PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
DEPARTMENT OF THE PARLIAMENTARY LIBRARY

NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AMENDMENT BILL 1979

Date Introduced:  4 June 1979
House:  Senate
Presented by:  Senator The Honourable F.M. Chaney,
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

Short Digest of Bill

Purpose

To amend the National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1975 so as to establish more quickly a mining town in the Kakadu National Park.

Background

The Jabiru Town Development Authority of the Northern Territory has proposed that preliminary town construction works such as roads, temporary water supply, sewerage and power be carried out in the current dry season for the Ranger uranium mining project at Jabiru. But the town site is situated in the Kakadu National Park, and is therefore subject to park management.

Conditions for preparing plans of management laid down in the Principal Act allow submissions and comments by the public to the Director of National Parks and Wildlife within a minimum time period. After approval by the Minister for Science and the Environment, a plan of management must be tabled in Parliament, either House of which can disallow the plan within 20 sitting days.

In the case of Kakadu National Park, a plan of management has not yet passed through these stages, and so the town construction work is unable to proceed under the Principal Act.

Main Provisions

Sub-clause 3(2) amends the Principal Act so as to allow the Director of National Parks and Wildlife to issue a construction licence in respect of the Jabiru township to the Jabiru Town Development Authority before the plan of management comes into force.
The Authority must consult with all appropriate bodies in the Northern Territory, and the Director of National Parks and Wildlife must consult with and have regard to the views of the Chairman of any relevant Aboriginal Land Councils before the licence can be granted (sub-clause 3(3)).

The Director must include any conditions he regards as necessary in the licence in order to preserve park values (sub-clause 3(4)), and may vary those conditions with the consent of the Authority (sub-clause 3(5)). The subsequent plan of management and town plan should be adhered to where this is not inconsistent with the construction licence (sub-clauses 3(6) and 3(9), respectively). Preparation of licence variations, the plan of management and the town plan should take works already approved by the existing licence into account (sub-clause 3(10)).

7 June 1979

Defence, Science & Technology Group
LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH SERVICE