



GOLDFIELDS LAND & SEA COUNCIL

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NGADJU NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2007

Agreement to avoid court action

A genuine commitment to an out-of-court settlement of the Ngadju claim was made at a meeting in Perth on 17 July of representatives of the Ngadju Mediation Team and Deputy Premier Eric Ripper. The Team was nominated by the claim group to negotiate an out-of-court settlement of the claim with the State Government.

Mr Ripper signed a statement that said the Government was committed to reaching an agreement with the claim group. Les Schultz and Betty Logan spoke on behalf of the Ngadju people, telling him that they also wanted to see an agreement, preferring this to taking their claim to trial.

After the meeting with Mr Ripper, the Mediation Team and GLSC staff met with State Government officers and Narnobinya claimants to begin the negotiations. The Ngadju representatives presented the State with their proposal for what the settlement should include. The proposal was further discussed at another meeting in mid-August.



Ngadju claimants with Deputy Premier Eric Ripper, at the signing of the agreement. L to R: Johnny Graham, Les Schultz (Jnr), Mr Ripper, Eddie McKenzie, Betty Logan and Jamie Murrphy.

The State is due to provide its response to the Ngadju proposal soon and the GLSC will update the claim group on the details of both the proposal and the State's response at the next claim meeting on 23rd October 2007.

Governing Committee appointed

On 5 July 2007, a general meeting of the Ngadju Aboriginal Corporation was held. The Ngadju Corporation was set up in 2001 to foster social development, help keep the people's traditional culture going and help build trust and friendship between Ngadju people and others in the southern Goldfields community.

The meeting elected the following people to the Corporation's Governing Committee: Johnny Graham, Albert McKenzie, Katie Ray, Betty Logan, Lurlene Graham, Elvis Stokes, Bonnie Smith and Adrian Schultz.

The Ngadju Governing Committee

then elected the following people as office bearers: Chairperson – Albert McKenzie, Secretary – Betty Logan, Public Officer – Betty Logan, and Treasurer – Johnny Graham.

Membership of the Corporation is open to all Ngadju people over 18 years of age. If you haven't joined and would like to, please call Trish Ranger on 9091 1661 for a membership application form.

Call the Ngadju claim lawyer Sophie Kilpatrick on 9263 8711 if you want to know more about the Corporation.

LionOre agreement

At a recent meeting of the people who are known as Ngadju 2 under the LionOre agreement, an agreement was reached on a policy for distributing their share of the money from that agreement.

The agreement relates to LionOre Australia's mining operations in the Lake Johnston area.

As well as mining royalties, LionOre Australia has agreed to consider other benefits for Ngadju people, including possible employment and training opportunities.

Enquires to Jeff Atkinson, Ngadju future acts lawyer, on 9263 8701.

Field trip to Lake Johnston

In May this year a group of 8 Ngadju people, 4 GLSC staff, 2 Wilderness Society staff and a consultant anthropologist participated in a field visit to Lake Johnston, funded by the Wilderness Society. The Society requested the field trip because it was concerned about the lack of environmental knowledge of the area, which is now the subject of a scientific study conducted jointly by the Wilderness Society and Australian National University.

The visit to Lake Johnson has made sure that Ngadju people's views on the environment and their connection with the land will be part of the study. The group visited important places around the lake, discussed the effects of mining in the area, and made numerous observations concerning native animals and plants, heritage places and language.

A draft report on the outcomes of this field trip and actions for the future is currently being developed by the



Jenny Woods, Diane Clinch and GLSC Project Officer Eddie McKenzie looking out over the Lake Johnston system.

Wilderness Society and the GLSC with assistance from the Ngadju working group. The report should be finalised later this year and will be used to ensure the environment of the region will be protected in the future.

Enquires to Vanessa Bray on 92638713.

HERITAGE SURVEYS

There have been several requests to the GLSC in recent months for heritage surveys in the Ngadju claim area. As directed by the claim group, the GLSC presents these requests, with maps, to the Ngadju Working Group meetings. This ensures that the Working Group has a say in who goes on the surveys and is in accordance with the guidelines that have been set by the claim group.

The guidelines recognise the need for: choosing people with the best knowledge of the area; making sure the views of the elders and marlpas are considered; sharing the work among all families; and taking young people and people lacking knowledge of the country out to learn (they are not paid).

Heritage survey enquires should be directed to Justin Beal, Anthropologist, on 9263 8712.

Push for new reserve

The GLSC has been working hard to secure a new reserve for the Ngadju people over the old camping area just north of Norseman. This reserve is particularly important for the Ngadju people because of a number of old burial sites in the area that need to be protected from mining and other disturbances.

Negotiations are underway with Davros, who holds tenements over this area, to reach an agreement that will hopefully result in Davros providing its support for the application to the State Government to have the reserve created.

The Shire of Dundas has agreed to move the horse stables off the reserve and is currently looking at other options for the location of these stables.

Enquires to Vanessa Bray on 92638713.

Protection for Norseman graves

The Shire of Dundas has been asked to provide added protection for the graves of some Aboriginal people buried in Norseman Cemetery.

GLSC helped Ngadju elder Johnny Graham write to the Shire to ask that that a special fence be erected around the unmarked graves and a plaque be placed there to acknowledge the people and help prevent visitors to the cemetery from walking over the graves. A gate to allow relatives to enter the graves area has also been requested.

Aboriginal graves at the Norseman cemetery were originally outside the boundary fence. Some years ago Johnny Graham assisted the Shire to move the fence so that those graves were on the inside.