



ATHENA GOLD AWARDED \$200,000 GRANT FROM ONTARIO GOVERNMENT

White Rock, BC --- Newsfile Corp. --- April 13, 2026 --- Athena Gold Corporation (CSE: ATHA) (OTCQB: AHNRD) (“**Athena**” or the “**Company**”) is pleased to announce it has been awarded CAD \$200,000 in non-dilutive grant funding from the Ontario government through the Ontario Junior Exploration Program (“OJEP”). Administered by the Ontario Ministry of Mines, the OJEP grant provides financial assistance to junior exploration companies to offset costs associated with grassroots mineral exploration.

“We send our gratitude to the Ontario Ministry of Energy and Mines for their ongoing commitment to supporting junior explorers like Athena,” said Koby Kushner, CEO of Athena. *“This non-dilutive funding will be used to help finance our maiden drill program at our Laird Lake project, where we are aiming to make the next great discovery in the historic Red Lake Gold Camp through our recently launched maiden drill program.”*

“Ontario is leading the charge to secure the minerals that will power our economy and strengthen our sovereignty,” said Stephen Lecce, Minister of Energy and Mines. *“Through OJEP, we’re backing companies like Athena to advance promising projects here at home—unlocking resources, creating jobs, and building a more self-reliant and secure Canadian economy.”*

About OJEP

The Ontario Junior Exploration Program (OJEP) is an initiative of the Ontario government that will help attract investment in early exploration, expand the pipeline of mineral development projects, including critical minerals, and lead to more mines and jobs in Ontario. Early exploration is key to the discovery of new and existing minerals, including critical minerals, which is a priority area for Ontario. The mines of the future depend on discoveries made by junior companies during the exploration phase. By funding the eligible costs associated with early exploration, OJEP can reduce risk for private investors, boosting Ontario’s appeal as a jurisdiction of choice for mining investment.

For more information please visit: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontario-junior-exploration-program>

About Athena Gold Corporation

Athena is engaged in the business of mineral exploration and the acquisition of mineral property assets. Its objective is to locate and develop economic precious and base metal properties of merit and to conduct additional exploration drilling and studies on its projects across North America. Athena’s Laird Lake project is situated in the Red Lake Gold District of Ontario, covering over 7,000 hectares along more than 10 km of the Balmer-Confederation Assemblage contact, where recent surface sampling results returned up to 373 g/t Au. This underexplored area is road-accessible, located about 10 km west of West Red Lake Gold’s Madsen mine and 34 km northwest of Kinross Gold’s Great Bear project. Also in northwestern Ontario is Athena’s proposed acquisition of the Forester project, a 4,900-hectare land package located less than 30 km southeast of Orla Mining’s Musselwhite Gold Mine, with historical drill intercepts showing strong potential for both high-grade,

narrow-vein and low-grade, bulk-tonnage gold mineralization. Meanwhile, its Excelsior Springs Project is located in the prolific Walker Lane Trend in Nevada, where it is currently under an earn-in option with Mammoth Minerals Limited (formerly, Firetail Resources Limited). The Excelsior Springs Project spans over 2,500 hectares and covers at least three historic mines. Athena also holds 100% interest in its Oneman Lake Au-VMS project in Ontario.

For further information about Athena Gold Corporation, please visit www.athenagoldcorp.com.

On Behalf of the Board of Directors
Koby Kushner
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Forward-Looking Statements

This press release contains forward-looking statements and forward-looking information (collectively, "forward-looking statements") within the meaning of applicable Canadian and U.S. securities laws. All statements, other than statements of historical facts, included herein, including, without limitation, statements regarding future exploration plans, future results from exploration, and the anticipated business plans and timing of future activities of the Company, are forward-looking statements. Although the Company believes that such statements are reasonable, it can give no assurance that such expectations will prove to be correct. Forward-looking statements are typically identified by words such as: "believes", "will", "expects", "anticipates", "intends", "estimates", "plans", "may", "should", "potential", "scheduled", or variations of such words and phrases and similar expressions, which, by their nature, refer to future events or results that may, could, would, might or will occur or be taken or achieved. In making the forward-looking statements in this press release, the Company has applied several material assumptions, including without limitation, that there will be investor interest in future financings, market fundamentals will result in sustained precious metals demand and prices, the receipt of any necessary permits, licenses and regulatory approvals in connection with the future exploration and development of the Company's projects in a timely manner.

The Company cautions investors that any forward-looking statements by the Company are not guarantees of future results or performance, and that actual results may differ materially from those in forward-looking statements.

Readers are cautioned not to place undue reliance on forward-looking statements. The Company undertakes no obligation to update any of the forward-looking statements in this press release or incorporated by reference herein, except as otherwise stated.

Neither the Canadian Securities Exchange nor its regulation services provider accepts responsibility for the adequacy or accuracy of this release.