

## **Accelerating the Canadian Rare Earth Supply Chain Through a Strategic Research Consortium**

**Quebec City, March 13, 2025** – Industrial (mining) partners Appia Rare Earths & Uranium Corp., Commerce Resources, Defense Metals, and Vital Metals, along with March Consulting Associates Inc. and the mineral processing innovation centre Corem, are announcing the creation of a strategic research consortium dedicated to rare earth elements. This collaborative initiative is designed to accelerate the establishment of a national rare earth elements industry, thereby reinforcing Canada's strategic role in this key sector supporting the development of advanced technologies. Its creation will also contribute to the socio-economic development of northern communities.

### **An essential resource for the future of advanced technologies**

Rare earth elements are essential inputs for manufacturing essential components of advanced technologies, including permanent magnets for wind turbines, electric vehicle motors, and electronic devices. With fast-growing demand and limited and unpredictable global supply, the development of a domestic supply chain for rare earth elements is a strategic priority for Canada.

### **A strategic collaboration to strengthen Canada's position**

By bringing together the expertise of Corem and its industrial partners, this research consortium will implement a collaborative approach aimed at optimizing the extraction and processing of rare earth elements through technological innovation. This initiative promotes sharing the know-how and expertise of players in the value chain, pooling state-of-the-art, agile and flexible pilot laboratories, and the creation of collective innovation to accelerate the development of promising Canadian mining projects.

In addition to consolidating this expertise, this initiative will increase our capacity for innovation and position Canada as a reliable supplier of critical minerals, with some of the world's largest untapped deposits of rare earth elements. Finally, this strategic collaboration will accelerate the development of a competitive domestic supply chain, generating jobs, particularly in northern communities, attracting investment, and positioning Canada as a world leader in the critical minerals sector.

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#### **Sources**

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**About Appia Rare Earths & Uranium Corp. (Appia):**

Appia is a publicly traded Canadian company in the rare earth element and uranium sectors. The Company holds the right to acquire up to a 70% interest in the PCH Ionic Adsorption Clay Project (See June 9, 2023, Press Release – Click [HERE](#)) which is 42,932.24 ha. in size and located within the Goiás State of Brazil. (See January 11, 2024, Press Release – [Click HERE](#)) The Company is also focusing on delineating high-grade critical rare earth elements and gallium on the Alces Lake property, and exploring for high-grade uranium in the prolific Athabasca Basin on its Otherside, Loranger, North Wollaston, and Eastside properties. The Company holds the surface rights to exploration for 94,982.39 hectares (234,706.59 acres) in Saskatchewan. The Company also has a 100% interest in 13,008 hectares (32,143 acres), with rare earth elements and uranium deposits over five mineralized zones in the Elliot Lake Camp, Ontario.

**About Commerce Resources:**

Commerce Resources Corp. is a mineral resource company focused on the development of the Ashram Rare Earth and Fluorspar Deposit located within their Eldor Property, in northern Quebec, Canada. The Ashram Deposit is characterized by simple rare earth (monazite, bastnaesite, xenotime) and gangue (carbonates) mineralogy, a large tonnage resource at favourable grade, and has demonstrated the production of high-grade (more than 30 – 45% TREO) mineral concentrates at high recovery (more than 60 – 75%) in line with active global producers.

**About Corem:**

Corem is a leading centre for innovation in mineral processing, with Canada's largest concentration of R&D resources in the field. It provides specialized services to mining companies worldwide, supporting exploration, development, and operations. With state-of-the-art facilities, including a pilot plant and advanced laboratories in mineralurgy, mineralogy, and hydrometallurgy, Corem develops innovative solutions for a sustainable mining industry in collaboration with its members, clients, and partners.

**About Defense Metals:**

Defense Metals Corp. is focussed on the development of its 100% owned, 11,800 hectare (~29,158 acres) Wicheeda REE deposit that is located on the traditional territory of the McLeod Lake Indian Band in British Columbia, Canada.

The Wicheeda Project, approximately 80 kilometres (~50 miles) northeast of the city of Prince George, is readily accessible by a paved highway and all-weather gravel roads and is close to infrastructure, including hydro power transmission lines and gas pipelines. The nearby Canadian National Railway and major highways allow easy access to the port facilities at Prince Rupert, the closest major North American port to Asia. The projects' PFS was completed in February 2025, which showed robust economics for Wicheeda.

**About March Consulting Associates Inc. (March):**

March is a western Canadian employee- and Indigenous-owned multi-discipline engineering, advisory, procurement, project management, and construction management firm. Rooted in its values of Integrity, Adaptability, Safety, and Quality, March provides unique solutions to engineering challenges, while leveraging more than 25 years of local and global expertise on many complex projects within Canada's critical minerals sector. More information can be found at: <https://www.marchconsulting.com/>

**About Vital Metals:**

Vital Metals owns 100% of Nechalacho Resources, which, in turn, owns 100% of the Upper zone of the Nechalacho Project (both the smaller, high-grade North T demonstration project and the lower-grade, bulk tonnage Tardiff REE/Niobium deposit). Our project is located 90 kms East of Yellowknife on the North Shore of the Eastern Arm of Great Slave Lake, and sits on the traditional lands of the Tlicho, Akaitcho, and Metis Nations. We look forward to partnering and engaging with each and every nation and community to find the best way to move our project forward.