

28 February 2008

Noongar People to Host 2008 National Native Title Conference!

In an exciting announcement the Noongar people and the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council (SWALSC) have been selected to co-host the 2008 National Native Title Conference in Perth with the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies.

The Conference, which will be held at the Perth Convention Exhibition Centre from 3 to 5 June 2008, is a significant annual native title event and brings together the countries brightest indigenous policy makers.

The theme for the conference this year, which was decided by the Noongar people is *Koorah, Yira, Boordah* (Past, Present, Future).

The Conference is aimed at promoting public debate about native title and Indigenous peoples' interests in land and waters; extending skills in agreement making and natural resource management and providing an opportunity for native title parties to share information and experiences.

Mr Glen Kelly, Chief Executive Officer of SWALSC said, "The Conference is an exciting opportunity for SWALSC and the Noongar people to highlight the strength of our community. The Noongar people have such a strong culture and the Conference provides the perfect platform to show this".

Mr Kelly said that it is also an important opportunity to discuss developments in native title law and practice. "This is a complex area of law and the conference provides a rare forum for parties involved in native title to come together".

"This year's conference is focused on how Native Title can recognise and strengthen the fabric of Indigenous nations. It's about acknowledging the past, respecting the people of today and the struggle we are engaged in for this recognition and the way that Native Title can build a future for our nations".

"We want to look at how government policy can work with the aspirations of our community. Noongar native title is not simply about land, it is an historic opportunity for the State and Commonwealth to turn a new page in history in relation to Noongar people. It provides a vehicle to resolve many of the questions and challenges that exist within the Noongar Community".



South West Aboriginal
Land & Sea Council

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MEDIA RELEASE

This year, over 500 delegates including native title holders and claimants, traditional owners, native title representative bodies and service agency staff, the Federal Court, National Native Title Tribunal, Commonwealth and State government agencies, academics, consultants and industry representatives are expected to attend.

The Conference couldn't be any better timed; the Noongar People are currently waiting for the appeal decision in relation to the Single Noongar Native Title Claim. This Claim covers the un-occupied crown land within the Perth Metropolitan area and was the first successful Native Title claim over a metropolitan area.

The original decision was handed down in September 2006 which held that the Noongar community has maintained its connection to the South West under a body of laws and customs which have been observed and acknowledged through to the present day. This was challenged by the State and Commonwealth Governments. The Appeal decision is expected soon.

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