



Australian Government
Indigenous Land Corporation



David Hawker
Member for Wannon

MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, 23 November 2005

Victorian Indigenous property owners congratulated on successes

Federal Member for Wannon, the Hon. David Hawker, joined ILC Chairperson, Shirley McPherson in congratulating the Winda Mara Aboriginal Corporation on its land management successes, at a ceremony today on Kurtonitj, Aboriginal community land in Victoria.

Elders announced their intention to nominate the Kurtonitj property for national heritage listing at the event.

Kurtonitj is part of the Lake Condah Sustainable Development Project, which aims to develop the Lake Condah and Tyrendarra area as a major heritage park based on the cultural and natural values of the area.

The cultural values on the properties are outstanding and an important part of the traditional aquaculture system built by the Gunditjmara people. Kurtonitj features the remains of traditional stone huts and eel smoking trees.

Winda Mara Aboriginal Corporation made two quality applications to the ILC, including comprehensively developed land use plans.

The ILC purchased the properties following independent land valuations, and is proud to provide a further \$205,000 land management grant for development work.

The acquisition is an exciting situation, with Commonwealth agencies working with the local Aboriginal community in protecting and promoting Aboriginal cultural land and heritage, David Hawker said.

This relationship has established new employment in the southwest of Victoria. The Department of Environment and Heritage works with the Winda Mara community to manage the Budj Bim National Heritage Landscape.

Shirley McPherson said partnerships such as these are a key means of delivering benefits; they can increase the capacity of partners by enabling them to deliver available resources more effectively.

“It was with that in mind that we have worked with Windamara, the Lake Condah Sustainable Development Project, and the Department of Environment and Heritage. What’s being done is a demonstration to the wider community of what can be achieved through partnerships”, she said.

KURTONITJ is a traditional Dhawurd Wurrung language word meaning ‘water crossing place’.

ENDS

Enquiries:

Damein Bell, Windamara – (03) 5527 2077

Jane Templeton, Media Adviser, David Hawker’s office - (03) 5572-1100

Peter Keough, ILC Public Affairs – (08) 8100 7106