



Immediate Release – 20 May 2024

TAMWORTH LOCAL ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCIL'S WALAAYBAA RANGERS PROGRAM CELEBRATES ONE YEAR OF SUCCESS

In March 2023, the Tamworth Local Aboriginal Land Council proudly launched the Walaaybaa Rangers program, marking a significant milestone in community-driven land management activities. Over the past year, the program has made significant strides in environmental conservation, cultural connection, employment opportunities and economic sustainability to the Tamworth community.

Embodying a holistic approach to land stewardship, the Walaaybaa Rangers program seamlessly integrates traditional ecological knowledge with modern strategies. Through practices such as right-way burning, ecological restoration, and habitat enhancement, the Rangers actively contribute to the preservation and enrichment of our local environment.

Beyond the environmental benefits, the program plays a vital role in creating cultural and economic benefits. By empowering Aboriginal youth, men, and women to undertake culturally significant roles in land and water management, the program strengthens their connection to Country while providing valuable career pathways and leadership development opportunities.

Participation in the Walaaybaa Ranger Program also facilitates access to training and development initiatives, equipping members of the Aboriginal community with the skills and knowledge necessary to excel in related fields. Embracing emerging technologies, the program ensures that traditional knowledge is preserved and utilised while adapting to modern challenges and opportunities.

“Since commencing operations last year, the Walaaybaa Ranger team have hit the ground running with a range of professional and skills development workshops, partnership initiatives and youth mentoring events,” said Terri Whitton, Operations Manager of the Walaaybaa Ranger Program.

“Witnessing the sharing and practicing of cultural wisdom has been particularly impactful, for instance when the team collaborated with the Local Land Services Rangers and the Gomerioi Cultural Academy to plant trees and help with site preparation to create a dance circle as part of a cultural knowledge sharing day,” she added.

Central to the Program's mission is the preservation and transmission of language and cultural knowledge, with a commitment to cultural protocols and practices. Through these efforts, the Program seeks to uphold cultural integrity while contributing to broader community sustainability goals.

Operating on a fee-for-service model, the Program aims to achieve financial independence, reducing reliance on government funding and striving for self-sustainability. This financial autonomy not only ensures the longevity of the program but also underscores its commitment to economic empowerment within the Aboriginal community.

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“Our Walaaybaa Ranger Program is an extension of our organisation’s goal of creating self-reliance and autonomy within the Aboriginal community,” said Fiona Snape, CEO of Tamworth Local Aboriginal Land Council.

“By reducing dependence on government funding, we’re creating pathways to long-term success and impact,” she concluded.

As the Program marks its one-year milestone, the Tamworth Local Aboriginal Land Council celebrates its achievements and looks forward to continued success in the years to come.

For media enquiries or interviews, please contact:

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About Walaaybaa Ranger Program

The Walaaybaa Ranger Program, run by the Tamworth Local Aboriginal Land Council, combines traditional Indigenous knowledge with modern land management practices to preserve and protect Country. From cultural burning to habitat restoration, our dedicated team offers a range of services aimed at enhancing community wellbeing and fostering a deeper connection to the land. Join us in our mission to care for Country and cultivate a sustainable future.

