

Collaborations

Renewables in New England

Southern New England Landcare Ltd

LEP23-024-4-003



How can we achieve harmony as we meet the challenges of our region?

The issue

The declaration of the New England Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) by the NSW Government represents the most substantial land use change in the region since European settlement.

This has led to a significant rise in community groups concerned about the impacts of these changes. The community mobilization mirrors the early days of the Landcare movement. We recognized the urgent need to unite diverse perspectives on the REZ, facilitating information sharing and co-designing solutions to address potentially conflicting issues involved.

The solution

Southern New England Landcare and GLENRAC partnered with the Foundation for Regional and Rural Renewal (FRRR) to host a Leadership Action Initiative on the future of renewables in the New England region. The two-day program, held in Uralla, NSW on 20-21 March 2024, served as a circuit-breaker to tackle complex community issues. With guidance from the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation, the event offered facilitated discussions on the impact of renewables, collaborative efforts for progress, and opportunities for participants to shape community leadership for a resilient future.

The impact

The Leadership Action Initiative successfully brought together a diverse group of stakeholders to address the challenges and opportunities presented by the New England Renewable Energy Zone (REZ). Key achievements included:

- Facilitating constructive dialogues on the physical and social impacts of renewables.
- Fostering collaborative efforts to identify and pursue viable pathways for regional progress.
- Strengthening community leadership and resilience by equipping participants with the skills and knowledge to navigate complex changes.

This initiative is crucial as it promotes a unified, informed approach to the REZ, ensuring sustainable and inclusive development for the New England region.

Learnings

- Attendance was limited to those attending for work or those who were retired.
- Despite conversations and invitations, there was no first nations involvement.



Key facts

- 40 individuals attended from Walcha, Uralla, Armidale, Guyra, Glen Innes, Inverell, and Tenterfield.
- Facilitated discussions explored the impact of renewable energy projects on the physical and social landscape.
- Collaborative efforts focused on identifying practical pathways for progress.
- Fostered a sense of community and collective leadership.
- Numerous participants expressed a strong interest in continuing the conversation and working together.
- Highlighted the importance of inclusive dialogue and co-designed solutions to navigate complex land use change.

Project Partners



This initiative is made possible by the NSW Landcare Enabling Program, a collaboration between Local Land Services and Landcare NSW supported by the NSW Government.

26 Jun, 2024