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3.9.2011

Dear Friends,

### Mitchell Creek Catchment Zoning

1. A disastrous situation has occurred with Mitchell Creek. This is now an urban catchment of Palmerston, being overtaken in the development of the new eastern suburbs.
2. Recognition for the conservation of the Mitchell Creek Catchment has long been provided in the NT Planning Scheme by the Palmerston Eastern Suburbs Area Plan 1-3. This makes provision for the catchment in the three sections moving southwards, ie. Johnston, Zuccoli and Mitchell. In each case, large areas are shaded dark green for CONSERVATION ZONING (CN). Catchments are normally left as natural environment. Area Plans 1-3 fit together as puzzle pieces to cover the catchment.
3. Planning of the Mitchell Creek Catchment began even before the NTPS came into being. Land care groups were working long before that. The Area Plan was informed by a consultant's report by GHD and ECOsystems which showed a large wide area requiring conservation. There was a later management plan prepared in CDU (Palmerston) which confirmed the need for a wide catchment.
4. During the last two years, PLan, and also Alderman Sue McKinnon have worked hard with the Palmerston public, and Ministers Gerry McCarthy and Karl Hampton to increase understanding of the values of the Mitchell Creek Catchment environmentally, and as a selling point for living in Palmerston. We asked Minister McCarthy to zone the catchment for conservation before the built development began to encroach.
5. The disaster has come about because, instead of rezoning the catchment as provided for from previous research in the Area Plan, which is an essential part of the NTPS. It is formal statement to the public of what will be the shape of Palmerston.

Instead of the provisions of the Area Plan, Minister McCarthy has approved the conservation zoning only of a narrow corridor, in places less than 50 metres either side of the creek. (Planning Amendment 2010/1429)

6. In spite of our input, we were not told why this happened. We are shocked, mystified, and unsatisfied.

7. One of our researches has come up with the information, in the attachment below, after a search. See the attachment below, and go to the bottom of page 2 for the Mitchell Creek information. (Let us know if it will not open).

8. Our view is that it is NOT GOOD ENOUGH. It will result in the clearing of large areas of natural vegetation; does not compare with the conservation zoning of Ludmilla Creek and Rapid Creek, as urban catchments in Darwin; puts an unfair burden on Palmerston City Council; ignores the scientific basis of the existing Area Plan; and is an unaccounted for sudden change in policy, done without wider public consultation.

9. In the broadest terms, the Conservation zone (CN) should extend almost as far west as the Roystonea Avenue extension. That is what we are asking for. There were 117 submissions in response to PA 2010/1429, and about six well informed speakers at the DCA hearing.

10. If you can, please send a note to Ministers Gerry McCarthy (Planning) and Karl Hampton(NRETAS), both at "Parliament House, Darwin, NT 0801, or send them a brief email to: 'minister.gmcarthy@nt.gov' or '[minister.hampton@nt.gov.au](mailto:minister.hampton@nt.gov.au)'. Letters to the media would also help.

Community involvement is important because neither the NT News or the ABC have picked up on our media, although support from Palmerston Sun, and Territory FM has been good.

We are asking to meet both Minister face to face, discuss why this has happened, and return to what is shown on the Area Plan.

Margaret Clinch