

ARKAROOLA WILDERNESS SANCTUARY



From the ARK Update 24/07/11

TODAY'S CHOICE TOMORROW'S GIFT

Protection for Arkaroola Wilderness Sanctuary from future mineral exploration and mining is a gift for our state, our nation and future generations. Long-sighted and courageous, Premier Rann's decision respects the rights of those who come after us, for access to wild, spectacular places uncompromised by developments that may deliver short-term benefits but inevitably de-value such precious places.

Whilst some commentators seek to promote the uncertainty that this decision may bring to investment in mineral exploration in South Australia, it is important that South Australians understand why Arkaroola is **too precious to mine**. Although it has its share of threatened flora and fauna, endemic minerals and prospective deposits, this is not what defines Arkaroola's uniqueness. Few landscapes in Australia pull together so seamlessly, natural, cultural, scientific and spiritual values of national and international significance.

Arkaroola Wilderness Sanctuary has been holistically managed at a landscape-scale for more than four decades and it is at a landscape-scale where Arkaroola's true value lies. More than forty years ago Reg and Griselda Sprigg recognised the need for, and implemented, a management strategy for the 612 km² pastoral lease that was to pre-empt policies now used by state and federal conservation agencies. Had the government cut and carved, or tried to both protect and exploit different portions of this iconic mountain landscape, Arkaroola's ecological values would have been fragmented and its vulnerable cultural assets placed at considerable risk.

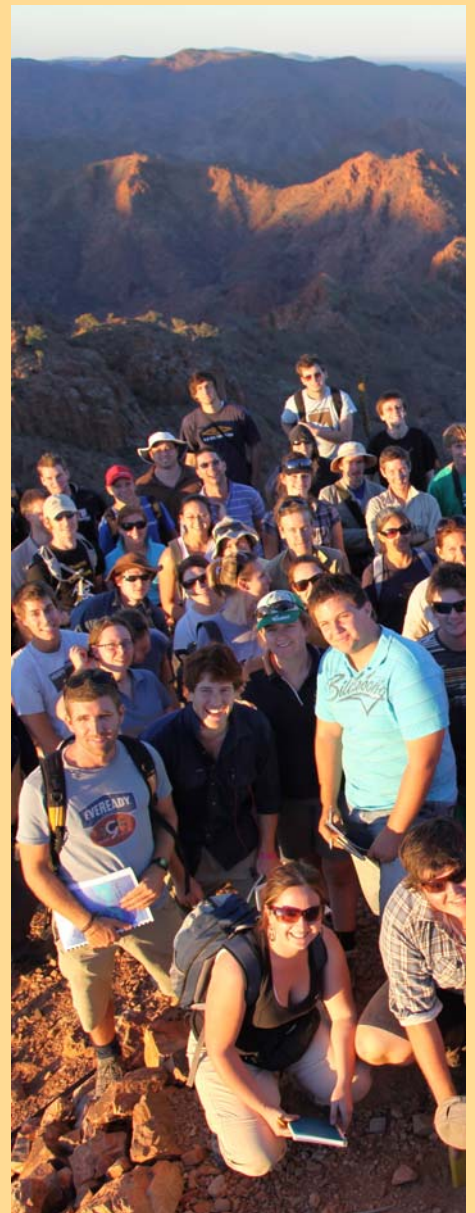
Arkaroola will now be protected in perpetuity. As a fully protected area Arkaroola will continue to provide access to tourists, scientists and research teams, university and school students, photographers, artists, filmmakers, and all who seek to experience and better understand this world-class landscape. This decision also paves the way for future rehabilitation works to be undertaken on exploration tracks that remain as the legacy of an era when mineral explorers were not required to re-mediate tracks and drill pads.

Whilst we expect Marathon Resources and some in the community to contest protection for Arkaroola, we applaud the Rann Government for listening to the people of South Australia.

To those who wrote letters to newspapers, sent emails, advocated through social media, rode bicycles to raise awareness, placed stickers on stobie poles, in bus shelters and railway stations, who lobbied their local members, who staged street theatre, who submitted carefully considered responses to the *Seeking a Balance* framework, Arkaroola thanks each and everyone of you. To senior elders Gilbert and Linda Coulthard and the Adnyamathanha Camp Mob Elders, to the many geologists, public servants, journalists, and politicians past and present, who advocated so passionately for Arkaroola's protection, we thank you. And to all those South Australians who participated in polls that overwhelmingly called for the protection of Arkaroola from mining, we heard you, the Premier heard you, the South Australian Government heard you.

We hope that you are as inspired and encouraged by this outcome as we are. To all our South Australian, interstate and international supporters, we thank you.

Marg and Doug Sprigg



NORTHERN FLINDERS RANGES

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

AUSTRALIA