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MANY ON COLLECTIVE MINING TEAM FAMILIAR
WITH COLOMBIA THROUGH CONTINENTAL GOLD

Renewed metals strength may drive junior miners

After a lengthy consolidation phase, gold is once again threatening to break out to new all-time highs. Copper has also been looking robust in recent months with extremely positive fundamentals. However, most of the resource stocks have not performed nearly as well. Junior explorers have rebounded off the extreme lows of last year but are still at the lower end of their longer-term range. If we are to see renewed strength for the metals this year, the junior explorers are overdue for a run to the upside. This could be a good entry to establish a position in an exciting resource discovery story with leverage to gold, silver and copper.

For speculators, the objective is to find companies with the potential to move first and then outperform the peer group as the bull market gains steam. One promising explorer on my list is **Collective Mining Ltd.** (CNL-TSX/VEN, \$2.91). This is a relatively new player in the sector that has already demonstrated an effective exploration strategy. The company has hit the ground running with exceptional drilling results achieved from the initial phases of their exploration ef-



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forts. This success positions Collective Mining on the fast track with the potential to define several very attractive polymetallic deposits in mining-friendly Colombia.

Collective Mining is led by an all-star management team with a proven track record to build shareholder value. Many individuals in the current leadership group were formerly involved with another successful mining company in Colombia, Continental Gold. Their strategy to increase gold resources and expand production output contributed to a successful acquisition deal for Continental by Zijin Mining Group unveiled in December 2019 and completed the following March. The transaction valued Continental at \$1.4 billion, representing one of the most significant deals in the sector during that time frame.

With the benefit of experience and strong contacts in Colombia, Collective Mining has been established to enable a similar progression along the value curve from the grassroots level. In 2021, the company announced option deals to secure 100 per cent control of two superb exploration assets located in a highly prospective mining district. Sur-

face fieldwork and prospecting commenced shortly afterwards. Significant drilling followed in 2022 and impressive discoveries were achieved at both projects.

While each of the properties has exceptional potential, the Guayabales project is already evolving as a legitimate prospect to build a company around. This land package, situated in close proximity to the Pan-American Highway, shares two boundaries with the Marmato mine property currently operated by **Aris Mining Corp.** (ARIS-TSX, \$4.40). In fact there are 10 fully permitted mines operating within a radius of three kilometres around Guayabales.

While it is often a better proposition to explore in proximity to a producing mine, the story is even more promising for Collective Mining. A cluster of porphyry structures has been mapped within Guayabales and in the surrounding district. Some of the most productive copper and gold mines in the world were established at porphyry deposits.

No fewer than seven high-profile exploration targets were identified at Guayabales through geophysical surveying and fieldwork programs. Collective was able to complete initial drilling work at five of them in 2022, achieving four notable discoveries. In total, about

23,000 metres of drilling was completed within Guayabales last year, which is an impressive accomplishment so quickly for an under-explored property.

The Apollo target is the most advanced and has already yielded several exceptional mineralized intervals. Drill hole APC-22 included a section of 426 metres bearing an average gold-equivalent (AuEq) grade of 1.51 grams per tonne of ore (g/t) including copper, silver and molybdenum values. Several other drill holes also yielded sections spanning more than 200 metres of continuous mineralization, often with average grades above two g/t AuEq. At the end of January, Collective announced the highest-grade section so far, reporting an interval spanning 32 metres with an average of 10.48 g/t AuEq. A broad-based gold-silver-copper deposit is currently being outlined, hosted with breccias interlaced with porphyry mineralization and enriched vein structures.

Apollo is a large target that has been interpreted across an area of more than a square kilometre and geologists are still expanding the dimensions of the system. The confirmation of mineralization with robust grades extending hundreds of meters is going to enable a large

tonnage deposit to be presented when a compliant resource is compiled. However, it is just one of several prospects identified so far.

The Olympus target is another porphyry discovery just a short distance to the northwest of Apollo. Again, wide intervals of attractive gold-silver mineralization have already been encountered from seven drill holes completed at this target. The highlight so far is an interval more than 300 metres starting close to the surface, bearing an average grade of 1.12 g/t AuEq. Meanwhile the Trap and Donut targets have barely been tested and yet multiple, near-surface intercepts of attractive mineralization remain to be followed up

as work continues.

Collective plans to continue this aggressive exploration activity with another 23,000 metres of drilling planned for this year. Three drill rigs are currently in operation to follow up on the exciting discoveries achieved so far. Much of this work will focus on Apollo. Of note, many of the drill holes from the previous program ended in mineralization, and the deposit remains open to depth and laterally to the west and northeast.

Meanwhile, the second appealing exploration asset controlled by Collective, San Antonio, is also set for additional drilling work this year to follow up on discovery results achieved in 2021. Located just four kilometres east of Guayabales, San

Antonio provides a powerful one-two punch of exceptional potential concentrated in this mining district. Based on early results, San Antonio would warrant much more attention if not for the superb resource definition already in process at Guayabales. For a junior explorer this is a very good problem to have.

Most of the speculative value for a junior explorer is generated at the discovery level.

Extensive drilling work scheduled throughout this year provides the expectation for ongoing success in the field. Steady news flow will build market awareness. Meanwhile, the company is lavishly funded with more than \$12 million in the treasury. Exploration is relatively inexpensive in

Colombia compared to similar jurisdictions elsewhere. Collective Mining is well-positioned to continue building the magnitude of this exciting discovery.

Despite all of the bullish circumstances related to this story, it remains a relatively unknown explorer. There is almost no hype or excessive speculative froth evident, for what amounts to one of the most promising discovery plays in the market. This will change if Collective Mining is able to continue delivering such outstanding results in the field. Look for this stock to move much higher in the months ahead.

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