GEOLOGICAL FIELDWORK 1996

A Summary of Field Activities and Current Research

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FOREWORD

Geological Fieldwork: A Summary of Fieldwork and Current Research, 1996 is the twenty-second edition of this annual publication. It contains reports of Geological Survey Branch activities and projects during the last year. The base budget of the Branch for the 1996-97 fiscal year is $5.5 million, down slightly from the previous year. This budget has been supplemented by $1.1 million to offset the impact of the ending of the federal-provincial Mineral Development Agreement, $180,000 under the Mineral Potential Initiative and $60,000 for MINEFILE and earthquake studies from the Corporate Resource Inventory Initiative. Overall funding therefore was essentially the same as in 1995-96.

As before the contents of this year's volume reflect the emphasis of Branch programs. Highlights are completion of the bedrock mapping and geochemical survey of the northern Nataga Belt, continuation of the Nechako Plateau NATMAP project, which is a collaborative effort with the Geological Survey of Canada and various universities, and regional geochemical sampling of two 1:250,000 map-sheets in north central British Columbia. The SEDEX-oriented Nataga project traced favorable lithologic units northward from Terminus Mountain to the Yukon border and conducted a lake sediment and water geochemical survey of the same area. The Branch focus within the Nechako project is the Babine porphyry belt, with its important mineral potential. The regional geochemical survey covered the congruent Toodoggone River and McConnell Creek sheets. As well, a new regional mapping project extended existing coverage of the Toodoggone volcanic belt southward to the area of the Kessess deposit. A new multidisciplinary study which keys on surficial geology, geochemistry and mineral deposits began in the Eagle Bay area; its focus is volcanogenic massive sulphide deposits.

A variety of mineral deposits are profiled in this year's Fieldwork volume, including the geological setting of Canada's first precious opal deposit. Other articles on Harper Creek (VMS), Nipple Mountain (opal), Taurus (bulk gold), Huckleberry (porphyry copper), Mount Mather Creek (sodalite), Mount Brussiloff (magnesite), Atlin (in skarn) and other locations profile more of the province's attractive mineral resources. Three interesting articles on coal and coalbed methane provide more documentation on the single most important mineral commodity in the province. The metallogenic study in the Tatogga Lake area completed its third and final year of mapping by defining the volcanic successions in the region and identifying the two main styles of mineralization.

The Mineral Potential project has completed coverage of all the province except the Queen Charlotte Islands. Much information from the project is posted on the Internet on the Ministry site (address: http://www.ei.gov.bc.ca/pages/geosmin.htm). The intent of the project is to have geology, geological tracts and mineral potential estimates available; at this time, the geology layer is not yet ready for posting. The geology, mineral assessment results and associated datasets are available for downloading in an Arc Export format which allows viewing and manipulation with the freeware Arcview1 program. Interactive viewing of the geology and other major datasets will be available in 1997.

Production of Geological Fieldwork to the camera-ready stage has been done in Microsoft WORD by the authors using a template prepared by Brian Grant. The Branch is now employing print-on-demand technology for its geoscience publications. Material will also be posted on the Ministry Internet site for viewing or downloading. Thanks are due to Dave Lefebvre, Bill McMillan and Gib McArthur for editing and to Brian Grant for guiding the process to completion on schedule.

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