

MOTIVATION: PERMIT TO SURVEY AND COLLECT FOSSILS NEAR NIEU BETHESDA

As part of an ongoing research project on floral changes across the Permian-Triassic boundary in the Karoo Basin (see attached publication on nearby locality), a fieldtrip is planned for the 4th to 16th May 2013, focusing on the Blaauwater and Tweefontein Farms near Nieu Bethesda, in the Eastern Cape, in collaboration with Dr J. Neveling (Council for Geoscience, Pretoria) and an international research team including Prof R.A. Gastaldo (Colby College, Maine) who is currently visiting the Albany Museum on a Fullbright Fellowship.

We have identified several plant fossil sites as well as at least two vertebrate skulls requiring excavation on Blaauwater Farm (Katberg and Balfour Formations), and hope to find additional localities during the course of our fieldtrip. This research is providing fascinating new insights into life preceding the greatest extinction event in Earth's history.

The material collected will be housed in the official Eastern Cape fossil repository – the Department of Earth Sciences at the Albany Museum – and will be prepared and curated by myself, Dr Billy de Klerk and our technical staff.

Owner of Blaauwater and Tweefontein Farms: Mr Justin and Mrs Liesl Kingwill (letter of consent attached)

I hope you will consider this application for a permit to collect fossils in this area favourably.

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