



June
2022



Boorna Wangkiny



► CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE

Kaya SWALSC members,

The state of WA recently made the second of 12 annual payments into the Noongar Boodja Trust. As we begin this second year of the Settlement, we should be proud of the progress we've made towards establishing the structures needed to support and inspire a strong and unified Noongar Nation.

Over the next 12 years we will develop the capacity to take full responsibility for managing the Trust – an important milestone towards self-determination.

In the short term, our six regional corporations are about to hold their first general meetings, where they will elect their cultural advice committees and their new member elected boards will begin their terms. Details of those meetings are on page 2 of this issue. If you haven't already joined your regional corporation, I encourage you to do so.

I'd like to thank the regional corporation initial directors who volunteered their time and efforts to get us to this point.

Thank you to: Barbara Bynder, David Collard, Kevin Fitzgerald and Murray Yarran in Ballardong; Charne Hayden, Cheryl Martin, Lynette Narkle and Lera Bennell in Gnaala Karla Booja; Chontarle Bellottie, Nicole Calgaret-Casley, Anthony Hansen and Stephen Van Leeuwen in Karri Karrak; Lindsay

Dean, Jeanice Krakouer, Craig McVee and Merindah Bairnsfather-Scott in Wagyl Kaip; Karen Garlett, Vickey Hill, Diana Ponton and Kerry-Ann Winmar in Whadjuk; and Greg Narrier, Diane Yappo, Mark Borinelli and Trevor Walley in Yued.

I also want to give our thanks to David Ashton, who has served as an expert director on the SWALSC board since 2016. David has been a strong supporter of Noongar people, working with the six SWALSC member elected directors to set our strategic direction during this period of transition. The board appreciates his years of support and we wish him well for the future.

Brendan Moore

IN THIS ISSUE:

The South West
Conservation
Estate
Page 6

*Regional
corporations
progress
update*

Page 2



REGIONAL CORPORATIONS PROGRESS UPDATE

The six Noongar regional corporations are well on their way to endorsement, and their first general meetings are being held.

The first member-elected directors of each corporation will take up their positions at the close of their respective general meetings. By now, members of each corporation should have received information in the post about these meetings. This pack includes information about candidates for the cultural advice committees, who will be elected at the first general meetings.

The initial directors of each corporation have done a huge amount over the past year. They have met regularly to arrange the set up of each corporation, including membership approvals, ORIC registrations, getting charitable status and a lot of other administration work. SWALSC would like to thank the initial directors for all their hard work in progressing the implementation of the regional corporations.

In the next few months following the general meetings, the new member-elected directors

will be inducted and will begin to appoint expert directors, prepare strategic plans and budgets, find office space and appoint CEOs.

Each regional corporation also has their own website ready to help them share news, events, and stories from around their region with their members and communities as they do this work.

Implementation Manager Vanessa Kickett said that while there's more work to do, there's a goal in sight and we're ready to meet it.

"It will be a busy time ahead for the six Noongar regional corporations and the CSC, but we're on track to endorsement from the state and trustee by the end of the year. We are so grateful for all the hard work of our initial directors in keeping the process moving forward," she said.

"Once the regional corporations are established and operating, we can start putting the South West Native Title Settlement to good use by Noongar people, for the benefit of the Noongar nation."

GENERAL MEETING DATES

The six regional corporations are all set to hold their first general meetings. Information packs have been sent to eligible members in the post. If you have any questions about your eligibility to attend a meeting, please contact SWALSC on 9358 7400 or email regionalcorporations@noongar.org.au

WAGYL KAIP RC GENERAL MEETING

DATE: Saturday 11 June 2022

TIME: 10:00am

VENUE: Kojonup Town Hall and online

BALLARDONG RC GENERAL MEETING

DATE: Saturday 18 June 2022

TIME: 10:00am

VENUE: Northam Town Hall

WHADJUK RC GENERAL MEETING

DATE: Saturday 25 June

TIME: 10:00am

VENUE: The Rise, Maylands and online

KARRI KARRAK RC GENERAL MEETING

DATE: Saturday 2 July

TIME: 12:30pm

VENUE: Churchill Park Hall, Busselton and online

GKB RC GENERAL MEETING

DATE: Saturday 16 July

TIME: 10:00am

VENUE: South West Italian Club, Bunbury

YUED RC GENERAL MEETING

DATE: Saturday 9 July

TIME: 10:00am

VENUE: Moora Recreation Centre

NEW MEMBER ELECTED BOARDS

Elections for the first member-elected directors for each of the six regional corporations have now been finalised. The member-elected directors will begin their terms following the general meetings of their respective corporations. Members of the cultural advice committees will be announced once the general meetings have been held.

Congratulations to all of the first member elected directors, we wish you well in your work ahead.

BALLARDONG ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

Kevin Fitzgerald
Norman Pickett
Michael Blurton
Murray Yarran

GNAALA KARLA BOOJA ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

Cheryl Martin
John Penny
Michael Cartledge
Lynette Narkle

KARRI KARRAK ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

Nicole Casley
Stephen Van Leeuwen
Chontarle Bellottie
Tony Hansen

WAGYL KAIP ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

Mervyn Eades
Malcolm Williams
Jeanice Krakouer
Oscar Colbung

WHADJUK ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

Diana Ponton
Kerri Ann Winmar
Rosemary Walley
Vicki Hill

YUED ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

Gail Beck
Benny Woodley Snr
Diane Yappo
Trevor Walley

Connect with your regional corporation online!

Keep up-to-date with all the news and events from each regional corporation at their brand new websites. You can also apply for membership of your corporation if you haven't already done so.

ballardong.org.au
gkb.org.au
karrikarrak.org.au
whadjuknoongar.org.au
wagylkaip.org.au
yued.org.au



CULTURAL ADVICE COMMITTEES: PROTECTING AND PROMOTING CULTURE

SWALSC has produced an informative video explaining the roles of the cultural advice committees (CAC). This is the second animated video in a series outlining the details of the South West Native Title Settlement.

Each regional corporation will have a CAC made up of Elders who consider matters relevant to culture, and make decisions to promote and protect Noongar cultural interests.

Matters that may be decided by the committee may include:

- Determining what cultural connection exists, or could exist, to support a piece of land being considered 'Cultural Lands' as part of the Noongar Boodja Trust.
- Determining those people who have most knowledge of relevant lands in order for surveys to be properly conducted.
- Determining how cultural knowledge should be recorded, and when and how it is shared with others.

- Determining how Noongar cultural protocols and practices should be acknowledged, valued, honoured and respected, including through welcome to country practices.

Ballots to elect members of the cultural advice committee for the regional corporations will be held at the first general meetings.

Visit the SWALSC website at noongar.org.au to watch the first two videos in the series, and follow us on Facebook to stay informed as more are released.



SECOND PAYMENT MADE INTO THE NOONGAR BOODJA TRUST

The Settlement has reached a significant milestone, marking one year since the first of 12 annual payments into the Noongar Boodja Trust. In April, the State Government made its second payment.

The \$63 million included \$50 million plus indexation into the Future Fund and \$10 million plus indexation into the Operations Fund.

The Future Fund is being protected so that its value will grow over time for the benefit of future

Noongar generations, while the Operations Fund will finance the operations of the six Noongar regional corporations and the CSC once they are established.

As we enter the second year of the Settlement, we should be proud of the progress we've made towards establishing the structures needed to build a strong and unified Noongar Nation, and eventually taking full responsibility for managing the Trust.

WELCOME NEW SWALSC DIRECTORS

SWALSC welcomes two new directors to its board. Megan Krakouer was elected on a count back to fill a vacancy in the Wagyl Kaip ward, while Michelle Nelson-Cox was elected in a by-election in March to fill a vacancy in the Ballardong ward.

Megan Krakouer is a Mineng woman from Mt Barker, and is the Director of the National Suicide Prevention and Trauma Recovery Project.

She has a Bachelor of Law and has contributed to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, after visiting 27 prisons to listen to the stories of the voiceless. She has also worked to transform young lives and reduce the prison population at Banksia Juvenile Detention.

Megan fights for effective suicide prevention strategies, to reduce the rates of removal of our children, to educate an end to domestic violence, harp on social justice issues that can save our people crushed by poverty. I work on the frontline, in the homes of our people.

Michelle Nelson-Cox is a proud Noongar woman, with Apical connections to Ballardong, Bibbulem and Wadjuk clans. She is a mother, grandmother and great grandmother. Born in Kellerberrin, she started school in Merredin before the family moved to Perth.

For over 30 years Michelle has been actively involved in Aboriginal Affairs at a local, state and national level. She has worked in native title and for the departments

of Housing and Education, Health Insurance Commission and Disability Service Commission, and holds a Bachelor of Social Science (Indigenous Services) and Bachelor of Arts (Community Management and Adult Education).

Megan and Michelle have already started and contributed in their roles, and we look forward to the exciting work ahead of us as we transition to the CSC.



Megan Krakouer



Michelle Nelson-Cox



A NOONGAR VOICE FOR THE SOUTH WEST CONSERVATION ESTATE

The South West Native Title Settlement is delivering huge benefits to the Noongar community, one of which the cooperative and joint management of the South West Conservation Estate.

The conservation estate includes national parks, marine parks, nature reserves, state forests and any other land within the South West Native Title Settlement area that has been set aside for conservation, and is managed by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA).

This is a significant amount of land – around a third of Noongar Boodja.

Justin McAllister, lands coordinator at SWALSC, explained there will be many important changes in relation to land management within the South West Conservation Estate as a result of the Settlement.

“It’s quite important,” he said, “because towards the end of the year – about a hundred days after the regional corporations are established – each regional corporation is going to enter into a cooperative management agreement with the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions.

“Those cooperative management agreements will create a seat at the table for Noongar representatives from each of the agreement groups next to the district and regional managers of DBCA. They’ll make strategic decisions and provide advice about various matters to do with the conservation estate.”

These changes are significant because, prior to the Settlement, there was only basic level consultation with Noongar people happening on these issues.

“All there is now is Aboriginal heritage consultation under the standard Noongar Standard Heritage Agreement and often minimal consultation regarding things like the management plans, fire burn patterns and stuff like that,” Justin said.

“So this is going to be a fundamental change to the way the conservation estate is managed – a real partnership between Noongar people and DBCA.

“Cooperative management will provide Noongar people with a seat at the management table to make decisions and provide advice for about a third of the land in Noongar country. When you think about national parks and nature reserves etc, there is a lot of special country in that area.

“This is a unique opportunity for Noongar people to protect their culture, to reconnect and help young people connect with their culture, manage the land sustainably, with the potential to create good economic, social, cultural and spiritual outcomes.”

The committees at work

The cooperative management committees will be responsible for big-picture, high-level strategic approaches to managing the entire estate within their region. Joint management committees will do the same tasks for a particular park within the estate, taking care of the specific needs of that area.

Within the Settlement, each regional corporation will enter into a Cooperative Management Agreement that will establish a Noongar-DBCA Cooperative Management Committee, and have at least one joint management agreement signed within the first five years and two within the first ten.

The role of these committees will be to protect Noongar cultural and heritage values within the estate and identify areas of national, conservation or marine parks to jointly manage. They will also provide advice on the undertaking of customary activities such as: hunting, shooting and camping; Noongar economic development, which could include looking at Noongar enterprises and tourism opportunities; and increasing Noongar employment within the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions.

"For the first time, Noongars are going to be sitting at the table and having a significant role in developing management plans with the senior decision makers of the department," Justin said.

Noongar knowledge benefiting all Western Australians

Karim Khan is a Noongar man with ties to the Gnaala Karla Booja and South West Boojarah agreement areas. He has 25 years of employment with the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) through a range of roles. He is currently part of a team of two senior project officers, South West Joint Management within the Aboriginal Engagement and Heritage Unit at DBCA. Through this work he is supporting the DBCA regions and districts to prepare for cooperative and joint management of the conservation estate in the southwest.

He said the changes are an important part of the Settlement that will give Noongar people a real voice in land management that goes beyond consultation.

"It's a large piece of country that, once all the boxes are ticked and the committees are formed, Noongars will have a say in how these lands will be managed," Karim said.

"It's an opportunity we haven't really had before, that's why it's so important for our Noongar people to join in the important work that we'll need to undertake.

"Other areas around the state, other Aboriginal groups, have had opportunities for their Native Title outcomes and joint management arrangements for many years in some places. But for us mob down here it's been a bit of a void or a gap.

"To really connect and say 'this is my country' you've got to get that deeper understanding and connection. Once you've got that, that's when you truly feel part of it."

"And that's why this whole Settlement is so important for our Noongar people. It's our opportunity."

The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions has been on its own journey of building relationships and engaging with Traditional Owners across the state.

"The department has been working with Noongar people for a long time on the small scale, and engaging with SWALSC through heritage matters and that kind of thing, whereas this concept gives us a voice on a more strategic level – management plans for example," Karim said.

"It's about strategic level decision-making, which then flows down into the localised agreements like joint management."

Karim said that cooperative and joint management of the conservation estate won't just benefit Noongars – it will benefit all Western Australians who visit and who live in the south-west. Together, we will all benefit from Noongar traditions and knowledge becoming embedded in how we work to protect and manage the biodiversity of the estate, into tourism opportunities, and promoting Noongar employment.

Noongar representation in the management of the conservation estate will also help people visiting the areas to connect to that country, which Karim says is so important for Australia going forward.

"When tourists or someone visits a place, over time they'll get to know the deeper stories of that place and help them connect to that old story – the story of country.

"To really connect and say 'this is my country' you've got to get that deeper understanding and connection. Once you've got that, that's when you truly feel part of it."

(Continued from page 7)

Honouring and continuing the work of our Elders

The regional corporations will be responsible for nominating people for the cooperative management committees and joint management committees.

Discussions will be had within the regional corporations once established as to how these appointments will be made.

"It's really important that if people want to have a say about how country is managed, to really think about putting their hand up for these committees," Karim said.

"We're going to need six Noongar representatives for each of the six groups.

"Then later on we're going to need Noongar people who are culturally connected to the area on the joint management committees as well."

For Karim, being active in this space is a way of acknowledging the work of the Elders who fought hard over decades towards the South West Native Title Settlement.

"It's about acknowledging their fight for justice, their journey, and honouring and continuing it," he said.

"We're looking for people that are passionate about their country and want to have a voice about how their country is managed.

"It gives us an opportunity to talk at that table, about the values within the bush to us; the plants the animals, the significance of them; how the bush is managed – all these things that are so important and core to who we are.

"Having a voice that's heard, listened to, and acknowledged for the value that we bring to looking after country. That's the most important stuff."

Karim said these changes to the South West Conservation Estate are a great opportunity for Noongar people and DBCA to build strong and enduring relationships based on respect and acceptance of each other's responsibilities to look after country.

For more information visit wa.gov.au/government/publications/south-west-conservation-estate-management.

PROTECTING OUR NORTHERN JARRAH FOREST

SWALSC has submitted objections to granting exploration licence to Rio Tinto in some of our most precious forest.

The Northern Jarrah Forest covers areas within the Darling Range from the east of Dwellingup to areas around Collie. It holds significance to Noongar people of the Gnaala Karla Booja region, and is vital for environmental sustainability.

Large parts of this land have already been affected by mining for bauxite under leases granted to Alcoa and Worsley.

SWALSC has objected to the licences on the grounds of the activities being in breach of the Conservation and Land Management Act 1984 (CALM Act). The CALM Act's objectives includes, "protecting and conserving the value of the land to the culture and heritage of Aboriginal persons ... in a manner that does not have an adverse effect on the protection or conservation of the land's fauna and flora."

SWALSC believes that mining activity in this area will be detrimental to Noongar cultural heritage.

It also poses a threat to the natural environment, including wildlife, biodiversity, rivers and endangered species, and to efforts to combat climate change.

Joe Northover, a senior Beelagu loreman and Wilmun Elder, said the Northern Jarrah Forest is significant country which should not be disturbed further.

"It forms part of my traditional lands because this is my spirit country," he said. "All the waters laying here underground – and the bush – holds many secrets and it upsets the spirit.

"The little bit we have left is sad. No one is crying for this country. They will put a scar on my body because my body is scarred from all the work that has been damaged already.

SWALSC's objections were lodged in March, and a hearing will be held in July at the Mining Warden's Court.

