

Weld Range Iron Ore Project

Sinosteel Midwest Corporation Ltd



CLIENT:

Sinosteel Midwest Corporation Ltd

LOCATION:

Midwest

SERVICES:

- Multi-year non-invasive monitoring of Schedule 1 species
- Extensive grid-based targeted searches
- Stakeholder and specialist consultation

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Identification of drilling as non-impact to populations
- Management recommendations based on findings

A three year *Idiosoma nigrum* monitoring program was undertaken for Sinosteel Midwest Corporation at Weld Range in the Midwest region with the aim of determining whether spider populations are impacted by exploration activities. This was in conjunction with frequent clearance surveys of areas of ongoing exploration.

Phoenix conducted a three-year monitoring program to fulfil conditions stipulated by the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC). The program was designed to monitor the long-term effects of vibration from exploration drilling and other site activities. In addition, regular surveys were conducted of new exploration areas in order to identify new populations of *Idiosoma nigrum* and determine appropriate buffer zone distances (m).

Idiosoma nigrum is a Schedule 1 listed species and therefore requires extreme care in areas where populations are known in such large numbers. Consultation with stakeholders and specialist taxonomists was required to determine the most suitable and non-invasive methods for measuring and monitoring populations. Field teams were sensitive to the area, even where populations had not been identified.

Vibrational impacts from drilling and other exploration impacts were demonstrated, in time, not to be direct factors affecting the survival of *I. nigrum*. However, significant differences in population, size and survival were identified across Weld Range, suggesting that other factors were relevant to the survival of populations, such as erosion.

Through thorough clearance surveys, areas of denser populations were located, profiled and accurately mapped; enabling SMC to avoid and minimise impacts to the species with respect to the placement of access tracks and project infrastructure.



PHOENIX
ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES