



# Summary Record of Decision

DEC 25-H9

In the Matter of

Applicant Denison Mines Corp.

Subject Application for a Licence to Prepare Site and  
Construct the Wheeler River Project

Public Hearing Dates October 8, 2025  
December 8 to 11, 2025

Summary Record of Decision Date February 18, 2026

## **SUMMARY RECORD OF DECISION – DEC 25-H9**

Applicant:	Denison Mines Corp.
Applicant Address:	345 4 <sup>th</sup> Avenue South, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, S7K 1N3
Subject:	Application for a Licence to Prepare Site and Construct the Wheeler River Project
Environmental assessment commenced:	May 15, 2019
Licence application received:	July 4, 2023
Public Hearing Dates	Part 1: October 8, 2025 Part 2: December 8 to 11, 2025
Public Hearing Location:	Part 1: 140 Promenade du Portage, Gatineau, Quebec and Virtual (via Zoom)  Part 2: Sheraton Cavalier Saskatoon Hotel, 612 Spadina Crescent East, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan and Virtual (via Zoom)
Summary Record of Decision Date:	February 18, 2026
Panel of Commission:	P. Tremblay A. Hardie V. Remenda
Deputy Registrar:	J. Samson
Recording Secretary:	M. McMillan
Commission Counsel:	A. Mazur

<b>Applicant Represented By</b>		<b>Document Number</b>
D. Cates	President and Chief Executive Officer	CMD 25-H9.1 CMD 25-H9.1A CMD 25-H9.1B CMD 25-H9.1C CMD 25-H9.1D CMD 25-H9.1E
J. Switzer	Vice-President, Environment, Sustainability & Regulatory	
C. Inglis-McQuay	Director, Sustainability	
K. Kent Drewes	Principal & Consultant-Intergroup	
E. Haack	Senior Environmental Scientist, Director of Assessment - Ecometrix	
P. Martin	Senior Environmental Engineer, Hydrogeology and Groundwater Modelling	
B. Holaday	Principal Metallurgist	
D. Johnson	Consultant, Wellfield Mining and Modelling	
C. Sorba	Vice-President, Technical Services, Project Evaluation & Exploration	
K. Himbeault	Vice-President, Operations	
B. Fraser	Principal, Senior Consultant-Ecometrix	
R. Parker	Director, Environmental Risk Assessment Specialist	
R. Millen	Legal Counsel, Blake, Cassels & Graydon LLP	
<b>CNSC Staff</b>		<b>Document Number</b>
K. Campbell	Director General, Directorate of Nuclear Cycle and Facilities Regulation (DNCFR)	CMD 25-H9 CMD 25-H9.A CMD 25-H9.B CMD 25-H9.C CMD 25-H9.D CMD 25-H9.E
K. Gorzkowski	Senior Project Officer, Uranium Mines and Mills Division, DNCFR	
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J. McKeown	Team Lead, Western and Northern Regions, Indigenous Consultation and Engagement Division, SPD	
P. Burton	Strategic Advisor, Director General's Office, DNCFR	
M. Fabian Mendoza	Director, Environmental Risk Assessment Division, Directorate of Environmental and Radiation Protection and Assessment (DERPA)	
J. Way	Environmental Review Officer, Environmental Review Division, DERPA	
V. Sesin	Environmental Risk Assessment Officer, Environmental Risk Assessment Division, DERPA	
A. Levine	Director, Indigenous Consultation and Engagement Division, SPD	
S. Gill	Project Officer, Major Projects and Strategic Support Division, DNCFR	
J. Thelen	Director, Major Projects and Strategic Support Division, DNCFR	

Q. Zheng	Geoscience Technical Specialist, Environmental Risk Assessment Division, DERPA	
R. Lane	Radiation and Health Sciences Specialist, Health Sciences and Environmental Compliance Division, DERPA	
C. Dodkin	Radiation Protection Specialist, Radiation Protection Division, DERPA	
R. Froess	Environmental Review Officer, Environmental Review Division, DERPA	
T. Tarekegn	Geoscience Assessment Officer, Environmental Risk Assessment Division, DERPA	
J. Lam	Environmental Program Specialist, Health Sciences and Environmental Compliance Division, DERPA	
R. Tennant	Director, Emergency Management Programs Division, Directorate of Security and Safeguards (DSS)	
B. Holland	Communications Advisor, Corporate and Regulatory Communications Division, Strategic Communications Directorate (SCD)	
S. Longo	Environmental Risk Assessment Officer, Environmental Risk Assessment Division, DERPA	
M. Yu	Environmental Risk Assessment Officer, Environmental Risk Assessment Division, DERPA	
C. Dodkin	Specialist, Environmental Risk Assessment Division, DERPA	
P. Bourassa	Director, Non-Proliferation and Export Controls Division, DSS	
D. Beaton	Director General, DERPA	
<b>Intervenors</b>		
See Appendix A		
<b>Other Government Representatives</b>		
Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment: W. Kotyk, C. Piper, T. Charabin and J. Dereniwski Saskatchewan Health Authority: D. Sampson and A. Silveira Saskatchewan Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety: D. Rezanoff Environment and Climate Change Canada: C. Ruiu Health Canada: C. Dutchak Transport Canada: J. Barker Natural Resources Canada: M. Abramson Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada: C. James		

**Decision under Section 5 of CEAA 2012:**

Project is not likely to cause significant adverse environmental effects

**Licence:** Issued

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1. On July 4, 2023, Denison Mines Corp. (Denison) applied to the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission<sup>1</sup> under subsection 24(2) of the [Nuclear Safety and Control Act](#),<sup>2</sup> for a licence to prepare site and construct its [Wheeler River Project](#) (the Project). The Project is located in the Athabasca Basin in northern Saskatchewan, approximately 600 km north of Saskatoon. The Project is within Treaty 10 territory and the Homeland of the Métis, and is within the traditional territories of the Denesūliné, Cree, and Métis.
2. The Project is a proposed uranium mine and mill that would extract and process uranium from the Phoenix deposit, a high-grade uranium deposit discovered by Denison in 2008. The Project would be the first uranium mine in Canada to use the in-situ recovery (ISR) mining method.<sup>3</sup>
3. Denison is seeking authorization to prepare a site for and construct the uranium mine and mill facility, as well as to possess, use and store nuclear substances and radiation devices for associated activities. A licence to prepare site and construct would not authorize operation of the facility.
4. The Project is subject to an environmental assessment (EA) under the [Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012](#)<sup>4</sup> (CEAA 2012). The EA commenced on May 15, 2019, following Denison's submission of the project description. The CNSC is the responsible authority for the EA under CEAA 2012, and the Commission must render a decision on the EA prior to making a licensing decision under the NSCA.<sup>5</sup>
5. This *Summary Record of Decision* reflects the Commission's decision with respect to the application for a licence to prepare site and construct the Project. The detailed reasons for the Commission's decision will be provided in a detailed *Record of Decision*, to be published at a later date.

### Matters for Decision

6. In accordance with section 52 of the CEAA 2012, the Commission must decide if, taking into account the implementation of any mitigation measures that it considers appropriate, the Project is likely to cause significant adverse environmental effects as described in subsections 5(1) and 5(2) of CEAA 2012.

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<sup>1</sup> The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission is referred to as the "CNSC" when referring to the organization and its staff in general, and as the "Commission" when referring to the tribunal component.

<sup>2</sup> *Nuclear Safety and Control Act*, SC 1997, c 9.

<sup>3</sup> The ISR method works by injecting mining solution directly into the ore body. The solution would dissolve uranium to create a uranium bearing solution that would then be pumped to the surface for processing into triuranium octoxide (U<sub>3</sub>O<sub>8</sub>) powder.

<sup>4</sup> S.C. 2012, c. 19, s. 52.

<sup>5</sup> In August 2019, the [Impact Assessment Act](#), (IAA) came into force, repealing CEAA 2012. Section 182 of the IAA includes transitional provisions which state that EAs of designated projects that began under CEAA 2012, and for which the CNSC is the responsible authority, will continue under CEAA 2012 if a decision had not been issued before the IAA took effect.

7. If the Commission determines that the Project is not likely to cause significant adverse environmental effects, then it may turn to considering the licence application pursuant to the NSCA.
8. Pursuant to paragraphs 24(4)(a) and (b) of the NSCA, in order to issue the licence to prepare site and construct, the Commission must be satisfied that:
  - a) Denison is qualified to carry on the activity that the licence will authorize; and
  - b) in carrying on that activity, Denison will make adequate provision for the protection of the environment, the health and safety of persons and the maintenance of national security and measures required to implement international obligations to which Canada has agreed.
9. As an agent of the Crown, the Commission recognizes its role in fulfilling the Crown's constitutional obligations, along with advancing reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples of Canada. The Commission's responsibilities include the duty to consult and, where appropriate, accommodate Indigenous Peoples where the Crown contemplates conduct which may adversely impact potential or established Aboriginal<sup>6</sup> or treaty rights.<sup>7</sup>
10. The Commission must determine whether the duty to consult is triggered and, if so, whether that duty has been satisfied. The determination of what is required to satisfy the duty in any given instance is informed by the principles and the provisions of the [\*United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples\*](#)<sup>8</sup> (UNDRIP), as a result of its adoption into Canadian law via the [\*United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act\*](#)<sup>9</sup> (UNDA).<sup>10</sup>

### Public Hearing

11. On February 27, 2025, the Commission published a [\*Notice of Public Hearing and Participant Funding\*](#)<sup>11</sup> for this matter, which invited requests to intervene by October 24, 2025. The Commission subsequently published two revised notices. The first, on [\*August 19, 2025\*](#),<sup>12</sup> provided the location for Part 1 of the hearing. The second, on [\*November 12, 2025\*](#),<sup>13</sup> provided the location and dates for Part 2 of the hearing and

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<sup>6</sup> "Aboriginal" is the term used in this document when referring to the Crown's duty to consult as that is the term used in s. 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982. In all other cases, "Indigenous" is the preferred terminology and used accordingly.

<sup>7</sup> *Haida Nation v. British Columbia (Minister of Forests)*, 2004 SCC 73; *Taku River Tlingit First Nation v. British Columbia (Project Assessment Director)*, 2004 SCC 74.

<sup>8</sup> *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, United Nations, September 2007.

<sup>9</sup> S.C. 2021, c. 14.

<sup>10</sup> *Kebaowek First Nation v. Canadian Nuclear Laboratories*, 2025 FC 319.

<sup>11</sup> *Notice of Public Hearing and Participant Funding*, CNSC, February 27, 2025.

<sup>12</sup> *Revised Notice of Public Hearing and Participant Funding*, CNSC, August 19, 2025.

<sup>13</sup> *Revised Notice of Public Hearing*, CNSC, November 12, 2025.

clarified that the purpose and scope of the hearing included the Commission's duties as an agent of the Crown.

12. To consider Denison's application, the President of the Commission established a Panel of the Commission, over which he presided, that included Commission Members Andrea Hardie and Dr. Victoria Remenda.<sup>14</sup>
13. The Commission conducted a two-part public hearing in accordance with the [\*Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission Rules of Procedure\*](#)<sup>15</sup> (the Rules). During the two-part public hearing, the Commission considered written submissions and heard oral presentations from Denison, CNSC staff, and 27 intervenors.<sup>16</sup> Interpretation was offered in English, French, Dene, and Cree. The hearing was webcast live, and video archives are available on the [CNSC website](#).
14. As part of the hearing, the Commission held closed sessions in accordance with the Rules to hear confidential Indigenous Knowledge from Indigenous Nations and communities.

## 2.0 DECISION

15. The Commission finds that the EA and licensing decisions trigger the duty to consult and, where appropriate, accommodate, with respect to the following rights holders:<sup>17</sup>
  - English River First Nation (ERFN)
  - Kineepik Métis Local #9 (KML)
  - Ya'thi Néné Lands and Resource Office (YNLR)
  - Métis Nation-Saskatchewan (MN-S)
  - Lac La Ronge Indian Band (LLRIB)
  - Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation (PBCN)
  - Birch Narrows Dene Nation (BNDN)
  - Prince Albert Grand Council (PAGC)
16. The Commission's responsibility to uphold the honour of the Crown and its legal obligation to consult and, where appropriate, accommodate under section 35 of the [\*Constitution Act, 1982\*](#)<sup>18</sup> have been satisfied. The Commission finds that the actions taken and measures proposed satisfy the duty to consult and, where appropriate, accommodate with respect to the Indigenous Nations and communities noted above.

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<sup>14</sup> Pursuant to section 22 of the NSCA.

<sup>15</sup> *Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission Rules of Procedure*, SOR/2000-211.

<sup>16</sup> A list of hearing participants and hearing submissions is provided in Appendix A of this *Record of Decision*.

<sup>17</sup> YNLR, MN-S, and PAGC are Indigenous organizations which represent rights holders.

<sup>18</sup> *Constitution Act, 1982*, Schedule B to the Canada Act 1982 (UK), 1982, c 11.



17. The Commission also concludes that the Wheeler River Project is not likely to cause significant adverse environmental effects as defined in subsections 5(1) and 5(2) of CEAA 2012, considering the proposed mitigation measures and follow-up monitoring.
18. The Commission is satisfied that Denison is qualified to carry on the licensed activities that the licence will authorize and, in carrying on those activities, will make adequate provision for the protection of the environment, the health and safety of persons, and the maintenance of national security and measures required to implement international obligations to which Canada has agreed.
19. Having established the above, the Commission issues a licence to prepare site and construct to Denison for a period of 5 years. The licence, UML-MINEMILL-WHEELER.00/2031, is valid from February 18, 2026 until February 28, 2031.
20. The Commission issues the licence as proposed by CNSC staff in Appendix A of CMD 25-H9.D, with the following changes:
  - licensed activity IV) a) is changed from:

*“prepare site and construct a nuclear facility (hereinafter, “the facility”) for the mining of uranium ore and the production of uranium concentrate at a site known as the Wheeler River Project in the province of Saskatchewan, as defined in appendix A to this licence”*

to

*“prepare **a site for** and construct a nuclear facility (hereinafter, “the facility”) for the mining of uranium ore and the production of uranium concentrate at a site known as the Wheeler River Project in the province of Saskatchewan, as defined in appendix A to this licence”*
  - licence condition 16.1 is removed
  - licence condition G.3 is changed from:

*“The licensee shall maintain a financial guarantee for decommissioning that is acceptable to the Commission.”*

to

*“The licensee shall **implement and** maintain a financial guarantee for decommissioning that is acceptable to the Commission.”*
21. The Commission delegates its authority for the administration of licence conditions 3.2 and 14.1 to the following CNSC staff:
  - Director, Uranium Mines and Mills Division
  - Director General, Directorate of Nuclear Cycles and Facilities Regulation
  - Executive Vice-President and Chief Regulatory Operations Officer, Regulatory Operations Branch

22. The Commission accepts Denison's proposed financial guarantee of \$42.7 million in the form of a surety bond, to which the Province of Saskatchewan is beneficiary. The Commission understands that the financial guarantee will be implemented in two phases, reaching its full amount in year 2 of the licence to prepare site and construct. The Commission directs Denison to submit the finalized financial guarantee instrument to the CNSC within 60 days of this decision.
23. With this decision, Denison is required to implement all commitments described in its *Commitments Register* and in CMD 25-H9.1D that are within the scope of the CNSC's mandate. Denison is also required to complete the 5 EA conditions and 8 licensing regulatory commitments proposed by CNSC staff in Appendix D of CMD 25-H9.
24. With this decision, the Commission directs CNSC staff to fulfill its commitments to the Indigenous Nations and communities that are set out in paragraph 15. These commitments include the following:
  - fulfilling CNSC staff's commitments to ERFN, KML, YNLR, and MN-S, as described in section 4.4 of their respective rights impact assessments
  - continuing ongoing consultation, collaboration, and information sharing with LLRIB, PBCN, BNDN, and PAGC
  - including LLRIB, PBCN, and BNDN in the CNSC's Project-related environmental monitoring activities
25. The Commission directs CNSC staff to report to the Commission on the status of CNSC staff's commitments and ongoing consultation on an annual basis.
26. The Commission directs CNSC staff to include an update on Denison's performance on the Project as part of its periodic reporting on uranium mines and mills. This update should include information on Denison's ongoing engagement with Indigenous Nations and communities. The Commission also directs CNSC staff to inform the Commission, as part of its reporting, of any changes made to the Licence Conditions Handbook. CNSC staff may bring any matter to the Commission's attention at any time, as required.
27. Details of the Commission's rationale, and its consideration of information submitted as part of this proceeding, will be provided in a detailed *Record of Decision*, to be published at a later date.

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Pierre F. Tremblay  
President  
Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission

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February 18, 2026  
Date

## Appendix A – Intervenors

<b>Intervenors - Oral Presentations</b>	<b>Document Number</b>
Birch Narrows Dene Nation, represented by Chief J. Sylvestre, K. Kempton, T. Moberly, R. Laprise, and J. Glover	CMD 25-H9.2 CMD 25-H9.2A CMD 25-H9.2B
Lac La Ronge Indian Band, represented by T. Roberts	CMD 25-H9.3 CMD 25-H9.3A
Inter-Church Uranium Committee Educational Co-operative, represented by K. Weingeist	CMD 25-H9.8
Stephen Lawrence	CMD 25-H9.11 CMD 25-H9.11A
Victoria Obedkoff	CMD 25-H9.12
Saskatchewan Environmental Society and the Nuclear Transparency Project, represented by C. Chubb	CMD 25-H9.14 CMD 25-H9.14A
Ya'thi Néné Lands and Resources Office, represented by A. Disain, M. MacDonald, Elder F. Throassie, L. Bougie-Still, B. Hanbidge, D. Kellett, and G. Schmidt	CMD 25-H9.15 CMD 25-H9.15A
Peter Prebble	CMD 25-H9.16
Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation, represented by T. Merasty, B. Merasty and D. Redman	CMD 25-H9.17
Mayor Laliberte for the Northern Village of Beauval, represented by R. Laliberte	CMD 25-H9.20 CMD 25-H9.20A
English River First Nation, represented by C. Hunt	CMD 25-H9.21
Society of High Prairie Regional Environmental Action Committee, represented by J. Asterisk	CMD 25-H9.22
Kineepik Metis Local #9, represented by M. Natomagan, R. Smith, Elder H. Smith, Elder E. Natomagan, D. Georges, and G. Smith	CMD 25-H9.23 CMD 25-H9.23A
Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility, represented by G. Edwards	CMD 25-H9.27
Métis Nation-Saskatchewan, represented by B. Larocque, B. Angus and H. Burnouf	CMD 25-H9.29 CMD 25-H9.29A CMD 25-H9.29B

<b>Intervenors – Written Submissions</b>	<b>Document Number</b>
Saskatchewan Mining Association	CMD 25-H9.4
Nancy Covington	CMD 25-H9.5
Carola Giudicelli	CMD 25-H9.6
Susan O'Donnell	CMD 25-H9.7
Des Nedhe Group	CMD 25-H9.9
Catherine Vakil, M.D.	CMD 25-H9.10
Orano Canada Inc.	CMD 25-H9.13
Primrose Development Limited Partnership	CMD 25-H9.18
MiningWatch Canada	CMD 25-H9.19
Canadian Nuclear Association	CMD 25-H9.24
Northwatch	CMD 25-H9.26
Ecological Justice Working Group of the Justice, Mission and Outreach Committee, United Church of Canada, Regions East	CMD 25-H9.28