

**Publisher: Nunavut News**

**Author: *David Ryan***

Rankin Inlet (Apr 03/06) - Looking for diamonds over two million acres of land may be a daunting task, but it's not stopping the joint-venture team on the Churchill project.

Exploration will begin in mid- to late-April on this chunk of tundra between Rankin Inlet and Chesterfield Inlet. The project includes Shear Minerals, 51 per cent; Stornoway Diamond Corp., 35 per cent; and BHP Billiton, 14 per cent.

"We are hoping for a breakthrough on the project," said Pamela Strand, president and chief executive officer of Shear Minerals.

Exploration from last year revealed a till sample from the Sedna corridor contained quality kimberlite fragments, said Strand.

"This sample contained the right type of mineral chemistry," she said. "There are sample matches with high diamond potential."

The company believes it is closing in on kimberlite with huge potential and its drilling will now be more targeted.

If the samples collected this year yield more positive news, it would be "ideal to get to the bulk sample stage next year," said Strand.

Thus far, 41 kimberlites have been discovered, 16 of which were diamondiferous though not of a high enough grade to be economical at this time, said Nick Thomas, investor relations manager at Stornoway, adding finding a quality kimberlite pipe is crucial.

"We need a breakthrough on this property," he said.

With a \$4.5 million to \$5.5 million exploration budget this season, Thomas is quite optimistic about what the 42nd kimberlite will hold.

Residents and officials in the surrounding communities are also excited the crews will be returning for another season.

"With the exploration, there's more business," said Pakak Sigurdson, a program officer with the Department of Economic Development and Transportation in Rankin Inlet.

"There is enthusiasm in the community."

## **NUNAVUT NEWS: Churchill diamond hunt continues**

Written by David Ryan

---

Many jobs have already been created for drilling and hauling assistants, he said.