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Yukon Chamber of Mines

President’s Message

The Yukon Chamber of Mines proudly presents another version of our annual mining directory, a tool seen by many as required reading for working in the Yukon mining industry. We hope you, as many other have, find this directory useful as we enter the 2019 field season.

In 2018, many bridges were built in search of solutions to our industry’s greatest challenges. Forging new relationships and strengthening old ones has been the key to carving a path to a brighter future. With outstanding support of our greatest initiatives, YCM has seen engagement across the board from our supporters and partners. Beginning with a successful Yukon Mining and Geology Week, we have seen an increase in community attendance and, more specifically, a thirst for knowledge about the innovations in our industry. No stronger was that engagement than during our 2018 Geoscience Trade Show and Forum, in which a resounding number of Yukoners of all ages attend our annual “Family Day” and were witness to innovative technology presented by our many exhibitors, some seen within this publication.

If 2018 was the year of building bridges, then 2019 and 2020 will be the years of crossing them. With the increasing support from community and industry, we will begin creating an environment of collaboration and mutually beneficial coexistence in the coming years. We look forward to continue building these new relationships and create economic growth not only within our industry, but the Yukon. As a non-profit organization, a large portion of the YCM’s funding comes from the support of our members. On behalf of the board of directors and staff at the Yukon Chamber of Mines, I would like to thank each company, organization, and individual whose membership dollars enable us to continue lobby efforts on your behalf while at the table with policy and decision makers at the community, territorial, and federal levels. The Yukon Chamber of Mines will continue to strengthen its voice as a representative of Yukon’s modern, responsible mining industry.

Sincerely,
Mike Burke
President
Yukon Chamber of Mines

Representing the Territory

Update from the Yukon Chamber of Mines

Through the Pages of the Yukon Mining and Exploration Directory, with a distribution across Canada exceeding 12,000 copies, you will find stories and photos that articulate the technology, innovation, and progressive partnerships of our industry. The directory is a testament to the growth of the Yukon mining industry and the Chamber organization that represents it. As our industry sees breakthroughs in collaboration and innovation, so does our directory, with additional companies listed and content enriched.

In 2018, Yukon’s mineral exploration and deposit expenditures totalled $172.3 million, a slight increase over 2017’s $165.1 million, and this coming season promises to be an exciting one as we see Victoria Gold Corporation (TSX-V: VIT) complete its Eagle Gold Mine in the Mayo region and Alexco Resource Corporation (TSE: AXR) looks to bring it’s Bermingham property online. Yukon’s last operating hardrock mine—Minto, found just north of Carmacks and owned by Capstone Mining Corp.’s (TSE: CS)—continues to be in care and maintenance as the owners negotiate an agreement of sale to Pembroke Resources (LSE: PERE).

Last year was also significant for the Yukon Chamber of Mines. We launched the “Yukon First Nations Engagement and Consultation Guide” (yukonmineralengagement.ca) which exemplifies best practices when engaging early with Yukon First Nations on their traditional territories. Over the course of the year, we experienced meaningful collaboration with Yukon First Nations and the Government of Yukon.

Yukon Chamber of Mines

Executive Director

Yukon Chamber of Mines

Yukon is ready to lead Canada’s mining future

As the world looks North, Yukon stands out as a leading jurisdiction for mining investment. The territory is home to world class mineral deposits, a reliable regulatory regime, strong relationships with First Nations, governments and access to markets that sets it apart in a competitive world market.

The Yukon government has built respectful, collaborative relationships with First Nations governments, recognizing that First Nations are both leaders and partners in Yukon’s economic prosperity.

Working together with First Nations and industry partners, we are making sure the territory’s regulatory process is clear, effective and reliable.

With the future of mining increasingly driven by digital innovation, we are proud to support Northern Lights Innovation – the first innovation hub north of 60 – as a site for collaboration and technological solutions for the mining sector.

Through investments in clean energy, innovation and resilient infrastructure, we are supporting long-term economic growth that is environmentally responsible.

We are focused on the growth and diversification of a thriving and prosperous economy with well-defined benefits for our communities, First Nations and all of Yukon.

With some of the highest mineral potential of any Canadian jurisdiction, Yukon is an outstanding place to invest and do business. 

Honourable Ranj Pillai
Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources
Yukon Chamber of Mines

Board of Directors

MIKE BURKE – PRESIDENT
Mike Burke is a Yukon-based consulting geologist and was the chief geologist for Golden Predator Mining Corp. from 2011 to 2017. Prior to joining Golden Predator, Burke spent more than 20 years working at the Government of Yukon, where his duties included liaison with prospectors and mining and exploration companies, visiting active exploration sites, writing the annual “Yukon Mining, Development, and Exploration Overview”, and presenting information on the Yukon to investment bankers, financial institutions, and mining analysts around the world.

SUE CRAIG – PAST PRESIDENT
Sue Craig has over 25 years of industry experience in the Yukon, ranging from mineral exploration and permitting to construction and operation of mines. Craig is currently an appointed member of the Yukon Mineral Advisory and Yukon Energy Corporation boards. She is a Yukon Women in Mining Champion, on the board of the Association of Mineral Exploration B.C., and honoured to have received the Yukon Chamber of Mines Member’s award, in 2012.

JOSH CLARK – DIRECTOR
Josh Clark brings over a decade of business-development, marketing, and sales experience to the board, as well as experience in human resources, community engagement, and customer care. He believes in achieving goals through strategic planning and has a strong work ethic that ensures plans are implemented successfully.

CHRIS CORMIER – VICE-PRESIDENT
Chris Cormier is the general manager at Goldcorp’s Coffee Mine Project. He has over 35 years of experience in the mining industry, most recently as vice-president of corporate, project, and mine management at Red Lake Mines in Red Lake, Ontario, and mine general manager at the Porcupine Operations in Timmins, Ontario. Since joining Goldcorp, in 1997, Cormier has held various roles within operations and projects with increasing responsibility. Throughout these roles he has always taken an active role in the communities, ensuring both the operation and community benefit from building a mine with a long lifespan.

COLIN ASESLTINE – DIRECTOR
With more than twenty years’ experience in the Yukon mining sector, Colin Asselstine has worked as an operational and project manager, business owner, and leader in the private sector and with Yukon First Nations governments. As general manager of the Kluneau Community Development Limited Partnership, Asselstine partners with government and industry to enhance local economic opportunities and attract investment to Kluneau First Nation. His work has attracted investment in community builds, infrastructure, and projects which encourage community growth in Buteinau Landling and throughout Kluneau First Nation Traditional Territory. Asselstine helped establish the partnership between Kluneau First Nation and Nickel Creek Platinum, which has given local citizens and contractors opportunities to participate at all levels of the project, while maintaining a cost-effective and solution-based approach, which targets the realization of the company’s objectives. As a long-time resident of the Kluneau region and an active member of the community. He sits on the Dân Keyi Renewable Resource Council and is a frequent volunteer, including more than 15 years with Yukon Emergency Medical Services.

JOHN SMALL – DIRECTOR
John Small joined the board as a small business representative. His company, Small’s Expediting Services, provides logistical support to the mining, exploration, mining, oil, and gas industries. Small moves the Yukon Chamber of Mines to a major role in play in protecting, developing, and advancing the Yukon’s industries. As a director and the board’s representative of small businesses, Small works to advance the objectives for all Yukon Chamber of Mines members.

LORALEE JOHNSTONE – DIRECTOR
Loralee Johnstone is director of permitting and sustainability for Coeur Silvercorp and responsible for all permitting as well as First Nations, government, and community relations. The Silvercreek site is located in B.C., but the majority of access and financial impacts are in the Yukon. Johnstone has more than 20 years of experience working with fish and wildlife, environment, mining lands, and the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board (YESAB) and has served as a member of the YESAB and Yukon Water boards.

YUKON CHAMBER OF MINES

Yukon Chamber of Mines

MINIMIZE AIRCRAFT DISTURBANCE OF WILDLIFE

Do your part. It’s the law.

• Whenever possible, fly well above or below wildlife.
• Plan your route to avoid sensitive areas.
• Allow wildlife to move safely away.
• Combine jobs to minimize flying time.

For more information on ways to minimize your impact on wildlife, please call 867-667-5409.

MICHAEL MCDougall – EX OFFICIO
Michael McDougall has over 35 years of experience in the Yukon placer fields, ranging from exploration, permitting, and management of large placer operations to construction and operation of his own family operation on the Sixtymile. McDougall is currently the president of the Klondike Placer Miners Association (KPMA). He has also been a member of the Yukon Mineral Advisory Board and is on the board of the Yukon’s Yukon Chamber of Mines. Since 2005, McDougall has been an elected member of the board of the Yukon Chamber of Mines. His main focus is on later-stage projects, where he actively seeks and evaluates junior companies with potential for the Yukon.

R. ALLEN DOHERTY – DIRECTOR
R. Allen Doherty has been active in mineral exploration in the Yukon since 1981. An active member of the Yukon Chamber of Mines since 1987, Doherty served as president of the board from 1988–89 and in 1993 and has been a director numerous times. He was a Prospector and Developer’s Association of Canada (PDAC) board member from 1996–2000 and a Yukon Minerals Advisory Board member from 1989–1993. Doherty is a founder and current chair of the Yukon Miners Training Association.

MICHAEL MCDougall – EX OFFICIO
Michael McDougall has over 35 years of experience in the Yukon placer fields, ranging from exploration, permitting, and management of large placer operations to construction and operation of his own family operation on the Sixtymile. McDougall is currently the president of the Klondike Placer Miners Association (KPMA). He has also been a member of the Yukon Mineral Advisory Board and is on the board of the Yukon’s Yukon Chamber of Mines. Since 2005, McDougall has been an elected member of the board of the Yukon Chamber of Mines. His main focus is on later-stage projects, where he actively seeks and evaluates junior companies with potential for the Yukon.
THE YUKON CHAMBER OF MINES represents a dynamic membership and, since its creation in 1943, has worked to serve its valued members and advance the interests of all those involved in the Yukon mining industry.

As the trusted voice of mining, the Yukon Chamber of Mines thrives on the government, community, First Nations, and individual partnerships it forges to help facilitate an environment of responsible development—one in which its members can continue to contribute and prosper.

Yukon Mining & Exploration Directory is published annually by North of Ordinary Media, Carcross, Yukon, Canada, on behalf of the Yukon Chamber of Mines.

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RECLAIMING KENO HILL

Alexco Resources partners with the Government of Canada and Na-Cha Nyäk Dun First Nation to clean up mine site

Developing a reclamation plan for the United Keno Hill mine site has challenges; there are historical, cultural, and environmental elements specific to the site that need to be considered.

The site, located in the Mayo region, was abandoned in 2000 and designated a Type II mine site—a place having, or potentially having, unfound environmental liabilities.

In 2006, Alexco Resources secured the mineral rights to the mine, which included taking responsibility for any reclamation work. Elsa Reclamation and Development Company is the environmental arm of Alexco Resources and tasked with the reclamation of Keno Hill.

The property is one of seven Type II mine sites in the Yukon which were identified in the Devolution Transfer Agreement, signed between the Yukon and Canadian governments, in 2003. The agreement transferred responsibility of mining activity from the federal to the territorial government.

Before the agreement, the Government of Canada was responsible for mining activity in the territory. Now, the Government of Canada is responsible for mines operationalized prior to April 1, 2003, and the Yukon government is responsible for mines operationalized after that date.

From contractor to mine operator, industry proponents participate in reclamation of Type II mine sites in varying degrees. Alexco’s work at Keno Hill is an example of a mine operator leading remediation efforts.

The Keno Hill project is a public-private partnership between Alexco Resources, the Government of Canada, and the Na-Cha Nyäk Dun First Nation. It’s a collaborative approach, with each participant contributing to the work.

Alexco Resources owns the site’s assets and liabilities and have posted $10 million into a trust to remediate the liabilities. The company is responsible for developing the reclamation plan, moving it through the assessment and permitting process, and implementing the final plan. It’s also responsible for care and maintenance of the site and water treatment.

While the Government of Canada contributes funding to the planning and implementation process, the Na-Cha Nyäk Dun First Nation has a more active role in developing and reviewing plans and participating in business opportunities, including joint ventures set up to implement the reclamation plan.

The Keno Hill area has been mined for over 100 years and is classified as a brownfield site. Brad Thrall, president of Alexco Resources Corp., says the environmental assessment process has been difficult.

“Participants in the environmental assessment process are more familiar with greenfield projects than brownfield,” Thrall explains. “The reclamation project is different than the assessment process they’ve dealt with in the past.”

For many years, Keno Hill was an important economic driver in the territory and many Yukoners have a family connection to the area.

Thrall says there’s a strong heritage component in the region that needs to be considered and weighed along with the environmental factors during reclamation.

“Our job is to balance all of these interests while at the same item removing the environmental and physical hazards.”

Thrall says another challenge comes from planning a new mine while simultaneously working on reclamation plans for the legacy mine site.

“We’re developing new, active mines in the district, and at the same time we’re putting a closure plan together for historic mines. It’s always a back and forth balance to make sure both plans are consistent in terms of water-quality objectives,” Thrall explains.

There’s value in creating public-private partnerships between government and industry to reclaim Type II sites. Thrall says these projects bring opportunities to the community, while reducing costs to taxpayers.

“The partnership allows one side for the company to explore and develop these resources, which provides economic opportunities, once again, to Yukoners and First Nations, while at the same time develops a plan to remediate the historic liabilities,” says Thrall. “Industry brings the unique skill sets and perspective to do both at the same time.”

Alexco’s reclamation plan for Keno Hill is currently in the environmental assessment process. It has been declared adequate, and the company is waiting to pass through to the licensing phase.

The plan will need final Treasury Board approval to receive government funding, which Thrall says could take another year before they can begin reclamation work.

“Our job is to balance all of these interests while at the same item removing the environmental and physical hazards.”
If all goes well, construction at Victoria Gold’s Eagle Gold mine will finish in June 2019, ore will be delivered to the heap-leach pad a month later, and the first gold poured in September—all ahead of schedule.

John McConnell, Victoria Gold president and CEO, says spending money on additional night shifts helped the project beat its original targets. He also credits his supervisory team; their leadership made increasing shifts possible, he says. McConnell says weather has been an ongoing challenge for the project.

“In the spring of last year, we had three times the annual rainfall in May,” says McConnell. “Dealing with mud really slows things down.” But the unseasonable weather did have its benefits. McConnell says this winter was mild enough to extend the season, helping the team catch up on work and surpass project goals.

The mine currently has 400 employees. Ten percent of Victoria Gold’s crew are Mayo residents, 40 percent are First Nation citizens, and 30 percent are women.

McConnell took a Yukon-first approach to hiring and says all outside-Yukon hires must be run by him first. He says the results have exceeded expectations and created a diverse, local crew.

Part of the Yukon-first approach included a recruitment campaign inviting Yukoners who left the territory to return home and work in Mayo.

Ranj Pillai, Yukon Government minister of energy, mines, and resources, says working with Victoria Gold was a game changer.

“We’ve been able to turn the [NNDDC] around from a very negative scenario to a very positive scenario, literally as soon as Victoria Gold broke ground and started spending money on development,” says Finnegan. “That allowed us to go after grant money, put our percentage of the

Photos: archbould.com

VICTORIA GOLD
A YUKON-FIRST APPROACH TO MINING
Victoria Gold relies on community to service Eagle Gold mine

Inside the Industry
money in, acquire the grants, and get research done."

He says it’s also allowed NNDDC to diversify beyond mining.

Some of their investments include upgrades to the Bedrock Hotel, which will house miners and other mine employees for now, but will be incorporated into a sustainable small-scale northern tourism opportunity in the future.

Improved infrastructure has been another benefit of the mine.

“The Government of Yukon played a role in refurbishing the transmission infrastructure to allow the mine to connect to the grid and implement the power-purchase agreement with Yukon Energy,” says Pillai. “This investment in infrastructure also provides additional capacity for future growth in the area.”

Pillai adds that Eagle Gold is more than a source of jobs for Yukoners. It’s also a case study on how to provide economic benefits to a community.

“The Eagle Gold Project sends a strong signal to the investment community that industry can do great things in Yukon,” he says.

McConnell agrees. He says Yukon’s permitting process isn’t the simplest in the world, but says it’s possible to navigate.

“We’ve shown people that you can do it. It’s not something that just happens. You’ve got to work at it,” says McConnell. “I think a lot of bigger companies will take a look at our success and say, ‘Oh, you can build mines in the Yukon. Let’s do more exploration there.’”

Pillai says Victoria Gold is a leader in the Yukon’s industry and setting a strong standard for exploration and mining.

“Victoria Gold Corp is important to Yukon in many ways and provides an example of what we hope will be repeated at other sites throughout our territory,” he says.

“We’ve shown people that you can do it. It’s not something that just happens. You’ve got to work at it.”
Tyrell Sutherland has worked in the Mayo area since 2011. He’s tried hiring local crews for exploration projects, but never had enough work to support them for a full season.

“Typically, our projects were one–two months in length, and most workers are interested in full-time [work] for the whole field season,” he explains. “Without the ability to hire people for the whole season, there is no way we could compete for local workers.”

He isn’t alone. Most small exploration companies face the same challenge. But he hopes to change that with a new company, Big River Mineral Exploration (BRME).

In October, Sutherland pitched his idea of a First-Nation-owned exploration company to the Na-Cho Nyäk Dun Development Corporation (NNDDC). His timing, he says, was perfect.

“NNDDC was undertaking a mineral inventory assessment of all the mineral discoveries in the traditional territory of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun, so the two projects, in essence, collided and BRME was born,” he says.

BRME was formed to bridge the workforce gap for exploration companies, providing crews to companies wanting to hire locally, while ensuring workers have full-time employment for the season.

“Nobody wants to only work somewhere for two weeks, and if that is all you have, no one will develop skills for the jobs we are looking for,” says Sutherland, president and CEO of BRME.

BRME’s long-term goal is to develop exploration skills and expertise within the community. While many citizens already work in the industry, Sutherland suggests they should be leading projects in the area.

“The NNDDC wants to be in the driver’s seat of exploration, and to do that they need skills that are not currently available in the community,” Sutherland explains. “We would like to develop knowledge so that Na-Cho Nyäk Dun First Nation citizens could eventually be running exploration on their own lands rather than just working at projects in their traditional territory.”

While BRME is determined to hire as many local workers as possible, they understand the limits of the regional hiring pool. There are currently more people working at Victoria Gold’s Eagle Mine than living in Mayo, and the competition will only increase if a second mine opens, like Alexco Resources, in Keno City.

“In this environment, we have to compete for employees with companies that may be able to offer much more conventional working schedules and fewer, if any, educational requirements for positions,” says Sutherland.

Even with a limited hiring pool, BRME’s future looks bright. The company projects $750,000 to $1 million in contracts in its first year and plans to hire 18 to 30 employees this summer.

Greg Finnegan, CEO at the Na-Cho Nyäk Dun Development Corporation, says BRME plans to recruit young geologists, as well as students hoping to work in geology, with a focus on First Nation youth.

“We’re hoping to be able to find young First Nation people who want to get into the geology exploration world, and we will train them,” he explains.

Finnegan says BRME will have strong First Nation leadership, including a First Nation management team, which the company plans to develop over the next three to five years.

For now, Sutherland is focused on BRME’s upcoming season.

“We have a busy summer lined up in Mayo, and keeping that organized and running smoothly is our top priority,” he says.

Sutherland believes creating a strong team this season will give BRME a good foundation to build on in its second year and help the company support more projects as exploration in the area grows.
The Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation and Yukon Government sign agreement on Carmacks bypass

The Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation and the Village of Carmacks are one step closer to getting their bypass. The Carmacks bypass will begin south of the village and connect to the Freegold Road, allowing mine-haul trucks to bypass the community.

In a press release, Russell Blackjack, chief of the Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation, says his First Nation and the Village of Carmacks have been requesting the road for some time. “The bypass project will help ensure the safety of Carmacks residents by redirecting industrial traffic away from the community,” says Blackjack in the release.

Lee Bodie, mayor of the Village of Carmacks, says this is the community’s third attempt at building the bypass. “It started twice and let go,” he says. “We’re hoping this time to go through.” Bodie says the request for the new road is based on public concern.

“We don’t want the big trucks rolling through town when there’s kids and dogs and adults walking along the streets,” says Bodie. “So we took a proactive course and said that we would like this bypass put in for safety reasons.”

This time, the bypass is part of the larger Yukon Resource Gateway Project, a joint initiative between the federal and territorial governments and industry. The proposed undertaking will improve existing infrastructure, including replacement of several bridges, culverts, and stream crossings, upgrades to 650 kilometres of road in the mineral-rich central Yukon, and construction of a new road between the Casino and Coffee terminus points.

In 2017, the federal government committed up to $247,381,000 from the Building Canada Fund for the venture. Industry and the Yukon government will pitch in $108,662,000 and $112,802,000 respectively to complete the project.

THIRD TIME’S A CHARM
Carmacks bypass moves forward
which is estimated to cost just under $500 million. In April, the Government of Yukon and Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation announced they had reached an agreement for the proposed Carmacks bypass project.

Ranj Pillai, minister of energy, mines, and resources, says the agreement is the first of a series of project agreements the Yukon government is hoping to finalize with affected First Nations. “The agreement enables the Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation to access the potential contracting, education, and training benefits associated with the project,” says Pillai. “The Yukon government has also agreed to provide funding so the First Nation can participate effectively in the planning, design, assessment, and regulatory processes.”

Bodie says beyond safety, the Carmacks bypass will open up land for both the village and the First Nation. “We have no places to add property and there’s this whole big section of it within the village limits that is inaccessible to us,” says Bodie. “[The bypass] opens up a whole new area for us for building houses, for building businesses, for whatever we deem necessary to be there, which would add to our tax base, which would mean we could then add more infrastructure and attract more people,” says Bodie.

In the Yukon’s 2019–2020 budget, $8.6 million has been allocated to the Resource Gateway Project, with $3.5 million dedicated to the Carmacks bypass. The $3.5 million covers geological work and pit development, maintenance and clearing of Freegold Road, permitting and heritage assessments, and design work.

Pillai says the government has recently completed geotechnical investigations on the Carmacks bypass and engineering is underway with a goal to start construction as soon as possible—hopefully this summer. He says it’s an important project for the territory. “The new road along with the other new and improved roads related to the Yukon Resources Gateway Project will help enhance the development of Yukon’s mineral resource sector,” Pillai says.
The crowd was packed tight on the tradeshow floor for opening day of the Yukon Geoscience Tradeshow and Forum. People shuffled from booth to booth, while the line at Goldcorp’s exhibit spilled over to its neighbours as attendees waited to test the company’s virtual-reality mine tour.

Optimism in the territory’s industry is growing, and the numbers at the 46th annual Yukon Geoscience Tradeshow and Forum reflected that fact. Over 700 delegates from across Canada and around the world attended the four-day conference in Whitehorse, and tradeshow booths sold out for the 11th consecutive year. Seventy-five exhibitors participated, including mineral and exploration companies, industry suppliers and contractors, government departments, and non-profit organizations. More than 20 participants displayed samples in the core shack, and 21 authors presented in the poster program.

The Geoscience Forum and Tradeshow brings together governments of all levels—territorial, federal, and First Nations—with industry and industry partners. It’s an opportunity to build new partnerships and strengthen existing ones, reconnect with colleagues, and celebrate relationships, while keeping up with industry trends and best practices. This year’s theme focused on First Nations partnerships, innovation, and environmental reclamation. The tone was set early on the first day by Dr. Ken Coates, who opened the conference with a keynote address on industry’s role in First Nations reconciliation.

Coates’s talk was followed by a panel discussion on Golden Predator’s Elders-in-residence program, the first of its kind in Canada. Kaska Elders Mary Caesar and Dorothy Smith shared their experience at the residency, hosted at the 3 Aces mine, while Susan Magun, administrative coordinator at Golden Predator Mining Corp., and Janet Lee-Sheriff, Golden Predator Mining Corp. CEO, spoke about the benefits and lessons learned from the program.

Later in the afternoon, a keynote address from Rex Murphy attracted the largest audience of the conference, with the crowd spilling into the hallway. The media personality talked about the challenge of living in the “outer regions” of Canada—areas often defined by the boom and bust of industry. He drew
comparisons between depressed fishing villages on the east coast and mining ghost towns scattered throughout Canada.

The annual conference offered its traditional program of technical and non-technical talks, which ranged from innovations in technology and infrastructure to project and regional overviews, community partnerships, and environmental-impact assessments. The talks ran concurrently with the tradeshow, and organizers say they’ve always been a draw for delegates.

While the technical talks focus on the technical aspects of the industry, the non-technical talks emphasize best practices and research.

New this year, regulators and assessors were invited to present in the non-technical talks, offering industry a better understanding of the governing bodies that oversee regulation and permitting in the territory. The day included presentations from the Yukon Land Use Planning Council, the Yukon Environmental and Socio-Economic Assessment Board, Yukon Water Board, and the Department of Energy, Mines, and Resources.

The Yukon Chamber of Mines partnered again this year with the Yukon Mining Alliance on the Investment Forum. The full-day program focused on investing in the industry with a spotlight on Yukon exploration and mining companies.

The Investment Forum included a keynote address from Glenn Mullan, president of the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada, on Canada’s overall competitiveness in the mineral industry, a panel on engaging investors in the age of cannabis and crypto, highlights from roundtables with junior explorers, and corporate updates.

Planning for next year’s conference has already started, and the committee hopes to build on the momentum from the past few years.

It’s an opportunity to build new partnerships and strengthen existing ones, reconnect with colleagues, and celebrate relationships, while keeping up with trends and industry best practices.
Robert Leckie was a Mayo-based mining inspector and instrumental in setting standards for placer-mine waste. He also advocated for strengthening the working relationship between industry and government.

The Robert E. Leckie Awards were created by the Government of Yukon, in 1999, as a tribute to Leckie’s career. Dominion Gold Resources Ltd. received the Leckie Award for Responsible and Innovative Exploration and Mining Practices for rehabilitating its property on Dominion Creek. Dominion Gold Resources Ltd. purchased its property, 55 km from Dawson City, in 2013. It’s one of the largest placer-mining properties in the Yukon, but in 2013 the mine had been abandoned for eight years, neglected, and rundown. Work began on the property in 2014. Over four years, Dominion Gold Resources Ltd. repaired and rebuilt camp structures, including houses, support buildings, and workshops. The company converted oil furnaces and hot-water tanks to propane and modernized equipment, including investing in environmentally friendly conveying systems designed to move dirt more efficiently and cost-effectively.

Dominion Gold Resources Ltd. also developed an on-site crushing prototype to increase productivity and is building an on-site portable water treatment plant. Selwyn Chihong Mining Ltd. earned the Leckie Award for Excellence in Environmental Stewardship in Quartz Mining for its Selwyn Project, one of the largest undeveloped lead-zinc deposits in the world. The transboundary project, 350 km northeast of Whitehorse, spans the Yukon-N.W.T. border. The project focused on remediating drill pads and trails and the removal of waste that had accumulated since the 1980s. Once remediation work began, in 2016, roughly 438,800 square metres of ground had been seeded, disturbed areas have been successfully recontoured and revegetated, and waste has been removed from the site, including historic barrels of waste buried by a previous company.

The company also developed and implemented an Elder in Camp program to assist and advise the company in achieving a full culturally integrated work-place and a student-worker shadow program to allow students to get a firsthand experience for the various positions.

Simon and Lill Hambrook were given the Leckie Award for Excellence in Environmental Stewardship in Placer Mining for their reclamation work at Black Hills Creek, which is a tributary of the Stewart River. The Hambrooks have been mining the property since 2009 and began reclamation work early in the project. Most land-based reclamation was completed in the fall of 2017 and summer of 2018 and included contouring mined areas and covering them with overburden, leaving trees to act as seed sources for revegetation, adding stability to the creek channel on the bends, and building overburden to the Black Hills Creek diversion to encourage rapid regrowth, which was successful at previous reclamation efforts downstream.

The Yukon Chamber of Mines presented two awards during the Yukon Geoscience Tradeshow and Forum: the Community Award and the Member Award. Archer, Cathro & Associates earned the Community Award for its dedication to responsible exploration and commitment to following established best practices, regulations, and input from stakeholders to ensure potential negative environmental impacts are minimized. It has designed and implemented programs on behalf of companies that have received four Leckie Awards for excellent environmental stewardship.

Heather Burrell was presented with the Yukon Chamber of Mines’ Member Award for commitment to the industry and approaching all mineral industry work in a responsible and sustainable manner. Burrell has served as an appointed member of the Yukon Minerals Advisory Board, a member of the deputy minister’s technical advisory committee, and the vice-president of the Yukon Chamber of Mines, chairing the Land Access and Regulatory Affairs committee.

The Yukon Prospectors Association named Bob Stirling the 2018 Yukon Prospectors of the Year for his long and tenacious career in the Yukon. Stirling has been prospecting in the territory since the 1980s. His 30-year career included work with Fred Chudy and George Marr at Miller Creek, United Keno Exploration, and Ampex Mining. In 2010, Stirling staked and optioned quartz claims to BC Gold Corp.

The 47th annual Yukon Geoscience Tradeshow and Forum will be held in Whitehorse on Nov. 16–19, 2019.
Yukon Mining and Exploration Projects 2018

MINING AND EXPLORATION PROJECTS

Commodity:
- Silver
- Gold
- Copper
- Tungsten
- Cobalt
- Unknown

Drilling program:
- Indicates drilling program

Exploration projects - deposit type:
- Intrusive
deposits
- Medium-rupture associated
- Intermediate-reach associated
- Sediment associated
- Intrusive
- Replacement
- Volcanic
- Ultrabasic

Mineralization projects - development phase:
- Planning, design and assessment
- Assessment complete
- Fully permitted
- Mine construction
- Operation and production
- Temporary closure

Expenditures:
- Projects with <$100,000 in expenditures are large symbols
- Projects with <$500,000 in expenditures are small symbols

MAP FEATURES:
- Communities
- Capital city
- Deep water port
- Transportation routes
  - Provincial highway
  - Interprovincial highway
  - Proposed
- Parks and protected areas
  - National and territorial
  - Watershed protection

Generating systems:
- Diesel
- Hydropower
- Natural gas
- Transmission line
  - 138 kV

Refined petroleum:
- Petroleum products
  - Domestic
  - Export

The exploration activity data represented on this map were compiled by the Yukon Geological Survey. Please contact minery@gov.yk.ca for further information.
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- Logistics support
- Camp service

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- Pumps
- Treatment
- Irrigation
- Sales, consultation, repair and water testing.

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- Mobile Seacoast Systems
- Wholesale Pipe Fittings and Fixtures

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- • Hoses
- • Fittings
- • Fuel System Services

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- • Erosion Materials
- • Fuel and Pond Liners
- • Culverts

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- • Wood
- • Wire
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The discovery of gold in Rabbit Creek, August 17, 1896, sparked the Klondike Gold Rush. Four men received recognition for the find: George Carmack, Skookum Jim Mason, Dawson Charlie, and Robert Henderson. In 1999, they were inducted into the Canadian Mining Hall of Fame for their contribution to the mining industry.

What many people don’t know, but has been passed down through generations of First Nations people, is that George Carmack’s wife, Kate, was with the men when the gold was discovered. The story goes that Kate Carmack, a Tagish First Nation woman who helped her husband survive in the bush with her traditional knowledge, was the one who actually found the first gold nugget, rumoured to be the size of a silver dollar.

Kate Carmack was born Shaaw Tláa. She was Skookum Jim’s sister and, after being widowed, married American prospector George Carmack. Following the gold discovery, George took his wife to the U.S. but later abandoned her and married another woman. Kate unsuccessfully sued George for her share of their wealth and eventually returned to the Yukon. She lived in Carcross on government support and died in an influenza epidemic, in 1920.

Among those close to Kate’s story, there has been the nagging feeling it was an oversight to not include her in the induction to the Canadian Mining Hall of Fame. However, on January 10, 2019, twenty years after her husband and his companions were inducted, Kate joined the group of Klondike discoverers.

Anne Turner, founder and president of Yukon Women in Mining, provided a letter of support for the nomination and is pleased Kate Carmack is now recognized. “Kate could have been the one who found the gold,” she says. “Many people knew that, so it’s very important that she gets added to that group of people.”

The application for Kate Carmack’s induction was a collaboration between the Chamber of Mines, the Youth of Society Today, Kwanlin Dün First Nation (KDFN), and the KDFN Youth Advisory Committee to Council. In 1999, Eileen Duchesne (now the assistant to KDFN Chief Doris Bill) wrote an article about Kate Carmack based on the accounts of Jessie Scarf and Olive Patrick, two KDFN elders and women’s rights advocates. It included the story about how Kate was the one who discovered the gold in 1896. “[The story] was carried over from one generation to the next,” Duchesne says.

In 2016, serendipity intervened when Lance Burton, executive director of the Youth Society of Today, was working on a project to paint murals around Whitehorse. Burton approached the Chamber of Mines about painting a mural on their building and Executive Director Samson Hartland jumped at the opportunity. The youth involved in the project picked the stories to paint, and they choose Kate’s story for the wall of the Chamber of Mines building. The painting is based on the photo used in Duchesne’s article.

“[The story] was carried over from one generation to the next,” Duchesne says.

“It was reflective of the story,” Burton says.

Hartland and Duchesne had previously discussed the possibility of nominating Kate for induction in the Canadian Mining Hall of Fame, and the mural project gave new life to the idea. Duchesne’s article, the Chamber of Mines’ work with the Youth Society and KDFN on the mural project, and the youth group’s decision to paint the nomination of Kate Carmack...
Twenty years after the Klondike-gold discoveries were inducted into the Canadian Mining Hall of Fame, Kate Carmack has joined them.

Zena McLean, Carmack’s great-grand-niece, travelled to Toronto with her daughter in January to attend the induction ceremony and accept the award on Carmack’s behalf.

McLean was joined by Kwanlin Dün First Nation Chief Doris Bill and Elders Councillor Jessie Dawson, Government of Yukon Deputy Premier Ranj Pillai, and members of the Youth of Today Society and Yukon Chamber of Mines.

Carmack is the first Indigenous woman and just the third woman inducted into the Canadian Mining Hall of Fame.

“Everything that happened along the way fed into the nomination occurring,” Hartland says.

With a sponsorship from the Mining Association of Canada and letters of support from Yukon dignitaries and organizations in the mining sector, Hartland and the Chamber of Mines submitted an application. Early in 2018, the news came that Kate would join the Klondike discoverers.

The recognition of Kate as a strong First Nations woman who helped her husband with her traditional skills and knowledge but was let down and poorly treated has significance that reverberates through society. First Nations people, women, youth, the mining industry, and all Yukoners can feel there is a part of history that has been rightfully amended. “It is probably the most meaningful and significant piece of reconciliation that I have been associated with,” Hartland says.

Chayenne Bradley from the KDFN Youth Advisory Committee to Council explains what it means that Kate is finally recognized 122 years after the gold discovery. “It’s huge for us because the gold rush completely changed our culture and everything for First Nations,” she says.

Anne Turner concurs. “We talk about Yukon getting put on the map at the gold rush, but history is obviously much longer than that,” she says. “Knowing that we got put on the map with First Nations participation and partnership and the use of traditional knowledge and understanding of the land, I think it’s a critical part of our heritage to celebrate.

Kate’s recognition is not only affecting history, it also impacts women and the mining industry today. “I think it’s just wonderful that women are finally being recognized because [they] do play a big role in mining,” Duchesne says. “I see women in those big rock trucks and I’m proud to see them there.”

On January 10, 2019, Kate Carmack was inducted at a ceremony in Toronto, where she was represented by the McLean family, her direct descendants.

“Kate’s story is a very sad one. If you can put her in the rightful place in history, I think that lifts her up.”

Kate Carmack all got the ball rolling. “For a lot of us it feels like a past wrong being righted,” says Burke.

McLean agrees that Carmack’s induction is a step toward reconciliation. “Having her recognized as a mining icon after years of obscurity is one step towards reconciling all First Nations roles in historical events and the contribution women have made in mining,” says McLean.

Carmack is not alone, though. McLean says there are many more First Nation women who need to be recognized for their contributions and nation-building role in Canada.
Returning to the Land
A Mining Company’s First Nations Residency Program Unites Elders and Youth

The concept behind Golden Predator’s Elders-in-residency program was simple. Elders would be invited to live for one week at the company’s 3 Aces mine, located in southeastern Yukon and the traditional territory of the Kaska Nation. While there, they would spend time on the land.

Kaska Elder Mary Caesar approached Janet Lee-Sheriff, CEO of Golden Predator, with the idea after a poorly attended community meeting in Watson Lake. The offer came when Lee-Sheriff was looking for a more proactive approach to community engagement.

Lee-Sheriff loved Caesar’s idea as soon as she heard it.

“I said, ‘Mary, it’s a fantastic idea. We’ll do it,’” she says.

Planning moved quickly into action, with meetings held to discuss the potential program.

The first meeting was held in Watson Lake at Golden Predator’s office. Twenty Elders attended, the first time in Lee-Sheriff’s 30-year career she saw that many Elders at a meeting.

“And on top of that, 17 were women,” says Lee-Sheriff. “I figured, okay, we’re onto something.”

The number grew to 30 Elders at the second meeting in Ross River. In June 2018, the program was opened to Kaska citizens aged 55 or older. Close to 80 Elders participated.

Caesar says she was encouraged by the experience.

“We’re finding our voices through being involved,” says Caesar.

Susan Magun, administrative coordinator at Golden Predator, was responsible for coordinating the program.

She advertised the opportunity and hung a calendar on her office wall to manage space in the program. She found it wasn’t hard to recruit.

“They just started coming in, and before you know it my calendar was full,” says Magun.

When the calendar was full, she made a list of Elders who were interested in the program but weren’t able to join because of limited space. But only one spot opened up over the season.

Magun says the Elders really enjoyed the residency, which gave some challenged by age a chance to return to land-based traditions.

“They’re at that age where going camping would be a struggle,” Magun explains. “This way they’re in a camp. They’re still on the land, they’re being catered to, they’re being cooked for, and they have a nice, warm place to stay. They were driven around, they can pick medicine and see the wildlife, which they probably wouldn’t be able to do if they were here in town.”

“They were really just happy,” Caesar adds. “I feel the Elders have some sort of renewed hope.”

She believes the renewed hope is as much for the youth as it is for the Elders.

At the end of the season, Golden Predator hosted a retreat at the camp and invited youth to attend and learn about geology. Six school-aged youth and two high-school graduates joined the Elders.

Magun says the youth really enjoyed their time at the camp and working alongside geologists. The experience also introduced youth to a different skill set and encouraged them to upgrade or pursue further education in science. One of the attendees is now enrolled in the Yukon College’s geology program.

Magun says the 2019 program will create more space for youth to participate.

“We have youth that are interested in going,” she explains. “It would be good to pair youth [with the Elders].”

Caesar agrees Elders and youth would benefit from working together. She emphasizes it’s important for Elders to be more proactive for the younger generation.

“We have to try to help our people,” she says. “We can’t sit back anymore. We can’t sit back and let the world go by.”

Ultimately, the program is about preserving traditions and culture as much as it’s about bridging cultures, she adds.

“We want to see more understanding among cultures—the non-native culture and Kaska culture,” Caesar explains.

Caesar is hopeful other companies will adopt a residency program. She was invited to BMC Mineral’s mine at Finlayson Lake, where they are planning their own Elders-in-residence program this summer.

As for the program at the 3 Aces project, Magun says Elders have been staying by her office since December and adding their names to this year’s list.

“I got, like, six Elders already on the [waiting] list,” Magun says. “They want to make sure that they go and they don’t get left out because they didn’t have a chance to go last year.”

“We’re just learning as we go along,” says Caesar. “We’re still going to have more discussions, more planning, as to what kind of ideas and programs we want to implement.”

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Mineral and resource development is spread across Kaska Nation Traditional Territory, which is home to five Kaska nations: Daylu Dena Council, Dease River First Nation, Kneadacha First Nation, Ross River Dena Council, and Liard First Nation. Caesar says First Nations communities need a say in how companies develop mineral and resource-based projects, and the program at the 3 Aces project is part of the solution.

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The territory’s annual Yukon Mining and Geology Week was held May 7–11, 2018. The week-long event brought mining to the City of Whitehorse, inviting Yukoners to learn how exploration, geology, and mining are part of our everyday lives. The Yukon Geological Survey offered walking tours of the Copper Belt, which included a visit to the old Copper King mine. The annual Exploration and Discovery Camp was held at the SS Klondike, in Whitehorse, and featured mining machinery and hands-on educational activities for kids. Yukon Mining and Geology Week is a collaborative event, hosted each year by the Yukon Chamber of Mines, the Government of Yukon, and industry and community sponsors.

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Yukon Chamber of Mines

YUKON NIGHT AT ROUNDUP 2019

The Yukon Chamber of Mines held its annual Yukon Night at the Association of Mineral Exploration Roundup, in Vancouver, last January. Over the years, Yukon Night has become the Roundup’s must-attend event. The evening is hosted in partnership with the Government of Yukon and celebrates the territory’s diverse mineral and cultural history. It’s an opportunity to showcase new innovations in the region’s mining and exploration industry. This year, political and industry leaders from across the North including, Sandy Silver, premier, Yukon, Peter Johnston, grand chief, Council of Yukon First Nations, Susan le Jeune d’Allegeershecque, British High Commission, Scott Donaldson, president and CEO, BMC Minerals and Nicole Davison, UK Council General, pictured below, attended Yukon Night in Vancouver.

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Yukon Surface Rights Board

The Board’s primary responsibility is to hear and decide disputes related to accessing or using Yukon First Nation settlement land and, in certain circumstances, disputes involving access to or use of non-settlement land. The Board’s process starts when the parties are unable to reach an agreement and a party applies to the Board. The Board’s jurisdiction is derived from several statutes. The primary authority for the Board is set out in the Yukon Surface Rights Board Act (Canada).

Additional responsibilities of the Board are set out in other laws and agreements including the Quartz Mining Act (Yukon), Placer Mining Act (Yukon), Oil and Gas Act (Yukon), Expropriation Act (Canada), Radiocommunications Act (Canada), and individual Yukon First Nation Final Agreements.

To learn more about the Board and its process visit yukonsurfacerrights.ca or contact the Board’s office.

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