

# GOLD

## Brightens Outlook

By Russell Noble

**A**tlin, British Columbia, (Pop. 400), is about as far north in the province as you can go without tiptoeing into Alaska or the Yukon. In other words, it's way up there insofar as most Canadians are concerned.

Located just 100 km east of Skagway and about 180 kilometres south of Whitehorse, Atlin sits in an isolated "Swiss-like" setting in a wilderness valley surrounded by snow-capped mountains.

Artists, artisans and authors make up most of Atlin's permanent population but it hasn't always been that way. In fact, during the Klondike Gold Rush of 1898, its population grew to more than 10,000 because of the gold in those surrounding mountain streams.

Today, however, the "rush" is over by comparison to the late 1890s, but the region's

economy is still underpinned somewhat by a few mining companies convinced that the area still contains enough gold to make investing in the area worthwhile.

One of those companies is Eagle Plains Resources, which recently bought the Yellowjacket Gold Project (an open-pit gold mine operation located just 9 km east of Atlin) from Prize Mining.

The Yellowjacket gold deposit is located west of Surprise Lake along Pine Creek — a zone located directly under a well-developed historic placer area with a long history of production dating back to the late 1800s.

A 26 m shaft was sunk on the property in 1903 and reportedly hit free gold, but the shaft was filled with placer tailings and had not been located since,

until weeks ago by Eagle Plains Resources.

As mentioned earlier, Eagle Plains is a company that truly believes in the region, and it further demonstrated this in 2009 by securing a Small Mines Permit allowing it to process up to 75,000 tonnes of hard rock ore per year. The company has a mill onsite with a capacity of 350 tonnes per day and has commenced a drill program of 2000-2500 m on the property this fall.

Gold mineralization at the Yellowjacket site consists of coarse gold hosted in quartz stockworks and silicified zones in brittle volcanic and altered ultramafic rocks. Gold mineralization occurs along a prominent fault structure which is interpreted to control the distribution of placer gold reported in the area.

There are three zones of interest within the property: the Yellowjacket zone; Rock of Ages zone; and the Gold Run zone. Current mining operations are focused on the Yellowjacket zone but both of the other areas have similar geophysical signatures and are also located in the producing and historic placer workings.

Mike Labach, Director of Investor Relations for Eagles Plains Resources, says "We have a large tenure encompassing the historic Pine Creek workings from the late 1800s and also a portion of the Spruce Creek workings from the same era. Our tenure is for hard rock mining, but we also have a placer mining tenure within this; so the project is largely hard rock with some placer claims within it."

Labach explained that the mill and



Discovering gold at the Yellowjacket Gold project in northwest BC has brought many smiles to the workers and a welcome return of interest to the community.





mine setup are for processing the hard rock ore that is extracted from open pits. The future pit locations are currently covered with a gravel overburden that was worked by the placer miners, during the extraction of that to expose the bedrock. The company processes the gravels from the lower few feet of the overburden to recover any remaining placer gold.

The process of mining involves stripping the ore from the pits using backhoes.



No blasting is required because the rock is soft; and because the gold is coarse, extraction from the ore requires only water and gravity.

“We have signed an Impact and Benefit Agreement with the First Nations and have complied with the environmental regulations for hard rock mining (primarily a tailings facility). We’re pleased to say that no chemicals are required in the entire process,” said Labach.

An earlier resource estimate put the property at 453,500 tonnes grading at 10.26 g/t historically, but Labach said that the company recalculated one based on

43-101 standards and it came up much less because some assumptions were removed between the holes.

Labach says the company is confident of quickly building this resource by infill drilling between the historic holes and also drilling with a new understanding of the geological model.

Whatever Eagle Plains Resources finds at its newly acquired Yellowjacket Gold Project, you can bet the company will be there in full force to once again bring the “rush” of gold back to the sleepy hills just outside of Atlin, B.C., (Pop. 400), for now!

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