

Deloro Site Clean Up Project

2020 Update

Deloro work continues despite COVID

The Deloro Site clean up project is on track, being 75 per cent complete and has already significantly improved the environmental conditions and water quality at the site and in the Moira River.

Even in light of COVID-19, the Deloro Project Team was able to continue site-related work thanks in part to pre-existing contingency and emergency preparedness plans that considered what to do in case of a pandemic.

The Deloro Treatment Plant operators, site management and laboratory personnel followed COVID health and safety measures including working staggered shifts. Site staff from the Ontario Clean Water Agency followed appropriate COVID protocols to ensure essential operational, inspection and monitoring programs continued. Some equipment delivery was slowed due to the pandemic, however, staff worked around those challenges.



Tailings Area completed
2012



Industrial and Mine Area
completed 2017



Young's Creek Area -- in
progress



Photo of Deloro site.

Treatment Plant continues to perform at a high level

The Ontario Clean Water Agency operates an arsenic treatment plant on the Deloro site. The plant removes up to 99.9 per cent of arsenic from the contaminated groundwater at the site and continues to provide a high level of treatment performance in meeting its environmental approval limits.

In 2019, the plant treated over 83 million litres of water. Nearly 1,000 kilograms of arsenic was removed.

Wastes and contaminated materials generated during the cleanup project will remain on site and will be safely contained. The by-product of the arsenic treatment process (ferric arsenate sludge – a solid, non-hazardous waste) is safely transported to an off-site ministry licensed landfill for disposal, as required.

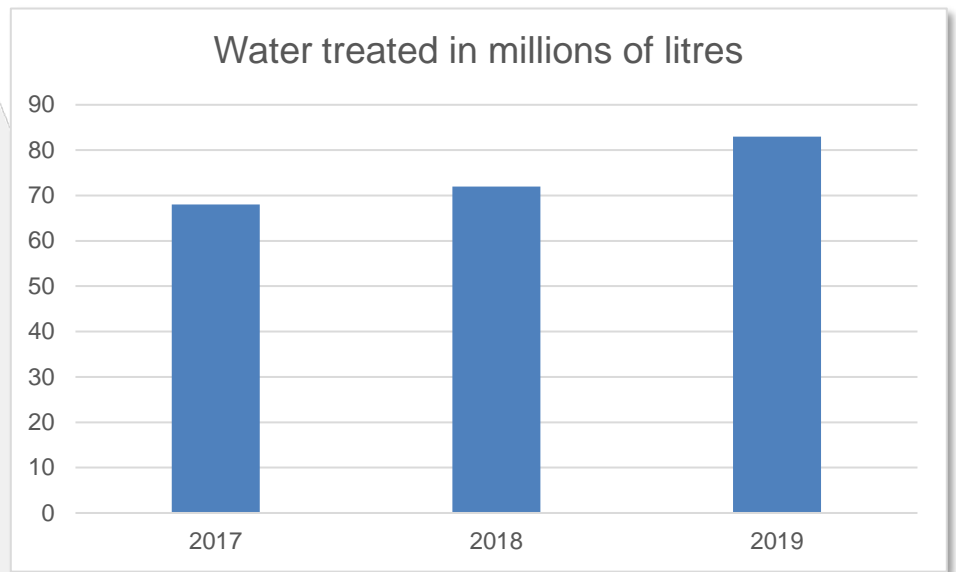


Photo of Arsenic Treatment Plant undergoing outside maintenance.

The Arsenic Treatment Plant removes nearly 100 per cent of the arsenic contamination found in the site groundwater.

The Deloro Project Team and the Ontario Clean Water Agency continue to ensure the building and plant are maintained so that treatment operations can continue to meet project goals and achieve environmental improvements.

Radiological risk safely reduced

2017 Tailings and Industrial and Mine Areas removed from licence

2019 Young's Creek Area removed from licence

2009 licence put in place as oversight

Continuing clean up and maintenance

Work on the site has successfully reduced risks to health, safety and the environment. These improvements have enabled the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission to remove the remaining requirements of its oversight licence.

The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission provided oversight through a licence for the entire Deloro site from 2009 to October 2017. The licence was in place because of onsite material with low levels of radiation.

In October 2017, the Industrial and Mine Area and Tailings Area were removed from the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission's oversight as remediation in those areas was complete. In August 2019, the Young's Creek Area was also removed from the Commission's oversight after low-level radiological materials were relocated and secured in the long-term waste management facility constructed onsite.

The Ontario government will continue to conduct the clean up of Young's Creek and manage the Deloro site for the foreseeable future. Access to the site will remain controlled to ensure ongoing safety and security.

New focus on Young's Creek

The remaining work in the Young's Creek Area will include removing and securing the remaining sediments, which are highly contaminated with metals.

Removing and securing the sediments will help improve water quality in the Moira River and Moira Lake. It will also prevent contaminated sediment moving into the Moira River during storms or when the water level is high.

The Ontario government is in the process of hiring an engineering firm to finalize the cleanup plans for Young's Creek. The engineering contract is expected to be awarded by early 2021. The remaining remediation work in Young's Creek will follow.



A view of the southern arm of Young's Creek. Clean up of the area will continue and contaminated sediments will be put into a containment cell.

Local environment improving



Site photo of geese and picture from aerial drone footage.

The site has been returned to a more naturalized state and continues to provide attractive habitat for wildlife. Local species seen on site include deer, rabbits, blue jays, otters, geese, frogs and insects.

Trees and other planted vegetation are generally observed to be healthy and resilient. Monitoring and maintenance will continue, including planting more trees if needed.

Staying involved

The Ontario government remains committed to completing the final phase of the cleanup project. Completing this work is an important step in meeting Ontario's commitment to supporting rural communities and their economic prosperity.

As noted in the Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan, Ontario's lakes, waterways and groundwater are the foundation of Ontario's economic prosperity and wellbeing.

The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks holds Public Liaison Committee meetings once a year. Contact 613-548-6921 to attend. You can find out the history of the Deloro site on Ontario.ca. For other inquiries call our Kingston Office at 613-549-4000.



Poplar trees on site.