

Mining in the Valley: Exploration to start in 2014

28th Nov 2013 6:00 AM

AUSTRALIAN mining company Eclipse Metals is poised to renew explorations in the Mary Valley which could lead to the reopening of old manganese mines that yielded more than 32,700 high-grade tonnes of the ore last century.

This follows a desktop review of data dating back to 1918 which found that 32,724 tonnes of ore grading 42% to 51% manganese had been shipped from the two exploration permits that make up the Mary Valley project.

During the 1900s, manganese was mined from multiple sites in the Valley, including Mooloo, Mt Mooloo, Dagon, Eel Creek, Zacariah Creek, Skyring Creek and Amamoor.

Limits of the deposits to be explored are not known either along strike or at depth, a company report says.

Historical assays also indicate the manganese, iron, silicon and phosphorus levels are all within the direct shipping ore parameters, which further support the economic potential of stand-alone mining operations at the Mary Valley Manganese Project.

"We are greatly encouraged to have received such excellent results from the open file desktop review," Eclipse Metals' director and geological consultant Rodney Dale said.

"This work has demonstrated the manganese prospectivity of both projects, especially in the high grade manganese mining areas within the Mary Valley project.

"The company will now focus on designing and implementing exploration programs targeting these high grade areas."

The Mary Valley Manganese Project permits cover a total area of 195.3sq km and are located about 14km south-west of Gympie.

The largest mine on the tenements controlled by Walla Mines, the company's 55.61% owned subsidiary, was at the Amamoor No.1 Manganese Deposit, which produced 19,630 tonnes grading 51% manganese.

A review of historical mining carried out by the Geological Survey of Queensland in 1962 had confirmed the high-grade manganese mined from the area.

This also identified at least 150 square kilometres of favourable untested lithology for manganese mineralisation.

The potential for DSO manganese at the Mary Valley project, which has historically produced high-grade manganese ore, is a major drawcard for Eclipse Metals.

Further exploration will target the high-grade areas, allowing the company to define its potential for development.

Eclipse Metals Limited is an Australian company with a portfolio (over 24,000 km²) of iron, manganese, gold, uranium and base metal projects.