© Circum-Pacific Council for Energy and Mineral Resources 2009 – Transactions
of the Third Circum-Pacific Energy and Mineral Resources Conference, 1982.

Abstracts of Additional Hard Mineral Session Papers

Mineral Resource Expansion in British Columbia

A. Sutherland Brown
J. Gilert McArthur
Geological Branch, Mineral Resources
Division Ministry of Energy
Mineral and Petroleum Resources
Victoria, British Columbia, Canada

Starting in 1980, British Columbia embarked on a decade of major growth in its mineral industry that is based on expansion of existing mines, development of established reserves, further investigation of known prospects, and widespread grass roots exploration. Production valued at less than $2 billion in 1980 is expected to double before the end of the decade. The evolution of the Cordillera provided a uniquely fertile environment for the formation of mineral deposits. An extensive terrace wedge on the margin of the craton and a growing collage of allochthonous terranes have been repeatedly activated by a sequence of collision, fault translation, and subduction. The result has been a great diversity of deposit types, found in a wide variety of tectonic settings from the Insular Belt to the Rocky Mountains. In the last few years it has become evident that favorable terranes for massive sulfides, porphyry, and shale-hosted lead-zinc deposits are much more extensive than originally believed. Current search concentrates on precious metal deposits or base metal deposits with significant by-product gold and silver. An array of deposit types for the latter is now recognized, including at least four types of bulk gold-silver deposits as well as a variety of vein types. Interest in the search for strategic minerals, not previously mined in the Canadian Cordillera, is also increasing.