

MEDIA RELEASE

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Finke Desert Race Spectators Urged to Minimise Environmental Impacts

The Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts (NRETA) Senior Natural Resource Scientist Dave Waterson is appealing to spectators and campers at this year's Finke Desert Race to minimise their impact on the environment.

"The Alice Springs region received less than a quarter of the annual average rainfall since last years Finke Desert Race, which means vegetation is becoming sparse along the Finke track so cars and motorbikes will cause major dust problems over the long weekend," Mr Waterson said.

"NRETA inspects the environmental impacts of camping along the Finke Track every year, such as erosion and dust, trees cut down for firewood, removal of vegetation from creek beds and sand dunes, new tracks from off-road vehicles and motorbikes, as well as the rubbish left behind.

"While most spectators are doing the right thing, the message is obviously not getting through to everybody.

"We need the community's help to make sure camping is allowed in the future, and that we leave the landscape in a condition that everybody can enjoy and be proud of, it's not hard to be environmentally responsible."

Mr Waterson said that simple actions such as taking your own firewood, leaving your motorbikes and pets at home, not building any sheds or toilets, sticking to the tracks and away from the fragile sand dunes and creek beds as well as taking your own rubbish home with you could make a real difference to the environment.

Ends

Media Note – For more information contact Dave Waterson on 0427 971 308

Images:

1. Motorbike tracks from Finke Desert Race 2007
2. Campsite rubbish from Finke Desert Race 2007
3. Bags of rubbish from Finke Desert Race 2007

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