



GOVERNMENT OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Response To Public Submissions

Proposed Iconic Natural Heritage Places

April 2021

Implementation of the State Government's Response to the Independent Scientific Panel Inquiry into Hydraulic Fracture Stimulation in Western Australia

Introduction

The purpose of the [Proposed Iconic Natural Heritage Places Public Consultation Paper](#) (Consultation Paper) was to seek public comment and feedback about proposed iconic natural heritage places, within which the petroleum industry would not be permitted to set up well pads or undertake drilling for oil and gas exploration or production, involving hydraulic fracture stimulation, also referred to as hydraulic fracturing.

The aim of identifying iconic natural heritage places is to prevent potential impacts arising from direct development or proximity to increased traffic, noise or light associated with hydraulic fracturing.

Due to the State Government's decision to lift the hydraulic fracturing moratorium on existing petroleum titles (i.e. exploration permits, retention leases and production licences) in force on 26 November 2018 and maintain the moratorium across the rest of the State, the scope of identifying iconic natural heritage places is limited to those located within existing petroleum titles.

Background

The State Government announced the establishment of the Independent Scientific Panel Inquiry into Hydraulic Fracture Stimulation in Western Australia (Inquiry) in September 2017, and enacted the Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Resources (Hydraulic Fracturing) Regulations 2017 in December 2017 to prohibit hydraulic fracturing in the South West, Peel and Perth Metropolitan regions; and impose a moratorium on hydraulic fracturing for the rest of the State, pending the outcome of the Inquiry.

In September 2018, the Inquiry handed its Report to the Minister for Environment. The Report, containing 91 findings and 44 recommendations, was released publicly in November 2018 via the Inquiry's [website](#).

In July 2019, the State Government released its [Implementation Plan](#), being the Government's response to the Inquiry. Implementation Plan Action 2 responds to the Inquiry's Recommendations 2 and the Government's Policy Decisions 2 and 6.

Components of Implementation Plan Action 2 have already been addressed through the amendments to [Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Resources \(Hydraulic Fracturing\) Regulations 2017](#), which commenced in September 2019.

Consultation

The Consultation Paper was released on the Implementation Website for public comment from 10 December 2019 to 31 January 2020. During the public comment period, 5623 submissions were received, with 469 of those being non-template submissions. Of the non-template submissions 32 contained feedback relating to iconic natural heritage places. The submissions received represent a range of stakeholders, including community groups and individuals, industry and industry groups, environmental and other non-government organisations.

During the public comment period there were four active submission campaigns being: 'Protect Kimberley Natural Heritage from Fracking'; 'Support for Kennedy Range Iconic Natural Heritage Place'; 'Iconic natural heritage areas to be protected from fracking'; and 'Please reconsider your decision to allow fracking in the Kimberley', which generated the majority of the submissions received. This led to individuals participating across a number of campaigns and resulted in multiple submissions being received from some individuals. While these are individually counted in the total number of submissions received, campaign submissions are considered as template submissions, and are attributed to the 'campaign'. Template submissions received after the closure of the public comment period have not been included in this response.

The State Government thanks all stakeholders for their considered feedback, and provides the following response.

Response To Stakeholder Feedback

Key Themes

The submissions received fall into four themes:

1. General feedback regarding hydraulic fracturing.
2. Comments relating to process and criteria for iconic natural heritage places.
3. Support for iconic natural heritage places proposed in the consultation paper.
4. Stakeholder nominations for additional proposed iconic natural heritage places.

General feedback regarding hydraulic fracturing

A large number of submissions received as a result of the various campaigns expressed general opposition to hydraulic fracturing. While some submissions expressed broad opposition to the activity of hydraulic fracturing, others commented about more specific concerns relating to potential risks to water, emissions, climate change, and general distrust of the industry.

Conversely, other submissions pointed to the Inquiry's finding that hydraulic fracturing poses low risk when a robust regulatory regime is in place. Comments were also received in regard to adverse impacts and sovereign risk arising from retrospective changes to permits post grant, significant funds already expended exploring for, and appraising, the unconventional resources, and the potential for hydraulic fracturing activities to provide considerable benefits to local communities.

The State Government acknowledges these views, but they are not addressed specifically in this response as they fall outside the scope of the Consultation Paper relating to proposed iconic natural heritage places, as outlined above.

It is important to note, however, that the 12-month Inquiry undertook a comprehensive review of scientific literature and evidence; held multiple public meetings in the Kimberley, the Midwest and Perth; considered more than 9,500 public submissions; and engaged in targeted stakeholder consultations with agencies, industry and non-governmental organisations. The Inquiry's Report also reflects and incorporates independent peer review by experts from across Australia.

The Inquiry concluded that the overall risk to people and the environment from hydraulic fracture stimulation on the onshore environment of Western Australia is low and manageable.

Following careful consideration of the Inquiry's Report, the State Government accepted in-principle the Inquiry's 44 recommendations; and on 27 November 2018 announced a raft of new, world-class controls to ensure risks associated with hydraulic fracture stimulation are reduced even further.

As a result, hydraulic fracturing is prohibited in Western Australia, except for petroleum titles that existed as of 26 November 2018. Further, within those petroleum titles, hydraulic fracturing is banned in national parks, within 2000 metres of public drinking water source areas and in iconic natural heritage places.

Additionally, in accordance with the Environmental Protection Regulations 1987, all projects involving hydraulic fracturing, including exploration and production wells, must be referred to the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA).

As a result of these State Government requirements, hydraulic fracturing will only be allowed under world-class protections and regulation, ensuring the highest standards of health, safety and environmental protection for all operations.

The Government's approach to hydraulic fracturing provides a balanced and responsible policy that supports economic development and environmental protection for the benefit of all Western Australians.

Comments relating to process and criteria for iconic natural heritage places

As outlined in the Consultation Paper, the State Government has developed a set of principles to guide the process of selecting places considered to be of iconic natural heritage. While Western Australia has many places of natural beauty and diverse ecological and cultural values, the intent of the principles is to identify those places that are truly 'iconic' and are recognised as such. This does not mean that places not designated as 'iconic natural heritage places' are not important or valuable, as demonstrated by various State and Commonwealth legislation and regulations (see Appendix 1) designed to protect and preserve cultural and environmental values.

While there may be a need to amend or improve some of the existing mechanisms, any proposed changes must be carefully considered and take place within the appropriate legislative context. It is not appropriate nor desirable to create duplication or overlap with existing mechanisms, which already consider potential impacts associated with hydraulic fracturing. Specific comments relating to iconic natural heritage places are clarified below.

Comment	Government response
The list of iconic natural heritage places should not be static with new places added to the list over time	The Inquiry envisaged that the process to identify places of iconic natural heritage, in consultation with the community, would be a formal part of the process by which the Western Australian Government releases acreage for potential development. However, as a result of the Government's Policy to maintain the moratorium across the State, except for petroleum titles that were in force on 26 November 2018, hydraulic fracturing will not be permitted over land released for oil and gas exploration as part of future acreage releases.
Definition of places should give equal weight to scientific and traditional Aboriginal knowledge / ensure consideration of cultural significance in defining iconic natural heritage places	The State Government recognises both scientific, and traditional Aboriginal knowledge and cultural values. For example, the entire Fitzroy River was added to the National Heritage List because of its exceptional natural and cultural value. It is also listed as an Aboriginal Heritage Site under the <i>Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972</i> .
Further consultation should be undertaken to refine the guiding principles to make them and the process by which they are applied rigorous and transparent	The guiding principles were developed by the State Government for the purpose of identifying iconic natural heritage for this consultation. This will not be an ongoing process as hydraulic fracturing will not be permitted over land released for oil and gas exploration as part of future acreage releases.
More thorough consultation needed with Aboriginal people to identify cultural areas where hydraulic fracturing is not permitted	As outlined in the Consultation Paper, existing mechanisms and processes exist for consideration of cultural values and heritage. Additionally, the State Government anticipates cultural values will also be considered by the relevant Traditional Owners as part of any consent or access requirements.
Ensure that gazettal of iconic natural heritage areas does not have flow on impacts for other petroleum activities or other parts of the resource industry	As recommended by the Inquiry, identifying iconic natural heritage places only applies to oil and gas exploration and production requiring hydraulic fracturing. Other petroleum or mining industry activities will not be impacted by the definition of iconic natural heritage places.
Prohibition against hydraulic fracture stimulation should be incorporated into the regulations	The State Government will include the identified Iconic Natural Heritage Places in future amendments to the Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Resources (Hydraulic Fracturing) Regulations 2017.

Support for Iconic Natural Heritage Places proposed in the Consultation Paper

As outlined in the Consultation Paper, the following are proposed as iconic natural heritage places:

- Fitzroy River and Camballin Floodplain Iconic Natural Heritage Place; and
- Kennedy Range Iconic Natural Heritage Place.

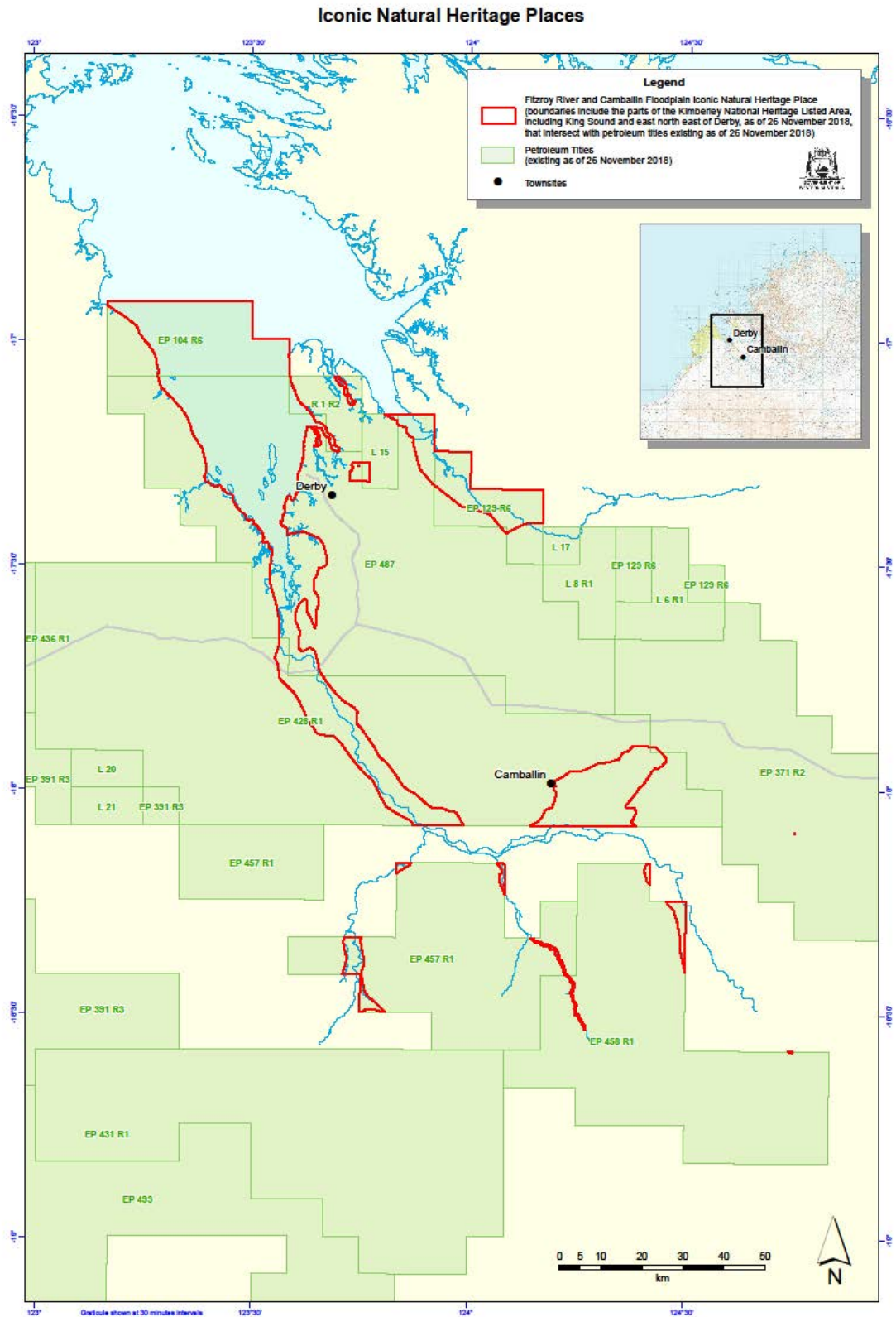
While some submissions expressed that the proposed boundaries should be increased, or include additional buffers, others called for the boundaries to be decreased and refined to ensure the areas selected truly reflect the iconic nature of the places. Overall, submissions received have expressed support for the State Government's proposed iconic natural heritage places as identified in the Consultation Paper.

Upon further consideration of the submissions, the State Government has decided to extend the Fitzroy River and Camballin Floodplain Iconic Natural Heritage Place, in accordance with the guiding principles for identifying places of iconic natural heritage, to include the additional parts of the Kimberley National Heritage Listed Area as of 26 November 2018 (including King Sound and east north east of Derby) that intersect with existing petroleum titles (see Map 1).

With respect to the proposed Kennedy Range Iconic Natural Heritage Place, the petroleum exploration permit EP 481 that existed over the Kennedy Range National Park expired in August 2020, which means that hydraulic fracturing will not occur in this area. Therefore, Kennedy Range Iconic Natural Heritage Place is withdrawn from the Government's proposed places as it is no longer within scope (i.e. it is no longer within existing petroleum titles).

Accordingly, well pads or other surface disturbance to undertake drilling for oil and gas exploration or production involving hydraulic fracturing are not permitted within the boundaries of the extended Fitzroy River and Camballin Floodplain Iconic Natural Heritage Place.

Map 1: Extended Fitzroy River and Camballin Floodplain Iconic Natural Heritage Place



Response to additional proposed iconic natural heritage places

Some submissions proposed additional iconic natural heritage places, whereas others nominated broader categories of land such as all wetlands in conservation reserves managed by Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Ramsar wetlands, existing and proposed nature reserves, conservation parks, threatened and priority ecological communities, registered and unregistered Aboriginal heritage sites, rivers, lakes, significant aquifers and sensitive water catchments, non-gazetted drinking water areas and vicinities, farms and pastoral leases, horticultural, agricultural and viticultural land.

As outlined in the State Government's guiding principles, the term 'place' defines a specific 'iconic' location with surface boundaries. While broad areas or categories of land nominated in some submissions are considered out of scope and not addressed below, it is important to note that any potential risks and impacts of hydraulic fracturing activities are considered and assessed by regulators responsible for administering respective legislation. Additionally, all hydraulic fracturing proposals now also require referral to the EPA, which considers component values of natural heritage such as biodiversity, landscape and amenity as part of its environmental impact assessment.

With considered risk management and appropriate conditions, resource extraction, including hydraulic fracturing, may co-exist with protection of natural values without causing unacceptable risk to the surrounding environment. It is also important to remember that resource activities are often temporary in nature, with the majority of infrastructure removed from site and the area rehabilitated to pre-existing condition or an agreed alternative subsequent land use, which can benefit the landowners and local communities.

In accordance with its guiding principles, the State Government has determined to ban hydraulic fracturing in national parks, including the proposed national parks being considered under the Plan for our Parks initiative. The proposed Plan for our Parks extension to Kennedy Range National Park was the only proposed national park that intersected with existing petroleum titles. However, petroleum exploration permit EP 481 expired in August 2020 which means that hydraulic fracturing will not occur in this area. Therefore, the Kennedy Range Iconic Natural Heritage Place is withdrawn from the State Government's proposed places as it is no longer within scope (i.e. it is no longer within existing petroleum titles).

The table below provides the State Government's response to specific locations nominated by stakeholders as iconic natural heritage places through the public consultation process.

It is important to note that the aim of identifying iconic natural heritage places is to prevent potential surface impacts arising from direct development or proximity to increased traffic, noise or light associated with hydraulic fracturing. Other regulatory mechanisms, including both existing and additional new mechanisms, including those being developed as part of the other Implementation Plan actions, will ensure that hydraulic fracturing activities are rigorously assessed by the regulator and the EPA, and do not pose unacceptable risks to the surrounding environment and people.

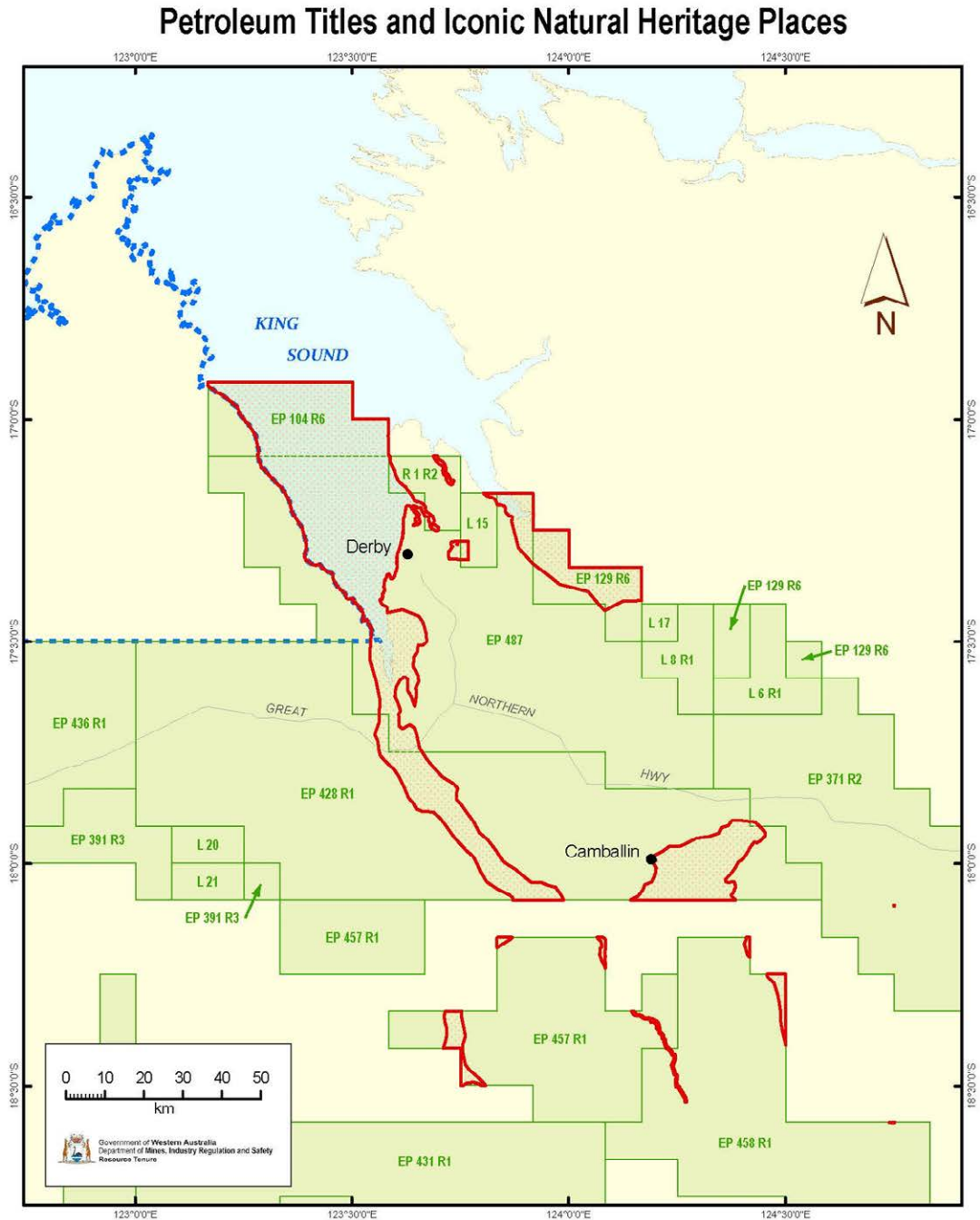
Nominated place	Government response
Whole of Kimberley region	The State Government recognises the diverse natural and cultural values of the Kimberley and notes that any impacts of proposed development can be avoided or reduced through other mechanisms (e.g. the environmental impact assessment). However, the entire Kimberley region is considered too extensive to be considered iconic for the purposes of this process.
Entire Fitzroy River catchment, all tributaries and floodplains of the Fitzroy River and priority ecological communities that are part of the Fitzroy River system	This area is regarded as too extensive to be considered iconic for the purposes of this process. Existing and additional new regulatory mechanisms, will ensure that any proposed hydraulic fracturing activities are rigorously assessed by the regulator and the EPA, and do not pose unacceptable risks to the surrounding environment and people.
Disaster Bay and monsoonal vine thickets of the Dampier Peninsula	These areas are located within the existing Dampier Peninsula hydraulic fracturing ban area and it is therefore not necessary to define them as iconic natural heritage places for the purposes of this process.
Ningbing Range, Mijing Conservation Park, and Jemarnde-wooningim (Darmalanka) Conservation Park	The only petroleum title in this area (exploration permit EP 386) expired on 30 March 2020. Therefore, hydraulic fracturing will not occur in these areas and it is not necessary to define them as iconic natural heritage places for the purposes of this process.
Edgar Range, Looma Hills, Mt Anderson, St George Range, Erskine Range, Mowla Bluff	The State Government recognises there are number of ranges, hills and other geological features in the Kimberley with natural and cultural significance. These specific areas have been considered by the State Government in accordance with the guiding principles and are not deemed to fit its criteria for iconic natural heritage places.
Geegully Creek, Big Springs, Lake Eda, Lake Champion, Taylors Lagoon, Ungani, Deep Creek	The Kimberley region supports a number of wetlands, creeks and other water features with natural and cultural significance. These specific areas have been considered by the State Government in accordance with the guiding principles and are not deemed to fit its criteria for iconic natural heritage places.

Conclusion

The State Government thanks all those stakeholders who made submissions for their considered feedback; and confirms the Fitzroy River and Camballin Floodplain Iconic Natural Heritage Place (boundaries extended to include the additional parts of the Kimberley National Heritage Listed Area as of 26 November 2018 that intersect with existing petroleum titles) as an iconic natural heritage place, where hydraulic fracturing will not be permitted.

The State Government will include the Fitzroy River and Camballin Floodplain Iconic Natural Heritage Place in future amendments to the Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Resources (Hydraulic Fracturing) Regulations 2017 (see Map 2).

Map 2: Map of Western Australia showing location of iconic natural heritage places



- Legend**
- Petroleum Titles Existing as of 26th November 2018
 - Iconic Natural Heritage Places
 - Dampier Peninsula Ban Boundary
 - Roads
 - Towns

DATA SOURCES
 Petroleum Titles sourced from Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (DMIRS). Roads and administration boundaries sourced from Landgate. Places of Iconic Natural Heritage data sourced from Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA). Dampier Peninsula Ban Boundary produced from the compilation of data sourced from various government departments.

This product was produced using information from various sources. The Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (DMIRS) and the State cannot guarantee the accuracy, currency or completeness of the information. DMIRS and the State accept no responsibility and disclaim all liability for any loss, damage or costs incurred as a result of any use of or reliance whether wholly or in part upon the information provided in this publication or incorporated into it by reference.



12/11/2020

APPENDIX 1

Overview of Western Australian legislation relevant to hydraulic fracturing

Agency	Role	Legislation
<p>Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (DMIRS)</p>	<p>DMIRS provides regulatory and policy oversight of the mineral and energy resources sector, including title management, environmental management, resource management, worker health and safety, and dangerous goods legislation, and ensures compliance with relevant State and Commonwealth legislation, regulation and policies.</p> <p>Additionally, the department has a role in provision of geoscientific information about minerals and energy resources and administering collection of royalties.</p> <p>The department is committed to responsible development of the resources industry to maximise the economic and social return to all Western Australians.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety Regulation: regulation of all safety obligations associated with the petroleum operation including the health and safety of workers. Regulated through the operator's submission of a Safety Management System and Safety Case. • Environment Regulation: regulation of all potential environmental risks and impacts associated with petroleum activities, including impacts to land, air, water, the subsurface, flora and fauna. Regulated through the operator's submission of an Environment Plan (EP) for each activity at each stage, from exploration, to production, through to decommissioning and rehabilitation. The EP must outline measures to reduce environmental risks and impacts to as low as reasonably practicable. • Native Vegetation Clearing: regulation of the clearing of native vegetation for petroleum activities under Part V Division 2 of the <i>Environmental Protection Act 1986</i> as provided for by delegation. • Resource Management and Administration: regulation of the technical aspects/operation of petroleum activities, ensuring they comply with international standards and best practice. Regulated through applications for exploration surveys, well management and field management plans governing all aspects of exploration, discovery, development and production or injection operations. 	<p><i>Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Resources Act 1967</i></p> <p><i>Petroleum Pipelines Act 1969</i></p> <p><i>Environmental Protection Act 1986 (Delegated Authority for native vegetation clearing)</i></p> <p><i>Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act 1982</i></p> <p><i>Dangerous Goods Safety Act 2004</i></p> <p><i>Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984</i></p>

Agency	Role	Legislation
Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER)	<p>DWER has the primary responsibility for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the regulation of pollution, unreasonable emissions, environmental harm and clearing of native vegetation; assessment and classification of contaminated sites based on risks to the community and the environment; and management of waste to promote the efficient use of resources and prevent environmental harm; • conserving, protecting, managing and assessing water resources, and planning for their use; and • providing support services to the Environmental Protection Authority, including monitoring compliance with conditions set by the Minister for <i>Environment under Part IV of the Environmental Protection Act 1986</i>. <p>Specifically, DWER's role includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regulating activities with potential impacts on the environment through works approvals and licences for premises prescribed under Schedule 1 of the Environmental Protection Regulations 1987 to prevent unacceptable risks to the environment and public health; • monitoring and enforcing compliance with conditions of approval under Parts IV and V of the <i>Environmental Protection Act 1986</i>; • developing and implementing policies and strategies that promote positive environmental outcomes; and reducing the environmental impact of waste. • Under the <i>Rights in Water Irrigation Act 1914</i>, licence the taking of water and construction of water wells in proclaimed areas from artesian sources; and permit activities that may damage, obstruct or interfere with water flow or the beds and banks or watercourses and wetlands in proclaimed rivers, surface water management areas and irrigation districts. • Under the <i>Country Areas Water Supply Act 1947</i> and <i>Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Act 1909</i>, protect public drinking water sources. 	<p><i>Environmental Protection Act 1986</i></p> <p><i>Contaminated Sites Act 2003</i></p> <p><i>Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2007</i></p> <p><i>Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914</i></p> <p><i>Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Act 1909</i></p> <p><i>Country Areas Water Supply Act 1947</i></p> <p><i>Water Agencies (Powers) Act 1984</i></p> <p><i>Waterways Conservation Act 1976</i></p>

Agency	Role	Legislation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under the <i>Country Areas Water Supply Act 1947</i> and the <i>Country Areas Water Supply (Clearing Licence) Regulations 1981</i>, licence the clearing of vegetation in the Denmark River, Harris River Dam, Mundaring Weir, Wellington Dam and Warren River catchment areas and the Kent River Water Reserve. This licensing system applies when there is an exemption under the <i>Environmental Protection (Clearing of Native Vegetation) Regulations 2004</i>. • Under the <i>Waterways Conservation Act 1976</i>, licence dredging, reclamation, dewatering, drainage, excavation and construction activities in the Albany waterways, Avon River, Wilson Inlet, Peel-Harvey estuaries and Leschenault Inlet management areas. • DWER also provides expertise and advice to other State Government agencies, and prepares policies, plans and guidelines about protecting and managing water resources, the environment and public health. 	
<p>Environmental Protection Authority (EPA)</p>	<p>The Authority comprises five members appointed by the Governor on the recommendation of the Minister for Environment. The EPA is independent, in that it is not subject to direction by the Minister, and its advice to Government is public.</p> <p>The Authority's operations are governed by the <i>Environmental Protection Act 1986</i> which stipulates that the objective of the EPA is to 'use its best endeavours to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) protect the environment; and b) prevent, control and abate pollution and environmental harm. <p>The EPA's functions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conducting environmental impact assessments; • preparing statutory policies for environmental protection; • preparing and publishing guidelines for managing environmental impacts; and • providing strategic advice to the Minister for Environment. <p>All onshore oil and gas proposals involving hydraulic fracturing are proposals of a prescribed class under the <i>Environmental Protection Regulations 1987</i> regulation 2C, requiring referral to the EPA.</p>	<p><i>Environmental Protection Act 1986</i></p>

Agency	Role	Legislation
<p>Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA)</p>	<p>DBCA has primary responsibility for managing the State's national parks, marine parks, State forests and other reserves that cover a total area of more than 31 million hectares, and protect biodiversity, social, cultural and spiritual values and provide opportunities for Indigenous Western Australians to connect with country and their identity as the original custodians of this land.</p> <p>DBCA is also responsible for conserving and protecting native animals and plants, and for managing many aspects of the access to and use of the State's wildlife and natural areas.</p> <p>DBCA provides support to the Conservation and Parks Commission, in which conservation reserves are vested.</p>	<p><i>Conservation and Land Management Act 1984</i></p> <p><i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i></p>
<p>Department of Health (DoH)</p>	<p>DoH provides a number of functions to support the delivery of health services across the State including the area of public health. This activity encompasses the regulation of the quality of drinking water in Western Australia, in addition to providing advice about potential environmental hazards impacting health.</p> <p>On referral, DoH reviews and provides advice to the EPA in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chemicals proposed for use in the composition of drilling and hydraulic fracture fluids, utilised in exploration and production activities involving hydraulic fracturing where they have the potential to impact public health; and • risk to public health from impact on air and water quality and contamination of land arising from such proposals. <p>DoH's advice is limited to proposals that have the potential to impact the public, communities and drinking water sources.</p>	<p><i>Health (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1911</i></p>
<p>Radiological Council</p>	<p>The Radiological Council is an independent statutory authority appointed under the <i>Radiation Safety Act 1975</i> in Western Australia to assist the Minister for Health to protect public health and to maintain safe practices in the use of radiation. The Act regulates the keeping and use of radioactive substances, irradiating apparatus and certain electronic products. Registration and licensing are the principal means by which the use of radiation is regulated.</p> <p>The officers of the Radiological Council also provide radiation health advice.</p>	<p><i>Radiation Safety Act 1975</i></p>

Agency	Role	Legislation
<p>Department of Premier and Cabinet - Aboriginal Engagement Directorate (AED)</p>	<p>AED works to build positive relationships between Aboriginal people and the Western Australian Government to deliver mutual and lasting benefits by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing a whole-of-government Aboriginal affairs strategy focusing on engagement, leveraging economic opportunity and systems reform; • shaping the State's approach and engagement with Native Title groups and Aboriginal communities to resolve claims and leverage community defined opportunities; and • partnering and building relationships with communities to deliver positive outcomes, through implementation of agreements and projects. <p>AED also provides secretariat support for the Aboriginal Affairs Coordinating Committee of Western Australia.</p>	<p><i>Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act 1972</i></p>
<p>Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH)</p>	<p>DPLH brings together land use planning, Crown land administration functions, all aspects of Western Australia's heritage, including Aboriginal heritage services, and administration of the Aboriginal Lands Trust estate.</p> <p>DPLH also provides professional and technical expertise and assists the Western Australian Planning Commission.</p> <p>The department's key focus areas are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • integrated land and infrastructure policy development; • land use planning and policy development; • Aboriginal heritage and lands management; • cultural heritage conservation services; • State land administration; and • land asset management. <p>On referral, DPLH reviews and provides advice to the EPA in relation to Aboriginal heritage and Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Plans.</p>	<p><i>Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972</i> <i>Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act 1972</i> <i>Planning and Development Act 2005</i></p>
<p>Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (AWE)</p>	<p>AWE conducts an environmental impact assessment of actions likely to have an impact on matters of national environmental significance as defined in the <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> (the EPBC Act).</p> <p>The EPBC Act is the Australian Government's central piece of environmental legislation. It provides a legal framework to protect and manage nationally and internationally important flora, fauna, ecological communities and heritage places – defined in the EPBC Act as matters of national environmental significance.</p>	<p><i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i></p>

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