

## **Nullagine on development track**

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WEDGETAIL Exploration NL (formerly Cloncurry Mining Company NL) is a minerals exploration and development company with its projects based in Western Australia.

The company is focused on developing a gold operation at its Nullagine project, in the central Pilbara region of the state.

According to managing director Frank Vanspeybroeck, during the year, Wedgetail has taken the initiative and applied modern exploration techniques to the Nullagine area.

“Two thirds of the area is covered by a thin veneer of transported overburden that has masked the geology from previous explorers,” Mr Vanspeybroeck said.

“The geophysical exploration conducted to date has allowed the company to map structures beneath this cover. The drilling has proven the relevance of these structures to gold mineralisation, and during the first half of this year, two new mineral trends were discovered – Linq and South Barton.”

Mr Vanspeybroeck said the company is a well-funded focused explorer with massive landholding in different stages of development, from grassroots exploration prospects to proven resources and reserves on granted mining leases.

“We also have proven exploration methodology and a 1mtpa CIP plant.”

So far this year, development progresses at Nullagine as RSG Global’s scoping study has given green light for the project.

“We have appointed C Engineering & Integrated Services, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Clough Limited to conduct our pre-feasibility study.”

The broad pre-feasibility study’s objectives include confirming the mine rate of production; establishing base design parameters for the process plant and site infrastructure; determining the suitability of equipment from the Bullfinch Plant for incorporation into Nullagine plant; developing capital and operating cost estimates for the process plant to an accuracy consistent with a feasibility study of  $\pm 25$  per cent; and compiling the process plant study report.

Mr Vanspeybroeck said the company’s infill and definition drilling results have been better than anticipated.

For example, the RC infill drilling at Golden Eagle returned 4m at 45.21 g/t Au, 5m @ 16.65 g/t Au and 13m @ 6.93 g/t Au.

Another highlight for the year was the appointment of the Nullagine project’s development manager.

Peter Woodman will advance the Nullagine gold project into final feasibility and production.

Mr Woodman has more than 15 years’ experience in the mining industry.

He has been involved with, and responsible for, several gold projects which have advanced from the resource development phase through to successful production both in Australia and overseas.

He was chief geologist of the Chatree gold/silver Mine in Thailand during the preproduction and commencement of mining phase for Kingsgate Consolidated.

Mr Woodman will be responsible for transforming Wedgetail from a successful explorer to a significant gold producer in the Pilbara.

The company has only had a couple of minor setbacks which have included the cyclone season which has delayed deployment of exploration crew to the Pilbara and increased delays in obtaining land access.

However, the successes have far outweighed these challenges.

Last year alone, Wedgetail raised \$9m which will provide the company with the financial capability to explore the numerous exploration targets and assist the company through transition into mining depending on the outcome of feasibility work.

"In addition, 24,571m of drilling was undertaken during 2003.

"An aeromagnetic survey was undertaken between Barton and Golden Eagle which has resulted in a further 17 drilling targets over the 20km between these projects.

"Of these targets, only two have been tested both of which are mineralised.

"As Wedgetail's tenement areas are covered by a thin veneer of transported overburden, aeromagnetic test work has proven to be a very effective exploration technique to potentially increase its inventory.

"Also last year, Wedgetail's 1mtpa gold treatment plant was dismantled and is in the process of refurbishment."

Mr Vanspeybroeck is in a perfect position to take Wedgetail into the future.

He has more than 18 years' experience in the gold mining industry, during which time he has been involved in prospecting underground gold mining, CIP plant operations and advancing a gold project from resource development through to production.

The company's goals will include transforming Wedgetail from an explorer to a gold producer in the Pilbara in 2005 and carrying out regional exploration and drilling to delineate further resources.