



NEWS NUGGETS

Compiled by Shane Lasley



TRILGY METALS INC.

The Bornite camp served as headquarters for roughly US\$17 million of exploration and pre-feasibility work at Bornite and Arctic, two high-grade metals deposits about 200 miles west of the Dalton Highway in Northwest Alaska.

PFS, scoping pave road to Arctic

Trilogy Metals Inc. Nov. 10 filed a National Instrument 43-101 technical report that supports the April resources estimate for the Arctic project in Northwest Alaska. At a 0.5 percent copper-equivalent cut-off grade, the April estimate outlines 36 million metric tons of in-pit indicated resources averaging 3.07 percent (2.44 billion pounds) copper, 4.23 percent (3.36 billion lb) zinc, 0.73 percent (581 million lb) lead, 0.63 grams per metric ton (728,000 ounces) gold and 47.6 g/t (55 million oz) silver. Trilogy said this resource is sufficient to support the upcoming Arctic pre-feasibility study, which is slated for completion in the first quarter of 2018. "Arctic is pretty special – we predict it will be one of the highest grade open pit copper projects in the world," said Trilogy Metals President and CEO Rick Van Nieuwenhuysse. "Arctic is also located in the geographic center of a 100-kilometer- (60 miles) long belt containing over two dozen known grade polymetallic deposits and occurrences. It is not hard to envision a central milling concept with the other deposits potentially feeding the mill beyond the mine life at Arctic."

The Arctic Mine being considered in the PFS, along with dozens of other minerals deposits and prospects in this metals rich region of Northwest Alaska, would be accessed by the Ambler Mining District Industrial Access Project, a proposed road that would extend 211 miles west from the Dalton Highway. The U.S. Bureau of Land Management is currently working on an environmental impact statement and is collecting public input for the proposed road to the Ambler district. A series of meeting to collect public input on the road proposal kicked off in the Northwest Alaska village of Allakaket on Nov. 13. A total of 11 meetings are scheduled – nine in communities near the proposed road, a Nov. 16 meeting in Fairbanks and a Nov. 20 meeting at the Dena'ina Center in Anchorage. "With the Ambler Mining District Industrial Access Project now in the formal permitting process and public scoping meetings taking place, it is exciting to see the Ambler Access Road finally taking shape," said Van Nieuwenhuysse.

Final holes test Pyramid edges

CopperBank Resources Corp. Nov. 14 reported results for the final seven holes of a 13-hole diamond drill program carried out this year at its Pyramid Copper project on the Alaskan Peninsula. Hole DDH 17PY037, which is entirely outside the historical resource, cut 331.6 meters of 0.31 per-

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PUBLIC POLICY

War on mining is over

Zinke's Alaska advisor delivers strong message from Interior Department

By SHANE LASLEY
Mining News

When Steve Wackowski asked his superiors at the U.S. Department of Interior office in Washington D.C. for a message to deliver at the Alaska Miners Association's annual convention in Anchorage, their response put an exclamation point on a clear shift in federal policy since President Donald Trump took office – "The war on mining is over."

This does not mean the United States' mining sector has a new federal ally, but it does indicate that the Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service and other agencies under the DOI banner are willing to grant mining due consideration on federal multi-use lands.

Wackowski, who was sworn in as Interior Ryan Zinke's senior advisor for Alaska affairs in May, delivered this message during a Nov. 8 presentation at the AMA convention.

Alaska's main terminal to the Interior offices in Washington D.C. said Zinke has made it clear that it is the department's sacred duty to be stewards of the public lands under its domain and that the mining sector is held to the highest safety and environmental standards on those lands.

"But with that comes another priority given to us by our President – that is to remove the burdensome and unnecessary regulations that seem to have been written to put mining out of business," said Wackowski.

Changing perception

Due to onerous policies, mining and mineral companies familiar with the landscape tend to sidestep federal lands in Alaska – especially those lands that fall under Interior Department agencies.

Mining executives, however, have been reluctant to publically express this discontent because of needing to deal with the Department of Interior and other federal agencies as a normal course of business – no matter whether it is state, federal or Alaska Native lands in which they are exploring or developing.

"Personally, we avoid working on federal lands," one such mining representative told Mining News.

This is particularly true at the exploration stage, according to a mining executive.

"Working on federal lands in Alaska is way more difficult than working on state lands, in terms of getting permits for exploration," he said.

Wackowski, a lifelong Alaskan and Air Force veteran that understands minerals increasingly important role in modern devices and America's military arsenal, has a personal reason to want to change this perception.

"I never want my sons to have to go fight for someone else's resources," he said.



STEVE WACKOWSKI

Wackowski and Zinke, both U.S. military veterans who have deployed overseas, have witnessed the environmental and social costs of resource extraction in foreign lands and have a shared belief that America would be better served to source a larger share of its resources on domestic soil.

"Particularly with oil and gas, we view energy dominance as a priority that will provide for a safer world (and a more healthy American economy," he said.

Being an Alaskan and knowing the resource riches his home state has to offer, this conviction is especially strong for Wackowski.

Reworking management plans

Wackowski sees a reworking of BLM's land management plans as one area the Interior Department can help make it easier for miners to do business on federal lands in Alaska.

"We understand that we have challenges with some of our land management plans," he said.

BLM is responsible for the management of 6.5 million acres in the federal government's Eastern Interior planning area, a roughly 30-million-acre, triangle-shaped expanse of eastern Alaska that stretches from the Yukon Territory border to a point about 240 miles into the interior of the state. This New York State-sized expanse blankets most of five historic mining districts – Fortymile, Goodpaster, Fairbanks, Circle and Tolovana (Livengood) – that have produced roughly 21 million ounces of gold and is known to host a broad range of other minerals.

A management plan finalized just before President Obama left office would place roughly 74 percent of BLM-administered lands in this minerals rich section of Alaska's Eastern Interior region off limits to mining for decades to come.

Wackowski, who visited with miners during a July trip to the Fortymile District, witnessed firsthand the livelihood family-run operations dig out of the ground in the district.

Aside from the large tracts land the pending Eastern Interior Management Plan puts off limits, Wackowski said the 1,500-page document is far too cumbersome for placer miners, mineral exploration companies and Alaska Native corporations trying to do business on BLM lands in the area.

"That is part of what we are going to try to address – to make it a little more simple and a little easier to do business on our federal lands," he said.

Permitting Ambler Road

Permitting a road into the metals-rich Ambler Mining District is a high priority item for the Interior Department, according to Wackowski.

BLM is the lead agency for permitting the pro-

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