The Ikuk Prospect

The Ikuk prospect was discovered in 1974 by Research Associates of Alaska (RAA), working for Calista Corporation. Anomalous gold, silver, arsenic, and copper values were identified in a color anomaly exposed on a steep cirque headwall.

Location and Access

The prospect is located on a ridge between Ikuktlitlig and Explorer Mountains 11 miles north of Goodnews Bay (Bering Sea). Access to the site is by helicopter. The village of Goodnews Bay, population 250, has a 3,000 foot airstrip, telephone, post office, year-round airline service and summer barge service. A winter tractor trail from Goodnews Bay passes 3 miles from the prospect site.

General Features

Explorer/Ikuktlitlig Mountain is at the southwestern end of a belt of Tertiary intrusives that hosts the Wattamuse, Cascade, Slate and Bear Creek gold placers. The color anomaly and the associated mineralized zone is on the north side of a 1,600 foot ridge between the Tunulik River headwaters and Camp Creek, a tributary of Barnum Creek which empties into the Goodnews River. The ridge is part of an intrusive complex of gabbro, diorite, and granodiorite forming the core of Explorer Mountain. The mineralized area consists of diorite/gabbro which has been intruded by aplite dikes. A fractured, weakly silicified, propylitic and sericite altered zone, 800 feet wide, is exposed in the steep headwall of a glacial cirque. Mineralization consists of chalcopyrite, arsenopyrite, pyrrhotite, and pyrite occuring in blebs, stringers, and disseminations. Arsenopyrite bearing quartz veins carry the highest gold values.

RAA sampled a 1000 by 1000 foot grid across the cirque wall, taking 80 samples in the grid and 12 more on the saddle adjacent to the grid. Nineteen of these samples contained from 0.1 to 1.1 ppm gold. One sample contained 168 ppm silver but anomalous silver values were generally between 5 to 25 ppm. Arsenic values reached 9900 ppm and the mean for the entire grid area was 787 ppm.

In September of 1989, Calista sampled the anomalous area. Fifteen of twenty samples contained anomalous gold, including 6 samples with values greater than 1 ppm. Two samples assayed 0.3 and 0.7 opt Au respectively. Sampling on the south side of the mineralized saddle established that anomalous mineralization continues across the saddle to the south side of the ridge. A train of fractured and gossanous material trends southeast, 350 feet downslope of the crest of the saddle.

Recommendations

The mineralization at the Ikuk prospect should be defined by channel sampling the cirque wall. In addition, the extent of southward extesion of the mineralized zone should be tested by a close spaced soil grid. RAA took several hundred samples in the area, most of which were analyzed at the RAA lab in Fairbanks; our experience suggests that we can obtain valuable information by reassaying the RAA sample pulps.