

Integrated Cultural Understanding Awakening the Nyungar Dream

CASE STUDY

Integrated Cultural Understanding



TOP: Noel Wallam and Karim Khan - Planting for the future generations (photo: Nadine Dymock-Webb)

ABOVE: Tuart Tree or (Tooart Boonur) with environmentally friendly rabbit proof meshing guards made by Maamun Danjoo Korliny Waakininy (Men Together Walking Talking) (photo: Nadine Dymock-Webb)

PROJECT TITLE

Integrated Cultural Understanding-
Awakening the Nyungar Dream

PROJECT LEADER

Karim Khan (Goomburrup Aboriginal Corporation) and John Penny (Peedac Pty. Ltd.)

PROJECT MANAGER

Zac Webb (SWCC)

PROJECT DURATION

September 2011- June 2013

PARTNERSHIPS

DEC, Goomburrup Aboriginal Corporation, Maamun Danjoo Korliny Waakininy and Peedac Pty. Ltd.

PROJECT AREA

Various sites across the South West, including, Abba River on Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) estate between the Ludlow Tourist Drive and the Bussell Highway.

BENEFICIARIES

DEC Estate, the Vasse-Wonnerup system and Aboriginal cultural heritage, Goomburrup Aboriginal Corporation, Maamun Danjoo Korliny Waakininy and Peedac Pty. Ltd.

NOTE: The spelling of the word Nyungar is subject to variation as the language was passed down through generations orally. It may also be spelt Noongar, Nyungah, Nyoongar and Nyoongah



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This project is supported by the South West Catchments Council, through funding from the Australian Government's Program, Caring for Our Country and the Government of Western Australia.



Department of
Environment and Conservation
Our environment, our future

During 2010-2011, the Wadandi people (People of the Sea) consulted extensively with SWCC and participated in the cultural landscape mapping of the Vasse-Wonnerup wetland system. This work captured important local traditional knowledge, which is now being used to inform environmental management decisions in the area.

It also facilitated the meaningful involvement of Traditional Custodians in Natural Resource Management (NRM) decision-making, as the results of the survey and mapping work was used to identify priorities for future on-ground work for SWCC to undertake in partnership with the Nyungar community.

The site that was selected as a priority for the community for work during this investment was the Abba River, due to its cultural and environmental significance as a major tributary to the Vasse-Wonnerup. A significant works area along the river, on Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) estate between the Ludlow Tourist Drive and the Bussell Highway, has been funded through the Integrated Cultural Understanding project.

A project plan was compiled in 2012 for the work to protect cultural and environmental values. This was based on technical knowledge and advice from SWCC and DEC staff, as well as advice from local Traditional Custodians. From these directives, 10 ha of weed control of a number of species (including *Watsonia*, arum lily, assorted annuals and wild fig)



has been undertaken, along with the establishment of 7,500 local native seedlings. The seedlings have been protected using custom-built tree guards, to protect them from being damaged by grazing rabbits and kangaroos.

Wadandi maamun Wayne Webb says, *"I remember when I was growing up, my grandmothers and grandfathers would take us along the Abba River along with all the water systems found in our peoples traditional lands, they would take us to these once running Bilya (rivers) to catch Culter (Mullet). We can't do this anymore because of the changes to the landscape."*

"We made nets from Hovea and Devil weed, which we scoop along the shallow pools and estuary's catching shrimp and bait. Sometimes Coriel (crabs) would become entangled, but more often we would dive for Coreil in the waters, catching them by hand, until someone got nipped, which would make all of us laugh. Other Coolungas (Children) of my Moort (Family) would shout "It was the biggest Crab ever, it nearly bit

my finger off!" Oh, we used to have such fun as kids; it was a happy healthy life, full of learning that I miss now. We still do a lot of fishing and hunting but it's restricted between work hours, fishery rules and regulations."

The group "Maamun Danjoo Koorliny Waakininy" (Men Together, Walking, Talking) is one of two Nyungar organisations that have been engaged by SWCC to work in partnership for on-ground delivery. The organisation operates out of Goomburrup House in Bunbury and its members are local Nyungar men who want to work to give something back to their community. They have focused their efforts as part of this investment on working at the Abba River site.



TOP: Abba River Map – Three river systems Abba, Sabina and Vasse discharge into the Vasse estuary system

BOTTOM LEFT: L-R Zac Webb, Noel Wallam, Karim Khan, Clint Jetta and Bill Turner (photo: Nadine Dymock-Webb)

BOTTOM RIGHT: Tony Bennell (photo: Nadine Dymock-Webb)



Karim Khan from Maamun Danjoo Koorliny Waakininy says, "We think it is great SWCC is involving the Noongar community to care for Country. It is early days for Maamun Danjoo Koorliny Waakininy, but we are grateful for the opportunity to work on country, to gain experience in environmental work and to show our younger Men that we don't need to rely on funding, that we can earn our own money to do the things we want to do. We will also use this opportunity to talk about our responsibility as Noongars to care for Boodja."

He adds, "Other things we would like to see is basically further opportunities and community involvement."

Peedac Pty Ltd has also been engaged by SWCC through a grant agreement to undertake an array of on-ground projects which include the revegetation and restoration of cultural appropriate sites identified by Elders in the community and assist in SWCC's various projects across the region.

John Penny, Manager of Peedac Pty. Ltd. says, "We think it is great that SWCC is involving the Noongar community to care for Country. We currently have a small contract with SWCC which is going quite well at the moment. We can now apply for our own CALM [Department of Environment and Conservation] contracts so that we can take ownership and care for our own lands."

"We need more opportunities for Noongar involvement not only in the country regions, but also for Noongar people who live in the Metro area so they can also work on their country. We believe that all our Noongar People should be trained and given the opportunity to care for their country." "The main thing is that we are training our Noongar people and giving them the opportunity take ownership of our lands. These men and women can then become role models for the younger generation of our people."

SWCC hopes that the steps taken in partnership as part of this project will pave the way for more work with the Nyungar community on NRM projects in future across the South West, for the benefit of Aboriginal enterprise in NRM, our community and our environment.



ABOVE: Clint Jetta supervising planting progress (photo: Nadine Dymock-Webb)

"I just love listening to stories from elders. Whenever I'm on country it fills me with pride. As a young Pibulmen/Wadandi Maamun (Man) I feel privileged to be able to work for an organisation that works alongside Aboriginal people and actively involves the Nyungar community on an array of environmental/cultural projects."

Zac Webb, SWCC



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working together to make a difference today and develop a sustainable environment for tomorrow.