



Traditional Owners gain fire fighting skills

MACKAY // MONDAY 7th December 2020

Traditional Owners have been trained in fire fighter minimum skills by Queensland Fire and Emergency Services.

Twelve Traditional Owners, representing Yuwi, Koinjmal/Koinmerburra, Barada/Widi and Ngaro/Gia/Juru participated in stage two of fire fighter training on the weekend.

Participants were nominated by the Mackay Whitsunday Isaac Traditional Owner Reference Group (TORG), who have worked cooperatively together and with Reef Catchments for more than 10 years to support Aboriginal people and organisations participating in the delivery of Natural Resource Management activities.

Reef Catchments project officer Aaron Regan said: “The TORG identified a need to build knowledge and skills that would lead to an increase in Traditional Owner involvement with planned burns undertaken by existing organisations, with a long-term view to rejuvenate Traditional Fire Knowledge in the region's contemporary landscape, leading to long term benefits for both the community and ecosystems.

“Following the successful first stage of training in August, the Queensland Fire and Emergency Service has provided the second stage of training in-kind to August's participants and four new participants. This demonstrates the great relationship that was established in the first round of training.

“Knowledge and skills were shared and networks built in this second stage of the training, which has provided participants the training needed to attain Rural Firefighter Minimum Skills Holistic qualification of operational rural firefighters.”

The knowledge, skills and networks that have been achieved through this training is just the start of the journey. With participants, the TORG and collaborators keen to continue to build on momentum, with funding being sought that will enable on-country cultural burning workshops to share knowledge of assessing country and how to increase community's knowledge and awareness of cultural burning.

Basic level firefighting training was jointly funded under the Commonwealth/State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements under the Community Development Program – Flexible Funding Grant Program

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