



YMAC News

News from Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation

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Above: Niyaparli, YMAC and IOH representatives at the signing ceremony in Tom Price.

Niyaparli Sign Agreement for Iron Valley Project

In Tom Price last month, the Niyaparli people signed a Land Access Deed with Iron Ore Holdings Ltd (IOH) that delivers important protection for country and support to the Iron Valley project.

Niyaparli country is situated in the central Pilbara region of Western Australia and covers approximately 36,684 square kilometres of land, including the mining town of Newman.

The agreement provides a range of benefits to the Niyaparli people including contracting opportunities, cross cultural awareness training for IOH employees and a rigorous framework for agreement implementation. More importantly the agreement provides for consultation on environmental

and heritage matters, which allows the Niyaparli people to retain their rights under Aboriginal heritage and environment legislation in order to protect areas of cultural and environmental significance.

The Niyaparli people, who are represented by Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation (YMAC), are now looking to build upon the spirit of cooperation and good faith they developed with IOH during the agreement negotiations.

Simon Hawkins, CEO, Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation, said the agreement was an example of a mining company working cooperatively and negotiating in good faith with Traditional Owners. "The Niyaparli people appreciated the company's willingness to sit down and negotiate with the group. The next step is to build on this relationship and see the agreement successfully implemented."

While we have made every effort to ensure this publication does not contain any culturally sensitive material, there may be references to, and images of, people who have since passed away. If you have any concerns please contact us.



Above L-R: Pilbara Chairperson, Doris Eaton; Yamatji Chairperson, Peter Windie.

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Hello and Welcome from YMAC's Board of Directors

Welcome to the last issue of 'YMAC News' for 2010. This year has been a particularly busy one for our organisation and the members we represent with good progress on native title claims and we look forward to another year of positive outcomes for Pilbara and Yamatji people in 2011.

In this issue we cover the recent Wajarri community meeting that was held in Meekatharra; the recent Aboriginal housing enterprise in Coral Bay; YMAC's anthropologist, Sanna Nadler's visit to Finland to teach students about native title; the Palyku railway agreement with Hancock Prospecting; and Nyiyaparli's recent land access agreement Iron ore Holdings.

From YMAC's Board of Directors, management and staff we wish everyone a happy and safe Christmas and look forward to working with you in 2011!

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Above: Wajarri community gathering at the Meekatharra meeting.

Wajarri Community Gathers in Meekatharra

On 29 November, YMAC held the largest Wajarri community meeting in the organisations history, with approximately 500 people gathering at Meekatharra shire hall to discuss important claim business.

The meeting had some outstanding outcomes for Wajarri people, including; the authorization of their connection report to be submitted to the state government; and the election of a new working group to represent the community.

A community meeting of this size requires a lot of planning and the YMAC team worked hard to run a professional and well organised event. The catering alone was an enormous task with some 300 sausages and 500 chops being BBQ by Yamatji Regional Manager, Donna Murdock, and Deputy Manager, Chris Dann. The BBQ lunch was enjoyed by all and the fruit salad was a hit with the children.

Yamatji Regional Manager, Donna Murdock, was pleased to see so many Wajarri people coming together to attend such an important meeting.

“It was great to see over 500 people attend the community meeting and make some important decisions about the future direction of the Wajarri native title claim. Myself and my team looks forward to continuing to work with the Wajarri community and assist them in achieving recognition of their rights and interests over their country.”



Above: Sanna Nalder explaining native title to students in Finland.

Students in Finland Learn about **WA Native Title**

Sanna Nalder, our Geraldton-based Anthropologist, was recently invited to give two lectures at the Giellagas Institute at University of Oulu, Finland. Sanna spoke about WA Native Title and Aboriginal Heritage with Giellagas Institute researchers, staff and students of Sami culture and language, anthropology, history and teaching.

Despite the cultural, geographical and historical differences, Sanna says there are similar concerns, sense of importance and responsibility shared by Finland's Indigenous people, the Sami, when it comes to rights to land and cultural heritage protection.

The audience was interested in Australian Aboriginal culture, as well as the research practices in native title and the high standard of proof required to prove that native title exists.

As there is increasing mining interest in Finnish Lapland, the heritage protection practices used in Western Australia was also discussed.

Sanna will keep in touch with the staff at the institute and continue the discussion and exchange of ideas between Finland and Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation.



Above: Baiyungu Aboriginal Corporation and Gnulli native title claim members in Coral Bay.

Aboriginal Enterprise for **Coral Bay**

In October, the Baiyungu Aboriginal Corporation (BAC) and Lands Minister Brendon Grylls signed an agreement that will allow for the development of much-needed housing for permanent workers and business owners in Coral Bay.

Involving the transfer of 30ha of land near the town centre, the agreement will enable the BAC to develop accommodation for people who live and work locally. The BAC has also agreed to lease a portion of the land back to the State Government, for the new seasonal staff accommodation facility planned for Coral Bay.

BAC Project Director, Noel Bridge, said it had taken several years of quality and focused work by the Corporation to reach a successful outcome.

“Coral Bay is a stunning tourism destination, but the development of infrastructure has not kept up with demand. The lack of quality housing for workers and business owners has made it very difficult to attract and retain staff.”

Mr Bridge said the BAC had received support from the Gnulli Native Title Working Group and Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation, and had worked effectively with the WA Department for Regional Development and Land to reach this successful outcome.

Paul Baron Gnulli Working Group Chairman said the agreement would allow Traditional Owners to maintain their connection to their land, create jobs, economic development, and enhance the local community.

“These types of projects have the added advantage of giving visitors the chance to share Baiyungu land and culture,” he said.



Above: Nora Cooke.



Above: Paul Barron..

Meet a **YMAC Director**

Nora Cooke

Nora is an Ngarla woman who played an integral role in her people's native title determination in 2007.

Nora enjoys the bush life in the Pilbara, including fishing, camping, cooking and hunting. Nora has an in-depth understanding of bush medicine and provides advice to people seeking bush medicine treatments. She also practices her culture by teaching several Aboriginal languages and running cultural awareness training at mine sites and the Wangka Maya Language Centre.

To Nora, country means to live freely on the land, gathering food and hunting.

Paul Barron

Paul is a Baiyungu man and a member of the Gnulli native title claim.

Mr Barron is the general manager of the Baiyungu Aboriginal Corporation, which is involved in development and land holdings in the Coral Bay area, including Cardabia pastoral lease.

Paul lives in Carnarvon and is a keen fisherman, but also enjoys hunting and camping in his spare time. Being on the board at YMAC is important to him because he believes that full recognition of traditional ownership provides Aboriginal people a base for building strong communities and enterprises.



Above: Woodstock Abydos.

Native Title Railway Agreement to **Protect Rock Art**

In October, the Palyku native title group and Hancock Prospecting announced an agreement over the company's proposed rail line to connect their Roy Hill project with Port Hedland.

The agreement provides financial and non-financial benefits, including payments to be used for protecting and managing the cultural heritage values relating to the Woodstock Abydos Reserve, one of the richest rock art centres in the world.

"In the negotiations we made it clear that we don't want any of our special places to be disturbed," said Terry Jaffrey, a Palyku elder. "Hancock has agreed to avoid all sacred sites and to provide funds to protect the Woodstock Abydos heritage listed area."

The agreement also specifies a portion of the financial

benefits to be used for an employment, training and education program and a Health and Elderly Support Fund.

Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation's, Pilbara Regional Manager, Peter Jeffries, said of the agreement, "Woodstock Abydos has immense national and international significance. Hancock Prospecting has recognised this by committing to protect its heritage value throughout their works connected with the railway. These provisions, along with the employment and health programs will mean that future generations can have their cultural heritage protected and a greater participation in the Pilbara economy."

"To us it's a very important place," said Terry. "That's why we have to work with Hancock to make sure they don't disturb anything. It's very important to me and to our children's children."

The agreement with the Palyku people is the latest to be signed by Hancock over its rail corridor, which will affect several native title claims in the area.

YMAC Christmas Office Hours

Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation offices in Perth, Geraldton, Karratha, South Hedland and Tom Price will be closed during the festive season from Friday, 24 December 2010, re-opening on Tuesday, 4 January 2011.

YMAC's Board of Directors, Pilbara and Yamatji Regional Committees, management and staff would like to wish all members a happy and safe festive season.

"This year has been a very busy one for YMAC and its members and we look forward to strong progress on native title claim work and the protection of country in 2011," Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation CEO, Simon Hawkins.



Above: Amangu country.

ABOUT US

YMAC News is produced by the Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation (YMAC).

We are the native title representative body for native title claims in the Murchison, Gascoyne and Pilbara regions of Western Australia.

We work with Yamatji and Marlpa (Pilbara) Aboriginal people to pursue:

- Recognition and acceptance of Yamatji and Marlpa culture in country
- A strong future for Yamatji and Marlpa people and country

MEMBERSHIP

YMAC membership is open to all adult (18+ years) Yamatji and Marlpa people.

Our membership also includes people who live in other areas but who have a traditional connection to Yamatji or Marlpa country.

SERVICES

Our work includes:

- Providing legal representation and research to assist with native title claims
- Negotiating land use agreements
- Heritage protection services
- Community, economic and environmental projects

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