



## Environmental Protection Authority

Mr W Slater  
Director  
Onslow Resources Ltd  
Suite G5, 49 Melville Parade  
SOUTH PERTH WA 6151

Our Ref 13-201882  
Enquiries Peter Walkington  
Phone 6145 0836

Dear Mr Slater

**NOTICE UNDER SECTION 39A(3)  
*Environmental Protection Act 1986***

**PROPOSAL:** Ashburton River Sand and Shingle Excavation within Mining Leases 08/458 and 08/461  
**LOCALITY:** Shire of Ashburton  
**PROPONENT:** Onslow Resources Ltd  
**DECISION:** Not Assessed – Public Advice Given

The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) understands that you wish to undertake the above proposal which has been referred to the Authority for consideration of its potential environmental impact.

This proposal raises a number of environmental issues. However, the EPA has decided not to subject this proposal to the environmental impact assessment process and the subsequent setting of formal conditions by the Minister for Environment under Part IV of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (EP Act). Nevertheless, the staff of the Office of the EPA has provided the attached advice to you as the proponent, and other relevant authorities on the environmental aspects of the proposal.

The EPA's decision to not assess the proposal is open to appeal. There is a 14-day period, closing 16 September 2013. Information on the appeals process is available through the Office of the Appeals Convenor's website, [www.appealsconvenor.wa.gov.au](http://www.appealsconvenor.wa.gov.au), or by telephoning 6467 5190.

Yours sincerely

Anthony Sutton  
Director  
Assessment and Compliance Division

2 September 2013

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**PUBLIC ADVICE UNDER SECTION 39A(7)  
Environmental Protection Act 1986**

**ONslow RESOURCES LTD - ASHBURTON RIVER SAND AND SHINGLE  
EXCAVATION WITHIN MINING LEASES O8/458 AND O8/461**

Onslow Resources Ltd proposes to mine up to 2.3 million tonnes of river sand and shingle in the Ashburton riverbed within the Minderoo Pastoral Lease. Mining will only take place when the river is dry and production will be limited by the rate that material is able to be replenished by flow events. Mining will be confined to replenishable material.

**1. Environmental Factors**

The EPA gave consideration to the significance of the impacts to the following environmental factors:

- hydrological processes;
- inland water environmental quality;
- flora and vegetation;
- terrestrial fauna
- amenity; and
- heritage

There were no factors that were determined to be preliminary key environmental factors that would require assessment under Part IV of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*.

**2. Advice and Recommendations**

The EPA has given particular attention to the issue of erosion and sediment transport when considering the significance of the impacts to the factor of hydrological processes. Having regard to the quality of the environment which is likely to be impacted and the extent of the likely impacts, the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) considers that the proposal is unlikely to have a significant effect on the factor of hydrological processes and does not warrant formal assessment by the EPA.

As explained in the EPA's *Environmental Impact Assessment (Part IV Divisions 1 and 2) Administrative Procedures 2012* the EPA uses professional judgement, which is gained through knowledge and experience in the application of environmental impact assessment, to determine whether a proposal should be assessed under Part IV of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*. The Administrative Procedures also provide information about matters that the EPA considers when making a decision whether or not to assess a proposal. This includes that the EPA may have regard to the presence of other statutory decision-making processes which regulate the mitigation of the potential effects on the environment to meet the EPA's objectives and principles for EIA.

In addition to its conclusion that the proposal is unlikely to have a significant effect on the factor of hydrological processes, the EPA considers that the proposal-related risk of erosion of the river bed and banks can be mitigated by maintaining river equilibrium through the application of sediment transport principles in determining the locations, depth and timing of mining. Accordingly the EPA has consulted with the Department of Mines and Petroleum (DMP) and the DMP has confirmed that the following management actions could be required by conditions under the *Mining Act 1978*:

1. Require a study by a person suitably qualified to investigate river sediment transport and the potential impacts of sand and gravel mining in the Ashburton River. In particular, the study should:
  - compare the scale of sediment transport rates to the extraction rates of sand and gravel;
  - assess the potential for sand and gravel mining to increase erosion of the river bed and banks and deposition in the natural pools;
  - assess the ability of the Ashburton River to replenish mined sand and gravel during flood events; and
  - provide a literature review of best practice river sand mining management methods used for avoidance of erosion/deposition impacts.
2. Based on the study:
  - Set a limit on the depth, locations and timing of mining.
  - Require development and implementation of a management plan setting out management procedures and monitoring requirements to ensure that erosion/deposition impacts are minimised.