



NATIVE TITLE ABORIGINAL CORPORATION RNTBC

# Newsletter

February 2026

## Welcome to our Latest Update

**Dear Waanyi Common Law Holders and Members,**

It is with pleasure that we present the February Newsletter 2026, providing you with further updates since the publication of our 2025 Summary of Achievements in November 2025.

It has been a busy yet challenging year for the Waanyi PBC. Unfortunately, the Annual General Meeting and Community Meetings scheduled for late last year had to be rescheduled. We regret any inconvenience this may have caused and confirm that these meetings will now be held on 18 March 2026. We look forward to meeting with you all at that time.

Importantly, we are keen to meet with our Elders to hear your direct feedback on our initiatives moving forward and any other matters affecting Waanyi communities. Your guidance and input remain central to the work we do.

Following the General Meeting on 18 March in Gregory, we also look forward to welcoming and introducing new directors as elected. Strong governance and representation are essential to our continued growth and success.

The Board remains wholly focused on delivering our Strategic Plan and ensuring positive outcomes for all Waanyi people.

Thank you for your ongoing support and engagement. I look forward to seeing you in March.

Warm regards,

**Hayley Iles**  
Chairperson  
Waanyi PBC

## First Nations Heritage Grant

Waanyi PBC has been awarded Australian Government funding through the First Nations Heritage Grants program to deliver a project at the Miyumba (Riversleigh) World Heritage Area. This project will bring together Waanyi native title holders with our team and partners to continue documenting cultural sites. Our goal is to better understand the importance of this area and to improve the protection and management of culturally significant places. We are proud of this achievement and look forward to some more on-Country trips this year.

## Queensland Museum Native Mounted Police Exhibit

The Queensland Museum (QM) is developing an exhibition that explores the history and legacy of the Queensland Native Mounted Police - some of whom were stationed at Turn Off Lagoon/Corinda in the late-1800s to early-1900s. The QM would like to speak with Waanyi people about the exhibition and about the Turn Off Lagoon area. The QM team will be visiting Doomadgee on Friday 20 March. Please contact us if you are interested in meeting with the QM team.

# Historic Land Returned to the Waanyi People

An important celebration was marked on 19 November 2025, when the Queensland Government officially returned a significant area of land to the Waanyi people, recognising their enduring connection to Country and cultural heritage.

The handback ceremony was held in Cairns and brought together representatives from the Waanyi Native Title Aboriginal Corporation (Waanyi PBC), the Department of Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation (DETSI), and the Department of Natural Resources, Mines, Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development (NRMMRD).

At the ceremony, the Government officially handed over the deeds to 167,000 hectares of Boodjamulla National Park (Aboriginal Land) to the Waanyi people. Agreements were also signed to confirm the joint management of the park by the Waanyi people and the Queensland Government, in accordance with the Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) established in June 2023.

This land return represents a significant step forward in supporting self-determination, strengthening partnerships, and acknowledging the enduring custodianship of the Waanyi people.

## Read the article:

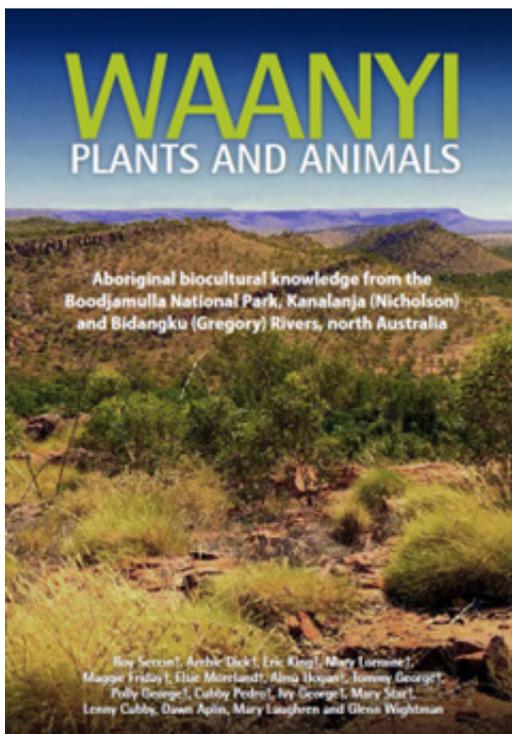
<https://nit.com.au/09-01-2026/22074/waanyi-people-regain-more-country-at-boodjamulla-national-park>



Andrew Buckley, Assistant Director-General QPWS&P, handing over the Boodjamulla land deed to Waanyi PBC chair, Hayley Iles, and Board member Everyl Johnny.



Lauren Varley (DETSI) witnessing Hayley Iles and Everyl Johnny signing land use documents on behalf of the Waanyi people.



## Waanyi Plants & Animals Book

The Waanyi Plants and Animals book has now been published by the Northern Territory Government and Papulu Apparr-Kari Aboriginal Corporation. The book is the result of decades of work by Waanyi elders and researchers to record language names and knowledge of hundreds of plants and animals belonging to Waanyi country. The authors, knowledge holders and their families should be proud of this achievement. We hope to get some more copies of the book soon.

## Gregory Land Development Update

The Waanyi PBC has secured funding through the Gambling Community Benefit Fund to support the development of new ranger facilities in Gregory. This funding will enable essential initial earthworks on the Waanyi-owned site, laying the groundwork for future development. In time, the site will include ranger accommodation, training and other facilities that strengthen on-Country management. The project is also expected to create local employment and training opportunities for the Waanyi community.



## Boodjamulla National Park Cooperative Management Update

Under a 2023 agreement between the Waanyi PBC and the Queensland Government, Boodjamulla National Park (Aboriginal Land) is now cooperatively managed. Over the past year, a broad range of activities has supported park management. On-park work - delivered in partnership with QPWS and Ngumari Waanyi Rangers - has included fire, weed and pest management, threatened species protection, and visitor management. Cultural management remains a priority. This includes site visits, cultural mapping, and the development of cultural awareness materials and a cultural database to support knowledge sharing and protection. Waanyi representatives also play an active role in governance through the Cooperative Management Council, meeting regularly to guide park operations, address issues, and support effective joint management.



## Online Language Group



Kunyba narri everyone, my name's Otis, I'm a member of the PBC through my ancestor Rosie Saville. For the past year or so I've been conducting Waanyi language lessons online with my family based on linguistic recordings and Mary Laughren's draft dictionary which I worked on, as we strive to revitalise our language. I want to open up these classes to the wider Waanyi community starting from scratch, so if you're interested in learning our language and/or would like to contribute to teaching others, please email me at [ocarm0809@gmail.com](mailto:ocarm0809@gmail.com) and I'll get in touch with you.

We are planning to meet online every Monday from 1:30pm QLD time.

Look forward to meeting you,

Otis Carmichael



## Jade King

Jade King is a proud Waanyi woman, born and raised in Mount Isa. Her connection to culture has only strengthened over the years through with the support of the loving King family and high school leadership roles, including Senior Indigenous Captain and 2021 Ngawa Youth Group Leader.

Jade now lives on Meanjin (Brisbane) land and is in her fourth year at QUT, studying a Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) (Chemical and Sustainable Processes) with minors in Environmental and Engineering Management. She has achieved many feats during her study, to which include representing QUT at conferences (notably speaking at IMARC, Australia's largest mining conference), serving two years as President of the QUT Chemical Process Engineering Club, and mentoring young engineers starting their studies. Despite these successes, Jade still actively seeks ways to engage with, give back to, and strengthen her community and culture.

Outside study, Jade works as an Undergraduate Process Engineer and QUT Student Ambassador, where she supports disadvantaged students from similar backgrounds—offering guidance, inspiration, and proof that anything is possible.

Jade hopes to inspire her community and fellow Indigenous youth to pursue their passions, whether it be in the arts, STEM, or any field that supports the self-determination of our community, families and selves. She is deeply grateful to her family, community, and mentors, and looks forward to uplifting the Waanyi people and the wider Indigenous community now and into the future.

## Rebuilding Boodjamulla National Park after the floods

The Lawn Hill Gorge section of Boodjamulla National Park (Aboriginal Land) has been closed since the destructive floods of 2023 caused widespread damage. Since then, significant rebuilding works have been completed – particularly last year during the 2025 dry season. Repairs to the park office and ranger houses are now complete, and essential services — including the water treatment plant, power and sewage — have also been restored. Access roads and several walking tracks have also been repaired to support the park's recovery.

We sincerely thank the many Waanyi men and women who assisted the rebuilding efforts and provided valuable cultural guidance across a range of projects. Their knowledge and support have played an important role in the park's recovery. Further restoration is planned for the upcoming dry season as the recovery continues.



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