



TSX, NYSE-MKT
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News Release

NovaCopper's CEO and VP Exploration Receive Colin Spence Award

January 25, 2016 - Vancouver, British Columbia – On behalf of **NovaCopper Inc.'s** (TSX, NYSE-MKT: NCQ) ("NovaCopper" or "the Company") Board of Directors and all the staff, Gerry McConnell, Chairman congratulates our President and Chief Executive Officer, Rick Van Nieuwenhuyse and our past Vice President, Exploration, Joseph Piekenbrock as recipients of AME BC's 2015 Colin Spence Award for Excellence in Global Mineral Exploration. Rick and Joe are being recognized for their success in defining and significantly expanding the Donlin Creek gold deposit and the Arctic copper-zinc-silver massive sulphide deposit and for exploration success at the Bornite copper deposit. Rick and Joe will be receiving their award at AME BC Awards Celebration of Excellence Gala to be held on January 27, 2016 during the Mineral Exploration Roundup 2016 conference.

Rick and Joe have an exceptional track record of major discoveries for which they have been recognized by their peers. As part of the team at NovaGold Resources Inc. they received the prestigious Thayer Lindsley Award for the discovery of the Donlin Creek deposit from the Prospectors & Developers Association of Canada (PDAC) in 2009.

NovaCopper acknowledges the efforts of Mr. Neil Pogany, Partner, Deloitte LLP for the nomination and Mr. Clynton Nauman, President and CEO of Alexco Resource Corp. and Mr. Robert Quartermain, President and CEO of Pretium Resources Inc. for their letters in support of the nomination.

"Colin Spence was a person with a superb understanding of the science of ore deposits; massive sulfides to porphyries, precious and base metal deposits, and a determination to unearth mineral deposits using a combination of technical excellence and systematic diligence in areas of the world both accessible and remote. In my view, there can be no better nomination to exemplify this talent and success than that embodied in the exploration success of Rick and Joe", wrote Clynt Nauman in his support letter.

"Rick and Joe's success in exploration has resulted from recognizing opportunities, engaging with the local communities early in the process and completing agreements that benefit all parties involved. By focusing on only a few quality projects their holistic approach of developing coherent geological, geochemical and structural models to build truly predictive models of ore controls followed up with targeted drilling to prove, disprove or further refine the model, has contributed to their success", wrote Bob Quartermain in his support letter.

Colin Spence Award

The Association for Mineral Exploration British Columbia (AME BC) is the lead association for the mineral exploration and development industry based in British Columbia, Canada. AME BC has established seven awards which are named in honour of eminent persons recognized for their distinguished service, leadership and contribution to the mineral exploration industry. The Colin Spence award for excellence in global mineral exploration recognizes individuals who

have made a significant contribution to enhance mineral resources through the original application of prospecting techniques or other geoscience technology.

Past recipients of the award include Ross Beaty, Roman Shklanka, Charles Forster, Mark Rebagliati, The Rubicon Team, Jeff Pontius and the International Tower Hill Team, Michael Gunning and Alistair McCready, Ben and Garret Ainsworth, and Duane and Morgan Poliquin.

Mineral Exploration Roundup 2016 Conference

A cornerstone of Roundup is the Core Shack featuring displays from the sector's most compelling projects, with maps, cross-sections and technical representatives to answer questions. NovaCopper's geologists will be displaying core from our Upper Kobuk Mineral Projects on January 27 and 28 in the Core Shack booth #816 at the Vancouver Convention Centre.

About NovaCopper

NovaCopper Inc. is a metals exploration company focused on exploring and developing the Ambler mining district located in northwestern Alaska. It is one of the richest and most-prospective known copper-dominant districts located in one of the safest geopolitical jurisdictions in the world. It hosts world-class polymetallic VMS deposits that contain copper, zinc, lead, gold and silver, and carbonate replacement deposits which have been found to host high grade copper mineralization. Exploration efforts have been focused on two deposits in the Ambler district - the Arctic VMS deposit and the Bornite carbonate replacement deposit. Both deposits are located within NovaCopper's land package that spans approximately 143,000 hectares. NovaCopper has an agreement with NANA Regional Corporation, Inc., a Regional Alaska Native Corporation that provides a framework for the exploration and potential development of the Ambler mining district in cooperation with local communities. Our vision is to develop the Ambler mining district into a premier North American copper producer. The Company also owns 100% of the Titiribi Project located approximately 70 kilometers southwest of the city of Medellin, Colombia, in Antioquia department, within the historical Titiribi mining district.

More information on the Company, its properties and its management team is available on the Company's website at www.novacopper.com

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