

# Fuerte Strengthens Management Team and Independent Oversight of the Coffee Gold Project Heap Leach Facility

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Vancouver, May 11, 2026 - [Fuerte Metals Corp.](#) (TSXV: FMT) (OTCQB: FUEMF) today announced several measures to strengthen the design, construction, operation, and governance of the Heap Leach Facility (HLF) at its proposed Coffee Gold Project in Canada's Yukon Territory. The Company has appointed a new Engineer of Record (EOR), established an Independent Technical Review Board (ITRB), applied for membership in the Mining Association of Canada (MAC) to adopt the Towards Sustainable Mining (TSM) protocols, and appointed Sébastien Tolgyesi as Vice President, Coffee Project, adding an experienced Yukon-based mining professional to the team.

"We recognize the deep cultural, environmental, and economic importance of the land and water surrounding the Coffee Gold Project to the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation, White River First Nation, Selkirk First Nation, the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun, and to all Yukoners. That responsibility guides every decision we make," said Tim Warman, CEO of Fuerte. "Our team is taking deliberate steps to strengthen how the Coffee Gold Project is designed, constructed, and operated. We are implementing multiple layers of independent technical review, enhancing oversight, and establishing clear lines of accountability across the project. In the aftermath of the Eagle Mine failure, we fully understand that the Coffee Gold Project will face heightened scrutiny. We welcome that scrutiny. It is essential that communities, regulators, and Indigenous partners have confidence that this project can be developed safely, responsibly, and transparently. Our commitment is straightforward: we will meet the highest standards of environmental protection, we will work in genuine partnership with First Nations, and we will ensure that the Coffee Gold Project reflects the values and expectations of the people who call this region home."

## Strengthening Engineering Accountability

Fuerte has appointed NewFields Canada Inc. as Engineer of Record for the Coffee Gold Project heap leach facility, with geotechnical engineer Alistair James, P.Eng., serving in that role. The Engineer of Record is the independent professional engineer responsible for the overall design and performance of the facility. NewFields brings more than 35 years of experience in natural resource projects, with a Canadian team and expertise in heap leach pad design, dam engineering, and mine closure - the key disciplines required for responsible management of the Coffee Gold Project HLF.

Forte Dynamics, the original designers of the facility, remain involved and will continue to support the work through the transition of the EOR. SLR Consulting, which completed an independent third-party review of the HLF in 2025, will continue to provide independent input as the project advances.

Bringing in a new Engineer of Record adds another layer of verification, ensuring the design is reviewed, tested, and challenged from multiple perspectives before construction and operation.

## Independent Technical Review Board

Fuerte has established an Independent Technical Review Board to provide ongoing, independent oversight of the HLF across design, construction, operation, and closure. Reporting independently to the Company's Board of Directors, the ITRB is made up of experienced external experts whose role is to review plans, question assumptions, and identify risks. It operates independently from day-to-day project execution and is aligned with Yukon guidance for mine waste management facilities.

Inaugural members of the ITRB include:

#### Mark Smith

Mr. Smith is a professional engineer with registrations across the USA and Canada, including the Yukon, and with 45 years of experience in gold and copper mining and mineral processing with special focus on heap leaching and tailings management. He has spent much of the last 20 years working on cold climate projects, including alpine and subarctic locations. He principally works as a senior reviewer and as a member of review, advisory and technical boards. Mark holds a master's degree in civil and geotechnical engineering from the University of Nevada, Reno, and has served on its College of Engineering Advisory Board for over 15 years. His experience includes 12 years working in the Yukon Territory, including on the owners' teams for Coffee Gold, Macpass and Mactung projects, consulting for the Yukon Energy, Mines and Resources on the Mine Waste Management guidelines and for the response to the Victoria Gold slope failure. Most recently, he chaired the Independent Review Board investigating the Eagle Gold failure and served as lead author of its forensic report. Mark is currently on the corporate review boards for Glencore, Barrick, and Minsur.

#### John Wells

Mr. Wells is a metallurgist with extensive experience across global mining operations and engineering projects. His career includes senior roles with Barrick, Anglo American, and Consolidated Goldfields, as well as engineering firms including Bechtel, Fluor, and Hatch. He has worked across gold, copper, uranium, and base metal operations in Africa and the Americas. Most recently, he has worked as an independent consulting metallurgist based in British Columbia.

Additional appointments are expected as the Board continues to evolve.

#### Applying Proven Standards and Independent Review

Fuerte has applied for membership in the Mining Association of Canada and intends to implement its Towards Sustainable Mining (TSM) framework at the Coffee Gold Project. Fuerte will apply the underlying principles of TSM - governance, accountability, risk management, independent oversight, and continuous improvement - to the HLF design, construction and operation.

#### Project Leadership

Fuerte has named Sébastien Tolgyesi as Vice President, Coffee Project. Sébastien is a mining professional with more than 25 years of experience across geology, engineering, and operations, including 15 years working in northern Canada. He has held senior roles with Glencore, Agnico Eagle, Capstone, Coeur, Hecla, and Newmont, contributing to both project development and operating assets. His experience includes helping bring Agnico Eagle's Meadowbank Mine into production, supporting the restart of Coeur's Silvertip Mine, and advancing the return to production of the Minto and Keno Hill mines in the Yukon. More recently, he was involved in the transition of ownership at the Musselwhite mine between Newmont and Orla Mining. Based in Whitehorse, Sébastien serves on the Board of the Yukon Chamber of Mines. He holds a B.Sc. in Geology from Université de Montréal and a B.Eng. in Mining Engineering from Université Laval and is a Qualified Person under National Instrument 43-101.

#### A Structured Approach to Responsible Development

Together, these measures establish multiple, independent layers of oversight for the Coffee Gold Project HLF - from the engineers responsible for the design, to external reviewers who challenge that work, to standards that require ongoing monitoring and transparency.

"Being a good neighbour in the Yukon requires that we develop this project responsibly from the outset," said Denis Flood, Chief Operating Officer. "As we advance from design into construction, we are guided by a disciplined approach that reflects our commitment to safety and environmental stewardship. These principles underpin every decision we make and form the foundation for delivering long-term value through the Coffee Gold Project."

#### About Fuerte Metals Corporation

Fuerte Metals is a Canadian exploration and development company advancing the Coffee Gold Project in Yukon, Canada, while building the systems, relationships, and track record required to grow beyond a single mining asset.

Coffee is a 100%-owned, open-pit heap leach gold project in the final stages of permitting and engineering, as the Company works toward a construction decision. The project hosts 3.0 million ounces of measured and indicated resources and an additional 0.8 million ounces of inferred resources. In addition to Coffee, Fuerte holds a portfolio of copper and gold assets in Chile and Mexico, providing longer-term growth potential.

Fuerte recognizes that protection of the land and water around the Coffee Gold Project is of central importance to the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, White River First Nation, Selkirk First Nation, and the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun. The Company is focused on building long-term relationships grounded in transparency, respect, and follow-through. From day one, Fuerte's approach is simple: do the work properly, be honest about it, and follow through on what we say.

#### Additional Information

For more information, please contact:  
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#### Forward-Looking Information

This news release includes certain "forward-looking statements" under applicable Canadian securities legislation. Forward-looking statements include, but are not limited to, statements with respect to future development plans and the business and operations of the Company. Forward-looking statements are necessarily based upon estimates and assumptions that, while considered reasonable, are subject to known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors which may cause the actual results and future events to differ materially from those expressed or implied by such forward-looking statements. Such factors include, but are not limited to business integration risks; fluctuations in general macroeconomic conditions; fluctuations in securities markets; fluctuations in spot and forward prices of gold, silver, base metals or certain other commodities; fluctuations in currency markets; results of exploration; the economics of processing methods; change in national and local government, legislation, taxation, controls, regulations and political or economic developments; risks and hazards associated with the business of mineral exploration, development and mining (including environmental hazards, industrial accidents, unusual or unexpected formations pressures, cave-ins and flooding); inability to obtain adequate insurance to cover risks and hazards; the presence of laws and regulations that may impose restrictions on mining; employee relations; relationships with and claims by local communities and indigenous populations; availability of and increasing costs associated with mining inputs and labour; the speculative nature of mineral exploration and development (including the risks of obtaining necessary licenses, permits and approvals from government authorities); and title to properties.

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 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.

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