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Cantung Mine

NEED TO KNOW

- ▶ The currently closed Cantung Mine is located in traditional Dene territory within the Mackenzie Mountain Range of Canada's southwestern Northwest Territories, about 306 km northeast of Watson Lake, Yukon. The site is under care and maintenance and now owned by the Government of Canada, while the mineral rights are held by the Government of the Northwest Territories.
- ▶ Cantung includes historic mine infrastructure, surrounding lands, and an all-season road connecting the site to the Alaska Highway at Watson Lake. The mine originally opened in 1962 and experienced several closures due to global tungsten price drops caused by Chinese market oversupply.
- ▶ The most recent closure occurred in 2015 when owner North American Tungsten entered creditor protection. At that time, Cantung was one of the largest operating tungsten mines outside China. Production came from both an open pit (seasonal) and underground mine (year-round), processing approximately 1,350 dry short tons of ore per day. Processing used gravity and flotation circuits, producing a premium gravity concentrate averaging 65% WO₃, a flotation concentrate averaging 35% WO₃, and a copper concentrate averaging 28% Cu.
- ▶ Since November 2015, care and maintenance funding has been provided by Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC). The sale and oversight of the site are managed by the Government of the Northwest Territories through court-appointed monitor Alvarez & Marsal Canada Inc., representing North American Tungsten and overseeing environmental management and closure planning.
- ▶ The Cantung mine is for sale.

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project: Cantung Mine
Ownership: Government of Canada /
Government of Northwest
Territories
Location: Northwest Territories,
Canada
Latitude: 61.96667° North
Longitude: 128.25° West
Size: Claims and leases total
9,985 hectares
Stage: Care and Maintenance
Resource: Not available
Listings: Under active cease
trade order

CONTACT INFORMATION

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HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ Cantung Mine is a former tungsten mine located in the southwest corner of the Northwest Territories, approximately 720 kilometres west of Yellowknife and 390 kilometres from Whitehorse, Yukon. There is seasonal access to the mine by road from Watson Lake, Yukon.
- ▶ Prospectors originally discovered tungsten in the area in 1954. The name Cantung is an abbreviation of the original company name, the Canada Tungsten Mining Corporation Limited. This company built the open pit mine upslope of the Flat River before continuing to mine underground. When the mine first opened, a small community called Tungsten was established for workers and their families, along with a small Tungsten (Cantung) Airport. During mine operations, the town of Tungsten was home to 650 people.
- ▶ The mine was operational from 1962 to 1986. Workers, supplies and ore were transported primarily through the 300-kilometre gravel Nahanni Range Road, which extends from the mine site into the Yukon, and alternately through the gravel airstrip. Over those years, the mine saw several changes in ownership and several periods of care and maintenance.
- ▶ As tungsten prices fell, the mine stopped operating and the town of Tungsten ceased permanent habitation by 1986, yet infrastructure remains.
- ▶ North American Tungsten Corporation Limited purchased the mine in 1997 and the mine operated again from 2002 to 2003 and from 2005 to 2009. At one point in 2007, it was reported that Cantung Mine and the nearby Mactung deposit (also owned at the time by North American Tungsten Corporation Limited) together contained 15% of the world's known tungsten.
- ▶ Production was again suspended at Cantung from 2009 to 2010, and mining operations ceased when North American Tungsten Corporation Limited became insolvent in 2015. The mine site then re-entered care and maintenance for the final time.
- ▶ Though the company has been under creditor protection since 2015, North American Tungsten Corporation Limited continues to own the Cantung Mine and is responsible for the site under the terms of its water licence, issued by the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board. A court-appointed monitor, Alvarez & Marsal Canada Inc., has been funded by the Government of Canada since November 2015 to oversee care and maintenance activities, environmental management and closure planning.
- ▶ In 2024, NATC collaborated with the Federal Government to transition Care & Maintenance activities to the contractor Parsons Canada Inc.



TRACK RECORD

Mine opened and closed several times since 1962 due to China flooding the tungsten market.

GEODATA / REPORTS

- [2014-09-28: NI 43-101 Report, TECHNICAL REPORT ON THE CANTUNG MINE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES, CANADA](#)
- [2023-03-24 PROJECT DESCRIPTION CANTUNG MINE, NT](#)

PERMITS / COMPLIANCE

- ▶ The mine is in care and maintenance under the auspices of the court-appointed monitor.
- ▶ The Extension land use permit (LUP) expires on June 5, 2026. The NATC anticipates either recommending the New LUP application proceeding, or applying for a broader-scope LUP to continue C&M and advance reclamation work anticipated in 2025 and beyond.
- ▶ NATC expects to apply for a closure license before the Extension Water Licence expires on January 31, 2027.