

October 2, 2025

Dear Party Leader,

**Re: Mining Industry NL's Provincial Election Brief - Letter to Party Leaders**

On behalf of Newfoundland and Labrador's private sector mining and mineral resources community, we are writing ahead of the upcoming provincial election to provide recommendations and pose questions for candidates and future elected officials to consider. With critical minerals elevated as a pillar of industrial policy, mining continues to be a critical driver of national competitiveness.

Newfoundland and Labrador's mineral resources sector industry is worth \$6.1 billion – powering jobs, innovation and growth in rural and remote regions of the province. From exploration to production, mineral resources activity is accelerating across the province, positioning Newfoundland and Labrador among Canada's most promising and underexplored mining frontiers. With \$258 million investment forecasted in exploration for 2025, and more than \$1 billion spent since 2021, there is tremendous untapped mineral potential.

Currently, the province is home to at least 27 of Canada's 34 critical minerals, boasting exceptional geological diversity. The province's mineral richness spans both the island and Labrador, with world-class systems from high-purity iron ore in Labrador West, with more than 30 percent of Canada's supply of iron ore coming from the Labrador Trough and future developments in the pipeline. Equally, Vale Base Metals' Voisey's Bay Mine supplies more than 30 percent of Canada's nickel. Gold exploration is particularly active, with Equinox Gold Corp. recently pouring first gold at its Valentine Gold Mine, the first greenfield project permitted in Atlantic Canada in over 15 years.

Mining NL and its membership have identified several high-level priority areas for the protection and advancement of this valuable provincial industrial sector. We are requesting your party respond to our recommendations and expectations to help our membership understand how you will influence the future of Newfoundland and Labrador's mineral resources sector related to the following areas:

- Clean Energy and the Strategic Importance of Labrador;
- Importance of Exploration and Investment Attractiveness;
- Access to Land and Investment Uncertainty;
  - Example: South Coast Fjords National Marine Conservation Area (NMCA);
- Skilled Workforce Development and Future Growth.

## **Clean Energy and the Strategic Importance of Labrador**

Energy access is a critical factor in supporting mining operations, infrastructure development and meeting decarbonization goals. Clean energy strategically positions Newfoundland and Labrador as a global leader in responsible resource development, production and supply chain services. Enhanced clean energy availability ensures we can grow sustainably, creating long-term benefits for communities and industry partners. Labrador is home to the critical cornerstone to the mining sector and holds significant untapped mineral potential, including critical minerals such as high-purity iron ore, nickel, cobalt, copper and rare earth elements essential for the global energy transition. Labrador west in particular is potentially on the cusp of major transitions and expansion of its iron ore mining sector, though without new power, this opportunity will be lost to other competing jurisdictions around the globe.

- ***How will your party ensure timely, reliable and cost-effective energy makes Newfoundland and Labrador an attractive destination for international investment in mining and energy-intensive industries, and notably with respect to Labrador's iron ore expansion and development opportunities?***

## **Importance of Exploration and Investment Attractiveness**

Mineral exploration is the vital starting point to unlocking new mine potential. Searching for and locating critical minerals throughout Newfoundland and Labrador's vast landmass is a complex, costly and high-risk endeavour. To be clear, no potential new mineral deposits will be discovered, and no new resource development will occur without ongoing prospecting and mineral exploration activity. Newfoundland and Labrador not only competes with other Canadian jurisdictions, but also globally.

The province boasts a wide array of unique geological assets, positioning Newfoundland and Labrador in an enviable position as a top tier investment destination. While Newfoundland and Labrador has a positive reputation as a favourable mining jurisdiction by industry and investors, there are substantial opportunities to improve upon this level of attractiveness. Strategic investments on the front end of the value chain will strengthen our competitive advantage on the national and global stage. Investments in public geoscience is a key mechanism to unlock potential and to further support attracting foreign direct investment (FDI) to the province.

- ***How will you increase Newfoundland and Labrador's investment attractiveness for exploration and development? If your party forms government, will you establish new tax incentives, such***
-

***as a Newfoundland and Labrador Mineral Exploration Tax Credit (NL-METC) to ensure this is additive with the federal METC? Will you commit to increasing investment in public geoscience to help attract continued exploration investment?***

### **Access to Land and Investment Uncertainty**

The mineral resources industry contributes significantly to the economic and social fabric of our society, yet it continues to weather substantial risk and uncertainty as new land accessibility issues continually arise. Challenges with land accessibility due to proposed protected areas and ecological reserves, marine conservation areas and wind-hydrogen projects erode investor confidence, creating instability in capital investment attractiveness. In simple terms, the mineral resources industry does not work without access to land for exploration and development. Land accessibility factors, combined with global market dynamics, economic threats to Canada in the form of tariffs and decreased metal prices can lead to further challenges for Newfoundland and Labrador to remain a competitive, top-tier mining investment jurisdiction. Our industry is at a critical crossroads, as we experience ever-changing complex, expensive and lengthy regulatory processes further complicated by federal jurisdictional over-reach.

- ***How will your party address the proposed restrictions to land accessibility throughout Newfoundland and Labrador? How will your party work to improve the regulatory process provincially to reduce duplication and/or over-reaching federal regulatory requirements to increase investment attractiveness and decrease the cost and timeline to develop mining projects?***

### **South Coast Fjords National Marine Conservation Area (NMCA)**

The proposed NMCA creates unintended, yet severe consequences to the province's exploration and mineral resources sector. The province's south coast region and further inland areas host numerous critical mineral and strategic metal deposits, including tungsten, molybdenum and a recent lithium discovery, as well as cesium, copper, high-purity silica, uranium and zinc prospects. The region also includes dimension stone, aggregates, and gold and silver opportunities, evidenced by the former Hope Brook Gold Mine as well as Moly Brook Exempt Mineral Land (EML). Given the province's south coast is a highly prospective, frontier region for mineral resource development, Mining NL and its members are especially concerned with the proposed NCMA.

---

Future growth of strategic mineral resource projects in this region is highly conditional on unconstrained tidewater accessibility. Future major projects in this region require access to seaports to facilitate both development and product exports, access to global markets and transportation shipping routes as well as unrestricted development of related infrastructure. In its current proposed form, the NMCA serves to sterilize the south coast region from significant development requiring port access and will cause substantial negative impact to mineral investment in this region and adjacent areas.

Mining NL recommends significantly modifying the NMCA to ensure areas of south coast continue to have potential for future port development to support exploration and mineral resource projects.

- ***Will your party modify the proposed NMCA to ensure areas of the south coast continue to have potential for port development to support exploration and mineral resource projects. Will you party ensure areas of mineral resource potential and prospectivity are excluded to mitigate negative impacts and unintended consequences?***

### **Skilled Workforce Development and Future Growth**

The industry is a significant source of employment in the province, supporting 8,000 person years of employment in 2024, particularly in rural and remote areas. With a history of generational mining expertise and mineral resource stewardship, this collective talent contributes to providing vital sustainable mineral resources.

Workforce sustainability and fostering a skilled talent pipeline is a key pillar of Newfoundland and Labrador's Critical Minerals Plan (November 2023) and a pivotal factor to ensure the critical minerals potential for Newfoundland and Labrador is fully realised. Traditional roles such as trades, engineering, geoscience and other professionals are in demand now and will remain essential to the future success of our industry. As mining projects advance and develop, the industry will continue to experience significant labour demands.

Mining NL recommends the new government better position Newfoundland and Labrador with a knowledgeable, diverse and highly productive workforce. One measure is to ensure the province's post secondary institutions implement their own respective critical mineral strategy to guide programming aligned with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's [Critical Minerals Strategy](#) and the Government of Canada's [Canadian Critical Minerals Strategy](#) (December 2022).

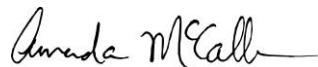
- ***Will your party ensure the province's post secondary institutions' work with industry to implement a critical minerals strategy to foster the talent pipeline?***
-

## **In Closure**

Mining NL looks forward to hearing from your party on these issues ahead of the upcoming election and working with future elected officials to embark on a new chapter of growth, resilience and innovation in Newfoundland and Labrador's mineral resources sector. We are requesting all parties respond to these recommendations and questions by Friday, October 10, 2025, to provide our membership the opportunity to consider where parties stand before casting their vote.

Thank you for your engagement and consideration. Please contact Mining NL with responses at [info@miningnl.com](mailto:info@miningnl.com).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amanda McCallum', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Amanda McCallum, ICD.D  
Executive Director

## **About Mining NL**

Mining Industry NL is a not-for-profit membership industry association supporting all sectors of Newfoundland and Labrador's mineral resources industry. As the voice of the mineral resources sector in Newfoundland and Labrador, Mining Industry NL's mission is to help shape and grow the industry for the economic and social benefit of the province. Founded in 1994, Mining Industry NL promotes the province's mineral potential, attracts investment and builds strong relations throughout the entire mining value chain, including:

- exploration – prospecting community and junior exploration companies;
- mining – mine developers and producers; and
- supports – supply and service firms.

With a mandate focused on advocacy, public outreach and promoting Newfoundland and Labrador's mineral potential as a top-tier global investment jurisdiction; our aim is to ensure Newfoundland and Labrador is the best place in the world to operate a mine. Our members include junior explorers, mine developers, mine operators and a range of supply and service firms.

## **Newfoundland and Labrador's Mineral Resource Sector Highlights:**

- Contributed 9.3 percent of real GDP, Newfoundland and Labrador's second most productive industry;
- Supported 8000 person years of employment in 2024;
- \$6.1 billion in gross value of mineral shipments for 2025(f);
  - \$1.168 billion in exploration expenditures since 2021 to current(f);
  - \$258 million in exploration expenditures forecasted for 2025.

## **Newfoundland and Labrador's Critical Advantage:**

- Newfoundland and Labrador has known occurrences of 27 of 34 critical minerals on Canada's list;
  - Producer of over 30 percent of Canada's high purity iron ore;
  - Producer of over 30 percent of Canada's nickel;
  - Ranked in the top 10 mining jurisdictions in the world; 8<sup>th</sup> place for investment attractiveness and 6<sup>th</sup> place for policy perception on the Fraser Institute's 2024 mining survey list;
  - High-quality and easily accessible geoscience and mineral resource information.
-