Welcome by the AWI Team Leader

Bradley Moggridge

Edwards River, NSW

I welcome you all to our fifth edition of AWI newsletter Water Yarning. This edition again offers the reading audience a series of stories and positive actions by AWI staff. The Aboriginal Water Initiative Program remains focused on developing our staff and providing effective regional engagement with Aboriginal communities in water. This is ensuring water dependent cultural values are considered in NSW water planning and management.

Where have I been?

- MLDRIN in Wagga Wagga 26/03/15, updated the group on the AWI program and NOW’s schedule for Water Resource Planning.
- NBAN in Lake Cargellico 30/03/15 and also 22/5/15 in Toowoomba, updated the group on the AWI program and NOW’s schedule for Water Resource Planning.
- Attended an update session on the National Cultural Flows Research Program in Melbourne 14/04/15 with MDBA and Victoria, there is some positive steps to deliver but also some unanswered questions.
- I met with the Barkindji Maraura Elders Environment Team Ltd (BMEET) 21/4/15, a deadly group doing some great work on Country including building fish hotels (artificial reefs) and watering lagoons and undertaking cultural management of Fletchers Lake, Dareton.

The AWI team wishes to acknowledge the diverse Traditional People and countries across NSW and pay their deepest respect to the Elders past and present of NSW.
I met with our Buronga NOW staff Scott Jaensch and Steve McGalshian after strong interest following our local ACAT session and also visited the beautiful TAR-RU Lands and River Country with OEH Coordinator Kenny Clark 22/4/15, and got an update on the activities at Lake Victoria. I saw some beautiful River Country and examples of Aboriginal people caring for their country.

I presented to the Department of Environment in Canberra 6/5/15, they run talks – Deadly Discussions as part of their Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). I presented the AWI and then met with their internal Indigenous water group.

I Presented at the Australian National University to first year Indigenous Cultural and Natural Resource Management students on Cultural Values and Water in NSW 12/5/15. I gave them a different perspective of water values; hopefully the seed is planted in their minds to consider into the future as they become leaders in their field.

I presented at the Metro Water Directorate – Showcase on Engagement 19/5/15 in Australian Technology Park, Eveleigh, on Engaging Aboriginal in Water Planning and Management.

Visit to the Great Lake Victoria

Amardeep Grewal / Pamela Dunrobin

Aboriginal Water Initiative team member Amardeep Grewal (Queanbeyan) had the opportunity to visit the Majestic Lake Victoria on 20 March 2015. The tour was organised and guided by NOW Buronga Project Officer, Pamela Dunrobin. Lake Victoria in south-western NSW is a special cultural place and a key national water resource that also holds an enormous amount of cultural heritage including Aboriginal burials. The Lake has proven to be a vital link in the management of the River Murray System assisting, in regulating river flows and controlling the salinity before it runs into South Australia. Unlike other water storages Lake Victoria can be used for various water management strategies including flood mitigation.

The Lake Victoria Program (LVP) jointly managed by MDBA, NOW, SA Water and OEH alongside the Aboriginal community strives to balance the management of water and cultural heritage protection to ensure minimal impact on the environment and Cultural and Heritage. Pamela Dunrobin works closely with Barkindji Maraura Elders Council (BMEC) to assist the Aboriginal community to maintain connection to country.
AWI celebrates some wins

Marcus Leslie / Patricia Walker / Lillian Moseley

AWI has negotiated sign off from Knowledge Holders on the Information Use Agreements in the North for WSP areas where we have assets collected:

- Brunswick • Clarence • Nambucca
- Lower Hunter • Coastal Sands • Tuross
- Deua • Clyde • Snowy Genoa • Bega/Brogo
- North Coast Coastal Sands GW
- Namoi • Gwydir

This is a positive step for AWI, this allows us to protect that knowledge and also put forward any management actions to hopefully influence water planning and protect the water dependency of those values.

NIMBIN Waterholes

Geoffrey Dixon/Patricia Walker/Rene Woods

Nimbin Waterhole is at the base of Nimbin Rocks. This area is owned by Ngulingagah LALC and has a Green Team regenerating the area with the locals Aboriginal Community; and also has a pecan farm. Bishop Creek runs through the property where turtles, catfish and other aquatic animals live. Geoffrey Dixon and Patricia Walker identified and mapped the Cultural Values at the area.

Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training Program

Amardeep Grewal

Office of Water’s AWI and Trade & Investment’s People Learning & Culture are jointly running internal Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training (ACAT) sessions across NSW. 430 Office of Water staff attended during 17 sessions held so far. ACAT is mandatory for all Office of Water staff to attend. Few more sessions are coming up in July month, Parramatta session on 6 & 8 July and Narrabri session on 15 July.

ACAT Testimony

“Thanks for running a great cultural awareness course in Armidale! I learnt a great deal and found all of the information very enlightening. Congratulations to you and your team”

ACAT goes to Buronga NOW Office

Buronga is on the banks of the Murray River facing directly opposite Mildura. NOW staff in Buronga have a number of important projects on grounds that require input from the local Aboriginal communities. The Lake Victoria Project is an example. Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training (ACAT) was held on 19 March in Buronga office, 16 NOW staff attended the session. It was great
opportunity for both Buronga staff and ACAT team to share the values that are central to Aboriginal culture. ACAT team is thankful to Buronga staff for attending and sharing the knowledge and experience of local Aboriginal culture.

**Testimony**

“Thanks for coordinating to make this course happen here in Buronga. I really enjoyed the course. Grant was an excellent presenter. It was very thought provoking and I learnt quite a lot, so for me, it was very worthwhile”.

**Team Leader’s Report**

*Bradley Moggridge*

The AWI team had a face to face meeting in Tamworth which is rare as we are spread out far and wide, it was great to get together and do some reconnecting and future planning.

Geoffrey Dixon’s first aid training put to the test and passes with flying colours, acknowledged by the Deputy Commissioner and the Deputy Director General in their updates – well done Geoffrey.

**Congratulations to Lillian Moseley** for completing Certificate IV in Frontline Management.

**Congratulations to Marcus Leslie and Lillian Moseley** who were accepted to undertake the NSW Public Sector Aboriginal Career and Leadership Development Program in 2015, coordinated by the NSW Public Service Commission.

**Lillian Moseley and Amardeep Grewal** attended the 2015 Environmental Watering Forum

‘Continuing to grow public confidence in environmental watering’ 21-22 May 2015 at Wentworth. The two day forum was hosted by Healthy Rivers Australia and Water Trust Alliance members that provided good opportunity to present and show AWI work and form networks.

**AWI Farewells - Barry Williams and Elizabeth Taylor**, Barry was on a short contract in Grafton to assist us meeting the Bioregional Assessment inputs at a State level. Elizabeth was an ACWF with us for 2 years in the Dubbo office; we wish them both well into the future and thank them for their roles in AWI.

**Program communication & promotion**

*Amardeep Grewal*

- Posters advertising workshop schedule distributed to key contacts prior to workshops.
- Banners displayed at workshops, and information sessions
- AWI brochures distributed at workshops, conferences, meetings and information sessions.
- Promotional mugs distributed at information sessions and workshops.
- Promotional shirts and travel bags for the team
- DVD and Our Water Our Country resource kit has been distributed during scoping meetings and workshop
- Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training (ACAT) sessions being held at various locations.

**Contacts**

Bradley Moggridge
AWI Team Leader ......................... 02 6229 7345
bradley.moggridge@dpi.nsw.gov.au

**Water Yarning** is a newsletter from the Aboriginal Water Initiative at NSW DPI.

Editor: Amardeep Grewal
amardeep.grewal@dpi.nsw.gov.au

ISSN 2203-0891

© State of New South Wales through the Department of Trade and Investment, Regional Infrastructure and Services, 2015. You may copy, distribute and otherwise freely deal with this publication for any purpose, provided that you attribute the NSW Department of Primary Industries as the owner.

Disclaimer: The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (June 2015). However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up to date and to check currency of the information with the appropriate officer of the Department of Primary Industries or the user’s independent adviser. Your email address will be collected NSW Department Primary Industries and recorded for the purpose of providing an email newsletter service for you. This information will not be distributed to any other parties. The supply of your email address is voluntary. However, the email newsletter service cannot be effected without storage of this information on our databases. You may update or unsubscribe from these services at any time by sending an email to the editor shown above.

Published by the Department of Primary Industries JobTrack 12406