

## NEWS >>>

### **Kennecott's New Tellurium Recovery Plant Points to Metal's Growing Importance**

*Now one of only two U.S. producers of tellurium, with demand growing at 5.5% annually.*

**Vancouver, BC, Canada, June 8, 2022** – First Tellurium Corp. (CSE: FTEL) (the “Company” or “First Tellurium”), reports that Rio Tinto Kennecott has begun processing tellurium at its Bingham Canyon Copper Mine near Salt Lake City, Utah. As a result, Kennecott is now one of only two U.S. producers of tellurium. The recently-completed, \$2.9 million recovery circuit will produce approximately 20 tons of tellurium annually, or about 4% of global annual production estimated at 580 tonnes.

“Kennecott’s Utah project reinforces our premise that tellurium’s importance is growing and growing quickly,” said FTEL’s CEO Tyrone Docherty. “With tellurium on both the U.S. and Europe’s lists of critical metals, we continue to field inquiries about the tellurium at our Deer Horn Project in British Columbia and Klondike Project in Colorado, especially from end users.”

The Deer Horn Project, located south of Smithers, holds one of the world’s few 43-101-compliant resources of tellurium. The Klondike Project was held originally by First Solar, one of the world’s largest solar panel manufacturers, as a potential primary tellurium source for its cadmium-telluride (CdTe) solar panels.

Docherty added that, according to Maia Research, tellurium usage is growing at a 5.5% annual rate. “Nearly all tellurium currently comes from copper mining,” said Docherty. “End users don’t like being dependent on the copper market for supply. Big consumers like First Solar would love to source primary supplies like we have in both BC and Colorado.”

Gaby Poirier, managing director at Rio Tinto Kennecott, noted: "Tellurium is critical to our mission for powering a sustainable future for Kennecott, for Utah, for the United States. It's a key material in the manufacturing of advanced thin-film photovoltaic solar panels, a clean energy source that is powering more and more communities in this country and around the world."

Kennecott [reported](#) that the recovered tellurium will be refined in North America by 5N Plus. The refined tellurium will be supplied to Arizona-based First Solar Inc., the lone American company amongst the world’s ten largest solar panel firms.

Advanced thin-film, cadmium telluride (CdTe) photovoltaic are highly efficient, rapidly manufactured and lower-cost when compared with conventional silicon-based panels.

A [recent article](#) by S&P Global Intelligence noted that First Solar's plan to spend \$1.36 billion to increase module capacity to 16 GW by 2024 seems certain to strain the tellurium market. If First Solar achieves its goals, its annual demand for the mineral will exceed last year's estimated global tellurium production by up to 70%, according to researchers at the Institute of Environmental Science and Technology at the Autonomous University of Barcelona.

Considering that First Solar’s growth represents only one stream of tellurium demand, such as next-generation [lithium-tellurium batteries](#) being developed by Fenix Advanced Materials of British Columbia, new sources of tellurium, particularly in North America, are becoming essential. “With our two North American properties, we believe we can help meet this demand,” said Docherty. “Our [strategic partnership](#) with Fenix was formed with this goal in mind.”

Utah Gov. Spencer Cox was on hand at the Kennecott opening to usher in what he described as "a very important step in helping Utah and the United States supply our own critical mineral needs."

Early in 2022, President Biden invoked the Defense Production Act to boost domestic supplies of critical minerals. By producing tellurium, said Governor Cox, Rio Tinto Kennecott is helping to bolster national security by decreasing U.S. dependence on foreign countries like China for critical mineral production.

“The importance of tellurium is only growing,” Rio Tinto reported on May 11. “From its improved extraction process to its impact on the economy and national security, the many applications of tellurium render it a critical element and important for us to invest in responsibly.”

### **About First Tellurium Corp.**

First Tellurium Corp explores and develops tellurium projects in North America. As the world pushes ahead to develop green technologies, tellurium will continue to experience increasing demand.

Our polymetallic (tellurium, gold, silver copper, tungsten) Deer Horn Project in British Columbia and Klondike tellurium-gold property in Colorado anchor a diversified search for metals, working in alliance with Indigenous peoples, NGOs, governments and leading metals buyers.

On behalf of the board of directors of  
First Tellurium Corp.

“Tyrone Docherty”

Tyrone Docherty  
President and CEO

For further information please contact:

**Tyrone Docherty**

604.789.5653

[tyrone@firsttellurium.com](mailto:tyrone@firsttellurium.com)

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