MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday, 22 July 2010

Myall Creek Massacre Site proposed to be placed on State Heritage Register

Public comment is being sought by the NSW Heritage Council on a proposal to place the site of a brutal Aboriginal massacre in north-western NSW on the State Heritage Register.

About 30 Aboriginal men, women and children were murdered at Myall Creek Station in June 1838, with seven stockmen hanged for their role in the crime.

Heritage Council Chair, Mrs Gabrielle Kibble, said the site proposed to be heritage listed is located 23km north east of Bingara.

The brutal massacre followed tension and fighting between the local Aboriginal people and settlers in need of more pasture for their rapidly increasing flocks of sheep and herds of cattle.

“The site is important to the Wirrayaraay and Gamilaroi Aboriginal peoples due to the brutal murder of their ancestors and for its ability to demonstrate their ancestors’ experience of colonisation,” Mrs Kibble said.

“Descendants of Aboriginal people who survived the massacre form part of the Myall Creek Memorial Committee, which co-manages the site along with Gwydir Shire Council.”

Mrs Kibble said the site was also a place of reconciliation for the descendants of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people involved in Myall Creek massacre.

“In recognition of the role that the memorial has played as a place of reconciliation, it was the winner of the Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation's Judith Wright Reconciliation Prize, in 2003,” Mrs Kibble said.

The massacre site was proposed for listing by the Department of Planning, Heritage Branch.

If listed on the State Heritage Register, any major works for the site would be subject to decisions or advice from the Heritage Council of NSW as well as Gwydir Shire Council.

Additionally, if listed, the site will have increased access to State Government heritage funding and will be required to be maintained on an ongoing basis to minimum standards of repair.

The NSW Heritage Council is interested in receiving information in writing, by telephone or in person until 27 August 2010.

Further details on the nominated place can be viewed at www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/listing.

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