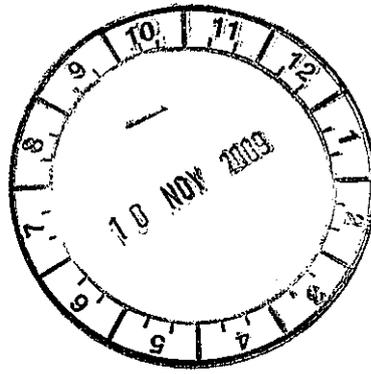


Our Ref: 26-04915



FAXED
11am 06/11/09



MINISTER FOR MINES
AND PETROLEUM;
FISHERIES;
ELECTORAL AFFAIRS;
LEADER OF THE
GOVERNMENT IN THE
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Hon Brian Ellis MLC
Chairman
Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs
Parliament House
PERTH WA 6000

PUBLIC

Dear Mr Ellis

PETITION NO 41 – SWAN RIVER CRAB FISHERY CLOSURE

Thank you for your letter of 21 October 2009 concerning the closure of commercial fishing in the Swan and Canning Rivers.

The commitment to close the Swan River to commercial fishing was part of the election platform of both the Liberal and Labor parties in the 2005 election. Both major parties have recognised that the Swan River has a high social value for recreational fishing. The Swan River is increasingly becoming a focal area for recreational fishing in the Metropolitan area, which is likely to increase as Perth's population grows.

Developing management arrangements for two fishing sectors in the Swan River where there is already significant competition, and conflict over sharing the available fish resources is not regarded as a viable long-term management solution. Hence, Governments have supported the Swan River becoming a recreational only fishing area, and the gradual buyout of commercial licences over time as the mechanism to give effect to the change.

This process has resulted in all except one commercial operator voluntarily surrendering their fishing licences for appropriate compensation. The eventual move to a compulsory buyout to remove the one remaining operator is the end result of a process that has been ongoing for many years.

When the last remaining operator purchased his licence, he acknowledged that he was fully aware of the political commitment to close the fishery.

After the last remaining operator is no longer fishing in the Swan River there will still be ample supplies of blue swimmer crabs and/or mullet available from other locations including: Mandurah, Shark Bay and Cockburn Sound (on reopening for crabs). The catches from commercial fisheries in these locations are much greater than the Swan River.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Norman Moore', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Norman Moore MLC
MINISTER FOR FISHERIES

06 NOV 2009

PUBLIC