

## Newsletter | February 2024

### Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Process – Draft Screening Report Now Available

The Faro Mine Remediation Project continues to progress through the Yukon environmental and socio-economic assessment process. The Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board's (YESAB) Executive Committee issued the [Draft Screening Report \[yesabregistry.ca\]](https://yesabregistry.ca) on February 19, 2024. The comment period is open until April 19, 2024.

To review and comment on the Faro Mine Remediation assessment documents, access the [YESAB Online Registry \[yesabregistry.ca\]](https://yesabregistry.ca). A Plain Language Summary of the Faro Mine Remediation Project Proposal is also available by searching for document #2019-0149-0638.

The active remediation phase of the Faro Mine Remediation Project will be initiated once the assessment process is complete, the required permits, licenses and authorizations are obtained and potential pre-construction regulatory conditions are met. Until then, care and maintenance and urgent risk mitigation work are ongoing at the site to ensure it remains stable and secure.

### 2023 Water Treatment Season Recap

The 2023 water treatment season was a record water treatment year for the Project with nearly 8 million m<sup>3</sup> of contaminated water treated across the three water treatment plants. This is 27% more water than in 2022, the best prior year, where almost 6.5 million m<sup>3</sup> of water was treated. This very successful treatment season resulted in notable reduction of the sites contaminated water inventory in the Faro Pit, and reduced project risk.

The annual performance of the three water treatment plants can be summarized as follows:



#### **Interim Water Treatment System**

- Operated April 30 to December 14, 2023
- Treated over 6 million m<sup>3</sup> in 2023
- A record volume of water treated

#### **Cross Valley Pond Treatment Plant**

- Operated May 31 to October 16, 2023
- Treated over 900 thousand m<sup>3</sup> in 2023
- Exceeded the annual treatment goal during this first full year of treatment



### **Vangorda Water Treatment Plant**

- Operated May 24 to October 21, 2023
- Treated close to 1 million m<sup>3</sup> in 2023
- Reduced annual performance due to two lightning strikes affecting the power supply, challenges with the lime delivery and slaking, and shutdowns required for pump moves.

*Faro Mine Complex water treatment plants. Photos courtesy of CIRNAC.*

Treatment systems at the Faro Mine complex are designed to treat water seasonally with a scheduled shutdown during the winter months. The site's three water treatment plants are now undergoing routine maintenance and upgrades to optimize the systems for the next treatment season. A new lime slaker has been installed to improve the efficiency of the Vangorda Treatment Plant, and lightning strike mitigations are planned. While the treatment systems are shut down for the season, contaminated water continues to be collected and stored in the mine pits until water treatment operations resume. The operation of the Interim Water Treatment Plant is scheduled to resume in mid-April 2024, with the other plants expected to resume operations shortly thereafter.

## **Permanent Water Treatment Plant Procurement Process Continues**

The procurement process for selecting a bidder for the construction, installation, testing, and commissioning of the Permanent Water Treatment Plant continues. The proposal submission deadline for the Request for Proposal (RFP) closed December 1, 2023 and bid evaluations are currently underway.

## **Ross River Dena Council Visits the Permanent Water Treatment Pilot Process Plant**

Ross River Dena Council leadership and a group of community members toured the Permanent Water Treatment Pilot Plant on November 2, 2023. The pilot involved the operation of a small scale high-density sludge and gravity filtration system from July to November 2023. The pilot's objective was to better understand the water treatment process methodologies proposed and to inform the final design specifications of the Permanent Water Treatment Plant. Two youth from the community gained experience operating the pilot plant over the summer. Four participants had interesting conversation about continued training and employment opportunities for community members in the water treatment field.

Meanwhile, the team from Jacobs (CH2M HILL Canada Ltd.) continues to work on analyzing the results from the pilot testing program.



*Ross River Dena Council leadership and community members during the pilot plant tour.  
Photo courtesy of CIRNAC.*

## Environmental Monitoring Training Program Graduates

This fall, Ensero Solutions Inc., the project's environmental monitoring contractor collaborated with Dena Cho Environmental Inc. and a professional instructor to develop an environmental training program for members of the Ross River Dena Council. The program consisted of a seven-day classroom-based instructional module in Ross River, which covered foundational theory such as: (1) the main environmental areas of interest at Faro, including surface water, groundwater, and seeps; (2) techniques for sampling and measurement; and (3) using field equipment. The program also involved a seven-day practicum where participants conducted routine sampling and measurement through a paid internship. This hands-on training opportunity provided participants with practical experience as well as valuable insights into the day-to-day reality of the environmental monitoring role.



*RRDC community members, Katherine Atkinson (left) and Logan Tom (right), conducted discharge measurements as part of the Environmental Monitoring Training Program.  
Photos courtesy of Ensero Solutions Inc. and Dena Cho Environmental Inc.*

Five trainees have successfully completed the classroom stage of training, and, to date, three have



completed the practicum portion. Looking ahead, plans are underway for another cohort to commence training in spring 2024. For more information on upcoming training opportunities with Ensero Solutions Inc., please contact Christin Sather at [christin.sather@dndcorp.ca](mailto:christin.sather@dndcorp.ca).

## Award of 2023 Kaska Scholarship

The 2023 Parsons Kaska Scholarship has been awarded to Dayna Dickson, a student from Yukon University's Northern Environmental and Conservation Science Degree program. This marked the launch of the Parsons Kaska Scholarship Program to support and enhance access for Kaska First Nation students pursuing post-secondary education or trades certification related to the environmental remediation field. For more information about the scholarship program, including eligibility criteria and application deadlines, visit the [Parsons FMRP website \[faromineproject.ca\]](https://www.faromineproject.ca).

## Kaska Elder Advisors now on staff at Parsons

Parsons is pleased to have respected Ross River Dena Council Elders and knowledge keepers, Louie Tommy and John Acklack Sr., join the team as Language and Cultural Advisors to the Faro Mine Remediation Project. The new positions will promote the use of Kaska language, increase the knowledge and understanding of local Kaska culture and history among the entire project team, and provide guidance, mentorship and support to Indigenous staff. Another key role will be to help identify and resolve barriers to Indigenous employment and find opportunities to advance cultural activities.

## Improving Contaminated Water Collection Performance in the North Fork Rose Creek

Work continues to improve the performance of the contaminated water collection systems in the North Fork Rose Creek area. In advance of this spring's melt, an additional collection and pumping system will be installed to help manage water levels.

Since the construction of the North Fork of Rose Creek clean water diversion channel and associated contaminated water collection system, water has been building up seasonally within the head pond, upstream of the system. Due to the late winter water build up, the volume of water in the spring has overwhelmed the capacity of the collection system in place, even after its pumping capacity was doubled in 2023. The addition of this new system will prevent water from building up and releasing rapidly in the spring, which will allow the interim contaminated water collection systems in place to keep up with water flows.

This work involves the construction of an access road and installation of sump, pumps, and pipes to convey the water. The road and sump construction was awarded to Jim Dent Construction Ltd., while the pump and pipe installation are being completed by the Parsons Care and Maintenance team.

As part of the active remediation phase of the Faro Mine Remediation Project a long-term robust collection system will be constructed at this location which will replace the existing collection systems in the original alignment of the North Fork Rose Creek.



*Photo of Head Pond, upstream of the North Fork Rose Creek clean water diversion channel.  
Photo courtesy of Parsons Inc.*

## Other Key Work Package Updates

### **Camp Update**

The camp owned by Dena Nezziddi Development Corporation (DNDC), Ross River Dena Council's economic development corporation was relocated near the Grum office in spring 2023 in order to clear the footprint for the construction of a Permanent Water Treatment Plant. It housed up to 76 workers until early December 2023. Winter caretaking services with Summit Camps are now in place until the camp is needed again later this winter.

Construction on the larger capacity, longer-term camp wrapped up for the season with the civil works expected to be completed this spring by Pelly Construction Ltd. The electrical works required to bring power to the new camp site via an overhead line has been initiated. Once fully complete the new camp will have the capacity to house around 300 workers for the near-term through to remediation.

### **Emergency Rescue Vehicle Garage Construction**

Following construction of the foundation for the Emergency Rescue Vehicle Garage in 2022, the remainder of the building was constructed in late 2023. The garage is currently in use. Electrical for heating and lighting will be added in 2024.

### **Brush Clearing**

In late November 2023, the Yukon First Nations Wildfire Team completed brush clearing along the top of the Rose Creek Diversion Channel for geotechnical-related maintenance of the dyke, and around power poles to reduce the risk of fire around this critical infrastructure.

## Subcontracting Opportunities on the Horizon

Parsons Inc., the Main Construction Manager for the Faro Mine Remediation Project, is responsible for the management of construction activities and for care and maintenance repair and improvement projects at site. Workplans for the upcoming season are currently being finalized and details on planned works and

upcoming procurements will be shared shortly.

Interested contractors are encouraged to monitor [MERX \[merx.com\]](https://merx.com) for procurement opportunities available at the Faro Mine Remediation Project. To explore how your company can get involved in the work, visit [Parsons FMRP website \[faromineproject.ca\]](https://faromineproject.ca).



For more information, visit [\[faromine.ca\]faromine.ca](https://faromine.ca) and [\[faromineproject.ca\]faromineproject.ca](https://faromineproject.ca)  
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