The Northern Territory is moving towards establishing a world class system of parks and reserves while resolving outstanding land and native title claims over national parks Chief Minister Clare Martin announced today.

"A year ago the High Court decision in Ward presented the possibility of great uncertainty for the future of the Territory’s national park estate—the proposed legislation I am releasing today turns that uncertainty into opportunity. The legislation will be introduced in the October sittings of parliament for passage in November.

"We will end up with larger, better managed national parks that will provide great value adding through commercial utilisation of our natural and cultural heritages.

"The Northern Territory parks estate will be expanded with more parks accessible to the general public. The legislation will enshrine the principle that there will be no entrance fees or permits required for parks.

"The Parks and Reserves Framework for the Future Bill allows a real chance to break through a logjam of land and native title claims on Territory national parks by a process of inclusion via joint management with Aboriginal traditional owners of our parks. This is vital to the economic future of Indigenous Territorians, who are currently the most impoverished sector of our society.

"I have committed my Government to negotiating an acceptable outcome for all Territorians instead of trying to resolve legal uncertainties through the courts. Instead of massively expensive litigation and disputation at every level, we are choosing a path of negotiation which will benefit all Territorians," said Ms Martin.

"Our approach is critical to the economic future of the Northern Territory given the comparative advantage the Territory enjoys with respect to our natural heritage. For the first time, the management of our parks and reserves will be explicitly linked with Indigenous cultural values and land management skills.

"Nevertheless, there are important core principles laid down by the government and agreed by the Land Councils, and these are reflected in the Bill and its associated instruments.

"These include:

- development of a parks masterplan to expand and more effectively manage the parks estate;
• current mining and exploration leases and applications and tourism operator concessions are guaranteed;

• all Territory Parks and Reserves will remain accessible to all Territorians and visitors on a no-fee no-permit basis;

• business as usual in parks until negotiations are completed; and

• where title changes occur they will be conditional on the land being leased back to the NT subject to joint management under NT legislation."

(NETWORKS NOTE: 17 min stock footage will be available via Channel 7 Gateway Sydney 11.30am (EST). Shot list attached. For further information contact Danny Sims TNA, 0417 815 700.

NB: THE COMPILATION IS TO BE USED FOR REPORTAGE OF THIS ISSUE ONLY AND NOT TO BE HELD BY NETWORKS AS STOCK FOOTAGE.)

Details of the legislation were released in special briefings today delivered to all stakeholders, including representatives of the mining, environmental, pastoral and tourism industries. The legislation will affect 49 Northern Territory parks and reserves.

PARKS AND RESERVES TO BE INCLUDED IN SCHEDULE 1 TO ALRA

Arltunga Historical Reserve
Chamber's Pillar Historical Reserve
Corroboree Rock Conservation Reserve
Davenport Range National Park (proposed)
Devils Marbles Conservation Reserve
Elsey National Park
Emily and Jessie Gaps Nature Park (including the Heavitree Range extension)
Ewaninga Rock Carvings Conservation Reserve
Finke Gorge National Park
Gregory National Park
Gregory's Tree Historical Reserve
N'Dhala Gorge Nature Park
Trephina Gorge Nature Park
West MacDonnell National Park (including Simpson's Gap National Park,

Elery Creek Big Hole Nature Park, Ormiston Gorge and Pound Nature

Park, Serpentine Gorge Nature Park, Glen Helen Gorge Nature Park,

Redbank Nature Park and the proposed Alice Valley extension)

SCHEDULE 2

Sections 8, 10, 12, 13 and 14

PARKS AND RESERVES OVER WHICH PARK FREEHOLD TITLE IS TO BE GRANTED

Dulcie Range National Park

Keep River National Park and the adjacent Spirit Hills Pastoral Lease

Kuyunba Conservation Reserve

Limmen National Park (proposed)

Native Gap Conservation Reserve

Watarrka National Park

SCHEDULE 3

Sections 8, 10, 12, 13 and 14

OTHER PARKS AND RESERVES FOR WHICH JOINT MANAGEMENT AGREEMENTS ARE TO BE ENTERED INTO

Alice Springs Telegraph Station Historical Reserve

Black Jungle / Lambells Lagoon Conservation Reserve

Daly River (Mt Nancar) Conservation Reserve

Flora River Nature Park

Fogg Dam Conservation Reserve

Harrison Dam Conservation Reserve

Litchfield National Park

Mac Clark (Acacia Peuce) Conservation Reserve

Mary River National Park (proposed)
SCHEDULE 4

Section 10

PRINCIPLES FOR LEASE OF PARKS AND RESERVES TO TERRITORY

1. The term of the lease is 99 years.

2. The parties to the lease must negotiate in good faith for the renewal of the lease.

3. The lease must not extinguish native title rights or interests.

4. The lease purposes –

   (a) must include the use of the land the subject of the lease as a park or reserve; and

   (b) may include the use of the land the subject of the lease for commercial activities that are consistent with its use as a park or reserve and conducted in accordance with the joint management agreement for the park or reserve.

5. The lease must require the lessee to permit Territorians and visitors to the Territory to use the park or reserve on a "no fee, no permit" basis.

6. The lessee must give preference to the participation of the traditional Aboriginal owners of the park or reserve in any commercial activities conducted under the lease.

7. The lease must permit the traditional Aboriginal owners of the park or reserve to use the land the subject of the lease in accordance with the joint management agreement for the park or reserve.

8. The lease must permit the grant under section 46(1A) of the Lands Acquisition Act of part of the land the subject of the lease for the purposes of an Aboriginal community living area in accordance with the joint management agreement for the park or reserve.
SCHEDULE 5

Sections 10 and 13

ABORIGINAL LAND TO BE INCLUDED IN PARKS AND RESERVES

Aboriginal land adjoining Davenport Range National Park (proposed) (including an area enclosed by the boundaries of the proposed park and the Epenarra-Murray Downs Road)

Aboriginal land adjoining Elsey National Park (including the Red Lily Lagoon area)

Aboriginal land adjoining Gregory National Park (including land linking the two separate sections of the park)

COMPILE Shotlist 19 September 2003

NT PARKS AND RESERVES (FRAMEWORK FOR THE FUTURE) BILL 2003

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NITMILUK BOARD WIDE 25:00 –32:21
NITMILUK BOARD WIDE REVERSE ANGLE 32:22 –45:07
NITMILUK BOARD PAN 45:08 –52:08
TOS AT BOARD MEETING MEDIUM 52:09 –59:02
STEVE NICHOLSON AND ROBERT LEE 59:03 –1:15:10
TOS DISCUSSING POINTS 1:15:11–1:38:11
TOS CLOSE UP PULL FOCUS 1:38:12–1:52:09
STEVE NICHOLSON AND ROBERT LEE WIDER 1:52:10–2:06:00
TOS READING REPORTS 2:06:01–3:08:11
STEVE AND NOEL (JAWOYN) DOWN GORGE 3:08:12–4:20:11
STEVE AND NOEL CLOSER 4:20:12–4:37:17
STEVE AND NOEL WAVE TO CANOE 4:37:18–4:53:21
STEVE AND NOEL VARIOUS ON BOAT 4:53:22–7:18:20
STEVE AND NOEL LOW ANGLE 7:18:21–7:37:08
STEVE AND NOEL CHECK CROC CAGE 7:37:09–8:05:04
STEVE & NOEL CHECK CROC CAGE REV ANGLE