

## Place No. 20 Harding Dam / Lake Poongkaliyarra



View of the Harding Dam

LOCATION	
Name of Place	Harding Dam/ Lake Poongkaliyarra
Other Name (1)	
Location/Address	
Street Number	
Street Name	Harding Dam/ Lake Poongkaliyarra
Suburb/Town	Harding River
Other Locational descriptor (text)	25 km south of Roebourne mE 510858 mN7680308 Longitude: 117.1045 Latitude: -20.9778

OWNERSHIP & LAND DESCRIPTION				
Owner	Address	Phone/fax	Status	Item No.
Water Corporation				
Reserve No.	Lot/Location No.	Plan/Diagram	Vol/Folio	Item No.

LISTING AND ASSESSMENT	
HCWA Reference Number	NEW ENTRY
State Register of Heritage Places: (Y/N)	No
Classified by the National Trust (Y/N)	No
Register of the National Estate (Y/N)	No
Local Town Planning Scheme (Y/N)	No
<b>Management Category</b>	<b>B</b>

DESCRIPTION	
Construction Date (1)	1982
Construction Date (2)	
Site Type (Place Type)	Other Built type Other Aboriginal Site
Use(s) of Place	
Original	OTHER: Aboriginal Site
Present	OTHER: Dam
Other	

<b>Construction Materials:</b>	
<i>Walls</i>	
<i>Roof</i>	
<i>Other</i>	
Condition	Good
Integrity (how much of the original fabric is intact?):	
<b>Physical Description</b>	
<p>The Harding Dam/ Lake Poongkaliyarra is located approximately 25 km south of Roebourne on the Harding River. When filled to capacity, the dam covers an area of fifteen square kilometres and extends ten kilometres back from the dam wall.</p> <p>Located around the dam is a rangers house, a public recreation pool, grassed recreation areas, a car park, barbeque facilities and gazebos.</p>	
<b>History</b>	
<p>With the growing population in the north-west region in the 1960s-1970s, the need for better access to water became an urgent priority. In the mid-1970s, proposals by the Public Works Department focused on the Fortescue River for the construction of a dam to supplement the water supply from the Millstream aquifer. However, the Fortescue River is a significant site to the Aboriginal people of the area and there was therefore strong opposition against the construction of a dam in this location. In this instance, the government reconsidered and alternative locations for the dam were investigated.</p> <p>In the early 1980s, the Public Works Department proposed the Harding River for the construction of the dam. This area was also important to the Aboriginal people of the area and they therefore protested, as the construction of the dam in this location would result in the destruction of sacred areas and cultural heritage sites of ongoing significance.</p> <p>In 1981 the Minister for Works applied to the Minister for Cultural Affairs for permission to utilise the area. Permission was granted, subject to the completion of an archaeological investigation of sites in the area. In 1982 the Public Works Department commissioned the consultants Bruce J. Wright to undertake a program of recording at the archaeological locations identified within the catchment area of the proposed dam. However, no salvaging or sampling work was to be undertaken.</p> <p>Construction of the Harding Dam commenced in February 1982. Both prior to, and during the construction of the dam, the Yindjibarndi people attempted to appeal against this impact upon their cultural heritage; they held protests at the site, travelled to Perth to present their case to the State Government and attempted to appeal to the new Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act. However, these had no effect and the construction of the dam continued.</p> <p>State elections in 1983 changed the ruling party from Liberal to Labour in Western Australia. The Labour party had been opposed to the construction of the dam and it was therefore anticipated that construction might stop with the change in power. However, as work on the dam was already 70% complete, and as the earthworks had made the land highly vulnerable to floods and erosion, the dam construction continued and was officially opened on 28<sup>th</sup> May 1985.</p> <p>The construction of the Harding Dam also negatively impacted upon the historic Cooya Pooya pastoral station, resulting in its abandonment and neglect. The Water Authority purchased this significant pastoral station was from the Stove family in 1978, as it lay within the Harding River catchment area.</p> <p>The construction of the Harding Dam had been promoted as ensuring the conservation of the Millstream aquifer. However, despite environmental concerns, when waters in the dam become low, water is still pumped from the Millstream aquifer.</p>	

<b>Archaeology</b>
<p>There is significant archaeological potential in this area, as the construction of the dam resulted in the flooding of land that contained significant Aboriginal cultural heritage sites. These included thalu sites, rock art sites, ceremonial sites, burial sites, and camp sites. There are therefore numerous Registered Aboriginal archaeological sites associated with the location (e.g. DAA site IDs: 8543-8560, 8563-8580, 8583-8598).</p> <p>There is also potential for industrial archaeology related to the construction of the dam.</p>

<b>SIGNIFICANCE</b>	
<b>Historic theme (s)</b>	6. PEOPLE 601 Aboriginal people 605 Innovators
<b>Statement of Significance:</b>	
<p>This site is culturally significant to the Aboriginal Traditional Owners of the area, including the Yindjibarndi and Ngarluma people. It contains cultural heritage sites, which were of ongoing significance at the time the area was flooded. The historical and social significance of the dam and its construction relate to the history of the recognition of heritage in the Pilbara. It also represents the historical endeavors of the State to promote the development of the region. The area encompassed by the dam and lake is also significant in relation to the early development of the pastoral industry in the Roebourne region, through Cooya Pooya Pastoral Station.</p>	

<b>ASSOCIATIONS</b>	
Architect/Designer (1)	West Australia Water Authority
Other Associated Person(s)	Yindjibarndi and Ngarluma Traditional Owners

<b>OTHER</b>	
<b>References</b>	
<p>Juluwarlu Group Aboriginal Corporation 2011, <i>Exploring Yindjibarndi Country – Lockyer's Gorge</i></p> <p>Wright, B. J. 1983, <i>Record of Selected Archaeological Data in the Harding River Dam</i></p>	

<b>NOTES</b>	
MHI 2012	Site identified through public consultation process
MHI 2012	Site assessed and Place Name Record created

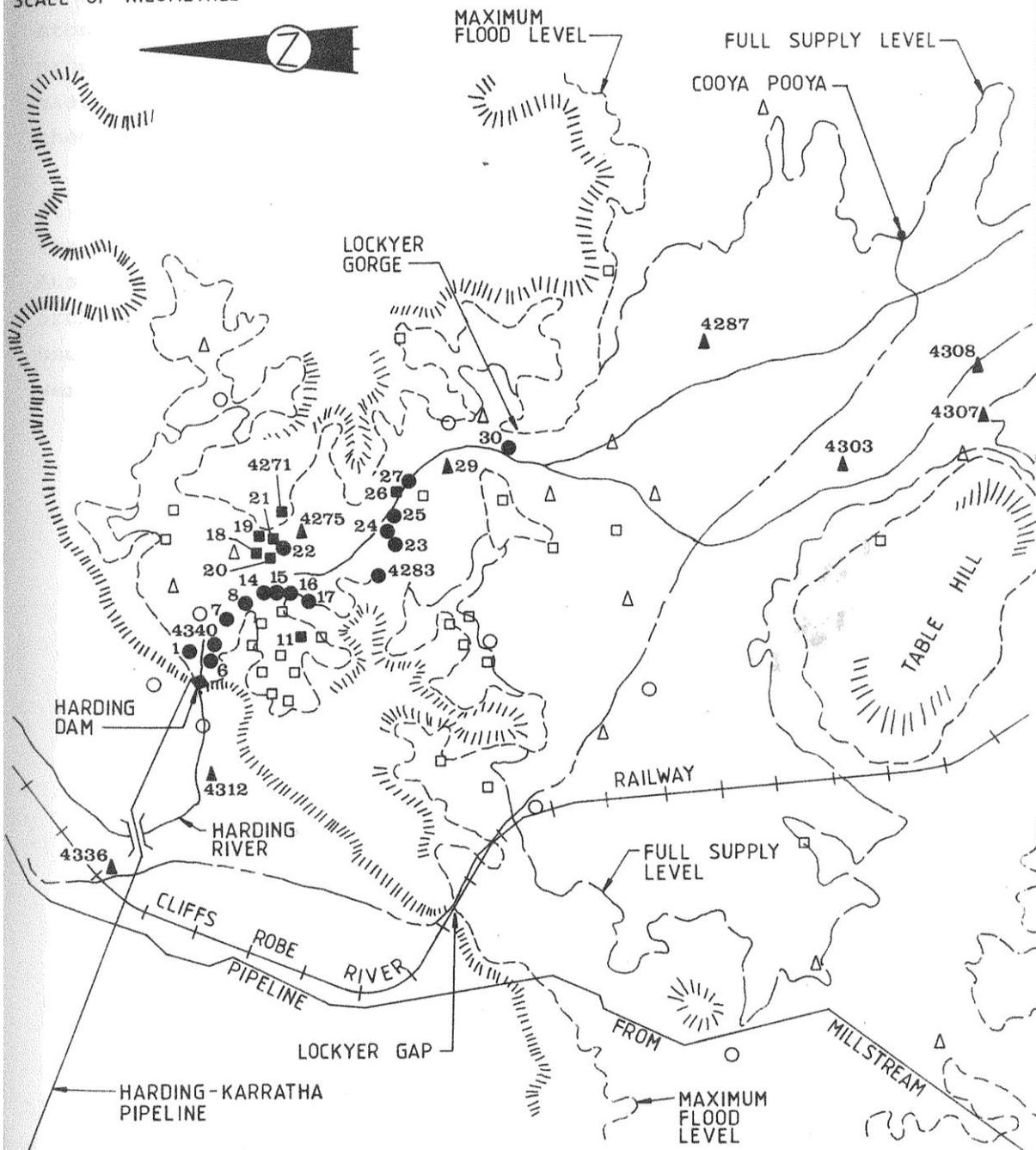
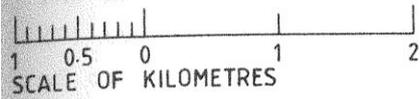


Information sign at Harding Dam/ Lake Poongkaliyarra

MAP OF HARDING RIVER DAM SITE AND INUNDATION AREA SHOWING LOCATIONS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND SITES RECORDED IN DETAIL

1-31: PREFIX P0221. OTHERS: PREFIX P

- ENGRAVINGS
- HUNTING HIDES
- △ ARTEFACTS
- 16 SITES RECORDED IN DETAIL



Wright 1983, 1 - Map of archaeological sites identified prior to flooding of the dam