Critical Minerals

Saskatchewan has an abundance of critical minerals – with strong exploration opportunities in several emerging minerals. In fact, the province has occurrences of 27 of the 34 minerals that the Government of Canada has identified as critical.

Growing global demand is driving exploration for these minerals, which the United States Geological Survey (USGS) defines as "metals, non-metals and mineral compounds essential to the economic and national security of nations."

Many critical minerals are components of rare and specialty metal alloys or are key to the development of batteries and emerging technologies such as electric vehicles. These minerals have the potential to become scarce because of geological, political or technical challenges.

Deposit Types and Location

Critical minerals are found in a variety of deposit types in Saskatchewan. Most people know about the province's vast potash deposits in the south and the ultra-rich uranium deposits of the Athabasca Basin in the north, but Saskatchewan also has projects under development and geological potential for numerous other critical minerals including copper, zinc, lithium, helium, rare earth elements (REEs) and nickel.

Production

- We are the world's most prolific potash producer, typically representing one third of annual global production, and we are home to over 40 per cent of the world's recoverable ore reserves.
- We have the world's largest high-grade uranium deposits and are the second largest global producer.
- We are Canada's largest helium producer with more than 25 helium wells in production and another 50+ drilled and undergoing production testing.
- In 2024, the Saskatchewan Research Council (SRC) began producing REEs at a commercial scale out of its new Saskatoon processing facility. The SRC is on track to reach 40 tonnes of production of rare earth metals per month by 2025.
- We have a burgeoning lithium-brine industry of identified resources exceeding 10 million tonnes lithium carbonate.
- There are numerous other critical mineral exploration and development projects in progress in Saskatchewan, including copper-zinc projects in the Creighton-Flin Flon area and REE projects north of Lake Athabasca.

Saskatchewan Critical Minerals

Chromium	Magnesium	Scandium
Cobalt	Manganese	Tantalum
Copper	Molybdenum	Flourspar
Nickel	Titanium	Gallium
Niobium	Tungsten	Graphite
Tellurium	Uranium	Helium
Potash	Phosphorous	Bismuth
Aluminum	Lithium	Zinc
REE	Tin	Platinum Group Elements

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Critical Minerals

Critical Minerals Strategy

In March 2023, the Government of Saskatchewan launched Securing the Future: Saskatchewan's Critical Minerals Strategy to drive growth and development of the sector in the province. The strategy outlines four goals to achieve by 2030:

- Increase Saskatchewan's share of Canadian mineral exploration spending to 15 per cent;
- Double the number of critical minerals being produced in Saskatchewan;
- Grow Saskatchewan's production of potash, uranium, helium; and
- Establish Saskatchewan as a REE hub.

To support the strategy, the provincial government expanded programs to facilitate new critical mineral development. The Saskatchewan Critical Mineral Exploration Tax Credit was increased from 10 to 30 per cent. The Targeted Mineral Exploration Incentive was expanded to include drilling for all hard rock minerals anywhere in the province and funding was increased to $4 million annually. Additionally, $4.4 million will be invested in geoscience data management technology and automation to improve the information available to explorers and stakeholders.

To strengthen Saskatchewan's position as one of the world's best places to invest in resource development, the 2024-25 Saskatchewan budget committed an investment of $10 million over 10 years to support critical minerals geoscience research that will help lead to new discoveries. Two new programs were created to drive diversification of the sector. The Critical Minerals Processing Investment Incentive offers transferable tax credits for qualified value-added processing, and the Saskatchewan Critical Minerals Innovation Incentive provides transferable tax credits for innovation commercialization projects. Both incentives apply to 11 emerging critical minerals.

Click or Scan to view the Saskatchewan Geological Resource Map

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