

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Question on notice

Tuesday, 21 May 2013

79. Hon Robin Chapple to the Minister for Mental Health representing the Minister for Environment.

- (1) Is the Minister aware of the media statement released jointly by Hon Donna Faragher and Hon Norman Moore on Wednesday, 1 September 2010 titled "New conservation, mining arrangements for Mt Manning"?
- (2) Can the Minister provide an update on the implementation of the new reserves listed in the media statement, including which of the promised new reserves has/have been gazetted, if any?
- (3) For each of the promised new reserves that have not been gazetted, when will they be?
- (4) When will the Management Plan for the Helena and Aurora Range Conservation Park be finalised and implemented?
- (5) Is the Minister aware of the outstanding ecological significance of the Helena and Aurora Range as identified in a range of government and scientific reports dating back several decades?
- (6) Is the Minister aware of repeated recommendations from scientists, government agencies and conservation organisations for the full protection of the Helena and Aurora Range as an A Class Nature Reserve or National Park?
- (7) In relation to the Helena and Aurora Range, when does the Minister expect mining company Polaris Metals to submit for assessment by the Environmental Protection Authority its proposals for:
 - (a) exploration; and
 - (b) mining?
- (8) Has the Minister visited the Helena and Aurora Range, or does he intend to do so prior to any decision on whether or not to approve mining of the range?

Answer

- (1) Yes.
- (2) In relation to reserves proposed to be managed under the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984*, no reserves have been created.
In relation to new mining reserves, the excision of the Lake Giles area from the Mount Manning Range Nature Reserve to create mining reserve 50929 vested in the Minister for Mines was completed on 29 April 2011.
- (3) The native title situation in relation to the proposed creation of new conservation reserves is complex because the area proposed for reservation is overlain by two native title representative body areas, and one native title claim requiring multiple agreements. One of these native title claims body areas is that being negotiated by the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council, in relation to the settlement of native title in the South West of Western Australia.

- (4) It is anticipated that the draft management plan will be released for a period of public comment and finalised by the end of 2013.
- (5)-(6) Yes.
- (7) The timing of submission of approval documents for Polaris Metals proposals for exploration and mining to Government is a decision for the company.
- (8) The Minister for Environment has not yet been able to visit the Helena-Aurora Range but intends to do so. In making any decisions in relation to environmental approvals relating to this area, the Minister will take into account the relevant information available to him.