

Exploration and Mining Opportunities

British Columbia is one of the world's major mining regions and holds great potential for more exploration and development. World renowned for its expertise, the industry generates about \$4 billion in revenues each year and provides direct and indirect jobs for up to 45,000 British Columbians.

British Columbia has abundant and widely varied, untapped mineral and coal resources. The provincial government is committed to developing these resources — the goal is to make British Columbia the most attractive jurisdiction in Canada for exploration and mining.

Government is working to increase mineral exploration and mining by streamlining regulation, establishing a single-window, full-authority provincial permitting agency, and creating new incentives for investors. New land use and access policies assure mineral lands are open to exploration and development.

Strong Mineral Potential

British Columbia's mineral potential is among the best worldwide with over 14,000 known mineral occurrences. The province is an important producer and exporter of copper, gold, silver, lead, zinc, molybdenum, coal and industrial minerals. The goal is to improve on this and expand the sector significantly.

Most of the coal, coalbed methane and industrial minerals resources, such as barite and magnesite, formed by sedimentary processes are located along the eastern margin of the Cordillera. Older sedimentary rocks, just west of the younger sediments, are rich in zinc, lead and silver. In the central and western portion of the province, rocks are predominantly volcanic and intrusive, and known to contain large deposits, particularly of copper, gold and molybdenum.

World-class mines in British Columbia include the Eskay Creek volcanic massive sulphide (VMS) silver deposit in the Northwest, sedex properties such as Sullivan's historic lead-zinc mine in the Southeast, Highland Valley's porphyry copper deposit in the South-Central district and Myra Falls' large polymetallic VMS zinc and copper deposit on Vancouver Island. Potential exists throughout British Columbia for similar large deposits.

In 2000 alone, British Columbia was home to five new massive sulphide discoveries, three porphyry discoveries and a handful of vein and magmatic discoveries. The provincial government is making key changes to enhance the minerals industry. Exploration levels are expected to increase strongly in the years ahead.

