



Environment Centre NT

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Media Release

Northern Territory environment and health groups come together to share their vision for a Nuclear Free NT.

The Northern Territory Nuclear Free movement has been buoyed by Koongarra traditional owner Jeffery Lee's insistence on rejecting a multi-billion dollar uranium mine inside Kakadu. In recognition of this admirable decision, and to build further momentum for a Nuclear Free NT, environment and health groups from across the Territory are hosting a public information night at The Groove Café in Nightcliff in Darwin on Tuesday 8th June.

Speakers from Central Australia and the Top End will talk about the current threats uranium mining and nuclear waste pose to our communities, our environment and our way of life. They will also outline a vision for a Nuclear Free NT.

Speakers will address growing threats from the nuclear fuel cycle including:

- a uranium mine just south of Alice Springs at Angela Pamela
- a radioactive Waste Dump at Muckaty Station near Tennant Creek
- plans to extend the Ranger mine in Kakadu and ERA's hopes for Jabiluka
- uranium exploration in rural residential areas near Darwin
- an increase in dangerous radioactive materials travelling on Territory roads and rail lines and through the Darwin Port

Taking a pro-active stance, the Arid Lands Environment Centre, The Environment Centre NT, the Top End Aboriginal Conservation Alliance and the Public Health Association of Australia (NT Branch) have joined together to promote a safer, healthier nuclear free vision for the Northern Territory.

"Nuclear threats affect all Territorians. Whether you live in a remote community, a regional centre like Alice Springs, a rural area or in the Darwin inner-city, radioactive issues will increasingly affect us all," said Jess Abrahams from the Arid Lands Environment Centre.

"Faced with a uranium mine so close to our town, Alice Springs residents from all walks of life are joining together to stop the Angela Pamela uranium mine," said Jess Abrahams. "The risks to our water, our air and our community are just too great— we will not let our town to become the uranium mining and milling centre of Australia," he said.



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“Despite evidence of spills and leaks from the Ranger uranium mine coming to light, ERA hopes to expand their contentious mine inside Kakadu. Coupled with the possibility of Jabiluka raising it’s ugly head again, we must strongly oppose any moves to expand uranium mining within this world Heritage listed National Park,” said Stuart Blanch, Coordinator, Environment Centre NT.

“With potential new mines in Central, Southern and Western Australia, Darwin Port faces a future as a global hub for uranium exports from across the country, as well as becoming the gateway for radioactive waste for the proposed Muckaty Station waste dump. This is not the future we want for Darwin Harbour,” said Dr Blanch.

Last week the Electrical Trades Union of Queensland and the Northern Territory banned its members from working on uranium mines, nuclear power stations or any other part of the nuclear fuel cycle because of the long-term health risks workers face.

“The Public Health Association of Australia NT holds similar concerns for the health of workers and residents that are exposed to even low levels of radiation over a long period,” said Dr Michael Fonda, a rural General Practitioner and member of the Public Health Association of Australia (NT Branch).

“The proposed ten-fold expansion of uranium mining in Australia, especially in the Northern Territory and South Australia, poses a significant threat to our clean waterways, aquifers & basins - leaving a long term radioactive legacy at every mine site, wherever the contaminants leak into the environment. It is up to all of us to halt this madness” said Donna Jackson, Larrakia Woman and co-chair of the Australian Nuclear Free Alliance.

“The Northern Territory is at a cross-roads, either we head down the nuclear path and condemn future generations to deal with a legacy of radioactive mines, waste and pollution or we chose a safe, clean, nuclear free future for all,” said Jess Abrahams.

Comment:

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Dr Stuart Blanch, Environment Centre Northern Territory - 0448 887 303

Dr Michael Fonda, Public Health Association of Australia, NT – 0429 435 595

Donna Jackson, Larrakia Woman and Co-chair Australian Nuclear Free Alliance - 0427 847 186

Nuclear Free NT: Public talk on uranium and nuclear issues in the Northern Territory

When: 5.30pm, Tuesday 8th June, 2010

Where: The Groove Café, 4/35 Progress Drive, Nightcliff, Darwin, NT.