



MEDIA RELEASE

9 June 2010

Traditional Owners Support Wild Rivers

“The Reserve is sacred land. We want to make sure it stays sacred and remains there forever.”

Traditional Owner Cecil Arthur

Traditional Owners of the Steve Irwin Wildlife Reserve have today stood together and voiced their support of the Wild Rivers declaration, congratulating the Queensland Government on making an important environmental decision.

Taepithiggi representative and Traditional Land Owner Cecil Arthur said “We are the Traditional Owners of the land and we support the Wild Rivers declaration. This protection really secures our significance, our country and our rights and where we belong.

“It is a security system against the mining company as well. Now they can’t get in and disturb these waterholes, these sacred places, these significant sites to us, because they are so valuable to our culture. So I look at this as a good thing at the end of the day that I’m really happy with.

“The Reserve is sacred land. We want to make sure it stays sacred and remains there forever,” Cecil said.

David Claudie – a Kuuku l’yu (northern Kaanju) elder, veteran ranger and CEO of the Chuulangun Aboriginal Corporation also congratulated the Queensland Government on its declaration of the Wenlock River as a Wild River.

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Open every day (except Christmas Day) 9:00am - 5:00pm
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“The Wenlock River basin holds significant cultural and spiritual value for its Traditional Owners. It features many important Story Places, sacred ceremonial grounds, totemic sites, and areas of rock carving and painting,” David said.

“The whole Wenlock River, its tributaries and springs have enormous cultural significance as the Creator of Ngaachi (homelands) under the umbrella of Pianamu (Rainbow Serpent).

“We are working with Australia Zoo towards protection of the Wenlock River and in respect for our totem the I’wai,” David said.

The Wenlock River has the richest freshwater fish diversity of any Australian river, and supports a critical population of critically endangered Spear-tooth Sharks, endangered freshwater Saw Fish and the vulnerable Estuarine Crocodile.

Terri Irwin said the declaration of the Wenlock River as a Wild River was a win for all Australians.

“I would like to congratulate the Queensland State Government. Minister Stephen Robertson visited the Steve Irwin Wildlife Reserve and the Wenlock River.

“This decision vindicates the intensive research we have conducted which clearly shows the environmental significance of the area and the importance of protecting it.

“This is a win for Queenslanders, and indeed all Australians. The Wenlock River Basin is one of the world’s most pristine ecosystems. Declaring the river as a Wild River means that it will be protected and preserved for future generations.

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“Steve always said that the Wenlock was the most beautiful place on earth, and now I am so pleased that this spectacular river and its biodiversity will be protected for the future,” Terri said.

“Irrespective of mining and other issues, this was the right decision in regard to the protection of the natural values of the Wenlock catchment,” Terri said.

“The fight still continues to protect the Steve Irwin Wildlife Reserve from being strip mined.

“I would like to say thank you to over 280,000 people who have signed the petition and voiced their support of the protection of the Steve Irwin Wildlife Reserve so far,” Terri said.

“There is still the possibility that this tribute to Steve could be destroyed, so I encourage all of you to continue the fight with us to Save Steve’s Place and protect this awesome place for our children and future generations.”

If you would like to sign the petition to Save Steve’s Place visit www.savestevesplace.com

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