



MINE Tailings

PERSPECTIVES FOR A CHANGING WORLD

Edited by Resa Furey and John F. Lupo

Re-imagine the Future of Tailings

Nearly every recent article on tailings starts by mentioning a large tailings dam failure. The consequences of these failures have been so devastating they have pushed conversations about the risks inherent in these structures beyond the mining community into the general population. We are left to question how we address the risks associated with tailings disposal, and in so doing, transform the image of the mining industry and perhaps the industry itself.

With this as a backdrop, the Society for Mining, Metallurgy & Exploration (SME) challenged tailings and mining professionals to re-imagine the future of tailings. The Mine Tailings: Perspectives for a Changing World symposium, held at the SME 2020 annual conference, started that conversation. Over three days, tailings professionals from around the world gathered to discuss tailings storage practices and the changes both the industry and the world want and need. The discussions squarely focused on how we, as an industry, can collectively make changes that will eliminate catastrophic tailings dam failures and lead to better outcomes for the industry and society.

Through sharing and conversation, the symposium participants recognized risks associated with our approach to tailings management and existing structures and discussed the gaps that need to be addressed, including how the behavior of tailings and mining professionals must change. The human element of risk *must* be recognized so it can be talked about openly, given the attention it deserves, and adequately addressed. We need to *own* this problem and the impact of our actions. We have the power to change this; when we own our actions, we can act differently for a different outcome.

MINE TAILINGS: Perspectives for a Changing World

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