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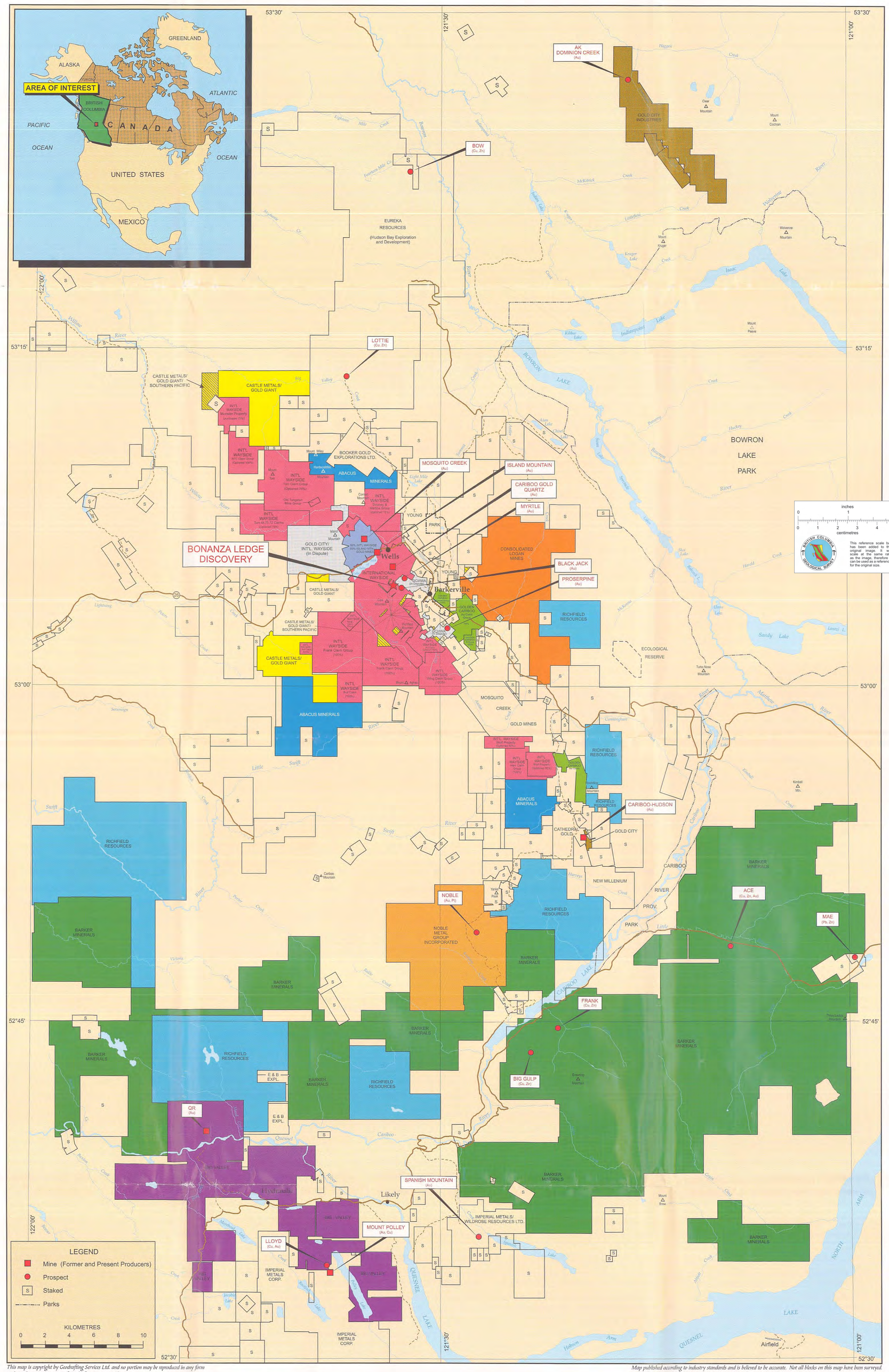
CARIBOO EXPLORATION PROJECTS AND DISCOVERIES

WELLS / BARKERVILLE / LIKELY AREAS



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Introduction

Mining activity in the North Cariboo region dates back to 1859 with the discovery of placer gold on the Quesnel and Horsefly rivers. In 1860, the Quesnel Forks area was opened up and gold was discovered in Keithley and Antler creeks. In 1861 rich strikes were made on Williams and Lightning creeks. Discoveries made in the Cariboo area, on the Quesnel River and in the vicinity of Barkerville, came in such rapid succession and mining of the rich gravel deposits proceeded so rapidly that 1863 was the greatest placer gold production in the province (7160 kilograms/230,210 ounces). The new wealth produced through the mining of placer gold in British Columbia was an extremely important factor in the early, rapid exploration of the province. The activity drew a large number of prospectors; they became the backbone of the mining industry and continue to play an important role in the search for new discoveries. Placer gold production in the region from 1859 to the present amounted to approximately 62,200 kilograms (2 million ounces). In the Barkerville camp, 79 creeks have reported placer gold production. Since 1902, lode gold production from the Cariboo-Barkerville camp (principally the Cariboo Gold Quartz, Island Mountain and Mosquito Creek mines) amounted to approximately 38,320 kilograms (1.23 million ounces). Thus, in total, placer and lode gold production in the North Cariboo region is estimated at 124,400 kilograms (4 million ounces).

The discovery of the **Bonanza Ledge Zone** in March, 2000 on the Cariboo Gold Quartz property at Wells, as well as recent massive sulphide discoveries in the region, has led to a staking rush resulting in the recording of over 6000 new mineral and placer units in the region.

The British Columbia Ministry of Energy and Mines databases, especially Regional Geochemical Survey data and The MapPlace, provide good exploration tools for the North Cariboo region [www.em.gov.bc.ca/geology]. During 2000, the BC Geological Survey Branch conducted regional mapping, till geochemistry and metallogeny studies over selected areas of the region. Preliminary results will be released at Roundup 2001 in Vancouver. Exploration in this region will hopefully lead to the revitalization of this historic gold camp, as well as the discovery and development of other targets regionally.

Targets:

1) **Auriferous mesothermal quartz veins +/- pyrite-replacement mineralization** (e.g. Cariboo Gold Quartz, Island Mountain, Mosquito Creek, Cariboo Hudson, Williams Creek, Myrtle, and Proserpine). Host rocks include argillite, phyllite, mudstone, sandstone and Limestone of the Late Proterozoic to mid-Paleozoic Barkerville Terrane (Snowshoe Group).

   [Reference: BCDM Bulletins 28, 34, 38, 47, 97 and GSC Memoir 421]

2) **Volcanogenic massive sulphide (VMS) mineralization**. Host rocks include tuffaceous mafic and felsic tuffs, pillow basalt, grits, phyllite, schist and marble of the Barkerville Terrane (e.g. Frank Creek, Ace and Big Gulp) [Besshi-type], mafic volcanic flows and tuffs and chert of the Triassic Slide Mountain Terrane (Antler Formation) (e.g. Lottie and Bow) [Cyprus-type], and mafic volcanic and metasedimentary rocks near the contact between Barkerville and Paleozoic Cariboo Terranes (e.g. Mae).

   [Reference: BC Ministry of Energy and Mines, Exploration and Mining in British Columbia - 1999, pp. 65-77]

3) **Platinum Group Element (PGE) mineralization.** Platinum has been recovered from placer mining, particularly in the area southwest of Wells. Although the host rocks are not well understood, the recent interest includes ultramafic rocks and the mafic end members of an alkalic intrusive suite.

4) **Auriferous skarn/manto mineralization**(e.g. QR). Host rocks include a sequence of Upper Triassic basic and intermediate volcanics, calcareous tuffite and mudstone, and a series of alkaline stocks.

   [Reference: CIM Special Volume 46, pp. 829-837]

5) **Porphyry mineralization** (e.g. Mount Polley). Host rocks include dioritic to monzonitic intrusions and breccias, intrusive into Upper Triassic Nicola Group sedimentary and basaltic rocks.

   [Reference: CIM Special Volume 46, pp. 609-622]

6) **Auriferous sediment-hosted mineralization** (e.g. Spanish Mountain). Host rocks include Triassic shales.

   [References: BC MEM Assessment Reports 14,682 and 24,729]

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