

Exploration Methods Explained: Bulk Sampling

Bulk sampling is undertaken only in very advanced exploration when making the decision to mine. Additional Government approvals are required for bulk sampling and strict environmental safeguards ensure all sites are rehabilitated.

Bulk Sampling

Bulk sampling is undertaken only in very advanced exploration programs. In 2011, there were only two bulk sampling approvals in NSW (one of which involved the removal of only 6m³ of material). Before making a decision to apply to develop a mine, an explorer may extract a bulk sample of the material to be mined to allow further metallurgical or chemical testing and refinement of the proposed mining procedures.

Extraction of a bulk sample typically involves excavation of a small open cut or development of a small underground operation. The nature of disturbance associated with a bulk sample depends on the nature and location of the mineral deposit to be sampled.

Regulation of Bulk Sampling

Extraction of a bulk sample in NSW requires approval from Government. Applications for such approvals are typically supported by a detailed *Review of Environmental Factors* (REF) and *Agricultural Impact Statement* (AIS) or similar document. Large samples may require further approval from the Department of Planning & Infrastructure in a process similar to a new mine approval where a full environmental impact statement is required. These approvals require detailed assessment of the current environment, justification of the proposal, mitigation and management strategies.

Rehabilitation of Bulk Sampling

Rehabilitation is a condition of every exploration licence and is undertaken as soon as practical following surface disturbance. Planning for rehabilitation is undertaken before surface disturbance and in consultation with the landholder. The soil and rock is returned to the hole before the topsoil. The surface is left slightly mounded to allow for subsidence then reseeded and fertilised as appropriate to the surrounding area.



Bulk sampling is only undertaken in very advanced exploration when the decision to mine is being made



Further information

NSW Trade & Investment – Division of Resources and Energy www.resources.nsw.gov.au

NSW Minerals Industry Exploration Handbook www.nswmining.com.au/menu/media/publications

NSW Minerals Council Fact Sheets on mineral exploration methods and guideline on the template *Land Access Arrangement for Mineral Exploration* www.nswmining.com.au/menu/media/fact-sheets

These descriptions are primarily provided for those who may not be familiar with exploration operations. As a result they are, by their nature, general. The descriptions have been written in consultation with the NSW Trade and Investment – Division of Resources and Energy. Our thanks to Malachite Resources Limited for contributing the photo to this fact sheet.

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