

business & labour

Development may mean Sahtu jobs

Selwyn Resources developing Yukon/NWT lead-zinc mine

by Guy Quenneville
Northern News Services
NWT

A large zinc-lead deposit primarily located in the Yukon has the potential to create jobs for NWT workers, particularly those living in the Sahtu region, according to the company currently developing the project.

Vancouver-based Selwyn Resources Ltd. has been exploring what it's calling the Selwyn Project straddling the Yukon/NWT border and is an hour-and-a-half flight away from Norman Wells – since 2005. Ten per cent of the project falls on NWT land.

The company believes the deposit, covering 38 km and with resources currently numbering 385 million tonnes, has the potential to become the largest zinc-lead mine in the world with a mine life as long as 50 years.

"It's a very huge zinc deposit."

"This is a big one – as big as they get," said Harlan Meade, president of Selwyn. "Out of that 38 km, we've probably drilled less than a quarter of the known extended mineralization. That fraction of the deposit has already basically tied us with Teck Cominco's Red Dog lead-zinc mine in northwest Alaska as the biggest lead-zinc deposit in the world. So is it going to be the biggest? Yes. By how much? Nobody knows."

What's clear is the mine, though only partially locat-



Harlan Meade: working towards a co-operation agreement.

ed in the NWT, presents a significant future economic opportunity for NWT workers and companies, said Meade, adding the mine will require 400 to 500 workers when commercial production begins, hopefully in 2013.

"There may be a border there, but it will become irrelevant as we try to seek skilled labourers, because otherwise we're forced to get people from B.C. or Alberta, and we'd rather get them locally," said Meade.

Meade said Selwyn is in talks with Sahtu First Nation bands about securing a co-operation agreement for the mine, though the talks are being stalled by the possibility that a service road to the mine, falling partly on Sahtu land, may come under the parameters of the Nahanni National Park extension.

"We're working slowly toward getting a co-operation agreement, which they seem



photo courtesy of Selwyn Resources Ltd.

Vancouver-based Selwyn Resources Ltd. is developing what it's calling the world's next largest lead-zinc mine in an area straddling the Yukon/NWT border. Pictured here is a drill on the site, which the company believes can host a mine with a potential mine life stretching to 50 years.

willing to do," said Meade.

Meanwhile, like many other junior exploration companies, Selwyn is scaling back on exploration activities for the project next year as they wait out the current economic slowdown.

The company has spent around \$60 million dollars – most of it toward drilling – on the project so far. Last sum-

mer it spent between \$3 and \$4 million; next summer that number will shrink to less than \$1 million.

"Unless we do a major transaction with a strategic partner, I would think there will be very little site activity next summer," he said, adding what little activity that may occur will probably be limited to on-site

care and maintenance.

"We'll conserve our cash and work on what we refer to as the strategic issues: getting First Nations agreements in place, advancing the engineering studies, infrastructure and power development, and securing government support," he said.

Mike Vaydik, executive director of the NWT & Nuna-

vat Chamber of Mines, said he's been following the Selwyn project with great interest for a while now.

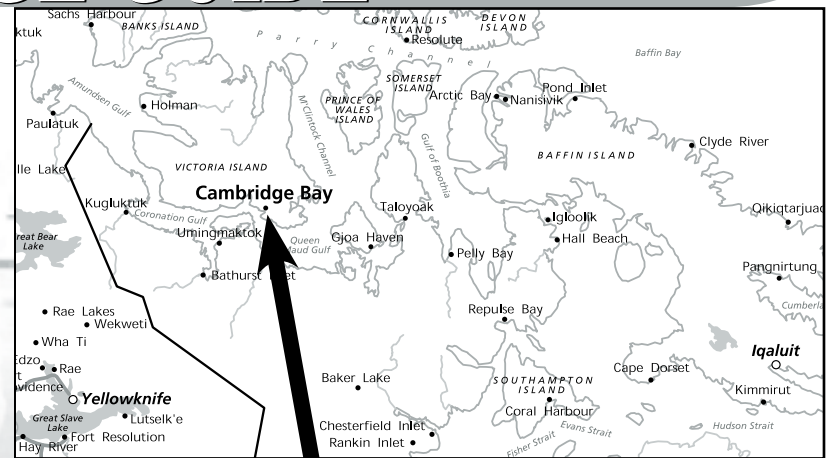
"It's a very huge zinc deposit – one of the biggest in the world. It has economic potential for probably several generations," said Vaydik. "It's one of those large projects that can stand the cost of infrastructure development."

IKALUKTUTIAK CAMBRIDGE GUIDE

'Good Fishing Place'



Photo courtesy of Jessica Moelker



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INUIT ORGANIZATION



The KIA was formed to defend, preserve and promote cultural and economic benefits to Inuit of the Kitikmeot Region of Nunavut

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Developing the future of the Kitikmeot

69°07'N, 105°03'W. 960 qangatayukkut unghahiktinga NE Yalunaimit. Hivuraani Kiillinniup, tunungani ahiap Ukiuqtaqtumi.

2006-mi inugiangninga 1,477

Hannaviulluqaqtut: Kavamatkut Haamlatkullu ikayuataita, anguniaqtnik ikkuaqtuiniq, niq-inik niuviqtittiniq, aghaluutiyaaturhutik havaktittiniq, nunamik takupkainiq, DEW Laimingit, anguniaqniq iqalughuqniqlu.

69°07'N, 105°03'W. 960 air km NE of Yellowknife. On the southeast coast of Victoria Island, north of the mainland Arctic Coast.

2006 Census 1,477

Major activities: Government and Hamlet services, sport hunting, country food sales, heavy equipment contracting, tourism, DEW line, subsistence hunting and fishing.

Climate: Average annual precipitation 6.9 cm rainfall; 82.1 cm snowfall; July mean high 8.4°C, low 3.9°C; January mean high -32°C; Winds NW 21.8 km/h

Education: K-6, 7-12, Arctic College
Postal Code: X0B 0C0

Recreation: Community Hall, arena, curling rinks, tot lots, pool (summer season only)

Medical Services: Community Health Centre, 4 nursing staff, 1 medical doctor, 1 clerk/interpreter, 1 dental therapist, 1 regional dentist

4-Man RCMP Detachment