



Kurka Kanyini Pilot Project at Watarru

Report
November 2005

A partnership between the Watarru Community, Department for Environment and Heritage (DEH), Aboriginal Lands Taskforce- the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Land Management.

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Progress Report: Kuka Kanyini Watarru Project

1. Executive summary

This is the first annual report for the Kuka Kanyini at Watarru project that covers the period from the 1st of July 2004 – 30th June 2005.

Key outcomes include:

- Participation in the project is widespread throughout the Community. The school is involved in collection of scientific data. Elders are teaching Pitjantjatjara language and participating in activities such as field trips and patch burning.
- The guaranteed wage has meant that people are now saving for large items and they are buying healthier foods. The enthusiasm of young people for the project is obvious and evidenced by the numbers who want to participate.
- Up to eleven Anangu men and women have been employed permanent part-time and a further ten remain employed on a casual basis.
- 1200 feral camels have been mustered and many of these have been exported overseas or sent for slaughter. Profits are being returned to the community.
- Several exclosures have been built over rockholes to prevent damage and access to water by camels. Other fences are being built to protect culturally significant areas from damage by camels.
- An unfenced sanctuary area measuring 1,225 square kilometers has been established as a breeding ground for preferred species and possible reintroduction of threatened species.
- Monitoring of threatened species is being undertaken – with follow up control of dogs, cats and foxes, and the use of patch burning where required.
- Anecdotal evidence suggests that there is already an increase in kangaroo and emu numbers in the area and new mallee fowl nests and great desert skink holes have been located.
- Overall, the project has exceeded expectations. It has increased self esteem and pride in the Community and apart from the positive environmental outcomes identified above, there has been significant skill development, reinforcement of some traditional values and knowledge and renewed connections involving 'caring for Country'.



2. The project at a glance

The Kuka Kanyini at Watarru project has been in operation since January 2004. The first six months involved data collection that was necessary to inform practical application. This is the project's first annual report.

The Kuka Kanyini concept evolved from the findings of the Department for Environment and Heritage's (DEH) 10-year biodiversity survey of the APY Lands which was undertaken between 1991 and 2001 and the relationships that had developed during that time.

The Anangu people from Watarru requested assistance from DEH. They wanted to address community health and wellbeing problems and believed that proper land management and natural resource use would play a major role in achieving this. Meetings were held with partners regularly over a two-year period from 2002 to 2004 to ensure that roles and responsibilities were clarified and understood. Such partnerships are rarely established but are absolutely vital to the success of a project such as this.

The Department for Environment and Heritage, the Watarru Community, Aboriginal Lands Taskforce- the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Land management have formed a unique partnership to develop the Kuka Kanyini project. Loosely translated, this means *looking after game animals* – but it is much more than that.

This project has the management of country at its heart. It is a means for Aboriginal Communities to support the management of their land and sustain the existence of Aboriginal people and their culture on traditional lands. What flows from this is maintaining culture, providing employment and training and improving the diet and overall wellbeing of one Indigenous Community – Watarru – and subsequently other communities. It is a project that is necessarily planned to take place over a ten-year period in order to produce benefits, and is seen to be a potential model for broader application across the APY Lands.

3. The Community

The Anangu people

Anangu are traditional land managers. The Kuka Kanyini Watarru project acknowledges that the foundation of the wellbeing of traditional Aboriginal Communities is their strong association with the land – with 'caring for country'. The project aims to support the Elders of the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands in strengthening that association. It is doing this by helping the people to rebuild cultural links within their Communities, specifically through a land management project centered on strengthening the ties between elders and young people, and aimed at ensuring that knowledge and skills are passed on to the next generation. One focus is on providing a sanctuary area that will improve the Anangu's access to preferred species in a sustainable way.

Watarru

Watarru is a small Community with a population ranging seasonally from 60–100 Anangu people. It lies within an Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) of 1,280,000 hectares situated in the far North West of South Australia. It is one of the most remote Communities in Australia and has one school, a clinic, a store and recently bitumenised roads.



Watarru is ideally suited for this project for four main reasons:

- a) It is a biologically significant area supporting populations of rare and endangered plant and animal species
- b) It is a relatively socially cohesive and proud Community, in which there is respect for traditional law
- c) The Elders continue to manage their land, where possible, in accordance with the 'Tjukurpa' (traditional law which regulates all aspects of life)
- d) Good communication and a relationship of trust have already been established with this Community, with some early success in small initiatives.

However, as well as having these strengths, the community also faces significant problems. In addition to declining biodiversity of native plants and animals in the region as with many other Communities, there is a crisis of health and social and emotional wellbeing among people who live in the area.

Problems include:

Health problems

High levels of preventable diseases such as:

- Circulatory system diseases
- Diabetes
- Respiratory diseases
- Neurological damage (related to substance misuse)
- High levels of injury (related to accident and violence)
- Renal disease
- Ear, eye, and other infections (related to water and sanitation issues)
- Self harm and suicide

- Mental health problems (especially related to, grief, and loss of hope).

Social problems:

- Poor school attendance and retention rates
- Lack of viable substantive employment that is compatible with existing skills
- High numbers of Anangu represented in the justice system
- Deterioration of family structures
- Poor sanitation – lack of access to clean water and inadequate sewerage
- Inadequate and overcrowded housing
- Poverty
- Violence (including family and sexual violence).

4. Project objectives

The project can have a positive impact on the problems outlined above by involving the Community in 'caring for country', using the best of contemporary scientific information in combination with traditional cultural skills and knowledge. The objectives of this work are to:

- Reduce feral animals on Watarru land (mainly camels) and seek economic return for them
- Increase the number of preferred species (e.g. bush foods for consumption) on a sustainable basis
- Re-instate diverse age structures of vegetation
- Clean and protect fouled rockholes so that clean drinking water is available for diverse species; build structures to protect rockholes from camels
- Develop a sanctuary area where reintroductions and breeding of preferred species can occur
- Provide constructive areas of employment outside of the Community Development Employment Program (CDEP)
- Support the transfer of traditional knowledge and language from older people to Anangu youth
- Improve the wellbeing of participants and the general community.

One component of the program specifically focuses on the women in the Community, acknowledging their crucial role in strengthening family and Community relationships and passing on knowledge and language.

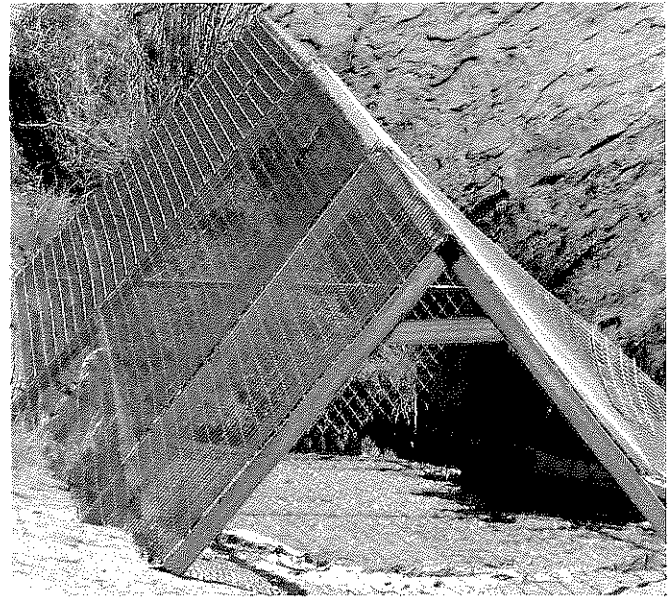


The project has been devised as a pilot with the Watarru Community. Essentially it involves three crews. Young people (both men and women) are involved in all crews; however, lead roles are performed by senior men and women. The crews are as follows:

1. The Tjilpis (senior men) are responsible for the identification of flora and fauna species and for 'Caring for Country', which includes the restoration of rockholes and fire work. This team also works closely with Watarru school students.
2. The Minmas (senior women) harvest and monitor bush foods, monitor species that are grown in significant quantities in some areas around Watarru and clean rockholes.
3. The camel and infrastructure team is developing a very successful feral animal harvesting and culling project and on-sale business. Many of the mustered camels are exported to Saudi Arabia or sent to abattoirs for pet food.

5. Project achievements

To date, the project has exceeded expectations. It has increased self-esteem and pride in the 40,000-year information base of the local people. The increased physical activity of participants is marked, and given current information about causes of diabetes, it can be reasonably predicted that the project will assist control of this condition.



The guaranteed wage has meant that people are now saving for large items and they are buying healthy foods. The enthusiasm of young people for the project is obvious and evidenced by the numbers who want to participate. The most prestigious occupations are seen as working with camels and fire skills. Young men, in particular, are experiencing increased self-esteem by being part of this work and the work ethic is high.

Land management and biodiversity outcomes

- Up to eleven Anangu men and women have been employed full time and a further ten remain employed on a casual basis. Several exclosures have been built over rockholes to prevent damage and access to water by camels. Other fences are being built to protect culturally significant areas from damage by camels.
- 1200 feral camels have been mustered and many of these have been exported overseas or sent for slaughter. Profits are returned to the community.



- Large plantations of quandongs are being planned and will be fenced to prevent destruction.
- An unfenced sanctuary area measuring 1,225 square kilometres square has been established as a breeding ground for preferred species and possible reintroduction of threatened species. In addition, it will assist in the maintenance of bush food and culturally important plant species.
- Monitoring of threatened species is being undertaken – with follow up control of dogs, cats and foxes, and the use of patch burning where required.
- Anecdotal evidence suggests that there is already an increase in kangaroo and emu numbers in the area.
- New mallee fowl nests and great desert skink holes have been located.

All of the Community is participating in the project. The school is involved in collection of scientific data and using Geographic Information System software (GIS) and Global Positioning System (GPS) to plot information onto maps generated by the children. Elders are teaching Pitjantjatjara language and participating in activities such as field trips and patch burning. People are learning cooking skills and traditional ways of cutting up animals for use (this involves learning how to comply with traditional law as well as learning practical skills). This work relies heavily on the commitment of the CDEP Manager and the Municipal Services Officer.



Social outcomes

Strong working relationships are being negotiated with the Watarru community and APY Administration, with the assistance of Government agencies in the following ways:

- Scientific and project management support for the environmental management projects
- Negotiation with TAFE for education and training support to develop and run training for the project staff
- Health support, for example encouraging Anangu youth into work programs and supporting their ongoing participation
- Social justice support from agencies with a current role in Watarru and the APY Lands.

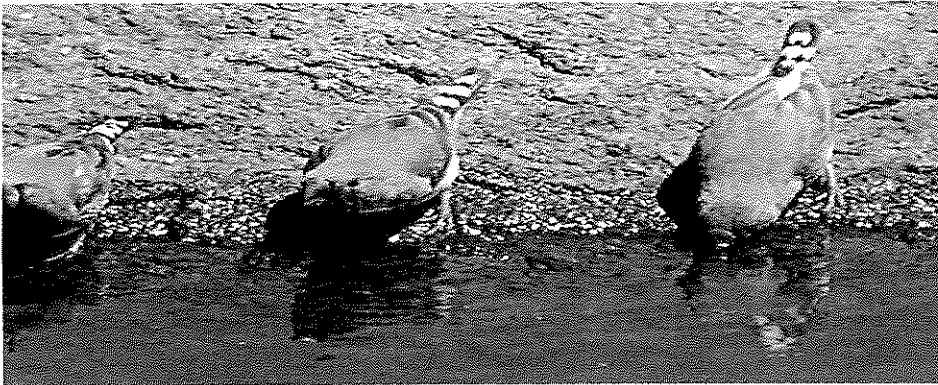
6. Details of environmental activities during the past 12 months

NB. Excessive heat over an extended period from early November 2004, to the beginning of April 2005 meant that on the ground work started later than anticipated.

Work on threatened species

Mallee fowl program – Nganamara

- DEH staff and traditional owners have searched for mallee fowl and located several new sites.
- These have been recorded on GPS and will be monitored for activity.
- Their condition, closeness to fire scars and vegetation formations surrounding nests have been recorded with male and female tracks distinguished.



- The abundance of feral animals in the vicinity of the mallee fowl nests has also been recorded. They include cats, foxes and dingoes.
- Traditional owners have been conducting transects from previous unused nesting sites to locate the new sites and also to implement any fire regimes.
- Baiting has been conducted where necessary in conjunction with APY Land Management (APYLM). This year no eggs were located but many new tracks of pairs of mallee fowl were found and new nests located. The mallee fowl appear to be returning to the old nests to visit as access to the area has been restricted.

Desert skinks – Tjakura

- Ecological information from Anangu relating to this species behaviour is essential and continues to be recorded.
- Monitoring of their condition and habitat has been undertaken.
- Scats have been collected and analysed when necessary.
- Vegetation formations have been assessed.
- Feral animal controls have been assessed and monitored.
- Several new sites have been located and continue to be monitored.

Rock Wallabies and sites – Waru

- Sites that have not been visited by Anangu for many years were searched with scientists, including very remote hilly areas and areas of significance.
- DEH staff searched three possible new remote locations, but only old scats were recovered. Evidence suggests that these animals have not been present for some time. These sites have been GPS'd, and despite not finding evidence of rock wallaby, they will continue to be searched on a periodic basis as time permits.

Marsupial moles – Itjartjari

- Marsupial moles are listed as an endangered species, but their elusive manner prevents a large amount of information being found by scientists.
- Anangu continue to look for new sites and monitor existing sites.
- New sites in one location have been located and these will continue to be monitored.

Bandicoots – Ngina

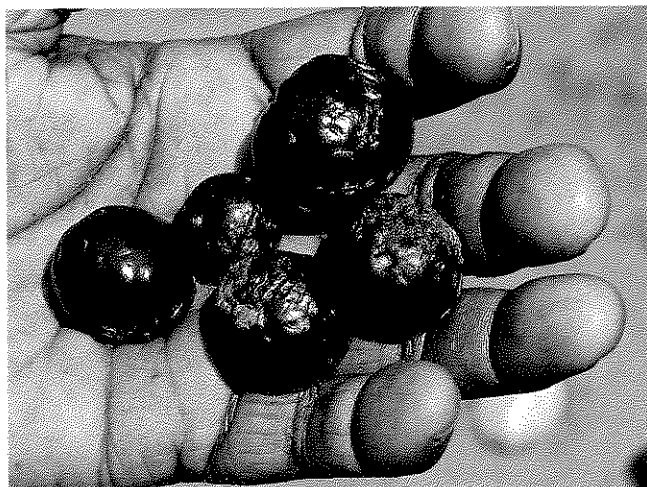
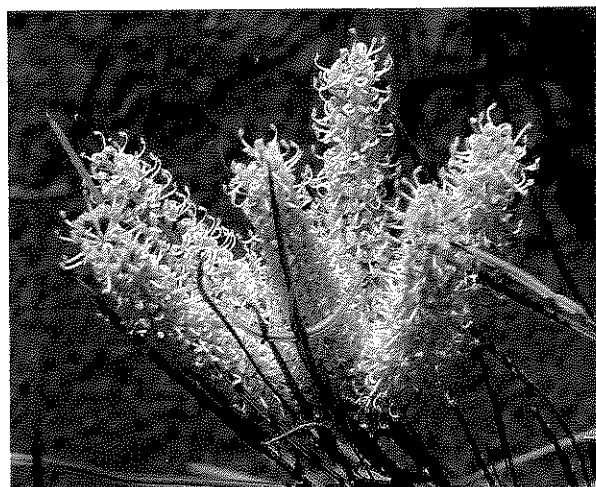
- Following a sighting of tracks, a search for bandicoots was also conducted outside the sanctuary area, but these were found to be bird tracks.

Summary

The project continues to monitor the impacts on threatened species within the trial area and establish procedures to control such impacts – i.e. baiting in cooperation with APYLM, shooting of cats, setting traps, the collection of scats and recording of tracks using cyber trackers (hand held data collection computers) – together with traditional methods.

Work on threatened plants

- Quandongs are being threatened by the impacts of camel browsing high in the canopy of these trees. There is little regeneration of new plants within the region as camels usually consume them at an early age. Impacts from rabbits are also of a concern, though their impacts are limited.



Increase of preferred species of plants and animals

- The fire work as well as the baiting and tracking appear to have assisted in the increase of kangaroos.
- Further scientific evidence will be required to substantiate these impressions. As most bush foods are seasonally available we are unable to assess the abundance of these species at this stage.

Further work will be planned within the sanctuary area now that the report from the ecologist is available.

Feral animal and predator control

Camels – Kamula

- The camel survey has accurately recorded, by aerial survey, estimates of camel densities within the region.
- It is estimated that 30,000 camels roam the APY lands, with higher density within the Watarru region.
- Their distribution is dependent on weather, time of the year, access to food and water.
- Approximately 1200 camels have been mustered, with many sent for export or for slaughtering purposes. The profits from the sale of the camels have been returned to the Watarru Community. Mustering of camels has taken place with portable yards strategically placed to capture these elusive animals.
- Animal welfare issues have been monitored and injured stock have been humanely destroyed. Camels are drenched, tagged, measured and weighed before trucking.
- The project will continue to manage the access of camels to rockholes and water supplies and organise the continuation of orders for camels for export or slaughter.

Rabbits – Rapita

- Areas where the impacts of rabbits occur have been recorded with particular attention to the sanctuary area.
- Consultation with Anangu still needs to occur on this issue, as many agree that ripping the burrows may restrict the numbers of Perentie within the sanctuary area and may also limit the growth of bush tobacco.
- Further information from the ecological report for the sanctuary area will be analysed before any on ground works are put into place for this problem.



Foxes – Tuuka

- Foxes have been collected by several Anangu on an ad hoc basis and this has involved great effort for little take. This will be factored into future planning. The stomach contents of the foxes have been analysed and found to have geckos, house mice and wild fig.

Cats – putjikata

- Several participants regularly go out shooting for cats but to date no cats have been destroyed.

- Cat traps have carefully been laid in strategic areas assisted by Anangu, but to date without success.
- Broad scale baiting has occurred in conjunction with APY Land Management. The benefits of conducting such baiting need to be assessed, as the rate of uptake of baits by cats is relatively low (baits are not cat-specific and cats are usually very elusive and reluctant to take baits). The effectiveness of baiting needs to be considered before any further baiting occurs.

Dogs – papa

- Information from the sanctuary report will assist in developing any methods to assist the numbers of dingoes.
- Anecdotally, there appear to be few dogs, and they are in very poor condition. Dingoes are visiting the water holes, many of which are now dry, so they are forced to travel long distances for water.

Rockhole cleaning

- Anangu continue to clean out rockholes, which often involves the removal of camel bones.
- Two exclosures have been designed and placed over these rockholes to prevent access by feral camels, but they also allow access by other animals, particularly preferred species. One natural spring has had a strong cable fence erected. This method has proved to be the only effective way of preventing camels accessing vital water sources that are large and in inhospitable country. Although the erection of the fence was time consuming, it protects a culturally significant spring and enables other animals to enter the area and is aesthetically pleasing to Anangu.
- Monitoring of animals' use of the rockholes, now that they are covered, will continue. This is important because tracking has limited success due to the usual rocky granite outcrops that surround these rockholes. Surveillance equipment recently purchased will assist the monitoring process of these water sources.
- Well over 30 rockholes for the area have been assessed and recorded on DEH's database.
- This information includes depth, condition, reliability of the water and cultural matters. The impacts on the rockholes for those selected to be protected with exclosures will be carefully monitored.

Noxious introduced weeds

- Buffel grass remains a problem around the Watarru community and will need to be controlled in the future to ensure that this noxious weed is not transferred into other areas where the biodiversity is extensive and weed free. Consultation with APYLM and the Desert Knowledge CRC are essential to combat this problem.
- There are also related problems with rosy dock that require control.

Flora surveys

- Flora surveys have not been conducted regularly, but rather, on an ad hoc basis.
- The samples have been collected and analysed by the Botanic Gardens and recorded on a database. Most collections have occurred on field trips, with the majority of specimens collected within the sanctuary area.
- Further work in this area is required.

Work within the sanctuary area

- Selection of the sanctuary and identification of priority works area required extensive consultation with Anangu.
- There has been considerable work to date, including the cleaning and fencing of rockholes and springs, fire work, baiting and setting traps, and the tracking and monitoring of species.
- Fire work has been extensive with traditional regimes to ensure that there is sufficient food for the preferred species, particularly the kangaroos and emu.
- Feral animals have been controlled with baits laid within close proximity to the threatened species, Tjukurpa (Great desert skink) and malleefowl. Tracking suggest that numbers are being controlled.
- Several itjari-itjari (marsupial mole) sites have been monitored, with new holes searched and found.
- One of the rockholes that has been covered lies within this area, as does the natural spring that has a cable fence placed around it. A further spring will be fenced off with cable fencing by the end of the year. This will significantly restrict the availability of water to feral camels, but not to other species.
- A map of the proposed sanctuary area, with its current boundaries, tracks, rockholes, springs (and other known waters), and former sites of threatened species including rock wallabies, skinks, bilbies, and possums, has been recorded.
- Known and recent fire scars with information about how and why they were burnt have been collected. The map also shows the same features within the surrounding area to a distance of about 35 kilometres in all directions.
- Current densities of malu (kangaroos), emu, goanna, bustards, perenties, goanna, echidna, skinks, mallee fowl, foxes and dogs, within and outside the sanctuary area, have been recorded.
- The reasons for the demise of any of these animals have also been recorded on the database, as well as the availability of bush foods within the sanctuary.
- Camel management priorities have been established and camel mustering has been concentrated within this area.

Hunting pressures

Anangu have maintained a no hunting policy within the sanctuary area, which has been strictly adhered to.

Fire Management

- The traditional owners have conducted extensive fire work within the region. As this type of work is season-specific, data has been collected on areas burnt and the benefit to animals. This information has been mapped and will be crucial in future planning.



7. Education and training

Involvement of the Watarru school

From a school perspective it has been fabulous to watch the adults and students in the school proudly talk (or indeed boast) to other schools about the types of things that are going on with Kuka K in Watarru. The school has been involved with monitoring quandongs and helping to check cat traps. We also hope to support older students in relevant VET training. Most importantly it also has given our older students hope of obtaining real work for a real wage in our own community.

[Teacher, Watarru]



The school is closely involved with project activities incorporating learning 'from the field' into curriculum objectives. Data collection about depth, location and condition of tracks around rockholes is not only of practical use, but also provides opportunities for students to learn about the importance and use of measurement and recording. Computer skills are learnt and incorporated into presentations about issues such as the use of bush food. The school has also been actively involved in filming and recording aspects of the project. This has included filming of mallee fowl, filmed interviews with project managers, and recording stories from community elders about traditional use of plants.

The Principal of the school (now retired) recognised the value of the project in terms of meeting fundamental educative ideals:

The significant aspects of the project from my perspective were all centred on the responsibility that was shared with the community from the beginning; The important role of traditional knowledge was recognized and the traditional stories take on another aspect when they are sifted for the scientific knowledge they contain as well.

[Retired Principal, Watarru school]

Training

- Training in animal husbandry has been implemented and continues to be followed rigorously by Anangu. Sufficient equipment, including a watering truck and other items, has made this task easier.
- Two day training for safe driving of four-wheel drive vehicles has been undertaken by a qualified instructor. Participants were taken over sand hills and taught how to retrieve vehicles in remote areas.

- Participants also received mechanical training from a qualified mechanic, in which they learnt about mechanical servicing and the maintenance of trucks and vehicles. Participants assisted with the extensive servicing of the camel truck that was in poor condition, so that camels can be reliably trucked to and from Watarru. Training was conducted in blocks to meet community needs, with a total of 22 days of training being delivered.
- The erection of the shed that will be used to store vehicles and equipment is almost complete. This was used as a training exercise so that participants learnt the skills involved in such a task. These included measuring and preparing surfaces for concreting. In total this training comprised 36 days.
- There is evidence of Community pride in the project, demonstrated not only in the actual work undertaken, but also through extensive art work that is being initiated by the Community, depicting the significance of the project. Six major pieces of artwork have been completed which will be hung in Government offices and at Watarru to tell visitors the Kuka Kanyini story.
- Aboriginal Partnerships Manager, Malcolm Anderson, conducted an occupational Health and Safety Audit inspection to identify issues to be addressed.
- A proposal is in place with the Indigenous Land Management Branch, Torrens Valley Institute of TAFE, to facilitate a skills-assessment of recognised prior learning (RPL). This will assess the extent to which participants in the project have reached national competencies in the Conservation and Land Management Training Package, and identify any gaps.

8. Media and conferences

- A radio interview was conducted with CAAMA radio in Alice Springs to discuss the Kuka Kanyini at Watarru project. This was broadcast nationally and included a special session with project supervisor, Charlie Anytjipalya.



- The project coordinator, Leanne Liddle, gave a case study at the community forum 'Stirring the Possum': South Australia – The Forgotten Arid Lands, (Adelaide University).
- Leanne Liddle and community members presented a paper on Kuka Kanyini at Watarru at the Australasian Wildlife Management Society Conference (Kingscote) in 2004.
- Poster presentation and panel membership at the Land and Sea Conference in April 2005.

9. Visitors

A number of people have visited Kuka Kanyini Watarru, contributing a range of expertise to its development and implementation. Details of these visits are outlined in the Visitor log sheet (see Attachment 1).

10. Meetings and collaborations

Many meetings, both informal and formal, have been conducted with community members to ensure that the project is moving in the manner and with the vigour that the Community wants. Meetings were also conducted with FACS Family and Wellbeing staff to ensure that integration in the program is achieved. Collaboration with the local police was also incorporated from time to time, and any anti social behaviour dealt with in conjunction and negotiation with the Community.

11. Health and Wellbeing survey

The Kuka Kanyini Health and Wellbeing Survey was commissioned by DEH in June 2005. Its objective was to provide benchmark data in the areas of health and wellbeing to enable assessment of the project's progress, using Commonwealth and State Government indicators about health, and social and emotional wellbeing. Kelvin Onus-King, CEO Dhawwara-Wurrung Elderly Citizens Association (Victoria), was consulted about both the questions and the methodology.

A consultant who had lived and worked in the community for several years, conducted 20 interviews. A local interpreter assisted when required.

Some comments are summarised briefly here, but more detailed findings can be found in requesting the final report from Project Coordinator- see contact details pg 19)

When Kuka Kanyini workers were asked why they liked working with the project, they identified a range of reasons which revealed they were aware of the broader health, social and environmental benefits of the project. Comments included:

- *To make money for children's food*
- *To earn money to wash clothes, to stay clean and strong*
- *There's enough work to keep mind and body occupied*
- *It's teaching people about animals and plants*
- *Cleaning rockholes means you're in the bush.*

While most participants had several sources of income, it was evident that Kuka Kanyini had resulted in increased income for many, and that this enabled extra spending on food, clothing, children and family.

There was evidence of overcrowding in houses, with two houses having 17 and 21 occupants, respectively, but most had between 1 and 6 people living in them.

Participants mentioned some use of alcohol, tobacco and marijuana in the community, but more frequent use of mingkulpa (Anangu tobacco). One comment was:

People sometimes drink outside the community and come back drunk, then sleep. They don't keep it or sell it in the community.

A small minority reported experiencing violence or violent threats. A large majority had had no dealings with the police in the past 12 months, although several had rung the police when there was 'trouble and fighting'.

There was an awareness of the benefits of bush food with more than half the sample saying they ate it very often or every week, citing reasons such as:

*More healthier, fresher and you get exercise while you get it
There's no scabies, diabetes, blood pressure. People stay strong.*

All six children interviewed had done Kuka Kanyini activities from school, including rockhole and camel work, quandong surveying and patchburning, and all said they would like to work full time with the project in the future.

Almost all people interviewed felt they got enough exercise, and most reported that they had had neither scabies nor boils in the past twelve months. Nineteen out of twenty people used bush medicine, especially Irmangka-irmangka (native fuschia plant).

12. Financial Report

Total monies spent for period covering this financial report- 1st July 2004-30th June 2005
\$617,460

Itemised costs

Salaries	\$342,764
Training costs	\$43,027
Travel	\$30,379
Materials	\$40,620
Consumables	\$10,301
Vehicle costs	\$50,980
Sundries	\$3,538
Capital assets	\$95,851

Funding partners include:

- The Department for Environment and Heritage South Australia
- The Aboriginal Lands Task Force - The Department of the Premier and Cabinet
- The South Australian Government

13. Project Coordinator's Summary statement

The success of the Kuka Kanyini Watarru Project gives me hope that there are ways to move towards a healthier future. I have seen changes in the community during the life of the project that are notable. These include:

- A sense of purpose among participants
- Pride in achievements
- Involvement and integration across the community
- Reinforcement of some traditional values and knowledge
- Significant skill development
- Renewed connections with Land (Country).

I am convinced that there are some identifiable factors in the Kuka Kanyini Watarru Project that account for its success.

- The long term involvement of the Department for Environment and Heritage and the commitment from the Premier and Cabinet's Aboriginal Lands Task Force, have been positive factors.
- DEH staff at all levels have respected Anangu knowledge as being of equal value to their own. This has meant that the Community has taken a central role in defining its aspirations and problems. DEH staff have responded well to the challenge of respecting ways of doing things which are sometimes unfamiliar.
- Long term relationships of trust have been carefully and sensitively developed.
- The project is managed in ways that frame achievable small goals within the bigger picture of change.
- The Project Coordinator and manager have been encouraged to be open about difficulties so that issues are put on the table as they arise and are addressed transparently.
- There is an understanding that money invested into positive projects at Community level reduces the proliferation of problems (and therefore costs) at a systems level later on.
- The agreement to a minimum of a five year funding period for the project demonstrates commitment to Kuka Kanyini and provides the Community with a realistic framework within which to work and achieve project objectives.

The Report *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2005* (July 2005) highlights the fact that:

Having a job leads to improved incomes and standards of living for people and their families. This in turn has a positive influence on health and the education of children. It also enhances self-esteem and reduces social alienation. More broadly, where people are employed, benefits also flow on to the wider community. The type of employment that people are engaged in may also have an impact on their social and economic wellbeing. [pp. XLVI – XLVII].

This point has particular relevance for the Kuka Kanyini Watarru project. Not only is the work environmentally significant and achieving measurable outcomes, it is also assisting in reclaiming the identity of a Community and strengthening cultural connections which have been so drastically dislocated.

However, there are a number of issues still needing urgent attention in Watarru. The project is unable to take on the number of people who would like to work on it, and unemployment levels are still unacceptably high in the Community. This is partly due to high levels of illiteracy. There is a need for a full time social worker in the area and a more consistent presence of other qualified human services staff.

Nonetheless, It is my strong view that the Kuka Kanyini Watarru project is making a difference and signalling possibilities for a healthier future for the whole community.

Leanne Liddle, Project Coordinator.

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(Photos for the report kindly supplied by Rosemary Lloyd, Leanne Liddle and Ian Milera)

References

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, *Social Justice Report 2003*.

Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2005, Commonwealth of Australia, July 2005

Department of Environment and Heritage, SA, *A Biological Survey of the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands, South Australia*, 2003.

Attachment 1

Visitor logsheet

Agency	Visitors	Locations Visited	Purpose of visit	Arrival	Departure
DEH	Leanne Liddle 5 members DEH	Watarru Watarru	Kuka Kanyini business To conduct aerial survey of camels within the Great Victoria Desert	15/7/04 19/07/2004	1/8/04 24/07/2004
	Leanne Liddle	Watarru	Kuka Kanyini business	9/09/2004	27/09/2004
	David Wilson	Watarru	4wd training re Kuka Kanyini project	16/09/2004	18/09/2004
	Stephen Forbes, Dave Armstrong & Leanne Liddle	Watarru & surrounding area	Threatened species survey with Traditional Owners	20/10/2004	28/10/2004
	Nick Bailey	Amata & Fregon	Authorising permit and providing advice on emu farming	21/10/2004	25/10/2004
	Leanne Liddle	Watarru	Kuka Kanyini business	17/04/2005	17/05/2005
	Minister Hill, Greg Leaman, Brer Adams, Peter Copley, Colin Koch	Umuwa, Ernabella, Fregon & Watarru	Meeting with Executive members, APY Land Management, Art Centres and Kuka Kanyini participants	11/05/2005	13/05/2005
	Peter Moller	Watarru	Training for Kuka Kanyini participants	8/05/2005	16/05/2005
	Peter Moller	Watarru	Training for Kuka Kanyini participants	26/05/2005	23/06/2005
	Robert Gitsham	Watarru	Mechanical training for Kuka Kanyini participants	11/05/2005	26/05/2005
	Robert Gitsham	Watarru	Mechanical training for Kuka Kanyini participants	1/06/2005	9/06/2005
	Malcolm Anderson	Watarru	OHSW audit	26/05/2005	26/05/2005
	Leanne Liddle	Watarru	Kuka Kanyini business	8/05/2005	16/05/2005
	Leanne Liddle	Watarru	Kuka Kanyini business	26/05/2005	20/06/2005
	Parliamentary Standing Committee: Aboriginal Issues	Watarru & other communities	Kuka Kanyini project	10/05/2005	11/05/2005