



CLCAC
CARPENTARIA LAND COUNCIL
ABORIGINAL CORPORATION



Edition 35: April - June 2020





CLCAC is a non for profit Aboriginal Corporation incorporated under the CATSI Act 2006 (Cth) and primarily funded by State and Commonwealth departments and agencies. We wish to acknowledge and thank the following department/agencies for their continued support:



Contents

CEO's Update	2
Native Title & PBC Update	3
Native Title Compensation	4 - 5
Wetland not Wastelands	6 - 7
WILSSED Rangers Update	8 - 9
Gangalidda & Garawa Rangers Update	10 - 11
Normanton Rangers Update	12 - 13
Staff Update	14
COVID-19 Information	15
CLCAC Members - Change of Address	16 - 17

Directory

- Chief Executive Officer (CEO) – Rachel Amini-Yanner
- Deputy CEO/Corporate Services Manager – Trish Steineck
- Principal Legal Officer (PLO) – Kevin Murphy
- Chairperson – Thomas Wilson (Lardil)
- Director – Marlene Logan (Gkuthaarn)
- Director – Gerald Loogatha (Kaiadilt)
- Director – Donald Bob (Garawa)
- Director – Joseph Rainbow (Kurtijar)
- Director – Phillip George (Kukatj)
- Director – Murrandoo Yanner (Gangalidda)
- Director – Henry Aplin (Waanyi)
- Director – Lawrence Burke (Yangkaal)
- Contact Person – Simone Arnol



CEO's Update

Welcome to Edition 35 of our Newsletter for 2020.

Unfortunately, the global pandemic caused by COVID-19 (coronavirus) still continues. We are very fortunate that our Region and communities are currently free of the virus and we again urge our members, Native Title Holders and Claimants to stay safe and follow the directives and guidelines handed down by the State Government and the Chief Health Officer. We are very proud of our Rangers as they have worked around the COVID-19 restrictions and have participated in training via teleconference and video preparations. Also carrying out fieldwork and where required video linking the required specialised support.

In this period we celebrated two anniversaries:

On 27 April, we celebrated the 36th Anniversary of the incorporation of CLCAC. The Corporation was first established in 1982, as a community based organisation to represent, protect and secure the rights and interest of Aboriginal people in the Gulf of Carpentaria.

We at CLCAC, would like to acknowledge our first Board of Directors; Charlie Dick, Major Walden, Norris King, Tommy George, Willie

Doomadgee and Phillip Yanner. We also pay tribute to those that championed in the struggle leading to the establishment and incorporation of CLCAC. CLCAC would also like to recognise all subsequent Board of Directors and their contributions to the indigenous communities in the Gulf.

On 23 June, we celebrated the 10th year Anniversary of the first Gangalidda and Garawa Determination, which saw the Gangalidda People being the recognised Native Title Holders of 5,819 sq km of their traditional country. The Federal Court of Australia sitting in Burketown declared two consent determinations recognising the Gangalidda and Garawa Peoples' native title rights and interests over parts of their two claims - Gangalidda and Garawa Peoples (QC 04/5) and Gangalidda and Garawa (QC 05/3). We acknowledge and thank the Traditional Owners past and present, who provided CLCAC with their knowledge enabling the Claim to be a success.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition of our Newsletter and don't forget to check us out on Facebook and Instagram.

Native Title & PBC Update

CLCAC continues to work with Native Title Claim groups in the Gulf to progress Native Title claims by providing legal advice, project support and administrative assistance.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic restrictions in place, face to face Native Title Holders, Claimants and PBC group meetings cannot be held, however the Legal representatives for the Groups are ensuring that their rights and interests are protected during this time. Meetings held in this period:

GRAC Director's teleconferences: 5 June 2020.

GGNTAC Director's teleconference: 15 May 2020.

GRAC PBC LOGO

The long-awaited anticipated GRAC logo has now been digitised from Tommy Wilson's fabulous artwork and is ready to present to the Board. Check out the logo!





Native Title Compensation

Part 2 - Timber Creek Case.

This is the second of three articles published by Carpentaria Land Council Aboriginal Corporation dealing with Native Title Compensation.

In the first article it was noted that Native Title comprises the traditional rights and interests in land and waters that Indigenous Australians have passed down through generations and which are now recognised by the legal system as being part of Australian law (the Native Title Act 1993 (Cth) ("the NTA"), being the main legislation).

Native title compensation refers to the compensation or damages that would be awarded by the Federal Court for any loss, damage or interference associated with those rights and interests. The compensation is awarded to the native title group. Native title compensation is a new area of the law. The Timber Creek Case is the only legal case where the High Court of Australia has determined a native title compensation application.

As was noted in the first article of this series, there were several key outcomes from the Timber Creek Case:

- the Court determined what could be compensated and determined some principles for the calculation of that compensation;
- the matter took years to get to the High Court; and
- the amount of compensation awarded was less than the legal costs of the native title holders and would have been about a quarter of the total legal costs of all parties.

Generally, to make out a case for native title compensation, an applicant must show that native title exists or existed at the time it was lost (extinguished).

There are possibly thousands of compensation claims that may be lodged with the Federal Court over the coming years.

To date there have been nearly five hundred determinations across Australia that native title exists. There are approximately a further nineteen hundred native title applications yet to be determined. There are about forty-five compensation matters lodged.

The Australian Government and the governments of the States and Territories are aware of this situation. The States and Territories are the parties that will be the parties paying any compensation awarded by the Courts and, if existing arrangements continue to operate, the Australian government will be the party funding the native title Applicants to run these matters through the Courts.

CLCAC, along with all the other Indigenous Land Councils across Australia, are equally aware of the issue - a lot of time and money can be expended in litigating these matters for relatively little gain to the applicants (or the community). Whilst future claims may not be as costly as the Timber Creek Case, the costs of litigation will usually outweigh the size of any compensation awards.

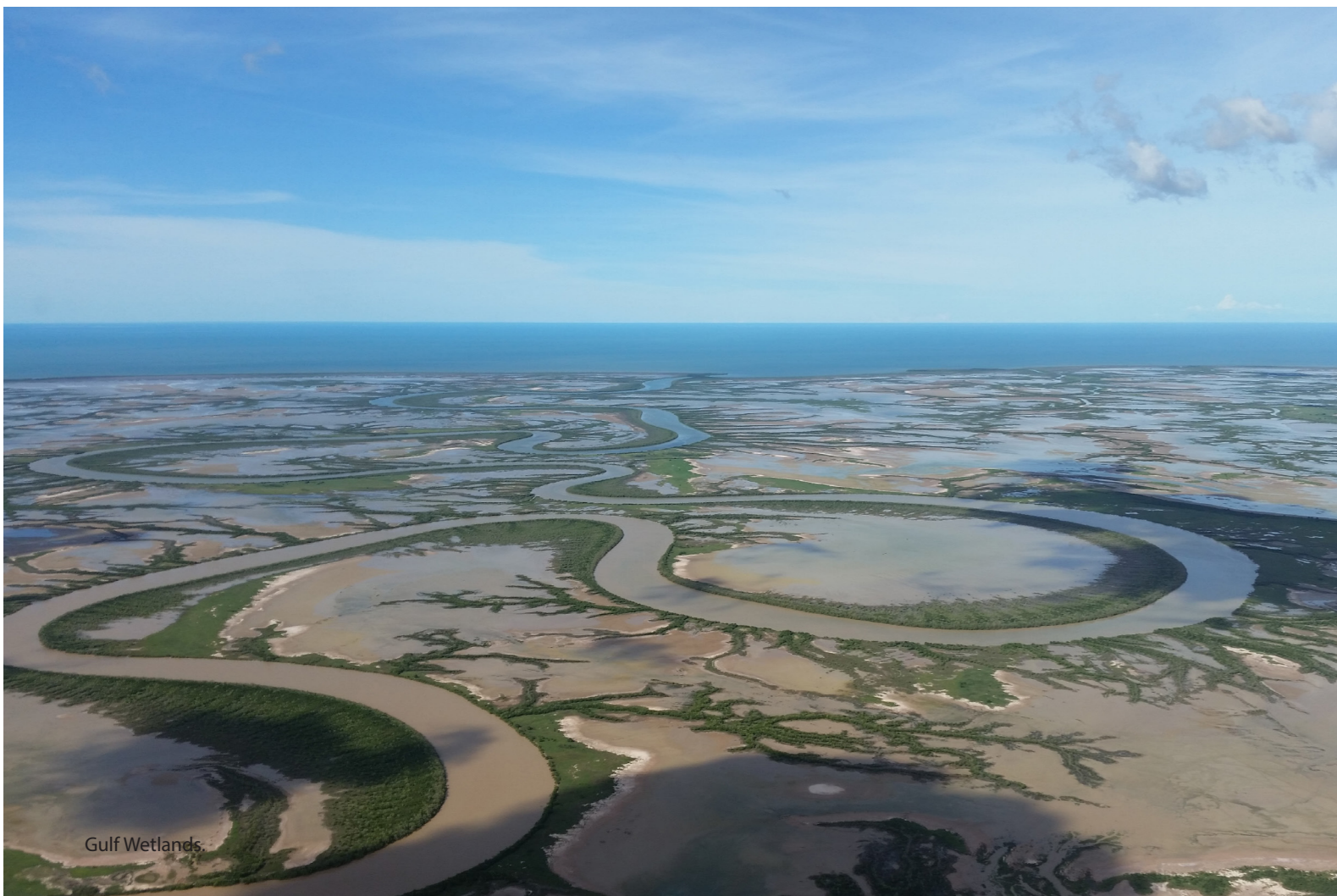
An obvious strategy for resolution of such a scenario is for the parties to settle compensation matters and not litigate them.

However, both native title holders and governments are hesitant to settle when there is such little existing direction from the Courts with only one case being considered by the High Court and no decisions since, in any Court.

There are presently a number of compensation claims that are in the Federal Court. CLCAC and other Land Councils across Australia, along with the various governments, are looking to some of these matters to progress quickly to determination in order to provide more direction for parties who wish to settle compensation cases rather than litigate them.

Settling compensation cases by agreement has the added advantage to the parties of being able to include a wide range of outcomes in addition to a payment of money.

The next article in this series will consider some of these other compensation outcomes.



Gulf Wetlands

Normanton Ranger, Kean Logan and Ranger Coordinator Phillip George conducting Saltmarsh assessment.

Wetlands not Wastelands:

\$600k partnership funded by Coca-Cola to tackle marine pollution in the Lower Gulf

CLCAC is proud to announce a new partnership with Earthwatch Institute and Plastic Collective to deliver a first-of-its-kind marine pollution and wetland management program in the Lower Gulf of Carpentaria through the generous support of Coca-Cola Australia Foundation's Environmental Flagship Partners Grant.

Together with Earthwatch and recycling experts Plastic Collective, the Gangalidda & Garawa and Normanton Rangers will deliver the 'Wetlands not Wastelands' program over the next three years.

Malcolm Hudson, Chair of the Coca-Cola Australia Foundation said the program was a stand-out in the Foundation's competitive grant process to address the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 14 'Life Below Water'.

"Driven by science and delivered by the local community, this program will trial a sustainable, community-based solution to

managing and recycling marine pollution in remote regions. Once this model is proven, it could potentially be replicated in many other remote locations in Australia and around the world."

Pollution is a key threat to the vast wetland system of the Lower Gulf of Carpentaria, which has little recycling infrastructure and is a hotspot for seasonal tourism. The area is also home to thousands of unique species including dugongs, sea turtles, migratory shorebirds and important mangrove and salt marsh wetlands that play a significant role in sequestering carbon.

Cassandra Nichols, CEO of Earthwatch Institute Australia, said the community-led program will help reduce marine pollution risks, as well as recover and upcycle plastic waste into valuable products, creating an economic opportunity for the community.

"Thanks to this generous grant from the Coca-Cola Australia Foundation, Wetlands not Wastelands will come to life and allow us to work directly with the CLCAC Land & Environment Rangers to develop a marine pollution management plan and a report card for future action to conserve this region's precious habitat.

"We will also be able to introduce two Plastic Collective 'Shruders', or plastic recycling machines, into the communities of Burketown and Normanton. The Rangers will be trained in how to use the Shruders as well as how to turn plastic waste into valuable construction materials, creating a social enterprise that further supports the local community."

The program will span hundreds of kilometres of the expansive Gulf region, from the NT border in the west to the Staaten River on Cape York in the east, with a particular focus on the Albert, Leichhardt, and Norman River systems.

Murradoo Yanner, CLCAC Director and Traditional Owner, said the project presents an exciting opportunity for the local community.

"From time immemorial, the Indigenous People of the Lower Gulf of Carpentaria have managed and cared for the pristine environment of the land, sea, waterways and wetlands in our region. Thanks to this exciting new partnership with Earthwatch and Plastic Collective and the generous support from Coca-Cola, we can continue to do so in an even more efficient way."

You can check out the video on the following links:

<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6674481453004414976>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v1v3NpoPCpg&feature=youtu>



Ranger Justin Chong foliage spraying Belly Ache Bush.



Head Ranger Shaqille Amini mixing the appropriate amount of chemical into the spray.

Wellesley Islands Rangers Update

WEED MANAGEMENT

The Wellesley Islands Rangers have been carrying out their Weed Management Plan, which includes chemical treatment of weeds on Mornington Island. Recently, Rangers have put in a big effort towards eradicating Bellyache Bush at Lamatha.

There is a limited window to carry out this on-ground management, as foliar spraying must occur during the weed's active growing season (January to May), and the weather must be suitable for spraying to be undertaken (no high winds and no rain).

Bellyache Bush is a high priority weed that has big impacts on the local environment, often out-competing native vegetation, especially perennial grasses. The plant is toxic if ingested, including to humans and cattle. For these reasons, it is considered a problematic weed especially around towns, waterways and in pastures.

This is an ongoing project, and results are starting to become apparent. Alongside the treatment of weeds, Rangers also conduct monitoring to gauge the effectiveness of their work. The monitoring sites are revisited and measured every year at the same time.

The most recent monitoring shows that Ranger efforts have significantly reduced the Belly Ache Bush infestation, allowing native trees and grasses to come back to these areas.

Image below: The area where Belly Ache Bush has been eradicated through the Ranger's on-ground management.



BIOSECURITY

Through fee-for-service work with the Northern Australia Quarantine Strategy (NAQS), the Wellesley Islands Rangers have been upskilling in identifying and responding to potential biosecurity risks. Exotic pests, weeds and diseases can have huge negative impacts on the local community, and native environment, especially on islands.

It is much better to catch invasive species early, before they make it into new areas and establish permanently. This is why the Rangers conduct a variety of activities including coastal surveillance, animal health surveys and aquatic structure inspections; these programs are designed to pick up potential pests early.

However, it's impossible for the team to monitor every part of the islands all the time. Community awareness and regular discussions with the local community have increased the number of people helping to keep an eye out for potential risks.

In May, Traditional Owners reported a bamboo raft that they had spotted floating nearby. It had washed up on the south side of Mornington Island at Dimereah, and there was concern about what foreign pests could be hiding in the vessel. The Wellesley Islands Rangers located, inspected and reported the structure to NAQS.

The Rangers then destroyed the foreign vessel, protecting Mornington from potentially harmful invasive species including insects and marine organisms like the Asian Green Mussel (AGM). This work is a crucial part of the Ranger's front-line management to protect Land and Sea Country from invasive species in the Wellesley Islands.



Early Season Burn

Gangalidda and Garawa Rangers Update

WEED MANAGEMENT

For the last 3 months the Gangalidda and Garawa Rangers have been spraying weeds around Burketown including Meatworks, along Wills Development Road and near Woods Lake. The Rangers focused on controlling rubber vine, prickly acacia and coral cactus, spraying over 12,000 plants and trees this quarter. The Rangers collected data documenting the weeds managed along with photos of the work which are then uploaded into the CLCAC Land & Environment Database. The successful number of weeds sprayed shows the hard and determined work the Gangalidda and Garawa Rangers undertake to keep the country clean and pristine.

MIGRATORY SHOREBIRD SURVEYS

The Gangalidda and Garawa Rangers undertook their first independent migratory bird survey at the mouth of the Albert River. The Rangers identified and counted shorebirds whilst also capturing detailed photographs which were used to verify species identifications and counts. The photos and data were then sent to Ornithologist, Roger Jaensch, for feedback and verification.

The Rangers confidently undertook the survey and identified and counted the birds with great accuracy. The positive outcomes of this survey clearly demonstrate the capacity of the Gangalidda

and Garawa Rangers to independently monitor migratory birds on country.

CHEMICAL TRAINING

In May 2020, 6 of our Gangalidda Garawa Rangers completed their Certificate 3 in ACDC Chemical Training (AHCPHMG301 Control Weeds, AHCCHM303 Prepare and apply chemicals, AHCCHM304 Transport and store chemicals and AHCMOM302 Perform machinery maintenance) with INLOC trainer and assessor Paul Boags. Due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, the training was delivered via teleconference and video presentations with on-ground support provided by experienced CLCAC Project Officer Kevin Anderson, WHS Officer/Ranger Lurick Sowden, Head Ranger Murradoo Yanner Jnr and Ranger Coordinator Desmond Armstrong. This training required a considerable amount of pre-planning to ensure effective delivery along with numerous photographs of the Rangers and assessment forms to provide the evidence required for competency and proof of on-ground experience. CLCAC would like to congratulate Rangers Zac Sowden, Mathew Ned, Benjamin Kumsing, Michael Watson, Milmarja Yanner and Maali Yanner in completing this training.

The Rangers are now using their new skills and qualifications when undertaking weed management activities which helps to bring the

environment back to its natural state. Whilst face to face training is in many cases the preferred option for delivery, achieving successful results remotely highlights another training and development option for CLCAC.

FIRE MANAGEMENT

The Gangalidda and Garawa Rangers completed their scheduled early season burning over 17,000 hectares of Gangalidda Traditional Lands. Rangers new to the team worked alongside experienced Rangers to gain valuable fire management knowledge and technical skills for igniting and managing fires on-ground. Experienced Ranger, Lurick Sowden operated the Raindance machine from the helicopter to aerially ignite fires from Moonlight Creek along the coast to the NT border whilst a team of Rangers worked in areas surrounding Burketown to undertake on-ground burning aimed to protect community infrastructure. The professionalism and capacity of the Gangalidda and Garawa Rangers ensured all fires burned exactly to plan. The mentorship and training of new Rangers by their more experienced peers ensures that the success of CLCAC's fire management program continues into the future.

BIODIVERSITY SURVEY

The Gangalidda and Garawa Rangers recently conducted fauna surveys at 2 sites around the outskirts of the Burketown Township. The first site was located near a swamp 500m from the Burketown Cemetery and the second was located at the sandbar at Bottleheap. Survey methods included Pitfall, Elliot, Cage, Funnel traps and active searches. The Rangers checked the traps before dawn each morning and would identify any species captured and then release the animals where captured. Daytime active searches involved the Rangers driving to various swamps, creeks, waterholes, escarpments and recording incidental observations of all wildlife sighted. Daytime incidental searches are important to the Rangers as these searches target species which may not be captured in traps and allow the Rangers to identify and record wildlife seen on country. The Rangers recorded a total of 36 vertebrate species which included 6 reptiles, 24 birds, 1 amphibian and 5 mammals. A stripe-faced dunnart was captured in a pitfall trap near a swamp 500m from the Burketown Cemetery, which was the first time the Gangalidda and Garawa Rangers have captured this species.

FERAL PIG TRAPPING

At the start of May, the Gangalidda and Garawa Rangers set up and baited pig traps near swamps on the outskirts of town. The Rangers learnt about different ways to set up the pig traps and how to put a trap together. They baited the traps using cracked corn, molasses and water, letting it ferment for a couple of days which will eventually attract feral pigs. The Rangers also took into consideration that smaller pigs have the ability to easily escape the traps, but this problem was resolved by tying tin sheets on the inside of the traps making it impossible for even the smaller pigs to escape. The Rangers set the traps up at swamps near the cemetery, off the saltpans, and Meatworks. After the first couple of weeks, there were no signs of pigs, so the Rangers moved the traps to 2 other locations, Woods Lake and Yarrum. A couple of days went past and the Rangers successfully captured a pig.

CROCODILE TRAPPING

Between late April and early May, CLCAC was informed by members of the Burketown community who observed a large saltwater crocodile at the wharf near the pontoon. Locals were concerned as many people go to the pontoon to fish and enjoy the site. The Gangalidda and Garawa Rangers set and baited a crocodile trap and placed it in the water near the location where the crocodile was spotted. Fish and pig legs were used to bait the trap. Unfortunately, the trap was unsuccessful in capturing the crocodile, however, no further crocodile sightings have been reported at the wharf.

BIOSECURITY

Over the past 3 months, the Gangalidda and Garawa Rangers have conducted numerous free of service biosecurity activities. The Rangers undertook plant host mapping which involves recording all the exotic plants and trees in and around the Burketown Township to determine if they have any signs of disease, infections or invasive insects. The Rangers also retrieved the marine settlement array from the Albert River which is used to survey for the presence of exotic marine species such as the Asian green mussel. Coastal surveillance/marine debris surveys were also undertaken along the coast (Gunnamulla) to collect debris that washes up on the beach and driftwood which may carry invasive invertebrate species.





Shorebird survey.



Wetlands Exclusion Fencing maintenance.

Normanton Rangers Update

FLINDERS-BYNOE ESTUARY SHOREBIRD SURVEYS

For 2 years the Normanton Rangers have planned and successfully carried out migratory shorebird surveys along the Flinders River coast as part of a Griffith University - CLCAC project examining the importance of Gulf rivers for shorebird food. The project builds on nearly a decade of shorebird surveys the team has conducted along the Lower Gulf of Carpentaria coastline. Last year however, just weeks before the Rangers scheduled their April 2019 surveys Cyclone Trevor tore through the Gulf with heavy winds and rain, and prior to the cyclone, heavy flooding transformed the Flinders catchment into a raging torrent with devastating impacts for the pastoral industry and perhaps native fauna as well.

When the Rangers arrived by helicopter to the shorebird roosts in April 2019, only a small number of birds remained, but the team repeated the surveys in September 2019 and April 2020 and documented a strong recovery from the flooding and cyclones, demonstrating the shorebirds' resilience to these extreme natural events. The surveys undertaken by the Rangers provide a critical baseline for disentangling and better understanding the natural threats to migratory shorebirds in the Lower Gulf compared to anthropogenic threats that could be introduced if the river systems are altered. The Rangers will continue the monitoring work to ensure that the Gulf rivers are clean, productive, and continue to support our native species for generations to come.

MARINE DEBRIS AND LITTER REMOVAL

Along with surveys designed to better understand the health of Country and threats to Country, the Normanton Rangers also take a proactive approach protecting the region by removing marine debris and litter, and by regularly monitoring the rivers and coast for biosecurity threats. After the wet season ended and Rangers could access the rivers and coast, the team patrolled the Bynoe, Flinders, and Norman River to remove cans and bottles before the litter enters the waterways, and the Rangers patrolled the Delta Downs coast where commercial fishing vessel waste had washed up during the monsoonal rains. The team removed the waste and will continue to monitor the rivers and coast for marine debris and exotic pests.

WETLANDS EXCLUSION FENCING MAINTENANCE

Three freshwater wetlands on Delta Downs Station, Dicks Lagoon, Lotus (Horseshoe) Lagoon, and Leichhardt Lagoon, were fenced off nearly 10 years ago by the Normanton Ranger team to protect the clean waters and fragile banks from feral pigs and cattle pugging. Maintenance of the fences is an on-going activity, particularly after the wet season when erosion and floating debris can cause damage. In April and May the Rangers spent time repairing the fences to protect the sensitive habitat and biodiversity of the wetlands.

Fauna surveys in Lotus (Horseshoe) Lagoon have shown that the small wetland supports over 70 species of native animals, and before/after photos taken pre and post-fencing show good outcomes in rehabilitating native vegetation in the wetlands.

WEED CONTROL

Between April and June this year, the Normanton team has primarily targeted 3 weed species: Bellyache Bush, Rubber Vine and Prickly Acacia. Rangers hand pulled Bellyache bush from the Old Reserve just outside Normanton while the ground was still soft from the wet season and before the plants went to seed. The Rangers also used the team's splatter gun to chemically treat Rubber Vine on Delta Downs and near Karumba. If left unchecked, the Rubber Vine near Karumba would continue to spread and in a few years time, it's likely that the open flats would become undriveable. It is unlikely that the weeds can be entirely eradicated, but the Rangers are strategically targeting areas to prevent further spread, and in the coming months, the Rangers will work alongside the stations to reduce the vast Prickly Acacia infestations found in the region.

FIRST SEA TURTLE NEST RECORDED FOR THE SEASON

On 2 May, while removing marine debris and conducting surveillance for aquatic pests, the team recorded the first local sea turtle nest for the season on the Delta Downs coast. The Rangers used their training in sea turtle track identification to identify the nest as a flatback clutch. In August and September, the peak of the sea turtle nesting season will arrive and the Rangers will post signs at access points to the beaches to remind drivers to avoid disturbing nesting areas.



L-R: Murrandoo Yanner Jnr and Desmond Armstrong

Staff Updates

Congratulations to Desmond Armstrong and Murrandoo Yanner Jnr!

Following on from our previous newsletter congratulating Desmond Armstrong on his promotion as Acting Ranger Coordinator, along with Murrandoo Yanner Jnr as Acting Head Ranger for the Gangalidda Garawa Rangers.

Further congratulations are now due to them both on their promotion now becoming permanent in these roles. Over the last 3 months Desmond and Murrandoo Jnr have embraced these positions and successfully met the criteria required.

With an excellent Ranger crew on the ground we predict more big things ahead for the Gangalidda and Garawa Rangers.

We are all extremely proud!

CLCAC welcomes the following staff members to our team:

New employees:


- Jimmy Kum-Sing - Gangalidda and Garawa Ranger for Burketown; and
- Manuela Russo - Data Development Project Officer, based in the Cairns Office.

Welcome to the CLCAC Team!


HEALTH WARNING CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

INFORMATION FOR TRAVELLERS


Developed a fever or cough?




FEVER



COUGH




SORE THROAT



SHORTNESS OF BREATH

[KNOW THE SIGNS]



Australian Government
Department of Health

www.health.gov.au



STAY CONNECTED

CHANGE OF ADDRESS FORM

Personal Details	
Name:	_____
Address: (residential)	_____
Address: (postal)	_____
Home Tel:	_____
Mobile:	_____
Email:	_____

CLCAC Members Update

Has your address changed?

It is important that CLCAC is able to keep in contact with our Members and Traditional Owners of the Southern Gulf of Carpentaria region so we can keep you informed about what is happening in and around your community and notify you of important meetings for you:

- Native Title Claim;
- PBC Consultation; and
- CLCAC Members meetings.

If you have changed your postal address or contact numbers please complete the attached form and forward to the CLCAC's Contact Person, Simone Arnol, in writing to: PO Box 6662, Cairns Qld 4870.

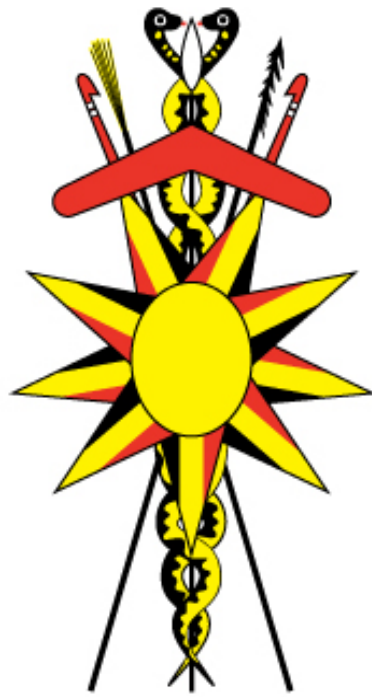
Or, if you have email you can request this form to be forward to you by emailing Simone on sarnol@clcac.com.au

I prefer to receive notices via (please tick selection)

Post

Email

Signed:



CLCAC

Cairns Office

A Suite 2, Level 1, 104 Mulgrave Road, Cairns QLD 4870
P (07) 4041 3833 F (07) 4041 3533
E info@clcac.com.au
W www.clcac.com.au

Burketown Office

A 24 Musgrave Street, Burketown QLD 4830
P (07) 4745 5132 F (07) 4745 5204

Normanton Office

A 11 Wurrup Street, Normanton QLD 4890
P (07) 4745 1556 F (07) 4745 1569

Follow us:



<https://www.facebook.com/CLCAC/>



[arparentarialandcouncil](https://www.instagram.com/arparentarialandcouncil)

