

Mining Matters

MINERALS NORTH: OPPORTUNITY ROCKS!

Two years ago Smithers hosted a very successful and sold-out Minerals North. This year, Prince George has the honour. The conference will be held from April 21–23, 2010 at the Prince George Civic Centre. Register at www.mineralsnorth.ca.

Minerals North seeks to bring together the minerals industry (prospectors and mining companies) with a broad spectrum of people in northern communities: contractors, business people, First Nations and the general public. The objective is to:

- build contacts and working relationships between the mining industry and local businesses, contractors and First Nations
- inform northern communities about exploration and mining issues
- hold a dialogue on the benefit and impacts of mining

The annual Minerals North conference is held in a different community each year. It aims to achieve the objectives listed above by including some (or all) of the following:

- technical sessions describing mine and development projects
- non-technical sessions with an emphasis on economic developments and future opportunities
- trade show
- panel discussion
- field trip to an operating mine
- social events where people from different backgrounds can meet

Did you know that Minerals North was started over 20 years ago around a kitchen table here in Smithers? From the Smithers Exploration Group to Minerals North to the School of Exploration and Mining, Smithers and its people have played a large role in the mining industry for decades.

MINING WEB PORTAL:

Have you had a chance to check out the latest Smithers Exploration Group Exploration and Mining Directory? Smithers is the base of operations for at least seven drilling companies, four main (and many minor) expediting companies, eight professional cooks and Level 3 First Aid attendants (including agencies), and more than 15 geological and engineering consultants. These are just a few of the folks who offer services to the mining and exploration community and many do their hiring right here in Smithers. Don't forget the employees at the Northwest Community College School of Exploration and Mining and the local or visiting students in town to attend classes!

The mining community buys bulk foods for camps, uses print shops for brochures, posters, business cards, and displays, contracts satellite internet, radios, and telephones for remote locations, purchases safety equipment and off-road vehicles, leases trucks, uses transportation companies, rents warehouse space, utilizes local banking services, and puts out-of-town employees up at local motels, eating at local restaurants. Many of us with companies here in the Valley use a 'buy local' policy whenever we can.

Employees and their families live, attend school, and participate in the community right here in Smithers. While mining work may take them out of town, province, or even country, this is their home base.

"Mining Matters" is a bi-monthly column written by Anastasia Ledwon, P.Geo., and welcomes your feedback and questions at general@smithers.ca.

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