

November 2022

## Benefits of the draft Caring for Country Strategy for Traditional Custodians



This fact sheet identifies actions in the draft strategy that may be most relevant to Traditional custodians, and how you can have your say in finalisation of the strategy.

### Have your say on the Caring for Country Strategy

As part of the Cumberland Plain Conservation Plan (the CPCP), the Department of Planning and Environment (the department) has co-developed a draft Caring for Country Strategy (the strategy) with the Aboriginal communities of Western Sydney.

The implementation of the strategy helps deliver our goal to

- support economic participation for Aboriginal peoples
- promote Aboriginal culture and knowledge
- help enable Traditional Custodians and Aboriginal peoples maintain distinctive relationships with the land, waters, and sky in Western Sydney including supporting ongoing and genuine access to Country
- improve the health and wellbeing of Country.

The strategy identifies 4 themes and 15 proposed actions, highlighting opportunities for future partnerships, business and employment, Caring for Country, and culture and heritage.

The department would like to hear from you or your organisation how we can work with you to implement these actions. To provide feedback, please visit [hyperlink] for more information.

### How have the Traditional Custodians been engaged?

The department engaged extensively with Western Sydney's Aboriginal communities since 2018 to prepare the CPCP. These engagements were followed up by discussions with the Aboriginal communities between March and October 2021 to understand the priorities and opportunities for

the strategy. The department met with a range of Aboriginal communities including Traditional Custodians to draft themes and actions for the strategy.

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## Benefits of the draft Caring for Country Strategy for Traditional Custodians

The following actions may be most relevant to Traditional Custodians. This is not an exhaustive list. For more information about these and other actions in the strategy, you can review the [draft Caring for Country strategy](#).

### **Establish an Aboriginal knowledge sharing panel**

The department will establish a knowledge sharing panel, with representatives from Aboriginal communities, including Traditional Custodians, to provide expert and cultural advice to the department to inform the delivery of the strategy and the CPCP more broadly. Membership will be sought through an expression of interest.

### **Partner with Western Sydney's Aboriginal communities**

The department will partner with Western Sydney's Aboriginal communities, including Traditional Custodians, to deliver the strategy based on the principles of genuine partnerships and co-development. The department also wants to build partnerships to deliver the CPCP's conservation program more broadly which comprises of 26 commitments and 132 actions. Partnerships would enable Traditional Custodians to provide input, advice and support the delivery of the strategy and the CPCP.

### **Work with Aboriginal Traditional Custodians and Knowledge Holders to pilot a traditional fire management program**

The department will partner with Traditional Custodians, Aboriginal organisations, and government agencies to develop a traditional fire management program to support the delivery of the CPCP. The program would provide employment, training, and mentoring opportunities for Aboriginal people in Western Sydney and opportunities to care for Country.

### **Develop opportunities for joint management of new conservation areas with Aboriginal community members under the CPCP**

In 2022, the NSW National Parks and Wildlife (NPWS) announced that it will develop a new model for Aboriginal joint management of national parks through consultation over the next 18 months. Once the new model has been developed, NPWS and the department will collaborate with Western Sydney's Aboriginal communities, including Traditional Custodians, to identify the desire for joint management in Western Sydney and what it would look like in the context of Western Sydney.

## **Develop and fund Aboriginal ranger positions to support the ongoing management of new jointly managed conservation areas under the CPCP**

The program aims to provide Aboriginal peoples an opportunity to use their knowledges and connections to Country to contribute to managing and restoring new conservation reserves established under the CPCP. The department will engage with Aboriginal communities including Traditional Custodians to consider and determine the best way to deliver an Aboriginal ranger program in Western Sydney.

## **Identify and deliver research opportunities co-led by Traditional Custodians to better understand how traditional land management practices can support conservation outcomes in Western Sydney**

The strategy recognises the need to position local Aboriginal knowledge as an integral part of the way the sustainability and resilience objectives are met. The department has partnered with Western Sydney University to develop a [draft Research Implementation Strategy](#) under the CPCP and has committed \$1.8 million to implement the research program in the first 4 years. Please see the [draft Research Implementation Strategy](#) for more information on opportunities for Traditional Custodian involvement.

## **Fund projects for Western Sydney's Aboriginal communities to recognise and protect Aboriginal culture and heritage**

The department is seeking to fund projects for Western Sydney's Aboriginal communities to recognise and promote Aboriginal culture and heritage. The department will fund a competitive grants program delivered in partnership with an Aboriginal organisation. Grant funding would be available to Aboriginal groups and organisations in Western Sydney such as Traditional Custodians.

## **Fund projects to extend existing education programs in Western Sydney including education officers to provide cultural competency activities at schools and in the community**

The department is seeking to fund projects to extend existing education programs in Western Sydney including education and engagement officers to strengthen cultural competency. The areas that will be explored for funding include Traditional Custodians led outreach programs to host community events where Knowledge Holders will be speaking.

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## **How can I find out more?**

The draft Caring for Country strategy will go on public exhibition from 10 November 2022 to 24 February 2023. A copy the draft Caring for Country strategy is available on our [website](#).

The department welcomes community feedback submissions. If you require support to submit feedback, the department is providing a submission support service. You can call 02 9585 6060 or email [CPCP@planning.nsw.gov.au](mailto:CPCP@planning.nsw.gov.au) and staff will assist you with your submission.

If English is not your first language, please call 131 450. Ask for an interpreter in your language and then ask to be connected to 02 9585 6060.