

SEG 100 Conference: Celebrating a Century of Discovery

ST.034

N'tsi Tatay: A New Look at Windy Craggy

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N'tsi Tatay is North America's largest resource of cobalt with excellent copper, zinc, gold, and silver grades hosted in an Upper Triassic Besshi-style volcanogenic massive sulfide. This deposit occurs within the Alexander Triassic metallogenic belt that has excellent potential for future discoveries.

The deposit is comprised of three vertical massive sulfide zones termed North, South, and Ridge. The 1992 historical resource estimate is 297,000,000 tonnes grading 1.38% Cu, 0.069% Co, 0.20 g/t Au, and .83 g/t Ag using a 0.5% copper cutoff grade. This estimate should be considered a minimum, as a new zinc-rich (Ridge) zone was discovered at the end of the last drilling campaign in 1990 and remains open. In addition, a supergene zone enriched in copper is capped by gold-silver-rich gossans.

Significant gold is associated with a chert-carbonate-sulfide unit. One drill hole (83-14) intersected 29.7 metres grading 14.72 grammes/tonne gold with microscopic native gold and electrum occurring as 7- to 8-micron-diameter grains.

Mineralization is comprised of chalcopyrite, pyrrhotite, pyrite, and sphalerite with lesser marcasite, galena, digenite, arsenopyrite, an unidentified bismuth telluride, cobaltite, cubanite, native gold, electrum, and native silver. Cobalt generally occurs within the sulphides (primarily pyrrhotite) as a solid solution. Primary textures and geologic relationships are well preserved for the most part. Gangue components include quartz, iron carbonates, magnetite, chlorite, and calcite.

From 1988 to 1991, approximately \$50,000,000 in expenditures were spent completing 4,139 metres of underground development and 4,618 metres of diamond drilling from surface and underground drill sites as well as the completion of a preliminary feasibility study.

N'tsi Tatay was discovered in 1957 by prospecting under the supervision of Mr. James McDougall (an inductee into the Canadian Mining Hall of Fame in 2006). After years of highly successful exploration the project was shuttered by inclusion in a park (1993) by Provincial and Federal politics without due consultation and compensation for the land claims and ancestral territory of the rightful First Nation owners. This event has led to an unparalleled historical legacy of over one billion dollars invested and spent on bringing other mineral deposits to fruition but nothing for the impacted First Nations.

Recent innovations in recovery technology, mine development, block caving, backfill paste and dry stack tailings storage techniques, environmental management and mitigation strategies, combined with the Canadian recognition and implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), necessitate that this high-quality resource be granted another look after 63 years.

There are numerous social and economic benefits from this development for all stakeholders. This is the time in which to showcase a vision of development with ownership and leadership by an Indigenous Nation entity that respects their culture, the environment, park sustainability, and economic realities. In a world that values a green economy requiring huge amounts of copper and ethically sourced cobalt, N'tsi Tatay warrants consideration.

The historical Southern Tutchone translation of N'tsi (windy) Tatay (mountainous) is Windy Craggy. This deposit is located in northwestern British Columbia, Canada.

