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# MINERALS BOOM

**REX MARTINICH**

CAVENDISH and Glenthompson could benefit from a potential gold, copper and zinc mining boom.

Two separate mining companies told Tuesday's Major Industries in the Southern Grampians presentation that operations in the area were under consideration.

The companies are currently evaluating the Stavely Project, which includes areas near Glenthompson and the Black Ranges Project north of Cavendish for future mine sites.

The announcements were made at the Major Industries Update presentation, run by the Southern Grampians Shire at the Hamilton Cinema.

Tasmanian Gold producer, BCD Resources, owner of the Beaconsfield mine, will resume drilling exploration today near Glenthompson.

Community relations consultant, Greg Walcott, told the audience BCD had completed conceptual development studies on 950 square kilometres of western Victoria around Ararat and Glenthompson.

"Beaconsfield Gold mine in Tasmania is being wound up and will complete operations in June," he said.

"From then on BCD will be an exploration and development company with a prime focus on the development of gold and copper east and north of Glenthompson up to Ararat.

"It has done some drilling there in the past and we have a new program starting on Thursday and from then on BCD will put all its efforts into that."

Mr Walcott emphasised it was too early to start speculating on the possible number of jobs to be created but the Stavely Project was major deposit with a fairly positive outlook at the moment.

He said BCD would transfer its funds from the loss-making Beaconsfield mine into developing new sites in western Victoria.

"They don't expect anything to be on the ground for three or four years, depending on approvals and the drilling program," Mr Walcott said.

"The consultations have only been with affected landowners so far, and most of those have been very good.

"From now on the drilling program will ramp up and hopefully, if all the figures align, we will start seeking approvals."

At Cavendish, Navarre Minerals has yet to start taking drill samples, but is looking at exploration later in the year.

Navarre Minerals is a Stawell-based company founded by former gold miners that has been seeking to explore previously overlooked deposits in Victoria.

Managing director, Geoff McDermott said his company was waiting on a geological analysis before starting a round of exploration in the Black Ranges.

"There are corridors of mineralisation in central and western Victoria, including the more well-known gold deposits in Ballarat and Bendigo," he said.

"When our company was first listed, our number one project was the Black Ranges, where we have properties near Cherrypool.

"We are dealing with rocks that are very different to the rest of Victoria; base metal rich rocks which are very similar to those on the west coast of Tasmania."

Mr McDermott said his company would receive its analysis results next month and if the news was good, would start aerial surveys in July. He said early signs from Black Ranges were encouraging.

"What we like about this area is the series of volcanic rocks that we believe is an extension of what BCD is mining down south in Tasmania," Mr McDermott said.

"We have had experts from the University of Tasmania tell us that our prospects here are identical to (Tasmanian zinc and gold mine site) Hellyer, which is pretty sensational.

"What we are looking for is large gold, copper and zinc mineralisation and at the moment we have experts reviewing the data, Mr McDermott said.

Navarre Minerals is still a number of years from breaking ground if all goes well with the exploration.



A MARKER left by BCD Resources at the site of its mineral exploration near Glenthompson, which will see the return of a drilling operation today. Picture: REX MARTINICH.

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