



Groundwater licence for iron ore mine

LINCOLN Minerals has been granted a groundwater licence for the proposed Barns iron ore mine in its Gum Flat project near Coomunga.

Water approvals have been delaying the project, with the Environment, Resources and Development Court directing the Environment Minister to grant the water licence in August.

This ruling reversed the minister's decision that refused the company's application for a water licence.

Lincoln Minerals managing director John Parker said the proposed mining operations would have no effect on Eyre Peninsula's potable water supply in the short, medium or long-term.

Dr Parker said the licence was only for the extraction of groundwater from the region's basement aquifer, not the upper aquifer that contained the groundwater in the Uley East and Uley South lenses that supplied the local water resource.

He said the proposed mine site was on levels where the upper aquifer did not contain groundwater.

"Independent modelling shows that mining operations will not affect the Uley East lens or the Uley South lens, which is over 10 kilometres

away," he said.

"Lincoln recognises that the groundwater resources are valuable and need to be managed sustainably."

Conditions imposed by the Environment Minister include preparing an approved monitoring plan, obtaining a mining lease within four years and maintaining detailed records of extraction.

The minister can change the licence at yearly intervals if more effective water use is necessary.

The Barns iron ore deposit is located within the Southern Basins Prescribed Wells Area just west of Port Lincoln and is subject to a Water Allocation Plan.

The groundwater licence is for the extraction of up to 435 megalitres a year for industrial purposes to progressively extract groundwater at a sustainable rate for mine operations.

In 2011 Lincoln Minerals prepared a draft Mining Lease Proposal for stage one mining of the Barns deposit at Gum Flat but has been waiting for groundwater licensing before the proposal could be submitted.

The company can now complete the proposal.