NORTHERN STAR RESOURCES LIMITED

CLEARING PERMIT SUPPORTING DOCUMENT NSR Hercules Gold Mine Project

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION 2
1.1 Purpose 2
1.2 Location and ownership 2
1.3 Project Description 3
1.4 Flora 5
1.5 Fauna 6
2. ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT & REHABILITATION 7
3. ASSESSMENT AGAINST TEN CLEARING PRINCIPALS 8
4. APPENDICES 10
5. REFERENCES 11

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Regional Location Map 3
Figure 2. Map of clearing permit application area. 4

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A. Hercules Basic & Targeted Fauna Survey Report_July 2024 Final (Phoenix Environmental Sciences, report issued November 2024)

Appendix B. Hercules Targeted Butterfly Survey Report_May & October 2024 Final(Phoenix Environmental Sciences, report issued November 2024)

Appendix C. Hercules Reconnaissance Flora/Vegetation and Brelation Fauna Report_March 2024 Final (Botanica Consulting, report issued April 2024)

Appendix D. Hercules Reconnaissance Flora and Basic Fauna Report_October 2024 Final (Botanica Consulting, report issued April 2025)

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

This document and accompanying Appendices have been prepared to support the application for a clearing permit (purpose permit), as required by Part V of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986.*

Northern Star (South Kalgoorlie) Pty Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of Northern Star Resources Limited, seeks to apply for a **Purpose Permit** to clear up to **600 hectares** of native vegetation on tenements: **M15/469, M15/726, M15/937, M15/938, M15/740 and M15/663.**

The clearing permit application relates to the proposed Hercules Gold Mine (the Project) which involves the development of new open cut pits, new Waste Rock Landform (WRL), topsoil stockpiles and associated mining related infrastructure to support the development and ongoing operation of the Project.

A Mining Proposal and Works Approval for this Project are being prepared and will be submitted to the relevant regulators in due course.

1.2 Location and ownership

Hercules Project is located 16.5km west of NSR's active South Kalgoorlie Operations (SKO). Hercules deposit sits proximal to the Zuleika Shear Zone, located within the Penfolds mining camp. It was formerly known as the Steinway-St Helens prospect. Historical deposits at Penfolds, Erebus and Fuji are spatially linked with the Hercules Basalt. Multiple open pits mined within the area since the 1990s. No mining has been conducted at Hercules before. Exploration activities commenced in 2023, with promising results. Northern Star is now proposing to proceed with mining activities at Hercules.

Table 1. Tenement Holders of the Clearing Boundary

Tenement	Holder	Expiry Date	Area (ha)
M15/469	NORTHERN STAR (SOUTH KALGOORLIE) PTY LTD	27/11/2031	900.80000 HA
M15/726	NORTHERN STAR (SOUTH KALGOORLIE) PTY LTD	20/09/2036	840.25000 HA
M15/937	NORTHERN STAR (SOUTH KALGOORLIE) PTY LTD	06/05/2045	835.65000 HA
M15/938	NORTHERN STAR (SOUTH KALGOORLIE) PTY LTD	07/05/2045	996.50000 HA
M15/740	NORTHERN STAR (SOUTH KALGOORLIE) PTY LTD	20/11/2036	866.30000 HA
M15/663	NORTHERN STAR (SOUTH KALGOORLIE) PTY LTD	07/06/2035	572.70000 HA

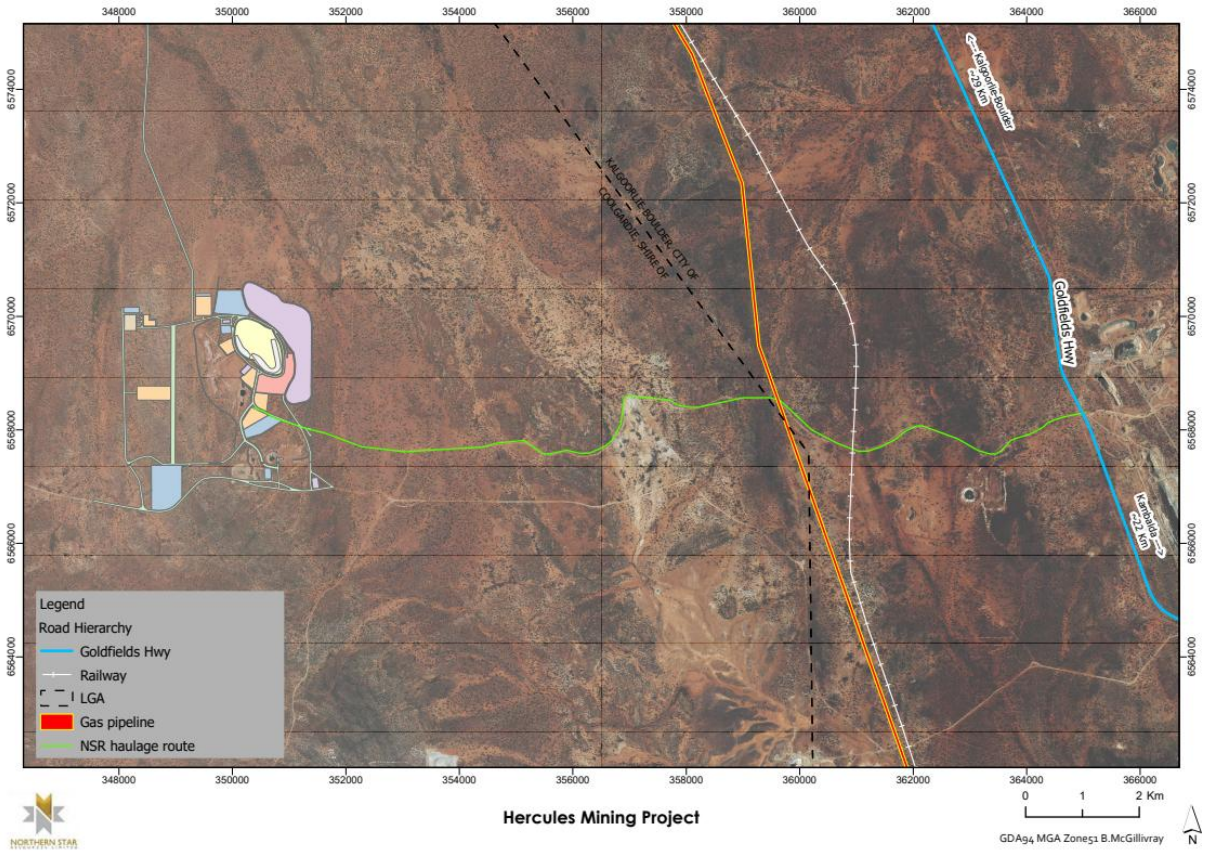


Figure 1. Regional Location Map

1.3 Project Description

The Hercules Gold Mine is a mining project located approximately 16.5km west of NSR's active South Kalgoorlie Operations (SKO) in the Eastern Goldfields region of Western Australia.

The Project will involve the development of an open pit and underground mine with associated infrastructure. Anticipated to transition to underground mining after ~3.5 years (30 months). Ore is expected to be hauled via road trains to either KCGM or Kanowna Belle for processing.

Vegetation clearing is required for the proposed open cut pits, WRL and other mining related infrastructure to support the development and ongoing operation of the Project. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Open pit (with portal to underground mine).
- Waste Rock Landforms (waste rock dumps).
- ROM pad.
- Topsoil stockpiles.
- Laydown/hardstand areas.
- Workshops and offices.
- Saline water dam/s
- Transport and infrastructure corridors (roads, pipelines, powerlines etc).
- Explosives magazine.
- Diversion bund.

Spatial data (ESRI shapefile format) of the proposed clearing permit boundary area, as depicted in **Figure 2**, have been provided with this application.



Figure 2. Map of clearing permit application area.

1.4 Flora

Autumn Survey - March 2024

A reconnaissance flora and vegetation survey of the Hercules Project area was conducted by Botanica Consulting during Autumn season in March 2024 (IBSASUB-20250328-221DDAF5). A copy of the final report can be found in **Appendix C**.

Eight vegetation types were identified within the survey area. These vegetation types were identified within three landform types and comprised of three major vegetation groups, which were represented by a total of 21 families and 74 taxa. Three fauna habitats were identified within the survey area. No Threatened Flora, Fauna or Threatened Ecological Communities as listed under the Western Australian *Biodiversity Conservation (BC) Act 2016* or Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act 1999* were identified within the survey area. No Priority Flora, Fauna or Priority Ecological Communities as listed by Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) were identified within the survey area. Based on the vegetation condition rating scale specified in the *Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) Technical Guidance - Flora and Vegetation Surveys for Environmental Impact Assessment – December 2016* (EPA, 2016a), vegetation was rated as 'good' to 'very good'. Disturbances within the survey area include previous mining and exploration activities, pastoral land use and occasional weeds and vehicle tracks. Four introduced flora and three introduced fauna were identified within the survey area. There are no wetlands of international importance (Ramsar Wetlands) or national importance (Australian Nature Conservation Agency Wetlands) within the survey area. The survey area is not located within a gazetted conservation reserve; however the survey area is located adjacent to the Karamindie State Forest. Based on the outcomes from the survey undertaken, Botanica assessed the results of the desktop and field survey with regards to the native vegetation clearing principles listed under Schedule 5 of the *Environmental Protection (EP Act) 1986*. The assessment found that the proposed vegetation clearing activities may be at variance with clearing principle (f) and (h).

Spring Survey - October 2024

A second reconnaissance flora and vegetationsurvey of the Hercules Project area was conducted by Botanica Consulting during Spring season in October 2024 (IBSASUB-20250328-75068A31). A copy of the final report can be found in **Appendix D**.

Eleven vegetation types were identified within the survey area. These vegetation types were identified within three landform types and comprised of four major vegetation groups, which were represented by a total 26 families. Dominant genera include, *Eremophila, Eucalyptus, Acacia* and *Maireana*. Four fauna habitats were identified within the survey area. No Threatened Flora, Fauna or Threatened Ecological Communities as listed under the Western Australian *Biodiversity Conservation (BC) Act 2016* or Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act 1999* were identified within the survey area. No Priority Flora, Fauna or Priority Ecological Communities as listed by Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) were identified within the survey area. Based on the vegetation condition rating scale specified in the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) Technical Guidance - Flora and Vegetation Surveys for Environmental Impact Assessment – December 2016 (EPA, 2016a), vegetation was rated as 'good' to 'very good'. Disturbances

within the survey area include previous mining and exploration activities, pastoral land use and occasional weeds and vehicle tracks. Six introduced flora and three introduced fauna were identified within the survey area. There are no wetlands of international importance (Ramsar Wetlands) or national importance (Australian Nature Conservation Agency Wetlands) within the survey area. The survey area is not located within a gazetted conservation reserve; however the survey area is located adjacent to the Karamindie State Forest. Based on the outcomes from the survey undertaken, Botanica assessed the results of the desktop and field survey with regards to the native vegetation clearing principles listed under Schedule 5 of the *Environmental Protection (EP Act) 1986*. The assessment found that the proposed vegetation clearing activities may be at variance with clearing principle (f) and (h).

1.5 Fauna

Basic and Targeted Fauna Survey - July 2024

A basic and targeted fauna survey of the Hercules Project area was conducted by Phoenix Environmental Sciences in July 2024 (IBSASUB-20250328-056526AF). A copy of this Final Report can be found in **Appendix A**.

Desktop reviews indicate no significant species or Short-range endemic (SRE) invertebrates have previously been recorded in the study area, however 21 significant vertebrate species, 2 significant invertebrates, and 71 potential or confirmed SRE taxa were returned in the desktop review. Three broad fauna habitat types were identified in the study area:

- Open Woodland (OW) – 1,281 ha, 68.5%
- Shrubland (Sh) – 404 ha, 21.6%
- Chenopod Shrubland (CS) –79 ha, 4.2%.

Both Open Woodland and Shrubland habitats are widespread throughout the study area and regionally. The remaining 5.7% of the study area is cleared, represented by roads, access tracks, infrastructure, and mining operations. A total of 37 vertebrate species were recorded during the field survey, consisting of 29 birds, 6 mammals, and 2 reptiles. Of the 6 mammals recorded, 4 are introduced species (cattle, goat, rabbit and cat). No significant vertebrates were recorded in the study area. While no significant vertebrates were recorded in the study area, one is considered likely to occur (Malleefowl, Vulnerable), and 5 may possibly occur. Malleefowl are common and widespread throughout the region, and habitat within the study area was assessed as suitable for occasional foraging and dispersal, however the openness of vegetation precludes breeding. The 5 species that may possibly occur include Southern Whiteface (VU), Western Rosella -inland ssp. (Priority 3), Forktailed Swift (Migratory) Central Long-eared Bat (P3), and Chuditch (Endangered). Southern Whiteface, Western Rosella, and Central Long-eared Bat may use the Open Woodland habitats, while Chuditch might occur in Open Woodland refuges during dispersal, and Fork-tailed Swift may occur overhead, but is unlikely to land within the study area. A total of 14 SRE taxa were collected within the study area comprising of 7 mygalomorph taxa, 2 isopod taxa, 2 centipede taxa, 2 pseudoscorpion taxa, and one millipede taxon. Of these, 11 taxa are potential SREs and 3 taxa are widespread. Two of the 11 Potential SRE species have previously been recorded from outside the study area and the remaining 9 species were considered new species. The assemblage of SREs is typical for the region, with all species collected expected to also occur outside of the study area

given the habitats present inside the study area do not present any form of refugia or barriers to dispersal. That said, many of the new potential SRE species are likely to be regionally restricted. Regional surveys of SREs are depauperate and most information centres around mining developments, contributing to the fragmented distributional and poor taxonomic knowledge of SREs in the region.

Targeted Significant Butterfly Survey - May & October 2024

A targeted significant butterfly survey of the Hercules Project area was conducted by Phoenix Environmental Sciences in May 2024 and October 2024 (IBSASUB-20250328-F72259B0). The habitat assessment was conducted on 1 to 5 May 2024 and follow-up butterfly searches were undertaken on 6 October 2024. The habitat assessment comprised of ground-truthing existing vegetation mapping (Botanica 2024) and assessing habitat potential for both species of butterfly using known habitat preferences. A copy of this Final Report can be found in **Appendix B**.

Habitats within the study area were ground-truthed during the survey, with 3 broad fauna habitat types present (Open Woodland, Shrubland, and Chenopod Shrubland). Collectively, these occupied 94.3% of the study area. The remaining 5.7% comprised of cleared areas.

Open Woodland (68.4% of the study area) is considered potentially suitable habitat for ABAB. This habitat occurred primary in the western third of the study area. Camponotus sp. nr. terebrans was not detected at any of the sites within the study area and this species is therefore considered absent from the study area.

Open Woodland and Shrubland habitats (90% of the study area) is potentially suitable for IHB. While the majority of the study area supports vegetation potentially suitable for IHB, when other habitat preferences were taken into account, two sites within the study area were considered suitable for IHB. These 2 sites were the only areas containing mature Senna with Froggattella kirbii, a mix on understory species, good drainage, and some bare ground. The 2 sites were inspected on 5 October 2025 when IHB were known to be active in the area (Phoenix internal data) however no butterflies were detected. IHB is therefore considered absent from the study area.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT & REHABILITATION

The following management recommendations will be incorporated into the planning and development of the Project where appropriate:

- The movement of machines and other vehicles shall be restricted to the limits of the areas to be cleared;
- During site works, areas requiring clearing should be clearly marked and access to other areas restricted to prevent accidental clearing of areas to be retained;
- Topsoil / growth medium vegetation will be stripped and stockpiled separately for later re-use during rehabilitation activities.
- Earth-moving equipment will be free from soil and vegetation prior to and leaving the area to be cleared (wash down facilities are available at the site); and
- Dust suppression activities will be controlled to ensure that surrounding vegetation is not sprayed with saline water.

A Mine Closure Plan (MCP) for the Project will be prepared and submitted to the Department Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (DEMIRS) in due course. Future revisions of this Mine Closure Plan and proposed rehabilitation strategies will include updated closure information as a result of activities described by this Project.

3. ASSESSMENT AGAINST TEN CLEARING PRINCIPALS

Clearing of vegetation is required for the purpose of developing the Hercules Gold Mining Project. The total area proposed to clear will not exceed 600 hectares on tenements: M15/469, M15/726, M15/937, M15/938, M15/740 and M15/663. Clearing will be undertaken by mechanical means and kept to the minimum extent necessary to minimise any potential environmental impacts of the project.

Statements against the ten 'clearing principles' as defined in Schedule 5 of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* have been provided below.

Letter	Principle	Assessment	Outcome
Native vegetation should not be cleared if it:			
(a)	comprises a high level of biological diversity.	Vegetation identified within the survey area is not considered to be of high biological diversity and is well represented outside of the survey area.	Clearing is unlikely to be at variance with this principle
(b)	comprises the whole or part of, or is necessary for the maintenance of, a significant habitat for fauna indigenous to WA.	No significant fauna or fauna habitat were observed within the survey area. Fauna habitats are well represented outside of the survey area.	Clearing is unlikely to be at variance with this principle
(c)	includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of rare flora.	No Threatened Flora taxa, pursuant to the BC Act and the EPBC Act were identified within the survey area.	Clearing is not at variance with this principle
(d)	comprises the whole or part of or is necessary for the maintenance of a threatened ecological community (TEC).	No TEC listed under the EPBC Act or by the BC Act occur within the survey area.	Clearing is not at variance with this principle
(e)	is significant as a remnant of native vegetation in an area that has been extensively cleared	Vegetation within the survey area retains >96% of its pre-European extent, and development within the survey area will not significantly reduce the current extent.	Clearing is unlikely to be at variance with this principle
(f)	is growing, in, or in association with, an environment associated with a watercourse or wetland	There are inland waters or perennial drainage lines within the survey area. Two minor ephemeral drainage lines intersect the survey area (vegetation type DD-EW1) which represents 13.9% of the total survey area.	Clearing may be at variance with this principle
(g)	Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause appreciable land degradation.	The survey area and surrounding region has not been extensively cleared. Clearing within the survey area is not considered likely to lead to land degradation issues such as salinity, water logging or acidic soils.	Clearing is unlikely to be at variance with this principle
(h)	Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to have an impact on the environmental values of any adjacent or nearby conservation area.	The survey area is not located within a conservation area however it is located adjacent to the Karamindie State Forest.	Clearing may be at variance with this principle
(i)	Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause deterioration in the quality of surface or underground water.	No surface water bodies are located within the survey area. Minor ephemeral drainage lines intersect the survey area however clearing within the survey area is unlikely to result in deterioration to water quality.	Clearing is unlikely to be at variance with this principle
(j)	Native vegetation should not be cleared if clearing the vegetation is likely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence of flooding.	Rainfall in the Eastern Goldfields subregion has an average rainfall of 200 to 300mm. Rainfall events are unlikely to result in localised flooding. Clearing within the survey area is not likely to increase the incidence or intensity of flooding within the survey area or surrounds.	Clearing is unlikely to be at variance with this principle

4. APPENDICES

Appendix A. Hercules Basic & Targeted Fauna Survey Report_July 2024 Final (Phoenix Environmental Sciences, report issued November 2024)

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