

Media Release

The Hon Jaala Pulford MLC

Minister for Employment

Minister for Innovation, Medical Research and the Digital Economy

Minister for Small Business

Minister for Resources



Friday, 4 March 2022

MORE MINERALS EXPLORATION TO SCALE UP RENEWABLES AND TECH

The Andrews Labor Government is expanding the search for critical minerals essential for clean energy technologies, in the Stavely Arc, beneath the plains of Western Victoria.

Minister for Resources Jaala Pulford today announced more ground is being made available following the success of the Stavely Ground Release in 2018. The first release saw 11 large blocks of land made available to the market, resulting in six blocks of land being licenced.

This potential discovery of new resources is essential in supporting Victoria's move to renewable energy, with copper considered the cornerstone for all renewable technologies due to its excellent thermal and electrical conductivity.

Ground covering 11,000 square kilometres will soon be available for exploration which has potential to uncover copper, gold and other valuable metals, as well as mineral sands and gypsum.

The Stavely Arc is a geological zone running from near Mildura to Terang, the newly available ground covers parts of the Wimmera, north and east of Hamilton and around Mortlake.

Geologists believe that 500 million years ago western Victoria was on the border of a super-continent called Gondwana, giving it a similar geological environment at the time to the copper-rich Andes in South America.

Minerals exploration is booming across Victoria with expenditure growing seven-fold over the last six years, bringing a boost to the regional economy and helping create new jobs.

Exploration is different to mining, as an exploration licence gives the holder exclusive rights to search for evidence of minerals within an area using mostly low impact methods such as mapping, surveying, soil sampling and drilling.

Mineral explorers in Victoria have a history of being environmentally and socially responsible. It is expected that exploration companies work closely with traditional and local landowners, as well as the broader community, in addition to the strict regulatory conditions these companies must adhere to.

In coming months, community briefings will be held to ensure positive relationships are developed between future exploration licencees, landholders and locals.

More details of the exploration licences are available at earthresources.vic.gov.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Resources Jaala Pulford

"Exploration in western Victoria has had promising results and lifting the temporary holds on licence application now will bring vital jobs and revenue to the region."

"Minerals are a key part of our everyday essentials like technology, building materials and medical supplies and are also needed for renewable energy infrastructure."

Media contact: Stephanie Hobbs 0429 275 437 | stephanie.hobbs@minstaff.vic.gov.au