

Montero Mining and Exploration Ltd

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Montero Mining says metallurgy results from Wigu Hill to improve flowsheet

Montero Mining and Exploration (CVE:MON) provided Monday an update on test work from material at the company's Wigu Hill rare earth project in Tanzania, taking a significant step forward in improving the economic flowsheet for the asset.

The metallurgical study, done by SGS Lakefield, examined flotation processes to upgrade rare earth element (REE) minerals from Wigu Hill bastnaesite-rich carbonatite material. The main aim of the study was to identify a processing route that could recover the rare earth-bearing minerals while rejecting major "gangue" minerals that include quartz and barite.

The best results from rougher stage tests were achieved from a head grade of 6.42% Ce₂O₃, the company said Monday, using a hydroxamate-type collector. Here, the cumulative rougher concentrate graded 12.8% Ce₂O₃, with 79.1% recovery and 48.1% mass pull, which represents x2 upgrade.

"The results achieved in the scoping study demonstrate the potential to recover REE minerals into a pre-concentrate and reject the major gangue minerals, which are acid consumers for the downstream hydrometallurgical process," Montero revealed in its statement.

The rare earths explorer is coming off fresh from the receipt of its EIA certificate - part of the requirement for a mining license application. The EIA certificate from the Tanzanian government was received in late June, to fulfil section 92(1) of the Environmental Management Act in the country. The company is planning to submit a mining license application within the quarter, with expectations that it will receive the permit sometime in the first half of next year.

Montero's main Wigu Hill rare earth element (REE) deposit in Tanzania, which is 81 per cent owned by the company, is a steep hill that is 250 metres above sea level, 550 metres above the surrounding coastal plain, with the highest peak at 796 metres above sea level.

The junior explorer's plan is to fast track a portion of the large, 142 square kilometre deposit to the mining and production stage, but with a more comprehensive drilling program, Montero is convinced it can expand mineral resources from the current 3.3 million tonnes to well above 40 million tonnes.

"Advancing the mineral processing flowsheet with the flotation testwork completed by SGS-Lakefield, keeps us on a production focused target for our flagship Wigu Hill project," said president and CEO Dr. Tony Harwood in the release.

"These positive results represent a significant step in advancing the beneficiation process and improving Montero's economic flowsheet for the extraction of REEs from the bastnaesite-rich carbonatite mineralization. By reducing downstream reagent consumption costs we are on track to becoming a low cost producer of Rare Earths."

Price: 0.025

Market Cap: \$547.02 k

1 Year Share Price Graph



Share Information

Code: MON

Listing: TSX-V

52 week High Low
 0.2 0.025

Sector: Rare earths & specialist minerals

Website: www.monteromining.com

Company Synopsis:

Montero Mining & Exploration Ltd. is a mineral exploration and development company engaged in the identification, acquisition, evaluation and exploration of mineral properties in Africa. Montero's new strategy is focussed on the battery metals in Africa and is currently exploring the Soris Lithium Project in Namibia. Namibia is one of the most progressive mining investment countries in Africa.

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"The mineralization currently has grades that average between 3% to 5% TREO [total rare earth oxides], and this could potentially be upgraded to up to 50% TREO in a rare earth mineral concentrate," Harwood explained in a recent interview with Proactive Investors, through methods including gravity separation and x-ray sorting. "If we can do that, we can target reducing one of our biggest costs in the rare earth extraction process using acid consumption in the leaching plant."

The company's fast track strategy and decision not to focus only on expanding resources has allowed the company to become one of the first juniors to produce samples of individual and mixed oxides for marketing purposes, making it attractive to potential funding partners and positioning it ahead of the pack.

The SGS metallurgical study announced Monday will form the basis for further lab and pilot scale test work, in which flotation, as a mineral processing option, will be further explored and optimized, Montero said.

The Wigu Hill rare earth asset is considered a "look-a-like" to Molycorp's (NYSE:MCP) Mountain Pass project in the U.S. as the rare earth elements are hosted in the mineral bastnaesite, found in carbonatite dikes at Wigu Hill. This carries high grades of neodymium, praseodymium, lanthanum, and cerium with a small amount of heavy rare earths in the deposit.

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