

# Dena Cho

## Environmental and Remediation Inc.

A Dena Nezziddi Development Corp. Company



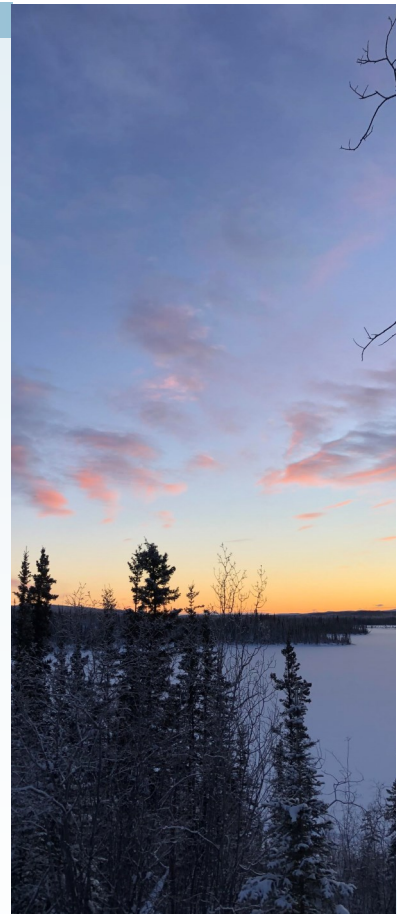
Dena Cho Environmental and Remediation Inc. (Dena Cho) is a 100% Ross River Dena owned and operated environmental management company. Dena Cho provides professional environmental services and management. Our team is proud to say that Dena Cho is the only 100% First Nation’s owned environmental management company in Yukon.

We are committed to consistently communicating with the community of Ross River, and more importantly, gathering feedback and direction on projects. With this goal in mind, we have committed to providing regular newsletter updates to Ross River community members and leadership. We are also in the process of developing a website where newsletters, updates and project information will be posted—stay tuned!

We encourage feedback on the content of this newsletter as we aim to keep our community informed and engaged. Please contact Caitlynn Beckett if you have any questions or concerns (cbeckett@denacho.ca or 306-491-2672).

### Our Team

- Stu Van Bibber, General Manager
- Jody Inkster, Environmental Scientist and Project Manager
- Billie Maje, Field Lead and Project Manager
- Caitlynn Beckett, Researcher and Project Manager
- Amber Etzel, Field Technician
- Eric John, Field Technician
- Mary Maje, Elder and Support
- Ted Charlie, Elder and Support

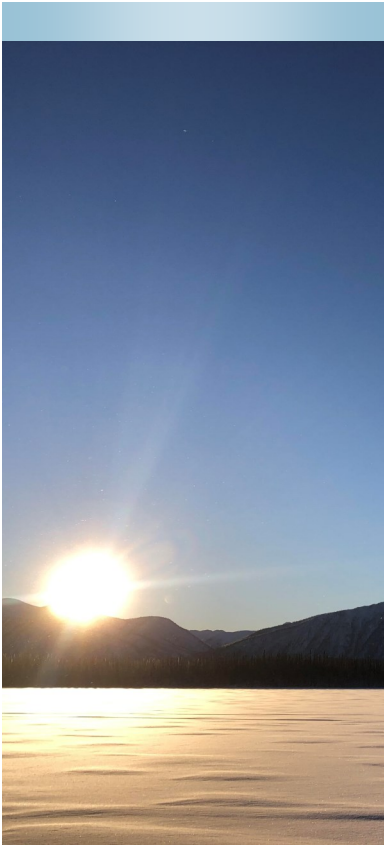


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### Whitehorse Office

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## Over the past three months, Dena Cho has worked on the following projects:

- The Faro Mine Remediation Project (3 parts of this work):
  - \* Leading the Faro Community-Based Revegetation Strategy
  - \* Reviewing and reporting to Kathlene Suza and RRDC leadership on the Faro YESAB process
  - \* Participation in the Technical Review Committee
- The Ketz River Mine Remediation Project
  - \* Ketz River Mine Working Group
- Ketz River Mine Environmental Monitoring Project
- The Wolverine Mine (water treatment and environmental monitoring)
- The Progressive Reclamation Working Group (Yukon Government Mining Memorandum Table) - Research assistance
- North Canol - Telegraph Wire Cleanup/Environmental Site Assessment
- Ross River - Contaminated Site Assessment at the Whiskers Lake Coal Mine

### Training:

- Our staff completed snowmobile training in November 2020.

### Future Projects:

- Faro Mine Environmental Monitoring

## JOB OPPORTUNITIES!!!

Dena Cho is looking for Ross River community members interested in summer employment in our community-based re-vegetation strategy. This will include tree planting work (for two-three weeks in June), seed collection (flexible schedule throughout the summer) and research internships. Please get in contact with Jody Inkster if you would like more information ([jinkster@denacho.ca](mailto:jinkster@denacho.ca) or 867-334-8048).



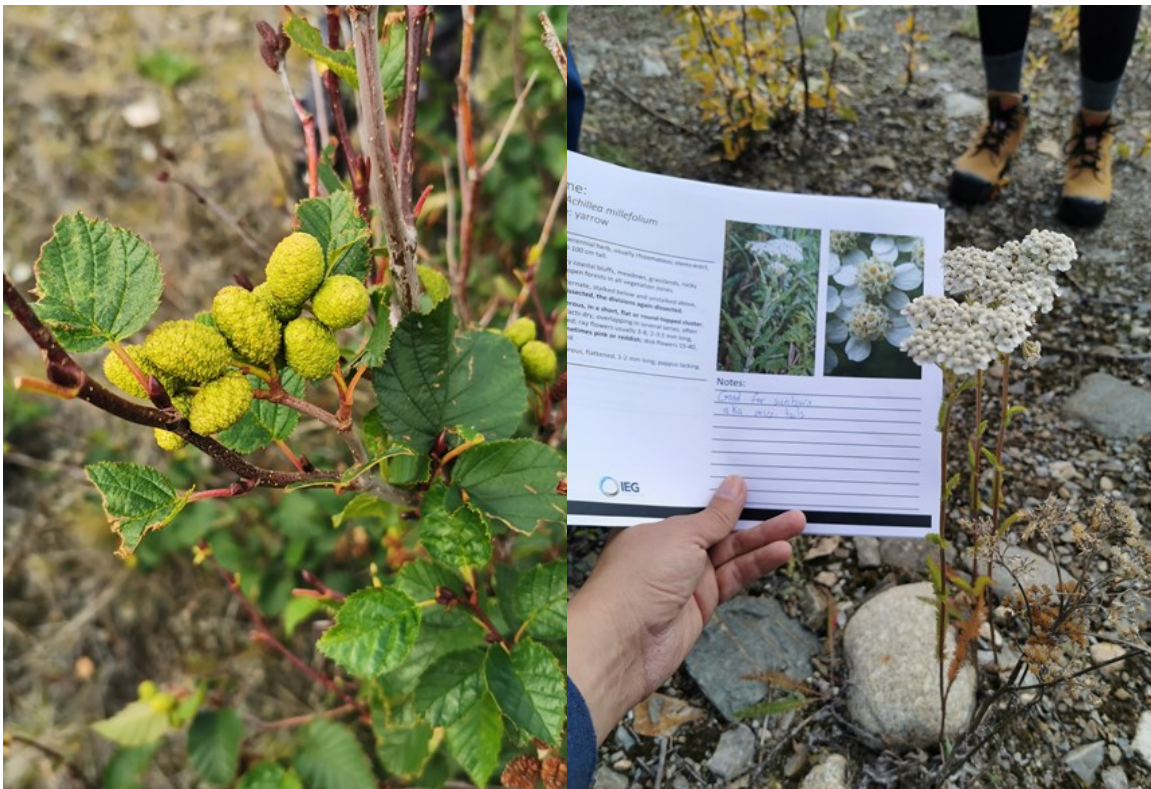
## Project Details:

### Faro Mine Remediation Project

**Faro Community-Based Revegetation Work:** Dena Cho obtained funding from the Canadian Government to engage with Ross River Elders, community leaders, youth and others to determine revegetation objectives for Faro. This project will be an excellent chance for Ross River community members to have more of a say in how remediation at Faro is completed and how the site will look and be used in the future. Dena Cho is currently working with the Lands Office, RRDC and Elders to ensure that we follow Kaska protocols for the use of plants. **If you would like to talk to us about this project, or would like to be interviewed, please let us know! Feel free to give us a call or send an email (jinkster@denacho.ca).**

We kicked off some of this revegetation work last summer with students from Ross River. These students helped us collect plant samples, which we sent to a lab for metal analysis (we are working with a company called [IEG](#) on this). We have recently gotten the results and will be analyzing them. However, there is not yet enough data to make any final conclusions about metals in plants at Faro. We hope to continue working on this monitoring this coming summer.

Next steps for this project include summarizing the interview information and drafting a report that will help in planning for revegetation over the next year. **Part of this planning will include hiring people from Ross River to assist with tree planting, seed collection and research over the summer - stay tuned! We will be posting opportunities for summer work soon.**



(left) - Alder seeds that are not yet ready to collect!  
(right) - Plant identification and Kaska plant names exercise

## Elder's Quote

*"We are here together. We want to have a greater say. We are the decision-makers, the Kaska. We know our land is valuable, but we are not digging it up".*



**Faro YESAB Review Updates:** The Faro Remediation Project is currently moving through the Yukon Environmental and Socio-Economic Assessment (YESA) process. As new documents are posted on YESAB's registry, Dena Cho summarizes the content and provides this to Ross River Dena Council. If anyone would like more information on the YESAB process for Faro or would like to look at the summaries we have completed, feel free to contact us.

**Faro Technical Review Committee (TRC):** Dena Cho attends bi-weekly TRC meetings for Faro (along with the Faro Secretariat, Kathlene Suza). These meetings include updates on site conditions, care and maintenance activities and remediation design planning. Updates from these meetings are provided to RRDC regularly.

**Faro Mine Environmental Monitoring:** Dena Cho is currently working to secure a contract at Faro Mine to help Golder Associates conduct environmental monitoring at Faro Mine! This is a great opportunity to have local Ross River members sampling water at Faro Mine and connecting the project back to the community. Starting in March 2021, Dena Cho will use existing employees from Ross River and the Town of Faro to sample surface and groundwater on a monthly basis. This work will ensure that Ross River Dena members are managing their lands and waters and more importantly connecting back to the area of Tse Zul.



## Ketza River Mine

**Ketza River Mine Remediation Project:** In November, Dena Cho provided an update on the Ketza remediation activities including a summary of the mine site tour. Other topics discussed were future engagement activities RRDC would like to see in the next proposal to CIRNAC. A summary report on the Ketza site tour was provided to CIRNAC and YG which shared RRDC's concerns and questions.

In January CIRNAC and YG provided the participating First Nations with a draft governance agreement for the project. This agreement is available for RRDC to provide critiques and comments.

As technical advisors to RRDC, Dena Cho has reviewed the draft terms of reference and other notable mine closure documents. As well, Dena Cho participates in monthly working groups and provides updates to RRDC about the ongoing remediation planning.

**Ketza River Mine Environmental Monitoring Project :** As part of Hemmera's First Nation Participation Plan and Yukon Government's procurement commitments to providing socio-economic benefits to affected First Nations, Dena Cho has been subcontracted to lead a portion of the surface water quality program at the Ketza Mine site. Subsequently, Dena Cho assists Hemmera with the quarterly sampling events and the annual groundwater program.

## Wolverine Mine

One of Dena Cho's long-term projects is the environmental monitoring program at the Wolverine Mine, which includes sampling local streams and creeks, groundwater monitoring wells, tailings storage water and water coming out of the mine portal.

In November 2020, EDI Environmental Dynamics Inc. contracted Dena Cho to assist in their sampling program for the winter of 2020/2021. While EDI is the lead environmental contractor at Wolverine Mine, EDI ensures that your community members are involved and supported throughout this project.

In fact, Billie Maje leads this project on behalf of Dena Cho, with the support of other community members (Amber Etzel, Derrick Redies and Ted Charlie). Lead contractor EDI has an amazing team (Annina Altherr, Joel MacFabe, and Manager, Lyndsay Doetzel) that supports Dena Cho's growth, and has shown a commitment to supporting our employees' success.

All of the environmental monitoring done is required under the Wolverine Mine Water Licence (QZ04-065) issued to the Yukon Zinc Corporation. It is Dena Cho and EDI's job to comply with this licence and monitor the mine site for the rest of the 2021 winter on a weekly and monthly basis.



*Eric John collecting a sample at Ketza River Mine.*



*Billie Maje taking notes in the field (January 2021)*

## Whiskers Lake Environmental Site Assessment

Dena Cho is currently doing work at Whiskers Lake coal deposit, located on the access road into Ross River from the Robert Campbell Highway. The mine was an open-pit mine in the 1980s and early '90s to provide a source of heat to dry the lead-zinc concentrate at the Faro mine. The mine has since been abandoned, and now Dena Cho is working with Hemerra, with support from CAN-NOR, to look at potential contaminants in the area. Contaminants may include fuel spills, oil spills and scrap metal piles. The purpose of this project is to connect Elders and community members to this area and see if there is any leftover contamination that needs to be cleaned up by Canada.

## North Canol Wire Cleanup

This summer, Dena Cho worked with Hemerra to clean up telegraph wire along the first 75 kilometers of the North Canol Trail. Dena Cho hired Eric John, Amber Etzel, Freddie Dick, Robyn McLeod and Justin Etzel to assist in the field work, which included surveying the length of the North Canol for wire and cleaning up the wire and disposing of it at the local landfill. The program was a success and we are now preparing to clean up the remaining wire next year.

### Training Initiatives



***Snowmobile training provided by the Northern Safety Network Yukon in November 2020.***