

American Tungsten's Idaho Revival Powers the U.S. Critical Minerals Offensive

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July 03, 2025 – Tungsten, the metal that turns warheads razor-sharp and microchips whisper-thin, is suddenly at the center of a global scramble, and [American Tungsten Corp.](#) (CSE: TUNG | OTCQB: DEMRF) is positioning a forgotten Idaho mine as Washington's quickest lifeline. "Our path to production is about 12 to 18 months, servicing roughly 8% of U.S. tungsten," chief executive Ali Haji said in an interview, describing the Ima Mine—once the fourth-largest tungsten producer in North America—as "a past-producing brownfield asset" sitting on private, patented land with no water-table issues.

Prices for the steel-hardening element have climbed to 14-year highs—about \$452 per metric ton unit, up nearly 30 percent since February—as China's export restrictions tighten and NATO members pledge to funnel at least five percent of GDP into defense. "You cannot have military dominance without tungsten," Haji warned. With the Pentagon still dependent on foreign supply, he is betting that Idaho's mining regulators and federal loan programs will fast-track a domestic reboot.

Haji has recruited heavyweight allies to make the case. Dan Nicholas, former head of the U.S. Department of Energy's Loan Programs Office—"he doled out about \$40 billion in government grants," Haji noted—[now sits](#) on American Tungsten's board, leveraging contacts for "non-dilutive capital" that could reopen tunnels first blasted in the 1950s. [Joining](#) him is Jim Whittaker, chief operating officer of Capstone Copper and the onetime president of BHP's Escondida mine. "He's only allowed

one board seat but chose to join me,” Haji said, emphasizing Whittaker’s experience turning large assets into cash flow.

The company itself is barely a year old, listed last summer and already boasting “over 6,000 U.S. shareholders,” according to Haji, with a similar cohort in Canada. That retail fervor has been fed by a flurry of catalysts: a June 10 NI 43-101 technical [report](#) identifying multiple new exploration targets, a summer program to reopen the D-level adit, validation drilling aimed at expanding a historical resource of 350,000 tons grading 0.63 percent WO₃, and negotiations with two regional mills for bulk sampling and metallurgy. “We may potentially have an increased resource,” Haji said, outlining plans for ventilation upgrades, track relaying and off-take talks before any large borrowings.

American Tungsten also controls the Star Project—4,600 hectares in British Columbia’s Skeena Mining Division—but investors are fixated on Idaho because it offers speed. “Unlike other tungsten projects in North America, we are not sitting below the water table,” Haji said. “We own the surface rights and the mineral rights beneath,” sidestepping the federal permitting logjams that have stalled rival critical-minerals proposals.

Haji’s own résumé is steeped in turnarounds: 14 years at Invesco in M&A roles, the acquisition of Centerra’s AT0 gold project in Mongolia (“we doubled the resource and brought it to production”), and the founding of Ion Energy during the last lithium downturn, where he farmed out assets while retaining royalties. “My shift to American Tungsten is quite topical,” he said, arguing that contacts within U.S. agencies can unlock grants and guarantees faster than equity markets can digest share dilution.

Investors appear willing to wager on that thesis. Haji said the company still aims to graduate to a senior U.S. exchange—“NYSE

American or Nasdaq”—after updating its resource and publishing a production schedule. Meanwhile, tungsten’s rise has overtaken the InvestorNews website’s most-read rankings, a data point Haji cited as evidence of demand. “I don’t see it slowing down,” he said. “Tungsten will continue to be in very tight supply” as the West re-arms and builds out microchip, wind and nuclear infrastructure it once outsourced to Asia.

The next inflection comes this summer, when crews reopen historical headings, drill the No. 5 and No. 7 veins and feed samples to nearby mills for flow-sheet testing, work meant to culminate in a formal offtake. “Before we start to bring on a lot of this non-dilutive capital,” Haji said, “we are able to start generating revenue as soon as we start to ship ore.”

To access the complete interview, [click here](#)

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About American Tungsten Corp.

American Tungsten Corp. is a Canadian exploration company focused on high-potential tungsten and magnetite portfolio in North America. The Company is advancing the Ima Mine Project in Idaho, a historic underground tungsten producer, where it holds an option to acquire full ownership (subject to a 2% royalty) and has expanded its land position with 113 additional federal claims covering nearly 2,000 acres. The Company’s Star Project, spans over 4,600 hectares in British Columbia’s Skeena Mining Division, where the company holds an option to earn 100% ownership.