

Petition to have Julimar State Forest reclassified as a National Park

Julimar Conservation and Forest Alliance (JCAFA)
Sharon Richards

IN MAY this year the alliance met with local State Labor MP Darren West, at Parliament House to present him with the petition to have Julimar State Forest reclassified as a National Park.

The petition was forwarded to the Standing Committee for the Environment and Public Affairs for consideration.

The Standing Committee wrote to the Minister for the Environment, Mr Reece Whitby, for his opinion and recommendation.

Disappointingly the Minister did not support the proposal, rejecting the opportunity to protect one of the last remaining Jarrah-Wandoo forests north of Perth and made the following comments:

“The petition calls for the entire area of 28,610 hectares of Julimar to become national park.

“This may not be achievable initially as State Agreement MLISA granted to Alcoa under the Alumina Refinery Agreement Act 1961 covers 7580 hectares of Julimar State Forest.

“The State Agreement provides Alcoa with development rights and interests over the area.

“There are currently existing and pending exploration licences affecting Julimar targeting minerals used in battery manufacture and green hydrogen technology adoption.”

He also writes

“Julimar has been managed by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions and its predecessors under the CALM Act for the protection of its significant flora, fauna, cultural heritage and landscape values since 1982.

“Due to its location, it is also subject to high public interest and recreational use.”

Sadly, we know that Julimar is currently subject to a very low level of management.

In 1987 CALM’s Regional Management

Plan recommended that Julimar be awarded conservation protection, again in 1999 and in 2000 the Conservation Park signs were erected, as Julimar awaited the resolution of its “mineral prospectivity” – Julimar is still waiting.

What management is in place for the critically endangered Woylie and the vulnerable Chuditch?

The Julimar Chuditch is currently breeding successfully and supporting the reestablishment of other populations of Chuditch around WA and SA.

How is one of the two largest breeding grounds for the Carnaby’s Black Cockatoo being protected to support these iconic birds who have seen a significant decline in recent years and are now deemed endangered?

There is high public interest in Julimar and surrounds with over 700 people petitioning the Environmental Protection Authority to conduct the highest possible environmental assessment over the Chalice Mining proposal which abuts the forest.

The WA Forest Alliance has also slammed Minister Whitby’s decision.

Wafa senior campaigner, Jason Fowler, said, “Despite Julimar forest ticking all the boxes for conservation status and being proposed as a conservation park since 1994, Minister Whitby omits this fact from his response, ignoring his own department’s forest management plan and capitulating to mining interests”.

Fowler adds “There is a serious risk that the Cook government’s commitment to finally implement over 200,000ha of already proposed protected areas like Julimar will fail”.

In addition, the WA Government is committed to creating 400,000ha of new conservation areas in the southwest.

Mature ecosystems like those found in Julimar forest cannot be replaced, they rely on the geodiversity and biodiversity which has evolved over many thousands of years and once destroyed cannot be replicated.



A view of the Julimar Forest.