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.

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.
Bringing back country – Central Tablelands

Central Tablelands Local Land Services (LLS) has been actively engaging with Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities to raise awareness, build and capture traditional ecological knowledge and revive cultural fire implementation skills, as well as applying fire to country for land management and biodiversity outcomes. The Gaambuwananha Ngurambang (GN) Team from Orange Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) is an Indigenous operated work team undertaking activities including cultural assessments, weed and pest control, native seed collection, plant propagation and revegetation for land management restoration. The ‘fire journey’ started for these partners at a workshop hosted by the Central Tablelands LLS at ‘Mawonga’ via Mt Hope. The journey continued to the Orange LALC property ‘Shadforth’, then linked with Traditional Owners and knowledge holders at the Cape York Indigenous Fire Workshop. The journey continues locally working the fire through the property ‘Girralang’ owned by Orange City Council and managed by the GN team. This property has major issues with the weed serrated tussock, very poor health of native vegetation and low biodiversity, and is described culturally as ‘sick country’. The partners are applying cultural fire methodologies and techniques to the land on their restoration pathway to enhance the native vegetation and improve biodiversity.

The Wild Dog Knowledge Gap Project and Aboriginal Engagement – North Coast

The Wild Dog Knowledge Gap Project aims to increase ecological knowledge on wild dogs, especially understanding their movement through the coastal and hinterland peri-urban landscape across the central zone of North Coast Local Land Services. The project engages three Aboriginal Green Teams from the Gumbaynggirr Nation, on whose traditional lands the research will take place. The three Green Teams have already been involved in a number of projects in natural and cultural resource management. Local Aboriginal Elders were engaged to share traditional knowledge about the role and significance that dingoes have played in the lives of members of the Gumbaynggirr Nation. Green Team members have undertaken accredited training in surveying pest animals, track analysis using sand traps and scat collection techniques. The three Aboriginal Green Teams, with the professional advice from vertebrate pest research staff from the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) and staff from North Coast Local Land Services, installed 20 camera traps at designated locations across the landscape. Information collected from the camera traps and sand traps was used by DPI staff to monitor the movement and activity of wild dogs. Scats collected by Green Team members were used by DPI staff to ascertain wild dog diets.

Working together to rehabilitate the Macquarie – Central West

Dubbo farmer, Mark Carter, is working with the Aboriginal community and Central West Local Land Services to improve his property’s biodiversity and river areas. The project, 25km south of Dubbo, has seen the Macquarie River fenced off to prevent erosion and replanting native vegetation. As part of the Work for the Dole Program, the Indigenous Concepts and Networking (ICaN) Group, has planted long-stemmed tube stock along 3.5kms of riparian land on ‘Strathmore’. ICaN’s James Riley reports that program participants were learning important environmental and job seeking skills saying they are also learning about interaction, including being able to communicate with different people on different levels, from government to landholders to our own mob as well. Host farmer, Mr Carter, said there were many positives about the project and praised the ICaN for doing a good job. He says it goes hand-in-hand in with our running of the farm, and he likes to see things be healthy, so revegetation is a good idea.

Yellomundee Bush Care Firesticks Program – Greater Sydney

A number of Aboriginal cultural fire events have taken place at a site in Yellomundee Regional Park to complement the current best practice methods of bush care being implemented there. The Blue Mountains Region of the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service in conjunction with Merana Aboriginal Community Association, Yellomundee Bush Care, Willow Warrior, Murru Mittigar, Green Army and the Rural Fire Service have been able to conduct these cultural fire events by using National Landcare Program (NLP) funding supplied through Greater Sydney Local Land Services. The Yellomundee Bush Care Firesticks program aimed to increase culturally relevant learning pathways that have enabled a greater diversity of fire, sustaining a healthy people and healthy country approach to natural resource management. The program addressed a number of environmental threats including bell minor associated dieback and invasive weed species such as lantana and African lovegrass. The program has allowed the sharing of cultural knowledge and connection to country, and has also met Aboriginal community aspirations for this culturally significant area. It is acknowledged that this program was based on an Aboriginal cultural practice as much as it was an exercise in land management that is also being shared with non-Aboriginal people.
Biraban Local Aboriginal Land Council Estuary Management Project - Hunter
The Biraban Local Aboriginal Land Council Estuary management project involved the Biraban Local Aboriginal Land Council Aboriginal land management team undertaking bush regeneration activities to remove weed infestation in the riparian zone at Pourmalong Creek, Morisset. The project area is of cultural significance to the Aboriginal community of West Lake Macquarie. Removal of the weed infestation allowed the community to access their traditional fishing area.

Jaliigirr – North Coast
Jaliigirr, the Gumbaynggirr word for tree, is a project that aims to improve the condition of and expand the linkage between the Pacific Ocean and the Great Eastern Ranges Initiative. Covering an area of 337,000 hectares with an altitudinal range of 1564 metres from the seaboard of Coffs Harbour Coast to the Dorrigo Plateau, the site is in a tropical, subtropical, temperate convergence zone that encompasses 100 regional vegetation communities. Jaliigirr includes an area of unique diversity and complexity. It includes 102 threatened fauna species, 50 threatened flora species, 13 endangered ecological communities and the World Heritage Gondwana Rainforests of Australia. Through active participation the project recognises and appreciates the involvement and attachment of Aboriginal communities to landscape, as the Gumbaynggirr people continue practices in natural resource management consistent with tens of thousands of years of knowledge and experience.

Walford Walkway – North West
The Walford Walkway at Walgett is a collaboration from a wide range of community members. Building upon the existing Tracker Walford Walkway, the Dharrirrwa Elders Group graded new walking tracks in a recently forgotten and very beautiful area on the banks of the Namoi River. The new walking tracks take in the special waterhole where the Spirit Dog Mirriwuula lives and Montkeila Bend, where Aboriginal people once lived in tin humpies. The walkway features 16 interpretative signs along the walking tracks and at Trevallion Park. A picnic shelter has been erected near the Namoi River weir along with park benches and botanical labels. Ten of the signs offer environmental education, from knowledge provided by members of Dharrirrwa Elders Group; Philip Spark, a prominent ecologist in this region; Claire Bergin from North West LLS; and others. Six of the interpretative signs provide historic and cultural information derived from the Walgett Elders’ memories and the wider community, and information about life in the Aboriginal communities of Namoi Village, the old brewery and Montkeila Bend, as well as memories of the flood times and other natural disasters. Also found on the signs are lists of Walgett’s Aboriginal servicemen and women; Walgett’s Aboriginal Trackers; and details of the Freedom Ride visit to Walgett in 1965.

Connection to Country – Murray
The Connection to Country project was an opportunity for Aboriginal communities across our region to share traditional ecological knowledge with Elders and youth gathering to share in stories, cultural dance and art, traditional plants, cultural heritage, respect and understanding. Murray Local Land Services assisted seven Aboriginal community groups with a series of Gatherings. Over 250 Elders, youth and children gathered at various locations across the region to share valuable experiences and knowledge. Yarkuwa Knowledge Centre held a three day Gathering incorporating women’s basket weaving with basket weavers from across the region to share in the traditional art of weaving. Men and youth had gathered to share their knowledge in artefact making which included sharing their knowledge and stories on cultural heritage sites, particularly scar trees. The Werai Aboriginal Negotiation Team held a Gathering which included teaching and sharing the art of traditional basket weaving. There was a children’s traditional dance group which was taught through their Elders. The Gathering focused on children and youth which included Elders sharing knowledge of their history. The Deniliquin Local Aboriginal Land Council held a three day ‘Kolety’ 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.
Projects repair precious country at Guyra & Glen Innes – Northern Tablelands

Northern Tablelands Local Land Services has been working with innovative Aboriginal organisations to restore native vegetation and control feral pests and weeds on key sites at Glen Innes and Guyra. Banbai Business Enterprises Inc. at Guyra, and the Glen Innes Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) have just completed projects funded through the Northern Tablelands Local Land Services Aboriginal Cultural Heritage & Land Management Program. These aim to maintain the natural integrity of Aboriginal-owned land. ‘The Willows’ and ‘Boorabee’, owned by the Glen Innes LALC, and the Banbai managed properties, ‘Wattleridge’ and ‘Tarrriwa Kurrrukun’, are all Aboriginal-owned Indigenous Protected Areas (IPA). Local Aboriginal staff have set up horticultural nurseries at ‘The Willows’, ‘Wattleridge’, and ‘Tarrriwa Kurrrukun’ to propagate native plant species that can then be used in revegetation. At ‘Wattleridge’ and ‘Tarrriwa Kurrrukun’ nurseries, there’s also a focus on sourcing and propagating species for planting in riparian zones, particularly for the proposed control of the pest fish species, gambusia. Weed control has also been carried out on each of the IPA properties targeting weeds such as Hawthorn, willow and blackberry.

Certificate II in Cultural Site Assessment & Land Management - Riverina

Ten members of the Aboriginal community participated in a program that has built and nurtured traditional knowledge in the identification of cultural sites and artefacts. The Aboriginal Cultural Sites Assessment Program was delivered by the Aboriginal Rural Training Program at the Murrumbidgee Rural Studies Centre in Yanco in partnership with Riverina Local Land Services. The pilot program worked with the Aboriginal community to identify, protect and support important cultural values and provide assessment services to landholders and the wider community. The course was designed to be practical and informative with a good combination of time spent in the classroom and out in the bush. The training program included 4 x one week residential blocks by the Aboriginal Rural Training Program at Yanco along with field workshops with Local Land Services staff at identified cultural sites. On completion, successful participants received Certificate II in Conservation and Land Management with an emphasis on Indigenous land management and the identification of significant cultural sites and artefacts. The pilot program was initially carried out in the Irrigation and Rangeland areas with further programs rolled out into other parts of the Riverina in the future. The Aboriginal Cultural Sites Assessment Program is supported by Riverina Local Land Services through funding from the Australian Government.

Protect our Future – Protect our River – South East

South East Local Land Services worked with Bermagui Public School students to assist them to learn about their local catchment - its plants, animals, Aboriginal culture and heritage, industries and history. Students toured the catchment with local Aboriginal Elders and produced a booklet promoting the unique aspects of the catchment and the Indigenous culture which is integral to it. This is the fifth booklet produced as part of a South East Local Land Services primary school education program. It has seen 140 school children from across the region expand their traditional ecological knowledge and strengthen their connection to Country.

Funding for Targeted Aboriginal Program – Western

Aboriginal Land Management Programs require a ‘direct negotiation’ approach due to the relatively small number of proponents and the identified low level of capacity to engage in mainstream programs. Targeted Aboriginal Programs (TAP) address these issues by providing an integrated suite of programs and partnerships targeting Aboriginal Land Managers across Local Land Services Western Region. TAP include: Aboriginal Land Manager Mentor Program: - Provide support and training for Aboriginal Land Managers to participate as Mentors and also trainees in sharing ideas and knowledge. Aboriginal Land Manager Devolved Grants Program: - Targeted at Aboriginal Land Managers, incorporating appropriate cost sharing, training and property planning. Aboriginal Land Manager Western Network: - Includes support for ACAGs, Aboriginal Land Management Workshops/Field Days, Aboriginal Land Manager Forum. Training – A Better Way to Manage Country: - Holistic Management, incorporating Best Practice Management, specific to the operation of the Aboriginal Managed Land. Expressions of interest are open until 10 July, with this program aligned with the region-wide open call for incentives funding. Approximately $273,000 will be made available for TAP.