



Aboriginal rangers to open their hearts and minds to the voice

The Central Land Council's ranger camp will answer questions of Aboriginal rangers from Central Australia and beyond about the voice referendum.

A discussion about the referendum about the voice to parliament will kick off the week-long professional development and networking event on Monday, 20 March, at Ross River near Alice Springs.

Dr. Josie Douglas, executive manager policy and governance at the CLC and a member of the national referendum engagement group, and Jade Ritchie from the Yes23 campaign will present about the voice and answer the rangers' questions.

They will be joined by Warumungu artist and CLC delegate from Tennant Creek, Jimmy Frank.

"Remote community residents have lots of questions about the referendum," CLC chief executive Les Turner said.

"Our rangers want to know how the voice will help them to better look after country and improve the lives of their families."

"I look forward to the discussions and hope it will inform the referendum campaign in remote communities," said Mr Turner, who is also a member the referendum engagement group,

In line with the event's peer-to-peer learning ethos, some rangers will learn to use their smartphones and tablets to produce short videos about what the voice means to them.

He said the location of this year's CLC ranger camp, an hour's drive east of Alice Springs, is highly symbolic.

"It's where we held the Ross River Regional Dialogue in 2017, one of 13 such events across the country in the lead-up to the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

"Six years ago, at the same camp ground, more than 100 local Aboriginal people chose Central Australia's delegates for the national constitutional convention at Uluru that called for voice, treaty and truth," he said.

At this year's camp around 140 rangers from 20 ranger groups from the southern half of the Northern Territory, as well as from South Australia and Western Australia, will also listen to each other's voices.

The groups will give presentations about their work and hear from guest speakers such as Joe Morrison from the Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation.

The camp features workshops and accredited training ranging from tracking animals to catching live venomous snakes, operating heavy machinery and burning country.

An awards ceremony with the Bachelor Institute for Indigenous Training and Education and NintiOne will celebrate the rangers' education and training achievements.

More than a dozen rangers will receive certificates in conservation and land management.

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