

5 May 2016

Rangelands Submissions
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Land Administration Amendment Bill 2016, Rangelands.

Outdoors WA would like to support the changes to the Land Administration Amendment Bill 2016 in line with the Rangelands Reform.

Outdoors WA is the peak body for outdoor recreation and education in WA along with camping and adventure tourism.

Outdoors WA supports the opportunity developed for change. An initial review of the Land Administration Amendment Bill 2016 consultation documentation identifies that the change of lease conditions may provide a set of conditions where the community can benefit from more appropriate management of the land and also increased access for pursuits such as outdoor recreation.

However these opportunities are not enshrined in this legislative proposal and we would like to see the prospect for public access to the rangelands and outdoor recreation development strengthened.

It is understood that part of this proposal is to provide a more open market mechanism for pursuing other options to encourage activities that improve the economic viability and ecological sustainability of the Rangelands. It is contested by Outdoors WA that this proposal should make consideration of the community benefits that may be realised if there is greater community awareness and access to the rangelands. This could be via outdoor recreation, outdoor education, adventure therapy or adventure tourism developments, and this would also meet the aims of the changes that in part are to ensure that:

1. *The rangelands are an asset of the State of Western Australia and should be developed for the benefit of all Western Australians.*
2. *Future development in the Rangelands must be economically, **socially** and ecologically sustainable.*

Changing Tenures, valuing outdoor recreation.

The proposal put forward a range of alternative land uses under the changes these include: *Conservation, indigenous use, pastoral use, horticulture, agriculture, tourism (broad acre, remote, low value – such as looking at land features), carbon sequestration, mining companies, lifestyle.*

However what is not considered is the value of the development of outdoor recreation within the lease arrangement. It is predicted that there will be a significant growth in the WA populations and it can be expected that recreation pursuits will follow. Unless outdoor recreation is specified then this usage may be lost to the community.

We would therefore like to see outdoor recreation specified as a specific alternative land use within the rangelands proposal.

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Terms of tenure.

Under the long term lease arrangements that are proposed, Outdoors WA would like to see a clause inserted to allow for a regular review of the lease to ensure that there is an opportunity to review the conditions under which the lease is provided and also to provide the opportunity for community input into the ongoing value of the lease conditions. It would be an unfortunate outcome if vast amounts of land are locked up with the community excluded under a conservation proposal when there are practices like 'Leave No Trace' that demonstrate that human interaction and nature can coexist together.

An issue which has arisen in discussions is how a permitted purpose that is conservation is reconciled with others having access. It is understood that the issue of the coexistence of competing uses will be managed through the approvals and referrals process, discussion with lessees and the imposition of conditions in the lease.

There is no guarantee within this legislation on how the community will be consulted to assist in determining how competing uses can be managed for the future of the community. Outdoors WA proposes that each lease adopts a community benefit approach that identifies the type of commercial and community use permitted and that these community uses include outdoor recreation.

The proposal put forward should also include opportunities for community input into the land usage before the lease is renewed. We have outlined additional management plan areas that may be considered in the attachment.

The extension of lease to 50 Years.

Whilst this could provide security of tenure and an increased certainty of investment, it also has the possibility of locking up land for a significant period. It would be prudent to consider that a regular review that had to provide a demonstration of community benefit on a regular basis say every 5 years would provide additional protection of the communities land asset.

Diversified use

Outdoors WA supports the development of increasing diversification of the land usage. We are already aware of existing properties such as El Questro station that provides a range of outback experiences including horse trekking, barra fishing or exploring remote areas via helicopter.

The potential opportunities for Aboriginal people is identified as a key benefit delivered by rangeland reform, according to the state government.

However there must be investment in the development of any business or social initiative to ensure that these Aboriginal communities will be able to participate in and contribute to economic growth through negotiated land use agreements, training and business development between traditional owners and rangelands lessees.

Unsustainable land use

It is understood that under the current lease arrangements that there are increasing areas of land that are incapable of supporting current grazing practices. This over time will mean that the pastoral lease use is unsustainable.

This creates a situation whereby pastoralists are confronted with financial hardship unless they overgraze the land. As this is not sustainable, over time we see this leading to weakened food production and poor environmental outcomes.

This provides a strong impetus to change land use, however this does not necessarily mean that pastoralists will have the skills to diversify into new industries. Although this may limit future economic

success, the important fact of the reforms is that they will enable choice for pastoralists to determine how they secure an income.

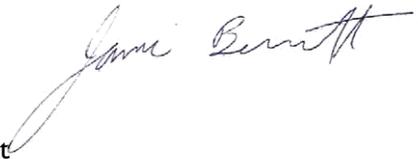
It is suggested that as alternative models of use are developed that supportive funding is released to upskill pastoralists into these areas such as adventure tourism.

Outdoors WA would encourage the further development of outdoor recreation opportunities within the new lease arrangements. The setting up of new campsites and areas in which a diversity of outdoor pursuits can be undertaken along with the development of new tracks, trails and outdoor spaces in Western Australia will benefit the health and wellbeing of our community.

Attached is a further submission form as requested as part of the consultation process.

We look forward to seeing the development of opportunities for the advancement of outdoor recreation to enable a happier, healthier and active WA community.

Sincerely



Jamie Bennett
Executive Officer
Outdoors WA