

Search for next Broken Hill continues

Silver City Minerals Ltd's game plan has been clear since it listed on the ASX in 2011 – find Broken Hill's next big base metals project.

The company strategically acquired 1,170sq km of exploration tenure covering a large area of the Willyama Supergroup, which surrounds the "supergiant" that is the Broken Hill lead-zinc-silver deposit.

Silver City initially set out to target near-surface mineralisation in the area with a view to utilise a JV agreement with local private miner CBH Resources – which operates the Rasp mine and mill in Broken Hill – but more recently the company has turned its attention to finding something bigger and deeper.

"We like to say we're out there to find another elephant, which is what Broken Hill is, but if we found elephant droppings we would be fine," managing director Chris Torrey told **Paydirt**.

"If Silver City was to find a deposit just 1% of the size of Broken Hill we would have happy shareholders. A 3-4mt orebody would certainly be an excellent discovery."

Silver City is currently banking on finding an elephant – or its lucrative ordure – at its Razorback West and Balaclava projects.

Razorback West is characterised by a 5km long, 400m wide zinc-lead anomaly detected in historic auger and RAB sampling programmes.

Torrey said Silver City was particularly interested in Razorback West's zinc anomaly, which overlaid a ridge of gravity anomalism, which extended for 6km along strike.

The company first probed the target in April 2012 with a 1,600m RC drilling campaign, which Torrey said only produced "low levels of zinc and manganese".

Still encouraged by the target's prospects, Silver City green lit an IP survey at Razorback West in December 2012, which identified three distinct areas of elevated chargeability, the Central, Northeast and East zones – ironically below areas already tested during the target's maiden drilling campaign.

Work at Razorback West idled until late last year when Silver City gave the go ahead for a moving loop EM survey over the prospect's geochemical and IP anomaly.

The survey covered an area of 7.14sq km and identified a weak conductor extending along strike for more than 1km.

Silver City was far from disheartened with the results and Torrey said the fact the conduc-



Silver City is testing Balaclava with two diamond holes

tors were coincident with elevated zinc, lead and manganese gave him confidence there was something bigger at play at Razorback West.

"They were very subtle EM anomalies because the mineral we are looking for is sphalerite, which doesn't generally respond very well to EM," Torrey said.

"We will be going back there to drill some more holes beneath those existing holes to target those EM conductors."

Balaclava – a JV with CBH – lies in a fault-bounded block enclosing the southern extension to the Broken Hill "line-of-lode".

Torrey said although outcrop was poor, a historic diamond hole drilled in 1989 returned a standout intersection of 10.1m @ 6.8% zinc and 0.7% lead.

Late last year Silver City completed a RAB drilling programme at Balaclava to sample bedrock beneath alluvial and soil cover, with one hole intersecting a gossan over 9m @ 0.48% zinc, 0.61% lead and 0.37% copper from 2m.

At the time of print, the company was halfway through a two-hole diamond drilling programme at Balaclava, which Torrey said was designed to test five close-spaced horizons in a zinc-rich rock package approximately 150m wide.

"It's an initial test to get a feel for what is going on there," Torrey said.

"It's probably about 600m all up."

Torrey said Silver City's partnership with CBH, which owned about 50% of its tenure, was an ace up the company's sleeve.

"It gives us flexibility in how we explore because CBH is interested in putting more ore through the mill," Torrey said.

"The scenario that they'd like to see is us having high-grade, near-surface mineralisation that could be trucked into town. They would own 25% of that and they have the off-take rights. It's a win-win. Even though we're looking for elephants, we could find something quite small and still make money out of it. With a partner that has a beneficiation mill no more than 15km away, it gives us lots of flexibility."

– Rhys Dickinson



Razorback West is less than 15km from the famed Broken Hill zinc-lead deposit