



“Fights for fairer access to land in NSW and represents the interests
of prospectors and fossickers.”

NSW & ACT Prospectors and Fossickers Association Inc.

Problems and restrictions to
Sluicing activities in NSW and the ACT.

June 2015

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Context – the problem

Current regulations in NSW and ACT can be interpreted to exclude the use of water pumps to supply water to hand fed sluice boxes and high bankers.

For many years the intent was to allow the pumping of water to small hand operated equipment and the interpretation was to allow this. There is now intent to enforce this narrow interpretation by certain authorities, including the Division of Resources and Energy and Inland Fishery Conservation Officers in the NSW Department of Trade and Investment, Regional Infrastructure and Services. Such a narrow interpretation undoes previous interpretation, severely restricting the ability to legally prospect and fossick and is a massive backwards step.

This situation has developed as a result of focusing limiting ground disturbance by banning mechanised equipment rather than using the existing area/volume restriction.

There are no valid reasons to exclude the pumping of water to small hand carried and hand fed equipment either environmentally; or from the view that this conducts a mining operation. The use of small hand carried mechanised equipment (sluices and dry blowers) is an almost no-impact activity when used for purposes other excavation. It has less impact than vehicle access and many other allowable activities. By definition, impact is negligible.

Coupled with land access restrictions, unworkable permission requirements in terms of Exploration Leases, the prospectors and fossickers of NSW face a very limited future. It is no exaggeration to say it is the worst it has ever been.

This new interpretation excluding the use of hobby scale water pumps is not acceptable to the prospectors and fossickers of NSW and the ACT. It both severely restricts the ability to access and recover alluvial gold, gemstones and minerals, and forces the use of sluice boxes in the stream beds which has a greater, although still minimal environmental impact.

A change of the Mining Act or Regulations is required to allow prospectors and fossickers freedom to continue their small scale work and to allow uniform regulation. At the very least the previous interpretation needs to be reinstated and enshrined so that it does not slip backwards again.

Definitions

Prospecting - To search for or explore for mineral deposits or oil using sampling, mapping and geological methods.

Fossicking - This can be for gold, precious stones, fossils, etc. by sifting or rummaging through a known prospective area or to search in abandoned workings, rivers, etc. especially by reworking washings or waste piles. In more recent times referring to small scale prospecting, especially when carried out as a recreational activity.

Costeans - To dig trenches to the underlying rock for the purpose of exposing the outcrop of a mineral deposit and determining its course.

Alluvial deposits - Sand, silt, clay, gravel, or other matter deposited by flowing water, as in a riverbed and floodplain that contain gold, minerals and/or gemstones.

Eluvial deposits - Geological deposits and soils that are derived by in situ weathering or weathering plus gravitational movement or accumulation that have not reached creek and riverbeds.

Sluice box - A long, inclined trough or box with riffles in the bottom that provide a lodging place for heavy minerals usually placed in running water. Gold bearing material is fed into the box with stream water flowing through and removing the lighter material and trapping gold and heavy minerals. Here is a picture.



High banker – A form of sluice box, usually in two parts comprising of a header box and sluice box below. Water is pumped to it and gold bearing material is fed into the header box which screens out the oversize rocks and pebbles and allows the water and fines to run through the sluice box. Here is a picture.



Dry-blower – traditionally used in desert areas and uses air and agitation to settle gold-bearing concentrates. Can be adapted for use with small portable motorised air pumps in the same way that motors are used in high-banker sluices.

JORC Code - The Australasian Code for Reporting of Exploration Results, Mineral Resources and Ore Reserves ('the JORC Code') is a professional code of practice that sets minimum standards for Public Reporting of minerals Exploration Results, Mineral Resources and Ore Reserves. <http://www.jorc.org/>

Recreation - Recreation is an activity of leisure, leisure being discretionary time. The "need to do something for recreation" is an essential element of human biology and psychology. It is good for body and mind,

Recreational activities - done for enjoyment, amusement, or pleasure when one is not working and are considered to be "fun" and not done primarily to generate income.

Turbidity - Turbidity refers to how clear the water is – the greater the amount of total suspended solids in the water, the murkier or muddier it appears and the higher the measured turbidity.

Role of Prospecting

Prospecting and fossicking has been an important activity for many since the 1850's to the current day.

It has been recognised as being responsible for building the foundation of the nation with the early gold rushes and resulting migration. Over the years it has been a contributor to the wealth of the nation, with many major mineral discoveries attributed to the non-corporate prospector, including fossickers.

Current day prospecting and fossicking is a very short term, and almost no impact activity that allows the potential discovery of the States Mineral wealth at no cost to the government, and at no detriment to other land users including Exploration Licence holders.

It is also a healthy recreational outdoor pastime for thousands of citizens, and allows many to follow in the footsteps of the early pioneering prospectors and miners; showing future generations both the hardships and contributions to the nation from small operators willing to go bush. It gets people off the couch!

The flow on benefits from prospecting and fossicking are many.

It is a significant self-employed occupation for those rare few who make discoveries and become leaseholders. It drives innovation in a valuable industry that designs and manufactures small scale equipment.

However its greatest contribution is support for regional economies as participants spend considerable time in regional areas using goods and services, and supporting the local tourism industry.

Previous Legislation and Intentions of Government

Successive governments have seen prospecting and fossicking to be in the public interest in all States and Territories in Australia and this is enshrined in their legislation. All have seen continuous operation of prospecting and fossicking since the early gold rushes to the current day, with some still retaining the

original “Miners Rights” terminology and similar systems dating from the 1850’s. During the Depression it was a state-supported activity as a means to provide a livelihood of sorts for the unemployed.

The earliest legislation in NSW was the Gold Fields Management Act 1852 where “Miners Rights” allowed prospecting and fossicking including the sinking of shafts and the digging of costeans. Once a prospective area was found the pegging of a “claim” was made to secure “title” to the ground to conduct the work including mining operations.

The Mining Act 1906 consolidated into one Act a number of mining statutes and in 1918, a new Division was added to Part IV of the Act, enabling a mining warden to grant to any holder of a miner's right an authority to enter private lands to search for minerals, and to apply for a mining lease (Conditions were set to protect and compensate landholders from prospecting activities).

This was a significant recognition of the importance of prospecting to the State. The need to have land accessible for prospecting to search for mineral wealth, and to have access over other title in the interest of promoting mineral discovery was deemed to be in the public interest.

The Mining Act 1906 was amended several times during the twentieth century, and this included enacting a new Mining Act in 1973 and later in 1992. As stated in Section 3.1 of NSW parliamentary brief 17/2012 “However, the general policy behind the 1894 and 1906 Acts has continued until the present time”.

The brief details the changes to mining legislation over time, the intentions and regulations, and provisions for access over other land title and is linked below:

[http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/parlment/publications.nsf/key/ExplorationandminingonprivatelandinNSW:abrieflegislativehistory/\\$File/e-brief.exploration+and+mining+on+private+land.pdf](http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/parlment/publications.nsf/key/ExplorationandminingonprivatelandinNSW:abrieflegislativehistory/$File/e-brief.exploration+and+mining+on+private+land.pdf)

The previous NSW Mining Act 1973 defined prospecting and fossicking activities separately, along with exploration and mining. It made provisions for different types and scales of activities relating to the discovery and development of the State’s mineral resources.

Fossicking areas were determined by the Governor on recommendation of the relevant Minister(s) under Section 25 of the Act (Extract in Appendix 1). Rights to fossick were by way of a fossicking licence under Section 26 of the Act. Holders of the licence were allowed to search for and remove gemstones, semiprecious stones and rocks in Crown lands constituted as a fossicking area, or private lands constituted as a fossicking area with the approval of the owner or occupier ([Appendix 1](#)).

Prospecting for other minerals and metals under the Act was by one of two ways:

- a) Pegging a Claim to work on a small scale to “search and sample”;
- b) Pegging of a Prospecting licence to carry out larger scale works including evaluation of ore parcels.

The Act also allowed granting of Exploration licences for corporate prospecting of larger areas and for Mining Leases to conduct mining operations.

The Mining (Access to Lands) Amendment Act 1989 removed the agricultural land provisions in the Mining Act 1973 to allow access to private land for Prospecting and Exploration Licences. However Claims were left at the existing provisions, and an important step of non-corporate discovery was left out despite the Minister at the time stating “The denial of access to land solely by its classification or potential classification as agricultural land has meant a cumbersome system which does not maximize the benefits to landholder, explorer, or the State.”

The Mining (Amendment) Act 1990 went further and abolished Prospecting licences for all areas apart from opal mining.

http://www5.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/num_act/ma1990n37188.pdf

The onerous costs and conditions of Exploration Licences excluded the non-corporate prospector from progressing from a Claim (200 x 200m) to a larger area allowing further evaluation of discoveries without corporate involvement.

The impact to the State is that small discoveries deemed un-economic to the corporate prospectors would no longer progress. Often these can be worked further in other State's that make these provisions and can ultimately prove to be significant deposits.

Two such examples are the Jundee and Golden Cities deposits in WA. Both were found by individual prospectors in the early 1990's and did not have initial corporate support. However they have turned out to be world class ore deposits.

Subsequent mining has seen Jundee produce over 60,000 oz per quarter for many years and a recent 2015 resource upgrade adding 300,000 oz to the gold inventory. Golden Cities produced over 220,000 oz total and was found 30km from Kalgoorlie, on a state geological map sheet area that had previously seen over \$280M of corporate exploration. The prospector, Bill Allen, found the deposits in geology thought to have little prospects, and although initial results were outstanding they were ignored by corporate prospectors for this reason. The benefits of these multibillion dollar discoveries is enormous and ongoing.

Current Legislation and Impacts

The current NSW Mining Act 1992 states that "fossicking is a lawful activity" under Section 12, and Mining Act 1992 Regulations cover prospecting and fossicking for minerals, gold and gemstones ([Appendix 2](#)) with current reference at:

http://www5.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol_act/ma199281/s12.html

The Mining Act 1992 provides some support to gain access to Exploration Licences and private land with an indemnity to Landholders from prospecting and fossicking activities under Section 383C and states the following:

http://www5.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol_act/ma199281/s383c.html

It was this Act that further restricted the non-corporate prospector as their activities were now classed into fossicking in defined areas. True prospecting over larger areas was limited to corporate entities or those with geological qualifications and the ability to meet the Exploration Licence requirements.

Unfortunately corporate explorers rarely search for small surface eluvial and alluvial deposits, as it is very difficult to demonstrate the resource to legal JORC standards due to the nature of these deposits. In most cases they would not gain support of shareholders or government approvals to commence a mining operation when the economic return could not be guaranteed. This is reflected in the fact that there are no stand-alone alluvial gold resources and only one sapphire resource (in QLD) and one tin resource (NSW) quoted that also focus purely on alluvial deposits.

Advanced exploration and prospecting at this scale would require bulk sampling to assess the economic grade, and this would require many small pits or costeans. Anything but exceptional results can easily prevent this due to the cost of works, timeframes for approvals and costs of rehabilitation.

Economically mining these small deposits is equally difficult as most are stream hosted, inconsistent in grade, and one must take considerable environmental rehabilitation into account.

It is here that the non-corporate prospector and fossicker has an advantage with no overheads or timeframes, can conduct activities with manual labour, small scale equipment in an almost no-impact way. Almost all of these small surface resources will only ever see any recovery of mineral wealth by the small operator.

The other factor is that effectively these deposits are sterilised under the current Exploration Licence system unless the EL holder allows access. In most mining operations the topsoils are not processed to recover gold, but stockpiled for use in rehabilitation.

The argument of competition for resources can easily be solved by the tenement holder lodging with the dept. a known mineral resource which would exclude access by other than the licence holder.

Although Government intent is to support prospecting and fossicking, and access to substantial online resources are made available to facilitate this; the reality is somewhat different and the issues overly complex for the recreational nature of the activity.

The Mining Regulation 2003 – Reg 11 added the restriction: “A person must not ... fossick for minerals using explosives, power-operated equipment or any other equipment except hand-held implements..... excavate or clear any land or waters”. This was clearly intended to prevent the use of excavating machinery and to mirror the low impacts future acts regime of the Native Title Act 1993.

In 2004 the Sydney Electronic Prospecting Club queried the use of power-operated equipment and in particular pumps for sluices and high bankers. The response from the Deputy Director-General, Mineral Resources included the following ([Appendix 5](#)):

“The regulations specify that a person must not, in the course of fossicking, use any explosives or power operated equipment. If a fossicker uses a hand feed sluice box, capable of being lifted by a single person, which is not located in a stream and only water and not gravel is pumped to it then my Department would consider such activity as complying with the spirit and intention of the regulations.”

The 2008 Mining Act amendments clearly support the prospector and fossicker with some of the objects of the amendments set out in (Section 3A) which are to:

“encourage and facilitate the discovery and development of mineral resources in NSW”

“to recognise and foster the significant social and economic benefits to New South Wales that result from the efficient development of mineral resources”

“to ensure an appropriate return to the State from mineral resources”

Considerable resources, support and guidance is supplied by various areas of government for prospecting and fossicking activities. Links to examples are provided below:

- A fossicking guide is provided by the Resources & Energy division:
http://www.resourcesandenergy.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0007/363544/A-Guide-toFossicking-in-New-South-Wales.PDF

- A 12-month state-wide permit is available from Forestry Corporation online for \$27.50 including GST. This allows small-scale fossicking for recreational, tourism or educational purposes in State forests: <http://www.forestrycorporation.com.au/visit/activities/fossicking>

However the Mining Regulation 2010 i.e. the regulation currently in force, puts further restrictions on fossicking: “A person must not ... carry out the following activities for the purpose of fossicking: (a) the use of any equipment other than hand-held implements on any land or waters that is subject to native title, ... (c) the use of power-operated equipment for the purpose of surface disturbance, excavation or processing on any land, ... (g) the disturbance of more than 1 cubic metre of any soil, rock or other material during any single period of 48 hours.” The penalty for contravention is up to \$5,500.

http://www5.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol_reg/mr2010172/s12.html

The differentiation in restriction of allowable equipment on native title land, against the different wording restricting equipment any other land, can be read to imply that power-operated equipment is permitted outside native title land, but not for the purpose of surface disturbance, excavation or processing.

“Processing” is not defined in the regulation, however in other areas it refers to “treatment of ore for the liberation, concentration and recovery of minerals by commercially viable plant”. It is not intended to refer to sampling, prospecting and recreational activity however it is now being interpreted that way.

The Mining Regulation 2010 was enacted following what purported to be “Public Consultation”. None of the active gold fossicking and prospecting clubs was even aware that such consultation was carried out. The process appears to have been run to mainly address other issues. However it also rubber stamped tightening of interpretation around fossicking with the use of small scale powered equipment.

This has created the present state of restriction and uncertainty with interpretation.

The inability to pump water to a high banker or sluice box rules out activity in many areas that do not have enough running water to operate. This is more so in summer when better weather encourages more recreational activity. The use of gold pan only is very restrictive, and as a “backbreaking” activity severely limits the elderly and those with disability.

The ability to pump water has numerous advantages:

- Feeding gravel to a sluice or high banker by shovel or from buckets has a constantly changing body position compared to the constant bent over panning method (much better from an Occupational Health and Safety point of view);
- The sluice or high banker can be operated away from the stream bed allowing return water to be filtered by the gravel beds removing silt and suspended particles (this is very important when there is little water flow or no flow and only pools in the creek beds);
- Operation outside of the creek bed is safer and minimises disturbance to the creek bed;
- With panning only and the scarcity of gold many will not even get a “colour” unless allowed a faster recovery.

Regardless of the present Regulation we seek to have the Regulation amended to allow the use of “high-bank” sluices and other powered small scale equipment, but not for the purpose of surface disturbance, excavation or processing for commercial purposes or on an industrial scale.

Discussion of the Issues and Complexity

It is very difficult to understand what activity is allowed in which areas due to complexity with land type categories such as Native Title, Forestry, NPWS restrictions and local government by-laws. For an individual to research an area to access there are numerous possibilities of what they can and can't do:

- Some areas have full access and liberties as per the fossicking guide allowing gold pan, sluice and hand operated equipment;
- Some are hand-tools only due to Native Title future Act process which also restricts excavation;
- For determined Native Title areas consent must be gained from that particular registered native title body corporate (some states have a native title facilitator to assist individuals to deal with all aspects of native title); However in practical terms for individual fossickers this is an unrealistic requirement;
- Fossicking in NSW state forests requires obtaining a special purpose permit allowing full access and liberties at a cost. (Currently a one year permit costs \$27.50). As native title has not been extinguished in most state forests, only hand-held equipment is allowed so restricted to hand-tools, and technically not allowed to excavate.
- In Fossicking Districts access over Exploration Licences is permitted but in all other areas – which is the vast majority of the state, access to Exploration Licence areas is not allowed without permission of the EL holder – even where permission of the landowner has been given;
- Overriding all of the above is Local Government By-Laws that can determine allowable activities over any stretches of land.

Some prospectors and fossickers are members of clubs partly to help solve the access problems, as the club outings are planned for them. However NAPFA estimates that most fossickers in NSW are in fact independent operators who are not affiliated with clubs. Individuals, or small groups of mates, therefore are the most active fossickers.

The ongoing issues with researching areas that allow access means that there is increased activity on known areas where it is clear access is allowed and the type of equipment that may be used, which is often published in forums, tourist guides and prospecting magazines. This creates a series of problems being:

- Increased impacts to other land users and owners in the vicinity due to the concentration of activity;
- Increased impacts on the locality due to the concentration of activity;
- Easy gold removed by regular operators making it harder for the tourist and less experienced casual operator;
- Increased regulation and restrictions by local government restricting sluicing to maintain gold panning areas ([Appendix 3](#)).

Add to this the selloff of public land that allows landowners to purchase the access to prospective areas and many of the river fronts that cannot be accessed by vehicle. This allows private landowners to restrict access to public land.

In some areas road access is gated off but public access on foot maintained for recreational activity. This is easy for bushwalkers and fisherman, but impossible for the prospector and fossicker to carry equipment over many hundreds of metres and severely restricts the elderly and disabled. There is also a safety risk of being far from a vehicle which might contain first aid or communications equipment.

An added problem here is that vehicles must often be left out of sight of the owner and in clear sight of a public highway at a considerable security risk.

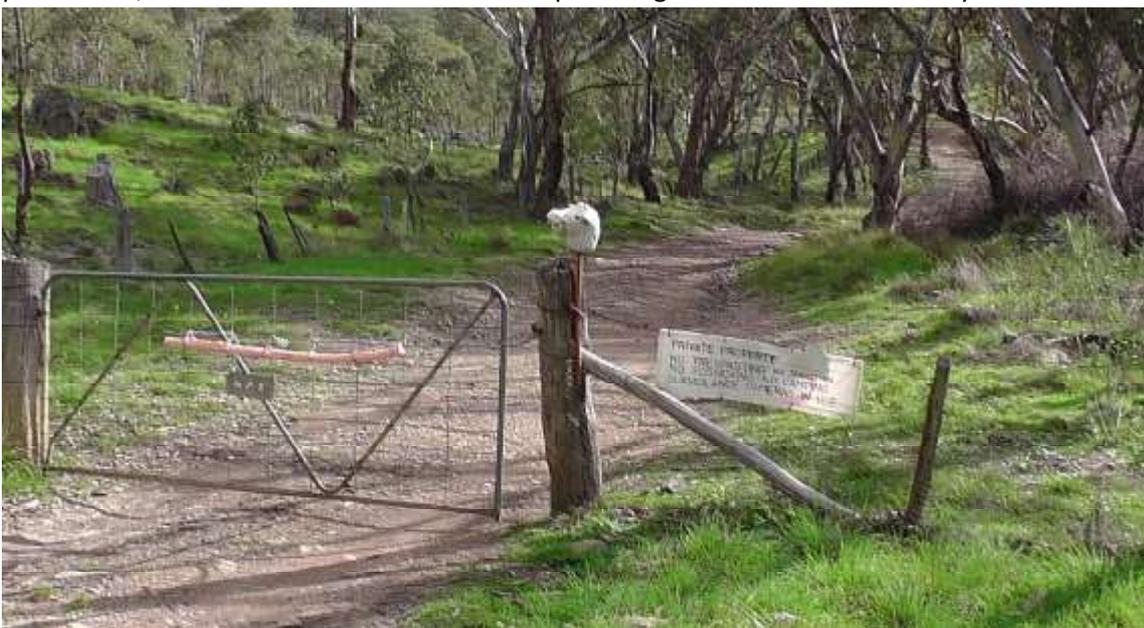


Golden Gully road gated off on the Mid-Western Hwy.

When public land is sold off it needs to be better assessed for public access for prospecting and fossicking and other recreational purposes. Initially it should be negotiated with purchasers to maintain this access and or not be sold at all.

In recent years another problem is that of landowners erecting signs and gates across public land saying that it is private property. The example below is on Wilson Rd at Windeyer in May 2015 which is the public road between Windeyer and Hargreaves townships.

NAPFA representatives contacted the Land and Property Information Division to confirm that this was still a public road, and then Crown Lands to follow up. The sign was removed a few days later.



Wilson Rd Windeyer.

The prospector and fossicker can often see significant preparation wasted as it is difficult to assess the ownership of land and validity of privately erected signage. With the threat of fines and in the interest of doing the right thing one is forced to turn back.

Although NSW SIX maps does have the ability to enable ownership enquiry it costs a fee, takes time to search and without training is not usable by those without computer and GIS experience.

Prospectors and Fossickers need a contact to report to and to have investigated illegal restrictions of access. Those found to hinder access need to be warned and ultimately prosecuted if they continue to do so.

The Western Lands Leases cover vast goldfields and gem & mineral locations, and have been a popular recreational tourist destination for many years. A number of lease owners have closed traditional access area overnight to the detriment of the townships from Broken Hill to Tibooburra. It is poor that this land is sterilised from extracting mineral wealth by fossickers due to restrictive and possessive attitudes of lease owners even though their leases are patrol leases.

These many issues above occur regularly and all of them restrict access.

When asking different departments and divisions there are different views and understandings as to what access rights exists and what activities are allowed.

Water is a good example where the intention in the Water Management (General) Regulation 2011 Schedule 5 Exemptions allows the taking of water with prospectors and fossickers exempt from requiring a permit. The exemption states ".....the taking of up to 3 megalitres of water required for all other such prospecting or fossicking in any water year." http://www5.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol_reg/wmr2011312/sch5.html

Yet a recent Dubbo event, a Fisheries Conservation Officer, backed by the Water Regulation Officer, Department of Primary Industries, NSW Office of Water was putting the view that fossickers are not allowed to access or take water without a licence or permit.

Issues with interpretation here stem somewhat from the "eductor dredging" restrictions, where water and gravels were sucked up from the streambed through a pipe into a sluice box in small hand carried equipment. In the past huge river dredges (weighing up to 7,000 tonnes) worked enormous volumes of material to the extent of redirecting the path of rivers. Despite such activities being stopped over half a century ago, the campaign to stop "eductor dredging" falsely implied this large scale destructive work was the sort of thing done by fossickers.

Current day Greens members still consider sluice boxes (sluicing) to be the same as large scale "hydraulic sluicing" activities dating back almost a century where powerful pumps washed out river banks and deposits for gold extraction. Despite the term "sluicing" this is dramatically different to the small riffle boxes used by fossickers and referred to as "sluices" today.

Australian Greens Lead Candidate for Northern Victoria (Jenny O'Connor) described the act of sluicing as "using high powered water pressure to erode away river banks to look for gold" in an interview aired on Prime 7 in recent debate to ban current day sluicing:

<http://au.prime7.yahoo.com/v1/video//watch/24143854/pro prospector-angry-over-sluicing-ban/>

Although hydraulic sluicing and river dredges have no relevance to very small scale fossicking, NSW fossickers are tarnished with this history and are generally treated as if they are ecological vandals when it comes to restricting their activities.

Tourism benefits and support for Prospecting and Fossicking

Nowhere else can the widespread public interest and benefit of prospecting and fossicking be demonstrated as clearly as in the tourism industry. In NSW there are national, state and local organisations that actively promote prospecting and fossicking to the public and their members. Some examples are linked below:

Geological tourism has been recognised by the Geological Society of Australasia which has formed a Standing Committee which focuses on geology and landscape as the basis for providing visitor engagement, learning, and enjoyment in Australia. Particular reference to NSW is stated below:

<https://www.ausimmbulletin.com/news/geotourism-continues-to-grow-in-australia/>

The NRMA holiday and route planner has suggested fossicking activities in many areas of NSW. The New England area is one of these linked below: <http://www.mynrma.com.au/travel/holiday-ideas/nsw/gonefossicking-in-nsw.htm>

The Northern NSW Fossickers Way touring route is detailed at: <http://www.fossickersway.com/home/.aspx>

Orange fossicking for gold is provided by the visitor information centre: www.tasteorange.com.au/LiteratureRetrieve.aspx?ID=148205

Fossicking Oberon gives detailed local information for the public to search for Gold, sapphires, zircons, occasionally diamonds, and smoky quartz at their site: <http://www.oberonaustralia.com.au/visitorinformation/things-to-see-do/fossicking/>

Lapidary World provides an extensive list of gem and mineral localities in NSW and ACT including detailed maps and instructions: http://www.lapidaryworld.com/maps_NSW.html

Treasure Enterprises of Australia who are an equipment supplier list the gold prospecting locations in NSW and the ACT including history, geology, localities and nuggets: http://www.treasureenterprises.com/gold%20prospecting%20information/gold_prospecting_locations_new%20south%20wales.htm

Prospecting and fossicking receives regular news coverage in the media and a recent article from November 2014 on the release of Doug Stones gold atlas is shown:

<http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/gold-rush-treasure-map-matches-gold-seams-with-public-land-in-nsw20141114-11kvz2.html>

The tourism benefits of prospecting and fossicking has been recognised by the recent NSW Legislative Council General Purpose Standing Committee No.3 into tourism in local communities. Two key recommendations supported were:

- Recommendation 17. That the NSW Government investigate further opportunities for tourism development in national parks including accommodation, camping, mountain bike trails and fossicking.
- Recommendation 19. That the NSW Government investigate opportunities for fossicking in national parks, a single access fee for state forests and linking information for fossicking activities on the Destination NSW website.

These recommendations were supported in the government response by the Deputy Premier the Hon. Andrew Stoner MP on the 14th October 2014. To date the only advance that has been achieved as a result of the review has been the State Forest Permit.

The Shooters and Fishers Party recognised the numerous benefits of prospecting and fossicking and support the right of access to public lands and waters for all recreational users to undertake lawful recreational activities. http://www.shootersandfishers.org.au/files/1/804003973/sfp_federal_policies.pdf

Economic benefits of Prospecting and Fossicking

Australia-wide, prospectors and fossickers contribute over \$1 billion per annum and this is before the value of commercially mineable deposits is taken into account. Much of this activity supports rural economies.

A study conducted in Western Australia a few years ago found that \$33 million was spent by recreational prospectors alone in general stores, prospecting shops, camping shops, service stations and caravan parks in the Eastern Goldfields alone. This does not cover larger shopping centres and all the other services required by prospectors in the region or the purchase of vehicles, caravans and other vital equipment.

Via research since then and through enquiries to the Goldfields Esperance Development Commission, Chamber of Commerce in Kalgoorlie and government members along with Senator Cormann, it is established that the standard multiplier was 3 times for this type of study. This equates to almost \$100 million dollars per annum just for the Eastern Goldfields. In trying to assess the total value to Western Australia with the Northern Goldfields, Pilbara and Kimberley regions and the purchase of major equipment in Perth, there is over \$350 million spent mainly by recreational prospectors per annum in WA. Add to this the tenement rents and Shire rates paid by leaseholders, and their contribution this number fast approaches \$500 million per annum.

In NSW prospecting and fossicking is well recognised and promoted by businesses in tourism areas. Many welcome an increase in prospecting and fossicking activity and encourage rights and access to be increased to encourage this. Unfortunately there is no systematic NSW research on the economic benefits of fossicking tourism, therefore educated estimates are generally used to discuss the local benefits. NAPFA's best estimate is that around 50,000 people who take part in some form of prospecting or fossicking activity each year in NSW. This is a conservative number – NSW Hansard references refer to 100,000 participants although in NAPFA's view this may be an over-estimation.

The innovation and business development created by prospecting and fossicking is wider ranging and very valuable to the economy. The development of equipment with improvements in recovery of fine gold and gemstones drives this innovation. This is supported by advances in software and other prospecting and camping equipment.

There are many small manufacturers of sluices that supply a wide range of equipment. Some examples:

<http://www.goldirocks.com.au/> <http://www.crampo.com.au/>

http://aussiesapphire.com.au/index.php?main_page=product_info&products_id=2943

It is unfortunate that a number of Australian manufacturers have limited or temporarily ceased production due to the uncertainty in a number of States about the future of sluicing and high banking.

There are also those constantly making improvements to current designs, and a search of the forums will see many inventions that are being constructed and tested. Fossickers and prospectors are excellent tinkerers and innovators and this has resulted in new and modified equipment that has the potential to be commercialised. Here is an examples of converting a sluice to a high banker:

<https://www.prospectingaustralia.com.au/forum/viewtopic.php?id=902>

An Australian designed mini crusher built to operate used on power tool is great for the prospector to crush small amounts of rock to evaluate for gold content. Many use the allowable rock for removal to take sample home and process at their leisure:



Mini crusher.

And here is a video of the world famous NSW designed and manufactured Mini Concentrator. It is marketed as Rotapan in the USA and has made over 100,000 sales worldwide:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z-L1ty9jLs4>

Adelaide-based Minelab developed and manufactures the worlds most advanced metal detectors. Through research and development in Australian prospecting conditions, Minelab is today a major world manufacturer of hand held metal detector products and has sales over \$100M per year.

Since its origins in 1985 Minelab has been, and still is, the world leader in providing metal detecting technologies for consumer, humanitarian demining and military needs.

Over the past 20 years, Minelab has introduced more innovative and practical technology than any of its competitors and has taken the metal detecting industry to new levels of excellence. It has been responsible for over 150,000 oz of gold per year in WA alone worth over \$200M per annum.

Total gold in Australia found since Minelab's technological breakthroughs in physics in 1995 is billions of dollars. Minelabs countermine technology was born from the prospecting development and is recognised worldwide for the humanitarian effectiveness to remove land mines in war torn areas.

<http://www.minelab.com/aus/>

Australian software developer Ozi Explorer provides GPS mapping software. The company's expansion to overseas markets and ongoing development is largely responsible from sales to prospectors and fossickers:

<http://www.ozexplorer.com/>

Social Benefits

Apart from invention, design and innovation being a healthy and warranted leisure activity, the research required to find and learn about prospective areas is a pastime in itself.

This drives self-education into software, the use of internet and government online products. The author can attest to the number of previously commuter illiterate prospectors and fossickers who have purchased and learnt how to use computers to pursue their hobby.

There are a number of benefits to this and one often not thought of is the benefit of GPS software in the interest of safety.

While prospecting the author was involved in a remote rescue where emergency services had received a co-ordinate from an emergency beacon but could not find roads to get there. We plugged the co-ordinate into our Ozi Explorer mapping software and within 30 seconds had the exact location displayed on the computer map and could plan the best tracks to get to the downed aeroplane.

Prospecting and Fossicking is also an important pastime and hobby to many individuals, families and retirees who use it as an activity while enjoying the great outdoors. It is a part of our society in Australia that we enjoy the natural environment and are encouraged to tour, camp, fish, observe and be part of nature.

The most significant social benefit is the many clubs and associations, and now online forums for prospectors and fossickers. These are generally broken down into a number of categories:

- National and State-wide Associations that operate to lobby and maintain prospectors and fossickers rights;
- State-wide Societies, Guilds and Councils mainly for gemstone and mineral cutting, faceting and collection that operate to promote and maintain standards of gemmology, gemstone faceting and collection and trade of mineral and fossil specimens;
- Local Clubs for social gatherings, field and camping trips, etc.

In NSW and the ACT there are over 70 such organisations: [\(Appendix 4\)](#).

A typical example is the Dubbo Prospecting, Fossicking and Camping Club which operates both on the internet and Facebook: <http://brianjwalters.wix.com/dpfcclub>

An example of a forum is: <http://alluvialprospectors.proboards.com/>

Risk Analysis of Prospecting and Fossicking Activities

The major perceived impacts of prospecting and fossicking activities are ground disturbance, and turbidity of rivers and streams. Prospecting and fossicking generally consists of mapping, sampling by pan and sluice and metal detecting by individuals or small groups using hand tools and hand operated equipment to process sample.

Exploration is a higher level activity and although most work is similar to prospecting it is done on a larger scale systematically using teams of workers. It can lead to drilling in advanced projects. Exploration at this level is deemed a low impact activity in Regulations and Native Title process.

By default, prospecting and fossicking is a very low level activity, and over very short terms which is almost a no impact activity.

Other states recognise this by allowing an exemption to Prospecting and Fossicking from low impact requirements.

In NSW ground disturbance is limited by:

- No mechanised equipment for surface disturbance;
- Hand tools (implements) only (metal detectors are OK);
- No more than 1 cubic metre to be disturbed in 48 hours;
- No excavation in creek banks;
- For recreational non-commercial purposes only;
- No damage to bush rock;
- Restoration of area and holes filled in before starting new areas;
- No disturbance of fish or aquatic animal habitat;
- No explosives.

This significantly reduces the amount of activity and the risk to the environment, even when larger numbers of individuals are operating in close proximity.

Turbidity is an issue focused on by environmental groups, and regulated for prospecting and fossicking activities in the Regulations and by the EPA.

The fact that perception is that any muddying of water will lead to significant impacts (be poisonous or harmful to) aquatic life are actually unfounded. When a creek or river floods the whole bedload including rocks, pebbles, sand and silt will move downstream, in a turbid violent flow.

This has not eradicated wildlife in the past nor will it do so in the future.

The NSW Office of Water states that "In most rivers turbidity increases after rainfall and flooding because of soil erosion". <http://www.water.nsw.gov.au/water-management/water-quality/turbidity>

A large group of prospectors potentially moving their single cubic metre each of material is but a tiny fraction of what is moving in a tiny stream after a rain event.

There are provisions against creating turbidity and also EPA Regulations that State that “You should avoid disturbing mud, clay or fine silt that causes significant turbidity in a waterway, as this could lead to a breach of the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997”. Sluicing cannot have a throughput sizable enough cause significant turbidity.

However, the greatest possible reduction in turbidity is to use high bankers away from the running stream – which perversely is currently not practically achievable without the use of powered pumps. As the returning water is self-filtered through the gravels on the stream banks, this also removes the need to set up a sluice in the creek bed limiting disturbance to the creek bed and the water flow.

However high bankers can only operate away from the stream bed if water can be pumped to them.

It is clear that the restriction of pumping water has a greater negative impact than by allowing it.

The ESG2: Environmental Impact Assessment Guidelines for exploration, mining and petroleum production activities subject to Part 5 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 on page 19 have been used a guide to conduct a risk assessment for prospecting and fossicking activities:

www.resourcesandenergy.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0007/427444/2012-03-05-ESG2Environmental-Impact-Assessment-Guidelines-FINAL.pdf

The table is shown below where prospecting and fossicking fall under the negligible category.

Analysis of impact	Negligible	Low adverse	High adverse
Size	Tiny 1m ³	Small scale size/volume	Large scale/volume
Scope	Very Localised	Localised	Extensive
Intensity	Very small impact dispersed over a vey short period	Small impact dispersed over a long period	Large impact over a short or long period
Duration	Very Short Term 48 hr	Short term	Long term
Level of confidence in predicting impacts	Very high confidence/knowledge and past experience	High confidence/knowledge and past experience	Low confidence, numerous uncertainties and unknowns
Level of reversibility of impacts	Impacts are reversible and rehabilitation would be successful	Impacts are reversible and rehabilitation likely to be successful	Reversibility impossible or unlikely due to cost or other factors
Ability to manage or mitigate the impacts	Very effective mitigation measures available	Effective mitigation measures available	Mitigation measures untested or unavailable
Ability of the impacts to comply with standards, plans or policies	Total compliance	Total compliance	Uncertain or part compliance
Level of public interest	Very Low interest and negligible impacts on community	Low interest and predictable impacts on community	High interest and uncertain impacts on community

Requirement for further information on the impacts of the activity or mitigation	Very High level of understanding and information on the impact	High level of understanding and information on all impacts	Low level of information on and understanding of key issues
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With prospecting and fossicking activities negligible, an almost no impact activity, especially when compared to other allowed activities, and regulations that reduce the risk to the environment, there should be no reason to restrict the pumping of water to high bankers and sluices.

In fact the only restrictions on small mechanised power operated equipment should be for ground disturbance and excavation.

The value of the prospector in the field has many advantages both to the resources industry as well as many others. Prospectors know the areas they work in well and have valuable knowledge on the flora, fauna and the land and have seen changes over time. They also help to regulate and prevent illegal activity and do care for the environment they work in, as prospectors are only too aware of the impacts of these issues.

All clubs and associations have their own codes of conduct and are self-regulating. NAPFA's own code of conduct encourages responsible fossicking.

As a short term and minimal impact activity by people who care for their prospecting rights, prospecting should be encouraged so responsible operators are in the bush rather than no-one at all. This will help control illegal activity and help to monitor the state of the land. It is a valuable resource to the wider conservation movement to have experienced people on the ground.

Summary of Recommendations

NAPFA has carefully considered the options to solve the undue restrictions on Prospecting and Fossicking activities in NSW. Our recommendations seek to be:

- Of net benefit to the State of NSW;
- in the public interest;
- of minimal impact to the objectives of other stakeholders;
- of negligible impact to the environment;

Accordingly NAPFA makes the following recommendations for consideration and action by the department:

1. To amend the Regulations so that the confusing and misunderstood restriction on powered equipment clearly only applies to excavation, and ground disturbance. This will allow the pumping of water to high bankers in hoses connected to sluices boxes and the use of small hobby scale equipment such as dry-blowers in dry areas.
2. To overcome once and for all the current unworkable Exploration Licence permission requirement for fossickers. Ideally this would be through Legislation; however as an interim step, Administrative action to declare many more areas of the state as Fossicking Districts would be helpful. Work begun last year on this should be expedited now that the Government has been re-elected.

3. To push the recommendations of the GPSC report with the Department of the Environment to bring about fossicking opportunities in a range of NSW National Parks. NAPFA estimates that at best this would total around 1.5 million hectares – or only about 20 per cent of the current area under National Park management in NSW. Department of Environment (National Parks) is currently considering this matter and it would be helpful for Minerals and Resources to offer to assist them to develop effective policy and practice for fossicking.
4. To establish a regular dialogue between the department and NSW fossickers through a six monthly roundtable of stakeholders that includes: fossickers through NAPFA; departmental administrators and policy officers; fossicking equipment retailers and representatives from other relevant government agencies.
5. To establish clear definitions and terminology in the Regulations relating to prospecting and fossicking activities so as to remove the uncertainty and adverse association to historic activities. To promote these to other government departments, local government and the fossicking community.
6. To establish clear and accurate maps showing areas where prospecting and fossicking is permitted, and what activities are allowed, and that all information will be available from Resources and Energy with a “One stop shop approach”. This will need to be done in conjunction with other depts. and divisions of government and include: Leases and Licences, Native Title areas, ILUA conditions, Crown Reserves, Public Access, Permits and costs and Local Government by laws. Potentially an APP with suitable geo-locating capability could be developed if funding was available.
7. Negotiation of Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUA) and consent determination to include access and activity rights for Prospectors and Fossickers consistent with the Mining Act and Regulations.
8. When public land is to be sold; to investigate and prevent the loss of access to public land for prospecting and fossicking and other recreational purposes. Initially it should be negotiated with purchasers to maintain this access by vehicle or not be sold at all. As part of this issue; to establish an email contact point so that fossickers can report for investigation and potential prosecution illegal public access restriction by adjacent landowners to crown land.
9. To change conditions on the Western Lands Leases to allow Prospecting and Fossicking on an advice rather than permission basis; enabling access to vast outback areas of goldfields and gem & mineral locations that are currently closed.

Conclusion

The importance of minerals to our society is critical as our way of life depends upon what comes out of the ground. Almost every manufactured product has elements from mining, and our society as a whole needs to support the skills and mind-sets that encourage people willing to have a go – be they weekend recreational fossickers, professional prospectors or large mining ventures.

Fossicking rights have been squeezed and whittled down over the decades by over regulation and lack of consideration, so that it is now in the worst actual shape than it has ever been. This is a great pity for an activity that sparked the 1850s gold rushes and has been enjoyed by many generations since that time.

It is time to re-focus and re-discover the value of our fossicking heritage and for government to get serious about the future of fossicking and prospecting in NSW. This means the activity needs policy and regulation support to make it easier rather than harder.

If Government can successfully support recreational fossicking it will generate optimism and respect for the law and set NSW apart as a leader. Tens of thousands of NSW citizens enjoy this activity and would welcome more responsive policy.

Changes will encourage more people to participate in a healthy outdoor recreational activity. Grey nomad tourists from all over Australia will be setting their GPS units for Destination NSW if the welcome mat can be freshened up.

As said by Lang Hancock “Long live the prospector, as without prospecting we will return to the Stone Age”.

Appendix 1 – Extract Mining Act 1973

25. (1) Subject to this section, on the recommendation of the Minister and with the concurrence of the Minister for Local Government, the Governor may, by order in the Gazette, constitute any Crown lands or any private lands as a fossicking area and fix its boundaries.

(2) Crown lands shall not be constituted as a fossicking area—

- (a) without the concurrence of the Minister for Lands; and
- (b) if they are held under a Crown lease for pastoral purposes or a special lease for pastoral purposes, without the consent, given by instrument in writing, of the occupier of the Crown lands.

(3) Private lands shall not be constituted as a fossicking area without the consent, given by instrument in writing, of the owner and any occupier of the lands.

(4)

652

Mining.

No. 42, 1973

(4) Lands in respect of which an application for the registration of a claim, or for an authority, is pending, or which are subject to a claim or an authority or are in a colliery holding, shall not be constituted as, or included in, a fossicking area.

(5) An order constituting any Crown lands as a fossicking area shall not be altered or varied without the concurrence of the Minister for Lands and, if applicable, without the consent referred to in subsection (2) (b), but may be revoked if the Governor so decides.

(6) An order constituting any private lands as a fossicking area—

- (a) shall not be altered or varied without the consent, given by instrument in writing, of the owner and any occupier of the lands, but may be revoked if the Governor so decides; and
- (b) shall be revoked if the owner and any occupier of the lands so request by instrument in writing.

Rights in fossicking areas.

26. (1) Where Crown lands are constituted as a fossicking area the holder of a fossicking licence may, subject to subsection (5) and to such conditions as may be prescribed, search in that area for, and remove from that area, gemstones, semi-precious stones and rocks.

(2) Where private lands are constituted as a fossicking area any person may, subject to—

- (a) subsections (3) and (5);
- (b) such conditions as may be prescribed; and
- (c) such conditions (including conditions as to the payment of a charge) as the owner of the private lands may stipulate.

search

search in that area for, and remove from that area, gemstones, No. 42, 1973 semi-precious stones and rocks.

(3) The owner or any occupier of private lands constituted as a fossicking area may, in his discretion, refuse entry to those lands to any person notwithstanding that that person is prepared to comply with any conditions stipulated by the owner pursuant to subsection (2) (c).

(4) No person shall exercise any of the rights conferred by subsection (1) in, or in relation to, a fossicking area consisting of Crown lands unless he is the holder of a fossicking licence.

Penalty : \$200.

(5) No person who carries on a prescribed occupation shall exercise any of the rights conferred by subsection (1) or (2).

Penalty : \$200.

(6) On payment of the prescribed fee the mining registrar shall issue a fossicking licence to any person applying therefor.

(7) A fossicking licence shall have effect for a period of twelve months from and including the date on which it is issued.

(8) For the purposes of this section—

"gemstones" means opal, sapphire, diamond, topaz, ruby, emerald and any other substance prescribed as a gemstone;

"semi-precious stone" means a substance prescribed as such.

PART

Appendix 2 – Extract Mining Act 1992

MINING ACT 1992 No. 29 - As Made

Fossicking

that fossicking is a lawful activity.

12. (1) For the purposes of this or any other Act or law, it is declared

(2) Subsection (1):

(a) does not affect any other Act or law that prohibits, regulates or restricts fossicking or that has the effect of prohibiting, regulating or restricting fossicking; and

(b) does not confer on any person a right to fossick on private land that is not owned by that person.

(3) Any publicly owned mineral that is recovered in the course of lawful fossicking becomes the property of the person by whom it is found at the time it is severed from the land on which it is found.

1992—No. 445

MINING ACT 1992—REGULATION – As Made

(Mining (General) Regulation 1992)

NEW SOUTH WALES

[Published in Gazette No. 101 of 20 August 1992]

Sec. 12: fossicking

10. (1) A person must not fossick for minerals on any land that is the subject of an authority, a mineral claim or an opal prospecting licence except with the consent of the holder of the authority, claim or licence. Maximum penalty: 10 penalty units.

(2) A person must not, in the course of fossicking for minerals:

(a) use any explosives or power-operated equipment; or

(b) drill or excavate to a depth of more than 1 metre; or

(c) damage or remove any bushrock; or

(d) remove more than:

- 10 kilograms of minerals (other than gold or gemstones);

or

- 10 grams of gold; or

- 20 grams of gemstones,

during any single period of 48 hours.

Maximum penalty: 10 penalty units.

(3) In this clause, “gemstones” means a Group 3, Group 6 or Group 7 mineral.

Appendix 3 – Examples of Local Government

TAMWORTH REGIONAL COUNCIL

WELCOME TO TOP SWAMP CREEK FOSSICKING AREA
WHILE YOU ARE HERE, PLEASE REMEMBER

EQUIPMENT YOU CAN USE
HAND HELD TOOLS TO A DEPTH OF ONE METRE, TOOLS INCLUDE A PICK, HAMMER, SHOVEL, SIEVE, PAN, SHAKER, BASIN, METAL DETECTOR AND SLUICE (WATER FOR SLUICING CAN ONLY BE REMOVED FROM THE RIVER MANUALLY, PUMPS NOT PERMITTED.)

EQUIPMENT NOT PERMITTED
POWER OPERATED EQUIPMENT, INCLUDES GENERATOR OR ENGINE DRIVEN EQUIPMENT, IE JACK HAMMERS, DREDGES, SPADING TOOLS AND EXPLOSIVES.

FOSSICKERS ARE **NOT** TO DIG MORE THAN ONE METRE BELOW THE LINE OF THE NATURAL CONTOUR OF THE SURFACE OF THE LAND.

PLEASE DO
LEAVE ALL PROPERTY AS YOU FIND IT.
LEAVE ALL GATES AS YOU FIND THEM.
BE FRIENDLY TO THE ENVIRONMENT - DO NOT INTERFERE OR DAMAGE NATIVE FLORA & FAUNA. DO NOT POLLUTE SOIL OR WATER.
TAKE ALL RUBBISH WITH YOU AND DEPOSIT IT THOUGHTFULLY.
LEAVE ALL GROUND AS YOU FIND IT AND BACK FILL ALL HOLES WITH THE ORIGINAL MATERIAL REMOVED.
CONTROL DOGS AT ALL TIMES ON A LEASH OR SECURED. UNDER **NO** CIRCUMSTANCES ARE THEY TO BE LET HARRASS STOCK. OWNERS ARE OBLIGED TO CLEAN UP AFTER THEIR ANIMALS. THE DOG ACT **WILL** BE ENFORCED.

PLEASE DO NOT
DIG INTO THE RIVER BANKS AND GRASSED AREAS.
CARRY FIREARMS & OTHER OFFENSIVE WEAPONS.
DISTURB OR INJURE LIVESTOCK.
WALK OUTSIDE OF THE AREA CLEARLY DEFINED BY THE PERIMETER POSTS IN PLACE, AS YOU WILL BE ON PRIVATE PROPERTY.

CAMPING IS ONLY PERMITTED AT THE SWAMP CREEK RESERVE CAMP SITE. CAMP FIRES ONLY AT THE SWAMP CREEK RESERVE CAMP SITE AND ONLY WHEN THERE IS NO TOTAL FIRE BAN.



Appendix 4 – NSW & ACT Prospecting and Fossicking Clubs

New South Wales and ACT

[Gem & Lapidary Council of NSW](#)

Gem and Lapidary Council of NSW Inc

PO Box 4233

Londonderry NSW 2753

AUSTRALIA

President: Joan Ball OAM Tel (02) 9773 5092 Secretary: Arthur

Roffey Tel (02) 4572 5812

secretary@gemlapidarycouncilnsw.org.au Minute Secretary:

Marilyn Behrens (02) 9635 8218

Assistant Treasurer: Arthur Roffey (02) 4572 5812

Education Officer: Nelson Robertson (02) 4385 4495

Editor Gem and Lapidary News: editor@gemlapidarycouncilnsw.org.au

HOTLINE TO THE COUNCIL - 0427 993 903

Far North Coast Regional Council of Lapidary Clubs

PO Box 3, Nana Glen, NSW 2450

[Mineralogical Society of NSW](#)

[Cl- Deans Office, Faculty of Science & Technology PO Box 10](#)

[Kingswood, NSW 2747](#)

NSW & ACT Prospectors and Fossickers Association Inc.

PO Box 2664

Carlingford Court

NSW 2118

<http://www.napfa.net/>

Gemmological Association of Australia NSW Division

24 Wentworth Ave, Sydney, NSW 2000

Fossil Club of NSW

52 Yellow Rock Road Blue

Mountains NSW 2777

Telephone: 02 4754 5970

[Australian Facetors Guild Limited:](#)

Canberra and Districts Branch

Mr. R. Westen

63/29 Cockcroft Avenue, Monash, ACT 2904

North East NSW Branch

Mr. Ron Parker

17 Union Street, Coraki, NSW 2471

Hunter Region Branch
Mr. Bill Reilly
56 Cadaga Road, Gateshead West, NSW 2290

New South Wales and ACT Clubs

Albury Lapidary & Allied Crafts
PO Box 677, Albury, NSW 2640

[Bankstown & District Lapidary Club](#)

PO Box 346, Bankstown, NSW 2200

Editor email: griffo1948@hotmail.com

Batemans Bay Lapidary Club PO Box 456,
Batemans Bay, NSW 2536

Blaxland Gem & Mineral Club PO Box 98,
Blaxland, NSW 2774

web page is <http://www.freewebs.com/blaxlandgemmineralclub/index.htm> or telephone
Michael Wilde on 02 4754 1436

Blue Mountains Lapidary Club
85 Railway Parade, Builaburra, NSW 2784

Broken Hill Mineral Club
PO Box 747, Broken Hill, NSW 2880 email:
bhminclub@internode.on.net website:
<http://brokenhillmineralclub.wikispaces.com>

Byron Lapidary Society
Tyagarah Airport
Tyagarah via Byron Bay, NSW 2481

[Campbelltown & District Lapidary Club](#) PO Box 1152,
Campbelltown, NSW 2560 email:
campbelltownlapidary@hotmail.com

[Canberra Lapidary Club](#)

Postal Address: PO Box 577 CURTIN ACT 2605

Clubhouse: Tooms Place, Lyons ACT 2606

Website: www.canberralapidary.org.au

Email: canberralapidary@gmail.com

Clubhouse: 02 6281 3312

Sec: 02 6161 0876

Canberra Fossicking and Metal Detector Club
PO Box 312 Jamieson Centre ACT 2615

Casino Lapidary Club

No current address, Casino NSW 2470 [Central Coast](#)

[Lapidary Club](#)

PO Box 60, Ourimbah, NSW 2258

Central Coast Prospecting and Metal Detector Club
PO Box 324 Gosford NSW 2250

Cessnock Gem & Mineral Club

PO Box 467, Cessnock, NSW 2325 Coffs Harbour Lapidary &

Assoc. Crafts Club

PO Box J87, Coffs Harbour Jetty, NSW 2451

Cowra Gem, Mineral & Bottle Club PO Box 399,
Cowra, NSW 2794

Dubbo Prospecting, Fossicking and Camping Club. <http://brianjwalters.wix.com/dpfclub#!about/c1wfv>

Fairfield & District Gemstone Club PO Box 3A,
Fairfield Heights, NSW 2165

Glen Innes Gem & Mineral Club

PO Box 548, Glen Innes, NSW 2370

Goulburn Gem Society

39 Masonic Village, Goulburn, NSW 2747

Grafton Gem Club No current address,
NSW 2460

Greenwich Gem Club 46-50

Greenwich Road,

Greenwich, NSW 2065

Gulgong Lapidary & Field Geology Club

PO Box 91, Gulgong, NSW 2852

Gunnedah & District Lapidary Club

PO Box 37 Gunnedah, NSW 2380

Hawkesbury Valley Lapidary Club

PO Box 179, Richmond, NSW 2753

Hunter Valley Gemology Club

PO Box 166, Maitland, NSW 2323

1 Maize Street, Tenambit, a suburb of Maitland, NSW web:

<http://www.hvgc.asn.au>

Hunter Valley Fossicking and Camping Club

PO Box 77 Adamstown NSW 2289 Illawarra
Lapidary Club PO Box 15, Wollongong East, NSW
2500 Inverell & District Lapidary Club PO Box 600,
Inverell, NSW 2360

Kyogle Gem & Mineral Club PO Box 283,
Kyogle, NSW 2474

Lake Macquarie Lapidary Club PO Box 19,
Blacksmiths, NSW 2281

The Lapidary Club of NSW PO Box 425,
Darlinghurst, NSW 2010 Lismore Gem &
Lapidary Club PO Box 743, Lismore, NSW 2480

Lysaght Lapidary Club PO Box 103, Fig
Tree, NSW 2525

Macleay Gem & Mineral Club
PO Box 125, Kempsey, NSW 2440

Manning Great Lakes Gem & Mineral Club
PO Box 620, Forster, NSW 2428

Mudgee & District Rockhounds Club
PO Box 396, Mudgee NSW 2850

Murwillumbah Gemstone, Mineral & Geology Club Mr. P. Rowe, 31
Riverview St.
Murwillumbah NSW 2484

Muswellbrook & Dist. Lapidary Club
PO Box 511 Muswellbrook NSW 2333

Nepean District Lapidary Club
27 Swanston Street St. Marys NSW (entry & parking via Collins Street)
PO Box 99 Penrith NSW 2750 contact: John Jackson 02 4777
4105, 0429 774 105 email:
nepeandistrictlapidaryclub@gmail.com website:
http://www.lapidaryworld.com/nepean_district_lapidary_club

New England Lapidary & Fossicking Club
PO Box 82, Uralla. NSW 2358 The

Newcastle Lapidary Club PO Box 66,
Adamstown, NSW 2289

[Northern Districts Lapidary Club](#)
PO Box 59, Beecroft, NSW 2119 Ph. 02 9484
0014 email: secretary@ndlapidary.org.au
Website: www.ndlapidary.org.au

Orana Prospecting Club

386 Fitzroy Street Dubbo NSW 4830

Orange Lapidary & Mineral Club

PO Box 1234, Orange, NSW 2800

[Parramatta/Holroyd Lapidary Club](#) PO Box 334,

Wentworthville, NSW 2145

[Port Hacking Lapidary Club](#)

PO Box 109, Gymea, NSW 2227

Website: <http://sites.google.com/site/phlgymea> email:

lapidarygymea@gmail.com Port Macquarie Craft Centre

Lapidary Club

PO Box 177, Port Macquarie, NSW 2444

Prospectors Home Club

12 Stafford St. Artarmon, NSW 2064 Rooty Hill &

District Lapidary Club

PO Box 59 Rooty Hill NSW 2766

Shellharbour & Albion Park Lapidary Club 2 Oak Street,

Albion Park Rail, NSW 2350 St George Gem & Lapidary

Club PO Box 493 Kingsgrove, NSW 2208

Sutherland Gem & Craft Club PO Box 133,

Sutherland, NSW 2232

Sydney Electronic Prospecting Club PO Box 488,

Miranda, NSW 2225

Tamworth Lapidary Club PO Box 108W,

Tamworth, NSW 2340

The Entrance & Districts Lapidary Club

20 Lakeside Parade, The Entrance, NSW 2261 Ulladulla District

Lapidary Club

PO Box 97, Ulladulla, NSW 2539 Wagga Wagga

Riverina Lapidary Club

PO Box 276, Wagga Wagga, NSW 2650 Wingala Lapidary

Arts & Craft Group

PO Box 111, Harbord, NSW 2096

Central Coast Prospecting & Metal Detector Club

PO Box 324, Gosford, NSW 2250

Hunter Valley Fossicking & Camping Club W J Phillips, 5A
Kelton St Cardiff, NSW 2285

Appendix 5 – Mineral Resources Reply 2004

Dear Kevin

Below is an extract of the letter which then Minister for Mineral Resources (The Hon Bob Martin) forwarded on 17 June 1996 to an inquirer about use of equipment for fossicking. This language was based upon advice received from the Department's Mines Inspection Branch.

"The regulations specify that a person must not, in the course of fossicking, use any explosives or power operated equipment. If a fossicker uses a hand feed sluice box, capable of being lifted by a single person, which is not located in a stream and only water and not gravel is pumped to it then my Department would consider such activity as complying with the spirit and intention of the regulations."

I trust this information will be of assistance to you.

Yours faithfully,

Ian Elsholz
for Deputy Director-General, Mineral Resources

CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVILEGE NOTICE:

This message and any accompanying attachments are intended for the addressee named and may contain confidential or privileged information. If you are not the intended recipient do not read, use, distribute or copy this message or attachments. Please notify the sender immediately and delete the message. Views expressed in this message are those of the individual sender except where the sender expressly and with authority, states them to be the views of the NSW Department of Primary Industries.
