

SUCCESS STORIES IN ABORIGINAL LAND RIGHTS IN NSW



NEW SOUTH WALES
ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCIL

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'This proposed legislation (the Aboriginal Land Rights Act) takes the first step in this State towards redressing the injustice and neglect of real Aboriginal need since Captain Phillip stepped upon the shores of Port Jackson in 1788. The Government has made a clear, unequivocal decision that land rights for Aborigines is the most fundamental initiative to be taken for the regeneration of Aboriginal culture and dignity, and at the same time laying the basis for a self-reliant and more secure economic future for our continent's Aboriginal custodians.'

Frank Walker, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Second Reading Speech,
Aboriginal Land Rights Bill, 24 March 1983.

ABORIGINAL LAND RIGHTS

Following recommendations from the 1978-1981 Inquiry of the NSW Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly upon Aborigines the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act* was passed by the NSW Parliament in 1983.

The *Aboriginal Land Rights Act* was enacted in recognition of, and in an attempt to remedy, the ongoing effects of the dispossession of Aboriginal peoples in NSW. The preamble of the Aboriginal Land Rights Act recognises that:

1. Land in the State of NSW was traditionally owned and occupied by Aborigines;
2. Land is of spiritual, social, cultural and economic importance to Aborigines;
3. It is fitting to acknowledge the importance which land has for Aborigines and the need of Aborigines for land;
4. It is accepted that as a result of past Government decisions the amount of land set aside for Aborigines has been progressively reduced without compensation.

The *Aboriginal Land Rights Act* was passed by the NSW Parliament to facilitate the return of land in NSW to Aboriginal peoples through claim over Crown land. A network of Aboriginal Land Councils was established to acquire and manage land as an economic base for Aboriginal communities, as compensation for historic dispossession and in recognition of the ongoing disadvantage suffered by Aboriginal communities. Aboriginal Land Councils represent not only the interests of their members, but of the wider Aboriginal community.

The Inquiry of the NSW Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly upon Aborigines

The Select Committee was chaired by the then Labor member for Woronora, Maurice Keane MP. The terms of reference of the Select Committee required it to inquire into and make recommendations about:

- The causes of the socio-economic disadvantages of Aboriginal people, particularly in the areas of housing, health, education, employment, welfare and cultural issues;
- The effectiveness of the Commonwealth/State arrangements in Aboriginal Affairs; and
- Land rights for Aboriginal people in NSW.

The Select Committee was assisted in its work by an Aboriginal Taskforce established to maintain close contact with Aboriginal communities during the course of the inquiry through liaison, facilitating field trips and community meetings. It released its first report in August 1980 which dealt with land rights and the protection of sacred and significant sites.

A second report, released in April 1981, dealt with the socio-economic issues and inter-governmental arrangements on Aboriginal Affairs.

The cross-party Select Committee made a range of findings on land rights and the protection of sacred and significant sites based on the evidence and submissions received during its inquiry process.

These findings formed the basis for its recommendations on the establishment of a land rights system as well as an Aboriginal Heritage Commission in NSW. The Committee emphasised that the granting of land rights was of paramount importance to Aboriginal people in NSW and recommended that the land rights system comprise of local community councils to advocate for Aboriginal peoples rights and to support decision making at a local level.

ABORIGINAL LAND CLAIMS

The intention of Aboriginal land rights was to enable 'Vast tracks of Crown land (to) be available for claim (to) go some way to redress the injustices of dispossession...'.¹ A core function of Aboriginal Land Councils is the claiming of land under the compensatory mechanisms of the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act* for the dispossession of Aboriginal peoples from land in NSW.

Section 36 of the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act* sets out the definition of claimable Crown land as being land that is vested in Her Majesty (that when a claim is made for the land) are able to be reserved or able to be lawfully sold or leased, or are reserved or dedicated for any purposes, under the *Crown Lands Act*, are not lawfully used or occupied, that does not comprise of land which in the opinion of the Crown Lands Minister are needed or likely to be needed as residential lands, are not needed or likely to be needed for an essential public purpose, are not the subject of an application for the determination of native title or an approved determination of native title. Land that falls within this definition must be granted to the claimant Aboriginal Land Council.

A successful determination of a land claim generally delivers freehold title to land which includes rights to certain minerals in the freehold land. This freehold can be dealt with for example via sale, lease and the owner of the freehold land (the Aboriginal Land Council) has the same rights as other freehold owners, subject to compliance with the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act*.

Aboriginal Land Councils can be granted lands that are to be managed as national parks or other form of reserve via a 'lease back' arrangement with the NSW Government, sometimes known as 'joint management'.

¹Frank Walker, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Second Reading Speech, Aboriginal Land Rights Bill, 24 March 1983

Joint Management

There are two ways that land can be jointly managed as a national park. The first is if the NSW Parliament recognises that land is of 'cultural significance' to Aboriginal people, and agrees to list that land in Schedule 14 of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act*. Schedule 14 lands may already be national parks or nature reserves.

A lease (under Part 4A of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act*) can be negotiated that provides the recognition of the cultural significance of those lands and handing back of these lands to Aboriginal Owners (to be vested on behalf of the Aboriginal Owners in an Aboriginal Land Council). This land can then be leased by the Aboriginal Land Council to the Minister. Aboriginal Owners are people whose names are entered on a Register of Aboriginal Owners because of the persons' cultural association with particular land.

The second way is through the Aboriginal Land Claims process. Under section 36A of the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act*, the Government can enter into Part 4A negotiations with the relevant Local Aboriginal Land Council to jointly manage the land in circumstances where land is not claimable because it is

needed, or likely to be needed, for an essential public purpose of nature conservation. If successful, the Minister for Lands can hand the land back to Aboriginal Owners on the condition that it is jointly managed as a national park or reserve.

As part of the joint management process, a Local Aboriginal Land Council holds the title of the lands (on behalf of Aboriginal Owners for Schedule 14 land) and a lease-back agreement is negotiated with the NSW Government.

A Board of Management is set up to manage the park. It must consist of a majority of Registered Aboriginal Owners, with government and other local and interest group representatives.

A rental fee is paid by the NSW Government and is used by the Board of Management to manage the land and for specific projects on the park.

There are seven areas of land currently under joint management in NSW - Biamanga National Park (near Bega), Gaagal Wanggaan (South Beach) National Park, Gulaga National Park (near Bermagui), Mutawintji National Park, Historic Site and Nature Reserve (near Broken Hill), Mount Grenfell Historic Site (near Cobar) and Worimi Conservation Lands (near Newcastle).

Aboriginal Land Councils are also entitled to make agreements with other land owners or persons in control of land to access land for hunting, fishing and gathering, and have rights to apply for access permits.

Currently there are 25,809 land claims that are still pending Government determination; 263 of which were lodged in or before the year 2000; with 13 of these having been lodged over twenty years ago.

CROWN LAND IN NSW

Aboriginal people's interests in land is multifaceted and includes, but is not limited to, the use and management of land for culture and heritage purposes as well as providing economic development opportunities for Aboriginal peoples.

Under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act*, Aboriginal Land Councils can make claims over unused and unneeded Crown land as compensation for dispossession and as such the use and management of Crown land and Aboriginal land rights are intertwined.

Crown land has significant Aboriginal culture and heritage values and retains cultural and spiritual significant as well as providing important opportunities to lay the basis for a self reliant and more secure economic future for Aboriginal peoples.

Photo from Worimi LALC, Murrook.



'In recognising prior ownership, the Government thereby recognises Aboriginal rights to obtain land. The Government believes the essential task is to ensure an equitable and viable amount of land is returned to Aborigines'

~ FRANK WALKER ~

THE NSW ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCIL

The NSW Aboriginal Land Council is the peak body representing Aboriginal peoples in NSW. The NSW Aboriginal Land Council is an independent, self funded, non government organisation. Pursuant to the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act*, the NSW Aboriginal Land Council has the following functions amongst others:

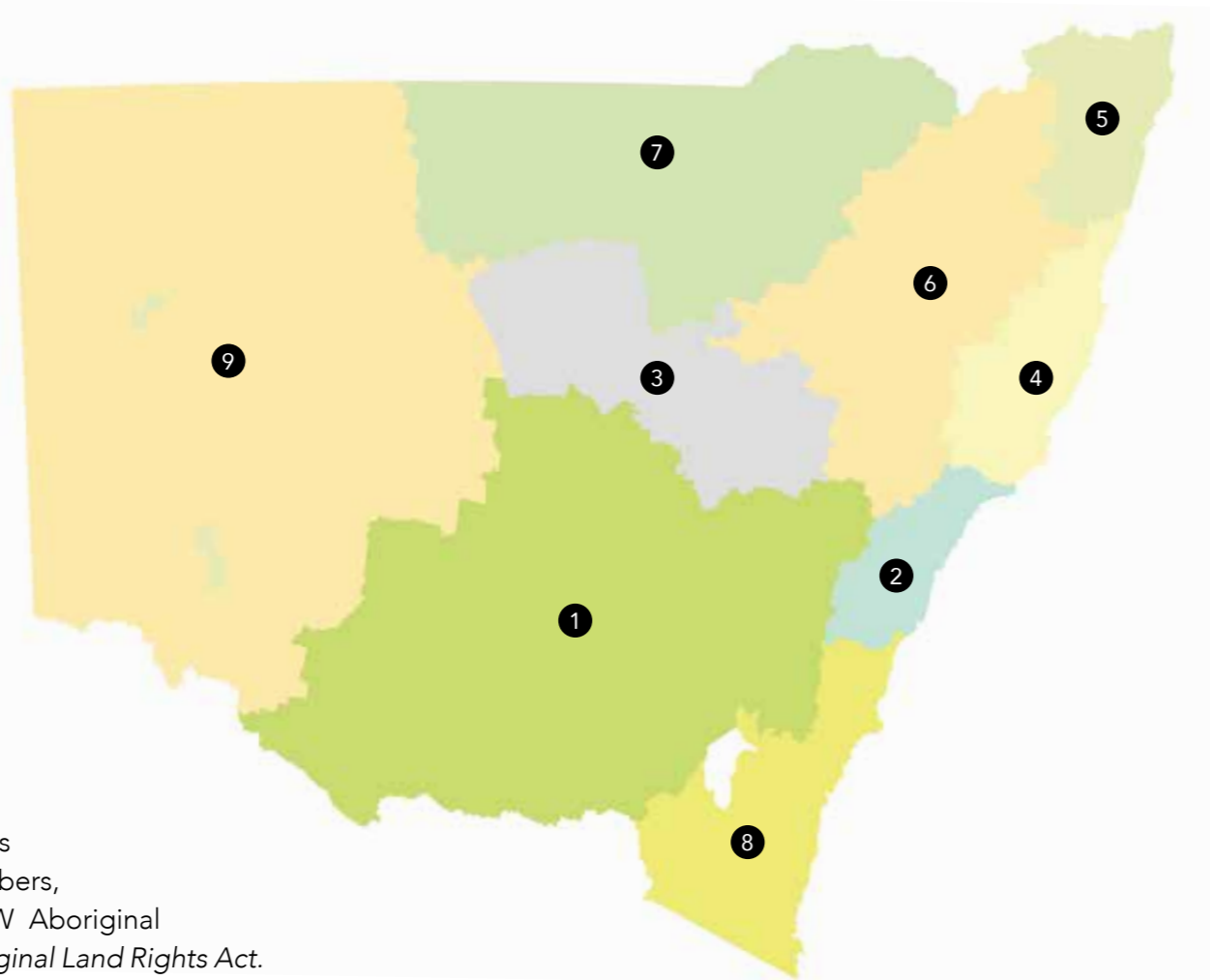
- The acquisition, control, and management of (and other dealings in) lands, including claiming land;
- The protection and promotion of Aboriginal culture and heritage in NSW;
- The facilitation of business enterprises; and
- The provision of advice to the NSW Government on matters relating to Aboriginal land rights.

The NSW Aboriginal Land Council provides support to the network of 120 Local Aboriginal Land Councils in NSW.

The Aboriginal Land Council network operates as a two tiered structure – the NSW Aboriginal Land Council which operates from Parramatta and five Zone offices (Dubbo, Queanbeyan, Coffs Harbour, Broken Hill and Gosford) and 120 Local Aboriginal Land Councils, which are governed by elected Boards.

THERE ARE
9
 ABORIGINAL
 LAND COUNCIL
 REGIONS
 IN NSW

Every four years, members of Local Aboriginal Land Councils vote for a Councillor to represent their region. In addition to representing the interests of Local Aboriginal Land Council members, Councillors direct the affairs of the NSW Aboriginal Land Council in accordance with the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act*.



Current Councillors are:

- 1 **Craig Cromelin** - WIRADJURI REGION, CHAIRPERSON. Craig is a Ngiyampaa and Wiradjuri man.
- 2 **Roy Ah-See** - SYDNEY/NEWCASTLE REGION, DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON. Roy is a Wiradjuri man.
- 3 **Stephen Ryan** - CENTRAL REGION. Stephen is a Wiradjuri man.
- 4 **Peter Smith** - MID NORTH COAST REGION. Peter is a Dungutti man.
- 5 **Tina Williams** - NORTH COAST REGION. Tina is a Bundjalung woman.
- 6 **Tom Briggs** - NORTHERN REGION. Tom is a member of the Gumbainggir nation.
- 7 **Anne Dennis** - NORTH WEST REGION. Anne is a Gamilaraay woman.
- 8 **Neville 'Jack' Hampton** - SOUTH COAST REGION. Jack is a Yuin man.
- 9 **Des Jones** - WESTERN REGION. Des is a Mooroowarri man.

The Aboriginal Land Council network is the largest member based Aboriginal network in Australia.

Key priorities of the NSW Aboriginal Land Council are to:

- To continue to secure and manage land for the benefit of Aboriginal people in NSW;
- To continue to improve the governance of the land rights network, including its financial and political sustainability, to ensure its long term viability and legitimacy;
- To drive economic development across the land rights network to support the Aboriginal people of NSW to achieve greater economic independence;
- To continue to ensure the benefits derived from the land rights network continue to support the social needs of our people; and
- To protect and promote Aboriginal culture, heritage and the environment for the benefit of present and future generations.

Aboriginal
 population
 in NSW:

It is estimated that there were **631,757** Aboriginal people in Australia at the most recent ABS Census. **202,674** Aboriginal peoples live in NSW, or **32.1** per cent of the total Aboriginal population. Only Queensland has a comparable population with an estimated **164,557** Aboriginal peoples living in that state. To put these figures into perspective, there were more Aboriginal peoples living in NSW than the whole of South Australia, Western Australia and the Northern Territory combined (**190,871**).

LOCAL ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCILS

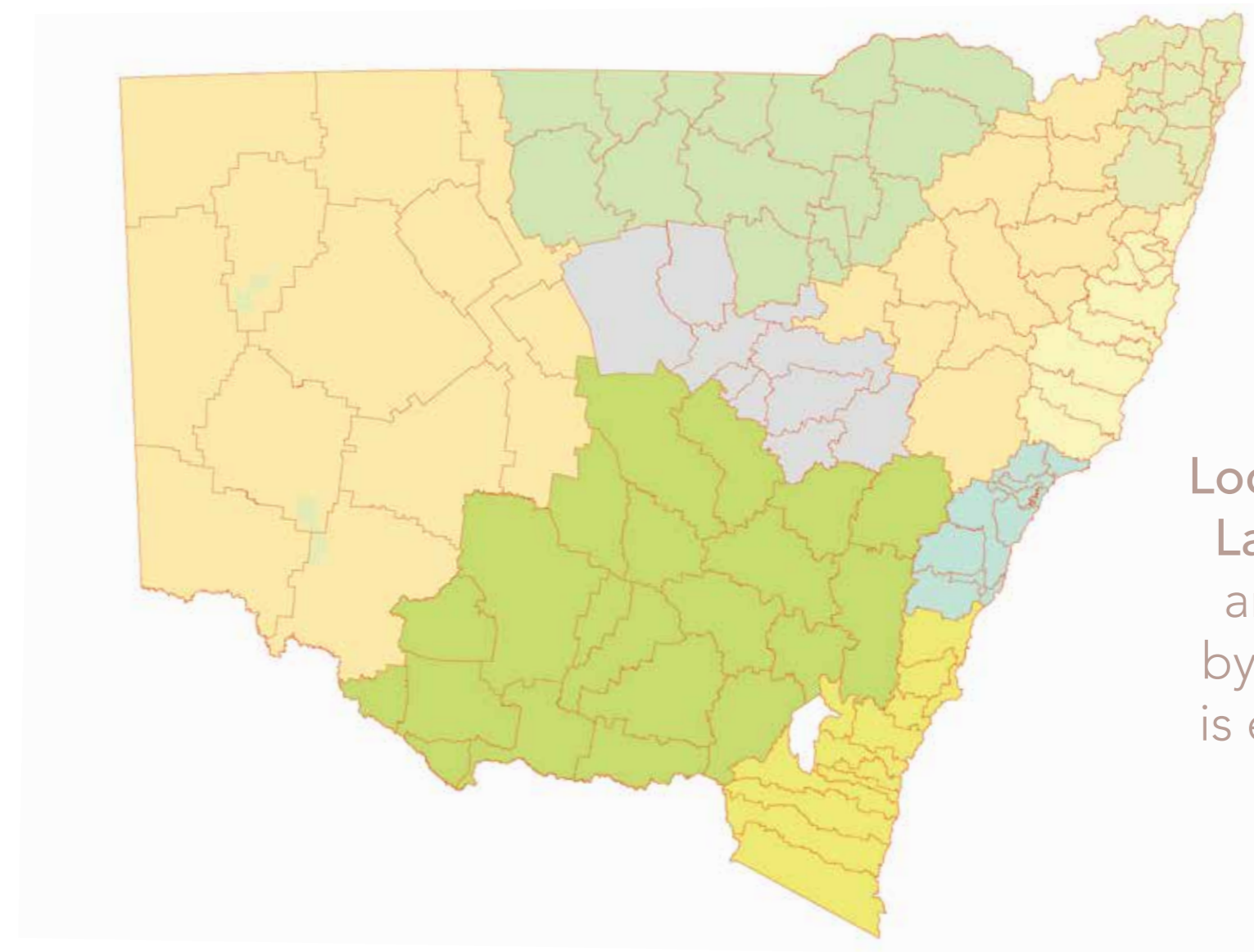
There are 120 Local Aboriginal Land Councils in NSW. Local Aboriginal Land Councils are autonomous organisations with similar functions to the NSW Aboriginal Land Council in their own area – to acquire, use, manage and control land, to protect and promote Aboriginal culture and heritage, to implement a Community Land and Business Plan and to facilitate business enterprise. Local Aboriginal Land Councils work for their members and the wider Aboriginal community living in their local area. They assist in matters relating to the areas of housing, legal, employment and other day-to-day matters involving Aboriginal people in accordance with functions detailed under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act*.

Local Aboriginal Land Councils are governed by a Board that is elected every two years.

All Aboriginal people who are 18 years or over can apply to become a member of a Local Aboriginal Land Council. Members either reside in the Local Aboriginal Land Council area or have a cultural association to the area.

Local Aboriginal Land Councils undertake a number of activities including the protection and restoration of Aboriginal culture and heritage, training, educational talks and tours promoting the protection of Aboriginal culture and heritage, site assessments, identification and surveying Aboriginal culture and heritage, researching, investigating and making Aboriginal land claims, the provision of suitable and affordable housing, training and employment programs and youth, Elders and family programs and events.

The following Local Aboriginal Land Councils were recipients of the 2013 Local Aboriginal Land Council Excellence Awards awarded at the 2013 Aboriginal Land Council conference.



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The 120
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▲



CENTRAL

The Central region has a population of 14,317 Aboriginal people which is 5.4 per cent of the whole population. Local Aboriginal Land Councils in the Central region include Dubbo, Gilgandra, Mudgee, Narromine, Nyngan, Trangie, Warren Macquarie, Weilwan and Wellington Local Aboriginal Land Councils.

[MUDGEE LOCAL ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCIL](#)

Over a number of years the Mudgee Local Aboriginal Land Council (Mudgee LALC) has consistently been a high performing Local Aboriginal Land Council.

Mudgee LALC has successfully led the development of strong local and regional partnerships and providing services to the local community. In particular, Mudgee LALC in conjunction with TAFE has delivered a number of agricultural courses including most recently security fencing construction.

Mudgee LALC undertakes Aboriginal culture and heritage assessments, including partnering with archeological services. These culture and heritage assessments include assessing the potential impacts of development on heritage and cultural values, consulting with the Aboriginal community as well as preparing Aboriginal Heritage Management Plans.

Other culture and heritage work that Mudgee LALC has undertaken includes the establishment of a walking trail on land returned to Mudgee LALC under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act*. This walking trail includes interpretive signage and guided

tours to educate the wider community on the importance of Aboriginal culture and heritage and the connection of Aboriginal people to Country.

As a member of the Mudgee Chamber of Commerce, Mudgee LALC has actively participated in the Mudgee Business Expo, where the LALC has showcased the services it provides and formed partnerships and networks with other local businesses and organisations.

Mudgee LALC coordinates a number of community events throughout the year including Close the Gap, Black Screen Film nights, NAIDOC and Anniversary of the Apology events.



All photos from the 2013 Aboriginal Land Council Conference.



MID NORTH COAST

The Mid North Coast region has a population of 20,019 Aboriginal people which is 6.5 per cent of the whole population. Local Aboriginal Land Councils in the Mid North Coast region include Birpai, Bowraville, Bunyah, Coffs Harbour, Forster, Karuah, Kempsey, Nambucca Heads, Purfleet/Taree, Stuart Island, Thungutti and Unkya Local Aboriginal Land Councils.

NAMBUCCA HEADS LOCAL ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCIL

The Nambucca Heads Local Aboriginal Land Council (Nambucca Heads LALC) decided to direct funds from the Wallung Trust into the development of an Eco Store and Art Gallery to do something positive for the local community, provide a space for local artists to exhibit and sell their work, and make an investment into the community now and into the future.

The Ocean Green (Gaagal Girrin) Eco Store and Art Gallery, based at the Nambucca Heads LALC offices, opened in 2014. The Eco Store stocks a range of locally designed and made clothes, natural soaps and other beauty products, environmentally friendly and organic manchester, recycled, reusable and sustainable household goods, educational toys, books, and other products sourced from companies with a social conscience. Ocean Green also showcases the work of local Gumbaynggirr artists and craftspeople.

All profits from the store and a percentage of the profits from the sale of artwork go back to the local community.

Ocean Green complements other initiatives of the Nambucca Heads LALC including the Gumma Indigenous Protected Area (IPA), 111 hectares of pristine peninsula from the Nambucca River to islets on the Pacific Ocean. IPAs are areas of land or sea owned by Indigenous people that is dedicated by traditional owners for biodiversity conservation and culture and heritage protection and managed in line with international standards.

Nambucca Heads LALC owns and manages Gumma on behalf of traditional owners. Gumma is managed on the key principals of traditional cultural practices, connecting land and sea, and conservation and sustainability. The IPA was declared in November 2011 and is part of Australia's National Reserve System, managed for its landscape and seascape values. The Nambucca Heads LALC has developed a range of partnerships with educational institutions and the National Parks and Wildlife Service to provide a learning environment and protect and manage the area. Tourists are also welcome to visit sites on the IPA and camp grounds have been established.



Top right photo of artist Francine Edwards. Photos courtesy of Nambucca Guardian News, Ute Schulenberg.



NORTH COAST

The North Coast region has a population of 15,174 Aboriginal people which is 5.2 per cent of the whole population. Local Aboriginal Land Councils in the North Coast region include Baryulgil Square, Birrigan Gargle, Bogal, Casino-Boolangle, Grafton-Ngerrie, Gugin Gudduba, Jali, Jana Ngalee, Jubullum, Muli Muli, Ngulingah, Tweed/Byron and Yaegl Local Aboriginal Land Councils.

NGULINGAH LOCAL ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCIL

Nimbin Rocks is an Aboriginal sacred place for all the people of Bundjalung. Nimbin Rocks is located just south of the Nimbin township, and is home to a number of threatened or vulnerable flora as well as being an important habitat for the Glossy Black Cockatoo. Since 2009 Ngulingah Local Aboriginal Land Council Ranger staff have been working to regenerate bush land, remove weed infestations, as well as successfully operating a nursery, and improving cultural knowledge for the Aboriginal and wider community on the approximately 120 hectare property.

and share cultural knowledge amongst the Nimbin local Aboriginal community and visitors at open days. The Nimbin Rocks Nursery has provided over 12,000 plants for the property and over 5,000 plants for local Landcare groups to undertake planting projects.

The Nimbin Rocks project has received funding from the Australian Government through the Working on Country program, however plans are underway for the nursery to become self sufficient.

Six rangers are currently employed and undertake a range of activities including collecting seeds and propagating and regenerating native plants that are suitable for bush foods and other traditional uses. These plant species are part of a demonstration site and a Connection Walk to help restore



Photos from top right (clockwise): Dorrabee Burning 2014 Photo by Ngulingah Rangers, Nursery work photo by Ngulingah Rangers, Fire training photo by Ngulingah Rangers, Nursery work photo by Ngulingah Rangers, Nimbin Rocks photo by Ngulingah Rangers.



NORTHERN

The Northern region has a population of 19,733 Aboriginal people which is 9.1 per cent of the whole population. Local Aboriginal Land Councils in the Northern region include Amaroo, Anaiwan, Armidale, Ashford, Coonabarabran, Dorrigo Plateau, Glen Innes, Guyra, Moombahlene, Nungaroo, Red Chief, Tamworth, Walhallow and Wanaruah Local Aboriginal Land Councils.

TAMWORTH LOCAL ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCIL

Tamworth Local Aboriginal Land Council (Tamworth LALC) is successfully partnering with a number of community, government and private sector organisations to deliver a range of youth, training, and health programs.

Since 2013 the Tamworth LALC has leased 'Trelawney Station' from the Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC) and has facilitated a number of projects in conjunction with a partner organisations including the Youth Opportunities 2 Education (Yo2Ed). 40 high school students are currently participating in this practically based program educating students outside the traditional classroom by providing accredited training, mentoring and work experience. Yo2Ed focuses on community engagement, well-being, respect, connection to Country and culture to deliver nationally accredited courses such as construction, animal care and agriculture.

Other programs facilitated by Tamworth LALC at Trelawney Station include a School Holiday program for Kindergarten to Year 6 students and a Healthy Lifestyle free from Drugs and Alcohol program. A farm management plan is currently being developed.

In April 2014, Tamworth LALC was announced as an Opportunity Hub as part of the NSW Government's new plan for Aboriginal Affairs, OCHRE. Opportunity Hubs seek to coordinate and match training opportunities for Aboriginal students, providing incentives to finish school and transition into jobs.

Tamworth LALC was also nominated for Tamworth Business Chamber Quality Business Awards (Community Service section) in 2013 and 2014.



Photos by Pat Strong and Liz Willis.



NORTH WEST

The North West region has a population of 12,526 Aboriginal people which is 26.8 per cent of the whole population. Local Aboriginal Land Councils in the North West region include Baradine, Brewarrina, Collarenebri, Coonamble, Goodooga, Lightning Ridge, Moree, Mungindi, Murrawari, Narrabri, Nulla Nulla, Pilliga, Toomelah, Walgett, Wee Waa and Weilmoringle Local Aboriginal Land Councils.

LIGHTNING RIDGE LOCAL ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCIL

Over the past couple of years the Lightning Ridge Local Aboriginal Land Council (Lightning Ridge LALC) has significantly improved its operational performance from being long term unfunded to become a high performing LALC.

Of particular significance is the LALCs achievement in building a stronger community through fostering and leading the development of strong local and regional partnerships; and building much needed local community services infrastructure.

In 2010 it was announced that Lightning Ridge would receive funding for the construction of an Integrated Child and Family Centre, a project initiated by the Council of Australian Governments and funded by the NSW Government through Family and Community Services.

Of the nine centres across NSW, the Lightning Ridge Integrated Child and Family centre is unique in that it is the only centre constructed on Aboriginal land. The construction of the centre

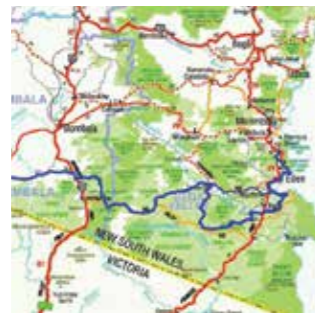
is now complete and will be opening in the near future.

The Lightning Ridge LALC also owns and manages the Angeldoon Reserve and Cemetery, a traditional camping ground. During the mid to late nineteenth century the area was a station camp and in the early decades of the twentieth century it became a major Aboriginal reserve settlement.

The Angeldoon Reserve and Cemetery is listed as an Aboriginal Place for its cultural heritage and historical heritage values. The Lightning Ridge LALC was recently successful in being a recipient of \$70,000 Commonwealth Indigenous Heritage funding to conserve burial sites, conduct heritage surveys and repair work, develop cultural heritage management plans, and record and pass on traditional knowledge.



All photos from Lightning Ridge presentation at 2013 Aboriginal Land Council Conference.



SOUTH COAST

The South Coast region has a population of 21,337 Aboriginal people which is 3.7 per cent of the whole population. Local Aboriginal Land Councils in the South Coast region include Batemans Bay, Bega, Bodalla, Cobowra, Eden, Illawarra, Jerringa, Merrimans, Mogo, Ngambri, Nowra, Ulladulla and Wagonga Local Aboriginal Land Councils.

EDEN LOCAL ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCIL

The Bundian Way is described as a shared history pathway which covers a distance of 265km and follows an ancient Aboriginal walking route from Targangal (Kosciuszko) to Bilgalera (Fisheries Beach) that connects the highest part of the Australian continent and the coast. The Bundian Way project managed by Eden Local Aboriginal Land Council aims to see the heritage protected route used for educational/tourism purposes, to be better recognised for its cultural values, and to create jobs for Aboriginal people.

The Bundian Way is the first Aboriginal pathway to be listed on the NSW State Heritage Register. The Bundian Way is associated with seasonal gatherings of Aboriginal tribes on the Snowy River for Bogong moth collection and on the Eden Coast during whale migration. It is historically significant for its role in early colonisation whereby white settlers were aided by Aboriginal guides in exploration and the search for pastures.

Historical documentation and archaeology found on the route reinforces traditional knowledge held by contemporary Aboriginal society and provides a strong validation of the social significance of this pathway today. The Way continues to be an important place of education and cultural activity in the Aboriginal community. For example measures are being taken to look after important Yamfields of the Monaro.

The Bundian Way travels through wilderness areas of untouched beauty and a remarkable variety of landscapes along the route between the highest part of the continent and the coast. Once opened to the general public, these should contribute to it becoming recognised as one of the world's best walks. It is currently proposed to open the walk in stages over the next few years.

Photos from left to right:
At Yamfields: May, Teneille, Brooke, Markita and Joelene, photo by John Blay.
Map of Bundian Way coastal track.
Eden LALC territory east of Tingiringi, photo by John Blay.



SYDNEY NEWCASTLE

The Sydney Newcastle region has a population of 86,377 Aboriginal people which is 1.7 per cent of the whole population. Local Aboriginal Land Councils in the Sydney Newcastle region include Awabakal, Bahtabah, Biraban, Darkinjung, Deerubbin, Gandangara, La Perouse, Metropolitan, Mindaribba, Tharawal and Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Councils.

WORIMI LOCAL ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCIL

In 2007 Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council (Worimi LALC) was successful in having lands at Stockton Bight handed back to the Aboriginal community and traditional owners. A feasibility study was conducted in late 2008 to identify enterprise opportunities that could be linked with the communities' desire to both promote Aboriginal culture and heritage and provide exciting hands-on tourism experience.

Sand Dune Adventures has been recognised as a leading Indigenous tourism experience in Australia, having been successfully nominated by Destination NSW into the Indigenous Business Australia / Tourism Australia elite program Indigenous Tourism Champions Program in 2013. Sand Dune Adventures has also been the recipient of Hunter and Central Coast Tourism Awards in the Indigenous Tourism category in 2013 and the Port Stephens Annual Business Award for Best Tourist Attraction in 2013.

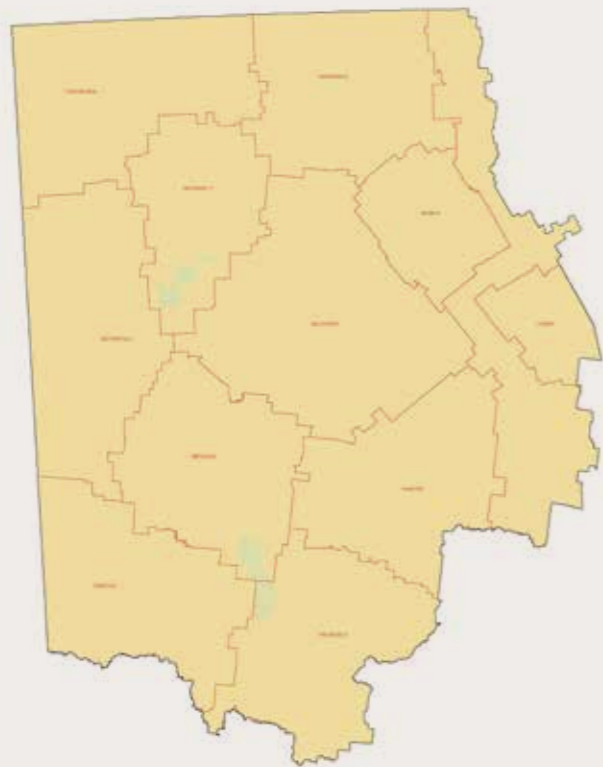
Sand Dune Adventures is a not-for-profit tourism enterprise showcasing the area's uniqueness by offering Quad bike and Hummer tours. Sand Dune Adventures is wholly operated by local Aboriginal people. Since 2009, the business has expanded and provides a range of experiences, activities and products that have been developed and approved by the local Aboriginal community.

Together Worimi LALC and Sand Dune Adventures collectively employs 23 Aboriginal people in varying roles such as Administration, Tour Guides, Maintenance, Site Officers, Culture and Education and our Green Team.

In addition, Sand Dune Adventures works closely with Destination NSW offering tours for trade partners and journalists to support the tourism industry and region as a whole.



Photos from top right (clockwise): Sand Dune Adventures, Worimi LALC, Sand Dune Adventures, Worimi LALC logo, Sand Dune Adventures.



WESTERN

The Western region has a population of 4,915 Aboriginal people which is 13.3 per cent of the whole population. Local Aboriginal Land Councils in the Western region include Balranald, Broken Hill, Cobar, Dareton, Ivanhoe, Menindee, Mutawintji, Tibooburra, Wannaaring, Wilcannia and Winbar Local Aboriginal Land Councils.

TIBOOBURRA LOCAL ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCIL

The historic Tibooburra Aboriginal Reserve is of great importance to Aboriginal people of Tibooburra, and has been the focus of extensive conservation and restoration works by the Tibooburra Local Aboriginal Land Council (Tibooburra LALC) in recent years.

Native vegetation planting and earthworks for erosion control were assisted by a 'Protecting Our Places' grant from the NSW Environmental Fund in 2006. Members volunteered their time to further develop an existing camping ground on the hundred acre site to lessen the impact of visitors to this culturally sensitive area. Town water was connected, amenities updated, and a three kilometre walking track to a second Aboriginal site was created.

Interpretive signage to promote community awareness of Aboriginal heritage and explain the significance of this special place links visitors to the Tibooburra LALC nearby Museum and Keeping Place. Hundreds of Wangkumara, Wadigali and Malyangapa people lived here until most were forcibly

removed, by the Aboriginal Protection Board, to Brewarrina 'Mission' in April 1938. A senior Wangkumara/Punthamara Elder from the Wilson River, Frank Millar, and his wife Alice, resided here for many years until 1964.

As visitor numbers increase each year the venture has proved a financial success and one which has achieved its aim to 'increase awareness of Aboriginal heritage and culture'. Today the most common response of campers is "...Thank you, we had no idea..."



Photos from top right (clockwise): Corner Country Tibooburra LALC, two photos from the 2013 Aboriginal Land Council Conference, Tibooburra Keeping Place Museum, photo from 2013 Aboriginal Land Council Conference.



WIRADJURI

The Wiradjuri region has a population of 28,038 Aboriginal people which is 5.4 per cent of the whole population. Local Aboriginal Land Councils in the Wiradjuri region include Albury & District, Bathurst, Brungle – Tumut, Condobolin, Cowra, Cummeragunja, Deniliquin, Griffith, Hay, Leeton & District, Moama, Murrin Bridge, Narranderra, Onerwal, Orange, Peak Hill, Pejar, Wagga Wagga, Wamba Wamba, West Wyalong and Young Local Aboriginal Land Council.

ORANGE LOCAL ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCIL

Biodiversity program

Orange Local Aboriginal Land Council (Orange LALC) received a \$2.26m Commonwealth biodiversity grant to implement a biodiversity program focussing on regeneration, propagation and restoration of land.

The program has seen the Orange LALC form meaningful and long-term partnerships and Memoranda of Understanding with relevant stakeholders including NSW National Parks and Wildlife Services, Cadia Valley Operations, Orange City Council, Angus Knight Group, Local Land Services, Local Land Care Groups and local private landholders.

The program employs 10 fulltime Aboriginal staff.

Yugaway (Motel Development)

Orange LALC was granted land under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act* and over the last four years the LALC has been working on a proposed motel development for this land.

A Development Application (DA) was recently submitted to Orange City Council for a \$18m, 110 room motel with the capacity for a 300 seat function area. The development will have the potential to employ 80 Aboriginal people from community within the industry, comprising of full time, part time and job share positions.

IBA funded the DA process and Orange LALC is now awaiting the DA approval.

Ability Links

Orange LALC is part of a consortia with Deniliquin LALC, Broken Hill LALC and Intereach. This consortia has been successful in tendering for the Aboriginal Ability Links tender for the western region. These LALCs have been funded for 11 positions - 4 of which will be based in Orange, 4 at Deniliquin and 3 at Broken Hill. The program was developed to assist people with a disability to reconnect to community and to live the life they want to live.

Going Home Staying Home

Orange LALC is the successful provider for the GSH package for families and individuals in Bathurst. The homelessness service is for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and people who are leaving due to domestic violence. This program will employ 5 Aboriginal staff and 5 non-Aboriginal staff. Ability links and GSH are funded by the Department of Family and Community services.



Photos from left to right: Orange LALC TAFE, Orange LALC nursery, Orange LALC proposed motel, Photos from Annette Steele.



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ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCIL**

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