

# Defense Metals' Dr. Luisa Moreno on the Wicheeda Project as a Critical Future Source of Rare Earths in North America

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During the Prospectors & Developers Association of Canada (PDAC) 2024 event, Jack Lifton of the [Critical Minerals Institute](#) (CMI) conducted an insightful interview with Dr. Luisa Moreno, President and Director of [Defense Metals Corp.](#) (TSXV: DEFN | OTCQB: DFMTF). Dr. Moreno elaborated on the company's Wicheeda Rare Earth Element (REE) Project, describing it as a significant carbonatite deposit located in British Columbia, Canada. At the pre-feasibility stage, the project boasts a resource of approximately 30 million tons at an average grade of 2%, with initial years of mining expected to yield even higher grades of 2.5 to 3%. The company's vision includes concentrating the material and establishing a hydrometallurgical plant to produce a chemical concentrate, with a target production timeline spanning about five years. Dr. Moreno highlighted the success of the pilot plant and the potential for another pilot plant focusing on flotation and hydrometallurgy, underscoring the project's viability and its role in supporting the burgeoning EV and hybrid vehicle markets, which are heavily reliant on rare earth permanent magnets.

Defense Metals Corp., under the leadership of Dr. Moreno and CEO Craig Taylor, aims to establish the Wicheeda Project as a critical future source of rare earths in North America. The project's strategic advantages include its location, superior logistics, favorable mineralogy and metallurgy, proven

capability to produce rare earth products through pilot plant operations, significant potential mine life, and the support of the McLeod Lake Indian Band. In line with this vision, the company has taken significant steps by shipping mixed rare earth carbonate samples to major rare earth companies worldwide, validating the high-quality REE product from the Wicheeda deposit. This initiative further positions Defense Metals as a pivotal player in establishing North American rare earth supply chains, emphasizing the importance of diversified supply chains and the need for increased REE production outside China. The company's commitment to contributing to North American rare earth independence is evident through its active participation in industry conventions, such as PDAC 2024, and its ongoing efforts to progress the Wicheeda Project.

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

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Defense Metals Corp. is a mineral exploration and development company focused on the development of its 100% owned, 8,301-hectare (~20,534-acre) Wicheeda REE Project that is located on the traditional territory of the McLeod Lake Indian Band in British Columbia, Canada.

The Wicheeda REE Project, approximately 80 kilometres (~50 miles) northeast of the city of Prince George, is readily accessible by a paved highway and all-weather gravel roads and is close to infrastructure, including hydro power transmission lines and gas pipelines. The nearby Canadian National Railway and major highways allow easy access to the port facilities at Prince Rupert, the closest major North American port to Asia.

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