
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2006EMPR0002-000020
Jan. 18, 2006

Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources

B.C. MINING EXPENDITURES \$220 MILLION IN 2005

VANCOUVER – Investment in mineral exploration reached \$220 million in 2005, signalling the best year for B.C.'s mining industry in over a decade, Minister of State for Mining Bill Bennett announced today.

“We’ve come a long way from four years ago, when exploration spending in B.C. was only \$29 million,” said Bennett. “The fact is the work of this government has been a major catalyst for the spectacular turnaround in the international mining and investment community’s interest in British Columbia. This has supported over 4,000 seasonal exploration jobs, and we will need even more trained, skilled workers as the industry continues to grow.”

“Finding qualified employees is a significant challenge for the mineral exploration industry today,” said David Caulfield, president of the Association for Mineral Exploration British Columbia (AME BC). “But the province’s stable economy and supportive government policies have helped make B.C. the preferred international destination for exploration investment attracting more workers to the industry.”

“While the northwest has been a hotbed for growth this past year, every area of the province has prospered,” said Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources Minister Richard Neufeld. “There were 650 projects underway in B.C. in 2005 – up almost 40 per cent over last year, and that’s something all British Columbians should be proud of.”

Regionally, the projects break down as follows:

REGION	# of PROJECTS	EXPENDITURE
Northwest B.C.	191	\$100 million
Northeast B.C.	36	\$30 million
Central B.C.	122	\$30 million
Thompson-Okanagan	140	\$36 million
Kootenays	106	\$13 million
Southwest B.C.	52	\$11 million
Provincewide	3	(incorporated into above figures)
Total	650	\$220 million

Bennett and Neufeld released the figures at the British Columbia Institute of Technology’s Mining Program Facility, where students are trained in everything from basic science to all aspects of mining, exploration and surveying.

The ministry also released several different publications and maps that indicate the phenomenal growth in exploration and investment in B.C.'s revitalized mining sector. These publications assemble fieldwork results from the B.C. geological survey. They include:

- Mining and Communities Maps
- Exploration and Communities Maps
- Mining Development Projects
- Exploration and Mining Activities

“More geoscience information is being produced around the province,” said Bennett. “Mining is back in British Columbia, and this new data will lead the way to new opportunities in the north and more family supporting jobs for B.C.’s regions.”

Links to the maps and publications can be found in the backgrounder attached.

1 backgrounder(s) attached.

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