

Nova Scotia

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Natural Resources

Connecting with Geoscientists of the Future

The opening of the Joggins Fossil Centre and designation of the community's Fossil Cliffs as a UNESCO World Heritage Site have been giant steps toward the goal of raising awareness of Nova Scotia's geological resources, both within the province and around the world. The educational resources at Joggins are truly world class. Connecting with the geoscientists of tomorrow, however, can be approached on many levels, and a trip to the classroom is still one of the best methods there is.

On March 24, 2009, I had another opportunity to speak about the virtues of geology to a classroom full of inquisitive young minds. The audience on this particular day was Mrs. Valerie Gardiner's Grade 3 class from the Kingswood Elementary School located in Hammonds Plains. The presentation involved a



'Keeper of the Cliffs' Don Reid connects with school children at the Joggins Fossil Centre in 2008. Photo courtesy of Nova Scotia Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage.

standard talk on geology, or as I like to call it *Life of a Geologist: a rock and mineral display, and a rummage through a geologist's knapsack*.

The presentation began with an interactive session. The students were asked three questions: What is geology? What is a geologist? and What do you think a geologist does? This was followed by a thirty minute slide show that pictorially answers all these questions and much, much more, such as: What does a geologist do? Where do they work? How do they travel? Where do they live? What do they see? The slide show includes photos from the Atacama Desert in Chile, the outback of Australia, and Mount Rushmore in South Dakota. The children also see how geologists travel while working 'in the bush': helicopters, four wheel drive vehicles, float planes and motor boats, as well as a lot of paces on the ground. Various camp scenes involving tents or cabins, and stories of camp life are part of the slide show. The stories always include bugs and other critters such as bears, snakes and foxes.

The rummage through a geologist's knapsack is always a fun and riveting

experience for the children. Items commonly carried in a knapsack include a first aid kit, survival gear and food, and of course tools of the trade including a rock hammer, gold pan, compass, map and more. But what the children really like is the high-tech gear such as the GPS. A common question asked at every school presentation is "How heavy is the knapsack?" and Kingswood Elementary was no exception. One student was chosen to try on the knapsack and tell the rest of the class how heavy it is. Then I reminded them that this knapsack is considered empty and is significantly heavier once all the rock and soil samples are put inside the knapsack.

This is followed by the hands-on finale of the presentation. Here, the students get to see the connection between geology and things they routinely use in their everyday lives such as the mineral halite (NaCl) and salt in a salt shaker. A typical reaction from teachers and students alike is that they never knew so many of our everyday, commonly used items, such as roads, walls, glass, wires, sandpaper, nails, cell phones, computers, pop cans,

cars, skate boards and, yes, even the kitchen sink, are made from rocks and minerals. Also, the students get to see and hold some nice rock and mineral samples that contain gold or fossils! But the real attention grabber is an ice cream container full of beach sand loaded with magnetite, a magnetic iron oxide mineral. The students are provided with a large hand magnet and they try to collect all the magnetite from the container. This is a learning opportunity to explain to the children how geologists describe or name rocks and minerals, based on different physical properties such as magnetism, colour or hardness.

The well-behaved enthusiastic students had lots of great questions and really enjoyed the hands-on display. Every time I deliver a presentation on geology at a school, it is a learning experience for me and the students. Mrs. Gardiner's Grade 3 class at the Kingswood Elementary School was no exception. I encourage any geologist who has the opportunity to visit a classroom and inspire an earth scientist of the future.

Terry Goodwin

Mineral Resources Branch Welcomes Alan Davidson as Director of Mineral Management

We are pleased to welcome Alan Davidson, P. Eng., as the new Director of Mineral Management in the Mineral Resources Branch. The Mineral Management Division comprises the Registry of Mineral and Petroleum Titles and the Mineral Development and Policy Section. The position became vacant with the retirement of Don Jones in January (see *Minerals Update*, vol. 26, no.1).

Alan knows the Nova Scotia mineral industry well, and brings a wealth of industry experience to the position, including 18 years with the Canadian Salt Company in Pugwash, where he rose to the position of Facility Manager, and recent experience with Black Bull Resources Inc. and Acadian Mining Corporation. In addition to his private sector

experience, Alan has a history of working with government on issues related to the mining industry, including service as Acting Director of Mines for the department in 2005. Alan has been an active member and Director of the Mining Association of Nova Scotia, and was very involved with the development of the new underground mining regulations. He is a member of the Association of Professional Engineers of Nova Scotia and a Past-President of the Mining Society of Nova Scotia. Alan has worked and lived in all regions of the province over the years, and he has visited most of the operating mines in Nova Scotia.

Scott Swinden



Alan Davidson

Bedford-based Merrex Gold Inc. Works to Develop a Gold Mine in Africa

Five years ago the privately held and locally owned company Jubilee Minerals carried out a reverse takeover of the public company Merrex Resources. The takeover resulted in local geologist Greg Isenor, fresh off his success with Jilbey Gold in Burkina Faso, becoming President and CEO of Merrex Gold. Isenor assembled an experienced team and set out to repeat his success in Burkina Faso by acquiring a significant land position in the West Mali Gold Belt in Africa. This area, well known to gold investors, produces more than 1.5 million ounces of gold per year from such large gold deposits as the Sadiola, Loulo and Tabakoto mines. Merrex Gold, based in Bedford, Nova Scotia, is also active in exploration and development of the Jubilee zinc-lead deposit on Cape Breton Island, as well as pursuing other exploration interests in Nova Scotia and Turkey.

The Merrex land package in Mali consisted of almost 750 km² of highly prospective permits with significant geological structures, associated anomalous gold zones, and extensive small-scale alluvial and underground gold workings, which Isenor and his team targeted as having tremendous potential. Early work on the project consisted of geochemistry, trenching and pitting while targets were identified and prioritized by the Merrex team. Subsequent work defined the Siribaya gold project in the southwestern portion of West Mali, near the Senegal-Guinea-Mali border. Drilling began with RAB drilling followed by diamond drilling on the property and significant assay results quickly followed each program (5.07 g Au/t over 33 m, 5.92 g Au/t over 20 m, 3.25 g Au/t over 22 m, 3.05 g Au/t over 26 m). After three years of grass roots geology and an investment of \$8,000,000, the junior explorer from Nova Scotia was on the radar of the major players in Africa with its Siribaya property.

The Merrex team invested heavily in its exploration program in Mali. This strategy paid off in October 2008 when

Merrex announced that IAMGOLD, a mid-tier gold producer, had entered into a joint venture agreement which would see an investment of \$12,000,000 over four years for IAMGOLD to earn a 50% stake in Siribaya. Isenor and his Merrex team would remain as the operator for the initial phase of mine development. With this partnership Merrex, in the midst of an economic crisis and the evaporation of capital for exploration projects, was fully funded to move Siribaya forward.

For Merrex investors, results from the recently released resource estimate, the first for Siribaya, was the best news yet. That resource estimate puts Siribaya well on its way to having significant economic potential, which IAMGOLD has acknowledged in their latest quarterly review. The NI 43-101 compliant resource estimate completed by

ACA Howe International estimated 123,000 oz. Au (2.12 million tonnes grading 1.81 g Au/t) in the Indicated category and a further 319,000 oz. Au (5.7 million tonnes grading 1.74 g Au/t) in the Inferred category for a 1 km zone in the 10 km Siribaya structure. This year, Merrex and IAMGOLD have announced a \$3,000,000 work program on the Siribaya project, which Merrex expects will significantly increase its gold resource.

Merrex has emerged from these down times as a true success story. The company is one of several Nova Scotia mineral companies that have embraced a global perspective. For Merrex, the current focus on gold and an eagerness to work in Africa have proven to be a formula for success in tough times.

Jamie MacNeil, Merrex Gold Inc.



Local geologist Greg Isenor, CEO of Merrex Gold Inc., stands beside a termite mound near the Siribaya property in Mali, Africa.

Parrsboro Prepares for Annual Gem and Mineral Show

For 44 years, rock, fossil and mineral enthusiasts from across the country have met in the town of Parrsboro on the Fundy coast of Nova Scotia to find and sell treasures at the Rockhound Roundup. Over time, this event evolved into Nova Scotia's Gem and Mineral Show (and Sale), the only show in the Maritimes celebrating our rich mineral and fossil heritage.

Join us from August 14 to 16 at the Parrsboro Lions Rec Centre on Western Avenue for an opportunity to view and purchase rocks, minerals, fossils, gemstones, precious and semi-precious jewelry, beads and bead- and jewelry-making supplies offered by dealers from eastern Canada and Maine. Geologists will be on hand at several booths to identify your treasures. The event will also take advantage of the region's outstanding sites of geological interest along the dynamic Fundy coast. Join a guided geological walk at the UNESCO World Heritage Site in Joggins (Friday), Five Islands Provincial Park (Saturday) or Wasson's Bluff (Sunday). Watch artists make their treasures. Demonstrations will include rock tumbling, cutting and polishing agate and turquoise, flint knapping arrowheads and gold panning.

Admission to this family-friendly event is just \$3 per person 12 and over. Show and sale hours are Friday and Saturday 10:00 am to 7:00 pm, Sunday 10:00 am to 5:00 pm. Booths will be judged for best lapidary work, best mineral or fossil display, and best overall display. Prizes will be presented at the Grand Opening, 1:00 pm on Friday, August 14, 2009. Blueberry cake and brown sugar sauce will be served daily at 1:00 pm to celebrate Nova Scotia's Blueberry Festival. Join us in our active penny auction. Door prizes will be awarded daily. Additional information about the Nova Scotia Gem and Mineral Show will be provided as it becomes available through the web site of Parrsboro's Fundy Geological Museum <http://museum.gov.ns.ca/fgm>.

Carol Corbett, Fundy Geological Museum



Visitors enjoy one of many display booths at the Nova Scotia Gem and Mineral Show in 2008. This year's event will take place from August 14 to 16 at the Lions Recreation Centre in Parrsboro.

First DNR Open House Set for September 18 and 19 in Shubenacadie

On September 18 and 19, 2009, the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will host its first Open House. The event will provide an opportunity to increase awareness of Crown land activities, the importance of the resources sector and natural resource stewardship, sustainable development of natural resources, messages coming from the Natural Resources Strategy, and career opportunities in natural resources. Youth and the general public can learn more about the various divisions of DNR and the ways they provide services that help manage our natural resources for today and tomorrow.

The two-day event is being held at the DNR Shubenacadie location and will showcase a mix of staffed exhibits, active demonstrations, presentations and self-guided tours. Exhibits will be set-up in the Training Room, Greenwing Legacy Centre and two event tents. Several 10-minute presentations will take place during each day at the Creighton Environmental Centre. Active displays will be scheduled periodically at various locations on the site. There will be live entertainment and food services on Saturday, September 19, when the event is open to all.

The Open House will be reserved for school groups, VIPs and DNR staff and retirees on Friday, September 18th, from 9:00 am to 4:30 pm. The day will conclude with a barbecue for staff, retirees and their families. On Saturday, September 19th, the event will be open to the general public from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Please visit the web site <http://www.gov.ns.ca/natr/> for more information as it becomes available.

Diane Webber

From the Mineral Inventory Files

Turning Silica into Rare Metals

The McMillan silica prospect is an obscure pegmatite-hosted quartz occurrence found atop the plateau forming the west flank of the Country Harbour valley at Country Harbour Mines, Guysborough County (Fig. 1). The prospect consists of two sites where quartz lenses lie at the centre of small, zoned pegmatite intrusions in a medium-grained leucomonzogranite pluton. This unnamed pluton is a small offshoot of the Bull Ridge Pluton found immediately to the south. Local residents have long known of the quartz lenses and say that prospectors did some digging and blasting there in an unsuccessful search for gold.

Well-known local geologist B. E. (Barry) Jones examined the quartz lenses in 1966 as part of his B.Sc. thesis at Acadia University. At the eastern site (Site 1, Fig. 1) Jones described two separate quartz lenses within a 150 m long, northwest-trending pegmatite dyke (inset in Fig. 1). The lenses are up to 6 m wide. The second location (Site 2, Fig. 1) is described as being 3.2 km west of the first site, where Jones found that what had been originally described to him as a single, large quartz mass was actually a series of smaller quartz lenses, a few metres in width each, enveloped by mixed muscovite granite and pegmatite. Of particular interest is the fact that Jones recognized the presence of discrete beryl crystals in some of the pegmatite patches but lack of time prevented him from evaluating this further. He concluded that the sites had little economic potential as a source of silica, but that their potential for beryllium (Be) should be evaluated. Such an evaluation has never been carried out and, in fact, the exact location of these two sites is not accurately known. I unsuccessfully attempted to find the eastern site in 2001 but did locate a different pegmatite of similar dimensions in the same general area. The second site has not been re-located and Figure 1 only indicates its most likely location.

It has long been known that rare metal pegmatites (enriched in Be, Ta,

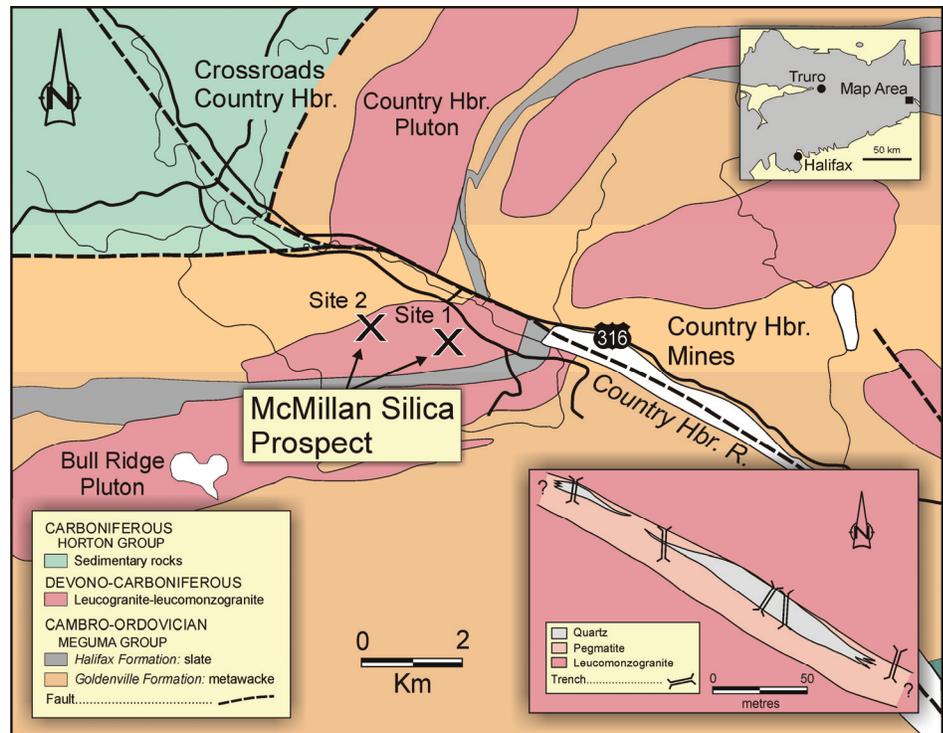


Figure 1. Geology of the Country Harbour area, Guysborough County, showing locations of the two sites that constitute the MacMillan silica prospect. Inset shows a plan of Site 1.

Nb, Cs, Li, Rb) occur throughout the Meguma Zone and I have visited many over the years. Two regions seem to host more of these occurrences: (1) southwest Nova Scotia from Liverpool around to Yarmouth; and (2) the Eastern Shore area from Canso-Country Harbour to as far west as Trafalgar. These clusters of rare metal pegmatites occupy areas of the Meguma Zone that have undergone the highest degree of regional metamorphism and, thus, likely represent the deepest burial levels. Globally, rare metal pegmatites are most commonly found in sites near the metamorphic boundary between greenschist facies and amphibolite facies rocks.

As far as rare metal occurrences in Nova Scotia are concerned, grade has not been a problem but tonnage has. I have often thought the key to solve this tonnage issue would be to locate a set-

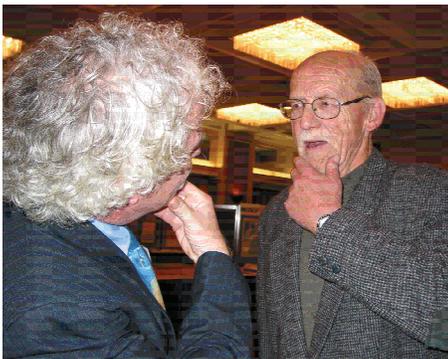
ting where the very apex of a highly evolved leucogranite intrusion is exposed. Such a zone is referred to as an apogranite, where the most highly evolved end products of the granitic magma are concentrated, resulting in enrichment of the most incompatible elements in a mix of leucogranite and pegmatite. This environment increases the possibility that the rare metal levels in both the pegmatite and enveloping leucogranite could reach a mineable tonnage. Jones's description of the McMillan prospect, especially the western occurrence, is a textbook example of what such an apogranite environment would look like. His recognition of beryl crystals in the pegmatite adds to the clear suggestion that this site has excellent rare metal potential and needs to be evaluated.

G. A. O'Reilly

Registrar of Mineral and Petroleum Titles Rick Ratcliffe Retires

After 30 years of loyal service in the department, Rick has decided that the time has come to move on. Rick joined the Department of Mines in 1979 as an assistant to Roy Slater, who was the Registrar back then, and became Registrar upon Roy's retirement in 1985. Over these thirty years, Rick brought his enthusiasm, dedication and passion to the work of the Registry. He was committed to the mineral industry and the Registry's clients and will be remembered as a champion for the industry and for his fairness in dealing with issues, which were often controversial. For all his professional life, Rick was an active member of the Provincial/Federal Mining Rights Committee. In 1993 he worked on a U.N.-sponsored consultancy to advise the Sri Lankan government on how to develop a Mineral Rights Registry system. During his tenure as Registrar, Rick was responsible for several revisions to the *Mineral Resources Act* and *Regulations*, initiated adoption of the new NAD'83 series of Claim Reference Maps, and was directly involved in the process to automate the Registry's business functions and introduce online staking. We at DNR will miss Rick's pleasant demeanor and interesting perspectives on life.

Norman Lyttle



Rick Ratcliffe (L) and Avard Hudgins (R) compare shaves at Mining Matters 2006.

January-March 2009 Open Assessment Reports

Report Number	NTS	Licensee
AR ME 2007-001	11E/01C	Acadian Gold Corporation
AR ME 2007-002	11E/02A, D	Acadian Gold Corporation
AR ME 2007-003	11E/04B	Richardson, G
AR ME 2007-004	11E/03D	Blackfly Exploration and Mining
AR ME 2007-005	11E/01A	Ross, J I
AR ME 2007-006	11D/16D	Bezanson, P T
AR ME 2007-007	11E/04A	Horne, E N
AR ME 2007-008	11E/01A	Ross, J I
AR ME 2007-009	11D/13D; 11E/04A	Grant, S
AR ME 2007-010	21A/16D	True Metallic Explorations Incorporated
AR ME 2007-011	11E/03B	Scozinc Limited
AR ME 2007-012	11D/14C	DeBay, A
AR ME 2007-013	11E/09A, B; 11E/10A; 11E/16A; 11F/13B	Wightman, J F; Ecum Secum Enterprises Limited
AR ME 2007-014	11F/04B	MacNaughton, T
AR ME 2007-015	11D/11D	Acadian Gold Corporation
AR ME 2007-016	11D/16C	Oicle, G
AR ME 2007-017	11E/04B	Anthony, R C
AR ME 2007-018	11E/03B	Acadian Gold Corporation
AR ME 2007-019	11E/03B	Acadian Gold Corporation
AR ME 2007-020	11D/16D	Allen, L J
AR ME 2007-021	11D/16D	Allen, L J
AR ME 2007-022	11F/04B	DDV Gold Limited
AR ME 2007-023	11F/05B	DDV Gold Limited
AR ME 2007-024	11F/04C; 11F/05B	DDV Gold Limited
AR ME 2007-025	11D/16C	Scratch Exploration
AR ME 2007-026	11F/15D	Unama'ki Resource Exploration and Investment
AR ME 2007-027	11D/11D	Acadian Gold Corporation
AR ME 2007-028	11F/04B	MacNaughton, T
AR ME 2007-029	11D/16C	H and E Mullen Investments Limited
AR ME 2007-030	11F/14A	Barrett, A M
AR ME 2007-031	11D/16C	Jewers, J M
AR ME 2007-032	11E/04A	Horne, E N
AR ME 2007-033	21A/10A	Colp, G B
AR ME 2007-034	21A/10D	Colp, G B
AR ME 2007-035	21A/02D	Oickle, R T
AR ME 2007-036	11E/01A	Meguma Resource Enterprises Incorporated
AR ME 2007-037	11D/10C	Acadian Gold Corporation
AR ME 2007-038	11E/03D	Richman, J
AR ME 2007-039	11D/15A	Acadian Gold Corporation
AR ME 2007-040	11D/15A	Acadian Gold Corporation
AR ME 2007-041	11D/15B	Hilchey, A F
AR ME 2007-042	11D/14C	Hilchey, A F

Susan Saunders and Norman Lyttle

Exploring the Potential for Potash in Nova Scotia

The high and steady price for potash (potassium salt), reflecting a worldwide shortage of potassium fertilizer, has had the effect of encouraging explorationists to examine the potash potential of Nova Scotia. Several Special Licenses for salt and potash are in the process of being granted throughout the province, while a few of the applications require additional consultation with First Nations representatives and communities.

Nova Scotia is situated in the southeastern portion of the Carboniferous Maritimes Basin. In the Early Carboniferous (340 million years ago) most of eastern Canada was covered by an inland ocean and experienced arid paleoclimatic conditions. Evaporation of this inland sea resulted in deposition of a series of evaporitic rocks, in ascending order: gypsum/anhydrite, halite and potash. Potassium salts only precipitate when nearly all of the seawater has evaporated and, therefore, represent only a small percentage of the overall evaporitic cycle. Marine rocks in the Maritimes Basin are assigned to the Windsor Group, which comprises strata deposited by several cycles of marine incursion and evaporation. Incursions of more normal saline seawater into the basin before deposition of potassium salts can result in an incomplete cycle with no potash.

There are numerous occurrences of potash in northern Nova Scotia, including sites near Oxford, Pugwash, Malagash, James River, Port Richmond, McIntyre Lake, Orangedale, Malagawatch and Kempt Head (Fig. 1). The Malagawatch deposit is the best documented of the occurrences, although the Orangedale, McIntyre Lake and Kempt Head deposits also have reasonable documentation. Potash beds in Cape Breton occur in at least two stratigraphic levels: a lower Windsor Group horizon referred to as 'Potash A' and one in the Middle Windsor Group referred to as 'Potash B'. The salt and potash deposits in Nova Scotia are complexly folded, with structural thickening of the potash layers along fold hinges. The 'Potash A' horizon is thick enough to be of economic significance, especially where structural thickening occurs.

Bob Ryan

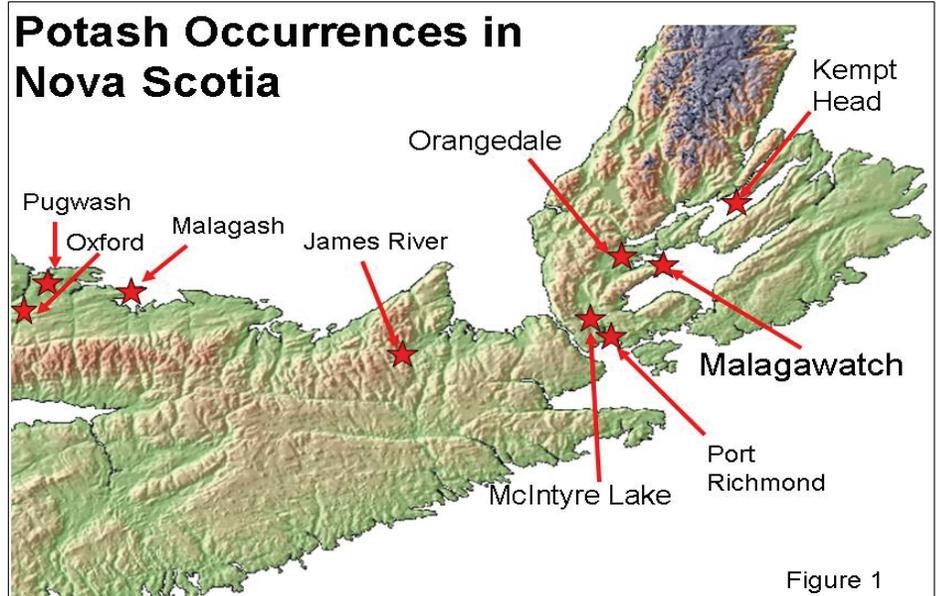


Figure 1

Figure 1. Map showing locations of known potash occurrences in Nova Scotia.

Diane Webber Starts Work as DNR's Liaison Geologist

The Geological Services Division is pleased to welcome Diane Webber as the department's new Liaison Geologist. Ms. Webber is a graduate of Saint Mary's University with a Bachelor of Science degree in geology, and is a member of the Association of Professional Geoscientists of Nova Scotia. Diane has over 20 years of experience in the exploration and mining industry, most recently working in investor relations and communications. She currently sits on the Board of Admissions for the Association of Professional Geoscientists of Nova Scotia.

The Liaison Geologist position for the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) plays an integral role in communicating the results of DNR geoscience programs and related activities to the mineral industry, universities, other government departments and the general public. The Liaison Geologist coordinates mineral promotion activities for DNR and explores opportunities for partnerships with other government departments and agencies. Diane will be the department's principal point of contact for mineral exploration companies. She will develop, manage and implement a strategy and coordinate outreach activities to promote the geological resources of Nova Scotia.

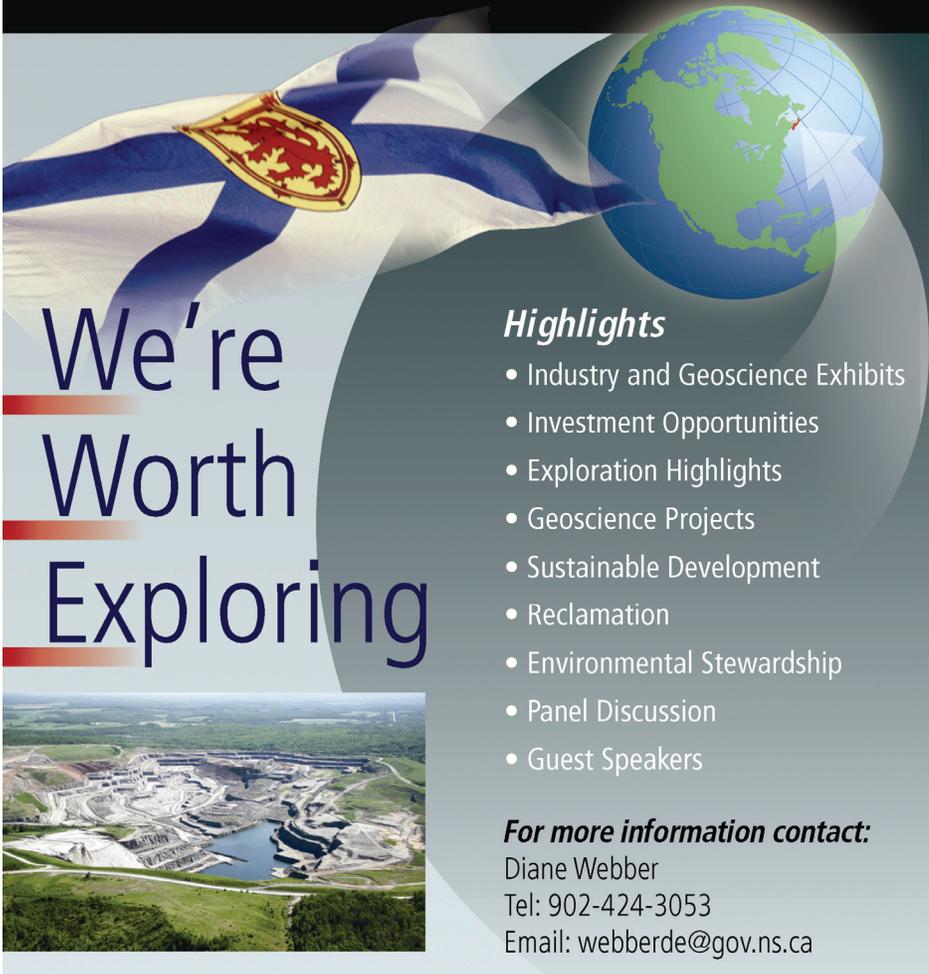


Diane Webber

Bob Ryan

Mining Matters 2009 Conference

November 16th and 17th, Westin Hotel, Halifax, Nova Scotia



We're Worth Exploring

Highlights

- Industry and Geoscience Exhibits
- Investment Opportunities
- Exploration Highlights
- Geoscience Projects
- Sustainable Development
- Reclamation
- Environmental Stewardship
- Panel Discussion
- Guest Speakers

For more information contact:
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Mining Matters 2009

Mining Matters 2009 will be held on November 16 and 17 at the Westin Hotel in Halifax. The organizing committee intends to build on the successful layout of the 2008 conference and address the issues of investment, exploration and geoscience projects, sustainable development, reclamation and environmental stewardship. Mining Matters 2009 will feature technical sessions, exhibits from government, non-government organizations, prospectors, exploration, investment and service companies, as well as guest speakers and a panel discussion. Additional details will be provided as they become available in the next issue of the *Nova Scotia Minerals Update* and on the Mineral Resources Branch website (<http://www.gov.ns.ca/natr/meb/>). For further information, please contact the author.

Diane Webber
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 902-424-3053

Special Note

E-mail Notification

If you would like to be added to our mailing list to receive an e-mail notice when new maps and publications are released, or when a new issue of the *Nova Scotia Minerals Update* is released, please send your e-mail address to minerals@gov.ns.ca.

Dates to Remember

May 24-27, 2009

Geological Association of Canada-Mineralogical Association of Canada 2009 Joint Assembly, Toronto Convention Centre, Toronto, ON. For more information please visit the web site <http://www.jointassembly2009.ca>.

June 4-6, 2009

The Mining Society of Nova Scotia, 122nd Annual General Meeting, Dundee Resort, Dundee, NS. For more information please visit the web site <http://www.miningsocietyns.ca>.

August 14-16, 2009

Nova Scotia's Gem and Mineral Show, Lions Recreation Centre, Western Ave., Parrsboro, NS. For more information please visit the web site <http://museum.gov.ns.ca/fgm> and see the article on page 4.

September 18 and 19, 2009

Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources Open House, Shubenacadie, NS. For more information please watch for updates on the DNR web site <http://www.gov.ns.ca/natr/> and see the article on page 4.

November 16 and 17, 2009

Mining Matters 2009, the Westin Nova Scotian Hotel, Halifax, NS. For more information please watch for updates on the DNR web site <http://www.gov.ns.ca/natr/meb/> and see the article and advertisement to the left.