

Aborigines Mount Challenge to State Government's Heritage Destruction

The Aboriginal community today announced it intends to seek court orders to stop the Tasmanian Government from reopening the 4 wheel drive tracks on Tasmanian's west coast.

State Secretary of the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre, Miss Trudy Maluga, said "There is no way they can reopen those tracks without destroying our heritage. It was the Aboriginal heritage values of the area that won national heritage listing for this coastal strip of takayna. It was the English invaders that wiped out the original peoples of that area and now they are intent on finishing the job by wiping out all trace of our people from that area."

"For the government to claim it can protect our heritage while allowing off road motor bikes and big 4 wheel drive vehicles to drive over many kilometres of beach and sand dunes on the way to catch crayfish is just fooling the public. The beaches, sand dunes, and foreshores are full of the physical presence of our old people. It was a long and complicated process that saw the closing of a few tracks under the previous government. For this government to reopen the tracks so quickly and with hardly any consultation shows they are bowing to pressure from the so called 'Save Our Heritage' group of 4 wheel drivers who might have been around for 100 years, but certainly not for many thousands of years", Miss Maluga said.

Miss Maluga concluded, "Our community is enraged that this track reopening is going ahead despite all the evidence of the damage it will cause. Our only hope now is to get the Federal Environment Minister to do a proper assessment of the likely damage so this politically-motivated destruction can be stopped".

Trudy Maluga
State Secretary
18 December 2014