

NorthWest Reports Significant Ore Sorting Results at Kwanika

TORONTO, Feb. 23, 2026 -- NorthWest Copper Corp. ("NorthWest" or the "Company") (TSX-V: NWST) is pleased to announce positive results from follow-up sorting test work at its Kwanika project. The program evaluated the use of sorting technology to reject barren material ahead of a processing plant. Incorporating sorting ahead of a processing plant will improve mill feed grades, remove or defer processing of lower-grade material, and could result in a reduction in the plant size needed to achieve a similar metal production profile. These results will be considered as part of the new Preliminary Economic Assessment ("PEA") targeted for mid 2026.

Paul Olmsted, CEO of NorthWest, commented: "The sorting results are encouraging and demonstrate the opportunity to improve mill feed grade at Kwanika early in the mine life, enhancing overall project economics. Incorporating sorting may allow for a reduction in mill size and lower upfront capital costs while maintaining similar copper and gold production rates. Sensor-based sorting technology has advanced significantly in recent years, and we will assess its impact as part of our objective to deliver a more economically compelling project in a new PEA relative to the 2023 PEA¹."

Test Work Highlights

- Significant increase in sorted metal grades of approximately 19%.
- High sorter metal recoveries of approximately 89% in only 75% of the original mass.
- Creation of low-grade stockpile for processing later in mine life.

Material	Distribution	Wt kg	Cu %	Au g/t	Ag g/t
Sorter Feed	77%	241	0.83	1.57	2.47
Screened fines (<10mm)	23%	71	0.84	1.59	3.60
Sample	100%	312	0.83	1.57	2.73
Sorted Product	53%	164	1.10	2.00	3.10
Low Grade Rejects (To Stockpile)	25%	77	0.33	0.75	1.13
Screened fines (10mm)	23%	71	0.84	1.59	3.60
Sorter + Fines	75%	235	1.00	1.85	3.25
Low Grade Rejects (To Stockpile)	25%	77	0.33	0.75	1.13
Sorted Grade Upgrade			20%	18%	19%
Sorted Metal Recovery			90%	88%	90%

Geoff Chinn, VP Business Development and Exploration added: "Results from the sorting tests are positive and support the potential to remove barren dyke material and other dilution from mined rock, potentially working in concert with low-cost bulk underground mining methods. Sorting could also enable us to reduce the overall environmental footprint of the project, significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions, process water, chemicals and energy requirements."

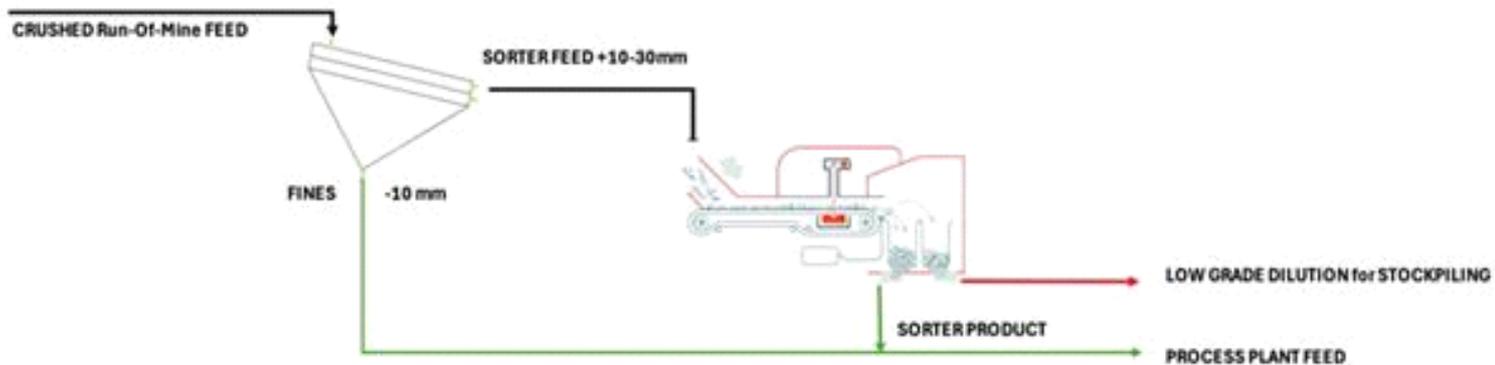
Sorting Test Program

NorthWest engaged Canenco Consulting Corp. ("Canenco") and Saskatchewan Research Council ("SRC") in late 2025 to complete sorting tests using X-Ray Transmission (XRT) technology. Five holes from different areas of the deposit were sampled to produce a representative composite sample weighting approximately 312 kg of mineralized plus waste material.

The samples were shipped to SRC in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, where testing was conducted under the supervision of Canenco. After screening to remove the fine particles (-10.0mm), approximately 241 kg of sample was tested at SRC's test facility through the TOMRA's XRT machine.

This is the first dynamic sorting test program conducted by NorthWest for Kwanika. Previous scoping and desktop tests were undertaken at both the BC Mining Research Ltd. facility and the Tomra Sorting Facility in Wedel, Germany, which were encouraging. The sorting process flowsheet is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Sorting Flowsheet Schematic



Test Program Results

- Test work was based on operating an XRT sorting machine, processing the rock size fraction of +10.0mm to 30mm grading approximately 0.83% Cu, 1.57g/t Au, 2.47g/t Ag, to concentrate the sulphide rich mineralization while rejecting the dilution taken during the mining process. The -10mm material bypasses the sorting process.
- Overall, copper, gold and silver results on feed material, recombining the fines fraction, resulted in a final mill feed grading approximately 1.0% Cu, 1.85g/t Au, 3.25g/t Ag in only 75.0% of the mass, with recoveries of approximately 90.2% Cu, 88.3% Au and 90.0% Ag.
- Dilution or low-grade rejects from the sorting process represented 25% of the overall feed with a grade of 0.33% Cu, 0.75g/t Au, 1.13g/t Ag. This low-grade material would be stockpiled and processed at the end of the mine life.

Operating and Environmental Benefits by Including Sorting

Sorting, using an X-Ray sensor and compressed air, is an innovative method of rejecting mine dilution and low-grade mineralised material, often below cut-off, from the mined rock and plant feed. This concentrates the grade of mineralisation feeding the plant, displacing the gangue material and preferentially retaining metal bearing rock.

Deposits such as Kwanika, with minerals of value associated with sulphides often respond very well to XRT sorting. The technology has many operational, economic and environmental benefits, which are sustained over the life the project, from operations through to mine closure.

Removing dilution from the mill feed and the requirement to grind this waste rock, provides a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions associated with power consumption. In addition, reducing the volume of material processed lowers water requirements, reduces process reagents, decreases the volume of tailings requiring long term storage, thereby decreasing associated footprint impacts and water treatment requirements.

Technical aspects of this news release have been reviewed, verified, and approved by Geoff Chinn, P.Geol., VP Business Development and Exploration for NorthWest, and Stacy Freudigmann P.Eng., F.Aus. IMM, CEO of Canenco who are qualified persons as defined by National Instrument 43-101 – Standards of Disclosure for Minerals Projects.

About NorthWest:

NorthWest is a copper-gold exploration and development company with a pipeline of advanced and early-stage projects in British Columbia, including Kwanika-Stardust, Lorraine-Top Cat and East Niv. With a robust portfolio in an established mining jurisdiction, NorthWest is well positioned to participate fully in strengthening global copper and gold markets. The Company is committed to responsible mineral exploration, working collaboratively with First Nations to help ensure future development incorporates stewardship best practices and respects traditional land use. Additional information can be found on the Company's website at www.northwestcopper.ca.

On Behalf of NorthWest

"Paul Olmsted"
CEO, NorthWest Copper

For further information, please contact:
416-457-3333
info@northwestcopper.ca

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

Cautionary Statement Regarding Forward-Looking Information

This news release contains "forward-looking information" within the meaning of applicable securities laws. All statements, other than statements of historical fact, are forward-looking statements and are based on expectations, estimates and projections as at the date of this news release. Any statement that involves discussion with respect to predictions, expectations, beliefs, plans, projections, objectives, assumptions, future events or performance (often, but not always using phrases such as "plans", "expects", "is expected", "budget", "scheduled", "estimates", "forecasts", "intends", "anticipates", or "believes" or variations (including negative variations) of such words and phrases, or state that certain actions, events or results "may", "could", "would", "might" or "will" be taken, occur or be achieved) are not statements of historical fact and may be forward-looking statements. In this news release, forward-looking statements relate, among other things, to statements with respect to: plans and intentions of the Company; proposed exploration and development of NorthWest's exploration property interests; the Company's ability to finance future operations; mine plans; magnitude or quality of mineral deposits; the development, operational and economic results of current and future potential economic studies; adding the Lorraine resource to the Kwanika-Stardust Project; the Company's goals for 2025; geological interpretations; the estimation of Mineral Resources; anticipated advancement of mineral properties or programs; future exploration prospects; the completion and timing of technical reports; future growth potential of NorthWest; and future development plans.

All statements, other than statements of historical fact, included herein, constitutes forward-looking information. Although NorthWest believes that the expectations reflected in such forward-looking information and/or information are reasonable, undue reliance should not be placed on forward-looking information since NorthWest can give no assurance that such expectations will prove to be correct. Forward-looking information involves known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors that may cause actual results or events to differ materially from those anticipated in such forward-looking information, including the risks, uncertainties and other factors identified in NorthWest's periodic filings with Canadian securities regulators. Forward-looking information are subject to business and economic risks and uncertainties and other factors that could cause actual results of operations to differ materially from those contained in the forward-looking information. Important factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from NorthWest's expectations include risks associated with the business of NorthWest; risks related to reliance on technical information provided by NorthWest; risks related to exploration and potential development of the Company's mineral properties; business and economic conditions in the mining industry generally; fluctuations in commodity prices and currency exchange rates; uncertainties relating to interpretation of drill results and the geology, continuity and grade of mineral deposits; the need for cooperation of government agencies and First Nation groups in the exploration and development of properties and the issuance of required permits; the need to obtain additional financing to develop properties and uncertainty as to the availability and terms of future financing; the possibility of delay in exploration or development programs and uncertainty of meeting anticipated program milestones; uncertainty as to timely availability of permits and other governmental approvals; and other risk factors as detailed from time to time and additional risks identified in NorthWest's filings with Canadian securities regulators on SEDAR+ in Canada (available at www.sedarplus.com).

Forward-looking information is based on estimates and opinions of management at the date the information is made. NorthWest does not undertake any obligation to update forward-looking information except as required by applicable securities laws. Investors should not place undue reliance on forward-looking information.

¹ NI 43-101 technical report titled "Kwanika-Stardust Project NI 43-101 Technical Report on Preliminary Economic Assessment" dated February 17, 2023, with an effective date of January 4, 2023, filed under the Company's SEDAR+ profile at www.sedarplus.com.

A photo accompanying this announcement is available at <https://www.globenewswire.com/NewsRoom/AttachmentNg/f3659d67-d16b-40cd-9bae-fcb3dec16e4d>