



# Australian Fossil Mammal Sites - Riversleigh World Heritage

## Advisory Committee Meeting Communiqué July 2018

1. The Riversleigh Community and Scientific Advisory Committee (RCSAC) welcomes the opportunity to respond and offer advice to the Minister to support World Heritage obligations for the Riversleigh section of the Australian Fossil Mammal Sites (AFMS) (identification, presentation, conservation, protection and management).
2. The Committee's second meeting for 2018 was held on site in the Riversleigh World Heritage Area (WHA) and at the nearby Boodjamulla National Park HQ on 4 and 5 July, and was attended by seven of ten Committee members and one proxy. Also in attendance was representation from the Heritage Unit in the Australian Government's Department of Environment and Energy.
3. The Committee was delighted to note that the Site Marker Project has been successfully completed. In total 195 separate fossil sites have been marked over the course of this two-year project and positions accurately recorded by the team of volunteers, with support from DES' World Heritage and QPWS staff. The Committee commends the Site Marker Volunteers for their outstanding work in locating and marking these sites, and would be very pleased if the Minister were able to send these volunteers a personal note of appreciation.
4. The Committee is very pleased that Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) is now in the same department as the World Heritage Unit, significantly increasing and simplifying opportunities for collaboration between the operational and strategic agencies responsible for World Heritage in Queensland. One immediate outcome benefit is that QPWS will now be responsible for marking all new Riversleigh research sites, with assistance from the World Heritage Unit, utilising data provided by researchers as an updated reporting condition of research permits. The Committee very much appreciated the support and attendance at the meeting of QPWS Regional Director and Principal Ranger Central West Region.
5. The Committee was very pleased to note that QPWS has allocated funds to scope improved interpretation and visitor infrastructure development at D-Site. This is the only publically accessible part of the Riversleigh WHA, and existing aged infrastructure and signage presents a poor representation of the Outstanding Universal Value.
6. The Committee acknowledged the Department's ongoing work in continuing the development of the Strategic Management Plan. The Committee recognises the Commonwealth's expectation that the Plan should reflect the serial listing of the Australian Fossil Mammal Sites (AFMS) in broad terms, and

looks forward to further progress on its development prior to the next meeting.

7. The Committee is delighted with the promotional opportunities for the Riversleigh World Heritage Area being developed by the World Heritage Unit. This includes the production of a podcast/audio tour to be used by visitors to the World Heritage Area, and the formalisation of a partnership with Queensland Museum to co-publish a Field Guide to Boodjamulla National Park and the Riversleigh World Heritage Area and the Boodjamulla National Park. The workshops facilitated by Tim and the team over the two days of the meeting resulted in a wealth of material that will assist in shaping and informing the interpretation and promotional initiatives.
8. The Committee noted early planning by the Department for celebration of the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Australian Fossil Mammal Sites World Heritage listing in mid-2019. A subsequent meeting of the Chair, Executive Officer and Principal Communications Officer with staff at Outback at Isa (Mount Isa) worked through some of these early concepts and developed a clearer understanding of local capacity to add value to a program of anniversary events in both Mount Isa and at Riversleigh. The Committee is mindful that consultation and collaboration with Naracoorte will be important, given the serial listing of both areas as the Australian Fossil Mammal Sites.
9. The Committee reiterated its strong desire that planning for the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary should include, if possible, a visit to Riversleigh visits by both the State and Commonwealth Ministers.
10. The Committee was pleased to note that the State and Commonwealth Governments are in the process of agreeing funding for a further five years to support the work of RCSAC, including funding for the Executive Officer position.
11. The Committee received a report from Professor Michael Archer on his recent invited visit to the Messel World Heritage Area, inscribed one year after Riversleigh. His observations on the interpretation of this fossil site assisted the Committee in its deliberations on future development of interpretative infrastructure at Riversleigh.
12. The Committee was delighted to hear of the recently announced Outback Tourism Infrastructure Fund, and commends the Queensland Government for this initiative. It was noted by representatives from Mount Isa City and Burke Shire Councils that they would be working jointly on a proposal to seek support from this fund.
13. The Committee noted the invitation from the Chair of the Waanyi Prescribed Body Corporate for members of RCSAC to promote the World Heritage Area at the Gulf Country Frontier Days Festival in Gregory Downs in mid-August. The Committee Chair is appreciative of the support of the Department to enable him, the Executive Officer and the Queensland Museum representative, Dr Andrew Rozefelds, to attend this major regional event. Attendance at this event will capitalise on the partnerships with QM and QPWS. Waanyi cultural values are a recognised value that contribute to the OUV of Riversleigh, and this liaison activity will benefit the business of the Riversleigh WHA and build trusting relationships that build cultural capability in the delivery of strategic goals.
14. The RCSAC would like to thank the Minister for her ongoing interest and support of the work of the RCSAC.

Dr Graeme Potter

Chair, Riversleigh Community and Scientific Advisory Committee