

CONFIDENTIAL
CABINET DECISION

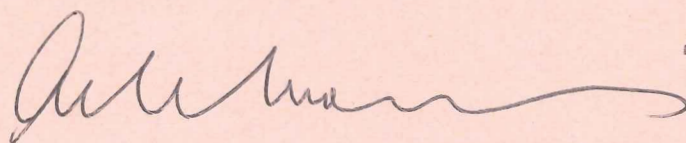
No.....6325.....

Submission No.: 5435

Title: DAVENPORT - MURCHISON RANGES

Cabinet -

- (a) approved in principle the establishment of a significant national park, centred on the Davenport-Murchison Range system south-east of Tennant Creek;
- (b) approved the further investigation of the availability of land and the terms for its surrender; and
- (c) directed that a further Submission be prepared when investigations are complete.



A. G. MORRIS
Secretary to Cabinet.

9 January 1990

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FOR CABINET

SUBMISSION No: 5435

<p>Title:</p> <p>Minister</p> <p>Purpose:</p> <p>Relation to existing policy:</p> <p>Timing/ legislative priority:</p> <p>Announcement of decision, tabling, etc:</p> <p>Action required before announcement:</p> <p>Staffing implications, numbers and costs, etc:</p> <p>Total cost:</p>	<p>DAVENPORT - MURCHISON RANGES</p> <p>MINISTER FOR CONSERVATION HON STEVE HATTON MLA</p> <p>TO APPROVE IN PRINCIPLE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL PARK.</p> <p>CONFORMS WITH THE NORTHERN TERRITORY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AND NORTHERN TERRITORY PARK DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES.</p> <p>NIL LEGISLATION REQUIRED DECISION REQUIRED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.</p> <p>NIL AT THIS TIME.</p> <p>CONSULTATIONS WITH LAND OWNERS.</p> <p>NIL AT THIS STAGE.</p> <p>INDICATED COST OF \$490 000 SUBJECT TO FURTHER CABINET APPROVAL.</p>
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OF THE CHIEF MINISTER

Department/~~Authority~~.....

COMMENT ON CABINET SUBMISSION No.

TITLE: DAVENPORT - MURCHISON RANGES

COMMENTS:

The Submission is supported.

B Chambers

SIGNED: B CHAMBERS

DESIGNATION: A/DEPUTY SECRETARY

DATE: 14th Nov. 1989. **CONFIDENTIAL**

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Department/Authority..... **NORTHERN TERRITORY TREASURY**.....

COMMENT ON CABINET SUBMISSION No.

TITLE: **DAVENPORT-MURCHISON RANGES**.....

COMMENTS:

The Submission is supported.



SIGNED: **G K B CLARKE**

DESIGNATION: **ACTING UNDER TREASURER**

DATE: **17 NOVEMBER 1989**

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LAW

Department/Authority:

COMMENT ON CABINET SUBMISSION No.

TITLE: DAVENPORT-MURCHISON RANGES
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COMMENTS:

There appear to be no constitutional or legal barriers to the proposal.

As indicated in the submission some of the land within the proposed park is under claim in the Wakaya/Alyawarre Land Claim. The evidence in this claim has been heard but final submissions have not yet been made. The prospect of those areas becoming Aboriginal land is assessed as being reasonably high.

In the event that the Commonage and the Reserve becomes Aboriginal land a lease back arrangement could be negotiated. Depending on the terms of the leaseback, cost estimates may be effected.

Peter F. Conran

SIGNED: Peter Conran
DESIGNATION: Secretary, Department of Law
DATE: 9 November 1989

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24/1/89

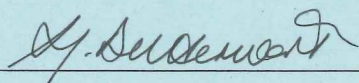
Department ~~Authority~~ OF LABOUR AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES.....

COMMENT ON CABINET SUBMISSION No.

TITLE: DAVENPORT-MURCHISON RANGES.....
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COMMENTS:

The submission is supported.



SIGNED: S J BUTTERWORTH

DESIGNATION: DEPUTY SECRETARY

DATE: 10 NOVEMBER 1989

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Department/Authority NORTHERN TERRITORY TOURIST COMMISSION

COMMENT ON CABINET SUBMISSION No.

TITLE:DAVENPORT-MURCHISON RANGES.....

COMMENTS:

ENDORSED AS PROPOSED.

SIGNED:



DESIGNATION: CHAIRMAN

DATE: 13 NOVEMBER 1989

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Department/Authority POWER AND WATER AUTHORITY

COMMENT ON CABINET SUBMISSION No.

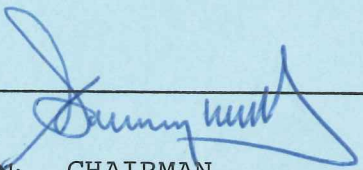
TITLE: DAVENPORT - MURCHISON RANGES

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COMMENTS:

The Authority has no objections to this Submission.

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SIGNED:
DESIGNATION: CHAIRMAN

DATE: 14 November 1989 **CONFIDENTIAL**

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Department/Authority MINES AND ENERGY

COMMENT ON CABINET SUBMISSION No.

TITLE: DAVENPORT - MURCHISON RANGES

COMMENTS:

The area is of considerable geological interest, is largely unexplored and of unknown economic potential. Any future land use plan must include full access for future scientific investigation and/or exploration.

SIGNED: _____

DESIGNATION:  SECRETARY

DATE: 14 November 1989 **CONFIDENTIAL**

Department/Authority XXXXXX Primary Industry and Fisheries

COMMENT ON CABINET SUBMISSION No.

TITLE: DAVENPORT AND MURCHISON RANGES

COMMENTS:

This Department notes with concern the lack of justification for including the Hatches Creek Quarantine and Stock Holding Reserve (No 929) in the proposed park, other than the intention stated to the Aboriginal Land Commissioner.

From the information provided there appear to be no sites or areas of significance within the reserve.

This shortcoming notwithstanding, the proposal for a National Park is supported.

SIGNED: 

DESIGNATION: Secretary

DATE: 14/11/89

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Department/~~Authority~~..... TRANSPORT AND WORKS.....

COMMENT ON CABINET SUBMISSION No.

TITLE: DAVENPORT/MURCHISON NATIONAL PARK.....

COMMENTS:

The submission is supported.

It should be noted that development costs for roadworks are estimated at \$2.3M to a formed road standard. This includes improvements to the Ring Route (\$1M) and access improvements to Whistleduck Creek Headwaters ((\$220,000), Julia Creek Basin (\$490,000), Old Policeman's Waterhole (\$40,000) and a link from the Devils Marbles to the ring route (\$550,000).

All internal roadwork would be programmed through the Conservation Commission, while any external roads would be programmed through Department of Transport and Work's program.

All roadworks would be subject to normal budget considerations. It should be noted that \$0.5M is currently included in Department of Transport and Works 1992/93 Forward Works Proposals.



SIGNED: I D GORDON

DESIGNATION: SECRETARY

DATE: 14/11/89

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Department/Authority..... **INDUSTRIES AND DEVELOPMENT**.....

COMMENT ON CABINET SUBMISSION No.

TITLE: DAVENPORT-MURCHINSON RANGES
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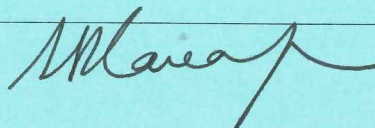
COMMENTS:

The submission is supported.

It would be beneficial for tourist development to have a national park in the Tennant Creek area.

SIGNED: SR CAVANAGH

DESIGNATION: ACTING SECRETARY



DATE: 11 NOVEMBER 1989 **CONFIDENTIAL**

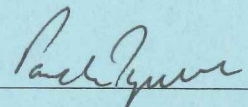
Department/Authority..... **LANDS AND HOUSING**

COMMENT ON CABINET SUBMISSION No.

TITLE: **DAVENPORT - MURCHISON RANGES**

COMMENTS:

The submission is supported.



SIGNED: **PAUL TYRRELL**

DESIGNATION: **SECRETARY**

DATE:

21/11/89

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RECOMMENDATION

1. It is recommended that Cabinet:
 - a) approves in principle the establishment of a significant national park, centred on the Davenport-Murchison Range system south-east of Tennant Creek;
 - b) approves the further investigation of the availability of land and the terms for its surrender;
 - c) directs that a further Submission be prepared when investigations are complete.

BACKGROUND

2. In May 1983, the then Minister for Conservation directed that the Conservation Commission investigate the establishment of a significant National Park in the Tennant Creek district.
3. Surveys of the Davenport and Murchison Ranges adjacent to the existing Devil's Marbles Conservation Reserve, 75km south of Tennant Creek, demonstrated the prime

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suitability of the Ranges for national park status. The area is rugged and scenic with numerous large and permanent natural waters. It is rich in Territory history and is a major natural refuge for wildlife.

4. The core area is contained within the pastoral leases of Kurundi and Singleton. In 1986, agreement was reached with the lessee of Kurundi on boundaries and settlement arrangements to be proposed to Government. In 1988, the lessee of Singleton agreed in principle to the excision of land required for the Park. In 1989, the lessee of Kurundi proposed development of tourist facilities within the Ranges and sought advice on the Government's strategic intentions in the area.

CONSIDERATION OF THE ISSUES

5. The establishment of the Park will not impact adversely on current land use. The land is rugged and the boundary between the two leases is unfenced. The portion on Singleton is ungrazed. The portion on Kurundi is grazed from time to time, but in the interest of improved stock control, the lessee is seeking to confine stock within fenced areas that fall outside the proposed park.

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6. The Park will not prevent responsible resource development. Amendments to the Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act and the Mining Act, together with agreed administrative arrangements provide for exploration and mining to be carried out on land dedicated as park or reserve. Wolfram has been extensively mined in the Hatches Creek area and gold prospects have been reported.

7. The proposed park conforms with strategic directions identified in:
 - . 'Towards Year 2000 Northern Territory Tourism Development Plan';

 - . 'Northern Territory Economic Development Strategy';
and

 - . 'N.T. Park Development Priorities 1988-93' (Cabinet Decision No. 5638).

8. The configuration of the proposed park is shown on Attachment A. Attachment B presents a development concept plan. The plan builds on outstanding recreational and natural features, centred on gorges,

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water-holes and historic sites. Attachment C summarises recorded sites of high cultural and/or natural value.

9. The configuration includes the Animbra Commonage (R1794) and Quarantine Reserve (R929). The Commonage has traditionally been subject to a grazing licence in favour of Kurundi and the Reserve 929 is without facilities and has never been used for its prescribed purpose. Both areas are subject to the Wakaya-Alyawarra land claim. The intention to include these areas within a national park was put to the Land Commissioner as part of the Territory Submission. The total area proposed for park status is 2,308km² made up as follows:

	km ²
Kurundi portion	1,325
Singleton portion	321
Commonage	280
Reserve	364
Devil's Marbles	<u>18</u>
Total	<u>2,308</u>

10. For purposes of development and operation, the Park and the Devil's Marbles Conservation Reserve will be treated as one resource even though they are separated by

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portion of McLaren Creek Station (under claim). In addition to the Marbles, development is proposed for Inkangarti Gorge, Ripple Gorge, Frew Gorge and the Hatches Creek Historic Mining Precinct.

OPTIONS

11. There are two primary options for Cabinet to determine:

- a) to approve in principle the establishment of the park; or
- b) to not approve the establishment of the park.

Option a) conforms with the Economic Development Strategy, conforms with local and regional aspirations, and is supported by extensive documentation on rich heritage, natural and tourist resources. Option (a) is preferred and is recommended.

PUBLIC IMPACT OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

12. A Government decision to proceed with the Park will be favourably reported as evidence of commitment to regional development, to conservation and to enhancement of tourism associated with Tennant Creek and the Stuart

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Highway.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

13. Actual cost of establishing the Park will be determined as land becomes available and settlements are negotiated. Indicated costs for land acquisition total \$490,000 made up of land at valuation \$80,000; fencing \$270,000 and replacement waters \$140,000. Infrastructure development of the Park will be programmed and will follow normal budget procedures and constraints.

14. The park lends itself to the image of 'adventure touring' and low profile development. It is expected that camping and lodge facilities will be provided on a commercial basis by local business. Establishment of the Park will increase total N.T. tourist visitor nights and park development can be programmed so as to yield a net Territory economic benefit, as well as a conservation benefit (Attachment D).

REGULATORY IMPACT

15. Nil.

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EMPLOYMENT AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

16. The park will increase regional employment in the tourism industry and will not impact on industrial relations. Associated government employment will be limited to an eventual establishment of four Rangers.

COMMONWEALTH STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

17. A decision on the matter is not expected to impact on Commonwealth, State or Local Government relations.

CO-ORDINATION AND CONSULTATION

18. The Submission has been presented to the Co-ordination Committee and circulated to the Departments of Chief Minister, Law, Treasury, Transport and Works, Industries and Development, Primary Industry and Fisheries, Mines and Energy and Lands and Housing; and to the Tourist Commission and the Public Service Commissioner. Comments are attached.

LEGISLATION

19. None required.

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PUBLICITY

20. A press release will be appropriate following completion of consultations with land owners.

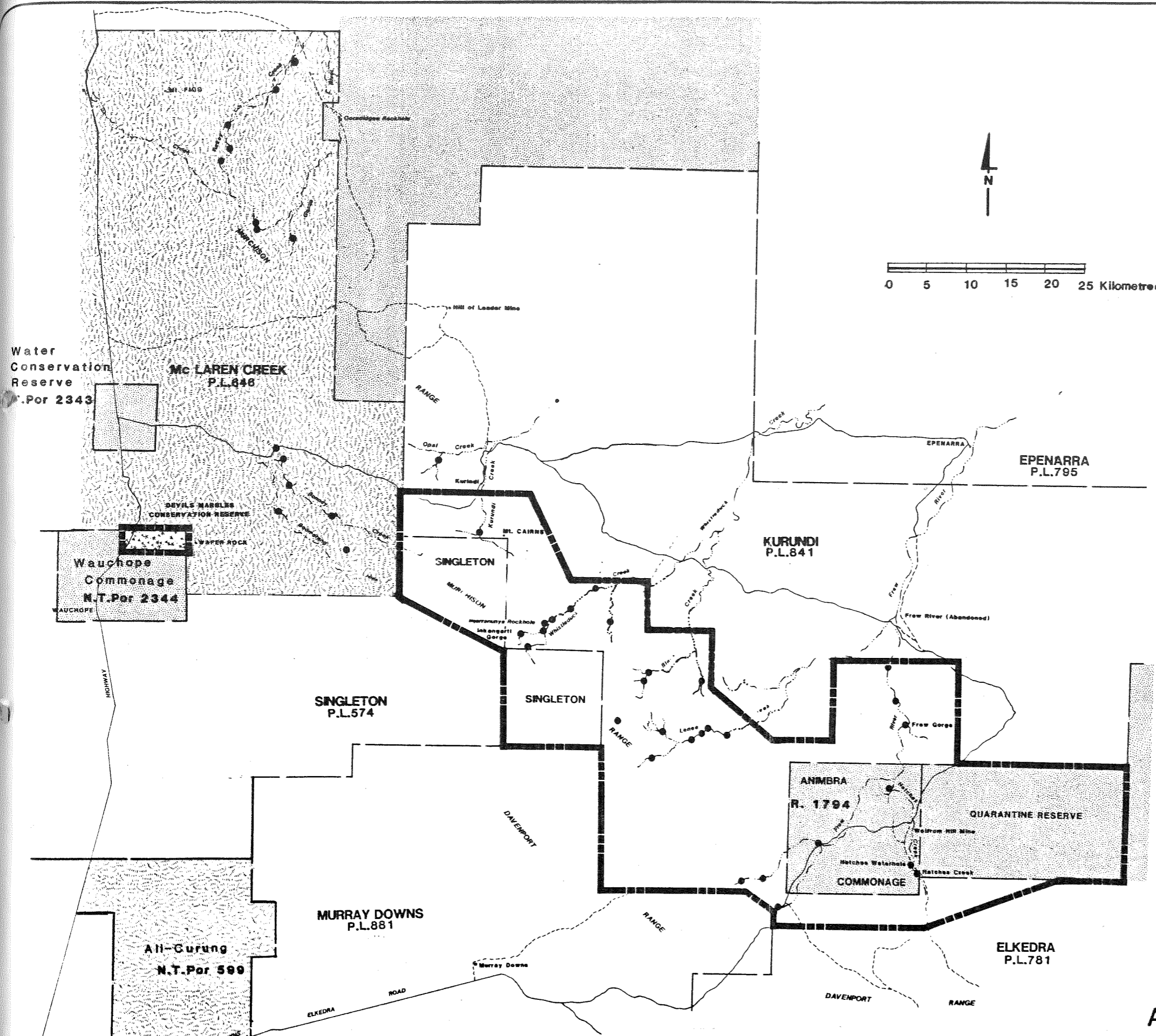
TIMING

21. A decision is required to permit response to be made to current inquiries for advice as to the Government's strategic intentions in the area.

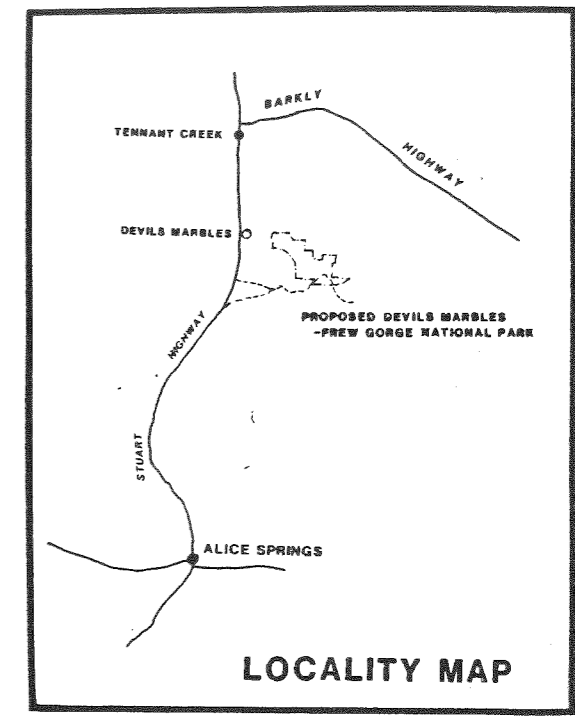
A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Steve Hatton', written in a cursive style.

STEVE HATTON

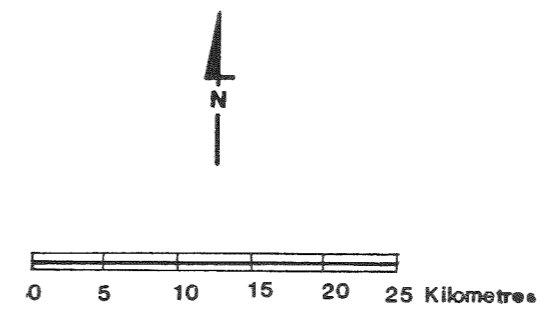
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LEGEND



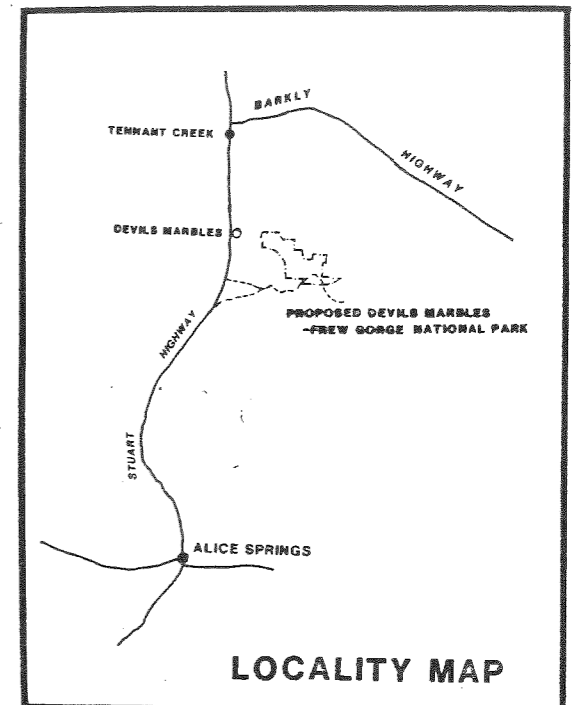
- Existing Park Boundary
- Proposed Park Boundary
- Station Boundary
- Existing Road
- Existing Track
- River/Creek
- Waterhole/Rockhole
- Pastoral Leasehold
- Aboriginal Freehold
- Aboriginal Land Claim
- Conservation Reserve



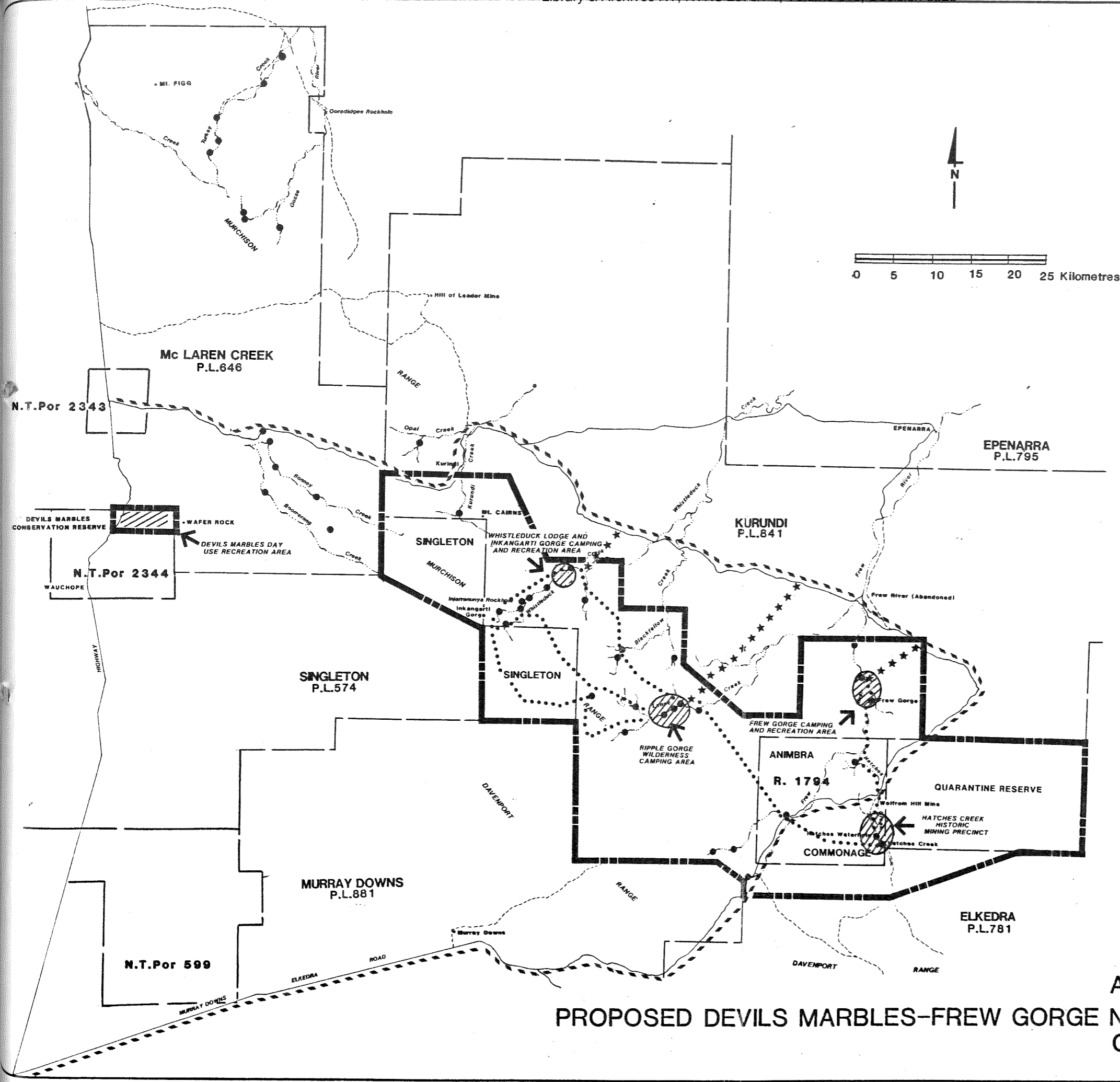
**ATTACHMENT A.
PROPOSED DEVILS MARBLES-FREW GORGE NATIONAL PARK
LAND TENURE**



LEGEND



- Existing Park Boundary
- Proposed Park Boundary
- Station Boundary
- Existing Road
- Existing Track
- River/Creek
- Waterhole/Rockhole
- Overland Walking Trails
- Proposed New Road
- Proposed Park Ring Route
- Visitors Facilities

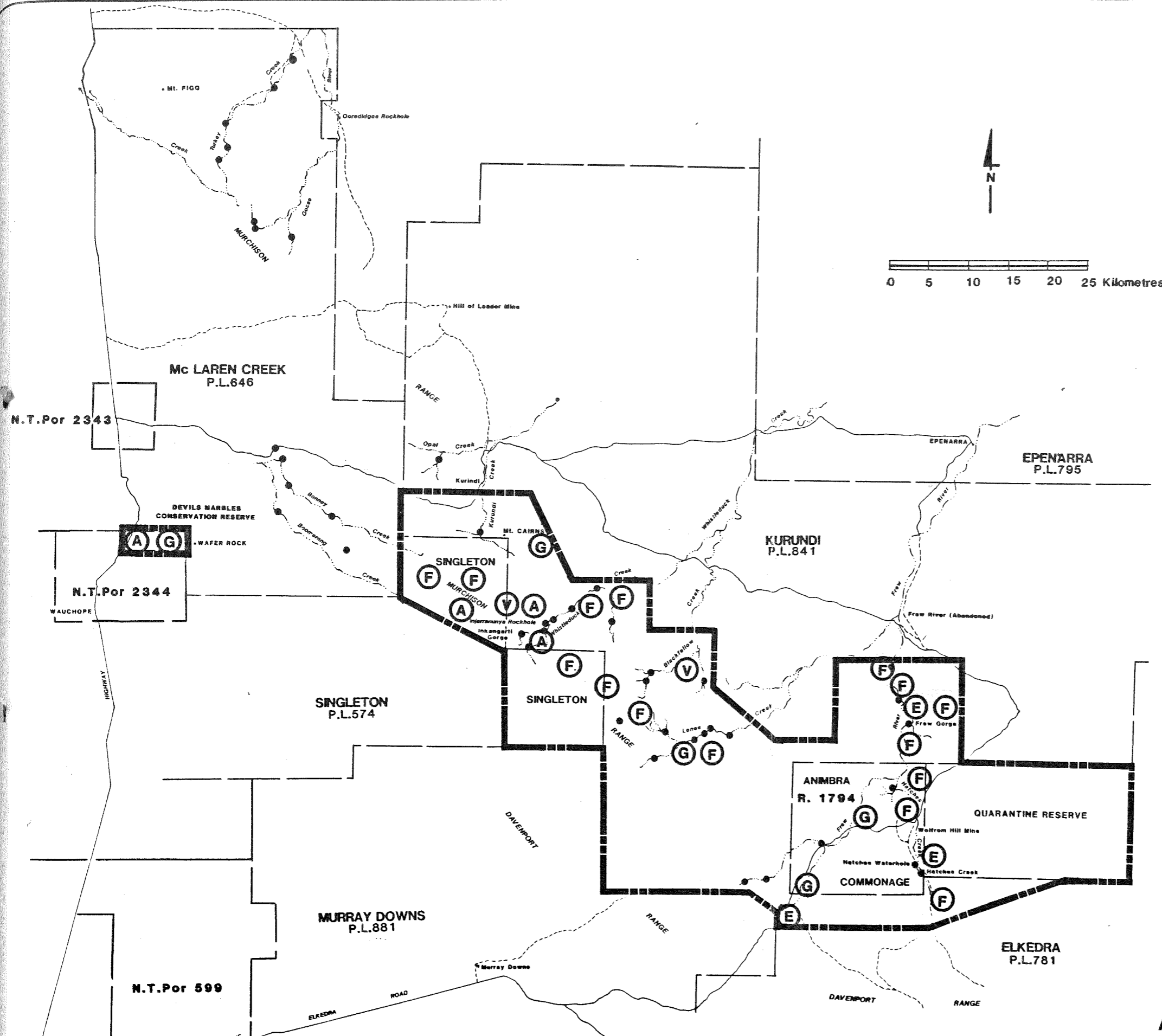
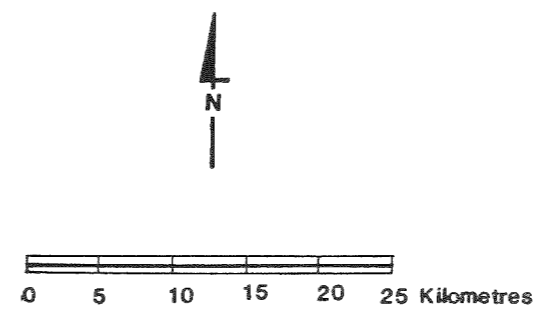
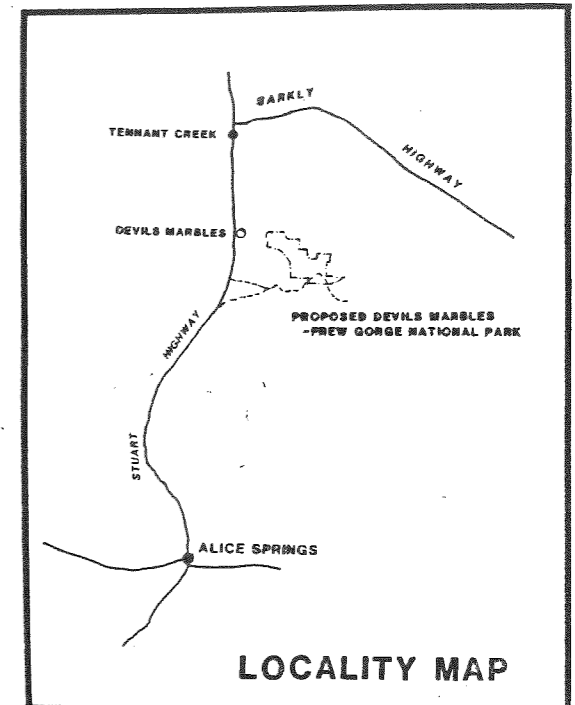


PROPOSED DEVILS MARBLES-FREW GORGE NATIONAL PARK CONCEPT PLAN

ATTACHMENT B.



LEGEND



- Existing Park Boundary
- Proposed Park Boundary
- Station Boundary
- Existing Road
- Existing Track
- River/Creek
- Waterhole/Rockhole
- European Historic Sites E
- Aboriginal Sites of Significance A
- Geological Formations G
- Significant Vegetation V
- Significant Fauna Habitats F

ATTACHMENT C.
PROPOSED DEVILS MARBLES-FREW GORGE NATIONAL PARK
CULTURAL AND NATURAL VALUES



DAVENPORT - MURCHISON RANGES - SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

The Submission notes that park development can be programmed so as to yield a net economic benefit, based on realised increase to total N.T. tourist visitor nights.

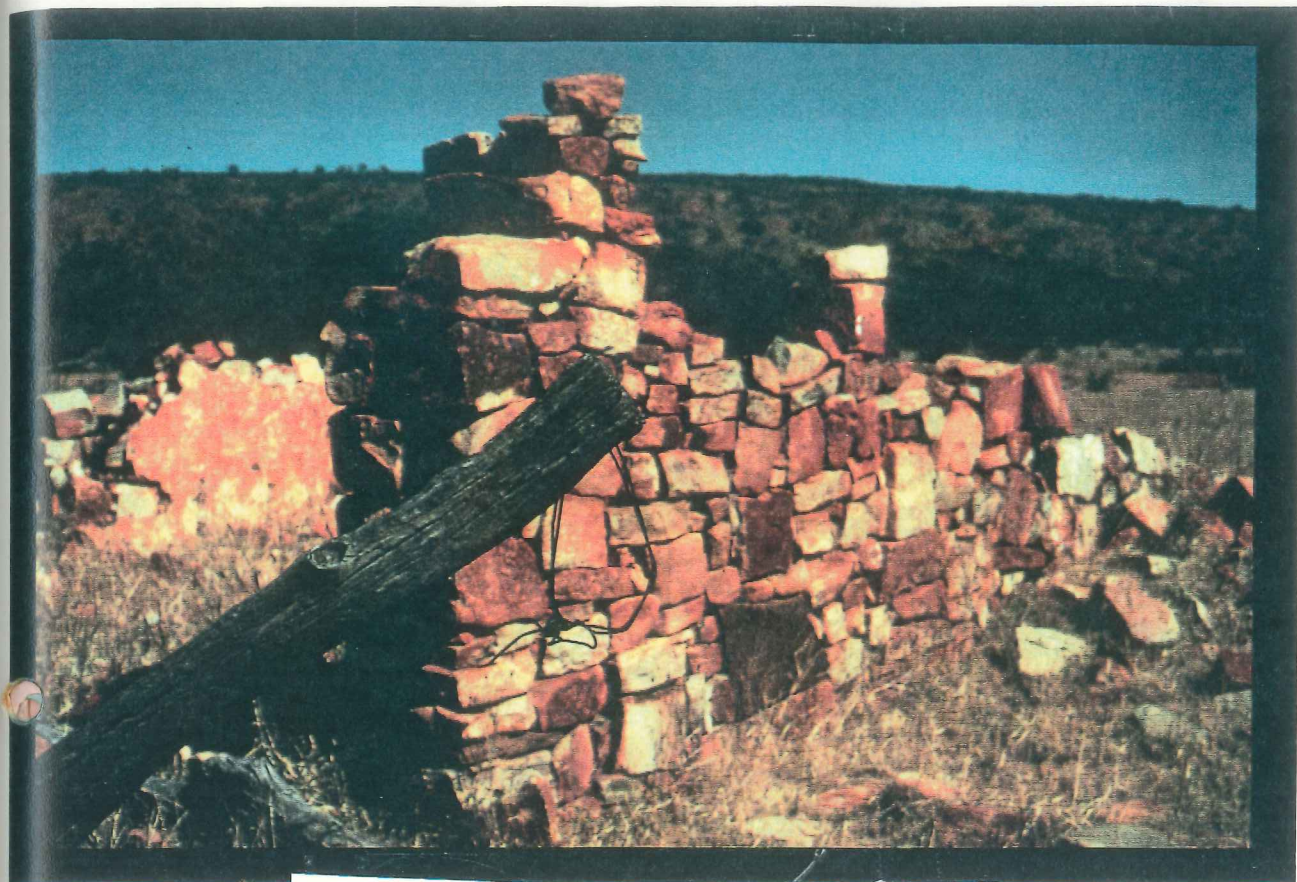
The two-day CCNT Baseline Park Visitor Survey in July 1988 recorded 429 visitors to the Marbles, giving 78,293 as an estimate of annual visitors. On the other hand, the 1987/88 NTTC Tourism Monitor records 150,000 as the level of annual visitation to the 'Tableland'.

Given that visitor numbers to major N.T. parks have increased at an average rate of 16% p.a. since 1986 (Budget Paper No. 6, 1989/90) and are likely to continue to do so, a current range estimate of 80,000 - 150,000 for annual visitors to the Devil's Marbles is conservative. Establishment of the new park will, of itself, further increase regional tourist visitation. In a comparative sense, future visitors will have the option of:

- a) increasing the duration of their N.T. stay;
- b) increasing the proportion of time spent in the tablelands area only; or
- c) conforming with past activity patterns.

Whatever the mix, the net effect will be an increase in total N.T. tourist visitor nights. The level of increase can, to some extent, be managed through park design and promotion. Data on visitation following the establishment of comparable parks, such as Finke Gorge and Kings Canyon, suggests that a target of 80,000 extra visitor nights within a five to seven year period is realisable.

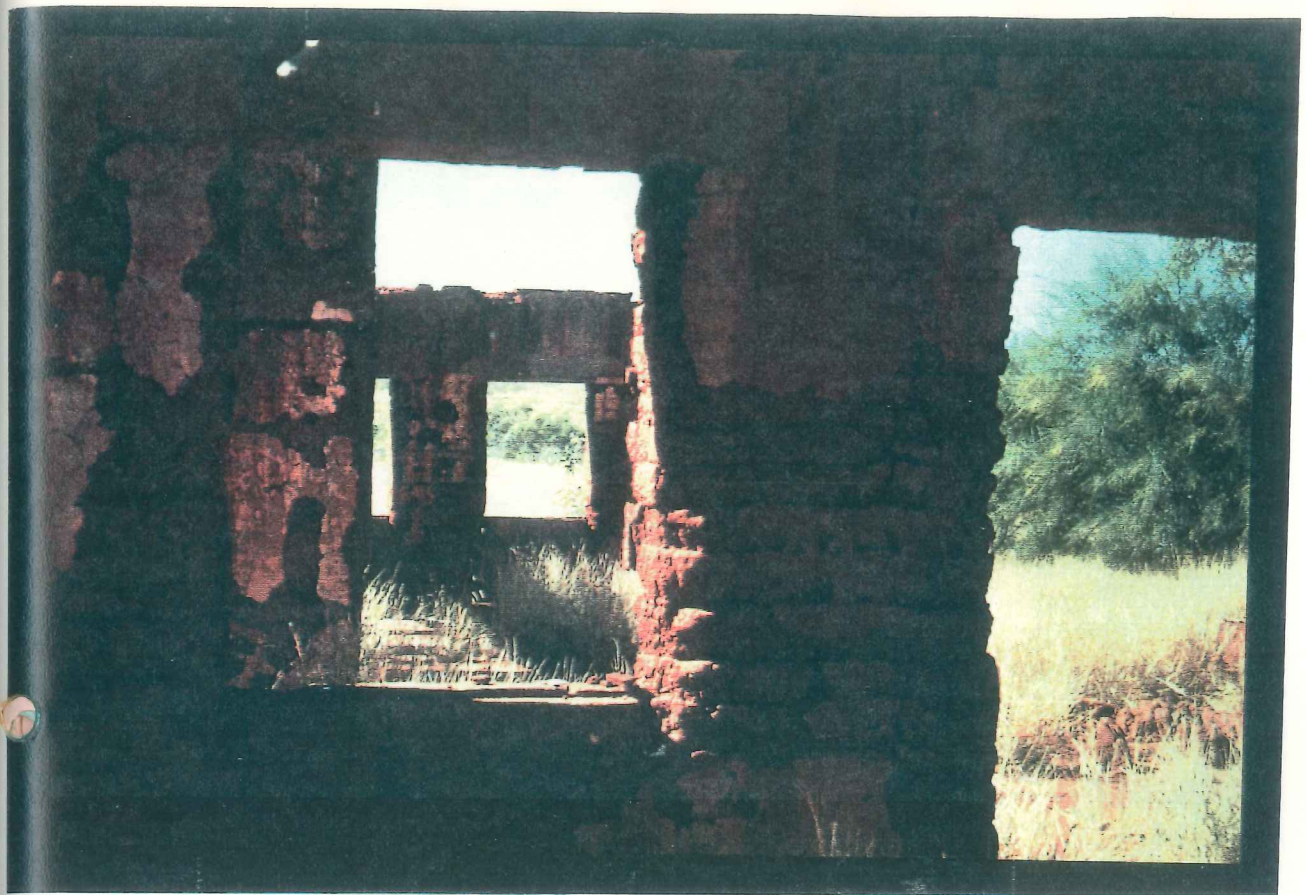
Currently, visitors to the N.T. spend on average \$65 per head per day. At this level, 80,000 visitor nights represents revenue to the N.T. of \$5.2M.



Building remains at Old Police Station
Waterhole. Originally built c1885.



Holly Grevillea (*Grevillea wickhamii*)
amongst an open-woodland valley in the ranges



Police Station remains at Kangaroo Waterhole
Demolished by fire in 1962



Remains of mining infrastructure Pioneer
Complex, Hatches Creek



Parsons Waterhole on the Frew River,
downstream of Frew Gorge



Frew River and valley, north of Frew Gorge



Old Police Station Waterhole



Sunset, Old Police Station Waterhole