



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 Council owned and operated environmental management company.

Dena Cho is 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 are providing regular newsletter updates to Ross River community members and leadership. We also post our newsletters and other updates on our new website: <https://denacho.ca/>.

We encourage feedback on the content of this newsletter as we aim to keep our community informed and engaged. Please contact Caitlynn Beckett (cbeckett@denacho.ca), Jody Inkster (jinkster@denacho.ca), and Cassia Jakesta (cjakesta@denacho.ca) if you have any questions or concerns.



MAY—JULY 2021 NEWSLETTER

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Whitehorse Office

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White spruce saplings ready to be planted on test trial sites at the Faro Mine Site (June 2021).

Our Team

Mary Maje, Elder Support

Ted Charlie, Elder Support

Nora Ladue, Elder Support

Franklin Charlie, Elder Support

Jody Inkster, Environmental Scientist and Project Manager

Billie Maje, Field Technician and Project Manager

Cassia Jakesta, Environmental Scientist and Project Manager

Danika Maje, Field Technician

Eric John, Field Technician

Stu Van Bibber, General Manager

Caitlynn Beckett, Researcher and Project Manager

Current Projects

- ✧ Faro Mine Remediation Projects:
 - Leading the Faro Community-Based Revegetation Strategy
 - Reviewing and reporting to Kathlene Suza and RRDC leadership on the Faro YESAB process
 - Participation in the Faro Technical Review Committee
 - Environmental Monitoring Program
- ✧ Ketz River Mine Projects:
 - Ketz River Mine Remediation and Working Group
 - Ketz River Environmental Monitoring Program
 - Ketz River Bridge #4 Fish Salvage and Preservation
- ✧ Wolverine Mine Environmental Monitoring Program
- ✧ North Canal Projects:
 - Telegraph Wire Cleanup
 - Environmental Site Assessment

Faro Mine Remediation Project

Faro Community-Based Revegetation Work: In June, Dena Nezziddi Development Corp. (Dena Nezziddi) contracted Dena Cho to hire 14 Kaska Dena to plant 36,000 trees at the Faro Mine Site. We are very proud of everyone that was involved in the program and we are appreciative of the support provided by CIRNAC, Integral Ecological Group, Dena Nezziddi, Wildside Reforestation, and RRDC. This tree planting program was the largest Kaska-led program at the mine site and the largest tree planting program in Yukon to date! We look forward to planning similar programs in future years.



The first day of tree planting, with Mary Maje planting the first tree!



Opening remarks at Blind Creek (June 2021).

Faro YESAB Review Updates: The Faro Mine Reclamation Plan is still being reviewed by YESAB (Yukon Environmental and Socio-Economic Assessment Board), the organization in Yukon responsible for assessing projects before they start, including protecting and promoting the well-being of First Nations and guaranteeing the use of First Nations' knowledge and experience in the assessment process. Currently, the Faro YESAB review process is moving from the 'Adequacy' stage to the 'Screening' stage. YESAB recently sent a third Information Request (a list of questions for the Federal Government (CIRNAC) to answer before going through to the Screening Stage of assessment) CIRNAC posted their answers to this third Information Request on July 22.



Tree planters on a reforestation test trial site (June 2021).

YESAB also published a Preliminary Scope of Assessment - this document outlines a preliminary list of 'valued environmental and socio-economic components' that will be considered in the assessment of the Faro mine Remediation Project. These 'valued components' include: surface water quality, wildlife and wildlife habitat, heritage resources, human health, community infrastructure and services, community wellbeing, and First Nations' cultural vitality, to name just a few. You can find the full report [here](#).

If you are interested, you can view all Information Requests/Answers for Faro [here](#). For more information on the YESAB process, check out [this link](#).

Elder's Quote

“We have been here since the time immemorial and our Ancestors have said that we must protect, preserve, and care for the land, air, water, wildlife, and culture.”



Danika filtering a water sample during the July surface water event at the Faro Mine.

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 the Chief and Council regularly. The following are some highlights from the past two months:

- CIRNAC has an ongoing program to test the safety of water for fish.
- High water levels are ongoing and causing issues with bank erosion, which is being fixed by CIRNAC and site managers.
- General management and maintenance of the Faro Mine site continue, and work is underway to make sure the environment continues to be safe.
- A new plan, called an Adaptive Management Plan, is now being developed to protect the environment and wildlife.
- In May 2021, an additional water treatment plant, called the Cross Valley Pond Treatment Plant, was installed and activated to help treat increased amounts of water.
- The Faro Remediation team began placing test covers on some parts of the tailings pond. These test covers will help in the design of the final tailings pond covers.

Faro Mine Environmental Monitoring: Dena Cho assisted Golder during the quarterly monitoring program, which included groundwater, contact water, surface water, and seep sampling. Currently, Cassia Jakesta is the lead on this project on behalf of Dena Cho with the support of Golder and Eric John and Danika Maje.





Cassia conducting a flow measurement at the Faro Mine.

Ketza River Mine Projects

Ketza Remediation Project: Dena Cho attends monthly Ketza Mine River Working Group meetings with the Yukon Government, Government of Canada, and participating First Nations (i.e., Liard First Nation and Teslin Tlingit Council). Currently, the main focus for the project is engagement activities, drafting an Adaptive Management Plan, and developing a remediation framework.

You can find additional information (i.e., an infographic, backgrounder, and virtual site tour) on our website at www.denacho.ca.

Ketza Environmental Monitoring: Dena Cho was on-site with Hemmera in May for the monthly surface water quality program. In June and July, Hemmera led the field programs. The August program will include the annual groundwater monitoring program and the monthly surface water program.

Ketza River Mine Fish Salvage Program: Dena Cho and Hemmera will assist the Yukon Government in the replacement of bridge #4 on the main road to Ketza River Mine. The bridge being replaced is located at kilometre 32 and is being replaced because it is deteriorating. Dena Cho's job will be to do a fish salvage program before bridge construction. We will catch fish just below the bridge and move them downstream from the bridge area. This will then make the area safe for bridge replacement and make sure fish are not impacted. Dena Cho will provide an update on the success of this program in our next newsletter!

Wolverine Mine Environmental Monitoring

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

Billie Maje continues to lead this project on behalf of Dena Cho, with the support of other community members. Lead contractor EDI Environmental Dynamics Inc. continues to lead the program, with support from Dena Cho.

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's job to make sure that the water collected is done properly and is done by Ross River Dena members.

North Canol Wire Cleanup

In the summer of 2020, Dena Cho worked with Hemmera to clean up telegraph wire along the first 75 kilometres of the North Canol Trail. Dena Cho hired Eric John, Amber Etzel, Freddie Dick, Robyn McLeod and Justin Etzel to assist in the fieldwork, 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, from kilometre 75 all the way to the border. For this year's program, we have hired two Ross River Dena members, with a start date of August 2, 2021. The purpose of this program will be to flag, clean up, and dispose of old telegraph wire, making the lands safe again for Ross River Dena members and wildlife alike.



(Above) Jody during the electrofishing training in North Vancouver in July.

(Below) Kaska tree planters at the Faro Mine Site in June.

Training

Jody Inkster and Cassia Jakesta completed an electrofishing course through Natural Resource Training Group in July.



36,000 trees planted at the Faro Mine.



21 Kaska trained in tree planting.



Largest tree planting program in Yukon.

