

# Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council

Wujal Wujal Ngulkurrmanka (Healing),  
Binalmal (Learning) and Kabanka (Rising)

North & Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough, 25 January - 14 February 2019

Endorsed by: Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council on 27 May 2019



Mayor  
Desmond Tayley



CEO  
Eileen Deemal-Hall

## Recovery story of the Yalanji, Jalunji and Ngungkul people

### Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council Overview and Vision

The Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire is a local government area in Far North Queensland and is managed as a Deed of Grant in Trust under the Local Government (Community Government Areas) Act 2004.

The community of Wujal Wujal is located in the Cape York region with the surrounding environment and cultural tourism attracting many people to the region. It has an area of 19.94 square kilometres of land.

It is located approximately 30 kilometres (19 mi) north of Cape Tribulation and 60 kilometres (37 mi) south of Cooktown. Access to the community is through a sealed road from Cooktown, or by the Bloomfield Track, an unsealed road from Cape Tribulation which is only suitable for four wheel drive vehicles. This is due to the gradient of the terrain and the many streams and rivers that make up the Daintree drainage basin which cross the path at very regular intervals. During high water flow the road from Cape Tribulation is impassable.

The rare Bloomfield River Cod (*Kuyu wujalwujalensis*) is found only in lives above Bloomfield river Falls below the Dawnvale station homestead and is named after this community.

The name 'Wujal Wujal' or 'many falls' is derived from the local language. There are several Indigenous languages spoken within this community and three traditional Clans.

Wujal Wujal is an active, safe, progressive and healthy community with increased participation in sports and improved economic opportunities. Our community is culturally rich, and appreciate and value the traditional Eastern Kuku Yalanji knowledge, language, skills and connection to the natural landscape and resources.

The scenic landscapes, rainforest and the Bloomfield River are the traditional grounds of Eastern Kuku Yalanji people. The lands and rivers are protected, valued and managed sustainably. Land is limited and community development is determined by a collaborative partnership between all stakeholders, representing the community and providing a transparent decision-making process.

### Event story

The monsoon event was the worst flooding experienced by the community. Whilst there are stories of continuous rain, this time it rained for a week solid and did not stop. The rain event was beyond anything the community expected. The river rose 5-6 metres more than normal. It looked like a sea of water. There are concerns we cannot rely on our stories or history anymore. The sounds of the rain and the river impacted the children. The community was cut in four and there was no way to access family members in different parts of the community. There were members of community in the Valley, a mob on the outstations, Thomson and Shipton Flats. Everyone was worried for everybody who lives in the valley. Everybody who lives here lost something.

### Our community's strength

The pristine nature of our community is important - the air is fresh, the water is pure and there is access to the sea and rainforests. We are connected to nature. Our community is strong and is resilient. We will 'fight on' with all challenges coming our way, including climate change. Our people are the soul of our community, with all three of our clan groups connected, and we live together in harmony. We protect and accept each other and always know where people are, especially when they visit homelands. There is strong leadership in our community and we yarn with our children to encourage them. Wujal Wujal is the best place.

### Key stakeholders

- Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council
- Community Members in Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire, Douglas Shire and Cook Shire
- Community Elders
- Traditional Owners
- Justice Group
- DATSIP
- Key service providers

## Recovery story artwork

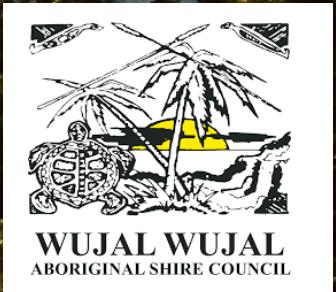


Jalunkarr kadan burayngjiku bayan bubu buyundanman.  
*When the flood came it damaged homes and land.*

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### Damage locations and impacts

#### Human and Social

- Community wellbeing – psychosocial wellbeing of community members affected.
- Community wellbeing – families had to be evacuated from their homes.
- Community wellbeing – lack of access to fresh water.
- Community connectedness – inability to utilise sports grounds.
- Community connectedness – inability to host local and broader community sporting events.
- Limited access to fresh food supplies as store was not stocked.
- Isolation – community members sad and worried about family members outside of the community.
- Isolation – children unable to attend school.
- Isolation – inability to participate in football carnivals.
- Isolation – inability to access additional shops outside of the community.
- Community health – concern for diabetics and access to dialysis in Cooktown.
- Community health – dysentery after the wet.
- Community health – potential disease from increase in mosquitoes and vermin.
- Personal property destroyed by flood waters – cars and furniture.
- Impact to Arts Centre, impacted healing places and loss of spirituality.
- Loss of meeting spaces (men's shed and women's area).
- Inability to access food due to isolation.
- Damage to smoking ceremony locations.

#### Economic

- Increased cost of living – having to spend more money on food due to inflation of prices in accessible stores.
- Loss of income/profit to Arts Centre.
- Loss of income/profit to individuals – loss of paintings held in Arts Centre that are normally for sale to tourists.
- Increased financial burden on members of the community to support others (food, power) taken in due to evacuations.
- Loss of 74 paintings from the Arts Centre.
- Loss of 152 pieces of jewellery from the Arts Centre.
- Loss of 51 paper prints from the Arts Centre.
- Loss of power tools and accessories from the Men's Shed.
- Loss and damage to plants in the market garden.

#### Environment

- Gardens and fruit trees washed away.
- Impacts to the Melaleuca Paperbark trees.
- Landscape change – flooding has re-arranged and flattened the landscape.
- Landscape change – large amounts of sand deposited throughout the community.
- Landscape change – large amounts of mulch deposited on the beach.
- Landscape change – erosion of the river bank.
- Landscape change – mouth of the river has changed shape.
- Landscape change – sand portion of the beach has been washed away.
- Biosecurity risk – increase in the number of snakes, rats and mosquitoes and other vector.
- Biosecurity risk – impacts from sewerage inundation.
- Biosecurity – flooding has spread Guinea grass.
- Cultural assets damaged including traditional plants and medicine plants.

#### Building

- Homes inundated by flood waters – lowest house received five metres of water through it.
- Arts centre inundated by flood waters – received one metre of water through it.
- Garden shed damaged – inundated.
- Change rooms on the football field inundated.
- Football field impacted by inundation and sand.
- Shipping containers moved and washed away.
- Loss of power.
- Loss of telecommunications.
- Sewerage and pumping stations impacted by inundation.
- Path to waterfall washed out due to river rises.
- Water/septic tanks impacted in seven homes.
- Loss of solar powered lights.
- Impacts to internal Wi-Fi system.
- Council depot stores were inundated and goods washed away.

#### Roads and Transport

- Key community roads damaged.
- Road surfaces damaged.
- Billy Goat creek cut off.
- Undermining near Bloomfield bridge.
- Wash outs on key community roads.
- Four causeways impacted by rock, mud and debris.
- Road signage washed away.
- Walking access to Bloomfield Falls damaged.

### Damage story artwork



Jalunkarr kadan burayngjiku bayan bubu buyundanman.  
*When the flood came it damaged homes and land.*



Bloomfield BRIDGE 2019

Damage locations and impacts

Damage story artwork

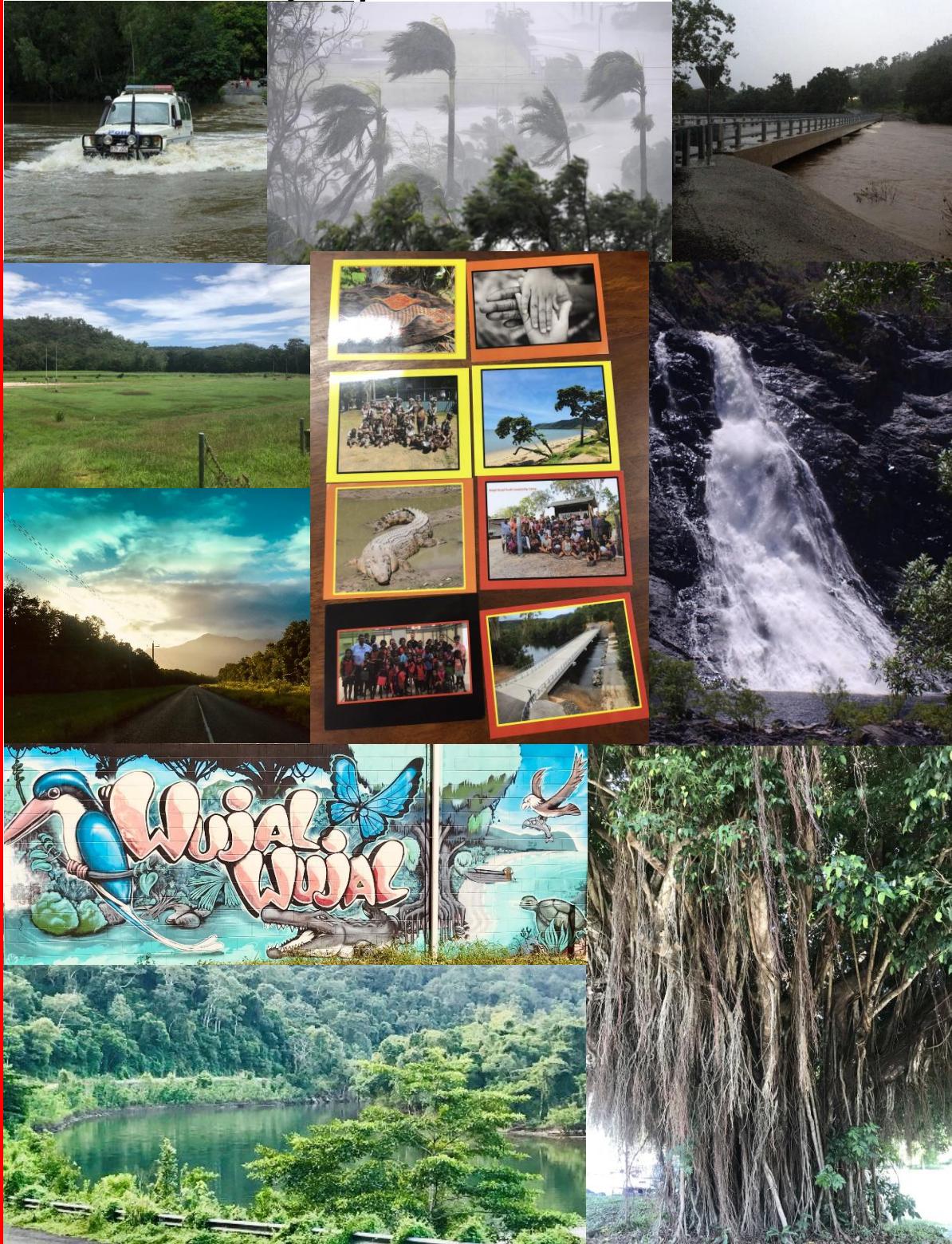
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## Our community in pictures



Our community in pictures

## Keeping strong (Recovery objectives)

### Binalmalmal (Learning)

1. Bureau of Metrology modelling improved to provide key data for community (short term).
2. Scoping of the Installation of Micro grids – solar to hydro (medium term).
3. Explore food security options through store leases (short term).
4. Flood infrastructure – river monitoring gauges (medium term).
5. Ensure all future housing is raised (ongoing).
6. Investigate opportunities for continued lessons while children can not access school (ongoing).
7. Complete a reviewed recovery sub-plan (ongoing).
8. Enhance disaster management arrangements with surrounding shires (ongoing).
9. Access to enhanced/faster weather communications (ongoing).

### Ngulkurrmanka (Healing)

1. Reconstruction of the Arts Centre (medium term).
2. Implement an alert and geotagging system to track rogue crocodiles (ongoing).
3. Implement a Vignettes program in conjunction with the Library (ongoing).
4. Install the Ngulkurrmanka, Binalmalmal and Kabanka footpath (ongoing).
5. Investigate opportunities for tourism (ongoing).

### Kabanka (Rising)

1. Installation of Micro grids – solar to hydro (medium term).
2. Explore food security options through vertical gardens (medium term).
3. Increase resilience in sewerage infrastructure (medium term).
4. Increased resilience in water treatment and supply infrastructure (medium term).
5. Flood infrastructure – river monitoring gauges (medium term).
6. Ensure all future housing is raised (ongoing).
7. Implement an alert and geotagging system to track rogue crocodiles (ongoing).
8. Implement a Vignettes program in conjunction with the Library (ongoing).
9. Install the Ngulkurrmanka, Binalmalmal and Kabanka footpath (ongoing).
10. Build a community evacuation centre/shelter (ongoing).
11. Investigate opportunities for tourism (ongoing).
12. Investigate opportunities for continued lessons while children can not access school (ongoing).
13. Complete a reviewed recovery sub-plan (ongoing).
14. Formalise the SES volunteer program (ongoing).

Keeping strong

Recovery timelines

## Recovery timelines

	Short term	Medium term	Long term	Ongoing
<b>Binalmalmal (Learning)</b>	1 3	2 4		5 6 7 8 9
<b>Ngulkurrmanka (Healing)</b>		1		2 3 4 5
<b>Kabanka (Rising)</b>		1 2 5 3 4		6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

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## Activations for Disaster Recovery Funding Assistance

For details of activations and assistance measures visit [www.qra.qld.gov.au/activations](http://www.qra.qld.gov.au/activations)

### Disaster relief measure

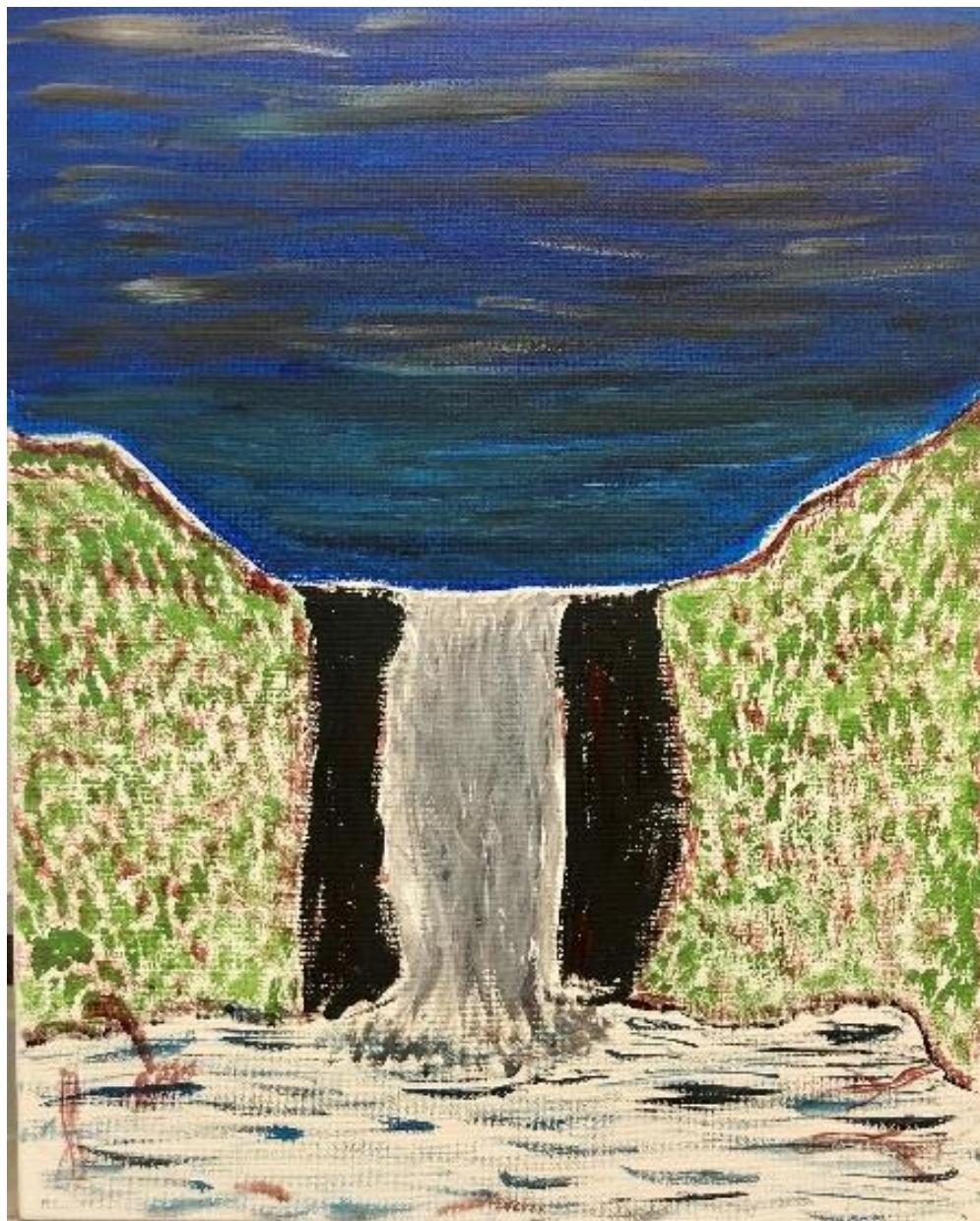
- Personal Hardship Assistance Scheme (PHAS)
- Counter Disaster Operations
- Reconstruction of Essential Public Assets

### Activation date

30/01/2019

30/01/2019

30/01/2019



Activations summary

## Measures of success

### Binalmalmal (Learning)

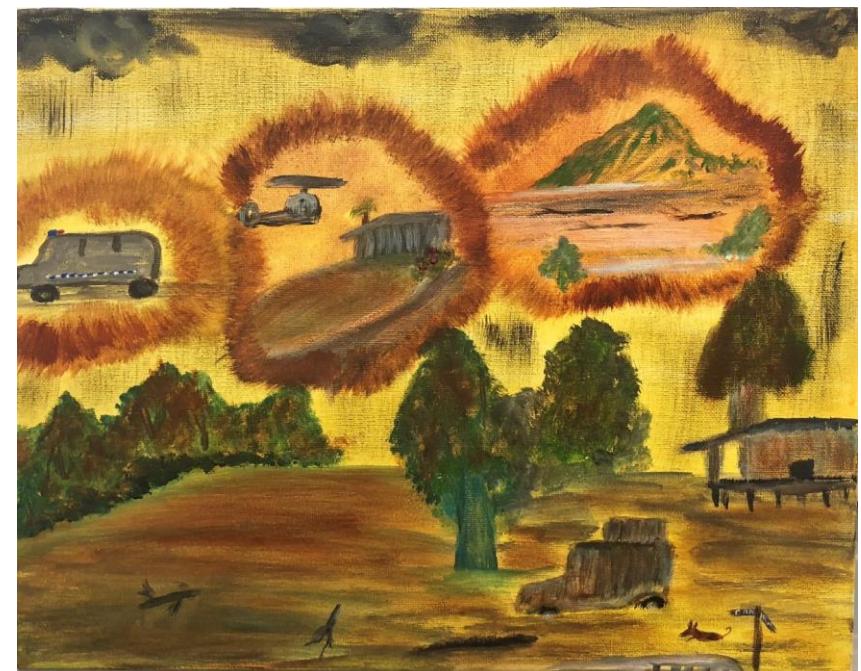
- Food security is enhanced.
- Community has access to appropriate financial support.
- Rogue crocodile alert and geotagging system operational.
- Raised platforms for sewerage and water treatment facilities.
- Community facilities are operational.

### Ngulkurrmanka (Healing)

- Food security is enhanced.
- Community involvement in recovery activities.
- Nil cases of dysentery reported in the community.
- Arts Centre is operational.
- Community facilities are operational.
- Installation of the Ngulkurrmanka, Binalmalmal and Kabanka footpath finalised.
- Tourism numbers increase.
- Clean-up of story places complete.
- Access is available to outstations.

### Kabanka (Rising)

- Food security is enhanced.
- SES utilised in future events.
- Football carnivals are hosted in Wujal Wujal.
- Arts Centre is operational.
- Funding to support programs is obtained.
- Raised platforms for sewerage and water treatment facilities.
- Community facilities are operational.
- Installation of the Ngulkurrmanka, Binalmalmal and Kabanka footpath finalised.
- Tourism numbers increase.
- Artwork is able to be sold.



Measures of success