

Mining Report



September 2006

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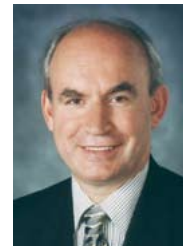
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COMING EVENTS

- ▶ 2006 Northeast British Columbia Community Coal Forum, Oct. 19-20, Chetwynd

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

I hope everyone enjoyed the summer and enters the fall re-energized as we get back to work building a stronger economy in British Columbia.



Honourable Bill Bennett
Minister of State for Mining

The possibilities for mining in our province are astounding and I commend everyone for the hard work that has been done so far.

I recently spent 18 days travelling in northern B.C. on my way to the Mines Ministers' Conference in Whitehorse and the trip reinforced the abundance of opportunities we are presented with. And as I travelled up Highway 37 in particular, I became more convinced that we will see economic benefits for everyone – companies, communities and First Nations – while continuing to protect the environment. In every speech I remind British Columbians that the mining industry generates more than \$5 billion while impacting only .03 per cent of B.C.'s land mass. We are leaders in reclamation and environmental standards and our environmental process is second to none.

I had very productive meetings with Federal Natural Resources Minister Gary Lunn and my colleagues across the country at the Mines Ministers' Conference.



Minister of State for Mining Bill Bennett (left), then-Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation Tom Christensen (centre) and Upper Similkameen Indian Band Chief Richard Holmes descend the stairs to the Mascot Mine while touring the facility before signing a historic mining consultation agreement at the Snaza'ist Visitor & Interpretive Centre on Thursday, July 27 in Hedley.

PROVINCE SIGNS HISTORIC AGREEMENT AT MASCOT MINE SITE

Hiking more than 500 stairs under a blazing sun didn't dampen any spirits as Minister of State for Mining Bill Bennett toured the Mascot Mine before signing a historic consultation agreement with the Upper Similkameen Indian Band (USIB).

The Minister got a first-hand look at the rich mining history of the Similkameen people high above the town of Hedley before witnessing an agreement with then-Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation Tom Christensen and USIB Chief Richard Holmes on July 27. The agreement is shaped by the principles of the New Relationship and outlines how the Band and the Province will be able to work together in the future.

With traditional territory near Hedley in the southern interior along Highway 3, the USIB traces its heritage of mineral exploration back at least 8,000 years through the mining and trading of ochre from the Tulameen River watershed.

Perched on a rock face 850 metres above Hedley, the Mascot Mine is the gem of the Band's efforts to preserve this history. The site used an aerial tram system to transport men and materials up to the site and

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BRITISH COLUMBIA

The Best Place on Earth

YOU'RE HIRED! JOB FAIRS CONNECT EMPLOYERS WITH JOB-SEEKERS

Connecting employers with job-seekers eager to fill the growing demand for skilled workers in B.C.'s booming mining and mineral industry was the goal of a series of job fairs held across the province. And judging by the results, the program was an overwhelming success.

The Mining Rocks: Career and Job Opportunities Tour 2006 visited 24 communities to highlight careers in mining and mining-related fields and promote the expansion of the industry. More than 1,500 people from Dease Lake in the North to Penticton in the South and Cranbrook in the Southeast attended the venues to learn more about the mineral sector and learn about career opportunities in this high-paying industry.

The job fairs hosted exhibits from more than 30 companies and featured about 50 different speakers from industry, government, First Nations, educational institutions and industry organizations, many of which participated at more than one tour stop. And while the program was designed to introduce job-seekers to the wide range of opportunities the mining sector has to offer, several people ended up being hired on the spot at the Dawson Creek, Tumbler Ridge and McLeod Lake venues.

A survey of participants gave encouraging feedback, as 90.5 per cent of respondents found the job fairs interesting and informative and 99 per cent wanted to see similar events in their communities in the future.

AGREEMENT

(CONTINUED FROM COVER)

ore to the ground below. Several of the original buildings have been preserved and stabilized, and a lengthy stairway (funded by the Province) has been added to allow the Band to develop the site as a tourist attraction.

The old Hedley elementary school is now the Snaza'ist Visitor & Interpretive Centre, with educational displays and historic photographs of the Band's history.

Despite having fewer than 100 members, the USIB employs more than 100 people in forestry and administrative operations and is a major contributor to the local economy.



Upper Similkameen Indian Band Chief Richard Holmes (left) and Minister of State for Mining Bill Bennett shake hands after the Province's first mining-related consultation agreement was signed, shaped by the principles of the New Relationship.

TRAINING THE NEXT GENERATION OF MINING WORKERS

The Province, industry and educational partners marked a milestone as they continue training the next generation of workers in B.C.'s growing mining and mineral exploration industry.

Minister of State for Mining Bill Bennett visited Northwest Community College on June 6 to recognize the success of the Mineral Exploration Field Assistant (MEFA) training program, which gives more opportunities for youth from rural and Aboriginal communities to pursue exciting new careers.

The MEFA program gives students hands-on experience in bush camps where they learn GPS and navigational skills, wilderness safety, helicopter safety, water and soil sampling techniques and core splitting. Ninety-five students graduated from the program in its first year, and 82 students have already graduated from this year's program.

Anxious to retrain to get back in the workforce, at least one Lower Mainland resident travelled all the way to Quesnel to get the hands-on training through MEFA. And that's the success the program was designed for

– delivering quality training to help British Columbians find good jobs.

Northwest Community College has delivered the MEFA program in areas near the Nass Valley, Dease Lake, Terrace, Hazelton, Topley, Burns Lake and Stewart in 2005, and is currently offering the program in areas near Smithers, Terrace and the Nass Valley. Provincewide, the program has been held near Cranbrook, Nelson, Mackenzie, Burns Lake and Dease Lake, with additional camps planned for Quesnel, Tumbler Ridge and Vancouver Island.

The Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources provided \$300,000 to Smithers Exploration Group (SEG) to continue the program at Northwest Community College and has committed an additional \$1 million through a contribution agreement with SEG to expand it into a new provincewide Mining and Education and Skills Development Program. This funding is part of the Province's \$2.3-million commitment to expand mining training opportunities for youth in rural and Aboriginal communities.



Pictured from left to right: Bulkley Valley-Stikine MLA Dennis MacKAY, Smithers Exploration Group vice-president Chris Warren, Minister of State for Mining Bill Bennett and Northwest Community College School of Exploration & Mining Dean Margo Van der Touw celebrated the success and Province's continued funding of the Mineral Exploration Field Assistant training program during the Minister's visit to Northwest Community College on June 6.

DID YOU KNOW?

Mineral Titles Online brought mineral title administration into the digital world with Internet technology and state-of-the-art mapping software. Implemented on January 12, 2005, this cutting-edge technology has earned three prestigious awards, including:

- ▶ **The Gold Distinction Award from the GTEC Awards national event.**
- ▶ **The 2005 Award of Excellence for Innovation in the Field of Geographic Information Systems from Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI) Canada.**
- ▶ **The Innovative Collaboration Award, shared with the Electronic Banking Branch, for the public service of British Columbia.**

EMERGENCY SKILLS PUT TO THE TEST

Emergency preparedness was put to the test as the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources' 51st annual Mine Rescue and First Aid competition brought together mine rescue teams from across the province to test their skills.

This year's competition was held June 8–10 in Campbell River. The competition brings together mine rescue teams from across the province to compete in several tasks designed to test their skills in First Aid, extrication, fire fighting, rope work and general mine rescue knowledge. Teams compete in either surface or underground competitions.

Six surface teams took part in this year's competition, with two from the east Kootenay region, two from the north region and two from the south central region. Four underground teams also competed, with three from the southwest region and one from the northwest region.

Highland Valley Copper mine took home the Surface Mine Rescue Award, while Eskay Creek mine received the Underground Competition Award. Kemess mine won the Three-Person Miners' First Aid Trophy.

B.C.'s mining industry is the safest heavy industry in the province with an accident rate that has dropped 85 per cent in the last 10 years. But maintaining that record takes both skill and practice, and that is the focus of this annual competition.



Emergency preparedness was put to the test during the 51st annual Mine Rescue and First Aid competition held in Campbell River June 8–10th.

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

(CONTINUED FROM COVER)

I'm glad to report that we have asked for action – not more study – on three files before we meet next year: cooperative geological mapping strategies, improving the federal regulatory process and maintaining the federal flow through share program. Minister Lunn was great to work with and I know he will do his best on these issues.

I will ensure these remain priorities in Ottawa by heading east with Michael McPhie, President & CEO of the Mining Association of British Columbia, and Dan Jepson, President & CEO of the Association for Mineral Exploration B.C., to raise our concerns directly with federal ministers.

Mining in British Columbia has come a long way over the last five years. We can see that investors have renewed confidence as our share of the Canadian exploration investment pie has jumped from six to 16 per cent. We know we have more to do to make B.C. even more attractive to mining exploration and development and we are working hard to accomplish that.

As always, I welcome your comments and ideas and look forward to hearing from you.

DID YOU KNOW?

There are more than 25,000 people currently employed in mineral exploration and mining related activities in British Columbia, including:

- ▶ 10,000 direct jobs
- ▶ 15,000 spin-off jobs
- ▶ 8,500 additional jobs estimated by 2010
- ▶ \$94,000 average salary (with benefits) in the mining sector

CONTACT US

The Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources Mining Report e-newsletter welcomes your comments. If you would like to comment on one of our stories or suggest a future story please e-mail us at:

Pub.EMPR.Newsletter@gov.bc.ca

Please advise us by e-mail if you would like to unsubscribe to this newsletter. Please [view our privacy statement](#).



The Best Place on Earth

AND THE WINNER IS... NOMINATIONS ACCEPTED FOR MINING AWARD

Recognizing innovation and leadership in B.C.'s mining industry is the goal of the Mining and Sustainability Award. This annual award pays tribute to everyone who practices sustainable mining and mineral development that meets the growing needs of all British Columbians while maintaining a healthy environment and vibrant economy for present and future generations.

This award is a joint initiative of the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources and the Mining Association of British Columbia. It recognizes the companies, communities, First Nations, government agencies, non-government organizations and individuals who are committed to sustainability in the B.C. mining sector.

Applicants must have some involvement in B.C. mining activities and have demonstrated a commitment to advancing and promoting sustainability. Applicants must provide evidence of having successfully developed, implemented and communicated their work towards sustainability. An application package including a nomination form, two letters of support, and a nomination summary must be completed to apply.

The 2005 Mining Sustainability Award was presented to Highland Valley Copper. Its contributions to sustainability include reclamation achievements recognized on four occasions by the British Columbia Technical and Research Committee on Reclamation, the development of a former tailings pond into a sustainable fishery and extensive waste reduction and recycling programs.

The winner and finalists of this year's award will be announced in the fall in the recipients' community.



Wolf Nickel, President and General Manager of Highland Valley Copper, receives the 2005 Mining Sustainability Award from Michael McPhie, President and CEO of the Mining Association of B.C.

Enquiries and applications can be submitted to:

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The deadline for nominations is Friday, Sept. 29, 2006 at 4 p.m. (PST).