



Boolah-Dillah

Bulahdelah Mountain Aboriginal Place

Bulahdelah Mountain is an Aboriginal Place in recognition of the cultural spiritual and historical significance of the area to the Worimi People.

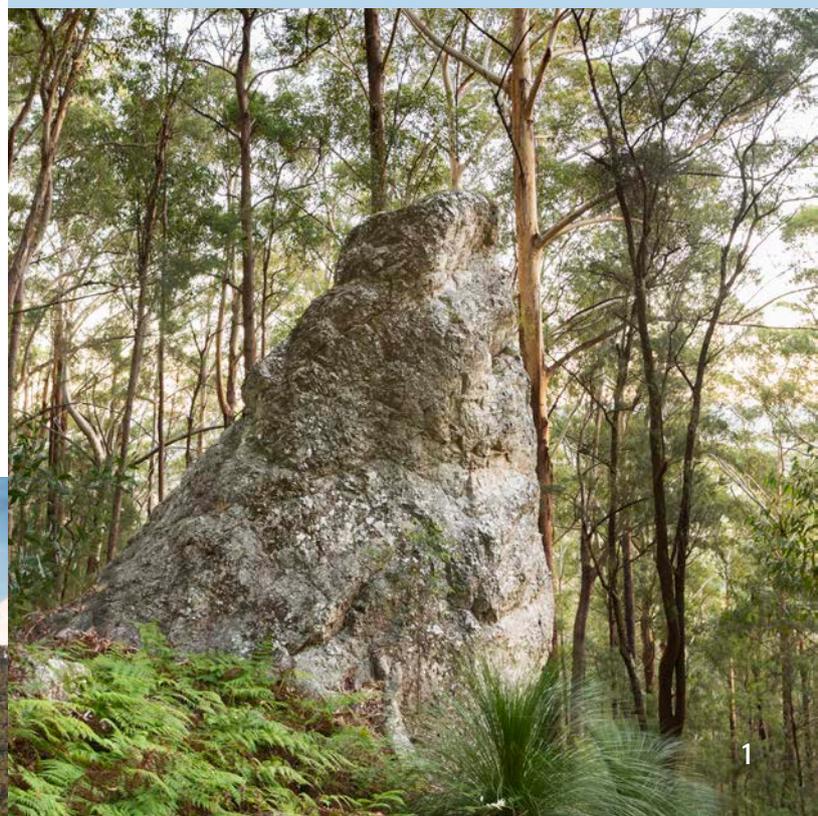
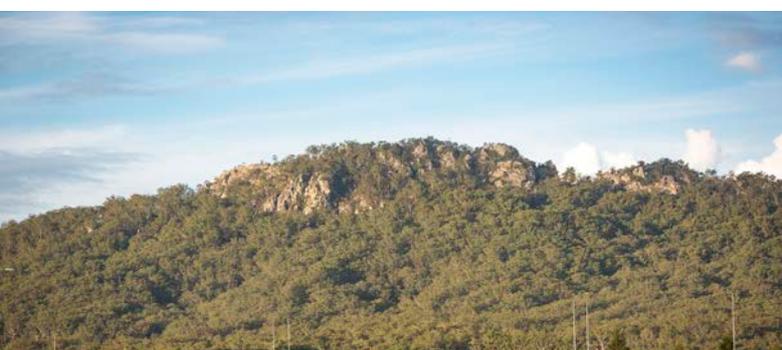
Bulahdelah Mountain has welcomed visitors for many years to experience the two lookouts and walking tracks through this beautiful forest. At the start of 2017 Forestry Corporation and Karuah Local Aboriginal Land Council started working together to revitalise and modernise the facilities on the mountain while highlighting the importance of the Aboriginal Place and the Worimi Culture.

What has been achieved to date:

- Planned what we wanted to achieve together
- Removed old visitor infrastructure
- Held sculpture workshops with community
- Carved trees at Boolah-Dillah
- Installed interpretive and wayfinding signage
- Developed a cultural space including seating and a fire-pit
- Upgraded visitor facilities

Worimi People

Worimi People are the traditional custodians of this country and Worimi Country is generally bounded by four rivers: the Hunter River to the south; Manning River to the north; and, the Alyn and Paterson Rivers to the west. This region is home to 18 clan groups or 'ngurras' all of whom spoke the Gathang (Kattang, Kuttung) language. 'Country' is central to Worimi culture as a place of belonging and belief. It is more than just the land and includes all living things, the seasons, stories and creation spirits.





The workshops

A series of sculpture workshops were held at the Land Council to develop skills in carving, create sculpture for the mountain and provide economic opportunities. Forestry Corporation provided small logs from one of its sustainable harvesting operations and tools. Sculptor John Van Der Kolk shared his expertise with

the community over a number of workshops.

The sculpture workshops evolved to carrying out contemporary tree carving, a traditional practice, creating a unique visitor experience on the mountain. Young people and Elders have developed the designs which tell cultural stories with young people learning skills in carving and reconnecting with traditional skills.





Carved trees

For thousands of years the Aboriginal people of central, north-western and north coast NSW have ceremoniously carved trees as a form of artistic and cultural expression. Whenever you see a picture of an Aboriginal carved tree, it's more than likely from NSW). *Ronald Briggs and Melissa Jasckon Carved trees: Aboriginal cultures of western NSW 2011*



In the landscape there are both carved and scarred trees present still today. Carved trees are unique and expressive forms of communication and were used as markers for burials, safe travelling paths, boundaries and had an important role in ceremony.

Scarred trees are what was left after the bark was removed from a tree for use as burial wraps, canoes, coolamons, shelters and shields. Scarred trees are still very prominent in our landscape though carved trees are very rare to see today due to them being destroyed and removed.

Carved trees mark this Worimi Place. They are a reminder to people walking by that this is a special area, a message that Boolah-Dillah Mountain is a significant place.

Watch the video

www.youtube.com/user/NSWForests



Collaboration

These local State forests contain a rich history of Worimi cultural heritage following thousands of years of management by traditional owners. Today Forestry Corporation and its Aboriginal Partnerships Team is creating pathways built on trust and transparency returning the community to the bush and the bush to the community.

Forestry Corporation protects, nurtures and manages Aboriginal cultural heritage and significant sites while creating sustainable partnerships with the Aboriginal community. Bulahdelah Mountain is an example of what we are trying to achieve across the state.



Karuah Local Aboriginal Land Council

The Aboriginal people of the Port Stephens - Myall Lakes area, Kattang speaking people, have a proud and continuous history of caring for country and welcoming the stranger.

Bulahdelah Mountain is a special place for us and this partnership means we can highlight this significance as well as underpin our economic development through cultural tourism. We want all to enjoy this special place which is the centre link of special places from coastal sands of Port Stephens to the Snow Tops of Barrington.

Our vision is to open up an historic song trail from Karuah to Tahlee to the Myall Lakes to Bulahdelah Mountain and beyond. We can only achieve this through the trust and cooperation that this partnership demonstrates.



Project collaborators

Karuah Local Aboriginal Land Council

Sculptor John Van Der Kolk

The Interpretive Design Company

Further information

For further information about State forests, visit www.forestrycorporation.com.au or share with us at [#visitnswforests](https://www.facebook.com/visitnswforests) or [facebook.com/visitnswforests](https://www.facebook.com/visitnswforests)

