

Benchmark Metals Inc. Reports Maiden NI 43-101 Mineral Resource Estimate For the Lawyers Gold-Silver Project in British Columbia

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EDMONTON, Alberta, June 14, 2018 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- [Benchmark Metals Inc.](#) (formerly, Crystal Exploration Inc., the "Company" or "Benchmark") (TSX-V:BNCH) (OTCQB:CYRTD) (WKN:A2JM2X) is pleased to announce the release of a maiden inferred mineral resource estimate for two spatially associated zones of epithermal gold-silver (Au-Ag) mineralization at the Lawyers Project in the Toodoggone region of northern British Columbia, Canada.

Giroux Consultants Ltd. ("Giroux") of North Vancouver, B.C., has estimated an inferred mineral resource of 550,000 tonnes grading 4.51 g/t Au and 209.15 g/t Ag at a 4.0 g/t gold equivalent ("AuEQ") lower cut-off at the Cliff Creek North zone, which equates to a contained metal resource of 80,000 troy oz. Au and 3,700,000 oz. of Ag, along with an inferred mineral resource of 58,000 tonnes grading 4.30 g/t Au and 139.13 g/t Ag (at a 4.0 g/t AuEQ lower cut-off) at the Duke's Ridge zone, which equates to a contained metal resource of 8,000 oz. of Au and 260,000 oz. of Ag (see Tables 1 and 2 below). Benchmark will file a technical report on Sedar supporting the mineral resource estimate within 45 days of this news release.

CEO John Williamson commented on the maiden resource, "The results of the independent inferred mineral resource estimate provide an initial platform on which we intend to grow the resource base with further work including drilling to infill and extend the known mineralized zones along strike and at depth. Existing historic drill results along strike and at depth indicate the expansion potential to be excellent."

Mr. Williamson further commented on the potential of the Lawyers Project, "The Golden Triangle region of northwestern British Columbia has been the focus of aggressive exploration in recent years with new mines being put into production, development projects and high-grade results from multiple companies. The Lawyers Project brings together the past-producing Lawyers gold-silver mine area and the extensive Silver Pond trend of precious metals occurrences within the northeast part of the Golden Triangle. This large prospective land holding presents a unique opportunity for Benchmark to carry out further exploration on a 'camp' scale. There remains excellent potential for the discovery of additional low and high-sulphidation epithermal precious metal deposits like those that have been discovered and explored to date. In addition, there exists the possibility for the discovery of near-surface or buried 'bulk tonnage' deposits which may offer the advantage of economies of scale should future mine development occur."

Table 1. Cliff Creek North Inferred Mineral Resource at a variety of lower cut-offs*

AuEQ** (g/t)	Cut-off Tonnes (tonnes)	Cut-off Grade			Cut-off Contained Metal***	
		Au (g/t)	Ag (g/t)	AuEQ (g/t)	Au (ozs)	Ag (ozs)
1.00	1,460,000	2.89	121.70	4.16	136,000	5,710,000
2.00	1,260,000	3.16	134.94	4.57	128,000	5,470,000
3.00	840,000	3.79	171.54	5.58	102,000	4,630,000
3.50	690,000	4.12	190.08	6.10	91,000	4,220,000
4.00	550,000	4.51	209.15	6.69	80,000	3,700,000
4.50	440,000	4.90	230.48	7.30	69,000	3,260,000
5.00	350,000	5.30	253.88	7.94	60,000	2,860,000
6.00	260,000	5.88	290.09	8.91	49,000	2,420,000

Table 2. Dukes Ridge Inferred Mineral Resource at a variety of lower cut-offs*

AuEQ**	Cut-off Tonnes	> Cut-off Grade	>Cut-off	Contained Metal***		
(g/t)	(tonnes)	Au (g/t)	Ag (g/t)	AuEQ (g/t)	Au (ozs)	Ag (ozs)
1.00	403,000	2.07	76.88	2.87	27,000	1,000,000
2.00	282,000	2.45	89.00	3.38	22,000	810,000
3.00	133,000	3.25	113.38	4.43	14,000	480,000
3.50	85,000	3.78	125.53	5.08	10,000	340,000
4.00	58,000	4.30	139.13	5.75	8,000	260,000
4.50	43,000	4.65	155.00	6.26	6,000	210,000
5.00	33,000	4.96	171.20	6.74	5,000	180,000
6.00	18,000	5.59	208.99	7.77	3,200	121,000

* Inferred mineral resources are not mineral reserves. Mineral resources, which are not mineral reserves, do not have demonstrated economic viability. There has been insufficient exploration to allow for the classification of the inferred resources tabulated above as an indicated or measured mineral resource, however, it is reasonably expected that the majority of the inferred mineral resources could be upgraded to indicated mineral resources with continued exploration. There is no guarantee that any part of the mineral resources discussed herein will be converted into a mineral reserve in the future.

**The following prices of metals and conversions are used to calculate AuEq; \$US1,200/oz for Au and \$US14.50/oz for Ag; AuEq = [(Au g/t * 1200 * 0.95 / 31.1035 g/oz) + (Ag g/t * 14.50 * 0.82 /31.1035 g/oz)]/ (1200 * 0.95 / 31.1035).

***Contained ounces may not add due to rounding.

LAWYERS PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

At Lawyers, low sulphide epithermal alteration and mineralized zones are controlled mainly by northwest-trending, steeply west-southwest dipping fault and fracture systems. Chalcedonic quartz veins, stockworks and multi-stage breccias host precious metal mineralization; adularia occurs adjacent to metal bearing veins and is flanked by kaolinite-illite. Zones of pervasive argillic alteration, with characteristic pyrite and chlorite, form envelopes to the mineralized fault and fracture systems and give way to peripheral and widespread propylitic alteration. Principal ore minerals include: acanthite, native gold, electrum and native silver with sphalerite, galena, chalcopyrite, bornite and covellite.

The Cliff Creek Zone, a north-northwest trending epithermal zone, has a strike length of at least 1,600 m and has been explored to a depth of greater than 300 m. It consists of the Cliff Creek South, Cliff Creek Central and Cliff Creek North sub-zones that form a continuous band of alteration and mineralization primarily contained in dilational structures along the West fault, located between the northwest-trending Cliff Creek fault and the Ptarmigan fault. Mineralization at Cliff Creek North ranges from narrow, massive sulphide veins, such as the P2 vein, located in the hangingwall of the main Cliff Creek North zone, which graded 293.40 g/t Au and 7,622 g/t Ag over 0.70m core length in hole CC15-12, to broad low-grade intervals such as a 51.99 m core length intersection in hole CC15-13 that averaged 1.71 g/t Au and 41.5 g/t Ag. The Duke's Ridge zone, located just southeast of the Cliff Creek North zone on the east side of the Cliff Creek fault, is a 1,200 m long zone that is typically 2-4 m wide, and is sub-vertical to steeply west-dipping.

LAWYERS MAIDEN INFERRED* MINERAL RESOURCE ESTIMATE

Giroux has estimated a maiden inferred mineral resource for the Cliff Creek North zone utilizing a total of 597 samples from 48 surface drill holes (including 15 holes drilled in 2015) and 4 trenches that have intersected mineralization. No underground data was used in the estimate because location and assay data for the historic underground is incomplete. Giroux estimated a maiden inferred mineral resource for the Duke's Ridge zone utilizing a total of 321 samples from 37 surface drill holes (including 7 holes drilled in 2015) and 22 surface trenches that intersect precious metal mineralization.

Modeled 3D geologic 'solids' were used to constrain mineralization in the block model and grades for gold and silver were interpolated into blocks by Ordinary Kriging (OK). Geologic 3D solids were developed using cross-sections and level plans to constrain the mineralization at the Cliff Creek North Zone and at the Dukes Ridge Zone. In both cases a rough AuEq value of ≥ 1.0 g/t was used to define and wireframe the 3D solids.

Based upon statistical treatment of gold and silver data for each of the four established mineralized domains capping was employed but had little effect on the overall estimate. A 2.0 m composite length was selected to approximate a potential underground mining height for both the Cliff Creek North and Duke's Ridge zones. In both zones, uniform down-hole composites were formed honouring the domain boundaries.

Variography on the composite data was used to model prominent search directions for gold and silver in all domains. Within the Cliff Creek North mineralized domain both gold and silver were modeled along strike (Azimuth 347° Dip 0°), down dip (Azimuth 257° Dip -65°) and across dip (Azimuth 77° Dip -25°). The longest continuity for both Au and Ag was found along Azimuth 347° and Dip -60°. A similar exercise was completed for Au and Ag at Dukes Ridge. Gold and silver were modelled along strike (Azimuth 308° Dip 0°), perpendicular to strike (Azimuth 218° Dip 0°) and in the vertical direction (Azimuth 0° Dip -90°).

Separate block models with blocks dimensioned at 5 x 5 x 5 m were created and fit to the mineralization solids for the Cliff Creek North and Duke's Ridge zones. For each block model the percentage below surface topography, percentage below bedrock and the percentage within the mineralized solids were recorded, for each block. The percentage of waste within a block was then calculated by subtracting the percentage of mineralized solid from the percentage below bedrock. Based on available data on historic underground workings in the Cliff Creek North zone, if an estimated block contained any percentage of underground workings, the workings were assumed to be within the mineralized zone and were subtracted from the percentage of mineralized solid in that block.

Specific gravity measurements were done in the field using Archimedes methodology and resulted in 145 measurements in the Cliff Creek North zone and 48 in the Duke's Ridge zone. Blocks within the Cliff Creek North mineralized zone were assigned an average specific gravity of 2.63, while blocks within the Duke's Ridge mineralized zone were assigned an average specific gravity of 2.58.

Grades for gold and silver were interpolated into blocks by OK using the search ellipsoid dimensions and orientation established by variography. For both the Cliff Creek North and Duke's Ridge block models the kriging was completed in a series of passes with expanding search ellipsoids. As a verification tool for the block model, level plans were produced for the Cliff Creek North mineralized Zone and the Duke's Ridge mineralized Zone showing both estimated gold grades in blocks and in 2 m drill hole composites from 10 m above the level to 10 m below. Block grades matched the composite grades with no bias indicated in either zone.

No economic evaluations have been completed on the Cliff Creek North and Duke's Ridge zones, and as a result an economic cut-off for them is unknown. However, for the purposes of reporting mineral resources on the Project, current gold and silver metal prices and current US\$-CDN\$ exchange rate were compared to historic metal prices (adjusted for both inflation and historic exchange rates) for the 4-year period of past production on the Lawyers Project. It was found that the average gold and silver grades corresponding to cut-off grades of 4.00, 4.50 and 5.00 g/t AuEq, after being adjusted for comparison purposes, and compare favourably with historic mined grades at Lawyers. It was concluded that it is reasonable to select a 4.0 g/t AuEq cut-off for reporting purposes for the Lawyers Project. The AuEq grade was determined for each estimated block utilizing, US\$1200/oz. Au price and 95% recovery, along with US\$ 14.50/oz. silver price and 82% recovery.

CLIFF CREEK NORTH ZONE

The Cliff Creek North Zone resource (Table 1) is classified as inferred due to drill hole density, uncertainty of the precise locations and full extent of underground workings and a limited number of blocks estimated in Pass 1 and 2 Kriging.

DUKE'S RIDGE ZONE

The Duke's Ridge Zone resource (Table 2) is classified as inferred due to drill hole density and the limited number of blocks estimated in Pass 1 and 2 Kriging.

About Benchmark Metals Inc.

Benchmark is a Canadian gold, silver and diamond exploration company with its common shares listed for trading on the TSX Venture Exchange in Canada, the OTCQB Venture Market in the United States and the Frankfurt Stock Exchange in Germany. Benchmark is managed by proven resource sector professionals, who have a track record of advancing exploration projects from grassroots scenarios through to production.

The technical content of this news release and the Company's technical disclosure has been reviewed and approved by Michael B. Dufresne, M.Sc., P.Geol., P.Geo., who is a Qualified Person as defined by National Instrument 43-101 Standards of Disclosure for Mineral Projects.

ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

s/ “John Williamson”
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