

RNC Minerals Sharpens Focus on Advancing Dumont Nickel-Cobalt Project; Launches Strategic Alternatives Process for the Beta Hunt Mine

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TORONTO, March 22, 2018 /CNW/ - RNC Minerals ("RNC") (TSX: RNX) is sharpening its focus to advance the Dumont Nickel-Cobalt development project, the largest undeveloped nickel and cobalt reserve in the world, by initiating a strategic alternatives process for its 100%-owned Beta Hunt gold and nickel mine located in Western Australia. PCF Capital Group, based in Perth, Western Australia, and Haywood Securities Inc. have been retained as financial advisors for the Beta Hunt process.

"RNC has made the decision that its central strategic focus going forward will be the advancement of the Dumont Nickel-Cobalt Project; one of the few large-scale, shovel-ready projects positioned to deliver large quantities of nickel and cobalt to market in the next few years. With the positive outlook for nickel and cobalt underpinned by growing demand from electric vehicles, the potential for the Dumont Project to be a large multiple of the value of Beta Hunt, and with one of the industry-leading nickel-cobalt management teams, now is the time to aggressively advance Dumont towards making a decision to begin construction in 2019. With this shift in our focus, Beta Hunt is considered to be non-core to RNC," said Mark Selby, President and CEO of RNC Minerals.

Selby continued, "RNC has engaged PCF Capital and Haywood to run this strategic process. Based on inbound interest we've received and the recent increase in M&A activity in the gold sector, our view is that Beta Hunt may be attractive to numerous companies, including the following two groups: a gold-focused company which can provide the capital and local management expertise to unlock the massive gold exploration and production potential of this asset in a region where we believe there is significant synergy with a number of Western Australian gold assets; or a nickel-focused company looking to take advantage of Beta Hunt's combined nickel-gold scale and strategic position to launch a consolidation of Kambalda's nickel assets at a time when the type of high-grade nickel sulphides produced in the Kambalda district is in high global demand by battery makers."

Beta Hunt Mine

Since the acquisition of Beta Hunt in Q2 2016, RNC has significantly increased the scale of the operation. The Company's exploration activities discovered a third gold-bearing structure - the Fletcher Trend, increased the known extent of the existing A Zone structure by 500 metres along strike to 1.7 km, and highlighted the potential of the existing structures to continue at depth with drill results such as hole WF18-036 6.3 g/t Au over 33.0 m, WF18-035 4.1 g/t Au over 21.5 m, WF18-064 3.7 g/t Au over 30.2 m, WF18-055 7.78 g/t Au over 7.78m and WF18-061 9.00 g/t Au over 6.25m (see RNC news release dated October 19, 2017).

Production at Beta Hunt continues to improve and we expect to see the fifth straight quarter of increases in gold ounces, tonnes mined, and grade in Q1 2018. Further growth is also expected in the second quarter of 2018.

Beta Hunt's measured and indicated mineral resource, as at February 1, 2016, was 379,000 tonnes at 4.2% Ni for 15,840 tonnes of contained metal and 815,000 tonnes at 3.5 g/t Au for 92,000 ounces. Inferred Resources total 216,000 tonnes at 3.4% for 7,400 tonnes of contained metal and 2,910,000 tonnes at 3.4 g/t Au for 321,000 ounces¹.

1. Reference is made to tables 1.1 and 1.2 in section 1 of the NI 43-101 Technical Report on the on the Beta Hunt Mine, dated March 4, 2016, available at www.rncminerals.com and under Royal Nickel Corporation's profile on www.sedar.com. Note: the mineral resources are as of February 1, 2016 and do not reflect depletions or additions since that date.

Strategic alternatives may include, but are not limited to, the sale of all or a portion of RNC's interest in Beta Hunt. There are no assurances that the process will result in a transaction or, if a transaction is undertaken, as to the commercial terms or timing of such a transaction.

The disclosure of scientific and technical information contained in this news release has been approved by Kevin Small, Director, Mining Operations of RNC, a Qualified Person under NI 43-101.

About RNC Minerals

RNC is a multi-asset mineral resource company with a portfolio of nickel, cobalt, and gold production and exploration properties. RNC has a 50% interest in a nickel joint venture with Waterton that owns the Dumont Nickel-Cobalt Project located in the Abitibi region of Quebec which contains the second largest nickel reserve and eighth largest cobalt reserve (the largest undeveloped nickel and cobalt reserves in the world). RNC has a 100% interest in the producing Beta Hunt gold and nickel mine located in Western Australia. RNC has a strong management team and Board with over 100 years of mining experience at Inco and Falconbridge. RNC's common shares trade on the TSX under the symbol RNX. RNC shares also trade on the OTCQX market under the symbol RNLKF.

Cautionary Statement Concerning Forward-Looking Statements

This news release contains "forward-looking information" including without limitation statements relating to the liquidity and capital resources of RNC, production guidance and the potential of the Beta Hunt and Reed mines as well as the and the potential of the Dumont nickel-cobalt development project and Qiqavik, West Raglan, Jones-Keystone Loflin and Landrum-Faulkner exploration properties.

Forward-looking statements involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors which may cause the actual results, performance or achievements of RNC to be materially different from any future results, performance or achievements expressed or implied by the forward-looking statements. Factors that could affect the outcome include, among others: future prices and the supply of metals; the results of drilling; inability to raise the money necessary to incur the expenditures required to retain and advance the properties; environmental liabilities (known and unknown); general business, economic, competitive, political and social uncertainties; accidents, labour disputes and other risks of the mining industry; political instability, terrorism, insurrection or war; or delays in obtaining governmental approvals, projected cash costs, failure to obtain regulatory or shareholder approvals. For a more detailed discussion of such risks and other factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from those expressed or implied by such forward-looking statements, refer to RNC's filings with Canadian securities regulators, including the most recent Annual Information Form, available on SEDAR at www.sedar.com.

Although RNC has attempted to identify important factors that could cause actual actions, events or results to differ materially from those described in forward-looking statements, there may be other factors that cause actions, events or results to differ from those anticipated, estimated or intended. Forward-looking statements contained herein are made as of the date of this news release and RNC disclaims any obligation to update any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or results or otherwise, except as required by applicable securities laws.

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