



## Abens boots hammers smoke and fire

*As a general rule, the most successful man in life is the man who has the best information*

Where there's smoke there's fire. This saying is a great way to explain the fortunate situation Aben Resources (TSX.V:ABN) finds itself in, snow cover has receded in northwestern BC and the company is launching its 2018 exploration season.

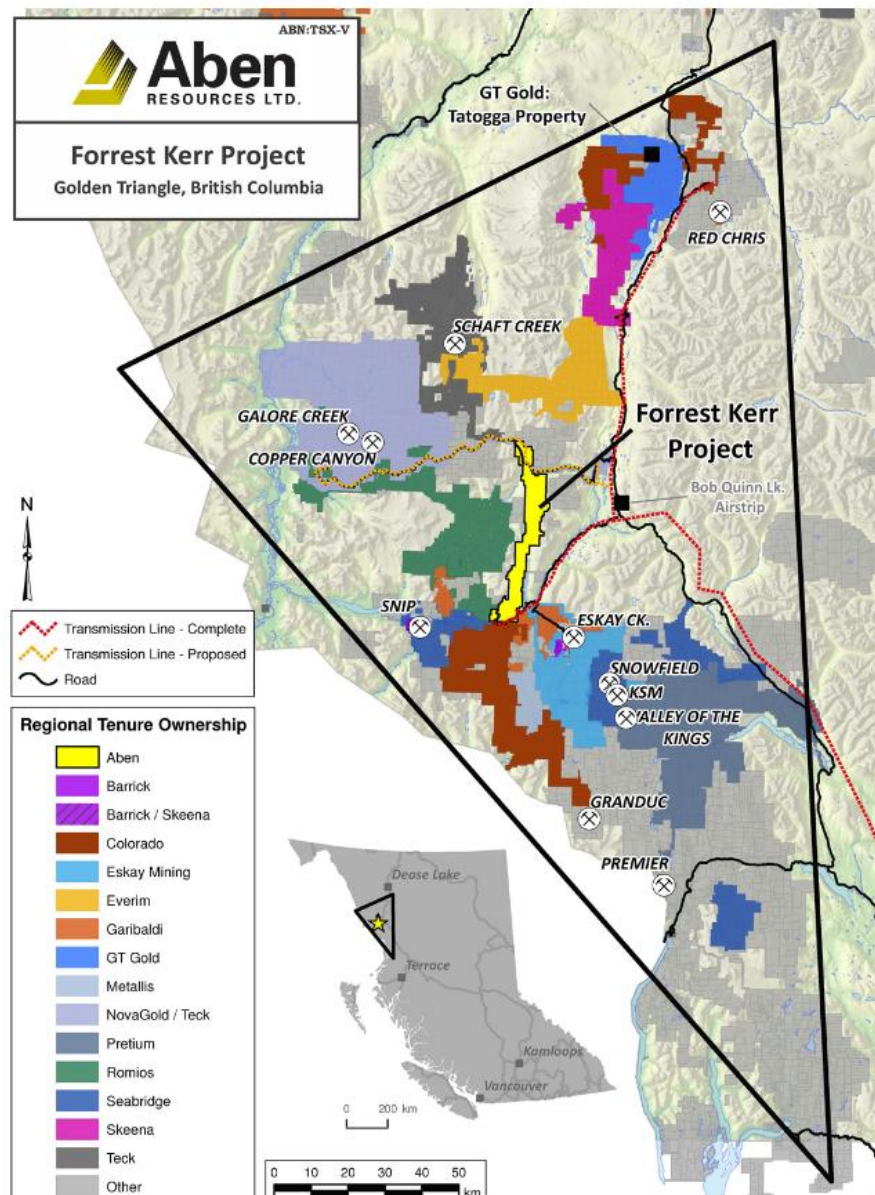


Shares Outstanding: 79,280,051

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Aben is operating amid one of the hottest area plays in Canada right now, the Golden Triangle. For a deep dive into the Golden Triangle, read our recent article, [Golden Triangle's Red Line](#), which not only gives a concise history of the area play, but explains a fascinating new geological theory that is driving a lot of explorers to the area along with investor excitement.

In 2017 the Golden Triangle witnessed some notable success stories. Garibaldi Resources (TSXV:GGI) intersected two long intervals of nickel-copper sulfide mineralization in its first hole, impressing investors who saw the prospect of a major base metal mine.



Other hits in the Triangle in 2017:

- Colorado Resources (TSXV:CXO) assayed 4,770 grams per tonne gold over half a meter at its KSP project.
- GT Gold (TSXV:GTT) made a gold-silver discovery at its Saddle prospect: a high-grade epithermal gold-silver vein system; and a copper-gold-silver mineralized porphyritic intrusive it believes to be "the engine" for the system. Intercepts in multiple holes included 13.03 g/t Au over 10.67m.

Of course, 2017 was also the year that Pretium Resources (TSX:PVG) put its Brucejack underground gold-silver mine into production. Most observers point to Pretium's discovery of the Valley of the Kings high-grade gold and silver deposit in 2013 as the catalyst that ignited interest in the Golden Triangle.

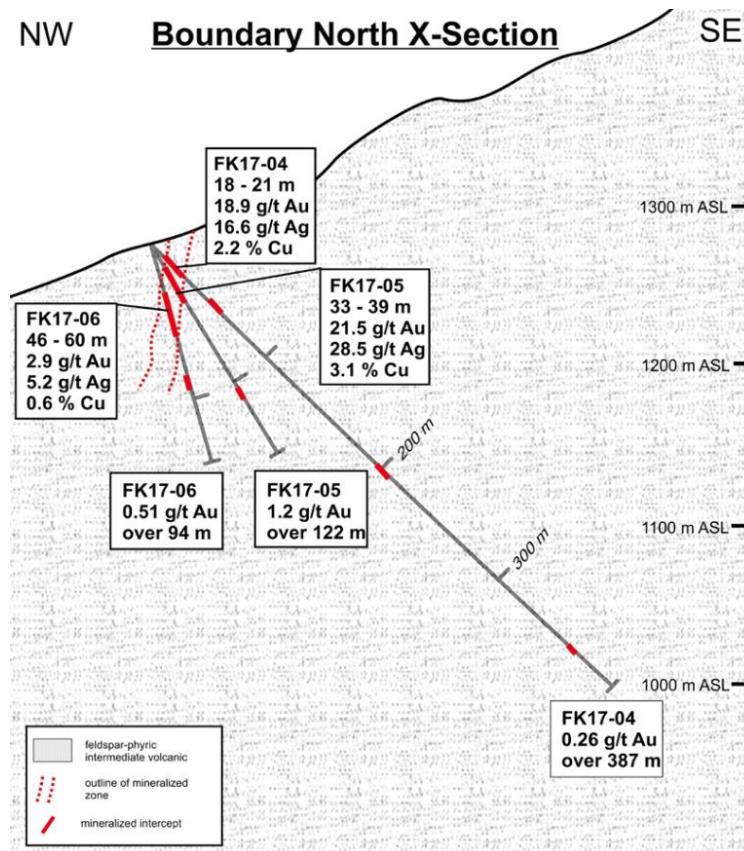
## **Forrest Kerr**

Aben has three separate projects on the go, including Forrest Kerr in the Golden Triangle, located between the Snip and Eskay Creek mines and south of the Schaft Creek mine. Recent discoveries by Colorado Resources (KSP) and GT Gold (Tatogga) are close by. The other two development projects it has underway are the Chico Gold Project in Saskatchewan and the Justin Gold Project in the Yukon.

When Aben Resources acquired the Forrest Kerr set of properties they came with a significant amount of exploration - 120 holes and about 20,000 soil samples. Highlights of historical drilling included the Carcass Creek hole which returned 9.87 g/t gold over 29 meters and the Forrest Creek hole with 2.28 g/t, 0.3% copper and 6.3 g/t silver over 28 meters. The most promising intersection was in the Boundary Zone hole which returned 33.4 g/t gold over 11 meters including 326 g/t gold over 0.45 meters.

However the high grades were not followed up on due to high drilling costs, limited accessibility, and glacier coverage in the Golden Triangle. Recent glacial recession and significant improvements to infrastructure - construction of the 335-km Northwest Transmission Line, AltaGas' Forrest Kerr, the largest run-of-river project in the province and an engineering marvel - three run of the river projects that contribute 77 MW of electricity to the provincial grid via the Northwest Transmission line and the paving of the Stewart-Cassiar highway north from Hazelton - have lowered exploration costs and made the project more accessible. A 250-man camp, on the southern end of ABN's Forrest Kerr Project, owned by AltaGas serves as a base and staging ground for operations. The property is accessible by road and has an existing power line and hydroelectric facilities on the southern part of the property.

## Smoke and fire

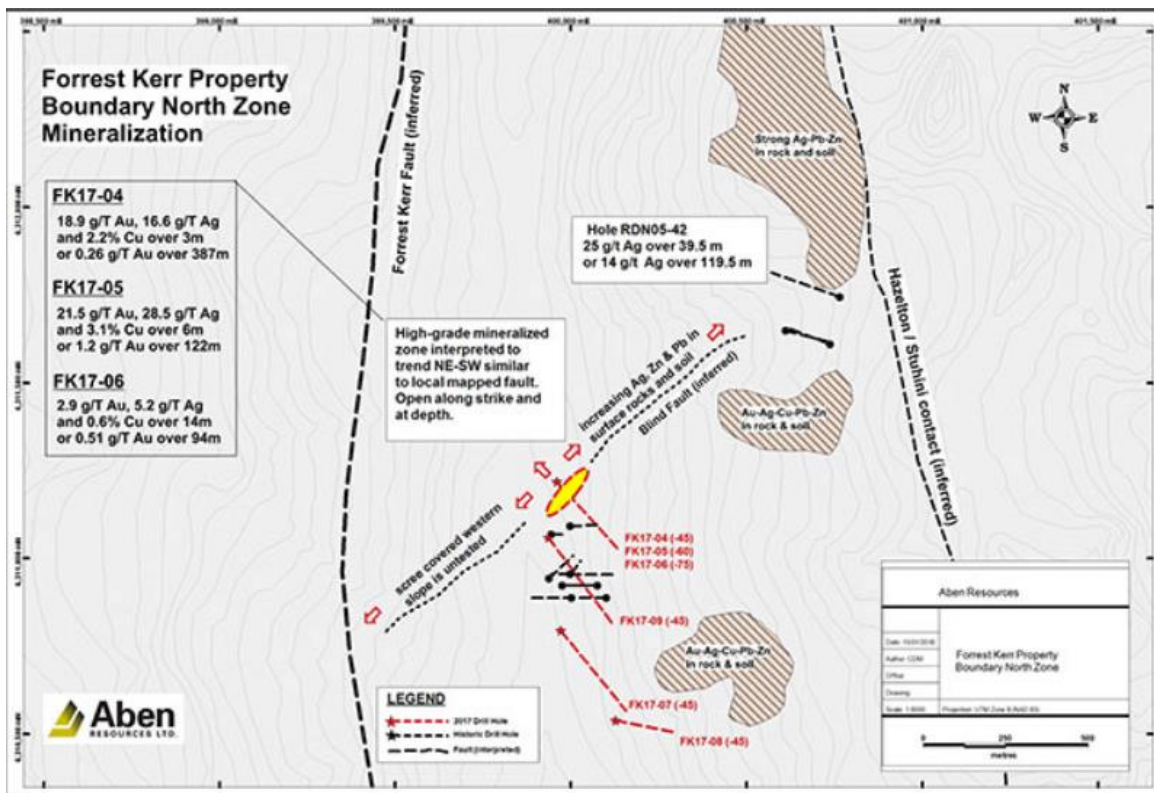


Last summer at Forrest Kerr, three separate drill holes, collared from the same drill pad and drilled in a fan pattern of 45, 65 and 75 degree dip, pierced a near-surface high-grade zone of gold-silver-copper mineralization, in addition to broad intercepts containing gold-bearing quartz veins.

The results from those holes, at the newly discovered Boundary North Zone, included 6.7 grams per tonne gold, 6.4 g/t silver and 0.9% copper over 10 meters, including 18.9 g/t gold, 16.6 g/t silver and 2.2% copper over 3.0 meters in Hole FK17-04, which combined for an average grade of 0.26 g/t gold over 387 meters.

Out of the nine-hole program, the best hit was in Hole FK17-05, which assayed at 21.5 grams per tonne gold, 28.5 g/t silver and 3.1% copper over 6 meters. The hole, drilled to a slighter greater depth, was within a broader zone of

mineralization of 122m containing 1.2 g/t.



The goal of this year's 5,000m diamond drill program is to expand the mineralization at the Boundary North Zone. According to Aben, this part of the Forrest Kerr property hosts gold-silver-copper in rock and soil anomalies that span over 2 km by 4 km and remain relatively under-explored. The zone's mineralization remains open in multiple directions with numerous soil geochemical anomalies and geophysical targets yet to be drill-tested.

An important point about Aben is that while it's early days as far as exploration, the company has already achieved tremendous success in drilling three discovery holes last summer. Due to the Golden Triangle's climate and geography (mountainous with plenty of snow), explorers have a short exploration season. Last year Aben only had about a month to explore the property with "boots on the ground" taking soil and rock samples, and then just a month of drilling. So the results are remarkable considering the limited amount of time on the property. It also indicates the possibility of a large mineralized system,



considering only nine holes brought back three winners.

## **Boots and hammer**

The challenge for a geologist tackling such a large property, 23,000 hectares, is knowing where to start. According to Aben's VP Exploration, Cornell McDowell, you go to where the known mineralization and mapped structures are. McDowell said he liked the Boundary Zone because it was under-explored and had some good soil sample data. Knowing from the historical discovery hole that the mineralization was trending northeast, southwest, he designed the drill holes to cut across as many of those zones as possible at right angles.

In an interview with Ahead of the Herd, McDowell explains:

*"The first three holes at Boundary, which are four, five, and six in the same pattern, that's about as far north in that zone where there is actual outcrop. There was some good gold numbers from one of the outcrops there. We looked at it. We saw the vein, we saw what we liked, we took a sample, and it was proven that there was mineralization there. So that was the most northerly path and, of course, we hit on the first one. So we steepened the dip on five and six in the same setup, and we were able to drill through that zone with all three. So that was the thinking there. It's ground-based direct observation, what you see with the boots and hammer essentially. I didn't want to focus on a small blip of the area. We have large soil anomalies there, gold and copper and silver, so we cut across a little bit of that and we still have a whole lot of gold and soil anomalies and rock to look at in the Boundary Zone yet."*

The point here is it was old-fashioned picking and turning over rocks that led to a successful drill program - a good lesson for gold explorers that while "the truth machine" (drill) reveals all, in-the-field exploration goes a long way too.

Another thing to note about Aben, in our discussion with Cornell McDowell, is the company is not wedded to one particular model. As mentioned at the top, where

there's smoke there's usually fire, but as to the method of finding that fire, and what the fire actually is, Aben is flexible. They intend to take a systematic approach to defining the type and degree of mineralization that is present at Forrest Kerr. As we shall see below, the type of deposit Aben has, has yet to be outlined, but the approach in finding out is systematic. It starts with a review of the historical data, to get familiar with the soil, the rocks, and the points of geological contact, and then you're into a field-study program of reconnaissance: collecting rock and soil samples, comparing those to the prevailing model of mineralization, and then using the drills to confirm that theory or look into other possibilities.

## **The theory**

So what kind of mineralization is Aben chasing at Forrest Kerr? According to McDowell, there is a large hydrothermal system with alterations of quartz, sericite and pyrite spread over several kilometers. The gold and silver mineralization is often associated with high-grade copper over the tested intervals but has not had a distinctly epithermal (near-surface) nor mesothermal (deeper) geochemical signature, nor does it display typical porphyry deposit characteristics. The observed alteration and mineralization is difficult to pigeonhole into a distinct type at this time so the Aben geologists will continue to analyze what comes out of the ground closely.

*"I call it intrusion-related because there is widespread hydrothermal alteration with both volcanic and plutonic rocks present that likely acted as drivers to the system. We know that what we've seen so far is likely fault controlled or structural controlled because it looks like a breccia zone in a shear system",* said McDowell.

The question still to be determined by the drills, is whether the veins are leading off from a buried intrusion or a porphyry, or even volcanogenic massive sulfide ore (VMS), which is the type of deposit that explorers were chasing in the Golden Triangle after the discovery of Eskay Creek in the late 1980s, which is VMS with a

high precious metal pattern, versus the high base metal content most VMS deposits have.

*"I know what we've seen is fault controlled so far, but the subsurface is full of surprises and you never know what the next drill hole pokes into. So we'll probably run a couple of holes a bit deeper than we normally would just to see, and it'll totally depend on what rock is coming out of the ground,"* said McDowell.

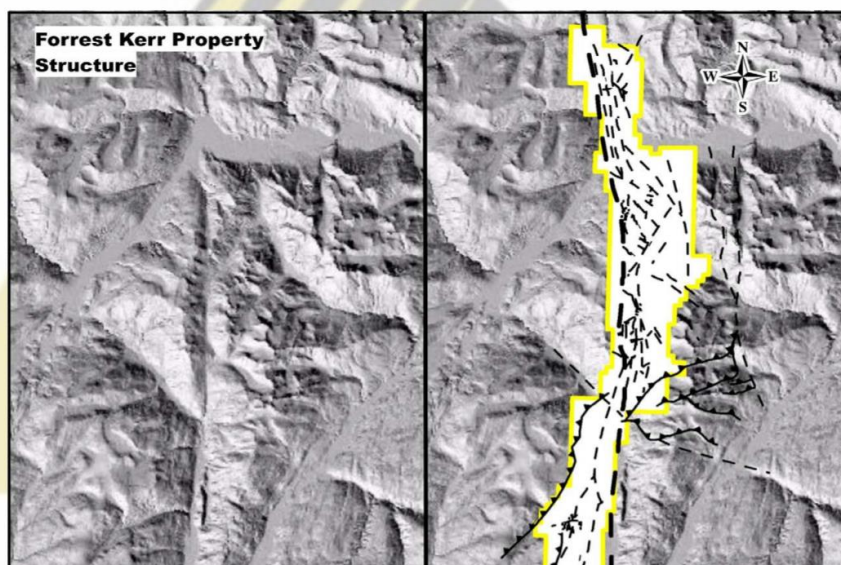
## The geology

When McDowell says "fault controlled", he's referring to the Kerr fault. Aben was originally interested in the Forrest Kerr project because of the fault, it's a large structural feature that the company theorizes may be a significant gold source for the Golden Triangle. Aben's 50-kilometer-long property runs along the fault, which acts as a major geological "engine" for the whole region, giving Aben tremendous discovery upside due to the amount of geological activity in the area.

### Forrest Kerr Property

#### Structural Complex

- Forrest Kerr Fault Zone transects the entire property
- Regionally extensive north trending sub-vertical fault with conjugate sets of steep NE & NW trending faults
- Long lived crustal break. Related to Mess Creek to the north and Harrymel/South Unuk Fault Zones? Active from Jurassic with significant movement into the Tertiary

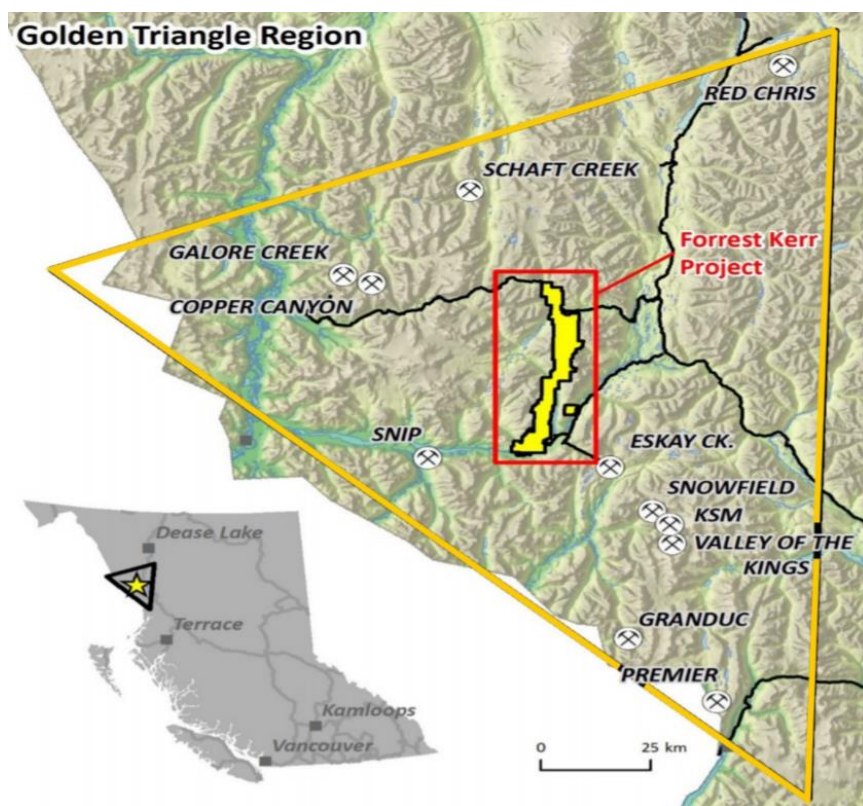


The fact that the Kerr fault - a 40-km-long trend - transects Forrest Kerr is important, because it divides the Mesozoic stratigraphy (rock layers) to the east from the older Paleozoic stratigraphy to the west. The fault acts as a conduit to conduct the hydrothermal fluids that are generated with volcanic activity.



*"What we have is a lot of intrusives centered along the margins of this fault. So we know that it's been active prior to this large movement in the Tertiary period. This is important because what we have is a crustal weakness that is localized volcanic activity throughout time," McDowell explained.*

Aben is looking for "splays" that run off the Kerr fault, since these splays - which are like subsidiary faults that branch off the main fault - are known to host mineralization, sometimes with bonanza grades.



Taking a bird's eye view of the Golden Triangle, McDowell noted the area contains all the elements for discoveries, meaning:

- The right age of host rocks, which in the case of the Triangle, means Triassic Stuhini or Jurassic Hazelton.
- The second factor was early Jurassic intrusives, which are commonly linked to mineralization throughout the region.

- The chemical constituents to transport the fluids, which came about through volcanic activity when the region was an island arc - a curving series of volcanic islands that were created through the collision of tectonic plates.
- Fault systems, including the Kerr fault, which conduct the fluids.
- A fifth key factor is that the mineralization has been preserved close to surface, rather than ruptured and buried very deep underground.

While the geology of the Golden Triangle has been well known for decades, it took a new twist to get geologists back into the field. Jeff Kyba, a former geo with the BC government, theorized that geologic contact between Triassic-age Stuhini rocks and Jurassic-age Hazelton rocks is the key marker for copper-gold mineralization. That means most of the Golden Triangle's deposits are found within 2 kilometers of this contact zone, which Kyba and his team dubbed "The Red Line". His theory, published in a BC government paper, was significant because it was the first time anyone had tied the area's discoveries together with a structural explanation.

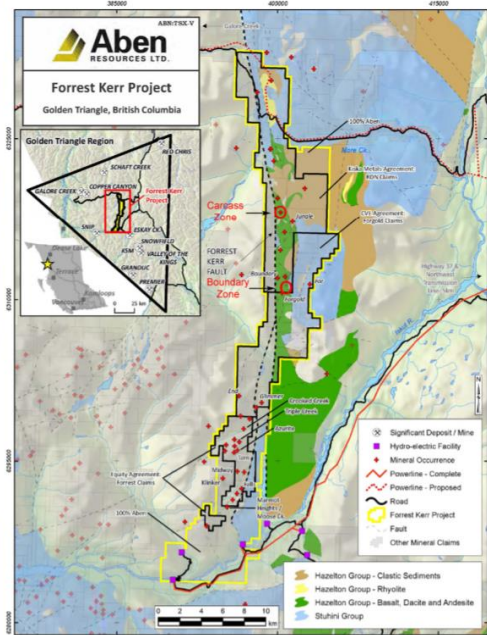
Data compilation study has been performed incorporating all historic data; regional scale approach to exploration and knowledge is now possible

- Priority targets established – led to last year success

According to recent geologic studies by BC Geological Survey personnel, there is striking evidence now available that may aid in the discovery process in the region. They conclude that most of the major deposits in the region occur within 2 km of the regional stratigraphic contact (the red line representing the Hazelton/Stuhini contact). They state, "if you are near that red line and there's a clastic sequence coupled with large-scale faults (Forrest Kerr), then you might be in the neighbourhood of BC's next big deposit, and knowing that is a big game changer for the explorers in the region, because it will get them closer to making a discovery

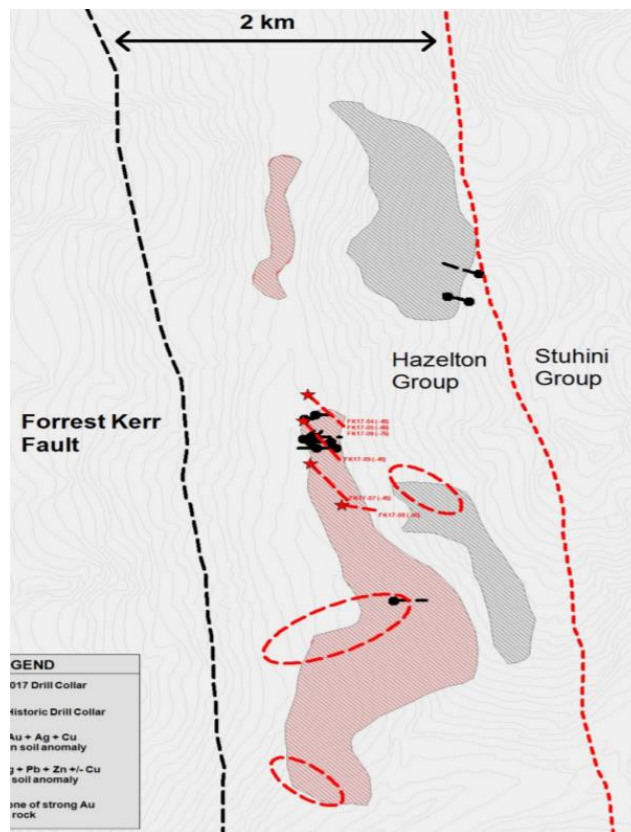
Going forward

- Expand on newly discovered Boundary Zone
- Test geochemical anomalies



McDowell said the Red Line isn't a target for Aben at this time, but it is a guide.

"In Forrest Kerr we have over 20 kilometers of that amount of contact on the property," said McDowell, noting 5 or 6 km are in the northern part of the property and show a slight epithermal soil signature. (epithermal gold veins tend to hold bonanza grades, such as the Comstock in Nevada and Cripple Creek in Colorado) The other 14 km is in the Boundary Zone, where Aben is concentrating its drill program this summer.



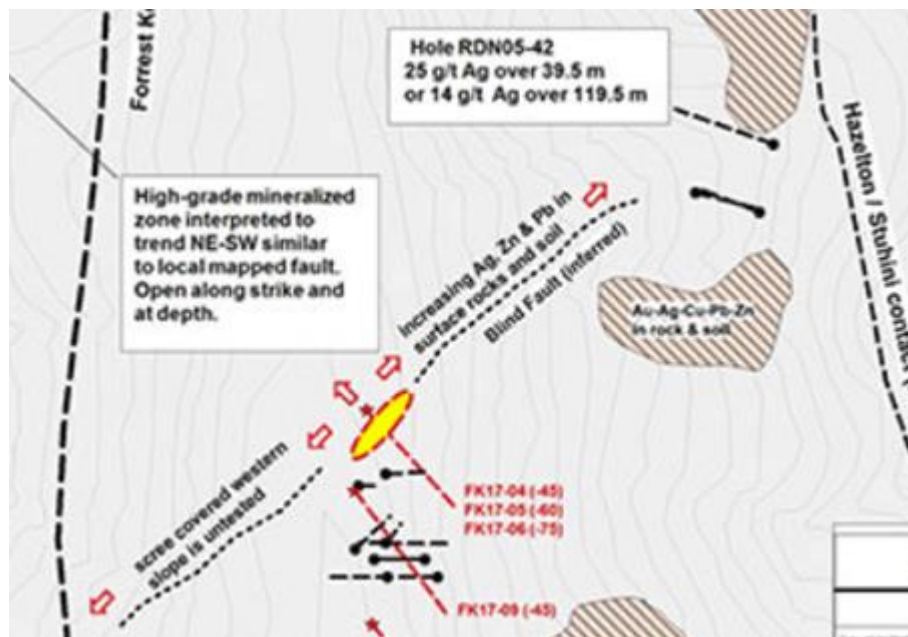
"There's a lot of geochemical signature along that contact or close to it that hasn't been drill tested on our property, something we certainly will look at," he said.

## Possibilities

As to what could come from this summer's drill program at Forrest Kerr, McDowell said he wants to concentrate on North Boundary, but is open to branching off into other parts of the property, particularly the relatively unexplored southern end.

The goal is to extend North Boundary, noticing that the surface outcrop with the quartz veining and good gold grades extend “uphill” to the northeast. Another intriguing possibility is whether a high-grade silver zone drilled in 2005 might meet up with the North Boundary Zone. It’s only one kilometer away.

*“They hit some good silver mineralization, such as about 25 grams per ton over 40 meters or 14 grams over 120 meters. Not much gold up there but to me, because it follows the trend of mineralization we had identified and it also follows a structure that they call the Blind fault, that interests me. So I want to try and tie the high-grade silver to the high-grade gold-silver property that we drilled,”* said McDowell.



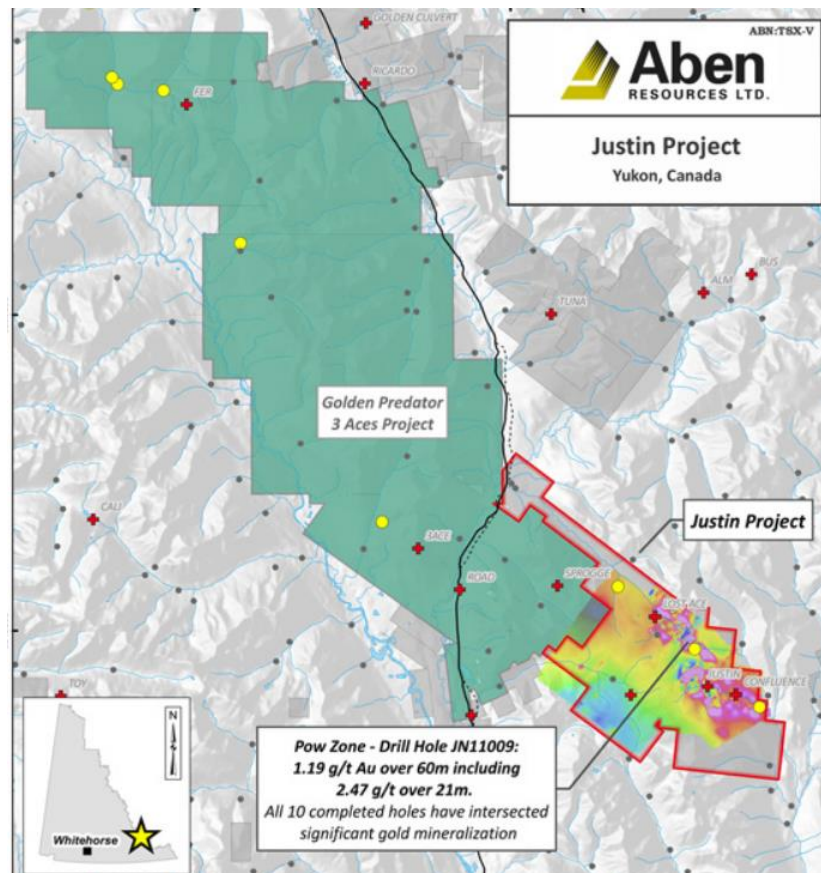
Going a bit beyond the beaten path, a third strategy could involve heading to the other side of the valley. Although the area is covered with scree ABN has some surface mineralization data from the west side but it is sparse as compared to the east side of the valley. No drilling and only limited field time has been spent on the west side, however McDowell says there are some decent rocks and grades. *“If we can tie some of those together then we can really start to look at the size of this thing,”* he said, emphasizing he wants to keep his options open, as far as where the drill, or drills, go.



*"I don't want to walk away from this year just having looked at one small area. Of course if [North Boundary] is well-mineralized and we're successful we certainly will concentrate right there and consider bringing in a second drill, but that's maybe a little too premature to talk about at this time," he said.*

## Justin

While Aben will spend the bulk of its exploration budget at Forrest Kerr this year, hoping for some more discovery holes, a team will also be turning over rocks in the Yukon at its Justin property. The land package is contiguous to Golden Predator's (TSXV:GPY) 3 Aces Project, which includes six mineralized areas that extend over a 35-kilometer gold trend.

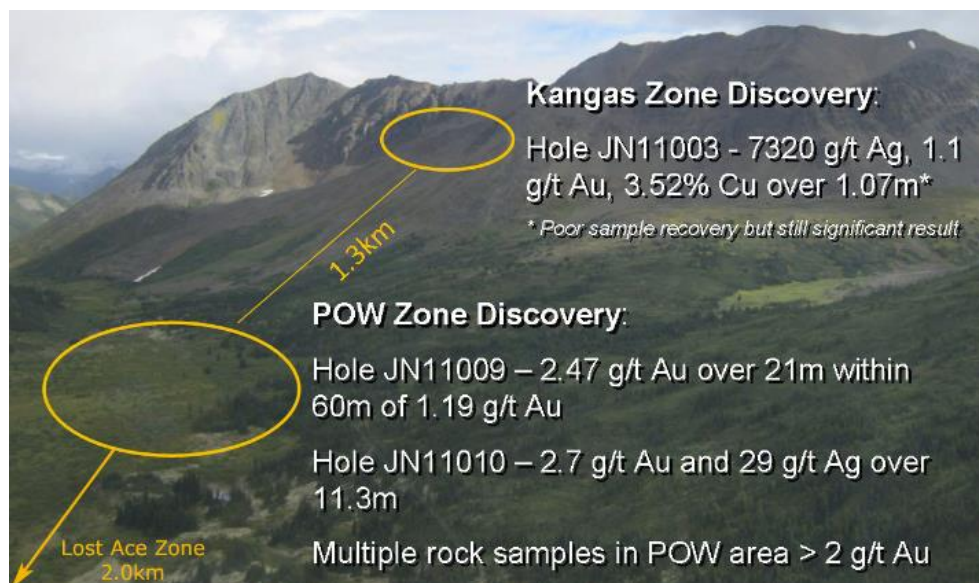


Last summer ABN discovered the Lost Ace Zone which is just west of the POW Zone. Assays from the 2017 trenching program returned encouraging results -



TR17-004 returned 1.44 grams per tonne gold over 5m true thickness, including 2.11 g/t over 3.85m true thickness and 4.77 g/t over 1.0m.

The gold-bearing vein system occurs in a geologic setting that is very similar to mineralization present on Golden Predator's 3 Aces located northwest of the Justin claim group.



This year Aben will be spending up to \$200,000 at Justin doing more detailed sampling and trenching work. While it's still early days, McDowell said the system at Justin could be analogous to Golden Predator's Brewery Creek Mine, or the Dublin Gulch project being developed by Victoria Gold (TSXV:VIT). The latter has a gold reserve of 2.7 million ounces and is expected to produce 200,000 ounces annually, which would make it the largest gold mine in Yukon history.

*"The Golden Predator fellows have talked about district-scale stuff on their 3 Aces property. We know that we're about eight kilometers away from that," said McDowell. "So in terms of size, Justin could be quite large. There's no doubt about it."*

## **Conclusion**

These are exciting times for Aben and other juniors conducting exploration programs this summer in the Golden Triangle. While geological models, geophysics, soil and rock samples can all be excellent guides to the mineralization, there's nothing like drilling to find out what really lies beneath. And the results can be surprising. Just look at Garibaldi Resources. Who would have thought that a nickel discovery would be made in an area known for gold-copper deposits? It's the element of "anything can happen" that makes [junior exploration](#) so exciting. I can't wait to see what Aben finds at North Boundary. That's why Aben Resources and its Forrest Kerr property is on my radar screen.

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