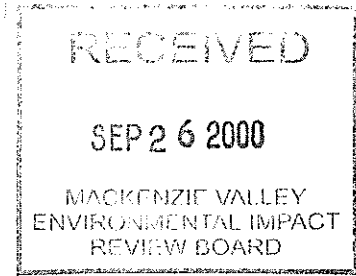


NORD PRESENTATION – September 26<sup>TH</sup> 2000  
BHP's EKATI DIAMOND MINE  
ADDITION at SABLE, PIGEON & BEARTOOTH



## I. Introduction.

I would like to take a moment to thank the board for providing us with this opportunity to present our view on the proposed expansion at the Ekati mine.

My name is Bill Aho I am the current president of NORD, Northern Organization for Responsible Development and I am here today to make presentation on our behalf. Our organization was registered under the societies act May 18, 2000. We are an organization of northern individuals and business people who have an interest and stake in what will occur as far as development in our territory. Since the review process for the original BHP mine began the members of our organization have been making presentation to various public forums on behalf of themselves or as representatives of organizations such as the chambers of commerce or construction association. We felt that our voice was not being heard and that our views were not being given due consideration. We felt the need to become more organized and focused. Out of this NORD was born.

The years of experience in the north of our membership make us a recognized and credible voice for responsible development in our territory. We believe this is crucial, as we will be the ones who have to live with the consequence of the decisions made at forums such as this. We understand that development of our natural resources is the only way to better the lives of all that live in our territory. We require that this development be responsible to the environment that we live in and to all the people who live here. Our organization is young but it is growing fast. Our membership includes a broad spectrum of the population and business community.

We are here today is to help assist in seeing that the regulatory process that will allow development in our territory will be defined, fair and timely. We do not wish to see potential development large or small discouraged because of a process that is not affordable and clear.

## II. Responsibilities of M.V.E.I.R.B. – taken from stated guiding principles as published on website at [www.mveirb.nt.ca](http://www.mveirb.nt.ca)

I would like to speak briefly about the guiding principles of the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board. Your web site focuses on two specific areas of interest.

1. Number one is “the protection of the environment from the significant adverse impacts of proposed developments” – N.O.R.D. Is in total agreement with this position. We are only interested in furthering the economy of the Northwest Territories with the long-term safety of our environment secured. We do however, recognize that there have been many forces at work in the Northwest Territories that are making these decisions more difficult than they should be. We encourage you to focus your efforts on the empirical information provided to you by regulatory agencies and the proponent to make reasonable, informed and timely decisions. When you are considering BHP’s proposal to alter their mine plan we encourage you to recognize the importance of the approval already given by the Environmental Assessment Review Panel.
2. Your next principle is stated as follows. “the protection of the social, cultural and economic well-being of residents and communities in the Mackenzie Valley.” This principle truly embodies the need for safe and timely development in the Northwest Territories. It is our belief that this board must proceed with a positive attitude towards development in order to protect the “well-being of residents”. There is little else in the Mackenzie Valley that has any long-term economic spin-off. We must encourage mining and oil & gas companies to harvest our non-renewable resources and set guidelines that protect our environment while allowing reasonable projects to proceed and bring economic prosperity to the region. The training opportunities offered by these major international companies are long overdue in the Northwest Territories and we must take advantage of them now if we are to see an elevated standard of living for all residents of the Mackenzie Valley in the years to come. If we think about the children that are in grade 9 – 10 right now they are going to be coming into the job market about the time that BHP, Diavik and the Oil & Gas companies should be hiring additional full time employees. Without these major projects to look forward to there is NOTHING for them to train for or offer them a future. These projects have the potential to carry generations of families in the Mackenzie

Valleys in to a higher standard of living, better education and reduce dependence on social programs.

Let us not forget that a project such as BHP's Ekati mine injects approximately one hundred million into the economy in goods and services annually and another thirty five million in salaries.

Please take the time to review your guiding principles every time you evaluate and make your recommendations to the minister of D.I.A.N.D.

### III. Length of process and setting of guidelines.

Since the beginning of the diamond industry in the north the review process has been continually changing. The original BHP project was a panel review and took about twenty-six months to complete from ground zero to an operating mine. The Diavik project was reviewed under a comprehensive study and will take about the same amount of time. The change to the Ekati Mine plan we understand could take up to twenty-eight months to complete. It is hard for us to understand why the addition of three pipes to an existing mine plan could take so long to approve or reject. We believe this is sending the wrong message to those that would consider development in our territory. The process has to be clearly defined and timely. Smaller developers may look at the experience of the two mines that have gone through the process and decide to take their development dollars to other regions where the process is clearer and they can determine weather or not they can do business in that territory. We do not want to make our territory out of reach for development large or small.

One roadblock that we are seeing coming over the horizon is cumulative effect. This is an issue that has to be addressed collectively not separately by each developer. A mechanism has to be put in place to deal with cumulative effects on an ongoing basis so that it does not become a stumbling block to future development.

### IV. Closing

In closing I would like to thank the board for the opportunity to make our presentation and to ensure them that NORD will provide what ever support they are able to see that the board has the tools and resources they need to make their decisions in a timely manner.