

U.S. Congressman
Nick Rahall
WORKING FOR WEST VIRGINIANS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MARCH 3, 1990

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RAHALL STRIKES AGREEMENT ON SOUTHERN WV MANGANESE INITIATIVE

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- U.S. Rep. Nick J. Rahall (D-WV) today announced that an agreement has been reached on a joint federal-state initiative aimed at paving the way for the commercial development of extremely critical deposits of the mineral 'manganese' located in southern West Virginia.

In late 1988, Rahall learned that the West Virginia Geological and Economic Survey had identified a mineralized belt approximately 150 miles long and 5 to 10 miles wide extending through parts of Mercer, Monroe, Greenbrier and Pocahontas Counties containing high-grade manganese ore. Manganese is an essential element in steelmaking. However, the United States is 100% reliant on imports from countries such as South Africa.

Since that time, in conjunction with the West Virginia Survey, Rahall has been seeking to obtain funding for the necessary studies to more firmly delineate the extent and development potential of the manganese deposits.

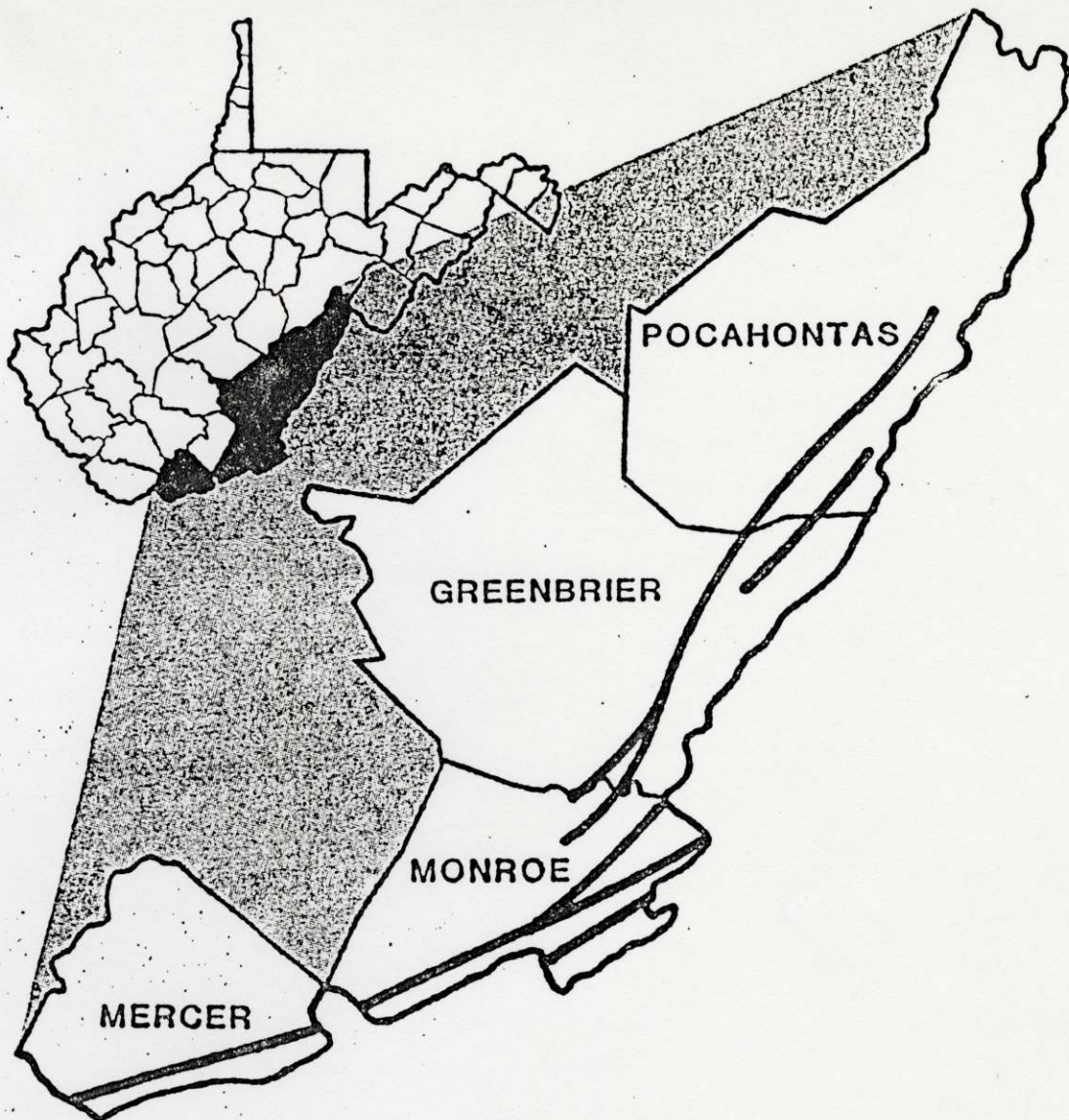
In a meeting in his office this week, representatives of the U.S. Geological Survey, the West Virginia Geological and Economic Survey and Rahall reached agreement on the scope and financing of a southern West Virginia manganese assessment program. The project would include data collection, geological mapping and manganese sampling and would be done jointly by the federal and state geological surveys. While the project's price tag remains to be finalized, an initial estimate placed the cost at between \$300,000 to \$500,000 to be born by the federal government.

"It is frightening to think that the Soviet Union and South Africa control 80% of the world's known reserves of manganese. They could bring this country to its knees if they decided to cut-off our manganese supplies," Rahall said. "Without manganese there would be no steel. Yet, today, there is no commercial production of manganese in the United States."

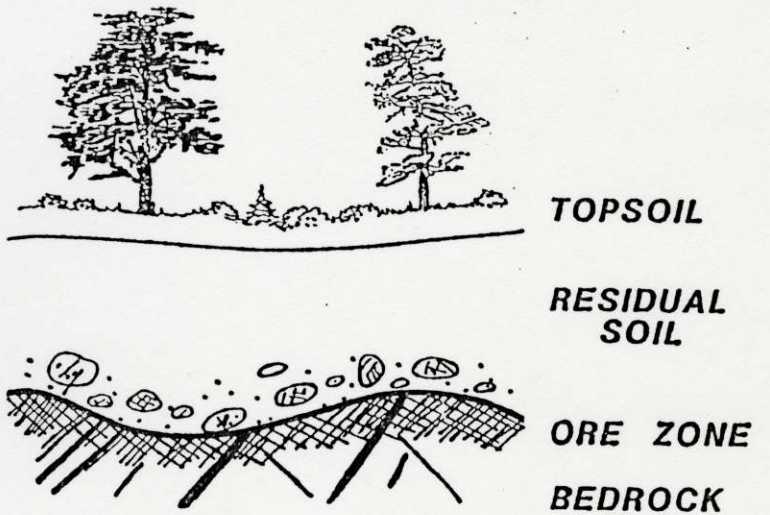
According to Rahall: "In West Virginia we have the potential to reduce this Nation's dependence on imports of this most critical mineral while at the same time expand our regional economy and providing new employment opportunities. However, first we will need to conduct the necessary assessments of our deposits so that we can attract commercial mining interest. This is what the federal and state geological survey effort will involve."

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TARGET AREAS



SILICEOUS DEPOSITS

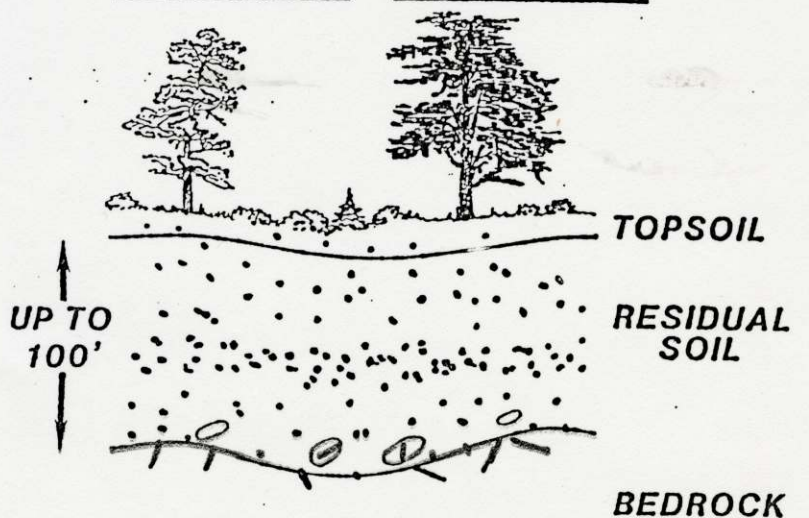


WEST VIRGINIA

ORE TYPES

- NODULAR
- SILICEOUS

NODULAR DEPOSITS



:: NODULAR ORE

Manganese deposit found in Mercer

BDT 10-6-88 A-1

By CHRIS MORRIS

of the Daily Telegraph staff

A large belt of manganese has been discovered stretching across four counties in West Virginia.



Rahall
affirmed belt.

Including Mercer, and Rep. Nick Rahall, D-W.Va., described the find as the biggest since the Pocahontas Coalfield.

The West Virginia Geological Survey has identified the mine approximately

"This is very high quality manganese and with the data we have, it appears that it would not be difficult to mine. Production of this ore will mean jobs for southern West Virginians while providing a measure of industrial and defense security for our nation."

• Nick Rahall
Democrat, W.Va.

150-miles long and five to 10-miles wide, extending through parts of Mercer, Monroe, Greenbrier and Pocahontas counties. Members of the agency recently briefed the House Subcommittee on Mining and Natural Resources in its investigation.

In light of the fact that the

United States is almost 100 percent dependent on imports to meet its manganese requirements, West Virginia is now poised to crack the strategic mineral stronghold foreign and often politically volatile countries

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Deposit

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have on us for this essential mineral," Rahall said. "This is perhaps one of the biggest mineral finds since the discovery of the Pocahontas Coalfield."

Manganese is used in the production of steel. Without it, widely used steel products could not be manufactured and no substitutes for manganese in this application have been found, said Hobart King, economic geologist.

He said the Soviet Union and South Africa control 80 percent of the world's supply of manganese and some countries, including the U.S., have problems obtaining it from those two countries.

While small amounts of the mineral were produced in southern West Virginia sporadically until the end of World War II, the extent and quality of the deposits are only now beginning to be understood, he said.

The deposit runs roughly parallel to the Virginia-West Virginia border — along East River Mountain in Mercer County — and is

extracted in much the same manner as clay.

"There wouldn't be any drilling and blasting like there is with coal mining," he said. "It is found under thick soil, in some cases the soil above the deposit is 100-feet thick. It comes out of ground in a state similar to clay and the manganese is processed out of that substance."

He said the U.S. uses about 700,000 tons of manganese per year, but he does not think the deposit would yield that much of the mineral.

"The project operating in southern West Virginia during World War II was producing about 27,000 tons per year. I can't say how much there is in this deposit because it is not one solid seam of manganese. There are large pockets of it along the 150-mile belt, but there are few sites in the U.S. that have as much in one single belt," he said.

The West Virginia Geological Survey is proposing to undertake development of the project and Rahall has pledged his support.

Manganese deposit is 'ace in the hole' for area, Rahall says

BDT 10-12-88 B-1
By CHRIS MORRIS

of the Daily Telegraph staff

"An ace in the hole," was Rep. Nick Rahall's description of a large belt of manganese found in four counties of West Virginia.

Rahall, D-W.Va., and members of the West Virginia Geological and Economic Survey were in Monroe County Tuesday viewing an abandoned manganese mining site; Rahall said he believes it is vitally important to the economic and defensive health of the nation that steps are taken to develop domestic deposits of the ore.

The Geological Survey discovered a 150-mile long, five-mile wide belt of manganese stretching through Mercer, Monroe, Greenbrier and Pocahontas counties. Dewey S. Kirstein, economic geologist, said the ore in the belt is high quality and would need little preparation before it is sent to steel manufacturers in the North. Manganese is a key ingredient in steel production.

"The advantage of the West Virginia deposits are they can be easily surfaced mined and are of high quality," Kirstein said. "An interesting aspect that we've noticed is the production that came from this one mine in Monroe County during World War II would be enough to produce one-fourth of the steel produced in the United States."

Since the U.S. imports nearly 100 percent of its manganese from the Soviet Union and South Africa, Rahall said it is important to have a large domestic supply.

"We have relied on the U.S.S.R. and South Africa for 98 percent of our more than 700,000 tons of manganese used in domestic consumption last year. That is a very dangerous reliance," he said. "We want to have an inventory of our domestic resources for our future defenses of this country, so that if we are cut off by either of those countries, we can come back to our stockpile."

The Geological Survey has indicated that there is a great potential for commercial production of shallow nodular manganese deposits in West Virginia. The agency has compiled a two-year proposal for a reconnaissance of these shallow deposits and is currently attempting to secure funding.

Kirstein said the first year of the study would include field work, such as mapping, sampling by portable auger and seismic surveys. He predicted the cost for these testing would be \$275,000.

The second year of the study would be carried out in conjunction with adjacent state surveys such as Pennsylvania, Virginia, Tennessee and Maryland; to outline the extent of this important mineral, he said. That too would cost about \$275,000.

Rahall said he is attempting to obtain this money from several sources.

"I want to lend all of my assistance possible via the

...Manganese

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Bureau of Mines, the Appalachian Regional Commission funding to allow the Geological Survey to continue to inventory these resources," he said. "Our government has classified manganese ore as a strategic metal -- because of that classification the government has begun stockpiling this resource."

"This means jobs for West Virginia and it means developing other resources we have in this state other than coal."