

CLC welcomes rangers



The CLC will soon have nearly just over 70 Aboriginal rangers as employees to close the gap left by the demise of CDEP. Already 40 rangers have joined the CLC and, once arrangements for the others are finalised, the CLC will have nearly 200 employees.

More than half of the CLC's staff are Aboriginal.

All of the CLC's ranger groups got together at a ranger camp at Hamilton Downs near Alice Springs recently for three days of professional development from experts in the field of land management.

The well-established Tjuwanpa rangers gave a demonstration on how to use quadbikes and spray gear, including safe weed spraying techniques.

The rangers also heard about the latest techniques in fire mapping, planning and onground fire management and were trained on using Cyber Trackers which record information in the field for fauna surveys.

Dylan Gordon from Lajamanu said ranger camps like these were an important way of keeping in touch when you live on a remote community.

"It's good to be a ranger - we learn more about the outside," he said.

American scientist Jayne Brim Box was waiting at nearby Fish Hole waterhole to show the rangers the latest scientific techniques to assess the health of waterholes. Dr Brim Box has worked with traditional owners at Uluru, Docker River, Santa Teresa, and Ti Tree on looking after precious waterholes under threat from feral animals and other sources.

Titus White, a ranger from the recently reformed Lajamanu group, said that waterholes were important for people in his country.

"We look after our waterholes - we walk around cleaning them up and check for dead animals. We like to go down there and swim," he said.

Brian Crafter from Tennant Creek group the Muru-warinyi Ankkul Rangers has worked as a ranger for several years.

"Aboriginal people have been looking after these waterholes for thousands of years and its important that we keep looking after them. Got to look after the main trees because they help keep the waterhole healthy," he said.

The rangers also got an inspiring induction talk about working for the CLC and an outline of the Land Rights Act, permits, and legal issues associated with cattle from legal staff.



Top: The rangers at Hamilton Downs; Above left taking a sample at Fish Hole and right, ranger Colin Joseph from the Tjuwanpa Ranger group checks a water sample; Above: Ranger groups work together on their plans for their country Right: Rangers

