

## FACT SHEET – FIRE

December 2016

### Thunderbird Mineral Sands Project

The Thunderbird Mineral Sands Project, located on the Dampier Peninsula between Broome and Derby, is being developed by Western Australian company Sheffield Resources Limited.

Thunderbird is a large-scale, mineral sands mining and processing project with low environmental impacts and long term economic and community benefits. Sheffield proposes to undertake mining of mineral sands for more than 40 years from the Thunderbird deposit.

Sheffield is undertaking a Bankable Feasibility Study (BFS) and Public Environmental Review (PER) of Thunderbird, scheduled for completion in 2017. Start of construction is planned to follow with first exports through the ports of Derby/Broome targeted for 2019.

Sheffield believes that Thunderbird can help transform the community through the creation of 140 permanent and many indirect local jobs. Income would stay in the region supporting families, business, cultural values and lifestyle.



*“Australia is a major producer of mineral sands. Non-reactive and non-toxic, mineral sands products are used in paints and artificial joints, in toothpaste, crockery and porcelain, medicines, food colouring and sunscreen.”*

### What is the environment like where the mine will be constructed?

The land is part of a pastoral station, and most of the site is covered in low, sparse eucalypt woodlands, with acacia shrubs and grasslands beneath.

### What fires occur there currently?

Fire regimes in the Kimberley are different from those once managed by Aboriginal people where historic burning was guided by seasons as well as cultural and hunting practices. The site is burnt regularly because of pastoral activities and natural causes such as lightning strikes. Bushfires can assist with regeneration of some species and ecosystems; however, there is an increasing trend in fire activity<sup>1</sup>, which may be negatively impacting on flora and fauna in the area.

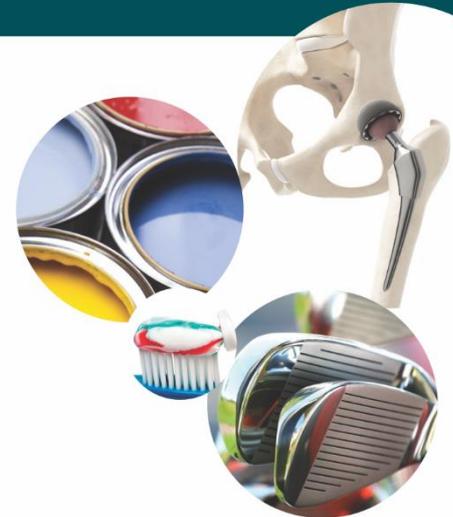
### How will the new mine site affect fires in the future?

The development of the mine site will reduce intentional burning in the area, but mining activities can provide additional ignition sources, which could increase accidental bushfires. To counter this, Sheffield will manage the mine site to reduce the risk of accidental fires.

<sup>1</sup> Environmental Protection Authority (EPA). 2006b. Fire Management in the Kimberley and other Rangeland Regions of Western Australia: Advice of the Environmental Protection Authority to the Minister for the Environment under Section 16(e) of the Environmental Protection Act 1986. Withdrawn. Perth: EPA.

This includes:

- ✓ The induction for people entering the mine site will include information on the prevention and management of fires. This means that people on the mine site will know about the risks, as well as the management in place to prevent fires.
- ✓ Vehicles will not be permitted to leave access tracks or cleared areas in order to prevent accidental ignition of plant material from exhausts.
- ✓ Permits will be needed to do any work that could cause a fire. This will make sure that safety precautions are taken.
- ✓ There will be firefighting equipment at the site, and people trained in fire response.
- ✓ All machinery and vehicles doing site clearing will be fitted with firefighting equipment.
- ✓ Sheffield will work with the pastoralists, Traditional Owners and Department of Fire and Emergency Services to undertake prescribed burns and install and maintain firebreaks if required. This will mean that the damage from extreme and out of control wildfires is minimised and infrastructure and the community are protected throughout the life of the project.



#### LIKE TO KNOW MORE?

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