

Critical One Energy Receives Ontario Government Funding Grant for Howells Lake Antimony-Gold Project Exploration Work

Toronto, Ontario--(Newsfile Corp. - February 13, 2026) - [Critical One Energy Inc.](#) (CSE: CRTL) (OTCQB: MMTLF) (FSE: 4EF) ("**Critical One**" or the "**Company**"), a leading Canadian mining exploration company focused on critical metals and minerals, is pleased to announce that it has received official approval from the Ontario Government for initial funding under the Ontario Junior Exploration Program (OJEP)'s 2025-2026 intake. This grant will support the Company's ongoing efforts to explore the [Howells Lake Antimony-Gold Project](#) ("Howells Lake Project") located approximately 120 kilometres (km) west of the Ring of Fire road corridor in the Thunder Bay Mining District of Ontario.

The OJEP grant, administered by the Ontario Ministry of Mines, provides financial assistance to junior exploration companies to offset costs associated with grassroots mineral exploration projects. Critical One's approved project focuses on identifying and evaluating high-potential sites for critical, precious, and other minerals in northern Ontario, aligning with the province's commitment to bolstering domestic supply chains for electric vehicles, renewable energy technologies, and advanced manufacturing.

"This approval marks a significant milestone for Critical One as we continue to push the boundaries of sustainable resource development of antimony and other critical metals," said Duane Parnham, Founder, Executive Chairman and CEO of Critical One. "The Company's quality management practices and strategic importance of our Howells Lake Project are attracting grants like this one, demonstrating the confidence that government and industry stakeholders have in our vision for a brighter future."

The funding will enable the Company to accelerate upcoming drilling work while ensuring responsible exploration that prioritizes community engagement and ecological stewardship. The company anticipates commencing enhanced activities in the spring of 2026, with preliminary results soon thereafter.

Critical One remains committed to transparency and collaboration with local Indigenous communities, stakeholders, and regulatory bodies throughout the project lifecycle.

The Howells Lake Project represents one of Canada's largest known undeveloped antimony systems, with a historical resource of 1.7 million tons at a grade of 1.4% antimony with associated gold mineralization (Themistocleous, 1980)*. Historical drilling has returned exceptional grades, including individual assays up to 75% antimony and over 14 g/t gold, as well as intervals such as 5.37% antimony over 8.35 metres and associations with high-grade gold. The project spans a substantial land package of approximately 25,000 hectares across a 30 km strike in a proven greenstone belt, positioning it as a key asset in addressing North America's growing demand for critical minerals amid supply chain constraints and elevated antimony prices.

****Note:** All geological and assay information contained in this document is historical in nature and the Qualified Person ("QP") responsible for the technical disclosure in this release is unable to determine if any of that data would meet current NI 43-101 regulations regarding disclosure of scientific and technical information. Additionally, the QP has not done sufficient work to make the resource current. Drill intersections are reported as downhole intervals. No true width could be determined at this time. The information in the data recovered is considered of value and relevant to the Company's project. However, the Issuer is not treating the estimate as current.*

References:

Themistocleous, S.G., 1980. Miminiska Lake Project, Northwestern Ontario, Geological Report, New

Qualified Person

Matthew Trenkler, P.Geo. and Chief Geological Officer, Critical One Energy Inc., a Qualified Person ("QP") under NI 43-101, has reviewed and approved the scientific and technical content of this news release. All technical information in this release pertaining to geology and assays is based on historical data that cannot be verified by the QP.

About Critical One Energy Inc.

Critical One Energy Inc. is a forward-focused critical minerals and upstream energy company, powering the future of clean energy and advanced technologies. The Howells Lake Antimony-Gold Project focuses the Company's exposure on antimony, one of the most in-demand critical minerals, as well as gold, which is known to occur at numerous locations on the Howells Lake Project. Backed by seasoned management expertise and prime resource assets, Critical One is strategically positioned to meet the rising global demand for critical minerals and metals. Its mine exploration portfolio is led by antimony-gold exploration potential in Canada and uranium investment interests in Namibia, Africa. By leveraging its technical, managerial, and financial expertise, the Company upgrades and creates high-value projects, thereby driving growth and delivering value to its shareholders.

Additional information about Critical One Energy Inc. can be found at criticaloneenergy.com and on the Company's [SEDAR+ profile](https://www.sedarplus.ca) at www.sedarplus.ca.

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Forward-looking Statements

This news release contains "forward-looking information" within the meaning of applicable securities laws. All statements contained herein that are not clearly historical in nature may constitute forward-looking information. In some cases, forward-looking information can be identified by words or phrases such as "may", "will", "expect", "likely", "should", "would", "plan", "anticipate", "intend", "potential", "proposed", "estimate", "believe" or the negative of these terms, or other similar words, expressions, and grammatical variations thereof, or statements that certain events or conditions "may" or "will" happen, or by discussions of strategy. Forward-looking information contained in this press release includes, but is not limited to, statements relating to the Company's business strategy and objectives.

Where the Company expresses or implies an expectation or belief as to future events or results, such expectation or belief is based on assumptions made in good faith and believed to have a reasonable

basis. Such assumptions include, without limitation, that: the Company will have the resources required in order to conduct its business as currently operated.

However, forward-looking statements are subject to risks, uncertainties, and other factors, which could cause actual results to differ materially from future results expressed, projected, or implied by such forward-looking statements. Such risks include, but are not limited to, risks relating to the mining industry in general, and other risks as described in the Company's continuous disclosure record on SEDAR+.

Accordingly, undue reliance should not be placed on forward-looking statements and the forward-looking statements contained in this press release are expressly qualified in their entirety by this cautionary statement. The forward-looking statements contained herein are made as at the date hereof and are based on the beliefs, estimates, expectations, and opinions of management on such date. The Company does not undertake any obligation to update publicly or revise any such forward-looking statements or any forward-looking statements contained in any other documents whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise or to explain any material difference between subsequent actual events and such forward-looking information, except as required under applicable securities law. Readers are cautioned to consider these and other factors, uncertainties, and potential events carefully and not to put undue reliance on forward-looking information.



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