

Local Land Services

INNOVATE RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

May 2018 - May 2020



Local Land
Services



Australian Government

National
Landcare
Program



RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN

INNOVATE

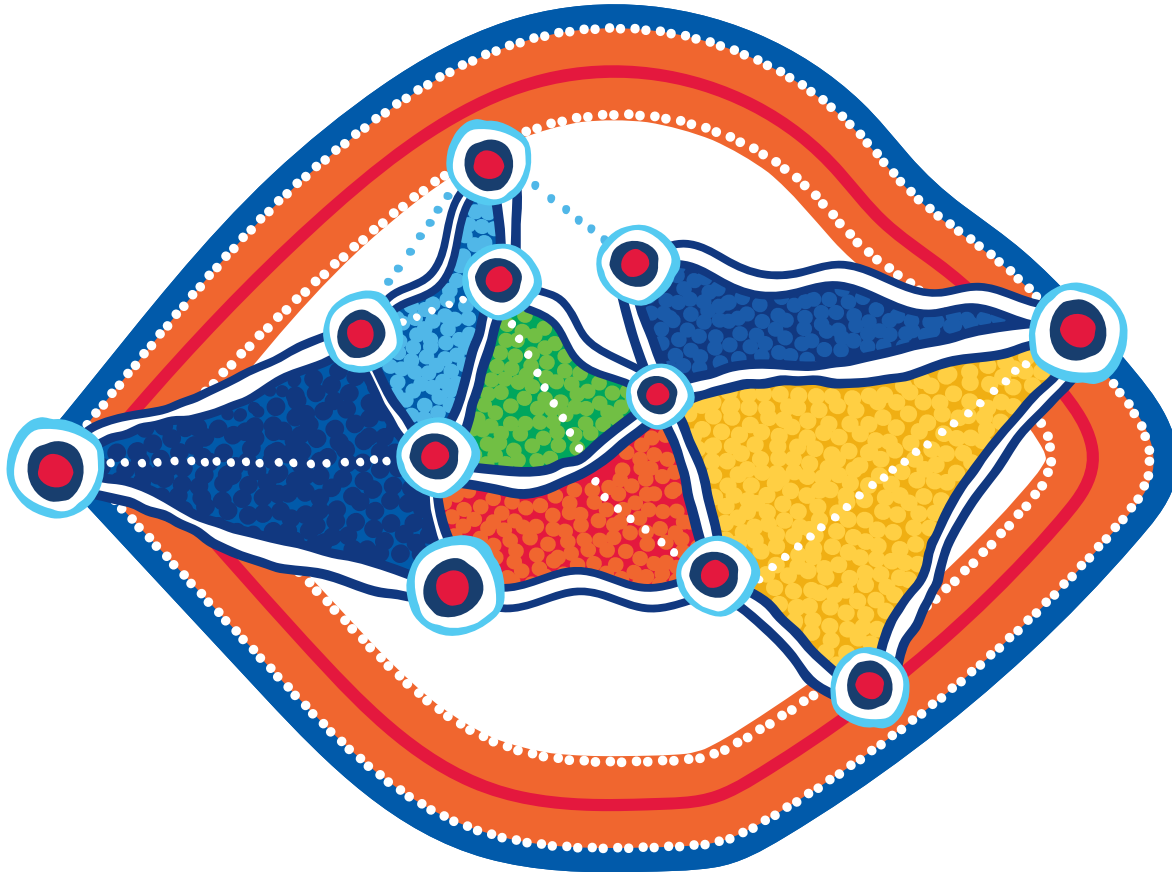
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MEANING OF THE ARTWORK

The cover artwork was created by Gilimbaa artist, Rachael Sarra (Goreng Goreng)

11 Regions connecting together, creating growth in their communities through collaboration. Connecting, growing and protecting our land, our communities and our culture to create generational change together.

BIOGRAPHY OF ARTIST

Rachael Sarra believes in the power that art plays to tell a story and to allow people to explore complex ideas in an engaging and inclusive way. As an Aboriginal artist from Goreng Goreng Country, Rachael draws on her heritage to produce pieces that are steeped in culture while being contemporary and future facing.

Rachael's talent has resulted in the development of exquisite artwork for a range of high profile clients including, Kmart Australia, STEM.IAM for Google, Australia Post, Australian Law Reform Commission and various Government Departments. Rachael uses her role as an artist to create pieces that can become a vehicle for change by helping to connect and celebrate culture. It is this belief that lies at the very centre of her creative process.

Intellectual property created, made, or originated from the artist shall be the sole and exclusive property of the artist, except as he or she may voluntarily choose to transfer such property, in full, or in part.

CULTURAL SENSITIVITY STATEMENT

For First Nations peoples reading this document, please be aware that there may be names and images of deceased people contained within the document.

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ACKNOWLEDGING TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS

Local Land Services acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land and pays respect to Elders past, present and future. We also recognise the unique, diverse and enduring cultures of First Nations peoples in NSW.

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First Nations peoples have a strong ongoing social, spiritual and cultural connection with their traditional lands and waters.

.....

Obligations to care for Country remain integral to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander law, identity, culture and social and emotional well-being.

The way in which traditional lands are being managed is of great interest to First Nations communities and Local Land Services understands that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a significant contribution to make in relation to land management in the region.

First Nations peoples hold special knowledge and rights regarding the management of land and its resources. Aboriginal peoples occupied all areas of NSW with evidence including camp-sites, scarred and carved trees, rock shelters, grinding grooves, rock art, and ceremonial and burial areas present across all landscapes.

Cultural values across NSW may also relate to natural resources such as native bush medicines, foods and tradeable goods including ochre and stone suitable for tool making. Song-lines, storylines and intellectual property in relation to traditional knowledge is also acknowledged. NSW holds many Aboriginal cultural heritage values and the preservation and management of these values is best determined by the Traditional Custodians of Country.

Local Land Services will continue to build strong relationships with First Nations communities, seek to understand their aspirations and ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a voice to provide input into land management issues and in particular the management of cultural values.





Photo: Brenda McBride demonstrates the use of native plants in the Lightning Ridge area.





MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

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I am proud to be part of a team that recognises the importance and value of traditional knowledge in the management of natural resources and productive agricultural land.

.....

On behalf of Local Land Services, I am very pleased to present our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). This Plan articulates Local Land Services' commitment to reconciliation and recognises Australia's First Nations peoples as Traditional Custodians of the land. We pay respect to Elders, past, present and emerging for their cultural beliefs and ongoing relationship with the land.

This plan was built upon agreed strategies after extensive state-wide consultation with our board members, staff and stakeholders, on how the organisation can form enriching relationships, enhance respect and create opportunities for First Nations peoples.

The RAP identifies specific and measurable actions to be undertaken across the organisation at both a state-wide and regional level to ensure we meet our goals.



Appreciating local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage values is a high priority for our organisation and under the *Local Land Services Act 2013*, we are responsible for consulting and engaging with the First Nations communities and developing strong partnerships.

Our RAP builds on our State Strategic Plan which specifies we will deliver services that support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to care for Country and share traditional land management knowledge.

We are committed to advancing reconciliation by fostering partnerships and relationships that focus on embracing diversity, enhancing respect and providing equitable opportunities for and with First Nations peoples across New South Wales.

I would like to acknowledge the support and endorsement of Reconciliation Australia which has enabled us to finalise this Innovate RAP to guide our organisation over the next two years.

Richard Bull

Local Land Services Chair





INTRODUCTION FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

This Reconciliation Action Plan is a commitment by Local Land Services to ensure our organisation works collaboratively with First Nations peoples to help protect and strengthen cultural heritage, share traditional land management knowledge and care for Country.

Our RAP promotes Local Land Services' commitment to reconciliation in three key areas:

- Enhancing respect
- Enriching relationships
- Creating opportunities

More than 2,700 individuals, including First Nations peoples, were consulted across NSW to help in developing practical actions that build respectful relationships and create opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

This Plan will enable Local Land Services to integrate respectful protocols and review our employment and procurement strategies to establish a solid foundation that strengthens our ongoing commitment to support local First Nations communities, organisations, programs and events.



All of us at Local Land Services have the opportunity to contribute to reconciliation, whether it is through delivering great service to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander customers, sharing skills to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, or celebrating the rich First Nations cultures.

With the development of this RAP, Local Land Services is demonstrating our genuine commitment to enrich, enhance and foster respectful relationships that create opportunities for First Nations peoples and other Australians to work and walk together toward reconciled, resilient communities in productive, healthy landscapes.

The Local Land Services Executive Team will champion the RAP across Local Land Services and encourage all staff to engage and participate in reconciliation.

Our opportunity to positively impact on the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities through our RAP is inspiring and challenging and we look forward to the journey ahead.

David Witherdin

Local Land Services Chief Executive Officer

STATEMENT FROM RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA CEO

Reconciliation Australia is delighted to welcome Local Land Services to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program by formally endorsing its inaugural Innovate RAP.

As a member of the RAP community, Local Land Services joins over 1,000 dedicated corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have formally committed to reconciliation through the RAP program since its inception in 2006. RAP organisations across Australia are turning good intentions into positive actions, helping to build higher trust, lower prejudice, and increase pride in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

Reconciliation is no one single issue or agenda. Based on international research and benchmarking, Reconciliation Australia defines and measures reconciliation through five critical dimensions: race relations; equality and equity, institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance. All sections of the community—governments, civil society, the private sector, and Aboriginal and Strait Islander communities—have a role to play to progress these dimensions.

The RAP program provides a framework for organisations to advance reconciliation within their spheres of influence. This Innovate RAP provides Local Land Services with the key steps to establish its own unique approach to reconciliation. Through implementing an Innovate RAP, Local Land Services will develop its approach to driving reconciliation through its business activities, services and programs, and develop mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.



We wish Local Land Services well as it explores and establishes its own unique approach to reconciliation. We encourage you to embrace this journey with open hearts and minds, to grow from the challenges, and to build on your successes. As the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation reminded the nation in its final report:

“Reconciliation is hard work—it’s a long, winding and corrugated road, not a broad, paved highway. Determination and effort at all levels of government and in all sections of the community will be essential to make reconciliation a reality.”

On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I commend Local Land Services on its first RAP, and look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine

Chief Executive Officer, Reconciliation Australia

A photograph of two young Indigenous Australian girls smiling at the camera. They are standing in front of a large, gnarled boab tree in a dry, arid landscape under a clear blue sky. The girl on the left is wearing a pink sweater, and the girl on the right is wearing a light blue sweater. A decorative graphic consisting of three concentric, curved lines in blue, orange, and red with white dots runs across the bottom of the image.

OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

Our vision is to enrich, enhance and foster respectful relationships that create opportunities for First Nations peoples and other Australians to work and walk together toward reconciled, resilient communities in productive, healthy landscapes.

LOCAL LAND SERVICES' OFFICES



.....

We grow, protect and connect.
We have more than 950 staff, including
19 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
staff, working from more than 90 locations
throughout NSW.

.....



OUR BUSINESS

Local Land Services helps secure the future of agriculture and the environment for NSW communities.

We grow, protect and connect. We have more than 950 staff, including 19 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, working from more than 90 locations throughout NSW. Our staff work and live in the communities we serve, building relationships with our customers and delivering on a personal level. We are a customer-focused service agency connecting people to knowledge, networks and local experience.

Our staff have a breadth of experience and expertise in a wide range of integrated services including natural resource management, Aboriginal cultural heritage, biodiversity, agriculture production, biosecurity, animal welfare, emergency management and soil conservation.

We work closely with our local communities on projects to improve environmental health, which includes native vegetation, soils, animals and waterways. Our programs and partnerships help the community understand the importance of biodiversity.

We have a great respect for the First Peoples of Australia. Our programs and partnerships help protect Aboriginal cultural heritage and increase opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to care for Country.

State-wide, we are governed by the Local Land Services Board, who are responsible for the performance of the organisation across NSW. Regionally, local boards set the local strategic direction and are an important link to our communities. They are supported by local community and Aboriginal community advisory groups to provide oversight of their corporate governance responsibilities, regionally appropriate programs, local strategic plans and budgets.

Our ongoing collaboration with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities has resulted in a greater appreciation of how traditional land management knowledge and practices can be adopted by other land managers to increase sustainability and profitability. Local Land Services also continues to support land managers and First Nations peoples to conserve cultural heritage values on freehold land, demonstrating that Aboriginal cultural heritage and sustainable agribusiness can harmoniously co-exist.

ABC Journalist Emmie Dowling interviews Uncle Lawrence Clarke, Chairperson of the Western Local Land Services' Aboriginal Community Advisory Group (south) during the RAP consultation process.





OUR RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

The journey of developing our first Reconciliation Action Plan had its beginnings in the Central West region in 2014. Central West Local Land Services identified that a RAP would be the means of building relationships and partnerships with First Nations peoples in the region. Following consultation with Reconciliation Australia, it was determined a RAP should be developed for the whole of Local Land Services.

The proposal for Local Land Services to develop a RAP was endorsed by the Local Land Services Board in 2017 and a consultant appointed to support the development of the RAP. In preparation for the consultation phase of the project, a RAP was drafted and work commenced on communications and public exhibition of the document. Local Land Services staff, Shona Whitfield and Amanda McCarthy, travelled with the Principal Consultant, Bill Buchanan, from September 2017 to January 2018, undertaking a total of 58 internal and external face-to-face consultations across NSW.

Regional Aboriginal Community Advisory Groups were major supporters and contributors to our consultation process. First Nations peoples who attended our consultation sessions identified the need to support employment, procurement and forming solid relationships of respect between Local Land Services and local First Nations peoples in relation to all activities undertaken by Local Land Services.

In addition, RAP Priorities Surveys were opened for submissions from staff and external customers and stakeholders who were unable to attend the consultation sessions. As a result of the feedback, a second draft was prepared in January 2018 and released for public exhibition.

The Reconciliation Action Plan project was supported by a Steering Committee who oversaw the development, endorsement and launch of the RAP and we would like to acknowledge the support of those people throughout this journey.

- **Shona Whitfield**, Team Leader Collaboration, Central West Local Land Services
- **Michael Nolan**, Senior Strategic Land Services Officer – Aboriginal Communities, Central West Local Land Services
- **Gary Rodda**, General Manager, Murray Local Land Services
- **Emma Knight**, Communications Officer
- **Ronni O'Donnell**, Senior Land Services Officer – Aboriginal Communities, Western Local Land Services
- **Angelina Moore-Tabuteau**, Senior Land Services Officer – Aboriginal Communities, Murray Local Land Services
- **Jane Chrystal**, Manager Strategy, Natural Resource Management and Agricultural Advice, Central West Local Land Services
- **Michael Smith**, Senior Business and Finance Officer
- **Carolyn Raine**, Director Corporate Operations
- **Shenal Basnayake**, Director Major Programs
- **Amanda McCarthy**, Aboriginal Programs Coordinator
- **Neville Merritt**, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community member



Our Reconciliation Statement, endorsed by the Local Land Services Board formalises our shared vision and commitment to adopt guiding principles for reconciliation across all 11 regions in New South Wales.

Our RAP will be a solid foundation for the ongoing work of our staff and key stakeholders and will support our strategic commitment to deliver services that support First Nations peoples to care for Country and share traditional land management knowledge. It will embed respectful protocols, build capacity, identify opportunities to help meet the challenges experienced by many First Nations peoples engaging in primary production and natural resource management.

Local Land Services acknowledges and is grateful for the input received from First Nations peoples, our boards and staff, and communities across New South Wales.

Local Land Services will establish a new RAP Steering Committee to monitor progress and guide implementation for the duration of this Reconciliation Action Plan. The Steering Committee is comprised of:

Local Land Services:

- **Shenal Basnayake**, Director Major Programs
- **Carolyn Raine**, Director Corporate Operations
- **Amanda McCarthy**, Aboriginal Programs Coordinator
- **Guy Gibbs**, Land Services Officer, Aboriginal Communities, Western
- **Harry White**, Senior Land Services Officer, Aboriginal Communities, Northern Tablelands
- **Den Barber**, Land Services Officer, Aboriginal Communities, Greater Sydney

External representation:

- **Lindon Coombes**, Co-Chair, NSW Reconciliation Council
- **Maxine Edwards**, NSW Aboriginal Land Council
- **Robert Dulhunty**, Chair, Landcare NSW
- **Derek Schoen**, President, NSW Farmers Association
- **Mark Davies**, First Nations community member, Northern Tablelands
- **Julie Knight**, First Nations community member, Western

Our RAP Steering Committee will be chaired by the Director Major Programs who will ensure the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on our Steering Committee. At least one or more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people/s will always be present at meetings.

Internally our RAP will be championed by our Chief Executive Officer, David Witherdin, and the Local Land Services Executive Team as listed below.

- **David Witherdin**, Chief Executive Officer
- **Carolyn Raine**, Director, Corporate Operations
- **Lisa Coletta**, Director, Strategy, Performance and Governance
- **Kristian Holz**, Group Director, Sustainable Land Management
- **Shenal Basnayake**, Director, Major Programs
- **Tim Ferraro**, General Manager, Soil Conservation Service
- **Natasha Collier**, Chief Financial Officer
- **Chris Cumming**, General Manager, Central Tablelands
- **Andrew Mulligan**, General Manager, Central West
- **David Hogan**, General Manager, Greater Sydney
- **Brett Miners**, General Manager, Hunter
- **Gary Rodda**, General Manager, Murray
- **Louise Orr**, General Manager, North Coast
- **James Hutchinson-Smith**, General Manager, North West
- **Paul Hutchings**, General Manager, Northern Tablelands
- **Rob Kelly**, General Manager, Riverina
- **Anthony Marshall**, General Manager, South East
- **Erlina Compton**, General Manager, Western
- **Dr Jacque Tracey**, Director Land Management Reform



LOCAL LAND SERVICES' INITIATIVES

Our staff are working state-wide on a range of initiatives with our First Nations partners that all contribute to our Local Land Services' RAP journey. A number of initiatives are listed here, and throughout the document we have included case studies from each of our regions.

Implementation of Aboriginal community advisory or reference groups

Regionally, Aboriginal Community Advisory or Reference Groups are an advisory body under the overall direction and guidance of each board, acting as a vehicle for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to have a real say on the development of appropriate regional Local Land Services' engagement processes and structure.

Local links published to celebrate NAIDOC Week

Each year we publish case studies to showcase the diversity of partnerships and projects being undertaken to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to care for Country and share traditional land management knowledge. The Local Links newsletter is published on-line and each July edition focuses on these initiatives across NSW.

Local Land Services Reconciliation Statement

Our Reconciliation Statement was endorsed by the Local Land Services Board at its meeting in December 2017. The Reconciliation Statement is a public statement by Local Land Services as part of its commitment to Reconciliation to build an environment that is genuinely inclusive of First Nations peoples whilst recognising cultural differences.

Aboriginal Communities Officers

Local Land Services employs a number of Aboriginal Communities Officers' across its 11 regions. Their primary focus is Aboriginal Cultural Heritage. They work with community to develop capacity and undertake collaborative projects on land across New South Wales including private holdings, travelling stock routes and other Crown lands. In collaboration with community, our Aboriginal Community Officers develop programs and projects to protect Aboriginal Cultural Heritage often involving grants and incentives for communities to undertake onground works, projects involving youth, and activities designed to break down social barriers and bust myths in the wider community.

Collaborating about the travelling stock reserves review

The NSW Government worked closely with Local Aboriginal Land Councils and Traditional Land Owners across the state to undertake a review of travelling stock reserves. The aim of the Review was to survey the uses of more than 6,500 travelling stock routes throughout the state to ensure they are fit for purpose as well as safeguard culturally significant sites.

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

Travelling stock routes hold important values for Aboriginal cultural heritage, with many routes believed to have followed pathways used traditionally by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

In some instances travelling stock routes are part of Indigenous Land Use Agreements and Native Title claims.

NORTH WEST

Protecting culturally significant sites

Building on successful knowledge sharing partnerships, Tamworth Local Aboriginal Land Council 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 were undertaken at Boundary Rock and Tamworth Botanical Gardens.

"We are proud to continue to lead our First Nations' 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 Local Aboriginal Land Council Chair, Harry Cutmore said.

"These projects build on tremendous public interest in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural knowledge. They will also protect our valuable landscapes and enhance connections between the North West Local Land Services and Tamworth Local Aboriginal Land Council."



Joanne Steaad (Tamworth Local Aboriginal Land Council) with Jason Wilson of North West Local Land Services

GREATER SYDNEY

Cultural burning forum

Greater Sydney Local Land Services hosted its first Aboriginal Cultural Burning Forum in May 2017, 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 and Torres Strait Islander cultural burning and its significance to 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.



Greater Sydney's Den Barber with Archie Davison from Sydney Metro Local Aboriginal Land Council at a cultural burning forum.



Traditional basket weaving

WESTERN

Protecting Aboriginal cultural traditions

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 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 and Torres Strait Islander peoples make up approximately 13 per cent of the population, compared with the national average of three per cent.

NORTH COAST

Connecting those who work on Country

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 First Nations groups shared cultural land management information.

The workshops discussed practical ways to engage appropriately with First Nations communities to allow for productive and sound project outcomes. They also identified opportunities that will build community capacity through direct Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement, employment and skills development.

These opportunities build on existing projects being undertaken including cultural heritage and traditional land management.



Ian Fox, Oliver Costello, Marcus Ferguson and John Nagle at an information session.



Traditional Aboriginal Bush Tucker

MURRAY

Connecting to Country small grants

Murray Local Land Services has provided Connecting to Country small grants to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across the region. The program has supported a range of gatherings to share traditional ecological knowledge, with nearly 30 events funded during 2016. Some projects included:

- A weekly gathering with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 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 artifact 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.

SOUTH EAST

Caring for cultural heritage on the Tomaga River

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 and Torres Strait Islander peoples. 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 and Torres Strait Islander peoples with country and enhancing the employment opportunities for the participating rangers.



Rangers from the Mogo Local Aboriginal Land Council with Kristi Sampson and Sonia Bazzacco from South East Local Land Services at their project site on the Tomaga River.



Central West Local Land Services Board members visit an Aboriginal hearth site at Bunglegumbie Reserve.

CENTRAL WEST

Aboriginal cultural heritage inspires Board

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The Central West Local Land Services Board has a deeper understanding of Aboriginal cultural heritage following an information session in the Dubbo area in 2017. Central West Local Land Services Aboriginal Communities Officer, Amanda Morgan gave board members an overview of sites where evidence of Aboriginal occupation has been preserved in the landscape. Ms Morgan said the historic sites and artifacts were part of a shared history that all Australians have inherited.

Board members visited Bunglegumbie Travelling Stock Reserve, to view remains of a hearth site and other artifact scatters which was evidence of occupation on that site. The hearth site, which has been carbon dated, is one of the few visible hearth sites in the Dubbo region.

Understanding local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 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.



Aboriginal Elder, Aunty Pat Cohen, who grew up on the Inglebar Reserve, exploring the property with Mark Davies from Amaroo Local Aboriginal Land Council

NORTHERN TABLELANDS

Reviving Aboriginal culture at Walcha

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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 peoples. 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 and Torres Strait Islander communities.

"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.



Lenard O'Hara from Hay and Lee Reavley from Narrandera inspect a scarred tree.

RIVERINA

Sharing knowledge and protecting cultural values on farms

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This project forms part of broader First Nations capacity building activities within the Riverina. The main objective of this project was to build the capacity of Aboriginal community members to deliver cultural site assessments on private property and travelling stock reserves.

Training in Aboriginal cultural sites assessment was delivered by the Aboriginal Rural Training Centre at the Murrumbidgee Rural Studies Centre in Yanco in partnership with Riverina Local Land Services. The centre worked with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 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 course was run in 2016 and 2017 with 15 Aboriginal community members completing the course. The project has provided the participants with the confidence to provide cultural assessment services to landholders in the Riverina Local Land Services. This skilled workforce has since been employed to foster the opportunity for better cultural heritage awareness and engagement between landholders and the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. The project has identified over 1000 artefacts on private property and travelling stock reserves.

This project benefited Riverina Local Land Services by providing site specific reports for the ongoing protection of significant sites and artefacts on travelling stock reserves and private properties involved in natural resource management incentive projects. The outcome was an improved understanding by landholders of the relationship between agricultural land practice and due diligence and they have practical experience in identifying and recording cultural sites and artefacts.





Gaambuwananha Ngurambang team, Orange Local Aboriginal Land Council

CENTRAL TABLELANDS

Bringing back Country

Central Tablelands Local Land Services has been actively engaging with First Nations peoples 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 Team from Orange Local Aboriginal Land Council is a First Nations peoples 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 team at 'Mawonga' via Mt Hope. The journey continued to the Orange Local Aboriginal Land Council 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 Gaambuwananha Ngurambang 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.



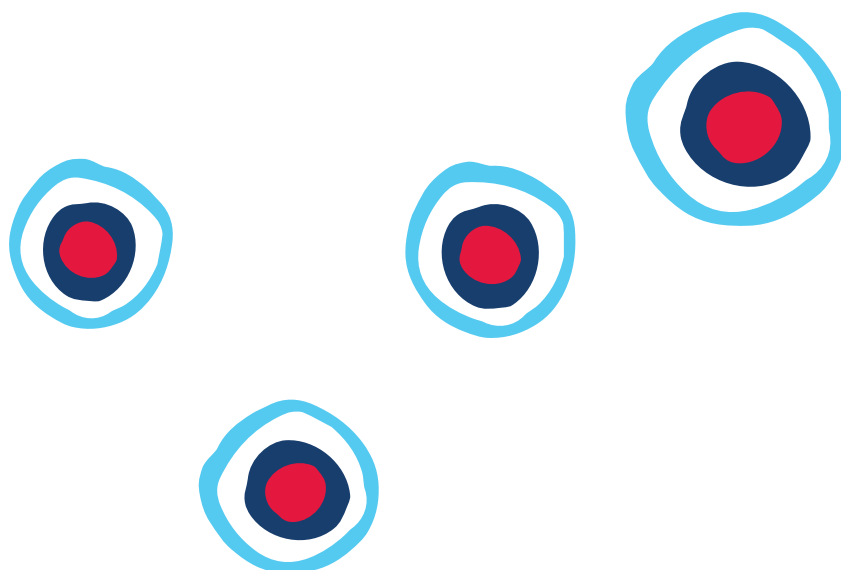
Weed spraying is one of the tasks undertaken by trainees

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

Hunter Aboriginal Riverkeeper Team

Soil Conservation Service in the Hunter region have commenced a program to enable the creation of a team to undertake bush regeneration and land management works on privately owned lands where Local Land Services have established landholder agreements.

The team participants will complete traineeships based on the Conservation and Land Management program in 15 locations in the Upper Hunter. The program will run over four years achieving cultural, social, environmental and employment outcomes. Previous projects undertaken in this realm have helped strengthen and promote partnerships and engagement between First Nations peoples and non-Aboriginal people. The project will contribute towards the national goals relating to First Nations peoples.



HUNTER

Training up to work on Country

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 First Nations peoples 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 First Nations 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.



Students participating in the Conservation and Land Management course



Greater Sydney Local Land Services staff at Cultural Competence training in the Blue Mountains.

ENRICHING RELATIONSHIPS

Local Land Services is committed to and accountable for meaningful engagement with First Nations peoples across NSW. Relationships with our customers and staff are founded on mutual respect, trust and integrity. Through this RAP, we will continue to develop, strengthen and enhance our relationships to mutually achieve and celebrate cultural, social, economic and environmental outcomes.

Enduring commitments:

- A RAP Steering Group to monitor progress and impacts of the RAP on progressing reconciliation.
- An informed organisation that is well placed to create opportunities and partner with key stakeholder groups to help progress reconciliation with local communities on Country.
- Formal arrangements/partnerships established with local reconciliation groups, major First Nations peoples land interest groups and other key stakeholder groups in all regions to promote and support National Reconciliation Week events and initiatives.

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
1. RAP Steering Committee actively monitors RAP development, implementation of actions, tracking progress and reporting	1.1 RAP Steering Committee oversees the development, endorsement, launch and implementation of the RAP	Director, Major Programs	May & September 2018 February, July & December 2019 April 2020
	1.2 The RAP Steering Committee will convene at least three times each year to monitor and report on RAP implementation	Director, Major Programs	June & September 2018 February, July & December 2019 April 2020
	1.3 Ensure First Nations peoples are represented on the RAP Steering Committee	Director, Major Programs	June & September 2018 February, July & December 2019 April 2020
	1.4 Establish Terms of Reference for the RAP Steering Committee	Director, Major Programs	June 2018

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
2. Develop and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with First Nations peoples, organisations and local communities to further reconciliation	2.1 Support improvements to consistency of governance and operations across Local Land Services Aboriginal Community Advisory Groups	Aboriginal Programs Coordinator	July 2019
	2.2 Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to develop guiding principles to support development and implementation of First Nations Community Engagement and Participation Plans	Chief Executive Officer	June 2019
	2.3 Investigate suitable opportunities to partner with our key stakeholders and First Nations peoples	Chief Executive Officer	August 2018 August 2019
3. Participate in and celebrate National Reconciliation Week by providing opportunities to build and maintain relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians	3.1 Annually, each region to organise an internal event to celebrate National Reconciliation Week	Chief Executive Officer	May 2018 May 2019 May 2020
	3.2 Ensure our RAP Steering Committee participates in an external National Reconciliation Week event	Director, Major Programs	May 2018 May 2019 May 2020
	3.3 Support an external National Reconciliation Week event	Director, Corporate Operations	May 2018 May 2019 May 2020
	3.4 Register all of our National Reconciliation Week events on Reconciliation Australia's National Reconciliation Week website	Chief Executive Officer	April 2019 April 2020
4. Raise internal and external awareness of our organisation's reconciliation commitments	4.1 Promote Local Land Services First Nations programs, reconciliation commitments and achievements at major regional events	Chief Executive Officer	August & November 2018 February, May, August & November 2019 February & May 2020
	4.2 Identify partnership opportunities to support the implementation of the RAP	Aboriginal Programs Coordinator	December 2018 December 2019
	4.3 Develop and implement a strategy to communicate our RAP to all internal and external stakeholders	Director Corporate Operations	July 2018
	4.4 Incorporate an overview of regional RAP responsibilities into our induction program	Chief Executive Officer	September 2018
	4.5 Promote reconciliation through ongoing active engagement with all stakeholders.	Chief Executive Officer	December 2018 December 2019
	4.6 All staff to highlight in their Personal Development Plans how they intend to contribute to the implementation of the RAP.	Chief Executive Officer	August 2018 February & August 2019 February 2020



Photo: Northern Tablelands Board Member, Tim Norton and Aboriginal Reference Advisory Group member Greg Livermore at the ARAG 10th birthday celebrations.

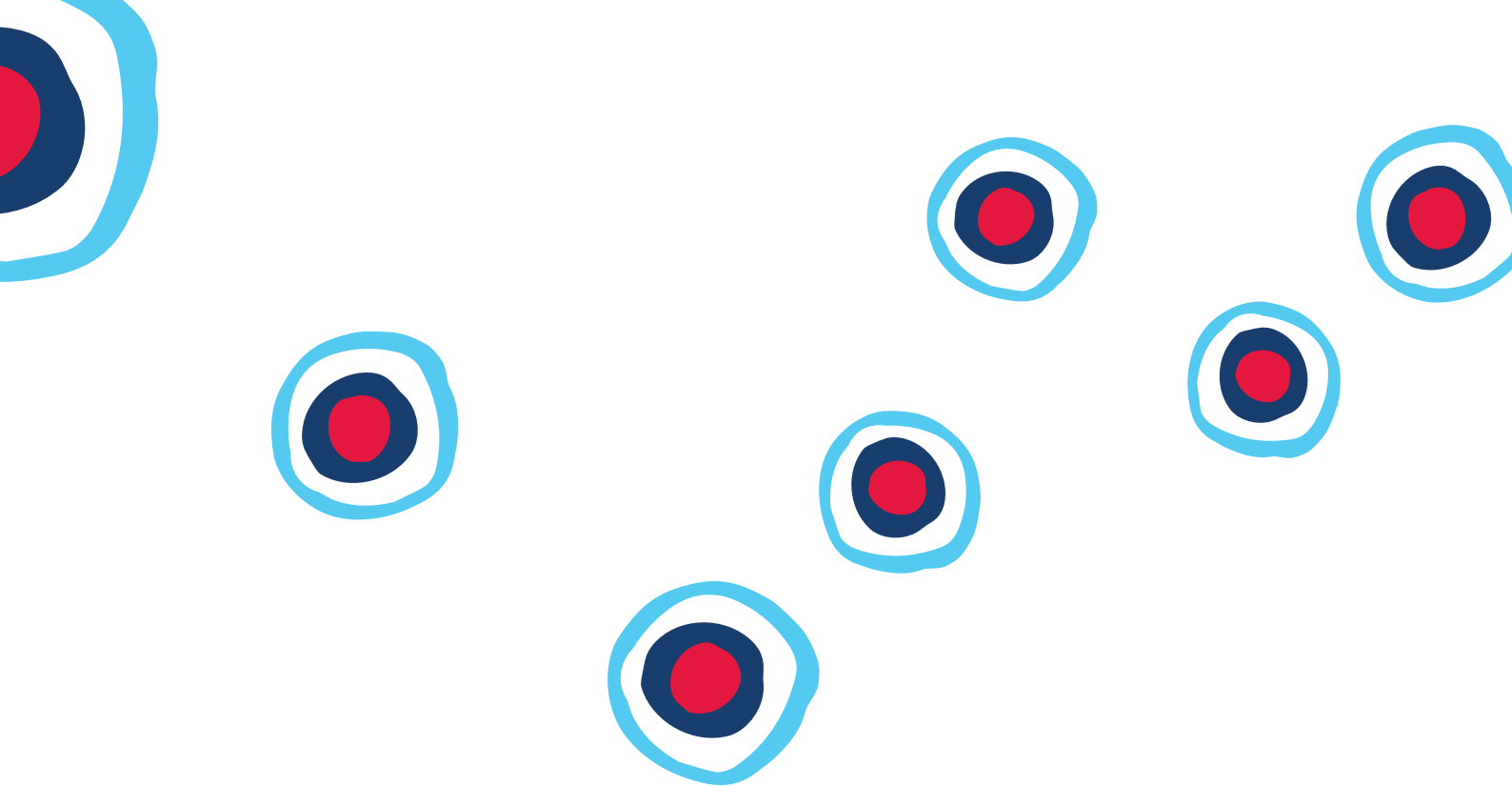
ENHANCING RESPECT

At Local Land Services, we are committed to a workplace culture that embraces and promotes mutual respect. We recognise First Nations peoples have the oldest continuous living culture and respect their cultural, spiritual, physical and emotional connection with the land.

Local Land Services will continue to collaborate with First Nations communities to garner a broader respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures through the sharing of Traditional knowledge to enhance contemporary land management practices in sustainable productive landscapes.

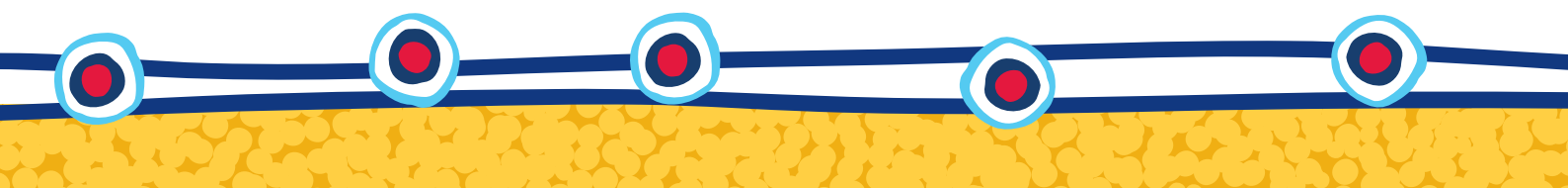
Enduring commitments:

- Cultural awareness training for all staff to support implementation of the RAP.
- Local Land Services' buildings and workplaces to display Acknowledgement of Country plaques and local First Nations peoples' works of art.
- Maintain the RAP information hub to provide up to date information regarding the RAP, and related information surrounding protocols, procedures, training opportunities, dates of significance and events.
- Support reconciliation related programs and events on significant days in partnership with key stakeholder groups including local reconciliation and First Nations community organisations to promote, acknowledge and celebrate First Nations peoples' cultures and achievements.
- Protocols to support respectful relationships and provisions for all new publications to include an Acknowledgement of Country.



ACTION	DELIVERABLE	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
5. Engage employees in continuous cultural learning opportunities to increase understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements	5.1 Develop, implement and evaluate an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness training strategy which defines cultural learning needs of employees and board members and including ways cultural learning can be provided (online, face to face workshops or cultural immersion)	Aboriginal Programs Coordinator	December 2019
	5.2 Investigate opportunities to work with local Traditional Owners and/or First Nations consultants to develop cultural awareness training	Aboriginal Programs Coordinator	November 2019
	5.3 Provide opportunities for RAP Steering Committee, RAP Champions, human resources managers and other key leadership staff to participate in cultural training	Director, Major Programs	November 2019
6. Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to engage with their cultures and communities by celebrating NAIDOC Week	6.1 Provide opportunities for our staff to participate in NAIDOC Week to recognise and celebrate the achievements of local First Nations peoples and communities	Chief Executive Officer	July 2018 July 2019
	6.2 Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to participate with their cultures and communities during NAIDOC Week	Chief Executive Officer	July 2018 July 2019

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
7. Engage employees in understanding the significance of First Nations cultural protocols to ensure there is shared meaning and to ensure respectful practices	7.1 Review communication guidelines and practices to ensure that culturally appropriate and approved language, terminology and imagery are incorporated in all publications and communications	Director Corporate Operations	December 2018
	7.2 Create and display prominently an Acknowledgement of Country plaque at all Local Land Services' offices	Chief Executive Officer	December 2018
	7.3 Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country utilising a list of key contacts	Director Corporate Operations	March 2019
	7.4 Invite a Traditional Owner to provide a Welcome to Country at the first Local Land Services Board meeting each year and other significant events	Chief Executive Officer	December 2018 February 2019 December 2019 February 2020
	7.5 Include an Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of all important internal and external meetings	Chief Executive Officer	August 2018
	7.6 Encourage staff to include an Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of meetings	Chief Executive Officer	August 2018
	7.7 Review key contacts within Community Engagement and Participation Plans on an annual basis to maintain currency.	Chief Executive Officer	August 2018
8. Incorporate First Nations peoples artwork/s into our workplaces and corporate branding	8.1 Review current corporate and regional branding of Local Land Services programs and services to identify opportunities to incorporate suitable graphics and designs by First Nations artists and appropriately acknowledge artists and stories	Director Corporate Operations	November 2018
	8.2 Regions to display cultural works of art that are significant to the local First Nations peoples	General Managers	December 2018



CREATING OPPORTUNITIES

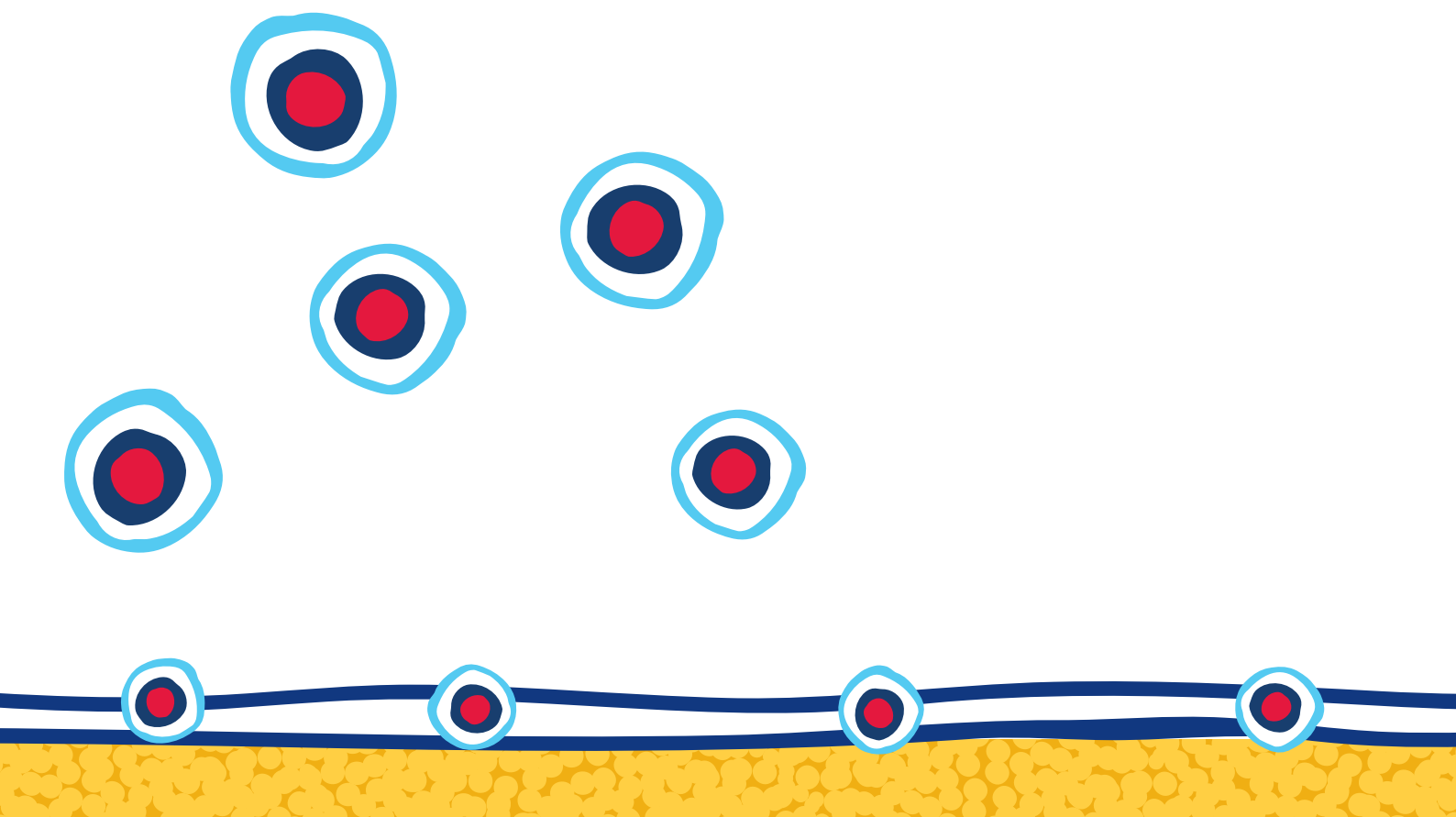
Local Land Services is committed to providing an equitable work environment that reflects and celebrates diversity and inclusion.

By providing internal and external employment and procurement opportunities, Local Land Services can support First Nations peoples and businesses to encourage, local, regional and remote opportunities across New South Wales.

This objective aims to develop Local Land Services' cultural capacity to respectfully engage with First Nations governance structures and ways of working. We aim to support First Nations communities in pursuing their aspirations in agri-business and natural resource management and beyond.

Enduring commitments:

- Local Land Services regional staff work closely with local Traditional Custodians of the land, other First Nations Peoples and community organisations to support and deliver programs and events aimed at promoting reconciliation in each region.
- A more culturally competent workforce and initiatives to support increased retention and participation of First Nations staff at all levels within our organisation.
- Local Land Services provides opportunities for engaging local First Nations peoples and businesses.



ACTION	DELIVERABLE	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
9. Investigate opportunities to improve and increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment outcomes within our workplace	9.1 In consultation with the Department of Industry, ensure the cluster-wide Aboriginal Employment and Inclusion Plan considers and addresses Local Land Services perspectives on First Nations staff participation and retention, professional development, employment pathways, leadership, mentoring and recruitment procedures.	Director Corporate Operations	December 2019
	9.2 Promote and support First Nations staff to attend and participate in the Department of Industry Aboriginal Support Network	Chief Executive Officer	Quarterly 2018, 2019, 2020
	9.3 Support and encourage First Nations staff, supervisors and managers to join the Department of Industry mentoring program	Director Corporate Operations	December 2018
	9.4 Collect information on our current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce and undertake quarterly analysis of relevant human resource metrics and exit interview data to maintain effective rates of recruitment and retention of First Nations staff	Director Corporate Operations	May, September & December 2018 February, May, September & December 2019 February & May 2020
	9.5 Engage with existing First Nations staff to investigate options to develop and implement employment pathways including traineeships and cadetships across our key program areas	Director, Corporate Operations	July 2018 July 2019
	9.6 Advertise all vacant Identified positions in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media	Director, Corporate Operations	March 2019
	9.7 Investigate opportunities to adopt changes to the Local Land Services regulations to ensure that First Nations peoples are adequately represented on the Local Land Service boards	Director Strategy Performance and Governance	March 2020
	9.8 Review human resources and recruitment procedures to ensure there are no barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and future applicants participating in our workplace	Director, Corporate Operations	March 2020
10. Investigate opportunities to incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity within our organisation	10.1 Work with Department of Industry Procurement team to investigate and address barriers to greater use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses	Chief Financial Officer	March 2019
	10.2 Investigate opportunities to partner with Supply Nation to ensure suitable First Nations businesses are engaged in procurement across all regions.	Aboriginal Programs Coordinator	March 2019
	10.3 Develop and communicate to staff a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses that can be used to procure goods and services.	Chief Financial Officer	December 2018
	10.4 Develop at least one commercial relationship with an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander owned business.	Chief Financial Officer	July 2019

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
11. Promote traditional land management knowledge and First Nations peoples' cultural heritage conservation	11.1 Identify opportunities for First Nations peoples and other land managers to promote, showcase and share traditional and contemporary land management knowledge and practices	Chief Executive Officer	December 2018 December 2019
	11.2 Investigate opportunities to increase collaboration with First Nations peoples in the management of Travelling Stock Reserves	Chief Executive Officer	June 2019
	11.3 Work collaboratively with the Office of Environment and Heritage to develop an interdepartmental directory for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs	Aboriginal Programs Coordinator	December 2018 December 2019
	11.4 Identify opportunities to showcase examples of where cultural heritage management and productive, healthy landscapes co-exist	Chief Executive Officer	October 2019
12. Increase First Nations peoples' engagement in sustainable agribusinesses in NSW	12.1 Provide advice and access to programs on sustainable agribusiness practices to First Nations peoples	Chief Executive Officer	June 2019
	12.2 Investigate opportunities to collaborate with New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council, Indigenous Land Corporation, Native Title Service Corporation and NSW Land and Property Information to identify, support and engage First Nations peoples' who own and manage land	Aboriginal Programs Coordinator	March 2019
13. Promote Care for Country - conservation, land management, rehabilitation and biosecurity	13.1 Provide advice and access to programs on sustainable land management practices to First Nations peoples	Chief Executive Officer	December 2018
	13.2 In partnership with local First Nations peoples, identify opportunities to promote the use of traditional land management approaches in the recovery and rehabilitation of degraded lands in NSW	Chief Executive Officer	June 2019
	13.3 Support the existing Memorandum of Understanding with Landcare NSW by working collaboratively to identify opportunities to improve and increase engagement with First Nations communities	Aboriginal Programs Coordinator	June 2019
	13.4 In partnership with Local Land Services regions, review all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs being delivered to identify opportunities to promote best practice and uptake of high achieving programs	Aboriginal Programs Coordinator	July 2018 July 2019





GOVERNANCE, TRACKING PROGRESS AND REPORTING

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
14. Report RAP achievements, challenges and learnings internally and externally	14.1 Ensure all staff and board members receive an annual summary of the RAP outcomes	Chief Executive Officer	September 2018 September 2019
	14.2 Publish RAP achievements, challenges and learnings in our annual report each year.	Director Corporate Operations	September 2018 September 2019
	14.3 Conduct at least one learning circle to support RAP Impact reporting processes	Chief Executive Officer	December 2018 December 2019
15. Report RAP achievements, challenges and learnings to Reconciliation Australia	15.1 Develop and implement a monitoring, evaluation and reporting process for the RAP	Aboriginal Programs Coordinator	June 2018
	15.2 RAP Steering Committee to collect data for the RAP Impact Measurement questionnaire	Director, Major Programs	July 2018 July 2019
	15.3 Complete and submit the RAP Impact Measurement questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia annually	Director, Major Programs	September 2018 September 2019 September 2020
	15.4 Investigate participating in the RAP barometer	Aboriginal Programs Coordinator	May 2018 May 2020
16. Review, refresh and update RAP	16.1 Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new RAP based on learnings, challenges and achievements	Aboriginal Programs Coordinator	November 2019
	16.2 Send draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for review and feedback	Aboriginal Programs Coordinator	December 2019
	16.3 Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal endorsement	Aboriginal Programs Coordinator	April 2020



GLOSSARY

Acknowledgement of Country: This is an opportunity for anyone to show respect for Traditional Custodians and the continuing connection of First Nations peoples to Country. It can be given by both non-Indigenous people and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Agribusiness: The business of agriculture.

Agriculture: The science or practice of farming, including cultivation of the soil for the growing of crops and the rearing of animals to provide food, fiber and other products.

Agricultural productivity advice: The provision of independent and unbiased advice to primary producers that is underpinned by current science and emerging research and development.

Biosecurity: Means the protection of the economy, environment and community from the negative impacts of pests, diseases and weeds.

Closing the Gap: An Australian government strategy that aims to reduce disadvantage among First Nations peoples with respect to life expectancy, child mortality, access to early childhood education, educational achievement and employment outcomes. It is a formal commitment made by all Australian governments to achieve First Nations peoples' health equality within 25 years.

Collaboration: Working together to develop an understanding of all issues and interests to work out alternatives and identify preferred solutions for joint decision making.

Country: A term used by First Nations peoples to refer to the land to which they have a traditional attachment to.

Cultural heritage: Cultural heritage consists of places and items that are of significance to First Nations peoples because of their traditions, observances, lore, customs, beliefs and histories. It provides evidence of the lives and existence of First Nations peoples before European settlement through to the present. Cultural heritage is dynamic and may comprise physical (tangible) or non-physical (intangible) elements.

Cultural and intellectual property rights: First Nations peoples' intellectual property rights extend to include a wide range of subject matter, beyond what is recognised within existing intellectual property rights. Usually the particular objects, sites and knowledge pertain to a particular Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander group or territory.

Heritage includes: literary performing and artistic works – songs, music, dance, stories, ceremonies, symbols, language and designs, all items of movable cultural property.

Cultural immersion: Being amongst people of another culture, gaining knowledge of their local culture and language and a deeper understanding of the differences.

Customer service: Local Land Services exists to create value for its stakeholders and customers. A key component of our strategy is an increased focus on customer services and preparedness to measure performance and customer satisfaction.

Emergency management: Management related to preparedness, response and recovery for actual or imminent animal and plant pest and disease emergencies, natural disasters and other emergencies impacting on primary production or animal health and safety.

First Nations peoples: The preferred terminology by community when referring to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Investor: Organisations and individuals that invest in Local Land Services and leverage outcomes from this investment.

Landscape: Represents the overlay of the variety and arrangement of physical landforms (rivers, escarpment, rocky reefs), communities of people (Aboriginal, rural), and land uses (urban, conservation, agricultural). Landscapes provide cultural, social, economic and environmental values and services and encompass both terrestrial landscapes and marine seascapes.


Memorandum of Understanding: a non-binding agreement between two or more parties outlining the terms and details of an understanding, including each parties' requirements and responsibilities.

NAIDOC: National Aboriginal and Islanders Observance Committee are week long celebrations held across Australia each July to celebrate the histories and cultures and achievements of First Nations peoples.

National Reconciliation Week: Is celebrated across Australia each year between 27 May and 3 June. The dates commemorate two significant milestones in the reconciliation journey – the anniversaries of the successful 1967 referendum and the High Court Mabo decision.

Natural resource management: Management of our natural resources which include soils, biodiversity, rivers, estuaries, wetlands and coastal and marine environments to improve environmental, social and economic outcomes for present and future generations.

Reconciliation: Reconciliation Australia identifies national reconciliation as being based on five critical dimensions; race relations, equality and equity, institutional integrity, unity and historical acceptance.



Reconciliation Australia: An independent, not-for-profit organisation whose vision is for a just, equitable and reconciled Australia.

Stakeholder: Organisations that collaborate and partner with Local Land Services directly to support customer service delivery.

Traditional Custodians: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are recognised as First Nations peoples and Traditional Custodians of the land.

TSR – Travelling stock reserve: The TSR network was established more than 150 years ago to allow the movement of livestock to and from markets. Many of these routes are believed to have followed pathways used traditionally by Aboriginal people to travel across country and many are adjacent to or follow tracks and rivers. While TSR's are still important for travelling and grazing stock they are also widely recognised for playing a key role in landscape connectivity and biodiversity conservation across NSW.

Welcome to Country: Protocols for welcoming visitors to Country have been a part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures for thousands of years. Despite the absence of fences or visible borders, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups had clear boundaries separating their Country from that of other groups. Crossing into another group's Country required a request for permission to enter. When permission was granted the hosting group would welcome the visitors, offering them safe passage and protection of their spiritual being during the journey. While visitors were provided with a safe passage, they also had to respect the protocols and rules of the land owner group while on their Country.

Today, obviously much has changed, and these protocols have been adapted to contemporary circumstances. However, the essential elements of welcoming visitors and offering safe passage remain in place. A Welcome to Country occurs at the beginning of a formal event and can take many forms including singing, dancing, smoking ceremonies or a speech in traditional language or English. A Welcome to Country is delivered by Traditional Owners, or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who have been given permission from Traditional Owners, to welcome visitors to their Country. *(Taken from Reconciliation Australia's website).*



