



JOINT NEWS RELEASE

PR02-19

High Grade Silver-Gold Breccia Mineralization Sheds New Light on Thorn Property

Vancouver, B.C. (December 5, 2002) – Rimfire Minerals Corporation (TSX-Venture:RFM) and First Au Strategies Corp. (TSX-Venture:FAV) are pleased to provide results from the recently-completed prospecting and diamond drilling program at the Thorn Property, located in northwestern British Columbia. The Thorn hosts a high-sulphidation epithermal Silver-Gold-Copper vein system where previous exploration has identified seventeen quartz-sulphide-sulphosalt vein showings over a five by five kilometre area. The initial seven-hole, 500 metre drill program tested three showings over a 1.2 kilometre trend, including the newly discovered Oban Breccia Zone. Fieldwork identified a large hydrothermal breccia unit in excess of 200 metres wide as the source of the previously announced (July 15, 2002) high grade Oban Zone mineralization (**6148 g/t (179 oz/t) silver and 3.5 g/t gold**). Maps and cross-sections relating to the 2002 program can be found at <http://www.rimfireminerals.com> or <http://www.firstaustategies.com>.

The Oban Breccia is coincident with a very strong Silver-Gold-Arsenic-Lead-Antimony-Zinc soil geochemical anomaly and is open to the southeast. High-grade Silver and Gold mineralization has been identified in outcrop over 160 metres in a north-south trend. At the northern end a grab sample of intensely sericitized breccia with interstitial sulphides assayed **1260 g/t (37.0 oz/ton) Ag, 5.32 g/t Au, 5.8% Pb, and 5.83% Zn**. A similar outcrop 130 metres to the south assayed **498 g/t (14.6 oz/ton) Ag, 0.44 g/t Au, 3.05% Pb and 0.3% Zn** from a grab sample over 2.6 metres. Thirty metres further south, silicified breccia assayed **391 g/t (11.5 oz/ton) Ag and 25.9 g/t Au**. Three shallow holes totaling 234 metres were collared at the Oban Breccia to test surface mineralization. All three holes intersected breccia with hole THN02-11 ending in 28 metres of pyritic breccia with traces of sphalerite, galena and sulphosalts yielding elevated silver, gold, lead and zinc values. The Oban Breccia remains a priority target for future drill programs.

A total of four holes were drilled to test the I Zone and Tamdhu Zone. All four holes intersected the target structures, confirming the continuity of vein mineralization. Holes THN02-09 and -10 targeted the I Zone, which is a fault/vein system up to 10 metres in width. Intersections are 20 metres and 40 metres, respectively, down dip from surface exposures where quartz-pyrite-tetrahedrite veining assayed 760 g/t (22.2 oz/ton) Ag and 9.3 g/t Au over 0.7 metres. Hole THN02-09 intersected 2.3 metres of 99 g/t (2.9 oz/ton) Ag and 3.5 g/t Au within the 7-metre I Zone fault. Hole THN02-10 cut 1.50 metres of 70.7 g/t (2.1 oz/ton) Ag and 1.4 g/t Au within the same zone. Holes THN02-12 and -13 targeted the Tamdhu fault/vein system where a 2.1 metre sample of surface mineralization assayed 320 g/t (9.4 oz/ton) Ag, 4.2 g/t Au, and 1.26% Cu. Hole THN02-12 intersected 0.52 metres of 67 g/t (1.96 oz/ton) Ag, 3.9 g/t Au and 0.34% Cu and THN02-13 cut 1.65 metres of 454 g/t (13.3 oz/ton) Ag, 3.05 g/t Au and 3.65% Cu. Intersections are 12 metres and 32 metres, respectively, down dip from surface exposures of the Tamdhu Vein.

Prospecting was highly successful in identifying new mineralization. A new Silver-Gold-Copper vein zone, the Glenlivet, was sampled intermittently over a 210 metre strike length. The Glenlivet is a zone of quartz-pyrite-sericite veins approximately 3 metres wide, located west of the Oban Breccia Zone. Highlights include **2580 g/t (75.4 oz/ton) Ag, 20.39 g/t Au, 23.9% Cu and 1170 g/t (34.3 oz/ton) Ag, 2.97 g/t Au and 12.4% Cu** from grab samples at either end of the structure.

Robert Archer, Director of First Au Strategies states, "The discovery of high grade mineralization at the Oban Zone Breccia is very significant. Not only does it underscore the potential for new discoveries within this extensively mineralized property, but it adds a new dimension to what was previously thought to be strictly a vein system. The Oban Breccia, which is open to the southeast, has tremendous size potential. The 2003 program will focus on identifying the controls on high grade surface mineralization as a precursor to an aggressive follow-up drilling campaign."

The Thorn exploration program was carried out under the direction of Henry Awmack, P.Eng., a qualified person within the meaning of National Instrument 43-101. Mr. Awmack has reviewed the exploration results contained in this news release. Core was split, with half sent to Acme Analytical Labs in Vancouver and the other half stored for reference on the property. A quality control program was implemented in the field, using standard and duplicate sampling procedures.

First Au Strategies Corp. is funding exploration at the Thorn in order to earn a 51% interest in the property. First Au must fund \$1.2 million in exploration and make staged cash and share payments totalling \$190,000 and 250,000 shares by 2005.

On behalf of Rimfire Minerals Corporation

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