4 October 2010

Boost for Alice Springs Eco-Tourism

Minister for Parks and Wildlife Karl Hampton today inspected new upgrades along the Larapinta Trail in West MacDonnell National Park.

Mr Hampton said the upgrades would draw even more tourists to the famous trail.

“The breathtaking Larapinta Trail is one of the icons of the Centre, and I pleased today to open upgrades which will make it easier for tourists to explore sustainably.”

“The $300,000 upgrades are part of the Henderson Governments $8m tourism stimulus funding package and include a new shelter here at Wallaby Gap, four new water tanks along the Larapinta Trail and three new hybrid toilets.”

The Larapinta Trail, situated in the heart of Central Australia, extends over 223kms along the backbone of the West MacDonnell National Park.

The long distance trail is divided into 12 sections and encompasses some of the key attractions of the area including Simpsons Gap, Ellery Creek Big Hole, Ormiston Gorge, Glen Helen Gorge and the iconic Mt Sonder.

“Every year more than 2000 people walk the Larapinta trail – these green infrastructure upgrades will make it easier for more people to experience this great journey through West McDonnell National Park with minimal environmental impact.”

The upgrades complement other recent upgrades to the park, including $150,000 for the construction of the second viewing platform at the Ormiston Gorge Ghost Gum Lookout and $180,000 for repairs and maintenance on the Simpsons Gap Bike Path Bridge.

“Tourism is vital to the Alice Springs region and the West Macs alone see 128,000 visitors every year,” Mr Hampton said.

“The NT Government is committed to preserving and promoting our natural wonders and projects like these further strengthen our eco-tourism market.”

Contact: Patrick Hastwell 0427 017 803