March 13, 2011

Bumper Fishing Year for Territory Anglers

Minister for Fisheries Kon Vatskalis outlined the NT Government’s priorities for the recreational fishing sector at today’s Annual General Meeting of the Amateur Fishermen’s Association of the Northern Territory.

Mr Vatskalis said recreational fishing is a major part of the Territory lifestyle and it also attracts thousands of tourists and visitors to Top End waters each and every year.

“This year’s wet season has delivered record rainfalls and we can expect a bumper run-off fishing period as well which will be great for visiting anglers and locals; in fact I’ve heard this year could be one the best,” Mr Vatskalis said.

“Fishing is such an important part of our lifestyle and huge tourism drawcard, and to support its growing popularity this government has made significant improvements to fishing infrastructure.

“This includes major boat ramp upgrades, including the recently opened $4 million Palmerston ramp and fishing jetty and major artificial reef developments.

“Further upgrades to other ramps including Saltwater Arm, Southport, Hardies and Buffalo Creek will occur this dry season to make it easier for people to go fishing.

“I am expecting to shortly be releasing a draft Development Plan for Recreational Fishing for public comment that will provide a strategic direction for recreational fisheries management in the coming years.”

Mr Vatskalis said new fishing controls implemented this year in the Daly River will also help ensure its iconic status as a fishing destination.

“These initiatives will help ensure the long term quality of recreational fishing in the Territory and builds upon previous achievements including the buying back of 15 fishing licences and closure of areas such as Bynoe Harbour to commercial fishing.”

He added that the NT Government remained committed to negotiating an outcome that will benefit all stakeholders in response to the High Court decision on Blue Mud Bay.

Contact: Maria Billias 0401 119 746