

# ANNUAL REPORT 2021 2022



**CROGO**

NWT OFFICE OF THE REGULATOR OF OIL AND GAS OPERATIONS



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Message from the Regulator</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>The Regulator</b> .....	<b>3</b>
Mandate .....	3
Jurisdiction .....	3
Responsibilities .....	4
Delegations and Appointments .....	4
<b>The Office of the Regulator of Oil and Gas Operations</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Role .....	5
Strategic Plan .....	5
Staff .....	6
Location .....	6
<b>2021-2022 Activities</b> .....	<b>7</b>
Applications .....	7
Inspections .....	11
Orders .....	11
Incident Response .....	12
Other Initiatives .....	13

## ENGLISH

The Office of the Regulator of Oil and Gas Operations (OROGO) ensures oil and gas activities are conducted in a safe and environmentally responsible manner that conserves oil and gas resources.

For more information, visit [www.oro.go.gov.nt.ca](http://www.oro.go.gov.nt.ca)

## MESSAGE FROM THE REGULATOR

I am pleased to present this Annual Report on the activities of the Office of the Regulator of Oil and Gas Operations (OROGO) in 2021-2022.

This year OROGO processed the highest number of applications since it was established in 2014. I am pleased that we were able to do so while still meeting our service standard targets. Our service agreement partners, the Alberta Energy Regulator and the Canada Energy Regulator, played a big part in this success. Their support is appreciated.

Five wells were safely abandoned in 2021-2022 and the number of long-term suspended wells in our jurisdiction continues to decrease. However, the majority of planned well abandonments were deferred for another year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

We continue to participate in educational and outreach events, including co-sponsoring a short course at the Geoscience Symposium with the Northwest Territories Geological Survey.

We also issued *Proof of Financial Responsibility Guidelines and Interpretation Notes* and the first OROGO *Safety Bulletin: OROGO-SB-01 – Shallow Wellbore Plugs*.

Finally, I would like to thank the three OROGO team members who left our organization this year for their contributions to our success over the years: Donna Schear, Janpeter Lennie-Misgeld and Kristen Cameron. We wish them all the best in their new endeavours.



Pauline de Jong, Regulator, OROGO  
(Credit: Angela Gzowski)



# THE REGULATOR

## MANDATE

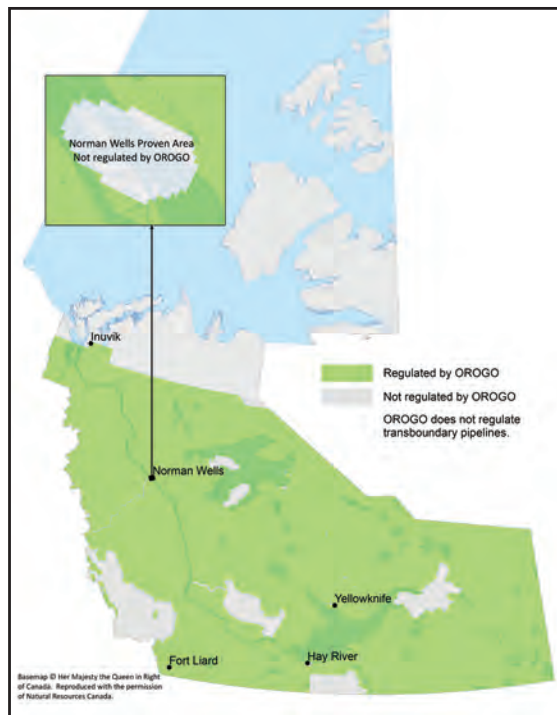
The Regulator is designated by the Commissioner in Executive Council under the *Oil and Gas Operations Act* (OGO).

The Regulator's mandate is to regulate the exploration for and exploitation of oil and gas resources for the primary purposes of ensuring human safety, environmental protection and the conservation of those resources. The Regulator's mandate does not include promoting oil and gas-related development.

The Regulator's activities are governed by OGO, the *Petroleum Resources Act* (PRA) and the regulations under those Acts, as well as the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act*.

## JURISDICTION

The Regulator has jurisdiction for the regulation of oil and gas works and activities in the onshore Northwest Territories (NWT), except for the Inuvialuit Settlement Region and lands that were not transferred from the Government of Canada to the Government of the Northwest Territories with devolution on April 1, 2014. Within these boundaries, the Regulator has jurisdiction over oil and gas activities on Aboriginal settlement lands as well as other private lands.



## CREE

ōma masinahikew kamikos ohci ōma nahaw isihcikewin ohci pimiy mīna pahkitewipimiy pimpayihcikewin (OROGO) kehcinahiwewin pimiy mina pahkitewipimiy waskawiwin mīna kīkway ka nikaniskamihk eta kanaweyihāmihk mīna isi nakayāskamowin kīkway ka nākatēyihāmihk tansi kesāyahk nema nahascikewin pahkitewipimiy isihcikewin

ohci ayiwak kwayaskomowewin kiyokata [www.oro.go.nt.ca](http://www.oro.go.nt.ca)



## RESPONSIBILITIES

The Regulator is responsible for:

- Considering applications for and issuing Operations Authorizations (including geophysical operations authorizations);
- Considering applications for and issuing Well Approvals for activities including drilling, re-entry, work overs, completion, recompletion, suspension and abandonment of a well or part of a well;
- Inspecting active and historic oil and gas facilities;
- Responding to incidents and spills at regulated oil and gas facilities;
- Considering applications for and issuing Significant Discovery Declarations and Commercial Discovery Declarations; and
- Issuing Operating Licences.

## DELEGATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

### Delegations

Section 8 of OGOA allows the Regulator to delegate any of its powers under OGOA.

In 2021-2022, the Regulator delegated the authority to issue Operating Licences to Janpeter Lennie-Misgeld, then Chief Conservation Officer, from March 31, 2021, to April 5, 2021.

The PRA allows the Regulator to delegate its powers to issue Significant Discovery Declarations and Commercial Discovery Declarations. These delegations are made on a case-by-case basis.

No new delegations were made under the PRA in 2021-2022.

### Appointments

Pauline de Jong was designated as the Regulator on August 2, 2020.

Section 4 of OGOA requires the Regulator to appoint a Chief Conservation Officer and a Chief Safety Officer.

Mike Martin, Senior Technical Advisor, was appointed Chief Safety Officer effective June 26, 2020, and Chief Conservation Officer effective December 10, 2021.

Brian Heppelle, Senior Technical Advisor, was appointed Conservation Officer and Safety Officer effective June 26, 2020.



# THE OFFICE OF THE REGULATOR OF OIL AND GAS OPERATIONS

## ROLE

The role of the Office of the Regulator of Oil and Gas Operations (OROGO) is to support the Regulator in carrying out its statutory responsibilities under OGOA and the PRA.

## STRATEGIC PLAN

OROGO's strategic plan, established in 2016-2017, sets out its mission, vision and strategic objectives.

### Mission

We regulate oil and gas activities to keep people safe and protect the environment where we live and work.

### Strategic Objectives



To enhance certainty and predictability in our actions and in regulatory decisions.



To promote accessibility and transparency in our work.



To build and maintain resilient working relationships.



To grow oil and gas regulatory capacity in the Northwest Territories.

### Vision

OROGO is a respected and effective regulator grounded in the values of Northerners.

## GWICH'IN

Aii Khaii akoo ts'at Nan T'at Guk'atr'inaatii kat (OROGO) nits'oo khaii gòo nan t'at hàh goo'aii danh tthak lòo nan diinagòo'ee gwà'àn tthak gwijzrii hàh gwint' àntr'ahkaii jì' geenjit guk' àndeht' inaatih.

Tth'aih hee jii geenjit gaviidandai' yinothan jì', jii gwits'at gwino'h'ii: [www.oro.go.gov.nt.ca](http://www.oro.go.gov.nt.ca)

## STAFF

OROGO's staff complement was reduced by two positions in 2021-2022. It now has four positions: the Executive Director; two Senior Technical Advisors; and the Regulatory Information Officer.

In 2021-2022, Donna Schear, Janpeter Lennie-Misgeld and Kristen Cameron left the OROGO team.

OROGO receives technical advice and support from the Canada Energy Regulator and the Alberta Energy Regulator through service agreements. OROGO can also access support from other regulators or consultants.

## LOCATION

OROGO's offices are located on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the Northwest Tower in Yellowknife. The public is invited to visit during working hours, weekdays between 8:30am and 5:00pm, except statutory holidays.



The OROGO Team, March 2022: Brian Heppelle (Senior Technical Advisor), Pauline de Jong (Executive Director), Mike Martin (Chief Safety Officer and Chief Conservation Officer), Kristen Cameron (Manager, Information Office). (Credit: Angela Gzowski)



## 2021-2022 ACTIVITIES

### APPLICATIONS

In 2021-2022, OROGO received:

- 4 applications for operations authorizations;
- 20 applications for well approvals;
- 6 applications to amend an existing operations authorization or well approval;
- 3 core sample requests;
- 1 application for information to be kept confidential under section 22(2) of OGOA; and
- All annual reporting requirements for continued compliance including production reports, environmental reports, and safety reports.

As was the case in 2020-2021, the majority of well interventions planned for the winter 2021-2022 operating season were deferred for another year due to the potential risk of COVID-19 transmission from personnel and crews entering the NWT from other jurisdictions to conduct well abandonment operations. OROGO is working with operators to mitigate the risk of further operational delays in the 2022-2023 work season.

Well abandonment programs continue to be driven by the *Well Suspension and Abandonment Guidelines and Interpretation Notes* (the Guidelines), which came into effect on February 1, 2017. The Guidelines establish requirements for suspended and abandoned wells under OROGO's jurisdiction and deadlines for the safe abandonment of inactive wells.

#### INUINNAQTUN

Uqhuryuaplu Gaasiliiplu Aulapkiayit Munaqhiyiita Havakviat (OROGO) hapkunanik munaqhivaktuq uqhuryuaplu gaasiliiplu hulilukaarutait aulatdjutainniklu ihuangnikkut aanningniattukkut nunaplu immaplu itdjuhiit ihumagittiaqhugit, uqhuryuaqarvigigamikikik gaasiliiqarvigigamikiklu munarittiaqhugit atungniit pivaktut.

Appiqhuutiqaruvit ilihimattiarumaguvitluunniit hapkuninga, una takuurvia qaritauyakkut pulaanginiarialik: [www.oroغو.gov.nt.ca](http://www.oroغو.gov.nt.ca)

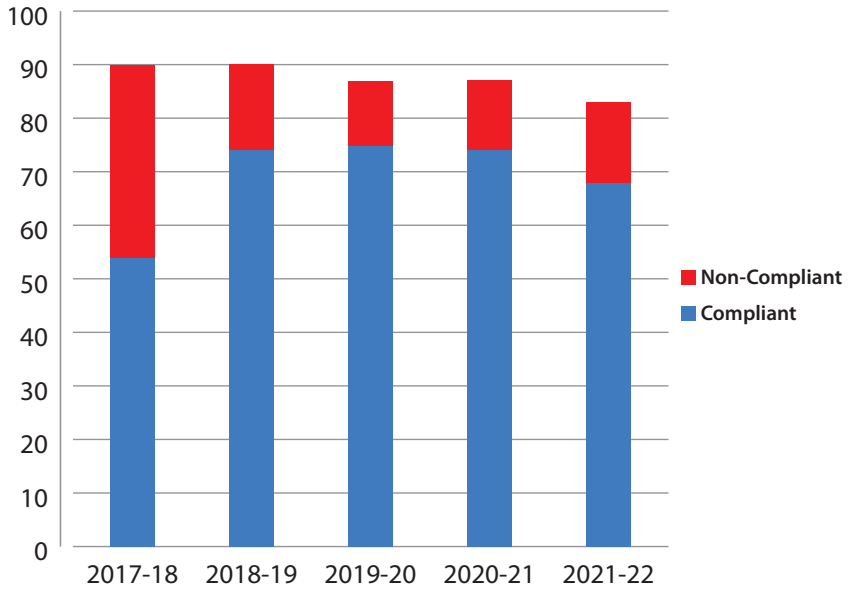
## 2021-2022 Applications Received

Type of Application	Application #	Purpose	Region
Operations Authorization	OA-2021-001-PPR	Well Abandonment	Dehcho
Operations Authorization	OA-2021-002-SUN	Well Abandonment	Dehcho
Operations Authorization	OA-2021-003-SUN	Well Abandonment	Sahtú
Operations Authorization	OA-2021-004-IMP	Well Abandonment	Dehcho
Well Approval	ACW-2021-IOL-B-48-WID0448	Well Abandonment	Dehcho
Well Approval	ACW-2021-PPR-2K02-WID1993	Well Abandonment	Dehcho
Well Approval	ACW-2021-PPR-L-68-WID1207	Well Abandonment	Dehcho
Well Approval	ACW-2021-SOG-2B-09-WID2071	Well Abandonment	Dehcho
Well Approval	ACW-2021-SOG-A-68-WID1746	Well Abandonment	Dehcho
Well Approval	ACW-2021-SOG-A-73-WID1747	Well Abandonment	Dehcho
Well Approval	ACW-2021-SOG-B-38-WID2002	Well Abandonment	Dehcho
Well Approval	ACW-2021-SOG-C-16-WID2001	Well Abandonment	Dehcho
Well Approval	ACW-2021-SOG-C-50-WID1608	Well Abandonment	Dehcho
Well Approval	ACW-2021-SOG-F-77-WID2065	Well Abandonment	Dehcho
Well Approval	ACW-2021-SOG-G-21-WID1764	Well Abandonment	Dehcho
Well Approval	ACW-2021-SOG-J-37-WID1757	Well Abandonment	Dehcho
Well Approval	ACW-2021-SOG-L-29-WID2041	Well Abandonment	Dehcho
Well Approval	ACW-2021-SOG-M-49-WID1974	Well Abandonment	Dehcho
Well Approval	ACW-2021-SOG-N-06-WID2067	Well Abandonment	Dehcho
Well Approval	ACW-2021-SOG-N-28-WID1753	Well Abandonment	Dehcho
Well Approval	ACW-2021-SUN-A-67-WID1555	Well Abandonment	Sahtú
Well Approval	ACW-2021-SUN-M-47-WID1476	Well Abandonment	Sahtú
Well Approval	ACW-2021-SUN-N-18-WID0790	Well Abandonment	Dehcho
Well Approval	ACW-2021-SUN-O-35-WID1600	Well Abandonment	Sahtú

OROGO processed 95% of the operations authorizations and well approvals issued in 2021-2022 within its established service standards, well above its target of 80%.

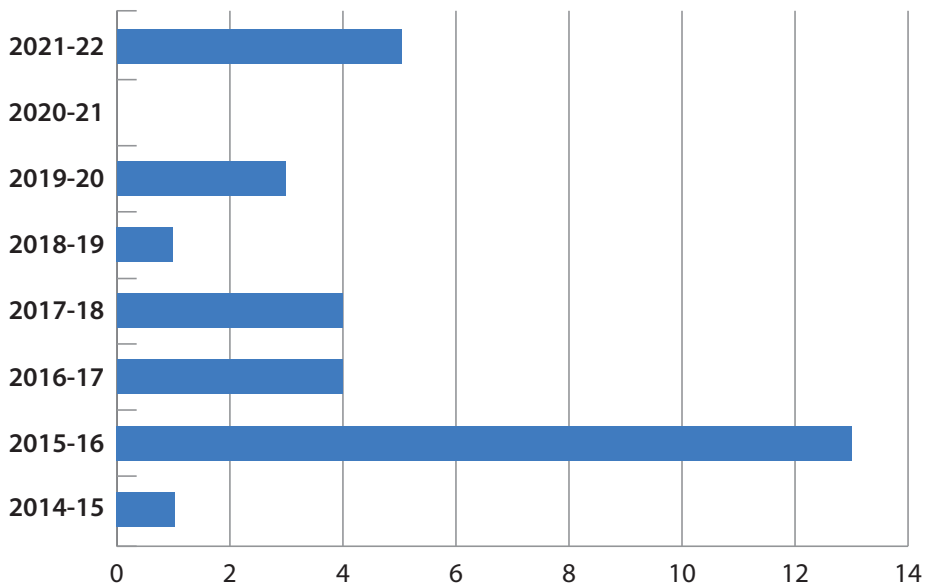


### Suspended Well Status



In 2021-2022, five compliant suspended wells were abandoned and the status of one well changed from suspended compliant to suspended non-compliant after a well inspection by the operator.

### Inactive Wells Safely Abandoned



Oil and gas wells safely abandoned under OROGO jurisdiction since April 1, 2014.

OROGO also accepted the 2021 annual report from Imperial Oil Resources Limited (IORL) on progress toward a “Final Decision to Construct” for the authorization applicable to the Mackenzie Gathering System component of the proposed Mackenzie Gas Project. IORL indicated that the construction of the Mackenzie Gas Project will not begin prior to December 31, 2022, and that it will not apply for an extension to the operations authorization for the project, which expires on December 31, 2022.

## INSPECTIONS

OROGO’s inspection activities in 2021-2022 fell into two categories:

- On-site inspections of authorized oil and gas activities; and
- Review of operator inspections of suspended wells.

OROGO staff inspected four well operations near Fort Liard in January 2022, and thirteen suspended wells near Fort Liard and Jean Marie River in February 2022.

The *Oil and Gas Drilling and Production Regulations* also require operators to regularly monitor and inspect their suspended wells to ensure they are in good condition and are not leaking. In 2021-2022, OROGO received 79 inspection reports from the operators responsible for ongoing monitoring of suspended wells. OROGO staff reviewed all these reports and followed up with operators to address any potential issues. The status of one well changed from compliant suspended to non-compliant suspended based on an operator-led well inspection.

## ORDERS

The Regulator did not issue any orders in 2021-2022.

### FRANÇAIS

Le Bureau de l'organisme de réglementation des opérations pétrolières et gazières (BOROPG) veille à ce que les activités pétrolières et gazières soient menées d'une manière sécuritaire et respectueuse de l'environnement en préservant les ressources en pétrole et en gaz naturel.

Pour en savoir plus, consultez le [www.oro.go.nt.ca](http://www.oro.go.nt.ca).



## INCIDENT RESPONSE

Oil and gas incidents are reported to the Regulator in two ways. If the incident results in a spill over a certain threshold from OROGO-regulated facilities or pipelines, the incident must be reported through the NWT-Nunavut Spill Line, which then routes the information to OROGO. All incidents must also be reported directly to OROGO through a dedicated 24/7 phone line, even if the incident results in a spill below the threshold or is a non-spill incident or a near miss.

No incidents or near-misses were reported to OROGO in 2021-2022.

In April 2021, the Chief Safety Officer issued OROGO's first *Safety Bulletin: OROGO-SB-01 – Shallow Wellbore Plugs*. The Safety Bulletin identifies hazards associated with the historical use of shallow wellbore plugs in suspended wells and describes OROGO's requirements for hazard mitigation during the removal of shallow wellbore plugs.

In October 2021, OROGO participated in an Emergency Response Plan tabletop exercise for the Ikhil project, which is located near Inuvik.



Mike Martin (Chief Safety Officer and Chief Conservation Officer) and Brian Heppelle (Senior Technical Advisor), Fort Liard area, February 2022. (Credit: OROGO)

## OTHER INITIATIVES

### Promoting Open and Transparent Regulation

OROGO continues to focus on increasing the openness and transparency of the oil and gas regulatory system.

In May 2021, OROGO led an information session with the Client Service and Community Relations team, Department of Industry, Tourism, and Investment, on its application processes and proof of financial responsibility requirements.

OROGO also facilitated meetings between several oil and gas companies and the Office of the Chief Public Health Officer about COVID-19 requirements for operations in the NWT.

### Making Information Available

OROGO is a repository for information collected during oil and gas activities. Information about oil and gas activities in the Regulator's jurisdiction is available on the website or by request to the Information Office. This data is particularly valuable to companies and researchers evaluating oil and gas potential.

In 2021-2022, OROGO completed a map of the extents of all geophysical programs in its jurisdiction. The map allows companies and researchers to find historical programs completed in locations of interest more easily.

All available information can be accessed upon request by contacting the Information Office at [orogo@gov.nt.ca](mailto:orogo@gov.nt.ca).

#### CHIPEWYAN

T'ą Beghár Ní Ts'į Gáslín chu Tłesdógh chu Náltsi T'at'ú Beghálada Hałnı Ją ʔeghálana Kúé sí (OROGO), denı t'a ní ts'į gáslín chu tłesdógh chu náltsi beghálada sí, ʔaté nezú beghálada-u, bet'á ní ts'édhir chá xa yatni-u, tth'ı yunéth hara xa bek'enélrá

ʔaʔú beghą bek'érilyą rílrl dé, computer yé ją nırlı, [www.orogo.gov.nt.ca](http://www.orogo.gov.nt.ca)

In 2021-2022, OROGO received:

- 8 requests for well information, resulting in 864 well history files downloaded;
- 4 requests for geophysical information, resulting in files for 34 programs sent; and
- 64 other public inquiries.

**2021-2022 Regional Breakdown of Files Provided by OROGO in Response to Information Inquiries**

Region	Seismic Files*	Well Files	Total
Dehcho	-	630	630
Sahtú	-	192	192
Gwich'in	-	42	42
Unspecified	34	-	34
Total	34	864	898

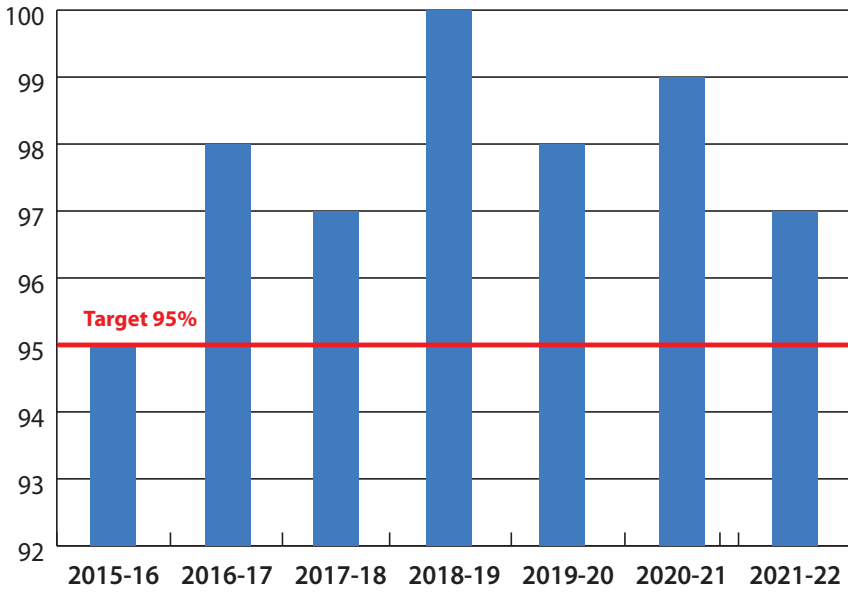
\*As seismic programs can be large and often cross land claim boundaries, they are not identified by their region.

Access to well materials (cuttings, fluid samples and core samples) is also available by applying to the Information Office. Three requests to sample these materials were received in the 2021-2022 fiscal year. These materials are located at the Geological Survey of Canada core facility in Calgary, Alberta.

In keeping with its objective of accessibility, OROGO places a high priority on responsiveness to public inquiries. In 2021-2022, OROGO responded to 64 public inquiries, all but two within one business day, well within our service standards.



### Response to Public Inquiries Within Service Standards (%)



Since 2015-2016, OROGO has provided a preliminary response to at least 95% of all public inquiries within one business day.

#### NORTH SLAVEY

Diri Tlehgot'ine Goręghálaeda k'é eyia areyqné Tlehret'o hé Tleh dek'ale hé areyqné asáqodé lé, nezo bet'á, ghqedi (OROGO) goredi qt'e bek'eodi gha yeghokedi qt'e.

Waa begodi k'eoruzhá nahwhę nídé ejq [www.oro.go.nt.ca](http://www.oro.go.nt.ca) k'e dat'e qt'e

## Guidelines and Interpretation Notes

Section 18 of OGOA authorizes the Regulator to issue guidelines and interpretation notes about the application and administration of OGOA and its regulations.

In 2021-2022, the Regulator issued *Proof of Financial Responsibility Guidelines and Interpretation Notes*. OROGO is also working on revisions to the *Well Suspension and Abandonment Guidelines and Interpretation Notes*, which will be issued in 2022-2023.



Service rig manifold, Fort Liard area, February 2022. (Credit: OROGO)



## Relationships with Other Regulators

OROGO prioritizes building and maintaining resilient working relationships with other regulators. It participates in organizations that bring regulators from different jurisdictions together, as well as establishing direct, one-on-one relationships through Memoranda of Understanding and other tools.

OROGO participates actively in the NWT Board Forum, which brings together resource management organizations in the territory and strives to improve and maintain effective lines of communication between its members and to resolve common issues and share expertise

OROGO is a member of the Western Regulators Forum (WRF), which focuses on facilitating the exchange of information and discussion of ideas about oil and gas regulation, collaborating on research into issues of common interest and supporting inter-organizational communications and engagement. The WRF includes representation from Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia, as well as the CER. In 2021-2022, OROGO participated in WRF workshops on air quality, cybersecurity and Indigenous reconciliation, diversity, and inclusion. OROGO also participated as an observer in the WRF project on strategic use of standards.

In 2021-2022, OROGO continued its participation as a member of the Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission (IOGCC) and attended the IOGCC virtual annual business meeting on May 12, 2021. OROGO's International Affiliate membership in the IOGCC allows it to participate on committees, join in oil and gas studies and access international best practices. Seven other Canadian provinces and territories are IOGCC International Affiliates.

OROGO also participates in FracFocus.ca, CAMPUT (a non-profit organization of Canada's energy and utilities regulators) and the Professional Petroleum Data Management Association (PPDM).

### SOUTH SLAVEY

Godj Tleh Det'q gots'eh Tleh Nihts'j eghalagenda K'êê (OROGO) la daqndih t'áh tleh det'q gots'eh tleh nihts'j t'áh eghalagenda sii, seë nezu zheehéh eghalagenda gots'eh zhaat'áá ts'eh k'éh chu nezu k'êogeah gha gots'eh azhji kii tleh det'q gots'eh tleh nihts'j t'áh eghalagenda le, sii kaqndih t'áh chu K'êogeah gha.

K'ëndah keodahshá enahthé enidé, satsq ahsii lq kenandih K'éh gots'ê gondi nináhna, [www.oroغو.gov.nt.ca](http://www.oroغو.gov.nt.ca)

## Outreach and Engagement

OROGO participated in several community outreach and stakeholder engagement activities in 2021-2022, including:

- The virtual Geoscience Symposium in November 2021;
- The annual meeting of GNWT departments involved with petroleum related initiatives in February 2022; and
- The Arctic Energy and Resources Symposium in March 2022.

OROGO continues to work with communities through the Well Watch Program, which encourages local land users to report concerns with historic, abandoned well sites so that they can be assessed, and any identified risks can be addressed. OROGO did not receive any inquiries about potential well sites of interest in 2021-2022.

For the eighth consecutive year, OROGO has published an Annual Report for tabling in the Legislative Assembly. As of July 2020, an annual report became a requirement under OGOA. OROGO sees this as an effective way to share information about its work and maintain accountability to the public and legislators.



Mike Martin (Chief Safety Officer and Chief Conservation Officer), Fort Liard area, February 2022.  
(Credit: OROGO)

## Capacity Building

OROGO continues to enhance its own capacity to regulate oil and gas activities and to promote oil and gas regulatory capacity building across northern organizations.

OROGO staff participated in formal and informal learning opportunities throughout the year, including:

- A week of in-field inspection training with the Alberta Energy Regulator;
- First Aid training;
- Information security training offered by the GNWT;
- A workshop on Cost-Effective Technologies for Onshore Well Abandonment and Verification offered through the IOGCC; and
- Living Well Together training offered by the GNWT.

In November 2021, OROGO co-sponsored a short course, Application of Geophysical Methods in Energy Geosciences, with the Northwest Territories Geological Survey, in conjunction with the Geoscience Forum. OROGO also participated in the course.

### ᑕᑭᑭᑦ

Tieh eyits'q Tiehtsj Wehoidi t'à Eghàlageedaa Wenjhtl'èkq (OROGO) dè gots'q tiet'ò eyits'q tieh xè eghàlagiidèe sù edete ts'à kehogiidì xè dè gomqò gò?qq tsjgowù ts'à k'ehogèra, hani-ìdè dè gots'q tiet'ò eyits'q dègottee gòlaa sù de?ò wek'ehowì ha-le.

De?ò wegodi k'èahsq ha njdè satsq t'à asù hàetaa [www.oroغو.gov.nt.ca](http://www.oroغو.gov.nt.ca) k'eyaahì.



Back Cover: Mike Martin (Chief Safety Officer and Chief Conservation Officer),  
Jean Marie River area, February 2022. (Credit: OROGO)



# OROGO

NWT OFFICE OF THE REGULATOR OF OIL AND GAS OPERATIONS

## Contact Information

Office of the Regulator of Oil and Gas Operations (OROGO)

Government of the Northwest Territories

PO Box 1320 Yellowknife NT X1A 2L9

Phone: **867-767-9097**

Email: [orogo@gov.nt.ca](mailto:orogo@gov.nt.ca)

Website: [www.orogo.gov.nt.ca](http://www.orogo.gov.nt.ca)

OROGO Information Office

Phone: **867-767-9097**

Email: [orogo@gov.nt.ca](mailto:orogo@gov.nt.ca)

Incident Response

NWT Spill Line: **1-867-920-8130** (phone);

**1-867-873-6924** (fax)

OROGO Incident Response Line (24/7):

**1-867-445-8551**



If you would like this information in another official language,  
please contact (867) 767-9097.