

News Release

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MARATHON TO CONTINUE ARKAROOA EXPLORATION

Marg Sprigg, Manager of the iconic Arkaroola Wilderness Sanctuary, today expressed bitter disappointment that the State Government is renewing the licence to allow Marathon Resources to continue uranium exploration in the heart of the sanctuary.

With Marathon, she said, Arkaroola is lined up against some very influential people, including former Labor parliamentarian Chris Shacht (a director of the Company) and another Labor luminary, John Quirke, as a political lobbyist. Behind Marathon too, are Chinese interests (Citic is a 17% shareholder, with a seat on the Board) and probably others to whom Marathon may want to sell their uranium production. These could put great pressure on the Government over the next 12 months.

The northern Flinders Ranges sanctuary of Arkaroola is run as a small family enterprise created over 40 years ago. The Sprigg family continues to act as caretakers of 600 sq km of extraordinary, arid rugged mountain country, protecting its values for all Australians.

Ms Sprigg likens Arkaroola's struggle to prevent desecration of the sanctuary by mineral explorers as a David vs Goliath battle. Arkaroola, she said, does not have the huge resources necessary to fight an enormous battle. Its greatest weapon in this struggle is the powerful voice of public opinion. There are thousands of Australians who are strongly against the desecration of Arkaroola. So far though, the Rann Government shows few signs of listening.

The Government's recent news release stated that a "review of the terms and operating conditions of the renewed licence will be undertaken in consultation with Marathon Resources." Considering Marathon's dreadful past record in Arkaroola exploration Ms Sprigg said that she fervently hoped that the State Government will consult also with the Arkaroola Wilderness Sanctuary, as the resident land-holder.

Arkaroola is not convinced that its Mt Gee site hosts a vast continuous uranium ore-body of uranium. Instead, what uranium is there may only be in scattered, discrete pods. To prove the presence of a mineable resource, Marathon must undertake a huge amount of closely spaced drilling. That exploration alone will cause severe environmental damage.

The mountains of Arkaroola must be protected from mineral exploration and mining forever.