

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee
Answers to questions on notice
Environment and Energy portfolio

Question No: 297
Hearing: Additional Estimates
Outcome: Agency
Program: Director of National Parks
Topic: Management of Buffalo Farm
Hansard Page: -
Question Date: 10 March 2017
Question Type: Written

Senator Siewert asked:

Please provide a copy of the paperwork you referred to in the recent estimates hearing on which you are basing your understanding of the Buffalo Farm management arrangements, specifically that Northern Land Council is responsible for managing the area of the Buffalo Farm? Please provide a copy of the lease you referred to.

Answer:

The Northern Land Council operates the buffalo farm under an approval issued by the then Director of National Parks in 1999. That approval is attached.

Chairman
Northern Land Council
PO Box 42921
CASUARINA NT 0810

Attention: Norman Fry
Chief Executive Officer

Dear Norman

KAKADU NATIONAL PARK : BUFFALO FARM

I refer to the letter dated 12 October 1999 from the Northern Land Council to the Manager of Kakadu National Park regarding the purchase by the Land Council from Gagudju Charitable Association Inc (In Liquidation) of the livestock of the buffalo farm that has been operated by the Association in Stage 1 of Kakadu National Park.

The purpose of the farm is to meet the wishes of the traditional Aboriginal owners of the region to be provided with buffalo meat. It was established and has been operated with the approval of the Director of National Parks and Wildlife on land made available by the Director (being land leased by the Director from the Kakadu Aboriginal Land Trust), and in accordance with an environmental impact assessment carried out prior to the farm being established. With the Gagudju Charitable Association in liquidation it has become necessary for the Northern Land Council (on behalf of local traditional owners) to purchase the livestock and for the operation of the farm to be continued by the Land Council or another body established for the purpose.

I note that funds for the purchase of the farm stock will come from moneys received by the Kakadu and Jabiluka Aboriginal Land Trusts as compensation for the removal of buffalo from their respective Land Trust areas during the Brucellosis and Tuberculosis Eradication Campaign. I understand that these moneys may only be used for the purchase and distribution of cattle and buffalo to the Land Trusts by the Northern Land Council.

The Director agrees that the buffalo farm should continue to operate. Further, the Kakadu National Park Plan of Management expressly recognises and provides for the maintenance of the existing herd within the park (section 17 at pages 86 and 89).

On behalf of the Director of National Parks and Wildlife I confirm it is agreed that the Northern Land Council or such other body as may be nominated by the Land Council may continue to operate the buffalo farm at its present location on the same terms and conditions on which it has been operated by the Gagudju Charitable Association Inc (that is, in accordance with the requirements of the environmental impact statement).

The arrangements for the operation of the buffalo farm have to date been informal and ought now to be formalised. I note also that activities at the farm include the collection of bush tucker for elderly Bininj and that the possibility of conducting a tourism venture in connection with the farm have been raised. I would be interested in receiving your comments on these matters and holding discussions with the NLC with a view to formalising local arrangements for the management of the farm.

Yours Sincerely

Peter Wellings
Assistant Secretary
Parks Australia North
For and on behalf of the Director of National Parks and Wildlife

23/12/92