

ElementUS Advances \$800 Million Rare Earth Elements Project In Louisiana

Joint venture would convert residual bauxite from Noranda site in St. James Parish, Louisiana

GRAMERCY, LA, USA, March 8, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Today, Gov. John Bel Edwards joined DADA Holdings Chairman and CEO David D'Addario and Enervoxa CEO Vandit Verma to announce that ElementUS, a joint venture of DADA and Enervoxa, will make an \$800 million capital investment to extract rare earth elements at the Noranda Alumina site in Gramercy, Louisiana, subject to a final investment decision within the next year.

DADA Holdings owns Gramercy-based Noranda Alumina and is partnering with green technology firm Enervoxa to separate rare earth elements and other valuable minerals from alumina byproducts. The Gramercy site has a 35 million dry-ton reserve of mineral-rich residual bauxite. The carbon-neutral project would result in 200 new direct jobs, with an average annual salary of more than \$85,000, plus benefits. Louisiana Economic Development estimates an additional 590 new indirect jobs would result, for a total of nearly 800 new jobs in Louisiana's Southeast Region and surrounding areas.

"Since we launched our Climate Initiatives Task Force in 2020, we continue to emphasize the extraordinary natural resources Louisiana possesses in our existing petrochemical and energy sector," Gov. Edwards said. "ElementUS represents another example of how we can achieve a lower-carbon future by adapting the resources that already exist in Louisiana, applying new technology and leveraging our talented industrial workforce."

Today, Noranda Alumina employs more than 400 manufacturing workers at the Gramercy site, which also serves as headquarters for New Day Aluminum, a DADA Holdings company that includes Noranda Alumina; a bauxite subsidiary in Jamaica; affiliated alumina and specialty minerals businesses in Louisiana, France and the U.K; and a ferrous and non-ferrous recycling business with operations in the southeastern United States.

"We could not be more thrilled to be partnering with Enervoxa on this game-changing green venture in Louisiana," D'Addario said. "Rare earth elements are in short supply and are vital to national defense, critical technologies and domestic industry in general. We, alongside Enervoxa, have the opportunity to extract and commercialize valuable rare earths and other minerals while at the same time further reducing the environmental footprint at our alumina refining business and the U.S. dependence on China for these limited and technologically strategic minerals."

“We are excited to be partnering with DADA Holdings and bringing our green technology to Louisiana and the Noranda Alumina site,” Verma added. “We have a proud history of developing and implementing green technology projects, and are confident that the partnership of ElementUS, Noranda Alumina and the great state of Louisiana will be a long and mutually beneficial one.”

From Noranda’s 3,300-acre St. James Parish site neighboring St. John the Baptist Parish on the Mississippi River, ElementUS will locate near the Noranda Alumina refinery and build a separation and extraction plant with an annual capacity in excess of 1 million tons. The residual bauxite has been confirmed to contain high concentrations of 10 of the 17 rare earth elements targeted by the U.S. Defense Logistics Agency, along with titanium, iron and other minerals and metals valuable to U.S. industry and consumer demand. Separation and extraction of the minerals will occur primarily through proprietary residual bauxite processing technology developed by Toronto-based Enervoxa.

“St. James Parish’s industrial base is broad and diverse, and we continue to welcome environmentally responsible companies who do their part to provide career employment and enrich the lives of our residents,” said Parish President Pete Dufresne. “We look forward to learning more about Noranda’s new endeavor.”

“Noranda Alumina is a valued industrial partner and we are pleased to see the \$800 million capital investment in this carbon-neutral project, which will create new job opportunities for residents and generate momentum for our economy,” said St. John the Baptist Parish President Jaclyn Hotard. “With a welcoming business climate, talented workforce and strong infrastructure, our region remains an ideal destination for new business ventures and St. John is proud to be a part of that progression.”

In addition to defense applications, rare earth elements provide key performance attributes for a variety of industrial and consumer products, such as batteries, magnets, refining catalysts, aircraft engines, electric vehicles, smartphones, digital cameras, computers, flat-screen TVs, lighting and medical scanning equipment. The ElementUS project would be located within the 54-mile jurisdiction of the Port of South Louisiana, the largest port by tonnage in the Western Hemisphere.

“The Port of South Louisiana is delighted at the prospect of welcoming a new stakeholder into the port district,” said Executive Director Paul G. Aucoin of the Port of South Louisiana. “This new venture will be using byproducts from Noranda to extract rare earth minerals and other commodity metals, such as iron, titanium and additional alumina. The port is also excited about the potential 200 new jobs for the residents of the River Parishes and the increased job security for the over 400 Noranda Alumina employees.”

LED began formal project discussions with ElementUS in late 2020. Subject to a final investment

decision, the State of Louisiana will offer a \$6 million performance-based grant and the comprehensive workforce solutions of LED FastStart® – the nation’s No. 1 state workforce training and talent attraction program. In addition, ElementUS is expected to utilize the state’s Quality Jobs and Industrial Tax Exemption programs.

“We’re proud to see the creation of this new facility will create hundreds of high-demand, high-wage job opportunities for the people of St. James Parish, St. John the Baptist Parish and surrounding areas,” said President and CEO Michael Hecht of Greater New Orleans Inc. “This announcement further proves that global companies can not only thrive in Southeast Louisiana, but that the region’s strong workforce and logistical advantages can lead to future expansions, as evidenced by this joint venture.”

ElementUS is completing its front-end engineering and design for the project. Upon a final investment decision, construction could be completed within two years in a building phase that would generate an estimated 2,200 construction-related jobs.

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