

# Beetaloo Native Title Holder Engagement – 2022 Update

August 2022



Cover image: Origin well site representative Josh Fisher explains how wells are constructed with multiple layers of engineered steel and cement that protect underground water sources using an actual size model during recent consultation with a Native Title holder family group in Marlinja, NT.



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We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Owners as the Custodians of this land, and we pay our respects to elders past, present and future.

At Origin, we honour and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as having the longest continuous culture on earth.

We acknowledge many of our resources and facilities are located on the land of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traditional Owner groups and we respectfully engage with unwavering respect for their enduring connection to land and sea.

## 1. Introduction

Origin's August 2021 Beetaloo Native Title Holder Engagement paper ("the 2021 Engagement paper") sets out Origin's practices for engagement with the Native Title Holders of areas where we are undertaking exploration work, guided by the principles of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC). This paper provides an update to how that approach has been implemented in the last year and plans for forthcoming engagement<sup>1</sup>.

Since the 2021 Engagement paper Origin's Native Title Holder and stakeholder engagement has focussed on the preparatory work for drilling two horizontal wells close to the existing Amungee NW1 well, with hydraulic fracture stimulation, extended production testing and a seismic survey. This work is scheduled to commence later this year. Origin's engagement with Native Title Holders and local community members has also been constrained due to Covid 19 restrictions and government biosecurity measures.

## 2. Community liaison officers

Origin has now appointed a Native Title Holder and Elliot resident as a Community Liaison Officer (CLO) providing ongoing engagement about our activities with local community members living in Elliott and Marlinja, as well as coordinating our support of community events. The CLO role is designed to provide local community members with greater access to information about the Beetaloo project.

An additional CLO role is currently planned to be advertised in Borroloola later this year to provide ongoing engagement with local community members living in Borroloola and Minyerri.

## 3. Native Title holder consent

Our exploration activity continues under the consents from Native Title Holders in the exploration agreements. Further consent for production activity will be sought from Native Title Holders prior to commencing production. In seeking that consent, we will continue to be guided by the principles of FPIC.<sup>2</sup>

## 4. Representation of Native Title holders

There has been no change in the representation of Native Title Holders since the 2021 Engagement paper. Native Title Holders continue to choose the Top End (Default PBC/CLA) Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC (Top End), with the Northern Land Council (NLC) as agent, to represent them.

Native Title holders for the areas where Origin is undertaking activities in the Beetaloo, recently spoke about Native Title rights, representation, speaking for country and support for exploration activity in a *National Indigenous Times* article, excerpts from which are included as follows.<sup>3</sup> The Northern Land Council (NLC) reprinted the article with permission in their July edition of *Land Rights News*.<sup>4</sup>

When Jingili Elder Pompey Raymond reflects on the Northern Territory's oil and gas industry, he sees careers for young people, education, community infrastructure and a pathway to protect his country.

A senior ceremony man born on Beetaloo Station, Mr Raymond believes the debate around industry is often hijacked by those who should not be speaking for the region.

"My father been learning me all that country....and all that...Beetaloo station, all them ceremony things, Mr Raymond said.

"Me and my daughter and my sons, we can talk for that Beetaloo.

"Beetaloo Station, we got all them areas... (so) we can talk... for that story, (those) people... and all that country."

Fracking is a polarising issue among the wider Indigenous population of the Top End, but on Warranangku country Mr Raymond said the voices who could rightfully speak for country were clear in their support.

***National Indigenous Times***<sup>3,4</sup>

1 [https://www.originenergy.com.au/wp-content/uploads/beetaloo\\_native\\_title\\_holder\\_engagement\\_report\\_2021.pdf](https://www.originenergy.com.au/wp-content/uploads/beetaloo_native_title_holder_engagement_report_2021.pdf)

2 refer sections 4.6 and 4.7 of the 2021 Engagement paper

3 National Indigenous Times ([Beetaloo Traditional Owners reveal frustration at anti-fracking activists 'interfering' on country](#)); June 20, 2022

4 Northern Land Council Land Rights News, [Northern Edition](#); July 2022

But Mudburra-Jingili man Jeremy Jackson, who lives in Marlinja on the southwest corner of the Falcon-Origin Beetaloo Basin joint venture, said working with industry was the best way to protect country and improve lives under current native title laws.

Mr Jackson speaks for his uncle, Terry Jackson, a senior mangaya (Traditional Owner) for the Bamarrnganja group in the Beetaloo region.

**“We say yes and then we get the benefit out of it and also we look after our country too as well, our sacred sites.**

“We want to work together with (Northern Land Council) and this mining company to protect our country, and our sacred sites.”

*National Indigenous Times*<sup>5,6</sup>

## 5. Cultural Heritage protection

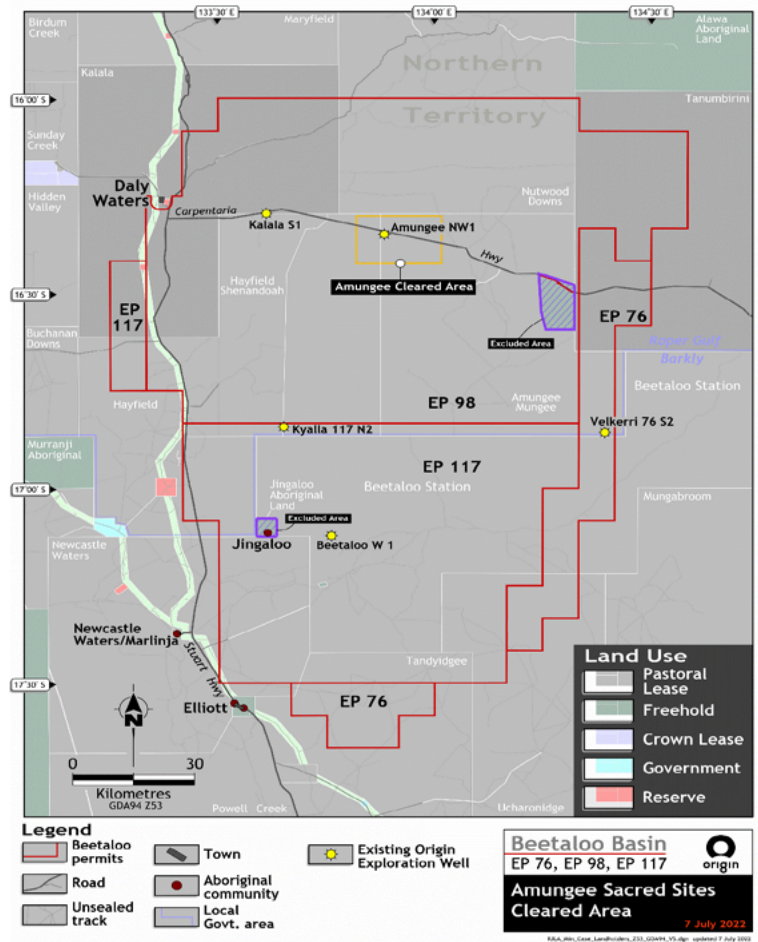
### 5.1 Sacred sites

Origin continues to apply an avoidance of impact approach to sacred site protection, reflecting both the terms of the exploration agreements and compliance with sacred site protection legislation.<sup>7</sup>

The area recently cleared for exploration activity is set out on the map below. The Native Title Holders for the area proposed to be cleared were consulted regarding the proposed work and the cleared area received Certification by the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority (AAPA). The two planned Amungee wells and seismic survey will occur within this cleared area.

### 5.2 Archaeological sites

An archaeological site containing numerous stone artefacts was identified during a pre-disturbance scouting activity and action was taken to protect the site. The NLC, as the representative of the Native Title Holders was notified, and the find was also discussed with Native Title Holders at the on-country meetings referred to in section 6. A no-go buffer zone of 500m was set up around the find and proposed well and seismic survey locations have been relocated away from the find area, consistent with Origin’s site avoidance approach. An archeological report has been shared with the Northern Territory Heritage Branch and the NLC, with Native Title Holders being consulted whether they wish to see any other protection measures in place.



5 National Indigenous Times ([Beetaloo Traditional Owners reveal frustration at anti-fracking activists ‘interfering’ on country](#)); June 20, 2022  
 6 Northern Land Council Land Rights News, [Northern Edition](#); July 2022  
 7 This approach is set out in more detail in section 5 of the 2021 Engagement paper.



## 6. Recent Engagement with Native Title holders

Meetings with Native Title Holders are conducted on an annual basis to share information and discuss planned exploration activity in advance of the work. In May/June Origin met with several Native Title Holder family groups who speak legally and culturally for country where upcoming work is planned to occur. The meetings in Elliot included a Welcome to Country from Native Title Holders.

Plain English story boards were used to assist Native Title Holders understand what work is proposed and facilitate informed discussion. The Origin team included subject matter experts in drilling and operations to respond to Native Title Holder questions about our proposed exploration activities.

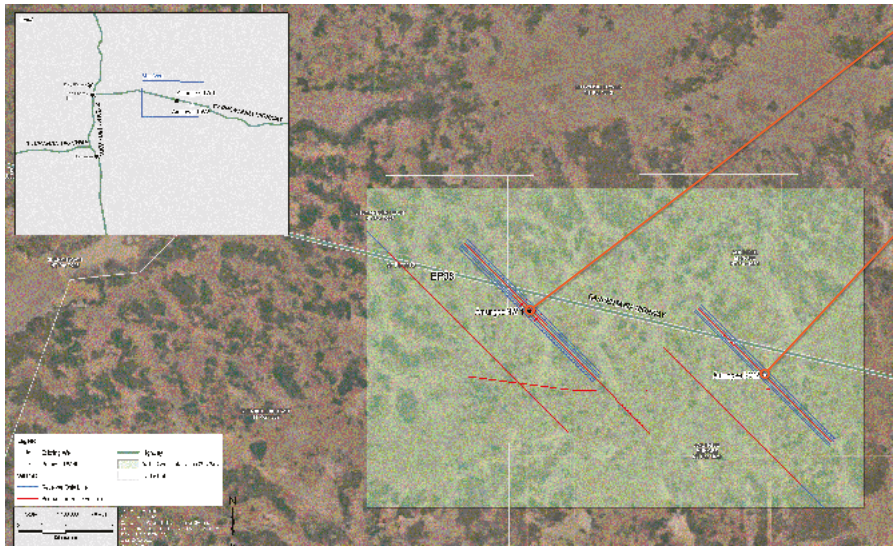


On-country meetings in Elliott and Marlinja, May/ June 2022





# Current Work Program (Poster 2)



**Amungee NW1**

We plan to extend the well pad and drill another well in the same location called Amungee NW1-2H. This well will go sideways (horizontal) for 1 kilometre underground.

We will drill a new bore to check that underground water is not affected by fracking.

We plan to drill this first new well in September.

**Amungee NW2**

Right now, there is nothing at Amungee NW2. This year we plan to build a similar setup to the Amungee NW1 well pad.

We will clear areas for a worker's camp, a drill pad and fence. We will also make a gravel pit just to the south of the well and use the gravel for pads, tracks and foundations.

We will drill two new bores to check that underground water is not affected by fracking.

This work will happen between September and October.

We plan to drill a new well called Amungee NW2-1H.

We plan to drill this second new well in December.

### Seismic testing

We plan to do some seismic testing next to the Amungee NW1 and NW2 wells.

Seismic testing is where geologists make a picture of the layers of rock under the ground.

They do this by making a loud bang sound on the surface and listening to the echoes that come back to microphones on the ground nearby.

These echoes are the sound signal bouncing off different layers of rock.

To do this testing we need to clear a seismic line or track. These are the red lines shown on the map below. There are 60 kilometres of these seismic lines. The blue lines show where we will put the microphones to pick up the sound coming back. We don't have to clear any tracks for these microphones.

Cultural Managers will watch over all this work to make sure heritage is protected.

After we have finished, we will rehabilitate the seismic lines so that plants regrow over the tracks.

This work will happen between September and October.

### Fracking and production testing

When this is finished and both new Amungee wells are drilled, we plan to do fracking then flow the wells for up to three months to see how much gas comes out. This work will happen next year, after wet season.

## Plain English story board example

Native Title Holder Jeremy Jackson spoke recently in the *National Indigenous Times* about his experience of engagement with Origin.<sup>8,9</sup>

Mr Jackson said he was happy with the level of consultation undertaken by Origin and the NLC on the project.

He said Origin had taken its community license to operate seriously – funding a football oval in Elliott, providing jobs for remote residents, and ensuring Traditional Owners had a first-hand look into the operations.

***National Indigenous Times***<sup>8,9</sup>

“Origin are drilling and all that stuff, and we see what they’re doing on our country, (Mr Jackson’s father) Uncle Terry’s country,” he said.

**“We did ask a lot of questions about the water and then they showed us.**

“We asked them what they put underneath the fracking stuff and they showed us a sample and it was really good.”

That willingness from Origin to show Traditional Owners what they are doing has built trust in the company, and a strong belief fracking can be done safely.

***National Indigenous Times***<sup>8,9</sup>

8 National Indigenous Times ([Beetaloo Traditional Owners reveal frustration at anti-fracking activists ‘interfering’ on country](#)); June 20, 2022  
 9 Northern Land Council Land Rights News, *Northern Edition*; July 2022

## 7. Planned future engagement with local communities

The map below indicates the closest communities to the Beetaloo Project area.

Site inspections are an important opportunity for Native Title Holders to spend time with on-site project specialists and see for themselves how exploration activity is conducted.<sup>10</sup>

As part of our efforts to engage with the broader community, Origin will be offering facilitated community bus tours to site to residents of Elliott, Marlinja, Borroloola and Minyerri later this year and into next year so they can see our exploration activity first-hand and discuss any concerns with site personnel.

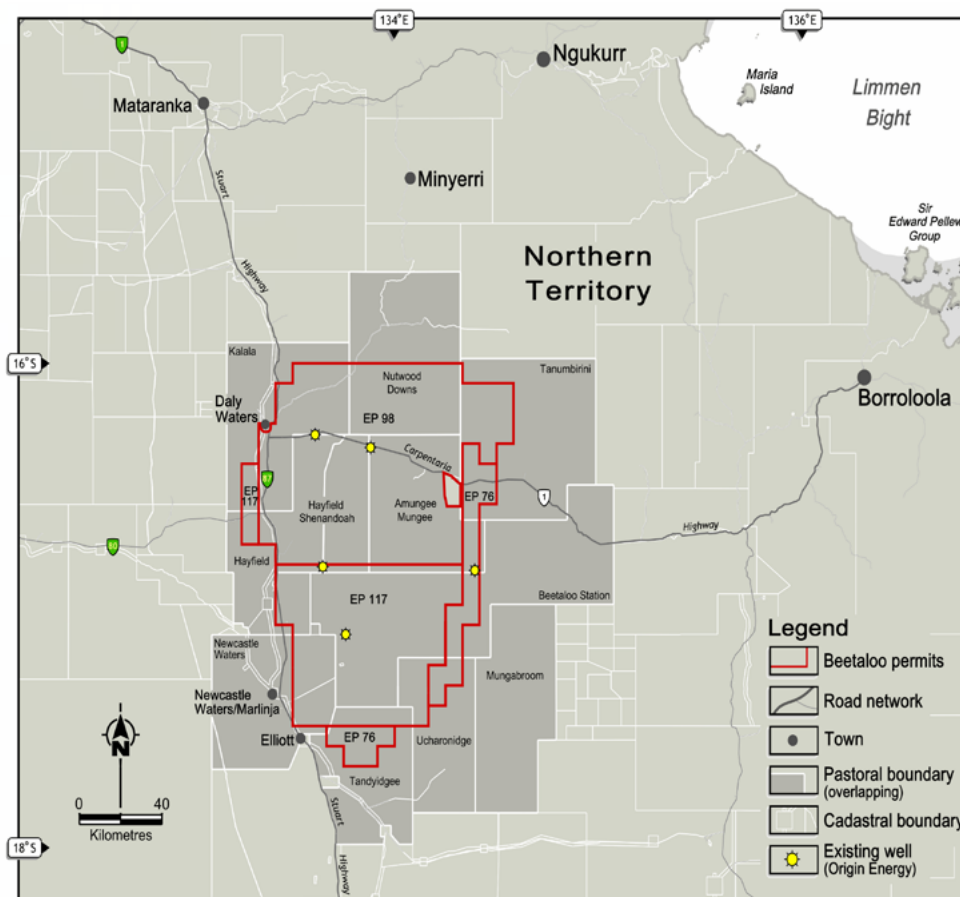
Origin has engaged a grant writer to work with Elliott and Marlinja local community members to apply for funding for community development projects identified by the community. If this pilot program is successful, we currently intend to extend it to other local communities.

A cultural induction program developed by a NT Aboriginal business with guidance from Native Title Holders is scheduled to be delivered to site personnel during the proposed Amungee wells work program.

Origin has made previous offers between 2018 and 2020 to Nurrdalinci Aboriginal Corporation (“Nurrdalinci”), GetUp!, Seed and AYCC to meet with local community members to discuss the Beetaloo project and any concerns they may have. We have not received any response to those offers. The offer to meet with local community members was made again to Nurrdalinci, GetUp! and Seed in June/early July 2022. We have not received a response from Nurrdalinci or Seed; a response was received from GetUp! and we are planning to engage.

Origin continues to support local and regional economic development forums through sponsorship and participation with the aim that Northern Territory suppliers, including local Aboriginal businesses, are aware of contracting opportunities and how to access them. Local forums include:

- Aboriginal Economic Development Forum (Growth Sponsor)
- Katherine and Barkley Region Major Projects Conference
- NT Energy Club ‘Meet the Buyer’ events



<sup>10</sup> Section 4.5 of the 2021 Engagement paper describes the site visits by Native Title Holders to the Beetaloo, Amungee and Kyalla well sites.

## 8. Employment and business development

Origin continues to create employment and contracting opportunities for Native Title Holders and local Aboriginal people at this early stage of exploration. Origin's approach is to recruit Native Title Holders/local Aboriginal people for career roles: roles that will have longevity in a production scenario or are transferrable in the event of lack of exploration success.

Examples include the existing and planned Community Liaison Officers, the existing Asset Field Officer, and two Transport and Logistics roles to be advertised prior to work commencing later this year. Speaking in the *National Indigenous Times*, Mudburra-Jingili man Benjamin Ulamari, spoke about his experience.<sup>11</sup>

“My position is a career position – I can get trained up and then I can move to elsewhere and just get a job like that,” Mr Ulamari said.

“Helping give us a better future for us, for our kids.

“We want better opportunity, better education, better jobs for our people, (and) we’ll decide that, not others.”

*National Indigenous Times*<sup>11,12</sup>

Origin continues to work with Triple P Contracting, an Elliott based Aboriginal business with a 90% Indigenous work crew, to deliver existing monitoring, maintenance and logistics services, and also to expand the scope to include long term ground water monitoring.

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11 National Indigenous Times ([Beetaloo Traditional Owners reveal frustration at anti-fracking activists ‘interfering’ on country](#)); June 20, 2022  
12 Northern Land Council Land Rights News, [Northern Edition](#); July 2022