**Video Transcript**

**North Central Goldfields Ground Release - Pre-licence information session 3**

[Slide: North Central Victorian Goldfields Ground Release - Annie Farrow]

*Annie Farrow, Manager Resources Strategy and Industry Investment*

Welcome everybody to the last of three information session about exploration and licence applications in the north central goldfields region of Victoria.

My name is Annie Farrow, I’m from the Earth Resources branch of the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions.

Thank you for taking the time out of your busy afternoon to attend this information session.

I’d like to start by acknowledging the traditional owners.

I’m coming to you from the land of the Wurrung people of the Kulin nation and I pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

I also pay respects to the traditional owners in the north central goldfields area, Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and the Yorta Yorta nation’s people.

I’d also like to acknowledge I think that we have one or two local government councillors participating tonight so I welcome them as well.

This is an opportunity for us to provide you with some further information about minerals exploration that’s occurring or maybe planned in your community and to provide you with some details about how you can have your say.

And then you’ll be able to give or have an opportunity to ask some questions, I’ll come to that in a minute.

This event has been organised because two companies were recently granted exclusive rights to apply for minerals exploration licences across four blocks around Axedale, Fosterville, Dalmore, Rochester, Lockington.

And that in turn came about as a result of an internationally competitive tender that concluded at the end of October 2021.

You’ll have an opportunity to meet company representatives a bit later on.

I just want to do some housekeeping so the next slide please John.

[Slide: Microsoft Teams - Asking a question]

Just before we start on this session are in listen-only mode so that means that we can’t actually see you.

We do welcome your questions and ask that you post them in a chat function, that’s the – you can see the red highlighted box, dialogue box, up in the far right corner or it may be on a different place on your screen.

Please post your questions as they come to mind throughout the session.

We’ve allocated time at the end of the session to get through as many of those as we can.

Please put your name to the questions and we’ll give priority to those rather than anonymous ones.

Also we will not take questions about existing mining or exploration licences as this session is focusing on the licence applications and we’d like to have the opportunity to explain that process.

Also just bear in mind that the place where you do post the questions is right next to the leave button, so if you accidently click the leave button you can come back in just in the normal way that you entered this afternoon’s session.

If you’re having some technical or other issues please phone Donna or John, there phone numbers are there and they will be put into that chat area as well.

So hopefully it’s going to work seamlessly for you, just as a reminder this is a recorded session, the video will be placed on Earth Resources’ website and we’ll send that link to you all when it’s ready.

And following the session we’ll also, probably in the next few days or week, we’ll provide you with some links to tools that may be mentioned during this presentation.

A transcript will also be sent to those people who are coming to us by phone rather than through the live event meeting.

[Slide: Agenda]

So just quickly the agenda tonight, or this afternoon rather, I would like to talk to you about minerals exploration in Victoria what it is what it isn’t.

I’d like to talk about the North Central Victorian Goldfields Ground Release and the licensing process and explain where we are now in that process and how you, as community members, can have a say about those licence applications.

I’ll introduce you to the two successful tenderers and they will speak about their companies and about their approach to engagement with landholders and local communities.

And then we’ll answer some questions received via registration as we’ve already received some, and then questions provided in the chat function.

[Slide: Exploration licences map]

So let’s make a start.

We’re all aware that minerals exploration is not a new activity in Victoria and indeed stretches way back to the gold rush of the 1850s.

Perhaps you don’t know though that exploration has boomed in Victoria in the past two/three years.

That boom’s been encouraged by a range of factors, firstly soaring international gold prices and more recently rising international copper prices.

Exploration has also been encouraged by the success of the Fosterville Gold Mine which is Australia’s third largest mine and considered a Tier 1 site which just means that the purity of the gold is world-class.

Also improved exploration technologies and greater scientific knowledge has also provided additional incentives to companies to look at opportunities in Victoria.

Now to illustrate this point, this map shows about 48% of the state is now covered by an exploration licence.

Exploration licences are actually the orange areas.

About two years ago 26% of the state was covered by an exploration licence, so that’s quite a huge growth, now we acknowledge that to some that might seem a little bit scary but I want to reassure you about a couple of things on that.

First that this doesn’t mean that every inch of that land has been dug up.

We’re here to talk about minerals exploration and not mining, and those orange areas are minerals exploration areas.

I’ll return to the difference a bit later on but I just want to emphasise that the mining footprint in Victoria is a miniscule 0.02% of the available land so very small.

Second, exploration tenements are often quite large to start off with because explorers want to target several points of geological interest, and then they narrow down their search, narrower on narrower on narrow depending on the results of their geoscience results.

And in most cases, and we’ll come back to this again later, nothing is found so the explorer relinquishes the tenement until someone else comes along and, you know, presumably with better geologists or better technology or more funds and they try their luck and the lands may be taken up again in a different tenement.

Third and perhaps the most important point here, is that we need to remind ourselves that despite so much minerals exploration happening all around us so too are other economic and conservation activities like agriculture and forestry and recreation within Crown land reserves.

That’s all happening at the same time as minerals exploration is happening so exploration can readily coexist with other land uses.

But we’re here tonight to really talk about minerals exploration in your specific patch and to introduce the two companies that were successful in the ground release tender.

[Slide: Split screen maps of the Greater Bendigo region]

So the two companies have won the right to apply for a minerals exploration licence in the four coloured blocks in the map shown.

So Fosterville Gold Mine has won the right to apply for an exploration licence over Blocks 1, 2 and 3 and S2 Resources will apply for a licence over Block 4.

For context the grey area in the middle of Block 4 is the current Fosterville Gold Mine.

Now all areas in Victoria are open to minerals exploration unless it is prohibited under legislation.

Exploration is not permitted in national parks like Terrick Terrick National Park and indeed there is an area within Block 1 that has been excised because it is a national park and so is not included in the block.

And also state parks you can’t explore, so you can see all of that in those green areas that are largely outside of these blocks.

Most of the blocks are located in the City of Greater Bendigo local government area, there’s a very small amount in the Mount Alexander Shire and the remainder in the north in Campaspe Shire.

[Slide: Potential for undiscovered gold]

So I guess the question is why are exploration companies interested in looking here particularly and looking now.

And I guess the answer to that is that these four blocks are in an area that we call the Victorian Goldfields Ground Release area and they are considered by geologists to be prospective.

So that is the type and age of rocks and the level of mineralisation and other geological features suggest good prospects that a commercial mineral deposit can be found.

For example, the Geological Survey of Victoria estimates that there’s still about up to 75 million ounces of gold yet to be found in this general broad area, so beyond those four blocks, but the general, sort of, north central part of Victoria.

And that 75 million ounces compares with the 80 million ounces that have been mined in the area over the last 170 years.

Now I mentioned earlier that Fosterville Gold Mine and its success has enhanced the reputation and mining potential of the region but in reality in Victoria there’s only a small chance that an economically viable discovery will be made, so the geologists will say it’s prospective but they’ll never say how prospective.

So we use the statistics of in Victoria on average it will take 300 exploration licences to end up in a mine, all the other 299 exploration licences did not find anything.

Most people in the minerals industry would, sort of, say that figure is too optimistic, it’s more likely one in 600 or indeed one in 1,000, plus it takes about, on average in Victoria, about 10 to 12 years from proving the existence of a commercially viable deposit to a mining operation actually beginning.

Before a company can actually build and operate a mine they need both the mining licence and a planning approval from the Planning Minister.

Part of that, sort of, 10-12 year period in getting a mining operation going is the need for the licence applicant to prepare detailed mineral reports that justify that the deposit is commercially viable and can be extracted, but importantly the exploration company would most likely have to undertake detailed economic studies and environmental design such as an Environmental Effect Statement.

And those things are required by the Planning Minister, that’s a decision by the Planning Minister.

They also are accompanied by extensive public engagement around the proposed development or mine.

But once again that’s talking about mining and these companies here today are only applying for an exploration licence.

If you have an exploration licence in Victoria you cannot mine, you cannot extract minerals under that licence.

[Slide: How minerals exploration is regulated]

So quickly what is exploration?

A lot of work that is done in early stages of a minerals exploration licence is desktop which involves studying geological maps and reports on samples that were taken by previous explorers or by Geoscience Australia or the Geological Survey of Victoria.

This helps the explorer target in on specific areas, they don’t go out there and examine every hectare within a tenement, and these particular tenements are very large as we saw back on that map of the blocks.

They range from 330 -500 square kilometres, so early work helps the explorers narrow their area of interest.

And then moving to on-ground exploration most work is undertaken under a Code of Practice, and that could be reconnaissance exploration which involves using handheld tools only and not disturbing any vegetation, so those techniques might involve water sampling or ground mapping etcetera.

Or it could involve what we term low impact exploration which does and could include drilling.

Now all those definitions are in the Code of Practice which is available online for you to view.

Donna will send a link to that in the next day or two.

Higher impact activities however require what’s called an Approved Work Plan, and that Approved Work Plan imposes an additional layer of regulatory oversight by the Earth Resources Regulator.

Now I’m not going to go into this tonight but suffice to say, this afternoon rather, but suffice to say that the work plan application process has detailed requirements about identifying hazards that might posed through those high impact activities, and the companies need to identify the risks that might be posed and importantly demonstrate how they’re going to mitigate those risks and how they can be minimised as reasonably practicable.

Now those work plans are often referred across to other government departments who might have the specialist expertise or the regulatory responsibilities for different elements or Acts that govern what is being proposed.

So for example, Earth Resources Regulator will quite often refer work plans to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning or to the Water Authority or a range other interest in government departments.

And again what triggers a work plan is explained in that Code of Practice, but those referral agencies are able to make comment back to the regulator to indicate how, if any additional safeguards need to be applied before the work approval is approved.

But it’s important to know that those regulations are not only just against our Minerals Act but also other Acts which govern the behaviour and activity of explorers.

[Slide: Special places, features safeguarded]

So you can see on this slide there are over 20 Acts which govern the behaviour and activity of minerals explorers that sort of demonstrates the robustness of the regulatory system.

It is highly regulated and there are many different safeguards that apply.

So all of the laws around national parks and waterways and aquafers, native vegetation, cultural heritage, indigenous heritage, threatened species etcetera, they all have Acts which safeguard them in some way or other.

And it is a legal obligation of the exploration licence holders to adhere to all of those laws, not just the Mineral Resources Sustainable Development Act and its regulations but all those laws.

And again when a work plan is submitted for approval DELWP and other agencies will review the proposed work plan and proposed mitigation strategies against those other Acts to ensure that the licensee can reasonably comply with those laws.

[Slide: the Goldfields Ground Release tender process]

So if I can take a pause first and before we get to the licensing process itself and just remind you of how we, sort of, got to where we are and why we used a ground release tender to allow these companies to obtain the exclusive right to apply for a minerals exploration licence.

The usual way that we would do that would be to allow the companies to apply over the counter which is actually nowadays online, no physical counter, that’s how it’s normally done.

But in 2019 the government announced that it would release the licence areas in the central goldfields region via a merit-based international tender process.

And the reason for that is that the tender process enabled us to impose a suite of criteria that go above and beyond the legislated standards that’s required under our Act.

So the government targeted experienced and progressive minerals explorers with a history and commitment to responsible exploration.

So we designed a tender where there was criteria which assessed those tenderers in detail that would not apply for licence applications over the counter.

Companies were of course asked about their exploration strategy and their expertise, their technical expertise, and their ability to fund the work programs and rehabilitation.

But we also asked them to articulate their approach to how they would engage with you, the landholders and local communities.

We also asked them to demonstrate how they would collaborate with traditional owners and also they were required to outline their environmental policies and expertise, and what their approach would be to sources local goods and services.

So all of those landholder and community engagements, traditional owners, environment and sourcing of local goods, if I’m to lump them into responsible exploration that accounted for 45% of the assessment of the tenderers so that’s quite significant because none of those areas are specifically addressed in over the counter application processes.

The evaluation of the tender responses was undertaken by an independent assessment panel, independent of government, and that was supported by two advisory panels for the first time in Victoria one of those panels comprised of traditional owners, the three traditional owner groups in this particular region which is Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Yorta Yorta nations, so they have participated in assessing those licence applications.

Now north central Victoria as a result of this tender process is now set to benefit from more than $100 million to be spent on minerals exploration in the region over the coming five years.

A commitment of the tender which will go into their licence is that Fosterville Gold Mine will spend, if licenced, more than $90 million over the three blocks over five years, while Southern Star, or S2 Resources, will spend $10 million across one block over a five year period.

So let’s come in now to where are we now in that process.

[Slide: The licensing process]

Explorers have progressed to the licensing stage which includes a 21 day period for the public to make a submission regarding those licence applications.

So this chart, sort of, shows that it’s an eight step process for licensing applications in Victoria, and it’s a pretty lengthy one, it’s a rigorous one.

So once a licence application is accepted the licence applicant has two weeks to advertise their application and they must do so in at least a Wednesday edition of a state-wide newspaper as well as one local newspaper within the licence application area.

So the advertising triggers then a 21 day period in which the public can make comments to the Earth Resources Regulator.

Now both applicants have now advertised and at this point specific information about their application is, and as it should be, available on their websites.

Now the three week, 21 day public comment and objection period has commenced, so you have until the 1st of December to make any comment on the application by Southern Star Exploration and you have up until the 8th of December to make a comment on the three applications by Fosterville Gold Mine.

Now we will be providing a link, and Donna will send it tomorrow probably, that will send you straight to the webpage where you can lodge any submission online.

Just to ensure that you understand that any applications or any submissions must document the reason for your objection, it must be in writing.

If you can’t use online Donna will also show you or provide you with a written address where you can make a written submission.

So those details will come through to you but the grounds for objection may relate to a perceived loss of amenity or social aspects or environmental aspects.

Objections and submissions often cite concerns around native vegetation and native flora and fauna or potential impacts on agriculture and tourism.

But I do want to point out that many submissions that the Earth Resources Regulator receives actually relate to perceived impacts of mining activity rather than with exploration and Earth Resources Regulator is administering the application for a minerals exploration licence at this point in time, so some of those objections may not be directly relevant.

But in any case the Earth Resources Regulator will look at all objections and will assess whether he has identified whether there are any grounds as to why a licence should not be granted, or if a licence is to be granted if there are any additional conditions that ought to be imposed on that licence.

And basically the Earth Resources Regulator will look at the submission or the objection and then compare that to well are there safeguards provided by other laws such as the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act or the Water Act or similar Acts for their safeguards under the Minerals Resources Sustainable Development Act, and if so the Regulator will make contact with the person who lodged that objection or submission but will take no further action.

Alternatively, the Regulator may well decide that he does want to oppose additional specific conditions on the licence based on those objections received.

At the same time that those objections and submissions are being received and then assessed the Earth Resources Regulator also undertakes a Native Title Future Act’s assessment if there is Crown land within the tenement.

So the explorer will need to make an agreement with the native title claimants in order to undertake exploration on that Crown land.

This may be a quick exercise if traditional owners have a recognition settlement agreement with the state of Victoria and indeed in this area too Taungurung and Dja Dja Wurrung do have recognition settlement agreements but Yorta Yorta does not.

So when there are no recognition settlement agreements we revert back to the Commonwealth Registered Indigenous Land Use agreements, if they don’t exist then there’s a period of advertising and negotiation and that can actually take several years to resolve.

At the same time the Earth Resources Regulator is also assessing whether these licence applicants are fit and proper people to hold a licence, whether they intend to comply with the Act, whether they genuinely intend to do the work, that they have an appropriate work program, and that they’re likely able to finance and undertake site rehabilitation.

Now of course a lot of that was also done as a part of the tender process but the Earth Resources Regulator as the Minister delegate has to actually complete the processes under the act so he does some of that work as well or all of that work.

So once a decision is made on the granting of a licence, the licence will be provided for a period of five years and then it can be renewed for a period of a further five years.

[Slide: Have your say]

So just to summarise before I introduce you to the companies, so tomorrow or the next few days Donna will provide you with a link email or telephone that will enable you to make a comment or objection directly through that website if you choose to do that.

All objections and comments must be writing and they must include the grounds on which you make your comment or objection.

Again public comment on Southern Star Exploration’s application for Block 4 closes the 1st of December.

Public comment for Fosterville Gold Mine’s applications for Block 1, 2 and 3 close on the 8th of December.

Now there’s much more I can tell you about exploration and tools to help farmers to negotiate with the explorer about consent to access your private property.

I could talk about compensation that’s payable if you suffer damage or loss of income or loss of amenity.

But we don’t have time for that this afternoon, but I do make the promise that the Department will be sending out people to speak with you more about those in coming months and more community information sessions will be made available.

But Donna’s particularly excited to receive and accept invitations to come and speak to your local neighbourhood group or your land care group or VFF group or whatever your local community organisation might be, so just make contact with her and she will oblige.

Now it’s time for me to introduce the two companies who applied for a minerals exploration licence in your area.

First we’re going to here from Kirkland Lake Gold and then from Southern Star Exploration, or S2 Resources.

[Slide: Going for gold responsibly, MDV Community Engagement Session November 2021]

*Troy Fuller, Director of Exploration*

Yeah, thanks Annie and good afternoon all and thanks for the opportunity on behalf of Fosterville Gold Mine to provide you with a brief on who we are and our community engagement approach as we continue to operate and explore within Victoria, and we look to expand our exploration activities over Blocks 1, 2 and 3 pending the grant of the licence applications.

I’m Troy Fuller, the Director of Exploration and with me tonight is Will Wettenhall, our Community and Environment Manager, and also on the line we have Jay Klopper, our Exploration Superintendent.

[Slide: Kirkland Lake Gold - Who are we?]

So just a little bit about ourselves.

The parent company of Fosterville Gold Mine is Kirkland Lake Gold who is a Canadian based mining company and their head office is over in Canada in Toronto.

The company itself holds three cornerstone assets in Fosterville here in Central Victoria and also the Detour Lake Mine and the Macassa Mine in Ontario in Canada.

But in addition to that we do hold some assets, including the Cosmo/Union Reefs Project area up in the Northern Territory, and at the moment we’re doing a large-scale rehabilitation project up there and also advancing some of our exploration activities.

All the three of the operating assets are high-performing and profitable operations and total gold production across the company 2020 was 1.37 million ounces and we’re targeting a similar production output again in 2021.

And the company employs around 2,500 people across Australia and Canada and does hold a substantial mineral resource and mineral reserve base.

We’re certainly not only a mining company but an exploration company.

We do have extensive in-house exploration capabilities and are leaseholders of some of the most prospective ground for gold exploration and that’s the commodity we look for in the world including here in Central Victoria.

The company is certainly a big backer in value creation through the drill bit and organic growth through the drill bit, and this is evidenced by the plant expenditure on exploration for 2021 of between $170-$190 million dollars US.

It’s important to note that underlying everything we do is a commitment to sustainable production, and an important component of sustainability is replacing the reserves that we mine in order to ensure ongoing production, investment and employment, and this is why we do explore.

Sustainability also involves achieving high levels of performance in safety, environmental management and community consultation and support, and we totally understand the importance to work diligently with all stakeholders to ensure that Kirkland Lake Gold remains a welcome member of the communities in which we operate.

[Slide: KL Australian Operations and Exploration]

So zooming in specifically looking at Fosterville, so the Fosterville Gold Mine has been here for quite some time, gold was discovered in Fosterville in 1894 some 40 years after the Bendigo/Ballarat Gold Rush, and mining essentially ceased in the early 1900s.

It was reintroduced in the 1990s where a series of open pits were mined, and in the mid-2000s a bacterial oxidation plant was commissioned and this allowed the processing of thresh rock ores at depth, and with this new technology it became economically viable to commence underground mining.

And in 2006 the underground did commence.

Since that time the operation’s been producing around 100,000 ounces per annum, but in 2015 there was the discovery of high-grade mineralisation at depth and since that high-grade discovery the production output has increased, not through moving more material but purely because there’s a higher concentration of gold in the material we’re moving.

The mine itself is a significant employer in Bendigo.

We do employ over 700 people and contractors and contribute up to $260 million per annum into the Victorian economy through wages and goods and services.

We do have a large exploration budget in Australia, between $100-$120 million for this year to continue our search for mineral resources, most of that expenditure is on the mine lease itself, so over 90% on the mine lease, but the remainder is planned for spending on our existing ELs and moving forward on Blocks 1, 2 and 3 in the coming years pending the grant of the applications.

In Australia we do have offices in Melbourne, Bendigo itself, so the regional exploration team are based in Bendigo and obviously at the mine site itself.

We do have a highly experience leadership team across all disciplines including in mining, new exploration, processing, environmental management and community engagement, and all of our management team do reside locally in the Bendigo area.

As a business we continually seek to improve our performance by advancing key health, safety, environmental, economic employee and community engagement priorities, including that we ensure we provide a safe working environment for our employees, implementing responsible environmental practices and effective environmental management systems throughout our business, creating meaningful opportunities for local employment and training, developing community relationships based on open and honest communications, ensuring the communities in which we operate do benefit from our presence.

[Slide: Fosterville Gold Mine - Regional Exploration]

Now just a little information on our exploration plans, I won’t go into a lot of detail here, but particularly exploration in the initial phases is confined to the office.

There’s a lot of desktop studies, a lot of data collection and correlation of historical datasets, drawing on open file information, also collecting historic drill samples from the area of interest and may be doing some analytical work.

Once a desktop review has taken place typically then we look at early stage exploration reconnaissance type surveys.

These would be undertaken over broad areas and typically we use aircraft for large-scale geophysical surveys.

So you can see the picture up in the top right-hand corner there, that’s one of the aircraft that flew a ground gravity survey over our blocks earlier and those sort of surveys take around about 10 days to complete an area of the size of the current block applications.

Once we’ve identified areas of interest we typically follow that up with ground-based small scale geophysical surveys.

You can see the picture in the top left there shows a field crew at work conducting an on foot ground gravity survey and this really just provides a higher resolution of data to assist us in vector in on potential gold targets.

We’d also look to undertake some geochemical sampling where suitable geological conditions exist and again we use these sample results to help us really vector in on where the potential gold mineralisation is.

And you can see the picture in the top middle there it’s just an example of one of our field crew taking a soil sample out in the bush where they typically dig a small hole, take a small sample, maybe 300 grams of soil material which will go to the lab for analysis, then backfill the hole and then move onto the next survey site.

So these are called air reconnaissance programs and all information from these types of exploration programs assists our geologists in identifying the priority targets for drilling.

So the drilling itself is very a very expensive exercise and we only really go to that stage where there is something that looks of interest that could have significant gold mineralisation.

So the types of drilling we use really depends on the depth of target, what type of information that we want to obtain.

If we’re after new surface gold anomalies and to help us vectoring in we might use something like aircore drilling which is relatively shallow and the rigs would move quite quickly from site to site.

If we had a targeted depth we may use diamond drilling which can drill a lot deeper and we can obtain a lot more geological information from that style of drilling as well.

And the pictures you can see there, so we’ve got the shed in the field, that’s an acoustic shed which we use around our diamond drill rigs, and the picture on the bottom right there you can see the rig set up inside that acoustic shed which acts a noise barrier, and you can see the guys working in there.

We’ve got track maps on the ground to protect the surface of the paddock we’re working in, and also under the rig there’d be mats to capture any grease or oil that may fall from the rig itself.

Look, it’s important to note that in the planning stages of all our exploration activities we do full risk assessments for the safe operation of our employees and contractors, but also rigorous risk assessments around environmental and community impacts.

There’s full recognition of cultural heritage importance and Kirkland Lake Gold acknowledges the traditional owner rights across the exploration licence areas in which we operate, and engagement we’ll consider and demonstrate respect for our indigenous people.

All access to private land is through consultation with the private landholders, and all sites are fully rehabilitated upon completion of our activities.

So look, with that I might pass on to Will Wettenhall, our Environment Community Manager, just to talk through our approach around community engagement.

Thank you.

*Will Wettenhall, Environment Community Manager*

Thanks Troy.

Good evening or good afternoon everyone.

[Slide: Community Engagement Approach]

So, Fosterville’s exploration activities are supported by a team of experienced community engagement practitioners, and our approach to stakeholder engagement is based on open and transparent communications and building trusted relationships with our stakeholders.

So how do we go about that?

Well, we make sure that our engagement methods are purposeful, so making sure that we’re undertaking focused and meaningful engagement that considers stakeholders levels of knowledge, we consider their expertise in their area, and also their level of influence as well.

We want to make sure that our engagement activities are relevant, so that means selecting appropriate techniques and engagement methods to ensure our engagement activities are effective in terms of communicating the information and also taking on feedback from the stakeholders that we engage with.

We want to make sure that our engagement activities are inclusive, so again making sure that the methods that we are using are appropriate and respectful of the perspectives and needs of our stakeholders.

And we also want to ensure that, and we are open to alternative points of views and stakeholders have opinions and we take that into consideration, factor that into our planning and the way the exploration activities we undertake.

And lastly, we ensure that our engagement activities are responsive, so that means providing timely and proactive acknowledgement to stakeholder questions or concerns and then following up to ensure that that information is understood and those concerns are addressed.

So, what are some of the engagement methods that you can expect to see us undertaking?

So typically with exploration there’s multiple forms of direct communication, so that often starts with landholder meetings, one-on-one conversations either meeting out at the landholder’s properties or at a mutually agreeable location, it will also include emails, letters, phone calls, those sorts of things.

We also issue information updates and letters more broadly to community.

We hold community meetings and information sessions, so in the past that might involve something like a town hall meeting.

We’ve made ourselves available for drop-in sessions, coffee and conversations, town hall meetings etcetera.

We also have a quarterly community newsletter and we use other publications to get information out there so that stakeholders have an opportunity to learn and understand what our planned activities are and provide feedback on that.

And if anybody that’s listening to this is interested in registering for Fosterville’s Community Newsletter then there’ll be details in the next slide of how you can go about contacting us and registering your email or postal address to receive that publication.

We use local media, you know, whether it’s newspapers, local and regional newspapers for notifications and advertising.

In the past, and we will continue to offer site visits and tours, so we’ve had drill rig open days where we welcome community members to come and have a look inside the green sheds and ask questions of our exploration team and our community team to build their knowledge and understanding of diamond drilling and the activities we are undertaking.

We look forward to getting back out now that COVID restrictions are easing, getting back out into more community events.

So previously we’ve had presence at significant events like Dalmore Field Days, Bendigo Easter Fair, and we also look forward to identifying and participating in more local community events in the exploration blocks that we’re applying for.

[Slide: Contact us]

And lastly, we have a website and also a social media page on Facebook that has our information contact details, but there’s also a substantial amount of information on our operation and exploration activities on our website which is FGM.Community.com.au and our Facebook page is also where we post information and notifications on our activities and any other information that’s relevant to our operations as well.

On this slide, so the contact details, we have a phone line with a dedicated community line for anyone that wishes to contact us via phone.

We’ve also got a community email address, FGM.Community@kl.gold.

The last point there that I’ll just point out, there’s also, in addition to the resources available to landholders on the regulator’s website, there’s a useful guide, a landholder’s guide for land access that’s been developed by the Minerals Council Australia in partnership with the Victorian Farmers Federation that can be accessed through the Minerals Council Australia website or alternatively you can jump onto Fosterville’s website and find the link there as well.

And, that’s all from me thanks Annie.

*Annie Farrow, Manager Resources Strategy and Industry Investment*

Thank you Will.

Now I might invite Mark Bennett the Chair of S2 Resources to speak.

Are you there Mark?

*Mark Bennett, Executive Chairman, S2 Resources*

I am Annie, can you hear me?

*Annie Farrow, Manager Resources Strategy and Industry Investment*

Yep, thank you.

*Mark Bennett, Executive Chairman, S2 Resources*

Thanks a lot.

Thank you everyone for tuning in and before I start I’d just like to pay my respects the traditional custodians of the land that I’m on which is the area, probably about 50ks north of Melbourne, and it’s the Wurundjeri-Willam clan to the Woiwurrung people, and also to the people in the area that we’re proposing to explore which is the traditional owners of the lands of the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Yorta Yorta people.

I’m just going to introduce our company to you.

There’s two different names and I’ll just explain that.

So Southern Star Exploration is a subsidiary of S2 Resources, and S2 Resources is an Australian mineral exploration company.

It’s base is in Perth, I live in Victoria, we use different subsidiaries for each of our projects hence the two different names.

But I’d just like to stress that in case you Google Southern Star Exploration be aware that there is a similar named company in Texas which is an oil and gas company and their webpage shows the horrible picture of oil derricks and chimneys spewing smoke.

That is not us, we are not involved in hydrocarbons, in other words oil, gas or coal.

[Slide: Who is Southern Star Exploration?]

We also don’t do anything radioactive such as uranium or mineral sands or fracking and things like that.

[Slide: What are S2’s values?]

So I’m just going to talk about who we are in terms of our values, what we believe in, what we don’t do and what we have done, and then I’ll handover to Matt, our CEO, who is over in the Perth office who will just describe how we go about it.

So, importantly we’re a small company, we were sort of spawn from another exploration company called Sirius Resources and it was very successful, and through both of those companies we have a pretty good track record of doing what we say we’re going to do.

Our aim is to find mineral deposits and if appropriate, and it’s not always appropriate, you know, what we do most of our time is just exploration which is a low impact activity and it only rarely leads to the discovery of a viable mineral deposit.

And you can, sort of, use statistics in all sorts of different ways, but if you, for example, say that only one in 10 prospects, or sorry, only one in 10 targets becomes an actual prospect, only one in 10 prospects become a mineral deposit and only one in 10 mineral deposits become a significant mine, that’s one in a thousand chance of exploration leading to a mining operation.

Now if you were just to halve that then it’s still a one in 125 chance.

Using the Minerals Council of Australia’s statistics it’s one in 660, so nearly always exploration fails but it’s undertaken in the hope.

[Audio and video froze at this point]

*Annie Farrow, Manager Resources Strategy and Industry Investment*

Matthew, do you want to take over I think that Mark has frozen.

*Matthew Bennett, CEO S2 Resources*

Looks like he has.

Okay.

Yeah, Mark was just covering off on that it is a low probability of successful exploration but of course best endeavours we do hope to find something that obviously would be a benefit, not only to our shareholders but the broader community in which we work, and we won’t undertake a feasibility study, well sorry, won’t undertake any mining activities unless that’s both technically, economically, environmentally and socially robust.

Generally, we’re a small company so Mark’s just got a point here that when engaging with a community you’re going to find that S2 Resources we’re generally going to deal very much on a one-on-one basis.

We’re not going to be some faceless company that maybe drops something in your letterbox, we are available, you will see us in and around the community and we’re always there ready for you to reach out and always happy to chat.

Mark will probably come back because I would like him to talk to the next slide when he comes back in, but I’ll continue on, so next slide please John.

[Slide: What are S2’s values?]

Mark’s pointed out that we are not exploring for fossil fuels, we’re not any way engaged in oil and gas or fracking that goes with gas exploration and/or production.

What we can show our shareholders is we’ve got a track record of strong environmental, social and governance.

Foremost the company prior to S2 which was Sirius Resources Mark spoke of a minute ago had an excellent track record of dealing and negotiating with the traditional owners.

I think while this was so successful and I’m speaking now of a company I joined last year so it’s prior to my engagement with this group, but looking from afar I was an analyst at the time reviewing the company, I think the success came down to the Ngadju Group who are in south Western Australia were shown respect and equally showed respect on the basis that we were able to negotiate at a management level as opposed to an operational level.

So it was in fact Mark Bennett dealing directly with the traditional owners and that led to some really good outcomes for that community, jobs, training, scholarships, a very good economic package that went with the compensation once the mine was developed down there in Nova Bollinger was the asset, but it came back to a shared respect and a true care for the community.

When we talk about engaging with a community, engaging with the Aboriginal groups we’re not doing this as, I suppose what you’d call a licence to operate, we do it on the basis that it is doing what is right and they are the beliefs and principles of everyone within S2 and it’s led from the top.

I would like if Mark does join us to go back, there’s some very interesting stories to those pictures on the right there, so if he does manage to get back on I might just scroll back.

But if we can, just scroll forward one slide.

[Slide: What are S2’s values?]

Look, we look to work in, I suppose the word is harmony with landholders and also the broader community.

We recognise that whilst a lot of our exploration will be conducted on agricultural land there is a broader community impact to those obviously living in and around the communities in those townships, so we look to engage with everyone.

We have a fundamental belief, and this is a belief personally of every employee that exploration should have a minimal impact on the ground, and where we leave our exploration ground it should be left in a condition the same if not better than when we first got there, whether that’s agricultural land or whether that’s bushland.

Just on the – I’ll go through a couple of slides here, but on the photos on the right-hand side this is the solar farm at Nova Bollinger which is the mine developed by Sirius the former company.

Importantly this is the second ever solar farm that was ever placed on a mine site in Australia, but I think more importantly this wasn’t funded from government subsidies, so this was fully funded by the company upon development.

And just, sort of, going through, on the right there we are experience in working with a community is not just limited to Australia, so the reindeer is probably reference to our activities in Finland where we’re also active.

Up there we work with the local indigenous group who are reindeer herders that are the Sàmi, so we’re quite experienced not only dealing with Aboriginal groups within Australia but other groups globally.

Mark quite likes that picture down the bottom left and what that really shows that we really do value individuality, diversity, creativity, you know, we don’t all wear the one colour shirt as you can see it’s a bit of a mix-match of hyper-colour shirts down there in the bottom right, probably looks like something out of an eighties party, but that’s us, we are very visible but you want see us walking around the town in suits.

Scroll forward one more slide please.

[Slide: What do we do? - 1]

This has been covered off a little bit by both Will and Annie but I just want to go through maybe a bit of a storyboard, just a journey what to expect from S2 in our exploration activities and what you’ll see us doing in and around your community.

So first of all you really won’t see much of us and this is the stage we’re in at present, so this is the data review, the desktop review process, so at this point we’re going through old historic data, maps, remote sensing data, flora/fauna studies that have been developed, trying to work out the land uses in place.

We may get on the ground and do some field mapping.

An important thing to note here is we are never going to enter someone’s property without getting access agreements first.

So we will get permission from the landholder before we go in there.

And in terms of our broader engagement with a community that will likely be in the form of community sessions, so before we’re on the ground we’d like to engage the broader community just to let them know exactly what we’re doing.

[Slide: What do we do? - 2]

So after desktop studies generally what we’re looking to do here is look at the sub-terrain and get some sort of signature, whether that’s a geophysical signature or a geochemical signature.

First on the geophysics, so this is generally done from either airborne surveys or very low impact on-ground surveys which are non-disturbing and just basically using field equipment and maybe ATVs to transport this equipment around.

The general time you’d expect us to conduct a survey, depending on the scale of the land, relatively short space of time will be complete within the space of perhaps a few days to maybe a few weeks.

Obviously there may be some overlap not only on the areas we’re looking at but if we’re flying drones these things do need to turn around and come back so there will be some flying over areas, we’re not actually exploring but of course we’ll try and engage with anyone who would be impacted or seeing something in the sky flying above them that is related to ourselves.

[Slide: What do we do? - 3]

So Will actually pointed on this a little bit but this is the next phase and this is again very low impact effectively testing of soil for anomalous minerals.

So on the top right there that’s a sampling site, so that’s a soil sample.

We’ll take small portion of dirt that gets sent to a lab which is tested to see if it has the elements we’re looking for.

Obviously that hole in the ground is filled up, the majority of the dirt is actually left in place, and that’s done on a very broad space so perhaps only one sample every few hundred metres.

We may bag some samples, so rock chips may be taken from the surface.

And in the bottom right if we’re looking to get a sample from a slightly deeper terrain, for example below tilled surface of a paddock, we may use an auger rig, so I think most of the mining community would be aware what an auger is.

It’s effectively a posthole digger is the most akin bit of equipment.

And again that sort of timeframe you’re probably looking at very fast moving activities, not sitting in one spot at any one time for very long, you know, and a geochemical survey for example over farm you’d think would be done within the space of one or two weeks.

[Slide: What do we do? - 4]

If we get to the next stage we’re slightly more intensive in terms of exploration, that’s where we move to drilling.

So drilling initially starts with very broad-based drilling and shallow, generally moving very quickly from site to site.

And as you get more advanced and we find some interest in what we’re looking for, perhaps we’re finding mineralisation, then generally we’ll drill deeper and on a closer space.

Just a couple of examples of the drilling there, so obviously not something we’re going to do in Victoria on the far left but that’s called base of till drilling, very low impact drilling generally conducted in winter when we drill through ice, but you can see that’s a very small unit.

In the middle is perhaps a bit more relevant, that’s aircore drilling currently being undertaken in the wheatbelt of Western Australia, notably this is done outside of cropping season so we will always work in and around the activities of the landholder so we’re not disturbing cropping or anything else.

If we’re flying any drones of course we won’t work in and around mustering or anything that’s going to disturb livestock.

And finally there on the far right, I think that’s a good picture and it’s up in Finland but it shows that – sorry we’ve gone forward one slide.

Yeah, on the bottom right there, that’s believe it or not it was actually a drill rig, it looks like a small hut of some sort, but there is a rig inside there.

But importantly there’s very little impact on the forest around, so this is drilling in the forests of Finland, very sensitive areas environmentally, but you can see that once that rig leaves there will be very little footprint.

[Slide: What do we do? - 5]

And of course this is what it looks like after we leave.

So quickly, in the top right there this is again in Finland, but what you would have seen prior to, or a few months’ prior to rehabilitation, there would have been a track running from alongside that tree up into the far tree-line, you can see now there’s little evidence that that is there, that’s been fully rehabilitated.

And just below that, this is actually a site before rehabilitation, so the bottom left, that’s drilling activities within a field.

You can see if you look closely there’s a couple of sample bags yet to be picked up, they would have been picked up very shortly after this photo was taken.

So even prior to the rehabilitation process you can see there is still very little impact.

The top right is a rehabilitated track in the south-west of Western Australia.

So importantly there, habitats are put back in place, that’s what the logs are.

The ground is scarified to allow regeneration of vegetation, if that vegetation doesn’t take we will source indigenous species and put those back in the ground and replant those, that’s a better way of terming that.

And the bottom right that’s again that Northern Finland drill rig site, so there’s very little evidence and you can see the regrowth is quite strong where there has been drilling previously.

And look, that is, I suppose the state which we want to leave all of our exploration sites.

We want to leave them as we found them if not better than when we found them prior to moving in there and doing our exploration works.

[Slide: Our approach to community engagement]

Just on our contact details, that’s myself on the far right, Mark Bennett who unfortunately froze and left is the far left.

We’ll be the primary contact in the near term.

We are looking to engage a local community officer who will also work in conjunction with us, but the community email address is listed below, we can be easily reached upon that, that will be answered.

We’ll answer you as soon as we can in a short space of time and we’ll answer you honestly and record any concerns and hope to address those as fast and as quickly as possible.

We’ve also got our office number there which will be picked up if you call.

Thanks very much everyone for giving me the chance to speak to you today.

We’re really looking forward to getting into the community, getting to know people, getting to learn the cultures and traditions of the local indigenous groups, local traditional owners, sorry.

And, I’m obviously based in Western Australia so it may be a few months before my Premier lets me get over there, but as Mark mentioned he’s a local Victorian and you may see his face in and around the community in the nearer term than me.

So thanks very much everyone.

*Annie Farrow, Manager Resources Strategy and Industry Investment*

Thanks for that Matthew.

I have a bit of an echo here John.

So we might go to questions now.

Now we’re not going to be able to get to all questions this afternoon, there were quite a number of questions posted as a part of the registration and throughout this session.

So we’ll go to a mix of those.

We will not be taking questions as I said right up front that relate to existing exploration or mining licences, those questions can be referred to the Earth Resources Regulator and if you give Donna permission that she can identify you to the Earth Resources Regulator then they can respond to you directly.

The questions that we don’t get to this afternoon but would like to respond to, Donna will prepare written answers and we will send those out in coming weeks when we’re able to provide you with the link to the video.

So we might just quickly go through some questions.

I am going to have to leave right on five o’clock so if I disappear all of a sudden you’ll be left in the capable hands of Donna.

So the first question was, if consent is given to explore does that mean consent is automatically given to mine if anything is found?

I think what this question is trying to sort of say, if you give your consent to the exploration company to undertake exploration activity now does that automatically mean that you give a mining company permission to undertake mining activities on your private property?

No.

The exploration licence and a mining licence are completely separate things.

The exploration licensee needs your permission for the exploration licence.

If a minerals deposit is found and the company applies for a mining licence it will have to go through that process of consents all over again.

So that might just move me onto that next question which is, can companies access our property without us signing permission?

So I might just sort of go to the point of consent to access your private property.

So taking a step back, the Crown in the state of Victoria owns the minerals on behalf of the people, now that’s the same in every state of Australia.

The Minerals Resources Sustainable Development Act gives the authority to the Minister for Resources to issue licences to companies to undertake minerals explorations on Crown land and to undertake minerals exploration on private freehold land.

But in order for an exploration company to enter your property they need to get your consent.

If they’re undertaking reconnaissance activities, so i.e. using handheld tools and not damaging or removing any vegetation then they only need to obtain your informed verbal consent.

But as soon as they undertake any kind of exploration activity beyond that they must obtain your written consent.

Now the Minerals Resources Sustainable Development Act gets a bit innocuous about if you refuse to give your consent because it does acknowledge, the Act does acknowledge that either party can take the other party to VCAT or the Supreme Court, and the Act specifically says that the Supreme Court or VCAT can only rule on the matter of the level of compensation.

So if you desire to say no then I suggest that you obtain legal advice which we can’t provide.

But that all said, I want to reassure that all around the state conversations about land access consent are happening all the time, every day.

As you saw, there’s 48% of the state under a minerals exploration licence and companies at various times depending upon their targets will seek the consent to access various properties at different times.

We don’t generally hear of many issues being raised.

Once exploration companies have had an opportunity to understand your concerns, and they’ve had an opportunity to outline what they’re proposing to do and the small nature of their footprint.

As I said, we do have tools to help you negotiate land access consent, Donna will send a link to that.

You do have the right to set some of the conditions upon which they might gain access.

And that brings me to one of the questions, or there might be a couple of questions that were posted online during the session, and that comes if you’ve got a Trust for Nature Covenant, or you’ve got, I can’t remember what it was called, a Wilderness Wildlife Sanctuary or something on your property, you actually do have some right to raise those matters with the exploration company and, sort of, point out that you’ve got a Trust for Nature Covenant and the exploration company might, sort of, say to you okay, we’ll we won’t explore in that particular patch because in the beginning exploration companies don’t need to necessarily drill in a specific one square metre space, they’re more flexible than that.

So they can perhaps work around that particular acreage under a Covenant or they perhaps can work around the area that you’ve allocated to a bit of a wildlife sanctuary.

So by all means raise these questions with the explorers and see what they’re willing to do.

So I might just, sort of, go up to a couple of more quick questions.

How much time do we have to submit an application about, or an objection I think it’s about?

As I said before, you have up until the 1st of December to lodge a submission or objection with respect to Southern Star Exploration.

You have up until the 8th of December to lodge an objection or submission in regard to Fosterville Gold Mine for Blocks 1, 2 and 3.

What assurances can ERR provide affected landholders that they will regulate in a manner that’s not biased towards companies given that the Regulator also promotes minerals exploration and mining?

So I will answer that question.

Basically the Earth Resources Regulator sits in the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions, it regulates.

It licences companies, it accesses work plan requests, it undertakes compliance and audits to ensure the companies are complying with their licence, with their work plan and with the Act.

The Earth Resources Regulator does not promote exploration mining, that is done by other parts of the Department, so that might include Business Victoria, Regional Development Victoria, Minerals Development Victoria and they’re probably the three main ones, and they are separate from the Earth Resources Regulator.

Next question was how close is an exploration allowed in the vicinity of people’s homes?

Laterally you cannot operate an exploration activity within 100 metres and I’m pretty certain that it is vertically 100 metres as well, so I’ll leave that one there.

I’ll invite now S2 Resources and Fosterville to answer a question about given COVID restrictions has been relaxed why aren’t the two companies making face-to-face meetings in the towns that will be affected before given an exploration licence, this would better inform residents who are unable to attend online sessions?

So let’s hand that over first to Matthew, do you want to take that one?

*Matthew Bennett, CEO S2 Resources*

Yes, certainly, thanks very much.

Now that’s a very good question.

We have the absolute intention to get amongst the community and have community sessions when we’re able to.

I’ll just, sort of, bear in mind that it has been just a few weeks since we were given this opportunity by the tender process.

Myself, obviously I’m not able to travel due to the restrictions in Western Australia but Mark Bennett is there.

So for us, they will take place in the future that’s one thing I will say there.

But I suppose more on the COVID sort of matter, there are going to be some people who have, sort of, concerns while COVID is still in and around the community, so we’ll obviously take the utmost care when we’re meeting people and be aware of sensitivities that people may have about face-to-face communication as well.

I think that it goes both ways, people want to meet but some people still have that level of caution.

*Annie Farrow, Manager Resources Strategy and Industry Investment*

Thank you.

And do you want to add anything extra Will?

*Will Wettenhall, Environment Community Manager*

No, as I touched on Annie in the slide, we have every intention to be out there in community.

We’ve got teams on the ground in Central Victoria already and we’re pulling together our plans to undertake our own face-to-face engagement in the coming months, but there is still that licence process to go through so we haven’t been awarded the licences yet, and as a result there’s stages to this process that need to be followed.

*Annie Farrow, Manager Resources Strategy and Industry Investment*

Yeah, thank you for that.

I might throw the next question or suite of questions back firstly to S2 Resources.

The questions are will the drill rigs be operating close to homes 24/7?

What is the noise level in decibels of drill rigs close to homes?

And, if one person agrees to having a drill rig on their property can neighbours object?

I will also circle back to answer that question, but do you want to talk about drill rigs and noise in a generic way please Matthew?

*Matthew Bennett, CEO S2 Resources*

Yeah, certainly.

Look I can speak to working in and around communities here in Western Australia.

Generally there will be a mandatory standoff to a dwelling, I think you mentioned that was 100 metres, I think it may actually be a little bit further here, and then beyond that we’ll generally apply a buffer again up to 400 metres, so that can be up to 600 metres is the closest we would get.

Again that would very much depend on that negotiation process with the landholder whether they’re comfortable with us being that close, and if we can avoid it of course we certainly will.

And of course we’ll look to drill with prevailing winds and other factors which impact wind.

I have worked at a site down south where noise can be a concern so I think that’s something that certainly has to be taken into consideration and I actually do like the approach that Kirkland Lake take with that noise attenuating barn that’s something we’ll certainly be having a look at ourselves.

*Annie Farrow, Manager Resources Strategy and Industry Investment*

So do you want to add anything else sorry?

*Matthew Bennett, CEO S2 Resources*

No, I’ll leave that comment.

*Annie Farrow, Manager Resources Strategy and Industry Investment*

Great, thank you.

Troy do you want to add anything to that from a Fosterville point of view?

*Troy Fuller, Director of Exploration*

Look pretty much aligned with Mark’s comments there.

You know, really it’s through consultation with the landholder, really understanding where we can put the rig on the property as to minimise any impact.

We do do extensive noise monitoring on our setups, so we’ll initially if it’s a diamond drilling program we’ll set up the rig, we’ll do dayshift drilling only and do a series of noise tests, and that’s coordinated through the Environment Community Department, and then we seek approvals through our own Environment Community Department to make sure that noise is at low levels before continuing into a nightshift phase.

Will, you might want to add a little bit more around the noise monitoring process?

*Will Wettenhall, Environment Community Manager*

Sure Troy.

So we do take a staged approach to our operating hours when we’re undertaking drilling and that certainly involves taking into consideration and factoring in the surrounding landholder feedback on those operating hours.

Here in the state of Victoria the EPA set the noise limits and the noise limits are established based on the planning zone that the property is situated within, so different locations will have different noise limits at different times of the day/evening, daytime, evening and night which is while we undertake our noise monitoring at receptors prior to extending our operating hours beyond dayshift.

*Annie Farrow, Manager Resources Strategy and Industry Investment*

Great, thank you for that.

Could I just interrupt for a minute, can someone please let Mark Bennett back in because we’ve sent various messages to ask someone to let him back in and he’s been waiting patiently in the lobby.

I’m just going to circle back to that question in a more general way.

If your neighbour has exploration activity taking place on their property but you suffer as a neighbour some kind of damage or loss of income or loss of amenity, you too are entitled under the Minerals Resources Sustainable Development Act, you are entitled to compensation as well.

So when Donna comes back out to the communities to speak with you she will be speaking to you about the Land Access Consent Tool which also incorporate some material about compensation.

I’ll just do one more question because I do have to leave and then I’ll hand it over to Donna.

So a question about safeguards in place to protect the Campaspe River, are exploration drill rig drives, I’m not a geologist so I apologise, I don’t understand what an exploration drill rig drive is, but let’s leave the question there, are there safeguards in place to protect the Campaspe River?

Yes, Victoria has a Water Act which makes determinations about the protection and safeguarding of groundwater and waterways.

There are rules that exploration licensees are required to adhere to, and we can provide some more details about that because we do have a fact sheet about safeguarding waterways and groundwater where exploration is involved, so Donna can send you a link about that.

As with much of the material, the nature of the questions, a lot of the material is already on our website and it has a search function which is really good, and there are sections there with Q&As and fact sheets that may be of interest to you.

Now I am going to handover to Donna now to work through the rest of the questions as best she can during the limited time that we have left.

So thank you for joining and please stay with Donna and the rest of the team.

Thank you.

*Donna Mongan, Senior community Engagement Officer*

Thanks very much Annie.

Yes, we’re up to how will exploration utilising deep drill drives – I think, hold on, maybe I’m ahead of myself.

What’s going to happen if ever minerals are found under our house or land property, can I say no to not granting access to our property?

I think we covered that during the earlier part of the session that activity cannot really take place within 100 metres of a residence, but I can supply, Jay you, with further details on that score.

All the answers to these questions will be made available in writing and published on the website.

Can I say no to not granting access to your property?

Well, yes you can, the legislation and Minerals Resources Sustainable Development Act is a bit ambiguous on that front, but explorers are always willing to work with landholders and they wouldn’t want to make it difficult for landholders on that front, and they mind find another solution.

But generally across the state landholders work perfectly well with explorers and access and negotiations work very well indeed.

How will exploration utilising deep drill rig drives affect groundwater?

I may pass that onto the explorers to answer.

Troy, would you be happy to answer that question?

*Troy Fuller, Director of Exploration*

Yeah, sure Donna, and look I might throw to Jay to get a few more specifics around groundwater risk management.

But I guess the initial stages are that we go through due diligence process of understanding where water bores are on any particular property, looking through registers, making sure we’ve got appropriate stand-off distances, and then it’s really down to the consultation process with the landowner, so understanding the local positions of bores, what they know about the groundwater and then, I guess, the potential impacts are all risk assessed before we progress any works on that particular property.

Look with that I might just pass to Jay because Jay’s dealt with this a lot in the field and he can talk through how we mitigate that risk.

*Donna Mongan, Senior community Engagement Officer*

Thanks Jay, thank you, thanks Troy.

*Jay Klopper, Exploration Superintendent*

It’s a really important question and we do take it very seriously, water is life around the world.

So, starting out, as Troy said, consultation is key, so when we drill somewhere there’s absolute consultation.

But what we do do is when we’re drilling a diamond hole, the diamond hole is encased with steel casing.

Then on the retreat from the hole when we’re finished drilling we fill the hole from the bottom of the hole to the top with what we call grout which is essentially cement which sets hard in the hole and effectively completely seals that hole.

So it’s sealed from top to bottom isolating all the sort of levels of water.

If it’s not a diamond drill hole, for example it’s a smaller diameter percussion hole which might be an aircore or an RC hole, that hole will also be cemented, this is what we do.

And we do operate above the recommended guideline by the government, so we fill the hole from bottom to top with cement and it’s as though the drill hole was not there.

So with our diamond drilling the hole’s very rarely, if ever, make water so there’s no positive flow, so we’re not extracting any water from the drill holes.

With the pneumatic or the aircore drilling water can be made by the hole, it’s a small volume relative to the volume in the ground, and then as soon as we’ve finished drilling that hole is sealed up.

Any water or drill spoil that does come out of the hole is removed from the site, taken away.

And also we’ve got very high, I guess you would call it site hygiene standards around the drill rig, so we have spill mats.

We don’t allow, as best we can. Water to spill on the ground we try and capture everything that we can and put it into bulkies, ICVs, whatever terminology you would like to use for that and take it away.

So yeah, but we do pride ourselves in the way we do treat groundwater.

Thank you.

*Donna Mongan, Senior community Engagement Officer*

The next question is we are land for wildlife sanctuary, what consideration is given to preserving quality habitat for wildlife in relation to this process?

Well, what I will send to all participants is a link to our land inventory for the North Central Victorian Goldfields, that certainly identifies all flora and fauna of note within that area.

And we also have a great deal of concentration on land access consent in terms of covenant of properties, and it is really worthwhile landholders bringing to explorers attention all over the state whether they have such a covenant over their property.

Again, I’m happy, very much happy to elaborate on that process, and if you would like to get in touch with me my number is below, I’d be happy to provide a much more elaborate answer on that aspect.

What is the actual probability of mining in Central Victoria are those statistics different from the overall average?

Well, there is certainly a higher level of prospectivity for that area.

It’s been identified through many years of geological research and investigations conducted by the Geological Survey of Victoria, and that of course has prompted the creation of the North Central Victorian Ground Release.

I might pass it over to the explorers to give their take on it, but on average it’s been quoted one in 300 licences can identify something, you know, commercially viable, but the industry can say 600 to one in 1,000 licences, you know, identifying something of a commercial quantity to progress to a mine.

Maybe I’ll pass it to Matthew this time to offer his view.

*Matthew Bennett, CEO S2 Resources*

Yeah, sure.

It’s a funny game we play, it is very low probability of success but the rewards are big which is why we do it.

But, yeah, you’re absolutely right there Donna, it is increased probability because this is a very prospective ground, but the probability is still very low, quantifying that is quite challenging.

Mark offered up some sort of statistics more on a global sense, you know, one in 225 to one in 1,000 chance.

One thing I will point out though is this a well explored region, you know, going back to old-timers to modern methods today.

So, what I would say a lower probability of say surface mineralisation, I think the high probability comes at depth.

And importantly, if there is in the future development of a mine there is a higher chance, if it gets to that point, it will be underground development where the actual surface exploration is much reduced.

So we’re not now talking open pit which is effectively an extraction from surface, you’re looking at a very small portal or a shaft and then the excavation is underground where there is very little surface expression of the mine itself.

May I’ll handover to the guys from Kirkland Lake to expand if there’s anything else to add.

*Matthew Bennett, CEO S2 Resources*

Yeah Matt, no I just agree with everything you’ve said there.

Yeah, gold isn’t easy to find, it’s certainly a high risk high reward business and it is very long odds in finding high enough concentrations of gold that it becomes economic to mine.

So we have talked about the statistics, the probabilities, but they are very small.

*Donna Mongan, Senior community Engagement Officer*

Okay, thank you very much Troy and Matt, I appreciate that.

Two questions have come in from Rob Canns and from Jennifer Grant, thank you very much.

We have gone over time but, expand on the nature and frequency of compliance audits.

That is a question I would need to confirm with Earth Resources Regulation to provide you with a robust answer on that Rob, and I’m happy to do that, I’ll get back to you tomorrow and of course all the responses to your questions will be published on the website so everybody will obtain that answer too.

What protections are there for Mount Sugarloaf Nature Conservation Reserve?

There are protections over national parks and over some reserves so I will check on that to make sure what level of protection is in place for Mount Sugarloaf and I will let you know Jennifer.

I should know off the cuff, but at the moment I’m a bit caught on that, but I will confirm that with you.

I think now it’s 5:07 we will wrap up the session.

I will just reiterate that there will be a recorded presentation available on our website for those who may have missed the sessions over the past two weeks, and of course any questions that arise you have my name, you have my phone number, you have my email address.

I am available to discuss your questions and if you have a desire to speak with the explorers I’m sure that they would be open for you to contact them on their contact details which we’ve provided in an email to you tomorrow.

If you have any further questions just email me and we’ll get back to you very quickly.

Have a good evening and thank you very much for your time and your patience.

And thank you very much Troy, Jay, Matthew, Mark and of course Will, and my colleague John Dunlevy for driving the session to an amazing extent and very difficult circumstances keeping track of the questions.

Again thank you very much and have a good evening.

Good bye.

[Farewells from all presenters]