

DE BEERS GROUP

March 24, 2023

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Via Email: WMMP@gov.nt.ca

Dear Mr. Hodson:

RE: Gahcho Kué 2022 Wildlife Report

De Beers Canada is pleased to provide Gahcho Kué Mine's 2022 Annual Wildlife Report, in accordance with the Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan (WMMP), Ver.1.2, which was approved by the Government of Northwest Territories on March 31, 2022.

This report is also submitted to fulfill the reporting requirement in the Wildlife Research Permit (Permit #: WL501014).

If you have any questions regarding this submission, I can be contacted at william.liu@debeersgroup.com or (867) 445-1485.

Sincerely,



William Liu
Environment and Permitting Superintendent
De Beers Canada Inc.

cc:

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DE BEERS GROUP

Gahcho Kué Mine

2022 Annual Wildlife Report

March 2023

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1 INTRODUCTION

De Beers Canada Inc. (De Beers) operates the Gahcho Kué Mine (Mine), located at Kennady Lake about 280 kilometres (km) northeast of Yellowknife, NT. Kennady Lake is north of the East Arm of Great Slave Lake and the small community of Lutsle K'e by approximately 140 km (Map 1-1). Commercial operation of the Mine began in September of 2016. The construction and operation of the Mine are currently under Type A Water Licence (MV2005L2-0015) and Type A Land Use Permit (MV2021D0009), issued by the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board (MVLWB). Mine activities and infrastructure include dewatering of Kennady Lake, open pit mining of three kimberlite pipes, construction and operation of Coarse and Fine Processed Kimberlite (PK) Facilities, Mine Rock Piles, accommodation and maintenance facilities, all-season airstrip, site roads and annual winter access road (Map 1-2).

In August 2019, the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) issued a new guidance document for development of wildlife management plans (GNWT-ENR 2019) to meet requirements of the NWT *Wildlife Act*. The GNWT then issued a directive letter to De Beers in October 2020 instructing De Beers that a Tier 3 Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan (WMMP) for the Gahcho Kué Mine would be required to meet compliance with the NWT *Wildlife Act*. This WMMP was developed from the existing Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat Protection Plan (WWHPP) and Wildlife Effects Monitoring Program (WEMP) and updated to align with the Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan (WMMP) Process and Content Guidelines (GNWT-ENR 2019). In compliance with the *Wildlife Act* and Land Use Permit MV2005C0032 (expired on August 10, 2021), Version 1 of the WMMP was submitted to the GNWT and MVLWB on April 26, 2021, and was subsequently issued for public review. On June 29, 2021, as part of the issuance of the renewed Land Use Permit MV2021D0009 (MVLWB 2021), the MVLWB determined the WMMP is no longer required in the Land Use Permit. Version 1.1 of the WMMP was submitted to the GNWT addressing reviewer comments from the GNWT, Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC), Ni Hadi Xa, and MVLWB in January 2022. The Mine's Tier 3 WMMP (Version 1.2, De Beers 2022) was approved by the GNWT-ENR on March 31, 2022 (GNWT-ENR 2022).

The WMMP outlines the policies, practices, designs, and procedures aimed at preventing and reducing Mine-related effects to wildlife and wildlife habitat, and providing Mine managers with information for making environmental management decisions. The WMMP also provides opportunities for regulators and Indigenous groups and communities to participate in the development of protection, mitigation, and monitoring of wildlife at the Mine site.

This WMMP draws together lessons learned from other mine sites in the NT including the De Beers Snap Lake Mine, Ekati and Diavik mines, as well as Traditional Knowledge (TK). In doing so, the WMMP will meet the requirements of the Species at Risk Act, the *Species at Risk (NWT) Act*, the Mackenzie Valley Land Use Regulations, the NWT *Wildlife Act*, and the Migratory Bird Convention Act, 1994 and Migratory Bird Regulations, as well as Review Panel Measures and corporate commitments.

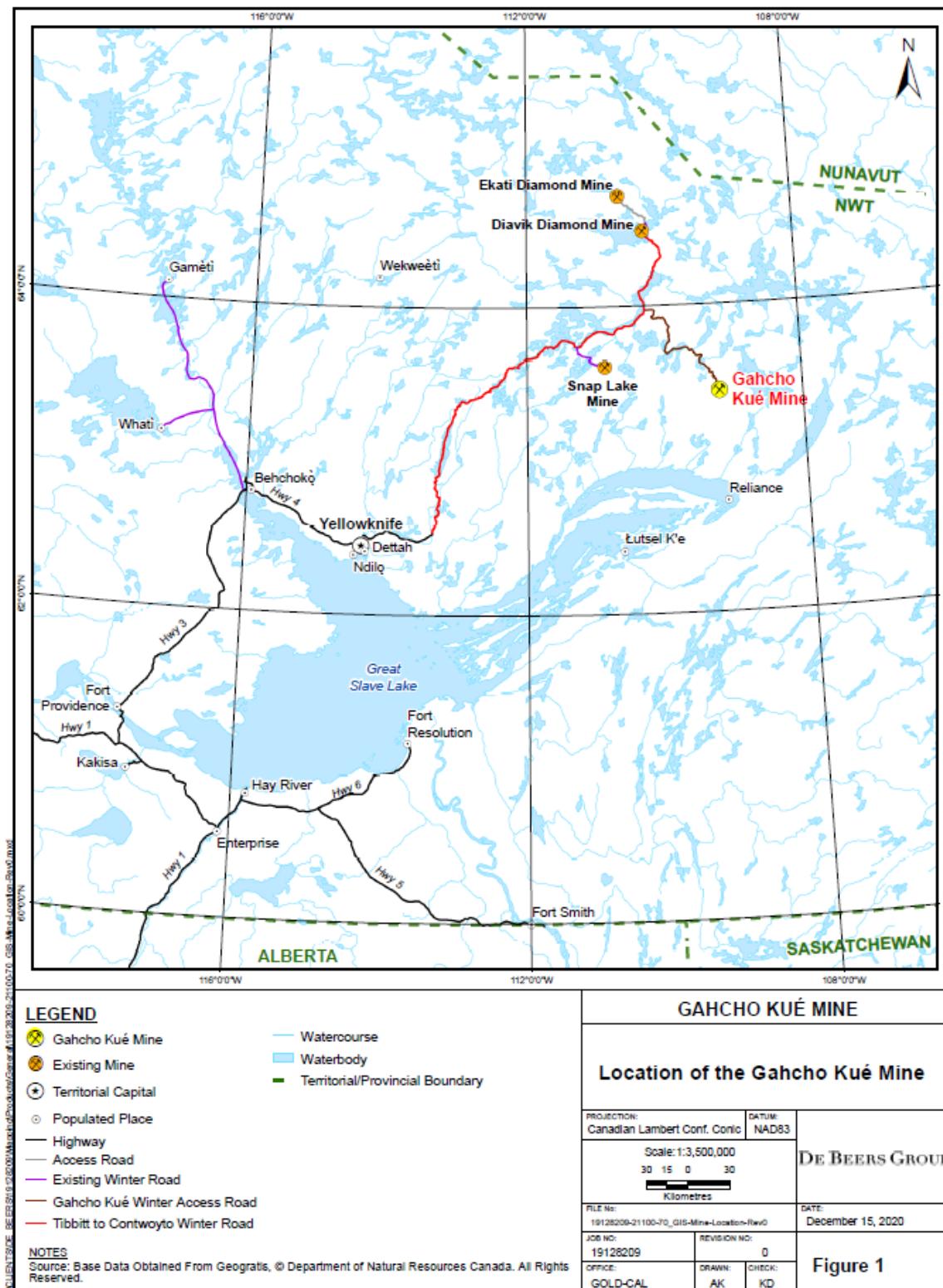
Pursuant to the WMMP (De Beers 2022), this report describes mitigation and monitoring activities at the Mine and in the regional study area (RSA) from January to December of the current reporting year and includes:

- a summary of all the monitoring programs that occurred at the Mine;
- updates or recommended changes to mitigation, environmental design features, or other actions required to meet the WMMP objectives;

- occurrences of human-wildlife interactions, and incidents, accidents, injuries, and mortalities involving wildlife;
- disturbances to wildlife and wildlife habitat that were not predicted in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS; De Beers 2010); and
- observations of recreational, traditional, and non-traditional activities near the Mine, including the winter access road.

A comprehensive analysis of mitigation and monitoring activities will be undertaken every five years. The first comprehensive analysis was done in 2019, with the next analysis scheduled for 2024. The comprehensive analysis report investigates Mine-related effects to wildlife, using all the relevant data available. In addition to programs designed for monitoring effects to wildlife from the Mine, monitoring of environmental indicators and contributed programs, such as small mammal monitoring, are completed to characterize natural changes or to contribute to regional monitoring initiatives. This schedule does not preclude focussed data analysis for specific issues or questions as they arise.

Map 1-1 Location of the Gahcho Kué Mine



Map 1-2 2022 Gahcho Kué Mine Site Infrastructure



Wildlife monitoring for the Mine was developed in consultation with regulators and Indigenous communities. As a participant in wildlife monitoring workshops hosted by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources of the GNWT (GNWT-ENR), De Beers updated monitoring programs for the Mine to be consistent with, and to support, regional monitoring for the assessment and management of cumulative effects by the GNWT. These changes included replacing past Mine-specific grizzly bear and wolverine monitoring with regional hair snagging programs for these species, and the addition of the Arctic Program for Regional and International Shorebird Monitoring (PRISM) in 2015. De Beers will continue to participate in ENR led monitoring initiatives and will update the wildlife monitoring and mitigation programs accordingly. In February 2021, the GNWT hosted wildlife monitoring workshops where it was determined among program partners that grizzly bear and wolverine hair snagging would be discontinued (GNWT-ENR 2021).

1.1 Content

The 2022 Annual Wildlife Report includes WMMP activities. The monitoring tasks may be continuous or seasonal, and on an annual or multi-year cycle. Supporting information is also collected through other monitoring programs (Table 1-1). This report will include descriptions and summaries of all of the wildlife monitoring that occurred during 2022.

Table 1-1 Schedule of Wildlife Monitoring under each Relevant Management Plan

Monitoring	Corresponding Monitoring Plans or Programs	Monitoring Schedule	Completed in 2022	Report Section
Mine Development Area and Direct Habitat Loss	WMMP	Mine development area updates will be provided at the end of construction and updated every year.	Yes	3.2
Noise	WMMP	Noise monitoring is anticipated to take place on a multi-year schedule at the Mine during operation in Years 1 (2017), 5 (2021), and 8 (2024).	No	3.3.1
Dust	WMMP Vegetation and Soils Monitoring Program	Dustfall collectors are monitored at the Mine annually and are measured every 30 days during the growing season (May to October).	Yes	3.3.2
Wildlife Sightings	WMMP	Wildlife sightings are monitored continually and reported annually.	Yes	3.3.3
Site Surveillance	WMMP	Monitoring is completed weekly, and reported annually.	Yes	3.3.4
Public Use of the Winter Access Road	WMMP	Monitoring is conducted daily when the winter access road is operational (usually February to March).	Yes	3.3.5
Wildlife Incidents	WMMP	Wildlife incident monitoring has been ongoing and will continue to be undertaken as required. Wildlife incidents are reported immediately to ENR, in addition to being reported annually.	Yes	3.3.6

Monitoring	Corresponding Monitoring Plans or Programs	Monitoring Schedule	Completed in 2022	Report Section
Caribou	WMMP	Caribou aerial distribution surveys were completed from 1999 to 2005 and 2010 to 2012. As there were likely insufficient caribou in the study area to detect a change in distribution, aerial surveys were not undertaken from 2013 to 2022. De Beers intends to use collared caribou data moving forward to assess for Mine-related effects of indirect habitat loss per the Mine's Tier 3 WMMP.	No	-
		Caribou interactions and mortalities at the Mine are monitored through the wildlife sightings log, site surveillance, wildlife interactions and behaviour monitoring.	Yes	3.3.3, 3.3.4, 3.3.6
		Aerial reconnaissance surveys are completed annually prior to the winter access road opening. The purpose of these surveys is to determine if caribou are present near the winter access road in numbers that would trigger caribou behaviour monitoring.	Yes	3.4.1
		Winter access road behaviour monitoring was first completed in 2014 and will occur annually when triggers for group size are met. Behavioural monitoring on the winter access road or at site was last completed in 2019.	Yes	3.4.2
		Snow berm measurements along the Mine's winter access road began in 2014 and are recorded annually.	Yes	3.4.3
Grizzly Bear	WMMP	Grizzly bear interactions and mortalities at the Mine are monitored through the wildlife sightings log, site surveillance, and wildlife incidents.	Yes	3.3.3, 3.3.4, 3.3.6
Wolverine	WMMP	Wolverine interactions and mortalities at the Mine are monitored through the wildlife sightings log, site surveillance, and wildlife incidents.	Yes	3.3.3, 3.3.4, 3.3.6
Raptors	WMMP	Raptor interactions and mortalities at the Mine are monitored through the wildlife sightings log, site surveillance, and wildlife incidents, as well as incidents of raptor nesting activity on Mine infrastructure.	Yes	3.3.3, 3.3.4, 3.3.6
		Raptor nest surveys in the RSA were completed in 2015. Results were contributed to GNWT-ENR for their regional nest monitoring database. A RSA was conducted by GNWT-ENR in 2020. Regional monitoring is anticipated to continue every five years with the next nest surveys scheduled for 2025.	No	3.6

Monitoring	Corresponding Monitoring Plans or Programs	Monitoring Schedule	Completed in 2022	Report Section
Upland Birds	WMMP Migratory Bird Nest Management Plan	Upland bird interactions and mortalities at the Mine are monitored through the wildlife sightings log, site surveillance, and wildlife incidents.	Yes	3.3.3, 3.3.4, 3.3.6
		Vegetation removal in areas surrounding Lakes D2/D3 and E1 was completed in 2015, 2016 and 2017 to fulfill commitments made in the Migratory Bird Nest Management Plan. Vegetation removal will continue as needed.	No	3.7
		De Beers will deploy bird deterrent devices, as per the Migratory Bird Nest Management Plan, to mitigate the risk of birds nesting in the remaining low-lying vegetation or on the ground during the spring in areas anticipated to flood.	Yes	3.7
		Arctic PRISM surveys were completed in 2017, 2019 and in 2022.	Yes	3.7
Small Mammals	WMMP	Monitoring and reporting of small mammal abundance will be completed annually. All small mammal samples collected are provided to the GNWT-ENR for identification and analysis.	Yes	3.8
Environmental Indicators	WMMP	Annual monitoring and reporting of weather-related variables began in 2015 and has continued since.	Yes	3.9
Measures of Mine Activity	WMMP	Annual monitoring and reporting of staff numbers, fuel consumption, volume of mine rock removed and ore processed, and domestic water consumption began in 2015 and has continued since.	Yes	3.10

PRISM = Arctic Program for Regional and International Shorebird Monitoring; GNWT-ENR = Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Government of the Northwest Territories; RSA = regional study area; WMMP = Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan.

1.2 Engagement

De Beers signed a legally binding environmental stewardship agreement, Ni Hadi Xa Agreement, with five Indigenous parties, including Deninu Kué First Nations (DKFN), Łutsel K'e Dene First Nation (LKDFN), North Slave Métis Alliance (NSMA), Northwest Territory Métis Nation (NWTMN) and the Tł'chǫ Government (TG), in 2014. Yellowknives Dene First Nation (YKDFN) became the signatory of the Agreement in February 2019. The purpose of Ni Hadi Xa is to provide a meaningful way for Indigenous communities to participate in the ongoing development and review of monitoring programs and management plans, review data generated from those plans, and to allow for TK to be incorporated into operations. Ni Hadi Xa also creates an opportunity to build on collaborative relationships, increase efficiency in regulatory processes, and provide more opportunity for TK monitoring. Ni Hadi Xa currently employs one full-time environmental monitor stationed at the site and works closely with the De Beers Environment. Two TK monitors and one TK administrator are monitoring any potential impacts of the mining operations based in the Ni Hadi Xa Cabin, established approximately 40 km north of the Mine.

De Beers engaged with Indigenous communities in multiple forums throughout 2022 as outlined in the Engagement Plan (De Beers 2015). In 2022 COVID-19 travel and social gathering restrictions began lifting. De Beers was able to continue hosting previously scheduled in person engagement events, such as Mine site visits, community visits and fish tasting. Many of the engagement activities were undertaken through virtual platforms.

2 SPECIES OF CONCERN

The intent of the *Species at Risk Act* and the *Species at Risk (NWT) Act* is to protect species at risk from becoming extirpated or extinct as a result of human activity. While the former was enacted by the Government of Canada, the latter was enacted by the GNWT and applies only to wild animals and plants managed by the GNWT. For the purposes of this WMMP, species may be of concern due to their national, territorial, and/or Committee on Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) status. As the *Species at Risk (NWT) Act* is implemented, the NWT Species at Risk Committee (NWT SARC) will make further assessments, and the Conference of Management Authorities will prepare the List of Species at Risk, providing legal protection for these species (NWT SARC 2021), and possibly leading to changes in the species at risk considered for the Mine.

There are twelve wildlife species of concern that may occupy or travel through the area of the Mine during part or all of the year. These species include barren-ground caribou (*Rangifer tarandus groenlandicus*), grizzly bear (*Ursus arctos horribilis*), wolverine (*Gulo gulo*), horned grebe (*Podiceps auritus*), peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum-tundrius complex*), rusty blackbird (*Euphagus carolinus*), short-eared owl (*Asio flammeus*), bank swallow (*Riparia riparia*), barn swallow (*Hirundo rustica*), Harris's sparrow (*Zonotrichia querula*), red-necked phalarope (*Phalaropus lobatus*), and lesser yellowlegs (*Tringa flavipes*). Monitoring is proposed for species of concern (Table 2-1). In the WMMP, monitoring for species of concern is primarily focused on detection at the Mine site, so that site-specific protection can be implemented.

As part of the comments regarding the 2021 Annual Wildlife report barn swallow was identified as a species of concern (COSEWIC, 2021) not listed in this section. The Environment and Climate Change recommendations dated October 14, 2022 are listed in Appendix B of this report. In the 2022 Annual Report barn swallow has been added to section 2. Additional training and surveillance objectives will be put in place in 2023 to address these recommendations. Barn swallow is not currently listed in the WMMP (Version 1.2, De Beers 2022). Prior studies did not find evidence of the species and the Mine was thought to be outside their habitat range. Components of the WMMP will still be used for potential effects and monitoring. Future revisions of the plan will receive updates to include barn swallow.

Table 2-1 Species of Concern for the Mine, Potential Effects, and Related Monitoring Components in the Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan

Species	NWT General Status Ranking ^(a)	Species at Risk (NWT) Act ^(b)	COSEWIC Assessment [®]	Federal Species at Risk Act ^(d)	Potential Mine Impacts	Components of the WMMP
Barren-ground caribou	At risk	Threatened	Threatened	Under consideration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May be affected by habitat loss May be sensitive to disturbance and human activity Risk of harm or mortality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> habitat loss surveillance monitoring zone of Influence monitoring
Grizzly bear (western population)	Sensitive	No status	Special Concern	Schedule-1 - special concern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May be attracted to developments if food is available Sensitive to disturbance particularly when accompanied by young or during denning Long generation time means one individual may be affected by disturbance seasonally over multiple years, resulting in potential regional population effects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> habitat loss surveillance monitoring
Wolverine	Sensitive	No status	Special Concern	Special Concern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May be attracted to developments if food or shelter are available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> habitat loss surveillance monitoring
Horned grebe (western population)	Sensitive	No status	Special Concern	Schedule 1 – special concern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waterbirds that use mine-altered waters may be harmed Loss of shoreline habitat for breeding Staging habitat in Kennedy Lake may be affected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> habitat loss surveillance monitoring PRISM
Peregrine falcon (<i>anatum-tundrius</i> complex)	Sensitive	No status	Not at risk	Special Concern (under consideration for)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peregrine falcons have been known to nest on mine infrastructure and in open pits, where they may be at risk of harm or may cause delays to operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> habitat loss surveillance monitoring monitoring nest occupancy and productivity in the regional study area
Rusty blackbird	Sensitive	No status	Special Concern	Schedule 1 – special concern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May nest on Mine infrastructure Experiencing population declines as a result of changing environmental conditions on breeding and overwintering habitats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> habitat loss surveillance monitoring PRISM

Species	NWT General Status Ranking ^(a)	Species at Risk (NWT) Act ^(b)	COSEWIC Assessment [®]	Federal Species at Risk Act ^(d)	Potential Mine Impacts	Components of the WMMP
Short-eared owl	At risk	No Status	Threatened	Schedule 1 – special concern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be affected by habitat loss • Sensitive to noise and disturbance and human activity during nesting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • habitat loss • surveillance monitoring • PRISM
Bank swallow	At risk	No Status	Threatened	Schedule-1 - threatened	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May nest on sand/ gravel mounds or aggregate quarries associated with the Mine • May be affected by habitat loss 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • areas with suitable habitat will be contoured to have slopes <70 degrees for stability • surveillance monitoring
Barn swallow*	Sensitive	No Status	Special Concern	Schedule-1 - threatened	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barn swallows demonstrate high nest site fidelity and dependence on human-made structures • May nest on Mine infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • habitat loss* • surveillance monitoring* • PRISM*
Harris's sparrow	Sensitive	No Status	Special Concern	Schedule-1-Special Concern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be sensitive to noise and disturbance from human activities • May be affected by loss of breeding habitat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • habitat loss • surveillance monitoring • PRISM
Red-necked phalarope	Sensitive	No Status	Special Concern	Schedule 1 – special concern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waterbirds that use mine-altered water may be harmed • May be affected by loss of breeding habitat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • habitat loss • surveillance monitoring • PRISM
Lesser yellowlegs	Sensitive	No Status	Threatened	Under consideration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waterbirds that use mine-altered water may be harmed • May be affected by loss of breeding habitat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • habitat loss • surveillance monitoring • PRISM

a) Working Group on General Status of NWT Species (2016). Ranking levels, from highest to lowest conservation concern, is: at risk, may be at risk, sensitive, secure, undetermined.

b) NWT SARC (2023).

c) Government of Canada (2023).

d) Species at Risk Act (2002).

* Species not directly listed in the current version of the WMMP

COSEWIC = Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada; WMMP = Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan; PRISM = Program for Regional and International Shorebird Monitoring.

3 MONITORING AND RESULTS

3.1 Local and Regional Study Areas

The wildlife RSA is defined by a rectangle with an area of 5,600 km² (75 km by 75 km), centered on the Mine site (Map 3-1). The wildlife local study area (LSA) (about 2 km²) was selected to assess the immediate direct and indirect effects of the Mine on individual animals and habitat. The wildlife RSA was used to assess Mine-specific and cumulative effects on upland migratory birds and raptor populations. The RSA was also selected to capture the maximum extent of effects beyond the LSA, which can influence groups of individuals from populations with large seasonal and annual ranges (e.g., caribou, grizzly bear, and wolverine).

3.2 Direct Habitat Loss

3.2.1 Mine Development Area

Wildlife habitat loss will occur from the construction of the Mine and from the flooding of areas resulting from dewatering of Kennady Lake and associated water diversions. Monitoring how much area is altered by the Mine is required to confirm that the permitted Mine development area has not been exceeded under Land Use Permit (MV2005C0032) and surface leases.

Methods

The Mine development area will be delineated through aerial photographs, satellite imagery, or ground surveys, and calculated using GIS software. The actual area of the Mine footprint will be compared to the permitted area, and monitored over the life of the Mine at key phases of development (e.g., end of construction and periodic points in operations [De Beers 2014a]).

Results

The Mine currently has a land footprint of 697 hectares (ha), and water (deep and shallow water) footprint of 669 ha, for a total footprint of 1366 ha (Table 3-1). This is currently 95.59% of the total 1,429 ha predicted Project footprint in the approved 2020 Updated Project Description as part of the Water Licence Amendment.

The largest amount of disturbance, by area, has been to deep water, which is the dominant Ecological Land Class in the LSA (De Beers 2010). The footprint calculations in 2022 included all of Areas 1-7 of Kennady Lake, which have been disturbed through de-watering or storage of water in the Water Management Pond.

Map 3-1 Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan Study Areas

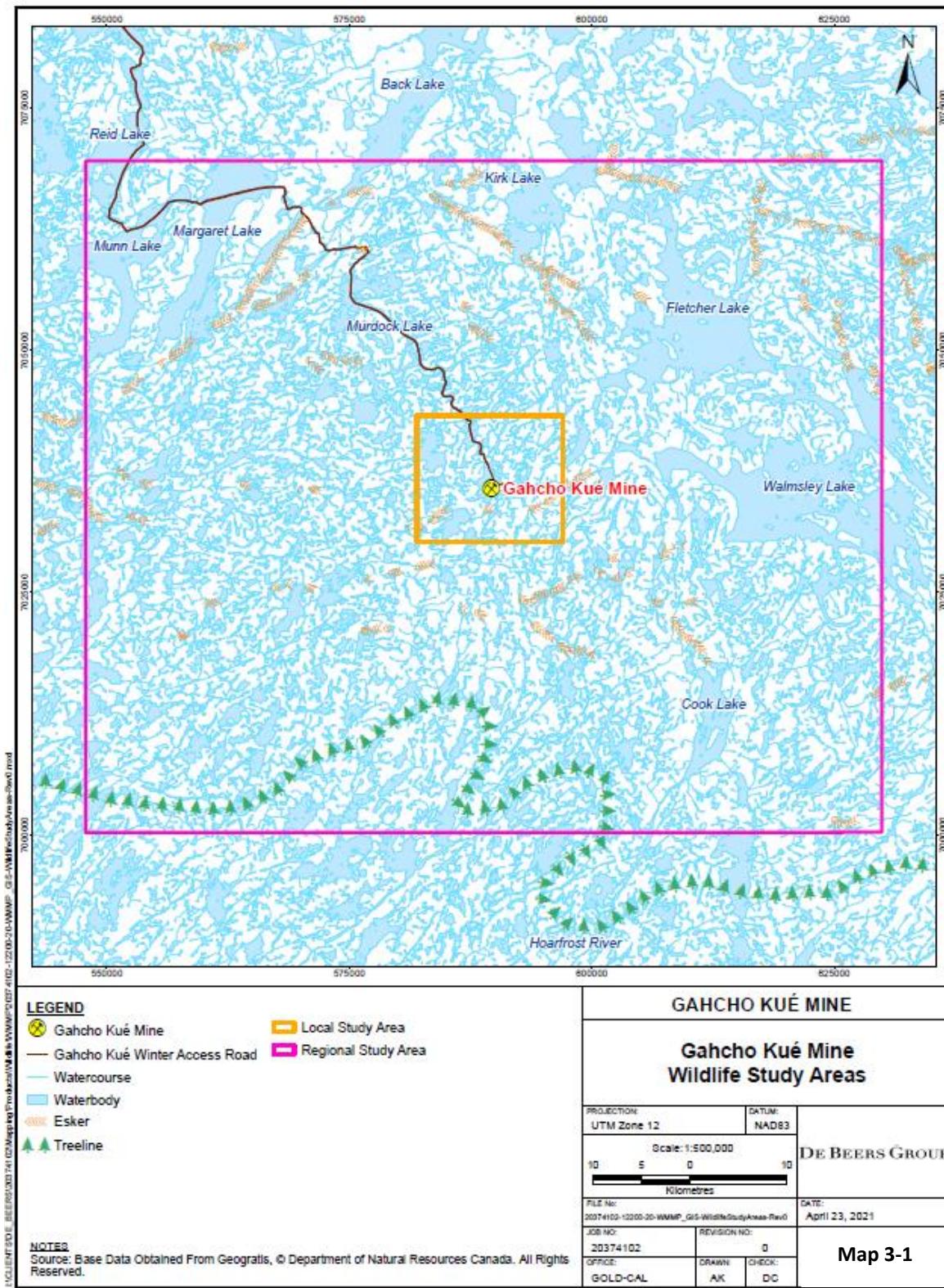


Table 3-1 Expected and Actual Loss of Habitat Types Associated with the Mine Footprint to the end of 2022

Ecological Land Class	Expected Disturbance (ha) ^a	Actual Disturbance (ha) ^b	Difference between Actual and Expected Disturbance (ha) ^c
Bedrock Association	10	9	1
Birch Seep	43	39	4
Boulder Association	8	7	1
Deep Water	494	493	1
Heath Bedrock	68	55	13
Heath Boulder	33	30	3
Heath Tundra	113	104	9
Peat Bog	134	127	7
Sedge Wetland	134	127	7
Shallow Water	176	176	0
Spruce Forest	51	47	4
Tall Shrub	44	41	3
Tussock Hummock	111	102	9
Esker Complex	0	0	0
Unclassified	10	10	0
Total	1,429	1,366	63

(a) Based on the 2020 Updated Project Description for the Gahcho Kué Project (De Beers 2020a)

(b) Delineated through ground surveys and calculated using GIS software.

ha = hectare.

3.3 Indirect Habitat Loss

3.3.1 Noise

Noise is believed to cause sensory disturbance to some wildlife species, and may result in avoidance or reduction of time spent in otherwise suitable habitat. Although noise was not anticipated to be a primary driver of indirect habitat loss for any of the wildlife valued components at the Mine, it is still a form of potential disturbance that should be minimized. Activities at the Mine that will generate noise include aircraft, vehicles, generators, blasting and the general presence of people.

Baseline noise levels were established by monitoring ambient noise at the Mine site as part of the EIS. A continuous, 24-hour assessment of baseline noise was completed at selected sites in June 2010. Using known sound emissions from anticipated Mine equipment and infrastructure, a model was developed that predicted the maximum distances Mine noise would attenuate to background levels.

The objectives of the noise monitoring are to confirm noise level predictions from the EIS (De Beers 2010) and to use measured data to inform the effectiveness of noise management practices at site. Monitoring of noise was completed in Year 1 (2017) and Year 5 (2021) of Mine operations with future assessments planned for Year 8 (2024) of the operation phase.

Methods

According to Alberta Energy Regultor (AER) Directive 038 (EUB 2007), the relevant parameter for characterizing cumulative noise levels is the energy equivalent sound level (L_{eq}), expressed in A-weighted decibels (dBA). Noise levels are scaled to A-weighting to reflect the frequency sensitivity of the human auditory system. L_{eq} is a single value that represents the average noise level over a given period of time. AER Directive 038 indicates that noise levels should be time-averaged over a daytime period ($L_{eq,day}$) defined as 7 am to 10 pm, and a nighttime period ($L_{eq,night}$) defined as 10 pm to 7 am. Note that the EIS and the Year 1 noise monitoring program adjusted the AER Directive 038 definition of daytime and nighttime for consistency with Health Canada guidance (Health Canada 2005); in the EIS, Year 1, and Year 5 noise monitoring program, daytime is defined as 7 am to 11 pm and nighttime is defined as 11 pm to 7 am.

During the Year 5 noise monitoring program, $L_{eq,day}$ and $L_{eq,night}$ cumulative noise levels were measured at four locations in and around the Mine during mid June (Table 3-2). These four locations used in the Year 5 monitoring program were selected for consistency with the assessment completed for the EIS (De Beers 2010) and the Year 1 noise monitoring program (Golder 2017).

Table 3-2 Year 5 Noise Monitoring Locations

Year 5 Noise Monitoring Location	Description	Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates [Zone 12]	
		Easting [m]	Northing [m]
RA	Accommodations complex (west side)	590,632	7,035,849
RB	Accommodations complex (east side)	591,005	7,035,997
RC	Unoccupied location on proposed East Arm National Park boundary	594,248	7,034,625
RD	Unoccupied location 1.5 km from the Mine boundary	591,106	7,033,986

Time-weighted noise averages were measured using daytime and nighttime energy equivalent sound levels over a 24-hour sampling period as per AER Directive 038, both within the Mine footprint and at a designated location 1.5 km from the Mine (location with highest predicted noise level). This schedule may be adjusted to align with other regional monitoring efforts or to accommodate changes in mining activities.

The Year 5 noise monitoring program was conducted in general accordance with methods described in AER Directive 038. Following the conclusion of the noise monitoring program, data were processed to obtain representative estimates of $L_{eq,day}$ and $L_{eq,night}$ noise levels for each monitoring location. The data was filtered to eliminate contaminated, abnormal, or invalid noise sources such as technician activity during deployment. All other noise sources (e.g., mine equipment, helicopters and other aircraft, insects, birds, and other wildlife) were considered valid and representative of normal conditions at the monitoring locations.

Noise monitoring was not conducted in 2022 (Golder 2022). The last study was conducted in 2021 where it was determined, daytime and nighttime noise levels from the Year 5 monitoring program were less than corresponding Year 5 model predictions from the EIS. This indicates that actual noise effects from Year 5 operations were less than predicted in the EIS. The Year 5 (2021) noise monitoring program validated and confirmed the conclusions of the EIS. The next study will take place for year 8 of operations in 2024.

3.3.2 Dust

The Mine will create dust through various sources including blasting and crushing rock, road construction, and traffic. Through engagement with communities and government, concerns have been expressed about the effects of dust on the environment and wildlife health, particularly caribou.

De Beers is committed to minimizing the amount of dust; however, dust cannot be completely eliminated and is predicted to settle in the area within and near the core Mine site. Fugitive dust will be reduced through the application of water in the area surrounding the Mine. Monitoring is conducted to measure the extent of fugitive dust deposition from emissions.

Methods

As described in the Vegetation and Soils Monitoring Program (VSMP) Version 3 (De Beers 2014b), dustfall collectors were deployed in August 2013 and monitoring has continued through 2022.

Dustfall was measured approximately every 25 to 60 days throughout the growing season (May to October). In addition, dustfall was collected over the approximately 250 day winter period (2015-2022). Dust deposition is measured at nine sampling stations, at distances of 0 m, 50 m, 150 m, 500 m, 1 km, 5 km, 10 km, 15 km, and 20 km from the Mine. Dust deposition results from 2013 to 2014 were used as baseline data for comparing dustfall values collected during construction and operation. Dust deposition data will be used to determine if changes in plant communities and soil chemistry are related to dust from the Mine, and as a potential mechanism of the zone of influence on caribou (Golder 2019).

To examine the spatial and temporal patterns of dust deposition, geometric mean fixed dustfall deposition rates were examined both graphically and statistically. For 2022 data, spatial patterns of the dust deposition results were examined for the entire study area and within sampling areas. Temporal patterns were examined by comparing the geometric mean fixed dustfall deposition rate among sampling seasons across years: 2013 to 2014 as baseline years, 2015 and 2016 to represent mine construction, and 2017 to 2022 for Mine operations. To examine the spatial patterns of dust deposition rates with increasing distance from the Mine, regression analysis was conducted using R (R Core Team 2020). Bayesian linear mixed-effects regression (Chung et al. 2013) was performed with fixed dust deposition rates (mg/100 cm²/30 days) and distance from the Mine (km). Fixed dustfall values greater than 115.3 mg/100 cm²/30 days were considered anomalous outliers ($n = 5$) and omitted from analysis, based on the calculated statistical distribution defined by the mean and three standard deviation units.

Results

Dustfall is reported annually as part of the Vegetation and Soils Monitoring Program report (De Beers 2022). The results provided herein represent a summary of key findings from that report. Dustfall collection jars were deployed and collected six times at all sampling areas (Five sampling areas at the Northeast transect and nine sampling areas at the Southwest transect) over the course of the 2021/2022 monitoring year. Collections occurred over six periods beginning:

- September 23, 2021 to April 24, 2022 (winter);
- April 24, 2022 to May 31, 2022 (spring);
- May 31, 2022 to June 30, 2022 (spring);

- June 30, 2022 to August 1, 2022 (summer);
- August 1, 2022 to August 30, 2022 (summer); and
- August 30, 2022 to September 30, 2022 (fall).

A total of 78 samples (including duplicates) were collected and submitted for dustfall analysis (none were damaged in the 2022 sampling program).

In 2022, 35 of 78 (44.9%) measured values of fixed dustfall deposition during spring, summer, and fall were below the detection limit of 3.0 mg/100 cm²/30 days (includes duplicate samples). In 2021, 45 of 65 (69.2%) measured values of fixed dustfall deposition during spring, summer, and fall were below the detection limit of 3.0 mg/100 cm²/30 days (includes duplicate samples). In 2020, 16 of 52 (30.8%) measured values of fixed dustfall deposition during spring, summer, and fall were below the detection limit of 3.0 mg/100 cm²/30 days (includes duplicate samples). In 2019, 29 of 50 (58.0%) measured values of fixed dustfall deposition during spring, summer, and fall were below the detection limit. In general, dustfall deposition increased from baseline through construction (2015 to 2016) and into the initial phase of operation (2017 to 2018). Dustfall rates have declined substantially since 2018 and in 2022 are within or below the range of baseline values.

Fixed dustfall deposition values measured in 2022 at the Northeast transect for the AQEMMP included 9 of 30 values below the detection limit from May to August (Table 3-3). Mean fixed dustfall deposition rates for sampling locations during baseline, construction, and operational sampling periods are shown in Table 3-4.

Table 3-3 Fixed Dustfall Deposition Rates at the Northeast Transect, 2022

Month	Fixed Dustfall				
	[mg/100 cm ² /30 d] ^(b)				
	NEDF01	NEDF02 ^(a)	NEDF03	NEDF04	NEDF05
Overwinter ^(c)	6	6	7.2	4.8	<3.0
May	3.9	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0
June	142.8	36.3	40.8	<3.0	4.2
July	27.3	17.55	28.8	7.5	11.4
August	6.6	5.7	5.4	6.6	3.6
September	3.6	<3.6	<3.6	4.2	<3.6
Annual ^(d)	31.7	11.48	14.25	4.35	4

^(a) Duplicate samples were taken at this station. The average value is presented.

^(b) Calculated on a 30-day basis.

^(c) Overwinter sampled from September 23, 2022 to April 24, 2021.

^(d) Values below detection limit were assumed to be the detection limit for annual averages.

^(e) mg/100 cm²/30 d = milligrams per 100 square centimetre per 30 days; < = less than, with the value after it representing the detection limit.

Table 3-4 Mean fixed dustfall deposition rates (mg/100 cm²/30 days) for Southwest Transect sampling locations during baseline years (2013-14), construction (2015-2016) and operational (2016-2022) sampling periods

Sampling Period		Sampling Area									
		Approx Sampling Period (days)	0 km	0.05 km	0.15 km	0.5 km	1 km	5 km	10 km	15 km	20 km
Spring	2013 ^a	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	2014 ^b	32	25.5	29.6	26.1	24.4	-	19.3	20.5	21.4	35.4
	2015 ^c	44	24.9	18.1	24	29.6	23.7	26.6	20.2	19.9	19.2
	2016 ^d	36	45.2	25.1	25.4	26.4	44.2	27.2	30.1	26.7	32.8
	2017	35	29.8	34.1	67.8	60	37.6	28.4	28.6	28.7	30.8
	2018 ^f	28	30.4	47	52.8	50.2	75.6	52.3	42.9	73.6	37.1
	2019 ^g	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	2020 ^h	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	2021 ^l	58	38.4	30.6	28.2	<3.0	4.5	3.3	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0
	2022 ^l	67	30.6	74.25	111.3	13.8	<3.0	168.9	40.35	120	<3.0
Summer	2013 ^a	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	2014 ^b	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	2015 ^c	35	23.9	25.3	22.7	25.6	25.4	19.4	18.8	24.7	26.3
	2016 ^d	28	27.1	25	17.7	35.7	44.7	37.1	34.6	<5.0	23.7
	2017 ^e	26	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	2018 ^f	34	61.3	145	54.7	24.7	49.7	20.9	33.6	28.2	32.4
	2019 ^g	40	12.9	26.1	12.3	<3.0	24.9	70.5	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0
	2020 ^h	32	15.6	21.6	11.1	21.0	12.6	5.4	<3.0	8.1	12.0
	2021 ^l	38	3.3	14.4	8.7	<3.0	7.2	3.9	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0
	2022 ^l	32	10.2	22.65	30.9	<3.0	<3.0	55.5	107.55	72.3	<3.0
Early Fall	2013 ^a	44	10.3	13	22.2	11.6	17.8	13.4	14.6	15.9	12.9
	2014 ^b	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	2015 ^c	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	2016 ^d	40	33.5	27.2	29.4	32.7	21.8	17.6	45.9	41.4	20.9
	2017	31	23.5	37	33.3	35	22.8	27.5	26.4	28.8	25.6
	2018 ^f	37	13.3	12.7	26.3	19	43.4	19.1	24.6	13.6	19.8
	2019 ^g	37	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0

Sampling Period	Sampling Area										
	Approx Sampling Period (days)	0 km	0.05 km	0.15 km	0.5 km	1 km	5 km	10 km	15 km	20 km	
Late Fall	2020 ^h	24	55.8	9.6	8.1	7.5	9.6	7.2	4.5	<3.0	4.5
	2021 ⁱ	29	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0
	2022 ^j	28	<3.0	<3.0	3.15	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0	3.45	<3.0	<3.0
	2013 ^a	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	2014 ^b	42	<5.0	4.8	<5.0	6.6	6	-	<5.0	9	11.4
	2015 ^c	35	19.9	23.6	38.4	17.4	28.7	24.1	23.6	25.3	21.3
	2016 ^d	30	23.4	15.4	24.7	<5.0	24.5	38.15	29.8	31.1	29.5
	2017	28	25.3	40.1	26	21.3	35.5	28.6	34	32.3	33.1
	2018 ^f	21	<3.0	5.7	<3.0	5.4	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0
	2019 ^g	21	<3.0	5.7	<3.0	5.4	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0
	2020 ^h	32	3.6	4.2	7.8	<3.0	3.3	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0
Winter	2021 ⁱ	21	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0
	2022 ^j	23	<3.6	<3.6	<3.6	<3.6	<3.6	4.5	<3.6	<3.6	<3.6
	2013-14 ^a	241	25.5	5.3	<5.0	<5.0	<5.0	<5.0	<5.0	<5.0	<5.0
	2014-15 ^b	256	18.9	29.5	43.6	22.3	25.6	-	-	21.4	23.5
	2015-16 ^c	241	11.2	15.9	13.7	7.9	6.1	<5.0	<5.0	<5.0	-
	2016-17 ^d	234	<5.0	10	-	8	-	<5.0	-	<5.0	<5.0
	2017-18 ^f	247	6.7	12.2	-	14.5	5.8	5	5.6	5.9	<5.0
	2018-19 ^g	252	29.1	19.8	19.2	10.5	8.7	6.9	5.1	4.5	4.5
	2019-20 ^h	260	6.0	21.6	9.0	5.1	6.9	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0
	2020-21 ⁱ	234	<3.0	3.9	4.8	3.0	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0
	2022 ^j	214	4.5	6	3.45	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0	<3.0

- = No data

Lowest Detection Limit = 5 mg / 100 cm² / 30d

(a) Transect not established until August 2013 (Golder 2014); 2013 sampling periods were August to September (Early Fall), October 2013 to May 2014 (Winter 2013-14)

(b) 2014 sampling periods: May-June (Spring), August to October (Late Fall) and October to May 2015 (Winter)

(c) 2015 sampling periods: June (Spring), July (Summer), August to October (Late Fall) and October 2015 to May 2015 (Winter)

(d) 2016 sampling periods: June (Spring), July (Summer), August (Early Fall), September (Late Fall) and October 2016 to May 2017 (Winter)

(e) Summer 2017 results are anomalous, and included outlier values due to sample contamination and are thus not included

(f) 2018 sampling periods: June-July (Spring), July-August (Summer), August-September (Early Fall), September (Late Fall) and September 2017 to June 2018 (Winter)

(g) 2019 sampling periods: June-July (spring), July-August (Summer), August-September (Early Fall), and October 2018 to June 2019 (Winter)

(h) 2020 sampling periods: June-July (spring), July-August (Summer), August-September (Early Fall), and September 2019 to June 2020 (Winter)

(i) 2021 sampling periods: April-June (Spring), June-July (Summer), August (Early Fall), August-September (Late Fall), and September 2020 to April 2021 (Winter)

(j) 2022 sampling periods: April-June (Spring), June-July (Summer), August (Early Fall), August-September (Late Fall), and September 2021 to April 2022 (Winter)

3.3.3 Wildlife Sightings Log

The wildlife sightings log provides staff working at the Mine an effective means to record and report wildlife observations to the mine environment department. While the information is not collected systematically and likely contains repeated observations of the same animals, it provides an indication of the presence of wildlife and the potential for wildlife incidents or problem wildlife. It also increases staff involvement with the environment programs and fosters awareness of wildlife issues.

Methods

Wildlife sightings logs were maintained at various locations around the Mine site to record observations of wildlife and wildlife sign. Staff were encouraged to add observations to the log, including observations of unusual species and potential problem wildlife. Reporting of sightings of medium to large wildlife (i.e., fox-size and larger) by staff and contractors is mandatory. Observations of species that pose a potential risk to human safety are reported to Environment staff immediately in addition to being documented in the wildlife sightings log.

Results

There were a total of 295 independent wildlife observations in 2022. The number of observations represents the number of independent and incidental observations of wildlife, and is not an indication of the number of individuals of a species observed. The number of people present at the Mine during 2022 is reported in Section 3.10.

Arctic hare was the most commonly observed species in 2022, with 60 observations. Caribou was also a commonly observed species during 2022, with 54 observations recorded. Other frequent species observed were the red fox and muskox (36 and 34 observations respectively). In 2022, 5 wolf were recorded, with the first sighting occurring January 28th and last recorded sighting on December 4th. Five grizzly bear observations were recorded in 2022. A full summary of observations recorded on Wildlife Sightings Logs for 2013-2022 can be found in Table 3-5.

Table 3-5 Wildlife Sightings Log Summary of Observations, 2013 to 2022

Species	Type	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
American robin	Bird	-	-	1	-	2	-	-	1	-	-
Arctic ground squirrel (sik sik)	Mammal	-	4	11	4	23	3	3	2	8	15
Arctic hare	Mammal	3	32	45	9	29	5	22	26	37	60
Bald eagle	Bird	-	-	1	4	1	2	11	5	7	3
Barn Swallow	Bird	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Beaver	Mammal	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	1
Cackling goose	Bird	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-

Canada goose	Bird	-	1	2	-	2	-	1	3	5	1
Caribou	Mammal	17	37	45	-	2	61	16	6	14	54
Common loon	Bird	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Common merganser	Bird	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
Common redpoll	Bird	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Common raven	Bird	-	10	16	13	15	11	27	15	44	11
Coyote	Mammal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Duck spp.	Bird	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	4
Falcon spp.	Bird	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Fox spp.	Mammal	5	33	155	85	104	91	48	15	33	-
Gadwall duck	Bird	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Golden eagle	Bird	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	2
Goose spp.	Bird	-	-	4	6	3	-	7	1	15	3
Greater white-fronted goose	Bird	-	1	5	1	-	-	-	3	5	1
Grey wolf	Mammal	7	27	22	2	4	4	40	2	-	-
Grizzly bear	Mammal	-	-	3	3	2	4	11	4	1	5
Grouse	Bird	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Gull spp.	Bird	-	1	3	-	2	-	1	-	2	2
Gyrfalcon	Bird	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	1
Hare spp.	Mammal	-	-	-	-	-	5	14	1	12	-
Hawk spp.	Bird	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Jaeger spp.	Bird	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Loon spp.	Bird	-	-	2	-	2	-	1	-	-	-
Mallard	Bird	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Mink	Mammal	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Moose	Mammal	-	-	5	-	4	1	5	2	2	5
Mouse spp.	Mammal	-	-	3	2	2	7	2	1	2	1
Muskox	Mammal	1	4	14	10	14	20	24	15	30	34
Muskrat	Mammal	-	-	-	2	5	-	1	-	-	1
Northern harrier	Bird	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Northern pintail	Bird	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	2	1
Owl spp.	Bird	-	-	2	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pelican spp.	Bird	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Peregrine falcon	Bird	-	1	12	1	-	2	1	-	4	8
Pine siskin	Bird	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Plover spp.	Bird	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Porcupine	Mammal	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Ptarmigan spp.	Bird	3	16	10	10	4	9	4	6	15	15
Red fox	Mammal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	127	36

Rock ptarmigan	Bird	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	-
Ross's goose	Bird	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rough-legged hawk	Bird	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	5	2
Sandhill crane	Bird	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	-
Scoter spp.	Bird	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Short-eared owl	Bird	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Snow bunting	Bird	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	4	-
Snow goose	Bird	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	2	4	1	-
Snowy owl	Bird	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	2	4	-	-
Sparrow spp.	Bird	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Teal duck	Bird	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
Tundra swan	Bird	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Unidentified duck	Bird	-	-	2	1	1	-	2	-	-	-	-
Unidentified raptor	Bird	-	-	2	1	3	4	-	-	-	-	-
Unidentified shorebird	Bird	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-
Unidentified songbird	Bird	-	-	2	1	1	2	-	-	3	-	-
Willow ptarmigan	Bird	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Wolf spp.	Mammal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	5	-
Wolverine	Mammal	-	-	-	-	8	27	43	4	-	-	3
Yellow warbler	Bird	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-

(a) The number of observations represents the number of independent observations for each species, and is not an indication of the number of individuals present.

- = none observed.

3.3.4 Site Surveillance

Wildlife are expected to be present near the Mine throughout construction, operation, and closure. Site surveillance monitoring, which is a regular scheduled program that occurs once per week, provides information of wildlife activity at the Mine, and direct feedback to Mine operations regarding the effectiveness of waste management and wildlife mitigation practices. Examples of wildlife activities that are documented through site surveillance monitoring include presence of wildlife in areas where food may be available, use of buildings for shelter or nesting, and use of water management ponds by waterfowl.

Through systematically monitoring for the presence of wildlife within and around the Mine site, Environment staff remain apprised of current and emerging issues, and are able to implement management actions to address these issues as required. To use a common example, site surveillance monitoring may detect that wildlife has gained access to a building on site or is taking shelter beneath it. The typical mitigation is to block the access through improved skirting, and follow-up with surveillance monitoring to confirm whether the mitigation was successful, or if further action is required.

Effective waste management practices and staff education are key to decreasing the availability of wildlife attractants at mine sites. Environmental design features, mitigation, and waste management are implemented at the Mine to limit the attraction of wildlife, and the associated increased risks of wildlife interactions and mortality. The effectiveness of the waste stream management system, as it pertains to wildlife attractants, is monitored through regular waste bin inspections, as per the Waste Management Plan (De Beers 2015b), and site waste audits.

Methods

Systematic site surveys of the Mine were conducted weekly to record all wildlife observations, recent wildlife sign (e.g., tracks, scat), and misdirected waste. Surveys were completed on foot and by truck. Staff recorded the area surveyed, with the nature and location of all observations. Surveillance monitoring included regular visits to areas of the Mine where there is risk of wildlife attractants (e.g., waste management areas), risk of wildlife using the Mine for shelter, denning or nesting, and where there were people working outdoors.

De Beers actively monitors for bird nesting activity around the Mine site, and in particular in areas scheduled for clearing or disturbance each year (Section 3.9.1). Bird deterrents are deployed in areas scheduled for clearing during the breeding season to avoid and minimize the disturbance of any active nests of migratory birds, consistent with the *Migratory Birds Convention Act*. Bird deterrents are also deployed in and around pits each spring. Monitoring is conducted to detect raptors, and actively deter them prior to nest initiation on Mine infrastructure.

In 2017, De Beers initiated systematic surveys of the water management pond and other water collection ponds on site to monitor for the presence and use of these water bodies by water birds. Collecting observations of water bird use of the site provides a better understanding of which species are present at different times of the year at and near the Mine. This program was continued in 2022.

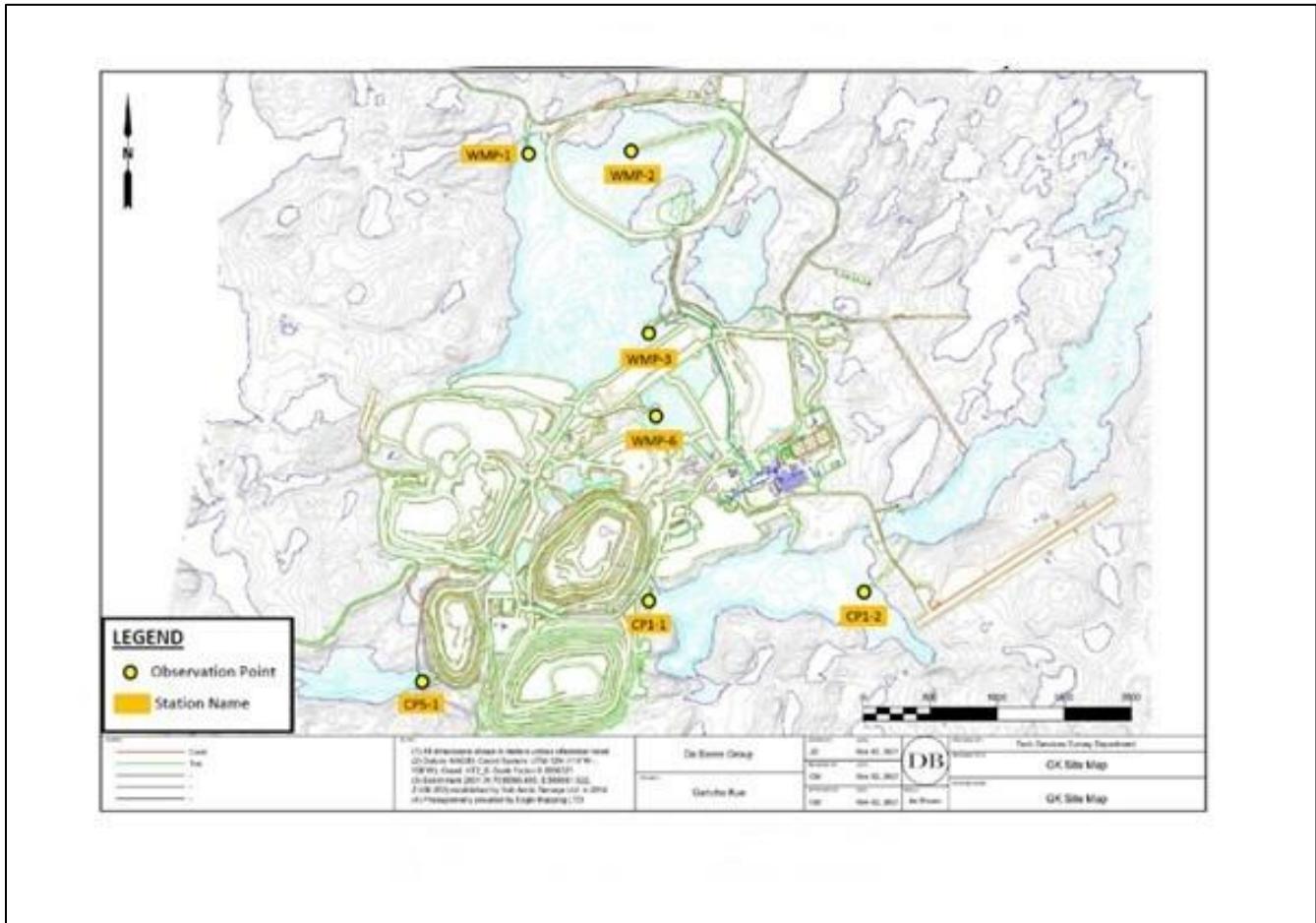
To monitor the use of site water bodies by birds, 7 stations were selected as fixed observation points from which the 2022 surveys were conducted. Two of these stations are located at the Water Management Pond, two stations monitoring collection Pond 1 (CP1-1 and CP1-2), one station monitoring the Collection Pond 6 (WMP-6), one station monitoring Collection Pond 5 (CP5-1), and one station monitoring FPK Area 2 (WMP-2). Previous stations that had been in place during the 2021 season have been removed, as these collection ponds have been removed by mining activity and no longer exist (WMP-7). The location of each of these survey stations is provided in Map 3-2 and the UTM coordinates for each station are provided in Table 3-6. At each station, the observer conducts a 180° sweep using binoculars, focusing on both open water and shoreline habitats. Surveying at each station generally takes 10-15 minutes to complete. The observer records information including species type, activity (including evidence of nesting behavior), and number of individuals.

Table 3-6 Locations of Collection Pond Stations, 2022

Station Coordinates	Easting	Northing
WMP-1	0588811	7038360
WMP-2	0589694	7038355
WMP-3	0589814	7037102
WMP-6	0590451	7036293
CP1-1	0589803	7035085

CP1-2	0589735	7035163
CP5-1	0588133	7034571

Map 3-2 Collection Pond Survey Locations, 2022



Results

In 2022, a total of 51 weekly site surveillance surveys were completed. Wildlife or sign of wildlife (e.g., tracks, scat) was observed during 50 surveys (98%). Caribou were the most commonly observed species in 2022, with 2723 individuals with 117 observations. Red fox observations were common with 56 observations and another 5 of an unknown fox species during weekly surveys. Other commonly observed species were ptarmigan species, common raven, and Arctic hare. A full summary of wildlife observations from weekly wildlife surveys can be found in Table 3-7.

Table 3-7 Wildlife and Wildlife Sign Observed During Site Surveillance Surveys, 2022

Species	Number of Surveys with Wildlife Observations	Total Number of Individuals Observed	Number of Surveys with Wildlife Sign
American pipit	11	18	

American robin	12	14	
American tree sparrow	6	9	
Arctic ground squirrel	1	1	
Arctic hare	54	51	29
Bank swallow	6	18	
Barn swallow	5	11	
Black scoter	8	19	
Cackling goose	3	130	
Canada goose	2	23	
Caribou	117	2723	8
Cliff swallow	14	51	
Common loon	4	10	
Common merganser	1	1	
Common raven	77	128	3
Duck spp.	14	54	
Eagle spp.	1	1	
Fox spp.	5	3	5
Goose spp.	2	11	
Greater white-fronted goose	1	15	
Ground squirrel	15	16	
Gull spp.	34	67	
Harris' sparrow	9	12	
Horned lark	2	4	
Lapland longspur	8	11	
Least sandpiper	1	6	
Lesser scaup	7	42	
Lesser yellowlegs	2	5	
Long tailed duck	14	35	
Loon spp.	2	3	
Mew gull	1	1	
Muskox	15	40	1
Northern harrier	2	2	
Northern pintail	18	196	
Northern shoveler	2	4	
Owl spp.	1	1	
Pectoral sandpiper	1	3	
Peregrine falcon	3	4	
Plover spp.	1	3	
Ptarmigan spp.	36	196	13

Ptarmigan	2	24	
Red fox	56	54	40
Red-throated loon	1	2	
Red-breasted merganser	6	7	
Rock ptarmigan	1	20	
Rough-legged hawk	3	3	
Sandhill crane	1	2	
Sandpiper spp.	6	10	
Savannah sparrow	15	27	
Scaup greater	1	1	
Scaup spp.	3	8	
Scoter spp.	2	3	
Seagull	1	1	
Semipalmated plover	10	16	
Semipalmated sandpiper	3	5	
Snow bunting	4	35	
Snow goose	1	12	
Songbird Spp.	5	18	
Sparrow spp.	8	21	
surf scoter	4	10	
Swallow spp.	1	7	
Swan spp.	1	12	
Teal ducks	7	31	
Tree swallow	1	1	
Unidentified shorebird	1	4	
Unidentified songbird	29	60	
Unknown	1	5	
Water fowl spp.	1	10	
White-crowned sparrow	8	10	
Willow ptarmigan	1	25	
Wolf	5	5	1

In 2022, Collection Pond Surveys were conducted on a bi-weekly basis from May 19th to September 30th. During 10 different survey events, a total of 117 bird observations were made consisting of 509 individuals. A summary of these results is provided in Table 3-8. The survey had positively identified 23 different species. Often birds could not be identified to species, and were classified to family group or as unidentified. A summary of the results is provided in Table 3-9. Nesting activity was observed in the CP1-2 survey. A seagull nest was viewed on the south end of CP1. The seagull was actively nesting and three chicks were observed in later surveys. This nest was not near mining activities but the closest accessible road was barricaded to avoid any nest disturbance. Another nesting event occurred within the WMP-6/CP6 area. A Greater white-fronted goose nest was discovered near Dyke B, after the adults were observed with four goslings. This nest was

located within active work areas but was not impacted by daily operations. Signage was posted for workers in the area to watch for the adults with their young. These individuals were monitored in later surveys until they left for the season.

Table 3-8 Birds Observations Collected During Collection Pond Surveys, 2022

Station	Number of bird groups observed	Number of Individuals Observed	Average number of individuals per station per survey
CP1-1	11	111	10
CP1-2	14	94	6
WMP-1	9	16	1
WMP-2	4	25	6
WMP-3	12	39	3
CP5-1	10	173	17
CP6/WMP-6	9	51	5

Table 3-9 Birds Observed During Collection Pond Surveys, 2022

Species	Number of Individuals Observed	Number of survey events where species was observed
Greater white-fronted goose	14	3
Goose spp.	144	2
Northern pintail	68	3
Long-tailed duck	25	6
Northern shoveler	2	1
Scaup spp.	9	2
Duck spp.	25	6
Surf scoter	20	4
Common merganser	4	3
Common loon	1	1
Red-throated loon	4	3
Loon spp.	1	1
Gull spp.	28	15
Semipalmated plover	13	7
Sandpiper spp.	2	2
American pipit	38	13
American robin	5	5
Harris' sparrow	1	1
American tree sparrow	3	3

Savannah sparrow	2	2
Sparrow spp.	13	3
Lapland longspur	3	2
Horned lark	1	1
Bank swallow	21	6
Cliff swallow	10	1
Barn swallow	2	1
Tree swallow	4	2
Unidentified songbird	29	12
Northern harrier	1	1
Common raven	8	4
Total	509	117

3.3.5 Public Use of the Winter Access Road

De Beers operates a winter access road from MacKay Lake to the Gahcho Kué Mine site from early February to late March each year (Map 1-1). De Beers conducts surveillance of the winter access road to document public use and provide safety and support to truck traffic. Public use of the road is typically dominated by hunting parties.

Methods

Each day the winter access road is open, security personnel drive from the Mine to MacKay Lake, and record wildlife observations and hunting/recreational activity. Observations of public use of the road are documented on a Winter Access Road User Survey Form (De Beers 2014a).

Results

In 2022, the winter access road was operational from January 31st to March 27th (i.e., 56 days). There were 1,890 loads on the winter road to supply the Mine with fuel, ammonium nitrate and general freight and equipment. During the daily security patrols, wildlife and wildlife sign observed included of wolf, wolverine, fox, ptarmigan, and caribou. Hunting parties were reported on the winter access road by security personnel on multiple occasions, no major incidents were reported.

3.3.6 Wildlife Incidents

A wildlife incident is defined in the WMMP as:

- human-wildlife interactions that present a risk to either people or animals;
- wildlife-caused damage to property or delay in operations;
- wildlife deterrent actions; and
- wildlife injury or mortality.

Following the principles of adaptive management, monitoring of wildlife incidents is undertaken to identify all incident types and to prevent future incidents or escalation of problems.

Methods

Wildlife incidents throughout the year are reported, investigated, and have immediate follow-up actions by Environment staff. If wildlife are deterred to reduce the risk of a wildlife-human incident, then an effort is made by Environment staff to start with the least intrusive method available, with all deterrent actions recorded in the wildlife deterrent log. All wildlife mortalities are reported immediately to Environment and Climate Change Canada and/or GNWT-ENR. Documentation of wildlife incidents include photographs, names of people involved, the nature of the incident, and supporting information such as the time, date, location, and the follow-up actions that occurred.

Results

In 2022, two wildlife mortality incidents were reported. An Arctic hare carcass was found on the ring road outside of Tuzo Pit on November 24th. As per section 4.3.7 of the WMMP, a notification of the incident was sent the same day to the Wildlife and Environment Manager at the GNWT-ENR. The cause of death was likely a vehicle strike. The vehicle involved in the incident was not identified. Following the incident, the right-of-way policy was reviewed with the mine site field crews. The wildlife right-of-way policy is a part of the Site Drivers Permit training, Pit Drivers Permit, and Winter Road training.

The second mortality was a young bull caribou on Feb 19th that was found deceased near the South end of Dyke A. The caribou was submitted to the GNWT-ENR Wildlife Health Program for a full necropsy investigation and diagnostics to determine cause of death. The full necropsy was completed on March 21st at the North Slave Regional Laboratory. Results found the Caribou died of severe sepsis (or systemic/body-wide infection by bacteria). Culture results confirmed the causative agent as *Pasteurella multocida*, which is a naturally occurring bacterium found in many animals. In this caribou individual, there was abnormal overgrowth of this bacteria that led to sepsis and death. This mortality was considered to be natural and not the result of a Mine-related interaction.

3.4 Caribou

The Bathurst caribou herd is known historically to move through the RSA during the northern migration to the calving grounds near Bathurst Inlet, and to the wintering grounds at or south of the treeline during the post-calving migration (De Beers 2010). Bathurst caribou may also occupy the RSA in winter. Beverly/Ahiak caribou are also known to occupy the RSA during the winter months.

Objectives of caribou monitoring for the Mine are:

- to determine if caribou behaviour changes with distance from the Mine;
- to determine what the zone of influence is and whether it changes in relation to Mine activity; and,
- to determine if caribou abundance and distribution changes in the study area over time.

The monitoring objectives are met through:

- participation in the GNWT-ENR led Zone of Influence Technical Task Group;

- aerial reconnaissance surveys of the winter access road;
- snow berm measurements along the winter access road; and,
- caribou behaviour monitoring.

3.4.1 Aerial Surveys

De Beers has contributed to the GNWT-ENR monitoring programs supporting the Barren-ground Caribou Management Strategy (ENR 2011). De Beers also participates in the GNWT-ENR-led Zone of Influence Technical Task Group for development of a standardized set of guidelines to monitor the zone of influence for caribou. De Beers has committed to completing aerial reconnaissance surveys to determine if caribou are present near the winter access road. The information collected during this survey is used to inform haul truck drivers of the presence and location of any caribou groups near the road, and is used as a trigger for caribou behaviour monitoring (Section 3.4.2).

Methods

In 2022, an aerial reconnaissance survey was completed on January 26, 2022 along the Gahcho Kué winter access road via helicopter aircraft at an altitude of approximately 150m and speeds of 80-100 km/h. The helicopter flew east along the north side of the winter access road to Mackay Lake. The number of wildlife and wildlife sign observations were recorded by Mine Environment staff. An aerial survey is completed each year prior to the winter access road opening to provide information to the haul truck drivers of the presence and location of caribou near the road, and determine whether caribou behavioural monitoring is triggered. The monitoring trigger is 20 caribou groups or 100 total caribou.

Results

A total of thirty individual caribou were observed during the reconnaissance. An additional fourteen were observed but assumed to be the same group from a prior sighting during the survey. In total there were forty-four caribou sightings. The survey also included sightings of four muskox. Although thresholds were not exceeded, the winter access road caribou behavioural monitoring (Section 3.4.2) was triggered for the 2022 season.

3.4.2 Behaviour Monitoring

The objective of determining if caribou behaviour changes with distance from the Mine for behaviour monitoring is based on recommendations from the Diamond Mine Wildlife Monitoring Workshop (Marshall 2009; Handley 2010). As noted for monitoring changes in caribou distribution, monitoring caribou behaviour around the Mine could contribute to future environmental assessments and the assessment and management of cumulative effects by government under different development scenarios. Caribou behavioural monitoring from the winter access road is conducted through the WMMP (De Beers 2022).

Large numbers of observations are required to detect differences in caribou behaviour, which is strongly affected by environmental conditions, such as wind, temperature, and insect (in summer) and predator abundance (BHPB 2004; Witter et al. 2012). For example, a power analysis based on Ekati and Diavik monitoring results indicated that a minimum of 55 caribou groups are required in each distance strata, assuming power of 0.8 and a type I error rate of 0.1 (Golder 2015). Behaviour monitoring of caribou groups in the RSA may be discontinued in favour of using collared caribou data, which was discussed at the February

2021 Diamond Mine Wildlife Monitoring Meetings (GNWT-ENR 2021). De Beers intends to engage Indigenous communities before making this decision.

The winter access road is located within the range of the Bathurst caribou herd, and De Beers has committed to implementing a behaviour monitoring program along the winter access road if sufficient caribou are present. Behaviour monitoring will be triggered when either 100 caribou or 20 caribou groups are observed along the length of the winter access road during either the aerial reconnaissance survey (Section 3.4.1) or during public use monitoring (Section 3.4.3). Caribou in proximity to the winter access road is a cause for concern for both the safety of the animals and the drivers. It is also an opportunity to better understand the interactions between caribou and winter roads in the NWT through behavioural monitoring. Monitoring is anticipated to continue from construction through closure of the Mine.

Methods

Behavioural monitoring methods are consistent with those implemented at other NWT mines. The behaviour monitoring will be conducted by a crew of two observers stationed along the winter access road or other Mine roads in a truck. Both focal surveys of individuals and scan surveys of caribou groups will be undertaken. Focal surveys provide information on activity budgets (i.e., the amount of time an animal is engaged in different behaviours), the temporal sequence of behaviours relative to stressors or other stimuli, and the length of time it takes the animal to return to a non-stressed state following a stressor event. Scan samples of a group of animals are more useful for quantifying the frequencies of dominant behaviours in a group over a period of time (ERM Rescan 2014).

For focal surveys, an individual is selected from a group for observation. Behaviour and time of behaviour changes are recorded. Focal surveys will be undertaken on both cows and bulls, for a minimum of 20 minutes. For scan surveys, observers will make instantaneous behaviour observations of caribou groups at 8 minute intervals for at least 40 minutes (a minimum of four observations per group).

For both scan and focal surveys, the response of caribou to stressors, such as vehicle or aircraft traffic, will also be recorded. Behavioural observations will be repeated at multiple locations along the road where caribou are present. In addition to behaviour, observers will record the number, group composition, location of each group and total group size. Observers will also record caribou tracks seen and or caribou tracks observed. advise as to any additional factors that seem to stress caribou or alter their behaviour negatively (e.g., vehicle speed and type, and wolves).

Results

Caribou behavioural monitoring was performed by WSP Golder in conjunction with De Beers Environment staff from February 4th to March 25th 2022. The crews completed a total of 197 group scans and 183 focal (individual) scan surveys. On two occasions visibility conditions decreased the ability to see the caribou and influenced the number and duration of surveys.

During caribou group scans, the field crew recorded the number of individuals in the group displaying each type of behaviour (Feeding, Bedded, Standing, Alert, Walking, Trotting, or Running) at one moment in time at 8-minute intervals. A minimum of four, and a maximum of eight observations are required per group (32 minutes and 64 minutes). Crews recorded the group size (i.e., number of individuals), group demographic composition (i.e., sex, age, class, group composition), and location of each group in relation to the winter road. The goal of this task was to observe and record data on as many groups as possible over the course of the field program.

During focal scans, The field crew monitored a single individual from a group of caribou continuously for a minimum of 20 minutes to measure how long the caribou was exhibiting each behaviour type/reaction to stressor. The behaviour type and time of the behaviour changes were recorded for the focal individual.

The results of the Group and Focal Scans are listed in Appendix A including; stressors, behaviours and characteristics.

3.4.3 Snow Berm Management

Snow berms associated with the winter access road may act as a partial barrier to caribou movement by deflecting caribou from crossing roads. For example, caribou have been shown to deflect from a road when snow berms are 1.6 m or greater in height (ERM Rescan 2011). Determining the aspects of the winter access road that influence caribou movements (e.g., snow berm heights) provide information specific to the operation of the Mine and potentially to features of the winter access road that may be mitigated, such as lowering of snow berm heights.

The objective of this component of the monitoring program is to determine heights of snow berms along the winter access road.

In 2015, De Beers made the commitment to implement additional mitigation to reduce snow berm heights if any measurements were observed over 1.6 m. This mitigation was implemented from 2016 onwards.

Methods

Snow berm measurements along the winter access road were recorded during three separate surveys:

- Survey 1 – February 10th, 2022
- Survey 2 – March 6th, 2022
- Survey 3 – March 20th, 2022

Snow berm height and slope were measured every 2 km along the winter road, at both lake and portage locations, to determine factors affecting the permeability of the winter road to caribou (i.e., whether snow berm heights exceed deflection thresholds for caribou). These data were also used to inform the road maintenance crew of any snow berm heights in excess of 1.6 m.

Results

The total length of the winter access road occurring on lakes is 100 km (83.0%), whereas 20 km is constructed over portages (17.0%). The percent of snow berm measurements along the winter access road was 81% at lakes and 19% at portages. Thus, the measurements correspond to availability of snow berm conditions potentially encountered by caribou. In 2022, the average snow berm heights for lake section surveys of the winter road were 0.71 m, 0.64 m, and 0.79 m, during survey 1, 2 and 3, respectively, with a maximum berm height recorded of 1.66 m during Survey 3. The average snow berm slopes were 24.9°, 30.2°, and 30.0°, with a maximum recorded slope of 80° during Survey 2. On portage sections, average heights were 0.03 m, 0.00 m, and 0.14 m, with a maximum height of 0.70 m during Survey 1. Average snow berm slopes recorded on portages were 0.55°, 0.00°, and 7.05°, with a maximum slope of 40° recorded during Survey 3. Over all three surveys, Summary of survey data is located in Table 3-10.

Table 3-10 Snow Berm Monitoring Results for the Winter Access Road, 2022

Measurements		Survey 1 (n = 122)		Survey 2 (n = 122)		Survey 3 (n = 122)	
		Lake	Portage	Lake	Portage	Lake	Portage
height (m)	average	0.72	0.03	0.65	0.00	0.79	0.14
	min	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	max	1.61	0.70	1.41	0.00	1.66	1.00
slope (°)	average	24.96	0.55	30.29	0.00	30.00	7.05
	min	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	max	61.00	12.00	80.00	0.00	75.00	40.00

n = number of measurements.

Results from the snow berm monitoring program indicate that 99.4% of the snow berms measured along the winter access road were at or below 1.6 m during the operational season (Table 3-11). Two measurements of greater than 1.6 m were made at 1.61m (Survey 1) and 1.66 (Survey 3). When Snow berms were observed to be over 1.6 m during the snow berm measurement surveys, De Beers notified the winter access road maintenance crew so that they could be decreased. No additional maintenance was required from observations recorded during winter road berm monitoring.

Table 3-11 Proportion of Snow Berm Height Measurements for the Winter Access Road, 2022

Height (m)	Survey 1	Survey 2	Survey 3	Average
<1.6	99.14%	100%	99.14%	99.43%
≥1.6	0.86%	0%	0.86%	0.57%

\leq = less than or equal to; \geq = greater than or equal to; % = percent.

3.5 Arctic Program for Regional and International Shorebird Monitoring Surveys

De Beers is contributing to the Environment and Climate Change Canada Program for Regional and International Shorebird Monitoring (PRISM) surveys. These surveys are designed to document population numbers of Arctic shorebirds and contribute to regional knowledge in an effort to set population targets and assist with management and conservation of shorebird species (EC 2012).

Methods

Monitoring methods adhered to standard techniques for PRISM surveying (CWS 2008). De Beers first partnered with Environment and Climate Change Canada to conduct ground-based rapid assessment surveys of 12 ha plots in 2015. PRISM surveys were conducted in 2017, 2019, and 2022.

Results

In 2022, eleven PRISM plots were surveyed and a total of 21 bird species were identified (Tables 3-12, 3-13). The PRISM survey was conducted from June 16 to 19, 2022. American tree sparrow (*Spizella arborea*) was

the most frequently observed species and was recorded at eight PRISM survey plots. Incidental observations of birds outside of the plots were also recorded, notably including a breeding pair of Smiths longspur (*Calcarius pictus*). Three confirmed and one probable American tree sparrow nests were observed during the surveys. One abandoned or inactive nest was also observed. Four Harris's sparrow (*Zonotrichia querula*) and two Red-necked phalarope (*Phalaropus lobatus*) both listed as species of Special Concern were witnessed. All eleven PRISM plots surveyed in 2022 have been surveyed previously during either 2015 or 2017. Habitat and sub-habitat types encountered in 2022 were similar to those encountered during the previous surveys. The total habitat surveyed was comprised of 47% dry upland habitat, 28% wet lowland habitat, and 25% permanent water.

Table 3-12 Species observed during 2022 PRISM survey

Common Name	Scientific Name	Number of Plots where species was observed
American golden-plover	<i>Pluvialis dominica</i>	1
American tree sparrow	<i>Spizella arborea</i>	8
Black scoter	<i>Melanitta americana</i>	1
Blackpoll warbler	<i>Dendroica striata</i>	2
Common merganser	<i>Mergus merganser</i>	1
Common redpoll	<i>Acanthis flammea</i>	5
Grey-cheeked thrush	<i>Catharus minimus</i>	2
Harris' sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia querula</i>	4
Herring gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	2
Horned lark	<i>Eremophila alpestris</i>	1
Lapland longspur	<i>Calcarius lapponicus</i>	3
Long-tailed duck	<i>Clangula hyemalis</i>	1
Pacific loon	<i>Gavia pacifica</i>	1
Red-necked phalarope	<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>	2
Savannah sparrow	<i>Passerculus sandwichensis</i>	7
White-crowned sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia leucophrys</i>	5
Willow ptarmigan	<i>Lagopus</i>	1
Yellow warbler	<i>Dendroica petechia</i>	4
Unidentified upland bird	-	1
Unidentified gull species	<i>Larus sp.</i>	1
Unidentified redpoll species	<i>Acanthis sp.</i>	1
Unidentified shorebird species	-	1
Unidentified sparrow species	-	1

Table 3-13 Incidental species observations during 2022 PRISM survey

Common Species Name	Scientific Name
Hermit thrush	<i>Catharus guttatus</i>

Common Species Name	Scientific Name
Northern pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>
Smith's longspur	<i>Calcarius pictus</i>
Song sparrow	<i>Melospiza melodia</i>
White-throated sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia albicollis</i>

3.6 Raptors

Raptor species (i.e., birds of prey) observed nesting within the RSA include peregrine falcon (likely anatum-tundrius complex), gyrfalcon, rough-legged hawk (*Buteo lagopus*), and short-eared owl. The short-eared owl is currently listed as special concern by COSEWIC. Both the peregrine falcon and short-eared owl have a general status rank of sensitive in the NWT (NWT SAR 2023). Both species are scheduled for assessment by the Northwest Territories Species at Risk Committee in March 2023 (NWT SAR 2022). Analysis of 13 years of nest site use and productivity monitoring data in the Ekati and Diavik mines study area found no relationship with proximity to mines (Coulton et al. 2013). The nearest active raptor nest site identified in the RSA is 18 km from the Mine site. Considering the distance of the Mine to the nearest known raptor nest, the Mine is not anticipated to affect local raptor populations.

There are two programs for raptors conducted by the Mine. The first is the Regional Raptor Nest Monitoring Program, which is conducted within the RSA and contributed by De Beers to the GNWT-ENR. The second is monitoring and deterrence of raptors from nesting in the pits. Both are conducted as part of the WMMP (De Beers 2022).

3.6.1 Regional Raptor Nest Monitoring Program

The objective of the raptor nest monitoring program is to contribute nest survey data to the GNWT-ENR for inclusion in regional databases (De Beers 2014c).

Methods

De Beers conducted regional raptor nest data through collaborative aerial surveys at both the Gahcho Kué and Snap Lake mines. The timing and methods of these surveys are developed in partnership with the GNWT-ENR and other operators in the region.

Visits to known nest sites are conducted by helicopter, using fly-by methods to identify occupying species, and to count eggs and young. Surveys are not carried out in the rain, and visits are kept as short as possible to limit disturbances to the birds. Nests are considered occupied if at least one adult bird was observed. Eggs are counted if visible. Nests are recorded as successful if at least one chick is observed in the nest. The number of chicks are also recorded. Although the monitoring is focused on raptor species, observations of other species (e.g., ravens) are recorded during the surveys and included in the summary statistics.

Results

Regional raptor nest monitoring was initially completed in 2015. The monitoring in the RSA was not conducted in 2021 due to the COVID-19 restrictions. The next regional survey will occur in 2025.

3.6.2 Pit Raptor Monitoring and Deterrence Program

As described in the WMMP (De Beers 2022), raptor interactions and mortalities at the Mine are also monitored through the wildlife sightings log, site surveillance, and wildlife incidents (Sections 3.3.3, 3.3.4 and 3.3.6), as well as incidents of raptor nesting activity on Mine infrastructure (De Beers 2014a). Raptors that are observed in dangerous areas of the Mine, such as open pit areas, will be actively deterred from nesting. Deterrent methods include bear bangers, propane noise cannons, air horns and predatory effigies. The objective of this aspect of the program is to deter raptors from nesting on Mine infrastructure or pit walls.

Methods

De Beers actively deters raptors from nesting in the open pits through the use of visual and auditory deterrents and routine monitoring. The 2022 bird deterrent and surveillance program began on May 1, where initial visual observations commenced for the presence of nesting bird species within the 5034, Hearne, and Tuzo open pits, as well as the surrounding pit areas and active construction zones. The visual monitoring of nesting birds within pit areas was performed by Environment staff during day shift using binoculars. Initial propane scare cannon deployment began on May 10th around the pit areas. Eleven cannons were placed around Hearne; two on the north wall near Geohut #3, one by Geohut #4 (west wall), three located on a bench in the southwest wall, and three placed at the blaster lookout (northeast wall). Additionally, two more cannons were added to Hearne to cover the east wall. Initially cannons were placed along the east wall of 5034 pit, near a 2021 peregrine falcon nest site. On May 15th, four more cannons were added to 5034 pit; these placements included the west wall near Geohut #2 and the north wall where the blaster lookout was located. This area encompassed the southern end of Tuzo pit, and was the only accessible location to place deterrents within the Tuzo pit. Six cannons were also distributed around the airstrip as a preventative measure for waterfowl presence on the airstrip. The cannons were removed from the airstrip on May 31st as no waterfowl occupied the area. These cannons were used at the north wall of the Coarse Processed Kimberlite (CPK) dump. There were 22 cannons set up around 5034 pit and Hearne pit during the peak of the season. These cannons were adjusted or repositioned throughout the season based on bird activity and specific areas of concern.

In addition to propane cannon deployment, predator decoys were also utilized in the pit areas. Kite decoy deployment increased in the 2022 Bird Program with an average of 15 kites being flown at once. Kites were flown constantly throughout the nesting season; these visual deterrents were located above each wall of both pits. More kites were added as the season progressed by establishing the poles in rock piles in areas of potential nesting interest. Kites were used outside of the pit areas as well. Deterrent placements were adjusted throughout the program to accommodate mining and construction activities as well as extreme weather events. One full-time bird monitor was brought on to manage deterrents, conduct daily surveillance, and monitor nest sites as required. Bethany Nesbitt, who conducted the Bird Program in 2021, completed these tasks with Mine Environment staff when needed. All bird sightings were documented on a daily field sheet.

Results

There were a total of 1479 individual birds observed in or around the 5034, Hearne, and Tuzo pits in 2022 (Table 3-14). Of the the birds observed in or near the pits, the most common were the bank swallow with 196 individuals counted over 32 occasions.

In early May, the main species observed around the pit areas were peregrine falcons and rough-legged hawks. By mid-May, the primary concern became peregrine falcons as two pairs were seen frequenting both pits and courtship displays were observed. Nesting concerns in active construction areas and mine operation sites (outside of open pit areas) included the following species: bank swallow, cliff swallow, American robin, common raven, barn swallow, and shorebird species.

On August 13th to 18th, peregrine falcon sightings of 3 juvenilles and 2 adults occurred on top of the north wall of 5034 pit 1 bench below the main road. The Environment Department conducted surveys of the area from a distance intended to negate any stress. The last sighting of a single fledgling was observed on August 18th.

In May and June, several bank swallow colonies were observed within the Coarse Processed Kimberlite (CPK) facilities. Upon consultation with Environment and Climate Change Canada via telephone on June 1st, a monitoring action plan was initiated. A 100 m setback of heavy equipment operation was implemented from the colonies in order to minimize the potential impact to nesting habitat, damage of nesting burrows and any excessive stress upon adults and young. Setback barriers were installed within the CPK facility and all operators working within the area were notified.

Table 3-14 Recorded observations of individual species count and total number of observations, 2022

Species	Number of observations	Number of individuals
Peregrine falcon	58	86
Bank swallow	32	196
Cliff swallow	21	164
Barn swallow	10	18
Tree swallow	1	1
Common raven	45	68
American pipit	37	43
American robin	28	29
Semipalmated plover	20	54
Least sandpiper	10	24
Lesser yellowlegs	1	1
Sandpiper spp.	3	3
Greater white-fronted goose	10	182
Snow goose	5	56
Cackling goose	9	179
Goose spp.	6	31
Northern pintail	11	67
Black scoter	8	38
Long-tailed duck	4	11
Green-winged teal	4	18
Surf scoter	3	5

Northern shoveler	1	2
Scaup spp.	2	3
Duck spp.	4	23
Common loon	2	2
Loon spp.	1	1
Common merganser	1	1
Northern harrier	2	2
Rough-legged hawk	6	6
Bald eagle	4	4
Golden eagle	3	3
Raptor spp.	2	2
Gull spp.	12	61
Lapland longspur	9	14
Snow bunting	1	5
Horned lark	2	2
Savannah sparrow	10	11
Harris' sparrow	7	7
American tree sparrow	5	7
White-crowned sparrow	6	7
Unidentified songbird	17	34
Willow ptarmigan	6	6
Ptarmigan spp.	1	3
Total	430	1479

Note: the number of individuals is biased high as the same individuals may be observed during surveys.

3.7 Upland Breeding Birds

In 2015, a Migratory Bird Nest Mitigation Plan was developed and submitted to and approved by Environment and Climate Change Canada (De Beers 2015c). The objective of the nest management program is to avoid destruction of active upland migratory bird nests in areas scheduled for flooding or disturbance by mining. This plan described mitigation actions to limit harm to migratory birds and the disturbance or destruction of nests and eggs and to comply with the *Migratory Birds Convention Act*. Each fall De Beers pro-actively clears standing vegetation in areas anticipated to flood the subsequent spring, therefore reducing the attractiveness of these areas to tree and shrub nesters. Each spring, prior to the 50% snow melt when nesting activity is typically initiated, De Beers deploys bird deterrents to those same areas targeting ground nesting birds. Additionally, during the nesting season, De Beers re-visits these areas to confirm functionality of the deterrents and observe bird activity.

Upland birds include shorebirds, ptarmigan, and songbirds (excluding raven). The rusty blackbird, bank swallow, barn swallow, harris's sparrow, lesser yellowlegs, horned grebe and the red-necked phalarope are birds of concern that may occur in the RSA. They are also listed by COSEWIC as either threatened or special

concern (COSEWIC 2023). From 1998 to 2004, rapid assessment upland bird surveys were completed to provide a comprehensive species list in the RSA. In 2004 and 2005, permanent sample plots were established in the RSA to estimate the variation in upland breeding bird density and richness in the RSA and LSA, and to assess the importance of habitats in the LSA for upland bird nesting. Impacts to upland breeding birds are anticipated to be localized at the Mine site and not to influence regional populations (De Beers 2010). The objective of monitoring for upland birds is to detect changes in regional bird populations over time. This objective is achieved through participation in Environment and Climate Change Canada PRISM surveys (Section 3.5). De Beers contributes PRISM monitoring during the operating life of the Mine to fill existing information gaps in ECCC's N7 Bird Conservation Region (Section 3.5).

3.7.1 Nest Management Program

Development and operation of the Mine has the potential to inadvertently disturb upland breeding birds and their nests through land clearing activities to develop site infrastructure and the raising of Lakes D2 and D3 (Lakes D2/D3) and E1. For the latter, during the operation of the Mine, terrestrial habitat around Lakes D2/D3 and E1 will be flooded through the establishment of diversion dykes in the D and E lakes watersheds (Table 3-14). Water levels in these lakes have increased following freshet each year since the diversion dykes were constructed in 2015. They were predicted to continue to rise until reaching full supply level in Year 2-3 for Lake E1, and Year 4 for Lakes D2/D3, after which water levels will stabilize until the dykes are removed at closure (Table 3-16). The actual extent of flooding in 2022 at Lakes D2/D3 and E1 is reported in Table 3-15. As the water levels will rise most rapidly during freshet, the period of flooding will overlap with the migratory bird nesting season, which is defined to occur annually from the middle of May to mid-August (ECCC 2022).

Table 3-15 Predicted Timing and Extent of Predicted and Actual Flooding at Lakes D2/D3, and E1

Timing of Flooding	Incremental Extent of Flooding							
	Lake D2/D3				Lake E1			
	Predicted		Actual		Predicted		Actual	
Elevation (masl)	Area (ha)	Elevation (masl)	Area (ha)	Elevation (masl)	Area (ha)	Elevation (masl)	Area (ha)	
2015	424.2	0	424.2	0	425.2	0	425.2	0
Year 1 (June - October 2016)	425.7	19.7	426.1	34.2	426.0	5.1	425.8	4.5
Year 2 (June - October 2017)	426.3	18	426.6	10.2	426.0	1.1	425.9	0.5
Year 3 (June - October 2018)	426.8	9.8	426.7	3.1	n/a	n/a	425.9	0
Year 4 (June - October 2019)	427.0	4.6	427.0	4.6	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Year 5 (June - October 2020)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Year 6 (June - October 2021)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Year 7 (June - October 2022)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total	n/a	52.1	n/a	52.1	n/a	6.2	n/a	5.0

Note:

Lake D2/D3 and E1 reached their spillover elevation in June 2019 and 2018, respectively. Following the spillover, changes to the lake water elevations were due to natural fluctuations.

Methods

The hydrometric station at Lake D2/D3 was established in 2015 and continuous monitoring of water surface elevations (WSE) have been ongoing annually since 2015. The hydrometric station on Lake E1 was established in 2016 and water level measurements and continuous monitoring of WSE have been conducted annually since 2018. Flooding (WSE) is monitored to verify predictions of water elevations. If water levels are on the rise, a vegetation clearing program will be put in place as mitigation.

Results

There was no vegetation clearing program conducted in 2022. The actual peak elevation in 2022 for Lake D2/D3 was similar to that estimated by the EIS with associated flooding being slightly higher than predicted. The peak WSE and actual area for Lake E1 was also similar to the predicted values from the EIS. The timing and extent of flooding predicted in the EIS is compared to actual observations is shown in Table 3-16 for both lakes. Until predictions can be verified, monitoring will continue.

3.8 Small Mammals

The periodic population cycles of small mammals can have strong influences on other species in the Arctic ecosystem such as clutch and litter size of raptors and foxes, respectively. The nearest small mammal monitoring location to the Mine is at the Daring Lake research facility (approximately 200 km northwest of the Mine), operated by the GNWT-ENR. In 2015, De Beers began annual monitoring of small mammals, including lemmings and voles, to provide an additional regional monitoring site to the GNWT-ENR.

The methods for the small mammal survey follow those outlined by Carrière (1999) and Outcrop Communications (2005). The small mammal program in 2022 was conducted from August 12th to 17th over five nights, with 100 traps set per night. The same two transects established in 2015 northeast of Area 2 of Kennedy Lake were used again in 2022. This habitat is considered representative of tundra features typical to the Taiga Shield High Subarctic Ecoregion. Both transects measured 250 m in length and are parallel to each other, roughly 100 m apart. Historically, a mixture of oats and peanut butter were utilized as bait for all museum traps. The 2022 survey also utilized fresh apple cuttings, approximately 1 cm in length & 0.5 cm in width, on transect 1 only with one apple cutting set per trap. This process was employed to compare the efficacy of bait. On both transects, bait was replaced as needed. On transect 1, the apple cuttings were replaced every other day. The bait on transect 2 was replaced on August 16th due to rain the night before (washed off peanut butter from several traps).

Results

Catch results are summarized in Table 3-16. A total of nine animals were captured over the five consecutive trap nights which occurred August 13th to 17th. One juvenile Lapland longspur and eight small mammals. Specimens were identified using the NWT Small Mammal Identification Guide (GNWT-ENR 2005). Three voles and one lemming were unidentified. All animals trapped were intact at the time of collection and appeared to be in good physical condition. Transect 1, baited with apple, proved to yield significantly more catch than transect 2, baited with peanut butter. It was noted that Transect 1 ran through wetter areas than Transect 2.

Arrangements are being made to ship these samples to the GNWT-ENR laboratories in Yellowknife during the first quarter of 2023.

Table 3-16 Small Mammal Monitoring Program Catch Summary, 2022

Date	Transect No.	Site No.	Trap No.	Species
13-Aug-2022	1	10	1	Meadow vole
14-Aug-2022	1	1	1	Southern red-backed vole
14-Aug-2022	1	10	1	Meadow vole
14-Aug-2022	1	13	1	Lapland longspur*
15-Aug-2022	1	14	2	Unknown vole
16-Aug-2022	1	20	2	Unknown vole*
17-Aug-2022	1	10	1	Meadow vole
17-Aug-2022	1	14	2	Unknown vole
17-Aug-2022	1	25	2	Unknown lemming

* Both individuals found alive in trap but severely injured.

3.9 Environmental Indicators

To provide estimates of the annual changes in local environmental conditions surrounding the Mine, De Beers committed to monitoring basic environmental indicators or covariates (De Beers 2014b).

Methods

The indicators recorded by Environment staff included the following:

- snow melt (date of 50% snow cover and 10% snow cover);
- lake thaw (date of 50% ice cover and 10% ice cover on selected lakes);
- lake freeze (date of first ice across selected lakes);
- first snow (date of first snowfall that does not melt); and,
- migratory bird arrival (date of first and second observation of common and easily identified migratory birds, including raptor, waterfowl and upland bird species).

Results

The environmental indicators that were recorded in 2022 are summarized in Table 3-17.

Table 3-17 Gahcho Kué Environmental Indicators, 2022

Environmental Indicator	Date
Snow melt	June 1, 2022 (50% snow cover)
	June 12, 2022 (10% snow cover)
Kennedy Lake thaw	June 21, 2022 (50% ice cover)

	June 26, 2022 (10% ice cover)
Lake freeze	October 22, 2022 (100% ice cover on Kennady Lake)
First snow	October 12, 2022 (date of first snow that did not melt)
Migratory bird arrival	May 14, 2022 (Unidentified Geese flying over Kennady Lake)

3.10 Mine Activity

Sensory disturbances, such as noise, smells, dust, or the presence of people resulting from mining activity may alter the behaviour or distribution of wildlife in habitats adjacent to development (Bayne et al. 2008; Boulanger et al. 2012). De Beers committed to record covariates contributing to overall Mine activity to help explain possible changes in wildlife behaviour and distribution (De Beers 2014c).

Methods

The indicators recorded monthly by the Mine include the following:

- occupancy (number of site staff);
- fuel consumption;
- mine rock moved;
- ore processed; and
- domestic water consumption.

Results

In 2022, average monthly occupancy ranged from 329 in January to 369 in October (Table 3-18). The total fuel consumption for 2022 was 47,346,991L of diesel. The total amount of mine rock mined was 33,947,188 tonnes. The total amount of ore processed was 3,102,219 tonnes. The total amount of water consumed for domestic use was 27,417,000, which does not include the additional water drawn from the Water Management Pond for site operation activities such as dust suppression within the Controlled Area (14,822,000L).

Table 3-18 Gahcho Kué Camp Occupancy, 2022

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Average Occupancy	329	350	366	355	363	361	351	343	359	369	367	349

4

WILDLIFE MITIGATION AND MONITORING PLAN AUDIT

Mitigation measures are described in the WMMP and stem from current practices at existing mines or are derived from suggestions during the environmental assessment process. In order to evaluate mitigation measures an audit is implemented annually. The results of the audit should include, site mitigation measures that are regularly implemented by Mine staff, and results from any additional special studies undertaken to further understand effectiveness of mitigation actions intended to reduce residual effects.

Section 5.2 of the WMMP states that the mitigation proposed in the WMMP should be evaluated to confirm that mitigations work as intended, and new mitigation identified through adaptive management should be documented. The mitigation policies and actions evaluate:

- if all mitigation has been implemented;
- which mitigation was observed or demonstrated to be successful or effective;
- if new mitigation has been implemented in response to new issues; and
- if some mitigation is redundant.

Methods

The audit was conducted in 2022 based upon 2021 mitigations. For the audit, WSP Golder was contracted to work with Mine Environmental staff to review mitigations provided in the WMMP. Mine Environmental staff were asked the following questions:

- 1) Was the mitigation implemented in 2021?
- 2) Was the mitigation observed or demonstrated to be effective?
- 3) Was the mitigation redundant in application with any other mitigation?
- 4) Are there any special studies required to support determining effectiveness of the mitigation?

GNWT-ENR indicated in the conditional approval letter for the WMMP that the effectiveness of snow berm reduction on the winter access road (113 km) could not be evaluated with the current mitigation management measures outlined in Version 1.1. In response, WSP Golder conducted an evaluation of the Mine's snow berm management and compared the management to caribou observations that occurred in years where behaviour monitoring was triggered. WSP Golder analyzed the snow berm data and caribou behaviour data locations as part of the mitigation audit deliverable to examine how frequently and where snow berm management has been required.

Results

The results of the WMMP mitigation audit indicates that the 2021 mitigations implemented appear effective according to the observations of Mine staff. Seventy mitigations from the WMMP (97%) were implemented in 2021, all of which were observed by Mine staff to be effective. Two mitigations identified in the WMMP were not applicable. A summary of mitigations is listed in table 4-1.

The detection of bank and cliff swallows during 2021 resulted in new management actions to minimize disturbance to nesting birds from mining activity.

Snow berm monitoring from 2014 to 2022 identified infrequent instances (<5% of all recorded measurements) that equal or exceed the threshold height of 1.6 m. The majority (89%) of snow berms greater than 1.6 m were at lake locations (54 measurements) compared to portage locations (7 measurements). In years where caribou monitoring was triggered and data were available (2014, 2018, 2022), four or fewer locations per year had snow berm measurements greater than 1.6 m, which appears to be a threshold height for deflecting caribou from roads (Rescan 2011). Observations of caribou from behaviour monitoring detected caribou occurrences on both sides of the winter access road before and after snow berm reduction. This suggests it is unlikely that the snow berms established from ploughing the winter access road are hindering movement for caribou. Although snow berms exceeding 1.6m are uncommon, it could not be verified whether caribou are using locations where snow berms have been reduced. As a recommendation for 2023 WSP Golder suggested placing wildlife cameras at locations where snow berms have been reduced.

Table 4-1 Summary of Mitigations Implemented in 2021

Mitigation Implemented?	Count of Mitigations	Proportion (%) of Total Implemented Effective	Mitigation not Implemented	Rationale for no Implementation
Yes	70	100%	N/A	N/A
Not Applicable	2	-	Backfill Mined out Pits. Suspending mining activities in areas where caribou are present at the mine site.	Mined out pits have not been backfilled because it is not applicable at this phase of development of open pits. Caribou were present on-site during winter months, but operations proceeded as per usual, as it is not a requirement to shut down the entire active Mine when caribou are present.

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6 ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AEMP	Aquatic Effects Monitoring Program
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
AN PAD	Ammonium Nitrate Pad
ARKTIS	ARKTIS SOLUTIONS INC.
COSEWIC	Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada
De Beers	De Beers Canada Inc.
DFO	Fisheries and Oceans Canada
DKFN	Deninu Kué First Nations
DNA	deoxyribonucleic acid
EBA	Tetra Tech EBA
EC	Environment Canada
ECCC	Environment and Climate Change Canada
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
ENR	Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Government of the Northwest Territories
FRMC	Fort Resolution Metis Council
GIS	Geographical Information System
GNWT	Government of the Northwest Territories
Golder	Golder Associates Ltd.
GPS	Global Positioning System
ICRP	Interim Closure and Reclamation Plan
IEMA	Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency
LKDFN	Łutselk'e Dene First Nation
LSA	Local Study Area
Mine	Gahcho Kué Mine
Mine Ops.	Mine Operations
MVEIRB	Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board
MVLWB	Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board
NSMA	North Slave Métis Alliance
NWT	Northwest Territories
NWT SAR	Northwest Territories Species at Risk
NWTMN	Northwest Territories Métis Nation
PK	Processed Kimberlite
PKMRMP	Processed Kimberlite and Mine Rock Management Plan
PRISM	Arctic Program for Regional and International Shorebird Monitoring
RSA	Regional Study Area
SAR	Species at Risk
SHEOP	Safety, Health, and Environment Operational Procedure
sp.	species
spp.	multiple species
TCWR	Tibbitt to Contwoyo Winter Road
UPD	Updated Project Description
TG	Tłı̨chǫ Government

VSMP	Vegetation and Soil Monitoring Program
WEMP	Wildlife Effects Monitoring Program
WMMP	Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan
WRD	Water Resource Division
WWHPP	Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat Protection Plan
YKDFN	Yellowknives Dene First Nation

7 UNITS OF MEASURE

≤	less than or equal to
≥	greater than or equal to
%	percent
+	plus or minus
>	greater than or equal to
°	degree
°C	degrees Celsius
h	hour
ha	hectare
km	kilometre
km/h	kilometres per hour
km ²	square kilometre
L	litre
m	metre
masl	metres above sea level
m ³	cubic metre

8 GLOSSARY

Abundance	The number of individuals
De Beers	De Beers Canada Inc.
Density	The number of individuals per unit area
Distribution	The pattern of dispersion of an entity within its range
Habitat use	The way and animal uses (or <i>consumes</i> , in a generic sense) a collection of physical and biological entities in a habitat
Hemostat	A plier-like locking medical instrument used to secure fine and delicate materials
Home range	The area traversed by an animal during its activities during a specific period of time
Mine	Gahcho Kué Mine
Population	Classically, a collection of interbreeding individuals
Transect	A method of sampling along a path or fixed line
Upland	Ground elevated above the lowlands along rivers or between hills; highland or elevated land; high and hilly country

APPENDIX A: 2022 CARIBOU BEHAVIOURAL MONITORING RESULTS

Survey # (Survey Type Day-Group)	Date	Temp C	Wind Speed (m/s)	Wind Direction	Observer location	Distance to Herd	Bearing to Herd	Herd Size	Group Size	Lats or Portage?	Location Description	Survey Area	Nearest Infrastructure	Herd Composition (HBC#)	Herd Composition (FBC#)	Score Type	Group #	Time	# of Individuals doing Behaviour*						Stressor*	Distance to Stressor (m)	Response (H or S)	Time to Return to Previous Behaviour (Seconds)	Comments (including if only some or all responded to stressor)	Surveys Under Time		
																			B	F	S	A	W	T	R							
Survey 12-201	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-202	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-203	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-204	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-205	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-206	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-207	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-208	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-209	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-210	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-211	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-212	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-213	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-214	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-215	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-216	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-217	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-218	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-219	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-220	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-221	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-222	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-223	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-224	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-225	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-226	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-227	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-228	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-229	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-230	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-231	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-232	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-233	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-234	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-235	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-236	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-237	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-238	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-239	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-240	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-241	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-242	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-243	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-244	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-245	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-246	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0	100	100	0	0	0	Caribou Kue	200m	F, M, C	1	1	11:40:00		1												
Survey 12-247	12-Mar-21	-11	0	0	0	200m	0																									

APPENDIX B: 2021 ANNUAL REPORT ECCC RESPONSE TO BARN SWALLOW



Environmental Protection Operations Directorate
Prairie & Northern Region
5019 52nd Street, 4th Floor
P.O. Box 2310
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2P7

ECCC File: 5100 000 0013/007
MVLWB File: MV2005L2-0015 /
MV2021D0009

October 14, 2022

via William.Liu@debeersgroup.com

William Liu
Regulatory Specialist
De Beers Group
Suite 300 – 1601 Airport Road NE
Airport Corporate Center
Calgary, AB T2E 6Z8

Dear William Liu:

RE: MV2005L2-0015 / MV2021D0009 – De Beers Canada Inc. – Gahcho Kué Project – 2021 Annual Wildlife Report Proponent Responses

Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) has reviewed the information submitted to the Government of the Northwest Territories regarding the above-mentioned 2021 Annual Wildlife Report and the subsequent responses to ECCC's comments submitted by De Beers Canada Inc.

ECCC is providing technical, science-based information and knowledge based on our mandate pursuant to the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act*, the pollution prevention provisions of the *Fisheries Act*, the *Migratory Birds Convention Act*, and the *Species at Risk Act*. These comments are intended to inform the assessment of this project's potential effects in the receiving environment and on valued ecosystem components. Any comments received from ECCC in this context does not relieve the proponent of its obligations to respect all applicable federal legislation.

The following comments are provided:

1. Species of Concern – Barn Swallow

Reference(s)

- Section 2 – Species of Concern, Gahcho Kué Mine, 2021 Annual Report
- Email Response: 2021 Gahcho Kue Annual Wildlife Report



Environment and
Climate Change Canada

Environnement et
Changement climatique Canada

Canada

Comment

In the Proponents response, it is stated that “flight observations of barn swallows did not trigger immediate protection measures and ECCC notification, as no signs of nest activity was present.”

ECCC would like to emphasize that barn swallows were previously observed at stations WMP-6 and CP1-1 on two separate visits, and were definitely nesting at the mine site somewhere. Those swallows may have been foraging when first detected, but efforts to follow them and locate the nest to implement protective measures should always be the course of action, unless the nest has already been found. These swallows nest on man-made structures (buildings, culverts, bridges, etc.) and there are no other structures for hundreds of kilometers from that mine site. They also have high nest site fidelity, which means they will return to nest there every year (i.e. ongoing management issue). In addition, CWS was notified by Gahcho Kue staff in 2022 that a nest of barn swallows was found in one building and monitored to ensure measures were effective.

ECCC Recommendation(s)

In addition to the Proponent’s response, that they will add barn swallows to Section 2 and Table 2-1 in the 2022 Annual Wildlife Report, ECCC recommends that:

- Surveillance monitoring be initiated upon detection of barn swallow on-site to locate the nest(s);
- Measures be put in place immediately to avoid disturbance and the damage and destruction of the residence, once the nest(s) are located;
- Monitoring of nest(s) continues to ensure the effectiveness of protection measures;
- Monitoring be summarized in the Annual Wildlife Report; and
- ECCC be notified at cwsnorth-scfnord@ec.gc.ca for:
 - a. All interactions and incidents involving the potential disturbance of individuals or nests, and any mortality events of these species; and
 - b. Any updates to wildlife management and monitoring plans, or their equivalence, in relation to these species.

ECCC acknowledges all other responses provided by the Proponent and considers the corresponding comments resolved.

If you need more information, please contact Stephanie Mallon at Stephanie.Mallon@ec.gc.ca.

Sincerely,

[original signed by]

Stephanie Mallon
Environmental Assessment Officer

cc: Jody Small, Acting Head, Environmental Assessment North (NT and NU)