

March 2005

Title case opens in national park

The Gunditjmarra people recently gave evidence over three days in relation to their connection to land at a Federal Court hearing in Mt Eccles National Park. The claim covers 20,000 sq km in south-west Victoria and consists of Crown land, rivers, coast and up to 22 nautical miles offshore from north of Glenelg River to the South Australian border, south to Portland and beyond. This evidence will then be referred back to the National Native Title Tribunal for further mediation.

Hamilton Spectator, pg 1. 31-Mar-05.

Title outcome good news for aged care

An agreement signed between the State Government and the Rubibi community in October last year has allowed for the residential development of 33 hectares of prime land near Cable Beach and will also allow for the creation of an aged care facility. Under the agreement the Rubibi traditional owners are compensated for extinguishment of native title over the area by cultural, economic and social benefits. Kimberley Land Council Executive Director Wayne Bergmann said the agreement was a solid building block in the relationship between the Rubibi traditional owners and the State.

Business News, pg 18. 24 -Mar-05.

Broome development waits on outcome of title claims

The outcome of native title negotiations, including the Rubibi people claim in the coming months will be critical for the property sector in Broome amid mounting development and cost pressures. Negotiations regarding the Crown land surrounding Broome have been ongoing since native title began 13 years ago. It is expected that April will be critical in the negotiations with a lengthy court process expected if settlement is not agreed in the Rubibi people claim.

Business News, pg 18. 24 -Mar-05.

Tribunal registers Wik agreements

The National Native Title Tribunal has registered three ILUAs in relation to the Wik

and Wik Way People, 3 pastoral holdings and the Queensland Government on the west coast of Cape York Peninsula. The parties to these ILUAs can now carry out all aspects of the agreement such as access arrangements as well as the Local Government planned infrastructure and development in the area.

NNTT Media Release, pg 5. 24 -Mar-05.

Agreement to reserve 300 ha land

The Ganumi and Woppaburra people have made an agreement with the Queensland Department of Natural Resources and Mines in the Rockhampton region. The agreement will grant them 300 hectares of freehold land which they plan to turn into reserve land. Of the 300 hectares 140 hectares will be on Great Keppel Island and 160 hectares at Mt Wheeler.

Morning Bulletin, pg 8. 24 -Mar-05.

Native title claim settled out of court

A native title claim involving 28 South Australian Councils and the Kurna People is progressing slowly through out of court negotiations. The claim was originally lodged in 2000 and is more than 8000 sq km in size with only specific Crown land within the boundary, subject to the claim.

Bunyip, pg 6. 23-Mar-05.

Native title deal for BHP Billiton

BHP Billiton Iron Ore and the Njama People signed an agreement at a ceremony in Port Hedland during mid March. The Njama People will receive some financial compensation along with other benefits. The agreement will also ensure the expansion of the company's operations at Yarrrie mine, which is 180 km east of Port Hedland. The Njama People are represented by the Pilbara Native Title Service.

North West Telegraph, pg 3. 23-Mar-05.

Native Title Claim

A Noongar people's claim, which is the largest ever to be filed in Western Australia, is currently in notification. The claim is

194,000sq km and spreads from Jurien Bay, east to Coorow and southwards to Hopetoun. The claim is made up of several smaller claims that have been filed over the years and excludes privately owned land.

Central Midlands & Coastal Advocate, pg 4. 17-Mar-05.

Agreement signing makes title history

A coalition of 16 Councils from the Western Australian Wheatbelt region have signed an ILUA covering over 40,000sq km. The coalition was formed by members of local governments which are part of the Central Country Zone of the WA Local Government Association (WALGA). The South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council is the representative body for the Noongar claimants. Benefits from the agreement for the Noongar claimants were significant protection of cultural heritage sites, cross-cultural training, employment, training and contracting opportunities, along with consultation with the State, Councils and other land developers.

Narrogin Observer, pg 3. 16-Mar-05.

Coastal claims to be judged

The long running native title dispute over the Community of Yarrabah in Far North Queensland and a large strip of its southern coast will be heard by a Federal Court Judge in Cairns. The communal native title claim involves four applicants from clans in the Yarrabah region, including the Mandingalbay Yidinji and Gunggandji groups. The Yarrabah Community Council involved in the claim has said the delay in resolving it was hurting the community by preventing vital developments including essential services.

Cairns Post, pg 5. 14-Mar-05.

Mining Act hits a snag

The West Australian Government's long-running bid to overhaul the State's Mining Act and clear the native title backlog has again been halted, with the centrepiece of legislation passed in October now requiring further amendment before it can be enacted. These improvements to the legislation were formulated after more than two years of talks between the industry and native title groups. However, the changes are now unlikely to

come into effect until June 30 provided new amendments can be passed when Parliament resumes.

West Australian, pg 60. 12-Mar-05.

Review for SA native title

The Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement's Native Title Unit (ALRM NTU) has initiated an independent review which will inquire into the way native title negotiations have been undertaken in South Australia. The review will inquire into all levels of negotiations and also related processes. ALRM's Executive Officer Parry Agius said both negative and positive aspects will be covered with the results documented.

Koori Mail, pg 61. 09-Mar-05.

Native title on agenda

Six traditional owner groups between Bendigo and Mildura recently met to discuss native title issues pertinent to their region. Garry Murray, the Deputy Chairman of North West Clans Nation said at present a regional agreement was being negotiated with the State Government to settle the six native title claims. Mr Murray also said other issues to be discussed at the meeting included traditional owner's boundaries and the establishment of a body corporate.

Bendigo Advertiser, pg 9. 05-Mar-05.

Native Title agreements to stimulate new exploration in North-West

Queensland Mines Minister Stephen Robertson MP recently ratified a number of native title agreements which will allow eight mining exploration permits to be granted in the Cloncurry area. The agreement is between Ivanhoe Cloncurry Mines Pty Ltd and the Kalkadoon, Yulluna and Mitakoodi Peoples. These permits will cover land south of Cloncurry around the Selwyn copper-gold mine.

ABC Online, Indigenous News, Message Stick. 03-Mar-05.

Keys native title discussed

Members of Ceduna District Council, the Ceduna Marina Development Company and

South Australian State Government met with representatives of the Far West Coast Aboriginal Negotiation Committee and the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement (ALRM) recently to discuss issues surrounding the proposed Ceduna Keys Marina development. The proposed development will involve native title and Aboriginal Heritage issues. Due to some of the land being vacant Crown Land and other land vested in the Aboriginal Lands Trust, the parties hope to reach agreement between respective stakeholders to determine how native title and Aboriginal heritage interests in the project will be accommodated. At this stage the parties are committed to exploring a negotiated outcome through the use of an ILUA.

West Coast Sentinel, pg 1. 03-Mar-05

Agreement reached on Sickle

Junior miner Crescent Gold and Wongatha native title claimants have reached an agreement paving the way for a mining lease to be granted on its flagship tenement at Laverton. Crescent Gold Managing Director Andrew Haythorpe said both parties had entered into an all-encompassing land access agreement. Crescent now has to apply to the State Development Minister for the mining lease before development can commence.

Kalgoorlie Miner, pg 12. 03-Mar-05

Traditional owners vow to battle against canal

The Kimberley Land Council (KLC) has said that native title holders and claimants in the

Kimberley region will oppose any canal proposals from Fitzroy River to Perth. KLC Executive Director Wayne Bergman said he had also received many calls from traditional owners expressing objection over the proposal.

Broome Advertiser, pg 1. 03-Mar-05.

New accord in Victoria

An historic meeting of 20 Victorian traditional land owners recently in Melbourne, was an outstanding success according to Native Title Services Victoria (NTSV) Chairman Graham Atkinson. The group endorsed a statement which was presented to Victorian Attorney-General Rob Hulls and Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Gavin Jennings calling on the State government to commit to a process of negotiation.

National Indigenous Times, pg 10. 03-Mar-05.

Qld leads in native title

Natural Resources and Mines Minister Stephen Robertson MP has said Queensland leads the rest of Australia in facilitating native title recognition and Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs). So far, Queensland have facilitated 31 of the total 64 native title determinations and 86 of the 146 currently registered ILUAs. Mr Robertson also stated that these agreements helped expedite development of significant projects such as new mines, which in turn benefit the Indigenous communities.

Cooktown Local News, pg 11. 02-Mar-05