

Hecla Receives Permit for 2026 Polaris Exploration Program in Nevada's Historic Aurora Mining District

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[Hecla Mining Company](#) (NYSE: HL) today announced that its wholly owned subsidiary, Klondex Aurora Mine Inc., has received a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and Decision Notice from the U.S. Forest Service ("USFS") for the Polaris Exploration Project in Mineral County, Nevada, clearing the way for exploration activities to commence in 2026.

This press release features multimedia. View the full release here:
<https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20251201878709/en/>

Figure 1: Aurora plan view map showing 2026 exploration target areas.

The USFS Bridgeport Ranger District issued the approval on November 20, 2025, following a comprehensive environmental review that concluded the proposed exploration activities will not have significant environmental effects.

"This approval marks a significant milestone in advancing our exploration strategy in one of Nevada's most prospective high-grade gold districts," said Kurt Allen, Vice President of Exploration. "We are excited to begin our 2026 exploration program at Aurora, which produced some of the highest-grade gold and silver ore in Walker Lane during its historic operations. We appreciate the thorough review conducted by the USFS and the collaboration with local stakeholders throughout this process."

ABOUT THE AURORA MINING DISTRICT

The Aurora Mining District is one of the highest-grade historic mining districts in Nevada's Walker Lane, having produced 1.9 million ounces of gold and 20 million ounces of silver, with underground production averaging 2.24 ounces per ton gold. This exceptional grade demonstrates the district's potential for additional high-grade discoveries within a well-mineralized hydrothermal system.

The project benefits from existing infrastructure, including a 600-ton-per-day mill on site, and significant private land holdings that reduce permitting requirements for any future discoveries. Over the past three years, Hecla geologists have focused on compiling historical data, consolidating land positions, and developing high-quality exploration targets.

2026 EXPLORATION PROGRAM

The planned exploration program includes testing multiple high-grade epithermal vein systems across various erosional levels (Figure 1):

- Partially eroded targets where mineralization approaches surface, including Martinez, Juniata, and Ann
- Deep preserved targets where the mineralized horizon remains at depth, including Brawley Peak, Sawtooth Ridge, and Polaris

These targets represent numerous underexplored vein systems with significant discovery potential based on district-scale structural and geochemical analysis.

"The Polaris Project represents an important opportunity to expand our understanding of the mineral

potential in this region while upholding our commitment to responsible environmental stewardship," Allen added. "We have assembled a highly prospective land package and developed targets that we believe offer excellent potential for high-grade gold and silver discoveries."

Hecla's land position includes substantial private parcels that provide a strong foundation for exploration activities and potential future development. The Company remains committed to operating safely, transparently, and in full compliance with all federal and state regulations.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Decision Notice and supporting environmental documents are available through the U.S. Forest Service website: [Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest | Project Summary \(#65353\) | Forest Service](#)

Cautionary Statement Regarding Forward Looking Statements, Including 2025 Outlook

This news release contains "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, which are intended to be covered by the safe harbor created by such sections and other applicable laws, including Canadian securities laws. Words such as "may", "will", "should", "expects", "intends", "projects", "believes", "estimates", "targets", "anticipates" and similar expressions are used to identify these forward-looking statements. Such forward-looking statements may include, without limitation: (i) planned exploration at Aurora in 2026 and (ii) a 600-ton-per-day mill on site and significant private land holdings reduce permitting requirements for any future discoveries.

The material factors or assumptions used to develop such forward-looking statements or forward-looking information include that the Company's plans for development and production will proceed as expected and will not require revision as a result of risks or uncertainties, whether known, unknown or unanticipated, to which the Company's operations are subject. Estimates or expectations of future events or results are based upon certain assumptions, which may prove to be incorrect, which could cause actual results to differ from forward-looking statements. Such assumptions, include, but are not limited to: (i) there being no significant change to current geotechnical, metallurgical, hydrological and other physical conditions; (ii) permitting, development, operations and expansion of the Company's projects being consistent with current expectations and mine plans; (iii) political/regulatory developments in any jurisdiction in which the Company operates being consistent with its current expectations; (iv) the exchange rate for the USD/CAD being approximately consistent with current levels; (v) certain price assumptions for gold, silver, lead and zinc; (vi) prices for key supplies being approximately consistent with current levels; (vii) the accuracy of our current mineral reserve and mineral resource estimates; (viii) there being no significant changes to the availability of employees, vendors and equipment; (ix) the Company's plans for development and production will proceed as expected and will not require revision as a result of risks or uncertainties, whether known, unknown or unanticipated; (x) counterparties performing their obligations under hedging instruments and put option contracts; (xi) sufficient workforce is available and trained to perform assigned tasks; (xii) weather patterns and rain/snowfall within normal seasonal ranges so as not to impact operations; (xiii) relations with interested parties, including First Nations and Native Americans, remain productive; (xiv) maintaining availability of water rights; (xv) factors do not arise that reduce available cash balances; and (xvi) there being no material increases in our current requirements to post or maintain reclamation and performance bonds or collateral related thereto. In addition, material risks that could cause actual results to differ from forward-looking statements include but are not limited to: (i) gold, silver and other metals price volatility; (ii) operating risks; (iii) currency fluctuations; (iv) increased production costs and variances in ore grade or recovery rates from those assumed in mining plans; (v) community relations; and (vi) litigation, political, regulatory, labor and environmental risks. For a more detailed discussion of such risks and other factors, see the Company's 2024 Form 10-K filed on February 13, 2025, and Form 10-Q filed on May 1, 2025, August 6, 2025 and November 5, 2025, for a more detailed discussion of factors that may impact expected future results. The Company undertakes no obligation and has no intention of updating forward-looking statements other than as may be required by law.

Qualified Person (QP)

Kurt D. Allen, MSc., CPG, VP-Exploration of Hecla Mining Company and Paul W. Jensen, MSc., CPG, Chief Geologist of Hecla Limited, serve as a Qualified Persons under S-K 1300 and NI 43-101 for Hecla's mineral

projects. Mr. Allen supervised the preparation of the scientific and technical information concerning exploration activities for this news release.

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