



NEWS RELEASE

Positive 2013 Developments in NWT and Nunavut Exploration and Mining

(Yellowknife, NT – January 3, 2014) There were positive developments for the mining and exploration sector in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut in 2013 despite the challenges companies are facing globally. “As we begin a new year, it is helpful to reflect on the many recent positive developments in the NWT and Nunavut including legislative and regulatory initiatives and commitments to invest billions of dollars in mining developments in the coming years.” said Chamber President Brooke Clements.

Many projects advancing

Mining continues to be a cornerstone of the economies in the NWT and Nunavut and multiple projects continue to advance through environmental assessment, feasibility studies, permitting and licensing, and construction preparations.

- In the NWT, the Ekati, Diavik and Snap Lake diamond mines maintained the territory as the third most valuable diamond producer in the world. The largest diamond mine, Ekati, triggered the environmental assessment process to seek approval to mine three more kimberlite pipes that could extend that mine’s life from 10-20 years beyond its currently projected 2019 closure. Tungsten production from the Cantung mine was up, and new exploration on the site could extend its mine life. Four NWT mining proposals are advancing closer to production: Prairie Creek received all permits required to begin construction, and the NICO, Gahcho Kué, and Nechalacho projects received timely Federal ministerial approvals to proceed to the licensing process. Gahcho Kué also received the land use permit required to prepare the site in anticipation of the mine land use permit and water license required for construction and operations being issued in 2014.
- In Nunavut, the Meadowbank gold mine continued its strong performance in 2013, despite the downturn in gold prices. Six mining projects are advancing through the environmental assessment and feasibility study processes. Mary River received a 12-year water license and site preparations are now underway for construction of an early revenue phase iron mine as the approval process nears completion. The Meliadine gold project is undergoing environmental review and the Back River gold and the Kiggavik uranium final environmental impact statements are on schedule for 2014 submission. A robust preliminary economic assessment is breathing new life into the Hope Bay gold project and studies are underway to optimize opportunities for Izok Corridor Project. Work resumed on advancing the Bathurst Port and Road project to support the Hackett River and other deposits.
- While earlier stage exploration activity in both territories was below levels seen in previous years, investors did fund a number of important projects. In the NWT, diamond exploration programs were mounted at Kennady North and in the Lac de Gras and Dehcho regions, and gold exploration was conducted in the Yellowknife and Courageous Lake areas. In Nunavut, encouraging diamond results were reported for the first bulk sample collected at the Chidliak diamond project and additional projects that were advanced include the Angilak uranium project and the Hackett River base and precious metal project.

Legislative & infrastructure improvements

Governments are taking action to improve the legislative, regulatory, and policy environment as well as infrastructure for exploration and mining.

- The Prime Minister of Canada continued to emphasize his government's support for the North. During his eighth tour of the North, he announced new federal government funding for mine training as well as for continued and significant investment in geoscience research.
- Federal Bill C-47, the Northern Jobs and Growth Act, received royal assent and includes the Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act (NUPPAA) and the Northwest Territories Surface Rights Board Act. This fulfils outstanding legislative obligations under Aboriginal land claims agreements and responds to calls for measures to streamline and improve regulatory processes in the North.
- Federal Bill C-15 "The NWT Devolution Act" was introduced in Parliament in December. Bill C-15 introduces legislative changes to support one of the most significant developments in NWT history, the transfer of jurisdiction over land and non-renewable resources to the NWT Government.
- In preparation for devolution and to support its premier industry, the NWT Government launched its first ever *NWT Mineral Development Strategy*, in partnership with the Chamber of Mines, to lay a foundation to sustain and grow the NWT minerals industry and its many benefits.
- Long-awaited changes to the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act (MVRMA) were included in Bill C-15. Positive changes include defined regulatory process timelines, a measured approach to consolidate regional Land and Water Boards into one Board, and the authority to establish guidelines for Aboriginal consultation.
- Changes to Federal mining regulations are now underway to bring map staking to Nunavut and to transfer responsibility for land tenure to the NWT Government as part of devolution.
- NWT land use plans were completed in the Sahtu and Tlicho regions. The Nunavut Planning Commission is advancing the draft Nunavut Land Use Plan through public consultations. These plans are bringing more clarity to the rules around exploration and resource development.
- The NWT Government announced visionary plans for infrastructure investment that would benefit industry through its *Corridors for Canada III* transportation strategy and its *Vision for the NWT Power System Plan*, a strategy for hydropower and liquefied natural gas investment.

"Our two great northern territories of Nunavut and the NWT comprise nearly one third of the Canadian land mass, and have some of the most compelling and underexplored mineral potential in the world," said Chamber President Brooke Clements. "With the support of federal, territorial and Aboriginal governments, we are poised for significant growth in the coming years. Investors are helping to advance a number of mining projects, and we are hopeful that renewed global confidence in our industry this year will lead to increased investment in earlier stage exploration."

For more information on the NWT and Nunavut mining industries, visit the website at www.miningnorth.com, and in particular project updates in our [monthly newsletters](#), or contact Tom Hoefer, Executive Director at Tel: 867-873-5281 or email: executivedirector@miningnorth.com.