



THE CHRONICLE-JOURNAL/BRENT LINTON

Ewan Downie, president and CEO of Premier Gold Mines, announces the company's Greenstone plans during a news conference Monday in Thunder Bay.

# Premier investing in North

## *Geraldton site in the plans*

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THE CHRONICLE-JOURNAL

Gold mining in Northwestern Ontario is in good shape, says Premier Gold Mines.

Ewan Downie, the company's president and CEO, announced Monday that Premier will spend about \$15 million in Ontario in 2009, including \$8-10 million on its newly acquired Hardrock project in Geraldton.

"We're seeing a lot of base metal mines having a lot of trouble," said Downie, "but in these financial times the gold price is actually performing really well."

The Hardrock Project area has been host to other mines over the years, which have collectively produced about two million ounces of gold.

"An old saying in mining is that the best place to look for a new mine is in the shadow of an old one," said Downie.

Northern Development and Mines Minister Michael Gravelle, who was present for Premier's announcement in Thunder Bay, said the company's projects are a good sign.

Gravelle said that he expects an up-

turn in the mining industry.

"Despite the challenges in the mining sector," he said, "there's good reason to think that the future of mining in Northwestern Ontario is very positive."

Greenstone Economic Development Corporation executive director Dina Quenneville, who also attended Downie's announcement, said the region welcomes the jobs and economic boost that the site could create.

"For the Greenstone region this is tremendous," said Quenneville.

"When you hear all of the depressing sort of stories all over the region, hearing what we heard today is just wonderful."

She noted that the Hardrock site's proximity to Geraldton will make it easier to develop.

"With the roads right at their fingertips, access to natural gas, hydro . . . certainly makes everything more cost-effective for the project," said Quenneville.

Premier acquired the Geraldton site from Barrick Gold Corp. in December for \$1 million.

Premier Gold is the only Thunder Bay-based company traded on the TSX main exchange.