



# Connections and Reflections

## Campfire Gatherings: Connection & Reflection on Country

A series of Campfire Gatherings are being held across New South Wales, inviting Landcare Coordinators employed under the NSW Landcare Enabling Program 2023 – 2027 (the Program) to sit by a campfire, share, listen, connect, and reflect on Country.

Landcare NSW, in partnership with Local Land Services, is delivering these events as part of the Aboriginal Partnerships Pathway Planning for the next phase of funding under the Program. This funding is dedicated to increasing opportunities to develop stronger connections and partnerships between Landcare Groups and Aboriginal communities practicing traditional land management practices.

Landcare NSW Aboriginal Partnerships Manager Den Barber, a descendant of the Traditional Custodians from Mudgee of the Wiradjuri people, said connection is at the heart of each Campfire Gathering, made possible through cultural ceremony, storytelling, and the sharing of personal and Landcare-related experiences in an on-Country setting.

"These aren't formal meetings or workshops. Campfire Gatherings are about people - Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal - meeting in a safe, open space to yarn, honour Country, build trust, and foster genuine relationships that will shape the future of Aboriginal partnerships within Landcare in NSW.

Reflection is just as important - participants are encouraged to be open, honest, and transparent in exploring what 'Aboriginal Partnerships' in Landcare means to them," said Den.

Designed to be culturally respectful and meaningful, the Campfire Gatherings offer an opportunity for Landcare Coordinators and participants to connect, explore challenges and opportunities, and contribute insights that will guide the Aboriginal Partnerships Pathway Planning in their own region.

Shelley McDouall, North West Regional Landcare Coordinator, shared, "My biggest takeaway from our Campfire Gathering was the absolute importance of allowing time for relationship-building. We need to be guided by Aboriginal communities – by how they want us to walk alongside them."

Each Campfire Gathering features shared meals, quiet time on Country, storytelling, truth-telling, and a final reflective ceremony - a moment where participants make a personal commitment to Aboriginal partnerships in Landcare.

The stories, conversations, and takeaways from these Campfire Gatherings will help shape the future of the Aboriginal Partnerships Pathway Plan within the NSW Landcare Enabling Program - ensuring the next steps are guided by trust, respect, and the voices of the community.

This initiative is made possible by the NSW Landcare Enabling Program, a collaboration between Local Land Services and Landcare NSW supported by the NSW Government.

### Campfire Gatherings:

- Tuesday, 10th June 2025 - Central Tablelands Region
- Wednesday, 11th June 2025 - North West Region · Tuesday, 8th July 2025 - Mid Coast to Tops Region

