

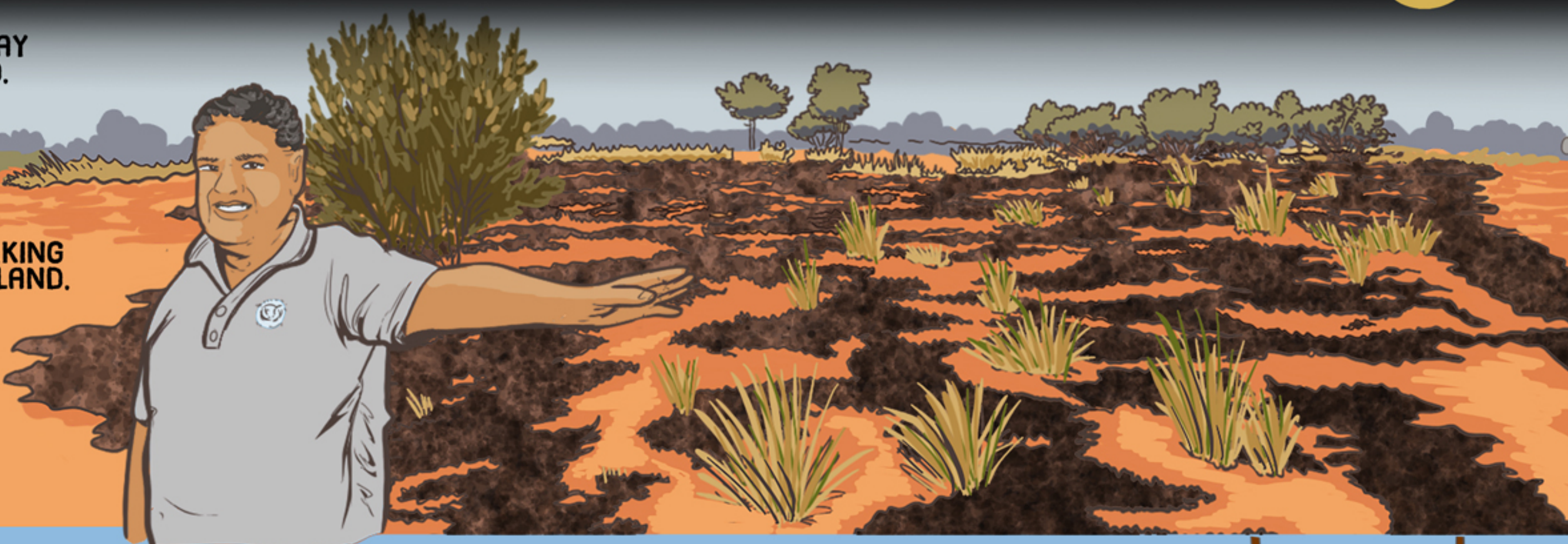
"MY NAME IS WAYNE DAVIS. I HAVE TRADITIONAL AUTHORITY TO MANAGE MY LANDS IN CENTRAL AUSTRALIA AND LOOK AFTER MY COUNTRY."

Uncle Wayne's Story

ONE OF MY PARENTS WAS TAKEN AWAY IN THE STOLEN GENERATION PERIOD.

I GREW UP IN THE TOP END WHERE MOST OF MY WORK WAS ON COUNTRY WORKING WITH ELDERS, WALKING AND BURNING THE LAND.

FIRE IS MY SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTISE. SOMETIMES THE COUNTRY NEEDS FIRE, SOMETIMES IT DOESN'T. THERE'S ALL KINDS OF INDICATORS, BUT IT HAS TO BE PUT INTO THE CULTURAL CONTEXT, WITH THE TRADITIONAL OWNERS. THEY HAVE TO ENDORSE IT.



MY CURRENT ROLE IS TRADITIONAL FIRE PROGRAMS COORDINATOR, BASED IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA WORKING IN THE SOUTH IN NOONGAR COUNTRY. I'M MOVING SOON TO WORK IN A SIMILAR ROLE IN NEW SOUTH WALES. MY ROLE IS TO ENSURE THAT THE ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY IS A PLAYER IN THE PROCESS, THE TRADITIONAL OWNERS TELLING THE STORY, RIGHT ACROSS AUSTRALIA. IT'S IMPORTANT FOR GOVERNMENTS TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THERE ARE TRADITIONAL OWNERS THAT HAVE ATTACHMENT TO LAND THAT'S BEING MANAGED BY MAINSTREAM FIRE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS.



TALKING ABOUT CULTURAL BURNING WITH DIFFERENT PEOPLE IS A GOOD, HEALING FEELING.

MY ELDERS ARE WATCHING ME NOW IN A SPIRITUAL WAY, THEY ARE ENDORSING ME TO SHARE THIS KNOWLEDGE.

WE MUST BRING THIS KNOWLEDGE FORWARD TO OPEN UP DISCUSSION, BECAUSE WE ARE DEALING WITH CLIMATE CHANGE.

WHETHER AT THE POLICY LEVEL, GROUND LEVEL, WORKING WITH STAFF, ON COUNTRY WORKING WITH TRADITIONAL OWNERS, UNDERSTANDING THE ENVIRONMENT, AND UNDERSTANDING THE REGULATIONS AND LEGISLATION.



RECENTLY I'VE BEEN DOING A LOT OF PAINTINGS, TEACHING OTHERS ABOUT LAND MANAGEMENT.

THIS PAINTING DEPICTS MY DESERT COUNTRY DURING A FIRE SEASON. THE PAINTING SHOWS HOW THE FIRE IS TRAVELLING AROUND IMPORTANT SITES TO PROTECT THEM, IN A MOSAIC OR PATCH BURNING PATTERN. MANY OF MY PAINTINGS PAY HOMAGE TO THE LAND.

WE DON'T ACTUALLY OWN THE LAND, THAT'S NOT THE WAY WE THINK, THE LAND OWNS US.

IT'S VERY IMPORTANT THAT CULTURAL BURNING IS ALWAYS APPLIED IN CONSULTATION WITH THE LAND."

WAYNE AMPETYANE DAVIS
KAYTEJ ELDER
TRADITIONAL FIRE PROGRAMS
COORDINATOR WA*

* AT THE TIME OF WRITING, NOW AT ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY AND HERITAGE PARTNERSHIP, TRANSPORT FOR NSW.



CULTURAL BURNING in southern Australia

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