

August 5, 2002

Gordon Wray  
Acting Chair  
Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board  
Box 938, 200 Scotia Centre  
Yellowknife NT X1A 2N7

Dear Mr. Wray;

**Re: Snap Lake Diamond Project Environmental  
Assessment Work Plan Schedule**

On July 31<sup>st</sup>, De Beers submitted its completed responses to Information Request Round One (the second IR round). This week we will make our submission on the outstanding non-conformity topics. This raises the issue, particularly in light of the recent INAC "Request for Ruling", of a revised Work Plan schedule.

We consider that a revised schedule must balance the need for effective public participation and a rigorous Environmental Assessment while being timely and economically efficient.

In this regard, recent draft Work Plan schedules are of concern to us, for example, in the September 2001 Work Plan, the period from De Beers responding to the final Information Request round through to completion of a Public Hearing is approximately 3 months. While in recent draft Work Plan schedules this time period has been increased to approximately 6 months to include "pre-hearing conferences" for the Technical Sessions and Public Hearings.

In De Beers opinion, few substantive issues have been raised during the Environmental Assessment to date and we feel an accelerated review process is



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# DE BEERS

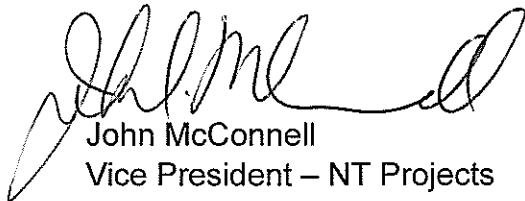
A DIAMOND IS FOREVER

feasible. We would like to propose the milestone timing below be considered in the Work Plan schedule revision. This timing, with the exception of concurrent Technical Session and Public Hearing, is based on timeframes outlined in previous Work Plans.

<u>Milestone</u>	<u>Date</u>
Final IR round closes	Aug 20, 2002
De Beers submits responses to final IR round	Sep 17, 2002
Advisors submit Technical reports to Board	Oct 15, 2002
Pre-hearing conference	Oct 30 – 31, 2002
Concurrent Technical Session and Public Hearing	Nov 25 - Dec 13, 2002
Review Board decision	Feb 14, 2003

Thank you for your consideration on this very important matter.

Yours sincerely,



John McConnell  
Vice President – NT Projects