

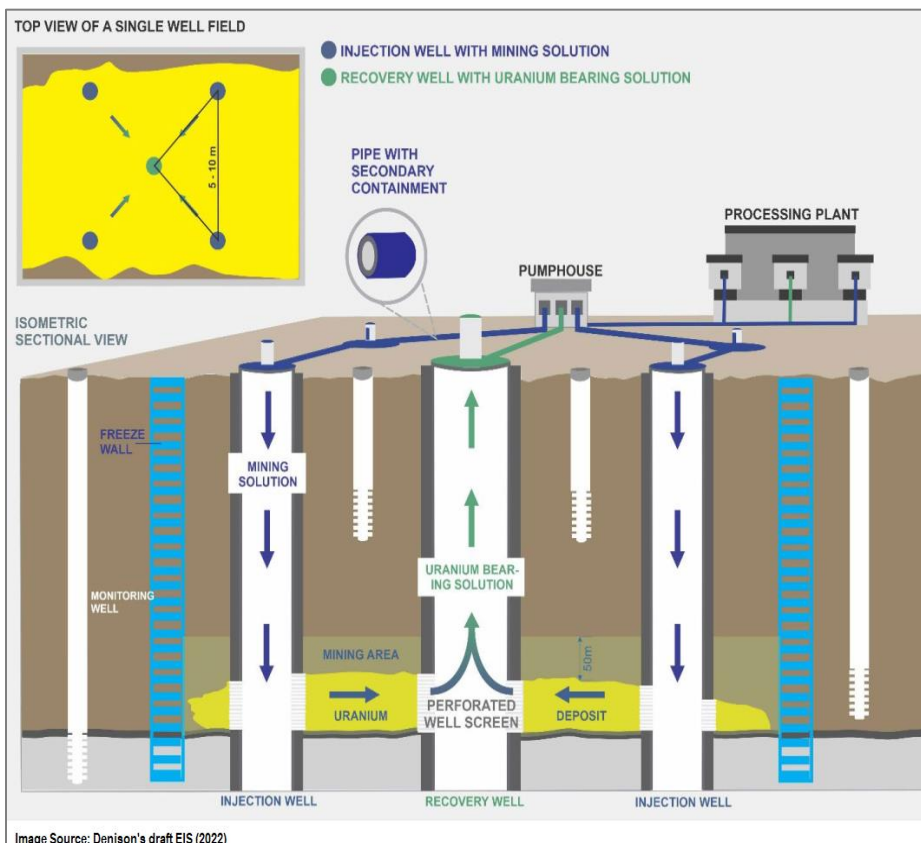
April 2023

# Denison Mines Corp. Wheeler River Project Bulletin



## PROJECT OVERVIEW

Denison Mines Corp. (Denison) is proposing to develop an *in situ* recovery uranium mining and processing plant - [the Wheeler River Project](#) - in the Athabasca Basin in Saskatchewan, approximately 600 kilometres north of the City of Saskatoon. The proposed project is located within Treaty 10 territory, the homeland of the Métis, and within the traditional territories of the Dene, Cree, and Métis peoples. It is also located within the Northern Administration District of Saskatchewan.



Denison have proposed an *in situ* recovery method, meaning that the mining will occur *in place* and from above ground, without the need for an open pit or underground tunnels.

The proposed mining method would involve:

- 1) injecting an acidic mining solution into the ground through encased wells to dissolve uranium from the deposit
- 2) bringing the uranium-bearing mining solution back to the surface through recovery wells
- 3) transporting the mining solution to an onsite processing plant to process and extract the uranium

The mining area will be surrounded by a freeze wall to help control the movement of the mining solution underground.

The proposed Wheeler River Project would include underground and above ground components to support the mining and processing of uranium. The main components include: a camp facility; site operations centre; *in situ* recovery mining wellfield and freeze wall; freeze plants; processing plant / water treatment plant; warehousing and fuel storage facilities; power generation; waste management; an airstrip; and, additional infrastructure to support mining activities.

Denison's proposal is undergoing an [environmental assessment](#) (EA) as per the [Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012](#) (CEAA 2012) by the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC). Denison also intends to apply for a licence to construct their facilities, which will trigger a thorough [licensing review](#) as per the [Nuclear Safety and Control Act](#). The project is also subject to a [provincial EA](#) as per the province of Saskatchewan's Environmental Assessment Act.

## WHERE WE ARE NOW

In 2019, Denison submitted a project description to provide a general overview of the proposed Wheeler River project which was posted to the [Canadian Impact Assessment Registry \(reference #: 80178\)](#) (the Registry) for review. From May 31 to June 30, 2019, CNSC staff sought comments from the public and Indigenous Nations and communities on the project description and posted [CNSC staff's responses to the comments](#) to the Registry. Following the comment period on the project description, in December 2019 the Commission issued a [Record of Decision](#) for the proposed Wheeler River Project stating the EA will include the factors mandated within CEAA 2012 with no additional factors.



The [EA was temporarily suspended](#) due to COVID-19 in March 2020 at Denison's request. The project resumed in January 2021, at which point Denison provided a [revised project description](#). The revised project description proposed a new freeze wall design for a third level of containment instead of the previously proposed freeze dome. The revisions did not constitute material change to the project and additional public consultation on the revisions were not required. In May 2020, in anticipation of the submission of the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) [participant funding was offered](#) to assist Indigenous Nations and communities and members of the public in the review and comment on the draft EIS.

Since 2022, Denison has been conducting a field test to assess the feasibility of the proposed *in situ* method, under a CNSC Nuclear Substances and Radiation Devices licence. This licence is valid until December 31, 2023.

In October 2022, Denison submitted a draft EIS package (see [Key Documents](#)). CNSC staff performed a [conformity review](#) of the draft EIS and found the submission has the required information to proceed with the technical review. In November 2022 two parallel reviews began: [a 90-day public and Indigenous comment period](#) and 120-day EIS technical review by the Federal and Indigenous Review Team. The [public and Indigenous comments](#) and [federal information requests](#) have been shared with Denison for review.

## NEXT STEPS

Denison will be required to respond to comments on the EIS from the public and Indigenous Nations and communities, as well as provide responses to federal information requests, along with any supplementary information required. The review of Denison's responses will be an iterative process that can last as long as it takes to ensure the responses meet regulatory requirements. Once the draft EIS meets regulatory requirements, CNSC staff will proceed to the development of an EA report for consideration by the Commission. Denison will also need to meet CNSC licensing requirements described in the [Uranium Mines and Mills Regulations](#), among other requirements, in order to obtain a licence to begin construction.

Before deciding on each of the EA and construction licensing aspects of the proposed project, the Commission will hold public hearings where Indigenous Nations and communities and members of the public may [participate](#).

## OUTREACH

CNSC staff will continue to engage on the Wheeler River Project and is planning future webinars and outreach events related to Denison's *in situ* mining proposal as this project progresses. Stay tuned!

### Wheeler River Project Bulletin

If you have any questions or suggestions on topics or issues that you would like to see covered, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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