

**Sambaa K'e Dene Band**

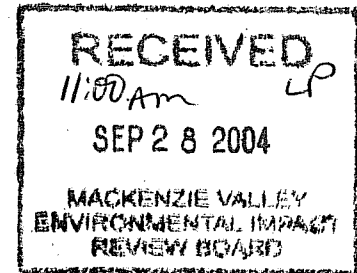
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September 23, 2004

Alan Ehrlich
Senior Environmental Assessment Officer
Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board
Yellowknife, NT



Dear Mr. Ehrlich,

This letter is in response to the Review Board's Information Requests (IRs) regarding the Dehcho Imperial Geotech Environmental Assessment (EA). The Sambaa K'e Dene Band has been asked to respond to IR 1.9 regarding the nature and extent of the cultural values attached to the K'éotsee watershed area.

First, we must point out that the K'éotsee area has both cultural and ecological value and significance to the Sambaa K'e Dene Band. As noted in our letter of March 23 to the MVEIRB, "...we have attached a map showing the eastern K'éotsee (Trainor Lake) watershed area, which is considered a highly sensitive area given the *environmental* and *cultural* values of the lake and its tributaries" (my italics). This dual concerns needs to be clear. In that letter, along with our concerns regarding K'éotsee, we also noted concerns about the woodland caribou in the proposed MGP corridor, proposed a community-based environmental monitoring approach, and raised issues about the use of the Sambaa K'e winter road. We should note that the winter road and environmental monitoring issues are being addressed by the proponent through negotiation with the community, but the caribou issue has not yet been addressed directly.

With respect to K'éotsee, the 'Sambaa K'e Traditional Knowledge Report for the Proposed Mackenzie Gas Project' provides details about our concern. For this reason, I have attached page 4 and pages 30-31 of the TK report along with Map # SKDB-TK-2003-04 entitled 'Watershed C: K'éotsee Area'. We ask that you keep this TK information and the maps confidential - Imperial already has access to them and there is no reason for other parties to have this information. This map shows a very high density of ecological and cultural sites in the K'éotsee area.

I have also attached Map # SKDB-TK-04a entitled 'East K'éotsee Watershed Area' that highlights the area of most sensitivity to the community. The TK report and maps were submitted to Imperial some time ago and resulted in a relocation of the proposed MGP corridor approximately 2.5 kilometers eastward throughout the K'éotsee watershed, a move that was appreciated by the community.

However, as you are aware, the Sambaa K'e Dene Band has ongoing concerns about the location of a large camp / storage facility, the development of gravel pits, and use of water in this watershed area. To resolve this issue, the community has had three meetings with Imperial over the past few months -- in April, May, and June. As well, harvesters from the community traveled with ColtKBR representatives to the sites in question to identify alternatives.

As a result of these meetings and visitations, the Sambaa K'e Dene Band sent a letter to Imperial on July 7th, 2004 outlining its current position. The main text of the letter is as follows.

We received your letter of July 6th regarding Imperial's response to the June 17th site visitation and community meeting in Sambaa K'e. We understand that your current position regarding some outstanding Sambaa K'e concerns are as follows:

- 1) *Imperial still wishes to explore the possibility of utilizing two gravel sites in the K'etsee watershed area, although one of these sites has shifted to a location along the existing Enbridge right of way;*
- 2) *Imperial's preferred location for the main construction camp is at KP1167 along the new, easterly route around K'etsee, but still within the K'etsee watershed;*
- 3) *Imperial still wishes to access water from K'etsee for camp usage;*
- 4) *Imperial has agreed to shift the proposed winter investigation camp and proposed heater station to a site recommended by Sambaa K'e through its traditional knowledge (TK) study.*

While respecting your decision to move the winter investigative camp and proposed heater station -- and your previous decision to re-route the proposed pipeline further east from K'etsee -- the Sambaa K'e still stands by its TK recommendation that no facility or gravel site development occur within the K'etsee watershed. However, we understand your interest in continuing to investigate these preferred sites and want assurances that Imperial:

- 1) *Will utilize Sambaa K'e personnel, through the SK Development Corporation, during all investigative work in the K'etsee watershed (and other areas being investigated);*
- 2) *Will continue to pursue other options for facility and gravel site development;*
and
- 3) *Will consult fully with the Sambaa K'e Dene Band before any final decisions are made.*

We again note that our interest in addressing mitigation issues does not imply support for the MGP and is done without prejudice to the Deh Cho Process or our inherent Aboriginal rights

[signed Chief Dennis Deneron].

I must add that our concern over the proposed main camp / storage facility in the K'etsee watershed is two-fold:

- 1) Its location in the watershed, and
- 2) The fact that, if the camp / storage facility is located at K'etsee, the corridor between the winter road and K'etsee will be impacted for three winters (setup, construction, and de-commissioning). Our original TK recommendation was that the main camp facility be situated just south of the winter road / Enbridge crossing, reducing overall impact on the corridor area (which has a high concentration of woodland caribou) to one winter.

With respect to the geo-technical investigation under environmental assessment, the community wants assurances that Imperial is seriously looking at other options for facility development, gravel sites, and water access. Our other conditions noted above also continue to apply. If you need further information, do not hesitate to contact me directly. Mahsi.

Yours truly,



Chief Dennis Deneron

cc. Dchuho First Nations

Sambaa K'e Dene Band