



Nurrdalinji Native Title Aboriginal Corporation

ABN: 32 608 508 769

ICN: 9392

Protecting Our Sacred Sites and Songlines Directive *Beetaloo Basin - 14 August 2022*

Introduction

The Nurrdalinji Native Title Aboriginal Corporation (Nurrdalinji) was incorporated in 2020 and is made up of over 60 native title holders from 11 native title determination areas throughout the Beetaloo Basin. Nurrdalinji was formed following an historic meeting of native title holders from throughout the Beetaloo Basin at Daly Waters.

The name “Nurrdalinji” means “mixed tribe” in Alawa language, reflecting members’ diversity and unity. Nurrdalinji’s purpose is to support members to be consulted about what happens on their country. It seeks to enable its members to be heard and to determine their future aspirations for their country.

At a meeting in Daly Waters, NT on 13-14 August 2022 Senior Traditional Owners and custodians met together to talk about how we want to protect our places which hold a special meaning and significance for us from fracking damage.

Our concerns

For too long companies have been able to get away with damaging our land and sacred places. They have never properly consulted us. We will not sit by while plans for exploration move to production without due consultation. These companies need to leave, cease any new works and remove all equipment that is currently destroying our country.

We don’t believe the claims that there are benefits in this industry for us, when there are limited jobs, limited financial outcomes and when the actual costs to country and the climate are just too high.

Everyone is worried about fracking and the proposed scale. It would leave a scar on the earth, take too much water from our creeks and underground water. We don't want it to go ahead. But the companies are not listening to us, and experience tells us they will go ahead and do fracking without our permission.

Once companies put hundreds of wells across the Beetaloo Basin, where are we going to take our kids fishing and hunting? Where are we going to go when they damage and pollute our water? What’s going to happen to all our sacred songlines if this fracking goes ahead?

We don't believe the Northern Territory Government or the gas companies will protect sacred sites and waterways. They are rushing to get exploration done and are already cutting corners and making mistakes. The Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority (AAPA) must make sure that companies are doing the right thing and safeguard these sites from harm.

The Northern Land Council (NLC) is meant to be our representative body. It needs to consult with the right people and sort out the old anthropology which was done in a hurry. No one we speak with has ever understood, or now understands, the scale of what is coming. This is why we think it is so important to consult broadly, with all the right people. We have asked many times for a regional meeting of Traditional Owners across the Beetaloo, and are determined to see this happen.

What we want

The NLC should properly represent us. The Northern Land Council should properly advise us and faithfully represent our views and start to respect our right to determine what happens on our country, so we can organise, take advice, make timely group decisions and engage effectively with fracking companies, governments and other developers.

The NLC should hold a regional summit. The Northern Land Council should use the \$2.1 million it received from the Federal government in March 2022 for the purposes of consulting in the Beetaloo Basin to hold a regional summit. This summit should be organised in consultation with Beetaloo Basin native title holders so we all have a say in what happens on country, providing native title holders with information to make informed decisions, as a group, about whether to give consent to fracking on our country.

Signed on 14 August 2022 by Johnny Wilson, Sam Daylight, Gillian Limmen, Samuel Sandy, Elaine Sandy, Josephine John, Bradley Farrar, Janet Gregory, Alan Watson, William John, Peter Ellis, Loris Hume, Dean Nugget, Abel Larsen, Pearl Hodgson, May August.