



MEDIA RELEASE

Chamber of Mines Welcomes Federal Commitment to Nation-Building Northern Infrastructure

(Yellowknife, NT – March 13, 2026) – The NWT & Nunavut Chamber of Mines welcomed the Government of Canada’s announcement of major new investments in northern infrastructure and the referral of key Northwest Territories and Nunavut projects to the federal Major Projects Office.

The federal initiative forms part of a broader national plan to strengthen Canada’s Arctic sovereignty, improve northern transportation and energy systems, and unlock the economic potential of the North. The announcement includes significant new investment in northern defence and civilian infrastructure as global competition and strategic interest in the Arctic intensifies.

The Chamber is encouraged by the federal government’s decision to advance several transformative northern infrastructure projects through the Major Projects Office, including:

- Mackenzie Valley Highway – an all-season transportation corridor connecting communities along the Mackenzie Valley and linking northern supply chains to southern markets.
- Grays Bay Road and Port – a strategic Arctic deep-water port and mineral transportation corridor that could enable responsible development of major mineral deposits in the Nunavut portion of the Slave Geological Province and strengthening Canada’s presence across the Arctic.
- Arctic Economic and Security Corridor – a proposed all-season road through the Northwest Territories’ portion of the Slave Geological Province to the Nunavut boarder, connecting the Grays Bay Road to the national highway system.
- Taltson Hydro Expansion Project – a 60 megawatts addition that will double the Northwest Territories’ hydro capacity.

These projects are widely recognized as nation-building infrastructure that could unlock globally significant critical mineral resources while improving connectivity for northern communities and supporting Canada’s security in the Arctic.

“The Northwest Territories and Nunavut sit atop some of the most prospective critical mineral deposits in the world,” said Tim Syer, President of the NWT & Nunavut Chamber of Mines. “But without roads, ports, and energy infrastructure, these resources remain stranded. Strategic investments like these are essential to unlocking the North’s potential for the benefit of Northerners and all Canadians.”

The Chamber emphasized that the North holds critical minerals needed for clean energy technologies, defence systems, and advanced manufacturing along with other minerals. With global demand for critical materials accelerating, Canada must ensure its northern resource potential can be developed responsibly and competitively.

The Major Projects Office was created to help coordinate and accelerate approvals for large projects of national importance, working with governments, Indigenous partners, and industry to streamline regulatory processes and reduce delays.

The Chamber noted that regulatory inefficiency and infrastructure deficits remain among the largest barriers to responsible resource development in Canada's North.

Syer further stated "Northern projects already face higher costs, challenging logistics, and short construction seasons. Streamlined approvals and coordinated decision-making are essential if Canada is serious about building major projects in the North."

"With the right infrastructure and clear regulatory pathways, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut can become a cornerstone of Canada's critical minerals supply chain," Syer added. "Investing in the North is not only good economic policy—it is strategic nation-building."

Mining has long been a cornerstone of the northern economy, providing thousands of jobs and generating billions in economic activity for northern communities, Indigenous businesses, and governments.

The NWT & Nunavut Chamber of Mines looks forward to working with the Government of Canada, territorial governments, Indigenous governments and organizations, and industry partners to ensure these projects advance responsibly and efficiently.

For more information on the NWT and Nunavut minerals industry, please visit the website at www.miningnorth.com or contact Karen Costello, Executive Director at Tel: 867-222-5281 or email karen.costello@miningnorth.com.