American Tungsten's Ali Haji on "Leading the Tungsten Race in the U.S."

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In the hidden corridors of Idaho's abandoned IMA Mine, American Tungsten Corp. (CSE: TUNG | OTCQB: TUNGF) is laying the groundwork for a revival that its CEO says could mark the first new U.S. tungsten production in more than a decade, a development that has deep-reaching implications for strategic supply chains. American Tungsten Corp., a Canadian exploration company advancing the IMA Mine Project toward commercial production on private patented land above the water table, is executing a disciplined underground drill program that the company describes as progressing "exactly as designed."

From the outset of drilling in early December through recent weeks, the company has completed more than 2,120 feet across six holes from the first D Level station — and is preparing a second rig to expand tests on the Zero level — work designed to unlock the geological continuity of historically prolific tungsten and polymetallic quartz veins. "The core that we've been able to obtain thus far is highly mineralized," Ali Haji told InvestorNews host Tracy Hughes, praising his exploration team's understanding of the geological model. The initial assays are expected in eight to ten weeks, with preliminary rock-chip and channel samples soon to follow.

The IMA Mine's history is storied: first mined in 1881 and operating through 1959, it was once the fourth-largest tungsten producer in North America, later drilled by major players through the 20th century and into the early 2000s. Its location stands on private patented land with paved road access and

electricity at some of the lowest rates in the United States — factors that, Haji emphasized, enable faster project advancement relative to federal land counterparts. “We’re able to advance things a lot quicker … so you’re able to advance things a lot quicker relative to anything that might be BLM or forestry,” he said.

The stakes for tungsten have rarely been higher. The metal — dubbed by Haji as “black gold” — is a critical mineral facing supply scarcity exacerbated by Chinese export restrictions and strategic controls, contributing to supply tightening and price strength globally. “It is almost impossible to get your hands on scrap as well … supply is scarce,” Haji told Hughes, noting the narrowing price spread between Western and Chinese markets as evidence of tightening supply dynamics.

Haji also highlighted the diversity of value in the IMA system — not just tungsten but significant molybdenum and silver credits, a combination he believes could underpin project economics and future optionality. “It will likely start as a moly mine … a lot of upside there,” he said, pointing to high-grade molybdenum compared with nearby peers.

Beyond geology, American Tungsten has moved strategically. A recent investment in Viking Mines’ high-grade Nevada vein systems adds optionality to the company’s future pipeline without diverting focus from IMA, Haji explained. With an updated NI 43-101 resource statement slated for release in March and a series of operational and listing milestones scheduled through the year — from expanded drilling footprints to engineering studies and exchange uplists — the company’s timetable aims at first product sales by late 2026.

In sector coverage, analysts have underscored American Tungsten’s positioning. Hallgarten + Company chose the phrase

“Leading the tungsten race in the U.S.” to characterize its leadership in re-establishing North American production, a title Haji said reflects the company’s infrastructure, patented land position and supportive regulatory backdrop.

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