



# Rela Western Arrarnta mapa pmara rangkarra

Tjuwanpa Ranger mapalila plan  
mbaritjika region rangkarra ka'lela  
**2023-2033**

**Western Arrarnta People and Country**  
To respect our Elders and plan for future generations  
The Tjuwanpa Rangers region



## **Citation**

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For traditional owners and the Central Land Council.

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## Key Western Arrarnta terms

Altjirra	Creation time, Dreamtime
Arranga	Father
Arrarnta	Language group, socio-cultural group in central Australia
Ebmanna	Mother's mother
Kara	Meat, animal foods
Kemarre	Subsection term
Kngwarreye	Subsection term
Kurtungurla	Traditional owner of a country through father's mother, mother's father, or sometimes mother's mother
Marna	Plant foods
Mptyane	Subsection term
Ngale	Subsection term
Palla	Father's mother
Peltharre	Subsection term
Penangke	Subsection term
Pengarte	Subsection term
Perrule	Subsection term
Pmara	Country, place, home, hearth
Pmerekwerteye	Traditional owner of a country through father's father or sometimes mother's mother
Tjimia	Mother's father

## Vision for our country

*“We aim to keep our country’s knowledge strong by getting young people involved in activities, such as the Junior Ranger program and country visits. We want rangers more often working with young generations on country. This helps them build a deeper connection to our land and culture. Taking care of our country and culture means a lot to Western Arrarnta people. Water springs, watercourses, native plants and animals, and sacred sites are very important in our lives, so it’s vital to protect these resources for the well-being of future generations. We hope to see the return of special native plants and animals that have disappeared from our country in the future.”*

## Pmerra Arratja Tnyinitjuka

Nurna tjaya arratja antjanima tnyinitjuka kitji muba kaltja-nitjuka urkapintja Ranger Program-alila pmerra ntjarra turta tnyinijuка itnaka. Itna kaltja nitjinanga tngangarra-apa pmerra turta kaltjirrijika. Nurna rela pmerra-arinya ntjarra-la kwtja spring ngarranga, kwtja ulpai ngarr-ana apa tnuntha ntarrana pa merna busharintja ntjarra turta, pmerra muka-muka-muka tjarra turta. Nurna arratja tgninijuка kuka nurnaka-na muba kaltja tnyinjinanga. Nurna untjanama arratja nthurra murna bush-arinya nurnaka ntjarra wutha pitjalputjuka pmerr-una.

# About this plan

## Why this plan was made

Western Arrarnta people's traditional lands lie west of Alice Springs. Their country encompasses five Aboriginal Land Trusts (ALTs) as well as surrounding country now covered by pastoral leases and Northern Territory Parks.

The Tjuwanpa Rangers are based at Ntaria (Hermannsburg) Community and work for and with traditional owners (TOs) of the five land trusts. Their work covers a wide area including the Finke Gorge and Tjoritja (West MacDonnell) National Parks and the Thorala (Gosse Bluff) Conservation Reserve.

This Healthy Country Plan was made to support Western Arrarnta people to look after their country and carry out cultural responsibilities. It sets out the worries traditional owners have for their country and what they want to do over the next ten years to

protect their country and culture. It will guide Tjuwanpa Ranger Coordinators and Central Land Council (CLC) staff, rangers, traditional owners and members of the Traditional Owner Ranger Advisory Committee (TORAC) to set annual work plans to achieve their goals.

CLC may show the plan to government and other people. Then governments can better understand the work traditional owners want their ranger group to do.

Australian desert environments are the most variable in the world. Land managers must respond flexibly to changing conditions. Actions that follow the strategies in this plan will need to be adapted to human situations, cultural context, and environmental conditions of the work.



Uruna ALT

## How this plan was made

This Plan was commissioned by CLC because traditional owners and CLC identified a need for long-term strategies to guide the work of rangers. Under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* (the Land Rights Act), a function of CLC staff and rangers is to consult traditional owners prior to any Land Management work on their land.

The Plan was created through collaboration between traditional owners, rangers, CLC Land Management and the facilitators. It is based on what people said during the workshops, as well as written sources, and the facilitators' knowledge and experience drawn from working with Western Arrarnta people over many years.

Ninety-two traditional owners and rangers, eight CLC staff and two facilitators attended five workshops to create the plan (a list of participants can be found at the end of this plan). Traditional owners of Rodna ALT were not available during the consultation period.

Workshops were held for four of the land trusts at the following places (Figure 1):

- A bush camp site on Roulpmaulpma ALT (28-30 July 2020)
- Ipolera community on Ltalaltuma ALT (1-3 September 2020)
- The Palm Valley Old Ranger Station for Ntaria ALT (22-24 September 2020), and
- The Old Rehabilitation Camp near Injartnama on Uruna ALT (29-31 April 2021).

During these workshops, traditional owners visited important places on country and spoke and wrote about what they want for their country in the future. CLC staff and facilitators helped by creating a space for people to listen, take part, and feel safe to speak and share. A review workshop was also held at Tjuwanpa Ranger station (19 October 2023) to go through the draft plan with TOs and rangers.

The facilitators compiled what people said in the workshops into Traditional Owner Country Planning Reports<sup>1</sup>. These reports have quotes from participants and informative photos. This Healthy Country Plan, the Traditional Owner Country Planning Reports and annual Land Management operational plans, made by the coordinators, rangers and TORAC go together. They are the road map to guide traditional owners and rangers in caring for country.

This plan records what traditional owners said in the workshops. Some key considerations when making this plan were:

- What do Western Arrarnta people want for their country and culture?
- What is good about Western Arrarnta country?
- What worries people about their country?
- What do people want to do and how?
- How might weather and conditions affect doing the work?
- What equipment, funds and resources are available?
- What actions are possible and how to prioritise them?

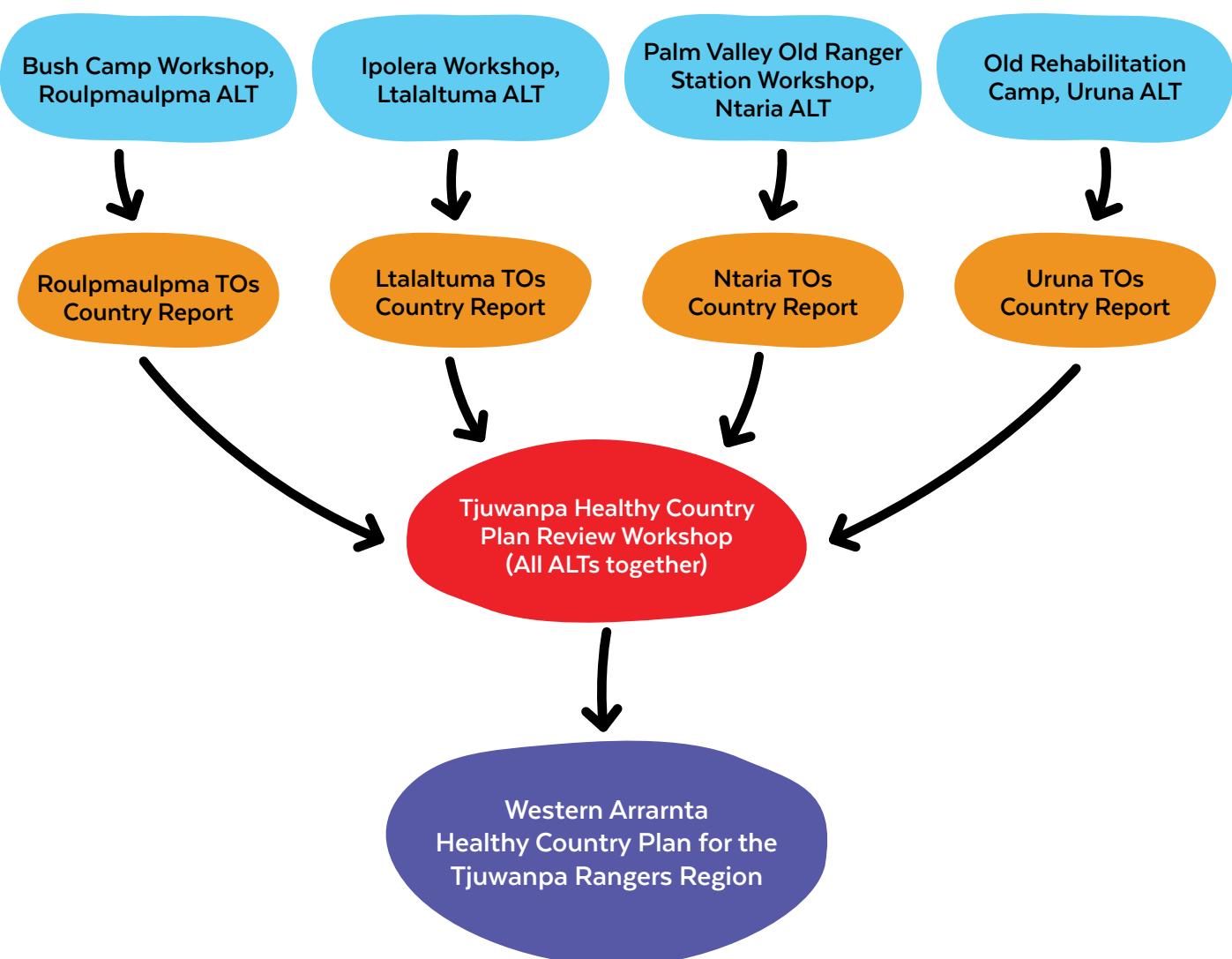
1. See Appendix 2: Books, Reports and films list for Country Planning Report details.

# Structure

This Plan contains information about Western Arrarnta people, their lands, and past land management work. It shares their vision for country and identifies the main things they value – the many good things. It also records their worries about what they see as threatening their country.

The main section contains strategies to protect and strengthen the things traditional owners value and to reduce the threats. Future operational planning will be based on these strategies. The Appendices to the Plan include: a list of workshop participants (Appendix 1); and all books, reports and films including published and unpublished sources (Appendix 2).

Figure 1: Tjuwanpa Rangers Country Planning process from workshops and the Land Trust reports then the final plan



### Palm Paddock Old Ranger Station, Ntaria ALT

Left to right: Fabian Raggett, Mervyn Raggett, Sue Ellison (CLC), Martin Campbell (CLC), Michael Taylor, Troy Ratara, and Kristoff Ratara, Other are present but not in photo.



### Ipolera, Ltalaltuma ALT

Left to right:

Last row: Christian Malbunka, and Billy Ngalkin

First row: Colin Malbunka, Bevan Malbunka, Fiona Walsh (Facilitator),

Michael Cawthorn (Facilitator), Mildred Malbunka, and Rodney Malbunka

Front row: Fabian Raggett, Raphael Impu, Ryan Clark, Emron Campbell, Colin Joseph, and Obed Ratara









**Gilbert Springs, Ltalaltuma ALT with TO's and rangers**

Left to right: Obed Ratara, Ryan Clark, Emron Campbell, Shaun Emitja, Christian Malbunka, Rodney Malbunka, Carl Pereroultja, Raphael Impu, Colin Joseph, Bevan Malbunka, Tristan Malbunka, Delic Malbunka, and Dean Inkamala



**Palm Paddock Camp, Ntaria ALT with TO's and rangers**

Left to right: Vivian Entata, Noeline Ratara, Conrad Ratara, Mini Ragget, Edmond Rubuntja, Kelly Pareroultja, Byron Ratara, Fabian Raggett, Christoph Ratara, Troy Ratara, Alan Williams, Shaun Emitja, Obed Ratara, Mervyn Raggett, Emron Campbell. Absent from photo: CLC staff Michael Taylor, Sue Ellison, Martin Campbell and Ryan Clark and facilitators Mike Cawthorn and Fiona Walsh.



**No. 4 Waterhole, Roulpmalpma ALT with TO's and rangers**

Left to right: Dean Inkamala, Martin Campbell (CLC staff), Obed Ratara, and Casey Kenny



**Injartmana Youth Camp, Uruna ALT with TO's and rangers**

Left to right: Christopher Ungwanaka, Raphael Impu, Louise Abbott, Eric Abbott, Desia Abbott, Camron Abbott, Mark Fly, Ankin Abbott, Colin Craig, Terry Abbott, Ralph Abbott

Absent from photo: Sue Ellison (CLC), Tom Ruggles (CLC), Martin Campbell (CLC), Michael Cawthorn (Facilitator) and Fiona Walsh (Facilitator).

# Western Arrarnta lands: The region of the plan

The Tjuwanpa Rangers help traditional owners to manage a huge area of country across five ALTs encompassing the former Hermannsburg Lutheran Mission lease. From east to west these are: Uruna; Roulpmalpma; Rodna; Ntaria; and Ltalaltuma. Combined, they cover an area of 4,161 km<sup>2</sup>. Granted in 1982, the Land Trusts align with traditional Arrarnta estate group areas. They contain numerous culturally important places and are crossed by many Altjira song lines. These traditional estates extend far beyond the legal Land Trust boundaries.

For this reason, the rangers also work on the Finke Gorge National Park to the south; Trorala (Gosse Bluff) Conservation Reserve to the west; Owen Springs Reserve to the east; and Tjoritja (West MacDonnell) National Park to the north. Immediately to the west of Ltalaltuma ALT is the Haasts Bluff ALT (see Figures 2 and 3 below).

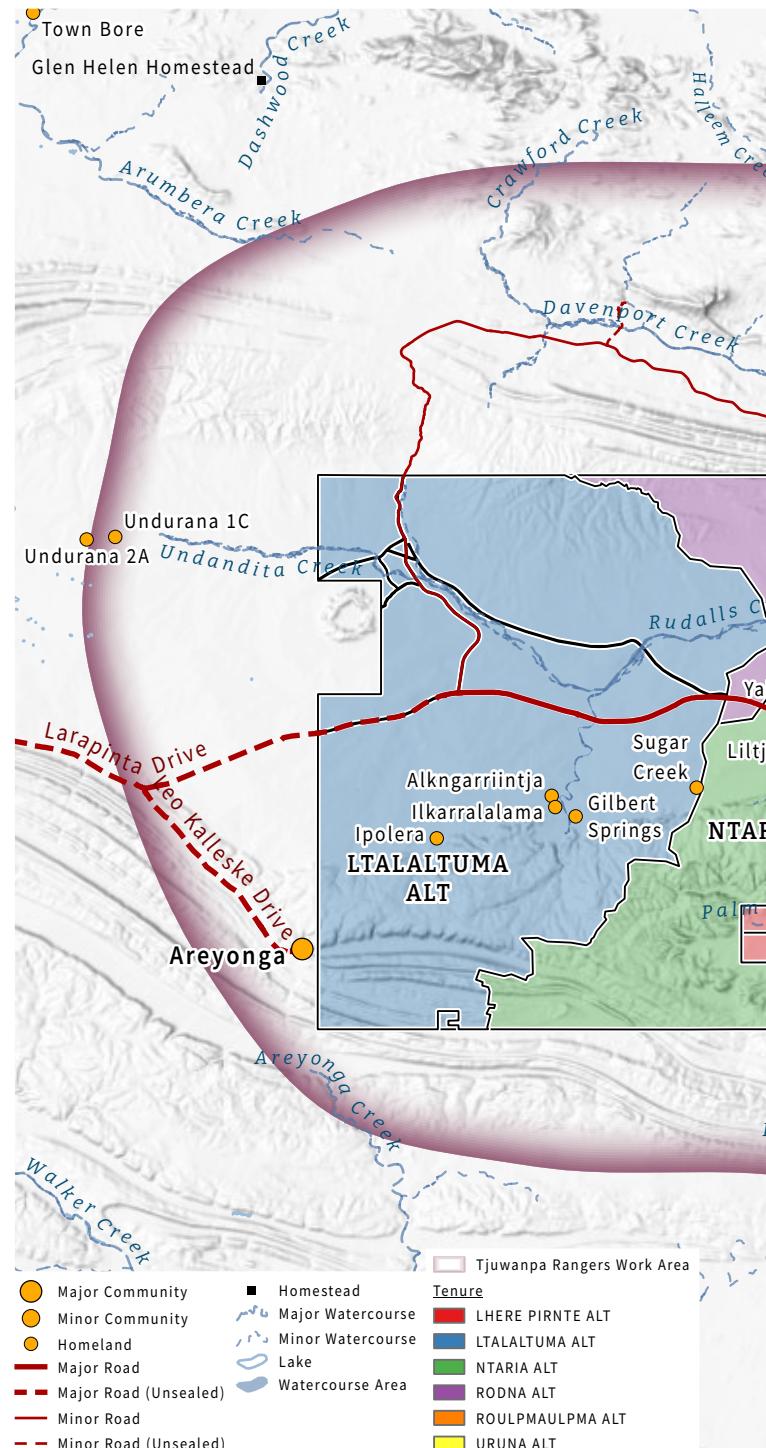


Figure 2: Hermannsburg Aboriginal Land Trusts

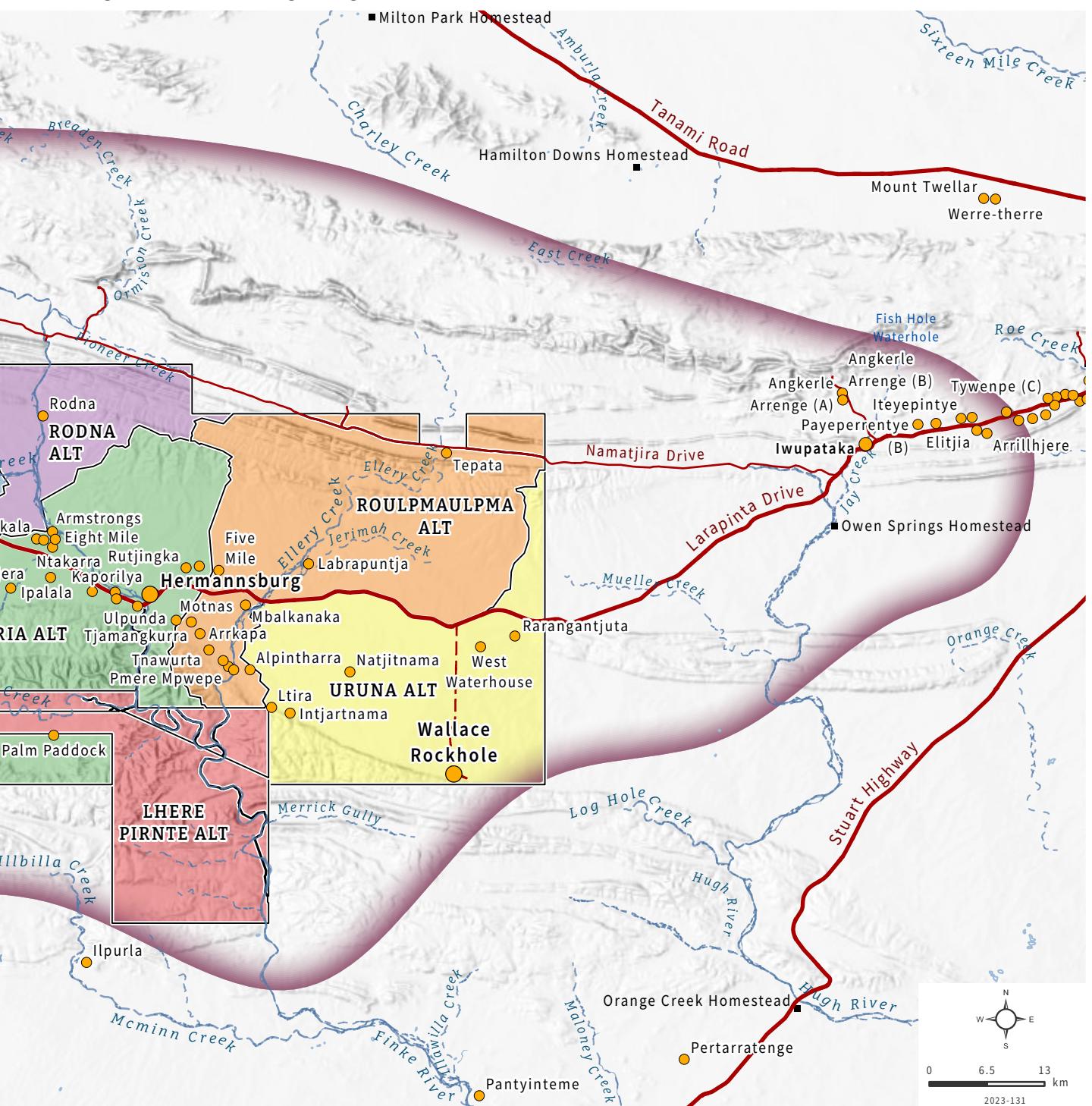
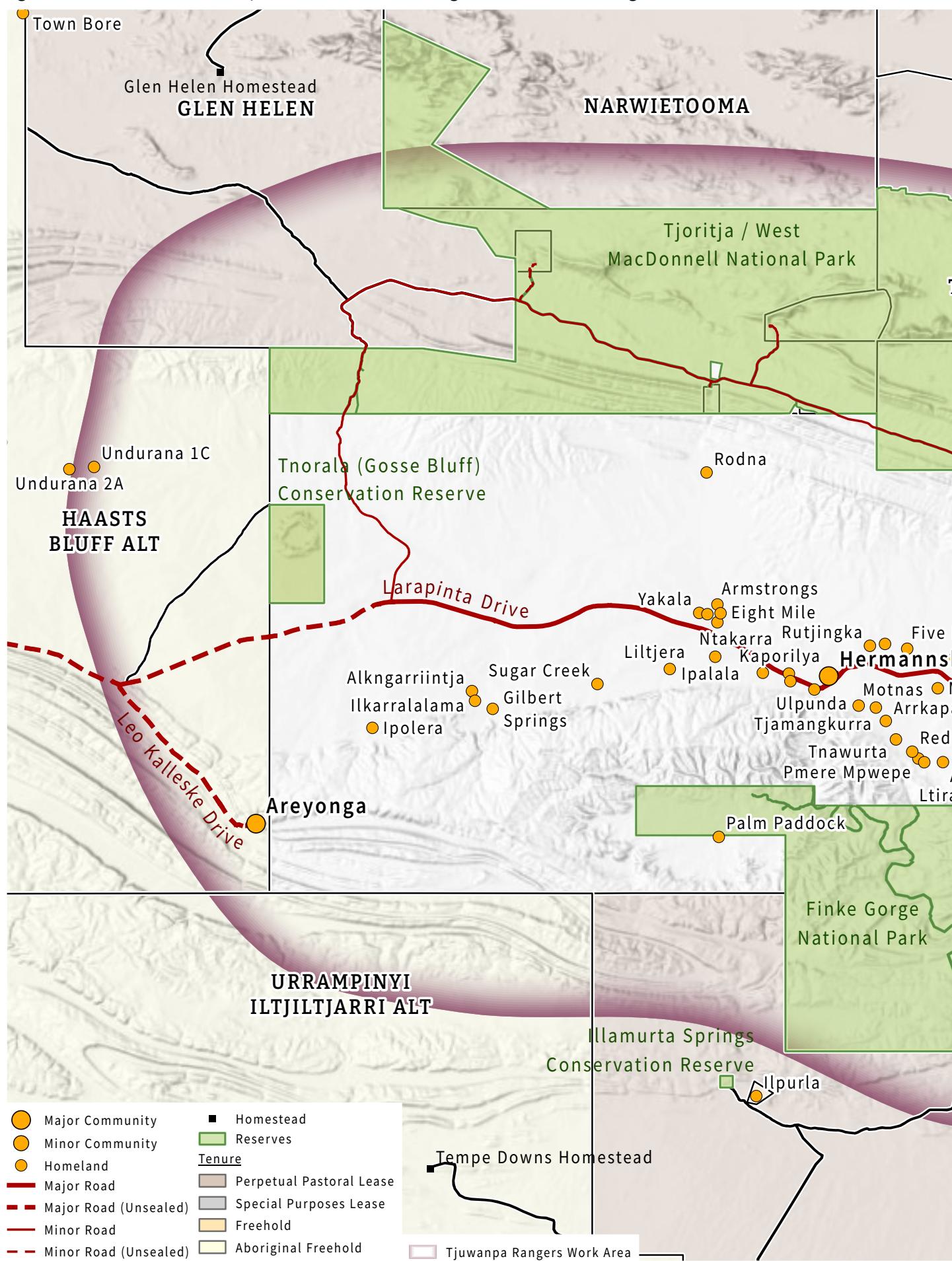
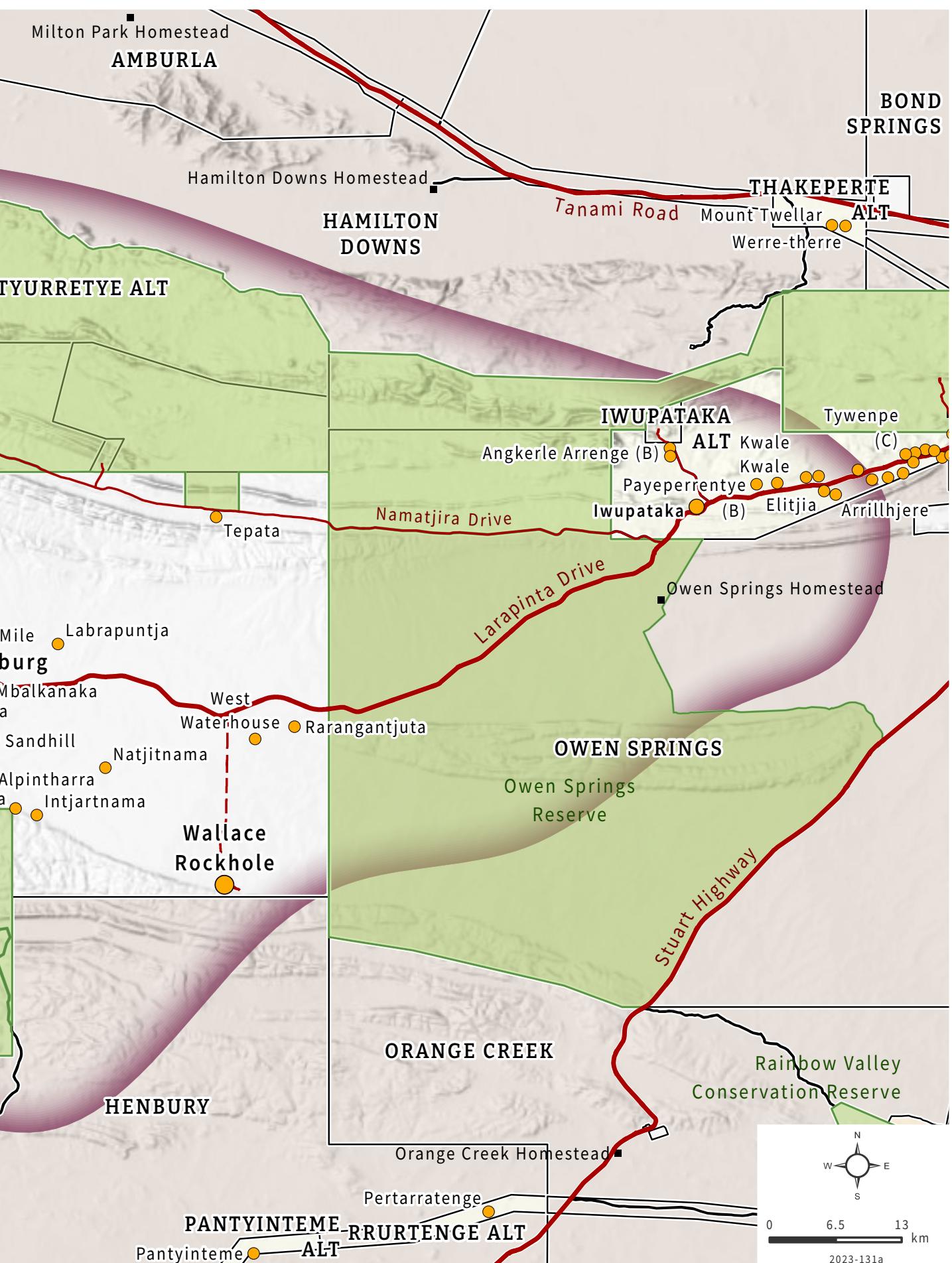


Figure 3: NT Parks, reserves and pastoral leases surrounding the five Hermannsburg ALTs





# Traditional owners and Tjuwanpa Rangers: life histories and skills

Most traditional owners have lived much of their lives on or near to their country and know it better than non-Aboriginal Australians.

Their cultural knowledge and experience are foundational to the work of the ranger program.

At the workshops, participants wrote something of their life stories. Each of these are recorded in the Traditional Owner Country Planning Reports. In summary, traditional owners described themselves by their skin names, the country of their parents and grandparents and the places that are important to them. They also wrote of their varied professions and work experiences including as:

- School teachers, family educators
- National park rangers
- Cattle workers, horse-riders

- Road maintenance and construction workers
- Fencers, bore runners
- Childcare, aged care, mental health care workers
- Artists and painters
- Woodworkers, craftsmen/women
- Motor mechanics
- Interpreters and translators
- Multi-media makers and producers.

Their skills are relevant and useful to ranger work and land management which is another reason why traditional owners are a part of the ranger program.

The life stories and knowledge of some Arrarnta Elders are also documented in books and reports that are listed at the end of this plan.

# Western Arrarnta people and their country

## Altjirra

Arrarnta laws, customs and language are believed to have originated in the *Altjirra*, (commonly glossed into English as ‘Dreaming’) a time in the past when *Altjirra* ancestors travelled across the landscape. They created all the features of the country through their

actions, including the lands, waters, plants, and animals. The paths along which *Altjirra* ancestors travelled are sometimes translated as ‘song lines’ or ‘Dreamings’, and places in the landscape associated with them are referred to in English as ‘sacred sites’.

## Anparnintja - the kinship system

Arrarnta people have been caring for the land for thousands of generations. Their ancestors were the first rangers. They travelled across the country and looked after waters and sacred sites. They hunted and gathered bush foods and burnt the land to promote the growth of bush food plants and to track animals. Their ways of living helped to keep the country productive and healthy. Knowledge about country has been passed down from generation to generation to people in the present day.

Arrarnta people, country, waters, animals, and plants are understood to come from the *Altjirra* and are related to each other. In Arrarnta these relationships are called ‘Anparnintja’, meaning the connections between people and all things. Anparnintja explains how everything on Arrarnta country is related. It encompasses the kinship system as well as the relationships between people, *Altjirra*, land, language and culture. The health and well-being of people and country depends on these relationships being kept strong.

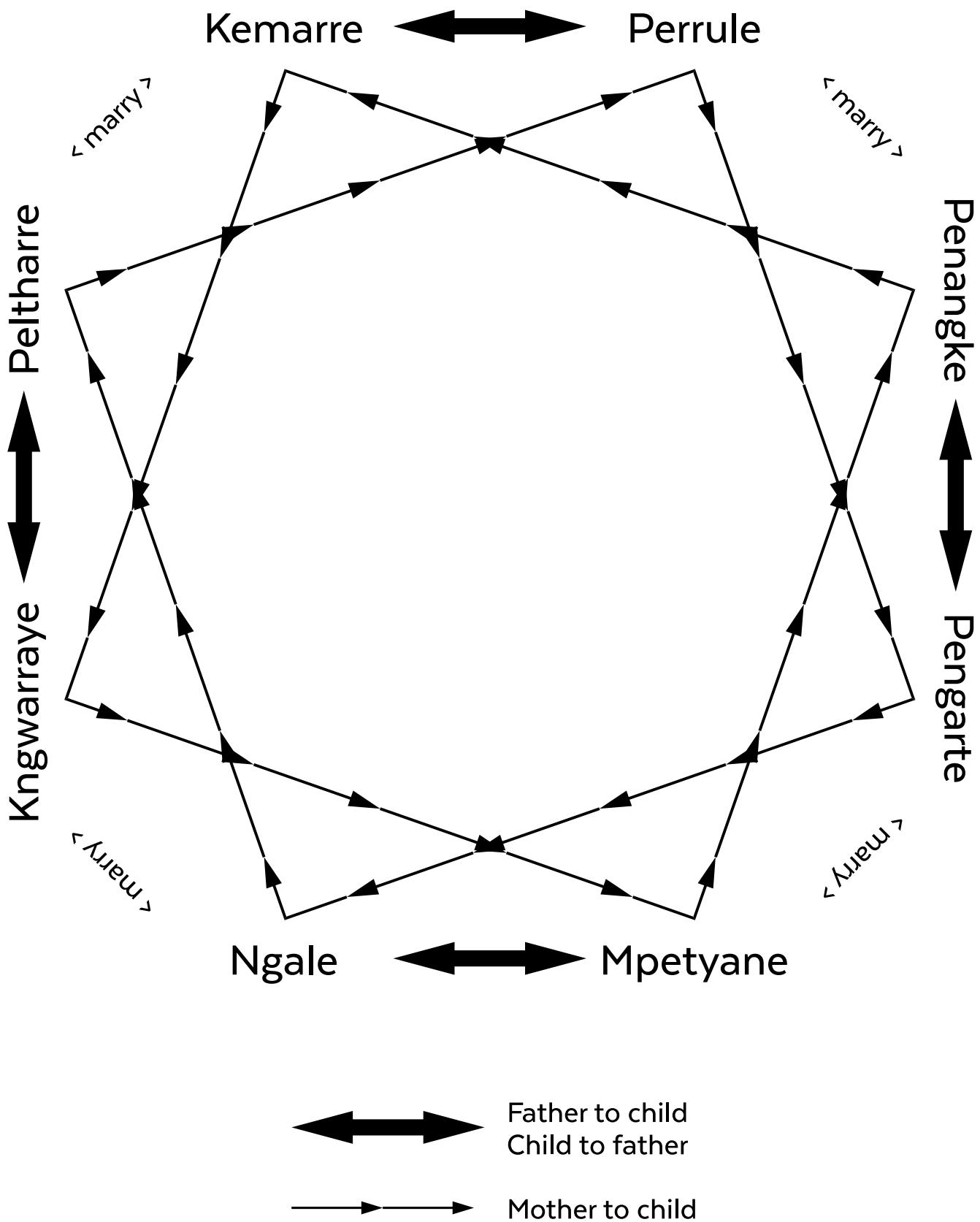
The kinship system is central to the Arrarnta world view and establishes the cultural rules for how to look after the land. It also sets out marriage rules and defines how people relate to each other and to the land. There are four main

ways in which people are connected to country. These are through their father’s father (arranga); mother’s father (tjimia); father’s mother (palla); and mother’s mother (ebmanna).

Arrarnta people follow an eight-class subsection system also known as a ‘skin system’. Arrarnta people are born into a particular subsection based on the subsection identity of parents and grandparents. The eight subsections are: Kemarre, Perrurle, Penangke, Pengarte, Penangke, Mpetyane, Ngale, Kngwarreye and Peltharre. The diagram at Figure 4 shows the relationships between the subsections.

This system provides a way to categorise kinship relationships, not only with people, but also with plants, animals and places in the country itself. Plants and animals also have skin names that come from *Altjirra* and are connected to sacred sites and Creation stories.

Figure 4: Diagram of Western Arrarnta section relationships (Henderson & Dobson 1994).



## **Pmerekwerteye and kurtungurla**

Arrarnta country is made up of different tracts of country called *pmara*, or ‘estates’ in English. Western Arrarnta people are connected to estates through the *Altjirra* and their relationships with *Altjirra* ancestors that gave the country life and form.

People inherit estates through both their mothers and fathers. Those who inherit country through their fathers and fathers’ fathers are

called *pmerekwerteye*. In English they are sometimes called the ‘owner’ or ‘boss’ for the land. Those individuals who have ancestral ties to an estate through a grandparent aside from a paternal grandfather are called *kurtungurla*. They are often referred to in English as ‘managers’ or ‘workers’. *Pmerekwerteye* and *kurtungurla* work together to care for country.

## **Western Arrarnta history**

Prior to European settlement Arrarnta people had been living on this land since time immemorial. Less than 100 km from Ntaria, archaeological sites such as Puritjarra and Kulpi Mara rock shelters indicate the ancient Aboriginal occupation of central Australia. These sites were first occupied from around 35,000 years ago.<sup>2</sup>

Arrarnta ancestors possessed a deep understanding of their country. They knew the locations of water sources, hunting grounds and bush food areas, and walked the country caring for important places.

After Europeans came to central Australia, they took up much of Arrarnta country for pastoralism. Most cattle runs were established between 1876 and 1884. Thousands of cattle and horses were introduced onto Arrarnta lands.<sup>3</sup>

The Hermannsburg Lutheran Mission was established in 1877 and took up a lease on Arrarnta land that is now covered by the five Land Trusts. More recently, national parks and reserves have been declared over parts of Western Arrarnta traditional lands adjoining the Land Trusts.

Colonisation, and particularly the introduction of cattle, brought profound changes to Arrarnta people’s lives. They were restricted from walking across their lands, accessing springs and waterholes, or freely hunting and foraging for food. Despite these significant disruptions, Arrarnta people continued to live on their land, settling at surrounding cattle stations and the Hermannsburg Lutheran Mission where Arrarnta people and missionaries developed longstanding relationships.

Following the passing of the Land Rights Act, traditional owners worked with the Finke River Mission and the CLC to have title to the former Hermannsburg Mission Lease transferred. In 1982 the five Land Trusts, which make up the core of the Tjuwanpa Rangers work area, were officially handed over to traditional owners.

2. Smith 1987; Thorley 2004.

3. Austin-Broos 2009:29; Kenny 2013:20.

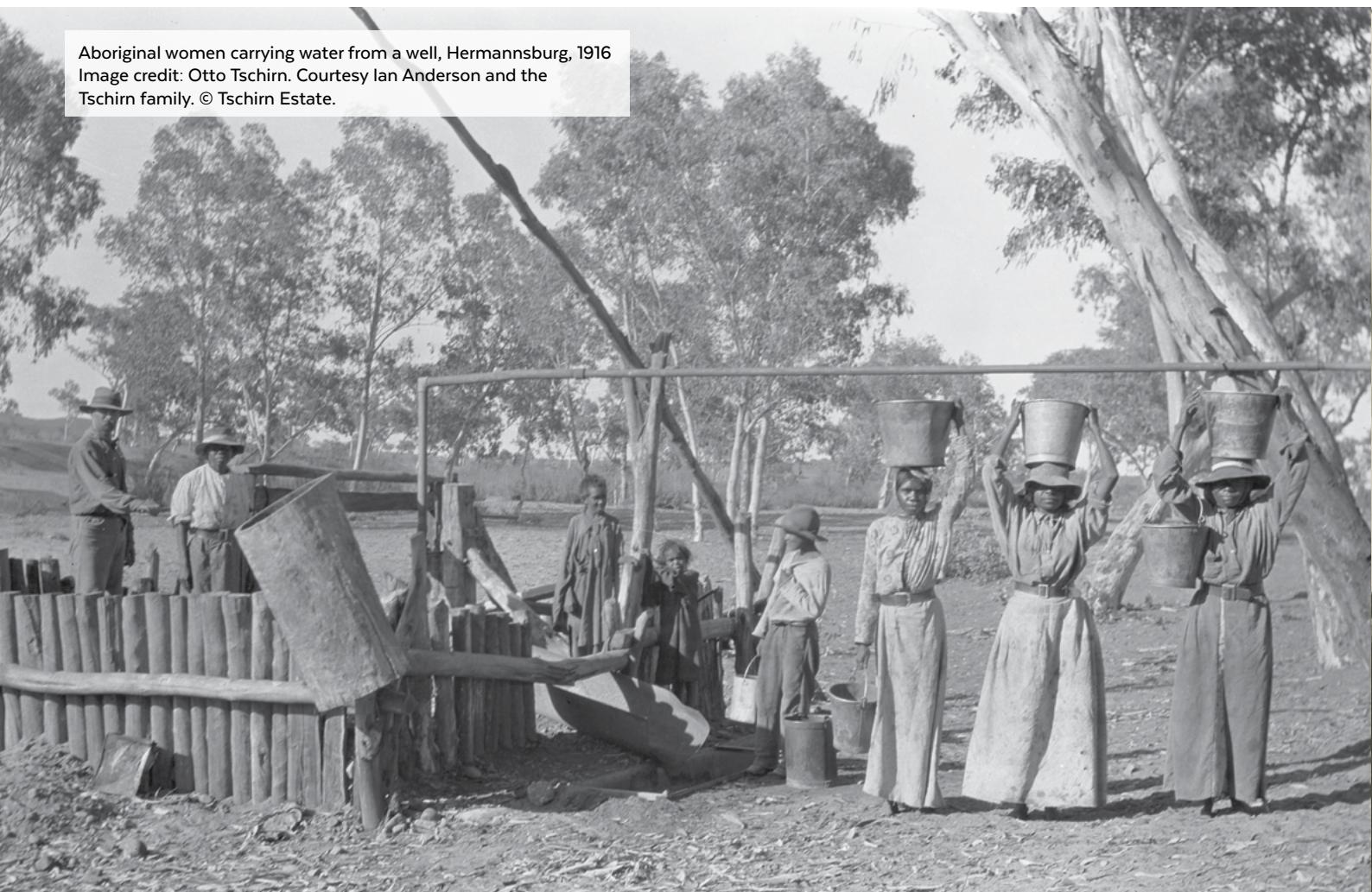
Temporary traditional grass huts in the 'creek camp' area at Hermannsburg  
Image credit: Lutheran Archives: P02620 05048



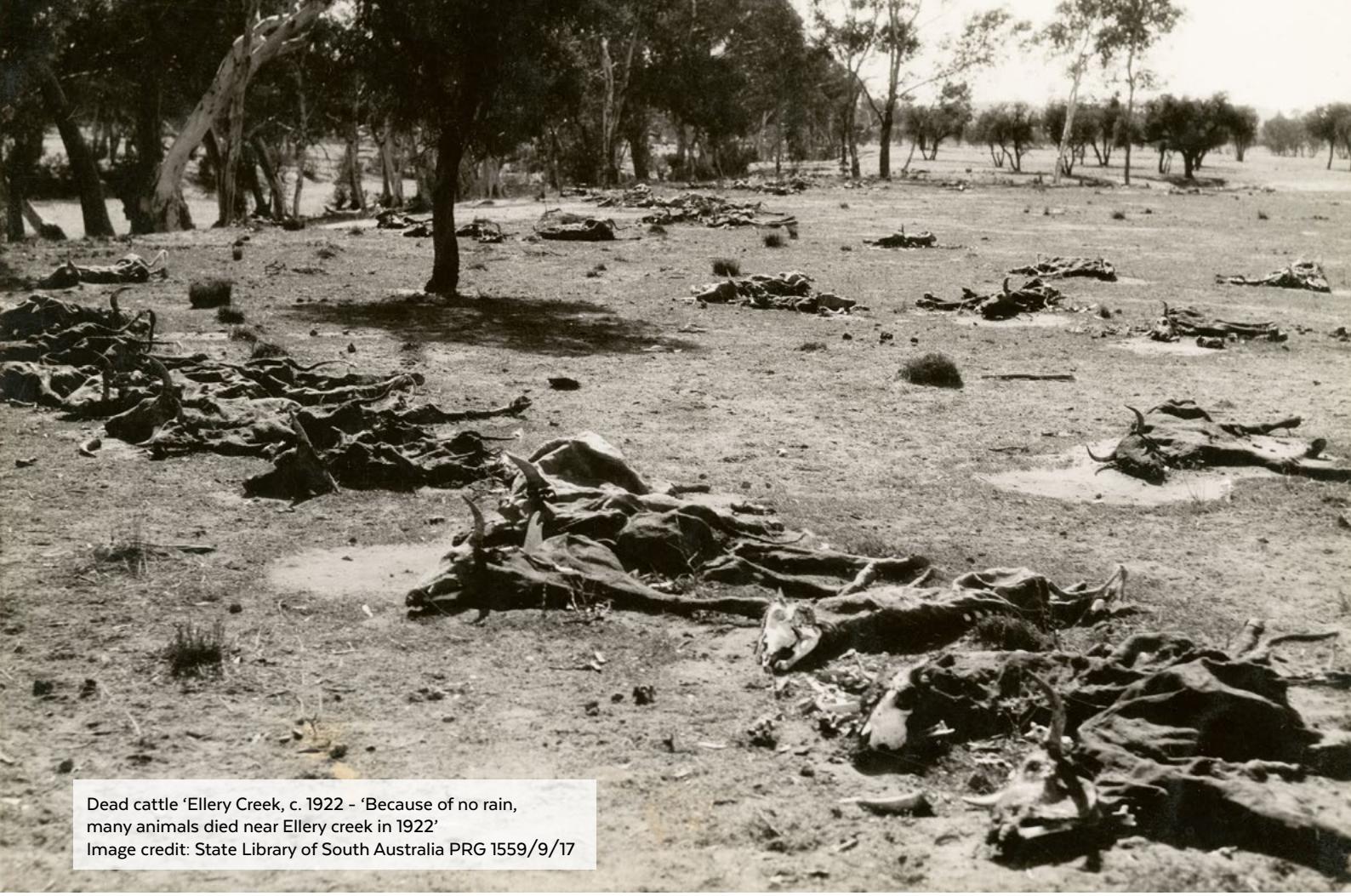




Finke River Mission, NT, Hermannsburg, 1953 -  
The children lined up at the front of the school  
Image credit: Lutheran Archives: P03760 07829

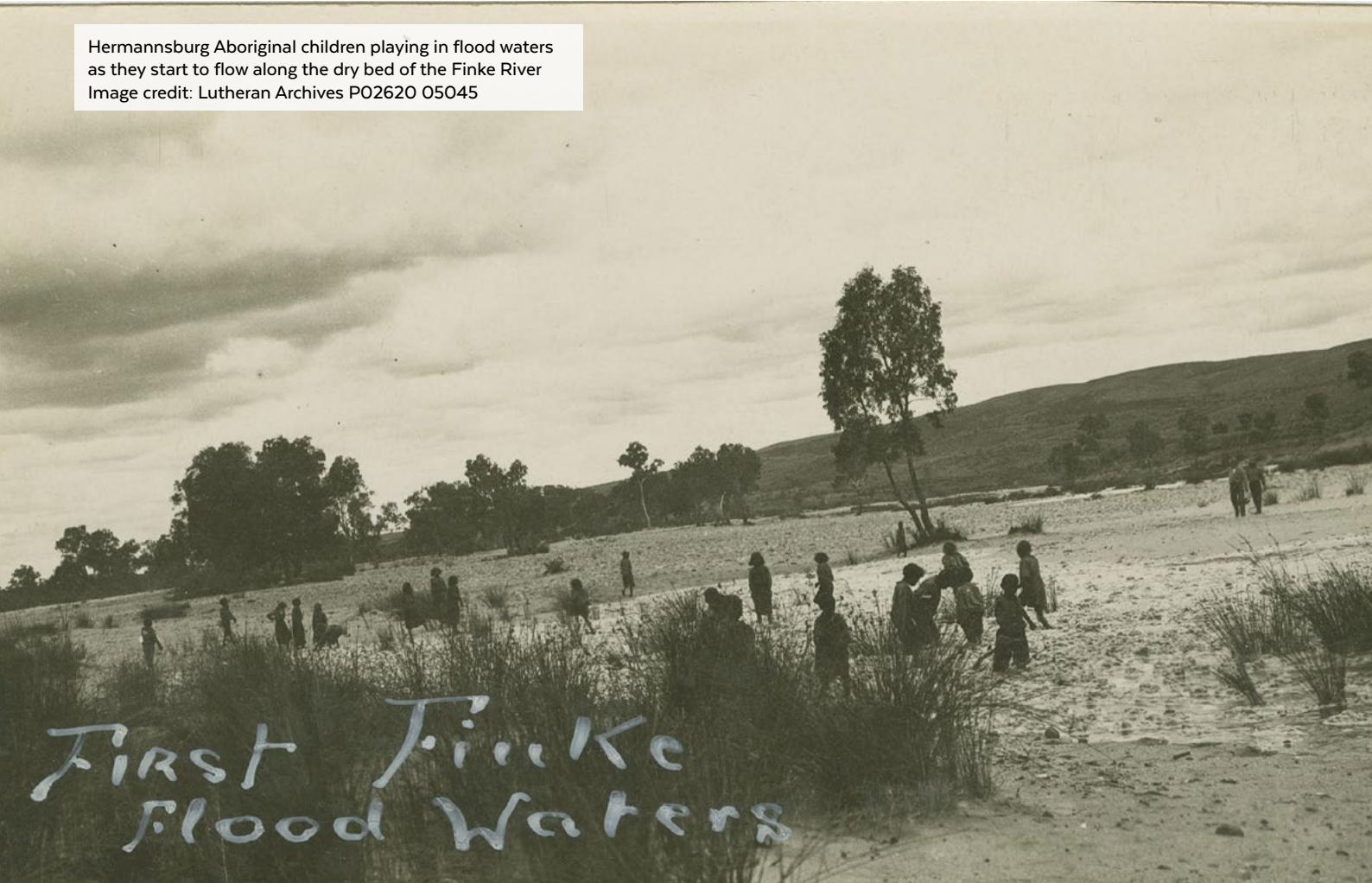


Aboriginal women carrying water from a well, Hermannsburg, 1916  
Image credit: Otto Tschirn. Courtesy Ian Anderson and the  
Tschirn family. © Tschirn Estate.



Dead cattle 'Ellery Creek, c. 1922 - 'Because of no rain, many animals died near Ellery creek in 1922'  
Image credit: State Library of South Australia PRG 1559/9/17

Hermannsburg Aboriginal children playing in flood waters as they start to flow along the dry bed of the Finke River  
Image credit: Lutheran Archives P02620 05045



## Land management work, planning and actions: 2000s – 2020

Arrarnta people worked for NT Parks at Finke Gorge and West MacDonnell National Parks in the 1980s and 1990s. In 2005 a ranger group was established with NT Parks and Reserves government funding. The group was first supported by Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) through the Tjuwanpa Outstation Resource Centre. Tjuwanpa' means Ironwood tree in Arrarnta. The Centre once had a large Tjuwanpa tree growing nearby.<sup>4</sup> 'The ranger's logo represents Mt. Hermannsburg (Ljalkaindirma) and the Finke River (Larapinta/Lara Beinta) which flows through their land.

The Tjuwanpa Rangers initially worked on Finke Gorge and West MacDonnell National Parks and the five Aboriginal Land Trusts through a Flexible Employment Program (Figures 5 & 6). Funding stalled with the closure of CDEP and the ranger program was taken over by the Tjuwanpa Rangers, CLC and the Tjuwanpa Outstation Resource Centre. The group has been funded under the federal government's Working on Country program since 2008. Along with their work on the ALTs, since about 2005 traditional owners and rangers have been involved in Joint Management of neighbouring NT Parks.

### Examples of operational activities undertaken by Tjuwanpa Rangers in 2016.

The ranger newsletters have details of past ranger work (see the end of this plan)<sup>5</sup>

Biodiversity monitoring and threatened species	Soil Conservation	Fire management	Weed management	Feral animal management	Cultural heritage management	School-based capacity building
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Conducted Slaters Skink and Marsupial Mole surveys.</li><li>Conducted Freshwater surveys with NT Parks and Wildlife.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Undertook training in soil erosion surveys, monitoring, and management at Ti Tree and Santa Teresa.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Conducted fire management, burning 135ha of country.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Managed Prickly Pear, Athel Pine, Mexican Poppy, and Ruby Dock on about 10ha of country.</li><li>Undertook a fee-for service contract for Athel Pine control.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Installed rockhole 'spiders' at two springs to protect them from camels, cattle, and horses.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Completed one cultural heritage trip to each of the five land trusts.</li><li>Constructed a fence at one cultural site.</li><li>Maintained Namatjira house yard and grave sites at springs.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Supported the ANZAC youth horse ride to Alice Springs.</li><li>Organised a community open day for 10th anniversary of Tjuwanpa Rangers.</li></ul>

Figure 5: Tjuwanpa Ranger Teams



**Tjuwanpa Rangers 2015**

Left to right: Cleveland Kantawara, Garry Ungwanaka, Jermaine Kenny, Daryl Kantawara, Fabian Raggett, Christopher Ungwanaka and Obed Ratara



**Tjuwanpa Rangers 2019**

Left to right: Jermaine Kenny, Kristopher Ungwanaka, Obed Ratara, Dean Inkamala, Malcolm Kenny, Benji Kenny, Fabian Raggett, and Raphael Impu



**Tjuwanpa Rangers 2024**

Left to right: Dean Inkamala, Obed Ratara, Patrick Abbott, Daniel Le Breton (Ranger Group Facilitator), Christopher Ungwanaka and Kevin Malthouse.

Figure 6: Tjuwanpa Rangers' activities



Tjuwanpa Ranger team, Ryan Clark, Christopher Ungwanaka, Clint Wheeler and Raphael Impu setting up a trap camera.

Tjuwanpa Rangers engaged in fire training.





# About values, threats and strategies in this plan

This section identifies the key values of Arrarnta country, the primary threats to those values, and the actions that will be taken to make Arrarnta people and country healthier.

Much of the content of this plan is taken directly from the words of *pmerekwerteye* and *kurtungurla* and reflects their views and aspirations. For this reason, the facilitators wrote the values, threats and strategies of this plan in the first-person voice.



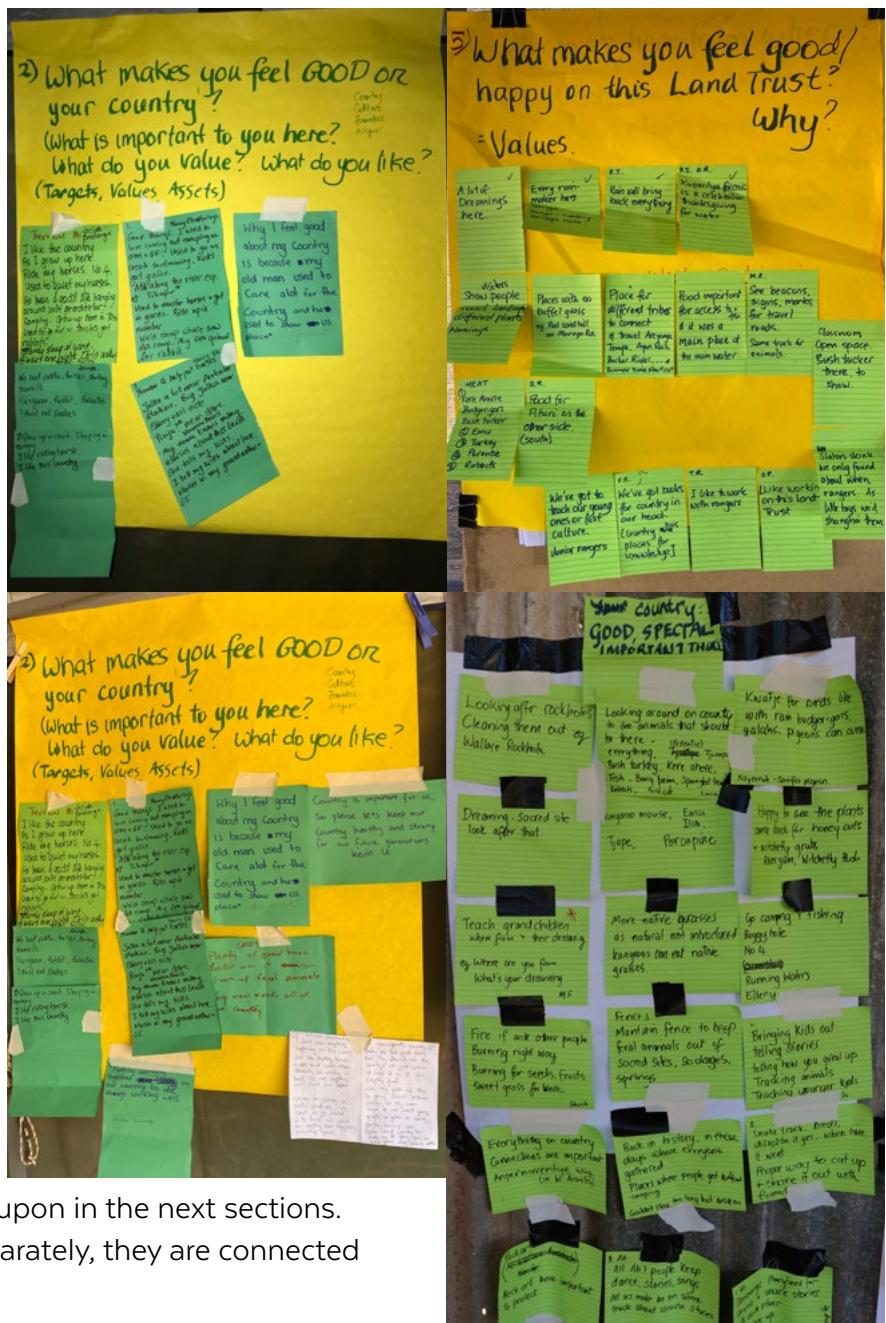
*Solanum lithophilum* (Bush Tomato), Uruna ALT

# Good things about our country: What we value

At the workshops, we spoke and wrote about the ‘good things’ on our country. In this plan, we call them ‘values’. These are the things we want to make stronger and better through land care and management.

All values were grouped into themes and six were identified as priorities based on how frequently people spoke of each during the workshops. They are:

- Value 1: Rain, springs and natural waters
- Value 2: Living and working on country
- Value 3: Bush foods, animals and medicines
- Value 4: Important cultural places
- Value 5: Learning and teaching about country
- Value 6: Rangers and the ranger program



These six themes are expanded upon in the next sections. Although they are presented separately, they are connected and influence each other.



Ltalaltuma ALT, Gilbert Springs (Thalick Malbunka, Martin Campbell and Colin Joseph)

## Value 1: Rain, springs and natural waters

There are important springs, soakage and rock holes throughout our country. They provided water for our old people when they walked from place to place. These are also important to us today.

When it rains the waterholes fill up, the country becomes green again, the bush tucker comes back, and native animals return. Rainmaking is important to bring the rain. In the past we would sing songs and rub special stones to bring the rain.

The cultural and physical wellbeing of the country depends on having healthy springs and rock holes. Traditional owners and rangers work together to protect them from feral animals and weeds. It is not enough to fix the springs and rock holes and then leave them. We need to check on them regularly to make sure they remain healthy.

Rain will bring back everything. After rain all the bush tucker come back.

Raphael Impu

Every rainmaker has songs and special stones. Rubbing the stones and singing, that brings the rain.

Group of Ntaria men

It would make me feel good if we got rain and plenty of it. I would be happy to see grass getting greener again and water in the waterhole.

Ltalaltuma traditional owner



Uruna ALT, Pultharra Rockhole, William Palmer



Uruna ALT

## Value 2: Living and working on country

Being on country and caring for it with our families makes us happy. Many of us grew up living and camping on country with our parents, grandparents and wider families. Our country is our history and our future. We want it to stay the same for our descendants.

It is good to work with the rangers to look after our traditional lands. There are sometimes tensions and fighting in town. It is quiet and peaceful living on our own country with our families. It is the way we learnt about our country, and it is here we can teach our children about our laws, sacred sites and bush tucker.

I am happy and I feel at home. Proud to be at my country, Ltalaltuma that belongs to my grandfather and father this is where my family belongs.

Mildred, Rodney and Tristam Malbunka

I like to stay at outstation to look after country and being part of my grandfather's land.

Tristam Malbunka

Country is important for us, so please let's keep our country healthy and strong for future generations.

Kevin Ungwanaka

This is my grandparent's country. It makes me feel good being here. They showed us the country. We just want to keep it as it is – everything good.

Elfrieda Ungwanaka



Uruna ALT, Injartmana Youth Camp



Roulpmalpma ALT

## Value 3: Bush foods, animals and medicines

Our country has many plants and animals that are spiritually significant to us. They were important food sources for our old people and continue to be important to us today.

We look after our country and keep feral animals and weeds out not only so that we can eat, but also to maintain our physical and spiritual connection to the plants and animals of our country.

After rains fish return to the rivers and rock holes, and our traditional foods and bush medicines come back. Although people can go to the store today it is important for our health and well-being to go out on country, to hunt and get bush tucker as our ancestors did before us.

Ipolera area had lots of bush tucker. It was well here with rain. Rain makes everything grow back. Good bush tucker you can eat. Bush coconut, Bush plum, Fig, Bush orange, Yalke [Bush onion], Langkwe [Bush banana]. They might grow back from rain.

Colin Malbunka

Whenever there is water, people fish on the Finke River. After the rain we're happy because it'll bring everything back.

Troy Ratara

Bush tucker was always on the side of the road, but we were going past it to the shop!

Raphael Impu



Bush food Quandongs



Ltalaltuma ALT

## Value 4: Important cultural places

Our lands hold many sacred places and Dreaming tracks. The country and people are healthy when sacred places are properly cared for and respected.

With the help of the Tjuwanpa Rangers, we protect sacred sites from threats such as feral animals, weeds and fire. As custodians of these sacred places, it is crucial for rangers to ask traditional owners for guidance and cultural protection before doing work on country. To prevent unintentional entry to sacred sites, it is also vital that others do not travel on our country without permission.

We want to pass on knowledge of our Dreamings to the next generation to learn about their important spiritual places. We can do this when we have the means to work, hunt, collect bush tucker and camp on our country with our families.

**We've got to ask traditional owners which one's main springs to look after. That's our job. Are we going to go and barge in? No, we come and ask traditional owners.**

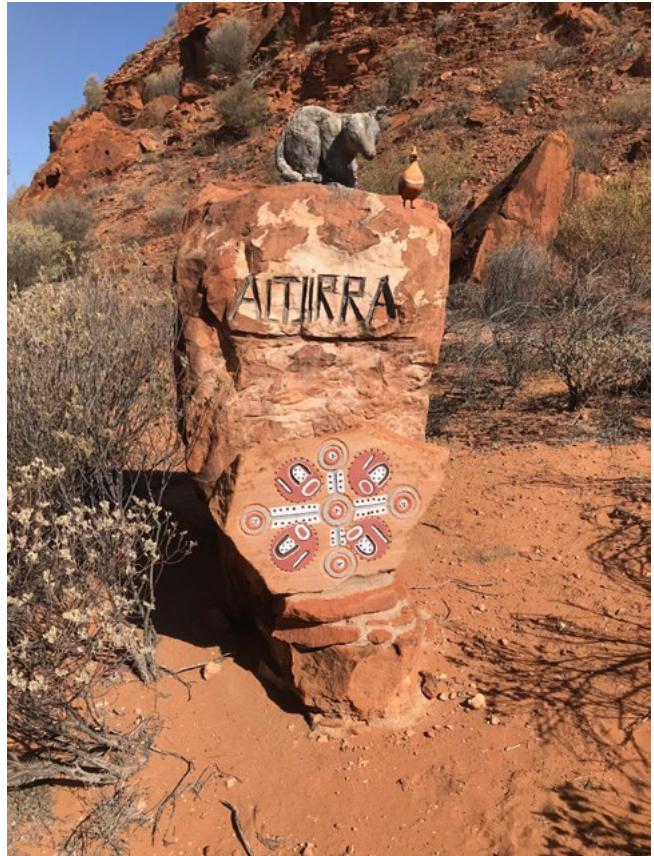
Raphael Impu (Tjuwanpa Ranger)

Rangers to protect men's sites – firebreaks, fencing, storytelling to young people.

Lyle Kenny

**Protecting the spring and sacred sites.**

Colin Malbunka



Ltalaltuma ALT, Ipolera



Ltalaltuma ALT (Bevan Malbunka) shows one of his main hopes for country

## Value 5: Learning and teaching about country

Kids need to go to school to learn from qualified teachers, but it is equally important that they learn about their own country, culture and language from their families. Our old people, *pmerekwerteye* and *kurtungurla*, are the knowledge holders and decision-makers for country. We learn about caring for country from them.

The Junior Rangers is an important program for our children to learn about their country. Many junior rangers have become Tjuwanpa Rangers after they finished school. Being on country through working and living at our outstations means children grow up knowing where they come from. Their country is then familiar to them.



Tjuwanpa Rangers and Ntaria traditional owner, Byron Ratara on a culture trip with Ntaria School at Palm Valley.

When they grow up, they will be going around to the areas so they can enjoy it, so they know and can learn about country.

Elfrieda Ungwanaka

We got two books. Whiteman got books. We've got books for country in our heads.

Fabian Raggett

My mum, Vanessa Davis, knows many stories about this land. She tells my kids. I tell my kids about here. Stories of my grandmother and grandfather.

Jacinda Ebatarinja

In the future, when we have junior rangers, they will know stories for Palm Valley.

Troy Ratara

If we bring them children to our outstation they will know, "This is where I'm from" so they feel at home. And oldies can tell them, "This is your arranga's [father's father's] land". The others that come back will feel at home, "This is where we belong".

Mildred Malbunka



## Value 6: Rangers and the ranger program

The Tjuwanpa Ranger program supports us to look after our land. The rangers have done important work for traditional owners, helping to keep the numbers of feral animals down and protecting springs and other important places. For example, on Roulpmalpma ALT the rangers removed large numbers of cattle carcasses that had fouled an important spring. It was hard and dirty work but now the spring is flowing clean and fresh again.

The rangers work closely and respectfully with traditional owners. They don't work on their own but ask *pmerekwerteye* and *kurtungurla* (traditional owners) advice about the work that needs to be done and ask for permission before going out on country. Ranger work is directed by the TORAC, and rangers learn from traditional owners about how to look after cultural sites.

Tjuwanpa Rangers Fabian Raggett, Colin Joseph and Malcolm Kenny create a fence around the Liltjere spring at Ntaria ALT

Albert Namatjira was a famous man to Arrarnta people. The rangers have helped to look after his house by fencing it and doing whipper snipper work.

Mervyn Raggett

Being a ranger, I learn more to look after sacred sites and places, things my grandparents taught me. What I learn I'm showing.

Raphael Impu

Tjuwanpa Rangers preparing for burning on country, Ltalaltuma ALT



# Main worries about our country: What we see as threats

At the workshops we spoke and wrote about the things we worry about for our country. Healthy Country Plans from other places in Australia refer to worries as ‘threats to country’. These are the things that weaken our country and sometimes ourselves.

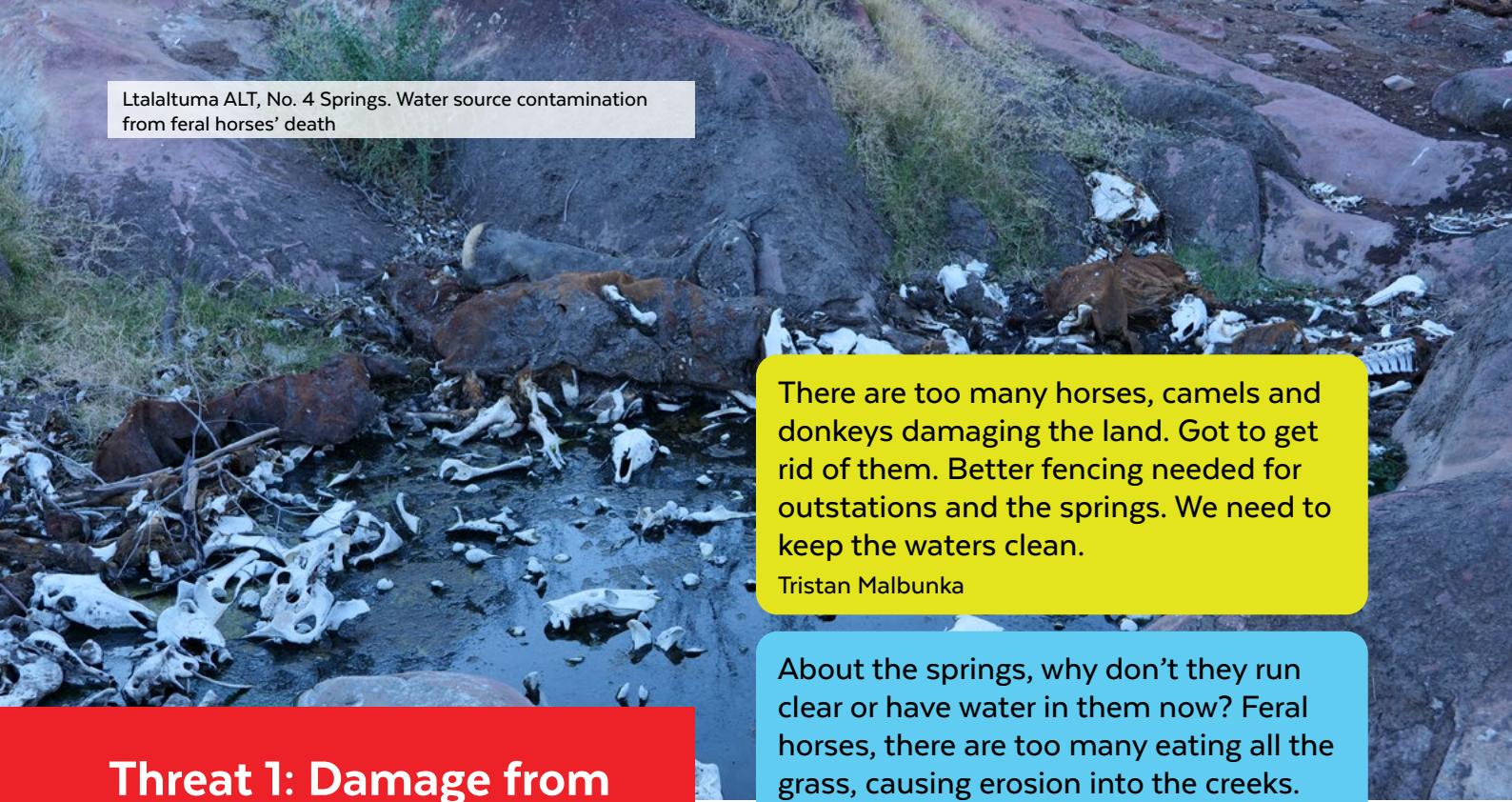
All threats were grouped into themes and seven were identified as priorities based on how frequently people spoke of each during the workshops. They are:

- Threat 1: Damage from feral animals
- Threat 2: Dry times and climate change
- Threat 3: Buffel grass and other weeds
- Threat 4: Loss of cultural knowledge
- Threat 5: Big wildfires
- Threat 6: Poor relations with neighbours and visitors
- Threat 7: Challenges to living on and accessing our country

These are expanded in the next sections with direct quotes. These seven threats are presented separately in this Country Plan; however, many are connected and influence each other.



These seven threats are presented separately in this Country Plan; however, many are connected and influence each other.



## Threat 1: Damage from introduced animals

The damage caused by introduced animals is our single biggest worry. Cattle, horses and camels spoil our waterholes and springs. They make the water muddy, and some die in or near the water. These animals damage sacred sites and overgraze the land. They cause erosion and kill our native plants, including important bush medicine and bush tucker species.

Carcasses of feral animals in our springs need to be cleaned out and the springs fenced. However, when we fence the springs, horses and camels always push them down eventually.

Culling helps to keep the numbers of horses and camels down; however, we would like to find other solutions as carcasses being left where they are shot upsets people and looks bad.

Feral cats and foxes prey on our native animals, many of which are rare like the Kangaroo hopping mouse. Others, like the Bilby have disappeared altogether. Even animals that used to be plentiful such as Perentie and Hill kangaroos are not as common as they used to be.

There are too many horses, camels and donkeys damaging the land. Got to get rid of them. Better fencing needed for outstations and the springs. We need to keep the waters clean.

Tristan Malbunka

About the springs, why don't they run clear or have water in them now? Feral horses, there are too many eating all the grass, causing erosion into the creeks.

Nicholas Williams

Animals, they've gone. They were here long time ago. Which animals are surviving? Nothing. Even kangaroo. We can't even see them anymore. All our bush tucker has gone – Bush banana, Fig, Yalke. Even kangaroo we don't see them anymore. Only see horses and cattle here.

What about Bilbies? They're gone. Cat ate them. They were here when I was young.

Mildred Malbunka

We worry about soaks and rock holes, mainly feral – other people's stock. Around here you see donkeys, horses, and camels. People need to be responsible for looking after animals. Some are owned animals from communities, and some are wild. They die in rock holes and leave the country really ugly. I don't know who shot them but they should clean up the bones.

Jacqueline Silverton

Kangaroo mouse. Don't see them round much anymore because of cats.

Eric Abbott



Italaltuma ALT, Gilbert Springs. Drying of water source due to lack of rain (Mildred Malbunka)

## Threat 2: Dry times and climate change

Until recently, it was very dry for a long time. Mulga, gum trees, *Tjaape* (witchetty) trees, everything was dead. Bush banana and *Yalke* (Bush onion) had also become less plentiful.

We know the climate is changing we can see it. We feel sad when we think about the country the way our grandfathers and grandmothers talked about it.

There's something different about these dry times now. We are worried because the swimming holes are smaller, waterholes are empty, the grass is dry and there are fewer birds and very little bush tucker around. We don't see many Kangaroos, Bush turkey or Emus anymore. Bush bananas, Bush raisins, Desert raisin, bush medicine and sugar bag (wild honey) are not plentiful like they used to be.

**People start to think about climate because they see all the changes. We put on TV and watch things like that and learn.**

Ada Lechleitner

**People don't know what climate change is. We want to really know.**

Bevan Malbunka

We know when the west wind comes its getting warmer and plants are coming out. But nowadays we don't see those seasonal changes. We gotta ask what climate change is on the ground.

Mildred and Bevan Malbunka

There used to be a lot of kangaroos. I think and cry with the memories of what I did with my grandmother and grandfather when I was little.

Nancy Ebatarinja

We had climate change meeting at basketball court, but no one came because no one want to believe in it. But we see it. It's coming, it's in front of us. We want climate change meetings with CLC so everyone can hear about it.

Stuart Pareroultja

People are beginning to think about the climate because we see things changing. When we turn on the television, we watch things about climate change. People really want to understand climate change and what we can do to deal with its effects. We worry about the health of the rangers and other people who work outside in summer during the heat of the day. We want CLC to organise meetings about climate change so that everyone in the community can learn about it and how to cope better.



Buffel grass invasion (East Dam, Roulpaulpma ALT)

### Threat 3: Buffel grass and other weeds

Weeds are a huge problem on our country. One of the most obvious weeds is Buffel grass. We see it everywhere taking over and pushing out native grasses like spinifex as well as seed food grasses that our grandparents relied on.

Where Buffel grass grows all our bush tucker disappears – Bush raisins, Bush tomato, and Bush onion. It also pushes out *ngkurlpa* (bush tobacco) in rocky country. *Ngkurlpa* is not found any more in places we used to collect it. Buffel grass grows so thickly that it is difficult to see the bush tucker that is still around. Looking back to the 1950s there were a lot of bush foods and animals on our country. Now there's not so much around. We wonder if Buffel grass is to blame.

Buffel grass is difficult to walk through and it's a bush fire hazard – particularly after big rains when the grass gets thick. It causes dangerous bushfires because it burns hotter and quicker than native grasses. Buffel fires even kill native trees like Corkwood trees that have thick bark to protect them from fire. Buffel fires cause a lot of destruction in river systems, and are a big risk to rock art.

Main issue is Buffel grass

Conrad Ratara

Buffel grass eats bush tucker. Bush tomato, Bush raisins, they are all gone. Maybe there is a bit of *yalka* around. Maybe not. All the bush tuckers gone from buffel grass. Ate all our bush tucker. Even our spinifex is gone. No more.

Raphael Impu

Buffel grass – no plants and native grasses. We walked everywhere as kids. Now we can't see to walk through buffel grass.

Jacquie Silverton

There was a lot of bush tucker around in the 1950's – Mulga seeds, Banded goanna, Bush plum, Bush bean. Not now, all bare. All gone, maybe because of Buffel grass.

Louise Sultan

It is difficult to track animals in country where there's widespread Buffel grass because we can't see the ground. It grows in big tussocks and water flows around it, causing erosion. This makes the ground very bumpy and difficult to drive over. We notice that since there were some big rains in the hot season of 2021-22 some of our bush tucker plants and animals are coming back except where there's Buffel grass.

Other weeds that damage our country include Athel pine, Mexican poppy, Couch grass and Ruby dock. In some places bulrushes grow too thickly around springs and block water flow. They need to be pulled out. Around Palm Valley traditional owners worry that weeds and other growth stop young Red cabbage palms (*Livistona mariae*) growing.



A lizard stuck due to random throwing of a can after use

## Threat 4: Loss of cultural knowledge

We feel upset when people use our country without asking us first. Sometimes they visit sacred sites and hunt on our country without our permission. This worries us because they do not know where they are driving or the right protocols for visiting country. They might damage a sacred site. People don't mean to be disrespectful, but some have not learned how to behave properly according to Arrarnta law.

Kids used to live with their grandparents and learn from them when they were about ten years old, but this doesn't happen as much anymore. Some don't know their own skin names and talk to people of another skin the wrong way because they don't understand these rules.

When we were young, we used to go on school trips and excursions on country all the time, but the schools no longer seem to organise regular excursions. The Junior Rangers Program also used to be a way for kids to learn something about country but now the program is not so strong.

How do we get children to learn? In past times, children were welcome to come along when traditional owners visited country with CLC.

How to make sure children are learning?  
Early days when they lived with mum and dad, when they were ten years old, they'd separate and go with their grandparents. Nowadays it is gone. Wrong skin, talking on their phones. Kids don't know skin name.

Conrad Ratara

Problem with losing culture. Kids are on their phones, watching YouTube. They don't know dances. Who will know and speak for the places here?

Unnamed person

Sometimes people from Alice Springs, Ntaria, and Areyonga hunt on Ltlaltuma. They're trespassing on other people's land... Hunting for kangaroos is free, but sometimes they're driving around making marks on the country. They don't know where they're driving. They might be driving on sacred sites. Sometimes it's a worry because they make bushfire and burn everything.

Bevan Malbunka

This was an important way to learn about country because it is often difficult for us to get a car to visit country by ourselves. Today the rules have changed, and kids can no longer go to meetings, or on country visits in CLC vehicles.

Young people spend a lot of time on their phones and watching YouTube and Tiktok. Sometimes young people are not being shown important places on country the right way according to our laws. Even now we see children losing the names for things like plants, animals and waterholes in their own language.

We're worried that the next generations won't know their country or have the right knowledge to speak for it. We want them to learn about their country and culture.



Wild fire causing damage to mature trees

## Threat 5: Big wildfires

Our ancestors burnt the country for hunting, communication and to clear the ground for walking. Regular burning kept the country healthy. It reduced grasses, encouraged new growth and attracted animals.

When Europeans arrived, they brought cattle, horses and donkeys with them and used our land for pastoralism. We were no longer able to practice our way of burning because Europeans were worried bushfires would burn their livestock.

Our traditional burning regimes have not been practiced for generations. Now when fires occur, they are often very large and uncontrolled and wipe out everything in their path. When Buffel grass burns it kills trees – even plants that are adapted to fire. Some of our sacred trees have been damaged or killed by bushfire.

Not much Ngkurlpa bush tobacco, too much bushfire and all that. Not even roots left.

Roger Ebatarinja

Around West Dam and Middle Dam is hunting area. If bushfires go through, they might get really big and there'll be no more kangaroos.

Bevan Malbunka



Roulpmaulpma ALT. Casey Kenny shares one of his main concerns.



## Threat 6: Poor relations with neighbours and visitors

Our traditional country is not just the Land Trusts. It extends onto surrounding pastoral stations and Northern Territory Parks. We have always lived on this country. This is where we bring up our children and grandchildren.

It worries us when we don't have good relationships with all our neighbours as well as the visitors that use our land. We feel frustrated and disrespected when we are not informed about significant things that happen on our country such as mining and feral animal culling. We want neighbours like pastoral stations and Northern Territory Parks, and visitors like tourists, tourism companies and mining companies to listen to us and work with us.

We have problems with poor boundary fences between the Land Trusts and surrounding cattle stations. Cattle and horses cross onto the ALT and damage our land. They eat the grass and foul our springs and rock holes. It upsets us that there is not better communication between traditional owners, the CLC and pastoralists.

Tourists frequently drive on to the ALT because they think it is part of Northern Territory Parks.

Rangers work with traditional owners on the ALT. Got to work with tourism and mining as well like the Palm Valley pipeline.

On boundary issues, need to talk and liaise between traditional owners, CLC and manager of pastoral leases.

Conrad Ratara

Like if there's something happening with mining, we get frustrated when there's no communication.

Troy Ratara

Tourists come through. They think it's part of the National Park. We turn them around and send them back the way they came.

Terry Abbott

We need to find ways to let tourists know that this is Aboriginal land and educate them about where they can and can't go. We are worried that some sacred sites could be accidentally damaged by tourists, and that tourists could get hurt going to those places.



Water source contamination by feral animals poses challenges to living on country (Ltalaltuma ALT, Gilbert Springs) - Bevan Malbunka

## Threat 7: Challenges to living on and accessing our country

A lot of roads and tracks on the ALT follow old walking paths that connect springs and other water sources across our country. Some tracks link us with places to the south such as Areyonga (Utju), Tempe Downs, Docker River and Uluru. In earlier times Pertame (Southern Arrernte) people travelled up the Finke River from the south and Luritja people also come north through Missionary Gap.

It worries us when we can't visit our country because the roads and tracks are no good. For example, there are no tracks up to Missionary Plain from the south. In some places tracks are washed out or have been blocked by fallen trees.

It is also problem that most families live at Hermannsburg rather than on their outstations. We need support to maintain our outstations and keep them liveable. There are several different service providers responsible for outstation maintenance and repairs but it is not always clear who we should ask for help for different jobs.

There are a lot of salty bores on outstations. If the water is no good people cannot live there.

I can't stay here on my outstation and look after my land. Because of this government now we got to go back and work at Hermannsburg. Tjuwanpa Resource Centre is saying go back to outstations, but the government is saying we have got to go back to community. This is a problem for rangers too. They want to work here but I'm not living here.

Bevan Malbunka

We have a lack of families living at homelands. All families are living at Hermannsburg now. Maybe they have no feeling for the country.

Mildred Malbunka, Rodney Malbunka and Christian Malbunka

We wouldn't have known about that track if we hadn't been shown by old people. The people used to use that track for visiting Hermannsburg at Christmas time. And where we made the road, we opened it up and everyone was connected.

Mervyn Raggett

There used to be funding from the government for outstations, but there is little funding or support around anymore.

There's no work for us on our land, so how can we live here? This causes problems for the rangers as well because how can they work if we are not here to guide and supervise them? If people do not live on their country, they might lose their connection to it. We can only care for and teach our children about our country if we can regularly visit and live there, if we know the country and it knows us.

# Strategies: to strengthen our values stronger and reduce threats

At our five Healthy Country Planning workshops, we talked about what to do to look after the things we value and to reduce the threats to our country and culture. In this plan these are called 'strategies'. Strategies are the work traditional owners want to do with the support of the Tjuwanpa Rangers and CLC.

Our strategies are like a roadmap to enable us to achieve our goals for healthier people and country. We want to protect the values that are at greatest risk and deal with the most severe threats first. The strategies are a guide to develop our actions to care for country. They also set out 'indicators' which explain how we will monitor our progress towards reaching our goals.

These strategies are divided into two parts. The first, 'Healthier people connected to country' sets out how to support and improve our access to country and preserve and teach cultural and country based Arrarnta knowledge to younger generations. The second part, 'Healthier country' details how we will maintain the things that are important to us on country and address the worries we have for our land, plants, animals and waters.

## Quotes about Strategies for healthier people connected to country

Sometimes when we've got problems with the springs we work together Parks mob, Tjuwanpa Rangers and me and my father.

Troy Ratara

I used to love coming out camping with my grandmother and grandfather. We used to go to the creek swimming, the kids getting Yalka [Bush onion]. All along the river.

Nancy Ebatjarina

We need to be on our country. I don't want to stay at Hermannsburg. I just want to go home.

Mildred Malbunka

Why I feel good about my country is because my old man used to care a lot for the country, and he used to show us places.

Angela Ebatjarina

## Quotes about Strategies for healthier country

Protect the spring and sacred sites. Gilbert Spring is the main one to look after. Three main springs are important. It might rain and they'll be alright. The rain might grow them up right back.

Colin Malbunka

Springs and water holes used to run clean and clear. We swam in them, drank from them and always had water.

Nicholas Williams

We're weeding around Quandongs and fencing to protect from camels on Haasts Bluff country. That's the kind of project we can do in other places.

Raphael Impu

Tjuwanpa Rangers tried putting a fence around the spring at Gilbert Spring but it kept getting broken, so we need a better solution.

Colin Malbunka

If you want to look after land you've got to look after fences to keep feral animals out. Like at sacred sites and areas where we want our native animals.

Terry Abbott

Bush tuckers are gone. Native plants gone like Katjera (Desert raisin). Used to be big yellow bellies [fish]. You won't see them now because I think the water is bad.

Raphael Impu

We need rain because there's nothing here, only Witchetty grubs

Mildred Malbunka

Feral horses, there are too many eating all the grass, causing erosion into the creeks. We need to get rid of ferals.

Nicholas Williams

It's not just Cattle causing erosion, car tracks are causing problems too. The rangers did work on erosion on Roulpmalpma with grader and bob cat. Made banks to pool water and let things grow. We were looking at erosion on the five ALTs.

Obed Ratara



A Tjuwanpa Ranger (Kevin Malbunka) helping fish survey as a part of biodiversity conservation on country

## A. Healthier people connected to country

### GOAL 1A: PEOPLE LIVING AND WORKING ON COUNTRY

(This strategy keeps **Values 2** and **4** strong and addresses **Threat 7**)

#### Strategies - What we will do

- Carry out minor outstation maintenance work to make it easier for traditional owners to live on their own country.
- Supported by CLC, rangers will assist traditional owners to better understand the roles and responsibilities of service providers such as MacDonnell Shire for outstation maintenance.
- Repair and maintain commonly used un gazetted roads so that more people can travel on their country and visit important cultural places and other communities.

#### Indicators - Measures of our progress

- Between 2023 and 2033, the rangers continue to assist traditional owners with minor outstation maintenance and get assistance from service providers for larger works.
- By 2025, traditional owners have a clearer understanding of assistance available for outstation maintenance, and CLC has them connect with appropriate service providers.
- By 2027 rangers have coordinated repairs and maintenance of important un gazetted roads such as the Palm Valley to Areyonga Road.



## GOAL 2A: THE RANGER PROGRAM IS STRONGER

(This strategy keeps **Values 6** and **7** strong and addresses **Threat 4**)

### Strategies - What we will do

- Maintain and strengthen the relationships between the rangers and the TORAC.
- Incorporate this Healthy Country Plan into ranger planning and work activities over the next ten years.
- Regularly update traditional owners and the TORAC on ranger work through newsletters, presentations, and short videos.
- Invite the Tjuwanpa Women Rangers to TORAC and land management planning meetings.
- Provide more options for Western Arrarnta people to work as casual rangers.
- Employ traditional owners on a casual basis to ensure cultural protocols are followed when rangers are working around important cultural sites.
- Involve school children in ranger work to provide work experience and career path options.

### Indicators - Measures of our progress

- Between 2023-2033, the rangers develop projects in consultation with traditional owners and the TORAC before working on country.
- From 2023, this Healthy Country Plan is being used to plan and prioritise ranger work.
- By 2025 a poster version of this plan has been produced for ranger use.
- By 2024, the rangers have a communication plan and provide regular updates on their work to traditional owners and the TORAC.
- By 2024, the Tjuwanpa Women Rangers are regularly invited to TORAC meetings.
- By 2025, there are more Western Arrarnta people working as casual rangers.
- Between 2023 and 2033, rangers work with senior traditional owners on their country.
- By 2025, the rangers have developed an engagement strategy with Ntaria School and NT Parks to grow and strengthen the Junior Ranger Program.



Silverton family Uruna ALT

## GOAL 3A: YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN ABOUT COUNTRY AND CULTURE

*This strategy keeps **Value 5** strong and addresses **Threats 4** and **7**.*

### Strategies - What we will do

- In cooperation with the Tjuwanpa Women Rangers, the Tjuwanpa Rangers support traditional owner families on at least one annual country trip to teach children about their country, waters and culture.

### Indicators - Measures of our progress

- Between 2023 and 2033, rangers have collaborated with the Tjuwanpa Women Rangers to support family country visits.
- By 2028, the rangers have helped to teach younger people about springs and natural waters.

## GOAL 4A: GOOD RELATIONSHIPS WITH NEIGHBOURS AND VISITORS

This strategy addresses **Threats 4 and 6**.

### Strategies - What we will do

- Work with CLC staff to improve communication and cooperation with neighbouring land holders, mining companies and tourism operators in relation to cultural and land management issues that impact traditional owners.
- Rangers will assist CLC Land Management to develop land use Memoranda Of Understanding (MOU) to support good relationships with neighbours and organisations.
- Traditional owners will work with rangers and CLC to manage unauthorised land use (such as hunting) by non-traditional owner community members.
- To deter unauthorised entry, rangers will coordinate the placement of yellow 'Aboriginal Land' signs on the boundaries of the Land Trusts.

### Indicators - Measures of our progress

- By 2026, the rangers and CLC have negotiated these traditional owner concerns with land holders.
- Repair and maintenance of ALT boundary fences.
- Control stock movements onto the ALT.
- Burn firebreaks around ALT boundary.
- Feral animal culls.
- Manage unauthorised entry to the ALTs.
- Between 2023 and 2027, MOUs addressing traditional owner concerns are in place with relevant land holders and organisations.
- By 2026, traditional owners are supported by CLC and the Tjuwanpa Rangers to manage unauthorised land use on their country.
- By 2026, 'Aboriginal Land' signs are installed on Larapinta Drive, shared pastoral and NT Parks boundaries, particularly on frequently used ungazetted tracks.



## B. Healthier country

### GOAL 1B: THE HEALTH OF OUR IMPORTANT SPRINGS AND NATURAL WATERS HAVE IMPROVED

This strategy keeps **Values 1, 4 and 5** strong and addresses **Threats 1, 2 and 3**.

#### Strategies - What we will do

- Regularly check and identify threatened springs and rock holes and prioritise actions to protect them from feral animals and weeds.
- Protect identified springs and rock holes through strategies such as: excavating sand build up; removing dead animals, bulrushes and weeds; installing of stock exclusion fence panels; establishing and maintain water sources for horses and cattle away from springs and rock holes.
- Work with scientists to monitor water quality changes in springs and rock holes.
- Engage water scientists to assess the condition of Kuprilya Spring.
- Encourage traditional owners and community members to help protect springs and rock holes by shutting gates behind them in feral animal exclusion areas. This can be achieved through community awareness programs, including the use of signs, community notices, and school and community education.

#### Indicators - Measures of our progress

- By 2025, all important waters have been identified and the ones to work on are prioritized.
- By 2033, the condition of important water places has improved and been sustained even in drier years.
- By 2032, each prioritised water place has been visited and cleaned.
- By 2028, rangers and scientists are regularly monitoring the health of important waters.
- By 2028, management strategies are in place to exclude feral animals and remove weeds from important waters.
- By 2025, rangers and water scientists have understood why water flow to Kuprilya Spring has reduced and recommended measures to restore the spring to a healthy state.
- By 2029, the recommendations have been implemented and the condition of Kuprilya Spring has been reassessed.
- By 2028, there are observable increases in gate closures and fewer feral animals are entering exclusion areas through open gates.



Maureen Abbott from Uruna ALT with the delicious nectar of Native fuchsia (*Eremphila latrobei*).

## GOAL 2B: BUSH TUCKER, MEDICINES AND NATIVE ANIMALS AND PLANTS ARE HEALTHY

This strategy keeps **Value 3** strong, addresses **Threats 1, 3 and 5**.

### Strategies - What we will do

- Record the occurrence and health of important bush food and medicine areas and monitor the impacts of feral animals and weeds, especially after rains.
- Implement suitable measures to protect identified bush food and medicine areas from threats.
- Identify and fence a small trial bush food area (about the size of a football oval) and exclude feral animals and weeds then compare with the condition of surrounding feral impacted country.
- Monitor the abundance and health of bush foods within the fenced area compared with the surrounding country. If this is successful, then expand to include priority bush food areas.
- Reduce the number of horses on the ALTs to protect bush foods and medicines (this connects to the goal 'Control feral animals').
- Review past Tjuwanpa nursery bush foods propagation work and apply the lessons learned to determine the feasibility of undertaking similar projects in the future.
- Set up animal species identification sensor cameras at rock holes and springs to gather baseline data to inform native animal protection strategies.

### Indicators - Measures of our progress

- By 2024, rangers and traditional owners have identified and documented bush food and medicine areas.
- By 2032, important bush foods medicines are healthier and more abundant in protected areas.
- By 2026, the trial bush food area has been fenced and managed.
- Between 2026 and 2030, a monitoring strategy has been established and implemented to see if bush food production improves in areas of stock exclusion and weed reduction.
- By 2028, there are fewer horses and the abundance and condition of bush foods has increased and is sustained through dry years.
- By 2026, a review of past bush food and medicine propagation has been completed.
- From 2026, nursery planning is dependent on the findings of the review.
- By 2026, sensor cameras are installed at prioritised rock holes.
- By 2028, data is analysed to understand trends in native and feral animal numbers and native animal protection strategies have been developed.
- By 2030, native animal protection strategies have been implemented.



Raelene Silverton from Uruna  
ALT says what she thinks is most  
important to look after her country

Teaching our young generations  
to look after their country in  
our traditional way.

## GOAL 3B: IMPORTANT CULTURAL PLACES ARE PROTECTED

This strategy keeps **Values 4, 5 and 6** strong and addresses **Threats 1, 3, 4 and 5**.

### Strategies - What we will do

- Together with rangers, traditional owners from each ALT develop plans to protect important cultural places from neglect, wildfires, feral animals and weeds.
- Traditional owners and rangers develop a plan together to identify, visit and protect important rock art places.

### Indicators - Measures of our progress

- By 2028, a management plan for important cultural places on each Land Trust is developed and implemented.
- Between 2024 and 2033, the actions identified in the management plans are addressed.
- By 2028, a rock art management plan is developed and implemented.
- By 2033, threats to identified rock art sites are reduced.



Chemical spraying of prickly pear and Mexican poppy and removal of Athel pine to minimise their invasion on country

## GOAL 4B: BUFFEL GRASS AND OTHER WEEDS ARE REDUCED

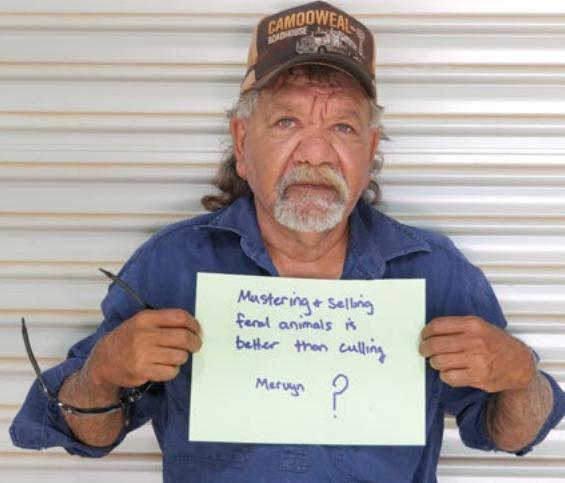
This strategy keeps **Values 1, 3 and 4** strong and addresses **Threats 3, and 5**.

### Strategies - What we will do

- Conduct a ranger training, skills and equipment audit and provide further weed management training where required.
- Map weed distribution and identify priority weed work areas.
- Reduce weeds spread by spraying and removal on the boundaries of weed invasion and around important sites.
- Seasonally after rains, carefully spray and reduce Buffel grass during rapid growth in places of high cultural importance.
- Regularly monitor effectiveness of weed control to identify and carry out ongoing follow up work.
- Assess the health of Red cabbage palms on Ntaria ALT.
- Clear Buffel grass and thick undergrowth under Red cabbage palms (*Livistonia mariae*) on Ntaria ALT to encourage growth of young palms.

### Indicators - Measures of our progress

- By 2026, rangers have best-practice training, skills and equipment to manage the spread of Buffel grass, Athel Pine and other weeds.
- By 2026, weed distribution has been mapped and priority areas for weed management identified.
- By 2032, the spread of Buffel grass and other weeds is reduced in culturally and ecologically important places and on weed distribution boundary areas.
- By 2028, the rangers have implemented a monitoring strategy to gauge growth of the Red cabbage palms.
- By 2033, younger palms are growing.



Mervyn Raggett from Ntaria

## GOAL 5B: CONTROL FERAL ANIMALS

This strategy keeps **Values 1, 3 and 4** strong and addresses **Threat 1**.

### Strategies - What we will do

- Establish a horse committee involving traditional owners and local horse owners to develop plans to manage horse impacts on the Land Trusts.
- Explore culturally appropriate ways to reduce feral horse numbers such as mustering and trucking horses rather than aerial culling.
- Where shooting is the only practical option, investigate alternatives such as to muster horses, shoot and bury them at safe distances from surface waters and bores rather than leaving carcasses on the ground.
- Assist with feral animal control measures such as mustering and culling.
- Rangers to shoot feral cats during routine work.
- Where necessary, outsource feral animal control work, give preference to employing local people.
- Prioritise, repair and maintain boundary fences around land trusts to reduce feral animal movements from neighbouring pastoral leases and NT Parks.
- Repair the gate to the public painting at Tjilpa Valley to reduce the damage caused by horses, camels and cattle.

### Indicators - Measures of our progress

- By 2026, a Horse Management Committee has been formed and has met at least once.
- By 2026, options for culturally sensitive ways to cull horses and other feral animals have been explored and reported to the TORAC.
- By 2026, more rangers have shooting licenses for the purposes of feral animal culling.
- By 2026, CLC has established, through a skills and training audit, the interest in and capacity of local people to undertake feral animal control work.
- By 2027, prior to advertising feral animal control work, CLC has first offered contracts to appropriately skilled and licensed local people.
- By 2026, the rangers and CLC have audited the condition of ALT boundary fences.
- By 2027, sections of fence requiring repairs and maintenance have been identified and prioritised.
- By 2028, repairs have been completed.
- Between 2028 and 2032, the rangers have continued to monitor the condition of boundary fences and updated priority repair areas.
- By 2025, the gate to the Tjilpa Valley site has been repaired and horses are excluded from the area.



Prescribed burning to control Buffel grass (Christian Malbunka)

## GOAL 6B: REDUCE LARGE WILDFIRES AND INCREASE CULTURAL BURNING

This strategy keeps **Values 3, 4 and 5** strong and addresses **Threats 3 and 5**.

### Strategies - What we will do

- Continue and adapt the Tjuwanpa Rangers fire management plan with consideration given to:
  - Reducing fuel load risks,
  - Promoting production of bush foods,
  - Protecting outstations, important sites and bush food areas.
- Burn fire breaks around outstations, and along paddock boundaries and road corridors to reduce fuel loads. Burn parallel to creeks and avoid starting burns in the creeks and the creek flats.
- Manage Buffel grass fuel loads around important cultural sites, communities and outstations (see the goal ‘Buffel grass and other weeds are reduced’).
- Apply cultural burning strategies, such as seasonal and patch burning to promote native grass regrowth that encourages the return of native animals.

### Indicators - Measures of our progress

- By 2025, a baseline for fire frequency and fire damage across the Tjuwanpa Ranger work region has been identified.
- By 2026, a burning program has been planned and approved by the TORAC, burning areas have been prioritized and the plan adapted annually.
- By 2026, the TORAC has determined whether to continue aerial incendiary burning as part of the fire management plan for the Tjuwanpa Rangers.
- By 2026, fire breaks around outstations, along road corridors and adjacent to creeks have been implemented in accordance with the fire management plan.
- By 2028, an ALT boundary fire break strategy has been implemented in cooperation with neighbouring land holders.
- By 2028, a cultural burning program has been applied so as rangers and traditional owners are confidently conducting cultural burns.
- By 2028, large wildfires have been limited due to cultural burning, break burning and Buffel grass reduction.



Italaltuma ALT Drying of water source

## GOAL 7B: COPING WITH CLIMATE CHANGE

This strategy keeps **Value 6** strong and addresses **Threat 2**.

### Strategies - What we will do

- CLC will deliver climate change education meetings at Ntaria like the ones held at Santa Teresa after 2010.
- Collaborate with arid region climate experts to enhance CLC and rangers' understanding of climate trends and develop coping strategies.
- CLC and the TORAC to factor in ranger health and well-being when planning and approving annual work programs.
- Implement climate adapted strategies for ranger work, such as adjusted work programs in response to increased summer temperatures.

### Indicators - Measures of our progress

- By 2026, rangers, traditional owners and community members are better informed about climate change and coping strategies.
- By 2026, CLC and the rangers have current expert advice on climate change trends, projections and coping strategies.
- By 2026, CLC has factored climate impacts into Ranger work programs.
- 2028, Ranger work programs are reviewed and adjusted to accommodate for climate change impacts. For example, during hot months rangers may spend more time on indoor tasks, while during cooler months outdoor work is prioritised.



Coca-cola waterhole, Ntaria ALT

## Appendix 1

# Traditional owners, rangers and CLC staff at the workshops

Ltalaltuma	Roulpmalpma	Uruna	Ntaria
Mildred Malbunka	Andrew Ebatarinja	Cameron Abbott	Conrad Ratara
Rodney Malbunka	Roger Ebatarinja	Mark Fly	Obed Ratara
Bevan Malbunka	Regina Ebatarinja	David Silverton	Abel Ratara
Romona Malbunka	Nancy Ebatarinja	Ralph Abbott	Byron Ratara
Tristan Malbunka	Alima Ebatarinja	William Palmer	Troy Ratara
Christian Malbunka	Diane Ebatarinja	Ankin Abbott	Allan Williams
Dora Malbunka	Adeline Ebatarinja	Colin Joseph	Emron Campbell
Georgina Malbunka	Angela Ebatarinja	Terry Abbott Senior	Fabian Raggett
Ashlina Braybon	Stuart Pareroultja	Terry Abbott Junior	Shaun Emitja
Ashley Braybon	Elfrieda Ungwanaka	Nathan Abbott	Kelly Pareroultja
Gaydon Malbunka	Lyle Kenny	Jacquie Silverton	Christoph Ratara
Billy Ngalkin	Casey Kenny	Raelene Silverton	Maxwell Mulkatana
Annabelle Ngalkin	Benjamin Pareroultja	Jacob Hayes	Mervyn Raggett
Ryan Abbott	Jacinda Ebatarinja	Maureen Abbott	Vivian Entata
Alfrieda Fejo	Craig Ebatarinja	Louise Sultan (nee Abbott)	Dora Ratara
Faith Malbunka	Ada Lechleitner	Eric Abbott	
Shawn Emitja	Kevin Ungwanaka	Bobby Abbott	
Thalick Malbunka	Peter Braybon	Stuart Pareroultja	
Alias Malbunka	Cleophas Lofty Katakarinja	Desia Abbott	
Dorcus Malbunka	Linda Ebatarinja	Kevin Abbott	
Carl Inkamala	Augustina	Mavis Abbott	
Ebatarinja	Jane Silverton	Colin Craig	
Colin Malbunka	Sonya Davis	Gordon Abbott	
Raphael Impu			
Gladys Driffen			

**CLC/Tjuwanpa Rangers**

(Some rangers are also traditional owners for one or more of the above ALTs)

Carl Pareroultja

Christopher Ungwanaka

Colin Joseph

Dean Inkamala

Emron Campbell

Fabian Raggett

Jermaine Kenny

Obed Ratara

Raphael Impu

**CLC staff**

Arun Dhakal

Ben Sidhu

Daniel Le Breton

Laurence Tait

Martin Campbell

Michael Taylor

Ryan Clark

Sue Ellison

Tom Ruggles

**Facilitators and report compilers**

Michael Cawthorn

Fiona Walsh

## Appendix 2

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