

PARLIAMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY



TERRY REDMAN MLA
MEMBER FOR STIRLING



OUR REF:JT799/Sub-34

26 April 2007

Secretary to the Electoral Distribution Commissioners
GPO Box F316
PERTH WA 6841

Dear Sir/Madam

Please find enclosed my submission regarding the 2007 Electoral Distribution for consideration by the Electoral Distribution Commissioners.

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on this very important issue.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Terry Redman'.

Terry Redman MLA
MEMBER FOR STIRLING

Encl

Submission from Terry Redman MLA -Member for Stirling

This submission is in support of the WA Nationals' proposed South West Region electorate "Great Southern", as delineated in the WA Nationals submission to the WA Electoral Commission.

Proposed Electorate of Great Southern (South West Region)

The proposed electorate of Great Southern is defined by the Shires of Kojonup, Boyup Brook, Broomehill, Tambellup, Jerramungup, Gnowangerup, Plantagenet, Denmark, Cranbrook, Manjimup and the western wards (part of the former Shire of Albany) of the City of Albany.

The overriding majority of these shires are already encompassed in the region governmentally, commercially and historically known as Great Southern.

Summary of arguments in this submission

- Shires of the proposed Great Southern electorate share intrinsic and historical links.
- Many government and non-government service providers have Albany as a regional centre, servicing the Great Southern Region, and hence most of this proposed electorate.
- Many industry and land use patterns, including the burgeoning plantation timber industry and viticultural industry, are centred on the Great Southern Region, with strong links to adjacent areas.
- Communication is strengthened by the common regional boundaries of many goods and service providers.
- The proposed electorate of Great Southern has considerable natural assets, especially the unique karri forests of its national parks and wilderness areas common to the Manjimup, Denmark, Plantagenet and Jerramungup Shires.
- The proposed Great Southern electorate maintains the integrity of all shire boundaries, except the City of Albany, which has traditionally been split between two electorates.

1. General

The seat is provisionally named Great Southern, as the proposed electorate is strongly synonymous with the Great Southern Region as defined under Regional Development Commission boundaries.

There is strong justification for developing an electorate centred on a significant proportion of the shires of the Great Southern Region due to their intrinsic and historical links through commerce, government service provision, land use, natural values and social infrastructure.

2. Key Points

Community of interest

Commerce

The proposed electorate of Great Southern encompasses 8 of the 12 Shires defining the Great Southern Region, as well as the west wards (part of the former Shire of Albany) of the City of Albany. The latter is also encompassed in this region. Whilst Boyup Brook and Manjimup are in the South West Development Commission Region, Walpole, in the Manjimup Shire, has stronger commerce and service links to Albany than to Bunbury, and Boyup Brook has very strong links to Kojonup as a regional centre.

Albany is the single dominant regional centre, offering a variety of **agricultural, business and social services** to the wider region, predominantly the proposed electorate of Great Southern. It makes good sense to define a regional electorate around a common service centre, for reasons of economic and social sustainability.

Albany is the only city, and the only port in the region.

Education, Police and Health Services

The proposed Great Southern electorate is predominantly serviced in the areas of education, police and health from regional offices based in Albany. Education and police services also cover Walpole, which is in the Manjimup Shire.

The Albany District Education Office services all schools in the proposed electorate, except those schools in Manjimup and Boyup Brook on the western edge of the electorate and the schools of Jerramungup and Gardiner River, on the eastern end.

The University of Western Australia has a regional campus in Albany that services the Great Southern and adjacent regions. Unique to this campus is a course in restoration ecology, synonymous with the regional focus on natural resource management and the region's natural assets.

Great Southern Grammar and St Joseph's College, both based in Albany, provide an early childhood – year 12 private education facility to students from throughout the Great Southern.

Other government services

The Great Southern Development Commission (GSDC) is focused on economic development and services the Great Southern Region, as does the Great Southern Area Consultative Committee, with a focus on support of regional economic, social and environmental enterprise.

The Department of Agriculture and Food has a regional office in Albany that services the region. This level of service support is indicative of the importance of agriculture to the region's economy and reinforces agriculture as a common community of interest in the proposed electorate.

Political and agri-political

The Great Southern is a zone of the Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA). Regular zone meetings keep a level of common interest in regional issues and regional infrastructure development, supporting local government interests. The Great Southern Zone comprises 9 of the 11 shires in this proposed electorate.

Agri-political groups also encompass the Great Southern as a zonal area, with the WA Farmers Federation (WA Farmers) and the Pastoralists and Graziers Association (PGA) convening regular meetings to discuss and formulate policy on common issues.

Land Use patterns

Agriculture

The area defined by the proposed electorate of Great Southern has a mixed farming focus, with considerable development in recent years of plantation forestry, viticulture and olives. Other niche industries, such as horticulture, fruit, and organic produce are evident in the higher rainfall zones closer to the coast.

Livestock production, especially of beef and sheep, is significant to the economy of this proposed electorate, and is a common land use theme from Manjimup and Boyup Brook in the west, to Gnowangerup and Jerramungup in the east. Livestock agencies have regional services based in many of the communities with significant regional centres in Albany.

Plantation forestry in particular, is a common theme in the proposed Great Southern electorate, with extensive plantings from the Manjimup Shire in the west to Jerramungup Shire in the east, and Kojonup and Boyup Brook Shires in the north. New loading terminals at the Albany port, and new and planned processing facilities in the Mirambeena timber-processing precinct north of Albany, are evidence of the considerable development in this sector.

Viticultural developments in the Great Southern and Manjimup/Pemberton areas have been considerable over the last 10 years. Great Southern, Manjimup and Pemberton are defined as wine regions, and are noted for world-class premium wines. A united marketing focus has been the goal of the Great Southern Wine Producers Association (GSWPA) and the Great Southern Region Marketing Association (GSRMA).

The proposed electorate of Great Southern unites the potato growing areas of the Manjimup Pemberton area with the potato growing areas of Bornholm (west of Albany). Industry issues are the same, with potato marketing, quarantine and disease control issues common to both areas.

Cottage industries are becoming more and more evident in the coastal areas stretching from Manjimup to Albany, with a strong focus on attracting the tourist market.

Means of Communication and distance from capital

Access to Member of Parliament

The electorate as described, is large enough to capture the required voting population to fit within established quotients, yet is compact enough to keep distances down to a minimum, improving access for constituents to their member of parliament.

Media

Whilst there are numerous community newspapers, the two main regional papers are the “Albany Advertiser” and the “Albany and Great Southern Weekender”, both based in Albany and both servicing the wider Great Southern area. The “Great Southern Farmer” supplement of the Albany Advertiser and the Great Southern Herald is a weekly publication which focuses on issues common to its farm-based readership across the Great Southern.

Radio media includes ABC radio Great Southern, and Radio West, both based in Albany. There is also a community radio based in Albany. All service the Great Southern as a region.

Albany as a service centre

As Albany is a centre for many regional government services, as far west as Walpole in the Manjimup Shire (education and police) and as far east as Jerramungup (health, police and development commission), there is a strong argument that the provisional electorate of Great Southern would enhance the strong communication links to all incorporated shires. This would be further strengthened through unified political representation.

Physical features

Natural features - National Parks and Wilderness Areas

The Great Southern electorate as described, contains a significant proportion of the state’s national parks, from the Warren National Park in Manjimup, to the Shannon, Beedelup, Walpole-Nornalup, Porongurup, Stirling Range National Parks and the Fitzgerald River National Park to the east.

The recently defined Walpole Wilderness Area, covering locations in the Manjimup, Plantagenet and Denmark Shires, has significant environmental values and is quite unique in Western Australia.

Many common issues are raised in the context of managing these natural resources with conservation values and fire management strategies among the most important.

It is particularly relevant to note that the Conservation Commission of Western Australia Forest Management plan 2004 – 2013, designates forests from Manjimup to Mt Barker as being in the one forestry sector. This sector is especially dominated by the states Karri forests, and further defines a synergy between the Mt Barker-Denmark-Manjimup areas.

Natural tourist attractions

There are numerous natural tourist attractions in the Great Southern electorate, including Bluff Knoll in the Stirling Ranges and Nancy's Peak and Castle Rock in the Porongurup's, as well as the Valley of the Giants Tourist Drive, encompassing the Tree Top Walk and the Diamond and Gloucester Tree lookouts in Manjimup and Pemberton respectively.

Tourism is a strong focus in this electorate and one strongly supported by the significant natural attractions that the region offers. Also significant is the local development of a regional branding focus through organisations such as the Great Southern Region Marketing Association and the Great Southern Wine Producers Association.

**Existing boundaries of regions and districts and
Existing local government boundaries*****Current regional boundaries***

Whilst this proposed electorate has shires that have not traditionally been in the South West electoral region, it should be noted that both Tambellup and Boyup Brook have been in the South West Electoral Region in the past. The synergies that exist between the Jerramungup, Gnowangerup and Kojonup Shires, with Albany as their service centre, provide a strong argument for their inclusion into the South West Electoral Region.

In the context of the South West Region being required to include coastal and forest areas of the south west of the state, it is reasonable to argue that, together with the extensive native forest areas in the Manjimup, Denmark, Boyup Brook, Cranbrook and Plantagenet Shires, the existence of plantation forestry is a basis for inclusion of shires in the South West Region. Plantation forestry is extensive in the Jerramungup (at Bremer Bay), Albany, Plantagenet, Cranbrook, Kojonup and Boyup Brook Shires.

Current local government and district boundaries

The proposed Great Southern electorate resolves two historical anomalies;

- The previously split shire of Bridgetown Greenbushes is now in the WA Nationals proposed electorate of Blackwood. This has been a significant issue for this shire.
- The previously split Shire of Manjimup is now in the proposed Great Southern electorate.
- The Tambellup and Broomehill Shires share a Chief Executive Officer and this proposal enables both to remain in the one electorate.



Terry Redman MLA
Member for Stirling
PO Box 61, Mount Barker WA 6324
Tel: 9851 1544 Fax: 9851 1912
Email: terry.redman@mp.wa.gov.au

