YUKON TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENT EXPLORATION INCENTIVES PROGRAM PROJECT # 93 - 030

# PLACER PROSPECTING IN THE STEWART RIVER AREA

June 16 - November 1, 1993

TRANSVERSE MERCATOR PROJECTION CO-ORDINATES 137°30' longitude - 63°30' latitude (approx.) PLACER CLAIM SHEET 115P-12 & adjacent

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#### 1. Introduction

The focus of this prospecting project was to perform a preliminary evaluation of the thawed gravel deposits in the Stewart River drainage between the Stewart Crossing bridge and downstream of Clear Creek. I also prospected up Moose Creek and Clear Creek.

#### 2. Geology

These creeks are all similar in that they cut through the Tintina Trench. The gravel deposits of the Tintina Trench are known to be auriferous, although paying gravels have not been extensive. Some people believe that the bar deposits on the Stewart River were formed by the action of the river cutting through the gravels of the Tintina Trench. In R. G. McConnel's 1903 report "Report on the Klondike Gold Fields" he says that,

"The wide depression between the Klondike hills and the Ogilvie range is covered with alternating beds of silts, sands, clays and gravels, for which the name of Flat Creek beds is proposed.....The Flat Creek beds have been partially destroyed by streams flowing from the Ogilvie range, and are carved into a series of flattopped plateaux often lined with low terraces....The gravels are well rounded and consist of slates, cherts, quartzites, diabases, and granites occurring in the Ogilvie range. There are auriferous in places but no pay values have so far been found in them."

In his 1900 report, "Exploration of the Tintina Valley from the Klondike to Stewart River", McConnel states:

"The gold on the Stewart River bars is fine, and there is every reason to believe that it has been concentrated from the high gravel and sand banks described above..."

#### 3. Rationale

Because the creeks cut through these massive gravel deposits which carry a low concentration of placer gold, I thought that gold would be concentrated in their valley bottoms.

These creeks, which cut through the Flat Creek beds, are thawed and the water table is high. For this reason they would make good dredging deposits. Each of these creeks contains millions of yards of gravel, so that any one of them could support large scale development. Because floater dredging is so cost efficient, a low grade deposit could be worked profitably. All of the area has been staked with placer claims or leases in past years but there is a substantial amount of ground open on them now.

#### 4. Work Description

The prospecting which I carried out consisted of taking gravel samples and processing them on location using a gold pan. The samples were all approximately one shovel-full or, on average, 7 pounds. I also collected some samples in a 2 1/2 gallon pail and panned them down. These samples were approximately 50 lb. in weight and are identified with an \* in the tables of results. I did not attempt any kind of grade analysis of the gravel which I sampled because I did not feel that I had enough information. My objective was to establish gold presence in these Flat Creek beds over a wide geographical area with the intention of performing more detailed exploration work in promising areas identified by this prospecting.

#### 5. Areas Investigated and Results Obtained

I have broken down my prospecting work on a drainage basis. The following information is discussed: the best panning results obtained, the general tenor of the pans, a brief discussion of the geography of the area, and a preliminary impression as to the viability of the ground.

#### 5.1 Moose Creek

I began the prospecting project by doing a cursory evaluation of Moose Creek. I took pans up the creek for a distance of approximately three miles. The results are tabulated in Table 1, and my field observations are noted in Days 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 12 in my field book. Sample locations are plotted on Maps 1a and 1b.

I found traces of gold in approximately half of the samples which I panned. The best pan which I obtained had 4 colours and most of the pans which contained gold had 1 or 2 colours.

The amount of gold which I obtained was less than I had hoped. Undoubtedly there would be a greater concentration of gold in the lower depths of gravel and on bedrock. Heavy equipment or drilling is required to determine whether there is a viable prospect here.

The ground which I examined in the Moose Creek valley would be excellent dredging ground provided depth to bedrock is not excessive and sufficient gold values are obtained by more detailed evaluation work. The valley is wide, approximately 2,000 feet in the lower reaches and narrowing to approximately 1,000 feet further up the creek. There is very little overburden covering the gravel. The most overburden that I observed was 3 feet, and in many places it was less than a foot.

#### 5.2 Stewart River near Stewart Crossing

I spent 7 days evaluating ground around the Stewart Crossing area. This area attracted my attention because there are some large bars and islands immediately upstream and downstream of the bridge. The results of the sampling which I did are outlined in Table 2 and detailed observations from my field notes are recorded on Days 8, 9, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18. Sample locations are plotted on Map 1c.

The best sample which I obtained contained 17 colours. Many of the pans had 10 to 12 colours and most of the pans contained gold particles.

This ground looks promising from the surface samples which I took. However, while the surface showings were encouraging, it would have to be ascertained whether this is surficial bar gold or whether the values extend deeper.

This area of the Stewart contains tens of millions of yards of gravel and access has already been established. It is ideal dredging ground with little overburden on the banks of the river and on the islands in the river, and no overburden in the back channels and bars. It is doubtful that bedrock would be reached with a dredging operation, however if the values were sufficient in the upper gravels, it would still pay to work this area. Further evaluation using heavy equipment would determine the viability of the deposit.

#### 5.3 Stewart River near McQueston Airstrip

I spent 10 days evaluating gravel around the McQueston Airstrip in the Steamboat and Chapman Bar areas, and around the mouth of Clear Creek. Results of the samples which I took are outlined in Table 3 and detailed observations from my field notes are recorded on Days 10, 11, 13, 19, 20, 21, 27, 28, 29, and 30. Sample locations are plotted on Map 1.

The best sample which I took had over 150 colours in it. Several pans contained over 100 colours, and most of the pans contained gold. All the gold was fine; however in the better pans there were some good sized flakes which could be heard when dropped into a pan.

Some of the surface samples which I obtained were exceptional, but this area is

well known for its bar deposits, and testing over a significant depth would have to be undertaken in order to determine the viability for dredging. Bedrock could probably not be reached, as it is reported to be 75 to 100 feet below the gravel surface. If a section of 20 to 30 feet of the gravel proved viable, mining could be undertaken.

Access in the area is good with a trail extending upstream from the airstrip several miles and a heavy equipment access trail, which is swampy in places and not suitable for vehicular traffic, extending downstream to Independence Creek. Overburden in the bank ground is up to 8 feet deep in some places, but there are many islands, bars, and back channels which have very little overburden.

#### 5.4 Klondike River

I did some sampling on 2 bars on the Klondike River, upstream of Hunker Creek. It has been said that the Klondike is not auriferous above Hunker Creek, and I wanted to determine whether this is true.

The theory of gold not being deposited in paying quantities above Hunker Creek appears to be valid from my cursory sampling. The best pan on the two bars which I sampled had two microscopic specks of gold. I did not find anything worth pursuing with this work. The results of my field observations are recorded on **Days 22 and 23** of my journal. The results of pans which I took are tabulated in **Table 4**. The bars where I took samples are plotted on **Map 3**.

#### 5.5 Clear Creek

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I spent some time examining ground in the lower Clear Creek area. There is a good access trail, from the Clear Creek bridge on the highway, which parallels the creek for approximately 7 miles upstream. There is evidence of former prospecting work over the length of the creek which I traversed. There are several prospecting cuts which have been excavated with heavy equipment. The results of my findings are tabulated on Table 5, and my field observations are recorded on Days 24 and 25. The sample locations are plotted on Map 1.

The best sample which I obtained was 4 colours, one of them a good sized flake, in a 7 lb. sample from a small gold pan. Most of the pans had some colours, although there was nothing exceptional.

The section of Clear Creek which I examined had some dredgeable ground, but there were also large areas which were locked in perma-frost. I didn't spend much time in this area because it didn't seem particulary suitable for dredging and the samples which I took were not noteworthy. The fact that there are a number of prospecting cuts made with heavy equipment and no subsequent mining undertaken, indicates that other miners may not have obtained viable results here either. The valley is extremely wide in this section of the creek, which would mean that the pay is not concentrated. Access is very good into the area. The road could be fixed up with minimal cat work.

#### 5.6 Flat Creek

I spent a day in Flat Creek. I walked upstream from the highway and took some pans approximately 1 mile from the bridge. The results of this sampling are tabulated on **Table 6**, and my field observations are recorded on **Day 26** in my journal. The location of the samples which I took is plotted on **Map 3**.

I found that the ground was pretty well all frozen, except for the actual creek bed, and therefore not suitable for dredging. I didn't pursue my prospecting work for more than one day here. I found gold in all of my samples, although none of the samples had gold of any great significance, and one of the samples had only 3 colours in a 2 1/2 gallon pail. The best sample which I took contained 3 very fine colours in 7 pounds of gravel. This sample was taken out of cut bank in the creek channel.

#### 6. Conclusions and Recommendations

The prospecting work which I did in the Tintina trench gravels, as outlined in this report shows that these gravels contain placer gold. I found that there is a tremendous volume of this Tintina trench gravel that is thawed. Some of the areas showed promise for placer mining, although more detailed evaluation would obviously be necessary. My intent was to perform a cursory evaluation of this ground to confirm that it is auriferous to some extent and I believe that I accomplished my objective.

The work that I did in the creeks leads me to believe that the action of these creeks cutting through this Tintina Trench gravel may not have been great enough to provide a significant concentration of gold in the valleys. Possibly, testing to bedrock depth could prove otherwise. In the Stewart River basin, however, it appears that the river has had a significant concentrating influence. It can be seen that the river channel has moved around through-out the river valley over time. Because I found a concentration of gold in some areas, both on the bars and in the banks, and because the action of the water can be seen in

the valley, I think that the pay is distributed in rich shallow layers throughout the gravel sections. Further evaluation is definitely warranted. Because the Stewart is highly valued as salmon stream, it should first be ascertained whether dredging would be allowed on the bars, the dry channels, the islands, and the river-bank ground adjacent to the water-course.

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. Tal	ble 1	Tab	ie 2
Sample	Results	Sample	Results
MOOSE CREEK		STEWAR	T RIVER
		NEAR STEWA	RT CROSSING
Sample #	# of Colours		
1.1	2 fine	Sample #	# of Colours
1.2	0	8.1	3 fine
1.3	0	8.2	0
		8.3	7 (2 flakes)
2.1	1 fine	8.4	3
2.2	1 fine	8.5	11
2.3	2 fine		
2.4	0	9.1	7 very fine
		9.2	3
3.1	2 fine	9.3	4 (1 flake)
3.2	0		
3.3	0	14.1	3 fine
		14.2	4 very fine
4.1	0	14.3	0
4.2	1 very small	14.4	4 (1 flake)
4.3	0	14.5	11 fine
4.4	0	15.1	13 (2 flakes)
		15.2	9 (2 flakes)
5.1	0	15.3	11 very fine
5.2	0	15.4	1 flake
5.3	2 very fine	15.5	3 very fine
5.4	3 (1 Irge flake)		
		16.1	3 very fine
6.1	2 very fine	16.2	2 fine
6.2	4 fine	16.3	0
6.3	0	16.4	6 (2 flakes)
		16.5	9 fine
7.1	2 small	16.6	3 fine
7.2	0		
7.3	0	17.1	3
		17.2	7 (2 flakes)
12.1	2 fine	17.3	6 fine colours
12.2	8 fine	17.4	4 colours
		17.5	13
		17.6	10 (1 flake)
		17.7	0
	1		

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Table 2- Sample STEWA NEAR STEW	- continued e Results ART RIVER ART CROSSING	Table 3 – Sample STEWAR NEAR McQUES	continued Results FRIVER FON AIRSTRIP
Sample #	# of Colours	Sample #	# of Colours
18.1	2	21.1	100+
18.2	0	21.2	150+
18.3	17 (2 flakes)	21.3	100+
18.4	0		
18.5	0	27.1	7
18.6	2 very fine	27.2	6
18.7	0	27.3	4
Та	ıble 3	28.1	2 fine
Sampl	e Results	28.2	3 fine
STEWA	ART RIVER	28.3*	19 fine
NEAR MCQUE	STON AIRSTRIP	28.4	0
		28.5	9 (2 flakes)
Sample #	# of Colours	28.6	3 fine
10.1	150+, big flakes	28.7	2 fine
10.2	150+, big flakes		
10.3	100+	29.1	0
		29.2	3 fine
13.1	150+. big flakes	29.3	2 fine
13.2	150+, big flakes	29.4	3 flaky
		29.5	0
19.1	6	29.6	0
19.2	9 (3 flakes)	29.7*	5
19.3	7		
19.4	14 (3 flakes)	30.1	2 fine
19.5	3 fine	30.2	1 fine
		30.3	0
20.1	7	30.4	4 fine
20.2	6	30.5	11 (2 flakes)
20.3	2	30.6	0
20.4	6 (flake)	2	<u> </u>
20.5	11 (4 flakes)		
20.6	2 very fine		
20.7	1 very fine		

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Table 4		
Sample Results		
KLONDIKE RIVER		
Sample #	# of Colours	
22.1	0	
22.2	0	
22.3	1	
22.4	0	
22.5	0	
22.6	2 very fine	
22.7	0	
23.1	0	
23.2	0	
23.3	0	
23.4	0	
23.5	0	
23.6	0	
23.7	1 very fine	

## Table 6 Sample Results FLAT CREEK

Sample #	# of Colours
26.1	2 fine
26.2	1
26.3	3 very fine
26.4*	11 fine
26.5*	3

# Table 5Sample ResultsCLEAR CREEK

Sample #	# of Colours
25.1	2 very fine
25.2	0
25.3	4
25.4*	9 (2 flakes)
25.5	2 fine
25.6	0

\* indicates 50 lb. sample (all other samples were approx. 7 lb. or 1 small gold pan full)















Sampling Bar Gravel on the Stewart River



View of the Massive Bar Deposits Built Up in the Stewart River Channel



FLGE 16

Sampling Bar Gravel on the Klondike River



Typical Tintina Trench Gravels This bank is approx. 100 ft. high.



Gravel Outcrop on Moose Creek

MAPI MODELE CREEK Ju -16,1993 1000 GEWEL COTOROP NOTE CK. 4. SANADE 4.1 R1H5 3.0 4. of Da - araw 51 52 ase. 53 31,323.3 2 fine colours 2.1, 22, 2.3, 2,4 30 . 2 higher goon are eturnoff O dolours. no hearing. 12-1,12.2 1.3 on cocele bay aportox ne HWA colours. Ô

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G JUNE 23 MODE CK DAY 5 L "up creck apprex 1. 1 on gravel bar Somp# Surface U black son ALLE PM ained colorers. 6.7 ken 1 ft Journ 7. . bar at water evel he boarre 62 WOSK CERCE 3 rolesulth X bain below much · 2 very fine colours, Wasseret at contact een green funck Bedaus. Come lo frake)

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AGE 2

81,82,83,8485 JULY 4 STEWART ENER DAY SV dewart crossing on bars, STEAM RIVER 32 SAMP# 1. Sunall particle 716. -3 fine colours, 35 X 2. qual par BRIDE KLAND - O colour 3. out of bank CHS TATION ) cours Q 2 fintes mit at man an La colour?. 5. on interest botween - 11 colorits 1

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STEWARTER DAY 9. - AUG 15 STEWART RIVER. DAY 10 Went downtwer with Bart samp 1col Bruce Mckennon off surtenes have lookat bars, ustadado Samot count little verifine 10.1 approx 5 miles du Streau of airport. 92 off CUN tringe wasan -15)+ colours. nde good give flates. colour lots of black same 93 150 COLOUR 0.2 c. of with the second good sue Alakes. -4 colours 10.3. - 100+ colorer flake

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