

KIMBERLEY LAND COUNCIL NEWSLETTER



JULY 2022



MABU NGIMBI,

The next big step in Australia's journey towards reconciliation is making sure First Nations voices are heard.



This year, the KLC has been focused on supporting the national campaign for an Indigenous Voice to Parliament, which would take Australia on the next path to reconciliation.

Labor's commitment to a referendum on a Voice to Parliament was supported at the election, and is an important step forward.

An Indigenous Voice to Parliament means lawmakers would have a moral responsibility to listen to Aboriginal people – and to consider our views before making decision that affect us. Nothing about us could be without us.

We hope the referendum next year will be a moment Australian's remember with pride.

As we focus on campaigning for a voice to Parliament, coming back home to the Kimberley, I am proud to say following the recent outcome of the Special General Meeting held across the Kimberley in May, the KLC looks forward to a more inclusive future where all PBC groups get a say.

With state borders now open, it has been a great opportunity for both myself and KLC CEO Tyrone

Garstone to travel widely around the country to meet with leaders and attend events like the Economic Development Forum at the Australian National University in Canberra. There, we had important discussions about the development of Australian First Nations economies.

In this newsletter we have included a detailed update on the changing laws that impact Native Title and the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act on pages 12 – 17. I encourage all members to read through to stay up to date on law reform as it will have significant impact on Traditional Owners across the Kimberley.

KLC also sent 13 staff members to the National Native Title Conference on Kabi Kabi county in Queensland at the start of June. I am proud of the way KLC staff represent our organisation and members at these national forums. It is a fantastic opportunity to showcase the important work the KLC is doing to other land councils around the country.

As we enjoy the cool season here in the Kimberley, I'd like to acknowledge the hard work of ranger groups who have been out working alongside the Kimberley Fire Program officers carrying out prescribed burns.

The KLC fire program has seen the extent and severity of late season wild fires decrease and that is due to the incredibly hard work of people on the ground, particularly Kimberley rangers.

Recently the KLC was successful in securing state funding for three ranger groups in the Kimberley. The KLC will continue to advocate for ranger groups and was excited to see the incoming Federal Government stand firm in their commitment to the doubling of ranger funding.

We have continued our strong campaign for the protection of the Martuwarra Fitzroy River. KLC leaders met with the WA Water Minister Dave Kelly at the Broome office last month. The KLC will continue to lobby Government to ensure that protections for the Fitzroy River, alongside development of businesses and new jobs, are long-term and sustainable.

This must start with the Western Australian Government hearing and responding to the voices of Traditional Owners who have called for protection of the river, including protecting, rather than extracting surface water flows, and a better voice on whether ground water should be used, and under what conditions and controls.

This would be an important legacy for Western Australia, our People and the world.

KLC has also been proud to host two free events in Broome, during both Reconciliation and NAIDOC week, where we have screened stories from Traditional Owners and asked the Broome community to stand with us in our fight for the protection of our heritage and the river.

Finally, I would like to thank the elders of the Kimberley for always providing their guidance and wisdom. I acknowledge those people who have sadly passed away and am grateful for their long-lasting contribution. We all stand on the shoulders of our old people and without them, the Kimberley Land Council would not be what it is today.

Anthony Watson
Chairperson, Kimberley Land Council

KLC MEMBERS APPROVE NEW STRUCTURE

The KLC is pleased to announce that members who attended the Special General Meeting held across the Kimberley on May 25 overwhelmingly approved the proposed changes to the KLC Rule Book.

This was our first time holding a meeting on such a scale across multiple locations at Broome, Fitzroy Crossing, Halls Creek and Kununurra, using video conferencing technology.

Three separate resolutions were put to the membership regarding the proposed changes and all three were approved by more than 75% of the votes cast across all four locations.

This is a wonderful outcome for our organisation and will ensure the KLC continues to be representative and a strong voice for our members all across the Kimberley.

The new Rule Book was sent to ORIC for approval and registration. Now that it has been approved, the KLC is undertaking a number of

steps to ensure we can implement the changes and transition successfully to the new KLC structure in the lead up to this year's AGM in August.

We will continue to keep our members and PBCs updated as we undertake this transition process.

Thank you to everyone who came along to ensure the KLC remains representative, effective and inclusive now and into the future.



CELEBRATING NAIDOC GET UP! STAND UP! SHOW UP!

KLC was proud to support the 2022 Kullari Festival NAIDOC this year, and take part in the reconciliation walk in Broome on Yawuru country in July.

Thank you to all the Broome school students who took part - the Kimberley community has a bright future with future leaders willing to get up, stand up and show up.

KLC would like to congratulate this year's NAIDOC feature organisation, Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services (KAMS) for keeping the Kimberley community safe throughout unprecedented challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic.



KLC STAFF TAKE HOME NAIDOC AWARDS

Congratulations to the KLC women who were recognised at the Kullarri NAIDOC Awards Presentation for their significant contributions to the Kimberley community.

Contribution to Indigenous Affairs

KLC Deputy CEO, Sarah Parriman

Elder of the Year

KLC Director & Cultural Advisor, Irene Davey

NAIDOC Excellence

KLC Office Manager, Regina Manado

Outstanding Contribution to Sport

KLC HR officer, Mirrika Councillor

The KLC is proud to be guided by such a strong team of Indigenous women leaders, many of whom have dedicated their careers to working for and with Traditional Owners across the Kimberley.

KLC Deputy CEO Sarah Parriman said it was an honour to be recognised and particularly special to stand alongside her colleagues and elders at the awards.

"I'm inspired by the many people in our community who get up, stand up and show up every day to contribute to change for our people and communities."



KLC Deputy CEO Sarah Parriman and KLC Director & Cultural Advisor Irene Davey



"I go to work in a job that I love every day, and I work for people in my community that I care about. I was very humbled by the recognition and attribute it to the great leaders and elders showing me the way, and the dedication of the colleagues I work alongside."

KLC would also like to congratulate all the other NAIDOC award winners, the focus organisation for this year's celebrations, Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services - KAMS and Goolarri Media Enterprises for a fantastic NAIDOC week.



THE KIMBERLEY CULTURE AND HERITAGE SHOWCASE

The KLC was proud to host its first ever NAIDOC event at Goolarri in July. The Kimberley Culture and Heritage Showcase was an opportunity for the organisation to engage with the Broome community, showcase the achievements of the Kimberley Ranger Network and advocate for the protection of Aboriginal Heritage and the Martuwarra Fitzroy River.

KLC CEO Tyrone Garstone hosted the evening and the night began with a warm welcome to country and smoking ceremony by Aunty Di Appleby.

The night featured powerful performances from local youth dance group Burrb Wanggarraju Nurlu led by Tara Gower and the Yawuru dancers in front of a video installation about Aboriginal heritage projected onto the sheds at Goolarri.

The video, by KLC artist in residence Alana Hunt, focused on the legal and bureaucratic processes structured by non-Indigenous Australia that enables colonisation, specifically looking into the WA Aboriginal Heritage Act under the guidance of KLC's legal team. You can read more about Alana's artwork on page 11.

The night also featured a series of short films on the Kimberley ranger program alongside a selection of films from the Fitzroy River Film Festival, telling the stories of those who live along the Martuwarra Fitzroy River, who are calling for the protection of one of the nationally heritage-listed rivers which is one of the last wild, free-flowing rivers in the world.

We hope the evening inspired people to get up, stand up and show up for Aboriginal heritage and culture here in the Kimberley.



Yawuru Dancers performing at the Kimberley Culture and Heritage Showcase





KLC ARTIST IN RESIDENCE: RURAL UTOPIAS AND SPACED

Rural Utopias with SPACED and the Kimberley Land Council - NAIDOC premiere

At the Kimberley Heritage and Culture Showcase, KLC artist in residence Alana Hunt, a non-Indigenous artist and writer living on Miriwoong Country shared her work publicly for the first time.

Under the guidance of the KLC's legal team Alana has been learning about the legal and bureaucratic processes structured by non-Indigenous Australia that enable colonisation.

Specifically, she has been looking at the WA Aboriginal Heritage Act. When the legislation came into effect in 1972 it became illegal to "destroy, damage or alter an Aboriginal site", but Section 18 of the Act provides legal permission for those who feel the need to "destroy, damage or alter an Aboriginal site" to do just that.

Since 1972, it is estimated over 3300 applications have been approved. Only three applications have ever been declined; what a striking illustration of power. Under the guise of protecting Aboriginal heritage this legislation opens a pathway for its destruction. Alana's video, which was projected onto the shed at Goolarri last night, lists, in chronological, order the project summaries of every Section 18 application that was submitted via the WA Aboriginal Heritage Act between 2010-20. There are 967 in total and the video runs for 2hr41m in duration.

Local youth dance group Burrub Wanggarraju Nurlu led by Tara Gower and Yawuru dancers performed in front of the video projection.

Former CEO of Rio Tinto, Sam Walsh AO narrated the entire video. Through his decades long involvement with Rio Tinto Sam would have been party to any

number of these Section 18 submissions, including the application that ultimately led to the blasting of two rock shelters at Juukan Gorge—an event which brought WA's Aboriginal Heritage Act into the public sphere.

More recently Sam has spoken of the need for major reform for industry and legislation. He expressed serious concern the WA government's recent amendments to the Aboriginal Heritage Act, passed in the week before Sam and Alana recorded this in December 2021, still give government and industry more power than First Nations people.

Juukan Gorge received widespread public outcry. And, that was an important response. But as a society we also missed how common what took place at Juukan Gorge really is. The project summaries in this video, are not only about large mines and big explosions, but also, and perhaps most interestingly, they are about footpaths, housing developments, yacht clubs, churches, and even cultural centres...accumulatively, the list paints quite a telling picture of colonisation. Prompting us to reckon, not simply with "mining", but with the material impact of our daily lives on Aboriginal land. Colonisation is not a past or distant thing but something we are very much entangled with and enabling.

Alana began her artist residency in 2020 with the KLC as part of the Rural Utopias program initiated by SPACED, an arts organisation with a decades long history of supporting socially engaged art in regional WA.

You can find more information about Alana's work at: <https://www.alanahunt.net/>



Tara Gower and local youth dance group Burrub Wanggarraju Nurlu performing in front of the projection.

CHANGING LAWS THAT IMPACT NATIVE TITLE HOLDERS

Law reform is occurring across multiple WA Government departments with significant impacts for Traditional Owners. This is because the WA Labor Government has a majority in both the Lower and Upper Houses of the WA Parliament, which makes it easier to pass amendments to legislation or new legislation. As a result, the KLC, PBCs, native title holders and the broader Aboriginal community are being asked to provide feedback on many different types of legislation as well as various areas of policy design.

Current legislation and policy proposed for change, review or design include:

- The Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021 (ACH Act)
- The Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act 1972 (AAPA Act)
- Land and Public Works Legislation Amendment Bill 2022
- The Water Reform Bill

While the KLC appreciates the opportunity that exists to update outdated legislation, it is important that Traditional Owners have appropriate time and resourcing to adequately consider and provide feedback to proposed change. As outlined in the WA Government's Aboriginal Engagement Strategy, Aboriginal people must have a defined and systematic role in decision-making, proportional to the potential impacts or opportunities for Aboriginal people.

The KLC is calling on the WA Government to recognise that the level and pace of change is becoming

prohibitory for effective engagement, co-design and decision-making, and this must be a serious consideration of the WA Government when pursuing the current reform agenda. It is important that KLC members are aware of the changes that are occurring and that they will have real life impacts for native title holders. The KLC will continue to keep our members up to date and, as always, will advocate for changes that are in the best interest of our community.

OVERVIEW OF CURRENT LAW REFORM

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021

The WA Government is undertaking a process of co-design for the development of the ACH Act regulations, statutory guidelines and operational policies. Phase one has been completed and phase two is underway. The co-design process has included workshops and opportunities for stakeholders to make written submissions. The Department of Planning Lands and Heritage also attended the Kimberley PBC Forum in July 2022. The co-design process is important because the regulations, statutory guidelines and operational policies will help to govern how the ACH Act operates. For more information about the ACH Act please see pages 14 to 17.

Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act 1972

The WA Government is proposing amendments to the Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act aimed at removing barriers to divestment of Aboriginal Lands Trust (ALT) land. The KLC recognises the need for change and the WA Government's efforts at amending an out of date and out of step legislation. However, we also note that there is clear motivation for the State to transfer responsibility for areas of land that do not currently economically benefit the State. The KLC understands that the State intends to divest all ALT lands.

With this in mind, it is essential that any amendments aimed at facilitating the divestment of ALT lands are accompanied by targeted, appropriate and well-resourced measures that allow Aboriginal people to capitalise on and benefit from divestment. Without such measures Aboriginal people will be exposed to unreasonable risk, cost and disadvantage, making divestment an unviable option for the majority of Traditional Owners and Aboriginal people with long-standing connections to ALT lands. The KLC has attended several information sessions about the AAPA Act amendments and has made a submission in response to the first round of consultations.

Land and Public Works Legislation Amendment Bill 2022

The WA Government is working on legislation that will change permitted uses of Crown land with amendments to the Land Administration Act 1997 (LAA). One of the major changes proposed is the introduction of a diversification lease. According to the WA Government, the diversification lease is for broadscale and non-exclusive land use, like a pastoral lease, but will not restrict land use to a particular

activity in the way that a pastoral lease does. Where native title exists or may exist, the diversification lease proponent is required to negotiate an Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) with the relevant native title party(s).

While the KLC believes amendments to the LAA can create a pathway for Aboriginal people to more effectively participate in the broader economy, the experience of dispossession and the current reality of entrenched disadvantage means that support mechanisms must be in place to allow this to happen. It is essential that any changes to the LAA include such support mechanisms so that native title holders are able to make free, prior and informed decisions when considering proposals for diversification and/or new leases that impact their country. If the State is committed to introducing a new land management regime, it should ensure that, economically and operationally, prescribed bodies corporate and native title parties have the capacity to respond and negotiate.

Water Reform Bill

The WA Government is working on a Water Reform Bill which will consolidate six water resource management Acts into one. Some current provisions will be transitioned to the new legislation without change, while others will be amended and new provisions will be created, including the provision for the creation of Aboriginal Water Reserves.

While there is currently not much information available about the Water Reform Bill, the KLC has voiced its concerns about the proposal for Aboriginal Water Reserves, the benefits of which have not been appropriately investigated for native title holders and Traditional Owners.

ABORIGINAL HERITAGE ACT UPDATE

On 22 December 2021, the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Bill 2021 passed both houses of the WA Parliament and became law.

While some parts of the Act have commenced, the rest of the new law will come into effect on a date fixed by proclamation, in approximately 12 months' time. From now until then there will be a transition period when the regulations, statutory guidelines and operational policies for the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021 (WA) (ACH Act 2021) are developed.

The WA Government has committed to a process of co-design for this period. A new Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Reference Group will oversee the co-design and includes Aboriginal representatives Merle Carter and Lindsay Dean, industry representative Bronwyn Bell and government representative Anthony Kannis.

The WA Government has said there will be three phases of public engagement. Phase one has been completed and phase two is underway.

How did the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act become law?

For many years the KLC had called on the WA Government to overhaul the outdated Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972 (WA) (AHA 1972). For 40 years, the Act did not operate in the best interests of Aboriginal people and allowed for the destruction of many heritage sites.

In 2018 the WA Government announced a review of the AHA 1972. As part of this review the Government released a discussion paper, and then held a consultation period. A draft Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act Bill was released in October 2020 and then a revised Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Bill 2021 was released in November 2021 on the same day it was introduced into Parliament.

Throughout this process the KLC, and many others, voiced significant concerns about what was contained within the proposed new law, the way the Government consulted with Aboriginal people and, eventually, the manner in which the WA Government overruled the wishes of Aboriginal people and used its majority to rush the bill through Parliament right before Christmas.

What has the KLC been doing?

The KLC worked with PBCs and native title holders to ensure the views of Kimberley Traditional Owners were heard and represented. We spoke out loudly about the many concerns about the draft Bill, telling the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and the WA Premier that the law would not protect Aboriginal culture and heritage. The KLC held several public demonstrations and generated significant media coverage about the flaws of the proposed legislation. The KLC also held several PBC Forums to discuss the proposed legislation and engaged in the WA Government consultation process, making submissions, writing letters and providing feedback on the failings of the proposed law.

What is the KLC doing now?

The KLC's role is to make sure that PBCs and native title holders are given adequate opportunity to discuss the new ACH Act, raise issues or concerns and shape the outcomes of the co-design process. The KLC has been participating in the WA Government's ACH Act co-design process. So far this has involved attending a workshop in Perth and providing a detailed submission on the first phase of consultation. The KLC's submission can be viewed on the WA Government co-design

website. In July 2022 the KLC held an ACH Act scenario planning session with PBC representatives to discuss the impact of the new law in more detail. The KLC also held a PBC Forum to provide PBCs with further information and to provide a space for Department of Planning Lands and Heritage staff to speak to PBCs about the co-design process.

Ongoing concerns

The KLC continues to have deep concerns about the new ACH Act, as well as the 'co-design' process currently underway. These concerns have been outlined in letters, one-on-one meetings, workshops and written submissions. The concerns include, but are not limited to, no right for Traditional Owners to say "no" to damage or destruction of their cultural heritage, a rebranded Section 18 now called a permit with few safeguards for Traditional Owners than the old s18 process, burdensome agreement making, inappropriate cost-shifting to PBCs and Traditional Owners, limitations to the newly created 'Protected Areas', a loss of rights of review and a lack of free prior and informed consent throughout.

The KLC is also particularly concerned about the consultation process employed during the drafting of the legislation and the current 'co-design' process for the development of the ACH Act's regulations, guidelines and operational policies. Co-design should include equal participation, decision making, understanding and ownership of a final outcome. The KLC is concerned that the process underway is not a true form of co-design and is just another phase of consultation which does not give Traditional Owners a final say.



ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE ACT TIMELINE

1972	ABORIGINAL HERITAGE ACT 1972 (WA) WAS FIRST CREATED.
March 2018	The WA Government announces a review of the Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972.
March 2019	The WA Government releases a discussion paper and consultation process that will result in the drafting of a new Aboriginal Heritage Bill.
May 2019	The KLC, NBY, Walalakoo and KTLA make a joint submission to the WA Government on the review of the AHA 1972.
April 2020	The WA Government consultation process is put on hold due to COVID-19.
May 2020	Juukan Gorge is legally destroyed by Rio Tinto. In 2013 the destruction was approved.
June 2020	Garnkiny in the East Kimberley is damaged by Kimberley Granite
September 2020	The WA Government releases a draft Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Bill 2020 for consultation.
September 2020	The KLC invites all Kimberley PBCs to a forum to discuss the draft Bill.
September 2020	The KLC identifies major issues with the new Bill and releases a joint media statement with the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council condemning draft Bill.
September 2020	PBCs meet in Broome to review the draft Bill at a KLC facilitated PBC forum. Participants release a statement outlining their concerns and calling on the government to scrap the draft bill. The KLC goes onto hold another 27 meetings of PBCS about the proposed Bill.

October 2020	KLC makes a submission on the draft Bill calling for major changes.
November 2020	The membership of the KLC, KALACC and Aarnja hold their Annual General Meetings and release the joint Kooljaman statement calling for major changes to the Bill.
April 2021	The Department of Planning Lands and Heritage decides not to prosecute Kimberley Granite Holdings for the destruction of Garnkiny.
May 2021	The KLC requests WA Aboriginal Affairs Minister Stephen Dawson convene a forum of government, industry, native title groups and native title representative bodies to discuss the proposed Bill.
June 2021	The KLC organises for Kimberley leaders to travel to the steps of the WA Parliament to present a statement to Minister Stephen Dawson calling on the government to convene the forum. Minister Dawson declines to organise the forum
June 2021	The WA Alliance of Native Title Representative Bodies and Service Providers (WA Alliance) unanimously agree the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Bill should not be presented to State Parliament in its current form.
July 2021	The Board of Directors of the KLC releases a statement urging the WA Government not to proceed with the draft Bill.
August 2021	The KLC holds a march to the steps of WA Parliament, which is attended by hundreds of people. Kimberley leaders present a message to Minister Dawson. Minister Dawson does not provide any response.

October 2021	The final report of the Juukan Gorge Inquiry is released with recommendations calling for major change and better protection for Aboriginal cultural heritage.
November 2021	Minister Dawson attends the KLC AGM and discusses the proposed Bill. The KLC, KALACC and Aarnja release the Punturr Punturr Statement again calling for the Government not to proceed with the proposed Bill and to listen to the views of Aboriginal people.
November 2021	Two weeks later the WA Government introduces the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Bill 2021 to the WA Parliament and suspends normal parliamentary processes to fast track the Bill through both Houses.
November 2021	The KLC writes to the United Nations calling for an intervention.
November 2021	The KLC writes to all WA Members of Parliament calling on them to vote no to the new Bill.
December 2021	The KLC writes directly to Minister Dawson requesting a correction of incorrect and misleading statements to the Parliament of Western Australia.
December 2021	On 15 December the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Bill is passed and on 22 December it is officially made law by Royal Assent becoming the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021.
April 2022	The ACH Act co-design begins



KLC ATTENDS THE NATIVE TITLE CONFERENCE ON KABI KABI COUNTRY



Commemorating 30 years since the Mabo decision

In June, the KLC was represented by 13 staff members and 5 Directors at the 2022 AIATSIS Summit hosted by the Kabi Kabi peoples on their traditional country on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland.

There was a great representation from across the Kimberley with 27 PBC representatives at the event. KLC staff worked hard to support the attendance of Kimberley Traditional Owners by coordinating travel logistics for the 5-day summit.

The annual AIATSIS Summit provides a unique forum for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, academics, native title stakeholders, legal experts, community and cultural sectors and government to collaborate in addressing current and future challenges. The summit also offers opportunities to support and strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, knowledge and governance.

Here in the Kimberley, in the 30 years since the 1992 Mabo Decision, the KLC is proud to have played a leading role in seeing 97% of the region native title determined.

The historic 1992 case set the benchmark for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the nation to start to regain control and ownership over their lands. The Mabo decision meant the law recognised that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' connection to Country and Culture is continuous and enduring.

Looking forward, the KLC will continue to get back country, look after country and get control of the future so Kimberley Aboriginal people can prosper from native title.

RECONCILIATION WEEK

KLC CEO Tyronne Garstone represented the Kimberley on the 2022 Regional Voices panel to provide a regional lens to this year's Reconciliation Week theme 'Be Brave, Make Change'.

On the breakfast that was live-streamed to over a million people, Tyronne spoke about the challenges in the Kimberley covering topics from suicide to lack of housing, poor health and how these issues are often exacerbated by the lack of recognition of Indigenous voices around law reform and policy development.



"Aboriginal people are constantly seeing Governments and broader Australia making decisions on our behalf and not listening to us."

We want the Government to know that we can make decisions for ourselves and that regional programs really do work.

We need the Government to trust us when we are calling on a voice into parliament. And again, the commitment to an Indigenous voice to parliament will be key to helping resolve these issues.

We have been consistent in our messaging to the Government, we are the best place people to make the system design and to develop the policy and the laws that will make change in our regions.

Regional governance that leads into national governance is the best way forward to resolve the issues we are facing in the remote and bringing Australia together as a collective.

Indigenous people in Australia want to live in a prosperous Australia, we want to share this country with you as one nation.

By giving us a voice, Australia will be a better country."

- Tyronne Garstone



CELEBRATING KAMS CEO VICKI O'DONNELL



KLC CEO Tyronne Garstone and Chair Anthony Watson attended a celebration for Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services - KAMS CEO Vicki O'Donnell in June, where she was congratulated for receiving one of the country's highest honours, an appointment to the Order of Australia.

Ms O'Donnell has had a long career in the Kimberley, leading the Derby Health Service for 12 years, and serving as CEO of the KAMS for the past seven years.

We thank you for your service and years of commitment working towards better health outcomes for Kimberley Aboriginal people.

WA WATER MINISTER VISITS BROOME OFFICE

In June the WA Minister for Water Dave Kelly and Member for the Kimberley Divina D'Anna for stopped in for a visit at the KLC.

The meeting was an important opportunity to discuss a range of water issues in the region, in particular the WA Government's ongoing planning in relation to the Fitzroy River.

KLC CEO Tyronne Garstone called on the Minister to listen to the voices of Traditional Owners and to abandon any plans for large-scale water extraction from the river.

We look forward to continuing to work with the WA Government towards sustainable development in the region.



WELCOMING THE NEW MINISTER FOR INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS

The KLC would like to welcome the country's new Minister for Indigenous Australians, Linda Burney.

In June, KLC CEO Tyronne Garstone was present at Government House in Canberra to congratulate Linda Burney shortly after she was officially sworn in.

Linda Burney becomes the first Aboriginal woman, and the second First Nations person, to serve as Indigenous affairs minister and will take the lead on enshrining a voice to Parliament in Australia's constitution.

The KLC would also like to congratulate Senator Patrick Dodson, who has been announced as a Special Envoy for Reconciliation and the implementation of the Uluru Statement.

We look forward to working alongside the new government lead by Prime Minister Anthony Albanese to better the lives of Aboriginal people and to bring an Indigenous Voice to Parliament.



WOMEN RANGERS GET NEW FIRE UNIFORMS!

KLC is proud to support women rangers. Last month the KLC sent around 60 new fire uniforms to 13 women ranger groups throughout the Kimberley.

The Nyul Nyul women rangers are pictured on the right wearing their uniforms for the first time whilst carrying out a prescribed burn on country.





KLC HOSTS THE FITZROY RIVER FILM FESTIVAL

The KLC was pleased to host a sold-out screening of the Fitzroy River Festival held in Broome for Reconciliation Week.

It was a powerful evening listening to the stories of Traditional Owners about their connection to the National Heritage-listed Martuwarra Fitzroy River and their fight to protect the river from large-scale water extraction.

As KLC Chair Anthony Watson and Martuwarra Fitzroy River Chair Dr Anne Poelina reiterated in their opening speeches, it is so important that we stand in unity for the river.

'Be Brave, make change' is this year's theme for #NationalReconciliationWeek, and supporting the protection of Aboriginal heritage is a way all Australians can contribute to reconciliation.

The WA Government will decide on the future of the Fitzroy River this year. The decision will be whether to allow more than 300 billion litres of water to be

extracted from the river every year for large-scale agriculture, or to protect the river and its floodplains. Last year, more than 43,000 Australians sent in submissions to the WA Government's Fitzroy River Water Discussion Paper asking for the river to be protected and to abandon all plans for irrigation.

Head to likenowhereelse.org.au to find out what you can do to stand with Traditional Owners and #ProtecttheFitzroy.

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Thank you to Goolarri Media Enterprises for hosting the night, Yawuru Elder Aunty Di Appleby for her welcome to country, Divina D'Anna and Rosetta Sahanna for attending, KLC Chair Anthony Watson and Martuwarra Fitzroy River Council Chair Dr. Anne Poelina for powerful opening speeches, KLC LSMU Manager Daniel Oades for being MC and to The Kimberley - Like Nowhere Else Environs Kimberley for making the night happen.



RANGER EXCHANGE: FROM THE RIVER TO THE DESERT

In May ranger teams from the Kimberley and Northern Territory took part in an Indigenous Desert Alliance ranger exchange to Kiwirrkurra Indigenous Protected Area in the Gibson desert to learn about ways to look after threatened animals.

The Gooniyandi Rangers and the Walungurru rangers travelled long distances to meet the Kiwirrkurra Rangers to undertake conservation activities for the bilby (Gooniyandi: nyarlku, Pintupi: ninu) and great desert skink.

Traditional Owners welcomed everyone to Country at a ninu tjukurrpa (bilby 'Dreaming') site prior to camping out for a couple of nights and undertaking searches for evidence of bilbies and cats.

Rangers went tracking for feral cats which harm these animal populations, and followed some fresh prints for a few hours but the cool weather and light rains meant the cats got away this time!

Although rain and the threat of flooded tracks forced the exchange short by a day, the Gooniyandi Rangers learnt a lot from the Kiwirrkurra Rangers and enjoyed their trip down to Australia's most remote community.

Gooniyandi Ranger Coordinator Russell Chestnut said the knowledge that the Kiwirrkurra rangers had was inspiring.



"The tracking work done by the Kiwirrkurra rangers was incredible. The rangers can identify whether the tracks of a bilby mean the animal is a female, male or if it is a bilby pregnant or carrying young."

Russell said he learnt a lot and wanted to do more ranger exchanges in future.

"I learnt a lot off the Kiwirrkurra women rangers who had spent most of their life traditionally in the bush away from town. The Kiwirrkurra rangers also had excellent ways to manage feral animal populations. It was a great experience for all of us and we can't wait to host them on our country."

Later this year, the Kiwirrkurra Rangers will travel to the Kimberley to complete the exchange and undertake bilby monitoring activities on Gooniyandi Country.

The trip was made possible with funding support from Indigenous Desert Alliance in collaboration with Desert Support Services.

BARDI JAWI RANGERS CREATE MARINE SAFETY SIGNS

The Bardi Jawi Rangers together with Marine Rescue WA have developed locally designed marine safety messages to encourage the local boating community to stay safe on the water.

The Bardi Jawi Rangers provide sea rescue response support around their sea country and are a part of a network of 39 Marine Rescue WA groups situated along Western Australia's 13,000 kilometre coastline.

Marine Rescue WA groups work closely with the Western Australian Police Service (WAPOL) performing search and rescue missions at sea and also facilitate community awareness of marine safety.

Rangers are often the first point of contact for rescues, which are often initiated by community messages and smoke signals, and are best placed to respond with local and traditional knowledge of the waters, places, people and local vessels.

Bardi Jawi Sea Country and the waters of the adjacent Buccaneer Archipelago is pristine and stunning, but is an incredibly treacherous area of water with high reef platforms that become exposed and dry daily with up to 11m springs tides, rip tides, back-currents and standing waves just a few of the maritime hazards. These waters are the customary fishing/hunting area and the marine resources in this area provide livelihoods for Bardi Jawi people, so support for people to get out onto sea country provides multiple community benefits.



Ranger Azton Howard lead the signage project, facilitating a workshop with students of Ardyaloon school and getting them to draw pictures of key safety equipment which was all brought into a sign design which has been installed at all main community boat access points in Ardyaloon, Djarrindjin and Lombadina.

"This project started when I was completing my Cert IV in Conservation Land Management. Keeping people safe is a big part of caring for country and hopefully these signs will help to increase awareness around water safety."

Azton Howard, Bardi Jawi Ranger

"We want make sure our people go out with the right stuff so they can return safely and prevent us doing rescues"

Phillip McCarthy, Ranger Coordinator and Commander of Bardi Jawi Marine Rescue Service.

"Its important that the rangers are supported to communicate safety messages in the best way they think will work locally. Having local artworks helps local ownership of the messages too."

Bec Benson - Pilbara/Kimberley Marine District Officer with Department of Fire and Emergency Services

KIJA RANGERS TAKE A CHOPPER RIDE TO SURVEY RARE ANIMALS



In June Kija rangers based out of Wuggubun in the East Kimberley used a chopper to get to a remote gorge to follow up on previous Scaley Tailed Possum (wyulda) sighting caught on camera by Kija rangers in 2018.

The sighting in 2018 was unexpected and unique as it is outside of the known range of Wyulda in Western Australia.

KLC ecologist Marlee Hutton coordinated and went along on the trip and said it's important and vital work the Kija rangers carry out through surveying.

"Understanding whether there is a permanent population of Wyulda in these gorges will inform ranger land management for better conservation of significant species."

The Wyulda is one of only three species of possum that shelter exclusively in rocks. Frequent, intense fires negatively impact Wyulda habitats by reducing the density of fruiting trees for them to feed on. The cool season burning the Kija rangers carry out each year through the KLC's fire program is helping to keep the near-threatened species habitats healthy.



Whilst on country Kija rangers also conducted Bilby surveys on country to verify some local sightings. They deployed trail cameras and conducted vegetation surveys to find out as much as they can about the presence or absence of Bilbies on their country.

Nationally listed as Vulnerable, the bilby is suffering an ongoing decline in range and abundance due to pressures such as habitat loss and degradation, altered fire regimes and introduced animals.

Kija rangers work hard to protect bilby habitats and conduct surveys which helps scientists learn how we can better protect this iconic Australian species.



BARDI JAWI OORANY RANGERS LIVE ON AIR WITH SANDY DANN

Bardi Jawi Oorany rangers Tamara, Henarlia, Chenielle, Tiayana and Vivian spoke with presenter Sandy Dann live on air in the Radio Goolarri studio today.

The rangers spoke about why they love their jobs, the importance of caring for country and about the Goolarri Media Enterprises oral history course they have been taking part in this week.

The Bardi Jawi Oorany rangers, alongside Nyul Nyul and Karajarri rangers have been in Broome taking part in a two-day oral history course lead by Dr Elaine Rabbitt.

The nationally accredited oral history course will teach the rangers how to use professional recording equipment and develop interview skills to document community history. It's great to see the rangers willing to get out of their comfort zone and learn new skills



KLC AND PARKS AUSTRALIA PREMIERE MAYALA FILM

In late 2020, Mayala traditional owners, supported by the Kimberley Land Council, received an Australian Government Our Marine Parks Grant to build their capability and involvement in Kimberley Marine Park management.

In October 2021, Parks Australia and KLC joined Mayala on the first of two back-to-country voyages to the remote and spectacular Buccaneer Archipelago, off the coast of Western Australia.

Fifteen Mayala traditional owners and aspiring Mayala rangers travelled to the top end of the Mayala country, spending five days exploring some of the hard-to-access islands, including culturally significant Noomoonjoo (Caffarelli Island).

The film, which showed what the trip meant to Mayala Traditional Owners, premiered during National NAIDOC week. To watch the video, head to the KLC website, klc.org.au/video-gallery.



NEW TWO-WAY SCIENCE INITIATIVE LAUNCHED

The KLC's new two-way science initiative was launched in June - an innovative new program that will see rangers working with schools to promote on country learning.

Two-Way Science coordinators, Cameron Hugh and Eduardo Maher alongside project officer Justin King have been travelling around the Kimberley over the past month to develop the program alongside ranger teams, schools and community.

The two-way science team are currently working with three ranger teams; Nyul Nyul, Bardi Jawi and Bardi Jawi Oorany and the Ngurrara rangers to develop and deliver education programs to four schools across the Kimberley; Sacred Heart School in Beagle Bay, One Arm Point Regional Community School, Yakanarra and Djugerari schools in Desert country.

The programs are being designed to cover content about caring for country including seasonal calendars, traditional food sources and sustainability. They will also include subjects based on ranger work such as wildlife monitoring using technology like remote camera traps and baited underwater remote videos (BRUV monitoring)!

They will be co-designed by rangers, community and schools to help establish a culturally responsive curriculum.

The two-way science program will officially begin at the beginning of term 3, July 2022.



Nyul Nyul Rangers trying out baited underwater remote videos! (BRUV monitoring)

Bardi Jawi Oorany Rangers



KLC SUCCESSFUL IN SECURING RANGER FUNDING

The KLC was successful in securing state funding for three ranger groups in the Kimberley.

The Bardi Jawi Oorany Rangers and the Nyul Nyul Women Rangers secured \$1.4 million each for Monsoon Vine Thicket Recovery.

The Gooniyandi Rangers will also receive \$1.4 million in funding.

Congratulations to all the other groups in the Kimberley Ranger Network who also secured funding.

“The KLC will continue to play an integral role in advocating for both State and Federal Government funding for the expansion of ranger teams throughout the Kimberley.”

KLC CEO Tyrone Garstone



Nyul Nyul Women Rangers

SAVE THE DATE!

**KLC, KALACC, KLRC
and Aarnja AGMs**

22 - 26 August

Travel days TBC

Location:

**Kupartiya Community,
(Bohemia Downs Station)**



More information coming soon.

www.klc.org.au



KIMBERLEY LAND COUNCIL

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The Kimberley Land Council welcomes donations to support our activities. Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible.

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