

## BONUS! ACTIVITY 11 FOR GRADES 7-12: YUKON PLACER MINING REGULATIONS & RECLAMATION

# VIRTUAL YUKON MINING



**Complete this activity and submit for Grand Prize Entry**

Placer gold is gold that can be recovered from gravels. Placer miners use three things to extract the gold from gravels: water, motion and gravity. No chemicals are used in the mining process of placer gold, except for fuel in engines and generators. The machine that washes gold-bearing gravel is called a sluice plant, and it works like a big washing machine: the gold is very heavy and gets trapped in the bottom of the sluice plant as gravel and water flows over top. This is how miners collect the gold. Once the gravels have been washed, the miners have to perform reclamation activities.

In 2018, placer miners recovered roughly 70,000 ounces of gold. As gold is very heavy, 70,000 ounces is about the same as 2,200 kilograms; equivalent to the weight of an average pickup truck but much smaller in size. This amount of gold is valued at about \$95 million, with the majority of that money being spent on fuel, equipment, camp and other operating expenses. A 2017 survey showed Yukon placer miners spend 87% of their annual expenses in the territory, supporting Yukon families and businesses.

But mining the gold is only part of the story, reclamation is also a necessary part of the package. Mining reclamation is the process of restoring land that has been mined to a natural state or for another purpose or use. The process of reclamation occurs during mining activities (called “progressive reclamation”) and is finished once mining is completed; but the planning of mine reclamation activities happen prior to an operation being permitted or started. Reclamation plans are an important part of making sure mines are left in a way that encourages plant growth and habitat development for moose, birds and other animals that are native to the Yukon. Because placer operators only use motion, gravity and water to extract gold, reclamation can be very effective in a relatively short amount of time.

**So, let's see what you know about placer mining and reclamation in Yukon!**

 **Tip: Check out the Resource for Links to helpful sites**

**BACKGROUND  
TOOL**

**GR. 7-12  
1**

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## EXPLORING FOR INFORMATION

<https://www.kpma.ca/>  
<https://goldprice.org/>  
<https://www.goldrushnuggets.com/tyofgopl.html>  
<http://www.emr.gov.yk.ca/mining/placermining.html>  
[http://www.gov.yk.ca/legislation/acts/plmi\\_c.pdf](http://www.gov.yk.ca/legislation/acts/plmi_c.pdf)  
[http://www.gov.yk.ca/legislation/regs/oic2003\\_059.pdf](http://www.gov.yk.ca/legislation/regs/oic2003_059.pdf) (page 20)  
[http://www.emr.gov.yk.ca/mining/pdf/mlur\\_placer\\_operating\\_conditions.pdf](http://www.emr.gov.yk.ca/mining/pdf/mlur_placer_operating_conditions.pdf)  
<https://www.yesab.ca/about-yesab/yesab/>  
[http://www.yukonwaterboard.ca/forms/Information%20Sheets/Placer\\_InfoSheet\\_14Nov2015%20.pdf](http://www.yukonwaterboard.ca/forms/Information%20Sheets/Placer_InfoSheet_14Nov2015%20.pdf)  
[http://www.yukonwaterboard.ca/forms\\_info.htm#pm](http://www.yukonwaterboard.ca/forms_info.htm#pm)  
[http://www.emr.gov.yk.ca/mining/placer\\_mlu\\_application.html](http://www.emr.gov.yk.ca/mining/placer_mlu_application.html)  
<http://www.emr.gov.yk.ca/mining/pdf/indian-river-wetlands-info-sheet-20200203.pdf>  
<https://yukon.ca/en/doing-business/licensing/prepare-project-proposal-class-4-placer-activities>  
[http://www.emr.gov.yk.ca/mining/pdf/handbook\\_placer\\_regulations.pdf](http://www.emr.gov.yk.ca/mining/pdf/handbook_placer_regulations.pdf)  
<https://yukon.ca/sites/yukon.ca/files/env/env-preferred-practices-works-affecting-yukon-waters.pdf>  
<https://yukon.ca/sites/yukon.ca/files/emr/emr-placer-guidebook-mitigation-measures.pdf>  
[http://www.emr.gov.yk.ca/mining/pdf/placer\\_mining\\_permitting\\_roadmap.pdf](http://www.emr.gov.yk.ca/mining/pdf/placer_mining_permitting_roadmap.pdf)  
<http://www.emr.gov.yk.ca/mining/leckie.html>  
<https://yukon.ca/en/news/leckie-awards-recognize-excellence-mining-practices>

Before you go online, please check with your parents or guardians. To learn more about Internet safety, please visit:  
<http://www.justice.gov.yk.ca/2404.html>

Links also available online at [www.YukonWIM.ca/vym-activities/](http://www.YukonWIM.ca/vym-activities/)

**PLEASE USE THE EXTRA BLANK PAGES TO ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS.**

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**EXPLORE ONLINE TO FIND THE ANSWERS TO THESE YUKON PLACER QUESTIONS**

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- Q1:** In April 1915, the gold price was \$19.25 per ounce in U.S. dollars. This is equivalent to about \$500 USD today. Approximately, what is the current price of gold today?
- Q2:** What is the difference between quartz and placer mining?
- Q3:** Yukon placer mining operators have been required to reclaim their mining activities since 1999. Part 2 of the Yukon Placer Mining Act deals with mining land use and the need to reclaim. What is the specific purpose of this Part?
- Q4:** What Board carries out environmental and socio-economic reviews/assessments of proposed exploration and mining projects?
- Q5:** Approximately how many placer operations are there in Yukon?
- Q6:** How many types of placer mining operations are there in Yukon?
- Q7:** Once the placer mining project has been reviewed by YESAB, the next step is to acquire a placer mining land use approval. Depending on the Class of placer operation they may also require a water license to operate. At what class level does a placer operation need a water licence?
- Q8:** How often does a placer operation with a water license have to report to the Yukon Government on their activities?
- Q9:** Placer miners who show excellence in environmental stewardship, outstanding social responsibility, and leadership and innovation in overall process are recognized every year by the Government of Yukon. What are these awards called?
- Q10:** Name one placer miner that has won the Robert E. Leckie Award in the past.

PRESENTED  
IN PARTNERSHIP



**Yukon**



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## YUKON PLACER RECLAMATION – TRUE OR FALSE QUESTIONS

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- Q1:** All placer mining is done in creeks and rivers. TRUE | FALSE
- Q2:** Placer mining can yield gold dust, flakes or nuggets. TRUE | FALSE
- Q3:** Placer mining reclamation is only needed if the operator feels it is necessary. TRUE | FALSE
- Q4:** There are 5 classes of placer mining operations. TRUE | FALSE
- Q5:** The Placer Mining Land Use Regulation came into effect in 2005. TRUE | FALSE
- Q6:** Fish habitat and vegetation are two reclamation areas that placer miners have to address. TRUE | FALSE
- Q7:** There are about 75 placer mining operations in Yukon. TRUE | FALSE
- Q8:** Placer mines don't need a water license as long as they are careful with how much water they use. TRUE | FALSE
- Q9:** YESAB can recommend additional reclamation requirements to the minimum standard. TRUE | FALSE
- Q10:** The public is not allowed to participate in environmental and socio-economic reviews (by YESAB). TRUE | FALSE
- Q11:** The Robert E. Leckie Awards honour those who go above and beyond in reclamation efforts at their placer (and quartz) mining operations. TRUE | FALSE