

## **FORT RESOLUTION ENVIRONMENTAL WORKING COMMITTEE (FREWC) FINAL REPORT FOR THE INTERIM RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE (IRMA) PROGRAM 1997-98.**

The Environmental Committee has completed 95% of actions items set out in the workplan submitted to the IRMA Program.

- a) **Continue to submit proposals to different funding agencies that will meet our objective.**
  
- ◆ The Environmental Committee submitted proposals to the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) for the Integrated Resource Management Program (IRMP). The objective there was to lay a foundation for the IRMP process and begin to develop an integrated resource management plan for our traditional land use area. We held two Visioning Workshops to familiarize the residence on the IRMP process. Lutra Associates Ltd. facilitated these workshops. We hope to continue on with this process of developing an integrated resource management plan for our area that maximizes our resource to its fullest potential and has minimal environmental impact . . . in the sustainable development context.
  
- ◆ A proposal was submitted to your department on the Protected Areas Strategy (PAS). We used this program for researching, identifying areas that the community felt should be protected. We also used this program to enhance our Geographical Information System (GIS). We are in the process of digitizing all the information on the GIS. We used the IRMP Visioning Workshop to introduce the PAS and identify specific areas. We also used some funds from the Abnormalities in Wildlife to interpret the PAS, IRMP

and the Abnormalities in Wildlife in Chipewyan on the local T.V. Broadcasting.

- ◆ We also accessed funds to do environmental assessments on Land set aside for Indians. Mike Nehir of Public Works. Edmonton did the scope of work and Dave Perrin, Manager of Lands, Environment and Natural Resources, Indian and Inuit Services, Land and Trust Services. Completed the inspection after the project was done.
  - ◆ Resource, Wildlife and Economic Development involved the Environmental Committee on a project that looked at Abnormalities in Wildlife. This project was very interesting. We had two workshops one with the students of Deninoo School grades 7,8 and 9 Class and the second with harvesters. We also had a field trip that also involved the students, harvesters and elders. The Environmental Committee tries to involve students as much as possible to reinforce the importance of completing the sciences in school such as Biology and Chemistry. We also added a traditional knowledge component in the field trip by using elders. The project was very successful.
  - ◆ Akaitcho Tribal Council Environment Coordinator and the FREWC Coordinator submitted a proposal to the First Nation Forestry Program do a one week GIS training course that involved other Treaty 8 Communities- Lutsel Ke and Yellowknife. The GIS a very useful tool in the integrated resource management planning process. The only problem we have is that technology is constantly changing and evolving it is a challenge to keep up with the times . . . the need to upgrade and be up with this technology is a requirement. For example, when we bought our system we were ahead of remote sensing with the Windows 95 Application and now we are trying to catch up with the new Spans 7 application. With the new hardware and software- the GIS department is probably the most exciting area in the environmental department.
- b) Review and respond to all land use applications that might impact on our traditional land use base.**

The Environmental Committee reviews and responds to all land use applications in our land base area. Our biggest concern is the claim staking in our area. We are not notified about such activities and this causes us concern when we plan for our area. Government (Territorial and Federal) tends to put third party interests before land

claim negotiations and this makes it hard to plan for land selections and for our Protected Areas Strategy

**c) Review Thor Lake Demonstration Project submitted by Highwood Resources.**

The FREWC Coordinator and the Deninue Kue Chief, Don Balsillie participated in a project review January 12<sup>th</sup> 1998. There were deficiencies identified during the project review. Another project review (Level II Screening) was conducted March 31<sup>st</sup> 1998. Highwood presented the following:

- The previous work performed during the early 1980's at Thor Lake to be completed.
- Mergers of Highwood Resources and Mountain Minerals, July 1996.
- Project feasibility rejuvenated.
- Application process for bulk samples and mineral processing facility was submitted, July 1997.
- Downstream metallurgy to be proven.
- Mineral particle size to be reworked.
- Pyrometallurgical process for master alloy to be confirmed.
- Alloy for "test market" to be developed.
- Baseline studies to be performed pending Scientific Research License approval-FREWC Coordinator wrote support letter for Highwood Resources Ltd. to conduct all scientific research pertaining to the Thor Lake Demonstration Project. FREWC feels that all baseline data around this area are required to really get a snapshot of the state of the environment and compare values with Canadian Arctic Contaminants Assessment Report.

Highwood Resources Ltd. Will be doing community presentations sometime in May 1998.

**d) Review Annual Operating Plan for Long Island Logging Ltd. And Northern Forest Products Ltd.**

FREWC has reviewed Long Island Logging Ltd. And put terms and conditions on their application. Northern Forest Products Ltd. Pulled a fast one on FREWC by not submitting an application for review to FREWC. This caused problems in the middle of the operation. FREWC recommended that only Grapple Skidders be used because of the damage to residuals. Northern Forest Products Ltd., did not follow

the recommendations and used Grapple Skidders in the log harvesting operation. FREWC wrote to the NWT Development Corporation stating that we do not support management's decision to use Grapple Skidders.

**e) Continue to monitor water levels caused by the repairs to the structure of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam. Document all positive and negative impacts caused by the unusually high water levels.**

We were concerned with high water levels. The Canadian Arctic Contaminants Assessment Report reported that <sup>1</sup>“metal concentrations observed in filtered water and suspended sediments from the Slave River often exceeded national water quality guidelines (CCREM 1987).” A proposal was submitted to the Northern Contaminants Program to look at Muskrats and Berries. Due to time constraints we did not complete this project. This project will be conducted by David Kennedy, DIAND and FREWC in 1998-99 fiscal year.

**f) Continue to work with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) on fish stock assessment.**

Another year working with George Low and our Fieldworker Jill Rymer on fish stock assessment. George did two presentations: one at our one day environmental workshop on DFO's partnership with National Hydrology Research Institute, Marlene Evans on the preliminary report on the contaminant studies conducted 1996 in the Slave River, Resolution Bay and Pine Point areas. And another presentation at our Integrated Resource Management Visioning Workshop March 10<sup>th</sup> 1998 on fish stock assessment.

**g) Complete the environmental assessment on Lands Set Aside for Indians Use (commonly referred to as IAB properties) in Rocher River and Fort Resolution with Dave Perrin, Manager of Lands, Environment and Natural Resources, Indian and Inuit Services, Lands in Trust Services.**

Site inspections conducted under contract by Environmental Services, Public Works and Government Services Canada in October 1996 for DIAND, Indian and Inuit Services Directorate, Yellowknife.

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<sup>1</sup> Editors: J. Jensen, K. Adare, and R. Shearer, Canadian Arctic Contaminants Report 1997, Chapter 2 Page 94.

Based upon the site inspections, Environmental Services have found several environmental issues that require further discussions:

- Numerous residences contained assorted amounts of debris and scrap material, including abandoned vehicle bodies, that could pose health and safety hazards to residents, especially small children. Specific locations are documented within the database report.
- Fuel storage tanks not meeting local, Territorial and Federal standards.

The database, once completed, will allow DIAND to provide timely answers to inquiries by the First Nation. All information will be shared with the First Nation and kept confidential by DIAND. However, information gaps in the database will be addressed.

#### **h) Review Canadian Arctic Contaminants Assessment Report.**

In this report we concentrated in our area to develop proposals that looked at all industrial impacts that might contribute to the increase of diseases in our community. This report is quite lengthy and we will continue to review this report in the next fiscal year.

#### **i) Review the Mackenzie Basin Impact Study Final Report.**

This report looks at the impact of global warming and predicts that our area will be suitable for farming in the future. This is important to consider when we are planning for the Integrated Resource Management process. All scenarios have to be closely looked at, in order to plan for our future generations.

#### **j) Continue to research and address any developments that might impact on our traditional land use base.**

We followed two developments this year- Diavik and Monopros, both proposed diamond mines. We were impressed by both companies on how they involved our community. The BHP fiasco left our community with a bitter pill to swallow. Diavik and Monopros seemed sincere in avoiding the same obstacles experienced by BHP.

#### **k) Attend Mercury Workshop in Ottawa.**

We were interested in this workshop because one of the values in our preliminary report was close to guidelines. The workshop focused on the mercury issue closely and what direction should be taken to address this problem. It is always good to keep in touch with the Labs, the Scientists and make new contacts (partnerships) for future work. Since I have been involved with environmental issues, I found that the Scientific Community open and easy to work with. They are very technical in their work and I very much enjoy that part of my work.

### **Closing remarks**

Once again we have completed another year of addressing most environmental issues in our traditional homeland. The Fort Resolution Environmental Working Committee would like to thank your department for all funds that was made available to our committee. There were many challenges we had to overcome and building partnerships made our work easier to complete. Planning for our future and addressing all impacts from industrial developments can only ensure sustainable development does occur in our traditional land base.

Thank you for your time and if you have any questions please do not hesitate to call me.

In the Spirit of Coexistence

Maurice Boucher, Environmental Coordinator  
Fort Resolution Environment Working Committee