



Australian Government
Department of the Environment

Approval

Stockman's Base Metal Mine, Victoria (EPBC 2010/5717)

This decision is made under sections 130(1) and 133 of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

Proposed action

person to whom the approval is granted Stockman Project Pty Ltd

proponent's ABN 64 124 695 567

proposed action To re-commission the currently closed underground Wilga Mine and develop and mine the adjacent Currawong deposit near Benambra, Victoria (see EPBC referral 2010/5717).

Approval

Controlling Provision	Decision
Listed threatened species and ecological communities (sections 18 & 18A)	Approved

conditions of approval

This approval is subject to the conditions specified below.

expiry date of approval

This approval has effect until 1 January 2030.

Decision-maker

name and position James Tregurtha
Assistant Secretary
South-Eastern Australia Environment Assessments Branch

signature

date of decision 19 DECEMBER 2014

Conditions of approval

Pre-clearance surveys

1. Prior to the **commencement of construction activities**, the person taking the action must undertake pre-clearance targeted surveys, in accordance with **Department guidelines** (where available) for the following species:
 - a. Kiandra Greenhood (*Pterostylis oreophila*), Critically endangered;
 - b. Giant Burrowing Frog (*Heleioporus australiacus*), Vulnerable; and
 - c. Alpine Tree Frog (*Litoria verreauxii alpine*), Vulnerable.

Targeted surveys must be undertaken across all potential habitat (for above listed species) likely to be impacted by the proposed action.

2. If pre-clearance targeted surveys required by condition 1 result in the identification of any threatened species listed above, then the person taking the action must submit a species specific report to the **Department**, including information about population characteristics, proposed avoidance and mitigation measures, quantification of potential impacts and proposed offsets (where relevant). Activities in the affected area must not commence until directed to in writing by the **Department**. This condition only applies where species listed in condition 1 are confirmed present.

Offsets

3. Prior to the **commencement of construction activities**, the person taking the action must offset the unavoidable impacts to the Alpine Sphagnum Bogs and Associated Fens ecological community by securing the offset site identified in the **Stockman Project Offset Proposal**. All measures identified in the **Stockman Project Offset Proposal** must be implemented. Any proposal for an alternative offset must be agreed to in writing with the **Department**.

Tailings management and water quality monitoring

4. The construction, operation and decommission of the proposed tailings storage facility (Appendix A and B) must be consistent with the requirements of **ANCOLD guidelines**.
5. Any **potentially acid forming material** identified in the existing tailings storage facility wall must be removed, neutralised or isolated to avoid acid and metalliferous drainage /seepage. Details and records of removal, neutralisation or isolation activities must be maintained and provided to the **Department** on request.
6. Any **potentially acid forming material** encountered during construction activities must be visually identified, isolated and excluded from the material used to raise the tailings storage facility embankment. **Potentially acid forming material** must be stored and disposed of consistent with section 15.2 of the **EES**, to avoid impacts from acid and metalliferous drainage. Accurate records must be maintained and provided to the **Department** on request.
7. The person taking the action must implement a surface and groundwater quality monitoring program consistent with relevant **groundwater and surface water guidelines**. At a minimum, the program must monitor the performance of measures implemented to prevent seepage from areas within the TSF impact footprint (Appendix B). The program must include specific trigger points and associated remedial actions. Accurate records must be maintained and provided to the **Department** on request.

Administrative

8. Within 30 days after the **commencement** of the action, the person taking the action must advise the **Department** in writing of the actual date of **commencement**.
9. The person taking the action must maintain accurate records substantiating all activities associated with or relevant to the conditions of approval, including measures taken to implement the programs/proposals, and make them available upon request to the **Department**. Such records may be subject to audit by the **Department** or an independent auditor in accordance with section 458 of the EPBC Act, or used to verify compliance with the conditions of approval. Summaries of audits will be posted on the **Department's** website. The results of audits may also be publicised through the general media.
10. Within three months of every 12 month anniversary of the **commencement** of the action, the person taking the action must publish a report on its website addressing compliance with each of the conditions of this approval, including implementation of any programs/proposals as specified in the conditions. Documentary evidence providing proof of the date of publication and non-compliance with any of the conditions of this approval must be provided to the **Department** at the same time as the compliance report is published.
11. Upon the direction of the **Minister**, the person taking the action must ensure that an independent audit of compliance with the conditions of approval is conducted and a report submitted to the **Minister**. The independent auditor must be approved by the **Minister** prior to the commencement of the audit. Audit criteria must be agreed to by the **Minister** and the audit report must address the criteria to the satisfaction of the **Minister**.
12. If the person taking the action wishes to carry out any activity otherwise than in accordance with programs/plans as specified in the conditions, the person taking the action must submit to the **Department** for the **Minister's** written approval a revised version of that program/plan. The varied activity shall not commence until the **Minister** has approved the varied program/plan in writing. The **Minister** will not approve a varied program/plan unless the revised program/plan would result in an equivalent or improved environmental outcome over time. If the **Minister** approves the revised program/plan, then it must be implemented in place of the program/plan originally approved.
13. If the **Minister** believes that it is necessary or convenient for the better protection of listed threatened species and ecological communities to do so, the **Minister** may request that the person taking the action make specified revisions to the programs/plan specified in the conditions and submit the revised program/plan for the **Minister's** written approval. The person taking the action must comply with any such request. The revised approved program/plan must be implemented. Unless the **Minister** has approved the revised program/plan then the person taking the action must continue to implement the program/plan originally approved, as specified in the conditions.
14. If, at any time after 5 years from the date of this approval, the person taking the action has not **substantially commenced** the action, then the person taking the action must not **substantially commence** the action without the written agreement of the **Minister**.
15. Unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the **Minister**, the person taking the action must publish all programs and plans referred to in these conditions of approval on their website. Each program and proposal must be published on the website within 1 month of completion.

Definitions

- a) **ANCOLD guidelines** includes the documents: ANCOLD (2012), *Guidelines on Tailings Dams, Planning, Design, Construction, operation and Closure*, May 2012 and ANCOLD (2014) *Regulation and Practice for the Environmental Management of Dams in Australia*, June 2014. This also includes any subsequent revision to the listed documents;
- b) **Commencement** is the date that preparatory works are first undertaken, including but not limited to clearing of vegetation, the erection of any onsite temporary structures and the use of heavy duty equipment for the purpose of breaking the ground for infrastructure or earthworks.
- c) **Construction activities** means all works associated with changes within the project area defined in the Stockman Project Environmental Effects Statement, including vegetation clearing, excavation, soil movement and stockpiling, the erection of any onsite temporary structures, the use of heavy duty equipment, erection of fencing, road and track works and site rehabilitation and remediation. It does not however include preliminary investigations into the suitability and integrity of the existing tailings storage facility.
- d) **Department** means the Australian Government Department administering the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.
- e) **Department guidelines** means relevant guidelines (including in draft form) for EPBC Act listed species and/or survey guidelines for nationally threatened species available on the **Department's** website (<http://www.environment.gov.au/epbc/policy-statements>).
- f) **DSDBI guidelines** is the document Department of State Development, Business and Innovation (DSDBI), (2004), *Management of Tailings Storage Facilities*, Energy and Earth Resources Division, Victorian Government. This also includes any subsequent revision.
- g) **EES** means the environmental effects statement prepared under the *Environment Effects Act 1978* and exhibited between 25 March and 8 May 2014.
- h) **Groundwater and surface water guidelines** includes the documents: EPA Victoria (2006) *Hydrogeological Assessment (Groundwater Quality) Guidelines*, September 2006, ISBN 0 7306 7658 7. <http://www.epa.vic.gov.au/~media/Publications/668.pdf>, as well as any subsequent version or revision and ANZECC (2000) *Australian Guidelines for Water Quality Monitoring and Reporting*, ISBN 0 642 19562 5. This may include any other relevant guideline approved by the Department in writing.
- i) **Minister** means the Minister administering the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and includes a delegate of the Minister.
- j) **potentially acid forming material** means rock, ore and mine wastes that contain sulfur or sulfides, which may produce acid when oxidised.
- k) **Stockman Project Offset Proposal** means the report prepared by Ethos NRM for Independence Group, August 2013.
- l) **Substantially commence/d the action** means the commencement of activities at the Wilga or Currawong mine. This does not include preparatory works or preliminary investigations into the suitability and integrity of the existing tailings storage facility.

Appendix A: Proposed Site Layout



Appendix B: Site of the proposed Tailing Storage Facility

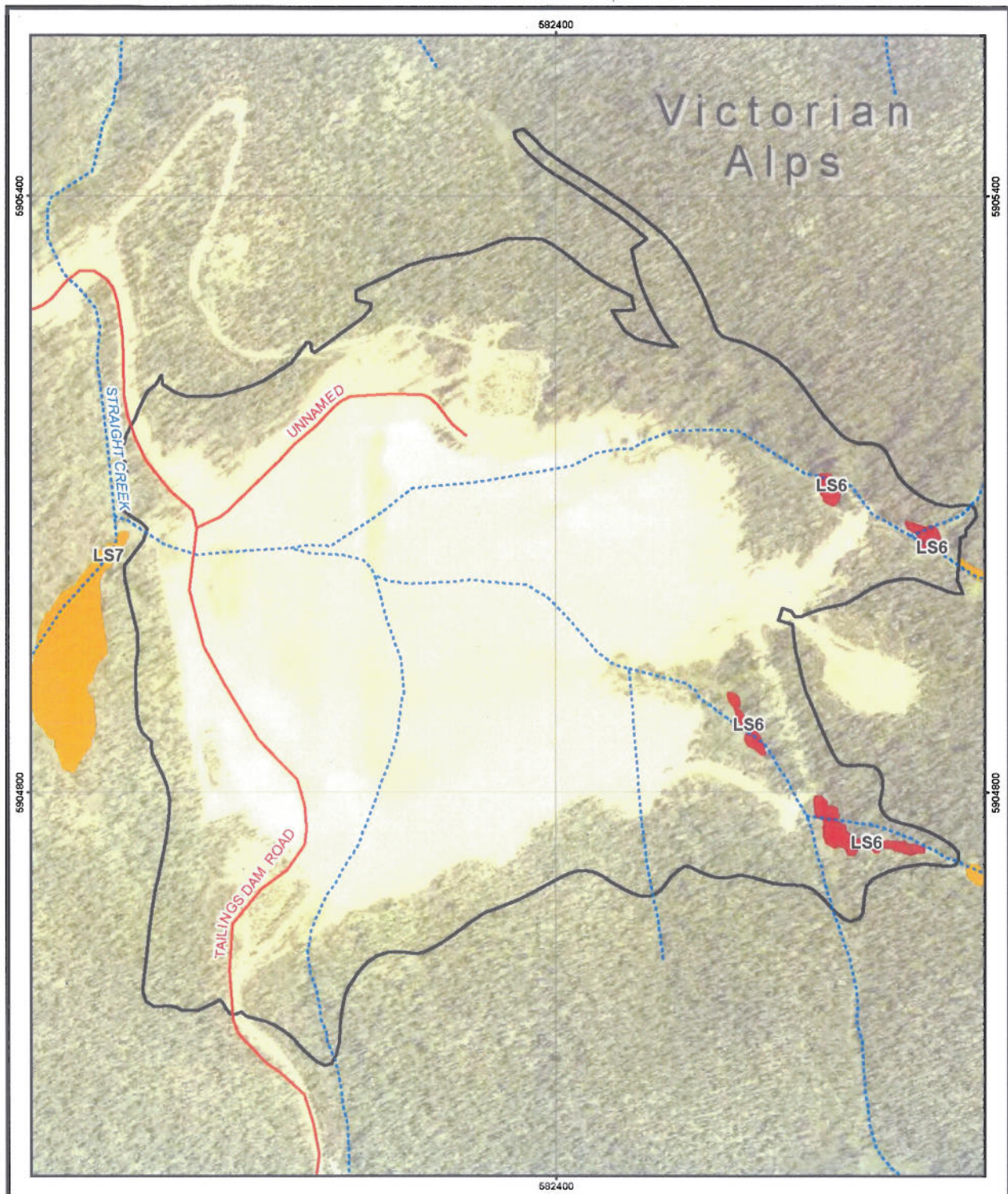
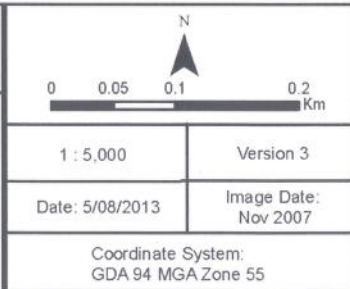
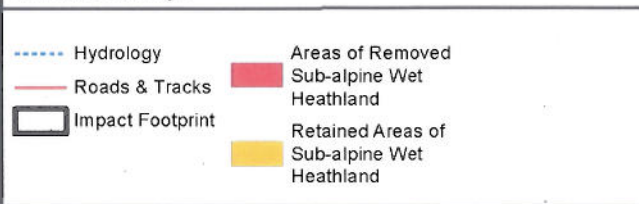


Figure 2: Stockman Project: Impacts to Alpine Sphagnum Bogs and Associated Fens, Sub-alpine Wet Heathland, Montane Swamp.



Map Produced by Ethos NRM
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Note: this map is not intended for surveying purposes. Ethos NRM and its employees do not guarantee that this map is without flaw of any kind or that it is wholly appropriate for your particular purposes and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequences which may arise from you relying on any information in this publication.