



Local Land
Services



Australian Government

Local links

Connecting across NSW

Local Land Services works with land managers and the community to achieve our vision of *'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.



2017 NAIDOC WEEK

www.ils.nsw.gov.au

1300 795 299

Goal 1 - resilient, self-reliant and prepared local communities

Aboriginal Reference Advisory Group marks 10th anniversary – Northern Tablelands

The Northern Tablelands Aboriginal Reference Advisory Group, better known as the ARAG, recently celebrated a decade of success working in natural resource management and building the skills of local Aboriginal communities.

Northern Tablelands Local Land Services hosted a special anniversary event to celebrate the ARAG's 10 years in operation from

2007 to 2017. The ARAG was established to engage with Aboriginal communities and provide feedback and advice on Aboriginal cultural heritage.

The group actively promotes partnerships and ensures traditional knowledge is preserved and incorporated in practical land management.

Current membership of the organisation comprises representatives from Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALC) across the region.

The ARAG has collaborated in the delivery of training opportunities in skills such as native seed collection, property planning, Aboriginal heritage site assessment and traditional crafts, many of which have led to ongoing economic opportunities.



Training up to work on Country – Hunter

Hunter Local Land Services and the Hunter Aboriginal Community Advisory Group have developed a program to train local Aboriginal land management teams in conservation land management.

The Conservation Land Management Diploma course has been tailored for Aboriginal land management teams in the Lower Hunter and includes Indigenous fire knowledge and identification and assessment of Aboriginal cultural heritage.

Seven students are now about to complete the course and will qualify to undertake land management work in their local Aboriginal Land Council or other Aboriginal organisations.

"The Aboriginal students that are now completing this course have a strong connection to Country. When you see them out on their Country, they want to learn and they want to do things to manage their Country properly, and that's what this course is all about. Assisting them in managing their Aboriginal lands," Hunter Local Land Services, Aboriginal Land Services Officer, Toby Whaleboat said.



Connection to country at Mungo National Park – Western

Each year, Western Local Land Services partners with National Parks and Wildlife Service to support Aboriginal elders, traditional owner groups and local communities celebrate NAIDOC week at Mungo National Park.

The event provides Aboriginal elders with the opportunity to share the story of NAIDOC and its meaning which assists the community with connection to Country.

Landholders and community members participate in Aboriginal games such as boomerang throwing and are informed about traditional hunting techniques.

Archaeological dig pits are created which allows everyone to search for 'old bones' buried beneath the age-old soil of Lake Mungo.

On the menu is a bush food barbecue which includes kangaroo steaks, emu sausages, bush meat burgers and the feature of the day, emu stuffed with Wilga leaves cooked in the ground.

Western Local Land Services will be organising this event during NAIDOC Week at Mungo National Park.



Emu in the sky cultural camp – Central Tablelands

Students from the Central Tablelands recently took part in the region's first Emu in the Sky Aboriginal Cultural Camp, which explored astronomy, art, history and science from a unique Aboriginal perspective.

The Camp, brought the local community together to share skills and knowledge, while building understanding and respect for Aboriginal Country and culture.

Students from Blayney and Orange High Schools learnt through stories, science and hands-on activities how Aboriginal people historically connected to nature and the night sky.

Orange Local Aboriginal Land Council also taught students how to identify Aboriginal artefacts and scar trees and outlined traditional uses of native plants and animals.

"There has been a growing desire in our local communities to understand more about the life of our First Australians," Camp organiser, Lisa Paton, from Neville and Region Landcare said.

"Through this Camp we're gathering Aboriginal knowledge and stories to build a stepping stone to other known history in a broader context," she said.



Goal 2 - biosecure, profitable, productive and sustainable primary industries

Inaugural cultural burning forum – Greater Sydney

Greater Sydney Local Land Services hosted its first Aboriginal Cultural Burning Forum in May, attracting more than 110 representatives from Aboriginal communities, government agencies and environmental groups.

Supported by the Koori Country Firesticks Aboriginal Corporation, Firesticks Initiative and Victor Steffensen of Mulong Arts, the two-day event gave participants insight into the practice of Aboriginal cultural burning and its significance to Aboriginal communities and Country.

Greater Sydney Local Land Services Land Services Officer, Aboriginal Communities, Den Barber said the event attracted overwhelming interest from the Sydney community.

“It was a truly meaningful and worthwhile experience and a first for many people who attended. Cultural burning means different things to different people but it is basically burning practices used by Aboriginal people to enhance the health of land and its people.”

The cultural burn demonstration was carried out on a site near Mulgoa managed by the Cumberland Land Conservancy.

This project was funded by Catchment Action NSW.



Sharing knowledge and protecting cultural values on farms – Riverina

Riverina Local Land Services and the Aboriginal Rural Training Centre, Yanco has been working with the local Aboriginal community to provide training on identification, protection and support of cultural values.

The program provided participants with the ability to provide cultural assessment services to landholders and the wider community in the Riverina region. The skilled workforce has since been employed to foster the opportunity for better cultural heritage awareness and engagement between landholders and the local Aboriginal community. The project has identified more than 1,000 artefacts on private property and travelling stock reserves.

Aboriginal community members have assisted Riverina Local Land Services by providing site specific reports for the ongoing protection of significant sites and artefacts on travelling stock reserves and properties involved in natural resource management incentive projects.

The program has improved understanding by landholders of the relationship between agricultural land practice and due diligence providing practical experience in identifying and recording cultural sites and artefacts.



Collaborative effort to reduce pest animals – Murray

The Aboriginal community is playing a key role in removing hundreds of feral pests from the Werai, Koondrook-Perricoota and Millewa forests, collectively known as the Central Murray Ramsar site.

More than 300 pigs and 130 deer have been removed in Murray Local Land Services' Ramsar wetland and buffer zone project, significantly reducing environmental and agricultural impacts.

Moama Local Aboriginal Land Council members have worked with Forestry Corporation NSW, trapping and baiting in the Koondrook-Perricoota Forest, while the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service has built on Yarkuwa Indigenous Knowledge Centre work in removing pests from the Werai Forest.

Pigs, deer and foxes devastate native forests and wetlands, and carry exotic diseases that affect livestock. Their removal is a positive result, and Murray Local Land Services is continuing to maintain pressure on pests in these important wetlands.

This project was funded by the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme and Catchment Action NSW.



Protecting culturally significant sites – North West

Building on successful knowledge sharing partnerships, Tamworth Local Aboriginal Land Council (Tamworth LALC) again joined forces with North West Local Land Services to share and protect two culturally significant areas and related knowledge.

As part of the project weed management, weathering minimisation works, signage and education activities will be undertaken at Boundary Rock and Tamworth Botanical Gardens.

“We are proud to continue to lead our Aboriginal community to unite and educate all people through knowledge sharing activities, on-ground management including signage and interpretation of our culture and to maintain our traditional Kamilaroi lands, it's a win-win,” Tamworth LALC Chair, Harry Cutmore said.

“These projects build on tremendous public interest in Aboriginal cultural knowledge. They will also protect our valuable landscapes and enhance connections between the North West Local Land Services and Tamworth LALC,” he said.

This project was funded by the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme and Catchment Action NSW.



Goal 3 - healthy, diverse, connected natural environments



Reconciliation Action Plan – Central West

In 2014, Central West Local Land Services identified that a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) would be an effective way of enhancing relationships with local Aboriginal communities and providing support and opportunities for Aboriginal staff. RAPs are practical plans of action built on relationships, respect and opportunities.

With guidance from Reconciliation Australia, it was considered important to take a whole of Local Land Services approach rather than focusing on one region, a concept which was subsequently endorsed at a State level.

In May 2017 a contract was signed with Bill Buchanan Management Services to start work on the state-wide RAP.

On finalisation, this plan will include key actions around Indigenous employment, supplier diversity, NAIDOC and National Reconciliation Week activities, cultural heritage management and cultural awareness training for staff.

A first draft of the RAP will be submitted to Reconciliation Australia for review in January 2018, with an expectation that the final plan will be endorsed mid-2018.

Caring for cultural heritage on the Tomaga River – South East

Rangers from the Mogo Local Aboriginal Land Council have partnered with South East Local Land Services to preserve a culturally significant midden on the Tomaga River.

Middens are places where debris from eating shellfish and other food has accumulated over time. They are important sites for Aboriginal people.

Archaeologists have recognised the midden on the Tomaga River as having historical and cultural significance due to its size and the presence of a fire pit.

The rangers have been carrying out ongoing works to both halt the erosion on the river bank and prevent the remains of the midden from falling into the river.

They have used 2,500 hand sewn sand bags, 600 self-propagated mangroves and riparian plantings to address the issue.

As well as encouraging the return of native fish and protecting culturally significant sites, the project has been connecting Aboriginal people with country and enhancing the employment opportunities for the participating rangers.



Collaborating about the Travelling Stock Reserves Review – statewide

The NSW Government has been working closely with Local Aboriginal Land Councils and traditional land owners across the state as part of the Travelling Stock Reserve (TSR) Review, which is examining the current uses of TSRs.

The aim of the Review is to survey the uses of more than 6,500 TSRs throughout the state to ensure they are fit for purpose as well as safeguard culturally significant sites.

The TSR network was established more than 150 years ago to facilitate the movement of livestock, both sheep and cattle. Today many TSRs are no longer used for their original purpose, however they do have great environmental, economic, cultural and social benefits to NSW.

TSRs hold important values for Aboriginal cultural heritage with many routes believed to have followed pathways used traditionally by Aboriginal people.

The TSR Review is about maintaining a viable, well maintained and connected TSR network for the future.



Restoring a rich heritage at Busbys Flat – North Coast

The Casino-Boonangle Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) is working in partnership with Northern Rivers Fire and Biodiversity Consortium to significantly enhance the biodiversity conservation and cultural heritage values of Busbys Flat, south west of Casino.

The Working on Country project involves restoring native vegetation and riparian areas through pest plant control on LALC land as well as two adjoining travelling stock reserves managed by North Coast Local Land Services.

The project that is delivering tremendous outcomes as Busbys Flat is not only a hotspot for threatened plant communities and the many threatened fauna species dependent on floodplain eucalypt forest, but also of significant cultural heritage importance to the Casino Aboriginal community.

The Working on Country team is very keen to restore the native forest and riparian areas of Busbys Flat and committed to maintaining community connections with the spirit of the area.

This project was funded by the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme and Catchment Action NSW.

