

# Duncan Road and Gordon Downs Road Upgrades



The \$51 million project jointly funded by the Australian Government and the Western Australian Government has recommenced after successful completion of the heritage surveys.

## Main Roads collaborated closely with Jaru traditional owners, Yaruman community members, Kimberley Land Council and EHSIS, to complete the heritage surveys for this Project.

In October and November 2021, several Jaru family groups undertook heritage surveys. This was followed in April and May 2022 by Jaru heritage monitors being engaged to check work areas before the commencement of ground disturbance, who will continue monitoring as works progress.

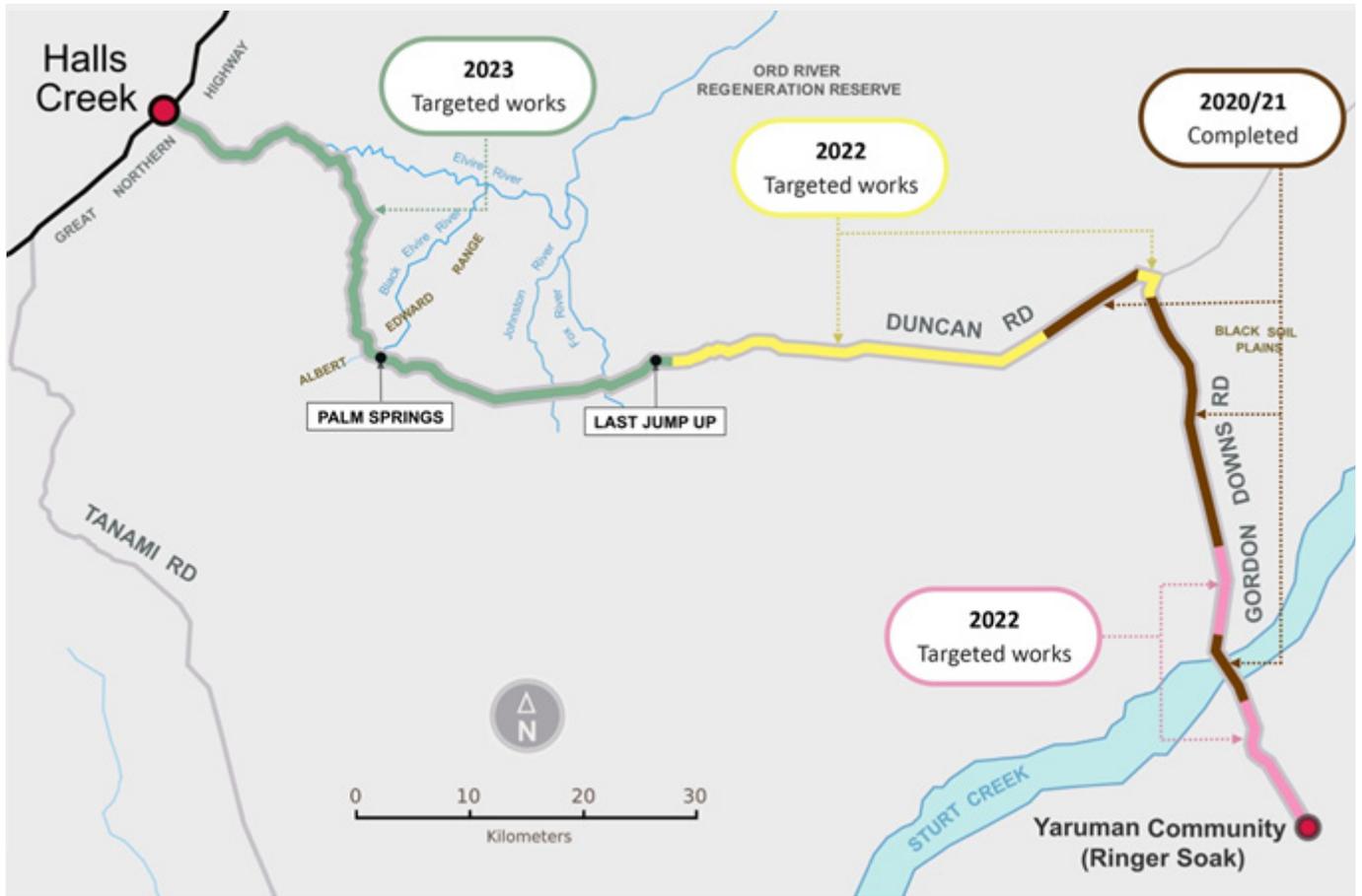
The Jaru traditional owners confirmed sensitive areas to avoid and the importance of rehabilitating materials sites. Jaru man, Steven Woodhouse of Halls Creek said, "the surveys were an opportunity for traditional owners to discuss their areas of concerns from a local Aboriginal perspective and provide feedback to Main Roads out on country".

Main Roads Project Manager, Silvano Todesco, confirmed, "having input from traditional owners based on their local knowledge and history of the road and country has been invaluable to the

project. This input will feed into finalising an improved design with better project outcomes for all, whilst taking into account places of cultural significance"



Left to right: Miranda Gore, Yvonne Birrell, Marianne Skeen, Edna Skeen, Basil Thomas, Frank Sampi, Cedric Johnson, Steven Woodhouse, and Kenny Boomer, November 2021.



### 2021 Maintenance Activities

Throughout 2021, the Shire of Halls Creek undertook seasonal routine maintenance and minor repair works along the Duncan and Gordon Downs roads.

The completed surveys in 2021 allowed Main Roads to undertake a floodway upgrade late in the year at a critical section on Gordon Downs Road before the wet season, providing better drainage and improved wet season access along the road, including to and from the Yaruman Community.



Workers at a pre-start meeting, May 2022.

### Planned works for 2022

Roadworks recommenced in May 2022 and will continue through to late November or early December, weather permitting. Many local contractors and workers have returned to the site after working on other Main Roads projects in 2021.

The Shire of Halls Creek continues to play a significant role on the project by providing plant and local personnel.

Initial priority works included:

- gravel push-up and stock piling
- drilling of water bores and construction of dams.
- Construction side-tracks



Stocking pile gravel, May 2022.

## Gordon Downs Road

Targeted Works:

- Install culverts and seal floodways;
- Form drainage and gravel sheet various sections;
- Install grids and seal approaches;
- Seal road approaches into Yaruman (Ringer Soak) including minor side road.
- Construct side-tracks



Gordon Downs Road, gravel sheeting works, May 2022.

## Duncan Road

- Install culverts and seal floodways;
- Form drainage and gravel sheet various sections;
- Seal jump ups.

Roadworks crews will continue with gravel re-sheeting and drainage improvements on both Duncan Road and Gordon Downs Road, which will improve access for all road users.

It is also planned to commence works through the Hills Section on Duncan Road at points where there currently exists poor road geometry, creating blind corners. The planned work will involve 'opening-up' these blind corners to create better lines of site for road users.



Loading tippers in another gravel pit, May 2022.



Duncan Road, gravel sheet works, May 2022.

## Future scheduled works

### Duncan Road

The final stage of road construction will see drainage and safety improvements through the hills section of Duncan Road including:

- Install culverts and seal floodways;
- Upgrade concrete floodways at major rivers;
- Road widening and alignment improvements to cater for road trains;
- Completion of geometry improvements through the hills section to improve line-of-sight;
- Form drainage and gravel sheet various sections;
- Seal various high maintenance sections including jump ups;

These targeted upgrades will significantly improve safety for all road users.

### Local opportunities

Aboriginal employment is recorded as hours worked on the project. The project is achieving 36% Aboriginal employment rate to date, which is above the 30% target.

Main Roads is committed to prioritising locals and is working with the local employment and job training agencies to assist them to become job ready.

In November 2021, Main Roads visited Yaruman Community to gauge interest from locals who want to be involved in the project in 2022. Six locals showed interest.

In May 2022, Main Roads continued to collaborate with East Kimberley Job Pathways and Djaringo training to offer traffic control training to the locals at Yaruman community to prepare them for taking up opportunities on the project.

### Long standing local Aboriginal business engaged

2022 sees Aboriginal business and local legend Danny Calwyn on the project, who has been in business for almost 20 years in the Kimberley region. Danny is glad to be working close to home again after working with Main Roads on the Gibb River Road. Danny operates one of his graders and the other is operated by local Halls Creek man Michael Polkinhorne. Michael is in good hands under the guidance of Danny and site supervisor Steve Battersby.



Danny Calwyn (left) and Michael Polkinhorne (right), grader operators.



Yaruman community participants undertake traffic management training, May 2022.

## Further information

Contact: Carmen Murdock, Community and Stakeholder Manager. Phone: 0488 776 301 | Email: carmen.murdock@mainroads.wa.gov.au