



Private Property Rights

Bulletin #3 – 28th June 2013

Department of Environment and Conservation

On 1 July 2013 the Department of Environment and Conservation will be replaced by two (2) departments being the "Department of Parks and Wildlife" and the "Department of Environmental Regulation". The Dept of Parks and Wildlife will focus on the network of National Parks, Marine Parks, Conservation Reserves and Forrest Management. The Department of Environmental Regulation will be responsible for industry licensing, regulation and pollution prevention

Hopefully removing the National parks and reserves from the regulatory side will improve the management outcomes of the reserves with respect to feral animals and weed control. This was part of the Government changes announced by the Premier on 10th April this year. Whilst we can agree to this change in principal we are disappointed that we were not able to obtain any details of the regulatory aspects of the amalgamation.

Public Sector Commission - DOW

PGA has received an invitation to comment on the proposed changes to Government agencies which proposes that the Department of Water (DOW) amalgamate with the newly formed Department of Environmental Regulation. A small interagency group chaired by the Public Sector Commissioner has been established to consider a range of issues including the cost benefits of the proposed changes.

The PPR&R Committee Chairman wrote to the Premier to relay our concerns with the proposed amalgamation. Listed amongst those concerns was transferring the water from what we consider was a production focused department to an environmentally focused Department. We believe that it may not be in the best interests of agriculture in having a department whose primary focus is on protecting the environment being responsible for regulating the water licensing processes for productive industries.

Our view is that the current responsibilities of the DOW are broad enough to merit a stand alone department. For those members wishing to have a say on this proposed change contact Zak on 9475 7005 or email milanz@pgaofwa.org.au the committee welcomes your comments.

Department of Mines and Petroleum

The State Government has established a new fund called the "Mine Rehabilitation Fund" Act 2012 which will replace the Environmental Bond System previously used to ensure that funds were available for restoration of mine sites at the time of closures. There are currently eleven thousand (11,000) mine sites in WA that require some form of rehabilitation.

The historic mine sites have been the subject of some debate by the companies contributing to the new MRF. Their view is that they should not be required to fund the rehabilitation of historic sites.

DMP has suggested that they are considering using the interest generated from the MRF to fund the rehabilitation of these sites.

The President of PGA received a letter inviting comment on the Departments proposal to develop an Abandoned Mines Policy for Western Australia. We believe that part of the reform package should include guidelines for the management and rehabilitation of abandoned mine sites.

We invite members' comments on what we should be including in an Abandoned Mines Policy submission. The closing date for submissions is 09th August 2013.

Please email your comments to milanz@pgaofwa.org.au.