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Wellington treasures

BY FARREN HOTHAM

MINERS drilling at the Commonwealth Mine site 25 minutes from Wellington have made promising finds of gold, copper, lead and zinc.

The exploration is carried out by Impact Minerals, a company backed by Perth billionaire Andrew "Ziggy" Forrest.

Impact managing director Dr Mike Jones has described the Commonwealth Mine project as similar in strength to the large Cadia mine near Orange.

On-site international geologist James Cumming, who has worked on projects from Zambia to Pretoria, South Africa, and in Australia is impressed by what lies beneath.

"Our current drilling follows a successful 2014 drilling campaign where we tested known mineralisation shafts on Commonwealth Mine. In that program we

found an extension to the south with massive sulphide to about four metres, 41 grams of gold, so now we have new targets based on various surveys."

"High in mountainous territory which overlooks country producing sheep and cattle are traces of copper, gold, zinc and lead. These traces are now sprouting new prospects.

"We have two new prospects, the Welcome Jack prospect where we have had some very encouraging geo-

chemical results and we have two holes there and the zinc doughnut, which has two holes and which is north east of the Commonwealth Mine. It has some interesting gravity targets also."

"Basically gold, copper, lead and zinc is what we are finding. The gravity is the density of rocks. Sulphide rocks are high in iron and copper, heavy minerals

basically, and they are at a very good depth and heavy in iron."

Impact Mineral's drill rigs are driving 150 to 300cm below the surface.

"The volcanic sediments are interesting, the country rock, and on those contacts you generally get good mineralisation."

In the 1930s the Commonwealth Mine was known as one of the biggest minerals producers in Australia. Some of the old mine shafts still exist not far from where Impact is looking for new riches now.



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MINING IN WELLINGTON: Geologist James Cumming looks over samples of rocks. **Photo: FARREN HOTHAM**