

A busy season gets underway at Prairie Creek Mine

Canadian Zinc to spend approximately \$8 million this year

by Roxanna Thompson
Northern News Services
Deh Cho

Work has already begun on what's scheduled to be a busy season at Prairie Creek Mine.

Canadian Zinc Corporation plans to spend approximately \$8 million this season at the mine site and on the permitting process, said Alan Taylor, the company's vice-president of exploration.

The site opened for the season on April 1 with repair and maintenance work. During the week of May 14 to 18, preparations began for a diamond drill program that will be running at the mine until approximately October.

The program will be similar to the one undertaken last year, said Taylor. Two drill rigs will be operated throughout the summer, one in the Casket Creek area, approximately five kilometres from the mine site, and one closer to the mine, approximately one kilometre away. The drilling will look for additional mineral resources and also provide more information about known mineral deposits, Taylor said.

Last year drilling in the Casket Creek area indicated mineral resources extend that far but the holes were too shallow. This year the company will revisit a hole that was drilled to approximately 1,200 metres with the goal of reaching the target depth of 1,500 metres, Taylor said.

An airlift will be undertaken this summer to move a third, small drill rig to the mine. This rig will be used to test areas around the mine where facilities such as a waste rock pile and storage pond are expected to be built. Data is needed to determine if the areas are stable enough to support the facilities, Taylor said.

Additionally, a pre-feasibility study on the economics of the mine site is entering its second year.

While all of this is underway, the company will also be supporting four training programs the Mine Training Society Northwest Territories



photo courtesy of Canadian Zinc

Canadian Zinc Corporation will be using two diamond drill rigs this summer to look for additional mineral resources at the Prairie Creek Mine site. The drill program is just one of many projects the company has underway at the mine this year.

is offering at the site.

Six students taking a camp cook course are currently on site. They will be joined by participants taking programs for diamond drilling, geological assistants and safety.

Approximately 40 to 50 people at Prairie Creek

With all of the work underway, there will be between approximately 40 and 50 people at Prairie Creek at any given time, said Taylor, who added half of the employees will be from the Deh Cho.

The company has not decided whether or not it will do underground work this year.

Canadian Zinc was waiting to receive permits that would allow it to dig new tunnels. Earlier this month, the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board issued a new Class A land use permit for underground development that will be good for five years.

The board also approved an amendment and extension to the company's existing Class B water licence to cover new underground development. With the permit and licence the company will be able to dig new tunnels to access key areas and to drill unexplored portions of the mineral deposit, said Taylor.

Canadian Zinc also received a two year-extension for a land use permit to use the existing road that connects the mine to Highway 7. The permit allows the company to do rehabilitation work on the portions of the road outside of the Nahanni National Park Reserve.

Applications to the board for a land use permit and water licence to realign sections of

the road and operate the road portions outside of the park have entered the review phase.

The company has also made similar applications to Parks Canada both to rehabilitate the existing road and to realign sections and operate the road. Approximately 80 km of the 170-km road are inside of the park.

The company has also received an update about the

Class A water licence and related land use permits it needs for the operation of the mine. The board has issued a work plan that includes holding a public hearing in November and issuing a draft water licence in late December, said Taylor.

"We think it's a pretty reasonable timeline," he said.

Taylor said Canadian Zinc is in favour of working to meet the schedule.



ETANDA HARDISTY-BEAVERHO

SPORTS CARD IN-LINE SKATING

AGE: 9

Fort Simpson

Etanda has been in-line skating for two years. It's not hard to do, she said. "It's like skating on ice." Etanda said she likes playing games on in-line skates and just skating around.

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