



MVOD Touchstone Meeting

Summary Report 2024

PREPARED FOR
Crown Indigenous Relations and
Northern Affairs Canada

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CONTENTS

1.	BACKGROUND ON MVOD	1
1.1	OBJECTIVES	1
1.2	REPORT OVERVIEW	1
2.	UPDATES ON EXTERNAL INITIATIVES	1
2.1	GOVERNMENT OF CANADA – CIRNAC UPDATE	2
2.2	GNWT – ITI UPDATES	2
2.3	STANDING COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT (SCEDE)	3
3.	MVOD 2024 FOLLOW UP	4
3.1	CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FROM MVOD MEETING (MAY, 2024)	4
3.2	ONLINE REVIEW SYSTEM (ORS) ANALYTICS	4
3.3	SECONDMENT OPPORTUNITY AND DEVELOPMENT OF OPERATIONAL TOOLS	5
3.4	POTENTIAL UPDATES TO THE WATERS REGULATIONS	5
3.5	ACTIONS TO ADVANCE COLLECTIVELY	6
4.	DISCUSSION AND PLANNING FOR MVOD 2025	6
5.	NEXT STEPS	7
	APPENDIX A: PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS	8
	APPENDIX B: MEETING AGENDA	9
	APPENDIX C: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	10

1. BACKGROUND ON MVOD

The Mackenzie Valley Operational Dialogue (MVOD) began in March 2020 to help address concerns raised during the review of Bill C-88 (an Act to amend the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act*, among other Acts). The initial focus of this table was on small-scale exploration, such as sharing knowledge on information required to process regulatory applications and identifying challenges and potential solutions. MVOD served as a pilot to provide momentum for more regular dialogue for partners, rights holders, and stakeholders to collaborate on specific and prioritized operational improvements related to small-scale mineral exploration in the Mackenzie Valley resource co-management regime. Since the original in-person meeting in March 2020, several virtual and in-person meetings have been held and actions items developed. The report for the hybrid 2024 MVOD meeting, held in May, can be found [here](#).

Most recently, a virtual touchstone meeting was held on November 13th, 2024, to provide updates on the progress of actions identified at MVOD 2024 and to discuss topics for the next hybrid MVOD.

1.1 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this virtual touchstone meeting were to:

1. Provide updates on relevant external initiatives in the Mackenzie Valley.
2. Provide updates on activities identified during the May 2024 MVOD workshop and identify additional action areas.
3. Initiate planning on the next MVOD hybrid session in 2025.

1.2 REPORT OVERVIEW

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the MVOD Touchstone meeting, which covered progress on external initiatives, progress on activities since the May MVOD meeting, discussion of additional activities to collectively advance, and discussion of the next hybrid MVOD. Appendix A provides the list of participating organizations and Appendix B provides the meeting agenda.

Updates on
External
Initiatives

MVOD 2024
Follow-up

Additional
Actions to
Advance

Planning for
MVOD 2025

2. UPDATES ON EXTERNAL INITIATIVES

Below is a summary of presentations on external initiatives and the ensuing discussions. Appendix C provides additional information on the Critical Minerals Strategy and the Regional Energy and Resource Tables led by Natural Resources Canada.

2.1 GOVERNMENT OF CANADA – CIRNAC UPDATE

CIRNAC provided an overview of the Northern Regulatory Initiative (NRI) and its four pillars: Indigenous participation in resource management processes, Crown consultation clarity and coordination, regional cumulative effects studies, and multi-party regulatory dialogues. The Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board, with funding support through the NRI, has launched a call-out to support the participation of Indigenous Governments and Organizations (IGOs) in resource management processes through a secondment program. More information on this program is provided in section 3.3 below. They are also working with the Consultation and Accommodation Unit (CAU) and CanNor on follow-up regarding Crown consultation clarity and coordination. Work under the NRI includes advancing a Regional Study in the Slave Geological Province (NWT), which was requested by the Tłı̨chǫ Government, with finalization of the Study governance structure and consideration of next steps underway. Additionally, the NRI is leveraging MVOD in the NWT to discuss operational components of small-scale exploration and to raise other regulatory topics for discussion and action outside of MVOD, such as regulatory amendments.

2.1.1 DISCUSSION

Participants were interested in how the Regional Energy and Resource Tables (RERT) fit into the NRI, which is led by NRCan. NRCan is currently reaching out to partners to advance these regional discussions on energy efficiency. The Federal Budget 2024 emphasizes a government-wide approach to prioritizing clean energy projects and clean growth. CIRNAC representatives are invited to participate in the RERTs to identify potential collaborations, ensuring that efforts are streamlined. NRCan representatives often participate in work under the NRI to foster collaboration. The Tłı̨chǫ Government encouraged more CIRNAC participation in the RERT.

Participants were also interested in knowing whether industry has or will be a part of the RERT sessions. The focus has initially been on working with IGOs and the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT). The Chamber of Mines was engaged at the beginning but has not been involved since. Recently, NRCan shared the scoping paper with industry organizations, academics, and other stakeholders.

2.2 GNWT – ITI UPDATES

The NWT Critical Minerals Action Plan includes several key initiatives. Community trade shows are planned for 2025 in Fort Resolution and Behchokǫ to share energy information with all age groups. The Action Plan aims to increase awareness and action, exemplified by the successful Lithium 101 session at MVOD and the ongoing Mining Matters program in schools. GNWT conducts promotion and marketing efforts with partners at conferences and trade shows, such as the Yukon Geosciences Forum, AME Roundup, and the Prospectors & Developers Association of Canada (PDAC), to showcase the NWT's potential for critical mineral exploration and investment. Recently, GNWT launched a request for proposals with the Governments of Nunavut and Yukon to develop a broad northern message promoting Canada's North as a prime location for investment.

Geophysical data collection is ongoing, with CanNor supporting efforts in the PinePoint area and a further focus in the Yukon pegmatite province and Nechalacho. Strengthening partnerships is also a focus, allowing IGOs to access programs to attend conferences, organize workshops, and build

awareness and education. The GNWT secondment program facilitates skill and capacity building by bringing people from GNWT to work on key initiatives, and there is a desire to have IGO representatives work with GNWT to enable a two-way flow of expertise.

2.2.1 DISCUSSION

Participants raised questions about the GNWT secondment program, which GNWT-ITI confirmed has been in place for a few years but noted could benefit from further promotion. There was a suggestion to share messaging and promotional and marketing materials with the MVOD group to ensure consistent messaging about the NWT and to understand what others are sharing. This idea was agreed upon, emphasizing the benefits of shared messaging and partnerships. Additionally, it was noted that uranium is on Canada's critical minerals list. There are 34 minerals listed overall and 24 of them are found in the NWT, highlighting the region's significant potential. A full list of Canada's critical minerals is available [here](#).

Participants also discussed the opportunity to host upcoming REDI (i.e., Resources and Energy Development Information) events in tandem with other events to broaden the audience scope.

2.3 STANDING COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT (SCEDE)

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment (SCEDE) is currently reviewing the operational effectiveness of the land use, water licence, and permitting regulatory landscape. SCEDE will make recommendations to GNWT on potential improvements within their scope. To date, SCEDE has held five public hearings with presentations from various stakeholders, including the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board (MVLWB), Tłı̨chǫ Government (TG), CIRNAC, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut Chamber of Mines, and lithium companies. Session videos and minutes are available online, and further information can be requested via email.

Proponents have expressed concerns about duplication in the system, leading to increased work and delays, and have highlighted challenges in participation and regulations. While there are no major issues with the overall system, specific points need addressing, and more education on the system is necessary. Capacity/financial resources are also a challenge for IGOs to meaningfully participate. SCEDE has received numerous submissions and is following up on several. The next steps include reviewing submissions, seeking clarification where needed, and presenting findings, likely by next May. Overall, the process has been positive, and SCEDE looks forward to finalizing and tabling their report.

2.3.1 DISCUSSION

Participants asked about the timeline for the report, noting that the comment period was extended, and the net was cast quite wide. The target for presenting the formal report is May 2025, and the process is currently in the summary and analysis stage. There were also questions about whether SCEDE, while focusing on the regulatory side, had considered reviewing impact assessment processes for project approvals and development. The response highlighted that the report may include observations on issues that arose beyond the initial scope.

Participants stated concern about another review of the regulatory system, and wanted to ensure all are involved in productive conversations. MVOD should consider the SCEDE report in scoping of future MVOD sessions or actions.

A participant emphasized two key messages: the need to embrace the system collectively, and the importance of the treaty-based system's core principles, while acknowledging room for improvement.

3. MVOD 2024 FOLLOW UP

Below is a summary of presentations on topics raised at MVOD 2024.

3.1 CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FROM MVOD MEETING (MAY, 2024)

The introduction to this session highlighted the transition from Light Work Plans to more focused action items. The facilitator reviewed the discussion outcomes from the MVOD meeting in May. Participants had identified several challenges, including capacity issues, lack of stable funding, information gaps, differing expectations and understanding of regulatory processes and outcomes, overtaxing regulatory processes, and an increase in expenditures with a decrease in value-add.

Opportunities identified by MVOD 2024 participants included increasing Indigenous government capacity and consistency through strategic approaches and funding, advocating for Indigenous government concerns with the GNWT, ensuring the regulatory system supports early-stage exploration, providing clarity on Crown consultation processes, improving understanding of the co-management system, implementing regulatory changes, and braiding Traditional Knowledge with western science.

3.2 ONLINE REVIEW SYSTEM (ORS) ANALYTICS

Recent updates to the [ORS Analytics Dashboard](#), accessible from any Land and Water Board (LWB) or Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board (MVEIRB) website, now include the incorporation of GNWT reviews as well as an Assignment category under "Type of Review." A key improvement underway is the ability to select LWB processing times by type of permit/licence (e.g., Type A or Type B Licence). This enhancement will allow for more accurate tracking of timeline averages for each process. As of November 14th, the system also tracks the number of applications deemed incomplete, the number of applications referred for environmental assessment, and the frequency by which applications fail to meet legislative timelines.

Participants asked about the difference between the start-up phase and the internal processing phase under 'LWB Processing Time.' The LWB explained that the start-up phase involves the time taken by the proponent, while the internal processing phase is the time the application is with the LWB for staff reviews. Participants suggested the phases be renamed to better reflect the respective activities (e.g., "completeness/conformity"). Participants also asked whether the LWB reviews data to improve its processes, and LWBs confirmed that this is the goal.

Participants inquired if the tool would identify bottlenecks to help develop solutions. The LWB noted that while its processes are flexible, there are fixed timelines, and that feedback is regularly incorporated to improve efficiency. A GNWT representative noted that the tool is seen as critical for the GNWT Pathfinders program, helping proponents avoid redundant applications and reduce

delays. Additionally, MVEIRB is developing a timeline tracker to enhance transparency and user experience.

3.3 SECONDMENT OPPORTUNITY AND DEVELOPMENT OF OPERATIONAL TOOLS

MVOD participants have consistently identified capacity as a significant issue, including among Boards. At the last MVOD, a participant suggested implementing a secondment program. In response, CIRNAC and LWBs have been collaborating to develop ideas, including a pilot secondment program where LWB staff will work directly with IGOs to increase capacity and knowledge of the regulatory system. This program will also help MVLWB staff gain insights into the perspectives and pressures faced by IGOs. There is an expression of interest process underway to which IGOs can apply.

Additionally, WSP, a consultancy, has been retained to develop templates for mineral exploration, based on the 2020 NWT Environmental Audit recommendation 1-8. These templates will start with assumptions about "low risk mineral exploration" projects, which only require a land permit and not a water licence. The initial focus will be on reducing effort associated with creating a waste management plan, spill contingency plan, and engagement plan. These templates will begin with a theoretical project in the Yellowknife area, and then potentially expand to other regions. Additionally, it was noted that these draft templates would be shared for public review prior to finalization.

Participants asked about the secondment expression of interest and whether there is funding for multiple IGOs. CIRNAC and LWBs are still working out the details and it will depend on how many organizations express interest. A LWB staff member could work with one or multiple IGOs for several months. The goal is to build capacity within different groups, as learning these systems takes time. The financial resources for this initiative come from the NRI, which requires a connection to critical minerals or infrastructure projects.

3.4 POTENTIAL UPDATES TO THE WATERS REGULATIONS

The GNWT is in the early stages of proceeding with legislative amendments to the Waters Regulations and *Waters Act*. GNWT has notified the Intergovernmental Council (IGC) of their intention to proceed and will engage with the IGC on November 15th, where they will share recommendations from boards and industry. A more fulsome update is expected at the next MVOD workshop in Spring 2025.

Participants asked for confirmation that the updates pertain to the Water Regulations and not the Act itself. It was clarified that the focus is on targeted amendments to regulations, which can be implemented more quickly. However, there are other legislative changes needed to provide investment certainty, such as the process for closing water licences, and these ideas will be presented to the IGC. It was recognized that any legislative work is outside of the scope of MVOD, as a separate offshoot action item.

CIRNAC and the federal government are interested in following the process closely to ensure that territorial and federal regulations are aligned, from both proponent and enforcement perspectives. Participants appreciated GNWT's responsiveness to addressing outdated or unclear items and saw

an immediate opportunity for targeted amendments. This approach can demonstrate a shared commitment to continuous improvement. It was also noted that the IGC includes the GNWT and Indigenous Governments created under the devolution agreement.

3.5 ACTIONS TO ADVANCE COLLECTIVELY

A Mentimeter poll asked participants what actions they would like to see collectively advanced under MVOD. Participants then had the opportunity to vote on which action they would most like to see implemented. The most popular responses included:

- Developing training materials and supports for industry, IGOs, other groups to better understand and navigate the regulatory system (nine votes).
- Federal funding pathfinder for NWT Indigenous Governments, and a mechanism within the federal financial system to pool money from multiple federal funding programs (seven votes).
- Regulatory efficiencies and clarity for full lifecycle of mining projects (six votes).
- Remove land use permit extensions and storage authorizations from requiring ORS Reviews (six votes).
- Development of the templates for small minerals exploration projects to streamline the process for Land Use Permits coupled with raising the threshold for water use for drilling (six votes, but noted as being currently underway).

4. DISCUSSION AND PLANNING FOR MVOD 2025

The Mentimeter poll also included questions regarding MVOD 2025. Participants were asked if they would like MVOD 2025 to include an educational/awareness component, like the Lithium 101 session last May. The response was overwhelmingly positive, within 27 out of 30 responses indicating they would like to see this included. Regarding potential topics for awareness, responses included (but were not limited to):

- Water Regulations
- Mineral life cycle and the components in each phase
- Funding pathfinding
- Clean energy and critical minerals link
- MVRMA basics (origins, principles, how Boards work together)
- Tips and tricks for using the LWB online review system for proponents and reviewers.

Participants were also asked if, at MVOD 2025, they would see value in holding focused discussions organized by sectors/interest groups. The response was positive albeit more mixed, with 16 voting yes, three voting no, and eight indicating they were unsure.

Regarding what they would like to see as outcomes of the next MVOD workshop, responses included:

- Advancement of action items (not just discussion)

- Tangible products (training materials, etc.) or clear workplans with timelines and responsibilities defined
- Defined ways on how people will be engaged on actions from MVOD
- More joint initiatives - public governments, Indigenous governments, regulators, and industry
- Recognize unique Indigenous government and community perspectives and priorities
- Checklist for land use permit applications, and templates for management plans complete and in use by proponents

The feedback highlights a desire for educational components and focused discussions at MVOD 2025, with participants emphasizing the importance of advancing action items and producing tangible outcomes.

5. NEXT STEPS

The next steps following the touchstone meeting include sharing a Summary Report with all participants. Additionally, there will be a call-out for organizations and individuals to help advance the actions currently underway or identified during the meeting.

APPENDIX A: PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

Indigenous Governments and Organizations

- Tłı̨chǫ Government
- Yellowknives Dene First Nation
- Hay River Métis Council
- Gwich'in Tribal Council
- Fort Smith Métis Council
- Northwest Territory Métis Nation
- Dehcho First Nation

Industry

- NWT & Nunavut Chamber of Mines
- Aurora Geosciences
- WSP
- Li-FT
- Cheetah Resources
- Burgundy Diamonds
- DeBeers
- Rio Tinto
- Nahanni Construction
- Denendeh Investments Inc.
- DEMCo

Boards

- Mackenzie Valley Review Board
- Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board
- Wek'èezhìi Land and Water Board
- Sahtu Land and Water Board
- Gwich'in Land and Water Board

Government of the Northwest Territories

- Industry, Tourism and Investment
- Environment and Climate Change

Government of Canada

- Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada
- Natural Resources Canada
- Environment and Climate Change Canada
- Department of Fisheries and Oceans
- Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency

APPENDIX B: MEETING AGENDA

Timing	Agenda Item
10 mins	Welcome & Introductions
5 mins	Background on MVOD
15 mins	Quick Updates on External Initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GoC – Northern Regulatory Initiative/Critical Mineral Strategy updates • GNWT – Critical Mineral Action Plan • Q&A • Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment (SCEDE) 'Review of the Land and Water Use Permitting Regulatory Framework'
50 mins	MVOD 2024 follow-up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review what we heard at MVOD 2024 • Update on follow-up actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Online Review System (ORS) Analytics Dashboard (LWBs) + Q&A ○ Capacity support (secondment opportunity) and development of operational tools (MVLWB/CIRNAC) + Q&A ○ Waters Regulations (GNWT/CIRNAC) + Q&A
10 mins	Break
20 mins	Plenary Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional actions we could collectively advance
20 mins	Discussion and Planning for Annual MVOD Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would you like MVOD 2025 to include an educational / awareness component, like the Lithium 101 session last May (e.g., field trip and topic specific presentations)? • What topic could be the focus for awareness? • At MVOD 2025, would you see value in holding focused discussions organized by sectors/interest groups (e.g., industry only breakout group, IGO only breakout group, etc.)? • What are you hoping will be the outcomes of the next MVOD workshop?
5 mins	Wrap-up

APPENDIX C: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

See next page for additional information.



CANADIAN CRITICAL MINERALS STRATEGY

The Canadian Critical Minerals Strategy was released in December 2022 following extensive engagement with industry, academia, Indigenous groups and other governments, including provinces and territories.

Supported by nearly \$4 billion in funding from Budgets 2021 to 2024, the Strategy's vision is to increase the supply of responsibly sourced critical minerals and support the development of the green and digital economy at home and abroad.

The Strategy will be pursued through six complementary areas of focus:

1. Drive research innovation and exploration to better target resource potential and deposits, and stimulate investment
2. Accelerate project development for Canada's critical minerals mining, processing, materials/inputs, and recycling projects
3. Advance Indigenous reconciliation through access to capital, meaningful participation in critical minerals projects and associated business opportunities
4. Grow a diverse workforce by promoting the contribution of diverse workers to Canada's green energy transition as part of the critical minerals' workforce
5. Build sustainable infrastructure to connect communities with critical minerals development opportunities, and
6. Strengthen global leadership and security by developing resilient global supply chains shielded from market disruption, while enhancing Canada's economic security.

All initiatives under the Strategy have been launched and several federal tax credits that will support critical mineral development have been implemented.

Canada's Critical Minerals List was reviewed and updated by NRCan in 2024. The list was first released in 2021 with revisions planned every three years to reflect changing domestic and global conditions.

The updated list retains all 31 minerals from the 2021 list and an additional three minerals (high-purity iron, phosphorus and silicon metal), for a total of 34 critical minerals.

NRCan recently released the [2024 Critical Minerals Strategy Annual Report](#). The Report details the progress made since the launch of the Strategy in December 2022, what gaps remain, and what we plan to do next.



Critical Minerals Initiatives Supporting Projects in Northwest Territories

Northern Regulatory Initiatives (NRI)

The Government of Canada has allocated up to \$40 million to CIRNAC, in partnership with CanNor to support the Northern Regulatory Initiative. The NRI aims to support clear, trusted, and functional northern regulatory regimes that reflect and respect the contexts in each of the three territories.

To advance these objectives, the NRI supports: participation in resource management processes; Crown consultation clarity and coordination; regional and cumulative effects studies; and multi-party Regulatory Dialogue forums.

Activities in the NWT include:

- Leveraging the Mackenzie Valley Operational Dialogue (MVOD) to bring partners together to share perspectives and co-develop actions to address common regulatory and operational resource management barriers; and
- Supporting the early development of the Slave Geological Province Regional Study.

For more information on the NRI, please contact the NRI General Inbox at:

Initiativedereglementationdunord-Northernregulatoryinitiative@sac-isc.gc.ca.

Critical Minerals Infrastructure Fund (CMIF)

The CMIF will provide up to \$1.5 billion until 2030 to support clean energy and transportation infrastructure projects that are necessary to enable the sustainable development and expansion of critical minerals. The CMIF offers two avenues for support:

1. Grants to support Indigenous engagement, participation and capacity building related to infrastructure projects that would enable critical minerals development.
 - CMIF Indigenous Grants program is open for applications until December 31st, 2024. It will provide up to \$3.5M in grant funding to eligible engagement projects.
2. Contribution funding for preconstruction activities and shovel-ready infrastructure projects.
 - The first call for proposals (November 2023 to February 2024) will provide up to \$300M in contributions. Assessments are underway in consultation with other government departments and partners.
 - Funding decisions have begun to be announced, and applicants will be informed of the results of remaining assessments in the coming months.
 - Next call for proposals for contribution funding is planned to be launched in early 2025.



For more information, please visit the CMIF [website](#) and/or email the CMIF team at: cmif-fimc@nrcan-rncan.gc.ca.

Indigenous Natural Resource Partnership (INRP)

The INRP program aims to increase the economic participation of Indigenous communities and organizations in the development of natural resource projects that support the transition to a clean energy future.

The program has \$80 million in funding, including at least \$25 million dedicated to communities' capacity building to engage in critical mineral projects and to support Indigenous-led projects.

So far, INRP has announced funding to ten projects under the critical minerals stream of the program, including two NWT projects:

- \$5M to Denendeh Exploration and Mining Company (DEMCo) support capacity building within DEMCo in their efforts to be owners and leaders of the development of the Camsell River mineral property.
- \$1,9M to Liidii Kue First Nation to increase capacity to train and hire members and develop band-owned businesses and partnerships to capitalize on the opportunities from the Prairie Creek Mine.

For more information, please visit the INRP [website](#) and/or email the INRP General Inbox at: inrp-prna@nrcan-rncan.gc.ca.

Critical Minerals Research, Development and Demonstration (CMRDD)

The CMRDD program is providing \$192.1 million in funding to support the development of innovative processing technologies for the critical minerals industry, which will help advance Canadian mining projects toward production and further develop domestic critical minerals value chains.

CMRDD is providing \$714,500 in funding to Fortune Minerals Limited to enhance the production of cobalt sulphate and bismuth ingot products from the company's planned mine in the Northwest Territories and refinery in Alberta.

For more information, please visit the CMRDD [website](#).

Critical Minerals Geoscience and Data Initiative (CMGD)

Budget 2022 provided over \$79 million through CMGD to enhance the quality and availability of public data, insights, and digital technologies to support geoscience and mapping that will accelerate the efficient and effective development of Canadian critical minerals value chains,



including identifying critical minerals reserves and developing pathways for sustainable mineral development.

The Geological Survey of Canada, in collaboration with the NWT Geological Survey, is conducting a comprehensive assessment of the mineral (including critical minerals) and geothermal energy potential within the Territories. As part of this initiative, NRCan has endorsed two funding proposals submitted by the NWT Geological Survey to the CMGD initiative, totaling an investment of approximately \$900,000. These projects include:

- An evaluation of the critical metal potential within the Selwyn sedimentary basin (\$399,798), focusing on the primary and secondary geological and geochemical factors influencing zinc and vanadium enrichment in black shales.
- A petrogenetic re-examination of the rare-metals pegmatites in the Slave Geological Province (\$497,925), aimed at uncovering new insights for exploration.

For more information please visit the [CMGD website](#) and/or send an email to the CMGD Initiative Coordination Office, at: cmgd-gdmc@nrcan-rncan.gc.ca.



REGIONAL ENERGY AND RESOURCE TABLES

As Canada transitions to a low carbon future, our country possesses tremendous potential to be a highly competitive, prosperous leader in the net-zero economy. The Regional Tables are a collaborative initiative that brings the federal government together with individual provinces and territories, in collaboration with Indigenous partners – and with the input of key stakeholders – to advance the top economic priorities in the energy and resource sectors in each of Canada’s regions. This can be achieved through the development of Collaboration Frameworks that align resources and timelines, which can better inform future investment decisions.

10 Regional Tables have been launched across the country, building on the respective strengths of each province and territory, and recognizing their unique combinations of natural resources.

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES REGIONAL TABLE

The Northwest Territories (NWT) Regional Table was launched in October 2022. Through discussions between Natural Resources Canada (NRCan), the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT), NWT Indigenous Governments and Organizations, and some key stakeholders, we aim to identify and advance opportunities unique to the Northwest Territories. To date, three priority areas have been identified to be advanced through the NWT Regional Table:



Critical Minerals



Electricity



Indigenous
Leadership and
Capacity

Indigenous Engagement

Canada is committed to implementing and supporting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). Through the NWT Regional Table, Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) is engaging with Indigenous partners to ensure meaningful Indigenous inclusion in this process and in the energy transition more broadly. We ensure that Indigenous perspectives are integrated continuously and at the outset of the process.

Since Summer 2023, NRCan has been engaging on the NWT Regional Table with Indigenous Governments and Organizations via the NWT Council of Leaders Secretariat (NWTCOL-S), and with the Mackenzie Valley Operational Dialogue, keeping groups informed of ongoing developments and providing opportunities to share individual insights, priorities and perspectives.

An exploratory session was held in March 2024, in Yellowknife, with participation from NRCan and Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC), the GNWT, and Indigenous Governments and Organizations to discuss priorities to be advanced under the NWT Regional Table.



Following this session, a scoping paper was circulated with Indigenous Governments and Organizations to seek their perspectives and identify potential actions. NRCan also presented updates on progress to the NWTCOL-S in May and September of 2024.

Some preliminary themes and actions that emerged from those discussions include the need:

- To foster equity partnerships and ownership opportunities to enhance economic self-sufficiency for communities;
- To invest in training and skills development tied to future local economic opportunities, with an emphasis on transferable skills training and youth;
- For increased community energy, critical minerals and geoscience literacy, and better understanding of energy concepts, technologies, and opportunities to inform decision-making;
- For alternative energy studies, including Small Modular Reactors and biomass;
- To enable infrastructure such as roads, transmission lines and EVs charging stations;
- For energy efficiency planning, including energy storage and district energy systems to increase energy efficiency, reduce costs and reduce fossil fuel use;
- To include traditional knowledge to inform opportunity areas; and
- To acknowledge climate-related risks and ongoing emergency management in the context of clean energy and resource development sectors

Discussions with the GNWT, Indigenous partners and key stakeholders will continue later this fall. These efforts will lead to the development of a public-facing Collaboration Framework outlining our joint commitments, targeted for release in 2025.

Participant Funding

Funding is available for Indigenous Governments and Organizations to support their participation in the Regional Tables engagement process. NRCan remains available to further discuss participant funding with groups who might be interested. We ask that you kindly reach out using the contact information below.

Contact Information

For more information on other Regional Tables or participant funding, visit our [webpage](#) or contact Natasha Kilpatrick: natasha.kilpatrick@nrcan-rncan.gc.ca.