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July 30, 2026

RUA GOLD's Auld Creek Project Qualifies for New Zealand's 6-Month Fast-Track Approvals Process

Rua Gold Inc. (TSX: RUA | NZX: RGI | OTC: NZAUF | FSE: X9R) ("RUA GOLD" or the "Company") is pleased to announce that the Auld Creek Project, located in the Reefton Goldfield, New Zealand, has been has been approved for referreal to the process established under the Fast Track Approvals Act 2024. This represents another positive step in the Company's transition from explorer to mine developer.

Highlights:

- In December 2024, the New Zealand Government enacted legislation establishing a one-stop-shop Fast-Track Approvals regime to accelerate projects with significant regional or national benefits.
- RUA GOLD established a dedicated project team in late 2025 to advance permitting activities and support the Fast-Track application and key mining studies.
- The Fast-Track process provides a streamlined pathway through which RUA GOLD can seek all key approvals, including mining permits, resource consents, water-use permissions, and wildlife approvals.
- The Company acknowledges the continued strong support of Ngāti Waewae, the Reefton and wider West Coast communities, and government stakeholders.
- The Company remains on track to submit its substantive Fast-Track application in Q4 2026. If the application is successful, the Auld Creek Project would be fully permitted by mid-2027, allowing early works to commence.
- RUA GOLD completed a Preliminary Economic Assessment ("PEA") in early 2026 and expects to complete a Preliminary Feasibility Study ("PFS") in Q4 2026.

Simon Delander, VP Risk, Stakeholder, Regulatory Affairs, commented: *"We are very encouraged that the Auld Creek Project has accepted into New Zealand's Fast-Track Approvals process. This is an important milestone that reduces permitting risk and provides greater certainty as we advance the Project toward development.*

Supported by a team of independent advisors, we have been progressing a broad range of environmental, economic, social impact, mining and processing studies in preparation for submitting our substantive fast-track application later this year.

We have also undertaken extensive engagement with communities, stakeholders and regulators, completing more than 800 engagements. This engagement is helping stakeholders understand the Project and informing how its potential impacts will be managed"

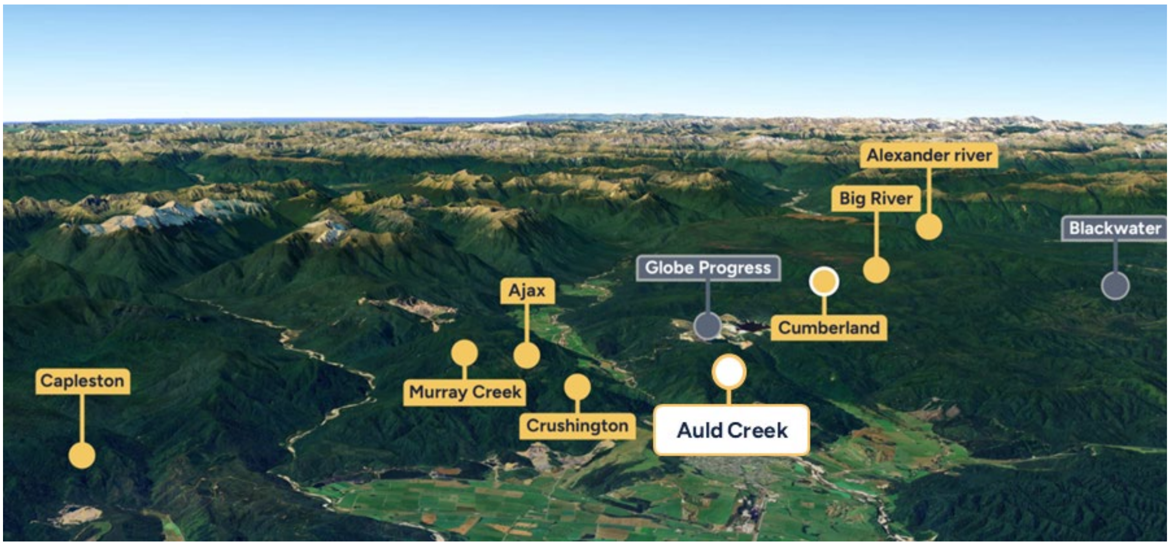

Figure 1: Overview of the Reefton Goldfield.

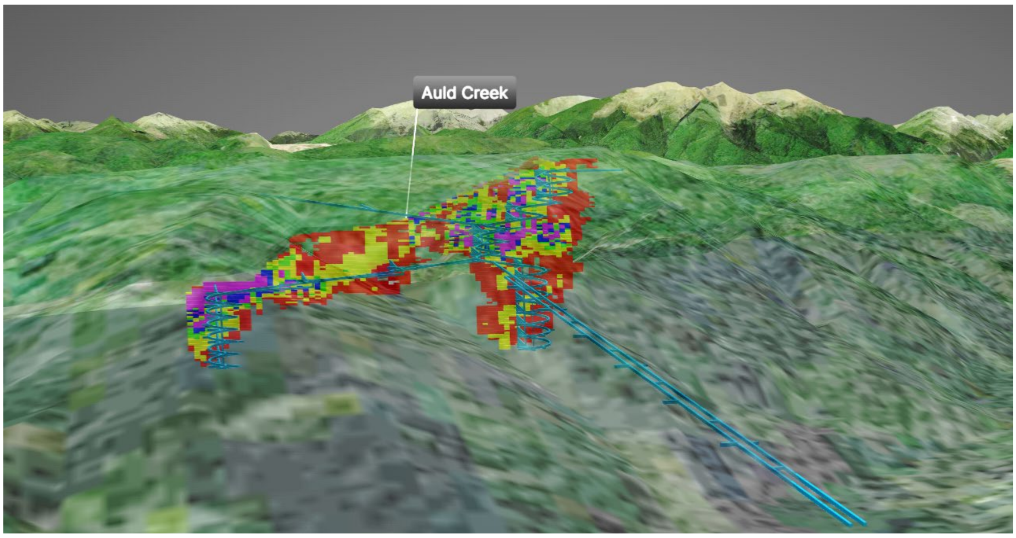

Figure 2: Conceptual Mine design of Auld Creek

FAST TRACK APPLICATION PROCESS

The Company is actively preparing a substantive Fast-Track application for the Auld Creek Project under the Fast-Track Approvals Act 2024. The application includes a comprehensive suite of technical reports and assessment of environmental effects, supported by social impact assessments, and economic studies.

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, traffic, socio-economic impacts, geochemistry, erosion and sediment control infrastructure, and mine closure planning.

In parallel, RUA GOLD has completed a PEA in early 2026, with a PFS now underway and targeted for completion in Q4 2026. The Auld Creek PFS is being undertaken by global mining consultancies Mining One and Pitch Black.

The Auld Creek Project is proposed as an underground mining operation with an initial mine life of eight years. The Project is expected to employ approximately 200 people and contribute an estimated NZ$240 million to the regional economy. The longer term plan is to establish a regional processing hub capable of supporting future mining developments in the Reefton Goldfield.

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THE FAST TRACK APPROVALS BILL

New Zealand's Fast-Track legislation allows for streamlined permitting for the Auld Creek Project and the acceleration of development timelines. The legislation establishes a "one-stop shop" process through which approvals otherwise required under multiple statutes—including the Resource Management Act, Conservation Act, Wildlife Act and Crown Minerals Act—can be considered together. More information can be found at www.fasttrack.govt.nz/.

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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[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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T his 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 pre-feasibility study; the anticipated employment and economic benefits of the Auld Creek Project; 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 o 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.