

# Exploration and mining highlights, Southeast Region, 2024

## Overview

Four metallurgical coal mines operate in the Elk Valley of the Southeast Region, accounting for most of Canada's coal production and exports, and mine expansion and exploration continued at these mines.

Dating back to the mid-1800s, the region has a long history of metals mining, including lead, zinc, and silver from the past-producing Sullivan mine and gold and silver from the Rossland, Greenwood, Sheep Creek, and Slocan camps. Today, exploration in the region focusses on base and precious metals with some recent extensions into Rare Earth Metals (REE) and related metals on Canada's critical minerals list. The region hosts several industrial mineral mines and quarries, and placer mining continues. The Trail smelter (Teck Resources Ltd.) produces refined lead, and zinc (which is on Canada's critical minerals list), silver and cadmium along with other metals on Canada's critical minerals list (germanium, indium), and fertilizer products.

The number of exploration projects remained similar to recent years and the amount of drilling and expenditures increased over 2023. This was largely infuenced by continuing work at Glencore's Fording Expansion project.



## Exploration and drilling estimates

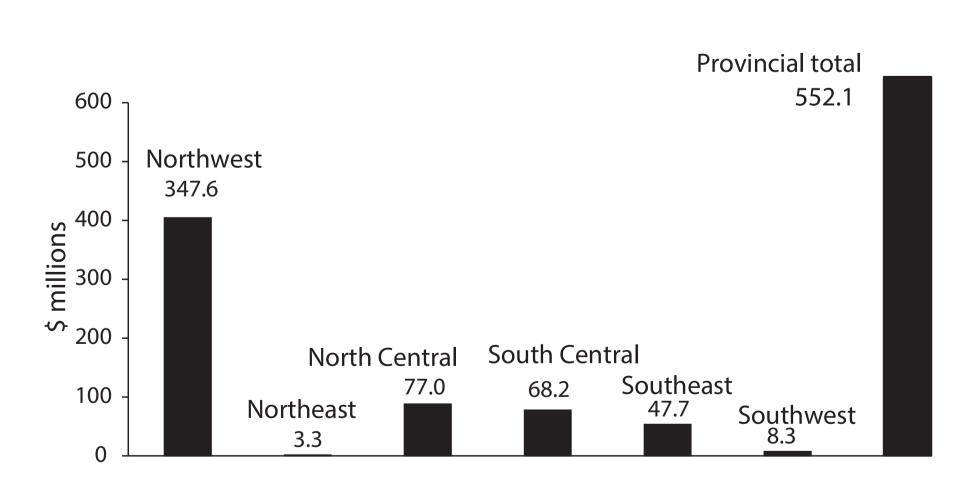
Total British Columbia:

- Exploration expenditures: \$ 552.1 million
- Drilling: 631,700 m

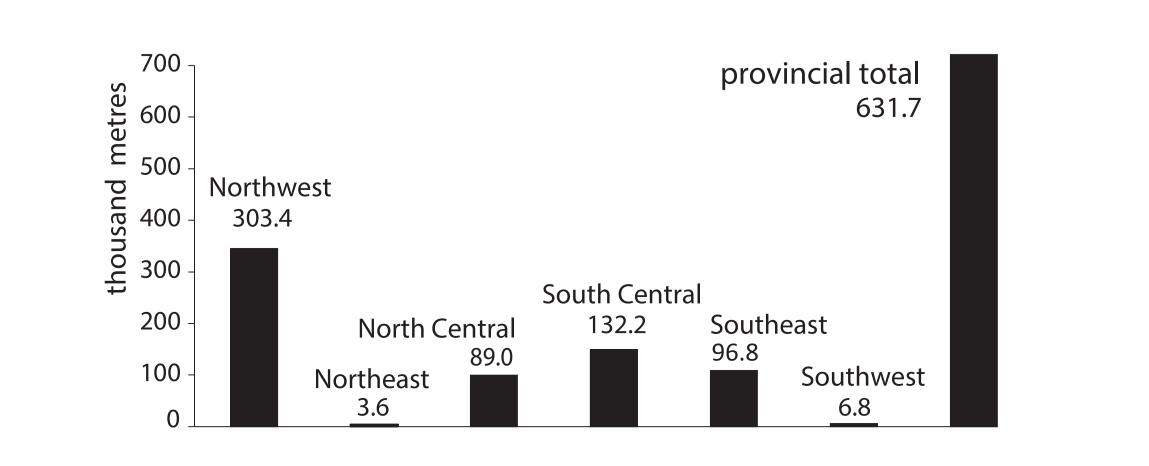
#### Southeast Region

- Exploration expenditures: \$47.7 million
- Drilling: 96,800 m

### Province, expenditures by region

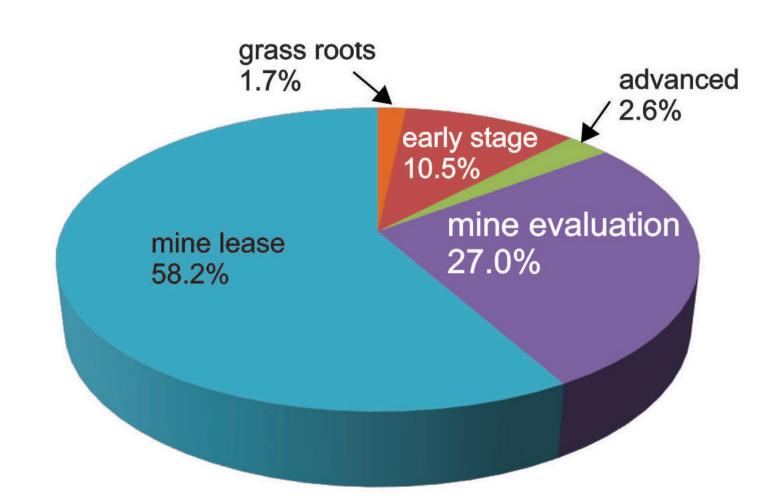


#### Province, drilling

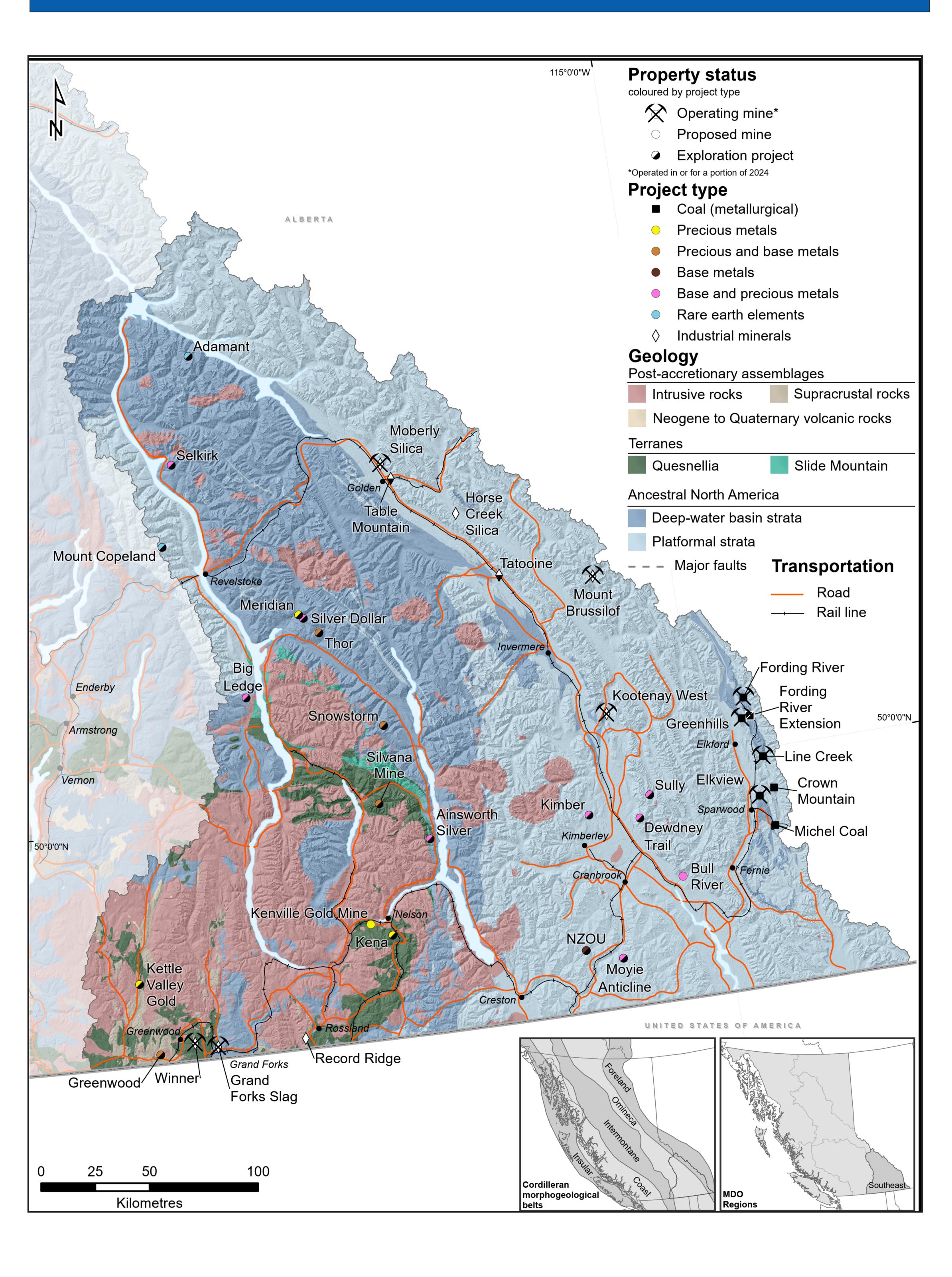




#### Southeast Region, expenditures by category

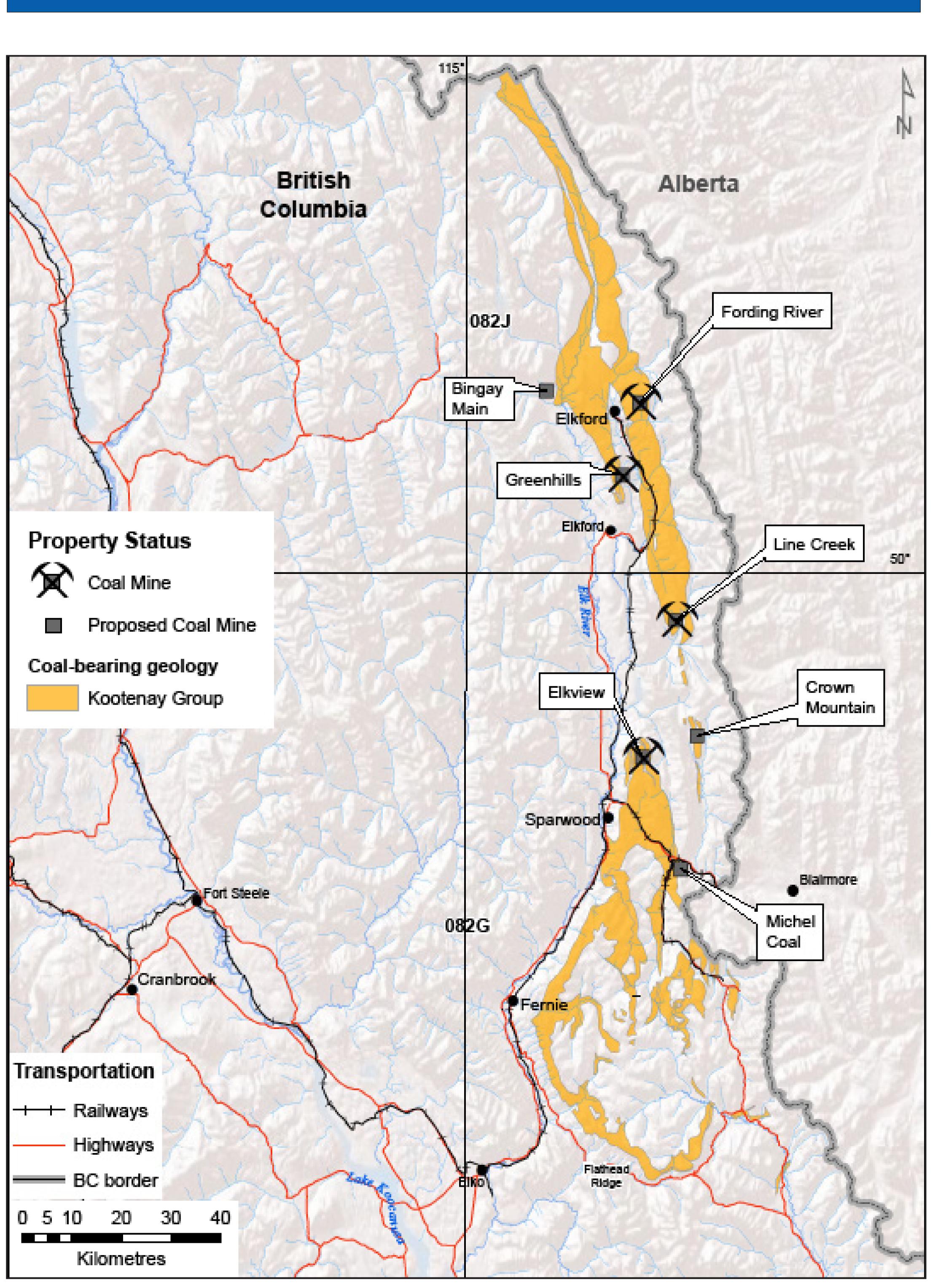


## Mines, selected proposed mines, and selected exploration projects



Kirk Hancock<sup>1, a</sup> Critical Minerals

## Coal mines and selected projects





# Exploration drilling highlights

The Kenville Mine project of Ximen Mining Corp. has mine permits in place to drive a new 1200m decline and underground development with 20,250m underground drilling planned. The company is working towards completing all engineering and environmental requirements before underground mine construction can start

Elk Valley Resources continues to do significant mine site exploration and development at all of its sites. Additionally, the company has ongoing exploration works for the Fording Extension project and remains a major project in the region.

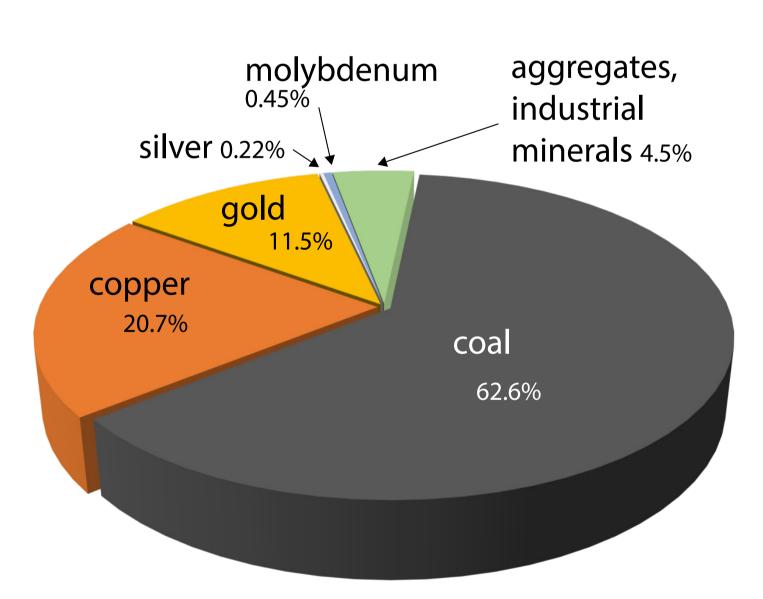
Canadian Critical Minerals Inc. has been shipping selected development material from its **Bull River mine** to the Afton mill for processing. About US\$910,000 has been paid to the company from processed material, reported as of October 2024. Typical ROM grade material is reported at 1.39% Cu, 0.29 g/t Au, and 11 g/t Ag with shipped upgraded ore grade reported at 3.53% Cu, 0.60 g/t Au, and 27.58 g/t Ag. The final mine permit and environmental permit processes are ongoing.

# Mining highlights

Coal remains British Columbia's most valuable mined commodity with sales forecasted at CDN \$10.3 billion for 2024, which accounts for approximately 62.6% of the mining revenue for the province. In the Southeast Region, Elk Valley Resources (Glencore Canada Corporation) mines coal seams of the Kootenay Group (upper Jurassic to lower Cretaceous) at four open-pit operations along the Elk River valley: Fording River, Greenhills, Line Creek, and Elkview. Resource expansion drilling continued at the Fording River Extension project.

Total annual production in the Southeast Region for 2024 is forecast to be 24 Mt of metallurgical coal. Elk Valley Resources reported that Q3 2024 production (5.7 Mt) with nine-month sales of 18 Mt.

Proposed coal mines include Bingay Main, (Centerpoint Coal Ltd.), Crown Mountain (NWP Coal Canada Limited), and Michel Coal (North Coal Limited).





2024 forecast value of British Columbia mineral production by commodity. Total is \$16.5 billion. Coal (mainly metallurgical) accounts for 62.6% of the value of mineral production from BC.

The Southeast Region has several industrial mineral mines and quarries. The operators range from local companies through to large international corporations. No metal mines are operating.

Kootenay West (CertainTeed Gypsum Inc.) has opened its Kootenay West gypsum mine, commencing operation in 2023 with a projected mine life of 43 years. The company reported a resource of 17 Mt gypsum at a blended quality of 83%, with a designed annual production of 400,000 tpy. 2024 production replaced that from the Elkhorn mine for wallboard grade material, but the Elkhorn quarry still supplies 140,000 tpy of lower grade material to Lafarge for cement production.

## Further information

Hancock, K., 2025. Exploration and mining in the Southeast Region, British Columbia. In: Provincial Overview of Exploration and Mining in British Columbia, 2024. British Columbia Ministry of Mining and Critical Minerals, British Columbia Geological Survey, Information Circular 202 01, pp. 145-156.

EY LLP, 2025. British Columbia Mineral and Coal Exploration Survey 2024 Report.

#### Recommended citation

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