

ENORMOUS LANDSCAPE DISCOVERED UNDER ANTARCTIC ICE



Glorious Antarctic ice, some of the cheapest prime real estate you can find.

Buried deep beneath Antarctic ice, scientists have discovered an ancient valley deeper than the Grand Canyon buried deep beneath Antarctica. Carved out millions of years ago by the first Antarctic ice sheets in Antarctica, the colossal mountains and valleys cover an area nearly 200 miles long, 15 miles across, and 2 miles deep. The research team who discovered the Antarctic ice valley was composed of researchers from Newcastle University, the University of Bristol's Glaciology Centre, the British Antarctic Survey and the universities of Edinburgh, Exeter, and York. The team has named the area they discovered the Ellsworth Subglacial Highlands.

An area buried beneath the Antarctic ice fitting the description of the Ellsworth Subglacial Highlands has been hypothesized to exist for some time, as scientists

have regularly discussed the precise origins of the Antarctic ice in Western Antarctica. It turns out that the Ellsworth Subglacial Highlands encompass the original site where ice sheets similar to those currently in arctic Canada and Russia began to form.

The team spent 3 seasons mapping the region beneath the Antarctic using satellite data along with ice penetrating radar. According to Professor Martin Siegert, Professor of Geosciences at the University of Bristol,

By looking at the topography beneath the ice sheet using a combination of ice-penetrating radio-echo sounding and satellite imagery, we have revealed a region which possesses classic glacial geomorphic landforms, such as u-shaped valleys and cirques, that could only have been formed by a small ice cap, similar to those seen at present in the Canadian and Russian High Arctic. The region uncovered is, therefore, the site of ice sheet genesis in West Antarctica.



The antarctic is arguably owned by 7 different countries along with 1 neutral territory. The Antarctic ice is mostly uncharted territory.

The team will use the data uncovered from mapping sub Antarctic ice trenches within the Ellsworth Subglacial Highlands to better understand the activity of current Antarctic ice. Particularly, this will allow them to create a reconstruction of

Western Antarctica before and after the presence of ice sheets. This in turn will shed light on the future of Antarctica as it pertains to climate change, the melting of southern Antarctic ice caps, and the thawing of enormous plots of land in places like Antarctica, Canada, and Russia. According to Tim Flannery in his world renowned book “The Weather Makers” Canada and Russia are poised to become two of the most bountiful and wealthy countries in the world due to expansive amounts of previously unusable land becoming fertile and profitable in the wake of rising global climates.

Dr. Neil Ross, a member of the team, considers the find to be a serendipitous one. He notes that although antarctic ice penetrating radar had been used on both ends of the valley, it wasn't until the team used satellite data that they realized the spaces in between could be seen from space. He also reminds us all that we have barely begun exploring the entirety of our planet, stating that,

To me, this just goes to demonstrate how little we still know about the surface of our own planet. The discovery and exploration of hidden, previously-unknown landscapes is still possible and incredibly exciting, even now.

Just think, we've only discovered 14% of the projected 87 million species that exist on Earth. Even more astounding, we have only discovered 5% of all ocean space, which accounts for 71% of Earth's surface.

Source: <http://wondergressive.com/expansive-landscape-discovered-under-antarctic-ice/>