Introduction

Abandoned mining lands, for the purposes of this strategy, refer to areas or sites of former mining activity for which no individual, company, or organisation are responsible. Such sites have also been called ‘derelict’ or ‘orphan’ mines.

These sites may contain hazards to human and animal life in the form of accessible adits, shafts and workings, and there may be associated pollution (such as acid drainage) from old workings and stockpiles. Visual degradation is an issue in some areas, even if the site is not actively eroding. In some places, ongoing erosion can affect land stability, revegetation efforts and water quality.

These problems have arisen because government requirements and operational standards were previously of a lower standard than are in use today. Modern mines are operated in accordance with ‘best practice’ techniques and government regulation of both exploration and mining is strict. Bonds are held against both exploration and mining titles and these funds can be used for any rehabilitation which is left outstanding by the operator.

This was not the case in the past, when mines and many industrial developments operated without the care and attention to the impact on the environment which we expect today.

In recent years the mining industry agreed to an increase in royalties, a portion of which was to be allocated to a Trust Fund, for the sole purpose of the repair of abandoned mining lands.

Establishment of Trust Fund

A Trust Fund was established to fund rehabilitation of land affected by former mining or exploration activities. This is defined in the Mineral Resources Development Act 1995 as:

(a) any money appropriated by Parliament for the purposes of this Part; and
(b) any money received from the sale of any building, machinery or property vested in the Crown under section 105(4); and
(c) any security deposit or part of a security forfeited by the Minister under section 198; and
(d) any other money received for the purpose of this Part; and
(e) any money the Treasurer directs to be paid into the Rehabilitation Trust Fund.

The Minister for Mines may (Mineral Resources Development Act 1995, Section 180):

(a) cause any abandoned mining land or land affected by former exploration activities to be rehabilitated; and
(b) enter into any contract relating to the environmental rehabilitation of any abandoned mining land or land affected by former exploration activities.

Trust Fund Committee

A Committee has been established to provide advice to the Minister on the management of the Trust Fund. The committee comprises representatives from:

- Mineral Resources Tasmania (MRT);
- Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment (Environment and Planning);
- Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment (Parks and Wildlife Service);
- Forestry Tasmania;
- Crushed Stone Association; and
- Tasmanian Minerals Council.
**Aim of Rehabilitation**

The Trust Fund has set priorities for sites to be rehabilitated. These are:

- remove risks to health and safety;
- stabilise the site and reduce or remove the impact of erosion and mass movement;
- where feasible maintain or increase the biological diversity of species in the vicinity to pre-mining levels;
- remove or ameliorate sources of site contamination;
- remove features limiting the beneficial use of the site and its surroundings;
- improve the visual amenity of the site and its surroundings.

**Selection of Sites**

Sites which are to be considered for rehabilitation must fit the following selection criteria:

1. the site is to be on Crown land. Sites on private property will not be considered;
2. the site is to have been worked by private enterprise and not by government or by government instrumentality. Gravel pits previously worked by the Hydro-Electric Corporation, Forestry Tasmania, the Department of Main Roads etc. will not be considered;
3. the site must be abandoned, with the responsibility for rehabilitation resting with the Crown. Current liabilities of existing tenement holders will not be considered. However, work may be done on tenements where the tenement holder has been absolved of responsibility for pre-existing degradation.

Other factors to be considered include:

4. threats to the safety or health of the public, stock or native flora/fauna;
5. pollution impacts on adjoining properties or catchments;
6. erosion or land degradation on/off site;
7. loss of visual amenity;
8. public concerns/complaints.

The selection of sites will always be based on the criteria previously mentioned.

**Priorities for Rehabilitation**

To set priorities for rehabilitation, a means for determining the degree of risk presented by a given site (environmental and safety) is required. Where practicable, this should be quantitative or semi-quantitative while still allowing for other factors to be used in final consideration of the eligibility of a site for remediation. Such a method may entail an assessment of the likelihood of risks and the consequences of utilising a risk assessment matrix to determine priority sites.

A summary sheet is to be filled out for each site under consideration (Appendix 1).

**Determining Rehabilitation Priorities**

The Committee has previously agreed that the sites selected for rehabilitation should be prioritised in accordance with the following criteria, which are listed in order of importance. A guide to using these criteria is given in Appendix 2.

(a) The nature of public risk posed by hazards on the site, assessed by risk analysis:

- risk, depth of shafts;
- extent of stoping and excavations;
- ease of access;
- population exposed.

(b) Scope of impacts — off-site: the extent of the impact and the consequences of impacts on surrounding lands, such as:

- natural areas/National Park;
- forested land or productive forest;
- agricultural land;
- derelict farmland;
- acid drainage;
- siltation; and
- potential for weed infestation to spread.

(c) Extent of and potential for further degradation on site: factors such as the following will be considered:

- area of degradation;
- contamination;
- erosion, stable or actively degrading;
- loss of soil and vegetation;
- weed infestation.

The duration of any potential impact (short or long term) will also be considered, as will whether the remediation can be completed in one or two campaigns or will be on-going, requiring extensive maintenance.

(d) Visual amenity and social impact

- The visual impact of the site is also a factor to be considered. This need not necessarily be related
to the size of the site; small sites may be more visually intrusive in sensitive areas than larger sites elsewhere; and

☐ Social impact refers to public interest in the site or its off-site effects.

The committee has agreed to a list of sites which are to be rehabilitated. A preliminary three year rolling plan has been prepared which lists sites to be repaired as funds permit. This list will be reviewed from time to time and will be amended as new information comes to hand (see Appendix 2).

**Development of a Rehabilitation Plan**

The objectives and extent of rehabilitation should be agreed to as early as possible to provide discipline for discussion with stakeholders and bodies who grant approvals. Rehabilitation plans must be developed to guide site-specific remediation.

**Process for Rehabilitation**

The process to be followed for the implementation of rehabilitation projects is outlined below.

Following the approval of a particular project by the Committee a number of steps are required before on-ground work can commence. These are:

**The Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993 (LUPAA) as it applies to rehabilitation on Crown land**

As all rehabilitation projects include on-ground work they will fall under the LUPAA and therefore require a permit from the Local Government. By following the requirements of this Act a transparent process is followed which includes notification in the local press and public consultation.

The following information is included in the Planning Application:

☐ description of the proposed development:
  − background;
  − stakeholder consultation;
  − proposed works;
  − current and proposed land use;
  − staging of the proposed works;
  − hours/days of operation;
  − heavy traffic movements;
  − potentially hazardous operations and/or movements;
  − disposal of wastes;
  − control of emissions;
  − employment.

☐ supporting information:
  − maps;
  − scientific and cultural information.

In some cases rehabilitation on a minor scale may be exempt from these requirements, for example spraying an incipient weed infestation. If this is the case the work will either be approved by using the Project Proposal Form for lands managed by the Parks and Wildlife Service (discussed below) or if it is conducted on tracks or related to other exploration activities the usual MRT exploration work approvals process will be used.

**Inter-departmental Consultation**

All projects will be circulated to Forestry Tasmania, the Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment, and Property Services at an early stage to determine their requirements and develop rehabilitation objectives.

**Public Consultation**

Selection of sites and plans will be discussed with community and stakeholder groups early in the process to develop interest and support, assist in site selection, develop rehabilitation objectives and to avoid future conflicts.

**Approval for work to commence on Crown land**

**Crown land managed by the Parks and Wildlife Service**

Any works on land managed by the Parks and Wildlife Service can be approved but a Project Proposal Form (PPF) must be completed. The PPF is an integral part of any rehabilitation project and must be factored into the budgeting and planning process. Information required for the PPF includes details of the type and scale of work proposed and prescriptions for the particular site. Natural resource information is also required.

The PPF is assessed by the Parks and Wildlife Service, with assessment taking approximately five weeks. Information assessed includes known natural and cultural values which may occur in the vicinity and how they may be influenced by on-ground works. Consideration is also given to the prescriptions or treatments being proposed and whether they are consistent with conservation and land management requirements, and in particular, to satisfy the Crown’s

Parks and Wildlife Service staff are not available, unless adequately resourced, to do detailed environmental assessments outside the agency, it being the proponent’s responsibility to provide information necessary for an adequate assessment.

In some cases further on-ground assessments may be required, if for example there is a high likelihood that the works could impact on important conservation values or that they may have adverse environmental impacts due to site conditions or the nature of the disturbance being treated.

Crown land managed by Forestry Tasmania

The majority of identified abandoned mine sites occur on Crown land managed by the Parks and Wildlife Service. In a situation where a site occurred on land administered by Forestry Tasmania and major works were required, a Level 1 permit would be applied for under LUPAA. Forestry Tasmania would be consulted and involved in prior planning and approvals would need to be obtained through the relevant District Forester. Natural and cultural heritage considerations would also need to be reported on to satisfy the Crown’s responsibilities under the Threatened Species Protection Act 1995 and the Historic Cultural Heritage Act 1995.

The Management Decision Classification System (MDCS) of Forestry Tasmania will be a useful mechanism for identifying special values in areas prioritised for rehabilitation.

Appointment of Consultants

As MRT does not have the resources to project manage large rehabilitation works consultants will need to be appointed to manage these tasks.

To ensure fairness and transparency the best practice model advocated by the New South Wales Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) will be used to select consultants.

By following the principles of probity set out by ICAC and the Association of Consulting Engineers Australia in the booklet Qualification Based Selection, the appointment of consultants will be seen to be ethical and maintain the integrity of the selection process.

Awarding of Tenders and/or Contracts

In most cases the appointed project managers will be responsible for the preparation and dissemination of works tenders.

MRT will approve the preferred tenderer after perusal of the applications and discussion with the project manager, and the award of the tender will be ratified by the Trust Committee.

The project manager will use an Australian Standards approved tendering process such as the AS 4301 system.

Project Management

After sites have been selected and prioritised, a project brief for work will be drawn up by MRT and circulated to committee members. The agreed project brief will be the basis for invitation of tenders. This will include rehabilitation objectives, safety requirements, and environmental management.

Regular inspections will be made by MRT staff as work progresses, in conjunction with the consultant and other members of the Trust Committee or representatives of the land manager as required.

Reporting

The Trust Committee will meet quarterly. Progress reports on individual projects will be made quarterly and an annual report of Trust Fund activities will be produced. A list of projects, both current and completed, is given in Appendix 3.

Acknowledgements

This strategy was compiled by Carol Bacon with assistance from John Pemberton, Wojciech Grun and David Gatehouse.

[14 March 2001]
APPENDIX 1

Trust Fund Assessment

Locality/Site Name: .......................................................... Grid Reference: ............................................

Land status: .................................. Grid Reference: ............................................

Past Lease/Licence Holder (if known): ..........................................................

Approximate date last worked: ..........................................................

Description of previous operation (exploration site/mine site/alluvial mine/quarry/gravel pit/tailings):
..................................................................................................
..................................................................................................
..................................................................................................

Previous reports: .............................................................................
..................................................................................................
..................................................................................................

Public safety hazards: ..........................................................

Access (vehicle/bike/foot): ..........................................................

Vegetation type: ..........................................................

Topsoil availability: ..........................................................

Off-site impacts, acid drainage/erosion, etc.: ..........................................................

Adjacent land: ..........................................................

Visibility of site: ..........................................................

Duration of site impacts: ..........................................................

Historical significance (water races, tailings dumps, structures, adits, town sites etc.):
..................................................................................................

Restoration measures required (seeding/fertilising/earthworks, ripping, re-contouring, spreading topsoil, drainage, erection of bund):
..................................................................................................

Maintenance: ..........................................................

Hazard reduction required: ..........................................................

Previous rehabilitation: ..........................................................

Public safety (high/medium/low): ..........................................................

Off-site impacts (high/medium/low): ..........................................................

Extent of degradation and potential for further on-site degradation (high/medium/low): ..........................................................

Visibility and social impacts (high/medium/low): ..........................................................

Priority for restoration (high/medium/low): ..........................................................
APPENDIX 2
Rehabilitation Criteria

1. Public Safety
   Risk: Depth of shaft/s
         Extent of excavation
         Stopes
   Exposure: Proximity to population, access

2. Off Site Impacts
   Severity/Potential
      Weeds — potential to spread
      Siltation activity
      Severity/potential
      Acid drainage
   Extent: Exposure to wind
           Catchment
           Dispersion/confluence

3. Extent of degradation and potential for further on-site degradation
   Degradation: Weeds
                Erosion/activity
                Soil loss
                Vegetation
                Contamination
   Extent: Area

4. Visibility and social impacts
   Intrusion: Visibility
   Exposure: Population/traffic
             Perception
             Complaints
APPENDIX 3

Current and Completed Rehabilitation Projects
(Revised November 2000)

Endurance Mine
- Repair of erosion gullies which are consuming approximately 2 ha per year of land previously rehabilitated by Greening Australia
  - Maintenance 1999-2000
  - Water monitoring and design of water treatment on Ruby Creek 1997–1998
  - Honours study on revegetation success 1998–1999
  - Honours study on acid drainage, Ruby Creek 1998–1999

Star Hill Workings
- Recontouring of alluvial tinfield; improvement to drainage 1997–1998
- Seeding and fertilising 1997–1998
- Repair of tailings dam; stability work 1997–1998
- Repair of dam overflow and erosion channel 1997–1998
- Monitoring and maintenance required

Monarch Workings
- Stabilisation of gully and creek 1997–1998
- Successive alkalinity producing system trial on Vicarys Creek 1997–1998
- Planting of seedlings (by Scottsdale High School pupils) 1997–1998
- Joint revegetation effort with Scottsdale High School (contribution to NHT funds) 1999-2000

Rossarden
- Tailings dam maintenance (further spreading of seed and topsoil) 1998–1999
- Water treatment investigation (pump trial $25,000) (pipe investigation $10,000) 1999–2000
- Pumping installation under consideration
- Piping installation under consideration
- Wetland construction under consideration
- Water diversion works 1999–2000

Storys Creek (RiverWorks)
- Alkalinity addition to Storys Creek, trial 1998–1999*
- Alkalinity addition to jig tailings and lysimeter evaluation, trial 1998–1999*
- Limestone addition to stream banks; laboratory trial 1998–1999*
- Limestone addition to stream, trial 1998–1999*
- Anoxic limestone drain above mine, trial 1998–1999*
- Drill precipitate dam 1998–1999*
- Relocate precipitate dam (contribution to RiverWorks) 1999–2000
- Seal eastern adits (contribution to RiverWorks) 1999–2000
- Limestone addition to stream banks 1999–2000
- Biological monitoring under consideration
- Anoxic limestone drain above mine 2000–2001
- Limestone addition to stream, continuing 2000–2001

**Zeehan**
- Alkalinity producing system trial near Queen Hill No. 4 workings 1998–1999
- Honours study on seepages from Oceana smelter site 1998–1999
- Honours study on natural remediation of Zeehan wetlands deferred
- Honours study on completed rehabilitation of mine sites in the Zeehan district 1997–1998
- Consultant’s assessment of Tim Parr’s honours work and recommendations for water quality improvement work 1998–1999
- Revegetation of parts of Queen Hill 1999–2000

**Queensberry Mine**
- Eradication of gorse infestation planned

**Shaft Capping**
- Cap over shaft at Montana 1997–1998
- Backfill stopes at Montana 1997–1998
- Grid over shaft at Crown Prince 1998–1999
- Grids over three shafts at Great Republic mine, Gipps Creek 1998–1999
- Grid over shaft at Spray mine, Zeehan 1999–2000
- Cap over shaft at Golden Mara, Warrentinna (Branxholm) 1999–2000
- Cap over shaft at Orieco mine 1999–2000

**Shaft and Adit Fencing**
- Ben Lomond, Great Republic mine, Gipps Creek 1999–2000
- Golden Mara area, Warrentinna (Branxholm) 1999–2000
- Orieco, Trafalgar, Golden Ridge 1999–2000
- Queen Hill, Zeehan 1999–2000
- Vaudeau, Cuni (Melba Flats Zeehan) 1999–2000

**Miscellaneous Safety work**
**Tasmanian Acid Drainage Study**

- Trust Fund to contribution to NHT funds 1999–2000
- Project management by MRT, geochemist for two years to undertake study of acid drainage

**Quarries**

- Whalebone Beach gravel extraction, King Island 1998–1999
- Revegetation Oak Dene Road sand pits 1998–1999
- Maintenance 1999–2000

**Balfour**

- Revegetation planned

**Exploration**

- Removal of camp sites from the South West Conservation Area
- Removal of huts and rubbish from Old Noddy Creek, Moores Valley and Wart Hill 1998–1999
- Removal of rubbish and drill rods from Old Innes Peak and Wart Hill 1999–2000

*partly or wholly funded by RiverWorks. Some works in conjunction with Trust funding.*
## APPENDIX 4

### Inventory of Abandoned Mine Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site No.</th>
<th>Ref No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Land Status</th>
<th>Commodity</th>
<th>Current Years of op</th>
<th>Sheet</th>
<th>Work required</th>
<th>Assessed Date</th>
<th>Safety</th>
<th>Off-Site</th>
<th>Degradation</th>
<th>Visibility</th>
<th>Program</th>
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<td>198x 50023</td>
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<td>Comstock CL Pb, Ag, Zn Yes</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>568 35040</td>
<td></td>
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<td>610 50018</td>
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<td>842 37039</td>
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<td>Round Hill Central (A) Ag No</td>
<td>81153</td>
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<td>1998-1999</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>730 50016</td>
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<td>84151</td>
<td>Needs assessment</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Site elements: Adits, open cut, shafts, townsite

Issues: Mining heritage, public safety, acid drainage

Site elements: Complex of adits & shafts, open cuts, costeans

Issues: Public safety, drainage, mining heritage

Site elements: Shaft, adit, battery site

Issues: Open shaft, some workings

Site elements: Shaft, adit, battery site

Issues: Shaft access

Site elements: Shaft and wider fencing

Issues: Shaft cap and wider fencing

Site elements: Shaft, adits, history

Issues: Open shaft, some workings

Site elements: Shaft, adits, history

Issues: Shaft access

Site elements: Shaft

Issues: Part of Queen Hill complex, acid drainage

Site elements: Sluiced areas, tailings, dams, Mount Cameron water race

Issues: Eroded areas, visual impact, (?) degradation, dam repairs

Site elements: Alluvial race

Issues: Erosion gullies, some revegetation, dam
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site No.</th>
<th>Ref No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Land Status</th>
<th>Commodity</th>
<th>Current Lease</th>
<th>Years of op</th>
<th>Sheet</th>
<th>Work required</th>
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<th>Degradation</th>
<th>Visibility</th>
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<td>44026</td>
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<td>CL</td>
<td>Py, Zn</td>
<td>No</td>
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Site may be substantially altered by filling in excavations. No grids or gates needed, may fill in holes.

Site Conditions

- **Shaft**
  - Size
  - Depth
  - Filled / Open
  - Ground conditions
  - Shaft timbers

- **Adit**
  - Size
  - Length
  - Ground conditions
  - Ventilation flow through
  - Gaseous

- **Accessibility**
  - i.e. Probability of accident occurring

- **Deadlines**
  - Summer work window
  - Availability of machinery

- **Cost**
  - Availability of funds

- **Previous History of Visitation**
  - Use by stakeholder groups: e.g. orienteering, schools, fossickers
  - Known previous accidents / incidents
  - Level of public concern
  - Decision on treatment option for site giving regard to above factors
  - Consult with Land Manager and again on implementation option

- **Risk Medium**

- **High**
  - Manage site (i.e. fence sign)
  - Exclude access (i.e. grid barrier, fill in)

- **Risk Medium**
  - Manage site
  - Exclude access
  - Exclude access

- **Low**
  - Manage site
  - Exclude access
  - Manage site

- **Access**
  - Difficult
  - Moderate
  - Easy