



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



Since the mid-1800s, mineral exploration has played a key part in British Columbia's economy. And, with the ever-increasing demand for minerals needed to transition away from fossil fuels, exploration and mining will continue to provide economic opportunities and jobs for thousands of people in this province.

Last year alone, B.C.'s estimated mineral production was over \$10 billion and the sector continues to grow and thrive. Mineral exploration and mining provide good-paying jobs for more than 30,000 British Columbians and the provincial revenues this sector generates help fund the many programs and services people in this province rely on every day.

With Budget 2022, we are again supporting mineral exploration and mining in B.C. by investing \$18 million over the next three years to improve and strengthen the permitting process. Our investments will not only improve regulatory oversight and permitting, they will also encourage further investment and job growth for this critical sector.

Since 2017, there have been more than \$1.9 billion in mineral exploration expenditures in British Columbia, and while the past year has been a difficult one, mineral exploration has continued to flourish. In fact, according to the Association of Mineral Exploration, Kamloops ranked number one across B.C. in supply chain expenditures at \$343M.

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 PST rebates on select machinery and equipment investments to help businesses expand and become more productive. Despite the challenges caused by COVID-19, 2021 was a significant exploration year in B.C., attracting nearly \$660 million in exploration spending, which was the highest since 2012.

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 2021 with more than \$147.6 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. Mineral exploration is extremely important as the first opportunity to establish partnerships to advance reconciliation which, combined with our low carbon operations, is key to establishing B.C.'s environmental, social, and governance (ESG) credentials. For these reasons, British Columbia is quickly becoming the supplier of choice for international investors concerned about 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