


NOTICE OF DECISION AND STATEMENT OF REASONS

Section 55 of the *Environment Protection Act 2019* (EP Act)

Regulations 57(2)(b) and 63 of the *Environment Protection Regulations 2020* (EP Regulations)

Name of proposed action	Mathison Station Land Clearing
Proponent	NTR AG PTY LTD & THE TRUSTEE FOR MOHR-BELL FAMILY TRUST & THE TRUSTEE FOR PANCHO TRUST (trading as Pancho Beef)
NT EPA reference	EPA2023/026
Description of proposed action	The proposed action is to clear 4,517 ha of land on Mathison Station (NT Portion 7061, Perpetual Pastoral Lease 1224) for the purpose of growing hay and fodder crops including cavalcade, jarrah, forage sorghum and Rhodes grass.
Nature of proposed action	Pastoral
Decision	Standard environmental impact assessment is required in accordance with section 55 of the EP Act and regulation 57(2)(b) of the EP Regulations The method of environmental impact assessment to be by referral information in accordance with regulation 57(2)(b)(ii).
Person authorised to make decision	Dr Paul Vogel AM – Chairperson, as delegate of the Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority (NT EPA)
Signature	
Date of decision	16 August 2023
Matters considered under EP Regulation 56	The NT EPA has considered the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the accepted referral (including the referral form, referral report and appendices) • submissions received in relation to the referral information during the public consultation period 30 June 2023 – 26 July 2023 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ government authority submissions received: 5 ○ public submissions: 2

Consultation

Submissions indicated that the proposal has the potential to have a significant impact on the environment from threats to wildlife connectivity through clearing of native vegetation, greenhouse gas emissions from land use change and threats to Aboriginal sacred sites and cultural heritage.

Submissions are published on the NT EPA website in accordance with regulation 269.

Statement of Reasons

Overview

The NT EPA considers that the proposed action has the potential to have a significant impact on environmental values associated with three environmental factors¹ (Table 1). The NT EPA is of the view that it has sufficient information to assess the potential significant impacts on this factor.

Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Terrestrial ecosystems – There is potential for significant impact on wildlife through the removal and modification of native vegetation reducing landscape connectivity through the application area.
Air	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Atmospheric processes – There is potential for significant impact on atmospheric processes through land use change. The proposed clearing would emit approximately 623,714.3 tCO₂-e. Greenhouse gas emissions have the potential to have a significant impact on the environment. The extent of the impact from greenhouse gas emissions is uncertain and the ability to meet the NT EPA's environmental objective for atmospheric processes requires assessment.
People	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Culture and heritage – There is potential for significant impact on culture and heritage from land use change. The extent of impact from the proposal is uncertain and the ability to meet the NT EPA's environmental objective to protect culture and heritage requires assessment.

The NT EPA considered other environmental factors during its consideration of the referral; however, the impact on those factors was not considered to be significant.

Justification

A standard assessment on referral information is required because:

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| Regulation 59 (a) | the significance of the potential impact of the proposed action as described above |
| Regulation 59 (b) | <p>the need to improve the NT EPA's level of confidence in predicting potential significant impacts of the proposed action taking into account the extent and currency of existing knowledge, particularly in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the level of certainty about impacts to soil organic carbon sequestration under pastures compared to savannah woodlands in the Northern Territory• Aboriginal cultural values and uses. |

¹ [NT EPA Environmental factors and objectives](#)

Regulation 59 (c) the need to develop measures to avoid, mitigate or manage potential significant impacts, and increase the NT EPA's confidence in the effectiveness of the proposed measures, with respect to:

- greenhouse gas emissions from land use, land use change and forestry activities in the Northern Territory
- terrestrial ecosystem vegetation buffers to maintain ecological functioning.

Regulation 59 (d) & (e) the extent of community engagement that has occurred in relation to the clearing of native vegetation for improved pasture on Mathison Station, including:

- industry stakeholders
- government authorities, independently and during the referral consultation process
- the general public during the referral process.

Conclusion

The NT EPA considers that the proposed action has potential for significant impacts on three environmental factors.

A standard environmental impact assessment is required. The method of assessment will be assessment on referral information.

In making its decision under EP Regulation 57 the NT EPA has considered:

- the objects of the Act in section 3 of the EP Act
- the purpose of the environmental impact assessment process in section 42 of the EP Act
- the matters under regulation 56 of the EP Regulations
- the matters relevant to a consideration of the method of environmental impact assessment in regulation 59 of the EP Regulations.