



News Release

NWT and Nunavut exploration expenditures remain weak

Yellowknife, NT (March 16, 2021) The latest Federal statistics from Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) show exploration expenditures are projected to see only a slight upturn in Canada's northern territories, however Nunavut and NWT's share of Canadian exploration spending continues to be weak. NRCan's [Annual and Revised Spending Intentions Statistics for Mineral Exploration](#) provides the following projected spending intentions for 2021 compared to 2020:

- \$47.7 million in NWT, a \$12.3 million (35%) increase from \$35.4 million in 2020
- \$85.4 million in Nunavut, a \$14.4 million (20%) increase from \$71.0 million
- \$98.5 million in Yukon, a \$22.6 million (30%) increase from \$75.9 million
- \$2,876.7 million in Canada, a \$785.4 million (38%) increase from \$2,091.3 million

When compared to other jurisdictions, Nunavut and the NWT continued to capture a declining share of total Canadian investment. Even with the projected 2021 increase, exploration would be at levels not seen since the early 2000s (see **Backgrounder Charts** attached).

While the COVID-19 pandemic did impact northern exploration, statistics also show that several provinces including British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec, and Newfoundland-Labrador experienced increased exploration in 2020.

"This continuing trend of falling exploration investment is worrisome given that exploration is required to find new mines to replace those currently in operation," said NWT & Nunavut Chamber of Mines President, Ken Armstrong. "Without an exploration turnaround, the sustainability of future benefits from mining continues to be at risk. The Fraser Institute's annual survey also reflects a significant decline in investor interest in the NWT and Nunavut and helps identify areas for improvement."

The [Fraser Institute Annual Survey of Mining Companies 2020](#) reports that Canada is the second most attractive region in the world for investment after Australia. However, rankings for the NWT and Nunavut continue to decline:

- The NWT fell to 46, down from 35 in 2019, and well below its 10 rank in 2018.
- Nunavut fell to 39, down from 26 in 2019, and well below its 15 rank in 2018.

Some of the reasons cited include permitting authorities not meeting their own established timelines, lack of transparency, and in the NWT, low confidence that explorers would receive permits. Our Chamber is working with regulatory bodies and governments to find process improvements. Find the full Fraser Survey report and associated documents [here](#).

Charts of historical and projected expenditures in northern Canada are in the **Backgrounder Charts** attached. The Chamber of Mines has summarized NRCan's complete data in charts [here](#).

For more information on the NWT and Nunavut mining industries, please visit the NWT & Nunavut Chamber of Mines website at www.miningnorth.com or contact Tom Hoefer, Executive Director at Tel: 867-873-5281 or email: executivedirector@miningnorth.com.

Backgrounder Charts

