



My Second Summer Tour of the Yukon

A Monday Morning Musing from Mickey the Mercenary Geologist

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Hey folks, a shout goes out to the [Yukon Mining Alliance](#) and the [Yukon Department of Economic Development](#): thanks for inviting me on the summer tour again!

Now in its seventh year, this partnership invites mining analysts and media types to the territory for a mid-summer tour of exploration projects and a day-long investment conference in Dawson City.

Because a couple of us visited most projects on the main junket last year, the powers-that-be in Whitehorse constructed an alternative trip to three new projects. Our smaller group of five included James Kwantes of Resource Opportunities, radio-man and photographer Ellis Martin of the eponymous Report, CEO of Mining.com Michael McCrae, Gwen Preston of Resource Maven, and yours truly.

My visit began with an early afternoon flight to Whitehorse on July 11, where the summer weather was frightful, and an hour-late connection to Dawson, where the summer weather was lovely. Here is Ellis' selfie on our flight:



After hotel check-in, we quickly departed for adult beverages at a well-known watering hole and then went on to more adult beverages and a buffet dinner at the Drunken Goat Taverna. My night on the town ended at that juncture while the less prudent of 32 delegates hit Diamond Tooth Gertie's Gambling Hall and most likely, Dawson's infamous dive bar for a nightcap in the wee hours.

On Wednesday, the Yukon Mining Investment Conference was held in a tent behind the Yukon Commissioner's Residence. Following an opening speech by the Minister of Economic Development, it was on to assigned one-on-one meetings with Yukon exploration companies. Other than one millennial CEO who apparently stayed out too late and missed our mid-morning meet, all went according to plan. I was able to visit with about half of the 19 exhibiting companies for reviews and updates and knock off a Northern Miner podcast over the course of a warm and sunny day.

After meetings were over and a quick refresher at the hotel, I began my walk a few blocks back to the mansion's veranda for the sparkling wine and appies reception. However, the Coyne Brothers wheeled around the corner, I hung out my thumb, they pulled over, and I took the captain's seat for a test drive in Flacco's lovely land yacht, this 1978 Lincoln Continental:



The Yukon Investment Banquet followed under the Midnight Sun Tent, the wine flowed, the bison was excellent, the Make a Wish Foundation garnered \$55,000 in donations, and most attendees again downed the requisite sour-toe cocktail (you gotta love that Yukon Jack!).

It had been a long day of conversations and a longer evening of libations so I retired while the sun still shone brightly; others apparently did not.

So I was up early the next morn for a scheduled departure at 7:45 am. Only one problem, our hotel café did not open until 7:30 am. So I walked down to another hostelry, ate a quick sausage, egg, and cheese sammie with a liberal dose of Tabasco, packed my bags, and was outside at the appointed time for a shuttle to the helicopter. But it was not there and it did not come. After about 30 minutes of wondering what was up, I wandered into the hotel and found the rest of the tour group eating a late breakie and awaiting the ride; so much for punctuality, eh?

Someone called about the snafu and we were finally picked up and transported to the heli pad, arriving an hour late at 9:15 am to meet [White Gold Corp's \(WGC.V\)](#) Chief Technical Advisor Shawn Ryan and Ground Truth Geologist Jodie Gibson. We flew about 50 km to the company's Cali target in the 60 Mile claim area and looked at a map of coincidentally anomalous gold-in-soils, rocks in trenches, and IP highs with resistivity lows. After sizing up the prospects, we walked a ways thru the bush to this track-mounted rotary air-blast drill:



This company is revolutionizing prospecting and exploration in the Yukon by employing low-impact, easily maneuverable drill equipment to test targets quickly and at a much lower cost with less ground disturbance and no permitting requirements versus standard core drilling:

Shawn and I traded a few stories of working for Kennecott Exploration in our younger days and respective anecdotes about ace geo Ricardo Presnell, may he RIP. We then concluded that the exploration and mining community is indeed a small world:



After the field tour, we flew back to White Gold's office for lunch and a review of its huge (3990 sq km) land position, including the Golden Saddle and Arc deposits containing historic resources of about 1.2 million ounces, numerous reconnaissance targets, and innovative exploration techniques. In addition to standard geological mapping, prospecting, auger soil sampling, and airborne geophysical surveys, their toolkit includes track-mounted RAB drills, drone surveys, close-spaced IP/R, and down-hole 360-degree cameras. Agnico-Eagle and Kinross Gold are strategic partners; each holds 19.9% of the company.

Our little party then shuttled to the airport and was joined by Brandon Macdonald, CEO of [Fireweed Zinc \(FWZ.V\)](#). We flew about an hour and a half via fixed wing to the far eastern side of the Yukon near the Northwest Territory border. Here's the group at FWZ's Macmillan Pass project that is being acquired under a 100% option agreement with Hudbay Mining:



Brandon gave a corporate presentation of this newly-minted company, which will be exploring, qualifying resources, and attempting to advance the Tom and Jason zinc-lead-silver deposits to feasibility. If its option is exercised within the two-year term, Hudbay will hold a 15% interest of Fireweed with a 3% NSR on the Jason deposit that is buyable for \$2.5 million. With project success, it will become the likely partner of choice for development and production.

We examined sediment-hosted massive sulfide, barite zones and host rocks in core, walked up to the Tom adit and mine dump, and looked at the overlying barite horizon outcrop on the hill above.

Combined historic resources are impressive at 32.0 million tonnes of 6.6% Zn, 3.8% Pb, and 38.5 g/t Ag. Although remote and at altitude with a harsh climate, exploration potential is high. Existing infrastructure includes a seasonal road within three km of the project, government airstrip, and fully-functional camp, as seen here from the mine dump:



Our long day continued with a flight back to Mayo in the central Yukon, where we were met by Sue Craig of [Metallic Minerals \(MMG.V\)](#), and who then drove us to Keno City for the evening. Beers and pizza concluded our adventure and of course, it never made twilight that night so the zzzs did not come with ease.

Friday 8am breakfast was followed by a short walk to Metallic Minerals' headquarters in the bottle house that also serves as office for company geologists. We were met there by Greg Johnson, CEO, Director Bill Harris, VP Sue Craig, and experienced geologists including Debbie James and Stuart Morris.

The company controls most of the ground east and south of Alexco Resource Corp's currently-suspended mining operations in the Keno Hill Silver District. Harris et al. assembled the 112 sq km land package from many small, fragmented mining claim holders over the course of ten years and founded the original public company that has since morphed into Metallic Minerals.

After a corporate presentation by Johnson and geological review by Morris, we proceeded to the field for an eight-stop tour. Here's our group looking southwest toward Keno Hill. The knob at the right top is where a district-wide, favorable greenstone-quartzite contact occurs; note the workings below:



Company director Bill Harris was of course in charge of providing anecdotal banter. A different Coyne Brother was the protagonist in this entertaining tale of high-grading ore by hanging over the edge of a mine dump in the bucket of an excavator.



MMG geologists have conducted and compiled mapping, soil sampling, geophysics, and prior limited drilling to construct a 3D model of their ground within the Keno Hill district. Combined with Alexco's work, they have determined that eight of the district's 12 structural corridors trend onto company holdings and the aforementioned greenstone-quartzite contact is within readily drillable depths. I consider exploration potential to be high.

After a lunch punctuated by many more stories and debates on the merits and veracity of such, we piled into two trucks, drove back to Mayo, flew to Whitehorse, ate a relaxed dinner, checked in for our flight to

Vancouver, and hit the bar for *just one more*. I was home in my home away from home not long after midnight.

It was indeed a whirlwind trip with ten meetings, a lot of quality time spent with quality people in quality drinking establishments, three property exams, and two half-days of travel, all crammed in from Tuesday afternoon to Friday night. A good time was had by all.

My appreciation goes to the effervescent Anne Lewis of the Yukon Mining Alliance, the *my amable* Tara-Lee Bosna and the gregarious Eddie Rideout of the Yukon Department of Economic Development, and the forever energetic and irrepressible, now ex-government employee Corey Kanzig for sponsoring a well-organized tour with generosity and hospitality. I also thank El Martin of [The Ellis Martin Report](#) and Michael McCrae of [Mining.com](#) for providing the fine photos reproduced herein.

I hope to get picked for this event next year.

Ciao for now,

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The [Mercenary Geologist Michael S. “Mickey” Fulp](#) is a Certified Professional Geologist with a B.Sc. Earth Sciences with honor from the University of Tulsa, and M.Sc. Geology from the University of New Mexico. Mickey has 35 years experience as an exploration geologist and analyst searching for economic deposits of base and precious metals, industrial minerals, uranium, coal, oil and gas, and water in North and South America, Europe, and Asia.

Mickey worked for junior explorers, major mining companies, private companies, and investors as a consulting economic geologist for over 20 years, specializing in geological mapping, property evaluation, and business development. In addition to Mickey’s professional credentials and experience, he is high-altitude proficient, and is bilingual in English and Spanish. From 2003 to 2006, he made four outcrop ore discoveries in Peru, Nevada, Chile, and British Columbia.

Mickey is well-known and highly respected throughout the mining and exploration community due to his ongoing work as an analyst, writer, and speaker.

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