

Hazardous Waste Inventory and Risk Assessment

Assessing climate change risk to municipal hazardous waste disposal sites in eight Northern NWT communities.

CONTEXT

Northern regions in the NWT are experiencing the most rapid climate warming in Canada, resulting in thawing permafrost, slumping, and coastal erosion. These landscape changes can increase the risk associated with the release of contaminants (used oil, fuel, batteries, paint, and mercury) associated with historic hazardous waste stockpiles. A complete inventory of hazardous waste and a climate change risk assessment is important to protect communities from environmental threats that will likely occur with consistently warmer temperatures.

Environment and Natural Resources



OBJECTIVE

This project will inventory historic stockpiles of hazardous waste within communities in the Inuvik region, including a cost estimate for their transportation and disposal. Combining this assessment with a climate change risk assessment will allow the prioritization of management and removal options for these historic stockpiles.

APPROACH

This is the second year of a three year project. The first year of the project saw the inventories for 6 of 8 arctic communities completed. This year, the project had to postpone the remaining communities – Sachs Harbour and Ulukhaktok – due to weather conditions.

EXPECTED RESULTS

A report on the inventories for the hazardous waste historic stockpiles located in Aklavik, Inuvik, Fort McPherson, Paulatuk, Sachs Harbour, Tsiigehtchich, Tuktoyaktuk, and Ulukhaktok will be completed. This report will also contain a cost analysis for repackaging, removing from the community, and disposing of the hazardous waste from each community.

These results are expected to benefit each community by providing an understanding of current hazardous waste levels within each community, as well as the costs associated with the cleanup and disposal of hazardous waste, and the areas in which hazardous waste management can be improved to reduce future stockpiles of hazardous waste in these communities.

The complete inventories will provide the information necessary complete the climate change risk assessment.

Significance

Climate change increases the risk of municipal hazardous waste being released into the environment. The Beaufort Delta and High Arctic are experiencing rapid climate warming resulting in thawing Permafrost, slumping, and coastal erosion.

Partners

- Community Governments
- Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada
- NWT Association of Communities
- Northwest Territories Water Board
- Gwich'in Land and Water Board
- Government of the NWT, Municipal and Community Affairs
- Government of the NWT, Environment and Natural Resources

FOR MORE INFO

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