

Illegal fossicking

Incident dates: 7 June 2018 and 26 July 2018

Event: Illegal fossicking

Location: Meroo River near Avisford, 35 km west of Mudgee NSW

Overview

The NSW Resources Regulator in collaboration with NSW Fisheries and the NSW Police Force has investigated an incident of alleged illegal fossicking using a power-operated dredge in the Meroo River near Mudgee. Investigations are continuing into a second alleged incident.

Photo: Photograph of the power operated dredge



The location

The Meroo River, Avisford, is in the Mid-Western Regional Local Government Area and is located approximately 35km west of Mudgee. The Meroo River is a perennial watercourse and is a tributary of the Cudgegong River.

The incidents

On 6 June 2018, NSW Fisheries officers were patrolling the Meroo River and observed a floating dredge in the centre of the watercourse. The dredge was equipped with a petrol motor, sluice and various intake and outlet lines. The sighting of the dredge was reported to the Resources Regulator and NSW Police.

On 7 June 2018, detectives from the NSW Police Force Rural Crime Investigation Unit attended the same location and observed a male person using the powered operated dredge to mine for gold in the watercourse.

On 26 July 2018, NSW Police again observed the same male person using the dredge in the watercourse unlawfully. All information obtained by police was referred to the Resources Regulator.

The investigation

The Regulator has issued a 35-year-old Parkes man with a \$2,500 penalty notice for the offence of “mining or prospecting without authorisation” for the alleged offence detected on 7 June 2018. Further enforcement action may be taken in relation to the alleged offence detected on 26 July 2018.

A prohibition notice has also been issued to the man ordering him to discontinue illegal fossicking using power operated equipment in NSW.

The mining laws

Illegal fossicking and illegal mining are serious offences under the Mining Act 1992 and carry penalties of up to \$1.1 million.

Should you observe illegal fossicking or illegal mining please report it to the Resources Regulator on **1300 814 609**.

Further information

Please refer to the following guidance materials:

- https://www.resourcesandgeoscience.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/363544/A-Guide-to-Fossicking-in-New-South-Wales.PDF
- <https://www.resourcesandgeoscience.nsw.gov.au/miners-and-explorers/fossicking-in-nsw>

About this information release

The Resources Regulator has issued this information to draw attention to unlawful fossicking activities in the Meroo River.

The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing. However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that the information upon which they rely is up to date and to check the currency of the information with the appropriate officer of the Department of Planning and Environment or the user's independent adviser. All photographs were taken by the Resources Regulator.

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