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Firestone Ventures Making Good Progress At Its Torlon Hill Zinc Project In Guatemala

It was refreshing to hear the enthusiasm of Lori Walton , chief executive of Canadian listed Firestone Ventures, for her company's Torlon Hill zinc project in Guatemala when she was in London recently. As she points out, it is a mining friendly, democratic country and wide open as there are only four other Canadian juniors operating there compared with something like 200 in neighbouring Mexico. The geological potential is massive and not every project is situated near the Pan American Highway and 12 kms from the city of Huehuetenango like Torlon Hill, so infrastructure is well within reach. Ms Walton has gone to great lengths, even at this comparatively early stage, to make sure that families in the vicinity of the project are happy with what is going on.



Firestone QP John Cleary examining drill core on the TH-06-3 drill site

Redhawk Resources and AIM listed [Zincox](#) Resources carried out some exploration in 2000-2001 and sampling and mapping on the property have confirmed their exploration data. Zinc mineralization in the form of smithsonite extends over a 100 metre by 700 metre area called the Santa Rosa Corridor which is buttressed by two sheets of high grade mineralization. Early last March Firestone announced results from an additional seven drill holes and these extended the known footprint of zinc mineralization an additional 100 metres southwest beyond the previous boundary. Geological evidence indicates that the intersections are located west of a northerly trending fault, in an area not previously known to contain mineralization. The potential for additional mineralization, both "oxide-type" and sulphide, is enhanced by the presence of previously unknown block faulting in this area.

Lori Walton reports that the current drill programme at Torlon Hill now has three objectives. The first is to expand the mineralised zone further; the second is to carry out detailed in-fill drilling; and the third to improve delineation of deposit geometry. Infill drilling of the area of high-grade zinc mineralization defined last year is now complete

and the current drill holes are expansion holes testing for additional areas of zinc mineralization. Right at the end of March Firestone announced a new high-grade zinc discovery on the southwest side of the project. One hole intersected 42.5 metres of 9.7% zinc and 4.7% lead, including 19.9 metres of 13.8% zinc and 5.2% lead and 3.2 metres of 10.6% zinc, 13.0% lead and 88 grams/tonne silver.

The conclusion has to be that there may be significant credits from silver and lead and metallurgical testing is now taking place. Lori Walton is clearly thrilled by this new discovery as it will expand the tonnage potential significantly and an initial resource estimate should be ready before the autumn. "To date," she points out, "most of the defined zinc mineralization at Torlon Hill is exposed on surface or near-surface. There is obviously significant potential on the rest of the property for buried mineralization that has no surface expression." As the name suggests, the project is on a hill which means that there will be zero strip ratio if an open pit mine gets the go-ahead.

The plan is now to expand the ground position around Torlon Hill and last month a deal was agreed with Goldcorp to earn a 100 per cent interest in the Saturno and Saturno II concessions. These concessions surround project and cover an area of 12,226 acres. They cover Permian carbonate formations which are considered to have excellent exploration potential for more zinc and lead mineralization. Firestone has to make a cash payment of US\$5,000 and spend US\$250,000 over three years so the terms are not too onerous. Anyway the company is in quite a strong financial position as it had C\$3 million in the bank and another C\$1 million to come from warrants when it raised another C\$2 million recently from a private placement recently. Incidentally this took the holding of London listed [Anglo Pacific Group](#), a shrewd resource investor, up to 16.76 per cent of the equity and it has warrants in addition.

Clearly Torlon Hill is close to Lori Walton's heart, but her company also has an 80 per cent interest in the [Sonora Gold](#) property which lies midway along the Dawson gold belt in the Yukon and is about 45 kilometres from Sherwood Copper's copper-gold project which is currently undergoing development. Some significant intercepts were received from initial drilling and this could become a surprise package. So also could the 100 per cent owned Alberta Sun uranium project though it is still at the grass roots stage. A comprehensive radon cup survey is now taking place to locate zones of uranium mineralization by tracking radon gas emissions from the breakdown of hidden uranium sources. Firestone is a company well worth watching.