

Minerals North Apr. '91

It's Not Over 'til It's Over

→ Bell Copper

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The Bell Mine is facing the reality of imminent closure in 1992. Bell commenced operations in the early seventies, but closed in 1982 due to high operating costs and low metal values. The mine reopened in 1985 with an expected 3 year life, but with tenacity and innovation, the operation has been sustained. Through further exploration, an orebody has been identified which could carry the operation well past the year 2,000. Unfortunately, economic conditions are not conducive to the huge capital requirements needed almost immediately to continue operations. Considerable work and planning is presently directed at decommissioning which coincidentally may position Bell for many years of sustained profitability. The history of other Noranda closures (and reopenings) provides information for planning the Bell Mine decommissioning. This presentation will identify the steps taken to plan the closure which ironically may result in continued strength.