

**Session #5 - Abandoned Sites Management**

**Time** 950am-1010am

**Topic** **Faro Mine Remediation Project - Indigenous Engagement**

**Abstract** Faro Mine, once the largest open pit lead-zinc mine in the world, has become one of the most complex abandoned mine remediation projects in Canada. Thirty years of mining left behind 70 million tonnes of tailings and 320 million tonnes of waste rock, which have the potential to leach heavy metals and acid into the surrounding land and water. When the last owner declared bankruptcy in 1998, the Government of Canada stepped in to fund the work required to keep the site safe.

The project is located on the asserted traditional territory of the Kaska Nation, and upstream from Selkirk First Nation. Engagement with First Nations is part of Canada's commitment to good governance and to the reconciliation agenda.

Considerable work has taken place to build relationships with the Kaska Nation, and increase First Nation involvement in the Faro Mine Remediation Project. In June 2016, the Kaska Faro Secretariat was established as Kaska's preferred method for increased involvement in the project. It represents the interests of Ross River Dena Council, Liard First Nation and Kaska Dena Council. The Secretariat allows the Kaska to build capacity and be fully integrated as project partners, participating in all aspects of the project, from project Oversight Committee and topic-specific working groups to day-to-day activities. It also coordinates Kaska's participation in the planning process and further enables the Kaska to be an effective and contributing partner in all phases of the project. The Kaska Faro Secretariat plays an important role in the Faro Mine Remediation Project and helped facilitate community consultation sessions in Ross River and Watson Lake in the summer of 2017. Consultation sessions were also held in the Town of Faro, Pelly Crossing, Carmacks and Whitehorse at this time. The project team solicited input, feedback and concerns on the plan for remediating the Faro Mine site. A second round of consultations is scheduled to take place in summer 2018 to review the feedback heard during the 2017 consultations, and present proposed measures to address community interests and concerns. The public will be invited to provide feedback on these measures intended to mitigate the project's impact on the economy, people and the environment.

The objective of this presentation is to communicate the engagement approaches, challenges, and lessons learned associated with addressing the legacy contamination that resulted from the operation and abandonment of the Faro Mine.

**Presenter(s)** Jesse George, CIRNAC

**Bio(s)** Jesse George has been working within the department of Crown Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada for over 15 years. He has gained valuable experience managing various programs across the country and in the North including the Northwest Territories Protected Areas Strategy and has led the departments climate change and clean energy programming for numerous years. His current role is leading on the engagement and consultations for the Faro Mine Remediation Project.