PRESS RELEASE
For immediate release

NMG Awards Key Construction Contracts for the Phase-2 Matawinie Mine Ahead of FID

- Civil work to be carried out by Manawan-Fournier, an Atikamekw joint-venture; Metso to supply concentrator equipment; Beauce-Atlas to complete steel structures; and Pomerleau to handle the management of the construction
- Over 50% of CAPEX secured by key contracts, within projections, supporting project debt finance activities
- Procurement activities underpin preparation for FID, derisk project execution and secure contractor pricing to deliver the Matawinie Mine on time and on budget
- Matawinie Mine shovel-ready with close to 80% advancement in detailed engineering, preparatory work completed on site, all key permits secured, and instrumental agreements with First Nation and local community
- NMG's Phase-2 Matawinie Mine earmarked as Major Project of National Interest to bolster economic growth, accelerate the development of an integrated value chain in Canada, and support G7 countries and allies in sourcing critical minerals

MONTRÉAL, CANADA, February 18, 2026 – Nouveau Monde Graphite Inc. ("NMG" or the "Company") (NYSE: NMG, TSX: NOU) is preparing for the construction of its Phase-2 Matawinie Mine – a major project of national interest as identified by the Government of Canada – via the procurement of key construction capacity, services, equipment and materials. Major contracts awarded over the past few months, with provisions for full execution upon the Company having reached a positive final investment decision ("FID"), represent over 50% of the project's CAPEX and are within estimates of NMG's updated feasibility study for the Phase-2 Matawinie Mine in accordance with National Instrument 43-101.

Eric Desaulniers, Founder, President, and CEO of NMG, stated: *"By locking in top-tier partners ahead of FID, we are further de-risking the final financing steps and upcoming project execution. Efforts invested in rigorous construction planning and early contractor involvement is yielding tangible benefits—securing the capacity to mobilize immediately upon a positive FID and to deliver within the pricing envelope set by our latest technical report. We are proud to deepen our relationship with the Atikamekw First Nation of Manawan through the civil works contract awarded to Manawan-Fournier and to extend our collaboration with Pomerleau, whose work to date has sharpened our execution strategy. We are planning on expanding this group of like-minded partners who share our values of safety, quality, and sustainability, via contracts in concrete, structures, systems, and specialized services, always striving to create direct and indirect opportunities for Indigenous and local businesses and workers."*

In continuity with the pre-construction mandate, NMG has appointed Pomerleau as Construction

Manager for the construction and commissioning stages of the Matawinie Mine, namely the industrial platform, concentrator, environmental infrastructure, water treatment plant, and associated facilities. Through its direct involvement in planning and optimizing the Matawinie Mine construction over the past two years, Pomerleau has acquired a deep understanding of the project and contributed to mapping the execution strategy. As part of NMG's integrated project team, Pomerleau will oversee the detailed construction sequence and schedule, contractors' supervision, worksite logistics, implementation of the health and safety, environment, and quality programs, as well as cost control.

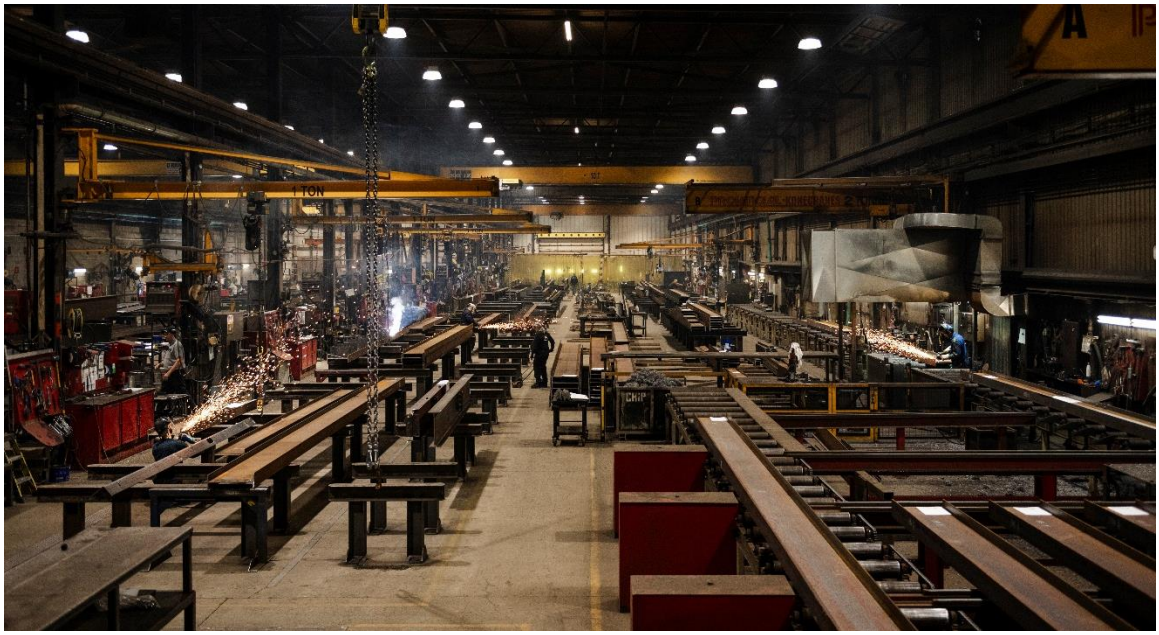
Martin Jacques, COO at Pomerleau, and Eric Desaulniers, President & CEO of NMG, officialize a new collaboration chapter in presence of key team members.

The first and largest construction package that will kick-start construction activities upon reaching a positive FID was awarded to Manawan-Fournier, an Atikamekw joint-venture between the Manawan Atikamekw Band Council and L. Fournier & Fils, an established East Canadian mining and civil contractor who had carried out the construction of the access road and preparatory work for the industrial platform in 2021-2022. Civil work includes the construction and development of various networks (stormwater, sanitary, firefighting, water, etc.), industrial structures (basins, platforms, buildings, domes, roads), as well as concrete work, temporary structures, and maintenance work necessary for the complete realization of the project.

Representatives from NMG and Manawan-Fournier mark this new collaboration.

The collaboration with Manawan-Fournier further advances NMG's commitment to stimulate business opportunities, training and employment for the Atikamekw First Nation of Manawan, as reflected in the Company's long-term engagement in the community and formalized in the Impact and Benefit Agreement. In collaboration with the Commission de la construction du Québec, NMG and the Atikamekw First Nation of Manawan co-hosted special information activities for the community February 10 and 11, 2026, to facilitate the participation of workers and contractors in the construction. Training sessions for the ASP Construction card are also being offered in the community.

The steel structures package has been awarded to Beauce Atlas, a Québec-based company specializing in the engineering, detailing, fabrication, and installation of complex structural steel for buildings and heavy industrial facilities. Through an early contractor involvement approach, Beauce Atlas will actively participate in the final engineering and constructability optimization of the industrial facilities. Beauce Atlas' scope of work will include the strategic sourcing of steel, fabrication of structural components, and full on-site installation, encompassing buildings, crane rails, as well as all associated works and logistics.

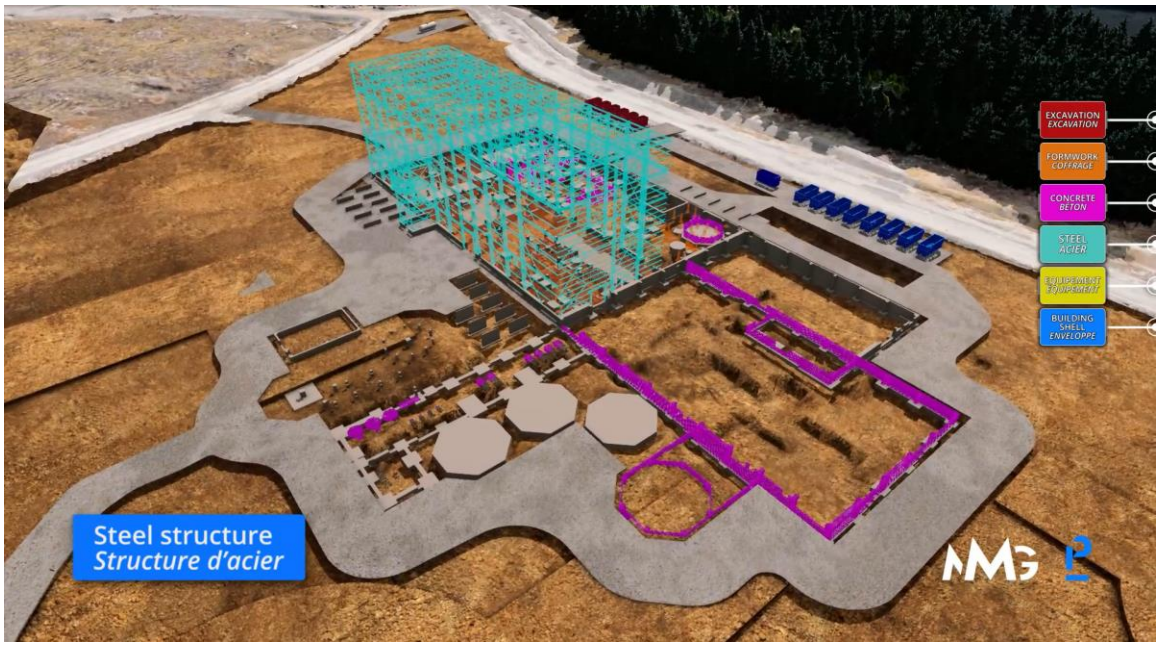


Overview of Beauce Atlas' plant.

NMG is finalizing an agreement with Metso, an international market leader in sustainable technologies, end-to-end solutions and services in mineral processing, to supply key processing equipment, including the crushing station, apron feeders, mills, flotation cells and filter presses. Engineering for the equipment is 90% complete. This agreement is set to further strengthen NMG and Metso's partnership, supporting coordinated planning for long-lead items and alignment with the construction schedule.

Metso grinding mill, as ordered for the future Matawinie Mine concentrator.

Additional contracts secured include mechanical equipment, turnkey solutions for facilities, electrical substation and powerline, and specialized consultants. These contracts, combined with close to 80% advancement level on detailed engineering, solidify the Company's execution plan to bring the Matawinie Mine from shovel-ready to commissioning.



4D model of the Matawinie Mine construction timeline available for viewing at https://youtu.be/rNvqCVHRzEw.

About Nouveau Monde Graphite

Nouveau Monde Graphite is an integrated company developing responsible mining and advanced processing operations to supply the global economy with carbon-neutral advanced graphite materials. The Company is developing in Québec, Canada, a fully integrated ore-to-processed-graphite value chain to serve tomorrow's industries in energy, advanced technology, and manufacturing. With recognized ESG standards and structuring partnerships with major customers, NMG is set to become a strategic supplier of advanced materials to leading specialized manufacturers while promoting sustainability, innovation, and supply chain traceability. www.NMG.com

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Cautionary Note Regarding Forward-Looking Information

This press release contains "forward-looking information" and "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of applicable securities legislation (collectively, "forward-looking statements"), including, but not

limited to, statements relating to future events or future financial or operating performance of the Company and reflect management's expectations and assumptions regarding the Company's growth, results, performance and business prospects and opportunities. Such forward-looking statements reflect management's current beliefs and are based on information currently available to it. These forward-looking statements include, but are not limited to, the Company's ability to to secure its project financing and to secure a positive FID for the Phase-2 Matawinie, the completion of the Phase-2 Matawinie Mine, the ability to execute the construction and the commissioning as planned and in accordance with the execution plan and stratgegy, the ability of Manawan-Fournier, Metso, Beauce Atlas, Pomerleau and all other contractors and suppliers to deliver in accordance with their commitment, the expected results and anticipated benefits for the communities involved, including the Atikamekw First Nation of Manawan and the local community of Saint-Michel-des-Saints, , and the expected results of the initiatives described in this press release, and those statements which are discussed under the "About Nouveau Monde" paragraph and elsewhere in the press release which essentially describe the Company's outlook and objectives.

Forward-looking statements are based upon a number of estimates and assumptions that, while considered reasonable by the Company as of the time of such statements, are inherently subject to significant business, economic and competitive uncertainties and contingencies. These estimates and assumptions are not guarantees of future performance and may prove to be incorrect. Moreover, these forward-looking statements are based upon various underlying factors and assumptions, including the business relationship between the Company and its stakeholders, the ability to obtain sufficient financing for the development of the Matawinie Mine and the Bécancour Battery Material Plant, the Company's ability to satisfy the due diligence processes of the stakeholders, and are not guarantees of future performance.

Forward-looking statements are subject to known or unknown risks and uncertainties that may cause actual results to differ materially from those anticipated or implied in the forward-looking statements. Risk factors that could cause actual results or events to differ materially from current expectations include, among others, availability financing or financing on favorable terms for the Company, delays in finalizing the definitive agreements, delays in reaching FID, and general economic conditions, as well as earnings, capital expenditure, cash flow and capital structure risks and general business risks. A further description of risks and uncertainties can be found in NMG's Annual Information Form dated March 31, 2025, including in the section thereof captioned "Risk Factors", which is available on SEDAR+ at www.sedarplus.ca and on EDGAR at www.sec.gov. Unpredictable or unknown factors not discussed in this Cautionary Note could also have material adverse effects on forward-looking statements.

Many of these uncertainties and contingencies can directly or indirectly affect, and could cause, actual results to differ materially from those expressed or implied in any forward-looking statements. 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. Forward-looking statements are provided for the purpose of providing information about management's expectations and plans relating to the future. The Company disclaims any intention or obligation to update or revise any forward-looking statements or to explain any material difference between subsequent actual events and such forward-looking statements, except to the extent required by applicable law.

Further information regarding the Company is available in the SEDAR+ database (www.sedarplus.ca), and for United States readers on EDGAR (www.sec.gov), and on the Company's website at: www.NMG.com.