

03 / 11 / 2014

This is my submission to the Senate Committee
Re Terms of Reference

(9) any other matter the committee considers
relevant.

Q.G.C. gas well known as Avon Downs No 1.

The gas well was drilled in Dec. 2000. Approx 80 metres
from Columbusa Creek, a catchment creek to the
Condamine River & Murray Darling system.

2 evaporation ponds were built beside the gas well &
a separator installed to separate water from gas, the
gas was placed into a large cylinder the saline water
was put into the poly sheeting lined evaporation ponds

In Nov/Dec 2006, I found the trees along a section
of Columbusa creek had died, also a white crust
on top of the ground from where the evaporation ponds
were into the creek.

What had happened was Q.G.C. could not handle the
saline water & closed the well down. Then between
2001 & 2006 they folded the liners into the ponds & pushed
the banks in on top of the liners, not making sure
that there was no saline water mixture remaining
in the ponds.

When I reported the damage, I was told it was my
problem, at last the Condamine Catchment Group in
Toowoomba came & tested the water & site Dec 2006.
They contacted DERM who rang me & said they
would contact me in ^{Jan} Feb. 2007 when they returned from
Xmas leave. I worked for DERM & she & 2 other
DERM people I met in Miles to take them to the site, Avon
Downs No 1.

Q.G.C. were told by DERM to start to rehab the area, sediment
fences were all that were installed at that time, then soil
test to see where the saline dirt was & how deep. DERM then
allowed Q.G.C. to rehab the full area affected by salt

AVON Downs No 1.

03, 11, 2014

this area was approx 1 ha also 1/4 ha in towards the creek & creek bank approx. 60mtrs in length. I enclose photos of area.

Q.G.C. were NOT taken to environmental court for the damage caused & took 7 years for me to get compensation for the loss of creek water in my paddock.

are some of the DERM officers.

I also spoke to the Gas Field Commission which was a waste of time, all they can do is go to the gas companies & say this farmer is not happy go & solve the problem.

another DERM (EHP) officer said "we can't stop these companies, we can only try & minimise their mistakes" & damage

If these companies were held accountable for the disasters they cause & lies they tell, they come in & tell great stories how good they are & won't go anywhere the farmer doesn't want them but all that changes once they are allowed in the front gate. The "make good" with water is a joke the three gas companies around here are permitted to lower the artesian water basins by 50 mtrs each total 150m. They the gas companies offer the land owner who has a bore (water) on his farm money to "cap" the bore - no water to come out of the bore, then there is no complaint if the water level drops. If the farmer does not allow the bore to be capped the gas company offers to buy the farm because they can not make good with water.



Department of
**Environment and Resource
Management**

7 March 2012

Dear David

Information relating to Avon Downs No 1 CSG Well

As per my email to you today, I have been working on your request from 7 December 2011 for the following information surrounding the dam decommissioning at Avon Downs no.1 CSG well in January 2007. You requested information on:

- Approved rehabilitation program from QGC for the Avon Downs No.1 CSG well;
- When rehab started;
- Columboola Creek water test results by DERM from January 2008;
- Soil test results prior to rehabilitation starting;
- When the evaporation pond was pushed in; and
- Hard copy of the EA.

I have located the Temporary Management Program from QGC, dated July 2008, regarding the dam decommissioning incident at Avon Downs no.1 well. This includes a rehabilitation plan in Attachment 1. According to section 1.1 'Overview' (p. 1) of the Temporary Management Program, pond decommissioning was undertaken in August 2006. This type of information is normally accessed under Right to Information application however I have decided that I will provide the information and have included a hard copy for your convenience.

I have also located the final Transitional Environmental Program (TEP) that was issued by DERM to QGC regarding the rehabilitation of the area affected by the incident. This TEP approves the rehabilitation within the conditions listed in the TEP. The TEP is dated 16 March 2009 and includes a number of rehabilitation conditions and milestones at the Avon Downs no.1 site. I have included a hard copy for your convenience.

Our records indicate that DERM officers undertook water and soil sampling of the Avon Downs no.1 well rehabilitation site during January 2007, with a representative selection of

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samples tested by an independent laboratory for relevant analytes. I have included a copy of the field map, which shows indicative DERM sampling locations from January 2007. I have been unable to find any water or soil sampling results from the site that occurred in January 2008, as requested. However, I believe the January 2007 sampling results should provide the relevant information.

I have included a copy of the current EA covering Avon Downs, dated 11 October 2010 and presently under amendment, in addition to the EA that was in place at the time of the Avon Downs no.1 well being drilled, dated 25 September 2000, with the other documents.

I am continuing to work through your remaining enquiries.

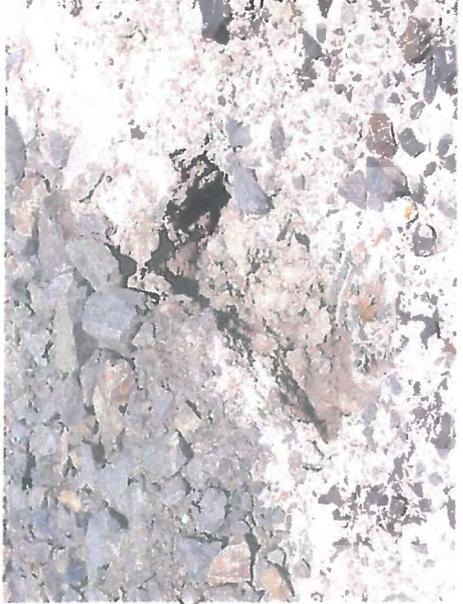
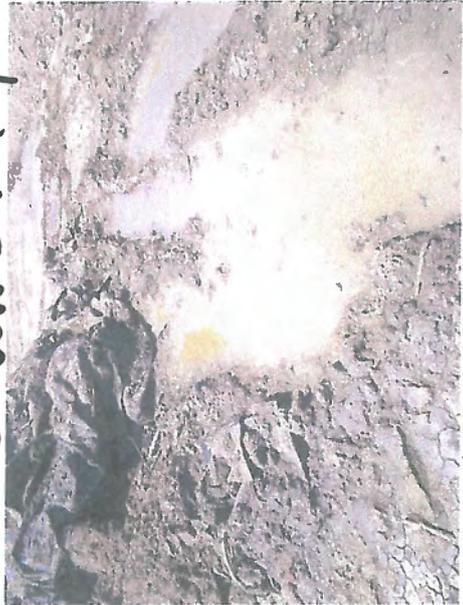
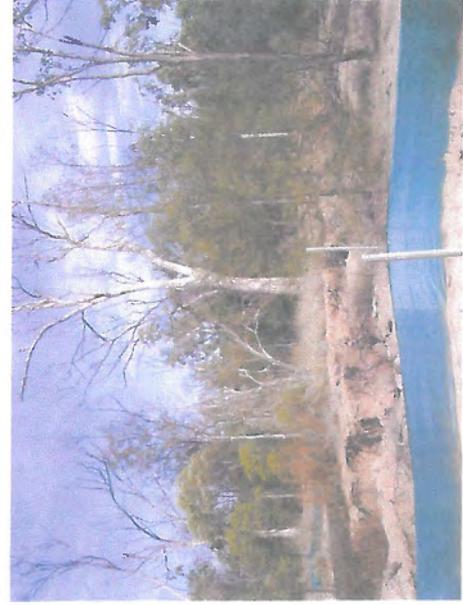
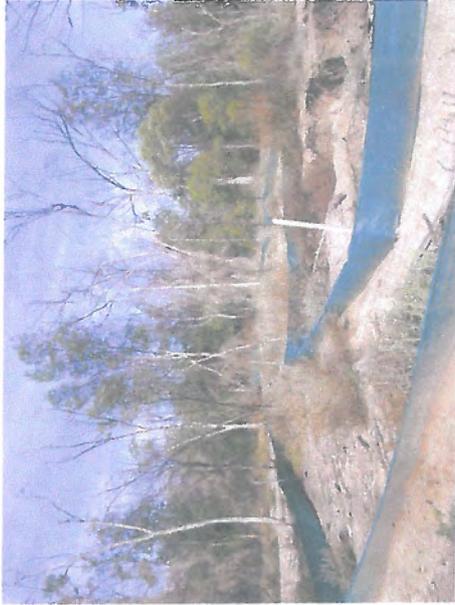
If you require any clarification of these matters please contact me

Yours sincerely

Manager

Avon Downs No 1

x Tree dead from Salt run off from QSC Site Avon Downs No.1.



After bank was taken out by QSC. There are ponds unencumbered.

DERM visited this site Jan. 2007. QGC put green bundling around to stop silt, washing into Columboola Creek



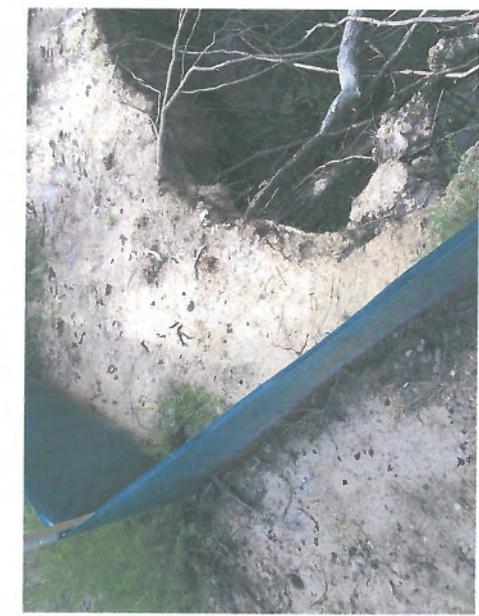
Silt on banks of



I was worried about the silt.

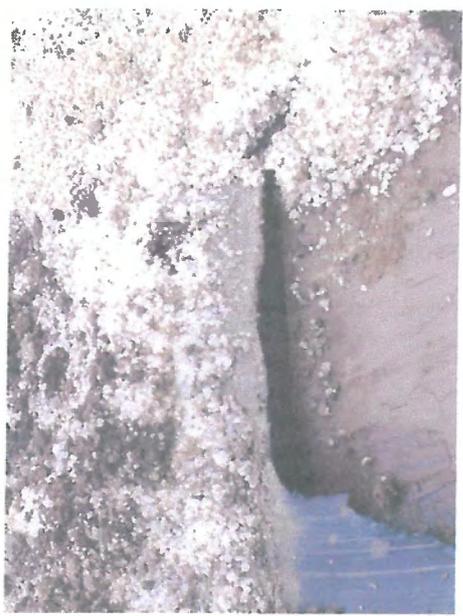


Small bank put between Ponds or Columboola Creek - X Row over



Dead trees along Columboola Creek X

was
There
more
Soil
tests
done
after
lined
removed

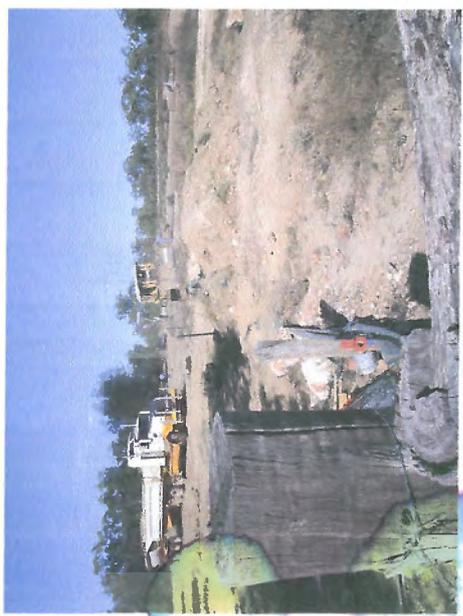
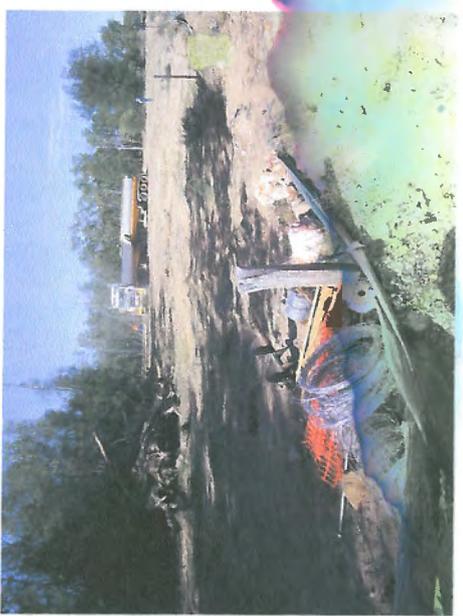
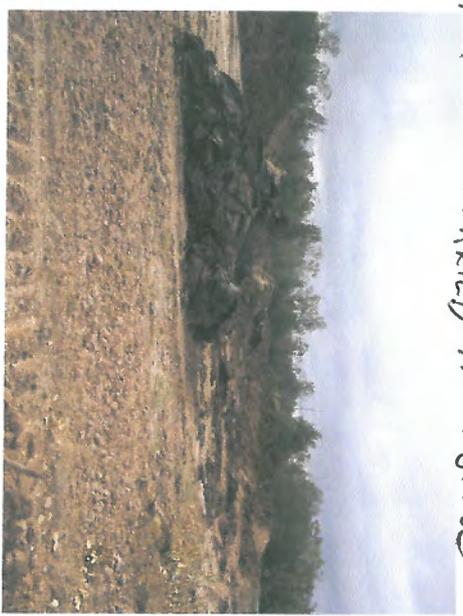


EVAPORATION POND OPENED UP
REVEALING SALT

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at
top
inner
in
middle
sed



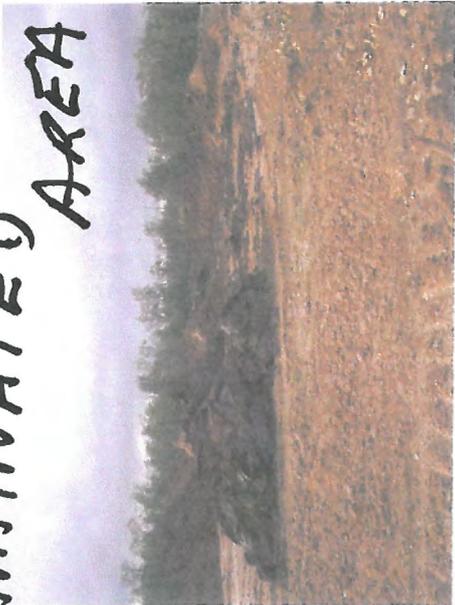
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Liners Buried in Pond



AVON DOWNS NO. 1.

CONTAMINATED AREA

(S...?)



SW... 1

x

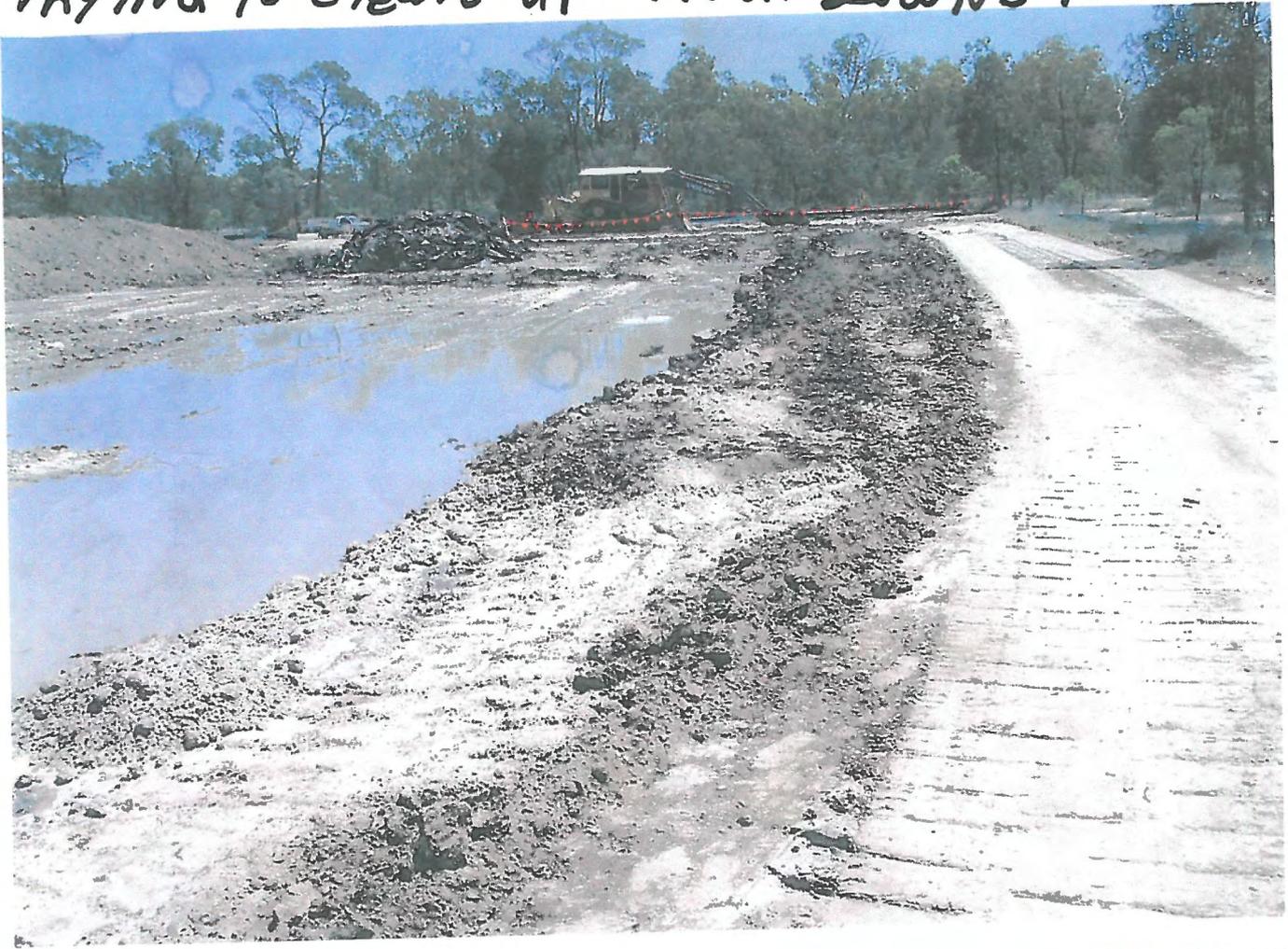
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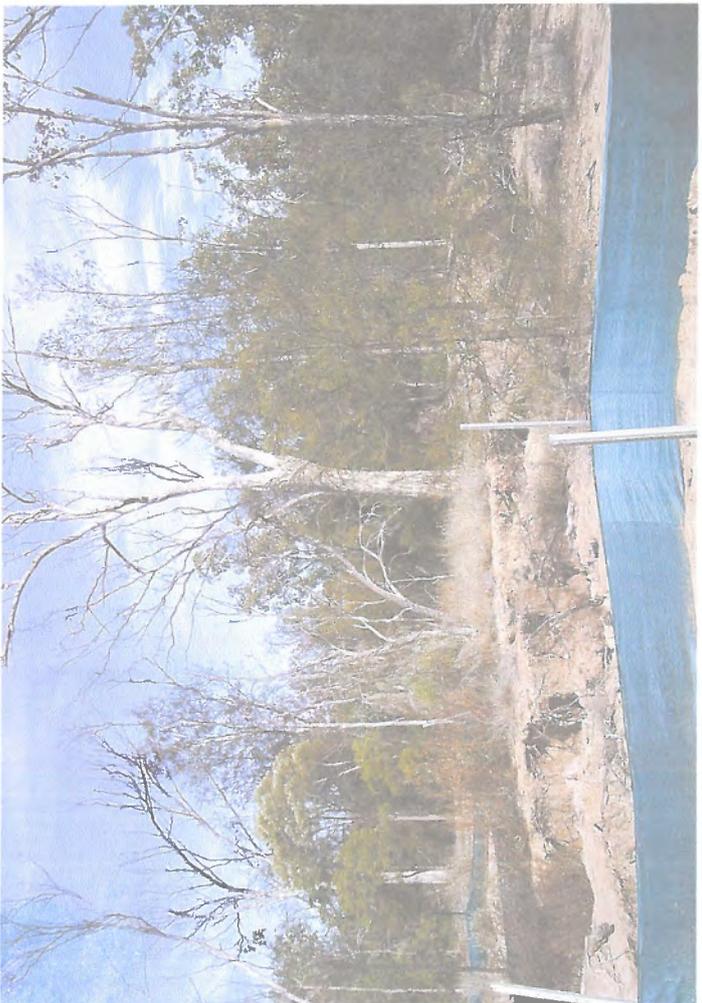
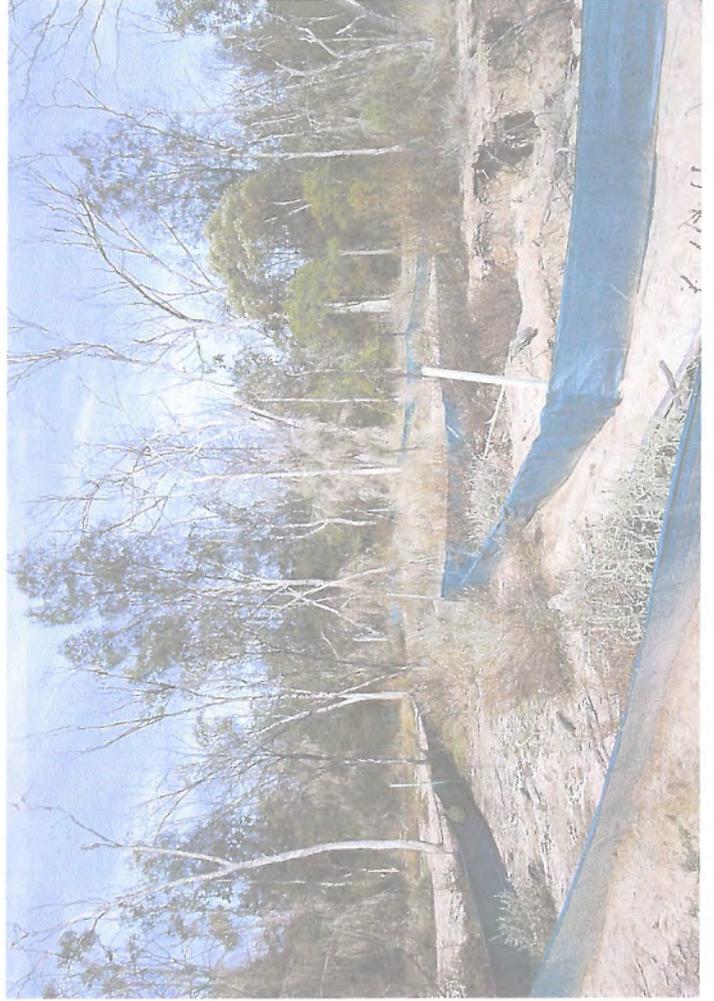
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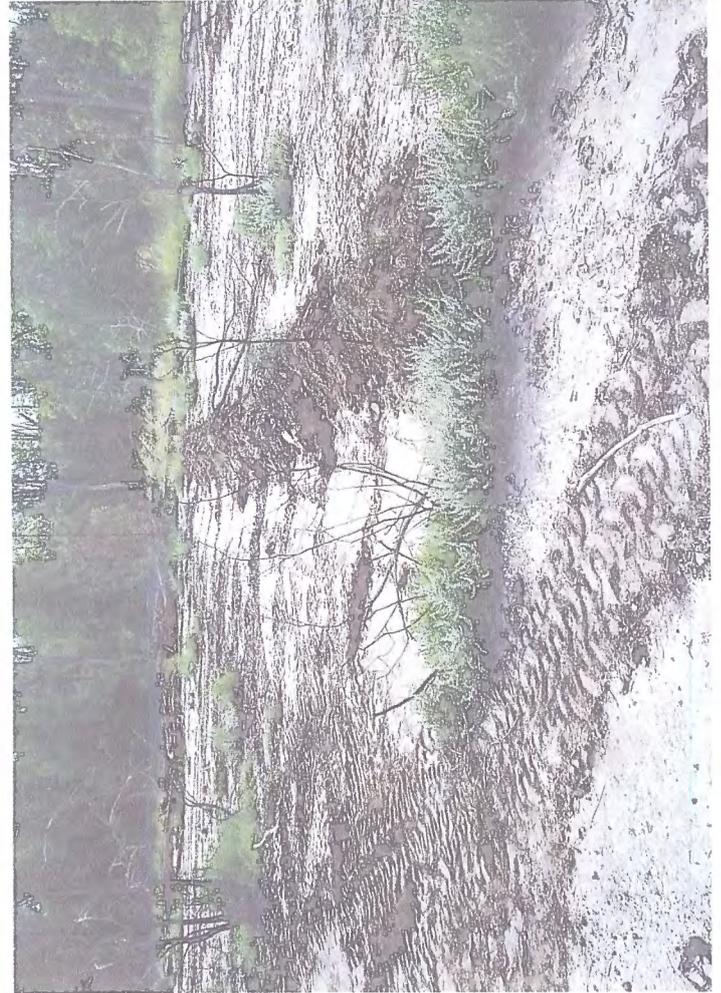
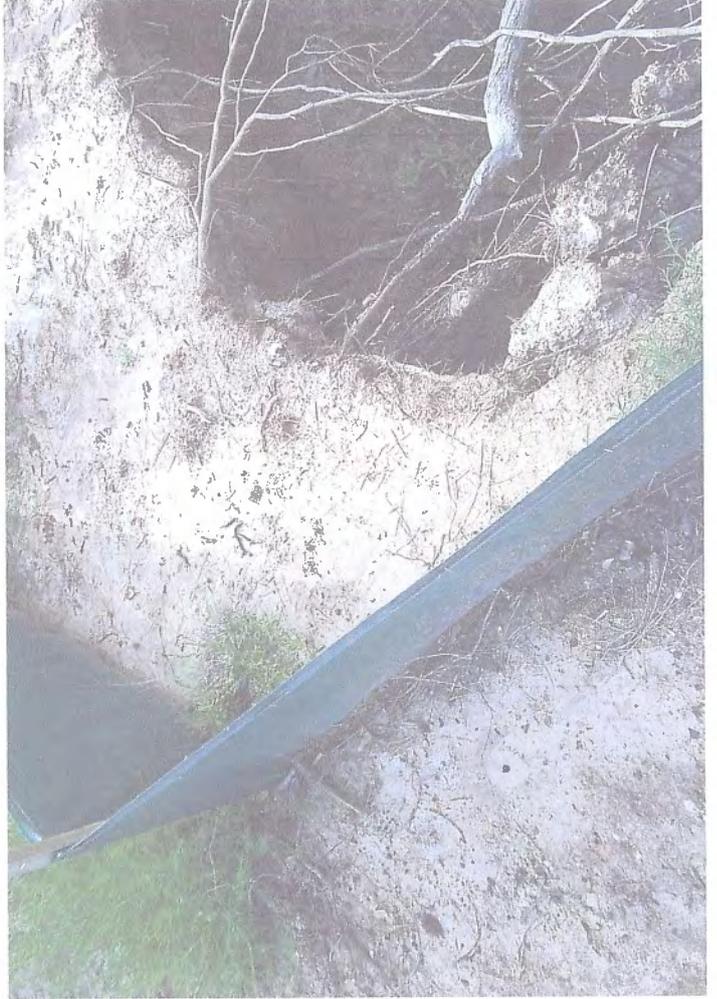
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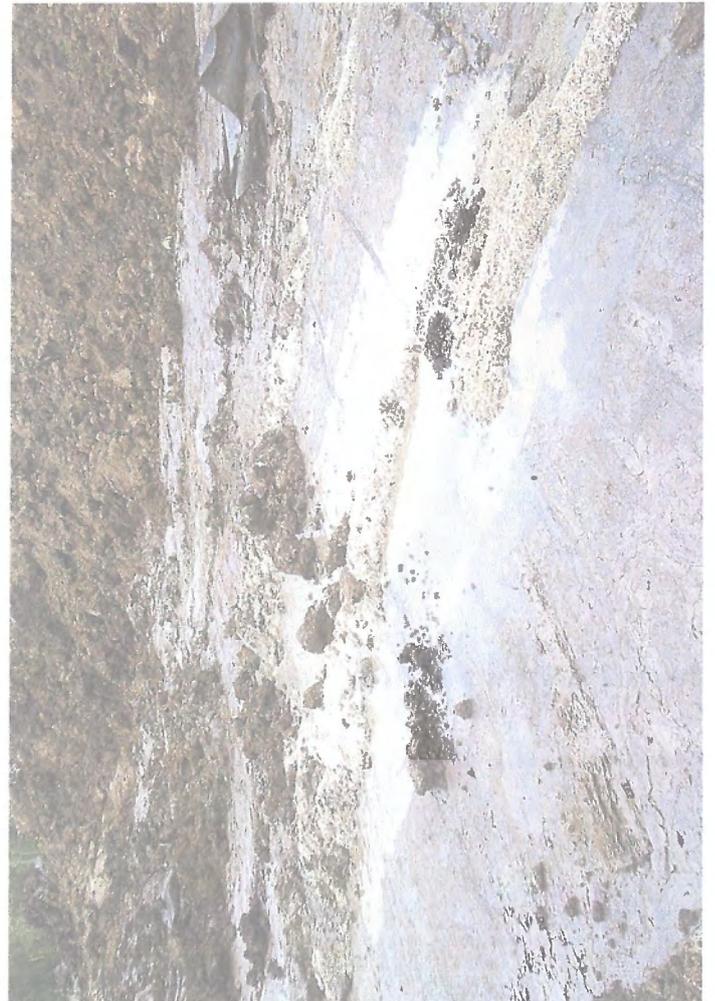
TRYING TO CLEAN UP AVON DOWNS No 1











I *Copies*

QGC
ENVIRONMENTAL
management

RE: Avon Downs Settling Ponds

 This message may be a phishing scam. [Learn more](#)

Sent: Monday, 10 September 2007 7:42:10 AM

David,

Hi. I apologise for not returning your call, but I can't recall receiving a message. I will follow that up to try and stop that happening again in the future.

88

I haven't been directly involved in the management of these issues involving Queensland Gas for some time. However, I will contact the EPA's Project Manager this morning and ensure he gives you a call.

If you don't hear from the EPA by tomorrow morning, can you please call me on

Kind regards,

3
met with
in Sept on site
expected report from EPA
in couple of days would
let me know as sap.
that 3 weeks ago

Sent: Sunday, 9 September 2007 11:01 AM

Subject: Avon Downs Settling Ponds

I met you and two other EPA representatives in Miles and then travelled to "Avon Downs" on the Boort-Koi Road at Columboola to inspect a salt spill from a Queensland Gas well that had been closed down, and the settling ponds filled in. You took soil and water samples, and said that the Queensland Gas company would do something about the salt spill. They have done some work around the fenced area and a small semi-circle on my side of the fence, on the Columboola Creek side. There is still an area where the trees have died, and had been marked with pink ribbon, which hasn't been touched by Queensland Gas.

I marked the area that I am concerned about, for them. But they say they cannot see how the salt would affect that area, and that the EPA has agreed to the work that they are undertaking. I am

Have trucks Bahrat on site 19/12/09 *guard building*

still concerned about the area that I marked. I rang approximately two weeks ago and reported this, I asked for you to ring me back. Please contact me regarding this.

David McCabe

Salinity at Coolumboola Ck - QGC operations

 You may not know this sender. [Mark as safe](#) | [Mark as unsafe](#)

Sent: Monday, 10 September 2007 8:05:20 AM

To:

Dear Mr McCabe,

I received your email through my supervisor.

I just wanted to touch base as quickly as I could and let you know who I am and what is going on now.

Initially I was involved in this project as far back as January this year as a Soil Scientist from Dept. Natural Resources and Water, I am now however the project manager (at the EPA) looking after the environmental interests for petroleum activities that Queensland Gas Company carry out on the Avon Down property.

The company has been working with the EPA to remedy the situation and we have been in negotiation to put in place a rehabilitation/remediation strategy to deal with the salinity/sodicity issues that have been encountered. The company has put in place sediment and silt fences to prevent any further overland flow into Coolumboola Ck. The company plans to carry out significant remediation strategies over the next few months – but at this stage we are in the final stages of negotiation.

If you have any questions about the theory or process – please email me back or ring on the below number – just please note I have to go away for a few days – but will be back in the office this Friday. If you email me back your phone number I'll give you a ring on Friday.

Regards,

Visit us online at www.epa.qld.gov.au

QUEENSLAND GAS COMPANY LIMITED
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Email: qgc@qgc.com.au

22 August 2007

David & McCabe

Dear David and

I just wanted to give you an update on our progress on the two ponds on Avon Downs.

Thanks for flagging the trees you were talking about. I went out and inspected the site personally again with an engineer the week before last. We thoroughly reviewed all the sediment and erosion control measures that we had put in place in August and these had been viewed by the EPA. All those controls are still sound and certainly doing the job they were designed to do but please inform me if you observe any changes.

I'm at a loss to explain the problems with the trees in the area you flagged. We couldn't see how the salt could possibly have migrated upstream from the pond sites, especially given the upstream earth bridge that's in place across the creek. The soil scientists we've engaged carried out extensive investigations in the area in March and they were clearly of the view that not all tree losses back then had been salt-related because many of the trees extended well upstream.

Our proposed rehabilitation of the entire pond area will take place under an environmental management program as soon as the program has been approved by the EPA. We can't start that work until after we get the EPA approval but we don't expect it to be far away. That rehabilitation will of course include removal of salt effected areas and the erosion and sediment controls will remain in place until after the salt is removed.

Once we get the EPA's approval, we'll arrange the contractors to carry out the rehabilitation work. I'll be in touch with you again once I have some dates for that work. In the meantime if you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me at any stage on

Yours sincerely,

Environmental Manager
Queensland Gas Company Limited

Cc. (Environmental Protection Agency)
(Environmental Licensing Professionals Pty Limited)

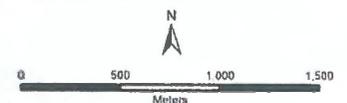


**13BWR149
65BWR154
Aerial Imagery**

- Surveyed Property Boundary
- QGC Field
- Property Boundary

a/10/11

DATE:	5/10/2011	MAP NO:	M 11054 01
CREATED BY:	337	REV NO:	
CHECKED BY:		MAP TYPE:	
PLAN REF:			



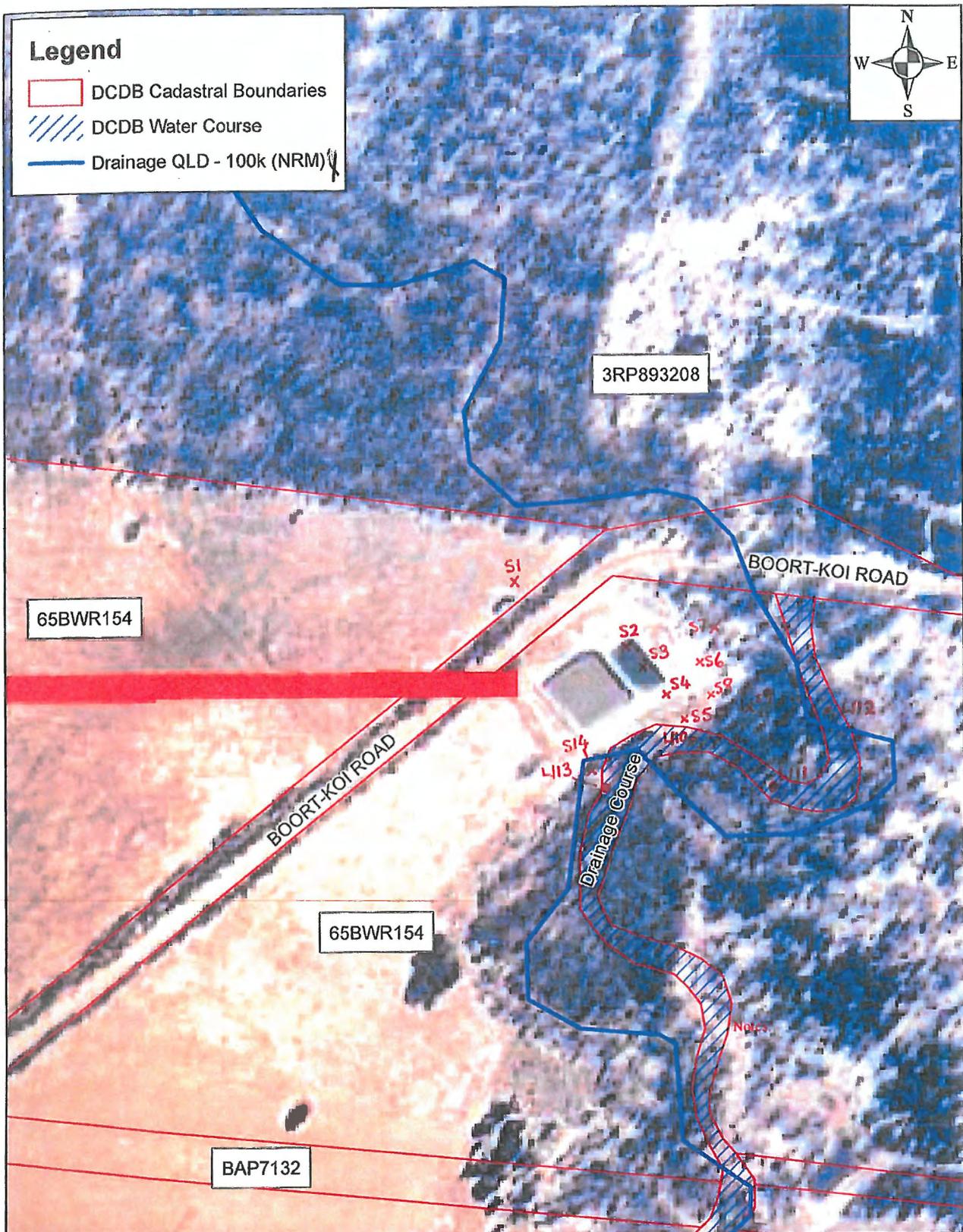
Map Projection: QGA '94 SCALE: 1:25 000 (A3)

DATA SOURCE:

Note: Every effort has been made to ensure this information is spatially accurate. The location of the information should not be relied on as the exact field location.



X Columboola Creek



Legend

- DCDB Cadastral Boundaries
- DCDB Water Course
- Drainage QLD - 100k (NRM)



3RP893208

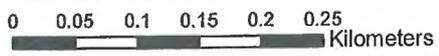
65BWR154

65BWR154

BAP7132

**Soil Samples
Locality: Columboola**

Drawn By: Environmental Planning, Southern Region, EPA.	Projection: The Universal Transverse Mercator.
	Horizontal Datum: GDA 1994, MGA, Zone 56.
Date: 19/01/07	Vertical Datum: Not Applicable
Job Number: S07011902	



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Sheet 1 of 1 Original A4

Queensland Government
Environmental Protection Agency