



Federal Funding Supports Key Water Study at Nechalacho Rare Earth Mine

Yellowknife NT (Nov 1, 2022) A three-year water quality study at the Nechalacho Rare Earth Mine is being funded through the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) in partnership with Natural Resources Canada, Cheetah Resources, Stantec Inc and Environment and Climate Change Canada. The study is part of an initiative, valued at \$265,000 annually, to better understand the environmental risks of the rare earths and other technology-critical elements.

The study at Canada's first producing rare earth mine began this summer, led by Biology Professor Jim McGeer of Wilfrid Laurier University who is working with colleagues from Laurier, the Université de Montréal, University of Guelph as well as the Institut national de la recherche scientifique and CANMETMining.

Prof. McGeer brings 27 years of study into the toxicology of metals and has been focused on rare earths for over a decade. "As Canada's only rare earth mine, it is the only field location in Canada where real-life data can be collected," said Prof. McGeer. "This data will ensure that decisions are made based on local conditions and not lab-derived estimates."

The research will help define a comprehensive site-specific understanding of the potential effects of rare earth residue in aquatic ecosystems. It will also support the mine and regulators in setting appropriate levels of treatment before any site waters are discharged. The study will focus on ground and melt water which collects in the North T excavation pit. That water is pumped into a lined settling pond and analysed before any release into the natural environment.

"We welcome this kind of academic and scientific research at Nechalacho," said David Connelly, Vice President of Strategy and Corporate Affairs for Cheetah Resources Corp. and parent company Vital Metals. "We are committed to being a responsibly-sourced supplier of rare earth product, and this will help everyone build confidence that the environment is being protected."

The partnership with Cheetah Resources was recommended and facilitated by the Government of the Northwest Territories, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR). Cheetah will provide local air transportation, accommodation at the mine 110 kilometres southeast of Yellowknife, and logistical support for the field studies at the site.

The research team brings considerable expertise in the geochemistry of rare earths, essential to ENR's staff and representatives from the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board. They joined Prof. McGeer at Nechalacho this summer, assisted by Cody Drygeese, Cheetah Resources' Environmental Officer.

For More Information:

Prof. Jim McGeer
jmcgeer@wlu.ca

David Connelly
Cheetah Resources
dconnelly@cheetahresources.com

www.cheetahresources.com



Prof. Jim McGeer of Wilfrid Laurier University leads a discussion at the Nechalacho Rare Earth Mine with a team from the GNWT Departments of Land, and Environment and Natural Resources. The visit in August, 2022, was part of a three-year water study at the mine. *Cheetah Resources/Cody Drygeese*



Cody Drygeese, Environmental Officer at Cheetah Resource's Nechalacho Mine, tests a water sample at the mine's water settling pond. Drygeese, of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation, is assisting in a three year water study at the mine. *Cheetah Resources/billbradenphoto*