

North of 60 Mining News - The mining newspaper for Alaska and Canada's North

Early Zackly results show growth potential

Strong copper well beyond deposit indicate much larger skarn



By [Shane Lasley](#)
Mining News



Kyle Negri, Millrock Resources Inc.

This highly oxidized copper mineralization was encountered at a depth of about 57 meters of ZX18020, a hole about 850 meters east of the Zackly skarn deposit at PolarX' Alaska Range project.

MACLAREN RIVER: A cold summer rain drizzling down on the exploration camp does not dampen the spirits of [PolarX](#) Ltd. Executive Director Jason Berton ... and for good reason. Laid out across the tables in the core shack at the company's highway accessible exploration camp is gold- and copper-rich skarn mineralization from a hole drilled some 850 meters east of the current resource at the Zackly deposit on the company's Alaska Range project.

If ongoing drilling can trace this mineralization back to the 1,000-meter-long high-grade gold and copper deposit already outlined at Zackly, this would mark a major expansion of the resource the company recently upgraded to modern standards and go a long way toward supporting the Australia-based exploration company's strategy of building a sufficient copper-gold inventory between Zackly and Caribou Dome to support a feasibility study on a combined operation on one or more stand-alone operations.

"Whilst it's early days in our testing of the East Skarn zone, the significance with respect to potentially progressing into a feasibility is that strong mineralization observed in core from surface and 850 meters along strike from the Main Skarn JORC (Australian Joint Ore Reserves Committee) resource is that we are a step closer to achieving the minimum resource threshold to justify an economic appraisal of Zackly," said Berton.

Australia-Alaska partnership

[PolarX](#) acquired the Stellar property early last year in a three-company deal that also involved Vista Minerals Pty Ltd., a privately held exploration company from Australia, and [Millrock Resources](#) Inc., a project generator with a portfolio of Alaska gold and copper exploration projects.

Merging Stellar with adjacent Caribou Dome property, already held by [PolarX](#), the Down Under explorer focused its 2017 program on upgrading a historical resource for Zackly to Australian Joint Ore Reserves Committee mineral reporting standards.

[Millrock Resources](#) Inc., which owns a 9.76 percent interest in [PolarX](#), is managing the exploration at Alaska Range.

Berton said this collaboration with Millrock is the first time he has attempted such a partnership and the local company's acumen is a key to the early success at Alaska Range.

"I can see that it may not always be possible to create such a partnership because I think Millrock is quite unique," Berton said. "Millrock is a professional outfit that knows the lay of the land both geologically and logistically which has enabled us the ability to plan and implement our programs efficiently and effectively. In my opinion it just would not have been possible for us to undertake Millrock's role ourselves without significant costs and disadvantages."

Under this Australia-Alaska exploration partnership, a 13-hole drill program put together last year upgraded the historical Zackly resource to 3.4 million metric tons of JORC-compliant inferred resource grading 1.2 percent (90.4 million pounds) copper, 2 grams per metric ton (213,000 oz) gold and 14 g/t (1.5 million oz) silver.

"The fact that we have readily upgraded the resource to JORC standard while maintaining the same quantity of contained metal further underpins our confidence in the potential to significantly expand the project," [PolarX](#) Managing Director Frazer Tabcart said.

This shallow deposit, now referred to as Main Skarn, has been traced for a length of about 1,000 meters and [PolarX](#) said it is clearly open along strike and at depth, areas that are being targeted by the two drills currently on site.

Tapping East Skarn

During a July 8 visit to the site by Mining News, one rig set up about 850 meters east of the current resource had just completed hole ZX-18020.

From only 2.5 meters below the surface, this hole cut 55 meters of mineralization at East Skarn. This thick intercept included a section of heavily oxidized copper mineralization, primarily malachite, at 57 meters.

This skid-mounted rig is now testing the area between East and Main skarns.

"It is early days and there are a lot of meters to fill in the gap," Berton said, referring to tracing the obvious copper mineralization tapped in hole 20 to the JORC-compliant resource at Zackly Main.

ZX-18016, the first hole of the PolarX' 2018 program at Alaska Range, cut visible gold about 300 meters east of Main Skarn, providing evidence that further drilling will be able to trace the deposit out to hole 20.

Extending the skarn to hole 20 would nearly double the length of the gold- and copper-rich mineralization, which is the primary objective of the skid mounted rig. The company is also evaluating the potential of extending East Skarn.

"We have good core orientation from that zone now so while the rig is drilling back toward the Main Skarn our geologists are logging the drill core for geological structures to assist our geological model before we drill any further east of ZX-18020," Berton said.

While the skid mounted rig is extending the length of Zackly, a smaller rig capable of being moved by helicopter is tapping skarn mineralization below the currently outlined resource. This hole, ZX-18018, had begun drilling into skarn mineralization with chalcopyrite (copper sulfide) during Mining News' July visit to the project.

While it will be a while before assay results reveal how much copper and gold was intersected, the visual mineralization indicates that the resource may be expanded to depth and the information from this deeper drilling could provide further evidence of porphyry mineralization [PolarX](#) and Millrock observed last year at Zackly.

"We are encouraged by the fly rig's progress and it's an important piece of the puzzle for both increasing the mineralization extents at Zackly and in understanding the deposit's genesis," said Berton.

Focused on Zackly

Overall, [PolarX](#) aims to rapidly accumulate sufficient copper-gold inventory between Zackly and Caribou Dome, a high-grade sediment hosted copper deposit about 12.5 miles southwest of Zackly, to support feasibility studies on a combined operation, or one or more standalone operations.

Caribou Dome, a potential mine on its own, hosts 1.6 million metric tons of JORC-compliant resource (measured, indicated and inferred) averaging 3 percent (107.8 million lb) copper that is amenable to open-pit mining; and 1.2 million metric tons of underground mineable resource averaging 3.2 percent (82.3 million lb) copper.

For now, however, [PolarX](#) is focused on the obvious expansion potential at Zackly.

Beyond tracing the shallow high-grade skarn mineralization, the exploration at Zackly is vectoring toward a deeper and much larger potential porphyry source indicated by a prominent magnetic anomaly at Zackly SE, which lies about 2,000 meters southeast of the current resource.

The thick zones cut by hole 20 suggest the widths of copper mineralization could be getting thicker towards the porphyry target at Zackly SE.

The Mars prospect, which brackets the northwest end of a 6,000-meter corridor that is prospective for deeper porphyry mineralization, hosts another prominent magnetic anomaly [PolarX](#) would like to investigate further.



Kyle Negri, Millrock Resources Inc.

ZX18018, the third hole of the 2018 program at PolarX' Alaska Range project, tapped copper mineralization below the current resource at Zackly.

Broadly spaced sampling at Mars has outlined copper, gold, molybdenum and silver mineralization over a 2,000- by 1,500-meter area. Rock-chip samples collected here have returned up to 7.4 percent copper and 1.8 g/t gold.

An induced polarization geophysical survey completed in 2017 identified a chargeability anomaly that is 100 to 150 meters below the surface of Mars. [PolarX](#) said these coincident geochemical and geophysical anomalies suggests the potential of a buried porphyry copper-gold system about 3,000 meters northwest of Zackly.

With the drilling success below and to the east of Zackly, however, [PolarX](#) and Millrock are currently busy on potentially doubling the size of the high-grade gold and copper resource found there.

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