



## MEDIA RELEASE

### Beach Fires Off Limits at Casuarina Coastal Reserve

Northern Territory Parks and Wildlife Service today asked Territorians and tourists to help protect and preserve Casuarina Coastal Reserve.

Senior District Ranger Kristen Appel said one way this could be done is through correct disposal of litter and applying for permits to light beach fires.

“Casuarina Coastal Reserve is a beautiful part of the Territory the community enjoy on a regular basis and we need everyone’s help to look after it,” Ms Appel said.

“Most visitors do the right thing and dispose of rubbish correctly, but some visitors don’t, or they feel the need to light beach fires.

“Rubbish and beach fires affect the environment and have a negative impact on animals such as flatback turtles that regularly nest on the beach.

“People, both visitors and rangers, are also at risk of injury should rubbish not be disposed of correctly or fires not be properly put out, when they should not be lit unless permitted.

“Sometimes people cover fires with sand and this can be dangerous if visitors step on the hot sand with hot ash underneath, causing burns to people and animals.

“Furthermore, people often bring crates of wood with nails and steel straps in them, throw their rubbish like bottles and tins into the fire leaving a mess and the potential for injury to both people and animals; safety is a top priority.”

Ms Appel said Parks and Wildlife Service rangers and police regularly patrol the Reserve and will approach people found littering or lighting beach fires, as they are in breach of the *Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation By-laws*.

“We had a situation recently where a beach party went for more than seven hours one night and it took two staff and six volunteers about six hours the following day to remove all the rubbish such as cans, bottles, chairs and other plastics,” Ms Appel said.

“Rangers shouldn’t have to clean up someone else’s mess that shouldn’t even be there to begin with, as they should be focusing their time and resources on their primary duties, which is managing the reserve.

“So in effect, non-permitted parties are costing the community valuable resources.”

Ms Appel urged people who witness or have knowledge of suspected illegal activity at Casuarina Coastal Reserve to contact NT Police on 131 444.

Ends

**Media Note – For more information contact Kristen Appel on 0439 887 124**

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Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts

Edwin Edlund 8999 4730 or 0437 915 366

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