



## GLOBAL BUSINESS REPORTS



Jeff Parshley,  
*Corporate Consultant,*  
**SRK CONSULTING**

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**Can you touch upon some mining projects you are working on in Nevada?**

The mining industry in Nevada has not slowed down, even during the COVID period, as it was considered an essential industry in the state. Our work has continued at mine sites, particularly given the interest in battery metals. Most recently, we worked on the permitting of several new lithium projects, particularly at Lithium Americas' Thacker Pass along with Albemarle's Silver Peak operation. We are also working with companies looking at developing other lithium deposits in the US, and other metals such as nickel and copper, metals that are vital to the green economy.

**To what extent is the EasyMineXR collaborative mapping software addressing geological visualization challenges?**

It is a mixed-reality mapping tool that allows mining and geology teams to capture and visualize data in real time. It captures detailed geological and geotechnical data with pattern-drawing tools. It also allows users to map and view areas that might otherwise be unsafe, like the toe of a pit wall. With this tool, we can do the mapping without putting people in harm's way.

**How do you view your relationship with the Bureau of Land Management?**

Being successful in any jurisdiction depends on maintaining strong relationships with all stakeholders in the mining industry, including regulators. Because of our extensive work at the permitting and closure stage, we have known several generations of regulators, which has helped us build trust.

**Are the industry's net-zero targets achievable without relying on carbon credits?**

The industry has always looked for ways to improve its operations, and the awareness of greenhouse gas emissions has been there for decades. As the production of battery metals needs to increase for society to reach its goals to transition away from fossil fuels, the emphasis on mining is higher than ever. Battery technology must improve: 300 miles for a car sounds great, but batteries also have to work with large haul trucks and other mining equipment. I understand that Caterpillar recently demonstrated that battery-powered large haul trucks are possible.

**What role can Nevada play in helping secure the domestic lithium supply chain?**

Nevada has been the focus of large investments in lithium. It is not the only state endowed with lithium, but it is the only one with proven production and several projects in the pipeline. However, we are still getting mixed signals from policymakers. On one hand, they are pushing for a green economy, and on the other, they are proposing laws that will make it more difficult to get projects up and running. But between federal and state regulations, no place in the world has better environmental protections than Nevada.

**To what extent is it key for the US to increase its domestic production of critical minerals?**

In the most recent USGS survey, there are 17 critical minerals we don't produce at all or produce very little of, with many being imported from countries that are not friendly towards the US. By allowing this, we are putting our country's security at the mercy of others.

Furthermore, Washington's continued attempts to pass laws making it harder to mine in the US may scare investors away. These investors could go to countries where it is not only easier to permit a mine, but also to ignore environmental and social regulations. By not developing minerals domestically, we could be sending environmental and social impacts elsewhere; an out-of-sight, out-of-mind situation. This is not the responsible approach expected of a country wanting to be a global ESG leader. The best way to lead on that front is by encouraging responsible mining in the US, where we have the best people for the job and the best regulatory framework for the industry.

**What areas will drive growth for SRK Consulting in the coming months?**

We are always hiring, and that is because our business continues to grow. One thing that has driven growth in Nevada and internationally is the new awareness of the critical aspects and risks associated with mining, particularly in terms of tailings management. We are extremely busy with the new GISTM. ESG standards and the concept of responsible investing have heightened the industry's awareness of responsible mining. Mine closure work continues to expand, and we are exporting that expertise out of Nevada into other parts of the world.

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