

Prospects

LEADERSHIP AND MENTORING

FEATURE

MINING THE FUTURE

New Funding and New Programs take the Society to New Heights

+ KEEPING THE DEHCHO SILVER

Year Two of More Than A Silver Lining Goes from Success to Success

+ OUR FRIENDS IN NUNAVUT

Strong New Partnership in the Kitikmeot Region



Mine Training Society
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

SILVER LINING: YEAR TWO



The second year of the *More Than a Silver Lining* program far exceeded its targets, seeing 97 Dehcho residents employed – 27 more than the set goal of 70. The successful 2012/13 training program included 12 different programs, and continued to bring both economic and social benefits to the people, communities and businesses of the region.





A Silver Lining trainee contemplates Prairie Creek and the future: the program has already exceed its targets.

Silver Linings has its roots in the Dehcho's Aboriginal communities. Nahanni Butte and Liidlii Kue (Fort Simpson) have Impact Benefit Agreements with Canadian Zinc, who plan a zinc-lead mine at Prairie Creek in the Mackenzie Mountains west of Fort Simpson, part of the Dehcho claim area. But the Prairie Creek project will need 235 full time employees when it is up

and running, and additional workers will be required to handle logistics and road maintenance. Nahanni Butte and Liidlii Kue partnered with Jean Marie River, Trout Lake, Fort Liard, Canadian Zinc and the Mine Training Society to develop a successful training fund proposal to the Government of Canada Skills and Partnership Fund.

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Getting ready for a career underground: trainees at the Paririe Creek site.

(SILVER LINING CONTINUED)

“The Mine Training Society runs the program, Canadian Zinc is the client,” says Chris Reeves, general manager of Canadian Zinc Corporation.

Five 2012 programs offered skill development directly related to opportunities at Canadian Zinc’s future mine

project at Prairie Creek. These included Camp Cook, Mining Exploration Field Assistant, Diamond Driller, Small Engine Repair and Building Trades Helper. Approximately half these trainees will be offered employment with the mine in 2013, once the mine receives permits to begin operations.

“The Mine Training Society is vital to our commitment to the Dehcho communities,” says Reeves. “The *More Than a Silver Lining* training program helps us deliver direct benefits to Dehcho communities, in the form of transferrable skills.”

TRANSFERABLE SKILLS BENEFIT EVERYONE

Training that delivers transferrable, marketable skills can add much value to small communities across the North. Robert Kenney, who currently delivers safety training for Ekati Diamond Mine in the North Slave region, but who has worked across the North, describes the kind of benefits transferrable skills can bring to a small community: “A couple of years ago I was working in Wekweëti, and a person that comes to mind there is a fellow called Johnny Arrowmaker. He’s a guy that could probably work at any mine up here because he can operate pretty much everything that there is. And Wekweëti would have a rough time without him. He’s the guy that, when a person runs out of water, or their furnace is broken, or whatever, fixes the situation. Communities need these kinds of people with this kind of training.”

And the benefits of training can be even more intangible. Sometimes, successfully completing a course is an act that in itself can create greater confidence and ambition, says Kenney. “I’ve gone into lots of Northern communities, and sometimes the benefits, aside from

SILVER PROGRAMS

A review of the 2012/13 programs delivered by the MTS and its partners in the Dehcho

In addition to MTS and Canadian Zinc, training program partners in 2012/2013 included Aurora College, the Government of the Northwest Territories, Dehcho and Liidlii Kue First Nations, the Community of Trout Lake, Pehzeh Ki First Nation, Pedzeh Ki Contractors, and Cabo Drilling.

The 12-week **Camp Cook Training** program is based on the occupational standards recognized by the Apprenticeship, Trades and Occupations Certification Board of the NWT, and graduates have the skills to work in any camp situation. Eight participants,

from Jean Marie River, Fort Providence and Fort Simpson began the course, and seven completed it.

The **Mining Exploration Field Assistant** program delivered highly marketable skills. Eight participants, including one woman, were drawn from the Dehcho communities of Nahanni Butte, Fort Simpson and Fort Providence. This program featured an added bonus that went beyond basic field assistant skills: Prospector basic training and Drill Core Technician basic training were added to the program, greatly expanding employment



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- Wilbert Antoine

learning about the actual details of the course, are that it just gave the people the feeling that they know they can go on and do something else. I've seen that happen quite a bit actually.”

PREPARED FOR REAL JOBS CLOSE TO HOME

“Unlike some past training programs,” says Wilbert Antoine, “people who participate in the *Silver Lining* project actually have a job to go to.” Wilbert is the Northern Development Manager for Canadian Zinc's Prairie Creek Mine. “In the two years of the program we've probably trained about 100 people.”

“The beauty of this program,” says Antoine, “is that standout participants are targeted for mine employment, and each Dehcho community benefits as well. If, for example, we train eight emergency medical technicians, at least two will be available for work in their home community.”

Antoine is based in Fort Simpson, after a long career in the mineral industry. “This is my dream job,” Wilbert adds, “this year I will be marking 42 years in the mining industry, and here I am back home in Fort Simpson.” When Wilbert travels to the Prairie Creek mine site, he makes sure to check up on *Silver Lining* participants. He's very enthusiastic about the program and the potential for trainee success.

MIXING MENTORSHIP WITH THE TRAINING

The *More Than a Silver Lining* training program has a strong mentorship component. Darlene Sibbeston heads up that core part of the training program. She is the NWT Mine Training Society's Fort Simpson-based Job Coach. Sibbeston's involvement starts with program orientation. “I tell them to put their best foot forward, and that they can come to me for help or advice. I can put participants in touch with various types of assistance – for example, money management or dealing with family issues. Sometimes all the participants really need is someone to say ‘you're an adult, now act like one.’”

This tough love has its warmer moments, too: “It's really gratifying to see students successfully complete these programs. Mining is a career. If people can start out in these jobs and be successful, they can spend their working lives in this field.”

Canadian Zinc's Chris Reeves and Wilbert Antoine, along with Darlene Sibbeston, NWT Mine Training Society's Job Coach, are all justifiably proud of the past year's accomplishments. But credit also goes to the more than 60 Dehcho residents who were willing to take the first steps in a career in mining. **MTS**



opportunities for graduates in mineral prospecting, or drill core care and logging in any exploration camp.

Northwest Community College's mobile training crew delivered the **Exploration Field Assistant** program, a first for that institution in the NWT. This mobile school has successfully trained workers from many remote BC communities by delivering content close to home or at a mine site.

The **Diamond Driller Helper** program was an intensive 12-week program designed to ready eight participants for employment.

Trainees from Fort Providence and Fort Simpson also included one woman. Instruction in the theory of drilling followed a plan developed by the Canadian Diamond Drillers Association. The program was in partnership with Aurora College, Canadian Zinc and Cabo Drilling.

Participants in the Camp Cook, Diamond Driller and Mining Exploration programs also received advanced safety training, including first aid. Both Chris Reeves and Wilbert Antoine chose the **Emergency First**

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BRINGING IT HOME

Mine Training Society programs delivered in small communities like Trout Lake provide long-lasting benefits that go beyond serving the needs of the business community.

Trout Lake, also known by its Dene name of Sambaa-K'e, is a Slavey community close to the Alberta border. "There's about 110 people living here," says Brenda Jumbo, finance officer for the Sambaa-K'e Development Corporation (SDC). "It's a small, remote community, where the only access is by air, in the summer. In the winter, there's three months of winter road."

It's best known for fishing, thanks to the Trout Lake Lodge, which brings sports fishers from around the world to its scenic setting and abundant lake trout, pickerel and pike. The airport that delivers these fishing tourists is being upgraded, a project due to be completed by September, 2013.

"The Sambaa-K'e Development Corporation tries to employ as many local people as we can," says Jumbo, "so we try to have as much local training as possible."

With this goal in mind, MTS partnered with the Corporation and the GNWT Department of Transportation to deliver Heavy Equipment Operation and First Responder Emergency Training courses in the community in the Fall of 2012.

"It was hands-on training while they were doing their work here," says Jumbo. "In the past we've had H.E.O. courses, but the trainees have had to leave the community to take them. It was hard for them to be out there, especially with the social issues and pressures that come up. But here, they can go for the training and then come home to their families."

BUILDING A SKILLED WORKFORCE

Robert Kenny, training advisor for Dominion Diamond Ekati Corporation, is a big supporter of the Mine Training Society's in-community training. "I've trained in 16 different communities between the Territories up here," he says. "It's way better to go into these communities than to bring people out." Aside from the cost savings and other practical benefits, Kenny says, "number one, the attendance is much better. They are right there."



SILVER PROGRAMS (CONT'D)

Responder Program offered in 2011 as one of the most valuable training programs for the communities. Reeves explains: "The small communities may not have access to a nurse or trained first aid staff. This program helps the community, supplying a trained person who can deal with emergencies. The trainees are qualified as paramedics."

Other *Silver Lining* courses also deliver skills that lead both to job opportunities

and overall benefits to Dehcho communities.

Small Engine Repair is an example of a training program with benefits that go beyond immediate employment. This five-week course was delivered in Fort Simpson in 2012. Eight residents of Fort Simpson and Fort Providence took the course. They received training in how to service and maintain two and four cycle engines for snowmobiles, ATVs, outboard motors and chainsaws, all vital components of small community life.





Scenic Trout Lake is the perfect location for in-community training.

Kenny is quick to add that in-community training is just part of the training process. Most programs designed to produce on-site mine workers – underground miners especially – work best when they include the experience of being in a remote camp, he adds. “When they come to a remote camp, a lot of people find that it’s something they can’t handle. So giving them some experience with that sort of situation makes them more comfortable when they do go to a camp.” In-community training is just one component of a happy, healthy and skilled northern workforce.

Mavis Wasp-Colin, general manager of the SDC, has extensive experience herself in training and employment programs, having run the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Partnership Program with the Deh Cho First Nations for nine years. “I know the challenges and benefits and everything else, inside-out,” she says.

Wasp-Colin explains one reason why in-community training is key in a place like Trout Lake:

“We have a very high population of preschoolers – about 19 of them out of a population of around 110. And we don’t have a day-care or anything like that, so it’s very beneficial that the training takes place in the community.”

The airport will be finished in the fall of 2013, but there’s plenty of ongoing work after that: a road resurfacing initiative, on-going infrastructure improvements, and the next major priority, a refurbishment of the fishing lodge.

And now the community has members who are equipped to take on that work. Says Wasp-Colin: “There’s always some project going on, especially ones that involve heavy equipment, and we will always need operators, so now we’ll have the people with the knowledge and skills to operate that equipment right here in Trout Lake.”

But the training that the Mine Training Society and its partners delivers has many long-lasting benefits, ones that go far beyond the delivery of a set of workplace skills. The training gives people a sense of pride,” says Wasp-Colin, “because now they have the ability to be involved in the project. I think that’s a big motivation that helps them to stay with the program right to the end. The sense of being a part of something gives them the ambition to complete courses.”

And that sense of ambition doesn’t stop at taking courses. “Once they’ve gone through this training, they are more confident and eager to tackle different things. They have the idea that they can go on and do different things if they choose to.” **MTS**

The Building Trades Helper program, which extended into 2013, included five students. They were in training to assist carpenters, plumbers, electricians and drywallers. Trainees learned safety on the job, and will have acquired knowledge necessary for work as a skilled labourer, a definite leg up in the building trades, and a possible route to a skilled trade.

The five-week **Environmental Monitor Program** in Fort Simpson in 2012 was completed by six participants. Training was based on National Occupational Standards

for Environmental Monitors, and opens up a career in monitoring land and water quality with a mine, or the home community.

Additional programs offered in the 2012 year included **Mine Administration**, leading to entry level positions, and work placement for one graduate of the 2011 program, now a permanent employee of Canadian Zinc, based in Fort Simpson.

And finally, there were three community-based programs that offered job-ready skills. Trout Lake and Wrigley held **Heavy**

Equipment training programs. The Trout Lake crew was hired by the community to maintain the airport and operate the water delivery and sewage pump out systems. Some Wrigley grads joined Pedzeh Ki Contractors, working on soil remediation for Ledcor/Enbridge Pipelines. Nogha Enterprises in Fort Simpson, the business arm of Liidlii Kue, delivered Class 1 Drivers License training. In total, 19 Dehcho residents successfully completed these *Silver Lining* programs, and now could qualify for employment with support services for Canadian Zinc’s Prairie Creek Mine. **MTS**

