

PASTORAL LAND BOARD

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Ms Juanita Croft
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Department of Natural Resources, Environment & the Arts
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PALMERSTON NT 0831

Dear Juanita

REQUEST FOR COMMENT - PASTORAL LAND CLEARING APPLICATION: NT PORTION 2730, PL 942 BLOODWOOD DOWNS STATION, STURT PLATEAU PASTORAL DISTRICT

An application has been made to the Pastoral Land Board seeking approval to clear native vegetation totalling approximately 2790 hectares on Bloodwood Downs Station. The proposed clearing is located on the northern boundary adjacent to Lakefield Station, and on the western side of the Darwin – Alice Springs railway corridor. Proposed clearing method is aerial application of Graslan Aerial® to thin tree cover and remove the shrubby undercover. It is not proposed to plant improved pasture species, but to encourage native perennial grasses through management of stocking rates.

Bloodwood Downs Station is 577km². The term lease for Bloodwood Downs Station included a development condition requiring clearing of 400 ha. Approval was granted in 1995/96 for clearing of 100 ha. Approximately 227 km² was cleared on the property by the former lessee, but maintenance has not been carried out for several years. Previous clearing approvals lapsed following transfer of the property and re-clearing of areas cleared before 1992 would require approval under the new Clearing Guidelines.

Under the Guidelines for Clearing Pastoral Land published in April 2004, all pastoral land clearing applications are circulated to relevant government agencies for comment and are subject to a public notification process.

The Board is required to take the following matters into account when determining a clearing application:

- Any matters the Minister may have directed the Board to consider;
- Lessee submissions in respect of the proposed clearing and development;
- Reports of relevant government agencies;
- Any public submissions made;
- The capability of the land to support the proposed development;
- Any impact the proposed development may have on the subject land and other land;



- Sensitive or significant vegetation communities, such as rainforest, vine thickets or closed forests;
- Natural drainage lines, seasonally waterlogged soils and permanent water features such as swamps, lagoons and rivers);
- Essential habitats, within the meaning of the *Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act*;
- Erosion prone soils, slopes exceeding 1% and any areas of erosion hazard within the meaning of the *Soil Conservation and Land Utilisation Act*;
- Declared Heritage Places or Archaeological sites within the meaning of the *Heritage Conservation Act*;
- An Environment Protection Objective within the meaning of the *Waste Management and Pollution Control Act* that is relevant to the subject land;
- If a public environmental report, or an environmental impact statement has been prepared, or is required under the *Environmental Assessment Act*, in relation to the proposed development, the Board is required to consider the report or statement and the results of any assessments by the Minister administering that Act;
- Any beneficial uses, quality standards, criteria or objectives that are declared under section 73 of the *Water Act*;
- The potential impact on the existing and future amenity of the area and potential impact on natural, social, cultural or heritage values;
- The public interest;
- The merits of the proposed development as demonstrated in the application; and
- Other matters it thinks fit.

I have attached a copy of the clearing application for Bloodwood Downs Station. Could you please provide any comments you wish to make by 25 August, 2008.

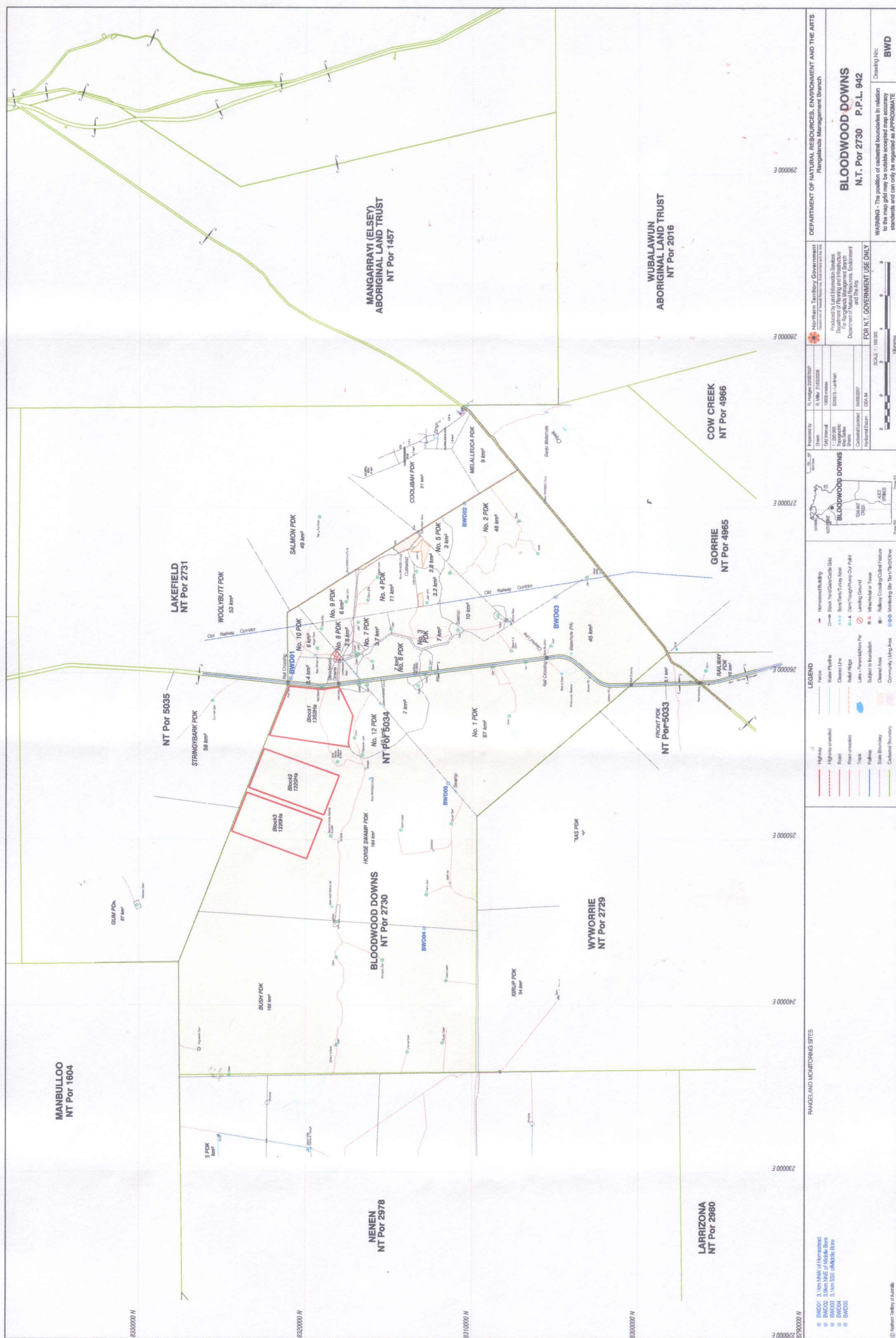
Please do not hesitate contact me should you have any queries, or require further information.

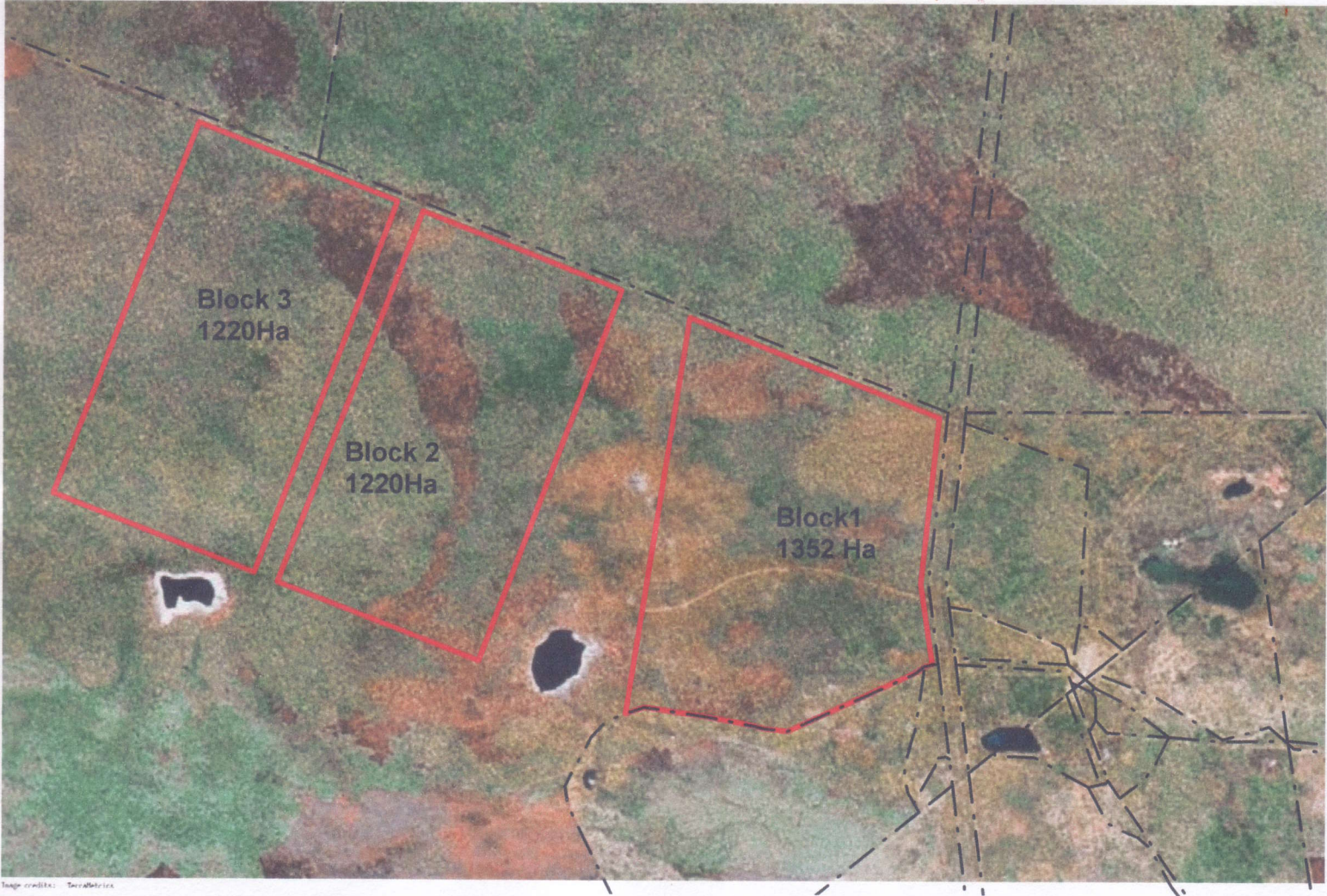
Yours sincerely

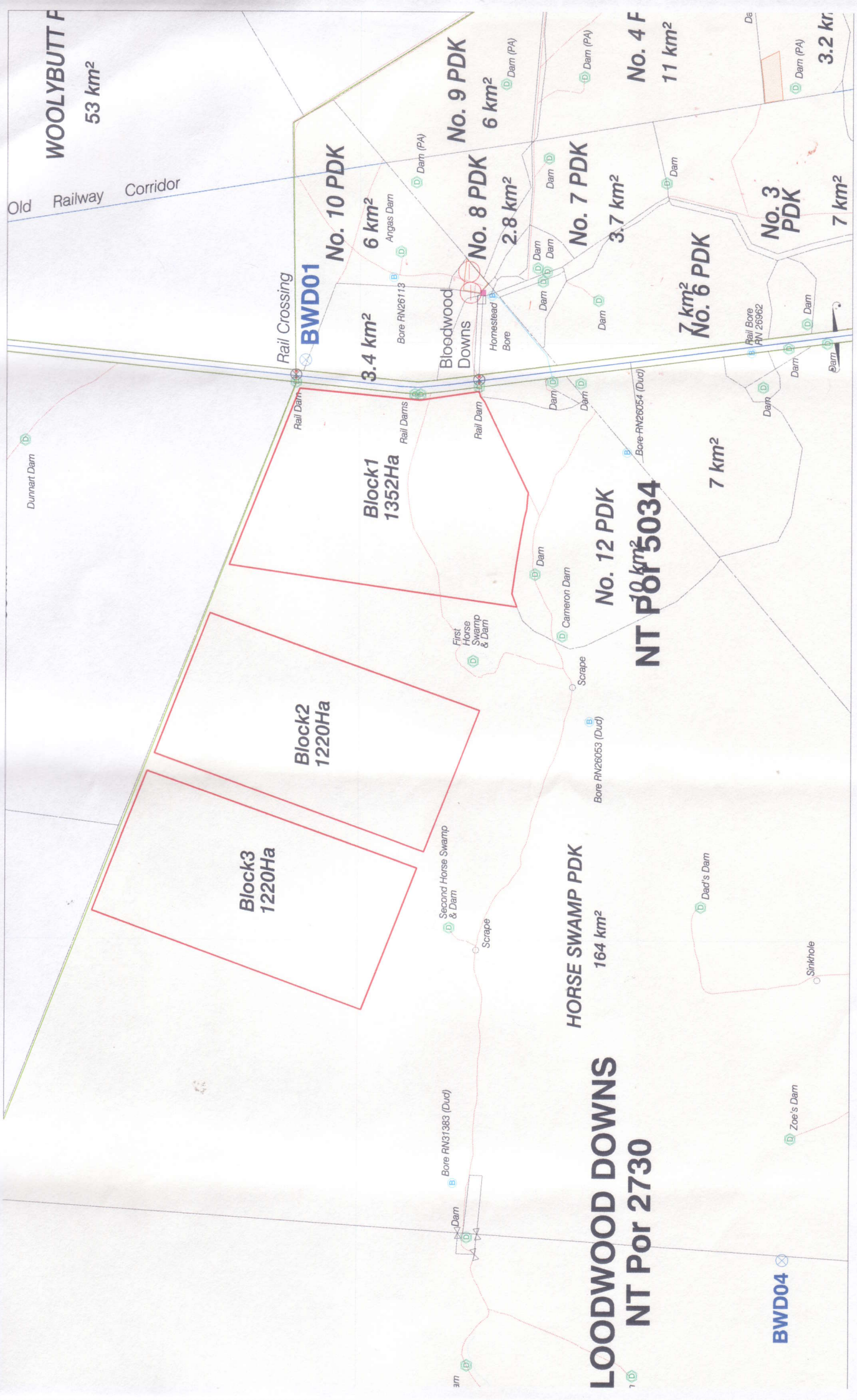


JUDY BARTOLO
Executive Officer

29 July 2008







WOOLYBUTT F

53 km²

Old Railway Corridor

Rail Crossing

BWD01

No. 10 PDK

Block1
1352Ha

Block2
1220Ha

Block3
1220Ha

No. 9 PDK

6 km²

No. 8 PDK

2.8 km²

No. 7 PDK

3.7 km²

No. 4 F

11 km²

No. 3 PDK

7 km²

No. 6 PDK

7 km²

No. 12 PDK

164 km²

NT Por 5034

BLOODWOOD DOWNS
NT Por 2730

HORSE SWAMP PDK

BWD04

3.2 km²

NORTHERN TERRITORY PASTORAL LAND BOARD



Property Management Plan for Land Clearing Development

Pastoral Lease No: NT Portion 2730

1. Overview of Proposed Clearing & Whole Property Development

Summary of clearing & development program for the whole property.

Bloodwood Downs Station is 577.74km² and the property carries approximately 4500 head of cattle with the capacity to run up to 5000 head. Cattle are mustered before each sale. This is time consuming and expensive. The proposed blocks will be in close proximity to the homestead where up to 1000 head of cattle may be held for short to medium periods of time prior to sale, allowing rapid response to market demands.

Details of the natural resources (native vegetation and pasture, soils, waters, average rainfall) and current status (is native vegetation stable, current land condition and weed status).

The property is predominately native pastures and land condition is good.

Soil type in clearing development

The soils to be cleared are predominately Banjo. Banjo is described as gently undulating to almost level plains; predominantly loamy red earths with gravelly red and yellow earths and lithosols; mixed eucalypt woodlands over perennial grasses.

STURT LANDSYSTEMS

Day, K.J, Sivertsen D.P & Torlach D.A. (1984)" Northern Territory - A Reconnaissance Land System Survey,
Land Resources of the Sturt Plateau, October 1983".

Soil type on rest of property: Soil types range from very light sands through to poorly drained soils, to extensive wide valleys of red earth soils and limited areas of black soils.

Rainfall: Average annual rainfall 780mm

Weeds: The property is relatively weed- free. There are areas of sida and hyptis occur around the house paddock and at watering points mainly where hay has been fed out. The property tries to source weed free hay, but if not available have designated feed areas to keep an eye on what weed species come onto the property. There are weeds along the rail corridor which are a problem and may cause management problems in the future.

How does the proposed clearing development fit into the long term aims for the property?

This clearing proposal is designed to cause minimal soil disturbance through aerial application of Graslan Aerial® pellets. Three blocks have been identified within Horse Swamp Paddock. The blocks are marked Block 1 (1352 Ha), Block 2 (1220Ha) and Block 3 (1220) respectively.

The plan is to treat Block 1 (1352 Ha) initially and then monitor the regrowth throughout the next season to assess the result. If successful, then subsequent treatments will be staged to occur for Block 2 and Block 3 over the following two to three years. This treatment is dependent on the success of each treatment and may be carried out over a period of five years.

Number of cattle currently carried and proposed final number of cattle to be carried on the property following completion of the clearing development.

Bloodwood Downs currently runs 4500 – 5000 head with a plan to reach carrying capacity of 5000 head. This clearing application is to open up country to reduce mustering costs and provide quicker access to markets.

2. Cost and Benefit of Development

Cost of the proposed clearing development; total, per ha or km2.

The application rate of Graslan Aerial ® is 10 – 12 kg per ha. The product price is \$15.60 per kilo. Therefore the application rate

Application rate @ 10 kg/ha = \$156.00 per ha.

Application rate @12kg/ha= \$186.00 per ha.

Annual cost of ongoing maintenance following completion of the clearing development per ha or km2.

This development cost will be a one off application rate for each of the blocks to be treated. The only additional cost to the property for maintenance will be burn the paddocks to reduce the dead timber about two to three years after treatment. This would be carried out under the normal annual fire management program.

Projected increase in carrying capacity following completion of the clearing development (per km² and total for the clearing project).

Once all blocks are finished it is envisaged that an extra 500 head will be carried on the lease. Once the blocks are developed an extra 500 head of stock can be retained on the lease enabling it to reach its carrying capacity of 5000 head.

Projected increased annual income from the clearing development; per ha or km².

Once the paddocks are operational is expected that having 1000 easily accessible sale cattle will add up to \$50 000 per year in projected annual income based on this seasons prices. By having cattle readily accessible allows the flexibility to pick the market. In addition it results in reduced mustering costs.

3. Details of Proposed Clearing

Areas not to be cleared due to natural resource limitations (slope, rock outcrop, seasonal inundation, poor soils, highly erodible soils, watercourse and drainage line buffers and native vegetation strips to be retained for soil and drainage management).

These blocks are level with under 1% slope and each block selected is free of all restrictions. The reason selection of the three blocks is due to rock outcrop between Blocks 1 and 2. The wildlife corridor between Block 1 & 2 is 840m at the top of the block and 1.84 kms at the bottom of the block. The wildlife corridor between Block 2 & 3 is 300m in width.

Areas not to be cleared due to environmental and heritage considerations identified in Section II on the application form. Areas to be retained for wildlife corridors.

There are no identified environmental and heritage considerations identified under the NT Heritage Register. Wildlife corridors are established at 840 to 1.84 kms (Block 1&2) and 300m respectively between the three treated blocks as indicated on the attached property map.

Details of clearing method, technique & timing of each stage (eg chaining, windrowing, raking, burning, pin wheel rake, site preparation).

The clearing method is the aerial application of Graslan Aerial ® a Group C Herbicide which will be applied at 10 – 12kg per hectare.

Application of Graslan Aerial® will be in accordance with the Graslan Aerial Herbicide Code of Practice 2006, label specifications, environmental guidelines and Northern Territory legislation. Prior to aerial application a recommendation for the

rate and area to be treated will only be made after a detailed paddock inspection by Dow Agro Sciences which is scheduled to take place in late August 2008. Aerial application will only be undertaken by Dow Agro Sciences approved or accredited applicators and the application will be undertaken after the clearing permit is approved and as the first wet season rains occur to achieve the maximum results.

The label registration details are attached as supporting documentation.

Details of waterway establishment, graded banks and other earthworks for run off management and infrastructure development.

The blocks are on flat country with less than 1% slope. There are no water courses within the blocks to be cleared, the swamp areas have sufficient buffers on them to provide protection. The station carries plant and equipment which can undertake remedial work if necessary.

Details of pasture establishment and development methods (species, sowing rates, sowing methods, fertiliser regimes).

After Graslan Aerial ® application herbicide activity will continue for several seasons. During this time, woody plants may go through repeated defoliations and re-growth until death occurs. A single application is normally effective for several years. The rates will allow native perennial grasses to establish and it will be important to allow grasses to seed, and seedlings to establish after treatment, before grazing pressure is increased.

4. Ongoing Resource Management

Grazing regimes and pasture management plan (periods of stocking, stocking rates, spelling, fertiliser and woody regrowth management)

Each block has perennial native grass pastures which will be managed through fencing each block after the clearing and stocking at 500 – 600 head for short to medium periods of time prior to market. Herbicide activity will manage the woody weed regrowth. Native grasses will be allowed to seed over the wet season to maintain growth and cover.

Weed Management Plan (to include weed species present, area of weeds, areas at risk, control measures proposed, including measures to prevent new weed infestations)

There are only a few recorded species of declared weeds present on the property. There is some sida species present in areas where hay is brought onto the property and fed out. These species tend to be found around feed out areas, watering points and the house yard.

Exotic Pasture Species Management Plan (to include details of exotic pasture species and areas planted. Buffer zones around exotic pasture species, location of watercourses, measures proposed to prevent spread to non target areas, grazing systems, location of fences & watering points)

Bloodwood Downs is predominately a native pasture grazing system.

Fire Management Plan (use of fire for management and protection from wildfires).

Firebreaks are established around the fence lines and are annually maintained. Fire will be excluded from this area after application of the Graslan Aerial® pellets as fire will impede the residual action if it occurs prior to the clay pellets dissolving and the chemical moving into the root zone. Two to three years after the application as the timber starts to break down each selective block will be burnt to reduce dead timber.

Native Vegetation Management Plan (prevention of degradation to remaining native vegetation, including native vegetation buffers).

The aerial application of Graslan Aerial® is designed to thin the existing native vegetation at recommended rates that will clear susceptible native trees while retaining around 5 % of native species. One block will be treated each season leaving two 300m and 1700m wildlife corridors respectively between each block.

Erosion and Sediment Control Plan (erosion prevention and strategies for rehabilitation if erosion occurs).

The area being treated is less than 1% slope as the area is being treated chemically and not by mechanical means no soil disturbance will occur.

Feral Animal Management Plan

Feral pigs occur on the property and are controlled by shooting. Dingo baiting is carried out as required.

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE



DATE

21-7-08.