

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Stellar Resources Ltd through John Miedecke and Partners P/L have engaged Philip Milner Landscape Consultant Pty Ltd to undertake targeted field surveys for evidence of the presence of Tasmanian Devils and species of orchids, particularly threatened species within and adjacent to the St Dizier Exploration Lease EL 46/2003, which is in response to the recommendations of the previous desktop survey and field survey dated 6th May 2014 and report dated 18th June 2014 and undertaken by this consultant.

This report presents the findings of field surveys of the exploration lease undertaken on the 17th and 18th February 2016 and the 25th November 2016, and should be read in conjunction with and reference to the previous report detailed above.

SUMMER SURVEY: 17th - 18th February 2016

Tasmanian Devil: One devil scat was observed within the proposed infrastructure area of the mining lease, one was observed on a track to the immediate east of the resource area and two were observed along the lower track, parallel with the Tasman River. All four scats were old and no fresh scats of devils were observed. There had been rain the previous day but no fresh paw prints of devils were observed in any of the wet sandy spots along the tracks. No potential devil den habitat was observed during the survey.

Wombat: Eight deposits of wombat scats were noted along the lower track, parallel with the Tasman River and one was observed on a track to the immediate east of the resource area. Three of the scat deposits were fresh. No wombat scats were observed within the resource area or within the proposed infrastructure area of the lease. Wombats can be indicative of potential devil habitat as devils are known to utilise wombat burrows as dens, including as maternal dens, although no wombat burrows were found in the locality due to the nature of the local substrate.

Summer Flowering Orchids: One species of terrestrial orchid was observed during the survey, *Eriochilus cucculata* Parsons Bands. This species is widespread in a range of habitats however all native orchids are considered to be of some conservation significance.

Threatened Species of Flora: A targeted search for the summer flowering Horned Orchid *Orthoceras strictum* in suitable habitat within the lease and particularly along the track parallel with the Tasman River failed to find any plants of this species.

SPRING SURVEY: 25th November 2016

The area proposed for the development of infrastructure associated with the new mine had been burnt in the autumn of 2016 and there had been little regrowth at the time of this survey nor had there been a post fire response of any orchids in this, the first spring season.

Tasmanian Devil:

No evidence of the presence of devils such as scats or paw prints was observed within the resource area of the lease or within the proposed infrastructure development area. One very old scat of a devil was observed along the lower track parallel with the Tasman River.

Wombat: Three deposits of wombat scats were observed in the resource and infrastructure area of the lease, and two of those were quite fresh. Six deposits of wombat scats were observed along the lower track parallel with the Tasman River and three of those were relatively fresh.

Spring Flowering Orchids: The following species of non-threatened orchids were observed in non-burnt locations within the resource and proposed infrastructure area of the lease.

- *Thelymitra ixioides* Spotted Sun-orchid
- *Thelymitra rubra* Pink Sun-orchid
- *Calochilus robertsonii* Purple Beard-orchid
- *Caladenia carnea* Pink Fingers
- *Caladenia gracilis* Musky Finger-orchid only within the wooded resource area of the lease.

The following species of non-threatened orchids were observed in the survey area adjacent to the lower track parallel to the Tasman River.

- *Thelymitra ixioides* Spotted Sun-orchid
- *Thelymitra rubra* Pink Sun-orchid
- *Calochilus robertsonii* Purple Beard-orchid

Threatened Species of Flora: A single plant of the following species of threatened orchid was observed on the verge of the Heemskirk Road about 100 metres to the west of the main entrance to the site.

- *Diuris lanceolata*. The Large Golden Moth is listed as being endangered under both the *Tasmanian Threatened Species Protection Act 1995* and the *Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

The nearest other known occurrence of this species is at Rebecca Lagoon within the Arthur-Pieman Protected Area about 80km to the north of this location.

The observation is adjacent to but outside of the proposed development area but the orchid would be very vulnerable to being impacted by road verge maintenance activities such as grading or herbicide application being undertaken by other authorities.

The observation however does indicate the possibility that the plant occurs elsewhere in the vicinity and although no plants were seen within the area of the lease or the area proposed for development during this survey, possibly because the adjacent area within the lease was burnt in the most recent autumn. A follow up search for this species may be warranted in the following two to three post-fire seasons in the adjacent area of the lease.

CONCLUSIONS:

The area proposed for the development of the mine infrastructure and part of the resource area within the lease had been burnt in the autumn of 2016 and little regrowth had yet occurred.

One species of flora which is listed under both the Tasmanian *Threatened Species Protection Act 1995* and/or the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* was observed during the survey. The Tall Golden Moth (orchid) *Diuris lanceolata* was observed on the verge of the Heemskirk Road, outside of the proposed development area.

No threatened species of flora were observed within the resource area and proposed infrastructure area of the lease, including *Diuris lanceolata* and the Horned Orchid *Orthoceras strictum*.

Six species of non-threatened orchids were observed within the resource and proposed infrastructure area of the lease, and three species were observed in the area adjacent to the Tasman River.

Evidence was observed of the presence of devils within and adjacent to the resource and proposed infrastructure area, as well as the area adjacent to the Tasman River, however the scats observed were not recent or frequent. Therefore it could be concluded that the lease and adjacent area is part of the home range of one or more individual devils but not key habitat or a key location for the species.

No potential den habitat was observed for the Devil in either of the two survey areas.

Evidence of the presence of Wombats was observed within the lease and adjacent area although no wombat burrows, as potential devil den habitat were found. The conclusion being that wombats frequent the area on a regular basis but it is not a key location for the species given the lack of burrows.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The recommendation detailed in the previous report (18th June 2014) are reiterated here particularly in regard to the limiting of clearing for the proposed mine and infrastructure, the effective management of drainage from the mine site and the area adjacent to the Tasman River being treated and managed as a fauna habitat conservation zone.

THREATENED FLORA

As the threatened species *Diuris lanceolata* is listed under both the *TSP Act 1995* and the *EPBC Act* further searches for the species in the next 2 to 3 (post fire) seasons may be warranted in order to determine if the species is present within the proposed infrastructure area of the lease, which is adjacent to the observation of this species on the verge of the Heemskirk Road in the most recent survey

NON-THREATENED FLORA OF CONSERVATION SIGNIFICANCE

A conservation zone in the area adjacent to the Tasman River will protect three of the six non-threatened species of orchids observed during the surveys.

THREATENED FAUNA and THREATENED FAUNA HABITAT:

The treatment and management of the area adjacent to the Tasman River as a fauna habitat management zone will conserve the most significant areas of potential threatened fauna habitat in the area adjacent to the mine site.

NON-THREATENED FAUNA OF CONSERVATION SIGNIFICANCE;

The treatment and management of the area adjacent to the Tasman River as previously recommended as a fauna habitat conservation zone will ensure that the significant area of habitat for the Wombat and other non-threatened fauna of conservation significance is retained.

Philip Milner
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17th January 2017