

## Global Warming Uncovers Biggest Canadian Gold Deposit

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Miners could not even see Canada's biggest gold deposit until "glacier receded" and uncovered what lay beneath, according to one mining executive with operations in northern British Columbia.

Rudi Fronk, CEO of gold explorer Seabridge Gold, told Kitco News that the company acquired the KSM project back in June 2000 from Placer Dome that had spent approximately \$25 million at KSM, focusing on the Kerr and Suphurets deposits that were visible from the surface.

But, one area the previous owner ignored was the Mitchell Zone, as it was covered by a glacier when Placer conducted its activities.

"Since Placer Dome worked at KSM, the Mitchell glacier has retreated by almost 3 km, exposing the Mitchell deposit, and allowing us to ascertain what's there," Fronk said in a phone interview on Tuesday.

Even though global warming is not the most popular topic within the mining industry, it is opening up doors for some miners in remote northern locations, not accessible before.

"There's no question that as glaciers retreat, more ground will become available for exploration and more discoveries could be made in that part of the world," said Fronk. "It is a possibility that we might see more of such deposits as Mitchell."

A preliminary feasibility study of the KSM project conducted in November 2016 showed that the site contained 39 million ounces of gold and 10 billion pounds of copper, with a mine life of more than 50 years. The Mitchell deposit accounts for 27.5 million ounces of KSM's gold reserves and 5.1 billion pounds of copper.

The company plans to first mine the Mitchell deposit as an open-pit mine and then go underground. Seabridge Gold already has the permits to start mining, but is looking for a major mining company to join the venture as a partner. "We intend to partner with large and skilled operator," said Fronk.

Another example of a similar discovery made possible due to warming weather conditions is the company's Iron Cap deposit, which is located near the Mitchell deposit. "In fact we believe that the Iron Cap deposit at KSM could eventually match Mitchell in size." The site has revealed positive results once Seabridge was able to drill through the ice.

"Four of the five holes have long intercepts with gold grades above one gram per tonne," according to a press release published in September. "Hole IC-17-65 returns 422 meters grading 1.04 g/T Gold and 0.32% Copper. Hole IC-17-66 returns 64 meters grading 4.77 g/T Gold. Exceptional gold/copper values could accelerate plans for Iron Cap block cave."

However, it is also important to remember that global warming could have adverse effects on the mining industry as well. For example, Newmont Mining has said in the past that higher temperatures contribute to rising sea levels, which can impact operations in a negative way.

"Newmont has two port facilities where we ship concentrate product from our operations in Indonesia and Western Australia. These facilities could be impacted by long-term (>100 years) rising sea levels; however, the range of currently estimated short-term rise in sea levels suggest that neither facility would be impacted within the current lifespan of the projects (<20 years)," the company said in March 2017.