

More local support with regional guidance for Landcare in the Hunter region

Landcare in the Hunter region has gained enhanced funding under the *NSW Landcare Enabling Program*. In the first phase of its \$59 million state-wide program, the NSW Government has committed funds for the employment of more local and regional coordinators and administration support officers by Landcare across NSW, until 30 June 2027. This comprehensive support program will be managed jointly by Local Land Services and Landcare NSW.

A doubling of resources for Landcare roles aims to strengthen the capacity of volunteers and landholders to care for the local natural environment and agricultural systems by increasing their knowledge and skills for more effective outcomes. In the Hunter region, this means enhancement of the existing support for Landcare groups and activities throughout the district as well as the introduction of new support roles.

The Hunter Region Landcare Network (HRLN) will soon be advertising for a new part-time Local Landcare Coordinator (LLC) to drive initiatives in the Mid and Upper Hunter, joining the existing team of two LLCs working with volunteers and landholders in the district. The extra LLC will improve engagement for those communities, including the many farming and conservation properties further from our main urban centres.

Another new role for the Hunter region will be an Administration Support Officer who will support Landcare staff and network committees. A second position is being created with the Mid Coast to Tops Landcare Connection (MC2T), and both will be working closely with a Hunter and Mid Coast Regional Landcare Coordinator (RLC).

The new, full time RLC role will be jointly managed by HRLN and MC2T. The RLC will guide the work of network committees, local coordinators, support, and project officers to implement projects that help governments and regional organisations respond to the many environmental challenges our communities are facing.

In urban and coastal areas, Landcare supports groups and volunteers who are keen to protect their local environment and amenity, working together on public land. In the Hunter region they will enjoy enhanced natural resource management training, recognition and site planning provided by an LLC in conjunction with agencies and land managers.

Rural landholders in the Hunter region are always keen for information on ways to build farm productivity, while also protecting and restoring wildlife habitats and building landscape resilience. More guidance from the Landcare team will support and enhance these local connections and shared initiatives.

Landcare will also be able to engage more on disaster preparedness and recovery in rural areas, to help communities in more isolated places be better prepared for extreme events, by collaborating in agency programs.

A better resourced Landcare will enable a more committed working relationship with our partners such Local Councils, Landcare NSW, MC2T, universities, and other community-based organisations, to co-design initiatives and research around priorities identified in regional plans and needs highlighted by communities.

Hunter Region Landcare Network looks forward to building the camaraderie and shared sense of purpose for Landcare volunteers in the Hunter region, in conjunction with our colleagues on the Mid Coast.

Web: www.hunterlandcare.org.au

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