

Carcross - Wednesday, September 12, 2018

Session #7 - Collaboration in Reclamation Projects

Time 135pm-155pm

Topic **Rethinking Mine Remediation: Community Engagement in Mine Closure**

Abstract To date, research on mine remediation in Canada has focused primarily on its scientific and technical aspects; little is known about the historical, political and social dimensions of remediation in Canada. Using the remediation projects at the Giant Mine in the Northwest Territories and the Cyprus Anvil Mine in Faro, Yukon as case studies, my research analyzes mine remediation processes in the Canadian sub-Arctic and investigates how local communities shape these processes. Using the concepts of ecological restoration, environmental justice, discard studies, and theories of care, this research investigates how effectively Indigenous knowledge and community concerns have been included in remediation planning. Recognizing that remediation plans tend to focus on the material and economic aspects of containing pollution, my research asks: How can the current approach to mine remediation be changed from a focus on site containment to a broader emphasis on community remediation, reclamation, repair and reconciliation? I argue that, without a community objectives based approach to remediation, such projects risk continuing systems of degradation and marginalization that allowed for such destruction to happen in the first place. The Giant Mine and Cyprus Anvil Mine cases illustrate the potential for community activism to shift remediation to include social issues such as environmental justice, reconciliation and intergenerational equity. This research contributes to a broader understanding of the social dimensions of toxic contamination and mine remediation, and the development of best practices for community engagement during mine closure.

Presenter(s) Caitlynn Beckett, Memorial University

Bio(s) I am currently a PhD student in Geography at Memorial University in St. John's Newfoundland, where I also completed my MA in 2017. I completed my undergraduate degree at the University of Saskatchewan in International Studies in 2015. I have also worked for Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation and Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada. I am a settler scholar from Treaty 4 Territory and grew up in Regina, Saskatchewan. My research interests include processes of mine remediation, environmental justice, impact assessment and community engagement in resource extraction across Northern Canada. My Masters research was completed at the Giant Mine, in Yellowknife, in partnership with the Yellowknives Dene First Nation and included key stakeholder interviews and participant observation. The objective of this research was to trace the history and processes of remediation at Giant Mine from a community perspective. In my PhD, I will continue this type of research and am currently developing research objectives with the Ross River Dena (for the Faro Mine Remediation Project and environmental/socio-economic assessment process) and am also involved in the Mine Closure Committee for the Raglan Mine in Nunavik. The ultimate goal of this research is to provide a comprehensive, critical review of mine remediation practices across northern Canada, focused on community impacts and objectives.