

## Welcome to our Latest Update

### Dear Waanyi Common Law Holders and Members,

September was a proud and important time for our people as we came together on Country to celebrate the handback of Boodjamulla National Park (Aboriginal Land). After so many years of determination by our Elders and those who came before us, it was special to see families, young people and community members sharing this historic moment together.

I want to acknowledge everyone who helped make the celebration possible, particularly our Elders, Rangers, community members and the many people who worked behind the scenes. The return of Boodjamulla is more than a milestone. It carries a responsibility to protect Country, keep our culture strong and ensure future generations can continue to learn from and care for this special place.

Across Waanyi Country, our Corporation continues to support cultural heritage work, employment and opportunities for our people. We also welcome Anthony Whitfield as our new CEO/Business Manager as we look ahead to the work still to be done. Thank you for your continued support and involvement. Together, we will keep working to protect our rights and interests and build a strong future for the Waanyi people.

**Hayley Iles**  
Chairperson  
Waanyi PBC

## Boodjamulla Handback Celebrations

On Friday 4 September, the Waanyi PBC and Queensland Government hosted an event to celebrate the handback of Boodjamulla National Park (Aboriginal Land) to the Waanyi People. While a formal ceremony was held in Brisbane in 2023, celebrating this historic moment with our people on Country was always the plan...and we are so proud that we finally made it happen!

Len Cubby opened the morning's celebration, and speeches followed by PBC Chair, Hayley Iles, several Waanyi Elders, and the Deputy Director-General (DETSI), Ben Klaassen, who gifted a plaque to the Waanyi People to commemorate the hand back. The Doomadgee Dancers honoured

the audience with their traditional dance and song, and while we shared big feeds for lunch and dinner, more live music featured John Turner and DMC Boys. Boat and canoe rides up through the stunning gorge and waterfalls, and activities for children such as boomerang painting, were also available.

To watch footage from the Boodjamulla handback celebration, visit [waanyipbc.org/boodjamulla](https://waanyipbc.org/boodjamulla).

We thank each and every person who made the effort to be there. We also acknowledge that this event required a lot of hard work, commitment and support. We offer our genuine thanks to the following:

We would particularly like to thank our government partners at the Queensland Department of Environment, Tourism, Science

and Innovation (DETSI), and the many DETSI staff who contributed their time and effort to preparing for and participating in the celebration at the Park. We particularly acknowledge Deputy Director-General Ben Klaassen, Cecilia Beirne and the catering team, Lachlan Clark, Grant Ison and Kieren Sellars for their contributions to the event.

Wugudaji-Adels Grove and Lawn Hill Station provided significant support, including boat trips and canoe use, as well as assisting community members with accommodation, camping and fuel arrangements. We extend our sincere thanks to Melissa and the team for helping make the event accessible and enjoyable for our community.

We acknowledge Kyle Jacob and the Ngumari Waanyi Rangers, past and present, for their continued support of activities undertaken at Boodjamulla National Park (Aboriginal Land) and for the important work they continue to do on Country.

With Boodjamulla National Park (Aboriginal Land) spanning the Burke Shire and the Mount Isa City Council area, we appreciated the attendance and support of the local government representatives who joined us for the celebration, including Mayor Ernie Camp of Burke Shire and Mayor Peta MacRae from Mount Isa City Council.

We also acknowledge the support of regional mining and exploration companies working on Waanyi Country. Santos, Sibanye Stillwater, Rio Tinto and Anglo American provided financial support towards the celebration, and we sincerely thank them for their contribution. We also thank Andrew Hulme of Sibanye Stillwater, who hosted PBC Business Manager Anthony Whitfield and PBC staff at Century Mine for several days during the event.

A special thank you to Doomadgee Roadhouse, particularly Rob and the team, for assisting community members with fuel before travelling to the celebration.

Finally, we acknowledge GOS Construction, who are currently undertaking reconstruction works at Boodjamulla National Park. We greatly appreciate their assistance and their flexibility in adjusting their work schedule to accommodate this important event.

To everyone who contributed, whether through financial support, practical assistance, time, equipment, services or simply being there on the day — thank you. Your support helped us come together on Country to celebrate an important moment in Waanyi history, and we are truly grateful.

## Why is it important to celebrate this moment?

The return of Boodjamulla National Park has been part of the Waanyi People's struggle to get our Country back since non-Indigenous settlers first claimed this land in the 1800s. In our contemporary fight for land rights, it took us more than 40 years to reach this point.



## Timeline

- **1982** – Formation of the Carpentaria Land Council
- **1994** – Three-week sit-in protest at the national park
- **1995** – Formation of the Waanyi Ministerial Advisory Committee
- **1996** – Land claim lodged over Lawn Hill National Park under the Aboriginal Land Act
- **1999** – Waanyi People native title claim lodged over the park
- **2003** – Park renamed Boodjamulla (Lawn Hill) National Park
- **2010** – Waanyi People native title determined over the park
- **2016** – Queensland Land Tribunal recommends the park be handed back
- **2023** – Agreements signed to formally hand back the park to Waanyi in stages & park renamed Boodjamulla National Park (Aboriginal Land)

## Honouring our Elders: The Waanyi Land Handback

We acknowledge our Waanyi Elders past and present. We remember those who carried our knowledge, lore, language, ceremony, stories, and responsibilities for our Country, including those who did not live to see this significant day.

The Waanyi connection to our land has never left us. Our connection to our Country has always remained through our old people, our families, our stories, and our continuing responsibility to care for our Country.

This handback is the result of many years of work, determination and commitment from Waanyi people. It belongs to every Waanyi person, to those who stood up for Country before us, to those who continue that work today and to the generations who will carry it forward.

To the Waanyi people, this handback belongs to you all. To our Elders, your strength has guided us. For our Waanyi ancestors that fought the way forward for us to be standing here today, let us not forget them. To our government partners, thank you for working with us in good faith and for honouring commitments made. This is a proud day for the Waanyi Nation.

This is a proud day for the Waanyi people. It is a day to honour those who came before us, recognise the work of our people today and carry that responsibility forward for those who come after us.



## A Special Thank You to the Boodjamulla Rangers

As we celebrate the return of Boodjamulla National Park to the Waanyi people, we want to acknowledge and thank the Boodjamulla Rangers for the care, commitment and hard work they give to Our Country.

Boodjamulla is Our Country. It holds our stories, our culture, our knowledge and our connection to the old people who have cared for this place for generations. Our connection to Country has never left us, and neither has our responsibility to care for it.

We recognise the Rangers who continue to walk and work on Country, caring for the land, waterways, wildlife and special places that are so important to our people.

Your work is part of caring for Boodjamulla and helping protect Country for our children and the generations who come after us.

As we move forward together, we thank you for the work you do, your commitment to Country, and your continued care for this special place.

From the Waanyi people, thank you for caring for our Country and walking with us into the future.





## Boodjamulla Handback: A New Chapter for Waanyi Country

A significant day for the Waanyi People and the generations who have cared for Country.

On Friday 4 September 2026, Waanyi People came together at Boodjamulla to mark a significant moment in our long journey to have our Country recognised and returned.

Boodjamulla is Waanyi Country. It is a place of deep cultural, spiritual and historical importance to our People. Our connection to this Country goes back thousands of years and continues today through our Elders, families and young people.

The handback of Boodjamulla National Park marks an important new chapter for the Waanyi People.

It is a moment to recognise the strength and determination of the generations before us who stood up for Country and continued to fight for the rights and interests of Waanyi People.

### Looking after Country

Boodjamulla is more than a national park. It is living Country, carrying the stories and knowledge of the Waanyi People.

Our connection to the land is at the heart of Waanyi culture. The Country, rivers, gorges, animals, plants and sacred places are all connected through our stories and responsibilities.

The handback gives Waanyi People an important opportunity to continue building a strong future for Boodjamulla, working alongside Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service through joint management.

Together, there is an opportunity to bring Waanyi

knowledge and cultural values into the ongoing care and management of Country.

This is about protecting Country, respecting culture and making sure future generations can continue to learn from and connect with their ancestral lands.

### Looking to the future

The handback is not the end of the journey. It is the beginning of a new chapter.

For Waanyi People, it is about getting back Country, looking after Country and having a stronger say in the future of our traditional lands.

It is about creating opportunities for our People, supporting our young people to learn from Country and ensuring Waanyi culture remains strong.

We acknowledge everyone who has contributed to this journey and, most importantly, the Elders and generations of Waanyi People whose strength and perseverance helped bring us to this moment.

Boodjamulla remains a place of deep significance to our People. We look forward to continuing to care for Country, protect our culture and build a strong future for Waanyi People and future generations.

**This is our Country. This is our responsibility. This is our future.**



## New CEO Profile

### Anthony Whitfield

The Board of the Waanyi PBC welcomes Anthony Whitfield as its new CEO/Business Manager. He took over from Trent McKenzie in late August 2026.

Anthony is a proud Nywaigi man, country to the east of Waanyi on the coast. Nywaigi are saltwater people from the Hinchinbrook/Ingham area of North Queensland.

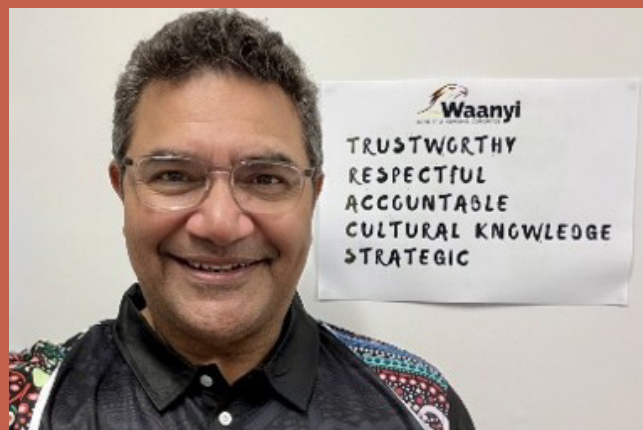
He travelled out to Waanyi Country in early September for the Boodjamulla National Park Ceremony and got to meet many Waanyi people and Elders.

Anthony joined the Waanyi PBC with 35 years of work experience and his career includes decades of work in the infrastructure, mining, oil and gas sectors in Western Australia, Northern Territory, Queensland as well as in Papua New Guinea.

He has also worked directly for traditional owners for 8 of those years and has a broad knowledge

of Native Title work across Cape York, Western Australia and northern Queensland, as well as specialised skills in contract negotiations for and on behalf of traditional owners.

Anthony is excited to work with the Waanyi Board of Directors, the PBC team and all Waanyi people. *"There are many challenges that Waanyi people face but also many opportunities ahead. The Waanyi PBC has a strong part to play in protecting the interests of Waanyi people and their Native Title rights and interests".*



## Waanyi PBC Operations Update

Waanyi PBC continues to support cultural heritage protection, employment and engagement across Waanyi Country, with a number of work programs currently underway across the Waanyi tenements and at Boodjamulla National Park.

Our team continues to work alongside Traditional Owners, contractors, industry partners and government agencies to ensure cultural heritage responsibilities are understood and respected, while creating opportunities for Waanyi people to participate in work taking place on Country.

### Trail Works Constructions

Trail Works Constructions completed the first programmed earthworks at Boodjamulla National Park in August 2026. The works focused on re-establishing walking tracks and footpaths affected by previous flood damage.

The Waanyi PBC provided two cultural heritage monitors on a continuous rotating seven-day roster throughout the works, supporting the protection of cultural heritage while construction activities were carried out on Country.

### GOS Constructions

Following the completion of the Trail Works program, GOS Constructions commenced the next stage of construction works at Boodjamulla National Park in August.

The Waanyi PBC continues to provide two cultural heritage monitors on a rotating seven-day roster. The current program is expected to continue through to the end of November 2026.

### Rio Tinto Exploration

Rio Tinto Exploration has continued exploration activities across the south-eastern Waanyi tenements since April 2026, with two drill rigs operating in the area.

Two earthwork surveys have been undertaken as part of the exploration program. Areas of cultural heritage significance were identified, requiring further cultural heritage assessment and the involvement of Senior Men with cultural knowledge to support the appropriate clearance process.

It is scheduled to conclude its exploration activities for the year at the end of October 2026.

## Aeon Exploration - Nugaburra

Aeon Exploration remobilised to the Nugaburra area in May 2026 and reopened its camp as exploration activities progressed.

The Waanyi PBC supported ground-truthing and cultural heritage monitoring during July and August for the establishment of new drill pads. Drilling commenced at the end of August as part of a 12-week program.

## Geoscience

Waanyi PBC provided cultural heritage monitors for a Geoscience magnetotelluric survey across 45 sites in the lower Waanyi tenements.

The monitoring supported cultural heritage clearances and helped ensure survey activities were undertaken with appropriate consideration for cultural heritage across Country.

## Burke Shire Council

Waanyi PBC has continued its engagement with Burke Shire Council and its contractors, including cultural heritage awareness inductions and engagement with the PBC.

Work activities are currently taking place across two locations, Lawn Hill Crossing and Gregory Downs Township. These programs are expected to continue through to November 2026.

## Anglo American

Anglo American completed a cultural heritage survey in August 2026. Further exploration activities, including potential drilling, may progress following the completion of this work.

## Santos Energy

Santos Energy has continued to hold information sessions and tours throughout 2026 regarding a proposed Authority to Prospect in the South Nicholson Basin, including areas within the Waanyi tenements.

Waanyi PBC continues to engage with Santos Energy as information is shared and discussions progress regarding the proposed activities.

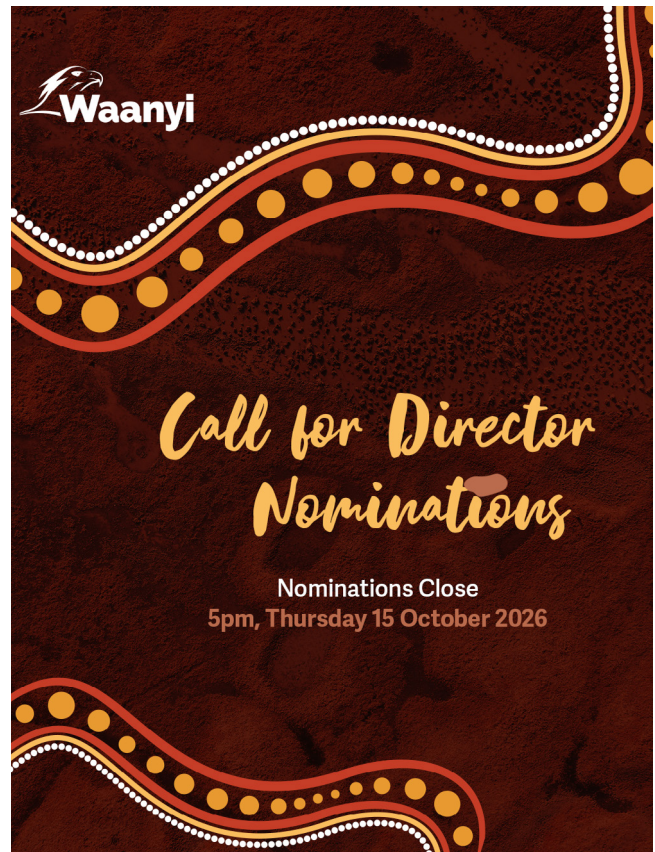
## Creating Opportunities for Waanyi People

The work taking place across Waanyi Country is also creating employment opportunities for Waanyi people.

Over the past 16 weeks, more than 200 Waanyi people have been engaged on a casual basis across available work programs. These opportunities include cultural heritage monitoring, field work and other project-related activities. Waanyi PBC continues to support opportunities for Waanyi people to

participate in work on Country, build experience and skills, and contribute to the protection and management of our cultural heritage.

These work programs demonstrate the importance of strong cultural heritage processes and meaningful engagement across Waanyi Country, while creating opportunities for Waanyi people to be involved in the work happening on our Country.



## Call for Director Nominations

The Board of Waanyi Native Title Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC (Waanyi PBC) is pleased to invite eligible members to nominate for election as a Member Director at the 2026 Annual General Meeting.

The Annual General Meeting will be held on **Saturday, 21 November 2026** in Gregory.

Following the Board's determination regarding the transitional director arrangements, **all eight (8) Member Director positions are available to be filled by election** at the 2026 Annual General Meeting. Existing Member Directors are eligible to renominate, subject to meeting the eligibility requirements contained in the Rule Book and the CATSI Act.

## Election Timetable

- **Nominations open:** 28 August 2026
- **Nominations close:** 5:00 pm, 15 October 2026
- **AGM Notice and Candidate Information:** 16 to 27 October 2026
- **Annual General Meeting:** Saturday, 21 November 2026

**Please note:** You will NOT be able to nominate on the day of the AGM.

## What You'll Need to Provide

Each nominee is **required** to provide a candidate profile of **no more than 400 words** containing your family connection and how you can contribute to the future of the corporation.

## Who can nominate?

To be eligible for election as a Member Director, you must:

- be a current Member of Waanyi Native Title Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC;
- be at least 18 years of age;

- satisfy the Director eligibility requirements contained in Rule 30 of the Rule Book;
- complete and sign the **Nomination and Consent to Become a Director** form;
- provide your Director Identification Number (DIN), or evidence that you have applied for one; you can apply at [abrs.gov.au](http://abrs.gov.au)

**Important:** You cannot nominate on the day of the AGM. Nominees must also attend the AGM in person to be eligible for election.

## Ready to nominate?

- Complete the nomination and consent forms
- Submit the form with all required supporting information by the closing time

For assistance with your nomination, contact the Corporation office at [admin@waanyipbc.org](mailto:admin@waanyipbc.org) or 0418 415 658.

## Stay Connected on Socials

Our community is strong, proud, and always moving forward. To help keep everyone connected and informed, Waanyi PBC has launched an official Facebook page — a new way to share updates, opportunities, and stories that matter to our people.

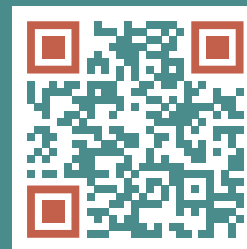
This page is for our mob — to share news, support each other, and stay strong together. Use your mobile to scan the QR Code to follow the page and stay connected.

We have also launched a Waanyi LinkedIn page, which is a platform to share our work with partners, organisations, and supporters. Follow us there if you're on LinkedIn and want to see how Waanyi is leading in land management, cultural governance, and economic development.

**Help us spread the word and encourage family members to follow too. The more connected we are, the stronger we grow together.**



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