

ARKAROOLA WILDERNESS SANCTUARY



From the ARK Update 28/10/10

LOST ON PAGE 79

In case you missed page seventy-nine of last Saturday's edition of *The Advertiser* (like most South Australians), we thought we had better share some of it with you. The article below is a bit of a blur, just like its position in the weekend tabloid, but if you zoom to 200% you will be able to read what most South Australians missed.

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Business

Mining zones for Flinders wilderness shelved

CAMERON ENGLAND

A STATE Government plan which would have allowed mining in sensitive parts of the Northern Flinders Ranges, including the Arkaroola Wilderness Sanctuary, has been quietly shelved.

The *Seeking a Balance* report, which proposed to set up four zones for various levels of mining activities, was criticised as "greatly flawed" by the SA Museum, which said it should be "totally rejected" back in March.

The report drew 450 public submissions, and came under fire from the mining sector, which criticised the proposals as effectively retrospective legislation which increased South Australia's sovereign risk.

Both sides can now claim a win, with Mineral Resources Development Minister Paul Holloway stating on ABC radio that the report had been shelved. A spokesman for Mr Holloway said yesterday that the Government was now looking at a new response to the issue of mining in the area.

The issue has been controversial ever since mining company Marathon Resources had its exploration rights in the area suspended in early 2008, when it was found to have dumped uranium drilling waste illegally.

Marathon's exploration rights expired yesterday, but the minister's spokesman said the company could still operate in the limited fashion it had been permitted to in the past, while a response was formulated.

"*Seeking a Balance*' went out for consultation... and several from both sides came back saying they didn't like the way we addressed the issue, so the Government accepted that, and said in that case we will frame a new response and we are in the throes of doing that," he said.

"There was an expectation that we could do that before the licence came up for renewal but that hasn't occurred, but they (Marathon) have been advised through the department that they can continue under the current lease arrangements until such time as (the Minister) is ready to make a decision."

Mr Holloway said yesterday the Government was hoping to make a statement on the issue "soon".

Marathon shares closed steady at 37c yesterday.

We also thought we'd better go to the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary to check on the current meaning of the word 'several'. Perhaps there had been a semantic shift. We discovered that there are several meanings for 'several'. However, as commonly used, 'several' still means 'a few, not a lot'.

Several /'sev(ə)r(ə)l/ a., n., adv., & pron.
2. More than two but not many

Minister Holloway's spokesperson, quoted in the article above, might like to reconsider the sentence which contained the following "... and several from both sides came back saying they didn't like the way we addressed the issue..." The government received 450 submissions as part of its *Seeking a Balance* public consultation process. With 82% of respondents rejecting the proposed new framework for management of the Northern Flinders Ranges and calling for greater protection of the Arkaroola Wilderness Sanctuary from exploration and mining, use of the word 'several' in this way was quite misleading.

We are encouraged that the government has accepted the judgement by respondents that *Seeking a Balance* was a flawed document that must be abandoned. However, we believe that those respondents who, collectively, invested hundreds of hours to craft well articulated and thoroughly researched responses to *Seeking a Balance* deserve more than a whisper on page seventy-nine. A joint statement from the two ministers whose agencies collaborated to develop the proposed new management framework is what we require.

Please continue to use your social networks and every media opportunity to advocate for Arkaroola's full protection. Write to the Premier at The Hon M D Rann MP, Premier, GPO Box 2343, Adelaide SA 5001 or email at premier@sa.gov.au

For more information go to:
www.savearkaroola.com.au or
www.arkaroola.com.au/breakingnews.php

October 2009
Seeking a Balance released on 27th for public comment

November 2009
Final policy document to be released in early 2010

December 2009
Closing date of 19 Dec extended to Jan 31 or was it 29?

January 2010
Submissions closed end January

February 2010
Processing of *Seeking a Balance* submissions begins

March 2010
State election March 20

April 2010
Anticipated response from government to submissions

May 2010
Additional time required due to quality of submissions

June 2010
South Australia awaits government response

July 2010
Premier and Ministers visit Arkaroola on July 31

August 2010
Liberal Opposition visits Arkaroola on August 1 & 2

September 2010
South Australia still waiting for response to submissions

October 2010
First anniversary of release of *Seeking a Balance*
Seeking a Balance is quietly binned

NORTHERN FLINDERS RANGES SOUTH AUSTRALIA AUSTRALIA