



Impact Report 2025

Enduring partnerships, connecting conservation, culture and industry.

Pilbara

Conservation
Project



RioTinto

Project partners

By integrating science, traditional knowledge and on-ground action to manage fire, weeds and feral animals, the Pilbara Conservation Project aspires to deliver improved landscape scale conservation outcomes in Karijini National Park (KNP) and Millstream Chichester National Park (MCNP).

The Project aims to collaborate with and support the involvement of Banjima, Ngarluma, Wintawari Guruma, Yindjibarndi and Yinhawangka Traditional Owners, on management directions and delivery of on-ground works.

Officially launched in 2024, the Project is being delivered through a partnership between Rio Tinto (RTIO) and the Parks and Wildlife Service from the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA).

In 2025 significant progress was made towards delivering the desired outcomes.



Achievements 2025



Working with Traditional Owners to integrate traditional knowledge into management practices

- The inaugural meeting of the Banjima Karijini National Park Advisory Committee was held in April, with a second meeting held in July
- Draft Terms of Reference finalised for the Yindjibarndi DBCA National Park Advisory Committee for MCNP and Mungaroon Range Nature Reserve
- Increased involvement of Aboriginal rangers in fire, weed and feral animal management
- Enhanced relationships with Traditional Owner groups
- Cultural immersion with Juluwarlu Aboriginal Corporation
- Weed busy bee with Banjima Traditional Owner
- Two Yindjibarndi Rangers employed with Parks and Wildlife Service to allow seamless integration with prescribed burning
- Aboriginal rangers contributed to 168 hours of weed management



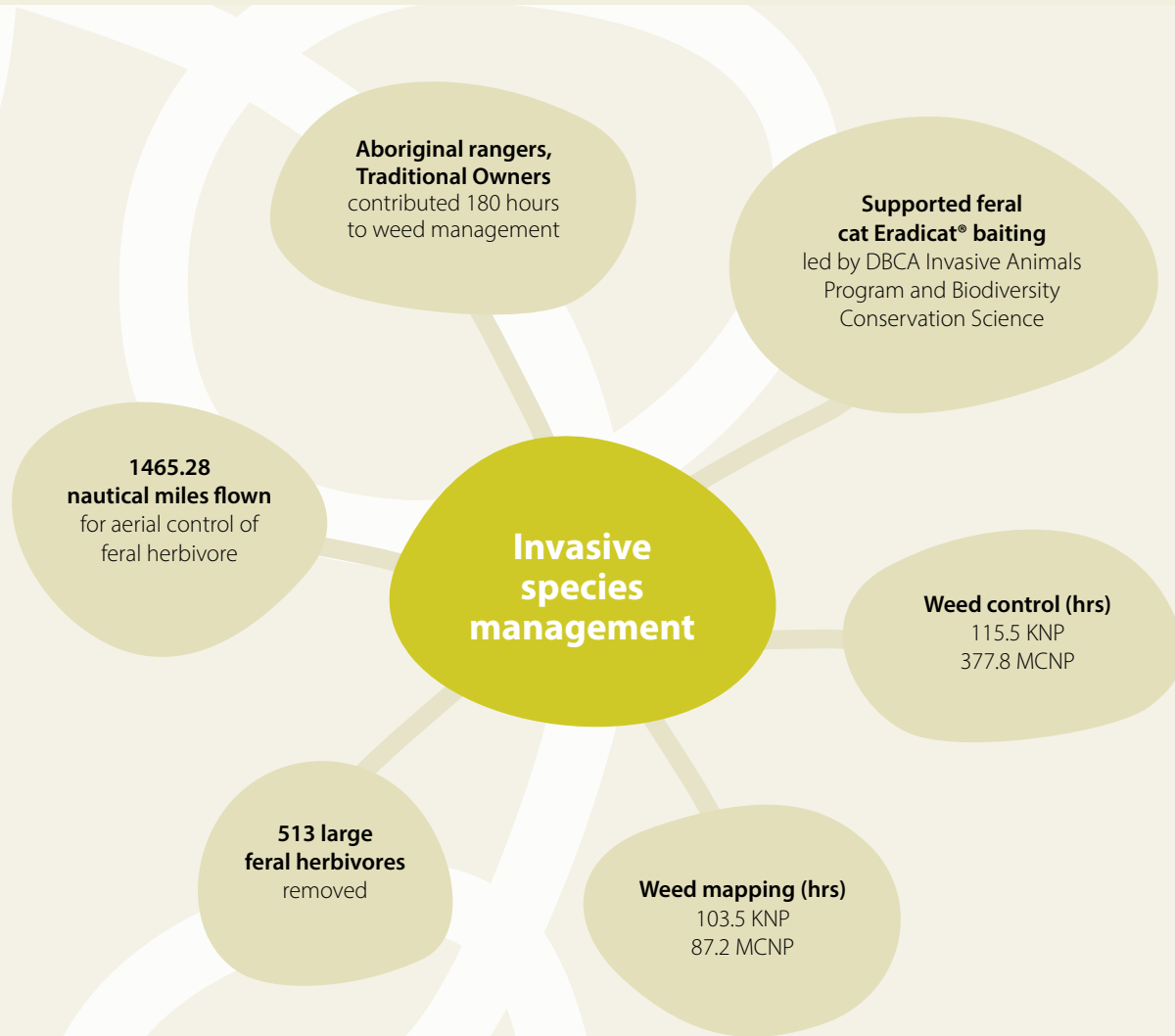
"It's important because we've got more of say now in our community. As a board (Banjima KNP Advisory Committee) they can hear our voice."

May Byrne, Traditional Owner

May Byrne (pictured above second from left) with Banjima KNP Advisory Committee.



Combating feral fauna and weeds

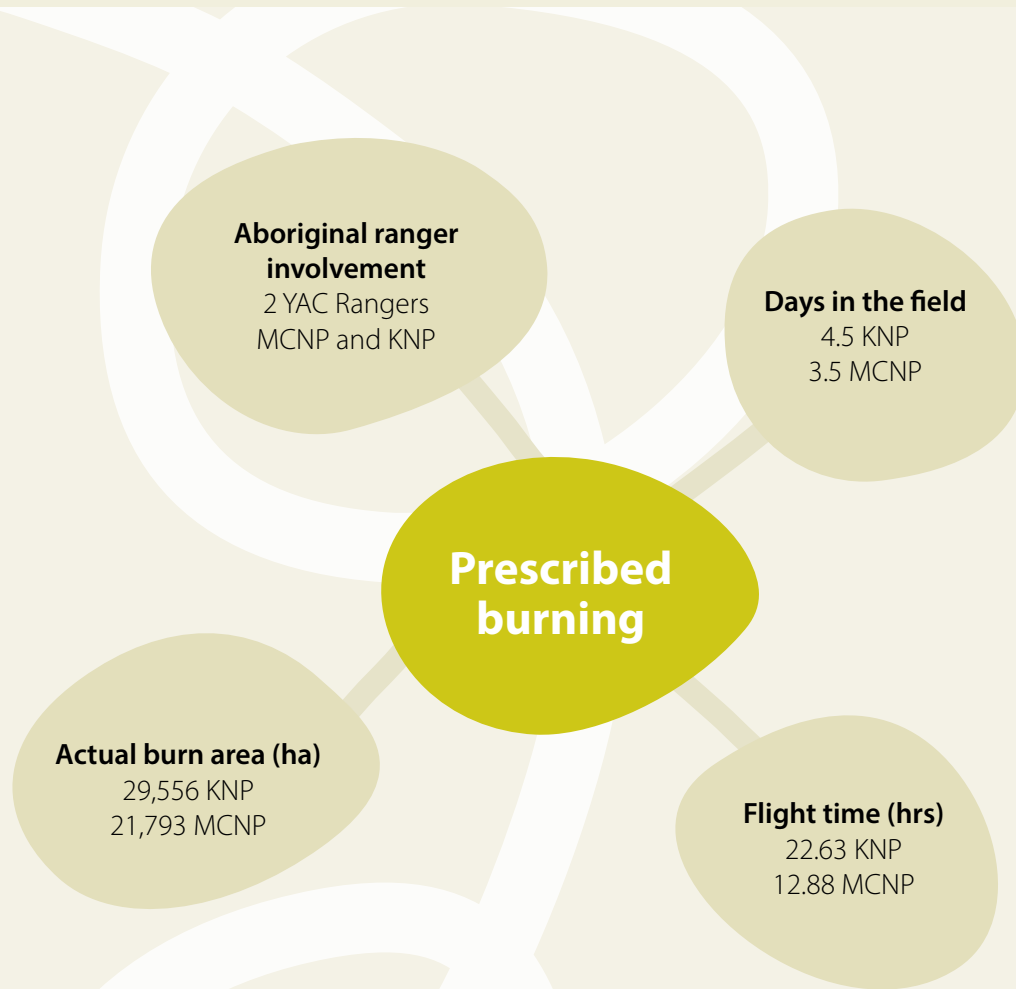


"I feel very privileged to have worked with the Yindjibarndi Rangers out on country, learning about their connection to the land and their culture. Working side by side with so many Rangers we were able to achieve all of the weed management work we set out to do and more."

Lily Robertson, Assistant Operations Officer, DBCA



Improved fire outcomes



"DBCA has helped Yindjibarndi working up the skills. While us Yindjibarndi have been enriching their knowledge."

Haylen Wielgomasz, Yindjibarndi Aboriginal Corporation Ranger



Improved understanding through science to support adaptive and evidence-based land management

Fire ecology:

- 120 research sites established across the parks to quantify fire behaviour and investigate relationship between biodiversity and fire in western Pilbara spinifex ecosystems of differing biomass, cover and time since last burnt
- Project supported the deployment of 90 camera traps across approximately 2000 hectares in MCNP, to investigate the influence of fire and feral cats on northern quoll movements as part of a collaborative PhD project between Charles Sturt University and DBCA Biodiversity and Conservation Science

Remote sensing, spatial analysis and mapping:

- Pilbara fire scar maps updated using satellite imagery
- 80 field surveys conducted to help inform land unit mapping and modelling
- Flora surveys commenced in KNP to support detailed vegetation mapping
- Collaborative helicopter survey undertaken with RTIO in the remote southern end of KNP to conduct fauna, flora and fire investigations; located new populations of conservation-listed flora



“Long-term monitoring is key to successful landscape scale conservation. The longer we can collect data, the more responsive and robust our research is to help inform our fire management practices in the Pilbara... The fire management occurring in the region is progressive and traditional at the same time, making it a unique research opportunity.”

Matt Chick, PCP Fire Ecologist, DBCA

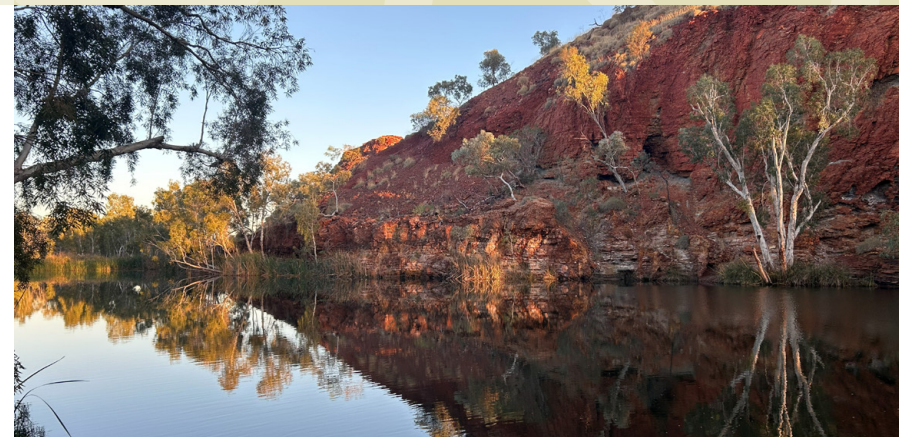
Pictured above in Karijini National Park





Supporting achievements

- Organised and delivered the Pilbara Voluntary Conservation Industry Forum, a joint initiative with RTIO, The Pew Charitable Trusts and Pilbara Development Commission.
- Contributed to the establishment of the Enduring Pilbara Reference Group which aims to assist and guide current and future land management activities delivered by members to support knowledge sharing, coordination and partnerships across the landscape.
- Provided technical support at the Pilbara Ranger Network (PRN) Ranger Training Camp held in Onslow and the PRN Fire Training Course held at MCNP, as well as presented and participated in the PRN Forum held in Karratha.



“It was a real privilege to have participated in the cultural immersion training offered by Juluwarlu Aboriginal Corporation... They were incredibly generous with their time and knowledge. It was an unforgettable experience and I am grateful to have been able to experience Yindjibarndi Country from a new perspective.”

Jane Chapman, Research Officer, Remote Sensing and Spatial Analysis, DBCA

Key focus for 2026

Build connections with all Traditional Owners of the project area.
Investigate opportunities for two-way learning and strategic partnerships.



For more information

Email: pilbaraconservationproject@dbca.wa.gov.au

Click or scan the QR code to go to: dbca.gov.au/pilbaraconservation

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