

Revegetation across three Landcare groups improve biodiversity and resilience

Hunter Region Landcare Network



The issue

Following the devastating fires in 2019/20, HRLN worked alongside Landcare groups to support threatened species and habitat recovery in critical areas adjoining the Blue Mountain Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area in which approximately 80% of its extent burnt. Weed incursions, lack of appropriate native vegetation and pest animals in the adjoining unburnt areas needed to be addressed to provide refuge while the area recovers from the impact and to ensure protection and support of recovery of species and habitats for the Brush Tailed Rock Wallaby, Koala, Regent Honeyeater, and Spotted-tailed Quoll.

Broke Bulga, Congewai, Wollombi Landcare groups were not only affected by the fires at the beginning of the project, but also several periods of floods and the Covid-19 pandemic during the 3 years of the project. The challenge was to bring everyone together to make this project happen in the face of ongoing crisis.

The solution

Each group faced similar issues; We focused on priority weeds, fencing off areas to provide regeneration around creeks and dams, revegetation with diverse native species where resilience was low, and vertebrate pest education and control. Congewai Landcare aimed to connect Corrabare State Forest to the West to Congewai Creek running parallel up the Valley. Three properties provided new fenced areas to create these linkages and stepping stones. 7 properties carried out weed control and revegetation along Congewai Creek. Wollombi Landcare tackled targeted woody weeds along a stretch of Congewai Creek and tributary Coolawine Creek which allowed for revegetation with diverse native species along the riparian zones of 6 properties to increase habitat viability in degraded areas. Broke Bulga Landcare focused on reinstating local populations of River red gums with appropriate genetics (as verified by [ReCER](#) at the Botanic Gardens of Sydney) in the Broke area. Camera monitoring was conducted over 22 properties in Congewai, Wollombi and Broke over the Spring seasons of 2021 and 2022. Monitoring results, presented as a workshop to each group brought awareness of the pest species in the area and the presence of native species that we seek to protect.

The impact

We have increased the ability of the groups to continue further regeneration and restoration work through observation, planning and action. Broke Bulga Landcare is continuing with the genetics study and establishment of more River Red gums across the Hunter region.

Learnings

The impact of pest animals was not as apparent to those not directly affected by stock losses. By holding several information sessions- Vertebrate pest animal introduction, camera monitoring, riparian condition assessment, other members of the community did get involved in some aspects of the project. 1080 baiting was not an option for many of the small landholders due to perception of cruelty to the affected animals, having dogs or other pets.



Key facts

- Revegetation with over 50 different local native species and 3000 tubestock over 15 ha
- Augmented the natural regeneration occurring in fenced off areas.

Project Partners



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