



# Mining

## Ekati Diamond Mine, Canada

As of 2001, the Ekati Mine was North America's only operating diamond mine. Located in the north central Northwestern Territories (NWT) of Canada, the mine yields raw diamonds from a sparsely inhabited sub-arctic region. Air transport connects mine personnel and supplies year-round, while a single winter ice road provides the only vehicular access just ten weeks per year.

Expanded mining exploration in the 1990s began a new era for this otherwise undeveloped region. Wildlife officials have collared and tracked caribou, in a herd

ranging from 350 000 to half a million, to monitor their movement and behavior in proximity to the mines. Historical information about the herds comes from Dogrib and Inuit knowledge obtained from elder natives who still inhabit the NWT, and who have depended on the caribou for centuries.

These two images compare the same area, pre-mining and after mine operations have commenced. The white patch in the northwest portion of the 2000 image represents the mine and the associated infrastructure.