

VRB Energy Reports on the Successful 10-Year Performance Review for Its Zhangbei 8Mwh Vanadium Flow Battery for the North China State Grid

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TORONTO, Nov. 13, 2023 - Sparton Resources (TSXV:SRI), ("Sparton" or "the Company"), is pleased to report today that VRB Energy Inc. reported through its China domestic website, on October 29, 2023, the successful 10-year performance review of its 8Mwh GEN1 vanadium flow battery installed at the North China State Grid Zhangbei Renewable Energy Generation and Storage Demonstration Site about 180 km north of Beijing PRC. Sparton owns a 90% interest in its subsidiary VanSpar Mining Inc. which in turn owns a 9.975% equity interest in [VRB Energy Inc.](#)

Figure 1: Zhangbei Offices

Technical and commercial representatives of VRB Energy and North China State Grid met at the Zhangbei site and carried out a complete positive review of the battery operations over time and discussed the parameters for upgrading the battery to GEN3 operating status.

Figure 2: Zhangbei Renewable Energy Demonstration Site

This is a major achievement for VRB Energy as the Zhangbei GEN1 VRB-ESS® is the longest operating large scale vanadium flow battery system ever installed globally. It was installed in 2011 and successfully commissioned in early 2014. The battery has operated continuously since that time and contributed to the Zhangbei Project by supplying electricity to the Beijing Winter Olympics in 2022. It has met or exceeded all of its designed operating parameters since it began operation.

Commentary

"Sparton is delighted to see this major development in VRB Energy's technical achievements, stated A. Lee Barker, Company CEO. We believe the successful long-term operation of the GEN1 Zhangbei system and its recognition by the North China State Grid show that vanadium redox flow batteries are competitive with lithium-ion batteries for grid scale, long duration energy storage applications, and clearly safer**. The GEN3 system also now has a UL1973 Safety Certification which will provide global acceptance of the GEN3 VRB-ESS® system and provide VRB Energy with a very strong marketing tool for new business going forward." (See Company News release dated August 31, 2023)

The group also toured the GEN1 operating battery and the new VRB MW-ESS® Gen III system ("GEN3") recently installed at Zhangbei which is undergoing testing and evaluation.

Figure 3: GEN1 Zhangbei Battery Figure 4: GEN1 Electrolyte Tanks

Figure 5: Zhangbei VRB.ESS GEN3 TESTING Unit

Key staff in charge of the North China State Grid Wind and Solar Energy Storage and Transmission Company (the world's largest utility) praised the stability of VRB Energy's GEN1 system technology and the professionalism of its operation and maintenance services. They went on to say that they expect VRB Energy to continue to make new breakthroughs in technological upgrading of its energy storage systems and maintain its leadership in the industry. The installation of a GEN3 test unit at Zhangbei and planning for an upgrade of the GEN1 system to GEN3 status are major business developments for VRB Energy and new business catalysts going forward.

About VRB Energy

VRB Energy is a fast-growing, privately held clean technology innovator. The company has developed the most reliable, longest-lasting vanadium flow battery in the world, with more than 500 megawatt-hours installed or in development worldwide, and more than 1,000,000 hours of demonstrated performance.

VRB Energy's vanadium redox battery systems store energy in liquid electrolyte in a patented process based on the reduction and oxidation of ionic forms of the element vanadium. This is a repeatable process that is safe, reliable, and non-toxic. The electrolyte can be recycled at end-of-life, dramatically improving lifecycle economics and environmental benefits including safety, compared to lithium-ion and other battery types.

About Sparton

Sparton is a mineral exploration Company with a forward-thinking business opportunity mentality. The VRB Energy equity share asset is a keystone in the Company's value base and came about as a result of early work doing exploration and development activities for vanadium resources in many international locations.

Its current exploration activities are focused on exploring for gold and critical metals near producing mines on or near the major mineral producing trends in northeastern Ontario and northern Quebec. It holds interests in three exploration prospects. The Bruell Property, hosts a new gold discovery, now being explored by Eldorado Gold Inc., which owns the nearby producing Lamaque Mine the west. The Oakes and Pense Properties near Matachewan and Englehart in Ontario are in close proximity to Alamos Gold's producing Young Davidson Mine and the prolific Kirkland Lake mineral producing area.

**** Source: Scientific American, Battery Fires Reveal Risks of Storing Large Amounts of Energy, (2011).**
<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/battery-fires-risks-storing-lareg-amounts-energy/>

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Photos accompanying this announcement are available at

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