

***A Survey for Aboriginal Heritage***

at

**Comstock Mine  
Zeehan**

for

**SEMF Consulting Engineers Pty Ltd  
45 Murray Street  
HOBART 7000**



by

***Rocky Sainty,  
Aboriginal Heritage Consultant***

**49 Cologne Drive,  
Oakdowns 7019  
Phone: 62473994  
Mobile: 0417 016 598**

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## Section 1 INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of a Survey for Aboriginal Heritage at the Comstock Mine Site which is approximately 5km south west of Zeehan along the Trial Harbour Road. The purpose of the survey was to identify and note any previously recorded Aboriginal sites within the survey area. The survey was conducted at the Comstock Mine site on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2006, by the writer Rocky Sainty at the request of Ms. Annette Foster of SEMF Consulting Engineers Pty Ltd on behalf of Oceania Tasmania Ltd, who holds the mining lease.

Consultation with the Tasmanian Aboriginal Land & Sea Council and the Aboriginal Heritage Office of the Department of Parks, Tourism, Heritage and the Arts was undertaken. It is important to inform and consult with the Aboriginal community on all matters concerning Aboriginal cultural heritage. The Tasmanian Aboriginal Land & Sea Council has established policies, protocols and procedures with various government agencies and other parties in terms of ensuring that the Aboriginal community's cultural heritage interests are maintained and protected. All Aboriginal sites are significant to the Aboriginal community.

## Section 2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Environmental & Infrastructure Solutions SEMF Consulting Engineers Pty Ltd are preparing a 3 year EMP Review for a small open cut mine on the west coast of Tasmania, near Zeehan. The Comstock mine site is approximately 5km south west of Zeehan along the Trial Harbour Road. The mine is not currently extracting or processing ore. The last three years has mainly been rehabilitation of waste rock dumps. In 2001 the Development Proposal and Environmental Management Plan was approved, and at the time a complete heritage survey was not required. As part of the review I was contacted By Annette Foster of SEMF to undertake an Aboriginal Heritage Survey.

Prior to European occupation this area and its surrounds was used regularly by Aborigines. A number of Aboriginal placenames have been recorded for country around this area.

The people of the area consisted of small clans or family groups, who frequented specific sites for food harvesting, camping, trade and ceremonial purposes. They travelled regularly to places including what is now known as Zeehan, Macquarie Harbour, and Trial Harbour hunting and gathering as they needed. Swans, ducks, mutton birds and their eggs were much sought after, as well as other water birds and mammals and an abundance of plant foods. The Tasmanian Aboriginal community have a continued physical and spiritual connection with country. A number of Aboriginal sites have been recorded throughout the area.

The Tasmanian Aboriginal Site Index at the Aboriginal Heritage Office of the Department of Parks, Tourism, Heritage and the Arts was inspected in order to determine if any Aboriginal sites had previously been recorded within the survey area or surrounding area. This research also assists in developing an understanding of the nature of any sites in the general area and also allows a review of any previous studies in the area of field survey. The inspection of the TASI revealed that there have been no sites previously recorded within the survey area.



### Section 3      FIELD METHODS

The survey was undertaken on the 27<sup>th</sup> February 2006 by the writer Rocky Sainty. Ground visibility was fair-poor, consisting of button grass and wet sclerophyll forest (see attached photo).

### Section 5      DISCUSSION

The Comstock lease has been mined by various companies from the 1880s, and the Aboriginal landscape has been heavily impacted upon as a result of these operations. Given the Aboriginal occupation of this area prior to European occupation there is always the possibility of Aboriginal sites being found. The Aboriginal community will always have concerns when works of any kind are to be undertaken within close proximity to waterways and cultural resources, particularly given the historical significance of these places to our community, both past and present, and the continued connection the Aboriginal community still has with these areas. All Aboriginal sites are significant to the Aboriginal community. Any kind of development is a threat to the Aboriginal landscape of our country and the integrity of cultural resources and heritage.

### Section 6      RECOMMENDATIONS

As no Aboriginal sites were found within the survey area there is no objection to works proceeding. If any Aboriginal cultural material is unearthed when works begin works should cease immediately and the Tasmanian Aboriginal Land & Sea Council or the Aboriginal Heritage Office be contacted.

As contained under Section 14 (1) of the *Aboriginal Relics Act 1975*:

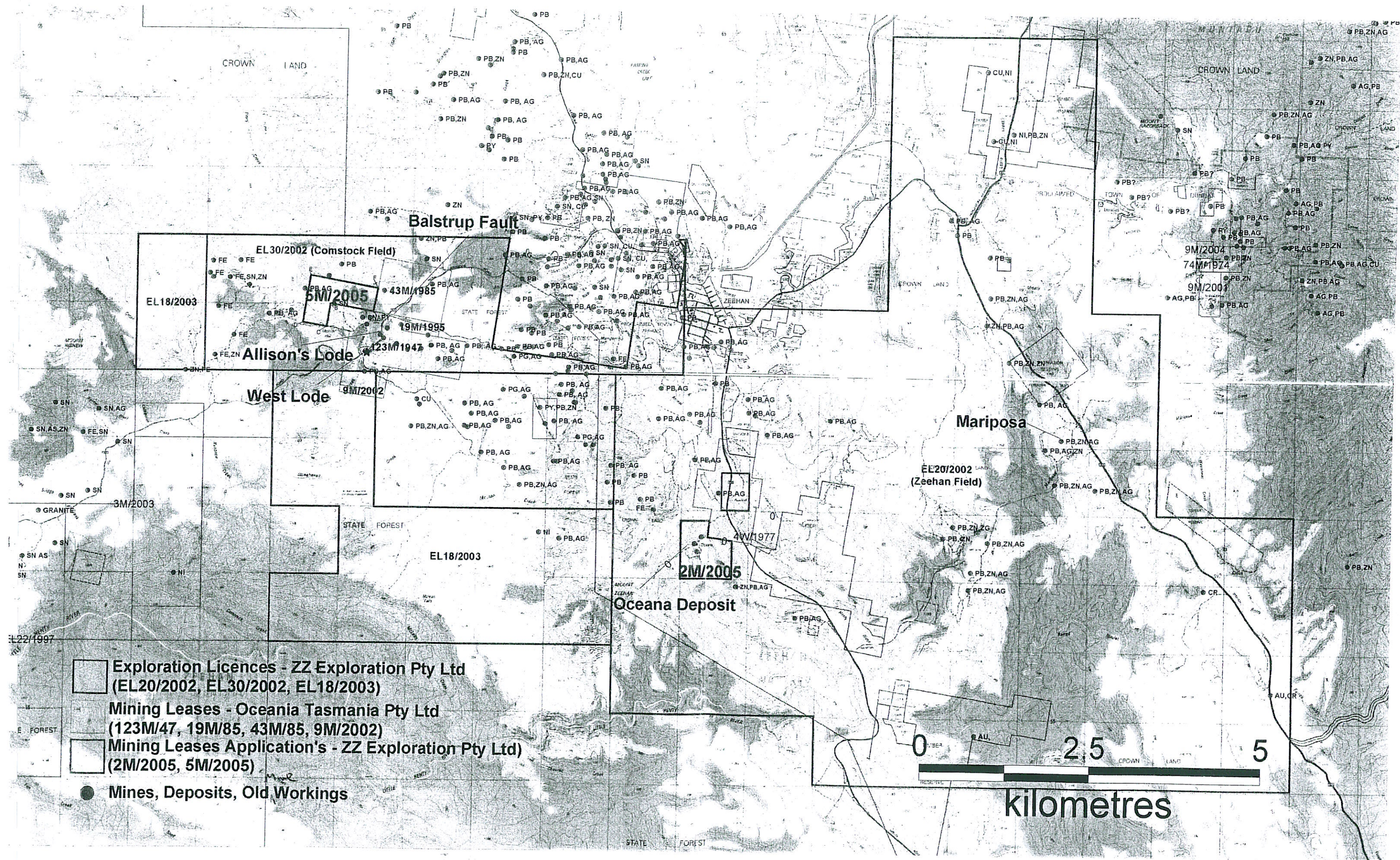
“Except as otherwise provided in this Act. No person shall, otherwise than in accordance with the terms of a permit granted by the Minister on the recommendation of the Director –

(a) destroy, damage, deface, conceal or otherwise interfere with a relic.”



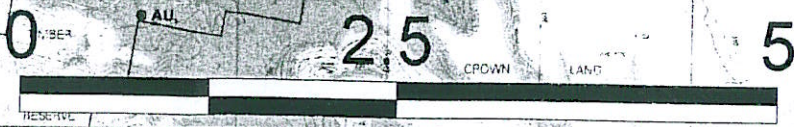
Photograph of survey area.  
Taken by Rocky Sainty, 27 February 2006





- Exploration Licences - ZZ Exploration Pty Ltd  
(EL20/2002, EL30/2002, EL18/2003)
- Mining Leases - Oceania Tasmania Pty Ltd  
(123M/47, 19M/85, 43M/85, 9M/2002)
- Mining Leases Application's - ZZ Exploration Pty Ltd)  
(2M/2005, 5M/2005)

● Mines, Deposits, Old Workings



kilometres