

NUNAVUT 2021 mining



THE HUNT FOR NUNAVUT'S MINERALS AND METALS



MINING COMPANIES SEND AID DURING COVID-19



KIVALLIQ MINE WORKERS HELP COMMUNITIES

Gilbert Edwin Aggark, who serves as a geological assistant, prospector and wildlife monitor with Solstice Gold, at the KGP project. photo courtesy of Solstice Gold

Mapping, sampling and drilling

Exploration companies homing in on Nunavut's next big mineral finds

By Derek Neary
Northern News Services

Covid-19 dealt a setback to some companies in the mining and exploration industry in 2020, but the pandemic hasn't ground activity to a complete halt.

A portion of mineral exploration went ahead over the past year and multiple companies have substantial funds earmarked for fieldwork over the coming several months.

Project: Back River
Owner: Sabina Gold and Silver
Resource: Gold

Location: 364 km southwest of Cambridge Bay
Status: Sabina has a hefty \$60-million budget planned for work at its 100-per-cent-owned Back River gold project in 2021. Some of the exploration will be focused on the George site, approximately 50 km north of the Goose site. George is home to an estimated 1.2 million ounces of gold, out of the estimated 6.3 million ounces in the Back River district. Mine life at the site is currently projected at 15 years. Sabina raised \$35.1 million through the stock market in March.

Project: Mel
Owner: North Arrow Minerals
Resource: Diamonds

Location: 140 km south of Sanirajak
Status: North Arrow formed a data sharing and royalty agreement with Stratex Elements Corp. in February. StratexX acquired non-diamond mineral rights to the 138,400-acre Mel property. The agreement also provides for logistics and cost sharing during exploration programs.

Project: Naujaat
Owner: North Arrow Minerals
Resource: Diamonds
Location: 10 km northeast of Naujaat

Status: North Arrow received an injection of \$5.6 million from EHR Resources in August 2020 to carry out a 1,500-2,000 tonne preliminary bulk sample from the Q1-4 diamond deposit at the Naujaat project. EHR will earn a 40 per cent interest in the project upon completion of the sample. Work is scheduled to begin in June and results are expected during the first quarter of 2022.

Project: Yava
Owner: Blue Moon Mining
Resource: Zinc, lead, copper, silver, gold
Location: 450 km northeast of Yellowknife

Status: The 14,216-acre Yava project lies 32 km from Glen-core's Hackett River deposit. Historical resource estimates at Yava indicate 1.3 million tons of resource containing 4.96 percent zinc, 1.03 per cent copper, 1.60 percent lead, 3.42 ounces per ton of silver, and 0.008 ounces per tons gold to a depth of 91.5 metres. Blue Moon stated that next steps for the project include exploring the five shallow holes the company has drilled.

Project: Chidliak
Owner: De Beers
Resource: Diamonds
Location: 120 km northeast of Iqaluit

Status: De Beers hired Arctic UAV, a 100-per-cent-Inuit-owned and Iqaluit-based company, to look after annual maintenance of five meteorological stations during summer 2020. De Beers paid \$107 million to purchase Peregrine Diamonds in September 2018 and thereby assumed ownership of Chidliak. The project has an inferred resource of more than 22 million carats.

Project: Kahuna
Owner: Kodiak Copper Ltd.
Resource: Diamonds

Location: 37 km southwest of Chesterfield Inlet
Status: The company has established an inferred resource of more than four million carats. The last drilling on site took place in 2018. "Kodiak is currently evaluating strategic options for the Kahuna project," the company's website states.

Project: Kiyuk Lake
Owner: Cache Exploration
Resource: Gold

Location: 350 km west of Arviat
Status: Cache Exploration announced at the end of March that it can access up to \$6 million in financing through Alumina Partners. Plans were in place to commence 4,000 metres of drilling as of early March at the 590-square-km Kiyuk Lake property, where there are five known mineralized zones.

Project: Hood River and Ulu
Owner: Blue Star Gold Corp.
Resource: Gold

Location: 210 km southeast of Kugluktuk
Status: Blue Star conducted 7,621 metres of drilling over 38 holes during the 2020 exploration program at its 22,240-acre property in 2020. Results from the Flood Zone included

14.95 grams of gold per tonne over 13.8 metres and 9.65 grams of gold per tonne over six metres. Updated geologic modelling for the Flood and Gnu Zone deposits was underway as of January. An updated resource estimate for the projects is planned.

Project: Baffin Gold
Owner: ValOre Metals Corp.
Resource: Gold

Location: 230 km southwest of Clyde River
Status: ValOre Metals is focused on a project in Brazil. The entire Baffin Gold property, sprawling over one million acres, possesses "structural similarities to multi-million ounce gold mines in the North (i.e. Meadowbank and Lupin)," according to the exploration company.

Project: Meadowbank
Owner: Western Atlas Resources
Resource: Gold

Location: Adjacent to Agnico Eagle's Meadowbank mine
Status: A logging and sampling program at the Meadowbank gold project turned up new potential for nickel and polymetallic mineralization on the property, Western Atlas Resources announced in April. Future drill programs will target potential higher-grade precious and polymetallic mineralization, the company added. Western Atlas Resources' 100-per-cent owned property covers 580 square km.

Project: Seal/Storm
Owner: Aston Bay Holdings
Resource: Copper, zinc, silver

Location: 120 km south of Resolute Bay
Status: Australian company American West Metals Limited entered into an option agreement in March for the Storm copper project on western Somerset Island. American West Metals can earn an 80 per cent interest in the property by spending \$10 million over up to nine years, including a minimum \$2 million over the first two field seasons, according to Aston Bay Holdings, which will receive a \$500,000 cash payment from American West Metals when the deal closes. Planning was taking place for a summer 2021 field season, including geophysics and possible drilling.

Project: Greyhound
Owner: Gold79 Mines/Agnico Eagle
Resource: Gold, silver

Location: 40 km northeast of Baker Lake
Status: Agnico Eagle, as the operator, holds majority interest in Greyhound, where drilling on gold and volcanogenic massive sulphide targets is planned for May. Gold79 Mines was formerly known as Aura Silver Resources prior to August 2020.

Project: Committee Bay
Owner: Fury Gold Mines
Resource: Gold

Location: 130 km southwest of Kugaaruk
Status: Fury Gold intends to drill between 5,000-10,000 metres at Committee Bay this summer. Among the targets will be the Raven high-grade vein, which is part of an eight km shear zone. Expansion of the Three Bluffs deposit is another goal. Fury Gold Mines Limited came about when Auryn Resources underwent a reorganization in October.

Project: Tree River
Owner: Silver Range Resources
Resource: Gold

Location: 155 km southeast of Kugluktuk
Status: Silver Range stated in November that it received a "fully-costed exploration program proposal to bulk sample the gold- and diamond- bearing Tree River conglomerate." The exploration program, if permitted, would consist of collecting 50 kg, one-metre by one-metre panel samples from bedrock every 200 metres along the seven km area of geological interest between June and August. The samples would be analyzed for gold, and some also for diamonds. Tree River spans nearly 97,000 acres.

Project: Hard Cash and Nigel
Owner: Silver Range Resources
Resource: Gold

Location: 700 km east of Yellowknife
Status: Canarc Resources Corp. terminated its option to acquire 100 per cent interest in the Hard Cash and Nigel properties as of November, Silver Range Resources announced. Silver Range is having existing data reviewed to identify untested targets. The properties are located at the western end of the Ennadai-Rankin greenstone belt, which extends from Rankin Inlet to southwestern Nunavut. Agnico Eagle Mines Ltd. has built the Meliadine high-grade gold mine at the eastern end of the belt.

Project: Kuulu
Owner: International Consolidated Uranium Inc.
Resource: Gold

Location: 41 km northwest of Rankin Inlet
Status: International Consolidated Uranium Inc., the new name for NxGold Ltd. as of September 2020, became a shareholder of Meliadine Gold Ltd. (MGL) in January. Work on the Kuulu property encountered delays due to an inability to renew the land-use agreement. "Both groups recognize the potential of the project but also that the path forward requires a patient and focused approach which the team at MGL is well equipped to undertake," Glen Dickson, president and CEO of Meliadine Gold stated in January.



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