

Mining in Ontario: In Unity There Is Strength

By Cecilia Jamasmie

In the era of global businesses, the region of [Ontario](#), Canada, is emerging as a model worth following. Home to almost 40 percent of all head offices and 57 percent of foreign-controlled head offices in Canada, [Ontario](#) has emerged as an efficient hub for advanced manufacturing, services and research and development (R&D).

[Mining](#), in particular, is leading the province's success. In 2005, mineral production topped \$5.5 billion for the second year in a row, the highest levels since the late 1980s. Exploration and deposit appraisal is exceeding US \$230 million annually. Billions more are being spent on mine development in the [Sudbury](#), [Timmins](#) and [James Bay](#) areas.

According to [Statistics Canada](#), Ontario accounts for about two-thirds of [Canada's nickel and gold production](#), one-third of Canada's [copper](#) production and 90 percent of Canada's [platinum](#) group metals production.

The key to the province's success seems to lie in the strong [governmental support](#) offered to private companies. Apart from [partnerships, assistance and tax benefits](#), the Ontario government has recently increased efforts to promote the vast range of [mining and exploration activities](#) this northern Canadian piece of land has to offer.

Marc Leroux, Information and Marketing Services Officer at the [Ontario Ministry of Northern Development and Mines](#), explains that most of the government's efforts are focused on the [Northern Ontario Mining triangle](#) bordered by [North Bay](#), [Sudbury](#) and [Timmins](#):

"We have more than 300 companies in the area that supply mining services and advanced equipment to hundreds of exploration and development projects worldwide," says Leroux.

In addition, there are about 6,000 [active prospectors](#), who are private individuals with a licence to explore for minerals anywhere in the province. Leroux explains that in order to prospect on Crown lands in Ontario or stake out,



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record or apply to record the staking of a mining claim, a person must be a holder of a prospector's licence issued under the [Ontario Mining Act](#).

"The number of [mining claims](#) recorded in 2007 reached 114,000, the most ever reported for a single year in Ontario. This is particularly encouraging because throughout the history of the province, prospectors have been responsible for nearly 90 percent of all the discoveries made in Ontario," adds Leroux.

One-Stop-Shop

[Sudbury](#), one of the world's great mining cities, is located in Ontario. The area, better known as the [Sudbury Basin](#), has 15 producing mines, two smelters, two refineries and close to 40 significant projects underway.

However, as the Executive Director of the Sudbury Area Mining Supply & Service Association ([SAMSSA](#)), Dick DeStefano, acknowledges, the city needed "a push." That is why, in 2003, a group of mining supply and service companies formed SAMSSA as a non-profit trade association to find business opportunities globally and domestically on behalf of its members.

By September 2008, SAMSSA had 407 members, a critical mass that goes beyond Sudbury to include North Bay and Timmins, which constitutes a corridor of mining related companies based in Northern Ontario that have never before been represented or marketed. "Toronto

authorities always say they have more than 600 mining companies, but many of them are American subsidiaries with a local presence only for the distribution of goods. In Sudbury and the surrounding areas, all we have is local expertise," adds DeStefano.

Today Sudbury has a total value of historic production and present reserves and resources estimated at more than \$300 billion, partly thanks to the support that SAMSSA has received from the [Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce](#), the [North Bay Chamber of Commerce](#), the [Greater Sudbury Development Corporation](#) and the [Sudbury Mining Solutions Journal](#), as well as the [FedNor/Industry Canada](#), [Ontario Mining Association](#), [Laurentian University](#), [Cambrian College](#), [Canadore College North Bay](#), [NORCAT](#) and [College Boreal](#).

The Association is connected to 120 trade offices globally and has achieved concrete cooperation and commerce agreements with [Chile](#), [South Africa](#) and [Mexico](#). It has also assembled a country mining company databank and publishes its own journal - [Sudbury Mining Solutions](#) - which is distributed worldwide.

Investing in Education

The main goal for SAMSSA this year is to provide relevant educational opportunities to all its members to improve their understanding of how they can export their products and services globally:

"We already have the largest concentrations of post-secondary mining education programs in Canada. The highly skilled mining graduates from [Laurentian](#), [Cambrian](#) and [College Boreal](#) are in demand locally and globally. If there is ever a time for the city to capitalize on this mining education expertise, it is now," adds DeStefano.

According to the [Ontario Mining Association](#), half of the province's mining activity and revenue is generated from the geologically rich ore deposits present in the area. Outside [South Africa](#) and

perhaps [Russia](#) and [Australia](#), there is no other area in the world with the concentration of hardrock, [underground mining](#) expertise which Sudbury has.

There is a high concentration of [retired mining industry experts](#) in the community who would enjoy the opportunity to help train the next global generation of skilled mineral industry professionals. And a thriving [supply and service sector](#) that is also an integral part of the hardrock mining culture of the city further enhances Sudbury's reputation as a global mining city-state.

Furthermore, the [Rainbow District School Board](#) in Sudbury is offering a unique [Specialist High Skills Major](#) program that focuses students' studies on a specific economic sector while meeting the requirements for their secondary school diploma (OSSD). In Sudbury, the students concentrate on the booming mining industry and are encouraged to explore and consider the many [employment opportunities](#) in this sector.

The first step in establishing Sudbury as the premier global centre for hardrock mining education, says DeStefano, is to

consolidate all of Ontario's post-secondary mining engineering and geology programs at [Laurentian University](#).

Currently, the three mining engineering programs in the province – [University of Toronto](#), [Queens](#) and [Laurentian](#) – are all small, under-subscribed and in the south and are costly to run. Funding is enrolment-driven and it becomes difficult to maintain the curriculum required to produce effective mining engineering graduates from a small number of students.

"The hardrock mining expertise in the Sudbury Basin has few equals in the world. Combine this with the high standards of the Canadian educational system and Sudbury could easily become a global training centre for mining expertise," explains DeStefano.

Ten years ago, no one in this community would have thought that the first new medical school in Canada would have one of its campuses in Sudbury, training the next generation of northern doctors. Ten years from now, we might see the next generation of skilled mining technicians in Brazil, South Africa,



The Sudbury Basin has 15 producing mines, two smelters, two refineries and close to 40 significant projects underway. Courtesy of [Rainbow Routes Association](#).

Peru, Chile, Russia, China and the rest of the world to have been educated in Sudbury. ■

Links and References

- [Cambrian College](#)
- [Canada's Copper Production](#)
- [Canada's Platinum Group Metals Production](#)
- [Canada's Nickel and Gold Production](#)
- [Canadore College North Bay](#)
- [City of North Bay](#)
- [College Boreal](#)
- [Employment Opportunities in Ontario](#)
- [FedNor/Industry Canada](#)
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- [Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [Greater Sudbury Development Corporation](#)
- [Invest and Trade Ontario](#)
- [James Bay](#)
- [Laurentian University](#)
- [Mining Claims within the Province of Ontario](#)
- [Mining Labour Market Transition Project](#)
- [Mining in Australia](#)
- [Mining in Chile](#)
- [Mining in Mexico](#)
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- [Mining in South Africa](#)
- [Mining Industry Human Resources Council \(MiHR\)](#)
- [Mining Labour Market Transition Project](#)
- [Mining Suppliers](#)
- [Modernizing Ontario's Mining Act](#)
- [NORCAT](#)
- [North Bay](#)
- [North Bay Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [Northern Ontario Mining triangle](#)
- [Ontario Mining Act.](#)
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- [Ontario's Mineral Development Strategy](#)
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- [Ontario's Mining Industry](#)
- [Ontario's North](#)
- [Ontario Prospectors Association](#)
- [Queens University](#)
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- [Specialist High Skills Major](#)
- [Statistics Canada](#)
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- [Underground Mining](#)
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- [Timmins Economic Development Corporation](#)

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