Jawoyn culture to be showcased in new cultural centre

13 July 2016

A new cultural meeting place showcasing Indigenous culture will be created in Nitmiluk National Park, thanks to a $100,000 NT Government Tourism Development Infrastructure Grant.

Minister Price and local Member, Willem Westra van Holthe presented the grant to Nitmiluk Tours at a meeting with Traditional Owners this evening in Katherine.

“As Minister of Parks and Wildlife and a proud Aboriginal woman, I am delighted to support an Indigenous business in a Territory national park,” she said.

“This facility will present the culture of the Jawoyn people to international and domestic visitors, which will share their story around the world.”

Member for Katherine Willem Westra Van Holthe said the introduction of the meeting place will create an opportunity to generate visitation and growth.

“Tourism is a hugely important part of the Katherine economy and this grant will support the development of tourism in the Katherine region.”

“The Country Liberals’ Government is committed to expanding the range of tourism experiences on offer in the Territory, particularly in our regional areas, so we can create more jobs and drive economic development in these areas.”

“Having had an association with the Jawoyn people for almost 30 years, I’m delighted to see our government making such a significant investment in our local indigenous people.”

Jane Runyu-Fordimail, Chairperson of Nitmiluk Tours said the new facility will be used as a cultural centre dedicated to the Jawoyn people, but could be also be used as a venue for functions.

“The cultural meeting place, located on country, will be the perfect location to share the culture of the Jawoyn people and will fill a gap that is really missing in the Indigenous tourism area,” she said.

“The need for authentic Indigenous interpretation of the culture and the country is an essential part of the stay for our visitors. Sharing of the culture is also the vision of the Jawoyn people. We already include an element of cultural interpretation in all our touring but recognize that there is a demand from the market for more authentic and interactive Indigenous activity.”

The grant will help provide a parking zone, toilets, shade and a gravel track into a clearing in a natural bush location with an escarpment background in Nitmiluk National Park.
The cultural presentation will be called “Footsteps” and will focus on traditional stories, basket weaving and hunting tools of the tradition people. Painting and bush skills will be presented by a cast of Jawoyn people.

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