ATHENA APPOINTS FRED LEIGH TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Toronto, Ontario --- Newsfile Corp. --- September 8, 2026 --- **Athena Gold Corporation (CSE: ATHA) (OTCQB: AHNRF)** ("Athena" or the "Company") is pleased to announce the appointment of Mr. Fred Leigh to the Company's Board of Directors (the "Board"), effective immediately.

Mr. Leigh has been involved in the resource sector for nearly 40 years and has served in significant roles as a founder, director and/or investor in numerous public companies. He is also the founder and President of VC7K Capital Inc., a privately held company that, for more than 35 years, has invested in early-stage opportunities across the resource sector.

In connection with Mr. Leigh's appointment, Mr. Brian Power has resigned from the Board. Mr. Power will continue to work with Athena in a consulting capacity.

"I would like to personally welcome Fred to Athena's Board. Fred has been an early backer of several of the most successful mining ventures in Canada over the past four decades. Notable examples include his role as a founding investor in the group that structured the acquisition of the Golden Bear Mine by Wheaton River Minerals, which later evolved into what is now the metal streaming giant Wheaton Precious Metals. He was an early investor in several other major mining transactions, including Hathor Exploration, which was acquired by Rio Tinto for approximately C$650 million in 2011, and Blue Pearl Mining, which acquired Thompson Creek Metals for US$575 million in 2006. He was also one of the early directors of Great Bear Resources prior to its discovery in Red Lake, which Kinross acquired for C$1.8 billion in 2022. I look forward to working closely with Fred as we advance Laird Lake and look to prove out the next major gold discovery in Red Lake," said Koby Kushner, President and CEO of Athena. *"On behalf of the Board, I would also like to extend a heartfelt thank you to Brian for his hard work and dedication to the Company over the last several years, and I look forward to continuing to work with him in his new consulting role."*

"There is significant value to be unlocked across Athena's portfolio. I have spent my career backing early-stage stories in proven camps, led by teams with the drive and motivation to make a new discovery, and Red Lake is as good as it gets. I am excited to join the Board and to be part of what I believe will become another Canadian mining success story," said Fred Leigh, incoming Director of Athena.

Options Grant

The Company announces that it has granted an aggregate of 2,000,000 stock options ("Options") at an exercise price of $0.34 per common share to directors, officers and consultants of the Company, pursuant to the terms of the Company's 2026 Stock Option Plan. The Options shall vest immediately, expire ten (10) years from the date of grant and are subject to approval by the Canadian Securities Exchange. The Options, and any common shares issued upon exercise, are subject to a statutory hold period of four months from the date of grant in accordance with applicable securities laws and the policies of the Canadian Securities Exchange.

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 more than 7,000 hectares along more than 10 km of the Balmer-Confederation Assemblage contact, where the Company recently made a high-grade, near-surface, grassroots gold discovery. 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 Forester project, a 14,930-hectare land package located less than 30 km southeast of Equinox Gold'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, Athena's 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. The Excelsior Springs project spans more than 2,500 hectares and includes at least three historic mines. For further information about Athena Gold Corporation, please visit www.athenagoldcorp.com.

On Behalf of the Board of Directors
Koby Kushner
President and Chief Executive Officer, Athena Gold Corporation

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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.