

Project fast-tracked

PHOSPHATE is the future for North West Queensland, Premier Anna Bligh believes.

Legend International Holdings head Joseph Gutnick and State Member for Mount Isa Betty Kiernan told the premier at meetings

in Brisbane this week more than 1000 jobs were linked to the Georgina Basin project 125km north Mount Isa.

"I told the premier this is real and in the now; it's not out there in the never never," Mrs Kiernan said and the premier agreed.

"There is a lot of hype about uranium mining in Queensland, but it might be decades away - if at all," Ms Bligh said.

"I went to this year's poll with a clear position and that won't be changing. This is now. Some in the uranium industry are talking up their numbers, but there are potentially five to six times as many jobs on offer with just this one project. Let's get on with it."

By its own reckoning, the uranium industry predicts it would take three to five years to create 120 jobs.

Legend International plans to begin mining up to one million tonnes a year at its D-Tree phosphate mine, 125km north of Mount Isa.

It plans to ramp up production to 5 million tonnes a year by 2012.

Legend plans to become one of the world's leading suppliers of phosphate and fertiliser products and has an agreement with an Indian giant to take up to 7 million tonnes a year.

Mrs Kiernan said Legend was a serious player.

Legend's primary focus is the development of its phosphate interests in the Georgina Basin including Paradise (formerly Lady Annie and Lady Jane), D-Tree, Thornton, Lily Creek, Quita Creek, Sherrin Creek and Highland Plains.

Legend's phosphate project is being fast tracked in the Queensland Government's Expedited Mining Projects. No Environmental Impact Assessment (EIS) was required for the D-Tree Mining Lease Application.

Subject to the conclusion of a positive feasibility study, the D-Tree DSO Project remained on schedule to start operation in the fourth quarter this year.



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