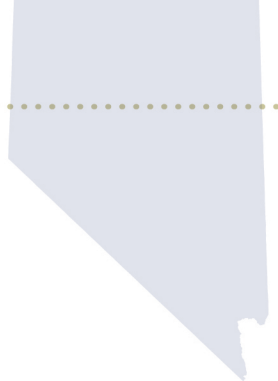


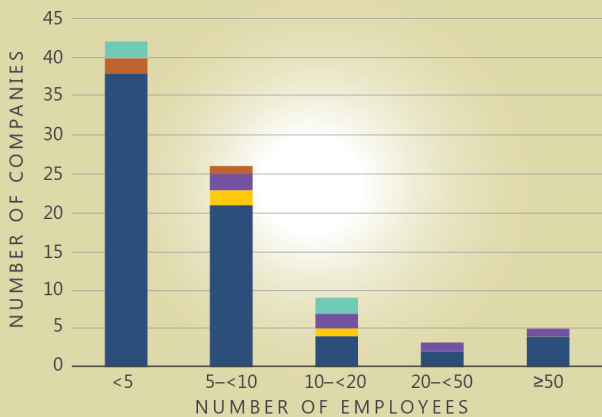
# SURVEY OF NEVADA'S MINERAL AND ENERGY EXPLORATION INDUSTRY



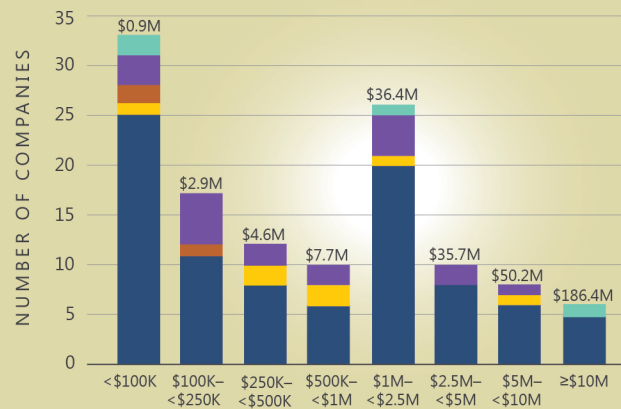
- ▶ A minimum of \$325 million was spent on exploration in Nevada in 2016, down 6% from 2015's \$348 million and down more than half from 2011's record \$675 million, which was the peak of the commodities boom.
- ▶ Exploration spending in Nevada since 2012 mimics global trends and is directly linked to lower commodity prices in the current downcycle.
- ▶ 86% of Nevada exploration expenditures in 2016 went toward precious metals, the remaining was spent on lithium (6%), geothermal (5%), and copper and zinc (3%).
- ▶ 51% of companies indicated they plan to spend more on exploration in Nevada in 2017 than they did in 2016. Another 37% of companies indicated they will spend about the same in 2017 as 2016.
- ▶ Direct exploration employment rose 8% in 2016 to 808 from 2015's 746.
- ▶ In 2016, 63% of exploration expenditures went toward actual exploration (mainly drilling), 11% was spent on land holding costs, 8% on permitting, and 12% was directed to corporate expenses.
- ▶ About 61% of expenditures in 2016 went toward resource expansions at existing sites, whereas 39% was spent on locating new resources (grassroots exploration) through discovery.
- ▶ Nevada's prospective geology, its potential for new discovery, and its access to public lands are the most important factors that attract companies to explore in Nevada.
- ▶ Negative factors include the time and cost for permitting, threats to withdraw or limit access to public lands—including the proposed sage grouse and military withdrawals—and the high cost of mining claims.

The Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology conducted a survey of 242 companies thought to be actively exploring for minerals and energy resources in Nevada in 2015 and 2016. The survey's purpose was to gauge exploration activities and assess the economic impacts of exploration, including expenditures and employment. Survey responses were received from 86 companies and expenditures for another 54 companies were obtained from corporate financial filings, for a total of 140 companies. Expenditures and employment reported here are minimum estimates. Survey results are published in *Nevada Mineral and Energy Resource Exploration Survey 2015/2016*, available from the Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology at [www.nbmng.unr.edu](http://www.nbmng.unr.edu).

2016 EXPLORATION EMPLOYMENT



2016 EXPLORATION EXPENDITURES



PRECIOUS METALS    BASE METALS    LITHIUM    INDUSTRIAL MINERALS    GEOTHERMAL



University of Nevada, Reno

