

BABINE RANGE - 16 JULY 1974

On July 16th I took a recce helicopter trip into the Babine Range with Nick Carter, Jim Hutter and Joe L'Orsa. The Range has been proposed as a Wilderness Park by Joe.

The Department of Mines has been asked to study the mineral potential of the Range. The topography is rugged and thus prospecting has been tough. Nevertheless, several prospects exist within the proposed park boundaries as well as one producing mine, the Cronin Mine. Most if not all of these showings should be examined as well as further potential areas. The amount of snow on the ground at the time of our trip does not permit a thorough examination at this time.

We flew up the Driftwood Creek and circled over the Harvey showings owned by Driftwood Mines and the Rainbow showings owned by Lorne Warren. Both appear to be free of snow and will be examined in the near future. We continued flying up to the headwaters of Driftwood Creek and landed at the adit site in Silver King Basin. We looked around the old dump, and selected typical ore and host rock specimens. The ore appears to be concentrated in quartz veins. This Silver King Basin area is probably the key area in the park proposal and will be examined in more detail as soon as the snow leaves.

From the Silver King Basin we flew up and over into Hyland Basin near the headwaters of Cronin Creek and observed that the showings there were still covered in snow. We then flew over the Cronin Mine and northwards to the showings on Debenture Creek. These showings are up on the steep creek bank and were partially covered by snow. We circled the showings and then flew southeastwards and landed at the Native Mines showing located near the head of Higgins Creek. The showings here were also partially covered by snow. Surface showings (trenches) are very impressive. However, apparently the adit driven underneath did not intersect ore. Some of the best lead and zinc ore in the Babine Range was observed here in the trenches. An impressive reddish brown variety of coarse crystalline siderite is one of the prominent gangue minerals present. From the Native Mines showings we flew into the Little Joe adit at the headwaters of Little Joe Creek.

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The adit is very old and very little ore was observed outside the adit, in fact only one sample of quartz contained some grey copper. From the Little Joe showings we flew back to Smithers over the Big Onion porphyry copper prospect which is currently under active exploration.

At present, active exploration is being carried out on the Big Onion prospect. Work is planned on the Little Joe prospect. The Cronin Mines is in production.