



Message from the Honourable Bruce Ralston
Minister of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation



Mineral exploration is a key part of British Columbia's economy. Despite the challenges posed by a global pandemic, mining and mineral exploration continue to provide stable high-paying jobs to British Columbians and the materials needed to create the innovative technologies of the future.

Employing more than 30,000 British Columbians, and with a mineral production value of \$9 billion per year, the sector is growing and thriving. Mineral exploration provides a robust foundation of promising projects that will become the prosperous mines of tomorrow.

We are supporting mineral exploration and mining in B.C. by improving the permitting process and strengthening health and safety. With a \$20-million investment in Budget 2019, the Province is working to improve regulatory oversight and permitting, while continuing to encourage investment and job growth. Recent changes to the Mines Act, including the creation of a Chief Permitting Officer, will help make the mining permitting process more efficient and effective, while ensuring that the mining sector continues to prioritize safety and the environment.

Since 2017, there have been more than \$1.3 billion in mineral exploration expenditures in British Columbia, and while the past year has been a difficult one, mineral exploration has continued to flourish. Early in the pandemic, we made sure the sector was classified as essential, so work could continue out in the field, guided by the Public Health Orders. Through Stronger BC, we provided rebates on select machinery and equipment investments to help businesses expand and become more productive. Despite the challenges caused by COVID-19, 2020 was a significant exploration year in B.C., attracting more than \$422 million in exploration spending, which was the highest since 2013.

With four major mines in operation, South-Central B.C. is currently the most productive copper mining district in Canada. The region's varied geology, well-established infrastructure, and access to markets also position it well for mining sector growth. This was demonstrated in 2020 with more than \$69.3 million in mineral exploration spending recorded in the region.

The economic success of mineral exploration in B.C. is linked to the critical demand for metals and minerals found within BC, in our transition to a low-carbon future. These minerals and metals set the foundation for green technology, such as EVs and wind turbines. As countries around the world, including our own, transition to a low-carbon economy, the lower greenhouse gas intensity of our mining operations allows us to distinguish ourselves from most global competitors. Mineral exploration and mining lead the way in B.C. in partnering with Indigenous governments on projects, and in helping



advance reconciliation. For these reasons, British Columbia is quickly becoming the supplier of choice for international investors concerned about environmental, social, and governance (ESG) outcomes.

I look forward to continuing to work with this sector to support further growth in mineral exploration in B.C. Our abundant natural resources and commitment to responsible development and innovation will guarantee success in our shared climate goals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bruce Ralston".

Bruce Ralston
Minister Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation