

Listing lashed

A FEDERAL Government decision to heritage list 17 million hectares of the Kimberley could cripple mining and pastoral industries.

Kalgoorlie MHR Barry Haase and Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley have voiced concern over the Government's decision to assess whether to place the land on the National Heritage list.

"Minister [Peter] Garrett is hellbent on a course that will send the Kimberley back to the hunter-gatherer days," Mr Haase said.

"Considerable time and effort is invested by companies to ensure they comply with environmental policies, and Mr Garrett is naïve to think he can just lock up vast tracts of land without devastating consequences for the economy," he said.

The area of land in dispute would include Broome, Derby and Fitzroy Crossing.

Wyndham East Kimberley shire president Michele Pucci said the council wanted the Commonwealth Government to be more upfront in the consultation process with local communities and detail what a National Heritage

Listing would mean to the region.

"It needs to be clear of the ramifications and impacts involved," Cr Pucci said.

"It's such an important issue and there needs to be face-to-face consultation here," she said.

Council lodged a public submission to the Federal Government opposing the listing until impacts of the proposed listing were understood by the Kimberley communities.

"The area needs some protection but we need to be clear on the terms of the listing on further development in the region," Cr Pucci said.

"If this is going to be done in the Kimberley the Government has to back it up with resources to protect the region," she said.

She said council would monitor the results of the public submission period on the issue which close tomorrow (Friday).

"We need to know what National Heritage listing means, does it mean extra hoops to jump through to do anything or is it just a word – they certainly haven't been clear about that at all," she said.