Ucore Advances Louisiana Rare Earth Separation with Expanded Defense Funding

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“We can now see that commercial window ahead of us,” said Pat Ryan, P.Eng., Chairman and CEO of **Ucore Rare Metals Inc. (TSXV: UCU | OTCQX: UURAF)**. Speaking with InvestorNews host Jack Lifton, Ryan outlined the company’s move toward commercial rare earth separation at its Louisiana Strategic Metals Complex in Alexandria. The immediate priority is Enhanced Machine A, with installation, testing and commissioning targeted for the first half of 2027.

Ucore announced an additional US$4.6 million from the U.S. Department of War on September 14 for samarium and gadolinium process development and deployment of Enhanced Machine A. The award brings total grant funding under its U.S. government agreement to US$27 million. Ryan linked the government’s interest in samarium to defense and aerospace applications where samarium-cobalt magnets must retain performance at high temperatures.

Ucore is concentrating on the separation stage that connects mixed rare earth feedstocks with metal, alloy and magnet manufacturers. “It’s not about the rocks; it’s about the chemistry,” Ryan said. RapidSX applies established solvent extraction chemistry through modular equipment that can be configured for different feedstocks and product requirements.

At its Kingston, Ontario, facility, Ucore has reported 99.5% neodymium-praseodymium material and 99.9% dysprosium oxide for customer qualification. These samples allow prospective buyers

to evaluate the products against their manufacturing specifications. Producing suitable samples is a step toward commercial agreements, with customers still needing to establish quality, consistency and suitability for their processes.

Ryan is looking beyond the immediate buyer when making those decisions. “If you’re a magnet maker, what does your customer look like beyond you?” he asked, pointing to motor and drivetrain manufacturers. Understanding those requirements should help Ucore determine which products to make and how to allocate the limited output available during the early stages of production.

The company’s collaboration with Sumitomo Corporation of Americas supports feedstock sourcing for Louisiana and downstream customer development, including in Japan. Ryan said the relationship had introduced feedstocks from the Far East, while Ucore was also working with material from South America. Testing in Kingston helps establish the processing routes needed to turn those materials into products customers can evaluate.

Ryan said the Louisiana equipment is being built and assembled in the United States using components available in the U.S. market. Orders include reactors, switchgear and chillers, alongside the columns, pumps and controls required for the separation system. The modular approach is central to how he intends to expand the operation. “It’s scalable. It’s modular. You can build it in pieces,” he said.

Ucore also raised C$69 million in gross proceeds through an August public offering, with net proceeds intended for Louisiana development, working capital and general corporate purposes. Commissioning and customer qualification remain essential steps toward commercial deliveries. Ryan’s objective is direct: “Let’s get specified product that people are going to buy and move down

through the supply stream from there.”

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