

Apex Drills 81.6 m of 2.02% REO, including 50.9 m of 2.40% REO, Extending Strike Length of Main Body, with Highly Enriched NdPr Zone at Rift

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Highlights:

- Strong grades over wide intervals in first drill hole assays received at Rift.
 - 81.6 m at 2.02% REO⁽¹⁾, including 50.9 m at 2.40% REO (RIFT26-002).
 - Multiple (17) samples grading >3.00% REO.
- Drill hole RIFT26-002 was a ~100 m southern step-out from historical drill hole NEC11-004 and, coupled with mineralization in historical drill hole EC-043, indicates a mineralized zone extending over more than 700 m strike length is present.
 - Mineralization remains open in all directions.
- Discovery of highly enriched Neodymium-Praseodymium ("NdPr") zone with an average NdPr distribution⁽²⁾ of 49% over 10 m with an average 0.75% REO grade.
 - NdPr represents the highest value component in most rare earth deposits due to its critical use in high-strength permanent magnets for electrification technologies.
 - NdPr distribution in rare earth carbonatites typically range from 14-20% and therefore this discovery highlights the potential of Rift to host zones of NdPr that are significantly more enriched than the global average.
- A total of eight (8) drill holes have been completed to date for approximately 5,868 m, with assays pending for seven (7) holes (5,266 m).

VANCOUVER, April 7, 2026 - [Apex Critical Metals Corp.](#) (CSE:APXC)(OTCQX:APXCF)(FWB:KL9) ("Apex" or the "Company"), a Canadian mineral exploration company focused on the identification and development of critical and strategic metals, is pleased to report assay results from drill hole RIFT26-002, representing the first assay results received from the Company's 2026 drill campaign at its 100%-held Rift Rare Earth Project, located within the Elk Creek Carbonatite Complex in southeastern Nebraska, U.S.A.

Sean Charland, CEO of Apex Critical Metals, commented: "These first results from our 2026 drill campaign confirm that strong rare earth mineralization at Rift extends well beyond the historical footprint, with over 100 metres of continuous mineralization intersected in a step-out hole to the south. The presence of highly enriched NdPr distributions over meaningful widths further highlights the breath of potential at Rift, not just in terms of absolute REO grade and scale, but also in terms of contained NdPr content, where the value is focused. With rare earth mineralization open in all directions, the Company is well positioned for substantial value creation for our shareholders and we look forward to additional assay results in the weeks ahead."

WATCH NOW - <https://bit.ly/4sgl5Fe>. EVP, Joness Lang, and Darren Smith, Co-lead Technical Director, discuss the significance of the initial assay results at Rift.

Key Observations and Takeaways

Drill hole RIFT26-002, reported on herein, was designed as more of a regional southern step out to test the continuity of rare earth mineralization beyond historical drilling, targeting extensions from NEC11-004 and EC-93 (Table 1, Figure 1). The drill hole successfully intersected strong grades including 50.9 m at 2.40% REO within a wider mineralized interval of 81.6 m at 2.02% REO with multiple (17) samples assaying over 3.00% REO. The intersection confirms that mineralized carbonatite extends to the south for at least another 100 m; however, when coupled with mineralization in historical drill hole EC-043 (See News Release Dated October 14, 2025), indicate a mineralized zone extending for more than 700 m in strike length (Table 2, Figure 1).

The successful demonstration of 2% REO intervals and a highly enriched NdPr zone further down hole highlight the potential scale and opportunity for Rift to deliver high quality tonnage to support the domestic REE supply chain in the United States.

Additionally, the drilling has confirmed the discovery of a highly enriched neodymium-praseodymium (NdPr) zone which returned an average NdPr distribution⁽²⁾ of 49% over 10 m at an REO grade of 0.75% REO (Figure 2). This discovery is significant as most carbonatite hosted rare earth projects have NdPr distributions typically ranging from 14-20%. NdPr represents the highest value component in most rare earth deposits due to its critical use in high-strength permanent magnets for electrification technologies. When the distribution of NdPr is enriched it means there is less lower value rare earths present (e.g., cerium and lanthanum), which in turn may significantly enhance the inherent value of the rock. The Company cautions that to-date this unique and globally significant NdPr enrichment has only been encountered with a single drill hole and, although very encouraging, requires follow up drilling to properly delineate the extent of the zone and confirm potential continuity and scale.

Additional completed drill holes RIFT26-001A, 006, and 007, collared in closer proximity to historical drill holes NEC11-004 and EC-93 (Figure 1), were designed with higher degrees of confidence intended to validate and expand on historically identified mineralization (See News Release dated October 22, 2025). The drill holes with assays pending have consistently encountered significant carbonatite intervals with hematite alteration, which appear coincident with higher grades of rare earth mineralization (Image 1). Results will be reported as they are received, validated and interpreted.

Figure 1. 2026 Phase I drill plan at the Rift Project showing the location and assay results of drill hole RIFT26-002 (reported herein), along with active and completed drill holes and historical drill hole locations. Carbonatite intersections illustrate the distribution of the target host lithology (blue) and include minor intervals of fenite.

Figure 2. Cross-sectional view of drill hole RIFT26-002 showing logged lithology, REO grades, and distributions.

Table 1: RIFT26-002 Location and Attributes

Hole ID	Depth (m)	Azimuth ^(b) (°)	Dip ^(b) (°)	Easting ^(a)	Northing ^(a)	Elevation
RIFT26-002	600.46	80	-60	742037.46	4460700.36	331.29

^(a)Coordinates are presented in NAD83 UTMZ14 ^(b) Azimuth and Dip are planned and may vary downhole

Table 2: RIFT26-002 Assay Summary

Image 1. Sample RIFT002-163 showing REO mineralization within the 289.66 - 290.50 m interval (4.22% REO over 0.84 m). Photo shows a representative ~12 cm interval of carbonatite with intense hematite alteration

Next Steps

The Company has completed additional drill holes designed to further test the extent of mineralization along

strike and at depth with assay results pending. Ongoing refinement of the 3D geological model, including integration of assay results as received, will support improved understanding of the mineralized system and help prioritize future drill targeting. The 2026 drill program remains ongoing, with a total of eight (8) drill holes completed to date for approximately 5,868 m. Based on initial assay results from RIFT26-002 and ongoing visual observations from other completed drill holes, the Company anticipates expanding the scope of Phase I drilling.

Quality Assurance / Quality Control

All drilling was completed using one truck and one track mounted diamond drill rigs with HQ size core and all drill core samples have been or will be shipped to Activation Laboratories Ltd. (Actlabs) preparation facility in Ancaster, Ontario, for standard sample preparation (code RX1) which includes drying, crush (< 7 kg) up to 80% passing 2 mm, riffle split (250 g) and pulverize (mild steel) to 95% passing 105 µm. The samples were subsequently analyzed using Code 8 by XRF Nb₂O₅, ZrO₂ and Ta₂O₅ (0.003%), Code 8 - REE Assay (lithium metaborate/tetraborate fusion with subsequent analysis by ICP and ICP/MS). Drill core was saw-cut with half-core sent for geochemical analysis and half-core remaining in the box onsite.

A Quality Assurance/Quality Control protocol was incorporated into the program and included the insertion of certified reference material and silica blanks at a rate of approximately 5% and 5%, respectively. Additional analysis of pulp-split and reject-split sample duplicates was also completed at a rate of approximately 5% and 2.5%, respectively, to assess analytical precision at different stages. Actlabs Canada is independent of the Company.

Management cautions that the interception of carbonatite is not necessarily indicative of mineralization. Assay results are required to confirm the presence, grade, and significance of any mineralization.

(1) REO (Rare Earth Oxide) is defined as the sum of Ce₂O₃, La₂O₃, Pr₂O₃, Nd₂O₃, Eu₂O₃, Sm₂O₃, Gd₂O₃, Tb₂O₃, Dy₂O₃, Ho₂O₃, Er₂O₃, Tm₂O₃, Yb₂O₃, Lu₂O₃, and Y₂O₃.

(2) NdPr distribution calculated as $(Nd_2O_3 + Pr_2O_3) / REO \times 100$

Qualified Person

The technical content of this news release has been reviewed and approved by Nathan Schmidt, P. Geo., a Qualified Person under NI 43-101 on standards of disclosure for mineral projects. Mr. Schmidt is a Geologist with Dahrouge Geological Consulting Ltd., the consulting firm engaged by Apex Critical Metals Corp. to conduct and oversee all of the Company's exploration work, including the 2026 drill program.

Mr. Schmidt has verified all scientific and technical data disclosed in this news release including the sampling and QA/QC results, and certified analytical data underlying the technical information disclosed. Mr. Schmidt noted no errors or omissions during the data verification process. The Company and Mr. Schmidt do not recognize any factors of sampling or recovery that could materially affect the accuracy or reliability of the assay data disclosed in this news release.

About Apex Critical Metals Corp. (CSE:APXC)(OTCQX:APXCF)(FWB:KL9)

Apex Critical Metals Corp. is a Canadian exploration company focused on advancing rare earth element (REE) and niobium projects that support the growing demand for critical and strategic metals across the United States and Canada. The Company's flagship Rift Project, located within the highly prospective Elk Creek Carbonatite Complex in Nebraska, U.S.A., hosts extensive rare earth rights surrounding one of North America's most advanced niobium-REE deposits. Historical drilling across the complex has reported broad intervals of high-grade REE mineralization, including intercepts such as 155.5 m of 2.70% REO and 68.2 m of 3.32% REO.

In Canada, Apex continues to advance its 100%-owned Cap Project, located 85 kilometres northeast of Prince George, British Columbia. The 2025 drill program confirmed a significant niobium discovery with

0.59% Nb₂O₅ over 36 metres, including 1.08% Nb₂O₅ over 10 metres, within a 1.8-kilometre-long niobium trend. The Cap Project continues to demonstrate strong potential for niobium mineralization within a large and previously unrecognized carbonatite system.

With a growing portfolio of critical mineral projects in both Canada and the United States, Apex Critical Metals is strategically positioned to help strengthen domestic supply chains for the minerals essential to advanced technologies, clean energy, and national security. Apex is publicly listed in Canada on the Canadian Securities Exchange (CSE) under the symbol APXC and quoted on the OTCQX market in the United States under the symbol APXCF, and in Germany on the Borse Frankfurt under the symbol KL9 and/or WKN: A40CCQ. Find out more at www.apexcriticalmetals.com and watch our videos at <https://apexcriticalmetals.com/apex-critical-metals-corporate-video/> and make sure to stay in touch by signing up for free news alerts at <https://apexcriticalmetals.com/news/news-alerts/>, or by following us on X (formerly Twitter), Facebook or LinkedIn.

On Behalf of the Board of Directors

APEX CRITICAL METALS CORP.,

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Neither the Canadian Securities Exchange nor its Regulation Services Provider (as that term is defined in the policies of the CSE) accepts responsibility for the adequacy or accuracy of this release.

CAUTIONARY STATEMENT REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING INFORMATION:

This news release may contain "forward-looking statements" under applicable Canadian securities legislation. Forward-looking statements consist of statements that are not purely historical, including any statements regarding beliefs, plans, expectations or intentions regarding the future. Forward-looking statements in this news release include (without limitation) statements regarding the Company's planned Phase I drill program and any subsequent drill programs and statements regarding the Company's US-based prospective assets (more particularly described above), including the potential for additional acquisitions and the potential for exploration, and statements regarding the potential for future exploration and drilling to confirm the source of magnetic anomalies. Forward-looking statements are subject to various known and unknown risks and uncertainties that may cause actual results, performance or developments to differ materially from those contained in the statements. Risks that could change or prevent these events, activities or developments from coming to fruition include: the Company's properties are at an early stage of development and no current mineral resources or reserves have been identified by the Company thereof, that we may not be able to fully finance any additional exploration on the Company's properties; that even if we are able to raise capital, costs for exploration activities may increase such that we may not have sufficient funds to pay for such exploration or processing activities; the timing and content of any future work programs; geological interpretations based on drilling that may change with more detailed information; potential process methods and mineral recoveries assumptions based on limited test work and by comparison to what are considered analogous deposits that, with further test work, may not be comparable; testing of our process may not prove successful or samples derived from our properties may not yield positive results, and even if such tests are successful or initial sample results are positive, the economic and other outcomes may not be as expected; the anticipated market demand for REE and other minerals may not be as expected; the availability of labour and equipment to undertake future exploration work and testing activities; geopolitical risks which may result in market and economic instability. There can be no assurance that such statements will prove to be accurate, as actual results and future events could differ materially from those anticipated in such statements. Accordingly, readers should not place undue reliance on forward-looking statements. The forward-looking statements herein are made as of the date hereof, 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 law.

SOURCE: Apex Critical Metals Corp.

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