NT Government Supports Koongarra Protection

Chief Minister Paul Henderson and Member for Arafura Marion Scrymgour today welcomed the announcement by Federal Environment Minister Peter Garrett that his government would protect Koongarra from Uranium Mining.

Minister Garrett today pledged to expand Kakadu National Park to incorporate the 1,200 hectare parcel of land, after being requested by traditional owner Jeffrey Lee to protect the area.

“Koongarra is an area of immense cultural and environmental value to Aboriginal people, containing sacred sites and rock art of international significance,” Mr Henderson said.

“I applaud the decision by Minister Garrett to preserve this land for generations to come.”

Local Member Marion Scrymgour said the pledge was a bold move which would benefit all Australians.

“As Mr Lee said today, this is about more than money – it is about preserving land so future generations, white and black, can appreciate his people’s culture and traditions.”

“Koongarra is a site of huge importance situated very close to Nourlangie rock and the NT Government has always opposed mining at the site.

“I congratulate Mr Garrett for listening to traditional owners and putting the long term health of our indigenous communities and environment ahead of short term mining opportunities.

“Koongarra is a national treasure and should be recognised as such.”

10 August 2010