



Spring 2015

Decision of Environmental Assessment and Next Steps Towards Full Remediation

Environmental Assessment is complete

The Giant Mine Remediation Project was referred to Environmental Assessment (EA) in March 2008. This referral was prompted by concerns that the project would have negative impacts on the environment.

On August 14, 2014, the Responsible Ministers issued their Decision of EA for the Giant Mine Remediation Project.

This decision confirms the project has been thoroughly reviewed, and that the project team has attended to the associated social and environmental impacts. It also specifies the measures that must be completed to address public concerns.

The Ministers' decision also confirms the Frozen Block is the best way to protect the public and the environment at this time.

The information in the Decision of EA, including the 26 measures it sets out, provides focus for the next phase of engagement, design and decision-making.

The road to full remediation

The Giant Mine Remediation Plan has undergone extensive environmental review, as well as expert and public review since Canada became responsible for the site in 1999.

The project applied for a Water Licence in 2007 and was referred to Environmental Assessment in 2008.

The City of Yellowknife referred the project to environmental assessment, citing potential adverse environmental impact within municipal boundaries in 2008.

Between 2008 and 2012, the Project Team took part in several technical sessions and public hearings, as well as hundreds of information requests, meetings and discussions with stakeholder groups, the Yellowknives Dene and the public.

Site stabilization was undertaken in 2013 and 2014 to reduce risks at site as the EA proceeded.

The Ministers' Decision of Environmental Assessment was issued in August 14, 2014. This is a major milestone for the project that allows the project team to continue the land and water permitting process and advance the engineering design.

As this work proceeds, AANDC will continue to monitor site risks and take action to protect the health and safety of on-site workers, the public and the environment.



Spring 2015

How close are we to the clean up?

After a six-year EA process that included information requests, technical sessions, public hearings and engagement, the project is now a big step closer to being able to fully clean up the site to protect the people of Yellowknife, N'dilo and Dettah, and the local environment.

While everyone wants to see the clean-up start as soon as possible, there are still important permitting and planning activities that first need to take place. This is work that could not begin until the EA was completed.

This means remediation is still years away. The project team will set an anticipated start date once it has a better idea of how much time will be required to implement the measures of EA and go through the regulatory licensing process.

What will happen now?

Addressing EA measures and completing regulatory requirements

The Project Team is now focussed on developing and updating the regulatory applications it first submitted in 2007 before the project was referred to EA. The project needs a Water Licence and Land Use Permit before full remediation can begin and to obtain these, the Project Team must develop and submit a complete Water Licence package, including a Consolidated Project Description to the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board.

It is important to note that the Decision of EA listed 26 measures that must be addressed. These measures are related to public concerns over potential adverse ecological and social impacts of the project.

Many of the measures must be considered in the development of the updated project description and will require thoughtful review and planning. The majority of measures must also be addressed before the project receives regulatory approvals.

The measures cover a range of topics, such as:

- limiting the overall timeframe of the project to 100 years
- adding independent reviews every 20 years to evaluate project effectiveness and possibly identify a better approach
- continuing assessment of overall risk as well as human health risks
- conducting human health monitoring
- investigating long-term funding options
- establishing independent oversight
- investigating options for Baker Creek
- treating water to a drinking water standard
- changing the way treated water will be released into Great Slave Lake, and
- facilitating on-going research into potential new technologies

Over the next year, the Project Team's immediate focus will be on the measures with set timelines, as well as on the measures that have been identified by parties such as the Giant Mine Working Group and the Giant Mine Advisory Committee.

Spring 2015

These measures are related to establishing independent oversight, conducting human health monitoring, continuing the assessment of overall risk as well as risks to human health, investigating options for Baker Creek, and updating the existing air quality monitoring program.

Most of the remaining measures will be addressed within the next four-to-five years.



EA measures 11, 12 and 13 address the potential options for Baker Creek and water quality.

Engineering, design and project planning

There is also a significant amount of engineering work and project planning that must take place before full remediation can get underway. The licensing process requires the Project Team to gather significant local stakeholder and public input into these plans. This phase of the project will require extensive engagement.

All these steps will take time, but they ensure the remediation is done properly, incorporating public concerns along the way. The Giant Mine Remediation Project Team will continue to work with stakeholders to move the project forward in a timely and inclusive manner.



Committed to the health and safety of on-site workers, local communities, and the environment

The Giant Mine Remediation Project Team will continue to ensure the site is kept safe, secure, and in compliance with regulations by maintaining facilities, controlling and inspecting contaminated waste storage areas, managing mine water, and treating water effluent on site.



Spring 2015

The safety of on-site workers remains a priority at all times and is ensured through the various site safety protocols and plans in place.

In 2012, the Project Team applied for a Water Licence to begin remediation work on the roaster and the underground to address unacceptable risks. A great deal of stabilization work was completed in 2013 and 2014, including the deconstruction of the roaster complex, and as a result, the site is safer today than it was two years ago.

With time, as the site continues to deteriorate, risks may need to be addressed. The Project Team will maintain an active risk identification and management program until full remediation can begin. The Team will also keep the public and stakeholders informed and involved in this process.

All 10 structures of the former roaster complex have been decontaminated and demolished and the arsenic waste is safely stored; the current priority is a final tidy up of the former roaster area and on-going underground stabilization. The C-Shaft headframe is also a concern as the original timber frame continues to deteriorate and the risk is now deemed unacceptable. The Project Team is currently engaging with stakeholders on the headframe and there are plans to address this in 2015/16.

We want to hear from you

There will be many opportunities to participate in this project in the coming months and years. Engagement will be critical to addressing EA measures, licensing and permitting, as well as project design.

Want to learn more? Here's how:


- Attend community information sessions and stakeholder meetings
- Learn about the project online: www.giant.gc.ca
- Follow us on Twitter @GiantMine
- Talk to us: 867-669-2426
- Come see us: 3rd floor, Gallery Building, 4923 52 Street, Yellowknife

For information regarding reproduction rights, please contact:
Public Enquiries Contact Centre
Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada
Infopubs@aadnc-aandc.gc.ca

www.aandc.gc.ca	English Version (Format: PDF)
1-800-567-9604	QS-6359-000-EE-A1
TTY: 1-866-553-0554	Catalogue: R3-225/2015E-PDF
	ISBN: 978-0-660-01974-1

© Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, represented by the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, 2015

Cette publication est également disponible en français sous le titre:
Décision sur l'évaluation environnementale et prochaines étapes en vue de l'assainissement complet.



Moving Forward Together



Canada 