



NEWS RELEASE

Mackenzie Valley Highway could advance new NWT Mining District

(Yellowknife, NT – July 5, 2018) Last week's announcement of \$140 million in funding from the governments of Canada and the Northwest Territories (NWT) to advance the Mackenzie Valley Highway (MVH), holds new promise to advance exploration opportunities and mining in a region of the NWT that hasn't seen mining since the 1980s. The combined federal and NWT government funding of \$140 million will pay for construction of the Bear River bridge and 15 kilometres of all-weather road from Wrigley north to Mount Gaudet, as well as environmental and planning studies to inform final highway routing, design and construction permits.

The Sahtu Region is one of five administrative regions in the NWT, and at 280,238 square kilometres is the size of Labrador. It hosts 4 geological provinces with diverse mineral potential including lead, zinc, iron, copper, silver, uranium, lithium, cobalt, diamonds, tungsten and even emeralds. Despite this tremendous potential, it has seen a disproportionately low amount of mineral staking and exploration over the last 30 years, in large part due to its nearly 100 year reliance on oil and gas production. Most recently, as the petroleum economy has waned, Sahtu regional leaders have increased their participation at exploration and mining shows to revive flagging mineral investment. This highway funding announcement now provides them with a stronger message to help attract investment to the Sahtu region, since the long awaited MVH would not only help lower costs for communities but also for mineral exploration and mining.

Chamber of Mines President Gary Vivian said: "We were thrilled to see outspoken and respected Sahtu elder Cece McCauley at a recent Vancouver exploration conference, helping promote the road and mining in her region. As a strong, self-proclaimed 'woman warrior' for the Sahtu, for the highway, and for economic opportunities for her people, I am sure she is smiling now from above at this positive announcement. We truly believe that the MVH, when combined with strong leadership support, marketing, and a strategic plan to welcome investment to the region, the people of the Sahtu will be able to attract new mineral exploration and mining opportunities to that part of the NWT. As our diamond mines are so ably demonstrating in another part of the NWT, there are significant numbers of high paying jobs, billions in northern business and in tax and royalty revenues now flowing to northern communities, and public and Indigenous governments. They're creating a new economic future for northerners, one that isn't so reliant on government subsidies from the South."

Constructing the MVH is but one step in addressing the significant deficit in northern infrastructure. "The Chamber of Mines continues to strongly urge governments to invest in nation-building roads and a port to reduce costs to explore and mine in the mineral rich Slave Geological Province which straddles both the NWT and Nunavut territories," said Vivian. "That region alone has already produced tens of billions in mineral wealth, and we have just barely scratched the region's potential. Investing in infrastructure in the Slave Geological Province will bring a quick and healthy return on investment."

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