16 March 2012

Resources Minister Welcomes Limmen National Park Announcement

Minister for Resources, Kon Vatskalis, today welcomed the Henderson Government decision to excise parts of the proposed Limmen National Park to provide certainty for the development of mining resources.

The decision will reduce uncertainty around the Northern Territory Government’s support for economic development and preservation of high value conservation areas in the Roper Region.

As part of the proposed park, exploration areas held by Western Desert Resources, Sherwin Iron and other companies will be excluded to allow for exploration and extraction of bulk iron ore from the area and other resources.

“The NT Government has struck the right balance in regards to providing long-term protection of our natural environment, while supporting the resource industry’s need to progress with new developments,” Mr Vatskalis said.

“The proposed iron ore developments in the Limmen area are significant, with an estimated resource of 200 million tonnes of iron ore at a value of $20 billion.

“It would provide significant economic stimulation for the region and Indigenous communities who would benefit from the creation of jobs and training opportunities.

“As part of the proposed mining development a specific community benefit package would also be negotiated to increase Indigenous conservation initiatives in the region.

“Government has a vision for the region which includes economic development as well as increasing tourist and recreational visitor numbers.

“Some of these plans are already in progress such as the $1.5 million upgrade to the Tomato island camping facility and boat ramp.

“I also welcome the proposal of a recreational fishing friendly marine park to be established in the area around Maria Island, creating further protection for our marine environment.

“The proposed marine park area contains significant seagrass beds that are home to the largest population of dugongs in the NT as well as containing nesting sites for the threatened Flatback turtle.

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