

# Great Victoria Desert Biodiversity Trust Annual Report



**2017-2018**

A report of the outputs, expenditure  
and governance of the Trust

August 2018

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## Message from the Chair

On behalf of the Management Panel of the Great Victoria Desert Biodiversity Trust, I am pleased to present the fifth Annual Report on our activities. This report is a public documentation of the Trust's activities for the 2017-18 financial year, ensuring our accountability to the organisations that fund the Trust, to the key stakeholders in the Great Victoria Desert (GVD), and to the broader WA public.

The budget figures show that the Trust has really 'hit its straps' this year in relation to funding significant projects in the GVD. In 2016-17 we spent \$120,289 on projects whereas this year we spent \$313,481 on projects. Interestingly, \$72,553 of this was spent on purchasing special camera equipment to be used for the Sandhill Dunnart survey project. This camera equipment is a significant asset we now own, which we can use for other surveys, and, we will make these available to other research projects in the GVD not necessarily funded by the Trust.

As well, we wrapped up the Adaptive Management Implementation Plan, and the Trust can now build on this to work with the key stakeholders in the GVD, especially the Traditional Owners, to further the aims of the Trust.

I would like to personally thank the members of the Management Panel for their continued commitment to the Trust's objectives and the Technical Advisory Panel for their high level and invaluable technical advice, all of whom have provided their time without being remunerated. A special welcome back to Kathryn Sinclair who has returned part-time from maternity leave as Trust's Operations Manager. We also welcomed Kylie Payne who joined us this year and is now job-sharing with Kathryn.

In the year ahead, the Trust wants to continue to increase its funding of important projects that add to the knowledge of the ecology and better management of the GVD, especially in cooperation with the Traditional Owners. As well, a priority will continue to be to identify other organisations and industry groups who would like to be active members of the Trust.

Finally, I would like to formally acknowledge the strong and effective working relationship the Trust has with AngloGold Ashanti Australia and the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, and with the WA Public Trustees who manage the funds for the Trust.



Dr Garry Middle



## Executive Summary

The Trust has increased momentum throughout the 2017-18 financial year, with completion and commencement of several important projects focussing on threatened species and biodiversity threats in the region.

Five projects were completed during the year – four initiated in 2016-17 and one initiated in 2017-18:

- Adaptive Management Implementation Plan for the GVD (Completed July 2017);
- Stratified survey site selection for Malleefowl across the GVD (Completed July 2017);
- Extension to Northern Australian and Rangelands Fire Information (NAFI) fire scar mapping (Completed Oct 2017);
- Burn Rules and biodiversity mapping in Spinifex People's country (Completed Nov 2017);
- Sandhill Dunnart Camera Trapping Survey (Completed April, 2018); and
- Traditional and Contemporary Fire Patterns (Completed May, 2018)

In addition, two projects were scoped and initiated – for completion in 2018-19. These projects will provide essential background information for the future planning and implementation of on-ground activities

- LIDAR corridor for the detection of Malleefowl mounds
- Buffel Free GVD – Development of a Buffel Grass Management Plan in the GVD – Ten Deserts (Trust has contributed funding)

The Management Panel continues to provide oversight and direction on Trust matters, working with the Trust's Operations Manager/ Joint Operations Managers throughout the year, including during two Management Panel meetings, one informal Management Panel meeting and several out-of-session decisions and ad hoc advice.

During the year, Kylie Payne replaced Caroline Minton as acting Operations Manager, whilst Kathryn Sinclair was on maternity leave. Kathryn Sinclair returned from maternity leave to resume her role as Operations Manager in a job-share capacity with Kylie Payne. The Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) for the Trust maintained its original membership and continued to provide technical advice on various projects and plans, through participation in three TAP meetings and various discussions and review of documents.

Whilst the Trust continues to work with several partners for collaborative conservation and management works in the GVD, the sourcing of additional financial partners has proven to be challenging.

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## 1. Introduction

The Trust represents a unique model for a biodiversity offset in Western Australia, and Australia in general. It was established by the Tropicana Joint Venture (AngloGold Ashanti Australia (AGAA) Ltd (manager and 70% owner) and Independence Group NL (30% owner)) as the central part of an offset package for the Tropicana Gold Mine (TGM) in Western Australia under the Commonwealth Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act 1999.

2017-18 was the fifth year of operation for the Trust and marked a year in which the results of several important foundational projects were obtained. In July 2017 the Adaptive Management Implementation Plan (AMIP) was completed. This document was a compilation of outcomes from meetings between key partners in the region and contained guidance on the key priorities and threats facing the region. Utilising this document and discussions from the workshop, the Trust funded or contributed funds to the following projects:

- 1) Malleefowl site selection project – Gaia Resources
- 2) Extension to NAFI Fire Scar Mapping – Charles Darwin University
- 3) Cultural Burn Rule and Biodiversity Mapping – Spinifex Land Management
- 4) Sandhill Dunnart Camera Trapping Survey – Greening Australia
- 5) Traditional and Contemporary fire patterns – Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions
- 6) LIDAR corridor for the detection of Malleefowl mounds – Gaia Resources
- 7) Buffel Free GVD – Development of a Buffel Grass Management Plan in the GVD – Ten Deserts
- 8) Minyma Tjutaku Uninypa: the Seed Women – Spinifex Rangers (funding committed)

Three of these projects are related to fire management – one of the biggest challenges for threatened species conservation in the Great Victoria Desert (GVD).

The Sandhill Dunnart Camera Trapping Survey was the first of its kind in the GVD, with the placement of camera traps in a wide variety of habitats across the GVD. Whilst only two Sandhill Dunnarts (SHD) were detected, the survey contributed significantly to knowledge of species and habitat across the desert. The Malleefowl site selection project created a map of potential Malleefowl habitat across the GVD and generated 100 survey sites. The LiDAR corridor project designs a pathway for LiDAR to be conducted and builds on data from the Malleefowl site selection project.

The Trust also contributed funds to the Ten Deserts project, Buffel Free GVD – Development of a Buffel Grass Management Plan. This project aligns with one of highest priorities identified through the Adaptive Management Partnership (AMP) in the AMIP. The Trust

committed funds to the establishment of a laboratory for seed propagation by women in the Spinifex community. This project, whilst not yet completed, aligns with the Trust's objective to support indigenous employment whilst simultaneously promoting the conservation of biodiversity through seed collection and propagation.

The Trust's main aim is to deliver conservation benefits to nationally-listed threatened species, at a landscape-scale, and facilitate indigenous involvement in land management and conservation activities in the region. The projects implemented in the 2017-18 financial year take significant steps to addressing these central aims.

The Trust's purposes, region of focus ('Trust Area') and governance structure are outlined in more detail below.

### 1.1 Trust Purposes

The purpose of the Trust is to achieve the following objectives:

1. Develop a Bioregional Management Plan (also referred to as a 'Biodiversity Conservation Plan') for the Western Great Victoria Desert bioregions 1 and 2 (i.e. the 'Trust Area');
2. Facilitate and/or undertake priority research in the Bioregional Management Plan at the landscape level and into species considered to be of Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES) under the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act 1999*, including the Sandhill Dunnart and Malleefowl;
3. Fund on-ground environmental and conservation management at the landscape level, with emphasis on net conservation benefits to threatened species, including those considered MNES;
4. Facilitate indigenous involvement in land management and conservation activities in support of the above objectives.

These objectives reflect those specified in Condition 6 of the *EPBC Act* approval 2008/4270 for the Tropicana Gold Mine. They have been integrated into the Project Plan submitted to the former Department of the Environment (DoE) in 2011 and Schedule 1 of the Trust Deed executed in 2013. The Project Plan was updated and approved in August 2015 to reflect the revised direction of the Trust since it commenced activities in late 2013.

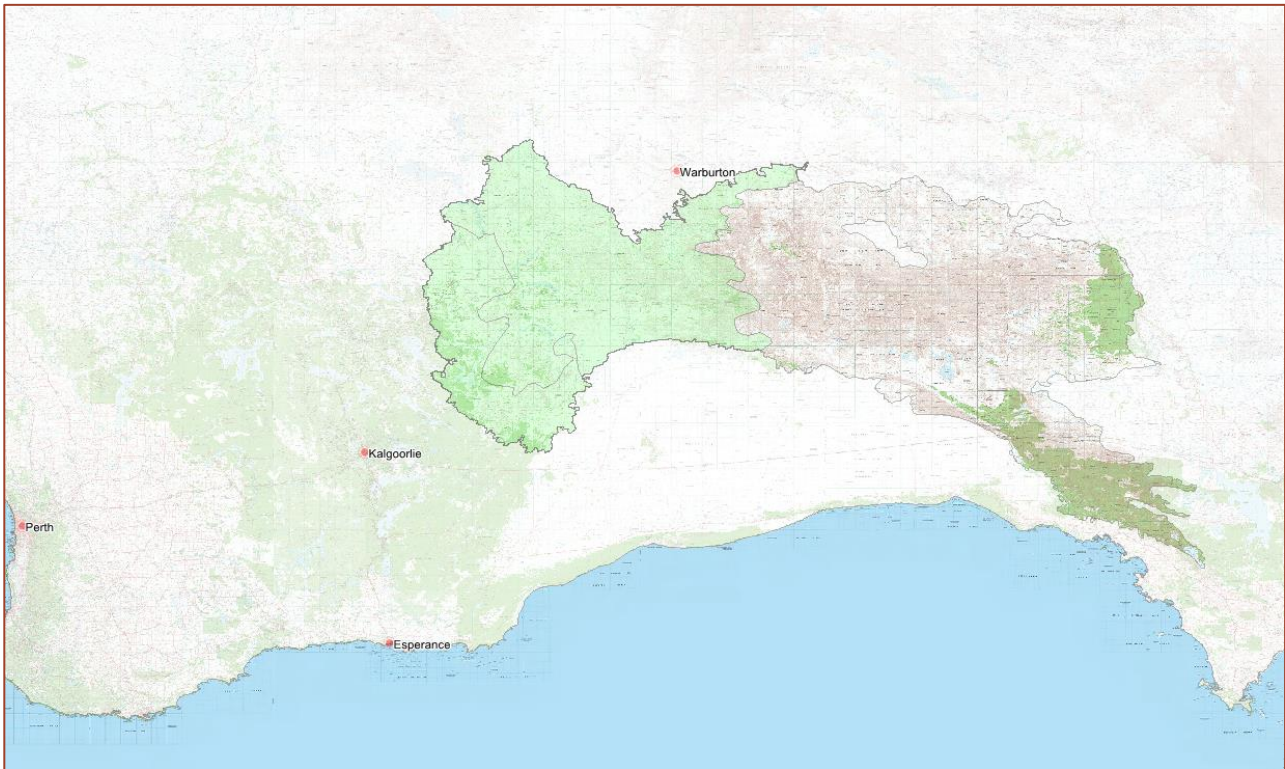
### 1.2 Trust Area

The Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia (IBRA) classifies Australia's landscapes into 89 large geographically distinct bioregions. These are based on common climate, geology, landform, native vegetation and species information (DoE, 2015). The 89 bioregions are further refined to form 419 subregions. These are more localised and homogenous geomorphological units in each bioregion.

The GVD is one of the 89 IBRA bioregions. It is comprised of 6 subregions which extend from approximately 200km east of Kalgoorlie in Western Australia to cover large areas of



South Australia. The entire GVD IBRA region covers 42,375,084 ha. The Trust's area of focus ('Trust Area') is comprised of the two most western subregions of the GVD, known as Shield and Central, which are entirely located within Western Australia (refer to Figure 1). These two sub-regions cover an area of 17,332,721 ha.



**Figure 1. The location and extent of the GVD (outlined) and the Trust Area (bright green)**

Whilst the Trust's activities are predominantly focussed on research and on-ground activities within the Shield and Central subregions of the GVD, they can occur outside this region if they meet the Trust's overall objectives. That is, they must be relevant and beneficial to species and biodiversity within the Trust Area, especially species and communities that are MNES protected by the *EPBC Act*.

## 2. Governance

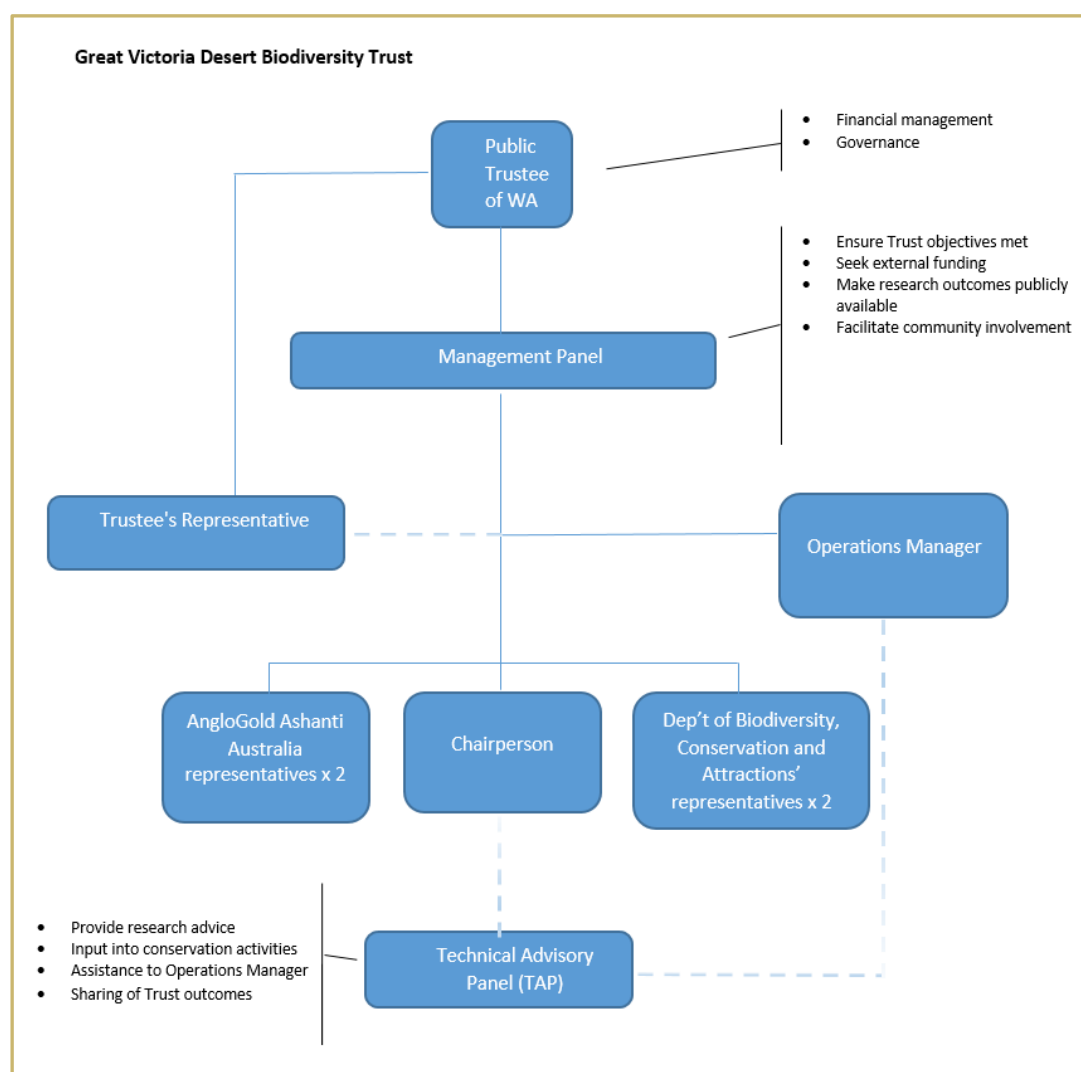
The governance structure of the Trust is a key component of ensuring stakeholder support and the delivery of activities that align with the Project Plan approved by the former DoE as part of the TGM *EPBC Act* approval (2008/4270). The governance structure of the Trust is outlined in Figure 2.

The activities and expenditure of the Trust are the overall responsibility of the Trust's Management Panel, which consists of representatives from the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) and AngloGold Ashanti Australia (AGAA), as well as an independent Chair.

The day-to-day management and operation of the Trust is the responsibility of the Operations Manager (previously the 'Trust Coordinator'). The Operations Manager reports to the Trust's Management Panel via the Chair. The Operations Manager is supported through the provision of technical advice from the Trust's Technical Advisory Panel (TAP). The TAP consists of five members – four independent experts and a technical expert from the Management Panel.

The Public Trustee of Western Australia maintains the financial accountability of the Trust, ensuring that all the spending of the Trust account aligns with the Trust Deed. The Public Trustee maintains a role on the Management Panel, having a standing invitation to attend meetings.

The Trust's funds, held by the Public Trustee, are allocated to various organisations and individuals according to anticipated benefit, value for money, and alignment with the Trust's objectives and priorities. The recipients include Traditional Owner groups, researchers, not-for-profit environmental groups and expert consultants.



**Figure 2. The Structure of the Great Victoria Desert Biodiversity Trust**



The Trust, and all of its activities and expenditure, is governed by an overarching Trust Deed. This document details the relationship between:

- The Trust's Management Panel;
- AngloGold Ashanti Australia, as the founder; and
- The Public Trustee of Western Australia, as the financial manager.

The Trust Deed also outlines the roles and responsibilities of the Management Panel, Chair, Trustee, Operations Manager and the TAP, and the purposes and scope of the Trust.

The following sections of this report describe the Trust's governance in more detail, as well as specifics regarding governance of the Trust in the 2017-18 financial year. Additional background information is located at [www.gvdbiodiversitytrust.org.au/about-us](http://www.gvdbiodiversitytrust.org.au/about-us) and in the Trust Deed (<http://www.gvdbiodiversitytrust.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/GVDBT-Trust-Deed.pdf>).

## 2.1 The Management Panel

The Management Panel met three times during the 2017-18 financial year, as outlined in Table 1, to ensure progress was maintained on key priorities. The Management Panel also made several out-of-session consensus-based decisions regarding projects and variations to projects.

Dr Stephen van Leeuwen remained a representative from DBCA whilst the Trust awaited documentation from DBCA confirming his role on the Management Panel.

**Table 1: Management Panel Meetings and Attendance 2017-18**

Attendee	Meeting 1: 31/10/2017 Attendance	Meeting 2: 09/04/2018 Attendance	Meeting 3: 26/06/2018 Attendance (not formal meeting as did not have quorum)
Kris Anderson (Public Trustee)	✓	✓	✓
Norm Galli (AGAA)	✓	✓ *	✓*
Garry Middle (Chair)	✓	✓	✓
Nerilee Rockman (AGAA)	✓*	✓	Apologies
Stephen van Leeuwen (DBCA)	✓	✓	Apologies
Nigel Wessels (DBCA)	✓	✓*	✓
Kathryn Sinclair (OM)	✓ *	✓	Apologies

Kylie Payne (OM)	✓	✓	✓
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Key: \* = Skype/teleconference

The Trust's management team continues to acquire a greater understanding of the GVD's assets and threats, which is essential for effectively planning and implementing sound conservation and management strategies.

## 2.2 The Operations Manager

During the year, Kylie Payne replaced Caroline Minton as acting Operations Manager. Ms Payne had a one day handover with Caroline Minton and worked in the role full time for five weeks whilst Kathryn Sinclair was on maternity leave. Ms Sinclair returned from maternity leave in October 2017 and resumed the role as Operations Manager in a job-share capacity with Kylie Payne. The role was initially divided with Ms Payne working three days a week and Kathryn working two days a week. In March 2018 Kathryn began working three days a week and Kylie commenced working two days a week. The Operations Managers have developed a 'roles and responsibilities document' which outlines the workload allocated to each person. The Operations Managers communicate on a regular basis to ensure the workload is completed on time and there is limited duplication of effort.

The Chair of the Trust had regular meetings (1-2 per fortnight) with the Trust's Operations Manager/joint Operations Managers throughout the year to ensure the Trust maintained steady progress on key activities and maintained a strategic vision of the objectives of the Trust.

## 2.3 The Public Trustee

The Public Trustee's representative attended all meetings of the Management Panel in 2017-18, as shown in Table 1, as well as providing assistance with donations to the Trust and project invoice payments. The Trustee has provided quarterly and annual financial statements (refer to section 4.1), which are tabled at Management Panel meetings.

As in previous years, the Public Trustee's representative worked closely with Ernst and Young, the nominated financial auditors, to ensure that all of the Trust's spending, accounting and financial reporting had been conducted appropriately. The Trustee continues to give strong guidance to the Trust to ensure it meets both financial and legal obligations.

## 2.4 The Technical Advisory Panel

The Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) was established in April 2015 to provide expert advice and support to the Trust, such as providing feedback on the scope of research proposals, on-ground environmental or conservation activities and draft research reports. The membership of the TAP has remained unchanged since establishment, retaining its five original biodiversity experts.

The TAP met three times during the 2017-18 financial year, as outlined in Table 2, to discuss issues including: the scoping of Sandhill Dunnart surveys and Malleefowl site selection and potential LiDAR use. TAP members regularly made themselves available providing advice and review on documents and projects throughout the year.

**Table 2: Technical Advisory Panel Meetings and Attendance 2017-18**

Attendee	Meeting 1: 11/9/2017 Attendance	Meeting 2: 13/12/2017 Attendance	Meeting 3: 21/3/2018 Attendance
Belinda Bastow	✓	✓*	✓*
Ryan Ellis	✓	✓	✗
Katherine Moseby	✗	✓*	✓*
Blair Parsons	✓	✓	✓
Stephen van Leeuwen	✗	✗	✓
Kathryn Sinclair / Caroline Minton	✓ (CM)	✓ (KS)	✓ (KS)
Kylie Payne	n/a	✗	✓

Key: \* = Skype/teleconference

### 3. Trust Activities

#### 3.1 Funded Projects

An overview of the works initiated and/or completed during the 2017-18 financial year is provided below.

##### 3.1.1 Traditional and Contemporary fire patterns – Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions

The DBCA were engaged by the Trust in April 2017 to reconstruct traditional Aboriginal burning patterns in the GVD. It was initially hoped that aerial photography from the military's Blue Streak Rocket Project (BSR) in 1953 could be used, however only a small section of the rocket's flight path was photographed, in a remote area in the Gibson Desert. Instead, the earliest aerial photography available has been sourced from 1960/61, covering the areas of Spinifex country where Aboriginal people were believed to be still living a traditional or a transient traditional lifestyle.

The final report was provided in May 2018. The outcomes of the report demonstrated that the old aerial photographs showed that the people who carried out the burning prior to 1961 had a sound knowledge of fire behaviour; they were able to keep the fires small because they understood relationships between fire behaviour, vegetation (fuel) and weather, especially wind. The consequence of broadscale patch-burning was that it

mitigated, or buffered, the harmful effects of hot season bushfires. The report concluded that action is needed to increase the capacity of land managers to better manage fire in the GVD and to re-instate traditional Anangu fire management across larger areas of high cultural and conservation value. Neil Burrows and Jane Chapman delivered a presentation to the Management Panel in June 2018.

### 3.1.2 Extension to NAFI Fire Scar Mapping – Charles Darwin University

The Trust contracted the North Australia and Rangelands Fire Information (NAFI) service to complete long-term fire history mapping for the GVD and the broader Western Australian rangelands. Fire mapping for the years 2003–2016 has previously been completed under separate contracts coordinated by Rangelands NRM (RNRM) and part-funded by the Trust. The aim of the project was to capture fire scar imagery from 2000 – 2002 to allow a fully accessible system to identify ‘long unburnt’ areas. The project originally intended to use the capture of monthly burn scars from Landsat imagery at a resolution of 1:250m for each year. The project team instead used imagery from the MODIS sensors carried on board the NASA earth observing satellites *Terra* and *Aqua*. Daytime images from these sensors (below) are available twice a day from each satellite giving four possible updates a day.

The final report was provided in September 2017 and Peter Jacklyn delivered a presentation in October 2017 to an audience of the Trust Management Panel, environmental consultants, not-for-profit organisations and mining representatives. The presentation was well received by the audience. The mapping is displayed on the NAFI website ([www.firenorth.org.au](http://www.firenorth.org.au)), administered by Charles Darwin University, which also provides an online reporting tool that can convert the fire scar data into graphs and tables. The tool includes relevant GVD areas, available for reporting in drop-down menus. Fire scar history identifies frequency of burns, as well as insight into vegetation types and fuel loads. This information will be used to improve the planning and implementation of fire management in the GVD, to protect threatened species.

### 3.1.3 Burn Rule and Biodiversity Mapping in Spinifex Lands – Spinifex Land Management

Previous attempts by DBCA and Spinifex Land Management (SLM) in 2016 to implement fire management through targeted burning were restricted due to uncertainty regarding the cultural authority to burn. In April 2017 SLM were engaged by the Trust to determine Burn Rules for Spinifex People’s country. SLM combined the project funding from the Trust with funding from the Maralinga Piling Trust and the National Landcare Program to facilitate a ‘Back to Country’ week for the Spinifex people.

Around 80 members and staff from the Tjuntjunjarra Community made the trip to Ilkurlka in May 2017 for the event. The week’s activities included flying Tjilpi and Minyma (Elders), Rangers and key family members via helicopter to significant ecological and cultural sites, using funding from the Trust. Burn Rules were established to protect these sites from fire. The Rangers also collected ecological data to assist the Trust and SLM, such as vegetation

type and the presence of Malleefowl (including previously unknown locations), weeds, introduced predators and feral herbivores.



Figure 3. Left to right: SLM Head Ranger Ethan Hansen, Tjilpi Mr Fred Grant and Mr Roy Underwood, prior to heading off to their country

The school children from the Tjuntjuntjara Remote Community School interviewed the Elders and Rangers to document their experiences on video, and stories were also captured through paintings. Interviews with the Elders were used as a means to document traditional land management practices, such as patch burning, prior to European influence in Spinifex People's country. Together with the Burn Rules this information will be used by the GVDBT and SLM to inform future fire management planning, through re-introduction of traditional patch-burn practices to protect vegetation and threatened fauna in the GVD from large unmanaged wildfires. The Project was completed in November 2017 when the Spinifex Rangers delivered a presentation to Adaptive Management Partners including the Trust, Rangelands NRM, DBCA and Yilka ahead of the Indigenous Desert Alliance workshop.

#### 3.1.4 Sandhill Dunnart Camera Trapping Survey – Greening Australia

The SHD Camera Trapping survey was the on-ground implementation of the baseline survey the Trust commissioned in 2016: *Defining a baseline survey design for Sandhill Dunnart (Sminthopsis psammophila) in the Great Victoria Desert of Western Australia* (DPaW, May 2016). This survey was designed to survey a wide variety of habitats across the GVD to determine:

- 1) where SHD could be detected
- 2) if SHD could be detected in habitat or areas not previously thought of as suitable.

During the survey 138 cameras were set up at 20 sites and more than 140,000 images were captured during survey. Nine sites were established in late September/early October with motion sensor cameras remaining in the field until early November and 11 sites were established in early-November, remaining in the field until mid-December.



To conduct this survey the Trust purchased 70 Reconyx PC900 covert 'no-glow' cameras and associated batteries, chargers and SDs cards. This represents a significant asset for the Trust and the cameras will be used for future studies in the GVD.

The survey detected SHD in two locations (one as confirmed and once as highly likely). The survey detected a breadth of data including 137 fauna species, comprising 25 reptile, 88 bird, 18 native mammal and six introduced mammal species. Fauna species included several species rarely encountered in the GVD and has resulted in the extension of range for a number of species. In addition substantial amounts of opportunistic siting data and habitat data was collected.

Following on from this survey, a second phase survey will take place to pitfall trap and camera trap the two sites where SHD were detected. This aims to collect a rich variety of data including habitat data, species abundance data, SHD age / gender characteristics, Malleefowl data (through the inclusion of Malleefowl long walks) and camera trap data.

#### 3.1.5 Malleefowl Survey Site Selection

Very little is still known about Malleefowl abundance and distribution throughout the GVD. Most of the records in the GVD are primarily in the southwest corner as a result of survey programs associated with resources development proposals. Elsewhere records are sparse and isolated. Additional surveys are required to identify Malleefowl distribution and habitat preference in the GVD.

Gaia Resources was contracted by the Trust in May 2017 to identify suitable additional sites to survey for Malleefowl across a range of categories of likely Malleefowl habitat suitability. Various mapping layers were analysed, including Beard's vegetation associations, fire scars, Landsat imagery, roads and tracks. A suitability map book containing areas of high, moderate and low suitability for Malleefowl was created, following workshops with experts and key stakeholders.

A smaller set of potential survey locations that are accessible from existing roads and tracks, and geographically distributed across the GVD, were subsequently nominated from the thousands of candidate polygon areas. Seventy-six survey sites were randomly selected from this subset, across the three categories of suitability. A final map book of sites to survey has been created to provide to the survey team(s). The survey sites also include twenty-four of the accessible sites where Malleefowl have previously been recorded. The contract was completed in mid-July 2017.

#### 3.1.6 LIDAR corridor for the detection of Malleefowl mounds

LIDAR is recognised as a cost effective method to detect Malleefowl mounds over large areas. Gaia Resources has been contracted by the Trust to identify a corridor to undertake LIDAR to detect Malleefowl mounds in the GVD.

The corridor is being identified based on the following criteria:

- more than 10 years since fire
- high Malleefowl suitability based on vegetation type or moderate Malleefowl suitability (these were derived from the Malleefowl Site Selection Project <sup>ref section 3.1.5</sup>)
- within 2km of roads or tracks (to make it easier for ground truthing)

The corridor is expected to take in a wide variety of habitats to determine if Malleefowl mounds can be detected in areas outside the highly suitable areas. The project is expected to be completed in August 2018.

### 3.1.7 Buffel Free GVD – Development of a Buffel Grass Management Plan in the GVD – Ten Deserts

Buffel grass poses a serious threat to biodiversity in arid areas as it is a long lived, deep-rooted species that is able out compete native vegetation due to its ability to disperse large amounts of seed and tolerate drought, fire, grazing and a wide variety of soil types (DoEE, 2015).

Ten Deserts ([tendeserts.org.au](http://tendeserts.org.au)) through the working group 'Buffel Free GVD' determined the necessity of creating a regional, cross-border initiative to control Buffel grass and prevent its spread. The Trust, through the AMIP, has also identified Buffel grass as a 'High' threat to the region and 'Integrated Buffel Grass Weed Management' was listed as 'Project One' for the partners in the region.

The alignment of this Buffel Grass Bioregional Management Plan with the outcomes of the AMIP, made supporting this project important for the Trust. The development of the plan is currently underway and is expected to be completed in September / October. The plan will enable Indigenous groups and other stakeholders to work together to collate cross-border (South Australia, Western Australia and Northern Territory) data, assess cross-border resources and develop a single action plan that can be effectively undertaken across the GVD.

This project that has a high potential to deliver meaningful results to the region in terms of Buffel Grass management as well as potentially delivering specific priority projects that the Trust may be able to fund through Indigenous Ranger programs in the future.

### 3.1.8 Trust Promotion

Kylie Payne attended the three day Goldfields Environmental Management Group workshop in Kalgoorlie in May 2018. Ms Payne manned a display booth at the workshop and provided brochures and information on the Trust to many attendees.

The Trust also continues to be involved with the National Malleefowl Recovery Team, mainly through the two-way sharing of information and provision of activity updates. The joint Operations Manager, Kylie Payne, attended the National Malleefowl Adaptive Management Project workshop held in Perth in May 2018, providing input and insight into the potential for

a paired GVD Malleefowl monitoring and predator control site to be included in the national study. Currently insufficient data are available for sites to be identified in the GVD.

#### 3.1.9 Supporting Relevant Organisations

The Trust's joint Operations Manager, Kathryn Sinclair, continues to attend meetings of the Ten Deserts Alliance and the meetings of their Buffel-Free GVD sub-group, providing input and support wherever possible. In 2017 the Ten Desert alliance was awarded \$21 million from BHP Billiton Foundation to support indigenous-led work across the Ten Desert region, including the GVD. The project is a collaboration between the Ten Deserts Alliance, the Indigenous Desert Alliance, Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa and several other desert stakeholders. The sub-group 'Buffel Free GVD' was awarded \$10,000 through this process to develop a 'Buffel grass Management Plan'. The Trust contributed \$3,000 + GST to this project as a total of \$20,000 was sought to fully develop a meaningful plan.

## 4. Finances, Administration and Allocation of Funds

### 4.1 Finances

The annual contribution from the Tropicana Joint Venture (TJV) to the Trust in 2017-18 was \$342,402, based on an annual fee of \$100,000 plus \$80 per hectare of cleared footprint for the TGM. The Trust also received \$35,424.19 interest from the funds held on its behalf by the Public Trustee.

A total of \$240,928 was spent directly on projects in the 2017-18 financial year. In addition, the Trust purchased 70 Reconyx cameras plus batteries, SD cards and rechargers. These represent a significant asset for the Trust with a total value of \$72,553. Five cameras were destroyed in the 2017-18 during the SHD survey due to fire. A summary of the Trust's income and expenditure during the 2017-18 financial year is outlined in Table 3 and in the annual financial statement ('Statement of Transactions') provided by the Public Trustee (Appendix 1).

AGAA maintains an oversight of the Trust's day-to-day expenditure as part of its administrative support function, and all Trust expenditure is presented to the Management Panel in quarterly and annual statements provided by the Public Trustee.

The Trustee has continued to provide strong support and guidance in 2017-18 to the Trust to ensure it meets its financial and legal obligations. Financial statements are provided to the Trust by the Public Trustee on a quarterly and annual basis, which are subsequently tabled at Management Panel meetings.

Ernst and Young audited the Trust in November 2017 and confirmed that the Trust's spending, accounting and financial reporting have been conducted appropriately.

Table 3: Summary of income and expenditure for the Trust during the 2016-17 financial year

Item	Income	Expenditure
<b>Income</b>		
<b>Annual contribution (AGAA)</b>	\$342,402	
<b>Interest</b>	\$35,424.19	
<b>Expenditure: management and administration</b>		
Salary (Operations Manager - project management and administration*) and general expenses		\$148,581
Financial management fees (Public Trustee)		\$14,100
Financial audit fees (Ernst and Young)		\$5,665
Out of pocket expenses (Chair)		\$2259
<b>Expenditure: Projects</b>		
Traditional and Contemporary Burn Patterns and Practices ('Blue Streak rocket') project (DBCA) refer to section 3.1.1		\$8,250
Extension to NAFI Fire Scar Mapping project (Charles Darwin University) refer to section 3.1.2		\$22,000
Burn Rule and Biodiversity Mapping project (SLM) refer to section 3.1.3		\$10,000
Sandhill Dunnart Camera Survey (Greening Australia) refer to section 3.1.4		\$153,729
Malleefowl survey site selection project (Gaia Resources) refer to section 3.1.5		\$17,266
Malleefowl LiDAR Corridor – Gaia refer to section 3.1.6		\$4,435
Buffel Management Plan contribution – Ten Deserts refer to section 3.1.7		\$3,300
Template development - Whistling Moose Graphics		\$1,100
Development of AMIP – RNRM		\$20,548
Room Hire WA Museum		\$300
<b>Asset Purchase</b>		
Camera and Camera Equipment Purchase		\$72,553.30
<b>Refund</b>		
Refund of GST on expenditure	\$13,468	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$391,294.19</b>	<b>\$484,086</b>

Key: \* = approximately 80% of time spent on project and contract management and 20% on Trust operations and administration.

## 4.2 Administration

AGAA continues to provide essential administrative support to the Operations Manager and Trust, including:

- Human resource services, such as payroll management, employment contract;
- General office administration and equipment, such as IT, mobile phone, office/meeting space;
- Flights, accommodation and access to vehicles at TGM, as appropriate; and
- Legal services for contracts.

This substantial in-kind support represents a considerable reduction in the administration expenses that would otherwise be incurred by the Trust and ensures that the Trust maintains its administration cost below the 20% maximum outlined in the Trust Deed.

## 4.3 Funding

The Trust has made significant inroads into leveraging the knowledge, strengths and resources of several key stakeholders in the region through the development of the AMP however the TGM continues to be the Trust's sole financial contributor. Little interest in providing financial support has been demonstrated to date from other companies in the resources sector operating in or near to the Trust Area however Vimy Resources has been proactively sharing their knowledge and research on SHD.

# 5. Future Direction

## 5.1 Sandhill Dunnart Pitfall Trap Survey

Following on from the Sandhill Dunnart Camera Trapping Survey in 2017, a second phase is planned to investigate the locations where Sandhill Dunnart were detected (or highly likely detected). This project will involve a trip to the GVD to dig pitfall traps and establish camera traps. A second trip will take place to open the pitfall traps and investigate the species trapped. This project has a number of aims:

- 1) Confirm SHD presence
- 2) Determine abundance
- 3) Determine the key characteristics of the sites
- 4) Determine a likely patch size for the species at each site
- 5) Determine characteristics of the populations (age, gender) to the extent possible

Alongside the pitfall traps, camera arrays will be established to:

- 1) Determine the effectiveness of cameras compared to pitfall traps in the same vicinity
- 2) Capture additional data



During the pitfall trapping monitoring trip, Malleefowl long walks will be conducted during the day. This is to maximize the time of the field crew and gain important information on the Malleefowl in areas of highly suitable habitat. The project is expected to take place in the latter half of 2018.

## **5.2 LIDAR for the detection of Malleefowl mounds in the GVD**

Once the LIDAR Corridor project <sup>ref section 3.1.6</sup> has been finalised, the Trust will begin investigating the costs and flying parameters associated with conducting the LiDAR in the GVD. The Trust has already had initial discussions with companies with the capacity to conduct flights and data interpretation to identify Malleefowl mounds.

The advantages of LiDAR include:

- It can cover a large area in a time and cost efficient manner.
- LiDAR is the method recommended for detecting Malleefowl mounds by the National Malleefowl Adaptive Management Project.
- Computer analysed data also provides structural information on vegetation and water bodies which will be helpful for the future as climate changes and consequently habitat may change.

The LiDAR analysis process involves ranking potential Malleefowl mound locations from 1 (high) to 4 (low) as to likelihood of being a mound. Selected areas would then be ground-truthed to confirm if they are in fact mounds. This will greatly increase knowledge on the habitat Malleefowl use for nesting, their potential distribution across the GVD and their density in different habitats.

A future project that may occur, following LIDAR is ground-truthing the mounds identified. This project may occur in early or late 2019.

## **5.3 Workshops on fire management and Sandhill Dunnarts**

In the 2018-19 financial year the Trust plans to hold two workshops, one on fire management and one on the Sandhill Dunnart. Planning for these workshops is currently underway and the likely format will be:

- 1) a 'lunch and learn' with experts delivering presentations on recent work undertaken in the GVD on fire and Sandhill Dunnarts. The aim of this is to share information with a wide variety of stakeholders and the public. Presentations are likely to include projects funded by the Trust, PhD research on the SHD and Vimy's camera trapping research on the SHD.
- 2) A workshop, following the 'lunch and learn', will bring together key actors in the fire and Sandhill Dunnart space. These experts will help determine the key next steps for the conservation of biodiversity and threatened species in the GVD.

### 5.4 Stakeholder Engagement

#### 5.4.1 Adaptive Management Partnership

The Trust will continue to encourage stakeholder collaboration and collective effort for biodiversity conservation within the Trust Area, predominantly through engaging with the AMP and supporting the implementation of the AMIP. The Trust would also like to work with the AMP to encourage and support: Yilka Aboriginal Corporation to develop a Ranger program; and potential future involvement of the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Traditional Owner group in the AMP and AMIP implementation throughout their lands in the north-east of the GVD.

#### 5.4.2 Additional Funding Partners

Due to the sheer size of the Trust Area, and the range of biodiversity conservation and management issues to be addressed, the Trust has always acknowledged the need to find additional funding partners to the TJV.

The Trust has recently sought to improve its online presence, brand and desirability as an attractive funding partner/recipient through the development of various templates (e.g. letterhead, newsletter, donation form and PowerPoint presentation), as well as updating and enhancing the Trust's website, including the uploading of key documents and research related to the Trust and the region.

## Appendix 1: Statement of Transactions

### Statement of Transactions



MR . GREAT VICTORIA DESERT BIODIVERSITY TRUST FUND

PREVIEW

Client Reference: 33111845 Contact: TM39

Statement of Transactions Number 8

Public Trustee Activity TRST / 1

Statement Period from 30/06/17 to 30/06/18

Date	Transaction Details	Payments	Receipts
Opening Balance as per Statement of Account Dated 30/06/2017			1968607.81
<b>OTHER PAYMENTS AND RECEIPTS</b>			
10-JUL-17	GRAPHIC DESIGN - WHISTLING MOOSE GRAPHICS	715.00	
12-JUL-17	MAPPING/SITE SELECT 2,1B - GAIA RESOURCES	14731.20	
27-JUL-17	NAFI EXTENSION - CHARLES DARWIN UNIVERSITY	11000.00	
31-JUL-17	ASSET MANAGEMENT FEE	862.22	
31-JUL-17	TRANSACTIONAL FEE	47.90	
04-AUG-17	MALLEEFOWL SITE SELECTION - GAIA RESOURCES	2534.40	
07-AUG-17	GST REFUND 2017		13468.00
10-AUG-17	AMIP PROJECT - RANGELANDS NRM WA	3740.00	
10-AUG-17	AMIP PROJECT - RANGELANDS NRM WA	3740.00	
10-AUG-17	AMIP PROJECT COMPLETION - RANGELANDS NRM WA	13068.00	
14-AUG-17	BLUE STREAK ROCKET PROJ. - DEPT OF BIODIVERSITY, CONSERVATION AND ATTRACTIONS	4125.00	
30-AUG-17	TRUST EXPENSES JULY - ANGLOGOLD ASHANTI	14708.12	
30-AUG-17	TRUST EXPENSES JUNE - ANGLOGOLD ASHANTI	22587.62	
31-AUG-17	ASSET MANAGEMENT FEE	862.22	
31-AUG-17	TRANSACTIONAL FEE	191.60	
04-SEP-17	BATTERIES/SD CARD/CHARGER - FAUNATECH AUSTBAT	10689.80	
08-SEP-17	COVERT CAMERA PURCHASE - COMMONWEALTH BANK - BANKING SERVICES WA	55656.94	
12-SEP-17	CHAIR OUT OF POCKET EXP. - VISION ENVIRONMENT - DR GARRY MIDDLE	870.33	
13-SEP-17	TRUST EXPENSES AUGUST - ANGLOGOLD ASHANTI	15124.07	
19-SEP-17	GRAPHIC DESIGN - WHISTLING MOOSE GRAPHICS	385.00	
20-SEP-17	DIGITAL CAMERA - UNITED PARCEL SERVICE	5480.56	
30-SEP-17	CR INTEREST 30/09/2017		18629.88
30-SEP-17	ASSET MANAGEMENT FEE	834.41	
30-SEP-17	TRANSACTIONAL FEE	258.05	
04-OCT-17	TRUST EXPENSES SEPTEMBER - ANGLOGOLD ASHANTI	13796.04	
18-OCT-17	DUNNART CAMERA SURVEY - GREENING AUSTRALIA	44000.00	
18-OCT-17	DUNNART CAMERA SURVEY - GREENING AUSTRALIA	33000.00	
31-OCT-17	TRANSACTIONAL FEE	167.66	
31-OCT-17	ASSET MANAGEMENT FEE	862.22	
06-NOV-17	NAFI EXTENSION - CHARLES DARWIN UNIVERSITY	11000.00	
16-NOV-17	EVENT ROOM HIRE - WESTERN AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM	300.00	
30-NOV-17	TRANSACTIONAL FEE	339.55	
30-NOV-17	ASSET MANAGEMENT FEE	834.41	

## Great Victoria Desert Biodiversity Trust Annual Report

### MR . GREAT VICTORIA DESERT BIODIVERSITY TRUST FUND

### PREVIEW

Client Reference: 33111845 Contact: TM39

Statement of Transactions Number 8

Public Trustee Activity TRST / 1

Statement Period from 30/06/17 to 30/06/18

Date	Transaction Details	Payments	Receipts
14-DEC-17	TRUST EXPENSES OCTOBER - ANGLOGOLD ASHANTI	11466.17	
14-DEC-17	TRUST EXPENSES NOVEMBER - ANGLOGOLD ASHANTI	8899.00	
18-DEC-17	BURN/BIODIVERSITY MAPPING - PILA NGURU ABORIGINAL CORPORATION	10000.00	
18-DEC-17	CHAIR OUT OF POCKET EXP. - VISION ENVIRONMENT - DR GARRY MIDDLE	741.40	
31-DEC-17	TRANSACTIONAL FEE	203.59	
31-DEC-17	ASSET MANAGEMENT FEE	862.22	
08-JAN-18	TRUST EXPENSES DECEMBER - ANGLOGOLD ASHANTI	10623.91	
09-JAN-18	TRUST AUDIT 2016/2017 - ERNST & YOUNG	5665.00	
31-JAN-18	TRANSACTIONAL FEE	203.58	
31-JAN-18	ASSET MANAGEMENT FEE	862.22	
02-FEB-18	FIRE PATTERN PROJECT M3 - DEPT OF BIODIVERSITY, CONSERVATION AND ATTRACTIONS	4125.00	
05-FEB-18	TRUST EXPENSES JANUARY - ANGLOGOLD ASHANTI	8825.66	
12-FEB-18	DUNNART CAMERA SURVEY - GREENING AUSTRALIA	33000.00	
28-FEB-18	TRANSACTIONAL FEE	559.36	
28-FEB-18	ASSET MANAGEMENT FEE	778.78	
13-MAR-18	TRUST EXPENSES FEBRUARY - ANGLOGOLD ASHANTI	8350.89	
13-MAR-18	CAMERA FOAM PROTECTION - FOAM SALES	726.00	
31-MAR-18	CR INTEREST 31/03/2018		16794.31
31-MAR-18	TRANSACTIONAL FEE	251.48	
31-MAR-18	ASSET MANAGEMENT FEE	862.22	
09-APR-18	TRUST EXPENSES MARCH - ANGLOGOLD ASHANTI	10636.65	
30-APR-18	TRANSACTIONAL FEE	243.37	
30-APR-18	ASSET MANAGEMENT FEE	834.41	
01-MAY-18	AGA ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION		342402.00
02-MAY-18	TRUST EXPENSES APRIL - ANGLOGOLD ASHANTI	10367.21	
07-MAY-18	CHAIR OUT OF POCKET EXP. - VISION ENVIRONMENT - DR GARRY MIDDLE	646.80	
31-MAY-18	ASSET MANAGEMENT FEE	862.22	
31-MAY-18	DUNNART CAMERA SURVEY - GREENING AUSTRALIA	43729.04	
31-MAY-18	TRANSACTIONAL FEE	251.49	
12-JUN-18	CONTRIBUTION - ARID LANDS ENVIRONMENT CENTRE	3300.00	
15-JUN-18	TRUST EXPENSES MAY - ANGLOGOLD ASHANTI	13195.90	
15-JUN-18	MALLEEFOWL LIDAR SURVEY - GAIA RESOURCES	4435.20	
30-JUN-18	TRANSACTIONAL FEE	666.37	
30-JUN-18	ASSET MANAGEMENT FEE	834.41	
01-MAY-18	ATTENDANCE FEE	564.00	

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PREVIEW

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Public Trustee Activity TRST / 1

Statement Period from 30/06/17 to 30/06/18

Date	Transaction Details	Payments	Receipts
<hr/>			
	Closing Balance	-   -	1875816.13
<hr/>			
Opening Balance	Total Payments	Total Receipts	Closing Balance
1968607.81	484085.87	391294.19	1875816.13