

McArthur River Mine (MRM) has activated its local resident workforce for community projects while remote travel restrictions are in place during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The mine worked with local organisations to identify community projects that could be undertaken by the 28 MRM staff who have been sent home on special paid leave during the current crisis.

The workers were sent home in mid-March before restrictions came into place for designated remote areas to ensure zero contact between the mine and the local community. Most of them live in Borroloola, 65km from the mine site.

MRM General Manager Steven Rooney said the company understands the threat of coronavirus to remote communities and protecting their health was one of the first measures put in place.

"We didn't wait until restrictions were put in place to make this decision,"

"We took the proactive decision to send people home because we know how devastating it would be should coronavirus reach the local area," he said.

"Our people have great skills that have been put to use in the community," Steven said.

So far the team has tidied and transformed the town centre, cemetery, museum and church, built an ablution block, helped out Parks and Wildlife and installed irrigation and fencing.

They have also been working hard to bring the community together, celebrating Mother's Day with a community BBQ and wearing blue for Do it for Dolly Day.

The team has been supported by local community organisations.

"We are lucky to have the support of local organisations such as Mabunji Aboriginal Resource Indigenous Corporation, Roper Gulf Regional Council, Borroloola School, Parks and Wildlife and Borroloola Police," Steven said.

The team will continue to work in the local community until they can return to site.