



# Environmental Protection Authority

## Environmental offsets reporting form

See *EPA Guidance Statement No. 19: environmental offsets - biodiversity*

Please note that the EPA may request additional information.

### Section A: Administrative information

**1. Proposal or scheme name:** Browns Range Project

**2. Summary of proposal or scheme:**

Northern Minerals Limited (NML) proposes to develop a rare earths mine and mineral processing operation at a location approximately 160 kilometres (km) southeast of Halls Creek, Western Australia. The mine and processing operations will be supported by other infrastructure, including an accommodation camp, an airstrip, access roads and a borefield. Access to the site will be via existing roads from Halls Creek to Ringer Soak, with an access track from Ringer Soak to site to be upgraded.

The Project will produce rare earths that will be exported for use in technological applications.

### Section B: Type of environmental asset (s) – State whether Critical or High Value, describe the environmental values and attributes

No critical assets, as defined by EPA (2006), will be affected by this proposal.

However, approximately 711 ha of native vegetation will be removed to establish the Project. This vegetation supports some species of conservation interest has been assessed as in excellent condition. This vegetation also comprises habitat for native animals. Under the offset guidelines (EPA 2006), this area would comprise a high value asset.

### Section C: Significant impacts (describe the significant adverse environmental impacts related to the proposal or scheme before mitigation measures are applied)

Significant impacts associated with the Browns Range Project include:

- Land clearing (loss of about 711 ha of native vegetation and fauna habitat);
- Excavation of five open pits (construction of four permanent open voids, dust generation);
- Construction of waste rock landforms and a tailings storage facility (potential local impacts on air and water quality); and
- Processing of ore to produce rare earth product (potential local impacts on air and water quality).

### Section D: Mitigation measures (describe all measures to Avoid, Minimise, Rectify and Reduce)

#### Avoid

- Biological survey to identify and avoid more sensitive areas.
- Capture and retention of process water.
- Prevent overclearing through the introduction of a Ground Disturbance Permit system.



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## Minimise

- Minimise project footprint through designs changes.
- Monitor environmental impacts and address any issues arising during construction, operations and after closure.

## Rectify

- Rehabilitate waste rock landforms, tailings storage facility and infrastructure areas . re-establish native vegetation and fauna habitat.

## Reduce

- Limit potential for indirect impacts through dust controls.

## **Section E: Significant residual impacts (describe all the significant adverse residual impacts that remain after all mitigation attempts have been exhausted)**

- Four permanent voids
- For rehabilitated areas, native vegetation and fauna habitat will be . re-established but original ecological function is unlikely to be fully restored.

## **Section F: Proposed offsets for each significant residual impact (identify direct and contributing offsets). Include a description of the land tenure and zoning / reservation status of the proposed offset site. Identify any encumbrances or other restrictions on the land that may impact the implementation of the proposed offset and provide evidence demonstrating how these issues have been resolved.**

Initial thoughts on offsets have focussed on land management initiatives that could operate within an Indigenous Protected Area (IPA). Such an initiative could be appropriate for the local area and activities could include fire management, and feral animal and weed control. Northern Minerals would be happy to discuss this further with the OEPA and potential indigenous participants.

## **Section G: Spatial data relating to offset site/s (see *EPA Guidance Statement No. 19: environmental offsets- biodiversity, Appendix 4*)**

Not applicable.

## **Section H: Relevant data sources and evidence of consultation (consultation with agencies, relevant stakeholders, community and references to sources of data / information). Include details of specific environmental, technical or other relevant advice and information obtained to assist in the formulation of the offset.**

To be advised.