



MEDIA RELEASE

Feral Pig Control at West MacDonnell National Park

A popular attraction at a well known Territory park is set to be closed next week as part of ongoing feral animal control.

NT Parks and Wildlife Service chief district ranger Chris Day said feral pigs needed to be removed from the area around Ellery Creek Bighole in West MacDonnell National Park before their numbers increased.

“There are about a dozen or so pigs in the area at the moment and to prevent them becoming established in the area we will conduct a feral pig control program from Ellery Creek Bighole along the Ellery Creek to the James Range,” Mr Day said.

“We therefore wish to advise the public the Ellery Creek Bighole section of the park will be closed from midday 10 October to sunset 11 October to ensure the removal of pigs is done without risk to public safety.

“Conditions are quite dry at the moment meaning feral pigs are basically concentrated along a five kilometre stretch of Ellery Creek, meaning our job in removing them shouldn’t be too difficult.”

Mr Day said the feral pig control program would involve an approved shooter from a helicopter.

“The feral pig removal is part of an ongoing feral animal control program that is required to minimise public safety risks, damage to natural values and the Parks and Wildlife Service infrastructure,” Mr Day said.

“From our point of view, it is very important to remove these feral pigs before they become established as the Finke River system, of which Ellery Creek is a major part, has significant conservation value.

“It is also an area that would offer potential habitat for feral pigs to become established in central Australia and wreak considerable environmental damage, with the opportunity to disperse in better seasons.

“Not only do feral pigs enjoy dining out on our native vegetation they also tend to wallow in water, make it muddy, and produce more nitrogen in the water that then has a negative impact in relation to weeds, fish and invertebrates.

“But furthermore, roaming feral pigs can also become a traffic hazard at night should motorists be passing through there, especially around Namatjira Drive where there is a blind spot, and who knows what might happen if a driver tries to swerve in an effort to avoid colliding with a feral pig.”

Mr Day said traditional owners for the upper Ellery Creek area have been consulted about the feral pig issue and have agreed the feral pigs need to be controlled and Parks and Wildlife Service is the appropriate authority to do this.

Ends

Media Note – For more information contact Chris Day on 8955 1119

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