



# COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

## The next era at Ekati Diamond Mine is bright

Message from Kim Truter - CEO of Burgundy Diamond Mines



**Burgundy Diamond Mines** is the new owner of Ekati Diamond Mine, and it is my honour to share with you the goals for the company to secure a long-term future of continued growth. Ekati celebrated 25 years of production on October 14, 2023, and we are both proud of what has been accomplished and excited about the future!

It is only through our valued relationships with local communities,

notably our Impact Benefit Agreement and Northern Indigenous business partners, who continue to support projects and work collaboratively to advance them, that we can achieve our collective goals and more successful outcomes for the North.

Burgundy is focused on building a future for generations to come. The existing mine plan extends through to 2028, with the Point Lake Project approved and ready to go into production in 2024.

We are also considering five conceptual potential future project additions to the mine plan, for extending mine life beyond 2028. These include continuing Misery underground at greater depths, alternatives for the expansion of Point Lake, exploring underground options at Sable and Fox, and optimizing diamond resources by processing the remaining stockpiles from Fox.

With continued investment in the Northwest Territories, we are also working diligently to provide quality employment opportunities for Indigenous community members and Northerners. As we build on strategies to extend mine life at Ekati, we recognize the opportunities for more generations to benefit from incorporating Traditional Knowledge and Indigenous history learning into everyday life at Ekati. As a company, we have committed to highlighting Indigenous cultures and promoting diversity through regular events and learning and development opportunities.

I look forward to continuing Ekati’s legacy as major contributor to the economy of the North and to continuing to strengthen Burgundy’s relationships with Indigenous communities.

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# Celebrating Indigenous culture

## National Indigenous History Month and Truth and Reconciliation Day



*Renowned Tłjchq artist James Wedzin spent two days at Ekati teaching Indigenous art paint classes to our workforce.*

National Indigenous History Month included a packed schedule at Ekati with special events and activities focused on celebrating the talent, heritage and culture of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples throughout the month of June. This included:

- An Indigenous movie festival.
- A treasure hunt to discover various Indigenous artifacts displayed around site.
- Traditional Dene Hand Games with community drummers.
- Painting classes with renowned Tłjchq artist James Wedzin.
- Meals comprised of a variety of traditional dishes being served during special dinners.
- A Fire Ceremony to honour Indigenous ancestors and National Indigenous Peoples Day through prayer.



To commemorate Truth and Reconciliation Day and Orange Shirt Day, we looked towards talented Ekati Indigenous artists to specially design a unique drawing, which was then printed on orange shirts and distributed to everyone at site and in the Calgary office.

The Orange Shirt was designed by Alec Shae, an artist from Behchokq and highlights the important message for Truth and Reconciliation Day that Every Child Matters. As part of Alec's award, he chose to designate the \$1,000 donation provided by Burgundy to support youth in his community and the Fort Good Hope youth program.

Mural installations made up of black paper were also made available at Ekati and in the Calgary office, providing a safe space for anyone who wished to pledge their support for those who have been directly impacted by residential schools, using orange paint to imprint their hand on the murals.

Burgundy Diamond Mines recognizes the traditional land use of our IBA partners, Tłjchq Government, Akaitcho Treaty 8 (Yellowknives Dene First Nation and Łutsel K'e Dene First Nation), North Slave Métis Alliance and Hamlet of Kugluktuk/Kitikmeot Inuit Association. We also acknowledge the impacts 13 Northwest Territories residential schools had, and continues to have, on our workforce.

As a company who values and respects the diversity of all Indigenous peoples, we will continue to celebrate and recognize the rich traditions and contributions First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, within our workforce, throughout Northern communities and through our relationships with Impact Benefit Agreement partners, northern suppliers and businesses.

This summer, 68 per cent of Northwest Territories residents were forced to flee their communities due to wildfires that spanned over 4,000,000 hectares across the territory.

This historical event prompted mass evacuation orders for residents of Fort Smith, Hay River, K'at'l'odeeche First Nation, Jean Marie River, Enterprise, Yellowknife, Dettah and Ndilq in August, with some communities unable to return home until mid-September.

Numerous members of Burgundy's workforce and their families were personally impacted by the wildfires. In response to the emergency, Burgundy assembled an incident management team (IMT), that quickly stepped into action, by employing their skill-set and knowledge, to explore options and efficient responses to prioritize the health and safety of NWT community members.



## Northwest Territories Wildfires Response

### Burgundy assists in emergency relief efforts

This included providing food and lodging options for Burgundy workforce members and their families displaced by the wildfires, as well as accommodations for emergency responders fighting the fires in the region. The team also assisted with wildfire emergency response expertise and health and wellness support for those impacted by mass evacuations in the NWT. Alternative fly points and flexible leave options were also made available for any members of Burgundy's workforce impacted by the fires to accommodate travel to and from Ekati mine.

"There was a lot of uncertainty during the evacuation. I worked with the IMT team to ensure that our Northern workforce was taken care of, while being evacuated myself, which helped distract me from the events happening at home," said Rebecca Plotner, Community Relations Advisor with Burgundy.

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*"Alberta opened their arms to many Northerners and lots of former Northerners opened their homes to displaced evacuees. It was wonderful seeing so many people working together to try and support each other."*

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Overall, Burgundy donated a total of \$45,000 in wildfire emergency relief and raised more than \$14,000, from additional private and personal donations through its emergency response matching campaign. These fundraising efforts were made possible by generous donations from employees, contractors, suppliers, customers and investors, and provided financial assistance so that shelves didn't go empty in the affected communities.

*Pictured below: view from Hay River Highway heading into town two hours before evacuation orders were issued in May 2023, at the start of what would become a historical event for wildfires in the Northwest Territories.*





## Ekati Diamond Mine

Celebrating 25 years of production

Ekati Diamond Mine celebrated 25 years of production on October 14, 2023, a remarkable milestone accomplishment!

Ekati is Canada’s first diamond mine, with the first diamonds discovered in 1991. The discovery triggered the largest staking rush in Canadian history and put Canada on the map as a plentiful source of quality ethically produced diamonds.

“We are proud to continue Ekati’s legacy in Canada and enhance its reputation around the globe, by successfully and sustainably producing exceptionally high-quality, ethically sourced diamonds with Canadian provenance,” said Kim Truter, CEO and Managing Director of Burgundy Diamond Mines.

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*“Ekati has significant resources and is a world-class mine with exceptional infrastructure in a favorable jurisdiction with a significant opportunity for growth.”*

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As of October 2023, Ekati has produced more than 95 million carats extracted from surface and underground pit ore bodies, and it is ranked in the top 10 diamond mines globally based on production carats recovered in 2022.

Ekati’s current mine plan extends through to 2028, with Sable open and Misery underground in active operation and Point Lake open scheduled to go into production in 2024.

Potential future project additions to the existing mine plan at Ekati, include five conceptual conventional mine life enhancements, currently under consideration:

- Continuing to advance underground mining operations at Misery underground.
- Looking at alternatives for the expansion of Point Lake.
- Evaluating Sable underground opportunity following open pit completion.
- Opportunity for underground operations at Fox, below the existing open pit.
- Opportunities to maximize the remaining stockpile resource at Fox pit.

As we reflect on the history, the contributions made possible by the mine and the opportunities ahead of us, we continue to be in awe of the people who work at Ekati. It is through the perseverance and hard work of those who ensure they are prepared to deliver results at our 24/7 365 day a year operation in a harsh sub-arctic climate, that the mine continues to be a success. Ekati is a cornerstone asset in the Burgundy Diamond Mines portfolio and has a great future with numerous opportunities to extend the life of the mine and provide future growth opportunities well into the next decade.

*Celebrations took place at Ekati and in the Calgary office which included ribbon cutting ceremonies, cake, drumming performances, celebratory gifts and a whole lot of fun!*





## In the spotlight

Cheryl Melanson, Ekati Diamond Mine Security Officer and community activist

Eyeing banks of computer monitors, Cheryl Melanson observes and reviews security camera footage for Ekati Diamond Mine and Burgundy's offices in Calgary, Antwerp, Belgium and Perth, Western Australia. As a security officer, she is responsible for ensuring the safety of everyone on premises, including monitoring wildlife movements in relation to operations to limit human interaction and potential safety incidents around the Ekati mine site.

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*Cheryl is known at Ekati as someone who brings a valuable dynamic to the team through her strong moral compass and passion for helping others.*

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Cheryl joined Ekati in December of 2021, when she was looking for a job that would allow increased flexibility and work-life balance. Her background and training are in corrections, and she is fully certified in First Aid and verbal judo.

Cheryl is known at Ekati as someone who brings a valuable dynamic to the team through her strong moral compass and passion for helping others. She demonstrated this when a devastating flood washed through the Northern community of Hay River, Northwest Territories in 2022 which displaced many community members and Ekati workers and their families.

During these events, Cheryl took the initiative to ensure that affected off-shift employees and families of those working at Ekati had their needs met, by directing them to their local Friendship Centre to gather supplies. She also organized trucks filled with bottled water to be sent out to evacuees.

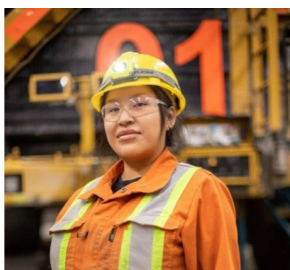
"We couldn't help in all ways, but the small things we did I hope made a difference. We made sure our community, as well as our

Ekati family, were all on the list to receive supplies and support and that they were not forgotten," said Cheryl. "It's those little things that keep our Ekati family strong."

Cheryl serves as a dedicated Indigenous community advocate on the Board of Directors for the National Association of Friendship Centres (NAFC), a non-profit organization that provides valuable resources and support to Indigenous members living in urban areas.

She is also the Northern representative for the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-spirit (MMIWG2S) initiative, ensuring the names of the missing and murdered receive media representation, while fighting for policy changes at the federal level.

Just like the diamonds she watches over, Cheryl truly embodies the same purity, strength, resilience and brilliance of character. Her commitment to advocating for Northern communities and bringing awareness to Indigenous rights and issues is unwavering and invaluable to the northern territories and Ekati Diamond Mine.



Interested in a career with Burgundy Diamond Mines? Please contact [careers@burgundydiamonds.com](mailto:careers@burgundydiamonds.com)

[burgundydiamonds.com/careers](https://www.burgundydiamonds.com/careers)



## Point Lake Project

### The bridge to Ekati's future

Point Lake is the site of the first diamondiferous kimberlite discovery in the Northwest Territories. Many people have heard the story of how the announcement of microdiamonds in Point Lake drill core in late 1991 started the biggest staking rush in Canada's history.

Now Point Lake represents the bridge to Ekati's future and mining is expected to commence in April or May of 2024.

Lots of progress has been made at site to get the project to this stage, including working together with the community to conduct a fish-out of the lake, completing scientific research about Lake Trout ecology in the North, and then pumping out more than 7 million cubic meters of water from Point Lake, which equates to roughly 2,800 Olympic swimming pools full of water.

The water, which was pumped from King Pond to Lynx, will enable the testing of the underwater remote mining system in the Lynx pit.

"I would like to congratulate everyone involved in progressing Point Lake into the production plan for 2024," said Kim Truter, CEO of Burgundy. "This major milestone could not have been achieved without the consolidated effort from everyone working together as one team."

Burgundy remains committed to developing the Point Lake Project in the most environmentally and responsible way, by continuing our collaboration with community stakeholders, regulatory bodies and Impact Benefit Agreement partners.

*Pictured left to right: Dewatering system operations; Dewatering progress Sept. 2023; Point Lake winter preparation.*



For more information about the programs and projects mentioned in this newsletter, please contact **Nicholas Ballantyne** at [nicholas.ballantyne@burgundydiamonds.com](mailto:nicholas.ballantyne@burgundydiamonds.com) or **Rebecca Plotner** at [rebecca.plotner@burgundydiamonds.com](mailto:rebecca.plotner@burgundydiamonds.com). Information is also available on our website at [burgundydiamonds.com](http://burgundydiamonds.com).



## Ekati Plus Program

Burgundy invests in projects that support healthy, vibrant Northern communities through the Ekati Plus Program. Applications to request funding or in-kind support for projects that support people and community development in the Northwest Territories may be submitted to [ekatiplus@burgundydiamonds.com](mailto:ekatiplus@burgundydiamonds.com). More information about the program can be found on the website at [burgundydiamonds.com/sustainability](http://burgundydiamonds.com/sustainability).

## Burgundy receives 10-year approval for Ekati Water Licence

Burgundy Diamond Mines received approval for renewal of its Type A Water Licence for Ekati Diamond Mine in December.

Ekati operates under several environmental permits and agreements guided by different government agencies. The Type A Water Licence, issued by the Wek'èezhìi Land and Water Board, defines water use on the mine site. For example, it sets out the amount of water that Burgundy can take from lakes to use in camps or for watering roads to keep down the dust and controls the quality of the mine water Burgundy can return into the environment.

The renewal came into effect December 18, 2023, for a period of 10 years, as an extension to the previous licence. It covers future water usage to conduct the underwater remote mining trial at Lynx pit and approval for additional water volumes for contingency for the process plant and for progressive reclamation, including back flooding completed surface pits.

“We appreciate the support from our Impact Benefit Agreement partners for Ekati’s water licence renewal, who we worked with

collaboratively, throughout the duration of the regulatory process,” said Sheila Chernys, Head of Health, Safety, Environment and Communities at Burgundy. “It is certainly great news for all of us, as this is an essential part of Ekati’s future life of mine plan and growth opportunities.”

Burgundy is committed to the safety and well-being of our people, the environment and the communities in which we operate. Mitigating environmental impact is part of our environmental stewardship practices, which support our mandate to deliver ethically produced natural diamonds to the market.

One-third of the Ekati claim block is covered with water, so ensuring water usage is in line with environmental standards and regulations, is of the utmost importance to the continuity of our operations. Water usage and water quality is important for wildlife, communities in proximity to the mine, and part of our long-term mine and reclamation commitments.

*Overview of Ekati claim block of which one third is covered with water.*

