Aurora Minerals Limited
ABN 46 106 304 787

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The Manager
Announcements
Company Announcements Office
Australian Stock Exchange Limited
PO Box H224 Australia Square
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Exploration Update
Hazelbrook Epithermal Gold Project, New Zealand

HIGHLIGHTS

- **New gold–in-soil anomaly discovered at Toolshed prospect, southwest of Backyard prospect**
- **Rock-chip sampling identifies more gold mineralisation northeast of Backyard prospect and mapping extends the prospective zone**
- **Prospecting identifies another significant epithermal system, at Te Mata prospect to the south**
- **Project-wide aeromagnetic survey planned for May 2005**

INTRODUCTION

Aurora Minerals (**ASX codes** ARM and ARMO, **NZX codes** ARM & ARMOA) has conducted more exploration at its Hazelbrook Project (PP39-270) on the North Island of New Zealand and is pleased to announce further encouraging results. These include the discovery of a new gold-in-soil anomaly from soil sampling at the **Toolshed prospect** and extensions to the newly discovered Backyard Prospect (grades up to 6.9 g/t gold) in the northern part of Hazelbrook project.

Hazelbrook is a large 1013 km^2 project, 100% owned by the Company, where it is exploring for a large Martha-type epithermal quartz vein gold deposit. The Martha mine lies to the south of and in a similar geological setting to Hazelbrook, and has produced approximately 7.5 million ounces of gold to date (at an average grade of approximately 7.4 g/t gold) and 26 million ounces of silver.

LATEST EXPLORATION

1. Toolshed Prospect

The **Toolshed prospect** lies approximately 2.1kms southwest of Aurora's recently discovered **Backyard prospect** where gold-bearing quartz veins have yielded assays up to **6.9g/t gold**. Both **Toolshed** and **Backyard** occur within the Huia Volcanic Center, a roughly circular andesitic volcanic centre covering some 14km^2 of hills and elevated plateau.

The Company's exploration program has identified a coincident gold-arsenic-antimony soil anomaly at the **Toolshed prospect**. The anomaly has maximum values of 52ppb gold, 614ppm arsenic and 27ppm antimony over a distance of 400 metres in a south-southwest direction, and is 200 metres wide. The **Toolshed** anomaly extends right up to the southern boundary of the area sampled and may continue, extending to the south where the company plans to test shortly.

This concentration of gold and the gold-pathfinder elements arsenic and antimony occurring together in the soil is encouraging and Aurora believes that this anomaly may potentially represent the upper parts of an epithermal quartz vein system at depth.

The **Toolshed** soil anomaly is more evidence for the potential for a significant epithermal mineral system within the Huia Volcanic Center.

Soil sampling details :

The orientation soil sampling survey at **Toolshed** covered an area of 1200m north-south by 1200m east-west and was designed to follow-up earlier rock-chip samples of mineralised andesite tuff, containing gold to 132ppb, arsenic to 1847ppm and antimony to 29ppm. The new anomaly lies in the southern part of the area tested, and is defined by the +10ppm As, +3ppbAu and +3ppm Sb contours. Sample spacing was 100m on north-south trending lines 100m apart with every other line staggered by 50m to give a non-directionally bias grid sample distribution. 133 samples of soil/weathered bedrock were collected from a depth of 10 to 80cm, below a regionally extensive but thin recent volcanic ash cover which is considered to mask the surface geochemical response of potential bedrock mineralization. The soil anomaly covers the mineralised tuff outcrops and extends upslope to the south and southwest through grass covered hilly pasture.

The next stage of exploration in the **Toolshed** area will include extending the soil sampling coverage southwards to test for extensions of the anomaly.

2. Backyard Prospect

At the **Backyard prospect** exploration continued, aimed at increasing the size of the prospective zone at surface. The **Backyard** gold-bearing quartz veins lie on the northwestern edge of an extensive grass covered plateau. The veins are vertical to steep southerly dipping and are believed to extend beneath the plateau to the east and northeast.

Current size estimates, based on the veins identified so far are:

- 400m of strike for the main outcropping quartz vein where 10 out of 27 samples so far carry gold up to 6.9 g/t in highly leached surface rock,

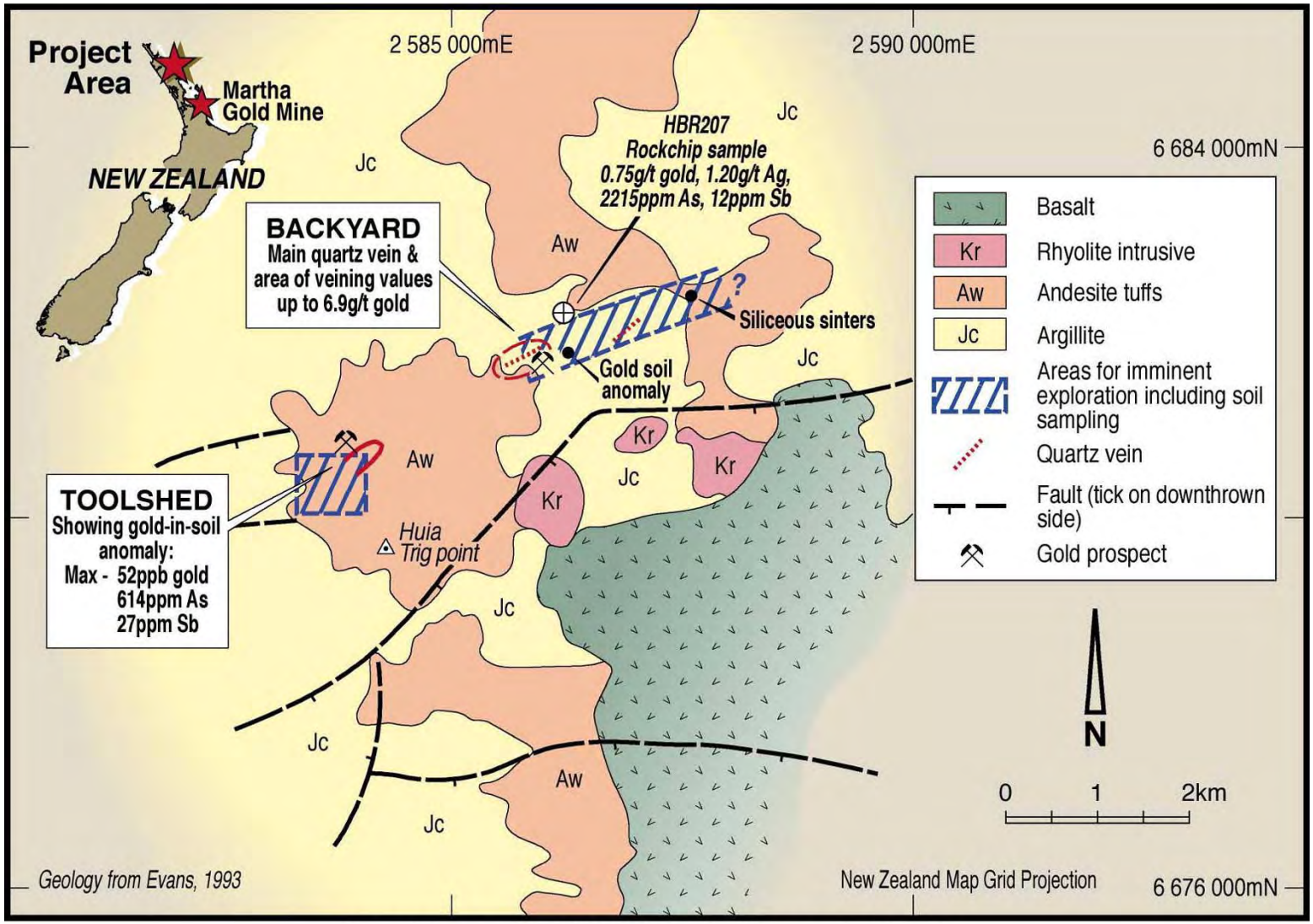
- subsidiary quartz vein and shear zone extensions over a further 200m to the east,

- a gold in soil anomaly up to 27ppb extending the prospective zone a further 250m to the east again, up onto the grassy pastures of the plateau.

- Aurora's latest geological mapping has found evidence of quartz veins and silicified and brecciated volcanic sinters up to 1700 metres to the east-northeast of Backyard, suggesting elements of the Backyard system may potentially continue under the pastureland for a considerable distance in this direction.

- previously all high gold grades came from the main vein, however encouraging results just received include: gold 0.75 grams/tonne, silver 1.2 g/t and arsenic 2214 ppm in altered argillite bedrock 370m to the northeast of the eastern end of the veins. This result comes from the only sample (sample HBR207) taken at this location.

The Company believes the work to date has outlined potential for a gold discovery under the grassy paddocks just south of the northern plateau margin and continuing on in an east-northeasterly trend across the paddocks. The next stage of exploration in this area will aim at extending the soil sampling coverage across these paddocks.



Hazelbrook PP39/270: Huia Volcanic Centre

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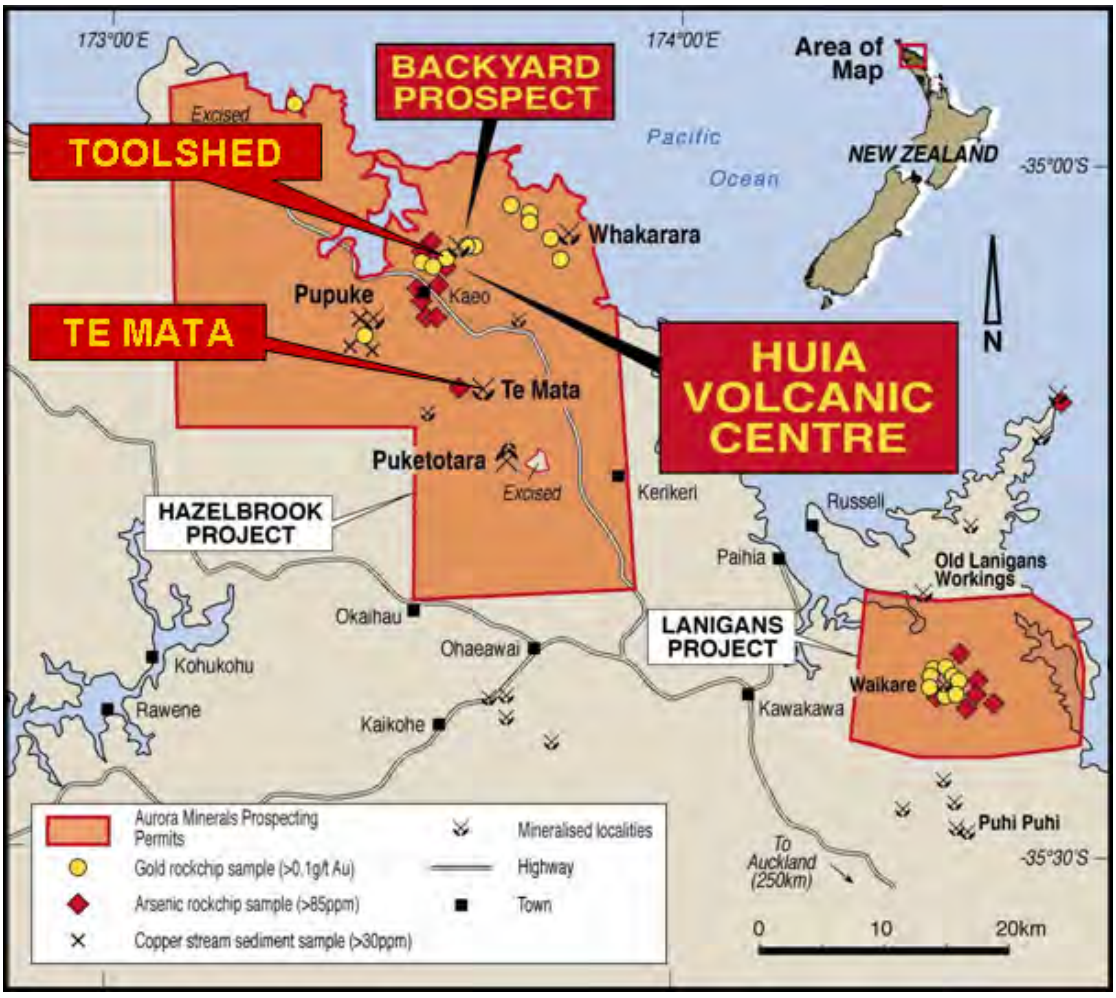
3. Te Mata

During the past month Aurora's geologists have been prospecting and mapping at the **Te Mata prospect located** 11.7km directly south of Backyard.

At **Te Mata** broad zones of arsenic and mercury anomalism were reported by previous explorers. In its initial field investigations Aurora has found extensive areas of strong sulphide alteration of the surface rocks, and has quartz veins at surface with epithermal textures. Although work at Te Mata is at a preliminary stage the prospect appears to have the potential to host a significant mineralised system.

At **Backyard** and **Toolshed** to the north, prospecting and rock float sampling comprising some 300 samples has proved to be the most effective method for finding epithermal gold veins and their associated hydrothermal alteration. Soil sampling has also proved effective in outlining the gold-bearing veins and these methods will shortly be extended onto the Te Mata area.

First rock sample results should be available by the end of April and soil sampling is expected to be underway shortly.



4. Aeromagnetic survey

Plans have progressed for a project-wide aeromagnetic survey to be conducted by a well credentialed Western Australian geophysical company using a fixed wing aircraft in May 2005. This would result in further information allowing the Company's geologists to interpret trends of prospective rock types and structures. In particular it would be aimed at helping identify extensions to the known gold mineralisation at **Backyard** and **Toolshed** and recognizing similar characteristics in the **Te Mata prospect** and the unexplored area between **Te Mata** and Backyard/**Toolshed**.

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Aurora's Hazelbrook project has received a reasonable amount of press coverage, and interest has been sparked in the project. The Company has received an expression of interest for a joint venture which it would consider, depending on appropriate commercial terms.

To date there has been excellent cooperation from local landholders for the Company to conduct surface prospecting. Future drilling or mining by the Company is subject to the provisions of the Resource Management Act, and the Crown Minerals Act which includes requiring the Company to enter access agreements with relevant stakeholders and more information regarding this is contained on the Company's website. The Company has commenced negotiations with landowners and Maori groups and hopes to have RMA consents for drilling in some of the key areas towards the end of the year.

Meanwhile surface exploration is ongoing at Hazelbrook and further results should be available for release over the coming months.

Yours faithfully

Robert Taylor
Managing Director

This report was compiled by Dr RS Taylor, a Member of the Institute of Mining and Metallurgy, and Mr GP O'Hara, an Executive Director of Aurora Minerals Limited who is a competent person and a corporate member of the Australasian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy.

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