

ADVISORY NOTE

CLEARING AND REHABILITATION OF GRID LINES AND TRACKS

This advisory note outlines the approach for clearing of grid lines and tracks and their rehabilitation.

INTRODUCTION

Explorers are required under the *Mining Management Act 2001* to rehabilitate areas impacted by their activities. The main goal in environmental management of exploration activities is to minimise or prevent unnecessary impacts and rehabilitate sites where disturbance cannot be avoided.

Grid lines and tracks should be prepared and cleared with a minimum of disturbance to the environment and should be rehabilitated in such a way as to promote rapid revegetation and prevent the initiation of erosion.

GRID LINES

- Blade work should be kept to a minimum and where possible the 'blade up' method should be used. This method is sufficient to remove vegetation whilst retaining the rootstock, topsoil and seed to encourage rapid regeneration.
- Windrows should not be formed at the sides of the grid lines particularly on sloping ground as this will channel surface flow and cause significant erosion gullies. Any windrows which are formed should be pulled back over the grid line at the time of rehabilitation.
- Natural drainage lines should not be blocked.
- At the time of rehabilitation, if the surface of the grid line has become compacted or degraded or in areas where the topsoil has been substantially disturbed, the grid line should be scarified or contour ripped to promote revegetation.
- Remove all grid pegs and survey markers prior to relinquishment of the exploration licence or at completion of exploration activities for the site.

ACCESS TRACKS

- The location of access tracks should be planned to avoid environmentally sensitive areas and heritage sites and in consultation with the landholder.
- Land clearance should be kept to a minimum by considering routes which minimise tree clearing.
- Blade work should be kept to a minimum and where possible the 'blade up' method should be used. Wherever possible vehicles should be driven across unprepared terrain.

- If vehicles are to traverse unprepared terrain more than once the same wheel tracks should be used each time.
- Keep the width of tracks to the minimum required to safely meet the needs of the largest vehicle.
- Natural drainage lines should not be blocked. Creek crossings should maintain the natural bed of the creek and the creation of a crossing by filling the creek bed with a “gully plug’ of material should be avoided.
- The formation of windrows at the sides of tracks should be avoided. These have the potential to channel surface flows can which cause significant gully erosion.
- Care should be taken in the planning and placement of tracks on sloping ground as they are subject to severe erosion. Erosion control structures such as spur drains, spoon drains or contour banks should be placed at suitable intervals.
- Rehabilitation of access tracks should be carried out prior to relinquishment of the exploration licence unless requested otherwise by the landholder.
- Back-grade windrows on access tracks.
- Remove any obstructions from creek beds.
- Ripping of tracks may be required if they have become compacted or deeply rutted and topsoil significantly disturbed. On sloping tracks avoid ripping down-slope.

For further information or advice on this subject please contact

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