



Sunday Examiner
Sunday 15/01/2012

Page: 13
Section: General News
Region: Launceston TAS, AU
Circulation: 37279
Type: Regional
Size: 81.28 sq.cms.



slice
slicemedia.com

press clip

Nickel mine on track for North

By PATRICK BILLINGS

THE proposed \$50 million Barnes Hill nickel mine near Beaconsfield is one step closer to going live.

Proto Resources and Investments yesterday announced it was seeking a power grid connection to carry about \$50,000 worth of electricity to the mine a day.

If the project is approved, the company will mine and refine nickel on-site for shipping at Bell Bay on to Asian markets.

Barnes Hill is slated for an early 2013 commencement date, subject to approval.

Proto's managing director, Andrew Mortimer, said the mine would create several hundred jobs for construction and about 100 when operational.

A draft feasibility study is due next week, with the final report expected before June 30.

"We already know it's positive, we just want to know how positive," he said.

"Especially now they're kind of powering down on Beaconsfield

Gold, we are very keen to take up the slack as it comes available."

In production, the mine is expected to reap a profit of \$15 million a year before a potential production increase could see a return of double that.

Mr Mortimer said the approval process was going smoothly and an environmental group had requested the company fund more research and protection of local species.

"Which we are more than happy to do," he said.