

Canadian Arctic Resources Committee (CARC) and the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society-NWT Chapter (CPAWS-NWT) intervened in the court challenge, represented by the Sierra Legal Defence Fund. The groups were the sole defenders of the Board's decision as the Board was not permitted to argue in favour of its own decision in the Court, and the Attorney General of Canada intervened to argue that the Board's decision should be overturned.

*"This is a strong victory for the environment and the right of Northerners to manage their own resources,"* says Karen Wristen, CARC's Executive Director. *"It makes it very difficult for other projects or companies to look for legal loopholes to avoid undergoing an environmental assessment."*

*"We are very pleased that the CanTung mine will finally go through a public environmental assessment,"* adds Greg Yeoman of CPAWS-NWT. *"This will give us all an opportunity to assess the impacts of the mine on the ecological integrity of Nahanni National Park Reserve, a World Heritage Site. To do otherwise would have been a failure of the environmental management system in the NWT."*

The company argued that its operations should be exempt from environmental assessment because the mine, although recently reopened, has been in existence for over three decades. *"The Court rejected the attempt to preclude the environmental review of old projects,"* says Randy Christensen of the Sierra Legal Defence Fund, the lawyer who argued the case. *"Environmental protection in the North will be significantly enhanced by this decision as many practices allowed 30 years ago are simply not acceptable today."*