



**HUNTER REGION
LANDCARE
NETWORK**

Committee Initiatives & Landcare Activities

2015 - 2016



Preface

Hunter Region Landcare Network Committee has been instrumental in the establishment of three coordinator positions in the Hunter Valley, as part of the NSW Landcare program that has seen coordinators placed in localities throughout the state as part of a three year NSW Government \$15 million program to foster Landcare activities. The HRLN Committee has devoted much of the later part of 2015 and early 2016 to the task of securing the positions for the Hunter and staff recruitment.

Other activities of the committee have been to foster the workshops and field activities that are in the following document, allowing the region to reflect upon and share experiences that are taking place here.

The following collection of Advertisements and reporting documents has been assembled from Landcare organisations and other bodies for whom the Hunter Region Landcare Network has provided advice and assistance during the past year.

The events reported are often the culmination of many years of volunteer work, or are providing fresh insights into land and environmental issues that have been identified as being of public interest.

Many of the events have been supported through the provision of funding by the Local Land Services or from funding by HRLN or both bodies.

The reporting is in the words of the groups responsible for the hosting of the events, reflecting the experiences of the participants.

HRLN has represented Landcarers at various forums and other events and these are also mentioned.

This document provides a means of summarising and celebrating the work of HRLN and Landcare in the Hunter during the past year.

L. J. Pearson

Compiler

The Hunter Region Landcare Network Committee

2015 -2016



John Hughson, Wendy Heys, Louise Duff, Carmel Brown, Fran Corner, Jenny Castles, Leslie Pearson

Hunter Region Landcare Network
Committee Initiatives and Activities
2015 - 2016

Chapter	Group	Topic	Page
1.	HRLN & NSW Landcare	The establishment of Coordinators	07
2.	HRLN Chair	Commentary of 2015 -2016 Reports	08
3.	Tilligerry Habitat	Port Stephens Muster	09
4.	Hunter Councils Inc.	9 Valley Wildlife Trail Stage 1	10
5.	Martindale Landcare	Woody Weeds Workshop	16
6.	Newcastle City Council	Newcastle Muster	20
7.	Tilligerry Habitat	Breakfast with the Birds	21
8.	HRLN	Intrepid Landcare Consultation	22
9.	Lake Macquarie Landcare	Governance workshop	23
10.	Hunter Wetlands LC	Training & supporting volunteers	24
11.	Tilligerry Habitat	Bees	25
12.	Gresford Landcare	Birds of the Paterson Allyn & Williams	27
13.	Tilligerry Habitat	Koala workshop	29
14.	Worimi LALC Green Team	The First Landcarers	31
15.	HRLN	Lets Connect on Biodiversity	33
16.	Hunter Councils	Biodiversity in roadside reserves	36
17.	Wollombi Landcare	Riparian erosion control and repair	38
18.	Coal Point Landcare	Habitat enhancement with fire & steel	40
19.	Lake Macquarie Landcare	Hunter Intrepid Landcare Retreat	41
20.	Hunter Valley wine tourism	Making compost for Vineyards	44
21.	HRLN	Social Impact Assessment and State Significant Mining Projects	47
22.	HRLN	Landcare Membership	48
23.	HRLN	National Conference in Melbourne	53
24.	HRLN	Total Foundation Day 4 th November 2016	56
25.	HRLN	Chairperson's Report for AGM 2016	57
26.	HRLN	River Red Gum Report 2016	59



Lower Hunter Anna Glasby



Mid Hunter Adam Dwyer



Upper Hunter Nicholas Alexander

HRLN The establishment of Coordinators in the Hunter in conjunction with NSW Landcare

The development of the coordinator program came from an election promise of the NSW Government to provide funding to Landcare NSW to foster and strengthen the landcare movement to more effectively address environmental needs in the state. At the Hunter level, this has translated into three part-time coordinator roles;

1. Lower Hunter based at the Wetlands Centre Shortland
2. Mid Hunter based at Singleton Shire Council
3. Upper Hunter based at Muswellbrook Shire Council

These Local Landcare Coordinators are employed directly via their host organisations, and will increase the capacity of the organisation to:

1. support and increase community engagement
2. extend their coverage and provide support to more groups, networks and landholders
3. undertake planning, develop partnerships and secure resourcing through project grants and other sources
4. monitor, evaluate and report on their projects and activities
5. improve financial sustainability and long-term viability by sourcing external funds
6. effectively participate in natural resource management activities that address critical agricultural sustainability and environmental issues
7. link to programs of Local Land Services and other Government agencies and organisations to develop on-ground natural resource management projects, in line with regional and state strategies.

Local Landcare Coordinators and their host organisations will be supported in undertaking these roles through their membership of a regional and state network and by participating in, and contributing to, a state and regional community of practice, coordinated by Landcare NSW.

This process has already commenced with the three appointees in place by May of 2016. Our coordinators are;

Lower Hunter	Anna Glasby
Mid Hunter	Adam Dwyer
Upper Hunter	Nicholas Alexander

Already the coordinators are developing rapport with local communities and Adam and Nicholas are also involved with their respective councils who are co-sponsors for the program. Evidence of their work will be presented at the AGM on the 19th November 2016.

L J Pearson

Hunter Regional Landcare Network Report to our Funding source for July 2015 to June 2016**Hunter Local Land Services (HLLS) funding support for the Lower Hunter 2015-16**

Through ongoing partnership arrangements with Hunter Local Land Services this year, we have secured an increased level of funding to assist in the facilitation of many of the support activities provided by our network to the groups in the Lower Hunter. Additional HLLS funding was also provided through arrangements with the Singleton Landcare Network and Muswellbrook Shire Council, to assist the Landcare groups, and Local Landcare Coordinator positions in the Upper Hunter.

These new Lower Hunter funding arrangements have greatly assisted in the delivery of a range of field days and focused workshops, as well as providing a significant contribution to the administrative support our Network has provided in the establishment of the new Local Landcare Coordinator positions, employed through a state-wide funding arrangement between Landcare NSW and the NSW State Government. As a result of this funding, we were once again able to provide \$500 payments directly to Landcare groups, to host field days, provide a venue, catering and an activity that encouraged participation in Landcare in the group's local area. The funding also allowed us to provide up to \$2,000 (with a couple of worthy exceptions) to support focused workshops on an increased number of Landcare sites across the region. The workshops all focussed on issues of particular relevance to the groups in their area, contributing to the cost of providing a speaker (or speakers) and workshop activities, as well as the usual costs associated with organising and hosting the workshop. Through their own connections and local networks, most groups were able to also bring additional resources to these events, adding considerably to the success of the event, and to the overall program. Hunter Region Landcare Network members and Hunter Local Land Services staff also attended to promote and acknowledge this partnership.

The benefits of this partnership have been considerable, to Hunter Local Land Services, to our network and to the Landcare groups we support. All of the field days and workshops directly addressed HLLS targets, engaging and supporting community participation, and helping to achieve their stated goals. The Hunter Region Landcare Network was able to use the funding to promote and build on our goal of supporting the Landcare groups and networks in this part of the region. Participating Landcare groups gained the opportunity to promote their successes, increase their capacity to make the best use of their efforts and connect their local actions to the bigger picture, as well as attracting the occasional new member. Please see attached a spreadsheet detailing the specific outcomes of the program. Event flyers and reports can be seen on the HRLN website.

HRLN is looking forward to continuing this partnership into the next financial year (and beyond) and to working together in our efforts to support the Hunter's Landcare community. Thank you to everyone who contributed to, and/or participated in this program. Your efforts helped make this a very successful partnership between the Hunter's Local Land Services and the Hunter's Landcare community.

John Hughson – Chair

Port Stephens Muster 25th February 2016

PORT STEPHENS LANDCARE MUSTER Jeannie Lawson

Landcare has been around for 25 years and the 'hands around Australia' symbol is the second most recognised symbol in Australia (guess who takes out the top spot - the 'golden arches' of MacDonalDs!). Landcare has gone through many transformations along the way but it is still essentially a grass-roots, community organisation that supports the restoration of native bushland areas around the country.

On Thursday, 25th February, 20 people representing many groups came together for the first Port Stephens Landcare Muster for a very informative day. We started with Richard Kime from the Worimi Land Council who told us the story of the black cockatoo as part of an acknowledgement of country.

John Hughson, President of the Hunter Regional Landcare Network, updated the groups on where Landcare is at and how it will move into the future. A number of Landcare co-ordinators are currently being engaged in order to better work with existing groups and provide more support and networking.

Most of the day was taken up with good, basic information about bush regeneration by two experienced speakers, Paul Melahan and myself. 'How to assess your site' and 'Weeds' were their respective topics. Paul got us thinking about what we need to address at our sites in a logical and time- and cost-effective way by prioritising the tasks and planning well. My live weed display was a great way to positively identify the plants we all know and hate. My message was to 'know your enemy' well so that you can best deal with it.

All the groups had the opportunity to say a bit about their 'patch' and it was great to hear other people's stories about their sites – the similarities and the differences, the challenges that each group is facing and the success they have achieved.

Many thanks to Fran Corner for organising the event, and of course to the Tilligerry Habitat volunteers who fed us so well! The event was sponsored by Hunter Local Land Services and supported by Port Stephens Council.



Hunter Councils Inc. 9 Valley Wildlife Trail 10th March 2016



Connectivity conservation through landholder engagement and capacity building events

9 Valley Wildlife Trail – Stage 1

Proposal prepared by: Eva Twarkowski

Date: 10 March 2016

Hunter Councils Inc
Environment Division

1 Introduction

The 9 Valley Wildlife Trail initiative is underpinned by a strong and established collaboration of organisational partners and landholders committed to the protection and management of native vegetation and fauna habitat unique to the Central and Upper Hunter regions. Its implementation seeks to establish key stepping stones (through native regeneration, weed control, restoration planting and fencing for habitat protection) to improve connectivity of important habitats for bird and mammal movement which has in parts severely declined throughout the Hunter Valley floor. This proposal will incorporate Stage 1 of this initiative and will involve consolidating and extending landholder engagement and involvement in one of three target areas i.e Jerry's Plains, Martindale or Sandy Hollow communities (Refer to Site Map 1). This will include:

- identifying, engaging and raising community awareness,
- assessing and identifying property and landscape scale conservation priorities
- providing training support and resources to support landholder conservation activities.

Stage 1 of this initiative will offer a unique opportunity to align and coordinate multi-agency environmental programs to maximise connectivity and conservation gains on both private and public land in a manner that is consistent with the values and objectives of the Great Eastern Ranges Initiative (GERI).

2 Project Appreciation

The Hunter Region Landcare Network (HRLN) is a non-for profit organisation providing support to active Landcare groups in the Hunter and Central Coast Region since 1998. The focus of the HRLN is to extend and support Landcare groups and landholders in undertaking activities such as bush regeneration, seed collection and plant propagation, directly contributing to increasing biodiversity, improving habitat condition and creating suitable local wildlife habitat.

HRLN presently has funding available for the development and implementation of a Landholder engagement program focussing on the identification and improvement of important ecological and connectivity values on private land through a series of capacity building events, activities and incentives.

The 9 Valley Wildlife Trail encompasses Jerry's Plains, Martindale and Sandy Hollow areas, which has been the focus of previous landholder engagement and on-ground restoration activities. These sites have been recognised for their significant ecological values and identified management requirements to improve condition, connectivity and resilience of vegetation communities and their habitat.

The activities in this proposal will encourage landholder engagement and involvement and further increase community awareness of significant biodiversity values and management. To ensure a cost effective, coordinated and strategic approach is achieved, the project location within the 9 Valley Wildlife Trail will be determined in consultation with HRLN and HLLS.

Connectivity conservation through landholder engagement and capacity building events 4

3 Experience of the Hunter Councils Environment Division

Over the last 5 years the Environment Division has developed and implemented multiple on-ground conservation, rehabilitation, and restoration programs focussing on weed control, bush regeneration, and fencing activities which have improved the condition, diversity and extent of Endangered Ecological Communities (in particular Hunter Valley Weeping Myall Woodland and White Box Yellow Box Grassy Woodland) on private property, community land and road reserves in the Upper Hunter.

These activities have required the Division to work with landholders to identify areas for both

protection and to improve biodiversity links within agricultural farming areas. Our programs have involved extensive landholder engagement, commonly through the implementation of capacity building events which have highlighted the importance of protecting and enhancing these unique natural areas to benefit broader biodiversity values, as well as enhancing farm productivity.

HCED has extensive experience in on-ground conservation works. Our approach, wherever possible, is to develop a 'whole of landscape approach' typically including the following actions / outcomes:

- Identifying important wildlife corridor linkages to inform restoration works (i.e. weed control, fencing and planting, retention and enhancement of habitat areas)
- Improving links between biodiversity and agricultural practices
- Identifying, prioritising and protecting areas requiring enhancement and conservation

The project will also draw upon the significant data, mapping and conservation assessment work completed by the Environment Division over many years which has confirmed the Jerry's Plains to Giants Creek area as a significant regional conservation priority. This reflects its multitude of unique vegetation communities, flora and fauna species, endangered ecological communities and important habitat and landscape values.

The project team's existing knowledge of the area and history of capacity building and conservation outcomes provides us with a unique ability to work with HRLN to deliver measurable on-ground outcomes, and to implement a landscape scale assessment and community engagement process with the potential to be expanded throughout the HRLN region.

4 Proposed Project Methodology

The Division proposes to develop and implement a landholder engagement project within the 9 Valley Wildlife Trail corridor. The intent of the project would be to deliver an engagement process that can continue to be built on and expanded throughout the HRLN region, as well as provide a demonstrated framework upon which to secure future implementation funding from a variety of government or non-government sources.

Following is a description of the proposed Scope of Works that represents the first stage of a long term collaboration between landholders, Landcare, community groups, stakeholders and state agencies to deliver a landscape scale approach to improving and extending biodiversity and habitat values in the Upper Hunter Region.

The actual location of the project activities (i.e. Jerry's Plains, Martindale or Sandy Hollow) will be confirmed following discussions with Hunter Region Landcare Network and Hunter Local Land Services.

Connectivity conservation through landholder engagement and capacity building events

5 Proposed Scope of Works

The project will deliver the following broad activities:

- Community Engagement to inform the community of the unique biodiversity values of their locality, and how they can become active in the protection and enhancement of the area
- Property assessments to identify restoration and protection opportunities
- A capacity building workshop to raise community awareness and capacity to undertake conservation activities
- Data entry and mapping of ecological values and rehabilitation opportunities
- Implementation of a framework to identify conservation priorities and on ground works including weed and pest species control, fencing to exclude stock and bush regeneration activities within habitat for threatened species and endangered ecological communities.

Project Methodology

Stage 1. Inception meeting

Project inception meeting with HRLN to confirm priorities, actions and deliverables

Stage 2. Community Engagement

(a) Desktop analyses of project area to identify number of properties to which engagement activities will be targeted, approximate area of property assessments to be delivered and using Aerial Photo Imagery ADS40, the nature and extent of vegetation communities present.

(b) Liaison with landholders, Landcare Groups and community groups within the project area.

This will involve sending a letter to all landholders describing the project and inviting landholders to an information session.

(c) Design and delivery of an information session for landholders and community groups within the project area. This will provide an overview of the project and opportunities for involvement. It will also involve promotion of the HCCREMS Biodiversity Investment Prospectus resources, tools and products.

Stage 3. Field Work

Deliver site assessments on properties (maximum of 12) who register their involvement in the project. Assessments will identify areas and opportunities for improving and maintaining landscape connectivity on private land.

Site assessments will include rapid vegetation surveys to identify and confirm vegetation communities present, while also gathering the following information:

- Habitat features including presence of habitat trees, fallen logs, burrows etc.
- Location of all identified vegetation communities, habitat features, potential areas for restoration planting, potential regeneration areas
- Land management issues including weed infestations, pest species
- Location of appropriate tree planting sites to connect contiguous vegetation patches and landscapes
- Areas suitable areas for restoration i.e. broad scale restoration to increase native grass species diversity
- Endemic tree species and appropriate spacing of trees will be identified based on the existing vegetation communities

Connectivity conservation through landholder engagement and capacity building events

Stage 4. Community Workshop

One community workshop will be designed and delivered. It will cover one or more of the following topics:

- Weed Identification and Management
- Pest species Management
- Broad scale restoration techniques to increase native grass species diversity, and improve pasture and soil condition.
- Importance and benefits of retaining biodiversity habitat values on agricultural land

The workshop will be delivered by technical experts and located on either private property or on council or crown reserve.

Stage 5: Data Entry, Analysis and Mapping

All outputs of property inspections will be collated and analysed in an Excel database and mapped

using ArcGIS software.

Stage 6: Documentation & Reporting

Development and packaging of all final mapping products, documentation and reporting for provision to HRLN.

Additional Activities

The project team will also engage with National Parks and Wildlife Service and Hunter Local Land Services to identify any of their current priorities and activities that may complement, integrate with or build upon the project.

Outputs and Deliverables

- 1 Technical report detailing the findings of the field assessments and outcomes of landholder engagement.
 - 2 Minimum of 30 landholders register their involvement in the project
 - 3 Site inspections completed for a maximum of 12 properties
 - 4 Delivery of one Capacity Building workshop
 - 5 Mapping of all identified EECs, habitat for threatened species, habitat trees and other habitat features on properties inspected within the project area
 - 6 Mapping of suitable restoration areas to create stepping stones and linkages to adjacent contiguous native vegetation
 - 7 Mapping of suitable sites for shelter belts or wind breaks (on properties at which site inspections are undertaken)
 - 8 Mapping of suitable regeneration or regrowth buffer areas adjacent to existing Endangered Ecological Communities and / or important habitat for threatened species
 - 9 Mapping of all paddock trees (on properties at which site inspections are undertaken)
 - 10 Identification and mapping of high priority weed infestations and presence of pest species including dens, tracks, scats and other evidence (on properties at which site inspections are undertaken).
 - 11 Identification of conservation priorities and on ground works including weed and pest species control, fencing to exclude stock and bush regeneration activities within habitat for threatened species and endangered ecological communities.
- Connectivity conservation through landholder engagement and capacity building events 7

6 Proposed Project Timeframe

To successfully deliver this project the following delivery timetable is recommended.

Stage Action Days Timeframe

Stage 1: Inception Meeting

Project inception meeting to confirm project actions and deliverables 5 March 2016

Stage 2: Community Engagement

Design, promote and deliver Community information session 1 day April 2016

Stage 3: Field Work Delivery and documentation of site inspections 5 days April – May 2016

Stage 4: Community Workshop Design, promote and deliver one capacity building workshop 3 days May 2016

Stage 5: Data Entry,

Analysis and Mapping Data entry Mapping of vegetation communities Mapping of areas suitable for connectivity conservation 2 days May 2016

Stage 6:

Documentation & Reporting Development of mapping products, documentation and reporting 4 days June 2016

7 Project Budget

The implementation of this project is costed at a lump sum of \$10,000 (ex GST)

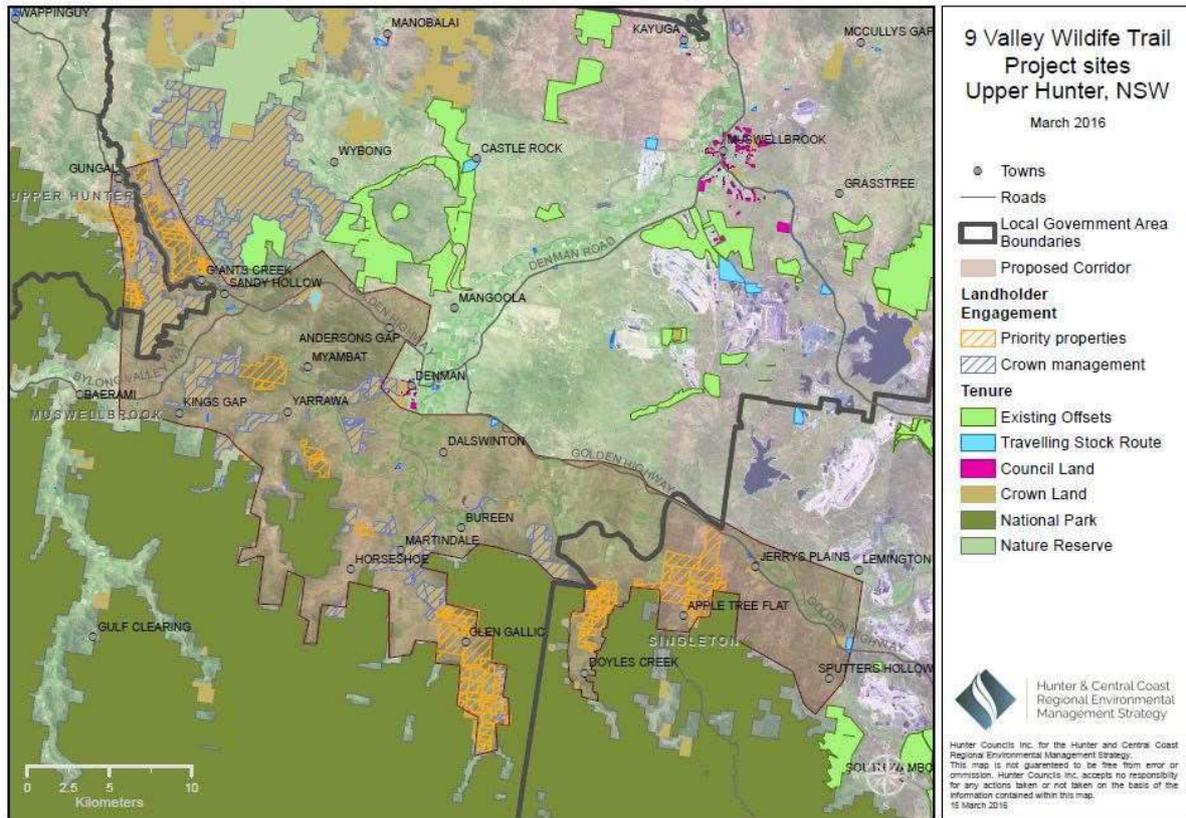


Figure 1 Site Map of Project Area

Nine Valleys Report

Although a report for this stage of the project was planned for July, this has not been achieved for various reasons. Some of the consultations have taken longer than anticipated but the project is still progressing. As a result of HRLN input, further submissions have been made for funding for stage two from other sources and it is hoped that these will be successful. A more up to date report will be given at the AGM on the 19th November 2016.



Woody Weeds Workshop

Sunday March 15 saw a good crowd attend MCCL's first Field Day, with approximately thirty residents and visitors in attendance, including representatives from Hunter Region Landcare Network, Scone Landcare, LLS and GERSS.

The day focused on control of Woody Weeds, in particular Honey Locust, Green Cestrum and African Boxthorn. Perry Brown from the Upper Hunter Weeds Authority presented the workshop. Perry provided attendees with an excellent presentation on noxious weed classes and the legal requirements for control of these weeds, followed by information on chemical control options and the legalities involved.



Honey Locust seed pods



semi-mature Honey Locust

The three focus weeds are Class 3 Noxious Weeds in the Upper Hunter region and are pest plants of particular note in the Martindale Creek catchment area. A Class 3 declaration means that landowners or managers must fully and continuously control and suppress weeds within this listing, with the purpose of reducing the area of infestation and the negative impact of infestations. By their nature these weeds are difficult to control and need at least annual monitoring and treating. Class 3 noxious weeds are plants that pose a serious threat to primary production or the environment of an area to which the order applies, are not widely distributed in the area and are likely to spread in the area or to another area.



Local Land Services



Hunter Region Landcare Network



**MartindaleCreek
Catchment
Landcare**

Following Perry's talk, representatives of the LLS, Steve Eccles, District Coordinator for the Upper Hunter, and Nev Reis, Hunter Regional Landcare Facilitator, gave a short presentation on the services the LLS can provide to our members.

Local residents, as well as some visitors, then watched a demonstration by Perry on several options for control, with demonstrations on basal bark spraying, cut and paint, and granular herbicide application and the pros and cons of these as well as restrictions due to proximity to the Creek.



Basal bark spraying

Nev Reis of the LLS also demonstrated a mechanical removal tool, the Tree Popper, which is now on loan to MCCL for use by members.

Tree Popper in action



The final activity of the day was then to take a walk and see some examples of these weeds in situ, with discussion on other locally significant weeds and their control options, such as the pervasive Blue Heliotrope.

The official part of the day was followed by a lovely lunch under the shade of the pecan grove, with a BBQ provided by Peter and Jann Dixon-Hughes and salads and slices provided by members of the MCCL Committee. A great family day out was had by all, with many people commenting during lunch that they had definitely learnt a new method or identified a weed which had them troubled.



Local Land
Services



Hunter Region
Landcare
Network



MartindaleCreek Catchment Landcare



Perry Brown, UHWA, presents our workshop

Martindale Creek Catchment Landcare would like to express our thanks to the LLS and Hunter Region Landcare Network for funding our Field Day, Perry and the UHWA for presenting the workshop, Brad and Sharon Franks for hosting the day in such a lovely spot on the beautiful Martindale Creek, and Peter and Jann Dixon-Hughes from LRB Direct for providing and cooking such delicious sausages for our picnic lunch.





Further information: www.huntercentralcoastweeds.com.au has links to

- DPI weeds website – for noxious weed ID, declarations for different NSW Shire, noxious weed classes and control actions required
- APVMA website (Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority) – for minor use herbicide permits
- DPI Noxious and Environmental weed control handbook (6th edition) – for weed control information

To contact Perry at the Upper Hunter Weeds Authority, Muswellbrook:

Ph 0408 683 491 or email perry.brown@muswellbrook.nsw.gov.au

What next?

MCCL is now working towards our next workshop, to be held on Sunday 26th April at St Martin's Church Hall, Martindale. This will be a Woodland Bird ID Workshop, and will teach you how to identify birds you see or hear and how to conduct bird surveys on your property. This workshop is funded through the GERSS and is presented by Birdlife Australia.

For information please contact Pauline Sykes, Martindale Creek Catchment Landcare, on 6547 3644 or email sykes.pauline@gmail.com



Eastern Spinebill



Newcastle Landcare Muster 13 April 2016

On Wednesday 13 April a dedicated group of Newcastle's most experienced Landcarers came together at Blackbutt Reserve to tell their stories, share experience and learn about Newcastle Council plans to actively increase the wildlife habitat in Council's bushland. Over coffee, cake and a sausage sandwich stories of many successful bush regeneration projects were told, a community-based vision for urban parkland exemplified by Morgan Street Reserve Landcare was presented, and the personal and practical challenges of being a Landcarer were shared.

About 20 people, including members of Newcastle based Landcare groups, attended the Muster (get together) along with Council staff, Local Land Services staff and the new Local Landcare Coordinator for the Lower Hunter region, Anna Glasby.

Groups in attendance included:

- Dixon Park Landcare
- Trig Shepherds Hill Landcare
- Merewether Landcare
- Shortland to Wallsend Landcare
- Nobbys Beach Landcare
- Hunter Wetland Centre
- Morgan Street Reserve Landcare
- George McGregor Reserve
- Jack Norman Reserve



The Landcare Muster, which included a tour around the Blackbutt Reserve facilities to look at wildlife habitat, was organised by Newcastle Council which supports many volunteer Landcare groups.

Following lunch the group visited Morgan Street Reserve at Merewether. When local residents realised that the Reserve was identified by Newcastle Council for possible rezoning they made representation to Council and from those meetings Morgan Street Reserve Landcare group was born in February 2015. The 0.6 hectare reserve is a sloping site featuring mown open parkland with mature shade



trees, a bushland belt along one border providing the main habitat area and a meadow area of domestic grasses, Themeda and Coolatai will be developed as a Themeda EEC. In its short existence the group has controlled erosion, tackled Coolatai grass, cleaned up the site after storm damage and conducted planting days with school groups. The Morgan Street Reserve Landcare group will continue to enhance this community asset with further mulching, planting, maintenance and community engagement.

Tilligerry Habitat Breakfast with the Birds 14th April 2016

Breakfast with the Birds Jeannie Lawson

The dedicated volunteers of the Tilligerry Habitat have rallied to the cause again and provided the community with another excellent nature event—Breakfast with the Birds on the 14th April. A cool and damp morning after rain the previous day didn't dampen the spirits of the 39 participants who arrived with binoculars, telescopes and cameras at the ready.

A brief walk to the waterfront allowed us to discover a dozen different bird species in a very short amount of time. Our expert guide, Anne Lindsay, helped the inexperienced bird watchers to develop their skills of tracking the smallest movements in the branches to view the special feathered friends that abound here. (And, yes, we did find a koala too!)

Our walk was followed by a delicious breakfast—a big thank you to all who helped in the kitchen/BBQ!

Back in the classroom, Anne shared Her experience and anecdotes as a dedicated twitcher (bird watcher/ enthusiast) from the Hunter Bird Observers Club and presented an array of wonderful photographs.

We had all just learned of the importance of habitat and wanted to put it into practice. So after a quick interlude for morning tea, we were back on the trail, ready to plant! Small, leafy shrubs were planted in a circle with a larger, outer circle of “prickly” plants- banksia, petrophile and hakea—which will help to protect the smaller birds from larger predators.

Our day was made possible by a grant from Hunter Local Land Services and Hunter Regional Landcare Network. Pam Hill and Fran Corner organized the program so we couldn't have done it without them. Everyone who attended was very grateful for the opportunity to attend such a well-organised and informative day.

Hope to have this event on again next year!!



These birds did not join us on the day!



Hunter Region Landcare Network Intrepid Landcare Consultation 19th April 2016

Inspire. Act. Lead.

April 2016

Hunter Regional Landcare Network Consultation summary

This consultation session was facilitated for the Hunter Regional Landcare Network, and the Lake Macquarie Landcare Network on the 19th of April, 2016. The objective of the session was to capture information about what happens in the youth engagement Landcare space across the Hunter region extending from the coast to inland areas covering a diversity of land use.

The session explored current Landcare activity, natural assets, youth networks, and the potential to deliver Intrepid Landcare services.

What we captured

Snapshot Intrepid Landcare

Megan Rowlatt, Cofounder of Intrepid Landcare, delivered a 30 minute presentation about Intrepid Landcare. The presentation included information about the formation of the Illawarra Intrepid Landcare group in 2009 and how the group has evolved over time to be more engaging to young people, and more diverse in the services it provides to communities and the environment.

Megan covered content around how Illawarra Intrepid Landcare inspired the start-up of a Gold Coast Intrepid Landcare group which was one of the outcomes of a Landcare Leadership Retreat for Students on the Gold Coast in March 2015. This leadership retreat also inspired a number of young people on the Gold Coast to step up into leadership roles and deliver their own projects which mattered to them.

With the assistance and ongoing coaching from Megan and Naomi Edwards (Cofounder of Intrepid Landcare), and mentoring and support from existing Landcare networks and local government, a number of inspiring projects are being driven on the Gold Coast by young people.

Throughout 2015, Intrepid Landcare also inspired the start-up of an ANU Intrepid Landcare group at Australian National University in Canberra, a Victoria / Melbourne based Intrepid Landcare, and a UOW Intrepid Landcare Club at the University of Wollongong.

These outcomes lead to the establishment of Intrepid Landcare as a national organisation, which is being driven by a young creative board of management to support communities and young people with youth engagement services in Landcare.

Lake Macquarie Landcare Network Governance Workshop 6th May 2016

The workshop was primarily run for Lake Macquarie Landcare Network members. A total of five of the core Lake Macquarie Landcare Network members attended (the other three members were away and could not attend) as well as one Lake Macquarie Landcarer. The workshop participants were community members from a range of backgrounds, all volunteering as Landcare volunteers in their local neighbourhoods. Some have been a member of the Network for several years, while others are relatively new.

Outcomes achieved:

- The workshop provided information and training on a variety of governance topics, focussing on two main issues:
 - Corporate governance (ensuring internal systems are functioning, tips on types of policies required for Landcare organisations, knowing you have your bases covered etc.)
 - roles and responsibilities of the Network
- Educate and inspire the Landcare Network, while enhancing and strengthening its ability to operate as a successful and forward thinking organisation.
- Provided valuable information and training to Landcare group leaders about running their individual groups and will hopefully encourage more Landcare volunteers to join the Landcare Network.
- Provided network members with a clearer understanding of what their next steps are in order to build the Network's capacity, function and purpose.
- Initiated the development of plans, visions and strategies for the committee to lead the organisation
- Discussed the importance and key points of risk management in the organisation and network
"It actually raised more issues than we already knew about, especially 'big picture' aspects of the Committees role and future. And it really was very productive in setting our path; heard great ideas from quieter committee members; inspired the new 2 people - who have been on other Committees, and Bob said 'This day is a great idea - who thought of it?' – LMLN member *Due to workshop facilitator costing more than anticipated, the Landcare shirts for Network members could not be included in the grant like originally planned.

Other support:

Lake Macquarie Landcare provided free use of the meeting room and equipment in which the workshop was held as well as providing lunch for workshop attendees. Support was also given through administration and event management assistance provided by Lake Macquarie Landcare staff members.

Hunter Wetlands LC Training & supporting volunteers 12th May 2016

The workshop was reasonably successful with a total of 23 people attending.

I believe we achieved our goal, to educate and inform people on how to train and support volunteers. Ken Balyiss (Guest speaker) spoke about native plant propagation, a topic not too many people were familiar with. Ken had people asking him some very interesting questions and everyone seemed to find it quite informative.

Jenny Castles (Guest speaker) spoke about her time in land care and what she has achieved over the years. The audience found this quite interesting as they were pleased to learn that Jenny and her team played a role in restoring a lot of local parks and Wallsend cemetery.

Once the workshop had completed we had the opening of “Tuxford Park Track”, an area that Jenny and her volunteer team had been restoring for the past few months. This was enjoyable as guests were able to see firsthand the impact that volunteers have on Landcare.

Overall the workshop was a success, with the audience learning more about volunteering in Landcare and leaving with valuable knowledge they would not have had previously.

Tilligerry Habitat Bees 14th May 2016*Tilligerry Habitat Association***Report on Beekeeping Workshop on Saturday 14th May 2016
Dorothea Willey**

A very successful workshop was conducted on Backyard Beekeeping on the above date, with 21 people attending. A cuppa was provided on registration and the presentations began at 09:30, with Fran Corner welcoming the attendees.

David Gear, a well-known and respected former breeder of queen bees – which he exported worldwide- opened the presentation with a history of how honey bees came to Australia and how modern day hives came to their present form (the gaps between frames and measurements of the cells is referred to as “bee space”). He then went on to explain the anatomy of a bee and how it develops from egg to mature bee, and the different “castes” – the division of labours among the bees in the hive and whether they are male or female. The role of the queen bee was of particular interest as she has the ability to determine the gender of the egg she lays, and also whether any female eggs will be fertile or not. The presentation was delivered in an informal manner, and questions were invited from the floor at a time of choosing of the attendee/s. This helped to spark a flow of information which enhanced the visual displays placed around the room and on the screen. Morning tea was served at 10:30, with the majority of the food provided having honey as an ingredient. All participants partook of this with relish, as evidenced by the speed with which the food disappeared from the servery!

-The session following morning tea dealt with, among other topics, the subject of biosecurity, and was jointly delivered by David and myself (hobbyist beekeeper and volunteer at Tilligerry Habitat). The main threat to local hives is the small hive beetle, and its incidence and control formed the basis for a lively discussion. The importance of maintaining a strong hive i.e.: one that has a large population of bees, was noted as being extremely important as this assists the bees to maintain control of their environment and therefore be less likely to develop serious problems with infestation or disease..



Among the topics that participants indicated were of interest was the flora – particularly local- that might be of use as “bee food”. As bees collect both pollen and nectar, it is important that a variety of flora be available in good numbers. *Angophora costata*, the *Leptospermum polygalifolium* (jelly bush), *Banksia* varieties, and *Callistemon* (among others), which occur on the Tilligerry Peninsula particularly in Tanilba Bay are excellent flora for bees to feed upon. Just prior to lunch, **Gina Cranson** (writer, editor, proof reader, illustrator), gave an extremely interesting talk on Australian native bees and how she came to be interested not only in illustrating them, but in discovering their anatomy, how they live and forage, and whether or not they produce honey. Among the information that she provided was the fact that there are as many as 1600 species of Australian native bees, that only **11 of these species are stingless** and produce honey (in very small quantities, perhaps a 500gm jar a year!). Most native bees are solitary bees,

and live in holes in the ground, wood, bamboo canes, and similar habitat which a person can provide in their own garden to assist in attracting these bees. Native bees are efficient pollinators of a variety of flora, including but not exclusive to macadamias and cherry tomatoes. Gina also had on display – and for sale (with a donation to the habitat from each sale) her beautifully illustrated posters of the native bees of NSW, and the Hunter Region. Gina also donated a poster of Hunter Native Bees to Tilligerry Habitat.

A BBQ lunch was provided, with the chicken marinated in honey to once again showcase it as something much more than just a sandwich spread. Following lunch, a field trip to my home to observe a working hive and extraction of honey was undertaken by those who wished to participate. An outdoor area fully enclosed by insect screen proved to be a perfect place for participants to view the brood and honey frames taken from the hive. I demonstrated how to uncap a frame of honey and invited participants to taste the honey before it was spun from the frames, as this is an experience most people would not have had the opportunity to undertake before. Looking at the smiles on people's faces, it was evident that they enjoyed the taste!

Participants also found it fascinating to observe how the honey had the appearance of "fairy floss" on the side of the extraction centrifuge, collected at the base of the drum, and then flowed through a series of filters (each successively smaller), to finally end up in the pail in which it is then sold.

Evaluation :Of the **21** participants, **12** returned their evaluation forms.

1.Venue rating – 7 rated at 5 (highest), 2 rated at 4, 3 did not rate the venue.

2.Organisation of event: 8 rated at 5 (highest), 1 rated at 4, 3 did not rate

3.Catering: 10 rated at 5 (highest); 2 did not rate

4.Introduction to bees: what did you learn?. Comments include:-

Need for habitat for bees, history and care of bees, too much to express, number of native bees we have, that stability in a hive is not a difficult process, importance of honey bees, important information for native bees, process for moving hives, flora for planting, respect for bees/attracting them to my garden

5.Biosecurity issues? Comments include: *care of the hive, what's out there that could affect the hive, our honey is just as good as Manuka honey that certain processes are necessary for a successful hive, usefulness of honey garden plants, management of pests, honey process, register my hive*

6.Native Bees : comments include *diversity of habitat, study bees more, fantastic can't wait to install a couple of bee hotels, buy a box of native bees for my verandah, that one can derive a great deal of pleasure form observing and recognising native bees, the number of native bees in Australia, leads one to want to learn more and to discover what is around in the natural world*

7.Other topics for workshops: *Native orchids of the local area, frogs, birds, chickens for the backyard, looking after domestic pets, chickens, vegies, vegies, geology and soils of the area: geomorphology, flying foxes, spiders, snakes, building native habitat in backyards, native bees, flora. Funding etc.*

Gresford Landcare Birds of the Paterson Allyn & Williams Rivers 21st May 2016



BIRDS OF THE PATERSON ALLYN AND WILLIAMS VALLEYS

**Expert Bill Dowling will describe our native birds
& their threatened habitat. He will discuss what
we can do and answer questions.**

**Gresford District Landcare
Warmly invite all landholders to a:**

**FREE FIELD DAY
SATURDAY 21ST MAY 2016
9.30AM-2PM**

9.30AM AT ST MARY'S HALL, ALLYNBROOK

**FREE SAUSAGE SIZZLE AFTER THE TALK
RSVP J WOKES 49385112 or juliawokes@hotmail.com**

Birds of the Paterson, Allyn & Williams Valley

Held 21st May 2016 at Mary St Allyn Church Hall, Allynbrook 9.30 – 2.00

70 people met on a beautiful Saturday morning at 9.30 to hear Bill Dowling speak on birds of the area.

Bill gave the attendees a list of the Common Birds of the area.

He was helpful in providing information on Equipment to look for birds & when was a good time to See/hear them....late in the afternoon when they are all having their last meal. The message was, as expected, there are many bird varieties in decline, with more aggressive bigger birds – Galahs, Corellas, Noisy Minors, Magpies & Crows.

Some because of habitat decline such as the rainbow bee-eater that used to be common on the sandy banks of the river...as the rivers have eroded there has been the loss of sandy banks.

Some of the ground laying birds: Warblers, Stone Curlew & Pippits have faced predators such a cats & foxes & are going or gone.

Bill covered what can we do – revegetate for both larger birds & smaller birds. This is for food, for protection & for nesting. Local nurseries are often helpful with plants that are useful for this purpose. As well as trees, shrubs & flowers – Old Man’s Beard, Dog’s hair & River Oak’s all provide nesting material.

There was plenty of time for the attendees to share their bird observations.

We were very pleased with the attendance. Promotion had been by email, through our database, plus the Hunter Bird Association, the Landcare Network and the local garden club. There were fliers handed out at Tocal Field day, as well as being in the local businesses. An advertisement was paid for in the Gresford new & we were able to get a good article in the Dungog Chronicle.

Our expectations were for about 40 attendees – we were exceptionally pleased with the 70 – albeit that there were extra trips for food! It is hard to say whether it was the publicity or the topic.

Our objective was to have a field day that attracted a wide audience and that was informative & fun – these objectives were achieved & we were able to get additional contact details so we can invite these people to additional events. How successful we were we will know at our next Field day!

We appreciated the support of the Hunter Region Landcare Network. The support in the form of funds & handing out leaflets at Tocal & having Adan Dwyer tweak the flyer & promoting the event through your channels.

Julia Wokes

Tilligerry Habitat Koala workshop 6th June 2016

Tilligerry Koalas

Fran Comer

Helping Our Koalas Workshop was run by Hunter Koala Preservation Society on Monday 6th June involving our Tilligerry Habitat volunteers and community members. Our purpose was to develop a partnership to look after OUR koalas with the group that started in Raymond Terrace where most koala activity was then, moved to Tilligerry for many years and now is based on Tomaree but is responsible for koala rescue across most of Port Stephens. Sessions of the workshop dealt with koala diseases, issues of habitat protection, how the society works and koala rescue techniques. A short session focussed on Tilligerry needs before a BBQ lunch. The afternoon session was presented by Port Stephens Council on the project to replant koala habitat on Tomaree this year. A similar planting is planned for Tilligerry in 2017.

Carmel Northwood
HKPS President



This workshop like the bee, bird, Landcare Muster, Worimi workshops held in the last 4 months were run by grants from a partnership between Hunter Region Landcare Network and Hunter Local Land Services through the National Landcare Program funding. This gave us catering and venue costs and a \$600 contribution to Hunter Koala Preservation Society.

Discussion following the meeting has led us to put together a project called Tilligerry Wildlife Corridors with the other stakeholders on Tilligerry Peninsula: Hunter Water, Crown lands, Port Stephens Council, Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council, RFS, National Parks. It aims to improve our mapping of bushland and specify corridors, recognise the status of the bushland with a name sign, add a logo noting what corridor it is, plan to remove weeds, fence to lock out vehicles where needed and possible and to identify where links need to be improved by tree planting.



The koala bus



Workshop at the Tilligerry Habitat

Tilligerry Koalas continued

So far out of one part stakeholder meeting we have gained a sign where none existed on Girumbit State Conservation Area (see sign). corrected our maps. have a path to get permission to work on National Park and a major track has been blocked. Another stakeholder meeting is planned for late July.

The Tilligerry Envirotrust Grant begun in 2012 has been refunded to employ bush regenerators on 10 patches across Tilligerry Peninsula working on some of the same bush land that is part of our wildlife corridors. This gave us \$250 000 working with Port Stephens Council, Tanilba Bay Parks, Reserve and Hall committee, Tilligerry Landcare Group, Mallabula Parks and Reserves, Tilligerry Habitat and Lemon Tree Passage Parks and Reserves for 6 years (2 to go).

Hunter Koala Preservation Society has provided us with their press release on the Port Stephens Koala Hospital and Tourism Centre feasibility study. Port Stephens Council has approved the expenditure of \$64 000 on a centre to be located at Treescapes Holiday Park at Anna Bay. Mayor of Port Stephens Bruce MacKenzie said 'The concept has a number of obvious benefits, most importantly for the wellbeing of the existing koala population for animals requiring treatment and care, and boosting local numbers to ensure koalas continue to have a presence in Port Stephens into the future'.

'Simply put, Port Stephens koalas will not survive in the wild if the hospital is not built for treatment and breeding purposes. Hunter Koala preservation Society is hopeful this centre will promote wider community involvement and respect for wildlife, to ensure the survival of the local koala population' Carmel Northwood HKPF President agreed.



Help us track Tilligerry Koalas

Go to

Google—haveyoursay.portstephens.nsw.gov/koalas1

Register, go to map and help us record sightings

Tilligerry map slides across with cursor

Sightings in June



Worimi LALC Green Team The First Landcarers 11th June 2016

Field Day: The First Landcarers

The First Landcarers Field day took place on 11 June 2016, at Murrook Cultural Centre. This is the home of the Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council. It was attended by 14 registered participants and four Worimi staff and members. A fifth staff member joined the group for the afternoon session and Uncle Nevil gave the Welcome to Country address.

The morning started with the Welcome to Country address, including a potted history of the Worimi Nation, their boundaries and the connection to the local area.

Opening the morning session with a story about the White and Black Cokato, Richard Kime, assisted by Brett Chambers and Joel Richie, went on to present a comprehensive overview of the business units operating out of the Murrook Cultural Centre and the formation and management of the Worimi Conservation Lands. He then explained how the Worimi Green Team originated, their humble beginning and progress to date. Now with five staff members and admin support they expect to break even financially this year. He spoke about some of the projects and partnerships they are presently involved in and the practical and theoretical training the team continue to undertake. This was followed by a short walk around some of the gardens to look at plant species of particular significance to the Worimi people.

After a fabulous lunch the group piled into the 4WD bus and were taken out to the Sand Dunes. The bus drove past the normal carpark area and the group walked through the Land Councils private land (away from the general public and recreational vehicle area). Johnathan Lilly (Cultural and Heritage Education Officer) led the group over the sand dunes to an area where they looked down on the freshwater lagoons. Here, out of the wind and with Sea Eagles soaring above he built a small fire, sat everyone down and proceeded to explain what this land meant to him and his family. Jonathan had brought along his young nephew, ensuring that the knowledge was passed down to future generations. At times he spoke in the Worimi language, interpreting for the group and teaching them a few Worimi words and the proper pronunciation.

A second story about the Black Cokato was a fitting end to a practical and cultural informative event.

After the drive back to the centre participants were greeted with refreshments and even doggy bags of fruit to take home with them.



Watching the fire Jonathan Lilly

HRLN Let's Connect on Biodiversity 17th June 2016



LEARN SHARE CONNECT

Let's connect on Biodiversity!

You are invited

To a workshop sponsored by Landcare NSW

Learn about proposed changes to the NSW legislation that manages native vegetation, biodiversity and land management, and connect to biodiversity projects in the Hunter Region.

This workshop is for Landcare groups, farmers, environmentalists, agencies, universities, local government and community members to share, learn and connect on biodiversity and changes to the way it is managed in NSW.

This full day workshop is a great opportunity to get informed and up to date. It will include presentation and discussion on:

- Draft Biodiversity Conservation Act and changes to Local Land Services Act
- Environmental Defenders Office (EDO) views on changes
- Showcase of Landcare biodiversity projects
- Networking

Friday 17 June 10am – 4:45pm

Hunter Wetlands Centre

412 Sandgate Road, Shortland, NSW 2307

LUNCH provide if you REGISTER at lowerhunterlandcare@gmail.com

Agenda will be emailed following registration

For more information call Anna Glasby, Lower Hunter Local Landcare Coordinator on 0429 444 305



The Following is an Executive Summary of the state-wide workshops that were held under this theme, including the Hunter.

Landcare NSW, through the support of the NSW Environmental Trust delivered a series of eight workshops across NSW during the submission phase of the NSW Biodiversity Reforms. The workshops aimed to engage the Landcare community in the reforms process through showcasing Landcare biodiversity project outcomes, provision of information about the draft reforms from different sectors and identification of opportunities for Landcare members to participate in the reforms.

The workshops were attended by a total of 290 people. Participants included a mix of Landcarers, agency representatives, farmers, community and local government participation. An additional 157 participants were logged on for the OEH webinar, totalling 447 participants.

Landcare NSW provided a confidential submission to the reform process, focused on the opportunities identified by Landcare NSW to participate in and contribute to the reform process and simultaneously contribute to a sustainable long term funding platform for Landcare NSW.

Landcare NSW did not attempt to address or adopt a position on the specific and technical aspects of the proposed land management and conservation reforms, however Landcare NSW has encouraged Landcare groups and its individual members to provide their own submissions to the current consultation process, to ensure that the full range of views, as held by Landcarers, were represented.

Reflecting this approach, this report does not attempt to address the merits of the reforms, but instead provide a snap shot of the key issues and comments raised at more than one of the workshops. Throughout the workshops Landcarers also identified a number of omissions from the current process and opportunities to improve the reforms.

The biodiversity reforms are a complex suite of proposed changes to current legislation. It was noted that for many participants that the workshops were their first exposure to the reforms. While the www.landmanagement.nsw.gov.au website was circulated through the Landcare networks prior to the workshops most participants had not viewed it, and were searching for information.

Nonetheless, a number of consistent themes were raised during the workshops.

These included:

- the need to recognise and build on the efforts previously undertaken by Landcare and government agencies to improve the condition and extent of landscape biodiversity,
- the importance of utilising sub catchment and catchment planning models to maximise outcomes,
- that it is essential that biodiversity management incorporates an integrated education and extension component, and

- that resourcing should be aimed at utilising and increasing the capacity of existing networks such as Landcare and LLS rather than creating a new entity.

Landcare has long promoted that biodiversity and production are not exclusive but rather one supports the other and hope that the biodiversity reforms continue to support this message through legislation, information and on-ground outcomes.

Rob Dulhunty

Chair Landcare NSW Inc

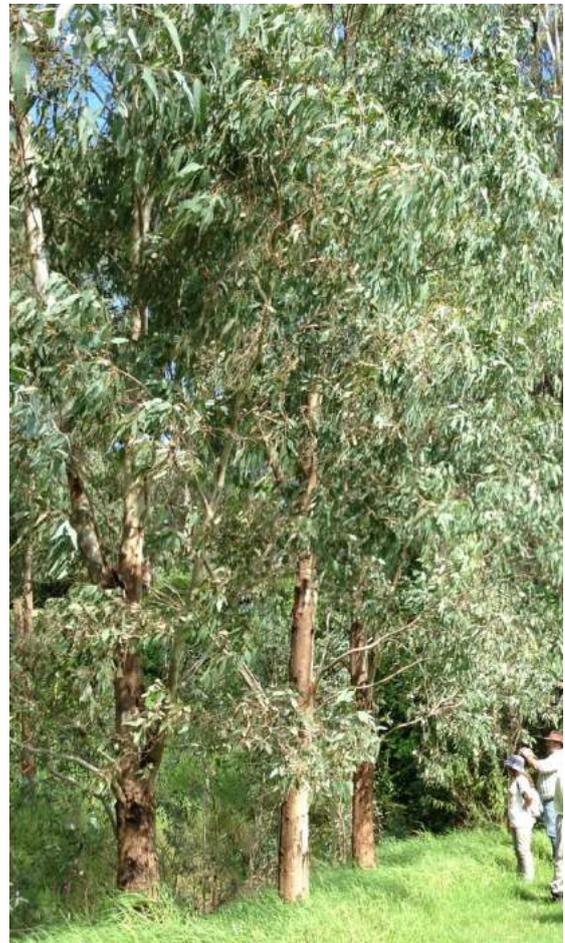
At the Wetland Centre a number of local speakers presented topics with local themes.

Joshua Lethbridge spoke of the work being undertaken in the Hunter wetlands and drew attention to the area's significance as a wetland area.

Fran Corner spoke of the development of wildlife corridors in the Port Stephens area and of the various groups involved in caring for and supporting wildlife and vegetation on the peninsula.

Anna Glasby spoke from her own experiences when she explained the ways to make effective submissions, drawing attention to who will read what you write, (it could be made public); the importance of homework (researching the issue); sticking to the topic; style; structure; distribution and follow-up and feedback.

Leslie Pearson spoke of the HRLN River Red Gums project that has been under way in the Hunter, since 2008, sharing some of the problems and successes of the project as well as revealing insights into this iconic Australian tree.



E Camaldulensis planted at Singleton in 2008

Photo 2014

Hunter Councils Biodiversity in roadside reserves 18th June 2016



Hunter & Central Coast
Regional Environmental
Management Strategy

Final Report to Hunter Region Landcare Network

The Benefits of Identifying, Managing and Protecting Biodiversity Values within Road Reserves and Private Land Workshop

1. Overview

Hunter Councils Inc. received funding from the Hunter Regional Landcare Network to design and host a community workshop for the communities of Martins Creek, Duns Creek, Glen Oak and Maitland Vale (communities around the junction of the Port Stephens, Dungog and Maitland Local Government Areas).

The Workshop was held on 18 June 2016 (9am to 1:30pm) and included both a site visit and Presentations from local experts. Morning tea and a BBQ lunch were provided.

The workshop presented information on the following topics:

- An overview of the unique diversity of ground dwelling and arboreal mammal species of the area
- the different habitat types that support species such as the Squirrel Glider, Koala and Brush tailed Phascogales
- The importance of available food sources
- The importance of retaining habitat to ensure survival and persistence of endangered fauna in the landscape
- The importance of maintaining Koala Pathways
- Preserving farmed landscapes for people and biodiversity
- Overview of local environmental programs being undertaken by Councils, LLS and Hunter Councils.

2. Presenters

A number of presenters were sourced to provide attendees with access to local experts who have detailed knowledge of the local area and programs being undertaken. Presenters were:

- Narawan Williams, a local fauna expert specialising in fauna surveys in the Hunter and Central Coast region for over 20 years. Narawan led the walk and presented on local fauna and endangered fauna of the Maitland, Dungog, and Port Stephen Council, areas
- Lynda Stevenson a member of a volunteer carers organisation called Australian Wildlife Needing Aid (FAWNA) and has worked with Koalas in the Dungog, Maitland and Port Stephens area for over 30 years. Lynda presented on the importance on Koala pathways during the site visit section of the workshop.
- Lorna Adlem, (Senior Local Land Services Officer, Hunter Local Land Services) facilitates multiple regional environmental management programs in the area. Lorna presented on

preserving farmed landscapes for people and wildlife and provided an overview of African Olive weed control.

- Scott Meier, (Bushland and Rainforest Restoration and Consultancy), undertakes local on ground conservation works at Clarence Town Crown Reserve and the Roadside project sites.

3. Workshop Outcomes

The workshop was heavily promoted throughout the three local government areas and attracted 20 attendees on the day (including presenters). An additional 4 people had registered but did not attend, likely due to inclement weather caused by an East Coast Low. Hunter Councils and the presenters were exceptionally happy with the turn out, considering the workshop went for over 4 hours, on a weekend, during poor weather. Key outcomes for Hunter Regional Landcare include:

- 20 rural landowners attended the weekend workshop (**Attachment 1 to 2**)
- Increased awareness of local endangered fauna that are known to occur on private property in the Martins Creek, Duns Creek, Glen Oak and Maitland Vale area. Many of the participants were not familiar with some of the more cryptic species including; Brush-tailed Phascogales, Squirrel Gliders, Feather-tailed Gliders, Swift Parrots, Speckled Warblers and Grey-crowned Babblers (anecdotal evidence)
- The workshop provided an opportunity to register new Bushcare/Landcare volunteers, with one participant expressing interest in joining a local Landcare or Bushcare group in the Glen Oak area
- One participant offered to promote similar events through the Dungog Science Hub, as they felt the information would be well received by that audience. Additionally, and importantly, the workshop leveraged a 2-year Environmental Trust Rehabilitation and Restoration Project facilitated by Hunter Councils (titled “On-ground works to improve the condition and protection of 15 remnant Endangered Ecological Communities Roadside reserve sites”) which involved both community education and on-ground restoration activities. The use of fauna surveys and project outcomes at this community workshop ensured landowners understood the location of important sites managed by Councils, and that the fauna discussed at the workshop were actually found in the local area. The tailoring of the workshop to the local area made it much more personal for the attendees.



Narawan Williams



Scott Meier

Clarence Town Crown Reserve

Wollombi Landcare Riparian erosion control and repair 18th June 2016

Wollombi Valley Landcare AGM and Riparian Erosion management Workshop

Held at Wollombi School on Saturday 18th June from 10 am

Twenty five people attended today which began with the landcare AGM which was a huge success with all positions filled, and was followed by our workshop on Riparian Erosion management. One guest speaker, Mick Budden from Local Land Services, shared some of his knowledge on Riparian management. He discussed understanding riparian processes and rehabilitation of river banks after flooding. Our rivers systems are dynamic and ever changing with floods, erosion and stream adjustment, which can be amplified by character and conditions of the individual river, eg, lack of vegetation.

Erosion is more prevalent along sandy valley floors, rather than rocky more elevated streams. Vegetation is needed with a variety of canopies and a mixture of shrubs and grasses. Lomandra is ideal and contributes to stabilising the banks.

There are different types of erosion. One type being slumping erosion, where a high water table and a flood causes collapsing which is common in our area. Sheer water force creates head cutting in gullies.

Leave fallen trees in the waterways to create channel diversity which provides habitat to water animal life. Also, this encourages other plants to take hold and grow.

Persistence is the essence to riparian management. Plant the pioneer species first which grow quickly. Some include casuarinas, wattles, red ash, callistemons and water gums, There will be floods with each being different to the last. Eventually the planting of vegetation will take hold and lessen future erosion.

It is important to control the rate of flow to prevent flooding downstream where rivers meet. A healthy river or tributary will slow down the force of the water. Rivers heal themselves but need our help.

After Mick's presentation we walked along a section of the Wollombi Brook which Landcare has been rehabilitating. Greg Major, a local Ecologist, joined us and added his expertise and observations concerning our efforts. Mature Casuarinas are a feature of this section of river and have been the backbone of the rehabilitation efforts. Native species that have been planted include White Cedars (which are now controlled as they are in large numbers), Callistemons, Breynia, Water Gums, Lomandras, Dianellas etc. A major feature of the area is the success of the native grass *Micoleanea Stipodes* which has proven to be a great ground cover and "living mulch". This is important because large areas of *Tradescantia* have been removed leaving bare sandy soil which is vulnerable to erosion when the river floods. To partially guard against this, areas are cleared in a patchwork quilt pattern so as not to expose too large an area all at one time. And we have also selected flatter areas first to rehabilitate, these being less prone to erosion than steeper sections. Steeper sections are not

cleared, but rather planted into with colonising species, with the aim to get them established prior to later rehabilitation works. Privets are poisoned “in situ” so as not to disturb the soil and also to negate the need to deal with large amounts of biomass. Cleared areas are densely planted with a range of native plants, with ground covers being a high priority.

One area at the toe of a bank was over cleared and has been badly eroded. It was recommended by both Mick and Greg that the area be densely planted out with Lomandras with half metre spacing. Many people were interested in the type of plantings that have been used along the brook and that is a focus of our aim to make the site an educational tool. We had placed name “tags” alongside some plants in the past, but these need to be replaced due to the action of floods.

Following the walk/talk we went back to the school for a BBQ where John Hughson gave a talk on the work of the Hunter Regional Landcare Network as well as outlining the efforts of Adam Dwyer, our Local Landcare Coordinator.

All in all it was a great day the was well attended (there were a good half dozen new faces) with a good outcome. Thank you to Mick, LLS, Greg, John and HRLN for helping make it an enjoyable and rewarding day.

Cheers Chris Jackson (President Wollombi Landcare)

Coal Point Landcare Habitat enhancement with fire & steel 18th June 2016



HABITAT ENHANCEMENT WITH FIRE AND STEEL

Progress Hall, 197 Skye Point Rd, Coal Point
Saturday 18th June 9:30-2:30pm

A field day focussed on creating, maintaining and monitoring habitat in an area that received an environmental burn on 6/4/16.

A morning session showcasing the creation of habitat structures in standing trees (stags) and in fallen logs using advanced chainsaw techniques with Jarrah Hume-Cook.

An afternoon session monitoring the impacts of the 6/4/16 environmental burn by taking photopoints along a transect that was established prior to the burn and sampling flora quadrats for the first arrivals after the burn.

The event is hosted by the Coal Point Progress Association and includes displays, presentations, field tours and catering.

More information on the CPPA website <http://coalpointprogress.blogspot.com.au/2016/05/habitat-enhancement-with-fire-and-steel.html>

**BOOKINGS APPRECIATED [HTTPS://WWW.EVENTBRITE.COM.AU/E/HABITAT-ENHANCEMENTWITH-FIRE-AND-STEEL-TICKETS-25415795328](https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/habitat-enhancement-with-fire-and-steel-tickets-25415795328)
OR PHONE/SMS SUZANNE 0438596741**





Habitat Enhancement with Fire and Steel
18/6/16 at progress Hall, 197 Skye Point Rd

OUTCOMES ACHIEVED

- 40minute discussion/presentation on habitat enhancement and the value of hollows by Jarrah Hume-Cook
- 1.5hr field demonstration of advanced chainsaw techniques by Jarrah Hume-Cook
- 30 minute presentation on native plants for



habitat enhancement by Ann Loughrano Sold items were 36 plants, 1 Native or Weed pick the difference book

- 15 minute powerpoint and picture presentation of the pre burn process and monitoring techniques and 45min walk around the Stansfield burn site by Suzanne Pritchard (CPPA)
- Networking by local landcare organisations that are in a position to influence different approaches to habitat enhancement.
- 2 landcare volunteer sign-ups for landcaring 'in the Hunter region'
- Displays from
 - CPPA landcare including nestboxes, monitoring, native plants and weed books and information to take
 - TIN- plants, books and information to take
 - Backyard Habitat for Wildlife
 - Lake Macquarie Landcare
 - Toronto Area Sustainable Neighbourhood group

Lake Macquarie Landcare Hunter Intrepid Landcare Retreat 25th -26th June 2016

Grant Report Hunter Intrepid Landcare Retreat Hosted by Lake Macquarie Landcare Network

On 25-26 June 2016, Lake Macquarie Landcare Network hosted an Intrepid Landcare Retreat to launch Intrepid Landcare in the Hunter.

Sixteen young people (aged 16-30) applied for and participated in the retreat.

While most of the participants lived in the Newcastle and Lake Macquarie area, there were also some that lived in Cessnock and Central Coast areas. The participants included high school, TAFE, University students and young workers, all with a passion for our local environment. They had a range of hobbies and interests that demonstrated their involvement in the community and ability to pursue new adventures.

The 16 participants were guided through the Retreat activities by facilitators Megan Rowlett and Naomi Edwards, Intrepid Co-founders and Young Landcare Ambassadors.

In addition to the 16 participants and 2 facilitators 15 people attended the Retreat as 'mentors', activity coordinators, or representatives of partner organisations.

Outcomes achieved:

Inaugural Hunter Intrepid event brought together 16 young people and engaged them in a range of conservation and adventure activities to showcase what Intrepid Landcare is about. Activities included:

- Ice-breaker & pair-share activities
- Landcare activities (weeding & planting) at Burwood Beach
- Guided abseiling in Glenrock Conservation Area
- Nature documentary
- Breakfast with the birds with local bird guru
- Bush tucker and Glenrock history talk with local Landcarers
- Tour of Glenrock Landcare site
- Lunch with mentors and leadership workshops

The leadership workshop allowed participants to work up a variety of ideas to implement in the Hunter Region. Their ideas included:

- Clean up market day
- Landcare playdates (for young Landcarers – new parents with children)
- Beach clean-up/ Speers Point Park
- Wine and Weeds in the Hunter Valley

The participants agreed to continue as a 'Hunter Intrepid Landcare group' and meet again to undertake Landcare and adventure activities, with the first planned activity being a return to Glenrock and Burwood beach for a one day weeding event in late August or early September. They agreed to join a facebook and email group in order to keep in touch and arrange future events.

Other support

As well as the Hunter Region Landcare Network and Hunter Local Land Services, the following other support was received for the Hunter Intrepid Retreat:

- MP Greg Piper – Local Member for Lake Macquarie
- LMCC (Community Planning)
- Lake Macquarie Youth Advisory Network
- In-kind support from LMCC Landcare Resource Centre in organising, promotion and attending aspects of the Retreat as well as funding towards event insurance
- In-kind contribution of mentors and other volunteers involved
- Landcare Australia has made a contribution towards the next Hunter Intrepid event



Hunter Valley wine tourism Making compost for Vineyards 29th June 2016

COMPOST WORKSHOP – POKOLBIN

Wednesday, 29th June 2016

Pokolbin Hall/Tyrrell's Vineyards – Times to be confirmed (most likely 9-2pm)

Cost : \$25

Hunter Valley winemakers and viticulturists are looking strongly at utilising winery and vineyard waste streams, along with other locally sourced organic materials, to make and use composts in vineyards with the aim of improving soil health, reducing synthetic nutrient inputs and overall sustainability of their production system.

On the 29th of June the Hunter Valley Wine & Tourism Association is staging a workshop on composting at Pokolbin Hall, with funding provided by the National Landcare Program and supported by NSW DPI and Hunter Local Land Services.

Presenters will include :

David Forrest of Forrest Farms is an organic fruit and vegetable farmer with over 30 years experience in making and using compost, and he will provide advice on recipes, the pros and cons of different input materials for use on perennial crops such as grapevines and interactions with soils and how it fits into vineyard production systems.

David Lowe of Mudgee and John Kalleske from the Barossa Valley are both organic and biodynamic winemakers who will present case studies on their experiences on making and utilising compost & mulches in their vineyards.

A tour of a local winery Tyrrell's composting process is also part of this workshop.

A must do event for all Hunter Valley winemakers and viticulturists.

Please email Melissa Romeyn at the Hunter Valley Wine & Tourism Association E melissa@hvwtw.com.au to register your interest, and for further details in due course.

Other enquiries can be directed to Liz Riley 0411 203 773 .

Compost Workshop – Pokolbin Community Hall – Wednesday 29th June 2016

The Compost Workshop was held by the Hunter Valley Wine and Tourism Association on 29th June 2016 with support from the NSW DPI. The workshop was made possible with supporting funds received from the Hunter Region Landcare Network and its partners Hunter Local Land Services and the National Landcare Program.

The workshop was pitched at local vineyards and wineries with a focus on the “how to” of compost production, utilising winery waste streams e.g. .grape marc, cardboard, garden waste etc.

The four speakers were:

Darren Fahey – NSW DPI Development Officer Viticulture

David Forrest – Forrest Farm (organic farmer – Northern NSW)

John Kalleske – Kalleske Vineyards (organic vineyard owner/operator, Barossa Valley, SA)

David Lowe – Lowe Vineyards (Mudgee, NSW)

The speakers were all very knowledgeable and delivered talks that set the scene in regards to the science behind composting, the processes involved and in the execution of the processes to get the desired outcomes. The talks covered different methods of composting and the differences in the compost they produce. With two vineyard/winery focused speakers this was able to then be tailored to how these different products are suitable for use at different times of the season and for different phases in the vineyard’s life e.g. in the development phased compared with the production phase.

David Forrest and David Lowe provided some very useful information on ratios of inputs and how to manage the composting process. This included how to keep the process going when it slows and how to manage the process to minimise the labour inputs required i.e. if the ratios are right then there will be less need for watering and turning. David Forrest was also able to add some insight in how to manage compost production in high rainfall regions, as this is a potential challenge in the Hunter in the period when we would be composting i.e. post-harvest (February onwards).

David Lowe showcased his analysis and financials of compost production, which was very relevant for those considering going down his path. David along with John Kalleske provided great insight into application methods, where they apply the compost (the midrow rather than undervine), application rates, expected benefits and time frames for change. Much of this was different to how many growers currently use commercially available products in the undervine area. This lead onto a good discussion in regards to soil biology and vine resilience versus just adding organic matter and gaining mulching properties.

Some growers brought along samples of the compost they have been making and were able to receive feedback on how it was progressing and tips on when it would be suitable for use. The morning tea break provided a good opportunity to inspect samples that David Forrest had brought and for growers to get specific questions answered.

John Kalleske discussed his composting process in the context of his whole farm philosophy. His experiences and wine quality outcomes were very credible and provided confidence in the use of compost. With the Barossa having a quite different climate to the Hunter there were many

questions in regards to how this region may need to adapt processes to accommodate the wetter conditions. John provided some insights into equipment and undervine weed management which were of great interest.

The workshop had 23 registered attendees, but there were a few extras on the day. The level of engagement was high from attendees as indicated by the technical questions coming from the floor.

The session closed with a request for participants to work collaboratively to progress some plans for composting post the 2017 vintage (Jan-March 2017). The lead time to the commencement of the growing season (Sept) will provide local vigneron with time to assess the opportunity, and to put plans in place to implement a program in the New Year. There is a strong level of local collaboration and we would expect to see some composting executed in 2017. Those who are already composting have left with added knowledge and tools to manage their process for better outcomes and benefit. The HVWTA appreciates the support of the Hunter Region Landcare Network, Local Land Services, the National Landcare Program and the NSW DPI, in particular Darren Fahey for his work in pulling the workshop together.

Liz Riley

HVWTA Viticulture Sub-committee Representative (and project co-ordinator for the workshop).



Hunter Valley Wine & Tourism Association
2090 Broke Road, Pokolbin NSW 2320 Australia
ABN 75 862 270 715

P +61 2 49 900 900 F +61 2 49 900 901
E info@winecountry.com.au
W winecountry.com.au

Agenda		
Social Impact Assessments	Item	Who?
1	Welcome and introductions	Jock Laurie – NSW Land and Water Commissioner (facilitator)
2	Overview of the project	Stephen Barry – Director, Resources Policy, Department of Planning and Environment
3	Key features of good social impact assessment	Jo-Anne Everingham –Senior Research Fellow, Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining, University of Queensland
4	How social impacts have been assessed and managed under the current system – the Upper Hunter experience (discussion)	All attendees
5	Strengthening the social impact assessment process for State significant mining projects – key focus areas and opportunities (discussion)	All attendees
6	Close - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final questions and comments • Next steps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All attendees • Stephen Barry

Social Impact Assessment and State Significant Mining Projects.

Stephen Thatcher and Leslie Pearson represented HRLN at the forum in Muswellbrook, 7th July 2016, which was a fact finding exercise of the State Government to expand the essential details associated with Environmental Impact Statements required by Companies for the development of large scale resource or infrastructure projects.

In the past and currently the requirements of projects examine Environmental and Economic issues effectively but minimal attention is paid to social impacts of particular projects.

The purpose of this forum was to gain an impression of some of the social impacts and issues that currently are ignored or poorly dealt with in the Muswellbrook area; the aim being to incorporate these issues into future project planning requirements.

Jo-Anne Everingham from the UQ is tasked with assisting the enquiry to formulate an effective social impact assessment set of procedures to address the range of social issues involved with major projects.

The meeting heard from representatives with various backgrounds; Wonnarua Elders, Local Government, Chamber of Commerce, Water Rights Holders along the Hunter River, Local Dairy Farmer surrounded by Mining sites, Small Community Representative and the impact on small communities, Country Women’s’ Association, and the Hunter Region Landcare Network. Each representative covered an aspect of mining impacts from a social perspective and these ranged from immediate social impacts to longer term health and social dislocation through to longer term environmental issues and land use, post mining.

This forum was one of a number to be held during the month. It is anticipated that a draft of the proposed Social Impact Assessment Details will be ready for examination before the end of the year.

LJ Pearson

8th July 2016

INVITATION TO MEETING



Landcare Membership Workshop Invitation

24th August - 10am – noon - followed by a light lunch

Hunter Wetlands Centre

The Hunter Region's Local Landcare Coordinator Initiative is hosting a workshop to develop a regional position on Landcare Membership.

- The workshop will discuss the fundamental relationship between Landcarers and the Land Managers responsible for their worksites. The discussion will include the rights and responsibilities of all concerned.
- We will also discuss the need for a Landcare membership structure that supports Land Managers, and the Landcarers working on their worksites, and explore structures to make the most of this relationship.
- Finally, we will discuss the need to share information about our efforts with Landcare Networks, at local, state and national levels, ensuring that all are able to make accurate representations to all levels of government on our behalf. This information will help demonstrate our worth to potential funders of community engagement in biodiversity conservation and natural resource management programs.

This workshop will begin this very important conversation, addressing an issue that will have great impacts on the success of the Local Landcare Coordinator Initiative. The workshop will also provide opportunities for you to connect with others with similar issues and solutions to you. I hope you, or a representative of your organisation, can make it along.

Cheers

John Hughson

Chair – HRLN



Landcare Membership Workshop

Report

24th August 2016

Hunter Wetland Centre

On the 24th August, the Hunter Region's Local Landcare Coordinator Initiative hosted a Landcare membership workshop in the Regional Landcare Network's office at the Hunter Wetlands Centre. The aim of the workshop was to develop a regional position on Landcare Membership for our region. (See attached, a brief summary of our discussions)

The workshop was well attended with representatives from across the region bringing a wide range of perspectives to the meeting. We also received apologies from many others who were unable to attend on the day, at that location and/or time, highlighting the need to hold further workshops at different times and/or different locations across the region.

The workshop discussed the fundamental relationships between Landcarers and the land managers responsible for their worksites, and the various forms that Landcare support takes in different areas and situations across our region. This included various arrangements with individual local government organisations and the different structures developed by those who seek to engage their communities in stewardship of their natural environment.

Current and potential structures to support Landcarers working on private land was also discussed, and highlighted the benefit, and the need for individuals, groups and groups of groups to "network" to share their successes and challenges, to promote practices that work, and collectively, to promote the needs of the land they are managing, in order to seek funding and support for their efforts.

The workshop also discussed the need to "*share information about our efforts with Landcare Networks, at local, regional, state and national levels, to ensure that all are able to make accurate representations to all levels of government on our behalf*". The information we gather and share will help demonstrate our worth to potential funders of community engagement in biodiversity conservation and natural resource management programs.

As planned, this workshop began the conversation, to address an issue that will have great impacts on the success of the *Local Landcare Coordinator Initiative*. Also as promised, the workshop provided opportunities for Landcarers to connect with others with similar issues and solutions, the very essence of networking.

Thank you to all who participated in a great workshop. I look forward to your thoughts and ongoing involvement in the further development of this discussion and our network.

Cheers

John Hughson – Chair – HRLN

Landcare Membership Workshop

Workshop notes

Attendance

The meeting was attended by the Local Landcare Coordinators and members of the Hunter Region Landcare Network as well as representatives from the following 18 organisations attended the meeting.

Morisset & District Landcare

Shortland Wallsend Landcare

Hunter Wetland Centre

Lake Macquarie Council

Lake Macquarie Landcare Network

Newcastle City Council

Kooragang Landcare

Local Land Service

Belmont Neighbourhood Centre

Tilligerry Habitat

Catherine Hill Bay Landcare

Landcare NSW

Muscle Creek Landcare

Martindale Landcare

Lambs Valley Landcare

Singleton Landcare Network

Dungog Common Landcare

Merriwa Landcare

Trees in Newcastle

A number of other groups expressed interest in attending but were unable to send someone on the day.

Overview

The following existing networks were identified, working at different scales within and outside the region.

National

National Landcare Network – representatives of the state networks – makes representations to the Australian Government about their support of the national Landcare movement

State

Landcare NSW – representatives of the regions – makes representations to the NSW State Government, partnership arrangements with LLS that deliver the Local Landcare Coordinator program, etc. Representations to the National Landcare Network and Australian Government

Hunter Region

Hunter Region Landcare Network – representatives from the various districts across the region.

Existing District Scale Networks in the Hunter region; Port Stephens, Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, , Dungog, Singleton, Muswellbrook.

Proposed District Scale Networks; Upper Hunter, Mid Hunter, Lower Hunter District Landcare Networks.

Gaps

The following geographic areas and stakeholder groups that could potentially become, align with or join a landcare network.

Cessnock, Maitland, Dungog, Hunter Farm forestry, Local Aboriginal Land Councils, Slow food producers

Note: These could become involved by being invited to assist in steering the Local Landcare Coordinator position in their district.

Roles of a network

There was discussion about the current and potential roles of a network and how these would work at different scales. Some roles were:

- Represent support the needs of its members
- Source funding and support for projects
- Hold funds for unincorporated groups
- A source of funds (devolved grants, etc.)
- Provide advice, mentoring, guidance
- Seek/hold insurance
- Provide training and development
- Support recruitment
- Advocacy/Promotion/Communication
- Policy / Governance support
- Forum for sharing
- Planning (district/regional scale)
- Support for new and isolated groups
- Showcase successes / develop case studies

Issues Raised

Throughout the discussions at the meeting a range of issues relating to membership and networks were raised. The following is a summary of those that participants felt might require specific attention or clarification in the future.

- Who and how do individuals and groups register as a Landcarer or Landcare group?
- What are people joining? (define Landcare in our region)
- Can/should individuals be members of networks or only groups and organisations?
- Public land and private land? (models and structures that support both)
- Insurance –who has it, who needs it and how do you get it?
- Membership fees – what are the benefits of membership? – who pays? – who gets the money? Network/Group/Individual membership?
- Gateway site – currently not connected to anything – several databases not connected
- Roaming groups – eg Intrepid . Where do they fit and how are they supported
- Diversity of people and purpose – how to foster and support the diversity and meet their needs.

The way forward

- Support the Local Landcare Coordinator initiative
- Develop Steering Committee for each of the three LLC positions – drawing on the groups and networks in each area.
- Develop better communications to engage remote groups
- Organise future meetings across the region in locations and at times that better suit our membership.
- Other stakeholders might include Wetland Care / CVA, Farm Forestry Network, Hunter Wetlands Centre, Birds Australia, Hunter Councils, roving Landcare groups (i.e. Intrepid Landcare)

Regional Representation at the Landcare National Conference in Melbourne 21st – 23rd September

Carmel Brown from the HRLN Committee as well as two of our Coordinators attended the National Conference in Melbourne.

“The 2016 National Landcare Conference was based around the theme ‘**Collaborative Communities – Landcare in Action**’, the diverse conference programme provided; robust discussion, opportunities to network with peers, and insights from community leaders and innovators on the latest trends and technologies driving the industry.”

Carmel’s comments are as follows;

It was a tough decision but I chose the Mornington Peninsula field trip because of its contrasts to Lake Macquarie Landcare.

Balcombe Ck Habitat Project is an educational farm for PS and home schooled children by a teacher; Main Ridge Dairy of goats (yum cheese), a vineyard and cafe (yum wine and tapas), a new wildflower farm at Balnarring and the Vaughan Vineyard trialling different mulching sizes, depths, etc. from Council green waste. The new MP Landcare Coordinator escorted us and at most sites the local Landcare leader met us. It seems that MP has many dedicated Landcarers working on their land, but there are also many areas with weekender owners/ holiday makers who are supportive but not engaged. Sounds so familiar!

The conference was an overwhelming series of iceberg tips! Land caring in different regions, different landscapes, different issues, but always great volunteering. The Community Engagement strand gave me plenty of ideas, but I did sneak over for a Climate Change talk.

The panel discussion for our category showed great projects of birds and Indigenous communities, but Jason Harvey, LM Landcare Coordinator, took the question on government partnership and it seems the length and strength of our partnership was important - starting with the LM Network of volunteers and then the ongoing commitment from LMCC to form 'LM Landcare.'

I was delighted to accept the award on behalf of the Landcarers who set up the Lake Macquarie Landcare Network and the partnership; and all those who volunteer on their sites and then come home and phone, send emails, post on Facebook, and go to meetings. All worthwhile!

I have to say ABC's Costa G was a hit - very funny, but also very respectful of speakers, making thoughtful comments and giving us relevant tips about getting projects going. Don Burke's talk was on the soil of dry Sclerophyll bush - WA university work seems to be confirming his ideas. Another interesting talk noted the strong connections Landcare has in communities, and proposed that government train us up as First Responders in crises. Of course, Megan Rowlett's talk on Intrepid Landcare was the most humorous - what old people in Landcare?

Please check out the conference website - <http://www.nationallandcareconference.org.au> for slideshows and papers click on Presenters and join our Network.

Cheers,

Carmel Brown

Lake Macquarie Landcare Network gained an award at the conference and the following article was how it was reported in the Lakes Mail.

Lakes Mail

Lake Macquarie Landcare named best Landcare partnership in Australia

David Stewart 27 Sep 2016



WINNERS: Lake Macquarie Landcare's Carmel Brown and Jason Harvey, left, with the Assistant Minister to the Deputy Prime Minister, Luke Hartsuyker, at the awards in Melbourne. Picture: Supplied

NOBODY beats Lake Macquarie when it comes to the number and dedication of willing Landcare volunteers.

These are volunteers who are prepared to roll up their sleeves and do everything from pull out noxious weeds by hand, to collect and dispose of rubbish, and rehabilitate damaged ecosystems in their communities.

And it's a record of achievement that was formally recognised on Thursday when Lake Macquarie Landcare was named best Landcare partnership in Australia at the National Landcare Awards in Melbourne.

Lake Macquarie Landcare was recognised for the successful partnership between local Landcare volunteers and Lake Macquarie City Council.

The local environmental group was up against eight other nominees from across the country.

Lake Macquarie Landcare is the largest network of Landcare groups in NSW and works with almost 300 volunteer groups.

Carmel Brown, chair of the Lake Macquarie Landcare Network, was delighted to win.

“Landcare is based on volunteers, so to get recognised for volunteering is awesome,” Ms Brown said.

“We only have one planet, and we care deeply,” she said. “It means so much to the Landcarers to have that back-up from council, to know there’s a team of experts there that can help us with the heavy stuff.”

Ms Brown and Lake Macquarie Landcare co-ordinator, Jason Harvey, were at the presentation ceremony to receive the award.

Mr Harvey said the award was a huge honour and highlighted the potential of council and Landcare partnerships.

“This award clearly shows that council and Landcare partnerships are the future,” Mr Harvey said.

“State and federal governments have a clear obligation to support Landcare through funding and setting supportive policy, but it is local government that is best placed to provide tailored support to their own Landcare groups.

“Local government understands local environmental issues and have a stable structure from which to support the volunteers who do so much.”

Representing HRLN at Tocal Foundation Day 4th November 2016

The visit commenced with a tour to the Tocal Dairy where an explanation was given of this mid-size commercial operation and the anticipated growth to maintain its position into the future. This is to be achieved by; increased irrigation use, closer monitoring of stock checking body temperature and milk output, maximising the use of fertilizers on pastures through GPS steering of tractors, adjustments to fertilizer applications as the tractor traverses different soils in the one paddock etc. At the same time it is expected that the dairy will continue to have a productive educational role in the college. The challenge is to keep costs low and to maintain or ideally increase output especially as milk prices are moving towards 35c per litre.

The addresses later in the day all focussed on educational roles that are being adopted to foster and encourage future farmers.

Geoff Smith gave a presentation of camps that have been developed over the past 6 years for year 9 students throughout the central regions of NSW. The 5 day camps examine the growing and processing of grains and includes field visits to farms and grain silos as well as the Trangie Experimental Station to see new varieties being grown under trial conditions.

Mia Mackay spoke of the Young Farmers Business Project and the ways by which these people can gain knowledge, finance and skills to develop their individual Agribusinesses.

Ben Stockwin of the Primary Industries Education Foundation Australia, spoke of the issues in creating and understanding of the role of farmers and farming in Australia. The major issue is the disconnect between what farming is and what young people assume is the source of food – the supermarket. It needs to be understood that Australian farmers provide food for the Australian Population and for 60 million others directly and through patents and other research benefits another 400million people. (It is an area where there needs to be a balance between environmental issues and farming so that optimal outcomes can be achieved without soil degradation).

Michelle Fifield spoke of the NSW DPI Schools Program which followed on from the previous speaker and drew attention to practical ways by which the classroom has changed and the challenges of dealing with computer literate, Google oriented students who have a wealth of information available in an instant with increasingly shorter attention spans as a result. New approaches to learning are needed to match this change.

Comment.

Listening to the issues raised caused me to reflect on the ways by which environmental issues are addressed in Landcare and in what ways these can be placed before commercial operators, beginner farmers and both older and younger students so that the environment and the nation can both benefit.

LJ Pearson

8th November 2016

**Hunter Region Landcare Network Inc.****Annual General Meeting - 2016****Chairperson's Report**

As is our practice, I acknowledge the Aboriginal People of our region, the original carers of this land, and I pay my respects to their Elders, past, present and future, in the world's oldest living culture.

I also acknowledge the modern-day carers of our land, present and represented here today, for your efforts in caring for our country, and also all who support us in those endeavours.

This year has seen lots of great challenges for the **Hunter Region Landcare Network's (HRLN) Management Committee**. Over the past few years we have devoted most of our efforts to keeping Landcare afloat and striving to get ourselves back to where we had been in better times. This year we have had to focus most of our time on establishing partnerships and making arrangements that facilitate a very different regional Landcare support structure.

Thanks to the exceptional efforts of **Landcare NSW**, this year has seen the start of a State Government funded program that promises a whole new world of opportunities for **Community Landcare** in our State. We are now part of a 4 year, **\$M15 program** that provides three part-time **Local Landcare Coordinators** to support the Landcare Communities in the Upper, Mid and Lower Hunter.

The **Hunter Region Landcare Network** is the overall host of the program, with great support from;

- **Muswellbrook Shire Council** - who are providing employment structures, accommodation and support, as well as more than matching the State funding allocated to their area
- **Singleton Shire Council** - who are providing accommodation and support to the Mid Hunter position
- **Hunter Wetland Centre** - who are providing employment structures to the Mid and Lower Hunter positions. The Wetland Centre is also our landlord for the HRLN office at the Centre.

in 2007, **Landcare NSW** formed to provide a **Network of Networks** for Landcare across NSW. Great differences in the level of support provided to different regions, and the lack of a collective voice were among the reasons why Landcare NSW formed in the first place, but the lack of Local Landcare Coordinators was the common and consistent regret expressed at **Landcare Musters** across the State. With the slogan "**Many hands, one voice**" and great support from a host of very capable people, mostly volunteers, with a few paid staff, we are now part of an exceptional **partnership** between the **NSW Government, Local Land Services** and **this State's Landcare Community**.

We have employed 3 very capable Coordinators and the success of the program is looking very promising. To make sure we get the most of the resources provided by this program, we need to ensure that our Coordinators are well supported by the Landcarers in their area. We (**HRLN**) have committed to making this happen through the creation of a **Steering Group** for each position. The Group's primary roles will be to ensure that the coordinators are providing the best possible resource to Landcare in their area, and that all groups have access to the Local Landcare Coordinator

program. Our hope is that representatives from those groups might then also be part of the **HRLN Management Committee** ensuring that the needs of their local areas are forwarded to the regional level.

Over the past 2 financial years the **HRLN Management Committee** has partnered with the **Hunter's Local Land Services (HLLS)** in a very successful program to deliver a series of field-days and workshops to celebrate Community Landcare, and to educate and connect Landcarers across our region. Last year's partnership was limited to the groups in the Lower Hunter, however **HLLS** also provided funds through the **Singleton Landcare Network** for projects in the Singleton Local government area and **Muswellbrook Shire Council** to support projects in the **Upper Hunter**. These funds are a great investment in the shared **Natural Resource Management** goals of both partners. Many of the **HLLS targets** were assisted by this program and **Community Landcare** had the resources required to facilitate networking, one of our primary functions. Negotiations are well underway with this year's **Lower Hunter Program** contracts to be signed off very soon.

Thanks to the Hunter's Local Land Services staff and our Region Landcare Facilitator for all their support of Landcare in our region.

Landcare in the Hunter has now been in existence for almost 30 years. For most of that time there has been a **Hunter Region Landcare Network** where representatives of our **Landcare Groups and Networks** from across our region get together to share our successes, to address our challenges, to learn from our failures and to explore new opportunities.

Throughout this time there has always been people prepared to give a little more than most, often on top of their other efforts, to become part of the team that supports Landcare at the regional level. I would particularly like to acknowledge all those people for their past, present and in some cases, ongoing contributions to Landcare in our region.

I would like to thank the current members of the Management Committee for an exceptional job this year. I would particularly like to acknowledge **Wendy Heys**, for her outstanding efforts as our secretary over the past few of years.

With a strong **Community Landcare Network**, supported by 3 capable **Local Landcare Coordinators**, the future of Landcare in our region is looking very promising.

Cheers

John Hughson – Chair

Hunter Region Landcare Network

Hunter Region Landcare Network

River Red Gum Project

Report for AGM 19th November 2016



The River Red gum project has continued to make a small impact in the region with the Total Field Days acting as a major distribution point for the dissemination with 200 trees distributed over the three days and various contacts made with landholders in the valley.

With the introduction of the new coordinators in the valley it has been decided by the committee to make \$1500 available to each coordinator for tree plantings in each of the sub regions. Some funding is still held in credit at Riverdene Nursery for the provision of plants when the nursery has more stock available for sale.

In Muswellbrook, 40 trees were planted as part of a ‘Paddle and Plant’ day. At Muswellbrook and at the ‘Lets connect on Biodiversity’ workshop, talks on the River Red Gums of the Hunter were given. It is exciting to think that with the help of the coordinators the planting aspect of this project can continue into 2017.

As the initial plantings of the project commenced in 2008 it is exciting to see trees maturing.

It is anticipated that in 2017, unless further funding becomes available, the distribution and planting of trees through HRLN will cease as a particular project of the Hunter Region Landcare Network.



L J Pearson

E. camaldulensis beside Black Creek were planted in May 2014. They are now 2m high. Photo September 2016