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## **American Critical Minerals Strengthens its Senior Team with the Appointment of, Industry Veteran, Dean Pekeski as CEO, President & Director**

### **Simon Clarke moves to Chairman**

**VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA** April 16, 2026 - **American Critical Minerals Corp.** (“**American Critical Minerals**” or the “**Company**”) (CSE:KCLI | OTCQB:APCOF | Frankfurt:2P3) is pleased to announce the appointment of Dean Pekeski as CEO, President & Director of the Company with immediate effect. Simon Clarke current CEO & President will move to the role of Chairman.

Dean has been involved in senior technical and corporate positions across the mining sector for over 33 years with a particular focus on potash exploration and development for over 17 years of that time. In particular, Dean was Executive Vice President of Western Potash Corp. (WPX- TSX) from 2008 – 2015 and led discovery and development of the Milestone Potash Solution Mining Project in Saskatchewan which is currently 80% complete. From 2016 Dean has been developing Peak Minerals Inc., a private Company developing the construction ready Sevier Playa Potassium Sulphate (SOP) Brine Project in Utah where he served as Project Director and CEO, President & Director since 2016. He will remain as Chief Technical Officer and Director to Peak Minerals.

Dean is intimate with all aspects of potash exploration and development, solution mining, brine evaporation, and processing of potassium, magnesium, sodium chloride, bromine, and lithium, rich brines. During his career at Western Potash and Peak Minerals he has advanced projects through key project milestones including discovery, technical studies (PEA, PFS, FS, FEED), geotechnical and constructability testing, process pilot testing, successful environmental permitting at all government levels, securing key supply and construction contracts and off-take agreements, and financing. Throughout his career Dean has raised more than US\$120M capital at appropriate valuations to enable the companies he has worked for to meet milestones, growth and market share. He has a deep network with a number of equity, debt, and royalty investors; is well connected with peer / industry companies across Utah and beyond; and has good connections into local and federal government funding initiatives and State and Federal regulators. He is also intimate with global potash supply, demand, pricing, and development projects globally.

Dean holds Honors B.Sc. Geology, University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, 1994, is a PDAC Member and has his P.Geo Registration with the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Saskatchewan. He is also a Director of Fidelity Minerals Corp.

### **Management Commentary**

Simon Clarke President & CEO stated, “The appointment of Dean as CEO, President & Director is a major inflection point for the Company. It adds significant strength to our Senior Team and highly relevant and material operational / technical expertise as we finalize steps to launch our inaugural drill program. There are very few sources of domestic potash in the US and the Paradox Basin is believed by many to be a leading deposit. We have the benefit of numerous historic oil and gas wells across, and around, our acreage with logs that highlight excellent

potash grades and thicknesses, and we are proximate to Intrepid Potash's mine which has been successfully producing potash for over 50 years\*\*. We are also surrounded on two sides by Anson Resources Green River and Paradox lithium Projects which are at an advanced stage. However, it is key that we drill our own wells to fully validate the historic data and the potential of the Green River Project.

Although we will be able to test for potash, lithium and bromine in each well we drill, this is deep and technical drilling and it's great that we are now joined by an industry veteran who has been involved in drilling dozens of similar wells. In addition, the technical, government and financial relationships across the industry and the sector that Dean will bring to bear will add major value as we move to unlock the potential of the Green River Project."

Dean Pekeski stated, "I am delighted to join a project with significant potential and strong strategic importance. Exploration at Green River offers a unique opportunity to advance potash, lithium, and bromine development simultaneously at a single project. The US government's recent recognition of all of these minerals as being critical to the US economy further underpins the strength of our story! I look forward to results from our maiden drilling campaign."

### **On behalf of the Board of Directors**

**Simon Clarke, President & CEO**

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### **About American Critical Minerals' Green River Potash and Lithium Project**

The Green River Project is situated within Utah's highly productive Paradox Basin, located 20 miles northwest of Moab, Utah. It has significant logistical advantages including close proximity to major rail hubs, airport, roads, water, towns and labour markets. It also benefits from close proximity to the agricultural and industrial heartland of America and numerous potential end-users for its products.

The history of oil and gas production across the Paradox Basin provides geologic data from historic wells across the Project, and the wider Basin, validating and de-risking the potential for high grade potash and large amounts of contained lithium. Wells in and around the project reported lithium up to 500 ppm, bromine up to 6,100 ppm and boron up to 1,260 ppm (Gilbride & Santos, 2012). This data is reinforced by nearby potash production and the advanced stage of neighbouring lithium projects. The Paradox Basin is believed to contain up to 56 billion tonnes of lithium brines, potentially the largest such resource in US (Source:AnsonFastmarketsPresentation– <https://wcsecure.weblink.com.au/pdf/ASN/02823465.pdf>).

The Company has disclosed targets for further exploration at the Green River Project consisting of 500 million to 950 million tonnes of sylvinitite (the most important source for the production of potash in North America) grading from 12% to 18% potassium oxide based on eLog (eK<sub>2</sub>O=19% to 29% potassium chloride based on eLog (eKCl)). Its target for further exploration for Lithium and Bromine are 0.6-1.7 Mt lithium carbonate equivalent grading from 91-152 ppm; and 3.3-9.1 Mt bromine grading from 2,647-4,412 ppm.\*

The Company holds a 100% interest in eleven State of Utah ("SITLA") mineral and minerals salt leases covering approximately 7,050 acres, 1,094 federal lithium brine claims (BLM Placer Claims) covering 21,150 acres, and 11 federal (BLM) potash prospecting permits covering approximately 25,480 acres. Through these leases, permits and claims the Company has the ability to explore for potash, lithium and potential by-products across the entire Green River Project (approx. 32,530 acres). The Company is authorized to drill a total of 7 drill holes across the Project (pending bonding the recently approved 4 drill holes).

Intrepid Potash, Inc. is America's largest potash company and only U.S. domestic potash producer and currently produces potash from its nearby Moab Solution Mine, which the Company believes provides strong evidence of

stratigraphic continuity within this part of the Paradox Basin ([www.intrepidpotash.com](http://www.intrepidpotash.com)). Anson Resources Ltd. has advanced lithium development projects contiguous to the northern boundary of our Green River Project and neighbouring to the south. Anson has a large initial resource, robust definitive feasibility study and has recently completed successful piloting operations through its partnership with Koch Technology Solutions, as well as an offtake agreement with LG Energy Solution. The Anson exploration targets encompass the combined Mississippian Leadville Formation and the Pennsylvanian Paradox Formation brine-bearing clastic layers, which also underlie American Critical Minerals' entire project area ([www.ansonresources.com](http://www.ansonresources.com)).\*\*

In 2022, the U.S. imported approx. 96.5% of its annual potash requirements with domestic producers receiving a higher sales price due to proximity to market ([intrepidpotash.com](http://intrepidpotash.com)/ August 15, 2024, Investor Presentation). In March 2024, the US Senate introduced a bill to include key fertilizers and potash on the US Department of Interior list of Critical Minerals which already includes lithium, and this process is well advanced with potash being added to the USGS Draft Critical Minerals List. In August 2025. Recent market estimates suggest that the global potash market is over US\$50 billion annually and growing at a compound annual growth rate ("CAGR") of close to 5%. Annual lithium demand is now estimated to be over 1 million tonnes globally and continuing to grow rapidly.\*\*\*

### **Qualified Person**

The scientific and technical content of this news release has been reviewed and approved by Dean Besserer, P.Geo., the Chief Operations Officer of the Company and a qualified person for the purposes of NI 43-101.

*\* The potential quantity and grades are conceptual in nature and there has been insufficient exploration to define a mineral resource, and, while reasonable potential may exist, it is uncertain whether further exploration will result in the determination of a mineral resource under NI 43-101. Targets for further exploration for potash, lithium and bromine at the Green River Potash and Lithium Project are used to provide a conceptual estimate of the potential quantity and grade of a mineral deposit, based on known and additional limited geological evidence. It is an early-stage assessment that will help to guide further exploration, but it is not a mineral resource or mineral reserve and should not be treated as such. The report titled "Amended and Restated NI 43-101 Technical Report, Green River Potash and Lithium Project, Grand County, USA" dated January 27, 2026 and available under the Company's profile at [www.sedarplus.ca](http://www.sedarplus.ca) provides details of the basis on which the targets for further exploration have been determined.*

*\*\* American Critical Minerals' management cautions that results or discoveries on properties in proximity to the American Critical Minerals' properties may not necessarily be indicative of the presence of mineralization on the Company's properties.*

*\*\*\*United States Geological Survey, Mineral Commodity Summaries, January 2024 (<https://pubs.usgs.gov/periodicals/mcs2024/mcs2024-potash.pdf>).*

## **CAUTIONARY STATEMENT REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING INFORMATION**

*This news release contains forward-looking information or forward-looking statements within the meaning of applicable securities legislation. All statements, other than statements of historical fact, are forward-looking statements and are based on expectations, estimates and projections as at the date of this news release. Any statement that involves discussion with respect to predictions, expectations, beliefs, plans, projections, objectives, assumptions, future events or performance (often, but not always using phrases such as "plans", "expects", "is expected", "budget", "scheduled", "estimates", "forecasts", "intends", "anticipates", or "believes" or variations (including negative variations) of such words and phrases, or state that certain actions, events or results "may", "could", "would", "might" or "will" be taken, occur or be achieved) are not statements of historical fact and may be forward-looking statements. In this news release, forward-looking statements relate, among other things, to: statements with respect to the Company's future plans and potential of its mineral properties.*

*Although the Company believes that such statements are reasonable, it can give no assurances that such expectations will prove to be correct. All such forward-looking statements are based on certain assumptions and analyses made by the Company in light of their experience and perception of historical trends, current conditions and expected future developments, as well as other factors management believes are appropriate in the circumstances. Forward-looking statements also involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors which may cause the actual results, performance or achievements of the Company to be materially different from any future results, performance or achievements expressed or implied by the forward-looking statements. Important factors that could cause actual results to differ from this forward-looking information include those described under the heading "Risks and Uncertainties" in the Company's most recently filed MD&A.*

*Forward-looking information contained herein are made as of the date of this news release and the Company does not intend, and expressly disclaims any obligation to, update or revise the forward-looking information contained in this news release, except as required by law. There can be no assurance that forward-looking 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.*

***Neither the Canadian Securities Exchange nor its Market Regulator (as that term is defined in the policies of the Canadian Securities Exchange) accepts responsibility for the adequacy or accuracy of this release.***