

***Wardaman Indigenous Protected
Area Management Plan***

2014 – 2024



Wardaman
Indigenous
Protected Area

**Land of the
Lightning Brothers**

Acknowledgements:

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND TERMS

ALRA	Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976
ANU	Australian National University
APB	Aerial Prescribed Burning
CAP	Conservation Action Planning
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CFC	Caring for Country (original land and sea management program established by Aboriginal people in the mid - 1990s)
CfOC	Caring for Our Country (subsequent funding program established by the Australian Government in the mid-2000s)
CLA	Community Living Area
DPI	Department of primary Industry (NT)
DSEWPaC	Department of Science, Environment, Water, People and Communities
FaHCSIA	Department of Families and Housing, Community Services, Indigenous Affairs
GIS	Geographic Information System
IK	Indigenous Knowledge
IEK	Indigenous Ecological Knowledge
IPA	Indigenous Protected Area
IPA MP	Indigenous Protected Area Management Plan
IPP	Indigenous Pastoral Program
IUCN	International Union for Conservation and Nature
NAISMA	North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance
NCRM	Natural and Cultural Resource Management
NLC	Northern Land Council
NP	National Park
NRETAS	Department of Natural Resources, the Environment the Arts and Sport (NT)
NT	Northern Territory
NTP	Northern Territory Portion
OH&S	Occupational Health and Safety
PWCNT	Parks and Wildlife Commission of the Northern Territory
TEK	Traditional Ecological Knowledge
TOs	Traditional Owners
VRDCA	Victoria River District Conservation Corporation
WIPAAC	Wardaman Indigenous Protected Area Aboriginal Corporation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In late 2009, a large and representative group of Wardaman Traditional Owners (TOs) met at Katherine. The TOs heard about and questioned the concept of an IPA and made an informed and unanimous decision to proceed with the consultations and planning that would lead to dedication of an Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) over most Wardaman owned and controlled lands (see Map 1).

The consultation process required many on country mapping and survey trips, as well as larger and smaller consultations with TOs. The extended consultation and action planning process was necessary to develop a land management model guided by senior TOs and driven by younger leaders building their knowledge of both cultural and western management.

Wardaman country is rich in cultural heritage. It contains more than 200 recorded rock art sites containing 6,000 individual paintings and 41,000 engravings. Yiwarrarlaiyi (on Delamere Station) is probably the most famous publically known rock art site of the “Lightning Brothers”.

The Plan is based on six core land management strategies outlined below:

- Establishing Good Governance and Financial Management (under the auspices of a WIPAAC) as the operational foundation.
- Acquiring a Sustainable Source of Land and Cultural Management Funding (employment and equipping of Wardaman Coordinator and Rangers, provision of infrastructure and capital assets) to provide operational resources.
- Developing Land Management Capacity, Training and Skills (including infrastructure, capital equipment management and staff) to do the work.
- Rangers and Traditional Owners working on country (including weed, feral animal, erosion, fire and water resource management) as capacity grows.
- Cultural maintenance and protection activities (including mapping, site protection and inter-generational transfer of knowledge) leading the way.
- Negotiating Land and Cultural Management Partnerships (for research, support and training) to create better cultural and land management results.

The Plan will require substantial support to implement because Wardaman are in the process of rebuilding their land management governance capacity, and some strategies will require concurrent implementation. A major theme of the Plan’s development was the action planning component where TOs actively participated in cultural mapping, writing letters to potential partners, and meeting to establish and resolve governance issues.

The IPA management Plan provides a way forward for a younger generation of Wardaman to sustain their culture on healthy country. The cultural management Indigenous Ecological Knowledge (IEK) work will lead greater engagement by Wardaman TOs, followed by more land management work. This land management work is only sustainable with a fully funded and properly resourced governance structure driving a broader operational agenda.

INTRODUCTION

“Land management work is important because it protects our bush tucker like sugar bag, emu, kangaroo, yam, plum, currant, bush tea... donkeys, pigs and fire damage this bush tucker” (Sally Winbirr and Queenie Morgan; IPA MP Workshop Session, Menggen 2010).

THE WARDAMAN IPA

A large group of Wardaman Traditional Owners (TOs) met at Katherine in December 2009 (Attachment 1: Summary of Meetings and Attendees). At this meeting TOs heard about and questioned the concept and details of the IPA Program. They made the unanimous decision to proceed with the consultations, planning and eventual dedication of an Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) over all Wardaman owned lands.

In June 2013 this plan was presented to all Wardaman and the group endorsed the plan and requested the Northern Land Council to progress a request to the Australian Government for dedication of Wardaman IPA. In late 2013 all Wardaman met again and formed the Wardaman IPA Aboriginal Corporation (WIPAAAC) for the purpose of managing the IPA.

The Wardaman decision is based on a good understanding of information provided by the Australian Government, and the Northern Land Council during the course of a lengthy and comprehensive consultation process. The decision to dedicate their lands as an Indigenous Protected area was made on the basis of their prior and informed consent.

The Wardaman IPA only includes country that is legally owned by Wardaman where traditional Indigenous owners have entered into an agreement with the Australian Government dedicating their land to be managed for conservation by TOs. This process will be supported by the Caring for Our Country (CfOC) Program which supports Indigenous communities to manage their land as IPAs, contributing to the National Reserve System.

The National Reserve System (NRS) means the lands and seas all over Australia that are specially protected and looked after because they are environmentally and/or culturally important. IPAs are a way for the Australian Government to support Aboriginal people, Wardaman in this case, to look after their land, language and culture but without the government owning the land.

Wardaman Traditional owners have agreed to manage their country within the Wardaman IPA (Map 1) as an IUCN Category VI Protected Area. This category aims to conserve ecosystems and habitats, together with associated cultural values and traditional natural resource management systems. Wardaman Lands will be dedicated to the National reserve System in two stages (Map 1). Stage one will be all lands which are not subject to leases, licences or agreements and stage two pending further negotiations and planning will cover those Wardaman lands where suitable co-management between the IPA and partners can be developed.

The acceptance of this management regime implies automatic adoption of the IUCN guidelines, which are generally consistent with TO's aspirations described in this plan. Wardaman believe they are rich in land and culture but lack the resources to achieve their strategic objectives of building their cultural and land management capacity including the necessary staff, governance, infrastructure, equipment, and communications to support land and cultural management operations.

The IUCN guidelines for Category VI Protected Areas are to:

- Protect natural ecosystems and use natural resources sustainably, when conservation and sustainable use can be mutually beneficial.
- Promote sustainable use of natural resources, considering ecological, economic and social dimensions.
- Promote social and economic benefits to local communities where relevant.
- Facilitate inter-generational security for local communities' livelihoods, therefore ensuring that such livelihoods are sustainable.
- Integrate other cultural approaches, belief systems and world-views within a range of social and economic approaches to nature conservation.
- Contribute to developing and/or maintaining a more balanced relationship between humans and the rest of nature.
- Contribute to sustainable development at national, regional and local level (in the last case mainly to local communities and/or indigenous peoples depending on the protected natural resources).
- Facilitate scientific research and environmental monitoring, mainly related to the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.
- Collaborate in the delivery of benefits to people, mostly local communities, living in or near to the designated protected area.

The IPA, Land Rights and Native Title

The Wardaman TOs understand that the IPA does not affect land rights or native title rights, and TOs keep the same control of their country. The IPA system recognises TOs own, and are responsible for, the management of their land, and does not change what they can do on their land.

The Wardaman TOs understand that there are no royalties from having their country dedicated as an IPA, but rents and royalties can be paid from other legally binding enterprises on their land, like tourism or cattle. The IPA payments are flexible and aim to support TOs to operate their IPA administration, and land and cultural management work.

Managing the IPA

Wardaman Traditional Owners will manage the IPA, initially under the assistance of the NLC, and eventually independently through WIPAAC. An advisory committee of experts will work with WIPAAC to provide technical advice and assistance where necessary. The Corporation may partner and work with other organisations but no other organisation will manage the IPA finances or operations.

Elected Wardaman TOs and the WIPAAC members will prepare and review IPA Management Plans over time as the basis for managing the IPA. The IPA does not stop TOs from pursuing cultural or social business on their country.

Once the Wardaman IPA is dedicated by the TOs, WIPAAC can seek and receive funding, and recruit staff (Coordinator and Rangers) to help TOs in looking after the cultural places on their country, and doing things like managing weeds and feral animals, fire/burning, and protecting important water resources. The biggest job is getting the WIPAAC governance in place.

The lands proposed for the IPA (Map 1) include: Wardaman owned Aboriginal Land Trusts and all Community Living Areas on Wardaman country whose titles have underlying Wardaman traditional ownership.

Consultations and field work activities occurred over five participatory workshop and field work gatherings at Katherine in December 2009, Menggen Station in April 2010, at Flora River in June 2010, at Judbarra (Gregory) National Park in July 2011 and Katherine in December 2011 (Attachment 1: Summary of Meetings and Attendees).

During these sessions, TOs identified a range of threats to cultural and ecological values, named governance concerns as threats and discussed ways to manage these concerns /threats. The need for cultural mapping to transfer cultural knowledge and to map impacts to cultural sites was identified as the highest priority. The results of this work, including several field trips, helicopter surveys, and a major cultural mapping project (see pp14-20: Cultural Mapping Project) informed and contributed to this Plan.



Figure 1.1: Photo: Pam Wickham NLC; Tilly Raymond, Lindsay Raymond, Bill Harney Jnr, Jessie Brown, Pauline Murrimal; IPA Planning Workshop, Menggen, 2011.

THE PEOPLE

Wardaman country is rich in cultural heritage. It contains more than 200 recorded rock art sites containing 6,000 individual paintings and 41,000 engravings. Yiwarralarlayi (on Delamere Station) is considered by many as the most famous rock art site of the "Lightning Brothers".

Wardaman land management and ownership is traditionally based on eleven estate holding sub-groups, with each sub-group being associated with an area of land:

1. Yibulyawun 2. Wujara 3. Wunggayajawan 4. Wugleni 5. MuyMuy 6. Barnanggaya 7. Belerrerinyin 8. Mamandajgarni 9. Beregumayin 10 Gilin Gilin 11. Jigayagawun.

Wardaman country lies within the Victoria River and Upper Daly catchments, west of Katherine in the Northern Territory "Top End". Wardaman refers to a language group, and Wardaman membership is attained primarily by patrilineal descent, while individuals whose mothers were Wardaman also have important rights and responsibilities in Wardaman country. Wardaman lands are broadly bounded by Dagoman to the north east; Garranga (-burru) to the south; Ngaliwurru to the west; Jamingung to the north-west and Wagiman to the north.

The Wardaman people, along with their neighbors, suffered sustained negative impacts from the forcible seizure of their lands by the pastoral industry from the late 19th Century. Frontier violence, disease, the removal of children, known as the Stolen Generation, and later changes and disruptions in the cattle industry - all contributed to reducing the Wardaman population, generally through the physical loss of people, and also the physical removal of Wardaman from their country.

After the initial period of violent confrontation between Wardaman and European settlers, by the 1920s, the ancestors of today's Wardaman people were settled on the cattle stations established on or near their country. Three stations in particular: Delamere, Willeroo and Manbulloo, owned by the British company Vestey's, were the focus of Wardaman people's lives for the next 60 years. Technological and management changes in the cattle industry, as well as a slump in cattle prices, beginning in the 1960s, coupled with the introduction of award wages for Aboriginal stock workers led to people being forced off stations for a variety of reasons during the late sixties and early seventies and a drift towards Katherine.

Since the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976 (ALRA) there is a movement of Wardaman people attempting to gain control of, and live on their traditional lands. For example, Menggen (formerly Innesvale Station), and the Dilinya Community, whose populations vary with the season, with peaks of 50 and 10 people respectively during the dry season.

During discussions about the establishment of the IPA some Wardaman expressed their desire to move back to Wardaman country, from Binjari, to participate in managing the IPA.

Judbarra (Gregory) National Park is also Aboriginal Land; however it is leased to the Northern Territory Parks and Wildlife Commission and while there are provisions within the lease for communities to be established within the park, to date none have been established within Wardaman country. Another small Community Living Area (CLA), Djarrung, adjacent to the Giwining (Flora River) Nature Reserve has a small population of around five Wardaman people.

While the largest concentration of Wardaman people (population of 300) live in Binjari CLA, approximately 15 kilometers west of Katherine, small numbers of Wardaman people also live in Kununurra, Timber Creek, Hodgson Downs, Darwin and Yarralin. This reflects the ongoing ties of marriage and ceremony that exist between the Wardaman and their neighbors.

The Wardaman understand their rights and obligations to their countries as being established in the time of their ancestral creator beings known as Buwarradja (also known as buwarraja or “dreaming”, or the “Dreamtime”). These ancestral beings existed at a time when the world ‘was just sand’ that is, formless. Everything was created by these being’s activities; not only the landscape (geology, flora and fauna), but the people, their laws, ceremonies and creation stories. These stories name country, define people’s roles, relationships and responsibilities to kin and country. The ceremonies and songs serve to renew, and pass on cultural knowledge.

THE LAND

Traditionally owned Wardaman controlled lands include three Aboriginal Land Trusts, and three pastoral excisions/community living areas (Table 1). These Wardaman owned and controlled lands are proposed to form the Wardaman Indigenous Protected Area. Dedication of stage one of the IPA will be over Djarrung, Wurrkeleni, Yibulyawun and Menngen Land Trusts, excluding the section of Menngen under an LUA for cattle grazing (Map 1).

It is hoped that further planning and negotiation will lead to the eventual dedication of stage two of the IPA. Stage two may include Dillinya, Giwining/ Flora River Nature Reserve, the Wardaman section of Judbarra/ Gregory National Park and the section of Menngen Land Trust under ALRA Section 19 Land Use Agreement. The issues associated with cattle operations over the Menggen and Dillinya ALTs, and potential conflicts with the IPA objectives, are referred to later in this Plan.

*Binjari Aboriginal Community Living Area NTP 3362, lying within Manbulloo Station, near Katherine, is not Wardaman country. Wardaman traditional owners, although they hold the CLA title, requested that it not be included in the IPA dedication at this stage.

The Menggen Aboriginal Land Trust [2831 sq. km] is the largest single portion of land proposed as part of the IPA. It is located 150 km south west of Katherine and is bounded by the Upper Daly Aboriginal Land Trust and Dorisvale Station to the north, Wombungi and Bradshaw Stations in the west, West Mathieson and Willeroo Pastoral Leases to the east and Coolibah Station and Judbarra (Gregory) National Park to the south. Dillinya Land Trust [206.34 sqkm] is also subject to an LUA for commercial cattle operations.

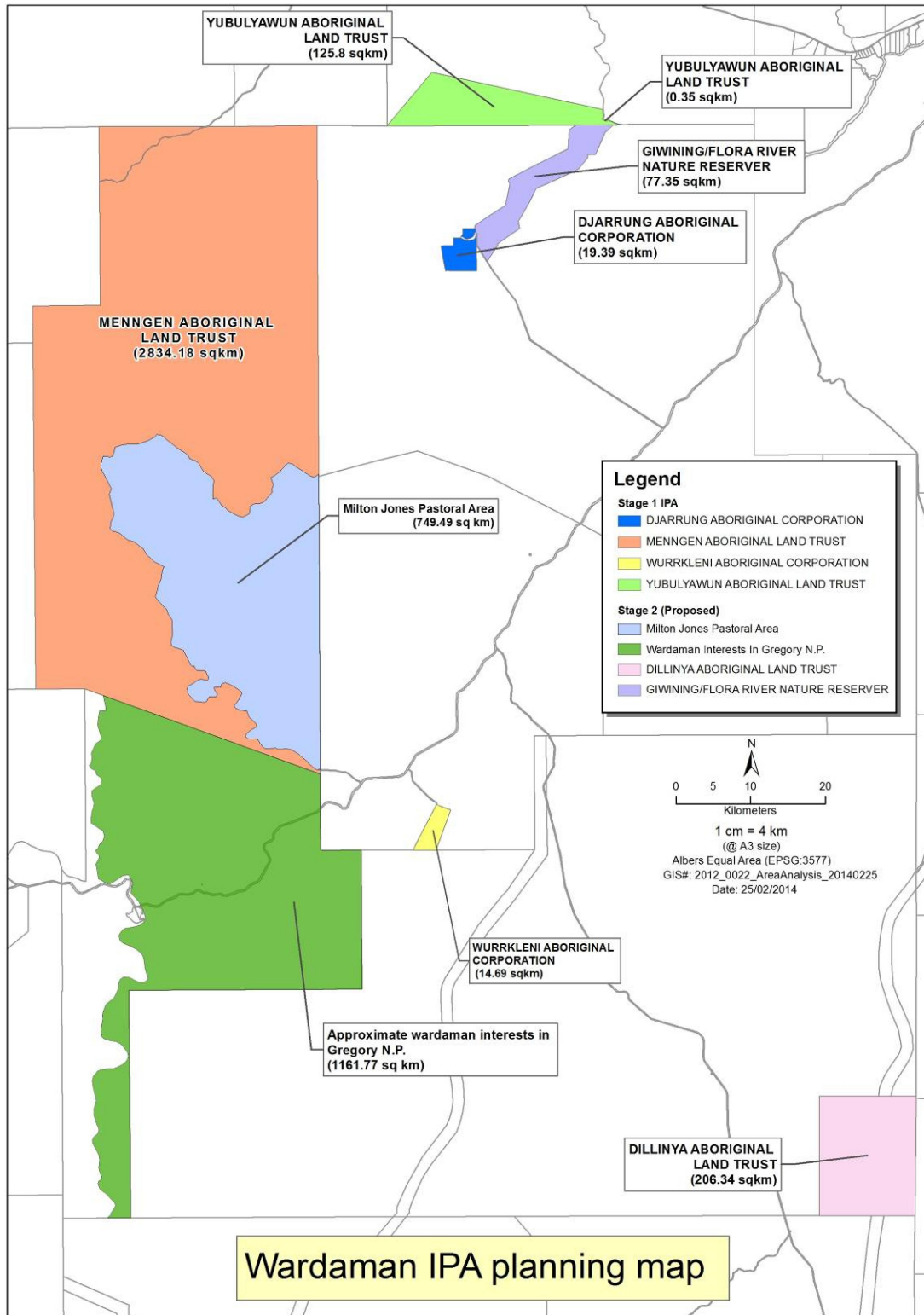
Table 1: Wardaman controlled lands proposed for the IPA stage 1 (See Map 1)

Aboriginal Land Trust	Aboriginal Community Living Areas (located on Pastoral Leases)
Menggen Aboriginal Land Trust (formerly Innesvale Station) Northern Territory Portion (NTP) 858. Excluding the portion under LUA for cattle grazing (See Map 1)	Wurrkleni Northern Territory Portion (NTP) 3867 (Willeroo Station)
Yubulyawuyn Aboriginal Land Trust NTP 4058	Djarrung NTP 3868 (West Mathison Station)

Table 2: Wardaman controlled lands proposed for the IPA stage 2 (See Map 1)

Aboriginal Land Trust	National Park or Nature Reserve (Under Joint Management Provisions)
Section of Menggen Aboriginal Land Trust (formerly Innesvale Station) Northern Territory Portion (NTP) 858 under commercial LUA for cattle grazing.	Giwining (Flora River) Nature Reserve.
Dillinya Aboriginal Land Trust NTP 2011.	Wardaman interests in Winan Aboriginal Land Trust [Judbarra (Gregory) NP].

MAP 1: WARDAMAN CONTROLLED LANDS PROPOSED FOR THE IPA



OVERVIEW OF THE REGION

The regional overview is derived from Chris Clarkson's 2007 Australian National University (ANU) "E Press" publication about Wardaman Country, particularly the material in Chapter 4: Physiography and Climate Change. It is used in this management plan because it precisely summarizes and describes the most important elements of Wardaman country, as they relate to both land and culture.

Wardaman Country is a region of spectacular mesas, deep... gorges broad black soil plains and gently rolling hills and woodlands. Standing above the plains in places are red sandstone outliers, deeply weathered by time and the ravages of the tropical climate. These outcrops provide numerous overhangs, crevices and declivities that have offered shelter to people and preserved their artistic activities over thousands of years. In places among the rocky hills and gorges, and on the flood plains, water holes dot the landscape and act as loci for human and animal habitation alike in what is otherwise a hot, brown region for most of the year, and an often flooded and verdant one for the remaining few months.

Wardaman Country is roughly 8,932km² in area and is located ~120 km southwest of Katherine. It is bordered by the Victoria River in the southwest, which drains the southern half of the region, the Flora River and Limestone Creek, draining the northern and eastern areas into the Katherine/Daly River, and is bordered on the eastern edge by the Sturt Plateau. This probably represents the distribution of Wardaman speakers and the outer boundary of clan estates as it existed around the time of European contact in the late 19th Century (Merlan 1989).

The main access to the region today is via the Victoria River Highway. There are no towns in this area and the closest are Katherine to the northeast and Timber Creek to west; both of which are roughly 60km from the edge of Wardaman Country. (Clarkson, Ch 4, 2007)

CLIMATE

Wardaman Country has a warm dry monsoonal climate, receiving almost all of its rainfall between November and March, most of which falls in January and February. The region receives 900mm annual rainfall in the northwest and around 650mm in the southeast where rainfall becomes less intense and reliable (Sweet 1972:3), and vegetation and soils become increasingly typical of semi-arid to arid lands (Slayter 1970). Temperatures range from a mean of around 29°C in June and July, to about 38°C in November and December. Minimum temperatures range from 10°-13°C in winter to between 21°-24°C in summer. Rainfall is the primary factor effecting vegetation growth, which is generally restricted to the short wet season... (Clarkson, Ch 4, 2007).

HYDROLOGY

A dry monsoonal climate, coupled with extremely high rates of evaporation, means that Wardaman Country is a parched place for most the year, and in addition to the seasonal nature of rainfall, Wardaman country is subject to high inter-annual variations in rainfall (Dewar 2003). It may be very wet during the monsoon season, when low lying country is often inundated and waterholes and ephemeral creeks fill and overflow but the Wet may fail.

During the dry season, waterholes and creeks dry up, and permanent water is generally scarce. The Flora River and northern reaches of Hayward Creek in the north, for instance, are spring fed and maintain at least a weak flow throughout the year (Pontifex and Mendum 1972:23). The Victoria River, although stagnant during the dry season, maintains good water supplies in long reaches throughout the driest seasons (Sweet 1972:16) and its spring fed tributaries, such as Cow Creek and Gregory Creek, contain numerous permanent waterholes.

Despite marked seasonal variations in rainfall and the unpredictable nature of rainfall from year to year, Wardaman country is relatively well watered. This is reflected in the high number of culturally significant water sources along with the numerous dreamings associated with their creation or maintenance. This perception of Clarkson, regarding water, differs to the view of Wardaman and their neighbors who see Wardaman country as being very well watered in comparison to country further to the south.

CULTURAL MAPPING

The physical protection of culturally important trees and vegetation is an important practical outcome from cultural mapping and management.

During the IPA planning meetings TOs identified bio-physical threats to cultural sites (feral animals, fire and weeds) and the low levels of inter-generational transfer of cultural knowledge as a major problem. The TOs decided that the IPA should focus on culture and cultural sites and incorporate natural resource management into the management regimes for cultural sites.

A participatory cultural mapping project was conducted over 2011 and 2012, led by Dr. D Cooper, a researcher known to TOs over many years, and Bill Harney senior, a very knowledgeable TO. The project aimed to identify critical areas for site protection and management, and to support site mapping and knowledge project work conducted by Bill Harney and another researcher, David Lee over many years. The project also built on the considerable body of previous research resulting from land claims, parks and joint management activities and sacred site protection work.

The cultural mapping project was successful in providing a more comprehensive cultural overview, and detailed maps (Maps 2 and 3 below) as part of managing the IPA. The project was based on the assumption that Yubulyawuyn, Giwining (Flora River), Menggen, Wurrkleni, Dillinya and the area of Wardaman interests in the eastern section of Judbarra (Gregory) NP would be included in the IPA.

The cultural mapping project included: recording cultural sites information, conducting helicopter and ground mapping of unrecorded sites in the IPA with senior and younger TOs. Records of cultural sites held by the NLC and the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority (AAPA) were also combined into a site register for the IPA. This register is the foundation of a cultural site database that can facilitate future management of cultural sites in the IPA and the ongoing, secure recording and storing of cultural information.

The project also incorporated rock art and cultural site recording data previously carried out by David Lee, and facilitated the recording of additional rock art sites by David Lee during the helicopter based cultural mapping work. On-country recording and mapping of sites was carried out from 20-24th August 2012. The two days of helicopter time was used to concentrate mapping efforts on remote parts of Menggen and the northern section of East Gregory (Ryan Creek and Matt Wilson Creek) where there had been little or no site recording. A boat survey (Victoria River Gorge) and vehicle based mapping of some sites in East Gregory was also carried out.

A focus was also placed on using helicopter time to show younger Wardaman TOs the location and significance of sites on Menggen and along Ryan and Matt Wilson Creeks. These site visits served as part of the intergenerational transfer of knowledge from older knowledgeable to younger Wardaman.



Figure 1.2: Photo: D. Cooper, Action Planning – IPA Cultural mapping project, Gregory Creek, 2012

In all over 80 previously unmapped sites were documented during the field survey (Cooper 2013). The on-country site recording in Menggen and Judbarra (Gregory) NP included senior Wardaman TOs and other Wardaman who were able to attend.

Those in attendance included Bill Harney (Snr.), Freddie Martin, Basil Murrimal, Michael Murrimal, Queenie Ngabijiji as well as a number of younger Wardaman. Senior Karrangpurru TO, Alan Young, also came to Menggen and participated in the boat survey down Victoria River Gorge and the vehicle based site recording in areas south of Sullivan Creek.

CULTURAL SITES

The cultural mapping project has highlighted the immense cultural significance of the IPA, the diversity and range of cultural sites within it, and the depth of associated cultural knowledge and traditions held by Wardaman TOs.

The IPA Site Register currently includes nearly 480 cultural sites within the IPA area (Map 2), and 150 sites that include rock art components. The maps also include sites recorded adjacent to the IPA, particularly art sites in the vicinity of *Ingaladdi* (*Yinggalarri*) Waterhole, that will require management and monitoring in conjunction with IPA cultural site management activities. A large format map was produced for use as a cultural site management tool for the IPA managers (TOs and Rangers).

Culturally significant features of sites are representative of every aspect of the natural landscape including hills, waterholes, billabongs, springs, water courses, rock outcrops, mineral outcrops, soil, sand, trees and other vegetation.

The IPA includes numerous rock art sites, a number of which are of national and international significance. These sites contain paintings and petroglyphs that are part of the living cultural traditions of the Wardaman people. Many of these are also sacred according to Wardaman belief, and in some instances with cultural restrictions applying to access and the extent of information that is open or that may be made public.

BUWARRAJA ("DREAMING" TRACKS AND SITES)

Cultural sites in the IPA are associated with numerous dreamings or *buwarraja*, some of which are travelling dreamings following tracks that extend into, and which provide, cultural and ritual links with the countries of adjacent groups. Other dreamings are localised to Wardaman country or individual estates.

"Travelling dreamings" include:

Walujabi, the black-headed python, who travelled through Wardaman country and is associated with a number of sites on the Flora River, Hayward, Sandy, Palm and Ryan creeks

Yarrimanbu and Jurntakal, two death adders travelled through the southeast corner of Menggen and down through the eastern section of east Judbarra (Gregory) NP

Mulurru (two mature women) pass through the southern portion of the IPA in Judbarra (Gregory) NP.

Beregumayin and *Ngajembele*, the two dogs, pass through east Judbarra (Gregory) NP on their way to *Dillinya*.

Wiyen, the rain dreaming travels through Wardaman country east of Menngen and

Judbarra (Gregory) NP turning south through *Dillinya*.

Jangininya, the lightning dreaming, from which Wardaman rock art became famous through the paintings of the Lightning Brothers, came from the west, and is associated with a number of important sites in Wardaman country.

There are many localised dreamings located in the IPA, associated with creation beings who became the physical features and animal species now found on country.

Creation beings are often represented at sites transformed as mature trees which are of sacred significance. These tend to be distinctive tree species, often with localised or ecologically unusual occurrences. Examples include: Ghost gums (*belerren*), Boab trees (*muruwun*), Paperbarks (*bagali*), Palm trees (*garnban*) and Casuarina trees (*lalmarrin*).

There are also dreamings for ritual and other cultural items derived from tree and other plant species, such as *garnawun* (Lancewood), *magum* (Cypress pine), *bagali* (Paperbark trees), *buda* (Black Plum) and *ganmalin* (Cane grass). At the sites of these dreamings the trees or other plants are regarded as actual transformations of the dreaming objects and are of sacred significance.

The spectacular rock art of Wardaman country has been the subject of intense interest from archaeologists as well as gaining broader public recognition, particularly in response to exposure of the ‘Lightning Brothers’ paintings. Six art site complexes, *Jalijbang*, *Gandawag-ya*, *Yinggalarrri*, *Wiynbarr*, *Garnawala* and *Yiwarlarlayi* are considered of national significance and have been registered with the Australian Heritage Commission.



Figure 1.3: Photo: NLC, Judburra (Gregory) NP landscape showing mature coolibah and river gum, 2011.

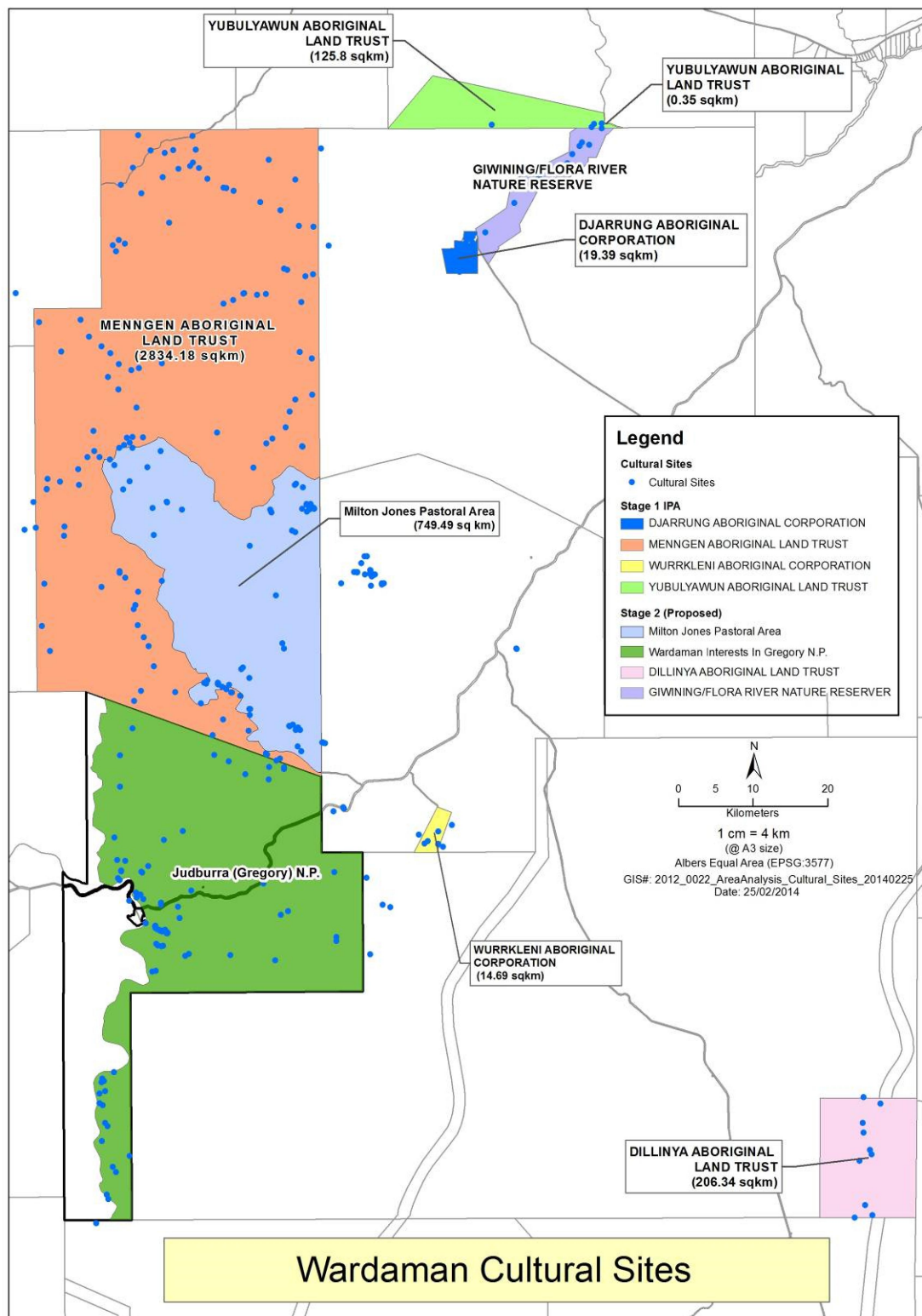
In recent years, intensive rock art recording and documentation has been carried out by David Lee in cooperation with Bill Harney (Senior). Much of this recording has occurred within the IPA area, particularly on the Menggen Land Trust. Records from this work have been made available to the IPA cultural mapping project and have been incorporated into the IPA site register and associated records.

An aspect of David Lee's work has been to re-visit a number of art sites which had previously had protective work, mainly fencing, carried out in the 1980s, much of which is in need of repair. The sites have been assessed for damage from weathering, feral animals and insects, rubbing and intrusion from trees and build-up of fire load (Appendix 3 and photo below).

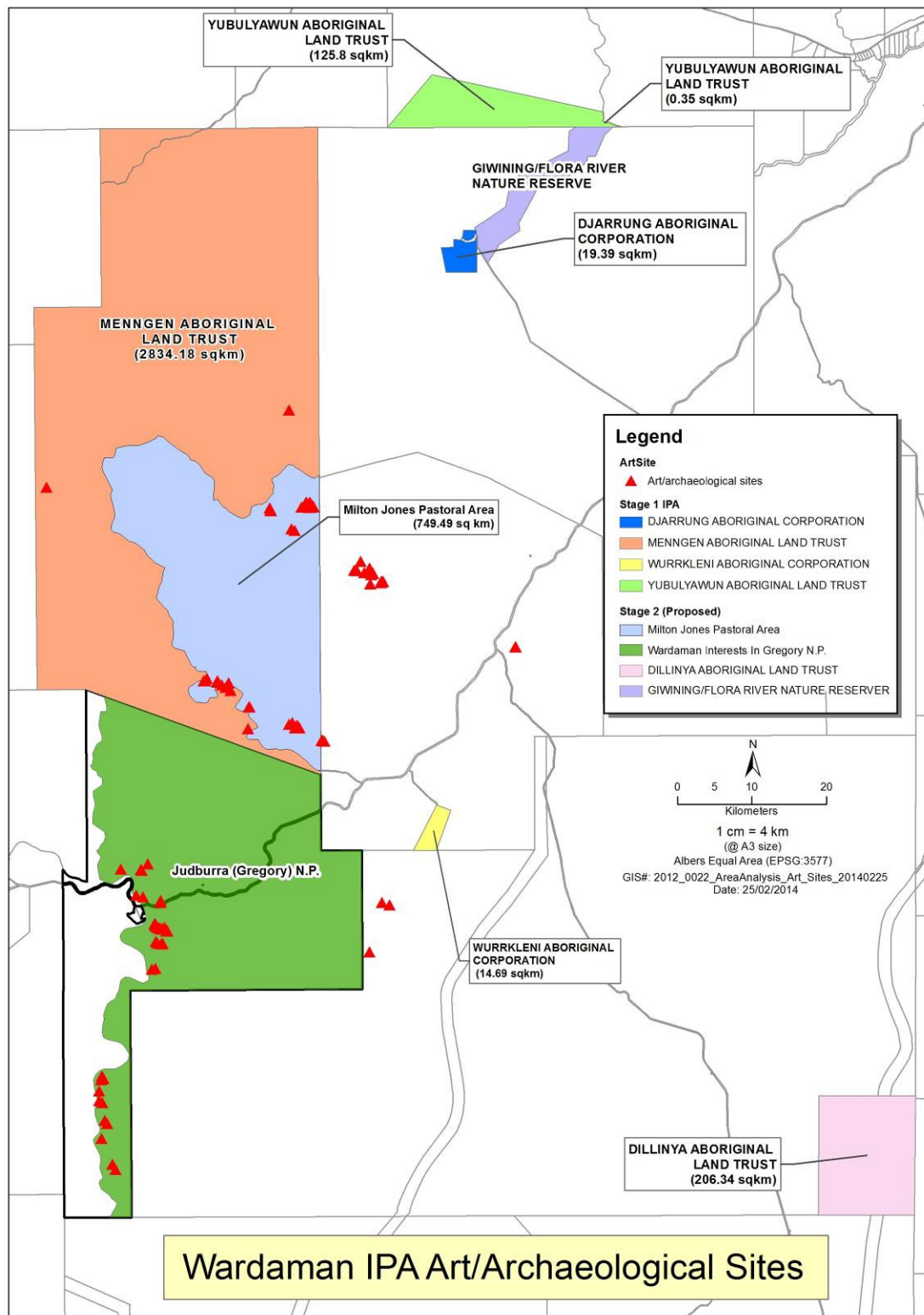


Figure 1.4: Photo: NLC. TOs Annie Morton, Jessie Brown and Bill Harney Jnr looking at a Wardaman rock art book with Author/Researcher David Lee and Charlotte Lee, Flora River IPA meeting 2012.

MAP 2: CULTURAL SITES



MAP 3: ART SITES



BIODIVERSITY

The cultural mapping project for the IPA MP has identified some plant species and habitats which are potentially under threat. They require special management consideration and conservation action. These habitats are important not only in their own right but also as important refuges for vulnerable animal species. Managing invasive weeds and animals will be a key aspect of protecting biodiversity on the IPA.

This section includes a description of relevant biodiversity material and references, any particular matters of note or local, regional and national/international significance based on lists of endangered or vulnerable species (NRETAS). There is a lack of recent or detailed scientific knowledge about the status of many species on Wardaman country. However, there is still significant Indigenous knowledge held by some TOs, making ongoing cultural mapping and flora and fauna survey work on a “two toolbox” basis viable.

The internationally significant “Victoria River middle reaches and Gregory area” Site of Conservation Significance includes a large section of eastern Judbarra (Gregory) National Park, including parts of Ryan, Matt Wilson, Sullivan and Gregory creeks and the Victoria River.¹

A number of plant species and communities found in the IPA area are of particular cultural importance as well as being environmentally significant. Lancewood or *garnawun* (*Acacia shirleyi*) occurs in small, isolated patches on Menggen, occurring at the edge of its biogeographic range and is vulnerable to destruction by fire. A number of these patches are cultural sites and the trees within them are of sacred significance.

Cypress pine (*Callitris intratropica*), or *Magum* is found in open woodland habitats on the upland plateau on Menggen, and is also represented as a sacred feature of cultural sites on the plateau. The species is particularly vulnerable to wildfire and, along with a number of animal species (eg Frilled Lizards, granivorous birds and small mammals), has significantly declined across northern Australia as a result of a shift to high-intensity fires caused by the decline of Aboriginal burning practices (Sharp & Bowman 2004).

A further plant community of particular cultural and ecological significance is *ganmalin* or cane grass—northern cane grass (*Mnesithea rottboelioides*) found growing together with river grass (*Chionachne cyathopoda*). Stands of cane grass along the lower reaches of Ryan Creek and in Matt Wilson Creek are of sacred significance and require special protection. Cane grass is also a habitat for the vulnerable Purple-crowned Fairy-wren (*Malurus c. coronatus*) and endangered Gouldian Finch. Threats to cane grass habitats include grazing, weeds, erosion and fire.

¹ It is one of 67 identified Sites of Conservation Significance in the Northern Territory. These areas contain special biodiversity values that require additional protection (Harrison et al. 2009).

Further species and communities, particularly in riparian habitats are both culturally and ecologically significant. These include River Red Gum or *dimarlan* (*E. camauldulensis*), Ghost gum or *belerren* (*Corymbia bella*), Pandanus or *bundoyuran* (*Pandanus aquaticus*), Melaleuca spp. (*bagali*), Palm species (*garban*), including *Livistona rigida* at the Flora River and *Livistona victoriae* at the Victoria River, and *lalmarrin* (*Casuarina cunninghamiana*).

Aboriginal management of fire will be an important aspect of protecting the biological and cultural values of the IPA. Mapping work as part of land management will provide an ongoing assessment of areas requiring particular types of management, and the identification of habitats and species under threat.

The NT Government provides details of plants and animals that are critically endangered, endangered, or vulnerable at: <http://lrm.nt.gov.au/biodiversity-conservation/animals/home/specieslist>. The most significant vertebrate species, in conservation terms, present in the proposed IPA are included in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Endangered and Vulnerable Vertebrate Species in the Proposed IPA

Critically Endangered	Vulnerable
Northern Quoll, <i>Dasyurus hallucatus</i>	Northern Leaf-nosed bat, <i>Hipposideros inornata</i>
	Gouldian Finch, <i>Erythrura gouldiae</i>
	Grey Falcon, <i>Falco hypoleucus</i>
	Purple Crowned fairy Wren (Western Sp) <i>Malurus coronatus coronatus</i>
	Australian bustard, <i>Ardeotis australis</i>
	Emu, <i>Dromaius novaehollandiae</i>
	Mertens Water Monitor, <i>Varanus mertensi</i>
	Angalarri Grunter, <i>Scortum neili</i>

THREATENING PROCESSES SUMMARY

The key threatening processes are generally described in the NT Government Fact Sheets at <http://lrm.nt.gov.au/biodiversity-conservation/animals/home/specieslist>. Threatening processes, management approaches, priorities and risks are summarized in Table 3.

The major threats to biodiversity, summarised from the NT Government Fact Sheets are:

- Degradation of riparian vegetation (due to altered fire regimes and/or impacts of livestock and feral animals)
- Alteration of water flow and quality (due to increased erosion as a consequence of poor land management practices)
- Impacts from feral cats, the spread of cane toads, disease or changed fire

regimes. (NB. Quolls appear to be particularly susceptible to the poison of cane toads)

- Altered availability of food resources caused by under-story vegetation change because of pastoralism and/or changed fire regimes
- Impact of pastoralism and fire on food resources may be very substantial
- Landscape-scale changes in fire-regimes or grazing by feral or domestic herbivores may, in the long-term, reduce the availability of nesting trees and appropriate prey species.

Table 3: Summary: Threats, Management Approaches, Priority and Risk

Threat	Management Approach	Importance	Risk if not managed
Feral animals and cattle <i>Pigs and donkeys are damaging rock art painting by rubbing against the rock art; Damage to sacred sites.</i>	<i>Feral animal monitoring and management including reduction; Map and assess sites for damage and best control methods (eg. New fencing or maintenance and culling or mustering). Produce annual/ 5 year strategy.</i>	Very High	Very High
Unmanaged fire <i>Lack of locally based fire management training and equipment; Extreme late fire causing ecological damage and damage to cultural sites.</i>	<i>Fire management training and seasonal planning and mitigation burning; continue current Bushfires NT support; Participation in carbon farming initiative. Produce annual/ 5 year strategy.</i>	Very High	Very High
Reduced water quality & impact on aquatic life <i>Damage to natural waters (springs, waterholes and rivers, and loss of aquatic food sources; erosion, pollution and silting of watercourses.</i>	<i>Fencing cattle from natural waters; providing stock with artificial water sources "make sure proper fishing, not too much, just enough to eat like in early days..."</i>	High	High
Loss of Indigenous Knowledge about Wardaman culture and country <i>Traditional stories and knowledge about country and places are not being passed on from older people to younger people.</i> Loss of control about access to cultural sites <i>Unauthorized entry and damage to important cultural places and damage to sites.</i>	<i>Undertake cultural mapping work and build on existing site recording and assessment work; ensure ongoing culture camps and participation of culturally knowledgeable Wardaman with younger less knowledgeable Wardaman to extend knowledge base; Increase visits and presence at cultural sites and over Wardaman country generally. Produce annual/ 5 year strategy.</i>	High	High

Threat	Management Approach	Importance	Risk if not managed
Weeds reducing riparian and other habitat quality <i>Weeds not controlled except for work on jointly managed areas.</i>	<i>Management Plan to support reducing weed infestations by increasing strategic effort and to prevent weed spread from outside. Identify location of weeds of national significance and weeds of high priority in the NT and develop work plans to combat infestations. Produce annual/ 5 year strategy.</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Medium</i>
Lack of capacity to undertake land and cultural site management work <i>There is no well governed Wardaman organisation, supported by all Wardaman, that can provide the necessary governance to effectively run a land management group.</i>	Partnerships <i>working partnerships with both government and non-government groups, as well as Aboriginal and other regional organisations</i> <i>Good research into animal and plant species and how to look after them</i> Set up Wardaman Ranger group: <i>Funding for wages, equipment, training and employment of local Rangers</i> <i>A ranger base/office at Menggen and Djarrung.</i> <i>Wardaman Ranger badges.</i>	<i>Highest</i>	<i>Very High</i>
Lack of access to remote parts of Wardaman country.	<i>Improve access to country by:</i> <i>Having right vehicles and the ability to keep and look after vehicles</i> <i>Access to equipment to keep station tracks in good condition</i> <i>Having the funds to use helicopters to access difficult places</i> <i>Working partnerships with other land management agencies and groups.</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>High</i>
Damage to culturally significant vegetation <i>Unmanaged fire, weeds, feral animals and erosion.</i>	<i>Protection of culturally important trees and vegetation stands is a significant part of cultural mapping and management.</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>High</i>

The TOs maintain that both a lack of capacity to access country and lack of general capacity to undertake land management activities threatens their ability to fulfill basic cultural obligations, and implicitly their spiritual responsibilities to care for animal, plant species, habitats and landscape features. This lack of capacity poses a threat to cultural sites, which are an important part of maintaining healthy people on healthy country.



Figure 1.5: Photo: NLC; Bill Harney (Senior) standing adjacent to blocked access track, creek crossing, Menggen ALT, 2011

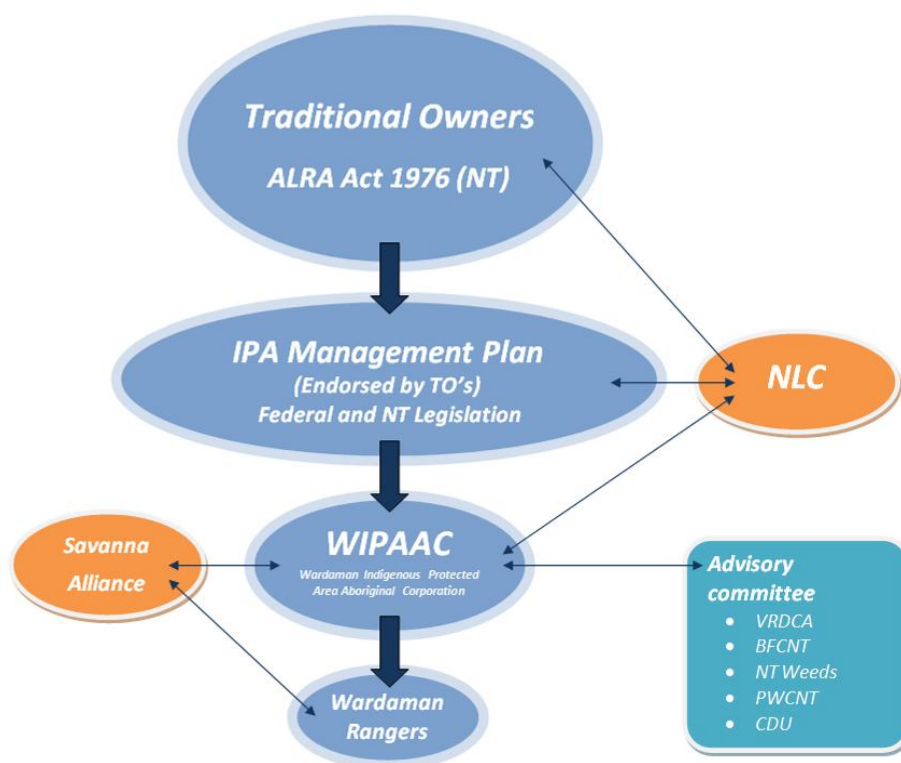
The presence of Exploration License Applications over the IPA may present a new and significant threat to both the biodiversity and cultural values of Wardaman country. Exploration approvals made by TOs under the provisions of the ALRA automatically include permission for extraction/mining should the explorer find economically viable mineral or energy resources.

New initiatives in mining for coal shale oils and gas “fracking” are increasingly present in the NT. Both may have significant impacts on the natural waters, and therefore cultural and biodiversity values. Comprehensive and independent social, cultural and environmental impact assessments are required if such requests eventuate.

GOVERNANCE

Wardaman IPA Aboriginal Corporation (WIPAAC) will hold executive authority for the IPA. The rebuilding of Wardaman confidence in their ability to manage their own affairs with support mechanisms like any similar corporate entity is a priority action. All Wardaman clan groups are represented on the WIPAAC board. The NLC will continue provide a range of support to the board and the IPA. Other stakeholder groups, including an expert advisory committee, will also provide support in all areas of managing the corporation and the IPA through the steering committee. It is the goal of WIPAAC to be able to manage all aspects of the IPA independently. As such the roles of the NLC and Savanna Alliance may change accordingly in the future.

Figure 1.6: Wardaman IPA Governance Structure:



The biggest indirect threat to Wardaman country is the lack of capacity for Wardaman, as a cultural group, to be able to manage and control their own financial affairs within an accountable, transparent land management focused corporate structure. This factor mitigates their ability to receive and acquit grants, administer funds and manage land management operations.

The lack of a viable land management governance structure was the cause of ongoing discussion during the IPA planning consultations. As a result WIPAAC was formed in late 2013. The corporation will provide a platform from which land management activities can be launched. The Northern Land Council and Savanna Alliance will assist the corporation to develop strong governance and operational capacity.

The basic governance structure in terms of decision making and support for the IPA is shown above. In keeping with traditional culture and the Land Rights Act, the ultimate authority for Wardaman land rests with the broader Traditional Owner group and any decisions which will have a significant effect on Wardaman country must be made through the processes set out in the Land Rights Act administered by the NLC.

Through participatory planning and consultation the broader Wardaman group endorsed this plan and the structure and role of WIPAAC. WIPAAC will therefore manage the IPA accordingly, having been given support to do so by the broader Wardaman group. The advisory committee will meet with WIPAAC at least once a year to provide support for planning, funding, monitoring and operational projects. The advisory committee will include a range of stakeholders such as Savanna Alliance, Victoria River District Conservation Association, Bushfires Council NT, Weeds Branch NT and Charles Darwin University. Each of these groups have varying functions, all can provide technical advice, some can provide logistical support for on ground projects such as BFCNT, WEEDS Branch NT and VRDCA and some can assist with funding such as VRDCA.

The NLC will provide support to WIPAAC including a secretariat role in the early stages of the IPA, project management, technical advice, management of IPA funding agreements and governance support. As the IPA develops relationships with stakeholders and support agencies will change accordingly. As already stated it is the goal of WIPAAC to manage their own affairs so the development process will transition towards this.

WIPAAC constitution states that the board must be comprised of eleven directors, one from each Wardaman clan group. The Directors will, as funding becomes available, in the first instance employ a Coordinator/facilitator to get WIPAAC running, make urgent funding applications, set up core governance arrangements, and eventually, recruit an Executive Officer. This early stage would be supported by the NLC joint management unit to provide governance support and manage the IPA funding agreement.

An Executive Officer (EO) may be employed, and be delegated to manage the corporation, fulfill secretariat functions of the Board, prepare budgets, policies and protocols, formalise partnerships, work with Directors to establish a staff structure (ranger/works Coordinator, rangers, and administration support), make funding applications and report to Directors at least quarterly. The EO would purchase or lease equipment, and employ land management staff, subject to delegations of the Directors, and on the basis of funding and partnership agreements to implement this plan.

Given the IPA encompasses almost all Wardaman land the governance process will be somewhat complex. The IPA is also bordered by Giwining (Flora River) Nature Reserve and Judbarra (Gregory) NP. Wardaman are involved in the joint management of these parks through governance of differing structures and composition. Given that both the IPA and the parks are managed to protect natural and cultural values and deliver opportunities to TOs, the governance process for all three jurisdictions should overlap. This poses both opportunities and challenges.

Such a process will benefit both TOs and PWCNT by reducing operational pressures and costs for all parties while working on shared goals. The benefits may be achieved by sharing resources, sharing knowledge, capitalizing on a local workforce, and running back to back operations and training, while concurrently building strong relationships. This relationship will develop and gain support as the IPA becomes operational.

Key governance principles are: transparency, accountability, and active succession to a new generation of Wardaman leaders. Corporation Directors will be drawn mainly from the younger generation. Competent, regular, governance support (mentoring and coaching) will be a feature of the new land management corporation, and will include practical exercises to formulate a transparent management structure, clear delegations and authority, knowledge and application of roles and responsibilities, and development of clearly written policies and protocols.

Recognition of Cultural Responsibilities in Governance

All Wardaman families are represented within the IPA. The inclusion of all Wardaman interests provides a foundation of unity and cultural authority for WIPAAC. The corporation is comprised of one representative from each of the eleven clan groups which comprise the Wardaman language group. Culturally linked governance structures and processes are already established for Giwining (Flora River) Nature Reserve and Judbarra (Gregory) NP.

During 2011 and 2012 concurrent IPA, and Park Joint Management camps/ meetings were held for both parks. Confusion was avoided by running each meeting on a separate day during the on-country camps. As management objectives of the IPA and two parks are convergent, the concurrent meetings help to avoid duplication, divergence, save on resources and allow the IPA members to participate in a significant governance process, while accessing technical support from PWCNT and NLC joint management staff.

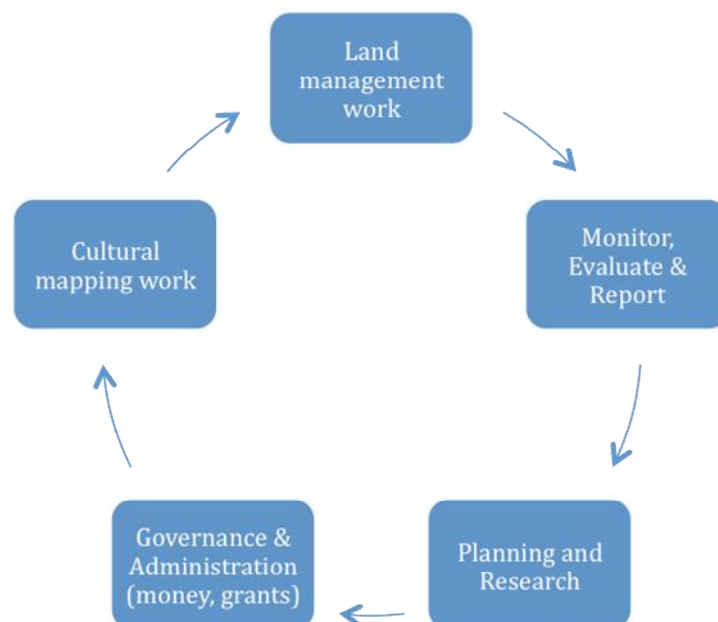
The Judbarra (Gregory) NP has been divided into three regions for administrative convenience. The TOs from each region nominate four senior and four younger TOs to represent their region on the Judbarra (Gregory) NP governing committee (12 senior, and 12 younger TOs). The eastern region is comprised of Karangpurur, Wardaman and Nungali language groups. Wardaman elders and younger TOs are elected to represent their interests in Judbarra NP.

The Giwining (Flora River) Nature Reserve management committee is comprised of six members, with two representatives each from Yibulyawiyn, Wunaijawyn and Wardaman sub-language groups.

The governance processes for both parks' includes active recognition of Wardaman cultural responsibilities. Firstly, all development or site clearances are overseen by the NLC under the provisions of the ALRA and require consultation with TOs and the application of traditional Wardaman authority. Secondly, whenever possible, both groups run their meetings at a country camp where the wider TO group is invited, and enabled to participate in planning and decision making.

The country camps, unlike office based committee meetings allow for an expanded TO presence (gender, age and cultural group representation) which increases transparency, improves accountability and supports the eventual succession of younger TOs to leadership roles. Continuing to run these meetings concurrently will provide greater support for the IPA generally and implicitly strengthen the IPA in relation to joint management, and vice versa.

FIGURE 1.7: WARDAMAN IPA MANAGEMENT: KEY ACTIVITIES CYCLE



WARDAMAN IPA STRATEGIES

Wardaman will review and improve their own governance arrangements, and develop their own independent land management governance capacity, through WIPAAC, supported by working partnerships with the NLC, VRDCA, PWCNT and others, to facilitate their IPA aspirations.

Introduction

Wardaman TOs plan to develop a land and cultural management capacity which can complement those of their land management partners (both Aboriginal neighbors and Government Agencies) to better deliver practical cultural management and land management outcomes. The WIPAAC is the preferred hosting arrangement to implement the land management plans of Wardaman. The gaps in suitable

governance arrangements, particularly asset management and financial accountability determine the foundational strategies to be:

- Negotiating land and cultural management partnerships.
- Acquiring sustainable land and cultural management funding.
- Developing land management capacity, training and skills (including infrastructure, capital equipment and workers).
- Achieving good governance and financial management (under the auspices of a Wardaman controlled land management entity).

These four (of six) strategies are inter-related and will need to be occurring concurrently. The main assumption is that one of the Wardaman partners or advocates would provide the role of facilitator to assist with negotiation of working partnerships and incorporate complementary funding and capacity building/training into any such arrangements.

The major risk is the low internal capacity to support Wardaman beyond the existing mechanisms and people who supported the failed WAC. These strategies rely on Wardaman participation at all levels. Increasing capacity can be partly achieved through a strong relationship with joint management operations in both Parks, and partly through local partnerships (eg. VRDCA). These arrangements are crucial to building the capacity of Wardaman to successfully manage the IPA.

Efforts to motivate and establish support arrangements and partnerships as a part of an “action planning” exercise during the consultation process caused a number of letters to be sent seeking support to establish and/or host a ranger operation while Wardaman rebuilt governance and operational capacity. No replies were forthcoming, but the lack of responses strengthened the resolve of Wardaman TOs to establish an independent Land Management presence to more effectively manage their cultural and land assets.

Wardaman TOs are participants in two joint management agreements with the NT Government (Judbarra (Gregory) National Park and Giwining (Flora River) Nature Reserve), two Australian Defence Force agreements (Bradshaw and Delamere Stations) and a number of other Land Use Agreements (LUA) over ALTs.

All of these properties have associated agreements and provision for TO driven cultural and environmental management works. They also offer potential, as Wardaman governance and land management capacity increases, to allow for the negotiation of beneficial partnerships that can contribute towards more efficient land management operations, and improved outcomes for people and country.

During the IPA consultations, senior Wardaman and Ngaliwurru TOs acknowledged that no single ranger group in the VRD Region has sufficient economies of scale to maximise and sustain their operational capacity and therefore achieve ongoing, positive land management results. The eventual combining of land management groups in the region, under a single umbrella organisation, could allow for greater economy of scale. This goal, will require longer term discussion and agreement facilitated through the NLC.

The dedication of an IPA and linked strategies are also referred to in the Wardaman Land and Cultural Strategic Management Plan 2010 – 2015, which has not been implemented to date. This Strategic Plan sets out the Wardaman aspirations, stated at the time, lists land tenures and outlines threats and management approaches. It emphasises a commendable vision of eventual economic independence. Most of the grant information which forms much of the Plan's content is now out of date.

IPA STRATEGIES AND KEY ACTIONS

The engagement of reliable partners is a crucial to achieve the objective of establishing good governance and operational capacity. Ultimately WIPAAC will operate relatively independently, however in the short to medium term support and cooperation with others is vital. Securing enough funding to maintain a ranger program to implement the IPA management plan will be the major challenge.

The most important underpinning principle is that of Wardaman pursuing their vision of having '*Wardaman looking after their own culture and country*'. Major stakeholders and partners to this end include the NLC, VRDCA, PWCNT, BFCNT and Savanna Alliance.

In the early stages of the project NLC managed all IPA planning funding and project management. This will continue until such time as the corporation has the capacity to do so independently. Savanna alliance has also provided support in seeking funding and has the capacity to provide administrative assistance under the direction of the corporation. While it is anticipated that there can be a good working relationship between the PWCNT and the IPA, it must be noted that PWCNT will not be in a position to make any financial or other contribution to any activities outside the Parks' boundaries. VRDCA and BFCNT can both at times work together on projects in and around the IPA.

WIPAAC will enable, subject to good governance coupled with transparent and accountable financial management, the administrative capacity to acquire funding to employ staff, own assets and commence operations.

During the course of the planning Wardaman confirmed the following six priority land management strategies:

- **Establishing Good Governance and Financial Management (through WIPAAC)**
- **Acquiring a Sustainable Source of Land and Cultural Management Funding (employment and equipping of Wardaman Coordinator and Rangers, provision of infrastructure and capital assets)**
- **Developing Land Management Capacity, Training and Skills (including infrastructure, capital equipment and workers)**
- **Rangers and Traditional Owners working on country (including weed, feral animal, erosion, fire and water resource management)**
- **Cultural maintenance and protection activities (including mapping, site**

protection and inter-generational transfer of knowledge)

- **Negotiating Land and Cultural Management Partnerships (for research, support and training)**

The order of priority is complex and will require support because most of the six strategies need concurrent action. The land and cultural management work will provide a catalyst for greater engagement by Wardaman, but it is not sustainable without a funded and resourced governance system and organizational structure.

STRATEGY: ESTABLISH GOOD GOVERNANCE AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

KEY ACTIONS:

- Establish management and operational capacity (funding and staff, including a Coordinator and Rangers, accounting services and auditor) for WIPAAC (Board with external expert support).
- Establish and maintain a permanent Wardaman IPA Corporation and establish staff coaching and support mechanism for regular “corporate health” check-ups.
- Provide, through support agencies (NLC), mentoring and support arrangements facilitated by Wardaman doing hands on rebuilding of capacity, to re-establish confidence and corporate knowledge.
- Create effective Wardaman land management governance arrangements including the capacity to undertake recruitment of a Wardaman Land Management Coordinator using existing and leveraged funding streams, and establishment of human resource arrangements (contracts, employment procedures, OH&S protocols) to recruit Wardaman rangers through Working on Country (WoC) funding.
- Identify reliable support institutions including strengthening, when possible, existing Wardaman institutions and financial management checks and balances. Engage with organisations like ORIC for this type of institutional support.
- As a long term option, participate in the development and possible creation of a new Victoria River Regional Aboriginal Land Management corporate entity (responsible for providing a more cost effective and efficient coordination, funding acquisition/acquittal and management of the regions Aboriginal ranger groups).

STRATEGY: ACQUIRE FUNDING FOR LAND MANAGEMENT WORK

KEY ACTIONS:

- Identify all sources of Wardaman funding (current and potential) and apply for funding through the IPA and the Working on Country Programs.
- Establish funding and governance arrangements including agreements and MOU with the current host (NLC) and if appropriate PWCNT.
- Formulate a 5 year land management budget with strategic goals.
- Establish contract and other funding arrangements for Wardaman rangers with suitable regional and other Aboriginal organisations.

STRATEGY: DEVELOP LAND MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONAL CAPACITY

KEY ACTIONS:

- Formulate a Wardaman ranger group annual work-plan and standard operation procedures (vehicles, OH&S etc).
- Prepare a training plan and negotiate training, capacity and skills building and knowledge sharing with a good Registered Training Organisation (RTO).
- Set up operational ranger base/s on Wardaman country (Menggen/Djarrung).
- Acquire equipment (ranger base, shed and capital and minor equipment commensurate with skills and operational capacity).

STRATEGY: RANGERS AND TRADITIONAL OWNERS WORKING ON COUNTRY

KEY ACTIONS:

- Plan and implement a cultural mapping (see Cultural mapping Plan below) program and practical sacred site protection activities (fencing, fire, weed, feral animal and water management).
- Participate in Flora/Upper Daly catchment management (erosion, fire weeds and feral animal management) work including participation in bi-annual fauna survey with research partners.
- Continue flora identification, establish monitoring points and add data to existing information.
- Conduct annual back to country camps focusing on Wardaman children and young people “learning on country”. These camps can be linked to both cultural maintenance, planning and protection activities as well as fauna survey work.

STRATEGY: CONDUCT CULTURAL MAINTENANCE AND PROTECTION ACTIVITIES

KEY ACTIONS:

- Develop Wardaman Cultural Site Register access and research protocols with assistance from NLC; and maintain Wardaman Cultural Site Register.
- Maintain existing, and establish new research partnerships based on two toolbox techniques (using both traditional and scientific knowledge systems).
- Obtain funding and resources for annual cultural mapping work with TOs.
- Develop feral animal and wildfire work-plans based on site protection priorities.
- Engage in activities that support the inter-generational transfer of knowledge.

STRATEGY: NEGOTIATE AND ACHIEVE PARTNERSHIPS

KEY ACTIONS:

- Negotiate a strategic partnership* based on the dedicated IPA, between Wardaman, the NLC and PWCNT to support operations and ranger training within specified joint management areas of Wardaman country, and aimed at practically linking these areas of Giwining (Flora) and Judburra (Gregory) with the IPA.
- Integrate, align or coordinate management objectives and governance processes with joint managed parks as appropriate and according to agreements.

Table 4 *Proposed Strategic Partnership: Wardaman, the NLC and PWCNT

<i>Wardaman Role/NLC supported</i>	<i>Proposed PWCNT Role "on parks"</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Engaging in two way process of engagement that includes:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Sharing knowledge of our culture and lands/Share agreements</i> ○ <i>Sharing access to our country and assets/permit arrangements</i> • <i>Wardaman living on country and doing the land management work</i> • <i>Commitment to the future and finding better ways of "Closing the Gap"</i> • <i>Providing increased credibility to the joint management agreement</i> • <i>Participation in Joint Management activities</i> • <i>Additional leverage for acquiring catchment management resources and support</i> • <i>Improve land management on ground outcomes</i> • <i>Increase cultural protection and TEK transfer</i> • <i>Increase knowledge of endemic flora and fauna</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Provide greater opportunity for access by TOs to country</i> • <i>Two way sharing of assets, knowledge and equipment</i> • <i>Capacity to provide land management skills transfer, jobs and training to younger Wardaman</i> • <i>Increased operational opportunities in land management for all parties</i> • <i>Provide locally based specialist skills, expertise and knowledge in land management work and monitoring</i> • <i>Improve on ground land management outcomes</i> • <i>Support improved catchment management outcomes</i> • <i>Improve the currently sparse knowledge of endemic flora and fauna through "two way" research projects.</i>

- Negotiate partnership agreements with environmental services organisations such as the Victoria River District Conservation Corporation (VRDCA), NT Weeds Branch, Department of Primary Industries Rangelands Group, Bushfires NT and other culturally linked, or appropriate Aboriginal organisations to achieve economies of scale for operations by the Wardaman Ranger group
- Develop partnerships with relevant research institutions and organisations such as NAILSMA, ANU, and Charles Darwin University.

STRATEGY RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT

Strategy	Risk	Risk Management
Achieving good governance and financial management.	Lack of funding support for IPA or WIPAC.	Startup process supported by NLC.
Negotiating land and cultural management partnerships (for research, support and training).	Partners refuse/unable to provide required support; Partners lack capacity and/or delay commitment.	Some support already in place, and national/ International significance of cultural values attractive to new and existing partners; Current capacity and support provides basic assistance.
Acquiring a sustainable source of land and cultural management funding.	No funds available through WoC, IPA or other sources to start-up/operate Rangers; *Unrealistic expectations about funding support from PWCNT for the IPA operations, training or employment.	Links with entities such as VRDCA and others; Agreement for support by NLC to source and manage funds prior to transition into WIPAAC. Clear PWCNT agreements.
Developing land management capacity, training and skills including infrastructure, capital equipment and workers.	Suitable training unavailable; Skilled trainers unavailable; No/low current capacity.	Training identified and available; Training programs available in conjunction with other ranger groups and peak organisations; Training capacity exists with Wardaman rangers working with PWCNT at Giwining (Flora) and Judburra.
Undertaking Caring for Country work including weed, feral animal, erosion, fire and water management.	No capacity to do work within reasonable timeframes; Logistical and resource limits preclude effective work.	Some current capacity, and ability to mobilise partnership support through PWCNT, Savanna Alliance and NLC; Arrangements with NLC, PWCNT, other ranger groups and Savanna Solutions can provide basic support at the initial stages.
Conduct ongoing cultural maintenance and protection activities including mapping, site protection and inter-generational transfer of knowledge.	Support ceases and ranger group fails to be established within a shorter timeframe;	Current work is ongoing on a voluntary basis; Action research undertaken through the IPA MP development identified very significant cultural values which are compelling to potential partners.

CULTURAL MAPPING AND SITE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Introduction

The initial IPA consultations included broad sweep helicopter and vehicle based surveys with TOs visiting many important places. Geographically these sites and areas ranged from large springs and watercourses to mesa formations and intermittently watered valleys. Wardaman country takes in the headwaters of the Flora River, an important tributary which joins with the Katherine River at the Flora Junction, to form the Daly River.

Mapping included sacred and “open” rock-art sites (painting, petroglyphs), cultural “living” sites (permanent springs, trees, and fresh water sources), archaeological sites (eg. stone tool scatters) and sites of historical significance such as old stock yards (refer to Maps 2 and 3 above). TOs seek to continue to look after these sites (Maps 2 and 3) in their overall context using the rangers to provide ongoing management, and senior custodians both as advisers and to transfer knowledge.



Figure 1.8: Photo: NLC. Younger and older Wardaman Traditional owners visit a culturally and ecologically important site in the headwaters of the Flora River, Menggen, 2011

Also of note is the inclusion of a *Special Protection Zone in East Gregory* in the Judbarra (Gregory) National Park Joint Management Plan (2011:32). The zone encompasses the escarpment areas in the vicinity of the Victoria River crossing and junctions with Ryan, Sullivan and Gregory creeks.

Cultural Site Management Plan

The Cultural Mapping project provided the foundations for an IPA Cultural Site Management Plan. The Plan will also be integrated with the Wardaman IPA Site Register and associated maps. The operational details of the Cultural Site Management Plan are dependent on funding and the formation of a ranger group.

The Cultural Mapping project has identified a number of critical management zones and sites where on ground works are required. These provide the initial priorities for cultural site management. Appendix 2 comprises a listing of 49 cultural sites requiring high priority protection and conservation management based on current knowledge and inputs from Wardaman TOs. The names of the sites are omitted as they are confidential. They are available to TOs from the Katherine NLC Anthropologist.

Protection and conservation management activities identified for cultural sites by TOs include fencing to protect waterholes, springs and art sites from cattle and feral animals, active land management works including weed spraying and monitoring, protection of culturally significant trees, vegetation and shelters from damage by unmanaged fires (see Fire Management Plan below).

Cultural site management actions:

- Update the meta data associated with culturally important sites (via the Wardaman IPA Site Register), document impacts, and protect them from further damage by animals, fire and erosion (Cooper, Cultural mapping project, 2012).
- Continue cultural mapping and management requirements according to Wardaman cultural protocols and practice, with TOs, facilitated by existing (David Lee) and proposed new partners (ANU).
- Facilitate intergenerational transfer of knowledge about the sites from older knowledgeable people to young people, through participatory cultural mapping.
- Implement feral animal, weed and fire management actions initially to protect the sites identified in Appendices 2 and 3 from damage, and to help restore country.
- Establish monitoring sites with the support of Department of Primary Industry (DPI) and the Indigenous Pastoral Program (IPP) as part of recording change.
- Implement cultural sites' management activities, and improve maintenance and management actions based on evaluations of the relative success of the work.

Major threatening processes:

- The activities of introduced species such as pig, buffalo, and cattle (responsible for rubbing against and degrading many of the paintings), and native species like termites and wasps nesting on or near paintings.
- Plants growing (inside art sites), against paintings and engravings and creating a build-up of dead plant material, which ignite during bushfires, the heat generated then causes the rock to spall.
- Damage by trees and larger animals to existing site protection fencing.
- Weeds and fire causing degeneration of native vegetation including culturally important trees and habitats for vulnerable and/or culturally important species.

A major risk to cultural sites' management is the limited extent of detailed cultural site records and as a consequence a lack of information about site features, particularly significant trees and vegetation. The Cultural Site Management Plan will need to be an active document, continually being updated and supervised by senior TOs.

Appendices 2 and 3 provide a specific set of target sites that require cultural management: through the familiarizing of younger people about these sites' stories and locations, and application of physical remedies to mitigate the threat of damage by identified negative impacts such as fire and feral animals.



Figure 1.9: Photo: NLC. Modern graphic in traditional style showing the need for fencing and protection of cultural habitats as well as art sites. IPA planning, Menggen 2010

FIRE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Wardaman TOs identified unmanaged fires and lack of capacity as a threat to cultural and environmental values on their country: *“Bushfires mob come and help to do some of the burning. We mostly work with Wagiman and station owners (our neighbors) to help manage fires and find out when they are burning... equipment is needed and money for wages and fuel to do fire protection ... supported with training and equipment.”*

Billy Harney Jnr Menggen, 2010

The NLC assists TOs to manage fire on their land. Wardaman will be part of the Western Top End fire project regional planning meeting where senior TOs, ranger groups and other stakeholders will plan for early dry season aerial and on ground burning, subject to weather conditions. A similar process will be supported annually in the eastern sector of Judbarra (Gregory) NP including consultations with neighbors, and park staff.

During IPA planning consultations, Wardaman also expressed interest in participating in the carbon economy. An important action in this regard, is to contact the NAILSMA Carbon Project Officer to get more information about the requirements for developing a fire/carbon mitigation project. An information package is available at www.nailsma.org.au.

Objectives and Actions

The first key objective is to protect important cultural sites and fire sensitive vegetation habitats through the initial placement and maintenance of locally effective firebreaks, then creating more strategic breaks with helicopters using the *Raindance machine. When equipment and capacity allows, then additional strategic on ground burning can be conducted to supplement the aerial prescribed burns.

The second key objective is training for rangers and TOs. Fire suppression, controlled burning, Raindance equipment training and navigator training will be provided to all participants. Deliberate burning near fire sensitive areas or important cultural sites will be avoided. All APB will be done in close consultation with traditional owners and where NTP&WS staff, and supervised by experienced NLC Fire Project Coordinators.

The third key objective is ongoing fire management action planning, which will take account of the Cultural Site Management Plan, particularly with regard to fire sensitive cultural site features such as trees and vegetation. Appendices 2 and 3 lists sites currently known to contain significant trees and vegetation.

Management actions include:

- Initiate vegetation mapping, particularly significant vegetation habitats.
- Negotiate access to equipment and start fire management training.
- Undertake annual pre-fire season planning with TOs and stakeholders including fire planning meetings for the northern and southern regions.
- Obtaining informed TO consent to use fire as part of carrying out targeted cultural management arrangements, in conjunction with aerial and ground survey work to facilitate initial visits to important cultural and rock art sites on areas to be burnt.
- Rangers guided by senior TOs will establish firebreaks around culturally and environmentally sensitive areas using firebugs, rake-hoes and blowers.
- Aerial Prescribed Burning will create larger scale, strategic firebreaks.
- As part of managing these areas, photo monitoring points will be established in fire sensitive areas and cultural sites on Menggen.
- Fire scar maps showing areas for proposed burning and the results of previous years burning will be used as a planning tool at the beginning of each fire season.

Managed Fire is important because:

- It is part of Wardaman culture and an important land management tool.
- It helps with renewing bush tucker/protect special or culturally important trees and plant communities.
- It helps with hunting by providing a green pick for kangaroos'.
- It makes country better by removing woody weeds and low scrub.
- It can protect sacred sites and other important places from wildfires.
- It helps with cleaning up special fishing/ hunting places.

Good Fire Management is about:

- Making fire breaks by burning at the right time.
- Talking, planning and working together with neighbouring TOs, station managers and owners before the fire season, to manage fire by using fire and graded tracks to make good strategic fire breaks.
- Talking with everybody who needs to know for cultural reasons.
- Combining cultural obligations with operational activities.
- Making sure burning is alright for certain places and times by using maps and a calendar and putting together a fire plan that everyone agrees to.
- Talking to neighbours' and Bushfire Council to plan early season burning.
- Having the right equipment, fuel and other consumables and training to use the equipment (eg vehicles, quad bikes, fire trailer, firebugs, helicopter).
- Funding for helicopter time, fuel, incendiaries, wages and operations' costs.
- Obtaining expert support from the Bushfire Council, PWCNT, and NLC.

CATTLE MANAGEMENT PLAN

It is important to note that the IPA can operate in the same space as any commercial LUA providing the commercial operations are not interfered with the management objectives of the IPA. The IPA is in fact complementary to good environmental practice, and irrespective of the IPA being dedicated, TOs are always able to ensure protection of their culturally important sites, and environmentally sensitive areas. Wardaman want to work closely with both cattle leases on their land to manage cultural sites and assist with environmental management. Wardaman will work towards the possibility of stage two dedication expanding the IPA to cover some or all of the lease area in the future.

The presence of cattle on Menggen Aboriginal Land Trust (ALT) includes uncounted, but from aerial observations, relatively large numbers of unmanaged, wild or feral cattle. The actual number of unmanaged cattle on Menggen and elsewhere on Wardaman lands is unknown. There is also commercial cattle grazing occurring on Wardaman lands adjacent to the IPA. Assessing numbers of cattle and other large invasive vertebrates and developing management regimes will be a primary objective of the IPA. Independent monitoring regimes will be established and supported with the assistance of Charles Darwin University and Department of Primary Industries and the NLC.

The ALRA Section 19 Land Use Agreement operating over part of the Menggen ALT permits up to 3,222 adult equivalents to be run over the southern portion of the Menggen Aboriginal Land Trust. This figure is based on an independent assessment by the NT Department of Resources. A Section 19 Land Use Agreement is also in place for Dillinya ALT to the south. This lease area has been approved to carry 1000 adult equivalents. Both agreements have comprehensive sections which allow for careful management of cultural sites and sensitive environments. The IPA could cover part of these lease areas without either operation interfering with the other. WIPAAC may consider in the future a second stage of declaration to cover some or

all of the land under lease for pastoral purposes. Getting to this point will require further work and the establishment of strong relationships with the lessees.

Another ALRA Section 19 proposal was lodged by some TOs in 2011, over part of the northern portion of the Menggen ALT. The purpose was stated to be for a “*subsistence herd*”. It is estimated the area is about 200 sq. km. A subsistence herd is allowable under the IPA provisions providing a stock management plan is provided in the IPA MP. This proposal has not been dealt with yet and will require consultation with all stakeholders including WIPAAC. If this proposal is to proceed it will have to shown that it meets all requirements under IPA guidelines for cattle management.

While both existing land use agreements provide for protection of sacred sites and sensitive environments it will be the WIPAAC and Wardaman rangers who will undertake most of the required monitoring. It is the intention of Wardaman to ensure reliable monitoring of the S19 PLU over Menggen and Dillinya is being conducted, and that the environmental and cultural protection and management parts of the s19 agreements are being fulfilled.

Objectives and Actions

Wardaman have entered into LUAs as a means to pursue their economic aspirations. Ensuring that economic aspirations can operate alongside cultural and environmental ones is the key objective of cattle management. All protected areas in the region have ongoing issues managing the negative impacts of large invasive vertebrates, in particular, cattle. Conducting independent monitoring and ensuring adequate control measures to protect both stage one and proposed stage two is a vital component of managing the IPA. All S19 PLUA agreements executed through the NLC have stringent requirements with regard to the protection of environmental and cultural values and regardless of this plan, the legal structure is in place to ensure responsible and sustainable practices inside the LUA areas.

The NLC, CDU and DPI have agreed to provide assistance with monitoring the IPA and lease areas to ensure effective cattle management. This will involve rangelands monitoring facilitated by NLC and DCI and ecological monitoring supported by NLC and CDU. As such regular inspections of areas under S19 PLUAs with Wardaman Rangers will occur along side ongoing ecological monitoring of environmentally sensitive sites inside the IPA. This monitoring will inform management actions.

In the case of a subsistence herd eventuating, the objectives would be expanded to include independently assessed sustainable production of cattle for local consumption. It is important to be able to run small sustenance operations without compromising or reducing the natural and cultural values of the IPA. It is also important to recognise that Wardaman need to earn an income from multiple sources, and the ALT areas remain a major resource to run commercial operations.

The key actions are:

Commercial Pastoral LUA

- Engage with both pastoral lessees/ LUAs and develop and maintain positive working relationship through cattle working group nominated by WIPAAC.
- Ongoing assessment and control of numbers of all large vertebrates throughout the IPA and lease areas and ensure proper stock carrying capacity assessments are made by DPI, NLC and CDU.
- Maintain rangeland condition monitoring sites assisted by DPI/IPP.
- Establish broader environmental monitoring program with CDU to monitor for negative impacts from large feral animals and cattle.
- Ensure areas under commercial management are monitored to ensure land condition is not reduced as a result of running livestock (eg. Weeds, fire, erosion, protection of natural waters), and ensure cattle are staying within the agreed paddocks.
- Monitor LUA and regularly inspect LUA with Wardaman Rangers and NLC/IPP/DPI pastoral Officer/s to ensure infrastructure is being maintained (eg. fencing, tracks and water points) and environmental management and cultural protection provisions are being adhered to.
- Create contracts with Wardaman Rangers (once established) to conduct cultural and environmental assessments to enhance existing, and to conduct additional natural and cultural management works (as per IPA Cultural Site management Plan).
- Where appropriate fence sensitive areas to prevent damage by cattle.

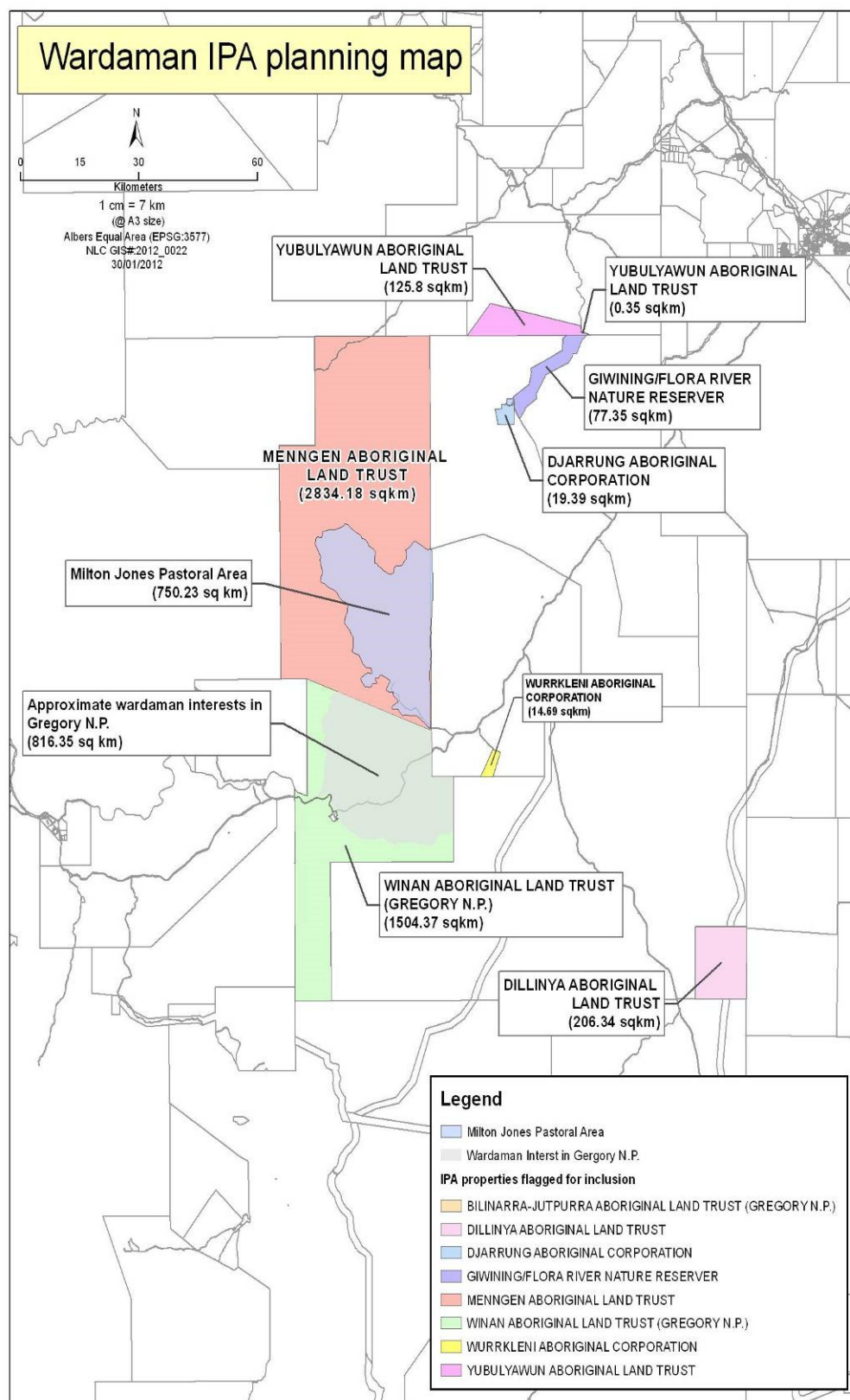
Subsistence Pastoral LUA

- See above as per Commercial LUA
- Ensure stock numbers consistent with subsistence operations
- Wardaman Rangers (once established) to conduct cultural and environmental assessments to enhance existing, and to conduct additional natural and cultural management works (as per IPA Cultural Site management Plan).

Non commercial areas of IPA

- Develop and implement monitoring program.
- Undertake control measures to mitigate negative impacts from cattle and other invasive vertebrates.

MAP 4: PLANNING MAP SHOWING AREAS WITH ABORIGINAL TITLE HELD BY WARDAMAN



MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The ability to effectively evaluate the performance of any plan or organisation requires the establishment of “monitoring points”. These need to be established early in the life of the plan, and are every bit as important as land management monitoring sites. Quantitative monitoring would need to include employment statistics, project statistics and reports against approved work plans and funding acquittals are simple and useful monitoring tools.

Organisational monitoring points include both governance and performance against the IPA MP planned activities. The monitoring elements could include: ability to establish land management entity and fill positions, ability to acquire, organize and manage funds, timely reporting completed, key staff recruited & retention levels, performance and satisfaction in the workforce and amongst TOs, fulfillment of specific governance arrangements like regular Directors meetings, staff work planning sessions).

The Wardaman IPA includes the establishment of a relevant and functional land management organisation with good management, administrative and operational capacity to implement the IPA strategies. The Wardaman IPA MERI Plan will require staff to:

- Identify key monitoring elements to measure the plan’s implementation.
- Provide formative advice to guide implementation and project improvement.
- Provide an evidence base to judge the success of the program.
- Inform decision making regarding the continuation and extension of the program.
- Establish a Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) Plan within 12 months of dedicating the IPA.

The MERI Plan will include key performance indicators against foundational, short, medium and long term activities, a clear long term vision for the IPA and include:

- Program logic (details of outcomes, outputs over the short, medium and longer terms, achievement of objectives, and descriptions of agreed program assumptions).
- Evaluation aims, objectives and tools.
- An evaluation approach including key evaluation questions.
- A summary of assumptions that the objectives and activities are based.

Suggested evaluation questions that could be used are:

What do we do well?

- a. What positive changes are TOs and stakeholders (Rangers, staff, and community) experiencing and reporting as a result of the IPA/activities?
- b. To what extent are anticipated outputs and outcomes being achieved?
- c. To what extent have the various collaborations and partnerships been achieved, and then developed to support the delivery of outcomes?
- d. Has organisational capacity occurred to support achievement of outcomes?

What can we do better?

- a. What organisational changes need to occur to achieve better outcomes?
- b. What have we learnt from the evidence of 'what works' in achieving outcomes?

What could we do more of?

- a. What new opportunities have emerged from the introduction of the program (e.g. in terms of partnerships, collaborations, both ways learning, blending on and off the job delivery, mentoring, governance coaching)?
- b. How can those opportunities be translated into sustainable organisational practice?

What could we do less of?

- a. What challenges and risks have limited program implementation (e.g. in terms of efficiency, community demand and motivation, capacity, funding, demand)?
- b. What organisational factors (e.g. partnership arrangements, governance, staffing) contribute to a failure to achieve outcomes?

ATTACHMENT 1:

LIST OF IPA MEETINGS AND ATTENDEES: DECEMBER 2009 TO DECEMBER 2013

1. Proposed Wardaman IPA Meeting, 8th December 2009, Katherine, NT

Attendees: Marie Allan, Jessie Brown, Florrie Smiler, Dixie Harney, Sally Winbirr, Annie Kells, Pauline Murrimal, Kathy Gill, Bill Harney, Ted Croker, Paddy Bennett, Ted Croker (jnr), Janelle Campbell, Geoffrey Nipper, Michael Murrimal, Queenie Ngabijiji, Ronnie Smiler, Percy Anderson, Natasha Hogan, Renae Dodd, Natalie Blitner, Lena Murrimal, Valerie Birdum, Olivia Raymond, Jason Raymond, Waninbu Wurumurru, Barbara Raymond, Helena Raymond, Mike Raymond, Maggie Raymond, May Rosas, Tilley Raymond, Lindsay Raymond, Boaz Smiler, Arnold Croker, Dwayne Rosas, Nathan Rosas, Mathew Birdum.

2: Wardaman IPA Meeting, and Steering Committee Meeting, 28-29th April 2010, Menggen, NT

Attendees: Jessie Brown, Bill Harney, Florrie Smiler, Anne Kell, Shauna Norman, Patrick Nelson, Lewis Raymond, Jeffery Nipper, Sally Winbirr, Lindsay Raymond, Tilly Raymond, Ted Croker (Snr), Ted Croker, Janelle Campbell, Queenie Morgan, Dixie Harney, Sally Norman, Pauline Murrimal, Haddrick Harney, Leanne Oakes, Fiona Croker, Anthony Oakes, Leon Norman, Patrick Harney, Valerie Birdum.

3: Wardaman IPA Steering Committee Meeting Menggen, NT, 29th April 2010

Attendees: Wardaman - Lewis Raymond, Roderick Harney, Hadrack Harney, Sally Winbirr, Ted Crocker Jnr, Bill Harney Jnr, Janelle Campbell, Lena Murrimal, Pauline Murrimal, Queenie Morgan, Anne, Kell, Leon Norman, Bill Harney, Dixie Harney.

Anthea Burns , NLC, Paul Josif, IPA Consultant, Lyndall McLean, Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA), Bill Panton, Parks and Wildlife Commission NT (PWCNT), Adam Northey, Victoria River District Conservation Corporation (VRDCA)

4: IPA Planning Meeting – Flora River, NT, 22-25 June 2010. (attendance list with NLC)

5: Wardaman IPA Planning Meeting Report – Judbarra (Gregory) NP 4-7th July 2011.

Attendees: Bill Harney Snr., Bill Harney Jnr., Sally Winbirr, Freddy Martin, Michael Murrimal, Marie Allen, Queenie Ngabijiji, Jessie Brown, Annie Morton, Kenny Allyson, Patricia Mota, Basil Murrumul, Lena Murrimal, Theresa Allyson and Max Allyson. Lorraine Jones, Ngaliwurru, David and Charlotte Lee.

6: Wardaman IPA Meeting, 10th August 2011, Flora River Nature Park.

Attendees: Bill Harney Snr., , Queenie Morgan, Dixie Harney, May Rosas, Annie Morton, Sally Winbirr, Janelle Campbell, Pauline Murrimal, Bill Harney Jnr., Lena Murrimal

8: Wardaman IPA Steering Committee Meeting, 9th December 2011, Katherine NLC.

Steering Committee/Attendees: Bill Harney Jnr, May Rosas, Marie Allen; Jessie Brown, Pauline Murrimal, Olivia Raymond, Lena Murrimal. **Observers** Bill Harney Snr, Sally Winbirr, Ted Croker Snr., Ted Croker Jnr., Janelle Campbell, Michael Murrimal, Maxie Raymond.

9: Wardaman IPA Meeting 5th June 2013, Binjari Community.

Attendees: Mary Raymond, Basil Frazer, Regie ryan, Freddy Martin, Jeffrey John, Robin John, Cherie Murrimal, Joanne Gill, Barbra Douglas, Polly Brown, May Rosas, Mark Vogt, Michael Murrimal, Basil Murrimal, Verona Raymonds, Tilly Raymond, Annie Moreton, Mari Allen, Geraldine Kerinawia, Janet Johns, Phyllis Conway, Teresa Allyson, Paddy Bennett, Tracey Allen, Saddie Gibbs, Nathan (no last name shown), Lewis Raymond, Bill Harney Jnr, Lena Murrimal, Morris John, Helena Raymond, Halarisha Hodgson, Stella (no last name shown), Jessica Smiler, Maria Gibbs, Janet (cant read last name), Ellis Raymond, Sally Winberr, Christopher Frith, Frank Douglas, Stuart Raymond, Patrick Nelson, Cecile Conway, Megan Raymond, Rodrick Harey, Patricia Allyson. **Observers:** Micheal Stoor SEWPAC, Justine Yanner NLC, Trish Rigby NLC, Crag Carttling NLC, John Laurence NLC, Paul Josif consultant, Alice Bielby Savanna Alliance.

10: Wardaman IPA Corporation Inaugural Meeting 5th October 2013, Binjari Community.

Attendees: Maire Allen, Annie Morten, Janet John Ashley, Theresa Allyson, Sadie Gibbs, Nina Lewis, Jennifer Smiler, Basil Murrimal, Queenie Morgan, Amanda Arnold, Rosabell Smiler, Annie Kells, Sally Winberr, Joan Gill, Cameron Ryan, Polly Barker-joe, Barbara Douglas, Hazel Gill, Kathy Gill, Peewee Harney, Roderick Harney, May Rosas, Bill Harney, Maurice John, Samantha Sing, Freddy Martin, Polly Brown, Angela Katherine, Wilfred Waterloo, Mike, Raymond, Lincoln Raymond, Jennifer Smiler, Sonya Skeen, Lachlan Raymond, Lewis Raymond, Lindsay Raymond, Tilly Raymond. **Observers:** Crag Carttling NLC, Ben Window NLC, Rebecca Hughes NLC, John Laurence NLC, Alice Bielby Savanna Alliance.

APPENDIX 1: INDIGENOUS PROTECTED AREA (IPA) INFORMATION SUMMARY

What is an IPA and what does it mean?

- An Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) is an area of Aboriginal land or sea where Traditional Aboriginal owners (TOs) make an agreement with the Australian Government to do caring for country work.
- Aboriginal land dedicated as an IPA becomes part of representing the best country from all over Australia. For example, Dhimurru have had an IPA for 10 years, Djelk and Warddeken have dedicated IPAs in 2009.

Does an IPA affect Land Rights and Native Title?

- IPA does not affect land rights or native title.
- The TOs stay in control of their land.
- The IPA recognises TOs own the land and are the managers of their land.
- An IPA does not change what TOs can do on their land.

What if we change our mind about the IPA?

- TOs can decide to pull out or join in at a later time.
- The IPA boundary is flexible and can be changed with negotiations between TO,s and the Australian Government .
- The NLC and the Australian Government can help Wardaman make sure the IPA boundaries are right.

IPA Money

- There are no royalties from having your country dedicated an IPA.
- IPA money is paid by the AG to support the TOs on country to do land management and cultural protection work.
- It can help you build up your own ranger group.

Who will manage the IPA?

- Your own Rangers can help TOs with looking after their country.
- The IPA boundary covers the area to be dedicated by TOs.

Would TOs like to manage their country under an IPA?

- The question was only asked after detailed information presented and discussions held.

APPENDIX 2: CULTURAL SITES REQUIRING PRIORITY PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

Site Name	No.	Location	Protection / management needs
See confidential list with NLC* Katherine	3	Menngen	Rock art - Tree removal and repair of fencing.
	160	Menngen	Rock art – Repair of fencing
	416-423	Menngen, Mt Hogarth	Rock art – Tree removal and repair of fencing
	397	Menngen, Mt Hogarth	Rock art - Tree removal and repair of fencing
	414, 415, 428, 429	Menngen	Rock art - Tree removal and repair of fencing
	126, 444	Menngen	Rock art - Tree removal and repair of fencing
	446	Menngen	Rock art - Tree removal and repair of fencing
		Menngen	Rock art - Tree removal and repair of fencing
	366	Menngen	Rock art - Tree removal and repair of fencing
		Menngen	Rock art - Tree removal and repair of fencing
	112	Menngen	Near Old Killarney Yard - fencing
	353	Menngen	
		Menngen, East Gregory	Protect waterholes from feral animals and cattle.
		Menngen	Requires active land management work.
	14	Menngen	Top of Flora River to Hayward junction. Requires active land management work.
	46	Menngen	Fencing to protect from feral animals and stock
		Menngen	Requires active land management work and weed monitoring
		Menngen	Protect spring with fence
		Menngen	Near Mt Hogarth - requires active land management work.
	338	Menngen	Fire – Lancewood trees to be protected
	26	Menngen	Fire - Lancewood trees to be protected
	28, 340	Menngen	Fire - Cypress pine trees to be protected
	30	Menngen	Fire - Pandanus to be protected
	47	Menngen	Fire - Black Plum and belerran (white gums) to be protected.
	51	Menngen, Flora River	Fire - Riparian vegetation, bamboo/cane to be protected.
	214	Flora River NP	Banyan tree to be protected.
	10	Menngen, Ryan Ck	Fire - Trees and vegetation to be protected
	305	East Gregory	Fire - Cane grass to be protected from damage or burning
	308	East Gregory	Fire - Livistona palm trees to be protected.
	310	East Gregory	Fire - Cane grass to be protected from damage or burning
	323	Menngen, Palm Ck	Fire - Trees and other vegetation to be protected
	328	Menngen, Palm Ck	Fire - Trees to be protected
	331	Menngen, Palm Ck	Fire – Trees to be protected
	332	Menngen, Palm Ck	Fire – Lancewood trees to be protected
	334	Menngen	Fire - Trees and vegetation to be protected
	336	Menngen	Fire – Lancewood trees to be protected
	337	Menngen	Fire - Trees and vegetation to be protected
	335	Menngen	Fire - Pandanus and trees to be protected
	341	Menngen	Fire - Pandanus and trees to be protected.
	342	Menngen	Fire - Pandanus and trees to be protected.
	343	Menngen	Fire - Pandanus and trees to be protected.
	344	Menngen	Fire - Lancewood trees to be protected
	348	Menngen	Fire - Paperbark and other trees to be protected
	355	Menngen	Fire - Lancewood trees to be protected.
	356	Menngen, Angalarri R	Fire - Trees and other vegetation to be protected
	357	Menngen	Fire - Lancewood trees to be protected
	358	Menngen	Fire - Cypress pine, lancewood and vegetation to be protected
	363	Menngen, Hayward Ck	Fire - Trees to be protected

*List of 49 site names are confidential and are available to authorized persons through NLC Anthropologist (Katherine).

APPENDIX 3: CONDITION ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL SITES CONTAINING ROCK ART WITHIN THE PROPOSED WARDAMAN INDIGENOUS PROTECTED AREA

David Lee, Western Rock Art Research July 2011

Wardaman Country in the Victoria River District of the Northern Territory contains somewhere in excess of 250 cultural sites that have components of Aboriginal rock art, and that estimate is very conservative. At the request of Senior Wardaman Elder *Yidumduma* Bill Harney I have visited and assessed approximately 50 of them, and started to document them, along with all of his associated traditional stories. To date, 25 sites have been documented in this fashion.

All of the sites are subject to negative impacts by weathering, and by human, plant, and animal actions. Due to the remote nature of the sites, and because a Wardaman guide is required to visit them, the sites are almost entirely free of vandalism. However, introduced species such as pig, buffalo, and cattle are responsible for rubbing against and degrading many of the paintings at many of the sites.

Plants are also responsible for destroying many of the paintings and engravings by growing through or against them, and by building up piles of dead leaves and brush, which ignite in bushfires, and cause the rock to spall. Termites and wasps are responsible for negatively impacting the paintings as well.

Many of the sites in the area have lost elements or entire panels of rock art, and unless action is taken, many more paintings and engravings will be lost. All of these effects can be greatly reduced, with adequate fencing and an active management program.

Recognizing a problem, Mr. Harney obtained funds during the 1980s to build a large number of fences protecting many of the more vulnerable sites in Wardaman Country. This helped protect them for many years, but neither funding nor time has been available to maintain the fences, or perform brush and grass removal, etc.

Mr. Harney has identified fifteen sites that are in urgent need of maintenance. All of these sites were previously fenced, but trees have fallen over the fencing and have grown up in the sites, and non-native grasses have caused a built up fire-load within the shelters. All of the sites will require that large trees that have grown up in the shelters and have fallen over the fences are removed.

All of the fuel will need to be removed from within the fenced areas, and a plan for burning or spraying the immediate area will need to be developed, as well as a plan to remove and discourage wasps and termites.

Mr. Harney is confident that these fifteen sites can be cleaned up, and the fences repaired or replaced for \$100,000. This would fund both man-power and materials (fencing materials, fuel, and cost-of-living expenses), but would not be expected to pay for any equipment needed (truck, sprayer, chainsaws, etc.). More funding would also be required for annual maintenance of the sites, which is expected to be minimal. List of sites (below):

Gandawag-ya (Moon Dreaming)

This is a very important men's and women's site northwest of Menggen Station that has many trees growing in and around some of the rock art panels, and many large trees fallen over the fence. Approximately 200 metres of fencing surround the site and is in need of repair.

Murrardail-ya (Crab Dreaming)

A large, sprawling complex of shelters with over 200 metres of fencing, most of it down, and many large trees that need to be removed.

Gongoma-ya (Grasshopper Dreaming)

Leedi Grasshopper Dreaming site, there are over 200 metres of fencing here, mostly underneath fallen trees.

Gornbun-ya (Whistling-kite Dreaming)

Located on the western side of the area known as *Garnawala*, this is one of the largest rock art sites in Wardaman Country with nearly 200 panels. It also contains one of the largest rock shelters in the area, and over 100 metres of fencing surround it. Many large trees have fallen over the fence, and have grown up in and around several of the shelters.

Lirmingining

This site is also located on the western side of *Garnawala*, and has approx. 50 metres of fencing needing repair. In addition, this site has a large fig tree growing through one side of the main panel that needs to be removed, but only with great care and with the advice of a rock art conservator.

The four sites below are between *Gornbun-ya* and *Lirmingining*:

Yigolawarung/Maningani/Gordol-ya/Ngaralulun

These are four sites are adjacent to each other, and currently have three small fenced areas that need to be combined into one large one (approx. 200 metres). These sites also have many large trees, some fallen over the fence lines, that need to be removed.

Murning

The largest site on Willaroo Station, it has over 200 metres of fencing needing repair, and two other areas need to be added to the area behind the fence.

Yunumburrgu/Nimjee (Red-back Kangaroo and Peewee Dreamings)

Two sites near *Murning* that share the same fence line, approx. 200 metres.

Mudbiyn-ya (Barramundi Dreaming)

A large site near *Murning* containing rock art, and a masonry "bird trap." The fence ringing the site (approx. 200 m.) is badly in need of repair.

Jembe-ya (Death Adder Dreaming)

A very important women's site, it has fig trees growing in front of some of the panels that may be able to be cut back without removing them, and approx. 50 metres of fencing, in very good shape. Only two small areas (approx. 15 m.) need to be fenced.

Malbadasgu (Goanna Dreaming)

This site is northwest of *Gornbun-ya* and is a relatively small site, with only 10 metres of fencing protecting it, and several trees needing removing.

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