

## **The Future of Mining in the Yukon**

Mining has evolved, however people's opinion of mining is still stuck in the past.

While the Yukon's Gold Rush was an historical event that made the Yukon famous world-wide, a lot has changed since the 1890's. Since the Faro mine was constructed and began operating in 1969 our world has evolved. Canadians have placed more value on human rights, environmental protection, and health and safety over the last several decades as more information has become available and people have become more informed. In the 1960's there was very little use of seatbelts in vehicles, in fact, most vehicles didn't even have seat belts. In the 1970's smoking was permitted everywhere, including on planes and in places of work. As information about the health effects of seatbelt use and smoking became available and widely shared, our attitude toward them changed.

We are currently celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Together Today for our Children Tomorrow, perhaps the greatest societal shift the Yukon has ever seen. In the 1980's the Charter of Rights and Freedoms was finally enacted. In the 1990's Yukon Land Claim and self-government agreements started to be signed. Moving on to the 2000's, YESAA was enacted to conduct independent environmental assessments in the Yukon and same-sex marriage became legal. Only six years ago you would have a criminal record if caught selling marijuana and yet only a mere four years ago government started selling it.

As society evolves, attitudes change, and laws and regulations reflect those changes. Regulatory changes drive innovation and innovation improves society. As society evolves, industry also evolves, and mining today is reflective of the same societal changes that make seatbelts mandatory in cars. The mines of today are not the mines of yesterday and the mines of tomorrow will be better yet.

A major challenge facing society today is climate change and our transition to a green economy. Yukon's mining industry is among the most energy efficient in Canada and the world. Modern mines are dedicated to driving forward innovation to reduce GHG emissions through the adaptation of new technologies and building efficiencies into operations.

Miners, businesses that service and supply mines, and environmental practitioners are excited to see the industry evolve so quickly and become part of an innovative contributor to Yukon's and Canada's economy and well-being. We are all people who live in the Yukon and are committed to being leaders in environmental stewardship while providing a good economic base for the Yukon.

We would like the opportunity to change your mind about mineral extraction by showing what mining is like now. Modern mining companies have made significant strides over the past several years in developing lasting and respectful relationships with First Nations; in working to ensure safe and healthy workplaces and assisting communities with the same; improving environmental compliance and performance; and continually innovating to push the bar higher.

We understand that water quality and the aquatic environment is key for Yukoners – we have made significant progress to ensure water resources are protected through better water quality monitoring systems and adaptive management systems to enable earlier response to changes in water quality to better water treatment plants keeping water safe for all Yukoners. Tomorrow's projects will be able to use automated remote sampling to constantly monitor! We are working with Yukon University to constantly improve our results, so tomorrow's projects are safer and are better for the Yukon.

The mines of the future will take this experience and build on it through continuous improvement and innovation, and just like society we will continue to evolve. That's not to say we won't make mistakes along the way, because we will, but a progressive and responsible mining industry in Yukon and in Canada, will take those mistakes and learn from them to continue the cycle of improvement.

A strong, responsible exploration and mining industry means a stronger Yukon. Producing the minerals needed for the green transition and others that sustain our lifestyle can not be a task we export to another part of the world where environmental and social concerns are not as high, and the regulatory environment is decidedly less strict. We can do this correctly and sustainably here, and the Yukon is blessed with an endowment of resources, both natural and human that can make it happen. It's a new generation. We are excited about the positive changes we see now, and the innovations just around the corner. Today's Yukon miners want to ensure there is both a future for responsible mining in the Yukon and an abundance of the wild places that brought us to the Yukon in the first place. Do you?

Government of Yukon is currently reviewing the Yukon's mining legislation and you can participate in the 90 day public engagement, as well as accessing an online survey, [New minerals legislation | Government of Yukon](#). We encourage every Yukoner to make your voice heard.

- Yukon Chamber of Mines -