FIRE DESTROYS NAMATJIRA GHOST GUMS

3 January, 2013

The destruction of two iconic Ghost Gums painted by Albert Namatjira has saddened many Territorians, Minister for Indigenous Advancement, Alison Anderson, said today.

“About December 30 a fire started around the trees on Larapinta Drive, 16 kilometres from Alice Springs, and they toppled over, destroying a special place that has been visited by many since Albert Namatjira won international acclaim,” Ms Anderson said.

“The Ghost Gums featured in many of his works and were easily accessible on the road to Hermannsburg, where he was born in 1902.

“The twin Ghost Gums were a wonderful reminder of his connection to the land and many who visited the site would have felt a connection to this great Territorian.

“Often visitors stopped just to stand in the place where he captured the trees and the magnificence of the Australian landscape.

“Only recently work was done around the trees to try and protect them from fires and allow as much moisture as possible to get to their roots.

“The trees were not only special to the Indigenous people of the area, but to many other Territorians who loved and admired Albert Namatjira.

“In his watercolours he brought the beauty of the Central Australian landscape to the world and helped make it a symbol of Australian identity.”

The Department of Lands, Planning and the Environment notified the police who believe the fire was deliberately lit.

Albert Namatjira held his first exhibition in 1938 and painted for the following two decades. He died in 1959.

Media Contact:
Judith Hughey 0409 863 383
www.nt.gov.au
GPO Box 3146, Darwin NT 0801