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Joint Media Release

**Minister for Indigenous Affairs
Senator the Hon. Nigel Scullion
Member for O'Connor
Rick Wilson**

Indigenous rangers supported to care for country in the Goldfields

Saturday, 5 November 2016

Indigenous land across the Goldfields region of Western Australia will be better preserved, thanks to a \$660,000 investment by the Coalition Government in a new Indigenous ranger group.

Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Nigel Scullion, and the Member for O'Connor, Rick Wilson, said today the Goldfields Land and Sea Council would receive \$660,000 through the Indigenous Advancement Strategy.

"This great local project will employ six new, young Indigenous rangers to conserve and care for their country through land management," Minister Scullion said.

"The funding will be provided on the condition that the local Land Council works with Government to identify sites of environmental and cultural significance to be managed as well as developing appropriate employment, training and youth engagement strategies.

"Funding for this project will not only focus on preserving iconic biodiversity and cultural sites on the Goldfields' Aboriginal estate, it will also have a strong focus on engaging local Indigenous youths to facilitate their access and experience on country.

"In the future, the project may expand into a fee-for-service enterprise, providing economic development opportunities for young local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people."

Supporting a thriving Indigenous business sector is a critical component of the Coalition Government's agenda in Indigenous Affairs.

"This is a great project offering local Indigenous employment and support for young people in our region," Mr Wilson said.

"Indigenous rangers carry out vital work to protect and conserve threatened species, marine systems and cultural places, and address environmental threats caused by feral animals, invasive weeds, marine debris and wild fire. I am pleased, too, that this project has the potential to support our local business sector."

The grassroots approach under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy's community-led grants process enables Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities to apply for funding at any time for projects to address local needs or opportunities.

"Through these grants, we're providing targeted investment to those on the ground to develop local solutions in their region," Minister Scullion said.

More than 2600 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are now employed as Indigenous rangers through the Coalition Government investment of more than \$425 million over five years in Indigenous rangers and Indigenous Protected Areas.

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