

Prospectors' Schools

by M. J. Denner

1978 Courses

The seventh consecutive annual prospectors' school was held in La Ronge from April 10th to May 19th, 1978 and sixteen students graduated from the course out of an enrollment of 20. Half of the students at this year's school were from the La Ronge area. Out-of-town students came from Black Lake, Ile a la Crosse, Patuanak, Uranium City, Brabant Lake, Timber Bay, Saskatoon, Regina, Creighton and Southend.

Course Content

The annual six-week timetable has a deliberate bias in content towards practical field activities. Gold panning and use of explosives are popular parts of the course. Students are given particular instruction in the techniques of "boulder chasing" which have proven increasingly relevant to the search for Athabasca basin uranium deposits, and also basic training in the operation of some geophysical instruments and geochemical methods used to home in on hidden uranium deposits.

Employment of Graduates

The highly active state of mineral exploration in northern Saskatchewan presents ready job opportunities to graduates of the prospecting course. Each year the majority of graduating students receive offers of employment before leaving the school in La Ronge.

A problem arises after the work season is over, when the return to an often remote home settlement removes an individual from information on job availability in the following years. Many northerners lack a knowledge of procedures to follow in seeking work and are not aware of which firms are active in mineral exploration in northern Saskatchewan. The problem is compounded by the fact that companies hiring from a particular community are often unaware of the training and work experience of many community inhabitants. Thus individuals anxiously looking for work can easily be missed by companies anxiously looking for exploration workers.

Two steps are proposed to ameliorate the above situation:

1. Provide all exploration companies active in northern Saskatchewan with a list of the 124 who have graduated from the prospecting school in the last 7 years. This list will include name, age, home community and work experience where known.
2. Provide northern communities with a list of names, addresses, telephone numbers, etc., of exploration companies active in northern Saskatchewan.

Future Classes

The annual school will again be held in La Ronge from April 9th to May 18th, 1979.

Application forms are available from:

The Principal,
La Ronge Region Community College,
P.O. Box 509,
La Ronge, Saskatchewan.
SOJ 1L0

For additional information on provincial prospecting programs contact:

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