

Discussions continue with potential off-take customers for Company's planned battery-grade cobalt sulphate production and NICO project financing

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LONDON, ON, March 9, 2016 /CNW/ - [Fortune Minerals Ltd.](http://www.fortuneminerals.com) (TSX: FT) (OTCQX: FTMDF) ("Fortune" or the "Company") (www.fortuneminerals.com) is pleased to announce that it has completed the first \$500,000 tranche of an anticipated \$1 million non-brokered private placement of the Company's capital stock. A total of 14,285,714 newly issued common shares were placed with an arm's length private investor at a price of \$0.035 per share. Proceeds of this financing will be used for general working capital purposes.

Fortune owns the proposed vertically integrated NICO Gold-Cobalt-Bismuth-Copper development, that comprises a planned mine and concentrator in the Northwest Territories and refinery near Saskatoon where concentrates from the mine will be processed to higher value products. The NICO project has already been assessed in a positive feasibility study and has received its environmental assessment approvals in the Northwest Territories and Saskatchewan. The NICO Mineral Reserves will support a 21-year mine life at a mill rate of 4,650 tonnes of ore per day to produce 180 wet tonnes of concentrate per day for shipment to the refinery in Saskatchewan. Life of mine average annual production is forecast at 41,300 ounces of gold, 1,615 tonnes of cobalt contained in a battery grade cobalt sulphate heptahydrate, 1,750 tonnes of bismuth in ingots, needles and oxide, and 265 tonnes of copper.

The cobalt market has been growing at a compound annual growth rate of approximately 6% over the past two decades and the market is now greater than 100,000 tonnes. Most of this increase in consumption is attributed to the use of cobalt in high performance lithium ion and nickel metal hydride rechargeable batteries used in portable electronic devices, electric vehicles and stationary storage cells. Batteries now account for 46% of cobalt demand; having increased from only 1% of the cobalt market in the mid 1990's. The battery market continues to expand with wider usage of portable electronic devices and greater adoption of electric vehicles - globally. Significant growth in the market is also expected from stationary storage cells connected to intermittent energy sources such as wind and solar generators, and off-peak charging from the electrical grid.

The NICO deposit also contains a significant gold co-product and 12% of global bismuth reserves. Bismuth is a metal used in a broad range of industrial applications, particularly in the automotive and pharmaceutical sectors. It is also an environmentally safe replacement for lead which is subject to lead-toxicity concerns and legislation banning its use in potable drinking water sources and consumer products such as in solders, brasses, steel, aluminum and zinc galvanizing alloys, paint pigments and ceramic glazes.

Fortune has completed confidentiality agreements with a number of globally recognized corporations interested in off-take of the Company's cobalt sulphate production. Discussions are also advancing on project financing for the NICO development. The Government of the Northwest Territories is also proposing to make strategic investments in transportation infrastructure and workforce development as a top priority in the Mandate of the Government, which includes construction of the Tlicho All-Season Road to connect the community of Whati with the highway to Yellowknife. Fortune has environmental assessment approval to build a road from Whati to the mine as part of its proposed development.

This press release does not constitute an offer to sell or a solicitation of an offer to buy nor shall there be any sale of any of the securities in any jurisdiction in which such offer, solicitation or sale would be unlawful. The securities have not been and will not be registered under the United States Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the "U.S. Securities Act"), or the securities laws of any state of the United States and may not be offered or sold within the United States unless registered under the U.S. Securities Act and applicable state securities laws or pursuant to an exemption from such registration requirements.

About Fortune Minerals

Fortune is a Canadian development stage mining company focused on advancing the vertically integrated NICO gold-cobalt-bismuth-copper project in the Northwest Territories and a related refinery the Company plans to construct in Saskatchewan. Fortune also owns the Sue-Dianne copper-silver-gold deposit located 25 km north of NICO and is a potential future source of incremental mill feed. Additionally, the Company maintains the right to repurchase the Arctos anthracite coal deposits in northwest British Columbia that were recently purchased by a provincial Crown corporation.

The disclosure of scientific and technical information contained in this press release has been approved by Robin Goad, M.Sc., P.Geo., President and CEO of Fortune, who is a "Qualified Person" under National Instrument 43-101. The technical report on the feasibility study referred to above, entitled "Technical Report on the Feasibility Study for the NICO-Gold-Cobalt-Bismuth-Copper Project, Northwest Territories, Canada", dated April 2, 2014 and prepared by Micon International Limited, has been filed on SEDAR and is available under the Company's profile at www.sedar.com.

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This press release contains forward-looking information and forward-looking statements within the meaning of applicable securities legislation. This forward-looking information includes statements with respect to, among other things, the Company's plans to develop NICO, anticipated growth in the market for rechargeable batteries and the use of stationary storage cells, the anticipated completion of the second tranche of the private placement referred to herein and the plans of the Government of the Northwest Territories is to make strategic investments in transportation infrastructure and workforce development. Forward-looking information is based on the opinions and estimates of management as well as certain assumptions at the date the information is given (including, in respect of the forward-looking information contained in this press release, assumptions regarding the Company's ability to arrange the necessary financing to continue operations and develop the NICO project, growth in the in the market for rechargeable batteries and the use of stationary storage cells and proposed investment by the Government of the Northwest Territories in transportation infrastructure and workforce development). However, such forward-looking information is subject to a variety of risks and uncertainties and other factors that could cause actual events or results to differ materially from those projected in the forward-looking information. These factors include the risks that the Company may not be able to complete the second tranche of its private placement or arrange other necessary financing to continue operations, the Company may not be able to finance and develop NICO on favourable terms or at all, the market for rechargeable batteries and the use of stationary storage cells may not grow to the extent anticipated and the Government of the Northwest Territories may not complete its anticipated investments in transportation infrastructure and workforce development. Readers are cautioned to not place undue reliance on forward-looking information because it is possible that predictions, forecasts, projections and other forms of forward-looking information will not be achieved by the Company. The forward-looking information contained herein is made as of the date hereof and the Company assumes no responsibility to update or revise it to reflect new events or circumstances, except as required by law.

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