

Woolworths focuses on food future

AS PART of their partnership, which focuses on supporting sustainable agriculture, Woolworths and Landcare Australia are currently working together on two major projects which will assist Woolworths in improving the sustainability of its fresh food supply chain.

These projects are being undertaken as part of the Woolworths Fresh Food Future program, a program which addresses the important issues that impact on the supply of fresh food to Australian consumers, with particular relevance for Woolworths' fresh food suppliers.

The projects will focus on a whole of supply chain life cycle analysis for greenhouse gases for key vegetable crops, and the development of a water footprinting tool for Woolworth's fresh food suppliers.

Landcare Australia farming programs and major projects director, Dr Shane Norrish, said the project work was currently being undertaken nationally by the Waite Institute of the University of Adelaide in conjunction with Landcare Australia.

"A whole of supply chain life cycle analysis for greenhouse gases for the key vegetable crops will assist Woolworths in understanding the emissions associated with the different stages of vegetable supply, from on-farm through to the customer," Dr Norrish said.

Carrots, potatoes and tomatoes are the highest volume fresh produce lines and as a result were chosen for the study.

Dr Norrish said although there was currently no statutory requirement to undertake carbon accounting, if it was not measured it could not be managed.

Woolworths is therefore investing in capacity building in the agriculture sector so the sector understands its carbon impact and is ready for whatever policy framework may be introduced in the future.

"There is a link between carbon emissions and expenditure", Dr Norrish said.

"Therefore, this analysis will help identify where the costs are and enable the supply chain to respond effectively.

"In terms of risk management, it will provide anybody in the Woolworths supply chain with the information on risks."

The process for the project will be based on a standardised life cycle analysis that is simple, straightforward and accepted.

It will use a supply chain map and identify the inputs and outputs at each step, while collecting more data along the way whenever necessary.

Dr Norrish said some emissions in the chain were straightforward, such as those of a tractor, whereas others, such as packaging, were more complicated and provided more of a challenge.

Once the project was completed, before the end of the year, an assessment will be made to decide if the project should be expanded into other fruits and vegetables.

The second project being undertaken will focus on water use in the veg-



Conservation Farming Officer, Tony Pratt, collects soil core samples from a trial site at Mirrool Creek, NSW, as part of a Woolworths and Landcare Australia funded project.

etable industry, with a water footprinting tool being developed for use by Woolworths' fresh food suppliers as an add-on to an existing carbon foot-printing tool.

"It's got a pretty similar intention to the first project," Dr Norrish said.

"They're both based on life cycle analysis, but this particular project will help Woolworths' fresh food suppliers calculate the impact of their water use."

Dr Norrish said the development of a water calculator module would allow Woolworths' fresh food suppliers to assess their water use based on a water stress index.

This index accounts for regional differences in the environmental impact of water use in different crops.

"Woolworths' fresh food suppliers will be able to use the calculator to monitor water use against industry benchmarks," he said.

The modified life cycle analysis of on-farm operations would be undertaken by the team from the Waite Institute, with the project due to be completed in December.

Dr Norrish said it was a benchmarking opportunity and would assist Woolworths supply chain in discovering options for improved efficiency.

The new Fresh Food Future program

The Woolworths Fresh Food Future program is an important investment by Woolworths to continue supporting the sustainable production and supply of Australian food.

One key aspect of this new program is a grants round which will be open to all farming groups and organisations around Australia.

Through this open grants round, Woolworths is making \$150,000 available to support agriculture projects through its partnership with Landcare Australia.

The projects that will be awarded grants focus on improving nutrient

management and water use efficiency, both issues which emerged as critical through a comprehensive stakeholder consultation process.

These grants will aim to support farming groups in the development or adoption of new production technology and practices in these key areas.

Grants up to a maximum of \$10,000 will be available and all information, criteria and application forms are available through the Landcare Australia website.

■ Visit www.landcareonline.com.au

The relationship between Woolworths and Landcare has been developing since 2007, with initial support provided through the Drought Action Day.

Dr Norrish said Woolworths had a strong interest in securing the ongoing sustainable supply of fresh produce as well as supporting skill development and leadership in the sector through programs such as Woolworths Agriculture Business Scholarship.

"The Woolworths Fresh Food Fut-

ure program aims to identify risks and trends impacting on the sustainability of the supply chain while increasing productivity, providing training and leadership, and improving consumer awareness about sustainable food production," Dr Norrish said.

Landcare Australia has developed the current projects with Woolworths and the Waite Institute, with Landcare overseeing progress and working to communicate the outcomes with the industry.



Landcarers view stubble management trials at Junee Reefs, NSW, as part of a Woolworths and Landcare Australia funded project.



New Woolworths grants available for sustainable agriculture projects

As part of their continuing partnership Woolworths and Landcare Australia have launched the Woolworths Fresh Food Future program. Woolworths is providing grants under its Fresh Food Future program to help farming groups develop or implement sustainable farming practices. The grants will support farmers in the adoption of technology

or practices to improve water use efficiency, nutrient management and their carbon footprint. The grants will be awarded to farming groups and each grant can be up to a maximum of \$10,000 to implement a project which addresses one of these key areas.

For more information or to apply please go to www.landcareonline.com.au

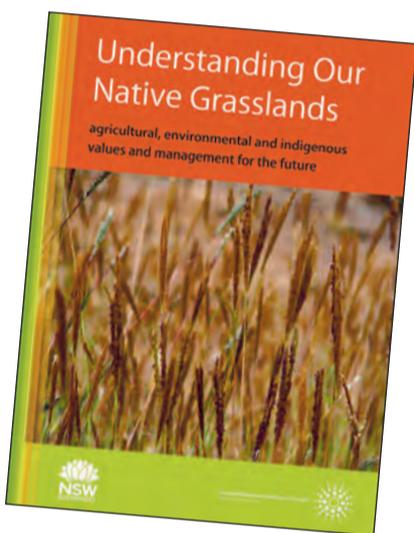
Valuing our native grasslands

NSW's sometimes undervalued native grasslands are getting deserved recognition with the publication of a booklet, *Understanding Our Native Grasslands*, by the Natural Resources Advisory Council (NRAC).

The booklet aims to raise community awareness about the critical role native grasslands play in maintaining healthy soils and water, creating habitat for animals and plants, fodder for stock and as being culturally important for indigenous people.

In western NSW, native grassland once covered more than 3.7 million hectares.

Almost half of that area has been removed or replaced since European settlement.



Few of the lowland native grasslands of central west NSW remain in their original condition and they rank among Australia's most threatened ecosystems.

Native grasslands have been shown to:

- Be naturally drought tolerant and frost resistant and can help to maintain fodder all year round
- Provide low input production for land managers
- Respond quickly to rainfall
- Produce wool fleece that is softer, better in colour and of finer quality.

The booklet is available from the NRAC Secretariat, (02) 9895 7334, or can be downloaded from www.nrac.nsw.gov.au/

NRAC is an independent body that was set up by the NSW Government as a single forum for stakeholder advice on high level natural resources management and land use issues.

Solid bonds ensure ongoing care

Comment by PHYLLIS MILLER OAM, NRAC Convenor

ACROSS the country the Landcare movement provides a unique and important role in supporting the management of our lands and natural resources.

The legacy of that unlikely alliance between National Farmers Federation's Rick Farley and Australian Conservation Foundation's Phillip Toyne to work together to tackle land degradation lives on.

In the coming decade we will be facing many challenges, including climate change, increasing pressures on biodiversity and the need to improve the health of our rivers.

The support of our landcare volunteers will be critical to any success in meeting these challenges and helping to improve and protect our landscapes while maintaining sustainable productive lands.

Landcare, Bushcare, Coastcare and Rivercare play a vital role in building community capacity,

undertaking on ground works and developing awareness and education programs.

With 2126 registered Landcare groups in NSW and more than 57,000 members, the contributions of our Landcare volunteers are significant and deserve to be acknowledged.

The 2011 NSW Landcare Awards are a great opportunity to recognise the commitment and efforts of the many local community volunteers who devote their time to manage and care for our land.

Their efforts make a significant contribution to the environment and sustainable production – ordinary people making extraordinary differences.

The Landcare movement's grassroots approach, with a clear focus on community engagement, builds strong partnerships that enable practical action to protect and improve our valued landscapes.

The National Resources Advisory Council (NRAC) is proud to be supporting the 2011 NSW Landcare Awards.



Phyllis Miller OAM, NRAC Convenor

Bigger, better Muster returns

AFTER a washout in 2010, the NSW Landcare Muster is aiming to be bigger and better than ever in 2011.

The Muster, in which NSW Landcarers come together to report on what's happened in the past year, and to map out the forthcoming year, is scheduled to coincide with the 2011 NSW Landcare Awards, to be held in Parkes in September.

David Walker, the immediate past president of Landcare NSW and current chairman of the National Landcare Network, said the 2010 event was cancelled after an exceptionally wet spring promised to complicate harvest and prevent many Landcarers from attending.

This year the muster will go ahead, Mr Walker says.

The final agenda is being worked out at an upcoming Landcare NSW meeting, and the Landcare community is being canvassed for what it wants to discuss.

"Generally the Muster framework is to get reports on what the

Landcare community has been doing for the past 12 months, and to ask the community what it wants Landcare NSW to do in the coming 12 months," Mr Walker said.

"We'll be able to report, for instance, that after 18 months of trying to see Frank Sartor, when he was Minister for the Environment, with

"I think the fact that Landcare has refused to die, even though we couldn't get a meeting with Sartor, has got us to the point where the pendulum has swung back in our favour – even if that's not translating to much more money at the moment.

"The new NSW Government will

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– National Landcare Network chairman, David Walker



no success and no hope of getting any money from the department, we seem to have got a fairly firm promise from the incoming government that there's going to be some support for Landcare.

be far more supportive of Landcare, not just because we've been rattling the cage, but because government would be stupid to ignore us – we represent the people who manage the land, and the people who

believe in making the environment better.

"The movement was certainly struggling over a number of years.

"It was pretty well ignored by the bureaucratic conception of a regional funding model, although there are some regions that have been very good at understanding that Landcare people were their natural allies.

"But there are other areas where the regions considered themselves the only approach to natural resource management, and see themselves as having superseded Landcare."

Much had changed in the 12 months since the Landcare Forum in Adelaide, which reaffirmed the community's commitment to Landcare, Mr Walker said.

"Landcare is such a powerfully good thing," he said.

"It's not expensive to run – it's mostly reliant on people who are doing things because they believe in doing them, and when you bring neighbours together on a project there are many social benefits."



SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY

This year Coles and Junior Landcare celebrate funding 1000 school and community gardens which help teach children about the environment in a hands on practical way.

Every time our customers buy a green reusable bag from Coles, we make a donation to fund more gardens.

There are lots of great stories about the gardens that have grown and flourished and are enjoyed by their schools and communities. For more information please go to

www.1000gardens.com.au



Have your say about caring for our country

Comment by Federal Agriculture Minister, JOE LUDWIG

THE Gillard Government is investing \$2 billion over five years through the Caring for our Country (C4oC) initiative to achieve environments that are healthy, better protected and support sustainable production in a changing climate.

The first phase of C4oC is due to be completed by the end of June 2013, and the government is conducting a review into the effectiveness of the current C4oC program and options for the future.

This is a major area of investment for the Australian Government and is of significant interest to communities and land managers across the country as it comprises critical areas such as pests and weeds, sustainable agriculture, Landcare, Coastcare and biodiversity conservation.

In my meetings with community groups, fishers, farmers and other land managers across the country, it is clear their interest in this area remains strong.

Recently, with my colleagues,

Environment Minister, Tony Burke, and Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Mike Kelly, I announced a package of measures under C4oC that will help drive the recovery of Australia's natural resources in the aftermath of the recent natural disasters.

Regional natural resource management groups in disaster affected areas nationwide have received \$4.9 million for environmental recovery work, including the restoration of wildlife corridors, removal of debris and weed and pest control.

Another \$1.35m has been given to Conservation Volunteers Australia to assist Natural Resource Management groups in severely impacted areas with their engagement and management of volunteers.

This important work will help address the impacts of flooding, bushfires and Cyclone Yasi on our local ecosystems and complements the C4oC program in protecting our environment.

Landcare has played an important role in this area for more than 21 years, but we need your thoughts

about how best to approach the future.

Your views, ideas and suggestions are important in helping to shape future Australian Government support for natural resource management.

The government has initiated an online forum at caringforourcountryreview.com.au so people can take part in a public discussion about C4oC – what you think works well, what we can do better, or completely new ideas.

In this forum you can air your views and experiences, contribute to existing discussions, catch up with community or industry partners, and find out what others are saying about the program.

Formal submissions can also be emailed to thereview@nrm.gov.au.

I encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity and have your say about the government's future delivery of environmental and sustainable agriculture programs. Submissions to the C4oC review close on the 20 May 2011.

■ For more information visit nrm.gov.au or contact (1800) 552 008.



Minister Joe Ludwig with Darwin Aquaculture Centre aquaculture manager, Dr Ann Fleming.

Awards nominations now open

Nominations are now open across the country for the 2011 State and Territory Landcare Awards. Application forms, closing dates and all information on categories and criteria are available on www.landcareonline.com.au

ACT

Nominations close: Friday, June 10

ACT Landcare Award Co-ordinator:

Sally McIntosh, ACT Natural Resource Management Council

Contact: (02) 6205 2913

Email: sally.mcintosh@act.gov.au

NSW

Nominations close: Friday, May 27

NSW Landcare Award Co-ordinator:

David Howse, Natural Resources Advisory Council

Contact: (02) 9895 7049

Email: david.howse@environment.nsw.gov.au

Northern Territory

Nominations close: Friday, August 26

NT Landcare Award

Co-ordinator: Territory Natural Resources Management

Contact: (08) 8999 4113

Email: info@territorynrm.org.au

South Australia

Nominations close: Friday, July 29

SA Landcare Award Co-ordinator:

Department of Environment and Natural Resources

Contact: (08) 8463 7883

Email: deb.rav@sa.gov.au

Western Australia

Nominations close: Friday, May 27

WA Awards Co-ordinator: Natalie Moore, Department of Agriculture and Food

Contact: (08) 9368 3166

Email: natalie.moore@agric.wa.gov.au

Tasmania

Nominations close: Monday, July 4

Tas Landcare Award Co-ordinator:

Margie Jenkin, Tasmanian Landcare Association Inc.

Contact: (03) 6234 7117

Email: awards@taslandcare.org.au

Queensland

Nominations close: Friday, July 22

Qld Landcare Award Co-ordinator:

Natalie Mogg, Queensland Water and Land Carers/Green Nomads

Contact: (07) 3252 7154

Email: eo@qwalc.org.au

Victoria

Nominations close: Friday, July 1

Vic Landcare Award Co-ordinator:

Monique van Wierst.

Contact: (03) 9637 9804

Email: cel.hub@dse.vic.gov.au



2011 State & Territory Landcare Awards

Celebrate the work of people in your community who make a positive difference to our local environment. **Nominate today!**

Nominations are now open for the 2011 State & Territory Landcare Awards.

www.landcareonline.com.au

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Do you know an individual or group in your community who makes a positive difference to the environment?

This could be through such things as conservation projects, research initiatives, adopting sustainable farming practices, using Indigenous knowledge to manage local environments or many other on ground activities.

If you know someone who should be recognised, nominate them today!

Dairy gets a sustainability leg-up

By ALISHA
FOGDEN

DAIRY farmers across Victoria will be making environmental improvements on-farm and throughout their communities thanks to a \$250,000 contribution to the partnership between National Foods and Landcare Australia.

The National Foods Landcare Environmental Sustainability Dairy Grants Program offered dairy farmers grants of up to \$10,000 to assist in the implementation of environmentally sustainable on-farm management of both liquid and solid dairy waste.

National Foods milk procurement and inbound logistics general manager, Murray Jeffrey, said the company was always looking at ways to reduce its environmental footprint and the impact its facilities had on the communities in which they operated.

"We would really like to embed a culture of environmental responsibility across our business, from the farmgate to the end product," he said.

"We want to be in a sustainable long-term industry and to do that we need to operate within the realms of

acceptable environmental behaviour. "Effective waste management will ultimately help ensure the long-term sustainability of farms."

Mr Jeffrey says the program is available to National Foods and Dairy Farmers Milk Co-operative suppliers that demonstrate how the grant will facilitate an environmental project that will benefit the natural environment.

"Preference is being given to those farms/farmers that have undertaken an assessment under the DairySAT program and identified key natural resource achievements within this, as well as farmers that were involved in, or have previously implemented a National Foods Farm Quality Assurance Program (or equivalent)," he said.

Almost 50 per cent of the partnership funds was allocated to the farmers' grants, while the rest will be used in a community grants program.

The community grants program targeted dairy farming areas, where money could be put towards new or existing environmental projects.

■ For more information please contact your National Foods farm services officer.



National Foods milk procurement and inbound logistics general manager, Murray Jeffrey, said the company was always looking at ways to reduce its environmental footprint and the impact its facilities had on the communities in which they operated.



Sunbury Primary students Brock and Brook are excited about building their new raingarden.

Recipients

- St Macartans Parish Primary School, Mornington
- Selby Primary School, Selby
- Ascot Vale West Primary School, Ascot Vale
- McClelland College, Frankston
- Blackburn Lake Primary School, Blackburn
- Tooradin Primary School, Tooradin
- Sunbury Primary School, Sunbury
- Lang Lang Primary School, Lang Lang
- Sandringham Primary School, Sandringham
- Laburnum Primary School, Laburnum
- Eltham Primary School, Eltham
- Manchester Primary School, Mooroolbark
- Coolaroo South Primary School, Coolaroo
- Yarraville West Primary School, Yarraville
- Sandringham House-Firbank Grammar, Sandringham
- Glen Huntly Primary School, Glen Huntly

Growing stormwater quality awareness

SIXTEEN schools and youth groups in the Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment area have been selected to receive a grant of up to \$5000 to build a raingarden to improve the health of rivers and creeks in their school community.

The Melbourne Water Raingardens grants program, in association with Junior Landcare, aims to raise awareness of how good management of stormwater contributes to healthy waterways.

It promotes simple ways people can improve stormwater quality at school and at home, like building a raingarden.

Raingardens receive stormwater from hard surfaces such as a downpipe from a roof, paved areas or driveways, using plants to slow the rate of stormwater before it flows into drains and on

to rivers, creeks and bays.

In public spaces such as streets, parks and schools, raingardens also filter out litter, oil, excess nutrients, chemicals and sediment that normally build up on hard surfaces such as roads, car parks, roofs and driveways.

Melbourne Water's general manager of waterways, Chris Chesterfield, said stormwater run-off from suburban streets was the main polluter of rivers, creeks and bays because of the materials it picked up and carried into waterways.

"Stormwater run-off can carry pollutants ranging from nitrogen that causes algal blooms, to motor oil and animal droppings that can affect the health of fish and platypus," Mr Chesterfield said.

"Raingardens are a great way to reduce the impact

we have on our waterways, and they also make an attractive and water-efficient feature to the landscape."

Since 2003, Melbourne Water has provided schools and groups with Young Watercare Grants through the Junior Landcare Grants Scheme.

Schools have used the funds to restore or maintain waterways in their local area through activities like water testing, reducing litter, water bug surveys, tree planting or protecting native flora and fauna.

■ For more information about Junior Landcare grants visit www.juniorlandcareonline.com.au

■ For more information about raingardens, including frequently asked questions and simple steps on how to build raingardens visit www.melbournewater.com.au/raingardens



The New National Landcare Directory

connecting Landcare and Coastcare volunteers

www.landcareonline.com.au

Find A Local Landcare or Coastcare Group

Looking for a local Landcare or Coastcare group to volunteer with? Use the **Find A Group** link on landcareonline.com.au. You can search by either entering your postcode or suburb. Results appear in a list and on a Landcare Map.

Register Your Landcare or Coastcare Group

The new directory has been purpose built so that it is easier for groups to use. It will also capture the various project types that groups are working on all over Australia. You are encouraged to register if your group is involved in volunteer community environment projects, including: Landcare, Coastcare, sustainable farming, friends of groups, bushcare, rivercare, Junior Landcare (eg. schools, scouts and other youth groups).

More Features available

- Registered groups can apply for Landcare Australia grants online
- Search for and network with affiliated Landcare/Coastcare groups
- Showcase projects from past and present
- Promote group events such as working bees and planting days on the events calendar

Dune force plans for golden future

AMONG the glitz and glam of the Gold Coast, there are many prepared to get their hands sandy by participating in BeachCare, the Gold Coast's community dune care program.

The Gold Coast community is out on the dunes nearly every weekend, actively taking action and caring for the beach environment.

Established in 2005, BeachCare is run by a passionate team of dune gurus from Griffith Centre for Coastal Management at Griffith University, with support from Gold Coast City Council.

BeachCare inspires many first-timers or long-time dune lovers to look after their local beach by providing free, fun, family-friendly dune care activities.

Activities include planting native species, removing invasive weeds, beach litter pick-ups and, for those aspiring horticulturists, seed collection and propagation.

"It is very exciting for volunteers to bring along their 'home-grown' native dune plants to plant and eventually see them succeed over the dunes," said BeachCare's Naomi Edwards.

All this effort can have an emotional price.

The coastline is active and dynamic, and erosion poses an ever-present threat to all the hard work.

At the same time, the awareness and education provided by BeachCare increases the community's understanding of the coastal environment.

As volunteers learn how native plants glue the dunes together, it encourages other community members to help save their beach from being washed away.

RIGHT:
Karina Feichtmann from Surfrider Foundation now facilitates dune care.



Surfers turned dune carers learning about dune restoration.

Professor Rodger Tomlinson from Griffith Centre for Coastal Management said coastal community engagement was extremely important.

"Without a program like BeachCare,

members of the public would be left with a doom and gloom view of what their beach may look like in the future," Professor Tomlinson said.

"Increasing the community's capacity to become involved in coastal decision-making is important for the Gold Coast to successfully plan for a golden future on the beach.

"BeachCare is one strategy that is certainly making sandy footprints on Gold Coast's beaches."

Surfrider Foundation Gold Coast (Tweed Chapter) was the first "self-sufficient" dune care group on the Gold Coast, and now going into their third year they are becoming their own identity in the dune care world.

Surfrider Foundation Gold Coast's mission is the protection and enjoyment of the ocean, waves, and beaches on the Gold Coast.

The organisation promotes a healthy coastal lifestyle through conservation, advocacy, research and education.

"Dune care is just one component that encourages community members to respect the ocean, waves and

beaches," said Surfrider's Adam Feichtmann.

"We enjoy partaking in dune care because it is one tangible way all peoples, young and not so young, can actively give back and make a real difference at their local beach."



Increasing the community's capacity to become involved in coastal decision-making is important for the Gold Coast to successfully plan for a golden future on the beach

— Professor Rodger Tomlinson,
Griffith Centre For Coastal Management

To date, BeachCare actively manages nine dune care groups and also engages with three individuals who care for their beach front dune.

BeachCare extends from the northern foreshores of Paradise Point to the southern point breaks of Rainbow Bay, accessible to everybody.

And as the effort grows, more community action groups want to join in. BeachCare has begun engaging with

four additional community groups through the development of BeachCare partnerships.

BeachCare provides technical advice, training, support and encouragement and where possible field tool for the partnership groups to

become self-sufficient in their own right and of course, spread the word about caring for the coastal environment.

■ To find out more about BeachCare please contact Naomi Edwards, BeachCare Co-ordinator, at n.edwards@griffith.edu.au or on (07) 5552 8823.

■ Visit www.griffith.edu.au/coastal-management

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Hovells Creek group efforts shine in flood

ONE-in-100-year floods around Cowra, NSW, in early December 2010 have brought the strengths of Landcare to the fore.

Members of the Hovells Creek Landcare Group (HCLG) have frontage to the Boorowa River, Lachlan River and Hovells Creek, where for years they have been working to limit stream-bank erosion.

While fences constructed by the group to exclude livestock from watercourses were severely flood-damaged when they collected huge logs and tons of other debris, most of the trees and shrubs planted over the past ten years have survived.

Casuarinas and callistemons, in particular, were sufficiently flexible and open in structure to cope with the fast moving, debris laden floodwaters.

The melaleucas with dense foliage tended to catch a lot of debris and get flattened, while some eucalypts were uprooted.

Surprisingly, recently planted, deep-rooted casuarinas and eucalypts survived the two-metre-deep flood onslaught.

Even some of their tree guards remain in place.

Other engineering strategies, like rock lined gullies and water calming ponds, and small dams with a



sump connected to the waterways by a 200-millimetre pipe, proved successful in limiting floodwater damage.

However, the might and sheer power of the floods undermined large old river red gums and gouged tons of soil from streambanks, despite the fencing, revegetation work and exclusion of livestock for many years.

This demonstrated that Landcare is



ABOVE and LEFT: Floodwaters in Hovells Creek early December 2010.

cas and callistemons in the riverine zone.

Recently the group successfully replanted long stem, deep planted river gums and casuarinas into streambanks.

These have been produced locally by growing out tubestock in recycled one-litre milk cartons.

The work of the group has been funded in the past decade by members, with assistance of National Heritage Trust, Envirofund, Lachlan Catchment Management Authority and Caring for our Country grants for Landcare activity.

HCLG members have especially valued the grants to facilitate fencing, construction of new watering points and earthworks to restore eroding gullies.

While tree planting is an activity many people associate with Landcare groups, HCLG members know all about the background work, time and cost that goes into site preparation and follow up weed control.

The repairing of Landcare fences along creeks and rivers after floods is also just some of the valuable work that HCLG and other Landcare groups do on a regular basis.

Enhancing Kalgan Valley conservation

MORE than 100 kilometres of fencing has been built along remnant bushland areas in the first stages of a partnership aimed at reconnecting wildlife habitats across the Kalgan Valley, in south-west Western Australia.

The Oyster Harbour Catchment Group is partnering with Mt Barker Chicken/Milne AgriGroup in the "Ranges Link" project, which is linking bushland along the valley, which lies between the Porongurup and Stirling Ranges north of Albany.

Some of the fencing undertaken since 2009 has provided the opportunity to re-establish native vegetation on 50 hectares of degraded land.

The volunteers are now busy fencing another 30km on private land to

enhance conservation outcomes.

Each new fence enables the group to consider further revegetation work to supplement important wildlife habitat between the Ranges.

The core group consists of landholders with professional experience in conservation farming, geology, botany and land and project management.

The group works with planning support from the Gondwana Link team.

Peter Luscombe, one of the core group members, observes that there are many high conservation value bird and animal species in the valley, including the brush wallaby (black glove wallaby), Carnaby's cockatoo, carpet snake, bardic snake, western quoll, mallee fowl, firetail finch, echidna and

blue tongue skink, among others.

The group also has an ongoing project collecting seed of local provenance to support the revegetation of the diverse soil types within the project area.

Many of these species are locally indigenous, like *Hibbertia selkii* "Stirlings orange buttercup", *Eucalyptus talyuberlup* "Pretty Yate", *Dryandra ionthocarpa* "Kamballup dryandra".

General manager of Mt Barker Chicken, Mark Rintoul, operates free range chicken farms close to the project site.

He was highly supportive of the project, which he considered important for the region.

"Mt Barker Chicken is committed to



working with the Oyster Harbour Catchment Group to reconnect country between the Stirling and Porongurup Ranges and help protect the valuable and unique animals and plants in the region," Mr Rintoul said.

Peter Luscombe said the region was

indebted to private sponsors like Mt Barker Chicken, and supporting organisations like South Coast NRM and Gondwana Link.

"Without the support of all these people, important projects like these would struggle," he said.

RACV has a commitment to supporting environmental initiatives and has partnered with Landcare Australia to support environmental group projects across Victoria.

RACV members and staff can have a say on what projects they would like to see supported and can choose to get involved in each project.

For more information please go to
www.landcareonline.com.au



Supporting our community



Murrindindi's fencing force needs a hand

IMAGINE a fence stretching all the way from central Victoria to Perth. Burn it down, and then contemplate the task of replacing it.

That's the scale of the task facing landholders in the burnt areas of the Shire of Murrindindi, in the Goulburn Broken area of Victoria, where more than 3500 kilometres of fencing

was destroyed in the Black Saturday fires of February 2009.

The Fencers Without Boundaries project, supported by the Upper Goulburn Landcare Network, has been busy on this project since March 2009.

The effort has so far seen volunteers pull out almost 150 kilometres of burnt fencing and rebuild more than 200 kilometres of fencing.

Allan Stafford, a volunteer with the Uniting Church, has been a leader in this operation.

His work in Murrindindi Shire has been outstanding.

He has supervised and trained countless volunteers and has worked hands-on to operate the tractor and drive in thousands of fence posts.

The work also has the support of many partners, including National Australia Bank, ANZ Bank, BMS Pharmaceuticals, Earnst and Young, Environment Protection Authority and Origin Australia, who have collectively contributed more than \$500,000 to the rebuilding.



Volunteers from NAB fencing at Paul Michael's Flowerdale property



Benalla Uniting Church volunteers fencing.

So far more than 1200 volunteers have helped, but the enormity of the task means many more are still needed.

Considering almost 1400 homes were destroyed in the Murrindindi Shire alone, many of the residents have yet to rebuild.

By helping to remove the burnt and damaged fences and rebuild new ones, volunteers are helping to define

property boundaries and keep livestock within paddocks – one small way to help the fire affected communities.

Clubs and large companies have been a strong source of support, producing volunteers who are then trained in the tasks to be performed, supplied with tools and protective clothing and supervised by Upper

Goulburn Landcare Network co-ordinators.

■ If you want to help, or know of people who can help, please contact the Upper Goulburn Landcare Network. Email ugrecovery@gbcma.vic.gov.au or contact Upper Goulburn Landcare Network's fire recovery co-ordinator, Chris Cobern on (03) 5736 0104.

Fostering community projects

THE "small grants" component of the Australian Government's Caring for our Country initiative, Community Action Grants, will this month be open for applications for the 2011-12 grant round.

The program has been allocated \$5 million to support conservation of the Australian landscape and help rural, urban and indigenous community groups across the country protect the environment and adopt sustainable land management practices.

Community Action Grants are awarded in sums of between \$5000 and \$20,000 (GST exclusive).

Individuals are not eligible for Community Action Grants and projects must be completed within 18 months.

Importantly, the Community Action Grants can be used for on-ground works or capacity building within the community.

This gives groups greater flexibility in developing a project that best meets the needs of their local group/community.

The grants were developed in direct response to feedback from the community about the need for a small grants process for groups to undertake work in their local areas.

In 2010-11, Community Action Grants for Landcare related works amounting to \$4.2m were approved.

Projects covered a range of local activities such as monitoring soil properties, erosion control, invasive pests and weeds management, riparian restoration, benchmarking sustainable resource management, trialing various farming and grazing practices, soil health and dung beetle projects, rain-forest and bush regeneration, wildlife corridors, wild dog and rabbit control,

managing salinity and recording and use of traditional ecological knowledge.

Small groups which are not incorporated can participate by being sponsored by an incorporated organisation that is willing to apply on their behalf.

For example a local branch of a farming organisation could approach their State farming organisation as their sponsor, or a local environmental or productivity group could approach their regional Natural Resource Management body or Catchment Management Authority.

■ For more information on current Community Action Grants visit nrm.gov.au or if you need help contact your Regional Landcare Facilitator. Contacts can be found at nrm.gov.au/contacts/regional.html

Facilitator network support

THE Australian Government's \$33.6 million four year (from 2009 to 2013) commitment to support a national network of Regional Landcare Facilitators is continuing to be implemented.

The Regional Landcare Facilitators will support community Landcare and production groups to adopt sustainable farm and land management practices and to protect Australia's landscape.

They will help Landcare groups and networks seek public and private funding and to develop projects that contribute to and support the uptake of land management practices in rural and related landscapes including Caring for our Country targets.

The Regional Landcare Facilitators will help community

and production groups link with regional bodies, industry, research and development corporations and the Australian, State and territory governments.

To find your Regional Landcare Facilitators visit nrm.gov.au/contacts/regional.html

Regional Landcare Facilitators will also provide information to farmers and other relevant land managers in their regions on how they can benefit under the Carbon Farming Initiative.

They will undertake this role in conjunction with the Australian Government's Caring for our Country Sustainable Farm Practice Regional Officers and Indigenous Land Management Facilitators.

■ For more information visit www.daff.gov.au/climatechange



CEREALS & SNACKS 

Landcare and Be Natural – a natural fit!

We believe that the planet is precious. It's where we play and it's only natural that we do our part to look after it. So we've partnered with Landcare Australia to help make a difference. Be Natural's support will help fund local community projects to protect and repair our precious environment. In 2011 we will build on our partnership by offering \$125,000 in grants for local Landcare environmental projects and we're also sponsoring the Young Landcare Leader Award in the 2011 State and Territory Landcare Awards.

www.benatural.com.au



Strengthening the protection strategy

LANDCARE is important for us all – this is the message from the Australian Landcare Council, an independent advisory body on Landcare and natural resource management to the Australian Government.

The council, with the Landcare community, is assisting the government to reinvigorate Landcare.

It aims to provide insight into future opportunities and to ensure the Landcare movement and Australian community can meet the challenges of food security, respond to climate change and support volunteers as well to maintain the environment.

The council's 17 members, who have strong local environment, community and natural resource management skills and abilities, are working hard to strengthen links with Landcarers and rural communities by identifying priorities and strategies to help protect Australia's natural resources.

An important focus for the council in the past year has been the Australian Framework for Landcare.

The framework builds on two decades of knowledge, experience and achievement to address a range of current and emerging environmental challenges.

Acting as a guide for Landcarers, it sets out the vision, main features,

guiding principles and key elements of the Landcare approach.

The council has, on behalf of the Landcare community, developed a draft action plan for the Australian Framework for Landcare – a community framework to ensure the Landcare movement is resilient and focused on natural resource management challenges and opportunities in the next 20 years.

The council released the draft action plan for public consultation on March 7, 2011. Submissions close on June 17, 2011.

"The council welcomes feedback on the proposed goals and actions and any suggestions on what activities individuals or groups can take to contribute to achieve these goals," said council chairman, Kim Chance.

"Involvement in the development of this action plan will help to strengthen and re-energise the Landcare movement into the future."

The Australian Government is reviewing Caring for our Country – the way the government funds management of our natural resources.

Caring for our Country supports communities, farmers and other land managers to protect Australia's natural environment and to sustainably produce food and fibre.



Australian Landcare Council members at the 47th Meeting of the Australian Landcare Council, Canberra. Andrew Stewart, Ella Maesepp (observer), John McQuilten, Kate Andrews, Kim Chance (Chairman), Vicki-Jo Russell AM, Sharon Starick, James Walch, Judy Henderson AO, Snow Barlow; with (front) Pam Brook, Dennis Mutton, Coral Love, Alexandra Gartmann.

Photo: Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Mr Chance encouraged Australians involved in managing our natural resources to have their say on the future of Caring for our Country.

A discussion paper is available at www.nrm.gov.au/thereview

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Senator Joe Ludwig, said "in reviewing Caring for our Country, we are considering the efficiency, effectiveness and appropriateness of the initiative and options for future delivery".

Today there are more than 5400 Landcare groups across the country made up of thousands of everyday Australians.

Landcare brings together people from all walks of life, rural and urban, young and old, private and public sectors in partnerships helping to look after our environment in a way that offers food security resulting in farm productivity gains as well as environment protection.

A big concern of the council is the

burnout of volunteers who are a major strength and the key to Landcare's success to date.

Engagement and participation are key to Landcare's approach that people from all communities and cultures can and ultimately must take responsibility for the health of Australia's environmental assets.

Landcare Australia Limited is looking to increase the number of Landcare volunteers through its latest advertising campaign, "Donate".

Phone round-up helps to restore coast

AUSTRALIA'S official mobile phone recycling program, MobileMuster, will enable five volunteer Coastcare groups to plant up to 25,000 trees as a result of its highly successful old phones, more trees campaign.

Old phones, more trees, a joint initiative between MobileMuster and Landcare Australia called on Australians to recycle their old mobiles, batteries and accessories between July and October 2010 to help plant trees along the Australian coastline.

Throughout the campaign MobileMuster collected more than 36,000 kilograms of mobile phones and accessories which will result in 25,000 trees being planted across NSW, Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia and South Australia.

"2010 was the first year the old phones, more trees campaign focused on coastal initiatives," said MobileMuster's Rose Read.

"We were delighted to see how many Australians wanted to recycle

their old mobiles and help protect our iconic coastline."

MobileMuster believes the coastal-themed projects strongly resonated with all Australians.

"Thousands of Australians and overseas tourists flock to the beach every summer, but our coastlines are suffering from erosion, storm-water pollution, weeds and damage caused by people and their cars," Ms Read said.

The five coastal areas and community groups that will receive funds from the old phones, more trees campaign are:

- The Friends of Belmont Wetland, Central Coast/Lake Macquarie, NSW
- The Balmarring Foreshore Parks and Reserves Committee of Management, South Coast of Mornington Peninsula, Vic
- The Peel Harvey group, Austin Bay Nature Reserve, WA
- The Goolwa Coastcare group, Fleurieu Peninsula near the Coorong, SA
- The Moreton Bay Coastcare group,

Cabbage Tree Creek and Moreton Bay, Qld.

When these trees are planted, MobileMuster and Landcare/Coastcare groups will have planted more than 250,000 trees around Australia since the old phones, more trees campaign commenced in 2007.

"Planting 250,000 trees is a significant achievement with each tree planted helping to restore Australia's unique landscape and protect native wildlife habitats," Ms Read said.

"The campaign has also helped to divert from landfill and recycle over 146 tonnes of mobiles and accessories, including more than 1.2 million handsets and batteries."

More than 90pc of the materials in the mobiles and accessories collected by MobileMuster can be recovered and reused to make new products.

The 36,000 kilograms of mobiles and accessories collected throughout the 2010 old phones, more trees campaign could potentially be recycled into 3000 plastic fence posts, 900 gold

wedding rings and more than 135,000 aluminium cans.

However, according to MobileMuster, there are still more than 19 million old and broken mobile phones, accessories and batteries stashed away in homes and offices that could be recycled.

MobileMuster and Landcare Australia will be kicking off its sixth old phones, more trees campaign on World Environment Day which takes place June 5, 2011.

MobileMuster aims to collect enough mobiles by the end of September 2011 to provide up to 25 grants of \$2000 each to local Landcare/Coastcare community groups around Australia.

"MobileMuster is pleased to partner with Landcare Australia again to keep old phones out of landfill and help restore and protect our precious coastline," Ms Read said.

MobileMuster is a not for profit take back program funded by Nokia, Samsung, Sony Ericsson, LG, HTC, Huawei, ZTE, Telstra, Optus, Voda-

fone, 3 Mobile, Virgin Mobile and Force Technology.

All mobiles and components are recycled to the highest environmental standards.

None are refurbished and sold into developing countries.

■ Visit www.mobilemuster.com.au or contact (1300) 730 070 to find your nearest collection point and for more information.

Landcare In Focus is published by Landcare Australia Limited. For more information or to submit an article, email enquiries@landcareaustralia.com.au. Articles should be 300 to 600 words in length. An article should explain why the project is important, and the methods being used to carry it out. Only report on projects that have produced tangible results and include a good photograph – or preferably a selection – that show some of the people involved in the project. The objective is to highlight the diverse ways in which "Landcare" is being interpreted around Australia.

Old phones, more trees.

Round up and hand in those old mobiles & accessories for recycling and you'll be helping local Coastcare groups regenerate our precious coastline one-tree-at-a-time.



Hand 'em in at these mobile retailers or call: 1300 730 070
www.mobilemuster.com.au



mobilemuster
Official recycling program of the mobile phone industry