payments, they told Chief Joe Sangris to tell his people to come in from their lands and stay in town permanently. The government wanted the children to go to the church's school, he said, and the people had to stay in a place where the doctors and nurses could give them medical attention. Not everyone trusted the residential schools, where the people's children were forced to leave their parents and stop referring to their way of life, their culture, their language. Until the late 1970s, some Weledeh Yellowknives families continued to stay in their log homes along Weleh-Cheh and travel in late summer to the barrens as far as the Coppermine River.

In 1959, there were about fifteen houses in Dettah, which in the Weledeh Yellowknives dialect means "ash point". The name refers to a time when a camp fire was left burning after some people left: the fire burned out of control, reducing the entire point to ashes. Always a good place to stay, Dettah has had log homes since the early 1800s. When the government wanted the people to relocate in the 1960s, Dettah remained a small place largely cut off from the rapid development of Yellowknife. The people continued to build their own homes and to move among the nearby fish camps: there was no electricity, no stores, no gas, no roads, and no school. In the mid-1960s, cut lines were blazed through the bush from Dettah to the road running along the Ingraham Trail, but the road to the village was not pushed through until the Chief demanded government houses for the increasing population and electrical power.

In 1959, there were only ten government-built houses in Ndilǫ (*trans.* tip of the island): their colourful paint resulted in the village being called Rainbow Valley until the First Nation insisted that the traditional name be restored. No more houses were built in Ndilǫ for another ten years, so some families stayed in tents and small shacks.

Although people built cabins elsewhere on Latham Island and around the town of Yellowknife, they were called squatters and were unofficially expropriated without compensation or alternate homes. (*See* Yellowknives Dene First Nation 1993). Many Weledeh Yellowknives have had to stay in Denínu Kų́ę́, Łutsel K'e, Tłı̀ Chǫ̀ communities, or even leave the Dene homeland (Denendeh). In the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, very few Dene could get jobs in the wage economy and, with the children taken forcibly to distant residential schools, it became more difficult for families to travel together on the land in the more familiar household economy of their people. Relocation into town has brought massive social, cultural, and economic dislocation for all Dene. The indigenous peoples continue to be pressured by change demanded and made by government and industry — to their communities and their lands — while wanting to determine their own development in their way.

Mining in Weledeh-Cheh & the Barrens

Prospectors started moving into Weledeh-Cheh in the 1930s. Weledeh Yellowknives Dene often found rock with gold in it — particularly women picking blueberries where the Giant mine was later established. There, three women one day found a very large gold-bearing rock, which they brought back to their camp beside the Weledeh, where a visiting prospector saw it when having tea with one family. Without telling the people the value of the rock, he offered to trade it for a stovepipe. The woman who found it was puzzled, but accepted the stovepipe. The gold rush — and the negative impacts — started soon after this uneven trade. There are other, similar stories of uneven sharing between the indigenous people and the incomers. While Akaitcho's peoples agreed at Treaty in 1900 and 1928 to share their lands, the incomers have rarely shared with the people their profits earned from the people's land.

In the early 1930s, a small gold mine operated for only a year or two at Burwash Point just north of Dettah. This mine and several later gold mines paid people to cut spruce trees for use in their mills before other power sources were available. As a result, spruce is now a rare tree species in Weledeh-Cheh. This cutting with no regard for sustainability makes the sacred tree on the southwest side of the Weledeh mouth even more noteworthy. More and more timber was cut in the decades following, as development proceeded at a very rapid pace. Today, the Weledeh area seems sparsely treed: not so long ago, this was not the case. The traditional name of the camp site on Akaitcho Bay, before it was called Dettah, was "Spruce point".

Mines in the area of the Weledeh have had sporadic periods of operation, with the exception of the Giant mine. In the 1970s, a winter road was constructed by Echo Bay Mines from Tibbett Lake at the end of the Ingraham Trail across many large frozen lakes and portages to the north up to the company's Lupin gold mine near Contwoyto Lake. Clearly, the engineers planning this route had some knowledge of indigenous

people's land use: the winter road follows traditional trails used by Weledeh Yellowknives Dene, particularly from Gordon to Contwoyto Lake. The people were not informed about this use of their lands and their consent was not sought. Re-constructed each winter, this ice and portage road is used to haul a year's worth of fuel for mine operations, as well as the chemicals such as arsenic and cyanide used in the gold extraction process. Since the Tibbett–Lupin winter road crosses their traditional hunting grounds, Weledeh Yellowknives land users are concerned about fuel and chemical spills resulting from truck accidents on the large frozen lakes. This winter road also provides access by many more people to hunting grounds traditionally used by Dene from many communities: increases in waste meat are a further concern of Dene land users.

Exploration for diamonds and mine development around Ek'ati (Lac de Gras) put increased pressure on the Tibbett-Lupin winter road, the Ingraham Trail highway, and the 1962 one-lane bridge. To serve these intensifying mining operations, more trucks, much more heavily loaded, were required for the month or two that the Tibbett–Lupin winter road is open. The new bridge constructed over the Weledeh in 1996–97 was intended to carry this extra traffic. The indigenous people know the bridge will also bring more recreation traffic, more hunters to their lands.

Weledeh Yellowknives Dene know the barrens are unspoiled, mostly untouched by industrial development and the pollutants associated with them, as Weledeh-Cheh was before the 1930s. Perhaps the biggest differences between the southern and northern parts of the people's territory is the scale of the mining planned. No mine in Weledeh-Cheh is as large as each of the vast open-pit diamond mines will be. Large-scale mining developments around Ek'ati are already changing the land and waters on which many Dene families have and continue to rely for meat, fish, hides, and fur. At least nine open-pit diamond mines are planned to operate for at least twenty-five years from 1997. Four of the pits, in the lake itself, are to be surrounded by wide granite-filled dykes. Weledeh Yellowknives Elders indicate that mining is not a good idea for the barrenlands. They say the barrens are a wild place, the home of the animals, that cannot be tamed. Having observed the effects of development impacts in Weledeh-Cheh, they have grave doubts that mining near Ek'ati can do anything but harm to their people's traditional territory.

3 – Development of the Ek'ati Traditional Knowledge Project

A federal environmental assessment on the BHP project was held between December 1994 and July 1996. As one of several intervenors, Yellowknives Dene First Nation was an active if reluctant participant. The federal government had given out hundreds of land-use permits to explorations companies in Weledeh Yellowknives territory, although there was no mutual agreement on land ownership and jurisdiction. For three years before the assessment process started, the First Nation had been persistently lobbying government to stop alienating their lands in this way while negotiating land ownership and jurisdiction. The focus of the assessment review panel was fairly narrow, to the disappointment of Weledeh Yellowknives Dene. Observations by and recommendations from the First Nation were, for the most part, ignored by the panel. A positive aspect of this environmental assessment process was the recognition of the potential contribution to be made by the traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples, although, for the review of the BHP project at Ek'ati, that contribution remained potential.

The review panel's terms of reference included the integration of traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples into the proponent's environment impact statement (EIS); however, timing in the guidelines indicated that the federal government wanted this assessment to be rapid. Certainly, the pace of activities was too hurried to include adequate documentation and interpretation of traditional knowledge by indigenous peoples, before the integration of the interpretations into the proponent's EIS. After the review was announced in December 1994, BHP wrote public letters advocating co-operation from aboriginal communities so the company could meet its lawful obligations (ie, the review guidelines).

In a March 10, 1995 letter to the panel, BHP said that it was "actively seeking meaningful ways to include traditional knowledge throughout the EIS". In April, Chiefs of Yellowknives Dene First Nation received a letter from BHP outlining Phase I and Phase II of its traditional knowledge studies for this project. In response, in late May, Yellowknives Dene First Nation sent BHP a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that described the traditional knowledge activities that could be completed for inclusion in the Environmental Impact Statement BHP had to produce for the assessment review (*See* Appendix 4). That is, the First Nation intended this work to be part of what BHP called Phase I of its proposed traditional knowledge projects. However, there was no response from BHP to this draft MOU. BHP presented its Environmental Impact Statement to the review panel only twelve weeks after the company had informed the people of its phase I and II traditional knowledge proposal. Not only would it not have been feasible for the people to do the traditional knowledge work in such a short period of time, they were not given the opportunity to contribute their knowledge in time for the release of the EIS.

In BHP's EIS, Weledeh Yellowknives Dene could see that baseline data collected by its contract specialists did not provide accurate information for the state of the environment at Ek'ati before any development by BHP had occurred. The descriptions given by specialists doing fieldwork at Ek'ati for brief periods of time were cursory by comparison to the knowledge held by Weledeh Yellowknives Elders who had used the land for more than fifty or sixty years. The people who could read the English in the eight volumes of the EIS were deeply concerned that the wisps of traditional knowledge in it were presented without adequate description of what they were or what they signified (*see* the written response to the EIS in Yellowknives Dene First Nation 1996). The only Weledeh Yellowknives traditional knowledge included was on maps prepared for the initiation of comprehensive land claims in 1974–76; fewer than twenty land users had been interviewed for their knowledge of the people's occupation and land use for the Dene Nation mapping project. Worse, no interpretive description of the maps was provided so that sense could be made of them by readers not familiar with the Dene way of life.

In October, the review panel wrote to BHP requesting an update of traditional knowledge and other aboriginal community initiatives mentioned in the panel guidelines. In November, BHP responded, among other things, that the company considered Phase I of its traditional knowledge study to be complete and its results included in the EIS. The letter stated that co-operation by aboriginal peoples was "somewhat hampered" and listed as reasons the proprietary nature of traditional knowledge and objective assessment of the knowledge during the review process. Yellowknives Dene First Nation made written and oral statements to the panel to clarify that their people's knowledge had not been included in the EIS.

The November letter by BHP went on to say that two aboriginal "groups" had agreed to participate in Phase II — Yellowknives Dene First Nation was not among the indigenous peoples who had agreed. The main reason for hesitating over Phase II was that it had not been described in enough detail for the people to understand what they might be involved in. The First Nation had experienced many difficulties with the archæologists and environment specialists under contract to BHP with regard to information about their people, their history, their communities, their economy, and their traditional knowledge. Concerns were documented in the written presentation to the traditional knowledge technical hearing of the review panel in February 1996. Nothing substantive occurred until December 1996, when BHP sent a letter to the First Nation to say that the company would contribute to a project defined to meet the needs of another company planning to mine diamonds in Ek'ati. (This letter is reproduced in Appendix 5.) By then, the review panel had submitted its report recommending approval of the mining project (July 1996) and the federal Cabinet had given official support to the panel's recommendation.

The claim block to the south and west of the BHP land lease at Ek'ati is held by a Canadian company, Aber Resources, and a company that is a subsidiary of London-based RTZ, one of the largest multinational corporations in the world. (A map of the claim block prepared by Diavik for this report is in Appendix 1.) The land-use application from this company, in December 1994, was made under the name Kennecott Canada. In June 1996, a Kennecott official signed a Memorandum of Understanding for traditional knowledge studies to be conducted for its Ek'ati project; at that time, he announced that the company name had been changed to Diavik Diamonds. Representatives of Kennecott/Diavik, learning from the processes that BHP has been through, seem to want to maintain better relationships with the indigenous peoples. At the June 1996 meeting, Diavik presented a letter that outlines the kinds of information the company would like to have included in a report from the traditional knowledge project they were funding. (This letter is reproduced in Appendix 5. The MOUs for BHP and Diavik are reproduced in Appendix 4.)

With partial funding and intentions secured, preliminary work on methods and planning for this project started in August 1996. It was difficult for researchers to plan project activities without knowing whether BHP would also be part of it. Work was interrupted for long periods so that project participants could fulfil requests from the First Nation Chiefs and Council to take part in other processes related to the BHP mines – the development of a federal government environmental agreement with the company, and hearings prior to the granting of a water licence. BHP sent a letter confirming its participation in this project (*See* Appendix 5); when its initial funding contribution was received, the study got properly underway in spring 1997.

4 – Weledeh Yellowknives Knowledge in this Report

The intentions of Weledeh Yellowknives Dene in conducting this project were to:

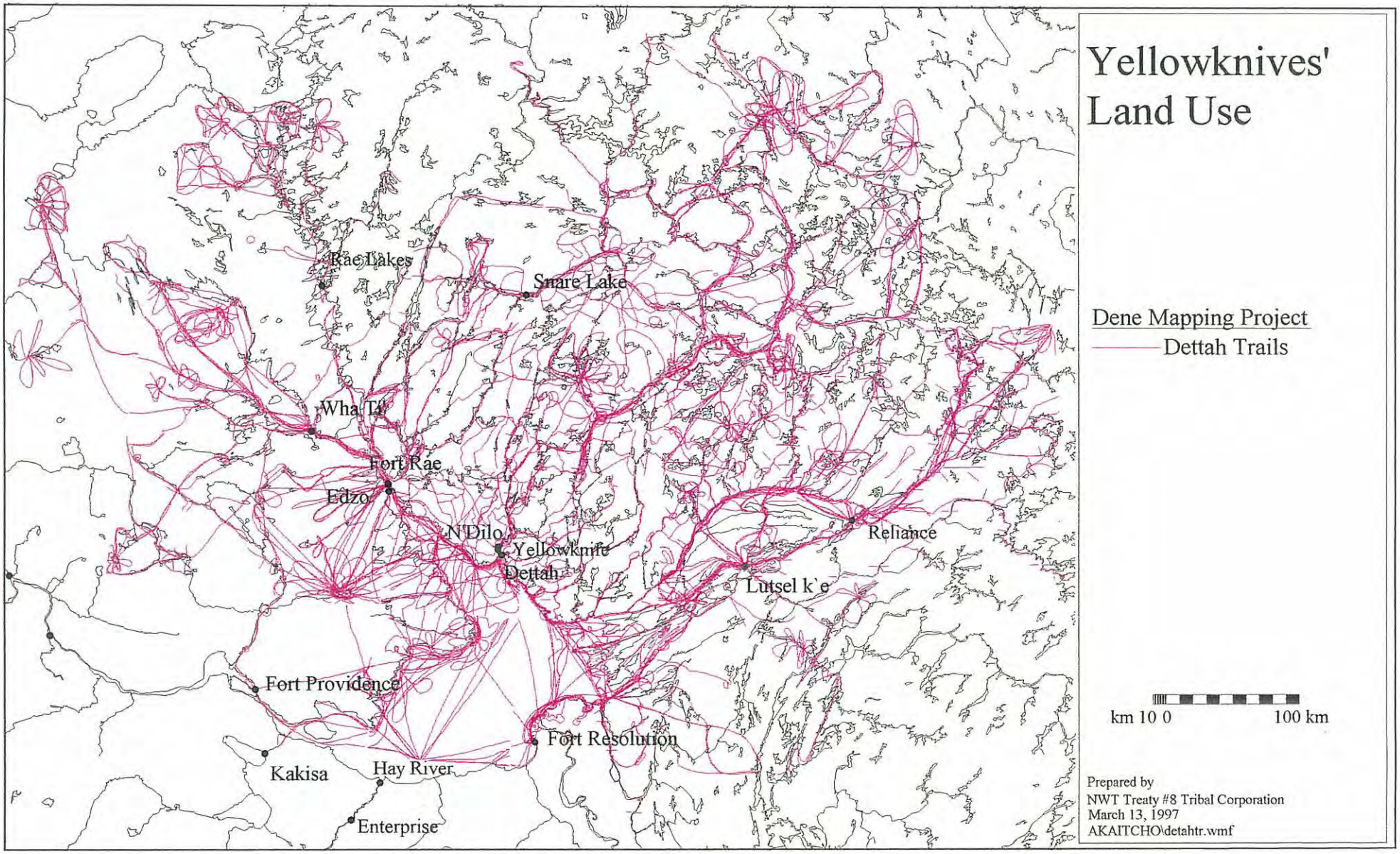
- document and verify traditional knowledge of Ek'ati from Elders and land users
- produce a sensitivity map and report for public presentation
- show pre-development patterns on the lands, as known by Weledeh Yellowknives Dene
- respond to specific requests by funding sources/mining companies
- suggest ways to reduce cumulative effects from impacts of mining development
- produce an inventory of materials documented for the First Nation

During report production for other traditional knowledge projects, it occurred to researchers that information made public about the history of the people ought to be consistent. Thus, parts of those earlier reports are included in this report. While different land users hold different specific knowledge, there is consensus among land users about knowledge of broader or common uses. Only knowledge on which several land users concur is reported here. The report was translated in sections to the Elders, so that they could verify accuracy, or revise inaccurate parts. Following conventions for reporting participatory research, the anonymity of persons who contributed the knowledge reported in this document has been maintained.

Weledeh Yellowknives Elders and experienced land users expressed many concerns about the way mining construction and operations would proceed, and they had many suggestions, drawing on their knowledge of their land. Therefore, large sections of this report present those recommendations and explain why or how the land users arrived at them.

While discussing these recommendations with Weledeh Yellowknives Elders, researchers asked them how they wanted their knowledge to be used by the mining companies. Elders are aware that their knowledge in English does not have the same clarity, meaning, or significance that it does in their own language or to their own people who are familiar with their history. Therefore, it is recommended that aspects of knowledge in this report not be taken out of their context. Any use of this material is to be fully cited as:

> Weledeh Yellowknives Dene (1997). "Weledeh Yellowknives Dene: a traditional knowledge study of Ek'ati". Dettah: Yellowknives Dene First Nation Council.


Yellowknives' Land Use
Dene Mapping Project
Dettah Trails
Rae Lakes
Snare Lake
Wha Ti
Fort Rae
Edzo
N'Dilo
Yellowknife
Dettah
Reliance
Lutsel k`e
Fort Providence
Fort Resolution
Kakisa
Hay River
Enterprise
km 10 0
100 km
Prepared by
NWT Treaty #8 Tribal Corporation
March 13, 1997
AKAITCHO\detahtr.wmf

C – Weledeh Yellowknives Dene in their Lands

[*Translation*] I would like to talk about the way our people have lived with the animals; we have always lived off the land and we need the animals. I have been to that mine site [ie, BHP]. We used to live in that area: my father used to have a trapline in that area. The animals were always important to us. I don't think I can survive without the animals. ... We know the migration routes of the caribou, and it looks like the mine is going to go right into the migration route. That's one of my concerns. ... We used to go trapping up in the barrenlands: that's how hard we worked on the land. They told us that they would build us a house [here in town], so we have not gone back to stay on the land or else we would be there right now. We used to go up to the barrens in the fall and winter. A lot of people lived on the barrens to go trapping, the animals are important for the people. I really agree with your efforts to protect the caribou, because we use that area. ... Now I'm seventy-one years old and I still want to live on the land. We know how important the caribou is to us, and we want to protect it before it is all gone. We never overhunt these animals; we only take what we need for our children.

[Weledeh Yellowknives Elder Joseph Charlo, Ndilǫ: CARC, 1995]

Since time immemorial, T'satsąot'inę have stayed on the banks of the Weledeh, coming to think of themselves as Weledeh Yellowknives Dene. As indigenous people, Weledeh Yellowknives Dene are born to their lands and in that sense are part of their lands. For Dene, "the land" (*ndeh* in their languages) means about the same as the English word "environment": *ndeh* includes the soil and plants, the air and weather, birds, the waters and fish, trees, animals, and people who use the land. From generation to generation, Dene learn to respect the land because it is the source of their survival. Respect is paid in many ways: by using without damaging; by not wasting any part of animals, birds, and fish; by offering to pay the land; and by learning to live with the land and its changes without bringing negative change.

1 - Changes to Land-Use Patterns Over Time

Occupation and use of lands in Weledeh-Cheh and the barrens by Weledeh Yellowknives Dene are ancient. The people travelled by water, as comfortable on fast-flowing rivers as on the very large lakes, such as Tinde'e (Great Slave Lake). Before the Akeh-Cho–Edzo peace agreement, T'satsąot'inę were the only peoples living around Tinde'e. In those times, the Tłı̀ Chǫ̀ were a woodland people, avoiding Tinde'e and Sah Tú (Great Bear Lake). For hundreds of generations, T'satsąot'inę, including Weledeh Yellowknives, were the only Dene using the barrens until the 1823 peace agreement with the Tłı̀ Chǫ̀. From time to time, Dene met with Inuit hunters; in the generations since the current Elders' grandparents, Dene and Inuit would share food. For prior generations, such encounters provoked hostility. Bloody Falls was the site of a battle between T'satsąot'inę and Inuit on the Coppermine River.

Encouraged by Akeh-Cho, the Tłı̀ Chǫ̀ began to travel in winter into the barrens to trap, mostly, white fox. Trapping in the barrens for the fur trade changed the land-use patterns of the indigenous peoples north of Tinde'e. One significant change was that trappers would leave the barrens perhaps two or three times in winter to take accumulated furs to the nearest trading post. Before trapping for trade, the people had no reason to leave the barrens during winter. Once the people started trapping for trade, families likely used a wider variety of base camps, and trappers likely started planning shorter trips of, perhaps, a week or two, before returning to their base camp. Trails recorded on maps during the 1974–76 Dene Mapping Project reflect patterns of land use during the fur trade, rather than ancestral patterns before the fur trade.

The initial Dene Mapping Project was a remarkable research project undertaken with highly participatory methods long before they became popular. The Indian Brotherhood of the NWT trained its own people as fieldworkers who travelled to Dene communities to interview land users and have them patiently trace the trails they used on transparent overlays on topographic maps (Nahanni 1974). This research was necessary for Dene to enter the federal government's land claim process at the time. Even though Dene had given testimony in court in 1973 to prove their occupancy and land use in their traditional territory, they had to conduct this two-year project to provide federal administrators with more detail. These maps became a focus for community testimony to Judge Berger in the assessment review of the proposed pipeline project through the Mackenzie valley, conducted in the same years the mapping project was underway.

The original work was augmented by a second stage of the project during land-claim negotiations in the 1980s. All maps and trails were entered into a geographic information system on the University of Alberta computer. Later, these data were transferred to software used on smaller personal computers. In a contract with the Dene Nation, BHP gained access to some of these maps for inclusion in its EIS during

the 1996 review of its project. Many of the maps that appeared in the EIS are used in this report to demonstrate the people's knowledge.

Maps 2 and 4, for instance, show Weledeh Yellowknives Dene trails within their traditional territory, between Weledeh-Cheh and the barrens. Many frequently used trails are shared with their T'satsąot'inę relatives who stayed during summers around Ta-Cheh (the East Arm). Other popular trails converge at Gordon Lake (*in lower left, a thumb's width from the left edge of both maps; the lower left corner of the maps is Prelude Lake*). The trails converging in circular routes (*centre right of both maps*) are around Lake of the Enemy, Courageous Lake, Mackay Lake, Lac de Gras, and Lac du Sauvage. The multiple trails leading to these lakes from the west (*left centre of the maps*) were used by people who spent their summers at Enodah and, during the fur trade, Tłı̀ Chǫ̀ from Behchoko. The community of Snare Lakes was not yet established when the mapping project started; the Tłı̀ Chǫ̀ who settled there were undoubtedly those who shared these trails with Weledeh Yellowknives hunters and trappers. The preferred hunting area for Tłı̀ Chǫ̀ was and remains the Point Lake area (*shown in the upper left of both maps*). Differences between Map 2 and Map 4 (Dettah trails only) can be realised by comparing this area on both maps.

Elliptical trails that leave from and return to the same place on the main travel trail are likely to be trails where hunters have set snares and traps. Each lengthy trail may take several days to visit, retrieving fresh kills and resetting traps or snares with new bait. Although such trails are not registered here as they are in the provinces, trails repeatedly used by the same family and recognised to belong to them are referred to by the people as that family's trapline. Trapline trails were for hunting and trapping for fur. A trapline is used by a specific family, but travel trails are shared by the entire community and other Dene.

The people's land use changed again in the 1930s and 1940s, when mine, town, and dam developments changed hunting and trapping patterns. Weledeh Yellowknives families could no longer hunt caribou in Weledeh-Cheh, at Whitebeach Point, or with their T'satsąot'inę relatives at Rocher River. The parts of the Bathurst herd that migrated around Great Slave Lake before that time changed their routes. It also became more of a challenge to carry the tools and other manufactured goods the people obtained from stores in town that made their lives on the land easier: it took many more dogs to haul the extra weight, and that meant carrying more fish to feed the dogs. With declining prices, the people received less and less for their furs.

With relocation into town and children taken to school, families found it increasingly difficult to travel to the barrens as their ancestors had. In the 1960s to 1980s, there was a gradual decline in the number of hunters and trappers who used the land, the number of times the people went on the land, and the number of people in each group of land users. Thus, camp sites used for hundreds of generations of the people have

gradually and reluctantly been abandoned only in the last twenty years. This generation has built rudimentary cabins on the land. Because the people cannot spend the time they used to on the land, they now travel by snow machine and airplane and must carry fuel to keep travelling. The expense is borne because so many of the people in the communities continue to rely on wild meat, medicine plants, and animals pelts.

Today's Elders lament the loss of companionship and sharing that comes from travelling in very small groups with noisy equipment that shuts off conversation and the enveloping silence of the land. Who can hear the shouts of a hunter in trouble? Can a snow machine carry an injured hunter to his camp and family, as dogs have? But these are small complaints by comparison to the permanent loss of land and potential changes to animal patterns as a result of damage from mining operations.

An Elder, originally from Rae who has lived for fifty years in the Weledeh Yellowknives community, recalls a Weledeh Yellowknives Elder from the previous generation saying: "The people from Gameti [Rae Lakes] and Behchoko [Rae] used to go trapping in the barrens more in the western parts [ie, at Point Lake]. Myself, Susie Abel, others around our age went trapping all over the barrens but not once did we see the Tłı̀ Chǫ̀ Dene from Behchoko in our area. We used dog teams in those days but we never saw them. ... Ek'ati and farther north is the area where Weledeh Yellowknives Dene did a lot of harvesting." Present-day Weledeh Yellowknives Elders are concerned about what some young people in the communities are saying about Ek'ati since talk of diamond mines began.

For Elders, it is respectful to speak only of the things a person knows because he or she experienced it or was told it by their Elders. It is a matter of honour not to repeat things that a person does not know: in oral cultures it is essential that people pass on only things that are accurate. Elders feel that some young people today should not "repeat what they have heard from people who maybe did not even trap in the area but wished they had. When a person wants other people to listen to them, they should not lie about work they say they have done on the land because they will find that a lot of people older than them will not believe them. The young people today have not harvested there, so they do not know the areas and the way that our ancestors worked and lived." It is for these reasons that Elders and land users with experience in Ek'ati and the barrens were interviewed for this project to contribute accurate knowledge of their own and taught to them by their forefathers.

It is easy for the people to describe their way of life: so easy that it is sometimes difficult to remember the distances they travelled, the blizzards and frigid cold without the kind of heated shelter available today, the constant search and hard work to get food, and the rare places where the people had access to water in winter. Anyone who stands on the barrens today feels daunted by the people who endured with a sustainable economy in these wild lands.

2 - Weledeh Yellowknives Occupation of their Land

Weledeh Yellowknives occupation of the barrens is ancient. In their language, the people refer to the place, not as a "barren" or lifeless land – for they know that is not true – but simply as lands that are wide and open. Travel there in winter is unhampered by trees and bush. Today's Elders know of some individuals who have travelled, sometimes alone with their dogs, as far as the Arctic coast, but those trips have been rare in the past four generations. Until the 1970s, seasonal occupation by Weledeh Yellowknives land users has been continuous as far north as Contwoyto Lake, which the people call "Lake with many camps". Map 4 shows Weledeh Yellowknives trails around southern Contwoyto Lake recorded by only ten Dettah families during the Dene Mapping Project, 1974–76. (Contwoyto Lake is in the *upper right*.) The people also travelled farther east in the barrens than is shown on Map 4, as indicated by the winter trails proceeding off the map (*to the right*). The people often joined their T'satsǫ̨ot'inę̨ relatives to hunt in lands from Aylmer Lake to Artillery Lake, sometimes as far east as the Thelon River. In warmer months, they followed summer trails by canoe to hunt caribou and musk-ox.

Itawo, a highly respected Weledeh Yellowknives land user, was born in 1865 at *Itawo Ti*, a lake near Tree River on the Coppermine River. He was the last harvester of the people to use that area, as his family had always done. Itawo abandoned the area only when his wife passed away, leaving him with an infant son - the Coppermine River was too far to travel with a two-year-old. Itawo, like many Dene of his time, lived for more than one hundred years.

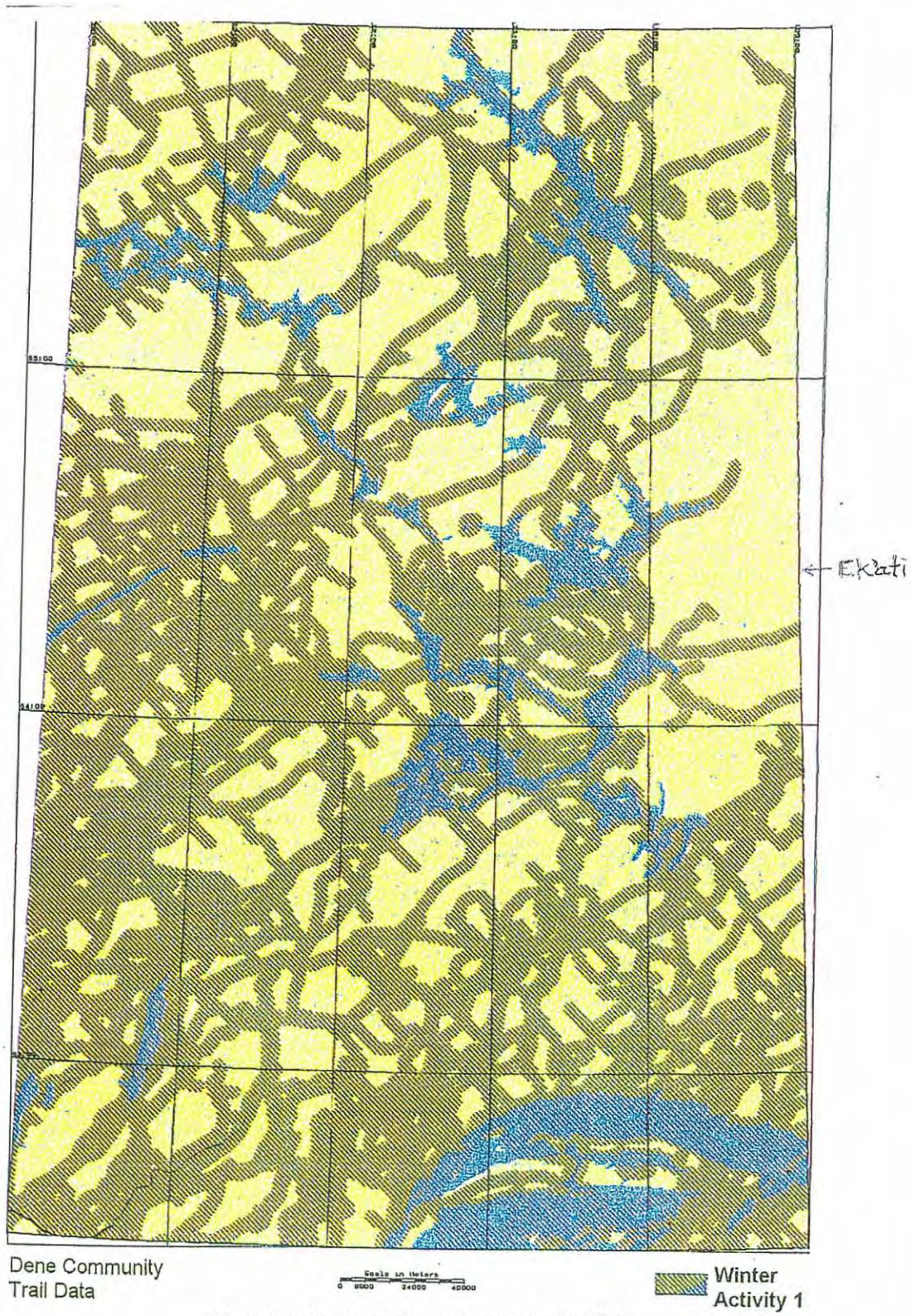
Most Weledeh Yellowknives families used the barrens all winter, which occurs there from mid-October until April (and sometimes May). Map 5 illustrates Dene winter activity in the barrens. Map 6 shows that considerable non-winter activity occurred in the barrens from April or May to September. As only a thirty percent sample of land users were interviewed and the interviews were conducted when many traditional land users were out on the land, the activity shown on these maps is modest, quite conservative. Lines on the maps represent activity on trails, camp sites, and traplines. Much of the non-winter activity was preparing for winter in treeline camps and hunting for caribou around the large lakes from late summer to the first snowfall.

In fall, caribou have acquired fat and their coats are thick and rough, ready for winter. Because Dene, too, need fat for winter and the thick hair on caribou helps keep them warm in the frigid cold and winds on the barrens, caribou hunting in fall was vital to the people's survival. Elder after Elder insistently repeats that the caribou is the most important animal to the Dene, that they cannot survive without caribou. The single most important staple in the people's diet apart from water, caribou is most useful to Dene in fall time.

Since time immemorial, the lake shown on maps as Lac de Gras has been central to Weledeh Yellowknives because it was the place to hunt caribou in fall. The people's traditional name of lands to the south of this lake is "Under the sun", a reference to the people's summer camps in that direction. The traditional name of lands to the west is "Where the west wind blows", to the east, "Where the east wind blows", and to the north, "Where the north wind blows". Visitors to the area will understand very quickly why wind is foremost in these names. These traditional names place this lake at the centre of the Weledeh Yellowknives territory.

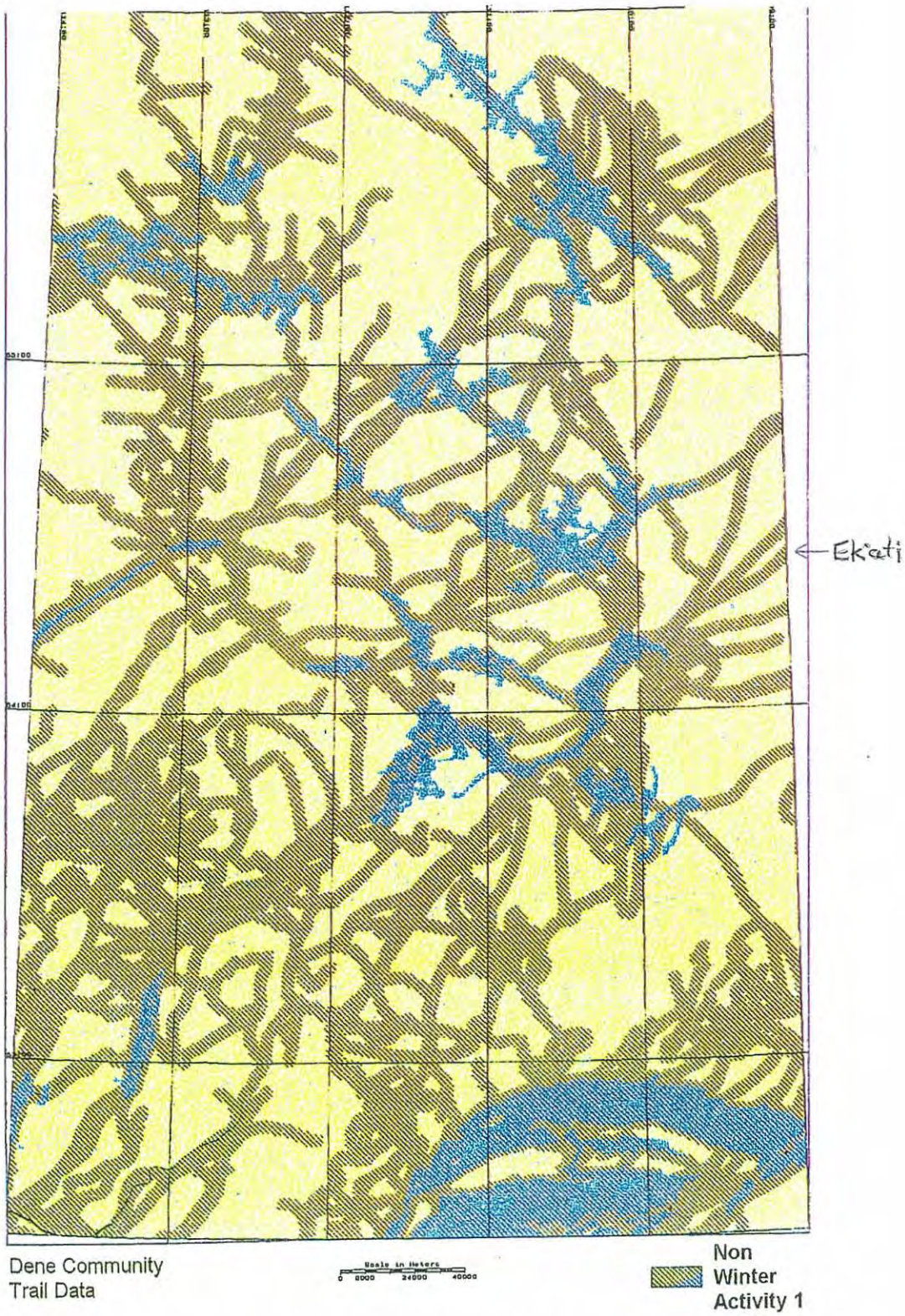
The traditional Weledeh Yellowknives name of this lake was *Ti Cho* (*trans.* large lake). Since the generation of Itawo's grandfather, the people have called the lake *Ek'ati* (*trans.* fat lake) to remember a particular event. One fall, a Weledeh Yellowknives hunter canoeing on Ti Cho was close to starvation. He kept paddling around the shore until he could smell fat (*ek'a*) from caribou meat cooking at the camp of another hunter. Heading in the direction of the smell, he reached the camp where caribou fat was cooking, and saved his life. Being close to starving is a terrible situation. Weledeh Yellowknives remember this event by referring to it when they name this lake.

Map 5 – shows winter activity recorded by Dene hunters and trappers using the barrens where mineral exploration and mining is bringing rapid changes to the people's lives and lands



Weledeh Yellowknives Dene at Ek'ati 37

Map 6 – shows "non-winter" activity for comparison with Map 5



Weledeh Yellowknives Dene at Ek'ati 38

Weledeh Yellowknives Trails

Canoe and portage trails from Enodah, Weledeh-Cheh, and Ta-Cheh converge around Mackay Lake (*see* Map 4). The explorer Franklin refers to lakes along these trails in his journals. From Mackay Lake, two major trails go to Ek'ati: one arriving at the Narrows between Lac de Gras and Lac du Sauvage, and one (which the present-day winter road to the mines follows) arriving at a large bay in the southern part of Ek'ati. Some of today's Elders recall a time when they were at Ek'ati as young men camping at a point on this bay with a hunter who liked to sleep longer than everyone else. One morning, the early risers tunnelled the snow out from under the sleeping hunter so that, when he moved to get up, he fell under the stove. The people still refer to this point by the name of the hunter who slept there.

Many places at Ek'ati were important camp sites used by the people for hundreds of generations. The people camped where caribou, fish, and water were available: at the Narrows, on small bays along the shore, and on islands with channels where swift currents kept the water open in winter. Winter and summer trails criss-cross all the large lakes so that showing them on a map results in a confusion of lines. The two large islands in Ek'ati — both called by the people *Ek'ati Ndi*, as if they were one island — were an importance place to camp, hunt caribou and fish, and to cache meat, fish, and furs. On the eastern island of this pair, Diavik plans to operate open-pit mines on diamond-bearing kimberlite pipes in the lake around the island.

Weledeh Yellowknives Dene are water people: they have always travelled readily on rivers and lakes, paddling canoes even across the very large lakes in their territory. They could make canoes in two sizes and, in recent generations, larger boats to carry more. Handmade canoes, still being fashioned even two generations ago, were made by removing sheets of bark from birch trees with sharp carved bone tools and attaching them to wooden frames with twisted willow roots and spruce gum. Bigger canoes were made to carry women and children, as well as supplies, and smaller canoes were made for hunters and their dogs. When nails and canvas became available from trading posts, they were substituted for spruce gum and birch bark. Canoes were essential for carrying the people rapidly from their summer fish camps to treeline camps to prepare for fall hunts and winter. (*See* Photo 2.)

At treeline camps, hunters would make sled frames and snowshoes for covering trails on snow and ice. Sled frames were narrow, in differing lengths, ready to be covered with caribou hides sewn together with sinew thread and a carved-bone needle; when no wood was available, old caribou hides would be sewn together as a sled, especially to pull very old people or young children. Each family had its special techniques and made different types of snowshoes: for hunting on packed trails and for breaking trail after snow falls. A Weledeh Yellowknives Elder recalls: "We would break trails for the dog teams to follow. Sometimes we would go all day long. At

times there would be holes in our hide boots because we wore the snowshoes all day long, stopping only to rest. When we first start using snowshoes, we would fall all the time until we get used to walking or running on them."

In the deep past, when Dene used a trail in the barrens, they stopped at intervals to collect large rocks and pile them to mark key places along the route. This summer, for this project, a Weledeh Yellowknives Elder demonstrated making of a marker by placing a tall angular rock on top of a large boulder pushed inland by ice. (*See* Photo 3.) Then, he carefully wedged small stones under the top rock, tapping them gently into position, to secure it in place; he expressed confidence that this marker could remain there for hundreds of years if not disturbed by people.

Stone markers were invaluable when the people were travelling where only rare solitary trees and few other features were landmarks to remember the way. On trails used often, dogs could be relied on to detect the smell of their own or other dogs' scent; they can follow scent on a trail as long as the driver lets them. When snow is blowing, it is particularly difficult for the people to see a trail, as one Elder recalls: "When there are blizzards, I remember noticing rocks that we piled up as markers. We had done that, so that we could find our way in winter time when we went hunting and trapping [ie, on traplines away from base camps]."

Any rocks piled along a trail – caches, burial cairns, or trap markers, as well as those specifically placed on a trail – could guide travellers as a marker. When young Dene are learning to use the land, they look for markers on trails they have not used before. Markers tell them that their forefathers travelled there and it is a good place to go. If a party of hunters or travellers had to split up to search for food, knowledgeable land users could look for new markers to tell when the rest of their party was ahead of them or had gone another direction. Individuals were known to make different kinds of markers, which were sufficiently distinctive that travellers could tell who used a particular trail by the markers. One reason all adults had to be able to find trails is because caches with stored meat were placed along them. Sharing meat and fish stored in caches could keep each community at base camps fed between hunting trips, so adults in a family had to know where to look for caches.

Young land users were expected to have trouble finding their way and Elders were not happy about young hunters and trappers travelling without an experienced land user. Even so, not everyone lived to very old age or returned safely to base camps. Elders today can all recall times when even experienced land users lost their way: "Sometimes in winter the blizzards are very bad and people got lost when they went to check on their traps and they were never seen again." The loss of experienced land users was a serious blow to families, given their continual need for the meat from hunting large animals. Fishing and snaring small animals and birds could feed people

in need, but the fat in large animals was required for people to survive winter. For this reason, hunters making successful kills shared the meat with anyone who needed it.

When no water was readily available on winter trails, the people sucked on ice. Dried berries rolled into caribou fat and frozen made for good travelling food. Because they are light, dryfish could be carried in fall; however, on winter trails, many dryfish would be crushed to a powder for use in soup at sundown when travellers and dogs camped for the night. Moose and caribou drymeat, too, was powdered and rolled in fat, then frozen as a travel food. As a treat for children in more recent years, sugar could be added for extra energy.

Weledeh Yellowknives hunters travelled to their treeline camps in fall in a hurry, taking, for example, from two to seven days on *Weledeh alàa to* from the mouth of the Weledeh to camps at Lockhart and Beniah lakes. Other trails might take longer, depending on weather conditions and the number of portages. To cross portages, the people helped by their dogs carried everything on their backs. Women and children would follow a short time later, carrying tipi, dryfish for dogs, and any other products made during the past summer. After a summer of plentiful fishing and hunting, food was not usually a problem for the people travelling north to the barrens.

Before they had guns, the people took their canoes for fall hunts, spearing caribou from the canoes as they swam across channels or between islands and lake shores. There is a place on Mackay Lake, for instance, well known to Weledeh Yellowknives and called to this day "Spear the water". When the people were ready to use winter trails, they would cover their canoes to store them. The remains of many birch bark canoes can be found around the shores of most large lakes in the barrens: some were found during field trips in 1995. Others canoes, whose locations were known, had been removed, perhaps by people from outfitters lodges or exploration camps — even though removal of such ancestral evidence is illegal in the NWT. Weledeh Yellowknives Dene would prefer that visitors to their territory simply photograph such finds — and inform them about the locations so that they can add the sites to their records.

Returning to the fish camps in the southern parts of their territory, Weledeh Yellowknives families took their time. Spring snow conditions made for difficult walking, and it might take families a week to get to Weleh-Cheh from Gordon Lake. Toboggans and snowshoes had to be used on winter trails, and as along as snow remained on the ground in spring. One experienced land user remembers that "the head of our toboggan would get carved by the snow, so the front is thin and narrow by the time we returned in spring." Very young children and the very elderly could ride in sleds, pulled either by dogs or by strong young hunters assisted by other people behind the sled pushing it with tipi poles. Dogs were needed to carry meat, furs, and supplies, so everyone else walked between camps.

Camp Sites: Living in the Barrens

Weledeh Yellowknives Dene stayed at camp sites used by their people for hundreds of generations for differing lengths of time. Some sites, such as those on larger lakes just below the treeline with a good supply of wood, became almost permanent. At such sites, the people would set up tipi, drying racks, and fireplaces. Some camp sites in the barrens, where base camps might be used for weeks at a time, are marked by rings of stones used to surround fire places and to hold the hem of hide tipi in place on the ground. Land users might use camp sites along traplines and travel trails overnight only, leaving no trace when they left before dawn.

Typical locations for Weledeh Yellowknives camp sites are at open channels in winter, along shorelines, especially on islands and points from which a wide expanse of land can be seen, and where eskers meet shores. Travellers would also walk along eskers, following them just as migrating animals do. Many graves are located in eskers, and Elders discourage the people from camping in these areas. Families try to camp behind high places that could act as a natural wind screen. Caches storing food are located near such sites so that travellers could share the harvesting done by people who had moved through the area.

The people built a variety of shelters at different kinds of camp sites. At semi-permanent base camps where women, children, and the very elderly usually stayed, caribou hide tipi were customary. In winter, hides were sewn with hair left on the inside for extra warmth; outside, boughs and snow could be piled against tipi walls to seal in the heat from the fire. In the barrens, the floor of a tipi would be spruce boughs or caribou floor mats with the fire in a cleared space at the centre. (When the people started building cabins, they put up walls and a roof, leaving the ground to be covered with what was customary: hide floor mats and boughs.)

Because Dene took their supplies with them when they travelled, rings of tipi stones are often the only indication of camp sites that were used season after season. In recent generations, an occasional wooden tent peg or manufactured fire grate might be left behind. At a Weledeh Yellowknives camp site on the north shore of Ek'ati, near La Pointe de Misère, tipi ring stones can be seen, although they have been moved. As well as a fire place at this site, there is a rock that still glistens with the fat from meat pounded on it by generations of the people. (*See* Photos 4, 5, and 6.) Participants in this project visited this site this summer and found survey pegs there. They were later informed that BHP was planning to build its access road between the winter road across the lake and its mining sites — right through this ancient camp site.

Today's Weledeh Yellowknives Elders remember being told about the construction in the past of very large shelters like cabins made of wood and hides for several families at one time: "Our ancestors placed spruce trunks side by side high enough and long enough to cover an area for up to four families to live together. It was covered with caribou hides and snow. They poured water on it to harden it [ie, freeze it] and they lived there all winter. Our relatives told us a lot of these stories, which can be very useful for future generations to know so that they may understand how their ancestors used to live and how hard they worked for survival." Such structures were likely built at locations near the main canoe and portage trails below the treeline, such as Beniah Lake, where many of the people became accustomed to staying all winter.

Weledeh Yellowknives hunters and trappers used a variety of temporary shelters at overnight camp sites on travel trails or at successful hunt sites, where they stayed only long enough to cache the meat and hides. Because sled space was needed for bare essentials, hunters carried very little to make shelters. At most it would be usual to take only two tipi poles – poked into the top of the packs strapped across their dog's backs – and two covers of caribou hides sewn together. One was hung on the two poles dug into holes in the snow as a wind screen and the other was a blanket for sleeping. If rabbit snaring had been good, a hunter might have a fur blanket. Hunters in recent generations take two tipi poles and a tarp for shelter from wind. Temporary shelter could also be found by digging under a rare tree's roots or digging a hole for sleeping in the snow, taking care that the wind would not blow snow into the hole during sleep.

In fall, hunters staying for some time at a caribou kill site might build themselves several temporary shelters from boughs of abundant low-growing plants. A hole dug into the still-soft ground was surrounded by piles of these boughs twisted together and shaped into a dome. Caribou hides could line the hole where hunters could stay warm during sleep or storms. This summer, an Elder on this project demonstrated how boughs were used in this way to shelter several hunters. Visitors to such sites, even trained archæologists, might miss this camp site because all that remains is the shallow hole in the ground.

Today's Elders remember other kinds of temporary shelters built by hunters at animal kill sites. It would take several days to butcher the meat and store it, during which hunters had to conserve their energy and keep warm without using much of the firewood hauled from below the treeline or from willow stands beside large lakes. Frozen muskeg, for instance, would be stacked to build walls of a shelter about two metres high, three metres wide, and five metres long. Caribou hides were stretched across the walls for a roof to protect the people in storms.

Dene living on the barrens became very acute at understanding weather, watching the sky to detect patterns that could bring storms so that they could prepare for them in time. Changes in weather can be seen in the sky from a long way off across the wide open spaces of the barrens and move very quickly on the wind. Weather can be predicted, particularly at sunrise and sunset, for up to four days in advance. Elders say that wind in storms blows for at least three days, so the people (and many animals) take shelter for the duration of the storm. Hunters made temporary shelter on trapline trails in storms by turning their sleds on their side and draping them with caribou covers. Hunters and dogs could huddle under this shelter and wait for the storm to subside. Trying to travel in a storm, when visibility is very low, usually resulted in hunters missing markers and getting lost. Many of the people have lost their lives in the vicious winds in blizzards on the barrens. Elders try to teach young Dene to respect the weather.

Dene have traditional names for every kind of weather and precipitation, in far greater detail than in English. Each type of snow has separate names, depending on its nature and the use the people made of it. Sundogs, beams like rainbows that appear on either side of the sun, augur good weather, with clear skies and bright sunlight. Land users travelling in such weather wore protectors over their eyes to avoid the glare of the sun off the snow. The night sky bright with stars was useful for evaluating direction and time while resting or moving along a trail; experienced hunters tried to travel as long as they could see under a clear night sky.

When incomers started coming to the barrens, they were often taught by Dene how to make temporary shelters. This summer, participants in this project stayed at a camp on a small island in Ek'ati near the Narrows, which they decided to call *Akeh-Cho Ndia* (*trans.* Akaitcho Island). An Elder at this camp told the others that, in 1948, he and his brother had stayed overnight near there in a frozen muskeg shelter which had been built, they thought at the time, by non-Dene trappers. The shelter had a window and a metal stovepipe, with two bundles of dry boughs for a fire – enough to keep the two Dene hunters warm for one night. Clearly, the builders of this shelter had also been shown how the Dene made fires.

Fire, while essential to the people in the barrens, was only made when absolutely necessary. On winter trails, travelling families might only make a fire to cook or to dress young children after sleep. Hunters checking their traplines might not make fires, munching frozen caribou fat with dried berries on the trail without stopping and eating drymeat and dryfish at rest camps, sucking on ice for water. In more permanent camps, the people placed rocks in a ring around fires to keep out strong winds and prevent fires from spreading. Such rocks could also be used to anchor green branches, from which a copper cooking pot might be hung over the flames.

It is not surprising that Dene have considerable knowledge of fire-wood and fire making. For the generations before traders brought wooden matches, Elders recall that "certain rocks were used like flint to make fire; since the traders came, we started using wood matches. We know about flints because this one man [grandfather to a present-day grandfather] had a flint which was given to him and he always shared it with others." The people scraped small white rocks found along shores to produce sparks for the many things useful as kindling: birch and other kinds of bark, thin branches of many plants (particularly blackberry), and fish oil because it burns for a long time. When travelling, especially away from lake shores in the barrens, the people carried bundles of flammable materials with them, for kindling and firewood, tied either with babiche or with the last branches twisted around and tucked in the bundle.

Because of the importance of places where kindling and wood for fires could be found, the people gave them names. Traditional names, such as "Place of big willows" or "Spruce tree point" can be found at places around lakes in the barrens essential to the people's survival. They are places where the people harvested wood, chopping at it with moose bones sharpened on one side and hauling it in sleds to their winter camps. The same places were summer camp sites where fires burning willow kept mosquitoes away while food cooked or hides were smoked. When leaving a camp, Weledeh Yellowknives were careful to cover fire embers and debris with gravel. Thus, only very observant people would know a fire was there. Any unburned shrub was tossed back where it was gathered, ready for other travellers to use.

Dene made many uses of wood other than for making fires, canoes, tipi poles and cache racks, snowshoe and sled frames. Hunting spears, bow frames strung with babiche, and arrows were also carved from wood. Spruce boughs are also used by the people in tipi and when making offerings to pay respect to the land, water, animals, and their ancestors in burials. Children used birchbark baskets to gather water, and women used them to carry berries back to camp. Dried food placed in large birch bark containers could be stored in permafrost, the places identified by stone markers. Cups, plates, and small bowls for meals were all made from birch bark and carried to the barrens. Bowls could also be carved from wood or soapstone, using copper knives or chisels carved from bone. Wooden paddles used for canoes were put to different use in the barrens: tied together, they became racks for drying fish and meat. Tree roots twisted together could also be made into drying racks. Another use for twisted roots was as strong "ropes" strung between trees or willows to cut caribou off from migrating herds; hunters would kill them with bows and arrows or spears, in the centuries before guns.

Harvesting in the Barrens

Dene survived in the harsh environment of the barrens because their ancestors worked very hard, harvesting what they needed to live. Whatever their need, they never used all the plants, trees, fish, or animals in an area because they knew some had to be left if they wanted to find any when they returned to that place. The people travelled hungry to harvest food at another site rather than use up the foods they relied on at any one place. Even after hunters started participating in the fur trade, they maintained a sustainable economy, adding trapping to their hunting trips and leaving enough animals to reproduce — a practice not always followed by non-Dene trappers. Some Dene hunters also made extra trips to harvest meat for trading posts. Details of the people's seasonal use of their land are described in Section D.

Every member of Weledeh Yellowknives families who could walk in the barrens harvested wood, water, food, feathers, and wind-blown musk-ox hair. Women, children, and old people who could no longer travel on winter trails collected berries, medicine plants, moss, lichen, seeds, fish eggs, and bird eggs. They set willow and babiche nets in lakes to catch fish and in shrubs to catch ptarmigan. They set snares and nets for water fowl, and snares for rabbit and other small animals. Youth and adult hunters who did not have to stay with young children harvested large animals for meat and trapped larger fur-bearers for pelts and sometimes meat.

Dene men snared, trapped, and hunted large animals. In the past, the people used many techniques for harvesting animals. Using spears and arrows, hunters would approach moose, bear, musk-ox, and caribou. Dene sometimes deflected caribou from their trails, herding them toward hunters poised in areas enclosed by "caribou ropes" made from twisted plant roots and hung between rocks or low-growing shrubs. To persuade caribou to change their route, the people made stone markers along the trail with pieces of hide wedged between rocks to flap noisily in the wind. When caribou came along, some of the people stood beside the markers, waving their arms and shouting. These unusual and unsettling actions deflected some caribou into the spears and arrows of the hunters. Gradually, the people learned that, if they continued their deflection technique at a place along the migration trail for three successive migrations, caribou adjusted their path. For the fourth and subsequent migrations, caribou would follow the trail the people had deflected them onto rather than their previous trail.

The other food harvested in large amounts by the people in the barrens is fish. Map 7 on page 48 shows areas of fishing activity, which continues right into the barrens, even in winter. The people know that the large lakes have good fishing with lots of old and very large fish. Shallows in these lakes, including Ek'ati, have important fall spawning areas, which the people respect. In fall, fish were thin and not good for harvesting. In winter, to add to summer dryfish for their dogs, the people harvested fish at holes in the ice, often at channels where a swift current kept the water open,

visiting their nets up to four times a day. Many of the people's traditional names for places in the barrens refer to such open channels, which provide the only access to drinking water in the frozen landscape. Two of the most important channels are at Mackay Lake (the traditional name of the lake is the name of this channel) and the Narrows between Lac du Sauvage and Ek'ati.

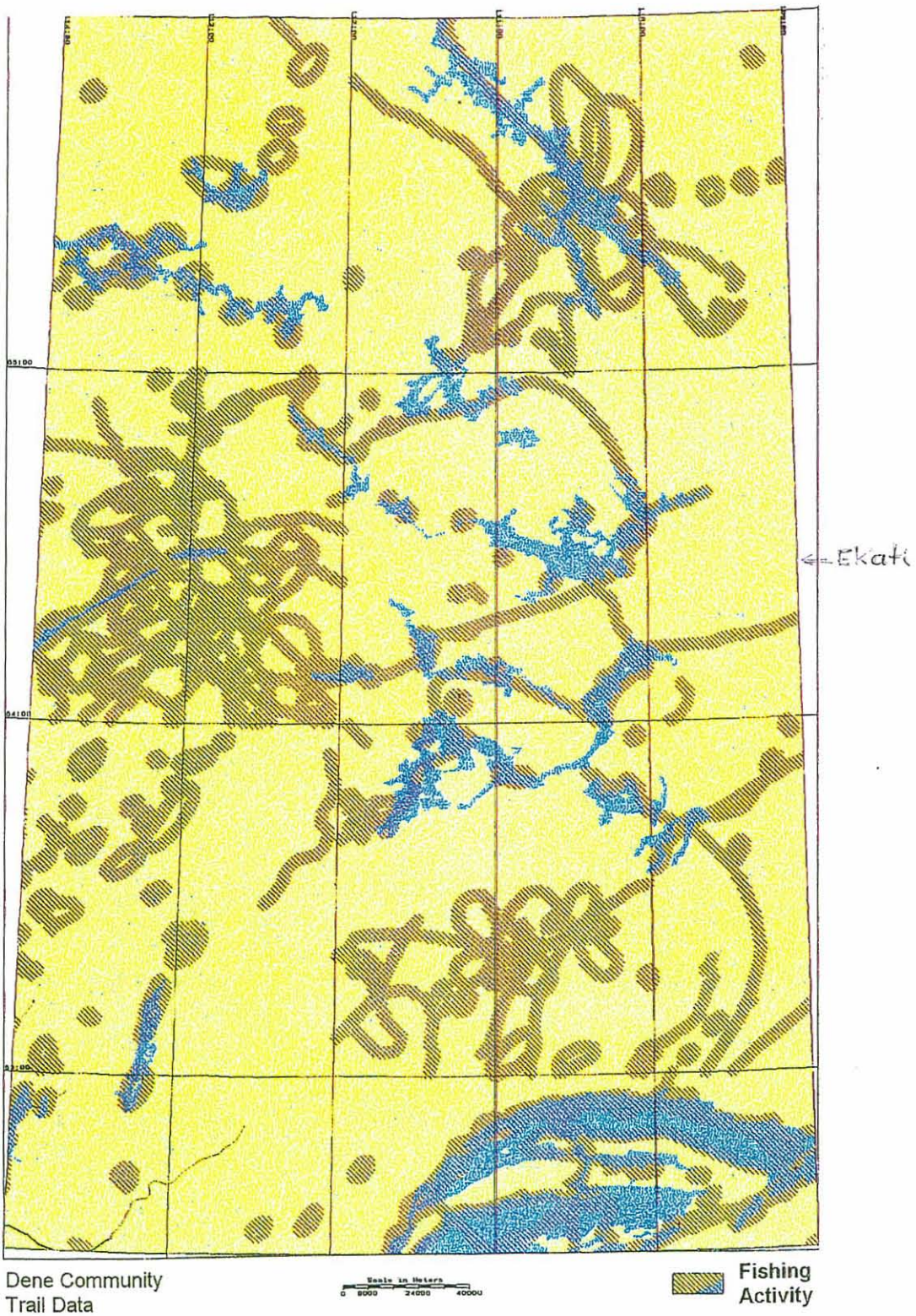
Semi-permanent camps would have wood caches for drying fish and meat, as well as caches stored in the ground before freeze-up. In winter, caches of dried and frozen fish, meat, fat, hides, and whole animals were stored under rocks. Meat and frozen animals were usually thawed by placing them frozen beside people going to sleep, because wood could not be spared for fires. Body heat through the night would be enough to thaw meat for cooking and animals to remove pelts for stretching

Hunters built and re-used winter rock piles for caches near camps and along their hunting trails. Whatever was to be cached was stacked on level stones to prevent animals from burrowing into the cache from underneath. Hunters piled large rocks and, often, cut willows tied in bundles, on top; moss was then poked into gaps to keep out animals, including sled dogs. Such stone caches also served as trail markers that were likely more welcoming to hunters finding them in storms than simple piles of rock.

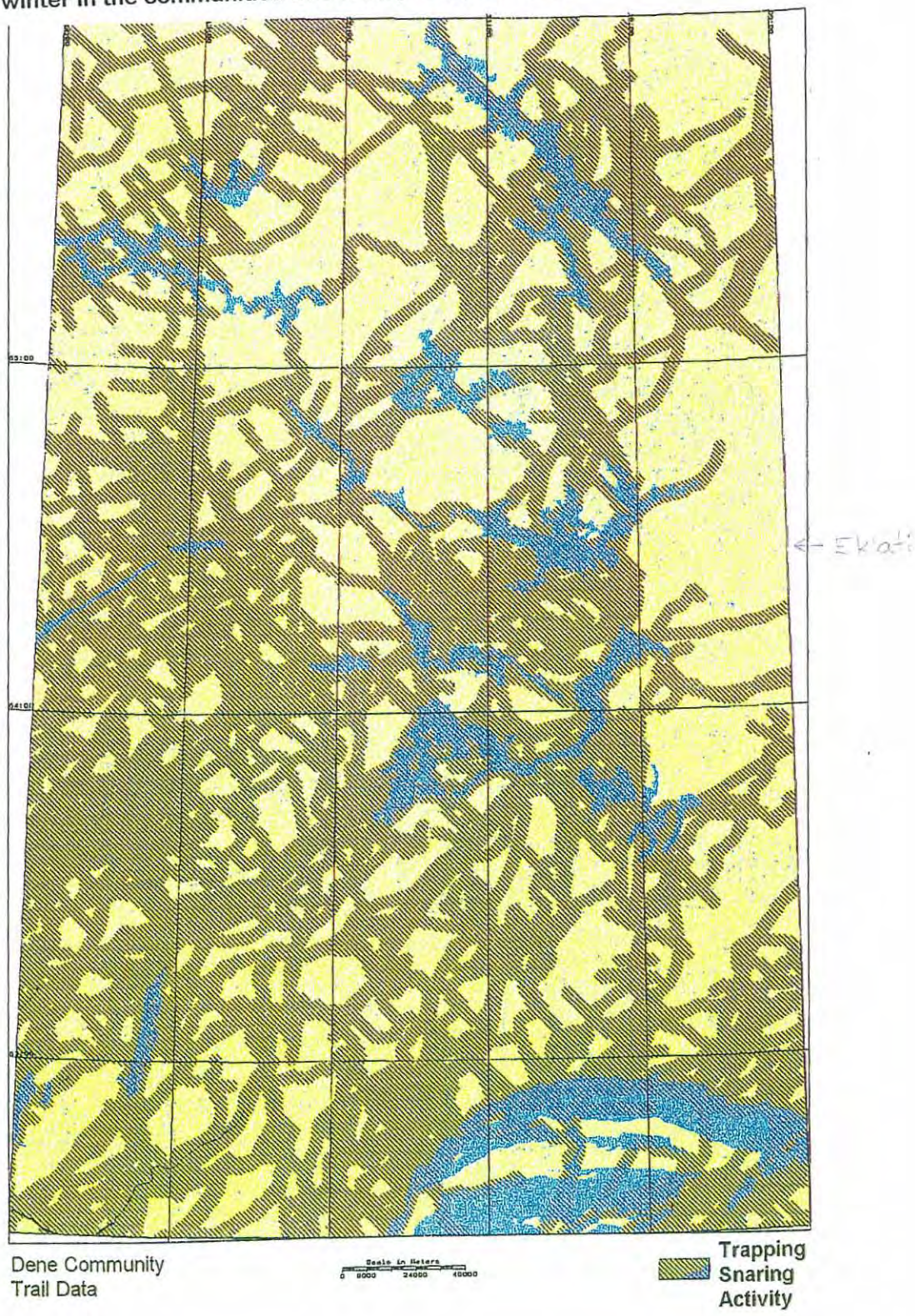
Weledeh Yellowknives participants this summer visited the site of a stone cache on caribou trails where the north mainland is very close to Ek'ati Ndi. (Contract archæologists for Diavik called this site "LdNt 14".) Elders quickly identified the marker as a stone cache that was used repeatedly to store a cache of, at least, caribou meat and hides. Judging from the lichen that has grown on the rocks, the development of soil between rocks, and the old moss in the cracks – Elders determined that this cache was very old, likely having been built at least one hundred years ago. Elderly Elders thought it might have been built in their grandfather's time. (*See* Photo 7.) They remarked on the marker's height – so that snow would not drift over it – and its position high on a hill – where it could be seen by travellers on Ek'ati trails.

Looking around them at this stone cache site, Weledeh Yellowknives Elders sketched a realistic picture of the people's activities when the cache was stored. The site's location on caribou trails strongly suggested that the people had been caribou hunting, likely in fall time when the amount of meat would have been abundant enough to cache some. Elders remarked that, rather than paddling around the whole point, the hunters came here to escape the wind. The rocky ground, with many boulders, at the cache site is not suitable for camping, and Elders speculated that the hunters' temporary camp was probably farther up the hill from the cache.

Map 7 – shows areas where fishing occurred, as reported by about thirty percent of Dene land users for the Dene Mapping Project in 1974–76



Map 8— shows trapping activity, as recorded by Dene land users in 1974–76; interviews were conducted in winter in the communities when many trappers would have been on the land



Leaving treeline camps for Weledeh-Cheh in spring, the people picked up whatever was left stored in winter caches and carried it with them, as described by a present-day Elder:

> By April, families [at places like Gordon Lake] would have a whole lot of caches, up to ten or fifteen caches, each one the size of a toboggan (about one-third of a metre wide, a metre high, and a metre long). Because a cache could fit into a toboggan, it was easy to transport. ... If people had lots of fish or meat at their camps, they would make daily trips moving the caches one at a time so that each cache was closer to the community.

For the four generations since the time of Akeh-Cho, trapping has become fully integrated into the people's way of life. Map 8 shows Dene trapping and snaring in the barrens. Young Dene often learned how to trap on lakes close to the more permanent camps. An Elder recalls when he learned to trap muskrat one spring: all members of his family went and they harvested all day, because the season when muskrat fur is best is short, then spent the evening catching pike along the shore. In this one trip, the family trapped seventy muskrat for trade.

Doing business with trading posts broke up traditional winters for the people in the barrens. Before the fur trade, families remained all winter in the barrens, travelling and harvesting; once they started trapping for trade, trappers found it necessary to take the extra pelts to the trading posts at intervals. They had to collect too many furs from caches to try to deliver them all at once. Initially, the people did not use many of the things offered at trading posts, continuing to make everything from the land. Leaders like Akeh-Cho encouraged the people to exchange furs and meat for rifles and ammunition, which could make harvesting food easier: lives were undoubtedly saved when guns were introduced to the people. However, the people had to spend more time trapping to get rifles. Elders recall how the exchange was done — by stacking furs against a gun held vertical; the rifle went to the hunter when the pile of furs was the same height as the gun. After traders introduced the fur press, many more furs were required for this exchange. Dene land users can tell many stories about ammunition, particularly about searching in snow and on the ground for spent cartridges so that hunters could refill them. Sharp shooters were given more bullets, about four or five, than hunters who were more skilled at other things. Gradually, the people tried out other items at the trading posts; recent generations stopped at the posts to get supplies on credit before leaving for the barrens in the fall.

Trading furs and meat for manufactured goods such as cotton twine and shovels gradually made the people's lives easier, but did not change the people's values or basic economy. They went on sharing and using what they had, not keeping money or accumulating wealth. A present-day Elder observes: "Back then, when the people went trapping, they had hard times but they still brought their furs to the trading post.

Traders thought it was easy to trap animals but the furs never made any of us rich. Trading furs just helped to feed and clothe our families. Traders took furs from our trappers, not giving much for them, and, when they sold those furs down south, they made a lot more money on them."

The generations of the people who were taught by missionaries made sure they travelled south with furs a few weeks before Christmas, to include attendance at mass with their visit to the trading post. Many older people in the past forty years were baptised as children when their parents brought them south at Christmas: as a result, many old people's birthdays are registered in officials records as December 25 or January 1, and many of their ages are underestimated.

3 - The People's Birth & Burial Places

Given the extensive occupation of the barrens (*see* Maps 5 & 6), it is understandable that birth and burial places of Weledeh Yellowknives Dene are throughout the barrens. Present-day First Nation members older than middle age were born on their land, and their traditional name is usually related to that place. The barrens contain the remains of hundreds of generations of the people. Birth and burial places are of immense significance to the people because they tie the people irrevocably to the land: they are indigenous to it in a way that incomers and visitors cannot be. A 1986 United Nations study defines indigenous peoples in this way:

> Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing over those territories, or part of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal system.
>
> [M. Cobo, Special Rapporteur to UN Human Rights Sub-Commission, 1986, 3rd report, section F, para. 362 and 382]

Weledeh Yellowknives Dene today are a nation within the state of Canada, where the people's identity has repeatedly been questioned. The Special Rapporteur who prepared this UN report provides these points relating to indigenous peoples as nations within present-day nation-states:

(a) Indigenous peoples must be recognized according to their own perception and conception of themselves in relation to other groups coexisting with them in the fabric of the same society;

(b) There must be no attempt to define them according to the perception of others through the values of foreign societies or of the dominant sections of such societies;
(c) The right of indigenous peoples to define what and who is indigenous, and the correlative, the right to determine what and who is not, must be recognized;
(d) The power of indigenous peoples to determine who are their members must not be interfered with by the State concerned, through legislation, regulations, or any other means;
(e) Artificial, arbitrary, or manipulative definitions must be rejected;
(f) The special position of indigenous peoples within the society of nation-States existing today derives from their historical rights to lands and from their rights to be different and to be considered as different.

[M. Cobo, Special Rapporteur to UN Human Rights Sub-Commission, 1986, 3rd report, section F, para. 368–77]

For Weledeh Yellowknives Dene, their identity, history, and relation to their ancestral lands derives from having been born to the land, having lived with the land since time immemorial, and holding knowledge of evidence that their ancestors remain with the land. Birth and burial places within the people's ancestral lands are of the greatest possible significance to Dene.

As the people travelled on the land, they would visit burials to pay respects to their ancestors. In this way, young Dene came to know where the burials are: they may not always know the precise identify of every person buried at a grave site – especially at mass graves, but they have their Elders' assurance of the culture of the deceased. The place where many of the people passed away may not be known: those who became lost, drowned, or did not return from checking their snares. Since non-Dene started coming to the people's land, there have been many unexpected deaths by diseases previously unknown to the people or by poison. It used to be common practice for some non-Dene trappers to use poison bait, acquiring hundreds of pelts with no marks on them; unfortunately, sled dogs and people sometimes ate meat from poisoned animals. (One of the people's words for non-Dene is the same word for "sickness".) When an epidemic or starvation struck, there might be so many deaths that no one was left to bury the people respectfully for some time. Land users coming across such a tragic scene would bury the deceased in mass graves, often in the loose material of eskers.

Graves that are known in living memory can be located by Elders and land users who used a trail where the grave is located. In summer, the people taught by missionaries made the effort to bury relatives who passed away in coffins laboriously made with chopped wood. In winter, when the ground is frozen, the people made burials in loose gravel of eskers. There is a mass grave – of ten Weledeh Yellowknives

who starved – in the esker adjacent to Ek'ati Ndi, the island where Diavik plans to mine diamonds. (This information was reported to Diavik in 1996: *see* Appendix 3. Archæologists call this site "LcNs18".) In the barrens, where no wood was available, families piled rocks over those who passed away. A stone cairn that is the burial of a Weledeh Yellowknives female child is located near the marshes on the southeast side of Ek'ati Ndi (which is also noted in the 1996 report). (*See* Photo 8.) There are many other burials around Ek'ati.

Burials, tipi rings, and other ancestral evidence can be found throughout the barrens. Reports of ancestral evidence found on mining claim blocks where development is planned do not identify all sites where Weledeh Yellowknives Elders know such evidence ought to be. Participants in this project found evidence of their ancestors during field trips this summer that was not included in archæological reports produced by contractors for mining companies. Elders feel that such omissions are disrespectful. As a result, they have made recommendations that they hope mining companies will implement.

Recommendation #2-A-1
Mining companies must use Weledeh Yellowknives Elders to find evidence of their ancestors' use of their lands and to monitor the impacts of mining operations on such evidence.

Recommendation #2-A-2
In summer 1998, mining companies – particularly BHP – should take Weledeh Yellowknives Elders and land users to sites identified by the contract archæologist and to sites known to the people where ancestral evidence can be found.

During the project, participants developed a sensitivity map (Map 16 on page 86), on which sites of ancestral evidence are identified as "sensitive". Elders feel strongly that these sensitive areas must be avoided by all mining and related activity. This summer, project participants were distressed to find garbage left on top of one of their people's graves.

Recommendation #2-A-3
On Map 16, areas identified as "green space" are to be totally avoided by the mining companies and their employees and subcontractors and their employees. These areas include burial sites, caches, as well as areas of great importance to animals and fish.

Recommendation #2-A-4
Weledeh Yellowknives burial sites must be marked so that anyone from the mines can easily see and respect them. Graves can be marked by large rocks placed at each corner and rocks in the form of a cross over the grave. Rocks placed like this are not likely to be moved by caribou.

Weledeh Yellowknives Elders feel that sites of significance to their people at Ek'ati are being overlooked by mining companies. When the companies offer to take Elders to the site, they focus on the places the companies want Elders to look, not places Elders believe are important to investigate. Elders are also very concerned that, if ancestral evidence at sites being ignored by the companies is not identified, it may be collected by people at the mine sites even though gathering artefacts is against the law in the NWT.

Recommendation #2-A-5
Mining companies should fund Weledeh Yellowknives Dene to search for significant areas on former shorelines, islands, and other places the companies are not telling contract archæologists to investigate. (Indigenous peoples could work with the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre.)

Recommendation #2-A-6
All Weledeh Yellowknives camp sites in the barrens are to be identified by the people, and are to be protected. Such camp sites must be avoided by mining companies, especially for road building.

Recommendation #2-A-7
Since there will be continual construction at mine sites and along roads, contract archæologists must continue searching for ancestral evidence *with* the indigenous people, including Weledeh Yellowknives Dene, in order to make recommendations to mining companies *before* disturbance of the area goes ahead.

Recommendation #2-A-8
Mining companies must carry out a strong policy to forbid anyone from the mines disturbing graves or artefacts and, especially, to forbid the collection of artefacts, caribou antlers, and bones in compliance with NWT law. People from the mines can take photographs instead.

Mining Company Archæology Reports

It has been difficult for Weledeh Yellowknives to trust archæological reports being produced for companies planning mines at Ek'ati. When the Diavik contract archæologist was preparing the initial report of investigations of its project area (Fedirchuk McCullough & Associates 1995), the company funded the First Nation's Land & Environment Committee to assess a draft of the report. In its response, the Committee made corrections to identification of sites. One site ("LcNs25") near marshes on the east island where Diavik plans its mining operations was described by the contract archæologist as a "stone trap marker". In fact, the stones mark the burial of a Weledeh Yellowknives child (*see* Appendix 3). The next report by the contract archæologist dropped any description of this site: it appears only in a list of all archæological sites found (Fedirchuk McCullough & Associates 1996). It is hard to think that such an omission is accidental. Other reference materials, such as information sheets and maps of archæological sites identified by the contract specialists, were given to participants of this project. These materials either leave this site out or continue to call it a "stone marker", with no indication that this is the burial marker that Elders have told them about.

Weledeh Yellowknives Dene have encountered considerable difficulty obtaining archæological reports of La Pointe de Misère. This site was added to BHP's project plans later than the other four sites and archæological information about it in the 1995 EIS was slender. At the February 1996 assessment review technical hearing on traditional knowledge, the Weledeh Yellowknives presenter stated that, at La Pointe de Misère, there is at least one fairly recent grave. Discussions with company officials about visiting this site to identify burials continued through the next two years and throughout the summer when project participants were at Ek'ati and visited the point. Finally, arrangements were made in early October 1997 to take an Elder to the site; however, by then the site was covered with snow and the helicopter taking them to the area could not land where the Elder could locate burials. The mining company still does not know where graves are, so that they can be avoided during construction and operations.

Indigenous peoples' perspective and interpretation of evidence of their ancestors were ignored in reports prepared for the federal assessment of the BHP project. Reports by the contract archæologist for BHP, Points West Heritage Consulting Ltd., were incorporated into BHP's 1995 EIS and continue to be produced for ongoing exploration. No attempt has been made to adjust inaccurate statements identifying the people whose ancestors occupied and used these lands. It is a requirement of the Canadian Archæological Association principles for ethical conduct that the peoples' perspective and interpretations of evidence be accepted (*see* Appendix 6). Field investigations at Ek'ati on behalf of mining companies are limited to places where mining operations will damage the land – especially eskers. Two eskers have already

sustained damage, the materials from them being used to build the airstrip and connecting road to the first camp site on the BHP claim block; no indigenous peoples consented to the removal of these materials. As noted, archæological investigations at Ek'ati do not attempt to use indigenous peoples' perspective to provide reports of peoples' use of their lands nor of ancestral evidence in the area.

Elders observe that their people camped along shorelines, where the majority of ancestral evidence can be expected to be found. However, Elders also point out that water levels have changed over time, and shorelines where their people's camps are located are not where present-day shorelines are. This summer, for this project, Elders demonstrated the change in shoreline location and a photograph of their demonstration was taken. The site of this demonstration was the small island where project participants were camping, Akeh-Cho Ndia. Several Elders took part, each of them standing on the stones of a former shoreline of this island. (*See* Photo 9.)

Elders explain that, years and years ago, when the water levels in Ek'ati were much higher than they are now, stones and gravel were pushed up onto the shore by ice. These stones are now jagged with years of erosion and have lichen growing on them. As the level of ice in winter dropped – with fluctuations in precipitation – shore stones and gravel were pushed to a level lower than the initial shore. At the location where the demonstration took place, Elders found six separate previous shorelines formed from stone and gravel deposits pressed onto the island by ice. Project participants could see that stones farther away from the present shoreline are more jagged and lichen-covered than stones at the present shoreline, which are smooth and bare, with no lichen growing on them.

The island where this demonstration took place is in Ek'ati. It can be said to be representative of the shore for the entire lake, for other islands in the lake, and for lakes inland from the shore, such as those that will become open-pit diamond mines. What the change in shorelines levels in Ek'ati means is that ancestral evidence of former Weledeh Yellowknives camps is likely to be found in several locations at several distances from the present-day shorelines. This may explain why contract archæologists apparently found no ancestral evidence of Dene at the shores of lakes that BHP plans to drain and use as diamond mines.

As a result of their concerns, Elders developed several recommendations for ways in which mining companies can remedy current shortcomings in archæological work on their behalf.

Recommendation #2-A-9
Mining companies should use government archaeologists, who may be perceived as having less bias than archaeologists under contract to the companies, in the verification of information for reports and monitoring.

Recommendation #2-A-10
Mining company contract archæologists and government archæologists should follow the 1996 principles for ethical conduct pertaining to aboriginal peoples, as developed by the Canadian Archaeological Association (*see* Appendix 6).

Recommendation #2-A-11
All contract archæologists working for mining companies must have at least ten years' experience, with half of that time in collaborations with indigenous peoples. An acceptable alternative might be for the mining companies to authorize and fund indigenous peoples to select specialists they believe they can work with for results satisfactory to their peoples, governments, and the companies.

Recommendation #2-A-12
Evidence of Weledeh Yellowknives ancestors' occupation and use of their land is not to be called "heritage resources" because this term diminishes the connection of such evidence to indigenous peoples. Ancestral evidence should not be considered exploitable "resources". Because participants in this project have a range of ideas about how mining companies and government should handle evidence of their ancestors, Weledeh Yellowknives Dene need to hold community work-shops to develop plans for presentation to the First Nation Council for approval.

Recommendation #2-A-13
Yellowknives Dene First Nation is to develop guidelines for the companies and contract archæologists to follow in their relationship with the people and their ancestors' evidence.

Diamonds in the barrens are found in slender pipes, the tip of which is sometimes at the bottom of small lakes (as is the case for the five approved BHP mines). After the lakes are drained, mining companies will gradually enlarge the resulting pits. The people's ancestors are likely to have camped around the shore of these, shores that are farther back from the current shorelines. When mining equipment and dynamite move the current shores back to enlarge the pits, it is certain that they will strike the remains of ancient camps and burials. Sadly, dust from operations will be such that equipment operators may not spot such remains in time to save them.

The concluding section of this report describes the people's traditional use of their lands (*ndeh*) as they lived, season by season, and their knowledge of water at Ek'ati. This section also presents more of the project participants' recommendations about mining in the barrens so that the people can continue using *ndeh*.

D – Weledeh Yellowknives Knowledge of Ek'ati

[*Translation*] The most important animal for us [Dene] is the caribou. They clothe us and we make blankets out of it. All the things you can make with caribou is endless, even tents. That's how our people lived, like that, before [we lived in town] — even in the barrenlands where it is very cold. You can live off the land even if you are very poor. That's how important it is to us. ... I have travelled in that area where the mines will be, travelling with dog teams because there was no such things as snowmobiles or planes. And sometimes people did not have dogs; they had to pull their sleds from place to place. I don't think White people would live like that.

[Weledeh Yellowknives Elder Joseph Charlo, Ndilǫ: CARC 1995]

The knowledge held by indigenous peoples of their territory has been accumulated through thousands of years of observation while living with their lands. It is improbable for scientists and other non-indigenous specialists to accumulate comparable knowledge of an area in a few seasons of fieldwork. In this section of the report, some Weledeh Yellowknives knowledge is presented about *ndeh* (that is, the lands and waters and the plants, fish, birds, and animals that live with them alongside the Dene). The people know the barrens to be a place that, even though it seems strong, is very fragile: the slightest change has lasting effects. Weledeh Yellowknives Elders and land users are aware that much of what they know, particularly their spiritual relation to *ndeh*, is not of interest to mining companies. They have determined which parts of their knowledge gathered during this study are appropriate and of interest to mining companies, with their recommendations on ways to reduce effects from mining impacts to their land.

1 – *Ndeh*: The People's Use of their Land

As noted earlier in this report, traditional Weledeh Yellowknives names for the lands in their territory around Ek'ati place it at the centre of the people's ancestral lands. The Ek'ati area was important to Dene because of the arrival in late summer and early fall of caribou when they were most useful to the people. Without caribou hunting in fall time, the people could not have survived. For this reason, this report describes the people's use of their land season by season, starting with late summer/early fall.

Fall (mid-August, September)

By the middle of August, when fish in Weledeh-Cheh are thin from their efforts to spawn and are no longer worth harvesting, Yellowknives families are busy at treeline camps or have already moved into the barrens. In the past, the people timed their movements depending on the weather and when the most experienced Elders believed caribou to be feeding around the large lakes, like Ek'ati. Elders know that some caribou may be around Mackay Lake by August, slowly moving toward the treeline, and others will still be moving between Lac de Gras and Mackay Lake to feed. By the end of August, the people have observed that most mature bulls have entered woodlands to finish rubbing off antler skin in preparation for mating. By the end of August and into September, people can be confident that all caribou will have moved into woodlands, although, if the weather turns warm again, they may return north of the treeline again to feed. In the past, when caribou migrated as far as Great Slave Lake, some Weledeh Yellowknives families would hunt them in September as the herd passed through the Gordon Lake area.

To reach their wintering grounds, indigenous peoples know that much of the Bathurst herd crosses Contwoyto Lake, Yamba Lake, Lac du Sauvage, Lac de Gras (Ek'ati), Mackay Lake, and Courageous Lake. Since time immemorial, these lakes have been used by Weledeh Yellowknives Dene to hunt caribou in fall time. Because the people went where experienced land users expected most of the caribou to be, the main Weledeh Yellowknives trails meet the caribou migrating south. Each generation of the people learns from their Elders and, later, their own experience, that caribou cows teach their calves the migration trails along eskers and across islands. Caribou follow the same trails season after season.

The map on page 61 shows Dene trails that were traditional places to hunt caribou, reported by land users interviewed for the 1974–76 mapping project. Trails made by the caribou can be found throughout Ek'ati, particularly on islands to which caribou swim to cross the large lakes. (*See* Photo 10.) For this reason, the two large islands, called collectively *Ek'ati Ndi* by Weledeh Yellowknives Dene, are of vital importance to

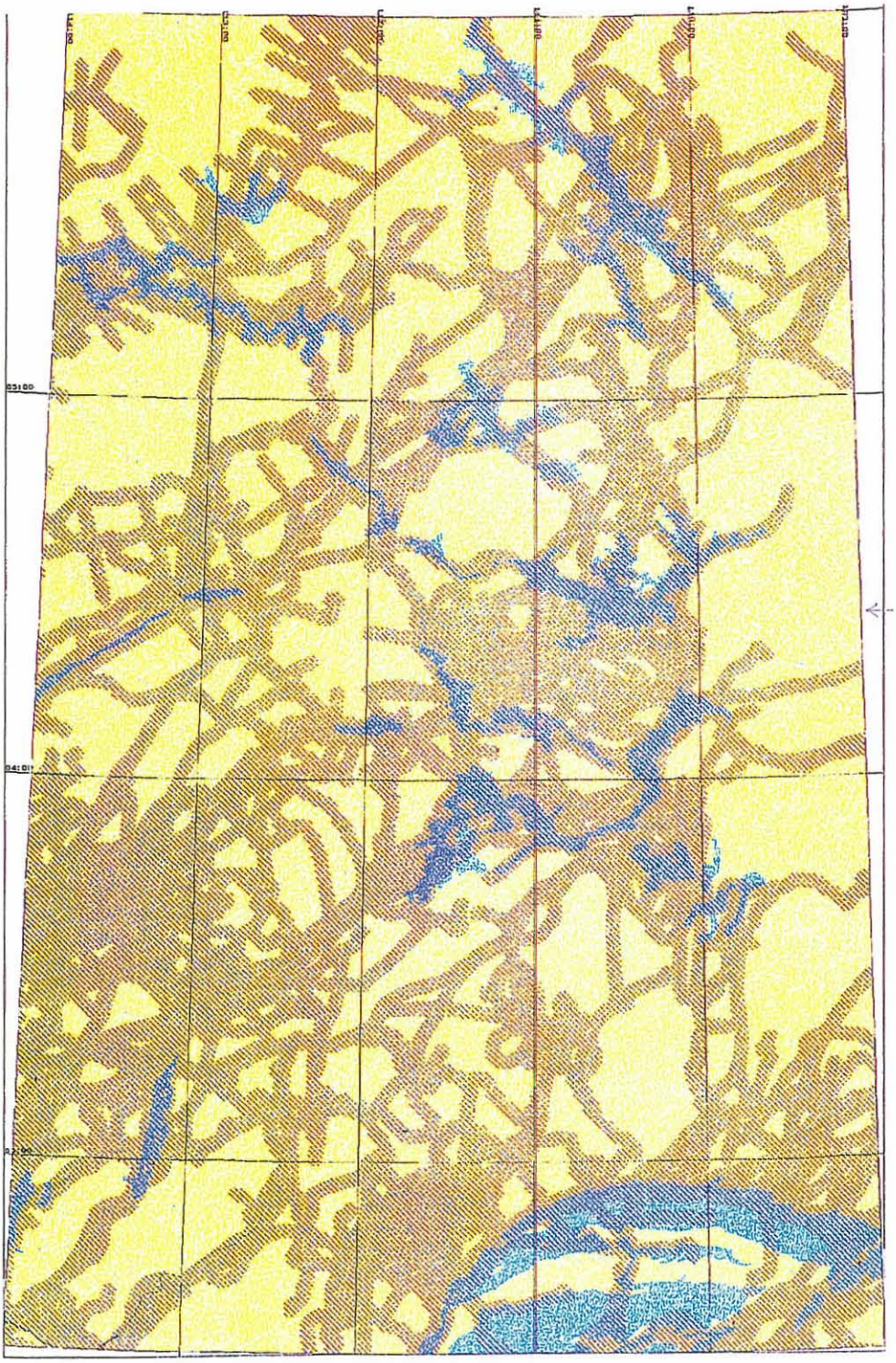
migrating caribou. The people maintained caribou hunting camps during fall on east Ek'ati Ndi, where Diavik is to operate mines to extract diamonds from at least four kimberlite pipes that are in the lakes itself.

People and caribou with young go to islands for protection from insects and predators, especially bears. For people, islands were preferred places for shoreline camps and for waiting for migrating animals. For keeping bears away, the people burned a fungus that grows on birch trees in their fires; this fungus is also useful for starting fires. Elders say bears do not like the smell of this fungus when it is burning For caribou, islands were also important places to heal legs injured from falls through cracks in rocks; many calves die when they snap a leg or become trapped and cannot move. Whenever this occurs, ravens soon alert other scavengers. Dene hunters always watch the behaviour of flying ravens when they are in the barrens, because they know that ravens fly in particular ways over animals. The people can be confident that animals are nearby when a raven flies in one direction, then makes a wide circle, or when a raven flies upside-down for long periods. When flying upside-down, a raven will fly closer and closer to the ground, indicating to the hunters where the animals are. Hunters know that the raven is happy to send them signs because there is a chance the raven may be able to scavenge from the hunters' kill. To this day, the raven helps hunters. (For traditional stories about raven and caribou, *see* Appendix 7.)

Earlier this century, ravens and other large birds, such as whisky jacks, disappeared from the barrens. When non-Dene trappers used poison to acquire large numbers of unmarked pelts, Dene land users noticed that the birds and animals that scavenge were also poisoned. Hunters say they suspected this was happening when they would encounter dozens of the bodies of scavengers lying on many frozen lakes. It was very obvious that something unnatural had caused these creatures to die. The people avoided these lakes, not wanting their sled dogs to be affected.

When Weledeh Yellowknives families reach the large lakes where they expect to find caribou, they look for signs to tell them whether the migration has arrived. When caribou have fed well in summer, they leave traces of their fat in water they swim through. When caribou reach shore, they shake themselves, flinging some of their hair out of their coats along with water. (*See* Photo 11.) Hunters look for tracks in mud, piles of hair gathered by the shores, and fat floating on the water as sure signs that the caribou have arrived before them. Caribou fat floating on the surface of Lac de Gras is a further reminder of the lake's traditional name.

Map 9 – shows Dene activity related to caribou hunting, as reported by land users during the 1974–76 Dene Mapping Project



Weledeh Yellowknives Dene at Ek'ati 61

At fall hunting camps, enough caribou had to be killed and butchered to feed the people throughout winter, with the addition of some small game. More than food and fat, caribou also provided the people with most of the shelter, clothing, and tools they required to survive. The only parts of a caribou not used are guts and cleaned antlers – and these are returned to the land. Fresh caribou meat is grilled over an open fire or cut into pieces for stews for immediate use; much caribou meat was dried and, in the past, some drymeat was powdered for making soup to which powdered lichen was added. Rocks on which meat was pounded to prepare drymeat glisten to this day with fat. (*See* Photos 6 and 12.) Caribou leg bones are crushed so that marrow can be removed and boiled to produce a kind of lard eaten with drymeat; in the barrens, the women poured the liquid lard into caribou stomachs for carrying and storing. Caribou fat around body muscles was carefully set aside and stored as winter travel food: without it, it is doubtful that the people could have survived the freezing temperatures of winter in the barrens.

Dene use caribou hide from the body for many handmade products. For winter in the barrens in the past, women left the hair or fur on for greater warmth and, for warmer months, women scrape off the hair, then soak and smoke the hide for use. Tipi, blankets, floor mats, covers for sled frames, and all-purpose covers (rather like tarpaulins) were all made by sewing both types of hides together with caribou, moose, or musk-ox sinew using bone needles. The edges of caribou hide (as well as recycled older hide) was cut into babiche, a flexible rope-like string that had hundreds of uses, mostly as a fastening, for instance, to tie meat wrapped in bundles, the wrapping consisting of recycled old caribou hide. Babiche made with hide from caribou legs is woven to make dog harnesses, knife cases, small bags to carry drymeat or dryfish, and hunting bags (that hold a knife, drymeat, and container for boiling water or tea). Women took great pride in decorating hunting cases and bags for the hunters who worked hard to provide for their families. In the barrens, decorations might include red dye made from ochre or by boiling red willow. Babiche from muskox hide was much stronger than caribou babiche, and could be woven to make temporary fish and meat drying racks in winter. Before the government's ban on muskox hunting in 1917, Dene often made very warm blankets from the huge, thick, fur-covered muskox hide.

Weledeh Yellowknives women were very busy in fall making pants and jackets from caribou hide. In the past, Elders recall that jackets might have mittens built into the sleeves, with a slit cut in the inside of the sleeves so, if necessary, hands could be free of the mittens. Women also made many useful tools, such as awls, needles, and scrapers (from caribou bones), thimbles (from dried caribou skin), and sewing materials (from caribou sinew and hooves). Calf hide made really good sleds when wood was not available, as they slide well on snow. Even caribou teeth and gums have a medicinal use, reducing toothache; caribou hooves and other parts prepared by

knowledgeable Dene had the ability to remedy ailments. When Dene say that caribou are the most important animals to them, they truly mean it.

At Lac de Gras and Lac du Sauvage, Weledeh Yellowknives hunters found many places in fall time to wait downwind from migrating caribou. They prefer places where their families' camps are nearby, where water, fish, and other animals were also available. One very important site was at the Narrows between the two lakes, called traditionally by the people "Standing willow place". The Narrows is a very significant place to Weledeh Yellowknives, where many land uses overlap and have done so for hundreds of generations in the past. During this project, participants developed a map of highly significant places that are sensitive to development, which the people say mining companies must avoid. The Narrows is one of the main significant sites identified on this map (*see* Map 16 on page 86). After studying maps prepared by environmental specialists under contract to mining companies, project participants decided they need to produce their own maps. Elders said that the specialists' maps were not complete, allowing that it was difficult to understand the animals and their home in the short time the scientists were spending at Ek'ati. Weledeh Yellowknives land users developed maps of fish migration and spawning grounds in Ek'ati (*see* Maps 13a and b on pages 70, 71) and of caribou migration around Ek'ati (*see* Map 14 on page 72), to show the companies places that should be avoided.

The Narrows site is important to birds, fish, and animals, including caribou, grizzly, wolf, fox, wolverine, weasel, and Arctic hare. Project participants visiting this site this summer found piles of caribou hair as well as bones left by feeding animals. The channel at the Narrows is an important site for fish to spawn in fall. All winter, the strong current at this channel, which provides a good oxygen supply for fish, keeps the surface from freezing. This current is so strong that it produces current movement in bays in the east part of Ek'ati. These bays are also good fish spawning sites. Weledeh Yellowknives camps were not located adjacent to the water at the Narrows because of the danger to their children from grizzly, and because their presence might disturb animals that they relied on. The people camped on islands and nearby mainlands at a distance from shores at the Narrows. Markers, including burials of Weledeh Yellowknives Dene can be found throughout this area. (*See* Photo 13.)

Winter (October to March)

From mid-September until mid-March, while most Weledeh Yellowknives families were living on the barrens, caribou stay in woodland wintering grounds. In October and November, caribou continue to arrive in woodlands where the rutting season, when caribou mate, occurs. For the rest of the winter, caribou forage in small groups throughout woodland wintering grounds, staying out of the wind and eating lichen.

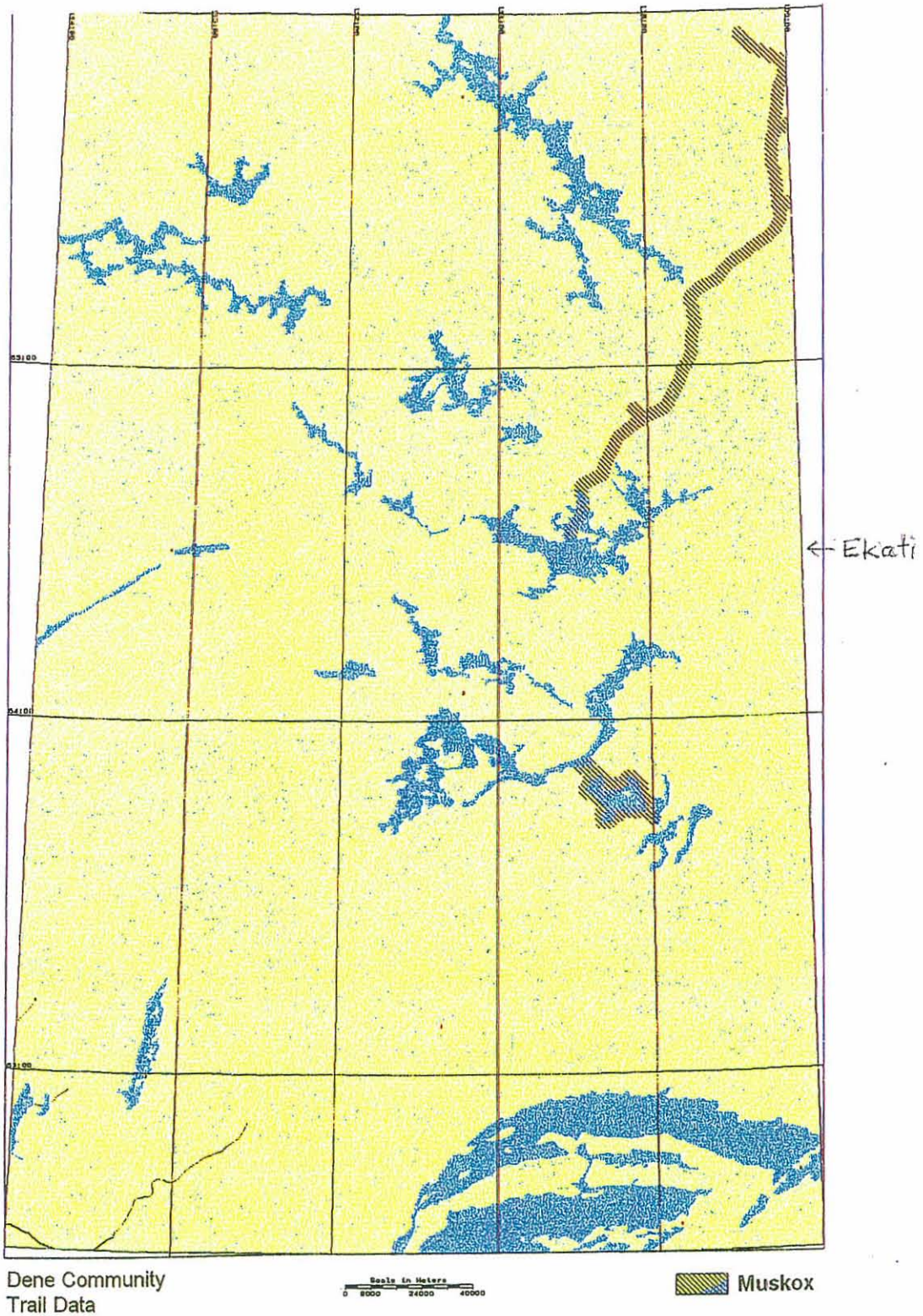
Dene hunters can tell when a large number of caribou have been on trails in the woodlands by the hardened, packed trails they make when searching for food. Caribou save their energy throughout winter for the return journey north to the calving grounds, starting in mid-March.

In winter, Dene hunted the musk-ox, which they respect for its ability to survive by itself, until the government ban. Before 1917, it was traditional for Weledeh Yellowknives hunters to hunt musk-ox with their T'satsąot'inę relatives east of Artillery Lake, and in their traditional lands south of the eastern part of Mackay Lake and north of Ek'ati. (*See* Map 10.) Dene families looked forward to musk-ox hunts because musk-ox meat is delicious and the hides are so useful. Dene hunters would take their dogs, spears, and bows and arrows to places where they expected to find musk-ox. To harvest musk-ox, hunters would leave their white dogs and take only dark-coloured dogs. A hunter who locates a musk-ox herd would make a trail of stone markers and return to camp to inform his companions. The people knew that one hunter alone would have little success against musk-ox. Returning along the trail of markers, hunters hid themselves around the herd. Then, they let their dark-coloured dogs run and bark at the musk-ox; immediately, the adult musk-ox defended their calves by forming a circle around them, with their horned heads outward, facing the dogs and hunters. Careful not to hit the horns, the hunters would attack animals with spears or bows and arrows from several positions to try to ensure at least one kill.

When stalking musk-ox, Dene hunters studied their behaviour, as they did for all animals in their territory. They knew that musk-ox run faster than caribou, easily outrunning dogs; in deep snow especially, the musk-ox can travel farther than dogs. Muskox use their short legs to break up the hard crust that can develop on the surface of the snow, then use their horns to remove snow from the lichen they feed on. Thick musk-ox hides, well suited for the harsh barrens climate, made thick blankets and jackets for the people, as well as very strong babiche. Muskox shed their very soft hair, which the people gather from the drifts where it was blown by wind. The people burned the bones instead of wood for a fire. Muskox hides were so highly prized that a hunter might sacrifice space in his sled to carry two of the huge hides from their hunts.

Dene know that the wolf and fox rely on caribou, migrating along with the herd. When Weledeh Yellowknives hunters are waiting for caribou, one of the signs they are alert for is howling that announces the arrival of a wolf pack — usually a day or two in front of the caribou. The wolf, like the fox, marten, wolverine, and bear, swims well and is often found on islands searching for food. As well as caribou, the wolf catches arctic hare and fish and eats bird eggs and nestlings. Dene are aware that the wolf eats grass and other shrubs on the barrens to clean out their stomachs, mostly of worms. Eskers that are caribou migration trails are good places for the wolf to den. Not every wolf stays in a den; some travel together in packs relying on caribou or smaller

Map 10 - shows traditional musk-ox hunting areas, before the 1917 ban, as reported in the 1974–76 mapping project: south of Mackay Lake and north of Ek'ati



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animals. For Dene, the wolf is brother-in-law to the raven, one of the most important creatures in traditional stories that Elders tell to give youngsters guidance. (*See* Appendix 7.)

Wherever the wolf is, Dene hunters expect to see fox, weasel, and raven because they scavenge wolf kills. Red fox, like the wolf, den in eskers along caribou migrations, but Arctic fox do not den. If a wolf pack does not provide the fox with caribou or other animal kills, fox can survive on caribou droppings and vegetation. Fox and weasel do hunt for themselves, catching fish, young birds, and small mammals such as mice, ptarmigan, and rabbit. Like the wolf, the fox also eats grass to clean its stomach. All animal scavengers are potential problems around camps, outfitter lodges, and mines – particularly if food scraps or garbage are left where the animals can smell it. Dene are not surprised that fox and wolverine are frequent visitors to mining camp sites near Ek'ati; they were disappointed, however, to learn that some people at an exploration camp in Ek'ati had tamed a young wolf as a pet. Keeping the caribou migration away from mine sites could help to keep away scavengers that pursue them, but mine sites also have to be as clean as possible so that such scavengers find nothing to eat.

Weledeh Yellowknives land users keep track of wolf and fox partly as an indication of the whereabouts of caribou and partly in order to trap the fur-bearers. Maps 11 and 12 show very extensive traditional trapping activity by Dene from the East Arm to the barrens. Before they pursued the fur trade, Dene made use of the pelts for their own clothing and blankets. Over time, Dene trappers developed different methods for harvesting fur-bearers, drawing on their knowledge of the animals' behaviour. Mink and lynx do not leave their woodland habitat to wander in the barrens and, although otter are found in all rivers, their pelts are not profitable enough for Dene to trap them for trade. Elders praise the ways in which people used to worked together, along with dogs, in order to harvest successfully and look after their families. Elders expressed sadness about changes to the people's lives that remove them from such positive ways.

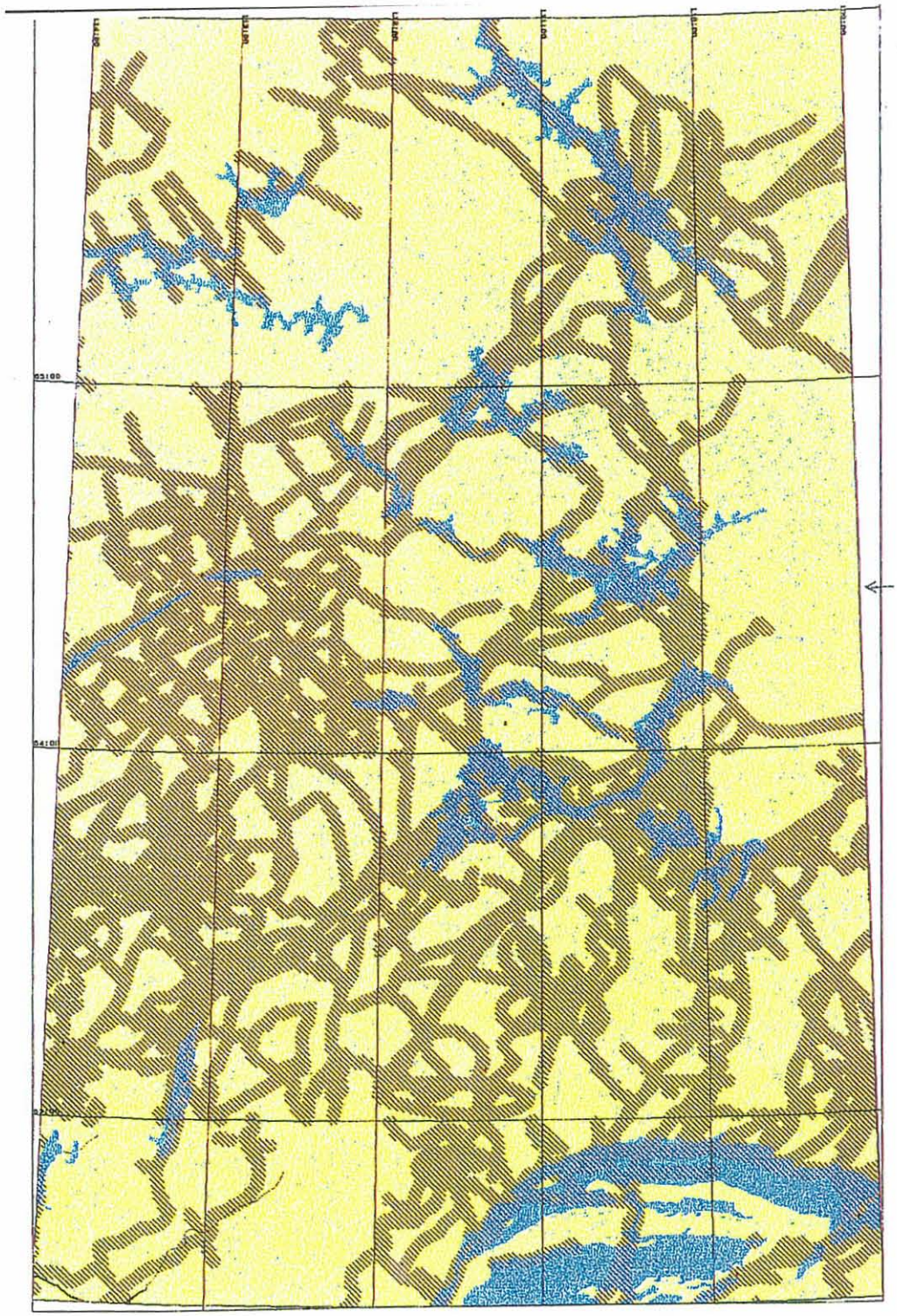
Arctic hare and ground squirrel are barrens animals that are very respected by the people. Arctic hare den almost everywhere in the barrens, and move quickly to hide in boulders from their many predators. Weledeh Yellowknives land users eat hare meat, use the bones to make tools, and wear or sleep under thick rabbit pelts. The large Arctic hare feeds on willows, berries, and short shrubs, finding vegetation on top of wind-blown hills and around rocks in winter. In summer, hare get water from plants and around boulders; in winter, they get water from snow. Hare and ground squirrel, like many other small animals, develop extensive tunnel networks through snow connecting their dens and feeding patches. These tunnels are good places for the animals to wait out the severe blizzards on the barrens.

Ptarmigan and grouse are small birds that stay in the barrens and near the treeline. Weledeh Yellowknives women caught the birds, which are fat and tasty in winter, in nets made of sinew and babiche strung between low-growing shrubs. Feathers were collected for arrow shafts and for blankets. The people say that young pregnant girls who sleep on ptarmigan feathers will give birth to a playful, alert, and helpful child. To ensure a child might grow as surefooted as the ptarmigan on the barrens, parents might tie ptarmigan feet to the child's ankles until they were a few years old. When ptarmigan are mentioned in conversation, Dene land users will speak about their mating dance. Male and female ptarmigan gather in spring before dawn for their dance, fanning their wings as the sun rises. The motion of their wings is strong enough to sweep away everything on the ground where their mating dance is done. Dene coming across a patch of ground with no moss, lichen, stones, or plants know they are looking at a place where ptarmigan danced in the spring dawn. Such cleared places are called "ptarmigan dances". (*See* Photo 14.)

In the barrens, winter survival depended on how much caribou and fish the people managed to harvest in summer and fall. Fish were crucial for feeding dogs. Weledeh Yellowknives Dene have always used dogs: a family had at least one large husky-type dog to pull a sled carrying the tipi, firewood, drymeat and dryfish, and the very old and very young family members. It was normal for dogs pulling a loaded sled to cover twenty-four kilometres a day. In the distant past, a family with a three-dog team was considered well off; today's Elders were accustomed to driving four dogs at a time — one woman can recall travelling by herself with her team from Beniah Lake in the barrens to Weledeh-Cheh when she was forty years of age. By the 1940s, it was usual for hunters to take teams of four to six dogs on week-long hunting trips in the barrens, returning to the lakeside camps. By the late 1960s and 1970s, people had started to haul many more goods: manufactured tools, fuel, groceries, and dog food. They needed longer teams to haul the heavier loads over longer distances. If food was available for them, as many as twelve dogs might be seen running along the traditional trails. Few of the working dogs can now be found: dogs seen in communities today are likely to be racing dogs.

Dene watch for fish migrating to their spawning grounds in late fall when the first patches of ice are forming at shorelines. When female fish can feel their eggs are really large, they go to shallows around islands and shorelines with reeds for protection and a current, to lay their eggs where there is more light and oxygen than in deep water. Dene know that, after spawning in the fall, fish in large lakes of the barrens migrate to the deepest water where they stay throughout the coldest mid-winter weather. (*See* Maps 13a & b.) In late fall and early winter, Dene know that the fish caught in their nets will be very thin from the efforts of migrating and spawning. In deep winter, the people check for wind direction to set their nets in a sheltered place.

Map 11 - shows the Dene wolf harvesting trails north of Ta-Cheh (the East Arm), which are similar to caribou migration trails



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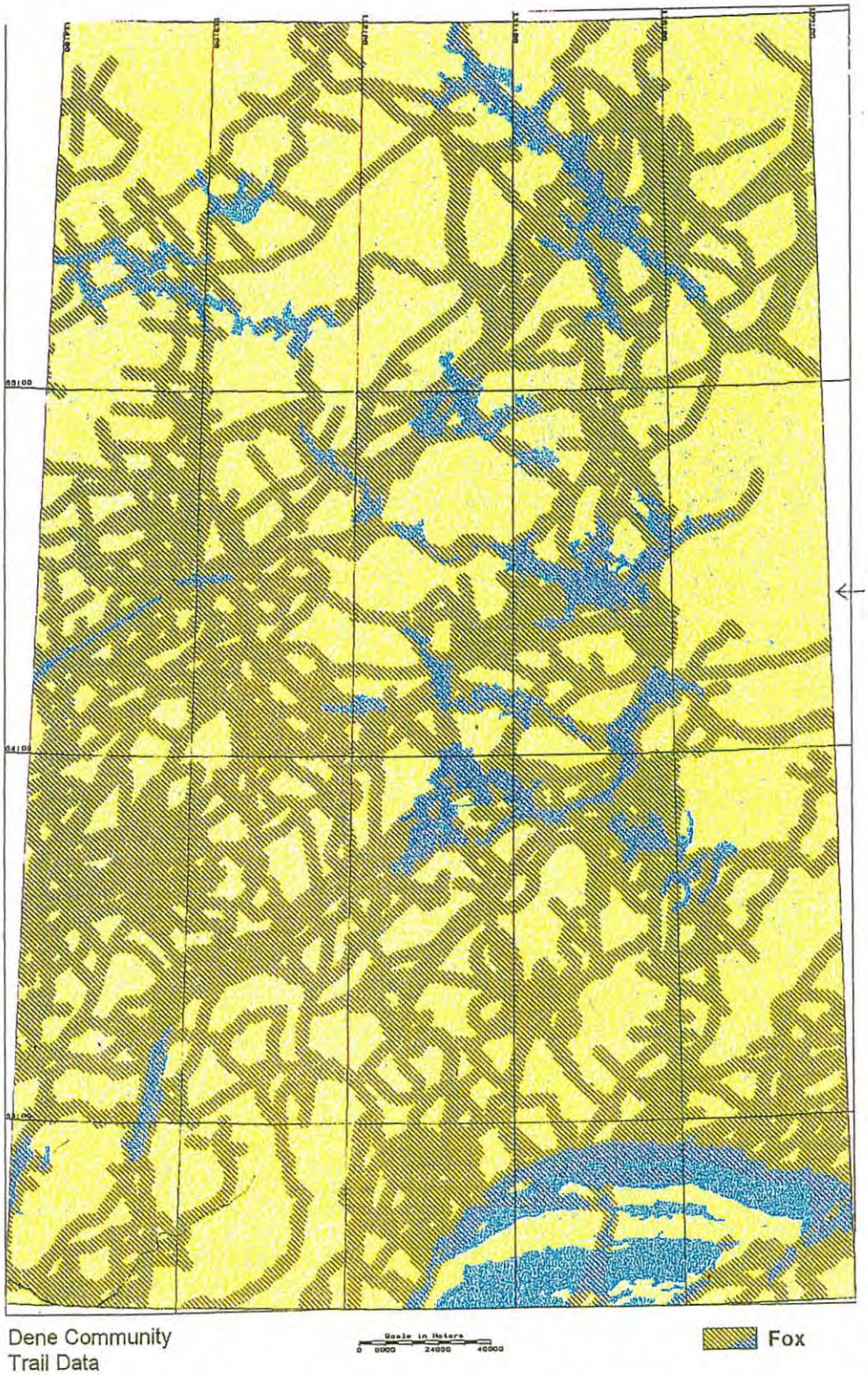
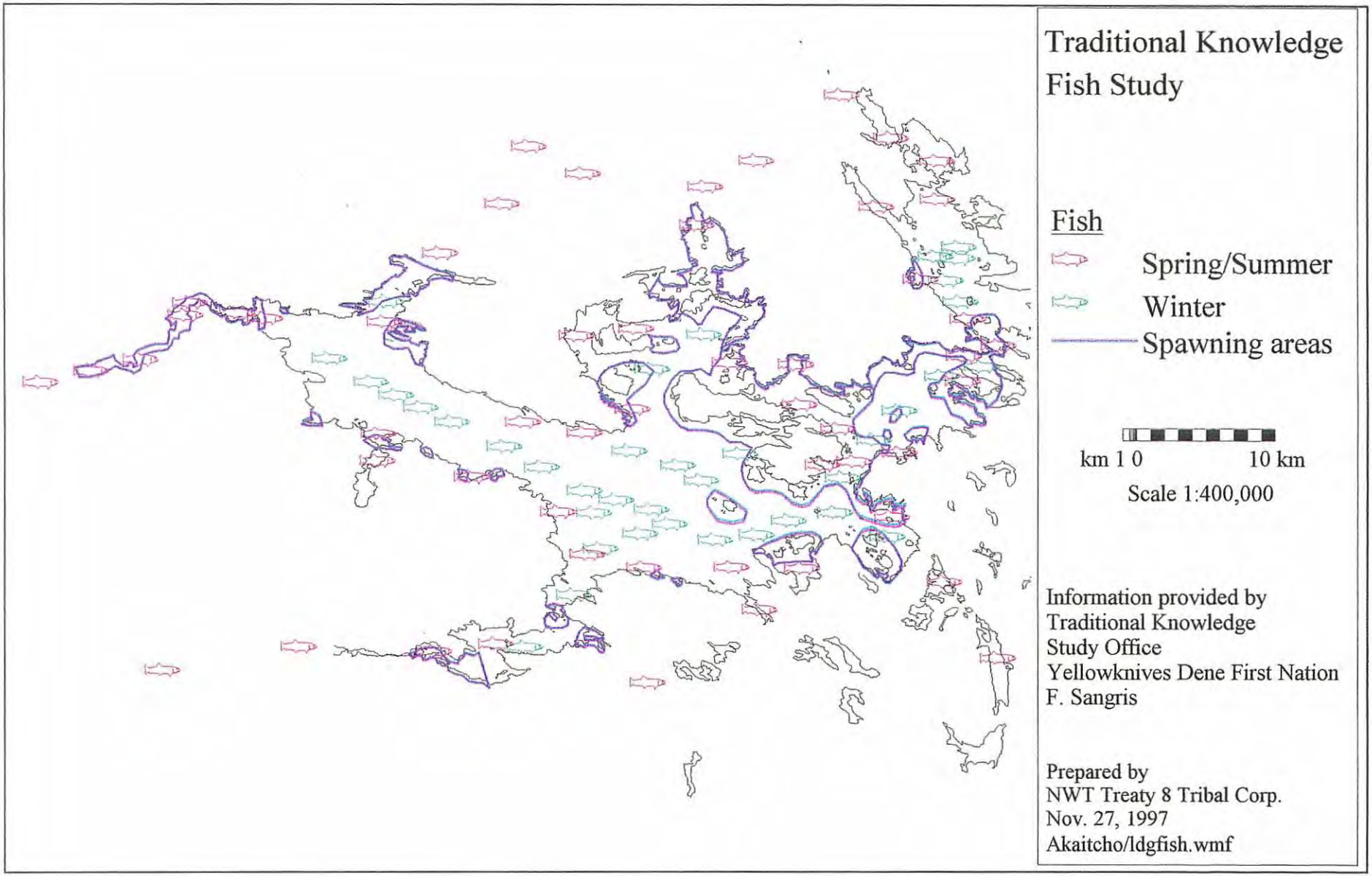
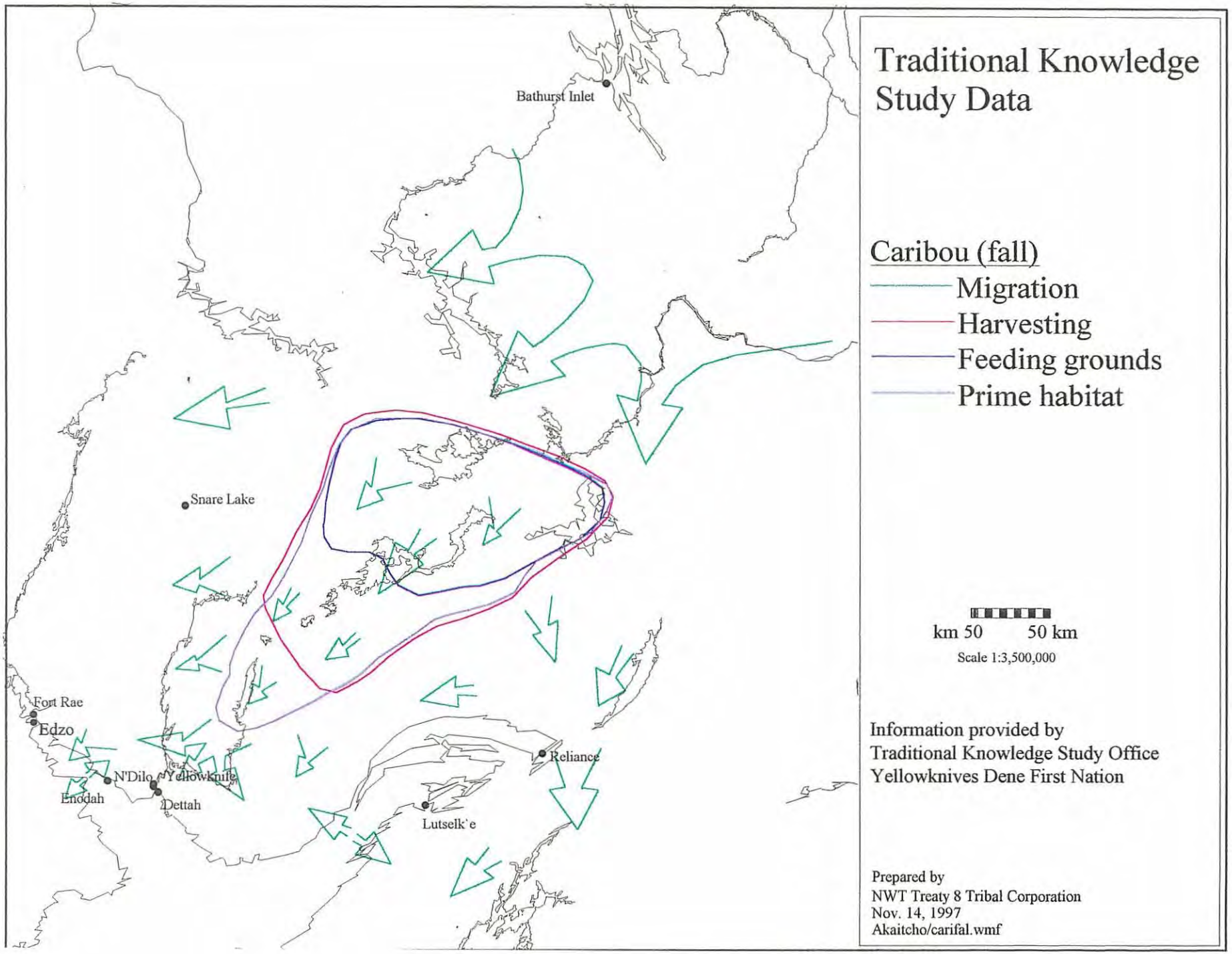
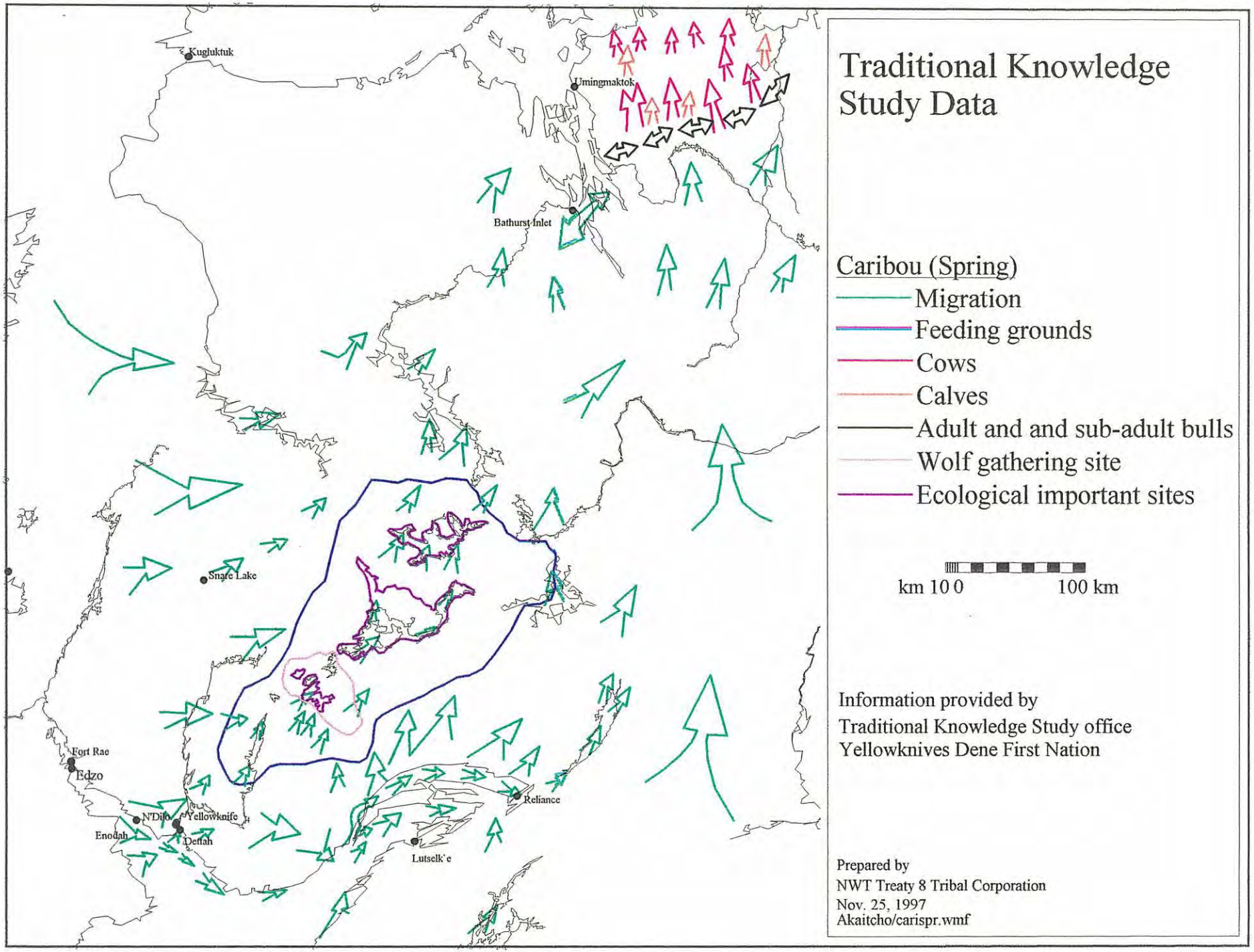
Map 12 - shows the very extensive Dene fox trapping areas, as reported in the 1974–76 mapping project




Traditional Knowledge
Fish Study
Fish
Spring/Summer
Winter
Spawning areas
km 1 0
10 km
Scale 1:400,000
Information provided by
Traditional Knowledge
Study Office
Yellowknives Dene First Nation
F. Sangris
Prepared by
NWT Treaty 8 Tribal Corp.
Nov. 27, 1997
Akaitcho/ldgfish.wmf


Traditional Knowledge Study Data
Caribou (fall)
Migration
Harvesting
Feeding grounds
Prime habitat
km 50 50 km
Scale 1:3,500,000
Information provided by
Traditional Knowledge Study Office
Yellowknives Dene First Nation
Prepared by
NWT Treaty 8 Tribal Corporation
Nov. 14, 1997
Akaitcho/carifal.wmf
Bathurst Inlet
Snare Lake
Fort Rae
Edzo
N'Dilo
Yellowknife
Enodah
Dettah
Lutselk`e
Reliance



Traditional Knowledge Study Data

Caribou (Spring)

- Migration
- Feeding grounds
- Cows
- Calves
- Adult and and sub-adult bulls
- Wolf gathering site
- Ecological important sites

km 10 0 100 km

Information provided by
Traditional Knowledge Study office
Yellowknives Dene First Nation

Prepared by
NWT Treaty 8 Tribal Corporation
Nov. 25, 1997
Akaitcho/carispr.wmf

Weledeh Yellowknives families in the barrens, and those remaining in Weledeh-Cheh, continued fishing throughout winter. They make holes in ice softened by the swift current of rivers or in channels between islands. Strong chisels carved from moose bone are used to chip at the ice, until chunks of ice can be hauled up onto the ice surface. Manufactured shovels have made it much easier for the people to keep ice holes free from snow and ice. Nets are slung between the holes and anchored with heavy rocks. (*See* Photo 15.) The people used to add hooks made from the two bottom teeth of a muskrat, loon brisket, or very strong animal bone to the nets. Hooks were tied securely to fresh wood or willow, then bait such as fish parts or caribou tongue was sewn onto the hooks. When no fish or meat was available as bait, the hooks could be baited with dried red willow, as fish are attracted to the smell or taste of willow. In the frigid cold of winter, fresh fish could be left whole to freeze naturally. At some sites, fish were so plentiful that ice fishing could continue throughout winter. In spring, fish under the ice of frozen lakes can feel the heat of the sun and start moving to shallow waters warmed by the sun. As ice recedes from shorelines where water is shallow, fish can easily be caught by animals and people.

In the Ek'ati area, the people fished in small lakes around Lac de Gras as well as the lake itself. Long Lake, which BHP has been given permission to turn into a tailings pond, is called "Fish lake" by Weledeh Yellowknives, because they found fish there very plentiful. Weledeh Yellowknives Elders told a story about Long Lake to the Water Board during hearings into the BHP water licence application. Elders know that there were camps with many fish caches made from wood around the former shores of Long Lake: they would like the opportunity to search for them before the tailings pond overflows the present area of the lake.

Some Weledeh Yellowknives families in recent generations have stayed in Weledeh-Cheh throughout winter. When caribou migrated around Great Slave Lake, they would arrive around Weledeh-Cheh from late in October until December. When the weather is cold enough to freeze the lake, caribou could travel faster across the North Arm. Dene from Weledeh-Cheh, south of Great Slave Lake, and Deh Cho would hunt caribou that migrated south of the lake. These caribou could provide Weledeh Yellowknives families with the products necessary for their winter survival. When the caribou migration there stopped, those Dene had to incur far greater expense to travel deep into Weledeh Yellowknives territory (around Gordon Lake and Mackay Lake) or into Tlì Chò territory to pursue their traditional hunting activities.

Weledeh Yellowknives trappers staying in Weledeh-Cheh for winter could make a good living in the fur trade from marten, muskrat, beaver, and other fur-bearers from the lakes along what is now the Ingraham Trail. Dene know that six kinds of fox used to be abundant in Weledeh-Cheh near marshes, where mice could be found for food. The blue fox is now extinct and the silver fox is rare, owing partly to the fur trade

(especially through poison used by non-Dene trappers) and partly to the wolf reduction program of the 1940s. The area was also important habitat for wolf, wolverine, lynx, fox, coyote, fisher, caribou, moose, bear, porcupine, otter, muskrat, beaver, mink, marten, and rabbit. In one area near the Weledeh, rabbit are so plentiful, the people called it "rabbit place". Snared rabbit were especially useful to the people. Women made rabbit stew and used the fur for clothing, hats, warm diapers, and blankets woven from rabbit fur attached to babiche. Even before the fur trade, Weledeh Yellowknives Dene made good use of fur-bearing animals for their fur, meat, sinew, bones — nothing is wasted. Only the guts were discarded, buried in the land, to be returned to the land.

Until recently, moose were common along the Weledeh from its mouth to Weleh Ti (Prosperous Lake). A point near the mouth of the Weledeh used to be the preferred place for hunters to wait in the evening for moose coming to the water. When the Ingraham Trail was built, it cut across the moose trail, and traffic disturbed the moose so much that the animals avoided the area. One of the most important animals, which the people treat with great respect throughout their territory, is the bear. The barrens grizzly is not hunted at all by Dene, and the black bear is hunted and eaten by only certain families. The grizzly takes branches and shrubs to block the entrance to its den, but does not make beds with boughs, as other animals do. Bear are also important for medicine to remedy ailments.

Bones from all animals became tools: chisels, awls, needles, axes. Moose bones used as an axe were struck around a tree trunk repeatedly, until it cut through to produce logs. Shorter pieces could be obtained by burning a log over a small fire. In the barrens, musk-ox bones and fat would be burned in a fire, when the people had no wood. Unused bones, like anything taken from the land that the people no longer used, were returned to the land, buried to pay respect to the land.

Dene use of their lands is traditional, but it is not frozen in the past: the people today continue to rely on meat and other things the land provides. For that reason, the people continue to need access to the expansive lands where the animals and fish have always sustained them.

Spring (April, May)

Spring would see Weledeh Yellowknives families returning from the barrens to the fish camps in Weledeh-Cheh. From May to early June, when lakes still have ice on them, families camp near the places where the hunters left their traps around the end of December. Knowing that small fur-bearers, especially muskrat, return in spring to the same lakes and rivers, the trappers set their traps in winter along shores where they

expect the animals to come, even when they see no tracks there. In spring, they set their nets in these lakes to feed their dogs while the entire family harvests muskrat. Over several weeks, they visit their traps several times a day, skin muskrat in morning, and visit their traps in the evening. Muskrat are skinned at the lakes to reduce the weight of loads packed across portages when they are ready to travel. At good muskrat sites, Dene may get an average of three hundred pelts. Some traditional areas were lost to Dene when the government brought in beaver, which swiftly took over the muskrat habitat.

On the banks of the Weledeh in spring, the people raised their tipi sewn from the last fall's caribou hides, followed by racks for drying fish and meat. Because the area could support at least ten families, the fishing settlements along both banks of the Weledeh were large. Melting snow provided water until the lakes and rivers were free from ice. Fresh water, fish and animals, trees, berries, and medicine plants were available and in abundance. Some men joined women to weave red willow strips into fishing nets and to build birchbark canoes. It was a time for people and dogs to rest before the hard travel in the next fall and winter.

The mouth of the Weledeh, where the ice breaks first, was a good place to stay. Ducks and geese migrating north could be relied on to drop down to the open water to rest, and fish could easily be caught at the mouth of the river. In spring, older fish are healthy and fat, although fish spawned the previous fall are small, resembling eggs with large eyes and few visible bones. In spring, migrating fish move from open water into rivers where there is more light, warmth, and food. Weledeh Yellowknives land users have observed fish migrating up the Weledeh as far as the barrens, feeding on shoreline grasses. The people say that, when you eat fish in the spring, you can almost taste the grass; they prefer fatter fish that do not taste of grass. Bottom-feeding fish such as loche in Weleh-Cheh do not migrate and could always be found at the mouth of the Weledeh. Loche skin, scraped from the meat with a thin bone chisel, was used for windows in cabins. The people put fat or wax on loche skin to prevent cracking, although it is quite tough. Loche produce many more eggs than other fish. The people tell a story in which a young man wanted to count the number of eggs in a loche: when he finished counting, he was an old man.

Spring was a time for making and repairing nets in ways developed and used for thousands of years by Weledeh Yellowknives women. They weave the nets from strips of red willow found near the Weledeh shoreline. Other willow was discovered not to be as strong as red willow. Bark strips are peeled using a hand tool like an awl, then twined together for strength and fashioned into nets ranging from one to one and a half metres high and up to six metres long, with holes of four fingers (about eight centimetres) width. Nets are kept fairly short because long nets make fishing more difficult. Nets could be kept in place by tying rocks at intervals to the bottom of the net

and by tying sticks or wood to the top of the net to keep it afloat. People visit their nets often, fishing in much the same way as with a hook, removing fish as they become stuck in the net. Because nets made from willow had to stay wet all the time, they were left in the water or were placed in a caribou-hide bag filled with wet moss. Carefully tended and repaired, willow nets could last many fishing seasons: a family would use its net for several years. When the people began to trade furs at the new posts, they obtained cotton twine for making nets instead of willow; after the making of the Treaty in 1900, government people started giving the people nets made of nylon twine with lead weights.

In early spring in the barrens, at large lakes like Ek'ati, when shallow waters become too warm, fish migrate to cooler lake waters or up rivers where there are deep pools. They stay in these cool places during summer and early fall, feeding and preparing for spawning in rivers and lakes (in bays, around islands, and in channels). Each type of fish has its own timing, but most spawn in September and October and, by November, the female fish have dropped all their eggs into shallow water and the male fish have finished fertilising them. Schools of fish then migrate to rest in deeper water all winter. Migration patterns and spawning grounds of fish in Ek'ati, as Weledeh Yellowknives land users have identified them, are on Maps 13a & b (pages 70, 71).

Land users are aware that features of the land under the water are similar to those on the surface of the land with hills, valleys, cliffs, and jagged rocks. And they are aware that different kinds of fish have different habitats. By dragging a rock on the bottom of a lake, a Dene fisherman discovered that he could find a lot of whitefish in muddy areas. Moving to another spot – one that was flat and smooth – he came back with six buckets of trout. Dene recognise three different kinds of trout: darker brown and green trout that are found in rivers, lighter silver and grey trout that stay in large lakes like Ek'ati, and reddish trout that are found all over. The colour of the trout tells the people whether it lives in a stream or deep lake water. River fish get more sunlight on their skin.

Weledeh Yellowknives land users know there are many kinds of fish in Ek'ati. Fish with teeth, such as pike and trout, feed on smaller fish, insects, and plants that grow near shore. Bottom-feeders without teeth, such as loche (ie, moray, or burbot) and whitefish, feed on insects, plants, and nutrients in silt. Cisco, grayling, and suckers are also found in the large, deep lakes of the barrens. Elders say that there are pike in Ek'ati and some of the smaller lakes in the area, although it is rare for pike to be this far north. Other species may enter Ek'ati from the Coppermine River. Dene know that fish in their lands grow very slowly, taking two years before they are longer than a few centimetres. In Ek'ati, there are many very large, very old fish that Elders say should be protected. Some types of fish, especially the largest ones, stay in the deep water of lakes like Ek'ati all year, except for their migration to shallows for spawning. In

summer, smaller fish find their way into the creeks that flow into Ek'ati. Elders say that tasting is the best way to tell fish that stay near shore a lot from those that come to shallow water only once a year: they taste like the grasses they eat near shore. As a traditional fishing lake, Ek'ati has always provided the people with fat fish.

There are shallows and spawning grounds around Ek'ati Ndi, where Diavik plans to operate mines within wide C-shaped dykes to be constructed in the lake itself. Important spawning grounds are also located in the narrow inlet that nearly separates the north part from the rest of the east island (*see* Map 13b). Elders and land users are concerned not only about the timing of construction of these dykes, but also the effect of mining operations and dust on fish spawning patterns. Other impacts to consider are the effects of the dykes on migrating caribou and other animals. Some people who work for Diavik think that caribou will walk on the dykes, but the Dene participating in this project believe there will be too much noise and dust coming from the pits inside the dykes for caribou to want to walk on the dykes. They discussed many aspects of these concerns and considered a range of possible ways to reduce the impacts before developing their final recommendations. (All recommendations for ways to reduce impacts from mining operations to *ndeh*, including fish and animals are presented at the end of this part.)

Weledeh Yellowknives families travelling south in spring to return to Weledeh-Cheh often passed caribou travelling north. The people know that, in late winter and spring when caribou migrate north, they travel through the barrens to a broad point (ie, Bathurst Inlet) by the coast of the Arctic Ocean. Caribou do not migrate altogether as one herd. By mid-March, groups of caribou cows start moving slowly from woodland wintering grounds toward the barrens, feeding and gradually joining other groups. Migrating in groups of a hundred or more can enhance their chances of surviving predation.

Cows are the first to migrate north when they feel the fœtus inside them getting bigger. Caribou cows can begin to produce calves when they are three years old, although Dene still think of them as youngsters. Although some cows never grow antlers, most do start growing small antlers at the age of three – at this time, young female and male caribou can be differentiated. Cows that grow antlers use them to protect their calves and generally keep them throughout fall and winter, not losing them until their new calves are born late spring. Caribou generally travel in the mornings, then forage and rest late in the day. Leaders at the head and end of each group of caribou that travel together look around continually, on guard for predators. In March and April, caribou hair is not very tough and easily falls out; even if caribou were not going to calving grounds, Dene would not hunt them at this time because the coat would be of little use to them. If they have little meat left in their caches, they may need to shoot yearlings or older caribou following the cows for meat.

Dene have traditional names for caribou males and females at different ages and circumstances, for instance to describe a cow with a calf. Yearling calves remain close to their mother, migrating with them and sometimes still being suckled by cows after a new calf is born. In their second spring, young calves spend more time with other youngsters in the main herd. Cows and their yearling calves start to migrate, with young bulls and cows following their tracks in the snow soon after and mature bulls coming last. By April, cows and yearling calves migrating north can be found from Mackay Lake to Lac du Sauvage. As caribou move north, they follow the same trails they use when migrating south, walking across frozen lakes they would swim through in summer. In April, the groups of the Bathurst herd that wintered in different places join to go to the calving grounds at the same time. Sometimes, the people see caribou walk across frozen lakes without looking around and only the leaders stopping to listen; at such times, the people are sure the caribou are snow blind from sun glaring on the bright surface.

Mature bulls do not migrate north until well after snow starts to melt, in May and June, arriving in the calving grounds by June and July, when calves are born. Cows go to islands and points in Bathurst Inlet to give birth, in order to reduce the chances of predators killing their newborn calves. Mature bulls, young bulls, and the young cows that do not breed gather on the mainland blocking the way to these islands and points from bears, wolves, wolverine, and fox. Calving cows and their newborns remain in their birthing areas, feeding and gaining strength. Cows want to travel back to the woodlands as soon as their calves are ready. They rejoin the rest of the herd, and migrate south together along the same trails they took north.

Elders are aware of the recent movement in the general location of calving grounds of the Bathurst herd, as they have been mapped by government specialists (NWT Council 1996). In the past twenty years, government specialists say, Bathurst caribou have calved in areas generally to the west of previous calving grounds. The Bathurst herd, called *Deh chi(lın)-ta ekwo* by Weledeh Yellowknives Dene, follows the same migration trails north and south, for as long as indigenous peoples have used them. Weledeh Yellowknives participants in this project developed a map showing caribou trails, focusing on Ek'ati (*see* Map 14 on page 72). On this map, there is not a place where there are no caribou. There are caribou as far east as the Thelon Game Sanctuary and as far west as Point Lake.

Until the 1940s, Bathurst caribou followed the same migration pattern. In its summer migration, the herd travels south to Contwoyto Lake, then east and west around the lake. Between Contwoyto Lake and Lac de Gras, the herd split to winter in three different woodland areas: western Tłı̀ Chǫ̀ territory, east of Great Slave Lake, and south of Great Slave. Caribou used to migrate around the East Arm and across the North Arm of Great Slave Lake until they reached grazing lands of buffalo, with whom

they do not mix. Since the development of mines, dams, and the city of Yellowknife in the 1940s, caribou no longer migrate that far. Caribou that used to winter south of Great Slave Lake now stay in the barrens and woodlands to the east. Caribou prefer to winter in places where this is little wind and lots of lichen.

Elders say that, in the past before Europeans came and before the people started using guns, the Bathurst caribou herd was much larger than it is now. People who harvest caribou from this herd include Inuit (who harvest them in July), Dene and Métis hunters from throughout central and southern Denendeh, tourists at outfitter lodges, and non-Dene sport hunters (who can each take up to five caribou a year). The herd is further reduced by animal predators, deaths from drowning or disease, and being hit by vehicles on roads. Dene land users are concerned that the many pressures on this herd now are having negative impacts on the caribou. Weledeh Yellowknives Elders are certain that caribou will be badly affected by the extensive mining planned at Ek'ati. "Caribou are not made of metal", they remark, "they will be affected."

Summer (June to mid-August)

Summer is time for the people to fish in their camps around Great Slave Lake. All fish found in Weledeh and Weleh-Cheh were very important to Weledeh Yellowknives Dene and all parts of fish caught were used. The skin of the whitefish and parts of its stomach and gut were used to make bags to hold meat. These bags were often decorated with ochre and berry dyes. From coney, which are high in fat, the people made candles by soaking babiche or pieces of hide (and, more recently, twine or cloth) in coney fat. Burning the soaked material gave light and fire.

Each summer, Weledeh Yellowknives women dried and smoked many thousands of fresh fish in Weledeh-Cheh. Fish speared on a thin piece of wood (called a stickfish), would be placed over the poles of the fish drying rack, or fish cache. Fish caches were built with four spruce posts hammered into the ground and four or six longer poles, a few centimetres in diameter, cleaned of bark and dirt, aligned in rows on top. Across each pole, ten fish would be hung to dry or freeze for later in the year. The drying fish were suspended high enough off the ground so that wolves, fox, and dogs could not get them. When one fish cache was filled, another would be built. (*See* Photo 16.) There would be at least two fish caches, and usually more, for each tipi in the settlements. Women would clean and gut some fish, cut them in half lengthways ensuring that the two halves remained attached at the tail. Then the fish were placed upside down over a pole in a tipi to dry. Criss-cross cuts in fish flesh speeded up drying. Dried coney, whitefish, grayling, and suckers could be stored much longer than dried lake trout.

Weledeh Yellowknives Elders tell the different kinds of lake trout by their colour — red and green, silver, or spotted — and the various kinds of whitefish by their gills. At least three different kinds of whitefish have spawned in the Weledeh: a very large one, one with dark markings along the back, and one that is long and narrow. Trout, coney, smelt, and whitefish — the migrating fish — were very populous in the Weledeh. Anyone could catch a trout soon after throwing in a hook. The people set nets for smelt near the rapids, where the fish were so populous they turned the water black. All summer, people ate fresh fish and fish soup.

Fish soup, thickened with fish kidney, could be flavoured with a variety of land and water plants, as well as black or green lichen from rocks. Rock tripe (*umbilicaria*), is a dark grey lichen found on rocks, often with other kinds of lichen. It has a curly appearance and can be used year-round, but is difficult to collect when snow covered. The people gathered as much as they could in warmer months and carried the lichen as a pounded powder through the winter. (*See* Photo 17.) The people used this lichen to make a soup or porridge high in nutrients for young babies, when they are not feeding as well as they should. It was prepared by boiling a mixture of lichen powder and water. Plants common to Weledeh-Cheh and the barrens are well known and well used by Dene. In fact, a compelling reason for the people to return early to the barrens is to collect plants and wood before snow starts to fall.

One plant harvested extensively by the people is peat moss, which they call *kwa.* Peat moss grows on the ground in thick, deep mats of a light green to mustard colour. The moss, soft and spongy and very absorbent, is ideal for its traditional uses for infants and sick or incontinent adults. Two cleaned caribou hides were cut, with a small hole in one, so that they could be wrapped and tied around a baby (the way cloth diapers are), then dried peat moss was added inside the caribou wrapper to line it. The infant is placed over the hole, so that soiled peat moss could easily be removed and replaced. Women carried two or three spare hides for each child to replace those that were wet and in need of cleaning. Young children and sick or incontinent adults could have clumps of dried peat moss placed under them during sleep to absorb urine. Peat moss is harvested year-round by pulling it out of the ground, in winter cut in frozen blocks with a sharp bone chisel or copper knife. Before it is used, the people dry it: for immediate use, clumps of the moss can be placed near a fire to dry. Normally, the women lay the clumps on boughs, where sun and wind dry it in less than a day. Women carried large caribou-hide bags filled with dried *kwa.* To be respectful, used peat moss was buried, returned to the land. (*See* Photo 18.)

When gathering peat moss, the people might come across depressions in the ground, about three to four feet deep and several feet long. Seeing this, they would know a bear had slept or rested there, seeking protection from a storm, heat, or insects. On Akeh-Cho Ndia this summer, project participants found a depression like this,

which Elders said was likely made many years before. Even the slightest changes to the barrens landscape endure for a long time.

Tall fireweed (*Epilobium angustifolium*) produces abundant pink flowers on its tall stems. The flowers can be burned and the resulting smoke inhaled by someone needing relief from a headache. Close to shores, a small shrub that turns brown at the tips in August is a staple for Weledeh Yellowknives adults, who never travelled without it: it is also very effective as a headache remedy. (*See* Photos 19 and 20.) A low-growing shrub called by the people simply "Green leaves in the barrens" (*Betula glandulosa*) is very abundant; its roots, like willow roots, have many uses for the people. Dug up, shaved, and split in two, the roots could be twisted for making and repairing canoes, and for building drying racks and "caribou ropes". (*See* Photo 29.)

In late summer and fall, when the people are moving north, many kinds of berries are available as travel food and medicine. Blackberry or crowberry (*Empetrum nigrum*) is important as food and juice for bears as well as the people, who also use it as tinder for starting fires. (*See* Photo 21.) Rock cranberry (*Vaccinium vitis-idaea*) is eaten as fresh fruit and also boiled with water to make jam. One Elder observes: "With birchbark baskets we gathered berries like cranberries and blueberries, although they are only available for a short time. Eating berries was a treat: we squeezed the juices and drank them, just like today when we drink juice bought from the store. We also used this juice for medicinal purposes. We dried a lot of berries for use in winter time." Land users know that, when they are very hungry, or when they have a stomach ache, the best thing is to eat some cloudberry (*Rubus chamaemorus*). (*See* Photo 22.)

Soups, tea, and water were boiled in birchbark baskets, carved wooden bowls, or caribou stomachs. A caribou stomach, tied with babiche into a bag so that no steam can escape, was always used for caribou blood soup. Clean, smooth, round rocks heated in a fire were placed one at a time into whatever container held the liquid to be heated. As each rock cooled, it was replaced until the liquid in the container boiled. Dene often use a rather different term now to refer to a caribou stomach used for cooking. After Dene were relocated into town, they started watching television. Someone noticed during the televised summer Olympic games that bathing caps worn by swimmers resembled caribou stomach bags. Now, even Elders and experienced land users refer to caribou stomachs used for cooking as "caribou swimming caps".

By July, the majority of the Bathurst caribou have reached Ek'ati and lands north of Mackay Lake. Hundreds of caribou move very slowly in large, mixed groups. Adult cows and bulls stay near calves and yearlings to protect them from predators during migration. Wolves follow caribou and try to break through caribou protection methods, so that they can kill sickly caribou or calves; wolverine, fox, and raven are scavengers, eating what wolves leave from their kills. In July, antlers start to grow on

male caribou, starting as small buds; they fall off during winter after the mating season in late fall. Caribou males became mature at about five years of age and begin to mate. The people tell the approximate age of bulls by looking at their eyes: older bulls have cloudy eyes that have changed colour. Caribou can live for a long time, but rarely survive predators to become old. When experienced land users see a mature caribou holding its head very high, they will expect it to be old, with poor eyesight.

Weledeh Yellowknives land users describe their apprehension when two or three hunters become isolated from their family and find themselves hemmed in by hundreds of moving caribou. Sitting in a slender canoe surrounded by a caribou migration brings feelings of awe — and the fear of drowning. Caribou migrate slowly in summer, feeding and putting on fat for winter. Mature bulls eat constantly to put on extra weight for the rutting season. Where bulls find rocks and willows —such as the stands at the Narrows between Lac du Sauvage and Lac de Gras — they start to rub the velvet-like skin off their antlers. At that time, the people know their antlers look red like blood, but soon become dry and very hard. The people have used caribou-antler skin to make hats and suspenders and to decorate their hunting gear.

Often, when air temperatures rise too high, caribou do not enter the woodlands where insects are very thick, but continue moving between Lac de Gras and Mackay Lake, feeding and waiting for cool weather. Elders speaking about caribou always caution that the patterns the animals follow are generally the same, but there are also many alternations and exceptions. In some years in the past, Weledeh Yellowknives going to their winter trails around Contwoyto Lake have seen small scattered groups of cows and calves there; evidently, some cows and calves travel only that far rather than to woodland wintering grounds.

In summer, moose sometimes move through the barrens around the large lakes, where Weledeh Yellowknives Dene hunt them (*see* Map 15 on page 84). In summer, moose wander out to the barrens to browse on dwarf birch and berries, and to escape insects. Moose meat was dried and cached in ways similar to caribou, and moose hide usually becomes footwear, as the scraped and smoked hide is thicker and more durable than caribou.

Summer for the people was time for visiting, celebrating, and sharing information, since most of the community was gathered in the fishing camps in Weledeh-Cheh. People were always busy; the old people remember that no one had time for just sitting around. Land users like to talk about the weather patterns, what they had seen while travelling through the barrens, and the best places to travel for the next trapping season. Families celebrated marriages with ti-dances. There were hand-games after the day's work was finished. Women made sinew for sewing and boiled fresh berries and plants for dyes; they collected seeds, quills, fish scales, ochre, and feathers for

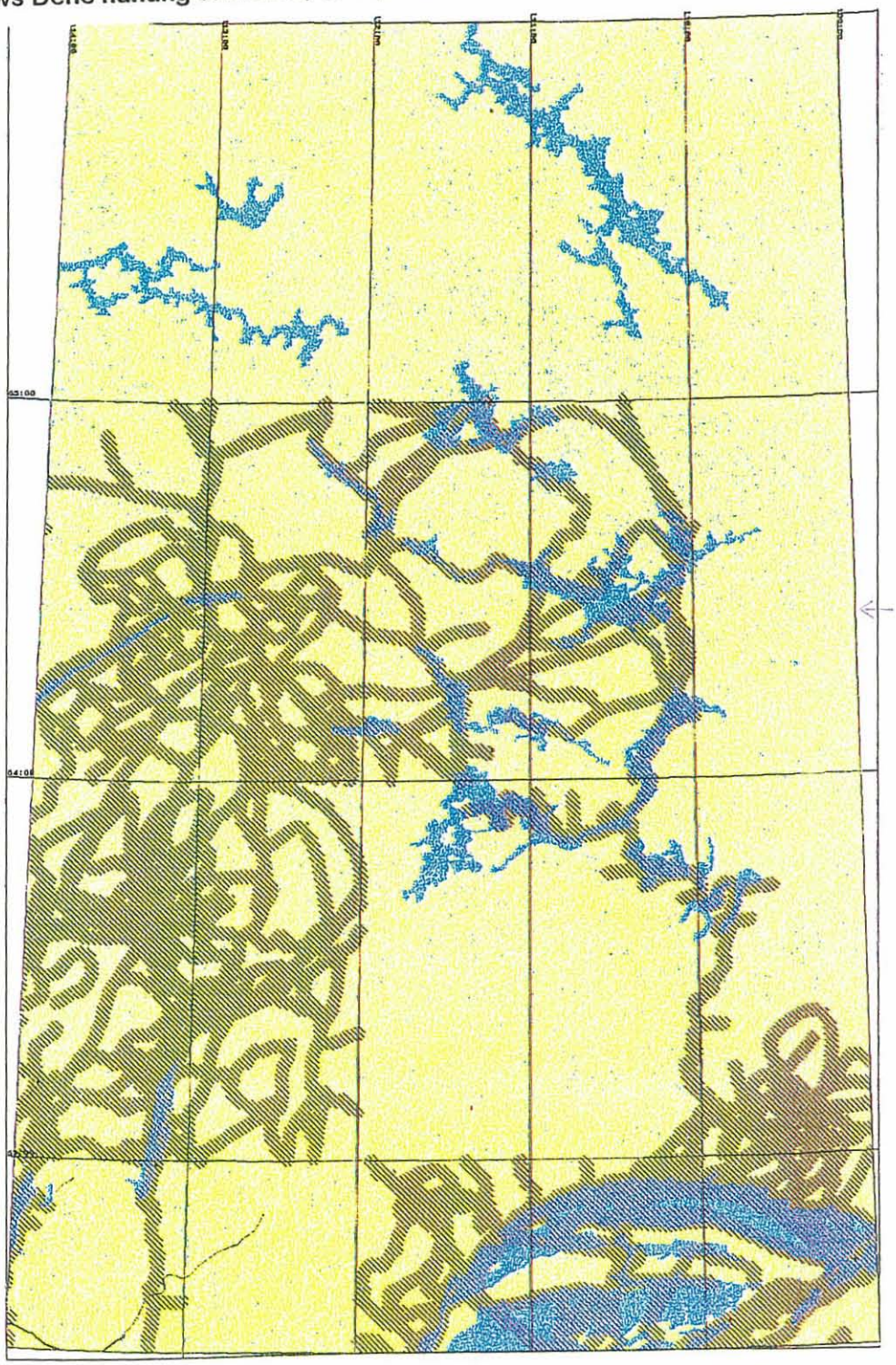
decorating clothing, bags, and cases for hunting tools. Around the fires in the long evenings, the women sewed and Elders retold the people's stories, passing them on to the younger generations.

One story told around the summer fires is popular when eating trout. There was a time when the people were near to starvation because their canoes and bone-axes were missing and the hunters could find no caribou or muskrat. The most powerful medicine people searched hard to learn who had taken their tools and animals. Eventually, they discovered that the trout were responsible and took steps to get them back. Four bones in a trout's head represent what the trout had taken: a caribou leg, a muskrat swimming, a canoe, and an axe. Since the recovery of those things, the head of a trout is eaten only by an Elder, who slowly removes the bones one at a time, identifying the missing tools and animals, as the story is told to young people.

At summer's end, the hunters prepared for the journey to the barrens — up to seven days of hard canoeing and portages — carrying only enough dried fish and meat for the trip. Before following, their family prepared fish and other food, such as meat and berries, to store near the river. They stored food in huge log caches, two to three square metres in area, to keep animals out. They also dug holes along the river bank, deep into the permafrost, lined them with spruce boughs and moss, then placed dried food there for storage. Such storage places were left so that food was available for trappers who might return from the barrens during the winter months.

In years when fishing in spring and early summer in Weledeh-Cheh were really good, some Weledeh Yellowknives families would be able to travel to the barrens by mid-summer. Elders recall their Elders telling them that weather in the barrens has been very different in some years. Scientists studying Arctic ice cores are confirming this: in some years, air temperatures that are even five degrees lower than usual might mean that snow falls right through summer in the barrens. Plants do not grow as well, caribou feed less and are less fat, and the animals and people who rely on them are less healthy; many starve. Air temperatures a few degrees higher might mean an exceptionally early spring or many fires throughout a summer. Climate fluctuations and impacts from them in the past have affected the timing of migration patterns of fish, birds, and animals. To be sure of surviving, the people who relied on harvesting bird eggs, spring waterfowl, and animals and fish during migrations had to be able to adjust their own seasonal patterns to such natural changes.

Map 15 - shows Dene hunting of moose, as reported in the 1974–76 mapping project



Weledeh Yellowknives Dene at Ek'ati 84

Weledeh Yellowknives Recommendations on Ways To Reduce Impacts to *Ndeh*

Recommendation #2-B-1
Mining companies must use Weledeh Yellowknives land users to monitor impacts from mining operations on the water quality, plants, fish, and animals (including fish, birds, and wildlife).

Habitat damage

Recommendation #2-B-2
Mining companies must take responsibility for damage to *ndeh* (the environment). Since there is to be continual damage through exploration and mining, the companies must use some of their profits to carry out their responsibility to protect areas of great significance to animals, such as good caribou habitat and good fish spawning areas.

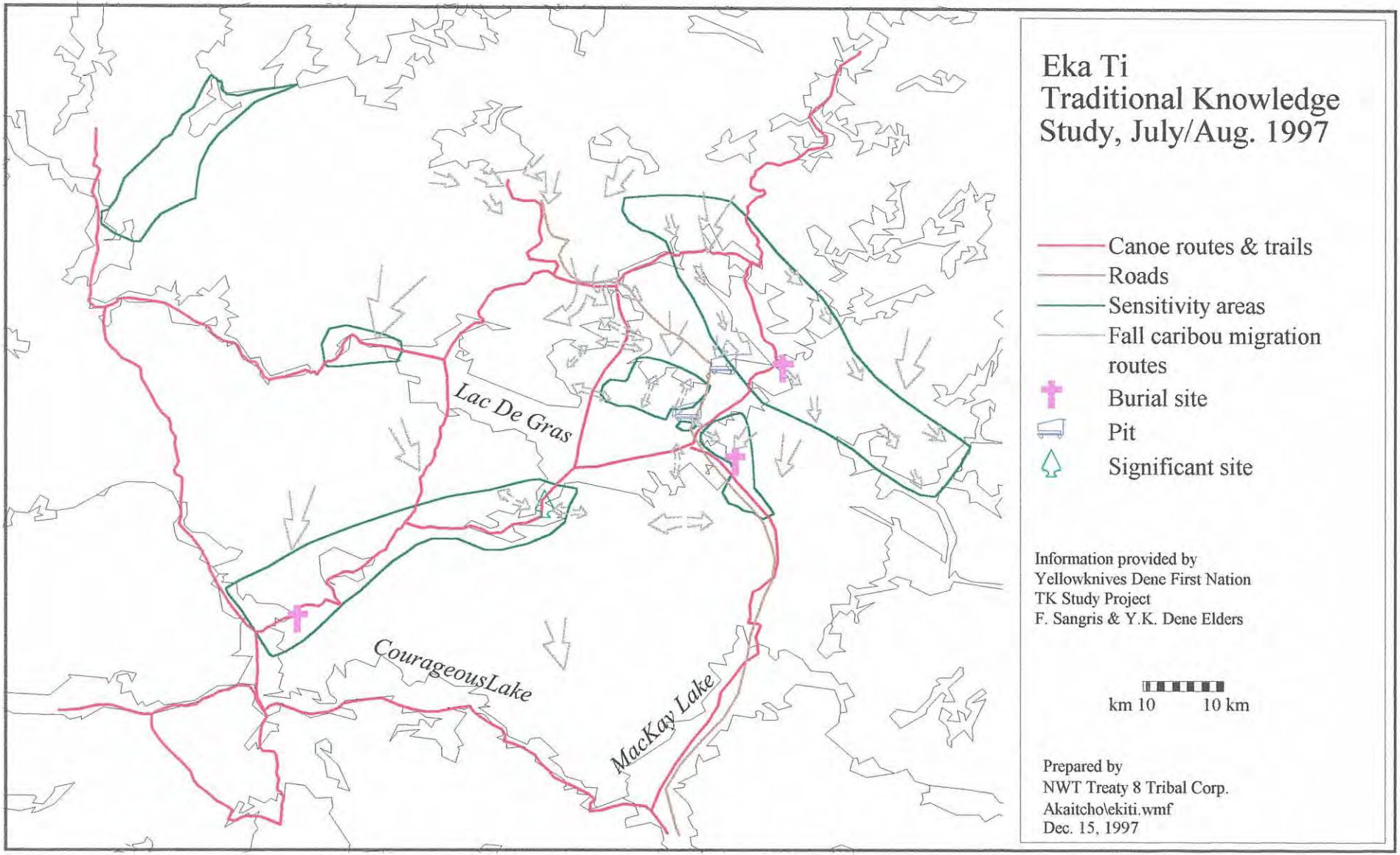
Recommendation #2-B-3
Mining companies must pay for as much regeneration of habitat as is possible.

During this project, participants developed a sensitivity map to identify sites that are highly significant to Weledeh Yellowknives Dene. (*See* Map 16 on the next page.) Significant sites include burials, places where ancestral evidence has been found, migrations trails, and fish spawning grounds. Separate maps of fish migration paths and fish spawning grounds were also developed. (*see* Maps 13a & b on pages 70, 71.) Sensitive sites are to be avoided by mining operations.

Animals

Recommendation #2-B-4
Before there is any more disturbance of Ek'ati Ndi (the island where Diavik plans to mine diamonds), all animals — including fox and ground squirrel — must be live-trapped and moved to a suitable habitat away from Diavik and BHP mine sites. If mining companies decide to use lands directly to the west of their sites (ie, where dust will be most dense), or decide to increase their activities (and increase the amount of dust blowing to the west) — every effort must be made to keep animals, birds, and fish out of that area.

Recommendation #2-B-5
There should be no vehicle movement or blasting or other dust- and noise-producing activities during bird and animal migrations.



Eka Ti
Traditional Knowledge Study, July/Aug. 1997

- Canoe routes & trails
- Roads
- Sensitivity areas
- Fall caribou migration routes
- Burial site
- Pit
- Significant site

Information provided by
Yellowknives Dene First Nation
TK Study Project
F. Sangris & Y.K. Dene Elders

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Prepared by
NWT Treaty 8 Tribal Corp.
Akaitcho\ekiti.wmf
Dec. 15, 1997

Recommendation #2-B-6
To protect animals from human activity and contaminants, mining companies must take great care to keep animals off their sites with fences. Fences must be built around mining sites, especially where animals are migrating. Fences must be very high (about four metres) so that animals do not get caught in the top of fences in winter when snow blows against them.

Recommendation #2-B-7
Diavik should limit its mining activities to the east island of Ek'ati Ndi and leave the west island (the one that points to Great Slave Lake) for animals. The island where mining operations are planned should be entirely fenced, leaving a wide corridor (at least 100 metres) around the shore so that wildlife can continue to use the island to rest while crossing the lake.

Elders know that, in summer and fall, caribou traditionally swim across to the islands, such as Ek'ati Ndi in Lac de Gras. Some caribou rest, especially on the large island, then swim to the south shore of the lake. Officials representing Diavik told project participants that they have observed caribou continuing to come onto Ek'ati Ndi, then wandering off the island the way they came. Weledeh Yellowknives Elders suggest that caribou turn back instead of crossing the island because of the unusual and unsettling activity on the island. Caribou travel the same routes, memorising the landscape. Construction and preparation of mine sites on Ek'ati Ndi have already altered the landscape as caribou remember it. Elders suggest that caribou are becoming confused, thinking they have gone the wrong way, and return to more familiar ground. A corridor around Ek'ati Ndi may help some caribou to continue using the island to cross the lake: it would be better, however, if caribou did not have to mix with mining operations at all.

Caribou

Recommendation #2-B-8
Mining companies must fund Weledeh Yellowknives land users experienced in caribou deflection to change the migration of caribou out of the entire operating area near Ek'ati. During the next three caribou migrations, experienced land users, directed by the Elders, can set up stone markers and stand by them to chase caribou away. After three migration seasons, caribou will have learned to avoid the markers (and, therefore, the mining operations). People will not have to man the markers after that time, as long as no one disturbs the markers.

Under this proposal, Weledeh Yellowknives land users would draw on their experience with traditional techniques for caribou deflection, as described in Section C (*see* page 46). They would build and stay beside stone markers along the "Misery"

esker from Paul Lake north of Lac de Gras to the Echo Bay camp south of Lac de Gras, and along mining roads where caribou have been observed.

Recommendation #2-B-9
Mining companies must avoid the narrows between Ek'ati (Lac de Gras) and Lac du Sauvage and the esker that passes through La Pointe de Misère and crosses Ek'ati because they are key caribou migration routes. If Weledeh Yellowknives land users successfully deflect caribou to this area, the deflection will have been useless if the Narrows are disturbed. [*See* related Recommendations #2-D-4 and -5, and -6 to -9.]

During this project, participants developed a map of caribou migrations as known to Weledeh Yellowknives land users. (*See* Map 14 on page 72.)

Recommendation #2-B-10
Mining companies ought to pay for Weledeh Yellowknives Dene to improve the Narrows between Ek'ati (Lac de Gras) and Lac du Sauvage, since increasing numbers of caribou will use the narrows to avoid the mining operations. The crossing is dangerous because gaps in the rocks can break caribou legs, especially those of very young calves. Some become trapped and die, particularly in springs (like the one in 1997), when caribou cows leave the calving grounds early with calves not yet hardened for travel. Land users could fill dangerous gaps in the rocks.

Recommendation #2-B-11
Weledeh Yellowknives Elders strongly recommend that caribou calving grounds become Protected Areas. They urge BHP, which has gold mining interests near Bathurst Inlet, to support the protection of the caribou calving grounds in the area. Halting gold mining operations – to stop noise and dust – during calving would benefit the caribou and other animals, such as birds in the nearby waterfowl sanctuary. Caribou cows, if they feel more comfortable, might stay in the calving grounds long enough for their calves to be properly ready for migration.

Recommendation #2-B-12
Diavik must leave room for migrating caribou on the north part of the island, where they are planning to build an airstrip.

Fish

Recommendation #2-B-13
Mining companies must protect fish in Ek'ati (Lac de Gras) as much as possible. There are some very old, large fish in this lake, which have never experienced disturbance on this scale. They could be damaged by boat motors as well as dyke construction and, potentially, from any spills resulting from trucks going through the winter road. Many fish also migrate to Ek'ati – particularly to spawn – from the Coppermine River and could suffer from construction activities, spills, and dust contamination.

[*See* Ek'ati fish migration patterns and spawning grounds, as identified by Weledeh Yellowknives project participants, on Maps 13a & b on pages 70, 71.]

Recommendation #2-B-14
People from the mines should not hunt or fish in the Ek'ati (Lac de Gras) area. Mining staff and contractors go to Ek'ati to work; if they want to hunt and fish, they can go to nearby lodges.

Recommendation #2-B-15
Weledeh Yellowknives Elders also warn against the catch-and-release of fish. It is not a good practice because fish can die from wounds inflicted by large hooks or from starvation when hook wounds in the mouth prevent them from feeding. Fish can also die from hypothermia when fish are handled by humans so much that the slime covering the fish is removed.

Recommendation #2-B-16
Government specialists should verify environmental information for reports and monitoring of mining effects, as they may be perceived as having less bias than contractors or staff working for the mining companies. Contractors working for mining companies in these areas must have at least ten years of field experience – most of it in northern environments, and field staff working for such contractors must have at least two years of experience collecting field data.

Protection of Aboriginal & Treaty Rights

Recommendation #2-B-17

Mining companies must compensate Weledeh Yellowknives Dene for disrupting their land rights and altering their way of life.

Recommendation #2-B-18

Mining companies that cause a large loss of animal, fish, and bird habitat must compensate the indigenous peoples, including Weledeh Yellowknives Dene, for loss of use of land resulting in destruction of harvesting areas on which the people continue to rely for food.

Recommendation #2-B-19

Indigenous peoples such as Weledeh Yellowknives Dene must continue to have access to mining leases for their traditional pursuits.

As the peoples indigenous to these lands, Weledeh Yellowknives Dene want to be continually and fully informed on any changes to mining projects, including the location of **any** minerals the companies plan to exploit. Participants in this Weledeh Yellowknives project want to see a formal agreement in place that the mining companies will work together with their people throughout mining projects (including reclamation and closure) to develop, implement, and monitor ways to protect the water, land, animals, the people's continued use of their lands, and the evidence of the people's ancestral use of the lands. The best possible process would be for knowledgeable land users to participate directly in the monitoring, so that the people can be assured about what is happening on their land. No participant in this project wants to see more damage to their lands than is strictly necessary for mining to be carried out.

2 – Water and Mining Development

> [*Translation*] From all the rivers and lakes up toward the north, all the water from there flows into Great Slave Lake, and I'm sure there's going to be an effect from that when the mine happens. We should do something about it before something destroys more of our lands. That's why we're here to talk about it. ... So, we should really stress how they're going to protect the environment from the tailings pond, the drainage from the mine, because it will affect the animals. Whatever goes into the land will affect the caribou.
>
> . . .
>
> Water is really important, we wouldn't be able to survive if we didn't have water. ... From the mine site, the water will be flowing into the Inuit land and this way, so it will have an effect on a lot of people.
>
> [Weledeh Yellowknives Elder Joseph Charlo, Ndilǫ: CARC 1995]

Before and during the federal assessment review of the BHP diamond project, Yellowknives Dene and Łutsel K'e Elders continually informed people that they were missing part of the Ek'ati watershed. Maps drawn by specialists for the mining company show water flowing only north along the Coppermine River (Ek'ati Deh, to the people). However, the Elders maintained that water from Ek'ati also flows south, dropping down into a series of small lakes and rapids just south of the lake, then flowing into larger lakes until it enters the East Arm of Great Slave Lake. This summer, participants in this project walked and flew along as much as possible of the high ground that separates the Ek'ati watershed from the one south of it. The resulting information was mapped on a small-scale map, for an accurate picture of the watershed boundary. From the areas where it was possible to walk, participants could not see any evidence of southward flow of water; however, they could not walk the entire boundary. While researchers could not verify current southward flow of water from Ek'ati, they could not discount the firm insistence of so many Elders that surface water did flow in that direction.

As described in Section C of this report, Elders demonstrated how much water levels in Ek'ati have dropped. Current water levels are far lower those known by Weledeh Yellowknives Elders and their forefathers. In their lifetimes, there may have been more evident flow of water south out of Ek'ati. While the limited observation from this summer detected no southward flow of surface water, it is possible that groundwater continues to flow southward, as surface waters once did. Groundwater flows requires careful monitoring:

Recommendation #2-C-1
Mining companies and government specialists must continue to verify where water flows from Ek'ati (Lac de Gras) to establish watershed boundaries in this area. Verification is to determine where water flows south, as Elders say it used to, as well as north. Monitoring of water flow and levels must be continual throughout and after mining operations.

Permafrost underlies all of the barrens at Ek'ati. The Dene refrigerator for storing food only works when it is not exposed or disturbed. Mining companies are planning to drain five lakes where kimberlite pipes are to become open-pit mines, and several smaller ones in order to dump waste rock into them. These changes to water are likely to alter groundwater patterns. Changes to groundwater, if they are not properly monitored may bring changes to the permafrost it moves around. Elders are very concerned about effects on groundwater and permafrost from the dynamite and heavy vehicles used in mining operations: there has been no activity of this sort or scale here. Weledeh Yellowknives land users know that permafrost can heave dramatically in winter, thrusting ridges high into the air, like the one at La Pointe de Misère. (*See* Photo 23.)

For the BHP mining complex, dykes holding back tailings in what used to be a lake have a core of ice. Elders are also worried that the unusual conditions the mining operations are bringing to this area may affect these dykes and they will not hold the tailings in place. Anything that is likely to reduce the quality of the clear, pure waters of the barrens is of concern to Weledeh Yellowknives Dene. One Elder is so pessimistic about Ek'ati's future, he is predicting that it will not be safe for the children of today to drink water from Ek'ati when they are adults.

Every Elder who expressed concerns about mining projects at Ek'ati emphasised how important water is: to the people, to the animals, to the fish, to the birds, and to the plants. For the people, water is important for transportation, drinking, fishing, and soaking hides as well as the myriad other uses of water. Dene have great respect for water, offering to pay the water – as they pay the land when they travel in the home of the animals – when they travel on it, or to be at peace with the water when they have lost a relative through drowning.

The water in Ek'ati is very clear: Weledeh Yellowknives have always been able to see straight to the rocky bottom of the lake. Water is filtered as it flows in the ground toward Ek'ati and this filtering makes the lake water clear: clear water is good clean drinking water. When Dene travel on or camp near water they make every effort not to damage it. When spearing or shooting caribou in water, hunters haul the animals to shore and butcher them away from water. Skinning and cleaning of any animals by Dene takes place away from water and no animal parts are thrown in water: this

would be extremely disrespectful to both the water and the animal that has given its life for the people to eat. The few animal parts that Dene do not use they place under rocks or bury them in the land, in part to ensure they do not damage the water.

Weledeh Yellowknives Elders say that "The water at Ek'ati is good. It tastes good; we do not have to add anything to make it taste better. It is almost like ice water." In the past, when the people camped at Ek'ati in winter, they had to chop ice from the lake and melt it for drinking water and cooking soup and stew. They would not use the top layer of snow on the lake, which is very fine, but dig to the bottom, where the snow is crystallized and like pure ice. In warmer months, when Dene are inland from water, they look for water that gathers under large boulders; this water is filtered as it flows through the land and has no insects in it. The people used to drink only water and teas brewed from local plants, so good water was vital.

Weledeh Yellowknives communities have had much experience with damage to water, in addition to their misfortunes with arsenic-laden meltwater. Returning to Weledeh-Cheh after trips on the land, Dene continue to be disappointed by the taste of the water around their former summer fish camps. There, the people can taste diesel fuel and chemicals in the water. When water tastes bad to the people, they know it is not good to drink. They know not to drink the water from the bay because of the sores they see on fish that live there, and because they know that tailings from the gold mines seep into the water.

Dene have their own ways to test water quality before they will trust water for drinking. When the people can see that edible plants along the shore have changed, the people stop using them because they know that changes in water quality have damaged the plants. Very polluted water smells unpleasant and the people will no longer use it, even for soaking hides. When the people can see meat in fish that used to be healthy is mushy and the fish have sores, they do not eat the fish. They know that the fish have eaten plants in the water that are contaminated or the water itself is polluted. Fish in the lake near La Pointe de Misère, which BHP wants to turn into a mine, died after bulk-sampling drilling was done there, and some exploration garbage was dumped into the lake. Fish did not spawn in this lake the next fall. Because they react soon to changes in water quality, fish are good indicators for pollutants.

Weledeh Yellowknives Dene know that the water quality of Ek'ati is good, that there are no contaminates in it now. Since Dene have been using the Ek'ati area, no one has become ill from any water there. Elders and land users doubt that the water will maintain its high quality once mining construction and operations proceed. Potential contaminants may come from increased heavy traffic on the winter road crossing the lake, dykes to be constructed of waste rock in the lake itself, acid drainage from waste rock piles, runoff from mining sites and airstrips, and overflow from tailings ponds,

sediment holding areas, and sewage and waste water overflow from mining camps. All sources of contamination were previously unknown in this area.

Perhaps the biggest threat to water quality at Ek'ati is dust. When project participants were at the Diavik camp on Ek'ati Ndi, they saw a dust cloud billowing above one of the BHP sites – from a distance of just over twenty kilometres away. With potentially nine open-pit mines operating at the same time and heavy vehicle traffic using gravel roads across the mining sites, there is a potential for a lot of dust to enter the atmosphere and settle on vegetation and the lakes and rivers of the surrounding area. Winds blow very strongly at Ek'ati: plants and water east of the mining projects are likely to receive a lot of dust over the next twenty-five years. Large accumulations of dust could have many accumulating effects on the entire environment of the lake and the lands surrounding it, including wildlife.

While fish may be the initial indicators of changes to water quality in Ek'ati, birds and wildlife that do not migrate are likely to be affected. Weledeh Yellowknives land users are aware of the short plants that grow in the barrens that are food for caribou and musk-ox. The main food of caribou migrating south from the calving grounds is a very abundant light greenish-yellow lichen that grows in soil. (*See* Photo 24.) The people can use this lichen as tinder for starting fires. Another lichen found clinging to the surface of rocks is wiry, black, and very dry; this lichen is eaten by caribou, which have been observed by the people selecting this lichen after eating other plants. The people themselves do not use this lichen. (*See* Photo 25.) Caribou also eat the fresh green centre shoots from tufts of grass, that are dry around the outside. (*See* Photo 26.) They browse on new leaves of shoreline shrubs, about a metre high, with thin oval green leaves. Dry branches from this shrub are used by the people as kindling because they are an excellent fire starter. (*See* Photo 27.) Antler lichen (*Masonhalea richardsonii*) is similar to the light greenish-yellow lichen but is not attached to soil or rocks: it rolls around on the surface of the land blown by wind; caribou eat this lichen only after rain has softened it. (*See* Photo 28.) Dwarf birch (*Betula glandulosa*) is eaten by caribou, especially if they cannot find other food. (*See* Photo 29.) The people chew the leaves slightly and put them on insect stings for relief.

If dust covers vegetation in and around Ek'ati, Elders fear that migrating fish will not only become sick, but they may attempt to avoid the worst areas; spawning grounds in Ek'ati may then be abandoned. A very abundant plant with red stems, short green rosettes at the base and dry, rust-coloured flower heads (in August) is eaten by birds (although not by the people); dust on this plant and the seeds of others may have a profound effect on migrating and nesting birds. (See Photo 30.) Dust on snow cover over the frozen surface of Ek'ati and other surface water in the area may result in earlier ice breakup and many as yet unforeseen impacts on fish, aquatic plants, and water quality.

If caribou find little palatable or worthwhile to eat or drink in the area, Elders are certain they will alter their migration route. Grizzly bears, wolves, foxes, and ravens depend on the caribou as much as people do for survival; they too are likely to be negatively affected by loss of vegetation from dust or other contamination from mining. The people still go to the barrens for medicine plants, particularly since they no longer trust many of the plants in Weledeh-Cheh. Elders wonder: "If all those plants are destroyed [at Ek'ati], we will have nothing to use for medicinal purposes. Even now we cannot take any [medicine plants] near Dettah; we have to go farther inland." Weledeh Yellowknives are concerned not only that these things will happen, but that no one is really sure what all the impacts and cumulative effects of dust from mining operations might be. Further, the people fear that neither mining companies nor government agencies will inform the people about what is happening on their lands. Therefore, they developed these recommendations that they hope will be implemented:

Recommendation #2-C-2
Mining companies must involve Weledeh Yellowknives Dene in the monitoring impacts from mining on water quality, water flow, water level, fish, aquatic plants, and wildlife relying on water – including monitoring for dust and contaminants from waste rock stockpiles.

Elders are very concerned about dust from mine pits and roads that will be carried westward by wind. Dust will settle in streams that flow into Ek'ati and these contaminants will flow into the larger lake. Rain will also wash dust into the lake. The nine open-pit mines planned to date will all produce huge amounts of dust. Dust from Diavik's planned mines (in the lake itself) and the BHP mine closest to Ek'ati (at La Pointe de Misère) is likely to have the greater impact on water and the plants, birds, fish, and animals that depend on it than pits farther inland from Ek'ati.

Recommendation #2-C-3
Mining companies' waste water must be well filtered, and the outflow of waste must be monitored constantly (24 h/d, 365 d/yr). Weledeh Yellowknives Elders are concerned that soap, sewage, and other toxins from mining camps will enter the water and harm plans and animals. Although mining companies are treating this waste, it can still seep into the lake. Elders want to know the effects of such seepage on wildlife, plants, and people that use the water.

Recommendation #2-C-4
Mining companies must take responsibility to secure their fuel storage from spills, explosions, and other disasters. Fuel storage must be far from shorelines and creeks to reduce seepage. Fuel tanks should be placed in retainers with cement bottoms and walls so that, if tanks leak, any leaks can be contained. Fuel storage should be located

at a safe distance from camp facilities to reduce impacts (and lives) from potential fires resulting from lightning strikes.

Recommendation #2-C-5
Every effort must be made to prevent damage from salt and acid drainage to spawning grounds and fish habitat. Because salt and acid drainage that may occur during drilling for mining operations can be devastating for fish and water plants, mining companies must be very open about informing indigenous peoples, including Weledeh Yellowknives Dene, about where they plan to drill so that the people can monitor impacts from drilling.

Recommendation #2-C-6
Mining companies must monitor for seepage of contaminants, including those from waste rock stockpiles, into groundwater.

Weledeh Yellowknives Dene are sceptical that mining companies and governments will be willing to carry out their recommendations or address their concerns. It is for this reason that the people make their strongest recommendation that, if mining proceeds, their people be funded to monitor the water, land, and animals for changes that may have negative effects. They feel that because of the depth of their feeling for their land and their land users experience, they are the most caring and the best equipped people to monitor the impacts from mining operations.

3 – Reducing Negative Effects from Mining Construction

> [*Translation*] When you think of this big mine, it's kind of scary that it's going to be there, what effect it will have on the animals. It seems like the government is not listening to the people at all. They always say they'll deal with it later, but they never do. We need to deal with it; that way I would have a little peace of mind. We see it here, in our community. We have never seen a penny here in our community. We should do something about it for the next company that wants to start a mine on our lands.
>
> [Weledeh Yellowknives Elder Joseph Charlo, Ndilǫ: CARC 1995]

Weledeh Yellowknives participants in this project have years of personal experience – on average, as much as fifty or sixty – and their memories of having learned, through often-repeated tellings, the experiences of their Elders. Drawing on their extensive body of traditional knowledge, the Elders and land users have described their occupation and use of their ancestral lands. They have also developed recommendations they hope will prove useful to mining companies. The last recommendations are related to mining construction in water and on land:

Recommendation #2-D-1
Mining companies planning major changes to the barrens environment – such as the draining of small lakes or the building of expansive dykes in large lakes – should be restricted to only one site initially. At this site, mining companies, government agencies, and indigenous peoples can find out what impacts actually occur and which mitigation attempts work best. No development on this scale has occurred in the barrens environment before now, and impacts cannot be predicted with certainty. It is possible that better methods of construction and monitoring can be developed before additional sites are attempted.

Recommendation #2-D-2
To have the least negative impact on fish and fish spawning grounds near Ek'ati Ndi, Diavik should start building dykes in Lac de Gras in late October or November, after fish have migrated to deep water. In spring, fish travel to and live in shallow areas along shores, bays, and islands in order to feed. In summer and fall, fish spawn in these shallow areas. (*See* Map 13b.) Diavik's plans to construct dykes will disturb these spawning grounds in the shallows. One Elder suggested that, if dyke construction begins very cautiously in July (before spawning starts), leaving channels near the shore, the fish would be able to leave the shallows through these channels in late fall. The remainder of the dykes could be then built in late October or November.

This alternate process might still cause problems for whitefish because lake sediment will be disturbed and will cover plants that whitefish feed on.

Recommendation #2-D-3
Diavik must protect the important fish spawning ground in the narrow inlet that almost separates the northern part of east Ek'ati Ndi from the rest of the island. One of Diavik's drawings (dated July 1997; *see* Appendix 1) shows this inlet being closed off at the eastern shoreline. Since dykes in the lake will cut fish off from other spawning grounds in shallows around the island, it is vital that the spawning area in this inlet be preserved. If Diavik puts an airstrip on the northern part of this island, it would be advisable to fence the inlet so that fish are not disturbed.

Eskers

Recommendation #2-D-4
Mining companies should leave **all** eskers in the barrens undisturbed. If companies believe they have to disturb an esker, they must consult with the indigenous people (as well as the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre) to do a comprehensive investigation of the esker, especially for burials and animal habitat, **before** the esker is disturbed or altered in any way.

Recommendation #2-D-5
Mining companies should use waste rock from pits or granite stockpiles (if they can be proven not to produce contaminants), instead of using material from eskers for construction of roads.

BHP's "Misery" Mine Site

Recommendation #2-D-6
BHP's "Misery" camp and mine operations must be constructed west of planned locations: instead, they should be located inland away from water and away from the "Misery" esker. Materials from the esker should not be used to build roads or other construction. Waste water and sewage from the camp should flow toward the large unnamed lake between La Pointe de Misère and Paul Lake, rather than into Lac de Gras. (This lake is surrounded by higher land and Elders feel that wastes can be contained there.) Camps should be built on sites with lots of boulders, to deter caribou. Waste rock piles must be located so that potential acid drainage does not enter Lac de Gras as runoff. (In many ways, BHP's plans for this area remind Elders of the Tundra/Salamita mine site on Mackay Lake, where contaminants from abandoned tailings ponds at the top of a slope are seeping into the lake.)
Reasons why development should not occur on and east of the "Misery" esker and the shore of Ek'ati (Lac de Gras) include:

a) There is at least one visible camp site and there are burials in this area.
b) The esker is important to animals making dens in the soft gravel.
c) The shallow, rocky shore is an important fish spawning habitat.
d) Caribou migration and plans for deflection require the esker to remain in place.
e Regardless of deflection, some caribou and other migrating animals will continue to try to use the shore associated with the esker.
f) Animals denning in the esker should not be disturbed by direct human contact.

Recommendation #2-D-7
Elders are concerned that the planned distances between camps and mining operations are too great. They say that, if these sites are not closer together, workers will face potentially fatal challenges walking between the sites during blizzards. Project participants recall a man working at the Tundra/Salamita mine on Mackay Lake about ten years ago; he had intended to walk through a storm to an electrical shed only one hundred feet away: he did not return and searchers never found his body. Lightning is also a hazard for anyone walking or working on the barrens.

Recommendation #2-D-8
The access road from the BHP mining lease to the winter road that crosses Ek'ati should be constructed to the west of the small lake that will become the open-pit mine — rather than, as planned, near the esker used by migrating caribou and over a clearly visible Weledeh Yellow-knives ancestral camp site. A small valley to the west of the mine site would be suitable.

Recommendation #2-D-9
Elders also feel strongly that BHP should not build roads from mining camp sites to water, especially to Ek'ati, for people from the mines to fish, bother animals, or collect ancestral evidence as souvenirs.

Winter road(s)

Recommendation #2-D-10
Mining companies and government should discuss with Weledeh Yellowknives Dene a more appropriate route for the winter road constructed every year to bring supplies to an increasing number of mine sites. The First Nation was not properly consulted about this route when permission was requested in the 1970s. This road uses a traditional trail of our people and, as a result, goes through some of the people's most important hunting areas. Participants in this project strongly recommend that the winter road from Tibbett Lake be moved to follow another route — particularly if there are plans to build a permanent, all-weather road.

Recommendation #2-D-11
Mining companies should use Weledeh Yellowknives land-users during winter road construction to identify currents and channels in lakes, so that ice over them does not become part of roads. Ice over currents and channels remains thin because of continual water action; thin ice results in trucks crashing into lakes with their loads of supplies, such as diesel fuel.

Recommendation #2-D-12
To reduce the possibility of more fuel spills into lakes crossed by winter roads to and on Ek'ati (Lac de Gras), mining companies must have and enforce contracts with trucking companies stating that transport trucks must stay off winter roads when the ice is under two feet thick.

Recommendation #2-D-13
Mining companies that depend on winter roads crossing Weledeh Yellowknives Dene territory must put up bonds against spills, contamination, and other damage to water, lands, wildlife, and culturally important sites, to be held in trust by winter road operators or government agencies.

Recommendation #2-D-14
Mining companies must find acceptable alternate ways to handle garbage that cannot be incinerated, such as styrofoam and many plastics, because burning them results in contaminants polluting the air. At present, all garbage from kitchens and camps is incinerated.

Recommendation #2-D-15
There are to be no public tours of mines and no construction of permanent towns in the barrens. Tours and towns would increase human activity in this area and, thereby, increase the negative impacts and cumulative effects on an environment that is extremely vulnerable and has never had to adjust from such pressures.

Recommendation #1

Readers of this report may have noticed that all recommendations developed by Weledeh Yellowknives are identified with the number "2". The number one recommendation emphatically and repeatedly expressed by all participants is that there be no mining at all in the barrens.

The people have already experienced the impacts from mining – in Weledeh-Cheh and in the barrens – and they feel enough damage has been done to their lands. When mining first started around Weledeh-Cheh, no one informed the people about it – what mining was, what it was for, what the consequences might be. When the Discovery gold mine opened beside fishing and hunting areas used by Weledeh Yellowknives Dene, the company neither hired the people nor warned them of potential impacts from mining activities. The people continued using water and fish in their lands after they had become contaminated: even government agencies agree that mercury and other chemicals are seeping into the lake from the abandoned Discovery tailings pond. Weledeh Yellowknives Dene believe they have paid far too high a price for no benefit. They have never been offered compensation for their loss of use of land, water, fish, plants and berries, or wood. No one has offered to compensate the people for the extra expense they incur to travel farther to hunt the moose and caribou that used to be in Weledeh-Cheh. No one has compensated them for loss of livelihood or their way of life.

Weledeh Yellowknives participants in this project feel very strongly that there should be no mining for diamonds, which have no value or use to the people. In the past, fur traders and gold mining companies did not share their profits with the people. Every participant observed that the trading and mining companies got rich because of what they took from the people's land. Weledeh Yellowknives Dene, who believe in sharing for true coexistence, do not want this kind of exploitation to continue with mining companies. Even if every First Nation member were to be employed at mines in Ek'ati, that could never compensate the people for the permanent loss of the land of their ancestor's and whatever other changes mining operations bring to Ek'ati. There is no mitigation for such impacts.

For this project, Elders and land users made the following observations:

[*Translation*] The issues that we are discussing are not important to us Elders because we will not be here when the land is destroyed. It is important for us to speak about these things for the future generations. If children eat berries near places where mining is going on, those children will get sick and maybe die. Mining will not only affect berries, but all the animals that eat the berries, including caribou. This area here [ie, at Ek'ati] is on the caribou migration trails. All the

vegetation around here is important for caribou feeding on it. Caribou will eat the plants that are contaminated from the pollution that falls on the land. So the caribou will never be the same in the future as our ancestors knew them and used them. You will never hear us say that the land is not important. It is very important and because of the caribou and the land, the people are able to live off this land and survive.

[*Translation*] If the mining companies are not going to help our people, why would I want to support them? They have been extracting a lot from our land for a long time now, and now I want them to help the people in any way they can. But, sometimes it seems pointless to ask them. Everything is going to be destroyed. There are a lot of mines all over this land that have already damaged the land. All the good land has been damaged. They will damage the land and the plants as long as they mine here. Every-thing that you can see here [ie, at Ek'ati] will be destroyed by the mining activities. But, it's useless for us to refuse them because they will go ahead and develop the mines.

[*Translation*] Mining companies that are here for diamonds now, they will look all around this area for other minerals. In fifteen to twenty years from now, the diamond mines will be getting ready to close and other kinds of mines, maybe for gold or lead, will be getting going here. At that time, there will not even be places for grass and plants to grow. Towns will be developing here and the water will be contaminated for sure. We cannot just tell them [ie, mining companies] to be cautious with the water. They have to realise that their mining will affect everything, from the land and water to the wildlife. I know because I have worked at mines and I have seen what mines do to the land and water. The mine where I worked had a tailings pond that overflowed and all the birds, rabbits, and small animals around that place died. All mines are like that. I know the mines here will damage everything. If it was our decision, we would decide not to develop any mines here.

Weledeh Yellowknives participants in this project are certain that, even if they object, the federal government will give approval for mining to go ahead anyway. One Elder said that the mining companies seem to recognise as the authority only people who give them approvals and licences. Therefore, Weledeh Yellowknives participants in this project have made recommendations in four major areas on ways to reduce impacts from mining in the barrens, even though they are not confident that their suggestions will be carried out by the mining companies. Altogether, these recommendations are secondary to Weledeh Yellowknives project participants' overwhelming rejection of mining in the barrens.

Weledeh Yellowknives Dene
a traditional knowledge study of Ekàti

E – Appendices

1 - Maps (from Mining Companies) and Photographs with Captions [in separate folder]

2 - Yellowknives Dene First Nation Traditional Knowledge Guidelines

3 - Land & Environment Response to Initial Fedirchuk Report (for Kennecott)

4 - Memoranda of Understanding with Mining Companies

5 - Letters from Mining Companies Regarding Traditional Knowledge

6 - Principles of Ethical Conduct Pertaining to Aboriginal Peoples

7 - Weledeh Yellowknives Stories about Animals

8 - References

Weledeh Yellowknives Dene:
a traditional knowledge study of Ek'ati

Appendix 2
Yellowknives Dene First Nation
Traditional Knowledge Guidelines

POLICY GUIDELINES FOR

Yellowknives Dene Traditional Knowledge

SAVING
OUR COMMUNITY
CULTURAL RESOURCES

February 1995

POLICY GUIDELINES FOR
Yellowknives Dene Traditional Knowledge

REASONING

WHEREAS, Yellowknives Dene traditional knowledge is a community cultural resource that our First Nation wishes to protect, and

WHEREAS, Yellowknives Dene Elders and experienced land users, who hold our traditional knowledge, want our community to benefit from their knowledge, and

WHEREAS, our First Nation needs to develop the ability to document, save, and make community use of the knowledge of our Elders and experienced land users — with their consent, and

WHEREAS, our First Nation is receiving increasing numbers of requests from outside our community for our "traditional environmental knowledge", when the nature of the information requested is often unclear, and

WHEREAS, our First Nation needs to clarify the actual nature of information being requested from outside our community and to develop ways of fulfilling them, and

WHEREAS, in the interests of conserving our resources, our First Nation needs to determine strategies whereby we can accomplish internal goals and fulfil appropriately defined external requests — while protecting the intellectual property rights of our community cultural resources —

THEREFORE, the Yellowknives Dene First Nation needs policy guidelines for consistent ways to

- care for the traditional knowledge held by Yellowknives Dene Elders and experienced land users, and the materials in/on which it is documented

- meet clarified and carefully defined external requests for Yellowknives Dene traditional knowledge, while protecting our intellectual property rights
- ensure beneficial use of our community cultural resources for our First Nation, with the consent of our people holding our traditional knowledge

POLICY GUIDELINES FOR
Yellowknives Dene Traditional Knowledge (YDTK)

Regarding YDTK Outside our Community

—> **Whenever possible, Yellowknives Dene First Nation members, leadership, and staff can educate and inform people about the nature of our traditional knowl-edge and why we think of it as a community cultural resource.**

Explanation: Traditional knowledge holds our identity as a people: the history, spirituality, values, principles, and practices we can live by as Yellowknives Dene. With traditional knowledge, our Elders can teach our young people our languages — the words as well as the ideas behind the words as they evolved on the land. With traditional knowledge, our Elders can help to develop Dene words for modern terms and ideas. With traditional knowledge, our Elders can teach younger people how to participate in our land-based economy, teaching them bush skills so they can survive on the land and guiding their involvement in present land-based activities without selling our culture negatively. With traditional knowledge, our Elders can show younger people how to visit the land and to observe and remember changing natural patterns. The more recent knowledge of our Elders includes their recommendations for ways to share our lands and resources according to our values — and as reflected in the Treaty relationship — so that we can coexist with people from other cultures.

The traditional knowledge of Indigenous Peoples is not well understood by literate, highly individual-centred, and competitive cultures. Our cultural heritage has much to offer to people from other cultures, and whenever possible, we can express our pleasure in being a Yellowknives Dene while we educate and inform people from outside our First Nation about our community cultural heritage. Our educating and informing can include our reasons for wanting to save and protect Yellowknives Dene traditional knowledge.

—> **Yellowknives Dene First Nation leadership can lobby other governments to support the protection of our community cultural heritage by implementing and improving their policies that affect our traditional knowledge.**

Explanation: Government policies (ie, those related to land use, languages and education, and economic development) may affect Yellowknives Dene cultural heritage. Conditions for funding programs may exclude our Elders as advisors or trainers. Scientists may study our traditional lands without our consent and without consulting our Elders, despite their government's traditional knowledge policy that they must. We can lobby for better policy accountability.

—> Whenever possible, Yellowknives Dene First Nation members, leadership, and staff can seek and locate materials within and outside our membership that contribute to our community cultural resources, and alert appropriate staff about their status and condition.

Explanation: In the past, our Elders were very generous about sharing their knowledge. During the past 40 or so years, many people have interviewed or recorded stories of our Elders: university professors, journalists, anthropologists, community development fieldworkers, and specialists working for government. Our Elders say that sometimes their knowledge has been used only for the benefit of a person or a government department outside our community. We know that materials contributing to our community's collective traditional knowledge are located in many places. When we visit museums, universities, government departments, libraries, and so on, we can ask if they have any Yellowknives Dene materials. If so, we can try to find out two things: what condition the materials are in, and what regulations or policies the institution has about the materials. We can report this information to the appropriate staff in our community, for further recommended action.

—> Yellowknives Dene First Nation leadership and staff can find ways to have materials located outside our community either transferred to us or duplicated.

Explanation: When we locate Yellowknives Dene cultural materials outside our community that are in good condition, we can ask if the holder of the materials is willing to transfer them to us. If so, we can discuss such issues as suitable places to store or display the materials, and carry out strategies for the transfer. When we locate cultural materials, such as audio tapes, outside our community that are in poor condition, we can discuss with the holder of the materials some ways to copy or transcribe the materials so that the knowledge in the materials can be transferred to our community, even if the original materials are not worth transferring. We can decide whether the originals ought to be destroyed once copies are made.

—> **Yellowknives Dene First Nation leadership and staff can negotiate with external holders of our traditional knowledge materials, particularly tapes or transcripts of stories by our Elders, to restrict access to them until our consent is obtained.**

Explanation: When external holders of Yellowknives Dene cultural materials insist on retaining copies or originals, we can negotiate for restricted access to the materials, perhaps with the condition that the owner of the intellectual property rights in the traditional knowledge give informed consent for access to the materials.

—> **When presented with external requests for our traditional knowledge, Yellow-knives Dene First Nation must clarify the actual nature of information being requested, then seek our leadership's advice about fulfilling the request.**

Explanation: Often, what external governments or companies asking for our traditional knowledge actually want is identification of areas within Yellowknives Dene traditional territory that are highly sensitive. That is, when land uses are proposed by anyone other than Yellowknives Dene members, governments and/or companies want to be able to predict where potential conflicts may arise. They may not really want detailed oral history or land-use records, because those materials require interpretation by our specialists. What may be more helpful to governments and companies are materials that indicate land areas of sensitivity — that is, areas of significance to the Yellowknives Dene, however we define it. Therefore, as well as educating and informing people about our traditional knowledge, our Elders Society and our staff can discuss with people or companies making requests what information they actually need or are expecting to get — to reach agreement about the actual nature of information being requested.

—> **Through a registered non-profit society, our Elders can arrange research contracts and other projects through which appropriately clarified and approved external requests for information can be met.**

Explanation: A registered non-profit Elders Society can discuss and clarify the true nature of external requests for Yellowknives Dene traditional knowledge, which can be submitted to our leadership for approval. Once approved, the Elders Society can we can make arrangements (such as a research contract or sub-contract), so that they can provide the information services needed to fulfil the external request, in co-operation with one or more of our First Nation programs. The proceeds from

such contractual arrangements can support community cultural projects in which our young people learn our ways from our Elders.

—> **To protect Yellowknives Dene intellectual property rights, *no primary detail or evidence drawn from our traditional knowledge* can be interpreted or presented by or to external information users. Secondary information can be provided to external information users with our consent and approval, for unedited use of materials prepared by Yellowknives Dene, with full acknowledgement.**

Explanation: Yellowknives Dene Elders and experienced land users feel strongly that their traditional knowledge should not directly benefit people outside our First Nation community. We face challenges, especially limited resources, for documenting our traditional knowledge for our community's benefit. We need strategies to meet internal and external demands, while protecting the detailed primary information that comes directly from our Elders and land users.

POLICY GUIDELINES FOR
Yellowknives Dene Traditional Knowledge (YDTK)

Regarding YDTK Community Issues

—> **A Yellowknives Dene First Nation Elders Society can explore strategies for documenting, saving, and making our traditional knowledge accessible to our community for beneficial use, with the consent of our Elders and experienced land users who have parts of our traditional knowledge.**

Explanation: Yellowknives Dene Elders and experienced land users say that they are willing to have their knowledge recorded, for instance, on tape and on maps, as long as recorded materials are used within and for the benefit of our First Nation community. Our Elders have said repeatedly that they are not willing to give their knowledge directly to outsiders, especially when they suspect that the use of their knowledge may not benefit our community. Some Elders prefer that their voices not be aired publicly after they pass away; such preferences can be stated on signed "informed consent" documents that can be kept with the recorded materials.

—> **A Yellowknives Dene Elders Society can develop guidelines for the beneficial use of our traditional knowledge by our First Nation community, including its use for and by our First Nation government.**

Explanation: Our First Nation community — like any other human community — has potentially conflicting interests. We want to protect intellectual property rights of individual Yellowknives Dene members with traditional knowledge (either their own or inherited materials), but still provide access to our collective knowledge as a community cultural heritage resource. Our Elders can help us design some flexible guidelines for ways in which our community can use and benefit from their knowledge, ways to reassure holders of our traditional knowledge that it will not be misused during or after their lifetime, and ways to encourage individual members to contribute their knowledge. Finding ways to incorporate our traditional knowledge within our First Nation government can provide models for other parts of our community.

—> **The Yellowknives Dene Elders Society and Land & Environment Program can develop traditional and current characteristics and**

criteria to define land areas considered to be sensitive or of significance to our First Nation. ***To protect our intellectual property rights, any primary evidence or detail must remain within our First Nation community.***

Explanation: As noted, the nature of information required by government or industry requesting our traditional knowledge may actually be quite different. To accomplish our community goals of documenting our Elders' and land users' knowledge and to try to meet more accurately identified

external information needs, our Elders Society and Land & Environment Program can begin defining what we mean by land that is "sensitive" and "significant" to us.

For instance, characteristics for our own meaning for land that is sensitive for the Yellowknives Dene might include: the presence of burial sites, former gathering places, birthing grounds, hunting areas, and so on. Then we can develop criteria for Yellowknives Dene significance that we might attach to each of these characteristics. For instance, for the "sensitivity characteristic" of burial sites, we might have "significance criteria" for: a single isolated grave, the burial site of a highly respected Elder, a mass grave site, multiple sites within a defined land area, and so on.

—> **Applying these characteristics and criteria, the Yellowknives Dene Elders Society and Land & Environment Program can produce maps (of primary information) to show areas within our traditional lands according to their degree of sensitivity and significance to our First Nation. And, for clarified and approved requests, the Yellowknives Dene Elders Society and Land & Environment Program may produce composite (secondary information) maps or other materials for specific land areas.**

Explanation: When the Elders and experienced land users have developed Yellowknives Dene "sensitivity characteristics" and "significance criteria" for each characteristic, they can begin plotting each characteristic on a map, according to the degrees of significance attached to each criterion. *Each sensitivity map must be considered to be primary evidence*, because it will be a direct record of our Elders' and experienced land users' knowledge; as such, *Yellowknives Dene sensitivity maps cannot be for external presentation or public circulation.*

On request, we can consider preparing composite maps, with a brief interpretive explanation for presentation, of a specific land area of interest to the government or company making the request. Only secondary information maps can be presented

to an external user, *once each agrees to obtain our consent and approval, to use our prepared interpretation and presentation unedited and with full accreditation or acknowledgement, and, prior to release, to pay in full all agreed recompense according to contractual arrangements.*

Appendix 3

Yellowknives Dene First Nation
Land & Environment Committee Response to

Draft Final Report Entitled
"Heritage Resources Impact Assessment, Kennecott Southwest Diavik Property"
by Fedirchuk McCullough & Associates Ltd.
October 1995

Note: Only two changes were made to this report for inclusion in this Appendix, solely to reduce the number of pages. The title page and contents have been omitted, and the line spacing has been decreased to single.

Background

Since time immemorial, T'satsaot'ine ("metal people") have lived on our lands between what is now called Great Slave Lake and the Arctic river where our people gathered the copper metal for which we are named. A young European explorer looking for that copper in the mid–1700s called our people Copperknives or Yellowknives. Today, European peoples still come to our lands exploring for metal and mineral resources from which they want to profit. Today, Aber Resources and Kennecott Canada have come to Yellowknives Dene as the people indigenous to the lands where the company hopes to mine diamonds from Lac de Gras.

Yellowknives Dene today have the protection of the Canadian government as our legal trustee. The British Crown first imposed this trust-like obligation on its colonial administration in 1763. The fiduciary obligation for Canada's government to protect the lands of Indigenous Peoples was extended to the Dene when the British Crown transferred lands held under the Hudson Bay Company charter and sold to Canada in 1868. When mineral exploration probed the potential resources below Dene lands, the British Crown made a Treaty with our people through a Canadian government official.

Yellowknives Dene from around Great Slave Lake signed Treaty 8 in 1900. According to the written version of this Treaty (which our people did not see until the 1960s), along with the recognition of certain rights for both parties, Dene land was to be turned over to Canada. Since 1900, there has been no legal agreement about which Dene lands now belong to Canada as a result of our people signing Treaty 8. Today, Yellowknives Dene who made Treaty in 1900 are members of Yellowknives Dene, Lutsel K'e Dene, and Denínu Kué First Nations.

Because our people and lands are protected by Canada's fiduciary obligations, federal officials must consult our people about uses other people want to make of our lands. Therefore, when companies like Aber and Kennecott want to explore for minerals, they must apply for a permit to do so. Applications for exploration and other land-use permits are sent to our First Nations for review by our people. Similarly, any non-Dene researchers wanting to study our lands must apply for a government permit and this too must be sent for our people's review. A mining company that wants to develop a mine on our lands must inform the federal government, which starts a process for assessing potential impacts on our lands (ie, "the environment"), and on our people. Our First Nations participate in such assessment processes alongside government people.

Kennecott Canada has applied for and received exploration land-use permits to conduct bulk sampling of three diamond-bearing kimberlite pipes in Lac de Gras on a claim block the company calls the "Southwest Diavik Property". Kennecott, with its partner Aber Resources, wants to develop a mine to take diamonds from these three pipes, which are located just offshore from a small island in Lac de Gras. This location is part of traditional travel routes used by generations of our people following the animals on which we rely between Great Slave Lake and Contwoyto Lake. These lands have spiritual, cultural, and social significance for our people. Many of our ancestors are buried in this area.

Aber–Kennecott preparations for developing a diamond mine here includes getting ready for the federal assessment process. The mining company has contracted Acers International to organize scientific studies of the mineral claim block. One of these studies is an archæological assessment of the area being conducted by Dr Gloria Fedirchuk, of Fedirchuk McCullough & Associates Ltd. In the spring of 1995, Acers International staff met with the Yellowknives Dene Land & Environment Committee to introduce the scientific studies, to encourage our people to approve their permit applications, and to urge us to participate in their studies. It was explained that "participation" meant contributing local or Traditional Knowledge to the scientific studies.

At that time, our First Nation's Land & Environment Program Co-ordinator explained our policy not to contribute our people's knowledge to studies if our knowledge is to be interpreted by scientists. He provided a copy of our First Nation's Traditional Knowledge policy guidelines. And he informed the visiting scientists that our people prefer to conduct our own, separate studies to document those parts of our knowledge that are relevant to scientists' studies. Our people's Traditional Knowledge can then be interpreted through our people's worldview, rather than that of the scientists, to prepare our report of our findings. Our people believe that the appropriate time to compare what scientists find with what our people know is after both separate studies have been completed and their findings reported. Representatives from Kennecott Canada have agreed to fund a separate Traditional Knowledge study, which has yet to begin.

Soon after, Aber and Kennecott executives gave a presentation to Yellowknives Dene First Nation Council to explain their mineral exploration program and their hopes for a mine. Since then, there have been many meetings. Archæologist Dr Gloria Fedirchuk met with our Land & Environment Committee to hear our people's concerns about her projected work on our lands, as described in Kennecott's land-use application and in Dr Fedirchuk's field work permit application. In particular, Yellowknives Dene Elders objected to Dr Fedirchuk repeating anthropologists' reports claiming that our people no longer exist. It was also made clear that: (1) no Elders would accompany field archæologists, (2) no contribution of Yellowknives Dene Traditional Knowledge would be made to the scientific study, and (3) the spiritual, cultural, and social significance of the lands to our people is to be reported by our people.

Kennecott Canada personnel agreed to restrictions our people placed on the archæological permit, and asked if our Land & Environment Committee would respond to the report produced by the project archæologist. Our Program Co-ordinator pointed out that we have little time for doing such assessments and the few financial resources we receive are for other purposes. As a result, Kennecott Canada provided funds for this response to be done. However, time constraints — especially with our participation required in the federal assessment process for a diamond mine proposed by a different company — meant that we needed several months to complete our assessment and respond. We are pleased to present Aber Resources and Kennecott Canada with this report of Yellowknives Dene First Nation's response to the draft final report "Heritage Resources Impact Assessment Kennecott, Southwest Diavik Property" by Fedirchuk McCullough & Associates Ltd. (October 1995).

Materials provided for assessment and response

Visual Materials At the request of Yellowknives Dene First Nation, Dr Fedirchuk sent our Land & Environment Program a copy of photographs she took during her field work in late summer 1995. These photographs, received on October 20, 1995, were mounted on 8½ x 11 pages, which were lightly spiral-bound. Each colour shot is identified by a photograph number and a brief description. There was no map with these photographs to identify each location. After a quick survey of the photos, our Land & Environment Program Co-ordinator determined that they were not sufficient for our Elders to identify individual sites. He also feared the photo contents might be too small for some of our Elders to see. He called Richard Weishaupt at Kennecott Canada to request a copy of the slides from which the photos were made. Slides of some of the photos arrived at two months after the draft final report from the archæologist.

Written Materials The Draft Final Report, entitled "Heritage Resources Impact Assessment Kennecott, Southwest Diavik Property" by Fedirchuk McCullough & Associates Ltd. (dated October 1995) was received by our First Nation on November 01. A map called Figure 6 in the draft report identifies all the sites encountered during summer 1995 field work. These sites are labelled using a standard system adopted by professional archæologists. The slides sent to us by DEC 19 were also labelled using this system. Photos in the draft final report are numbered consecutively by plate number — which is mostly not the same number each had when sent to us in October (ie, photographic plate 45 sent in October is plate 37 in the draft final report).

The written draft report organizes the sites according to their type, as professional archæologists might identify them, rather than the chronological order in which they were encountered — which was the order of the slides and the photos sent in October. It took some time to decide which way to present the materials to our Elders. The report also provides a description of the study approach and method taken, some assumptions of the study, and recommendations for the mining company with regard to the artefacts encountered during field work.

Method for Preparing Yellowknives Dene Response

Given all the different numbering systems for the materials provided, one of the first steps taken was to correlate the visual materials: that is, photographic plates received 95 OCT 20 with plates in the draft final report, with the slides, with the written descriptions, and with the map.

Much of the work for this assessment and response was done by Yellowknives Dene First Nation Land & Environment Program Co-ordinator with assistance from a community development consultant. The consultant, a non-voting member of the Land & Environment Committee, is a social scientist trained in qualitative and quantitative research methodology who specialises in First Nations. In 1993, the consultant conducted two studies for the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples with Yellowknives Dene First Nation and the Dene Nation. Since 1993, the consultant has undertaken service contracts with Yellowknives Dene First Nation, Deton'cho Corporation, and the NWT Treaty #8 Tribal Council and Corporation. As such, the consultant is in a unique position to assist the Land & Environment Program with the assessment of a technical research report and, under the First Nation's direction, prepare this report.

The consultant read the draft final report and made notes of its contents, of points to raise with the Land & Environment Committee, of inaccuracies known to the consultant, and of analytical observations. The consultant discussed with the Land & Environment Program Co-ordinator the preliminary assessment and suitable ways to present the report to the Committee.

It was decided to use the map called Figure 6 as the main guide, and to put the slides in the following order: sites to the north and west of the project site (from farthest to nearest), sites along the esker to the east of the project site (ordered by the site number), and sites closest to the project site (by site number). The slides were arranged for this order and placed in a projector carousel. Each photographic plate for which there was no slide was marked according to the site number used on map Figure 6.

Map Figure 6 was photocopied for the Committee and the site numbers highlighted. The consultant copied the summary of findings (Table 1) and made notes on one copy of map Figure 6 for use during the slide presentation. We then waited for a time to hold a Committee meeting solely on this report: the months of January and February were particularly busy for the Land & Environment Program, the Elders Advisory Council, and the consultant, as all were involved in preparations for and participation in the hearings of the federal environmental assessment panel reviewing the BHP diamond mines proposed for the Lac de Gras mineral claim block immediately to the north of the Kennecott claim block that is the subject of the draft final archæological report being assessed here.

With the hearings done, the Committee met to assess this report (on 96 MAR 07). The approaches taken for the presentation included: the audio taping of the entire meeting, information presented in English by the consultant, translation of each statement by the consultant into the Yellowknives Dene language by the Land & Environment Program Co-ordinator.

<> an introduction to the land area, the mineral claim block, the company, the archæologist, and the land-use process of which this report is only one small part

<> an introduction to the draft written report, the photographic plates, and map Figure 6, including an introduction (on the map) to the order in which the slides would be shown

<> an introduction to the sites (in relation to the Committee's visit to the project site in December) and an explanation of the site numbers on map Figure 6

<> the presentation of each slide and the field archæologist's findings at that site, where necessary providing explanations of technical terms, what the field archæologist and Dogrib Elder thought they had found, and the recommendations for each site — translated comments by Committee members throughout presentation were noted by consultant

<> a showing, where necessary, of the additional photographic plates; also at intervals, light was provided so the Committee could check the map of sites with the slide being shown

<> after the slide presentation, Elders on Committee made general comments and answered some additional questions posed by the consultant:
- Does Committee think any sites might have been missed by the field archæologist?
- Does Committee want archæologist to look for other sites?
- What does Committee want Kennecott Canada to do about the burial sites?
- Does Committee want artefacts shown in the slides and photos to be collected?
- Did Committee find the review of this draft report a useful thing to do?

This report was drafted by the consultant, submitted to the Land & Environment Program Co-ordinator and Chiefs, revised as directed, and submitted to the First Nation Council for approval.

Yellowknives Dene Response: A Summary

Yellowknives Dene First Nation has assessed the stated goal, objectives, and scope of the proposed work as well as the site-by-site findings presented in the draft final report. Our people remarked that background information in the draft final report is still inaccurate. Our people wondered why the study goal and objectives were so restricted, when the federal assessment review of the BHP–The Blackwater Group required a far broader consideration of the ancestral and current places used by Indigenous Peoples and their significance.

While present-day Yellowknives Dene and our ancestors have used the project lands extensively, other Indigenous Peoples — Inuit, Dogrib Dene, and Métis relatives of Yellowknives and Dogrib Dene — have shared the lands' resources. It is the way of Indigenous Peoples not to damage the lands we use and, as a result, there is little physical evidence on and in the ground of our ancestors' use of our lands. This explains why we have been of comparatively little interest to archæologists. Further, this study presents site-by-site findings and evaluation. This kind of presentation allows for evaluation of such findings as burials, but misses the bigger picture, the broader significance of our lands to our people. An assessment of the full significance of lands to which we are indigenous remains to be done.

The draft final report states often that impacts cannot be forecast because project plans have not been developed to a point where potential use of the lands surrounding the kimberlite pipes can be known. Our people felt that it is premature to assess impacts on ancestral places when those impacts cannot be forecast precisely.

Of the site-by-site descriptions, two are badly inaccurate (LdNt14 and LcNs25). Both stone markers are burial cairns, LdNt14 being that of a child with a ceremonial fireplace nearby. Yellowknives Dene Elders confirmed that site LcNs18 is a burial site; it is in fact a mass grave. Our Elders disagree that there may be more finds underground at places on eskers where the field archæologist recommends excavation. Our Land & Environment Committee, Elders Advisory Council, and elected leaders developed our First Nation's recommendations in response to those in the draft final report. Our recommendations are presented at the end of this report.

Yellowknives Dene Detailed Observations

The draft final report "Heritage Resources Impact Assessment, Kennecott Southwest Diavik Property" provides an outline of the goal, objectives, and scope of the archæological study (pp 1–4). As these provide the basis for the approach taken and the assumptions underlying both the approach and the report organization, this assessment begins with some observations on them.

> The goal for the archæological study is stated as: "To provide an archæological and historical site inventory associated with potential facility locations and assess these sites relative to impact from project development and operation" (p 1).

Observations As noted earlier, this study is one of many that will contribute to an assessment of the potential impacts from the diamond mine Aber Resources and Kennecott Canada propose. The stated goal restricts this study to an assessment of lands "associated with potential facility locations". Yellowknives Dene Elders, other Committee members, and elected leaders wondered why the study had been restricted in these ways. They pointed out that the federal assessment review of the BHP proposed diamond mines required that company to assess the social and cultural significance of the project lands to our people. As Indigenous Peoples, the lands our people have always used are of great significance and the loss of any of them — temporary or permanent — is of great interest to us. *In our assessment of this draft final report, our people wondered if another study would be done with a broader goal.*

Further, the impact assessment is based on potential project development and operation, yet the draft final report author states repeatedly that plans for project development are not sufficiently known for the assessment to be complete. *In our assessment of this draft final report, our people wondered why the report had been written before the impacts could be assessed.* Perhaps the final report should be delayed until project plans are developed to a point where impacts to the surrounding lands can be assessed more precisely.

> The objectives for the study are necessarily limited to the restrictions of the stated goal. The four objectives are: (1) to do an inventory of "historical resource sites within the proposed development zones", (2) "to evaluate the significance of individual sites identified", (3) "to forecast the nature and magnitude" of impacts specific to each identified site, and (4) to design a program for reducing negative impacts to identified sites before construction.

Observations Our people wondered what "historical resource sites" are meant to be. The definition provided for "heritage resources" includes "precontact, historic, and palæontological sites" (p 15), and definitions are provided for each type of Dene ancestral place. The draft final report author refers many times to "prehistoric" artefacts and occupants of sites. Since the entire report is based on this inventory of "historical resource sites", we would like to have a better idea of

what the author means. Also, there is no map of the "proposed development zones". *If development plans were not fully known to the archæologists, we wondered how the field locations were determined.*

The "significance" of each site identified in last summer's field work is said to be assessed for both "scientific and ethnic" criteria (Executive Summary, p iii). However, "ethnic" significance seems to be based solely on the observations of the one Dogrib Dene Elder and his interpreter. The author does say that additional information is to be provided by Dogrib and Yellowknives Dene Traditional Knowledge studies. *Our people felt that the information provided by only one Dene Elder is not enough for assessing cultural significance, and the scientist should not mislead readers into thinking that the draft final report is a comprehensive assessment.* Also, the significance to the Dene of a single site, such as a burial, might be deep, but *there needs to be an overall assessment of the significance to the Dene of the entire area.* When scientists look at specific sites without assessing the bigger picture, they can miss much of the real significance of the land to Indigenous Peoples.

Because of the many times the author had to say that the mining project plans are not yet developed enough to assess impacts on the surrounding lands, our people felt that the "forecast" of impacts is incomplete. *If this objective is vital to the effectiveness of the final report, then perhaps it should be delayed until a proper forecast of impacts can be done.*

The final objective of the study was to design a mitigation program (that is, a plan to reduce negative impacts on Dene ancestral places) *before construction.* Yellowknives Dene Land & Environment Committee members visited the project site in December to decide whether a proposed site for a new camp would have negative environmental effects. This camp has been constructed, although the archæological mitigation program has not been completed or approved. According to the consulting archæologists, Dene ancestral places are located near this camp, which means that the potential for disturbance is fairly high. *Our people wondered if Aber and Kennecott have policies in place now to protect Dene ancestral places from actions by employees and contractors at the project site. If not, we question how serious the exploration companies are in protecting Dene ancestral places identified in the draft final report.*

> The scope of the work to be done for this study is necessarily limited to the restrictions of the stated goal and objectives. The scope of work was to include: (1) a review of existing archæological records, (2) a ground survey in the field, (3) individual site evaluation for nature, quantity, and quality of observed remains, as well as for "the potential of the site to contribute to public enjoyment and education", and (4) site assessment to forecast impacts and recommend site-specific mitigation according to the "assigned value of the site".

Observations The comments made earlier about significance and forecasting of impacts apply to the scope of the work. The review of existing archæological records indicated that all but two existing studies were conducted by the contract archæologist for BHP–The Blackwater Group on the mineral claim block to the north of Aber–Kennecott's. Ironically, the author of the draft final report finds that the work done for BHP–The Blackwater Group is not comprehensive: in the author's view, the surveys by Bussey were limited in scope and a wide variety of interior land form types were not inspected. Nonetheless, the results of this study clearly indicate that esker features are of very high archæological potential. Although the [Bussey] study did not investigate much of the shoreline of large lakes, the shores of many inland lakes were inspected in their entirety. Only

the shores of the large, often named, lakes were found to be associated with archæological sites. (draft final report, p 30)

The entire Aber–Kennecott mineral claim block is in a very large, named lake — Lac de Gras — and yet very little shore line was investigated by the summer ground survey in the field. Our Elders pointed out that our people do not camp high up on eskers, where it is windy and there is no water nearby: our people prefer to camp along shore lines and, when bears are not hibernating, on small islands for the safety of our children. These areas generally were neglected in the ground survey conducted for Aber–Kennecott's archæological impact assessment. Eskers are of importance to our people for travel on foot, for identifying animal denning and hibernation sites when other food is scarce, and for burials, especially when snow fills lower-lying lands. *In our assessment of the draft final report, our people felt that too much emphasis was put on eskers, possibly because of their use to mining companies as construction materials, and not enough attention had been paid to places more likely to be of interest to Dene ancestors.*

Site-by-site evaluation and assessment have been conducted according to archæological standards in order to arrive at the scientific significance (pp 27–29). However, the draft final report does not indicate what criteria are used to arrive at the significance of sites to Indigenous People. We feel that, as a result, recommendations that are made according to the "assigned value of the site" are based mostly on scientific criteria. In an attempt to provide balance, we have provided our First Nation's recommendations for policies regarding all ancestral places of Indigenous Peoples. As far as we can see, the draft final report does not address the issue of potential contribution of ancestral places to "public enjoyment and education"; however, our people have firm views on that subject, as reflected in our recommendations.

Something that is not provided in the goal, objectives, or scope of work are any expectations the contract archæologists had for the involvement of our people. On page 30, the draft final report indicates that Yellowknives Dene did not identify any "traditional use sites" at a meeting with Dr Fedirchuk to discuss the study. At no time did anyone approach our people to discuss design of the study or our participation in it. At an earlier meeting of our Land & Environment Committee, there was discussion with Acers International that our people would conduct a Traditional Knowledge study of our own. At that time, it was made clear that we would not contribute our people's knowledge to scientists' studies, that the appropriate place for bringing the two bodies of knowledge together was after separate studies are completed. Perhaps more informed co-ordination among the contract scientists can reduce further unrealistic expectations.

Minor Points

> Our people feel that "heritage resources" is a vague and restrictive term. (The definition in the draft final report refers only to "sites".) We would prefer "archæological findings", "ancestral places", "ancestral items", depending on the context.

> The draft final report author suggests that finding places and items used by Indigenous Peoples is a "testimony to prehistoric use and occupation" of the lands. We wish to point out that living Yellowknives Dene Elders lived on and travelled through these lands. Please expand the testimony to historic and present times.

> The word "ethnic" is inappropriate with regard to Indigenous Peoples.

> "First Nations groups" is redundant: "First Nations" is preferable.

> When referring to our First Nation, Chief Jonas Sangris prefers "Yellowknives Dene" (rather than simply "Yellowknives"). It is also a good idea for authors to indicate when they are discussing Yellowknives Dene First Nation, as opposed to our people before the making of Treaty 8, after which the federal government separated us into "Band" memberships. Our people are now members of several First Nations.

> The sections on the history of our people reflect interpretations of a little knowledge learned by a few anthropologists (pp 18–19). We indicated last year that the studies these descriptions are based on were flawed and are not reliable. The description of our Treaty (p 21) is one-sided, reflecting the view of the federal government. We would prefer that such descriptions indicate that there are other views (ie, those of the Indigenous People), which do not agree.

> Typographic errors: Some words have been dropped between the two pages of the Executive Summary. Two words on page 5 are misspelled. On page 22, "the both" should read "both the", and "sole" in the last line should be "solely". On page 28, "less" should be "fewer".

> Our people wondered why the description of the use our people make of our lands (pp 33–35) is separated from Indigenous Peoples' histories (pp 16–21). It would seem more natural for the two discussions to be together.

> The description of Dene use of our lands (pp 33–34) is incomplete, and stresses winter use for trapping and associated hunting. We feel it is not useful to write a general description applying to all Dene based on an unverified account from one informant and his interpreter. Yellowknives Dene made use of these lands year-round and hold a thorough knowledge of denning and medicinal plant locations. In contradiction to the draft final report, our people have both burials and sacred places throughout this area. Three burials were identified during the summer ground survey in the field, but only one was recognized as a grave site. The other two burials — both stone cairns — were thought to be trap markers, which would be consistent with a knowledge of the land for winter use only.

> Regarding the Dene and French names for "fat or grease lake", our people report that the name reflects the importance of the area for fall hunting when our people came north to get meat, hides,

and especially fat or grease, to supply our families through the winter. Our Elders say that so many caribou were killed that excess fat would float on the surface of the lake. The number of shaped stone flakes (used as hide scrapers by our ancestors) found by the field archæologist is a testimony to the importance of these lands to our people. (The lake has been good for fishing, but the name does not come from our people fishing there.)

> Our people are puzzled by the inclusion of "traditional land use concerns" as if our concerns about damage to the land as a result of mining is the same thing as the significance of the land to our people. We recognize that documenting our environmental concerns is a separate process from documenting the spiritual, cultural, and social significance of our lands to our people.

Yellowknives Dene First Nation Recommendations

<1> A more comprehensive archæological assessment needs to be done, so that all uses by Indigenous Peoples of lands in the area are identified and assessed from a scientific point of view. Yellowknives Dene Elders advise that scientists focus especially on places Indigenous People would use as portages and as camp sites, such as shore lines and small islands.

<2> A separate assessment must be done of the spiritual, cultural, and social significance of the lands surrounding the project site — based on the Traditional Knowledge of Yellowknives Dene Elders — from the point of view of the people indigenous to the lands.

Yellowknives Dene Elders expressed the wish that reports about our people, our ancestors, and our lands use language and descriptions that are respectful to our people. They said that too often reports about us become the experts' commentaries and do not reflect our people's way of thinking about ourselves or our lands.

<3> The spiritual, cultural, and social significance of these land can be assessed only by comparing final findings from a completed archæological study (analyzed, interpreted, and approved by scientists) with final findings of a completed Dene study (analyzed, interpreted, and approved by Indigenous People).

<4> The field archæologists should take young Dene as assistants, rather than Dene Elders. It would be good to take young Dene from more than one First Nation. It would be good for the archæologists to tell the Dene assistants what they are looking for and what they think they have found, rather than ask our young members to give our people's knowledge without our consent.

<5> The archæologist recommended several sites for excavation and further study. In the opinion of Yellowknives Dene Elders, none of these sites will yield anything worthwhile, because they are not camp sites (as the field archæologist suggested) and because our people did not leave valuable things behind when they travelled. Our people are also concerned about disturbance through excavations using large equipment to wildlife. Our First Nation will not approve any excavations.

<6> The archæologist recommended collection of all artefacts found during last summer's field work. Yellowknives Dene Elders point out that the artefacts provide the only physical evidence that our people have used the land. If they are removed, our Elders fear that non-Dene will try to say that the land was never used by our people. Our people want to see the government do a far better job of informing the public about existing laws that prevent artefact collection. Yellowknives Dene First Nation will not permit collection of any artefacts — particularly from burials and other sacred ancestral places — by professional scientists, by employees at exploration camps or future mines, or by any other person on these lands on behalf of or at the invitation of Aber Resources and/or Kennecott Canada.

<7> The archæologist recommended protection of Dene burial sites. Yellowknives Dene First Nation supports this recommendation to the fullest possible extent.

In particular, our Elders believe that the stone cairn beside the shore line closest to the kimberlite pipes (LcNs25) is especially vulnerable: we urge Aber and Kennecott to take every precaution to protect this Dene child's burial. Our Elders know that there are other burials and sacred ancestral sites in this area. Yellowknives Dene first Nation wants our ancestors to remain at rest and not to be dug up or studied. We also urge the mining companies to develop monitoring procedures to ensure that "avoidance" is carried out.

Weledeh Yellowknives Dene:
a traditional knowledge study of Ek'ati

Appendix 4
Yellowknives Dene First Nation

Memoranda of Understanding with Mining Companies for Traditional Knowledge Projects

DRAFTED May 1995

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BETWEEN

BHP DIAMONDS INC / BHP MINERALS CANADA LTD

&

YELLOWKNIVES DENE FIRST NATION

regarding

the documentation of Tattsanotine (Yellowknives Dene) knowledge about their traditional and current use lands around Egati (also known as Lac de Gras) for inclusion in BHP's Environmental Impact Statement to the EARP Panel Assessing BHP's Proposed Diamond Mine Project

PRINCIPLES OF UNDERSTANDING

WHEREAS members of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation are descendants of the Tattsanotine, who used lands including those around Egati (Lac de Gras) for generations — and

WHEREAS Yellowknives Dene Elders and experienced land users know and understand the knowledge passed orally of lands used by the Tattsanotine, including those lands still used by the Yellowknives Dene around Egati (Lac de Gras) — and

WHEREAS Yellowknives Dene First Nation has developed policy guidelines for the collection, recording, and use of our community's traditional knowledge and for the protection of our intellectual property rights — and

WHEREAS the Yellowknives Dene Traditional Knowledge Policy allows for the preparation of secondary information based on our Elders' and experienced land users' primary knowledge, and for the public presentation only of secondary information based on our primary traditional knowledge — and

WHEREAS the Yellowknives Dene are directly involved in the government of Canada's Environmental Assessment Review Process set up to assess potential environmental and socio-economic impacts of BHP's proposed diamond mines near Egati (Lac de Gras) — and

WHEREAS BHP Diamonds Inc/BHP Minerals Canada Ltd, in writing on April 28, 1995, requested Yellowknives Dene co-operation to enable the company to include their traditional knowledge in BHP's Environmental Impact Statement in order to fulfil the EARP panel's EIS guidelines to "give full and equal consideration to traditional knowledge" — and

WHEREAS BHP wrote to the EARP panel on March 10, 1995, expressing its willingness to integrate traditional knowledge throughout its Environmental Impact Statement, and the Yellowknives Dene First Nation genuinely wishes to provide appropriate and relevant secondary information based on their traditional knowledge so that BHP can do so — and

WHEREAS BHP has offered funding to acquire the information it needs from the Yellowknives Dene, funding which is not at present available from any other source, including EARP intervenor funding —

THEREFORE, BHP Diamonds Inc/BHP Minerals Canada Ltd and the Yellowknives Dene First Nation agree to the articles in this Memorandum of Understanding in agreement with these principles.

ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT

01 The methodology, in Appendix A, describes how Yellowknives Dene will provide appropriate and relevant information for BHP's Environmental Impact Statement.

02 BHP Diamonds Inc/BHP Minerals Canada Ltd can disburse funds to Yellowknives Dene First Nation according to its specified arrangements, and will provide written criteria which Yellowknives Dene First Nation must meet to continue receiving funds.

03 All traditional knowledge purporting to be from or about the Tattsonotine or Redknives or Weledeh or Wuledeh or Yellowknife River Indians or Yellowknives Dene for presentation to the EARP panel must be authenticated by Yellowknives Dene First Nation Elders.

04 Yellowknives Dene First Nation reserves the right to reject the authenticity of any information it provides to BHP that is altered, misinterpreted, or changed in context in such public documents as the EARP panel Environmental Impact Statement.

05 Either party can stop these arrangements at any time by alerting the other party in writing with reasons thirty (30) days before the agreement is to stop, and with the possibility that the Yellowknives Dene can rectify unsatisfactory arrangements.

06 The methodology for collection of information for BHP will follow the traditional knowledge guidelines of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation.

Signed

FOR BHP

_____
Project Manager
NWT Diamonds Project

_____
WITNESS

DATE: _____

FOR YELLOWKNIVES DENE

_____
Chief Jonas Sangris

_____
Chief Darrell Beaulieu

_____
WITNESS

DATE: _____

Appendix A

Methodology
for Yellowknives Dene First Nation
To Collect Primary Traditional Knowledge about Egati & Transform it into Secondary Data for Public Presentation

1995

June – Yellowknives Dene select project workers, who collaborate with Elders and experienced land users to prepare for site visits and community activities

July – Dene project workers & Elders visit sites around Egati, tape and film interviews and prepare rough maps

August – No activity while the fall hunt occurs in our traditional and current hunting grounds around MacKay Lake.

September to November

Dene project workers:
- continue interviewing Elders
- transcribe taped interviews and verify transcriptions with Elders
- prepare proper maps from rough site maps and interviews of primary data, and
- begin community discussions about what to put on secondary maps for public presentation to BHP and the EARP panel

December – Conduct and record community discussions about what information can be presented to BHP and to the EARP panel, and what form it should take

1996

January – Preparation of Yellowknives Dene report with maps, of secondary information according to approved community direction
– Consultation with _utsel K'e Dene Elders to compare findings

February – Submission of final report to Yellowknives Dene leadership for approval

March – Presentation of final report simultaneously to BHP and EARP panel

REDRAFTED April 1996; signed December 1997

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BETWEEN

BHP

&

YELLOWKNIVES DENE FIRST NATION

regarding

the documentation & presentation of T'satsaot'ine (Yellowknives Dene) knowledge about their traditional and current use lands around Egati (also known as Lac de Gras) for inclusion in Environmental Impact Information that BHP may use in connection with its proposed diamond mines on Yellowknives Dene traditional lands

April 1996

PRINCIPLES OF UNDERSTANDING

WHEREAS members of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation are descendants of the T'satsaot'ine, who used lands including those around Egati (Lac de Gras) for generations — and

WHEREAS Yellowknives Dene Elders and experienced land users know and understand the knowledge passed orally of lands used by the T'satsaot'ine, including those lands still used by the Yellowknives Dene around Egati (Lac de Gras) — and

WHEREAS Yellowknives Dene First Nation has developed policy guidelines for the collection, recording, and use of our community's traditional knowledge and for the protection of our intellectual property rights — and

WHEREAS the Yellowknives Dene Traditional Knowledge Policy allows for the preparation of secondary information based on our Elders' and experienced land users' primary knowledge, and for the public presentation only of secondary information based on our primary traditional knowledge — and

WHEREAS the Yellowknives Dene are protected by Canada's fiduciary obligation to protect the lands of Aboriginal peoples from interference with Aboriginal and Treaty rights through developments such as the proposed diamond mines near Egati (Lac de Gras) — and

WHEREAS BHP has expressed in correspondence to our First Nation and to the federal environmental assessment panel reviewing the proposed diamond mining project, and in public hearings its willingness to commission and fund Yellowknives Dene to present the company with public information based on our Traditional Knowledge — and

WHEREAS the Yellowknives Dene have the capacity to conduct the required research and present prepared public information to BHP —

THEREFORE, BHP and the Yellowknives Dene First Nation agree to the articles in this Memorandum of Understanding in agreement with these principles.

ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT

01 The methodology, in Appendix A, describes how Yellowknives Dene will provide appropriate and relevant information, *according to the Yellowknives Dene First Nation Traditional Knowledge Guidelines*, for BHP's Environmental Impact Statement.

02 BHP can disburse funds to Yellowknives Dene First Nation according to its specified arrangements, and will provide written criteria which Yellowknives Dene First Nation must meet to continue receiving funds.

03 All traditional knowledge purporting to be from or about the T'satsaot'ine or Copper Indians or Northern Indians or Redknives or Weledeh/Wuledeh or Yellowknife River Indians or Yellowknives Dene for presentation to the EARP panel *must be authenticated by Yellowknives Dene First Nation Elders.*

04 Yellowknives Dene First Nation reserves the right to reject the authenticity of any information it provides to BHP that is altered, misinterpreted, or changed in context in public documents or the monitoring of its proposed mines on Yellowknives Dene traditional lands.

05 Either party can stop these arrangements at any time by alerting the other party in writing thirty (30) days before the agreement is to stop.

Signed

FOR BHP

_____
Jim Excell
NWT Diamonds Project

_____
WITNESS

DATE: _____

FOR YELLOWKNIVES DENE

_____
Chief Jonas Sangris

_____
Chief Darrell Beaulieu

_____
WITNESS

DATE: _____

Appendix A

Methodology
for Yellowknives Dene First Nation
To Collect Primary Traditional Knowledge about Egati & Transform it into Secondary Data for Public Presentation

1996

MAY – Yellowknives Dene complete plan for collecting Traditional Knowledge (primary data) and preparing information (secondary data) for public presentation
– Yellowknives Dene select project workers, who collaborate with our Elders and experienced land users to prepare for detailed activity schedule
– Yellowknives Dene project workers collect and inventory existing Traditional Knowledge of this region

JUN to AUG – Yellowknives Dene project workers travel with Elders on the land, interviewing Elders at significant sites and making rough maps, with our people's names for places, noting sacred and ceremonial places, burial and grave sites

SEP to JAN – Yellowknives Dene project workers begin to:
· transcribe audio tapes and verify with Elders
· arrange for videos to be edited according to direction from Elders
· prepare formal maps from rough site maps
· draft interpretive report to accompany public maps
· develop appropriate categories for mapping of secondary information

1997

FEB – Yellowknives Dene project workers:
· prepare maps of secondary information for public presentation, consulting with and verifying maps with community members and Yellowknives Dene Elders and related Elders in Lutsel K'e Dene and Denínu Kué First Nations
· complete draft interpretative report, circulate for comments, and revise

MAR – final draft interpretive report and maps of secondary information to Yellowknives Dene Elders Advisory Council and elected leadership for approval
– final revisions to be made to report and maps, according to direction from Yellowknives Dene Elders Advisory Council and leadership

APR – final report and maps to be given to BHP at a community meeting presenting the study and its public findings to membership

DRAFTED April 1996, signed June 1996; Kennecott is now Diavik Diamond Mine Ltd.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BETWEEN

KENNECOTT CANADA INC.

&

YELLOWKNIVES DENE FIRST NATION

regarding

the documentation & presentation of
T'satsaot'ine (Yellowknives Dene) knowledge
about their traditional and current use lands
around Egati (also known as Lac de Gras)
for inclusion in
Environmental Impact Information
that Kennecott may present for project approval
of proposed developments on
Yellowknives Dene traditional lands

April 1996

PRINCIPLES OF UNDERSTANDING

WHEREAS members of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation are descendants of the T'satsaot'ine, who used lands including those around Egati (Lac de Gras) for generations — and

WHEREAS Yellowknives Dene Elders and experienced land users know and understand the knowledge passed orally of lands used by the T'satsaot'ine, including those lands still used by the Yellowknives Dene around Egati (Lac de Gras) — and

WHEREAS Yellowknives Dene First Nation has developed policy guidelines for the collection, recording, and use of our community's traditional knowledge and for the protection of our intellectual property rights — and

WHEREAS the Yellowknives Dene Traditional Knowledge Policy allows for the preparation of secondary information based on our Elders' and experienced land users' primary knowledge, and for the public presentation only of secondary information based on our primary traditional knowledge — and

WHEREAS the Yellowknives Dene are directly involved in the DIAND NWT Region's Regional Environmental Review Committee (RERC) set up to assess potential environmental and socio-economic impacts of developments, such as Kennecott's potential diamond mines near Egati (Lac de Gras) — and

WHEREAS Kennecott Canada Inc. has expressed its willingness to commission and fund the Yellowknives Dene First Nation to present the company with public information based on traditional knowledge — and

WHEREAS the Yellowknives Dene have the capacity to conduct the required research and present the public information to Kennecott Canada Inc. —

THEREFORE, Yellowknives Dene First Nation and Kennecott Canada Inc. agree to the articles in this Memorandum of Understanding, in agreement with these principles.

ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT

01 The methodology, in Appendix A, describes how Yellowknives Dene will provide appropriate and relevant information, *in accordance with the Yellowknives Dene First Nation Traditional Knowledge Guidelines*, to Kennecott Canada Inc.

02 Kennecott Canada Inc. can disburse funds to Yellowknives Dene First Nation according to its specified arrangements, and will provide any written criteria which Yellowknives Dene First Nation must meet to continue receiving funds. Yellowknives Dene will provide quarterly progress reports to Kennecott Canada Inc.

03 All traditional knowledge purporting to be from or about the T'satsaot'ine or Copper Indians or Northern Indians or Redknives or Weledeh/Wuledeh or Yellowknife River Indians or Yellowknives Dene for presentation to public authorities must be authenticated by Yellowknives Dene First Nation Elders.

04 Yellowknives Dene First Nation reserves the right to reject the authenticity of any information it provides Kennecott Canada Inc. that is *altered, misinterpreted, or changed in context in public documents* presented to support potential developments on Yellowknives Dene traditional lands.

05 Either party can stop these arrangements at any time by alerting the other party in writing thirty (30) days before the agreement is to stop.

Signed

FOR KENNECOTT CANADA INC.

_____
Doug Wiley

_____
WITNESS

DATE: _____

FOR YELLOWKNIVES DENE

_____
Chief Jonas Sangris

_____
Chief Darrell Beaulieu

_____
WITNESS

DATE: _____

Appendix A

Methodology
for Yellowknives Dene First Nation
To Collect Primary Traditional Knowledge about Egati & Transform it into Secondary Data for Public Presentation

1996

MAY – Yellowknives Dene complete plan for collecting Traditional Knowledge (primary data) and preparing information (secondary data) for public presentation
– Yellowknives Dene select project workers, who collaborate with our Elders and experienced land users to prepare for detailed activity schedule
– Yellowknives Dene project workers collect and inventory existing Traditional Knowledge of this region

JUN to AUG – Yellowknives Dene project workers travel with Elders on the land, interviewing Elders at significant sites and making rough maps, with our people's names for places, noting sacred and ceremonial places, burial and grave sites

SEP to JAN – Yellowknives Dene project workers begin to:
· transcribe audio tapes and verify with Elders
· arrange for videos to be edited according to direction from Elders
· prepare formal maps from rough site maps
· draft interpretive report to accompany public maps
· develop appropriate categories for mapping of secondary information

1997

FEB – Yellowknives Dene project workers:
· prepare maps of secondary information for public presentation, consulting with and verifying maps with community members and Yellowknives Dene Elders and related Elders in Lutsel K'e Dene and Denínu Kué First Nations
· complete draft interpretative report, circulate for comments, and revise

MAR – final draft interpretive report and maps of secondary information to Yellowknives Dene Elders Advisory Council and elected leadership for approval
– final revisions to be made to report and maps, according to direction from Yellowknives Dene Elders Advisory Council and leadership

APR – final report and maps to be given to Kennecott Canada Inc. at a community meeting presenting the study and its public findings to membership

Weledeh Yellowknives Dene:
a traditional knowledge study of Ek'ati

Appendix 5
Letters to Yellowknives Dene First Nation from Mining Companies Regarding Traditional Knowledge Projects

Kennecott Canada Inc.
Diavik Diamond Project
5007 - 50th Ave
Suite 205, P.O. Box 2498
Yellowknife, NWT
X1A 2P8
Tel: (403) 669-9157
Fax (403) 669-9058

FILE: _____

Kennecott
CANADA INC.
Diavik Diamond Project

June 6, 1996

Mr. Fred Sangris
Land and Environment Co-ordinator
Yellowknives Dene First Nation
P.O. Box 2514
YELLOWKNIFE NT X1A 2P8

Dear Fred:

RE: Traditional Knowledge Study

As we have discussed, Kennecott Canada Inc., in joint venture with Aber Resources in the Diavik Diamond Project, is performing baseline research in the area of Egati. In conjunction with this baseline environmental research we would also like to learn more about the traditional knowledge which is inheritant in the lives of your people.

Although the Diavik Diamond Project has not formally applied for the authorization to proceed with a mine, we are preparing this information in anticipation of proceeding with our project.

Below we have laid out the scope of work we would require to be addressed in the Traditional Knowledge Memorandum of Understanding.

Scope of Work

1) Conduct formal interviews with elders for the purpose of obtaining information on traditional land and resources use of the Yellowknives Dene in the area of Egati.

2) Conduct field investigations in the area of Egati that would identify significant traditional land uses such as:
   - Portages trails
   - Hunting and fishing camps
   - Transportation routes
   - Burial sites
   - Spiritual sites
   - Medical plant locations
   - Cairns/markers
   - Traplines
   - Migration routes, both traditional and present
   - Habitat

3) Provide and prepare recommendations to the Diavik Project with regards to the TK aspects surrounding fish and water quality.

4) Prepare composite secondary information maps with interpretive explanations of the TK complied.

5) Provide recommendations to the Diavik Project on land use areas to be avoided and mitigative measures to be used to address concerns of the Yellowknives Dene First Nations.

6) Provide traditional names for the lands, waters, and places around Egati.

7) Provide traditional knowledge deemed necessary to minimize the effect that involvement in the area of Egati would have on the caribou of the area. Provide any information and comments with regards to other wildlife of the area.

NOTE: Kennecott understands that the information provided from this study is at the discretion of the Yellowknives Dene First Nations and that Kennecott has no right to information which is not relevant to the project or the project area. Kennecott respects the confidentiality of the information provided from the Traditional knowledge studies but reserves the right to use this information for a formal submission in support of an eventual project proposal.

Kennecott will provide transportation and on-site support when and where ever possible, keeping with the demands of the on-going exploration. Kennecott offers management and computer drafting, word processing, and related assistance if required.

Kennecott would like the opportunity to discuss the present on-going studies with the Yellowknives Dene First Nations and share information through the project. The Yellowknives Dene First Nation have an important contribution to make to this project and it is Kennecott's intention to strive to develop a project which is environmentally sound, and provides benefits the Yellowknives Dene First Nations.

I look forward to meeting with you to discuss this further. Please contact me at your convenience to arrange an appropriate meeting time.

Sincerely,

Doug Willy
Manager, Public and Government Affairs

DW/kb

BHP

BHP Diamonds
New Business Development
BHP Minerals

18 December, 1996

Chief ~~Darrell~~ Beaulieu
Yellowknives Dene Band
Box 2514
Yellowknife, NT
X1A 2P7

Chief ~~Jonas~~ Sangris
Yellowknives Dene Band
Box 2514
Yellowknife, NT
X1A 2P7

Gentlemen;

Re: Traditional Knowledge MOU with the Yellowknives Dene

Enclosed is a signed photocopy of the Traditional Knowledge MOU. BHP requires a copy with original signatures as backup for the authorization to expend funds. If you need original signatures, Jim Excell would be happy to sign a second copy.

As we understand you want to conduct this project in coordination with your Diavik one, perhaps Fred Sangris, Richard Weishaupt (Diavik) and I should get together soon to discuss the study. I will be away from December 21st through January 3rd.

BHP looks forward to working with the Yellowknives Dene on their Egati traditional knowledge study.

Sincerely Yours;

Chris Hanks
Traditional Knowledge Consultant

cc. Jim Excell
David Boyd
John Witteman
Richard Weishaupt

Appendix 6

Statement of Principles for Ethical Conduct Pertaining to Aboriginal Peoples by Canadian Archæological Association (1996)

CANADIAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION/
L'ASSOCIATION d'ARCHEOLOGIE CANADIENNE

Statement of Principles for Ethical Conduct Pertaining to Aboriginal Peoples

PREAMBLE

The objectives of the Canadian Archaeological Association include the promotion, protection and conservation of the archaeological heritage of Canada, and the dissemination of archaeological knowledge. Canadian archaeologists conduct their activities according to the principles of scholarly practice and recognize the interests of groups affected by their research. Whereas the heritage of First Nations Peoples constitutes the greater part of the Canadian archaeological record, this document presents a Statement of Principles that guides members of the Association in their relationships with Aboriginal peoples.

PRINCIPLES

Members of the CAA/AAC agree to abide by the following principles:

I Consultation:

1. To recognize the cultural and spiritual links between Aboriginal peoples and the archaeological record.

2. To acknowledge that Aboriginal people have a fundamental interest in the protection and management of the archaeological record, its interpretation and presentation.

3. To recognize and respect the role of Aboriginal communities in matters relating to their heritage.

4. To negotiate and respect protocols, developed in consultation with Aboriginal communities, relating to the conduct of archaeological activities dealing with Aboriginal culture.

II Aboriginal Involvement:

1. To encourage partnerships with Aboriginal communities in archaeological research, management and education, based on respect and mutual sharing of knowledge and expertise.

2. To support formal training programs in archaeology for Aboriginal people.

3. To support the recruitment of Aboriginal people as professional archaeologists.

III Sacred Sites and Places:

1 To recognize and respect the spiritual bond that exists between Aboriginal peoples and special places and features on the landscape.

2 To acknowledge the cultural significance of human remains and associated objects to Aboriginal peoples.

3 To respect protocols governing the investigation, removal, curation and re-burial of human remains and associated objects.

IV Communication and Interpretation:

1 To respect the cultural significance of oral history and traditional knowledge in the interpretation and presentation of the archaeological record of Aboriginal peoples.

2 To communicate the results of archaeological investigations to Aboriginal communities in a timely and accessible manner.

Weledeh Yellowknives Dene:
a study of traditional knowledge at Ek'ati

Appendix 7
Weledeh Yellowknives Stories about Animals

Weledeh Yellowknives Dene:
a study of traditional knowledge at Ek'ati

Weledeh Yellowknives Stories about Animals

Some Traditional Raven Stories

Our ancestors used to tell people back then that raven was their leader. The people asked him about everything and he would tell them what the people did in the past. And the people would do what the raven told them. He had all the animals in the palm of his hands, although he was an animal himself. Raven would travel around and eat what he hunted, and then go back to the people. So one day the people asked him, "Why is it that you are healthy and we are starving?" And he said, "No, I am starving too." But he was lying to the people. And the next time when he returned to the camp, the children, who notice everything, noticed his bow and arrow bag hanging and in it was caribou intestine and fat. So when he left, the people watched where he went. He noticed the people were following him so raven circled around and said he was starving and asked for some bannock, and the people gave him some bannock. And the people watched him and noticed that raven had intestine and fat in his bag. They didn't know what to say to him. At that time some animals were without food, so raven chopped up some fat and left it at the entrance to their homes. And all the fox smelled the caribou meat and came out. Then fox rounded up the caribou and raven told the people to kill the caribou then. After they kill the caribou, they ate.

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One time, raven decided to be a white fox for a while, so he turned himself into white fox. The people saw raven doing this and decided to play a trick on raven by making him black. The people ground up some charcoal and dumped it on raven. Charcoal got in raven's eye and, when he tried to fly off, he landed in a mud puddle. When raven got out of the puddle, he was no longer a totally white fox: his head was grey.

And that's why there are grey fox today.

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Our ancestors said that, back then, raven was leader of the animals. One day, a bear tore the arm off a fox. The people noticed the bear near the shoreline, so they went to raven and asked if he would go and see the bear. Raven went to find the bear; he went

across the lake by a boat and sat in the boat and tricked the bear into thinking he was a bear by making the same kind of noise as a bear. Raven kept talking to the bear until the bear got close to the shoreline. Raven kept growling like a bear until the bear invited him into his den. In the den the raven kept growling like a bear. When raven said he had to pee, the bear followed him outside, so raven kept growling while he peed. This went on for a while, maybe for two or three days. Finally, when the bear was falling asleep, raven nudged the bear to see if he was asleep. The bear was growling in deep sleep, and raven grabbed the fox's arm and flew away. That evening raven went to the fox, who was lying near the fire with ashes on his wound. And raven took his arm and put it back on the fox, but he put it back crooked. That's why the fox's arm is the way it now.

Some Traditional Caribou Stories

The Creator told the caribou: "Do not be scared of the people – go near the people so that they can also survive". The Creator noticed that the caribou would not go near the people, so the Creator asked them what was happening to keep them away.

"The smoke from their fires is too strong for us and we are scared of the people, too", said one of the leaders.

"Because you are scared of their smoke. I will help you," replied the Creator. And the Creator took a piece of arm bone with some skin from one of the people and put it into the caribou leg. Since that time, the caribou has not been scared of people.

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A long time ago, caribou used to be human. This story starts off when an old caribou heard a human child crying, so he went to check. The old caribou found a human baby boy by himself and brought the boy back to his herd. He carried the boy between his legs, with the boy on top of his feet, which is why the lower part of the caribou's legs are lighter than the rest. He told the other caribou: "When we come across some of the people, we will leave the boy on a trail for them."

At that time, the people would just take caribou when they came across them. They did not know how the caribou travelled, where the caribou went when the people did not see them.

Soon after the old caribou found the baby boy, an old man and his wife set up camp near the caribou trails. One day, the old man heard a child crying and, when he went

to check, he saw caribou tracks near some wood. When he looked closer, he saw there was a baby boy there. He brought the baby back to his wife and they raised him. As the boy became a young man, the old man taught him to travel on the land and survive on his own. But the boy always thought about the time he spent with the caribou. When he had learned enough to travel alone, the old man who raised him told him that, if he happened to come across people, he should watch them. The old man told him, "If there is a young woman among them, watch her and see if she looks directly at you or if she avoids you. If she avoids looking directly at you, you should marry her one day."

The young man left the old couple and travelled on the land to survive by himself. Not too much time went by when he came across three people in a camp: an old couple with a young woman. The old man asked him to stay with them and to hunt for them. The young man saw that the young woman did not look directly at him. He remembered what the old man who raised him had told him, so he stayed with them and, eventually, married the young woman. Soon, a baby boy was born to the young couple and the young father taught his son as the old man had raised him. When the couple's son was about ten years old, the whole family went to the barrens.

On the first night, the young father could not sleep. His wife asked him why he could not sleep, so he told her that he knew the caribou would migrate soon and he wanted to follow them. He told her that his mind was on the caribou all the time; he said "The caribou have spoken with me. They have asked me to live among them and travel with them for one year. I love my child but I think I should go with the caribou." They all told him to do what he thought was best, so he decided to go and follow the caribou for a year.

Before he left, he told his son what he was going to do: "I will be with the caribou for one year. You must return to this same spot next year. When the caribou start migrating next year, watch them and, if you see one caribou go off by itself, that will be me. You have to go to the caribou herd in a canoe with your mother, you in the front and your mother in the back of the canoe. I am going to teach you a song, and I want you to paddle slowly towards me to the shore singing this song. When you get close to shore, your mother is to stand a long ways back and you are to catch me."

One year later, the young man's wife and son were doing exactly what he had told them to do. The boy caught the caribou by its antlers and, together, they stood still for a while. Then the caribou became a man again. That is how the boy got his father back. The man was happy to be back, and he spoke to them, telling them what had happened to him during the year he was one of the caribou travelling with the herd. He said that the land the caribou migrate in is huge.

"Their leader is leading them all the way," he told his wife and son, "stopping only to eat and rest. When calves are born, they are protected by the whole herd. On their way towards the treeline, the calves are encouraged to travel at the same speed as the adult caribou: 'At the treeline, we will eat lots of lichen the calves are told. You have to hurry to keep away from bears and wolves'."

"When the caribou get close to people, they are shot at but the caribou never think about their relatives that are being killed; they have to keep on going. They look back once and keep going. All they say is 'brother' or 'sister' to each other and that's it. Their leader is always keeping an eye on all things happening, and he tells them when it is time to go back to the barrens. They travel over land and swim across lakes. When they see people, they stop for awhile so that the people can have some meat and survive also. The land that they travel is near Great Slave Lake and also near Rae Lakes.

"The caribou that is the leader takes the caribou to the ocean and in the summer, they come back to where the people are. The leader tells the caribou that the people need them to survive and that the people must miss them and are looking forward to seeing the caribou again. So the caribou head south."

"When the herd gets about halfway, around Ek'ati, the leaders tells them to split up and go in three directions. The leaders tells some of the caribou to go toward the people around Lutsel K'e, and some to go to the people around Rae Lakes, and some to go to the people around Great Slave Lake. They were told to do this by their leader. So at this big lake, they would go in those directions, one to the east, one to the west, and one to the south. Then the caribou would meet the people, where they camp. And the caribou help the people to survive: they don't mind if they get killed for food.

"The caribou live with the people all winter and, in the middle of March, the leader calls to the cows and they start to walk very fast back to the ocean. The leader tells the cows that, if they have their calves below the treeline, it will get too warm for them to travel, so they have to go in March. The cows tell the yearlings that they are returning to the north to have their brothers and sisters, and that they are to travel with the rest of the herd later, after everything melts. 'We will meet you there', the cows tell the yearlings. And usually the rest of the herd follows the cows in late spring, when the snow melts. Sometimes, when the ice breaks early, part of the herd stays behind because they do not want to hurt their hooves on the sharp ice.

"When the caribou travel north, they go to the edge of the land where the ocean is, and they stay there for the spring while the cows have the new calves. At that time of the year, there are a lot of bears and wolves that try to kill the newborn calves, so the cows stay on land that is away from those animals. When the newborn calves are ready to walk, the herd gets ready to travel south again. The cows bring the new calves to

where the rest of the herd is, and they travel together. That is the time of year when you see small calves travelling with their mothers. So that is how the caribou travel, from season to season."

And that is how the people found out how the caribou travel, where they go.

A Traditional Trout Story

Our ancestors knew a time when the people were near to starvation. They were hungry because their canoes and bone-axes were missing and the hunters could find no caribou or muskrat. The most powerful medicine people turned themselves into animals, flying as ravens, and searched everywhere to learn who had taken their tools and animals. Eventually, they discovered that the trout were responsible and took steps to get them back. Four bones in a trout's head represent what the trout had taken: a caribou leg, a muskrat swimming, a canoe, and an axe. Since these things were recovered by the medicine people, the head of a trout is eaten only by an Elder, who slowly removes the bones one at a time, identifying the missing tools and animals, as the story is told to young people.

Weledeh Yellowknives Dene:
a traditional knowledge study of Ek'ati

Appendix 8
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Appearing throughout this Weledeh Yellowknives traditional knowledge report are quotations from this 1995 meeting by respected Elder Joseph Charlo, who passed away before he could participate in this project. He had very much wanted his knowledge to contribute directly to this report; his wife, Judith, was generous with her knowledge and her memory of her former husband's traditional knowledge.

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"Lands that are Wide and Open"

Traditional Knowledge Report

For the Proposed Dominion Diamond Ekati Corporation's Jay Project

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August 2015

YKDFN Land & Environment

Citation or reference to this report:
Yellowknives Dene First Nation (2015). *Lands that are Wide and Open*: Traditional Knowledge Report. For the Proposed Dominion Diamond Ekati Corporation's Jay Project. Prepared by Trailmark Systems Inc., Victoria, BC. For Yellowknives Dene First Nation, Dettah, NWT, August 2015.

Cover photo:
Kyle Sangris at "Nàk'ooʔaa (the Narrows)" between Ekʼati (Lac de Gras) and Nàk'ooʔaatì (Lac du Sauvage), summer, 1997. Note the large amount of caribou hair piled up along the shores shed from the numerous caribou using this crossing located a few kilometres south of the proposed Jay Project.

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Acknowledgements

Remember what the elders have said from this community because they know what has happened before the white people came…We grew up here and what our grandparents told us about these areas around the lake…We know these places because we have been there ourselves. - Judy Charlo, Jay Project Workshop, 2015

With tremendous gratitude, we acknowledge the exceptional individuals who gave their time, positivity, and trust to this traditional knowledge study. We wish to thank the Elders and interviewers of the past who documented key traditional knowledge in the 1990s, well before the first diamond operations ever began on our territory. Elders who shared important understandings related to the Ek'ati (Lac de Gras) area and whose transcripts were reviewed for this current work include:

Isadore Sangris
Elise Liske
Therese Sangris
Noel Crookedhand
Alexi MacKenzie
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Our deep gratitude also goes to the current Elders and participants of this study, namely Alfred Baillargeon, Judy Charlo, Jonas Sangris, James Sangris, Peter D. Sangris, Jonas Noel, Eddie Sikyea, George Tatsiechele and Lena Drygeese (interpreter) for their dedication and support throughout the 2015 site tour, workshop and study. Special thanks go to Fred Sangris for his commitment to documenting traditional knowledge efforts for the YKDFN for over thirty years.

Finally, to the respondents and participants on this study—to all of the individuals who contributed their time and knowledge—your honesty and willingness to share has brought to light the insight, resilience, strength, and challenges facing the YKDFN today.

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1.0 Project Understanding

Dominion Diamond Ekati[1] Corporation (DDEC) is proposing to extend the life of the Ekati Mine, located about 300 kilometres northeast of Yellowknife, NWT, by 10 or more years by developing the Jay kimberlite pipe under Nàk'oo?aatì (Lac du Sauvage). The proposed development of Jay pipe and related infrastructure is understood as the Jay Project.

In October 2013, DDEC submitted a Project Description of the Jay Project to the Mackenzie Land and Water Board to initiate the regulatory process. The Developer's Assessment Report (DAR) in October 2014 was then submitted as part of the environmental assessment process. The location of the Jay Project (adjacent to the Ekati Mine) is shown in Figure 1 in relation to other diamond mining developments in Chief Drygeese Territory. Detail of the proposed Jay Project footprint is illustrated in Figure 2.

The Jay Pipe is located in the southeastern part of the Ekati claim block, which is publicly owned land that DDEC has leased from the Government of the Northwest Territories. Before a mine can be developed on a claim block, the company that holds the claim block must obtain a mining lease.

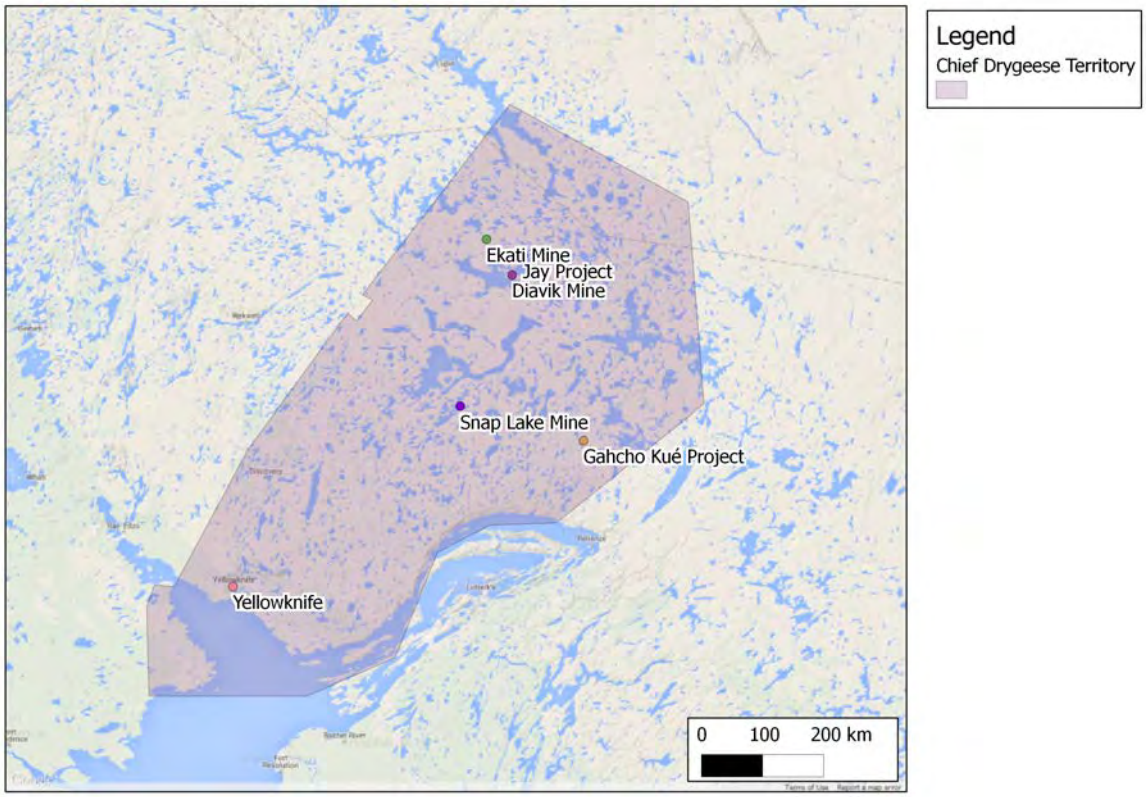

Figure 1 Current Diamond Mining Activities on Chief Drygeese Territory

[1] The term Ekati comes from the Dene name Ek'ati meaning "fat lake" which is known officially as Lac de Gras. The YKDFN understand that gras (French for "fat") related to the strong smell of caribou fat that was processed during fall hunts (YKDFN 1997:8). Note that the YKDFN prefer the spelling Ek'ati and have used it throughout this report unless referring specifically to the Ekati Diamond Mine. Alternative spellings in this report are limited to references within quotes and include: Egati and Ekati.

The Jay pipe is about 25 kilometres southeast of the Ekati Mine's main facilities, and about 7 kilometres to the northeast of the Misery Mine. The Jay pipe is located about 1.2 kilometres from the western shoreline of Nàk'oo?aatì (Lac du Sauvage) in about 35 metres of water at its deepest spot (Figure 2).

DDEC is proposing to mine the Jay pipe by separating the area of Nàk'oo?aatì (Lac du Sauvage) that overlies the Jay pipe from the rest of the lake with a horseshoe-shaped dike that will hold the lake water back. The water in this isolated area, with a surface area of about 4 square kilometres, will then be pumped out so that an open-pit mine can be used to access the diamonds in the kimberlite pipe. The resulting open pit would be about 370 metres deep.

The Jay Project timeline currently envisions that dike construction would commence in the summer of 2016 with dewatering and pre-stripping in 2019 followed by conventional open-pit mining. Production is currently expected to begin in 2020.

Diamond-bearing kimberlite would be trucked to the existing Ekati Mine process plant using the existing Misery haul road (Figure 2). Processed kimberlite tailings would be deposited into mined-out open pits at the Ek'ati site such that environmental disturbances related to expanding or constructing new deposition areas are avoided.

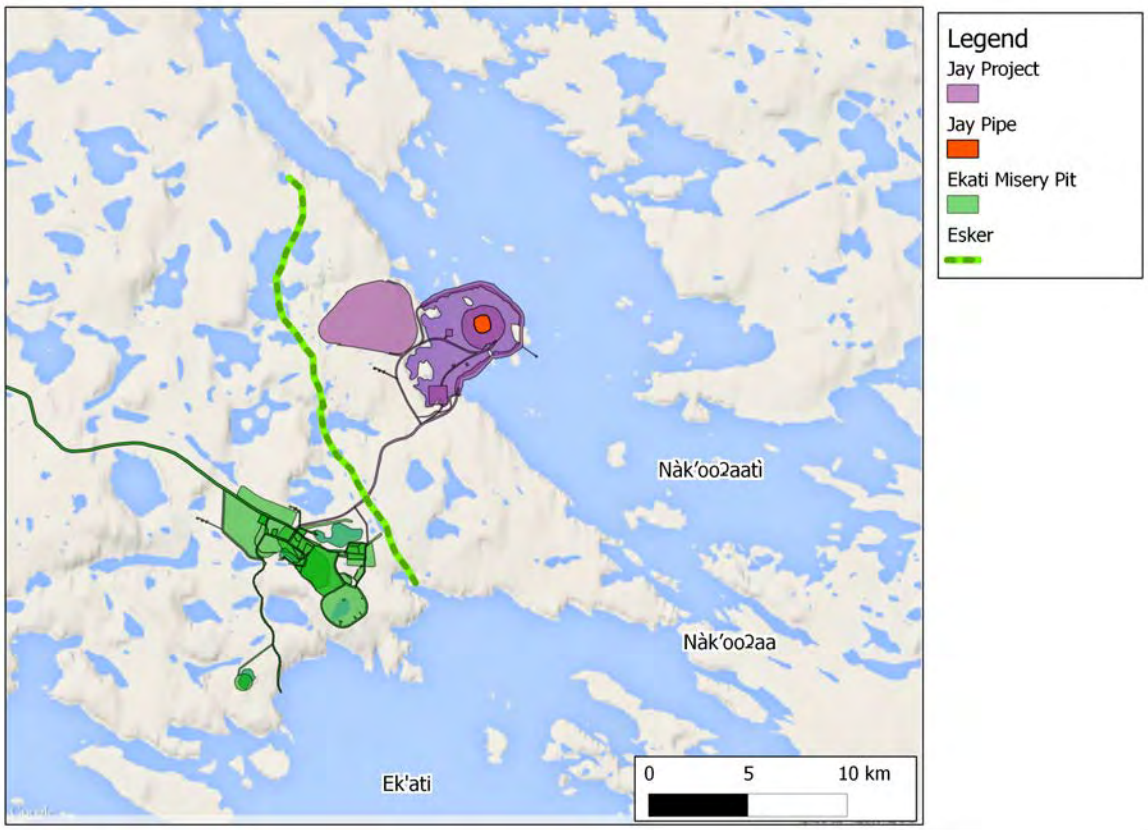

Figure 2 Proposed Jay Project Footprint

2.0 Introduction

> *In the past and until very recently, Weledeh Yellowknives Dene spent the majority of each year in the open spaces of the barrens north of the treeline. The traditional territory of these people and their T'satsǫot'inę relatives extended from what is now called Great Slave Lake to the Coppermine River and, on rare occasions as far as the Arctic coast. The lake identified on official maps as Contwoyto [Kǫ̀k'e Tì] is called by Weledeh Yellowknives Dene, "lake with many camps", referring to the winter hunting settlements of their forefathers (YKDFN 1997: iv-v).*

Yellowknives Dene have long used an extensive system of trails that connect their Wìlìdehcheh[2] (Weledeh-cheh / Yellowknıfe Bay) and Wìlìdeh (Weledeh / Yellowknife River) villages with their trapping areas north of the Great Slave Lake and through to the traditional fall caribou hunting grounds, and winter white fox trapping areas, around Ewàdehtì (Courageous Lake), MacKay Lake (Nǫndıka Tì), Ek'ati (Lac de Gras) and Nàk'ooʔaatì (Lac du Sauvage) in the barrens. Many stories tell of the 1920s and 1930s when the Yellowknives Dene lived in the barrens year-round for four or five years for fear of the flu epidemics (YKDFN 1997a; 1997b). A major trail, used in all seasons, crosses Ek'ati (Lac de Gras) and onto Nàk'ooʔaatì (Lac du Sauvage) then continues north towards Kǫ̀k'e Tì (Contwoyto Lake) (Figure 3). Graves and markers are found along the route to the tundra:

> *In the deep past, when Dene used a trail in the barrens, they stopped at intervals to collect large rocks and pile them to mark key places along the route. In the summer of 1997, a Weledeh Yellowknives Elder demonstrated making of a marker by placing a tall angular rock on top of a large boulder pushed inland by ice. Then, he carefully wedged small stones under the top rock, tapping them gently into position, to secure it in place; he expressed confidence that this marker could remain there for hundreds of years if not disturbed by people (YKDFN 1997b: 21).*

[2] Where possible, current spellings for place names provided by the Goyatikǫ̀ Language Society are used throughout this report.

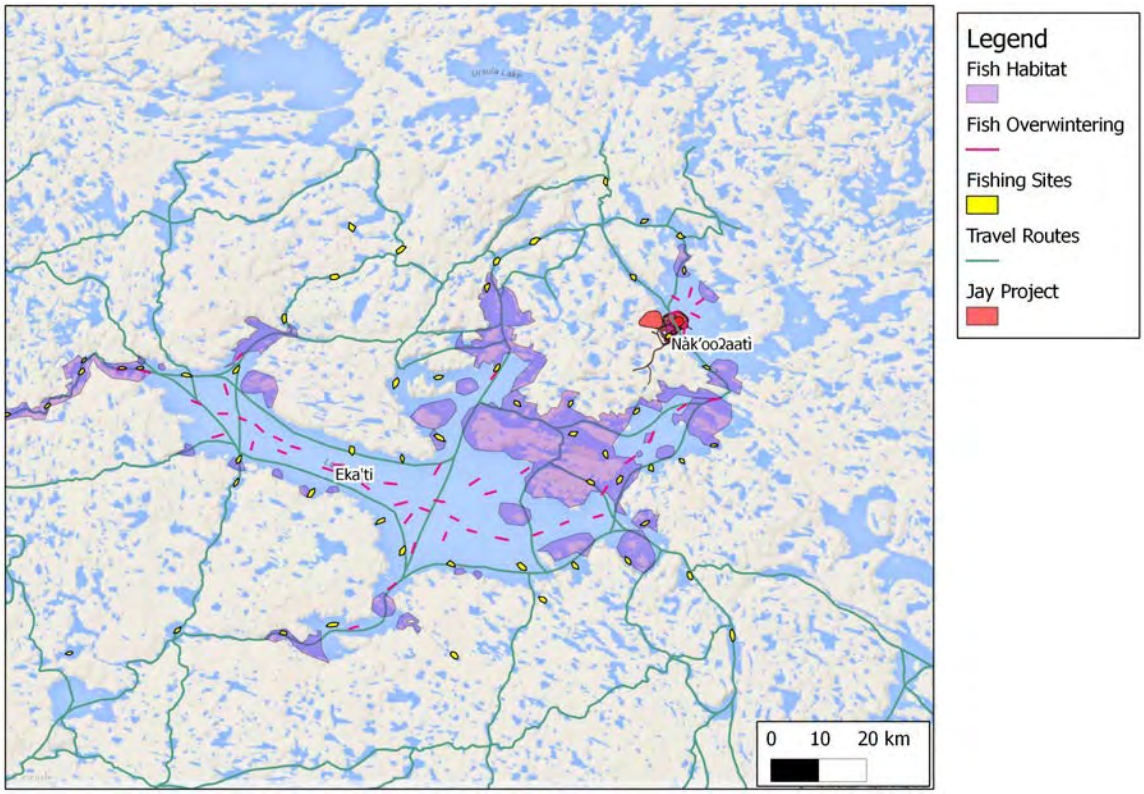

Figure 3 YKDFN Travel Routes and Important Areas for Fish Near Proposed Jay Project

There are many traditional and current use sites in the area around the Ekati and Diavik Diamond Mines that operate adjacent to one another at Ek'ati (Lac de Gras). Presently, these mines are owned and operated by DDEC in joint venture with Rio Tinto (for the Diavik Diamond Mine). Also located within Chief Drygeese Territory is the Snap Lake Diamond Mine (operated by De Beers). In addition, DeBeers and Mountain Province Diamonds are developing the Gahcho Kué Project (Figure 1).

The Federal Environmental Assessment Panel reviewed the NWT Diamonds Project during the early 1990s and submitted their report to the Minister of DIAND and the Minister of the Environment on June 1, 1996. Meanwhile, from 1995 to 1997, the Yellowknives Dene First Nation's Elders Advisory Council gathered and analyzed traditional knowledge data for the region as a result of increased mineral exploration and development on Chief Drygeese Territory. Their report, "A Traditional Knowledge Study of Ek'ati" (herein, 1997 TK Study of Ek'ati), was submitted to the Federal government for review in the environmental assessment of Ek'ati (then called the *NWT Diamonds Project)*

However, at the time, the Federal government's decision to allow these developments on the traditional lands of the Yellowknives Dene did not take into consideration the 54 recommendations documented in the TK Study of Ek'ati, nor did the government consider

the baseline environmental data for the Ek'ati area gathered during numerous interviews with YKDFN knowledge holders. Appendix A contains these original recommendations.[3]

Now today, with plans to continue expanding diamond mining, DDEC provided funding to the YKDFN to carry out an updated TK Study with a focus on the proposed Jay Project. Seventeen years after the 1997 TK Study of Ek'ati, the questions considered in the current study by the YKDFN are as follows:

- Are the recommendations of the TK Study of Ek'ati still valid?
- Do the "dire predictions" contained in the Report still reflect the attitudes and beliefs of YKDFN Elders?
- Is the baseline environmental data contained in the audio and video tape recordings used in the production of the TK Study of Ek'ati valid for the Jay Project?
- Are there gaps in the data that can be addressed by further analysis, further knowledge holder interviews and renewed discussions?

As DDEC intends to proceed with the development of the Jay Project, it is critical that the 1997 TK Study of Ek'ati is revisited and integrated into current and future discussions. In addition, results of the TK Study carried out in 2015 for the area of the proposed Jay Project, on Nàk'ooʔaatì (Lac du Sauvage) and near Ek'ati (Lac de Gras) must also be meaningfully considered. Together, results from these two seminal events will provide important guidance to DDEC such that both TK and western science can be considered equally in the EA process.

[3] The numbering of the recommendations in YKDFN 1997 contains an error whereby two different recommendations are given the designation of "Recommendation #2-D-4" (YKDFN 1997: xiv). In the current report, the second "Recommendation #2-D-4" is corrected to "Recommendation #2-D-5" and edits to all following recommendations are made accordingly (i.e. Recommendation #2-D-5 to #2-D-16).

3.0 Methods

The Yellowknives Dene First Nation, with the assistance of Trailmark, began work on the 2015 TK Study with a site visit to the area of the proposed Jay Project to enable Elders/knowledge holders to see firsthand the impacts of diamond mining in the area and to consider possible impacts of the Jay Project. The site visit was carried out on August 11, 2014, and photographs and notes taken during the visit were entered into the YKDFN internal Database Management System (developed by Trailmark Systems). During the site visit, four Elders/knowledge holders and YKDFN's Traditional Knowledge Specialist visited previously documented archaeological sites and discussed the traditional and current use of the area.

YKDFN and Trailmark researchers reviewed materials related to the 1995-97 TK Study of Ek'ati and produced English language summaries for key parts of these records, including references to the area where the Jay Project is proposed. In addition, the following questions guided the review:

- Is the baseline environmental data contained in the audio and video tape recordings used in the production of the TK Study of Ek'ati valid for the Jay Project?
- Are there gaps in the data that can be addressed by further analysis, further knowledge holder interviews and renewed discussions?

Materials reviewed for relevance to the Jay Project include notes, transcripts and reports are detailed in the Interviews Cited section at the end of this report and include more than thirty documents.

It was not possible to listen to audio material or video material from the 1990s, and they had not been transcribed; however, photographs of the Nàk'ooʔaatì (Lac du Sauvage) and Ek'ati (Lac de Gras) area taken during site visits in the 1990s were examined and scanned.

Following the site visit on August 11, 2014 and review of materials from the TK Study of Ek'ati, a day-long workshop was held at the Council chambers in Dettah on March 24, 2015, with participation from Elders familiar with the Ek'ati (Lac de Gras) area including: Alfred Baillargeon, Judy Charlo, Eddie Sikyea and George Tatsiechele. Fred Sangris facilitated the meeting with assistance from Randy Freeman and Natasha Thorpe. Lena Drygeese interpreted. The purpose of the workshop was to provide a high-level overview of the Jay Project, present findings from the site tour, document TK and TLU related to the Ek'ati (Lac de Gras) area, and review and update the recommendations of the TK Study of Ek'ati. Notes taken at the workshop are contained in Appendix A. The following questions guided the workshop participants:

- Are the recommendations of the TK Study of Ek'ati still valid?
- Do the "dire predictions" contained in the Report still reflect the attitudes and beliefs of YKDFN Elders?

Results from the review of the 54 recommendations, proposed edits, outstanding questions and supporting quotes were documented (Appendix B). Notes from the workshop were reviewed and entered into Trailmark for future reference, an abbreviated version of which is included in this report (Appendix C). Appendix D contains a key of English and Taltsą̀ot'ıné names for places in Chief Drygeese Territory used throughout this report. Maps were marked during the workshop but the data were not included in the current report due to cultural sensitivities.

The structure of this report mirrors the 1995-1997 TK Study of Ek'ati, the recommendations of which are categorized as follows:

- General (Recommendation #1)
    - A – Ancestral Evidence of Weledeh Yellowknives (Recommendations #2, #2-A-1 to #2-A-11)
    - B – *Ndeh* (i.e. the environment: land, animals, fish birds, plants) and the peoples' continues use of their traditional lands
- General (Recommendations #2-B-1 to #2-B-3)
- Animals (Recommendations #2-B-4 to #2-B-7)
- Caribou (Recommendations #2-B-8 to #2-B-12)
- Fish (Recommendations #2-B-13 to #2-B-16)
- Protection of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights (Recommendations #2-B-17 to #2-B-19)
- Water (i.e. Ek'ati, streams flowing into and out of the lake, and groundwater (Recommendations #2-C-1 to #2-C-6)
- Water of land as a result of construction (Recommendations #2-D-1 to #2-D-4)
- Eskers (Recommendations #2-D-5 to #2-D-6)
- Misery Site (Recommendations #2-D-7 to #2-D-10)
- Winter Roads (Recommendations #2-D-11 to #2-D-16)

4.0 Historical Overview: Ancestral Evidence of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation

> *Weledeh Yellowknives' occupation of the barrens is ancient. In their language, the people refer to the place, not as a 'barren' or lifeless land – for they know that is not true – but simply as lands that are wide and open (YKDFN 1997a: 35).*

A key focus of the interviews carried out between 1995 and 1997 was the ongoing relationship between the Yellowknives Dene and their land. This relationship with and to land ultimately led to eleven specific recommendations regarding ancestral evidence in the 1997 TK Study of Ek'ati (Appendix A, Recommendations #2-A-1 to #2-A-11). Each of these recommendations remains relevant today, even where there are enforcement challenges or the specifics of the proposed mining development are different.

The interviews of the 1990s succinctly address the historic activity of the Yellowknife Dene in the Ek'ati area:

> *In the past and until very recently, Weledeh Yellowknives Dene spent the majority of each year in the open spaces of the barrens north of the treeline. The traditional territory of these people and their T'satsǫot'inę relatives extended from what is now called Great Slave Lake to the Coppermine River and, on rare occasions as far as the Arctic coast. The lake identified on official maps as Contwoyto [Kǫ̀k'e Tì] is called by Weledeh Yellowknives Dene "Lake with many camps", referring to the winter hunting settlements of their forefathers (YKDFN 1997a: iv-v).*

> *Somewhere on Egati [Ek'ati] is another camp that is like a small village; people returned to this camp every year to melt [caribou] fat; there are burials at this camp too; but the Elders are not sure where this camp is located (Crapeau et al. Interview, Aug. 12, 1997).*

> *Leaving caches of meat for the families who could stay in summer camps, the hunters headed farther north to caribou migrating south through the lakes—[Ewàdehtì] Courageous, [Nǫndıka Tì] Macka , [Ek'ati] Lac de Gras, [Nàk'ooɂaatì[Lac du Sauvage, and the Coppermine River (YKDFN 1997a: 8).*

The 1997 report addresses the inadequacy of archaeological finds as a sole means of establishing the full extent of the Yellowknives Dene presence and use of the land:

> *Very little evidence of the Dene can be found because the peoples cared for their lands so carefully, to ensure that their childrens' children could continue to live and survive on them. The Dene have always taken care not to damage the land, to use only what they needed, carrying their goods with them. Therefore, little evidence - particularly evidence in the form of damage—exists of the peoples indigenous to lands in the barrens before industrial developers and governments began to take an interest in them (YKDFN 1997a: 13-14).*

For the Yellowknives, the land, and travel through the land, are experienced together as a source of sustenance. These experiences and ways of being have long shaped life, travel, practical skills, intellectual paradigms and spiritual beliefs within the context of changing seasons, the growth of plants and the hunting of animals. "Since time immemorial"[4] is a phrase used frequently to express the depth and longevity of this bond:

> *Where the people have been, how they have used their lands, and what changes the people have observed are remembered by the people: that is the essence of the traditional knowledge of peoples (born) to their lands. This knowledge is passed from an experienced generation to the next, so that the peoples learn accumulated patterns of change. They use this knowledge to plan the paths they need to take to ensure their survival (YKDFN 1997a: 14).*
>
> *Seasonal activities of Weledeh Yellowknives families between their winter camps in the barrens and their summer fish camps around Great Slave Lake have been the peoples' way of life for thousands of generations (YKDFN 1997a: 14).*
>
> *Every member of Weledeh Yellowknives families who could walk in the barrens harvested wood, water, food, feathers, and wind-blown musk-ox hair. Women, children, and old people who could no longer travel on winter trails collected berries, medicine plants, moss, lichen, seeds, fish eggs, and bird eggs. They set willow and babiche nets in lakes to catch fish and in shrubs to catch ptarmigan. They set snares and nets for water fowl, and snares for rabbit and other small animals. Youth and adult hunters who did not have to stay with young children harvested large animals for meat and trapped larger fur-bearers for pelts and sometimes meat. Dene men snared, trapped, and hunted large animals (YKDFN 1997a: 46).*

[4] As this report is written in English and based on English transcripts, some of the richness of this phrase may be lost in translation.

This repetitive harsh life of work against the backdrop of the land also provided a forum for social interaction, entertainment and a space for ceremony and religious practice:

> *Summer…was time for visiting, celebrating and sharing information…There were hand-games after a day's work was finished. Women made sinew for sewing and boiled fresh berries and plants for dyes; they collected seeds, quills, fish scales, ochre, and feathers for decorating clothing, bags and cases for hunting tools. Around the fires in the long evenings, the women sewed and Elders retold the people's stories, passing them on to the younger generations (YKDFN 1997a: 82-83).*

It is apparent from the interviews conducted in 1997, and their associated maps, that Ek'ati (Lac de Gras), Nàk'ooʔaatì (Lac du Sauvage) and surrounding areas have been frequently inhabited, hunted and fished because of the abundance of animals and fish. Of particular note is the caribou crossing, camp, fishing site, and open ice at an important traditional site where Ek'ati (Lac de Gras) and Nàk'ooʔaatì (Lac du Sauvage) meet known as "Nàk'ooʔaa (the Narrows)" (Figure 2). Good camp sites generally are identified as having good water, fish, game, fuel and berries. As shown in Figure 3, these places are likely to be near the larger lakes—Ewàdehtì (Courageous Lake), Nǫndıka Tì (MacKay Lake) Ek'ati (Lac de Gras), and Nàk'ooʔaatì (Lac du Sauvage) —where travel across the ice was easy and swift currents meant good fishing.

The Ek'ati area is mentioned many times in the 1990s interviews. Maps produced at the time, record use of the Ek'ati (Lac de Gras) and Nàk'ooʔaatì (Lac du Sauvage) areas for hunting, fishing, trapping and the day-to-day activities that accompanied this work. The density of trails passing across Nàk'ooʔaa (the Narrows) is a visual indication of this use of the geographic feature by animals and people (Figure 3). At the time of the interviews, elders noted that only one third of the people who used this area were present to give input when the map was created—the other two thirds were on the land.

Many of the 1990s interviews underscore the importance of Nàk'ooʔaa (the Narrows) as a land passage and site where people gathered. More about Nàk'ooʔaa (the Narrows) is considered in Section 5.0 through 7.0.

> *At Nàk'ooʔaa (the Narrows), there, there is a grave…We saw it. It was all tied up in roots, a cross. Jonas and Isadore, we all went on a trip and walked all along there. I'm sure there is more than one little burial site around those areas [near the proposed Jay Project], but we do not know how they came to be buried there. I'm sure there are a lot more burial sites (Alfred Baillargeon, Jay Project Workshop, March 2015).*

Interdependence with the animals is so important to the Yellowknives Dene that animals are sacred and people have animal spirits to guide the interaction necessary to maintain human life:

> *Every person or family gets guidance from a different animal; they cannot harm, destroy, or harvest this animal; if they tried to harm the animal, they would not be able to defend themselves from it. For example, if a person receives guidance from the bear and tries to kill the bear, the bear would harm or kill them instead. (Crapeau et al. Interview, Aug. 12, 1997).*

On a pragmatic level, the reciprocity between people and animals is expressed as a deep concern and responsibility for the animals' well-being:

> *The animals have depended on the land for thousands of years and it is up to us to maintain this land for them, to protect them. We must also protect animals because we (the Weledeh) depend on them for survival (Crapeau et al. Interview, Aug. 8, 1997).*

> *We survive by the animals: all our ancestors lived by the animals on the land, and the animals were healthy. If we don't take care of the animals, if the mining starts up and the animals get contaminated, the people will also (Weledeh Yellowknives Elder Joseph Charlo, Ndilo [Ndılǫ]: CARC 1995 in YKDFN 1997a: 20).*

Workshop participants in March 2015 echoed the assertions made in the mid-1990s, that the YKDFN have long been in relationship with their territory and continue to care deeply:

> *All these people that used to live there, at the camp, they would keep it very clean. All this area, our ancestors had lived in the area, and it looks clean when we are out there because they took care of the land. Today, it is not like that. Things they didn't want to use anymore, used to be disposed of properly, burned or buried. Now it is just thrown away, in the water. I was young at the time but I remember what it was like (Judy Charlo, Jay Project Workshop, March 2015).*

> *I used to go out on the land trapping with my family. We knew where the wildlife was, we followed the animals for survival. We had a good time, clean air, everything. The old timers are not with us anymore and we have to pay for everything that we need. We have to pay for our water and it is used by everybody (Judy Charlo, Jay Project Workshop, March 2015).*

> *When I think back about traveling with dog teams, everything was pristine. Water, land, trees…everything. I remember how I used to look when I travelled (Alfred Baillargeon, Jay Project Workshop, March 2015).*

Indeed, it is the sense of responsibility and deep caring that first brought the Yellowknives Dene to negotiate with Canada in signing Treaty 8.

4.1 Treaty 8

The traditional ways in which the Yellowknives Dene (*Taltsą́ot'ıné*[5]) were in relation with their lands fundamentally changed in the summer of 1900, when the terms of Treaty 8 were agreed to with the Canadian government. It is the mutual understanding of the terms of this agreement that provide a framework for co-operative and amicable use of the land today. The interviews conducted with Elders from 1995–1997 document their detailed knowledge and understanding of the Treaty terms pertaining to shared land use. Material from these interviews also characterizes differing understandings relating to verbal and written agreements between the Yellowknives and the Crown.

> *Early in 1900, officials from the Government of Canada came to the Weledeh fishing camps to ask the people to meet mid-summer in Denínu Kų́ę́. Representatives…gathered there in July…For two days, the peoples spoke among themselves before agreeing to have a peace and friendship agreement with the Crown . . . T'satsąot'inę recall the terms of Treaty 8 differently from the written versions Canada uses. The terms in the written version make reference to things that held no meaning for the peoples, such as extinguishment and expropriation. Akaitcho's peoples understand the Treaty to mean that they could go on living their lives on their own land in their own way as long as the sun shines, the river flows, and the grass grows (YKDFN 1997a: 11).*

Elders indicated a shared sentiment that in more than the 100 years since it's signing, the Treaty has not lived up to the people's expectations. In the early 1900s, as prospectors began to move into the Great Slave Lake area, Elders reported that the terms of the Treaty were not enforced. Now, almost one hundred years since the making of Treaty 8, the peoples' lands in the barrens are experiencing development on an unprecedented scale:

> *The rights of Weledeh Yellowknives Dene are being ignored: indigenous people have been chased off their own lands (YKDFN 1997a: 22).*

> *There are other, similar stories of uneven sharing between the indigenous people and the incomers. While Akaitcho's peoples agreed at Treaty in 1900…to share their lands, the incomers have rarely shared with the people their profits earned from the people's land (YKDFN 1997a: 24).*

[5] Other spellings include *T'satsąot'inę* and *T'satsaotine* although *Taltsą́ot'ıné* is the accepted form by the Goyatikǫ̀ Language Society as of August, 2015.

> *When Treaty 8 signed by our former Chief Sizeh Drygeese of the Yellowknives with the Crown in Right of Great Britain, the Queen requested the right to live in our territory in a spirit of coexistence. The Weledeh Yellowknives continue to maintain the Treaty relationship that is binding on the state of Canada and any party who enters into our territory. Therefore, it is recommended that a percentage of profits, jobs and compensation for loss of land use go to the Weledeh Yellowknives Dene First Nation (YKDFN 1997a: vii).*

The Elders expressed frustration and mistrust today about diamond mines which is partly grounded in their expectations not being met through Treaty 8. This legacy carries over into current discussions about mineral exploration and development on Chief Drygeese Territory:

> *Now in the barrens today, they are making money out of our area. They send us just a little money. How can we help our own people if the government doesn't help us? They think we are stray dogs all over this land. They make as much money as they can from our land and then just leave. Then they go buy the fancy stuff down south. What do we end up with? Hardly anything!. . . Today we are being taken advantage of, just like the first time the white people came and built houses everywhere. In the past and today, the white people are still taking advantage of us and our land (Alfred Baillargeon, Jay Project Workshop, March 2015).*

The implications of such mistrust are further elaborated in Section 6.0.

5.0 Traditional Knowledge

This section elaborates on the observations, concerns and recommendations documented in the 1997 TK Study of Ek'ati with Elders of the Yellowknives Dene, combined with guidance provided by participants of the March 2015 workshop in Dettah to consider the following:

- Are the recommendations of the TK Study of Ek'ati still valid?
- Do the "dire predictions" contained in the Report still reflect the attitudes and beliefs of YKDFN Elders?
- Is the baseline environmental data contained in the audio and video tape recordings used in the production of the TK Study of Ek'ati valid for the Jay Project?
- Are there gaps in the data that can be addressed by further analysis, further knowledge holder interviews and renewed discussions?

Appendix B provides the original 54 recommendations and highlights their relevance today along with suggested changes and supporting quotations.

Oral histories recorded in the 1990s draw on the knowledge, narratives, and perspectives of Yellowknives Dene who grew up in the barrens in the first half of the twentieth century, before the coming of diamond mines. These interviews provided a starting point from which to assess the cumulative and residual effects of mining on the land and culture of the original inhabitants. The Elders expressed their fears and predictions about possible impacts as well as provided precise and practical recommendations for co-operative activity and mitigation initiatives. These efforts demonstrated both a willingness and capacity to provide meaningful contributions to environmental management in Chief Drygeese Territory:

> *When we talk about the mines on our land, we have concerns. I remember when the elders used to be on our land. We never used to see anybody around the [Ek'ati] (Lac de Gras] area…Today I am still talking about water. I am upset I am paying for water delivery. I did not ruin the land or all those areas around the mine! All the chemicals they used! I was really concerned. We did not do this! The leaders here, they did not like what the white people were doing. . . They used our land as a dumping ground (Judy Charlo, Jay Project Workshop, March 2015).*

This report pays particular attention to information gleaned from past traditional knowledge initiatives and new workshop results relating directly to the Ekati and Diavik Mines, Nàk'ooʔaatì [Lac du Sauvage] and Ek'ati [Lac de Gras] areas.

The spatial scope of the research focused on Ek'ati (Lac de Gras) and Nàk'ooʔaatì [Lac du Sauvage] and surrounding areas. The review of information for inclusion in this report highlights Nàk'ooʔaa (the Narrows) between Ek'ati (Lac de Gras) and Nàk'ooʔaatì [Lac du Sauvage] as a hub of economic, biological and cultural importance. Nàk'ooʔaa (the Narrows)

are located approximately 6 km from the proposed Jay Project (Figure 2). An important esker, a vital animal passageway and site of burials, meat caches and animals burrows, is situated between the established Misery Mine and the proposed Jay pipe excavation (Figure 2). The esker corridor is within 400 m of both mines at certain points and understood to be critical habitat for several wildlife species, particularly barren-ground caribou.

5.1 *Ndeh* or "The Land"

The YKDFN use the word *ndeh* meaning "the land" as a comprehensive term roughly equivalent to the word "environment." *Ndeh* includes the soil, plants and trees, the air, water and weather, and the animals, fish, birds and people who use these resources as well as the spiritual connections between all of these living elements. Dene peoples are born to their lands and in that sense are a part of their lands. From generation to generation, the Dene are taught to respect the land because it has always been the source of their survival. Respect is paid in many ways: by using without damaging; by not wasting any parts of animals, birds and fish; by offering to pay the land; and by learning to live with the land and its changes without bringing change.

Appreciation for *ndeh* has long been understood to have a strong spiritual foundation:

> *The rare earth metals at Thor Lake are very powerful. We used to avoid that area, the Elders used to say, we avoided that area because they know there was something over there. Now today, they think that we don't know anything. (Alfred Baillargeon, Jay Project Workshop, 2015).*

This repetitive, hard, even harsh life of work against the backdrop of the land also provided a forum for social interaction, entertainment and a location for ceremony and religious practice. Excerpts from the 1997 Elders interviews demonstrate the reverence and care with which the people regarded the *ndeh*:

> *There are as many as fifty portages on most of the routes between Weledeh-Cheh and the barrens. Portage trails used for hundreds of generations of Weledeh Yellowknives Dene are winding trails: if a tree is in the peoples path, they go around it. If families travel when there is snow on the ground, the people usually walk the portage on snowshoes, guiding the dogs that are in their traditional, narrow harnesses. Some branches and small bush were broken by toboggans pulled by dogs: they would be picked up by families following the trail and used for firewood (YKDFN 1997a: 8).*

Knowledge of *ndeh* has created highly specialized knowledge of eskers, long narrow gravel ridges, as a central landscape feature in the barrens. People understand that eskers provide easy, unhindered travel for people and animals. Eskers are known to provide shelter from the wind on the leeward side, vantages over the land, and safety from predators. The ground is soft and is used for meat and fish caches, or for burials. Eskers are also good terrain for animals such as foxes and rabbits to build burrows. A large esker is situated to

the west of the proposed Jay Project. This same esker and the importance of its many logistical, biological, cultural functions was discussed at length in the interviews and discussions in the 1990s, as the Misery Mine was being considered for construction to the west of the esker.

Since the Ek'ati (Lac de Gras) area was a main camping area for people to harvest caribou for thousands of years, people understand that there will be many burials in the eskers. The YKDFN cannot identify all burial sites although efforts are being made to identify as many as possible through stories, memories and investigations of the land:

> *Typical locations for Weledeh Yellowknives camp sites are at open channels in winter, along shoreline, especially on islands and points from which a wide expanse of land can be seen, and where eskers meet shores. Travellers would walk along eskers, following them just as migrating animals do. Many graves are located in eskers, and Elders discourage the people from camping in these areas. Families try to camp behind high places that could act as a natural windscreen. Caches storing food are located near such sites so that travellers could share the harvesting done by people who had moved through the area (YKDFN 1997a: 42).*

5.1.1 Concerns

Under the terms of Treaty 8, the YKDFN understood that the land was not a resource for exploitation by one party, but a source of life to be accepted in trust to ensure basic survival of *ndeh*. Deep concern over the long term detrimental consequences of mining were voiced many times by the Elders during the 1990s interviews and again in March 2015:

> *Weledeh Yellowknives Dene know the barrens are unspoiled, mostly untouched by industrial development and the pollutants associated with them, as Weledeh-Cheh [Yellowknife Bay] was before the 1930s. Perhaps the biggest differences between the southern and northern parts of the people's territory is the scale of the mining planned. No mine in Weledeh-Cheh is as large as each of the vast open-pit diamond mines will be. Large scale mining developments around Ek'ati are already changing the land and waters on which many Dene families have and continue to rely for meat, fish, hides, and fur. . .Weledeh Yellowknives Elders indicate that mining is not a good idea for the barrenlands (YKDFN 1997a: 25).*

To express the magnitude of their sense of insignificance in the face of mining development, Elders voiced traditional spiritual beliefs:

> *The wisest of [our] Elders have always taught their peoples not to dig deep under their lands, as digging could release the evils captured and imprisoned there in the time of Yamoria (YKDFN 1997: 17).*

In the 20 years prior to the 1997 interviews, imbalance in exercise and authority over use of the land brought profound and disturbing change in every aspect of people's relationships to the *ndeh*:

> *The people's occupation and full use of the area stopped only when non-indigenous development occurred and damaged the people's land to such a degree that they no longer felt comfortable in their traditional places along the river banks (YKDFN 1997a: 7).*

As in the past, the Yellowknives Dene continue to be concerned about the *ndeh* and insist that the *ndeh* continues to be respected, cared for, monitored and healed.

5.1.2 Recommendations

Concerns for *ndeh* led to recommendations in the 1990s that continue to be relevant today, specifically, that Yellowknives monitor their lands, mining companies take responsibility for damage through regeneration and remediation, and provide compensation for damages where necessary (Appendix A, Recommendations #2-B-1 to #2-B-3).

The YKDFN has long insisted on monitoring lands in Chief Drygeese Territory. For example, the monitoring authority for the Dene people was highlighted:

> *Mining companies must use Weledeh Yellowknives Dene land owners to monitor impacts from mining operations on the water quality, plants, fish, and animals (including fish, birds, wildlife) and all roads, airstrips, barges, snow machines and other mechanical impacts to be used by mine companies (YKDFN 1997a, #2-B-1: ix).*

As a result of previous development in the Ek'ati (Lac de Gras) area, Elders predicted that Nàk'ooʔaa (the Narrows) between Ek'ati (Lac de Gras) and Nàk'ooʔaatì (Lac du Sauvage) would become more important as a crossing for caribou:

> *Since the caribou that have traditionally crossed Egati Dea and swam to the opposite mainland can no longer cross the island because of the mine site, more caribou are forced to cross the channel between [Ek'ati] Lac de Gras and Nàk'ooʔaatì [Lac du Sauvage]. This crossing is dangerous for caribou; there are many crags in the rocks where caribou break their legs or get trapped and die (YKDFN 1997a: 46).*

Weledeh suggested in their recommendations that they not only monitor, but also remediate the problem at the crossing for the caribou:

> *Mining companies will have to pay Weledeh Yellowknives Dene to improve the [N]arrows [Nàk'ooʔaa] between Ek'ati and [Nàk'ooʔaatì] Lac du Sauvage, since increasing numbers of caribou will use Nàk'ooʔaa (the Narrows) to avoid the mining operations (YKDFN 1997a:xi).*

It is apparent that the intent of the Elders in participating in the 1990s interviews was to document "baseline" information so that this vital area would not be further developed:

> *Nàk'ooɔaa (the Narrows) between Ek'ati and [Nàk'ooɔaatì] Lac du Sauvage near here is considered to be an important area for the wildlife. We have to document that so that mines will not be developed near there. And along that area where there is a long stretch of sand (Misery Point), where there are grave sites, is the long stretch of esker that the wildlife use during migration season. Those are the areas that the mining companies want us to research and document so that those areas will not be used. They said, they don't want to use all the land, but they want this kind of information documented for future mine development (Betsina et al. Interview, Aug. 11, 1997).*

5.2 Animals

Hunting and trapping animals has always been central to the people's survival and quality of life. This is reiterated in the 1990s interviews with Elders and continues to be a central discussion today. As in the past, hunting is vitally important to a life that is dictated by the seasonal availability of animals:

> *Joseph told Isadore that his father worked hard trapping and hunting to support his family and to gain wealth; he travelled all over the land, he travelled to the Egati area, to Fort Ridley [Wrigley], to the east arm of GSL, Fort Resolution, to Fort Smith, and up the Slave River and Rocher River; he loved life (Isadore Sangris Interview Aug. 11, 1997).*

Trapping and selling furs to white people became important in the 1820s and resulted in more widespread use of the barrens by various peoples:

> *Following the peace of 1823 and encouraged by Akeh-Cho, the Tłı̨ Chǫ̀ began to travel in winter into the barrens traditionally used solely by T'satsǫot'inę, in order to trap, mostly white fox. Trapping in the barrens for the fur trade changed the land-use patterns of T'satsǫot'inę, including Weledeh Yellowknives Dene, who began to share their traditional territory with many peoples (YKDFN 1997b: 19).*

Elders emphasized the importance of respecting all animal migration routes:

> *Elders discouraged families from living where animals, especially moose, would come because the animals would stop coming there. Otter and mink, for instance, leave a river where people camp or settle on the banks; moose eventually leave an area where people stay. Thus, Weledeh Yellowknives families did not stay or build log homes in such places as the present day Giant mine site, the townsite of Yellowknife, or recreation areas along the Ingraham Trial. In the past at these places, the people could find plentiful caribou*

(October to December, March and April), fur-bearing animals all winter, and moose, fish, berries, plants, and trees vital to survival year-round (YKDFN 1997a: 5).

Hunting caribou was a key discussion topic both during the 1990s interviews and the March 2015 workshop. Several interviews confirm that Ek'ati (Lac de Gras) and Nàk'ooʔaa (the Narrows) have long been important locations for hunting, trapping and the sustenance and social activities that were part of this seasonal round:

Caribou migration in the fall, summer, summer and fall hunts takes place here by ambush, using wind direction to ambush. Bows and arrows, spears, snares are used, the Weledeh hunters hide themselves behind rocks, boulders, the jagged rocks…taking caribou down one by one, they also have their canoes nearby. They spear caribou while they swim crossing the Narrows [Nàk'ooʔaa] (Isadore Sangris Interview, Aug. 10, 1997).

When you travel on the land, you can see the natural eskers caribou follow to migrate. And where the caribou cross all the lakes and rivers…there's clumps of caribou hair all along the shores,[6] *I know for fact that the hairs were not cut (Drygeese et al. Interview, Aug. 21, 1997).*

This is Whatì the caribou also migrate this way in March. And around Ek'ati and Nodeati [Nǫndıka Tì / Mackay Lake] there are a lot of fox dens in that area. These animals are in the caribou migration route and in the spring around March the caribou migrate through that area, there are a lot of dens around that area. These animals are there because during the migration there are a lot of caribou and their calves which they live off. So the area is black marker (on the map), Nodeati [Nǫndıka Tı / MacKay Lake], Whticho [Whatìcho / Beniah Lake], Whatia, [Whatìa / Drybone Lake], Naeti, Kodeti [Kǫ̀k'e Tì/Contwoyto Lake] and Ek'ati are all important places (Fishbone et al. Interview Aug. 12, 1997).

In winter many people went to Egati [Ek'ati] to trap furs (Elise Liske Interview, June 19, 1997).

In the summer time when people went to the barrens, they portaged all the way to Ek'ati, because they wanted caribou meat. On the way, they would stop at lakes that they knew had good fishing spots. Most of the people had their children with them so sometimes they stayed in one area for a long time—even for one year. Back then only tents were used, if they had built cabins then, there would a lot of old log houses all over the place up to the barrens (Therese Sangris Interview, June 20, 1997).

[6] Note the report cover photo that shows caribou fur on the shoreline.

We used to go hunting at Ekati for caribou with our dog teams (Noel Crookedhand Interview, June 25, 1997).

There are a lot of portage trails all the way to Ekati—we had to be very careful with the birch canoes as they were fragile. Some women would stay behind along the portage routes to wait for us. They would set fish nets and gather fish for dogs and to make dry fish. Some women even hunted for moose or whatever they could kill (Therese Sangris Interview, June 20, 1997).

Caribou remain the main concern related to mining. As explained by Dettah Chief Edward Sangris during technical sessions for the Jay pipe environmental assessment held in Yellowknife in April 2015:

The caribou don't have a navigational aid like the humans do; we cannot direct them to go here and there. No matter how many precautions they put into the traffic management consideration, it will always have an effect on caribou. In my view the footprint for development is getting bigger and the footprint for caribou is getting smaller (CBC News North 2015).

It was mentioned in some 1997 interviews that muskox were no longer hunted. Bear were hunted but are seldom mentioned in the 1997 interviews. White fox and wolves, migrating with the caribou herds were trapped for fur:

Some families stayed near the Weledeh [Wıìlıìdeh / Yellowknife River] year-round. Before mining and town development, some Bathurst caribou used to pass through the area between October and December on their way to wintering grounds to the south of Ni-shi (the North Arm of Great Slave Lake). (YKDFN 1997a: 73).

These caribou could provide Weledeh Yellowknives families with the products necessary for their winter survival (YKDFN 1997a: 73).

Once the people started trapping for the fur trade, Weledeh Yellowknives hunters could make a good living from beaver, marten, muskrat, fox, and other fur-bearers from the lakes along what is now the Ingraham Trail (YKDFN 1997a: 73).

Weledeh-Cheh [Wıìlıìdehcheh / Yellowknife River] was important habitat for moose, caribou, bear, wolf, wolverine, lynx, fox, coyote, fisher, porcupine, otter, muskrat, beaver, mink, marten, and rabbit (YKDFN 1997a: 74)

Until recently, moose were common along the Weledeh [Wıìlıìdeh / Yellowknife River] from its mouth to Weleh Ti [Prosperous Lake] (YKDFN 1997a: 74).

> *One of the most important animals, which the people treat with great respect, is bear, which is hunted and eaten by only certain families (YKDFN 1997a: 74).*
>
> *Fox were abundant near marshes, where their food supply, especially mice, can be found. In the Weledeh area, six kinds of fox were known to the people: one, the blue fox, is now extinct and the silver fox is rare, owing partly to the fur trade (especially through poison used by non-Dene trappers) and partly to the wolf reduction program of the 1940s (YKDFN 1997: 73-74).*
>
> *Even before the fur trade Weledeh Yellowknives Dene made good use of these animals for their fur, meat, sinew, bones—nothing is wasted. Bones, for instance, became tools . . . Moose bones, struck around a tree trunk repeatedly, could cut through to produce logs. Shorter pieces could be obtained by burning a log over a small fire . . . Unused bones . . . were returned to the land, buried to pay respect to the land. (YKDFN 1997: 74).*

One Elder tells an amusing story of being too small to go hunting with the men, but trapping a mink with the help of his mother:

> *Isadore stayed at the camp and helped his mother fish, they had one dog with them at camp; sometimes they caught 80 fish in a net in a day, they mainly caught trout, whitefish, loche, and pike; Isadore also hauled wood, but at this age he had not yet set traps; one day when he checked the net and took the fish, he accidentally forget to take one fish out of the net and this fish attracted a mink to the fishing hole, so Isadore set the one trap that his dad had left behind and tried to catch the mink, he caught it, but he did not know how to kill it so he asked his mom and she showed him the method to kill it (Drygeese et al. Interview, August 15, 1997).*

Muskrat trapping was also a good source of income after the 1820s, furs were traded to white people for other goods and money:

> *Isadore and his family stayed at Duck Lake in 1937 and here he learned to trap and hunt muskrats, he harvested 70 muskrats that spring; during muskrat season they hunted and harvested all day without stopping because the season is short, they cannot let a day go by without harvesting and all members of the family (women and children included) got involved in muskrat trapping and hunting, the people survived this way and it was good because people hunted all winter the caribou and ducks and fish so there was plenty of food; after muskrat hunting season, they paddled around the shorelines with a long stick with a hook at the end to catch pike (they tried to hook/stab? the fish) (Drygeese et al. Interview, August 15, 1997).*

Smaller animals, birds and fish were often hunted by the women and were a 'back-up' if larger animals were not available. Indeed, birds found in the barrens, including ptarmigan, were sometimes as significant as big game animals as a source of food. Since small game could feed a family when caches were dwindling, harvesting small animals and birds became increasingly important. Often, women would provide small game, feeding the family while the men were hunting larger animals.

> *They also killed ptarmigans and rabbits in the barrens; they may have ate squirrels but she is not sure (Elise Liske Interview, Aug. 11, 1997).*

5.2.1 Concerns

In the 1990s, Elders predicted that human habitation and activity would disturb animal habits and patterns. Simply put, the Elders predicted that mining development and impacts to animals would have a negative outcome:

> *Weledeh Yellowknives Elders indicate that mining is not a good idea for the barrenlands…[T]he home of the animals (YKDFN 1997: 25).*

The fear of chemical contamination surfaces in all interviews that discuss caribou and other animals:

> *The caribou herds migrate every season back and forth through all the mining camps. Some will wander into these mining camps. The mines cannot work without the chemicals. These chemicals are so poisonous that trees are dying. Even if we said we don't want a mine to be developed, they will go ahead and open a mine. The caribou is an important part of our food chain, so if the mines are to be developed I want to make sure the chemicals used are monitored. What about the caribou that wander into mining camps and feed off the vegetation? Eventually these chemicals are going to be found in the caribou. And in the future, how are the people going to be affect by eating contaminated meat? We are very concerned about how the mining companies will affect the most important part of our food chain (YKDFN 1997a: 47).*

Elders today express the same core belief as Elders did in the 1990s—that animals should be respected and protected. Concerns for the animals from the effects of development, contaminants, noise, vehicles, and other human activities continue to be heard, much as they were nearly 20 years ago. Key habitats such as calving grounds, eskers and crossings remain areas of concern.

5.2.2 Recommendations

Concerns for *ndeh* led to recommendations that continue to be relevant, specifically, that animals should be trapped and removed, deflected by fencing or noise, protected from human activities, and key habitats should be avoided or protected (Appendix A,

Recommendations 2-B-4 through 2-B-16). As previously discussed, the Yellowknives Dene must continue to be involved in monitoring animal populations, especially caribou.

In 1997, the Elders gave practical recommendations for avoiding harm to the animals by preventing them from wandering into the mining areas:

> *I think the mining camps should be fenced off and there should be a cement casing where chemicals can be stored. I think that's the only solution to protect the caribou. I want the caribou to be well taken care of first. The caribou are not the only animals that roam this land, there are many fur bearing animals that have dens in that area and they also migrate seasonally just as caribou do. As long as the mining companies are careful with the chemicals and protect the caribou, we will be happy. We are not the only people that use caribou anymore, there are a lot of white people who hunt and use caribou. If we eat any contaminated meat and get sick, the mining companies are going to be at fault. If that happens they will hear from us, they will have to compensate the people in some way. But before that happens, they should fence the camp and cement casing should be put in place as soon as they can. Those are my concerns (Fishbone et al. Interview, Aug. 12, 1997).*

> *The island where mining operations are planned should be entirely fenced, leaving a wide corridor (at least 100 metres) around the shore so that wildlife can continue to use the island to rest while crossing the lake (YKDFN 1997a: x).*

The concept of fencing to protect animals continues to be important today:

> *The ribbons used to try to deflect caribou were suggested by the Tlicho, but didn't work and probably attracted caribou instead. We want instead a 15 km radius, fencing around the airport site and the camp. Near Great Bear Lake, caribou got caught up in fencing and died. We are wondering how it would work to use markers to deflect caribou? Is there something different that we can try? Should this still be a recommendation? (Fred Sangris, Jay Project Workshop, March 2015).*

> *Anything, any kinds of fencing, has to be taken down when the mine is closed. In the past some fencing was done, some kind of wiring. One time we went to BHP campsite and close to the airport there were lots of caribou and the plane couldn't land. The workers chased the caribou to another area, but after that there was fencing put up. After the mines close, they have to take the fencing down. Anything they brought to the mine site to put up, they have to take it away (Alfred Baillargeon, Jay Project Workshop, March 2015).*

Among the 1997 recommendations was the request that caribou be deflected from the vicinity of the mines by implementing a traditional practice for moving the animals in a certain direction:

> *To herd caribou into one direction, into their snares, Dene traditionally piled stones to resemble human figures into 2 rows. Diavik should fund a project whereby the indigenous people improve the [N]arrows [Nàk'ooʔaa] habitat for migrating caribou by filling gaps in the rocks (Drygeese et al. Interview, August 15, 1997).*

> *In order to direct caribou away from the mine sites, the mining companies should fund (work with) the indigenous people to erect such stone markers from Misery Point north to Paul Lake, along both sides of the mining road, and from east of 'T' Lake along the esker to Echo Bay camp. (The markers on the esker will decrease the number of caribou migrating north onto Egati Island where the Diavik site is located.) The mining companies should also fund the indigenous people to monitor the markers for 3 seasons. After 3 seasons, during which the indigenous people stand near the markers and chase the caribou away; the caribou will instinctively avoid the markers (Drygeese et al. Interview, August 15, 1997).*

The Yellowknives Dene have long used deflection techniques to guide caribou. This understanding informed the recommendations made in the 1990s and affirmed in 2015:

> *Dene sometimes deflected caribou from their trails, herding them toward hunters poised in areas enclosed by 'caribou ropes' made from twisted plant roots and hung between rocks or low-growing shrubs. To persuade caribou to change their route, the people trail stone markers along the trail with pieces of hide wedged between rocks to flap noisily in the wind. When caribou came along, some of the people stood beside the markers, waving their arms and shouting. These unusual and unsettling actions deflected some caribou into the spears and arrows of the hunters. Gradually, the people learned that, if they continued their deflection technique at a place along the migration trail for three successive migrations, caribou would adjust their path. For the fourth and subsequent migrations, caribou would follow the trail the people had deflected them onto rather than their previous trail (YKDFN 1997b: 28).*

Elders today suggest that deflection is important, but add that the effectiveness of means such as flagging or stone cairns should be discussed with a larger group of YKDFN Elders (Jay Project Workshop, March 2015).

Protection or removal of the animals from the noise and pollution of mine sites during sensitive life-stages was also advised:

> *Weledeh Yellowknives Elders strongly recommend that all caribou calving grounds become Protected Areas (YKDFN 1997a, #2-B-11: 88).*

> *There should be no vehicle movement or blasting or other dust—and noise producing activities during bird and animal migrations and birthing periods (YKDFN 1997a, #2-B-5: 85).*

> *Before there is any more disturbance of Ek'ati Ndi…all animals—including fox and ground squirrel—must be live trapped and moved to a suitable habitat away from Diavik and BHP mine sites (YKDFN 1997a, #2-B-4: 85).*

The Elders had a final suggestion with regard to regulation of the harvesting done by mine employees:

> *Mining Employees come to Egati to work and earn income. If employees wish to hunt and fish, they should go to hunting and fishing lodges that are nearby (Drygeese et al. Interview, August 21, 1997).*

The Yellowknives Dene understand that this recommendation has been adopted at all of the mine sites in the Ek'ati (Lac de Gras) Area.

5.3 Fish

Fish are a relatively reliable source of food in the barrens. During certain seasons, fishing and the preparation of fish was a task generally completed by women, while men were further afield, trapping and hunting. The importance of Ek'ati (Lac de Gras), Nàk'ooʔaatì (Lac du Sauvage) and Nàk'ooʔaa (the Narrows) were highlighted as very productive, but sensitive, fishing locations:

> *…the point of land at this channel is called Na ko ah (means 'standing willow'), Lac du Sauvage is called Na ko ah ti [Nàk'ooʔaatì]—'standing willow lake,' (Crookedhand et al. Interview, July 19, 1997).*

> *Fish camps and hunting camps are located everywhere on Egati; hunting and fishing is done on the whole lake, it is not possible to point to specific camps; camps were generally placed on islands, at mouths of rivers, and at channels (narrows) (Crookedhand et al. Interview, July 19, 1997).*

> *In the past, there were lots of fish in these lakes…there used to be a fish camp, they used to take the guts and throw them in the water just like that; that is how it used to be. (Judy Charlo, Jay Project Workshop, March 2015)*

In 1997, important spawning and fishing areas were identified and discussed (Figure 3):

> *The shallow, rocky shore along Misery Point is important fish spawning habitat (Drygeese et al. Interview, Aug. 21, 1997).*

> *The other food harvested in large amounts by the people in the barrens is fish. The people know that the large lakes have good fishing with lots of old and very large fish. Shallows in these lakes, including Ek'ati, had important fall spawning areas, which the people respect. In fall, fish were thin and not good for harvesting. In winter, to add to summer dryfish for their dogs, the people harvested fish at holes in the ice, often at channels where a swift current kept the water open, visiting their nets up to four times a day. Many of the people's traditional names for places in the barrens refer to such open channels, which provide the only access to drinking water in the frozen landscape. Two of the most important channels are at Mackay Lake [Nǫndıka Tì] (the traditional name of the lake is the name of this channel) and Nàk'ooʔaa (the Narrows) between [Nàk'ooʔaatì] Lac du Sauvage and [E'kati] Lac de Gras (YKDFN 1997a: 46-47).*

In Ek'ati, favourite fishing areas stretched from Ekècho Ndìa (Egati Island) to the east until Nàk'ooʔaatì (Lac du Sauvage); people fished around the islands and in the bays.

Perhaps most significant to consider today is that the shallow shoreline area in the bay included in the proposed development of Jay Project was identified as key spawning habitat in the 1990s (Figure 3). Further discussion during the March 2015 workshop confirmed that this area has long been important for fish and harvesters.

The Elders described the synchronicity of their seasonal activities and travels with the seasonal life-cycle migrations and fish habitat. Some fresh fish was cooked, dried, cached, fed to dogs, or used as bait:

> *Weledeh Yellowknives land users have observed fish migrating up the Weledeh as far as the barrens in one season, feeding on shoreline grasses (YKDFN 1997a: 75).*

> *Spring was a time for making and repairing nets in ways developed and used for thousands of years by Weledeh Yellowknives women (YKDFN 1997a: 75).*

> *All fish found in Weledeh (Wıìlıìdeh / Yellowknıfe Rıver) and Weleh-Cheh [Wıìlıìdehcheh / Yellowknıfe Bay] were very important to Weledeh Yellowknives Dene and all parts of fish caught were used (YKDFN 1997a: 79).*

> *There would be at least two fish caches for each tipi in the settlements (YKDFN 1997a: 79).*

Women would clean and gut some fish, cut them in half lengthways ensuring that the two halves remained attached at the tail. The fish was placed upside down over a pole in a tipi to dry (YKDFN 1997a: 79).

From mid-August, when fish are thin from their efforts to migrate and spawn, Weledeh Yellowknives families began to leave for the barrens (YKDFN 1997a: 59).

Yet fish were continually needed to feed the dogs (YKDFN 1997a: 67).

When people travel in the barrens they travel to where there is fish; if they stop at a site for just one night, they set fish hooks; if they live at a site for week or more they set a net; they fish for themselves and for dog food; they set nets on big lakes wherever they know there is fish; they set fish-lines in rivers for trout (Drygeese et al. Interview, Aug. 21, 1997)

Fish spawn in fall, they come to the rivers to spawn (for e.g. they come to the rivers at Lac du Sauvage), they spawn in channels and where there is current (YKDFN 1997a; 63).

By the time the shores are frozen in Nov., the fish have migrated from the shallow areas where they spawned to the deeper areas in the lake (YKDFN 1997a; 67).

Families continued fishing throughout the winter. They make holes in ice softened by the swift current of rivers or in channels between islands (YKDFN 1997a: 73).

As previously mentioned, Nàk'ooʔaa (the Narrows) between Ek'ati (Lac de Gras) and Nàk'ooʔaatì (Lac du Sauvage) remains open year-round and the fishing is known to be excellent.

During an interview dedicated to fish, Elders described various fishing techniques and noted that willow traps would be the gear of preference at Nàk'ooʔaa (the Narrows). Methods of catching fish included the following:

Willow nets

Jigging

Klue gee (fish hook), hooks were made from various animal parts (e.g., bones, muskrat teeth), the hooks were, and still are, baited. The best bait to use is loon's throat (the Weledeh eat the rest of the loon). The hook was attached to babiche (caribou hide string). Today the same method of fishing is used but twine is used instead of caribou hide.

A spear with a single point

Fish weir: a trap in the water made out of rocks.

Fish trap: during fish migration in both the spring and late fall, fish sometimes have to jump over rocks in the rivers and streams. The Weledeh look for these areas where fish must jump and they place green boughs (spruce) across the rocks so when the fish jump, they land in the bows; this technique may have been used in Egati with willow boughs. (Crookedhand et al. Interview, July 19, 1997).

5.3.1 Concerns

Today, as in the 1990s, Elders are concerned about key fish habitat such as spawning areas. As with animals, fish must be respected. One way to respect fish is not to handle them too much, and to provide for their harvest and distribution wherever water is going to be disturbed (e.g. before de-watering). Provision to keep them safe for eating is important.

In the past, the fish were distributed to different communities, even to Yellowknife. The mining companies were not prepared to collect fish when they first had work on the other open pits. Those lakes on top of the pipes took the fish out and water out; they were not prepared to store fish onsite (i.e. no freezers or equipment ready). So some of the fish was getting rotten and so the fish were brought to somewhere else. We don't know where it was brought. Maybe to Kugluktuk where they still have dogs. So if they had told us on what days they were going to send the fish on the plane, somebody could have been waiting at the airport to get them. . . fish were spoiled. The ones still good were sent to this community. This time, we recommend that freezers are available to store fish before sending to community so they are not spoiled. They should freeze it and package it and send it to different communities. It should be talked about. That way too much fish won't get spoiled (Fred Sangris, Jay Project Workshop, March 2015).

During the recent workshop, Elders also expressed concern about the fate of the fish in Nàk'ooʔaatì (Lac du Sauvage):

What about if they find another kimberlite pipe, drain the water, what are they going to do with the fish? Are they going to put the water back in the Nàk'ooʔaatì [Lac du Sauvage] after it is built? (George Tatsiechele, Jay Project Workshop, March 2015).

5.3.2 Recommendations

The four recommendations provided in the 1990s specific to fish remain relevant to proposed operations today (Appendix A, Recommendations #2-B-13 to #2-B-16). However, these recommendations should not be considered in isolation from those put forth around water.

The Yellowknives have strong directives with regard to good fishing and handling practice:

> *Weledeh Yellowknives Elders warn against the catch and release of fish. It is not a good practice because fish can die from wounds inflicted by large hooks or from starvation when hook wounds in the mouth prevent them from feeding (YKDFN 1997a: 89).*

> *When you touch fish from the lakes up there with your bare hands, because there is something in your hands that is not good for the skin/scales of the fish (Fred Sangris, Jay Project Workshop, March 2015).*

The recommendations from 1990s state that mining companies must protect fish in Nàk'ooʔaatì (Lac du Sauvage) and Ek'ati (Lac de Gras):

> *Mining companies must protect fish in Ek'ati…There are some very old, large fish in this lake, which have never experienced disturbance on this scale. They could be damaged by boat motors as well as dike construction and, potentially, from any spills resulting from trucks going through the winter road. Many fish also migrate to Ek'ati—particularly to spawn—from the Coppermine River and could suffer from construction activities, spills, and dust contamination (YKDFN 1997a, #2-B-13: 89).*

The Elders also offered their expertise as monitors and stewards of the fish population of the area:

> *…Contract [sic] scientists or fisheries and aquatic specialists researchers will hire Yellowknives Dene land owners for fish monitoring and related work. (YKDFN 1997a, #2-B-16: xii)*

> *We should meet with the mines and DFO to make recommendations on how they should do [harvest fish before de-watering], and how we can work with them. They should hire some of our people (Fred Sangris, Jay Project Workshop, March 2015).*

Workshop participants acknowledged that previous recommendations to participate in monitoring fish have been realized through participation in current activities, such as through the Aquatic Effects Monitoring Program held at Diavik (TCS 2013), but advise that much more could be done:

> *We do the water and fish tasting at [Ek'ati] Lac de Gras. We need to dig deeper to find out if they are following our direction. . . (Fred Sangris, Jay Project Workshop, March 2015).*

Elders provided recommendations on the timing of the dike construction at the Ekati site, in order to cause the least harm to fish, which may be relevant to the current proposed development for the Jay Project:

> *If Diavik has the consent of the Yellowknives Dene to proceed there are a number of things which must be done. To have the least negative impact on fish and fish spawning grounds near Ek'ati Ndi, Diavik should start building dikes in Ek'ati in late October or November, after fish have migrated to deep water. In spring, fish travel to and live in shallow areas along shores, bays, and islands in order to feed. In summer and fall, fish spawn in these shallow areas. Diavik's plans to construct dikes will disturb these shallows…One Elder suggested that, if dike construction begins very cautiously in July (before spawning starts), leaving channels near the shore, the fish would be able to leave the shallows through these channels in late fall. The remainder of the dikes could be then built in late October or November. This process might still cause problems for whitefish because lake sediment will be disturbed and will cover plants that whitefish feed on (YKDFN 1997, #2-D-2: xiii-xiv).*

In addition, as previously mentioned, further discussion is required about the shoreline area in the bay included in the proposed development of Jay Project that has been identified as key spawning habitat (Figure 3).

5.4 Water

The Yellowknives Dene have long recognized excellent water quality as crucial for all animals, plants and people:

> *Water is life. Without life, there is no food. We throw branches in the water to honour it. For the caribou, birds, and medicinal plants, we pay honour and ask the Creator to keep our food and medicine coming (Fred Sangris in TCS 2013: 51).*

> *When caribou migrate they use a lot of the water—they swim in it, drink it, and eat the plants on the shoreline; therefore bad water will have a huge negative impact on the caribou (Crapeau et al. Interview, July 16, 1997).*

The Weledeh Elders described the care that must be given to rivers and lakes:

> *When the Dene travelled on the water they did not pollute it or destroy the water's quality; when Dene people camp(ed) at Egati while harvesting the caribou, they do not throw anything away into the lake; if they harvest a lot caribou, they do all the skinning and cleaning on the mainland away from the water; they do not throw any parts of the caribou into the water; they take all of the caribou they can use and any parts they did not use they put under rocks on land so they would not ruin the water (Crapeau et al. Interview, July 16, 1997).*

> *When the Dene stop to camp at Egati in winter, they chop ice from the lake and melt it to drink and to cook; this ice is a pure quality of water; they do not use the top layer of snow which is very fine, but they dig to the bottom of the snow to where the snow is crystallized and almost like pure ice (Crapeau et al. Interview, July 16, 1997).*

As in the 1990s, water was a key topic of discussion during the 2015 workshop. Elders expressed their frustration with not being able to drink water wherever they desired, as in the past, and the desire for clean water for swimming.

> *This is the land of our ancestors and it is being ruined. Even some of our people get sick on the water. Sitting beside me, Eddie, his older brother was walking around in the water and his feet got infected. All those companies have ruined our land (Judy Charlo, Jay Project Workshop, March 2015).*

> *In the past we never thought anything about getting a pot of water, we have never known the water to be contaminated. That's what this area use to be like (Drygeese et al. Interview, August 21, 1997).*

> *Even our young kids like to swim during the summertime, like to have fun and go swimming in the water. Even our kids, we want our grandchildren to swim in the lake, on the shore (Judy Charlo, Jay Project Workshop, March 2015).*

Further, there is resentment about having to pay for water on Chief Drygeese Territory.

> *We cannot even drink water without paying for it. . . . Now they don't give back to us. We should not pay for water. I don't like that (Judy Charlo, Jay Project Workshop, March 2015).*

In addition to being identified as important for caribou and fish, the Elders emphasized the importance of Nàk'ooʔaa (the Narrows), as a source of drinking water in the winter when other water was frozen:

> *Many of the people's traditional names for places in the barrens refer to such open channels, which provide the only access to drinking water in the frozen landscape. Two*

> *of the most important channels are at MacKay Lake [Nǫndıka Tì] (the traditional name of the lake is the name of this channel) and Nàk'ooʔaa (the Narrows) between [Nàk'ooʔaatì] Lac du Sauvage and Ek'ati (YKDFN 1997).*
>
> *They did that before the mine started; they carried out all these tests before the mine started. We walked all over, we went through Nàk'ooʔaa (the Narrows), and we used boats to go through Nàk'ooʔaa (the Narrows). Mike Francois and myself, we were there for two months working with them…We were in a chopper and there is water flow between the rocks. There was a large chunk of ice like an iceberg, and we landed on it in July, just on the north side of, and west of Jay Pipe [IC1]. (Alfred Baillargeon, Jay Project Workshop, March 2015).*

According to Elders interviewed in the 1990s, Nàk'ooʔaa (the Narrows) have long been important for the survival of migratory birds during winter:

> *If the migratory birds arrive when Egati is frozen, they flew to areas of open water such as channels and the [N]arrows [Nàk'ooʔaa] between Egati and [Nàk'ooʔaatì] Lac du Sauvage. These channels are given names and locations in the Egati place name work (Drygeese et al. Interview, Aug. 15, 1997).*

Elsewhere, YKDFN Elders have reported on the importance of moist muskeg areas as natural filtration in the Ek'ati (Lac de Gras) area. There is a skill in "reading" the vegetation on the land to find good drinking water (TCS 2013).

Before development started, Elders drew attention to the pristine quality of the water in Ek'ati (Lac de Gras) and Nàk'ooʔaatì (Lac du Sauvage). In 1997 they noted:

> *The water quality of Egati is good now; there are no contaminates in it now; there are strong winds at Egati but there are no toxins in the air right now to pollute the water; the Dene people have used the Egati area since time immemorial and there is no known sickness from any water in the Barrenlands, all lakes and streams are good water (Crapeau et al. Interview, July 16, 1997).*

Now that development is ongoing, it is important that the Yellowknives continue to monitor water quality.

> *We get reports of how they are doing their work at Ek'ati. We have to make sure they follow our recommendations. Maybe we can make recommendations they have to put up rocks piled up to deflect caribou. They have used some of the recommendations we made. We do the water and fish tasting at [Ek'ati] Lac de Gras (Fred Sangris, Jay Project Workshop, March 2015).*

5.4.1 Concerns

A legacy of water contamination from previous mining operations in the Chief Drygeese Territory has led many Elders to express profound mistrust regarding the intention of the mines to prevent water contamination. Water contamination where the people currently live has heightened sensitivity to water quality issues around mines and their potential for environmental harm.

In the 1990s, the Elders stated that people had observed negative alterations to the environment but without positive recognition of contamination by scientific experts they lacked 'proof' to prevent further harm:

> *The development of the Giant mine before there were environmental regulations resulted in air-borne arsenic dissolving in the water and settling in sediment of nearby lakes, bays, and rivers, including the Weledeh. Further air-borne arsenic entered these water bodies through runoff of melting snow and ice. To this day, sediment and river banks of the Weledeh contain large amounts of arsenic (YKDFN 1997a: 22).*
>
> *Before Weledeh Yellowknives Dene understood what arsenic was, they were aware of changes that made them wary of the water, fish, berries, and plants near the mine sites…The people were never warned about the impacts and risks of living near mines…To this day they refuse to use water from the Weleh-Cheh for soaking caribou hides or making dryfish (YKDFN 1997a: 22-23).*
>
> *As a result of the mines in this area, the land has been wasted, destroyed and contaminated; mining has occurred for more than 50 years and a lot of damage has been incurred; the water is contaminated, the fish are contaminated, all the traditional food and medicinal plants have become contaminated; rabbits and grouse are contaminated; the Dene people have become very cautious of eating traditional foods because of the heavy contaminants in the water, land, and air; the contamination even destroys trees, marshes, habitat, and wild berries; all the things that the Dene people want to use but cannot use anymore; the Weledeh cannot use the water or eat any of their traditional foods; the mining companies should compensate the people around the area that has been contaminated for destroying their water, fish, land, and wildlife; the Weledeh don't fish in the bay here anymore, they have to go to Wool Bay, they have to go to communities far from the mines to get their fish and waterfowl. (Isadore Sangris Interview, Aug. 11, 1997).*

As the mines in Ekati are near large lakes and have required de-watering and diversion, concern was expressed many times by the Elders with regard to water quality. The Jay pipe is to be constructed in the basin of Nàk'oo?aatì (Lac du Sauvage):

> *Because the mine is on an island, the chemical is going to contaminate the water. If the mine was on land, it wouldn't be so bad. But the mine is on an island right in the middle of the caribou migration route (Crapeau et al. Interview, Aug. 21, 1997).*

Several interviews refer to dust from the mines as a major source of contamination:

> *Elders are very concerned about dust from mine pits and roads that will be carried westward by wind. Dust will settle in streams that flow into Ek'ati and these contaminants will flow into the larger lake. Rain will also wash dust into the lake…Dust from Diavik's planned mines (in the lake itself) and the BHP mine closest to Ek'ati (at La Pointe de Misère) is likely to have the greater impact on water and the plants, fish, and animals that depend on it than pits farther inland from Ek'ati (YKDFN 1997: 95).*

During the recent workshop, there was concern expressed about waste rock entering into the water from the Jay Project:

> *They are piling rock close to the open pit; this is a concern that it is too close to the water. The pile needs to more inland because of dust and how windy it is in that area. We need to recommend that we do more meetings before they do their EA [for Jay Project] (Fred Sangris, Jay Project Workshop, March 2015).*

Winter roads that span across lakes and rivers are a threat to water, especially if a truck were to go through the ice. Elders voiced this concern repeatedly.

> *Spillage from trucks would be more harmful than the sewage from the mine sites (Drygeese et al. Interview, Aug. 21 ,1997).*

> *What if a truck goes through the ice? And here on Great Slave Lake there's a winter road that is used by the mining companies. If a truck carrying arsenic falls into the lake, the truck and its contents maybe retrieved but not the arsenic. It will not only contaminate the water but all the vegetation on the land will be affected. This also applies to the oil that is transported on the winter road. If a truck carrying oil falls into the lake, it will also contaminate everything. The mining companies are not going to pollute this area, they will pollute other areas like the one at Ek'ati. All these mining camps are accessible by winter roads from south to the north. And you have to remember that not all lakes and rivers are the same either. Each year ice on the lakes and rivers forms different than other areas, it depends on the weather. If the water table is high, then a lot of overflow is to be expected for that year in that area. If the*

water is low, then there will be no overflow. There are a lot of things to be considered. If the mining companies are going to be working in that area that's fine with me but my main concern is the water (Crapeau et al. Interview, Aug. 21, 1997).

Elders expressed pessimism and a sense of helplessness regarding water quality issues based on past experiences with mining operations in the past:

We know that we will never be able to drink from this lake again now or in the future. If a young child is thirsty, who doesn't know the water is not drinkable, he will get sick. This will happen to the mine we are now talking about. Right now we can see through the clean clear water. We can see the rocks at the bottom of the water. It's a beautiful sight. But twenty years from now or ten years, the water will be different (Crapeau et al. Interview, Aug. 21, 1997).

As in the 1990s, concern about the overall health water remains important among Elders in 2015. Water quality is important to the survival of animals, people and plants. Good water is important for swimming, travel and drinking. People are concerned about contaminants entering water through winter roads, tailings, or other human disturbance. Water must be respected and cared for today as it was in the past, long before mines contaminated some water bodies.

5.4.2 Recommendations

Elders in the 1990s put forward 10 recommendations related to water (Appendix A, Recommendations #2-C-1 to #2-C-6, and #2-D-1 to #2-D-4). Many of these were specific to the proposed development and construction at the time, but the same key tenets continue to apply today. For example, recommendations to construct dikes in the fall and to protect spawning habitats remain relevant. Other recommendations are entrenched within current regulatory processes, but they provide a good reminder on the necessary care to be given to water. For example, water must continue to be monitored and contaminants minimized. It is recommended that flow patterns, quality and quantity and other key indicators continue to be monitored by both scientists and Aboriginal peoples, and that the quality and quantity thresholds be informed by YKDFN perspectives and needs.

Recommendations made by the Elders are specific in their demands on the government and mining operations to filter and clean their waste and tailings water from their operations:

Mining companies and government specialists must continue to verify where water flows from Ek'ati. Monitoring of water flow and levels must be continual throughout and after mining operations (YKDFN 1997a, Recommendation #2-C-1: xii).

Mining companies' waste water must be well filtered, and the outflow of waste must be monitored constantly (24h/d, 365 d/yr)…What is the composition of the tailing ponds. There should be strict criteria developed with the

Yellowknives Dene for the construction and maintenance of tailing ponds including their location (YKDFN 1997a, Recommendation #2-C-3: xiii).

People were also firm in their recommendations with regard to the effect of winter roads on water. They offered their expertise to identify safe routes for the ice roads, which should not interfere with their own activities on the land:

Companies will use Weledeh Yellowknives Dene landowners during winter road construction to identify currents and channels in lakes, so that ice over them does not become part of roads. Ice over currents and channels remains thin because of continual water action; thin ice results in trucks crashing into lakes with their loads of supplies, such as diesel fuel (YKDFN 1997a, Recommendation #2-D-11: xv).

To reduce the possibility of more fuel spills into lakes crossed by winter roads to and on Ek'ati, mining companies must have and enforce contracts with trucking companies stating that transport trucks must stay off winter roads when the ice is under two feet thick (YKDFN 1997a, Recommendation #2-D-12: xvi).

In summary, whether recommendations put forward regarding specific construction activities of the past were followed should be communicated to the YKDFN. However, the general principles of each of these recommendations (e.g. monitoring) should be applied to new construction proposed for the Jay Project. Finally, note that this approach also applies to the four recommendations put forth for the Misery Mine (Appendix A, Recommendations #2-D-7 to #2-D-10).

5.5 Eskers

There were two key recommendations regarding eskers that were put forth by the Elders in the 1990s (Appendix A, Recommendation #2-D-5 to 2-D-6), in addition to a list of reasons why development should not occur on or east of the Misery esker or along the shores of Ek'ati (Lac de Gras), in particular (Figure 2). Elders were clear that eskers should not be disturbed, and the same thinking applies today:

Mining companies must avoid Nàk'ooʔaa (the Narrows) between Ekati and [Nàk'ooʔaatì] Lac du Sauvage and the esker that passes through La Pointe de Misère and crosses Ek'ati because they are key caribou migration routes (YKDFN 1997, Recommendation #2-B-9: xi).

Mining companies must carry out a strong policy to forbid anyone from the mines disturbing graves, artifacts and especially, to forbid the collection and removal of artifacts, caribou antlers, and bones (YKDFN 1997, Recommendation #2-A-7: viii).

Reasons put forward by Elders in the 1990s to restrict development east of the Misery esker and the shore of Ek'ati include the following:

- There is at least one visible archaeological camp site and there are burials in this area
- The esker is important to animals making dens in the soft gravel
- The shallow, rocky shore is an important fish spawning habitat
- Caribou migration and plans for deflection require the esker to remain in place
- Regardless of deflection, some caribou and other migrating animals will continue to try to use the shore associated with the esker
- Animals denning in the esker should not be disturbed by direct human contact. (YKDFN 1997: xiv).

The same concerns about eskers were again highlighted during the March 2015 workshop:

> *The Elders didn't want eskers used. It is the same today (Fred Sangris, Jay Project Workshop, March 2015).*

Elders provided recommendations for work around the esker near Misery Mine and the Jay pipe development:

> *Mining companies should leave all eskers in the Akaitcho Territory undisturbed. If the companies believe they have to disturb an esker, they must consult with the Indigenous Peoples to do a comprehensive investigation of the esker, especially for burials and animal habitat, before the esker is disturbed or altered in any way (YKDFN 1997 #2-D-4: xiv).*

> *BHP's camp and mine site at Misery Point should be located west of the esker and should be inland away from the water. The esker should not be used to build a mining road. The road should be built to the west of the esker (Drygeese et al. Interview, August 21, 1997).*

Concern for an esker located between two open pit mines was a significant concern in terms of caribou expressed during the March 2015 workshop.

5.6 Winter Roads

There was not time to consider the recommendations around winter roads during the March 2015 workshop (Appendix A, Recommendations 2-D-11 to 2-D-16), however, the guiding principles behind the recommendations, described below, are applicable.

People have long requested that the gravel of the eskers not be used to build winter roads:

> *Mining companies should use waste rock from pits or granite stockpiles (if they can be proven not to produce contaminants), instead of using materials from eskers for construction of roads (YKDFN 1997a, Recommendation #2-D-5: xiv).*

In the 1990s interviews, there was concern regarding possible damage to significant camp sites and travel routes by the building of access routes without discussion with the YKDFN. Elders contrasted the intrusive construction of access roads with the methods of traditional travel, which avoid or integrate natural features without causing harm or alteration:

> *There are as many as fifty portages on most of the routes between Weledeh-Cheh and the barrens. Portage trails used for hundreds of generations of Weledeh Yellowknives Dene are winding trails: if a tree is in the people's path, they go around it (YKDFN 1997a: 8).*

In 1997, people had already experienced problems with the existing winter route to Kǫ̀k'e Tì (Contwoyto Lake). They stated their concerns regarding recognized problems and the potential for increased traffic:

> *…[T]he winter roads follow traditional trails used by Weledeh Yellowknives Dene, particularly from Gordon to Contwoyto Lake [Kǫ̀k'e Tì]. The people were not informed about this use of their land and their consent was not sought. Re-constructed each winter, this ice and portage road is used to haul a year's worth of fuel for mine operations as well as the chemicals such as arsenic and cyanide used in the gold extraction process…Weledeh Yellowknives land users are concerned about fuel and chemical spills resulting from truck accidents on the large frozen lakes. This winter road also provides access by many more people to hunting grounds traditionally used by Dene from many communities: increases in waste meat are a further concern of Dene land users. Exploration for diamonds and mine development around E'kati (Lac de Gras) put increased pressure on the Tibbett-Lupin winter road, the Ingraham Trial highway, and the 1962 one-lane bridge (YKDFN 1997: 25).*

In the 1990s, people were very firm in their recommendations with regard to winter-roads:

> *All Weledeh Yellowknives Dene archaeological and ancestral camp sites within the BHP block and surroundings are to be identified by Dene and protected. There will be no activity on identified camp sites, especially for road building (YKDFN 1997 #2-A-6: viii).*

The Elders offered their expertise to identify safe routes for the ice roads, which should not interfere with their own activities on the land:

> *Mining companies and government will get the consent of the Weledeh Yellowknives Dene on a more appropriate route for the winter road constructed every year to bring supplies to an increasing number of mine sites. When the first road was built in the 1970's, it was built without the consent of the Yellowknives Dene. This road uses a traditional trail of our people and, as a result, goes through some of the people's most important trapping and hunting areas. Elders and land owners in this project strongly recommend that the winter road from Tibbett Lake be moved to follow another route – particularly if there are plans to build a permanent, all-weather road (YKDFN 1997 #2-D-10: xv).*

6.0 Discussion

> *We are very concerned about our future generations, our lands and water. This is what I wanted to share. (Judy Charlo, Jay Project Workshop, March 2015)*

The Elders Advisory Council and the participating elders in the 1997 TK Study of Ek'ati were disappointed that their recommendations were not considered in the decision to approve the NWT Diamond Project. Further, the key lines in the 1997 TK Study of Ek'ati are "the report is much shorter than the information gathered," (YKDFN 1997a: v) and "Elders participating in this report are profoundly disappointed that their lands are to be destroyed to obtain diamonds, something that has no use or value to the people," (YKDFN 1997a: vi), a belief reflected in the recommendations contained in the current report.

The 1997 TK Study of Ek'ati also contains recommendations specific to the west shore of Nàk'ooʔaatì (Lac du Sauvage), to the 'Misery Esker', and to Nàk'ooʔaa (the Narrows) [between Nàk'ooʔaatì (Lac du Sauvage) and Ek'ati (Lac de Gras)], areas that will be directly impacted by the Jay Project.

Through this current TK Study, the opportunity to revisit these recommendations, provide edits, pose questions and continue to document expertise relevant to Nàk'ooʔaa (the Narrows) amd the Nàk'ooʔaatì (Lac du Sauvage) and Ek'ati (Lac de Gras) areas has been provided. The results from this report should be meaningfully integrated into the environmental assessment process in order to avoid the same mistake of two decades past.

6.1 Next Steps

The YKDFN appreciates the chance to prepare this TK Study for the Jay Project and offers the following suggested next steps:

1. A significant amount of time during the site tour and workshop was spent engaging and providing information specific to the proposed Jay Project. Elders were interested in details outlined in the Plain Language Project Description and the researchers were able to show photographs and maps of the area, as well as highlight key elements from documents provided by Dominion to help them understand what is being proposed on their territory. While this was a valuable exercise in consultation, it meant that less time was available to actually discuss recommendations specific to the Jay Project. Indeed, Elders needed time to consider all of the information about the Jay Project that was presented.

   Owing to the fact that much time with the Elders was spent providing information about the Jay Project instead of conducting new research, the YKDFN requests additional research time to carry out new TK interviews specific to the n'deh of the Jay Project environs.

2. Much time with the Elders was spent providing information about the Jay Project instead of conducting new research and the past must not be repeated:

   The main reason for hesitating over Phase II was that it had not been described in enough detail for the people to understand what they might be involved in (YKDFN 1997a: 27).

   It is important that the YKDFN be afforded the time and resources to provide recommendations specific to the construction, development, monitoring and mitigation of the Jay Project.

   The YKDFN requires additional research time to work with more Elders to develop <u>new recommendations</u> specific to the Nàk'ooɔaatì (Lac du Sauvage) area based on their experience of the last 20 years that can supplement the 1997 recommendations.

3. The proposed Jay Project provides an opportunity for the YKDFN to evaluate how TK has been integrated into the NWT Diamonds Project envisioned in the 1990s and realized today through the operation of the Diavik and Ek'ati Diamond Mines.

   The YKDFN would like to work with DDEC to understand how and where their recommendations of the past have been integrated into the proposed Jay Project and how proposed revisions to these recommendations will be addressed.

6.2 Work on Building Trust

The interviews with Elders in the 1990s, and the subsequent TK Report based upon them, were an effort to communicate the knowledge and stipulations of the Yellowknives Dene people. As previously discussed, the information was ignored largely due to an administrative pretext. Consequently, people developed mistrust of the process to meaningfully integrate TK into future assessments. In some cases, this mistrust has extended to current operations.

Elders in the 1990s and today voiced uneasiness and had doubts as to the validity of the process given the *ex post facto* timing of scientific investigation:

> *During the federal government's environmental assessment process for five of these mines, it became apparent that no true baseline data could be collected for Ek'ati in order to measure cumulative effects from mining impacts. Scientific information describing the pre-development state of the environment was not available because there had been considerable disturbance to the area before any data were collected. Scientists doing fieldwork on behalf of mining companies for brief periods of time in the barrens cannot report environmental patterns on the scale known by indigenous Elders who have used the land all their lives (YKDFN 1997a: v).*

> *The past leaders made suggestions. Why aren't they listening to our suggestions? The government didn't listen to us when we make recommendation. It is not right. We are very concerned about our future generations, our lands and water (Judy Charlo, Jay Project Workshop, 2015).*

> *We recommended this in the past, how do we know they will listen? Elders have died, and this is all we have left: points on paper. What is going to happen? Most of the young people have never been there. We need to make our reports available. If you have to, pass it to each house like a flyer! (Alfred Baillargeon, Jay Project Workshop, 2015).*

The Elders expressed doubt in the value of the TK process to overcome differences in the traditional and scientific perspectives; in their own ability, as busy people with lives to lead, to master large volumes of scientific research and jargon; and in the value of communicating their ideas in a format that diminishes the significance of those concepts to "wisps":

> *The people who could read the English in the eight volumes of the EIS were deeply concerned that the wisps of traditional knowledge in it were presented without adequate description of what they were or what they signified (YKDFN 1997: 27).*

> *It is recommended that aspects of knowledge of this report not be taken out of context or placed on a database. Elders are aware that their knowledge in English does not have the same clarity, meaning, or significance that it does in their own language or to their own people who are familiar with the language and the history or their territory (YKDFN 1997 #2-D-15: xvi).*

The Elders requested transparent information to better their participation in the co-operative process:

> *As the peoples indigenous to these lands, Weledeh Yellowknives Dene want to be continually and fully informed on any changes to mining projects, including the location of any minerals . . .(YKDFN 1997a: 90).*

Elders interviewed in the 1990s made some direct statements regarding "straight talking" on the part of Elders in authority:

> *Most of us Elders are over 70 and we know what we are talking about. We have been here before the White people and we have seen the changes. We never used to have any kind of sickness. But you researchers just have to look around these two mines here and you can see what those mines have done: that's what you have to do to protect the environment (Weledeh Yellowknives Elder Joseph Charlo, Ndilo [Ndılǫ]: CARC 1995 in YKDFN 1997: 17).*

They (i.e., the mining companies) should be careful as to how they work with the Dene and how they should work to protect the environment (Weledeh Yellowknives Elder Joseph Charlo, Ndilo [Ndılǫ]: CARC 1995 in YKDFN 1997: 20).

Everyone knows that the land around here is contaminated, no one can do anything about it anymore because the mining has destroyed it. So we are here to help the land in the barrens from not being destroyed (Weledeh Yellowknives Elder Joseph Charlo, Ndilo: CARC 1995 in YKDFN 1997: 20).

And the other mine at Ek'ati, I didn't realize it was a useless thing they were planning to mine. To mine something that has no importance to us, just to destroy the land is difficult to understand, but at the same time we can't say no to them. The mining companies think the only people who issue mining licenses have authority. Those are my concerns for now. I can't talk about it anymore because I am disappointed about the whole issue (Fishbone et al. Interview, August 19 1997).

The Elders currently feel that recommendations they give to the mining companies will not be implemented (YKDFN 1997a: 102).

The Elders and Dene landowners in this project, who believe in coexistence, do not want this kind of exploitation to continue in their territory (YKDFN 1997a, Recommendation #1: vii).

Despite understandable frustration, a spirit of co-operation prevailed throughout the 1997 TK Report (especially through the good work of Fred Sangris). The Yellowknives continue to live their paradigm: that issues are solved and altered over an extended period of time, especially when a "scientific" solution does not adequately capture the complexities of this situation.

In 1997, Fred Sangris with many Elders pushed for inclusion of Weledeh experts in the planning and operations of the mining company to form a cooperative work environment and an ongoing basis for mutual respect and trust:

The indigenous people must be part of the team that monitors the mining companies' work and impact on the environment (Drygeese et al. Interview, Aug. 21, 1997).

If they agree to these recommendations made by us, then we can begin to work together. If they don't want to conduct this research by themselves, then the young people such as myself can work on this research with them. We can act as watch-dogs, to make sure that all information concerning these issues are properly conducted and reported (Fishbone et al., Interview, Aug. 19, 1997).

In addition to trust issues surrounding the recommendations put forth in the 1990s, there is a general distrust of the mining industry that needs to be addressed:

> *The mining companies really protect one another. We have seen those attitudes before. That is why we need to take a look at these things themselves. We have to see what they are doing…The companies say they are not using chemicals but we know that they are (Alfred Baillargeon, Jay Project Workshop, 2015).*

> *Having observed the effects of development impacts in Weledeh-Cheh, they have grave doubts that mining near Ek'ati can do anything but harm to their people's traditional territory (YKDFN 1997a: 25).*

Finally, the Elders today feel a great respect for the Elders of yesterday who originally put forth the recommendations. As such, they are reticent to make any changes to them and would instead like the opportunity to provide additional recommendations.

> *The Elders put the recommendation forward, but they are not with us here today. We know they didn't want it disturbed. This is what they wanted. We should leave the recommendation the way it is. Nàk'ooɂaa (the Narrows) must be protected (Alfred Baillargeon, Jay Project Workshop, 2015).*

Another example of such distrust is illustrated in the response to a question posed at the workshop: What have you learned in the last 20 years, and how can you give advice thinking forward to the Jay Pipe?

> *Before the mines started, they told us they were just using straight water. After the mine started, they were using chemicals. They need to tell the truth. I hope it doesn't happen like that again. If they want to start a mine, they should come out with the truth and be open from the start and nothing is hidden. In the Aboriginal way, we don't hide anything. We are straightforward, if we want somebody to know something, we don't beat around the bush. That is our way. That is the thing, that I really want to know the truth before something happens (George Tatsiechele, Jay Project Workshop, 2015).*

6.3 Work Together

Elders in the 1990s and today, expressed a sincere interest in working together to ensure the best outcomes on Chief Drygeese Territory. Respect, trust and a genuine interest in understanding one another will be critical to working together on the Jay Project:

> *Diavik informed us of everything and they worked very well with us. Dominion should do the same (Alfred Baillargeon, Jay Project Workshop, 2015).*

At that time, fish inspector came with us to go all around to see the fish and check nets. We caught different fish: small fish, big fish, with all different net sizes. We check the nets about 20 minute later. The fish get caught in the net. The inspectors always go out with us, we have to put the recommendation forward. The fish should be scooped with the net, try not to handle them too much. Fish cannot survive without water. The [fisheries people] give us lots of information too. I recommend that we meet with the fisheries people on site so that we can share TK and science (Alfred Baillargeon, Jay Project Workshop, 2015).

We have to recommend that they hire our people, that they work with us. I want to recommend that they hire our people to do these kinds of work on the land (Alfred Baillargeon, Jay Project Workshop, 2015).

Not all communities work well together: sometimes they just want money. It is getting hard for communities to work together (Alfred Baillargeon, Jay Project Workshop, 2015).

We know what happened on our land, our grandparents told us what happened. Now we are going through this, how can we make recommendations so that they [the mining companies] work better with us? (Alfred Baillargeon, Jay Project Workshop, 2015).

YKDFN Elders believe that there must be ongoing formal recognition that DDEC is operating in Chief Drygeese Territory and that some gratitude must be expressed:

They said that the white people were saying there were not Dene people here when they came. I am really upset because that is not true. People were always out doing something—nobody stayed in one spot a long time. We were always out doing something on this land; we traveled all over. I remember a lot of things that happened. When I was young, we would travel to Lutsel K'e, and spend a few seasons over there and then come back here again. I never saw one white guy growing up. Then they say a white guy found gold in YK area. When we did see them [white people], they were dressed poorly. We had to help them out. They would have froze. There was one white guy who had three dogs on his team, he didn't have good footwear so my uncle gave him mukluks and thick leggings when we saw him at Gros Cap. I was there. I saw it. I never heard one white person say that they survived because Dene people helped them. And here they are trying to take over everything that is ours. They don't even say thank-you. No white person has mentioned anything like tht. (Judy Charlo, Jay Project Workshop, 2015).

Finally, respect and understanding for one another will be critical to moving forward:

> *They just step over us. They don't ask us to go on our land. Look at all these mines, they are going over our heads, going straight to the government and they don't tell us what they are going to do on our land. This is our land, by our rights, they have to come see us first. We don't go to their land and just destroy what we want. I'm trying to figure out how they think after all these years. Ever since white people came to this land (Alfred Baillargeon, Jay Project Workshop, 2015).*

6.4 See with our Own Eyes

In the world of the Yellowknives, "seeing is believing." As reported elsewhere, Elders at Diavik wondered aloud whether DDEC was even mining diamonds, as they had not seen them with their own eyes (TCS 2014). Community members must continue to visit the proposed development frequently before any work commences and again throughout the entire construction process should the Jay Project proceed.

> *You should look for funding so they can show us how, when, where they plan to build the Jay Pipe. I know they don't work very fast, so right now everything is being planned. They should take some youth and some elders in the 40s/50s so they can see it with their eyes and so they can know. They cannot know otherwise. We should have a site tour, we need to take a trip…The mining companies should be able to sit down with the young people and talk together…What I recommend is that we go to the Jay Project Pipe to consider an open pit; to go there in July (Alfred Baillargeon, Jay Project Workshop, 2015).*

> *We should go check it with our own eyes. I wasn't there. I need to see it, the esker (Alfred Baillargeon, Jay Project Workshop, 2015).*

Once something is seen with one's own eyes, that person can now speak of it. Otherwise, it is in keeping with the Yellowknives' world-view that dictates that one cannot speak of something they have not witnessed.

7.0 Closing

This TK Study set out to look into work done by Elders in the 1990s to help proposed development of the Jay Pipe today in the context of answering the following questions:

- Are the recommendations of the TK Study of Ek'ati still valid?
- Do the "dire predictions" contained in the Report still reflect the attitudes and beliefs of YKDFN Elders?
- Is the baseline environmental data contained in the audio and video tape recordings used in the production of the TK Study of Ek'ati valid for the Jay Project?
- Are there gaps in the data that can be addressed by further analysis, further knowledge holder interviews and renewed discussions?

In answer to the first question, the detailed table in Appendix B shows that most of these recommendations are still valid, although some continue to be more important than others. In general, the principles behind the recommendations remain relevant, even if the specific construction activity has changed. Elders today are reticent to make any changes to recommendations made by Elders of the past, simply out of respect for their predecessors.

In general, the "dire predictions" contained in the original TK Study reflect the attitudes and beliefs of the YKDFN Elders. However, the Elders are encouraged by their inclusion in some on-site monitoring programs (e.g., aquatic monitoring of fish and water).

Indeed, the baseline environmental data contained in the audio and video tape recordings used in the production of the TK Study of Ek'ati are relevant to the Jay Project, but there needs to be additional work carried out to focus on Nàk'ooʔaatì (Lac du Sauvage) rather than just Ek'ati (Lac de Gras). As discussed in Section 6.0, much time was spent informing study participants of the Jay Project in a consultation manner rather than collecting new data, and thus more time is needed to conduct research to supplement baseline data for the Jay Project.

When Elders today revisited maps and data contained in the 1997 TK Study of Ekati, there are two key areas that must be further examined. The first is the significance of Nàk'ooʔaa (the Narrows) for a multitude of reasons, including caribou crossing, open water for bird habitat, fishing, burial sites, cultural importance, and more. The second is the bay in Nàk'ooʔaatì (Lac du Sauvage) currently slated for de-watering and construction of the Jay pipe. This area has been identified as key spawning habitat, and must be protected.

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Appendix A

Recommendations from the 1997 TK Study of Ek'ati

Recommendations

Source: Weledeh Yellowknives Dene: a Traditional Knowledge study of Ek'ati (1997: vii-xvi)

Recommendation #1

Weledeh Yelowknives Dene Elders have already seen the impacts from mining-in Weledeh-Cheh and in Akaitcho Territory. The Elders and Dene land owners in this project, who believe in coexistence, do not want this kind of exploitation continue in their territory. When Treaty 8 signed by our former Chief Sizeh Drygeese of the Yellowknives with the Crown in Right of Great Britain, the Queen requested the right to live in our territory in a spirit of coexistence. The Weledeh Yellowknives continue to maintain the Treaty relationship that is binding on the state of Canada and any party who enters into our territory. Therefore, it is recommended that a percentage of profits, jobs and compensation for loss of land use go to the Weledeh Yellowkives Dene First Nation.

The Elders and Dene land owners of this project strongly recommend that Weledeh Yellowknives Dene land owners must participate actively in developing mechanisms in monitoring and in monitoring impacts from mining operations and their effects on their territory. Participants in this Weledeh Yellowknives project want to see a formal agreement in place that the mining companies will work together with their people throughout mining projects (including reclamation and closure) to develop, implement, and monitor ways to protect the water land, animals, the peoples continued use of their lands, and the evidence of the people's ancestral use of the lands.

Recommendation #2

Weledeh Yellowknives Elders and Dene land owners in this project have made recommendations in four major areas on ways to reduce impacts from mining in the Akaitcho Territory barrenlands.

Recommendations:

A. Ancestral evidence of Weledeh Yellowknives Dene

B. *Ndeh* (ie, the environment: land, animals, fish. birds, plants) and the Peoples' continued use of their traditional lands

C. Water (ie, Ek'ati, streams flowing into and out of it, and groundwater)

D. Water or land as a result of construction

As the Indigenous Peoples of these territories, Weledeh Yellowknives Dene want to be continually and fully informed prior to giving their consent to any mining or any changes to mining projects, including the location of any minerals

A—Ancestral Evidence of Weledeh Yellowknives Dene

Recommendation #2-A-1

Mining companies must get the consent of the Weledeh Yellowknives Elders for the use of their territories, lands and water and to monitor the impacts of mining operations. There are particular areas of the territory which has particular significance to the Weledeh Yellowknives Dene that must be respected by any group wishing to enter into the territory in the spirit of co-existence.

Recommendation #2-A-2

In summer 1998, mining companies particularly BHP should take Weledeh Yellowknives Elders and Dene land owners to sites previously identified and to sites known to the people where ancestral evidence can be found.

Avoidance of burials and significant sites

Recommendation #2-A-3

On the sensitivity map, areas identified as "green space are to be totally avoided by the mining companies and their employees and subcontractors and their employees. These areas include burial sites, caches and ecologically and environmental sensitive areas of great importance to animals and fish.

Recommendation #2-A-4

Weledeh Yellowknives burial sites must be marked so that anyone from the mines can easily see and respect them. Graves can be marked with large rocks placed at each comer and rocks in the shape of a cross placed over the grave. Rocks placed like this are not likely to be moved by caribou.

Indigenous Peoples' identification of sites

Recommendation #2-A-5

Mining companies shall fund Weledeh Yellowknives Dene to identify significant areas on shorelines, islands, and other places the companies are not telling their contract archaeologists to investigate.

Recommendation #2-A-6

All Weledeh Yellowknives Dene archeological and ancestral camp sites within the BHP block and surroundings are to be identified by Dene and protected. There will be no activity on identified camp sites, especially for road building.

Recommendation #2-A-7

Mining companies must carry out a strong policy to forbid anyone from the mines disturbing graves, artifacts and especially, to forbid the collection and removal of artifacts, caribou antlers, and bones.

Contract archaeologists

Recommendation #2-A-8

Mining companies can use government archaeologists in the verification of information for reports and monitoring. These archaeologists must be confirmed by the Yellowknives Dene prior to going into the territory.

Recommendation #2-A-9

All contract archaeologists working for mining companies shall have at least ten years experience, with half of that time in working with Indigenous Peoples. An acceptable alternative might be for the mining companies to authorize and fund Indigenous Peoples to select specialists they believe they can work with for results satisfactory to their Peoples, governments and the companies.

Recommendation #2-A-10

Evidence of Weledeh Yellowknives Dene ancestors' occupation and use of their territory is not to be called "heritage resources" as the term is disrespectful and diminishes the connection of such evidence to Indigenous Peoples. Ancestral evidence will not be considered exploitable "resources". Elders and Dene land owners in this project have a range of ideas about how mining companies and government should handle evidence of their ancestors, therefore, mining companies need to hold a community workshops with Yellowknives Dene to develop plans for presentation to the First Nation Council for approval or use.

Recommendation #2-A-11

Yellowknives Dene First Nation have developed guidelines for the companies and contract archaeologists to follow in their relationship with the people and their ancestors' evidence. Therefore the companies and contract archaeologists must get permission and operational guidelines from the Chief and First Nation council.

B—*Ndeh* (ie, the environment: land, animals, fish, birds, plants) and the peoples' continued use of their traditional lands

Recommendation #2-B-1

Mining companies must use Weledeh Yellowknives Dene land owners to monitor impacts from mining operations on the water quality, plants, fish, and animals (including fish, birds, wildlife) and all roads, airstrips, barges, snow machines and other mechanical impacts to be used by mine companies.

Habitat damage

Recommendation #2-B-2

Mining companies must take responsibility for damage to *ndeh* (land) and environment since there is to be continual damage through exploration and mining, the companies shall be responsible to protect areas of great significance to animals and other wildlife, such as good caribou habitat and good fish spawning areas.

Recommendation #2-B-3

Mining companies must pay for regeneration of wildlife and aquatic habitat. Therefore the Elders and Dene land owners of this project recommend that preventative policies and mitigating measures be put in place along with adequate reclamation funds be for purposes. The funds be to used these will jointly managed by the Yellowknives Dene and the company. This is in keeping with the numerous international legal instruments that require such measures.

Animals

Recommendation #2-B-4

Before there is any more disturbance of Ek'ati Ndi (the island where Diavik plans to mine diamonds), all animals - including fox and ground squirrel - must be live trapped and moved to a suitable habitat away from Diavik and BHP mine sites. If mining companies decide to use lands directly to the west of their sites (ie, where dust will be most dense), or decide to increase their activities (and increase the amount of dust blowing to the west) - every effort must be made to keep animals, birds, fish and vegetation from being covered with thick dust and going into the water.

Recommendation #2-B-5

There should be no vehicle movement or blasting or other dust- and noise-producing activities during bird and animal migrations and birthing periods.

Recommendation #2-B-6

To protect animals from human activity and contaminants, mining companies shall take great care to keep animals off their sites with fences. Fences must be built around mining sites, especially where animals are migrating. Fences must be very high about four metres or 12 feet high) so that animals do not get caught in the top of fences in winter when snow blows against them.

Recommendation #2-B-7

Diavik should limit its mining activities to the east island of Ek'ati Ndi and leave the west island (the one that points to Great Slave Lake) for animals. The island where mining operations are planned should be entirely fenced, leaving a wide corridor (at least 100 metres) around the shore so that wildlife can continue to use the island to rest while crossing the lake. The Elders and land owners of this project recommend that monitoring be

especially enforced by the Land and Environment personnel in spring, summer, fall and winter.

Caribou

Recommendation #2-B-8

Mining shall fund Weledeh Yellowknives Dene land owners experienced in caribou deflection to change the migration of caribou out of the entire operating area near Ek'ati. During the next three caribou migrations, experienced land owners, directed by the Elders, can set up stone markers and stand by them to chase caribou away. After three migration seasons, caribou will have learned to avoid the markers (and, therefore, the mining operations). People will not have to man the markers after that time, as long as no one disturbs the markers.

Recommendation #2-B-9

Mining companies must avoid the Narrows between Ek'ati and Lac du Sauvage and the esker that passes through La Ponte de Misere and crosses Ek'ati because they are key caribou migration routes.

Recommendation #2-B-10

Mining companies will have to pay Weledeh Yellowknives Dene to improve the Narrows between Ek'ati and Lac du Sauvage, since increasing numbers of caribou will use the narrows to avoid the mining operations. The crossing is dangerous because gaps in the rocks can break caribou legs, especially those of very young calves. Some become trapped and die, particularly in springs (like the one in 1997), when caribou cows leave the calving grounds early with calves not yet hardened for travel. Land owners could fill dangerous gaps in the rocks. This work to be done at the same time as the work being done in Recommendations #2-B-8.

Recommendation #2-B-11

Weledeh Yellowknives Elders strongly recommend that all caribou calving grounds become Protected Areas. They urge BHP, which has gold mining interests near Bathurst Inlet, to support the protection of the caribou calving grounds in the area. Halting gold mining operations to stop noise, dust and contamination during calving would benefit the caribou and other animals, such as birds in the nearby waterfowl sanctuary. Caribou cows, if they feel more comfortable, might stay in the calving grounds long enough for their calves to be properly ready for migration.

Recommendation #2-B-12

Diavik must leave room for migrating caribou on the north part of the island where they are planning to build an airstrip.

Fish

Recommendation #2-B-13

Mining companies must protect fish in Ek'ati. There are some very old, large fish in this lake. They could be damaged by boat motors as well as dyke construction and, potentially, from any spills resulting from trucks going through the winter road. Many fish also migrate to Ek'ati – particularly to spawn - from the Coppermine River and could suffer from construction activities, spills, and dust contamination.

Recommendation #2-B-14

People from the mines will not hunt or fish in the Ek'ati area. Mining staff and contractors go to Ek'ati to work; if they want to hunt and fish, they can go to nearby lodges.

Recommendation #2-B-15

Weledeh Yellowknives Elders warn against the catch-and-release of fish. It is not a good practice because fish can die from wounds inflicted by large hooks or from starvation when hook wounds in the mouth prevent them from feeding. Fish can also die from hypothermia when fish are handled by humans so much that the slime covering the fish is removed.

Recommendation #2-B-16

Government specialists and an independent environmental monitoring agency picked by the Yellowknives Dene and the company should verify environmental information for reports and monitoring of mining effects. Contractors working for mining companies in these areas must have at least ten years of field experience most of it in northern environments, and field staff working for such contractors must have at least two years of experience collecting field data. Contract scientists or fisheries and aquatic specialist researchers will hire Yellowknives Dene land owners for fish monitoring and related work.

Protection of Aboriginal & Treaty Rights

Recommendation #2-B-17

Mining companies will compensate Weledeh Yellowknives Dene for disrupting their Akaitcho Territory land rights and affecting their way of life.

Recommendation #2-B-18

Mining companies that cause a large loss of animal, fish, and bird habitat will compensate the Indigenous Peoples, including Weledeh Yellowknives Dene, for loss of use of territory resulting in destruction of harvesting areas.

Recommendation #2-B-19

Indigenous Peoples such as Weledeh Yellowknives Dene must continue to have access within their complete territory for their traditional pursuits. The Elders and Dene land owners of this project recommend that an open door policy be put in place for managers of

the mine site to give emergency help to hunters and travellers who may need assistance when in the area.

C—Water (ie, Ek'ati, streams flowing into and out of the lake, and groundwater)

Recommendation #2-C-1

Mining companies and government specialists must continue to verify where water flows from Ek'ati. Monitoring of water flow and levels must be continual throughout and after mining operations.

Recommendation #2-C-2

Mining companies must involve Weledeh Yellowknives Dene in the monitoring impacts from mining on water quality, water flow, water level, fish, aquatic plants, and wildlife relying on water including - monitoring for dust and contaminants from waste rock stockpiles.

Elders are very concerned about dust from mine pits and roads that will be carried westward by wind. Dust will settle in streams that flow into Ek'ati and these contaminants will flow into the larger lake. Rain will also wash dust into the lake. The nine open-pit mines planned to date will all produce huge amounts of dust. Dust from Diavik's planned mines (in the lake itself) and the BHP mine closest to Ek'ati (at La Pointe de Misere) is likely to have the greater impact on water and the plants, birds, fish, and animals that depend on it than pits farther inland from Ek'ati.

Recommendation #2-C-3

Mining companies' waste water must be well filtered, and the outflow of waste must be monitored constantly (24 h/d, 365 d/yr). Weledeh Yellowknives Elders are concerned that soap, sewage, and other toxins from mining camps will enter the water and harm plants and animals. Although mining companies are treating this waste, it can still seep into the lake. Elders want to know the effects of such seepage on wildlife, plants and people that use the water what is the composition of the tailing ponds. There should be strict criteria developed with the Yellowknives Dene for the construction and maintenance of tailing ponds including their location.

Recommendation #2-C4

Mining companies must take responsibility to secure their fuel storage from spills, explosions, and other disasters. Fuel storage must be far from shorelines and creeks to reduce seepage. Fuel tanks should be placed in retainers with cement bottoms and walls so that if tanks leak, any leaks can be contained. Fuel storage should be located at a safe distance from camp facilities to reduce impacts (and lives) from potential fires resulting from lightning strikes.

Recommendation #2-C-5

Every effort must be made to prevent damage from salt and acid drainage to spawning grounds and fish habitat. Because salt and acid drainage that may occur during drilling for mining operations can be devastating for fish and water plants, mining companies must be very open about informing Indigenous Peoples about where they plan to drill so monitoring impacts from drilling can take place in an orderly fashion.

Recommendation #2-C-6

Mining companies must monitor for seepage of contaminants, including those from waste rock stockpiles, into groundwater.

D—Water or land as a result of construction

Recommendation #2-D-1

Mining companies planning major changes to the Akaitcho Territory environment such as the draining of small lakes or the building of expansive dykes in large lakes should be restricted to only one site initially. At this site, mining companies, government agencies, and Indigenous Peoples can find out what impacts actually occur and which mitigation attempts work best. Development on this scale has occurred in the barrenlands in Russia and Mongolia with devastating impacts. It is better to have methods of construction and monitoring developed before additional sites are attempted.

Recommendation #2-D-2

If Diavik has the consent of the Yellowknives Dene to proceed there are a number of things which must be done. To have the least negative impact on fish and fish spawning grounds near Ek'ati Ndi, Diavik should start building dykes in Ek'ati in late October or November, after fish have migrated to deep water. In spring, fish travel to and live in shallow areas along shores, bays, and islands in order to feed. In summer and fall, fish in these shallow areas. Diavik's plans to construct dykes will spawn disturb these shallows. One Elder suggested that, if dyke construction begins very cautiously in July (before spawning starts), leaving channels near the shore, the fish would be able to leave the shallows through these channels in late fall. The remainder of the dykes could be then built in late October or November. This process might still cause problems for whitefish because lake sediment will be disturbed and will cover plants that whitefish feed on.

Recommendation #2-D-3

Diavik must protect the important fish spawning ground in the narrow inlet that almost separates the northern part of east Ek'ati Ndi from the rest of the island. One of Diavik's drawings (dated July 1997 *see* Appendix 1) shows this inlet being closed off at the eastern shoreline. Since dykes in the lake will cut fish off from other spawning grounds in shallows around the island, it is vital that the spawning area in this inlet be preserved.

Recommendation #2-D-4

If Diavik puts an airstrip on the northern part of this island, it would be advisable to fence the inlet so that fish are not disturbed.

Eskers

Reasons why development should not occur on and east of the "Misery" esker and the shore of Ek'ati include:

a. There is at least one visible archaeological camp site and there are burials in this area.

b. The esker is important to animals making dens in the soft gravel.

c. The shallow, rocky shore an important fish spawning habitat,

d. Caribou migration and plans for deflection require the esker to remain in place.

e. Regardless of deflection, some caribou and other migrating animals will continue to try to use the shore associated with the esker.

f. Animals denning in the esker should not be disturbed by direct human contact.

Recommendation #2-D-5

Mining companies should leave all eskers in the Akaitcho Territory undisturbed. If companies believe they have to disturb an esker, they must consult with the Indigenous Peoples to do a comprehensive investigation of the esker, especially for burials and animal habitat, before the esker is disturbed or altered in any way.

Recommendation #2-D-6

Mining companies should use waste rock from pits or granite stockpiles (if they can be proven not to produce contaminants), instead of using material from eskers for construction of roads.

BHP's Misery Mine Site

Recommendation #2-D-7

BHP's "Misery" camp and mine operations must be constructed west of planned locations: instead, they should be located inland away from water and away from the "Misery" esker. Materials from the esker should not be used to build roads or other construction. Waste water and from the sewage camp should flow toward the unnamed lake between La Pointe de Misere and Paul Lake, rather than into Ek'ati to prevent the runoff which is presently occurring at Mackay lake and Pine Point. (This unnamed lake is surrounded by higher land and, there, the Elders feel such wastes can be contained.) Camps should be built on sites with lots of boulder, to deter caribou from entering. Waste rock piles must be located so that potential acid drainage does not enter Ek'ati as runoff.

Recommendation #2-D-8

Elders are concerned that the planned distances between camps and mining operations should not too great. They say that, if these sites are not closer together, workers will face potentially fatal challenges walking between the sites during blizzards. Project participants recall a man working at the Tundra/Salamita mine on Mackay Lake about ten years ago; he had intended to walk through a storm to an electrical shed only one hundred feet away: he did not return and searchers never found his body. Lightning is also a hazard for anyone walking or working on the barrens.

Recommendation #2-D-9

The access road from the BHP mining lease to the winter road that crosses Ek'ati should be constructed to the west of the small lake that will become the open pit mine - rather than, as planned, near the esker used by migrating caribou and over a clearly visible Weledeh Yellowknives ancestral camp site. A small valley to the west of the mine site would be suitable.

Recommendation #2-D-10

Elders also feel strongly that BHP should not build roads from mining camp sites to water, especially to Ek'ati, for people from the mines to fish, bother animals or collect ancestral evidence as souvenirs.

Winter road(s)

Recommendation #2-D-11

Mining companies and government will get the consent of the Weledeh Yellowknives Dene on a more appropriate route for the winter road constructed every year to bring supplies to an increasing number of mine sites. When the first road was built in the 1970s, it was built without the consent of the Yellowknives Dene. This road uses a traditional trail of our people and. as a result, goes through some of the people's most important trapping and hunting areas. Elders and land owners in this project strongly recommend that the winter road from Tibbett Lake be moved to follow another route - particularly if there are plans to build a permanent, all-weather road.

Recommendation #2-D-12

Mining companies will use Weledeh Yellowknives Dene land owners during winter road construction to identify currents and channels in lakes, so that ice over them does not become part of roads. Ice over currents and channels remains thin because of continual water action; thin ice results in trucks crashing into lakes with their loads of supplies, such as diesel fuel.

Recommendation #2-D-13

To reduce the possibility of more fuel spills into lakes crossed by winter roads to and on Ek'ati, mining companies must have and enforce contracts with trucking companies stating that transport trucks must stay off winter roads when the ice is under two feet thick.

Recommendation #2-D-14

Mining companies that depend on winter roads crossing Weledeh Yellowknives Dene territory shall put up bonds against spills, contamination and other damage to water, lands, wildlife and cultural sites. The monies will be held in trust by the Yellowknives Dene for cleanup purposes.

Recommendation #2-D-15

Mining companies must find acceptable alternative ways to handle garbage that cannot be incinerated such as styrofoam and many plastics, as burning them results in contaminants polluting the air. At present, all garbage from the kitchens and camps is incinerated.

Recommendation #2-D-16

There is to be no public tours of the mine and no construction of permanent towns on the barrens. Tours and town would increase human activity in the area and increase the negative impacts and cumulative effects on an environment that is extremely vulnerable. It is recommended that aspects of knowledge of this not be taken out of context or placed on a database. Elders are aware that their knowledge in English does not have the same clarity, meaning, or significance that it does in their language or to their own people who are familiar with the language and the history or own their territory.

[Authors Note: The numbering of the recommendations in YKDFN 1997 contains an error whereby two different recommendations are given the designation of "Recommendation #2-D-4" (YKDFN 1997: xiv). Accordingly, the second "Recommendation #2-D-4" is corrected to "Recommendation #2-D-5" and edits to all following recommendations (i.e. Recommendation #2-D-5 to #2-D-16)].

Appendix B

Recommendations from the 1997 TK Study of Ek'ati Re-considered in March 2015

Number	Recommendation	Current Status / Questions	Action Required	Suggested Edits (in bold)
1	Weledeh Yelowknives Dene Elders have already seen the impacts from mining-in Weledeh-Cheh and in Akaitcho Territory. The Elders and Dene land owners in this project, who believe in coexistence, do not want this kind of exploitation continue in their territory. When Treaty 8 signed by our former Chief Sizeh Drygeese of the Yellowknives with the Crown in Right of Great Britain, the Queen requested the right to live in our territory in a spirit of coexistence. The Weledeh Yellowknives continue to maintain the Treaty relationship that is binding on the state of Canada and any party who enters into our territory. Therefore, it is recommended that a percentage of profits, jobs and compensation for loss of land use go to the Weledeh Yellowkives Dene First Nation. The Elders and Dene land owners of this project strongly recommend that Weledeh Yellowknives Dene land owners must participate actively in developing mechanisms in monitoring and in monitoring impacts from mining operations and their effects on their territory. Participants in this Weledeh Yellowknives project want to see a formal agreement in place that the mining companies will work together with their people throughout mining projects (including reclamation and closure) to develop, implement, and monitor ways to protect the water land, animals, the peoples continued use of their lands, and the evidence of the	Should be addressed in IBA already negotiated.	A new IBA must be negotiated for Jay Pipe.	
A - Ancestral Evidence of Weledeh Yellowknives				
2-A-1	Mining companies must get the consent of the Weledeh Yellowknives Elders for the use of their territories, lands and water and to monitor the impacts of mining operations. There are particular areas of the territory which has particular significance to the Weledeh Yellowknives Dene that must be respected by any group wishing to enter into the territory in the spirit of co-existence.	Still relevant		
2-A-2	In summer 1998, mining companies particularly BHP should take Weledeh Yellowknives Elders and Dene land owners to sites previously identified and to sites known to the people where ancestral evidence can be found.	Done / No longer relevant		
2-A-3	On the sensitivity map, areas identified as "green space are to be totally avoided by the mining companies and their employees and subcontractors and their employees. These areas include burial sites, caches and ecologically and environmental sensitive areas of great importance to animals and fish.	Have these areas been totally avoided?	More meetings with Elders are required to evaluate whether the 'green space' indicated is still relevant.	
2-A-4	Weledeh Yellowknives burial sites must be marked so that anyone from the mines can easily see and respect them. Graves can be marked with large rocks placed at each comer and rocks in the shape of a cross placed over the grave. Rocks placed like this are not likely to be moved by caribou.	Still relevant		
2-A-5	Mining companies shall fund Weledeh Yellowknives Dene to identify significant areas on shorelines, islands, and other places the companies are not telling their contract archaeologists to investigate.	Still relevant		
2-A-6	All Weledeh Yellowknives Dene archeological and ancestral camp sites within the BHP block and surroundings are to be identified by Dene and protected. There will be no activity on identified camp sites, especially for road building	Still relevant		
2-A-7	Mining companies must carry out a strong policy to forbid anyone from the mines disturbing graves, artifacts and especially, to forbid the collection and removal of artifacts, caribou antlers, and bones.	Still relevant. Should be covered under current reguatory processes.		
2-A-8	Mining companies can use government archaeologists in the verification of information for reports and monitoring. These archaeologists must be confirmed by the Yellowknives Dene prior to going into the territory.	Difficult to enforce		
2-A-9	All contract archaeologists working for mining companies shall have at least ten years experience, with half of that time in working with Indigenous Peoples. An acceptable alternative might be for the mining companies to authorize and fund Indigenous Peoples to select specialists they believe they can work with for results satisfactory to their Peoples, governments and the companies.	Difficult to enforce		

Number	Recommendation	Current Status / Questions	Action Required	Suggested Edits (in bold)
2-A-10	Evidence of Weledeh Yellowknives Dene ancestors' occupation and use of their territory is not to be called "heritage resources" as the term is disrespectful and diminishes the connection of such evidence to Indigenous Peoples. Ancestral evidence will not be considered exploitable "resources". Elders and Dene land owners in this project have a range of ideas about how mining companies and government should handle evidence of their ancestors, therefore, mining companies need to hold a community workshops with Yellowknives Dene to develop plans for presentation to the First Nation Council for approval or use.	Were these workshops held?	Terminology in Project Description still refers to "Heritage Resources" (page 22). More discussion is required.	
2-A-11	Yellowknives Dene First Nation have developed guidelines for the companies and contract archaeologists to follow in their relationship with the people and their ancestors' evidence. Therefore the companies and contract archaeologists must get permission and operational guidelines from the Chief and First Nation council.	Difficult to enforce	YKDFN to send their guidelines to Dominion.	
B - *Ndeh* (ie, the environment: land, animals, fish, birds, plants) and the peoples' continued use of their traditional lands				
2-B-1	Mining companies must use Weledeh Yellowknives Dene land owners to monitor impacts from mining operations on the water quality, plants, fish, and animals (including fish, birds, wildlife) and all roads, airstrips, barges, snow machines and other mechanical impacts to be used by mine companies.	Addition required.		Mining companies must use Weledeh Yellowknives Dene land owners to monitor impacts from mining operations on the water quality, plants, fish, and animals (including fish, birds, wildlife) and all roads, airstrips, barges, snow machines and other mechanical impacts to be used by mine companies. Monitoring Programs must draw from both TK and western science (e.g. indicators of healthy water grounded in TK). YKDFN notes that Dominion is carrying out monitoring, but there is room for improvement.
2-B-2	Mining companies must take responsibility for damage to *ndeh* (land) and environment since there is to be continual damage through exploration and mining, the companies shall be responsible to protect areas of great significance to animals and other wildlife, such as good caribou habitat and good fish spawning areas.	Should be covered under current regulatory processes.		
2-B-3	Mining companies must pay for regeneration of wildlife and aquatic habitat. Therefore the Elders and Dene land owners of this project recommend that preventative policies and mitigating measures be put in place along with adequate reclamation funds be for purposes. The funds be to used these will jointly managed by the Yellowknives Dene and the company. This is in keeping with the numerous international legal instruments that require such measures.	Should be covered under current regulatory processes.		
Animals				
2-B-4	Before there is any more disturbance of Ek'ati Ndi (the island where Diavik plans to mine diamonds), all animals - including fox and ground squirrel - must be live trapped and moved to a suitable habitat away from Diavik and BHP mine sites. If mining companies decide to use lands directly to the west of their sites (ie, where dust will be most dense), or decide to increase their activities (and increase the amount of dust blowing to the west) - every effort must be made to keep animals, birds, fish and vegetation from being covered with thick dust and going into the water.	Was this done? The YKDFN does not think so.	Will this be done for Jay Pipe?	
2-B-5	There should be no vehicle movement or blasting or other dust- and noise-producing activities during bird and animal migrations and birthing periods.	Should be covered under current regulatory processes.		
2-B-6	To protect animals from human activity and contaminants, mining companies shall take great care to keep animals off their sites with fences. Fences must be built around mining sites, especially where animals are migrating. Fences must be very high about four metres or 12 feet high) so that animals do not get caught in the top of fences in winter when snow blows against them.	See 2-B-8	High fences and wildlife deflection zones remain a priority.	

Number	Recommendation	Current Status / Questions	Action Required	Suggested Edits (in bold)
2-B-7	Diavik should limit its mining activities to the east island of Ek'ati Ndi and leave the west island (the one that points to Great Slave Lake) for animals. The island where mining operations are planned should be entirely fenced, leaving a wide corridor (at least 100 metres) around the shore so that wildlife can continue to use the island to rest while crossing the lake. The Elders and land owners of this project recommend that monitoring be especially enforced by the Land and Environment personnel in spring, summer, fall and winter.	Note concerns about shoreline. Too specific to still be relevant given current development.		
Caribou				
2-B-8	Mining shall fund Weledeh Yellowknives Dene land owners experienced in caribou deflection to change the migration of caribou out of the entire operating area near Ek'ati. During the next three caribou migrations, experienced land owners, directed by the Elders, can set up stone markers and stand by them to chase caribou away. After three migration seasons, caribou will have learned to avoid the markers (and, therefore, the mining operations). People will not have to man the markers after that time, as long as no one disturbs the markers.	YKDFN still strongly support this recommendation. Why was this not does with the YKDFN and done only with the Tlicho?	Recommend a 15 km radius, fencing around the airport site and camp. Any fencing has to be taken down during reclamation. Experiment with using inuksuit, sonic deflectors and wolf sounds to scare away caribou.	
2-B-9	Mining companies must avoid the Narrows between Ek'ati and Lac du Sauvage and the esker that passes through La Pointe de Misere and crosses Ek'ati because they are key caribou migration routes.	What sort of mitigations will be presented if these areas are disturbed? What has been done to date? The YKDFN understands that nothing has been done to date.		
2-B-10	Mining companies will have to pay Weledeh Yellowknives Dene to improve the Narrows between Ek'ati and Lac du Sauvage, since increasing numbers of caribou will use the narrows to avoid the mining operations. The crossing is dangerous because gaps in the rocks can break caribou legs, especially those of very young calves. Some become trapped and die, particularly in springs (like the one in 1997), when caribou cows leave the calving grounds early with calves not yet hardened for travel. Land owners could fill dangerous gaps in the rocks. This work to be done at the same time as the work being done in Recommendations #2-B-8.		YKDFN to remove large boulders and make a gentle slope in the waters at the Narrows to faciliate safe caribou passage.	
2-B-11	Weledeh Yellowknives Elders strongly recommend that all caribou calving grounds become Protected Areas. They urge BHP, which has gold mining interests near Bathurst Inlet, to support the protection of the caribou calving grounds in the area. Halting gold mining operations to stop noise, dust and contamination during calving would benefit the caribou and other animals, such as birds in the nearby waterfowl sanctuary. Caribou cows, if they feel more comfortable, might stay in the calving grounds long enough for their calves to be properly ready for migration.	Should be covered under current regulatory processes (i.e. Caribou Protection Measures).		
2-B-12	Diavik must leave room for migrating caribou on the north part of the island where they are planning to build an airstrip.	Done / No longer relevant		

Number	Recommendation	Current Status / Questions	Action Required	Suggested Edits (in bold)
Fish				
2-B-13	Mining companies must protect fish in Ek'ati. There are some very old, large fish in this lake. They could be damaged by boat motors as well as dyke construction and, potentially, from any spills resulting from trucks going through the winter road. Many fish also migrate to Ek'ati – particularly to spawn - from the Coppermine River and could suffer from construction activities, spills, and dust contamination.	Fish should be removed by communities before any lake or water body is drained or disturbed and distributed to communities.	How will Jay Pipe affect the key fishing areas identified in the TK Study of Ek'ati (maps)?	Mining companies must protect fish in Ek'ati and Lac du Sauvage. There are some very old, large fish in this lake. They could be damaged by boat motors as well as dyke construction and, potentially, from any spills resulting from trucks going through the winter road. Many fish also migrate to Ek'ati – particularly to spawn - from the Coppermine River and could suffer from construction activities, spills, and dust contamination. FS: In Lac de Sauvage, at the shorelines, there are lots of fish, especially near the island [near bay of Jay Project]. The open pit and dyke area is right in an important spawning area.
2-B-14	People from the mines will not hunt or fish in the Ek'ati area. Mining staff and contractors go to Ek'ati to work; if they want to hunt and fish, they can go to nearby lodges.	Should be covered under current regulatory processes. YKDFN understands that this is now an enforced regulation.		
2-B-15	Weledeh Yellowknives Elders warn against the catch-and-release of fish. It is not a good practice because fish can die from wounds inflicted by large hooks or from starvation when hook wounds in the mouth prevent them from feeding. Fish can also die from hypothermia when fish are handled by humans so much that the slime covering the fish is removed.	Still relevant. Fish in Lac du Sauvage must be handled with care.		
2-B-16	Government specialists and an independent environmental monitoring agency picked by the Yellowknives Dene and the company should verify environmental information for reports and monitoring of mining effects. Contractors working for mining companies in these areas must have at least ten years of field experience most of it in northern environments, and field staff working for such contractors must have at least two years of experience collecting field data. Contract scientists or fisheries and aquatic specialist researchers will hire Yellowknives Dene land owners for fish monitoring and related work.	Difficult to enforce		
Protection of Aboriginal & Treaty Rights				
2-B-17	Mining companies will compensate Weledeh Yellowknives Dene for disrupting their Akaitcho Territory land rights and affecting their way of life.	Still relevant. Partly addressed through IBA payment once/year.		
2-B-18	Mining companies that cause a large loss of animal, fish, and bird habitat will compensate the Indigenous Peoples, including Weledeh Yellowknives Dene, for loss of use of territory resulting in destruction of harvesting areas.	Still relevant		
2-B-19	Indigenous Peoples such as Weledeh Yellowknives Dene must continue to have access within their complete territory for their traditional pursuits. The Elders and Dene land owners of this project recommend that an open door policy be put in place for managers of the mine site to give emergency help to hunters and travellers who may need assistance when in the area.	Still relevant		
C - Water (ie, Ek'ati, streams flowing into and out of the lake, and groundwater				
2-C-1	Mining companies and government specialists must continue to verify where water flows from Ek'ati. Monitoring of water flow and levels must be continual throughout and after mining operations.	Should be covered under current regulatory processes.		

Number	Recommendation	Current Status / Questions	Action Required	Suggested Edits (in bold)
2-C-2	Mining companies must involve Weledeh Yellowknives Dene in the monitoring impacts from mining on water quality, water flow, water level, fish, aquatic plants, and wildlife relying on water including - monitoring for dust and contaminants from waste rock stockpiles. Elders are very concerned about dust from mine pits and roads that will be carried westward by wind. Dust will settle in streams that flow into Ek'ati and these contaminants will flow into the larger lake. Rain will also wash dust into the lake. The nine open-pit mines planned to date will all produce huge amounts of dust. Dust from Diavik's planned mines (in the lake itself) and the BHP mine closest to Ek'ati (at La Pointe de Misere) is likely to have the greater impact on water and the plants, birds, fish, and animals that depend on it than pits farther inland from Ek'ati.	Still relevant. Yellowknives Dene want to lead monitoring on their lands.		
2-C-3	Mining companies' waste water must be well filtered, and the outflow of waste must be monitored constantly (24 h/d, 365 d/yr). Weledeh Yellowknives Elders are concerned that soap, sewage, and other toxins from mining camps will enter the water and harm plants and animals. Although mining companies are treating this waste, it can still seep into the lake. Elders want to know the effects of such seepage on wildlife, plants and people that use the water what is the composition of the tailing ponds. There should be strict criteria developed with the Yellowknives Dene for the construction and maintenance of tailing ponds including their location.	Should be covered under current regulatory processes.		
2-C-4	Mining companies must take responsibility to secure their fuel storage from spills, explosions, and other disasters. Fuel storage must be far from shorelines and creeks to reduce seepage. Fuel tanks should be placed in retainers with cement bottoms and walls so that if tanks leak, any leaks can be contained. Fuel storage should be located at a safe distance from camp facilities to reduce impacts (and lives) from potential fires resulting from lightning strikes.	Should be covered under current regulatory processes.		
2-C-5	Every effort must be made to prevent damage from salt and acid drainage to spawning grounds and fish habitat. Because salt and acid drainage that may occur during drilling for mining operations can be devastating for fish and water plants, mining companies must be very open about informing Indigenous Peoples about where they plan to drill so monitoring impacts from drilling can take place in an orderly fashion.	Should be covered under current regulatory processes.		
2-C-6	Mining companies must monitor for seepage of contaminants, including those from waste rock stockpiles, into groundwater.	Should be covered under current regulatory processes.		
D - Water or land as a result of construction				
2-D-1	Mining companies planning major changes to the Akaitcho Territory environment such as the draining of small lakes or the building of expansive dykes in large lakes should be restricted to only one site initially. At this site, mining companies, government agencies, and Indigenous Peoples can find out what impacts actually occur and which mitigation attempts work best. Development on this scale has occurred in the barrenlands in Russia and Mongolia with devastating impacts. It is better to have methods of construction and monitoring developed before additional sites are attempted.	How is this being addressed?		
2-D-2	If Diavik has the consent of the Yellowknives Dene to proceed there are a number of things which must be done. To have the least negative impact on fish and fish spawning grounds near Ek'ati Ndi, Diavik should start building dykes in Ek'ati in late October or November, after fish have migrated to deep water. In spring, fish travel to and live in shallow areas along shores, bays, and islands in order to feed. In summer and fall, fish in these shallow areas. Diavik's plans to construct dykes will spawn disturb these shallows. One Elder suggested that, if dyke construction begins very cautiously in July (before spawning starts), leaving channels near the shore, the fish would be able to leave the shallows through these channels in late fall. The remainder of the dykes could be then built in late October or November. This process might still cause problems for whitefish because lake sediment will be disturbed and will cover plants that whitefish feed on.	Was this done?		

Number	Recommendation	Current Status / Questions	Action Required	Suggested Edits (in bold)
2-D-3	Diavik must protect the important fish spawning ground in the narrow inlet that almost separates the northern part of east Ek'ati Ndi from the rest of the island. One of Diavik's drawings (dated July 1997 *see* Appendix 1) shows this inlet being closed off at the eastern shoreline. Since dykes in the lake will cut fish off from other spawning grounds in shallows around the island, it is vital that the spawning area in this inlet be preserved.	Was this done?		
2-D-4	If Diavik puts an airstrip on the northern part of this island, it would be advisable to fence the inlet so that fish are not disturbed.	Was this done? What are the results?		
Eskers				
2	Reasons why development should not occur on and east of the "Misery" esker and the shore of Ek'ati include:			
	a) There is at least one visible archaeological camp site and there are burials in this area.			
	b) The esker is important to animals making dens in the soft gravel.			
	c) The shallow, rocky shore an important fish spawning habitat,			
	d) Caribou migration and plans for deflection require the esker to remain in place.			
	e) Regardless of deflection, some caribou and other migrating animals will continue to try to use the shore associated with the esker.			
	f) Animals denning in the esker should not be disturbed by direct human contact.			
2-D-5	Mining companies should leave all eskers in the Akaitcho Territory undisturbed. If companies believe they have to disturb an esker, they must consult with the Indigenous Peoples to do a comprehensive investigation of the esker, especially for burials and animal habitat, before the esker is disturbed or altered in any way.	Still relevant.		
2-D-6	Mining companies should use waste rock from pits or granite stockpiles (if they can be proven not to produce contaminants), instead of using material from eskers for construction of roads.	Still relevant.		
Misery Site				
2-D-7	BHP's "Misery" camp and mine operations must be constructed west of planned locations: instead, they should be located inland away from water and away from the "Misery" esker. Materials from the esker should not be used to build roads or other construction. Waste water and from the sewage camp should flow toward the unnamed lake between La Pointe de Misere and Paul Lake, rather than into Ek'ati to prevent the runoff which is presently occurring at Mackay lake and Pine Point. (This unnamed lake is surrounded by higher land and, there, the Elders feel such wastes can be contained.) Camps should be built on sites with lots of boulder, to deter caribou from entering. Waste rock piles must be located so that potential acid drainage does not enter Ek'ati as runoff.	Should be covered under current regulatory processes.		
2-D-8	Elders are concerned that the planned distances between camps and mining operations should not too great. They say that, if these sites are not closer together, workers will face potentially fatal challenges walking between the sites during blizzards. Project participants recall a man working at the Tundra/Salamita mine on Mackay Lake about ten years ago; he had intended to walk through a storm to an electrical shed only one hundred feet away: he did not return and searchers never found his body. Lightning is also a hazard for anyone walking or working on the barrens.	Should be covered under current regulatory processes.		
2-D-9	The access road from the BHP mining lease to the winter road that crosses Ek'ati should be constructed to the west of the small lake that will become the open pit mine - rather than, as planned, near the esker used by migrating caribou and over a clearly visible Weledeh Yellowknives ancestral camp site. A small valley to the west of the mine site would be suitable.	Was this done?		
2-D-10	Elders also feel strongly that BHP should not build roads from mining camp sites to water, especially to Ek'ati, for people from the mines to fish, bother animals or collect ancestral evidence as souvenirs.	Has this been done?		

Number	Recommendation	Current Status / Questions	Action Required	Suggested Edits (in bold)
Winter Roads				
2-D-11	Mining companies and government will get the consent of the Weledeh Yellowknives Dene on a more appropriate route for the winter road constructed every year to bring supplies to an increasing number of mine sites. When the first road was built in the 1970s, it was built without the consent of the Yellowknives Dene. This road uses a traditional trail of our people and. as a result, goes through some of the people's most important trapping and hunting areas. Elders and land owners in this project strongly recommend that the winter road from Tibbett Lake be moved to follow another route - particularly if there are plans to build a permanent, all-weather road.	Not considered due to time constraints		
2-D-12	Mining companies will use Weledeh Yellowknives Dene land owners during winter road construction to identify currents and channels in lakes, so that ice over them does not become part of roads. Ice over currents and channels remains thin because of continual water action; thin ice results in trucks crashing into lakes with their loads of supplies, such as diesel fuel.	Not considered due to time constraints		
2-D-13	To reduce the possibility of more fuel spills into lakes crossed by winter roads to and on Ek'ati, mining companies must have and enforce contracts with trucking companies stating that transport trucks must stay off winter roads when the ice is under two feet thick.	Not considered due to time constraints		
2-D-14	Mining companies that depend on winter roads crossing Weledeh Yellowknives Dene territory shall put up bonds against spills, contamination and other damage to water, lands, wildlife and cultural sites. The monies will be held in trust by the Yellowknives Dene for cleanup purposes.	Not considered due to time constraints		
2-D-15	Mining companies must find acceptable alternative ways to handle garbage that cannot be incinerated such as styrofoam and many plastics, as burning them results in contaminants polluting the air. At present, all garbage from the kitchens and camps is incinerated.	Not considered due to time constraints		
2-D-16	There to be no public tours of the mine and no construction of permanent towns on the barrens. Tours and town would increase human activity in the area and increase the negative impacts and cumulative effects on an environment that is extremely vulnerable. It is recommended that aspects of knowledge of this not be taken out of context or placed on a data base. Elders are aware that their knowledge in English does not have the same clarity, meaning, or significance that it does in their language or to their own people who are familiar with the language and the history or own their territory.	Not considered due to time constraints		

Key

Questions posed to Dominion with a request for a response and/or update OR Topic of discussion.

Suggested edits made to existing recommendations.

Not considered due to time constraints. Needs further discussion.

Should be covered under current regulatory processes OR No longer relevant OR Too difficult to enforce.

Appendix C

March 2015 Jay Project Workshop Notes

Yellowknives Dene First Nation
Revisiting A Traditional Knowledge Study of Ek'ati: 17 Years Later
Workshop carried out to consider Jay Pipe proposed by Dominion Diamonds
March 24, 2015, 9: 30 – 4:00
Dettah, NT (Council Chambers)

Participants:

Judy Charlo (JC)
Eddie Sikyea (ES)
Alfred Baillargeon (AB)
George Tatsiechele (GT)

Facilitators:

Fred Sangris (FS)
Randy Freeman (RF)
Natasha Thorpe (NT)

Interpreter:

Lena Drygeese

Attempts were made to invite youth, but nobody was available.

Materials Available: Plain Language Summary of the Developer's Assessment Report for the Jay Project. Prepared for Dominion Diamond Ekati Corporation. Prepared by Golder Associates Ltd. October 2014.

Materials Provided: Maps 2 and 3 from the DAR Plain Language Summary produced by Dominion Diamond Ekati Corporation (DDEC). (May 2: Proposed Jay Project Footprint and Map 3: Existing and Proposed Mine Footprints).

Note: Participants marked burial sites and other sites of interest on a map, but this is not included due to issues around confidentiality and sensitivity.

Notes taken from English interpreting carried out during workshop. Participants have not verified these notes so they should not be cited without written permission. Maps were shown (Maps 1 – 4) from the DAR Plain Language Summary produced by DDEC of October 2014).

FS: Welcomes group. Explains purpose, plan and agenda for the day (see attached presentation). Provides history and overview of 1990s TK Study of Ek'ati. Focus today will be on recommendations made in the TK Study of Ek'ati as they relate to the proposed Jay Pipe. Chiefs and Council will discuss issues around IBAs, and socio-economics. Explains that reports are given by Dominion Diamonds to communities to provide updates on their work. Encourages group to make sure that their recommendations (of the past and those made today) are followed. Highlighted how communities to water and fish tasting

regularly, but that they have a responsibility to 'dig deeper' to find out if the recommendations are being followed. In reviewing the plain language summary of the proposed Jay Pipe, there are likely concerns about: deflecting caribou, the caribou and the narrows, key spawning habitat, piling waste rock too close to the open pit in a windy area, cumulative impacts and ongoing expansions. Asks for permission for notes and photos to be taken during the workshop which is granted by participants. [See Powerpoint Presentation.]

FS: We get reports of how they are doing their work at Ek'ati. We have to make sure they follow our recommendations. Maybe we can make recommendations they have to put up rocks piled up to deflect caribou. They have used some of the recommendations we made. We do the water and fish tasting at Lac de Gras. We need to dig deeper to find out if they are following our direction. . . . They are piling rock close to the open pit; this is a concern, that it is too close to the water [CN1]. The pile needs to more inland because of dust and how windy it is in that area. We need to recommend that we do more meetings before they do their EA [for Jay Project].

RF: Shows photos from the August 2014 site tour where a small group of elders visited the area proposed for development of the Jay Pipe.

Group: General discussion about the traditional name for Lac du Sauvage.

AB: A long time ago, we were there [at Ek'ati] for two months and I helped. There was a small trailer placed there and that time the exploration people were looking for kimberlite. We used to set nets and well over 5 feet deep, we used to catch fish in the net. We used only one net and we checked the fish and the water. They did that before the mine started; they carried out all these tests before the mine started. We walked all over, we went through the Narrows, and we used boats to go through the Narrows. Mike Francois and myself, we were there for two months working with them. At the Narrows, the place is so old that even the rocks are all worn out [at the Narrows].

Back then they were testing everywhere. Now they want us to develop that pipe that they call Jay Pipe. It seems like they are not really going to go ahead, but we are not sure. Before they were working on that Misery Pit. The other sites that we visited and they took tests, it seems like they have found other pipes and they didn't say anything at that time. They didn't tell us about it at the time. How many years ago was that? They didn't say anything about those pipes. Only now they are saying they are going to work on it.

They are using a strategy on us. All those places that they said they were only going to be testing. We had gone to those places with them. They measured things down in the ground. That is what they were doing when we were with them. Those pipes that they used, they poured a little bit of cement in to the ground and pushed it down. That is what they were doing when we were with them. They were doing all these tests. I think they were planning on building a dyke around Diavik at that time, but they did not tell us. They will do the same thing around this Jay pipe.

During that time, we saw a burial [GR1].

We still want the IBA payment to continue no matter what kind of work they do in the barrenlands up there. They have to continue, no matter what. At the Narrows, there, there is a grave [BU2]. We saw it. It was all tied up in roots, a cross. Jonas and Isadore, we all went on a trip and walked all along there. I'm sure there are more than one little burial site around those areas [near the proposed Jay Pipe], but we do not know how they came to be buried there. I'm sure there are a lot more burial sites.

We were in a chopper and there is water flow between the rocks. There was a large chunk of ice like an iceberg, and we landed on it in July, just on the north side of, and west of Jay Pipe [IC1].

ES: What does Lac du Sauvage mean?

FS: The "lake of the savages" – that is what they called the Dene. Nàk'oo?aatì is the traditional name, I remember that lake. It is called standing willow or Willow Lake. There is willow all around the lake.

AB: There are lots of moose in that area east of the Narrows [MS1]; we saw two moose wandering in that area on the east side of Lac du Sauvage. We saw them. There is a tourist camp on the south side of the Lac du Sauvage. There was about eight moose at the southern part of Lac de Gras one time where there was a little cabin there, tourist camp. Even around Mackay Lake, there were 3 moose around that lake [MS2]. Maybe they are still wandering around in that area.

There was an island there, we were in a canoe and we were going towards that island. It looked like a big cliff on the island, but as we got closer, we realized it was a moose. We saw two moose on that island.

FS: About twenty years ago we heard about moose there [near Ek'ati], but we didn't see any. Now there are about eight moose there, on the east side of Lac du Sauvage. It is because of the willows in the area: the willows are attracting the moose, especially in the winter when the food is scarce. The moose will go where the willows are. Maybe in the future, they will come down.

FS: When we went there in 1996, we told them not to go there, where the Jay Pipe is located.

FS: Background

AB: I want to know, where do these people come from? Overseas? We want to know their backgrounds; what kind of families they have; we want to know everything. They just step over us. They don't ask us to go on our land. Look at all these mines, they are going over our heads, going straight to the government and they don't tell us what they are going to do on our land. This is our land, by our rights, they have to come see us first. We don't go to their land and just destroy what we want. I'm trying to figure out how they think after all these years. Ever since white people came to this land.

Today they use chemicals. Look at Giant Mine and the arsenic. There is a lot of arsenic underground. All kinds of big storage bins and all these things are there. Ms. [Judy] Charlo went there to see how they stored things.

Look how much of our land they are contaminating. They are using chemicals. They are doing all this damage to our land and don't say anything to us until after it is too late. At one time, we went on a site tour. There were different rocks laid out, but they told use we could not touch those rocks without using gloves. They knew they were contaminated. What is going to happen to our land, when the young people go out? When they go out, they don't even tell us what they are doing.

All these mines, they are trying to make money out of it. Even Akaitcho mines. There is a gold mine, past Giant, TerraX [TerraX Minerals Inc. is presently exploring the Yellowknife City Gold Project, a current exploration program for property adjoining Giant Mine's north boundary]. We need to go meet with them again. We need to recommend TK to them. They are destroying our land all around us. They are looking for more minerals, gold, anything they can make money out of on our land. Even if they do all this exploration work, they don't tell us what they find.

Here we talk about the Drybones Bay area, remember they destroyed some places during exploration. Drilling, blasting and now that site doesn't look good anymore. We thought that we recommended that they don't do any work in that area, but they did it anyway. They are sneaky: they did it anyway. They destroyed the land and then stopped. It seems like they just come to our land and take whatever they want want and do whatever they want. They have to come to Dettah and talk to us, talk to the Chief, people who work for the Band.

There are burial sites at Drybones Bay. There was a fire there and some of the graves were destroyed. When they did their exploration work, it was right near the burials.

Now in the barrens today, they are making money out of our area. They send us just a little money. How can we help our own people if the government doesn't help us? They think we are stray dogs all over this land. They make as much money as they can from our land and then just leave. Then they go buy the fancy stuff down south. What do we end up with? Hardly anything!

When we try to make recommendations, and negotiate, they say that their person has died or moved so we have to start all over again. It is so sad to see the government even thinking about the native people in the country. Not only us up here, but all over. Today we are being taken advantage of, just like the first time the white people came and built houses everywhere. In the past and today, the white people are still taking advantage of us and our land.

We want to teach our young people. We make recommendations to help our future generations. We cannot always say we are in the poor house, as we are always helping one another. Still, we want the government to keep to their promises when they made the treaty. We want our great grandchildren to have a great life. Even myself, when I think

back to being a young boy with the old man, grandpas and uncles, they raised us how to do things on the land. What we did on the land, we knew. During those days, we traveled and hunted and trapped for our clothing and survival. Today it is different.

We should recommend that youth sit with us, travel with us, just sit with us. Even one of my sons works at the mines and he watches everything. Right now, they blast in the open pit. If there is a bit of wind after the blasting, the wind carries the dust on the land. Sometimes he sees the fox come out of dens because of the smoke. They come out of their dens because of the blasting, or maybe the sulphur smell.

There is nobody working to help our workers. Maybe there is nobody helping us. Maybe the mine representatives are hired and don't even talk to people.

We have to put a lot of recommendations forward if we want to protect our land and people. It gets hard sometimes when you think about it. I would like to recommend that whoever does work on our land, I want to know who the head boss is and where they come from, what country and more. We know all kinds of people are in this world, but we do not like it when they come to our land and destroy it just to make money for themselves.

In 1958 when the Mackenzie highway opened and the Ingraham Trail was worked on, the ice road was worked on every winter. Think of it, all these heavy equipment and supplies moved to the barrenlands to start those mines. We never got anything back in return. You have to give us compensation. There was lots of good fish in the barrens. What about all the dozers that go over all the portages, go over the burials? Sometimes you smell the oil from the spills. When I look at that, I think of the wildlife in that area. For destroying our land, wildlife, environment, we want to get compensation. There are four mines in operation and they bring up people in there. There are 9000 deliveries to the mines on our land. We should talk about those big vehicles. They should pay a toll, fee of some kind.

Break

NT: Explains details of Jay Pipe (e.g. will extend minelife for 11 years), the work of the TK Panel (formerly through EMAB) resulting in recommendations, many of which are the same/similar to those detailed in the 1990s TK Study of Ek'ati and may of which are being implemented. Explains the objective today of considering the 55 recommendations made in the 1990s down to those most relevant to the proposed Jay Pipe.

FS: Explains that IBA will be dealt with by Chief and Council. We are only here today assuming that there will be at least 30% Aboriginal employment, and that there will be many jobs and training. This is being negotiated by the GNWT through a socio-economic agreement. This should be mentioned as it related to

Recommendation #1.

Caribou Recommendations

R #2 – B – 8

FS: The ribbons used to try to deflect caribou were suggested by the Tłı̨chǫ, but didn't work and probably attracted caribou instead. We want instead a 15 km radius, fencing around the airport site and the camp. Near Great Bear Lake, caribou got caught up in fencing and died. We are wondering how it would work to use markers to deflect caribou? Is there something different that we can try? Should this still be a recommendation?

AB: Anything, any kinds of fencing, has to be taken down when the mine is closed. In the past some fencing was done, some kind of wiring. One time we went to BHP campsite and close to the airport there were lots of caribou and the plane couldn't land. The workers chased the caribou to another area, but after that there was fencing put up. After the mines close, they have to take the fencing down. Anything they brought to the minesite to put up, they have to take it away.

FS: The Jay Pipe would extend the life to 2030. They will still be using trucks, helicopters, so we should make recommendations. Maybe we can get funding to employ our people to set up the berms or fencing. What about the suggestion to use rocks? Our people could help with this.

GT: In the past, there is something being used. What about using something humans cannot hear, but animals can and it will deflect the caribou (i.e. sonic).

FS: Maybe we could use wolf sounds, help them develop wolf sounds. In the past, when our ancestors tried to herd the caribou using cairns like inuksuit. Maybe they can use recorders of other animals that prey on the caribou, like the wolves. Maybe they will go another way. We could us those kinds of sounds systems (e.g. ultrasonic).

JC: When we talk about things like that at these meetings, when I think back to the way our ancestors lived - even the Chief Drygeese, the past chiefs - they way they used to go to Fort Resolution for meetings, and I know the things they used to say. The Elders used to talk about all kinds of things, even Eddie's grandpa, they would make recommendations to each other around how the people should live, what they should do.

This is the land of our ancestors and it is being ruined. We cannot even drink water without paying for it. Even some of our people get sick on the water. Sitting beside me, Eddie, his older brother was walking around in the water and his feet got infected. All those companies have ruined our land.

There is a story about a big boat that sunk in the water, past Moose Bay, a big island off there, a big boat sunk in the water and it is still there. There is another vehicle, stuck in the ice with supplies, and it sunk. These things are happening on our land, but we don't see the government saying "lets help these people clean up the land."

In the past, there were lots of fish in these lakes. There used to be a fish camp, they used to take the guts and throw them in the water just like that; that is how it used to be. Fish blood, guts, were thrown into the water. Now when I think about it, we cannot even drink a cup of water without paying for water delivery. People used to set nets and travel all over the lake by boat. I feel badly when I think of all the damage done to our land. I don't like to think it, but I have to say it.

Now they have garbage and slop pails they just throw in the water . All these people that used to live there, at the camp, they would keep it very clean. All this area, our ancestors had lived in the area, and it looks clean when we are out there because they took care of the land. Today, it is not like that. Things they didn't want to use anymore, used to be disposed of properly, burned or buried. Now it is just thrown away, in the water. I was young at the time but I remember what it was like.

Now they don't give back to us. We should not pay for water. I don't like that. Sometimes some people make up stories, say to others in meetings . . . there is word going around that people in Dettah would not have survived without the city of Yellowknife. That is a false statement, not true. I don't like it when people make false statements like that. Government people don't know anything about the people who live here, so why do they make false statements? They don't know anything.

Even our young kids like to swim during the summertime, like to have fun and go swimming in the water. Even our kids, we want our grandchildren to swim in the lake, on the shore. Government trying to make rules. Is it because they want more money for the land. I used to go out on the land trapping with my family. We knew where the wildlife was, we followed the animals for survival. We had a good time, clean air, everything. The old timers are not with us anymore and we have to pay for everything that we need. We have to pay for our water and it is used by everybody.

We went for a site tour to Giant Mine to see how they transported the minerals, the trains. . . We used to be close to where the exploration people were working. We used to feel and hear the blasting not too far from us, even though we were out on the land. When the exploration people used to blast rocks near us and we would talk to the Chief right way and tell him they should not be doing this close to us or near us. Nobody mentions this anymore. On top of the ground, under the ground…. They just work at it until they get what they want. They don't even pay us for destroying our land. They should be paying for our water, because this is what we need. We have informed the Chief and council of this, and it take time, but they know what we need.

It is not just here that this is happening. All these abandoned mines, explosives, materials, cans, just left there, all abandoned. They just take off when they are done. Even on the barrens. The other mine that they are working on, near Kennedy Lake, that company will leave an imprint behind. In that area, it is good for all kinds of wildlife. As a little girl, I used to be there with my family. As a young woman, I went there. All of this is taken from our land, we should get something back in return. That is why I want something done for our people. Compensation or anything. They have to help us somehow after they come to our

land and ruin a big area without even consulting with us. What about the other communities when people go to their land and destroy their land? We raise our concerns, all the time.

I recommend compensation, I was thinking about that. The past leaders made suggestions. Why aren't they listening to our suggestions? The government didn't listen to us when we make recommendations. It is not right. We are very concerned about our future generations, our lands and water. This is what a wanted to share.

FS: They should give us compensation for all the areas they have destroyed. Even N'dilo we have to pay for water too. By our rights, when you think about it, they should give something in return for that trade-off. It is really hard for a lot of families to pay for water, especially those who don't have steady jobs.

Randy returns.

FS: Randy, do you know if anybody ever tried sonic or wolf calling?

RF: Not to my knowledge.

GT: Should do it only at daytime to protect from airplanes. Wolves only howl at night anyway. It makes sense to do it that way.

Lunch

Caribou

#2 – B – 9

FS: About the Narrows. There used to be white people there fishing. We told them not to disturb the area there. What do you think?

AB: The Elders put the recommendation forward, but they are not with us here today. We know they didn't want it disturbed. This is what they wanted. We should leave the recommendation the way it is. The Narrows must be kept protected.

AB: [The big rocks at the Narrows are] really dangerous for the caribou.

FS: We looked at the rocks in the water and that is when we found two caribou, the hooves got caught, in 1996. They both drowned. When we went there, the elders said that it was pretty dangerous. If you drive the herd east of Diavik, which will happen with the Jay Pipe, more than one caribou might be injured. In the past, when they crossed safely to Diavik Island, it was safer for them. It is a pretty rough place. DFO might have a problem with us removing rocks or changing it.

RF: Either pull out the big rocks or fill in the small spaces?

FS: There are lots of materials right there, you could make it smooth so the herd can jump in and get out the other side. If the Jay Pipe goes ahead, they are going to chase the herds off that area [north of Misery Esker], and they are going to run across that place. We'll have to ask DFO, to get their blessing, to see if they understand. What do you think?

GT: If we do throw sand in there or gravel, there might be big outroar about that too. Maybe we should ask the DFO and others first. We do not have the same knowledge. They go by scientific, we go by TK.

FS: In the past, when Diavik was on that island, we were working with Diavik, and we told them about the recommendations and they said it was a good idea. Now BHP has a new company, Dominion. So we they did not know all the recommendations put in place since 1995 so now we want to meet with them and tell them about our recommendations. So Diavik is ok with it, but the Dominion Diamonds needs to know. If they say yes, we could work and do something about it. If they say no, the caribou will still migrate in that area. Maybe we can go look at it ourselves.

GT: The caribou drowned in that area, you said. I think that it would be a good idea for where the big rocks are, the big rocks should be removed. Only the gentle part should be left. The area further up is ok, only that one spot (NOTE ON MAP). Big rocks should be removed and replaced with smaller ones so it won't happen again. We don't want caribou to drown. It happened lots in the past, but we don't know about it. It is a recommendation we can work on.

AB: When we worked there one summer, there are lots of big rocks there. That area you just mentioned, it is only one little area [south of inlet – about half way up the Narrows channel]. We could make that suggestion and funding could be put in place. I think that it could be done. It is just that little small area there. In the future, when the mines close, caribou might go back to it.

FS: We have the chance to fix it. One day the herds will all come back and it is probably better to make it safer now. We probably want to work on deflectors in this area.

Fish

FS: Shows map from 1990s TK work showing fish activity in Lac de Gras and Lac du Sauvage – 1:250,000 PDF. Requests discussion.

FS: According to Alexie Mackenzie, the Narrows stay open all year. In Lac du Sauvage, at the shorelines, there are lots of fish, especially near the island [near Jay Project Bay]. The open pit and dyke area is right in an important spawning area. We need to meet with the company to put a recommendation to take fish out and to ask questions.

AB: At that time, fish inspector came with us to go all around to see the fish and check nets. We caught different fish: small fish, big fish, with all different net sizes. We check the nets about 20 minute later. The fish get caught in the net. The inspectors always go out with us, we have to put the recommendation forward. The fish should be scooped with the net, try not to handle them too much. Fish cannot survive without water. The [fisheries people] give us lots of information too. I recommend that we meet with the fisheries people on site so that we can share TK and science. They need to see it with their own eyes or they won't believe it. We need to be together on site.

Not all communities work well together: sometimes they just want money. It is getting hard for communities to work together.

The Weledeh have to sit down and be serious about what is going on our land. Mining companies have to come tell us and give us a presentation they need to consult with us. They need to consult with us after everything is set up. Even when we took the site tour, on that day, they had blasted rock. They crush the rocks for roads, they use chemicals too. Water flows all the time and it will get contaminated slowly even if it doesn't look like it. After the work is done, what about the oil on the ground from vehicles? Our water will have a film on it. Will fish survive if the water is put back in the pit?

We recommend this in the past, how do we know they will listen? Elders have died, and this is all we have left: points on paper. What is going to happen? Most of the young people have never been there. We need to make our reports available. If you have to, pass it to each house like a flyer.

Diavik informed us of everything and they worked very well with us. Dominion should do the same. We are doing this for future generations, for them to live on the land. Look what happened with Giant and Con.

GT: What about if they find another kimberlite pipe, drain the water, what are they going to do with the fish? Are they going to put the water back in the Lac du Sauvage after it is built? The first time, they said they distributed the fish to the communities. Are they going to do the same thing this time?

FS: In the past, the fish were distributed to different communities, even to Yellowknife. The mining companies were not prepared to collect fish when they first had work on the other open pits. Those lakes on top of the pipes took the fish out and water out; they were not prepared to store fish onsite (i.e. no freezers or equipment ready). So some of the fish was getting rotten and so the fish were brought to somewhere else. We don't know where it was brought. Maybe to Kugluktuk where they still have dogs. So if they had told us on what days they were going to send the fish on the plane, somebody could have been waiting at the airport to get them. Over 55, 000 fish were spoiled. The ones still good were sent to this community. This time, we recommend that freezers are available to store fish before sending to community so they are not spoiled. They should freeze it and pakckage it and send it to different communities. It should be talked about. That way too much fish wont get spoiled.

Last year at Kennedy Lake, all the fish that was taken out of that Lake, we had put recommendations in there, to be prepared to collect and store them properly. We told them to do that. They got everything ready and the ones that know how to check nets and fish, we wanted them to hire our fishermen to collect the fish because they know how to handle them. This should be done again at Jay Pipe. When you touch fish from the lakes up there with your bare hands, because there is something in your hands that is not good for the skin/scales of the fish. We should meet with the mines and DFO to make recommendations on how they should do it, and how we can work with them. They should hire some of our people.

FS: It needs to be done properly. They didn't do a good job in taking care of the fish so we need to recommend that they gut it and package it properly to be distributed to people. In that area where they are going to drain the water, there probably won't be much fish because it is a shallow area, but it is important migration, spawning and fish habitat.

#2-C-5

FS: If we have people that do the blasting and drilling, maybe we could have them come talk to us. We should tell them to demonstrate to us, or tell us how the work is done. Better communication of monitoring results, want to know what is in the stockpile.

#2 – D – 1

RF: The idea 20 years ago was that the mines would get too big, there would be too many mines. We can re-word this that it is still a concern and that it is actually happening.

FS: We have to recommend to keep it small; we put forward recommendations years ago that we did not want a big footprint of the area. Go slowly and learn from the past. If you are going to have open mines, we want them to work carefully so that they do not destroy the water or contaminate anything and that they don't have too many buildings everywhere, especially around the minesite. We don't want too many mines in all directions.

NT: What have you learned in the last twenty years and how can you give advice thinking forward to the Jay Pipe?

GT: Before the mines started, they told us they were just using straight water. After the mine started, they were using chemicals. They need to tell the truth. I hope it doesn't happen like that again. If they want to start a mine, they should come out with the truth and be open from the start and nothing is hidden. In the Aboriginal way, we don't hide anything. We are straightforward, if we want somebody to know something, we don't beat around the bush. That is our way. **That is the thing, that I really want to know the truth before something happens.**

JC: When we talk about the mines on our land, we have concerns. I remember when the elders used to be on our land. We never used to see anybody around the Lac de Gras area. When I go to meetings, I sit around and listen to what people say and sometimes in other communities, I go and I listen. When they talk about their own land, when they talk about their mines. In the Burwash area, there was people living there, I was talking about what the mines did to our land. . . . I always tell them that everybody is younger than me at the meeting. I remember all the chiefs of the past. I remember what they said, what they did for our people. We never used to see white people on the land. We never used to see white people. We used to go to Fort Resolution to pick up our supplies.

After so many years, Chief Drygeese said we would not go to Fort Resolution to accept treaty money and we told them they had to come here. That was before the big influenza epidemic came through the north. We never used to see white people around here. After the epidemic came through here, it was only after that the white people came through. Some white people started coming.

At Con mine, we didn't know they were going to do blasting. It was in 1935 after I came back from residential school when… I never saw white people until I went to Fort Resolution. Around Burwash there were little shacks and log houses… when the white people came there, they were really surprised that the white people came here, across here, at Con Mine. The chiefs said that on this side of the land [near Dettah], no white people are going to come here. Willie Crapeau has said this. These were his words.

Today I am still talking about water. I am upset I am paying for water delivery. I did not ruin the land or all those areas around the mine! All the chemicals they used! I was really concerned. We did not do this! The leaders here, they did not like what the white people were doing. There used to be the Back Bay / river area, people used to set up tents to collect fish for the upcoming winter. They did that in the fall time. Later when the white people came, the just put their garbage wherever they wanted. They used our land as a dumping ground. Sometimes the tailings pond over-flowed and they didn't do anything about it. That is why Back Bay is really bad.

Even in this area, the fish look different. Around Gros Cap Area [in Great Slave Lake], we used to come back to Dettah and then back there: the fish were different. Sometimes they have slop pails in the winter times, they just spill on the ice like that. Just dump their garbage not too far from where they live. All these things, I have seen.

They said that the white people were saying there were not Dene people here when they came. I am really upset because that is not true. People were always out doing something – nobody stayed in one spot a long time. We were always out doing something on this land; we traveled all over. I remember a lot of things that happened. When I was young, we would travel to Lutsel K'e, and spend a few seasons over there and then come back here again. I never saw one white guy growing up. Then they say a white guy found gold in YK area.

When we did see them [white people], they were dressed poorly. We had to help them out. They would have froze. There was one white guy who had three dogs on his team, he didn't have good footwear so my uncle gave him mukluks and thick leggings when we saw him at Gros Cap. I was there. I saw it. I never heard one white person say that they survived because Dene people helped them. And here they are trying o take over everything that is ours. They don't even say thank-you. No white person has mentioned anything like that. We used to see white people on the land, said my uncles, but I was little and I still remember. In 1935 I came back here from residential school to this area. If it wasn't for the white man, they would say nobody would be in Dettah. That is not true. I don't like that. My grandpa, and his grandpa and his grandpa were here…. I know that because I was told that.

In those days, we went hunting and trapping, we had everything we needed. Even at Thor Lake now they are talking about a mine there. Francois Lake, the other place. . . My grandpa had a log house there, and they had a little smoke house beside the log house. Fred knows that area I am talking about. There are lots of trapping trails from Dettah out that way to the east. Sometimes they just made a small lean-to house, with a flat roof, just enough for

people to sit around, lay down, have a small stove or fire pit in there to check their traps. My grandpa used to have a log house out there. They used to go to Fort Rae in a small freighter canoe with an old time kicker on it. They used to have a trading store at Fort Rae. They used to buy tea in exchange for fur.

I remember one time they went there and on the way back, they stopped at Enodah.

Then they made log houses there, at Enodah. Now the white people say when they first came there, there were no Dene people there.

When I first saw blasting done, it was at the Con Mine. They were blasting some rocks there and we didn't really know what they were talking about. They were making signals and talking. We finally figured out what they were trying to say and so we got out on shore. The guy kept looking at his watch. He said we should just wait 20 minutes and kept looking at his watch. Next thing we know, there was big bang and dust and rocks fell into the water on the shore. We knew they had blasted. We got back in our boats and we couldn't go back that way [because of the blast rock] so we had to go around the other way, away from Con.

. . . Remember what the elders have said from this community because they know what has happened before the white people came. My mother is from the Aklavik area and my father is from the southern part, near Fort Smith. My parents are from two different places, but we grew up here and what our grandparents told us about these areas around the lake. . . We know these places because we have been there ourselves.

The government and mining companies are taking money from our land and we don't get anything. I remember when the Queen of England came with her family to here. They did a tour. My husband had some coins given to him, maybe for the Centennial. All these things were happening and all our people were out on the land.

What the land looks likes today, with all the abandoned mines….we went to those areas too and have seen how they just leave their things behind. When I get out, I remember how good the land used to look. Then I see the stuff left behind and I get really disappointed. It breaks my heart.

You must take down our words, as this is what we saw. This is what we learned from our grandparents before us.

AB: We know what happened on our land, our grandparents told us what happened. Now we are going through this, how can we make recommendations so that they [the mining companies] work better with us? They should help us with money since they are making money. The way they want to work with us at Ek'ati and Diavik. If they can improve…

What if something happens to those two lakes [Lac de Gras and Lac du Sauvage], what will happen to the fish and water? We have to get a payback of some kind, compensation. Even this diamond mine that they have started, the land they have touched, the open pits, they have killed that land. It will never be the same again. They ruined that land that they are on. So now there is another area they want to work on.

I recommend that we go there ourselves. Sometimes we have to have people from here to go to the worksite to see what they are doing. We need funding to do the kind of work that we want. Since they are taking from our land, we want them to give us funding.

From Dec/Jan there is always big trucks going on the road. Now there are 4 mines operating and all these supplies are being delivered. We have not talked about the roads too much.

When I think back about traveling with dog teams, everything was pristine. Water, land, trees…everything. I remember how I used to look when I travelled. Not all lakes have been checked for good fish. Maybe there is some fish nearby the mines where the water and/or fish is not good. The fisheries officers are always making regulations. It cannot always be like that. They have to make recommendations from us too. The old people, from the 1950, 60s, 70s… We have to recommend that they hire our people, that they work with us. I want to recommend that they hire our people to do these kinds of work on the land.

Somebody somewhere is digging something up. We have to think about this. I wonder how they are doing out there. The land is being torn apart and the wildlife need to find another place. I wonder where they are going to?

The mining companies really protect one another. We have seen those attitudes before. That is why we need to take a look at these things themselves. We have to see what they are doing.

The companies say they are not using chemicals but we know that they are.

The rare earth metals at Thor Lake are very powerful. We used to avoid that area, the Elders used to say, we avoided that area because they know there was something over there. Now today, they think that we don't know anything.

Now they say there is going to be a road in a different area. It just seems like they are constantly changing their minds. We should always talk about what is going on in our land. We need to continue with these information sessions. We need to involve the young people to teach them.

You should look for funding so they can show us how, when, where they plan to build the Jay Pipe. I know they don't work very fast, so right now everything is being planned. They should take some youth and some elders in the 40s/50s so they can see it with their eyes and so they can know. They cannot know otherwise. We should have a site tour, we need to take a trip. . . . The mining companies should be able to site down with the young people and talk together.

There are lots of abandoned sites . . . We don't want to do that again, just pick a spot and start picking around. . . . As Treaty 8 people, we have not even settled our land claim yet. I was thinking that if we had settled our claims, we could have been part owners. I am thankful we have people who work with us.

In 1952 or 1954 in Fort Rae, I went there by boat and I was about 17 years old. In Fort Rae, people were really pitiful at that time. After we helped them out a bit, they think that they

are so rich and they want to take over our land. They were so pitiful at one time. What I recommend is that we go to the Jay Project Pipe to consider an open pit; to go there in July.

I want to know, when is the next meeting for Jay Project in N'Dilo?

RF: There will be many meetings. This is just the first meeting. The Jay Pipe will go through a lengthy environmental assessment process.

#2 – D -5

FS: Should we alter the wording around eskers? The animals make their dens in there. This is still valid.

#2 – D – 6

FS: The Elders didn't want eskers used. It is the same today.

NT: Can they mark areas for potential deflection areas for caribou, key fish areas or camp sites?

FS: They said there is not enough people here and they want more meetings. They don't feel comfortable. They don't want to change the recommendations made by the elders in the mid-1990s.

#2 – D – 8 / #2 – D – 9

FS: We recommend that there are not a lot of roads built to give people access. We don't want policies to enable people to take things, go fishing, go on our land.

AB: What are they going to do with all of the waste rock that they take out? Where are the people going to stay?

FS: There is an area where there is an esker where it goes down to the shore, where it goes down. The road will be constructed after the assessment. There will be several meetings about the road construction. That is when they are going to start working on the dyke. They really have to watch out for the weather, it can get very windy around here. Dust on the road from trucks going by. They have to be careful how they work. Plants and other wildlife are in that area in there. We have to ask questions about this.

AB: We should go check it with our own eyes. I wasn't there. I need to see it, the esker.

FS: This is not the only meeting we will be having so we will still be talking about it.

RF: I don't know when the environmental hearings will be, but everybody needs to go and stand up and talk.

GT: Do they have water and water treatment?

RF: Yes, as part of their regulatory requirements.

GT: Closing prayer.

END

Appendix D

English and Taltsą́ot'ı̨né́ Place Names in Chief Drygeese Territory

Ehdaìtì/Ehdaàtì / Lockhart Lake

Ekècho Ndìa / Egati Dea / Egati Island /Small Island in Lac de Gras

Enǫhdaà / Enodah

Ewàdehtì / Courageous Lake

Kǫ̀k'e Tì / Contwoyto Lake

Nàk'ooʔaa / The Narrows between Lac du Sauvage and Lac de Gras

Nàk'ooʔaatì / Lac du Sauvage

Ndilo / Ndılǫ

Nechagǫndo / Gros Cap

Nǫndıka Tì / Nodeati / MacKay Lake

Nǫndıka / MacKay Lake (at narrows)

T'èʔehdaà / Dettah

Wìlìideh / Weledeh / Yellowknıfe Rıver

Wìlìidehcheh / Welehdeh-cheh / Yellowknıfe Bay

Whatì / Whati

Whatìa / Drybone Lake

Whatìcho / Beniah Lake

Taltsą́ot'ıné

From: GOYATIKǪ LANGUAGE SOCIETY (June 5, 2015