



Naracoorte Lucindale Council

# Naracoorte Caves Trail

STOP 1

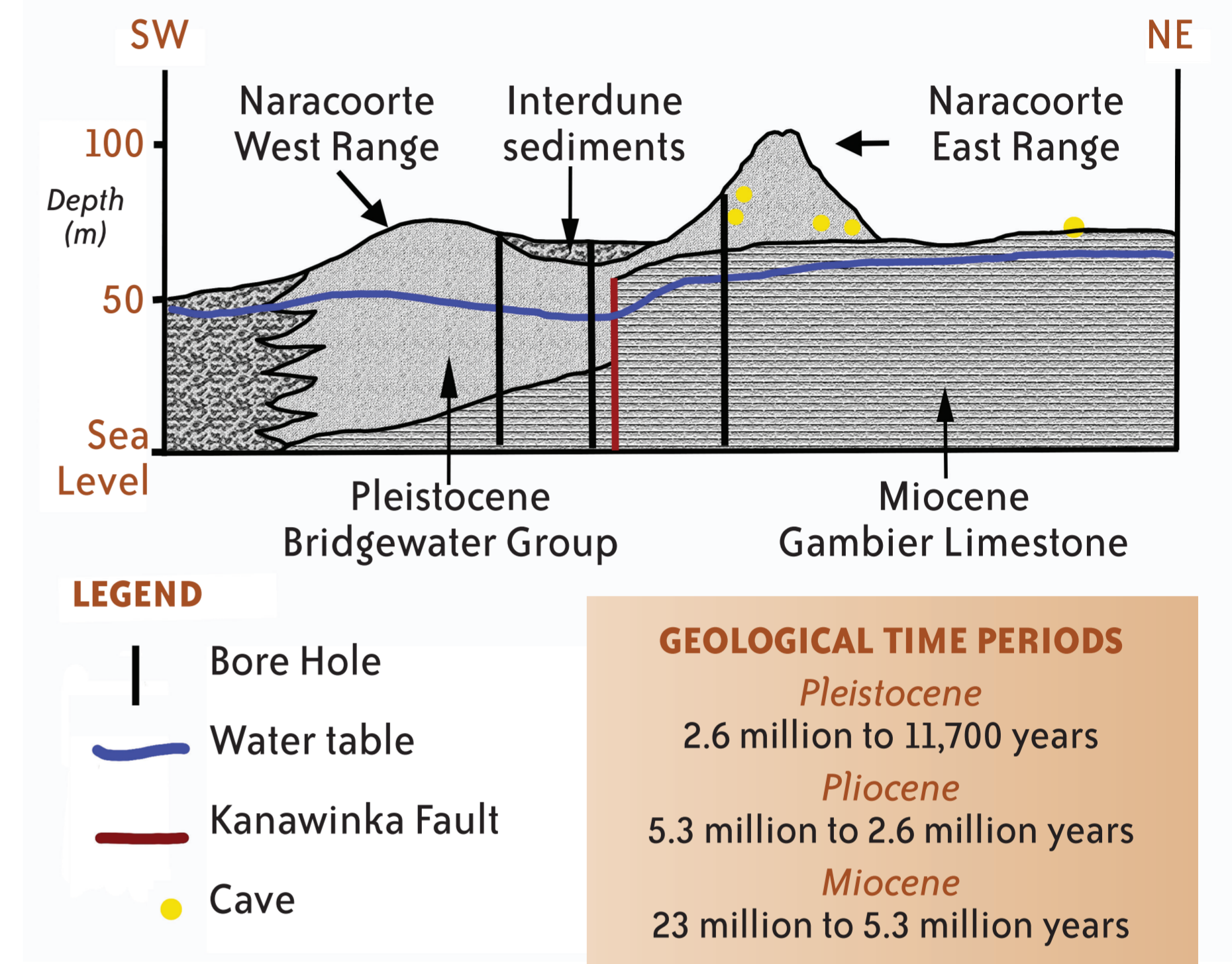
You are now standing on the remains of an ancient coastline.

Beneath the Naracoorte area lies an extensive bed of limestone. Bristling with carbonate fossils of animals such as bryozoans, urchins and corals, it bears witness to a time when this region was covered by a shallow sea from 37 to 12 million years ago.

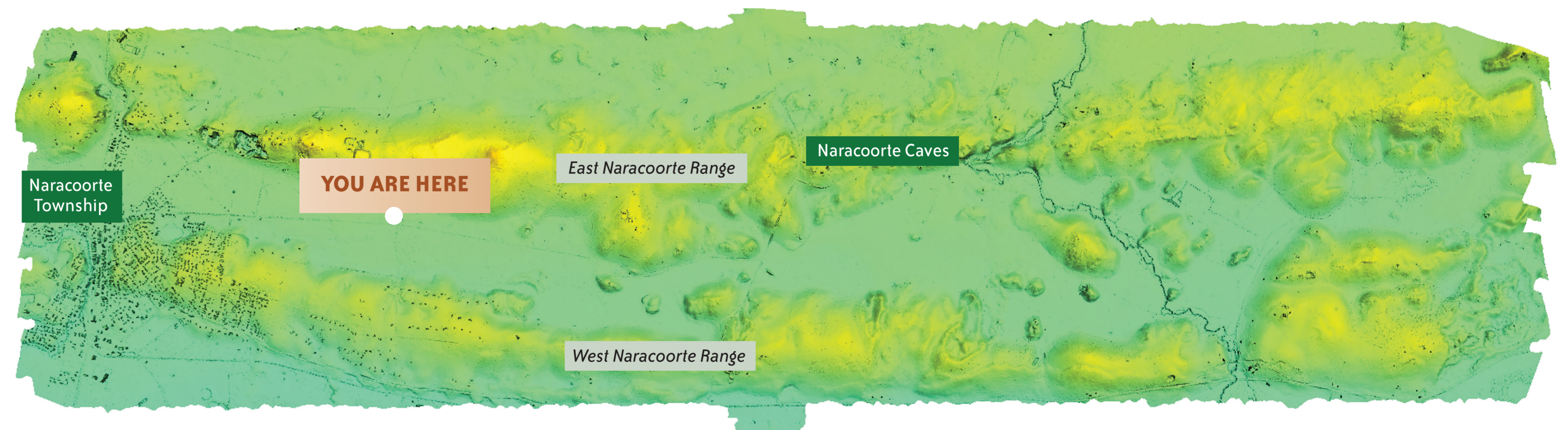
Later, during the late Miocene to early Pliocene, the Kanawinka fault caused uplift of the eastern part of the range. Dunes formed over the uplifted escarpment when the sea level was much higher, and this was the coastline. From where you stand, you can see the East Naracoorte Range (~1.1 million to 900,000 years) and the West Naracoorte Range (~780,000 to 880,000 years). These dunes are composed mainly of carbonates and silica sands. Sediments of the low-lying, interdunal areas comprise swamp and lake deposits.

Caves developed in the uplifted Kanawinka escarpment around 1 million years ago. Dissolution of the limestone by underground water, and structural influences from the fault, influenced cave development.

*The low-lying interdunal flats would have been wetlands when European settlers arrived. Extensive draining was undertaken to provide more land for agriculture.*



Geological section, Pistol Club area, Naracoorte.  
Source: Liz Reed, adapted from White and Webb (2015).



3D image of the Naracoorte dune ranges.  
Source Craig Williams.

