



Suggestion 27

The Nationals WA

28 pages



Suggestions Submission
to the Redistribution Committee for
Western Australia

on behalf of The Nationals WA

THE NATIONALS
for Regional WA

Redistribution Committee for Western Australia
C/- Australian Electoral Commission
Locked Bag 4007
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Committee Members

It is our pleasure to submit our Suggestions Submission for the 2020 Western Australian Redistribution on behalf of The Nationals WA.

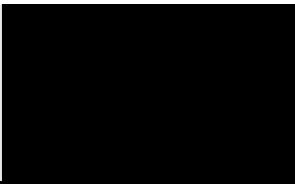
In preparing our submission, we have used MapInfo v17.0.4 so that our suggestions can easily be viewed and analysed by Committee Members and staff.

Please be advised that our Suggestions Submission comprise the following:

- 1. A written submission with a summary of suggestions, a commentary on the methodology we have used in formulating them and the suggestions in detail including detailed maps of each of our suggested electoral divisions;*
- 2. The suggestions in PDF format for display on the Australian Electoral Commission's website; and*
- 3. The suggestions in MapInfo format.*

I trust this is of assistance.

Yours sincerely



Jack Mallick
Acting State Director - Operations

Suggestions Submission

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INTRODUCTION

This Suggestions Submission is made in response to the Australian Electoral Commissioner - and Chair of the Redistribution Committee for Western Australia - Tom Rogers's invitation to members of the public to propose changes to the boundaries and names of federal electoral divisions in Western Australia.

The Country Party was first represented in the Parliament of Australia in 1920 and later became The Nationals in 1982. For a century, we have been committed to providing an unwavering voice for rural and regional electors in the House of Representatives, the Senate, and state parliaments. The Nationals has always advocated for the drawing of electoral divisions based on communities of interest, commonality, ease and means of communication and travel, for the avoidance of contrived boundaries.

The Nationals WA (The Nationals) are the only political Party dedicated solely to representing the people living in regional Western Australia. It is for this reason that our Suggestions Submission for the 2020 Western Australian Federal Redistribution is unashamedly focused on ensuring the boundaries drawn in regional areas represent and are built upon the strongest possible communities of interests – local government areas – subject to the numerical criteria under which the current redistribution must be carried out. To this end, The Nationals provide detailed suggestions for the electoral divisions of Durack, Forrest, O'Connor and Pearce.

While The Nationals are focused on regional Western Australia, we recognise that the 2020 Western Australian Federal Redistribution must consider the state as a whole. Therefore, we have ensured that the suggestions we have proposed for regional Western Australia allow for the remaining eleven (11) metropolitan and outer metropolitan electoral divisions to be redrawn within the numerical and statutory criteria required under the Act.

REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE ACT

The Nationals acknowledge that Western Australia will decrease its representation from 16 to 15 Federal Electoral Divisions and note that in making the proposed redistribution, the Redistribution Committee for Western Australia is required by Section 66(3)(b) of the Commonwealth Electoral Act to:

(a) shall, as far as practicable, endeavour to ensure that, if the State or Territory were redistributed in accordance with the proposed redistribution,

the number of electors enrolled in each Electoral Division in the State or Territory would not, at the projection time determined under section 63A, be less than 96.5% or more than 103.5% of the average divisional enrolment of that State or Territory at that time; and

- (b) subject to paragraph (a), shall give due consideration, in relation to each proposed Electoral Division, to:*
- (i) community of interests within the proposed Electoral Division, including economic, social and regional interests;*
 - (ii) means of communication and travel within the proposed Electoral Division;*
 - (iv) the physical features and area of the proposed Electoral Division; and*
 - (v) the boundaries of existing Divisions in the State or Territory;*

and subject thereto the quota of electors for the State or Territory shall be the basis for the proposed redistribution, and the Redistribution Committee may adopt a margin of allowance, to be used whenever necessary, but in no case shall the quota be departed from to a greater extent than one-tenth more or one-tenth less.

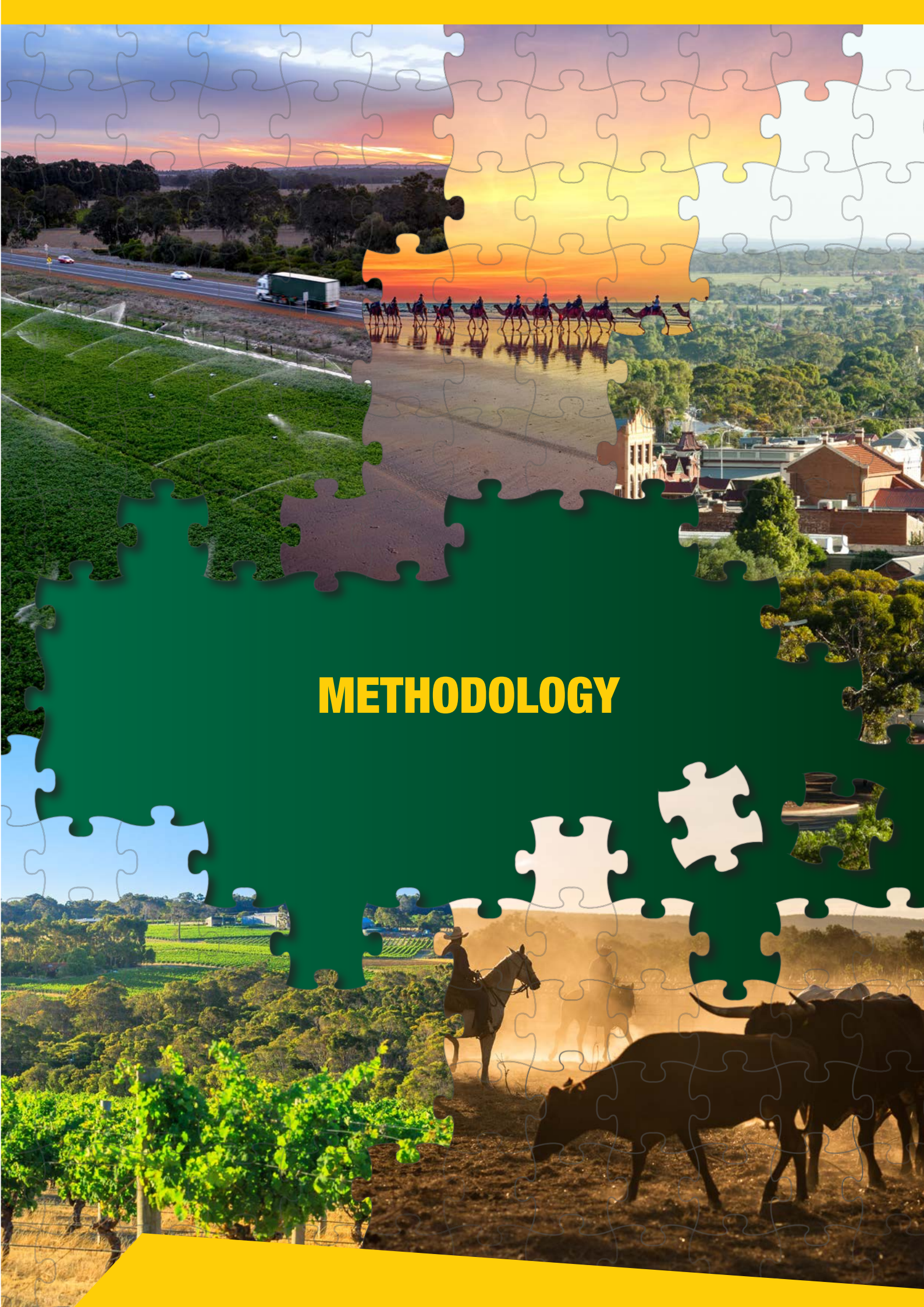
In preparing this submission, The Nationals have adhered strictly to the elector constraints as set out in the Act and has also paid the necessary due regard to maintaining community of interests, means of communication and travel, physical features and existing boundaries.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Unprecedented in previous redistributions, there is a significant unique factor which should be considered during the 2020 Western Australian Redistribution process – the ongoing wide-spread community disruption being caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Over recent months, we have seen significant impacts on Western Australian residents and local communities, whether it be through loss of employment, closure of businesses and schools or the implementation of isolation measures and other restrictions.

We therefore suggest that the Redistribution Committee for Western Australia should attempt to minimise further unnecessary voter disruption by undertaking and adopting minimal change to electoral division boundaries wherever possible.



METHODOLOGY

From the outset, we note the suggestions of The Nationals fully comply with the statutory requirements set out in Section 66(3)(b) of the Commonwealth Electoral Act.

STARTING POINTS AND CORRIDORS

The drawing of Western Australia's electoral divisions needs to begin from logical fixed starting points. It is therefore anticipated that the Redistribution Committee will work inwards from both the north east (locality of Kununurra) and south east (locality of Eucla) corners of the state.

ELECTORAL ENROLMENT

In accordance with Section 65 of the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918, the Electoral Commissioner has determined the current enrolment quota for the purposes of the redistribution of Western Australia to be 112,172 - based on enrolment numbers as of Wednesday 15 July 2020, which is the date the Western Australian Federal Redistribution commenced.

Further, the number of enrolled voters in each electoral division must not vary by more than 10 per cent (up or down) from the quota or average number - nor be less than 96.5% or more than 103.5% of the average divisional enrolment at the 'projection time'.

This variation has been provided by Parliament so it is possible to also have regard for the aspects of the statutory criteria set out in Section 66 (3) (b) of the Act.

Therefore, one can assume that the full permissible variation can be employed to allow sensible electoral divisions to be drawn.

There is also no requirement that each electoral division must be drawn so their actual enrolment has negligible variation from the quota, or that the projected enrolment should have negligible variation from the average divisional enrolment at the 'projection time'. To this end, The Nationals suggestions have sparingly made use of the flexibility offered by the margin of allowance.

In analysing the current and projected enrolments of the existing electoral divisions in the table below, it becomes increasingly clear that there are significant challenges facing the Redistribution Committee.

Of the thirteen (13) current metropolitan and outer metropolitan electoral divisions, only five (5) are sustainable on their existing boundaries, one (1) is significantly over quota, with the remaining (8) are significantly under quota on both current and projected enrolment.

| DIVISION | JULY 2020 | | FEBRUARY 2025 | |
|-----------|-----------|----------|---------------|----------|
| | ENROLMENT | VARIANCE | ENROLMENT | VARIANCE |
| | 1682574 | - | 1752566 | - |
| | 112172 | 0.00% | 116838 | 0.00% |
| Brand | 110508 | -1.48% | 119561 | 2.33% |
| Burt | 109053 | -2.78% | 116511 | -0.28% |
| Canning | 110091 | -1.85% | 117835 | 0.85% |
| Cowan | 100543 | -10.37% | 104250 | -10.77% |
| Curtin | 101848 | -9.20% | 105373 | -9.81% |
| Durack | 98382 | -12.29% | 95524 | -18.24% |
| Forrest | 107326 | -4.32% | 113971 | -2.45% |
| Fremantle | 109269 | -2.59% | 115628 | -1.04% |
| Hasluck | 100732 | -10.20% | 103715 | -11.23% |
| Moore | 102441 | -8.67% | 104031 | -10.96% |
| O'Connor | 101985 | -9.08% | 101703 | -12.95% |
| Pearce | 125488 | 11.87% | 142491 | 21.96% |
| Perth | 104026 | -7.26% | 106518 | -8.83% |
| Stirling | 103123 | -8.07% | 104440 | -10.61% |
| Swan | 102932 | -8.24% | 105211 | -9.95% |
| Tangney | 94827 | -15.46% | 95804 | -18.00% |
| | 1682574 | | 1752566 | |

Suggestions Submission - Methodology

The remaining three (3) regional electoral divisions (Durack, Forrest and O'Connor) will require additional enrolment injection. However, as The Nationals suggestions will demonstrate later in this submission, the required enrolment can be sourced very easily for these electoral divisions in a methodical way - and in large part - will be achieved through the inclusion of entire local government authority (LGA) areas.

As previously noted, The Nationals will be providing detailed suggestions only for the electoral divisions of Durack, Forrest, O'Connor and Pearce, as we are the only political Party dedicated solely to representing the people living in regional Western Australia.

However, to ensure easy adoption of our suggestions for these electoral divisions by the Redistribution Committee, The Nationals have ensured that the remaining current and projected enrolments will easily produce the other eleven (11) required electoral divisions well within the allowable variances (see below table).

MAINTAINING EXISTING ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES WHERE POSSIBLE

Although Western Australia will be losing one electoral division during this redistribution process, The Nationals urge the Redistribution Committee to maintain 15 of the existing 16 divisional names as they are well accepted by the community and there is no demonstrated benefit to be gained by changing them.

The current names reflect either significant localities or features within each Division (eg. Freemantle, Perth, Swan) or recognise individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to Australia (eg. former Prime Minister John Curtin, George Fletcher Moore, Edith Cowan OBE).

To this end The Nationals submission does not recommend any changes to the names of electoral divisions.

COMMUNITY OF INTEREST

The Nationals recognise the difficulties faced in attempting to establish a precise definition of what constitutes a 'community.'

We submit that the Redistribution Committee should - subject to numerical considerations - seek to create electoral divisions which - where practical - reflect natural and pre-existing communities. This would suggest that where a group of electors identify themselves as part of an existing 'community', every effort should be made to avoid dividing them between electoral divisions.

This is not to suggest that an electoral division should only comprise electors from a particular cultural, professional, or socio-economic group. A typical 'community' will still include a diverse range of citizens. Individuals who shop in the same area, read the same local newspaper, or send their children to schools in a local area are likely to identify as part of a 'community.' However, they are still likely to encompass a broad range of socio-economic and cultural groupings.

Rather than seeking to create an artificial form of social homogeneity in electoral divisions, the Redistribution Committee should strive to use 'community of interest' as a concept, which defines geographical areas. For example, local government areas (LGAs) in regional areas and utilising locality/suburb boundaries in the metropolitan areas.

In regional electoral divisions, economic, social and regional interests tend to have a greater salience and LGA boundaries are generally a far stronger indicator of community of interest than elsewhere in the state. By and large, LGA boundaries also reflect the significant natural physical features of the State.

Therefore, electoral divisions should be drawn in regional areas that incorporate whole LGAs in the one

| DIVISION | JULY 2020 | | FEBRUARY 2025 | |
|--------------------------|-----------|----------|---------------|----------|
| | ENROL | VARIANCE | ENROL | VARIANCE |
| | | 1682574 | - | 1752566 |
| | 112172 | 0.00% | 116838 | 0.00% |
| Durack | 117741 | 4.97% | 114959 | -1.61% |
| Forrest | 108398 | -3.36% | 114496 | -2.00% |
| O'Connor | 115829 | 3.26% | 116937 | 0.08% |
| Pearce | 101668 | -9.36% | 117760 | 0.79% |
| REMAINDER (11 Divisions) | 1238938 | 0.41% | 1288414 | 0.25% |
| | 1682574 | | 1752566 | |

electorate where possible, subject to the necessary numerical considerations and requirements as set out in Section 66(3)(b) of the Act. Our suggested boundaries in regional areas are largely based on LGA boundaries and this is provided in greater detail later in this submission.

Finally, in metropolitan areas, LGAs are at times less helpful than in rural areas. Therefore, the utilisation of locality boundaries in metropolitan areas will be much more useful in determining local 'community of interest' as residents know which suburb they live in and including whole suburbs in electorate divisions where possible helps to avoid any confusion.

COMMUNICATIONS AND TRAVEL

Ease of travel and communication is an important consideration when working to establish electoral divisions.

When a number of different regions need to be incorporated into an electoral division, preference should be given to grouping those which are connected by major transport corridors, railways and other major roads. All efforts should be made to avoid creating electoral divisions where different parts would have difficulty communicating with one another.

Where it becomes necessary to divide a community, the dividing line should ideally represent a barrier to communication corridors. Such barriers can often take the form of physical features, such as rivers, major highways/motorways, or railway lines.

Major roads have often provided an obvious boundary in metropolitan electoral divisions. They frequently serve as postcode and locality boundaries and will often clearly denote a community of interest.

There are, however, certain instances where a community will be grouped around or along a main road corridor or connected by a major road corridor and therefore using it as a boundary may ultimately divide communities. This situation applies equally in rural and metropolitan electorates.

Railway lines often provide a better guide to community boundaries than major roads. Not only do they tend to prove more of a barrier to cross-communication than roads, but using a railway line as a boundary often eliminates the confusing situation where electors living on opposite sides of a given street end up residing in different electorates. A similar argument applies to major highways.

PHYSICAL FEATURES AND AREA

The physical features of any electoral division provide an invaluable guide in drawing electoral boundaries, as they generally complement the key considerations of community of interest and ease of communication.

Inevitably, physical features that may be considered 'natural' boundaries for electoral divisions occur more frequently in rural areas.

In metropolitan areas, natural physical features such as waterways and bushland can also make good boundaries, provided the use does not occur at odds with the enhancement of community of interest or the use of communication/travel corridors.

CONCLUSION

While the above material has outlined the most important factors The Nationals have adopted in developing our approach and what we submit the Redistribution Committee for Western Australia should consider, the list is by no means exhaustive.

For example, it may be appropriate to consider the history of electoral boundaries in a particular area or boundaries that have been long established may be more worthy of preservation.

None of the principles discussed above can be absolute, and there will at times be conflict between them.

On occasions, if there is a proposed electoral division with a projected enrolment that utilises a full permissible variation (but still within statutory requirements), it may be more beneficial to accept the enrolment rather than to obtain or lose extra electors by dividing an existing community of interest, particularly in rural and regional areas.

In conclusion, The Nationals submit that this redistribution process must be conducted fairly and impartially and has no doubt that the Redistribution Committee for Western Australia will pursue an outcome that enhances electoral fairness.



SUGGESTIONS IN DETAIL

DIVISION OF DURACK

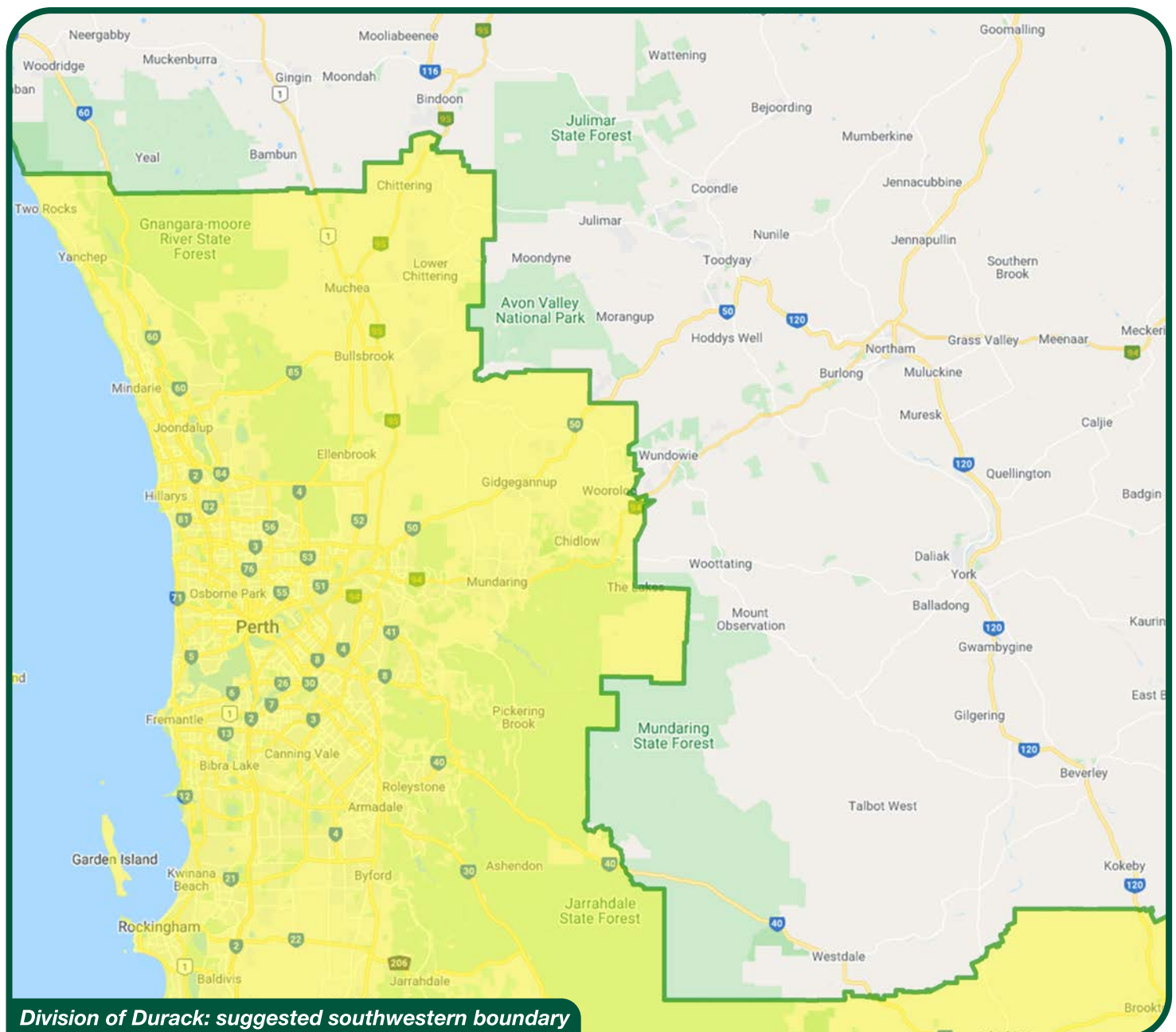
The Division of Durack on current boundaries is severely under quota. However, with the Northern Territory border to its east and the coast to the north and west, there is a very simple remedy to address this shortfall based on strong 'community of interest' arguments and redistributing the regional components from the extremely over-populated adjoining Division of Pearce.

To this end, The Nationals suggest relocating into the Division of Durack, the entire Shires of Beverley, York, Northam, Toodyay and Gingin – along with part of the Shire of Chittering – from the Division of Pearce.

This will not only help to address the over-populated Division of Pearce but brings the Division of Durack well within quota on both current and projected enrolment by uniting like-minded rural shires within the one electoral division.

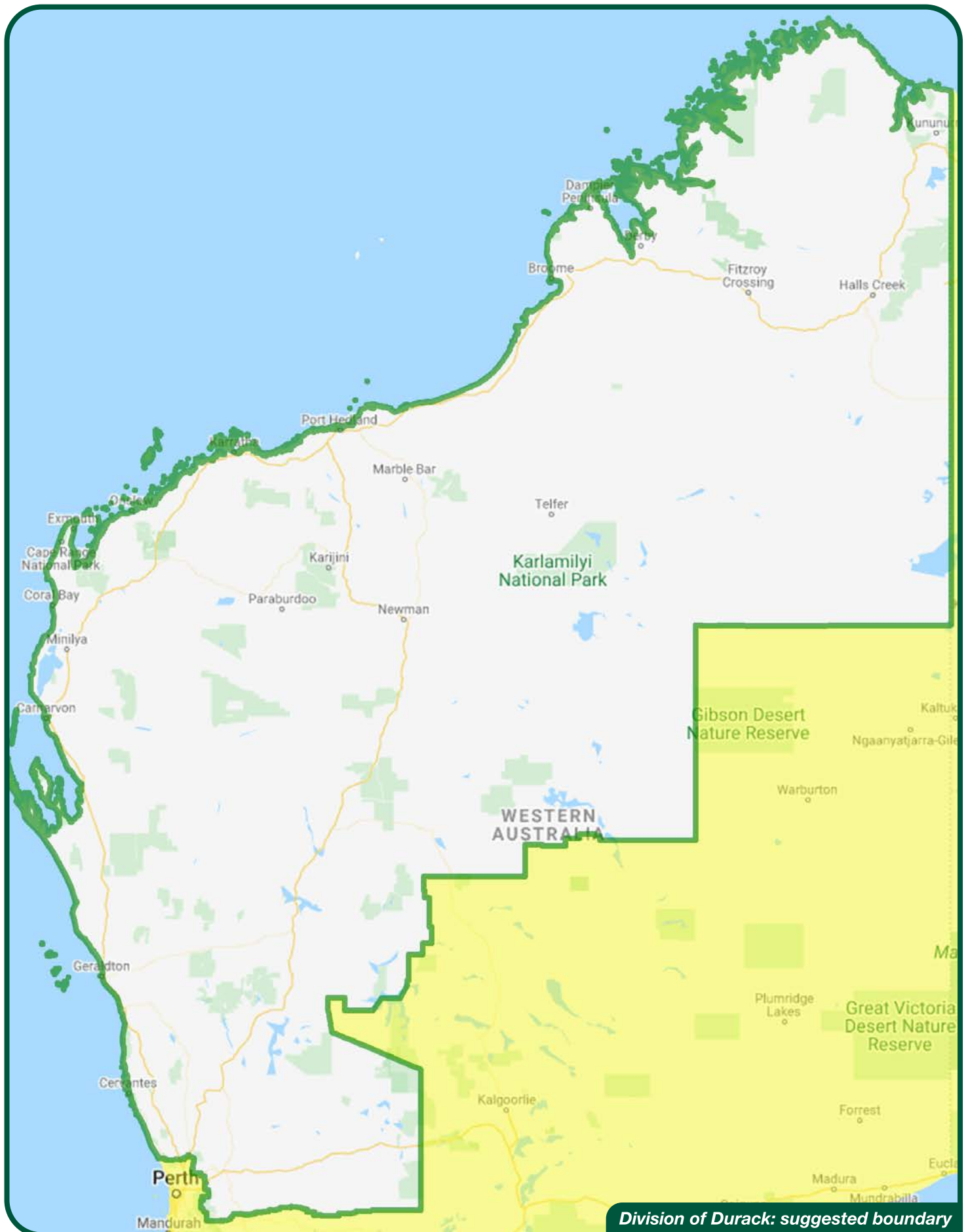
The new current and projected enrolments for The Nationals suggested Division of Durack are:

| DIVISION | JULY 2020 | | FEBRUARY 2025 | |
|----------|-----------|----------|---------------|----------|
| | ENROL | VARIANCE | ENROL | VARIANCE |
| Durack | 112172 | 0.00% | 116838 | 0.00% |
| | 117741 | 4.97% | 114959 | -1.61% |



Division of Durack: suggested southwestern boundary

Suggestions Submission - Suggestions in Detail



DIVISION OF PEARCE

The Division of Pearce is the most over-populated electoral division in Western Australia on current boundaries, with a current enrolment of 125,488 (+11.87%) and a projected enrolment of 142,491 (21.96%).

However, The Nationals believe that there are several simple and logical changes which can be made to address the overpopulation and enhance community of interest in adjoining electoral divisions of Durack and Hasluck.

As detailed earlier, The Nationals suggest relocating the entire Shires of Beverley, York, Northam, Toodyay and Gingin – along with part of the Shire of Chittering – into the Division of Durack.

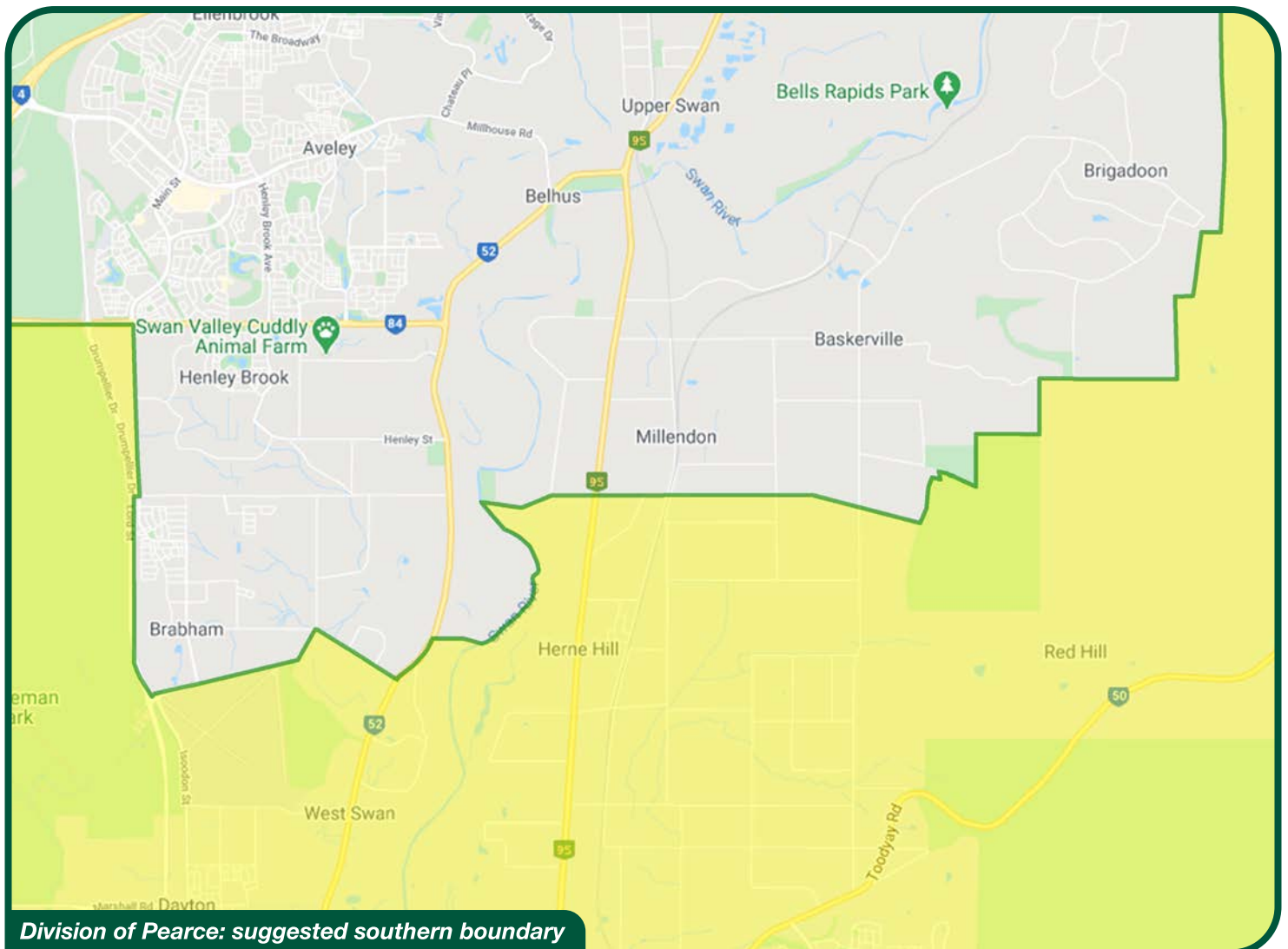
Unfortunately, the Division of Pearce will still remain outside of the allowable projected enrolment variance

with a new current enrolment of 106,129 (-5.39%) and projected enrolment of 123,056 (+5.32%) - but there is another simple remedy to relocate further enrolment to the under-populated adjoining Division of Hasluck.

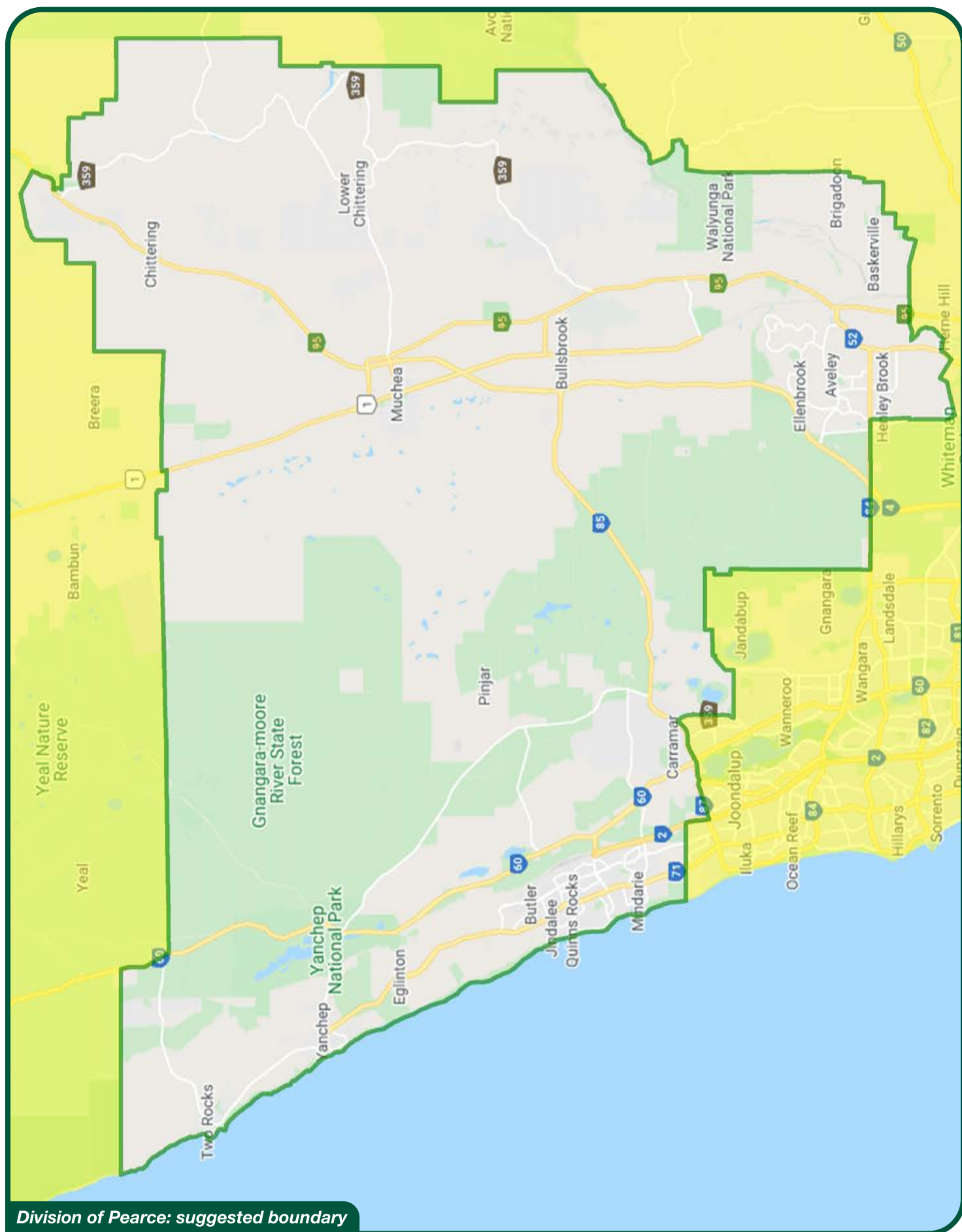
To this end, The Nationals suggest relocating the entire localities of Red Hill, Herne Hill, Middle Swan and West Swan from the Division of Pearce into the Division of Hasluck.

The new current and projected enrolments for The Nationals suggested Division of Pearce are:

| DIVISION | JULY 2020 | | FEBRUARY 2025 | |
|----------|-----------|----------|---------------|----------|
| | ENROL | VARIANCE | ENROL | VARIANCE |
| Pearce | 112172 | 0.00% | 116838 | 0.00% |
| | 101668 | -9.36% | 117760 | 0.79% |



Suggestions Submission - Suggestions in Detail



DIVISION OF O'CONNOR

Like the existing Division of Durack, the current Division of O'Connor is also well under projected quota with a current enrolment of 101,985 (-9.08%) and projected enrolment of 101,703 (-12.95%).

With the South Australian border to its east and the coast to the south, the most logical solution to ensure the electoral division of O'Connor is redrawn within the numerical and statutory criteria required under the Act, is to source the required enrolment from like-minded rural shires currently located within the Divisions of Forrest and Canning.

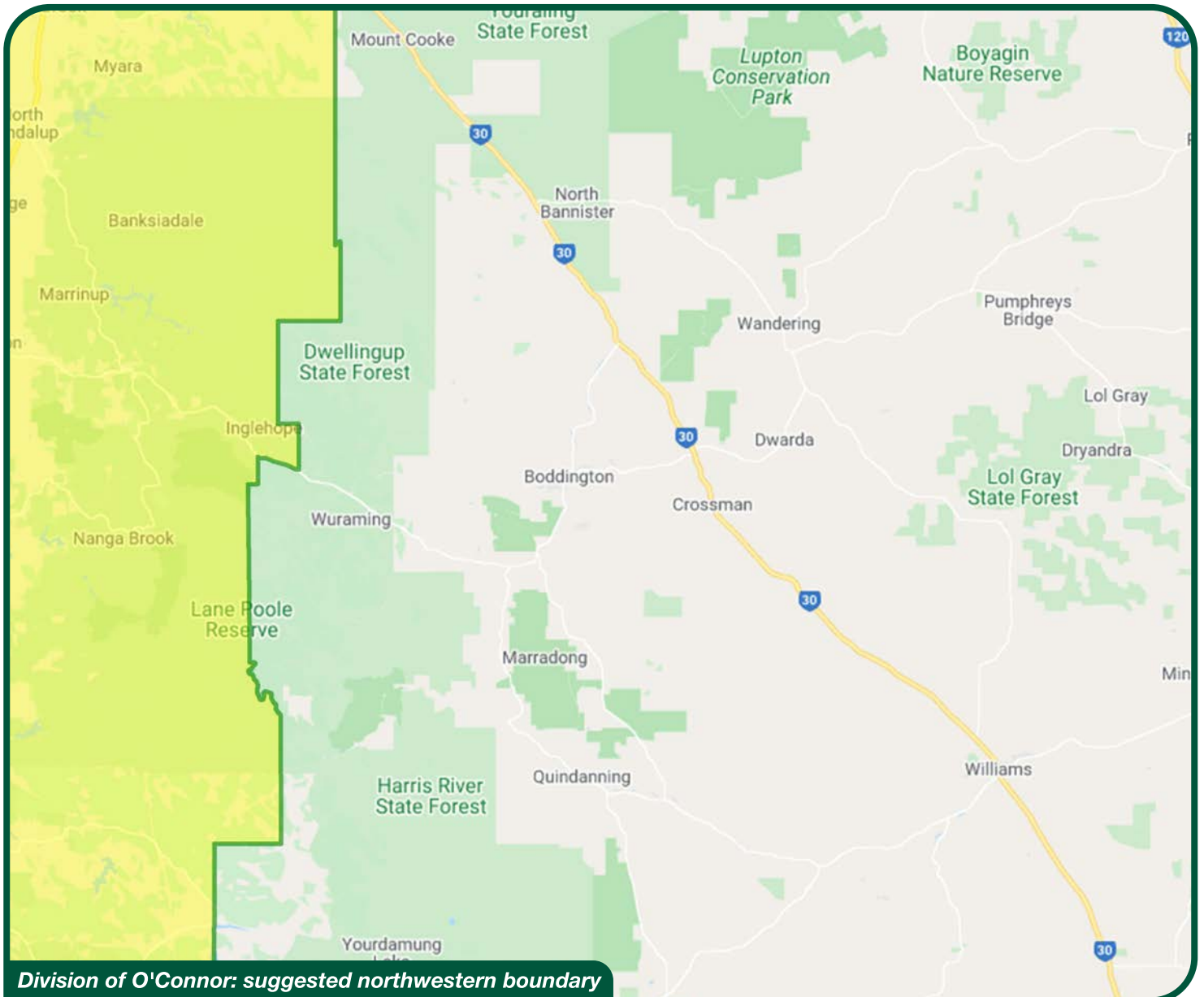
To this end, The Nationals suggest relocating into the Division of O'Connor, the entire Shires of Augusta

Margaret River and Nannup – along with part of the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup – from the Division of Forrest.

Further, the entire Shire of Boddington is suggested to be also relocated from the Division of Canning, which will assist in ensuring the newly drawn Division of O'Connor is nearly on projected enrolment quota.

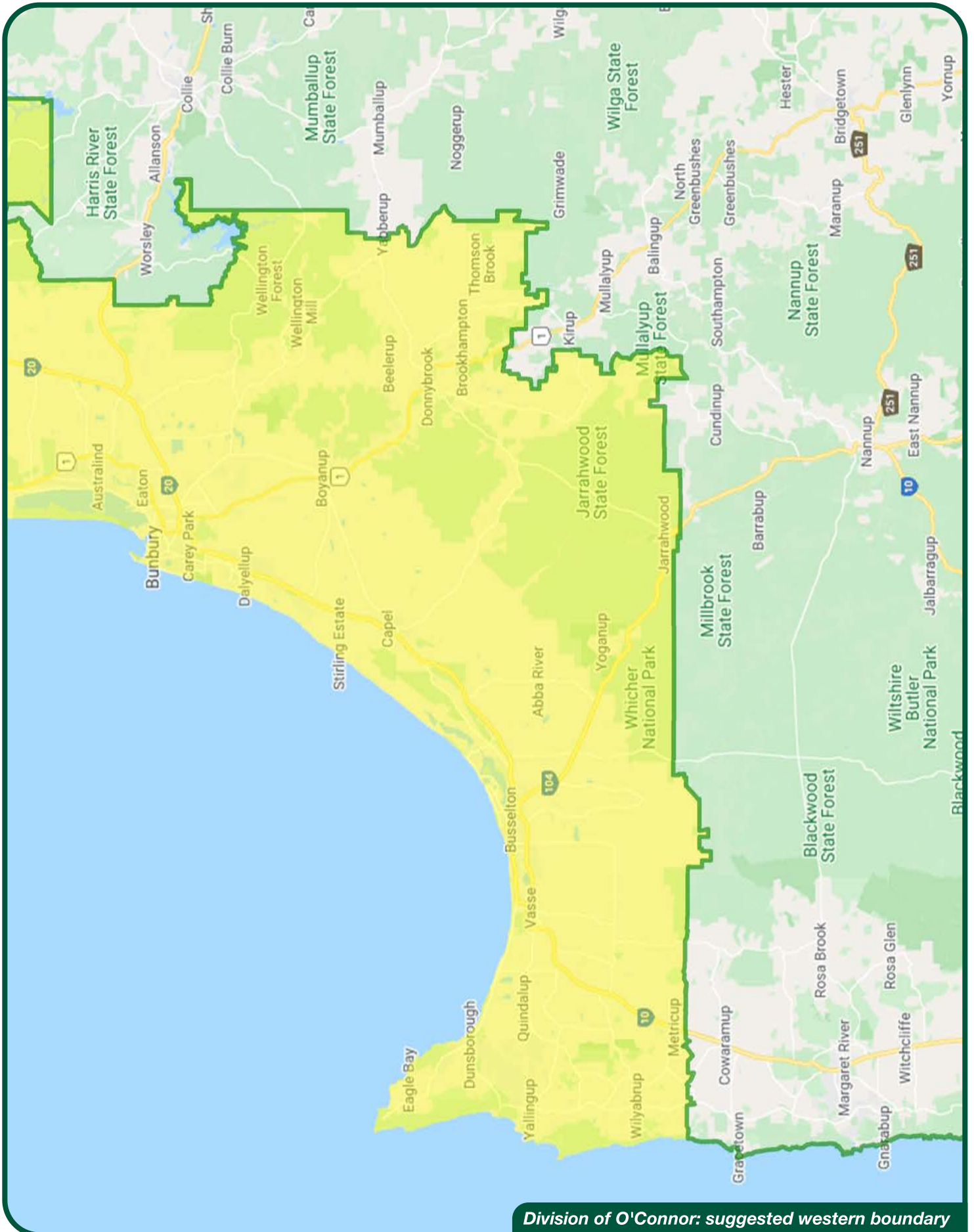
The new current and projected enrolments for The Nationals suggested Division of O'Connor are:

| DIVISION | JULY 2020 | | FEBRUARY 2025 | |
|----------|-----------|----------|---------------|----------|
| | ENROL | VARIANCE | ENROL | VARIANCE |
| O'Connor | 112172 | 0.00% | 116838 | 0.00% |
| | 115829 | 3.26% | 116937 | 0.08% |

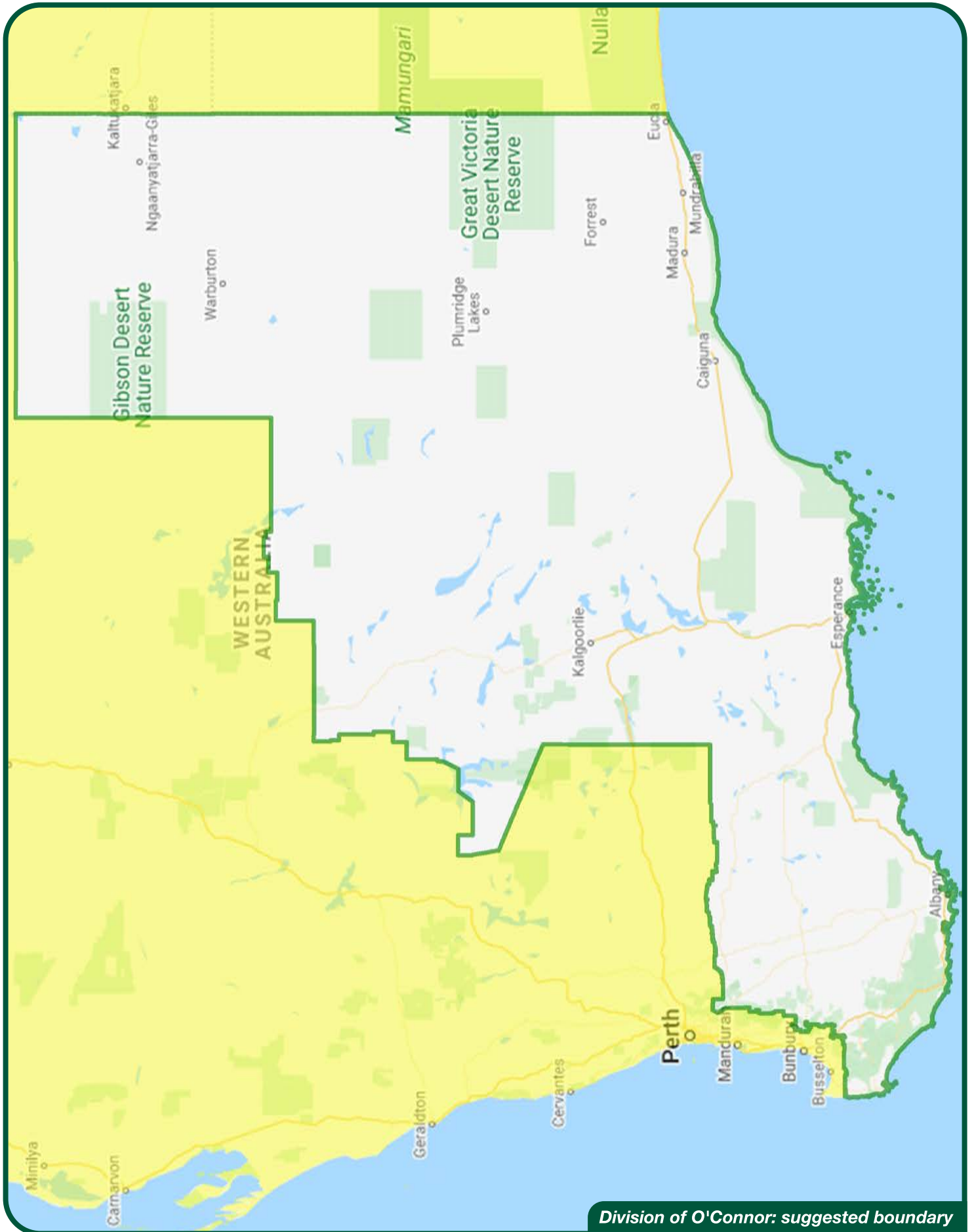


Division of O'Connor: suggested northwestern boundary

Suggestions Submission - Suggestions in Detail



Division of O'Connor: suggested western boundary



Suggestions Submission - Suggestions in Detail

DIVISION OF FORREST

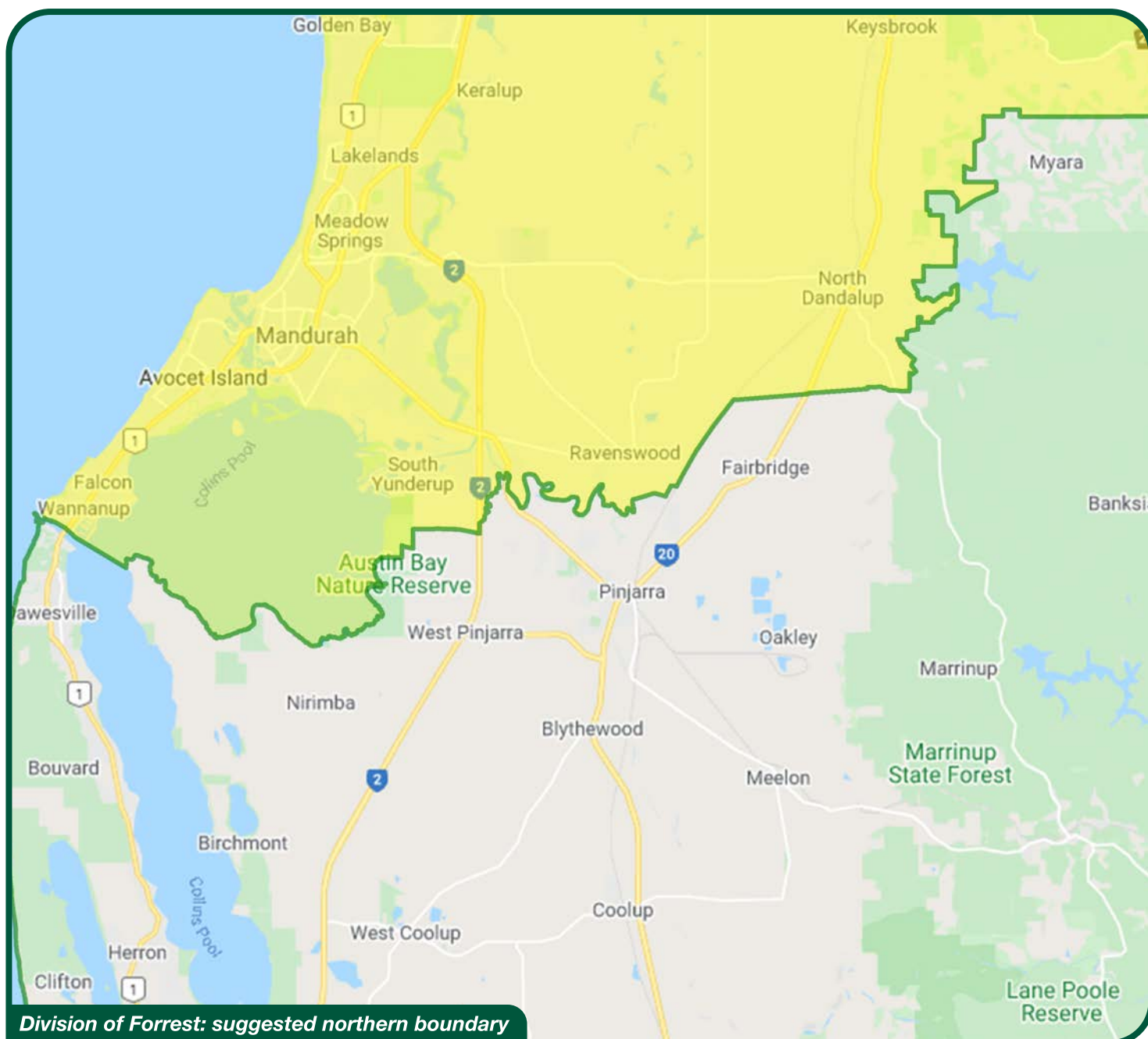
Although the current Division of Forrest falls within the required quota variances on current and projected enrolments (-4.32% and -2.45% respectively), changes to its electoral boundaries are necessitated due to transfer of enrolment to the Division of O'Connor which rectifies that electoral division's population imbalances and improves its community of interest.

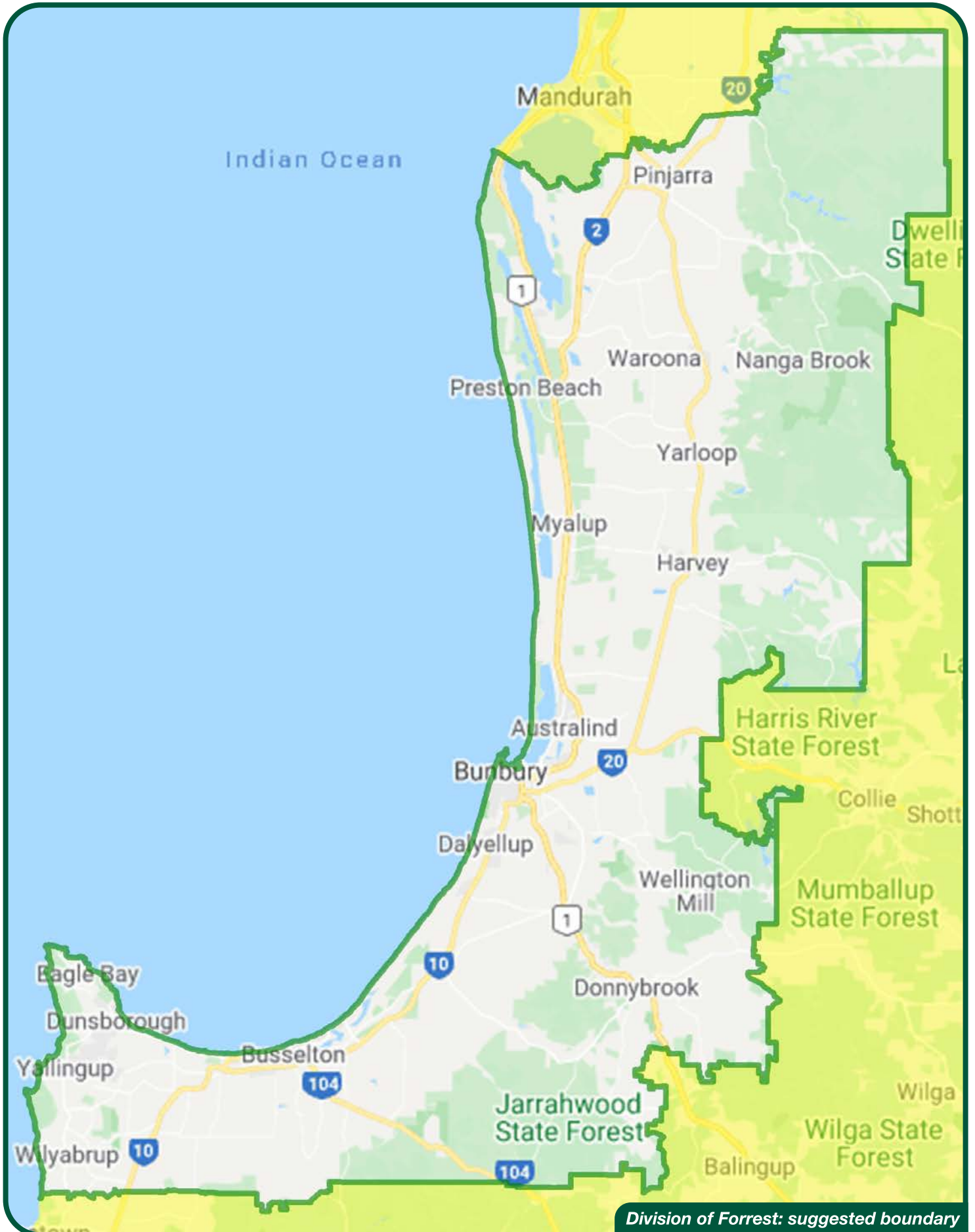
Therefore, the logical and only location to source additional population for the redrawn Division of Forrest is to the north of its northern boundary from the Division of Canning.

To this end, The Nationals suggest relocating the entire Shire of Waroona, part of the City of Mandurah and part of the Shire of Murray from the Division of Canning into the Division of Forrest.

The new current and projected enrolments for The Nationals suggested Division of Forrest are:

| DIVISION | JULY 2020 | | FEBRUARY 2025 | |
|----------|-----------|----------|---------------|----------|
| | ENROL | VARIANCE | ENROL | VARIANCE |
| Forrest | 112172 | 0.00% | 116838 | 0.00% |
| | 108398 | -3.36% | 114496 | -2.00% |







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