

**HONOURABLE GORDON HOGG
MINISTER OF STATE FOR MINING**

SPEAKING BULLETS

**Release of QUEST-West Geophysical and Geochemical Data at
2009 Mineral Exploration Roundup**

Date: January 26, 2009

**Location: Map Tent
Westin Bayshore**

Time: 10 am

Check against Delivery

INTRODUCTION

- Thank you.
- In 2008, the Premier announced \$6 million in funding to support Geoscience BC's QUEST West Project.
- This funding built on the success of the QUEST project, which resulted in 820,000 hectares of mountain pine beetle-infested forest being staked for mineral exploration.
- The QUEST-West Project launched in June 2008.
- The goal of the project is to identify the mineral potential of over 40,000 square kilometers from Vanderhoof and Fort St. James to Terrace and Kitimat.
- The first QUEST-West geophysical data was released in November at the Minerals South conference
- Geoscience BC is now prepared to release new geophysical and geochemical data from the QUEST-West project.
- New geochemical analyses from till samples collected by the British Columbia Geological Survey in the Granisle area will be released in April. Geoscience BC will also release additional QUEST-West geochemical data in April.
- This is an important program for the Province and for the communities that live in the areas affected by the mountain pine beetle.
- And the Province would like to thank all the partners involved with this project - Geoscience BC, the Northern Development Initiative Trust and communities through the Regional Districts of Bulkley-Nechako and Kitimat-Stikine and the British Columbia Geological Survey.
- **The QUEST/QUEST-West project is helping to:**
 - unlock the province's mineral potential.
 - diversify communities.
 - stimulate new economic activity and attract new investment
 - support the economic diversification of pine beetle affected communities
- The Province has provided a total of \$11 million to the QUEST/QUEST-West program.

- This funding has helped to accelerate the mineral exploration and geoscience projects in pine-beetle affected areas of B.C.

CONCLUSION

- With the recent downturn in the global financial markets, all sectors, including mining, have been affected.
- Now -- more than ever -- we need to work together to build a strong, sustainable mining industry.
- Programs like QUEST-West have the potential to stimulate more exploration interest, attract new investment and open up opportunities for communities and industry.
- We look forward to seeing how this new data can be used to stimulate exploration activity and investment in our province
- Thank you to everyone involved with this exciting and important project.