

# Relationships with Indigenous Peoples

## WHY THIS TOPIC MATTERS TO EQUINOX GOLD

Partnerships between mining companies and Indigenous communities are essential to the success of the mining sector. As the first peoples to occupy the lands we today share, Indigenous peoples have deep-rooted history, culture, territorial rights, and invaluable knowledge and experience pertaining to these places. As a company operating in proximity to Indigenous communities, it is important that we build respectful and mutually beneficial relationships with these communities.

# Our Approach

Equinox Gold is committed to building strong, progressive relationships with Indigenous peoples wherever we do business, through collaboration and engagement in an inclusive, respectful and culturally appropriate manner.

In our Social Responsibility and Human Rights Policy, we articulate our commitments to working with Indigenous peoples to:

- respect their rights and consider their needs and interests;
- identify opportunities for social investment and community development; and
- communicate openly, honestly and regularly about Equinox Gold’s plans, programs, performance and compliance.

Through all stages of mining, from exploration to operations to mine closure, we implement practices to ensure meaningful participation of Indigenous peoples in our workforce, in our procurement process and in other business opportunities. We foster a culture that is inclusive of Indigenous values, and we host regular discussions and training with our teams to promote respectful and inclusive practices.



## RELEVANT POLICIES

- [Diversity Policy](#)
- [Social Responsibility and Human Rights Policy](#)
- [Greenstone Gold Mine – Indigenous Relations Policy](#)







## Greenstone Collaboration Brings Meaningful Benefits

Successful collaboration and engagement with Indigenous communities is essential to the success of our Greenstone project in Ontario, Canada. The lands on which Greenstone operates are the traditional territories of Animbiigoo Zaagi'igan Anishinaabek, Aroland First Nation, Ginoogaming First Nation, Long Lake #58 First Nation, and home to the citizens of the Métis Nation of Ontario.

Greenstone has Long-Term Relationship Agreements in place with all of these Indigenous peoples, the result of several years of respectful and productive dialogue. The agreements include a range of commitments

and shared responsibilities associated with environmental management, the use of traditional knowledge and heritage resources, employment and training, business and contracting opportunities, and financial participation. We acknowledge our responsibilities under the Long-term Relationship Agreements and are dedicated to demonstrating our commitment to the long-term success of our Indigenous partners. We strive to have Indigenous community members participate and benefit at every step of project development, and to help our Indigenous partners create businesses that will endure beyond the mine life.

To achieve this, we have formed committees with representation from Greenstone and our Indigenous partners dedicated to ensuring compliance with the agreements as we move through the construction phase and prepare for operations. The project team is making significant efforts to fulfill our commitment to Indigenous employment and procurement, and we expect our contractors to do the same. Many Indigenous people have been hired for construction jobs, and training programs are underway so our Indigenous community members have the skills to join the team during operations, which will provide long-term, meaningful employment.

## Accountability

Our CEO, COO, SVPs leading each of the countries where we operate, and Vice President External Affairs and Social Responsibility have overall responsibility for relationships with Indigenous peoples at Equinox Gold. To manage daily engagement responsibilities and compliance with our commitments with Indigenous communities, each Equinox Gold site has a Community Engagement leader. At Greenstone, the General Manager has the responsibility for these relationships and has a dedicated Indigenous Relations manager to conduct day-to-day activities.



# Our Performance in 2022

24%

of Greenstone employees self-identified as Indigenous

- Awarded 25% of the total value of supplier contracts at our Greenstone project to Indigenous businesses or partnerships
- More than 10% of the total working hours at Greenstone were provided by our Indigenous partners
- Collaborated with our Indigenous partners to develop a Cross-Cultural Awareness Training program

We are proud of the ongoing work at Greenstone to build trustful, strong relationships with our Indigenous partners, including through Implementation Committees to make sure that all commitments outlined in the agreements are achieved. In 2022, we attended 16 meetings with the Implementation Committees and 10 town-hall meetings with Indigenous communities.

We have also teamed up with Lakehead University and our First Nations partners to develop a Cross-Cultural Awareness Training program. The university is spearheading the initiative and each First Nation is providing its own content as well as reviewing the overall training program, which will be implemented in 2023.

We continue to promote economic opportunities for Indigenous groups to form partnerships or start new businesses to support the construction and operation of Greenstone. In 2022, 25% of the contract value was awarded to Indigenous businesses or partnerships.

25%

of contract value at Greenstone awarded to Indigenous businesses or partnerships

## Cultural training

is being developed to educate employees at Greenstone on Indigenous culture and history

### PRIORITIES FOR 2023

- Deliver Indigenous Cross-Cultural Awareness Training.
- Continue skills-based training programs for Indigenous community members.
- Support Indigenous businesses and partnerships and ensure their integration into the mining supply chain.



CASE STUDY

Partnering  
to Drive  
Environmental  
Benefits



Through consultation and engagement with local Indigenous communities over many years, Greenstone has developed a comprehensive Environmental Monitoring Program with partnering Indigenous communities from Animbiigoo Zaagi'igan Anishinaabek, Aroland First Nation, Ginoogaming First Nation, Long Lake #58 First Nation and the Métis Nation of Ontario.

As part of this program, Environmental Technicians recruited from surrounding Indigenous communities receive formal and on-the-job training on their day-to-day tasks, such as collecting surface and ground water samples, conducting instream measurements, soil testing, and studies of aquatic, noise and air quality, to ensure Greenstone honours its Environmental Assessment conditions and permit requirements.

“I am grateful to take part in the air quality monitoring for Greenstone Mine,” said Jason Chapais, a Ginoogaming First Nation

Environmental Technician responsible for collecting the initial sampling data. “The air stations will be running not only for construction, but also for the life of the project, which reassures me that the air we breathe in Greenstone will remain clean for us and future generations to come.”

Environmental Advisory Sub-Committees (EAS) have also been formed, with participation from Environmental Technicians from each community. The EAS gather and make recommendations concerning traditional knowledge in the project area and the potential effects of the project on areas of cultural significance or traditional activities.

Together, these local employment opportunities and monitoring structures and processes will help ensure both near- and long-term positive impacts for all stakeholders throughout, and beyond, the lifespan of the Greenstone Mine.

\* This case study is based on an article that appeared in *The Canadian Mining Story*, Summer 2022.

National Day for  
Truth and  
Reconciliation



Equinox Gold and Greenstone Mine took a moment to pause, reflect and commemorate Canada's National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. This important event allows everyone to acknowledge the tragic Residential Schools legacy suffered by generations of Canada's Indigenous peoples and also serves as a call for action to seek justice for countless lost, missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

National Indigenous  
Peoples Day



Equinox Gold commemorated National Indigenous Peoples Day to recognize and celebrate the unique heritage, diverse cultures and outstanding contributions of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. Our Greenstone project has partnerships with five Indigenous communities.

In the words of Chief Nelson of Animbiigoo Zaagi'igan Anishinaabek, “We’ve been successful in arranging all levels of employment for our people, from top equipment handling, truck driving, to general maintenance, carpentry and cleaning. The spin-offs that will be created from this one mine will enable us to gain the foothold we need to develop ourselves for the future and bring more industry and economy to our First Nation and surrounding area. This is what the North needed and what was in our long-term plan from the start, and it’s great to see it in action.”