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Yellowknife NT
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August 24, 2001

Gordon Lennie
Chairperson
Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board
Box 938
Yellowknife NT X1A 2N7

Re: De Beers Snap Lake Diamond Project Environmental Assessment

Dear Mr. Lennie

I have just received a media release from De Beers that may represent a significant change in this proposed development.

The developer has now pushed back the date for full production by two years and indicates that there will be a "test mining" phase. There was no mention of a "test mining" phase in the project description submitted in February 2001.

Furthermore, there is a statement in today's media release that further time is needed to "delineate the resource within a technically challenging kimberlite". This could suggest that this project has a greater degree of uncertainty than originally portrayed in the project description submitted in February 2001.

This new information also raises procedural concerns as the Draft Terms of Reference is based on the February 2001 project description. Your Board may wish to consider the need for additional information from the developer to substantiate the statements made in the media release issued today by De Beers.

All of this reinforces the need for a public scoping process for this proposed development as recommended in the letter that I submitted earlier today.

Sincerely,

Kevin O'Reilly
Research Director