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BUILDING CERTAINTY IN BC'S GOLDEN TRIANGLE



BUILDING CERTAINTY IN THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE:

INFRASTRUCTURE, INDIGENOUS OWNERSHIP AND THE PATH TO EXECUTION



Northwest British Columbia's Golden Triangle is one of the most mineral-rich regions in the world – and one of the most strategically important for Canada's critical minerals ambitions. The remote, mountainous region holds an estimated 75% of Canada's undeveloped copper potential, alongside significant gold, silver, and other strategic metals essential to electrification, defence, and industrial supply chains.



Charles Morven
SECRETARY
TREASURER OF THE
NISGA'A LISIMS
GOVERNMENT



John Mullally
HEAD OF EXTERNAL
RELATIONS AT
NEWMONT NORTH
AMERICA



Mark Reder
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Todd den Engelsen
CEO OF THE TAHLTAN
NATION DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION

Yet despite decades of geological promise, several advanced-stage projects – including [Seabridge Gold's KSM project](#) and [Skeena's Eskay Creek gold-silver project](#) – remain stuck between ambition and execution. Today, a convergence of grid expansion, Indigenous-led ownership models, infrastructure investment, and disciplined capital is beginning to reshape the region's risk profile – and with it, investor confidence.

What emerges is not a frontier story, but an execution story: how certainty – of power access, regulation, partnership, and pathway to market – will determine whether the Golden Triangle finally delivers at scale.

ENERGY CERTAINTY AS THE FIRST CATALYST

For mining projects in the Golden Triangle, electricity has long been the gating factor. Diesel reliance inflates operating costs, increases carbon exposure, and complicates long-term planning. The North Coast Transmission Line (NCTL) may soon change that equation.

Recently passed provincial legislation cleared the path for BC Hydro to expand transmission capacity from Prince George to Terrace on the northwest coast, with Phase 3 extending power deep into the Golden Triangle.

"Expanded grid access via the North Coast Transmission Line (and extensions) is a step-change for projects in the region," says John Mullally, Head of External Relations at Newmont North America. "It will materially lower operating cost risk, capital cost, reduce diesel dependence and carbon exposure."

Newmont has a 50% interest in the Galore Creek copper-gold deposit (alongside Teck Resources) and also operates the Red Chris and Brucejack mines as a result of the 2023 acquisition of Newcrest. All these mines are located in BC's Golden Triangle, and Mullally explains that British Columbia is "a critical part of Newmont's future". "Our presence here reflects confidence in Canada as a politically stable and geologically attractive jurisdiction," he adds.

From an investor standpoint, grid certainty also redistributes risk. Mark Reder, Partner at public affairs consultancy Framepoint, explains that giving the transmission infrastructure mandate to BC Hydro transfers the cost and schedule burden away from

individual projects and "helps the collective investment conditions in the area".

The implications extend beyond economics. Clean grid power access strengthens ESG profiles, supports Indigenous participation through equity and contracting, and makes Northwest BC more competitive against jurisdictions aggressively courting capital.

INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP: FROM CONSULTATION TO CO-DEVELOPMENT

If power is the physical catalyst, Indigenous leadership is the structural one. Across the Golden Triangle, the Tahltan and Nisga'a Nations are reshaping the development model – moving from consultation toward ownership, co-development, and control over enabling infrastructure.

"We don't want to be just receiving royalty payments," says Charles Morven, Secretary Treasurer of the Nisga'a Lisims Government. "We could potentially be partial owners of any mines moving forward: we want to put ourselves in a position to be able to do that. By being part owner of any company, you get a seat at the table of the board of directors, and you have more of a say in making sure that the environment is going to be protected before you move forward." In practice, projects with aligned strategy, First Nations engagement, and environmental priorities are also likely to obtain faster permitting.

The Nisga'a Nation played a founding role in the creation of Nations Royalty, Canada's first majority Indigenous-owned publicly traded company, designed to build capital and enable direct equity participation. When Nations Royalty was formed, the value of the Nisga'a Nation's shareholding was approximately C\$100 million. As of January 19, 2026, the [value of those shares has doubled](#).

"Our nation wants to build financial independence," Morven says, adding that this will require capital, and increasing ownership in mines and infrastructure is one of the ways the nation is building this up.

For proponents and investors, this shift in partnership structures with First Nations is increasingly seen as a way to reduce risk. Morven talks about a certain "stigma" around the uncertainty that involving First Nations may create. "One of the things that I have



Ownership of the port allows Indigenous participation across the entire critical minerals supply chain, including control over transport and export routes, opening market access for current and future mining operations in Northwest BC"

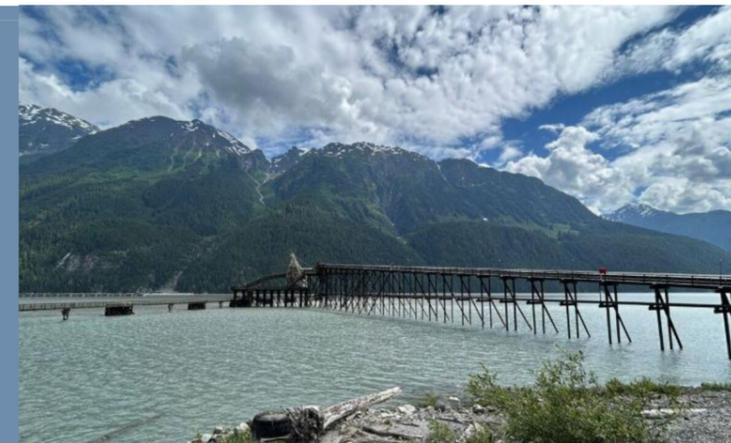


PHOTO COURTESY PORT OF STEWART

been doing is going out with junior mining companies or bigger mining companies, and breaking down that door so the investors know that Indigenous involvement is a good thing, in that it brings more certainty to their projects."

That view is echoed by industry. "Deepening partnerships with Tahltan and Nisga'a Nation are shifting projects from transactional consultation to meaningful levels of participation, co-management and sharing benefits of mining. This increases certainty by aligning the long-term vision for the regions where we operate with traditional landowners. Partnerships are increasingly viewed as risk-reducing – not risk-adding – when they are durable, transparent, and backed by clear governance," says Mullally at Newmont.

PORT-TO-MARKET CONTROL

Nowhere is that alignment clearer than at the Port of Stewart: [last August](#), the Nisga'a Nation, Tahltan Nation Development Limited Partnership (TNDLP), and Arrow Transportation Systems formed a strategic partnership to purchase the organisation operating the Port of Stewart Bulk Terminal – a crucial point of departure for Golden Triangle minerals exports.

"Ownership of the port allows Indigenous participation across the entire critical minerals supply chain, including control over transport and export routes, opening market access for current and future mining operations in Northwest BC," says Todd den Engelsen, CEO of the Tahltan Nation Development Corporation (TNDC, the business arm of the Tahltan Nation). With 70% of the Golden Triangle in Tahltan territory, TNDC has long supported the region's mining project, providing construction, infrastructure, mine development, transportation, aviation, aggregates, and support services at the likes of Red Chris, Eskay Creek, Galore Creek, and KSM.

Stewart Port's capacity is now set to expand from 50% to 75%, which, according to den Engelsen, will significantly improve route-to-market certainty. "As a deep-sea port with direct highway access and low handling costs, it offers faster, more cost-effective connections to global markets, particularly in Asia.

Expansion supports fully integrated port-to-mine logistics, linking the Golden Triangle's mining activity to international supply chains. With Indigenous ownership and room for growth, the port strengthens long-term economic stability and positions the region to meet rising global demand for critical minerals," he adds.

This increased reliability, based on a strong partnership with Indigenous nations, changes the game for the region. Newmont, the port's sole current customer, supported the financing of the terminal expansion, and Mullally says that embedding Indigenous equity directly into export infrastructure "aligns interests in a way that strengthens long-term project viability."

CAPITAL AVAILABILITY AND POLICY REFINEMENT

But despite the global enthusiasm for critical minerals, capital is not necessarily chasing every project in the Golden Triangle. Investors are disciplined, and timelines matter. Mullally explains that investor appetite is strongest where three conditions converge: infrastructure readiness, predictable regulatory frameworks, and durable Indigenous consent. "Investor appetite is strong but selective," Mullally says. "Commitments deepen when those three elements align."

Foreign downstream buyers are ready to invest in Canadian mining projects: Japanese and European firms are some of the largest investors in the Baptiste



nickel project in Central BC, for example. But this international capital is yet to materialise in the Golden Triangle.

“Capital can go all over the world,” Reder says. With mines being such long-term investments, Canada can increase its competitiveness by accelerating permitting and providing regulatory certainty, he adds.

Morven confirms that, based on his experience speaking with foreign investors, one reason they hesitate to invest is “because Canada’s environmental process is way too long and too much red tape at times”. The Nisga’a Nation is working with the provincial government to improve dispute resolution mechanisms to avoid delays without compromising Indigenous rights. “We’ll assist them in any way we can to make sure that we fill in all the gaps and help bring forth a brief resolution to different phases of the environmental process,” Morven adds.

It’s clear that momentum is building for Golden Triangle critical minerals operations. Newmont’s Red Chris Block Cave was recently designated as a Project of National Interest, which “helps enormously underscore the importance of major mining developments in Canada,” according to Mullally. And

BC Premier David Eby’s recently launched ‘[Look West strategy](#)’ aims to have four new mines or expansions in operation in the province by 2032.

Reder notes: “There’s quite a unique consensus in Canada right now around this industry and its value, that it can operate in a very highly sustainable, highly socially responsible way. I think the momentum here is significant. This is a province where we have a long history of really significant debates over land use, but today, around mining and critical minerals, we’re pretty unified, so I don’t see any significant roadblocks. The biggest thing that Canada needs to keep its eye on is competitiveness in attracting capital.”

The Golden Triangle’s story is no longer about potential – it’s about execution. With grid expansion underway, Indigenous Nations moving decisively into ownership, ports scaling for growth, and capital aligning behind certainty, the conditions are finally converging.

If Canada gets it right, the Golden Triangle won’t just supply copper and gold for the energy transition – it will demonstrate how energy certainty, Indigenous leadership, and disciplined capital can unlock critical minerals responsibly, competitively, and at scale.



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FROM RESOURCE RICH TO INVESTMENT READY: CAN BC UNLOCK BANKABLE CRITICAL MINERALS PROJECTS?



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Energy and Mines' Melodie Michel speaks with finance, mining, and international trade leaders on what it will take to turn British Columbia's critical minerals potential into bankable, globally competitive projects.



BAPTISTE PROJECT COURTESY OF FPX NICKEL

Home to 16 of Canada's 31 critical minerals, British Columbia is undeniably an attractive destination for critical minerals investors. The province is developing a critical mineral strategy, has established a dedicated government office and is starting to benefit from national funding schemes.

And yet, raising investment may still be difficult for BC's junior mining companies. "BC probably has some unique challenges, principally around what is viewed as a somewhat more cumbersome and time-consuming permitting avenue for major mining projects," says Michael Scott, Managing Director, Global Mining & Metals Investment Banking at RBC.

The province remains "a premier jurisdiction", he adds, with mines frequently permitted, though at a more measured pace. "There's probably a view that other tier one jurisdictions like Australia and the U.S., for example, are attracting significant capital through accelerated permitting timelines and aggressive policy support."

A May 2025 study published by the Mining Association of British Columbia listed 27 mining projects in advanced stages of development, which could generate C\$984 billion in economic activity for the province over the next several decades.

COMMODITY CYCLES AND GEOPOLITICS SHAPE INVESTOR APPETITE

The Baptiste nickel project, located in central British Columbia, has received approximately C\$60 million of investment since the first drilling took place in 2010. It has now moved into the early stages of a feasibility study and environmental assessment, and FPX Nickel CEO Martin Turenne tells *Energy and Mines* that he expects a final investment decision "by the latter part of this decade".

"In a lot of ways, the last two years have been the most difficult time, because the nickel price has been at a cyclical low around US\$15,000 a ton, and the narrative around nickel has tended to be focused on oversupply coming from places like China and Indonesia," he says, stressing that the lower the price of nickel, the harder it is to attract investment.

Despite that, the company was recently able to attract large international investors who "take a more positive long-term view of nickel and are very focused on ensuring that the nickel that they ultimately bring into their supply chains is responsibly produced," he adds. Much of the foreign appetite for BC critical minerals is offtake-driven, and recent geopolitical tensions have led several countries to offer incentives to their companies to secure critical minerals outside China or Russia.

"Japan in particular is interesting because the Japanese government is really encouraging derisking from Chinese copper supplies. So BC offers a very strong alternative to Chinese copper, especially because of its geographic position," explains Rachael Gurney, Senior Project Specialist, International Trade and Investment, at the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada. Gurney has observed similar appetite from South Korea and its battery manufacturers.

The EU also sees Canada and BC as a key, geopolitically aligned partner in this effort, according to Geneviève Tuts, Ambassador of the European Union to Canada. This was formalised in 2021 through EU-Canada Strategic Partnership on Raw Materials, and is further supported by the EU's Critical Raw Materials

Act, which sets targets for diversification of supplies for 34 critical raw materials.

While the partnership does not provide direct public grant funding, it acts as a catalyst for investment and commercial agreements: since 2021, EU imports of lithium from Canada have grown by 11%, graphite by 33%, manganese by 28%, and rare earth elements by 24%.

In addition, the European Commission recently launched the new Raw Materials Mechanism: "It will connect demand and supply for existing and future strategic raw materials; support project development in the EU and in third countries; link offtakers and suppliers with financial support and storage providers and enable cooperation between companies, such as demand aggregation, joint purchasing, and investment consortia," explains Tuts, noting that the first matchmaking round will take place in Q1 2026.

FPX Metals announced a [C\\$14.4 million equity investment](#) from Japan's Sumitomo Metal Mining in January 2024, and has received a similar amount of equity from [European stainless steel manufacturer Outokumpu](#).

"Security of supply and strengthening of geopolitical ties between allied countries in North America and Europe and in Japan and Korea is a key theme that is evident in the types of investment that we've been able to crystallize for our company," says Turenne.

PUBLIC CAPITAL, INFRASTRUCTURE AND THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

Besides foreign offtakers, critical minerals developers in British Columbia have several domestic avenues for investment. Increasing amounts of government funding are being made available for these projects, not least the C\$2 billion Critical Minerals Sovereign Fund announced in the Federal Budget in November 2025. The new fund will be administered by Natural

Resources Canada and is set to provide equity investments, loan guarantees and offtake agreements to advance critical minerals projects.

Canada Growth Fund is also [increasingly active in critical minerals](#).

The federal government is also supporting the development of infrastructure necessary for these projects, which is particularly crucial in BC, given the province's mountainous terrain and the remoteness of many mineral deposits.

The Critical Minerals Infrastructure Fund – also managed by Natural Resources Canada – has provided funding to several projects in BC, including an access road and powerline for FPX Nickel's Baptiste Project.

The Canada Infrastructure Bank is also [supporting infrastructure development for critical minerals projects](#), and recently granted a C\$139.5 million loan to BC Hydro to support the early works phase of the North Coast Transmission Line (NCTL) project, which should benefit miners in the resource-rich Golden Triangle.

"Government support for roads, power and water infrastructure can ultimately make or break project economics," says Scott at RBC.

TAX INCENTIVES, FLOW-THROUGH SHARES AND AN INTERESTING LEGAL PRECEDENT

What perhaps sets British Columbia apart the most is its tax regime: on top of the 30% federal critical minerals exploration tax credit available to junior miners since 2022, the province offers another 20% tax credit – [the highest in Canada](#).

This makes flow-through shares particularly attractive to investors in BC. "It derisks the investment a little bit more," explains Lisa Davis, Partner and CEO at



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PearTree, a financing platform that leverages flow-through shares and charity donation benefits to reduce dilution in mining investments.

“It’s a true win-win-win kind of situation, because the flow-through share offering is usually done at quite a good premium because of the extra value of the tax benefits, and the liquidity provider or end buyer can purchase the shares at a discount to market, and the pricing is all determined based on what PearTree’s clients need to achieve in terms of the after-tax cost of a donation,” she adds.

For this type of financing, no offtake agreement is necessary, though Davis says they can be helpful when combined with equity investment.

“As time went on, we were able to outperform traditional flow-through funds that had been the main source of financing for exploration in Canada, because the combination of the flow-through share tax benefits and the charitable donation receipt gave us more room to play with in terms of how we could price things,” she notes, adding that the introduction of the federal critical minerals exploration tax credit led to a tremendous change in the composition of deals supported by PearTree – from around 85% precious metals funding to 50-50 between critical minerals and precious metals. “So it just really demonstrates how powerful some of these tax incentives can be.”

All in all, despite slower permitting and more difficult terrain than a province like Saskatchewan, British Columbia is set to attract an increasing amount of investment into critical minerals projects – helped by its proximity to Asia, a tax regime that allows for innovative and advantageous financing structures, and the development of [several major infrastructure projects](#) under the national Major Projects Office.

A recent judicial decision by the Supreme Court of BC has also given investors some comfort: in October 2025, the court ruled that flow-through share benefits could be used to determine the economic feasibility of activities – not just the quality of deposits – mandating Canada Revenue Agency to pay [C\\$4.4 million in denied](#) tax credits to Seabridge Gold.

This decision set a precedent to allow flow-through share schemes to be used beyond pure exploration, potentially helping to cover milestones that are traditionally more difficult to finance – the infamous Lassonde curve. However, the federal budget announced in November effectively overruled it, clarifying that expenses incurred to determine the

quality of a mineral resource in Canada do not include those [related to determining economic viability](#). “It’s unclear right now as to exactly how this is going to play out,” Davis says.

The provincial government could also do more to lift common barriers to investment. “Permitting clarity and the ‘one project, one process’ approach can contribute to reducing investor risk and improve timelines by providing predictability, eliminating duplication of work, and offering a single point of contact throughout the regulatory process, hence streamlining decision-making, coordination and communication,” says Ambassador Tuts, adding that such an approach often reduces the time from discovery to production by several years.

To increase predictability in the decades-long process of moving a mine from exploration to production, Turenne advises engaging early with both provincial and federal governments, as well as First Nations impacted by the project.

He notes: “That pre-engagement with regulatory authorities can actually lead to more streamlined and more efficient outcomes. But I think that until you start to see those timelines start to be compressed and greater efficiencies actually achieved, my sense is that investors will continue to be cautious and potentially skeptical about the timeliness of the processes here in BC and in Canada.

Hear directly from Lisa Davis of PearTree and Martin Turenne of FPX Nickel — along with mining, government, investors and Indigenous leaders — at the BC Critical Minerals Forum, April 14-15 in Vancouver.

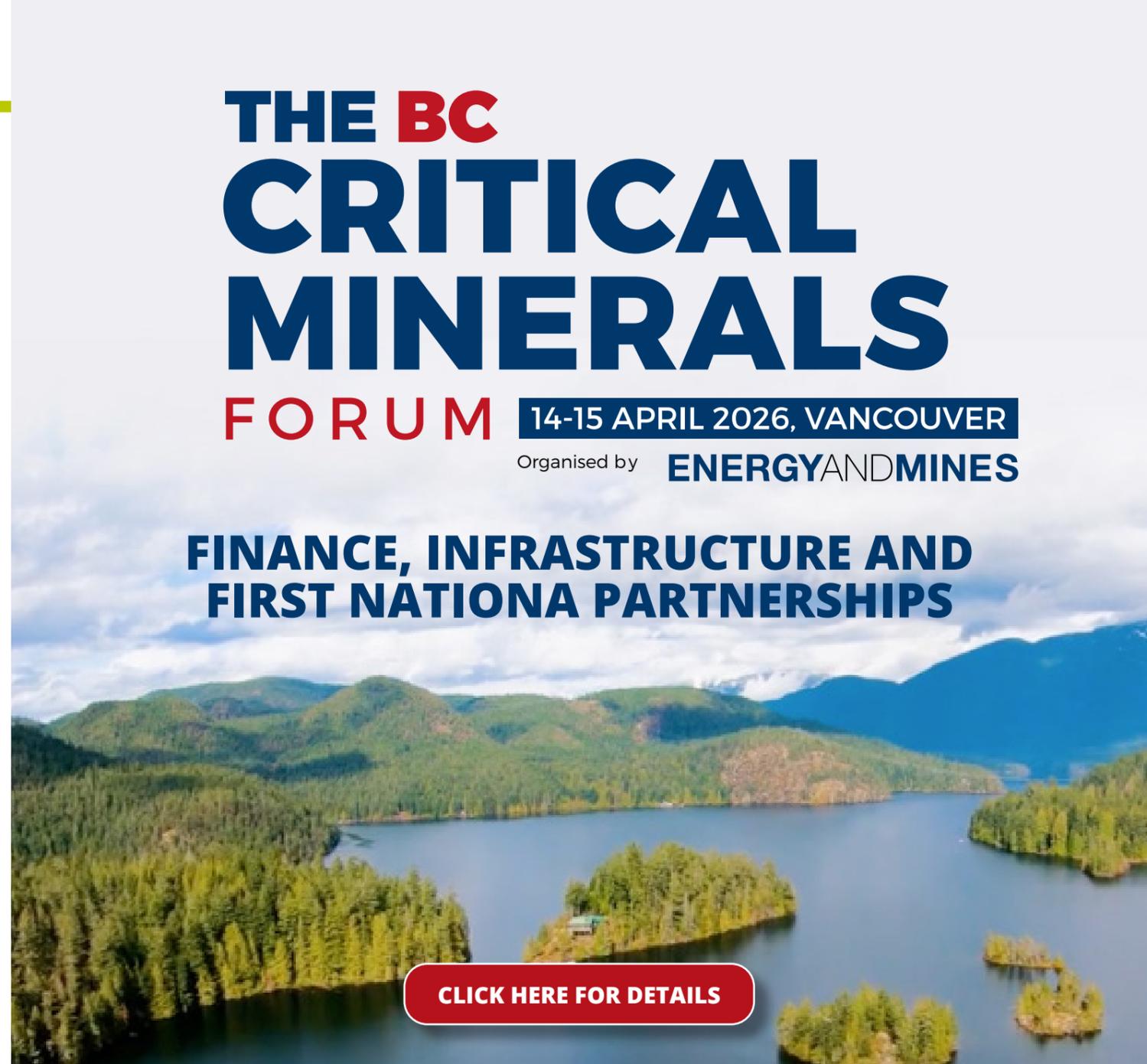
Visit the [BC Critical Minerals Forum website](#) to register.

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THE BC CRITICAL MINERALS FORUM PREVIEW:
**ADVANCING CANADA'S
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British Columbia sits at the centre of Canada's critical minerals ambitions — and at the intersection of some of the country's most complex development challenges. With 16 of Canada's 31 critical minerals, globally significant copper potential, and a regulatory and Indigenous governance landscape that demands collaboration rather than confrontation, BC has become a testing ground for how Canada will actually build secure, allied supply chains.

The **BC Critical Minerals Forum**, April 14–15, 2026, at the Sheraton Vancouver Wall Center, reflects this reality with an agenda that moves well beyond high-level policy aspirations and into the practical mechanics of project advancement. Across two days, senior federal and provincial officials, Indigenous leaders, miners, financiers and buyers will examine what it will take to unlock projects — not just in theory, but on the ground — in one of the world's most scrutinized mining jurisdictions .

ALIGNING FEDERAL STRATEGY, DEFENCE PRIORITIES AND PROVINCIAL EXECUTION

The Forum opens with a clear signal that critical minerals are no longer viewed solely through an economic lens. Early sessions link BC's mineral endowment directly to national security, defence supply chains and allied market resilience. Federal perspectives from Natural Resources Canada and the Department of National Defence are paired with provincial leadership from BC's Ministry of Mining and Critical Minerals, underscoring the growing alignment between resource development, industrial policy and security objectives.

Rather than treating defence and security as abstract concepts, the agenda focuses on how BC's minerals fit into real supply-chain decisions being made today. Panels explore how Canada's Critical Minerals Strategy is evolving from policy to execution, and

what mechanisms — from public capital to permitting reform — are required to embed BC projects into North American and allied industrial strategies.

INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP AS A FOUNDATION FOR CERTAINTY

One of the Forum's defining features is its sustained focus on Indigenous leadership — not as a sidebar, but as a central driver of project certainty. Multiple sessions examine how Indigenous-led equity ownership, infrastructure control and consent-based decision-making are reshaping the risk profile of critical minerals projects in BC.

Discussions go beyond principles to examine real-world models, including Indigenous loan guarantees, co-development frameworks and Nation-led infrastructure investments. These sessions position Indigenous participation not as an added layer

KEY SPEAKERS INCLUDE:



Crystal Smith
 Member
 Indigenous Advisory Council,
 Major Projects Office



Isabella Chan
 Senior Assistant Deputy
 Minister
 Natural Resources
 Canada



Wendy Hadwen
 Assistant Deputy Minister,
 Policy-Industry
 Department of National
 Defence

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of complexity, but as a source of clarity and long-term stability for investors navigating BC's regulatory environment.

The emphasis on Section 7 consent frameworks, Indigenous-led environmental assessment processes and governance structures reflects a broader shift: in BC, reconciliation is no longer separate from project economics — it is a core determinant of timelines, financing and viability.

UNLOCKING THE NORTHWEST: INFRASTRUCTURE AS THE DECIDING FACTOR

Nowhere is the convergence of opportunity and constraint clearer than in Northwest British Columbia. Home to the majority of Canada's undeveloped copper potential and a concentration of critical minerals projects, the region's future hinges on infrastructure — particularly power, transmission and ports.

The Forum devotes a substantial portion of Day One to the Golden Triangle, highlighting how energy availability, transmission expansion and Indigenous-owned infrastructure are redefining development pathways. Sessions examine progress on the North

Coast Transmission Line, BC Hydro's allocation strategy, and the role of Indigenous-led port ownership in providing certainty for global markets.

Rather than treating infrastructure as a government responsibility alone, discussions emphasize partnership models that align Indigenous ownership, public investment and private capital. The acquisition and expansion of Stewart Bulk Terminals emerges as a case study in how infrastructure control can accelerate project readiness while anchoring long-term regional benefits.

PERMITTING REFORM: FROM PROCESS TO PERFORMANCE

If infrastructure determines whether projects can move forward, permitting determines how fast — and whether capital stays engaged. The Forum's second day places permitting front and centre, with detailed discussions on regulatory reform, consultation timelines and coordination across jurisdictions.

Government officials, legal experts, Indigenous representatives and project proponents explore what "one project, one process" means in practice. Rather than debating whether permitting should be

streamlined, sessions focus on how to differentiate major amendments from operational approvals, reduce duplication in consultation, and ensure ministries are resourced to meet global demand timelines.

Importantly, these conversations acknowledge that faster permitting cannot come at the expense of trust. The agenda repeatedly returns to the idea that predictability — not just speed — is what ultimately unlocks investment.

FINANCING, BUYERS AND THE MIDSTREAM GAP

Capital is a recurring theme throughout the Forum, but the discussion extends well beyond traditional project finance. Panels examine how federal funds, infrastructure banks and sovereign-style capital are being deployed to crowd in private investment, and where gaps still exist — particularly for junior miners. Equally important is the role of buyers.

The Forum also tackles Canada's midstream challenge head-on. Case studies in lithium and rare earth processing, alongside provincial perspectives from Alberta and Saskatchewan, frame a broader discussion about how Western Canada can move beyond extraction and capture more value — while reducing exposure to foreign-controlled pricing.

A FORUM FOCUSED ON EXECUTION

What distinguishes the BC Critical Minerals Forum is its refusal to treat critical minerals as a future opportunity. The agenda is grounded in execution — in the decisions being made today by governments, Indigenous Nations, miners, financiers and buyers.

By structuring the conversation around infrastructure, consent, permitting, capital and markets — rather than abstract ambition — the Forum reflects a sector that understands what is at stake. In BC, success will not be measured by strategy documents, but by whether projects move forward with certainty, credibility and global relevance.

In that sense, the Forum offers more than discussion. It provides a snapshot of how Canada's most complex mining jurisdiction is attempting to turn critical minerals from policy priority into operational reality.

SIX REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD ATTEND THE BC CRITICAL MINERALS FORUM

- Hear directly from the policymakers shaping BC's critical minerals future**
Senior federal and provincial leaders will outline what is changing — and what isn't — across permitting, infrastructure and investment policy.
- Understand how defence and security priorities are reshaping demand**
Learn how defence policy, allied-market strategies and geopolitical realities are influencing where capital flows and how buyers assess supply risk.
- Learn what Indigenous-led project certainty looks like in practice**
Move beyond theory and hear directly from Indigenous leaders and project developers implementing equity ownership, consent agreements and co-development models.
- Get real insight into Northwest BC's infrastructure roadmap**
Understand what progress on power, transmission and ports means for project timelines, investment decisions and regional development.
- Clarify how permitting reform affects your project or investment**
Hear candid perspectives from government, legal experts and proponents on where delays occur, what is improving, and how to navigate approvals more effectively.
- Connect capital, projects and buyers across the value chain**
The Forum brings together investors, banks, buyers and miners to explore how financing, offtake and processing decisions are increasingly interdependent.

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