



Wuthathi Aboriginal Corporation News

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November 2023



Wuthathi Custodians Marco Wilson & Jordan Solomon have had a busy year! Here they are at Captain Billy's Landing looking for their next adventure – see pages 4-5 for more!

Leading the ILUA management process

The Raine Island Indigenous Land Use Agreement Working Group (ILUAWG), representing the Wuthathi and Meriam Nations, continues to guide the Raine Island Recovery Project work program through Phase 2 of the project in partnership with the Queensland Government, Raine Island First Nations Coordinator Andrew Simmonds says.

"At the same time, the ILUAWG has been progressing work on the transition to a First Nations-led co-management framework for Raine Island," he said. "This work has been a focus in 2023.

"I have been working to support the ILUAWG to develop protocols establishing the rules and procedures for how the partners work to care for Raine Island country and culture.

"The work includes a Cultural Protocol, which has been drafted to guide how people visiting and working on Raine Island must act and behave to respect and care for country and culture.

"Work to scope the options available to set up a fund for First Nations to attract and manage their own funds has also been progressed.

"Once established, this will allow the First Nations partners to operate independently as leaders in the co-management of the ILUA Agreement Area, which includes Raine Island, Moulter and McLennan Cays and their surrounding waters.

"This work was all progressed during the ILUAWG governance meeting held early in November.

"Drafts of the Protocols will be provided to each RNTBC party to the ILUA for feedback and discussion with their members before being finalised.

"Future work includes developing fundraising tools and strategies to use to pitch to sponsors and donors inviting them to invest in First Nations-led management objectives for Raine Island."

Andrew also had opportunity

to help Wuthathi expand its partnerships capabilities.

"This means Wuthathi can better engage with their partners to the Raine Island ILUA and reach better outcomes for country and culture, together," he said.

"My role reaches the end of its funded term in January 2024, but work to extend my tenure is underway."



Raine Island First Nations
Coordinator Andrew Simmonds

From our Chair...

Time has passed quickly since our last newsletter Wuthathi Aboriginal Corporation chair Keron Murray writes...

We continue to be busy with Corporation activities. I'd like to start with a big shout out to members and our friends for their contributions and interest in the business of Wuthathi Aboriginal Corporation (WAC). I hope all is well for you all.



Sea Claim

We have finalised all our consultations for our sea claim and authorised the applicants and working group.

We have met with members from Gudang Yadheykanu, and the eastern and central islands, and agreed on a process to work through negotiations.

We will continue to update members through our newsletters, Facebook and via our WAC Directors.

One Claim.

On a field trip in September our Wuthathi Tribal Elders Council met with Northern Kaanju reps on Country.

There is no final agreement on boundaries, so far.

You should have all received a letter from the Cape York Land Council (CYLC) lawyer informing us where it is all at from their side.

State Land Dealings has started for the Richardson Bramwell area, which is the same area as the One Claim in the head waters of the Olive River.

Traditional Owner Negotiating Committee members have discussed continuing those conversations through a process run by Balkanu Cape York Development Corporation.

World Heritage Process

The World Heritage Task Force will be at our Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Saturday 25 November 2023.

They will be there only to talk about tentative listing, and whether Wuthathi people would like our Country listed for World Heritage natural and cultural values.

They are looking at a Cape York-wide listing and will be engaging with all groups.

It will be an opportunity for us to discuss in detail and there will be more opportunities via a thorough consultation process.

If members have any thoughts or questions, please contact your Director or the WAC office and we can assist with more information as needed.

Land Management

Now our land management is on track we will be looking into future developments such as housing on Country and tourism enterprises so we can generate employment for our mob and create a fund for helping our mob through a future economic arm of the Corporation.

EOIs and On-Country Trips
Please all mob – put through your Expressions of Interest (EOIs) for future trips and projects, and keep an eye out for upcoming new jobs.

As our Corporation grows more jobs will be there for our mob.

Memberships

A lot of mail continues to return from incorrect addresses.

Can all members please check with families and those who have not received their AGM notification or this newsletter.

Please ask family and friends to update their contact information, it is important that postal addresses are kept up to date as some important claim and corporation business still needs to go out by mail.

If anyone needs help with this, please contact the WAC office or your Director or Alternate Director to make sure we have the correct contact details for all members.

Rangers and On-Country Access

Our rangers have been working on eliminating weeds, fixing tracks into camping areas for our people and making a track to access Double Point, so all our mob can enjoy Country.

Those wishing to go on Country please contact the office for more information.

Stay blessed and have a merry Christmas, a happy new year and please travel safe.

Keron Murray

WAC Chair
chairman@wuthathi.com

IPA plan signed and good to go



WAC Custodians Paul Sexton (left) & Jordan Soloman (right) with WAC's new IPA Coordinator Tim O'Reilly (centre) on the beach at Maa'u undertaking heli-survey work

Minsters Tanya Plibersek and Linda Burney signed off on the Wuthathi Indigenous Protected Area Management Plan 2023-33 and the voluntary dedication of Stage 1 of the Wuthathi Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) in September this year.

WAC IPA Coordinator Tim O'Reilly said it was a massive achievement for the organisation and the culmination of many years work by a great number of people.

"Thanks to outgoing IPA Coordinator Sophie Holt for the great work she undertook in getting all the documentation, mapping and revised plans through the complex web of Government requirements to proceed with dedication," he said.

"WAC is now in a position to begin planning a formal dedication ceremony up on country in 2024.

"It is likely this will be mid-year when roads are open and access is less challenging.

"It will be a great opportunity to bring many Wuthathi people together, as well as inviting key IPA project partners to celebrate the announcement and management of the Wuthathi IPA."

He said key activities were ongoing as the IPA continued management of Ngaachi and Karakara with the Wuthathi custodians from their base.

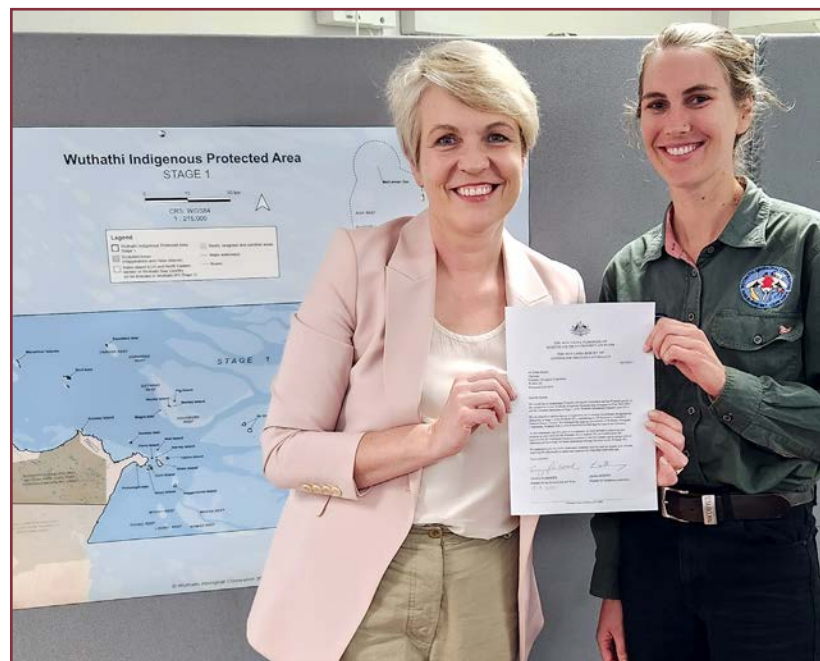
"Recent activities have included managing fire, clearing tracks, sea grass monitoring, inshore dolphin surveys and on-country planning," he said.

"We have already made applications to get started on IPA Stage 2 consultations, as well as looking at some other funding opportunities

through the Great Barrier Reef Foundation and project partners.

"It is an exciting time as the IPA moves from it's consultation phase into implementation and management.

"The recent securing of two additional ranger positions through the Queensland Government's Indigenous Land and Sea Rangers program is set to bolster our Custodian footprint up on country."



Minister for the Environment and Water Tanya Plibersek and former IPA Coordinator Sophie Holt with the letter of dedication.

See more on page 6 ...

...from page 1

2023 was a busy and productive year for the WAC and custodians at Shelburne Bay Senior Land & Sea Ranger Paul Sexton says. "In early May we had the opportunity to conduct water quality after the wet," he said. "Some of the sites were one of the monitoring sites at one of the sand dunes the other was at Middle Camp (Harmer Creek), and a new site was chosen at the small creek beside the custodian base. All these sites were monitored for salinity, ph, turbidity and water temperature so we can monitor changes and the custodian and elders was heavily involved in the whole process."

Tangaroa Blue

Paul said later in May and in early June the custodians, elders and traditional owners were again involved in the beach cleanup with Tangaroa Blue focused on Indian Bay.

"We managed to clean and remove 10.8 tonnes of beach debris from a 2.8km stretch of Indian Bay beach," he said.

"Access to that part of the beach was

limited so everything we needed was transported by helicopter from the Wuthathi Shelburne Bay base.

"So it was logistically challenging but we still managed to record the most debris removed off the beach by tonnage, and we were the first in Tangaroa Blue history to complete a clean up by helicopter."

The Wuthathi & Tangaroa Blue marine debris (Indian Bay) participants were:

- 3 x Wuthathi Elders
- 12 x Wuthathi Custodians
- 3 x Tangaroa Blue staff
- 6 x Tangaroa Blue volunteers
- 1 x representative from Australian Border Force.

Compliance training

In June the two custodians Rex Pablo & Jordan Solomon were a

part of three days of co

held in Lockhart River.

"The second part of th

delivered this month,"

"I also attended the a

leadership program in

said.

"I have been a part of

2020 whilst I was empl

but this year I represen

"The program means

leadership traits and v

custodians on Shelburn

"We teamed up again

Blue for a beach clean

Billy's Landing in Septe

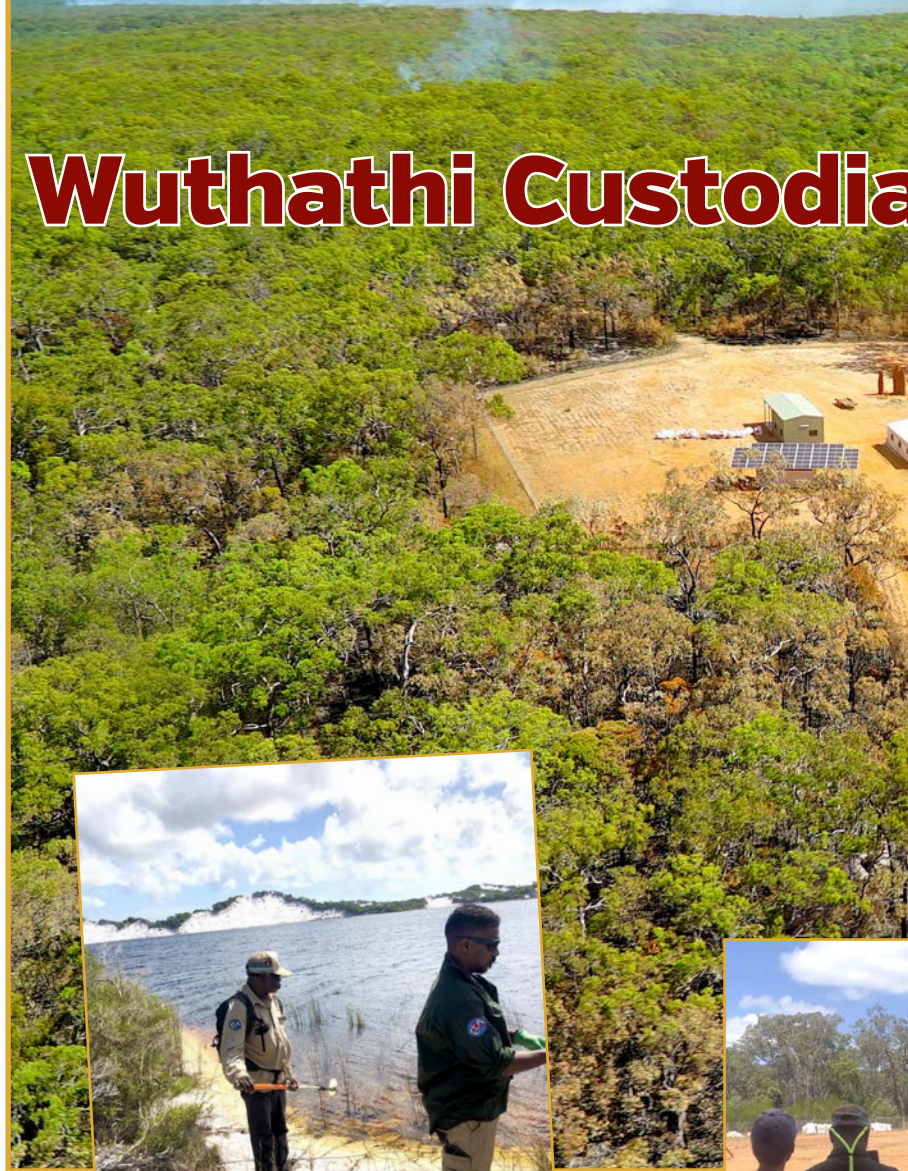
Sea grass m

In July WAC was invit

AMSA conference on t

present about the sea

Wuthathi Custodians



ns gaining ground



year but this was because we were able to walk the reef flats during the lower tides.

"Windy conditions meant we didn't have an opportunity to conduct surveys at Indian Bay, Shelburne Bay and the sand bar at Margaret Bay (Bremner Shoal), but we hope to complete these sites next year."

Dolphins, weeds and tractors

Custodians Marco and Jordan took part in a snubfin dolphin survey undertaken between Olive River and Captain Billy's Landing.

"The trip was successful but due to windy condition the trip was cut short to three days instead of five," Paul said.

"The project was jointly conducted by the Dolphin Project Australia on the research vessel Infamous and hope we can continue this project next year.

"In August Marco Wilson and I also conducted a three-day weeds survey with two QPWS staff east of Bramwell station along the northern side of the Olive River that leads to the Olive River boat ramp.

"The corporation finally received the new Kubota tractor that will be based at Shelburne Bay custodian base, after nearly a year of waiting for parts and assembling due to covid quarantine.

"Marco Wilson, Jordan Solomon and myself have completed relevant training over three days to operate the tractor.

"Our new women's quarters were also installed, which include two rooms and shower & toilet.

"This is the addition to Shelburne Bay custodian base which also offers the opportunity to employ women custodians to live and work on Ngaachi and Karakara in the future."

compliance training

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he said.

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employed with QPWS
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I can pass on
values to the
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-up at Captain
ember this year."

Monitoring

ed to attend the
the Gold Coast to
grass monitoring

conducted on Wuthathi sea country with our partners from JCU & Tropwater.

"Clayton Enoch, Ashley Wilson, Sophie Holt, Katherine Collier and myself presented at the conference about sea grass project," he said.

"In October we had the second part of sea grass surveys.

"We had eight custodians, one elder and two JCU staff, on board and the surveys were carried out on Wuthathi karakara.

"The surveys included reef flats on very low tide and water depths of up to 12 metres with a drop camera.

"The trip was planned for eight days on Karakara, and we started from the northern section of Wuthathi Karakara, the Saunders, Macarthur Islands, Magra Islet, Margaret Bay, and the family Island group.

"We managed to conduct 379 sites this year compared to 312 from the previous

IPA plan signed and good to go

... from page 2



ABOVE: Wuthathi Aboriginal Corporation Chair Keron Murray spoke to media about the IPA dedication, with Minister Tanya Plibersek and WAC's previous General Manager Jim Turnour watching on.

Introducing our new IPA Coordinator Tim O'Reilly ...

New IPA Coordinator
Tim O'Reilly grew up in a small rural property near Toowoomba in south east Queensland.

"I finished an Environmental Science degree in Brisbane before travelling Australia for the next four years," he said. "I was a tour guide in the Kimberley region where I developed a passion for working with Traditional Owners after travelling with senior Ngarinyin, Wunambal-Gaambera and Bunuba men around the their Country.

"I moved from there to Cape York to work on economic



development projects.

"About 20 years ago, I was lucky to join a cultural mapping trip to Wuthathi country with Johnson Chippendale, James and Brian Macumboy and some Kuuku Ya'u elders.

"This trip planted a seed to work with Traditional Owner groups who were trying to re-establish themselves on country.

"After working in Aurukun to develop a community-owned charter operation, Aurukun Wetland Charters, I chaired the Aurukun Waterways, Wetlands and Coastal Advisory Committee before returning years later to work as Wik IPA Coordinator during their consultation phase.

"Ten years later, when the opportunity arose to apply for the Wuthathi IPA Coordinator role, I didn't hesitate."

Wuthathi Elders Tribal Council working hard

The Wuthathi Elders Tribal Council is working hard to support families, custodians and staff in their aspirations to reconnect culturally, spiritually and physically with Wuthathi Country.

"We're happy to have our custodians out on Country working from our ranger base," Elder Cecil Macumboy (pictured left) said.

"We've got our Head Custodian Paulie, Marco and Jordan, they all do their job and we are happy for them.

"They've got the job of looking after our country and our sea, it's a big job.

"It's important for our future because we have all the young boys and girls coming up.

"They see what we do on country and they understand what we tell them – they're pretty good, hey."

Cecil was born in Coen, but grew up in Lockhart River and works for the Council as a qualified plumber.

He said he hopes to see Wuthathi people on their own Country learning about their culture in the future.





Congratulations Fabian!

Late last month Fabian Tabuai graduated with her Certificate II Conservation & Ecosystem Management – well done Fabian!



Back row: Community Research Assistant Kathy Wymarra, WAC Director Kenny O'Brien and Chair Keron Murray.
Front row: Receptionist Polly Namai and Administration Officer Teleya Wallis.

For more information about any of the stories in this newsletter please contact our Wuthathi Office on 4249 3360.



Administration: Polly Namai: 07 4249 3361
General Manager: To be advertised soon
IPA Coordinator: Tim O'Reilly: 07 4249 3360
Finance Manager: Mitchell Holmes, : 07 4249 3362
Land and Sea Custodians Coordinator: Clayton Enoch: 07 4249 3364