

shades of green

improving how we describe disturbed sites planned for new development

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**How would
you
describe
this
landscape?**



Describing previously disturbed sites

- The term “**brownfield**” is often used to describe historically **disturbed sites** that are planned for new development again
- These sites have **revegetated over time** and are recovering for use by plants, wildlife and people
- Is there a **better way to describe previously disturbed sites** during early community engagement when re-developing old sites?
- What **words would you use?**



The way we describe land has implications on how we treat it

- Do the terms greenfield or brownfield entitle the land to different standards or care?
- Does our language grant a different value for the land based on the terms we use?
- If we call the land “brownfield” even after decades healing, do we treat it differently than “greenfield”



Do we need a better term for disturbed sites?

- Many historic mines sites and roads were not reclaimed to today's standards
- They were left to revegetate naturally
- Land may have been healing for decades
- Does “brownfield” still apply to these sites?



**former Brewery
Creek heap
leach gold mine**

**opened in 1996
reclaimed in
2002**

**renewed
exploration
interest 15
years later**

**Is this
brownfield or a
landscape that
is healing?**

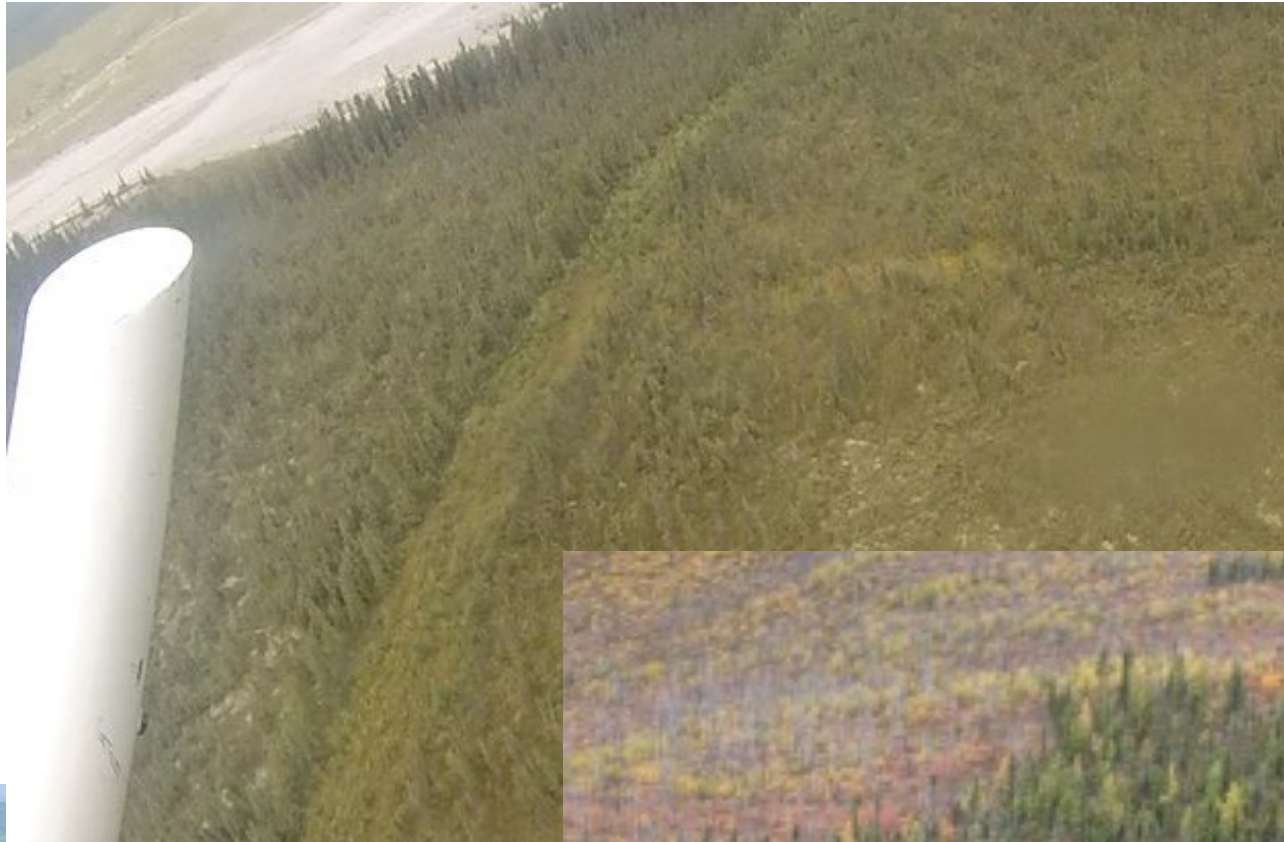


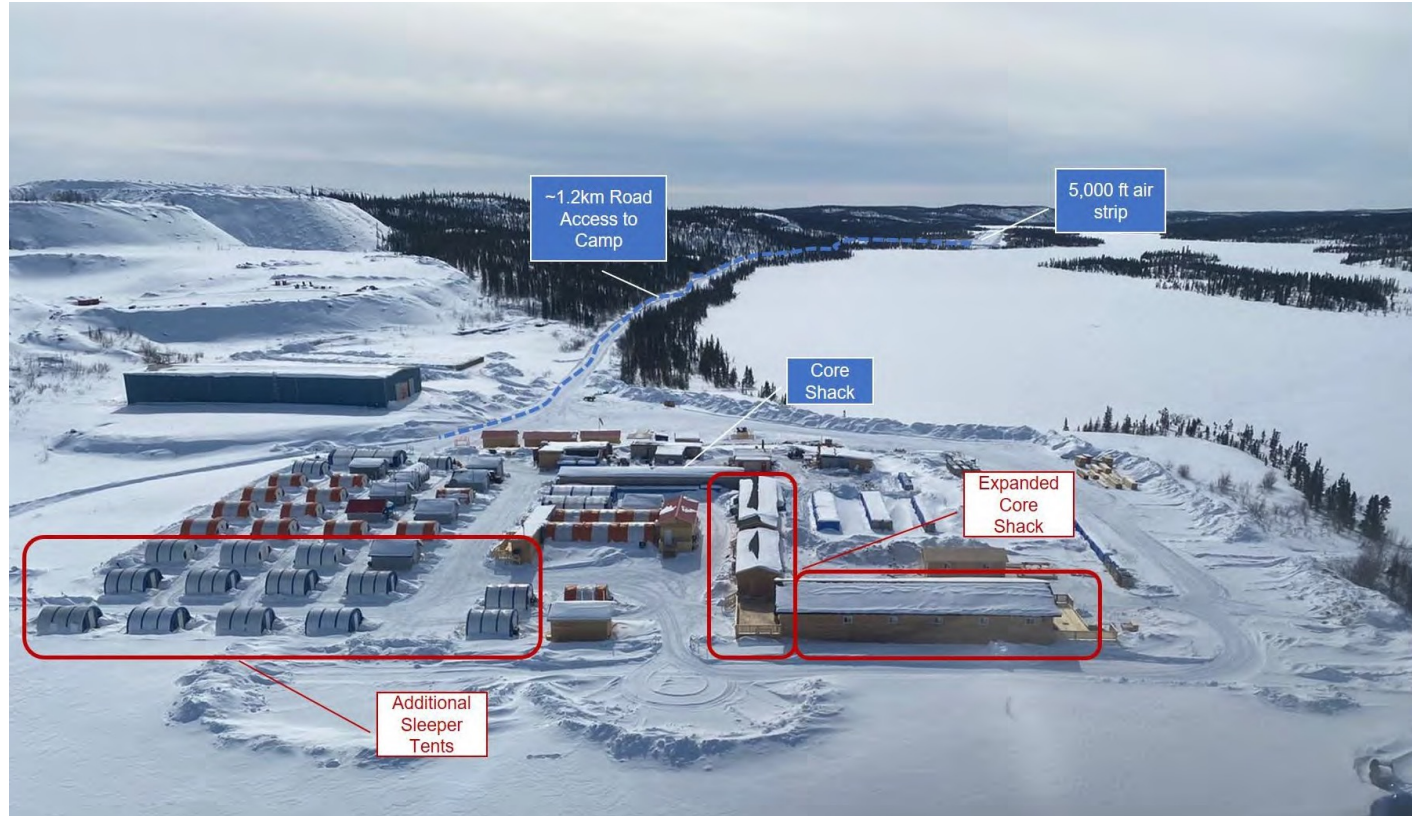
**1981-82 winter
now revegetated**

**proposed for all-
season road 4
decades later**

**-access to Prairie
Creek Mine**

**greenfield or
brownfield?**





Colomac mine
operating in the
1980's

Abandoned early
2000s

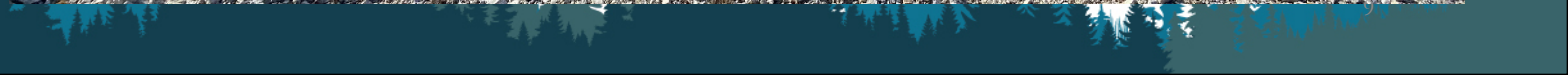


Renewed exploration and
interest in development 2020's



Previously developed sites are healing

- Renewed development can occur at same location of a historic mine
- Environmental assessment needs to consider land recovery when describing existing conditions
- Is this a healing landscape or a brownfield landscape?



People and wildlife may return to use these areas



After development stops:

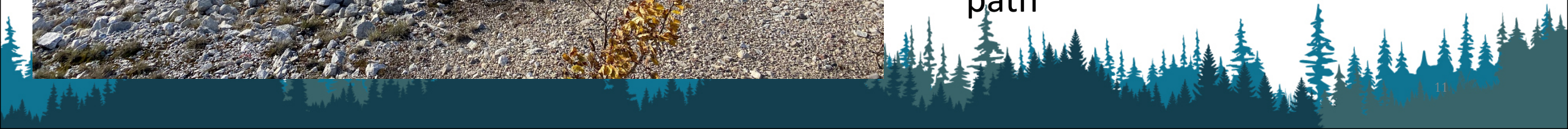
- vegetation returns
- wildlife returns
- people return
- water movement re-establishes
- natural processes re-establish
- functioning ecosystem returns



Historic mine site – land in transition



- Does “brownfield” accurately describe this landscape?
- We need to acknowledge the gradient of landscape change over time
- The dominant colour is transitioning to green over time
- The landscape is on a recovery path



Engage early when considering re-use of old disturbed sites

During early engagement project proponents should:

- ask if people have returned to use the site?
- ask whether wildlife, fish and birds have returned?
- ask if wildlife harvesting or gathering of plants has resumed?
- not assume that a site previously used for development is unused and automatically available for re-use



Acknowledge transition of land to future uses

- Closure goal of mine sites and access is often to return landscape to some form of safe use by people and wildlife
- If we are serious about this goal improved language to describe a recovering landscape is suggested



Can you recommend a better word than “brownfield”?

- The language we use is important during early community engagement
- What words would you use to describe a landscape that is healing?
- How would you describe this landscape being proposed again for development?

