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AGREEMENT PAVES WAY FOR EXCITING NEXT STEP AT PORT BONYTHON

A planned port facility at Port Bonython is closer to fruition following an agreement between the State Government and ports consortium Spencer Gulf Ports Links (SGPL).

Announcing the agreement, Transport Minister Patrick Conlon said SGPL had been granted exclusive rights to undertake an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed deep sea facility, which would greatly enhance the state's mining industry.

Minister Conlon said if the development is approved, the facility would be capable of servicing 180,000 tonne bulk iron ore carriers and offer significant sea and rail export options to complement the mining boom.

“The proposed Port Bonython project will deliver an efficient, first-class export facility servicing the iron ore mining industry and its projected boom in the State's north by significantly boosting existing capabilities,” Minister Conlon said.

“The proposed deep-sea port, which will be privately funded, is estimated to cost between \$600 and \$700m and includes a three-kilometre jetty and conveyor system and a 27-kilometre rail line connecting the port to the existing rail network.”

“Not only will the project deliver a modern, environmentally sound, purpose-built port with the ability to meet demand of more than 50m tonnes of product each year, but it is anticipated its construction would employ approximately 400 people, giving a major employment opportunity to our regional areas.”

The State Government and the SGPL consortium, comprising Flinders Port Holdings, Leighton Contractors, Macquarie Capital, BIS Industrial Logistics and the Australian Rail track Corporation, reached agreement this month on conditions to move ahead with the project.

The consortium will now undertake a comprehensive EIS and undertake extensive consultation with the community.

Flinders Ports Chief Executive Vincent Tremaine said Port Bonython provided an excellent location for the facility given its existing harbour, land availability and proximity to mining projects in the region.

“We strongly believe the port is viable, and indeed essential, given the expected increases in mineral resource volumes from proposed mining projects in the area,” he said.