



Water Yarning

AWI News - Issue 1 October 2013

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AWI Program

The Aboriginal Water Initiative was established in June 2012 to improve Aboriginal involvement and representation in water planning and management within NSW. This initiative has been given funding of \$1.69 million per annum from NSW Treasury for up to four years commencing 2011 under the Australian Government's Closing the Gap strategy.

The program will allow the NSW Office of Water to commence monitoring the success of water sharing plans in meeting their statutory requirements for Aboriginal specific performance indicators including:

- providing water for Native Title rights,
- recognising spiritual, social, customary and economic values of water to Aboriginal people.

Objectives

The main objective of the Initiative is to ensure there is ongoing effective state-wide and regional engagement with Aboriginal communities in water sharing plans and that measurable Aboriginal water outcomes for both environmental and commercial use are achieved and reported upon.

Aboriginal communities will provide the knowledge required by the Water Management Act 2000 to monitor and review water sharing plans for:

- Aboriginal water access licences for cultural purposes,
- water for economic development of Aboriginal communities,
- flow rules to protect Aboriginal cultural values dependent on water

Welcome from Program Manager - Bradley Moggridge

Figure 1 – Bradley Moggridge – Program Manager



I wish to welcome you all to our first edition of AWI newsletter - Water Yarning. We aim to publish our newsletter three times per year (October, February, and June) and hope to highlight the latest information about AWI Program activities and progress alongside some stories concerning water. It will also include information and updates on the community consultations and workshops.

AWI Team

Aboriginal Water Initiative (AWI) team consists of an Aboriginal Program Manager, Senior Aboriginal Water Planning Coordinators, four Aboriginal Community Water Facilitators and a Senior Project Officer. The team aims to continue Aboriginal community consultation activities undertaken by the NSW Office of Water in 2011 and early 2012

Figure 2 – AWI Team



From left Patricia Walker, Elizabeth Taylor, Lillian Moseley, Amardeep Grewal, Lyndal Betteridge, Geoffrey Dixon, Bradley Moggridge, Rene Woods and Gavin Callaghan

Team Profiles

Lyndal Betteridge

Lyndal is the Manager Rural Water Planning within the NSW Office of Water. Part of Lyndal's group includes the Aboriginal Water Initiative Program (which is the only Aboriginal water unit in Australia). Lyndal has a degree in Applied Science with a long working background in the NSW public service planning and policy, primarily relating to water. Lyndal is keen to improve the capacity for Aboriginal communities to participate in water planning and increase awareness of opportunities available for communities. She is also keen to see dedicated Aboriginal staff maintained in the long term to facilitate ongoing Aboriginal involvement in water management.

Bradley Moggridge

Bradley is the Program Manager Aboriginal Water Initiative within the NSW Office of Water (which is the only Aboriginal water unit in Australia). Bradley is a proud descendant of the Kamilaroi Nation (North-West NSW) and lives in Canberra. He is a scientist by qualifications and is looking to ensure Aboriginal knowledge of water and the environment can be considered equally by western science and also hoping to build on the opportunities for Aboriginal people in water.

Amardeep Grewal

Amardeep is the Senior Project Officer in AWI Program. Amardeep is dedicated to AWI Program that is aiming to be a model program within Australia. This program is innovative where Aboriginal people are re-engaged in water management, as a part of team, she is committed to providing the best possible level of service to improve this and make sure that the Program

becomes a champion for Australia in water management.

Rene Woods

Rene woods Nari Nari man from Hay in south west NSW I have been involved with culture and heritage and NRM for the last 10-15 years I have worked with OEH in the country culture and heritage division and have just taken a position the NSW office of water Aboriginal water initiative as an Aboriginal Community Water Facilitator.

I live by the following statement:

Making people more aware of Aboriginal Culture and Heritage, water issues, and getting local Communities back on Country and involved in water, and one day have their own water entitlements - "Healthy Water Healthy Life".

Geoffrey Dixon

I am a proud Wodi Wodi and Walbunga tribal man from the Yuin Nation (South Coast NSW). I am father of three young men and one princess and grandfather to one and one on the way. I spend my spare time involved in sports with my children ranging range from rugby league to netball, golf, basketball and any other interest they may partake in. I am involved with a few Aboriginal sporting bodies and The La Perouse Men's group and the Longbottom United family KO team.

I am a family man with strong cultural beliefs and values. I try to pass on as much cultural knowledge to my children and immediate family and friends.

Elizabeth Taylor

I am from the Gomleroi (Kamilaroi) Nation and grew up in Moree, I worked in Aboriginal Education, Training and Employment for 14 years in Sydney, Broken Hill, Tamworth and Moree

I graduated from the Australian Catholic University in 1993 with an Associate Diploma in Aboriginal Education. I have 3 beautiful children and I am dedicated to my family. I have over 30 years experience in working with Aboriginal communities and have seen much change in our communities over that time and am passionate about strengthening our community/communities capacity to grow, which involves much cultural awareness with government to enable and working in partnership to develop opportunities to engage Aboriginal people in local decision making and seeking funding to support re-engagement activities- especially on Country.

Gavin Callaghan

Hi my name is Gavin Callaghan; I am a proud Dughutti man from Kempsey on the North Coast of NSW. I have worked in the public service for over ten years. I worked for the Hunter Central Rivers CMA for four years and worked with NSW DPI Fisheries. I am currently employed as the Senior Aboriginal Water Planning Coordinator (South) in the Aboriginal Water Initiative Program. I have developed extensive networks throughout the state.

I am proud to be working in the only Aboriginal water planning unit. I have worked as an external contractor and was the Aboriginal Representative on the Mid North Coast Water Management Committee and Catchment Management Board. During my time on these committees I gained extensive experience in natural resource and water management as well as expanding my knowledge and community engagement skills. I look forward to working in the AWI team and across the Agency to deliver improved services to NSW Aboriginal communities.

Launch of Aboriginal Water Initiative Program

Amardeep Grewal

David Harriss, Commissioner NSW Office of Water officially launched the Aboriginal Water Initiative Program on Monday 12 November 2012 at Warragamba Dam. Aboriginal Elders travelled from various parts of NSW to celebrate the launch.

Mr Harriss was greeted on his arrival at Warragamba Dam in NSW with a traditional smoking ceremony, before launching the Program.

The Commissioner, community elders and other agency executives were given traditional and cultural welcomes before performances by Aboriginal children

Figure 3 – David Harriss, Commissioner for Water launches AWP program on 12 November 2012 at Warragamba Dam



Program Manager's Report Workshops

Bradley Moggridge

Aboriginal Water Initiative (AWI) program is focussed on developing effective regional engagement with Aboriginal communities. Aboriginal community consultation workshops have been held since the Program start up in early 2012 at locations throughout NSW.

These workshops followed on from a number of successful information sessions, briefings and field trips that had previously been conducted in different parts of NSW.

The workshops are an opportunity for Aboriginal communities to be informed and involved in water management in NSW, as well as contribute to better social and cultural outcomes for regional communities.

With the assistance of local Aboriginal communities, we can develop water sharing plans which focus on environmental, social, cultural and economic opportunities and priorities.

Training

Staff attended number of training since the program start up. Some of the training attended was - Cultural Awareness, Facilitation, Media, 4Wheel Drive, etc.

Program communication & promotion

- Ministerial media releases happen regularly about community workshops
- Articles in *HERE and NOW* about AWI program, program activities, new stories are published regularly
- Internet information regularly updated on NOW website
- Posters advertising workshop schedule distributed to key contacts prior to workshops. AWI brochures distributed at workshops, conferences, meetings and information sessions
- Banners displayed at workshops, and information sessions
- DVD and *Our Water Our Country* resource kit has been distributed during scoping meetings and workshops
- Promotional mugs are distributed at information sessions and workshops
- AWI showcased during Barmah Milawa Forest Research Conference in Victoria April 2013
- AWI showcased in Darwin during WIN 2013 conference in May 2013

AWI Staff attend WIN conference at Darwin

NOW's Aboriginal Water Initiative (AWI) team including Bradley Moggridge, Lillian Moseley, Gavin Callaghan, Amardeep Grewal, Elizabeth Taylor, Patricia Walker, Geoffrey Dixon and Rene Woods recently attended the World Indigenous Network (WIN) 2013 Conference held in Darwin. The conference was held at Darwin Convention Centre over four days from 26 May, attracting 1200 delegates from 55 different Nations.

Figure 4 - AWI Booth at WIN Conference Darwin



The aim of the conference was to bring together Indigenous Peoples, as well as land and sea managers from across Australia and the world to share stories, knowledge, cultural experiences and ideas to better manage ecosystems, protect the environment and support sustainable livelihoods.

Representation of NOW's Aboriginal staff at such a significant conference enhanced the credibility of the NSW Government in recognising and supporting cultural and Indigenous values in water.

NOW's AWI staff prepared and manned an information stall showcasing the program and the importance of including cultural values in water. Staff also participated in presentations and forums to discuss current and future options for projects and collaborations.

AWI program showcased at International Hydrogeologists Congress – Perth

Amardeep Grewal

AWI Program Manager, Bradley Moggridge, showcased the Aboriginal Water Initiative at the 40th International Association of Hydrogeologists World Congress in Perth.

Brad was selected to present his paper - 'Aboriginal People and Water' – which considers the knowledge and opportunities western water science can gain from one of the oldest living cultures on the planet.

The presentation also canvasses the challenges ahead for the First Peoples to ensure their value and relationship with water is not diminished by modern day water planning. The presentation highlighted how Aboriginal cultural values of water are identified through NOW's Aboriginal Water Initiative, which will ensure the values are not forgotten and are given their due recognition in legislative instruments.

Brad was nominated for Scientist of the Year at the 2013 Deadly Awards. The awards were announced at the Sydney Opera House on 10 September, and although he was not the eventual winner, the NSW Office of Water is proud for Brad to be invited to such prestigious event and recognition of his work in relation to the Aboriginal Water Initiative.

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