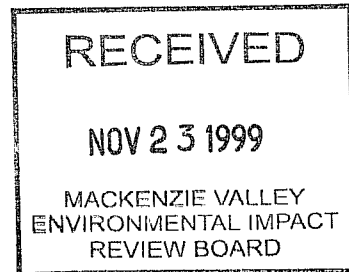


Box 1778  
Yellowknife NT X1A 2P4

23<sup>rd</sup> November 1999.

Mr Gordon Lennie  
Chairman  
Mackenzie Valley Environmental  
Impact Review Board.  
Box 938  
Yellowknife NT X1A 2N7



Dear Mr Lennie,

Judging from the draft "Environmental Assessment Terms of Reference of the BHP Diamonds Inc. Beartooth, Pigeon and Sable Kimberlite Pit Mine Extension" it appears that you are unaware that only a few short years ago the BHP operation was subjected to one of the most thorough, comprehensive, expensive and exhausting environmental assessments ever conducted in Canada.

Practically all the information you solicit is already in the public domain. It exists by the wheelbarrowful. All you have to do is pick it up from a neighbouring office.

Basically the extent of BHP's proposal is limited to amending their extraction sequence, a not uncommon practice amongst mining companies which is usually looked upon as being their own internal business. Even so their plans will be subject to scrutiny and will have to await approval by a whole host of public authorities including DIAND, the NWT Water Board

and the Chief Mining Inspector. Public interests in the fields of health, safety and the environment are already being looked after by the competent staff of these various offices

Needless duplication resulting in unnecessary time delays and very high costs to both the taxpayers on one hand and to BHP on the other bring institutions such as the MVEIRB into public disrepute and give rise to the feeling that its members and staff are creating illusory problems solely to justify their own existence without regard to the economic or environmental well being of the rest of us.

If the MVEIRB insists on reviewing BHP's proposed change in operational scheduling then it should restrict itself to incremental matters such as the 20 km or so of new road which, quite frankly, is hardly a major concern in the general scheme of things. It should not be going back to square one for a tortuous repetition and regurgitation of everything which has already been done to date.

Yours Faithfully,

Dave Nickerson.