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Metal Leaching and Acid Rock Drainage Prediction, Prevention and Mitigation at the Brucejack Gold Mine

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Brucejack Mine *Located in Northwest BC*



Mine Site Surface Layout



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Receiving Environment



ARD Potential

- Volcanic arc-related epithermal vein deposit
- Large gossan
- Low pH observed seasonally in local creeks
- ABA analysis from previous operator indicated waste rock was PAG (MEND, 2005)



ARD Prevention & Mitigation

- Metal Leaching/ Acid Rock Drainage Management Plan
 - Water Quality model developed to predict effects
 - Minimize bedrock disturbance
 - Confirm and document geochemical assumptions
 - Triggers for further investigation



ARD Prevention

- PRETIVM
- Mine designed and constructed to prevent/minimize ARD generation
 - Core infrastructure platforms ~30 ha.
- Management strategies
 - Minimize surface excavation
 - No PAG rock permitted for use in surface construction
 - Place all waste rock under permanent water cover



Waste Rock Deposition

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Waste Rock Deposition





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Contact Water Management



ARD Mitigation



- Water Treatment Plant
 - Designed to treat maximum predicted concentrations
 - Designed to removed TSS and targeted metals and adjust pH
 - Will operate as long as necessary to mitigate impact of ARD from underground workings and surface disturbance



Ongoing Characterization



 Water quality model developed from preliminary data

- Updates required every five years
- Includes a variety of data sources from each lithology:
 - Static testing (> 500 samples)
 - Humidity cells (46)
 - Saturated columns (15)
 - Field Bins (14)
 - Wall washing stations (5)
- ML/ ARD Mgmt Plan identifies triggers for additional investigation or review of model

Ongoing Characterization Underground Waste Rock Static Test Results

NPR

100 **S**3 Fragmental VSF 10 PAG PAG PAG 0.1 0.01 0.001 0 50 150 200 250 50 100 150 200 0 50 200 250 300 300 0 250 100 150 100 NP (kg CaCO₃/t) NP (kg CaCO₃/t) NP (kg CaCO₃/t)

- Conglomerate (S3) Heterolithic boulder to coarse cobble conglomerate with sandstone
- Fragmental (V12) Hornblende and/ or feldspar phyric latite to andesite fragmental volcanic rocks and subordinate flows with minor ash and lapilli tuff
- Volcanic Sedimentary Facies (VSF) Volcanically derived siltstone and sandstone with minor arenite and pebble conglomerate

Ongoing Characterization *Humidity Cell Tests*



Geochemical Assessment of Impact

Geological Model Unit	Relative % of Underground Waste Rock	HCT Time Until CaNP Depletion (years)		Field	Field Bin Time Until CaNP
		Base Case	Upper Case	עו חום	Depletion (years)
Volcanic Sedimentary Facies (VSF)	52.1	258	61	FB-2	1431
				FB-4	2337
Fragmental	22.0	127	3	FB-5	776
				FB-6	207
				FB-7	1112
Conglomerate (S3)	16.4	144	12	FB-8	376
Bridge P1	5.2	792	343	FB-3	4539

- Calculated NP depletion times are >> 2 years
- Loads accumulated during the first 2 years of exposure, based on lithology-specific field bin data and estimated exposed volumes were incorporated into the water quality model
- Loads associated with exposed waste rock are insignificant and result in insignificant change to lake water quality (e.g., a change of < 0.4 mg/L SO4, < 1ng/L As, < 1ng/L Zn)

Ongoing Studies

- Kinetic tests ongoing
 - Behaviour of waste in lake and UG mine
 - Behaviour following flooding
- Wall Washing
 - Evolution of mine wall geochemistry
 - Planning for closure
- Results used to refine site WQ model





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Questions

References

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