

# Native Title in the News

## National

**14-Aug-09 AU Native title changes** The Federal Government is claiming that the *Native Title Act* is delaying the dispensing of housing and other building programs in remote Indigenous communities and is looking to change this process. Indigenous Affairs Minister Jenny Macklin said Aboriginal communities should benefit from the \$5.5 billion in Government spending on social housing and infrastructure, as quickly as possible. *Illawarra Mercury* (Wollongong NSW, 14 August 2009), 5. *National Indigenous Times*, (Malua Bay NSW, 20 August 2009), 4. *Warrnambool Standard*, (Warrnambool VIC, 29 August 2009), 10.

## New South Wales

**20-Jul-09 NSW Native title claim on water reservoir** Cabone Council has received advice from the Department of Lands that an Aboriginal land claim has been submitted for a two lot site located near Gidley Street Reservoir. The claim is understood to have been made back in October 2006 and is now being assessed by the Department. *Daily Liberal*, (Dubbo NSW, 10 July 2009), 7. *Central Western Daily*, (Orange NSW, 18 July 2009), 4.

**30-Jul-09 NSW Native title after 16-year battle** The Wik clan in Cape York have finally been granted access to their traditional lands, after a 16-year legal battle and a 30-year political battle. Federal Court Judge Justice Andrew Greenwood formally recognised the claim by the Wik and the Wik Way people to 1200 square kilometres of land covered by Rio Tinto's bauxite mining lease. *Maitland Mercury*, (Maitland NSW, 30 July 2009), 6. *Australian*, (30 July 2009), 3. *Cairns Bulletin*, (Cairns QLD, July 2009), 2. *Summaries - Australian Financial Review*, (29 July 2009), 14. *Border Mail*, (Albury-Woodonga VIC, 29 July 2009), 6. *Warrnambool Standard*, (Warrnambool VIC, 29 July 2009), 7.

**05-Aug-09 NSW Native title claim takes next step** Wiradjuri families, the traditional owners of the Wellington region, have taken further steps to lodging a native title claim following a successful authorisation meeting. The claim covers a vast area of central west land including Wellington, Mudgee and Orange. Around 45 descendants of the traditional families attended the

meeting at the Senior Citizens Centre to discuss the claim, which covers hundreds of square kilometres, and to introduce the professionals representing the group. The claim has been described as one of the strongest native title claims in the country. *Wellington Times*, (Wellington NSW, 5 August 2009), 3. *Central Western Daily*, (Orange NSW, 4 August 2009), 7. *Daily Liberal*, (Dubbo NSW, 3 August 2009), 6. *Wellington Times*, (Wellington NSW, 21 August 2009), 3. *Mudgee Guardian*, (Mudgee NSW, 17 July 2009), 6. *Wellington Times*, (Wellington NSW, 17 July 2009), 3.

**13-Aug-09 NSW Native title claim settled after 15 years** In 1994 three sisters - Lorna Kelly, Yvonne Graham and Linda Vidler - lodged a native title claim over a wide area of coastal Crown land that stretched from Byron Bay to Broken Head. Almost 15 years later the claim has almost been finalised. *Byron Shire News*, (Byron Bay NSW, 13 August 2009), 5. *Byron Shire News*, (Byron Bay NSW, 13 August 2009), 5.

## Northern Territory

**01-Aug-09 NT Land in Elliott handed over** Traditional owners are celebrating after being given native title to a stretch of land in Elliott, 700 kilometres south of Darwin. Kim Hill, Northern Land Council Chief Executive has said it was the first time a native title determination had been granted by consent in the region. *Northern Territory News*, (Darwin NT, 1 August 2009), 3.

**11-Aug-09 NT Native title given at Pine Hill Station** The Northern Territory's Ilkewartn Ywel Anmatyerr People have been granted native title rights at Pine Hill Station. The Federal Court made a consent determination over almost 1200 square kilometres of land at the station 150 kilometres North of Alice Springs. The determination gives the people non-exclusive rights. *Northern Territory News*, (Darwin NT, 11 August 2009), 7. *Northern Territory News*, (Darwin NT, 8 August 2009), 12. *Tennant & District Times*, (Tennant NT, 14 August 2009), 3.

## Queensland

**01-Jul-09 QLD Kuuku Ya'u people granted first native title agreement over Queensland seas** Queensland's Kuuku Ya'u people have become the first Indigenous peoples to have their traditional rights recognised through a native title agreement. At a Federal Court hearing at Portland Roads, Justice Andrew Greenwood recognised the Kuuku Ya'u people's exclusive rights. *Western Cape Bulletin*, (Weipa QLD, 1 July 2009), 5. *Cooktown Local News*, (Cooktown QLD, 1 July 2009), 8.

*National Indigenous Times*, (Malua Bay NSW, 9 July 2009), 8.

**03-Jul-09 QLD Native title talks begin** Talks aimed at reaching an agreement on native title have begun between the Pitta Pitta and Kalkadoon people and Councils in Western Queensland. The claim submitted covers an area of 30,090 square kilometres. *Longreach Leader*, (Longreach QLD, 3 July 2009), 7.

**10-Jul-09 QLD State leads native title** Natural Resource, Mines and Energy Minister Stephen Robertson has said that Queensland is leading Australia in dealing with native title issues. As part of NAIDOC week, Mr Robertson announced that Queensland has registered more than 200 voluntary Indigenous Land Use Agreements, over half the current national number. *Gladstone Observer*, (Gladstone QLD, 10 July 2009), 8.

**24-Jul-09 QLD Land use agreements** Tablelands Regional Council will enter into Indigenous Land Use Agreements with two groups that have native title claims over land within the region. The Council resolved to enter into agreements with the Mamu and combined Delabel Malanbarra Yidinji peoples to decide how the land would be used in the future. *Tablelands Advertiser*, (Mareeba QLD, 24 July 2009), 10.

**06-Aug-09 QLD 16 year battle for Wik over** The Wik community, after a 16 year legal battle and 30 year political struggle have finally been granted access to their traditional lands. The native title rights of the Wik and the Wik way people were formally recognised by Federal Court Justice Andrew Greenwood. The land is covered by a bauxite mining lease. *National Indigenous Times*, (Malua Bay NSW, 6 August 2009), 11.

**29-Aug-09 QLD Dugongs poached** Indigenous communities claim they are powerless to stop the illegal trade in dugong meat and turtle meat, after the Federal Government cut funding to its ranger program. Poachers at Yarrabah in far north Queensland have reportedly been abusing native title laws to kill dugong and turtles and selling the meat for up to \$50 a kilogram. *Weekend Gold Coast Bulletin*, (QLD, 29 August 2009), 18. *Daily Mercury*, (Mackay QLD, 29 August 2009), 3.

## South Australia

**05-Aug-09 AU South Australian uranium mine gets green light** Australia's uranium industry has received a boost with the recent approval of south Australia's Four

Mile uranium mine. The mine will start its operations in early 2010 after receiving the 'go ahead' from Federal Environment Minister Peter Garrett in July. Members of the Adnyamathanha Aboriginal community in South Australia's Flinders Ranges have said that during negotiations their concerns were not adequately considered. Adnyamathanha Traditional Land Association Chairperson, Vince Coulthard said that the Association had very little choice and that Aboriginal people were disempowered, despite the Native Title Act. *Australian Mining Review*, (August 2009), 4. *National Indigenous Times*, (Malua Bay NSW, 23 July 2009), 7. *Roxby Downs Sun*, (Port Augusta SA, 23 July 2009), 4.

## Victoria

**07/2009 VIC New framework for native title settlement** The Victorian branch of the Minerals Council has welcomed the new native title settlement framework. Executive Director Chris Fraser said the Framework was a welcome step forward in resolving native title in Victoria and would facilitate agreement making between the minerals industry and traditional land owners. *Australian Mining Review*, (July 2009), 4.

**27-Jul-09 VIC No reward for miner** Reward Minerals has been dealt a blow, with the Federal Government refusing to overrule a decision blocking its Lake Disappointment Potash mine. In May, the National Native Title Tribunal ruled the planned Potash mine could not proceed. Shares in Reward Minerals plummeted more than 20 per cent on the release of the news. *Border Mail*, (Albury-Wodonga VIC, 29 July 2009), 19. *Advertiser*, (Adelaide SA, 29 July 2009), 55. *North West Star*, (Mount Isa QLD, 29 July 2009), 17.

**29-Aug-09 VIC Native title rebuke** Victorian Attorney General Rob Hulls says the Federal Government is undermining Victoria's efforts to establish a new framework for resolving native title claims by refusing to fund it. Territory ministers are angry that the Commonwealth had tried to avoid the cost-sharing agreement which was reached last year. *Weekend Australian*, (29 August 2009), 2.

## Western Australia

**01-Jul-09 WA Land access deed signed with Innawonga Bunjima and Iron Ore Holdings** A native title agreement has been reached between WA company Iron Ore and Innawonga and Bunjima people covering the central Pilbara. The claim includes parts of the

Karijini National Park and covers about 19,567 square kilometres. *Pilbara News*, (Pilbara WA, 1 July 2009), 8. *Australian*, (25 June 2009), 18. *Yamatji News*, (Geraldton WA, July 2009), 15.

**03-Jul-09 WA Relief for native title claimants** Nyungar Aboriginal Corporation Alternate Director has expressed relief after the town's native title claim, which mainly affects unallocated crown land around Esperance, successfully retained its registered claim status for the second time. *Kalgoorlie Miner*, (Kalgoorlie WA, 3 July 2009), 5.

**03-Aug-09 WA Human Rights Commission may step in on BHP claim** The Australian Human Rights Commission may intervene in legal action against mining giant BHP Billiton launched by an Aboriginal group opposing a mining claim in their traditional lands. BHP Billiton wants a mining lease over 200 square kilometres of Aboriginal land in the heart of the Pilbara, 1000 kilometres north of Perth. *Age*, (Melbourne VIC, 3 August 2009), 4.

**06-Aug-09 WA Reward slumps on native title loss** The Federal Court has dealt a blow to Reward Minerals by refusing to overrule a decision blocking its Lake Disappointment potash mine. In May the National Native Title Tribunal determined the planned potash mine in WA could not proceed. The area was leased covered and was deemed an extremely significant site for the Indigenous Martu people. *Businesses News*, (Perth WA, 6 August 2009), 24.

**06-Aug-09 WA Agreement a boost for native title holders** A landmark agreement has been established between the Broome Port Authority and Woodside to use selected land to establish a supply base which will support the Browse Basin LNG development. The development is being touted as a training and business opportunity for native title holders. *Broome Advertiser*, (Broome WA, 6 August 2009), 6.

**07-Aug-09 WA Native title and uranium mining** Native title claimants attended a series of workshops to learn about uranium mining and radiation in Geraldton. The workshops were also held in Canarvon and Karratha. They were hosted by Mid West native title body Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation (YMAC). *Geraldton Guardian*, (Geraldton WA, 7 August 2009), 13.

**14-Aug-09 WA Changes to mining approvals recommended** Mid West miners have welcomed key recommendations which will improve the State's approvals process for mining and other major projects.

The recommendations were released by the State appointed industry working group. The 15 recommendations include establishing a natural resource agency, changing the Environmental Protection Authority to a "stand-alone" entity, and altering native title processes and the environmental approvals process. *Geraldton Guardian*, (Geraldton WA, 14 August 2009), 7.

