
From:
Sent: Monday, 8 February 2021 11:36 AM
To: eia NTEPA
Subject: FW: Invite to comment - Winchelsea Island Manganese Mine Project Referral - comments due 8 February
Attachments: Winchelsea GIS.ZIP
Importance: High

Good morning

Groote Eylandt's fishing experiences and pristine marine environment are the main tourism drawcard for visitors. Key considerations relating to tourism are the preservation of aquatic ecology and development and extension of barge/boat loading facilities on both Winchelsea Island and Groote Eylandt. Tourism notes the proponent's intention to source water from bore fields located on Groote Eylandt, with the construction of a pipeline and water storage facility or dams also required for water to be shipped to Winchelsea for use (section 3.6.2). The environment risk assessment outlines potential indirect impacts to aquatic surface water and marine ecosystems from proposed terrestrial project activity. It is noted in the referral that "extensive environmental surveys conducted by Winchelsea to date, have not identified any roadblocks to mining" but as an EIS has not been provided it is difficult to comment on potential impacts.

A range of endangered and vulnerable marine turtle species inhabit the Groote Eylandt Archipelago with potential occurrence rated high (Appendix E). Potential and suitable turtle nesting areas on the coastal beaches of Winchelsea Island are reflected in referral documentation, as are confirmed signs of turtles accessing beaches in the project area. While it is acknowledged in the report that further rehabilitation initiatives will be actively investigated, there is little information provided in relation to marine flora and fauna.

The cultural heritage field survey findings provided state that there were "10 sites likely to be directly impacted by any exploration or mining activities, largely by clearing for coastal access". Tourism NT acknowledges that it is "understood that Traditional Owners have cleared the island for mining activities however the link between the cultural heritage information and permission from Traditional Owners has yet to be provided". An Authority Certificate under the NT Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act 1989 is required.

Kind regards,



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