



Hon Brian Ellis
Chair, Standing Committee on Environment
and Public Affairs
Parliament House
Perth WA 6000

Dear Mr Ellis,

**RE: PETITION NO.124 – PROPOSED MINING NEAR HORIZONTAL
WATERFALLS, BUCCANEER ARCHIPELAGO**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a written submission regarding the matters put forward in Petition No. 124, which I tabled on behalf of the Petitioners. The matter has not been taken to the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations (Ombudsman).

This petition was promoted by Mr Troy Thomas of Broome Western Australia, who is extremely concerned about the potential environmental impacts on the marine and terrestrial environment of the proposed copper mining venture. As the owner/operator of Horizontal Falls Seaplane Adventures for the past 10 years, Mr Thomas is also concerned at the loss of visual amenity and a concomitant loss of income if the Pegasus Metals copper mining venture goes ahead.

The Horizontal Waterfalls is a natural phenomenon that is unique in the world. The falls are created by the seawater being forced through narrow gaps in a series of rocky ridges that lie in Talbot Bay on the Kimberley coast. The phenomenon is particularly spectacular during very high tides.

Mr Thomas conducts tours to the remote location. His clients are flown in from Broome or Derby by seaplane and treated to a thrilling high speed ride through the gaps.

The rocky ridges are heavily mineralised. They are currently covered by exploration tenements E04/1441 and E04/2001. Both are held by Pegasus Metals or their subsidiaries who propose to mine the ridges for copper. Any mining activity will be clearly visible from the air and from the sea, detracting from the natural beauty of the area, with the potential to cause degradation of the terrestrial and marine environment.

I join with Mr Thomas in expressing my concern that, since the petition was tabled in the Legislative Council on 10th August, Pegasus Metals has continued its destructive programme of exploration just 2.5km west of Horizontal Waterfalls unabated.

This is despite the area of Talbot Bay, Dugong Bay and Horizontal Waterfalls being included in the West Kimberley National Heritage List by the Federal Environment Minister Tony Burke on 31st August 2011.

PUBLIC

PORTFOLIO AREAS:

ENERGY & CLIMATE CHANGE; MINES AND PETROLEUM; STATE DEVELOPMENT & INDUSTRY; NUCLEAR ENERGY; LOCAL GOVERNMENT;
WASTE MANAGEMENT; PORTS; PASTORAL ISSUES; ABORIGINAL ISSUES; RACING AND GAMING; AND REGIONAL SUSTAINABILITY.

POSTAL ADDRESS: PO BOX 94 WEST PERTH WA 6872 | OFFICE ADDRESS: 41 HAVELOCK STREET WEST PERTH

In light of this, it is strongly argued that the exploration permits be rescinded and exploration activity halted until a comprehensive environmental assessment can be carried out. All mining will be strenuously opposed by Mr Thomas and his growing band of supporters.

The marvellous features of Talbot Bay and surrounds have already been described by Mr Thomas in his submission, one that I wholeheartedly endorse.

A combination of some wonderful natural qualities makes the Horizontal Waterfalls a unique and world class tourist destination that, as Mr Thomas states: 'generates over AUD \$20 million per year in tourist revenue for the Kimberley and Western Australia'. The proposed mining operation would place this at risk.

Thank you for taking these comments into account in your deliberations. Please don't hesitate to contact me should you require further information or clarification of any points.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. H. Chapple', written in a cursive style.

The Hon Robin Chapple MLC
Member for the Mining and Pastoral Region

13th September 2011

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