



MEDIA RELEASE

Parks and Wildlife Service Rangers Heading Overseas

Parks and Wildlife Service senior ranger Phil Wise and senior district ranger Kristen Appel are expected to be in Scotland next month to participate at the 5th International Ranger Congress.

Mr Wise, a Nhulunbuy senior ranger who works at the Dhimurru Indigenous Protected Area, is expected to be accompanied by Dhimurru Land Management director Djawa Yunupingu, with the pair set to give a presentation about their particular joint management arrangement.

Parks and Wildlife Service is a managing partner of the Dhimurru Indigenous Protected Area and Mr Wise said the overseas trip would in many ways be a fact-finding mission.

“While we are in Scotland Mr Yunupingu and I will conduct a workshop focused on the particular model of joint management we are involved with,” Mr Wise said.

“But we are also keen to hear how other parts of the world are jointly managed by traditional landholders and Government-employed rangers. We feel our current arrangement in Nhulunbuy is quite unique.

“So in many ways we are putting ourselves in a position where we can all learn from each other.”

The congress will facilitate exposure to ranger groups from other countries also managing parks under joint management arrangements, providing a forum to share on ground knowledge and experience, including the identification of new and innovative approaches.

Mr Wise’s costs are being covered by a \$5000 Remote Workforce Development Strategy scholarship obtained through the Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment while Ms Appel is paying her own way.

Ms Appel, who is a Darwin region senior district ranger, is also the Australian Ranger Federation treasurer and has been to every international congress, which is held every three years.

She said the June 14-21 congress would be held at Stirling, famed as “the gateway to the Highlands”, and known internationally as the location where the Mel Gibson film *Braveheart* was filmed.

“Phil and I are both looking forward to the congress as it represents a great networking opportunity where we will each be able to share our ideas about

managing and caring for parks as well as gaining insight to experiences of other rangers,” Ms Appel said.

“Some of the rangers at the conference will be from some of the poorest parts of the world and go many months without being paid by their employers.

“But their ability to subsist off the land and commitment to caring for the land and animals is what keeps them going, and is truly worth admiring.

“Many of their colleagues, who share the same work ethic, have been shot trying to protect native animals from poachers, who often get far more money than they do.

“So a strong element is also about rangers from richer nations being able to help rangers from poorer nations wherever possible.”

The congress is being hosted by the International Ranger Federation, which aims to further the professional standards of rangers throughout the world as well as sharing knowledge and resources.

Ms Appel is expected to fly Ireland on May 29 to spend time with rangers in some of the Emerald Isle’s parks while Mr Wise and Mr Yunipingu are expected to fly to Darwin on June 12 before flying directly to Scotland.

Ends

Media Note – For more information contact Kristen Appel on 0439 818 300 or Mr Wise on 0427 009 653.

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