

# Unlocking our Potential



JULY 2024

# 30 YEARS OF DIAMONDS

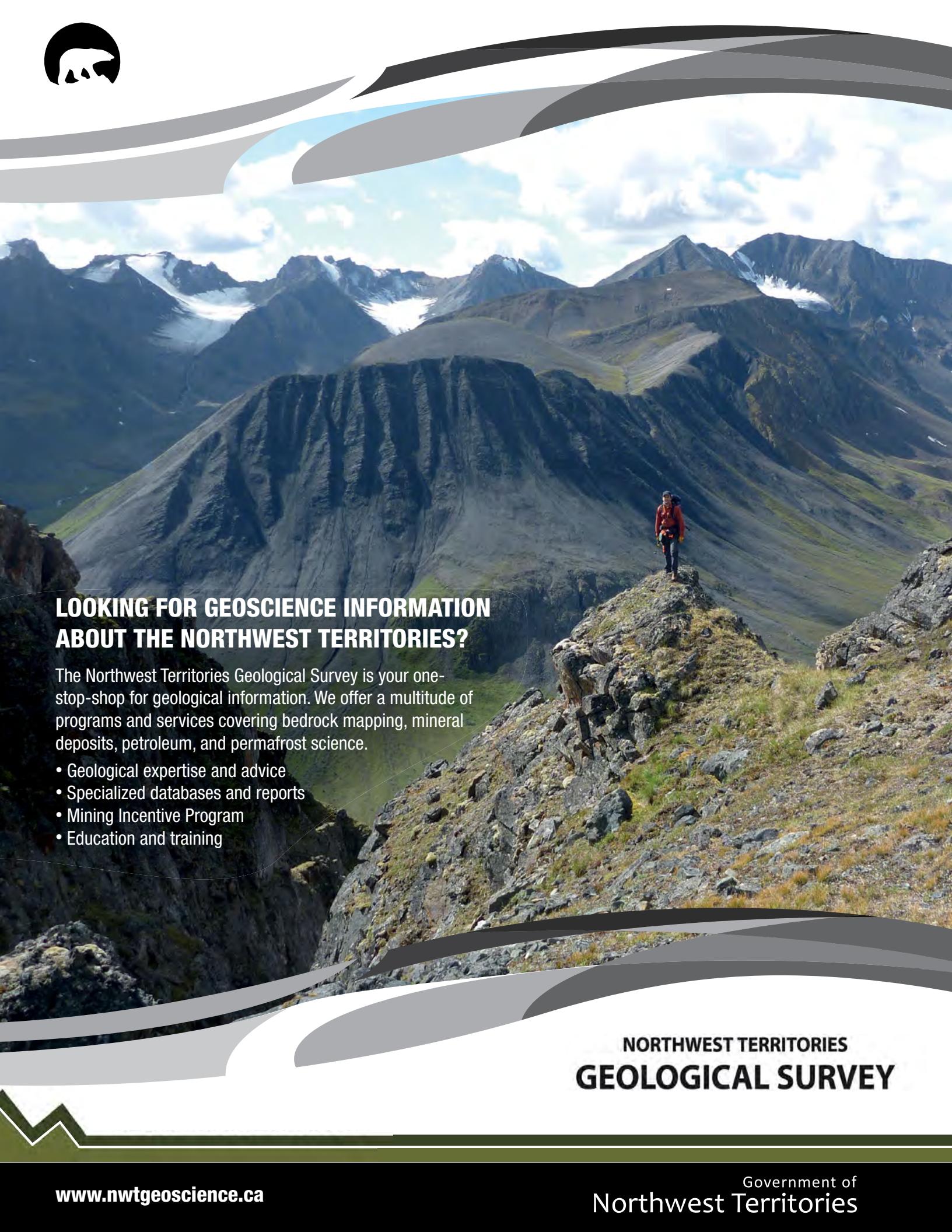
The NWT Welcomes  
the International  
Kimberlite Conference

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Government of  
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## LOOKING FOR GEOSCIENCE INFORMATION ABOUT THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES?

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**NORTHWEST TERRITORIES  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY**

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*Cover photo:*  
A 71.26 carat fancy vivid yellow gemstone recovered from the Misery pit of Canada's first diamond mine Ekati, located in the Northwest Territories. Picture courtesy of Burgundy Diamond Mines Limited

**Hon. Caitlin Cleveland**

MINISTER OF INDUSTRY,  
TOURISM AND INVESTMENT  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES



## MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

For delegates of the 12th International Kimberlite Conference (July 8-12): welcome to Yellowknife!

Your conference is set to pay tribute to Canada's 30-year diamond history which has roots right here in the Northwest Territories (NWT) when Charles Fipke and Stewart Blusson made their now-famous discovery at Lac de Gras in 1991.

Since then, diamonds have transformed our territory. You can get an appreciation of just what that means by looking back on how far we've come. In fact, we do that for you in our feature story, *Diamonds – the first 30 years* (page 8).

The centrefold of this edition illustrates another diamond legacy - the extraordinary economic benefits that diamond mining has brought to the territory; and on page 16 we asked some key northern influencers to weigh in on the lessons they believe we've learned along the way.

Diamonds, however, are just the most recent part of our territory's rich mining

history. (Check out the picture feature on Yellowknife's new historical museum. Its on page 18.)

This edition of *Unlocking Our Potential* also includes three exciting stories about what the future may hold. They highlight the very real potential of: Indigenous equity, critical minerals, lithium and what may be the world's largest-known deposit of bismuth.

We know that the mineral resource industry, and the corresponding investment landscape are changing quickly. As resource development evolves in Canada, the recognition of environmental, social and governance factors – and specifically, Indigenous partnerships has become the way of the future.

I am proud to say that the Northwest Territories mining industry has continually set this bar since the arrival of its first diamond mine over 30 years ago, and we are committed to maintaining these standards into the future.

*Dr. Barbara Scott Smith (bottom centre) is one of the so-called "Eminent Eight" who have attended all of the 12 International Kimberlite Conferences*



# WELCOME!

## International Kimberlite Conference

THE DIAMOND CAPITAL OF NORTH AMERICA IS HOSTING THE 2024 INTERNATIONAL KIMBERLITE CONFERENCE (JULY 8-12) THIS SUMMER.

It is a fitting place to hold the renowned scientific conference that will, this year, salute “30-years of Diamonds in Canada”, while celebrating its own 50th anniversary.

The five-day Yellowknife event will be the 12th such gathering since its debut in Cape Town in 1973. This is only the second time that the globe-trotting conference has touched down in Canada.

Barbara Scott Smith is one of eight geologists who have attended all of the International Kimberlite Conferences (IKC) and is the Executive Lead for the Yellowknife edition. She says what makes the forum stand out is the symbiosis between academia and industry.

*“Over the years, it has been wildly successful and the amount of science that has come out of that relationship between industry and academia is quite remarkable,” she notes.*

Five themes, each with a distinguished keynote speaker will shape the 2024 event. The Yellowknife conference will also showcase Indigenous participation in the NWT diamond industry.

A primary feature of all IKCs is the field trips held before and after the conference.

“Trips to the diamond mines themselves are a real attraction and have proven to be the most popular,” Scott Smith says.

“This is the Slave Craton. The oldest rocks in the world have been found here going back four billion years. You can also see geologically recent glacial influences which are pretty much unique to the NWT and Canada.”

While conference delegates are predominantly geological scientists, their interests vary from diamonds and their kimberlite hosts to the broad geological environments in which they are found.

When kimberlite was discovered in Canada in the Fort à la Corne district, Saskatchewan, it was found, on examination, to be different from kimberlite first identified in South Africa’s Kimberley city, for which the host rock was named.

Dr. Scott Smith was among those that first identified the distinction.

“I remember thinking OMG, this is nothing like we’ve seen before,” she recalls.



The NWT has both types of kimberlite. For delegates attending the Yellowknife conference, there will be an opportunity to contrast and compare kimberlite types first-hand.

*“It’s a ridiculous opportunity,”  
Scott Smith says.*

John Ketchum, a former Director of the NWT Geological Survey will serve as the convenor for the conference. He hopes the conference’s field trips, short courses, panel discussions, social events and tourism opportunities will provide delegates with a strong understanding of the role and impacts of diamond exploration and mining within the NWT.

Scott Smith and Ketchum are hopeful that a reunion of the NWT’s diamond pioneers Charles Fipke, Stu Blusson and Gren Thomas can also be part of the festivities.

## Themes and Keynote Presentations 12th International Kimberlite Conference

**OPENING** | The Ekati and Diavik Discoveries - Canada’s Entry to Global Diamond Production - *Jon A Carlson*

**Diamonds** – *Suzette Timmerman, University of Bern*

**Economic Kimberlite Geology** – *Casey M Hetman, SRK Consulting*

**Genesis of Kimberlite Magmas** – *Max Schmidt, Department of Earth Sciences, ETH*

**Diamond Deposits** – Exploration and Mining - *Andy T. Davy and Malcolm L Thurston*

**Cratonic Mantle** – Petrology, Geochemistry and Geophysics - *Sergei Lebedev, University of Cambridge*

**CLOSING** | A review of current natural diamond market supply and demand - *Eira Thomas, John Armstrong and Paul Zimnisky*

**CLOSING** | Summary of recent diamond exploration world-wide - *John Armstrong and Eira Thomas*

Fortune Minerals collects ore samples from its NICO critical minerals project



## NICO GETS A BOOST

### A flurry of announcements from Fortune Minerals bodes well for its NICO project in the NWT.

Company releases in May confirmed an injection of a \$16.2 million historic cross-border investment from both US and Canadian governments for its proposed cobalt-gold-bismuth-copper critical minerals project near Whatì.

Now in the advanced development stage, the project will include an open pit/underground mine and concentrator in the NWT, and a related hydrometallurgical refinery in Alberta. Fortune previously secured \$887,170 in funding from the Alberta and Canadian governments.

The company also owns the satellite Sue-Dianne copper-silver-gold deposit north of its NICO deposit which could be a future source of incremental mill feed to extend the life of the NICO mill and concentrator.

Speaking to Investing News Network (INN), Fortune President and CEO, Robin Goad said he believes the cross-border NICO project can tick a lot of boxes in the quest to secure critical minerals.

***"It's a vertically integrated project. We intend our materials to be mined, processed and made available to support North American manufacturing."***

The NICO project is primarily a cobalt-gold deposit. Cobalt, in particular, is notable given its growing consumption in lithium-ion batteries powering the transition to e-mobility. NICO, however, also features the largest known deposit of bismuth in the world – approximately 12% of the current world reserves. Recognized as an environmentally friendly mineral, the value of bismuth is on the rise with the increasing importance of manganese-bismuth magnets and its significance as an element in plugging decommissioned oil and gas wells.

The NWT's proposed NICO mine also boasts an estimated one million ounces of gold.

# YELLOWKNIFERS OFFERED A Li-FT

**During a tour of the NWT's diamond capital in May, Li-FT Power said that in the wake of anticipated diamond mine closures, lithium may be the catalyst for better days ahead.**

The Vancouver-based company has pinpointed 13 visual outcrops of spodumene-bearing pegmatite in the Yellowknife area and recently completed a drilling campaign of almost 50,000 metres. Chief Sustainability Officer April Hayward described results to a Yellowknife audience as "pretty promising".

"There's a window of opportunity for bringing hard rock lithium into the global lithium market," Hayward told local media, "And that's what we have in this area. The risk of not doing this in a timely manner and moving the project forward is that the technology to extract lithium from different sources is going to evolve very rapidly."

It's not often that the NWT is touted for its infrastructure advantages but speaking to KITCO Mining at the 2024 PDAC convention, Li-FT CEO Francis Macdonald said that in the absence of refining capacity in North America, it is one of the competitive advantages that the Yellowknife project has over traditional lithium jurisdictions like Ontario and Quebec.



*Li-FT says much of its identified spodumene pegmatite is in visible outcrops*

"There is a paved highway that goes through seven of our lithium deposits. There is rail in Hay River/Enterprise that will take us to Edmonton and from there, it's easy to get out to the Pacific coast... That sets us apart from a lot of other North American projects because we can actually get spodumene concentrate to Asia where it is (currently) being processed."

If all goes well, Li-FT's Yellowknife project could begin its environmental assessment process as early as next year, with production anticipated in 2030.

In the meantime, Hayward says it is important that people are aware and ask questions and have their concerns addressed early.

"This project has great potential to fill an important economic gap in the Northwest Territories," she says.

# NWT Diamonds the first 30 years



All pictures are courtesy of Burgundy Diamond Mines Limited and feature Ekati, Canada's first surface and underground diamond mine located in the Northwest Territories.



**When Canadian diamonds burst on to the scene in 1991, few could have known the growth and capacity that they would bring to Northwest Territories (NWT) businesses and economy. It was, by most estimations, transformational.**

"We were that proverbial dog that caught the car," chuckles Tom Hoefer. He was working in the mining industry at the time. Today, he is a Senior Advisor for the NWT and Nunavut Chamber of Mines. "We had no idea what we were dealing with. It happened so fast."

It sure did. The Ekati mine was fast tracked from discovery to production in just seven years. In another five, Diavik opened, and the NWT had emerged as a top tier global producer. By 2008 the territory's third diamond mine, Snap Lake, was also operational; and drilling had begun for what would be its fourth diamond mine, Gahcho Kué.

In the NWT's capital of Yellowknife, the arrival of diamonds left little time to even mark the closure of its two long-standing gold mines.

*"There was barely a hiccup," then Premier Stephen Kakfwi remembers. The city, that had once bragged that its "gold was paved with streets" was quick to adopt a new moniker: "Diamond Capital of North America".*

More significantly, the impact of diamonds was being felt beyond its capital region. The availability of labour incomes established new economies in communities where they hadn't existed before. Across the NWT, residents embraced the idea and benefits of two-on-two-off jobs with six-figure paycheques.

"Ladies from as far away as Fort Good Hope were working in a diamond mine. They loved it," Kakfwi recalls.

"In places like Behchoko, you could tell who worked at the mines, they had the bigger houses... with a new truck out front, sometimes two, a couple of snowmobiles, and maybe an outboard motor."

Indirectly, diamonds were impacting traditional political structures. Where the Tłı̨chǫ-speaking hunters, trappers and traditional knowledge holders were the once the powers to be, Kakfwi remembers, in very quick order, the leaders became younger.

Meanwhile, as Canada's world-class mines chose to sell their supply outside of the traditional De Beers strong hold, NWT diamonds were also changing life globally. In the face of a declining monopoly and increasingly negative publicity surrounding blood diamonds, DeBeers was forced to change its business model.

And, thanks to a guaranteed allocation of rough to NWT diamond polishing plants, the NWT turned the world's diamond industry on its ear by proving that diamonds could be cut and polished outside of traditional centres like Holland, India and Antwerp.

NWT diamonds were the first to be government tracked and certified. On close inspection, they sported a tiny engraved polar bear to prove it.

The quest for diamonds also evolved environmental legislation in the NWT. In under 20 years, the NWT's four diamond mines took three different regulatory routes to operation.

"For each mine, it took a little longer," Hoefer noted, as he watched the NWT's regulatory system mature and take shape.

In 2014, an agreement was finally inked to devolve authorities and responsibilities for lands and resources from the federal government to the Government of the NWT. It included another first – a deal to share diamond royalties across all three levels of NWT government – federal, territorial and Indigenous.

Today, the NWT is finalizing regulations for its new made-in-the-NWT mining Act. With its consultative, collaborative approach to draft regulations with Indigenous partners, the Northwest Territories *Mineral Resources Act* is heralded as a milestone for Canadian mining.

While that remains to be seen, a modern, streamlined legislative environment focused on the priorities of NWT residents and grounded in the consensus of northern governments and industry and Indigenous partners, will be unique in Canada.

So, even if diamond mines aren't forever, there benefits can be.

While the NWT's original mines are credited with paying it forward in infrastructure like roads, rail lines and hydro facilities, Hoefer says diamonds offer a new type of legacy.

*"They've invested in people," he says. "Their legacy will be the partnerships they have inspired with our public and Indigenous governments."*

Proponents of major projects in the NWT must agree to ensure economic benefits will stay in the North. Socio-economic and benefit agreements set out targets for things like training, procurement, wellness initiatives, and local employment.

"In many ways diamonds gave us a model of how development could be done," Kakfwi adds. "The role of government, the role of Indigenous people, the role of northern people; of the federal government, the government of the NWT and the mine itself."

With the growth of world-class diamond mines in the NWT came an explosion in local businesses providing the expertise and skills to service them. Settled land claims gave Indigenous governments the financial resources to invest in a multitude of NWT-based companies.

These grown-in-the-NWT corporations now own an impressive stable of aviation, engineering, trucking, and logistics companies. In addition to servicing NWT mines, they supply vehicles, heavy equipment and specialized expertise in areas like winter building and ice road construction. Some have outgrown their beginnings and are expanding to service projects around the circumpolar Arctic and in southern provinces.

Tł'chǫ elder Ted Blondin once quipped, "when Ekati opened, we were looking for jobs; by the time Diavik opened we were looking for business." Since 1996, diamond mines in the NWT have spent more than \$19.3 billion with northern businesses; specifically \$8.6 billion with Indigenous businesses.

Paul Gruner heads the Tł'chǫ Investment Corporation (TIC) – the economic development arm of the NWT's Tł'chǫ government. He says entities like TIC (and the Deton'cho Corporation owned by the Yellowknife Dene First Nation), now offer a major asset to prospective mines and projects.

"If you are flying your workforce in, that's a massive cost driver. The fact that we continue to build a technical, strong, stable, workforce that is local is a huge value proposition."

"Thirty years ago, we didn't have the level of capacity or understanding that we do today. Think about the learning that we can now apply. Think about the ownership structure, the equity stakes within the mines themselves, or owning the equipment, the power plants and the roads."

However, Graeme Clinton says he's worried that while the inaugural decade of diamonds spurred Indigenous economic development corporations and their numerous businesses and joint ventures, momentum wasn't maintained. A professional economist based in Yellowknife, he says new ideas to spur further innovation within the labour supply and business community have waned.

*"Policies that worked to bring new entrants into the workforce, to build the capacity within our business community, and expand NWT businesses into new areas require revision."*

Gruner concurs.

"We need to be bolder," he says. With a new rush of interest in NWT critical minerals, he's not

waiting on government. Gruner believes that collaboratively, the North's development companies can build on their track record with diamonds to move the needle in areas where government hasn't, even in infrastructure investments like clean power.

One of his priorities is housing – for a northern workforce, that wasn't there the first time. In the meantime, Hoefer wants to start the conversation about an NWT-based processing plant for critical minerals.

But, if there is a company that best personifies the NWT's 30-year diamond legacy, it just may be DEMCo., a 100% Dene-owned mineral exploration and mining company. Its Camsell River property near Great Bear Lake is a promising site for iron-oxide-copper-gold (IOCG) and potential critical minerals.

"It was the logical next step," says President, Darrell Beaulieu. "Mines generate revenues. We made the decision to pursue ownership. A homegrown indigenous service industry was already in place; we could import what we needed to fill the gaps. Obviously, ownership is never 100 per cent and we're going to need partners, but we are the decision makers."

For his part, Clinton believes that the North is entering an economic transition to a life after diamonds.

"Northerners are ready to embrace the next good project that comes along," he says. "The opportunity for risk takers is now."



*Top to bottom:* Tom Hoefer, Senior Advisor, NWT and Nunavut Chamber of Mines; Stephen Kakfwi, Premier of the Northwest Territories (2000–2003); Graeme Clinton, Economist, Impact Economics

# By the Numbers **the first 30 years**

Since 1996\*

**TOTAL COMBINED SPENDING BY NWT MINES**

**\$27.7 Billion**



Since 1996\*

Historical Spending with NWT Businesses

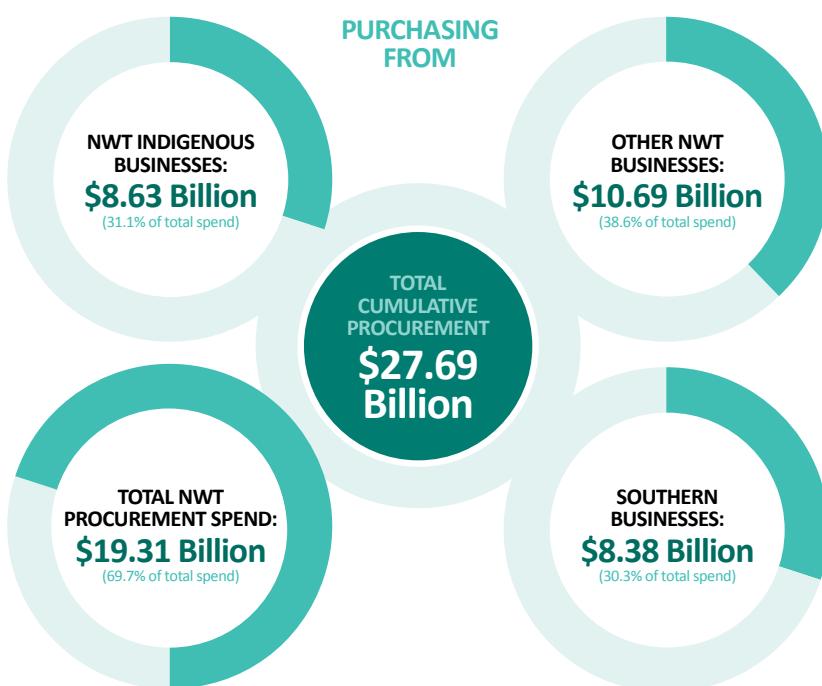
**\$19.3 Billion**

**2023**

Diamond Mine Spending with NWT Businesses\*\*

**\$829.9 Million**

## 1996-2023 Cumulative Mine Procurement



Since 1996\*

**CUMULATIVE PERSON YEARS OF EMPLOYMENT FOR NWT RESIDENTS\***



**34,762**

## 2023 NWT Employment by Job Category

27.1% 72.9%

### Professional and Management

27.1% of Professional and Management positions are filled by NWT residents  
72.9% of Professional and Management positions go south

21.5% 78.5%

### Skilled

21.5% of Skilled positions are filled by NWT residents  
78.5% of Skilled positions go south

48.9% 51.1%

### Semi-Skilled

48.9% of Semi-Skilled positions are filled by NWT residents  
51.1% of Semi-Skilled positions go south

78.2% 21.8%

### Entry Level

78.2% of Entry-Level positions are filled by NWT residents  
21.8% of Entry-Level positions go south

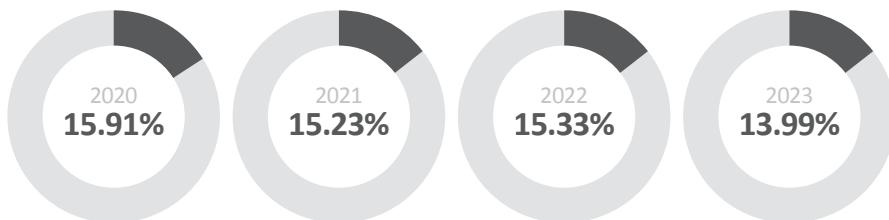
**13.99 %**

OF EMPLOYEES IN THE NWT  
MINING INDUSTRY ARE WOMEN

Canadian average: 16%



### Women - NWT Employment Totals (2020 – 2023)



2022-2023

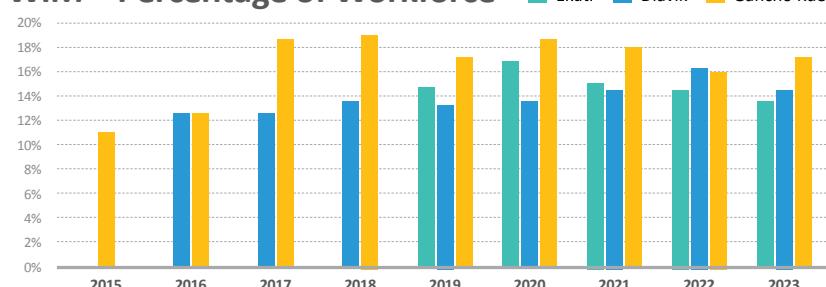
**NWT STUDENTS  
RECEIVED STUDENT  
FINANCIAL  
ASSISTANCE**

**1,251**



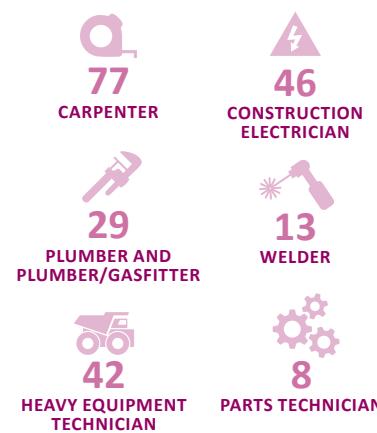
- ◆ **42** Apprentices Employed Through NWT Mines in 2023
- ◆ **23** Employed Directly with Mines
- ◆ **19** Employed with Contractors

### WIM – Percentage of Workforce



### Number Apprenticeships

Number of Apprenticeships by Trade in the NWT (2023)



COOK .....	5
INDUSTRIAL MECHANIC – MILLWRIGHT .....	8
POWERLINE TECHNICIAN .....	3
INDUSTRIAL ELECTRICIAN .....	0
CRANE OPERATOR .....	2
INSTRUMENTATION TECHNICIAN .....	0
MACHINIST .....	1

# NEWSBRIEFS

FEBRUARY 2,  
2024

## Exploration Projected to Rise

Statistics from Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) predict exploration spending will increase in the Northwest Territories (NWT) this year. Expenditures are projected to reach \$143.7 million, a \$30.8 million (27%) increase

from \$112.9 million in 2023. Activity in the NWT is anticipated to be mostly early-stage exploration dominated by junior companies focused primarily on finding base metals, diamonds, lithium and rare earths.

FEBRUARY 9,  
2024

## A Dramatic Conversation Starter

A new analysis of the Northwest Territories' economy, "Eyes Wide Open: Starting a Conversation on the Effects of a Diminished Resource Sector in the NWT", highlights the importance of the NWT's significant, world class mineral potential. The analysis by Impact

Economics of Yellowknife examines the effects that the closure of diamond mines and the end of oil and gas production would have, and asks the important question: What would happen if the territory's resource sector were to disappear?

FEBRUARY 15,  
2024

## Silica sand and Arsenic Falling Through the Cracks

The NWT and Nunavut Chamber of Mines weighs in on the proposed criteria for critical minerals in Canada. The Chamber suggests that at least two "minerals"- silica sand and arsenic have "fallen through the cracks and urges the

Government of Canada to re-examine and adjust its critical mineral list to ensure both are included in the final listing. (UPDATE: The final Critical Minerals List 2024 was released in June with three new additions: high purity iron, phosphorous and silicon.)

FEBRUARY 15,  
2024

## Premier Simpson Commits to Mining

Speaking to the Northern Miner at AME Round-up, Premier Simpson promises that the mineral resource sector will be a priority for his new NWT government. "We want to see more development; the public wants to see development and almost every

Indigenous government I speak with wants to see development," the premier says. "During the life of our government, we'll have a brand new modern (legislative) regime that will streamline processes, add certainty and ensure Indigenous participation in NWT mining. We're all on the same page. We're all moving in the same direction."

MARCH 1  
2024

## Exploration Summary Reflects Fiery Summer

The Northwest Territories Geological Survey releases its annual overview of exploration and mining in the NWT. While an historic wildfire season saw many exploration programs modified, reduced, delayed or even

cancelled, the work that did occur in 2023 was characterized by a renewed interest in lithium and other critical minerals as well as a continued interest in gold. Of the 43 projects listed in the report, 20 identified lithium as their primary commodity, while eight targeted gold.

APRIL 1,  
2024

### A Decade of Devolution

NWT governments marked the ten-year anniversary of the Devolution Agreement which transferred decision making authorities for resource development from the federal to territorial governments. The highly heralded deal was instrumental in the creation of the

NWT Intergovernmental Council where public and Indigenous governments now collaborate on issues of lands and resource management, notably co-developing a new *Mineral Resources Act* for the Northwest Territories (NWT) and drafting its regulations.

APRIL 16,  
2024

### Federal Loan Guarantees for Indigenous Projects

The 2024 federal budget officially introduced the federal Indigenous Loan Guarantee Program (ILG Program). The program provides up to \$5 billion in loan guarantees to enable

greater access by Indigenous communities to affordable capital and increasing opportunities for equity ownership in major projects. Most notably, for NWT Indigenous organizations, conventional oil and gas and mining projects are eligible under the program.

APRIL 16,  
2024

### Ekati's Sable Applies to go Underground

The Ekati Diamond Mine has filed an application with the Wek'èezhìi Land and Water Board to begin an underground project at its Sable open pit. The project would be similar to what is underway in its Misery pit. Open-pit mining at Sable, to the north

of the main Ekati camp, is scheduled to end this year. The Misery Underground project will be complete in 2026. In its application, owner Burgundy Diamond Mines says realizing kimberlite production from the Sable underground project by 2026 is "critical" to ensuring mine operations are extended through to 2040.

JUNE 9-15,  
2024

### NWT Mining Week

For the first time since the COVID pandemic the NWT's annual mine rescue competitions (see picture feature page 20) are staged during NWT Mining Week which, for 2024, also features the return of a popular tradition in the miner's picnic. In addition to virtual

content and contests, local "rock walks" are a staple for Mining Week in and around Yellowknife. New this year is a lithium-themed rock walk hosted by Li-FT Power.

If 30 years  
of diamonds  
have taught  
us anything,  
it's...

# 5 Things

It's been 30 years since the NWT's first diamond mine, Ekati, opened near Lac de Gras. While preparing this diamond-themed edition of our newsletter, we asked five influential northerners, with varying views and perspectives, to complete the sentence: "If 30 years of diamonds has taught us anything, it's..."

Here's what they said:



“...be bullish



“...don't stop exploring.



*Stephen Kakfwi, former Premier of the Northwest Territories*

“...be bullish

At one point we said, if we don't get some attention to the terms that we want, to hell with it, we'll just leave them in the ground. That caught everybody's attention.

There is an expression that is used to emphasize one's inability to make a difference and the absence of any possible change. They say it is 'carved in stone'. People say, you can't change that, it is 'carved in stone'.

Just up the winter road from here, lie some of the hardest and most beautiful stones in the world – diamonds. Not only did we carve our polar bears into these stones, we cut them into our own distinct shape called the Dene Rose.”

*Tom Hoefer, Senior Advisor, NWT & Nunavut Chamber of Mines*

“...don't stop exploring.

If you are going to be in the mining game, which only makes sense for the NWT to be in, you have to manage your resource development.

We know that no mine lasts forever. It's impossible. What you must do is start putting into your line-up a series of mines to replace the ones ahead of them - which means that you have to always have healthy exploration at the front end, leading 10- 20 years ahead, to ensure that as expiring mines close, there are new projects beginning operations.”

# 3

**“...be adaptable”**

**Graeme Clinton, Economist,  
Impact Economics**

**“...be adaptable”**

We must appreciate that what worked well 25 years ago may not necessarily work today, or at least will not be as effective. Adaptation must be a process that is forever underway to harness the true opportunity that economic growth affords. New opportunities, whether in mining or elsewhere in the economy, might not respond well to the old policies, and it will be important that the territory remembers that the first step when growing the economy is development. Remember, the policies that became transformational for the territory were not in place when exploration for diamonds was first underway, they came afterwards.”

# 4

**“...collaboration is critical”**

**Paul Gruner, CEO Tlicho  
Investment Corporation**

**“...collaboration is critical.”**

It can't be left to just government; if you take all of the people employed by the Tł'chǫ Investment and Det'ón Cho Development Corporations, (including their partnerships), they are the largest private employer of local people in the NWT.

We need to take these Indigenous entities to the next level: the enterprise stage, the commercial stage; to conduct work, self perform, and to have ownership pieces in the supply chain.

The more that we can do together, the more value we will retain in our local economy.

Can you imagine if we had more dev corps?”

**“...the definition of Indigenous participation has changed.”**

# 5

**Darrell Beaulieu, CEO  
Denendeh Investments Inc.**

**“...the definition of Indigenous participation has changed.”**

The bar has been moved. Diamonds opened our eyes to what participation could mean. Everybody had a different definition. It started with employment. One of the best returns we have seen from diamonds is still individual paycheques putting money directly into people's pockets and into our communities.

After that it was business services. Through our land claims and devolution agreements, it became royalties. So, what's left?

Today, its equity.”





## A SHOWCASE FOR YELLOWKNIFE'S MINING HERITAGE

**The Yellowknife Historical Museum opened in March to rave reviews.**

Its volunteers are quick to emphasize that Yellowknife's new community museum is a showcase of much more than the city's rich mining heritage.

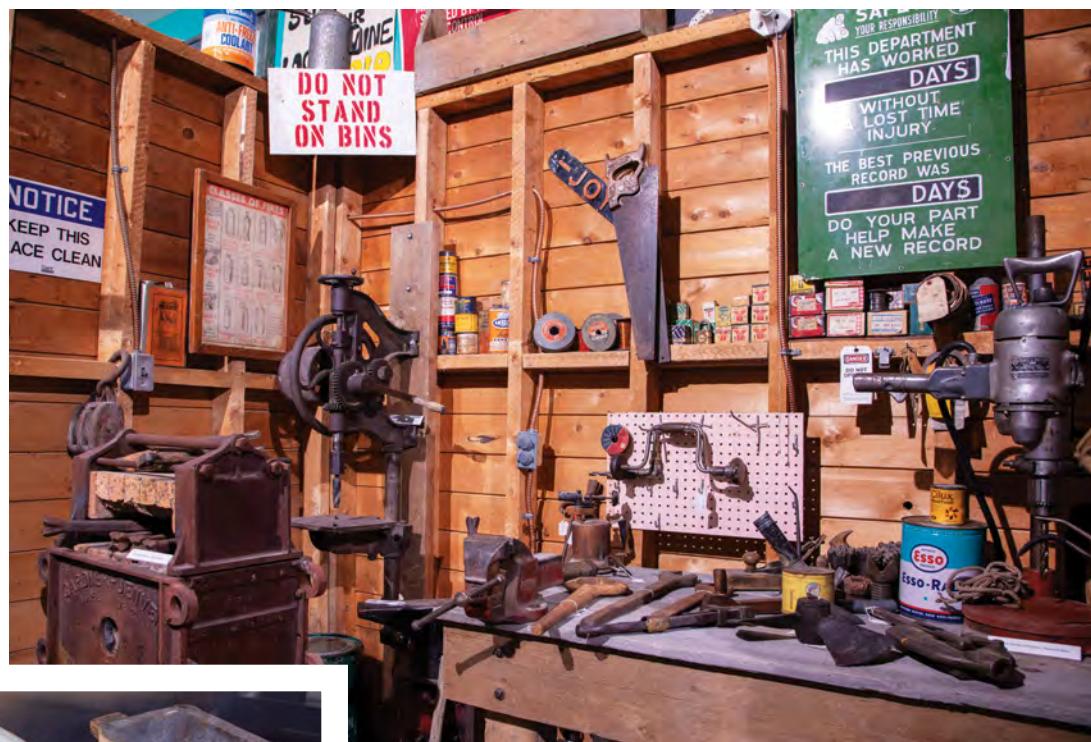
That said, its affinity to gold mining is certainly hard to miss. Located on what once was the Giant Mine town site, the museum is housed in (and around) the mine's fully renovated rec hall.

Outside of the museum, old buildings, antique vehicles, and pieces of machinery - including

equipment salvaged from abandoned gold mines - further illustrate Yellowknife's industrial heritage.

The museum's gift shop offers souvenirs, books, clothing and local arts and crafts. Its café is open for lunch and dinner. In the summer you can sit on the outdoor deck and enjoy a spectacular view of Great Slave Lake.

Prospector, artist, author and the Historical Society's first president, Walk Humphries says he hopes the heritage facility will evolve into an important cultural hub for the community.



**Above left:** Exhibits offer a glimpse into life in a 1930's gold-rush town – with immaculately staged recreations of a prospector's tent, mine office, workshop and local commissary.



**Above top right:** A typical mine workshop featuring a Canadian Blower drill press and Gardner-Denver blacksmith forge rescued from the former Ruth Mine; and drill steel shanks salvaged from the Negus Mine.

**Above:** Home furnishings in early Yellowknife were often built from scrap lumber and old shipping crates from the mines. This dresser originated as a wooden dynamite box.

**Inset photo:** Gold bricks were sent through the post office to the Royal Canadian Mint in Ottawa. A typical gold brick (this is a replica) weighed 50 pounds and contained 800 ounces of gold.

**Left:** A recommended miner's outfit to equip "one man for one year" included: wool underwear, sweaters and mitts, 10 yards of mosquito netting, 5 boxes of matches, 10lbs of tobacco and 200 lbs of bacon.

All pictures courtesy of Bill Braden Photo



# NWT Mining Week

Every year, the formal designation of “mining week” celebrates the unique history of mining in the NWT, the geology that makes it possible, and the people who drive and accentuate today’s mining industry.

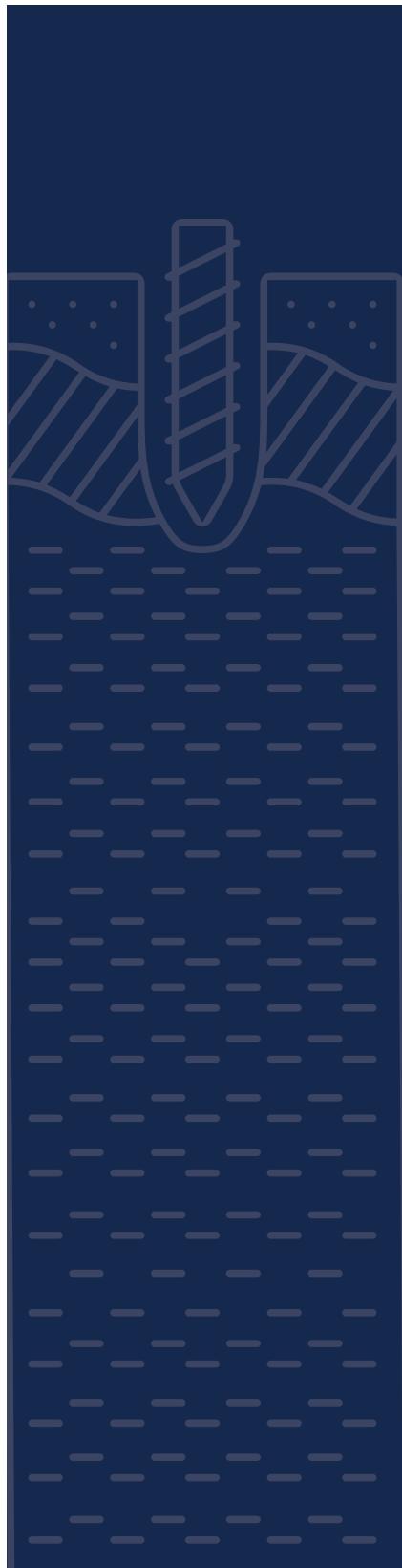
This year, the return of the annual mine rescue competitions provided an added and exciting culmination to NWT Mining Week. The competition recreates emergency scenarios in multiple disciplines for teams to test their ability to perform under realistic situations, time pressure, and in a competitive environment all while being showcased to their colleagues, family, and the public.

A treasured part of past mine rescue weekends, this year’s competition included the return of the miners’ picnic featuring a variety of mining-themed events designed to engage, educate, and entertain.



**Clockwise Top left:** The mine rescue team from the Burgundy Ekati Diamond Mine (NWT) prepares to enter a simulated smoke-filled "mine" shaft; **top middle:** Chantelle Masson, GNWT and Claire Tincombe, Det'On Cho Group of Companies promote the importance and benefits of having more women in mining; **top right:** A young prospector gets some hands-on guidance in a historical setting thanks to the Yellowknife Heritage Museum's photo booth – a re-creation of an early mine office; **2nd row right:** Outreach Geologist Landen Powell of the NWT Geological Survey leads the way on a "rock walk" along the four-kilometre Prospector's Trail; **3rd row right:** The rocks tell the story of Yellowknife's mining past, with a little help from Outreach Geologist Landen Powell of the NWT Geological Survey; **bottom right:** Young prospecting enthusiasts receive a demonstration in panning for gold and diamonds and other hidden prizes from the NWT and Nunavut Chamber of Mines; **bottom centre:** Madison Jerhoff, Manager Environment and Permitting highlights spodumene-bearing pegmatite in a "rock walk" hosted by Li-FT Power; **bottom left:** The Mine Rescue team from Agnico Eagle Meadowbank Gold Mine (Nunavut) arrive to compete in the rope rescue event; **3rd row left:** The team from the Baffinland Mary River Mine successfully rescues one of their teammates. The rope rescue is one of seven events in the mine rescue surface competition; **2nd row middle:** A photo booth sponsored by the Yellowknife Heritage Museum provided an opportunity to dress for mining weeks of yesteryear; **circle:** Annie Mathisen enjoys the best of NWT Mining Week: a carrot (or is that a carat?) from the Gahcho Kué Mine (Gahcho means "big rabbit") and a hot dog.

# CAMSELL RIVER IOCG GETS BOOST



## **A next-generation Northwest Territories mining company has received a \$5 million shot-in-the-arm from the Government of Canada.**

DEMCO, a 100% Dene-owned mineral exploration and mining company, will use the federal funding boost to advance field work and community engagement on its iron-oxide-copper-gold (IOCG) project at Camsell River near Great Bear Lake.

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***“Most of it (investment) will go in the ground,”***

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says Darrell Beaulieu, president of Denendeh Exploration and Mining Company Ltd. DEMCO plans to initiate a gap analysis this summer including gravity surveys as well as geological and environmental work aimed at further exploration.

“Our aim is to come out of the summer season with a good idea of potential drill targets,” Beaulieu said.

The Government of Canada says it is committed to advancing meaningful partnerships with Indigenous people while setting Canada up to be a global supplier of critical minerals.

For its part, the NWT is all in.

Better than half of the 31 minerals considered critical to domestic, industry, national security and emissions reduction can already be found in the territory.

Meanwhile northern and Indigenous entities, established to support and service the NWT’s three world-class diamond mines, are looking for new projects to drive their future.

Companies like DEMCO can serve as project generators says Beaulieu, advancing and de-risking projects on Indigenous held properties.

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***“NWT First Nations are increasingly looking at developing their own resources. Lands were selected with the knowledge that the resources are there. Of course, we’re going to need investment partners, but all mines start with a prospector or a junior.”***

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# LAST WORD

*Bill 34, The Mineral Resources Act (MRA), was passed by the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories (NWT) in 2019. Today, work is ongoing to develop the regulations that will bring this new legislation into force. In June, Minister Cleveland provided a progress update to her colleagues in the NWT Legislature. Her statement offers a timely “last word” to this edition...*

Mr. Speaker, developing regulations for the *Mineral Resources Act* is one of the key commitments from the Government of the Northwest Territories to support responsible resource development. This Act represents a new chapter for our mining sector, setting the stage for modernization and shared prosperity for residents, indigenous governments, and our industry partners.

The *Act* and future regulations will increase opportunities for exploration by providing more time to explore claims before transitioning to leases and making it easier to collect high-quality geoscience data. This, in turn, will attract investment and support the highly-anticipated move to an online map staking system.

The Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment is working in collaboration with Indigenous governments and stakeholders, to ensure that the regulations needed to implement the *Mineral Resources Act* are completed within the 20th Legislative Assembly.

A comprehensive *Policy Intentions Document* was completed at the end of 2023.

This document captures the intent and rationale of the regulations that are being developed collaboratively and is guiding the legal drafting process. Consensus has been reached with Indigenous governments and organizations participating in the regulation-development process for almost all of the proposed policy concepts.

The department is expecting an initial draft of the regulations toward the end of this year and (will be), in the first quarter of 2025, publicly sharing the proposed regulations for final engagement before they are circulated for Section 35 consultation.

Relationships will be foundational to the implementation of the *Mineral Resources Act*. Understanding this, the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment is working to ensure stakeholders are aware of and understand proposed changes and innovations, as well as the timelines for their implementation.

Department officials meet regularly with representatives of the NWT’s mining industry to address specific subjects or concerns and to ensure that all parties feel heard and see the full value that these regulations will bring.

In May, the department met with NWT regulators to provide updates and advance discussions regarding the integration of the *Mineral Resources Act* into the broader regulatory framework. Officials also traveled to Łutselk’e to meet with Elders, leaders, and residents to answer their questions and build understanding among Indigenous governments, stakeholders, and regulatory partners.

Mr. Speaker, the regulations that will bring the *Mineral Resources Act* into force are advancing under a protocol set out in the Intergovernmental Agreement on Lands and Resources Management, a first for our territory. This work includes restructuring the department’s Mineral and Petroleum Resources Branch for efficiency and supporting the new legislation with necessary software changes for greater transparency and accessibility.

An example of this leading industry approach is the proposed modernization of the socio-economic and impact-benefit agreements signed with diamond mines.

These agreements have positioned the NWT as a leader in the social and environmentally-conscious management of mining in Canada. Under the *Mineral Resources Act*, future benefit agreements can take various flexible forms, including participation, partnership, and equity agreements, all in the spirit of implementing of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

The time is right for these changes. There is a desire to chart a new way of doing business in the territory, bringing further clarity to industry and investors. This work is crucial as the territory moves towards a new era of mining amid a growing demand for critical minerals.

I look forward to providing further updates on work to develop these regulations as we strive to take our territory’s mining industry to new heights.



# Powering the future!

Government of  
Northwest Territories

Canada's Northwest Territories holds world-class potential to help create the clean energy the world needs. Our wealth of battery minerals – rare earth elements, cobalt, nickel, lithium, copper, vanadium and graphite – can move us forward. Let's get connected and power the future.

- Low-risk investment jurisdiction\*
- Wide range of early and advanced stage projects seeking investment
- Modernized mining legislation in progress to improve processes, increase certainty
- Strong resident support and Indigenous engagement in mining sector
- New transportation infrastructure to improve access to mineral resources

## Unlocking our Potential

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES MINERALS AND PETROLEUM

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