



A member of the Rio Tinto Group

ROBE RIVER MINING CO PTY LTD

A.C.N. 008 694 246

Manager for

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AR-08-03670

4 August 2008

Department of Industry and Resources
Native Vegetation Assessment Branch
Mineral House
100 Plain Street
EAST PERTH WA 6004

Attention: Virginia Simms

**APPLICATION FOR PURPOSE CLEARING PERMIT
CLEARING FOR RAIL CONSTRUCTION CAMP - (L47/00075 - ROBE RIVER MISCELLANEOUS
LICENCE and L47/00321 ROBE RIVER MISCELLANEOUS LICENCE - PENDING)**

Please find enclosed an application for a Purpose Clearing Permit for the Company's Wildflower Construction Camp.

The Company proposes to clear approximately 26ha within the larger polygon of 145ha for the purposes of buildings and infrastructure within this area.

If you have any queries on this application, please contact Julie Neilson on 9366 5467.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tim Eckersley'.

ap
Tim Eckersley
Manager, Environmental Approvals

- 1) Application Form C2
- 2) Statement addressing clearing principles
- 3) Vegetation Survey Report
- 4) CD Rom containing Application, Survey Report and ESRI shape files
- 5) Credit Card Payment Form C3

Application for a Purpose Permit to clear Native Vegetation for Rail Construction Camp (L47/00075 - ROBE RIVER MISCELLANEOUS LICENCE and L47/00321 ROBE RIVER MISCELLANEOUS LICENCE - PENDING)

Proposed Clearing

Robe River is proposing to carry out clearing on L47/00075 Robe River Miscellaneous Licence. The Company proposes to construct a construction camp at Wildflower to support rail construction personnel. It is anticipated that the total area required to be cleared for the camp will be substantially less than the study area surveyed.

An estimated area of 26ha of native vegetation is required to be disturbed under the proposed construction program. This clearing lies within a larger area of 145ha (see Figure 1 attached).

Clearing within the NVCP boundaries is required in specific areas preparatory to the placement of buildings and infrastructure for the proposed construction camp.

Clearing shall be carried out using the following plant and equipment:

- Bulldozer for large areas;
- Grader for large areas;
- Front end loader and bobcat for smaller areas; and
- Articulated dump truck for the relocation of overburden.

Management strategies will include, but not be limited to the following:-

- No clearing or works will be undertaken outside the approval boundaries;
- The area to be cleared will be kept to a minimum and clearly demarcated using bunting and appropriate signage;
- Topsoil will be stockpiled for rehabilitation purposes;
- Stockpiles will be clearly signposted and kept to a maximum 2m height to minimise erosion; and
- Dust suppression will be carried out on stockpiles using potable water only.

Flora searches have been conducted over the area and the survey report is attached. Heritage Surveys have been undertaken and no sites were identified. Rare flora and rare fauna searches were provided by the DEC, and these are included in the attached survey report.

1. Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises a high level of biological diversity.

Five intact vegetation types were recorded from the Wildflower Camp area, all of which are typical of such habitats in the locality. The total number of native species recorded from the study area is within the expected range for an area of this size in this locality, and is not considered to represent a high species richness. The proposed clearing will therefore not impact any features of high diversity.

- 2. Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises the whole or a part of, or is necessary for the maintenance of, a significant habitat for fauna indigenous to Western Australia.**

The primary habitats present within the Wildflower Camp area are widespread and abundant in this locality. While some Scheduled or Priority fauna species may utilise these habitats, neither the landforms nor vegetation types represent core habitat for any of these species of conservation significance.

- 3. Native vegetation should not be cleared if it includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of, rare flora.**

No Declared Rare Flora were recorded from the Wildflower Camp area and none would be expected to occur. No Priority flora were recorded from the study area. There is a possibility that the Priority 1 species *Goodenia lyrata* may occur on the clayey plains in the southern section of the study area. If there is to be any clearing of this habitat beyond the existing disturbance areas, then further targeted searches for this species should be undertaken in the immediate development areas.

- 4. Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises the whole or a part of, or is necessary for the maintenance of a threatened ecological community.**

No Threatened Ecological Communities or Priority Ecological Communities occur within the Wildflower Camp area. The Mulga over Spinifex vegetation occurring at the interzone between the stony and clayey plains may be considered to be an ecosystem at risk, however the proposed clearing of this vegetation is minimal, even at a local scale.

- 5. Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is significant as a remnant of native vegetation in an area that has been extensively cleared.**

Most of the Pilbara bioregion has never been cleared, however a combination of weed invasions, hot frequent bushfires, feral predators and grazing by exotic herbivores is causing a loss of soil fertility and vegetation cover through some pastoral areas. Erosion from increased runoff velocities is also occluding drainage lines in places. While historic clearing has taken place for the previous accommodation village in the Wildflower Camp area, this is negligible in comparison to the Pilbara wide representation of Beard's broad vegetation units mapped for the study area. The vegetation types identified within the project area thus do not represent stands of extensively cleared vegetation units.

- 6. Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is growing in, or in association with, an environment associated with a watercourse or wetland.**

There are no permanent watercourses or wetlands within the Wildflower Camp area.

- 7. Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause appreciable land degradation.**

Apart from the areas cleared for the historic accommodation village and associated infrastructure, the habitats and vegetation types of the Wildflower Camp area are in relatively good condition. The soils of the northern half of the study area comprise stony loams which are not overly conducive to erosion or weed invasion following disturbance. The clayey loams of the southern half of the study area would be more susceptible to both erosion and weed invasion and further development in this area should be avoided.

Controlled spraying should be conducted immediately for the infestation of *Melinis repens* on the site of the old Wildflower Camp and this area should be quarantined until this aggressive weed is eradicated. Strict weed hygiene measures must be implemented to ensure that no additional weeds are introduced to the area or the vicinity, particularly given the proximity of the Karijini National Park. Provided these measures are undertaken, it is considered that the proposed clearing will not increase land degradation in the project area.

Comment

The Company has done two rounds of spraying so far, and have another round of spraying booked in for August 2008.

- 8. Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to have an impact on the environment values of any adjacent or nearby conservation area.**

The boundary of the A-class Karijini National Park is less than 200m north-west of the north-western corner of the Wildflower Camp area. Provided that the population of *Melinis repens* is eradicated and effective weed management strategies are subsequently implemented, it is considered that the proposed clearing will have no impact on this conservation reserve.

It is noted that once the WA pastoral exclusion process is enacted in 2015, the additional of a section of Juna Downs Station to the Karijini National Park will mean that the location of the Wildflower Camp will effectively be within the reserve itself. Although the camp will have been decommissioned and the site rehabilitated by the time this extension of the park occurs, it is recommended that the proponent discusses the proposed location of this camp with the Department of Environment and Conservation in light of this.

Comment

The DEC is well aware of the plans - both the regional office, Science division, Environmental Management Branch and the Industry Regulation Branch. The camp has been discussed at our regular quarterly meeting with the DEC plus at two 320 Rail specific meetings with the DEC. In addition, it was raised last week at our meeting with the Industry Regulation Branch. The DEC are also advisers / reviewers of our weed management strategy for the camp.

- 9. Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause deterioration in the quality of surface or underground water.**

There are no significant surface drainage systems in the Wildflower Camp area. Given the small scale of clearing required for the proposed project, there is no reason to expect that surface or groundwater quality in the area would be affected.

- 10. Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence or intensity of flooding.**

The stony plains of the northern section of the Wildflower Camp area would shed water during heavy rain events to the more low-lying clayey plains in the southern section. There may be some ponding of water on these clayey plains after substantial rain, however given the small amount of vegetation clearing proposed for the study area, this would not be expected to exacerbate either the frequency or the intensity of flooding through these areas.



Application for a clearing permit (purpose permit)

Environmental Protection Act 1986 s 51E

Clearing of native vegetation is prohibited in Western Australia except where a clearing permit has been granted or an exemption applies. A person who causes or allows unauthorised clearing commits an offence.

FORM C2

Part 1 Applicant

A purpose permit is required for programs of clearing, such as ongoing maintenance projects, or where the applicant is not the owner (as defined in s51A of the act) of the land to be cleared.

An application for a purpose permit can only be made by the person by on whose behalf the clearing is to be done.

Applicant's given name(s) and surname or company name(s)

Robe River Iron Associates

Postal address

GPO Box A42, Perth

Postcode 6837

Contact details
If there is insufficient room on any part of this form, please continue on a separate sheet of paper and attach to this form.

Contact name (if different to applicant)

Julie Neilson

Phone number

(08) 9366 5467

Mobile number

0409 889 457

Fax number

(08) 9327 6298

Email address

julie.neilson@riotinto.com

Part 2 Land details

The land where clearing is proposed must be accurately described.

For example, certificate of title, mining tenement, reserve number, pastoral lease number or parcel identifier.

Description of land

L47/00075 Robe River Miscellaneous Licence

L47|321 - Robe River miscellaneous licence (pending)

State nature of authority to access land (please attach copy of authority)

Holder

Please specify the applicants authority to access land to be cleared. For example, a letter from Department of Planning and Infrastructure, a Statutory power or letter of authority from the landowner.

Full name of land owner as appears on certificate of title

Robe River Iron Associates

Ownership of land

A land owner can be:

- a person who holds the certificate of title
- a person who is the lessee of Crown land, or
- a public authority that is responsible for care of the land.

If the land owner is a company or registered body, please provide the Australian Company Number (ACN)

ABN 71 008 694 246

IMPORTANT

Information submitted as part of this application may be made publicly available. If you wish to submit information that you believe to be commercially sensitive or otherwise confidential, then you should submit that information in an appendix to this application, with a written statement of reasons why you request that each item of information be kept confidential. The department will take reasonable steps to protect confidential or commercially sensitive information. Please note in particular that all submitted information may be the subject of an application for release under the Freedom of Information Act 1992. If you have any enquiries regarding the provision of relevant information as part of this application contact either:

Department of Environment and Conservation or Department of Industry and Resources

Part 3 Proposal

A map must be attached, clearly marking the property where clearing is proposed

and if you have the facilities, a digital map on CDROM of the area to clear in one of the following formats:

1. **ESRI Shapefile** with the following properties:
 - **Geometry Type:** Polygon
 - **Coordinate System:** GCS GDA 1994 (Geographic latitude/longitude)
 - **Datum:** GDA 1994 (Geocentric Datum of Australia 1994)
2. **Autocad 2000** or earlier, or
3. **Microstation 8** or earlier.

Part 4 Fees

Make cheques or money orders payable to:

Department of Industry and Resources

petroleum clearing activities under the Mining Act, Petroleum Acts or State Agreement Acts.

Department of Environment

Conservation for all other clearing purposes.

Part 5 Declaration and Signature

For your application to be accepted, you must sign it either on behalf of your company (a), or as an individual (b).

a) For company applicants

For applicants that are a company or registered body, complete this part of the form.

If you are authorised to sign on behalf of your company, sign this part of the form.

OR

If your company is required to use a common seal, you must affix this seal and have this application signed by an authorised director(s) in accordance with the Corporations Law.

b) For individual applicants

For individual applicants, such as private land holders, sign this part of the application form.

Part 6 Application checklist

Additional information to assist in the assessment of your proposal may be attached to this application. If possible, information should be in electronic format and submitted on CDROM.

- Please ensure you have included the following as part of your application:
- A completed application form that is signed and dated
 - An aerial photograph or map with a north point identifying the land to be cleared
 - Optional CDROM or disk containing electronic maps, photos and reports to support this application. Existing additional information such as reports on salinity, fauna or flora studies or other environmental reports conducted for the site will assist with the assessment of your proposal

A copy of your authority to access land

Part 7 Post this completed application to either Department of Environment and Conservation or Department of Industry and Resources Applications related to Mineral and Petroleum Activities**Department of Industry and Resources**

Native Vegetation Assessment Branch
Mineral House
100 Plain St
East Perth WA 6004
<www.doir.wa.gov.au/nvab>

For enquiries relating to clearing for Mineral and Petroleum Activities, telephone DoIR at Perth Head Office on 9222 3333.

Department of Environment and Conservation

Native Vegetation Conservation Branch
Locked Bag 104
Bentley Delivery Centre WA 6983
<http://nvp.environment.wa.gov.au>

For general enquiries, telephone your local DEC Office:

Perth 9434 2900, **Bunbury** 9725 4300, **Albany** 9842 4500, **Kwinana** 9411 1777, **Geraldton** 9921 5955, **Karratha** 9182 2000, **Kununurra** 9168 4200

Please retain a copy of this form for your records. Incomplete applications will not be dealt with.

Total area of clearing proposed (ha)

26ha within 145ha polygon

Method of clearing and proposed disposal of vegetation

Method of clearing: dozer, blade down. Vegetation will be stockpiled and used in rehabilitation.

Period for which clearing is required, e.g. May 2008 – June 2008

October 2008 - October 2010

Purpose of clearing

Establishment of construction camp/village as part of the 320+ Rail Project.

Payment method (tick applicable box)

Cheque

\$200 (required fee for all purpose permit applications)

Money order

Credit card (complete Form C3)

Amount

Do not send cash in the mail.

ACN

ABN 71 008 694 246

Signature of person duly authorised to sign for and on behalf of incorporated body or company

Shaerullah

OR

The common seal was affixed in accordance with the company articles of association in the presence of

Date

4/8/08

Company seal

Signature

Date



OFFICE USE ONLY

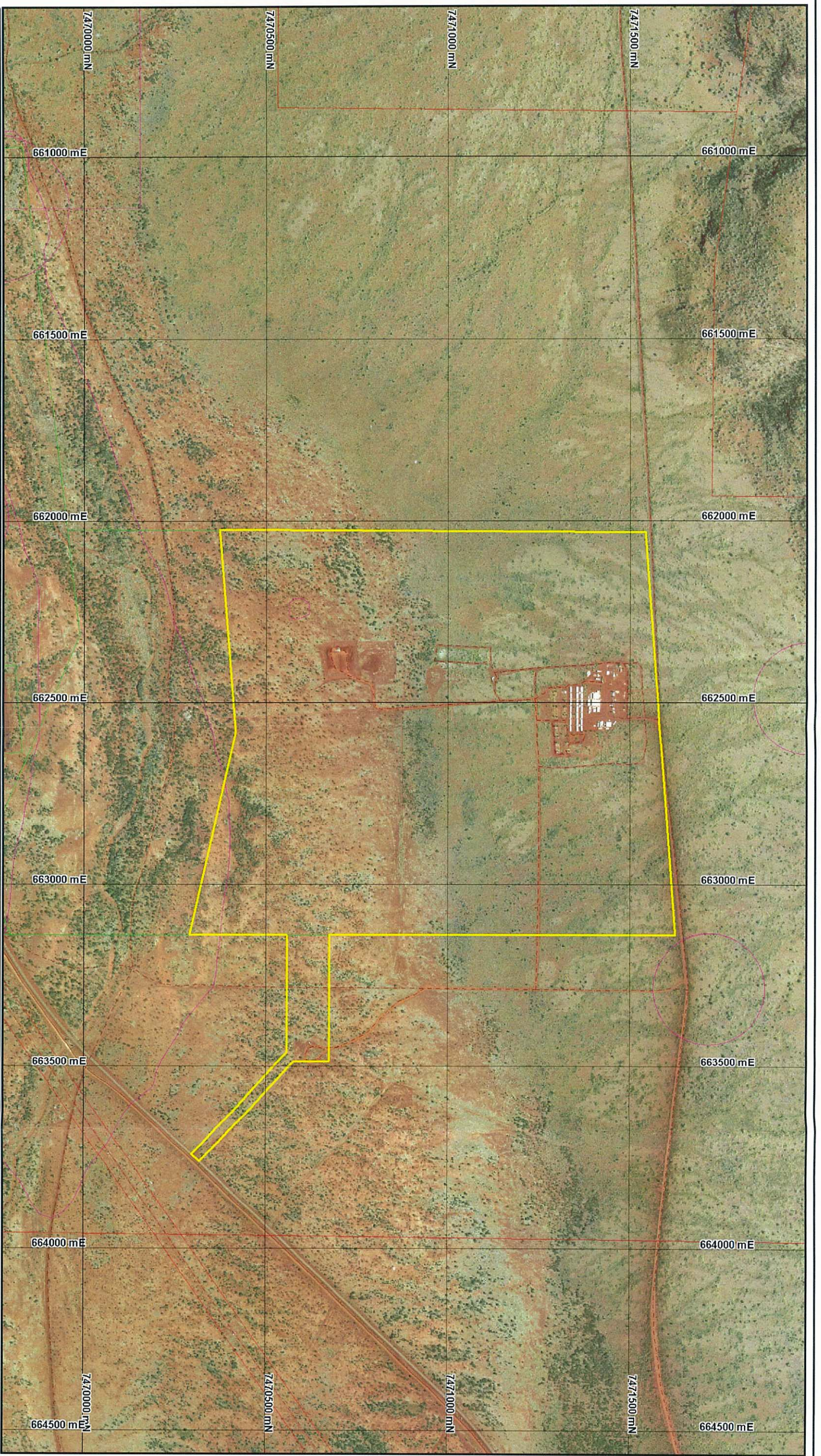
FORM C3

Credit Card Payment

Complete this credit card payment slip and submit with your application form.

Credit Card Number															
4	5	6	4	8	0	9	2	0	0	4	3	7	9	4	9
Card Holder Name (Please Print)															
Julie M Neilson															
Expiry Date: 08/08				Amount: \$200.00											
Signature: <i>JM Neilson</i>															
Contact phone number: (08) 9366 5467															
Please tick your card type															
<input type="checkbox"/> Bank Card															
<input type="checkbox"/> Master Card															
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Visa															

Upon receipt of payment - this form becomes a Tax Invoice.



- Requested Area**
- Request Area
- Avoidance Sites**
- Protected Sites
 - Protected Flora
 - Restricted Flora
 - Restricted Access Power Lines
 - Restricted Access Gas Pipeline

- LEGEND**
- Weed Locations (Any Colour)
 - Rare Restricted Flora
 - Plant of Special Interest
 - Priority 1 Flora
 - Priority 2 Flora
 - Priority 3 Flora
 - Priority 4 Flora
 - Tenement boundaries
 - Existing roads

NVCP Requested Area
AR-08-03570
Wildflower Camp

Author: J. M. Neilson	Date: 1 August 2008
Drawn: Julie Neilson	Revised:
Dwg No.: Figure 1	Report No.:
Projection: Zone 50, GDA 94	Scale: 1 : 10,000

