

PRESS RELEASE

An unprecedented partnership between UQAT and Horne Smelter will bring together the expertise of UQAT researchers

Rouyn-Noranda, April 12, 2018 – During an April 12 press conference at the Université du Québec in Abitibi-Témiscamingue (UQAT), Rouyn-Noranda, the *Fondation de l'UQAT* and Horne Smelter, a Glencore company, announced an unprecedented partnership to renaturalize a tailings facility.

This partnership agreement, valued at \$500,000 over 5 years, aims to develop the best possible plan for rehabilitating Horne Smelter's Quémont 2 site in Rouyn-Noranda. This research program is particularly important for UQAT as it will allow their two UQAT research institutes, the Research Institute on Mines and Environment (RIME) and the Forest Research Institute (FRI) to combine their expertise. *"This partnership meets two objectives that UQAT had set for itself in its 2015-2020 development plan, namely, to establish interdisciplinary research groups and to develop partnerships with the community. In total, more than a dozen professors, master's and doctoral students will work on this project. We are very happy to be able to contribute to it,"* said Denis Martel, UQAT Rector.

Effective rehabilitation requires the most appropriate restoration method to be identified. Therefore, this research project will be divided into three parts which, at the end of the program, will allow the most suitable plan to be designed. First, the *Hydrogeology* component will allow the RIME's Groundwater Research Group (GRG) to develop a hydrogeological model of the sector and establish a hydrogeochemical assessment. The second component will evaluate restoration plans through sampling and fieldwork. Finally, the third component will focus on renaturalizing the land. During this component, the potential of different plant species regarding various substrates will be compared and the biodiversity of floating islands will be assessed.

"For over 90 years, our company has shaped the landscape and human activity in Rouyn-Noranda. We are resolutely committed to our community's sustainable development. Therefore, we hope that this partnership increases the knowledge and innovation regarding renaturalizing industrial sites to restore their use for our community," said Claude Bélanger, General Manager of the Horne Smelter.

The Foundation is very pleased with this partnership, which will generate more than \$2 million in research projects. This is because the agreement's sums can subsequently be subsidized by various organizations, allowing the Foundation to act as a true promoter of research development. *"This partnership provides an excellent example of the Fondation de l'UQAT's local impact. I would like to thank Horne Smelter, a Glencore company, for its confidence in the Fondation de l'UQAT and the team of the Vice-Rector of Teaching, Research and Creation and the UQAT professors who are involved and continue to contribute to this wonderful research project. This project will both increase our students' knowledge and have long-term benefits for the residents of Rouyn-Noranda,"* said Yvan Rose, President of the Fondation de l'UQAT.

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