

Cultural watering at Kungari Waterholes

Water security and sustainability

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Limestone Coast Landscape Board

The Limestone Coast Landscape board is walking with First Nations to investigate how water resource management can incorporate effective strategies to achieve First Nations objectives in water planning.

In partnership with the South East Aboriginal Focus Group and Burrandies Aboriginal Corporation, this project will explore the delivery of cultural watering activities for the Kungari Waterholes at Kingston.

This project is delivered as part of the Limestone Coast Landscape Board's 'Making Every Drop Count' Program, which has funding support through the Australian Governments National Water Grid Authority (NWGA) and the South Australian Governments Landscape Priorities Fund.

First Nations and water planning

Water is sacred to First Nations people and is essential to their identity. First Nations rely on water access for social, customary, spiritual, cultural and economic needs.

Significant events in the 1990s, including the recognition of native title at common law and the subsequent passing of the Native Title Act 1993 formally recognised the importance of land and water to First Nations people.

In 2004 the National Water Initiative recognised that First Nations needs should be accounted for in water planning and management and in 2008 the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People emphasised the rights of First Nations people to pursue activities, including managing natural resources, to meet their own needs and aspirations and strengthen their culture and tradition.

Despite this, water planning often fails to effectively incorporate the objectives of First Nations people and is recognised as an area for improvement.

This project is a small step toward a better understanding of South East First Nation's social, cultural and spiritual water use. This understanding will begin to inform how First Nations can be further included in water resource management in the Limestone Coast.

'Making Every Drop Count' key partners

The Limestone Coast Landscape Board's 'Making Every Drop Count' Program works with partners to identify and implement projects that balance protecting the region's water resources, growing sustainable primary production and conserving and enhancing our region's biodiversity. Partners include;

- Burrandies Aboriginal Corporation
- Nature Glenelg Trust
- South East Aboriginal Focus Group
- South East Water Conservation and Drainage Board
- SA Water
- Goyder Institute for Water Research
- Primary Industries and Regions SA
- Primary Producers Sustainable Water Group
- Department for Environment and Water
- National Parks and Wildlife
- Lake George Management Committee

The Kungari Waterholes

The Kungari Waterholes are located at the Kungari Traditional Burial and Camp Ground, on the northern side of the Kingston township of South Australia. The property is 2.23 hectares at the mouth of Maria Creek and is generally flat with slight undulations containing middens, burial sites and natural springs.

Kungari means 'black swan' in the Meintangk and Boandik languages. The whole area around Kingston holds significant cultural value to First Nations People. It was noted by Tindale that between 1880 and 1890 there were 8 - 10 occupied humpies in the Rosetown area which is adjacent to the Traditional Burial Grounds. He also refers to this area as being a combined living area for many years.

In the 1970's and 80's the area surrounding the Traditional Burial Grounds was used by the Lacepede Bay Council as the town's local dump. The dump was moved to another location following years of negotiations between the Council and members of the Kungari Association in 1988. This allowed the site to be rehabilitated and revegetated.



Entrance to the Kungari Waterholes

The Kungari Association

The Kungari Aboriginal Association was established by the Tanganeakald, Meintangk and Bunganditj elders in 1988 at Kingston. The primary objective of Kungari was then and remains, to care for country, and in particular the sacred ancestral and cultural sites.

The work of the Kungari Association has been largely to prevent the burial grounds and the old camping areas from being further damaged as well as general rehabilitation of the area.

Cultural watering at Kungari Waterholes project

Under the Lartara-Wirkeri Cultural Governance Agreement, Burrandies will facilitate three South East Aboriginal Focus Group community workshops that explore the use of water for cultural activities.

The Lartara-Wirkeri cultural governance framework has been developed with the South East Aboriginal Focus Group as a tool for towards working appropriately with all First Nations people to create change and explore opportunities. The workshops will include;

- Site visits, pre-watering, during a watering event, and post watering.
- Installation of watering and monitoring equipment, and monitoring activities.
- Discussion around the importance of water to First Nations and its use for social, cultural or spiritual purposes.



Site inspections

Meet the project manager

Burrandies Aboriginal Corporation

Burrandies Aboriginal Corporation is a leader and strongly connected in the First Nations community in the Limestone Coast region. Burrandies Aboriginal Corporation provides a cultural connection for First Nations people to improve knowledge and cultural identity and provides opportunities for First Nations to undertake caring for country activities.



How you can be involved

Individuals interested in taking part or hearing more about the cultural watering at Kungari Waterholes are invited to contact Burrandies Aboriginal Corporation by emailing admin@burrandies.org.

Acknowledgment

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