

WALGA Forum: Building Positive Partnerships with Aboriginal Communities



Date: Tuesday, 6 August 2019
Time: 9:00am – 3:30pm (Registration from 8:30am)
Venue: Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre, 21 Mounts Bay Road, Perth

FORUM OVERVIEW

Please join us for this fantastic opportunity to hear about how Local Governments can develop strong, ongoing relationships with local Aboriginal communities that recognise our shared cultural heritage, build community capacity and celebrate successes.

PROGRAM

9:00am Welcome and introduction

9:05am Welcome to Country
Dr Noel Nannup

GOVERNANCE SESSION

9:15am Principles of engagement
Wayne Nannup, Chief Executive Officer, SWALSC

9:35am Aboriginal engagement, employment and procurement in line with Aboriginal protocols and customs
Dr Richard Walley OAM, Director, Aboriginal Productions and Promotions

9:55am Local Government: Sleeping Giants of Reconciliation
Carol Innes and Gary Smith, Co-Chairs, Reconciliation WA

10:15am South West Native Title Settlement: update and next steps
Angela Elder, Manager Aboriginal Policy and Coordination Unit, DPC

10:30am South West Native Title Settlement: creating the Noongar Land Estate
Sean Browne, Project Manager Agreements Implementation, DPLH

10:45am Panel question and answer session

11:10am Morning tea

MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT SESSION

11:40am Aboriginal employment initiatives at the Shire of Halls Creek
Noel Mason, Chief Executive Officer, Shire of Halls Creek

12:00pm Broome Town Beach redevelopment – consultation versus collaboration
Sam Mastrolembo, Chief Executive Officer, Shire of Broome

12:20pm The journey of the Bunbury Geographe RAP Reflect – developing a collaborative RAP and community engagement processes
*Kerry Shaw, Senior Community Partnerships Officer, City of Bunbury;
Ernie Hill, Coordinator, Goombarrup Aboriginal Corporation*

12:40 pm City of Melville's Reconciliation Action Plan engagement journey
Leanne Woods, Community Development Officer, City of Melville

1:00pm Lunch



DECOLONISING LANDCARE AND THRIVING CULTURE SESSION

- 1:45pm** **Noongar place names drive whole-of-community ownership through a shared sense of place**
Justin Bellanger, Chief Executive Officer, South Coast NRM
- 2:10pm** **The old people told me to look after our culture, law and the land**
Tracy Carboon, Healthy Country Coordinator, Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa
- 2:35pm** **Supporting Aboriginal cultural centres: Bilya Koort Boodja, centre for Nyoongar culture and environmental knowledge in Northam**
Ross Rayson, Executive Manager Community Services, Shire of Northam
- 3:00pm** **Midwest Aboriginal Ranger Program – improving the biodiversity of ecosystems**
Bianca McNeair, Aboriginal Program Coordinator, NACC
- 3:30pm** **Close of event**

PRESENTATION OVERVIEWS

GOVERNANCE SESSION

Wayne Nannup, Chief Executive Officer, South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council will discuss the opportunities for Local Government to establish positive and lasting relationships with Aboriginal communities offered by the SWNTS. Opportunities include shared decision making, and facilitation of joint learning and communication of cultural, environmental and heritage values of land. Wayne will also outline the key principles for meaningful engagement with Aboriginal communities to develop lasting relationships built on trust and integrity. These include engaging early with Aboriginal communities, engaging the right people to speak for country, and supporting cultural awareness in the workplace.

Dr Richard Walley OAM, Director, Aboriginal Productions and Promotions is a Nyoongar man with strong connections to many regions, including Wadjuk. Richard will discuss Aboriginal engagement, employment and procurement in line with Aboriginal protocols and customs.

Carol Innes and Gary Smith, Co-Chairs, Reconciliation WA, will discuss the important role that Local Government can play in reconciliation and truth telling at a local level. In the 2017 *Uluru Statement from the Heart*, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people issued a clear call for truth telling and recognised the central role of truth telling in healing and reconciliation, and its power to shape a better future for all Australians. Reconciliation Australia's recent Australian Reconciliation Barometer found that 80% of Australians support truth telling processes. Carol and Gary will discuss how many local governments around Australia are doing important work to engage in a range of activities and initiatives that involve truth telling for the betterment of their communities. Momentum is building for a greater focus on truth telling at a local level; and Carol and Gary will discuss the principles that should guide truth telling in Australia.



Angela Elder, Manager Aboriginal Policy and Coordination Unit, Department of the Premier and Cabinet, will provide an update on the South West Native Title Settlement (SWNTS), the most comprehensive native title agreement in Australian history. Angela will review key elements of the Settlement, including those of particular relevance to the 101 Local Governments within its boundaries, and outline next steps toward Settlement commencement and implementation.

Sean Browne, Project Manager Agreements Implementation, Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage, will provide an overview of the Noongar Land Estate and Land Access Agreements under the SWNTS. The Noongar Land Estate will provide the Noongar people with a significant asset to be managed and developed in line with Noongar cultural, social and economic aspirations for the benefit of generations to come. Noongar people will also hold lawful access to certain Crown land for cultural purposes under Land Access Agreements. Sean will explore the resulting partnership opportunities for Local Government.

MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT SESSION

Noel Mason, Chief Executive Officer, Shire of Halls Creek, will provide insight into the Shire's strategic use of employment as an opportunity to improve community engagement; whilst delivering social and safety outcomes for the youth and community of Halls Creek. The Shire's activities demonstrate the true value of engagement utilising concepts of Asset Based Community Development, empowerment and inclusion principles – whilst applying a healthy dose of good old remote community get up and go.

Sam Mastrolembro, Chief Executive Officer, Shire of Broome, will discuss how a change of approach between the Shire and Yawuru people, the native title holders within the Broome town site, has delivered beneficial outcomes for both, but more importantly the whole community. The *Shire's Aboriginal Heritage Consultation Policy*, adopted in 2017, acknowledges the importance of Aboriginal heritage and provides a clear process for engagement during development strategies and public works. Sam will provide a case study on how the Shire and Yawuru people collaborated on the Broome Town Beach redevelopment, which has resulted in a community facility that embraces and celebrates the cultural significance of the area through the site design, artwork and interpretive materials.

Kerry Shaw, Senior Community Partnerships Officer, City of Bunbury will outline the development and future direction of the Bunbury Geographe RAP Reflect, the first collaborative regional RAP endorsed by Reconciliation Australia. Kerry will discuss the collaborative approach to develop the RAP between the Local Governments of Bunbury, Capel, Dardanup and Harvey, together with the South West Development Commission, Edith Cowan University and representatives from the Gnala Karla Boodja and South West native title areas. **Ernie Hill, Coordinator, Goombarrup Aboriginal Corporation**, was involved in a cultural interpretation project supported by the RAP, the Wardandi Boodja sculpture. Ernie will discuss the engagement process for the 5.5 m steel sculpture, which takes pride of place at the Koombana Foreshore. The artwork stands as a guardian and reminder that we all live in Wardandi saltwater country.

Leanne Woods, Community Development Officer, City of Melville, will share the City of Melville's Innovate and Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) engagement journey. Leanne will discuss the role and responsibilities of the RAP Continuous Improvement Team, key achievements of the RAP process internally and for the community, and employment outcomes sought and achieved. Leanne will discuss the challenges that the City has faced on its RAP journey and lessons learnt along the way, providing insights that will help other Local Governments with their RAP processes.



DECOLONISING LANDCARE AND THRIVING CULTURE SESSION

Justin Bellanger, Chief Executive Officer, South Coast Natural Resource Management (SCNRM) and representatives from the local Aboriginal community and City of Albany, will discuss the 'Restoring Noongar Place Names' collaborative project. The project aims to recognise the shared history of the region and promote a deeper understanding of places by introducing dual name signs at popular landmark sites, including Middleton Beach, Mt Elphinstone, Oyster Harbour and Green Island. The project team will discuss how the integrated nature of place naming works and the practicalities of implementation.

Zan King, General Manager, Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa, will discuss how Martu are the traditional owners of 13.6 million hectares in the remote East Pilbara region of Western Australia. Martu lands are part of the most intact arid ecosystem anywhere in the world and provide one of the last wild havens for some of Australia's iconic but highly threatened desert species. Zan will discuss how Martu rangers work using traditional land management techniques combined with modern technology and natural resource management practices to protect the natural and cultural values of this country. This includes the large-scale use of fire to selectively burn areas and create a patchwork of vegetation regrowth, and Martu bush skills to survey and conserve threatened mammals and birds.

Ross Rayson, Executive Manager Community Services, Shire of Northam, will discuss the development and operation of the Bilya Koort Boodja Centre for Nyoongar Culture and Environmental Knowledge in Northam. The Centre was developed through a partnership between the Shire of Northam, Australian Government, Lotterywest, the Government of Western Australia and the Wheatbelt Development Commission. The Shire of Northam Aboriginal Advisory Group provided cultural guidance to the Shire on the development and operation of the Centre and continues to support the operation of the Centre. This ensures that the focus on culture is appropriately maintained and that the Centre continues to represent and connect with the Aboriginal community. Ross will highlight the key achievements and outcomes of the project for the local community and the Shire, and provide advice on working effectively with Aboriginal advisory groups in the Local Government context.

Bianca McNeair, Aboriginal Program Coordinator, Northern Agricultural Catchments Council (NACC) will discuss how traditional ecological knowledge is extremely valuable in enhancing the ways we understand and care for our environment. The NACC works alongside Yamatji and Noongar Aboriginal people in the northern agricultural region, which extends from Kalbarri down to Gingin and inland to Mullewa. Bianca will discuss the Midwest Aboriginal Ranger Program, a multi-stakeholder project funded by State Government that delivers a range of land and marine conservation activities, including maintenance of natural water sources, vegetation rehabilitation, and invasive weed and pest management. Bianca will show how the ranger and other NACC programs build capacity and share Aboriginal knowledge, therefore improving the biodiversity of ecosystems and strengthening the social and economic outcomes across the region.