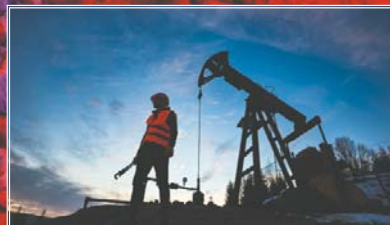


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Energy and Resources Minister tours key oil and gas facilities in Southeast Saskatchewan

In September, Minister of Energy and Resources Colleen Young toured two key southeast facilities that support innovative and sustainable energy production: Whitecap Resources Inc.'s enhanced oil recovery (EOR) project in Weyburn, and Steel Reef Infrastructure Corp's (Steel Reef) Viewfield gas processing facility, including their combined heat and power project, in the Estevan area.

"Our oil and gas sector is a bedrock of the provincial economy, supporting jobs, families and a massive service and supply industry," Young said. "Saskatchewan energy producers have a proven track record of developing and implementing new technologies to reduce emissions and keep production strong into the future. Our province is ready to play a key role in helping Canada realize its potential to be a global energy superpower."

The Weyburn CO₂ EOR project has been operating for nearly 25 years. It collects carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from industrial emitters and injects the gas underground to enhance oil recovery. To date, the facility has stored more than 44 megatonnes of CO₂ which is the equivalent to removing 9,310,647 cars off the road for one year. It has also produced over 120 million barrels of oil during this time.

"Whitecap is proud to own and operate one of the world's largest carbon sequestration facilities, right here in Saskatchewan,"

Whitecap Resources Inc. Senior Vice President of Business Development and IT Dave Mombourquette said. "This project helped pioneer enhanced oil recovery and world-leading best practices for EOR project implementation. It continues to enable low-decline, stable oil production while also reducing emissions. Saskatchewan's foresight in capturing CO₂ from Boundary Dam continues to pay dividends as the current main source of CO₂ that drives Weyburn's EOR recovery today. The province's attractive energy policies, combined with its skilled workforce, make Saskatchewan an ideal place for us to continue our investment to realize the full potential of the province's vast energy resources."

Steel Reef continues to support associated gas capture from oil production. Instead of associated gas simply being vented or flared to the atmosphere, the gas is collected and processed into various saleable products and used to generate electricity. The company has used the Government of Saskatchewan's Oil and Gas Processing Investment Incentive (OGPII) several times to support its flare gas capture investments in the province. Steel Reef has built the first phase of its combined heat and power project at its Viewfield gas processing facility in the Estevan area, which includes a turbine for power generation and integrated waste heat recovery units, reducing the need for asso-



Saskatchewan Energy and Resources Minister Colleen Young poses for a photo with Ministry of Energy and Resources staff and Steel Reef Infrastructure Corp staff at Steel Reef's Viewfield gas processing facility in southeast Saskatchewan.

ciated gas consumption for utility and process heat for flare gas processing.

With phase 2, Steel Reef will install additional turbines and electrical substations at Viewfield, as well as its facilities in Coleville, North Portal, Saskatchewan Ethane Extraction Plant (SEEP), and Steelman to align with multiple long-term Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) with SaskPower to provide in excess of 100 megawatts (MWs) of carbon efficient power for Saskatchewan communities. On average, each site will produce approximately 20 megawatts of power to be brought onto the SaskPower grid by late 2027.

"We were pleased to tour our Viewfield facility alongside the Government of Saskatchewan to



Saskatchewan Energy and Resources Minister Colleen Young tours Steel Reef Infrastructure Corp's Viewfield gas processing facility in southeast Saskatchewan on Sept. 4.

highlight the importance of economic growth and shaping a reliable, responsible and sustainable energy future," Steel Reef Infrastructure Corp. Chief Operating Officer Austin Voss said. "This was an opportunity to showcase how we are advancing emissions-to-energy technologies, and how we are investing in electricity generating turbines powered by recovered flare gas. This process reduces emissions and provides electricity from a previously unavailable source. By working with the government and industry peers - and thanks to the dedication of our talented employees - we are strengthening Saskatchewan's energy sector and

delivering long-term opportunities for growth and competitiveness."

The ministry continues to promote the responsible development of Saskatchewan's oil and gas resources through various emissions reduction programs. As of 2024, Saskatchewan's oil and gas sector has reduced emissions from venting and flaring at upstream oil facilities by 71 per cent, compared with 2015 levels.

Saskatchewan is a global leader in low emissions oil production from EOR. The Government of Saskatchewan urges the Government of Canada to support sustainable oil production, including by making EOR an eligible use of captured CO₂ under the federal Car-

bon Capture, Utilization and Storage Investment Tax Credit. Saskatchewan's competitive royalty structure, stable and predictable regulatory approach, programs that support innovation, emissions reductions, and new infrastructure make the province one of the best places in the world to invest in oil and gas.

For more information about the Ministry of Energy and Resources' many incentives and Crown royalty programs, please visit this link. You will find specific information about the Oil and Gas Processing Investment Incentive, the Saskatchewan Petroleum Innovation Incentive and the Oil Infrastructure Investment Program.



Saskatchewan Energy and Resources Minister Colleen Young is given a tour of control room equipment at Whitecap Resources Inc's enhanced oil recovery project in Weyburn.



Saskatchewan Energy and Resources Minister Colleen Young poses for a photo with Austin Voss, Chief Operating Officer with Steel Reef Infrastructure Corp, at Steel Reef's Viewfield gas processing facility in southeast Saskatchewan on Sept. 4.



Saskatchewan Energy and Resources Minister Colleen Young poses for a photo in the control room at Whitecap Resources Inc's enhanced oil recovery project in Weyburn, alongside Whitecap executives, from left, Dave Mombourquette, Bill Stoneman, Chris Bullin, and Darryl Williamson.

Sask critical minerals program to support new lithium project

The Government of Saskatchewan's Critical Minerals Innovation Incentive (SCMII) will support the development of EMP Metals Corp.'s Project Aurora, a lithium refining demonstration plant in southeast Saskatchewan.

The SCMII supports a wide range of innovative projects targeting 11 emerging critical minerals in Saskatchewan, including lithium. Project Aurora will involve building and operating a small-scale lithium refining demonstration facility to innovate and prove out a model for larger, commercial-scale lithium production in the future.

"This is an important and exciting step forward for Saskatchewan," Energy and Resources Minister Colleen Young said. "By approving this project under the SCMII, we are opening the door to new technology that will lead to new investment, good jobs, and a more sustainable energy future. Project Aurora will help strengthen Saskatchewan's position as a reliable supplier of the critical minerals the world needs and underscores our province's status as one of the best places in the world to invest in responsible resource development."

Project Aurora is a joint initiative between EMP Metals Corp. and Saltworks Technologies Inc. that builds on a successful lithium conversion pilot program. Saltworks will design and construct the

demonstration plant, while EMP Metals will provide lithium brine from its Viewfield well and further infrastructure.

"We greatly appreciate the Saskatchewan government's approval of our application for SCMII funding," EMP Metals CEO Karl Kottmeier said. "Once again, Saskatchewan has proven that it is truly a supporter of new investment and technological development. With Project Aurora, EMP and our partner Saltworks Technologies are excited to be building lithium production in the province and bringing longer-term employment opportunities to the community. This support only deepens our commitment to our work in Saskatchewan."

"Saskatchewan is clearly focused on harnessing its critical minerals, entrepreneurship, and innovation capacity," Saltworks Technologies CEO Benjamin Sparrow said. "We are thrilled to be collaborating with EMP Metals and Team Saskatchewan to demonstrate next generation lithium extraction technologies that will help unlock new opportunities for current and future generations."

Launched in 2024, the SCMII follows private investment and provides transferable royalty and freehold production tax credits on eligible innovation commercialization projects. The program is designed to drive investments that lead to greater recovery, improved environmen-

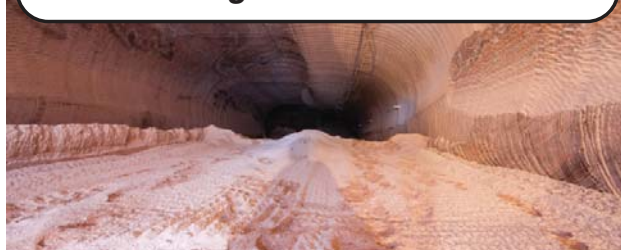
tal outcomes and increased value-added processing or byproduct commercialization in the province's critical minerals sector.

Saskatchewan continues to be ranked as Canada's top jurisdiction for mining investment, according to the Fraser Institute's Annual Survey of Mining Companies. In 2023, the province launched 'Securing the Future: Saskatchewan's

Critical Minerals Strategy' to foster sector growth, aligning with the Saskatchewan Growth Plan. The strategy aims to increase Saskatchewan's share of national mineral exploration to 15 per cent by 2030, double the number of critical minerals produced, and enhance output of potash, uranium and helium. It also seeks to establish Saskatchewan as a hub for rare earth elements.



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Sask one of the most attractive jurisdictions in the world for mining investment

BY KARA KINNA

The World-Spectator spoke with Saskatchewan's Minister of Energy and Resources Colleen Young about Saskatchewan's position as one of the most attractive jurisdictions in the world for mining investment.

According to the Fraser Institute's Annual Survey of Mining Companies, Saskatchewan is again the top region in Canada for mining investment attractiveness, ranking first in the country. The 2024 report included responses from 350 companies rating 82 jurisdictions around the world. In addition to its best-in-Canada ranking, Saskatchewan placed seventh globally, owing to its strong ranking in policy and regulatory perception.

The 2024 survey measured all regions on two main areas—policy perception and mineral potential—to come up with an overall attractiveness ranking for investment. Saskatchewan placed first in Canada, and third globally, in policy perception, based on responses concerning policy certainty, environmental regulation, the legal system and skilled labour supply.

Saskatchewan also ranked highly for its geological database—fourth in the world—which speaks to the Saskatchewan Geological Survey's cutting-edge mapping technology and high-quality public geoscience data and its extensive library of core samples in its southern and northern Saskatchewan facilities.

Last year Saskatchewan reached record highs in potash production, mining approximately 24.7 million tonnes of potassium chloride, while also reaching new records for uranium production and sales—16,700 tonnes and \$2.6 billion, respectively.

The province is home to 27 of the 34 minerals on Canada's critical minerals list. In addition to uranium and potash, there is strong potential in Saskatchewan for further growth in the critical minerals sector: helium production continues to increase, while key projects in lithium, copper and zinc are set to begin production over the next year.

The interview with Minister Colleen Young follows:

What are some of the key factors that really sets Saskatchewan apart when it comes to mining investment attractiveness?

The Fraser Institute reported great news for our province overall and it does underscore Saskatchewan's status as a leading global mining jurisdiction. As you know, this is the 11th straight year that Saskatchewan is ranked first in Canada for mining investment attractiveness and we are pleased to see that, and we are glad that Saskatchewan continues to be recognized as one of the best places in the world to invest in resource development.

Our mining investment is outstanding. We have 27 of 34 critical minerals in this province and it's estimated to have been the highest of any province in Canada last year alone in 2024 in our mining investment area, and we're expected to grow. We expect that we're going to hit over \$7 billion in 2025.

It's our strong regulatory policy framework that continues to give investors and resource companies that confidence that we're here, we're listening to them, that we're supportive, that we're stable and a reliable place to make significant investments for mineral exploration mining projects.

How is Saskatchewan differing from some other jurisdictions? What are we doing right?

Well I think we have created some really good competitive incentive programs and I think it's the predictability and the stable regulatory environment that investors and companies look at and say 'We're not going to make a change the next year,' that they can count on Saskatchewan's regulation and the programs that we're putting in place so that they are secure in making those investments and they know there's not going to be a change, a rapid change in that, and I think that's been for all of our industries whether it's been the oil and gas, whether it's been potash and now the new minerals that are coming online.

We make sure that we're not making rapid changes in those regulatory frameworks on a yearly basis or any time and we make sure that we're following the markets and that we know what's out there and what these industries are looking to invest in.

How much does a report like this really matter? Does it actually make a real impact in terms of companies investing in mining in Saskatchewan?

Absolutely, we work very closely with the Saskatchewan Mining Association as well, the SMA. They are on the ground, they are working with businesses and industries and I work close with (SMA President) Pam Schwann in making sure that I am hearing what they're saying and what they are looking for. And when we do that with our industries and we listen to them first-and-foremost, I think that they recognize that we're here and that we're stable and predictable, and that they can make a secure and confident investment in the mining industry in this province. And that's been there for a long time, and as I said, I meet



Colleen Young, Saskatchewan's Minister of Energy and Resources, speaking at an event at the Belle Plaine mine recently.

with many of them on a regular basis and assure them that if there is going to be any change, they're given a heads-up, and that we are working with them to let them know when that change may be and if it works within their industry.

Is that something that you really think that's helped make a difference for the province?

Absolutely, I believe so. The Fraser Institute does a really good job of listening to industries and making sure that they have provided their reports and provide that to the province, along with our credit ratings that are always there. Those industries are paying attention to those things.

How did it make you feel to see the ranking again this year?

We are very proud in Saskatchewan overall to know that we are leading in the global mining jurisdiction area and that we continue to lead there. The Fraser Institute has given us the 11th straight year that we have ranked first in Canada. It's been year after year after year that we've had that ranking, and we are an energy superpower. We have many things to offer and when it comes to energy, we know in our markets to the south to begin with, but also on a global scale, there are many countries that are looking to Saskatchewan for those mining investments.

Are there any new developments coming down the pipeline right now that we should be particularly excited about?

We have seen significant investments in the mineral sector across a variety of commodities and we know that's going to continue. Some of the notable ones I was just out at BHP—\$19 billion Jansen conventional potash mine. Last week, did a tour of it, we visited out there and they're targeted for their first production in 2027. And K+S Potash Canada is ramping up to nearly double production at the Bethune mine over the next couple of decades as well.

NexGen, they have a \$2.2 billion dollar Rook One conventional uranium project in Northwestern Saskatchewan along Athabasca Basin. It has high grade ore deposits and it's in its final stages of environmental licensing and approval.

Paladin Energy out of Australia completed the acquisition of Fission Uranium just recently this year and it's a \$1.2 billion conventional uranium project at the Patterson Lake south. Foran Mining Corporation at McIlwenna Bay, just up there by Hudson Bay, north of Hudson Bay, they have a copper and zinc development project which has currently been under construction for a while now, but they expect their first commercial production in 2026. So we are looking forward to that.

A brine lithium project is under development by Arizona Lithium, EMP metals, and Grounded Lithium. Benetton Mines just received an environmental approval for development of their uranium mine, and North American Helium is continuing construction of their purification facilities in Southwest Saskatchewan.

So we have a lot on the go right now and we're really looking forward to many of these things getting into production.

Where do you see growth in the industry continuing?

We are the world's largest potash producer and reached a record high of 24.7 Potassium Chloride tons last year and this year we are projecting the value of our potash sales to rise with recent increases in the international potash prices, so we are on pace with sales to end at the end of this year, \$4.1 billion, and the potash industry continues to be a strong pillar of the province.

We know that there are a lot of things happening. I was

just down at one of the mines here recently at Bethune and we see a bright future for the potash industry as it grows and they are making strong investments into our province as well. We are very proud of the potash industry and the work that they do. They have global markets that they are sending to and are strong world-class mining companies that we have. So, the potash industry is very strong in the province. We are on track again to push past our 2030 growth plan of \$9 billion in annual sales in the years ahead.

Are you anticipating a lot of growth in some of the other mining sectors as well?

In uranium production, our sales have already reached \$2.6 billion last year and a lot of production happened there, but uranium sales for the current year are expected to increase further than they were last year with global markets that are looking for the high-grade uranium that we have. So they're off to a strong start with sales of nearly \$1.7 billion already in the first six months of this year.

Denison mines has one project coming on, NexGen is just waiting for their federal approvals, Cameco and Orano, which are world-class existing producers that have been increasing production as well in advancing projects in Saskatchewan.

We have a lot going on in the potash industry and it's going to remain strong. I am very confident in the investments that are being made by the potash industry in our

province.

What practical differences does this report make?

We are constantly ranked by the Fraser Institute as the top jurisdiction for mining investment and this shows that the industry sees Saskatchewan as the place to be, for investment, for knowing that it's a stable, supportive and reliable jurisdiction to invest in the mineral development projects and we know that mineral development projects require significant investments. So these reports do affirm that the mining industry in Saskatchewan is a prime location for exploration and development.

What difference will it make for the provincial economy and for the province's finances when you have these new mines coming online?

Mineral development and mining continue to be one of our most important economic drivers. They directly employ about 11,000 people and are one of the top contributors to our GDP and direct government revenue. As these mines come online and begin production, they're going to be subject to mineral royalties and taxes, which do contribute to the provincial revenues and help fund public services, such as healthcare, education, social services, building of our highways, infrastructure such as schools, hospitals, and long-term care facilities, all of which benefit all of our Saskatchewan citizens.

So, it's really critical to be supportive of these businesses and industries in our province, and work with them along the way as they build and invest in their projects in this province and contribute to our economic growth.

How different do you think this province would be without these mines and these resources?

We would be looking at a heavier tax burden and for us the mining sector, the potash, the oil and gas sector—all of the things that drive and provide a strong economy are critical to ensuring that we can make good investments that the people need and that they expect so that they can have a good quality life for themselves and their families as they grow.

Our population has grown in this province because of the investments that have been made by these companies, and by investors in our province. That provides good paying jobs for workers and for families in our province. It creates a strong economic base for us to be able to invest into our citizens.

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Mosaic invests \$35M for spring turnaround work at Esterhazy sites

It was a busy spring for Mosaic at their potash mine sites in the Esterhazy area, and even more impressive is the fact that through 72,000-plus hours worked, no lost time injuries were reported.

"We had a K2 turnaround from May 18 to June 7, we also had a K1 turn around from June 1 to June 22," said Bernie Boutin, Mosaic's Director of Capital at Esterhazy K3. "And K3 had a partial turnaround over that period of time as well, between May 18 and June 22."

There were more than 400 contractors on site at all three locations, which Boutin noted is quite beneficial to the local economy.

"It was a very busy time, and we had day shift, night shift for all sites doing the turnaround work," he said. "It's a good number for our community, it keeps things busy in town. Our communities do a good job supporting these extra people that come to work in our area."

Whenever possible, local expertise is used for the annual turnaround projects, which is when critical maintenance and repairs take place.

"Generally, it's the local contractors that are always available for the mines, and then we get the larger, more remote contractors from the cities as well," Boutin explained. "Some jobs you right size it because for smaller jobs, generally the local contractors are interested in those, but we do have some of our larger contractors that like tackling the large construction project type jobs, which entails millwrights, welders, iron workers, pipe fitters, electricians.

The Mosaic K3 site at Esterhazy.



We had a variety of those types of jobs—smaller scale ones and some large scale ones."

While not as high-volume as previous years in terms of the number of contractors involved, this year's turnaround did note a healthy monetary investment in local Mosaic assets.

"Over \$35 million invested in material, supplies and services—it's a big number," Boutin said. "That relates to 400-plus workers and over 72,000 person hours of work, so it's good for the community. That means we're supporting companies as well as they're assisting with us on executing the turnaround projects."

With the shift to an earlier turnaround in Esterhazy, idle and turnaround expenses for Mosaic rose \$16 million, but is anticipated to decline in the third quarter.

As for the turnaround being free from work injuries, Boutin listed a few factors that make a big difference.

"The key there is the safe onboarding of contractors, the pre-job planning," he said. "That's what helps us be successful with not having injuries. Our presence in the field, in the regular contractor meetings, making sure they have good safe work procedures, and they're following that. Lots has to happen for good safety results, and

that's our focus."

One big project of note was the commissioning of the Hydrofloat project at the K2 mill. Adding the new hydrofloat circuit was delayed due to supply chain issues back when the Covid pandemic hit, but the completion target of mid-2025 proved to be a bullseye.

"We're still doing wet commissioning of that circuit, so it's kind of like a partial ramp up as we do wet conditioning," Boutin explained. "So it's not up to full rates, but it is in the throes of wet commissioning, and that will allow us to make another 400,000 tons of production at the K2 mill."

Producing low-cost

tonnes through this project allows Mosaic to optimize the Canadian Resource Tax, and based on last year's number, there is an approximate \$60 per tonne benefit to the increased production at Esterhazy.

The new Hydrofloat project was officially commissioned in July with hopes that the volume expansion will drive production costs per tonne lower in the future—the only asterisk to that being any big changes in foreign exchange rates.

Speaking of changes made by other countries, the U.S. tariffs are having little effect on Mosaic's operations locally.

"We've been watching it, we haven't seen a huge

impact just yet," Boutin said when asked about the 50 per cent tariff on Canadian steel. "But when you go out for bids, obviously our local suppliers will try and bid local materials because it also puts them at an uncompetitive advantage if they're bringing out of country materials. So when they go out for bids, they're obviously going to look at best pricing, and when you go to different vendors, you're going to see that through the quotation process."

In their second quarter report released in early August, Mosaic noted \$411 million net income for Q2, with \$194 million in potash operating earnings alone.

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Saskatchewan funds growing research and innovation partnership

The Government of Saskatchewan is strengthening the foundation of a unique research partnership that will support energy and mineral research and help make Saskatchewan a global leader in clean energy. To date, the province has committed \$780,000 to help establish and support the operations of the Global Institute for Energy, Minerals and Society (GIEMS).

GIEMS is a research and training partnership between Saskatchewan Polytechnic, the University of Regina and the University of Saskatchewan that began to create a collaborative pipeline of innovation and talent. As a result of Saskatchewan's ongoing international engagement efforts, a memorandum of understanding establishing the collaboration was first announced at COP28 in Dubai in 2023. The partnership aims to promote and align research and innovation in the province's energy and mineral sectors.

"GIEMS is already opening up new opportunities to accelerate research and innovation and train future leaders in these critical sectors," Advanced Education Minister Ken Cheveldayoff said. "This partnership will support our labour market and significantly advance Saskatchewan's Growth Plan goals. It will help position Saskatchewan to be at the forefront of clean energy."

The partnership will play a key role in supporting the transition to clean energy by coordinating research efforts and fostering collaboration between the post-secondary sector, government, industry and Indigenous groups. GIEMS recently hired Executive Director, Tom Kishchuk, who is building a team to help co-ordinate and advance its work. Mr. Kishchuk has extensive experience in the energy sector at the provincial and national levels including leadership roles and board appointments at organizations such as the Sylvia Fedoruk Canadian Centre for Nuclear Innovation.

"GIEMS will unlock the full potential of the people and organizations advancing the province's energy and minerals sectors. By engaging with academia, industry, government and Indigenous organizations to understand their needs, GIEMS will act as a bridge that connects ideas, capabilities and opportunities to achieve shared provincial goals."

—Tom Kishchuk, GIEMS Executive Director

"GIEMS will unlock the full potential of the people and organizations advancing the province's energy and minerals sectors," Kishchuk said. "By engaging with academia, industry, government and Indigenous organizations to understand their needs, GIEMS will act as a bridge that connects ideas, capabilities and opportunities to achieve shared provincial goals."

Through GIEMS, post-secondary researchers will combine resources and share knowledge to help address education and research gaps in energy and mineral sectors. The partnership will also enable them to leverage research grants to continue advancing work in these areas.

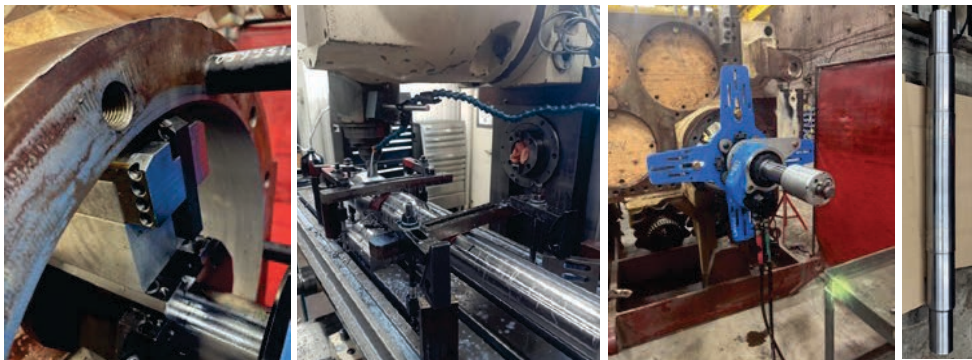
"At the University of Regina, we see GIEMS as a powerful catalyst for collaboration and innovation, promoting interdisciplinary perspectives to ensure that social innovations are developed alongside technical solutions," University of Regina Vice President of Research Dr. Chris Yost said. "Our researchers are advancing knowledge that supports a more sustainable energy future, while our students gain the experience and skills needed to become future leaders who will drive Saskatchewan's energy and mineral sectors forward."

"GIEMS is developing sustainable solutions that will positively impact both people and the planet," University of Saskatchewan Vice President of Research

Saskatchewan is proud to contribute our research enterprise, infrastructure, and leadership to the advancement of GIEMS."

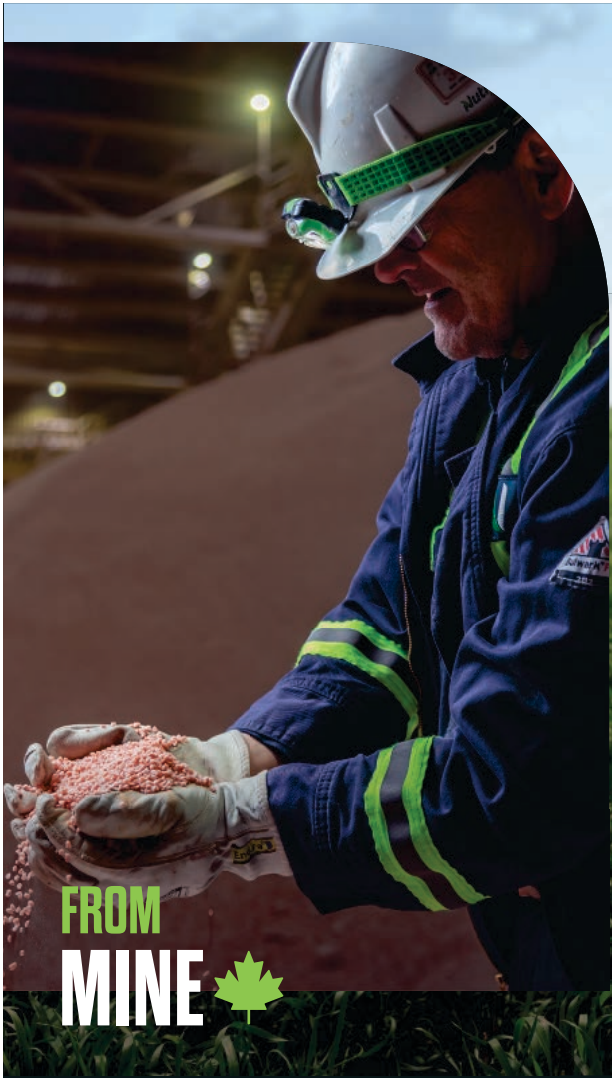
"GIEMS reflects Sask Polytech's strategic commitment to advancing industry-driven innovation," Saskatchewan Polytechnic Vice-Provost Susan Blum said. "As Saskatchewan's premier institution for applied research, our involvement in the GIEMS partnership ensures that our work-integrated learning programs are directly informed by current and emerging industry needs, helping employers access skilled talent and drive economic growth in the energy and mineral sector."

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Saskatchewan defines royalty structure to prepare for lithium development

The Government of Saskatchewan is supporting the development of the province's emerging lithium industry with the introduction of regulatory amendments to set a clear and consistent royalty framework for lithium and other minerals produced from natural brine aquifers.

These amendments to The Subsurface Mineral Royalty Regulations, 2017 will provide certainty for resource companies looking to develop or invest in lithium projects in Saskatchewan.

"Lithium is a critical mineral that is expected to see strong demand and growth in the decades ahead, and Saskatchewan is well-positioned to take advantage of this opportunity," Energy and Resources Minister Colleen Young said. "By putting this royalty framework in place now, we are providing certainty for industry, while ensuring the people of Saskatchewan benefit as this sector develops."

The new royalty framework sets a Crown royalty rate of 3 per cent of the value of brine mineral sales, with a two-year holiday for new productive capacity. The rate

"By putting this royalty framework in place now, we are providing certainty for industry, while ensuring the people of Saskatchewan benefit as this sector develops."

—Sask Energy and Resources
Minister Colleen Young

set is consistent with Saskatchewan's Crown royalties for potash, salt and sodium sulphate, while the overall system is competitive with other leading jurisdictions developing lithium from deep natural brine aquifers.

"This is another example of the Government of Saskatchewan continuing to encourage responsible resource development and employment in the province," Grounded Lithium President and CEO Gregg Smith said. "This new regulatory framework provides a reasonable royalty

rate while also recognizing the significant risk and initial investment companies make in processing facilities to ultimately achieve commercial production. Our pursuit of the most attractive geology brought Grounded Lithium to Saskatchewan, and we are pleased to be here."

Saskatchewan remains Canada's leading province for mining investment, according to the Fraser Institute's Annual Survey of Mining Companies. In 2025 Saskatchewan is projected to attract over \$7 billion in mining investment and account for more than 25 per cent of total mining investment in Canada.

In 2023 the province introduced 'Securing the Future: Saskatchewan's Critical Minerals Strategy,' aiming to grow the sector in line with the Saskatchewan growth plan. This strategy targets increasing Saskatchewan's share of national mineral exploration to 15 per cent by 2030, doubling the number of critical minerals produced, and growing the output of potash, uranium and helium. It also aspires to position Saskatchewan as a key hub for rare earth elements.



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GeoVenture gives Sask educators unique perspective on mining operations

BY RYAN KIEDROWSKI
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Every year teachers across the province exchange a week of their summer outside of the classroom for a chance to learn about advancements in the mining industry.

Organized by the Saskatchewan Mining Association, GeoVenture is a seven-day, cross-Saskatchewan exposure mission that allows educators to discover what the mining industry in the province is all about. From going underground and learning about potash at Mosaic K3 near Esterhazy, how coal is extracted at Westmoreland Poplar River in the Coronach area, to the northern uranium facilities at Cameco Cigar Lake and Orano McClean Lake, it's a whirlwind once-in-a-lifetime chance for them to learn about the industry and spread the word.

"It's surprising how much people don't know, and it's surprising a lot of teachers still don't know today," said Pam Schwann, President of the SMA. "So if they don't know, their students aren't going to get that opportunity."

Previously, the GeoVenture program was known as the Teacher's Tour—something that has been in existence for almost 50 years.

"It was a way for teachers to see firsthand what was involved in a mining operation, as well as to see all the different geographic regions where mining happens in Saskatchewan," Schwann explained. "This is a way to raise public awareness, but also because teachers have such an influence, it was a way to sustainably teach their kids in their classrooms more about the mineral resources of Saskatchewan."

Mining is found throughout the Saskatchewan education curriculum, and giving teachers the tools they need to accurately depict the current operations in Saskatchewan is an important mission.

"Mining is all through-



Going underground, the GeoVenture team visits the Nutrien potash mine near Rocanville.

Saskatchewan Mining Association photos

out the Saskatchewan curriculum," said David Potts-Schwinghamer, GeoVenture Program Manager who was previously a teacher himself. "In Grade 4, you learn about rocks; in Grade 5 and 6, you learn about our Saskatchewan resources in Social Studies. You come back to rocks in Grade 7; in high school, obviously chemistry has heavy applications, but Earth Science 30, Career Ed, there's all these places in the Saskatchewan curriculum that touch on the mining industry. When you become a teacher, it's your job to teach these things."

The beauty of the program is that it's no cost to educators, save a \$50 application fee.

"We know teachers don't have a lot of money," Potts-Schwinghamer said. "They spend money out of pocket on things, so when we build resources for teachers, they're not only curriculum correlated, but they're free or very low cost—supplies that you can source from the school kitchen."

An example of a hands-on project for the classroom is the Potash Kit that educators get to take home with them after the week has wrapped.

"In Grade 7 Science, one

of the units is on mixtures and solutions," Schwann said. "What better example if you're from Saskatchewan to talk about mixtures and solutions than potash. That's the premise of our Potash Kit—you can dissolve the potash, find out how much clay is in there, and you can take it all the way up to Grade 10 when you start talking about solubility curves. It's an opportunity to tie that Saskatchewan product into the curriculum that students need to learn anyway, and what a great way to raise the awareness of that."

Creating those linkages between the resources in

the GeoVenture program and the current curriculum is a stand-out feature.

"Everything is curriculum correlated for educators, it's not what somebody might think they need," Schwann said.

"We're going to give you those resources, it's actually what they need. It's free, and we try and make it as accessible."

Teacher's perspective

Every year, the GeoVenture program has room for 20 educators from around the province, with 17 in this summer's intake. From August 9 to 15, the group embarked on a quest with stops along the way to scenic destinations that some simply might not have the opportunity to visit.

Included in this year's group was Laura Sveinbjornson, who has been teaching at Langenburg Central School for 12 years.

"It was so cool," Sveinbjornson said. "It was the coolest thing I think I've ever done in the professional development world—very interesting!"

She learned about the GeoVenture program online during some down time.

"Strangely enough, I was just scrolling on Instagram and I saw an advertisement for it," Sveinbjornson explained.

Curious, she decided to learn more about GeoVenture through the SMA website.

"I read the descriptor of what they gave, and I thought, 'this is so interesting,'" she recalled. "I didn't

think I was going to get picked, to be completely honest, because that's too good to be true, right? It's something that you never get to experience, and yes, I got lucky and I got asked to join them."

While Sveinbjornson grew up in the area, hailing from Churchill, she didn't have an in-depth knowledge about mining until the GeoVenture experience.

"It's nothing that I've experienced before," she said. "Being from this area, you know how important the mining industry is, specifically potash mining, but I've never had the opportunity to go underground."

It's difficult to sum up the totality of GeoVenture, as Sveinbjornson recounted her seven days with the group. Going underground at Nutrien's Scissor Creek potash mine near Rocanville and having the experience of travelling far below the surface in the cage was one of the first things that stood out.

"I know quite a few people that work there and you hear them talking about work," Sveinbjornson said. "The cage was interesting to me, because everybody talks about going in the cage and taking their trip down. First of all, I couldn't get over how smooth the elevator was! We came out, I actually couldn't get over the fact that it was such a large space, the ceiling. I don't know how tall the ceiling was, but it had to be at least 20 feet tall—not what I was expecting!"

Continued on page B13



The GeoVenture 2025 group visits the Potash Interpretive Centre in Esterhazy.

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GeoVenture gives Sask educators unique perspective on mining operations

Continued from Page B11

Another remarkable tour was to Westmoreland's coal mining operation near Coronach and she was surprised at how environmentally friendly their operation is.

"When they are mining in the open pits, they're really focused on reclaiming the land to make it look like they hadn't been there and keeping their footprint very small," Sveinbjornson said. "It was so interesting to see, you would have never known that they had dug there because the land had been reclaimed."

Up north, Cameco's Cigar Lake uranium mining operation showed the uniqueness of the industry as going underground there was not the same as what the group saw underground in a potash mine.

"That was interesting because their mining is very different than what potash mining is," Sveinbjornson said. "They can only do so much at a time, and their big struggle is water because of how much water is up north. They're constantly trying to figure out the best methods, make sure everybody's safe, and the equipment was so different; everything was so different there than typical potash mining."

The GeoVenture group was filled with a variety, comprised of educators from elementary, middle, and high school backgrounds, plus career counsellors, each able to take away many new fascinating items to share with their classes.

"With my Grade 7 Science course and Social Studies course, we talk a lot about resources and wealth, how provinces and communities have money, or what does power look like?" Sveinbjornson said. "We often talk about our resource sector and there's so much that we have to offer. Now, I have new things to add to that list, things that I can better explain."

A big part of that relaying of knowledge goes back to the basic hands-on approach.

"In science specifically, there's a whole unit based on Earth and the minerals found in Earth's crust," Sveinbjornson said. "They gave us so many resources, and I get to now update my unit, because you do your best with the knowledge that you have, but now I actually have the pictures, I have the tactile material, I have the people I can contact right now, I know exactly who to ask if I have questions, if I want more resources. It's super relevant to what I'm doing."

One common thread Sveinbjornson noticed through each place the GeoVenture group visited was the authentic positivity everyone seemed to carry.

"Every single person we talked to was so enthusiastic, shared all their knowledge, were so gracious, and that networking is important, too," she said. "Even Pam and David—they were phenomenal. They did such a good job organizing. There is not one negative thing I can say about this experience. It was truly phenomenal!"

Ever-evolving program

The GeoVenture tours throughout the years have changed in scope simply due to advancements in technology. That ongoing program development continues as the organizers at the SMA are constantly tweaking the week-long professional development.

"We try and make it not just a fun thing to be on, but something they're going to be able to use in their classrooms," Schwann said. "It has changed a bit, it will keep changing and right now, it's a good cycle. But we don't get up to our gold mine, and we're going to have a copper and zinc mine that's producing soon. Our struggle is always, 'how much can we fit in a week?' because going longer than that is difficult."

It is a fine balance to tell the story of mining in Saskatchewan, but stick to a reasonable timeframe for the educators.

"We're asking for a week of their holiday time, so we need to make it really worthwhile and not make it so long that they just can't make that commitment," Schwann said, adding that last year, the question of establishing two trips being three days in duration, but with possibly different experiences was raised. "They wanted one trip because there

is nothing they wouldn't want to drop. The schedule really depends on our sites and when they are open to us being there."

Whatever changes happen in GeoVenture, there's no question that educators hold the experience dear.

"We had a teacher this year, a science teacher that is going to be in Milestone this year, her grandma went on the program in 1995," Schwann recalled.

While flying to visit the operations in northern Saskatchewan, the teacher told Schwann how her grandmother gave her a 50-page binder filled with pictures of the tour taken 30 years prior.

"This lady's kept this for that long because it meant that much to her," Schwann said. "We're pretty sure that the enthusiasm we see from the educators on this tour translates into the classroom for many years after."

Part of the GeoVenture evolution is through feedback obtained by previous participants and the companies the

SMA works with during the tour.

"The questions people ask to help us learn more," said Potts-Schwinghamer. "We get the privilege working with so many amazing companies, but there's just always more to learn. I truly enjoy their questions, and I'm learning all the time, too."

There were around 40 applications to the GeoVenture program this year, with 20 accepted. Due to a few last-minute cancellations, the final group numbered 17.

"The applicants are all over the province, and keeping a geographic mix goes into how we select people," Potts-Schwinghamer said. "We want representation from the whole of Saskatchewan, and I think it benefits everyone to see different parts of the province and the scope of the industry that occurs here."

With all the work that goes into GeoVenture, comments like Sveinbjornson's enthusiastic descriptor "felt like summer camp!" make the program all the more worthwhile.



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Natural gas bans are fuelling higher energy costs

Governments are pulling the plug on natural gas with no real backup plan in place and Canadians are paying the price

Banning natural gas and pushing electricity without enough supply is a recipe for soaring energy costs and blackouts. Politicians may forget the basics of economics, but supply and demand won't go away.

When the supply of anything goes up, its price falls. Limit or decrease supply and the price rises. Demand works in the opposite direction—high demand drives up prices, and lower demand brings them down.

Like gravity, the law of supply and demand is always there, but many politicians behave as though it doesn't exist. Nowhere is that clearer than in energy policy, where environmental goals are prioritized while economic realities are sidelined. The drive to eliminate energy-related emissions in just a few years may sound noble, but it ignores practical limits, and Canadians are paying the price.

Take natural gas. It emits far less carbon than coal or oil. In Canada, most natural gas comes from Alberta and British Columbia, and it's one of the country's most affordable and secure energy sources. Despite this, several jurisdictions in B.C. are banning its use in new and renovated buildings—moves encouraged by federal emissions targets and climate incentives.

These policies may be well-intentioned, but they ignore a basic fact: people still need to heat their homes and cook their meals. Without gas, they'll be forced to use electricity. But unlike gas, electricity is already in short supply and getting more expensive. Our current generating capacity can't keep up with rising demand, and that's before we even consider the added strain from electric vehicles, data centres and energy-hungry artificial intelligence.

British Columbia's Site C dam, a multibillion-dollar hydroelectric project under construction on the Peace River, is expected to generate enough electricity for



Roslyn Kunin

450,000 homes when complete. But all of that power is already spoken for. There are no Site C-scale replacements on the horizon. Meanwhile, our distribution infrastructure can't meet today's needs, let alone tomorrow's.

In one recent case, buildings planning to install EV chargers were told by B.C. Hydro, the Crown corporation responsible for electricity in B.C., that there wasn't enough power available. Major housing developments have even been blocked due to limited electricity supply.

These constraints aren't just technical—they're already making it harder to build new housing. Canadians may accept higher costs for environmental gains, but pushing up both housing and energy bills risks crossing a line. Banning natural gas makes it harder to build and maintain affordable homes, directly undermining what governments claim to support. In homes forced to switch from gas to electricity, heating and hot water bills could quadruple. Reliability also drops. Builders are now being advised to install backup generators to handle expected power outages—ironically, those generators will often run on the very natural gas being banned.

We can no longer assume the government will keep the lights on. That's a serious blow to Canadians' stan-

dard of living.

Some argue these trade-offs are justified if they cut emissions. But even that goal is questionable. The gas we don't burn here will simply be sold elsewhere—likely to countries still relying on coal, oil or even dung. Because emissions don't respect borders, the global climate impact remains the same, or worse.

Of course, Canada could go further and stop producing natural gas altogether. Leave it all in the ground. But doing so would deliver a major blow to our economy and standard of living: something no elected government is likely to survive.

Alternatively, Canada could export more of its low-cost, lower-emission natural gas to displace dirtier fuels abroad. That would reduce global emissions more effectively than restricting gas at home.

Canadians care about the environment. But we need smart, balanced policies—ones that use our resources wisely, not wastefully. We can pursue conservation and cleaner technologies while still recognizing that economic laws apply, even when they're inconvenient.

It's not about choosing between prosperity and the planet. It's about realizing that ignoring the fundamentals—like supply and demand—comes at a cost most Canadians can't afford.

Dr. Roslyn Kunin is a respected Canadian economist known for her extensive work in economic forecasting, public policy, and labour market analysis. She has held various prominent roles, including serving as the regional director for the federal government's Department of Employment and Immigration in British Columbia and Yukon and as an adjunct professor at the University of British Columbia. Dr. Kunin is also recognized for her contributions to economic development, particularly in Western Canada.



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Manitoba invests \$1.2 million in mineral exploration

The Manitoba government is providing \$1.2 million to six mineral exploration projects through the Manitoba Mineral Development Fund (MMDF) to support mining projects that create Indigenous partnerships, increase job opportunities and stimulate investment in northern Manitoba. Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation Minister Jamie Moses announced today.

"The Manitoba government is actively investing in new critical mineral opportunities that support local communities and deliver benefits to all Manitobans," said Moses. "This MMDF investment will leverage \$3.8 million in private-sector capital and create 39 jobs that will help shape a strong future for Manitoba's mineral development industry."

The MMDF is a provincial fund administered by the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce (MCC). Communities and businesses, including Indigenous groups, municipalities and the not-for-profit sector, are eligible to apply for funding. Financial assistance from the fund could include one-time grants for activities that help advance new mining opportunities and outreach to First Nations for collaborative resource development in Manitoba.

"The MMDF remains steadfast in its commitment to driving innovation, supporting economic growth and fostering partnerships within the mineral development sector," said Chuck Davidson, president and CEO, Manitoba Chambers of Commerce and chair, Manitoba Mineral Development Fund. "With growing demand for critical minerals, Manitoba has a unique opportunity to attract investment, create jobs and strengthen communities while

driving the province's long-term economic growth."

The funding provided to these six projects is expected to provide multiple short- and long-term jobs, strengthen

partnerships with several First Nations communities and support Manitoba's leadership in sustainable mineral exploration, the minister said



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October oil and gas public offering generates over \$7 million in revenue

The Government of Saskatchewan's latest Crown oil and natural gas public offering, held on October 7, 2025, has generated more than \$7 million in revenue. The Estevan, Lloydminster and Kindersley areas all surpassed at least \$1 million in bids, while the Swift Current region also generated sales.

Overall, the Estevan area generated the most revenue, bringing in \$3,474,184.13 for one exploration licence and 39 leases totaling 4,904.474 hectares.

Prairie Land & Investment Services Ltd. made the highest bid in this offering, \$863,628.23, an average of \$552.57 per hectare, for a 1,562.931 hectare exploration licence in the Estevan area north of Gainsborough.

Saturn Oil and Gas Inc. made the highest bid on a lease, bidding \$714,906.52, an average of \$2,806.13 per hectare, for a 254.766 hectare parcel west of Torquay, also in the Estevan area.

Ninety parcels were posted for the October offering, with 85 receiving acceptable bids, covering a total for 12,128.950 hectares.

The Lloydminster area generated the next-highest amount of revenue, \$2,106,595.92, while the Kindersley area generated \$1,317,181.62 in sales, followed by Swift Current at \$440,072.80.

This October offering was the fourth

of six such offerings for the 2025-26 fiscal year, over which time the Government of Saskatchewan has raised \$52,762,018.76. That total surpasses last fiscal year's revenue earned through six offerings, owing to the \$24 million generated from the August 2025 public offering.

Leases are offered with five-year terms and are issued to drill for and produce oil or natural gas. Exploration licences have terms of two to five years and are issued in less developed areas for exploration and production. Several factors affect public offering activity, including oil and gas prices, land availability, geological and technological constraints and various market conditions.

The Government of Saskatchewan remains committed to developing a positive investment climate for new and established oil and gas companies, by offering a stable and predictable royalty framework and a suite of oil and gas incentives that fit the needs of all stages of the production cycle.

According to the Fraser Institute, Saskatchewan is the highest-ranked Canadian jurisdiction and the third-most attractive jurisdiction for oil and gas exploration and production overall, behind Wyoming and North Dakota.

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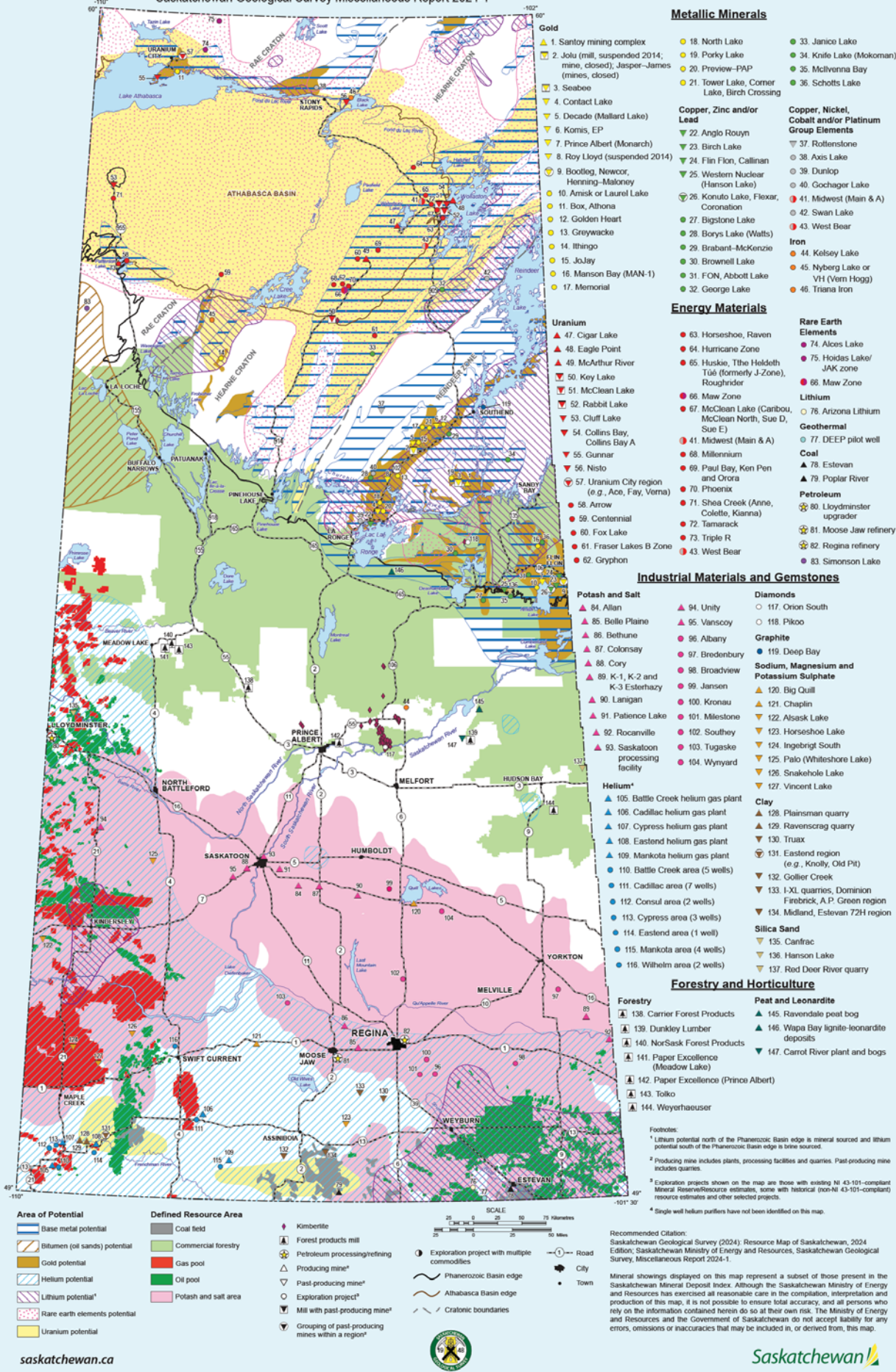
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After years of planning and construction, the Bekevar Wind and Power Line Project southeast of Kipling officially came online on Nov. 14, 2024. The 202 MW project consisting of 36 turbines creates enough electricity for the SaskPower grid to power an average of 100,000 Saskatchewan homes. Above some of the turbines on the horizon with a wetland in the foreground west of Kipling.



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