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IN THIS ISSUE

Message from the RCN	6
RCN 2023/2024 Board of Directors	8
RCN's Mission, Vision, and Positioning Statements	8
RCN bursaries.....	10
Message from Premier of British Columbia	11
Message from the Minister of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation	12
Message from the Minister of Forests.....	14
British Columbia ready to accept carbon capture and storage projects – By British Columbia Energy Regulator	15
B.C. takes giant step toward further reducing emissions.....	16
Global game changer: LNG Canada project nears completion.....	18
New path forward for Conuma Resources.....	20
B.C. forest industry looks to chart new path – By the BC Council of Forest Industries.....	22
Empowering women in trades: Building connections and facing the unknown.....	24
There's still plenty of gold in B.C.'s Cariboo Mining District	26
B.C.'s mining milestones.....	28
Reimagine your business lifestyle – live, work, play in the Northern Rockies.....	32
Thank you, North Thompson Region: The Trans Mountain expansion project completes.....	36
From local to global: How exporting can advance your B.C. business	38
Shifting hear: Tahltan HEO Program receives funding for second year	41
Construction on \$750 million export logistics project to begin in Prince Rupert Message from the RCN.....	42

INDEX TO ADVERTISERS

AME BC.....	35	Linde Canada Inc.....	13
Bk Two-Way Radio Ltd.	3	McElhanney Ltd.....	43
Bob Zimmer, MP / Prince George / Peace River / Northern Rockies.....	17	National Compressed Air Inc.....	7
Burns Lake.....	22	Northern Regional Construction Association.....	31
CIF Construction Ltd.	OBC	Northern Rockies Regional Municipality.....	5
Clear Blue Water Systems Ltd.....	37	Northwest Regional Airport.....	21
District of Kitimat.....	25	Sinkut Radiator Service Inc.....	20
Export Navigator	39	Sullivan Motor Products.....	9, 31
Fireweed Helicopters Ltd.....	13	Timberspan Wood Products Inc.....	20
Four Rivers Co-operative	10	Triton Environmental Consultants.....	9
Interior Workplace Compliance Testing	37	White Cap Supply Canada Inc.....	IFC
		Wilson M. Beck Inc.....	23

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MESSAGE FROM THE RESOURCE CONNECTOR NORTH

Resource Connector North has achieved significant milestones in 2023 with the overarching objective of fostering economic growth in the natural resource sector for the collective benefit of British Columbians.

With the approval of the Board, we have undertaken initiatives to extend our reach and establish bursaries across northern British Columbia, encompassing institutions such as the College of New Caledonia, Northern Lights College, Coast Mountain College, Thompson Rivers University, and the University of Northern British Columbia. These endeavors specifically concentrate on cultivating the knowledge and skills of young individuals to support businesses and resource projects in the northern region.

To enhance our engagement with supporters, Resource Connector North has leveraged social media platforms strategically. Interested parties can register online at www.resourceconnector.ca/membership/become-a-member, where new supporters can join, and existing supporters can update their business information. Moreover, we have bolstered our presence on LinkedIn through a dedicated webpage (www.linkedin.com/company/resource-connector-north/) and actively utilized Facebook (www.facebook.com/ResourceConnector) and Twitter (www.twitter.com/ResourceNorth) to disseminate information about RCN's activities and broadcast resource projects to our followers.

Resource Connector North's Board would also like to introduce three new directors: Confidence Ben, Lheidli T'enneh; Steve Sullivan, Vitaulic; and Norm Adams.

We are excited to once again to be working with DEL Communications to develop our 2024 RCN Membership directory and magazine. Past issues of the Resource Connector North directory and magazine are accessible at www.resourceconnector.ca/resources/magazine.

Finally, one of most important accomplishment for 2023 has been the collaboration with Artemis Gold and promoting the development of the Blackwater mine project near Vanderhoof. Resource Connector North promoted several networking events in Quesnel, Prince George, Vanderhoof, and Burns Lake.

On behalf of the Board of Directors,

Fraser Deacon
President, RCN Board ★



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Director



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Director

MISSION STATEMENT:

To promote economic growth in the natural resource sector for the benefit of all British Columbians.

VISION AND POSITIONING STATEMENT:

We serve business and industry related to natural resource development. We are a conduit of connectivity between business and natural resource sectors by:

DELIVERING services and products;

CREATING an environment of exchange of trade; and

SUPPORTING investment in Northern B.C.



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Bursaries



The RCN's bursary and scholarship program was established to help encourage future generations who have chosen to pursue careers in the resource sector. RCN provides bursaries to students at the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC), College of New Caledonia, Coast Mountain College, and Northern Lights College who are enrolled in trades programs with an emphasis on the resource industry. We are proud to support our many recipients and celebrate their success.

While the 2023 are still being awarded, the RCN would like to congratulate the following bursary recipients for their achievement:

- **Kane Schreiner** of Fort St. John, B.C.
- **Kelsey Cardinal** of Quesnel, B.C.
- **Coralee Ruiz** of Vanderhoof, B.C.

The RCN currently offers:

- Two bursaries in the amount of \$1,000 each are given to the College of New Caledonia in Prince George
- One bursary in the amount of \$1,000 is given to Coast Mountain College in Terrace
- One bursary in the amount of \$1,000 is given to Northern Lights College in Dawson Creek
- One bursary in the amount of \$1000 is given to University of Northern B.C.

For more information about RCN bursaries, visit the College of New Caledonia at cnc.bc.ca, Coast Mountain College at coastmountaincollege.ca, Northern Lights College at nlc.bc.ca, or the University of Northern B.C. at unbc.ca. ★

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MESSAGE FROM THE
HONOURABLE DAVID EBY
PREMIER OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



A CLEAN ECONOMY BUILT WITH NATURAL RESOURCES

Another year has come and gone. It's time to look back on our shared progress and the challenges we will tackle together in 2024.

In the year ahead, our government will continue working with resource industries to grow B.C.'s clean economy – especially in mining, with global demand for critical minerals growing. The world is taking notice of B.C. as a responsible supplier of natural resources, with lower carbon emissions, good wages, and working conditions for people and in partnership with Indigenous peoples.

B.C.'s Minister of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation, Josie Osborne, is a champion of this work. Minister Osborne recently attended the largest mining investment gathering in Europe to showcase B.C.'s strengths, and a new statement of cooperation with the Korea Mine Rehabilitation and Mineral Resources Corporation will encourage growth at all stages of the critical mineral life cycle, including exploration, mining, processing, manufacturing, and recycling.

Critical mineral development is just one area where our government is taking action to build on the longstanding strength of resource industries and create good, local jobs that families can count on for decades to come.

This year saw new opportunities for business, jobs, and growth in the exploration of low-carbon fuels, like hydrogen, electricity, renewable gas, and diesel.

In November, we launched a new, first-of-its-kind pilot program that aims to

ramp up the use of hydrogen fuel in the commercial transportation sector. We're partnering with hydrogen-energy company HTEC to procure heavy-duty fuel-cell trucks and complete upgrades to a hydrogen fueling station and maintenance facility. The company will buy, test, and demonstrate heavy-duty fuel-cell trucks for fleet operators throughout B.C. – bringing us closer to a future that is driven by clean energy.

Low-cost, low-carbon electricity is key to developing hydrogen as a clean fuel. And keeping industrial hydro rates affordable is one way that we're supporting the resource sector to create good jobs for people while protecting our air, land, and water.

We're committed to keeping electricity rates stable and affordable. For the sixth consecutive year, BC Hydro has applied for a rate increase below the rate of inflation. Industrial customers are saving approximately \$100 million this year compared to what rates would have been under the previous government's plan.

This year also saw the completion of B.C.'s first stand-alone renewable diesel refinery located in Prince George. Once fully operational, this project will deliver 170 million litres of renewable diesel each year, which creates 80-90 per cent less carbon dioxide pollution compared to conventional fossil diesel.

Additionally, our government issued an environmental assessment certificate for Cedar LNG, a floating, electrified LNG facility and marine export terminal on Haisla-Nation owned land. The project will be one of the cleanest of its kind in the world. It will

also provide unprecedented economic opportunity for both the Haisla Nation and region.

Many generations of British Columbians trace their roots back to forests, where they have lived and worked. Forestry is, and will always be, a foundation of the B.C. economy.

We are helping to diversify local economies to make them more resilient through the transition from high volume to high-value production. This year, we doubled the B.C. Manufacturing Jobs Fund to \$180 million and supported projects like a new mass-timber facility in Williams Lake, with 71 new well-paying jobs in the community.

Additionally, through the Rural Economic Diversification and Infrastructure Program, we've invested over \$20 million into projects based in the Cariboo, North Coast, Nechako, and Northeast regions of our province. There's more to come with a second round of projects that will create new clean development opportunities, more diverse economies, and better local infrastructure.

Throughout 2023, resource companies have shown themselves to be ready and willing partners in building a clean energy future. In fact, they are critical to making this future a reality.

I'm looking forward to another exciting year for resource industries in our province. And you can expect another year where our government will work with you to create new jobs, leverage our strengths to grow a cleaner economy, and build a better future for everyone in B.C. ★

MESSAGE FROM THE
HONOURABLE JOSIE OSBORNE
MINISTER OF ENERGY, MINES AND LOW CARBON INNOVATION



SUSTAINABLE GROWTH AND GLOBAL LEADERSHIP IN BRITISH COLUMBIA'S MINING SECTOR

As the province and the world shift toward a sustainable, greener future, British Columbia's mining sector maintains a crucial role, significantly contributing to the economy and offering tangible solutions to help fight climate change.

We are already seeing transformation that was unimaginable not that long ago, bringing us all closer to our shared net-zero goals.

In 2022, industrial mineral and coal exploration hit a record \$740 million, showcasing B.C.'s geological richness and responsible production of minerals and metals – including critical minerals.

British Columbia is well-positioned for the transition to a clean future, and our mining sector has a lot to offer to the world. We are geologically rich and are already responsibly producing some of the critical minerals and metals that are essential to fight climate change.

As Canada's leading producer of copper, B.C. aims to expand its role as a global supplier of critical minerals. The provincial government is actively developing a Critical Minerals Strategy to help facilitate the production of essential minerals like nickel and cobalt so we can add value and grow downstream opportunities.

Acknowledging the crucial role of First Nations in British Columbia's mining sector, the province emphasizes

collaboration and partnership with First Nation communities. First Nations continue to drive advancements in the mining sector, highlighting the importance of early engagement and partnership in project development.

With a commitment to shared decision-making, the adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and being the first jurisdiction in North America to enshrine these rights into legislation through the Declaration Act, British Columbia is actively working closely with the First Nations Leadership Council and the First Nations Energy and Mining Council to modernize its mineral tenure system through the Mineral Tenure Act. This commitment reinforces the province's dedication to reconciliation and collaboration to unlock the full potential of B.C.'s resources and to create a stable business environment.

British Columbia's unwavering dedication to environmental, social, and governance (ESG) principles has positioned the province as a world-leading mining jurisdiction, offering stability and predictability for investments and operations. In fact, we take pride in having multiple initiatives underway that both support and share our ESG performance with the public and investment community. Notably, our ESG Centre of Excellence, coupled with cutting-edge digital tools like the Energy & Mines Digital Trust,

empowers B.C. mines to demonstrate their product's origins and sustainability value. Environmental programs, exemplified by the CleanBC plan, actively promote the use of renewable energy in mining operations and incentivize the adoption of electric vehicles and machinery. These efforts underscore the province's resolute commitment to fostering innovation and sustainability.

Add to this our fully integrated port, rail, and road transportation systems – providing access to the largest international clients for critical minerals, our competitive taxes and strong fiscal and regulatory environment, electricity that's generated from 98 per cent clean and renewable resources, as well as a highly educated and multilingual workforce, and it's clear that B.C.'s mining sector makes for excellent investment opportunities.

For over a century, British Columbians have built a robust mining industry through hard work, dedication, and a commitment to innovation. As the mining sector continues to evolve towards a more sustainable, low-carbon future, collaboration remains key. The dedication to environmental sustainability, economic growth, and community engagement will continue to ensure that British Columbia's mining sector remains a global leader. ✨



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MESSAGE FROM THE **HONOURABLE BRUCE RALSTON** MINISTER OF FORESTS



B.C.'s forestry sector is in a period of transition, one felt by thousands of hard-working people in communities throughout the province. For generations, forestry workers have supported their families through good, well-paying jobs and it is my goal to see that continue in the future. The global demand for forest products is expanding and our government is putting B.C.'s forestry sector front and centre, helping our workers become leaders in the manufacturing of higher-value products.

We have announced new programs that will assist companies in adapting their operations while continuing to create jobs and careers. The B.C. Timber Sales (BCTS) Value-Added Manufacturing Program and the B.C. Manufacturing Jobs Fund are examples of how our government is encouraging innovation and growth across the supply chain. Mills in every corner of the province can be confident that they are supported in the shift to the production of high-value products.

Forestry workers and communities throughout the province are also benefiting from new funding for the Forest Enhancement Society of B.C. (FESBC). With an investment of \$50 million from the province, FESBC will expand funding for projects and programs that increase the use of

low-value or residual fibre, including trees damaged by wildfires and harvest residue left over from logging that would otherwise be burned in slash piles. FESBC is a proven partner in delivering projects on the ground that benefit people and their families around B.C. while reducing the devastating effects of wildfire.

As the forest sector transitions towards a higher-value model, it is important to address the health of our natural landscape. We have invested \$25 million in eight new Forest Landscape Plans (FLPs) with the goal of creating deeper engagement and greater transparency in the management of our forests. FLPs incorporate local knowledge and the values of First Nations communities and stakeholders into management of entire ecosystems. They are one way we can better manage forestry activities like harvesting and silviculture, while reducing the risks of wildfire and ensuring we have a strong diversified forestry sector in the future. Through continued partnerships with First Nations, local communities, and industry, I am optimistic that we are already seeing positive changes in the way we manage the long-term resiliency of our forests.

The unprecedented wildfires over the last few years took a toll on our forests and deeply impacted the

communities that rely on them. This year, of course, we witnessed the worst fire season on record and a changing climate means that we can expect longer and more severe fire seasons in the years to come.

In 2022, our government made the largest investment in the history of the B.C. Wildfire Service and doubled the annual funding for wildfire prevention programs. We've also made changes to the Wildfire Act, giving prescribed fire legal standing in B.C.'s forest management tool kit, enabling the government to expand work with First Nations and other partners on cultural and prescribed burns. I am committed to ensuring communities and wildfire firefighters have the tools they need to help keep homes, businesses, and livelihoods safe.

Forestry workers of this province are the engines that drive the forestry sector and I know there are many challenges affecting them today. Facing the realities of climate change and shifting markets, our industry is evolving and we are ready to meet the challenges. Through the continued advocacy and involvement of all British Columbians, I am confident that our forestry sector will continue to thrive for the people of this province and solidify our reputation as world-class leaders in forestry innovation for future generations. ★

BRITISH COLUMBIA READY TO ACCEPT CARBON CAPTURE AND STORAGE PROJECTS



On September 1, 2023, the British Columbia Energy Regulator (BCER) formally took on the responsibility of regulating a key component of global warming mitigation; carbon capture and storage (CCS) in B.C.

The BCER has extensive regulatory experience with similar projects and has identified significant CO₂ geologic storage capacity. Further, the Canadian government has recognized British Columbia as having policies and regulation in-place to effectively manage CCS in the province, enabling projects to qualify for the federal CCS investment tax credit.

The earth has been through many significant climate pattern changes throughout geologic history, as evidenced within the many geologic formations seen when drilling through to access oil and gas resources, and more recent data within sediment and ice core studies.

Though CO₂ average atmospheric concentration is currently only ~420 parts per million, this is a 50 per cent increase from pre-industrial time, and it's rising. Carbon capture and storage, also referred to as sequestration, describes methods to both prevent additional CO₂ emissions and potentially reduce CO₂ already in the atmosphere.

The prominent technology, already in use at several sites around the world, is the capture of CO₂ from industrial site flue stacks (chimneys), compression of the CO₂ gas into a liquid state, and injection into the deep subsurface for permanent storage. The geologic conditions of pressure and temperature at depths greater than ~800 meters below the surface keep the CO₂ in a dense state, occupying only about 1/300th of the volume the same mass would have in the atmosphere. CCS projects are described as storing megatonnes (millions of tonnes) of CO₂.

The BCER is now responsible, under the Energy Resource Activities Act, for the regulation of CCS activity; the facilities compressing the CO₂, pipelines transporting this CO₂ and the wells and reservoirs of a CCS project.

An applicant for a CCS project is required to own the subsurface rights for the formation in which the CO₂ will

be stored, which is administered by the B.C. Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation.

The BCER publishes a CCS application guide, outlining the detailed knowledge required to include in the written application submission. A BCER multidisciplinary team of professionals considers the suitability of the reservoir and the wells for the purpose of CCS; protection of the environment, including aquifers containing useable water, and safety are all top of mind. One of many considerations is the avoidance of injection that may result in induced seismicity. In northeast B.C., injection would result in CO₂ being locked in formations that have contained fluids for millions of years.

A CCS project approval from the BCER would contain numerous enforceable conditions regarding operations, monitoring, measurement, testing and reporting. The consultation process with land owners, communities, and First Nations is key to any CCS project.

To date, there are no dedicated CCS projects approved in British Columbia. However, the BCER and industry have decades of experience in northeast B.C. with safe deep injection and storage of produced water and acid gas, a combination of carbon dioxide and hydrogen sulfide removed from produced natural gas.

Initial projects are expected to be of modest scale based on point source emissions in known geologically favourable areas, that do not require significant pipelines for CO₂ transportation. Research and development work on new CCS technology is ongoing worldwide to foster this global warming mitigation.

Though Northeast B.C. is a primary area of interest for CCS, other areas of the province have geology which may be suitable for CCS projects utilizing slightly different technology.

The provincial government and the BCER will continue to work together, along with academia, researchers, First Nations, communities, and standards organizations, to ensure CCS projects occur in a safe and responsible manner. ★

B.C. TAKES GIANT STEP TOWARD FURTHER REDUCING EMISSIONS

By Melanie Franner



(L-R) Michelle Carr, Commissioner and CEO, BC Energy Regulator; George Heyman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy; Premier David Eby; MLIB Chief Harley Chingee; Josie Osborne, Minister of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation.

Described by B.C. Premier David Eby as what may eventually become one of the largest Indigenous energy projects in all of Canada, the recently announced McLeod Lake Indian Band (MLIB) hydro proposal marks yet another milestone achievement for the province.

The MLIB and the Province of British Columbia have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) that lays the foundation for a proposed Tse'khene Energy Transition Hub that will boost the regional economy while producing low-carbon, clean energy.

"This new collaborative initiative advances our shared goals of reconciliation," says George Heyman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy. "Through

partnering with First Nations, like the McLeod Lake Indian Band, we support reconciliation and economic growth, safeguard the environment, and help to reach our goal of reducing emissions by 40 per cent by 2030 by increasing clean-energy production for British Columbia."

FIRST OF MANY

The new Tse'khene Energy Transition Hub will be located about 80-90 km north of Prince George on the Kerry Lake East Indian Reserve. The MLIB reports that it has already secured world-class industry partners that are pursuing definitive agreements to further advance several on-reserve projects for its energy transition hub.

The first of these is a hydrogen production facility that would help

to significantly reduce emissions in industries that are hard to decarbonize such as medium- and heavy-duty transportation, pulp and paper processing, as well as the oil and gas refining industries. The second proposed project is a straddle plant that would reduce carbon emissions by extracting high-value, natural-gas liquids that would otherwise be burned as by-products in the gas distribution system.

"MLIB is exploring two projects at the proposed Tse'khene Energy Transition Hub," says MLIB Chief Harley Chingee. "A hydrogen production facility in partnership with Mitsubishi Power Americas and Enbridge, and a natural gas liquids extraction plant in partnership with AltaGas. These partner companies have the experience and expertise to build and run such projects and are enthusiastic about working with MLIB."

The two proposed projects are worth approximately \$7 billion, and could create upwards of 2,000 construction jobs and 500 full-time permanent jobs.

"We have a long way to go before final approvals and the start of

According to the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation, the CEMPO was not specifically created for the MLIB project, but the project is the type of initiative that CEMPO was created to support.

construction but we believe there will be job opportunities for MLIB members and others,” says Chief Chingee.

The MoU that was signed bridges regulatory considerations for projects with MLIB and is the result of a collaborative effort between MLIB, the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation, and the BC Energy Regulator. By aligning regulatory roles, the MoU will advance MLIB’s governance rights over its reserve lands, while establishing a responsible and predictable regulatory pathway for energy developments.

“This partnership between the province and the McLeod Lake Indian Band creates the foundation for exciting economic projects that will provide direct benefits to the region and help lower emissions,” says Premier Eby. “By working together, we can advance economic reconciliation, create strong economic growth, create good jobs, and meet our climate goals.”

THE DETAILS

The MoU provides clarity and direction on regulatory obligations and environmental assessment processes on which the three parties will collaborate – specifically, in three key areas: jurisdiction and environmental assessment; regulation; and management committee.

A management committee, consisting of representatives from the Province, BC Energy Regulator, and MLIB

will be formed to address issues and promote continuous collaboration.

The existing MoU is expected to build “a longstanding and successful partnership between MLIB and the province, as well as the BC Energy Regulator”.


A detailed action plan will follow to help guide the work required during the term of the agreement. The Clean Energy and Major Projects Office (CEMPO) will also help navigate the project through regulatory processes. According to the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation, the CEMPO was not specifically created for the MLIB project, but the project is the type of initiative that CEMPO was created to support. CEMPO was announced in March 2023 to help lead clean energy development in B.C., ensuring the province is meeting its climate targets

and providing British Columbians with jobs and opportunities in the growing clean energy sector.

HERALDING IN A NEW ERA

The new MoU points to a new way of doing business in the province of B.C. – one that recognizes the importance of clean energy, as well as the need to work collaboratively for the good of all parties.

“Signing this MOU is a hallmark of the collaborative partnerships between the province and First Nations in advancing new energy projects,” says Josie Osborne, Minister of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation. “I value the important relationship we have with the McLeod Lake Indian Band and I’m looking forward to seeing the Tse’khene Energy Transition Hub progress in the years ahead.” ★



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GLOBAL GAME CHANGER: LNG CANADA PROJECT NEARS COMPLETION



By Melanie Franner

LNG Kitimat site construction activities, Kitimat, 2023. LNG Canada.

The largest private investment project in Canada's history is nearing completion – setting the stage for the country to become a major player in the low-carbon LNG energy market at a time when geopolitical conditions demonstrate the need for secure energy supplies.

“Construction of the LNG Canada facility in Kitimat is now more than 85 per cent complete overall (November 2023),” says Teresa Waddington, Vice President, Corporate Relations, LNG Canada. “With construction nearing completion, we’re preparing for commissioning and safe start-up activities which will begin in 2024. We remain on track to ship first cargoes by the middle of the decade.”

A LOOK BACK

The LNG Canada project began as a greenfield development built on 400 hectares of land in Kitimat, B.C. The company is a joint venture comprised of five global energy companies with substantial experience in LNG: Shell, PETRONAS, PetroChina, KOGAS, and Mitsubishi Corporation.

When completed, the plant will consist of a natural gas receiving and LNG production facility, as well as a marine

terminal with the capacity to accommodate two LNG carriers, one tugboat dock, and LNG loading lines. The facility will also include LNG processing units, storage tanks, rail yard, water treatment facility, and flare stacks.

The LNG Canada facility will initially export LNG from two processing units or “trains” totalling 14 million tonnes per annum (mtpa). More notably, however, is that the LNG Canada facility is being built as the benchmark for responsible LNG development in the world.

“GHG emissions from LNG Canada’s Kitimat operation will be lower than any facility of a similar size operating in the world today: 35 per cent lower than the world’s best performing facilities and 60 per cent lower than the global weighted average,” says Waddington. “This is important in the context of the commitments Canada has made to reduce GHGs and important in the context of helping our international trading partners to meet their own climate change commitments.”

The facility will use energy-efficient gas turbines and the latest methane-emission mitigation technologies to help reach low-emissions standards. It will also use electricity from the BC Hydro grid, and it is ideally located to take advantage of northwestern B.C.’s cool climate and shorter



shipping distances to Asia to further reduce overall emissions.

THE PRESENT

Already, the LNG Canada project has had a huge impact on the province's economy. A Canadian and B.C. workforce of more than 8,000 is currently employed at the LNG Canada project site in Kitimat.

Plus, there are thousands of additional people working on the Coastal GasLink pipeline (which will deliver natural gas to the facility for liquification and export). Total pipeline installation was completed in October, while mechanical installation finished ahead of schedule in November.

LNG Canada has invested over \$5 million in workforce development programs and has contributed more than \$10 million to programs and equipment benefitting Kitimat, Terrace, and First Nations communities. The project has also paid millions in property taxes each year.

"The cumulative value of our project's contracts and subcontracts to local, Indigenous, and other businesses in B.C. continues to grow, and had exceeded \$4.2 billion as of August 2023," says Waddington. "That includes more than \$3.3 billion to Indigenous-owned and local area businesses."

With construction nearing completion, LNG Canada is currently preparing for the commissioning and safe start-up activities, which will begin in 2024. Along the way, however, the company has not lost sight of the goal to further reduce GHG emissions wherever possible.

"We understand that all levels of governments want to see industries of all kinds reduce their emissions profiles in order to meet certain objectives," says Waddington. "That is one reason why we have proactively taken steps to identify potential opportunities to further advance electrification at our export facility in Kitimat and potentially along the Coastal GasLink pipeline route, to align with an availability of sufficient reliable power."

A LOOK FORWARD

While LNG Canada is on track to ship the first cargoes by the middle of this decade, the joint venture company is already thinking ahead to the next phase.

"With our five joint venture participants, we continue to evaluate the timeline and scope for a second phase expansion," says Waddington. "A Phase 2 final investment decision will take into account several factors which include over-all competitiveness, affordability, pace, future GHG emissions, and stakeholder needs."

One possibility to further reduce GHG emissions, adds Waddington, is a phased-in replacement of Phase 2 gas turbines with electric motors, powered by electricity from the BC Hydro grid.

"Our five joint venture participants agree that a phased electrification for Phase 2 is a feasible path," she says. "We see a number of important benefits: reducing our emission performance even further from what is already a world-leading design; advancing our competitive profile; and alignment with government objectives."

TOWARD A CLEANER TOMORROW

Waddington points out that a reliable supply of responsibly produced energy should never be taken for granted. A look at the current geopolitical climate provides solid proof of this.

For this reason – not to mention the highly skilled jobs, long-term employment, and stable revenue stream – LNG Canada represents a unique opportunity for Canadians across the country.

"LNG Canada in particular is an appealing story," concludes Waddington. "We're on course for exceptional performance while setting the benchmark for economically, environmentally, and socially responsible LNG development." ★

NEW PATH FOR CONUMA RESOURCES

By Melanie Franner

Conuma Resources Limited (Conuma) began 2023 with a bang with an agreement in place with Teck Resources Limited to acquire the Quintette steelmaking coal mine near Tumbler Ridge.

The purchase sees Conuma paying \$120 million in cash in staged payments over 36 months, plus an ongoing 25 per cent net profits interest royalty, first payable after Conuma recovers its investment in Quintette.

There is little doubt that 2023 marks an exciting time for the steelmaking coal producer.

CLOSE COMPLEMENT

Conuma's new Quintette acquisition is located near three of its other mines: Brule, Wolverine, and Willow Creek, all of which are currently in operation.

Located between Chetwynd and Tumbler Ridge, Brule Mine became Conuma's first operational mine

in September 2016. It currently produces 2+ million tonnes per year.

The company's Wolverine Mine was the second Conuma mine to become operational, which happened in December 2016. It currently produces 1.5+ million tonnes per year. Again, plans are to phase out production at Wolverine's Perry Creek deposit and move equipment and resources to Quintette.

Located 35 minutes southwest of Chetwynd, Willow Creek Mine is situated near the Pine Pass. The property became Conuma's third operational surface mine in June 2018. It currently produces 1.2 million tonnes per year.

The company states that its current surface mine operations at Brule, Wolverine, and Willow Creek have a rated capacity to produce more than five million tonnes of high-quality steelmaking coal annually and provide more than 1,000 direct and 3,000 indirect jobs for families in the Peace River Regional District.

MONTHS IN THE MAKING

The new acquisition, which closed officially in 1Q 2023, has been described by Conuma as pivotal. It will strengthen the company's "position as a global supplier of steelmaking coal", and create long-term opportunities for employees and economic benefits to northeast B.C.

The Quintette mine, located near Tumbler Ridge, was in operation for 18 years prior to Teck closing it in 2000. Teck had been managing the mine in a care and maintenance phase since then.

Reports suggest that Quintette has at least 42 million tonnes of known reserves and at least 200 million tonnes of estimated reserves. If the company continues to produce at 1.5 million tonnes per year, which the company has publicly stated it intends to do, then that means a life span of at least 25 years for the mine.

Conuma CEO Brian Sullivan noted that there was a fair bit of work to do to develop the mine plan and get the



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plant modernized and operational again. He noted that the company's strategy is to use the existing facilities at Quintette, thus avoiding the need to truck the coal to the preparation plant at Wolverine. The strategy does require working with CN for some rail rehabilitation.

Additionally, the plan is to transplant resources and equipment from the Wolverine plant to the Quintette facility, once operations at Wolverine's Perry Creek deposit come to a close (estimated to be 2Q 2024). The Mount Hermann deposit at Wolverine will be "reprioritized" to accommodate the new focus on Quintette.

Conuma has also publicly committed to begin working on the implementation of the Global Industry Standard on Tailings Management (which prioritizes safety throughout the life of a tailings facility) with the storage facilities at Quintette.

Sullivan admitted that the acquisition had been months in the making. It began with Conuma taking all the legacy coal sitting off-site at Quintette and processing it at Wolverine, but he described it as a "successful first project".

RENEWED ENERGY

The recent Quintette acquisition brings new life and energy to Conuma, while also generating excitement and enthusiasm throughout the Tumbler Ridge region. By cementing its foothold in the area, Conuma has managed to further establish itself as a global supplier of steelmaking coal. ★

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FUTURE FOCUS: BC FOREST INDUSTRY LOOKS TO CHART A NEW PATH

By Linda Coady, President & CEO of the BC Council of Forest Industries



The B.C. forest industry has been deeply embedded in the fabric of British Columbia for generations, playing a vital role in sustaining communities, innovating, investing, and enhancing the overall well-being of the province's residents. The industry's enduring legacy has not only provided meaningful employment but has driven globally recognized innovation in forest management and created new markets and products. It is a history to proud of and to continue building upon.

A key theme for the future of British Columbia's forest sector revolves

around a growing focus on the role of forest products to combat climate change. Around the world, consumers are learning that the role of sustainable forest management and forest products, from lumber to biofuels, has a pivotal role in achieving the goal of emissions reduction.

British Columbia is a leader in sustainable forest management, and to be a leader means to continue to innovate and learn. We are learning and adapting in B.C. in strengthening forest management practices, addressing challenges such as climate change, wildfires, pest, and other ecological impacts, while preserving

the nature and biodiversity we are so proud of in our province. It is also incumbent on all of us in the sector to continue to communicate to Canadians and global consumers so that we are all kept well-informed about the industry's leading regulatory practices, certifications, and environmentally friendly products.

The future of the industry is right here in British Columbia on the ground and in the relationships we have with government, First Nations communities, and other interested parties. There is no doubt that we are in a transition and facing challenges in the province with an increasingly complex regulatory environment and changes on our landscape. However, by working together with all levels of government, our focus is on ensuring that the robust foundation of policies, regulations, and resources also provide predictability in land use and encourage the understanding and adoption of the full value chain of sustainable wood products produced in B.C.

Integrated approaches are essential, encompassing climate-smart forestry, the preservation of various forest values (from conservation to job creation), and a commitment to initiatives promoting clean, net-zero, and low-carbon building materials.

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The advertisement features a scenic aerial view of Burns Lake at sunset. The text is overlaid on the image, with the lake's name in a large, elegant script font. Below it, the slogan "Carve your path" is written in a similar script. The main message, "Development Ready, Commercial, Residential, & Industrial Lands," is in a bold, sans-serif font. At the bottom, contact information is provided in a dark purple bar with white icons for phone, email, and website.

We are learning and adapting in B.C. in strengthening forest management practices, addressing challenges such as climate change, wildfires, pest, and other ecological impacts, while preserving the nature and biodiversity we are so proud of in our province.

Part of adding more value to the forests we manage and the wood we harvest is diversification of the markets we supply and the products we manufacture. British Columbia, in collaboration with provincial and federal governments, has successfully expanded into overseas markets, particularly in Asia over the course of the past 25 years reducing our reliance on the United States as a key trading partner considering the ongoing softwood lumber dispute. We continue to pursue opportunities to further develop programs that align with global green building

initiatives, enhance Indigenous participation, and diversify both markets and products.

Underpinning all these exciting opportunities for the future will be establishing and nurturing partnerships with First Nations as a foundational element for the sector's future. British Columbia has set a precedent by adopting and initiating the implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, forging a path to continue building these relationships in a meaningful way, including sharing in the challenges

and opportunities we all face in the sector.

These and many other ideas will be the subject of robust discussion at COFI's annual convention, to be held in Vancouver April 10-12, 2024. We invite you to join us for the conversation. By working together and talking through these important opportunities and challenges, we are optimistic of finding a path forward in which the forest industry continues to play a vital role in making the province better for all British Columbians. To learn more, please visit cofi.org. ★

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EMPOWERING WOMEN IN TRADES: BUILDING CONNECTIONS AND FACING THE “FEAR OF THE UNKNOWN”

College
of New
Caledonia
CNC

As a female welder, Chris Montgomery-Hewett has firsthand experience of building a trades career in a male-dominated field.

Now as the acting dean of the school of trades and technologies at the College of New Caledonia (CNC), Chris is using her experience to help break barriers and reshape the landscape for all students.

Things are changing in the industry for women and systemically marginalized groups; however, Chris argues those changes are only the beginning of building an industry that fosters equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging both in education and on the job site.

“It is important for both prospective students and employers to see different types of people actually working in trades careers,” she

explains. “Not only will more students picture themselves in those careers, but it gives employers the chance to broaden their perspective. All types of people enjoy working in trades and should get the opportunity to work in the industry.”

Chris’ journey to acting dean exemplifies the changing face of the industry. She oversees the operations of the school and works with various community partners to create more inclusive and diverse trades environments. She acknowledges the challenges women and marginalized groups face when entering traditionally white, male-dominated professions.

“For the first 10 years I was in industry in the north, I only saw one other woman on-site, and she was a medic. It took many years in the field before I worked with other

women as labourers, apprentices, and journeypersons.”

Working as a heavy equipment operator in Alberta, Chris felt the need to prove herself to superiors and peers – a pressure not placed as heavily onto her male counterparts. In addressing these challenges, Chris highlights a common theme she has seen emerge with employers: the fear of the unknown.

“Oftentimes, we see employers apprehensive to hire people that may fall outside of the stereotypical ‘trades worker’ image. They worry about what additional supports might be required and can get caught up on hypotheticals. I think if those employers were to give more women or people from marginalized groups a shot, they would be pleasantly surprised.”

Employers may find the supports and considerations they already provide to their current employees are enough. That said, the only way to ensure all employee needs are being met is to cultivate relationships with individual workers and gain a personalized understanding of their needs.

“It all starts with building that relationship,” explains Chris. “If you give an employee room to share, they’ll tell you what they need. Through those open conversations, you can figure out which supports apply for each specific situation and work through them together for mutual success.”

Many organizations are already utilizing wrap-around supports to take the pressure off their employees and their families during training periods. These have included living arrangements, daycare support, and financial aid.

Chris attributes much of her own

success breaking barriers to the mentors who guided her. Through her experiences, she prioritizes mentorship and connection within the school of trades and technologies at CNC.

“The piece of advice I always share with students, especially those facing additional challenges, is to be curious. Show up, be engaged, and ask questions. When people see you’re interested in learning, they’ll be more apt to help you.”

While eventually hoping to create opportunities for women’s cohorts in the trades programs, the College is already taking steps to ensure women feel supported in their pursuit of trades. Some of the male instructors initiated a “Women in Trades” get together for students and industry leaders which Chris would like to see continue to grow.

“Women’s networks in trades can be very limited, so it’s inspiring to see

these connections being made early on,” she said. Chris added that this level of encouragement should be amplified by community and family members.

“When a person says they want to choose a trades career, the best way to respond is to cheer them on. That early encouragement can make all the difference in someone feeling confident in pursuing their dream.”

On a larger scale, Chris calls for a top-down approach urging industry leaders and employers to challenge stereotypes and open their doors to encourage women and people from marginalized groups to pursue these rewarding careers.

The industry is undergoing a paradigm shift, and with leaders like Chris Montgomery-Hewett paving the way, the future of women and marginalized groups in trades looks promising. ★

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THERE'S STILL PLENTY OF GOLD IN B.C.'S CARIBOO MINING DISTRICT

The Cariboo Gold Project is on track to deliver

By Deb Draper

The Cariboo Gold Project is now in an advanced stage feasibility level, having received its environmental assessment certificate after a nearly three-year review led by the provincial B.C. Environmental Assessment Office (EAO). The project is 100 per cent owned by Osisko Development (TSX,NYSE:ODV), a premier North American gold mining company, and it is focused on developing high-quality past-producing properties located in mining-friendly jurisdictions with district scale potential.

The proposed new underground gold mine is located just outside Wells, B.C. in the historic Cariboo mining district with a total land package area of 192,000 hectares that includes an approximately 80-kilometer strike of mineral targets from northwest to southeast. The mine is projected to have a production capacity of 4,900 tonnes per day and a total of about 25 million tonnes of ore over 16 years. In early 2023, Osisko released its feasibility study on the project, envisioning the production of approximately 1.87 million ounces of gold over a 12-year mine life with an after-tax Net Present Value (NPV) of 5 per cent or C\$502 million and 20.7 per cent Internal Rate of Return (IRR) at a US\$1,700/ounce gold price.

The Cariboo Gold Project is the first to be approved under the new Environmental Assessment Act updated in 2018. The B.C. government stated, "The project assessment involved extensive consultation with technical experts, First Nations, provincial agencies, local governments, a community advisory committee, and the public." In



October 2023, George Heyman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy and Josie Osborne, Minister of Mines, Energy and Low Carbon Innovation jointly made the decision to issue the certificate. In their paper, the ministers wrote, "We are of the view that the benefits of the project outweigh the costs and it is in the public interest." They also stipulated that the project must receive all required permits and fulfill 22 conditions before moving forward.

These legally binding conditions are in place to reduce Cariboo Gold's impacts on the community of Wells, the environment, and the Barkerville woodland caribou herd. Included in the list of conditions is the construction of a new, clean drinking water supply for the District of Wells, limits on noise and visual impact of the operation, and hiring 75 per cent of workers from the region along with strict policies around work camps. Mitigation and monitoring measures to reduce emissions and maintain air quality and remediation in the district and along the shore of Jack of Clubs Lake are also specific conditions to meet.

The project has two main locations: the mine site in Wells, B.C. and the QR Mill site, southeast of Quesnel. New above-ground facilities will be built upon the footprint of previous mining operations, including the services

building, waste management and treatment infrastructure, work camp, office, shop, and related infrastructure needed to run the operation. An electrical substation built on the site will connect to BC Hydro's Barlow substation near Quesnel, B.C. with an approximately 70 km transmission line. Any waste rock that cannot be returned underground will be transported underground to the storage facility at the nearby Bonanza Ledge Mine site near Barkerville, B.C.

The QR Mill site, located approximately 111 km from the mine site and 58 km southeast of Quesnel, B.C. is where concentrate will be processed and refined. It will also serve as the storage facility for filtered tailings waiting for reclamation.

The ministers noted in their decision that the Cariboo

Gold mine will provide benefits to the province, the local community, and First Nations community through employment and economic benefits. The project will employ an average of 200 workers during construction, peaking at close to 300 workers and almost 500 during operations. The mine project includes the development of a 200-person mining camp at the mine site.

Construction costs are expected to contribute an estimated \$588 million to the economy over four years and operations another \$466 million. In total, Osisko anticipates \$2.7 billion in investment and operating expenses, broadening the tax base and contributing to vital infrastructure including schools, roads, and hospitals. The company is aiming for first production in 2024. ★

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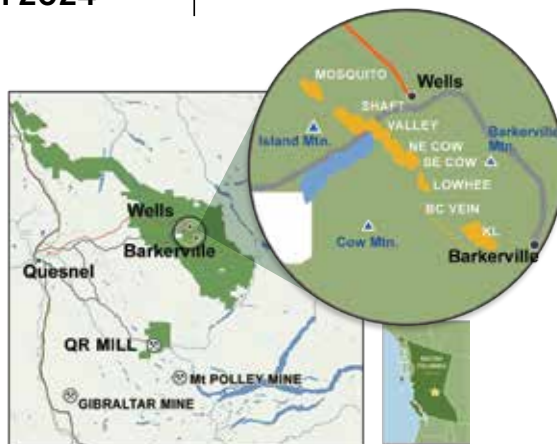
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(COMPLETED OCT 2023)**

**PERMITS
(Q1 2024)**

**CARIBOO FEASIBILITY STUDY¹
January 10, 2023**

MINE LIFE	FIRST PRODUCTION	INITIAL CAPITAL	TOTAL GOLD RECOVERED ¹
12 YEARS Phase 1 (1-3); Phase 2 (4-12)	2024 (PHASE 1) 2027 (Phase 2)	C\$137.3M Expansion C\$451.1 M	1.87 MOZ 2.03 Moz Probable Reserves
PRODUCTION (LOM Avg.)	LOM AISC ²	NPV% IRR (US\$1,700/oz Au, after-tax)	RESOURCES
~164,000oz/yr (peak 223 kozpa)	US\$968/OZ US\$886/oz (Phase 2)	C\$502M 20.7%	1.57MOZ M&I 1.71 Moz Inferred

**CARIBOO MINERAL RESERVES & RESOURCES
January 10, 2023¹**

	CATEGORY	TONNES (000'S)	GRADE (G/T AU)	CONTAINED AU (000'S OZ)
	PROBABLE RESERVES	16,703	3.78	2,031
RESOURCES	MEASURED	47	5.06	8
	INDICATED	14,635	3.32	1,564
	M & I	14,682	3.33	1,571
	INFERRED	15,470	3.44	1,712

1. Refer to the full text of the Cariboo FS technical report for the assumptions, qualifications and limitations relating to disclosure about the Feasibility Study on the Cariboo Gold Project. M&I resources are exclusive of mineral reserves.
2. This is a non-IFRS measure.

B.C.'S MINING MILESTONES

By Melanie Franner

Mining activity in B.C. was on the increase in 2023, with many companies making significant announcements throughout the year.

BLACKWATER MINE: ON SCHEDULE FOR 2024

Artemis Gold Inc. reports that, as of October 2023, the project at the Blackwater Mine in central BC “remains fully funded, within the guidance for initial capital expenditure, and on schedule for first gold pour in H2 2024”.

The company’s 3Q update shows overall construction is 45 per cent complete; earthworks continued in priority infrastructure areas, with approximately 505 hectares logged and cleared; over 90 per cent of access roads needed for Phase 1 construction are now operable; and construction of the site water management facilities, including the water management pond and Davidson Creek diversion, is well advanced.

Process plant construction progressed well on a number of fronts, including the mill building foundation preparation, reagents building, ball mill pedestals, carbon in leach (CIL) tanks, and the primary, secondary, and tertiary crushers structures, as well as the reclaim tunnel civil works. Hydro testing of the first CIL tank has been completed.

At September 30, 2023, Artemis Gold had estimated remaining Phase 1 capital expenditures of \$450 to \$470 million on September 30, 2023, while the committed sources of funding totalled C\$560 million.

With Phase 1 fully funded and 45 per cent complete, a study to evaluate the benefits of advancing the Phase 2 expansion earlier than contemplated in the September 2021 Feasibility Study is progressing well. The results of this study are expected to be released in early 2024.



Scotty Resources Gold Mine Project.

PREMIER GOLD: PRODUCTION IMMINENT

Ascot Resources’ Premier Gold Project, located on Nisga’a Nation Treaty Lands, was also a hub of activity in 2023.

At the end of Q2 2023, overall construction (excluding mine development) was 48 per cent complete, with engineering and procurement both at 99 per cent. The project remains on schedule and budget for first gold production in the first quarter of 2024.

Capital costs (including mining), incurred as of June 30, 2023 were \$200 million. The remaining project capital required to complete construction and achieve the first gold pour was approximately \$110 million, including mining but excluding certain pre-operating costs and working capital.

The earthworks contract for the tailings storage facility was signed in March 2023 and the contractor was mobilized to the site in April. Tailings pond de-watering was completed in June, and the construction of the tailings storage facility commenced.



Eskay Creek Gold-Silver Project.

The 2023 exploration program at Premier Gold Project consists of an initial 10,000 metres of surface drilling and will include exploration drilling for resource expansion as well as in-fill drilling of initial mining areas at the Big Missouri and Premier deposits. The drilling will focus on extending the Day Zone at Big Missouri and the Sebakwe Zone north of the Premier mill. Up to an additional 4,000 meters of drilling have been budgeted and will be deployed towards surface and underground drilling depending on results of the initial 10,000 metres.

CARIBOU GOLD: REGULATORY APPROVAL

A Feasibility Study on the Cariboo Gold Project (owned by Osisko Development) was released in early 2023. The



Eskay Creek core shack.

study details a robust and scalable underground operation expected to produce approximately 1.87 Moz of gold over a 12-year mine life.

The project received an Environmental Assessment Certificate on October 10, 2023, in accordance with the BC Environmental Assessment Act (2018). The Company anticipates receiving permits in Q2 2024.

RED CHRIS AND BRUCEJACK: IMPRESSIVE RESULTS

Newmont Corporation’s 100 per cent acquisition of Newcrest Mining Limited was finalized on November 6, 2023. The acquisition comes at a time when Newcrest reports increased metals production and abundant upside at its Red Chris and Brucejack mines – both of which had strong production numbers and impressive drill results during the second quarter of calendar year 2023.

During the second quarter, Red Chris produced 13.73 million pounds of copper and 13,680 ounces of gold. This is an 18 per cent increase over the 11.59 million pounds of copper and a 30 per cent jump over the 10,496 ounces of gold produced during the first three months of 2023.

A Red Chris block cave feasibility study is scheduled to be finalized before the end of the year. Several optimization opportunities to unlock further value are being assessed as part of the study, including options for the initial extraction level of the first block cave and alternative plant expansion options.

Newcrest also reports increased production at Brucejack, a high-grade gold mine about 160 kilometres south of Red Chris that Newcrest bought full ownership of last year.

Brucejack produced 79,907 ounces of gold during the second quarter, a 14 per cent increase from the 70,160 during the prior three-month period.



Ascot Research Premier Gold Mine Project.



Newcrest continues to implement a three-phase strategy to unlock the full potential of Brucejack and the district-scale property this high-grade gold target is located on. This included expanding the mill throughput to 4,500 to 5,000 metric tons per day, a roughly 18-32 percent boost to the current 3,800 t/d processing rate.

A prefeasibility study on the mill throughput increase is slated for completion before the end of the year.

DOLLY VARDEN SILVER CORPORATION: EXPLORATION DRILLING RESULTS

Dolly Varden Silver Corporation is focused on advancing its 100 per cent held Kitsault Valley Project located in the Golden Triangle, 25 kilometres by road to deep tide water.

The 163 square-kilometre-project hosts the high-grade silver and gold resources of Dolly Varden and Homestake Ridge along with the past producing Dolly Varden and Torbrit silver mines.

The company reported 51,545m of exploration drilling in 2023, with ongoing results expected over the next few months.

The company reports a Combined Silver Equivalent of 47,180,475 ounces Indicated and 90,530,925 ounces Inferred, along with a Combined Gold Equivalent of 629,073 ounces Indicated and 1,207,079 ounces Inferred.

SCOTTIE RESOURCES CORP.: EXPANSION AT BLUEBERRY

This year, Scottie Resources Corp. commenced a 20,000-metre drill program for its Scottie Gold Mine Project.

Approximately 17,000 metres of the drill program focused on expansion of the Blueberry Contact Zone, with the remaining metres allocated to additional advanced targets in the area.

Extensive geophysical work is also being carried out to delineate additional targets in the area.

The Blueberry Contact Zone is located two kilometres north-northeast of the 100 percent-owned past-producing high-grade Scottie Gold Mine.

SKEENA RESOURCES LIMITED: RESULTS ARE IN

In November 2023, Skeena Resources Limited announced the results of the Definitive Feasibility Study for its 100 per cent-owned Eskay Creek Gold-Silver Project located in Tahltan Territory.

Highlights from the study include:

- After-tax net present value (“NPV”)(5%) of C\$2.0 billion at a base case of US\$1,800 gold and US\$23 silver;
- After-tax internal rate of return (“IRR”) of 43 per cent and an after-tax payback of 1.2 years on pre-production capital expenditures (“CAPEX”);
- Life of mine (“LOM”) all-in sustaining cost (“AISC”) of US\$684/oz gold equivalent (“AuEq”) sold;
- Proven and Probable Mineral Reserves for open-pit mining of 39.8 million tonnes (“Mt”) containing 3.3 million ounces (“Moz”) gold and 88.0 Moz silver (4.6 Moz AuEq);

- Years 1-5: Average annual production of 455,000 oz at 5.5 g/t AuEq and average annual after-tax free cashflow of C\$474 million;
- Years 1-10: Average annual production of 370,000 oz at 4.2 g/t AuEq and average annual after-tax free cashflow of C\$365 million; and
- Estimated pre-production CAPEX of C\$713 million, yielding an after-tax NPV:CAPEX ratio of 2.8:1.

**TECK RESOURCES LTD.:
NEW MAJORITY OWNER ANNOUNCED**

November saw the announcement that Glencore Plc is set to acquire a 77 per cent majority stake in Teck Resources Ltd.'s coal business for \$6.93 billion, marking the end of a prolonged public dispute between the two companies. The deal marks a strategic shift away from a lucrative but environmentally impactful thermal coal business, focusing instead on metals crucial for the energy transition. The deal, subject to Canadian government approval, involves Nippon Steel Corp. and Posco holding the remaining stake. ★

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REIMAGINE YOUR BUSINESS LIFESTYLE

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With the rise of many employees and businesses alike making changes to adapt to the desire of wanting a more balanced lifestyle in combination with a viable business environment, many have their eye set on more rural communities like the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality. The positioning of the community of Fort Nelson allows for personal and business growth in a safe, family oriented, resourceful and independent community, which makes it perfect for any business looking to take advantage of opportunities in this new era.

Opportunities are endless among the 85,000 square kilometres that make up the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality (NRRM). Situated centrally along the Alaska

highway, the NRRM lies to the east of the Rocky Mountains and boasts a whopping 10 per cent of British Columbia's total area. Heavily forested areas, mountainous terrain and waterways, in addition to the abundance of untouched natural resources provide unparalleled opportunities for business growth and to encourage a healthy lifestyle for not just your business, but to all who work in it.

Smaller, rural, and remote communities such as the Northern Rockies offer multiple sectors for unparallel business opportunities. "Business in the Northern Rockies seemed like the only viable option to run a successful small business, while maintaining a fun, enjoyable and adventurous lifestyle" says Colin M, retired business owner.

THE COLD HARD FACTS

Forestry

The Fort Nelson Timber Supply Area (TSA) is the second largest in British Columbia and covers an area of almost 9.9 million hectares in the northeastern corner of the province. The diversity of forest types throughout the area, include coniferous stands, mixed-wood stands and deciduous stands. With a current Allowable Annual Cut (AAC) of ~2.58 million cubic meters per year.

The Regional Municipality and Fort Nelson First Nation have jointly secured of a Community Forest license. At an AAC of ~215,000 cubic meters, the Fort Nelson Community Forest is the largest in B.C. and gives the partners a degree of influence over the development of the industry

in the region, while ensuring the opportunity for local operators to secure fiber.

Significant research has been completed in partnership with Forest Products Innovations and subsequently reviewed by Forest Economic Advisors to provide reliable information on the quality and potential of the timber supply to assist investors and businesses in their future prospect decisions.

Distributed LNG

The Northern Rockies is rich in proven natural gas reserves with one of the most significant resources on the continent. Reserves are located in the Horn River, Liard and Cordova Basins in the northeast corner of B.C. These basins have geological formations rich in unconventional shale gas.

A considerable portion of northern Canada is currently reliant on diesel for the generation of electricity. Given the advantages of LNG diesel, including the reduced carbon emissions it offers, it is increasingly being used in large scale projects to generate electricity, heat buildings, power drilling rigs, and mining-related processing. Fort Nelson's relative proximity to these markets affords significant logistical and cost advantages as a point of supply to Yukon, Alaska, and Northwest Territory markets.

Agriculture

This growing industry is proving it's potential in the continual increase of the local year-round farmers market and enthusiastic growers having fun in their trade. One local grower managed to grow bananas in a green house in Fort Nelson. The





growing season is relatively short in frost-free days but has exceptionally long daylight days during the main growing season with the max darkness in the summer reaching nautical twilight from approximately midnight until 2:30am.

Tourism

With the world famous and historical

Alaska Highway as the main street and the expansive natural assets, the Northern Rockies offers endless opportunities for tourism business growth and development. With a fairly young tourism industry the region has ample opportunities for new tourism and hospitality businesses from eco- and adventure-tourism to health retreats to epic

With increasing technology advancements, working from anywhere is becoming more and more feasible.

long-haul trips.

Small-Business & Remote Work

The remote community is deeply connected to their locally owned businesses. This offers a supportive environment to operate a small business whether in retail, accommodations, food and beverage, health services, consulting, or anything a creative entrepreneur can think of. With increasing technology advancements, working from anywhere is becoming more and more feasible. With affordable housing prices, the ability to go to your favourite coffee shop – or anywhere in town for that matter – in less than five minutes, and an abundance of nature in your backyard, why wouldn't you consider a small, rural community?

Why just live when you can thrive?

If you're interested in learning more about growing your business, relocating, or tax exemption programs in the Northern Rockies, reach out to us today at ecdev@northernrockies.ca or at 250-774-2541.

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Exploring for Value

THANK YOU, NORTH THOMPSON REGION

The Trans Mountain Expansion Project completes



Trans Mountain has been operating across Alberta and British Columbia for 70 years. The original pipeline was built in 1953 and has been operating safely ever since. Since 2019, we've been actively building the Trans Mountain Expansion Project and are proud to be completing construction in the North Thompson region as part of this legacy project for all Canadians.

Thank you for hosting our workforce and their families and for your patience during construction.

Two hundred and one kilometres of pipeline construction is now complete in the North Thompson region of British Columbia. Construction in this area, known as Spread 3/4A, includes five major trenchless crossings, totaling 3,059 metres, and two pump stations. The region was also home to two camp communities that provided accommodations to workers.

While pipeline construction is complete, smaller work crews will return to finish right-of-way cleanup and reclamation.

Trans Mountain values the relationships it has built with

communities along the pipeline corridor over its 70-year history. During construction of the Expansion Project, we've given back to the region by funding various projects, local education and training opportunities, investing more than \$850,000 into Valemount, Blue River, and other communities in the Thompson Nicola Regional District.

As a result of a funding agreement with the Village of Valemount, Trans Mountain contributed \$2.3 million to upgrading Valemount's municipal water, sanitary sewer services, and roads. These services helped minimize project impacts, while providing a lasting benefit to the community. Trans Mountain also provided more than \$1 million to the Valemount Health Centre towards hiring registered nurses in the region.

During construction, Trans Mountain and its general construction contractor, Ledcor Sicim Limited Partnership (LSLP), aimed to be good neighbours and gave back to the local communities. Employees joined softball, golf, and hockey leagues, while families enrolled in local schools and daycares. When planning the Expansion Project, Trans Mountain made a commitment to work with



communities to minimize construction impacts, while maximizing local benefits. LSLP has given more than \$685,000 in financial support and in-kind contributions back to the North Thompson; all this while safely building the project.

Our camp communities in Valemount and Blue River are now closed and are being removed as weather permits.

Trans Mountain has many team members that continue to work and live in these communities. On top of local

benefits, Trans Mountain will pay more than \$3 million annually in local taxes after the Expansion Project is completed.

While our presence will be smaller with pipeline construction now complete, we look forward to staying good neighbours in the community and maintaining our positive relationship well into the future.

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FROM LOCAL TO GLOBAL: HOW EXPORTING CAN ADVANCE YOUR B.C. BUSINESS

Whether your company is big or small, exporting can grow your business. And while your local market is a great starting point, it will only take you so far. There are more than five million British Columbians today, but getting your business ready to export can open you up to new markets in the billions.

Even with zero experience, by leveraging existing resources and support, you can get your business ready to export confidently.

BENEFITS OF EXPORTING

When you export your goods or services, you reach new markets with potential new customers, benefits, and cost-saving opportunities.

You can benefit from higher sales volumes when your customer base is growing. Higher sales volumes will decrease your production costs and help to create cost savings through economies of scale.

Entering new markets also means connecting with new opportunities. You could discover a grant or funding that you're now eligible for. Or you could meet with new potential business partners.

Finally, a big benefit to exporting is that it diversifies your business. This will help you by insulating your business from fluctuations in the local market, especially when competition increases in your region.

HOW TO GET EXPORTING SUPPORT

Exporting can go from daunting to exciting when you have a trusted expert in your corner.

Export Navigator is a free-to-join program supported by federal and provincial funding that connects you with an export advisor.

Why work with an export advisor?

Export advisors are located throughout BC, and you'll be matched with one who's familiar with the local business

landscape in your region. Advisors connect businesses with resources, industry connections, and support services on the way.

When you meet with your advisor, they will do an assessment of your business's export readiness. Then, they will be with you step-by-step on your export journey, allowing you to go at your own pace.

THE EXPORT PATHWAY

Export Navigator boils down a complicated process into a step-by-step system. The Export Pathway has four stages: awareness, planning, market entry, and market development and growth.

1. Awareness

This stage assesses your awareness of exporting as a growth strategy and your export readiness. You'll also start to build your international network and work on your business expansion plan.

2. Planning

The planning stage includes identifying, researching, and narrowing down the markets that your product or service has a potential to succeed. Once you have validated the chosen markets, you'll develop an extension of your business plan that is focused on planning and executing the export strategy.

3. Market entry

The market entry stage is where the rubber hits the road. You will implement your export plan, and work towards making your first sale in your new market. This may include attending trade shows, trade missions, and B2B meetings in your chosen markets.

4. Market development and growth

Once you're in the market, it's time to sustain your presence, get help with any troubleshooting that comes up, and continue to grow.

Continued on page 40

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We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Province of British Columbia through the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation, and the Government of Canada through Pacific Economic Development Canada.

How to Join Export Navigator

The first step to joining the free Export Navigator program is to fill out the “Find an Advisor” form. In less than five minutes, you will find out if your business is eligible for the program.

Then, eligible businesses are connected with an advisor. Your advisor will reach out to learn more about your business and provide you with an intake form. Once you’re accepted into the program, your advisor will offer one-on-one guidance to help you reach your exporting goals.

Export Education for Business Owners

If you’re curious to learn more about exporting before joining Export Navigator, then you can take advantage of free e-courses for BC businesses.

- **Export Essentials** – This introductory course provides you with an overview of the exporting process from start to finish.
- **Exporting Your Services** – This course for service businesses provides you with the knowledge and resources to export your service to a new market.
- **Preparing to export agri-foods** – This course for agri-food suppliers shows you how to identify your target market, navigate regulations, and identify transportation and distribution modes. You’ll also be connected with additional resources and programs for support.

With so many free resources available, it’s easier to export than ever before. Get started on your export journey by learning more from Export Navigator at exportnavigator.com. ★



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SHIFTING GEAR

Tahltan HEO Program receives funding for second year



The Tahltan Nation Development Corporation's Tahltan Heavy Equipment Operator (HEO) Program has received funding from the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills - Indigenous Skills Training and Education Program to support the second year of the ground-breaking program.

The Tahltan HEO Program is a multi-faceted program designed to build capacity in Tahltan communities across several different areas: drivers' licences and driving for employment, developing new heavy equipment operators, and continuing to grow current heavy equipment operators into mentors, trainers, and instructors.

A key strategy to the success of the Tahltan HEO Program is supporting Tahltans in acquiring their Class 4, 5, and 7 drivers' licences in Tahltan Territory. Acquiring a driver's licence is a significant barrier to employment in remote communities and is required to operate equipment. Year two of the drivers' program is expanding to cover commercial licenses up to class 1, which enables access to employment in critical

industries in Northern B.C.

The HEO program has been developed in partnership with the provincial government, Iskut Band, Tahltan Band, Newcrest, CAT Finning, Procon Mining & Tunnelling, Arrow Transportation, Bandstra Transportation, Lakes District Maintenance, Mining Industry HR Council (MiHR), Centre for Training Excellence in Mining – BC (CTEM), Contact North BC (CNBC), Tahltan Central Government (TCG), and Thompson Rivers University (TRU) to address skill shortages within the region while also providing on-the-job practical work experience to set participants up for success.

This remarkable financial commitment and support underscores the recognition of the program's effectiveness and the collective determination to foster a brighter future for those living in these remote communities.

"The inaugural year of our HEO program – February to June 2023 – has already had a profound impact on the lives of several Tahltans," says Paul Gruner, CEO, Tahltan National Development Corporation. A total of

103 participants completed training, including 70 drivers licence students and 29 mentors trained. Plus, four Heavy Equipment Operators successfully completed their Mining Industry HR Council Common Competencies and Skilled Trades B.C. Roadbuilders certifications.

"These four individuals also passed their TNDC technical verification of competencies and found employment for the summer season. Building off the success of this inaugural year-one pilot, the HEO Program is moving forward with its expanded program framework to increase the impact in enhancing skills capacity of Tahltan individuals," says Gruner. "With the newly acquired funding, we are poised to extend the reach of the HEO Program, with new programs and new partners, and magnify its profound and lasting impact. Inclusion of the Class 1 drivers licence shows our ongoing commitment to Tahltan members to enhance their skills and employability for future opportunities in the region and beyond."

To learn more about the Tahltan HEO Program visit www.tahltanheo.com. ★

CONSTRUCTION ON \$750 MILLION EXPORT LOGISTICS PROJECT TO BEGIN IN PRINCE RUPERT



The Prince Rupert Port Authority (PRPA) is commencing construction on the Ridley Island Export Logistics Project (RIELP), an innovative large-scale logistics project that will provide expanded capacity and capabilities for rail-to-container transloading of multiple export products at the Port of Prince Rupert.

The investment promises to deliver critical trade infrastructure that will improve supply chain resiliency, strategic market access and enhanced competitiveness for Canadian exports.

“The development of this innovative project and its introduction of large-

scale export logistics capabilities at the Port will fundamentally improve competitiveness for Canadian exporters, and it marks the opening of a new chapter of Prince Rupert intermodal growth,” said Shaun Stevenson, President & CEO, Prince Rupert Port Authority. “It also demonstrates the strong alignment of our corporate, government, and community partners with PRPA’s strategic vision for growing Canadian trade.”

The project will consist of a 108-acre greenfield development on Ridley Island that will commence operation in Q3 2026. Ray-Mont Logistics

will develop and operate facilities that provide transloading service capacity for 400,000 TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units) for agricultural, forestry, and plastic resin products. Ray-Mont currently operates a successful multi-product transload facility on a temporary Ridley Island location that has proven the export transload concept in Prince Rupert.

The project will also include an expansion of the existing Ridley Island Road Rail Utility Corridor that will facilitate unit trains 10,000 feet in length with direct access to the site from the CN network. The transload facilities will be connected



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The development of increased logistics capacity is seen by PRPA as a strategic prerequisite to supporting the stability of existing and future container volumes through Prince Rupert, and the trade, employment, and economic opportunities they support.

to Fairview Container Terminal by direct private road access, the five-kilometer Fairview-Ridley Connector Corridor, ensuring all product movements will be within PRPA jurisdiction and fully avoid public infrastructure. The full electrification of transload facilities, optimization of rail, and the minimal truck drayage cumulatively represent a significant step forward in decarbonizing Canada's export supply chains.

RIELP will provide new and innovative capacities for Canadian exporters to Asia Pacific markets. The project's large scale, unit train capabilities, access to available empty containers, and proximity and integration into container terminal operations make it a unique model that promises the ability to deliver significant new service offerings to exporters that will greatly improve the quality, cost, and reliability of container supply chains.

In addition to its commercial advantages, RIELP will result in stronger volumes for loaded export containers moving through the Port of Prince Rupert and a more sustainable balance in its intermodal import and export trade. The development of increased logistics capacity is seen by PRPA as a strategic prerequisite to supporting the stability of existing and future container volumes through Prince

Rupert, and the trade, employment, and economic opportunities they support.

Local Indigenous partners will be active participants in the development and operation of RIELP. The primary contract for Ridley Island site development has been awarded to an Indigenous joint-venture arrangement that includes Metlakatla First Nation, Lax Kw'alaams Band, Gitxaala Nation and IDL Projects Inc. Metlakatla and Lax Kw'alaams are also majority owners of Gat Leedm Logistics, which will be a primary service provider of truck drayage services.

Total capital investment in RIELP will be approximately \$750 million,

and is being provided by PRPA, Ray-Mont Logistics, CN, the Government of Canada, and the Government of B.C. Canada's National Transportation Corridor Fund is providing \$64.8 million and the Province's Stronger BC program is providing \$25 million toward the project.

"The Government of Canada is committed to strengthening our transportation supply chains," said Hon. Pablo Rodriguez, Minister of Transport, Government of Canada. "This means better capacity, resilience, and competitiveness for Canadian businesses, and will help to make life more affordable for Canadians." ★



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