



MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday, 21 December 2010

Heritage Minister must protect Kimberley 'dinosaur trackway'

Conservation groups have welcomed advice obtained under the *Freedom of Information Act* which reveals the Australian Heritage Council has recommended inclusion of the James Price Point dinosaur footprints in the area nominated for National Heritage listing.

The advice recommends the fossilised dinosaur footprints found in the intertidal zone of the west coast of the Dampier Peninsula be included in the National Heritage listing for the Kimberley. Federal Environment and Heritage Minister Tony Burke makes the final decision on listing.

EnviroNS Kimberley Director Martin Pritchard said, "The jury is in on the Dampier Peninsula dinosaur trackway – these fossilised footprints collectively are clearly of international cultural and palaeontological significance."

"A letter signed by 86 scientists from 16 countries sent to the state and federal governments earlier in the year stated that some of the most important sets of footprints are situated where they face the greatest risk of damage or degradation if industrial development is allowed to proceed near James Price Point."¹

"The Australian Heritage Council has now recognised that the Dampier Peninsula coast dinosaur trackway - including the controversial proposed LNG industrial facility site at James Price Point – should be on the National Heritage list and protected." Mr Pritchard said.

State Coordinator for The Wilderness Society WA, Peter Robertson, said, "This formal advice to the Minister must be acted upon. Minister Burke should move quickly to confirm that the entire dinosaur footprint record is of National Heritage significance, and list it accordingly.

"If Minister Burke fails to act, we will have a federal Environment and Heritage Minister who does nothing with clear advice provided on the importance of these dinosaur prints, and a Premier at the state level making hollow promises to protect the footprints, while pursuing industrial development at James Price Point at all costs."

Last week, expert reports² commissioned by the State government were released that anticipate destruction or removal of the prints if proposed development at James Price Point goes ahead due to dredging, groyne and breakwater construction, and sand redistribution by longshore currents."

Further comment: Martin Pritchard 0427 548 075 ; Peter Robertson 9420 7255

Below: excerpt of advice from Heritage Council to Minister obtained by *The West Australian* under FOI

¹ ABC Kimberley April 20, 2010 <http://www.abc.net.au/local/audio/2010/04/19/2876835.htm>

² Prelim. Report upon the Palaeontology (incl. Dinosaur Footprints) of the Broome Sandstone in the James Price Point Area, WA. Prepared for DSD

13 July 2010, Minister Garrett was provided with briefing for a possible National Heritage listing decision.

The AHC recommended a final boundary which included dinosaur footprints exposed in the intertidal zone on the west coast of Dampier Peninsula, including at James Price Point. This was not included in the area the AHC had previously identified as potentially having National Heritage values. Stakeholders are therefore likely to have provided their comments on the understanding that this area was not included in the potential National Heritage place. The department recommended in its brief to Minister Garrett that further consultation be undertaken with owners, occupiers and Indigenous people with a right or interest in the west coast of the Dampier Peninsula before deciding whether to include this area in the National Heritage List.

As noted previously in this brief, a process has been initiated to conduct a strategic assessment under the EPBC Act of a common-user Liquefied Natural Gas precinct at James Price Point to service the Browse Basin gas reserves in the Kimberley

Timeframes and handling: Your decision on adding the west Kimberley to the NHL, including an appropriate boundary, is required by 5 November 2010, unless you choose to extend the timeframe in writing before this date. Detailed briefing on this matter will be provided to support your decision.

Responsibility: Mark Tucker, Deputy Secretary, 6274 1675 / [REDACTED]; James Shevlin, First Assistant Secretary, Heritage Division, 6274 2121 / [REDACTED].