

Motivation for permit to collect fossils on Haddon Farm, Adelaide, Amatole District, Nxuba Municipality, Eastern Cape

Mr Sello Mokhanya
Permit Review and Advisory Committee (PRAC)
Eastern Cape Provincial Heritage Resources Agency
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Dear Mr Mokhanya,

Recently a Rhodes geology student, Mr Gordon Ballantyne, reported his discovery of the partially exposed fossil skeleton of a large vertebrate preserved in siltstones of the Upper Permian Balfour Formation, upper *Cistecephalus* Biozone, on his family's property, Haddon Farm, immediately south of Adelaide in the Eastern Cape (GPS: 32° 44' 26.72" S and 26° 17' 26.63" E.; photograph below).



Partial fossil skeleton of an apparently large vertebrate preserved in grey siltstone of the Balfour Formation on the Haddon Farm. Large articulated vertebrae are visible on the left, along with rib fragments and possibly elements of the shoulder girdle. [photograph provided by Mr Gordon Ballantyne].



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Established 1855

As can be seen in the photograph provided, this skeleton is vulnerable to the elements, and has already been severely weathered.

This permit application seeks permission from the Permit Review and Advisory Committee (PRAC) of the Eastern Cape Provincial Heritage Resources Agency (ECPHRA) to:

- (1) excavate the reported specimen figured above;
- (2) survey and collect other potential fossils within the bounds of the Haddon Farm.

Any specimens found, including the one reported by Mr Ballantyne, would be excavated and prepared with the assistance of Dr W.J. de Klerk and the technical staff of the Earth Sciences Department of the Albany Museum, and would be accessioned into the Albany Museum collections.

This report of a large, *in situ* vertebrate fossil, presents an opportunity for Dr W.K. de Klerk and myself to further our studies on the fossil heritage of the Balfour Formation of the Eastern Cape, a field of study in which we are both currently engaged. There are very few fossil reports and accessioned specimens from east of the town of Bedford, so this discovery could make a significant contribution to our understanding of the regional distribution of Permian vertebrates, with potential implications for current biostratigraphic models.

I hope you will consider this application favourably, and that you will be able to provide us with a positive outcome swiftly, to avoid further weathering of the specimen.

Best wishes

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