

CERVANTES LIME PIT — CLOSURE

**410. Hon BRIAN ELLIS to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for the Environment:**

I refer to the closure of the Cervantes lime pit by the Department of Environment and Conservation whilst consideration is given to a clearing application for a pit extension.

- (1) Is the minister aware that the Department of Agriculture and Food is currently promoting the use of lime through its “Time to Lime” campaign?
- (2) Is the minister aware that the Department of Agriculture and Food estimates that the state needs up to 2 million tonnes of lime per annum to combat soil acidity?
- (3) Given the importance of lime supply to the preservation of healthy agricultural land, has DEC been liaising with the Department of Agriculture and Food about this matter; if not, why not?
- (4) What is the current status of the clearing application and when can a decision be expected?

**Hon SALLY TALBOT replied:**

I thank Hon Brian Ellis for some notice of the question. The Minister for the Environment has provided an answer in the following terms —

The Department of Environment and Conservation has not closed a lime pit in Cervantes. A vegetation conservation notice requiring that no unlawful or further unlawful clearing take place on the mining lease within Southern Beekeepers Nature Reserve was given, as the CEO suspected, on reasonable grounds, that unlawful clearing had occurred.

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The minister is aware of the importance of lime, and also of conserving the state’s native vegetation.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) This clearing application is being administered by the Department of Industry and Resources under its delegation of the clearing provisions of the Environmental Protection Act 1986. The Department of Industry and Resources has advised the Department of Environment and Conservation that the applicant was notified in October 2007 of significant environmental issues associated with the application. The Department of Industry and Resources has advised that it is liaising with the applicant and will progress the application when the issues have been satisfactorily resolved.