



DIRECTORATE: CORPORATE COMMUNICATION & ICT

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HERITAGE PARK TO BOOST LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Pilanesberg - Environmentalists and Conservationists from outside and within the North West Province and other neighboring countries like Botswana and Lesotho embarked on the 13th edition of the Heritage Park Walk which is aimed at creating awareness and soliciting land to create the third largest conservation estate in the country by combining Pilanesberg National Park and Madikwe Game Reserve.

The creation of the 280 000ha Heritage Park is also in line with the provincial government's vision of creating an eco-tourism city within the Bojanala Platinum District Municipality.

Addressing walkers during their sending-off session at the Moruleng Cultural Precinct, Acting Head of Department for North West Department of Tourism, Charles Ndabeni encouraged all participants not to just walk for the sake of walking.

"This is not only about walking. It is also about creating an economic corridor where we can deal with issues of unemployment and poverty. We are walking for development and most importantly creating awareness amongst affected communities on how they will economically benefit from this park we plan to create", said Ndabeni.

This year, of the four hundred targeted walkers, three hundred and forty one walkers registered to take part in the 106 km annual walk from Pilanesberg National Park to Madikwe Game Reserve.



“The value proposition is that in the next Heritage Park Walk we want to see some serious impact on economic development of affected villages. We do not want to see walkers carry their own food and erecting their own tents. We will have community members from all effected villages prepare food and erect tents and creating camping sites for the walkers. This will ensure that when walkers leave a certain village for the next they would have boosted the local economy of that particular village by renting tents and buying local food”, conclude Ndabeni.

Meanwhile, Kgosi Nyalala Pilane of Bakgatla Ba Kgafela endorsed the 2015 Heritage Park Walk and also emphasized that affected communities should economically benefit from this walk. “If communities do not economically benefit from this walk then it will be difficult to acquire the required land to build the Heritage Park as envisioned by government. There is a need for a solid partnership between government and affected villages”, Kgosi Pilane said.

Amongst other things heritage park walkers were taken to the Moses Kotane Memorial in Pella Village which is one of the recently established National Heritage Site in the province. The significance thereof was to showcase to the walkers the stalwart’s final resting place.

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Issued by the North West Department of Tourism

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