Argent Minerals Limited: High Grade Au Identified in Trunkey-Kings Plain Gold Belt

24.10.2016 | ABN Newswire

Sydney - Argent Minerals Ltd. (ASX:ARD) (Argent, or the Company) is pleased to provide its maiden release of exploration results for the historic Pine Ridge gold mine.

Highlights:

- Maiden Argent announcement of historical exploration results for the Pine Ridge gold mine - 100% Argent ownership acquired through low cost tenement application process.

- Pine Ridge highlights:

-- 21 m @ 5.6 g/t Au from 50 m (PR010) incl. 1.0 m @ 62.9 g/t Au from 59 m;

-- 10 m @ 3.7 g/t Au from 71 m (PR012) incl. 1.0 m @ 11.2 g/t Au from 76 m;

-- 18 m @ 2.4 g/t Au from 68 m (PR023) incl. 1.0 m @ 5.3 g/t Au from 77 m.

-- Deposit open at depth and along strike to the north.

-- Historical prefeasibility work includes pit design, favourable metallurgical testwork results, and preliminary assessments.

-- Freed up for exploration after release from 15 year lockup.

- Trunkey goldfields highlights:

-- High frequency cluster of gold lodes along 25 km gold trend related to the Copperhannia Thrust.

-- Slate belt gold district classification similar to Ballarat/Bendigo goldfields in Victoria, Beaconsfield in Tasmania, Hill End in New South Wales, and the Hodgkinson goldfields in North Queensland.

- The results form part of a systematic assessment of potential feedstock within trucking distance of Kempfield.

Maiden Argent announcement for Pine Ridge gold mine exploration results

Argent is the first company to secure an exploration licence (EL8213), which covers an area of 51.26 km2, over the Pine Ridge gold mine area since its release from a 15 year lockup under a 3rd party Assessment Lease Application (ALA). From 9 February 1998 to 27 May 2013, the area covered by ALA13 was excluded by regulation from exploration licence areas. This prevented any legal exploration of the Pine Ridge gold mine area during the lockup period by any party, including by the ALA13 applicant.

Until today's announcement, the most recent information on the Pine Ridge gold mine was published in April 1998, when Goldrim Mining Australia Limited (Goldrim) submitted the 7th Annual Report and the Final Report for EL3756 to the NSW Department of Industry, Division of Resources & Energy (DRE). Whilst that information has been available to the public via the DRE's DIGS website, it would have been a breach of the regulations for any party other than DRE (including Argent) to publish the results under its title without firstly securing the legal right to do so, and subject to a comprehensive review to ensure compliance under the applicable JORC Code and ASX Rules.

Argent has secured 100% tenure and the legal right to explore the area via EL8213, and has reviewed the available database. The information released in this announcement result from a systematic assessment of potential satellite feedstocks located within trucking distance of the Company's flagship volcanic-hosted massive sulphide (VHMS) project at Kempfield, NSW. The current area of focus is the Trunkey-Kings Plain gold belt.

About the Trunkey-Kings Plain gold belt

Both situated within the Trunkey-Kings Plain gold belt, the Pine Ridge gold mine is located approximately 17 km south-southeast of Kempfield, and the Trunkey goldfields are located approximately 7 km east of Kempfield.

The Trunkey gold occurrences are a high frequency cluster of gold lodes distributed along a 25 km long trend peripheral to the Copperhannia Thrust. The gold field was discovered in 1851 and intensive mining continued in the Abercrombie River basin until 1914. The inability to overcome the shallow water table significantly impacted gold mining due to rudimentary dewatering technology.

Although various explorers studied the major gold occurrences intermittently until the 1990s, the majority of known gold prospects or dormant mines have seen very little to no exploration or systematic assessment since 1914.

There has been no exploration activity in the Pine Ridge gold mine area since 1998.

Gold occurs in steeply dipping to near vertical west dipping quartz veins along bedding parallel faults hosted within carbonaceous slate or greywacke. The host rock and geological setting provide an easily identifiable classification as a 'slate belt gold district' which is similar to gold districts such as Hodgkinson in Queensland, Hill End in NSW, Bendigo and Ballarat in Victoria, and Beaconsfield in Tasmania.

About the gold intersections at the Pine Ridge gold mine

Argent gathered the known available data for the Pine Ridge gold mine from the DRE database. The data comprises annual reports and final reports for exploration licences that covered the deposit area, laboratory reports, drill logs, as well as geological and metallogenic maps for the area, and aerial photos.

The main focus of the assessment was 27 reverse circulation (RC) holes drilled under the management of Goldrim to an average depth of 75 metres for a total length of 2,026 metres. One of the RC holes was concluded with a 40 metre diamond tail for metallurgical testwork purposes.

The data was then analysed and crosschecked to assess for integrity and quality.

Table 1 (refer to link below) in Appendix C of this announcement provides details of the procedures employed, as well as the background information and explanations required for a report of exploration results in accordance with the JORC Code (2012).

The drill program yielded consistent elevated to bonanza type gold grades with the highest individual interval (before averaging with repeat assays) being 1 m @ 71.4 g/t Au from 59 m in hole PR010.

Figure 2 (refer to link below) provides a plan view of the collar locations and hole traces for the 27 RC holes along the 240 metre strike length.

The hole traces are colour-coded to assist visualisation of the assay results.

Example section illustrations follow for holes PR010 and PR023 (Figure 3), PR006 and PR009 (Figure 4), PR012 (Figure 5), and PR011, PR018 and PR019 (Figure 6); for Figures please refer to link below.

For each section, gold assay values are illustrated graphically along each hole trace, and the intersected geology has been colour coded based on the drill log data (see Appendix A for the geology legend).

About the metallurgy and preliminary assessments

A pre-feasibility study (in the terminology of the day) was completed on the project during 1997. The study was a reassessment of earlier work and included pit design, metallurgical testwork, environmental assessment and a preliminary economic viability assessment.

The study concluded that at the then 'very depressed' price of gold further work on the project was not warranted. The financial modelling was based on an assumed gold price of A$487 per ounce. In its final report to DRE in April 1998, Goldrim stated that it did not accept the negative findings, noting that the study was based on an outdated historical resource estimate that did not include the results of drilling performed after 1995 ie the holes reported in this announcement.

Goldrim also noted that the economic viability of the Pine Ridge project had begun to improve with a weakening of the Australian dollar at the time of submitting the report in 1998.

Metallurgical testwork performed by Envirometropolis Operations Pty Ltd in March 1997 on Pine Ridge material determined that most of the gold is in the 'free state', with very little bound in pyrite.

Standard sodium cyanide (NaCN) gold extraction tests provided good results with 87% to 93% gold dissolution and a low NaCN consumption, which reflects a large proportion of free gold with low antimony levels. Whilst Knelson Concentrator trials recovered only 16.7% of the gold in a gravity concentrate, carbonin-pulp (CIP) testwork provided excellent results, confirming that the contained gold may be classified as 'free' and that recoveries in excess of 90% could be expected.

R.W Corkery & Co Pty Ltd (Corkery) prepared the preliminary environmental assessment in 1997, providing potential synergies given that the same consultant prepared the Environmental Impact Study (EIS) submitted by Argent to the NSW Government on 10 April 2013 as part of mining lease application MLA418 for Kempfield.

According to the Goldrim 1998 report for Pine Ridge, 'The Corkery Report identified no serious environmental problems or barriers to mine development', with all potential identified issues assessed by Corkery as being readily manageable.

Kempfield strategy

The Pine Ridge gold mine is located in a gold district that has significant unrealised potential.

Argent's strategy is to identify potential satellite feedstock mining operations within trucking distance, to support a central mining and processing operation at Kempfield. The Pine Ridge gold mine has been identified as a good fit for this strategy.

One potentially attractive processing option under consideration for Kempfield premises a crushing, milling and CIP plant to initially extract silver and gold from the oxide material mined by open cut at the central site. Since the Kempfield oxide material extends generally from surface to a depth in the order of 50-60 metres, low strip ratios had been identified in the EIS for the first stage of mining - 0.5:1 (waste to ore) for a starter pit configuration, and averaging approximately 0.7:1 for a first stage of mining operations targeting 8.8 million tonnes of material. Under this option, flotation processing could be added at an appropriate point as the Kempfield mining operations encounter the deeper transition and primary material from which zinc and lead could be extracted (in addition to silver and gold). A plant of this nature could be readily adapted to process gold and silver ores mined at other nearby locations.

Next steps for the Pine Ridge gold mine

The Company's initial program at Pine Ridge gold mine will be to assess the repeatability of results attained by Goldrim by drilling two diamond drillholes on key sections. The diamond drillholes will confirm location of the mineralised lodes and provide valuable information on the sub-surface geology and structure. The local geology and structure will be mapped in detail to determine key controlling structures and/or lithology in association with assessment of attained drillcore.

Following this process reverse circulation drilling will be conducted with the aim of extending the known Pine Ridge mineralisation along strike to the north and at depth prior to preparing a resource estimate. Historic drilling had closed off mineralisation to the south however there has been no systematic test to define sterile areas. Argent will conduct routine grid spaced exploration drilling to identify any areas where extensions to mineralisation are possible. It appears as though exploration drilling was focussed on the single plane of mineralisation; however, it is typical for multiple parallel vein sheets exist. Systematic soil sampling will be conducted along the main trend and peripheral to main working areas to identify if other structural trends exist in the area.

Land access processes continue to progress and drill design work will be undertaken in the coming months.

About the detailed ASX announcements and future simplified presentation material

Please note that the technical and detailed nature of this report and the preceding Kempfield report released on 10 October 2016 are necessary for compliance with the JORC Code 2012 Edition and the relevant ASX Listing Rules for presenting drilling results for 'material mining project' projects such as Kempfield.

Once announcements such as this are released to the ASX, they form a technical and regulatory reference point for technical and financial analysts, and future reference by the Company. In accordance with the JORC Code (2012), material within these announcements (eg. diagrams) may be referred to in future more simplified publications including the Company's website, investor presentations, quarterly reports, and future ASX announcements, without having to fully repeat the compliance documentation (provided that no material change has occurred in the underlying facts).

This is an exciting time for Argent and its shareholders as the Company advances its operations toward the next rounds of drilling for Kempfield and West Wyalong, and new additions to the project pipeline such as the Pine Ridge gold mine and the Trunkey-Kings Plain gold belt.

This announcement is to be read in conjunction with Appendices A, B and C (refer to link below).

To view tables and figures, please visit:
http://abnnewswire.net/lnk/47A58R66

About Argent Minerals Limited:

Argent Minerals Ltd. (ASX:ARD) is an Australian publicly listed company with a 100% interest in a silver/gold project at Kempfield NSW. Work is underway on the preparation of an EIS and a feasibility study for the first stage of the project which will involve heap leaching some 8.8 million tonnes of mainly oxide and transitional material to produce over 9.5 million ounces of silver and 15,000 ounces of gold over a 5 year mine life. Argent is also earning up to a 70% interest in two other NSW projects - gold at West Wyalong and base metals at Sunny Corner.

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