

Apex Strengthens Executive Management Team

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VANCOUVER, February 18, 2026 - [Apex Critical Metals Corp.](#) (CSE:APXC)(OTCQX:APXCF)(FWB:KL9) ("Apex" or the "Company"), a Canadian mineral exploration company focused on the identification and development of critical and strategic metals, is pleased to announce the appointment of Nathan Steinke as Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of the Company, effective immediately, and the appointment of Jones Lang as Executive Vice President of Growth Strategy (EVP, Growth Strategy), effective immediately.

These strategic leadership additions come as Apex advances its portfolio of critical metals projects and prepares for an important phase of growth, including aggressive exploration and drilling plans at its Rift Rare Earth Project within the Elk Creek Carbonatite Complex in southeast Nebraska, U.S.A.

CEO Sean Charland commented: "We are very pleased to strengthen Apex's executive leadership team with the appointments of Nathan and Jones. Nathan brings extensive financial and capital markets expertise, while Jones contributes a proven track record in corporate growth, partnerships, and strategic transactions. Together, their experience will be highly valuable as we execute on our strategy to advance our critical minerals portfolio and create long-term shareholder value."

Chief Financial Officer Appointment

Mr. Nathan Steinke brings over 20 years of finance experience in the international resource sector. Mr. Steinke previously worked alongside Sean Charland, serving as CFO, at Alpha Lithium. Mr. Steinke was instrumental in supporting the advancement of the Company through key finance, growth and capital markets initiatives. After serving as CFO from 2020-2023 with Alpha Lithium, the company was acquired by Tecpetrol, providing Mr. Steinke with additional experience supporting companies through strategic transactions and change-of-control events.

Mr. Steinke has served in Chief Financial Officer and other senior finance roles with seven ventures over the past several decades. In these positions, he has overseen all financial functions, including debt and equity financings, corporate structuring, cash flow management, regulatory compliance, and stakeholder engagement, bringing extensive experience across a range of industries and stages of corporate development.

The Company also announces that Jody Bellefleur will be stepping down as Chief Financial Officer and will continue to serve as Corporate Secretary and remain on the Company's Board of Directors.

Sean Charland added: "On behalf of the Board of Directors and management team, I would like to extend our sincere appreciation to Jody for her outstanding contributions to Apex. Jody was instrumental in the formation and early development of the Company, and her leadership and dedication have been critical in establishing the strong corporate and financial foundation we have today. We are grateful for her continued contributions in her role as a Director and Corporate Secretary."

EVP, Growth Strategy Appointment

Mr. Jones Lang joined the Company as a director in May 2024 and has since been an active member of the Board, contributing to the Company's strategic direction and growth initiatives. He brings nearly two decades of executive leadership experience in the natural resource sector, with significant expertise in fundraising, mergers and acquisitions, finance, corporate governance, and securing strategic partnerships.

Mr. Lang graduated with honours from the Marketing Management Entrepreneurship Program at the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT) and subsequently earned a Bachelor of Commerce degree from

Royal Roads University, graduating with Distinction. Throughout his 17-year career in the natural resource sector, he has led or co-led more than 50 joint ventures, asset sales, spin-outs, acquisitions, strategic alliances, or corporate M&A transactions, and has helped raise more than \$120 million in equity financing.

Mr. Lang previously served as Vice President, Corporate Development for Riverside Resources during a period in which the Company operated as a cash-flow-positive prospect generator, spearheading numerous transactions with major metal producers. He later served as Executive Vice President of Maple Gold Mines, where the Company secured a transformational strategic partnership with [Agnico Eagle Mines Ltd.](#), and as President of American Pacific Mining, during which time the Company was nominated for Deal of the Year by S&P Global Platts.

Mr. Lang has a demonstrated track record of helping secure the strategic partnerships and funding necessary to accelerate the advancement of large-scale critical mineral projects.

About Apex Critical Metals Corp. (CSE:APXC)(OTCQX:APXCF)(FWB:KL9)

Apex Critical Metals Corp. is a Canadian exploration company focused on advancing rare earth element (REE) and niobium projects that support the growing demand for critical and strategic metals across the United States and Canada. The Company's flagship Rift Project, located within the highly prospective Elk Creek Carbonatite Complex in Nebraska, U.S.A., hosts extensive rare earth rights surrounding one of North America's most advanced niobium-REE deposits. Historical drilling across the complex has reported broad intervals of high-grade REE mineralization, including intercepts such as 155.5 m of 2.70% REO and 68.2 m of 3.32% REO.

In Canada, Apex continues to advance its 100%-owned Cap Project, located 85 kilometres northeast of Prince George, British Columbia. The 2025 drill program confirmed a significant niobium discovery with 0.59% Nb₂O₅ over 36 metres, including 1.08% Nb₂O₅ over 10 metres, within a 1.8-kilometre-long niobium trend. The Cap Project continues to demonstrate strong potential for niobium mineralization within a large and previously unrecognized carbonatite system.

With a growing portfolio of critical mineral projects in both Canada and the United States, Apex Critical Metals is strategically positioned to help strengthen domestic supply chains for the minerals essential to advanced technologies, clean energy, and national security. Apex is publicly listed in Canada on the Canadian Securities Exchange (CSE) under the symbol APXC and quoted on the OTCQX market in the United States under the symbol APXCF, and in Germany on the Borse Frankfurt under the symbol KL9 and/or WKN: A40CCQ. Find out more at www.apexcriticalmetals.com and watch our videos at <https://apexcriticalmetals.com/apex-critical-metals-corporate-video/> and make sure to stay in touch by signing up for free news alerts at <https://apexcriticalmetals.com/news/news-alerts/>, or by following us on X (formerly Twitter), Facebook or LinkedIn.

On Behalf of the Board of Directors

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This news release may contain "forward-looking statements" under applicable Canadian securities legislation. Forward-looking statements consist of statements that are not purely historical, including any

statements regarding beliefs, plans, expectations or intentions regarding the future. Forward-looking statements are subject to various known and unknown risks and uncertainties that may cause actual results, performance or developments to differ materially from those contained in the statements. Risks that could change or prevent these events, activities or developments from coming to fruition include: the Company's properties are at an early stage of development and no current mineral resources or reserves have been identified by the Company thereof, that we may not be able to fully finance any additional exploration on the Company's properties; that even if we are able to raise capital, costs for exploration activities may increase such that we may not have sufficient funds to pay for such exploration or processing activities; the timing and content of any future work programs; geological interpretations based on drilling that may change with more detailed information; potential process methods and mineral recoveries assumptions based on limited test work and by comparison to what are considered analogous deposits that, with further test work, may not be comparable; testing of our process may not prove successful or samples derived from our properties may not yield positive results, and even if such tests are successful or initial sample results are positive, the economic and other outcomes may not be as expected; the anticipated market demand for REE and other minerals may not be as expected; the availability of labour and equipment to undertake future exploration work and testing activities; geopolitical risks which may result in market and economic instability. There can be no assurance that such statements will prove to be accurate, as actual results and future events could differ materially from those anticipated in such statements. Accordingly, readers should not place undue reliance on forward-looking statements. The forward-looking statements herein are made as of the date hereof, and the Company disclaims any intention or obligation to update or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise, except as required by law.

SOURCE: Apex Critical Metals Corp.

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