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**NEW RECLAMATION AND CLOSURE POLICY FOR FUTURE YUKON MINES**

WHITEHORSE – The Yukon government has approved a Mine Site Reclamation and Closure Policy for hard rock mines. It goes into effect immediately.

“The policy lays out the Yukon government’s requirements for mining companies to plan for and finance the costs of restoring land to its former state or other productive uses,” Energy, Mines and Resources Minister Archie Lang said. “This policy will ensure that planning, implementing and financing of reclamation and closure are considered throughout the mine’s life. It also requires that companies provide financial security to ensure that reclamation and closure requirements will be carried out.”

This policy also provides guidance to government agencies for implementing their regulatory responsibilities.

Key components of the policy include:

- Mine operators are responsible for reclamation, care, maintenance and abandonment of the site;
- Every mine is required to have an approved reclamation and closure plan that has been approved by the Yukon government before development proceeds;
- The reclamation and closure plan will be adjusted at regular intervals as new information is collected;
- A Certificate of Closure will be issued when mine development or production is terminated and the Yukon government is satisfied that the mine operator has complied with all license conditions; and
- The Yukon government will determine the form and amount of security, to be provided by the mine operator, to cover the full amount of outstanding mine reclamation and closure liability. The amount will be periodically adjusted in accordance with decreased or increased site liability.

Extensive consultation with First Nations, mining industry representatives, environmental groups and government agencies took place to help guide development of the policy, which is consistent with policies in other jurisdictions in Canada.

The Yukon Minerals Advisory Board has endorsed the policy and notes that it provides a “clear and consistent approach to mine closure” and “reflects the industry’s support of the modern practice of integrating mine closure and progressive reclamation into mine planning and operation.”

The next steps are completion of detailed technical and financial guidelines to complement the policy. These guidelines will address the specific conditions for reclamation standards and the forms of acceptable financial security. Further public consultation will be undertaken to finalize the guidelines, which are slated for completion by April 2006.

The policy is available at the district Mining Lands Offices in Dawson City, Mayo, Watson Lake and Whitehorse and it can be downloaded from the Energy, Mines and Resources website at [yukonmining.com](http://yukonmining.com). To download the policy, link to <http://www.emr.gov.yk.ca/mining/reclamation%20and%20closure%20policy.html>

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