

EAGLE'S EYE

A news update from Noront Resources about development in the Ring of Fire

First Nations Drive Road EA

By Alan Coutts, President and CEO

One of the most important stages in permitting a mining project in Ontario is assessing the potential environmental effects—both positive and negative.

To do this, the project's proponent (or leader) must conduct an Environmental Assessment (EA), which involves getting an approved Terms of Reference (ToR) from the provincial government. The ToR is basically a work plan for what will be studied as part of the EA.

When Noront received an approved ToR for its Eagle's Nest project in 2015, the scope included both a mine and a 300 km all-season access road into the Ring of Fire. At the time, the mining company was expected to be the proponent for both. But, after initiating conversations with First Nations in the region, it was clear they wanted to play a major role in the EA for the access road, which transected their traditional lands.

The best way to ensure this was for the communities to become the road's proponents. Though this isn't a typical approach, the province agreed to provide the communities with funding so they could conduct EAs on the sections of road that cross their traditional lands. All sections of a road to the Ring of Fire are now advancing under this new and innovative permitting model.

With that in place, Noront will restart the Eagle's Nest (continued on next page)



August Act of Safety winner Brandyn Chum at Esker Site

Safety Takes on a New Meaning

Everyone has the right to work in a safe environment. The importance of this resonates today more than ever as we all take daily protective measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Because of this, the term "workplace safety" has taken on a new meaning. So, we'd like to take a moment to spotlight the excellent health and safety work that's been done since we re-opened Esker Site.

When our crew headed back in August, they had to complete all the regular safety procedures required at site plus additional measures like social distancing, wearing masks when necessary and regularly sanitizing common touch points. In addition, enhanced orientations and toolbox meetings were conducted to orient workers on how to perform the tasks required for the program in the safest possible way after returning to site following a long period away.

With all this happening, Brandyn Chum, Senior Site Support, went above and beyond. Brandyn has an amazing health and safety mindset and a positive attitude that he shares with his coworkers by speaking up and sharing his concerns and ideas. He took initiative by identifying what needed to be done to create a more efficient work environment. In this rotation, he fixed up the argos so they could be used during the program to move around site more easily. Brandyn's constant contributions add value to the Noront health and safety culture.

Each month we recognize one of our site staff with the Noront Act of Safety award. This month, we are pleased to acknowledge Brandyn with this award for his initiative and efforts in the reopening of Esker Site.

Congratulations Brandyn and thank you for embodying our health and safety motto, "I've got your back"!

The New Normal: Returning to Site



EMPLOYEE PROFILE:
ROYDON SPENCE

COMMUNITY:
WEBEQUIE FIRST NATION

JOB POSITION:
GEOTECH / LEAD SOIL SAMPLER

What do you do at Noront?

When I first started, I was a Field Assistant and did various jobs around camp and in the field. In 2019, I was promoted to Geotech. Now I help with core logging, which is a detailed process that involves reviewing core, taking readings, entering data and other fun stuff.

It's great to have more responsibility. We recently completed a soil sampling project and I was the Team Lead. I worked with two other guys and they looked to me for leadership and knowledge about the terrain and the tasks we were assigned.

How has COVID affected you?

I was in Mexico when the lockdown started. That was a bit stressful because we had to come back early and quarantine at home for 2 weeks. I was able to get a bunch of projects done around the house and spend some quality time with my wife, but I was really looking forward to getting back to work so I could tell my co-workers about my trip. I was also disappointed that our long-awaited honeymoon to Paris and Greece had to be cancelled.

Did things seem different when you came back to work after COVID?

Yes, there were a lot of measurements in place to keep us safe. Like splitting

going to the kitchen in two shifts for meals and wearing masks inside buildings and on the shuttle, airplane and helicopter where social distancing isn't possible. But things went well! We finished the gold soil sampling program on schedule and more importantly, we were safe! It was a bit tough the first few days, because we had to get back in shape and we were working in summer temperatures, so we felt the effects of the heat at times. But, we beat the heat by getting started early and getting as much work done as we could during the cool crisp morning.

What part of your job do you like best?

I really enjoy working in the Core Shack with Geoff and Matt. They both have a wealth of knowledge about geology and I learn something new and exciting from them every day.

How do you see your future as Noront transitions into a mine?

It's really exciting. I would love to work in a senior role...like Head Geotech or as a heavy equipment operator. Working at Esker really opened my eyes to other roles that I may want to try. Driller's Helper would also be great... I'm determined to move up to a driller position in a couple years, so I took a driller's surface & underground course last year. But Noront will always be my first choice.

Gold Exploration in the Ring of Fire

By Matt Deller, Senior Geologist

 The Ring of Fire is known for its abundant and varied mineral deposits. Over the years, significant nickel, copper, platinum, palladium, chromite, copper and zinc have all been discovered there. But, it's a little-known gold discovery from 2012 that currently has the attention of the Noront exploration team.

The Triple J occurrence is a gold-filled shear zone identified while we were drilling nearby at the Blackbird chromite deposit. Exploring for gold in the Ring of Fire is not without its challenges. A lack of exposed bedrock makes it difficult for prospectors and geologists to explore. And targeting new deposits is typically only possible with detection methods that can identify conductive metal or magnetic rocks such as geophysical surveys. Gold, unfortunately, doesn't occur in these forms, so a different exploration method is needed.

Our summer program focused on collecting clay samples from organic material, which makes up the base of vast swamps and bogs in the area. Samples are 0.2 to 5 meters below the surface and they require a special auger (a tool that digs bore holes) to collect. Trace amounts of gold are trapped and concentrated in the clay and they can only be detected using specialized analytical methods.

Our initial survey sampled clay above the Triple J occurrence and was then extended by 14 km along strike, to include the Webequie Shear Zone and structures crosscutting the Thunderbird intrusion. The objective is to identify areas along the prospective structures for follow-up soil sampling, trenching and diamond drilling.

Samples taken this summer are currently being dried and analyzed so our geologists can zero in on the most promising areas for further exploration.

First Nations Drive Road EA (continued from previous page)

mine EA without the all-season road in the work plan. This requires a revised ToR, so the company is currently working with the province to take this next step in the environmental permitting of the first mining project in the Ring of Fire.