KO Gold Provides Exploration and Drilling Update on its Otago Gold District Permits, New Zealand

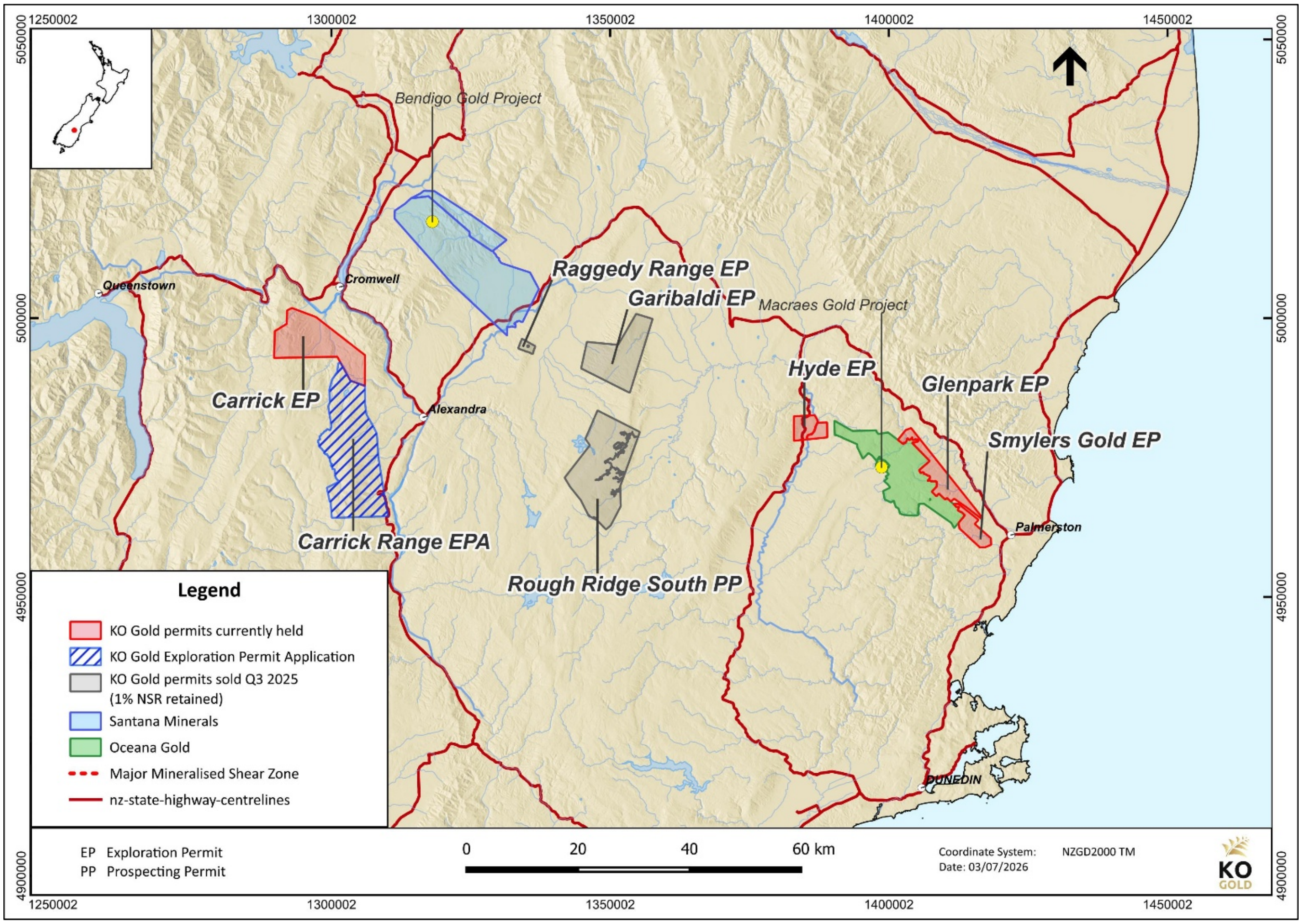
Toronto, Ontario – July 7, 2026 – KO Gold Inc. (**CSE:KOG**) ("**KO Gold**" or the "**Company**") is pleased to provide an update on its 2026 drilling and exploration campaign across its 100%-owned exploration permits in the Otago Gold District, South Island, New Zealand. Reverse circulation ("**RC**") drilling at the Company's Smylers Gold Exploration Permit ("**Smylers EP**") is at present progressing on schedule. In addition, multiple work programs, including both RC and DD drilling are advancing at the same time at the Carrick, Hyde, Glenpark, and Carrick Range permits (**Figure 1**).

Highlights

- 21 RC holes have been completed and 1,554.4 metres have been drilled at the Smylers EP since drilling commenced on May 5, 2026. A total of 24 holes have been planned for the Smylers East and Smylers Main targets at the Smylers EP (**Table 1**).
- Drilling on the Smylers East target is complete, and the rig has been moved to the Smylers Main target for step-out drilling along the principal Hyde-Macraes Shear Zone ("HMSZ") corridor.
- RC drilling samples are being submitted for analysis and initial assay results are anticipated in Q3 2026.
- Landowner access at the Smylers EP has been granted and private-landowner access negotiations at Carrick and Hyde are progressing constructively and full access is expected within days.
- A diamond drilling rig has been secured from Eco Drilling for the Carrick EP core drilling program, which is expected to commence shortly.
- An antimony exploration program has been initiated at the Carrick EP. Antimony is a designated critical mineral in Canada, USA, UK, EU, Australia, and New Zealand.
- Passive seismic data at Hyde EP is being interpreted by Resource Potentials Pty Ltd of Perth, Western Australia to map depth-to-basement and structural offsets along the western extension of the HMSZ and prioritize drill targets ahead of rig mobilization.

Greg Isenor, President and CEO of KO Gold, commented, "*Our 2026 campaign is advancing on multiple fronts with drilling progressing well at our Smylers EP. At Smylers East, we are drill testing the eastern extension of the HMSZ and at Smylers Main we are testing the continuity and extension of our previous gold intercepts. At Carrick, we will be core drilling to validate high grade historical gold intersections as a start to identify and validate mineralized shoots. A diamond drill rig has been secured for Carrick and access arrangements are moving forward. The antimony potential at Carrick has been identified by recent compilation and prospecting and parallel antimony exploration is underway. The team has built real momentum, and we look forward to delivering our Smylers assay results in the third quarter of 2026.*"

Figure 1: *Regional map of KO Gold's exploration permits in the Otago Gold District*



Exploration and Drilling Program Update

Drilling is being undertaken by Eco Drilling, an experienced New Zealand-based contractor, under a fully implemented health, safety, and environmental management system (**Figure 2**). Drill collar locations and access at the Smylers EP were finalized with private landowners in accordance with the Company's permit conditions granted by NZP&M.

Smylers – The current program consists of both drill testing the eastern geochemical anomalies interpreted to lie on hanging-wall structures of the HMSZ and also step out drilling along the principal HMSZ corridor to test continuity of gold mineralization on the significant intersections returned by KO Gold's 2021 drilling (**Figure 3**). Concurrent soil geochemical sampling is being conducted to refine targeting on adjacent untested areas with 250 soil samples collected to date.

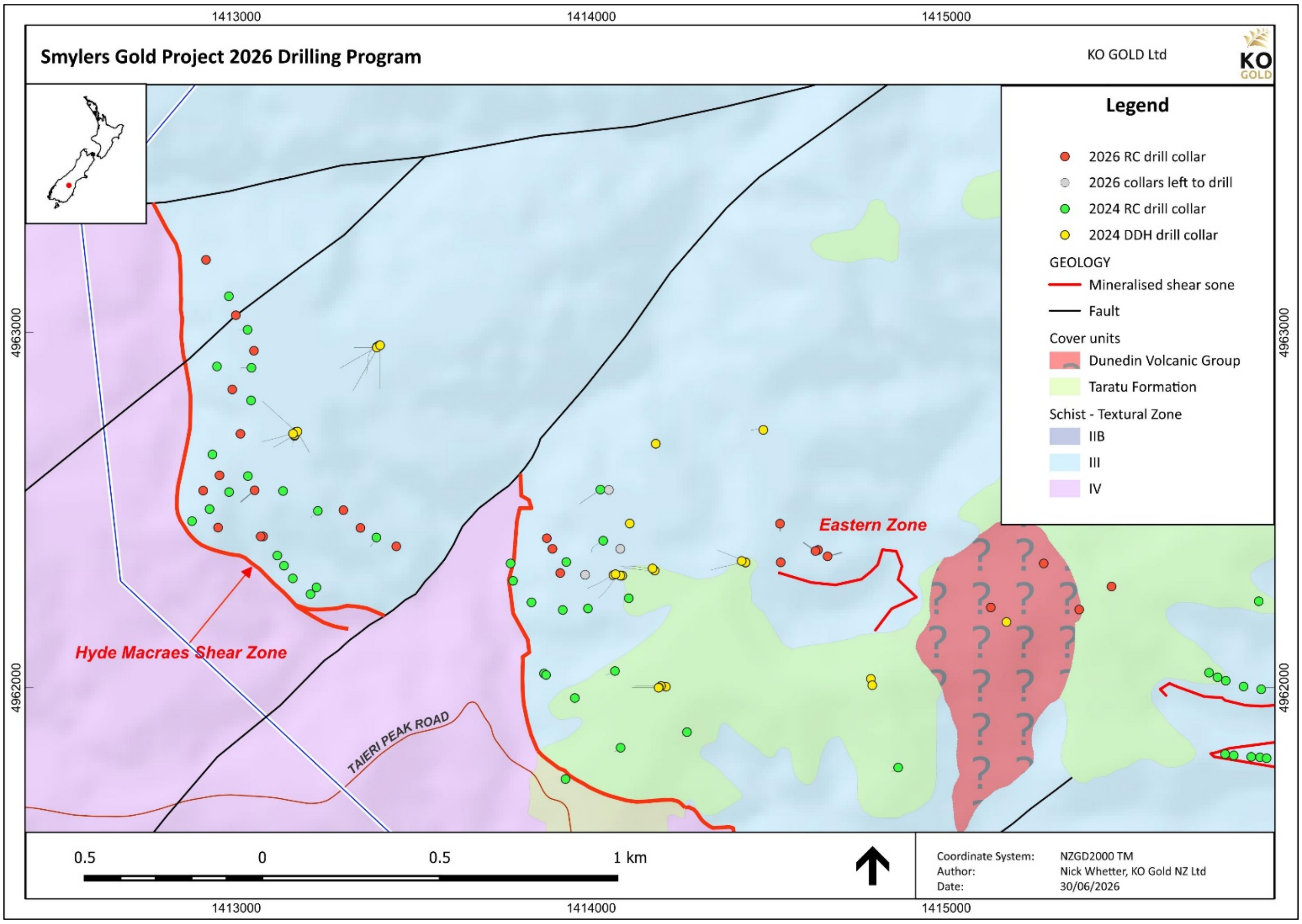
Figure 2: *UDR650 drill rig in action at Smylers on 19th June 2026*

Table 1: *2026 drill collar table to date*

HOLE_ID	HOLE TYPE	E_NZTM	N_NZTM	Azimuth (deg)	Dip (deg)	Hole Depth (m)
SMRC0065	RC	1413875	4962421	0	-90	78.0
SMRC0066	RC	1413913	4962323	0	-90	71.0
SMRC0067	RC	1415375	4962220	0	-90	91.0
SMRC0068	RC	1415466	4962285	0	-90	108.0
SMRC0069	RC	1415126	4962226	0	-90	80.0
SMRC0070	RC	1414639	4962388	0	-90	31.0
SMRC0071	RC	1414632	4962385	305	-50	64.0
SMRC0072	RC	1414666	4962370	75	-54	70.0
SMRC0073	RC	1414534	4962353	0	-90	66.0
SMRC0074	RC	1414532	4962462	180	-70	60.0
SMRC0075	RC	1412915	4963205	0	-90	55.0
SMRC0076	RC	1412907	4962555	0	-90	53.0
SMRC0077	RC	1412949	4962451	0	-90	55.0
SMRC0078	RC	1413076	4962426	0	-90	37.0
SMRC0079	RC	1412953	4962598	0	-90	80.0
SMRC0080	RC	1412999	4963049	0	-90	109.0
SMRC0081	RC	1413050	4962949	270	-65	126.0
SMRC0082	RC	1412989	4962840	0	-90	100.0
SMRC0083	RC	1413012	4962715	0	-90	86.4
SMRC0084	RC	1413069	4962426	0	-90	55.0
SMRC0086	RC	1413069	4962426	0	-90	79.0
TOTAL (m)						**1,554.4**

Note: assay results for these drill holes are still pending from the laboratory.

Figure 3: *Smylers Gold Project 2026 drilling program completed and remaining planned drill holes along the HMSZ corridor*



Carrick – The Carrick drilling program aims to twin and validate key historical intersections within the historical Carrick Goldfield, an area that despite past production has never been systematically tested with modern techniques or deeper drilling. A structural geology review and field mapping are underway to support drill planning and Department of Conservation ("DoC") access arrangements are in progress. The Mineral Impact Assessment for the permit remains valid through November 2026 and notification of fieldwork commencement has been provided to DoC.

Hyde – Landowner liaison is progressing positively on the eastern side of the permit and approximately 3 line-kilometres of passive seismic data will provide target generation along the western extension of the HMSZ. A total of five drill holes are planned to test the presence of HMSZ. Exploration drilling is now being carried out by other operators on both the east and west extensions of the Hyde permit.

Glenpark – Targeting of a down-dip northeastern HMSZ extension is being progressed with drilling planned subject to scheduling and access.

Carrick Range – Over the Carrick Range application area, an initial soil geochemical sampling program has been completed with samples undergoing portable XRF and laboratory analysis to support the technical work plan. Showings of both Gold and Antimony are being prospected, sampled, and mapped at present.

Antimony Potential — Carrick EP

The Carrick Goldfield has a documented history of areas of small-scale antimony mining alongside gold, and KO Gold has begun work to assess the antimony potential of its Carrick EP through rock-chip sampling and mapping, with further work and drill testing to follow. The recent inspection and sampling of the old showing within the Carrick EP known as Pipe Clay Gully has mineralization historically assaying 25% stibnite and this area will be mapped to determine the extent of the mineralization and drilling.

Antimony has become strategically important as it is a designated critical mineral in Canada, USA, UK, EU, Australia, and New Zealand, and is used in defence, energy storage, semiconductors, and flame retardants. China is the world's largest producer and introduced export controls in August 2024. Prices have risen sharply and Western countries have intensified the search for new supply. This work is at an early stage, no drilling has yet tested the antimony mineralization on the Company's permits, and it remains secondary to KO Gold's primary focus on gold.

Cautionary Statements and Data Verification

This news release contains scientific and technical information with respect to adjacent properties to the Company's properties in the Otago Gold District, which the Company has no interest in or rights to explore. Readers are cautioned that information regarding the geology, mineralization, and mineral resources on adjacent properties is not necessarily indicative of the mineralization on the Company's properties.

Data Verification and Historical Information: Certain scientific and technical information in this news release, including historical exploration results and the reference to historical stibnite grades at the Pipe Clay Gully showing, is derived from historical records that predate the Company's current programs. The Qualified Person has reviewed the available historical data but has not been able to independently verify all historical results, and readers are cautioned that historical results are not necessarily indicative of mineralization on the Company's permits. The Qualified Person considers the historical information relevant as an exploration guide only. Assay results from the Company's 2026 drilling and sampling remain pending. QA/QC and sample security procedures applicable to those results will be described when results are disclosed.

Qualified Person Statement

All scientific and technical information contained in this news release was prepared and approved by Paul Ténière, P.Geo., Vice President of Exploration and Director of KO Gold Inc. who is a Qualified Person as defined by NI 43-101.

Further information on KO Gold and its projects can be viewed on its website at https://kogoldnz.com/investors including a corporate presentation and Fact Sheet.

About KO Gold Inc.

KO Gold is a Canadian junior exploration company listed on the CSE under "KOG". The Company's strategy is to acquire and explore highly prospective gold properties within the Otago Gold District in New Zealand. KO Gold presently has four 100%-owned exploration permits within the Otago Gold District for a combined land package of 400 km^2 (including the Carrick Range exploration permit application). The Company's Smylers Gold, Hyde, and Glenpark EPs are located adjacent to OceanaGold's Macraes Gold Mine and the Carrick EP includes the historic Carrick Goldfield which holds promise as a significant gold deposit near Santana Minerals' Bendigo-Ophir Gold Project. The Company also has an NSR on three additional permits, Garibaldi, Raggedy Range, and Rough Ridge South totaling

340 km^2. KO Gold has completed exploration and drilling on its permits in the Otago Gold District over the past six years including RC and diamond drilling on its Smylers Gold EP with additional drilling currently underway at its Smylers, Carrick, Hyde, and Glenpark permits.

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The CSE has neither approved nor disapproved the contents of this news release. Neither the CSE nor its Market Regulator (as that term is defined in the policies of the CSE) accepts responsibility for the adequacy or accuracy of this news release.

Forward-Looking Information

This news release contains certain "forward-looking statements" and "forward-looking information" within the meaning of applicable Canadian securities laws (collectively, "forward-looking statements"). Forward-looking statements are frequently characterized by words such as "plan," "expect," "intend," "anticipate," "believe," "estimate," "may," "will," "would," "potential," "propose," "target," "scheduled," or variations of such words and phrases, or statements that certain actions, events or results "may," "will" or "could" occur. All statements, other than statements of historical fact, that address activities, events or developments that the Company believes, expects or anticipates will or may occur in the future are forward-looking statements.

Forward-looking statements in this news release include, but are not limited to, statements relating to: the scope, timing, sequencing and objectives of the Company's 2026 drilling and exploration programs at the Smylers Gold, Carrick, Hyde, Glenpark and Carrick Range permits; the completion of the remaining drill holes in the current Smylers main-zone program; the expected timing of receipt and reporting of assay results; the planned mobilization of a diamond drill rig to the Carrick EP; the progress and outcome of landowner access negotiations and Department of Conservation access arrangements; the acquisition, processing, interpretation and intended use of passive seismic and other geophysical and geochemical data; the planned advancement of the antimony exploration program at the Carrick EP; the status and outcome of the Carrick Range exploration permit application under review by New Zealand Petroleum & Minerals; and the potential for discovery, delineation and development of mineral resources, including a potential maiden mineral resource estimate, on the Company's permits.

Forward-looking statements are based on a number of opinions, estimates and assumptions that management considers reasonable as of the date of this news release, including, without limitation: the continued availability of drilling equipment, contractors, geophysical service providers and laboratory services on acceptable terms and on schedule; the timely finalization of landowner and Department of Conservation access arrangements; the accuracy of geological, geochemical and geophysical interpretations; the continuation of favourable operating, regulatory and stakeholder-relations conditions in New Zealand; the continued validity of, and the Company's ability to maintain and obtain, its permits and approvals; and the Company's ability to fund and execute its planned programs.

Forward-looking statements are subject to known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors that may cause actual results, performance or achievements to differ materially from those expressed or *implied by such statements, including, without limitation: exploration and development risks; the risk that drilling results, assay results or interpretations do not meet expectations; delays in completing access arrangements with landowners or obtaining regulatory consents; changes in commodity prices for gold, antimony and other minerals; the availability of financing on acceptable terms; delays in obtaining required governmental or regulatory approvals; changes to applicable laws, regulations or permit conditions in New Zealand or Canada; environmental, operational and weather-related risks; and the other risk factors described from time to time in the Company's public disclosure filings available under its profile on SEDAR+ at www.sedarplus.ca.*

Although the Company believes that the assumptions and expectations reflected in such forward-looking statements are reasonable, undue reliance should not be placed on forward-looking statements because the Company can give no assurance that they will prove to be correct. Forward-looking statements are made as of the date of this news release, and the Company disclaims any intention or obligation to update or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise, except as required by applicable law.

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