

British Columbia

Fast Facts

Location

British Columbia is Canada's western most province and one of North America's most mountainous regions. The province is bordered by the Pacific Ocean to the west, the American state of Alaska to the northwest. The Yukon and Northwest Territories also share part of BC's northern border. The province of Alberta lies to the east and the states of Washington, Idaho and Montana lie to the south.

Total Area

British Columbia: 948,527 sq km

Canada: 9,093,507 sq km

Population

British Columbia: 4,279,462 (2006 est)

Canada: 33 million (2006 est.)

Government

Canada has a constitutional monarchy that is also a parliamentary democracy and a federation.

BC was the sixth province to join Canadian Confederation (in 1871). The Province has a 79-member elected Legislative Assembly. The head of state is the Lieutenant Governor, who is appointed by the federal cabinet. The head of government is the Premier, usually the leader of the largest party in the Legislature.

Mineral Industry

British Columbia is internationally recognized as a global centre for excellence in mineral exploration and mining. Over 25% of the world's mining/exploration companies are located in BC.

Additionally, BC is internationally recognized for its highly skilled mineral exploration and mining workforce including engineers, geologists, prospectors, lawyers and financiers.

Canadian mining and exploration firms hold the largest share of the global exploration market in Canada, United States, South America, Central America, Europe, and most recently, Africa. This position has reaped benefits for Canadian financial markets, with Canada emerging as a world centre for mining finance.

The Toronto Stock Exchange maintains:

- The largest peer group of mining companies in the world.
- The best access point for equity capital for exploration and mine development.
- A global destination for financing international projects.
- A broad degree of expertise in mining, investment banking, securities law and mining analysts.

BC is one of the richest mineral areas of the world. There are over 14,000 known mineral occurrences in the province.

Mineral exploration and mining generate high-wage, family-supporting jobs throughout BC.

Employment in the mineral exploration and mining sector remains a source of strength in the Canadian economy. In 2003, approximately 47,000 Canadians were directly employed in the mining industry and about another 342,000 were employed in downstream minerals industries.

In 2004, minerals and metal exports were valued at \$56.6 billion, representing 13.8% of total Canadian exports, or one in every eight export dollars.

In 2004, the mining and minerals processing industries contributed \$41.8 billion to the Canadian economy, an amount equal to 4.0% of the national gross domestic product (GDP).

Canadian mineral and metal exports have increased by \$17.7 billion annually or 62% over the past decade – rising from \$29 billion in 1993 to \$56.6 billion in 2004.