

RUA GOLD Submits Fast-Track Referral Application for Auld Creek Project in the Reefton Goldfield, New Zealand

Vancouver, British Columbia--(Newsfile Corp. - April 20, 2026) - Rua Gold Inc. (TSX: RUA) (NZX: RGI) (OTCQX: NZAUF) (FSE: X9R) ("RUA GOLD" or the "Company") is pleased to announce the submission of its Fast-Track Referral application for the Auld Creek Project in the Reefton Goldfield, marking a key milestone in the Company's transition from explorer to mine developer.

If successful, the ability to utilise the Fast-Track process has the potential to significantly accelerate development timelines and streamline permitting for the Auld Creek Project.

Highlights:

- In December 2024, the New Zealand Government introduced legislation establishing a one-stop-shop Fast-Track Approvals regime to accelerate nationally significant projects.
- RUA GOLD engaged a dedicated project team in late 2025 to advance permitting activities and support the Fast-Track application.
- The Company has now submitted its application for the Auld Creek Project to be considered under the Fast-Track process as a starter mine in the Reefton Goldfield.
- If successful, the Fast-Track process would enable RUA GOLD to secure all key approvals, including mining permits, resource consents, water use permissions, and wildlife approvals, through a streamlined pathway.
- The Company acknowledges the strong support of Ngāti Waewae, the Reefton and West Coast communities, and government stakeholders.
- RUA GOLD also thanks OceanaGold for its support and provision of environmental baseline data, which was instrumental in meeting submission timelines.
- A decision on the application is anticipated over the coming three months.

Simon Delander, Vice President commented: *"The team has worked diligently to compile the technical reports and initial baseline studies required to support the Auld Creek Project's referral application for inclusion in the Fast-Track Approvals process."*

"The Reefton Project has the potential to become a significant gold and antimony operation, positioning the region as an important global source of antimony, a critical mineral of increasing geopolitical significance. We look forward to continuing our collaboration with government and local stakeholders to advance the project."

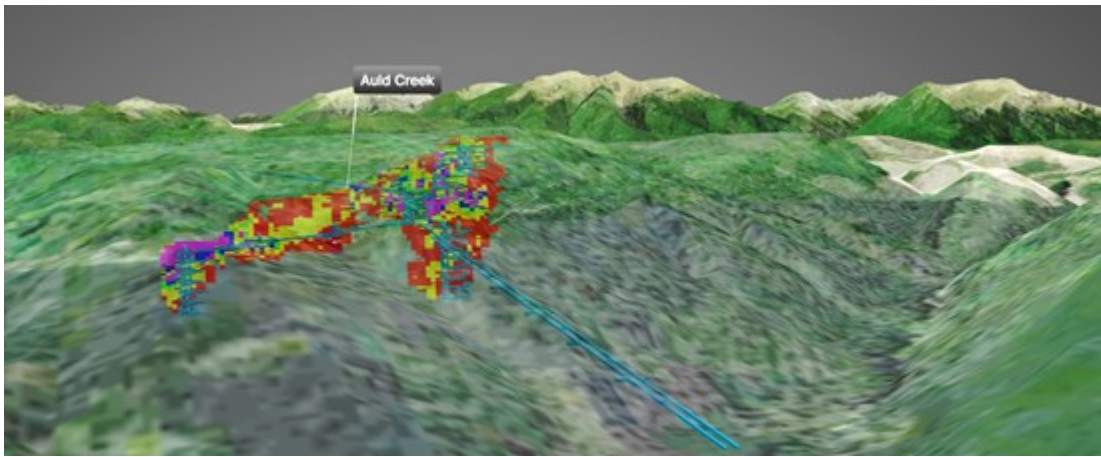


Figure 1: Conceptual Mine design of Auld Creek

To view an enhanced version of this graphic, please visit:

https://images.newsfilecorp.com/files/10755/293327_478b225b34047ba2_012full.jpg

FAST TRACK APPLICATION PROCESS

The Company has completed a referral submission of the Auld Creek Project application under the Fast-Track Approvals Act. The referral application includes a suite of technical reports and baseline studies, which will be further expanded ahead of the substantive Fast track application to ensure the Project meets and exceeds regulatory and environmental standards.

These studies incorporate extensive consultation with local stakeholders and input from leading environmental, social, and technical experts across multiple disciplines, including water quality, ecology, landscape and visual effects, air quality, socio-economic impacts, heritage, infrastructure, and mine closure planning.

In parallel, Rua Gold is advancing a Preliminary Economic Assessment (PEA), expected to be completed in May 2026, with progression to a Preliminary Feasibility Study (PFS) targeted for Q4 2026.

The Auld Creek Project is proposed as an underground mining operation with an expected initial mine life of up to eight years. The project is anticipated to employ approximately 200 people and contribute an estimated NZ\$240 million to the regional economy. It also has the potential to establish a processing hub to support future mining developments in the region.

THE FAST TRACK APPROVALS BILL

The Fast-Track Approvals Bill establishes a streamlined decision-making framework to facilitate infrastructure and development projects with significant regional or national benefits.

Under the process, project applications are submitted to the New Zealand Government, the responsible Ministers determine whether a project qualifies for fast-track consideration.

Eligible projects must then submit a substantive application to the New Zealand Government, these projects are then assessed by an independent expert panel in consultation with Government Agencies, this process assesses the proposal in detail and provides the final determination on the outcome.

Projects must meet defined criteria, including demonstrating regional or national significance. The process also includes consultation with relevant government agencies, local authorities, and iwi groups.

ABOUT RUA GOLD

RUA GOLD is an exploration company, strategically focused on New Zealand. With decades of expertise, our team has successfully taken major discoveries into producing world-class mines across

multiple continents. The team is now focused on maximizing the asset potential of RUA GOLD's two highly prospective high-grade gold projects.

The Company controls the Reefton Gold District as the dominant landholder in the Reefton Goldfield on New Zealand's South Island with over 120,000 hectares of tenements, in a district that historically produced over 2Moz of gold grading between 9 and 50g/t⁽¹⁾.

The Company's Glamorgan Project solidifies RUA GOLD's position as a leading high-grade gold explorer on New Zealand's North Island. This highly prospective project is located within the North Islands' Hauraki district, a region that has produced an impressive 15Moz of gold and 60Moz of silver⁽²⁾. Glamorgan is adjacent to OceanaGold Corporation's biggest gold mining project, Wharekirauponga.

For further information, please refer to the Company's disclosure record on SEDAR+ at www.sedarplus.ca.

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This news release includes certain statements that may be deemed "forward-looking statements". All statements in this new release, other than statements of historical facts, that address events or developments that the Company expects to occur, are forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements are statements that are not historical facts and are generally, but not always, identified by the words "expects", "plans", "anticipates", "believes", "intends", "estimates", "projects", "potential" and similar expressions, or that events or conditions "will", "would", "may", "could" or "should" occur and specifically include statements regarding, without limitation: the result of the Company's Fast-Track application; the timing and results of a preliminary economic assessment or pre-feasibility study; the timing and result of any mining permit application; and the Company's strategies, expectations, planned operations or future actions, including but not limited to the Company's proposed underground mine operations at its Auld Creek prospect. Although the Company believes the expectations expressed in such forward-looking statements are based on reasonable assumptions, such statements are not guarantees of future performance and actual results may differ materially from those in the forward-looking statements.

Investors are cautioned that any such forward-looking statements are not guarantees of future performance and actual results or developments may differ materially from those projected in the forward-looking statements. A variety of inherent risks, uncertainties and factors, many of which are beyond the Company's control, affect the operations, performance and results of the Company and its business, and could cause actual events or results to differ materially from estimated or anticipated events or results expressed or implied by forward looking statements. Some of these risks, uncertainties and factors include: general business, economic, competitive, political and social uncertainties; risks related to the effects of the Russia-Ukraine war and the war in the Middle East; risks related to climate change; operational risks in exploration, delays or changes in plans with respect to exploration projects or capital expenditures; the actual results of current exploration activities; conclusions of economic evaluations; changes in project parameters as plans continue to be refined; changes in labour costs and other costs and expenses or equipment or processes to operate as anticipated, accidents, labour disputes and other risks of the mining industry, including but not limited to environmental hazards, flooding or unfavorable operating conditions and losses, insurrection or war, delays in obtaining governmental approvals or financing, and commodity prices. This list is not exhaustive of the factors that

may affect any of the Company's forward-looking statements and reference should also be made to the Company's short form base shelf prospectus dated July 11, 2024, and the documents incorporated by reference therein, filed under its SEDAR+ profile at www.sedarplus.ca for a description of additional risk factors.

Forward-looking statements are based on the assumptions, beliefs, estimates and opinions of the Company's management on the date the statements are made, which include but are not limited to: to the accuracy of the Company's current mineral resource estimates; that there will be no material adverse change affecting the Company or its properties; the duration and effect of global and local inflation; geo-political uncertainties on the Company's workforce, business, operations and financial condition; the expected trends in mineral prices, inflation and currency exchange rates; that all required approvals and permits will be obtained for the Company's business and operations on acceptable terms including for underground mining at Auld Creek; that there will be no significant disruptions affecting the Company's operations and such other assumptions herein. Except as required by applicable securities laws, the Company undertakes no obligation to update these forward-looking statements in the event that management's beliefs, estimates or opinions, or other factors, should change.

¹. Technical Report on the Reefton Project, New Zealand, with an effective date of February 27, 2026 available under the Company's SEDAR+ profile at www.sedarplus.ca.

². Christie, A., Simpson, M., Barker, R., and Braithwaite, R. 2019. Exploration for epithermal Au-Ag deposits in New Zealand: history and strategy. New Zealand Journal of Geology and Geophysics, 62:1, 414-441. NI 43-101 Technical Report, Waihi District Pre-feasibility Study, New Zealand. OceanaGold Corporation, Report Date: December 11, 2024.



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