

Giyani Gold Bites Down on Growing Manganese Market

Multiple producers focused on manganese were forced to close their doors over the past five years as a three-year-price-slide annihilated business models the world over. In a surprise twist, the value of the steel making metal began to climb aggressively in 2016 resulting in a synchronised global facepalm of such magnitude that it could have been mistaken for a minor quake. Not everyone was unhappy, however; some forward-thinking companies had already begun to acquire significant manganese resources post-closures to prepare for the recovery. One such quick-witted company was Giyani Gold Corp. (TSXV: WDG) ("Giyani"), currently in possession of 100% ownership of five prospecting licenses and in the final stages of acquiring 88% interest in a further eight licenses on the site of a former producing mine in Botswana, close to the South African border.

Results from the zone are already pouring in, and significant manganese content is being confirmed at multiple locations across the Kgwakgwe Hill (K. Hill) project. Recent surface sampling returned grades as high as 60%+ MnO, which not only exceeded Giyani's expectations, but K. Hill graded well above the average of other potential mines currently being investigated. Furthermore, the samples contained impressively low impurities, which indicates that the material produced at the site would be ideal for use in the battery market.

Manganese is normally used in the manufacture of steel, with standard alloys featuring 1% Mn, but when the metal is used at a 13% concentration for crafting manganese steel, an incredibly strong alloy is born that is reserved for the construction of railway tracks, safes, rifle barrels and prison bars; surely these are markets due to surge under President Trump.

In addition to this, manganese is utilised as the primary cathode material in lithium ion manganese oxide batteries, for which a high grade and low impurity feedstock is essential. Recent scientific discoveries have also produced a manganese-zinc alkaline battery that could even be a viable alternative to lithium-based constructions.

Two things are certainly on the up in the coming years, steel and batteries; these two markets represent the primary driving forces behind manganese demand, and with recent historical production in decline it is up to a new wave of producers to supply the goods. Giyani's strategy of identifying and researching undervalued properties with a strong probability of containing high grade manganese deposits is proving effective and makes them a very likely candidate to join the pack of future producers.

During exploration, the company's geological team discovered several old, small scale, manganese mines. These historical mines were undocumented and unreported in existing government records of the area, providing a massive bonus to Giyani and inspiring yet further confidence in the area.

The geologists have reported multiple occurrences of visible manganese in an area that extends around 70km to the north east and 50km to the east of K. Hill reaching the border with South Africa and within a short distance from Gaborone, the capital of Botswana. This proximity to major infrastructure gives the project yet another significant logistical advantage as existing transport networks serve to lower capex by a considerable margin when compared with explorers who must construct their own road networks. The next five years looks good for manganese, but they look even better for the company that moved fast enough to source projects when prices were at their lowest. I'll be following the Giyani story closely, and as results continue to emerge from the site my bets are on a serendipitous success.