

From: [REDACTED]
To: [ntepa.epa](#)
Cc: [Das.NTG](#)
Subject: Project Ares submission - referral and draft Terms of Reference
Date: Thursday, 13 August 2026 10:37:12 PM

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As a Territory resident and a birdwatcher, based in Palmerston, I am writing to object to the proposed Project Ares data centre and gas power station at Murranyi Station.

The project's creeks drain about 80 km to Lake Woods, a nationally important wetland that fills with up to 116,000 waterbirds. The referral admits the connection but has not assessed the downstream effect. The project should not proceed until the NT EPA requires assessment of the project's impacts on Lake Woods and the creeks that feed it.

Project Ares would run on a gas plant of about 1,000 MW, bigger than the Territory's main power station, yet the referral will not say where the gas comes from. In this region, new gas means fracked Beetaloo shale gas. This must not be approved until the NT EPA requires that the source of the gas be disclosed and its full lifecycle emissions assessed, including the upstream fracking.

Threatened wildlife, including the Greater Bilby, has already been recorded here, and other listed species are likely present. The proponent has relied largely on desktop review rather than looking properly on the ground. I oppose this unless the NT EPA requires field surveys for these threatened species across the whole project footprint before any decision on impacts.

The project would take up to 4 billion litres of groundwater a year from the Cambrian Limestone Aquifer, about 30% of the water the regional plan makes available to all industry, while other users draw on the same system. This must not be approved until the NT EPA requires a full, cumulative assessment of whether this level of groundwater extraction is sustainable before any approval.

The project depends on an off-site gas pipeline and shares water and infrastructure with a separate ammonia project, yet these are being treated as separate matters. I oppose this unless the NT EPA requires that the whole project and its connected parts, including the gas pipeline and the ammonia plant, be assessed together rather than piece by piece.

So far the environmental work is mostly desk research, done without surveying the creek lines or the country downstream in the seasons when it matters. I object unless the NT EPA requires field surveys across the full project footprint, in appropriate seasons, before the scope and level of assessment are locked in.

The project can clear or disturb up to 19,150 hectares, an area roughly 14 km across. I oppose this unless the NT EPA requires that the assessment be carried out against the full maximum footprint, with any later reduction made a binding condition of approval rather than an assumption.

The project is on land under a determined native title and rich in cultural heritage, yet consultation has barely begun. The project should not be signed off until the NT EPA requires that cultural heritage assessment be led with Traditional Owners through the Northern Land Council, properly resourced, and not rushed by a streamlined timeline.

I do not believe this project should be approved until these matters are fully and independently assessed. I call on the NT EPA to require them in the Terms of Reference before any decision is made. Thank you for considering my submission.

Tilly Halson
Palmerston

Sent from my iPhone