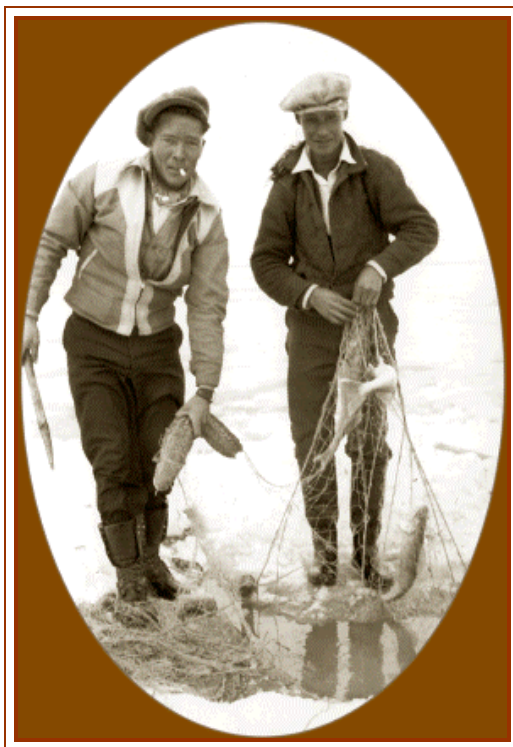


# Can't Live Without Work



**North Slave Metis Alliance  
Environmental, Social,  
Economic and Cultural Concerns:**

**A Companion to the Comprehensive Study Report on the  
Diavik Diamonds Project**



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Ernie Camsell (L) and Augustin Lafferty  
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## Contributors

### North Slave Metis Alliance Steering Committee and Researchers



**Front Row L to R:** Clem Paul (Ex-officio), Ernie Camsell, Edward Lafferty, Alice Lafferty. **Back Row L to R:** Jennifer Bellman, Marie Dautel, Marc Stevenson, Robert Turner, James Lafferty, Roberta (Bobbi) Bulmer, Caroline MacKay, Dianna Beck

#### Principal Contributor/Researcher

Dr. Marc G. Stevenson

#### Contributing Researcher

J. Michael Thoms

#### Assistant Researchers

Jennifer Bellman,  
Caroline MacKay

#### Editors

Robert Turner  
Clem Paul  
Katherine E. Arden  
Graeme Dargo

#### Board of Director's

Clem Paul – President, Marie Dautel – Director, Ernie Camsell - Vice President, Eddie Mercredi – Director, Robert Turner - Secretary - Treasurer

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

The North Slave Metis have occupied and used the North Slave region for over 200 years. During this time we developed distinctive social and economic patterns and traditions that define us as people, a culture and a community that possess Aboriginal and (Treaty rights as defined under s. 35(1 and 2) of the *Canadian Constitution Act*. As the present millennium draws to a close, we find that our rights to live as we choose, just as our forefathers did, are threatened by a host of forces beyond our current ability to manage or control. There is no threat that is currently more pressing than the anticipated impacts of the Diavik project and other diamond mines on our lands, resources, community, economy, and culture. If its impacts are known and properly managed, Diavik has the potential to create jobs, diversify local economies through secondary industry and bring wealth to our people at minimal cost to our community and the land and animals upon which we depend for physical, social, cultural and spiritual survival. If the impacts of the Diavik mine are not properly assessed, monitored and mitigated, it has the potential to destroy our lands and resources, our way of life and our people.

The North Slave Metis Alliance (NSMA) takes no comfort in Diavik's or the Responsible Authorities (RA's) efforts to convince us and other affected Aboriginal groups that the Diavik project is sustainable. In particular, Diavik's assessments of its potential impacts have failed the North Slave Metis. Critical data required under the *Act* and the *Environmental Assessment Guidelines* issued by the RA's were never collected. Throughout the environmental assessment (EA) process, the NSMA did not possess the community level (or generated) data necessary to make informed decisions about the social, economic, cultural, and environmental impacts of the Diavik mine. As a result, the NSMA finds itself in the awkward position of having to play "catch-up" in order that our voice be heard and that our concerns be addressed before the Minister makes her decision about the sustainability of the Diavik project.

We are dismayed that the RA's in the Comprehensive Study Report (CSR) chose to argue that Diavik's Environmental Assessment (EA) was adequate rather than exposing it as the superficial and perfunctory effort, which it ultimately became. After four years of meeting with Aboriginal communities, of listening to Aboriginal people express their fears, desires and concerns about its proposed diamond mine, Diavik failed to address the concerns or grasp the realities of Aboriginal communities. Diavik extended its hand and lent its ears to Aboriginal communities, but it refused to engage us on a level that would make a difference for the project, for us, for everyone. Our greatest fear, then, is that the Diavik project, far from being empowering, will perpetuate and strengthen the *status quo*,

which is neither acceptable nor sustainable. The RA's attempt to disguise uncertainties and portray Diavik's EA as a "jolly good effort" rather than to conduct a fair and impartial review consistent with the spirit and intent of the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEAA)*, misleads the Minister and fails to uphold the Crown's statutory and fiduciary obligations.

Neither Diavik nor government has given the NSMA any assurance that the Diavik project is anything more than a "big experiment" and that we, the Aboriginal people of the region, are the "guinea pigs". Diavik's assessment of its impacts and cumulative effects on caribou, fish, individuals, families, and Aboriginal communities creates certainty for no one. Cumulative, social, and cultural impacts are not unknowable and difficult to assess and measure as Diavik asserts. Rather, based on North Slave Metis experiential knowledge presented throughout this report, these impacts may be among the most damaging if the Diavik project receives regulatory approval.

Federal government personnel must shoulder some of the blame for the failure of Diavik's EA to adequately address Aboriginal concerns and issues, particularly those of the NSMA. The inability and/or refusal of the government to extend appropriate advice, guidance and direction to Diavik in regard to Aboriginal and Treaty rights and other issues in no way assisted Diavik to meet the *Environmental Assessment Guidelines*. More importantly, the RA's must be held accountable for misleading the public and the Minister about the adequacy of both Diavik's EA and their "comprehensive" evaluation of it.

Prior to the release of Diavik's EA, the NSMA expressed concerns to both government and Diavik about serious data shortfalls in respect to the NSMA (e.g. base-line data on population, living conditions, etc.). On September 25, 1998, our suspicions of exclusion were confirmed when Diavik released its EA to the public. The NSMA was left without the community level data required to assess the impacts and make informed decisions about the Diavik project on our lands, resources, economy, culture and community. On January 21st, 1999, the RA's determined that Diavik had not presented critical information in seven key areas in respect to the North Slave Metis. Specifically, the RA's established that Diavik had not incorporated our traditional knowledge into its report (Guideline 1109); not analyzed the potential project effects on our social and cultural patterns using indicators defined by the NSMA (Guidelines 3215 and 3217); not determined the relationship between the wage economy and the harvesting economy for the North Slave Metis (Guideline 3220); not determined the effects of the project on our traditional economy (Guideline 3220); not conducted a land use survey with the North Slave Metis or assessed the effects of the project on changes in our land use (Guideline 3224); and not conducted a heritage resources study with the NSMA to properly ascertain the effects of the project on heritage resources (Guideline 3234). Thus, with the full support of DIAND, Diavik and the GNWT, the NSMA set

about to address some of these data deficiencies. What followed was as mystifying as it was unconscionable.

Before the final release of the CSR, various drafts of relevant chapters were placed on the Public Registry. In an initial draft, the NSMA was alarmed to find numerous inaccuracies and misrepresentations of the EA process, including its deficiencies to the Minister of the Environment. To correct these problems, DIAND proposed a meeting with the NSMA (see minutes of the Steering Committee meeting for 30 April, 1999). In a working document prepared for this meeting, the NSMA advised DIAND that:

The RAs have a responsibility to adequately and accurately describe the environmental assessment process, including its deficiencies and outstanding issues, clearly to the Minister of the Environment. The honour of the Crown rests upon fulfilling this duty. The Crown should also want to avoid exposing the Minister to the problems that will occur if deficiencies, outstanding issues, and vague explanations of the EA process in the existing draft of the CSR are not clarified. <sup>1</sup>

At this meeting, DIAND agreed that our concerns were well-founded and set about to more accurately describe deficiencies in the EA, which, for the most part, it did. Further improvements were negotiated in a telephone meeting on May 5, 1999.<sup>2</sup> However, in the final version of the CSR, we were shocked and dismayed to find that the RA's had reverted to their original position, once again choosing to misrepresent the facts, mislead the Minister and eschew their statutory and fiduciary responsibilities.

Particularly duplicitous was the RA's handling of the seven non-conformity items identified in respect to the NSMA. Without any new data introduced, placed on the Public Registry or supplied by Diavik, the RA's concluded in the final CSR (1999, p. 89) that the outstanding data requirements required to address these non-conformities had mysteriously been satisfied. Apparently, because the NSMA was present at meetings, and had “ample opportunity to bring forth knowledge and expertise throughout the consultation period”, the RA's concluded that “the seven outstanding requirements ...had been adequately addressed to their satisfaction” (CSR, 1999, p.89). However, at no time, did we or anyone else have or present data to inform these outstanding requirements. Our purposes for attending public and Steering Committee meetings were to listen, remind the Crown of its statutory and fiduciary obligations to ensure that these data requirements were met and that the deficiencies and inequities in the EA process were clearly identified and discussed so that they could be accurately described to the Minister.



Aboriginal interest in the Steering Committee diminished throughout the review, one Aboriginal community never attended, one later dropped out and others attended infrequently. After difficulties arose with respect to the non-conformities, the NSMA was encouraged to stay on the Steering Committee and maintain its "active participation" in order to sustain the integrity of the Steering Committee review. Our "active participation", while obviously warranted, back-fired, producing the same result as never having "participated" at all.

The RA's have publicly dismissed the utility of our report, which they originally noted to be a "companion document" to the CSR, by stating it is "supplemental" to the CSR and "not essential" to the formulation of their recommendations (CSR, 1999, p.90). We strongly oppose this *a priori* rejection of our report as it contains information, data that Diavik was required to provide, information that might have led the RA's to reach a different conclusion about the sustainability of the Diavik project. Moreover, we find this hostile reaction doubly curious as DIAND not only provided funding for the research upon which this report is based, but it rejected our data outright without ever having seen it, while overturning an initial assessment of nonconformity on no data whatsoever.

This is all the more unfortunate because the CSR expresses limited confidence in, or presents challenges to Diavik and others' conclusions in several key areas which our report informs (i.e., the effects of long distance commuting and rotational employment, the interplay between wage and traditional incomes, the impacts on family and domestic relations; effects on women; effects on community cohesion, effects of in-migration and the effects on caribou migrations, etc.). We would have expected the RA's to welcome Aboriginal community level data as it informs several areas of the CSR where this information is missing and generally desired by others. Further, the CSR readily acknowledges that Diavik has failed to collect data on community wellness, social stability and cultural well-being using indicators developed by the affected Aboriginal communities (*Guidelines* number 3215, 3216, 3217) (see CSR 1999, pp. 89 and 218, points i, ii, iii). It must be noted that the collection and testing of community defined indicators is a fundamental precept to any reliable social scientific research conducted today, and this is presumably why it is included at the heart of the social, cultural and economic aspects of the *EA Guidelines*. Because the *EA Guidelines* are specifically intended for the "*Completion of a Comprehensive Study of the Proposed Diavik Diamond Project*" as stated in its title, it is all the more inexplicable that the RAs unilaterally deferred these essential data requirements to a period after irrevocable decisions have been made in respect to the project (emphasis ours). This is contrary to s. 4a and 11 (1) of CE,1A. Finally, if this essential data is collected as part of a follow-up program after direct and indirect impacts have occurred, it will not represent the baseline conditions needed to monitor the effects (deviations from baseline) of the project. The NSMA has begun to collect this data and it is perplexing that the RA's



find it non-essential, while ordering industry to collect the same data in a later period as part of project approval (see CSR, page 88).

The RA's err repeatedly in their cavalier treatment of our concerns and issues. In so doing, they cast doubt on the Crown's ability to undertake an impartial and comprehensive review of the Diavik project. They jeopardize the credibility of the EA process and mislead the Minister and the public as to the adequacy of Diavik's EA and the thoroughness of their review of it. It is clear that the RA's conclusions in respect to the NSMA were reversed, not because of the emergence of last minute data or studies, but rather as a result of a decision by the RA's, to mask significant outstanding data deficiencies for fear that the Diavik comprehensive review process would be "bumped-up" to an independent panel review. Ironically, this last minute obfuscation of the truth supplies the greatest evidence of the inability of the RA's to: 1) conduct a fair, objective and impartial review, and 2) uphold the Crown's statutory and fiduciary obligations to Aboriginal people when resource development is proposed on Aboriginal, Crown and unsundered lands. The NSMA is deeply offended and dismayed.

The NSMA is not against development or resource developers. For at least 200 years, the North Slave Metis have played a key role in the economic, social, and cultural life and development of the North Slave region. This is a role that we wish to strengthen and continue well into the future. North Slave Metis need jobs, it is true, but at what cost? It is imperative that we become re-empowered to preserve and rebuild our culture, community, and traditions on our terms, while maintaining stewardship of our lands, in spite of the roadblocks and obstacles that governments and industry have thrown at us. We do not wish to stop the Diavik project. However, we firmly insist that the assessment, operation, monitoring and management of this mine and its impacts be done properly, legally and with our full informed consent and participation.

The larger objective of *Can't Live Without Work...* is to contribute data that was outstanding and required to be provided by Diavik under CEAA and the *Environmental Assessment Guidelines*. The specific purpose of this report, however, is to articulate and present the concerns of the North Slave Metis about the environmental, social, cultural, and economic impacts of the Diavik project in the legitimate expectation that these concerns will be addressed prior to regulatory review. By addressing our concerns, one of the two conditions of adequate consultation imposed on the Crown by its fiduciary obligations to Aboriginal people will have been met. Since long outstanding data deficiencies in respect to the North Slave Metis were not recognized by the RA's until late in the EA Process, the development of appropriate environmental/land use, economic, social and cultural information baselines that would allow us to properly assess, and participate meaningfully in the management of, Diavik's impacts was temporarily set aside. As Diavik's EA clearly has not provided the required information to make

an informed assessment of its impacts relevant to the North Slave Metis, we propose to do this in a second phase of research. A funding commitment for *Phase Two* was made by DIAND in the CSR, and we fully expect an equivalent commitment from Diavik as a condition of approval. Failure to address our concerns or supply us with information required to assess Diavik's impacts prior to regulatory review may result in an infringement of *s. 35(1)* of the *Canadian Constitution Act*. Notwithstanding its dismissal by the RA's, *Can't Live Without Work*. ...is intended to be a companion to the CSR, and we fully expect it to be read and considered by the Minister of Environment.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

### **1) Diavik's EA Failed the North Slave Metis**

Diavik did not collect or present data that would allow the NSMA or anyone else to assess the impacts of its proposed mine on North Slave Metis resource use, economy, culture, individuals, families or communities. Diavik did not attempt to solicit, document, or address our concerns.

### **2) The RA's Failed to Uphold Their Statutory and Fiduciary Obligations**

The RA's failed to uphold their statutory obligations to conduct a fair and impartial review of Diavik's EA and thus has mislead the Minister and public. The RA's failed to uphold their fiduciary obligations to ensure that our concerns were addressed and we were supplied with sufficient information to assess the impacts of the Diavik project.

### **3) Diavik's EA Does Not Create Certainty**

Data relevant to assessing the specific impacts of the Diavik mine on caribou, fish and water quality; individual well-being, families and community wellness was not presented in the EA. Data relevant to predicting the cumulative effects of Diavik, BHP, and other potential mines on these and other valued ecosystem components was not provided. These serious knowledge gaps and deficiencies do not create certainty for anyone. These deficiencies must be addressed prior to regulatory review.

### **4) Diavik Will Brave Significant Adverse Environmental Effects**

In the informed opinion of many North Slave Metis, Diavik will have and contribute to significant adverse impacts on caribou behaviour and migration patterns, fish health and water quality in Lac de Gras. Appropriate studies need to be undertaken to properly assess impacts and to develop ways to monitor and

manage them. This must be done with the full involvement and consent of the NSMA and other affected Aboriginal groups.

### **5) Diavik Will Have Significant Adverse Social and Cultural Effects**

In the informed opinion of many North Slave Metis, Diavik will have and contribute to significant adverse impacts on individual emotional and cultural well-being, marital and family relationships, and community wellness. Appropriate studies need to be undertaken to properly assess impacts and to develop ways to monitor and manage them with the full consent and involvement of the NSMA and affected Aboriginal groups.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **1) Recognition of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights**

The federal government must recognize and respect our Aboriginal and Treaty rights as defined under *s. 35 of the Canadian Constitution Act* and uphold its fiduciary obligations to not unnecessarily infringe on our rights when resource development is proposed on our lands; it can do this firstly by addressing our concerns, and secondly by ensuring that we have sufficient information to assess the impacts of resource development on our lands, resources, community, culture and economy.

### **2) Addressing Our Concerns**

The recommendations of our membership in regards to properly assessing, monitoring and mitigating the environmental, social, cultural and economic impacts of the Diavik project must be duly considered and implemented to the fullest extent possible with our full involvement. In so doing, our concerns will be addressed to our satisfaction. Particular attention should be paid to specific recommendations about assessing and managing impacts on caribou, fish and water quality, individual well-being, family relationships, and community wellness. Failure to address our concerns as synthesized and presented in these recommendations prior to regulatory review could constitute an infringement of our Aboriginal and Treaty rights under *s. 35(1)*.

### **3) Supplying Sufficient Information for Assessment**

The development of appropriate environmental/land use, economic, social and cultural information baselines that would allow us to properly assess and participate meaningfully in the monitoring and mitigating of Diavik's impacts has yet to be undertaken. We propose this be done in a second phase of research with the full support of DIAND and Diavik. Failure to meet the condition of supplying us with

sufficient information or opportunity to assess Diavik's impacts may result in an infringement of s. 35(1).

#### **4) Negotiation, Settlement and Implementation of Land Claims**

Our claim to lands in the North Slave region, including Lac de Gras, must be settled now by the Crown. The North Slave Metis possess the same rights to lands and resources in the North Slave region as the Dogrib and Yellowknives. Competing claims must be settled prior to, or at least concurrent with, regulatory review. If the NSMA is willing to enter into a joint comprehensive claim with the Dogrib and Yellowknives, the federal government, as our fiduciary, is obliged to negotiate this claim prior to any more resource development on our lands.

#### **5) Restructuring of CEAA**

The *Canadian Environmental Assessment* Act and federal government departments charged with implementing it are insensitive, if not hostile, to Aboriginal peoples. The Act needs to be brought into line with recent court decisions and case law regarding resource development on Aboriginal, Crown and unceded lands. If this cannot be done it must be replaced with one that does.

#### **6) Developing Federal Capacity and Expertise**

Federal government personnel involved in EA clearly need to develop capacity and expertise to deal with Aboriginal issues and concerns. It is clear from the Diavik EA process, that training and capacity building in this area is badly needed to create certainty for industry, government and affected Aboriginal groups.

#### **7) Agreement on Value Added Diamond Processing**

The Government of Canada has a fiduciary obligation to minimize the infringement of Aboriginal rights caused by resource development on traditional Aboriginal lands through the promotion of sustainable development. Multiple land claims to the North Slave region have not been settled, and until they are, the federal government is obliged to consider the Aboriginal best interest. Development of secondary industry through local sale of rough diamonds has the potential to create sustainable economies for Aboriginal communities. The NSMA recommends that, as a condition of approval, Diavik must negotiate a value-added agreement with the GNWT, with the full involvement and consent of Aboriginal governments.

## **8) Socio-economic and Impacts Benefits Agreements**

Many of our concerns, especially those relating to socio-economic and cultural impacts, could be addressed through the implementation of specific socio-economic and impacts benefits agreements. Considerable attention should be devoted to identifying training; and capacity building needs for the North Slave Metis, and to defining the role of the NSMA in impacts assessment, monitoring and mitigation. It is imperative that these agreements be negotiated and signed off prior to regulatory approval.

## **9) Development of North Slave Sustainable Development Authority**

Increasingly, resource developments in the North Slave region are beginning to affect Aboriginal (and Treaty) rights, communities, resources, economies, and cultures. *Ad hoc* and accommodative approaches to environmental and socio-economic assessments are insensitive to the cumulative and longer-term impacts that a succession of resource development projects would have on Aboriginal communities. These problems, in combination with degraded economic and social conditions, make Aboriginal communities especially vulnerable to long-term and cumulative impacts of resource extraction development and exploitation. There is a growing urgency to develop an institutional process and mechanism that would place Aboriginal communities and peoples most effected by resource development at the center of decision-making in order to influence the design, operation and pace of resource development in the North Slave region. The establishment of a joint Aboriginal and government authority, the *North Slave Sustainable Development Authority* (NSSDA), to meet these needs would create certainty for industry, Aboriginal parties, and government in environmental assessment and resource development initiatives.

## **"WE'RE ALL HERE TO STAY" <sup>3</sup>**

The NSMA fully, and quite reasonably, expects substantial progress to be made on the implementation of these recommendations prior to regulatory review. Failing that, government can expect us to stand up for our Aboriginal and Treaty rights as laid out in the *Canadian Constitution Act of 1982*, and recently reaffirmed in numerous Supreme and lower court rulings. The costs, in financial and human terms, of our acquiescence at this important point in our history will ultimately be exorbitant for all. We want to be meaningful participants in resource development. At the same time, we must find ways to live and work together in a sustainable manner. There is no other option.

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This report articulates and presents the concerns of the North Slave Métis about the environmental, social, cultural, and economic impacts of the Diavik project. If these impacts are known and properly managed, the Diavik mine may create jobs and improve the lives of our people at minimal cost to our community and the land and animals upon which we depend for survival. If the Diavik's impacts are not properly assessed, monitored and mitigated, it has the potential to destroy our lands and resources, our way of life and our people.

Chapter Two describes who the North Slave Métis are, and how, as an organized society with inalienable Aboriginal and Treaty rights, we differ from other indigenous peoples of the region. It is particularly important for those who would ignore our rights and deny us equal treatment with that of other Aboriginal groups in the North Slave region that they know who we are. Very little research has been focused on Métis history in the North Slave region, and while this chapter is not the definitive word on our social, economic, cultural and political history, it should suffice to clarify who we are, and why government and industry should take due care and diligence to address our concerns and ensure that we are supplied with sufficient information to assess the impacts of the Diavik Project.

We have been forced to emphasize our uniqueness in order to illustrate how we are different from our Dogrib, Yellowknives and non-indigenous Métis neighbours. In this sense, we have contributed to and perpetuated the existing discourse on "Métis-ness" and "Indian-ness," rather than attempting to resolve it. Nevertheless, it is hoped that by describing our historical development and contemporary situation in concepts and terms that the Crown can understand, it will recognize our Aboriginal and Treaty rights and meet its statutory and fiduciary obligations in this environmental assessment exercise. This recognition will place the NSMA in a position where we can truly work with our Aboriginal brothers and sisters to collectively shape our future on our terms, just as we once did and we will do again.

Chapter 3.0 undertakes an analysis of recent case law regarding resource development on Aboriginal, Crown and un-surrendered lands. It is vitally important that government, industry and affected Aboriginal parties understand: 1) whose duty it is to consult with Aboriginal communities when their lands are targeted for resource development, 2) what are the objectives of consultation, 3) what kinds of information requirements are necessary to achieve adequate consultation, 4) what form(s) should consultation take and 5) when meaningful consultation has been achieved. Having this knowledge is a prerequisite for creating certainty for government, industry and affected Aboriginal parties in natural resource developments and the assessments of their impacts.



Analysis of numerous Supreme and provincial court decisions suggests that the fiduciary obligations of the Crown to properly consult with Aboriginal people when natural resource development is proposed on Aboriginal, Crown and unsurrendered lands, may be upheld when:

- 1) The concerns of affected Aboriginal groups have been addressed, and
- 2) They have been supplied sufficient information to enable them to determine the impacts of resource development on their community, lands and resources.

Then, and only then, can the Crown legitimately infringe, with appropriate compensation of course, our Aboriginal and Treaty Rights as defined under *s. 35(1 and 2)* of the *Canadian Constitution Act*.

The methodology presented in Chapter 4.0 flows directly from the *Constitution Act* and recent case law regarding natural resource development on Aboriginal, Crown and un-surrendered lands. In this sense, not only is it constitutionally compliant, it enhances the ability of regulators to incorporate Aboriginal Peoples and their knowledge, issues and concerns into environmental and socio-economic impacts assessment. Specifically, the methodology developed here seeks to:

- 1) Document, articulate and present North Slave Métis concerns about the environmental, social, cultural and economic impacts of the Diavik diamond mine, so that they might be addressed, and
- 2) Develop sufficient environmental, social, cultural and economic knowledge and information baselines in order for the North Slave Métis to assess these impacts and to participate effectively in their monitoring and mitigation.

These twin objectives constitute what are the minimal requirements of adequate consultation imposed on the Crown through its fiduciary obligation to Aboriginal Peoples when resource development is proposed on Aboriginal, Crown and unsurrendered lands.

However, having little time and fewer resources to undertake studies to assist government to meet these two conditions, the NSMA has been forced over the last four months to concentrate its research efforts on the first tasks, i.e. documenting, articulating and presenting the concerns of its members about the various impacts of the Diavik project in order that they might be addressed prior to regulatory review.



It is the intention of the NSMA in *Phase Two* to develop environmental, social, cultural and economic baselines in order to adequately assess these impacts and to participate effectively in their management.

A Steering Committee composed of individuals representing a cross-section of the North Slave Métis community, with the principle researcher, (Stevenson) developed an interview guide to assist two researchers to engage interviewees in discussion on Diavik's impacts. Interviewees were selected by the Steering Committee on the basis of their knowledge and expertise in one of two areas: 1) environment and land use, and 2) socio-economic and cultural knowledge. Over 30 people, accounting for over 1450 years of accumulated life experience (much of it spent on the land), were interviewed for this report. The knowledge and information contained within 960 pages of transcript that resulted from this research forms the "backbone" of this report.

Chapter 5.0 articulates and presents the concerns of the North Slave Métis about the environmental, bio-physical and ecological impacts of the Diavik project. Also presented, where information exists, are discussions of the indicators that would tell us that various valued ecosystem components are being impacted by Diavik and diamond mining. Included within this chapter are discussions about the importance of the land and animals to the well-being of the North Slave Métis, as well as a brief indication of the extent of resource use around Lac de Gras by the Métis.

Many respondents had mixed reviews about the severity of Diavik's impacts on caribou, fish, carnivores, birds and other animals. However, concern focused on the potential adverse effects on caribou and fish; impacts to these species would have serious negative consequences for individuals, families and community. Most interviewees were also concerned about the cumulative impacts of Diavik, BHP and other proposed diamond mines on caribou, fish and other animals. Although this chapter contains elements that some might label traditional knowledge (TK), the indigenous ecological knowledge (IEK) of those North Slave Métis interviewed for this study is incorporated into this report only to the extent that it informs our concerns.

Concerns of the North Slave Métis about the social, cultural and economic impacts of the Diavik project are articulated and presented in Chapter 6.0. Both the positive and negative impacts of increased income and employment that might result if the Diavik project is approved, and if North Slave Métis find work with Diavik, are discussed. Signs or indicators of individual well-being and community wellness are provided where available. While increased income was projected to have a number of positive effects, many respondents were concerned that having more money would result in increased social dysfunction, including greater problems with alcohol and drug use, gambling, and money management.

The assumption that more money will result in the purchase of more hunting equipment, thus strengthening ties to the land, is questioned. Increased employment could have positive effects on the community in terms of contributing to greater self-esteem, confidence, ambition and community wellness. However, the negative impacts of increased separation from family and community were considered to far outweigh any positive effects of employment, especially if these impacts were not properly monitored and mitigated. Increased interaction with southerners and social factionalism as a result of differential access to jobs and wages were other major concerns expressed by the North Slave Métis, as was the all too common tendency for Aboriginal people to wind up on the "shovel", (i.e., in low-paying, unskilled positions).

Chapter 7.0 presents an extensive list of specific recommendations from the NSMA membership, in their own voice, about how their concerns could be addressed. Specifically, it presents recommendations relevant to properly assessing, monitoring and mitigating environmental, social, cultural and economic impacts on a range of valued ecosystem components. Immediate and special attention should be devoted to addressing recommendations relevant to the proper assessment and management of impacts on caribou, fish, individual well-being, family and social relationships, and community wellness.

Some of our recommendations were foreshadowed in the Comprehensive Study Report (CSR). However, many were not, and most certainly not at the perfunctory level evidenced in the CSR. Nevertheless, we expect the Crown and Diavik to fully consider these recommendations and to develop, with our full consent and involvement, appropriate ways and means to implement them. In so doing, government will fulfill one of the two conditions of adequate consultation imposed on it by its fiduciary obligations to Aboriginal peoples when resource development is proposed on Aboriginal, Crown and un-surrendered lands. Failure to address our concerns to our satisfaction prior to regulatory review may constitute an infringement of our Aboriginal and Treaty rights, and any Ministerial decision in Diavik's favour may be overturned as a result.

Chapter 8.0 concludes our *Phase One* report with nine general recommendations that will enable us to construct a sustainable economy, community and future for our children, while creating certainty for government and industry and ourselves. These recommendations, which repeat and expand on those presented in the Executive Summary, should be implemented, or at least well on the way to being implemented, prior to regulatory review of the Diavik project. Failing that government can expect us to stand up for our Aboriginal and Treaty rights as laid out in s. 35 of the *Canadian Constitution Act*, and recently reaffirmed in numerous Supreme Court and other court rulings. Aboriginal groups, government and industry must find ways to live and work together in a sustainable manner. *Can't Live Without Work...* is the NSMA's vision for achieving this objective.

## **2.0 STRONG LIKE TWO PEOPLE: NORTH SLAVE METIS HISTORY**

### **Foreword**

The North Slave Metis Alliance (NSMA) represents the indigenous Métis of the North Slave region. The NSMA constitutes the political organization of those indigenous Métis who possess Aboriginal rights as defined under s. 35 of the *Canadian Constitution Act* and whose ascendants used and occupied the North Slave region prior to the signing of Treaty 11 in 1921. While members of the NSMA share a common heritage with other Northern Métis, it is their enduring occupation and use of the North Slave region that distinguishes them from other Métis now resident in the district. Holding specific Aboriginal rights and Treaty rights, the membership of the NSMA submitted a statement of claim on January 19<sup>th</sup>, 1998 to the federal government for lands in the North Slave region, including the Lac de Gras area. However, the federal government has refused to consult with us in good faith or engage us in discussions leading to our meaningful involvement in a comprehensive land claim process for the North Slave region.

Who are the North Slave Métis, and how, as an organized society with inalienable Aboriginal and Treaty rights, do they differ from other indigenous peoples of the region? These are important questions, not so much for the NSMA - we know who we are -- but for those who would fail to recognize our rights and deny us equal treatment with that of other Aboriginal groups in the North Slave region. Efforts have been undertaken to document the history of Métis in other regions, such as Manitoba and the southern prairies, Northern Alberta, and the Mackenzie District, but little research has been devoted to Métis history in the North Slave region. What we do know is that our history is not static, but one characterized by change, adaptation, dispersal, consolidation and cultural persistence. Even so, our social, economic, cultural and political history has yet to be written, and will remain so for some time after the submission of this report to the Minister. While we have begun to prepare genealogies of our members, this work is not yet complete because like our culture, our families are expanding. Similarly, even though we will be developing information and knowledge baselines as the second part of a two-phased study to assess the impacts of the Diavik diamond mine on North Slave Métis land and resource use, economy, culture and community, this work has not yet begun. What follows may be most parsimoniously called the expanded “*Readers Digest*” version of North Slave Métis history, economy, culture and society. Nevertheless, it should suffice to clarify who we are, and why government and industry should take due care and diligence to:

- 1) Address our concerns, and

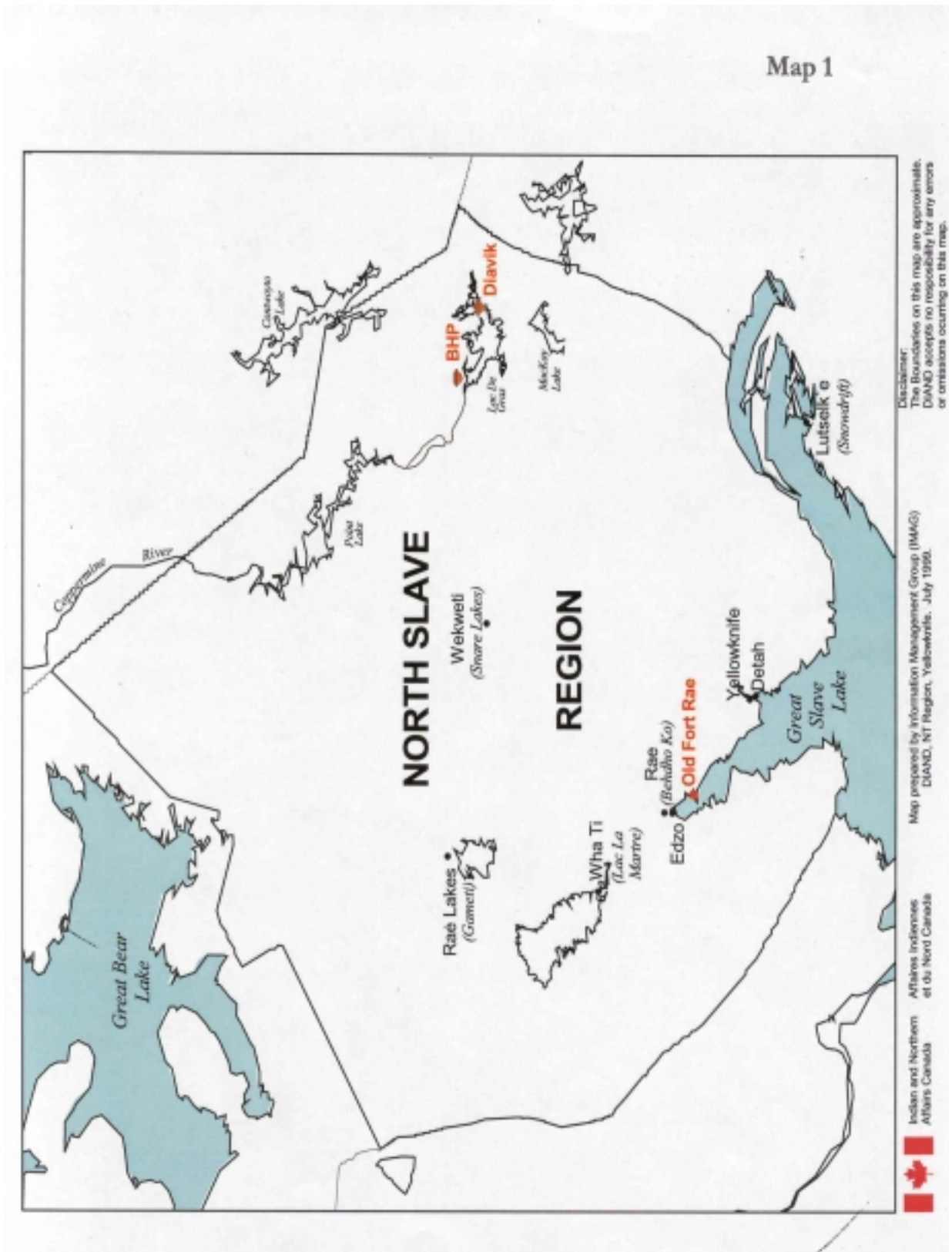
- 2) Ensure that we are supplied with sufficient information to assess the impacts of the Diavik Project.

By making itself aware of our rights in the Diavik environmental assessment process and by meeting its statutory and fiduciary obligations, the Crown will uphold its honour, and minimize the infringement of our Aboriginal and treaty rights.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The following is, in part, a history of the ethno-genesis of the North Slave Métis society in the 19<sup>th</sup> century fur trade, centred on Old Fort Rae on the North Arm of Great Slave Lake (see map). The literature sometimes describes the Northern Métis as a transitional population, serving as a sort of rudimentary working class in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century fur trade, providing a link between the other Aboriginal peoples and the Euro-Canadian managerial class.<sup>1</sup> The Northern Métis have also been characterized as an "intermediate" society that combined both Euro-Canadian and Aboriginal elements, but remained socially separated from both.<sup>2</sup> While these generalizations have some degree of merit, the Métis were more than a labour force and formed their own distinct society with its own culture, laws and traditions. This distinct society did not collapse with the fur trade, but has persevered to this day, constantly adapting. In our roles as trappers, traders, trippers, transporters, merchants and entrepreneurs, and with expert knowledge of our Northern lands and ecology, we played a fundamental role in shaping resource use in the North Slave region. We also acted as the Hudson's Bay Company's (HBC) fur harvest managers. The ability to influence and manage land use and promote the socio-economic development of our society is a central role and right we seek to recover.

The second part of this history does not chronicle "progress" for the North Slave Métis, but is a history characterized by marginalization and disempowerment at the hands of government and industry that continue to exercise control over our traditional lands. In 1921, the government of Canada, by permitting Métis in the North Slave region to participate in the negotiation and signing of Treaty 11, recognized and affirmed our Aboriginal rights to lands and resources prior to 1921, although clearly this was not the intention. To this day, we possess Aboriginal and Treaty rights in the North Slave region, as well as an enduring concern in the welfare of our lands and resources upon which we depend. The study concludes with a description of events in the post-treaty period where the cumulative effects of resource development continue to threaten the very survival of our society and culture. With recent and at times frenzied diamond mining operations being undertaken and proposed on our traditional lands, we, the North Slave Métis again find ourselves at a critical moment in our history.





## **Early North Slave Métis History and Ethnicity**

### **The First Arrivals**

Just prior to the expansion of the fur trade into the Great Slave-Mackenzie region in the 1780s, a number of French-Cree Métis with ties to the Canadian Prairies, the Great Lakes region and Old Quebec began to arrive in a vital but little known population movement.<sup>3</sup> The mid-18<sup>th</sup> century on the Canadian Prairies was a time of intense trade rivalries and hostilities, depletion of fur resources, natural disasters such as fire and drought and devastating epidemics among Aboriginal groups. Although uncertain, this social and economic upheaval may have been at least partially responsible for the initial movement of French Métis into the Great Slave-Mackenzie district after 1750. As Emile Petitot observed, "these mixed-blood ... nomads (were) the descendents of French and French-Canadian voyageurs and coureurs de bois who preceded the Hearnese, Frobishers and Mackenzies (sic) in these lands, and afterwards became the first servants of the Northwest (sic) Company."<sup>4</sup> Morris Lafferty suggests that the Lafferty's of Old Fort Rae, one of the two founding families of that settlement, are descended from the Great Lakes Métis:

I remember getting my first Métis oral history lesson at about age ten at the knees of my grandmother, Marie Augustine Villeneuve (nee Bouvier). And I quote in English, for she spoke French: "Your grandfather came to the North because they ran away from a war they didn't like. The soldiers told them to shoot the Indians even if they surrendered. The Indians would come from behind the trees with their hands up saying this - she spoke a word here meaning surrender in Sioux - but they were told to shoot, so... Now I think to the North meant to Canada. As I'm told, Louison married Catherine L'Espérance in a little parish in Greater St. Paul, Minnesota, in the USA."<sup>5</sup>

Many of the first Métis arrivals were the offspring of earlier French-Cree unions, and thus heavily immersed in Cree culture, language and tradition. Indeed, *Michif*, a patois of French, Cree and Dene languages that manifested itself in varying forms according to time and place, is still spoken by many North Slave Métis today and contains numerous Cree words and concepts. The extensive acculturation of many early French Métis in Cree undoubtedly facilitated their penetration into Cree-Chipewyan borderlands, and ultimately their incorporation into Chipewyan, Slavey and Dogrib family, social and economic networks.<sup>6</sup>

Other early French Métis names in the region include St. Germain, Beaulieu, Mandeville, Poitras and Cayen<sup>7</sup>. During the last half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Pierre St. Germain, (a.k.a. Buffalo Head), settled in Athabasca country, while Francois

Beaulieu and La Camarade de Mandeville found Great Slave Lake more to their liking. Descended from *coureurs de bois* families, Mandeville and Beaulieu, along with his brother Jacques Beaulieu, may have been among the first non-Dene in the region. Much later in 1862, Petitot encountered Poitras and his brother-in-law, Francois Beaulieu II, about which he had to say:

He was one of the oldest witnesses of the events that have taken place in the North. His father, a Frenchman, was a trader in the service of the *Compagnie des Sioux*. He settled in this distant wilderness, without anyone in Canada suspecting it. His son, our hero, whom he had with a Chipewyan woman, saw the arrival in 1780 of the first explorer of Great Slave Lake, Peter Pond; then, in 1789, of Sir Alexander Mackenzie. His uncle Jacques Beaulieu served as interpreter to the first of these officers of the North West Company.<sup>8</sup>

### **A Superior Class of Men: Métis and the Early Fur Trade**

Peter Pond built one of the first fur trade posts in the North Slave region in 1790 for the North West Company (NWC) near the mouth of Yellowknife Bay. Earlier posts were built at Old Fort Island and possibly Mountain Island (later to become known as Old Fort Rae). Pond's post, known as Fort Providence, served as a trading post for local Yellowknife Dene bands. However, with access to vast numbers of caribou, which wintered near the North shore of Great Slave Lake, its more immediate and larger function was that of a supplier of meat to other posts in the Great Slave-Mackenzie district. While a handful of Métis families may have settled in the Great Slave region prior to this time, a significant influx of French-Cree Métis accompanied the NWC into the district. These men were described by the HBC as "a superior class of men, stout, active fellows, in every aspect qualified for the laborious duties they have to perform", <sup>9</sup> features that undoubtedly endeared them to their superiors and led to their appointment as trippers and trading chiefs. In turn, the emergence of Métis middlemen after 1804 served to stabilize Métis trader-Dene trapper relationships through kinship ties and associated reciprocal obligations.<sup>10</sup>

The French-Cree Métis who preceded and accompanied the NWC into the Great Slave-Mackenzie district took Dene wives, quickly establishing social and economic alliances with local Dene families, and improving considerably the company's prospects.<sup>11</sup>

From the 1790s to 1820s, the NWC dominated the Northern fur trade. However, by 1815 competition between it and the HBC had become hostile and debilitating for both. Although the Dene initially received better treatment at the hands of the HBC, the company did not have the resources, personnel or



inclination to invest in the region as did the NWC (e.g., the HBC generally discouraged unions between its employees and Aboriginal women). As a consequence, shortly after French-Cree Métis traders began to live amongst the Dene, the latter began to shift their allegiance to the NWC.

### **Early French Métis Ethnicity**

Even though early French Métis traders married into local Yellowknife and Chipewyan families, their unique economic positions in the Northern fur trade industry allowed them, whether by design or serendipity, to maintain their cultural distinctiveness. Second and third generation Métis in the district (i.e., individuals with mixed French, Cree and Dene ancestry) were well connected to the land and Dene kin groups through their mother's or grandmother's side of the family. However, their socio-economic orientation as trappers, traders, trippers, fort provisioners, boatmen, transporters, general labourers and, most importantly, interpreters and intermediaries between the two cultures, generally served to distinguish local Métis from local Dene families.

The ability of most early Métis to learn and speak the languages of the Aboriginal groups with whom they traded facilitated their acceptance into Aboriginal social and economic networks:

My Grandmother, my Grandfather, they all talk French. We talk French. They talk Dogrib little bit. They learn from people, ...They start talking a little bit. That's how they learn. ...My Grandmother, she talked good Dogrib. She learned, so we used to go see my Grandmother. Talk only French, but that's when we were young, we talk French. After we left home, no French, just the English, eh. ...My old man Edward he talks Cree, really talk good Cree. He ...talk Dogrib, but he talk good French too. Well, his Dad was talking only French to him. And his mother, she Cree, so I guess they learn other language. (Alice Lafferty) <sup>12</sup>

Most of our parents spoke... a minimum of three languages. Some of them spoke as many as seven.... Years ago they needed to speak those languages because the Métis were the ones that traveled from community to community and brought the non-natives into the Dene communities.... When they traveled with the Dogribs, they learned Dogrib. When they traveled.... to Wrigley, they needed to know Slavey. And then of course they knew French, so they could communicate with most of the priests.... They were the link between the non-natives and the Dene people. (Clem Paul) <sup>13</sup>

[The Métis]... worked good with the trading company because they knew the languages, like my Mother she knew five different Aboriginal languages, and we were descended from the Cree, so she knew Cree, 'Chip', Dogrib, spoke a bit of Slavey and French. ...They interacted with everybody and needed these languages to communicate. (Bob Turner) <sup>14</sup>

Not only did the ability of the Métis to communicate with different Aboriginal groups work to their advantage and that of the trading companies whom they represented, it allowed them to influence and manage the needs and wants of both the indigenous Aboriginal and immigrant Euro-Canadian populations. Oral histories and the primary records of the HBC indicate that Métis land use and “tripping” in the North Slave region was extensive, taking in nearby lakes, as well as areas as distant as the Barrenlands. A key role of the early Métis was to find out from the Dene where the best trapping grounds were and to instruct them in the use of the new trapping technology, and how to prepare furs for the commercial market. The records of the HBC also indicate that the Company periodically placed moratoriums on certain furs in order to relieve pressure on resources and to capitalize on more lucrative furs <sup>15</sup> The ecological knowledge of the Métis was conditioned partially from extensive experience with the market use of resources in this region and other regions and no doubt played a key role in their management of land use activities. Thus, in their roles as interpreters, intermediaries and ultimately power brokers between the two cultures, Métis were able to influence to a significant degree the nature of resource use in the region.

At the same time, while specific groups of Métis became intimately linked to local Dene bands along linguistic, cultural and familial lines, their roles in the fur trade transportation network enabled geographically distant kin groups to maintain social alliances and cultural continuity through various forms of exchange, including marriage.<sup>16</sup> Marriage as a form of exchange among early Northern Métis families became an important means to maintain social solidarity, cultural continuity of this fledgling society and economic control of the region. Inter-marriage played a particularly important role in the emergence of a Métis identity in the Great Slave-Mackenzie district. As Martha McCarthy notes:

In the southern Mackenzie region, a Métis society of descendants of the *voyageurs* was a well-recognized entity. They spoke French, were Roman Catholic and considered themselves a *distinct social group* [emphasis added]. Their daughters often married the Red River Métis who came up with the boat brigades. Their long presence in the North, their mobility from one post to another, and their intricate web of relationships gave them familiarity with the region, which was uniquely Métis.<sup>17</sup>

Early Métis families while intimately intertwined with Dene families, were recognizably different. For one thing, Métis families were two to three times larger than Dene families,<sup>18</sup> and considerably less nomadic, which indicated differences in the organization of their labour. While the patriarch of the early French Métis family was absent from his wife and children for long periods of time during both summer and winter, his family remained more or less attached to the trading post. This pattern differed from that of the local Dene, whereby men spent more time in the bush with their families hunting, fishing and trapping. In order to effectively fulfill their roles as trippers, trappers and traders, Métis had to be as familiar, if not more so, with the land and the use of its resources as the Dene themselves. At the post, Métis families were often issued supplies or housing as conditions of service, and women and children generally fished and procured local resources.<sup>19</sup> In these respects, early French Métis families tended to exhibit a rather well-defined pattern of land use, both around forts and over the entire region. Thus, a new social formation with distinctive social, cultural and economic roots was beginning to emerge in Northern Canada that was socially cohesive across a large geographical area - a feature which further served to differentiate the early Métis from the resident Dene population and emerging immigrant Euro-Canadian population.



Catherine (nee Lafferty) descendent of Catherine (nee Beaulieu) Bouvier.  
Courtesy of Edward Lafferty.

Richard Slobodin refers to these early French Métis of the southern NWT as "Red River Métis", based on their Francophone, Catholic and early fur trade roots, which he distinguishes from the English/Scottish Métis who arrived farther North at a later date.<sup>20</sup> Marina Devine, however, feels that the earliest Métis in the Mackenzie-Athabasca region pre-dated or paralleled the emergence of the "Red River Métis" proper.<sup>21</sup> Whatever the case, by the 1820s, the Métis population in the

district was seen by outsiders such as George Simpson of the HBC as distinct from other populations, while by the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, people of mixed blood in the region self-identified as Métis.<sup>22</sup> As one Métis reminded Petitot in French: "Excuse me Father, but I am not a Frenchman from France, nor French Canadian, I am Michif (Metis) and my mother is a full-blood Indian."<sup>23</sup>

Métis families in the North Slave region during the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century derived a large part of their ethnic identity from the socio-cultural environment that was negotiated and nurtured between resident French-Cree Métis men and their Dene wives. Women, in particular, played a significant role in the development of an emerging Métis identity in the North as they blended the Aboriginal heritage of their mothers with the French-Cree traditions of their fathers.<sup>24</sup> The families of these long-term workers were raised within the sphere of the trading post and their mixed heritage offspring often hired themselves out as seasonal workers, usually on the summer boat brigades, and spent the remainder of the time trapping and tripping in the bush. During this early period, a number of French Métis workers established dynasties in the region, including Pierre and Louison Lafferty, who worked at Fort Resolution in the 1820s, and alternated between travelling inland with their families and working on the summer boat brigades. Other French Métis families reported in the North Slave region by 1820 include those headed by Louis Cadien and Pierre Blondin. The impact of the early French Métis in the Great Slave-Mackenzie region was so pervasive that almost all non-Dene names used by natives trading with the HBC after amalgamation of the two companies were French. Moreover, many French Métis who married into Dene communities established large families whose descendants are predominant in the social, economic and political life of the region today.<sup>25</sup>

Whether a Métis cultural identity developed within families also depended to a great extent on the father's length of stay in the North and the commitment to his family. If the man left the North, his children and spouse could be quickly absorbed back into local Dene social/family groups. However, many early Métis remained in the Mackenzie Basin for the rest of their lives, particularly those born in the district. They settled with their families amongst their Dene relatives to work in the fur trade while maintaining a distinct culture.

## **Old Fort Rae and the Emergence of the North Slave Métis**

### **After Amalgamation**

In 1821 the NWC amalgamated with the HBC. After amalgamation, the fur trade workforce in the southern Mackenzie-Great Slave district, as elsewhere, was downsized, with the HBC encouraging many former French Métis workers to relocate to Red River and other southern posts. The Company, however, generally retained English-Scottish Métis, as they had longer service with the company and

were felt to be more trustworthy than the French Métis and French Canadians who had worked for the NWC. In addition, in 1822 the HBC introduced the York boat, which required less Métis expertise and labour. Furthermore, after amalgamation, the HBC reduced French Canadian and French Métis wages relative to its non-French and European workers. For those French Métis who stayed -- usually descendents of the first French Métis/Dene unions in the region -- their roles in the fur trade remained undiminished as they acted as boatmen, guides, interpreters and labourers. In the summer, they were involved in the freighting of provisions by boats, supplies and furs, while during the remainder of the year they continued to hunt, trap and fish for their families.<sup>26</sup> It has been observed that there emerged a degree of solidarity among this early class of Métis workers, despite their transitory participation in the workforce and deliberate attempts by the HBC to weaken such ties by widespread recruiting from outside.<sup>27</sup>

For many long-term resident French Métis released from permanent or seasonal service, trapping assumed even greater economic importance. Indeed, for the rest of the century, trapping in the North apparently became synonymous with Métis identity.<sup>28</sup> Preliminary indications suggest more intensive Métis use of trap lines than local Dene groups, as the latter were mainly caribou hunters and secondarily trappers for the fur trade. Considering their roles as trippers, traders and intermediaries between the two cultures, the Métis arguably shaped the character of land use in the North Slave region throughout much of the fur trade era.

For those French Métis who continued to work more or less permanently for the Company, their status increased relative to their countrymen. Since Whites were hesitant to settle in the district, some Métis attained positions of considerable importance within the Company throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Louis Cadien was an interpreter for the HBC in the mid-1820s, as was Pierre St. Germain of Fort Resolution. Jean Baptiste St. Cyre was an interpreter, blacksmith and carpenter. Baptiste de Mandeville in 1833 assisted in establishing Fort Reliance. John Herbert (dit Fabien) worked as a boatman for 23 years for the HBC. And in the 1850s Henri Laferte (Lafferty) drove the packet team for HBC post at Fort Rae. By the 1890s, Antoine Laviolette had risen to the position of clerk at Fort Rae, a job to which his interpretive skills were apparently well suited.

At the same time, well-developed knowledge of the land and extensive kin ties with local Dene bands allowed a few powerful Métis families to undertake free trading throughout the years of HBC monopoly. Other French Métis continued to excel in their positions as middlemen for the HBC and free traders, often employing tactics that did not exactly endear them to others.<sup>29</sup> Francois Beaulieu II for example was known to permit only one trapper in his unheated store at a time,<sup>30</sup> presumably to prevent others from over-hearing the prices the trapper was forced to accept, and to hide from view the extent of his trade goods.



## **Old Fort Rae: The Early and Halcyon Years**



Old Fort Rae.  
Photo by C.W. Mathers. (Circa 1929)

The HBC established a post on Mountain Island (or *Nishi-ku* in Dogrib) on the North Arm in 1852-53, naming it after Chief Factor John Rae, a famous member of Franklin's First Arctic Expedition. However, the same site appears to have been occupied by French Métis long before the 1850s. On a recent trip to Old Fort Rae, North Slave Métis elder Eddie Lafferty stated that there were Métis graves in the Old Fort graveyard that predated the arrival of the Roman Catholic Church by many decades. Inspection of the graveyard by a qualified archaeologist confirmed Eddie's statements about the locations and antiquity of these graves as they are much older, for example, than the graves of Louison Lafferty and his wife, Marie L'Espérance. Until further investigation takes place, the most logical explanation for these graves is that they belong to a substantial and early French Métis occupation of the Old Fort Rae site when the Company of the Sioux or NWC occupied the North Arm. From Simpson's journals we now know that the NWC maintained a post at Mountain Island prior to 1820. An earlier Metis presence of Old Fort Rae may be indicted by Russell's comment in 1892 that "two hundred from the (HBC) big house, on the shore of a little cove called Sandy Bay, a few crumbling ruins of clay and stone chimneys mark the site of an 'old fort', abandoned so long ago that nothing is known by the present inhabitants concerning it." Recent archaeological investigations at Old Fort Rae appear to date these remains to the late 1700s.

The history of Fort Rae, to some extent, encapsulates the economic and social development of the North Slave region during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup>

century, and as such, plays an important role in the understanding of the emergence of the North Slave Métis. Like Old Fort Providence, Fort Rae was established primarily as a provisioning fort to supply other posts in the Mackenzie-Great Slave-Athabasca district, and secondarily as a trading post for local trappers. While ample supplies of wood and particularly fish figured importantly in the selection of the site, access to caribou, which passed by during the fall and spring migrations, was its greatest attraction.

The HBC required vast quantities of meat to feed York boat and barge crews transporting furs, trade goods and other supplies north and south, as well as trading post personnel.<sup>31</sup> Old Fort Rae soon became known as the "best provision post" in the North,<sup>32</sup> and local Dene and Métis hunters needed little encouragement to keep up the supply. As one early observer remarked, "the Dogrib killed upwards of 8,000-10,000 caribou annually and traded them as fur was traded elsewhere."<sup>33</sup> In 1853, an inventory of supplies at the post listed "over 13,000 lbs. of caribou meat, much of it dried, as well as 2,000 tongues."<sup>34</sup> So plentiful were caribou in the North Slave region that Fort Resolution hunters traveled across Great Slave Lake in 1854 to the "Terrethdessy" River to procure caribou, an incident that did not sit well with Métis and Dogrib hunters attached to Old Fort Rae.<sup>35</sup> "Caribou meat from Fort Rae, until the arrival of the steamboat, was the 'fuel' on which the transport facilities on Great Slave Lake-Mackenzie River trade route operated."<sup>36</sup> But Fort Rae was 150 miles off the 'beaten track' of the main fur trade route linking the southern Mackenzie and Athabasca districts.<sup>37</sup> While a provisions shipment route ran from Fort Rae to Fort Resolution where meat was issued to York boat and river barge crews, very few people traveled to Fort Rae unless on a specific mission. Thus, the Lafferty's and other Métis, especially women, who made Fort Rae their home, were more isolated geographically, and perhaps socially, than Métis living at other posts on the main fur trade route.

Little is currently known about the first inhabitants of Old Fort Rae; a comprehensive review of the relevant archival and other sources has yet to be undertaken by the NSMA. In addition to Lafferty, Louison Cadien (Old Cayen) appears to have lived at Old Fort Rae throughout most of the 1850s. Not only did he construct the first HBC buildings here in 1852, the HBC trader Bernard Ross brought Cayen from Fort Rae in 1858-59 to interpret for the Anglican missionary at Fort Simpson.<sup>38</sup> Historic documents reference other names of individuals working for the HBC at both Old Fort Rae and new Fort Rae such as LeMouel, Lamalice, Beaulieu, Ross, Jones, MacKay, Christie, Fraser, Stewart and others. However, there is no reference as to whether they self-identified as Métis or not. While many people with these surnames were Métis, older present-day North Slave Métis have observed that Métis families at Old Fort Rae far outnumbered Dogrib families who "were more transient, [and not] part of the stable Métis population at Old Fort Rae."<sup>39</sup>



It is important to note that historic records from the 19<sup>th</sup> century rarely use the term Métis *per se*. Occasionally, the term "halfbreed" is used. For example, HBC district manager, James Anderson, wrote in the 1850s that, "The success of Beaulieu has ...rendered some of the *halfbreeds* [emphasis added] very independent and saucy."

But more often, Métis are lumped under the generic term of "Indian" or "Dogrib". "All were the same" is a common refrain heard among older present-day North Slave Métis in reference to their relationship with the Dogrib. Rather, than inferring that all Métis and Dene were identical, what is meant by this is that everyone got along and played integrated and complementary roles in a common mode of production. In effect, most lived an Aboriginal or traditional 'way of life' with dependence on the land, and while some strategies for survival was shared, the Métis also developed specific family and community social and economic strategies that reflected their different orientation in the fur trade.

We know that Louison Cadien, along with five Dogribs, built log huts at Old Fort Rae in the summer of 1852, a year before the more permanent fort was built.<sup>40</sup> We also know that Henri Lafferty was working and presumably living in Old Fort Rae by 1853. At the end of the decade, Old Fort Rae must have had a large enough population, or had become an important enough centre of trade and commerce, to warrant the construction of a Roman Catholic mission. The missionaries attempted to grow vegetables on the rocky soils of the site, and were apparently so successful that they were able eventually to supply a small quantity of produce to other missions along the Mackenzie on an annual basis. When Old Fort Rae hosted the International Polar Year expedition in 1882-83, it was described as "an HBC post with half a dozen log huts, with a large trading store for provisions, furs and goods for trading with the Indians."<sup>41</sup>

From the early 1850s to the early 1880s, the Métis families of Old Fort Rae continued to be intimately involved in the activities of the Catholic Church and HBC. Preparing dried meat and fish was a job that fell mainly to the Fort's women and resident males. Providing these goods to the post and other forts were an important function of the resident male population, as was transporting these provisions and furs in the summer, and tripping and trading with the Dogribs in the winter. A considerable amount of their time was also devoted to hunting, trapping and fishing, and in these pursuits, the Métis undoubtedly exercised kinship rights and obligations with the four Dogrib bands with whom they interacted and were related. The occasional visitor or arrival of a new priest or HBC trader must have been a significant event. It appears it was during this time that a shared sense of economy, community and cultural identity first developed among the French Métis inhabitants of Old Fort Rae.

## **North Slave Métis Identity**

Today, the North Slave Métis trace their roots to two founding French Métis families, the Lafferty's and Bouvier's:

My grandfather [Joseph Bouvier] and them came originally, maybe their family, came from Batoche, Red River Rebellion. They came up with the missionaries. He [became] a fur trader, he had two fur trading posts. He would send [fur packets] out and he had a little place where you could buy sugar and eggs and trappers' equipment, mostly Métis and Dene men. He had two cabins they would overnight there for a few days, do their fur trading, and they would pick their flour, their lard, their sugar. (Anon.)<sup>42</sup>

It was common for the daughters of 18<sup>th</sup> century Northern Métis to marry 19<sup>th</sup> century Red River Métis who came North as transport workers for the Church or HBC, reinforcing their common social, cultural, economic and religious heritage.<sup>43</sup> The marriage of Joseph Bouvier and Catherine Beaulieu was a case in point, as was the marriage of Louison Lafferty and Marie L'Espérance, the daughter of a prominent guide and Northern riverboat pilot between the 1820s and 1840s.<sup>44</sup> Metis families tended to marry amongst each other a propensity exemplified by the Lafferty and Bouvier families.

It is known that the Lafferty's have had an enduring connection to Old Fort Rae since 1853, whereas, if Bouvier ever lived at Old Fort Rae it could not have been for very long; he and his family moved to Fort Providence in 1863-64 to set up a mission for the Oblate missionaries. Nevertheless, the interesting feature about these families is their degree of intermarriage. The children of Louison Lafferty and Marie L'Espérance and Joseph Bouvier and Catherine Beaulieu intermarried no fewer than four times. Marriage, as a form of exchange, can reveal much about the historical development of human societies. In this regard, it is instructive that recent genealogical work undertaken by the NSMA suggests that second and third generation French Métis in the North Slave region during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century tended to marry amongst themselves. This proclivity was also present in the South Slave region amongst the Beaulieu, Mandeville and St. Germain families, though these early South Slave families also married into the Lafferty-Bouvier dyad. The tendency for early French Métis families to marry amongst themselves may have developed soon after their roles in the fur trade were solidified; Francois Beaulieu II married at least two daughters, Louise and Catherine, of his father's old companion, Pierre St. Germain.<sup>46</sup>

Research is continuing, but this apparent marriage pattern reflects a preference among well-established French-Cree Métis/Dene families during the last half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to select mates from similar social, cultural, economic

and status backgrounds before choosing mates from other groups regardless of whether they were co-resident or non-resident. Thus local group and regional endogamy appears to be favoured over local and regional group exogamy (i.e., marriage with Dene and other non-Métis), although individual characteristics were undoubtedly equally important in mate selection. Whatever the case, this propensity tended to preserve and perpetuate the core values and traditions of the earlier Métis families in the North Slave region:

Over the years we kind of developed a culture amongst ourselves that would be a kinship. We realized that we were all related but many of us married into one another and thus developed a different [culture] and carried on the traditions of the Métis that brought their customs and traditions...to the North a couple of hundred years ago. (Clem Paul) <sup>47</sup>



Metis Wedding Dance.  
Courtesy of Edward Lafferty.

While intermarriage played a pivotal role in the emergence of a distinct Métis identity in the southern Mackenzie-Great Slave region, adaptation to specific local social, cultural, linguistic, economic and environmental circumstances served to differentiate one French Métis community from another. The community of Old Fort Rae, for example, seems to have been more isolated than most during the fur trade. This was a contributing factor to the development of a unique Métis identity.

A common social history, cultural heritage and economic niche, however, served to bind French Métis families across time and space permitting them a degree of residential mobility, geographical continuity and structural cohesiveness heretofore unknown for the district. This gave rise to a new type of social formation that was neither Dene nor White, but anomalous with respect to the two. In particular, Métis roles in the transportation and communication networks laid the groundwork for the geographically expansive sociability that would become a virtual criterion of Métis ethnicity.<sup>48</sup> In many ways, Lewis Binford's identification of “collecting” and “foraging” societies is an apt description of the organizational differences between French Métis and Dene families in the North Slave region. Collectors move resources to people; foragers move people to resources.

As oral history holders explain, the dominant culture of the Old Fort was Métis. At the fort, the *Michif* language was spoken, Métis clothing worn and Catholic religion and burial traditions of the Métis practised. The social organization of work was distinctly Métis, with its division and specialization of labour. Métis homes around the fort reflected a unique Métis architecture as they were permanent structures with root cellars and intricate dove-tailed corners which differed from more semi-permanent Dene dwellings.

Although somewhat isolated, the North Slave Métis maintained communication with the south and the Red River district. This helped to affirm and strengthen their self-identification as Métis and defined their existence within a larger Métis culture. As Clem Paul explains, news from the south must have played a critical role in the development of North Slave Métis identity and pride:

It is not an accident that you saw a new sense of pride at the fort in the 1870s after the first Métis rebellion [referring to the 1869-1870 Red River Rebellion]. The event helped reinforce a Métis identity and pride in our culture. It is shown in our use of the fiddle and our dances. Our isolation helped reinforce our culture at Old Fort Rae, but hearing stories about the rebellion created a sense of pride that was shared among all Métis. ...But also, there was a downside as the government went after the Métis after this time [the 1869-70 Métis Rebellion]. The government was after us right up until the 1970s. After 1870, many Métis thought it was best to keep their pride to themselves. This is why it is hard to do Métis history. Our people weren't always making their identity widely known because it could have been held against them back then, that's why we don't always show up in [non native] historical records from back then. (Clem Paul)<sup>49</sup>



**Métis Prisoners of 1885.** Of the Métis who participated in the Battle of Batoche, 18 were arrested, tried and found guilty of treason. They received prison terms of up to seven years. This photograph, taken at the Regina Courthouse in 1885, shows them handcuffed together. L. to R.: Johnny Sansregret, Pierriche Parenteau, Pierre Gariépy, Phillipe Garnot (secretary), Albert Monkman, Pierre Vandale, Baptiste Vandale, Toussaint Lucier, Maxime Dubois, Jimus Short, Tourond, Emmanuel Champagne. (Photo Credit: RCMP Museum, Regina, Saskatchewan)

The early Northern Métis have been characterized as "intermediate" socially separated from both the Euro-Canadians and the Dene,<sup>50</sup> and portrayed as an economically transitional population, serving as a rudimentary working class link between Dene hunting bands and the Euro-Canadian managerial class.<sup>51</sup> While these generalizations are just that, a host of traits distinguished the early French Métis from their Dogrib, Yellowknife and Chipewyan neighbours to whom they were related and with whom they interacted socially, culturally and economically on a regular basis.





Metis & Dene Cooperation.  
Courtesy of Edward Lafferty.

L. to R.: Jim Erasmus, Johnny Scholastique, Albina Lafferty, Dod Lafferty, Madelaine (Bushey) Lafferty, Philippe Lafferty, Jean Baptiste Lafferty, Toots (Ethel) Lafferty & child, "Le Raisin" Pierre Nidlin, Julia Fish, Pierre Migwi, John Bighead, Ernie Camsell, Fishbone

French Métis families were usually two to three times larger than local Dene families.<sup>52</sup> Thus, the rate of population increase among the Métis was generally higher as indicated by numerous traders' references to "large families of the Halfbreeds."<sup>53</sup> It is difficult to determine if Dene birth rates were similar. Because of their more nomadic existence in which food shortages were common, Dene women may not have given birth as often.<sup>54</sup> Whatever the case, survival rates favoured the Métis. French Métis were adherents of the Roman Catholic faith, and shared a common cultural heritage and background with the Oblate priests.<sup>55</sup> Most early French Métis spoke Michif, as well as Cree, Dogrib and Chipewyan. Indeed, many North Slave Métis consulted for this report, stated that their parents and grandparents could speak four or five different languages. Differences in the organization of production were alluded to briefly above. French Métis families were particularly successful at combining wage labour pursuits with subsistence hunting and fishing for their families, reflecting the two traditions of skills learned from their Euro-Canadian and Cree/Dene progenitors.<sup>56</sup> Generally, in most early Northern settlements such as Fort Rae, Fort Providence and Fort Resolution there was an economic continuum of Métis workers from occasional labourers whose intermittent service yielded no regular salary, food, rations, housing or other benefits, but were skilled hunters, trappers, farmers and craftsmen in their own right to full-time engaged servants who received an annual wage, food rations, housing for their managerial roles.<sup>57</sup>

Between these two extremes, was a spectrum of occasional workers with specialization in transportation/freighting, hunting/trapping, interpreting, etc. In this sense, the early Northern Métis differed from the Dogrib, Yellowknives and Chipewyan, whose sole source of credit was often derived from furs or provisions. Yet, the HBC could only meet a small part of the nutritional needs of the average Métis family and even full-time servants had to hunt, fish, trap and/or grow some of their food.<sup>58</sup> Moreover, store bought food was expensive and many Métis families couldn't afford to buy all of their food nor would they want to either:

Forty-five years now Henri Lafferty works in the Bay. \$60 a month. ... Hudson's Bay if you get money everything is high, you can't buy nothing with that. Everything is high price in the store. If you get a big family what are you going to do? You buy maybe lard ... everything is high. ... Nor for me, I buy raisins and I buy rice. I do like my Mom do that. (Alice Lafferty)<sup>59</sup>

Thus, another distinguishing characteristic of the early French Métis was the diversification and specialization of their activities in the region relative to local Dene groups.

With the incorporation of a variety of seasonal and permanent wage labour jobs into the annual routine, Métis productive activity was much more diversified, and in some cases specialized, than that of the Dene:

In our community there always was hunters and there always was fishermen and there always was woodcutters and different people, skilled at different aspects that brought something into the community. Not everybody fished, not everybody hunted to the degree that others did. Some other people that's all they did was hunt. Other people all they did was trap and other people they just gathered wood and others gathered berries, others ventured from community to community, they raised dogs, others provided fish for dogs. Everybody had a different job in those days in the community. Like my mother, for example, her job for her and her sisters was to feed dogs, so they had to fish, dry fish, put away fish, freeze fish - all those things. (Clem Paul)<sup>60</sup>





Bridge Construction at Fort Rae.

Courtesy of Edward Lafferty.

L. to R.: Dan Broomfield, Jean Baptiste Lafferty, Yate-Zoe, Henri Lafferty, ErnieCamsell.

Because not all families or individuals had the time or opportunity to produce what was necessary for them or their families to survive, many Métis families were forced to widen their exchange networks and strengthen their social relationships with, in descending order, resident kinsmen, resident non-kinsmen and non-resident kinsmen. The diversification and specialization of skills was a major factor promoting sharing and community well being among the Métis. Adrian D'hont explains:

Yeah, I think ... it was necessary to [share] for sort of day-to-day survival. I think there was probably more sharing [in the past]. Plus, when people were doing quite different things, there were some people that were sort of specialized in one area and another person was specialized in another area. Well I guess it [was] sort of a barter thing. I mean the bottom line is that it was sharing.<sup>61</sup>

The need to share was the glue that held Métis families together within and between communities, and contributed to the emergence of their distinctive cultural identity. It is little wonder that work, regardless of its nature, and productive activity generally, is so highly valued in Métis culture.

In an oral history interview, Catherine (nee Erasmus) Turner and Georgina (nee Bouvier) McPherson repeatedly emphasized the central importance of work throughout their lives. They also stated that they believe the cause of poor community health today is the absence of work or employment for Métis people. When asked if they could provide a title for this report, they replied: "Can't Live Without Work."<sup>62</sup>



Fixing a kicker.  
Courtesy of Edward Lafferty.  
L. to R.: Joe Drybones and helpers.

## **"New" Fort Rae and Economic, Social and Cultural Diversification**

### **Old Fort Rae: The Declining Years**

The 1870s and 1880s were a harbinger of change for the North Slave Métis; while new elements were added to the old patterns and ways of life, others were dropped. Dog teams came into general use around 1870, which enhanced the mobility of both Métis and Dogrib hunters and trappers.



Metis Transportation. (Circa 1946)  
Courtesy of Edward Lafferty.

At approximately the same time, the credit outfit system was introduced which had the effect of increasing Dogrib and Métis hunters and trappers' indebtedness to, while solidifying their socio-economic relationship with, HBC and independent fur traders. In the late 1880s and early 1890s, Old Fort Rae lost a number of hunters to injuries and death on the Barrens; the HBC trader had encouraged the winter hunting of musk-ox, while actively discouraging summer hunts, cutting credit advances and demanding full payment for previous advances.<sup>63</sup> These actions backfired, however. Not only did the angered hunters begin to trade their musk-ox furs at Fort Resolution, the Fort Rae priest assisted his parishioners by supplementing their reduced credits with his own supplies, forcing the HBC trader to pay twice the normal price for furs.<sup>64</sup>

## **Changes in Transportation**

The introduction of the steamboat in the mid-1880s had significant social and economic impacts on the Métis of Old Fort Rae and Fort Resolution. Formerly, a team of men was needed to successfully manoeuvre the York boats along the rivers:

I think they would have four on this side and four on this side. Sometimes there was no wind, so the sail couldn't go, so they had to row. So you had to pray for the wind. Sometimes the wind was in the wrong direction too. They used to break them oars, they would pull so hard. Snap right off. They used to talk about that I remember. I was little then. (Ernie Camsell) <sup>65</sup>



Jonas Lafferty's Scow.  
Courtesy of Edward Lafferty.  
Picking up groceries with the scow from the steamboat in French Channel.

While Métis men were no longer needed to crew on the summer York boats, after the introduction of the steamer, many continued to find work in the river transportation industry, cutting and stacking wood along the steamer routes, serving as pilots and deck hands on the ships, and most importantly pulling barges at portages.

They traveled pulling barges across portages and all that up at Fort Smith to Chipewyan or McMurray and used to come back down and bring some freight down the Mackenzie and down to Rae and all that. (Ernie Camsell) <sup>66</sup>

In some instances, Métis operated their own freighting service. The following example of a Métis freighting service on the Mackenzie River is similar to the work done at Fort Rae:

When I was a little girl my father used to have a scow and he used to go up and down from Fort Simpson to Fort Liard. He used to haul all the bishops and priests, sisters, Hudson Bay clerks, and white trappers that wanted to go up there to Liard. He had no engine, and six men on the line tracking. One in the front and one behind, and we would be sitting in the middle, in the hole, the crates all piled around us. Six men would go for two or three hours and then they would change. They would put some others on there and there would be one running around throwing ropes over sticks and stumps that were in the river....<sup>67</sup>

The adaptability of the Métis is illustrated in their transition from *coureurs de bois*, to York boat operators, to steamboat pilots. The ecological knowledge of the Métis gathered over years about how to read the water, predict weather and live off the land, facilitated each transition and informed their expertise and success. The great skills and knowledge of the famous river boat pilot, Johnny Berens, is described by Louis Mercredi:

I didn't travel very much with him, but I know he was a real good pilot and he tells the weather, you can't cross the lake unless he says. You take a pole and put it in the water while the boat is travelling and the ripples... the way it is... you can tell whether there is going to be a storm or not. The Captain disobeyed him, and that was the last time the Hudson Bay lost all their freight... they lost it in the fall of 1948, I think, and I was looking after the freight... loading it on from the docks.<sup>68</sup>

The most immediate effect of this change in river transport technology was that Company's dependence on caribou declined correspondingly. As the Company became less dependent on fresh meat from Fort Rae to feed its dwindling York boat crews, the Dogribs were encouraged to trap and trade furs and later on muskox robes. Many Métis also spent more time trapping, although a few continued to trade and "trip" among their Dogrib relatives.

By the turn of century, furs had become more important than caribou meat in economic importance to the HBC at Old Fort Rae and the fort had evolved from a provisioning post into a fur trade post.

## **Free Traders**

In 1870, the HBC lost its monopoly over the fur trade. However, it was not until after 1890 that it faced any direct challenge from free traders. The company of Hislop and Nagle engaged Alexis and Vital Lafferty to act as interpreters and to introduce them to Yellowknife and Dogrib bands living around Great Slave Lake and in the North Slave region. Perceiving the free traders to be a serious threat, the HBC trader at Fort Rae was replaced in 1893 by Joe Hodgson, himself a Red River Métis who had served as factor at Fort MacPherson, thus avoiding further alienation of Dogrib and Métis trappers/hunters. But it was too little, too late. By 1894, Hislop had drawn many Métis and Dene trappers away from the poorly supplied HBC post at Fort Rae. Things had become so bad for Fort Rae's HBC trader that he borrowed supplies from the Roman Catholic priest and traveled to Willow River to trade. Hislop had temporarily set up camp on the Willow River, the channel that drained Marian Lake into Great Slave Lake, in order to intercept Dogrib canoes and dog teams from further North. Adding to the HBC's problems was the fact that Hislop altered his supply to meet the demands of the trappers, whereas the HBC was reluctant to do so. Finally, in 1902 Hislop engaged Vital Lafferty to set up a new post at Willow River (present day Fort Rae). Adding to the attractiveness of the site was the fact that, by 1893, all useable timber around Old Fort Rae had been stripped from the surrounding area for fuel, and wood had to be hauled by dogs from over five miles away. One of the few redeeming features of Old Fort Rae was its unfailing fishery. Still, the new fort, being 18 miles North of Old Fort Rae, had the added advantage of avoiding the dangerous canoe trip south to Old Fort Rae. Gradually Métis families from Old Fort Rae began to resettle at Hislop's fort. In 1906, the Roman Catholic mission sealed the fate of Old Fort Rae by relocating to Hislop's post. The same year, the HBC retaliated by building opposite Hislop and Nagle's post, although it continued to maintain its operation at Old Fort Rae until about 1911. By 1916, only one large extended Métis family, headed by Henri Lafferty, remained at Old Fort Rae. Members of the Lafferty family continued to live at Old Fort Rae for years after it was closed, a testament to their enduring attachment to the site.

Hislop and Nagle seem to have relied extensively on the North Slave Métis from Old Fort Rae for the success of their operation. Alexis Lafferty, for example, tripped out of Fort Resolution, going head-to-head with the Beaulieu operation. Chillouis Lafferty was hired as a guide, while Boniface Lafferty traded at Liard River for Hislop and Nagle. Baptiste Bouvier who was a tripper at Fort Rae for the same pair in 1896, and was placed in charge of their Fort Providence operation in 1902. After the turn of the century, Nagle transferred more responsibility over to Bob Erasmus and others he had trained. Bob Erasmus was the son of Peter Erasmus the famous Métis interpreter who conducted negotiations for the Plains Treaties. Bob Erasmus had already worked for a year or two as the tripper and interpreter at Hislop's post, and was especially crucial to Hislop and Nagle's



operation. "Intelligent and trustworthy", he was entrusted annually with delivering the fall fur shipments, sometimes valued at \$85,000, to Edmonton. Bob Erasmus eventually moved to Hislop's operation at present day Fort Rae, several miles south of Hislop's first post. While at the post, consistent with his culture's preference to marry Métis, he married the daughter of Vital Lafferty, and together they raised one of the largest families in the region. Nagle had this to say about the Erasmus family:

The Erasmus family is probably as responsible for the development of western Canada as any Canadian family can be. There have been more notable merchants and entrepreneurs, but few of them have done as much for Canada's Indians. Peter Erasmus, Bob's father, was one of the greatest interpreters ever to work among the tribal groups.<sup>69</sup>



The Erasmus Family.

Courtesy of Edward Lafferty.

Standing L to R.: Unknown, Fred Erasmus, Father Napoleon Lafferty, Bob Erasmus, Harry Lafferty, Jim Erasmus. Seated L. to R.: Theresa Erasmus, Marie Erasmus, Florence Erasmus, Catherine Erasmus, Virginia Erasmus, and Unknown Man with Child.

## More Arrivals

By the mid-1890s the Dominion of Canada began to actively govern the North, in part because of the massive influx of Americans that was about to descend on the Klondike. By 1896, the "Unorganized Territories Game Preservation Act", which restricted access to virtually all animals and birds

important to the fur trade, came into effect and the government sent officials North to enforce the Act.

Although it might seem strange that the people most affected by the "Game Act" were not consulted prior to its enactment, it began a trend that continues to this day. While the three-year moratorium on hunting wood buffalo was the only section of the Act that would immediately affect the lives of indigenous Métis and Dene, government officials could only warn against the dangers of over hunting and threaten the appointment of Northern game wardens to monitor the buffalo and barrenground muskox hunts.

About the same time, the Mackenzie-Great Slave District was hit with a deluge of traders and then prospectors. Formerly the domain of the Dene, Métis and a few white people who discovered that a dollar or a soul could be "made" on the backs of Aboriginal people, the advent of the steamer in the 1880s opened up the North to all manner of fortune seekers. By 1900, even Hislop and Nagle began operating steamships, hiring experienced Métis boatmen to pilot the vessels. Times were changing and new arrivals were beginning to disrupt the hegemony previously enjoyed by the HBC and Roman Catholic Church. While Anglican ministers began to travel down the Mackenzie River to compete with the Catholic Church for souls, prospectors began to enter the district in large numbers.

The movement of Klondike-bound prospectors and freight through the region brought many strange faces and characters to the Great Slave-Mackenzie district. Many Klondikers remained behind to explore the mining potential of the region. By 1899, prospectors around Great Slave Lake were gripped by gold fever. It was during this time that samples of Pine Point galena assayed at 39 ounces of silver per ton. Robert Bell of the Department of Mines, however, examined the ore deposits around the lake concluding that no precious metals had been discovered and that chances of finding gold was slim. Further, the Pine Point galena, while of high quality, would be costly to mine and transport. The Great Slave Lake boom of 1899 had busted.

In the same year Canada sent Treaty and "Half-Breed" Commissioners as far North as the southern shores of Great Slave Lake. The Treaty commissioner managed to persuade most of the Indians he came across to take Treaty by implying that those who signed his document would not be bound by the Game Act.<sup>70</sup> The Half-Breed commissioner, however, was not as successful. To avoid a repeat of what happened to the Prairie Métis, who were dispossessed of their scrip lands by "unscrupulous speculators [who] often pressured them to sell [their transferable land scrip] on the spot", <sup>71</sup> the Northern "halfbreeds" were offered scrip entitling them to 240 acres of non-transferable land. In 1900, Beaulieu took scrip at Fort Resolution in order to protect his interests there. However, most Métis living south of Great Slave refused to accept non-transferable land scrip.

Nevertheless, "the scrip hunters" who followed the Half-Breed Commission ... bought up many \$240 scrip certificates for cash amounts of \$70 and \$130."<sup>72</sup> Consequently, by the end of the century, white investors owned most of the scrip lands from Edmonton to Fort Smith. Métis down river from Smith Rapids in Fort Resolution did not experience the same degree of exploitation at the hands of land speculators.

Independent traders and prospectors began to open up the region with startling speed after the turn of the century. With the onset of WWI, another wave of fortune hunters flooded North shaking the foundations of the Old Order.

## **Disease**

Accompanying each influx of newcomers were diseases to which indigenous Métis and Dene had little resistance. Over the winter of 1902-03, an outbreak of measles took over 120 lives from settlements around Great Slave Lake. From one Dogrib band alone attached to Fort Rae 48 people perished. Baptiste Bouvier of Fort Providence lost his youngest child, while Vital Lafferty, lost his wife and baby, leaving him with six motherless children. Consistent with his culture's proclivity to take wives from within the group, Vital Lafferty married Elizabeth Mandeville.

Epidemics were not unknown to the Métis and Dene of the southern Mackenzie and Great Slave regions. All manner of foreign strains of viruses spread throughout the district on the heels of fur traders, missionaries and prospectors. In the winter of 1867, an outbreak of measles and scarlet fever was responsible for the deaths of approximately 800 Dene and Métis in a population of an estimated 4,000. The spread of these viruses proved exceptionally fatal for Métis women and children. In 1918 a major influenza epidemic hit the North. However, Métis elders reported that the influenza epidemic of 1928 had the most traumatic and long lasting effects of all. Transported by the spring supply boats (HBC's *Distributor*) en route from Fort Smith to the Mackenzie Delta, influenza spread quickly throughout the Territory taking with it a reported three to four people per day.<sup>73</sup> Those that were fortunate enough to be spared were left to anguish over suffering and dying family members:

The epidemics of the 1920s destroyed families; cut children off from their past, and threatened to break the hopes of adults for the future. In a population that was just beginning to recover from the illness[es] of the late nineteenth century, the new blows must have seemed doubly cruel. <sup>74</sup>

Contributing to the devastating effects of influenza were the high rates of pulmonary disease that were found common to many Aboriginal women at that time. Throughout the early 1900s, tuberculosis was found to be 14 times higher

among Aboriginal women in the Northwest Territories than the national average, while pneumonia was estimated to be at least twice the average rate.<sup>75</sup>

Conditions began to improve by 1946 with the establishment of 12 Territorial hospitals. As the North became more 'developed' and the Government of the Northwest Territories was established (1967), nursing stations and qualified doctors were more accessible to the sick. However, non-treaty North Slave Métis did not initially benefit from government health care programs. The federal government assumed no official responsibility for those Métis who had not taken treaty, or for people who lost status as a result of the *Indian Act*. Those Métis who lost their status when their mother married a non-status person, were forced to pay for medical treatment.

### **More on North Slave Métis Identity**

The seeds for North Slave Métis ethnicity were sown at Old Fort Rae during the last half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, it did not come into full bloom until after the arrival of newcomers. While the economic foundations of the North Slave Métis identity may have been shaken, the diverse immigrant population, far from undermining or destroying North Slave Métis ethnicity, provided an opportunity for it to develop and flourish.

Ann Peterson Royce defines an ethnic group as "a reference group invoked by a people who share a common historical style...based on overt features and values, and who, *through the process of interaction with others, identify themselves as sharing that style*" (emphasis added).<sup>76</sup> As Fredrick Barth has observed, "*ethnic distinctions do not depend on the absence of social interaction and acceptance, but are quite to the contrary often the very foundation upon which embracing social systems are built*" (emphasis added).<sup>77</sup> Thus, the hypothetical group on an island with no knowledge of others is not an ethnic group; it does not have an ethnic identity; it does not have (social) strategies based on ethnicity.<sup>78</sup> In contexts of cross-cultural interaction, then, effective stages for social interaction are constructed by consistency of behaviour among groups members and stereotyping between/among groups, i.e., the accentuation of social group or ethnic identity.<sup>79</sup> Royce puts this nicely:

In order for interaction to occur at all in multi-ethnic situations, there must be shared understandings and common conventions. This necessarily gives rise to ethnic stereotypes, which are generalizations about the different groups they describe and which indicate appropriate attitudes and actions towards those groups.<sup>80</sup>

Thus, it was probably during the decades before and after the turn of the century that North Slave Métis identity crystallized and developed. It seemed inevitable that Dogrib ethnic identity must have also been subject to the same

processes. Social interactions with immigrants undoubtedly shaped and redefined early 20<sup>th</sup> century Dogrib identity and ethnic strategies, perhaps to the detriment of Dogrib-Métis relations which may have appeared almost seamless in the eyes of the outsider; both were intimately bound up in social and economic relationships that sustained their complimentary modes of production. However, relations between these two embracing ethnic groups would forever be changed in 1921, when the Dominion of Canada once again sent its Treaty and Scrip commissioners North.

### **Treaty 11 and Scrip**

The discovery of oil at Norman Wells in 1920 served as the catalyst for Canada's renewed interest in dispossessing Dene and Métis of the Mackenzie Basin of their rights to lands and resources. After WWI the Mackenzie Basin experienced an influx of trappers and prospectors, and with the Norman Wells discovery, a new numbered Treaty (Treaty 11) was authorized. In lieu of land scrip, and in contrast to previous treaties, all Metis people "living the Indian way of life" were qualified to take Treaty. With this act, the government of Canada recognized and affirmed, whether this was its explicit intention or not, the Aboriginal rights and title of the Métis in the North Slave region. These rights and land title are based on the Métis' long-standing use and occupation of lands in the region. For those Métis refusing to take Treaty, cash payments rather than land, might have been attractive.



Treaty Time in Fort Rae.  
Courtesy of Edward Lafferty.

The choices were inequitable. If a Métis person chose treaty, they would lose their rights to work for the HBC as well as government. Thus, for North Slave Métis, the acceptance of treaty meant the forfeiture of their economy, culture and way of life. As well, the acceptance of treaty meant the surrender of the right to drink, vote and own private property. On the other hand, cash payments were an unjust substitute for the surrender of Métis title to their vast lands in the North



Slave Region.<sup>81</sup> Neither choice was of the Métis' making and neither protected the Métis way of life and their rights to use and occupy their lands. As will be shown, each option had its own consequences for the North Slave Métis.

Initially, the Treaty Commissioner, Conroy, identified two distinct Metis groups in the region. The first, he described as "old and respected families in that country, adding that "I might even say that some of these the families are historic." In the North Slave Region, these included the Lafferty, Camsell and other families. Because these "historic" Métis families did not exhibit a distinctly "Indian mode of life", they were to be given cash payments, while the remainder of the "halfbreeds", because they lived the "Indian mode of life," would be taken into Treaty.

Some Métis chose not to take Treaty, fearing that they would lose their fundamental rights and freedoms as listed above. However, it was not until 1925, when the Dominion Land Act was amended to authorize payment, that cash settlements (172 in total) were paid in association with Treaty 11. The possibility that, by taking cash, the Métis did not know what they were giving up any more than the Dene, was suggested by the government agent in Fort Smith when he wrote, "that in many cases the money was not expected, in most cases they did not know why they were getting it."<sup>82</sup>

An important part of the discourse on "Métis-ness" and "Indian-ness" embodied within the Treaty process is the assumption of cultural homogeneity, which is a misrepresentation (often deliberate) of internal diversity and complexity.<sup>83</sup> One is no longer an Indian if s/he does not live the "Indian way of life", or even more curiously, an individual with mixed ancestry is no longer a Métis if s/he lives the "Indian way of life." Harry Daniels has said: "The international experience has been for dominant groups in polynational states to reserve the right to define groups, even to the point of defining them out of existence."<sup>84</sup> And this was precisely the intention of scrip and treaty: to make the Métis disappear legislatively, while enshrining a unique Indian status in the Indian Act in order "to control Indian populations and allow the expansion of the nation-state into areas previously controlled by Indian peoples."<sup>85</sup>

The decision to enter into Treaty or take scrip had both immediate and long-term consequences for the Métis community and family. No longer were members of Aboriginal communities able to freely choose their identity or status; one was either an Indian with special legal rights, a non-status Indian, or Métis or "halfbreed" with no legal ethno-minority status whatsoever. The treaty/non-treaty distinction was especially important in re-structuring social and land use relationships.



## **Treaty and Métis Strategies for Survival**

Many Métis men may not have known the implications of taking scrip payments. Nevertheless, some men who took cash payments realized that status Indians were eligible for various government benefits and services, especially the education of their children, and thus encouraged their wives to take Treaty.<sup>86</sup>

This strategy was fairly commonplace among North Slave Métis families, most notably the Lafferty's and Bouvier's. By adopting this strategy, Métis families used an otherwise colonialist policy intended to eradicate the Métis to their advantage. However, due to provisions in the *Indian Act*, Métis and Dene women who married to Métis/non-native men soon lost their Treaty status anyway:

My Dad was a Métis from Alberta he wasn't allowed to trap or hunt here in those days' years ago. My mother was a treaty Indian, you would say, according to the Indian Act she was a Métis, but she lost her status because she married my father, so she wasn't allowed to do that either. Our use of the land was cut off. (Clem Paul)<sup>87</sup>

The government's imposed artificial division of Treaty/non-Treaty forced those Métis who took scrip to adopt other strategies of survival:

They get free nets from Indian Agent anyway every year. They get shells and nets and whatnot. Treaty gives that out every year, but I'm lucky my daughter is Treaty, she gets a net and she passes it over to me, so I don't have to buy any, I've got lots of nets. (Ernie Camsell)<sup>88</sup>

The adoption of these and other adaptive strategies, gave the impression that Métis families were manipulating the "system" to achieve the "best of both worlds"-- an appearance that, in addition to their traditional roles as intermediaries and brokers between the two cultures, did not exactly endear them to White authorities or to their Dogrib relatives and neighbours:

We weren't accepted by either white people or native people.  
(Leroy Bloomstrand)<sup>89</sup>

(We) are a little bit different because our rights weren't recognized like treaty Indians were. Most of our parents were considered as Indians and treated like Indians down through generations by non-natives, and considered amongst the Dene as being like French. One treated us like Indians. The other treated us like French. (Clem Paul)<sup>90</sup>

Treaty Indians were legally entitled to hunt for food on Crown land, while Métis had to follow more general game laws. Catherine Turner recalls that her father, Bob Erasmus (who did not take Treaty) brought his (Treaty) children with him to the traplines in order to legally trap and continue his use and occupation of the land. Formerly, all rights of access to lands and resources were negotiated between the Dogribs and Metis locally through customary processes. Now within the same community, even within the same families, a barrier was erected which created differential access to land and resources. Clem Paul recognizes that these laws had the effect of breaking down the highly structured and differentiated production of work in the community, and atomizing it into small family groupings.

For 100 years, we had an organized system where members of the community had different skills and jobs, and the women worked in the camp and men in the bush. But now, it was illegal for many men to hunt and trap. But by bringing women and children with them to the bush, they could do this. We reverted to the Dene system of hunting in family groups.<sup>91</sup>



Metis Women & children in the bush.  
Courtesy of Edward Lafferty.

The Yellowknife preserve, created in 1923, is another example of interference in access to land and resources that had been traditionally negotiated amongst Aboriginal communities. When the Yellowknife preserve was initially created, only treaty Indians were allowed to hunt, creating hardship for Fort Rae's large Métis population. Eventually, however, Métis and resident non-Aboriginal

trappers and hunters were permitted to hunt in the game preserve and national parks. This established a new bureaucratic pigeonhole into which Métis were thrown along with long-term non-Aboriginal residents for the sake of administrative convenience.

After WWII especially, non-status Métis and Dene saw their treaty kinsmen receive assistance in the areas of housing, health care, and education, while they received nothing. Not surprisingly they felt this to be unfair. Ted Trindell resented the fact that the Dene "don't have to go by the same law, yet we're both the same. Indian-born in the same country. But they've got more privilege than I have."<sup>92</sup> In effect, the new legal division created a substantial social and cultural barrier between people who formerly lived in harmony within the same communities, a barrier that still continues to this day, as Ernie Camsell laments:

I'm still a Métis, but they call me a white guy ... I don't know why? ... Métis like me, that took treaty... they're "halfbreeds" and they took treaty. Because they took treaty they figure they belong to Treaty 11, but maybe because I didn't take treaty I don't belong to Treaty 11. So I'm pushed aside. I don't know why. Don't ask me why. I've done everything they've done. I lived with them, I lived with their womans [laughs] and all that ... I've lived among them, I've stayed with them and what they eat I ate, and just because I didn't take treaty, they push me aside. Now I'm getting angry about that. I used to pick them up and haul their meat with my truck and now if I see them on the road, I don't want to pick them up anymore. They call me a white guy, let treaty Indians pick you up, I'm not going to pick them up... Why be that way? What's a guy to do? That's the way they treat me, so why should I treat them... I don't find that it's fair. ... But they treat me that way, who's going to tell them, "Treat Ernie like your own, don't treat him like a white guy." If somebody told them maybe it would be better. (Ernie Camsell)<sup>93</sup>

## **The Church**

The religious heritage of North Slave Métis represents an integral component of their identity. The alignment of the North Slave Métis with the Roman Catholic Church was largely a result of paternal and fur trade origins. However, the spiritual orientations that resulted when Métis men took Dene wives, especially early on, set in motion the formation of a distinctive Métis religious ideology that blended the folk-knowledge of Roman Catholic beliefs with Aboriginal spiritual teachings and oral history. It is through these traditions that the Métis continued to demonstrate a strong connection to their maternal heritage

while uniquely integrating Catholicism into a spiritual universe to form a syncretized faith that is demonstrably both Catholic and Métis.<sup>94</sup>

Contributing to the early spread of Catholicism in the southern Mackenzie-Great Slave region was the efforts of Bishop Tache, who beginning in the 1830s sent Métis from Red River, such as Joseph Bouvier, to assist missionaries to set up missions in the district. Many of these Métis, having found better employment opportunities working for the HBC and other traders, remained in the district adding to the population of the Métis aligned with the Catholic Church. Among the most prominent of these men was Pierre Lafferty, who was hired to work at the new Roman Catholic mission at Fort Resolution in 1859. Because of the network of family relations and personal connections that Lafferty and other Métis had established, visiting Oblate priests relied upon them to serve as cultural brokers in their initial encounters with different Dene groups. As with the fur trade, the linguistic skills of the Métis proved instrumental in the spread of Catholicism through the southern Mackenzie-Great Slave region. By speaking Michif, the Métis were able to communicate with both the Dene as well as the Oblate priests who came from France or Quebec. Later on the Métis taught the priests the Dene languages, thus facilitating the acceptance of these newcomers and their message.



Gathering after Church in Fort Rae.  
Courtesy of Edward Lafferty.

The relationship between the Métis of the North Slave region and the Church is one that underscores the distinctiveness of their society. Without the social and linguistic skills of the Métis and their aptitude for wage labour and skills in long-distance travel the Roman Catholic Church would not have gained a

foothold in the region.<sup>95</sup> At the same time, the Church influenced and shaped Northern Métis culture, probably to a greater extent than the Dogrib because it formed a larger part of their everyday life. For example, Catherine (nee Erasmus) Turner noted that her mother used to go to church twice a day, seven days week, once at 6:00 am and again at 5:00 pm.<sup>96</sup> Thus, propinquity and cultural factors shaped from tradition and shared understandings not only differentiated Métis from Dene, but also served to distinguish the Métis in the southern Mackenzie region from the Métis of in the northern Mackenzie. However, perhaps the greatest influence of the Church on the Métis was exerted through the education of children.



L to R: Philippe Lafferty, Jean Baptiste Lafferty & Father Napoleon Lafferty.  
Courtesy of Ernie Camsell.

## **Residential and Boarding Schools**

One consequence of taking cash payments was that North Slave Métis families were now forced to pay for the education of their children at residential and boarding schools run by the Catholic Church with government assistance. It was not enough that children were forcibly removed from their families to attend school in Fort Resolution and Fort Providence, but the Métis had to pay for the service. Needless to say many Métis families, having numerous children, could not afford to pay for every child's education. Even those North Slave Métis who were steadily employed, such as Bob Erasmus, often could not afford to pay for schooling and had their homes confiscated by the Church as payment.<sup>97</sup>



Residential school was not the most enriching or empowering experience for Métis children. According to Celine (nee Lafferty) Laviolette:

"We were forbidden to talk Slavey all [the] time there. Margaret Sarchel and I were... about the same age. The Sister would come to see what we were saying, and she would yell, "You're talking Slavey again eh?" And, then she would slap us. And she said, "Your parents didn't put you in school to learn Slavey."<sup>98</sup>

"An elder who has curly hair once told me that she was told that it was evil to have curly hair. It was very superstitious. They [nuns] would go around to the kids who had curly hair and shave their heads. And they actually believed that at the time. Even the nuns, they believed it. The elder said that in a lot of ways the nuns were really nice and they treated them good. But now you are like, "What! That is not normal." It seemed normal at the time." (Dianna Beck)<sup>99</sup>

Ernie Camsell describes the living conditions which Métis and other Aboriginal children were forced to endure:

I stayed in school for seven years and every morning I had ...rolled oats or whatever you want to call them. Every morning with one slice of bread, just like we were in jail. Take butter and put it on that big slice of bread - little butter. I went by with that and I'm still alive. "Wait until I get out (of) school", I thought, "I'll eat." That's how I was brought up. They hung fish, they hung fish for the dogs and that's what we used to eat in school. That was in the 1930's. Poor, boy I tell you. There were 42 of us boys. Boys stayed alone and the girls alone. Big pad about that big [gesturing] and they used to put fish in there and that's what we used to eat guts and all. Nothing else. Every morning it was porridge and dinnertime it was fish, supper was fish, but we lived, we went through that.<sup>100</sup>

Métis girls, such as Catherine Turner and Celine Laviolette, often spent 15 to 20 years at residential/boarding schools in Fort Providence and Fort Resolution. As most instruction ended at the grade five level, many girls and some boys stayed on to assist the nuns, cooking and cleaning. Celine (nee Lafferty) Laviolette, for example, was put in school at less than two years of age, and stayed for 20 years. Often those Métis who remained after grade school became nuns, and occasionally priests. Father Napoleon Lafferty, from Old Fort Rae, was the first Métis to be ordained as a Roman Catholic priest in the diocese of Mackenzie.



Strict sexual segregation at residential school often affected the integration of children back into their communities, while compulsory attendance fractured Métis family life and the transfer of traditional values and knowledge to younger people.<sup>101</sup> But the Church-run residential and boarding schools had longer term, and arguably more devastating, impacts on Métis families that continue to this day:

...When the churches came and they built the residential school at Resolution, most of the family was shipped off over there. ... Mom was born there on Mission Island, but they eventually moved back to Fort Rae, and my Mom was there as a child and then she was sent to the residential school, and from there out to the present Rae for a little while. ... The North Slave Métis community was split up and I guess decentralized by the church and a lot of their influences, but a lot of us stayed within this area, there's quite a few families that stayed in the North Slave region and continue to use and occupy the land... (Bob Turner) <sup>102</sup>

Our people vary. Some of them are younger and many of our families over the years have been torn apart through residential schools. Most of our parents didn't really know how to be parents. They weren't raised around their parents, some of them were taken into residential schools and many years ago their parents died young or their grandparents, so the family structure wasn't as good or as healthy as it should have been. That has carried on to our generation... (Clem Paul) <sup>103</sup>



Metis Girls at Residential School in Fort Resolution.  
L. to R.: Catherine Erasmus, Celine Lafferty, Mary "Toots" Camsell, Virginia Erasmus  
Courtesy of Edward Lafferty.

Our people need a lot of healing right now. There's too many things that happened. The government took all of the kids away sent them to residential schools and then the government started building schools in the communities and told people, "Now they are your responsibility". So the parents try to take over their responsibility. These people were bush people, they were nomadic people, they followed the caribou, they went trapping, they went fishing, they lived off of the land. And then when they became town people, they had no skills and the skills of trying to raise a family in a white man's house is totally different than from off of the land. So their children didn't get any parenting skills from their parents because the skills that they knew did not fit into a cubicle place built out of wood. But any ways, then these kids turn around and had children. So parenting skills are gone again and we have babies who are having babies and it is not going to get any better until we start doing something about it. (Terri Douglas) <sup>104</sup>

### **Between and After the Wars**

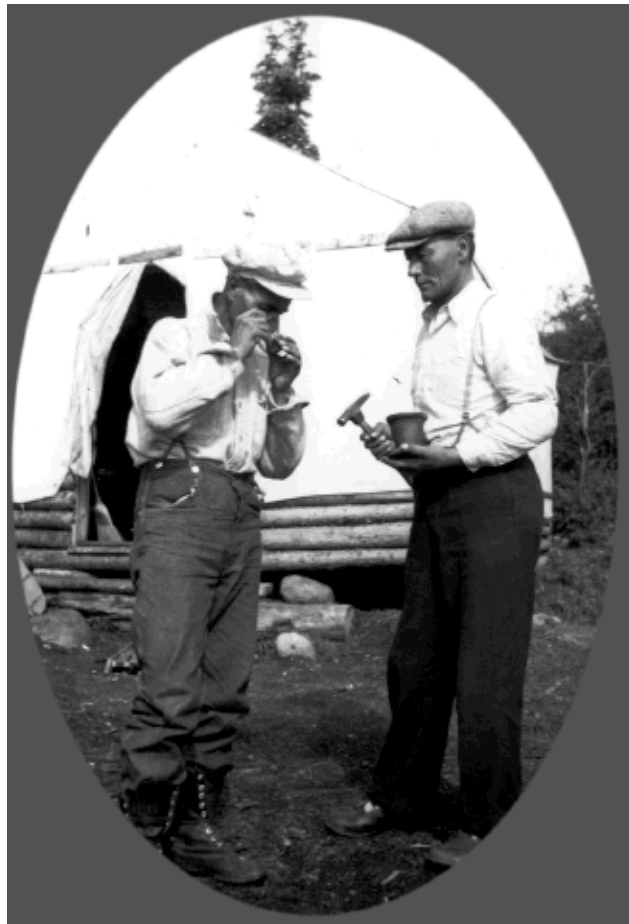
Between the World Wars, government ignored the needs of the North Slave Métis and other Métis, while Indian Agents attempted to balance their needs with those of the Dogrib and other Dene groups. The discovery of pitch blend on Great Bear Lake in 1930 initiated a chain of events that changed the nature of the economy of the Great Slave-Mackenzie region forever. While the Eldorado mine on Great Bear Lake soon started to produce uranium ore, more and more prospectors began to penetrate the district in search of mineral wealth.

In 1934, geologists heading down the Yellowknife River found gold on Yellowknife Bay triggering a gold rush, not seen in the district since 1899. It can be said that the Métis of the North Slave region never really felt the economic and socially debilitating effects of the Great Depression as they either relied more extensively on hunting and trapping --fur prices remained high during the 1930s-- or found work in the mining industry.

North Slave Métis elder Alice Lafferty provides a “snapshot” of the nature of land use for many Métis during this time:

They [father and uncles] had only dog teams and canoe, and they go trapping. They put everything in one toboggan. They go trapping, and they go, they don't come back for two, three weeks, and we stay with our mother, my mother fix the hide, she make sinew, moose sinew, caribou sinew and they kill rabbit. They keep that hide, rabbit hide, they dry it and they sell that. Squirrel. We do everything with Mom. Rabbit, fish, what is good, my Mom make

dry fish out of. What is good to boil, clean it, take all the scales and you put outside in the warehouse. Everything we do...we don't think about going someplace. We got little radio, that's all. We got old gramophone... My Dad comes back with furs. Now we have new mitts, gloves, moccasins, everything is there for them. When they come back they put all that for the people of Fort Rae. They get flour, baking powder, something like that, with dog team. (Alice Lafferty)<sup>105</sup>



Metis Prospectors Frank Smith (L) and Jonas Lafferty.  
Courtesy of Edward Lafferty.

By 1936, Yellowknife had become a boomtown and North Slave Métis began to move to the Yellowknife area, including Duck Lake, Prosperous Lake, and Burwash, in the pursuit of new economic opportunities. In Yellowknife, Métis families began to settle on the islands and shoreline of Yellowknife Bay or acquired homes alongside other Métis near present-day School Draw Avenue and the Willow Flats area, where two Métis enclaves were beginning to form. The new work in town included hauling freight, fishing for the mine and cutting wood. By

1940, the population of Yellowknife swelled to 1,000, mostly newcomers who overwhelmed the Métis population of 50 or so people. After the war, Yellowknife, with three operating gold mines, boomed once again and Métis continued to come to Yellowknife:

In 1945 I came here with the boat. My Dad said, "We go to Yellowknife. Maybe they get good medicine there," he said. "Hudson Bay, we look, I buy lots of medicine." We come here. We stay in the tent. That time we put the tent any place we want in Yellowknife. Now we went to Wildcat Café, and the old man, Chinese, he said, "Oh you got girls here. I need somebody to wash dishes for me." My Dad said, "We're gonna stay here for awhile." He said, "Maybe you work for awhile." A dollar a day [laughs]. The first time I worked. "I'll give you a dollar a day." I said, "Okay." And now I worked, do the tubs outside, boys they carry water. ...Before we leave, we wash dishtowels on the washer board and we hang them on the line outside. (Alice Lafferty) <sup>106</sup>

By 1947 Yellowknife's permanent population approached 3,000. In the late 1940s, the government ordered the Métis at Duck Lake and other outlying areas to move to Yellowknife and enrol their children in the local school. These families joined Métis families already living at School Draw and the "Flats", and quickly these enclaves began to evoke the social values and adaptive economy of a distinctive Métis community. Métis families modified existing dwellings by adding warehouses beside their homes for the processing of country foods. Nets were set in the bay, ducks were hunted in the nearby swamp and rabbits and foxes were snared at every opportunity. Near School Draw, berries were harvested from one of the best berry picking grounds in the region. These traditional modes of sustenance were blended with wage income in a manner unique to the Métis. Most families were related and fairly large, though not as large as in the past, with a minimum of six children. In the 1950 and 1960s, the Métis community living in the School Draw and the "Flats" was composed of 12 to 15 families forming a population of 80 to 100 people.

In the late 1940s and early 1950s, Métis fishermen from the Prairies joined the fishery on Great Slave, centred at Hay River. In most cases they spoke Cree and English and were often related already to Métis in the district.<sup>107</sup> However, after years of successful commercial fishing, the fish population dwindled and many Métis turned to other forms of work.



Nini Lafferty playing with gramophone.  
Courtesy of Edward Lafferty.

### **Wave After Wave of Newcomers**

With wave after wave of newcomers to the Great Slave-southern Mackenzie district, one might expect that the North Slave Métis, having a larger pool of potential marriage partners, would begin to intermarry more with outsiders. However, there is little evidence to suggest that this was the case. Individuals with the last names of Berens, McIver, McLeod and Gardnier married into the Lafferty and Bouvier clan just before and after 1900. During the 1910s and early 1920s, one finds a few women of the Lafferty-Bouvier dynasty marrying men by the name of Burke, Camsell, Loutit, McKay, Norwegian, Smith and Sibbeston. Some of these individuals were of mixed blood and/or members of families who had been long-time residents in the North. Some were just plain newcomers. Irrespective of the increased size of the marriage pool, there seems to be a residual preference for North Slave Métis to marry their own kind, or at least members of other Northern French Métis families. Thus, one sees descendants of the original Lafferty-Bouvier dyad taking French Métis spouses with surnames of Beaulieu, Erasmus, Mandeville, LaPorte, Laviolette, LeMouel, Boucher, Villeneuve and Mercredi, among others. By the 1920s and 30s, one even finds Lafferty's marrying Lafferty's, Berens' marrying

Berens'. Parents and grandparents, particularly, were relied on to remove any doubt of incestuous relationships. In fact, fathers often continued to choose men for their daughters. Rather than suggesting a pattern of first cousin marriage, by then, most of these individuals was separated by at least the second degree of colaterality (i.e., they were probably more distant than second cousins).

This preference continued throughout the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, although a few non-North Slave Métis men such as Turner, Paul, Arden, Douglas, Cassidy, Mercredi, Lessard, Balsillie and Dupras and others married into the North Slave Métis community adopting and contributing to their values, customs and traditions.<sup>108</sup>

### **Relocation of the Métis**

Throughout the early 1900s the community of Fort Rae continued to demonstrate steady growth, and in 1910 Rae boasted 20 log homes, two trading posts and a Catholic mission. As the Lafferty's and other Métis families took up residence at Rae, they settled at French Point forming an ethnic enclave of families originally from Old Fort Rae.<sup>109</sup> By 1929, a RCMP detachment had been added and several hundred Métis and Dogrib lived seasonally in 45 log and frame homes. Moreover, Rae had become an important float plane and supply base to service gold and pitchblende mining operations 250 miles to the North. Despite losing its role as the region's distribution centre when gold was discovered at Yellowknife, Rae continued to sustain its growth mostly through dependence on a hunting and trapping economy linked to the fur trade. In 1956, 685 people called Fort Rae home, making it the largest Aboriginal settlement in the Mackenzie District. The fact that its 100 Métis and Dogrib cabins were only occupied for a few weeks each year underscores the strength of their owners' attachment to the land and involvement in the bush economy.

As the population of Rae continued to grow throughout the 1960s, a number of community health concerns surfaced. Of these, a housing shortage, poor water quality and an antiquated sanitation system were considered major threats to the health and well-being of Rae's residents. Community health concerns reached their peak when the deaths of several children were attributed to these failing conditions. The federal and territorial governments responded by bringing in 'southern' health officials, community planners and consulting engineers to evaluate the situation. Having determined that infrastructural alternatives were limited at Rae, government planners recommended the creation of an entirely new community. Subsequently, in 1970 the town of Edzo, 24 km east of Rae, was created to replace to community of Rae. With its neatly rowed houses, cul-de-sacs and newly created park areas, Edzo was to be the "showpiece of the North."<sup>110</sup> Despite the best intentions of public officials, however, the Métis and Dene residents of Rae were now faced with an even greater concern, i.e., being uprooted



from their homes. Of major concern was the need to remain near their fishing nets on the lake. Local residents spoke even more emphatically about the value and meaning of their community and its significance in a well-circumscribed geographical, social, cultural and historical setting.



L. to R.: Albina Hudson & Alice Lafferty.  
Courtesy of Edward Lafferty.

But these protests went largely ignored. Government planners proceeded with the project, taking as tacit approval Chief Jimmy Bruno's statement that "they could go ahead and build the town if they wanted, but the people of Rae probably wouldn't move there."<sup>111</sup> Despite the establishment of a regional residential school, nursing station, fire hall and increased housing availability at Edzo, the majority of Rae residents refused to relocate, choosing rather to commute when needed and to bus their children to school. Eventually though, some Métis and several Dogrib families moved to Edzo. However, most Métis whose parents and grandparents came from Old Fort Rae, especially the Lafferty's, have chosen to remain in Rae to this day. Having recognized that the public health and related problems in Rae could have been resolved locally and at a substantially lower cost than the "Edzo" solution, the territorial and federal government gave up attempts to relocate Rae residents, choosing instead to improve the existing infrastructure.<sup>112</sup>

In the burgeoning city of Yellowknife, the government sought to dispossess Dene and Métis of their land holdings as part of their grand scheme for the city. The new non-Aboriginal work force had designs for the shoreline, islands and lands where the Métis and Dene had settled. The methods by which the city attempted to acquire these lands were particularly heavy-handed and the Métis have been left dislocated and up-rooted to this day.

In the early 1960's, the government set about eradicating this living pattern and forcibly removed the Dene to a piece of land at the end of Latham Island referred to as "Squaw Valley." Notices of eviction were often placed at a distance, sometimes on utility poles 100 feet from their homes. If people refused to leave, their residences were bulldozed in their absence. "People lost everything. All for the betterment of the community", says Clem Paul. The government built 500 square foot "matchbox" homes for the Dene at N'dilo.<sup>113</sup> The Métis were also forcibly removed from their homes at School Draw and Cabin Courts, and along the shoreline of Great Slave Lake and Willow Flats. At School Draw, Métis homes were bulldozed and berry picking grounds were torn up for the construction of 45 government homes. Unlike the Dene, the Métis were not offered a settlement area, but low-cost row housing in the new town.

Many Métis families living in the "Flats" refused to move from their homes. In response, the city moved the municipal garbage dump adjacent to Métis homes. "The garbage was burnt steady", says Clem Paul:

They burnt sewage, cars, gas cans, everything. Small explosions were always happening. Sometimes it would burn for three weeks. The government had a place for the Indians [Dene], but they couldn't get the Métis to move, so they moved the dump there and burnt it steady for several years. Métis families tried to stick it out. The options were stay near the dump and die, or move to low-cost housing. It was a scam. The government then bought up the land, surveyed parcels and when non-natives started moving in, they moved the dump. (Clem Paul)

The city deliberately disempowered the Métis by refusing to survey the lands upon which they had settled. Because it was unsurveyed land, the government called them 'squatters.'

That's what they did to Métis all over. Families could never buy the piece of land they were on because the city wouldn't survey it. The city would try to get the families to move any way they could, then bulldoze their homes, survey it, and then offer it for sale. That is how Yellowknife was built. That is what they are proud of. (Clem Paul)

Several Métis families eventually gave in and moved to the low-cost housing in the new town, while other Métis families moved elsewhere in the city. Without a defined land base or bounded community over which the Métis had some control, a scattered Métis population faced the hardships of systemic racism and discrimination in the expanding city without the advantages of a physical buffer provided by a fixed community. The families also lost their chosen homesteads proximal to fishing grounds and other natural resources important to their survival. To this day, the community is without a land base in Yellowknife, and the survival of the Métis community has been a constant struggle.<sup>114</sup>

### **Holding the Fort: Women and Children in North Slave Métis Society**

Women were always, and continue to be, pivotal in North Slave Métis society. In addition to raising large families, women, in the absence of their husbands, brothers and fathers, had to perform numerous productive activities around their homes, such as tending garden and fish nets, snaring and trapping small game and birds, making dry meat and dry fish, preparing and making clothing, among many other things. As Clem Paul says:

Métis women have been known throughout history as being the backbone of our society. Well-respected and rightfully so, because they've been probably the most successful. Maybe not the most mentioned, but most of us know that the women were the ones that kept the families together because the men were always away working. In today's society there's different family planning. Not everyone has 12 and 15 kids like we all used to. ...Women that's all they did until they were 45 years old was change moss bags. They must have gathered lots of moss.<sup>115</sup>



Nina Lafferty & her mother, Marie Madeline Camsell Lafferty.  
Courtesy of Edward Lafferty.

Women, played a particularly important role in the reassertion and resurgence of Métis political rights, not so much because they were more political than men, but because they were more available:

For many years we weren't allowed to gather and have meetings amongst ourselves, it was kind of against the law for brown or red faces to meet and congregate and stuff like that. So people over the years, like in my mother's generation, they began to rebel and when they started the Métis Association here in Yellowknife in the early 1970's, it was mostly done by women. Not because they were the outspoken ones of the family or the brightest ones or anything, it was because the men were mostly working, and for fear of being chastised in the workplace, they'd rather see their wives do it and that's how the Métis Association started here. It started like that in many different communities because it was only ten years before that the Indian people and women were allowed to vote. (Clem Paul)<sup>116</sup>

Children were the centre of Métis family life, and were given special care, attention and respect:

I grew up with my grandfather and two uncles and I never heard them swear. We were the first ones to eat, children came first. They used to drink now and again, they had their brew pots, but I never heard them swear. We were never treated like we weren't wanted, or like we were in the way. (Anon.)<sup>117</sup>



A Métis Family 1937

L. to R.: Albina Lafferty, Ernie Camsell (standing), Jonas Lafferty (centre), Nini Lafferty.

Courtesy of Edward Lafferty.

It was not only the parents who raised the children, but the entire extended family and most notably the grandparents:

The grandparents were in there sixties too, our grandparents that raised us. Just to make it easier on the whole family collective, I guess. (Anon.) <sup>118</sup>

The kids...It's good to have kids, you know. Lots of fun with them, me, I got two, my granddaughter. One will be seventeen on Sunday, Monday, I think, Sunday. And the other one's ten. Go to school. It's nice to have somebody with you. When they talk something, they funny. They make us laugh. It's nice. When they're not around, I don't know what to do. Worry about them. (Alice Lafferty) <sup>119</sup>

## **The North Slave Métis Community Today**

### **A Sense of Character and Community**

Today many Métis families indigenous to the North Slave region self-identify as North Slave Métis, distinguishing themselves from other Métis and Dogrib of mixed heritage in the region:

The North Slave Métis are the families that descend from the Lafferty-Bouviere of Old Fort Rae ... situated ... on the North Arm of Great Slave Lake prior to the treaties, the last treaty that was signed. ... They were situated in a communal setting and some worked for the trading company, but a lot of them, most of them, lived off the land and harvested the wildlife and resources throughout the area, along with the Yellowknives and Dogribs in this area. So the North Slave Metis Alliance membership descended from those families that lived and occupied land in the North Arm of Great Slave Lake. (Bob Turner) <sup>120</sup>

There's a lot of things that are different, of course, from other communities. There are a lot of family connections all through. Even if they're not part of the North Slave Métis [here], these people are connected somehow or other. I'm still into talking the Michif language with the elders, so I have that connection, my kids don't. (Anon.) <sup>121</sup>

Most North Slave Métis trace their ancestry back to those historic Métis families who used and occupied the North Slave region prior to 1921 and Treaty 11. In many instances their relations with their Dogrib neighbours and relatives remain as good as ever:

...I have a son Don and he used to like this friend of his, we call him Johnny Migwi, but he wasn't Métis, he was a treaty Indian. They used to go hunting together all the time. ... Anyway this is about the Métis and the Dogrib, so that's their story. But they were together; go hunting together all the time. They were together for so long. (Ernie Camsell) <sup>122</sup>

The contemporary North Slave Métis community, although geographically divided by 100 km of highway, remains first and foremost a community interconnected by various kinship, social and economic alliances and obligations. And despite all that has happened, all the systemic barriers the North Slave Métis have had to face, they continue to remain strong, free-willed and independent:

We are strong like two people. ...We are adaptable. I can work and live like a white man and still go out and be a native person on the other side. I can go out there and survive on the land myself. I know my children can. My kids I know can go to university and survive and come back here. It just makes us stronger people. Like they say, we are *strong like two people* (emphasis added). We have our white heritage and we have our native heritage. And we can put it together and go full stream ahead. (Marie Dautel) <sup>123</sup>

The traits and characteristics that define the very essence of what it is to be North Slave Métis have been passed down through the generations and are still very much alive today:

We are very humble and we fit in anywhere. You can always pick out a Métis in a crowd anywhere in this world because we usually are the ones that are smiling. We have hung on strong to our roots. We've had to grab and fight for everything that we've got. We have never to my understanding, through my grandmother and other elders, ... before the changes were made through governments and residential school and that, [been] accepted by either white people or native people. ...We are strong, family-oriented people. We are supposed to be religious. Hard-working, for sure. (Leroy Bloomstrand) <sup>124</sup>

The North Slave Métis have, out of necessity, developed strong traditions of caring for and sharing with others:

Back then you didn't have all this fancy equipment and so back in the old days people shared or went together. It's the way we are. I know I share lots. ...Usually it's just immediate family. Sometimes



there's some other family members going through tough times, so we help each other out that way because it always comes back. (Leroy Bloomstrand) <sup>125</sup>

And in the past, self-aggrandizement took a backseat to community well being:

I have a couple of other uncles that just before it went down made big bucks trapping, but you could never see it. Nobody looked better than the other, nobody had more than the other. (Anon.) <sup>126</sup>

To a large extent, the traditions of caring, giving and sharing continue to this day, and have allowed the North Slave Métis to retain a strong sense of family and community:

Caring. That's one thing I notice about the Métis community, it is always caring and that. We are always around talking about what the other person has done, how they are doing, keeping up to speed on stuff. (Leroy Bloomstrand) <sup>127</sup>

It [sharing] has been [important] forever, as far as I know. I mean I've seen tough times when I was a kid and you know somebody will come over and say, "Well, here's a hind quarter of caribou." You know, and when we can we'd replace it type of thing, so we'd help each other out in that manner. I know my personal feeling, if I had something and somebody needed it, and I could help, I'd be willing to, and I'm not saying that to make myself sound like a better person. I think that's just the way it is. That's the way I was taught anyway. (Jack Balsillie) <sup>128</sup>

I'm too family orientated. I couldn't leave my children for two weeks. ... My Mom and Dad really rely on me to be living in Yellowknife. When they come to Yellowknife, they stay with me. I drive them everywhere, take them shopping, make sure everything is hunky dory and then they go home. ...Someone from Rae will be coming out and they'll drop off some fish or a duck or something. I always have my native food in my freezer, my fridge. I never go without. But then again too, I get everything from Rae, nothing from Yellowknife. That's where I get all my food from. My brothers and my brother-in-law is a hunter. He's out setting nets he sends me fish. Make sure it's nice and filleted. My Mom is always sending me dried meat or dried fish or something. I come from Rae and everyone shares there among my family, my aunts and uncles and stuff. ...Everybody has their time of need and if you have the money, sure. ...We share a lot between my family. ...Somebody

needs something right now, boy, somebody has it, you've got it!  
(Marie Dautel) <sup>129</sup>

If anyone makes a bingo, ...if anybody plays cards and wins money, they share. They're good that way. That's the reason that everyone's got money over there, or something. It's always that way. It's always money going back and forth. (Ernie Camsell) <sup>130</sup>

Adrian D'hont describes the importance of sharing to the continued well-being of the North Slave community:

Yeah, certainly in the past, [sharing] was necessary for survival. And these days, well it's not absolutely essential for day-to-day survival; I mean it's essential for like cultural survival and to maintain links between families and friends, and just to sort of knit the community together. Without [sharing] I mean we would probably be just a bunch of scattered individuals living in the larger setting of Yellowknife and the North Slave region. You have to know who, sort of who, your people are I guess to be part of that. Well, I guess there's always the success of the hunts, fishing, or that type of thing, it's just kind of a cooperative spirit I guess. If somebody needs help with something and you know that, whatever it is, I mean you extend a hand in some fashion or other in order to help out. Like I know with our organization here, we've got kind of a bereavement [fund]. We're sort of a larger group that shares...when a member has lost one of their family members, so we try to help out that way. That's a more formalized kind of a thing. There are still a lot of informal things that happen in those cases, especially where it's a family that...well, everybody knows they're well respected...you know they need assistance in that time. (Adrian D'hont) <sup>131</sup>

Many of the traditions and values of the earliest Métis in the North Slave region have persevered because of the adaptability of the North Slave Métis:

People evolve into different things and the Métis have evolved over the years especially in this area. We're not the most successful people, but we've been more successful than other Aboriginal groups in the area because we've adapted more quickly. Like I said, we were always the “in-between people” anyway, so it was easier for us to change. (Clem Paul) <sup>132</sup>

In fact, it might be argued that the North Slave Métis have changed only insofar as to remain the same. In other words, they have changed as circumstances changed in order to preserve their core values, traditions and institutions.

Closely related to the North Slave Métis propensity to adapt to new circumstances and opportunities is their ingenuity, as North Slave Métis elder Ernie Camsell observes:

I had a guy with me fishing there at Grandin Lake, we were getting paid \$.20 per pound for fish, so he says after supper, "I wonder how much a fish weighs? I think I'll make a scale," he says. So he stuck a stick in the ground and he took another stick and he put it over here and a pound of lard weighs one pound and he put it at one end and the fish at the one end. He made a scale. Of course, the fish is heavier than that, so he stuck three pounds on there with the fish and it almost balanced. So he says, "The fish is almost three pounds". I laughed. Boy he had a good head, he never went to school, but on his fingers he counts. \$0.20, \$0.20. "Oh, that fish is worth \$0.20 a pound, three pounds..." and he figures it out on his hands. I don't know. Right on too. I've never seen that, but boy he was smart.<sup>133</sup>



Fishing at Grandin Lake.  
Ernie Camsell (L) and Augustin Lafferty.  
Courtesy of Edward Lafferty.

Through all the changes, the one common denominator has been respect, respect for fellow human beings and respect of the land upon which North Slave Métis continue to depend on for survival and sustenance.

...(we)'re a bit unique from other people, I suppose, I don't know, maybe we've got a little bit more respect for our fellow man than other Aboriginal people in the North. Sometimes I tend to think that way. That's one unique difference. We haven't lost respect. (Bob Turner) <sup>134</sup>

...If it's a Métis person or a native person out on the land, you'll never know that they've been there. They pick up after themselves. They leave it as they find it. (Marie Dautel) <sup>135</sup>

However, the North Slave Métis community continues to face many external pressures and challenges that threaten its very existence and survival. Indeed, the cumulative impacts of on-going and new agents of change have pushed the North Slave Métis perilously close to the "the edge of the abyss." Clem Paul explains:

All this development is pushing us closer to the edge of the cliff. Now with the diamond mine developments, it is like another big wave is about to hit us. It is getting harder and harder to push back. If we don't do something now, our culture will be wiped out. (Clem Paul) <sup>136</sup>

Bob Turner succinctly describes the situation in which the North Slave Métis and most Aboriginal communities in the region find themselves at the end of the second millennium:

...Because the way the Aboriginal people have been dragged away off the land and a lot of people have been taken away from their culture and have been introduced to foreign values and a lot of mistreatment by government and everything else, we haven't survived as a [pristine] Aboriginal community. I don't think that many Aboriginal communities can say that they've maintained the uniqueness that they had at one point before European contact. ...You know there's a lot of mixture of how people have been mistreated and treated differently from others, so there's a range of differences amongst ourselves, that were trying slowly [to heal]. ...We have to bring back some communal feeling and get the people back together, you know work on rebuilding a lot of negative impacts that have went on over time. There have been a lot of social impacts on our community, as well as other Aboriginal peoples in the North.... We weren't treated any different from other Dene, you know our parents went to the residential schools ...they had the same negative treatment... The result of all that

mistreatment doesn't, you know, I guess provide a very healthy environment. ...People become a little unhealthy in some settings because they have been introduced to a lot of negative impacts. So we're trying to rebuild our community back to healthy people. To do that you have to be out on the land...to be in touch with the land, that's where a lot of your rights come from... being out on the land, living out on the land. ...Because...a lot of people have been taken off the land, removed from their heritage, ...they don't even know where their rights are coming from. So you know you have to get people back in tune with the history of how our ancestors lived on the land, you know the hardships they've been through, still they worked together and survived as a community, and the reason they survived is because they helped each other. (Bob Turner) <sup>137</sup>

Despite the resiliency of the North Slave Métis, no Aboriginal society can withstand indefinitely the constant onslaught of oppressive forces with which they have had to contend, especially in the absence of a land base or the recognition of their constitutionally protected Aboriginal and Treaty rights. Eventually something has to give, and in this regard the signs of community breakdown are beginning to appear:

When I listen to older people they always used to ...help each other not only by giving them food and whatnot, ...you know you cut wood for your elders, ... bring them wood off the land. But those things have slowly depreciated, and it doesn't happen I don't think that often anymore, and you see a lot of people being left out, not helped in the community as much as they probably should be, and I don't know [why]. ...I see a lot of mistreatment in families, and I don't know what happened to me, but I've never done that, I've always tried to help my family and other members of the community, as much as I could. I'm not saying that I'm perfect or anything, I'm just saying that there's ... that treatment out there, I think there's a lot less help than there was, as far as people helping each other. (Bob Turner) <sup>138</sup>

It is hard to speak about the Métis community being healthy when we are really in a divided state. But a long time ago we used to be all united. That's what I like to remember. That's the best way to be. It would be nice to see everyone united again, but there are regional land claims and now we have to separate again. I think it has brought a lot of in-house fighting that shouldn't be there, but I guess it has to happen. ...They say that things come back full circle. Maybe we'll come back that way again. Just as long as we recognize

that we are all Métis and we should work together and we should be proud of our heritage. (Leroy Bloomstrand) <sup>139</sup>

The gap between the generations has grown especially vast, and children are at risk of losing touch with who they are. Alice Lafferty explains:

Before, it's not that way, people stay together, no argument, nothing. No liquor, no nothing. The kids just stay on the land, and work together. I don't know. Now today it's different. ...We don't know what the people doing. Me, I stay here, I don't see nobody. Young kids, 17, 18 they go to visit my granddaughter, they go there. Nobody talks about nothing. They go in the one room over there, and they talk, talk. They don't come and bug me. Me, I do sewing. "My Grandma's out there sewing" she says. "What I gonna do if I don't sew? I can't sit down and look in the window." ...You know young kid like the food from the store. They don't care for caribou meat. They don't care for fish, some kids. They like from the store. But some like caribou meat, fish, ducks.... Kids, 17, 18, they're all drinking. I don't know how they buy liquor. Who give them liquor? I'd like to know that, but I can't find. Kids, young kids, screaming all night. Boys, I think they're drinking or smoking up. Fort Rae, too, they said, they swears at ladies all the time, kids drinking lots. The Chief and they fix them, I don't know. ...Before, our young days, we never see that thing. We don't know. People stick together. All the people, friends, friendly people, stay together. They said they gonna do this. The next day they gonna do that. Everybody works. Young boys, whose gonna [bring] up, I guess. They're happy all the time. They do everything for their old people. We don't see five cents. We work, work, work. Our parents carry water. We never ask for five dollars. Now today you see, you can't even take the garbage out. "Grandma, I want two dollars? Grandma, I want three dollars." "Why?" And they want to go to a show. I said, "You've got a show right there," I said, "TV cable, and you can put tape in there, so why you want to run to spending money for nothing." ...I'm not giving you for show. Make your own money. Do something for people. Maybe people give you money. Go to the shows." I learn myself. Me, when I was young, 17, I never see five cents. We didn't know money. We eat at home, where it's good. We had lots of groceries to eat. We eat in. "Hey Papa, give me money." "Where we gonna go with that money? There's no place to go." (Alice Lafferty) <sup>140</sup>



## **The North Slave Métis Alliance**

On November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1996, the NSMA registered as a non-profit society in order to represent the direct descendants of those indigenous Métis who used and occupied lands in the North Slave region of the NWT prior to 1921. The proposed and on-going diamond mining projects, as well as other economic development projects, combined with the fact that governments were playing various Métis organizations off against each other, brought this initiative to the fore. For years the Aboriginal and treaty rights of the indigenous Métis of the North Slave region have been ignored. The NSMA was created as a vehicle to:

- Unite indigenous Métis in the North Slave region,
- Promote pride in North Slave Métis culture and heritage,
- Negotiate, ratify and implement a comprehensive self-government agreement based on the principles of the inherent right to self-government,
- Promote recognition and entrenchment of our Aboriginal and Treaty rights,
- Promote and enhance our education, economic, social and cultural development,
- Exercise our responsibility to protect the environment.

On January 19, 1998, the NSMA submitted a statement of claim to the federal government for lands in the North Slave region, including the area of Lac de Gras. Despite initial exploratory discussions with the NSMA, the federal government has rejected our efforts to become meaningful participants in a comprehensive land claim for the North Slave region.

Clem Paul, president of the NSMA, summarizes the vision of its members:

Our primary goal is not to go back in time, but to achieve what our grandparents had. Our grandparents were self-sufficient out here on the land. The land provided them with everything they needed - materials for boats, job opportunities, they provided them with food for the table, clothing and everything else. Over the years, due to moving into a center like Yellowknife, we lost that ability to completely look after ourselves and our goal is to go back to that way and to enable our people to be totally self-sufficient. I think a lot of work has yet to be done in order to accomplish that. The groundwork is being done and hopefully within two or three more years we should be in a position to fill in the gaps that the people are lacking in all areas - social and economic and education and all the other things. Also financial abilities to do the things that they need to do to become self-sustaining. (Clem Paul) <sup>141</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The North Slave Métis are in the throws of an economic, social and cultural transition between traditional and modern realities. Collectively, they face almost insurmountable odds in trying to preserve their distinct cultural identity, their community and their core values. Diamond mining and other recent resource developments on North Slave Métis' traditional lands have in no way enhanced the ability of the NSMA to merge the two traditions from which their culture derive its distinctiveness, and by which it is indeed constituted. Every generation of North Slave Métis has defined for itself what it means to be Métis, regardless of what form of employment or economic activity in which they happen to be engaged. However, the two common threads that run through each generation of North Slave Métis are their commitment to work and their connection to the land and its resources in order to sustain their culture, values, traditions, social relations, community, health and well being.

Clem Paul explains, in the following terms, his job as the current leader of the North Slave Métis:

It is my job to help expose and highlight those invisible links that have bound us together for the last two hundred years and encourage the young people to be proud of their heritage and to have government and industry respect us for who we are - a people, separate and distinct from others around us. (Clem Paul)

Government, industry and the public at large have a fundamental difficulty in understanding and accepting societies that do not appear to be neatly bounded into discretely packaged units. The North Slave Métis, and indeed most Métis, fall into this category. There are important similarities among Métis communities in the southern Mackenzie and Great Slave region owing to a common social, cultural and economic legacy. However, there are also crucial differences owing to adaptations to specific environmental, social, cultural and economic conditions. It is this uniqueness that we have had to accentuate in order to illustrate how we are different relative to our Dogrib, Yellowknives and Métis neighbours. In this sense, we have contributed to and perpetuated the existing discourse on "Métis-ness" and "Indian-ness," rather than attempting to resolve it. Nevertheless, it is hoped that by describing our historical development and contemporary situation in concepts and terms that the Crown can understand, it will recognize our Aboriginal and Treaty rights and meet its statutory and fiduciary obligations in this environmental assessment exercise. In so doing, the NSMA will be placed in a position where it can truly work with our Aboriginal brothers and sisters to collectively shape our future on our terms, just as our ancestors once did and we will do again.

### **3.0 RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT ON ABORIGINAL LAND: THE DUTY TO CONSULT**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Whose duty is it to consult with Aboriginal communities when their traditional lands are subject to resource development? What are the objectives of consultation and what kinds of information requirements ought to inform consultation? What form(s) should consultation take and how do we know when meaningful consultation has been achieved? Can the infringement of Aboriginal rights be justified, even in the presence of consultation? And finally, what implications do these questions have for the North Slave Métis? For Aboriginal groups whose traditional lands have been targeted for natural resource development, such as the North Slave Metis Alliance (NSMA), these are important questions. Fortunately, a series of recent court decisions has begun to provide some answers.<sup>142</sup>

*S. 35(1)* of the *Constitution Act* specifically recognizes and affirms "the existing Aboriginal and treaty rights of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada, while *s. 35(2)* explicitly defines "Aboriginal peoples of Canada" to include "Métis peoples." As a result of a number of recent Supreme Court decisions rooted in the *Constitution*, most notably *Sparrow* and *Delgamuukw*,<sup>143</sup> a rudimentary test has been created to determine whether Aboriginal and Treaty rights have been or could be infringed by government actions and decisions in the context of resource development, and whether or not infringement of the rights in question is justified.

A key consideration in the justification analysis, particularly in the case of natural resource development, is whether the government has adequately consulted with the Aboriginal group(s) affected. That said, rather than prescribe a standard consultation process, the courts have chosen to evaluate the adequacy of the nature and extent of consultation on a case-by-case basis.<sup>144</sup> Nevertheless, the courts have begun to outline some general principles and basic requirements of a consultation process in natural resource development that goes a long way to creating certainty for government, industry and Aboriginal peoples.

#### **WHO MUST CONSULT?**

When Aboriginal interests and resource development interests collide it is government, not industry, which has the constitutional obligation and legal responsibility to ensure that:

- Adequate consultation takes place,
- There is a forum or mechanism in place for this to occur, and
- Consultation is meaningful and conducted in good faith (i.e., consultations are conducted in a non-adversarial manner and result in tangible progress).

In other words, the fiduciary duty is that of the Crown's, not resource industries wishing to extract resources from traditional Aboriginal lands. Corporations cannot be expected to act in the interests of Aboriginal peoples when they have a strong commitment to and investment in a project, which may in many ways conflict with Aboriginal interests. *S. 35(1)* creates constitutional obligations that bind government, not private individuals or companies, to engage in meaningful consultations with affected Aboriginal groups as numerous court decisions, including *Guerin*,<sup>145</sup> *Sparrow*<sup>146</sup> and, more recently *Delgamuukw*, indicate:

...This aspect of Aboriginal title suggests that the fiduciary relationship between the Crown and Aboriginal peoples may be satisfied by the involvement of Aboriginal peoples in decisions taken with respect to their lands. There is always a duty of consultation. Whether the Aboriginal group has been consulted is relevant to determining *whether the infringement of Aboriginal title is justified...*(emphasis added).<sup>147</sup>

In reality, however, government is increasingly delegating natural resource management responsibilities and decisions to resource developers, whereby the private sector is routinely obliged to undertake consultations with Aboriginal groups as conditions of obtaining permits or licenses.<sup>148</sup> The *Environmental Assessment Guidelines for the Completion of a Comprehensive Study of the Proposed Diavik Diamond Project*,<sup>149</sup> which originate in the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*,<sup>150</sup> are a case in point. However, this does not make Diavik the fiduciary of the North Slave Métis, or resource industries the fiduciaries of Aboriginal peoples. Current case law indicates that consultation carried out by a company in the absence of consultation by government is not sufficient.<sup>151</sup> As Sharvit et al. state, "in the absence of parallel or prior government consultations with Aboriginal peoples, and in the absence of clear substantive and procedural guidelines by responsible government authorities, such consultation will not suffice to discharge the Crown's duty to consult."<sup>152</sup> Moreover, as the *Halfway* case suggests, the Crown must consult prior to making any decisions or resource allocations to third party interests that may affect Aboriginal or Treaty rights.<sup>153</sup>

Having established who has the fiduciary responsibility and constitutional obligation to consult with Aboriginal people, it might reasonably be asked what levels of government are legally bound to consult with Aboriginal peoples and

whom among the affected Aboriginal community should be consulted? The simple answer to the first part is that both federal and provincial/territorial governments must consult whenever and wherever resource developments have the potential to interfere with Aboriginal or Treaty rights.<sup>154</sup> Moreover, since decisions on natural resources by various levels of government are unconstitutional if they unjustifiably interfere with Aboriginal or Treaty rights, there is a duty on all relevant levels of government to consult with Aboriginal groups, preferably via some coordinated, interdepartmental process.<sup>155</sup>

Because Aboriginal and Treaty rights are collective rights, government must consult not only with select individuals whose rights may be infringed by resource allocations and developments, but also with representatives of the Aboriginal community or First Nation so affected. In one context this may be the Chief, Band Council or other elected officials. In another context it might be a group of elders empowered by culture and tradition to make decisions on behalf of their people. Whatever the case, government must consult with whomever the affected party that government reasonably assumes to represent the needs and interests of the affected Aboriginal group.<sup>156</sup> Often this will require prior consultation.

At the same time, the courts have recognized that consultation is a "two-way street, and that there is an obligation on Aboriginal people to consult."<sup>157</sup> In the *Cheslatta* decision, the judge ruled that "affected groups [cannot] complain if they refuse to be consulted in an effective forum created in good faith for such consultation."<sup>158</sup> Similarly, an affected party may not ... [remain] silent during consultation, in the hopes of complaining about un-addressed concerns at a later stage of the proceedings."<sup>159</sup> Neither of these examples, however, in any way describes NSMA's participation in the Diavik EA Review. (The NSMA is in the process of developing a consultation policy.)

## **The Spirit of Consultation**

Even though the courts have chosen not to prescribe the exact nature and extent of the consultation process, it is clear from existing case law that "*adequate consultation is always determined by asking whether it is in keeping with the honour of the Crown and its special fiduciary relationship with Aboriginal people*" (emphasis added).<sup>160</sup> In *Delgamuukw*, the Supreme Court ruled that:

...Even in these rare cases when the minimum acceptable standard is consultation, this *consultation must be in good faith, and with the intention of substantially addressing the concerns of the Aboriginal peoples whose lands [or other rights] are at issue* (emphasis added).<sup>161</sup>

## WHAT TYPE OF INFORMATION IS REQUIRED TO INFORM THE CONSULTATION PROCESS?

Sharvit et al.'s answer to this question is that *"consultation ... should provide both the government and potentially affected Aboriginal people with sufficient information to avoid any unnecessary or unjustified interferences with the exercise of Aboriginal and treaty rights"* (emphasis added).<sup>162</sup> In this regards, the *Cheslatta* decision has more than just passing relevance for the NSMA, since the context for consultations with the affected Aboriginal group was the same, i.e., an environmental assessment of a proposed mine. In *Cheslatta*, inadequate information in regards to wildlife was held to prevent the parties from assessing how a proposed project might adversely affect the exercise of Aboriginal rights.<sup>163</sup> Specifically, in the opinion of the court:

...Huckleberry Mines failed to deliver the maps that the Project Committee required of them. Those maps plus *the information which they should have brought forth would at least have given the Petitioners an opportunity to consider the impact on their lives and their land, and to consider what measures or compensation would be required* (emphasis added). If they had possessed adequate and requisite wildlife information, the Petitioners could have carefully considered their response and brought any concerns they might have had to the attention of the Project Committee and ultimately the Executive Director. The Executive Director might then have agreed or disagreed with recommendations of the Petitioners within his statutory duties, and result would have been the same. Such a process, however, would have constituted meaningful consultation.<sup>164</sup>

*... The issue is whether meaningful consultation actually took place and in my view, it did not adequately take place on the wildlife issue* (emphasis added).<sup>165</sup>

Similarly, in *Halfway*, the Court ruled that not only must the Crown make all reasonable efforts to consult with the affected Aboriginal party and fully inform itself of relevant Aboriginal and Treaty rights, it must provide the First Nation with information relevant to the proposed decision. As the trial court judge observed: "How can one reach any reasonable conclusion as to the impact on Halfway's rights without obtaining information from Halfway on their uses of their area in question?"<sup>166</sup> Thus, *"to make resource decisions that accord priority to, and achieve minimal infringement of constitutionally protected rights, government has a duty not only to provide information to Aboriginal peoples, but to become informed itself"* (emphasis added).<sup>167</sup> As government and industry personnel will often lack the legal and factual knowledge pertinent to understanding the Aboriginal situation, Aboriginal input is indispensable to a determination of potential infringement of Aboriginal rights and/or impacts on the exercise of these rights.<sup>168</sup>



## THE GOALS OF CONSULTATION

The practical goal of consultation should be to achieve certainty for all parties in resource development with the ultimate purpose of determining whether the project in question is sustainable or not. "*If carried out improperly, consultation will not achieve this goal and the decisions in question can be overturned as an infringement of s. 35(1)*" (emphasis added).<sup>169</sup> Once again, the Supreme Court in *Delgamuukw* ruled that consultation must "*substantially (address) the concerns of the Aboriginal peoples whose lands [or other rights] are at issue*" (emphasis added).<sup>170</sup> But, as the *Delgamuukw* decision suggests, this may fall anywhere along a spectrum from a mere duty to "discuss" to obtaining "full consent." Sharvit et al. (1999) have suggested that where along this scale a particular consultation process falls should be determined by asking what level of consultation is required to achieve minimal (i.e., acceptable) infringement of rights. Thus, the first goal of consultation may be satisfied when the Crown has upheld its constitutional obligation to:

- Address the concerns of Aboriginal people(s) so as to minimize the infringement of Aboriginal and Treaty rights.

## WHEN SHOULD CONSULTATION BEGIN AND WHEN IS IT SUFFICIENT?

Where resource allocations or developments have the potential to interfere with existing Aboriginal and Treaty rights, consultation should take place prior to the allocation of the resource to third party interests, especially where the rights and priority of Aboriginal resource users will potentially be affected by resource development. This is evident in the *Halfway* decision where the court ruled that, by allocating a timber cutting permit to a forest company without first consulting with the affected Aboriginal inhabitants of the area whose rights under Treaty 8 guaranteed them un-extinguished hunting, trapping and fishing rights to these lands, the Crown failed to uphold its fiduciary obligations. *Halfway* clearly establishes that the Crown must consult prior to making any decisions that may affect Treaty or Aboriginal rights.

On the other hand, consultation may be generally judged to be sufficient when:

1. The concerns of the Aboriginal peoples whose lands (or other rights) are at issue have been addressed.<sup>171</sup>
2. The Aboriginal peoples affected by the proposed Project have been supplied sufficient information to make a reasonable assessment of the Project's impact on their people and territories, and the exercise of their rights in those territories.<sup>172</sup>

As the territorial judge in the *Noel* decision ruled, this may mean, among other things, that:

Consultation must require the government to carry out meaningful and reasonable discussion with the representatives of Aboriginal people involved. *The fact that the time frame for action was short does not justify the government to push forward with the proposed regulation without proper consultation* (emphasis added). Otherwise the recognition and affirmation of Aboriginal rights in s. 35(1) of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, would become just another hollow promise to Aboriginal people.<sup>173</sup>

## **WHEN IS INFRINGEMENT JUSTIFIED?**

The courts have generally not required the consent or agreement of Aboriginal people for resource developments to proceed, although they have found that "such is much to be desired."<sup>174</sup> Even so, the Supreme Court in *Delgamuukw* held that not only must government engage in something "*significantly deeper than mere consultation*", *some situations may require the "full consent of Aboriginal people* (emphasis added)." Yet, even where full consent is not forthcoming, the *Delgamuukw* decision suggests that government can still legitimately infringe on the rights of Aboriginal peoples since Aboriginal title and rights are not absolute. That said, any infringement must meet two conditions:

1. It must be consistent with the fiduciary relationship between the Crown and the Aboriginal group.
2. It requires a compelling and substantial legislative objective, including conservation, the pursuit of economic and regional equity, non-Aboriginal interests in resource use, and economic development (e.g., forestry, mining, agriculture and hydro-electric development).<sup>175</sup>

According to the *Delgamuukw* decision, when government grants third party rights to resource developers, it must be able to demonstrate, because of its fiduciary obligation, that "*both the process by which it allocated the resource and the actual allocation of the resource which results from that process reflect the prior interest of the holders of the Aboriginal title in the land*" (emphasis added). This might mean that government accommodate the participation of Aboriginal groups in resource development or, when government infringes the rights of Aboriginal people, they are involved in decisions taken in respect to their lands.<sup>176</sup> Indeed, "*the fiduciary obligation may be satisfied by the involvement of Aboriginal peoples in decisions taken in respect of their lands*" (emphasis added).<sup>177</sup> Finally, because Aboriginal title has an economic component, when it is infringed fair compensation relevant to the nature of the infringement and question of justification may be required.

## **Avoiding Infringement of Aboriginal Rights**

Although s. 35(1) does not require "negotiated" agreements between the Crown and Aboriginal peoples when resource decisions infringe Aboriginal and Treaty rights, it is apparent that the best way to proceed is to seek agreement on rights, responsibilities and compensation. This may include arrangements in respect to monitoring, managing and mitigating impacts. As the Federal Court ruled in *Nunavut Tungavik*, "consultation and consideration must mean more than simply hearing. It must include listening as well."<sup>178</sup>

This means that, unless there is compelling reason to the contrary, Aboriginal peoples should be involved in decisions prior to resource allocations and developments. In the *Noel* decision, the court held that alternative methods of achieving legislative objectives offered by the Aboriginal people concerned must be considered seriously by the decision maker.<sup>179</sup> Thus, where consent is possible without jeopardizing the legislative objective, it will be difficult for government to justify an interference that does not take into account the Aboriginal rights of the holders.<sup>180</sup>

It is clear from *Delgamuukw* that the consultation process should be aimed at ensuring that Aboriginal rights are protected, rather than ensuring that infringement of these rights are justified. As Sharvit et al. state:

The infringement will be justified only if the government has done all it can to avoid the infringement, ...Clearly reconciliation cannot be achieved unless the level of consultation gives Aboriginal people clear and meaningful roles in decisions which affect their rights. Consultation must be carried out with an open mind and *not solely with the goal of convincing Aboriginal people that projects affecting their rights must proceed; government must be willing to consider that some projects should be denied because of their potential effects on Aboriginal and treaty rights* (emphasis added).<sup>181</sup>

## **ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION**

North Slave Métis lands, culture, community and economy are at risk from ongoing and proposed resource development on our traditional lands. The foregoing analysis creates a test to determine whether or not the NSMA has been properly consulted for the environmental assessment (EA) of the Diavik project.

Since 1996, the NSMA has attempted to engage Diavik to undertake collaborative studies to develop North Slave Métis knowledge baselines relevant to assessing the impacts of the Diavik mine. Despite supporting the research upon which this report is based, Diavik has not recognized our rights, maintaining that their involvement with Aboriginal groups has met the requirements of consultation

as set out in the *Environmental Guidelines* <sup>182</sup> for the Diavik project. This is their opinion, to which they are entitled. The fiduciary responsibility to:

1. Consult with the NSMA;
2. Supply us with sufficient information to assess the impacts of the Diavik project;
3. Ensure that our concerns are addressed
4. Inform itself of our rights; and
5. Minimize infringement of our rights:

is that of the Crown's, not Diavik's. However, it was not until January 21<sup>st</sup>, 1999, that the Responsible Authorities (RAs) determined that Diavik had:

- Not collected, in collaboration with the NSMA, North Slave Métis traditional knowledge, and incorporated it into its environmental assessment report (Guideline 1109);
- Not analyzed the potential project effects on the social and cultural patterns of the North Slave Métis using cultural well-being indicators defined by the North Slave Métis (Guideline 3215);
- Not analyzed the potential project effects on the social and cultural patterns of the North Slave Métis using the community wellness indicators defined by the North Slave Métis (Guideline 3217);
- Not determined the relationship between the wage economy and the harvesting economy for the North Slave Métis and effects of the project on the traditional economy (Guideline 3220);
- Not conducted a land use survey with the North Slave Métis community and assessed the effects of the project on changes in the use of the land and renewable resources (Guideline 3231); and
- Not conducted a heritage resources study in collaboration with the NSMA to properly ascertain the effects of the project on heritage resources (Guideline 3234);

Nevertheless, these data deficiencies were ignored in the final draft of the CSR. The RA's observed that the President of the NSMA stated that the NSMA "was consulted and well represented during the Comprehensive Study Process", disregarding the fact that the President noted this in the context of a comparison to past industrial activity in our region, including the BHP Environmental Assessment where the North Slave Métis were not consulted at all. The President also stated that the consultation process could not be evaluated effectively by the North Slave Métis until certain base line information was collected and analyzed.

From late January to early March of this year, however, DIAND continued to eschew its constitutional obligation to consult with the NSMA. In mid-March, in the interest of time, the NSMA accepted DIAND's offer of assistance to undertake research to address our concerns and to develop sufficient knowledge baselines in order for us to assess the impacts of the Diavik project on North Slave Métis lands, culture, community and economy. This has placed us in the unfortunate position of not being able to contribute effectively to the Comprehensive Study Report (CSR). In essence, we have been relegated to the sidelines and denied the opportunity to contribute to the CSR as other Aboriginal groups have. Consequently, in order

- To address our concerns about the impacts of this project; and
- To develop a sufficient base of knowledge to assess and contribute to the assessment, monitoring and mitigation of these impacts;

the NSMA has been forced into designing and undertaking our own study within an unacceptably short period of time.

We have neither the required information needed to assess the impacts of the Diavik project nor the required time to conduct the appropriate studies to obtain this information. Thus, we have had to divide the study into two parts, and to prioritize them: *Phase One*, which documents our concerns about the impacts of the Diavik mine and *Phase Two*, which develops baselines of knowledge that will assist in properly assessing, monitoring and mitigating impacts. Moreover, we have had to hire external consultants, and as good as they may be, we have missed the opportunity to develop capacity and expertise in our own community to undertake such research.

DIAND has a fiduciary obligation to educate and inform itself about our rights, including Aboriginal title, and to minimize the infringement of these rights through adequate consultation. However, the topic of Aboriginal rights was continually eschewed and skirted by DIAND and the proponent. A case in point is the opposition of most Aboriginal groups, including the NSMA, to Diavik's proposal to conduct a sport fishery at Lac de Gras. Opposition stemmed largely from arguments based in constitutional law, and from Aboriginal elders whose extensive ecological knowledge indicated that a sport fishery was unsustainable. Nonetheless, Diavik was steadfast in its refusal to recognize Aboriginal rights over this un-surrendered resource. Arguments from both sides continued for several months eventually culminating in a confrontation at a technical review workshop on January 26, 1999. At no point did DIAND provide an opinion, intervene, initiate discussion, or in any other way uphold its fiduciary obligation to ensure that Aboriginal rights to this fishery were clearly recognized and considered.

Of broader significance, throughout the EA process, legal questions arose about the Crown's duty to consult, the nature of Aboriginal rights and the meaning of specific sections of *CEAA*, especially in light of recent case law. Most Aboriginal communities do not have the resources to obtain legal opinions, no matter how crucial they may be to their equitable and informed participation in the EA process. From the outset of the Diavik EA, several Aboriginal communities requested that the Department of Justice be included on the "experts list." However, the RAs declined to make this legal expertise accessible to the Aboriginal communities. At the same time, the RAs requested legal advice from the Department of Justice, which they treated as proprietary. In one case, the Crown solicited advice on the nature of Aboriginal title at Lac de Gras. This opinion was never shared with the Aboriginal communities, nor were we invited to participate in discussions about Aboriginal title. In essence, the Crown managed to ensure that "the ground rules" were known only to themselves. Preventing the affected Aboriginal communities from knowing the Crown's position on their rights to lands, or their rights to be consulted under new case law, is not in keeping with its fiduciary obligation to Aboriginal peoples.

As a result of DIAND's failure to provide the affected Aboriginal communities with legal opinion, or entering dialogue about Aboriginal rights, the NSMA and other Aboriginal groups have been left entirely up to their own devices and resources to ensure that their rights were acknowledged and protected.

For all intents and purposes, the Diavik EA could be characterized as a misinformed and misguided effort by the Crown to ensure that extraction of a resource be justified through inadequate consultation processes, while thwarting any discussion of Aboriginal rights and its fiduciary obligations to Aboriginal peoples. Not only has the Crown's consultation process not attempted to minimize the infringement of Aboriginal rights, it has been arguably hostile to such efforts. Thus, it may be concluded that the honour of the Crown has thus far not been upheld in regards to:

- Providing adequate time and opportunity to undertake research to 1) address our concerns, and 2) develop sufficient information baselines in order to assess the impacts of the Diavik project;<sup>183</sup>
- Supplying us with information in order for us to make an informed determination about the sustainability of the project;
- Informing and educating itself about Aboriginal and North Slave Métis rights;
- Educating the proponent and the public about our rights; and
- Its fiduciary obligations to minimize the infringement of our rights.



In short, the failure of the Crown up to this point to ensure that we were adequately consulted and provided with sufficient information to determine the effects of the Diavik diamond mine on our lands, economy, community and culture may be an infringement of our Aboriginal rights under the *Constitution*. Whether the "parallel tract" in which we now find ourselves will suffice as adequate consultation or effectively address our concerns or minimize the infringement of our rights or complement the CSR remains to be seen, and will be determined largely by:

1. The reaction of the Crown to this report, and
2. Assurance that proper monitoring, mitigation and compensation schemes are in place prior to the issuance of licenses in the regulatory phase, and that NSMA be involved in their development.

Failure of the RAs and the Minister to consider seriously the contents and recommendations of this report, and their significance, will most surely constitute improper consultation. In this regard, the Crown might be will advised to heed Sharvit et al.'s (1999) observation that:

"If carried out improperly, consultation will not achieve this goal (justification), and the decision in question can be overturned as an infringement of s. 35(1)".

## **4.0 A METHODOLOGY TO ADDRESS ABORIGINAL RIGHTS, ISSUES AND CONCERNS IN ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The following methodology flows directly from *s. 35(1 and 2)* of the *Canadian Constitution Act* and recent case law regarding resource development on Aboriginal, Crown and un-surrendered lands (see Section 3.0). In this sense, it is a corollary of a constitutionally compliant environmental assessment process. Moreover, it enhances the ability of regulators to incorporate Aboriginal peoples and their knowledge, issues and concerns into environmental and socioeconomic impact assessment. Specifically, the methodology we have developed seeks to:

1. Address North Slave Métis concerns about the environmental, social, cultural and economic impacts of Diavik diamond mine, and
2. Develop sufficient environmental, social, cultural and economic knowledge and information baselines in order for the North Slave Métis to assess these impacts and to participate effectively in their monitoring and mitigation, or management.

These twin objectives constitute what are the minimal requirements of adequate consultation imposed on the Crown through its fiduciary obligation to Aboriginal peoples when resource development is proposed on Aboriginal lands, Crown land where Aboriginal people have unextinguished Treaty rights and unsurrendered lands. By addressing our concerns and ensuring that we have sufficient information to assess, and contribute to the management of, the impacts of the Diavik project, the Crown will minimize the infringement of our Aboriginal and Treaty rights and, in so doing, uphold its honour and role as our fiduciary.

Regrettably, because the non-conformities in respect to the NSMA were not recognized by the Responsible Authorities (RAs) until a few months ago (see Section 3.0), there was not sufficient time, resources or personnel to accomplish both objectives for this report. Ideally, both tasks should be undertaken, if not together, in a highly complementary and integrated manner for maximum benefit. However, the NSMA was forced to focus its scarce resources, as well as those provided by Indian and Northern Affairs, Diavik and the GNWT, on addressing the concerns and issues of its membership about the Diavik project. The development of sufficient information baselines required to assess and monitor impacts of the project had to take a "backseat" to addressing our concerns so that our voice might be heard in time to assist the Minister in making a determination

about the sustainability of the Diavik project. This does not mean that we view the latter objective as having lesser importance. On the contrary, it is one of the two pillars upon which adequate consultation is built and indeed by which it is measured, as well as a prerequisite for ensuring that our rights are not unnecessarily infringed in the environmental assessment (EA) process. The NSMA is now in the process of designing a second phase of research with its membership in order to develop the required information baselines.<sup>184</sup> The *Phase Two* report will be submitted to the Minister on 1 April 2000, with the expectation that it will play a pivotal role in assessing and managing the effects of the Diavik project.

## **THE NSMA STEERING COMMITTEE**

Before the concerns of the North Slave Métis could be addressed, they had to be documented. And before they could be documented, we had to know with whom to consult and how they should be consulted. In order to provide direction and guidance to the principal researcher and his research assistants, a Steering Committee was formed from among the North Slave Métis community. Steering Committee members represented a cross-section of the North Slave Métis community, including women, elders, youth, traditional land users, wage earners and various combinations thereof. Committee members were selected by the NSMA executive on the basis of their knowledge and expertise in two areas: 1) environment and land use, and 2) North Slave Métis society, culture and economy. The initial responsibilities of the Steering Committee were to:

1. Identify the major bio-physical, ecological, social, cultural and economic impacts of the Diavik project on the North Slave Métis, and to prioritize these, and
2. Identify various knowledgeable people in the North Slave Métis community who could speak to these impacts.

Steering Committee members were also expected to talk with family and community members in order to solicit opinions, knowledge and consensus relevant to understanding the various impacts of the Diavik project. A total of six Steering Committee meetings were held between the end of March and middle of June, 1999. In addition, with the assistance of Diavik, the Steering Committee visited the Diavik mine site.<sup>185</sup>

## **Interview Methods**

The Steering Committee also assisted the principal researcher to develop two survey instruments or interview guides for the first phase of research: one addressing environmental impacts, the other addressing social, cultural and economic impacts. These interview guides were designed, first and foremost, to

assist the researchers to engage each individual interviewed in discussion on a variety of potential impacts and specific topics. This semi-directed approach to questioning facilitated the documentation of numerous concerns, as well as the knowledge informing these concerns. In addition, it provided, where necessary, enough latitude for the interviewers to explore specific issues, concerns or areas of interest as they arose.

With the aid of several NMSA executive and Steering Committee members, the two interview guides went through a number of test runs or iterations, reducing redundancy and enhancing clarity. In the process, the two assistant researchers received first hand training which contributed to their ability to solicit concerns and document knowledge relative to the above impacts. As such, the researchers developed capacity to articulate and re-phrase questions and concepts in their own words, and as required, to address the language and comprehension levels of the individuals being interviewed.<sup>186</sup> All interviews were conducted in English, except one where a Métis elder fluent only in Dogrib preferred to have an interpreter.

Numerous individuals interviewed possessed knowledge and expertise in both the environmental-land use and social-cultural-economic arenas, and thus were interviewed on at least two separate occasions. A total of 23 environmental impacts interviews and 30 socioeconomic and cultural impacts interviews conducted. Of the 40 or so people initially identified by the Steering Committee to be consulted, only 28 were interviewed; a number of people either were not available or declined to be interviewed because of health, personal and other reasons. In addition, four youths from the community were consulted during a group interview about their concerns and opinions regarding the socioeconomic impacts of the Diavik project. In total, the individuals interviewed account for 1454 years of life experience, about a third of which was gained while living on the land.

The responses of this sample are assumed to be representative of the North Slave Métis community as a whole in regards to age, gender, occupation and place of residence, with the possible exception that females may be slightly under-represented in the sample. The latter is explainable with reference to the fact that of the nine people who declined to be interviewed, seven were women.

Steering Committee members and other North Slave Métis interviewed were reimbursed for their time, not their knowledge. It is a fundamental conviction of the NSMA that, despite our entrepreneurial heritage, our knowledge should not be for sale to anyone. Rather, peoples' time is worth money, and they should be compensated for their time and effort. Each individual interviewed was asked to read and sign a waiver giving permission to the NSMA to use the information and knowledge s/he provided in this report and similar submissions to government on the Diavik project, but not to share it with third party interests without their explicit permission. Interviewees were also given the option of having their names

associated with the information or knowledge released to the NSMA for this report. Out of the 32 people interviewed, eight decided to remain anonymous for various reasons. A brief profile of all people interviewed is included as an appendix.

All interviews were recorded on audiotape, which were transcribed with the aid of a transcribing machine. Each interview was transcribed in its entirety, often in two parts because of the length and comprehensive nature of the interview, with both questions and responses included in the final transcript. This resulted in over 80 hours of audiotape and 960 pages of transcript. Individuals were allowed, if they so chose, to review the accuracy of their statements in the final report prior to printing. Transcripts remain the joint property of the NSMA and the individual interviewed, and cannot to be accessed by third parties without the explicit permission of both principals.

The following two sections articulate and analyze the concerns of the North Slave Métis about the various impacts of the Diavik project, and diamond mining generally. To the greatest extent possible, peoples' concerns are expressed in their own voice, with minimal narration to set the context. It is not the first choice of the NSMA to follow the Comprehensive Study Report (CSR) for the sake of bureaucratic or administrative convenience; we feel there are better, more appropriate ways to present and analyze our concerns and issues about the Diavik project. It is virtually impossible, and certainly culturally inappropriate, in the North Slave Métis way of thinking to separate social, cultural, economic and environmental issues. All of these are intimately inter-related and interdependent for the North Slave Métis, perhaps more so than most Aboriginal groups. However, out of deference to the fact that this report is supposed to be a "companion document" to the CSR, and to aid comparisons, we have organized the presentation and analysis of our concerns into the two sections:

- 5.0 Environmental Impacts
- 6.0 Social, Economic and Cultural Impacts

Included within Sections 5.0 and 6.0 are presentations and discussions articulating North Slave Métis concerns about how the potential environmental and socio-economic-cultural effects of the Diavik Project will impact North Slave Métis lands, resources, community, culture and economy. In addition to documenting the specific concerns of the North Slave Métis, the following discussion also incorporates insights and knowledge relevant to developing indicators of, or ways to assess and manage, various impacts. Section 7.0 develops 80 specific recommendations about how various impacts could and should be assessed, monitored and mitigated.

## **Not a Traditional Knowledge Study: A Note on TK and Environmental Assessment**

This report is not a "traditional knowledge" study, and should in no way be construed as such. In many ways, the approach advocated here was foreshadowed by Marc Stevenson's paper "Indigenous Knowledge in Environmental Assessment"<sup>187</sup> and Chief Fred Sangris' address to the BHP Environmental Review Panel during its public hearing on traditional knowledge in 1996, which stated:

Since (we) have our own world view... we feel that no industrial developer should be expected to collect, interpret and present the views and concerns, the knowledge, or the understanding of indigenous peoples. Instead, (we) should be given the opportunity to document, and present our circumstances and our evaluation of potential impacts from major developments on our people, culture and lands.

More recently, these approaches have found support and legitimacy in Supreme and lower court decisions involving Aboriginal title and access to lands and resources (see Section 3.0). Although the following sections contain elements that could be labeled traditional knowledge (TK), the indigenous ecological knowledge (IEK) of those North Slave Métis interviewed for this study is incorporated into this report only to the extent that it informs our concerns.<sup>188</sup> Our concerns about mining and other large resource developments are based largely on:

- What we do know, which includes knowledge that is traditional and non-traditional as well as knowledge that is ecological and non-ecological;
- Our past experience with the impacts of mining and similar resource developments; and
- What we do not know about the impacts of diamond mining and other resource developments with which we are unfamiliar.

This approach may find favour not only among Aboriginal peoples, but with industry and government as it avoids the particularly thorny and contentious issue of intellectual property rights and ownership, while focusing only on that knowledge which industrial proponents and governments require or need to know. However, it might be difficult conceptually for non-Aboriginal parties to grasp.

In recent years, there has developed a much needed and long over-due recognition of the value of IEK in environmental impact assessment. However, on the ground, such recognition often translates into research activities that divest Aboriginal people of their IEK. Stevenson (1996) argues that dwelling on TK in environmental assessment to the exclusion of the other types of knowledge that



Aboriginal peoples possess, and especially to the exclusion of the people who hold this knowledge, opens up a "can worms" for all stakeholders. Sadly, the *status quo* has been to:

- Take TK out of its social and cultural context, often without properly acknowledging the people who hold this knowledge;
- Translate this knowledge, which exists primarily in oral form - the context where it achieves its greatest meaning and value -- into text and other literary formats so that it can be accessed by those that have no social relationship or obligation to the knowledge holder;
- Merge TK with scientific knowledge, which almost always trivializes and further de-contextualizes TK, forcing it to play "handmaiden" to western science; and
- Use TK, assuming it has any use to the dominant culture by then, to inform western scientific environmental management policy and praxis.

In this light, it is disturbing to learn that the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency is in the process of developing guidelines to incorporate TK into environmental assessment. Clearly, this effort is misdirected, and may serve to further disempower Aboriginal peoples and separate them from the control and use of their knowledge.

The *status quo* rejects the fact that there are different ways of looking at the world, and therefore different realities, and thus pathways to achieving sustainability. In the view of the dominant culture that seeks to impose its values, morals, beliefs and institutions on Aboriginal peoples, there is only avenue to the truth that which scientific knowledge apparently is on. As troubling as this is, there is also little or no recognition and appreciation of the fact that IEK does not inform environmental management per se, but a very different form of management, which has proven to be sustainable for hundreds of generations. Few Aboriginal elders speak of managing animals or resources. Rather they live a way of life that manages relationships and connections with the natural world based on mutual respect and reciprocity. This is why IEK is so often dismissed by scientists; it tells you more about managing people and sustainable relationships with the natural world than the animals or resources per se.

- In order to avoid the pitfalls that virtually all TK studies have fallen into, this report, following Stevenson and recent case law, advocates that government and industry, in full partnership with Aboriginal peoples, focus on:
- Incorporating Aboriginal people, not just their knowledge, into all aspects of EA, monitoring and mitigation.

- Incorporating all aspects of the knowledge of Aboriginal people into EA; TK is only one component of the knowledge Aboriginal people possess and can bring to EA.
- Documenting, understanding and addressing the concerns of Aboriginal people whose lands, cultures, economies and communities are most impacted by resource development.
- Ensuring that Aboriginal peoples have sufficient time, resources and information to assess the impacts of resource developments on their lands, cultures, economies and communities.

## **5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEAA)* industrial proponents and resource developers are usually required to assess the environmental or biophysical effects of their projects. Proponents must also assess the social, economic and cultural effects of their proposed projects if they result directly from environmental impacts. However, resource developers are not required under *CEAA* to assess the direct effects of their developments on local communities, economies or ways of life. Nonetheless, the environmental assessment guidelines developed for the Diavik project by the Responsible Authorities (RAs) instructed the proponent to assess the impacts of its mine on traditional economy, land use, cultural well-being and community wellness.

This "Made in the North" environmental assessment process, however, failed in respect to the North Slave Métis. Since the summer of 1998, the NSMA have articulated its concerns about anticipated data gaps but none were redressed for inclusion in the Diavik EA. It was not until January 21, 1999 that the RA's formally acknowledged these data gaps (non-conformities) in the EA. The rigid timelines set by DIAND according to industry's needs left no contingency for absent data or to address uncertainties. The NSMA was placed in the regrettable position of having insufficient time to collect data in order to make informed decisions and participate in the EA. The NSMA requested that the process be delayed in order to allow them the time to collect the data and participate at the same level of information as other Aboriginal groups, but DIAND refused to alter its timelines. Lacking sufficient time, resources and most especially baselines of information to participate effectively in the Comprehensive Study Report (CSR) process being undertaken by the RAs, we were forced to undertake our own study in order to make informed decisions about the effects of the Diavik mine.

When resource development occurs on Aboriginal lands adequate consultation with affected Aboriginal peoples is achieved by:

1. Addressing their concerns, and
2. Ensuring that they are supplied with sufficient information to assess and manage the impacts of development.

This chapter presents the major concerns that members of the North Slave Métis community have about the potential environmental impacts of the Diavik project.

Chapter 6.0 presents our concerns about the anticipated social, economic and cultural impacts of the Diavik project on North Slave Métis economy, culture and community.

Frequently, the environmental impacts of mining and other resource developments on Aboriginal lands have direct and measurable impacts on the well-being of Aboriginal peoples, lifestyles and communities. As "everything is related" and interdependent in the minds and realities of most Aboriginal peoples, environmental impacts are virtually inseparable from social, economic and cultural impacts. While it is our preference not to divide these, this report is intended to be a "companion document" to the CSR. Therefore, we follow this arbitrary division for the sake of administrative convenience and to aid comparisons.<sup>189</sup>

Included in the following presentation is knowledge, some of which might be labelled "traditional knowledge", that informs the concerns of the North Slave Métis community about the environmental impacts of the Diavik project. In addition, where information is available, indicators or signs of change in valued ecosystem components are provided. Recommendations relevant to monitoring and mitigating various impacts are presented in Chapter 7.0. In all three chapters, the voice of the North Slave Métis community is used, to the greatest extent possible, to identify and illustrate various concerns and issues. Unless otherwise indicated, all quotes used in the following sections were obtained during the interviews undertaken by the NSMA with its members between March 31<sup>st</sup> and June 26<sup>th</sup> for *Phase One* of its Diavik environmental assessment project.

### **Importance of Land and Animals**

For generations, the North Slave Métis have depended on the land and what it had to offer for survival. Everything needed for physical, economic, social, cultural and spiritual well-being was provided by the land:

...The moose and caribou are the mainstay for most of the Aboriginal people, but when they harvest rats, they eat rat and beaver and birds, a lot of birds. ...Some people [trap], but very few people are trapping for livelihood these days, I mean the bleeding heart animal rights groups have killed our fur industry. ...[But] people still use these animals for fur, for trimming and what not. Wolverine is always used as trimming around parkas, and muskrat and beaver pelts are always used for some form of clothing and will always be used. So they're all important. ...They're all important to me, and they all have their reasons for being on the land, whether they're scavengers or they're there for us to eat, they have their use on the land. They're all important. (Bob Turner)

Make jacket. Make moccasins. Moose hide. Make moccasins from it, but top we put caribou hide. Yeah. And we make a vest. The old timer, when you go trapping. My Mom, I remember make a vest with caribou hide, not to get cold. Everything, they make (?) out of moose hide and then dog harness with caribou hide. They make babiche with caribou hide. All kinds of things they made sleigh, snowshoe. ...And when caribou meat's good they make dry meat, make everything, they make stew meat. All the things they make with one caribou. They don't throw nothing away. Everything, the bones, the feet, the bones that were from the feet, big cords. They [put] that in the tepee tent. They dry that with little bit smoke, smoke `em. And after they put away. Summertime, when they want some soup they boil, they boil, they boil, it get really soft.... (Alice Lafferty)

In the past few decades, owing to a host of factors and actors beyond the control of Aboriginal peoples, there has been a significant decline in the "bush" or traditional economy:

If they [youth] were younger they could be trained easier and faster, but there has to be something which keeps them connected to the other way, the old ways of hunting. I don't know about trapping so much, I've heard Dogrib people say that not so many people can survive on it with supplementary grants to keep it going. It's kind of sad, my uncle trapped all his life and there's no pension from trapping. (Anon.)

Because of government relocation and participation in the wage economy, most North Slave Métis now spend less time on the land than their parents and grandparents. However, this in no way has diminished the value or importance of the land and animals to the North Slave Métis:

They [the youth] like it out in the barren lands. They like the fresh air, the freedom. They like to see the mountains, the hills, the rocks, those little flowers, you know, and they can see for miles and miles, just nothing disturbed. Nice and quiet and just watch the caribou come by, you know. It's really interesting. See some bears, wolves, lynx. It's [description of a school trip to the barren lands] good. (Anon.)

Being an Aboriginal person indigenous to this area, it certainly would have an impact seeing any wildlife lost or any becoming more endangered than they already are. ...I think it would have a big impact on myself and anybody else who's from this area. (Tom Williams)

## **Caribou Soup for the Soul: Importance of Country Food**

Animals, as a source of sustenance, are still essential for maintaining the health and well-being of the North Slave Métis, especially when the alternative is considered:

...If there was no caribou, what would we do? Can't eat from store all the time. Don't like store meat. Caribou is really fresh for us. Cut what we want, make stew, anything, dry meat, but from the store you buy meat, tastes...stays there long time I guess in the store, and they put plastic on that's worse. We eat wild meat, we fix it good, we keep it good, we cook it how we want. (Alice Lafferty)

...I can't stay without caribou meat, eh. I really like it. I really like dry meat, especially the tongue. Delicious. You can boil it or cook it. It's really tasteful. It's better than candies, fruit or Kentucky Fried Chicken. ... If all [those] animal[s] get infected there, now we have to go to Yellowknife and eat Kentucky Fried Chicken for sure. And I don't really like buying store bought food too. Get it out in the wild, it tastes better and it's fresh. (Anon.)

It would be unhealthy; I know ...country food is the more healthier food to eat than what we have in the stores. Maybe send that message out and go from there. Lots of Métis they still like fish and caribou and moose and geese. All the people I know that grew up here, they still like to eat those same country foods. (Leroy Bloomstrand)

[Country food] is a lot healthier than the bought meat that has all those antibiotics in it. That should be promoted. If you grew up with wild meat and country food you're used to it any way and it's something missing. But now I'm getting some, so it's fine. You can invite a friend over, "I've got some nice marrow bones and I'm going to make a big soup." You've got gatherings with old friends and you're the nice guy because you've got the marrowbones. That's a positive thing. Good for the soul. (Anon.)

All North Slave Métis (100%) interviewed for this report stated that they regularly eat "country food" and share it with others. In some Aboriginal communities, the consumption of "country food" far surpasses the use of store bought food:

I know the people in Dettah and Rae still mostly live off that [country food], but most of the Native kids that live right in Yellowknife it's not such a big deal. But I know the ones that live in the community, still ...90 per cent of their food intake is country foods. Most of the Natives



in Yellowknife are a little more domesticized compared to the ones in the communities. (Fred LeMouel)

Although many North Slave Métis families now live in Yellowknife (see Chapter 2.0), country food is still highly valued for nutritional and cultural reasons:

...Speaking of my own family in particular, we're not going to go shopping at the meat store for all our food, because for one thing it's kind of tasteless, a lot of it. You know there's considerations about these animals being raised on feed lots and stuff like that, ...and it just makes a whole lot more sense to do things the way we've always done them. So if that's a good resource out there, a good renewable resource, it's ours basically, and that's what it's for. ...That's right, yeah. ...It's meaningful, a meaningful activity, you know links with the past and all that. It's just the proper thing to do. (Adrian D'hont)

My ancestors have been using that meat to raise their children for thousands and thousands of years, and we rely on those animals and fish. We were raised by that. I remember when I was a kid; I used to eat meat, fish, most of the time. We hardly had any stores. We rely on the caribou. That's why it's so important to our culture. (Anon.)

The act of sharing country food with others is not only beneficial for nutritional reasons, but it serves as a way to promote social solidarity and cultural well-being.

Don't waste nothing. Share it with everybody in Rae, doesn't matter who it is. They want meat, they got it. Just take enough for myself and the rest goes to people. Even if I make dried meat and somebody wants some, I give them some. (Anon.)

Sure, everybody share when they got some caribou meat. Get some caribou meat from their cousins, and oh, give us some. Not very long ago I had nothing, no caribou meat, went to the store and bought stew meat. "Hey Grandma, make caribou stew." I didn't say nothing. ...They [kids] said they know right away. I said, "I'll ask my brother, maybe he got some around." ...Now I see her, my brother's wife. I said, "You got any caribou meat?" "Sure" she says, "I'll bring some to you tomorrow." Then they brought some. ...Now I make caribou stew for them.... (Alice Lafferty)

I was going to Calgary and my Grandma [Alice Lafferty] like put a whole bunch of caribou meat in a box for me and we went, and we didn't know we were supposed to not take it across or whatever. It's wild meat, but I did anyway, and my Mom was so happy because my

Mom really needed the caribou meat, so my Grandma packed it all up and I took it. People are like, "What is this?" "It's just caribou meat." "Like, we'll let you pass this time." (Catherine Gillis)

It is little wonder that many North Slave Métis remain very concerned about the potential impacts of diamond mining and other resource developments on their lands, and on caribou especially:

I'd be concerned mostly with caribou, and also some of the larger predators of caribou, grizzly bears, wolves. Caribou is the most important species.... Ducks and geese and moose might be subject to shortages [in my freezer], but not caribou. ...It's always a happy time to be able to go out and get some caribou, a family activity, when they're close in access is easy, winter hunting. I've never gone in the fall because it's too expensive to fly all that distance, and spend three days and shoot a couple caribou. Like, I like getting out in the country around here; I'll go to the Gordon Lake area, depending on their distribution around this area. It's probably the most important of the animals in our family, the ones that we eat, in any year, the largest component in the freezer is caribou. It's not something that we want to see compromised by some get rich quick scheme up there on the barrens. I don't know, it's just a good feeling to go out and see those animals. (Adrian D'hont)

### **Previous Experience with Mining Operations**

The concerns that the North Slave Métis have about the impacts of diamond mining on their lands and the animals on which they depend are well-founded, and based on their knowledge of the environment and ecosystem relations as well as prior experiences with the impacts of other mines:

I think it's around Great Slave Lake here, East Arm, someplace. I was up there once years ago, but I was up there in the winter. They say there's one lake there. They started mining in there and they just [mined] the hell out of it. It's still dead. That was in the thirties, I think. The mine opened up maybe for a year. I'm not sure how long. They didn't even get a gold brick out of it. That's how badly they polluted that one lake, and it's still like that now. You know that's sixty years ago. ... So it's fragile, like I said. It's very hard to heal. Sixty years and it's still not healed. So if that happens up there [Lac de Gras] and it spreads to other lakes, there's rivers, rivers in here, you know. All the lakes are interconnected. From there, it will seep into other lakes. It will be polluted all the way around. That's what we have to watch out for. Not much grows up there, and whatever does, it could be all gone because of somebody's mistake. (Lawrence Lafferty)

I know in the past, in other mines, the tailings ponds and whatnot as a result of different types of mining activity has polluted our environment. I guess, it depends on how hazardous the area is, depending on what is in their tailings and all that, because we have a lot of polluted sites in this area from past mining activity. Gold mining was bad because of all the chemicals they used, such as mercury and cyanide and the by-products of arsenic. But this type of mine is a lot different, but what they don't use in hazardous material they make up in their size and their impact on the land, and the destruction of habitat and the large amount of activity. That has to negatively impact the wildlife in the area, which can only be determined with proper monitoring in the future. (Bob Turner)

### **North Slave Métis Use of Lac de Gras**

Diavik claims that it's project will have minimal impacts not only on the environment, but also on the North Slave Métis and other Aboriginal groups, because very few if any Aboriginal people now use Lac de Gras, and there is little reason to expect that this situation will change in the future (see Diavik Socio-Economics Effects Report). However, many North Slave Métis feel that this assumption is spurious:

If they poison the fish, they poison the people too. Maybe someone was fishing there. We don't know, maybe before they start that. I guess the guy we knew that poisoned the fish, maybe he's gonna be in lots of trouble. Maybe lots of people they go there fishing, we don't know. (Alice Lafferty)

...I don't know where they got the idea that we don't plan on using it in the future. Like I've been saying all throughout, it's a resource that's there, whether it's there for me, or for my kids, or some other member of the community, it's a resource that's there now, and if it's not there in the future, it's a loss. (Bob Turner)

Well, when you think about the fur industry. At one time, people probably went that far [Lac de Gras] to trap and stuff, but now that there's really not much of a fur industry, people don't really go that far anymore, but that's not to say that in the future we might want to go that far again. I know a lot of the Native people [where] that was just an ordinary hunting trip to go up that far. I don't know of any graves or sacred sites around that area, but then again, if I did know it would be because someone told me, and no one's ever mentioned it to me yet, but that would be probably more involved with the Dene. (Métis removed their dead from the Barrenlands, while Dene typically did

not.) They might have some sacred sites up there, or graves up there that they don't want disturbed, but as far as that goes, it's such a small area on the map, I can't see them, it's just an island, but eventually you never know what's going to happen in the future. Maybe again some Aboriginal people will want to be out in that area again in the future, so that's why it's very important to protect it as much as we can. (Fred LeMouel)

All (100%) respondents, including elders and youth, stated that they obtain a portion, often significant, of their food from hunting, trapping or fishing, or some combination thereof. Although the NSMA has simply not had the time or resources to conduct a systematic and comprehensive land use and occupancy study with our members for this phase, we know that several of our elders used Lac de Gras for trapping and fishing:

Maybe before us, ...[that's] what they [Métis] did [used Lac De Gras]. We don't know what they did, but they went all over the place. My Dad, he says, they work, and they go there, go here, but he didn't say where he was, where they work. He said we work hard, paddling and paddling all over. ...Them people from Fort Rae, lots of people, they said, "Me I went there, me I was there," they said that. Maybe they all was together when they went over there. We don't know. Now today, they don't say where the people was. But my brother, him he knows. You'll ask him questions when he comes. Him, he knows lots. ...They go all over, the people. I don't know where they go. Maybe they're all over when they were young. We don't know. Maybe him [points to Eddie Lafferty]. He was there too when he was young, trapping with the people. I don't know. He went all over with dog team eh to do trapping. Maybe he was there too. He was telling me one time there's good fish in one place. You put the nets in, nice fish, he said, "It's a big fish." (Alice Lafferty)

The names of Lac de Gras and Lac du Sauvage, however, suggest a much earlier French Métis presence in the area:

I'm sure it's [Lac de Gras and area] all been used [by North Slave Métis]. You know some of the Lake names, going from that, and also talking to some of the old timers, I'm sure there's sites up here they'd know about. When they used to go musk- ox hunting [sound problems encountered]. (Adrian D'hont)

Métis from Old Fort Rae used to go musk ox hunting for the HBC in the barrens during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century (see Chapter 2.0). And combined with trapping, which increased after the 1880s, there may have been a fairly intensive use of Lac de Gras

by the North Slave Métis around this time. Nevertheless, the extent to which Lac de Gras was used by Métis has yet to be documented, and remains a high priority for the NSMA:

Our forefathers used the land, that's for sure. Some of our elders did use the land, maybe not to the degree that some of the other Aboriginal groups have and maybe not for the length of time. Many Métis people have been up in that area for a couple of hundred years. It's difficult to argue with that point when you haven't had the ability to study the area like other Aboriginal groups, to identify certain sites and locations of camps. A lot of Métis people might have died in different areas. Métis, most of the time, transported their dead back and didn't bury them always on the site, so they weren't like the Dene people where they had different traditions where very soon after the death they got rid of the body and wrapped him in hides and sometimes buried him.... (Clem Paul)

...Some of our elders pointed out they've been there, and one thing we haven't been (able to do) is to research this. ...We haven't been able to... organize a good research project to determine all of our land use in the area. That's never been provided to us as an opportunity by the government that other groups have had, and other groups have been involved in doing their land use studies for the last twenty years, and that began with the land claims and that promoted, I guess, mapping of land use areas. But the Métis of the North Slave region specifically haven't been involved in a project to determine our exact land use patterns and areas that we camped and used, similar to the Dogribs and Yellowknives in this area, we've overlapped use in this whole region. ...Some of our elders say they've been there, so we have to trace their steps, our steps, I mean our use. My own use has never been put down on a map, and I've been pretty well all through this area. ...Our elders before that have been out in dog teams and snowshoes, you know where we go now in a couple hours or a day our elders used to take weeks. But none of that has really been recorded specifically for the North Slave Métis, and that has to be done because ...the Dogribs and Yellowknife elders, they know that we were here, they know we have used the area as they have, so it's a given that our heritage and use of the area has to be documented. ...Well, our elders have to be talked to about those sites, and they would have knowledge in respect to a lot of those [campsites].... (Bob Turner)

As Alice Lafferty alluded to above, and as Bob Turner explains, it is entirely probable that the Métis, Dogribs and Yellowknives camped, trapped and fished together at Lac de Gras:

I believe [that] even the Dogribs and the Yellowknives have been there don't know exactly whose camp that was that's there, so it may be their elders, it may be our elders, or it may be all of our elders there together, I know the Inuit have been in that area as well.... And I've always said that the Métis have to be included along with the Yellowknives and the Dogribs in every activity in this region, when it comes to Aboriginal rights and Aboriginal use. (Bob Turner)

## **CARIBOU**

### **Importance of Caribou**

Of all the animals that may be impacted by the Diavik project, caribou emerged as the one that most people (78%) were concerned about, and understandably so; it is the principal item in the diet of most North Slave Métis. Thus, any impact on caribou will have a serious negative effect on the North Slave Métis:

It's kind of hard to have mines just for money. ...Like the caribou is just like our money. We cook it. We eat it. We use the hide for clothing. The meat for food. Everything. Like white people, they want diamonds so bad they'll do anything to get it. But what if all our caribou's gone, got poisoned or whatever? What we gonna live on? That's our traditional food. We can't stay without caribou meat. (Anon.)

...I mean if they [impacts on caribou] were significant enough to the point that they [caribou] were very sparse, then it would have a pretty major impact on us because that's the one thing we rely on. We know we can get caribou. With caribou you know you can pretty well ...count on getting one once you know where they are. You're pretty well assured...So if that changed, then...that element of reliability wasn't there anymore. I know it's not something I'm prepared to give up, that's for sure. (Adrian D'hont)

The caribou have been used for the main stay of our food for generations. That is the main reason. If their migration is altered, they will be harder to access by our members and myself and everyone else who uses them in this region. (Bob Turner)

Not only would the diet and health of the North Slave Métis deteriorate significantly if caribou were negatively impacted, so too would social relationships as caribou are at once both a *raison d'être* and catalyst for social interaction:



...There's typical spots you can pretty well rely on for caribou being there. You wouldn't think twice about going in there on reconnaissance and going to check it out because there's a good chance you'd encounter something. And then it's not just you either. You get the whole network going, you talk to people and you find out, you tell them what you've seen, they tell you what they've seen. ...If we couldn't talk about caribou we would have very little to talk to about. (Adrian D'hont)

Catherine Gillis' description of learning how to make moccasins from her Grandmother, Alice Lafferty, indicates the importance of caribou in maintaining youth/elder social relationships, as well as the value that Métis youth place on elders' knowledge:

I kind of just sit there and watch my Grandma and try [to make slippers]. Like I've tried to make slippers and stuff, but it's really hard. You need the caribou hide soft, and I've tried it a couple of times. ... They're nice and they're good for the cold, and they're even better than some of the jackets and stuff or boots or something, and because my Grandma made them all her life, we can't just say, "Oh, I don't like them," because it's just not right. (Catherine Gillis)

As caribou is of common interest to all North Slave Métis and the main topic of discussion in many social situations, its loss would also result in a decrease in the sharing and exchange not just of highly nutritional food, but information, knowledge and values.

Many North Slave Métis remain very concerned about the extent and magnitude of impacts of the Diavik project on caribou because they are unsure what the impacts will be and unfamiliar with diamond mining. As Adrian D'hont says, "this is a big experiment." However, our concern is also informed by:

1. Our prior experience with the impacts of other mines on caribou, and
2. Our intimate knowledge of caribou movements and behaviour.

### **Previous Experience with Impacts of Mining on Caribou**

The North Arm of Great Slave Lake was once critical habitat for wintering caribou. In fact, Old Fort Rae was built and operated largely to take advantage of this resource. As George Ramsey Rae remarked, caribou meat from Old Fort Rae, until the arrival of the steamboat, was the 'fuel' on which the fur trade ran.<sup>190</sup> however, the discovery of gold around Yellowknife in the mid-1930s soon changed things:

The caribou before used to come here a long time ago. Out on the lake, there were lots of caribou. Since they've put the mine [in] not very many caribou come around because the smell of you know, ...the working and I guess the smoke. When caribou they smell that for them it's very poisonous for caribou. That's why no more caribou come on the ice. They go to Gordon Lake, that far, and they go some place, Lac la Martre or Snare Lake. We don't see caribou, not really often. They go hunting but very far with skidoo. They don't see nothing. [Caribou] get scared of everything. The mines. You can hear that, when they's going, the machine. You can hear from far. Giant and Con, that's why the caribou don't come around here no more. Before it was lots. 1940. (Alice Lafferty)

More recently, there are concerns that mining activity at the BHP site may be affecting caribou movements and migration patterns:

Well, I guess if we would have had the animals go to Saskatchewan again, like the year before, we'd be more convinced that that was the case [BHP affecting caribou migrations]. You see ...as far as we know, we have no record of them having done such a thing, like they did last year, the bulk of the herd went right down in here [points to map] ...Last winter. The migration sort came down this way and shot down into northern Saskatchewan. Well, some people were thinking it was because [of BHP]. We don't really have any record of that happening, no accurate record. So the Dogribs had to go hunting down at Lutselk'e last year. (Adrian D'hont)

Now, there where my nephew work [BHP], he said there used to be lots of caribou, that's what he said, "But we don't see no caribou there now. BHP, we don't see caribou. I guess they go the other way, but we see big bears, everything. But they're behind the big fence. They can't come to the other side. We don't bug them. They eat garbage. They put something on the snow for them. I guess they eat, but we don't go over the fence." ...They [caribou] won't go there because there's a mine over there what they call BHP. There used to be lots of caribou before they said. Now there's nothing, caribou don't go close eh, because they heard all kinds of noise and they smell that smoke. They go the other way. They don't see caribou around there, only big grizzly bears. Bears, they go around there for garbage.... (Alice Lafferty)

## **North Slave Métis Knowledge of Caribou Movements and Behaviour**

Métis people using and occupying the North Slave region have depended on caribou for over 200 years. Thus, it is natural that they have accumulated an extensive base of knowledge about caribou distributions, movements, ecology and behaviours. However, owing to circumstances beyond our control, we were forced to concentrate our research on documenting North Slave Métis concerns about the impacts of the Diavik project. Thus, no systematic effort was made to record Métis ecological knowledge about caribou for this report. Nonetheless, the following observations foreshadow the potential contributions that the North Slave Métis will make in *Phase Two* towards improving government and industry's understanding caribou movements, behaviour patterns and prey-predator relationships:

You can have 200,000 of them spread out over 30 or 40 miles. ...They are on the march in the springtime. In the fall time they are mostly bunching up and August would probably be the best time to notice it [migration] on the barren lands. All of a sudden you'll see a caribou here and a caribou there and a caribou over there and they are all grazing and then there is a certain temperature all of a sudden they start grouping up and they start moving. When I was in Bathurst Inlet we had, between Bay Chimo and the bottom of Bathurst Inlet, there had to be over 50,000 caribou there one day and the next day they were on their way to Contwoyto, then four days later you couldn't find one. ...They moved, they were gone. In the Coppermine Mountains, it's the same way. At the end of August, we were there; there were caribou all over on the side of the hills you could have picked any one that you wanted. Then all of a sudden they were gone. You go there in February, you couldn't find one. You might find a group. The only place I know that caribou stay around all year is up on the North end of Bear Lake, but that's a different herd altogether from these ones. And then there is another herd way over here that goes down through Baker Lake and heads [in the direction of] Ontario.... These ones here that come from Diavik, they come through here and they wind up doing their little circles through here and then they all come marching back up. Then there is another herd that comes over from over here and hits Reliance and does Lutselk'e and goes all the way down to Saskatchewan and Manitoba and then they come all the way back up and make their way back over to Baker Lake that's their calving ground Kaminak Lake area. This herd will have their calving ground in the Marrow River, Hackett River area, that's where they will calve. (D'Arcy Mercredi)

If they used Diavik as a counting station I think Lands and Forest or Game and Wildlife probably created more damage than the mine did because they are chasing them around with helicopters trying to count them. ...So ... [caribou] probably never saw one [helicopter] and start running, plus they are pregnant, and the count isn't really right either because the first herds to come through are the females, the cows, all the bulls are still sitting back here. They are starting their march now. Last week when I come across Beniah Lake there was about 1,000 of them in here, then when we came down to Ross Lake there were still about 800 sleeping right on the ice there. There were about 800 of them in there yet and they were all bulls. The cows had already gone. ...After their breeding season, the bulls just leave the cows. The cows know when it's time to go to the calving ground, so they lead and the bulls they stay behind and they feed yet for another two weeks or so. And then they start the march up and they all meet up on the coast. At a certain temperature or something, they all start coming down and they start breeding on the way down. Come to their winter-feeding ground in here and then they start the march back up again. (D'Arcy Mercredi)

...Even though they [caribou] don't talk, they know everything that they gonna do. If they heard something noise, or something like that, I guess they heard from someplace. They don't talk, but they got one going first for caribou. One walking first. If it turn back, everything turn back. One turn back where to go, all them caribou turn back and they go up with the caribou. One caribou walk first to see where to go. That's funny, eh. ...If he don't want to go there when the caribou turned, they all turning with him. (Alice Lafferty)

...I don't think there is anything around the diamond site that could cause a broken leg or getting hurt and then walking off into the tundra. Even if they did get hurt and stumbled off ... there would be either a grizzly bear or a wolf. Foxes do more damage to a caribou than a wolf does because a fox doesn't know it's calving season. The little guy comes out, hits the ground, the fox is not big enough to kill it so he winds up biting holes in it and then it gets sick and then the wolf comes and cleans up. So that's why I don't like shooting wolves because I know that if the wolf is gone, then the caribou will be sick. ... Beniah Lake is another place where there's lot of them in the fall. There are herds where you can fly for five minutes with an airplane at 100 miles an hour over a herd and look in amazement at it. North Contwoyto is the biggest herd up in here in the Mara-Hackett River

area and they'd be about 200,000 strong. They'd come through for days right passed the tent. Of course the musk-ox disappear because they know that the caribou are there, that means the wolves are there. After the caribou have gone through the musk-ox shows up again. (D'Arcy Mercredi)

### **Importance of Lac de Gras for Caribou**

More than 70% of the people interviewed felt that Lac de Gras was an important area for caribou, while another 25% were unsure whether Lac de Gras was any more important for caribou than adjacent areas. Many people felt that the Lac de Gras area was critical for the migration of caribou:

It is right in the middle of their migration route. When they are travelling south and heading back home to their calving grounds in the spring, the Lac de Gras area is right dead centre. (Bob Turner)

... I know of a number of outfitters that are distributed in that area [Lac de Gras], fall hunters, so it's a major one of the major funnelling points for the caribou migration, with the islands and that type of thing there it could be an important crossing. I don't know that for sure, but there are some very major crossings in certain locations. (Adrian D'hont)

...It'll [Diavik Diamond mine] affect a lot of caribou. It's a small island [east island], and they usually go there and they graze on that island for awhile and then they keep going you know, and they see these people working there with equipment and they smell gas, and they probably won't go there. (Anon.)

Because of the funnelling effect that various lakes, streams and other landscape features have on caribou, even a minor alteration in one area may magnify impacts in other areas. Adrian D'hont explains:

Where there [are] narrows and lakes they tend to funnel through. ...Maybe they don't, maybe it's not that important, [any] particular location, but the thing is they might be funnelled into that area by other distributions of other lakes and that type of thing. And we'll start getting more activity...maybe this area could be more critical as they are displaced from other areas as well, but I don't know [how] to make an assessment like that. ...I think, I mean they don't always, but there's a pretty high probability in a certain location if they're moving, and a certain probability that they would begin in that corridor, I mean there's guys that are out here with their hunting camps and stuff, I'm sure there's a logistics side of it, ... I'm sure they didn't select these

spots just by chance, I'm sure they've had evidence that would have led them to set up in that particular location. (Adrian D'hont)

Others felt that Lac de Gras area was important to caribou not so much year after year, but only every once in a while:

Well yes, some years [Lac de Gras is important for caribou].... Caribou, when you have 250,000 of them walking across the tundra, the next year they don't usually come there. If there was 250,000 humans going through right, would you go back on your same track? ...So they usually move over, they have different patterns. Take for instance, six years ago they came out right down here in [Yellowknife] bay. They are over to the west now, but there was a fire too also last year that cleaned out a big area of their food in here, so they are all sitting over here this year. ... It's [Lac de Gras] a passage way for them. When I was there we had a eight herds that came by Lac de Gras and they came right across, right behind Diavik and they crossed right over and they were heading up into the Point Lake area because that's their calving ground up in here somewhere. They pass right through Ekati, they passed right through Diavik. We were out watching them. There were lots. Then we had a whole bunch come through here, up through, that's Yamba Lake. (D'Arcy Mercredi)

### **Specific Impacts on Caribou**

A minority of people interviewed (17%) believed that caribou would not be negatively impacted by the Diavik project:

They just walk around it [Diavik mine site]. They did that time. They didn't just stand there and look. They didn't even mind it they just walked right through. There were reverse circulators all over on the lake and diamond drills all across there and they just went right straight through. ...In 15 minutes there were 2,000 in a bunch and they were just gone. (D'Arcy Mercredi)

Well, I don't think any of them are going to be really that affected because animals move when they don't like the surroundings, they'll just move somewhere else. I feel the caribou will probably walk right through that camp, if that is their natural route. If not, caribou adjust, and they will go around. I don't think that's going to be a big deal. ...they'll walk right through because at Snare where I work quite a bit a lot of times the caribou are right on the road there and they walk right through the camps, pretty near, and they miss the camps, but they're crossing the highways and stuff there. It doesn't really affect them that



much, and that's such a little small area that Diavik's going to be taking up, I don't think it'll affect the caribou that much. (Fred LeMouel)

They won't get sick from the mine. These mines have been here since 1929. In 1956 when I was here [Yellowknife] there were thousands of caribou walking right past the mine and they are still here so that's one of the things you can fall back on. Then three years ago, they came right back down, the town is 19 times bigger than in 1956 and they still came. ... Anyways, I don't think [Diavik mine] at Lac De Gras will bother them. The trucking camp has been there since the year that me and my uncles made that road to Lupin and they still go to Lupin. If you go to Lupin you see muskox grazing just a mile or two away, it hasn't affected them any and you see caribou coming through there too in the fall time. There's always people out there taking pictures of them. (D'Arcy Mercredi)

On the other hand, more than two-thirds of the respondents (67%) believed that mining activities at Diavik, especially in combination with each other or in combination with activities at the nearby BHP mine site, would have serious negative impacts on caribou:

I don't think if they make that town [caribou] are going to be there. I bet you there will be no caribou there, around there. If they smell that, if they heard noise, there will be no caribou around there, but someplace else there'll be lots of caribou. They won't go close where they make noise. (Alice Lafferty)

Well, I'd be concerned about the migration.... Disturbances would be haul roads, aircraft, large numbers of landings and take-offs, that type of thing, other exploration type activities, helicopters or ATV's running around, and moving people and equipment here and there. And the operations themselves, blasting, hauling from pits to processing areas, and that type of thing, I mean there must be some pretty big blasts. ...We're talking about these huge holes here, and I'm not sure what they do when there's caribou in the area. What do you do, do you still blast or do you wait...? (Adrian D'hont)

Well, large mining activities like the BHP mine is covering a large amount of area with their haul roads, and they extend right from one site to the other. It is about 20 kilometers from their Misery pit that is close to Diavik up to their Panda mine site, so that is a lot of area in the barren lands that is being covered by [continuous mining activity]. ...It depends on how extensive the mining activity is. Small mining projects don't really affect them that much. If they are one or two men

camps, caribou will go by and not be bothered that much. When you get into something the size of a diamond mine, and the exploration that is involved in setting it up, there's a lot of activity with helicopters and small planes. During the construction phase, there is a long period of time where there is a lot of activity that would bother and harass the animals in the area. Well, in the short term, I believe the health of the caribou is going to depreciate because of the activity and it's going to take them some time before they, I guess, determine a new route away from activity, but while there's always that activity there they're going to be... harassed. (Bob Turner)

### **Blasting and Noise**

A few respondents thought that blasting would have little affect on caribou:

I don't think it'll affect them, blasting. They've been blasting around here for a hundred years, looking for gold. I don't think it'll bother them at all (Lawrence Lafferty)

However, other respondents felt that regardless of the type of noise, the combined effects of various sources would drive caribou away:

Caribou they won't go there. They scared. They go someplace. They might go someplace if they put a fence around, caribou don't go through. When it's noisy, caribou don't go. They hear from far, eh. They make a big turn. They go some place, some place. And there where they're working there be no caribou because they make too much noise. (Alice Lafferty)

Still others observed that caribou react differently to noise, depending on its source, i.e., decibel level, frequency and duration. While most people thought that caribou will run away from blasting, the same people noted that certain types of noise would attract caribou as they are inherently curious:

Startling blasts, or something like that, they are obviously going to be startled. It'll be a different reaction to a steady noise. ... If it is a steady noise, I think they will just become curious and wander around and check it out. (Bob Turner)

They run away [from blasting]. [But] caribou are funny, they can get scared for three or four minutes and then they'll stop and come back to see what scared them. ... They are very curious animals. ... If you sat in a white tent on a lake and banged two pots together, you might even have one stick his head inside the tent because he just thinks that it's a

snowball. ... You just sit there and you're drinking tea and all of a sudden, "Hey, there's some caribou out here looking at the tent". Sure enough you go out and there will be six or seven of them all standing around wondering, "What is this snowdrift doing mumbling?" [laughs] And when we are working there in the winter in the springtime at Diavik, they were standing there watching these rigs. (D'Arcy Mercredi)

Caribou are curious, eh. They hear that noise, they'll probably walk up to it and find out where it is. Yeah, they're really curious, those caribou. Sometimes you put up a tent, and you got a light in there at night, a gas lamp going, you can hear them outside... right outside the tent wondering what the hell it is, eh. [laughs] (Lawrence Lafferty)

### **Dust, Smoke and Other Emissions**

Alice Lafferty spoke eloquently about the impacts of smoke and other emissions from Yellowknife's gold mines on caribou around 1940 (see above). Others were equally concerned about the impacts of green house gases on global warming and how climate change may affect caribou over the long term:

...As far as I guess the mine itself, the disturbance associated with the mine itself, and contributions to increasing carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. They're burning how much diesel fuel between these two places [Diavik and BHP]. You look at the total N.W.T. contribution to carbon dioxide and the global warming scenario. I mean there's got to be a pretty dangerous jump in carbon dioxide...these big facilities. So there's that and what are the global warming effects on caribou? I mean there's all kinds of scenarios I guess affecting migration routes, parasites, changes in parasites. (Adrian D'hont)

And the other thing is all the emissions and stuff like that because the NWT is moving into really cutting down on the greenhouse effect. I think somewhere down the road that is going to be a big concern, and I think that Diavik would have to have the door open, because with their incinerator and exactly how much emissions and stuff like that. The GNWT and Federal government is moving towards that, because of that nice little spot where there is no ozone. (Dianna Beck)

Many people interviewed were concerned that dust from mine site operations could have just as great an impact on caribou, even if they did not know exactly how caribou might be effected:

(Dust) it's got to affect their food. If they're eating the lichens, the plants on the ground, it's covered with dust from a mine site, I don't

believe it's going to be that healthy for them. ... I don't know how they'll react (to smoke and other emissions), or if they'll be able to notice all those smells that ...I imagine they can't be that good for anything, I mean exhaust isn't good for anybody.... (Bob Turner)

...There's hardly any trees when it's [the dust from mining activities] blowing. It's really windy. Probably all the bits and dust from the rocks will fill up that island. Probably all those flowers, or whatever you want to call it, [dust] will probably ruin all the caribou moss or whatever you call it, you know. It'll probably be all covered up, and they won't probably eat it, or if they eat it, or if they ate it, maybe it's poison or whatever. (Anon.)

...Dust will affect their [caribou's] food. To what extent, I don't know what studies have said, what kind of studies have been done. ...Lichens and muskeg they usually pick up a lot of pollution anyway, not a lot of pollution, but they are a sort of sponge. They pick up some contaminants, but not all. I don't know how the dust would affect the lichen. It would just be on top, then it washes away? I don't know. (Leroy Bloomstrand)

Well, it can't be good for them I'm sure, but I don't know how they'd react to it [dust]. If it did something to the..., but they would seek out the better forage, they're highly specialized in picking out what is good feed, if they lose an area, then it could be important to them, in terms of their survival and migration. If they came to a spot that was dusty, what would they do? I don't know, would they still eat it or would they keep on moving to try to find a better spot? It can't be good for them. I know that in areas where they eat where there's a lot of sand area, their teeth will wear down fairly fast, that could cause some problems...but this dust that you're talking about here is so fine maybe it's not an issue for their teeth. ... Well, sure, I mean there must be something in it, they're taking that into their bodies, accumulating something that could potentially be insidious to digest, if you have something in your digestive system, then you're probably extracting something out of the dust. It can't be good for them. It's not something that's there in nature. If they're doing it everyday, you're talking about a fairly significant ... problem. It could be taking away some valuable habitat from them. (Adrian D'hont)

Nevertheless, there is little question based on experiential knowledge that, under certain conditions, dust from the Diavik and BHP mine sites has the potential to affect a large area, especially in the winter:

You see, I was living on the highway out here, about ten miles out. I had a cabin out there, and just like, I was maybe a 100 yards off the highway, and I used to go back about maybe say 10 miles back from the highway and make tea from the snow in the winter time, and you'd see dust in the snow from the highway, and that's in the winter time, so you know it travels a long way. Yeah, like in the wintertime, it travels a long ways, but in the summer it doesn't because of the evaporation from the lakes. It clings to the dust and makes the dust heavier. It just drops back to the ground. Like in the summer, when you walk along the highway, everything's covered with dust, but it doesn't seem to affect them [plants]. It keeps growing, but I don't know about the animals that eat `em. It [dust] travels a long ways in the wintertime. (Lawrence Lafferty)

Ekati and I suspect Diavik will probably have everything concealed and plugged so you don't have to worry about the Arctic winds [spreading dust]. Same with the loading of their trucks. They will have to design a way for load drop. I understand that Ekati has got a great big shovel there which you can almost put it right in the box and just dump. So you don't have to worry about all this stuff coming out. ... There's lots of other stuff laying around ... these mines in there that they can go study and just look and see what happened. Colomac ... if you want to see dust that's where you go. It was in the office, on the trailers, on top of the mills, on top of all of their supplies, everywhere. It was two miles out of Colomac (and) we were running into dust. (D'Arcy Mercredi)

## **Piles and Pits**

Several respondents were concerned about the impacts of open-pit operations and rock dump piles on caribou. Rock dumps present a real hazard for caribou, especially when they are spooked in large numbers:

If they're going through and they have to go on top of that [rock piles], they'll just keep going. They won't stop for nothing. Like if you see about a thousand caribou, you going through there with a skidoo, they won't even move apart, eh. If there's more, they're not afraid of nothing. (Anon.)

They're going to try and get over it [rock pile]. If it's a big herd, they're not scared of nothing, especially when they're disturbed, scared by something like wolves, been chasing them. They can run as fast as they could. It doesn't matter where. ...Well, for sure they're going to be stumbling on each other's legs, because there's big rocks in there.

They'll be falling off it. Some will get stuck in between the rocks. Some will break their legs, and they can die sitting there, if they have to. (Anon.)

Open pits were thought to present just as great, if not greater a hazard to caribou:

I imagine that's where they'll [caribou] be migrating and if they try to get to shore [east island], and they go in those pits and they fall in for sure. Next morning you see about three hundred caribou dead. (Anon)

Well, I've seen quite a bit of caribou entering the haul road, eh, and last year we seen some caribou coming into the pit, and then there was one right at the edge of the pit [at BHP]. If you fall down, you're going to die. He stood up there for I don't know how many hours. He went over the berm, so I don't know how he wants to get back out. I don't know. He just stood up there until a pit shifter chased him out of there. ...They [caribou] will be scared [of noise at mine site]. They will get scared, and they can run fast as they could, anywhere they see. That pit for one thing. If there's no berm around it, they can fall in there, all the way down in the pit, eh. That will be a disaster. (Anon.)

## **Roads and Truck Traffic**

Numerous respondents interviewed relied on their previous experiences with the caribou-road traffic interactions to predict the impacts of increased winter road use and truck traffic on caribou, should Diavik receive regulatory approval:

I was between one hydro plant and another hydro plant out at Snare, and the caribou have come crossing the road there, and our vehicles were all on the road, and the caribou just climbed right over our vehicles, right on the hoods, and they just keep going. They're a very tough animal. You know you might get the odd one that might hurt its leg or something, but I mean that's expected anywhere they go. There's rock piles, natural rock piles, anywhere they go. There's hills. You know that's expected, eh, so if they pass through or by that mine, I don't think it's going to hurt them at all. ... I don't think they would shift over. They'd just go right through where they always go. It's not going to scare them at all. The mine sites are so small when you look at that map, and the herd is so big, it'll just go between those mines if they have to. If that's where they naturally go, that's where they'll go. I can't see them going way around just because there's a little quiet mine [Diavik] over there. (Fred LeMouel)



That'll [the winter road] affect the caribou too because sometimes when they cross the winter road, they'll stop or they try to get across and then you can't slow down the truck, and you'll hit it right away. Like I went out two years ago to MacKay Lake, we were going on the ice road. We were going to go to Lupin just to check it out on the winter road, and sometime when there's caribou there, they [truck drivers] can't see nothing. They can see about five feet ahead of you. A herd of caribou, they don't know where they're going. They probably hit them all. (Anon.)

Depends on the use of the road... because a heavily used road, they'll over time probably totally avoid [it].... They've got the all weather road, you know from the Ingraham Trail to Providence, and very few caribou cross it, except for towards the end of the Ingraham Trail where you get some caribou crossing, but I think the more a road is used, the less the caribou are going to be going to the area, and what is proposed here is a lot of use, and.... they are going to be tripling the use of the winter road, haul loads, so that's going to affect the caribou that are crossing, and I imagine will eventually scare them away from the area. ...Well, the smaller roads around the mine site are going to be used year round, so if they're anywhere around the vicinity of the mine, there is going to be activity, and so I don't imagine they're going to get used to that over time. (Bob Turner)

They don't mind the trucks on Gordon Lake; as a matter of fact they mingle right amongst the trucks. A couple of years ago when we were hauling to... Ekati, they came out of the North end of Gordon Lake and they came across that lake for seven days while we were hauling and they were standing one either side. Sometimes you had to stop the truck and let them pass and they would just walk by the truck. "Nice painted truck," you know [laughs]. Or they will run alongside the truck with you, I don't know what that purpose is, maybe to see if they can run faster than your truck, I don't know. Then they just peter off and go off some other place. ...If you show up with a truck they either run back the way they came or they cross it [road] and keep on going. After the truck's gone they turn around. They are heading North, so there is no way you can stop them, but they will walk around obstacles. (D'Arcy Mercredi)

The amount of traffic on the Lupin mine winter road between Lac de Gras and Yellowknife is expected to triple over the next three years if the Diavik project is approved. However, respondents were fairly evenly divided about the impacts of increased traffic on the winter road.

Oh, it has to stress them out, just like any road, I am sure the winter road impacts the herd and harasses them as well, because when you get away, when you get caribou that are a long distance away from any community or road, they seem to be a lot more relaxed and not as wild or jittery as the ones that have been approached by a large number of hunters or any other activity that may be going on, where they are getting scared around by helicopters or hunters...I don't think that there is much difference between the two. (Bob Turner)

It doesn't bother them. They'll just cross it; same as like it's not there, eh. They just...They don't follow them. All the times I've been up there hunting [on ice road], I've never seen a caribou follow the road. Always on the side of the road, or crossing it. ... I don't think anybody's ever hit a caribou, to tell you the truth. I've never heard of anyone hitting one. (Lawrence Lafferty)

However, there is some evidence to suggest, that even with the current level of truck traffic on the winter road, caribou are taking pains to avoid it:

Well, I think the hauling on the winter road, certainly something you see like at Gordon Lake where there's a lot of traffic, and there's some years I can drive up there, all the way up to the tree line, and I don't see any tracks at all, as soon as you get off, get off Gordon Lake or some of the other lakes, you see caribou, to me it's fairly clear, something's happening there. They're being sort of cautious, I mean I'm talking about here not during migration time necessarily, but you know their winter distribution, when there's held up in an area... (Adrian D'hont)

While the number of trucks using the winter roads will be decrease slightly during the operations phase, dozens of ore transport trucks will be running around the clock. The reaction of caribou to increased truck traffic on haul roads within the Diavik footprint can be anticipated from the BHP experience:

...[There are] stories that are coming from what is happening to some of the caribou that approach the BHP site and get caught in between the haul roads or in the area on the air strip, are close to the pit[s], and they have to get ...herded away from the area. Sometimes they use helicopters to scare them away, sometimes on foot, but when they get in between haul roads and trucks are moving back and forth, caribou don't know which direction to go at times. (Bob Turner)

One impact that most respondents could agree on is that increased ease of access on the winter road will result in more unnecessary killing of caribou by "weekend

warriors", i.e., people who do not value or respect caribou the way the North Slave Métis do:

When the winter road's in, there's a lot of hunting. That's one of the things, waste, eh. A lot of people go up there and just shoot `em, just for the sport of it, and then leave `em there. ...Yeah, alongside of the winter road. You go back off the winter, like you go back off into some lakes, you can find a lot of carcasses there, not even touched. That's the game department's [responsibility].... They should be looking after that, I guess. (Lawrence Lafferty)

...The hazard comes in with the hunters that are using them [the winter roads]. You look at the Gordon Lake area. The big problem there is how people are using that road. They shouldn't be allowed to hunt off of that road period. Caribou will cross roads. It is not going to bother them. It is the hunters that are misusing the road. ...So I wouldn't worry about the caribou, it's the people that use the road. Too easy and they are too sloppy. It is just an ugly site when you see misuse of caribou. Heads... All the good stuff they leave behind. It's just a mess. It's not the caribou on the road; it's the people on the road. (Leroy Bloomstrand)

The biggest impact I've seen of caribou is the hunting season. Like I've said, we were over at Beniah Lake and we saw about a 1,000 caribou, well out of that pack there was about eight or nine of them that had bullet holes in their legs. Of course, they are not going to make it back up to the coast. The wolf is going to get him because he can't run as fast as he is supposed to. ...Most of the hunting seasons are done as far as Lockhart Lake if you wanted to go up there. There wouldn't be anything on the Barrenlands during the hunting season. They'd all be down here - Russell Lake area and Rae Lakes - inside the tree line. ...They'd be browsing and grazing all through in here. (D'Arcy Mercredi)

### **Cumulative Impacts: Changes in the Health and Movements of Caribou**

A minority of individuals interviewed believed that the cumulative environmental impacts of various mining activities at the Diavik mine site, even when considered with those from BHP, would not negatively impact caribou:

...The only time I think Diavik or Ekati could affect them is if they were right in the calving ground. ...It's not like at Kaminak Lake where it was a calving ground. I was working for Noble Peak and Borealis and they had to shut down for two or three weeks during the calving period

and there was nobody around because they were dropping calves right on their mine site and drilling sites and things like that, so everybody had to get out. That was the only time I've ever. ...But that's different.... (D'Arcy Mercredi)

Others, were more emphatic about the potential cumulative impacts that Diavik alone would have on caribou:

Well, it will affect their natural route of migration, if they have to go around it, and they may even try to go through it, ...which could become a hazard for them, especially if they get caught, like on the island, in the centre of a mine site, and then if there is a large number of them congregating in the area, I imagine if they get startled, they'll start running in any different direction, you wouldn't know where they're going to be running into, either a fence or a pit. ...Or into trucks, who knows? ...Yeah, I believe over time, that eventually the caribou will slowly start avoiding the area, and it will I guess, over time, change their migration route, similar to ...the all weather road right into Yellowknife. The caribou used to come down into the North Arm. The caribou used to come right down into Yellowknife. ...The caribou are staying further and further away from the community each year that time has gone on. (Bob Turner)

Well, I think there's danger that they [caribou] might start sort of get wrapped up in what's happening...being way out, all the things the miners want to do, blasting, whatever...I think if they're trapped on this island, and people are blasting away or trying to herd them off, I mean there's a lot of potential there for a significant loss of caribou, which is not good. But ...hopefully they'll just be able to move over and have a perfectly good life in another spot. We don't know that. Basically it's just an experiment here. (Adrian D'hont)

Concerns about cumulative impacts on both caribou migration patterns and health were naturally heightened when BHP and other potential diamond mines were thrown into the equation:

All these mines will affect our caribou. Maybe they're [caribou] gonna go east someday instead of towards our community anymore. They're probably gonna do that.... Yeah, they're probably gonna go this way [east] pretty soon if these mines get put up. People wouldn't like that because we won't see no caribou in our area anymore. Every one of them will be on the east side, and we're gonna go a long way to hunt caribou for sure. Even three years ago it happened. All these caribou went to Reliance, Snow Drift, Lutselk'e. All the way from Rae. People

went on skidoos to Lutselk'e to hunt. ...Well, it's gonna be a struggle for us because it's gonna be a long distance for us to go hunting caribou. It will be a very bad part for the community. (Anon.)

I think that with both those sites [Diavik and BHP] it is going to divide the herd up and the herd will either go, well, east or west of it, starting up at the BHP site. I guess during their spring migration, they'll be going either further east or further west.... Time will tell, but you can see indications of where the caribou have gone already. This year they've gone towards Great Bear Lake, and part of the herd has gone east and even further east towards Saskatchewan, so there's the indication of where they're splitting up and they're not going straight down through towards Gordon Lake the way they used to. ...Well, they're going to, I guess, compound the existing impacts that are already happening. Like BHP was a large impact and now Diavik is coming along, and Windspear and Monopros are going to be similar to that, so it's going to be a pretty ...impressive impact on that herd, a negative impact, and who knows what's going to happen to the movements of the herd from there? (Bob Turner)

Well, it [cumulative impact] would probably be greater than just the sum of two of them [Diavik and BHP]. It'll probably be something bigger than that, I'm not too sure. Basically you're talking about a [swath?] right across there. You look at this whole area that caribou might migrate there, it's a big chunk. ...Well, we could be seeing you know animals that are not in good shape having to dodge around these things. These animals, they've always been there. If habitat is lost or degraded, caribou could suffer a decline in their health and/or population size, and could tend to overuse other areas of their habitat.<sup>191</sup> (Adrian D'hont)

Adrian D'hont also expressed concerns about the potential impacts of caribou displacement on adjacent areas as well as their physical health:

They might have to give up area here and go over and use this, but then it takes a toll on the habitat in other areas, and yet you've got still the same numbers of caribou, an increasing number of caribou, and you get to a point.... Well I don't think the displacement is good for sure because I mean maybe they have to go further or whatever. But the thing is not only have they gone further, but they might be going faster, spending less time foraging.... (Adrian D'hont)

## **Impacts of Loss of Caribou on the North Slave Métis**

Caribou is the food par excellence for the North Slave Métis. Indeed, when many people talk about meat they mean and infer "caribou" meat. A great majority of respondents (86%) said that a decline in caribou health and numbers (as well as other animals) would negatively affect their connections to the land and to each other (sharing patterns) as well as their cultural values and traditions. Alice Lafferty predicts the impact that a decline in caribou numbers or health would have on North Slave Métis elders, while Adrian D'hont observes that a loss of caribou would have cultural and other implications:

We won't have no food. I don't know if we gonna have food to eat. Some people, they don't eat from store. Still some old timer[s], they got their own caribou meat. They got their own moose meat, rabbit, chicken from the bush. I don't think they eat from the store, but they buy tea, lard, something like that from the store, but I don't see them buying meat. They got their own meat, I guess. ...At Snowdrift I heard them talking on the radio.... they said, "If the white people ...be honest to us, maybe they can work their people, but if they want to kill our food, ...what we going to eat? We going to die right there," they said. "We going to have no food to eat." "They have to take it easy to work in there," they said. "They have to poison nothing. We going to talk to them before they start those things, long time ago, last year." "If there's too much poison they put around," they said, "they're going to kill all our animals, our food." "What we gonna have to eat?" they said. "And us too," he said, "Maybe they gonna poison us the last day," he was saying. (Alice Lafferty)

It's [caribou] irreplaceable. I mean there's the economic side. That's highly important. There's everything else that goes along with it, eh. I guess it's sort of like...when the Plains people lost the buffalo. There were strategies, military, the buffalo didn't live long. ...If the caribou are gone? ...Maybe the mines will end up drawing people away in this case, and then caribou becomes unimportant. Making money and doing your own thing in the store...I mean economically it's probably fine, but there's that whole other side to a person. I don't think there's anything that could compensate in this case. (Adrian D'hont) <sup>192</sup>

Others are concerned that alterations to caribou migration routes will result in Métis having to travel greater distances to hunt, thereby increasing the cost of hunting while reducing the number of hunting trips.



Every year there's a couple of hunts or whatever, like I went with Bob here. That's who I went with to MacKay Lake, him and Clem and all those other guys. I've never hunted with Clem or Bob other than that, so yes you could get together at those times. Then if it was farther to go to hunt, it would be more expensive too, so actually maybe the hunting trips would be kept minimal because it would be more expensive. (Danny Beck)

If you have to fly out say, definitely there are people who can't afford to fly out unless they go through the band or the Métis Nation or something, Hunters and Trappers, that's going to sponsor a hunt. The average person probably wouldn't be able to afford to fly out.... (Tom Williams)

If Métis are no longer able to access caribou, Métis youth will be unable to participate in their first hunt, an important cultural event that marks their passage into adulthood and strengthens the bonds between youth, elders and community. One interviewee explains:

If the migration route of the caribou is affected, it greatly affects us because we eat a lot of meat, plus part of the culture --like the young children, when they go on their first hunts, it affects them as well, if the caribou aren't around. It's very important for a young person to go out and they go on their first hunt. It's like an introduction into adulthood. They then go throughout the community and they usually distribute meat from their first hunt, and everybody knows that yes they're going to be a good provider, generous and so forth, so in that way if the caribou aren't around, it'll affect even that aspect of our life greatly. ...For me, my son went on his first hunt when he was eight, eight years old, and that was a step for him into the community. It makes them feel good, makes them feel like they're contributing to the community, to everybody, and it helps them. The elders recognize them as a person who is going to grow up to be a good person because they are able to hunt, which in days long ago, it used to be vital to be able to hunt, and that the person was going to be generous, good hunter, shares everything with everybody. (Anon.)

For the North Slave Métis, caribou is so much more than food. Bob Turner explains the impacts that the loss of caribou owing to deteriorating health or a decline in availability would have on him, his family, the North Slave Métis community and ultimately the Crown:

...It's going to affect my family because we're not going to have the same access to caribou meat that we've always had. The rest of our

community has been dependent on the herd for food since we can remember. ...It would change [my lifestyle] quite a bit because right now the majority of the time I'm out ...to look for caribou, harvest caribou and bring caribou back home. So if there isn't any caribou out on the land, we're going to have to look for food somewhere else. ...The community as a whole, I'm sure it has to [be] affect[ed by] it negatively, because in the community there is a range of how it is used by every individual; some use the caribou herd very little, and others depend on it for a main source of food. So there's going to be a different range, but it's all going to be a negative impact if that herd isn't there. ... There would be an uprising. (Bob Turner)

### **Signs or Indicators of Changes in Caribou**

There are a number of ways to determine the health and physical condition of individual caribou as well as herds. Perhaps the most obvious is the amount fat on a caribou:

Just by looking at them. ...Maybe it's instinct. I don't know. Go hunting, see a caribou, and you know which one's fat, and you know which one's skinny, so you shoot the fat ones [laughs]. (Lawrence Lafferty)

Parasites, which are a common affliction in caribou, are another indication of a loss of health in caribou:

You see they cut caribou meat, little white stuff in there, don't eat that, don't eat that meat. My Mother said there might be something inside, little white, small little white things; I think that big, you see in the meat. "It's not fat," she said. "You think that's fat. It's not fat. It's no good." My Mommy cut all that for dogs. (Alice Lafferty)

Another indicator that Métis use to judge the health of caribou, is the condition and smell of internal organs, especially the liver:

...The liver [sometimes] doesn't have the right colour. Sometimes you'll have a big lump on the liver, then you kind of discard it a little bit or else you turn that into dog food. You try not to leave too much behind. I've shot a few that I wouldn't touch because when you skin them or open them up they don't smell right, so you kind of start digging around in the intestines to see what's the matter with it. Most of the time you'll find a bad liver or something like that and you just don't bother with it. You can take a sample and send it out to see what was the matter with it. (D'Arcy Mercredi)

In addition, to physical condition, behaviour is another indicator of health:

Well, if they're with the group, just the way they hold themselves, you know if they look good, they look like they're fat. If you see one by itself sometime, you might want to have a good look at it, just to see if you can tell there's something wrong with it. I shot caribou in the past, this was seven years ago, and they were pretty spooky and I ended up catching this one. It was the skinniest caribou I've ever seen, but we were kind of hard up, so we shot it, this was when I was living in the bush, so we shot it, and it was also very tough meat. But it wasn't the one to shoot, if given the choice. ...If you get one that's nice and fat, and it's not full of cysts or whatever [that's good]. (Adrian D'hont)

[You can tell how healthy a caribou is] mostly just by the way it's moving around. Pregnant caribou move slower and a hurt caribou will probably favour itself somewhere. The rest of the crowd runs, it will probably fall behind or something like that. (D'Arcy Mercredi)

Perhaps the single most important indicator that diamond mining and other impacts have exceeded the threshold at which caribou can cope and adapt to industrial development is a significant reduction in the caribou population:

Well, the signs will be the population dropping drastically because there's not only the mines that are affecting the caribou, there's outfitters, resident hunters and Aboriginal hunters. Altogether the cumulative impact isn't known of the herd, and I don't think the government has even started looking at the cumulative effect of that herd related to all the activities in the area. ...At some point all the activities together will probably reduce the population of that herd dramatically. (Bob Turner)

We must weigh the cumulative risks to caribou against other, more benign and even positive impacts of Diavik and diamond mining, and ask ourselves: "Is it worth it?"

Well, I think we're starting to talk about fairly significant pressure filling the country up with mines, year round activity. I don't like it, especially when you think of how much of this do we really need? How much can we stand? How many of our people will be working at it? And would they want this kind of development in these conditions, living in this type of settlement? I've heard it described as living in jail. ...Probably when it's too late to do anything about it. It could be kind of a tangled thing to sort out to with all the other things that are

happening, hunting not just from hunters, but outfitters, out there hunting shooting those big bulls, just more activity out there, just larger changes. But it could be sorted out I'm sure.... (Adrian D'hont)

While there maybe a "way" to clarify our knowledge and understanding of various impacts, both individually and cumulatively, on caribou it remains to be seen whether there is the "will". In the final analysis, Diavik must be more than a "big experiment" as Adrian D'hont says; it must create certainty in regards to its impacts on caribou. A dearth of scientific knowledge and contradictory experiential local knowledge is not a sufficient basis upon which to predict and assess impacts on this most important and valued of all animals:

Like I said, caribou's our life. We live for the caribou. And diamonds, it's going to be there. It's going to be the white people, I mean like [that] diamond company that's going to take them out. They're the ones that are going to destroy the land. Destroy the people. If it's there, it's there, you know. I don't know why they have to make a mine there right away. It's just like money in the bank for them. They should just leave everything there until they're sure everything is protected, the land, the animals, and the whole bit. Then they can mine it out. It's too early and too fast to mine it, I think. (Anon.)

**Table 1. NSMA Survey Quick Reference Guide:  
Environmental Impacts and Caribou**

1. % of respondents who placed caribou at top of list of animals most important to them: 78%. (23 respondents)\*
2. % of respondents who noted that Lac de Gras is an important area for caribou: 70%, (P) 25%\*\* (24 respondents)
3. % of respondents who believe caribou will be negatively by various mining activities at Diavik, including noise, dust, smoke emissions, terrain changes, vegetation changes: 67%, (P) 17%. (24 respondents)
4. % of respondents who fear that cumulative impacts of Diavik and BHP might alter caribou migration routes and/or affect their health: 45%, (P) 36%. (22 respondents)
5. % of respondents who feel that changes to caribou migration routes around Lac de Gras will negatively affect caribou and thus their use of caribou: 55%, (P) 10%. (20 respondents)
6. % of respondents who think that the increased traffic on the winter road will have a negative impact on the caribou health and migration routes: 27%, (P) 18%. (22 respondents)
7. % of respondents who said that negative impacts on caribou and other animals would negatively affect their connections to the land, their cultural traditions, and/or their sharing patterns and connections to each other:

86%. (23 respondents)

*\*Number of respondents vary with each issue as not all questions were asked or answered*

*\*\* (P) = Possibly, but unsure owing to a lack of sufficient information.*

## **FISH, FISH HABITAT AND WATER QUALITY**

### **Prior Experience with Mining Operations**

Approximately 65% of the individuals interviewed were concerned that the Diavik mine would negatively impact fish and fish habitat in the vicinity of its mine. While another 15% were concerned about the environmental impacts of Diavik on fish, they did not know exactly how these impacts would affect fish or water quality in Lac de Gras. Much of the concern about potential negative impacts on fish was well-founded and based on experiential knowledge of the effects of other mines on fish, fish habitat and water quality:

"They move away," I think she said, that old lady from the village. She said "There used to be lots of rats here in the lake, but now since they put the road, since they put the mine," they said. I never heard somebody kill ...rats or beaver [there]. She said, "There used to be lots of beaver here before," she said, "Now nothing." I guess they move some place from the lake, and where they going to move? That's what she said. "They can walk on the ground too," she said. I guess they go to other lake. Nothing here around here. No fish. Where the fish went? There used to be lots of drag fish. They call it drag fish. "Lots, lots," she said, the old lady. When they put the net in, lots of jackfish, lots of whitefish. I said, "I never heard nobody put that net there now, but she said, "I think the fish, they move out or they die." "I don't know," she said, "Since they put that mine, no fish." (Alice Lafferty)

I think it's around Great Slave Lake here, East Arm, someplace. I was up there once years ago, but I was up there in the winter. They say there's one lake there. They started mining in there and they just [mined] the hell out of it. It's still dead. That was in the thirties, I think. The mine opened up maybe for a year. I'm not sure how long. They didn't even get a gold brick out of it. That's how badly they polluted that one lake, and it's still like that now. You know that's sixty years ago. ... So it's fragile, like I said. It's very hard to heal. Sixty years and it's still not healed.... (Lawrence Lafferty)

Well, I talked a little bit about the Discovery Mine project and how they pumped the old arsenic and mercury tailings right into the lake

and they destroyed that fish population in that lake, and it's not fit for human consumption, and that's spreading. And we've got Giant Mine that in their earlier years; the fish weren't that healthy in this area because of the amounts of arsenic and other chemicals they were pumping into the lake.... Over time and years, they've slowly reduced the amounts of pollution that they've been putting into the lake, and I think the health of the fish population in this area is slowly coming back. But at one point I don't think it was very good for the fish and for the people who ate them. But yeah there's a lot of places in the North that I wouldn't fish, not only because of mines, but because of the influence of cities, towns and sewer systems. (Bob Turner)

### **Métis Ecological Knowledge of Fish**

Next to caribou, fish was and is probably the most important species to the North Slave Métis.

All my family used to fish all the time. We like fish. It's a very good food for the kids. Fish is very important to us, to a lot of people in our community. We take good care of them. (Anon.)

It's [fish] our bread and butter. That's all we live on is fish and caribou meat. (Ernie Camsell)

Not only was fish used for human consumption, it was normally the major source of food for dog teams, and almost every North Slave Métis had a net.

They used to fish because they had dog teams and they had to use their dogs and feed their dogs fish. The only reason now they don't do that [is] because they've got ski-doo's. ...But before everyone carried a net with them and a jigger and chisel for ice, because they had dogs and if there was no caribou, you had to set your net to fish to feed your dogs. (Ernie Camsell)

Over the years we have built up an extensive knowledge base of fish, their habitat preferences, and other factors influencing their abundance and distributions. A systematic effort to document North Slave Métis ecological knowledge of fish, however, has not yet been undertaken. Nevertheless, such research, currently being planned for *Phase Two*, promises to be rewarding:

Gravel beds [are important to fish in Lac de Gras].... Trout would probably go more for a gravelly bed or sandy beach area or somewhere where they can stick their eggs and have them spermed, I guess. ... [There will be little impact on trout beds in Lac de Gras] because they



pick a creek feeding a smaller lake inland. They will lay their eggs there and their little fry will swim up into the lake for protection. After he gets about that big [gestures], then he'll come back down into the water system again, wherever his parents come from. (D'Arcy Mercredi)

...We didn't catch all that many fish ...when we were there [Lac de Gras]. We went up to the rapids in between Sauvage Lake and that's where we caught all of our fish because of the different little bugs go through the rapids and they come out the other end and they are upset or disoriented and that's where the fish feed. Even the trout will take a whitefish there. He gets into the rapids and he gets disoriented and goes to the bottom and that's when the trout will grab him. (D'Arcy Mercredi)

[Shallow waters are] prime habitats for reproduction. They all feed in the same area, that's why they all spawn in different areas. Once they get into Lac de Gras, trout and jackfish will eat each other or other fish depending on where they are. If you go up to Lac de Gras, you'll notice in springtime little minnows swimming. They are close in the shallow water because the bigger fish will get to them. As they get bigger and feed off larvae, then they get back into the bigger waters as they get bigger. That's how their life span is. (Leroy Bloomstrand)

## **Specific Impacts**

### **Destruction and Recreation of Fish Habitat**

In the process of building and operating its mine, Diavik will destroy several small inland lakes as well as several kilometres of shoreline on East Island. About half of the respondents (48%) believed that some of this habitat is critical or important to fish, while another 19% were unsure. Fish habitat, perhaps some of it productive, in both settings will be negatively impacted:

I mean it's possible that a lot of the [fish] habitat is concentrated in certain areas and that (shores of East Island) is one of them. But yeah, you've got to take safeguards otherwise you'll lose too much of the physical habitat. (Adrian D'hont)

...There's a portion of area that's going to be permanently lost, ...that they're not going to be able to rebuild back to its natural state. There's going to be those three lakes that are going to be gone, I mean they're not going to be able to dig those out and make them exactly the way they were. And there's going to be those big holes in the water, that is

going to be a lost habitat, whether its deep water habitat, I mean there's still a habitat area, ...I mean those pits, one of them is about two km across.... That's a lot of deep-water habitat that's lost because those holes are going to be about 300 meters deep, fish don't swim down that deep. ... [And] there's spawning areas where the mine is going to be located and where they're going to put the dikes into the lake. There's spawning shoals in the area, so there's going to be a lot of fish habitat lost in Lac de Gras. (Bob Turner)

To make up for fish habitat destroyed or negatively impacted by construction and operation of the Diavik mine site, Diavik, in consultation with the Department of Fisheries, is planning to recreate fish habitat elsewhere. Specifically, dikes around mined kimberlite pipes will be enhanced, as will several small lakes. Most respondents (65%) felt that this might be a good idea:

It might [work] for the grayling, ... because grayling hide in boulders because they are small. To survive, they are a small fish. If they don't have a boulder field to hide in, their chances are almost nil. Whitefish ... travel in schools, so if something comes along it can't eat them all it can only take one or two or whatever.... (D'Arcy Mercredi)

Others, however, questioned the practicality and wisdom of attempting to recreate fish habitat to make up for losses elsewhere:

...it's not a good idea to stock a lake that doesn't have fish to begin with because they don't know what's the real reason that there isn't fish there to begin with. And if there is no fish or any growth in the lake, by digging a hole, it isn't all of a sudden going to make it sustainable for a fish population. (Bob Tuner)

It depends on all the gravel size that is best used for spawning fish.... I don't see there being much small gravel in that blast rock they're going to be dumping into the lake.... Well, [DFO has] been creating fish habitat throughout Canada, I don't know how successful or not, I mean, ...they're not planning on going out of their way to build the perfect fish habitat around the dikes, they're just going to slope that blast rock, gentle slope, but, and then say "There's your fish habitat." So they're not going out of their way to create good fish habitat.... (Bob Turner)

## **Dust and Increased Sedimentation**

Mining operations on East Island will produce dust and increased sedimentation during run-off. About 73% of the respondents were concerned about the impacts

of increased sedimentation and dust on fish in Lac de Gras. At least two-thirds of these people felt that fish would be negatively impacted by these substances:

The fine dust settling in the lake, you know, eventually going down. It will probably plug up their gills or something. The water going through the gills of the fish, and if there's particles floating in it, it'll probably get stuck in its gills or whatever, and suffocate them. I'm not a biologist, but stuff like that happens. I've seen it happen. (Lawrence Lafferty)

Well, any introduced sediment to the water is going to affect the fish, especially the trout which is a very sensitive fish; ...they require clear water habitat. The first fish that will be negatively impacted will be the trout, and whether or not they continue to use that area during the operation of the mine will be determined during the monitoring. ...I don't think they'll immediately die, I mean fish, they don't die as soon as you put something into the water. But they become unhealthy, like the fish in [the] lake where Discovery Mine was, the fish are still living in there and swimming around. They look healthy from the outside, [but] as soon as you test them their mercury levels are way over the Canada guidelines. ...Well, there's going to be dust I think at constant [rates]... dust in the area, and it's going to be introduced to the lake and that's going to create turbidity into the lake. So it's not going to be the best habitat for, well, the trout that are in the area that have used those shoals to begin with, I don't think they're going to be going there, as they are now. (Bob Turner)

...And the other thing is if you've got dust going on the ice, with the ice melting the water's going to go downstream, or downwind from the operation, if you've got dust there, the water's going to open soon.... Yeah, when it falls on the ice and snow. And also just the deposition of the dust, I mean we're talking about the generation of a fair bit of dust, I mean what difference would there be between that and a small version of the Slave River coming in or whatever. It's still entering the system. (Adrian D'hont)

What if that machine [water treatment machines], whatever you call it, to clear that water, what if it stopped. All of a sudden there's problem and that water just seeped through that pumping station or whatever it is, and gets into the big lake, what would really happen, you know? It'll [sediments] probably affect all the fish. What if the pump stopped. It could happen. It could break down anytime, and the water could overflow or whatever, and they'll leak through the open water and you damage it, and people won't be able to drink water too. (Anon.)

## **Increased Metal Loading**

The majority of respondents (75%) were concerned about elevated metal levels in waters around the Diavik mine site, at least two-thirds of whom believed that increased metal loading will have a negative impact on fish populations. Whereas run-off from the rock dumps is predicted to increase the level of aluminium, cadmium and other metals draining into waters around the mine site, the construction of dikes around open-pit operations in the lake was a particular concern for some people:

Once they build that [dikes], that lake won't be the same. It'll change for sure. I don't know what kind of effects it'll have on the fish. All that rock that's been broken to build these dikes, all that metal that wasn't exposed before is going to be exposed. You see that lake there has been there for thousands and thousands of years, and all of a sudden there's a change like that, eh. You've got a brand new, brand new rock in there that's all been broken, all that metal being exposed that hasn't been weathered or anything, so all that metal will get into the water, so I think there will be rust, rust from different minerals, and that'll get into the lake. (Lawrence Lafferty)

Well, metals is bad, eh. When they're in the water, they rust. They make you see those ugly colours that coming out of them. Coming out of the fish. [Fish] swallows that I don't know what's gonna happen, and fish will get sick. Probably die. (Anon.)

Others felt that increased metal loading could be controlled:

Those things [metal concentrations] remain in the system once they're there. They [Diavik] could dilute them down before they descend to the bottom, out of reach in deeper waters, bottom sediments and buried up, it's not that big of a thing. (Adrian D'hont).

## **Blasting**

Most respondents (60%) thought that blasting would have detrimental effects on fish populations in the vicinity of the Diavik mine site, while another 10% were concerned, but unsure. Based on previous knowledge, this concern appears to be justified:

...If they're blasting right in the water, noise travels through the water, and it'll kill fish. In the old days, a lot of these prospectors used to fish like that. They'd throw a stick of dynamite, tie a rock to it, put a short fuse on it, and throw it in the lake. It hits the bottom, it explodes, and all the fish come to the surface, and then you just go and pick up your fish. It stuns some, but it will kill some. (Lawrence Lafferty)

Well, I imagine there's fairly good vibration there, I think that would disturb them all right. Push them out. ...Well, if there's enough of a shock wave, it's going to do them in that's for sure, that's one of the old fishing techniques [laughs]. (Adrian D'hont)

Some individuals were concerned that blasting would not only affect fish near the Diavik mine site, but possibly their eggs, especially if attempts to recreate spawning habitat along the dikes surrounding the open-pit mines were successful:

Well, if it's close enough to them, it'll affect them. They'll be belly up...but if the fish use the shoals on the dike, there has to be...they don't know how its going to affect the eggs, once the eggs are lain, if they continue the blasting, the shocks that go through the rocks and into the water, they don't know how its going to affect the eggs of the fish that are laying. (Bob Turner)

While some people recognized the effects of blasting on fish, they thought that this not a concern as long as Diavik did not use dynamite under water:

If you were blasting in the water it might be different because the shock wave in the water is total, there's no slowing it down. A bang there bangs two or three miles away - that might have something to do with it. Concussion is probably the worse thing a fish could ever take. But if it's in an open pit like that the concussion is out up into the atmosphere, it's not under like this. (D'Arcy Mercredi)

### **Increased Nutrient Loading**

The amount of phosphorous and nitrogen discharge from organics being deposited into waters around the Diavik mine site is anticipated to increase nutrient levels in Lac de Gras by 20%. Diavik predicts that this will make fish grow faster, larger and thus make them healthier. Half the respondents (50%) said that increased nutrient discharge would probably not negatively impact fish populations in Lac de Gras or around the Diavik mine site, either because it would have a positive effect or no impact whatsoever:

You can feed the trout in this lake the best food in the world and he ain't gonna grow because of the temperature. He's burning up energy to survive in that element. I think it probably would be the same thing up there at Lac de Gras. If you fell in the water and if you're not out of there in three minutes you're pretty well toasted eh? So it's a cold lake, so it is not going to make them get any bigger. If their food package isn't big enough in there they won't get any bigger either. They will only get as big as the food package. (D'Arcy Mercredi)

I don't think a person wants to get too optimistic about plant growth [as a result of increased levels of phosphorous] because it's very cold water, and it's covered with ice for a long time for many months of the year, so I don't think anybody wants to get too excited about growing stuff too fast, so I don't think it's a big issue. (Peter Arychuk)

However, more than one third (37%) of the respondents were not so certain about the effects of increased nutrient discharge on fish in Lac de Gras:

I actually don't know enough scientifically about this to say whether or not it's going to be a benefit for them or a negative impact. But my first impression is that a change of this magnitude is going to be a negative impact, and I don't believe that by trying to stimulate growth in a lake that doesn't normally have that nutrient level is going to be a positive. I guess time will tell whether it's a negative impact or a positive impact, but there's going to have to be a serious monitoring program in place to study those fish to see whether or not they're getting healthier or they're not. (Bob Turner)

Others were concerned, but similarly equivocal, about how increased nutrient discharge around East Island might upset the ecology and trophic relationships of Lac de Gras:

The other thing too is the chemical changes and water changes. If you're dumping in sewage you'll get a change with plant communities and that type of thing, maybe that'll affect distribution [of fish] in the larger sense. ...It'll change the fish population, I'm sure. Faster growth rates...Maybe that's not such a bad thing, but with the increased algae growth, I can see a shift in communities of other aquatic organisms. I don't know what that'll end up doing, as far as the trout go. I don't know what that'll do to the clarity of the water. Trout are visual hunters, I believe. It might have some impact on them in certain areas in the lake. (Adrian D'hont)



In the lake, you only have so much room for so many fish. If you have so much food, the fish are obviously going to eat it, you are going to have more fish. There is still that lake that doesn't change the size. So you can have more fish, but there is still going to be less area, and if you get too much [fish], just like any herd or anything, if you have too much, they all die. It becomes a dead lake. (Dianna Beck)

Some respondents, especially elders, felt that allowing nutrient levels to increase so dramatically in a lake as large as Lac de Gras was an entirely inappropriate treatment of fish and a violation of customary laws:

Well, the fish they stay in the water for all its life, and nobody feed them, fish, and if they feed the fish, the fish is getting more big and maybe be something else in the meat, be something in the meat. Like in the TV you see they give needle to the chickens and everything, and now somebody said it's no good to eat chickens. It's poisoned. Maybe that will be the same, if they feed fish, maybe the fish don't like that. They eat their own food under the water. They got their own food, the fish, but if they feed the fish, they get more big, maybe they won't like it. ...Well, God, he make the water for them, he make the food for them in the water, and now the fish, they should leave the fish that way. It's no use to feed the fish. They got their own food, and why they want to feed the fish in the water, they should not do that, just leave [it] that way. They were born that way, they eat that way, they should just leave it that way. It's no use to animals they go their own way. Like caribou. We don't feed them everyday, but they eat moss. They eat their own food.... Same, I guess. (Alice Lafferty)

### **Cumulative Impacts: The "Big Whammy"**

The majority of people interviewed (65%) went beyond consideration of the specific impacts on fish near the mine site, and expressed concern about the mine's cumulative impacts. Specifically, there was a fear that, if increased nutrient loading attracts fish to waters around the mine site, they could be more susceptible to blasting and increased metal levels, dust, sedimentation and other impacts:

I mean a 20% increase in nutrient loading...? [Lac de Gras] has got to be one of the crown jewels of our lake country up here and it's a major sacrifice to see that degraded. ...It [nutrient discharge] could [attract fish]. ...If you get an algae bloom and increased number of smaller organisms, animals, that are taking advantage of that feed that would be there. And I guess that poses another risk... with any of the sort of contaminants that might be directly from the mine area. ...Yeah, I'm not sure what bad things might be in the run-off from the footprint

area ... I don't know what might be running into the lake, just run-off, discharge or whatever. It's probably not going to go too far, depending what the major currents are. I mean some of these bay areas, the stuff would just hold in there, I would imagine. There's probably already fairly good use in those areas by fish populations, and if you start getting more feed in there, there could be some problems for certain species in certain areas. ...So how does one balance that against the other? I'm not sure. It's all a part of a big experiment that will or could be taking place because I don't know...so you've got more nutrient input into the lake, does that mean individuals are going to grow bigger, the same number of fish but bigger fish, and then you got some bigger ones eating more of the small ones...Yeah, we certainly can't make any sound conclusions based on a few [expletive deletive] baselines. There are so many big areas like that up there; we don't know what's out there, let alone how it fits together. (Adrian D'hont)

Others thought that, while Diavik could and should take measures to prevent increased nutrient loading, the outcome may not be any better:

If...according to the information that's been provided the nutrient levels that are going to be going up, and by the use of all this phosphorous to begin with, if you stop them from using this I guess, chemicals to treat the water. Then what would the negative impact be by ...using that? And I think that would release other heavy metals into the water system if they didn't treat it. So it's hard to determine whether it's going to be beneficial to say you can't raise these nutrient levels, because we don't know if it's going to be good for the fish or bad for the fish. And so by saying that you can't raise this nutrient level they're going to allow other heavy metals into the system. So what's worse the heavy metals into the system or the higher nutrient levels? (Bob Turner)

### **Impacts of Loss of Fish on North Slave Métis**

More than half (53%) of the respondents said that they or their families would be negatively effected if there was a loss of fish in Lac de Gras, while another 13% were concerned but unsure. People who now use the Lac de Gras area would be the most obviously impacted:

Well, I'm not sure what is all happening in Lac de Gras, but I know that there's a number of outfitters and fishing camps and whatnot in that area. And I can't speak for everyone, of course, if the fish are going to be impacted, that'll have a direct bearing on the people who are operating there and those that are up there doing other things. And

then just being there and knowing that you're fishing in what is the cesspool of the mine, I guess, it kind of makes you wonder, what you're picking up, because it's considered to be one of the good foods in this area. (Adrian D'hont)

However, even though those North Slave Métis who now fish closer to Yellowknife would feel the impact of the loss of fish, perhaps not so much immediately or economically, but eventually and for nutritional, cultural and spiritual reasons:

Well, it's going to affect me negatively, if I go there at some point in time and try to set a net to catch some fish for my family... I'm catching a bunch of unhealthy fish. That's like the answer I said before, it's a resource that you're taking away, that I always had there, my children, relatives, friends, have always had, I mean it's a resource that's there now that's not going to be there after this mine goes into operation. (Bob Turner)

That [loss of fish in Lac De Gras] would affect me for sure, because if I want to go there [Lac De Gras], like if I'm hunting there, I like to go out fishing. If I ate that and I got sick, who am I supposed to blame Diavik or Ekati mine for polluting the whole lake? (Anon.)

...I say I probably wouldn't even notice if something had happened, because it's not an area I go into. But it would bother us knowing that it has happened, that physically in terms of our particular enjoyment of the lake and the water and so on. It would be bothersome, it would trouble me because you start linking what's happening here, what has happened here and potentially happening over there, and further down stream. You know the old thin edge of the wedge thing. (Adrian D'hont)

### **Indicators of Fish Health**

Over the years, the North Slave Métis have developed extensive knowledge about the ecology and health of fish, which in part, determined how they were used:

If you get a fish, you just cut a little bit here, and look at the guts in there. It's just white it's fat. If it's not white just like purple, something like that, skinny, put it away for the dogs, and with this fat, put it away on that side. What is skinny put it away that side for the dogs, and now you fix the fish to eat, which is one is fat, and which one is skinny for dogs. That's the way they used to do it all the time. (Alice Lafferty)

In addition to fat content, parasite loading, the texture of flesh and the presence of tumours and sores are other indicators used to determine the health and physical condition of fish:

Well, a fish that's not carrying too many parasites... It's in good shape. It's attractive to look at, fat fish. The head is not way bigger than the body. You get a lot of fish like that in these lakes; these lakes are kind of impoverished. But I guess if you're dumping in lots of phosphorous the body will fill out more. [Laughs] So I don't know if it's...you can just tell it's a healthy fish. If it looks like a good fish then the chances are it is, unless there's something else that's being dumped in there at a level you can't see. You don't want to have flesh that's all soft and odd looking. You certainly don't want one that's full of parasites. At Artillery Lake here, which is a nice clear system, basically distilled water, and these fish are caught down there, they have parasites. (Adrian D'hont)

You have to open it up. The flesh, the meat, the liver, all insides-you have to look at it. Even right now if you get the fish, you clean it and you look at it right away. If it's got little lumps on it, you don't eat it. (Anon.)

But I do know some of the signs of bad fish is when you start getting lumps on them or sores. Those kinds of things a person right away knows there's something wrong with the fish, but a lot times you don't see anything, you don't taste anything. You just go ahead and eat them. (Fred LeMouel)

**Table 2. NSMA Survey Quick Reference Guide:  
Fish and Environmental Impacts**

1. % of respondents who believe Diavik will be impacting a critical fish habitat area: 48%, (P) 19%. (21 respondents)
2. % of respondents who think creation of new fish habitat to replace lost habitat elsewhere is a good idea: 65% (P), 25%. (20 respondents)
3. % of respondents who think release of phosphorous and increased nutrient discharge will harm fish: 14% (P), 36%. (22 respondents)
4. % of respondents who that increased dust and sedimentation will harm fish: 47% (P), 26%. (19 respondents)
5. % of respondents who think elevated metal levels will harm fish: 50% (P), 25%. (16 respondents)
6. % of respondents who feel blasting will have a negative impact on fish: 60% (P), 10%. (20 respondents)

7. % of respondents who believe the cumulative impacts of the Diavik mine will lead to a decline in the health and/or number of fish in the vicinity of the mine: 65% (P), 15%. (20 respondents)
8. % of respondents who believe the cumulative impacts of the Diavik mine will lead to a decline in the health and/or number of fish in Lac de Gras: 32% (P), 26%. (19 respondents)
9. % of families who claim their lives will be negatively affected if fish are negatively impacted by Diavik: 53% (P), 13%. (15 respondents)

## **CARNIVORES AND FURBEARERS**

### **General Impacts**

Land around Lac de Gras appears to be prime habitat for a small range of carnivores, including wolf, fox, wolverine and grizzly:

I believe there's habitat in the area for all these animals, ... there's wolf dens; foxes in the area, there's wolverine in the area. I know there's grizzly bear in the area. All camps attract carnivores because all camps have cooking facilities and whenever you cook the aroma of food goes into the atmosphere and it attracts pretty well all the animals...carnivores so they'll be affected by the mines. ...They already use the area. Some of the animals stay around there and don't migrate. The grizzly bears, they den up and stay in the area, they don't migrate anywhere, well the wolves, the wolves follow the caribou around, but foxes and wolverines and animals like that don't wander away. They usually have a territory. (Bob Turner)

Virtually all (100%) respondents were concerned, based largely on experiential knowledge, that animals will be attracted to the Diavik mine, with 85% stating that this will have a negative impact on animals:

It'll attract bears, you know, just the food, garbage dumps, and that's got to be looked after. Wolverines, the employees, like people working at the mine site, feeding them from their lunch. You don't want animals around. That's what happened up at BHP. You know people were feeding wolverines, foxes, so they hung around camp. People like to see them. Get pictures of them, so they feed them. They hang around camp. This one person just about got bit by a wolverine. Trying to go up and take a close picture, I guess. So they'd have to watch that. Watch the employees. Make sure they don't start feeding the animals because they'll hang around there. If they know there's food there, they'll hang around. That's the way it is. ...They're not scared of

humans. That's bad. It takes away one of their instincts, eh. They're not scared of humans anymore. .... Well, it would screw up the food chain in that area. They'll all hang around that mine, if they're being fed. It makes common sense. If you can get free food at the Explorer Hotel are you going to go over at the Yellowknife Inn? No... [Laughs]. If you have to pay over there, but you don't have to over there, well. If they don't have to hunt for their food, they just go over there and they've got it. (Lawrence Lafferty)

In addition to being habituated to the Diavik mine site, carnivores, because of increased truck traffic on haul roads and the winter road, may also wind up being more susceptible to becoming "road kill" themselves:

Well, if there's a busy road and if anything is getting run over I guess the scavengers would be there. If there's hunting along the road, parts of carcasses and gut piles left out there, that would certainly attract...to scavengers and predators that would access that available food source, and that could present a danger to the people out there hunting or using those corridors for access. In terms of the traffic itself, I've heard from guys who've driven up to Lac de Gras, they've seen wolverines right on the edge of the road. I'm not sure if that's because there was a gut pile or something. The guys wanted to stop and take a picture of it. (Adrian D'hont)

## **Foxes**

Arctic foxes used to be of considerable economic value to North Slave Métis trappers, and were one of the main resources that, along with muskox, attracted them to the area in the past. However, since the decline in fur prices, very few people now trap fox on a regular basis. Nevertheless, many respondents remained concerned about the impacts of the Diavik project on fox.

## **Habituation to Mine Site**

Recent experiences at the BHP mine site and elsewhere suggest that foxes, in particular, may be prone to becoming habituated to the Diavik mine site:

When I was in Ekati when they first got there, there was like hundreds, I mean literally hundred's of them [foxes]. Most of them were being fed by the diamond drillers or the reverse circulators and there was ... one day on Panda Lake I went there and I could count 30. Not counting the other 20 that were in the garbage dump. Then, there alongside the highway the truck drivers are throwing sandwiches out. So [the foxes] are all sitting there like a little circus pack waiting for



their sandwich, instead of trying to chase a rabbit or digging for a mouse. (D'Arcy Mercredi)

Foxes... like to hang around camps, they get used to activities. We've got foxes running right through the city of Yellowknife, here on a regular basis during the winter. But animals like wolverines, grizzly bears and wolves will always be a lot more cautious than the average fox, and grizzly bears, they're not an animal to be taken too lightly, even for the humans out on the land. They can get harmed, just as well as the animals can get harmed. (Bob Turner)

Diavik, because of the actions of some its employees, has not been immune to the problem of habituation - a fact which, if continued, has the potential to upset delicate ecological relationships:

They will be there because it is an easy source of food for them. ... But then along comes a wolverine and the poor little guy is sitting there waiting for some food and the wolverine gets it. ... When I was at Diavik, all the kitchen staff were feeding them out the back door like it was their pets. Eventually all of a sudden they weren't there. Well what happened? Two wolverines were sitting in the garbage dump and got them. Poor little guy was probably sleeping in a box. Wolverine just took him. ...So there, just destroyed his chance for survival. If he's not aware of it.... this other danger around him. ...A lot of people think that it's cute to throw food. Have a little fox come over and sit and take food out of your hand. I think that's wrong because you are taking the chances of his survival away from him. (D'Arcy Mercredi)

### **Other Impacts**

In much the same way as fish attracted to the Diavik site might be more exposed to other potentially damaging environmental impacts from mining, foxes too may be susceptible to the "big whammy."

It's hard to tell how the foxes will be impacted. I mean if the environment in the immediate area isn't healthy from the dust and all the fuel and everything else that's settling on the ground.... There are going to be, I imagine, rabbits and mice or little lemmings...that are food for foxes and all those other little carnivores. So if the mice and rabbits are eating the food that's contaminated ...it goes into the other carnivores that eat them. ... It's a chain, so if you impact the bottom of the food chain, it's going to work its way up to the top. (Bob Turner)

### **Health Indicators**

Behavioural changes as a result of rabies is perhaps the biggest indicator of stress in foxes, and there was a concern about the possibility that, with the habituation of foxes to the Diavik, the risk of rabies will increase:

The fox they should have some kind of deterrent to keep them away from camp because if you get too many foxes in one group they start fighting with each other and biting each other and they transmit rabies. Then along comes some other animals and bites into it, a weasel, a ground squirrel are meat eaters, those little small things they are meat eaters too. And you could have a rabies outbreak. That's not caused by the mine, it's just the attraction of garbage that brings them there and then along comes the wolverine because he feeds also on the little fox. There's another thing. You give a wolverine rabies? What do you do with a crazy animal like that that's not scared of even grizzly bear? (D'Arcy Mercredi)

There's a chance of rabies for one thing with foxes. The foxes seem to carry rabies more or you hear about it more than other animals, so that is a big thing is to ensure that the foxes don't have a reason to hang out [at the mine site] because somebody'll get bit and then somebody'll get rabies and all it's going to do is they're going to have to kill the animals. (Peter Arychuk)

## **Grizzlies**

### **Habituation**

Grizzly bears, while far fewer in number than foxes in the area, also have the potential to become habituated to the Diavik mine site, especially if they have already had encounters with humans:

Bears. They're hungry, eh. They smell garbage or something. If they want to go, they go there [Diavik mine], but not caribou. Caribou they're scared. ...They don't care but they smell the garbage from the food. They smell that, they go into the camp. (Alice Lafferty)

Certainly if they can keep any food from being put into the garbage dump, [that] would probably prevent animals from coming in. But I'm sure you're going to get curious grizzly bears. A lot of these bears have had some experience with people because of the outfitters and some of them associate human smell with food in the fall hunt. ...If those odours are out there and they run across them, I mean it might be kind of tempered by the fact that it's strange with other stuff's going on

[mining activities]. But at some point, if there was a scarcity of food or if they were on a big feeding frenzy there, a bear foraging and gorging himself, then they won't shy away. (Adrian D'hont)

Bears, especially bears, they'll go to the dump, you know. Grizzlies, as soon as they smell food, they'll be bothering the mine for sure, and probably after the people that working there, too. They're not scared of anything. If they bust a fuel tank or something you know, they'll get sick, and they'll die, or somebody shot that same caribou or I mean same bear, eat the meat, will affect the people, eh. (Anon.)

There was this one bear at BHP that kept on getting into their garbage and he'd have to keep getting relocated, but once a bear learns to eat at a certain place, they always go back to places similar to that. Diavik may not be the cause of the problem, but they will be having to deal with a lot of the effects. In this case, the bear ended up having to be shot. (Dianna Beck)

## **Health Indicators**

Changes in the fat content and behaviour of grizzly bears are indicators or signals that they are under stress:

If you saw one in the fall, for instance, and it was looking kind of thin, coat wise--I'm not sure. When they're wet or dry I guess they look pretty different. Yeah, there's probably a behaviour thing there too, I think. I wouldn't be able to tell. I mean I'd know when I was under stress I'm sure...[laughs]...and the bear was close to me. Yeah, it's probably behaviour stuff. Certain reactions, chomping their jaws, charging at the person. It's probably a time of year thing too, the way they behave towards people. I think in the spring that they're more afraid of people. If they strike out first, it's probably the wrong thing to do. (Adrian D'hont)

## **Wolverines Importance**

Unlike foxes, wolverines still retain considerable economic and domestic utilitarian value to the North Slave Métis:

They're a pretty consistent price for selling at the auction. Plus, there's a really good market for them, for community fur, for parka trim, and the same with wolves, you get more money selling it as parka trim than you do by selling it at auction. So it makes it kind of hard for people at

my work to keep track of how much is being caught because it doesn't all go to auction. (Adrian D'hont)

## **Habituation**

But like foxes, wolverines too may become habituated to the Diavik and BHP mines:

Yes, wolverine is another one too [that will be attracted to garbage and kitchen smells], but in the wild he's a traveler. He could be 40 miles away in a day, looking for anything from a ptarmigan under the snow to a lemming or a ground squirrel probably in the summertime because those ground squirrels hibernate all winter. But most of it would probably be ptarmigan because ptarmigan sleep at night. Lemmings, mice, even maybe a dead animal or dead caribou something a wolf left behind. That's his food source, so he moves all the time, but if his food source is going to be Ekati or Diavik, he'll be there. Why walk 40 miles? ...The camp was on (East) island and then they had a tent camp right here in the Bay.... The girl thought it was nice to feed him [wolverine] and then he stayed and he started to live under the camp. The next thing you know, he's up on the roof and then someone tried to shoo him away and he wound up chasing the guy into his tent. So I guess one of the Wildlife Officers came up and they darted him and took him out. (D'Arcy Mercredi)

There are wolverine up there [Diavik & surrounding area], and they are pretty smart and pretty cautious. Now if they're desperately hungry, then I can see them being a problem if there's food available, but I don't think they'd be too interested in coming around an operating site. They'll scour the edges and check things out, and sniff around to see if there's any goodies to eat, but wolverines are very, very cautious like a wolf. However, if there is food available, they are very bold. They won't have a problem sauntering in to get something to eat, whether there's a grizzly bear standing there or a four hundred man camp, so that is the reason for keeping the camp clean, keeping the food clean and the garbage. (Peter Arychuk)

Some respondents expressed concern about the possibility that wolverine may be especially vulnerable to habituation because they are already under stress from hunting pressure:

They're not shy to take advantage of food. If people are leaving stuff out, they'll get in there. They can get pretty snarly. I'd be concerned about wolverines because there's not that many out there and they've

been hit pretty hard with hunting. The fact that they do come in [to the mine site] will bump them off with no problem. (Adrian D'hont)

## **Wolves**

### **Métis Knowledge of Wolves**

It is perhaps not surprising that many North Slave Métis have developed a rich base of ecological knowledge about wolves; it is the major natural predator of caribou. Also, wolves continue to be hunted and trapped by some Métis for their furs. While Métis knowledge about wolf-caribou relationships and interactions will be documented in *Phase II*, the following provides a glimpse as to the quality of the information we might expect:

They [wolves] take a look at their environment and see how much food they have and they birth according to the amount of food that they can count. So if the female wolf is going to have pups and the hunter says that there is only enough food in our area to support two pups - she will have two pups. ...Yes, they are balanced. They have babysitters, they have everything. They have their own little society and their own social gatherings. One guy is the boss; two of the females might be babysitters, so that the female mother can go for a walk somewhere. ...The only thing that has any affect on a wolf is the firearm, of course. People who have to trap for a living you can't really let them starve either. ... [Wolves aren't declining] ...because if their pack gets too small they are going to make more pups to fill that gap. If they have problems catching up to a caribou, it's because they don't have enough tricks in their bag and they are missing three wolves. We watched a pack over in the Rayrock area. We watched them with a helicopter, we were way up. And there was caribou coming out on one end of the lake and there was three islands and behind each of those islands there was two wolves. One wolf was standing way on the end and the caribou saw him and they looked at him and made them go to one side like that and when they got part way there another one stepped out from behind and they split that herd. The rest of the herd ran back into the bush. Between these two wolves they herded the caribou in between these islands and when they come through the islands they got three inside of seconds. ... Two wolves on one, they had three wolves and then all the rest came out of the bush - young ones and females. And they all ate there and had a feast. Amazing, the way it's done. The rest of the caribou went passed and they never even looked at them sideways because "We got what we want." So if the pack gets too small they lose again, so they have to be a good number with them. Then, of course, there are the old ones back there that can't run anymore and

they have to look after them. They look after them up to a certain point and then they have to be dropped. (D'Arcy Mercredi)

You fly over a caribou herd and there's going to be twelve or fifteen wolves walking along beside it. Nobody's running, nobody's rushing, nobody's even paying attention. They're watching out of the corner of their eye, but you get a young calf who wants to go and jump around outside the herd, he's breakfast, and they'll just eat that and leave the herd alone until the next one makes a mistake or `till someone breaks his leg and falls behind. (Peter Arychuk)

### **Impacts on Wolves**

The reactions of wolves to diamond mining are more complex and difficult to predict than those of foxes. While some wolves might be attracted to the Diavik mine temporarily, they will generally tend to follow the caribou:

There's wolves that hang around. It all depends I guess on where the food is. The wolves aren't just going to hang around here, when the caribou have all moved off. They have to be able to move with the caribou. During denning time ...I think that we might see them in and around the camp, right in the camp potentially, but if there's really that many people, bad smells, explosions and stuff, then they'll hardly be staying there. ...I think they're probably fairly adaptable in that sense [human activity]. If there's something that attracts them and holds them there, getting hand-outs from people working at the mine, or if there's something they can access from the garbage, or if any animals are held there because of other things -- I'm thinking increased growth or some kind of forage, caribou or musk-ox that hang around there -- most wolves would tend to capitalize on that. (Adrian D'hont)

Wolves, well wolves, there'll be a pair of wolves that get used to the site, and they'll live very close and really basically all you do is get a nice photo of them now and then. They have a big area to cover and big territory, and if that's their territory [Diavik site], they're going to get used to what's going on. I mean I was up there [at one of the two diamond mine sites] three weeks ago, and we seen two wolves out on the ice in front of the camp eating a caribou. So I think people have to see this stuff to really believe. (Peter Arychuk)

Because their adaptability and tendency to avoid humans, wolves will not likely be impacted by the Diavik mine, at least not directly.



That would be nice (if wolves were frightened away from the BHP and Diavik diamond mines) because there is no wolves on those highlands. ... If they did, they would have had to swim across or they got caught there at break up, but they are a little bit too smart for that. ... I'm trying to think, all the time I was in Ekati and Diavik, I don't think I can remember seeing a wolf. They have a different source and they are a shy animal. If you do see them they are standing either quite a ways away and they know you're there. (D'Arcy Mercredi)

Whereas some prime denning habitat may be lost during the construction and operation phases of the Diavik mine, wolves will undoubtedly experience greater impacts if caribou were negatively affected.

### **Impacts on Small Furbearers**

Small furbearers will be impacted, not only through destruction of their habitat and subsequent displacement, but also by dust and other environmental impacts as suggested above and below:

[They have] small home ranges, so there will some displacement. As far as a larger displacement, I don't think it would happen too far, too far out. But then there's other things, like the dust. I'd have to guess on that. There will changes with the dust ...probably in distribution in certain areas. I don't know how that will be altered by the fact that everything's covered in dust, more noise, things happening and maybe some of their predators will be displaced. (Adrian D'hont)

### **Impacts of Loss of Carnivores and Furbearers on North Slave Métis**

Some North Slave Métis may experience an economic loss if wolves, wolverines and other economically viable furbearers were to be negatively impacted by the Diavik mine. They may even experience an erosion of their ties to the land and all these benefits that accrue from this connection. However, there is something just as great at stake: our responsibility to our children:

Well, it means there's another lost resource, and that's a negative impact, and as far as I would feel about it, it's like I'm losing something. If there's a resource there that is available to me now and something affects that resource negatively so that it's no longer there, it's a loss. It may not be as dramatic a loss as if the whole caribou herd was gone, but it's a loss. I haven't really weighed the value of it, but they're all valuable resources, whether you're using them now or you want to use them in the future. If it's a loss to me, it's a loss to my children and their children. What I may be using now might be

different from what my children are using in the future. It's a loss...what's there for me...it's very important. ...It's going to be a similar feeling across the community. Just like I said before, some members of the community may use the resource extensively, but some may not use it as extensively. But if it's no longer there for everybody, then it's going to be a loss of use and then you have to adapt to some other change, I mean like [if] you don't have caribou to eat, you're going to have to eat something else.... (Bob Turner)

...All these animals [carnivores & furbearers] are important to me because I've got two boys growing up and I want them to be able to see all this stuff, and I want them to have the opportunity I've had. ...and I've travelled all over the countryside, and I haven't see a place yet that I'd rather live or raise my kids than in the NWT and Yellowknife in particular. ...People don't have opportunities like this, so this stuff is very important. ...There will be foxes, rabbits, sics sics all around there, and these things are beautiful little animals. They're useless as far as furbearers go because the market is destroyed, and hopefully comes back some day so people who make their living off fur bearing animals can continue to make their living... (Peter Arychuk)

## **WATERFOWL AND BIRDS**

### **Destruction of Waterfowl Habitat**

There was a concern that mining activity would destroy important waterfowl habitat and disrupt reproduction during summer:

It's probably not a key area or anything like that, there's probably dispersed pockets of good habitat [for waterfowl]. When you're around this country in the springtime, there's migrations of geese. (Adrian D'hont)

Ducks probably swim too close [to the Diavik site]. If it's noisy maybe not, but ducks too. There's a lot of ducks there, pintail, black ducks. They're good to eat. ...They might scare them away. They might not go there because the noise is there. (Anon.)

The mine will affect most of the animals that live around here, birds and stuff. ...There's ducks, geese, swans and all different birds, cranes and loons. Not only that, there's small birds, there's robins and all those smaller ones. That'll [diamond mining] probably affect them too. In the wintertime, they go south. In the summertime, I see they're

coming from back down this way. That's where they lay eggs, on the tundra, the barrenlands. That's the most important part. (Anon.)

For others, concern about the loss of waterfowl habitat was informed by knowledge gained from the BHP experience:

If you compare the BHP site there is a number of lakes that have been taken out of the system that birds have normally used and that is going to happen at the Diavik site. They're [Diavik] talking about ... destroying three fish habitat lakes and other lakes that may not be fish bearing, but may be used by waterfowl in the spring and during the summer. But if those areas aren't there [anymore] they'll have to go elsewhere and we don't know what the impact on their tailings area are going to have on the birds if they use it. I mean they're giving us estimates of metals and chemicals that are going to be in the lake, tailings pond and the North Inlet, which they're going to use as a settling area, [but] we don't [know their impacts on waterfowl].... (Bob Turner)

## **Dust**

Dust was considered by some respondents to be especially harmful to waterfowl and birds:

Oh yeah, birds. That fine dust is bad on birds. I seen some on the highway there, nested right close to the island. They didn't look too healthy after they were there for quite awhile. I used to travel the highway ever day, and I'd see this little family of ducks there. Sometimes they were just grey from the dust, eh. They were supposed to be yellow, but they were grey. ...Like they're going to have tailings ponds. Ducks will be landing in there you know. All the fine dust. It'll take its toll on the ducks, birds and waterfowl. That real fine dust doesn't get filtered before it goes into their lungs. It's too fine. (Lawrence Lafferty)

## **Oil and Other Spills**

Some individuals felt that oil, anti-freeze and other contaminant would negatively impact waterfowl and resident bird populations, both directly and indirectly:

Well, if they land in it, eventually they would get coated in it. They'd clean it off and they could get poisoned that way. They'd lose the insulation value of their feathers and that type of thing. I guess if some

of the food becomes contaminated, and they're eating this food, that got contaminants in it, from the spill or residues from the spill. Yeah, a pretty negative thing overall, in terms of the birds. (Adrian D'hont)

Like the ptarmigan, they eat off the land. Chicken or prairie chicken, grouse, those are birds that eat off the land, so if there's any spill or anything, it'll affect them too, eh. Like, say an oil spill, that moss or whatever they eat. If there's any stuff on it, they'll eat it, or the berries. Lots of them eat berries. (Anon.)

<b>Table 3. NSMA Survey Quick Reference Guide: Environmental Impacts and Carnivores, Waterfowl and Other Animals</b>
1. % of respondents who believe that carnivores, waterfowl and other animals will be affected by various mining activities at the Diavik mine, including noise, dust, smoke emissions, terrain changes, vegetation changes: 65% (P), 10%. (20 respondents)
2. % of respondents who believe some animals will abandon the area around Lac de Gras: 68% (P), 11%. (19 respondents)
3. % of respondents who believe that some animals will become habituated to the Diavik mine site: 85% (P), 15%. (20 respondents)
4. % of respondents who feel that habituation to the mine site is unhealthy for animals: 78% (P), 6%. (18 respondents)
5. % of respondents who fear that animal disruptions and dislocations from the vicinity of Diavik will negatively impact adjacent ecosystems: 44% (P), 11%. (9 respondents)

## **OTHER AND GENERAL CONCERNS**

Many of Diavik's anticipated environmental impacts will have direct and, as the NSMA will demonstrate in *Phase II*, measurable social, economic and cultural impacts. One activity that appears to have already had a negative social impact on closely knit North Slave Métis families living in Rae and Yellowknife is increased truck traffic. Marie Dautel explains:

I wouldn't [go to work in the mine]. I'm too family orientated. I couldn't leave my children for two weeks. Even if they're not living in Yellowknife, I couldn't leave. My Mom and Dad really rely on me to be living in Yellowknife. When they come to Yellowknife, they stay with me. I drive them everywhere, take them shopping, make sure everything is hunky dory, and then they go home. I couldn't leave and have no one to look after my Mom and Dad. ...I don't even go home to Rae because of these big trucks. I'm scared to be on that highway. And now that (Diavik) is going to open up...how much more traffic is

going to be out there? I'm never going to go to Edzo to see my family because I'm petrified. I've almost had two accidents going there and I've been to Edzo twice since Christmas. And my family is only 100 km down the road, but I don't go there because I'm scared of those big trucks. They take up the road. And the road itself. ...That highway is just terrible. I wish they would build a road just for the big trucks, so we could have our own [laughs]. (Marie Dautel)

Quite apart from the specific environmental impacts of various mining activities on valued ecosystem components, many respondents also expressed concerns about the Diavik project in more general terms.

Like if you notice one species of animal totally gone, or you don't see them anymore it could be a concern. There could be some chemical that's going into that water that really bothers the animal, or even like you say, with the stuff they're burning and this and that. I feel like they better be following the exact ways that you dispose of things also. Like the way you dispose of certain types of fuel. Like you don't want to see a whole big bunch of empty drums when it's all over, a bunch of drums that are half full of different chemicals and stuff like that left out there. (Fred LeMouel)

I think, well, it's going to be a negative effect for sure. I mean I don't think any animal gets used to blasting. I don't think that even people get used to blasting, when your house starts to shake. But it's going to be a negative impact. I mean blasting is going to... If the animals are in the area, there are also... rocks are flying, and if they're altering the terrain, like eskers are used by the caribou during their migration movements, and they also hang around on the eskers during the hot days during the summer when the mosquitoes are getting bad up there, and roads, the roads around the area are going to be used extensively, so the caribou are always... it's going to be tricky sometimes, when they start crossing the road, running in front of vehicles going along, there could be accidents, and waste, depending on how they dispose of their waste and garbage, I guess it'll depend on what sort of animals are attracted to the area. [Others animals] will probably move away from the area. ...I imagine it will be a negative impact. I don't know how extensive it's going to be. ...All those emissions aren't going to be healthy for any animal or human, but I guess the amount that's coming out will depend on how healthy the area is. (Bob Turner)

...Disbursement of the water would probably be the biggest thing and containment of the heavy equipment fluids and just generally clean-up after everything was done. You don't want to put a band-aid on

something that's not 25 years old yet. With these two projects in the next 25 years, we'll probably learn so much from it about how to do things a little bit better and I think it should be gone through. We are lucky today that we have an environmental unit that can get up and complain and not be like this thing that went on in the early 50's beryllium mine or the Rayrock thing, which was just dropped and left. Port Radium site, the Hottah Lake site, which is right here, the Indor mine and there's another one over here, I think it was the Sun Rose. That was just left, they left their tank there and this was a uranium mine and they didn't even have a tailings pond. It was all run by steam way back in the 1930's. ...But you know something like that [Diavik], do a good clean-up after you are finished. With all of these (kimberlite) pipes they are going to be finding, they are probably going to be there for a hundred years on different projects and stuff like that, so they will have a lot of time to clean-up. If they do a good job and don't damage too much and if they do, then I guess we will learn something there too. (D'Arcy Mercredi)

### **Mine Clean-up and Reclamation**

Of particular concern to many respondents was the need for Diavik, if regulatory approval is granted, to clean-up and restore the mine site to the best of its ability after closure:

Well, I sure hope that they would carry through with the commitment to restore the site and all that to as near natural as they can; passable to caribou and all the wildlife, and just try to set things back to a natural state. You know we need some kind of a major bond posted by these people to ensure that will happen. We don't want to end up with another situation like with Giant here. I mean they were supposed to put in seven million [\$] towards a 250 million dollar clean up ...of arsenic, but what did they put in? Four hundred thousand, I hear. Definitely don't want to be in that kind of situation in the next go round of closures, whenever that'll be. We ought to make sure that we have some good agreement in place; the resources will be there, available to deal with the de-commissioning and reclamation of the mine site. (Adrian D'hont)

Once they stop mining they'll have to do a lot of work to try to restore the area, but they're not going to be able to restore it to its natural state, so they're going to have to fix it up as best as they can in the area, and then go elsewhere and fix other habitat that may have been destroyed or ruined or whatever, but a no net loss program means that if they destroy some habitat there they're going to have to replace it, back to



its natural state there, and then if they can't do that they'll have to go elsewhere and fix other habitat. (Bob Turner)

I make a portion of my living flying tourists out to take a look at this beautiful country that we have, and you come across some dilapidated old mess, it doesn't look good. So it is very important to me [clean-up and restoration of mine site], and plus my young fellows are going to come up and they're going to want to see some of this untouched ground, and if you go there and there are drums all over, then it doesn't look good. (Peter Arychuk)

And in the process, Métis may even get jobs out of it:

I don't know how much has been done with the environment after all we hear around here about Giant Mine. I'm sure that other groups have brought it up too, but that would be one of the concerns too I guess. The clean-up and how to restore it. That's job creation too. I don't know for how long, but there would be some clean-up work that would create jobs as well as make sure that things were restored back to as close as possible to what it was. (Anon.)

## **6.0 SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL IMPACTS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (the Act)* resource developers are required to assess the social, cultural and economic effects of their projects only to the extent that they result directly from environmental impacts. However, the environmental assessment (EA) guidelines developed for the Diavik project by the Responsible Authorities (RAs) also instructed the proponent to assess the impacts of its mine on traditional economy, land use, cultural well-being and community wellness. Nonetheless, this "Made in the North" environmental assessment failed with respect to the North Slave Métis Alliance (NSMA). Despite notification and arguments made to DIAND and Diavik, seven significant non-conformities were not recognized until January 1999, leaving the NSMA with little time to collect the data necessary to make informed decisions and meaningfully participate in the assessment (see Chapters 2.0 and 5.0). Thus, the NSMA was forced to set aside the development of environmental/land use, social, economic and cultural baselines in order to document the concerns of our membership about the various impacts of the Diavik project. The development of information baselines, which will allow the NSMA to assess and contribute to the management of impacts, is proposed for *Phase II*. This chapter presents the concerns that our members expressed about the major social, cultural and economic impacts of the Diavik project.

### **North Slave Métis Views on the Diavik Project**

Carefully constructed comments made by the RAs in the Comprehensive Study Report (CSR) suggest that Diavik's consultations during its environmental assessment were "adequate". However, this is not the case for the NSMA, who were never treated with the same respect as other Aboriginal communities, and who were never empowered to assess the impacts through any form of community-level data collection. In particular, the NSMA was never asked to define the indicators of community wellness and cultural well-being to be examined, a critical tenet of socio-cultural analysis, as laid out in the EA Guidelines. Some North Slave Métis felt that the entire process occurred at a pace that was discordant with the potential impacts of the Diavik project on North Slave Métis lands, resources, economy, community and culture:

I think it is extremely rushed. It should be lengthened and also they seem to design their environmental assessment around the winter road all the time, as if that's the make or break of the project. When they filed ...their project proposal, to ...get their license, they already have

that targeted date. They make believe to the regulatory authorities that the window of opportunity is only this big [gestures], [that] this whole mine is not possible if it has to be licensed in the next year. So, if something goes wrong for a week, well you've lost that week and they are not going to extend the project for one more week. That's their major downfall, as far as I'm concerned.... (Clem Paul)

Some individuals were so disillusioned and despondent about the EA process that they felt that the Diavik project was a "done deal" forged in the shady back alleyways of collusion:

...Money buys lots of people. It doesn't matter who you are. It buys them. Like if anybody wanted to make a bet on it, if that mine was going to open or not, I'd win for sure, because I know it's going to open, and no one is going to stop it. It can't be stopped! (Lawrence Lafferty)

Nevertheless, despite the failings of the Diavik EA process, it is a vast improvement over previous processes. Clem Paul explains:

Just dealing with these mines. The way these mines have been dealing with Aboriginal peoples is a huge boost to the morale amongst the Aboriginal people because in years past we never participated in any kind of licensing. The federal government licensed them and we never even had a say on it. So when these two mines were started up here [Giant & Con Mines], our parents never had a thing to say about it. Any of the chemicals, they didn't know the extent of the damage that some of this stuff could cause, like the arsenic trioxide and arsenic and all the cyanide they used and the mercury they used to use at the Discovery Mine and all those things. Our people didn't know what all that was about and we are only feeling the effects today. We knew for a number of years that it was bad for us, but there wasn't a thing we could do about it. Through this process here, just by our act of participation in the environmental assessment review process, is a huge boost for our people, because we see opportunities that we would never have been afforded. Our people were never afforded opportunities to work in those mines. Those mine[s] the only time there were brown faces around those mines 50 or 60 years ago was when they were unloading boats or bringing in supplies, that's all we did. Or else, like my father, supplying wood for the boilers. That was the only Aboriginal peoples that were there. They tried an integration program there in the 70's for a few Aboriginal peoples and it worked for some of them, some of them did adapt to the mining way of life, many of them didn't like going underground and they didn't like the

smell of the mill and all that. They were shy and scared away. So this process is a huge boost. (Clem Paul)

At the same time, the NSMA was frustrated and blocked in its efforts to obtain the data to which it is entitled under *the Act*. The impression it now seems, is that although it is untenable to ignore Aboriginal people when building a mine, all a proponent has to do is hold a certain number of meetings to claim adequate consultation. But actually empowering Aboriginal communities by providing data or access to data seems to be out of the question. Consultation as a smokescreen makes a mockery of the spirit and intent of *the Act* and should not be tolerated.

All (100%) North Slave Métis interviewed were firmly convinced that Diavik will have a combination of both positive and negative impacts on individuals, families and the North Slave community:

Working for Diavik will make them more independent. They can get and buy what they want. Hopefully, they'll know how to budget themselves. I'm kind of scared because there is going to be a lot of other negative things that go with the positives. (Marie Dautel)

Our people vary. Some of them are younger and many of our families over the years have been torn apart through residential schools.... Many families...have a strong desire to succeed and others maybe...are quite content to live for today. They vary. There will be success stories and there will be failures. I'm not going to be disappointed if there are a few more failures at first than successes because it just indicates to us that there's a lot more work to do with our people to ensure that they maximize the benefits of economic opportunities in the area, otherwise the opportunity isn't of any benefit to us. So, therefore it shouldn't be happening at this point, hurting us and tearing our families apart, we do not need anymore of this at this time. ... Some families are successful at it today and the next generation will probably be just as successful.... And the ones that aren't successful, they are either going to learn or they are going to do the same thing as the past generation, but nonetheless they are probably going to survive one way or another. Like I said, some of them are going to put money away and others are going to squander it. That's a fact of life. That's the essence of this kind of work so you can measure those kinds of things and you can calculate the percentage of successes that are going to be the result of any kind of development and what kind of people to focus your interests on. (Clem Paul)

The following four sections articulate the concerns and predictions of the North Slave Métis about both the positive and negative impacts of increased income and

employment, should Diavik receive regulatory approval. The first section presents what the membership of the NMSA feels may be the positive impacts of increased income created by direct and indirect employment with Diavik. The second section details the concerns of our membership about the potentially negative economic, social and cultural impacts of increased income. The third section presents the views of the North Slave Métis about the positive social and cultural impacts of increased employment. Finally, the fourth section discusses the potential negative impacts of increased employment on individuals, family and community. Also included in these sections, where available, is information and knowledge about the signs or indicators that increased income and employment are negatively affecting people, families and the North Slave Métis community. Chapter 7.0 forwards numerous specific and general recommendations relevant to properly assessing, monitoring and mitigating social, economic, cultural and environmental impacts at the Diavik mine site.

## **POSITIVE IMPACTS OF INCREASED INCOME**

### **Increased Income and Purchasing Power**

Diavik is committed to hiring Aboriginal people from the North, both as employees and as contractors of goods and services to its mine. All respondents (100%) felt that the income from employment with Diavik would result in the purchase of goods and services that would have positive impacts on individuals, families and the North Slave Métis community:

Well, they gotta a job, they make money, they're happy, they make money, they come to town they buy what they want, and I guess they go back to work again. They think I gonna buy this, I gonna buy that, I think I guess when they're working. When [they] get their cheque, now they put in the bank, and they come here to buy what they want to buy. Yeah. ...I'm really happy about that. They gonna make money. If they don't work, where they gonna have money? I'm really happy. People working all the time. They be happy with money. They buy what they want. They be proud about that, our work, and "I make money", they gonna save it. If they don't work, from where they gonna have money? Nobody give a dollar. They have to work today. Before us, we're young, we don't work [for \$], we don't know money. (Alice Lafferty)

For many people, more money may translate into greater freedom, independence and happiness:

You have money, you have freedom, you get this. I'm always one of these people who says, "What's going to happen to your children?" "Don't forget your children." I've seen a lot of people going ahead and

leaving their kids behind. ...It will be good, it will give them independence and give them money. It will give them some freedom... Like I said, it gives you independence and freedom. Also probably education comes along with that. (Marie Dautel)

...If everyone is working, then of course everyone is going to be happy and dollars will be in the community and everybody should be happy. ...It will be like the old Yellowknife when I grew up here. (Leroy Bloomstrand)

There is a host of things that people might spend their money on that would have a positive influence on them, their families and the North Slave Métis community:

Well people could maybe own their own homes. There's a number of people who aren't in that situation, but it would give them opportunity if they so choose to buy some place in the community, and they could use it to upgrade their gear for getting out on the land, you know on their two weeks off or whatever, if they wanted to go out and do some hunting or fishing or whatever, they could get some new equipment or better equipment.... And they could put bank some money away for children's education, and just buy those things that a person needs, I guess, to live a good healthy life. And there's probably, you know, some decisions that you could make, like in the grocery store, some things that maybe are good for you, but cost too much. (Adrian D'hont)

Mostly, people might be anticipated to purchase "big ticket" items, and judging from the BHP experience, trucks in particular:

Well, a lot of them will be able to buy things that are so unaffordable these days like boats, canoes, cabins or whatever they might need, in that sense like...or maybe fixing up their own homes. Just whatever any good person will spend good money on. (Fred LeMouel)

They shouldn't have to travel down south to work, and it's good money. By the time the 25 years is up, you could retire, and it's a good chance to build yourselves a home, or whatever from this mine. ...Well, build yourself a home, look after your family. ...Homes, transportation, luxury. Just things that a normal person spends their money on, I guess ... everybody likes to drive a brand new pick-up truck. I think that's the first thing on their mind. I see a lot of young kids driving wagon trucks around town. ...Most of the guys working up at BHP, young boys there, they're all driving brand new pick-ups. (Lawrence Lafferty)



But some of them [people] are good [with their money]. Some of them got trucks, which is good, they haul wood in it, they haul meat in it and all that. [My son] bought a truck, but now he's got it into the garage and it cost him \$600. ...But they've got lots of money. There's not too much welfare now. Those that are working now don't get any family allowance, that's changing too. Anyway, as far as those working there [Diavik and BHP], I think it's good for them because they go caribou hunting, they don't bum around. They go caribou hunting with their trucks, they buy gas, they come home and they take off again. That's a good sign. ...All of Fort Rae has got trucks now since BHP started. Everybody's got a truck; everybody's got a car. Oh, gosh. Before there used to be only two of us... that had trucks. Now the whole town has got trucks. (Ernie Camsell)

Travel is another thing that people might choose to spend their earnings on:

Well, there's a range of things that people can spend their money on, they can...after two weeks in the bush or out at the camp, they might want to spend their money on a plane ticket and header south and go on a holiday.... (Bob Turner)

While travel has the potential to benefit the individual, it can also have drawbacks for the local economy, and thus community:

They might be inclined to go on a good holiday, and come back just broke, and go back to work, and recharge the bank account, and do it again in two weeks time, I don't know. ...It could be a good thing, ...as long as it didn't go on forever. I mean if a person wanted to travel in their two weeks, they're not going to see the world in two weeks, but go somewhere in two weeks, and then go somewhere else the next time you're out. Travel in itself is a good thing I think. It gives you exposure to a lot of different things. In the right circumstances it could be good, but I guess the down side of that is the money being spent outside the home community and that type of thing, not contributing to the local economy. (Adrian D'hont)

There was also some indication that single people and families will have different priorities when it comes to making decisions about their purchases:

The single people will want vehicles, ski-doo's, those kinds of material things. Couples and families, I guess that's another educational part that's required for people to start looking at home ownership as a benefit to them. (Anon.)

## **Impact of More Money on the Traditional Economy**

Today, many North Slave Métis and other Aboriginal people find it difficult to hunt on a regular basis. Maintaining one's connection to the land requires money and a large majority of respondents (86%) thought that members of the North Slave Métis community who went to work for Diavik would purchase more hunting equipment:

Sure they buy everything. ...Some they buy sleigh for the dogs. They said they got dogs. Some people, they go with dog team I guess. Some they buy trucks, shells. Some they buy new gun. When they working over there [BHP], they buy lots of stuff I heard, Fort Rae. Well, they go their own land, they got their own tent, they got everything, they put on the land there, and they stay there, they hunting for rabbits, rabbits or chickens, ducks, moose...Yeah. They eat food from the land. They don't buy meat in the store. They eat wild meat. If they want to buy something, [its] tea, flour, rice, rolled oats. (Alice Lafferty)

It's not cheap to hunt these days. If you like to hunt with the luxuries of ski-doo's and 4-wheelers and boats and the cost of gas, maintenance... you've got to get good equipment.... I hope they increase it [hunting] more on their off days. That's what I plan to do. It's better than sitting in the bar. (Leroy Bloomstrand)

While many older people have a reservoir of knowledge and equipment needed to sustain themselves on the land, younger people often do not have either:

...[Jobs in the mine] would probably change their lives. ... Lots of boys in Rae, I think, "Why don't you do that for your Dad and go trapping and fishing and all that." "Ernie," they say, "We've got nothing. We've got no ski-doo, no traps, no tent, which way do you want us to go?" Who's to blame? The parents apparently, I guess. ...Maybe because there's no jobs. "I'd like to go," he says, "but I've got nothing to go with." ...That's the answer I used to get. So what should I tell them? (Ernie Camsell)

It is just not money that's in short supply. For many middle-age wage earners time seems to have become a rare commodity:

Although not everyone's able to [hunt] because these days it seems to take a certain amount of money to be able to do that, because it's not like

the old days where everyone had a fish net, had a dog team, you know, who had all that stuff. I mean these days it's a snowmobile, you have to have a snowmobile, you've got to have a boat, you have to have money to jump on airplanes, you got to have a truck or whatever. I guess it's not something everyone can do because there's a financial constraint on other peoples' lives, but then there's also some situations, I guess, because of health reasons and other family commitments. There's a lot of things that tie people into being in town as well. I mean it gets pretty tough to get out sometime. The kids have got sport activities or all kinds of things to keep, to sort of hold you in town. A lot of nice weekends go by, you'd love to be able to pack up and head out, but no [we] can't go we've got this or that [to do]. But I mean that's all decisions too, lifestyle decisions. (Adrian D'hont)

If income from employment at Diavik results in the purchase of more hunting equipment, some respondents thought that this would result in an increase in sharing:

What it [buying hunting equipment] does is that sharing thing. If you go hunting you share it with other families. You share it with your family and with others. In a community you know that this person is old and doesn't have relatives to help them, so you give them some. And it's not just North Slave Métis. North Slave Métis people will do it and give it to old people they know or people who have something wrong with them or their family won't help them. (Anon.)

Well, in a perfect world, if you got a good job and you're making a fair amount of money, living comfortably financially, then you should also be, I guess, able to share your wealth. And that doesn't mean by giving your money away, but by being able to provide help to others that need it, I mean you're going to be able to. Some people might purchase new equipment to go out on the land, they'll be able to access caribou, for an example. They can go out hunting a lot easier than people that don't have those items of equipment and can't get out, because you have to travel a fair distance away from Yellowknife to hunt. And, so if you're able to do that you can go out and harvest caribou or whatnot, fish, and provide food to other members of your community, or I know some people might just concentrate on their own families, but at least that's [beneficial] to their family.... (Bob Turner)

Purchasing hunting equipment, assuming that's it's used for hunting, also has the potential to promote traditional values about the land:

If the equipment is used for going out hunting and harvesting and if its increasing in our community, then its probably going to mean, these individuals, the younger generation that I'm thinking [about], are going to be working out there will be out there harvesting the wildlife and bringing food home. And if that's increasing then obviously they're going to be bringing more country food home, which is going to be a positive, and they're not always going to just keep it for themselves. ...Anytime that anything brings you back out onto the land, it just gets you more in touch with the land, and you talk about it with other people and they can relate, and its...I can say even spiritual.... I have to admit I'm not a very spiritual person, but I want to use that word because that's the feeling I get when [you] talk about getting out on the land. You can be alone or out there by yourself... (Bob Turner)

If more hunting equipment results in greater dependence on the land, there is also a greater potential that the wisdom, knowledge and values of the elders will be passed on to younger generations. Alice Lafferty explains:

...Maybe they'll be happy with people [elders], eh. Work, get wood, carry water for them, fix the hide, make snowshoes, babiche. They do everything on the land, but here [Yellowknife] nothing, they go to school, they go home, they go coffee shop, they make more trouble for people. Like in the summertime, we take them to Old Fort and they like it over there. We cook on the fire outside, and all night, they're sitting beside the fire, talking, talk, for three days or four days. They really like it. "Grandma, how come so quick we came here [Yellowknife], we like it [Old Fort Rae]." (Alice Lafferty)

Ever since the BHP environmental assessment there has been an assumption among both government and industry in the Northwest Territories that having more money will result in the purchase of more hunting equipment, which, in turn, will strengthen peoples' connection to their traditional activities and values while promoting a healthy diet, etc. However, this assumption, which continues to be perpetuated by Diavik, has not been rigorously tested. On the face of it, this myth seems as plausible as it is attractive, especially if one considers statements by elders; of course, that's what elders would want to do, if they had the money. But for younger people, i.e., the individuals most likely to wind up working for Diavik, emerging information is beginning to cast doubt on the general validity of this assumption. In Lutselk'e, for example, 71% of those interviewed said that they now personally spend less time on the land now that there is spouse is employed [at BHP and Diavik].<sup>193</sup> Some people consulted for this report predict the same effect for the North Slave Métis:

I think less [people working at the mine spending time on the land]. You're out there for two weeks in, 12-hour shifts. You come home; you'll probably want to spend some time with your family. You're not all of a sudden going to want to go out there and hunt. [Eventually] you'll go out there and... get some caribou and some fish and whatever and restock your deep freeze before you go out and your two weeks are up. (Marie Dautel)

There are other arguments that cast doubt on the "more money = greater use of renewable resources" myth. First, shift rotation work may be too inflexible for maintaining a traditional connection to the land:

To some extent [shift work will impact traditional resource use], especially if they miss the seasonal opportunity because [of] being on site. I'm thinking of them and their families. I mean if you're up working at Diavik and miss the goose hunting time, I mean it's gone and over with here very fast in the spring, you've just got a few days basically to do it, there's really only a couple of days that are really any good. You miss that day, that's it. No geese for you. Or moose hunting time. It's a little bit longer. There's other opportunities I guess. You need to rely on somebody else to be there to take advantage of those times if you were away. ...Yeah I wouldn't like it if I was up working there and geese were flying down. I wouldn't be a happy camper. (Adrian D'hont)

Also, more hunting equipment may not necessarily translate into greater consumption of country food, but more work:

I've seen it quite a bit. In the years that I've been [out] a few times, I see faces out there that I've never seen out hunting before. No, I don't think so. I think it just makes it easier, that's all, to have these things.... I went out this winter, out on a skidoo, and it wasn't fun, you know killing caribou, I had to drag it back, drag it back. It's not easy. (Lawrence Lafferty)

Paradoxically, having better, more efficient hunting equipment may result in spending less time on the land and with indigenous knowledge holders, and thus result in a loss of traditional land-based skills and values, knowledge. Adrian D'hont explains:

...for some I think you know if they've got the gear [dependence on land will increase]. But one thing that might happen is they might just go for shorter trips, for the day instead of going out and setting up a camp, along the highway or on the lake somewhere, they might drive

out and throw the skidoo or boat in, make a quick trip and be back the same day or whatever. ...But I don't know if there'd be like, on the short excursions if you'd have... enough time to sit around and hear some stories [from elders and land-based knowledge holders]. You just [go] out...you're spending all your day on your snowmobile, in the boat or whatever, and you don't have any down time around the campfire or held up because of the weather, drinking tea and telling stories, whatever. Potentially it could be just a quick trip without much time for stuff like that to happen. (Adrian D'hont)

There remains the distinct possibility that, if North Slave Métis make purchases that will strengthen their dependence on the land, so too will resident non-Aboriginals, which may result in a negative impact:

...I mean, as much as it is a positive impact for us [money could increase purchase of hunting equipment], it's also a negative impact because we know we are only going to make up about probably one-third, or if we are lucky maybe one-half of the workforce. If our people are going to benefit from getting out on the land, that's means that the other half of the workforce, which is non-native, will be out on the land as well. In other words, the positive impact that they are saying ... might happen, getting us out on the land, is also getting the other half of the people out on the land as well, [and] there are no rules and regulations guiding them as far as their land use and all that goes. So it is going to be a negative impact on our caribou herds and hunting wolves and everything else. ...Yes, so if they wanted to brag about [how] new money is going to enable us to get out on the land, the new money is going to enable everyone to get out on the land as well, so that means more people that we have to watch out for out in the bush that are shooting all over the place. They are shooting up wolves and caribou because most of our people don't shoot wolves. About 99% of our people don't do that. They are a necessity as far as the caribou herd goes and we feel that way. But other people, other non-natives, do it because it's worth \$500. So they run around and chase wolves and do all sorts of damage out there. They build cabins and burn and all kinds of stuff out there. So as much as it might be positive for us, the negative impact that it will bring [from] the other people out there, when you weigh both ends of the scale, it will probably be negative. (Clem Paul)



## **NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF INCREASED INCOME**

The notion that having more money, greater disposable income, will result in purchases that will have long lasting positive benefits for individuals, families and the North Slave Métis community is erroneous as it fails to acknowledge present circumstances and spending history:

Number one would be booze, of course. You know liquor. In many societies you have those that abuse certain things, and given the dollars they're going to make, which in some cases I'm sure will be substantial over what they've done now or have done in the past, so it could lead to things like more alcohol, drugs, family abuse, stuff like that. (Jack Balsillie)

...increased money isn't always a good thing. You know there's situations where there will be increased alcoholism, social problems, that are just a little hard to handle sometimes I guess, especially if it's a sudden thing, a sudden transition, but here I think we're living in this urban setting anyway, I think it could be kind of hard to sort that one out I would think. (Adrian D'hont)

... Like I said, if something isn't done to start dealing with problems that are here now, then just because people are making more money it doesn't mean that there's going to be less social problems in the area. And if individuals are coming back with more money and they're spending more money on alcohol and drugs, then the problems are increasing, so it's a tricky situation. (Bob Turner)

Almost all respondents (89%) were concerned that increased disposable income as a result of employment with Diavik will be used for purchases that will negatively affect individuals, families and the community. This is particularly so for those people who are either prone to consumerism or not used to handling money, or both:

Lets hope they don't go the other route and start spending it on alcohol and drugs and start really gambling and tearing your family apart.... [If they do] it will destroy a family and yes you will probably destroy a community. It can. ... The North Slave Métis ... are all related in some way. Have you ever seen the genealogy chart? I come from house so-and-so and Clem comes from house so-and-so and eventually we still go back up there, we are still related. Across the board. It will tear a family apart; it will tear a community apart. Drugs and alcohol are evil. And in the Bible what does it say? What is money? The root of all evil.

It will destroy, but I hope it doesn't. The more you have, the more you spend. (Marie Dautel)

Well, alcohol I guess, alcohol, drugs, those types of things. Buy satellite TV systems [laughs]. Buy stuff that you don't really need that's not going to do much for you. Buying a sixty thousand dollar vehicle when a thirty thousand dollar one would be adequate, stuff like that, getting caught up in that consumer type thing. But I guess that's like anyone else, got to make some decisions there, think of the future. (Adrian D'hont)

A lot of people never really had much money all their life, so all of a sudden they're going to have all this money, so a lot of them might start drinking even though they never drank much before, because when you grow up not ever having anything and any money, it's one thing to have this kind of life, a sober life and this and that, but all of a sudden when you have lots of money and you don't know what to do with it, so that's another thing the NSMA should look into is having say courses on money managing, and also be an agent for any people requiring rehabilitation. (Fred LeMouel)

## **Alcohol and Drug Abuse**

Of all the existing social problems that may be exacerbated by having more money to spend, 77% of the respondents predicted an increase in the use of alcohol and drugs. Past personal history and experience and the recent effects of the BHP Ekati mine appear to fuel this concern:

...They go, when they come here, they go straight to the bars and drink, and go back again, two weeks in, two weeks out. I know my nephew did. That's what he told me. I think he said, "I bought lots of things for my Mom, but now I'm going back [to bar]...." He said, "I drink with people. I don't know what I did with my money. Maybe I drink it all. I don't know what I did with it. I got nothing now. I have to go back to work." I said, "You better watch your money, you should leave it in the bank," I said. "If you need it, go and get a few dollars, something, but why you drunk it." "But now," he said, "I gonna do that." I never see him for a long. Maybe he's still working over there [BHP]. ...There they go [to the bar], they buy a round, they buy another, another with someone. Next day the same, and when they got no money, they wait until they go back to work, two weeks in, two weeks out. ...They don't listen to people. From here, if they go to work, BHP, they said they look at the packsack if they bring something. They don't bring nothing over there to work, that's why they're working. And when they're

gonna come back, right away they go to the bar. They said, my money be in, but twelve o'clock I take my money out. That's what they said. Twelve o'clock they go to the bank, they take their money, and they go back to the bar I guess. ...But some they got no kids, that's the ones that really spend their money, foolish. The bar. They don't think about nothing. ...But they got no kids, what they gonna do? They spend all in the bar. They work just for nothing. They go back broke again. Work two weeks, they come back the same. They got nobody to feed I guess. They got no kids. Maybe they got no girlfriend. (Alice Lafferty)

...You are not only going to have people who are recovering alcoholics out there [Diavik], you are going to have people who are all of the sudden going to have all of this money. They will come back and not be working, and they will have nothing else to do but call up the buddies and go out and have a few drinks. Two weeks of hard core drinking and you get used to that. I know some of the employees come back [from BHP] and their first day back the bar is the first place they hit. Some of them are in pretty rough shape by the time they get back to work. (Dianna Beck)

People will buy alcohol. Give all their money to the Gold Range. That's happened to me before. I always go out in the bush, and you're out there a long time, and you come back and blow the whole thing at the bar. When you finally come to, you're flat broke, wondering, "What the hell did I do."...Well, that's just like anybody else. The alcohol has damaged more families than anything, I guess. Alcohol is bad for that. It's not good for anything really. ...Some kids come in from BHP. They still got their luggage with them, sitting beside them at the bar. Their luggage is sitting on the floor. I don't think they're going home first, straight to the bar. That'll never change. (Lawrence Lafferty)

Well, there's many of us today that don't drink and many of us today that know and realize the benefits of a sober life, a drug and alcohol-free life.... There's enough of us in the community today to help bring those younger people back. I know that many of them will drink a little more. When we were growing up, I grew up in Yellowknife when it was just little shacks downtown.... In those days, you see, people used to go into the bush for four or five months, maybe six months, sometimes a year, they'd come out of the bush, stay in town ... drink, smoke, party and "fool around" in the community anywhere from a week to a month. They'd run out of cash and go back into the bush. Many of us grew up with that kind of attitude. That's all we knew - how to drink, smoke cigarettes and "fool around" and all that other stuff. So we thought it was a way of life. These days, in the last 15 or 20

years or so ...many of us have realized that that's just not the way to really raise a family; it's not really helping us. So we're kind of turning away from that. Many of our children and grandchildren see that today. I don't think they are going to be as bad as we were. If they are not as bad as us, I think there's lots of hope for success. (Clem Paul)

A few respondents (8%) felt that there would be little or no increase in the use of alcohol as a consequence of having more disposable income as they considered alcohol not to be the problem it once was:

...A lot of people will buy good things with their money. You gotta remember I believe we're on the tail end of all these addictions and everything because the north was hit very hard by the impact of [change].... And even when there was industry here the Natives [got] very little money, ...so it drove people into alcoholism because they couldn't see no future, and so when people moved from the land into the towns and stuff like that, and then they first had their first taste of alcohol.... But our parents lived through it and a lot of it was passed onto us around my age, and we're living through it, but they're all trying to recover. A lot of us have recovered, so we're teaching our kids different things now and so hopefully our kids won't have to go as deep into it as we did, so eventually the whole Native community, when I say whole Native community I mean Métis and Natives, by coming out of that alcohol era. ...Like I say, a lot of young people nowadays are not affected by that alcohol disease. Some still are, but some of them might be [on] drugs, but like I say it's up to the individual. (Fred LeMouel)

Alcohol consumption is a matter of personal choice and those who have no difficulty with it now, and can drink responsibly, will probably continue to do so after they go to work for Diavik:

...A lot of us probably grew up with alcoholic parents and we should know the effects. I'm no better myself because I'm going to go to the bar tonight, but I usually pay off my bills first. I think of my family first, then I go out and have a good time with my friends, but I don't try and go overboard. So it is just how to be responsible if you are going to indulge in some kind of drinking or smoking or whatever you want to do. That's where responsibility comes in and you have to handle that. (Leroy Bloomstrand)

They know what they're doing. And they're managing their money and their family is right. The ones that are already into that kind of lifestyle they have more money and they are probably planning better for their

children and their future or their pension or something. Those people are going to be okay. Other people are going to go through hard times. They're not going to keep their jobs for very long. It's all a matter of your own personal control and the choices you make. ...There are lots of alcohol and drugs in this town, we know that, it's a big problem here. And again it's based on your choices. (Anon.)

Chances are, however, that, for those people who have problems with alcohol now, their dependency will only get worse; people who are addicted to alcohol will do almost anything to get it:

I'll tell you a story; it was a long time [ago]. When I was working for the Hudson's Bay, there was no booze in them days. We had big brew pots that we used to make all the time. We made one at the house and I guess there was no fire, so it froze. So my brother-in-law says, "Let's go and see my kettle", but it was frozen. So he was chewing on ice and he finally got drunk, chewing on ice! [laughs] "Boy, it's good," he says, as he's chewing on the ice. Finally he got drunk. So funny you know. (Ernie Camsell)

Some elders thought that more money means not only that young people will be abusing alcohol and drugs more often, but the gap between their world and that of their children and grandchildren will widen:

If they're young they make that money, they go together, the people, young girls, young boys, they're gonna buy this, they're gonna buy that. They said they buy liquor, they buy dope, and now they go to the other place [bar], and they drink and they get like crazy with that, and when they come home, we can't even talk to them. They start to cry now, crying and crying. ...They cry for nothing. And I said, "What's wrong with you crying? I guess that dope up in their head. ...They don't think they're crying, they don't think they're talking like that but; I don't want to talk back to them. ...In the morning when they get up, I said, "Look, what's wrong with you last night...you crazy like?" ...Yeah, that's the way it goes. I don't know what going on in their head. It was scary. That's what I told them, I said, "Go to the detox they gonna clean you," I said, "Go over there, they gonna clean you...you be alright." ...They don't want to go. (Alice Lafferty)

The debilitating and mind-numbing effects of dead-end jobs, of working too long on the "shovel" as Fred LeMouel puts it, have forced many Aboriginal people to seek solace in the bottle, a fact that Diavik should consider in assessing its impacts on Aboriginal communities:

I brought one [a drunk] home this morning when I was coming to Yellowknife. I stopped in Rae and there was a drunk and he jumped in with me. He's working for the government. "Ernie," he says, "take me home." ... "What are you doing, I thought you were supposed to be working today?" "No," he says, "I've got ten days off". "Ten days off and you're drinking, what the hell are you doing that for?" I give him what I thought I'd give him. Towards the end he didn't say too much. "Ernie, I've worked long and I've worked so many years and when I work long I need [a drink]...." So I keep my mouth shut because he's right. (Ernie Camsell)

### **Indicators of Increased Alcohol and Drug Use**

There are a host of indicators or signs of increased alcohol abuse with which most people are familiar:

There will be a lot of criminal convictions, assault, spousal assault. That usually comes with alcohol. ...Some people aren't made to drink alcohol, and they don't know when to quit. They end up on the streets. You can see it in Yellowknife. There will just be more of that.... Divorces, family break-ups, murder. Real bad things happen with alcohol, when there's too much of it. ...Kids going to school drunk. Kids taking firearms to school. That's what's been happening. I'm not saying it's going to happen here. I think some terrible things are going to happen here. You've gotta expect them. ...I think mainly alcohol is going to be the biggest problem from all that money they make up there [Diavik]. (Lawrence Lafferty)

...There could be like family breakdowns from violence in the family, and certain effects I guess on the children, affecting their behaviour seeing these things happen to their parents or people they know, or other kids' parents or whatever. And, well there would be sort of direct health problems, I guess, if all the money is going towards alcohol and drugs and there's not, that person isn't going and getting food from the land, or they don't have enough money to go buy proper food, and whatever, I mean I don't know. Maybe their place would be getting trashed. There's a lot of things I guess. ...Well, it would, I think if it goes unchecked and people don't take care of themselves and try to get better, I mean it's something that could split people apart, cause some animosity there, and people would avoid each other a bit I guess, dodge each other over some incident that might have taken place or whatever. It wouldn't do any good to strengthen any bonds, that's for sure. (Adrian D'hont)



For North Slave Métis employees of Diavik, the indicators of increased alcohol and drug abuse would be quite obvious:

Usually they are missing work, they're late for work, they can't stop and sober up and clean up before they take the plane back to the mine. If they have families, you'll see the kids missing school. (Anon.)

Missing work or performance on the job. Safety is number one. That's when Diavik would probably step in. I think they are a little bit more compassionate than before. Companies would just let you go, I think they would probably tell you now to go get counselling or there are groups out there like AA.... (Leroy Bloomstrand)

For families, a sure indication of alcohol abuse is an increase in disputes:

The ones that have a problem with [alcohol], the ones who enjoy it and enjoy it too much, will probably blow it. If they have more money, they'll buy more [booze]. They'll have mothers that are worried sick and fathers that are mad. And there'll be family arguments and there will be little kids that go up to their bedrooms because they don't want to hear it. (Anon.)

Of all the people who could be negatively impacted by increased alcohol and drug abuse resulting from greater disposable income, children are perhaps the most susceptible. Ernie Camsell explains:

Well it's not the family so much as the kids [that will be affected by alcohol abuse]. It's the kids that would be pitiful. Father and mother they're fighting, kids are there, I've seen lots of that. Dad is drinking and drunk and fighting. That's where I got this from [shows scar]. A coffee pot, I got one here and there. Fight. (Ernie Camsell)

As participants of the NSMA youth workshop explain, children will suffer greatly:

They'd be tired and smell bad. ...They'd probably have problems at school. ...There'd be no lunch. ...No food to eat.

The youth also expressed the concern that the children of substance abusers may become substance abusers themselves:

They think it's all right if their parents are doing it [abusing drugs and alcohol]. They could do it or something. (Peter Turner)

One way to monitor the well-being of children is through school attendance:

School attendance is a big indicator of what's going on. There's a reason why people aren't going to school. Sometimes it's because their parents were beat up or because they've run out of money, because they've been abusing something else. So one way is to keep their kids home. I've heard that a number of times. They claim the kid is sick, but the kid's not sick, it's them that's sick. (Anon.)

## **Gambling**

About two thirds (65%) of respondents were concerned that gambling will increase as a result of greater personal incomes. Granted that bingo and other forms of gambling takes place in social settings and thus may have some redeeming social value, gambling has become a big problem among many Aboriginal communities:

...You've got another big addiction around here, gambling.... When I used to work at Eldorado there was guys that gambled their pay cheques and stuff. There were some pretty major poker games there. That probably goes on around here, maybe it happens right on site [BHP and Diavik]. (Adrian D'hont)

The gambling in the NWT, because there is no video slot machines, we have a lot of backroom gambling. This type of gambling is more intense and really does tear apart families. It is a very quiet way of doing it. No one actually finds out about it. All of a sudden all the money is gone. They want to go back to camp early because you are stuck here for two weeks with no money. (Dianna Beck)

For spouses or partners of people working in the mine the lure of bingo may be particularly strong. Clem Paul explains:

Well, it is quite possible that many of our people will probably be prone to play a little more bingo because this mine is a long way from our home and the one that you leave behind, many the times the family has certain things that they normally do and with one person gone, the other person tries to fill some time in. In this community, like many other northern communities, bingo seems to be the place to do it. The only option seems to be the bingo or the bar. So the other spouse usually prefers that the other one be at the bingo rather than the bar so they feel a little more secure that there will be something back home when they get there. I think bingo is not going to go away. It's like the alcohol and drugs, sooner or later people are going to realize that they are not getting much further ahead by going to bingo. It's probably

killing them faster than when they used to smoke and drink. It will probably hopefully eventually slow down from that. I really don't know what to expect, that's, like I said, that's what some of this work is for to forecast what might happen and if this does then we can do something about it or find a means to go about it. To alert government and say, "Well this is an impact on our society, therefore I want you to do something about it." (Clem Paul)

As with other addictions, children will be most impacted if more money translates into more gambling:

I believe gambling will increase... I don't gamble because it takes time away from my children. It takes money away from my children. And all of a sudden I just look at myself and go " Whoa, you are a bad Mom. You're not a good parent here." You're depriving your children of your time and everything else.... (Marie Dautel)

I firmly believe that people who gamble have made a bad choice on their part. We can't stop them; the only one that can stop them is themselves. Really! ...Their children suffer usually. They drop out of school, they get into that same lifestyle, they become homeless people some of them. They get kicked out of various places and you know something is wrong. After a while they are the kinds that will get a bad reputation especially if you're kicked out of subsidized housing the rent is very low, why would you be kicked out? Noise, parties, that kind of stuff. I don't think it helps their children. (Anon.)

### **Gambling Indicators**

Indicators of increased gambling are similar to those for increased alcohol and drug use. The inability to meet bill payments and rents, or properly feed, clothe and shelter dependents will only exacerbate family dysfunction:

The pay cheque's gone, I mean, you can't use it for food, clothing, shelter or whatever, the sort of necessary things, it's been wasted on something else.... Well, certainly it could bleed off a lot of money that wouldn't be available for essential day-to-day stuff. ...Well, I could see it being a real problem alright. It could probably lead to breakdowns, violence, whatever. I can see it being a major issue in those cases where it's a problem, gambling's a problem, taking money out of the home, yeah. ...Well, I guess there would be direct health stuff, and then there'd be inadequate nutrition or whatever, and there's also certain behavioural stuff if there's things happening, it's affecting them, it's

influencing how they behave. Yeah, not a good situation, that's for sure. (Adrian D'hont)

Borrowing money, losing things, not making their bill payments.... People don't seem to realize that gambling is a disease like alcohol or drugs it's an addiction. (Marie Dautel)

They would have to be dealing with a lot of people to know that. I work in housing, so I know. It's people who come in and say I can't pay rent this month, so I'll pay this. It's feast or famine. (Anon.)

## **Money Management**

Money management was identified as a key concern by most respondents (77%), while another 22% felt that North Slave Métis employees of Diavik might possibly have problems managing their money, but were unsure. Some respondents, while hoping that people will not have trouble handling money, were resigned to the fact that they probably will:

If you are levelheaded enough to get a job at Diavik and maintain a job... let's hope you can maintain a home and keep your mortgage and look after your home. It is up to the individual. ...I hope this extra money, this extra income that they are making will enrich them so much more that they could say "Hey I could do this for my child, I could do this for my family. I could put a little extra money away so they can go to university, or help them buy a house when they get married." I always hope that a lot of positive things come out about this. I try not to think of the negative aspect, but you know it's going to happen. (Marie Dautel).

One of the biggest obstacles that Aboriginal people have to wrestle with in managing their money is centuries of tradition of wealth distribution, sharing and living for the present. For generations, asset and wealth accumulation and saving for the future were antithetical to Aboriginal values. Indeed, in many ways they were an abrogation of the reciprocity, responsibility and obligation that it took to survive in small, closely knit social groups. What was a highly valued trait in the past is viewed as a weakness in contemporary society. One interviewee explains:

I think money management is a weakness in Aboriginal people because they never thought of money. It was just caribou, fish and ducks and this and that, it wasn't associated with money. Freedom 55 and pension, we don't think like that. Well, I think like that, but there's probably lots that don't because they think well, get a pension because she's a widow and old age, and they are happy with that. They should

be made aware that they can save also and have it a bit better than that. ...[Saving is] a weakness in all Aboriginal people. I know from working in North Slave Housing, that that's one of the killers, money management, planning, saving for your pension. You didn't think of it that way because you didn't hear of it... you never heard the word mortgage.... you never heard your parents talking about it, it doesn't mean anything. It's the same with saving for your future or paying your bills on time. I think you learn that in the home, but it doesn't hurt to have it in the schools too. ...The word mortgage was never something I heard when I was growing up. You were expected to build houses and cut the wood. Sometimes you stayed with whomever had the emptiest house until you could build one. It's [money management] not something you'd hear. It's more important to hear it now, so you can tell people to plan to pay off their homes, so in their retirement they won't have to worry about that. Make sure your home is paid off in case you have to go up north for a while, if you are a homeowner. Money management is really important and I think it's one of [our] big weaknesses. (Anon.)

Even when a good living could be made out in the bush or from trapping, Aboriginal people would still encounter problems with managing money:

I know back in the sixties and seventies, ...that it was the old way, go out and work and when you get to town -- it wasn't just like that with Natives, it was like that with anybody that worked in the bush -- when you came back to town, it was time to really give`er, eh, and then usually before it's time to go back, you sober up or whatever. (Fred LeMouel)

...Some of them make good money trapping, but what do they do? They go straight to Yellowknife. I hear all [about] what they're doing, of course, they tell me. They come back, and "What have you done with all the money that you had? What did you buy? Show me?" I give it to them oh, terrible. ... You have to tell them.... "You've got some money now, do this with it or do that", but who's going do that? (Ernie Camsell)

For those who have been disempowered financially for so long and have no history of money management, the spectre of consumerism looms especially large:

...If you really got into the consumer thing big time potentially you're sinking a whole lot of money in there that wouldn't be available for maintaining your family or considering future needs, education or whatever, or saving money for retirement and that type of thing. I mean it's a problem with

anybody whose got an income. [If] it's squandered on stuff, material stuff, there's going to come a time when that material stuff isn't worth anything and the future is looking pretty bleak. There's all that advice out there, financial advisors, RRSPs and all that stuff. A person's wise to sort of heed some of that. (Adrian D'hont)

Along with consumerism, Aboriginal people with increased disposable income might, as ironic as it might seem, experience serious financial debt:

Change in lifestyle I guess, maybe they might spend it too much at once, getting all these toys. From what I heard Fort Rae was like that buying Fords and things that they can't even afford to buy right away. ... Getting into debt. Carrying a big debt load right off the bat. (Leroy Bloomstrand)

For North Slave Métis and other Aboriginal people unaccustomed to working in mines, going in debt may set them up for the "big fall", as Clem Paul anticipates:

A negative impact that people don't always talk about, don't think about, is that along with a job comes a line of credit, usually it is for a new pick-up or a home or something like that. Then their life begins to hinge around that job and if they are not successful at that job or somehow they lose the job, they will establish a bad credit rating giving them a bad name for a number of years. That's potentially a negative thing that they would have to deal with [maybe] be long after the mine is gone, nonetheless it is a fact that they will have to cope with and that's one of the reasons we are doing some of this work - to help our people out of this situation or help them away from that situation before they are in it.

Several respondents stated that money management may become a particular source of friction between spouses, especially if one is a Diavik employee and the other is not. Ernie Camsell and others explain an all too familiar scenario:

... [He] is out there working, the old lady is home and she's one of them ladies that likes to drink all day. By the time [he] comes back home he goes to the bank; there's no money. What do you do in that case? I went to the RCMP and I told them about that woman, but there was no way to get it fixed, so I don't know what. (Ernie Camsell)

...It's a matter of education and again if it's the man working there and the woman you should do something about making sure there is equality between men and women. Because there's that idea that the men are working and the women stay at home and that's how they are



going to treat them, "It's my money and I'm going to buy a ski-doo, you worry about the rent or whatever." Something is wrong there. ...And I'll tell you and some of them are North Slave Métis men who have done this. Only paying half of the rent, "Half of my half based on household income." Right there that guy's going out on a drunk. He's only paying half of his half on that payday and he leaves the rest up to the woman to figure out how she's going to get out of that jam with the landlord. Because the money is based on his income.... (Anon)

I guess their wife maybe said, "Buy me this." They don't take their woman maybe to town. Maybe they don't buy that and they spend other place all that money, and they go home. Nothing. That's why their wife, I guess, they get mad, or their girlfriend. Big argument and they don't stay together. ...Maybe the old people, maybe they go see them, talk about that. Maybe they tell your wife or your girlfriend, you want this, and they never bought it. They went the other way. They spend all that money, and what's she gonna eat, and what's she gonna wear for clothing. And now he go back to work. Again it's the same, I guess. The arguments start. Maybe they don't stay together. Lots of them left each other for that. But maybe their wife if they got kids grow up to go to school. Maybe their mother look after her. Maybe she go to work. Lots of them working in Fort Rae. They're working in office, all over, woman. The boyfriend goes to BHP, I guess. (Alice Lafferty)

It would be a problem. You are out there for two weeks and your paycheque is going home and there's no money? Big time problem, I can just see another battle there. I've worked for two weeks and I'm tired and I want to come home and there's no money, the bills aren't paid. Yes, big time. (Marie Dautel)

However, having no dependents and little responsibility to others, single people may be especially susceptible to mismanaging money:

I don't know what the wages are for Diavik or those places. I know my son makes fairly good money, but I know what he does because he blows it all in the first week that he comes home. He's a single guy and I see that some of his friends are like that that work up there. So their attitude is...not good. I want them to think about putting money away, take good holidays, ... go out somewhere and see other parts of the world. That's what I'm thinking they should be doing with their money. Family people...should be doing lots for [their] kids at school. There are extra expenses involved in school and people have a hard time with that.... (Anon.)

If we preach to them and tell them... do this with your money, do that. Because money... it will be the bar, eh, that's where it will go right away. We need somebody. [If] the chief was good [I'd] imagine that he'd tell them, "Now that you guys are working why don't you get this, why don't you get that", but no nobody is saying anything like that. Them, they're too God damned ignorant to buy what they need. Maybe when they get a little older, maybe. (Ernie Camsell)

### **Indicators of Money Management Problems**

Increased gambling, and to a lesser extent, alcohol and drug abuse are indicators of money management problems. However, there may be others:

...Wife not home, kids home with babysitter... Bills aren't being paid and you're not happy, your wife's not happy. You've just worked a two weeks in, twelve-hour days. I think it will be a big problem. Creditors calling you. Your Visa's no longer working - its max'ed. (Marie Dautel)

Well, I think it's one thing that I'm thinking of. If kids are going to school in rags, but they're driving top of the line, brand new vehicles all the time, that type of thing, but maybe I'm just jealous because I'm driving an old wreck [laughs]. (Adrian D'hont)

Table 4. NSMA Survey Quick Reference Guide: Impacts of Increased Income	
1.	% of respondents who think that increased income from employment at Diavik will lead to the purchase goods and services that will have positive effects on individuals, families and the North Slave Métis community: 100% (27 respondents)
2.	% of respondents who think that increased income from employment at Diavik will lead to the purchase goods and services that will have negative effects on individuals, families and the North Slave Métis community: 89% (27 respondents)
3.	% of respondents who feel that increased income from employment at Diavik will lead to increased abuse of drugs and alcohol: 77% (P), 4%. (26 respondents)
4.	% of respondents who feel that increased income from employment at Diavik will lead to increased gambling: 65% (P), 20%. (20 respondents)
5.	% of respondents who think that North Slave Métis Diavik employees will purchase more hunting, trapping or fishing equipment: 86% (P), 14%. (22 respondents)
6.	% of respondents who think that NSM Diavik employees will spend more time on the land: 61% (P), 30%. (23 respondents)
7.	% of respondents who think North Slave Métis Diavik employees will have problems managing their money: 70% (P), 22%. (23 respondents)

## **POSITIVE IMPACTS OF INCREASED EMPLOYMENT**

### **Diavik and the Promise of a Better Life**

Today, most of Canada's Aboriginal population is unemployed. With the collapse of the traditional or "bush" economy as a viable occupation and a rapidly expanding young population, the future for many rural Aboriginal communities is bleak. However, employment in the natural resource sector holds considerable promise of a better life for many rural Aboriginal people, including the North Slave Métis:

It will benefit the family of the person that is working there. A full-time job, housing, an allowance, whatever comes with that package. I don't know what comes with it, but you have a livelihood from a deteriorating livelihood of trapping, hopefully this will pick up the pace. ...Ninety percent of Aboriginal people across Canada in the last [census] were unemployed. With the right training and a little bit of enthusiasm I think we can pick up those numbers and get out of that state. ...The job is there and you just do your best showing up and

doing your job and go home. Then you can go hunting and trapping or whatever you want to do on your off days. I think that would be a very good lifestyle. (Leroy Bloomstrand)

All respondents (100%) believed that employment with Diavik will have positive impacts for individuals, families and the North Slave Métis community. As Diavik is committed to hiring Aboriginal people, one of most immediate impacts of its mine may be a reduction in unemployment among the North Slave Métis community:

Some of the major positive impacts? Well, if they operate it the way they are proposing, to provide employment and training and business opportunities to the Aboriginal people of the region, ...then that will be a positive impact. So obviously, I mean if our community has a lot of unemployment, and there is employment created, then that's going to be a positive in that sense. But...I think if you've been unemployed for a while, an individual looking for work that's not there and hard to get, then you're going to have a good feeling once you get a job, it's supposed to be a long term position, with a lot of opportunities for training and advancement in your career, then its obviously going to be an uplifting, self esteem and all that good stuff. (Bob Turner)

### **Self-Esteem**

Because of the value of, and importance placed on, work in North Métis culture and society, virtually all respondents (96%) said that being employed and earning your own way will lead to an increase self-esteem and pride:

Well, you [will] probably have a better feeling about yourself and your place because you would, well you wouldn't be dependent on say getting welfare payments or U.I. or something. ...But then it's kind of a hard thing to put a finger on I think, but it could potentially be more of a self-sufficiency type of thing, although in this country around here, even if you don't necessarily have a wage income you can have income from other means, hunting, trapping, and fishing. ...Oh yeah. But you know times are changing and all that too. I mean some people would lean more toward the wage economy because.... For others I guess ...[they] put a lot more, [emphasis on that] old link to the old ways, perhaps more than joining the modern workforce. Sort of the freedom that goes with it and all that as well. Although that's all tied up in the luxury economy too. But the mixed economy thing is probably... for some people I think would be pretty attractive, some wage economy and some of the traditional stuff. (Adrian D'hont)

If you're without a job and people ask you what you're doing, well, "Gee I'm out of work right now," type of thing, it tends to make you feel a little lower or whatever. So if you have a well-paying steady job, I think it adds to your self-esteem and, of course that makes you a better person for that. (Jack Balsillie)

## **Community Wellness**

With increased employment there is the potential for enhanced community wellness:

Well, if more of the people are being employed, and I'm sticking to all the positive scenarios here, if your numbers of unemployment are getting reduced, then theoretically the community is starting to get a little more healthy financially. You're able to start paying your debts and buying food for your family, and clothing, and shelter, and start building up your home so that you're living a fairly healthy way of life. But it doesn't always work that way, but I'm just sticking to the positive scenario of what can happen with more money and more employment, and I guess advancing your career. (Bob Turner)

Jobs with Diavik will most notably benefit youth, who now account for most of the Aboriginal population in the North, and in Alice Lafferty's opinion, young girls especially:

I'm very happy if they make that mine, be lots of work for people, make money, girls, young girls, eh, go up there and work and come back to Mommy and go back and work. It be nice. They can't stay in one place. Them girls today, they make troubles all the time for somebody else. They go to school, they finish their school, they go to work over there. It be nice you know. They'd be more happy, [work] in town. Me, I stay over there on the land. We didn't have nothing. We didn't know nothing about that. We had old gramophone. Old radio. That's all we had. What else we gonna know. We help our Mom go for berries, and we're happy. Now today they want everything. You can't cut wood. You can't make fire you got no nothing. We go out in the bush. We got place out there. We go there for a day. Cut wood. It's good. (Alice Lafferty)

Others are hopeful that job opportunities at Diavik will mean that Métis will no longer have to move south to work.

If there's work here, you're not going to be going down here looking for something else, unless you can't get a job here. That's the biggest

problem with the north. We can't get enough jobs here to keep everybody working, and then when we have people that are trained, as soon as the job is finished they leave and go find work down south and they work there and they never come back, or they just come back to visit. (Jimmy Paul)

There seems little doubt in the minds of most respondents that employment and training will make the North Slave Métis community a better place. Fred LeMouel explains the connections among employment, self-esteem and substance:

Anytime there's employment, like I say there's not that much people that live off the land anymore, so anytime there's employment, not just employment in itself, but training to better yourself, it makes your community a better place. ...It would improve the Métis community. It would bring up the self-esteem of a lot of the people, knowing that they're working towards a career. That in itself will reduce the amount of drinking's that's going on or addictions. It's very easy for people that have good careers to tell somebody to quit drinking, or to quit this or quit that, but when you walk a mile in their shoes, where they're walking around with no hope for the future, it's a different story. (Fred LeMouel)

### **Job Security**

With increased employment comes the opportunity of personal job and financial security as well as skill development:

I'm not sure what types of wages they would pay and that, but on the positive side I mean it could be a fairly good boost financially for some people, and there could be some security there perhaps for a certain length of time. I'm not sure what the life span would be of the mine overall, but then there would probably be, depending on the nature of the work and the potential that individual would have, I mean there's lots of possibility I would imagine for training, certain skills that would be transferable maybe to future employment beyond the Diavik thing. And I don't know what they have in terms of other benefits, but potentially it could be a really good in some cases. (Adrian D'hont)

Well, the good thing about having a job, you got a pay cheque coming in all the time. ...I imagine they'll learn a few trades when they're up there, like in heavy equipment, in probably welding, plumbing, whatever, electrical work. There will be opportunities for them to learn that type of trade if they hang around that long enough, or they may have...more opportunities to get up there if they're working for an



electrical company in town or a welding shop in town. They get up there and work in the field and more experience. I guess that's what it's all about. The more industry we have up in the north country the more experienced Métis people are going to be, and they will be staying in the north, instead of getting their trade and leaving the north. That's the way it's been for as long as I can remember, because I was first apprenticed in this territory and as soon as I got my ticket, I booted out of town. Better work. (Jimmy Paul)

### **Skill Development**

The development of skills on the job at Diavik may create not just greater self-confidence, but initiative and capacity to pursue other or similar lines of work once the mine shuts down:

All of a sudden you find that you are out there to achieve. There's a lot of positive things. Once the mine shuts down...he still has that knowledge, he has his ticket, and he can go on in his life and still have the education and knowledge to get another job.... Once the mine shuts down, we can probably start our own business. ...If they can show the kids that these are the jobs, these are the qualifications that you need to get that job, maybe it will give them a bit more incentive to get out there and get the education and go out there and work. (Marie Dautel)

### **Other Benefits of Employment**

Shift work in the mine also has the potential to reduce parental worries. One interviewee explains:

My son works at BHP and I'm happy when he's not in town. I know he's working and he's not downtown. I like the part when he's out there. And I hope for the two weeks he's in he'll meet some nice woman who'll make him totally change. Then I wouldn't have to worry about him when he's in town. (Anon.)

Employment in at the Diavik mine will expose Aboriginal people to southern workers, which, in some respects, may not be all that detrimental to the North Slave Métis; along with southern workers comes the potential for new ideas:

Exposure to southerners might also lift us to another plateau, nobody really knows. I know what you are saying, but it's not as if they are taking them and never bringing them back. They are going to be on a rotation. They have a schedule; they are going to be coming back into the community on a regular basis. They'll be bringing money into the

community, bringing new ideas. The Métis have always thrived on new ideas, trying to do something a little bit better or trying to do things they never did before. It will probably... hopefully, it will help us in the long run. (Clem Paul)

Also, experienced southern workers might motivate northerners by example:

We have some of those [southern workers] already ...living here. I don't know that some of it is so bad either. Sometimes it's because they'll see that person has all this extra [money] and you'll say "Well, that's because they're a worker." You get to work too, then. Motivation. Sometimes that's the way it is going to work to make others work. ... Depends on how young they are and how much they ... have of their own family connections. If they were brought up with some of that stuff [that's] supposed to be there, ...and if you don't lose it completely, it might enhance something or another in your lifestyle. (Anon.)

Exposure to southerners may also result in the North Slave Métis becoming more worldly:

We will learn that there's another world out there. Let's go and visit. I think they'll get good friends out of it. But you go south and you'll see a total different lifestyles.... (Marie Dautel)

If the benefits of employment are maximized and the disadvantages are minimized through appropriate monitoring and management arrangements, we could experience less dependence on government services:

Well, that's hard to tell, but I don't really know how many people are solely relying on government help right now as compared to not. I know for sure that a young person employed by Diavik, say in an apprenticeship program, will definitely benefit. It will be an easement off of the government [and] the mine will probably have an excellent training program that will pay for his or her apprenticeship. (Clem Paul)

## **NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF INCREASED EMPLOYMENT**

### **Diavik: A Threat to Individual, Family and Community General Concerns**

Diavik has stated unequivocally that increased employment will have impacts on Aboriginal people and communities, and that these will be mainly positive. After four years of missed opportunities to conduct the appropriate

research, four years of "listening" to Aboriginal people state otherwise, Diavik remains steadfast in its conviction that any possible negative social, cultural or economic impacts arising from employment with Diavik are uncertain and therefore difficult to assess or measure. But for many North Slave Métis and other affected Aboriginal peoples, the future is not unknowable, it is predictable and it doesn't look good:

...But realizing all the social problems that are already here within the society, a lot of the people that are getting employed aren't you know all that healthy, you might say, at this given point in time. If someone's got a problem now, they get a job and go into the bush that doesn't end their problem, if they've got a drinking problem or if they're having problems with their family. You know there's a lot of sicknesses around, social sickness, you know that has to be dealt with, so if there's unhealthy people getting jobs, getting money, that doesn't mean they're going to come back to town and start spending it positively. ...It's a fact that people are going to continue to drink alcohol, continue to use drugs, and so, so you can I guess foresee that some people will come back and it will benefit the community, some people will come back and it's going to be a negative impact on the community because they're going to buy more booze, more drugs. There's going to be more violence, you know there's going to be separations. If a couple right now is having a hard time when they're both living in a community, they're going to have a harder time when one is gone, and you know you got the jealousy and all that syndrome there going on, that's just going to add to it. We hear about the problems that are already happening with families from Rae, that people have employment with BHP, they come back, and they're drinking more, there are already families breaking up. The guy goes to work, two weeks he comes back and his wife is off with someone else... So that's just some examples of what's happening already, so it's not going to stop, so you're going to have a little bit of both, and if you monitor it.... (Bob Turner)

...Same with marital problems and divorce that's going to happen. Crime to me, that [will happen naturally] with an increase of people. People not taking care of their kind. Spending less time on the land, that's a concern. Eating less country food, that's a concern. Interaction with elders and loss of culture, that's a big concern. Jealousy within the community, we've been living like that for how many years? Community breakdown that's not nice to see, but those things can be fixed over time. The three big concerns and the ones we probably should be concentrating on are: spending less time on the land, eating less country food and less interaction with elders and loss of culture. The rest of the problems you can deal with them as they come because

everything is out there already, there's all the education, places to go for help, people to talk to. When the time comes they are there. But these other problems that are either coming about or could happen in the future, that's the stuff we should concentrate on now because once they are gone, they're gone. (Leroy Bloomstrand)

The majority of respondents (77%) stated that employment with Diavik would have measurable negative impacts on North Slave Métis people, families and community. While increased employment was acknowledged to have its positive side, answers provided in most interviews emphasized the potential negative impacts of employment with Diavik.

### **Decrease in Sharing**

Some people reasoned that working in the mine won't promote sharing. In fact, judging from current trends, just the opposite will happen:

There will be a little bit of that [sharing], but I don't think a lot, I don't think a lot at this point. There has to be a lot of... I don't know, the government has to be involved in this as well, there has to be a lot more healing going on, getting people thinking straight, trying to help each other, rather than a lot of just self-centred gain, which I think the European society has brought. You're more interested in self-serving than sharing, because the society is built around competition, building up your own empire, that's what's been going on, that's where you get [the] rich man/poor man scenario, I'm sort of more into the communal thinking... (Bob Turner)

I think [sharing is] something you'll probably get away from more. I think this kind of a change... occurs when it's something like that [wage employment]. I think it's kind of harder to share cash than it is to share just other things that maybe come as gifts from the land, for instance. I think bank accounts become more of a private possession type of thing. But I mean there's always the opportunity still to share. It's not like you're handing someone over a direct part of your pay cheque or whatever. That stuff can translate into other things too... in the sense that you can give something that somebody needs, you could make gifts to people or whatever. But yeah, I could see a shift potentially happening, right. (Adrian D'hont)

## **Inability to Adapt to Work Schedule**

Some individuals cautioned about getting too excited about the prospect of all the new jobs that will become available if Diavik receives regulatory approval since the shine of a new job soon becomes tarnished:

Well, you didn't have a job before and you've got a job now, then you're going to be able to pay some bills, buy more food that you can't hunt. There's a lot of I guess positive things for getting work and getting more money into the household, but you've got to balance that with all the other impacts.... You feel good for a little while, but if you're not used to going out of the community and out into the camp setting, working twelve hours a day, and two weeks at a time, then that's a change [and] the initial good feeling sometimes wears off in a short period of time. So it's something that people will have to get used to, not everyone is going to be able to work in a two week in/two week out setting. A lot of family people just won't be able to. Like myself, I won't be able to do that work. When I was younger, in the wilder days, I used to work out in construction camps, and that was a way of life that's a lot different than a setting for a family, family man, you know a person that's used to living in a community. (Bob Turner)

## **More Use of Government Services**

It is conceivable that the use of some government programmes and services will decrease if Aboriginal people take jobs with Diavik (see "Other Benefits of Employment"). However, it is more likely that the demand on under-funded government programmes and over-worked government personnel will increase with each new diamond mine:

Well, people will presumably have more money. Maybe social assistance might be reduced, but then you could probably see an increase in demands on social services or whoever for breakdowns, marital breakdowns, problems in the home environment, whatever, and maybe you know reduction in some health problems, like children, but you might also see an increase because of breakdowns in the family. I don't know. I can only speculate. Increased alcoholism maybe. In some cases it would be demands that way, probably more directly with the workers themselves, but not necessarily there could be alcoholism in the home as a response to one of the spouses being gone. Anything's possible. (Adrian D'hont)

Several respondents predicted that, owing to a rapidly expanding resident and Aboriginal population and more people moving to Yellowknife, there will be a noticeable increase in demand for education and especially medical services:

We know that these added jobs are going to attract people from outside. That means that there is going to be pressure on the inside, pressure on our schools, pressure on our hospital, pressure on the nursing stations, pressure on the highway, pressure on a whole bunch of things that the GNWT is presently responsible for. Thus, the services that we have grown accustomed to with all that activity, if it brings more people it means that instead of waiting at the hospital for 15 minutes, you might be waiting there for four hours to see a doctor. Things like that. So we need to be working on a strategy and an agreement with the federal government to put in place a funding formula to help us deal with certain problems. (Clem Paul)

One of the concerns that I was thinking about is, as you know, even right now when you go to the emergency at the hospital, there's always a waiting list. If it's [Diavik] going to bring more people into Yellowknife, more people working ...I'm just wondering about the actual capacity of the hospital. Is that going to be making people wait in line for hours more or...? Things like that. But a lot of it is positive spin-offs, eh. Like there will be people that are working for the trucking outfits that ...cater to Diavik, so that'll create a lot of employment there, but like I say, a lot of people will probably move to Yellowknife.... What scares me is maybe our own children will not be allowed into the schools they go to [now]... because the schools will be over capacity. ...So I feel like the schools and places like that at least have to guarantee the people of the north first before they start taking southern children because I know every year the schools are packed, they're booked already before the next school year even starts, so things like that. ...When guys come to the community and get jobs and careers at one of these places [like Diavik] eventually they'll end up moving to Yellowknife because there's no work in the communities, so yes the population of Yellowknife will grow. And not only people from the communities, but the people that move up here from down south also. A lot of things are going to be full. ...And then it's gonna get worse once everything gets going because it just automatically spins-off [as] the population increases. ... Some of them don't get jobs out there, but they get a job somewhere else in Yellowknife, but eventually more families end up in Yellowknife, so you have to be able to service all these families also. (Fred LeMouel)



I believe our health care system is going to double or triple; more birth defects, a lot of transients, our population is going to boom with women having children. I see it. (Marie Dautel)

### **Loss of Human Capital and Community Capacity**

The North Slave Métis community may change significantly if its members withdraw from community life, either temporarily through shift rotation work or permanently through out-migration to Yellowknife. Respondents were evenly split about their concern over a reduction in community capacity since the North Slave Métis are already geographically divided between Rae and Yellowknife:

They are trying to now [move to Yellowknife]. I see that where I work. You see a lot of younger ones trying to move here and they can now because they can afford to live here if there's two or three together. North Slave Métis [already], ... they are already living here [Yellowknife]. (Anon.)

Presumably, the brightest and the best young and middle-aged people will be hired by Diavik. Many respondents were especially concerned that, with a loss of critical human capital, the community's ability to affect change for the common good and to deal with crises will be eroded:

...If [brightest and best go to work for the mine] and they would be participating in the community, as in some types of meeting, where maybe some decisions are going to be made, but they're not here to participate in that, yeah, it could be a loss of some good input for something that might have happened otherwise. ...It depends I guess on how many people are gone, who they are, but... if you lose all or some of the brightest people, so many of these people are involved in these types of things anyway, yeah, if they're gone it is a problem.... I know we've already encountered that with some of the BHP stuff. One individual from our board...we wanted him to counsel, he was off working a number of times when we had meetings. (Adrian D'hont)

Like BHP, ...it's either "you want your job or you don't" type of attitude. I think that when big Métis meetings come up, and we require those people to be at those meetings, Diavik should make allowances for these types of things because the people that are working out there from down south, well they're not in the same situation as us. We're in the situation where we're fighting for our rights, and our land rights. There's very important meetings with the government that have to be attended, and if all our Métis people are out working, ...we're not even going to have a quorum, ...we're not even going to be able to get their

opinions or anything like that... You know, "Well, either you're going to work for us, or you might as well quit." It shouldn't be a prison out there. ...A lot of these meetings coming up are the whole future of our Métis people, and we have to have that input from them. ... There's going to be times during the year when a person on shift out there is going to have to leave for a day or two, to ensure the welfare of his community.... ...Most of the Métis people here are closely related. Now someone from your immediate family might not have died, but one of your close relatives might have died, but we grew up so close that it's like we're all brothers and sisters. Say someone died and Diavik says well, "Was that your brother?" "No." "Is that your sister?" "No." "Is that your mom [or] dad?" "No, but it's my uncle or my cousin." "Oh, well you can't go to the funeral, unless you quit." Well, that's wrong as far as I'm concerned. If a person in your community dies, because most of the people in the community are so close knit, they should be allowed to go to the funeral. ...Respect the family needs, that the community is more close knit than they are down south. People are very, very close, and mostly are all related some way or another, and this stuff has to be put in writing. (Fred LeMouel)

Although clearly not the intention of any one party, employment with Diavik, if not properly managed, monitored and mitigated, may accomplish what 200 years of colonialist policy and interventions have been unable to do, the eradication of Aboriginal communities and collectives.

### **Two Week In/Out Shift Rotation Shift Rotation Schedule Works for Some, But Not Others**

About two-thirds (65%) of the respondents stated that the two week in/out shift rotation schedule proposed by Diavik would have negative impacts on individuals, families and the North Slave Métis community, while another 23% were concerned but unsure how shift work would effect them. For some North Slave Métis, the proposed shift rotation schedule would not present too much difficulty as not only do we have a long history of extended absences away from hearth and home, we are accustomed to hard work:

For most of the Métis people that's no problem. The way Métis people are brought up [differently] compared to Natives. The Métis people nowadays, 12 hours a day, two weeks at a time, I think it's fine. Personally, I think it's fine. I've never really asked any young Métis people how they feel about that, but at first it might be a little hard, but you get used to it, and two weeks, 12 hours a day is not such a big deal. ...I know in the communities a lot of the work at home requires a man being at home, or one of the parents being at home, and two weeks

in/out is good in the sense that you can spend the whole two weeks with your family, and you do get out. However, I think that different families have different needs. (Fred LeMouel)

At home where we lived a good many of the men went out to work on the boats for the whole summer. They were gone the whole summer. They were pilots on the MacKenzie, running their boats and to this day, there's still Métis from Providence that run up and down the river all summer and basically the only time they see their family is from a set of binoculars going by Providence. So I think that if there's anybody that can handle the situation, it's the Métis people. They're used to it. They're used to being gone. Hunting, trapping, fishing, working. They're used to it. It [the schedule] can work. (Peter Arychuk)

It is even possible that some young people may prefer to work more weeks rather than less:

I prefer to work longer weeks. 12-hour days are good. I'd rather work 3/1 or 4/2. You can make more money. Two weeks in, two weeks out, you just maybe break even. It's a good turnaround, not too hard on people. Some people can't handle longer than two weeks, but the longer, the better for me. (Leroy Bloomstrand)

Shift work was acknowledged by several people to be more suited to younger single people than older married people:

I know what I was like when I was single. You know it didn't matter to me where I was or where I worked. Footloose and fancy free type of thing. No obligations, or nothing to worry about what you leave behind when you're away for the two weeks. Certainly I think that single people would be able to cope with it [the schedule] somewhat easier than say someone who's married or in a relationship type of thing with family or whatever. It would be easier. (Jack Balsillie)

It would certainly take some adjustment and it wouldn't be for everybody, and but you know there are cases, situations where it could work. ...I'm thinking of myself like if I was a single person or whatever it would be an ideal situation. (Adrian D'hont)

I know some of the single guys could probably go three weeks in and one week out. I know some of the people with larger families, two weeks in/out might be fine, and maybe some of them might be one week in/one week out. Each family has their own criteria, what their needs are, and I think it should be more negotiable on what your time

in and time out is, depending on the family needs, ... I know some people can't expect to be gone two weeks at a time... (Fred LeMouel)

However, younger Métis people unaccustomed to work may not readily adapt to the proposed shift schedule:

...I told my grandson, I said, "You come here two weeks in/two weeks out, you should ask for a month." "Well, Grandma, it's too long to stay over there," he said, "Two weeks." You know what I said, "It's not long, you can stay for month." "Maybe I'll try." As I was saying, it was two weeks when I see him, but this time, he was in town, but I didn't see. He didn't come see me, nothing. Maybe he think my Grandma's mad. (Alice Lafferty)

While some young Métis may require a period of adjustment, the work ethic instilled in them by their parents may pull them through. Fred LeMouel explains:

So, at first it will be harder for them, the younger crowd, because most kids nowadays grow up around the TV and stuff. They never had to chop wood and stuff like that, like us older Métis people. So they grow up around the TV, or are going to school, and most of their parents did very well, so they never had to work as hard as their parents. But it's in them by the teachings of their parents that they have to work hard. So when this starts up, like I say the first couple of trips in would probably be hard on them, but after awhile they'll adjust. ... once they do it, their self-esteem will likely go up, and they'll start to feel like men, and it will be no problem after that. But like I say, right now a lot of the Métis kids nowadays are soft compared to how their parents were, but once they're out there, they'll adjust. ...As long as they can see a future, a career coming out of it, they'll jump to the occasion, but if they get out there and they can see that they're not going to move ahead then it's no use. (Fred LeMouel)

### **Difficult Adjustment to Shift Rotation**

There seems little doubt that adapting to the two week in/out shift schedule will take time and patience on both sides. However, there is also a distinct possibility, based on research in Lutselk'e that some individuals and families may never adjust to the stresses of shift rotation work. In Lutselke' 57% of those interviewed said that when workers are away it increases stress on the family in terms of childcare, household responsibilities and individual well-being. As importantly, wage employment with diamond mine has resulted in families spending less time together, even during time off.<sup>194</sup> While the causes for this will be clarified below, there is good reason to believe that shift rotation work will have

similar impacts on the North Slave Métis, and that ultimately many people taking jobs with Diavik will quit because there is no tradition of such work.

First of all they'll have a job and an income, so that helps. I was thinking about that and talking about that with someone else earlier today. It's a completely different way though, it's two weeks in and two weeks out. I think that's a long time. It's going to be a tough one. It might work for the young ones, the middle aged people it will be harder. Very few people will probably last that long. ...I think they'll go through a lot of people. Hopefully some of them will think about it and want to go back. But I don't know if they cut their own throats when they quit. We'll see. It's going to be a new thing. I was just talking to a guy taking diamond sorting, a Métis guy, not a North Slave Métis, but there's lots of other Métis people in town. He's a single father with a three-year-old daughter, so he wants to make sure he's in town. He's taking this diamond-sorting course and he doesn't know if he wants to be sorting diamonds. It's a different way. It's not something you've heard about or ... standing in line in a factory thinking, well your mother worked in a factory and your father worked in a factory or CN or Via Rail, and it kinda runs in families. We are still in that hunting and trapping and working thing, maybe heavy equipment operation would be better. Big trucks. ...It's going to be a transition period and it's going to be tough. (Anon.)

Many Métis and other Aboriginal people may also not be able to cope with the proposed shift rotation schedule because it is antithetical to, and indeed threatens the very fabric of, close knit Aboriginal families at a time when they are under attack from a plethora of other external sources and influences:

As far as the employee goes a lot of them are not going to last on a two and two [week rotation]. I can just about guarantee you that probably 50% of them won't last two years on that job.... In smaller communities and in our society I guess, we are always kind of close to our families, close to the children. When we go on the spring hunt together, the whole family used to go. Fall hunt, everybody goes. Winter community hunts, everybody goes. Years ago that's the way it used to be and the families are still close together that way. Although living in a community like Yellowknife you can't take your kids out of school, like they used to when I was younger and go away for a week. The families are kind of close, so I think that many of them are going to struggle being away on a regular basis. Usually they go on a job and they know that on the weekend, they have a weekend off, but being up there were sometimes you want to spend Christmas with your kids, but

your job says you've got to be there because that's your two weeks on. And they are going to struggle with that. (Clem Paul)

Ernie Camsell echoes the same message, while adding some suggestions about how Diavik can begin to address this problem:

I don't like it [2+2 week shift schedule] that way. But which way could we do it? There's lots of talk about that. It's no good they say. ...I'm talking about my friend there, over there at Diavik.... He's got five kids and he says, "Ernie, I wish I had my family up there. I wouldn't bother coming in," he says. And I believe him. He says, "I like my kids and I like to see them. Two weeks out there without seeing them that's...." Yes, it's kind of hard, but I'm trying to think of a way to do it. I'll ask [my friend] and see what he thinks about it. Maybe he'll tell me what's the best way, which way he wants it, and maybe the others will think the same way. "If I had a house out there I'd be happy," he says, "I won't miss my kids so much. Two weeks out there I don't like it, but what else can I do. I need a job. I got to work." ...[I know this other guy] out there too. [His wife] works at Diavik [too]. He's out there for two weeks and [in for] two weeks. But every time he comes back, he's drunk for two weeks, so what do you do? So you know we should ask some of the boys that are working out there, see how they think about it. How is two weeks out and two weeks back here? (Ernie Camsell)

### **Prior Experience with Shift Rotation**

Most respondents' concerns about the impacts of the shift rotation schedule are informed by previous experience:

...I work at the power corporation and a lot of the men have had to travel to the communities all the time, and a lot of people in the power corporation have had marriage breakdowns, eh, because one person's [always] gone, so that is something that should be looked into, maybe with professionals that know more about marriages, because right now I'm just giving you my opinion. Maybe Diavik should look into something like that because I know a lot of the people that have to travel in and out all the time, sooner or later it starts to affect their marriage. It shouldn't. If this was the old days, it probably wouldn't, but in today's world it probably would. (Fred LeMouel)

My family broke up on account of a rotation like that, but I used to work six weeks on and two weeks off, so it was a little bit worse than this. I wouldn't recommend that, that's for sure. ...I'm not an expert in that area that's for sure. I don't really know. It would be nice to say that



you work there Monday to Friday and you come home on Friday. That might work, but does it make sense economically? I know people are talking about it and BHP is doing it. They have some people on a 5/2 schedule, five days on, two days off. Some of them are on one week on, one week off. Some of them are on two weeks on, two weeks off. There's contractors up there that are working three weeks on, one week off. I really don't know why they are doing that to different people. Maybe the different stress levels of the job, maybe the different types of jobs, I ...have no idea. Maybe they are doing an experiment to see which one would be the most successful and then they'll put everyone on the same one, I don't know.... (Clem Paul)

I think that would be hard on anyone in general to keep that type of schedule. Some people can do it and it works fine for them, they can even work longer out there. But a lot of people, like one example I'm aware of, a father only lasted the first two weeks and then he couldn't go back because his little girl phoned him up and said, "Daddy," and that was it, he couldn't go back up. It is not that he did not want to work; it is not that he wasn't qualified for work; he just couldn't be away from home that long. (Dianna Beck)

### **Shift Rotation Hard on Young Mothers and Single Parents**

Shift work on the two week in/out rotation schedule was anticipated by several respondents to be especially hard on young mothers and single parents:

The Mother, if they don't have small babies, it's good I guess. They all go to school. And her, she's a woman, do work, sewing something like that, maybe she fix the hide, go to school come back. Maybe they do it. But if they had small baby, I don't know maybe it too hard for them. (Alice Lafferty)

...I was trying to figure out if it was a single Mom, how it would work out. For a single parent it would be a long time away. That would be a tough one. ... Sometimes you have to be more at home with your teenagers. That would be a tough one for a single parent. Unless you had a grandfather, if you had that kind of family set up that would help. (Anon.)

### **Two/Two Week Rotation: An Abrogation of Social Responsibility**

Many respondents stated that separation as a result of one spouse working at Diavik would have detrimental effects on marital and family relationships. Most of this concern was informed by experiential knowledge:

[My friend] working for Diavik keeps on getting kicked out all the time. Every time he comes home, "Get the hell out of here." She kicks him out, but what she does is she looks for [him] and takes him back home again. The other morning he was at the house here, "Oh, the old lady kicked me out and all that." That same night the old lady was looking for [him] and takes him back home. Next time I see him I ask, "Where are you now?" "Oh, I'm back home, the old lady was looking for me." So what do you do in that case? ...He doesn't know whether he's coming or going. ... He gets the odd drink alright, but he likes his kids. He's a hell of a good fellow. I don't know why his wife is so bitchy.... (Ernie Camsell)

The temporary absence of a spouse not only leaves the stay-at-home partner bereft of emotional support, it shifts the domestic workload to one person. In a sense, it is an abrogation of social responsibility and the reciprocal and sharing arrangements by which most healthy partnerships and spousal relationships are constituted. Thus, the potential for conflict is high.

Well, there could be a little friction arising between the spouses.... I mean you're not here, you're not taking part in all the stuff that goes on, maybe something breaks and it's got to be fixed or whatever, or if you got kids that are growing up you're not involved in going to their school concerts, changing diapers or whatever. You're not really part of it, and when you get home maybe ...you just want to go away and enjoy your time off from work. I don't know. Numbers of things I guess. ...Infidelity problems or whatever, hey, anything could happen. ...It would depend on the situation they're in, but yeah it could be a hell of a lot of work for one person. ...It's got to be a hard way to do it I guess. You know when you're both there, you can, I mean, share stuff constantly right? The person can be involved in other things that are happening, with other interests and whatever. ...Maybe there's young children, or children with a lot of commitments, involved in different activities in the community and that type of thing. You know, and you're trying to run the house, maintain order and all that stuff, put food on the table, clean up, do all these things, plus maybe even have a life of your own on the side you know. ...It's a whole lot easier when they're both there to deal with it. When someone's up on a mine site working, long days whatever they work, and they get back, and yeah they could be all worn out too, ...too worn out ...it's not like[ly] they're going to jump into a sharing thing right away I don't imagine. I know myself, whenever I come home from being away somewhere; it takes me a little while to sort of get back into the swing of things alright. ... Getting back into the relationship might seem a little funny after two

weeks I don't know. And that's a sort of communication thing, if you're not in contact all the time you'll sort of run into that. Like I said with the six weeks away...it felt a little odd coming home, getting back into it, whereas if I could have been talking everyday it wouldn't be such a big deal. (Adrian D'hont)

### **Burn-out and Shift Rotation**

Shift rotation work will increase stress on both the stay-at-home partner and mineworker in a spousal relationship. A library full of literature on health and occupational safety predicts that the stress of working 12-hour days will take its toll:

Two weeks of twelve-hour days. Well if I was there, I'd probably be a basket case. I don't know. It depends on the nature of the work, what kind of work that these guys are going to be doing. You know if it's hard physical labour, or maybe there just pushing buttons.... If it's outside work and cold, I'm sure there'd be any number of different types of work. Yeah, it could be hard, personally stressful or physically demanding, or hard in other ways if you're subjected to certain harsh conditions. Yeah, it could be pretty draining. You know if it's something that requires a lot of alertness or whatever, if you screw up your causing major problems. Yeah, it's a lot of pressure. ...If toward the end of one of those shifts, I mean you must be pretty well fried depending on what the nature of the work is. ...I wouldn't find it easy that's for sure. It would be pretty hard. I'd really be looking forward to the two weeks off. [laughs] ...There'd [also] be the accident thing, or maybe if it's something where the performance slips.... That [people quitting] could happen. People are always looking for something better or something they don't like for something better, and if they can't find it and it really is causing problems then they'd be forced to go back home. (Adrian D'hont)

Similarly, the potential for "burn-out" for the stay-at-home parent is extremely high:

Just looking at my children with their Dad gone all the time. All of a sudden you get burnt-out being a single parent. You burn-out. And all of a sudden the kids are saying, "Gee, I wish Dad was here. Dad would do this. Dad would say that." All of a sudden they're playing on you. When Dad comes home and he says "No", they say, "Well Mom always says yes." They start this battle between the parents. It happens in my household and, as old as my children are, it still happens. ...I'll say no and he says yes and all of a sudden there's a war. It's very hard because my children rely on both of us for different needs. I'm the one

there after six weeks in their face, moving them from point A to point B, getting them up and getting them to work. It's hard; it's very very hard. But when my husband comes home I hand over the keys and say, "Hey, they're yours I retire now. You bus them. I'm tired." ...But that individual has come home, he's been gone for so long, needs space and all of a sudden you are throwing this in their face? How are they going to react? Big argument. Big fight. You never know how an individual is going to react, but I know how my husband is going to react, so I give him his space. Give him his time to himself. After that, "Here honey, they're yours." (Marie Dautel)

Yeah, and if there's kids in school, kids' activities, and all that stuff you have to work around. Then I'm sure if the husband is gone for two weeks then gets home, maybe the wife will want a two week break. (Adrian D'hont)

### **2+2 = 3+1: Separation Lasts Longer Than Two Weeks**

Many respondents drew attention to the fact that, when a mine worker returns home after two weeks of working 12-hour days, s/he often needs their own time and space before they can be fully integrated back into the family circle. None spoke more poignantly to this issue than Marie Dautel:

[It's] hard on marriages and children. I know I've lived that for two and a half years. It is not a pretty sight. It's hard, very very hard. My husband lives in Nunavut and I see him about every six weeks. When he comes home I have to give him his space. You just can't bombard the poor man. ...I don't know how people are going to react to having their husbands or wives gone for two weeks. A lot of people can't cope with the separation. I know I can't. I guess it is all up to the individual, how you deal with it. I think we are probably going to need a lot more counsellors helping the individual cope with being alone, being a single parent for those two weeks and meet your children's needs. It's a big job. And there is a breaking point in there somewhere. Then when your husband comes home or your wife comes home, you're going to want their entire time and they're going to want to be left alone. They've just come home and they need their space. ...There is going to be a lot of friction. Let's hope that people can learn to deal with it. ...It's a big adjustment all on its own. There's going to be all these emotions running around. My husband comes home, wow, he's tired. I just leave him and say, "Do whatever you want". He'll sleep for hours. He'll come home and sleep 14-16 hours. Literally. I just let him sleep, let him be. Sure I want a piece of the action, but I have to be careful. [laughs] Give him his time and give him his space.... When you go out

there you're going to be homesick. You are going to want to come home. You've just done your two weeks and you come home and you're family is going to want you now, want your undivided attention. You're exhausted, you're tired, of course you are going to be upset.... Being there and being homesick and then you're home and all of a sudden everybody is in your face and you just spent two weeks by yourself and all of a sudden you think, "Ah, how am I going to deal with everybody wanting me?" (Marie Dautel)

So, even though the proposed two week in/out shift rotation schedule may physically separate mine workers from their partners and families for only two weeks at a time, the degree or amount of social separation and emotional detachment is considerably longer. This period of intense physical closeness but emotional disengagement creates a volatile brew that confounds established patterns of social interaction and heightens the potential for misunderstanding and family conflict. It is little wonder then that Lutselk'e mine workers now spend less time with their families when they are home than ever before.

### **Marital Discord and Infidelity**

Physical separation and emotional detachment is a harbinger of marital discord, broken marriages and infidelity, and there is good reason to expect more occurrences of these social problems as a consequence of employment with Diavik:

That's been happening for thousands of years and it's probably not going to stop as a result of this mine or even slow down. There will be outside relationships, but I wouldn't say that it was as a direct result of this mine. It's a result of employment, in general, and being away from one another. Naturally, if someone has a weakness that way. When someone is away for two weeks, well lots of things can happen in two weeks. ...What we are trying to do here is to ...put some contingency plan in place in case those things do happen and a family can get help. (Clem Paul)

...Because of the schedule, if there was any family problems or relationship problems at that time, [with] that person being gone for two weeks, it is so much easier at the end of the two weeks to just forget them, and say, "Look, I live two weeks without you, I bet I could live another two...." There would be the breakups and coming back and breakups and getting back together because it is so much easier to leave a person when they are not actually there... (Dianna Beck)

Recent experience clearly leads us to anticipate that rotation work will lead to an increase in broken marriages:

I heard one is working in the mine. One woman is working in the mine. They come here to town. She's still with another guy in Yellowknife... that's what I heard. And now she stay here, from here she go back to work. She don't go back to Rae, [to] her husband. I guess [she] stay with the guy here. When they come back they come to Yellowknife. Yellowknife and then they go back to work. I don't know if they go back to Rae to visit husband. I guess if they love each other. (Alice Lafferty)

### **Health of Marital Relationships**

To some extent, the impact of two week in/out shift rotation schedules on spousal and family relationships will be determined by the health and stability of relationships:

It depends on how healthy you are - as a couple, as an individual. There are lots of people that have had relationships where their husbands are gone for months at a time, like the armed forces. I'm sure people can work it out if it's for the best for their family. If they are looking for a job and there's nothing else around. They could try it out. (Anon.)

Maybe it might be hard on some people's relationships. As far as I understand some people have a hard time with their relationships. But then again that is something they have to work out between them. ...It depends on how your relationship is. (Leroy Bloomstrand)

However, for a society that has had its social foundations rocked by a host of forces over the last century, few marital or family relationships may be strong or resilient enough to withstand the impacts of shift rotation work indefinitely.

### **Kids Hardest Hit**

While spousal and marital relationships may suffer with one partner absent from home at least 50% of the time, it is the children of such unions who will suffer the most when one parent goes to work for the mine:

You know you're sort of losing some of that involvement, depending on the ages of the children and all that, things that they're involved in, maybe not being able to be there, well for the time you're away to help them do their homework or whatever, take them out to sporting stuff



or just do stuff with them. Just to be with them. Be there for them. Talk to them. Have that relationship. Yeah, it could affect them, and then if any of that negative stuff comes back as a result of the job over there [Diavik], then yeah there would definitely be some big impacts. I mean they're [children] the ones that are probably hit the hardest by all the negative stuff.... (Adrian D'hont)

## **Time Management**

A collateral impact of Diavik's proposed shift rotation schedule is that it places more pressure on individuals and families to better manage their time. With time for self and family shortened to something less than two weeks, individuals, in collaboration with other family members, will need to budget and plan their time accordingly. We need to prepare right now for the eventuality that very few families may have the necessary tools or current capacity to currently manage time under such circumstances.

## **Indicators of 2/2-Week Shift Rotation Impacts**

There are numerous indicators that might signal whether shift rotation work is negatively impacting individuals, marriages and families, some of which should be familiar by now:

The loneliness if she's gone for two weeks. The kids are driving you crazy, you'll probably go out, go to the bar, meet people and before you know it there's probably a relationship going on here. (Marie Dautel)

Well, I guess you would have to sort of be watching. ... The signs would ... be pretty obvious I think, referring to drop-out rate and all that stuff, criminal behaviour or just health problems, just other behavioural problems. Yeah, there's probably a lot of ways it could be identified that's going to require somebody to sort of have an eye out I guess, or to be available consulting people who need to bring the problem somewhere to help find a solution. (Adrian D'hont)

Perhaps the most instructive indicator is children:

...When the kids don't show up in school - that's another thing we should watch out for. (Ernie Camsell)

Some of the problems that the family will be facing? Definitely the kids feel it in school. Kids feel it in school one way or another, either from a lack of food or lack of sleep, or they don't have the ability to

concentrate because their mother and father are fighting, or one of them is fooling around, it bothering them and all kinds of stuff like that. That is going to happen, but to what degree, I have no idea, I wouldn't even venture to guess. (Clem Paul)

### **Empowerment or Gender Wars: Women and the Diavik Mine**

The North has experienced changes over the last several decades of a magnitude never before experienced by its indigenous peoples. The social underpinnings of the extended family unit have collapsed under the weight of residential schools, government policy and programmes and other forces. At the same time, the traditional economic foundations of Aboriginal communities have been devastated by the lack of viable commercial markets for products produced by the "bush" economy. Thus, the traditional economic roles of men have virtually disappeared, leaving them searching for new roles, but without the tools and capacity to readily adapt to the wage economy. Against this background, women find themselves empowered by culture and tradition to better cope with the challenges of current economic reality; traditionally Aboriginal women were raised differently than men, accepting responsibility for themselves and others at a much earlier age. In most Aboriginal communities, it is the women who are staying in school longer, getting educations, finding jobs and holding on to them once they get them. It is this realization that led some respondents to predict that women may be better able to meet the challenges of working for Diavik:

I hope a lot of the Métis women will see opportunities out there. I think the Métis women are probably the ones that will be the most prone to go to post-secondary education institutes. Many of them I am hoping to attract into the sciences, into senior management positions at the mine. Métis women have been known throughout history as being the backbone of our society. Well-respected and rightfully so, because they've been probably the most successful. (Clem Paul)

Yes, women are stronger than men. We're adaptable. I believe that... Women are a heck of a lot stronger than men. We can deal with change better than men can. I'm not saying this to put a man down. I'm saying this because I had to make a big adjustment. I keep on saying that I'm a single parent. Well, yes I am. Sure my husband supports me financially, but he lives how many thousands of miles away? We talk on the phone, we e-mail each other. Yes, women are stronger than men. We are adaptable. Change is easy for us. (Marie Dautel)

Already, Métis women have begun to prepare themselves for job opportunities that may develop with Diavik and other diamond mines:

Trades are another good thing. We have Métis women taking carpentry and stuff. I think I saw in the paper that those types of things are increasing. One of the guys was making all sorts of little comments. There are women in Home and Garden doing renovations. Those are the kind of things that could be promoted. I even know women who drive big trucks. Some men have problems with it too. (Anon.)

Some people thought that women going to work in the mine would not cause any particular problems for them or with their partner or spouse:

... There has been young ladies go up and working in the camps. I mean you see a lot more women working in the camps now than we've ever had, so that's a real positive thing. The Métis and Aboriginal girls they seem to enjoy getting out in the camps and working. I know a couple of Métis girls that work up at BHP, and I know quite a few of the Native ladies from the outlying communities that work up at BHP, and they enjoy it. So I think it would be great. The girls should have as many opportunities as the men by all means. (Peter Arychuk)

They should be happy for the woman who gets a job up there. Your lifestyle will just improve I think. ...It all depends on how the guy looks at it. He should be happy for his wife. Maybe he's got a job in town, that's still pretty good I think. (Leroy Bloomstrand)

However, according to 61% of respondents, women going to work for Diavik, while perhaps empowering personally, has the potential to create significant conflict in marriages and families (another 22% were concerned about this impact, but unsure of its implications for social relationships). In particular, a man staying at home while his wife or partner went to work for Diavik may cause resentment and jealousy:

... Men have big egos. They do. When all of a sudden you're making more money and men talk amongst themselves and they find out that she's making more money than me: "I don't feel very good about this. I'm not the main provider here." ...It will be great for North Slave Métis women to go up there and learn new skills and stuff. But coming from Rae and living in a small community, I was raised more Dene than I was Métis. A lot of jealousy. Big time jealousy sets in and then there will be a lot of break-ups.... And all of a sudden too you have to look at the difference in income. She's making more money than he is. (Marie Dautel)

Once again, this concern is based on what people already know or have already experienced:

I'm sure that will happen [men not accepting women working at Diavik] because camps have the reputation of being mostly men, so that would be difficult situation for a married man to accept. However, it depends on your relationship. If you have a good relationship, I don't think it'll be a big problem, but it would definitely be more difficult, from a man's point of view I would think, and I don't know why, but I think that's just the way things are. (Peter Arychuk)

Well, it was done different at Rayrocks, they had all of the camps out there. They had their womans' with them and all that. But here there's one that [left her husband] for sure I know.... She's here with another guy. ... She's been with BHP for quite a while. Two or three years I think. She's not with the old man. I asked her why. "Every time I come home," she says, "he's bitchy. Fights. I don't want to go back and fight. I'm not fighting with (this) guy." "Well what about the kids?" "Well, I give the kids money," she says. What do you say in that case? ...It's hard. I'm telling you. You see all that happening and you know. I've talk(ed) about that many ... times and sometimes the RCMP, for instance, [will] say, "What's going on in there?" And I [tell] them, "... if I told all of what's happening you'd be surprised. You want to know what's happening? I'm not telling you. Nothing. None of my business. Lots of things happening. Lots." (Ernie Camsell)

Today, many Aboriginal women feel that having a career is important:

...For a lot of women, a career is very important to them, more important than the career of being a mother, so they would not feel obligated to stay at home with the kids as much. So I know in the old days that was a mother's first inclination was to stay at home long enough that the kids were big enough to go out, and then she would pursue a career. A lot of women feel like they're being left out because they're stuck at home with kids. Like I say, it's up to the individual woman, how she was raised. If she was raised with those strong family ties of bringing up children, then she would probably prefer to stay at home, but some women aren't brought up like that. (Fred LeMouel)

Combined with the fact that having two-wage earners in each family may be an economic necessity in today's world, there is little chance of returning to the past and we must face this new reality head on:

There's still some guys like that I guess that ... prefer their women at home and don't want them to work. There's still a number of people like that in society. People evolve into different things and the Métis

have evolved over the years especially in this area. ...I think in time a lot of the people will come to realize that, and [with] the expense of the North, it is almost a given that [there will be] at least one full-time and one part-time, or both full-time workers, in families. I think people come to accept that as a necessity. (Clem Paul)

At the same time, we must also come to grips with the fact that men are not raised culturally to assume roles as primary care-givers, and thus may not currently have the necessary tools to nurture and raise children:

The other way around, I don't think it would, if there's no children. Children should be looked after by their mother, I think. The father doesn't do as good a job. That's what I think. (Lawrence Lafferty)

Society likes to say it is so politically correct. The situation of guys staying at home and the girl going out to work, [but] you still look down on the guy. It is one of those things that we haven't gotten over yet. Not too used to seeing that. ...You still get pressure from society because you still see this guy taking care of all these kids and you still get jokes and cracks about who wears the pants in the family and all that sort of stuff. (Dianna Beck)

I was sort of thinking ...well who would be a likely woman that would go, well probably single, I guess that's where I was sort of coming from with that question there, but yeah, I mean, from a family side. I'd be kind of surprised to see it happen, if it meant leaving a husband and kids. I'd be kind of surprised I guess to see that take place, but this is the modern age here, so I suppose it could happen, but I would think it would be more likely the man would be the one that would leave to do the work on site there.... I mean...typically whose the more nurturing of the parents? I think still today it's still the mother just because of that stronger bond you know, upbringing the kids, the one whose given birth to the child and nursed it whatever, and got it through its most critical stages. I think it's just a stronger bond. (Adrian D'hont)

Men may also be equally ill-prepared culturally to cope with mundane realities of domestic life and a significant period of adjustment may be anticipated:

When my husband was laid off from his job ...he didn't work for nine months. I supported the family and did everything I had to do and worked and he became very moody. He didn't like the fact that he sat home, but then you're a man and you're supposed to provide for your family and all of a sudden you're not. I had to sit down and talk with my husband and say, "Look, you're a stay-at-home Dad now. You can

do the laundry. You can start helping here...what I did for nine years when I was a stay-at-home Mom and you brought in the income. Did I complain because I had a zero income? No! You can stay home, balance the budget, pay the bills and start cooking and cleaning. But it took almost three months for him to do this. Then all of sudden you come home at lunchtime and your lunch is made and he's folding towels. It was nice, it was beautiful, but it took a lot. Then he'd come to my work sometimes and have coffee with me. It was nice, but I believe there will be a lot of jealousy, a lot of hardships, because all of a sudden she's making more money. I'm just going with what I experienced.... (Marie Dautel)

How North Slave Métis families will cope with the absence of primary caregivers (i.e., wives and mothers) depends to some extent on the nature of the existing relationship:

Well, that's been a problem with most men since women have been in the workforce. It hasn't been that long since women have been really in the workforce. Like I say, it's the individual couple. If a man's wife happens to be making better money than him, and he lets that bother him, well that's his problem. (Fred LeMouel)

It depends on what kind of guy it is. If you have a good relationship, then it should be fine, but if you don't, then I imagine you'll be accused of being with everyone in that camp. I used to travel a lot when my kids were quite small. My husband looked after everything, I consider myself lucky. It depends on what kind of person you're with and what kind of relationship you have. (Anon.)

It also depends on the personal support base of the worker. Yet, this may also place undue burden and stress on older relatives:

Old people need help looking after their grandchildren, that's what they are going to need. It's true a lot of them do already. Alice is one of them. Raising two granddaughters at her age. A ten year old and a seventeen year old. She calls me to talk to those kids. You know that's a sign.... I think she just doesn't have the energy anymore. She's getting older. She's adverse to getting tough with them.... She doesn't have a vehicle, she doesn't drive, she doesn't want other people to know. (People) always have this big hang up that welfare is going to take their kids. ...They would be in foster care if it weren't for Alice. The oldest one dropped out of school and she spends all her time worrying about (if) her grandmother dies who's going to look after the younger one.



...They are trying to go through me and I've got my own teenagers to handle too. That's just an example. That's how it goes. (Anon.)

Right now I can see mostly the old lady stays at home [while] her daughter is working, so her kids, the old woman is looking after them. But the old woman too, she's kind of tired of kids all the time. It's about time maybe that she got a spell. That's the way it is. I can see it right now the younger ones go out there and the kids stay with the older people. But here again, the kids are hard to listen to regardless of what...They are always bitching, they never say thanks, they're never happy. That's what my sister-in-law was saying. It's hard; it's a hard, old world to fight. (Ernie Camsell)

### **Young Women and Married Men: A Potential Time Bomb**

If North Slave Métis women go to work for the mine, chances are they will probably be younger, single women without the responsibilities of children:

If you're a single mother, they're the ones [that probably won't work at Diavik]. ...I always think that if you're single you're better off for those types of jobs. Once you're into the babies and stuff, you have to change your attitude. It depends on what kind of work there is for women unless there are some into the trades. I know there are more and more looking into that. I doubt someone would want to be a janitor all their life. (Anon.)

The BHP experience is instructive as it reminds us that the choice between career and children for young single women is a difficult one, and many may wind up quitting:

Most of [the] time it is the women that go [leave the relationship] and they're the ones sorting out all these problems looking for a place because they're the ones who are going to have the kids anyway, although there are more and more single fathers nowadays. I see some of these women that end up at Sissons Court where it's all Yellowknife housing and they work at BHP and I don't know if they're in the kitchens, maybe? In the beginning when it [BHP] first started opening up. And they're not working there anymore. It sounds like they're going to quit ... when it comes to the crunch and they're forced to go to income support. Kind of a downer living like that. ...I look at it this way, if the kids are with their mother even if they have less to eat at least they have that. They have somebody looking after them.... (Anon.)

However, the combination of young/single women and married men alone in an isolated setting may be a time bomb, in more ways than one, ready to go off, as the BHP experience leads us to anticipate. Alice Lafferty and another interviewee explain:

...I guess somebody told the boss over there ...that the woman got a boyfriend there [BHP], and that the people who working over there are all married people. Not very many singles. They're all married. They go back south to their wife, I guess. And the bosses told... they told that woman, they said, "...We heard ...you talking like that." She's working ...to make money, no boyfriend, just work, straight that way. They make bed, and forget about the people who talk about the people. "You're not working here no more. I heard you talking like that." That's the way it's going to be over there too, I guess. They watch people. (Alice Lafferty)

Yeah, I've noticed [prostitution] up there, at the other mine, BHP, there's a lot of single women working up there. ...Well, I see a problem up there with the fact that since I got there, they all come and ask me, "What room do you live in?" "I'm in the same room as your brother-in-law?" She said, "Okay, goodbye." I guess she was a prostitute up there. Yeah, there was three of them. Up at BHP. ...It's so obvious too, like after work we go up to the coffee room where they have the TV set up, watch TV, drink coffee and have a smoke, and they go in and just make their rounds there, and leave with somebody. Every night it's going on. Security didn't pick up on it. (Anon.)

Again, if women go to work with Diavik and other diamond mines, negative impacts will not only be experienced by their marriage partners, but also by their children:

Moms are always moms [to their children]. You go to Mom first before you go to Dad. It is going to be really hard. I know my children come to me before they go to their father and ask for anything. And it has always been that way. I don't know if it's the fact that I was a stay-at-home Mom, but I was one constant person in their life. Dad went out to work. When they needed anything they'd go to Mom and all of a sudden they're not going to have Mom there? Sure these poor kids [are] really going to have to adjust, change, but let's hope they do everything for the good and don't go to being on the streets and doing drugs or whatever. When I drive down the Gold Range street in the early afternoon or early evening you see these little kids hanging around there and you think, "Oh, my God." I want to pull over, go into that bar and drag out the parents. Look after your children you stupid

people. But I can't. Who am I to say, to tell an individual how to live? It breaks my heart. If the Mom goes out to work, these poor children are going to be big time affected. And let's hope you have a big, strong husband at home that can pick up and take over. (Marie Dautel)

### **Indicators That A Women's Absence From the Home is Negatively Impacting Marital and Family**

If Aboriginal women, as primary caregivers, go to work for Diavik and other diamond mines on a two-week shift rotation, they will, in essence, be abrogating well-established and traditional social obligations and domestic responsibilities. However, husbands and older relatives may not be prepared or capable to "pick up the slack." Thus, we can predict that many families will experience considerable turmoil and conflict as they attempt to forge new social arrangements that are congruent with this new reality. Some families will be successful; others will be casualties along the way. We need to begin to prepare and plan for this contingency right now before families reach critical mass. As we do this, some signs to watch for might include how couples treat each other in public, and as corollary, the frequency of broken marriages:

Just in their tone of voice, the way they talk, the way they. ...In public, how they talk to their women. Like you're not one, all of a sudden you're an individual. I've been married too long. Maybe it's just the way they communicate. They are throwing little innuendoes or insults back and forth. (Marie Dautel)

If the wife became the major breadwinner you know, had that sort of higher profile more that way, you know she's out there working, instead of at home changing diapers you know [laughs] whatever, it might bother some, yeah.... You'd see a lot of single parent families where the man was at the head, was the single parent. ...[Men losing role as major breadwinner would] lead to breakdowns yeah, marriage breakdowns. (Adrian D'hont)

Other indicators, of course, would be manifested in the behaviour and grades of school children.

Their schoolwork would probably be affected by [the primary caregiver going to work for the mine]. Failure in school. Not being in school. "What the heck, I don't have a Mom. It's just my Dad at home." You'll see a change in schoolwork, behaviour. There is going to be big time change. (Marie Dautel)

I think...probably a little more chaos in the home for one thing. I'm thinking of myself, allowing the kids to have ice cream three times a day and stuff. [laughs] ...Kids might be out playing on the street `till midnight or whatever, or not getting their homework done, grades slipping. (Adrian D'hont)

### **Differential Access to Employment and Income: Factionalism in the North Slave Métis Community**

Few North Slave Métis have the same background, work history, skills, education level, knowledge or expertise. As a consequence, some members of the community will undoubtedly be hired, or be more successful than others should Diavik receive regulatory approval. For a community that values sharing and shuns self-aggrandizement, the fact that some individuals will receive jobs with Diavik, while others won't has the potential to distance the North Slave Métis community far more than 100 km of highway:

Well maybe they gonna be mad at each other, "You got a job, how come me, I don't have nothing?" they gonna say, eh. And if they talk to both of them, if they talk to them, maybe they be happy to go to work. If only one side, they go to work, one side they stay over there, maybe they won't like it. They're gonna say, "How come you, you got a job, and how come me, I don't have a job. I stay here all my life. Only you, you get job." (Alice Lafferty)

Oh, big time. You have more and they have less! Sure, it will create a lot of friction. (Marie Dautel)

Feelings of jealousy and resentment, however, are not new to the North Slave Métis community, or most northern communities for that matter:

I think that's sort of been the case now for a large number of years around here. There's opportunities here with government or industry and there's reasons, you know education on whatever why some people have gotten opportunities to rise up the ladder in different organizations, maybe there's political connections and all that stuff too. But I'd say there's probably a fair bit of inequity already. I don't know if this would make it worse or tend to even it out or ... but I think it's something that we sort of have to expect, you know given the mix of the community, different opportunities and sort of different backgrounds that the people have.... (Adrian D'hont)

[He] was telling me that he come out of Wall Mart and someone said, "I thought you were working at Diavik, what are you doing here? Or

BHP?" He didn't say anything. They hate us because we are treaty and we are working over there at the mine. They haven't got the opportunity, so they don't like them. I heard that once. Some people don't want to get along together. Them Indians have got better jobs than them guys. (Ernie Camsell)

Fuelling feelings of jealousy and resentment in the past was the fact that traditionally there was only a limited number of jobs available to Aboriginal people, and they had no control over hiring policy. Clem Paul explains, while suggesting a way that the NSMA can avoid in-fighting and factionalism:

No more so than we've been through in the last 40 years. That's what made the Métis in many of the communities, this one is no exception, jealousy ran rampant in the community because of a limited number of jobs and we had no control over the jobs, so the outsiders could pick and choose. Hopefully, through the Diavik process we will be able to attain contracts where we would be in charge of hiring on a certain portion of jobs there. That's a way of evening [things] out and taking advantage of that. If it's done right and fairly, I think the community then will benefit, rather than just an opportunity for people to get jealous and start fighting. That wouldn't be anything new to our society that's for sure. (Clem Paul)

One interviewer also offered another solution how this problem could be avoided within the North Slave Métis community:

...There will be some jealousies here and there, but it would have been there before any ways for other things. It's just another new thing that they can say. "You know there are working families and there's some that are not going to work. Right?" There's always that there anyway. ...It depends on where they hang out I guess. Again, as I was saying it goes back to the community base. You wouldn't see too much of it if people lived close together. (Anon.)

### **Indicators of the Development of the Haves and Have-nots**

The Diavik project will most surely contribute to the latent tendency in most rural, northern and Aboriginal communities for the rich to get richer and the poor to get poorer. Opportunities to upgrade and empower the downtrodden and disadvantaged to point where they will be competitive in the job market must be considered jointly by the NSMA, government and the proponent. However, some signs that we might look for in the mean time that would tell us that disproportionately fewer jobs are going to the disenfranchised include:

Maybe verbal things. It would be so hard to live (like) that. Just to see (it) would be awful. That would be some of the main factors of how you would visualize what could happen. Vandalism, more crime maybe, I don't know. (Marie Dautel)

...There'd probably be friction I guess in the community, but I'm not really sure how we'd be able to pick that up again. There'd be more sorts of crimes against property and stuff. (Adrian D'hont)

### **Interaction with Southerners**

As the pace of development accelerates with each new diamond mine, more and more southerners will move north seeking employment. While this will place greater demand on government programmes and services, it will also increase the exposure of North Slave Métis to southern workers, especially within the confined settings of mine sites. Some of the positive impacts of greater social interaction with southerners were discussed in a previous section. However, 38% of respondents felt that the self-esteem and/or cultural values of some North Slave Métis working for Diavik would be negatively impacted by exposure to southerners, while another 25% were unsure but remained concerned.

### **Loss of Culture and Traditional Métis Values**

Some respondents thought that greater interaction with southern workers will have little or no impact on the North Slave Métis because we will never lose our core cultural values:

A lot of the guys from down south are good workers mind you, and I know the Métis people are always good workers. As far as work is concerned some values could be changed, but as far as your culture and that, I don't think you can ever change the Métis values that way. (Fred LeMouel)

Some individuals also thought that increased social interaction with southern employees would have little impact on the North Slave Métis cultural values because we are exposed daily to southern values and culture:

...It's possible, I guess, depending on sort of how the numbers work out. There'll be pressure stuff and all that, but I mean they're exposed to a lot of stuff here already in the north. Say for instance in Yellowknife here, there's a pretty broad spectrum of influences. All types of people live here, and the effect of American television and all that stuff, but yeah in terms of coming from a smaller place maybe it would be more of a factor. I don't know. I don't think it would be that



extreme actually unless we start getting...I don't know. But I'm sure there'll be all kinds of cultural awareness stuff and whatever offered through the employer, I'm guessing. (Adrian D'hont)

Sometimes, contact with others hurt us as a people. However, interaction with other cultures has always been a fundamental variable in how we defined ourselves, especially in our roles as intermediaries and brokers between Dene and European cultures. In essence, exposure to other value systems is and always has been unavoidable:

Unless they become hermits and just work and just go straight and have a shower and go to bed, they are most likely going to be in contact with other people of different values and that has taken some of our people away from our society. Many of them after the war never came back here or came back just for a short time. ...This sort of thing will happen to us, I know that. There will be people up there preaching and there will be religious guys and thieves, everything under the sun will be there. There will be people like that and those sorts of things have been around our society, like I said. We traveled right across this country nearly 200 years ago, I'm sure the same kind of people ...were around back then too so. ...I'm certainly sure that our grandfathers encountered a few along the way. My grandchildren will probably do the same. [That was a] different value system that we grew up around and most of them in our community here were mostly all Catholic. When we grew up those sorts of things weren't acceptable. Therefore there's not a whole lot of our people in jail on account of those sorts of things. I suppose it is something that they are going to encounter no doubt, but I think if done correctly, a worker working for us on a full-time basis can help us cope with some of that negative stuff we pick up. (Clem Paul)

Nevertheless, the potential for North Slave Métis to be negatively impacted by the values, attitudes and lifestyles of southerners is considerable, and we might anticipate that some individuals will lose touch with their cultural roots or foundation:

They get all this money and then they'll try to be a big shot and try to impress them by spending. Sure it will change them. If not, maybe not. I can see them going south and trying to impress [others]. Spend, go nuts, go wild, I don't know. They start thinking me, me, me, and then forget who they are and where they come from. All of a sudden they aren't doing their traditional ways, like eating their traditional food and stuff like that. (Marie Dautel)

...Maybe if there's a group of guys who are working on the same shift or whatever, sort of develop this camaraderie being on site, and then they get back to town and they want to party it up together. (Adrian D'hont)

Others might be so impressed by southern workers that it would be detrimental to them, and perhaps ultimately their health:

There will be a lot of change because you are dealing with people from the south and sometimes it's very impressive.... There is going to be interaction with the outside world and a lot of girls are going to be swept off their feet. Our population could double. Then there's the disease side of things and it's scary. AIDS is rampant. It's there. We have to let our people know that.... Like I said get some brochures and stick them out front. They'll see that and know that we care. (Marie Dautel)

### **Indicators of Loss of Values**

Well, it [adopting southern values] could have an effect I guess on the family... family life... and would show up maybe in all those other areas that I've been talking about, drugs, alcohol, gambling, or going too far toward consumerism at the expense of maintaining quality of life... I don't know, at home for your family, and maybe behaviourally, stuff happening, increased loans to pay... I don't know, getting drunk and disorderly, just problems coming up. (Adrian D'hont)

### **Loss of Self-Esteem and Confidence**

Working in a cross-cultural setting, especially when that setting is created, controlled and manipulated by members of another culture with different goals, values, attitudes and experiences, can be very intimidating and stressful for Aboriginal people. Lacking perhaps some of the skills, knowledge and expertise of seasoned mine workers; some Aboriginal people will only naturally experience a loss of self-esteem and confidence if they go to work for Diavik:

Maybe they gonna feel, "How come this one, he works really good. Me, I don't work good." Maybe them guys they went to school and they learned all kinds of things, but the other ones they didn't finish their school and went to work and they don't know nothing. What they gonna do? They don't make much money. They only make less, I guess. I guess they don't like it, but the Chief said, "My children," he said, "they went to school, grade twelve, and they're eighteen, nineteen," he says, "they gonna go to work. If I heard some trouble

from the white people, I'm gonna talk about that. They have to be friends all the time, like sisters and brothers." (Alice Lafferty)

...Because of the lack of education, they might not be able to work up to the standards. A lot of people feel very self-conscious up there because they have such a traditional upbringing and they have certain ways and these people don't. What we do might look stupid to them, but actually yes it can happen. A good, strong person won't let it happen. (Marie Dautel)

However, we need to fight through this, and get on with the job:

Right away people will probably start voicing concerns about [southern workers], but they have to look at the people in the Métis and Aboriginal communities - there's not too many people that are experienced in that field [diamond mining] up here right now. The people that are experienced in that field are down there [south] right now. You have to make sacrifices in order to pursue the long-term goal. A little bit of give and take. I'm sure after a while I'm sure these people from down south, after their training, will probably go back down south. Because I know most of them probably don't like to live up here any way. Once people are trained, it's just a matter of taking over the reigns. ...It's a cliché when you go to work, you leave your baggage at home. You are going to work; you are going up there to do a job. Whatever values they have if it is not conflicting with the people or the job then there shouldn't be any hassle. (Leroy Bloomstrand)

### **Indicators of Loss of Confidence**

Often when Aboriginal people quit a job because of a lack of self-confidence or self-esteem, their problems do not disappear at home:

I think they might be withdrawn. Stay home don't even go. They might quit or not interact with these people when they're working. Stay away. Avoid everybody. Do their own thing. And then the worst thing they can do is become withdrawn. Just sit there and let it fester. (Marie Dautel)

## **Racism and Prejudice**

Inevitably, because there is a tendency in all cultural interactions for individuals to stereotype, contrast and compare, cross-cultural work places are breeding grounds for racism and prejudice, particularly when one culture is "holding all the cards."

Initially, I guess maybe [there'll be a loss of confidence]. It depends on who they are working under. If they are nice people and they are not there to simply humiliate the person, I think they will get along. If the person is there and comes from a long line of colonialists and they thrive on laughing at you instead of with you, I suppose our people won't last long. Either they will retaliate and start fighting right there on the site or else they won't bother going back. (Clem Paul)

As will be elucidated below, there is a causal relationship between chronic under-employment of Aboriginal people and systemic racism and discrimination in large-scale resource development operations.

## **Prostitution and STDs**

Another negative impact that could be accompanying the influx mine workers to the North is prostitution and the spread of STDs.

...Prostitution is another thing. Prostitution... that's scary. ...All it takes is one time and you go with somebody else and AIDS could be rampant. Our people could be dying off. (Marie Dautel)

Prostitution, as a threat to family life, has recently hit Yellowknife:

There's all kinds of ...the drugs and the alcohol and I suppose there will probably be eventually up here lots of prostitution. Prostitution is happening right now in Yellowknife. It certainly wasn't here when I was growing up, but it is here now and I don't expect it to go away. It's the oldest profession in the world, they are probably getting better at it and it's going to get worse. That's why it has spread to a location like Yellowknife where you wouldn't think that it would be a very profitable business. It must be if some people are making a living off of it. There's those sorts of things. Money will be spent in lots of different ways, I guess, that is not going to benefit the family. (Clem Paul)

Prostitution has apparently even found its way to the BHP mine site (see "Young Women and Married Men").

## **Meaningful Employment or the "Shovel"? A Tradition of Low-Paying Jobs**

All respondents (100%) were concerned that Aboriginal people will only get unskilled, low-paying jobs if the Diavik mine goes through. In the past, Aboriginal people were viewed as a source of cheap labour and incapable of holding middle and senior management positions:

...When my Dad got to Yellowknife, he got a job at Giant Mine, and back then the most you could hope for was to be a labourer if you were Native, and that's what he was at Giant, a labourer, and he managed to raise ten of us kids working out there. In my younger days, growing up in Yellowknife, it seemed like there wasn't much future for Natives, whether you be a Métis or pure Native. It seemed like everywhere you went the only jobs Natives had was on the shovel, or some lower job like that, and it was the same for my Dad at Giant. ... I remember even in high school he used to tell some of us we might as well quit because you don't need high school to be on the shovel because he couldn't see the world changing the way it has changed. So finally the government changed a bit, and they started hiring Natives so they could train them, so you could see a few Natives here and there getting to be carpenter helpers, but other than that there wasn't much more hope of Natives coming into the real good jobs, eh. (Fred LeMouel)

## **Southerners Get All the Jobs**

Another concern shared by many respondents was that people from down south will receive, not just the best jobs, but most of the jobs:

White people, they take all the work from the [Aboriginal] people. White people, they come north here, and they get a job, ...and then some people around here they don't. It's hard for them to get a job because white people, they take all the jobs. Now, where they got diamonds and white people, all kinds of people altogether, ...the chief was saying, "My people, them they're going to have a job before the white people," that's what he was saying, and after the school finished I guess there be lots of kids going to work I guess over there, where they're working, BHP. That's what we heard on the radio. The Chief was talking, "It's not only for white people to work," he said, "My people they have to go to work, too," he said, "Altogether," he said, "that's the way...people have to work," he said, "but somebody phone from south and they come get a job right away, right away they go to work," he said, "there're a bunch of people here," he said, "some they

got no job. Woman too, have to go to work." The Chief was talking about. I guess after school's finished maybe all the people go to work. (Alice Lafferty)

I don't believe in what BHP is doing. People come in and they're gone, they don't even live in Yellowknife, they don't even live in the Territories. They take their money and they run. I wish that doesn't happen at Diavik. Live here, spend your money here and keep the North healthy. ... Sure there are going to be certain circumstances where people just don't live here because of the special needs that they have, the special skills, it is only for a short period of time for the mine. Sure hire them from the south bring them here and let them do their job and then whatever. I don't believe in these two weeks in, two weeks out people. Fly up from Edmonton and then go home, that's wrong. (Marie Duatel)

### **Systemic Racism and the "Shovel"**

Fred LeMouel describes his experiences on the "shovel", and how the systemic racism he experienced, and other Aboriginal people are now experiencing at the Ekati mine, can result in self-defeating behaviours that keep Aboriginal people marginalized, disenfranchised and either chronically underemployed or on the "shovel."

...In the private sector, I worked up at Norman Wells in 1981, and when I left Yellowknife, they promised me an electrical helper job. When I got over there I was put on the shovel, and they keep you on the shovel until you get mad and quit. ...The shovel is manual labour [laughs]. And I seen the same thing happening. I'd see all these little bush planes coming into Norman Wells, and all the guys getting off and just straight on the shovel, even though Norman Well promised all this training and this and that, and they had the odd little token Indian that had a good job, but the rest were all on the shovel, and then you'd see a great big jet fly in from Calgary or Edmonton, and all the young guys over there would get right into the welding jobs, electrical jobs, apprenticeships like, as helpers. All the good jobs were going to the guys from down south. ...All the Native guys were on the shovel, and then they would just keep you on the shovel. They'd keep promising you, "Oh next week we'll put you as a carpenter helper, electrical helper, or welder helper." They'd keep promising all the Native guys, eh, and another week would go by, another week, another week. Finally they'd just get mad, and go and get drunk, and quit and go back to the community. And then Norman Wells, Esso, would just mark in their books, "Well, we hired 500 Natives this summer, and they all quit." I



seen it myself. They were yelled at like animals, and stuff like that, so I lost faith in that kind of stuff, as far as big companies coming up here promising all these different jobs, and now from what I understand BHP is doing the same thing. I've talked to a lot of young Native guys that were working out at BHP, and they told me they were on the shovel all winter. They aren't being trained for anything. BHP has it marked in the books that they've hired all these Natives, but they've got the lowest jobs there. From what I understand, there are very few that are into training jobs, jobs that they can train you to be, so with this Diavik project, I'm hoping that these kinds of things can be changed. ...But when you see no future with the shovel, it's very easy to make up your mind and quit.... (Fred LeMouel)

Other Metis echo Fred LeMouel's concern that Aboriginal people are receiving the low-paying, low-skilled jobs at BHP. As Dianna Beck and Jack Balsillie explain, this creates negative images of Aboriginal workers:

Like I said before, a lot of the positions that they [BHP] are filling Aboriginal peoples with or northerners are all low entry-level positions. The mentality is never going to change if those people are always on the bottom of the scale and all of the southern people are on the management or the very top of the scale positions. More times than not, high-paying positions go to the southern people. It is going to be a subconscious thing; you are going to associate the southern people with these big, huge, massive brains. They just have all of this intelligence and you will never compare sort of thing. (Dianna Beck)

I understand that there's probably a lot employed at the existing mine [BHP] right now, but what I would like to see is the opportunity for them [Métis] to get more of the high-end jobs. Like I said trades, or even in the operation of the mill and that. Just don't have everybody on the end of a shovel, and doing the maid work and stuff like this you know. ...Let's train the people of the North to work at some of the better jobs. Do not just give them the low end ones. Eventually, they're going to quit, and then they're [Diavik] going to say, "Those damned Aboriginals are no good. All they want to do is work for a few times, get enough money to do what they have to do." (Jack Balsillie)

With no room or opportunity for advancement, especially when non-Aboriginal people are climbing the ladder all around you, it is easy to get despondent and quit when you are on the "shovel." While this has contributed to the image that most industrial developers have developed about Aboriginal people, if there is a glimmer of hope that hard work today will bear fruit in the future, then attitudes and productivity levels will most surely change:

One thing, like I've heard a lot of people say, "Geez, those Natives are so lazy." Well, when you've got no hopes for down the road, it's hard to get up every morning and go to work when you know you're going to be on that same low scale job as long as you're out there. But when a person sees hope and he sees a possibility of coming out in the future with something then a person jumps up in the morning. They can't wait to go to work, you know, but when a person knows they're being screwed or herded over to this job, or you were promised this, but when you got out everything changed. I've seen that happen in Norman Wells, and I know it's happening in BHP, and that's enough to discourage a person, when a person's discouraged, depressed, you get lazy. You don't even want to be there. You know, you'd rather be at home watching TV because you see other people from down south moving up the ladder, and you're still on the bottom there, hoping, hoping, and it's never happening. So that's why I would say it would have to be in writing, these jobs that they're willing to give Natives.... You can't just take their word for something like that because it's been happening too much in the north. (Fred LeMouel)

As Jack Balsillie eloquently explains, the benefits of well-paid, high-skilled positions will trickle down to Métis youth:

If they [Métis] do get these higher end jobs, then these people will become role models for the younger generation. They're going to say, "Hey, he did it. Why can't I?" or "She did it? Why can't I?" You know it will help things all the way down. It will give them some motivation if they see somebody succeeding in that type of environment.

### **Contracting: The Saga Continues**

Direct employment is not the only way Aboriginal people wind up in low-paying, unskilled jobs; they are currently experiencing the same situation in contracting. Once again, BHP, perhaps because it is currently the only show in town, is the key offender:

...And I feel like it's that way with the contractors. BHP pulled a fast one. They contracted out all the work, and they left it up to the contractors to hire who he wants, so there was a loophole for the contractors to just get their buddies from down south to come up and work. Very few Natives got training out of BHP so far, so these kinds of things will have to be put into the deal if it can be, because that's the most important resources we have, our young people. And if this mine is going to start up and shut down, I forget how many years they

expect to be open. ...Well, of course, BHP is always going to take the lowest bidder on all their jobs, but like say the people with catering and stuff like that, well these people will hire lots of Native women or whatever to wash dishes and this and that, but really they're making nothing. And then, plus, I hear some of them even have to pay for their room and board out there out of their wages. So all these little loopholes have all got to be sorted out and addressed, because there seems to be a lot of trickery going on when these things start up. It's never as good as they say, after it's started. Once they got the go ahead, it seems like all of a sudden they found a way to beat you this way, and they found a way to beat you that way, and I think that the best way to rectify that is to have everything in writing, and every contractor that goes out there, it doesn't matter how low he bids the contract, he has to pay these people a minimum wage, because none of this, "I'll pay you this much, and I'll pay you that much, and if you guys don't want to work for these wages, I know lots of people down south that will." And that seems to be the attitude out there now. (Fred LeMouel)

There's going to be a lot of secondary industry. ...The airplane industry. There's going to be parts industry. Why do you think that these big operations move in here like Acklands? All these people come up. They want northern preference so they can get into the driver's seat. Westland mining. These guys are all southern companies. They come up here because they want northern content, northern preference to take advantage of this. BHP has sworn on a stack of bibles that they were gonna hire Aboriginal and local carriers for doing their flying. ...There's no transportation sector that is owned by local Aboriginal people except for us, and we're a small company with no ability to compete at the levels that they do [First Air & Southern companies], and we don't get the option of doing the work for them. I would think that if you write a stack of bibles like BHP wrote that they would be banging on their doorstep to help us out to be their carrier. ...We're dealing with it day by day trying to get BHP's work, and we are the only Northern Métis carrier that has the ability to provide the service that they want. I mean they give a trip a week job to pick up the people in the settlements to a non-Native carrier. I mean if you go under their Environment Impact Statement and go under transportation or anything else, Aboriginal people have the first right of refusal, and that's not true. It's not true. It's in most of their hearings and everything, and they said they're going to support local people. We [Air Tindi] are local people. We are the only air service that is local people and right now we do all the flying for Diavik at this point. When they go into production, I put an offer forward to them that we would definitely like to be put in the position to bid on that work. I think they

will. However, I'm concerned there's nobody monitoring it. ...It's on our land, ancestral land or whatever the case, then there should be some way of monitoring where these contracts are going. If they're going to all southern firms, then what's the advantage of having a diamond mine in here. The diamonds have been in there for millions of years, it won't hurt to leave them in there a few more years until people decide that if you're gonna use us, if it's gonna be an advantage for the NSMA, then we are in full support of it. If your gonna say you're going to support the NSMA and you don't, leave the diamonds in there. They'll last for another million years. We'll even be gone in a million years. The diamonds will still be there. I think the producing diamond mine now [BHP], which we probably have no ability to say anything to because they've got their permits. They're going. But they don't care. They don't care if they use somebody from the south or somebody from the north. If you don't have the lowest dollar, then you don't get it. (Peter Arychuk)

### **False Promises**

Some people were concerned about the all too common tendency among resource developers to pad their Aboriginal quotas with people on the "shovel." There must be more than just a commitment to hire Aboriginal people to a certain target, this commitment must be put in writing and include job opportunities that promise a better future for the employee and his/her family:

Yeah, well it's easy to say, "We're going to hire this many Native people." That's exactly what Esso said and BHP, but it's the jobs that they're willing to give these people. That's what bothers me. I can go out, anybody can go out and say, "I'm going to hire 500 Natives every year," but they all know deep down if you keep them on the shovel or on the low scale jobs, they're going to quit. When you see all these other guys bragging about all the money they're making, and these people have no hope of ever making that kind of money, and these guys, it's no problem to go up to BHP, two weeks in/two weeks out because they're already trained, they're from down south, they're trained. Anybody would go up there for that kind of money. But when you're going out there for less money than you could be making in town, what's the point of going out there for two weeks separated from your family, and then come back with a little pitiful pay cheque and then they deducted this off your pay cheque and that, and this and that. What I'm saying is there has to be a promise of quality jobs. There should be a list of the jobs that they're willing to give Natives. And on that list, we should be able to identify and say, "Well, hold it here, this seems to be the low end jobs for the Natives." And make them

promise, in writing, that the good jobs will be, there, will be [for] Natives.... (Fred LeMouel)

### **Cumulative Impacts and General Concerns**

Most respondents were concerned not just about individual negative social, cultural and economic impacts should Diavik get the "green light.", but about the overall cumulative effect of these predicted impacts. In particular, concern was expressed about how the cumulative impacts of Diavik would result in a breakdown of the existing social order and structure among families and between generations, resulting in a loss of culture, values and sense of belonging:

Well, it's kind of a loss of the some of the traditional perspectives and values, so I guess it would be sort of a combination, and also sort of problems in the family, with being away and having breakdowns, alcoholism. I find it kind of hard to separate all that stuff. Do you want me to say just one of them? ...Yeah, just the fact that you're away from home that long working and that kind of a thing. It's kind of a disconnection, I guess, sort of a being in the community and some of the traditions, access to some of the traditional stuff, food or activities, hunting or whatever, and if you're married with children, it's going to be hard. (Adrian D'hont)

Right now I can see that there will be a decrease in the interaction with the elders and family. That's what I see right now. ...You're young, independent, free. Where's your grandparents? Sitting at home alone? They are not spending that quality time with them; they're not helping them. And I believe there will be a lot of separation and maybe even divorces.... On the negative side, there's going to be marriage break-ups, lots of horrible things that can happen. (Marie Dautel)

I think the three [main impacts]: decreased sharing, decreased transmission of TK and increased conflict. Those are the three that I ...would have the most [concern about]. Family separation, well, there was family separation when they were hunting and trapping anyway. It's not like they are being sent away for TB [treatment]. Sending someone away from sickness is one thing, but if they are working then it's productive. ...Living in Yellowknife, you will have an increase in transients, but also you might see kids putting their elders in old folks homes unless they have a community base, they have their own house or their own programme. There's some kids that do that now. I think it's still something that's kinda hard for people to put their elders away. I think Dettah and Ndilo work well because they have their own place, better than sending them to another community. (Anon.)

I think it [the main impact] would be increased family separation, because from that stems decreased sharing, it could increase alcohol and drug use, you're not consuming your usual food, you're not using the land. And I think all these...there's the lack of interaction with the family and community as a whole, as a result you lose the interaction with elders and the passing of knowledge and so forth, and I think the biggest thing would be increased family separation because everything else follows underneath that, you lose all these different things, so I think that would be the biggest thing. (Anon.)

...Less interaction between the elders and the family. I think that could be a problem. Like I mean if they get involved in a twelve-hour day and a more structured lifestyle and possibly some of that could go by the wayside. ...I could see it as being something that could happen. They're not just going to have the time. They're going to be away for basically six months of the year anyway, if they're employed at the mine year round, and if they have the dollars to spend they might consider more travel on their days off, possibly outside the NWT, so of course you know there again, they wouldn't have as much time to spend with the older people. ...I think as you grow older one of the things you probably want to have is a closer relationship with your family, and a lot of times I find a lot of people just don't take the time to spend with the older people to begin with. You're left as a person gets older and of course if they have an opportunity to do something else on their days off, plus being at work six months of the year. It is going to have an effect I think. ...I've always enjoyed talking to the elders. Some of the things that they tell you, and it's interesting I find, how their lifestyle was compared to ours, and it's something that you could pass on to your own family type of thing by talking to these people. I've always enjoyed that sitting around and having a good B.S. about how they grew up, and the lifestyle they led compared to what we do, so like I said, I hope that doesn't disappear, but some of it probably will. (Jack Balsillie)

## **Indicators of Individual Well-Being and Community Wellness**

### **General Indicators of Individual Well-Being**

A recurring theme expressed by most middle-aged and older respondents was the importance of work and being active in order to be emotionally, physically and spiritually healthy. By definition, a healthy North Slave Métis person is one who works as Alice Lafferty explains:

You go on the land. ...Nice, (winter?) breeze, it goes around you, and you make tea outside. You cook outside. You go back in the tent. Just like...really nice,



but here in Yellowknife we don't what to do. Nothing to do. You can't go outside, only garbage that's all, and what you gonna do. You can't wash clothes. You throw washing...wash clothes in the washing machine, and go by ourself. What you gonna do? Before it's not like that. You carry your own water, cut wood, wash clothes on the washboard. We do all of this, and now they put us in the lazy place. [laughs] Get more lazy, that's why we got the cabin on the highway. We go there everyday, eh. We cut a little wood, and we saw wood. It's good. We do little things around the house, and we come back. ...There's nothing to do [in a apartment]. What they gonna do. You have to take vacuum cleaner and vacuum. It's not the way we're raised. ...Yeah. Come home, move. That's how I guess my Grandmother did it. She live long because they're working. They're up and do this and do that, moving all the time, huh. They're not moving. You can't sit down there in apartment and look in the window, that's all we can, me that's why when I stay home I ... do little things around. What I gonna do? That's what I told my grandchildren. They lazy, lazy. You see, I said nothing to do. ...They said they want to have everything. Sometimes they make me mad, them kids. [laughs] (Alice Lafferty)

As Alice hinted, and Leroy Bloomstrand suggests, maintaining a connection to the land is a key factor promoting individual well-being:

I look at a person that can still go out in the bush and do what we still like to do - living off the land. ...Not just play the fiddle and drink all night, although that does go with it too. (Leroy Bloomstrand)

In addition, to being active and maintaining a connection to the land, having a sense of your cultural roots is also part of being a healthy North Slave Métis person:

Well, I guess it's probably having a knowledge of where they came from, and taking pride in that. And certain lifestyle decisions I guess that a person would need to make. You know living a good life, not necessarily tons of money, but just living life and making choices regarding types of things you might do, remaining active, and I don't know, I guess there would be healthy choices about the nature of work and stuff like that, but I guess that's pretty well driven by economic considerations: where the work is and that type of thing. ...In terms of diet, they fully recognize the value of traditional foods. They think they're a superior source of food. (Adrian D'hont)

For many, Métis elders are an essential link between younger Métis and their cultural roots. As Dianna Beck explains, a healthy Métis community is one that cares for and learns from its elders:

A healthy Métis community I think is one that really supports and initiates teaching of a language, transferring of the skills from elders to the youth, bringing those two age groups together. They do have the hunting trips and it is a part of our culture for the young people to go out hunting and to take care of the elders. An elder in our culture should not need, or have anything broken in their household, never. They should not ever have to shovel snow, nothing. They are an elder and they did enough of that in their life. They raised their kids and this is their kids' time to take care of them... (Dianna Beck)

### **General Indicators of Community Wellness**

Indicators that Diavik is having either positive or negative impacts on the North Slave Métis community would not be too difficult to detect:

Well, some signs will be if their family members, you know you're going to see them around, you're going to see them socializing with other people, their family, and you'll be able to tell whether their happy or not. On the other side, you'll either hear about them breaking up with their spouses, in problems with the law, drinking and all of that, and it won't be hard to determine whether or not they're benefiting or not. (Bob Turner)

Well you'd see a lot more smiles, happy people walking around. Not as many sad people. See families walking around, shopping and laughing, having fun. Of course, that's a positive thing from Diavik. Or else you see people walking and they're not smiling, they're yelling and screaming at the kids and you know that's not a happy sign. I hope and wish Diavik would do and keep the Métis people happy... jobs... education. (Marie Dautel).

Signs that negative impacts are overwhelming the positive impacts in the community might include the following:

Cops at your door because kid's stealing all the time. There's something wrong. You're obviously not showing them the right way to live or [something]. ...Maybe it's because they are in with their peers or whatever. Others, it could just be that they are into those bad habits. A social worker or RCMP at your door every weekend or Monday because something happened in the community, that's another sign that something's not right at home. Young offenders being sent away, that kind of stuff. (Anon)

## **Parting Thoughts**

The Diavik project could hold considerable promise for the North Slave Métis. Alternatively, it could be the harbinger of the demise of our way of life and our community. While a key to our success as a people has been our ability to adapt and change with times, if there is no land left to sustain us, if the impacts of this mine are not properly assessed, monitored and mitigated, all hope will be lost. Surely, this is not too much to ask:

Our people are going to have to change with the times. So far we have been very lucky, but how long our luck is going to last nobody knows. In 25 years, it's nice to think of just us, but in 25 years there's going to be a lot of "others" here as well. There is going to be a lot of other impacts on all of our land because no matter what rotation you have, maybe you have, ...if there is none of that land left there to do the things like our traditional pursuits it is going to be very difficult for us to say that the mine was a success. And all of those things. There are too many factors, I think. I'd like to say that it is going to be a success that it is going to be positive, I really would, but that would only be a very very uneducated guess. Through means that we are trying to do now, I think that it can be a success. If this work is done right and the information is gathered correctly, always on a regular basis and updated on a regular basis, I think our people will be successful. I think we will be able to deal with the problems on our time off and the problems we might face at the work site, but it is very difficult to predict. It so easily could turn bad and sour.

The way the North is developing, maybe within two to three years there will be a set of rules for most industries to follow in consulting with us and affording us opportunities at the site to ensure that every best effort is taken that any kind of development is positive for us. Otherwise the development simply won't happen because our people realize now that development, some people say it's good, but it hasn't been for us. The development so far hasn't been a success story for us, but it can be. It's not very hard to make it successful and it doesn't hurt very long to make it successful either. I think that once those rules are in place and the mining industry grows accustomed to those rules and the ones that are just here to take and never to give would simply leave and never come back and the ones that have a history of dealing cooperatively with local people and being environmental conscious, I think that it has great potential. Like I said it doesn't take long... it doesn't take many lemons to make it sour. (Clem Paul)

**Table 5. NSMA Survey Quick Reference Guide: Impacts of Increased Employment**

1. % of respondents who believe there will be positive impacts of employment at Diavik for individuals, families and the North Slave Métis community: 100%. (27 respondents)
2. % of respondents who believe that increased employment at Diavik will help increase personal confidence and self-esteem: 96%, (P) 4%. (26 respondents)
3. % of respondents who believe there will be negative impacts of employment at Diavik for individuals, families and the North Slave Métis community: 77%, (P) 4%. (26 respondents)
4. % of respondent who are concerned that wage employment outside the community and/or out-migration will affect the capacity of community to deal with crises: 39%, (P) 11%. (18 respondents)
5. % of respondents who think that North Slave Métis Diavik employees will have difficulty adjusting to the two week in/out, 12 hour day work rotation schedule: 60%, (P) 12%. (25 respondents)
6. % of respondents who think that the two week in/out rotation will have negative impacts on families of North Slave Métis Diavik employees: 65%, (P) 23%. (26 respondents)
7. % of respondents who fear that Métis women working for Diavik may have a negative impact on their partners and families: 61%, (P) 22%. (23 respondents)
8. % of respondents who are concerned about the fact that some will get jobs at Diavik while others won't, will create tensions in the community: 76%, (P) 10%. (21 respondents)
9. % of respondents who are concerned that shift rotation or wage employment outside the community will negatively impact respect for elders, sharing practices, Métis culture traditions, and/or the transmission of traditional knowledge and values: 44%, (P) 13%. (16 respondents)
10. % of respondents who believe that employment at Diavik and exposure to southern workers values will have a negative impact on self-esteem and cultural values: 38%, (P) 25%. (24 respondents)
11. % of respondents who are worried that the North Slave Métis will only receive low-paying, low-skilled positions: 67%, (P) 17%. (12 respondents)
12. % of respondents who fear that Aboriginal people will only get low-paying unskilled jobs, while non-Aboriginal peoples will receive the better, high paying jobs: 100%. (14 respondents)

## **7.0 ADDRESSING OUR CONCERNS: SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ASSESSING, MONITORING and MITIGATING IMPACTS**

### **A BLUEPRINT FOR SUSTAINABILITY**

Diavik's environmental assessment (EA) failed the North Slave Métis and other Aboriginal groups in the North Slave region. Diavik had the opportunity to create certainty out of uncertainty and to alleviate fears and concerns. However, the NSMA has still not received any assurances that critical valued ecosystem components such as caribou, fish, individual well-being, family relationships and community wellness will not be adversely impacted by the Diavik project. The NSMA remains concerned about the lack of effort expended and relevant information presented in Diavik's EA. We fail to see how this project can receive regulatory approval without first addressing our concerns and those of other Aboriginal groups.

Below we present a list of recommendations from the NSMA membership, in their own voice, about how our concerns could be addressed. In essence, it is a blueprint for sustainability, the sustainability of families, our community and our culture. Specifically, it presents recommendations relevant to properly assessing, monitoring and mitigating impacts on a range of valued ecosystem components. Some of the following recommendations may have been foreshadowed in the Comprehensive Study report (CSR), but many were not, and certainly not in the comprehensive and interrelated way they are presented here. We expect Diavik and government to fully consider these recommendations and to develop, with our full consent and involvement, ways and means to implement them. In so doing, government will meet one of the two conditions of consultation imposed on it by its fiduciary obligation to Aboriginal peoples when resource development is proposed on Aboriginal, Crown and unsurrendered lands. Failure to address our concerns to our satisfaction may constitute an infringement of our Aboriginal and Treaty rights under *s. 35(1)* of the *Constitution*, and any Ministerial decision in Diavik's favour may be overturned as a result.

### **GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **Recommendation #1: Working Together**

The current *CEAA* is, in many ways, hostile to cooperative efforts to assess and manage impacts for the common good. It is obvious that, in order to properly assess, monitor and mitigate the environmental, social, cultural and economic impacts of Diavik and other diamond mines we need to work together:

[Diavik] could control their activity in the area. It would be different I guess for the different species of animals. They'd have to slow their activity down when the caribou are in the area, and when there's others, they'd have to determine other deterrents for the wildlife that's in the area year-round, so it's going to take a lot of consultation, work, planning, monitoring and mitigating. Well, one method [of mitigating environmental and social impacts] is working in cooperation with the other Aboriginal groups in the area, with government, mining industry, and putting together a proper monitoring scheme that could cover all of the subjects that would have to be in the plan. I mean you have to monitor a lot of things, there's going to be social impacts, environmental impacts, wildlife impacts, I mean you have to deal with a lot of things. You not only have to monitor it, but once you've monitored it you have to determine the results and then plan on how to fix the problems if there are problems. It's not going to be an easy task, but that's my dream, is to have everyone working together and to do it right. (Bob Turner)

It is especially critical that the dialogue between Diavik and BHP be nurtured, as the Ekati mine is the first of its kind, and we may have much to learn from that experience:

I don't know if Diavik has any dialogue right now with the existing mine, and what problems they've had. They should be talking to each other [Diavik and BHP] and helping each other out to prevent any problems, like the existing mine is probably going to be the guinea pig. They will have some starter problems or whatever, and I certainly think that Diavik should talk to these people and vice versa in order to lessen any types of problems they might have. (Jack Balsillie)

## **Recommendation #2: Clarification of Roles**

In order to create certainty, it is recommended that the roles of government, industry and the NSMA be clarified and agreed upon prior to the development of commitments and agreements, and project approval.

### **Recommendation #2a: Diavik**

Many respondents felt that, because Diavik must be held accountable for its impacts, Diavik should shoulder the lion's share of the costs for assessing, monitoring and mitigating impacts:

...I mean the [mine has] got to be geared to the community, to the people here, and I think Diavik there, everything that I've read from



them has been quoting what a good corporate citizen they are, in regards to people in the area. Presumably they would go some distance to allow these things to happen and be more flexible in those areas [shift schedule], adapting some of their hiring practices to enable more people to participate. And go heavy on the training side too, to bring people and get them up to speed. And I guess that's not just solely them, I mean there's government responsibilities that could be identified there, partnership arrangements could be worked out, company, government and this organization [NSMA] for instance. ...Well, I think they [Diavik] should be a big funding source because after all it's for their benefit, when you think ...they're the ones that are making a nice big profit out of those diamonds. So I think yeah they've got to take care of the workers. I think, if they want to continue to work there and do a good job, especially when they invest in training and stuff. They don't want to see a big turnover. They want to be able to keep people. Oh yeah, they should be the major contributors there. (Adrian D'hont)

I think they [Diavik] should contribute to the different programs, all the different social programs. If a person works up at Diavik, as a result they have an increase in funds and they [may] use it in a negative way. Substance and alcohol abuse, the different social programs are going to increase the cost. [The] crime rate is going to go up, as a result of all the different people coming and going into the North. (Anon.)

## **Recommendation #2b: Government**

Most respondents felt that government, because of its fiduciary responsibility to Aboriginal people, should also have a role to play in order to create a sustainable economy and future for the people of the North Slave region, especially in the area of training:

The government could play a role in [training], such as the apprenticeship board offering to pay half of these peoples' wages, or something like that. The ones that get on as apprenticeships, ...that would encourage Diavik more and more to hire these guys as apprentices. And like I said, you'd have to have a classroom set up out there for the guys that are below grade level, and it doesn't have to be four hours a day. It could be two hours a day where they could just go into a classroom.... It won't take long to have your grade 12 or the level that you require for that particular grade. (Fred LeMouel)

Government, well, if they're doing some kind of a heavy duty tax number on Diavik then, yeah, I guess they could be putting some of

that back into taking care of the people that are being affected by the development, seeing that government's also out on the path there developing this stuff, so yeah it doesn't come cheap. (Adrian D'hont)

### **Recommendation #2c: NSMA**

Aboriginal groups must also have a large role to play in assessing, monitoring and mitigating environmental, socio-economic and cultural impacts. While more specific recommendations regarding the role of the NSMA in impacts monitoring and mitigation will be presented below, many respondents felt that the NSMA should receive sufficient funds from Diavik and government to put in place monitoring strategies that are geared towards the needs of the North Slave Métis:

I feel that a lot of money should be funnelled toward the NSMA just so we can do just that, have agents in there for employment and for environment and pollution, and like I say, so much money should go toward family, what do you call it? Not family counselling, but like the government has it where you...what did I call it before? Family services? Well, kind of like social services, but families that are directly affected by Diavik. There should be an office set up in Yellowknife for that. (Fred LeMouel)

### **Recommendation #3: Need to Study BHP**

We all may have much to learn from BHP's Ekati mine. Many North Slave Métis interviewed for this report talked about the negative effects that BHP was having in respect to caribou, decreased land use, increased alcohol and drug use, increased family breakdown, increased community disruption, etc. Diavik was presented with an ideal case study to undertake research to enhance the assessment of its impacts, but chose otherwise. It is recommended Diavik undertake a thorough study of BHP's environmental and, most especially, socio-economic effects prior to regulatory approval:

Yeah, because that's the first diamond mine, so we've got to see how things work out there, and use that as sort of a blue print, and follow that for all the rest of the mines that open up you know later. This is a new thing in the Northwest Territories and in Canada. It's got to be studied. You can't just, you know...It's got to be watched closely. ... It should be studied year-round, you know. Up at the mine [BHP] they had a bunch of people there all winter. I don't know if they're going to be there all summer. I imagine they'll be there all summer watching the caribou and stuff like that. It's the first time it's happened, so they gotta be very, very careful, especially [with] the fish, you know. ... We can't just let them go ahead and do what they want, and have a big dead lake

up north there. In the middle of nowhere, there's one big dead lake, with no fish, no animals around. It's got to be watched to make sure that things are done properly to make sure all these other mines are watched also. This Ekati mine there, they [Diavik] should learn a lot from that. It's been going for a couple of years now. They did a study before the mine was opened, and now that it's opened they should be able to see the difference, if there is any difference, and go from there. If there's something being done wrong, fix it before it gets worse. Make sure it doesn't happen at the other mines. (Lawrence Lafferty)

## **RECOMMENDATIONS: ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS**

### *(MINING ACTIVITIES)*

#### **Recommendation #4: Managing Spills**

A number of respondents forwarded specific recommendations about various ways to lessen the impacts of various mining activities, such as spills:

They have spills every year. Sometime a tanker tips over. Robinson's has probably one of the quickest response for diesel spills, maybe that would be a place that Diavik can go get some pointers on what kind of machinery they have and vacuums and whatever, how they contain it. 'Dangerous Goods' already has a pretty good course out on how to contain diesel spills or what kind of absorbents to use. I've taken dozens of courses on it. Everybody has a different method so the best thing is just to stay with the best one and keep notes on the other ones. ...The summer time would be the worse case scenario because spills go directly into the earth. Whereas in winter it's frozen and you can remove it, it will still be there in puddles. You can vacuum it out and then you can come along a scrape it up and vacuum everything one and then reclaim it again. But in the summer, that's where I say go get a good vacuum truck, something that you can just clean it up. Deal with it right away. Quick response. And I think everything will go quite fine. (D'Arcy Mercredi)

In addition, it is recommended that Diavik hire and train North Slave Métis and other Aboriginal people for its emergency clean-up operation.

#### **Recommendation #5: Refuse Disposal**

Some North Slave Métis suggested ways for handling refuse that, based on common sense and experiential knowledge, refuted the recommendations of "experts."

Try and find a low-lying area. When I was at Diavik they put their refuse area on top of a hill, so in the springtime you have that run-off coming down into the lake. So instead of picking a sump hole, and that was from experienced environmentalists that said you have to take it as far away from water as you possibly can. So, where is the furthest? Top of the hill, but everything flowed back down to the lake. ...They could probably make a sump somewhere. If they would have to line it with cement so it won't leak, by all means do it. To contain it in one spot that can be cleaned up again when they are finished. They can go in and they can clean it up, mulch it up and package it up, put it in plastic bags and take it out of there if it is going to bother anything. (D'Arcy Mercredi)

### **Recommendation #6: Leave it the Way You Found It**

For most respondents it was essential that when the Diavik mine closes, that it leave the area just the way they found it:

We [Métis and other Aboriginal people] own this country, and it's ours, so we should be watching it to make sure that it isn't changed. When they [Diavik] leave, after 25 years, it should be exactly the same way as it was when they came. That's what I think. ...Like I said before, it's all our land, so we'll always have something to do with it, now and in the future. We always will. (Lawrence Lafferty)

### **Recommendation #7: Research Other Reclamation Efforts**

Some people suggested that Diavik needs to study other reclamation efforts in the North to determine best practices for reclamation:

They will have to figure out how the cold works for the plant, because if it's made in a lab and then brought up and put into the [natural] element of it, what is going to happen when the wind hits it? It might not take it. Probably moss or anything else that can. I worked in the Yukon last summer maybe they can do some of the reclamation [that was done] there. After the fire they reclaim a lot of stuff and they use a lot of mosses because their overburden is similar to the Barren grounds. The Barren grounds on top of the rock, overburden is mostly sand and gravel. Because the forest fire went through and cleaned all the moss, the moss is only that thick [gestures], that's how thick they are and then underneath it is all gravel. So they go in and help in along with moss that is seeded already and they just lay it down and soak it in there and let it do its own thing. Maybe they can do something like that. Follow along with them people over there. (D'Arcy Mercredi)

*(MONITORING)*

**Recommendation #8: Autonomous On-site Monitoring**

**Recommendation #8a: On-site Monitoring by Aboriginal People**

Many North Slave Métis saw the need for independent monitoring of Diavik's environmental impacts, especially by Aboriginal people:

They're gonna watch, if they poisoned the animals, they'll watch. All the animals died over there, sleeping or they're dead. Now how they gonna know if they died with that poison. Nobody went close to shoot them. Maybe with poison. Too much dust, poison, too much everything, drilling and they put some poison, they said they mix poison in the water. I don't know what they do, but if they go in the lake, they're gonna poison lots of things. ...Here [Yellowknife] they watch, they watch, but the last minute they didn't watch I guess. They [poisons] went a little bit in the water, they said. Giant, not much, but they went in the water, poison, in the water there, big lake somewhere. If they put poison, maybe they go in the water, the caribou, they be poisoned. (Alice Lafferty)

...There should be a Aboriginal group of people, crew, to monitor [Diavik]. Monitor the waste site. Monitor metal or steel, if any of that stuff's going on. I feel that there should be somebody there to monitor that stuff, just so that someone doesn't get crazy and start discarding stuff that shouldn't be left up there when they can fly or haul it [out] on the winter road. I'm not saying that that's happening, but it might not hurt to have a group that could, like a monitoring group to, monitor, drive the winter roads and make sure that there's no fuel being spilt. Monitor the burned garbage. Monitor the waste of oil drums and monitor the quality of the water that's being pumped back into the lake and stuff like that. (Peter Arychuk)

If they do this one properly and BHP is doing their thing properly, then there should be no reason why more diamond mines can't open as long as things are done properly. I feel like you can't just give the trust to the mine itself. We should have an agent in each one of these mines to always be watching to make sure that things are done properly because if you don't then all of a sudden it's easier to just get rid of that stuff over there, and, "Let's just bury these things over here, and let's cut costs by doing this. Let's cut costs by doing that." And then that's how you end up with an environmental catastrophe. Like, even Colomac mine there, look at all the problems they're having over there now and that's because nobody was over there watching them constantly. That's why no matter how clean of a mine it is and how

different it is from gold mining, they still have to have an agent from our office, or one of the Dene band offices always watching what's going on at all times, and we would have to come up with the funding somehow that would probably be from Diavik to have someone out there, but they would be working through our office, and only we could fire them or something like that, but if they're working for Diavik it's pretty hard to bite the hand that feeds you, so that's why I say that. (Fred LeMouel)

The RA's in the CSR acknowledged the need for a long-term environmental and social monitoring board, and applauded the NSMA proposal for a North Slave Sustainable Development Authority (NSSDA) as an appropriate model to meet this need. It is recommended that both government and industry support the establishment and operation of the NSSDA in order to create certainty for all parties.

### **Recommendation #8b: NSMA Role in Environmental Monitoring**

Most respondents expressed the desire and saw the need to have the NSMA meaningfully and intimately involved in environmental monitoring:

...We could have our own person ...maybe in the winter checking all the caribou and stuff like that, and in the summer checking the fish. We could have somebody hired right out of our office to do just that on a regular basis, and they can be checking the pollution side of it also, because it doesn't take the whole summer to check on the fish, so they could be doing other things, kind of like a watchdog, making sure that the mine is living up to their side of the deal when it comes to the amount of water they're pumping into the lake and the chemical treatment they're promising to use is kept up to par. A lot of times and places where there's a big production, neglect starts to happen because to do all these things probably will slow down production a bit to keep their end of the deal as treating the water and stuff like that, so a lot of times they'll just say it was a mistake, but if they have someone checking on them all the time, then it would work out better like that.... Like I say, if we have a guy working right out of our office out there, or checking out there all the time, we have guys that have renewable resources tickets and things like that in our community that would be able to be employed and go out there on a regular basis and check all these different things involving pollution and environment. ... As long as they're under the watchful eye of someone from our office for instance, then they probably won't do it. But if no one's watching, eventually you're going to have little things like, "That was an accident. This was an accident. Oh, that was just an unfortunate accident." If



you have someone checking on them all the time, these things won't happen. (Fred LeMouel)

(CARIBOU)

**Recommendation #9: Managing Mine Operations in Presence of Caribou**  
**Recommendation #9a: Stopping Production**

Because of the importance of caribou to the North Slave Métis and other Aboriginal people of the North Slave region, Diavik must be prepared to temporarily stop production if large numbers of caribou are traveling through the area:

If the caribou, if they're hurt, if it's [the herd] coming [toward Diavik site]. They [Diavik] can do something about it, like say; "The caribou herd is coming, so why don't you shut the machines off for two days or something?" Clear the whole area or job site of whatever is going on. Shut her off for two or three days. Clear the caribou; it's the only way. (James Lafferty)

The temporary suspension of mining activity during caribou migration is not a novel idea; and an independent monitoring committee, consisting of Inupiat elders and hunters has the authority to close down production at the Red Dog mine in northern Alaska for up to two weeks if caribou are migrating through the area. This committee also has the same authority to close the mine's port operations if beluga are in the vicinity.

**Recommendation #9b: Restriction of Blasting**

Another recommendation that Diavik should entertain is restricting blasting to certain times:

Blasting might be able to be kept to so many days a week, instead of everyday. In that way, you're not scaring the daylights out of caribou or anything that might be nearby. They might be able to have a plane that patrols around to make sure that there's no herd close by when they do blast. Things like that would probably help quite a bit ...But like I say, maybe that could be something to look into where they might just take a plane and fly around the area and make sure there's no caribou herds close by before they go ahead and blast. ...If they contain all the blasting to certain days a week instead of everyday blasting, it shouldn't bother them at all.... (Fred LeMouel)

### **Recommendation #9c: Minimization of Blasting Effects**

Diavik should also be required to take other specific measures to minimize the impacts of blasting on caribou when they are migrating through the area:

If they're doing a blasting process, I don't know if they're going to use...Like we used to use a cover of tires, and I don't know if it's feasible for such a large operation, as well, it would be a good idea to mist the area with water, at the same time that they try to keep the dust more localized as opposed to letting it go in the atmosphere and drift all over the place, or maybe nowadays you know with some of the gadgets they got, they might be able to use an electrical sound or something like that could make it [dust] drop locally as opposed to spreading. (Jack Balsillie)

### **Recommendation #10: Caribou Sampling Program**

It was recommended that one way of monitoring the cumulative impacts of Diavik and other diamond mines on caribou is to periodically assess samples of their internal organs and tissues:

They gonna watch where caribou going, and maybe they test caribou too sometimes, eh, people to see if it's no good, people don't eat. (Alice Lafferty)

Something like that [assessing health and condition of caribou] could be done with the participation of the North Slave Métis and GNWT. We could set something up. There was a fellow in talking about...he's doing an assessment on the distribution of parasites in the N.W.T., the number of different species in wildlife. ...His concern is that we've got so little information, so little banked where we can go back and look at examples of whatever, so this could potentially be a part of this, and it all relates back to their health. (Adrian D'hont)

### **Recommendation #11: Develop Better Caribou Population Assessment Techniques**

Some North Slave Métis were concerned about current practices used by the GNWT to count caribou, and recommended more appropriate, less invasive techniques:

What I would like to see Game and Wildlife stop counting them with helicopters because if they want to count them, maybe they should count them on their march down, not in the springtime, not when they

are pregnant. I was at Diavik and the mine didn't affect them, it was the helicopter chasing them at 60 miles an hour down the lake. I'd like to know how many of them aborted early because of the stress. This time of the year it is cows that they are chasing. They still don't have a good count because all of the bulls are behind. When they are coming down they are breeding and there are cows and bulls. Count them when they come down this year in the fall and then see what happens during the hunting season all through these communities here, and then count them the next fall when they are coming breeding again. (D'Arcy Mercredi)

### **Recommendation #12: Monitoring Winter Caribou Hunting and Road Access**

One way government can lessen the impact of "weekend warriors" on wintering caribou is to ensure proper policing and regular monitoring of the winter road, as this has been an effective deterrent in the past:

I can remember back in, say 1975. There were people going hunting, but not as many as people as go hunting now [on the winter road]. I guess if you have more people coming in as long as the rules are there, the wildlife regulations are there. One thing I know is that they haven't really been policing it too much because of cutbacks and that has an impact. Enforcing who can hunt and how many animals - there is a lot of wastage out there, that's what bugs me. ...Find the funding and charge the people who are wasting meat because you go out there sometimes and people are just taking the hind quarters and that's a total waste. When we go hunting, we take everything. (Tom Williams)

Just about every time, I went up [winter road] this year, I ran into a game warden, so they must be doing something. When I went out this year, I didn't find any carcasses at all, this year, but years ago, when Discovery Mines was open, eh, go up there and find them all over the place. You had caribou with just a bullet hole in them, nothing taken. Some of them, they take the hind quarters and leave the rest.... They've been doing it for years. I think they should have checkpoints along the winter road, you know, checking hunters, making sure they didn't overkill. Make sure animals are tagged; you know what the game warden is supposed to do.... Oh yeah, people who have never hunted before, go up there and just for the sport, just to knock `em down, just to say they killed a caribou. Some of them take the meat, and then they get to town, and they take it to the dump. (Lawrence Lafferty)

It is recommended that North Slave Métis and other Aboriginal people be hired to monitor hunting practices and clean up programs along the winter road to Lupin.

### **Recommendation #13: Role of Elders in Caribou Monitoring**

Many North Slave Métis recommended that, because of the importance of caribou and since Aboriginal elders possess a great deal of knowledge and wisdom about caribou, elders should be intimately involved in their monitoring:

In their own environmental studies [Diavik should] involve Aboriginal people. Get the information out to the people, out to the communities, out to the residents; saying this is what is happening. I think it's fine for them to say it themselves, their own biologists, but have some local people like elders involved in some of these studies and stuff like that. Traditional knowledge, I think that's important. (Tom Williams)

In addition to elders, youth should also be involved in monitoring caribou:

I would like to see elders involved, because they are the greatest resource of knowing exactly ...[caribou] migration patterns. From being able to look at a tree and saying, "Well, this many caribou go through here," and all this kind of stuff. But, I would really like to see youth involved because they are going to have to take over once the elders are gone, so I would really like to see them working together. (Dianna Beck)

It is recommended that government and Diavik also assist the NSMA to develop school programs which will bring elders and youth together to share and exchange knowledge about appropriate caribou/human relationships.

### **Recommendation #14: Fencing for Caribou**

North Slave Métis were concerned about caribou wandering through the Diavik mine site and recommended that fencing be considered for both pits and other features that present a hazard for caribou.

#### **Recommendation #14a: Fence Pits**

Open-pit mines must be fenced to the satisfaction of all affected Aboriginal communities:

I assume that they probably will be fencing these areas off or something, so the animals wouldn't wander right into a pit. That's an assumption on my part. Anytime you place some sort of obstruction in

the way of an animal or human being, you know you have to make a detour to go around, but certainly there should be some means as well of fencing the area, or whatever they plan to do to try to minimize the animal's falling into something like that and harming themselves or killing themselves. (Jack Balsillie)

#### **Recommendation #14b: Proper Consultation and Research Needed for Other Caribou Diversion Fences**

In terms of other caribou diversion fences, it was recommended that first we need to determine the exact migration routes of caribou in the vicinity of Lac de Gras and their frequency of use:

They should find out [caribou migration route]. Like this spring, where are they passing? Which way? And then the next spring they [caribou] should follow that. They've been there already, two years. See they could check, and then if they still come this way [Diavik site], what they gonna do? They'll have to put a fence somewhere for sure. That might stop [the caribou]. (Catherine Turner)

One of the best ways of doing this, of course, is to consult with elders:

I think that what they have to do is a lot of consultation with the elders of the area first, and they're going to have to seriously consider fencing a lot of their area of activity, for starters, and a lot of monitoring, whatever I guess precautions they take. ...Well, there has to be a lot of discussion on the exact methods of monitoring, but they'd have to monitor all their movements in the area during both the spring and then the fall migration periods. (Bob Turner)

#### **Recommendation #15: Hunters' Financial Assistance if Caribou Affected**

It was observed that, if caribou migration routes were altered due to Diavik's mining activities, hunters would have to travel further in order to hunt caribou, as they did last year. In this case, some form of financial assistance would be required in order for Métis to keep up the hunt:

Some of these people that do the hunting or make their living from the resources, maybe they're stretched to the limit right now as to where they're hunting them at the time being. If that area [caribou hunting grounds] becomes larger and further away, of course you know something's going to have to be done for the people that have to go further, whether the mine you know says, "Okay, we'll pay for your fuel, or we'll pay for an airplane. We'll take you on the hunt because

this is affecting your existing area by having our mine. We'll compensate you somehow." Something would have to be done if that occurred. (Jack Balsillie)

*(FISH)*

**Recommendation #16: Appropriate Information Baselines and Monitoring Programmes for Fish**

**Recommendation #16a: Information Baselines**

Diavik needs to create better information baselines on fish using indicators appropriate to Aboriginal interests, so as to begin effectively to assess and measure impacts:

Well, I have to be involved in the monitoring right from the beginning and that means getting out there soon and determining exactly what the state of the fish population is and the health of the fish and all that right now, and then monitor it as the mine progresses, and the end results will determine I guess what they have to do to mitigate it. ...Well, that's one component of determining the health of the fish, along with scientific studies, when you send the fish tissue out to the lab, the only thing that's going to tell you is the amount of heavy metals that are in the fish, and it isn't going to tell you the general health of the fish, it doesn't tell you the texture of the meat, how soft it is, it doesn't give you an idea of whether or not, I mean the first sign of one of the other signs of a sick fish is when they start getting worms, and there's little cysts in the flesh, when you cut them open you can see all that, you can tell by the scales, it's not hard to determine a healthy fish from a sick fish, it's very noticeable if you've seen fish quite a bit, and when you fillet them, or cut them open, when you eat a fish, I mean I can tell whether or not a fish is healthy and whether it's not healthy, I mean we've...when you get a sick fish or whatever that goes out to the birds, or the dogs, or what not. I mean you don't eat it, and you can tell by looking at a fish, the texture of a fish, and how clear the meat is, and then signs of sickness, you know poor quality is when the fish get worms and the scales and skin are a little discoloured. It's not that hard to determine between healthy and sick fish. (Bob Turner)

**Recommendation #16b: Monitoring Programmes**

At the same time, it was recommended that monitoring of fish should be undertaken as a way to determine appropriate habitat restoration and compensation requirements:



...So there's going to be a negative impact on the fish, that's a given, and how much of a negative impact has to be determined through monitoring and then that will determine how much I guess enhancement of other habitat or other areas that they're going to have to provide because it's a given they're going to be destroying habitat, and they're going to be damaging a portion of the environment to the fish population, so it's a given they're going to have to compensate in other areas, as well as once they go into their closure mode, they're going to have to fix up the area as best they can, so that's what's going to have to happen. (Bob Turner)

### **Recommendation #16c: Cooperation**

It is especially important that we all work together in this objective:

...So, and that's where in the 'No Net Loss' program, is where the Aboriginal groups want to get together with DFO and the company [Diavik] and determine what is the best alternative fish habitat that can be developed or built and enhanced, whether it's in that immediate area, or in other areas, will be determined by the group that gets together. (Bob Turner)

### **Recommendation #17: Monitoring the Health of Fish**

Owing to increased nutrient loading and other potential impacts on fish and water quality, fish in Lac de Gras will have to be sampled by Aboriginal people on a regular and sustained basis in order to assess and monitor their health:

Well, you're going to be testing the fish from the beginning, and right now the fish are very healthy fish, in the northern lakes, cold water lakes, like Lac de Gras, the fish are...the meat is very firm and it's very high in nutrient level...I mean it's a healthy fish, but if you start adding all this stuff in, who knows how it's going to be. I know the fish in the Yellowknife area aren't as healthy as they used to be, the meat is not as firm as fish that you get out in the deeper, cold water part of the lake, and that is one method of determining the change, is the texture of their meat, and you know if they're getting stressed or what not, the meat is going to start getting softer and softer, but if you put them in the lab, the laboratory results will come back and say there's nothing wrong with the fish, but we test them by eating them. (Bob Turner)

### **Recommendation#18: Monitoring Water Quality**

In addition to fish, the water in and around the Diavik mine site should be tested regularly, preferably in locations to be identified by affected Aboriginal communities:

They should check the water all the time, and make sure that they're getting chemicals in there. It's a new frontier. People don't know too much about the north. They're just starting to develop it, eh. It's got to be watched to make sure they [diamond mines] don't make a big mess of things. (Lawrence Lafferty)

### **Recommendations #19: Monitoring Fish Movements**

Because Lac de Gras is not an isolated aquatic ecosystem, it was recommended that in order to understand more thoroughly fish migration patterns and movements in area, and Diavik's effects on these, that fish be tagged and recaptured on a regular basis:

It's hard to do a study on Lac de Gras because it's fed by from five different main streams. If you catch a trout in Lac de Gras, how do you know that it doesn't come from Point Lake or from MacKay Lake or from Thonokied (sic) or from Contwoyto? Actually a trout is part of the shark clan, so it is moving all of the time. Long distances. It's not his home here in Lac de Gras. You can probably put a ticket on him and you might find him down here next week. It all depends on where the food is.... The Fishery Department, they don't know where the fish come from for one [thing]. They don't know whether it is out of Sauvage Lake or Duchess Lake or Contwoyto or did that fish actually come from this sport fishing lake [MacKay Lake]? This is a sport fishing lake, right? Did that fish come from there or did it come from Point Lake or did it come up all the way from the ocean? Who knows? We have to tag them and find out exactly what the impact would be on that particular fish. You could tag a bunch of them in here and see if you catch them there and if you catch them there, then tag them again and see if they actually do come back. ...Tag them and maybe tag a bunch in here in this north end [and see how] they go up the Desteffany River and do come into here and then tag them in Lac de Gras and see if they can pick them up here again, if that's their route. Or tag a bunch here and see if they do come up the current. That would be a good project. (D'Arcy Mercredi)

## **Recommendation #20: Role of NSMA in Fish Assessment and Monitoring**

Many North Slave Métis felt that the NSMA should have a role in assessing and monitoring fish:

I think that they [NSMA] should have input, say a person that meets with the people of the mine itself, so that they're totally aware, not that you just get a piece of paper from Diavik that says, "Hey we've done this or that." It would be nice to have a person that goes there, if it's just a spot check type of thing, once a month or whatever, and actually witnesses the testing of the water before they're returned. Be there when the fish [organ samples] are taken. It would be nice to have a person or persons actually witnessing the fact, not just like I said, a piece of paper from the company itself that says, "Yes, we've done this and this and this, and here's our analysis for the water and that." It would be nice to have somebody who's either trained or is aware of what can be done so that when they witness these monitoring processes or whatever, that they are aware of that too. (Jack Balsillie)

It is also recommended that resources be made available to incorporate both our elders and youth into any assessment and monitoring programs for fish.

## **Recommendation #21: Use of Environmentally Safe Materials to Lessen Impact on Water**

Diavik must use the most environmentally friendly materials available in order to reduce impacts on fish and water quality:

The water can be damaged; the fish can be damaged, unless they use some kind of plastic pipe for water, whatever they call it. Use pipe that doesn't rust. It will rust in no time. If you throw something like a butter knife in the water and leave it in the water for two days and come back, it's going to be rusted and you won't be able to use it anymore. (Anon.)

Diavik must present the documentation and literature pertaining to their selection of material, as well as for all alternative materials rejected, to the affected Aboriginal communities, preferably through the NSSDA (see below), for review and monitoring.

## **Recommendation #22: Restoration of Fish Habitat**

### **Recommendation #22a: Restoration of Open-pit Mines**

It is recommended that, providing that a proper cap is used, the open-pits be back-filled with country rock after the mine closes:

They [Diavik] should return it [country rock] back to the three holes, cover them, fill up the holes as much as they can, then when the water drains back into these holes, it wouldn't have such an impact on the lake later on, because these little areas here ... these little dikes--it's going to make this area here good for the fish, yes, but that just compensates for what they take away from the shoreline, eventually if all the water drains back into these big huge holes, it's going to impact the whole area, and they'll lose all that area along the shore that's good feeding for the fish. They should fill in the three holes with these huge rock piles, then they can let the lake drain and whatever little amount is left, instead of leaving the holes and then letting the lake drain into it, they should leave the rock piles there. (Anon.)

### **Recommendation #22b: Do not Create Lakes and Stock Them**

Diavik should not create artificial fish lakes and restock them with fish because it is an abrogation of Aboriginal land use relationships.

...It's not a good idea to stock a lake that doesn't have fish to begin with because they don't know what's the real reason that there isn't fish there to begin with. And if there is no fish or any growth in the lake, by digging a hole, it isn't all of a sudden going to make it sustainable for a fish population. (Bob Turner)

### **Recommendation #23: Recognition of Aboriginal Rights and Needs to Hunt and Fish**

North Slave Métis workers and families may experience a reduction in the use and consumption of fish, caribou and other country food if the Diavik project is approved through disruption to traditional land use, increased family separation, etc. Diavik and government should recognize the Aboriginal right to hunt and fish, and encourage Métis and other Aboriginal mine workers to pursue these activities in their time-off (e.g., immediately before or after shift rotations). It should be noted that the NSMA was pivotal in Diavik's decision to abandon its effort to promote a sport fishery for its employees at Lac de Gras and adopt a no fishing policy. However, the NSMA and other Aboriginal groups reserve the constitutionally protected right to re-open this fishery if needs and circumstances warrant.

*(CARNIVORES)*

**Recommendation #24: Managing Human/Carnivore Relationships**

**Recommendation #24a: Deterring Habituation**

Habituation of foxes, wolverines, bears and possibly other carnivores is a distinct possibility. Diavik workers must be educated about the impacts and implications of feeding animals, while Diavik must take other precautions to deter habituation, such as fencing:

Maybe there should be more of a briefing session with everybody there, that's going out there. "Now this is the way it happens, you can't do this, we don't want to make you feel like you're in jail, but if you do this you are going to cause this animal to die. Take a picture, don't throw them a chunk of food."... [The fence] is there for their protection and the animals' protection. ...Make strict rules that there will be no feeding of wild animals and no discarding of food sources or anything to attract them. On the fox situation you just either have to fence everything or rubber bullet them if you have to. Give them a little bit of pain, so that they know that it's not good to come close. ...You would think that smoke would disturb them. It's the smell of the kitchen. Everything from the kitchen is going out the vent, you can't stop it, you have to cook food. You can't change the smell and it just attracts them, but there should be some way to figure out how to stop them from coming to the camp or stay out of bounds. Maybe electric fences, a couple of shocks. ...It's a drive-in. Yes, that's what it is, so maybe electric fences and stuff like that to keep them away from that food source, would probably be a good idea for the wolverine and the bear and the fox. I don't think the wolf would even bother with it; he's a smart, socialized family animal he'll stay with his crowd. (D'Arcy Mercredi)

There would have to be some type of fencing, especially around the pits. Because caribou will fall in there, guaranteed. They are not the smartest of animals. There would have to be definite fencing around there. As well as the kitchens because of the bears, but the problem is bears like to dig and they will dig under the fences. And so in certain areas they may have to have fencing underground. I know they don't like the fencing idea. They would have to think of ways of working things out because they are going to have people out there. Quite a number of people and all these animals that are trying to relocate are going to be stressed out and are not going to exactly like these people too much. (Dianna Beck)

### **Recommendation #24b: Managing Wolf Hunting**

Because wolves are so important to maintaining a healthy caribou population, it was recognized that hunting of this animal, which may increase with more traffic on the winter road, should be more strictly controlled:

The wolf is the one that I would like to see preserved. Maybe there should be a quota put on them in the North Slave region, where [hunters] are not going to run into a pack of 30 wolves, open up and get everyone of them. Put a quota on them and say as a trapper you are only allowed to take six wolves a year or something. ...The grizzly bear is another one that I'd like to see watched very careful because human contact with a grizzly bear is usually fatal. It's brutal and the human is usually hurt, so that one by one. (D'Arcy Mercredi)

### **Recommendation #25: Deterring Grizzly Bears**

As grizzly bears may be attracted by the food smells emanating from Diavik, it is important to have particularly effective deterrents around the garbage dump, kitchen and other facilities:

The grizzly would be using the Coppermine River as a food source at this time of the year because they will be just coming out of hibernation. They will be looking for open water where they can go and maybe grab a fish or something like that. Basically a mine site, ...would be a curiosity for them to go there. You would have to have some sort of deterrent for them not to go there -- electric fence. ... We had small ones when we were on the caribou hunt for the tourists' caribou. We put up electric fences to keep them out of there. When you are just using batteries it is just enough, you know, to give it to them, but I mean if you use the electric fences that they use for cows or something that "whack" and puts you right on your knees. Something like that where there is a good source of power going through. ...That would probably do it. I know rubber bullets don't work. We've already tried that. All we done is just got him mad. (D'Arcy Mercredi)

A management plan developed and implemented in respect to grizzly bears must involve extensive input from the NSMA and other Aboriginal groups, preferably through the NSSDA.



*(WATERFOWL)*

**Recommendation #26: Managing Impacts on Waterfowl**

**Recommendation #26a: Monitoring**

It was recommended that migratory waterfowl should be monitored closely, preferably by the proposed NSSDA, to determine the impacts of the Diavik mine on their health:

Extensive monitoring is going to have to be in place to determine exactly how harmful that place [Diavik mine site] is going to be for waterfowl that use it, and you're not going to be able to stop them from flying into the area, and landing in there and swimming around, and eating whatever little bugs that are in there. You can't deter them from that area. It's two kilometres in length. (Bob Turner)

**Recommendation #26b: Deterrence**

Diavik should use some form of deterrence during the spring and fall migratory movements of waterfowl through the area:

Like, I imagine they're going to have tailings ponds, eh. Ducks will land in that. I know that, so they're going to have to have something to scare them away, like they do down south. Like for the orchards and stuff, they've got some kind of a noisemaker that scares them. They'll have to make sure they don't land in those tailings ponds. Then you say they're not using any chemicals, eh? (Lawrence Lafferty)

**RECOMMENDATIONS: SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL IMPACTS**

**Recommendation #27: NSMA Should be Empowered to Deal with Impacts**

In order to participate effectively in the monitoring and mitigation of Diavik's adverse impacts the NSMA must be empowered to do so, since we do not have the current human or financial resources. It is recommended that Diavik and government provide the necessary resources for the NSMA to develop this capacity:

So we are working on a strategy and an agreement with the federal government to put in place a funding formula to help us deal with certain problems. First of all, it will probably take one full-time person to simply monitor the successes and failures, helping people get jobs, helping people get into training programs, encouraging people to go to post-secondary institutions for training, designing scholarship

programs and stuff like that. That's one thing that we are going to be doing, but as far as finding ways to deal with any of the problems that come up right now, the only thing the NSMA can do for them is simply refer them to some of the services that are provided here in the area. .... We are not equipped to do any of that sort of stuff, but the way we see it in the future we'd like to look after our own people and that will come through either self-government negotiations or through negotiations with the federal government on this, or both. (Clem Paul)

### **Recommendation #28: Development of Information Baselines**

In order to effectively assess, monitor and manage social, economic and cultural impacts and changes that result directly and indirectly from the Diavik mine, the NSMA must develop baselines of information:

...You have to first establish the problems that are there, [then] you have to get a baseline ...to determine where you're at, and then you can monitor and determine whether or not you're being successful in whatever program you develop. I guess you have to monitor the employees that are coming out of the mine, ...it has to be a little specific to the site, and it wouldn't take long [to determine] whether or not our members are being successful by being employed at the mine, or if it's a negative. (Bob Turner)

There's going to be successes and failures, so we'll try and do the best we can and this is one tool [information baselines] that we are definitely going to need forever so that we can always constantly measure our successes and see where we are lacking, and if we are lacking how fast we are going down in a certain area and then we can find different means to build us back up again. (Clem Paul)

It is recommended that sufficient funds be made available from government and Diavik to develop social, economic and cultural baselines relevant to the North Slave Métis. (The NSMA acknowledges that DIAND made a commitment to provide the necessary funds and resources for this second phase of research in the CSR.)

### ***(MONITORING)***

### **Recommendations #29: Monitoring Socio-economic and Cultural Impacts**

It is imperative that the social, cultural and economic impacts on our people, families and community be monitored preferably through the proposed NSSDA, in order to mitigate any negative effects.

...We should watch what's happening. See what happens with the alcohol. See what happens with the bingo. See what happens. Are there more people going there? See what happens back home with the family. Is it worse now than it was before? We'll watch all them things. (Ernie Camsell)

...So that's just some examples of what's happening already, so it's not going to stop, so you're going to have a little bit of both [negative and positive], and if you monitor it, then you'll be able to determine which one is a little bit and which one is a lot, but I think, I guess that's were you're going to have to come up with a monitoring program to determine exactly what's, I guess, happening.... Are you getting more of a benefit, or more of a negative impact? (Bob Turner)

It is recommended that the NSMA play a prominent role in monitoring, especially of impacts related directly to North Slave Métis interests:

Well, I don't think we've traditionally been miners, but I think... we've traditionally been monitoring the land and the environment, so if any component is geared towards the Métis it would be the monitoring of all the effects of the mine, and that would range right from the environment to social impacts. (Bob Turner)

It is recommended that both mine workers and their families be monitored:

We should keep a watch on who's going out there and keep a watch on their house. ...They are our own people, so we should watch over them I guess, so nothing happens. They are happy to have that job well they should act good. They should be good. ...I think we will open our eyes more. Keep watch over our own people anyway. Not them that come from outside, they're none of our business. As long as we keep everyone happy around here, I think it should be good. (Ernie Camsell)

Some individuals recognized that there is already capacity within the community to monitor impacts:

...Take this woman I've got. She knows everything that happens, she tells me all of that. It's funny. She knows everything, everything that's happening, what's going on. Who's there, who's not there. Who made the bingo. Who brings in the booze and all that crap, but the cops are real good [too]. (Ernie Camsell)

In addition to monitoring adverse effects, other indicators of community wellness should also be monitored:

A high education level doesn't necessarily mean that you are getting the jobs. People might be going and getting educated, but by the time they're educated, the job is already taken by somebody else. Those kind of jobs, when they come available, they are only available for a short time and then somebody's got 'em. Usually the person that gets it doesn't want to let it go right away. I suppose that is one of them that would be an indicator - education levels. Number of people in training programs.... (Clem Paul)

*(ALCOHOL and DRUGS)*

**Recommendation #30: Monitoring Alcohol and Drug Abuse**

Implicit within many North Slave Métis statements expressing their concerns about the possibility of increased alcohol and drug use was the urgent need to monitor these impacts (see Chapter 6.0). With the full involvement of the NSMA and the proposed NSSDA, Diavik should develop appropriate ways and means to monitor and manage this impact.

**Recommendation #31: Alcohol and Drug Prevention**

**Recommendation #31a: Public Awareness and Education**

A public awareness and education programme about the dangers of alcohol and drug abuse should be available to Aboriginal people who take, or are contemplating taking, jobs with Diavik and other diamond mines:

...Education is a pretty important part of that whole thing. You need to be aware of what the dangers are, and I'm not sure how that's best accomplished, whether a dedicated program or just having counsellors available, or people who have had experience dealing with that. I guess people need to be aware of what the dangers are, the traps in there, the pitfalls, to be able to be ready to cope with it, I guess. (Adrian D'hont)

**Recommendation #31b: School Programmes**

A school programme aimed at prevention and awareness about alcohol and drug abuse should be developed, and sponsored by the GNWT, Diavik and other diamond mines:

People will know about it when people are in trouble. One of the best things they could work on is working closely with schools where they work closely with counsellors. Watching out for the younger ones, otherwise they will fall right in the cycle as well. (Anon.)

### **Recommendation #32: Alcohol and Drug Addiction Counselling**

Counselling services, which utilize the knowledge and wisdom of elders, should be made available to Diavik's Aboriginal employees who are experiencing problems with alcohol and/or drug use.

You talk to them and they realize, this [drunk] I was talking to was mad the first time. But by the time I got to his house he'd cooled down and he says, "Thanks Uncle". He was happy. We need lots of guys like that to talk to them and take pity on them. Tell them what's right and what's wrong. ...Like I was saying, talk to them. It's the best thing I think anyway. Because I talked to this guy and he seemed to listen. At first he was mad, "You didn't do that when you were young?" Yes, I realize that, that's right. I couldn't quit... I told him. But now you get older you think about it and when I quieted down, I started to think. When I brought him home he says, "Thanks Uncle for the ride", so he must be happy. Maybe he had no one that he was talking to before that? Maybe you know. I've thought about that. Some of them are that way nobody talks to them. They are on their own. Take pity on this guy, talk to him, slowly tell him what's what. I think that's the best way actually, but some have got hard heads. (Ernie Camsell)

I think if people make more money they should think, "What should I buy with that? What should I get for the kids?" But they don't think that way, they don't think.... Booze, bingo... that's the way they think. They think wrong, I'd say. It has happened before I'd say and we try to correct it. It's kind of hard. It's before us. It has been going on for years and years. How can we fix it? ...Little by little, get the odd guy, get one in and "Okay, we've got him, he's alright now. Let's try the other guy." Maybe, you know, take time. Little by little maybe. But it's going to take years.... (Ernie Camsell)

### **Recommendation #33: Role of NSMA in Alcohol and Drug Counselling**

Many North Slave Métis recognized the need to have the NSMA intimately involved in delivering alcohol and drug counselling services for its members who find work with Diavik:

...If it seems to be a problem out there, or back in town, every time they come to town, it's deemed they're drinking up all their money, and it's not doing the family any good, then the NSMA should have an agent that looks into these things, and instead of them getting fired or whatever they might be able to go to the family and say, "Listen, you have an alcohol problem. You're just wasting your time going up there.

You're making it look bad for the other Natives. You might as well, we're going to require that you go to treatment or do something about it." Like I say a lot of these people might not be alcoholic now, but when they come upon all this money, it can be very easily turned that way in a couple of years, so I feel Diavik too would have to share some of the responsibility for that. So there should be some kind of a mechanism where we can jointly, with Diavik and the NSMA office, like I say have an outreach worker or something of that nature, and that person can look after these kinds of problems. (Fred LeMouel)

*(GAMBLING)*

**Recommendation #34: Gambling Prevention**

A low-key campaign to promote public awareness in gambling addictions should be developed and sponsored in cooperation with Diavik, and delivered through the NSMA:

They could put on something through the NSMA, or they could make it a part of their orientation [with Diavik]. Just kind of brush on it lightly, allude to it, but don't come right out or else people will say "You're prejudiced against us, why bring that up". Things through TV, sponsor things through community TV. Or if they're doing bingos, do something to promote awareness in a way that people are aware of things. That's one way around it. You hear on TV a lot of times to deal with gambling. Churches' ads. Promote awareness and then their choices are theirs. (Anon.)

**Recommendation #35: Gambling Addiction Counselling and Services**

Addiction services and counselling should be made available to North Slave Métis mine employees and their family members, preferably through the NSMA:

Gamblers are hard to get them to admit they have a gambling problem, you know, but like there's a Gamblers Anonymous in town. I feel like I say, if we had an agent in our office, the family should be able to know they could come to their office and say, "Listen my husband goes out there every week, every two weeks he comes in and gambles his money away, and then the NSMA should be able to phone that person and say, "Listen we understand that all you're doing is gambling your money away. If you want to keep working out at Diavik." It would be kind of like our own little employment office. Let's well, "we're going to recommend that you go for treatment." (Fred LeMouel)

...Because it's an addiction like any other, so it's going to require help. It's not necessarily something that one individual can deal with on their



own. There needs to be support somewhere and whether it be something through this organization [NSMA], or something that [NSMA] has worked out in partnership with somebody else. It's something that should be available, like accessible as well, and I'm not really sure, because I haven't really thought how, what the best avenue of that would be. I think people should be aware that something's available and accessible to help them to deal with it. (Adrian D'hont)

*(ELDERS)*

### **Recommendations #36: Role of Elders' in Counselling Aboriginal Mine Workers**

Because of their wisdom, life experience and the respect accorded them, elders must be intimately involved in counselling mine workers. Government and Diavik should provide the necessary funds to allow the incorporation of elders into counselling programmes:

If they go to work, they're working it's good for them. And now all those ones, they come to town, something like that, to buy something. Maybe again they go back where they were doing something, drinking or smoke something like that. They buy that and they go together, and I guess they get a little bit crazy with that. And on Sunday, just like they wake-up, they think about that, "I have to go to work." It gonna be the same. If the people talk to them, maybe it be good. ...Maybe they get better if the old people, they talk to them. If they listen to old people, maybe be better, but if they don't listen, we don't know what they gonna do with them. It's hard, you know, one way it's hard. (Alice Lafferty)

*(MONEY MANAGEMENT)*

### **Recommendation #37: Money Management Education and Life Skills Training**

Money management was anticipated to be a major problem for North Slave Métis and other Aboriginal people who may go to work at Diavik. There were some innovative suggestions about how the NSMA could deal with this problem:

Maybe the Métis could look after their money, maybe it would be better. "Okay you need some grub, how much money do you need?" Maybe give them that much money and make sure that they buy grub with it and not booze. Would be nice that way I think. (Ernie Camsell)

However, education and life skills training courses were thought to be the best solution:

Yes, you've got "X" amount of dollars and these are your bills and this is what's left over. Teach them how to spend their money, how to save their money. How to save for the future. (Marie Dautel)

We will be insisting with the mine, like we did with BHP, that certain life skill courses are granted to our people and kind of mandatory as part of the employment at the mine. So that people know how to open a bank account, they know how to use a bank card, they know what a savings' account is, they learn a little bit about what an RRSP is and different things like that. (Clem Paul)

### **Recommendation #38: Money Management Counselling**

Along with money management training, counselling would be an effective way to address the problem, through small group orientation, which has proven effective in the past:

...When you get hired at the mine, it should be [mandatory that] you have to come and get a little bit of counselling and you start talking about the difference of having this extra income and how it can change your life. Sure, we could have a counsellor on board saying, "Okay, guys you are going to go out there and make extra money. You're single; you're going to have all this money. Sure you'll want to go to the bar and have fun and meet your friends, that's fine, but be careful how you do it. Always put some money away for a rainy day". I wish we could have somebody here talking to these people, saying, "This will be changing." (Marie Dautel)

Do they have such an agency or is this something that should be thought of, you know where we can say, "Okay, you're making a good dollar. Let's do some investing or spend the money wisely. Let's try and help you along." For those who have never been in a wage structure system before, which I imagine there's very few, but sometimes are unaware of some of the things they should be doing, like buying RRSP's or mutuals, or whatever they might do. You know things along that line I think would be interesting to have for those that might have an interest in that area or want to do something with their money as opposed to just blowing it or stashing it in a low interest account or something like that. (Jack Balsillie)

**Recommendation #39: Wage Payments and Time-off Should be synchronized**

Some North Slave Métis recommended that Diavik needs to synchronize the payment of wages with an individual's time-off especially if that individual plans to go hunting:

You could [go out on the land when you come home from the mine]. Might be some of them that would be happy. The trouble is though that the two weeks they're in the money maybe went into the bank before they come out. The money doesn't come in the day they come in for their two weeks. Maybe there's no money to get in the bank? ...When they come in they didn't get paid yet. The money hadn't reached the bank. No money, so what's the use of two weeks over here without any money? It makes it hard. I don't like it too much. Maybe a month at a time. (Ernie Camsell)

*(LOSS OF HUMAN CAPITAL)*

**Recommendation #40: Lessening the Impacts of Loss of Human Capital and Community Capacity**

For those people who are absent from their communities for extended periods of time as a result of direct and indirect employment with Diavik, there should be some opportunity, such as teleconferencing, for them to contribute to the political and social life of the community:

...[If] we had a board member who was away from a meeting, ...he could proceed if they were there on telephone link. ...It [teleconferencing] could be yeah, for people who are more involved in the stuff that's going on in the organization. There are some times when things happen really quickly and you have to get ...to people and have decisions made. If somebody's out of touch over there [Diavik], more than one or whatever, it would be good to be able to involve them. Sometimes it would be essential to make that contact. (Adrian D'hont)

*(2/2-WEEK SHIFT ROTATION)*

**Recommendation #41: Mitigating the Impacts of Family Separation Through Counselling**

The two-week in/out shift rotation schedule was anticipated to have significant adverse, and even irreversible, effects on marital and family relationships. Counselling, was thought to be one of the ways that people might

prepare for and cope with potentially disruptive and devastating effects of family and spousal separation:

...I wish we could have somebody here talking to these people, saying, "This will be changing. You're a married woman, you're going to go up there for two weeks, your husband is home with the kids. How are you going to deal with coming home? You're going to be taking over the whole responsibility of being a wife again and being a Mom." (Marie Dautel)

Well, like all the other [negative] things, it would be good to, well, have an avenue for people to seek help if they need it, [if] they need to come forward, it's not like we can just go and jump in, and start pushing people around, telling them they've got to shape up, do this in their life or whatever. I think it has to be brought forward either by the person that's directly affected or the person who's doing...who [has] the problem, as long as they seek help, make an admission that they need help.... Or to be able to know where they can get the help to assist them. Again that would require someone in a very professional capacity or whether it would be someone within the organization or not because there's all that confidentiality, all that type of thing. Yeah, it's something that's not to be taken lightly. It's pretty important. I think it's something we should ensure that's there; either through existing networks... government offices or just other agencies that can help. (Adrian D'hont)

Because of the magnitude of the potential impacts of separation it is important that counsellors be experienced professionals in this area:

We will need something in place to teach and talk to these people.... We have to show our people that there are a lot of emotions. ... We are going to need counselling, it is going to be a big thing. These people are going to have to really understand. There are two sides to everything, there always is. Let's hope we can teach our people so that when they come home they're going to know, okay this is what I'm going to deal with. Come home, you're in for two weeks and you go back and how are you going to deal with it - the loneliness, the homesickness. So they'll know exactly what's in store for them when they go to work and when they come home. ...They [the counsellors] should be able to identify the emotions. How to deal with the separation. You're there, you're lonely, you're homesick, so this is how you are going to feel, this is what is going to happen. So when you come home. This is the other side of the story; everyone is going to want a piece of the action. With the counselling services sit there and

explain to them how they are going to feel. Also, when you come home you're going to be dealing with a lot of problems that you haven't dealt with while you were gone. Your child failed in math, all these different things. It's not the home you left; it's something else when you get back. It's going to be a totally different place. That person might say, "I can't take it anymore" and he'll probably up and go to the bar. Leave the family because he can't deal with the family issues and problems at home. (Marie Dautel)

*(FAMILY SUPPORT WORKER)*

**Recommendation #42: North Slave Métis Family and Community Support Worker**

**Recommendation #42a: Family and Community Support Worker**

In addition to counselling, it is anticipated that families and spouses of absent mine workers might sometimes require immediate support, which could be provided by an independent North Slave Métis or Aboriginal family and community support worker:

There could be the issues of one of the parents not being as good a parent as the other, where one parent could be out there working, and the other parent could be in town drinking, and their children are not being looked after properly. This could really affect the person that's stuck out there for two weeks, so I think, I can't see any way to resolve that except really having that person being able to call our North Slave [Métis] office and have one of our field workers check on the family or whatever, if it's one of those families that's iffy, iffy, and that way the person out there [Diavik] can feel better knowing that if it's the woman out there or the man out there, knowing that his wife is behaving or whatever while he's gone in that respect. ...It's not the 1920's anymore you know. "Either you want your job or you don't," so then people feel like they have to desert their family. You know maybe the wife is going for an alcohol problem while he's working up there. Maybe he just needs time to stay home with the kids, while she goes to treatment or whatever you know. But they should be able to talk it over with [someone] where these problems can be dealt with, instead of a person having to lose their whole career, because not every marriage, not every family is [a] stable marriage. There's always going to be problems. Things might be going really good for two or three years, and then you might have one bad year with your family and you're going to lose your whole career over it. It's not right. ...It would be nice if the NSMA maybe in some way ...could set up some kind of family care for these situations, where you know you have a trained person to watch your

kids while you're gone.... So I was hoping that the government or any organization would soon set up something like that because there's a lot of single parents out there, and the extent on what they can do as far as jobs and that is very limited. Like a lot of my training requires going to Snare (Lakes), and I've had to opt out of going to Snare. I had to talk to my boss, and thank God that they never made it compulsory for me to go out to Snare, because there was no one in my family that wanted to look after the kids while I leave town and stuff, and there's no way I can afford a nanny. So if there was some kind of help in that way that would be very, very good, [and] you'd see a lot more single people getting back into the workforce and pursuing careers. ...Like I say, it all goes to how strong your relationship is. I can't see there being a problem because I know there's no bars out there where persons can drink and go out of their minds and get taken advantage of or whatever, but if a woman is going to fool around, she's going to fool around. That's all there is to it, whether she be out at Diavik or BHP, or uptown by herself. (Fred LeMouel)

...You know like I was saying if we had someone out there [Diavik] talking to them once a week or something like that it would be nice. And then talk (to) who's at home and then write it down, "Okay what are you doing since the old man left? What have you been doing? Have you been playing cards? Spending money? Drinking? Are you looking after the kids? Are the kids going to school? Are they eating good and all that? We should have a Métis going around and then looking after that, I think it would be good. (Ernie Camsell)

A family and community support worker could also coordinate and organize ways to aid and support the families of mine workers, just as they did in the past:

...A fostering thing or surrogate family that could be a good thing to have I guess. Take turns, switching.... That's how it used to be for people working at the mine. We used to go with him [my uncle] to the nets. Sort out what was for the dogs - the jackfish; the rest would go to this person because her husband was gone.... (Anon.)

This support worker would have to have skills in and devote special attention to youth issues:

They would have to have some type of counselling for the parent left behind in situations where there's...kids. They would have to have youth counselling, if the kids are getting into trouble. (Marie Dautel)



I would say that Diavik could have an agreement with the NSMA. They can have an employee to address those types of concerns. It would be a youth employee, guaranteed it would have to be. That person could actually be here in this office, rather than out at the Diavik site and that way, their funding comes from Diavik, but then again they are still separate. (Dianna Beck)

It is preferable that the family support worker be Métis, or someone that other North Slave Métis can confide in and trust:

Well, they'd need somebody to talk to. You know I think something should be in place where people could have discussions. Maybe it's should be something that's done routinely, stop in, everybody's got ... half an hour or whatever to come in and have a chat with somebody somewhere on site. "How are things going?" "Do you have any bad feelings?" "Anything bothering you, anything at all you want to unload?" You know, whatever. ...They might want to have somebody who specialized in that, maybe a person from the North Slave Métis who would work in that capacity on site, 2 weeks in/2 weeks out. If that person was respected enough, trusted, professional, yeah, I think so. I mean there's a possibility that you could get somebody there who people would be suspicious of. I mean coming from small communities you kind of wonder okay...it depends who it is and who's the person that's going to be... it depends on the employee. I'm sure you could find that somebody might not feel entirely comfortable, but I guess it's like that with everybody, but yeah, I think it would be best to be Métis, but I mean to me it just makes sense, but yeah, it would have to be the right person. (Adrian D'hont)

#### **Recommendation #42b: Family and Community Support Centre**

It is anticipated that the family and community support worker will need to operate out of a centre or office where North Slave Métis families in crisis and individuals in stress can go and get support:

I think maybe ...family-counselling centres should be contemplated and designed to address some of the problems that the families are going to be facing. Either they are going to feel the direct effect from being up at the mine, or else at a job supplying the mine, so either one, you are either in the diamond industry or you are in the value-added industry and either one will be a steady income, a steady job. For a lot of our families that's just about unheard of. A lot of our people are seasonal workers either fighting fires or staking claims and stuff in the wintertime. Different jobs like that. A steady job to some of the

families is going to be a bit of a shock. It's not going to only affect the worker; it is going to affect the entire family and thus the children and everything else. [That's] what we tried to do with BHP, and what I would like to do with Diavik is to get a commitment from them for a full-time person to work on this sort of thing. To constantly evaluate the successes and failures, where people are and that person, not single-handedly, but in their own effort would be working towards keeping the community together and keeping the community in contact with one another and sharing different problems. Not sharing, "You are having a problem here, let's share it with somebody else", at least that person, if you are running into trouble, will have the ability, have the where-with-all to help the one in need. (Clem Paul)

You could have an office here in town, and make it known to the Métis people and the Native people that there's an office here in town, and if you're having problems with your spouse that's working up there, it can be brought to the attention of the office here in town. The family's could come here and say, "Well you know its no use, him working up there because he just blows his money when he gets back." And the individual can be approached by the office and talked to, to see if he needs help of some kind in that respect. (Fred LeMouel)

I think it might be good to have something that's sort of a little more dedicated to this one aspect, you know people working at Diavik and having problems because of the change in their whole life, having to be over there, just total changes like with the separation, increased income and ...an [in] ability to participate in some of the traditional stuff or stuff in their community. ...I think it might be good to have a specialized group or whatever to deal with that particular development. It doesn't just need to be Diavik. It could be other mines, but yeah, maybe some place where Métis people could come and feel comfortable. (Adrian D'hont)

*(EMPLOYEE SUPPORT WORKER)*

**Recommendation #43: North Slave Métis Mine Employee Support Worker**

In addition to a North Slave Métis family support worker, an Aboriginal, and preferably North Slave Métis, support worker should be hired at the Diavik mine site to assist Métis and other Aboriginal employees cope with the stress of family separation and other problems that the mine worker may be experiencing:

They should have counselling services for their employees right on the mine site. There's going to be a lot of change for families and as an individual. Sure, have someone right on the mine site that they can talk

to. Like they have a nurse on the mine site 24 hours a day, seven days a week, why not have somebody there to help the people? I believe in counselling, I really, really do. It keeps you focussed; it keeps you on-line. You step over the line; they can always put you back on track. (Marie Dautel)

Since there will be a lot of Métis from the North Slave [region] working out there hopefully...there should be a general agent somewhere in town, whether it be in one of the band offices or in the North Slave Métis office, where the individual families, if they have any problems, they should be able to go see this agent, and this agent can be the go-between them and Diavik. And they should also have someone out at Diavik like that, maybe a North Slave Métis or a Native person out in Diavik just to meet the special needs of every Native person working out there. ...I mentioned an office out at Diavik totally independent, not in any way paid by Diavik, and they would have to have a lot of clout out there, and that would give people a place to go if they feel that they're being short changed or prejudiced against or whatever. (Fred LeMouel)

It is recommended that government fund an on-site Aboriginal employee support worker to address the needs of North Slave Métis in the work place. It is particularly important that this position be independent of Diavik for reasons outlined by Fred LeMouel:

I know in Norman Wells they had one, and he was actually employed by Esso, and all the complaints went in one ear and out the other because he didn't want to stir up any trouble himself. ...If a Native person, whether he be Métis or Native, has a complaint or he feels prejudice, or he feels like he's not moving ahead, or feels picked on, or screwed, he can go to the little office right in the camp there and tell them what's going on, and that person will investigate. (Fred LeMouel)

A duty for this individual would be to hold regular meetings to discuss issues before they become problems:

Maybe what we should have is a meeting once a week over at Diavik, over there talk to the people, "Now you have lots of money, when you go back maybe you should do this." Maybe that's what we should do. Maybe that will help. ... So what they should do is maybe every two weeks, everybody that's working there, have a meeting. [People] from Rae or whoever wants to come in. At the meeting, this is what we have to say. It would be nice, because at night they've got nothing to do, but go to bed. Maybe we should suggest that. Get people talking. Have

meetings out there. Talk to them, "Now you've got some money and you go home and all that." Maybe we'll find out by the end of it, maybe we'll find out the best way and all that. Talk about two weeks in/two weeks out, talk about that and talk about the kids and how they're doing. "You've got some money now and what are you going to do with it? ...Spend it the right way?" Ask them how it is when the old man is away. Maybe that's a good thing to do. ... What we should do, we should find out who's going to the mine and maybe we should go and see their families. What they are doing while they are away? Maybe we should do that, I think. Because the family at home too they drink when the old man's away. "What do you do ...when the old man over there? Why don't you look after your kids?" Maybe that would be good. (Ernie Camsell).

*(FAMILY VISITS)*

**Recommendation #44: Family Visits to Mine Site**

Visits to the Diavik site on a regular basis, or a schedule to be worked out and annually updated by the employee and Diavik, would help alleviate some of the trauma and stress of extended family separation for both employee and family members:

I heard somewhere that they were entertaining possibly bringing families down to sort of see what the whole situation is, come visit, have some suites or something set up where you can get together. I don't know how workable it is or if they're serious or whatever. Yeah, there again it would depend on circumstances back at home what the spouse at home was involved in, possible schedules and things like that. (Adrian D'hont)

I can see some families starting to wear down after awhile, so it's something that should be looked into. Maybe every so many months, you should be able to spend a little time at home, or else there should be times when the person left in the community can come out and see you out at the mine, maybe every third week or whatever, maybe you could bring your kid or whatever out to the mine, and then that way you can connect to what the other person is going through out at the mine, what conditions he has to live in. Yeah, that would be something to look into I believe. (Fred LeMouel)

Give the rest of the family who's never been to the mine an opportunity to see the facility to see the type of work you do, what you do on your off hours, like for your recreation, what you get for food, everything. Give them a real insight as to what's happening on the job,

and an understanding of what the person does while they're there. ...They [employee's family] have no idea the actual job you're doing. To be able to get people, total family involvement in something like a job, even if it's just a look once in awhile, and demonstrate, "Okay this is actually what I do when I'm here" type of thing. It's important. (Jack Balsillie)

*(ON-SITE LIVING)*

**Recommendation #45: Assessment of Alternative On-site Living Arrangements**

In conjunction with recognizing the rights of its Aboriginal employees to hunt and fish (see Recommendations #23), and as a means to mitigate the adverse impacts of family separation and disruption to traditional economic patterns, it is recommended that Diavik assess whether alternative living arrangements (e.g., summer tent camps) are in the Aboriginal best interest:

Well... it would be nice if the family could move with the individual for the two weeks. Build a little community out there, so people can be together, so you don't have to worry about the separation. Then again you have to look at the other side of the fence. I'm leaving my home vacant. Sitting up at the mine you have to hope that no one has broken into your home. Is everything going to be okay when I get home?... (Marie Dautel)

...And I also feel that the natives that work out there should be able to hunt out there while out at the mine, and be able to send meat home to their communities from out there because they might leave a wife and kids behind, and while they are out there, they might miss the big caribou hunt. They might miss the big duck hunting season because they're out there, so while they're out they should be entitled to hunt, and package their food and send it home because there's times when you only have a good two weeks of hunting, let's say ducks or whatever, and then you missed the boat. They should be able to do that out there, while they're out there, especially the ones that are out there for three weeks out and one week in, whatever, and send the food home. (Fred LeMouel)

*(SHIFT ROTATION)*

**Recommendation #46: Develop More Appropriate Shift Rotation Schedules**  
**Recommendation #46a: Flexible Work Schedules**

The two week in/out shift rotation schedule was recognized by many North Slave Métis as insensitive to their and other Aboriginal peoples needs, and recommended that Diavik adopt more flexible work schedules:

... It would be good to have some flexibility [in the shift schedule] no question.... I mean that's asking a lot from somebody to haul out every two weeks. ...In some cases, it would certainly make some things easier. You know if that person had some preference or wanted to be involved in certain things back home.

...Yeah, well it would be good to be able to have that person back. It would be good to have some flexibility alright to enable that to happen.  
(Adrian D'hont)

The two week in/out shift rotation schedule is not workable for many Aboriginal people, mostly because two weeks away from home and family is too long, but also because for some it may be too short.

Two weeks in/two weeks out, but some people, one guy I don't know, he's a white guy; I think. He was in the coffee shop, he said, "I come here two weeks in/two weeks out, I told my boss, I said, "I have a girlfriend, my girlfriend we split. I got no place to stay in Yellowknife. I have to go to a hotel when I come here. Can I stay for a month, if I work?" And they gave me a month working over there," he says. "A month later I come here, he said, "but I got friends. I stay with my friends, and I give them a few dollars. I stay there. Then I go back again for another month" he said. "If they ask for a month, maybe they can stay for a month," he says, "but they take two weeks in/two weeks out." (Alice Lafferty)

**Recommendation #46b: Change Current Shift Rotation Schedule**

For some Aboriginal employees, Diavik would be well advised to consider implementing a one week in/one week out shift rotation schedule as a means of lessening the impacts of family separation. This model is currently in place and appreciated by employees in Northern Saskatchewan uranium mines:

...When you're out for two weeks and you get back in, it's just like the old west for some families. "Well, holy smoke, I only got two weeks in town," and then you go and get drunk for a week, and then you end up



only spending a week with your family. I think what would work a lot better myself personally is one week in and one week out, especially for the people with families. One week of 12 hours a day is not really that much different than two weeks in/two weeks out when you think about it, because if you have a scheduled flight going in and out, you know, what's the difference in the expense? One week of 12 hours is like two weeks of eight hours, so why not have it one week in and one week out? That way the family knows that well Dad's going to be back here in seven days. ... If it's one week at a shot, it's not as bad as two weeks at a shot, you know, so like I say, one week in/one week out would probably work a lot better for a lot of families. It's not such a big jar on your family, and it will probably help the ones that are in shaky marriages and stuff like that too, because one week is not that long when you think about it. But when it's two weeks, it's a lot harder on some families, and like I say, the flexibility should be there. It should be up to you if you want to work two weeks in/two weeks out or one week in/one week out. Eventually the family will find which one is best for them, and it will probably work a lot better for them. ...Like I say, that's why I say this one week in/one week out thing could probably be a good option for people on shaky ground because I know some people once they're out there, you're working closely with another person, sometimes you're lonely and stuff like that and you're saying the wrong things, because you're lonely and stuff like that, and then things happen. That's why I say one week in/one week out will probably be a better option for people like that. (Fred LeMouel)

#### **Recommendation #46c: Occasional Extended Home Visits**

As a way to alleviate employee stress caused by separation from family, Diavik should develop enough flexibility in its scheduling to allow for the occasional extended home visit:

If a person knows my wife really needs me at home right now, she's really ...doesn't feel good about me coming out here [Diavik] all the time. She's starting to feel negative about the whole thing. She needs more time with me, because there's times in peoples' marriages when you need more time with each other. I think the person should be able to come to the North Slave Métis office or to the Diavik office and talk this over with their boss, and maybe get some time off so you can spend it with your family. Let's say the person's wife is sick, or not feeling good, you should be able to take some time and spend with her, or say one of the kids are sick, he shouldn't have to feel so much pressure that he has to leave his family home sick, just so he can make it to work on time, because people, especially Native people, it's hard

to just leave, even if a relative is sick, it's hard enough to leave the community, let alone your wife or kid, and I know even in the governments and stuff like that, you get special leave. There should be lots of situations where special need is granted at these places, not everything has to be in stone. (Fred LeMouel)

**Recommendation #47: Undertake Research to Determine Most Appropriate Shift Rotation Schedules**

Diavik should undertake primary first-hand research, not just secondary research, to determine the most appropriate shift rotation schedules for Aboriginal employees, preferably with Aboriginal people who have felt the full impacts of mine shift rotation:

Well, if there's going to be any counselling it should be available, there's nothing like it being immediate if there's a problem developing. You want to be able to provide the assistance when it's needed. It's no good to struggle through and then come out and then try to deal with it after the fact. It would be good to be able to do it right there. It might be a little pre-emptive in some cases to deal with things before they really do develop into something major. ...I know there's been a number of different schedules tried in other places. I know in Northern Saskatchewan at the uranium mines they've had a number of different schedules and they've probably got lots of experience trying different things, so there might be some useful information that could be available from some of the northern Dene communities that were involved, see what worked for them, and there's also Métis communities there too, Stoney Rapids and that. They probably got... you know, some good information that they could share regarding what seems to be a reasonable approach to living and working in mining camps. (Adrian D'hont)

It is recommended that Diavik consult with Aboriginal mine workers in Northern Saskatchewan and elsewhere (see Recommendation #46).

*(WOMEN and the MINE)*

**Recommendation #48: Mitigating Social Impacts of Women and Primary Caregivers Working for the Mine**

Many North Slave Métis anticipated significant adverse impacts on family and spousal relationships if women went to work for the Diavik mine, especially if they had children and were primary caregivers. A number of recommendations were forwarded to mitigate these impacts.

### **Recommendation #48a: Public Education and Awareness**

Public awareness and education was considered to be an effective tool in preparing families for the loss of its primary caregiver:

Well, I think it would have to be an education and awareness thing, right up front about the possible different scenarios and types of things, potential problems it [married women working in the mine] could lead to, to be able to tell people how they can seek help, how they could deal with it, even through some organization, counsellors or whatever, through the North Slave Metis Alliance or an outside agency or help group or whatever. ...I think it would be a good thing to have opportunities like that, you know training and income, and be able to make some choices for themselves. But you know if it's a family situation well there could be some pretty hard choices to be made, and I guess that's something they would all have to work through together and be prepared to deal with it, sort out problems that could ruin that whole thing. It's not a decision to be made lightly by any means. It's got some pretty profound implications I think in terms of raising your family, maintaining your relationship. (Adrian D'hont)

### **Recommendation #48b: Counseling Services for Men**

Counselling was also recommended as a way to alleviate the absence of primary caregivers from the home:

...They should have a counselling service. They should be sitting down and talking about their feelings. I'm sure you get to know the people in there and explain to them that "hey, this is your lifestyle. This is what is going on. Be happy that she is bringing home the extra money, she is helping. She's trying to make life that much ...easier." I believe in counselling 110%. If you can't communicate with anyone at home, you have all this poison building up inside of you and how do you release it? You can do it verbally in a negative way or else you can be physical. My children, we sit and we talk about our feelings and.... I have to learn to sit back and listen to what my children are saying. I believe that counselling is going to be the big, big thing here. People are going to have to learn to deal with their feelings and what's happening in their life because there are going to be big, big changes and it might not be for the good in the long run. But you have to deal with it today, not tomorrow. (Marie Dautel)

### **Recommendation #48c: Parent/Child Programmes**

Some people recommended that there should be support programmes for both children and stay-at-home parents:

If the Mom is working and the Dad is home with the children then, what we can do is have an after school programme or an evening programme. Start something where the Dad and the children or the Mom and the children and for one night have a sit around and get together and have a game night. ...Yes. That way you're still connected with your children and you have a night where you can go do things with your children. ...It would bring the community together. You're sitting down; you're talking and laughing. You're being a normal human being like you would be at home. You are in the community. You are doing this with your children. I think that would be excellent. (Marie Dautel)

### **Recommendation #48d: Support Group for Stay-at-Home Dads**

In addition, there should be a special effort to ensure that stay-at-home dads have the support they need to facilitate the transition to their new roles as primary caregivers:

...it might be good to have some kind of a group thing or whatever you know, get together hang out, work out some of these things, assist each other some way, babysitting co-op or something, homework help. I don't know how you'd do it. It's kind of hard I guess, because people tend to have their own situations, own way of dealing with things in their homes, eh, discipline, dealing with schoolwork, different activities. Yeah, it's an idea [counselling for stay-at-home dads] alright, especially if the father's not used to dealing with a lot of day-to-day family rearing stuff, you know. But then would they enter into that situation knowing that, [and say], "okay mom you can go up and work there, I don't know how to do any of this stuff, but I'll stumble through and hope for the best." A lot of people wouldn't make that decision if they weren't in a situation where they could largely deal with it either through help from extended family or the community. Yeah, it might be a good thing to have, to have sort of a group that could help, support organization. I don't know what it would be, a group of helpless fathers or something like that? [laughs] (Adrian D'hont)

*(ABORIGINAL OUTREACH WORKER)*

**Recommendation #49: Aboriginal Outreach Worker(s)**

It was recommended that an Aboriginal outreach or liaison officer operate out of the NSMA office, offering the latest information in job opportunities and working conditions to prospective Diavik employees:

I think there should be a liaison office at Diavik for people. I mean for this office here, this NSMA office, and there's a person that is very familiar with what goes on at Diavik. They're very familiar with the schedule of work. They're very familiar what you eat, the accommodations you stay in, so when people come in and say, "Geez, you know, it would be nice to get a job up there. What do you think?" You could explain to them. This is what Diavik has to offer, and there should be a list, a continuous list of the type of personnel that they require. And you know how the government posts job applications, like inter-government job applications, they're always posted in the government offices on the boards and stuff like that. That's another means of communication to say, "Listen we need shovel operators, truck drivers, floor washers, bed makers, laundry personnel and vice-president of something. We need those people." And the NSMA should have that in their little Diavik cubicle so that when people walk in the door and make it open to the people, I mean in here, there are job opportunities just like if you work for the government, there are job opportunities. They're hanging on the board. If people come into the NSMA, number one they're going to become more familiar with the NSMA. They're going to be become interested in becoming more involved in NSMA, and the possibility that they want a job up at the mine site, they'd come and get all their information from here. Say, "Listen this is what's available. What qualifications do you meet? Maybe you can go out and start washing floors, but in two years from now you could be running a dozer or a truck up there." (Peter Arychuk)

Well, like I say if we have an outreach office, or an office in town, everybody will get a chance to get their applications in, but I feel like you're not going to be able to please everybody, that's how it's going to be. Some people griping, and blah, blah, blah. Like, I feel like there should be a good mixture of Indians and Métis out there working. You know you can't hog all the jobs, and there should be a certain number that they're going to offer us for Native employment, and then we can work it out from there, how [many] Natives get jobs and how [many] don't. That's what we probably would like to see, exactly how many

jobs they're willing to offer Natives, and what kinds of jobs, because that will make a big difference on the type of jobs. (Fred LeMouel)

That's going to be a full-time job for someone, not to only monitor, but to help train people and design training programs and interview people and do all kinds of different things to maintain that constant contact with the membership, with the families involved to ensure that they are not being left out, that opportunities aren't slipping them by or [companies] aren't taking advantage of them. A lot of work ...has to be done and the next step that we are taking is getting a full-time person doing this. (Clem Paul)

Some individuals thought each affected Aboriginal community should have two Aboriginal liaison officers, one in the community and one at the mine site:

This has potential, with BHP and Diavik, for a thousand jobs. That's a lot of employment, and my biggest concern is that I would have the NSMA, the Treaty 8 people and the Treaty 11 people, I would have three people up there monitoring the amount of people that are working, and I'd have a liaison in each community to see why they don't want to go back to work or whatever, or if they like it, what they don't like, what they like, to ensure that these people are employed. (Peter Arychuk)

### **Recommendation #50: Employee Assistance Programme**

Given the obvious benefits to both employees and Diavik, it is recommended that Diavik also have Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for Aboriginal people:

The employee assistance we had set up was great. They'd [employees] just have to, like I say, go to the company and say, "I'm going to an EAP, and they don't have to say why. They get the time off with pay, and it's handled by the EAP, the EAP person might come back and say, "Okay this person's got a problem." They will not say specifically what it is. "But we are helping the person. He needs x amount of time off." And they do all the advising as to how you, the employee, in strict confidence from the company, on how that employee should handle the situation. It was a great program. I think it's a good thing. It gives an employee an opportunity or someplace to go when they need the help, and that is good not only for the employee, but for the company as well. If he can overcome his personal problems, whatever they might, of course he's going to be more of a use to the company. (Jack Balsillie)



*(SOCIAL FACTIONALISM)*

**Recommendations #51: Mitigating the Impacts of Socio-economic Differentiation**

If the Diavik project is approved, it is inevitable that some North Slave Métis and Aboriginal people will get jobs while others won't. In order to avoid factionalism in the community along socio-economic lines, the following recommendation was offered:

The ones that have less, let's help them get some education and some kind of skills so they can go to work and make money also. The one thing that we... Métis are [is] close. We always try to look out for each other. Sure, it will cause friction among the people, but if we can help that individual who has no skills whatsoever towards any job maybe he can get in there and help them. It's like, "Hello, we're here. We can help you". Like a Métis Help line. Instead of 911, have the Métis Help line. Phone and get help. (Marie Dautel)

**Recommendation #52: Monitoring Social Relationships at Diavik Mine Site**

Relationships between men and women at the Diavik must be closely monitored for reasons elaborated by Alice Lafferty:

Well, they watch the people now. You know BHP. They said you can't go to the side where the men stay. This side, the woman stay. There's a watchman there to watch the people, that's what they said. You have woman work, make beds, everything. They watch that too, and they watch this side, not to make trouble with other people. If they make some trouble, they get fired right away. (Alice Lafferty)

*(CULTURAL WELL-BEING)*

**Recommendation #53: Cross-Cultural Awareness**

Many North Slave Métis have experienced systemic racism. As the Diavik mine will have mine workers from many different ethnic, cultural and educational backgrounds, it is recommended that there be resource materials and counselling services on site to promote cross-cultural awareness and sensitivity:

[Cross-cultural training] is probably something they should have up there because there is going to be quite a cross-section of people working at this place in addition to Metis. There's going to be Inuit, Dene, people from the south, long-term northerners, Yellowknifers. ...It could be good to have those resources available on site should anybody take any interest in it. I'm thinking if somebody's coming right

from south somewhere. It would be good to help them, instead of just sticking someone in there. Nice to know who you're with, be able to know how to deal with other people. Although in the mine setting, I guess it's sort of all the same. I keep thinking of those movies, you know when they land up on some asteroid somewhere, whatever, there's all kinds of characters... But yeah it would be nice to have a flow of information, you know sort of open information, pick up on each other, a basic thing and then of course people will be there and they'll be talking and stuff. (Adrian D'hont)

I know some guys who have problems with their boss because they're not communicating, you know, and some outsiders, some down south person, they come in here. They're not friendly people, you know. They argue too. I heard a lot of things happening at BHP, so they should have counselling there, or somebody to talk to about all these things. There's a lot mixed people there [BHP] working. It's kind of hard. (Anon.)

Cross-cultural training will also be needed to educate non-Aboriginal mine employees about Aboriginal rights to lands and resources, the Crown's fiduciary duty to uphold them and industry's responsibility to Aboriginal people.

#### **Recommendation #54: Cultural Awareness**

Additionally, it was recognized that many Métis and Aboriginal people need to develop pride in their culture. It is recommended that, as preventive measure, Diavik and government assist the NSMA to develop information and services to promote cultural awareness among the North Slave Métis community:

Yeah, it could be, I guess, you know, the education awareness thing and just helping people or enabling them to be proud of who they are and where they came from, and I mean we've got a few things to sort out ...in our own organization and in our community here. We're still grappling with some of that stuff now, sort out a few differences, but yeah I think it would be good to have the information and support there for people. And I think also education for the non-Métis people, their history, what makes them a little different, I guess. (Adrian D'hont)

#### **Recommendation #55: Appropriate Assessment of NSMA Heritage Sites**

Another way to promote cultural awareness within the NSMA community, as well as to address one of Diavik's non-conformity issues with the NSMA, would

be for the NSMA to undertake, with Diavik's support, a heritage resource survey and assessment of the Lac de Gras area:

It's definitely important to document the sites and inspect the sites and try and get some history of who and when and what they were doing, if nothing else for the history sake of it. It would be interesting to know which families were up there [Lac de Gras], if there was a family or an individual, or how long they stayed. That kind of stuff is very, very interesting, and very, very important for us to find out who has been up there. So, by all means if there is an historical site [there] might be another... who's to say, there could have been a community up there, whether it be a tent community or a moose hide tent community, whatever the case may be. (Peter Arychuk)

The NSMA should be involved or other Aboriginal groups [assessing archaeological sites]. That's part of their heritage. People have to find out. (Tom Williams)

**Recommendation #56: Assistance to NSMA Mine Employees**  
**Recommendation #56a: Courses in Self-Esteem**

It is recommended that the NSMA, with government and Diavik's support, develop and offer a course to promote self-esteem and confidence for prospective mine employees:

There's a range of things you can deal with, and they can start off very simple, little courses in self-esteem can be just one element of what can happen, and if you develop a bunch of programs you can deal with...some people might only need a little program to deal with some self-confidence and self-esteem and then a way they [go], they're starting to benefit. And, you know, start building up their career and have a successful life, but others could range right to the other end of the spectrum where they've got serious problems of drinking and alcohol and they've been through abuse and you know they have to be dealt with a lot more delicately, and there has to be a range of different programs that can deal with all aspects of those particular problems, and, you know, if social service is going to get together and start determining how to deal with these problems. (Bob Turner)

### **Recommendation #56b: Counselling a Condition of Employment**

It is also recommended that North Slave Métis take a counselling and awareness program as a condition of employment, as the consequences of not doing so might otherwise be costly for the individual, his/her family and the NSMA:

...When you get hired at the mine, it should be protocol, you have to come and get a little bit of counselling and you start talking about the difference of having this extra income and how it can change your life. Sure, we could have a counsellor on board saying, "Okay, guys you are going to go out there and make extra money. You're single; you're going to have all this money. Sure you'll want to go to the bar and have fun and meet your friends, that's fine, but be careful how you do it. Always put some money away for a rainy day." I wish we could have somebody here talking to these people, saying, "This will be changing."  
(Marie Dautel)

### **Recommendation #57: Serving Country Food As Often As Possible**

Because of the nutritional, cultural and spiritual values of country food to North Slave Métis and other Aboriginal people who might work at the Diavik mine site, and as away to lessen the adverse effects of other impacts on cultural well-being, it is recommended that country food be served as frequently as possible:

Well, it would be nice if it was part of the menu because a lot of people put on a lot of weight when they go to the places because they're not accustomed to the diet. Wild meat is almost cholesterol free. When you start eating beef and pork and stuff like that, it's very easy to put on a lot of weight. I've been in those places before, and I still go out to Snare, and that's the kind of food you get, so I feel like wild meat should be an option on the menu. You know, like if it's a cafeteria style, it's up to you if you want to eat wild meat or continue on. ...A lot of people are half and half now, eh. They don't eat only wild food, but a lot of the older people still love their wild meat. I know in the communities the younger people still eat mostly wild meat, so it would be nice if it was part of the menu. It doesn't have to be everyday, but at least every second day. They could give you that option to eat caribou, or whatever the cafeteria is willing to cook. (Fred LeMouel)

## **Recommendation #58: Combating Racism**

Many North Slave Métis felt that Aboriginal mine workers would be exposed to prejudice and racism through their interaction with non-Aboriginal people at the Diavik mine site. It is recommended that Diavik develop policies and set up an independent monitoring office at the mine to combat racial prejudice:

That's a problem I've foreseen happening with BHP and we have it in our agreement with them there - and I'm sure we will with Diavik - that, if that sort of thing happens, it will be reported immediately and we want it dealt with as soon as possible. ... (Clem Paul)

...You can't expect to know everything in a day when you go up there. You have to leave your personal baggage at home. ...You are there to learn how to do a job and it shouldn't be any intimidation or anything. If there's any comments made to intimidate, there's guidelines and a chain of command that you can go make your concerns known. These guys have to remember too, [that] they can't just go into the bush and snare a rabbit. ...(Leroy Bloomstrand)

Down where I work there's only a couple of us Natives. You can hear bad things all day long about Natives. In these camps, if the majority of these people aren't Natives, or at least a good portion, like say 40%... then you see less prejudice, and once Diavik stresses to ...all personnel, the importance of the Natives being in those camps, I think you'll see less prejudice in the workplace. Like I say, if we had an agent right out in the camps that people could complain to when they hear prejudice remarks or whatever, that would soon stop because the government implemented that in the workplace too, and now you hear less and less people calling down Natives and stuff like that because they know that they could be dinged, as they say, for making even the smallest remark, so people learn to hold their tongue after. ...If the majority is southern, and the majority all have the good jobs, and the Natives are a minority to begin with, they all got the lesser jobs, it's [prejudice] automatically going to be there. A lot of people from down south are not educated enough to respect everybody. A lot of them grew up in real redneck places. They're pissed off because they have to be out there for two weeks. They're very pissed off because they're away from their families also, ...so they start picking on Natives. And Native people are not the kind of people that are aggressive enough to pick on them. Once it's okay around a camp to slam Natives like that then it just gets worse and worse and worse, and then the person's self-esteem gets down to the point where they just quit. They'd rather be at home broke than out there making money, and that's just a circle that's been going on and

on, and it's got to end. Like I say, that should be one of the rules of the camp is no slandering and if you are caught in a situation like that you could lose your job, whether you be management or one of the workers. ...It's hard enough to be out in these camps for a week or two weeks...you miss your family, you're working long hours and stuff like that, without people slandering you and making life even worse, and a lot of times I've seen in Norman Wells and places like that where there's even conspiracies to make people quit.... Like I say, there's got to be an office out there independent of the camp where a Native could go or a white person, or Inuit. This office has to be independent, and he can go there and say that, "That guy over there told me I'm good for nothing, and he doesn't like Inuit." And if you have a witness or whatever, then that person should be addressed. You know maybe so many times and you're out of there. ...That kind of stuff spreads because then some other people might get on the bandwagon if they see you getting away with it. The next [thing] you know it just gets worse and worse, so a lot of times in the past if there's no one to go complain to, you might go up to one of the managers and he might be just as prejudiced.... So I could see that being a big thing out there is having an independent office like that because otherwise it's going to happen. (Fred LeMouel)

*(COMMUNITY WELLNESS)*

**Recommendation #59: Support for Family and Community**

**Recommendation #59a: Community Hunts**

Many North Slave Métis predicted that the Diavik project will have adverse negative impacts on families and community, and recommended that one way of mitigating these impacts while enhancing community wellness would be to support community hunts:

In the old days everybody used to get together at certain times in spring. It would be nice to get everybody out to a spring hunt somewhere. Get geese and that. That would be a good thing. Have a little father and son get together and people pitch in for a plane ticket and go somewhere and hunt. I think that would be a really good idea and in the fall time, moose. Wintertime we already have community hunts for caribou, so we should progress in that manner to other hunts.... (Leroy Bloomstrand)

Something the North Slave Métis could do [is] ...have those community hunts, they should increase that a bit. They could increase it and promote themselves as an organization by sharing [country food] a bit outside the North Slave [community]. I see a big need because people



ask us. We had an Inuk woman call us the other day where I work.... They come here and ...have no one to give them those kinds of things [country food]. Imagine the cost would be much too high if it had to be sent all the way from Cambridge Bay. They [NSMA] could access funds for that if they could show there was a need for other than their members. It's good for those young guys to learn how to do that [hunt]. What do they know; someday they might have to live like that again. ...Hunting and other renewable resources, do community hunts.... (Anon.)

### **Recommendation #59b: Community Gatherings**

Communal hunts are not the only ways the community can assemble in common interest. North Slave Métis recommended that more support should be available for community gatherings:

I think the only way you can do that [remain culturally strong] is to have gatherings or meetings or social things that bring people together. And they do. Different groups get together and they have different things like their fiddling and dancing. And I think they started family dances now too, I think that's coming back slowly, where you can bring your kids, whereas before you couldn't. I think it's a bit tougher in Yellowknife, than in the smaller communities. They can make it different, but they'll have to find a way to [do it]. ... (Anon.)

[My son is] into sports and that. I remember [the] Tree of Peace; we used to go play hockey and that. That's always a good thing to keep going. Do more things with the kids out there. Bring the family to Old Fort Rae maybe. (Leroy Bloomstrand)

### **Recommendation #59c: Support for Family Outings**

Diavik is anticipated to have a significant adverse impact on families. As community hunts are involved affairs that take a lot of preparation and planning, it was recommended that Diavik also support family hunts and outings:

We've been involved in community hunts and stuff like that, but it's getting harder and harder to get people out [as] community hunts are a lot of hard work. And, I think it's okay to have community hunts, but you have to start concentrating on other activities out on the land rather than just a massive community hunt. You got to start getting families out just to enjoy themselves out on the land, and harvest a little bit of wildlife, or fish or something, just to be out there and enjoy

the environment, rather than just going out there to work, you have to start getting out there to relax and enjoy yourselves. (Bob Turner)

### **Recommendation #60: Redesign Government Services to Meet Aboriginal Needs**

Another way for government to contribute to community wellness would be to redesign some of its programmes and services to better address the needs of those North Slave mine workers and their families:

[Community wellness] is not going to happen just because you buy a piece of [hunting] equipment. It's going to happen only if programs and services are set up to deal with social problems that are rising and are already here. ... As you know we've got the territorial government that's responsible for social services and they're not really doing justice to that program, so something has to change, and if a program to deal with these problems can be developed in cooperation with the GNWT and the other Aboriginal groups in the area and the mine, then I think we can touch a little bit on the problem, we're not going to solve the problem, but it's going to start I guess working on getting a more healthy environment. (Bob Turner)

### **Recommendation #61: Establishment of Community Land Base**

Being separated socially and geographically and dispossessed of their lands, the North Slave Métis are struggling to regain the sense of community they once had when they lived together:

It is hard to speak about the Métis community being healthy when we are really in a divided state. But a long time ago we used to be all united. That's what I like to remember. That's the best way to be. It would be nice to see everyone united again, but there are regional land claims and now we have to separate again. I think it has brought a lot of in-house fighting that shouldn't be there, but I guess it has to happen. We are going to evolve to. They say that things come back full circle. Maybe we'll come back that way again. Just as long as we recognize that we are all Métis and we should work together and we should be proud of our heritage. (Leroy Bloomstrand)

As the following statement makes clear, the adverse socioeconomic and cultural impacts of Diavik and diamond mining on the North Slave Métis could possibly be managed if they had a land-base:

I think if you're really going to see community wellness, you need a land base. You need a land base with people not living too far from one another. See how they interact. That's kind of lost here in Yellowknife. You go into other communities and there are sections that are mostly Métis. It's who you're married to or sharing a house with and how you're interacting. It's kind of broken up here in Yellowknife. I know they have bingos here and cultural things, that's great. It's kinda hard to judge exactly because there's no community base like Dettah and Ndilo have. ...There is no part of Yellowknife where you can say that it's just Métis people living. So it's different that way. How do you deal with it is different. It's not like Ndilo, where they build houses over there and they have a school. A lot of this stuff that is negative wouldn't be so negative if they had a land base. I don't know if I'm off track for what you are looking for, but that's what I see as the problem. Bigger than all of this stuff. Some of this stuff will work itself out like people living together they share a lot of things, but if they are living in Frame Lake South or one in Ndilo, one's downtown, one's in Gold Range, one's in United Place, that's different. (Anon.)

It is recommended that the North Slave Métis land claim be negotiated and settled without further delay.

*(ABORIGINAL HIRING)*

**Recommendation #62: Commitments to Hiring Aboriginal People**

Any commitment to hiring Aboriginal people must be included in socio-economic agreements and IBA. Hiring commitments cannot be informal because past experience suggests that, once the Diavik project is approved, Aboriginal hiring quotas will be ignored:

Not only a commitment, but in writing, because these commitments they only seem to last until they get the go ahead. I've seen it in the past, and then once the [project gets] going, and all of a sudden people are out there. ...So that's why I would say it would have to be in writing, these jobs that they're willing to give Natives. The grades that they expect Natives to have, and if Natives don't have these grades, then Diavik should be willing to hire them anyway, and once they're hired on, either have a classroom out there, where they can up their grades, at least [several] hours a day, or something else. But it would have to be in writing. You can't just take their word for something like that because it's been happening too much in the North. (Fred LeMouel)

### **Recommendation #63: Affirmative Action for Aboriginal Peoples**

The Diavik project is located on lands used and occupied by Aboriginal people and they, their families and communities will be the most impacted by its mine, if regulatory approval is granted. As a way to mitigate negative impacts and contribute to the sustainability of the North Slave Metis community, Diavik should make a commitment to hire Aboriginal people, both as employees and contractors:

...Training and priority hiring...because in a lot of cases some people don't have the confidence. Even the government was bad for this for years; they used to hire southern people and non-residents in the major positions in government. Just because that was their mentality, as well, so it is a mentality that has been ... in the works for a long time. (Dianna Beck)

My thoughts on this whole process are opportunities for Aboriginal, Métis people first. They should be the first ones [to] fill any of the jobs that they're able to. A job is not a permanent thing, but to build an entrepreneur is a permanent thing. It can relate into a family thing. It can go for generations. I'm more inclined to ...people, Métis and Aboriginal people, ...becoming entrepreneurs. We know that they're going to need ...heavy equipment. We know that they're going to need lots of welders. We know that they're going to need lots of laundry, the laundry that a 400 man camp is going to use. Now my feelings are rather than hire someone for a job to drive a piece of equipment for Diavik. Why don't they encourage an individual or a Métis group to buy that equipment, lease it to Diavik and work for themselves, work for the Alliance. Why don't they encourage someone to buy ten washers and ten dryers and build right onto the facility and have a laundry service, instead of shipping their laundry to Yellowknife to get cleaned. Do it up at the site. I mean there's going to be 400 pairs of coveralls that are filthy at the end of everyday. That is entrepreneurship. We've really got to encourage that. Get people into business. In the catering, they're going to be feeding 450 people and that equates to about forty pounds, twenty pounds of groceries per man per day. I mean that's a lot of grub to prepare and whatnot. That should be an industry that can be owned and operated by Aboriginal, Métis people. (Peter Arychuk)

As a way to contribute to the sustainability of our economy, families and community, Diavik must commit to the preferential hiring of Aboriginal contractors.

### **Recommendation #64: Monitoring Hiring Commitments**

It is recommended that Diavik's hiring commitments should be monitored closely:

...It [Diavik] really has to be monitored to ensure that Métis people are being hired at them places and it's as simple as that. If they're not going to hire them, then why give them approval to dig diamonds out? If it's not going to be beneficial to the people that live up here. Maybe it will be beneficial to the next company that comes in to do it twenty years from now because the diamonds aren't going to change. They might get a little better over the years, like red wine. It ages a little bit more, it'll be clearer. (Peter Arychuk)

It is also recommended that well-defined temporal parameters be established to assist the assessment of hiring commitments:

Encouragement, good training and time. If that time criteria is not met after your training, then there's steps of saying, "I think I've improved and why don't I have this job?" There's an ombudsman or people there that you can complain to, if you are not being recognized for your skills and you think you are competent at that job. Give me a chance. There's a way to get in there. You have to make your concerns again, "I'm ready to do that job, why haven't you put me on it?" (Leroy Bloomstrand)

### **Recommendation #65: Monitoring Employment Practices and Commitments**

In addition to monitoring hiring commitments, employment practices and commitments made in respect to career advancement should also be monitored:

Monitor the employment practices, how the people are treated at the mine, how Diavik is say helping them in their off time, if you have problems or whatever, you know, it should be a two way street. A lot of dialogue between the two. Identify the things that are problems and work on them. Like I said, be it hiring or treatment at the mine. Not just, "Let's employ the people because they're Aboriginal." But let's make sure these Aboriginals are working. If they're going out there to make 80 grand a year to lean on a shovel without direction or because they don't want to work, let's not have that either. I'd like to see the workforce up there that does the work and if they don't, then don't use them, get somebody else type of thing. So they [Diavik & NSMA] should work together on these things. (Jack Balsillie)

Yeah, and there should always be a count of who's moving up in the company and who isn't. If it seems to be only one class of people moving up and then there should be someone looking into it, well, "Why? How come this guy applied on this job and he never gets anywhere, but these other guys are all moving ahead, but this little group of people isn't? Why? Why is that?" Always [have] someone watching the personnel out there. (Fred LeMouel)

*(CONTRACTING)*

**Recommendations #66: Contractor Commitments**

The BHP experience instructs us that Diavik must develop agreements with its contractors that make firm commitments in respect to Aboriginal hiring, training and apprenticeship programs and minimum wages:

As far as contractors go, make that part of their package. And the same as contracting things out, and then the contractor turns around and pays his people the lowest wages that I've even heard of. I know of all kinds of contractors out in BHP, people are working for them, and they're getting paid nothing. I've seen people quit because they're getting paid ...nothing out there, but yet BHP seems to meet their obligations. The contractor should follow under the exact same rules as BHP, and they should have a minimum wage no matter what you're contracting in, a minimum wage that they pay the people that go out there. (Fred LeMouel)

**Recommendation #67: Monitoring Diavik's Contractors and Contracting Opportunities**

Contractors to, and contracting opportunities with, Diavik should be closely monitored so as to ensure that Aboriginal people are benefiting:

...I think the big catering companies from down south get the jobs. Now maybe they join up with groups and call them joint ventures, but I think it's important to look at the involvement, the actual real involvement. Like if it's a joint venture, let's ensure that the paper work is in a fashion that you can prove that it is a 51% owned and operated company with the majority of the people being Métis or Aboriginal, whatever the case may be. The opportunities in an operation like BHP or Diavik are unlimited, and I really think we should pay a lot of attention to who's doing the jobs, who owns the equipment, who owns the pick-ups, who owns everything up there. I mean we know that this equipment is going to have a [use] for 25 years. Let's get a group of



individuals to buy all this heavy equipment. I mean you can get financing if you have a contract. If you have a twenty-five year contract, you can go to any of the big equipment operators and say, "Listen I want to lease this equipment for the life of it, whether it be ten years or whatever, at which time we'll upgrade and go for another ten years, and we have a contract to lease it for x number of years to the second diamond producing mine in North America. (Peter Arychuk)

*(TRAINING)*

**Recommendation #68: Commitment to Aboriginal Training**

Because training Aboriginal workers creates a win-win scenario for all parties, it is recommended that Diavik make a commitment in writing to the NSMA and other Aboriginal groups for training during both construction and operation phases of the mine:

If the Natives are getting trained into the good jobs, then they'll get the respect of their fellow workers who might be white. But if the Natives are always on the shovel, they're not going to have the respect of the other workers in the camp. So as long as these Natives are deemed important, like the government did for a long time in the 80's, people learn to start respecting them because a lot of them are getting good careers and then the respect starts to be mutual. But if you keep always in a low position and that, well of course you're going to hear remarks and stuff like that, and then if less Natives are quitting, then they're going to be more respected. (Fred LeMouel)

It's the same old thing everywhere in the north, "We have to take this guy because he's trained already." No more of that. You promised that you were going to train those people to take those jobs. Same as Norman Wells. All those guys over there were supposed to be trained to take those southern jobs away and move into those southern jobs and send those other people back south, but it never happened. Once the ball is rolling, it's too late to stop it. So these things have to be sorted out and put down in writing before the go ahead is given. A lot of people might say, "Well that's just a small part of the whole project." But I think it's the most important part of the whole project because, like I say, the people are the most important resources we have, and once the young people are trained, then we can train some more younger people, and eventually...That's why there's so much suicide in the communities because [there's no] chance of ever getting trained into a good job, they know their way of life is coming to an end. They see a lot of natives from southern Canada are being trained into the

good jobs and stuff already, but there's no hope for them, and it's because we're more isolated. So if these mines are going to open up and make all those millions and millions of dollars, they should be able to shoot a few of those millions of dollars into training, no matter what level of education you have at the time. (Fred LeMouel)

Well, there's a chance for a lot of young people to learn a trade. Heavy equipment operators, just everything that they're doing there. They can learn a trade up there. BHP is going to be open 25 years, maybe longer. A lot of people, you know, it's a lifetime job. It would be nice to see a lot of the younger Métis people in there. Instead of them sending for people down south when we've got all kinds of able bodies here. We've got to get them trained, so they can go to jobs that are available. I mean if they don't, they're going to get people from down south, take up the spots that are available. ...They [diamond mines] can't just come in here and take everything out, and not expect to leave something behind. (Lawrence Lafferty)

Training will help to create a sustainable future long after the Diavik mine has closed:

Like I said at the beginning, if these people are trained and they do get a ticket of some kind while they're working there. It doesn't matter if the mine closes, they'll just get a job somewhere else, and that's the important part is to get them trained, and a lot of the people from the communities will very well benefit from that because they can always go to a different mine. They'll have the experience and like I say, twenty years down the road, if everything goes like I was saying ...there'll be a lot of well-trained individuals that can go to a different spot. (Fred LeMouel)

### **Recommendations #69: Training Needs and Programs Developed Right Now**

In order for the NMSA and other Aboriginal groups to take full advantage of employment opportunities at Diavik, these opportunities and their attendant training needs and requirements need to be identified right now, along with the development of appropriate training programmes:

Those opportunities have to be identified now. The number of positions that are going to be available, what skills are necessary for our people to be able to handle those jobs and training programs now developed and interest statements made by our members that they are indeed interested in those number of jobs. Some of them might only

be months away from having the ability to do the job and others might be years. But the operations phase is going to be about three years from now, so training programs can happen and they can be totally skilled to take over some of those jobs in the next few years or else at least to be in a good position to be training under someone for another three years after that and maybe going to some post-secondary education and that to do it. If the mine is sincere about us taking on some of those jobs, I encourage them to outline that as soon as possible and that's what we are trying to do in other works that we are doing now - beginning negotiations with Diavik on that sort of stuff. (Clem Paul)

### **Recommendation #70: Job Shadowing and Apprenticeship Programmes**

Many North Slave Métis recognized that the best way to develop job skills and experience is to be trained on the job as an apprentice. We have determined that we learn best from our own people:

Well, they have to learn from who they working with. The guy's working, he knows everything, and the other guy, he don't know too much, but they work together, he learn from him, and after he learn everything and he goes to work with another boy, young boy, and he learn. That's the way they learn. All have to work. Like my nephew, he said, "Auntie, before I went there [BHP], it's like I don't know what to do. I shovel the snow. I do something," he said, "All of a sudden, I look at people what they're doing," he said, "I learn, I learn now, I learn lots," he said, "Now I work with them good," he said. That's the way it goes. You don't have to ask what they're doing, but you have to watch the people there. Maybe some people they don't like it if you ask a question, "How you gonna do this? How you gonna do that?" They don't like it that way, white people. But here they tell them, they said, "You come here for work, why you asking me question? You know what to do, I guess. Don't ask me question." Some people, they say that. That's no good to us. "But we watch them," he said, "Watch what they doing. We learn by that," he said. "We don't tell them, "What I gonna do? What this one? What I gonna do with this? We don't say that because the other people don't like it, asking questions. That's what we learn. I learn by heart," he said, "I watch what they're doing, me too, I do the same. Now I know everything, now," he said. He work long time now. He's working out there. (Alice Lafferty)

...What we need is job shadowing. I mean there's Métis owned welding companies in town and everything. Like you take a young fellow that decides he wants to be a welder, send him up there with a journeyman welder. Let him learn; on the job training, job shadowing. (Peter Arychuk)

I think it'll probably be a good thing for the Métis to have a mine going up and they'll probably get a good chance of getting people working up there, and I think training would be a big thing for the Métis, to see if they can get more people trained, which means more work for businesses in town like myself and other companies, electrical companies and plumbing outfits. The more work we get, the more people we'll have to hire, and that would give the chance for younger people to get involved in the trades, and job training. If they call for, say a welder up there, maybe they could always send a helper or apprentice with the welder and that way that man gets experience while he's working, while they're working, and that always makes the job go faster. And that way you're getting two men working instead of one, but Diavik's paying two men, but the job is also going a little faster, and one man is getting trained, which is a good way for companies like this to operate. I've been trying to do that with my men. In jobs that I go out in the field I always have a younger guy with a journeyman welder or special welder or whatever. I try to send a younger guy with them all the time to get experience, but a lot of companies don't like paying the extra guy, and I can't do that all the time, but some of these jobs like this, I don't think it would affect them [Diavik] to pay an extra man to gain experience and probably stay in the trade, instead of just trying to go to school and trying to go up there with no experience at all. Even though he finished his schooling and got his ticket, he doesn't have that much job experience, so I think it's a good thing to think of. Like when they ask for a man, say "Send a helper with you." That would help the younger guys anyway. I'd always have to send somebody in there with them, or whoever was willing to work and wanting...You don't have to be a young guy to want to take a trade. You can start when you're older. That's one way of helping the Métis out. (Jimmy Paul)

It is recommended that Diavik develop as part of its training commitment agreements with the NSMA and other Aboriginal groups, apprenticeship and job shadowing programmes.

## **Recommendation #71: Career Path Planning**

It was recognized that many Aboriginal people will not have the necessary qualifications or credentials for middle and senior management positions at the start of the Diavik mine. Thus, in order for North Slave Métis and other Aboriginal people to be able to eventually fill these positions, Diavik has to offer some form of career path planning, preferably via linkages with best practice institutions:

...Initially, I guess, if there's some highly specialized [positions] that people have no background in whatsoever here, but there's somebody down south somewhere that's been doing that exact thing somewhere, already they're hired on. I mean it's pretty obvious that there's going to be some differences there. But it would be good and I think it's essential that the company go some distance to ensuring that the opportunities are there for the local people to participate or get trained into positions or to at least [lay] out a path that they can understand how they can progress to that stage. I think the opportunity should be provided, and yeah, I'm sure there'll be a little friction there about those things. ...I mean there's the guy that came from the south and he's got a good job, whatever. But there'll be turnover and once people are recognized for their potential you know, as long as they've got a process in place there ...to identify the people who are capable of moving into these different roles, willing to take training, do a little extra work, whatever. Yeah, I wouldn't want see the opportunity denied anybody, if they were fully capable of doing that. ...I suppose you would have to think about how that individual would get that [senior level position], think of some kind of path that would enable them to move through, because you're not going to go right through the process, running some piece of equipment to being the vice-president or whatever. So you're going to need some kind of a path to enable people to move through there and to be able to offer training in those areas that would allow that to happen and the opportunity to do it in steps.... And I guess there has to be some way to pick up some of those skills that are required, even though they might not be just directly tied to a certain job. I think there should be opportunity for people, that even if you're doing this job right now, there should be other skills that you should be able to pick up, even though you're not going to be using them immediately in your work, just to help to build your overall capability so that you could then easily make a transition into something with more responsibilities instead of just going in cold and then taking training on that specific narrow job.... It would be nice to have that. I guess time allocations would be a concern. ...It's 12 hours on the job, eight hours to sleep that leaves you four hours to do it.... It would be good ...to at least have exposure to ... other things and

have an opportunity to think about some of the particulars of moving into the next level or whatever.... I'm not sure how they'd really do all that, and plus putting in your 12 hour shift and doing everything else. (Adrian D'hont)

### **Recommendation #72: On-Site Educational Upgrading and Schooling**

Many Aboriginal people who take entry-level positions on the "shovel" may be shackled to these positions if they do not upgrade their educations. As the proposed two week in/out shift rotation schedule is not conducive to attaining higher levels of education, it is recommended that Diavik offer schooling on-site and during working hours for Aboriginal employees wishing to upgrade their educational levels:

There [should] be a guarantee that you can be trained whether you have grade 7 or grade 8 education, that they would just set up a school right out there [Diavik mine site] where the Native person can go to school so many hours a day. And then work so many hours a day until his grade level is high enough that they can put him into an apprenticeship program because if the same thing happens again, it's the same as BHP. They [BHP] know if they got you there, that all they got to do is ask you what grade level you have. How many guys in the communities have grade 12? Very few... so right away, "Sorry, if you had grade 12, we would train you, but you don't have grade 12, so I have to keep you on the shovel." ...Ninety percent of the apprenticeship programs ... have ways of upgrading you really quickly. ... They can bring you right up to the level you require for your trade in no time at all. These kinds of things should maybe be brought out to the camps [so] a person can go to school for two and three hours out of your shift everyday. ...And then at least you have a hope of getting a trade, but the way it is now, as soon as they got you out there and you don't have your grade 12, you have no hope of ever getting trained for everything, eh, so you're just going to keep going in for your two weeks in/two weeks out, and at the end of it all, you're going to be right where you were before the mine started. But this way, at least a person knows that if I keep going out there, I could end up with a trade, and that would encourage the young people to keep going out instead of quitting, but when you see no future with the shovel, it's very easy to make up your mind and quit. ...Yeah, like if they would put even one year, two years, into each man that they hire for training. Once that man is trained and his self-esteem is up, he will probably stick it out for the 22 years. But if you don't get any training and they just want you out there doing the same old thing, and then going back to the community and then go out two weeks later, leave their family. At the



end of it all, it was just a waste of time, because a person's self-esteem doesn't go up until he knows that his education is going up, and if they're stuck working out there, how can they go to school? So that's why I say, they should have a little technical school in there, a classroom, with a teacher there that would know what specific trade you're in, what specific things you have to know... whatever math you need to know for your trade, and bring you through it as you're working out there. ...A person would be thankful, grateful and at the same time commit himself to that mine and stay there for years. But if none of this training happens, they're all going to end up quitting. They'll say, "What the hell am I doing there? I worked out there for a year. I worked out there for two years. What good did it do me? I'm a real good shoveller." These are the kinds of things I worry about because otherwise it's just a waste of time. You can cry employment and this and that all you want, but at the end after all that and the mine's shut down, you have a bunch of people that just worked there, but didn't get anywhere. ...Yeah, training right out there. Never mind ... the excuse, "Well, you don't have your grade 12. Sorry, I can't train you. You'll have to stay on the shovel." I don't want that excuse used anymore. They should have a school right out there, a classroom, and it's not hard to take a person off their 12 hour shift, and put `em in a classroom.... And in no time at all, you'll have a trained person. But the way it is now, if a young man goes out there and he happens to only have grade (8?), they say: "Sorry we can't train you." He can't ask them, "Can I quit for a year so I can go to school?" He'll probably never get hired back on again, so that's the big thing is to get them trained. Make it worthwhile. And then these guys can train the younger people that come up down the road.... (Fred LeMouel)

### **Recommendation #73: Youth Scholarships and Career Experience**

Other ways to develop capacity among Aboriginal youth so that they may be qualified for jobs with Diavik is through youth scholarships and career experience programs:

...Even for the mother who works at the camp, that the kids have an opportunity for training up at camp or scholarships. The Yellowknife Dene First Nation, they have guaranteed scholarships through BHP for their families. That would be one way. [Kids] tend not to get too badly into trouble if you are trying to finish school. (Dianna Turner Beck)

The NSMA could also promote it through scholarships and stuff to encourage kids to stay in school. Have you ever heard of co-op programmes through the federal government? Where in between going

to school you could come in and work in that area that you're interested in and then you go back to school and do your two or three years and somewhere along the way you're going to end up with a job in that area. That's what you want to do. It takes two, like partners. The universities used to do it, especially in geology and land use and all that. That's one of the areas where maybe Diavik could sponsor people or special courses. Under filling jobs until they find that they're qualified and have the right skills, whatever they're lacking, bring them up to par for that job. (Anon.)

It is recommended that Diavik commit to both scholarship funds and a career experience programme for Aboriginal youth.

*(CLOSURE, JOB PLACEMENT and RETRAINING)*

**Recommendation #74: Job Placement and Career Counselling at Mine Closure**

It is recommended that Diavik make a commitment to placing employees and counselling them when it's mine shuts down in order to enhance the sustainability of its project:

One of the things they [Diavik] could do is look for alternate employment, help the people with job placement after the closure of the mine, look around for different places that their existing employees could possibly go, be re-employed. I'm sure that they won't be able to relocate everybody so some sort of classes on how to deal with the changes coming up, you know there'd be less money or whatever, and do things in that area you know. Explore the avenues. You know if they can get placed with say other mines, maybe there'd be other mines opening up, have a list of employees made available to the other ones that are still in operation. Say, "Okay, we're going to have these people available. What can you do about job placement for them?" (Jack Balsillie)

**Recommendation #75: Mine Closure and Retraining**

If jobs cannot be found for all of Diavik's North Slave Métis and other Aboriginal employees prior to closure, Diavik should commit to retraining them, preferably in skills that are currently in demand:

Yes, they [NSMA and Diavik] should [help to retrain employees]. Don't want to be like Pine Point where everyone had to leave. Pine Point worked that way [for] 20 years and everyone was gone, shipped everything out and that was it. ...Sure the government could help too,

but if it's planned for and thought about, the NSMA could look and make sure that their members at least have something that they've checked into for them. (Anon.)

Retrained and maybe relocated with the company or maybe relocated somewhere within Yellowknife or with some other mine in the neighbourhood so that they can do that sort of job. It is always an unfortunate sort of situation when that sort of thing happens and eventually it will happen, but like I said, if the North is developed the way many of us are proposing, there will be other opportunities for those people in another setting. If not, there's always... that's why the option of maintaining the land and make sure that it is well kept and is always there. People always have an opportunity; they can always provide food for their family. (Clem Paul)

*(LICENSING)*

**Recommendation #76: Follow the Law**

It seems obvious, but some respondents reiterated the need for Diavik to follow environmental laws and regulations during the course of its operation:

As long as they're following the laws of Environment Canada, they know there's certain ways you dispose of certain chemicals, and they know there's certain ways you dispose of this and that. And I feel like someone from Environment Canada should be out there on a steady basis making sure that it's done properly. If it's done properly there should be no problems with animals around the area. The dump should be fenced off because I know that some of the stuff you burn can hurt a lot of the animals if they inhale that smoke, so certain things shouldn't be allowed to be burned.... As long as these people at Diavik are following the laws and the criteria, and as long as they're not going to start breaking these laws, because to do it properly might slow down production. (Fred LeMouel)

**Recommendation #77: Licensing Based on Performance**

Some respondents were concerned that, once (and if) Diavik receives regulatory approval, there will be no turning back. Thus, permit renewal periods should be shortened and contingent upon satisfactory performance in each period:

So, I feel in this case, permits [licensing] should also not be given for too many years at once. I feel like these permits should have to come up every so many years, and if they're abiding by the rules and that, then their permit will be renewed. If not, it can be cancelled. If that's in

writing and it's one of the stipulations, then that would be a good way to control what goes on. So I think it would be up to the... government to make sure that you don't give someone a permit for ten years when really you should only have to give it for three years at a time or something like that. Whatever they deem is a good amount of years that they give someone a permit for, or maybe the permit has to be renewed every year or something like that because then that way they're not unleashing anything that could go wrong for that amount of years. This way here you have control, so it's like if they know their permit is coming up in a couple of years and has to be renewed, for sure they're going to stick by the guidelines, because if it's deemed that they aren't following the guidelines, then you just don't have to renew the permit. (Fred LeMouel)

### **Recommendation #78: Is the Posted Bond Large Enough?**

Some North Slave Métis were adamant that, given recent developments, Diavik post a bond large enough to cover to the cost of any contingencies during clean up and reclamation of the site:

And also after the mine shuts down there's gotta be a guarantee of clean up, right to the smallest detail, and a certain amount of money should be deposited, otherwise we could end up in the same fix as Giant Mines. They have just moved out, and now the Canadian people are stuck with the bill for cleaning it up. This same kind of thing should be done over there [Diavik], double what they anticipate it's going to cost to clean up at the end of it. Double that amount should be deposited with either the government or whoever they're going to give the permit to. In the end, if they figure it's easier just to move out than clean up. This way we have more than ample money to clean it up for them. If they have a large sum of money invested into clean up, and if they don't clean up and they just leave like that and say, "Well we got all we want out of here. You guys go ahead." Well, they should deposit more than enough, three times more than enough that they would anticipate it would cost right now, and that would encourage them to clean it up before they leave. And once again even the clean up should be supervised by one of our agents. (Fred LeMouel)

While the NSMA understands that Diavik has reached agreement on the amount of the bond, it is recommended that a review be undertaken to determine whether the bond is adequate to cover any and all contingencies. In addition, it is recommended that, only after all affected Aboriginal parties have given the go ahead, should the bond be released.

## **Recommendation #79: Compensation Agreements**

Diavik's project is located on Aboriginal lands. One way to ensure that Aboriginal people will become the beneficiaries rather than the casualties of this resource development is to ensure that other forms of compensation, other than jobs, be provided:

...Hopefully, there'll be something beyond just employment with the Diavik project if it does proceed. Hopefully, there'll be some other means for Métis people to participate in benefits from this development in this area other than going down and getting a job. There should be something else coming in for the community through other means. Some kind of an annual contribution or some kind of a fund or something. We need to get some agreement in place I think to allow others than just those direct employees to benefit from this, because I mean it is going to have an impact on us in other ways. We have to live with any of the problems that will arise as a result of those peoples' employment, or the fact that project is taking place on the land that is important for wildlife species that we rely on. And there might be some compensation for the fact that these effects are going to happen and one... is going to be taken up and altered, so I would hope that something else would be put in place, a larger agreement, you know scholarship funds or whatever money coming to help the people. (Adrian D'hont)

## **Recommendations #80: Need to Pace Development for Sustainable Future**

The current pace of development is not sustainable as both government and industry place more value on financial capital than human capital. We must begin to control the pace of resource development in the North Slave region so as to create a sustainable way of life for ourselves and for our children:

Well, I think you need to make people aware that [the Diavik mine] does have a finite life, but to acquire certain skills along the way [doesn't]. There's possibility that other work will be available if other mines are coming on stream. I think one of the things that consideration should be given to is why have ten mines at once, why not have one or two at a time, then when those wind down then open the next one up. Have it at a pace that makes sense, that would extend, provide longer-term opportunities and benefits for people rather than here today, gone tomorrow, dig it all out at once. You know why not tend to do it in more of a sustainable fashion. I mean people could then participate. But you know all this stuff, of course, is driven by corporate agendas, and stakeholders, demands for profits and all that

stuff, so, I mean shareholders, it's just big business. I mean how do you adapt that to the situation here and enable it to happen at a pace that we can fully benefit from? If there's only two hundred people available to work, and then we've got all these things opened-up and there's opportunities for two thousand workers, I mean we can't benefit from it, eh, we can only benefit from so much and the rest is just a run away thing that's laying waste to the countryside, and we can't really participate. So I think what we need is some means where we can throttle this stuff back, some kind of an agreement with the regulators and all that, say okay this can only happen at a pace that makes sense and at which people are able to participate. Okay everyone's fully employed, there's no more demand for employment in the region whatever, you will be next for consideration for your mine when this one is winding down. I don't know. I suppose you'd see exploration taper off. [laughs]. Nobody will want to come here, but I mean there's got to be some interest in it you know. Look at all the activity out there. Diamonds? I wouldn't have thought there'd be any market for them, but people want to do it. (Adrian D'hont)

## **CONCLUSION**

Some of the above recommendations have been foreshadowed in the CSR, but many have not. It is recommended that perhaps the most expedient and judicious way to address most of our concerns and those of other Aboriginal groups is through the creation of an industry and government funded sustainable development authority (see Chapter 8.0 for elaboration). It is the vision of the NSMA to be fully involved in all aspects of the Diavik mine and other resource developments in the North Slave region from impact assessment, monitoring and management to capacity building and training. Projects that reject this vision infringe upon our Aboriginal and Treaty rights, and cannot be given regulatory approval.



## **8.0 CONCLUSIONS: FINDING BALANCE and CREATING CERTAINTY**

Will the North Slave Métis community be better or worse off in 25 years if Diavik builds its mine? This was the question that prompted Adrian D'hont to write and submit the following response to the NSMA:<sup>195</sup>

On the environmental impacts side this is clearly a big experiment. If there are no significant impacts to wildlife, air, water and plant life, and if Métis people are interested in these jobs, there may be economic benefits for North Slave Métis. If there are no significant environmental impacts, there is still the presence of an industrial installation in a once pristine wild area that occupies an important place in the minds and hearts of many and is important in a spiritual and personal sense. The east island area would be a necessary casualty of this development, sacrificed to enable the largely unessential diamond[s] to reach their markets and the corporate shareholders to take their profits. On the social side, individuals will have to weigh their absence from family and community life against the income and lifestyle shift that may be enabled by employment at the mine. Possibilities also exist that individuals may participate in increased economic activity in their home community if other spin-off opportunities for the provision of goods and services arise locally. This mine could be a good thing if all remains intact and functioning and free from degradation in the environment, and all remains intact and functioning and free from degradation in the lives of Métis people who choose to participate in this development. On the other hand, it could be very bad if we get punished twice with a loss of environmental quality and impacts on our traditional resources and with social impacts that harm our society and damage the health and well-being of individuals and their families. I think a two and two [week in/out] schedule would be murder on family life. You would need some pretty strong commitment[s] and a clear and bright light at the end of a very short tunnel to be able to sustain this type of arrangement. I would say there are too many variables to say clearly that this mine will be good or bad for Métis. It depends a lot on personal circumstances of those individuals who would participate in it and it depends on mine effects in the environment. In a community sense, it may provide jobs and income for those who think they could cope with the living conditions and the schedule, but may see increased costs and burdens on social and health services in dealing with the fall out from the negative side. If the caribou take a hit from this, there will be some major economic,

health, cultural and spiritual impacts on Métis, Dene and Inuit who depend on this herd. This is a significant risk. It is such a risk that I am not comfortable at all saying simply that the mine will be good in that it will provide some economic opportunities for those who feel they are suited for it. In a larger sense there is too much at stake. This mine and others in this area are much more than just holes in the ground.  
(Adrian D'hont)

Diavik's assessment of its potential environmental and socio-economic impacts failed the North Slave Métis. Critical data required under the *Act* and the *Environmental Assessment Guidelines* issued by the Responsible Authorities (RAs) were never collected. Throughout the EA process, the NSMA never possessed the community level data necessary to make informed decisions about the social, economic, cultural and environmental impacts of the Diavik mine. As a result, the NSMA finds itself in the awkward position of having to play catch-up in order that our voice is heard and that our concerns be addressed before the Minister makes her decision about the sustainability of the Diavik project. We are dismayed that the RA's in the Comprehensive Study Report (CSR) argued that Diavik's EA was adequate, complementing it on a job well done in some areas while outlining conditions for approval in others. There are some areas where Diavik's EA may be satisfactory. But, in essence, it was a perfunctory, superficial and gratuitous attempt to assess the social, cultural, economic and environmental impacts of its proposed diamond mine. After four years of meeting with Aboriginal communities, of hearing Aboriginal people express their fears, desires and concerns about Diavik's proposed diamond mine, Diavik is really no further ahead than when it started. Diavik's personnel may have listened patiently to Aboriginal people, but they never really understood or even made a sincere effort to grasp the concerns or realities of Aboriginal communities. Diavik extended its hand and lent its ears to Aboriginal communities, but it refused to engage us on a level that would make a difference, for them, for us, for everyone. Our greatest fear, then, is that the Diavik project, far from being empowering, will perpetuate and strengthen the *status quo*, which is neither acceptable nor sustainable. The RA's attempt to disguise uncertainties and portray Diavik's EA as a "jolly good effort", preferring to "chance it" rather than conduct a fair review consistent with the spirit and intent of *CEAA*, misleads the Minister and fails to uphold the Crown's fiduciary and statutory obligations.

In many ways, over the last four years Diavik has been asking to enter into a socio-economic partnership with Aboriginal communities. However, it has continually eschewed or dismissed the fact that such a relationship will impact, perhaps seriously and irreversibly, well-established social, economic and ecological relationships in Aboriginal communities. Driven by the bottom line and shareholder interests, Diavik has minimized risk to its investors, while increasing risk to already vulnerable Aboriginal communities. Creating an uneven playing field and setting all the rules is not the stuff upon which equitable partnerships or

healthy relationships are built. If Diavik represents the new way of doing business with Aboriginal people in the North, the old way may have not been so bad after all. While politically incorrect from a human rights and an environmental perspective, at least it was not as deceptive or insidious.

Diavik has not given the NSMA any assurance or comfort that its project is anything more than a "big experiment." The assessment of its impacts as well as cumulative impacts on caribou leaves a very large question mark, as does its assessment of the impacts of increased nutrient discharge on fish in Lac de Gras. However, perhaps the biggest failure of Diavik's EA is the lack of information relevant, and effort committed, to assessing the social, cultural and economic impacts of its project on Aboriginal people and communities, especially the North Slave Métis. Economic impacts will not be mainly positive, and social and cultural impacts are not unknowable and therefore difficult to assess and measure, as Diavik asserts. Based on experiential knowledge and information provided by the North Slave Métis in Chapter 6.0 of this report, social, cultural and economic impacts may be among the most damaging if the Diavik project receives regulatory approval. Hiding behind the skirts of intellectual property rights, Diavik's use of traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) is woefully inadequate and perpetuates the existing discourse on TEK in EA, which trivializes such knowledge while separating it (and its control) from its rightful owners (see Chapter 4.0).<sup>196</sup>

But most of all, Federal government departments and personnel must be held accountable for the failure of Diavik's EA to adequately address Aboriginal issues and concerns, particularly those of the NSMA. The inability of federal government departments and personnel to give appropriate advice, guidance and direction to Diavik in regard to Aboriginal and Treaty rights and other issues in no way assisted Diavik to meet the *Environmental Assessment Guidelines*.

The North Slave Métis community is not against development or resource developers. For 200 years we played a key role in the economic and social development of the North Slave region, a role we wish to continue well into the future. It is true, we need jobs, but at what cost? At the same time, we need also to preserve and rebuild our culture, community, values and its traditions on our terms, and to maintain stewardship of our lands. We do not wish to stop the Diavik project in the long term, or even mid-term. However, we insist that the assessment, operation, monitoring and management of this mine and its impacts be done properly and legally, with our full consent and participation before irrevocable decisions are made.

In order to balance these objectives, to create certainty for everyone involved, and to construct a sustainable economy, community and future for our children, and ourselves we offer nine broad recommendations which we fully

expect to be implemented, or at least well on the way to being implemented, prior to regulatory review of the Diavik project:

### **1) Recognition of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights**

It is crucial that the federal and territorial governments recognize and respect the rights of the North Slave Métis as defined under s.35 of the *Constitution Act*. All we ask is that we be treated the same as other Aboriginal groups in the North Slave region. At the same time, government must uphold its fiduciary obligations not to unnecessarily infringe Aboriginal and Treaty rights when resource development is proposed on Crown, Aboriginal and unceded lands. In particular, governments will be well-advised to adopt a process similar to the one advanced here as a way to meet the two conditions imposed on it by its fiduciary obligations. By addressing our concerns, and ensuring that we have sufficient information to assess the impacts of resource development on our lands, resources, community, culture and economy, government will go a long way towards minimizing the infringement of our Aboriginal and Treaty rights.

### **2) Addressing Our Concerns: Implementation of Specific Recommendations**

The 80 recommendations of our membership in regards to properly assessing, monitoring and mitigating the environmental, social, cultural and economic impacts of the Diavik project must be duly considered and implemented with our full involvement. In so doing, our concerns will be addressed to our satisfaction. Immediate attention should be paid to our specific recommendations about assessing, monitoring and mitigating impacts on caribou, water quality, individual well-being, social relationships and community wellness. Failure to address our concerns as synthesized and presented in these recommendations prior to regulatory review could constitute an infringement of s.35(1).

### **3) Supplying Sufficient Information: Support for Phase II**

By addressing the concerns of the North Slave Métis about the environmental, social, economic and cultural impacts of the Diavik project, one of the two conditions of adequate consultation imposed on the Crown by its fiduciary obligations to Aboriginal people will have been met. Since the long-standing data deficiencies in respect to the North Slave Métis were not recognized until late in the EA process, we were forced to concentrate our limited human and financial resources on documenting our concerns. The development of appropriate environmental/land use, economic, social and cultural information baselines that would allow us to properly assess, and participate meaningfully in the monitoring and mitigating of, Diavik's impacts was temporarily set aside in order that our concerns be heard and addressed prior to regulatory review. As Diavik's EA clearly has not provided the required information to make an informed assessment of its

impacts on the North Slave Métis, we propose to do this in a second phase of research. A funding commitment for *Phase II* was made by Northern and Indian Affairs in the CSR, and we fully expect an equivalent commitment from Diavik as a condition of approval. Once again, failure to meet both this condition and to address our concerns may result in an infringement of s. 35(1).

#### **4) Negotiation, Settlement and Implementation of the NSMA Land Claim**

It is paramount that our claim to lands, resources, and the control over these, be negotiated immediately by the federal government. The lands on which the proposed Diavik mine will be located is within our traditional area of use, and have never been surrendered. The North Slave Métis share the same rights to lands and resources in the North Slave region as the Dogrib and Yellowknives Dene. Competing claims to Lac de Gras must be settled prior to, or at least concurrent with, regulatory review. If the NSMA is willing to enter into joint comprehensive claim with the Dogrib and Yellowknives, the federal government, as our fiduciary, is obliged to negotiate this claim prior to any more resource development on our lands. It is particularly important that we acquire a land-base so that we may survive as a people, rebuild our community, and regain stewardship of our lands. Whereas Métis "settlement lands" have been granted in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, land settlement rights in the Northwest Territories are outstanding, and must be fulfilled. Failure to do so will stay the course of a Métis assimilation policy developed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century that remains substantially unchanged to this day, and continues to flagrantly expose us to the direct and indirect impacts of industrial development.

#### **5) Restructuring of CEAA**

The *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* and the Agency charged with implementing it are insensitive, if not hostile, to Aboriginal peoples, communities and their systems of knowledge and management. In order to effectively accommodate Aboriginal interests and concerns in EA and to bring the *Act* and Agency into line with recent case law and court decisions regarding resource development on Aboriginal, Crown and unceded lands, the *Act* should be amended or replaced with one that does. Current efforts by *CEAA* to develop ways and means of divesting Aboriginal people from their traditional ecological knowledge for incorporation into EA on terms other than those of the Aboriginal party affected must also be abandoned.

#### **6) Developing Federal Capacity and Expertise**

Federal government departments having a mandate to be involved in EA on Crown, Aboriginal and un-surrendered lands, need to develop capacity and expertise to deal with Aboriginal issues and concerns in EA. It is clear from the

Diavik EA process, that training and capacity building in this area is sorely needed. The advantages of such a programme, which the NSMA would be pleased to assist in developing and delivering, would create certainty for industry, government and affected Aboriginal groups.

## **7) Agreement on Value-Added Diamond Processing<sup>197</sup>**

A responsibility of the federal government and a principle of the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* (CEAA s. 4[b]) is to promote sustainable economic development. This is particularly important in a region that has been characterized by chronic underdevelopment, unsustainable resource development, limited economic opportunities for Aboriginal people, and overpowering social and economic problems which compromise the ability of present and future generations to lead healthy lives in their traditional homelands. The intention of CEAA and the *Environmental Assessment Guidelines* for the Diavik project were to identify adverse impacts and to empower communities to seek mitigation of those impacts.

The environmental assessment report identified a number of possible negative effects arising from this project which warrant mitigation including, limited employment opportunities, out-migration and "boom and bust" scenarios. The government of Canada has a fiduciary obligation to minimize the infringement of Aboriginal rights caused by resource development on traditional Aboriginal lands. Multiple land claims to the region have not been settled, and until they are, if the federal government considers Diavik's proposal, it must also consider the Aboriginal best interest. Development of secondary industry through local sale of rough diamonds is one way to help mitigate the negative effects, while ensuring that Aboriginal communities benefit from resource development on their traditional lands. Establishment of a secondary diamond industry can open the door for economic opportunities for small communities as this option makes possible sustainable small community employment and removes the problems associated with employment barriers and out-migration. The NSMA recommends that, as a condition of approval, Diavik must negotiate a value-added agreement with the GNWT, with the involvement and consent of the Aboriginal governments, guided by the following principles:

- Northerners have a right to access Northern resources, and to benefit economically from them.
- Diamonds should be sold at fair market value.
- Benefits should be balanced between affected communities.
- Information should be presented to communities to educate people on "value added" industries and how they can participate in them.



- Sustainable communities require nurturing of healthy relationships between industry and affected communities.
- Agreement to be consistent with federal government commitments to assist Aboriginal communities in building local capacity and meeting self-defined goals.
- Agreement must be designed as a measure to mitigate the adverse socio-economic effects identified in this report, the CSR and elsewhere, and also as a measure to achieve sustainable development.
- Aboriginal governments must be provided the resources for meaningful involvement in the negotiations and have final consent over the agreement.

The agreement should contain a dispute resolution mechanism that includes the Aboriginal governments and a means for regular review and maximum funding to optimize participation in amendment, if necessary.

### **8) Socio-economic and Impacts Benefits Agreements**

Many of our concerns, especially those relating to social, economic and cultural impacts, could be addressed through the implementation of specific socio-economic and impacts benefits agreements. Considerable attention should be devoted to identifying training and capacity building needs for the North Slave Metis, and to defining the role of the NSMA in impacts assessment, monitoring and mitigation. It is imperative that these agreements be negotiated and signed off prior to regulatory approval.

### **9) Development of North Slave Sustainable Development Authority**

Increasingly, diamond mining and other resource developments in the North Slave region are beginning to affect Aboriginal (and Treaty) rights, communities, resources, economies and cultures. Almost always, government and industry deal with these projects and their impacts in isolation or *ad hoc* manner. Existing approaches to environmental and socio-economic assessments are insensitive to the cumulative and longer-term impacts that a succession of resource development projects would have on Aboriginal communities. Moreover, current assessment approaches tend to be *ex ante* (i.e., necessarily occurring prior to a decision before an actual impact is felt). But projects will often have consequences that cannot be measured or even predicted at the time of assessment. These problems, in combination with the degraded economic and social conditions of Aboriginal communities, make them especially vulnerable to long-term and cumulative impacts of resource extraction and development. With the accelerating pace of resource development in the North Slave region, there is a growing urgency to develop an institutional process and mechanism that directly incorporates those

most affected by mining and resource development into a process that influences the design, operation and pace of resource development in the North Slave region.

The *North Slave Sustainable Development Authority* (NSSDA) would place those Aboriginal communities and peoples most affected by resource development at the centre of decision-making in regards to environmental and socio-economic impact assessment, monitoring and management as well as community economic development and local capacity building and training. By providing more effective linkages with Aboriginal communities, the NSSDA would streamline and coordinate environmental and socio-economic assessments, monitoring and mitigation efforts. In so doing, it would eliminate the need for *ad hoc* structures and processes for each proposed resource development, thus avoiding duplication of effort and promoting cost effectiveness. The NSSDA would undertake needs-based research as determined by the Aboriginal communities for environmental and socio-economic impact assessment and management. By having the capacity to accommodate future resource developments, address cumulative impacts and contribute to regional planning efforts (re: sustainability, ecological thresholds, environmental and social carrying capacity, etc.), the NSSDA would create certainty for industry, Aboriginal parties and government in environmental assessment and resource development initiatives. We maintain that, as a condition of project approval, industry and government fund the operation of the NSSDA, which will be guided by the following principles:

### **Guiding Principles**

- Pro-active rather than reactive approach to resource development, environmental management and community development.
- Emphasizes capacity building in contexts of community and resource development and management.
- Recommendations and decisions guided by, and respectful of, traditional Aboriginal values and laws.
- Recommendations and decisions comply with federal and territorial regulations and laws.
- Research addresses specific community needs re: environmental and socio-economic impacts assessment and management, cumulative impacts, training and capacity building, and economic development.
- Agreements to address unknown and unpredicted effects through appropriate consultation and research with Aboriginal communities.
- Agreements to address mitigation of adverse effects.
- Research components built in that will establish links to best practice research institutions (e.g., Canadian Circumpolar Institute).

- Provides access to information, relevant to assessing, monitoring and mitigating impacts, by all parties to the agreement, subject to protocols for the protection of privacy and intellectual property.

### **Functions**

- Through close ties to, and liaison activities with, affected Aboriginal communities, the NSSDA will develop recommendations for research activities and action plans on environmental and socio-economic monitoring and mitigation, community capacity building and training, community economic development relating to resource development.
- Serves as a vehicle for Aboriginal communities to articulate and address concerns about the environmental and socio-economic impacts of resource development.
- Disseminates/communicates information and knowledge to communities about resource development (two-way flow of information).
- Serves as a vehicle to coordinate and develop community environmental/socio-economic monitoring and management schemes and to carry out monitoring recommendations required by resource developers.
- Serves as a vehicle to coordinate and develop community training and capacity building efforts in the context of resource development.
- Contributes to regional planning processes.
- Incorporates a conflict resolution process.

### **Membership of NSSDA**

- North Slave Metis Alliance
- Dogrib Treaty 11 Council
- Yellowknives Dene First Nation
- Lutselk'e Dene First Nation
- Kitikmeot Inuit Association
- GNWT
- Federal Government (ex-officio)

### **Advisory Subcommittees of NSSDA (membership variable, responsive to need)**

- Technical Environmental Impact Assessment, Monitoring and Management Committee
- Technical Social, Economic and Cultural Impacts Assessment, Monitoring and Management Committee
- Community Training/Capacity-Building Committee

- Community Economic Development Committee

### **Funding of NSSDA**

- Salaries (30%)
- Secretariat (20%)
- Research and planning (50%)

### **Funding Partners and Contributions**

- Government (40%)
- Industry (40%)
- Aboriginal (20%) (from land claims and treaty entitlement settlements)

### **CLOSING COMMENT: "WE'RE ALL HERE TO STAY"**

The NSMA fully, and quite reasonably, expects substantial progress to be made on the implementation of these recommendations prior to regulatory review. Failing that government can expect us to stand up for our Aboriginal and Treaty rights as laid out in *s.35(1)* of the *Canadian Constitution Act*, and recently reaffirmed in numerous Supreme and lower court rulings. The costs, in financial and human terms, of our acquiescence at this important point in our history will ultimately be exorbitant for all. We want to be meaningful participants in resource development. At the same time, we must find ways to live and work together in a sustainable manner. There is no other option. As Chief Justice Lamar stated in his ruling in *Delgamuukw* ([1997]3SCR 1010):

**"We're all here to stay"**

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A

#### INTERVIEWEE PROFILES

Profiles indicate gender, age group, parent/grandparent (if applicable), occupation(s), current place of residence, frequency of hunting (not applicable [n/a], occasional, very active), and degree of consumption of country foods (never, occasional, frequent).

**Part A:** Interviewees who gave permission to have their names used in association with their information.

**Arychuk, Peter:**

Male, 40-49, parent, pilot & co-owner/operator of Air Tindi Ltd., Yellowknife, very active hunter, frequent consumption.

**Balsillie, Jack:**

Male, 50-59, grandparent, instrumentation journeyman mechanic, (semi-retired), driver for L.A.R.G.A. (part-time), Edmonton, n/a, frequent consumption.

**Beck, Danny:**

Male, 20-29, parent, manager at Beck's Kennels, Yellowknife, very active hunter, frequent consumption.

**Beck, Dianna:**

Female, 20-29, youth consulting services, Yellowknife, occasional hunter, frequent consumption.

**Bloomstrand, Leroy:**

Male, 20-29, parent, wildlife officer, environmental management system manager, Yellowknife, very active hunter, frequent consumption.

**Camsell, Ernie:**

Male, 70-79, grandparent, former Hudson Bay employee and government employee (retired), Rae-Edzo, very active hunter, frequent consumption.

**Dautel, Marie:**

Female, 40-49, parent, medical travel warrant officer, Yellowknife, n/a, frequent consumption.

**D'hont, Adrian:**

Male, 40-49, parent, biologist, Yellowknife, very active hunter, frequent consumption.

**Douglas, Terri:**

Female, 40-49, grandparent, teacher, Rae-Edzo, n/a, frequent consumption.

**Gillis, Catherine:**

Female, 10-19, grade 11 student, Yellowknife, n/a, frequent consumption.

**Lafferty, Alice:**

Female, 70-79, grandparent, retired, Yellowknife, n/a, frequent consumption.

**Lafferty, James:**

Male, 30-39, parent, professional custodian, Rae-Edzo, very active hunter, frequent consumption.

**Lafferty, Lawrence:**

Male, 40-49, dry -waller, Yellowknife, very active hunter, frequent consumption.

**LeMouel, Fred:**

Male, 40-49, parent, power systems electrician apprentice, Yellowknife, occasional hunter, occasional consumption.

**McPherson, Georgina:**

Female, 70-79, grandparent, nurse (retired), MacKenzie, BC, n/a, occasional consumption.

**Mercredi, D'Arcy:**

Male, 50-59, parent, mining employee (line cutting, geophysics, prospecting, hauling freight), Yellowknife, very active hunter, frequent consumption.

**Norwegian, Aaron:**

Male, 10-19, grade 8 student, Yellowknife, occasional hunter, frequent consumption.

**Paul, Clem:**

Male, 40-49, grandparent, President of NSMA, Yellowknife, very active hunter, frequent consumption.

**Paul, Jimmy:**

Male, parent, 50-59, journeyman welder & owner/operator of Paul Bros Welding Ltd., Yellowknife, occasional hunter, occasional consumption.

**Turner, Catherine:**

Female, 80-89, grandparent, retired, Latham Island, Yellowknife, n/a, frequent consumption.

**Turner, Dennis:**

Male, 10-19, grade 6 student, Latham Island, Yellowknife, occasional hunter, frequent consumption.

**Turner, Peter:**

Male, 10-19, grade 9 student, Latham Island, Yellowknife, occasional hunter, frequent consumption.



**Turner, Robert (Bob):**

Male, 40-49, parent, Land Manager & Secretary-Treasurer at NSMA, Latham Island, Yellowknife, very active hunter, frequent consumption.

**Williams, Tom:**

Male, 30-39, parent, Assistant Negotiator with the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, Yellowknife, very active hunter, frequent consumption.

**Part B:** Interviewees who requested that their identities remain anonymous. Interviewees have been assigned numbers.

*Anon.*

Female, >40, parent, employed, Yellowknife, n/a, frequent consumption.

*Anon.*

Female, >60, grandparent, retired, Rae-Edzo, occasional hunter, frequent consumption.

*Anon.*

Male, >40, employed, Yellowknife, very active hunter, frequent consumption.

*Anon.*

Male, >60, grandparent, retired, Rae-Edzo, occasional hunter, frequent consumption.

*Anon.*

Male, >40, parent, employed, Rae-Edzo, very active hunter, frequent consumption.

*Anon.*

Female, <40, parent, employed, Yellowknife, occasional hunter, frequent consumption.

*Anon.*

Male, >40, parent, employed, Rae-Edzo, very active hunter, frequent consumption.

*Anon.*

Female, >60, grandparent, retired, Yellowknife, n/a, occasional consumption.

## **Appendix B**

### **STATISTICAL SUMMARY**

Total number of interviewees: 32

Number of social, economic and cultural interviews: 30

Number of environmental interviews: 23

Number of refusals: 9 (three males & six females)

Interviewees by gender: 11 females, 21 males.

Interviewees by age categories:

- a. 1-9: 0
- b. 10-19: 4
- c. 20-29: 3
- d. 30-39: 3
- e. 40-49: 10
- f. 50-59: 5
- g. 60-69: 2
- h. 70-79: 4
- i. 80-89: 1

## **Appendix C**

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The North Slave Metis Alliance would like to thank the following people and organizations for their support and assistance:

The interviewees for sharing their concerns and ideas with us. Without your input, this project would not have been possible.

Dogrib Treaty 11 Band, Rae-Edzo, for loaning us the photographs in chapter 2.

The Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre for loaning us equipment in the early stages.

Metis Heritage Association and Parks Canada, for permission to quote from *Picking Up the Threads: Metis History in the MacKenzie Basin*.

Diavik Diamond Mines Inc., Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, and the Department of Resources, Wildlife & Economic Development (GNWT) for their financial assistance.

## Appendix D

### INDEX

Exec Sum 1. Notes on revisions on the CSR for a meeting with DIAND at the office of the North Slave Metis Alliance, May 3, 1999.

Exec Sum 2. Meeting between the Director of Renewable Resources of DIAND and a consultant to the NSMA (Michael Thorns) in respect to a follow-up document entitled: "Concerns re: DIAND's revision to the CSR submitted by the North Slave Metis Alliance, May, 1999."

Exec Sum 3 Concluding remark of Supreme Court Chief Justice Lamar in Delgamuukw ([1997]3 S.C.R. 1010).

- 1 Richard Slobodin (1964) The Subarctic Métis as products and agents of cultural contact. *Arctic Anthropology* 2(2):50-55
- 2 Jarvenpa R. and H.J. Brumbach (1985), Occupational Status, Ethnicity, and Ecology: Métis Cree Adaptations in a Canadian Trading Frontier, *Human Ecology* 13(3):309-321.
- 3 Kerry Abel (1993), *Drum Songs: Glimpses of Dene History*, McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal-Kingston.
- 4 Emile Petitot, (1887) *En route pour la mer glaciale*, Letouszey et ane, Paris, p.267, 288.
- 5 Morris Lafferty, *My Métis Ancestry*, Transcript on file with the Métis Heritage Association.
- 6 Abel (1993:76).
- 7 Marina Devine (1998), The First Northern Métis. In *Picking Up the Threads: Métis History in the Mackenzie Basin*. Métis Heritage Association. The NSMA would like to thank the MHA and Parks Canada for their permission to refer to and quote this source.
- 8 Petitot (1891:78) *Autours du grand lac des Esclaves*. Nouvelle Librairie Parisienne, Paris.
- 9 HBCA, B39/e/1. Fo.34d.
- 10 Jennifer Bellman and Chris Hanks (1998) Northern Métis and the Fur Trade. In *Picking Up the Threads...*
- 11 Devine (1998).
- 12 NSMA interview transcript (1999).
- 13 NSMA interview transcript (1999).
- 14 NSMA interview transcript (1999).
- 15 HBC Archives, B. 200/b/37, pp. 103-4, letter from R. McFarlane to William C. King, Fort Rae, dated Fort Simpson, 28 November 1868.
- 16 Bellman and Hanks (1998).
- 17 Martha McCarthy, *From the Great River to the Ends of the Earth*, University of Alberta Press, Edmonton (1995:108).
- 18 Devine (1998).
- 19 This is not to suggest that women did not play important roles beyond their communities; Catherine Bouvier (nee Beaulieu) was famous for her dog team journeys between Fort Rae and Fort Providence, carrying caribou meat and mail

- (Rosemary Allerston, Where the Beaulieus Began. In *Up Here*, January/February, 1999:49-50).
- 20 Slobodin (1966:12-14) Métis of the Mackenzie District. Canadian Research Centre for Anthropology, Saint Paul University, Ottawa.
  - 21 Devine (1998).
  - 22 Devine (1998).
  - 23 Petitot (1887:164) *En route pour la mer glaciale*.
  - 24 Bellman and Hanks (1998)
  - 25 Able (1993:86).
  - 26 Bellman and Hanks (1998).
  - 27 Philip Goldring (1980) *Papers on the Labour System of the Hudson's Bay Company:1821-1900*. Parks Canada.
  - 28 Bellman and Hanks (1998).
  - 29 Bellman and Hanks (1998).
  - 30 Jordan Zinovich (1992). *Battling the Bay: The Turn of the Century Adventures of Fur Trader Ed Nagle*. Lone Pine Pub., Edmonton.
  - 31 York boats were 35", flat-bottomed scows with a five-ton capacity manned by eight men.
  - 32 Rene Fumoleau, (1973:322) *As Long as This Land Shall Last*. McClelland and Stewart Ltd. Toronto.
  - 33 Pierre Duchaussois (1937) *Mid Snow and Ice: The Apostles of the North-West*. Ottawa University, p.251.
  - 34 Fumoleau (1973:351).
  - 35 Fumoleau (1973:351).
  - 36 George Ramsey Rae. (1963) *The Settlement of the Great Slave Lake Frontier, Northwest Territories, Canada, From the Eighteenth to the Twentieth Century*, University of Michigan.
  - 37 Rae (1963).
  - 38 Martha McCarthy (1998) Northern Métis and the Churches. In *Picking Up the Threads...*
  - 39 Brenda Kolson (1997). *Old Fort Rae...* Report on file with the Métis Heritage Association.
  - 40 Excerpts from notes at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre, Yellowknife. Cited in Kolson (1997).
  - 41 Rae (1963)
  - 42 NSMA interview transcript (1999). As some respondents interviewed for Phase One preferred to remain anonymous, a code is used.
  - 43 McCarthy (1998:122).
  - 44 Additional examples of the tendency for North Slave Métis families to marry within their community will be highlighted throughout this report.
  - 45 Some of the birthdates shown are best guesses, and the NSMA plans to conduct further research to verify their accuracy.
  - 46 Diane Payment (1998) Métis People in Motion. In *Picking Up the Threads...*
  - 47 NSMA interview transcript (1999).
  - 48 Bellman and Hanks (1998).
  - 49 NSMA interview transcript (1999).
  - 50 Jarvenpa R. and H.J. Brumbach (1985), Occupational Status, Ethnicity, and Ecology: Métis Cree Adaptations in a Canadian Trading Frontier, *Human Ecology* 13(3):309-321.

- 51 Slobodin (1964).
- 52 Devine, M. (1998).
- 53 Jarvenpa and Brumbach (1985).
- 54 While Sylvia Van Kirk has demonstrated this to be true for some areas, the NSMA has not yet had the chance to confirm its accuracy as so much research remains to be done about our history.
- 55 Jarvenpa and Brumbach (1985)
- 56 Jarvenpa and Brumbach (1985)
- 57 Jarvenpa and Brumbach (1985)
- 58 Jarvenpa and Brumbach (1985).
- 59 NSMA interview transcript (1999).
- 60 NSMA interview transcript (1999).
- 61 NSMA interview transcript (1999).
- 62 NSMA interview transcript (1999).
- 63 Zinovich (1992).
- 64 Zinovich (1992).
- 65 NSMA interview transcript (1999).
- 66 NSMA interview transcript (1999).
- 67 Laura Loutit, Métis Heritage Association interview transcript (1977).
- 68 Louis Mercredi, Métis Heritage Association interview transcript (1977).
- 69 Ed Nagle and Jordan Zinovich (1989) *The Prospector North of Sixty*, Lone Pine Pub., Edmonton.
- 70 Zinovich (1992:178)
- 71 Jennifer S.H. Brown, "Métis", *The Canadian Encyclopaedia Plus*, McClelland and Stewart, CD ROM.
- 72 Jennifer S.H. Brown, "Métis".
- 73 Reports suggest that the Métis were less affected than the Dene. (Abel 1993:201).
- 74 Abel (1993: 201).
- 75 Abel (1993: 208).
- 76 Ann Peterson Royce (1982). *Ethnic Identity: Strategies of Diversity*. Indiana Press, Bloomington.
- 77 Fredrick Barth (1969). *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*. Little, Brown and Co.
- 78 Ann Peterson Royce (1982).
- 79 Marc G. Stevenson (1989). Sourdoughs and Cheeckakos: The Formation of Identity-Signalling Social Groups. *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 8:270-312.
- 80 Royce (1982:18).
- 81 However, the Paulette Case indicates that there was no surrender of Aboriginal rights or title under Treaty 8 or 11.
- 82 Cited in Patricia McCormack (1998) Northern Métis and the Treaties: Treaties No. 8 and No. 11, and the Issuance of Scrip. In *Picking Up the Threads...*
- 83 Patricia McCormack (1998).
- 84 Harry Daniels (1981). *Native People and the Constitution of Canada*.
- 85 McCormack (1998:177).
- 86 Catherine Turner, NSMA interview transcript (1999).
- 87 NSMA interview transcript (1999).
- 88 NSMA interview transcript (1999).
- 89 NSMA interview transcript (1999).
- 90 NSMA interview transcript (1999).



- 91 Personal communication, 1999.
- 92 Jean Morisset and Rose-Marie Pellitier (1986:119-120). *Ted Trindell; Métis Witness to the North*. Tillacum Library, Vancouver).
- 93 NSMA interview transcript (1999).
- 94 McCarthy, Martha (1998). Northern Métis and the Churches. In *Picking Up the Threads...*
- 95 McCarthy, Martha (1998:111).
- 96 NSMA interview transcript (1999).
- 97 Catherine Turner, NSMA transcript (1999).
- 98 McCarthy (1998).
- 99 NSMA interview transcript (1999).
- 100 NSMA interview transcript (1999).
- 101 McCarthy (1998).
- 102 NSMA interview transcript (1999).
- 103 NSMA interview transcript (1999).
- 104 NSMA interview transcript (1999)
- 105 NSMA interview transcript (1999).
- 106 NSMA interview transcript (1999)
- 107 Sandra Dolan (1998). Hay River's West Channel Métis. In *Picking Up the Threads...*
- 108 North Slave Métis Genealogy Tree, 1998. On file with the North Slave Metis Alliance.
- 109 Catherine Turner, NSMA transcript (1990).
- 110 Don Gamble (1986) Crushing of Cultures: Western Applied Science in Northern Societies. *Arctic* 39:20-23.
- 111 Gamble (1986: 21).
- 112 This conclusion was supported by Anders (1964) of the Industrial Division of DIAND who reported that the problems confronting Rae could be overcome largely by the judicious application of already available operating and maintenance funds and equipment to turn the Rae townsite into a "quite attractive place."
- 113 Feeling some concern about relocating the Dene to a place labelled "Squaw Valley", the government painted the matchbox homes sundry colours and re-dubbed the area "Rainbow Valley", present day N'dilo
- 114 Regrettably, this sad saga continues. Today, Métis families continue to live in the "Flats". However, the homes are considered an eyesore by adjacent homeowners. The families are keen to renovate and improve their homes and to keep their location, but once again the city has never surveyed this land and they are still considered 'squatters'. Thus, they do not qualify for grants to upgrade their homes. "It is a sad history, boy. People today just don't know what they've done to us. And, they are still at it," states Clem Paul.
- 115 NSMA interview transcript (1999).
- 116 NSMA interview transcript (1999).
- 117 NSMA interview transcript (1999).
- 118 NSMA interview transcript (1999).
- 119 NSMA interview transcript (1999)
- 120 NSMA interview transcript (1999).
- 121 NSMA interview transcript (1999).
- 122 NSMA interview transcript (1999).
- 123 NSMA interview transcript (1999).

- 124 NSMA interview transcript (1999).  
125 NSMA interview transcript (1999).  
126 NSMA interview transcript (1999).  
127 NSMA interview transcript (1999).  
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131 NSMA interview transcript (1999).  
132 NSMA interview transcript (1999).  
133 NSMA interview transcript (1999).  
134 NSMA interview transcript (1999).  
135 NSMA interview transcript (1999).  
136 NSMA interview transcript (1999).  
137 NSMA interview transcript (1999).  
138 NSMA interview transcript (1999).  
139 NSMA interview transcript (1999).  
140 NSMA interview transcript (1999).  
141 NSMA interview transcript (1999).  
142 This section draws heavily on the work of Monique Ross who has written a number of articles on the constitutional duty of the government to consult with Aboriginal peoples in resource development. However, any misinterpretations, omissions or errors are those of the NSMA alone.  
143 *R. v. Sparrow* (1990) 1 S.C.R. 1075; *Delgamuukw v. British Columbia* (1997) 3 S.C.R. 1010.  
144 C. Sharvit, M. Robinson, and M. Ross, *Resource Development on Traditional Lands: The Duty to Consult*, CIRL Occasional Paper No. 6 (1999).  
145 *R. v. Guerin* (1984) 2 S.C.R. 335, 6 W.W.R. 481.  
146 *R. v. Sparrow* (1990) 1 S.C.R. 1075, 46 B.C.L.R. (2d) 1.  
147 *Delgamuukw v. British Columbia* (1997) 3 S.C.R. 108 (Q.L.) at para 168.  
148 Sharvit *et al.* (1999).  
149 Issued by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, and Natural Resources Canada, 26 August 1998.  
150 *Environmental Assessment Act* R.S.B.C., 1996, c.119.  
151 For example, *Halfway River First Nation v. British Columbia (Ministry of Forests)*, [1997] 4 C.N.L.R. 45 (B.C.S.C.) at para. 136.  
152 Sharvit *et al.* (1999).  
153 *Halfway First Nation v. British Columbia* (1997), 4 C.N.L.R. 45 (B.C.S.C.).  
154 Sharvit *et al.* (1999).  
155 *Ibid.*  
156 This issue has yet to be tested specifically in the courts. However, it is noteworthy that, in *Cheslatta*, the Cheslatta Carrier Nation objected to the appointment of a certain Aboriginal member on the Project Committee as it felt that this individual did not represent its interests. (*Cheslatta Carrier First Nation v. British Columbia*, *Docket A954336*, (29 Jan. 1998) at paras. 30-34).  
157 For example, *Ryan et al v. Fort St. James Forest District (District Manager)* 25 January 1994, Smithers No. 7855, *aff'd* (10994) 40 B.C.A.C. 91 (C.A.).

- 158 The Cheslatta Carrier Nation claimed that Huckleberry Mines Ltd. had failed to adequately consult with them about the impacts of its proposed mine on wildlife
- 159 *Cheslatta* at para. 73.
- 160 Sharvit et al. (1999).
- 161 *Delgamuukw*, supra note 1 at para 168.
- 162 Sharvit et al. (1999).
- 163 For example, *Cheslatta* supra note 5 at para. 70.
- 164 *Cheslatta*, supra note 5 at para. 58.
- 165 *Cheslatta*, supra note 5 at para. 59.
- 166 *Halfway*, supra note 10 at paras. 129 and 133.
- 167 Sharvit et al. (1999).
- 168 Ibid.
- 169 Ibid.
- 170 *Delgamuukw*, supra note 1 at para. 168.
- 171 *Delgamuukw* (1997).
- 172 *Cheslatta*, supra note 5 at para. 70.
- 173 *R. v. Noel*, 1995, at para. 87.
- 174 Ibid.
- 175 Pape and Slater, *Delgamuukw: A Summary of the Supreme Court Decision* (1998).
- 176 Ibid.
- 177 Ibid.
- 178 *Nunavut Tungavik Inc. v. Minister of Fisheries and Oceans*, Federal Court of Canada, 14 July, 1997, T-872-97, at para. 22.
- 179 *R. v. Noel* (1995) 4 C.N.L.R. 75 N.W.T. T.C. at para. 87.
- 180 Sharvit et al. (1999).
- 181 Ibid.
- 182 Doug Willy, address to Technical Session on Socio-economic, 3 March 1999.
- 183 *Noel* establishes that proper consultation with Aboriginal groups includes adequate time for research, and this requirement will "trump" government/industry time frames every time.
- 184 Commitments for funding *Phase Two* have been received from Indian and Northern Affairs.
- 185 Although mining activity at the Diavik site was shut down, pending regulatory approval, the NSMA Steering Committee would like to thank Diavik for the informative tour of the site and a fine lunch.
- 186 As a matter of note, despite the fact that the two researcher positions were advertised in one of Yellowknife's major newspapers, inviting all interested North Slave Métis to apply, none did, and the NSMA was forced to go outside the community to hire researchers. Had there been sufficient time, we could have hired and trained our own members to conduct this research. By being consulted so late in the Diavik comprehensive review process, we have missed the opportunity to develop research capacity within our own community.
- 187 Stevenson (1996) *Arctic* 49(3):276-291.
- 188 This report intentionally avoids use of the term "traditional knowledge" as it is very much part of the post-colonial discourse currently keeping Aboriginal peoples, and their systems of knowledge and management in their marginalized and disempowered conditions.

- 189 This acquiescence should not, however, be interpreted as unconditional support for current environmental assessment processes as laid out in CEAA. The current Act fails to serve, and indeed is even hostile to, Aboriginal peoples. We foreshadow one of the major recommendations of this report here by noting that either the Act should be amended to incorporate and address Aboriginal interests and issues, or another mechanism should be designed and implemented to achieve these ends.
- 190 George Ramsey Rae. *The Settlement of the Great Slave Lake Frontier, Northwest Territories, Canada, From the Eighteenth to the Twentieth Century*, University of Michigan (1963).
- 191 For the sake of clarity, Adrian revised the last sentence of this statement. His revision has been substituted in place of the original.
- 192 This statement raises other important issues more appropriate to Chapter 6.0; namely that, by breaking people's ties to the land, which employment in the mining industry is apt to do, the importance and value of caribou could decrease.
- 193 Evelyn Marlowe & Dennis Drygeese, Community-Based Monitoring: Lutselk'e Dene First Nation, WKSS presentation, Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre, Yellowknife, NT, April 14, 1999.
- 194 Evelyn Marlowe & Dennis Drygeese, Community-Based Monitoring: Lutsel K'e Dene First Nation, WKSS presentation, Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre, Yellowknife, NT, April 14, 1999.
- 195 Letter to NSMA, 22 April 1999.
- 196 A report commissioned by the Minister of Resources, Economic Development and Wildlife (by Barney Masazumi), critical of Diavik's unscrupulous use of the intellectual property argument to mask the inadequacy of their TEK research, is not mentioned in the CSR or brought to the Minister's attention.
- 197 Extracted from a joint submission by the NSMA, Kitikmeot Inuit Association and Lutselk'e Dene Band in the CSR.

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***Dargo & Associates***

Suite199, 5603-50A Ave, Postal Service 9600 Yellowknife, NT, X1A 2R3  
Phone: (867) 873-9467 Fax: (867) 873-9597  
E-mail: [dargo@nt.sympatico.ca](mailto:dargo@nt.sympatico.ca)