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DETAILS

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NATIVE VEGETATION CLEARING

1 . Would a strategic approach to clearing, through a strategic purpose permit, benefit you?

Response: unsure

Comments:

My experience with clearing permits in the past is that there was long term planning put in place by the department and therefore there is already indication that the permits that I applied for on behalf of clients are strategic. It appears that simply the department is trying to show a starategic benefit to enable more and increased fees and red tape. The process of applying for clearing permits in the Margaret River region is already cost prohibitive as a result of the need to provide "expert" advice in countering the many claims made by the department when assessing clearing permits. The requirement for offsets to clearing creates further expense. The implication of local government regulations and opinion is another cost to applicants.

2. Is the 'purpose component' reasonable to apply considering the added complexity of assessing this type of clearing permit?

Response: no

Comments:

There is already enough red tape when applying for clearing permits. Why make it any more difficult and expensive.

3. Is the proposed fee structure fair and does it adequately reflect differences in the financial capacity of clearing permit applicants?

Response: no

Comments:

4. What is the likely impact on your business or industry of the proposed clearing fee structure?

Comments:

The current clearing permit fee structure is fair..... its the additional time lost and costs incurred by the proponent with employing experts to provide information to the department and the cost of offsets and future rates and management of those offsets that the department does not take into account when a proponent makes a application. The local government then also adds to the cost of clearing projects and the department doesnt take this into account either.

5. Additional comments regarding Native Vegetation Clearing not addressed in the questions above.

Comments:

WATER

6. Do you consider it reasonable for taxpayers to pay 100 per cent of the cost of assessing water licence and permit applications and if so, why?

Response: yes

Comments:

Taxpayers are responsible for electing government and therefore the agencies.

The issue is that taxpayers should be asking the government to make the agencies more effective by implementing better policy and procedures. If your question was "should licensed water users pay 100 per cent of the cost of assessing water licence and permit applications", then the answer would be NO....

the reason is that the water users have no course of action in combating poor policy and procedure within inefficient government agencies.

7. If water licence and permit assessment fees were introduced, what do you consider to be an appropriate fee for a water licence or permit application?

Comments:

Obviously the minimum fee.

The point is that in the Whicher area (Margaret River), there are both licensed and unlicensed water users. it is unfair that unlicensed water users can take water for commercial use and not share the management costs in licensing.

8. Would you consider a risk-based model for determining water licence and permit application fees to be appropriate? If not, what basis could the department use to structure fees?

Response: unsure

Comments:

Which risk based modeling are we working with in this assumption? It would appear that the departments risk based model for the Willyabrup which indicated that it is high risk and over allocated is dubious? Plenty of water flowing out into the ocean this year!

9. What would be the likely impact on your business or industry if water licence and permit fees were introduced?

Comments:

Licensed water users = It just makes operating the business that much more expensive and no way of recovering costs. Most of my clients are at the end of their financial capacity and no new blood coming in businesses and therefore not sustainable. As a result of the poor financial situation we have a aging population of owners and its uncertain how this will be managed into the future.

Unlicensed water users = they will be so happy that they couldnt be licensed under the current legislation!!

10. If water licence and permit assessment fees were introduced, how could the collection of fees be timed to better support your business or industry? For example, would you benefit from paying fees up front, at the end of a licence assessment or annualised over the term of the licence?

Response: unsure

Comments

I dont believe water license and permit fees will be introduced. However your leading question can be answered with the annualised over the term option if unfortunately fees are introduced.

11 . Additional comments regarding Water licences and permits not addressed in the questions above.

Comments:

Is it fair that there are both licensed and unlicensed water users in our region and that you are only targeting licensed water users?

Would a system that involved water metering and actual water use be a fairer alternative? User pays.