

Media Release:

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Final Report on West Mac Think Tank Available

The final report from the tourism think tank session on the West MacDonnell National Park held in March 2008 is now available online.

Department of Natural Resources, Environment and The Arts Park and Wildlife Service Southern Regional Director Andrew Bridges said the report included some of the main elements the participants identified that they would like to see incorporated in the overall vision for the joint management of the Park.

“The Think Tank really provided everyone the opportunity to gain a greater understanding of the joint management process and the opportunities it presents for tourism, in addition to a chance for Parks and Wildlife Service to listen to ideas and perspectives from the tourism industry,” Mr Bridges said.

Some of the main elements of the vision included:

- the park will continue to offer a natural experience that provides the visitor with a sense they are in a wild, rugged area;
- there will be management of increased visitor numbers to maintain the experience.
- there will be opportunities for interactive learning about all aspects of the park.
- Aboriginal cultural experiences will expand and visitors will be able to leave the park with a better understanding of the Parks unique values.
- there will be partnerships between land managers, the Aboriginal community, the tourism industry and private sector.
- there will be a strong relationship between the tourism industry and Aboriginal people, building cultural awareness which is mindful of community needs and expectations.
- there will be improved economic benefits gained from the park to the region and the community.

Mr Bridges said participants also developed a number of guiding principles that would be necessary if the vision is to be achieved.

“These principles revolved around themes of Park values, Visitor Experiences, Relationships and Social & Economic benefits,” Mr Bridges said.

“Informal feedback suggested that participants were extremely pleased with the think tank and appreciated the opportunity to contribute to such an important Territory landscape.”

The final report will assist Parks and Wildlife Service and Traditional Owners towards determining a shared vision for the draft joint management plan which will go out for public comment in 2008/09.

To view the final report go to

<http://www.nt.gov.au/nreta/parks/manage/joint/news/westmacdonnell.html>

Media Note – for more information contact Andrew Bridges on 8951 8201

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