



Heritage and Cultural Mapping National Native Title Conference

Central Desert Native Title Services Ltd
June 2011



Major Projects

- Any matters that will have a major or permanent effect on native title rights.
- Includes mining, land access or other proposed development matters.



Speakers and topics

- ◆ General principles of Cultural Mapping
Michelle Alexander
- ◆ Anthropology and fieldwork experiences
Dr Bill Kruse and Jodi Neale
- ◆ Archaeology and decision making under traditional law and custom
Claire Greer
- ◆ Native title holders and heritage, cultural mapping and traditional law and custom
Darren Farmer



Geographically: Western Australia - Western Desert region

Culturally: Western Desert Cultural Bloc

NTRI: Exclusive Use Possession Occupation Native Title
Native Title Claims exclusive and non-exclusive

Legal: Aboriginal Heritage Act (1972)
Native Title Act 1993 (Cth)



What is Cultural Mapping

- The identification of heritage values through a cultural assessment of the regional landscape around Major Projects.
- Includes: internal, confidential report and cultural map that describe and visually identify the cultural landscape.



Why do we undertake Cultural Mapping

- So traditional law and custom remains at the forefront of decision making for Major Project matters.
- As the basis of a Cultural Management Strategy that allows native title holders to make holistic decisions about sites and site complexes.



Purpose of Cultural Management Strategy

- Identification of Cultural Threshold Issues

OR

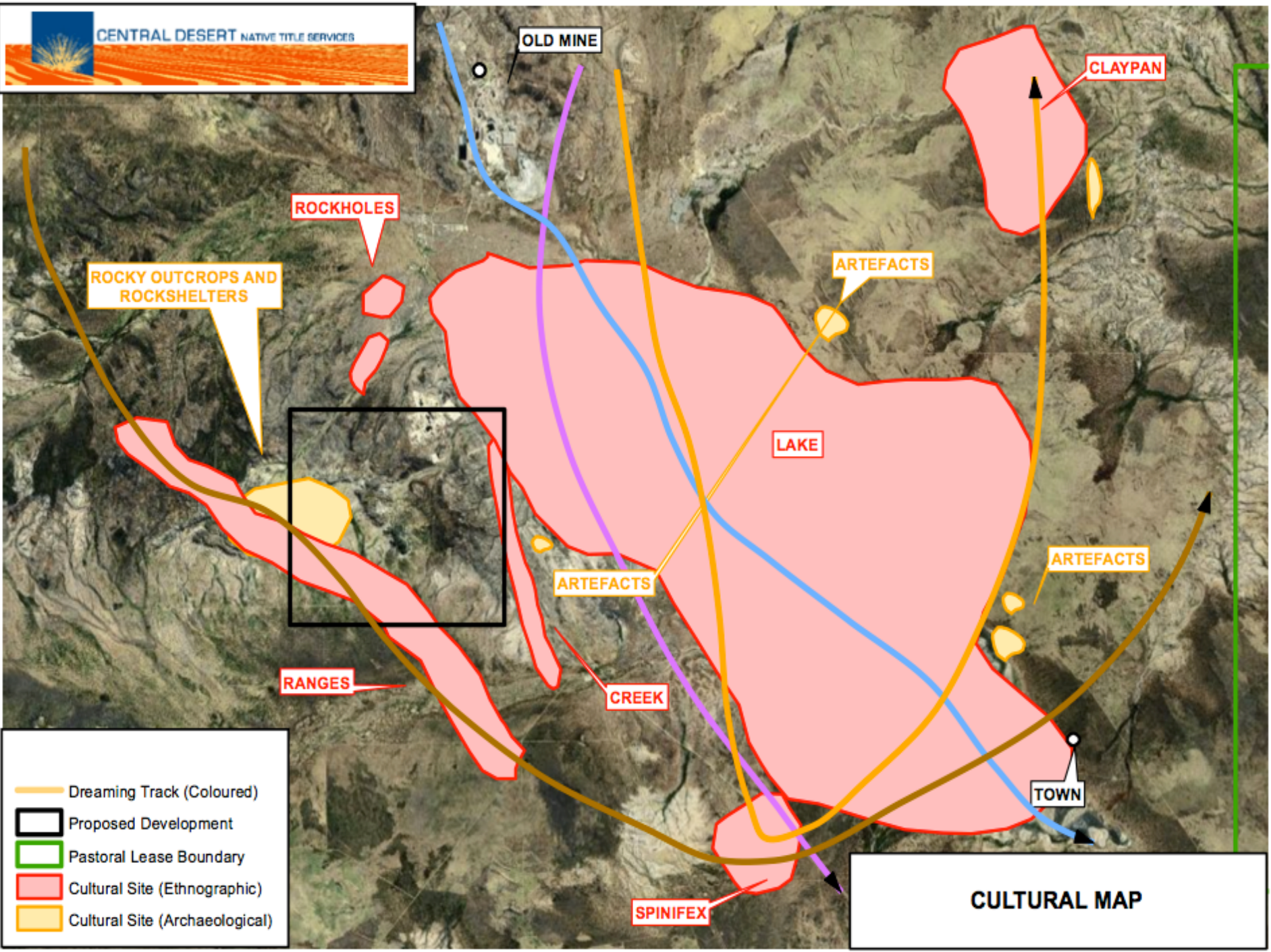
- Development of Cultural Management Plan



Public versus Private interests

Aboriginal Heritage Act: **Public** Interest Legislation

Native Title Holders: **Private** Right
to protect and maintain sites of particular significance





Archaeology in Cultural Mapping

- Understanding the archaeology of the area is an important part of the complete picture
- The importance comes from the place of the archaeology within traditional law and custom
- The relevance of archaeology in this context depends on using a flexible and integrated approach to view individual sites as part of a wider cultural landscape



Ethnographically significant archaeology

- Approaches to archaeological heritage surveys in WA are defined by the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972*
- Significance of individual sites assessed based on their ethnographic or archaeological value
- Archaeological sites on the Register are often viewed as static and unchanging, requiring protection and preservation
- Western Desert people continue to use their significant places in traditional ways, which includes exercising their right under law and custom to alter, move or remove material



Archaeological methodologies

- There are a number of levels of detail that can be applied in the archaeological cultural mapping process:
 - Desktop survey for archaeological potential
 - Selective/ targeted survey of a portion of the area
 - Comprehensive survey with minimal recording
 - Comprehensive survey with detailed recording
 - Excavation may also be relevant



Interpretation of the archaeology

- Specific interpretation may include the representativeness of any sites located, and the potential of the sites to answer regional research questions.
- Level of recording involved is no different to any other archaeological survey. Difference is the ethnographic interpretation of the archaeological results based on traditional law and custom.
- The results gained through this process become part of an integrated cultural map to create a complete picture of the interconnected landscape of the area.



What we've learned so far

- Archaeology is an involved and intensive part of the cultural mapping process, and may need several stages of increasingly detailed methodology to gain a complete picture
- The information gained from the archaeology is not an end point. The archaeological knowledge gained feeds back into the ethnographic processes
- The survey process may return extremely detailed scientific information about the archaeology, but not all will appear in the cultural map- may be limited to archaeological sites of specific ethnographic value.

