

# Prospector Assistance and Development at the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources

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While there are no national standards set for prospector assistance by provinces, there are several elements of assistance that are deemed important (Fig. 1). Assigning expertise to help prospectors engage with the provincial government is one element, training is another, seed funding is another important element and promotional assistance is the other. Nova Scotia has kept expertise for assistance in place over the long term. In 2012, the province has instituted a seed funding program and is working toward developing a set of training modules as well.

Unlisted as well as listed companies may apply for assistance. Companies new to Nova Scotia are assisted in order to help them learn the local logistical network and develop mineral exploration plans in the province.

Assistance activities may range from providing information about Nova Scotia's legislative and regulatory framework, to onsite mentoring of new prospectors, and explanation of safe work practices and sound scientific principles. This might include help with geological mapping and data collection.

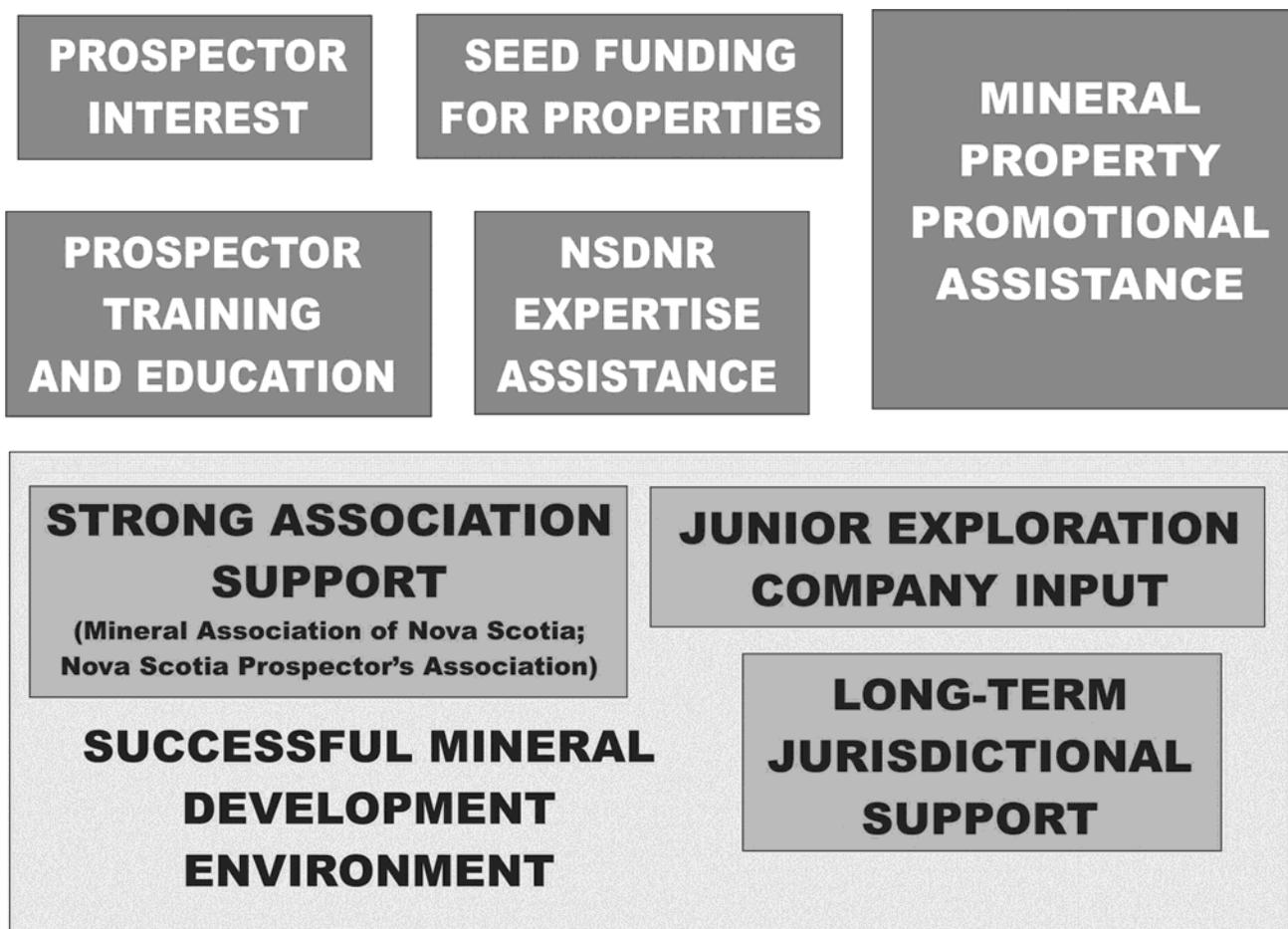


Figure 1. Elements of a successful mineral prospecting environment.

This aids prospectors in obtaining the information they will need to create promotional materials, posters and handouts they can use to market their properties at trade shows during the winter financing season. Such information may be prepared by NSDNR staff, drawn to specifications needed for promotional materials and transferred to posters as part of the assistance package for that particular prospector. Such activities are consistent with the activities offered today by other Canadian provinces and territories.

Trade shows such as the Prospector and Developers Association of Canada (PDAC) annual mineral exploration industry trade show in Toronto and the Vancouver Cordilleran Roundup have been the main venue for prospectors to attract funding to the local industry. Promotional materials for the PDAC and Roundup are prepared as posters and handouts on templates with a distinctly Nova Scotia brand. The department assists prospectors that attend the PDAC with funds for travel, lodging and meals.

The usual support for about a dozen prospectors to attend the show will be expanded to a larger number of individuals in 2012. This commitment to a larger number of prospectors is translated into a greater commitment to the mineral development industry in Nova Scotia.

The recent availability of seed financing of grassroots exploration has seen immediate positive impact. Several exciting new discoveries have been made as a direct result of seed funding this year alone.

Finally, a new program redesigning and retooling prospector education and development as part of a complete prospector development initiative is underway and an online prospector development course will be delivered as a series of modules that are expected to be ready in 2014.