

# Local links

Local Land Services connects people with groups, information, support and funding to build resilient communities in productive, healthy landscapes.

We respect the traditional owners of the land, their knowledge and expertise in land management.

These case studies showcase the diversity of partnerships and projects being undertaken to support Aboriginal people to care for Country and share traditional land management knowledge.



## NAIDOC WEEK - July 2016

Local Land Services values the contributions of the NSW and Australian Governments, who fund these projects, resulting in a healthier and more productive environment and opportunities to build stronger relationships with the Aboriginal community.

## Goal 1 - Resilient, self-reliant and prepared local communities

### Aboriginal cultural competence training—Greater Sydney

Greater Sydney Local Land Services staff was taken on a journey into Aboriginal customs and Country as part of Aboriginal cultural competence training. The training involved guided tours of significant Aboriginal place sites, site interpretation, cultural performances and an intensive workshop covering a range of topics to help staff better understand Aboriginal people, their history, culture and beliefs.

As a leading land management agency in NSW the training was an important step for staff to understand and appreciate the relationship Aboriginal people have to Country. Local Land Services Officer, Aboriginal Communities, Den Barber said the experience was about reinforcing the role the organisation has in caring for Country, just as Aboriginal people had done through traditional customs, practices and spiritual beliefs for thousands of years.



### Protecting Aboriginal cultural traditions—Western

Aboriginal communities in Western NSW are building on their connection to Country and preserving cultural traditions with support from Western Local Land Services.

Western Local Land Services recently funded a workshop in partnership with Culpra Milli Aboriginal Corporation, exploring traditional weaving techniques and knowledge of how the craft evolved through maintaining the natural environment.

The workshop was an opportunity for women to come together to share Aboriginal ecological knowledge through storytelling, song and dance.

“Aboriginal people are passionate about maintaining connection to traditional country, so it's important that skills and knowledge are passed on from generation to generation, Senior Land Services Officer, Aboriginal Communities, Ronnie O'Donnell said.

The Western region is unique as Aboriginal people make up approximately 13 per cent of the population, compared with the national average of three per cent.

### Barwon Learning Centre nursery project—North West

North West Local Land Services has partnered with the Barwon Learning Centre to involve and educate Aboriginal youth in the collection and propagation of native plants in the region.

The project aims to assist students, staff and the Aboriginal community of Moree to understand the importance of protecting, preserving and promoting native plants.

The establishment of the nursery has improved the capacity of students at the centre to manage, operate and deliver quality seed and seedlings for use in the learning centre garden and on Country.

Students have learnt to identify native seeds and plants and methods of propagating seeds. Plants propagated will not only be used at the learning centre garden but will also be available for use to both the Aboriginal and broader communities.



### Connecting those who work on Country—North Coast

North Coast Local Land Services has a range of innovative cultural connection projects that are building relationships between Local Aboriginal Land Councils and key environment management organisations.

The projects are designed to build the skills of Aboriginal Green Teams to undertake land management and achieve a cultural connection to Country. At recent events at Lennox Head and Coffs Harbour, participants from Local Aboriginal Land Councils and Indigenous groups shared cultural land management information.

The workshops discussed practical ways to engage appropriately with Aboriginal communities to allow for productive and sound project outcomes. They also identified opportunities that will build community capacity through direct Aboriginal engagement, employment and skills development. These opportunities build on existing projects being undertaken including cultural heritage and traditional land management.

## Goal 2 - Biosecure, profitable, productive and sustainable primary industries

### Preserving cultural heritage on travelling stock reserves—South East

South East Local Land Services has been working with Aboriginal students from TAFE NSW (Nowra Campus) to assess the cultural heritage values of travelling stock reserves in the Shoalhaven region.

Travelling stock reserves are parcels of Crown land, administered by Local Land Services, which were established more than 100 years ago to enable the movement of livestock from farms to markets or rail-heads.

They are still used today for grazing, routine stock movements and as emergency refuges. Some travelling stock reserves follow routes that were traditionally used by Aboriginal people as song-lines, paths or passages to enable the movement across the land for the collection of food and fibre, access to water, ceremony and other cultural practices.

Travelling stock reserves with cultural heritage importance have been registered with the Office of Environment and Heritage. This project has strengthened ties with the local Aboriginal community and will help to protect these tracts of land into the future.



### Exciting first in property planning—Northern Tablelands

Eight young people from Jubullum village have become the first Aboriginal group in the Northern Tablelands Local Land Services region to undertake formal training in farm planning.

Jubullum village near Tabulum has a population of 250, making it the largest discrete Aboriginal community in north-eastern NSW. The village sits on 490 hectares of land owned by the Jubullum Local Aboriginal Land Council.

While the country is picturesque, there are land management challenges in dealing with flood prone areas and steep sections of the property.

“We’re looking at running beef cattle and also want to explore other enterprises to create jobs and a profitable return for the community while protecting our cultural heritage as Wahlabul people,” said Cilla Bell from Jubullum Local Aboriginal Land Council.

“The farm planning course is helping us to understand what we can do with the natural resources on this property and the skills that we can develop in our young people.”

### Supporting Indigenous fire management—Hunter

Hunter Local Land Services is supporting Local Aboriginal Land Councils and land managers to develop firefighting skills and traditional burning techniques to manage their land and implement hazard reduction burns.

Ten Aboriginal land management team members from the Hunter region received TAFE certificates for basic firefighting training they completed with the Rural Fire Service in April. This was followed by an Indigenous fire management workshop in May, attended by 150 people, including Local Aboriginal Land Councils, community and government representatives. The forum was led by an Indigenous fire practitioner from Queensland’s Daintree region, Victor Steffensen, who conducted a cultural burn on day two of the forum, a practice that has not been seen in the Hunter for hundreds of years.

The training and the forum are part of a five-year plan to assist Local Aboriginal Land Councils and not for profits develop bushfire management plans, incorporating Aboriginal firestick knowledge, while creating employment opportunities for Aboriginal land management teams in our region.



### Cultural exchange and knowledge sharing—Central Tablelands

In an aim to revive the traditions of cultural burning and the benefits to land management, Central Tablelands Local Land Services has formed partnerships with Orange Local Aboriginal Land Council’s Gaambuwananha Ngurambang team and Albury City Council’s Wagirra team.

As part of a knowledge sharing exercise, the central tablelands groups visited the Albury team to share their experiences in applying cultural fire methodologies to the land to revive culture in practice and improve biodiversity and native vegetation.

The program demonstrated the benefits, importance and value of sharing cultural knowledge, learning from each other and gaining experience in the application of traditional burning to rehabilitate land.

Recently, the journey was reversed and the Gaambuwananha Ngurambang team had the opportunity to invite the Wagirra team to travel to Orange and together walk Country and undertake a very successful burn in bushland.

## Goal 3 - Healthy, diverse, connected natural environments

### Connecting to Country small grants—Murray

Murray Local Land Services provides annual Connecting to Country small grants to assist Aboriginal communities across the region. The program has supported a range of gatherings to share traditional ecological knowledge, with nearly 30 events funded in the past year. Some projects included:

- A weekly gathering with the local Aboriginal community and members of Cummeragunja Local Aboriginal Land Council to encourage sharing of cultural knowledge and connection to Country using the unique process and skill of weaving.
- A three-day camp which focused on learning and sharing traditional knowledge. The Kolety camp focused on youth and children, teaching traditional artefact making, traditional dancing, cultural heritage and the sharing of stories from Elders to youth.
- Wamba Wamba Local Aboriginal Land Council delivered a cultural camp to engage Aboriginal community Elders, youth and children to re-ignite and engage in the cultural history of the community.



### “Gaway Ngurambang-Gu” (come here to Country)—Riverina

Riverina Local Land Services is working with job seekers as part of the Work for the Dole program funded by the Australian Government.

The project involves identifying and documenting Aboriginal cultural sites and artefacts on travelling stock reserves and implementing protection measures.

The participants plan and schedule each phase of the project. Participants will gain skills in working as part of a team, communication skills, asset maintenance, fencing, equipment use and maintenance, chemical use and gardening/agricultural skills.

The activity will result in sustainable natural resource management on local lands including improvements to grazing management and the control of feral animals and weeds.

Participants will also develop skills that will benefit them in the local labour market.

### Aboriginal cultural heritage inspires Board—Central West

The Central West Local Land Services Board has a deeper understanding of Aboriginal cultural heritage following an information session in the Dubbo area.

Central West Local Land Services Aboriginal Communities Officer, Mike Nolan gave Board members an overview of sites where evidence of Aboriginal occupation has been preserved in the landscape.

Mr Nolan said the historic sites and artefacts were part of a shared history that all Australians have inherited.

Board members visited Terramungamine Reserve, north of Dubbo, to view grinding grooves in rocky outcrops on the banks of the Macquarie River and also explore traditional Aboriginal camp sites on nearby travelling stock routes, where evidence still exists. Appreciating local Aboriginal cultural heritage is a high priority for the Board. Under the *Local Land Services Act 2013* the organisation is responsible for consulting and engaging with the Aboriginal community and developing strong partnerships, a task that they now undertake with greater empathy.



### Reviving Aboriginal culture at Walcha—Northern Tablelands

The Inglebah Reserve near Walcha is in the midst of a major renovation to preserve Aboriginal cultural heritage and rejuvenate the reserve with a new learning centre and plans for a profit generating business enterprise.

The Inglebah Reserve has great significance to local Aboriginal people. Fifty or more families lived at Inglebah at any one time from 1893 up until the 1940s, with the last family leaving in 2000. The 40-hectare reserve was acquired by the Aboriginal Land Trust in 1975 and later transferred to the Amaroo Local Aboriginal Land Council.

The Amaroo Local Aboriginal Land Council has partnered with Northern Tablelands Local Land Services to preserve the history of Inglebah, while also developing the reserve as a place of learning and entrepreneurialism for the Aboriginal community.

“We’re working to develop an ongoing management plan for Inglebah that will enhance the environmental and cultural heritage aspects of the reserve,” Amaroo Local Aboriginal Land Council Chief Executive, Mark Davies said.