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Vale Living with Lakes Centre is officially opened in Canada

Applause and congratulations echoed across the waters of Lake Ramsey this morning, as members of the Laurentian University community celebrated, along with representatives of the federal and provincial governments, of mining company Vale Limited and of the Greater Sudbury community, the official opening of the Vale Living with Lakes Centre, one of the most environmentally-advanced buildings in Canada.

The Vale Living With Lakes Centre is a global centre of excellence in freshwater ecology, environmental restoration and sustainability. Building on the reputation of the Cooperative Freshwater Ecology Unit – a trailblazing research joint venture involving Laurentian University, the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources – the Vale Living with Lakes Centre positions the university to expand its specialized research into the protection, remediation and restoration of freshwater lakes and ecosystems. The Centre will also host Laurentian University's signature Science Communication graduate program. As well as being a locus for critically important ecological research, the Vale Living with Lakes Centre is an extraordinary building with an exceptionally low environmental footprint.

"We are very proud of this cutting edge centre of excellence," said John Gunn, Laurentian University Canada Research Chair in Stressed Aquatic Systems and one of the chief drivers of the Vale Living With Lakes project. "As scientists and educators, we are proud to be able to pursue our work in a building that embodies stewardship and sustainability in every way," said Dr. Gunn.

With its geo-thermal heating system, grey-water pond and "blueberry roof," the Vale Living with Lakes Centre is expected to be 70% more energy-efficient than conventional buildings. It is designed for the climate of 2050, adaptable to shorter winters and hotter summers, while using sun, trees and grey-water recycling to reduce its footprint.

"Today we celebrate the completion of the Vale Living with Lakes Centre a remarkable LEED Platinum-certified building, a model for smart and sustainable design in every sphere," said Dominic Giroux, President and Vice-Chancellor of Laurentian University. "This Centre will enable the expansion of critically important research and we look forward to the incredible discoveries that lie ahead for freshwater ecology, environmental restoration and sustainability."

President Giroux also acknowledged and thanked the major funders who helped to make the Vale Living With Lakes Centre a reality, including Industry Canada (Knowledge and Infrastructure Program), Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities, Vale, FedNor, and NOHFC. Construction cost for the Vale Living With Lakes Centre totaled \$20.2M. JL Richards along with Busby and Wills Architects were congratulated on their Holcim Foundation International Award winning design and Tribury Construction for their quality workmanship in building this state-of-the-art facility. Approximately eighty faculty members, staff and students will be housed in the 28,000 sq. ft. Centre.

"We are very proud to have our name associated with this important research facility," said Jody Kuzenko, General Manager, Sustainability for Vale's North Atlantic Region. "Vale has a long history of partnering with Laurentian on research relating to the preservation of freshwater ecosystems, and the opening of the Vale Living with Lakes Centre marks the start of a long future continuing this vital research. We congratulate the University and all of the contributors who made this endeavour a reality."

"Investing in science and research is vital to Canada's future economic growth," said the Honourable Gary Goodyear, Minister of State (Science and Technology). "Our government's support for new research and academic facilities has created jobs, while giving researchers and students the tools they need to become the best in the world."

Representing the provincial government, Sudbury MPP Rick Bartolucci praised the vision of the scientists who conceived the centre, and also applauded its forward-looking design. "Our government is proud to have invested in such a great project," said Sudbury MPP Rick Bartolucci. "The Vale Living with Lakes Centre will allow researchers from around the world to study our beautiful region in a state-of-the-art facility."

The Vale Living with Lakes Centre was constructed to meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) platinum standards.

More information



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