Environmental Management

Compliance and commitment

DMS will minimise Donald Project impacts by:

- Prioritising sustainability
- Implementing best practice environmental management
- Upholding stringent regulatory requirements designed to protect the environment and local communities

We operate under a strict regulatory framework, including:

- The *Environmental Protection Act 2017's* General Environmental Duty, which requires us to minimise the risk of harm to human health or the environment from pollution or waste
- The *Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990*, which sets rigorous standards for mining activities and rehabilitation requirements
- The *Water Act 1989*, which ensures fair water distribution while safeguarding dependent ecosystems
- The *Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, which includes specific conditions to protect Buloke Woodlands through our Biodiversity Offset Management Plan

In 2005, following requirements from the Victorian Minister for Planning under the *Environmental Effects Act 1978*, we prepared an extensive Environment Effects Statement (EES). The Minister for Planning favourably assessed this in 2008, subject to specific conditions.

Since then, we have reassessed our project's environmental impacts using current methods and standards, confirming the effects remain the same or less than originally predicted.

Management plans and controls

We have developed 19 robust management plans to avoid, minimise, and manage project emissions and discharges. These plans align with current laws and industry best practices.

Aspects they cover include, but are not limited to:

- Air quality
- Noise and vibration
- Visual impacts
- Cultural heritage
- Waste management
- Groundwater and surface water management

The relevant authorities will review and approve these plans before we can begin work.

Emissions and discharges

We will manage the following emissions and discharges from mining and processing the mineral sands ore:

- Noise and fuel combustion from fixed and mobile plant and vehicles
- Dust from open areas (e.g. stockpiles and mine pits) and material handling operations
- Use of mine pit dewatering and ore processing wastewater
- Sediment-laden stormwater
- Disposal of solid wastes (i.e. sand, clay, ore processing tailings)
- Seepage to groundwater from the return of solid waste to mine voids

Air quality

We will maintain air quality with a range of measures, including:

- Reducing pit exposure time to minimise dust by using the 'moving hole' mining approach
- Minimising and slowing vehicle movements on dirt and gravel roads
- Spraying water and planting grass to minimise dust
- Pumping ore in wet/slurry form to reduce airborne particles
- Packing ore onsite in sealed containers for transport offsite

Noise and vibration

We will minimise noise and vibration impacts, including by:

- Adhering to legal noise limits
- Communicating proactively with nearby residents before any noise events
- Constructing fully enclosed process plant buildings that limit noise emissions
- Reducing haulage distances between site stockpiles and mining blocks to minimise truck movements
- Positioning the Mining Unit Plant onsite as far from sensitive receptors as practicable
- Fitting plant machinery (e.g. haul trucks) with noise and emission reduction kits

Visual

The mine will be visible from some neighbouring properties and roads. Measures to reduce visual impacts will include:

- Planting trees and shrubs as natural screening. We will consult landowners about potentially effective and desirable screening on private property.
- Positioning facilities away from roads, where possible
- Using directed lighting and motion sensors to minimise light pollution

Biodiversity

Our commitment to protecting the rich biodiversity of the Wimmera region involves:

- Establishing protected 'no go zones' and 'tree protection zones'
- Securing vegetation offsets and relocating wildlife, when necessary
- Implementing strict weed and invasive species controls
- Safeguarding nearby conservation areas and important ecosystems

Aboriginal heritage

We have developed a Cultural Heritage Management Plan, in partnership with the Barengi Gadjin Land Council, to protect and manage Aboriginal cultural heritage sites.

We continue to collaborate with the land council as we follow through on our commitments and strengthen our cultural awareness.

DMS is also engaging with Heritage Victoria to manage European and non-Indigenous heritage.

Water

The Donald Project will manage water responsibly and efficiently, especially during dry times, to minimise impacts on local supplies.

To process the ore, we will source water by:

- **Extracting groundwater**

  We will install dewatering wells around the mining blocks so we can access the ore (about 80 per cent is below the groundwater table). We can use this hypersaline groundwater for processing. The nearest registered stock/domestic groundwater bores are about 20 km east of the mine site. It is unsuitable for agricultural use.

- **Capturing surface water runoff**

  We will capture water crossing site areas we have disturbed to avoid offsite release. Our onsite surface water runoff management system accords with best practice. It includes dams, diversion bunds, and channels. We will use diversion channels and bunds to divert surface water from disturbed areas.

- **Using our GWMWater growth water supply**

  We bought a water entitlement from GWMWater in 2011 from savings created by the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline project. We will limit the raw water supply requirement from GWMWater by prioritising surface water capture and groundwater extraction.

We will monitor our surface and groundwater use to make sure we meet environmental standards and maintain efficient water use.

Our *Water* fact sheet has more information about our water management approach.

Waste management

Our approach to waste and land management includes:

- Remediating any onsite contaminated land before mining
- Recycling and reusing materials (e.g. aggregate) where possible
- Proper handling and disposal of hazardous waste by licensed contractors
- Capturing and treating runoff from hazardous material storage areas
- Clear signage and safety protocols for handling potentially dangerous materials

Monitoring and verification

We are already monitoring air quality, groundwater, and naturally-occurring radiation. When we are operating, we will check our management controls are work by comparing with We will verify our management controls against these baseline levels.

When site activities begin, environmental monitoring will continue and expand. This monitoring will include will include visual, meteorological, real-time air quality, noise, groundwater, and radiation.

We will share monitoring results at periodic Environmental Review Committee meetings.

For more about radiation please read our *Naturally-Occurring Radioactive Material* fact sheet.

Rehabilitation

The Donald Project will restore all mined land to either agricultural use or native vegetation. We will do this gradually as mining progresses.

This progressive rehabilitation approach will allow us continually to refine our techniques and minimise overall environmental impact.

We have already successfully turned our test pit back into usable farmland. We are closely monitoring how this restored area performs to inform our methods for future rehabilitation work and ensure our land restoration is effective and enduring.

For more details, please read our *Rehabilitation* fact sheet.

About the Donald Project

The Donald Rare Earth and Mineral Sands Project is near Minyip and Donald, 300 km north-west of Melbourne.

Discovered in the 1980s, the site is a world-class source of minerals essential for everyday industries. These include critical minerals like zirconium and titanium, along with rare earth elements such as neodymium and praseodymium.

Donald Project Pty Ltd, trading as Donald Mineral Sands (DMS), is the joint venture between Astron Limited and Energy Fuels Inc developing the project.

Through responsible resource development, DMS will create long-term regional benefits including economic growth, jobs, and infrastructure improvements.

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