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BULKLEY VALLEY PERSPECTIVE ON THE EXPLORATION AND MINING SCHOOL

ADDS DIVERSITY TO OUR COMMUNITY

A Bulkley Valley strength has been its wonderfully diverse regionally focused economy – cattle and dairy farming, railway, airport, hospital, professional services, retail and industrial services, guide outfitting, recreational facilities (all seasons), logging, lumber and panelboard manufacturing, mineral exploration and mineral production.

A Northern British Columbia Exploration and Mining School will expand the knowledge industry in the Bulkley Valley and thereby further diversify our economy.

BUILDS ON OUR HISTORICAL EXPLORATION AND MINING STRENGTHS

The Bulkley Valley has a history of exploration and mining starting in 1890 when gold was discovered east of the Babines. Numerous mines were developed in our local area. The Bulkley Valley now services exploration and mining in all Northern British Columbia. The Bulkley Valley also contributes to the mining industry internationally as many of its skilled residents have provided experience and knowledge around the world.

The Bulkley Valley is blessed with an extensive history from which we can develop an exploration and mining school. We can use this advantage to benefit the industry, our community, and our province.

EVOLUTION AND MATURATION OF AN ECONOMY

Many economies begin with a hack and hew base. These evolve into secondary manufacturing further refining products and services, thus moving up the vertical integration ladder. A necessary component of this development is the creation of a knowledge-based industry. In fact this industry itself can become the final product.

The development of an Exploration and Mining School will help the Bulkley Valley participate in our evolving economy.

A SCHOOL WILL ATTRACT PEOPLE TO THE BULKLEY VALLEY

Some people make the Bulkley Valley their home for six months, some two years, five years, thirty years, and some even longer. New people contribute to the lifeblood of a community. They bring enthusiasm, skills, appreciation and energy. No matter how long they make the Bulkley Valley their home, they are important. An exploration and mining school will attract new people to our community.

NORTHWEST COMMUNITY COLLEGE FIELD SCHOOL AT SMITHERS CAMPUS

The Northwest Community College has contributed an excellent service to our community through its development of relevant courses for our students.

The Northwest Community College already offers courses in bush skills, prospecting, geology, assistant drilling and acid rock leaching.

The expansion of these courses into a fully integrated prospecting certificate, an environmental and reclamation certificate, a mining and a milling technician certificate is a natural progression from the existing education base.

The Exploration and Mining School in Northwest British Columbia will be greatly enhanced by the facilities and accreditation of our Northwest Community College.

THE CHALLENGE OF UNDER EMPLOYMENT

A major contribution to society is providing its people with the opportunity to be productive. Many persons in this world suffer, not because they are not smart, not because they don't wish to work, but because they have not been taught the skills and given the opportunity to be productive.

The mining industry is currently experiencing growth and needs skilled people. An Exploration and Mining School will help provide those skills in our community and thereby the opportunity to be productive and fully employed.

THE CURRENT EXPLORATION AND MINING OPPORTUNITY AND OBLIGATION

Mineral exploration in British Columbia's Northwest doubled in 2003 to \$21.1 million and is projected to significantly increase in 2004. Fortune Metals Ltd.'s Klappan Coal and BC Metals' Red Chris copper gold deposits are very near a production decision. Both of these will significantly impact employment opportunities in British Columbia's Northwest. At the recent Minerals North Conference in Smithers there was excitement over many Northern British Columbia mineral deposits. This prospective opportunity in exploration and mining is rapidly becoming an education obligation.

FUTURE OF THE SCHOOL

The school will have its challenges as it competes for recognition and funding, struggles to develop the most relevant programs, attract instructors, develop facilities and implement various delivery systems.

In the not too distant future it is quite conceivable that students of the Exploration and Mining School in Smithers will be employed not only in British Columbia's northwest, but throughout British Columbia, Canada, and other parts of the world providing exploration field skills, mining and milling trade skills and integrated resource management to the mining industry.