

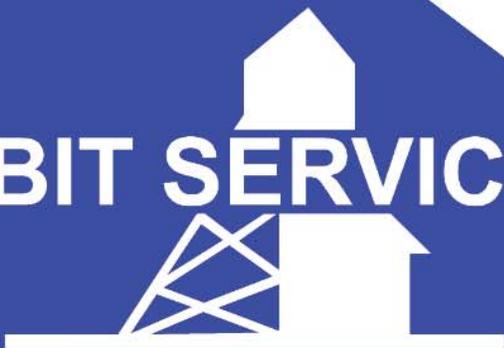


# MINING, ENERGY AND MANUFACTURING



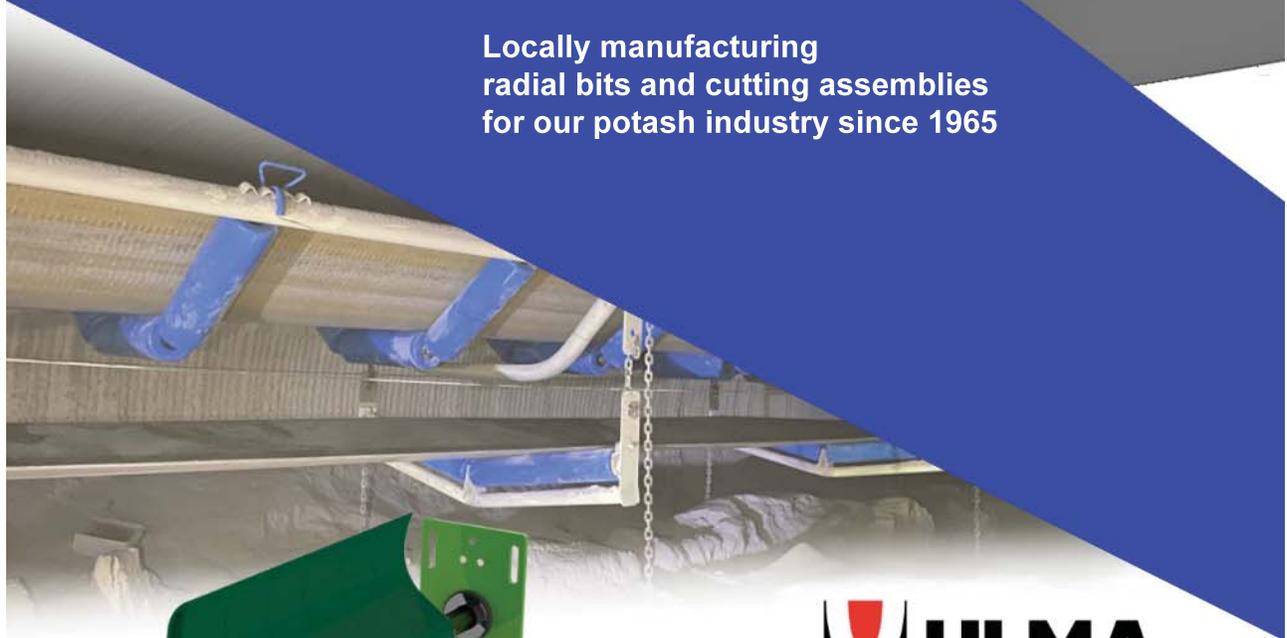
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# Sask has record mineral sales in 2022

Saskatchewan's mining industry reached an all-time high value of sales last year, more than doubling the previous record.

Mineral sales from Saskatchewan for 2022 were over \$19.4 billion.

Contributing factors included increased production and higher prices in response to supply disruptions, along with ever-increasing global demand.

The reopening of the McArthur River mine in northern Saskatchewan allowed for increased production volumes of uranium, while gold saw the highest production numbers in over 30 years with a record 136,000 ounces extracted from the Seabee mine.

The potash industry achieved record value of sales and record production, stepping up to alleviate global food insecurity concerns due to geopolitical instability that continues to impact global supply. The potash industry in the province has committed to continue to invest in increased production to meet global demand.

"These numbers show what a powerhouse Saskatchewan has become at supplying the world with minerals," Energy and Resources Minister Jim Reiter said. "The success of our natural resource sector directly influences our quality of life in Saskatchewan by providing jobs and revenue for social services and infrastructure, like highways, hospitals and schools."

Saskatchewan is home to 23 of the 31 critical minerals on Canada's list, nearly half of the world's known reserves of potash, and the world's largest high-grade uranium deposits.

World-Spectator Editor Kevin Weedmark spoke with Energy and Resources Minister Jim Reiter

about the record mineral sales.

**I'm looking at the stats for the mineral sales in 2022 and I'm just wondering what you think are the different factors that have contributed to setting that record?**

You know the bulk of it, of course, is potash. The demand and the price of it went extremely high for a period of time there, although it's back down a bit more now. So potash is the bulk of that and it's because of the geopolitical situation which was largely driving it.

**How important is mining—specifically potash mining—to the provincial economy and to the provincial government's coffers?**

Hugely important and we think that it's going to get more so.

Obviously the royalties are extremely important. You mentioned potash specifically—there's about 5,400 direct potash jobs in the province.

If you take direct and indirect right across the mining sector it's about 26,000 jobs, so it's huge. Potash and uranium alone count for about 12 per cent of the provincial GDP, so it's very, very important and we think that it's going to be expanding and becoming even more important.

**As mining companies are looking to invest, a lot of them have options of going to different jurisdictions. How do you think the province rates for investment attraction compare to other jurisdictions?**

I think the best that I can do



Saskatchewan Minister of Energy and Resources Jim Reiter

there, rather than just my opinion, the Fraser Institute annually does a survey and rates investment attractiveness for mining worldwide.

The latest version just came out a week or two ago, and Saskatchewan rates first in Canada and third in the world.

Then there are some other parts to that survey as well, where we rank well. We also rank number two in the world for mineral potential.

So we think we're doing pretty good right now but we want to do better, and so a couple of months ago we released a critical mineral strategy to incentivize more exploration to hopefully get more mines built and hopefully do even better.

**What are the main components of that strategy?**

There are several points to it. There are four goals and then a couple of tax incentives we have in place and then we're also going to be spending more investment in public geoscience data which helps the exploration companies a lot. So \$2.4 million in this upcoming year in technology and automation.

**What are the main drivers of future growth in Saskatchewan mining?**

I think you're going to see two parts to that. You're going to see increasing worldwide demand.

Critical minerals are going to be more and more in demand and we have 23 of the 31 minerals that are on the federal government critical mineral list.

The other thing that I think you're going to see help drive it in Saskatchewan is, I mentioned the Critical Mineral Strategy, those tax incentives, those goals we have I think have been very well received by the industry.

I spoke at an event last night and talked to a bunch of industry people again, we're getting good feedback, so we're pretty excited about that.

**At this point do you think that there's anything more the province could or should be doing to encourage mining development? Do you think with everything how it's set up right now, is it a competitive jurisdiction or is there anything else that the government could do to encourage further development?**

We can always do better. Even though we're ranking pretty well

as number one in Canada and pretty high worldwide, we can always do better.

That's what drove the critical mineral strategy. So I think what you're going to see now, that will be a work in progress, that strategy.

You'll see its targeted at the exploration side which is really important right now.

As we move on with that we're going to look at production or processing so we'll probably make some changes at some point down the road, but I think we're targeting the areas we should right now.

**Where do you see the mining sector going in the next five, ten, fifteen years?**

I think we're going to see more potash and uranium mining in Saskatchewan.

Those are our two big ones now so I think you're going to see more and more of that being produced and then we're showing a lot of potential in a number of other areas.

Helium looks very promising. We've got a copper mine that's going to be built in northern Saskatchewan—that's going to be very exciting and is going to employ people there. Lithium is showing promise and then of course rare earth elements are getting a lot of attention.

So that's just a few of them and it goes beyond that too. One of the goals I mentioned was that by 2030 we want to double the critical minerals that are being produced and we think we're going to get there.

While the big two, potash and uranium, continue to be the big two, you're going to see it branch out from there as well.



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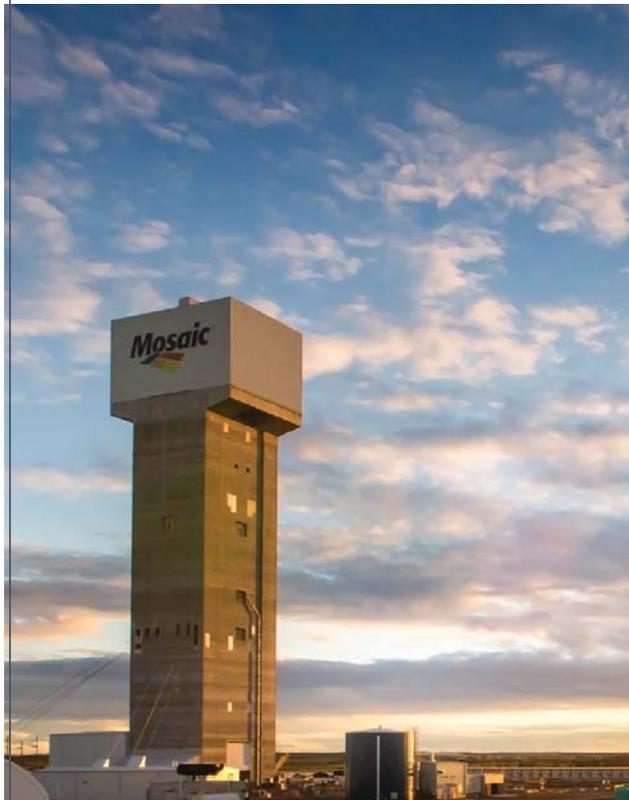
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## Saskatchewan third in the world for mining investment attractiveness

For the third year in a row, Saskatchewan has ranked first in Canada and in the top three in the world for mining investment attractiveness.

"Saskatchewan continues to be a stand-out jurisdiction to invest in because of our outstanding resource potential and strong policies that support mineral exploration and development," Energy and Resources Minister Jim Reiter said.

The Fraser Institute's 2022 Annual Survey of Mining Companies measured 62 jurisdictions around the world on two main areas - mineral potential and policy perception - to come up with an overall attractiveness ranking for investment.

Overall, Saskatchewan ranked third in the world for investment attractiveness in this year's survey. Nevada ranked first, and Western Australia second. Saskatchewan also ranked second in the world for mineral potential.

"It is no surprise that Saskatchewan remains the best jurisdiction in Canada for mining investment attractiveness and

one of the top jurisdictions globally," Foran Mining Executive Chairman and CEO Dan Myerson said. "A business-friendly government and world class geology allows companies like Foran to build multi-generational, infrastructure-type sustainable mining assets and provide the world with the critical minerals needed for global electric revolution."

"The potential is here and largely untapped," Reiter said. "Since this survey was done, we've announced additional tax and exploration incentives, along with a critical minerals strategy to drive new investment. These will all positively impact the industry in the province."

In this year's budget the Saskatchewan Mineral Exploration Tax Credit was increased from 10 to 30 per cent. The Targeted Mineral Exploration Incentive was also expanded from \$750,000 to \$4 million annually and applied to all hard rock exploration drilling across the province. In addition, a further \$2.4 million of new funding was committed to improve access

to geological data by explorers.

In 2023-24, the Government of Saskatchewan will also review environmental ex-

ploration permitting in the province to ensure timely and efficient processes for explorers and developers.



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## Record year for Saskatchewan mineral sales in 2022

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hospitals and schools."

Securing the Future: Saskatchewan's Critical Minerals Strategy, will further drive investment in the province to increase exploration and grow the mining sector.

Saskatchewan is home to occurrences of 23 of the 31 critical minerals on Canada's list, nearly half of the

world's known reserves of potash, and the world's largest high-grade uranium deposits. Abundant mineral resources, backed by a strong regulatory environment, competitive royalty and investment incentives, and a high-quality geological database have attracted most of the major global mining companies to the province.



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Vermilion Energy has committed to a \$9,000 contribution, spread over the next three years to support the ongoing education and success of Southeast College students.

# Vermilion Energy supports post-secondary scholarships with multi year partnership

Southeast College is pleased to announce a renewed scholarship partnership with Vermilion Energy Inc. Vermilion Energy has committed to a \$9,000 contribution, spread over the next three years, to support the ongoing education and success of Southeast College students. The bursary recipients will be deter-

mined based on both financial need as well as community involvement. Preference will be given to students located within southeast Saskatchewan and pursuing an education in Electrician, Industrial Mechanic or Office Administration fields. "Vermilion is proud to be a financial

supporter to the Southeast College Scholarship Fund. "Our Vermilion Ways of Caring community investment program is helping to fulfill our purpose—to responsibly produce essential energy—by giving back to our community partners and contributing to healthy, resilient and sustainable communities," says Shane Pollock, Area Superintendent for Vermilion Energy. "Southeast College is grateful to Ver-

milium Energy for choosing to invest in Southeast College students," emphasized Kassandra Lawrenz, Manager of College Advancement. "It's continued partnerships like this that are so valuable for our students as they are able to ease some of the financial pressures of pursuing a post-secondary education." Southeast College is proud to offer innovative and flexible programming that encourages students to learn where they live.

## Saskatchewan Mining Week May 28 - June 3, 2023

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- Monitor and optimize mining operations;
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- Ensure safety and environmental regulations are met and exceeded; and much more.

Scan the QR code to learn more about the program and apply today. Seats are available for Fall 2023.

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# Nutrien's Lanigan potash site recently used tele-remote technology to successfully mine a production wing without a single person entering the area

The potash industry has seen numerous near misses and, unfortunately, some serious injuries and fatalities when operators are working on an active mining face in recent years. That's one of the reasons that potash operators across the province are implementing tele-remote technology—an innovative solution to help improve operational and safety processes in underground mining.

Staff members from Nutrien's extensive network of six potash mines have been working together on developing the technology and recently Nutrien's Lanigan's potash site used this technology to successfully mine a production wing without a single person entering the area, enabling a step change in the stress relief mining process. After over 50 years of mining at Nutrien, it is the first time a wing has been cut with no people present.

"Collaboration between



the sites has been instrumental in Nutrien's success when developing and implementing tele-remote/automation technology across the potash business unit," says Owen Gunther, Automation Project Lead, Lanigan. "This

collaboration has allowed us to develop at a strong pace and replicate proven solutions."

The success of this project started with Nutrien's Culture of Care where everyone is empowered to lead, collaborate, chal-

lenge and trust. This vision enabled Nutrien to succeed by focusing on the following three pillars: People, Process and Technology. Through extensive collaboration between sites, Nutrien developed technology that enabled

them to change the way they operate. Countless hours were spent ensuring that the process uses the technology in the safest and most efficient manner possible. Nutrien worked with the people directly impacted by the change in process and technology by guaranteeing that the technology provides the people with the appropriate tools to perform their jobs safely and efficiently in this new way of operating. There was constant collaboration and commitment between each of the potash sites, strong alignment from the front line to senior leadership, engineering, operations, Next Generation Potash, IT teams and cross-network collaboration among autonomous mining opera-

tions teams. By coupling these three pillars together and investing in a dedicated site team to support the three pillars, the Nutrien potash team was positioned for success.

### About tele-remote technology and how it improves safety

Through a combination of Radar, LIDAR, advanced sensing systems and cutting-edge AI powered technologies, tele-Remote technology allows operators to operate the mining machine from a remote location, removing the operators from the active mining area and allowing changes to the way Nutrien can structure its operating strategies.

Continued on Page B12 <sup>€37</sup>

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- Spy Hill Generating Station
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# Mosaic's Esterhazy operation: One of the largest, most competitive potash mines in the world

Now running on all cylinders, Mosaic's Esterhazy operation is one of the largest, most competitive potash mines in the world. Both shafts at K3 have been in operation for more than a year, and production continues to ramp up towards full hoisting capacity of more than 72,500 tonnes per day. A new daily hoisting record of 63,180 tonnes was reached in September 2022.

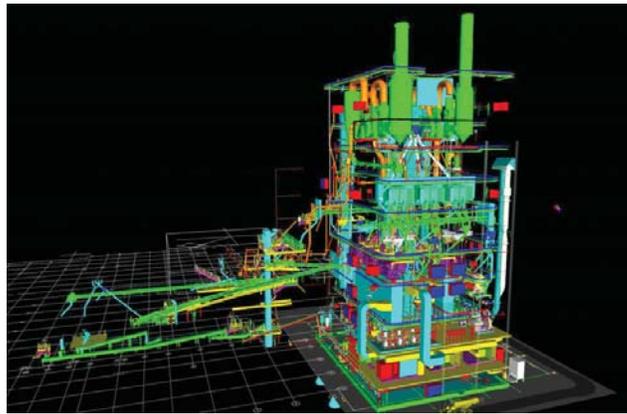
Having both shafts in production removes historical ore handling constraints at Esterhazy and ensures capacity for additional ore supply as more mining machines are assembled underground and put into production. Commissioning of a twelfth four-rotor mining machine began in January, and a thirteenth is expected to be completed later this year.

All machines in K3's fleet can operate autonomously in fully developed production areas—which reduces risk for Mosaic's employees and eliminates downtime, as they can be safely operated 24/7.

### Integrated operations: Operational visibility and real-time information

K3 is built on technology and innovation. It is designed to provide annual production of 6 million tonnes, which is about 60,000 rail cars full of potash. This means moving 17-19 million tonnes of ore per year.

Much of those operations are now being monitored and run from a technology-enabled pilot Integrated Operations Center, or IOC, on the surface at K2. Cameras and sensors monitor allow employees in the IOC to view the entire



Design and development are underway for a third compaction circuit that will be added at Esterhazy's K1 mill to increase blend-grade production capacity. When operational by the end of 2023, this third circuit will provide additional production flexibility to meet varying market demand for Mosaic's different potash products.

12-kilometer conveyance system that transports ore from where it is mined 3,350 feet underground, up through the shafts, and across the surface to the K1 and K2 mills for processing.

"The goal of this IOC is to improve production capabilities and increase reliability by integrating our operations from when the ore is mined to when product is loaded on railcars to ship out

to our customers," said Dustin Maksymchuk, General Manager Esterhazy. "This provides our employees with the operational visibility and information they need, and they are empowered to act on that data in real-time."

Integrating operations has also allowed Mosaic to build management systems and governance processes that help them operate efficiently, effectively, repeatably and sustainably. It also provides new opportunities for employees. "Employees helped us design the IOC, and their input will continue to be crucial as we move forward," said Dustin.

New roles were created to support integrated operations, including IOC

Co-ordinators responsible for managing the daily operations plan. There are also training and developmental opportunities available for employees to learn about and help refine automated mining controls and systems.

### Leveraging the full capacity of K1 & K2 mills

With both shafts at K3 up and running, operations at Esterhazy are no longer shaft-limited and can leverage the full capability of the mills. In addition to the IOC and implementation of new processes like Short-Interval Control, which helps employees maximize production by improving co-ordination and optimizing runtime, there is other work underway to improve operational reliability of the mills and ensure they are utilized to the fullest capacity.

At the K1 mill, a third compaction circuit is being added that will improve Mosaic's ability to convert standard tons to granular tons. This means more blend-grade product, which gives Mosaic additional production flexibility to meet market demand for specific products. This project is underway and expected to be completed by the end of 2023.

At the K2 mill, a project was recently approved to add a hydrofloat circuit that will increase K2's overall production capability by 400,000 tonnes—80 per cent of which will be natural crystal granular and the remaining standard product.

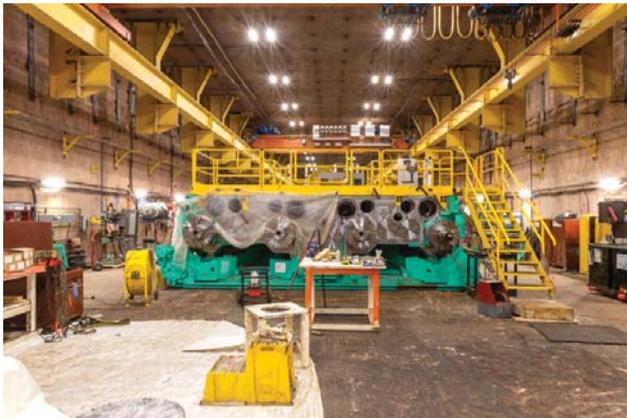
### Staying focused on delivering on their commitments

Throughout the K3 ramp-up and as Mosaic looks ahead, the Esterhazy team has remained focused on delivering on Mosaic's commitments and providing the products the company's customers need to feed the world.

*Continued on Page B11* 



During the week of January 8, Esterhazy employees joined with others across Mosaic to launch Employee Inclusion Networks—voluntary, employee-led and leader-sponsored groups that help foster a diverse and inclusive workforce through advocacy and allyship.



Esterhazy's mining machines are assembled in underground shops before being moved out into production areas to begin mining potash ore. Commissioning of a twelfth four-rotor mining machine began in January, and a thirteenth is expected to be complete later this year.

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# Mosaic's Esterhazy operation: One of the largest, most competitive potash mines in the world

Continued from Page B10

Over 100 risk reduction projects were completed in 2022, each one an employee idea that helps reduce safety or environmental risks. The K1 and K2 mills operated without a recordable injury for the entire year. Mosaic is also making considerable progress improving the safety culture across the site by focusing on employee awareness of ground conditions at K3 and heightened daily inspections in all immediate work areas to identify and address potential hazards.

"Our talented workforce is looking to the future and finding new ways to increase safety, efficiency and connection across our immense operating footprint—building a 'digital mine' to power us into the future," said Dustin. "Employees are leading innovative, technology-enabled improvements that will help ensure we have the operational capacity, reliability and flexibility we need to meet the changing needs of our customers. We're also remaining focused on safe, responsible operations and investing in our team and local

communities."

This includes Mosaic's commitment to partnering with local Indigenous communities and building a diverse, inclusive workforce and culture.

"The sustainability of our business and our communities are indelibly linked, and we're proud of the progress we're making in these areas," said Dustin. "We're taking action to strengthen local communities and ensure Mosaic is a place where all people feel welcome, safe, valued and respected."



Helping support, manage and implement change is a focus across Mosaic. The Esterhazy Team recently held training for Change Management Project Leads and are ingraining Change Management in their culture through dedicated resources, documented processes, ongoing training and continuous improvement feedback.



Funds and gifts from the Esterhazy Team's holiday celebrations were donated to three local food banks in Esterhazy, Langenburg and Churchbridge. Pictured above: Raelene Andres, Sr. Administrative Assistant - Esterhazy, presenting a check to Lynette Griffith with Esterhazy and Area Hampers.

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# Nutrien's Lanigan potash site recently used tele-remote technology to successfully mine a production wing without a single person entering the area

Continued from Page B19

Safety risks to the operators are significantly reduced, including the exposure to back, sidewall and roof hazards, trip hazards and equipment hazards. Using this technology has several benefits to the operator by reducing noise exposure, improving air quality, ergonomics and other working conditions for the operators.

Operational processes were also positively impacted, and productivity increased, due to the fact the equipment can operate seamlessly through breaks and shift changes through the new operating strategies.

### Key technologies

Of course, there were challenges to implementing the tele-remote technology, but the team was able to successfully overcome them by using the following key technologies:

- Ventilation Technology that enables Nutrien to continuously mine



without personnel having to be in the active mining area and hang traditional line brattice ventilation.

- A complete re-think on borer trip conditions enabled remote exception handling and alarm

acknowledgement to eliminate the need for operations to enter the hazardous location to resolve fault condition.

- Remote stand-alone hydraulic system to disconnect the borer from

support equipment and enable it to drop power and remotely back out separately.

- Camera technology that prevails against high levels of airborne dust and provides operators with a

high-definition experience.

- Radar Technology provides the operator with a real-time three-dimensional view of the borer and support equipment which complements

the camera technology when dust levels are high.

Advanced Instrumentation allows the operators to have real-time accurate mining machine metrics. This improves the tele-remote operating experience by providing the operator with information that enables them to operate with higher degrees of accuracy.

"This achievement illustrates Nutrien's dedication to its Culture of Care and also demonstrates that Nutrien's potash business unit can safely and effectively mine any pass in a stress relief mining environment without requiring people to be at the active face," said Trevor Berg, Senior Vice President, Potash Operations. "This advancement significantly improves the safety of the operators by reducing exposures, while increasing overall productivity. This is a safety success story where we have truly changed the way we operate mining equipment."

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# Manitoba government investing \$1.55 million to support mineral sector development

The Manitoba government is granting \$1.55 million to the Mining Association of Manitoba Inc. (MAMI) and the Communities Economic Development Fund (CEDF) to support mineral exploration and development in the province, Economic Development, Investment and Trade Minister Jeff Wharton announced on May 25.

"Driven by the emerging green economy, changing regulatory environments and evolving stakeholder expectations, the global demand for critical minerals is at an all-time high," said Wharton. "With an abundance of clean, renewable energy, and the minerals deemed critical for emerging technologies, Manitoba has a strong foundation to advance its competitive edge and become a leader within this transformative economy."

The minister noted that partnering with existing organizations that have well-established relationships with industry, communities, Indigenous rights-holders, educational institutions, and other stakeholders is the most effective way to achieve the outcomes and priorities of the Manitoba government.

"Manitoba's critical minerals work supports the federal government's mineral development objectives, which include encouraging economic growth, promoting environmental protection, advancing reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, fostering diverse and inclusive communities, and enhancing global security and partnerships," said Wharton.

As the primary industry association in the province, the Mining Association of Manitoba Inc. is in a unique position to market and promote Manitoba's mining sector to the public as well as domestic and international investors, the minister noted, adding that MAMI's projects will work to advance targeted initiatives within critical mineral development hubs.

These projects include:

- launching an education and development campaign that highlights Manitoba's lithium potential and its role in the



Manitoba Legislature

transition to a green economy;

- implementing employment readiness programs that include training on general mining operations, safety guidelines and environmental standards;
- developing new, comprehensive mineral and exploration guidelines that outline provincial standards and industry best practices; and
- supporting the development, marketing, and outreach for mining and mineral conferences in Manitoba.

"Manitoba is on the cusp of a new era in sustainable mining. MAMI is excited for the opportunity to assist with demonstrating the economic opportunity for Manitobans and the world," said Stacy Kennedy, president, MAMI. "Manitoba can be a leader in the extraction of critical minerals, which is a critical part of the solution for combating climate change."

The CEDF is Manitoba's northern economic development partner, with a mandate to unleash the economic power of

the north through leadership in community building, creating connections and advancing building development.

CEDF's projects under this agreement include:

- conducting a jurisdictional scan of industry support programs and providing recommendations on incentives that

could increase the competitiveness of Manitoba's mining sector;

- developing a plan to attract new talent and secure foreign workers to meet labour market demands; and

- launching an education and advocacy campaign that markets the tremendous potential of mining as both a solution to climate change and a driver of sustainable economic growth.

"The mining industry has employed thousands and contributed billions to Manitoba's economy both in direct and indirect jobs, particularly in the northern region of the province," said Chris Thevenot, CEO, CEDF. "This planning support will help ensure mineral development is a key component of a strong provincial and northern economy going forward and will better prepare the region for the many opportunities the mineral sector presents."

The minister noted these investments address recommendations from the Look North report and action plan and the Manitoba - First Nations Mineral Development Protocol, which highlighted the need to prioritize mineral exploration and advance strategic partnerships to harness Manitoba's mineral resources potential and advance economic reconciliation.

For more information on mineral resources and development in Manitoba, visit [www.manitoba.ca/iem](http://www.manitoba.ca/iem).

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# Accelerated site closure program a success

Over 8,800 inactive oil and gas wells and facilities in Saskatchewan were capped or closed under the Accelerated Site Closure Program. The program was announced in 2020 and provided \$400 million directly to Saskatchewan-based oil and gas service companies.

"This work would not have been possible without the dedication of Saskatchewan's oil and gas service sector, which stepped up to get the work done within a relatively short timeframe," Energy and Resources Minister Jim Reiter said.

Funding was provided from the Government of Canada and administered through the Saskatchewan Research Council. Saskatchewan successfully spent 100 per cent of funds allocated to the province. Funding went to more than 900 unique Saskatchewan-based oil and gas service companies, supporting an estimated 2,500 jobs over the life of the program. That includes about 1,790 jobs directly in the oil and gas service sector.

Over \$90 million of program funds were spent in support of Indigenous participation. Over \$32 million was used for projects on reserve lands and eligible Indigenous service companies completed over \$59 million in site closure work under the program.

"The program provided an opportunity for a num-

ber of First Nations and Métis businesses to continue to operate through the Covid-19 pandemic in the oil and gas sector," Saskatchewan First Nations Natural Resource Centre of Excellence President and CEO Sheldon Wuttunee said. "This means that many First Nations and Métis people were also working and the investment in reclaiming inactive sites and facilities means continued use for generations to come."

The Saskatchewan First Nations Natural Resource Centre of Excellence, in collaboration with the program, secured successful outcomes for Indigenous communities and businesses, helping to facilitate new partnerships within Saskatchewan's oil and gas industry.

Many former oil and gas sites will be returned to their natural state or previous use. The work has mediated and reclaimed lands across the province, including on reserve lands.

**WORK COMPLETED:**

- Over 8,800 well abandonments completed;
- Over 3,400 flowline abandonments completed;
- Over 14,000 site remediation and reclamation activities conducted; and
- Over 18,500 unique oil and gas sites saw site closure work completed.



# April oil and gas public offering brings in \$1.1 million

The Government of Saskatchewan's Crown petroleum and natural gas public offering held on Tuesday, April 4, 2023, has raised \$11,113,459.75 for the province.

Of the 147 parcels posted this sale, 105 parcels received acceptable bids. These bids covered 22,424.53 hectares.

The Estevan area saw the most interest, bringing in \$6,439,086.16 for 50 leases totaling 4,346.132 hectares.

The Lloydminster area also saw considerable interest, bringing in \$3,294,125.35 for 36 leases and two exploration licences totaling 9,617.094 hectares.

The highest bonus bid received on a lease in this offering is \$2,615,989.22 for a 258.7-hectare lease located northeast of Midale. This bid was also the highest dollar per hectare received in this offering, at \$10,112.37 per hectare. Buffalo Hill Resources Ltd. was awarded this lease.

An exploration licence, totaling 747.744 hectares, received a bonus bid of \$1,165,650.64 or \$1,558.89 per hectare. This licence is located east of Maidstone and was awarded to Millennium Land Ltd.

The next scheduled date for a public offering in Saskatchewan is June 6, 2023.



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# Mosaic's Esterhazy and Belle Plaine teams recognized for safety successes

Mosaic's Esterhazy and Belle Plaine facilities recently received Safety Achievement Awards from the Saskatchewan Mining Association (SMA).

The SMA is an industry organization representing Saskatchewan's mining and mineral exploration industry. Employees at both Mosaic mines were recognized for their safety successes/injury statistics. Over the last decade, Mosaic has improved safety at its facilities by 70 per cent.

The SMA annually recognizes member companies that realized an injury rating of zero. The SMA rating is achieved by a calculation of Lost Time Injury (LTI) and Modified Work Injury (MWI) frequency rate plus 10 per cent of the LTI and MWI severity rate.

The awards presentation was held during the SMA's Annual General Meeting in Saskatoon on March 2. Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety, Don Morgan presented the award alongside representatives from the SMA to the Esterhazy and Belle Plaine sites.

These awards represent Mosaic's commitment to ensure all personnel return home safely every day. At Mosaic, safety is a top priority, and the company says they believe no task or tonne of product is more important than the safety of their employees and contractors. Mosaic achieves this through continuous training and safety improvements at all their facilities.



**Right:** Mosaic receiving the Esterhazy Safety Award. From left to right are Larry Long SMA Chair, Dustin Maksymchuk, Janelle Appleyard SMA Director, Allison Boudreau, James Ferstl, Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety Don Morgan.

## Saskatchewan has the potential to lead in helium liquefaction

A new report looking at the feasibility of developing a commercial-scale helium liquefier in Saskatchewan has found that it could open broader helium markets, create jobs, and provide a positive financial return for owners.

The report, Helium Liquefaction in Saskatchewan, looked at the economics of several scenarios for the construction and operation of a liquefier in Saskatchewan. All scenarios showed a positive return on investment over the life of the project, based on the current supply and estimated price of helium. The report was done by the Saskatchewan Research Council.

"Research is key to understanding potential opportuni-

ties and identifying barriers to investment," Energy and Resources Minister Jim Reiter said. "Information like this is valuable to industry when making their financial decisions."

Helium is one of Canada's 31 critical minerals. It's used in a variety of scientific, medical, and technological applications. Helium cools superconducting magnets in MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) machines, separates hot gases and ultra-cold liquids during rocket launches and is used to make smart phones and fibre optic cable.

Helium is a gas that is typically turned into a liquid for cost-effective shipping. Six truckloads of helium in gas

form equal one truckload of liquid helium. Currently, Saskatchewan helium is sent to Colorado to be liquefied. The ability to liquefy helium in Saskatchewan would further facilitate opportunities for producers in the overseas markets.

This report supports commitments in the Government of Saskatchewan's Helium Action Plan: From Exploration to Exports, to contribute to the goal of Saskatchewan producing 10 per cent of the world's helium supply by 2030.

The Government of Saskatchewan will also use the information to seek federal funding through helium's position on Canada's Critical Minerals List.

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# SRC designs and manufactures Canada's first proprietary solvent extraction cell technology for rare earth element processing



A rendering of SRC's Rare Earth Processing Facility being built in Saskatoon. The facility will produce high value rare earth elements (REEs) and magnet metals using REE minerals and will operate in the mid-stream supply chain.

The Saskatchewan Research Council (SRC) has successfully designed and manufactured proprietary commercial-scale solvent extraction cells for its under construction Rare Earth Processing Facility. With this, Saskatchewan and Canada are now one of only a handful of jurisdictions in the world with this capability.

The cells, which are being developed with automation algorithms to improve productivity and efficiency, are being manufactured at an SRC-operated fabrication facility in Saskatoon, that celebrated its grand opening today.

"Innovation and technology development are at the heart of what SRC does," Minister Responsible for SRC Jeremy Harrison said. "The design, fabrication and automation of these solvent extraction cells right here in Saskatchewan is helping to develop an innovative and secure rare earth element supply chain in North America."

SRC is manufacturing 140 of these cells at the fabrication facility by fall 2023. The cells will be the main component in the Rare Earth Processing Facilities Separation Unit. The cells take mixed rare earth chloride, a liquid mixture which includes all 17 rare earth elements, through a process that separates them into individual or

grouped rare earth oxides. When separated, rare earth elements are highly valuable and are utilized in a variety of modern technological end-uses including cell phones, electric vehicles and wind turbines, along with more strategic uses including the defense industry.

"As SRC continues to develop its own commercial demonstration Rare Earth Processing Facility, it is developing additional expertise and new processes and technologies, like the solvent extraction cells, that will help position Saskatchewan as a leading-edge rare earth element hub," SRC President and CEO Mike Crabtree said. "The cells have been developed with automation algorithms to improve both productivity and efficiency, while at the same time being a cost-effective option, making them both a benefit to SRC's Facility but also to the growing rare earth industry as a whole."

SRC is constructing North America's first fully integrated, commercial demonstration Rare Earth Processing Facility with hydrometallurgy, separation and metal smelting stages which is expected to be fully operational in late 2024.

SRC is Canada's second largest research and technology organization. With over 350 employees, \$277 million in annual revenue and 76 years of experience, SRC

provides services and products to its 1,400 clients in 23 countries around the world. For more information, visit [www.src.sk.ca](http://www.src.sk.ca).



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# GM sees strong future for Nutrien Rocanville

BY SIERRA D'SOUZA BUTTS  
AND KEVIN WEEDMARK

The new General Manager of Nutrien Rocanville says the mine will continue to be busy with capital investment in addition to day-to-day mining over the next several years.

Justin Young says capital investment in the mine will remain around the same level over the next five years.

There have been major investments in the mine in recent years, with upgrades to the mill, expansion to the tailings management area, expansion underground, and the addition of an electrical generation plant.

"If you were to look at our capital forecasts, there will continue to be lots of work around here to reach our production network target of approximately 18 million tonnes over the coming years," he said.

"In our business we're never really done with maintaining and investing in our assets. There's still a large sustaining capital requirement to be able to maintain and keep up with our mining and milling facilities.

"When we look at responsible and sustainable mining, our mine plans are forecasted into the future a long way."

When asked about the possibility of an underground expansion and the potential for another shaft, Young says:

"We have a very detailed five-year site plan. We know where our miners are going to be, the development we need, the amount of underground infrastructure we need, and the upgrades we need to do in the mill from a sustainability standpoint. Then we look out at our 20-year mine plan, we have a good understanding where the mining panels are, and the amount of work we need to do to be able to sustain the production of 5.2 to 6 million tonnes.

"Based on those long-range plans, we get to a spot where we need to do something for ventilation and power underground. There are a few options. One is another shaft, but there are some other options outside of doing a shaft. A company our size spends a lot of time reviewing and making sure we make the right decision."

## Mine employees come from a wide area, Moosomin one of the main communities

Young said employees commute from as far as Saskatoon to work at the Rocanville mine, but most employees are in the local area.

"We have people who drive from Saskatoon and rent a room in the area. Others settle in the local area, with Moosomin being a big contingent. We just had a new hire group come in this week. There were 11 employees in this group and about half of them would be looking to stay in the Moosomin area," he said.

"A couple are renting in Rocanville, some in Manitoba, some are moving to other small communities in the area. They are typically spread around the area, but I would say Moosomin is probably one of our biggest populations for employees just because it has a few more amenities."

Since starting at the mine, Young has seen significant growth.

"You can easily say the staff has doubled," said Young. "Before my time we were at about 400 employees when we were doing half of the capacity. We doubled our workers since the expansion, and we've seen certain areas of the business grow.

"For example, we've seen the amount of capital spend required to continue to operate a facility this large grow, so we built our own capital management team on site."

## Rocanville Nutrien's largest mine

Nutrien Rocanville has close to 900 direct employees in addition to many contractors.

"We have 895 employees right now," said Young. "The number of contractors varies. There are peak seasons. In a turnaround we've been up to 1,200 to 1,400 contractors alone, plus all our employees. There's been days where the swipe-ins at security were over 2,000 people.

"Rocanville is the largest and lowest cost producer among Nutrien's six potash mines.

"This year we're anticipating about 5.2 million finished product tonnes.

"Out of all our potash sites, we are responsible for about 40 per cent of the overall production.



## New General Manager

Justin Young has been working at Nutrien's Rocanville mine for 12 years, and was recently announced as the new General Manager for the site.

"Our low cost per tonne comes down to our ground conditions underground. We're able to use a long room and pillar mining method, some would call it rock farming, where we cut straight ahead for about 5,000 to 6,000 feet, turn the miner back around for a second pass, then go back and cut the third pass; where our other mines have to mine in a stress relief fashion with shorter rooms and more ground control required, which is a lot more work."

How does Young explain the size of the Rocanville mine to people?

"Most people have been to the city of Calgary," he says. "If you drew a line around the perimeter of Calgary and overlaid it over our mine plan, it's about that size. Our underground workings are vast."

## Experience prepared Young for new role

Young said his years of experience have prepared him for his role as general manager.

"I'm from the area. I was born and raised in Wapella. My wife and I made the choice we should come back from Alberta. My parents are still here. My wife's parents are still here, and we had young children at the time when we moved back in 2011," said Young.

"My first role in the mine was a senior project engineer. After about a year, I took on the underground engineering manager position.

"Then a year after that I got involved in the expansion project and I saw that through to completion in 2016. I was then transferred to the mill where I became the mill maintenance superintendent for a few years. After that I became the assistant general manager and most recently became general manager.

"Being the assistant GM and stepping into this role, there isn't that much change," he said.

"In terms of the day-to-day operations with my past role, it's very similar to the expectations I have in this role.

"There's now more collaboration with our corporate office and supporting the facilitation of the strategic initiatives we are working on," said Young.

"Knowing how the site operates, allows the GM to share what will work, what won't work, things like that. I will now have more say and involvement in that process, which will probably be the biggest change."

## Biggest challenge

He said that attracting and retaining people is the biggest challenge for the mine.

"Right now the biggest challenge we have is the war for

talent," said Young.

"It's very hard to find skilled people and to get people to come to our community.

"The other thing is keeping them here once we get them here, especially our professionals. That's one of our biggest challenges right now. If they have a connection in the area they will stay, but if they don't have a connection to someone or something in the area it's hard to keep them here."

## Biggest reward

Young said the most rewarding part about the job is the people and working closely with everyone on the team, and getting them home safe every day.

"If I had to summarize the perfect day, it would be spending time in the field interacting with our employees and then leaving work knowing that everyone went home to their families safe, everyone's able to provide for their family by working here," said Young.

"And, that we hit our production targets. That we produced what we said we're going to produce, and we did it as efficiently as we could, and under budget.

"That would be the perfect day for me. We call them 0-20-60 days—zero injuries, no one got hurt, we produced 20,000 product tonnes, and we mined and hoisted 60,000 tonnes, which is a productive day."

And when asked why he does it?

Young says: "I love what I do and the industry I am in. I like the opportunity Nutrien provides for my career, the opportunity it affords my family, the opportunities it provides for my work family, and the opportunities it provides to our community as a whole."



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