

While Majors Ride Momentum, Smaller Gold Stocks Are Building Something Bigger

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VANCOUVER, May 16, 2025 - Despite a short-lived correction earlier this week, gold prices quickly recovered in what's called uncertainty-fueled "gold fever". While major gold miners reaped the benefits of a strong Q1 gold price performance, stocks of all sizes are moving the needle with developments of their own, including recent updates from Lake Victoria Gold (LVG) (OTCQB: LVGLF), [Gold Resource Corp.](#) (NYSE-American: GORO), [Contango Ore Inc.](#) (NYSE-American: CTGO), [Royalty Corp.](#) (NASDAQ: VOXR), and [SSR Mining Inc.](#) (NASDAQ: SSRM) (TSX: SSRM).

According to DoubleLine Capital CEO Jeff Gundlach (better known as "Bond King"), ongoing gold price rally isn't over, precious metal could climb as high as \$4,000 per ounce. JPMorgan analysts recently made waves with a bold outlook, that if just 0.5% of U.S.-held foreign assets shifted into gold, prices could climb as high as \$6,000 per ounce by 2029, while Goldman Sachs believes we could see spikes as high as \$4,500 this year alone.

Lake Victoria Gold (TSXV: LVG) (OTCQB: LVGLF) is quietly advancing its gold ambitions in Tanzania with a practical, boots-on-the-ground approach. The company recently brought in Nesch Mintech Tanzania-a respected third-party firm-to help evaluate a local processing plant that could play a key role in early production. This comes on the heels of a non-binding Letter of Intent from Nyati Resources to explore a small-scale development pathway. Nesch's review will assess how ready the plant is to run, how much gold it's likely to recover, and what upgrades might unlock even better results.

"Engaging Nesch Mintech at this stage ensures we bring third-party rigour and transparency to the commissioning process, which is fundamental to assessing the Nyati opportunity," said Marc Cernovitch, President and CEO of Lake Victoria Gold. "We're excited by the potential to leverage existing processing infrastructure and local ore sources to create a scalable gold production platform in Tanzania."

If the partnership moves forward, LVG would begin sending mineralized material from its fully owned Mining Licences to be processed at Nyati's 120-ton-per-day plant, alongside a new 500-ton-per-day facility that's nearly ready. Together, these could form the backbone of a centralized gold processing hub-giving both companies a faster, lower-capex path to first production.

"This audit is an important milestone as we advance this most compelling near-term gold development opportunity," said Benstead, Executive Director of Lake Victoria Gold. "By combining strategic processing infrastructure with high-potential development targets, the proposed joint venture has the potential to unlock meaningful value for all stakeholders. We look forward to working closely with Nesch Mintech to validate the plant's performance and move confidently toward execution."

While still early-stage and not yet backed by a current resource estimate or Feasibility Study, the proposed initiative gives LVG a chance to test its geology in a real-world setting. As with any small-scale venture, key risks remain-especially around grade consistency, metallurgy, permitting, and funding. If successful, this low-cost strategy could unlock near-term cash flow and fund further exploration. The agreement with Nyati builds on LVG's earlier announcement that it was exploring small-scale development options at its flagship Tembo Project, located right next to Barrick's high-grade Bulyanhulu mine.

Tembo is no stranger to serious exploration, with over US\$28 million already invested and more than 50,000 metres of drilling completed. Several key zones-including Ngula 1, Nyakagwe Village, and Nyakagwe East-remain open along strike and underscoring the project's long-term growth potential.

"Tembo has always stood out as a project with the potential to deliver both near-term value and long-term discovery opportunities," said Benstead. "Evaluating this small-scale development opportunity allows us to test the system, generate operational insights, and potentially self-fund ongoing exploration."

LVG continues to build momentum by aligning capital, partnerships, and near-term development opportunities. While Tembo remains the company's long-term discovery engine, its newly acquired Imwelo Project is the most advanced asset in the pipeline. Fully permitted and supported by a 2021 pre-feasibility study, Imwelo is located near AngloGold Ashanti's Geita Mine and appears well suited for streamlined development and construction..

To help advance development, Lake Victoria Gold signed a non-binding gold prepay term sheet with Monetary Metals in late 2024. The agreement provides upfront, non-dilutive capital in exchange for a portion of future gold production at a discount, aligning repayment with the project's output. The structure allows LVG to access value equivalent to up to 7,000 ounces of gold, with proceeds earmarked for construction and early development work.

In early 2025, the company also closed a C\$3.52 million investment tranche from Taifa Group at C\$0.22 per share, part of a broader C\$11.52 million three-stage financing. As part of that partnership, former Taifa CEO Richard Reynolds joined LVG's board, bringing additional regional experience and leadership.

Looking ahead, LVG also holds a milestone-based earn-in agreement with Barrick worth up to US\$45 million, tied to future exploration success at Tembo. With plant audits in progress, a joint venture under review, and a growing financial toolkit, Lake Victoria Gold is positioning itself as one of the more compelling junior developers in East Africa.

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In other industry developments and happenings in the market include:

Gold Resource Corporation (GRC) (NYSE-American: GORO) faced a challenging first quarter at its Don David Gold Mine in Mexico, where limited access to mining zones and worn-out equipment dragged down output.

"While production was lower in Q1 2025 than in prior quarters, we're now seeing strong early traction," said Allen Palmiere, President and CEO of GRC. "We secured additional capital through ATM sales and received the anticipated tax refund, strengthening our balance sheet and placing us in a better position to move forward with the development of the Three Sisters system. We're also advancing contractor negotiations to fast-track access to new zones. These initiatives are part of a disciplined execution plan-and we're confident in our ability to deliver anticipated results."

On the positive side, GRC secured \$8.6 million through financing and asset sales, plus a \$4 million tax refund, improving short-term liquidity. Management sees promising potential in the Three Sisters system, but new investment is crucial to avoid disruptions and return to positive cash flow.

Contango Ore, Inc. (NYSE-American: CTGO) delivered a strong Q1 2025, reporting \$19.3 million in income from operations and selling over 17,000 ounces of gold from its Manh Choh joint venture. With all-in sustaining costs of \$1,374 per ounce-well below target-and \$33 million in cash distributions, the company enters Q2 on solid footing. Contango also announced encouraging early economics for its Johnson Tract project, which could mirror the success of Manh Choh.

"Gold production from the first campaign of 2025 continued into the second quarter with a further 3,810 ounces in recoverable inventory at the end of the quarter," said Rick Van Nieuwenhuyse, President and CEO of Contango. "During the quarter we delivered almost 12,000 ounces to the hedge contract using the Carry Trade, effectively reducing our hedge balance to 74,800 ounces."

Vox Royalty Corp. (NASDAQ: VOXR) has added another cash-generating asset to its portfolio with the acquisition of a 2.5% royalty on the producing Kanmantoo copper-gold mine in South Australia. The \$11.7 million deal is fully funded and gives Vox immediate exposure to monthly royalty payments from an active underground operation. With production ramping up and major exploration underway, Kanmantoo enhances

both the near-term revenue and long-term upside of Vox's royalty platform.

"Based on Hillgrove's production forecasts for 2025, the Kanmantoo 2.5% royalty is expected to generate over \$3 million of annualized royalty revenue," said Kyle Floyd, CEO of Vox. "We believe the Kanmantoo asset provides our investors with exceptional exposure to a royalty that has both strong current production and growth potential in terms of mine life and mill utilization."

SSR Mining Inc. (NASDAQ: SSRM) (TSX: SSRM) posted a strong start to 2025, reporting \$58.8 million in net income and \$84.8 million in operating cash flow for Q1 2025, supported by over 103,000 gold equivalent ounces produced across its global portfolio.

"We are well on track for full-year consolidated production and cost guidance, and are positioned to generate strong free cash flows through the remainder of the year," said Rod Antal, Executive Chairman of SSR. "We look forward to advancing optimization and possible expansion opportunities at CC&V through the remainder of 2025."

The newly acquired CC&V mine contributed as expected, with further optimization planned for the months ahead. Excluding the suspended Çöpler operation, AISC dropped to \$1,749 per ounce, giving SSRM a solid cost base heading into the rest of the year.

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