

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mr Guyula to the Minister for Mining and Industry:

Environment Impact Assessment

In 2012, Western Desert Resources underwent an Environmental Impact Assessment for an iron ore mine at Roper Bar, and it was approved later that year. In 2015 the company was liquidated and the mine was closed. Last year, the mine was reopened under the new ownership of Nathan River Resources and was given re-approval under the Mining Management Act, however no new environmental approval process was undertaken, despite the last EIA occurring over nine years ago.

The 2012 EIA pointed out a number of environmental issues with the project, including the impacts of the proposed diversion of the Towns River. These issues are still of concern. Recently the company has applied for an amendment to the Waste Discharge Licence, granted in May 2020, indicating that there has been a change in nature of mining activities, further increasing the necessity of a new environmental assessment.

Question:

1. Why wasn't the mine referred to the NTEPA to undergo an environmental impact assessment when it was re-approved in May 2020, and what community consultation occurred that led to this decision?