

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
Question Without Notice

Tuesday, 20 March 2018

C095. Hon Robin Scott to the Minister for Regional Development representing the Minister for Mines and Petroleum

1. Has the Minister received from the Minister for the Environment or from any other source confirmation advice of the date of establishment of a National Park in the area of the Helena and Aurora Range, and if so what is that date?
2. Has the Minister received from the Minister for the Environment or from any source the result of any governmental monitoring of vehicles which have visited the Helena and Aurora Range since the decision to reject applications for mining leases by Mineral Resources Limited, and if so how many tourist vehicles have visited the Helena and Aurora Range since that rejection?
3. What is the Minister's reaction to the intended closure of the Koolyanobbing operations of Cleveland-Cliffs at the end of June, six months earlier than had previously been expected?
4. Will the Minister confirm that the refusal to allow new mines in the Helena and Aurora Range amounts to the sacrifice of West Australian mining, rail and port jobs for the sake of troglafauna?

Answer

1. No
2. No
3. This question is asking for opinion and cannot be answered due to not conforming to Standing Order 105.
4. No. I would refer you to the attached Minister for Environment's media statement on the matter dated 21 December 2017, which I table.



State Government preserves unique Helena-Aurora Range



Hon Stephen Dawson MLC
Minister for Environment;
Disability Services

Thursday, 21 December 2017

- Mining proposal in the Yilgarn region not to proceed
- Decision is final and without appeal
- Investigations to create a class A reserve over the Helena-Aurora Range to commence

Environment Minister Stephen Dawson has today announced the State Government will not allow an iron ore mining proposal in the Helena-Aurora Range Conservation Park to proceed.

The decision was made after careful consideration of the environmental, social and economic aspects of Mineral Resources Limited's proposal to develop the Jackson 5 and Bungalbin East iron ore deposits in the range.

The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) has twice found this proposal to be unacceptable on environmental grounds and last month the Minister agreed with the independent Appeals Convenor by dismissing all appeals against the EPA assessment.

The Environment Minister has since consulted with his ministerial colleagues to examine the social and economic benefits of the project. It has been concluded that the economic and social benefits of allowing the proposal do not outweigh the identified environmental impacts.

This decision has taken into account the pre-eminent environmental values of the Helena-Aurora Range, including the significance of the intact landforms and risks to threatened flora if the proposal was approved.

The State Government is now investigating options to create a class A reserve over the Helena-Aurora Range.

Comments attributed to Environment Minister Stephen Dawson:

"The Helena-Aurora Range is an intact Banded Iron formation with extremely high environmental and social values.

"Once mined, these landforms cannot be restored and today's decision means the McGowan Labor Government is preserving this range for future generations. This will ensure that the range can be enjoyed by locals and visitors to the region and maintained as a tourist destination.

"I will now begin working with my ministerial colleagues to investigate options for creating a class A reserve over the Helena Aurora Range to ensure that this unique location is preserved for future generations."

Minister's office - 6552 5800