

USCM Reports 2025 Milestones and Outlines 2026 Exploration Priorities at McDermitt East Lithium Project Amid Accelerating Thacker Pass Developments

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Vancouver, January 15, 2026 - [US Critical Metals Corp.](#) (CSE: USCM) (OTCQB: USCMF) (FSE: 0IU) ("USCM" or the "Company") is pleased to provide a year-end summary of key corporate milestones achieved through 2025 and outline its initial 2026 operational focus at the McDermitt East Lithium Project ("McDermitt East") in Nevada.

USCM's strategy continues to emphasize United States ("U.S.")-based critical mineral assets that can support chain resilience, particularly as North American lithium projects advance and western governments intensify efforts to strengthen supply independence.

2025 Key Milestones

Over the last year, USCM made material progress to align the Company with stated objectives. This specifically includes:

- Securing an amendment to the McDermitt East Option Arrangement that provides a clear path for USCM to acquire a 100% interest in McDermitt East within the McDermitt Caldera district. This includes a current operating ownership of 50% and option to acquire the remaining 50% interest for CAD \$500,000 in cash or shares of the Company (reference full press release, [here](#)).
- Completing the acquisition of a 100% interest in the Clayton Ridge Lithium Project following satisfaction of the applicable option agreement terms. This positions USCM with strong property positions in two of the foremost lithium districts in the US (reference full press release, [here](#)).
- Reporting strong uranium-vanadium grades in black shale sampling at Long Canyon Uranium and Vanadium Project, and additionally reported carbonate-replacement (CRD-style) mineralization. This supporting the presence of multiple mineralizing styles and a significant prospective trend (reference full press release, [here](#)).
- Closed a \$510,000 private placement financing to support corporate development and advancement of its U.S. critical minerals portfolio (reference full press release, [here](#)).

These developments over the course of 2025 have positioned USCM to enter 2026 with key areas of focus. This aligns with renewed market interest and price stabilization within lithium markets.

2026 Exploration Focus

USCM is pleased to further outline its planned 2026 exploration strategy and focus for McDermitt East. McDermitt East is located on the eastern margins of the McDermitt Caldera and is approximately 19 kilometers from Lithium Americas' Thacker Pass lithium project, which is located on the south-western margin of McDermitt Caldera¹.

Situated within the same regional lithium-bearing claystone system that hosts Thacker Pass, the Company believes the project is well positioned to benefit from both the advancing development and growing strategic importance of the district. Thacker Pass is one of the most strategically significant lithium developments in the U.S. and is anticipated to commence initial production in 2027, marking a major milestone for U.S.

domestic lithium supply. Thacker Pass has received strategic investments from both the U.S. Department of Energy and General Motors.^{2,3}

Figure #1: Location of McDermitt East Lithium Project

To view an enhanced version of this graphic, please visit:

https://images.newsfilecorp.com/files/8837/280357_b2f74bf25493a829_001full.jpg

USCM plans to undertake additional geological mapping and surface sampling at McDermitt East in early 2026, with the objective of further refining and prioritizing drill targets across the highest priority prospective areas. This work will build on previous exploration programs, including detailed trench-dump sampling conducted in Fall 2023 and Spring 2024, which generated anomalous lithium values up to 2,129 ppm - the highest lithium grades to date at McDermitt East (reference full press release, [here](#)) - confirming the presence of elevated lithium within the system and delineating a prospective zone for further evaluation.

The initial 2026 field program is designed to expand upon those results by improving geological understanding of the project area, integrating regional datasets, and guiding efficient drill target definition, with the plan to complete a maiden drill program in 2026.

Management Commentary

"2025 was a highly transitional and foundational year for USCM," comments Mr. Darren Collins, CEO and Director of the Company. "We deliberately focused on strengthening our asset base, simplifying ownership structures, and positioning the Company within premier lithium districts. By securing a clear path to 100% ownership at McDermitt East, completing the Clayton Ridge acquisition, advancing Long Canyon with encouraging multi-commodity results, and strengthening our balance sheet, we believe we have materially aligned the Company with its stated strategic objectives."

"As we commence 2026, USCM is well positioned to capitalize on a more constructive lithium market backdrop," continued Mr. Collins. "With U.S. government support accelerating for domestic lithium supply, large-scale projects such as Thacker Pass advancing toward production, and growing recognition of emerging supply constraints, we see increasing strategic value in high-quality, U.S.-based lithium assets. Our planned 2026 exploration program at McDermitt East is designed to efficiently advance the project toward a maiden drill program and position USCM for the next phase of growth as the sector continues to re-rate."

Marketing Contract Extension

USCM is pleased to announce it has extended its contact with Think Ink Marketing Data and Email Services Inc. ("Think Ink"), a marketing and public relations company based in Santa Ana, California, to provide investor relations and marketing services.

Pursuant to marketing and public relations program extension, Think Ink will facilitate the creation and distribution of marketing materials and paid advertisements for USCM. The extension provides for an additional up to USD \$250,000. Either party may terminate the Agreement by providing thirty (30) days' written notice. The extension will commence on signing of the extension agreement and terminate within a period of 6 months.

Think Ink will provide the Company with an opportunity to review all content describing the Company generated by or on behalf of Think Ink prior to its publication and Think Ink will not publish or distribute any content without the prior approval of the Company.

Think Ink is an arm's length party. To the best of the Company's knowledge, Think Ink does not hold, directly or indirectly, any securities of the Company or have any right to acquire any such securities. The

compensation to be paid to Think Ink does not include any securities of the Company.

The contact information for Think Ink is: Think Ink Marketing Data and Email Services Inc., 3308 W. Warner Ave., Santa Ana, CA 92704, Telephone: 310-760-2616, Email: claire@thinkinkmarketing.com.

Cautionary Statements and Source(s)

(1) The qualified person has been unable to verify the information and that the information is not necessarily indicative to the mineralization on McDermitt East.

(2) [Lithium Americas Corp.](#) (2025, January 9). Lithium Americas increases mineral resource and reserve for Thacker Pass.

<https://lithiumamericas.com/news/news-details/2025/Lithium-Americas-Increases-Mineral-Resource-and-Reserve-for-Thacker-Pass>

(3) Lithium Americas Corp. (2025, August 14). Lithium Americas reports second quarter 2025 results.

Retrieved December 2025, from

<https://lithiumamericas.com/news/news-details/2025/Lithium-Americas-Reports-Second-Quarter-2025-Results/default.aspx>

Qualified Person

The scientific and technical information contained in this news release has been reviewed and approved by Robert J. Johansing, BSC. geology, MSc economic geology, who is a qualified person as defined in NI 43-101. Mr. Johansing is a consultant of the Company.

About US Critical Metals Corp.

USCM is focused on mining projects that will further secure the U.S. supply of critical metals, which are essential to fueling the new age economy. USCM's assets consist of five discovery focused projects in the U.S. These projects include the McDermitt East Lithium Project located in Nevada, Clayton Ridge Lithium Property located in Nevada, Long Canyon Uranium Property located in Idaho, the Haynes Cobalt Property located in Idaho, and the Sheep Creek REE Property located in Montana. A significant percentage of the world's critical metal and rare earth supply comes from nations with interests that are contrary to those of the U.S. USCM intends to explore and develop assets with near- and long-term strategic value to the advancement of U.S. interests.

For further information please contact:

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Forward-looking information includes statements that are not historical facts and are generally, but not always, identified by the words "expects", "plans", "anticipates", "believes", "intends", "estimates", "projects", "potential" and similar expressions, or that events or conditions "will", "would", "may", "could" or "should"

occur. Forward-looking information contained in this press release may include, without limitation, the expected payment of remaining option payments and issuance of the related shares, exploration plans and expected exploration and drilling results at the McDermitt East and other properties of the Company, results of operations, and the expected financial performance of the Company. Although USCM believes the forward-looking information contained in this news release is reasonable based on information available on the date hereof, by its nature, forward-looking information involves assumptions and known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors which may cause our actual results, level of activity, performance or achievements, or other future events, to be materially different from any future results, performance or achievements expressed or implied by such forward-looking information.

Examples of such assumptions, risks and uncertainties include, without limitation, assumptions, risks and uncertainties associated with general economic conditions; adverse industry events; the receipt of required regulatory approvals and the timing of such approvals; that USCM maintains good relationships with the communities in which it operates or proposes to operate; future legislative and regulatory developments in the mining sector; USCM's ability to access sufficient capital from internal and external sources, and/or inability to access sufficient capital on favorable terms; mining industry and markets in Canada and generally; the ability of USCM to implement its business strategies; competition; the risk that any of the assumptions prove not to be valid or reliable, which could result in delays, or cessation in planned work; risks associated with the interpretation of data, the geology, grade and continuity of mineral deposits; the possibility that results will not be consistent with USCM's expectations; as well as other assumptions, risks and uncertainties applicable to mineral exploration and development activities and to USCM, including as set forth in the USCM's public disclosure documents filed on the SEDAR+ website at www.sedarplus.ca.

The forward-looking information contained in this press release represents the expectations of USCM as of the date of this press release and, accordingly, is subject to change after such date. Readers should not place undue importance on forward-looking information and should not rely upon this information as of any other date. While USCM may elect to, it does not undertake to update this information at any particular time except as required in accordance with applicable laws.

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