

Goldcliff aims to revive Hedley basin

VANCOUVER — Historic gold districts typically host more than one mine, but an exception is the Hedley basin of southwestern British Columbia, which has produced an estimated 2.5 million oz. gold from a single stratabound skarn deposit. Goldcliff Resource (CCN-V, GCRFF-O) views the district as ripe for new discoveries, and toward that end, is busy exploring the Panorama Ridge property, 4 km east of the past-producing Nickel Plate-Mascot mine.

Nickel Plate-Mascot was first developed as an underground mine in 1904, and operated intermittently until 1996, after lower-grade, open-pit resources were depleted. During the industry downturn in 2000, Goldcliff president Len Saleken noticed new outcrops exposed by new logging roads near the mine site. The ground was open, so the company staked what is now its 41-sq.-km Panorama Ridge property.

A number of new gold prospects were subsequently identified and sampled, with encouraging results. An initial 17-hole drill program tested a number of targets, with the best results coming from the York-Viking zone. Highlights are 69.9 metres averaging 1.1 grams gold per tonne and 18 metres averaging 2.04 grams gold.

In 2005, the company completed

a 13-hole program totalling 1,211 metres to further test the York-Viking zone. The highlight was a 73.7-metre intersection grading 1.17 grams gold and 1 gram silver per tonne, starting 3.66 metres below surface.

The hole included some higher-grade intercepts, notably 7.8 metres of 4.23 grams gold and 2.1 grams silver, with even higher values of 16.6 grams gold and 10 grams silver over a 1-metre interval.

Another hole returned 71 metres of 0.5 gram gold and 0.5 gram silver, which included higher-grade intercepts, such as 1 metre of 2.37 grams gold and 0.4 gram silver.

Goldcliff notes that these new results revealed, for the first time, that continuous silver mineralization is present at Panorama Ridge. This was also the case at the Nickel Plate-Mascot mine, which produced 594,175 oz. silver from ore that averaged 1.09 grams silver. Gold values averaged 13.94 grams during the underground-mining phase and 1.98 grams during the open-pit phase.

Assay results are pending from other holes at the York-Viking zone, and from testing the Nordie zone. The company notes that the zones have similar geology and skarn alteration and mineralization as seen at the nearby Nickel Plate-Mascot mine.