



Ministerial Media Statements

Judy Edwards

Thu 28 October, 2004

Government, mining company collaborate on nature conservation

Portfolio: Environment

28/10/04

One of the most significant conservation areas in the Eastern Goldfields will more than double in size and be upgraded to an A-class reserve after receiving State Cabinet approval.

Environment Minister Judy Edwards said the Mount Manning Range Nature Reserve north of Southern Cross would be increased from 150,000 hectares to more than 400,000ha.

The extensions included:

- a 12,800ha enclave of unallocated Crown land within the existing boundaries;
- more than 90,000ha incorporating the Helena and Aurora ranges on the southern side of the reserve; and
- more than 132,000ha on the western side that included landmarks such as the Die Hardy Range, Yokradine Hills and Boondine Hills.

“A critical factor in approving the expansion of mining operations to the Portman Iron Ore mine at Koolyanobbing was that there be a net benefit to nature conservation,” Dr Edwards said.

“The extension areas include a diverse range of native flora and fauna. For example, the Bungalbin Hill area in the southern extension has 51 species of reptiles, including 13 species of geckos - the highest number recorded for any of the surveyed sites in the biological survey of the Eastern Goldfields.”

The Minister said the expanded reserve would also include populations of the threatened flora species - Paynter's Tetratheca and Jackson Tetratheca.

“In addition, botanical survey work undertaken by Portman Iron Ore consultants and CALM staff has identified 67 significant plant species in the area including four Declared Rare Flora, 20 priority-listed species and eight undescribed species, highlighting the exceptional biodiversity of the area,” she said.

Dr Edwards said the extensions would not initially include those areas subject to current mining approvals for the Koolyanobbing iron ore expansion project. However, those areas would be added to the reserve after mining had finished and the area was rehabilitated.

Existing mining lease tenements would not be included in the reserve extensions until the tenements expired.

The Minister said the expanded reserve would be classified as A-class to raise its status as a secure, international-standard conservation reserve.

“Mount Manning Range Nature Reserve is bounded by the former Mount Elvire and Jaurdi pastoral leases,” she said.

“This means the expanded nature reserve will create a conservation network of more than 870,000ha that will provide additional opportunities for nature-based tourism activities in the Eastern Goldfields.”

The westward expansion also included tracts of the Diemals and Mount Jackson pastoral leases that already are subject to negotiation through the 2015 pastoral lease renewal process. This part of the extension process would be concluded after full Native Title consultation.

Minister's office: 9220 5050

Page last revised:4 Nov 2008