



First Cobalt Advances Refinery Commissioning Strategy

TORONTO, ON — (May 8, 2019) – First Cobalt Corp. (TSX-V: FCC, ASX: FCC, OTCQX: FTSSF) (the “Company”) is pleased to announce it has initiated a scoping-level capacity study to estimate the capital and operating requirements for various production scenarios using cobalt hydroxide as feedstock for the restart of the First Cobalt Refinery in Ontario, Canada.

Highlights

- Third party discussions underway to supply feedstock and capital to restart of the First Cobalt Refinery 18 to 24 months from finalizing feedstock supply terms
- Study will define the production capacity of First Cobalt’s Refinery in Ontario under specific commercialization scenarios using higher grade feedstock
- Study will provide detailed capital and operating costs estimates to process cobalt hydroxide at various production rates
- First Cobalt is 100% owner of the Refinery, which is the only fully permitted cobalt refinery in North America capable of producing battery grade cobalt sulfate

Trent Mell, President & Chief Executive Officer, commented:

"First Cobalt is focused on becoming the first North American refiner of battery grade cobalt sulfate and is in discussions with sources of potential cobalt hydroxide feed material. The study announced today is expected to identify upside within the Refinery by treating higher grade hydroxide feed material and removing the autoclave circuit, which is the current bottleneck to increasing throughput capacity. We look forward to announcing the results of this study in a few weeks' time."

On April 3, 2019, First Cobalt announced the production of a battery grade cobalt sulfate from a cobalt hydroxide feed source using the current refinery flowsheet by SGS Canada. Based on this work, the Company concluded that cobalt hydroxide was the preferred source of feed material to restart the Refinery and that the throughput rate and cost profile could be improved by excluding the autoclave circuit from the flowsheet.

First Cobalt has now engaged Ausenco Engineering Canada Inc. to complete a scoping-level debottlenecking study to define the production capacity of First Cobalt’s Refinery in Ontario with the exclusion of the autoclaves. Results of the study are expected before the end of the month and are expected to provide a better understanding of production constraints and opportunities under various operating scenarios.

The Ausenco study will focus on cobalt hydroxide feed materials and optimizing process flowsheets for the First Cobalt Refinery restart. The conceptual study will update the baseline production capacity and capital estimate, without the autoclave circuit, as well as explore additional production capacity for the Refinery under additional process flowsheets, estimating the capital and operating costs for each scenario. The report will support First Cobalt in developing the business case for the restart and serve as a foundation for future work to generate a financeable project definition.

Ausenco is a global consulting, engineering, project delivery and asset operations, management and optimization solutions firm to the minerals & metals, oil & gas and industrial sectors.

The First Cobalt Refinery is a hydrometallurgical cobalt-silver-nickel refinery located approximately five kilometres east of Cobalt, Ontario. Commissioned in 1996, the refinery is located a few hours north by road or rail from the US border. Once operational, the Refinery would become the only North American producer of refined cobalt for the North American EV market.

The facility was originally permitted to processing feed containing elevated concentrations of arsenic, such as those from the Cobalt Camp, the Idaho Cobalt Belt and elsewhere in North America. The Company believes that permitting a similar facility in North America today could take a significant investment of time.



Image 1. Top left to right, cobalt sulfate produced using the First Cobalt Refinery flowsheet; current autoclave circuit. Bottom left to right, external and areal images of the facility.

Debt Settlement Agreement

The Company also announces it will settle an aggregate of C\$364,130 of indebtedness owed to an arms'-length creditor of its wholly-owned subsidiary, US Cobalt Inc., through the issuance of an aggregate of 2,427,530 common shares ("Common Shares").

The Common Shares issued will be subject to a statutory four month and one day hold period. Completion of the settlement is subject to the approval of the TSX Venture Exchange.

About First Cobalt

First Cobalt is a Canadian-based pure-play cobalt company and owner of the only permitted primary cobalt refinery in North America. The Company is exploring a restart of the First Cobalt Refinery in Ontario, Canada, which could produce 2,000 tonnes of cobalt sulfate or metallic cobalt per year. First Cobalt's main cobalt project is the Iron Creek Cobalt Project in Idaho, USA, which has Inferred mineral resources of 26.9 million tonnes grading 0.11% cobalt equivalent, or an alternative underground-only scenario of 4.4 million tonnes grading 0.3% cobalt equivalent.

On behalf of First Cobalt Corp.

Trent Mell
President & Chief Executive Officer

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Neither TSX Venture Exchange nor its Regulation Services Provider (as that term is defined in policies of the TSX Venture Exchange) accepts responsibility for the adequacy or accuracy of this release.

Cautionary Note Regarding Estimates of Resources

Readers are cautioned that mineral resources are not economic mineral reserves and that the economic viability of resources that are not mineral reserves has not been demonstrated. The estimate of mineral resources may be materially affected by geology, environmental, permitting, legal, title, socio-political, marketing or other relevant issues. The mineral resource estimate is classified in accordance with the Canadian Institute of Mining, Metallurgy and Petroleum's "2014 CIM Definition Standards on Mineral Resources and Mineral Reserves" incorporated by reference into NI 43-101. Under Canadian rules, estimates of inferred mineral resources may not form the basis of feasibility or pre-feasibility studies or economic studies except for Preliminary Economic Assessment as defined under NI 43-101. Readers are cautioned not to assume that further work on the stated resources will lead to mineral reserves that can be mined economically. An Inferred Mineral Resource as defined by the CIM Standing Committee is "that part of a Mineral Resource for which quantity and grade or quality are estimated on the basis of limited geological evidence and sampling. Geological evidence is sufficient to imply but not verify geological and grade or quality continuity. An Inferred Mineral Resource has a lower level of confidence than that applying to an Indicated Mineral Resource and must not be converted to a Mineral Reserve. It is reasonably expected that the majority of Inferred Mineral Resources could be upgraded to Indicated Mineral Resources with continued exploration."

Cautionary Note Regarding Forward-Looking Statements

This news release may contain forward-looking statements and forward-looking information (together, "forward-looking statements") within the meaning of applicable securities laws and the United States Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. All statements, other than statements of historical facts, are forward-looking statements. Generally, forward-looking statements can be identified by the use of terminology such as "plans", "expects", "estimates", "intends", "anticipates", "believes" or variations of such words, or statements that certain actions, events or results "may", "could", "would", "might", "occur" or "be achieved". Forward-looking statements involve risks, uncertainties and other factors that could cause actual results, performance and opportunities to differ materially from those implied by such forward-looking statements. Factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from these forward-looking statements are set forth in the management discussion and analysis and other disclosures of risk factors for First Cobalt, filed on SEDAR at www.sedar.com. Although First Cobalt believes that the information and assumptions used in preparing the forward-looking statements are reasonable, undue reliance should not be placed on these statements, which only apply as of the date of this news release, and no assurance can be given that such events will occur in the disclosed times frames or at all. Except where required by applicable law, First Cobalt disclaims any intention or obligation to update or revise any forward-looking statement, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise.

- 1. All material assumptions and technical parameters underpinning the Mineral Resource estimate in the ASX announcement dated 27 September 2018 continue to apply and have not materially changed since last reported.*