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Teviot and Mahinerangi gold search

By Simon Hartley

Australian-listed company New Age Exploration (NAE) has got approval for two gold prospecting permits in South and Central Otago, for its low impact, two-year, \$150,000 work programme.

Although modest by industry standards, the programme is one of only a few in the country looking at gold trapped in hard rock, as opposed to alluvial (loose) gold exploration, including some near Waikaia and Roxburgh.

The "Teviot application" is a few kilometres east of Roxburgh, covering 458.5sq km and the "Mahinerangi application", is northeast of Lawrence, covering 417.5sq km.

The latter's southeastern boundary is just 9km from the historical Gabriels Gully goldfield which yielded more than 500,000oz from 1861.

NAE lodged applications with Government permit agency New Zealand Petroleum & Minerals in mid-August, which were approved this week.

NAE's managing director, Gary Fietz, said the initial exploration programme would start in mid-November with Dr Doug MacKenzie, from University of Otago, contracted to do fieldwork focused on soil sampling and geological mapping, to quickly identify drill targets.

A separate exploration permit would be required to drill.

"NAE is now in an exciting position of being the first to explore the South Otago schist belt for Macraes-style gold deposits within these permits," he said in a statement.

NAE believes recent research had identified a "mirror image" in the south of the Otago schist belt within its permits of geology which is present in the north of the belt, about 60km from Oceana Gold's Macraes mine.

Macraes has produced more than 4.3 million ounces of gold during the past 26 years.

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