

## Astral Mining Adds Drill Targets at BC's Jumping Josephine

By Andrew K. Burger

Astral Mining (TSX.V:AST) on Oct. 18 released a progress report on the ongoing Phase II drilling program at its Jumping Josephine gold prospect in southern British Columbia. Astral's on-site geotechnical team has sampled JJ Main Zone quartz stockwork over more than 540 meters of strike and down to a maximum depth of 152 m, diamond drilling a total length of some 3,333 m. This brings total Phase I and II length to more than 4,791 m. Management expects that a minimum 12 more holes will be drilled during the Phase II program before calling it quits for the season.

Most of the second phase drilling has been in the south and southernmost sections drilled during Phase I as assays for drill cores reported in July show that gold grades and zone width generally increase towards the southern part of the zone. Previously reported assay results for Hole 07JD013, assayed 19 m averaging 7.01 grams/tonne gold, management noted in its media release.

Astral expects to expand the Phase II drilling program based on preliminary indications. "The Phase II drill program is being increased...We're applying for 4,500 m of new drilling; we're not going to drill through the winter, but for as long as we can—another 12 to 15 holes minimum before quitting," Manfred Kurschner, Astral's president and CEO told ResourceX Investor.

### Extended Strike at JJ

When granted approval to increase its Phase II drilling program, Astral will test and confirm the geologic model it is building of the JJ Main gold zone. Management expects to receive word of its amended drilling permit within the next two weeks.

"We'll have a total of 40 to 45 holes for the second phase, probably 800 m along strike and probably not much deeper than 150 m, though we may sink a few holes as deep as 200-300 m using smaller diameter cores," Kurschner said.

The 1500 m and 20 drill holes completed during the Phase I drilling program indicated "what seems like a plunging chute to the south where the best grades and widths were encountered, so needless to say, we have concentrated on that southern area with the second phase," Kurschner elaborated.

Phase I drilling defined the stockwork zone over a strike length of 170 m leaving it open in both directions and to depth. Phase II drilling of 27 holes has increased that to a surface strike length of 540 m.

### Overwhelming Demand for Assays, Equipment, Miners

Expected receipt of assay results for Jumping Josephine's Phase II drill samples has been delayed due to backlogs at Vancouver area labs.

"There are no grades or assays in as yet but the technical team is pleased with what they're seeing and their perceptions of it...Drilling this many holes it'd be nice to know what they are assaying, but that's just not possible due to back-ups at the labs," Kurschner commented. "Results for the first several holes of Phase II are expected in early November."

Booming metals prices and the heightened level of exploration and development activity is also putting strains on the supply of mining equipment and a premium on geologists, mining engineers, technical and other staff.

### South of the Border

In the US, Astral has working interests in five Nevada properties. Its Emmy and Scraper Springs properties are located within the once prolific Carlin Trend, the REF property is located to the southwest in the neighboring Battle Mountain and Eureka Trend, the Roy & Hills property further west and south in the Walker Lane Trend and Gold Springs to the southeast in an area of known gold occurrences.

"There haven't been any really big announcements from Nevada but there's a ton of drilling going on...A big strike there could really ignite things," Kurschner said.

Staff and equipment shortages are also holding back progress on Astral's Nevada projects. "We're permitted for four drilling projects but we've been delayed due to lack of drills and geologists"

With the onset of the northern winter, Astral is planning to turn its attention to its Bear Creek and Saluda gold prospects in South Carolina's Slate Belt. "We want to go back to South Carolina and start another round of drilling," Kurschner commented.

## The Benefits of Pooling Resources

Astral is one of six members of the Grosso Group, a management team which was formed to take advantage of the greater efficiencies in common financial, administrative and operational functions that a group organizational structure can provide to each of its member companies.

The Group is owned by its members, with each one paying in its share of capital and drawing on common resources and expertise as required.

“The Grosso Group is a non-profit corporation that provides [its member-owners] with services to do with accounting, finance and compliance—SOX (the US’ Sarbanes-Oxley legislation),” Kurschner explained. “It can be very cumbersome to ensure full compliance for corporate governance rules, particularly in the US.”

The Grosso Group has 20 geologists on staff upon whom members can draw on for their expertise. The group also assists with arranging financings. The Group structure is also advantageous when it comes to retaining and re-allocating staff, particularly in today’s times of high-demand and poaching, as they can be shared and allocated among members’ various projects, he added.

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