



June 19, 2008

Launch of the QUEST West Mountain Pine Beetle Geoscience Project

Geoscience BC is pleased to announce the launch of the QUEST West Mountain Pine Beetle Geoscience Project, in partnership with the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako, the Northern Development Initiative Trust (Northern Trust) and the BC Geological Survey of the Ministry of Energy Mines and Petroleum Resources.

Geoscience BC's Board has approved \$4.5 Million worth of new airborne geophysical surveys, ground geochemical surveys and geoscience data compilation, analysis and distribution for the QUEST West Project. This will be partnered with an additional \$0.75 Million in funding from the Northern Trust Pine Beetle Recovery Fund as proposed by the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako, to expand project work in the Bulkley-Nechako Region. Geoscience BC is also partnering with the BC Geological Survey on detailed surficial geoscience studies in the Babine Lake area.

"The QUEST West area is considered to have good potential for molybdenum, copper, gold and silver mineralization," said Dr. Lyn Anglin, President and CEO of Geoscience BC. "These surveys are designed to stimulate more exploration industry interest in the area, and publication of the survey results will help attract and guide more exploration activities and investments."

"These new QUEST West projects will build on the success of the original QUEST program by helping to reveal the untapped mineral potential of approximately 40,000 additional square kilometres extending from Vanderhoof-Fort St James to Terrace," said Minister of State for Mining, Kevin Krueger. "These new projects will continue to attract new investment and support the economic diversification of pine beetle affected communities in B.C."

The main QUEST West Project Area extends from Vanderhoof-Fort St James, west and north over Fraser Lake, Endako, Burns Lake, Houston, Telkwa, Smithers and Terrace.

"The incredible increase of almost a million hectares of staking and exploration that occurred as a result of the initial QUEST Geoscience project has made our board eager to partner with Geoscience BC and the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako, through contributing \$750,000 to the QUEST West project" stated Bruce Sutherland, Chair of the Northern Development Initiative Trust. "We have every confidence that this initiative will focus investor interest and create exploration jobs in the communities in central BC that have been deeply affected economically by the pine beetle epidemic and the forest industry downturn."

The funding secured by the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako from the Northern Trust will be used by Geoscience BC to extend the airborne geophysical surveys over more of the RDBN, particularly over the area north of Granisle over the Babine Lake and Takla Lake areas.

"With the cooperation of all the partners involved, this project means the door can open economic possibilities for the Region," said Eileen Benedict, Chair of the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako. "The Regional District Board has been looking at every opportunity to help diversify our economy in the Region in the wake of the pine beetle epidemic. Because of the impact, this is a perfect opportunity to explore the new possibilities mineral exploration may provide."

Geoscience BC has initiated a contract with Sander Geophysics Limited of Ottawa, Ontario to undertake over 23,000 line-kilometres of airborne gravity surveying at 2 km line spacing over the main QUEST West area plus the Babine-Takla lakes area extension. The gravity surveys help to identify different rock types and structures in the region that will aid the exploration industry in identifying promising areas for more intensive exploration.

"Sander Geophysics (www.sgl.com) is very happy to be working with Geoscience BC and their partners on the QUEST West Project" stated Stephan Sander, Co-President Sander Geophysics. "Having been involved in the previous QUEST Project, we are excited about the interest generated by this targeted approach to mineral exploration, and are confident that our unique AIRGrav airborne gravity technology will assist Geoscience BC in making QUEST West a success."

In addition to the geophysical and geochemical surveys, the BC Geological Survey is planning to undertake detailed studies of glacial materials in the Babine Lake area in partnership with Geoscience BC. These studies will help exploration geologists and prospectors to identify target locations for more detailed prospecting and tools for effective exploration in areas of glacial cover.

Geoscience BC's QUEST West Project activities have been funded by a generous \$6 Million grant from the Province of BC for geoscience in the Mountain Pine Beetle area announced by Premier Gordon Campbell at the Mineral Exploration Roundup meeting in Vancouver in January 2008.

"This project will further open up the great economic potential of the North," said John Rustad, MLA for Prince George-Omineca. "I'm excited for the mining prospects this work will highlight through the vital partnership between our communities, the Northern Trust and the Provincial government. Northern B.C. has already benefited from the work of Geoscience BC and the QUEST project and this investment only means more opportunity for our residents."

Geoscience BC is an industry-led, industry-focused, non-profit organization. Its mandate includes the collection, interpretation and marketing of geoscience data and expertise to promote investment in resource exploration and development in British Columbia. Geoscience BC works in partnership with industry, academia, government, First Nations and communities to attract mineral and oil & gas investment to BC.

For more information please see Geoscience BC's website at www.geosciencebc.com.