

Southern Empire Resources Corp. Completes Road Construction for Phase 1 Sonic Drill Program at Oro Cruz

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January 13th, 2020 - [Southern Empire Resources Corp.](#) (Southern Empire) (TSXV:SMP) (Frankfurt:5RE) (OTC:SMPEF) announces that it has completed road and drill pad construction for its fully permitted Phase 1 sonic drill program at the Oro Cruz Gold Project, located in Imperial County, California.

Southern Empire's contractor, Canyon State Earthworks, LLC of Yuma, Arizona is now demobilizing from site and the drill contractor, Yellow Jacket Drilling Services, LLC, is expected to arrive at the Oro Cruz Property on January 19, 2021; please see Southern Empire's news releases dated November 17, 2020, for details concerning the Phase 1 Sonic Drill Program.

Oro Cruz Gold Project – Phase 1 Sonic Drill Program Highlights:

- - Road construction and drill pad preparation completed for Phase 1
 - Fully permitted for 27 sonic drill holes
 - Approximately 470 metres (1,542 feet) of sonic drilling is expected to start in mid-January
 - Gold assay results from 2020 surface sampling of the historical heap materials ranged from 0.128 grams gold per tonne to 2.078 grams gold per tonne (0.004 ounce per ton to 0.061 ounce per ton gold); for details, please see Southern Empire's news release of July 7, 2020
 - Sonic drilling is intended to confirm and determine the consistency of gold mineralization remaining in the historical American Girl and Padre y Madre heap leach pad materials
 - American Girl historical heap leach pad covers approximately 24.7 hectares (61 acres)
 - Padre y Madre historical heap leach pad covers approximately 8.9 hectares (22 acres)
 - Samples collected will provide for metallurgical testwork to optimize possible gold extraction methods
 - Sonic drill program is expected to be completed approximately two weeks after starting

David Tupper, Southern Empire's VP Exploration stated: “After enduring repeated Covid-19 related disruptions and delays, we are extremely pleased to start our first drill program at Oro Cruz. This program will enhance our understanding of the gold mineralization in the historical heap leach pads at both Padre y Madre and American Girl.

Assessment of Historical Heap Leach Pads - Objectives and Background

At Oro Cruz, historical mining of the American Girl, Padre y Madre, Queen and Cross oxide gold deposits by the American Girl Mining Joint Venture (AGMJV; then owned 53 per cent by MK Gold Company and 47 per cent by [Hecla Mining Company](#)) occurred between 1987 and 1996. At that time, gold was recovered by

either heap leaching of lower-grade materials or milling of higher-grade materials. AGMJV operations ceased in late 1996 because of declining gold prices, leaving the American Girl and the Padre y Madre historical heap leach pads.

Southern Empire believes that the gold-bearing material comprising the two historical heap leach pads may contain significant residual gold amenable to reprocessing and, as an initial assessment, collected 26 surface grab samples (12 samples from the Padre y Madre and 14 samples from the American Girl historical heap leach pads). Gold assay results for these samples ranged from 0.128 grams per tonne to 2.078 grams per tonne gold (0.004 ounce gold per ton to 0.061 ounce gold per ton) and averaged 0.775 grams gold per tonne and 0.535 grams gold per tonne for the American Girl and Padre y Madre, respectively; for details, please see Southern Empire's news release of July 7, 2020.

For the first phase of sonic drilling on the Oro Cruz Gold Project, Southern Empire received two notice-level acceptances from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM; an agency within the U.S. Department of the Interior) for road construction, pad preparation and the completion of 27 sonic drill holes. BLM acceptance is valid for two years, expiring in 2022, extendible to 2024. The required permit bonding has been lodged with the BLM. In addition, Southern Empire has received two requisite Conditional Use Permits from Imperial County Planning & Development Services.

Qualified Person (QP)

The scientific and technical information contained in this news release has been prepared, reviewed and approved by David Tupper, P.Geo. (British Columbia), Southern Empire's VP Exploration and a Qualified Person within the context of Canadian Securities Administrators' National Instrument 43-101; Standards of Disclosure for Mineral Projects.

About Southern Empire Resources Corp.

Southern Empire is focused on the acquisition, exploration and development of gold deposits in North America.

In the Cargo Muchacho mountains of Imperial County, California, Southern Empire owns 100 per cent of the historical gold-producing American Girl mine property and also holds options to acquire a 100-per-cent interest in the adjacent 2,160-hectare (5,338-acre) Oro Cruz property located approximately 22.5 kilometres (km; 14 miles) southeast of the operating Mesquite gold mine of Equinox Gold Corp.

With a history that includes extensive drilling and large-scale open-pit and underground mining by the American Girl Mining Joint Venture (53 per cent owned by MK Gold Company, then a subsidiary of Morrison-Knudsen Corp., and 47 per cent owned by [Hecla Mining Company](#)), which was suspended during the gold market downturn in 1996, the Oro Cruz Gold Project hosts many gold exploration targets in addition to a high-grade oxide gold zone that, based on the historical mine operation records, is amenable to conventional heap leach extractive processing.

In 2011, Lincoln Mining Corp. reported a historical inferred resource estimate at Oro Cruz totalling 341,800 ounces gold based on 4,386,000 tonnes averaging 2.2 grams gold per tonne at a cut-off grade of 0.68 g/t Au (4,835,000 tons at 0.07 ounce gold per ton). This historical inferred resource estimate is disclosed in a technical report dated April 29, 2011, prepared for Lincoln Mining Corp. by Tetra Tech Inc. and filed on SEDAR.

The historical mineral resource estimate, termed inferred mineral resource, which is a category set out in NI 43-101, was based on previous reverse circulation and core drill hole sample, underground channel sample, and blasthole sample assays, and calculated using ordinary kriging to estimate gold grades in 10-foot-by-10-foot-by-five-foot blocks. Accordingly, Southern Empire considers this historical estimate reliable as well as relevant as it represents key targets for future exploration work. However, a Qualified Person has not done sufficient work to classify the historical estimate as a current mineral resource and Southern Empire is not treating this historical estimate as current mineral resources.

Southern Empire is well financed, having completed two oversubscribed, non-brokered private placement

financings during 2020; see Southern Empire's news releases dated March 18 and June 12, 2020, for details. With its strong working capital position, which also includes a significant equity holding in Bullfrog Gold Corp., Southern Empire has the financial resources to continue exploration and development programs at Oro Cruz and consider new opportunities.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of [Southern Empire Resources Corp.](#),

Dale Wallster, CEO and Director

For further information on Southern Empire please visit both www.smp.gold and SEDAR or contact: Lubica Keighery, (778) 889-5476, lubica@smp.gold.

Cautionary Notice on Forward-Looking Information

Information provided in this news release may contain forward-looking statements that are based on assumptions as of the date of this news release. These statements reflect management's current estimates, beliefs, intentions and expectations. They are not guarantees of future performance. Southern Empire cautions that all forward-looking statements are inherently uncertain and that actual performance may be affected by a number of material factors, many of which are beyond its respective control. Such factors include, among other things: risks and uncertainties relating to Southern Empire limited operating history, the need to comply with environmental and governmental regulations, results of exploration programs on its projects and those risks and uncertainties identified in its annual and interim financial statements and management discussion and analysis. Accordingly, actual and future events, conditions and results may differ materially from the estimates, beliefs, intentions and expectations expressed or implied in the forward-looking information. Except as required under applicable securities legislation, Southern Empire undertakes no obligation to publicly update or revise forward-looking information.

Work Programs During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Timing of Southern Empire's exploration programs will be contingent on governmental regulations regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and also the availability of exploration-related personnel, drill contractors, equipment, lodging, et cetera. Southern Empire will adhere to COVID-19 directives regarding safe working practices putting worker, community and national safety first and will proceed with exploration and development work programs only if potential COVID-19 risks can be effectively managed.

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