

Landchat

Landcare in the Southern New England, No. 93, January - February 2013

Southern New England Landcare...

Our **VISION** is for a vibrant, socially and economically healthy community existing in a healthy, productive and biodiverse environment.

Our **MISSION** is to foster community participation in sustainable natural resource management.

Contact US by phone 02 6772 9123 or email mail@snelcc.org.au



Landchat is bought to you by



Diary Dates

SNELCC Meeting	20 Feb
Local Land Services Public Consultation - Glen Innes	26 Feb
Feral Animal Control and Training Days "Europambela", Walcha	13 March
Wongwibinda Hall.....	14 March
Landcare Adventure - Bingara.....	19-20 March
Conservation Volunteers Australia,"In Safe Hands" Training Workshop, Armidale.....	9 Apr
Soils for Life Field Day, "Lana" Uralla.....	10 Apr
Christine Jones present soil carbon workshop - Ben Lomond.....	2 May

WHAT DO YOU VALUE MOST ABOUT LANDCARE?

*Is it the access to information from people
who understand the local situation?*

*Help with project design and access to
funding?*

*Support for your group with funding
applications and administration?*

*Having local coordination and partnerships
developed?*

We have over 200 financial member families and nearly 1000 contacts on our database; and between us all we have developed valued partnerships to implement some amazing activities and education programs resulting in significant improvement to natural resource management and sustainable farming awareness and uptake in our region.

Southern New England Landcare has provided these services for our members and the wider community for 20 years. However, with the transition to Local Land Services not due to commence until 1 January 2014, it means that we are at this stage unlikely to continue current levels of operation beyond 30 June 2013.

Please go to Page 5 to find out how you can help us lobby to ensure that Landcare remains a key delivery channel in both the transition to and the design of Local Land Services.

PONTOON POND TO HELP IMPROVE WATER QUALITY AT MALPAS

Southern New England Landcare along with members of the Saint Kilda Fishing Club have recently installed thirteen floating pontoons at Malpas Dam at a site near the Malpas Aquatic Association clubhouses as part of efforts to improve water quality.

Ray and Gwenda Williams have been the force behind these pontoons being made for the dam and their efforts are great to see now the pontoons have been set on the water, said Emily Ingram, Malpas Catchment Coordinator with Southern New England Landcare.

Ray was helped by his brother Pete to get the pontoons to the site, and it took a better part of a day to rig up their anchors and plant the pontoons with a variety of native waterplants, Ms Ingram said.

The pontoons are placed in a protected part of the dam, near the clubhouses, to better be able to monitor their growth and of course be an accessible site for fishing in the future.

The plants placed within the fibre of pontoons are already shooting, and waterbirds are roosting on them, which is wonderful to see and they are doing just what we hoped they would.

Within a couple of seasons we hope to see the pontoons heavily vegetated, which will provide suitable habitat for fish to shelter under and of course kick off the whole water based ecological system of plant roots cleaning the water and other creatures benefiting from the structures.

The preparation of areas on the dam bank have also commenced, with the Armidale Tree Group having prepared several circular areas near the “ponton pond” for planting of low height shrubs including callistemons and leptosperms.

We are very pleased to see new planting’s in this area to act as stepping stones for wildlife. It is great to see community groups implementing innovative ideas. Community based projects such as these are great to be involved with, and we thank Armidale Dumaresq Council for their continued support, plus the Australian Government’s Caring for Country Grant, Ms Ingram said.



Emily Ingram, Southern New England Landcare, with waterplants ready for planting



Hallam Ingram helps with pontoon planting



Ray & Pete Williams with pontoons



Pontoon line planted out and launched



Pete Williams dropping anchor

"Healthy Communities"

The 2013 Landcare Adventure will explore every aspect of a healthy landscape - healthy soils, healthy pastures, healthy livestock, healthy biodiversity and healthy people.

The Landcare Adventure is a two day event held each year in the New England North West. The event is open to all - including non members of Landcare, town residents, farms, government agency staff, schools, community groups & Landcare members. At just \$90 for members of the community, the event includes accommodation, bus travel, all meals, event notes, tickets to the Regional Awards Dinner & tours across the two day event.



The 15th annual Landcare Adventure

19th & 20th March 2013

Hosted by Upper Gwydir
Landcare Association,
featuring tours of
Landcare projects across
the Bingara region

Feature Speakers

- **Jock Laurie**, President, National Farmers Association
- **Graeme Sait** - Nutritech Solutions
Sustainable Farming - Minerals, Microbes, Plants & Human Health
- **Dr. Carole Hungerford** - Nutritional Environmental Medicine
Healthy food, healthy eating, healthy people
- **Ben Keogh** - Australian Carbon Traders
How will the Carbon Farming initiative work for New England North West landholders?
- **Bart Davidson** - Healthy soils - the basis to a healthy productive farm.
- **Dr Mahri Koch** - Dung beetles - building healthy soils, feeding healthy pastures
- **Meg Perceval** - Rural Mental Health

Sponsors



This event is supported by funding from the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry as part of the Carbon Farming Initiative



More Information

Call your local Landcare Office to find out more:
SNELCC (Armidale)
02 67729123



Regional Awards Dinner

The 2013 Landcare & Catchment Management Awards will be presented at the Landcare Adventure Dinner on 19th March 2013 at the renowned Roxy Theatre.

Registration (closes Monday 11th March):

Free bus travel is available from most centres to the event. Call your Landcare Office for details.

Name(s): _____ Contact ph: _____

Address: _____

- I will be attending:
- Full event, including dinner \$90 per person (government agency staff \$150 pp)
 - Awards dinner only \$35 per person
 - Accommodation (t/share). I will share a room with (if applicable): _____
 - Dietary restrictions (if applicable): _____

Payment: Cheques / Cash only. Cheques payable to UGLA, PO Box 108, Bingara NSW 2404.

JOHN WINTER-IRVING BEQUEST FOR 2012 ANNOUNCED

The Board of Southern New England Landcare is honoured that the Winter-Irving family has made available a Bequest, to allow John's unflinching commitment to Landcare to be continued. In recognition of John's quite unassuming manner the Bequest is not openly advertised, but instead is merit based – a case of where actions really do speak louder than words.

In determining who the Bequest should be awarded to, the Board looked for a member or partner of Southern New England Landcare who has shown skills, interest and commitment in one or more of the following areas – sustainable agriculture, natural resource management, rural development or leadership – and in the view of the Board has the potential for further development with the assistance of this Bequest. The Bequest is to be used as a study grant in an activity of the recipients choosing, in the field of sustainable agriculture, natural resource management, rural or regional development or leadership. Suggested uses for the grant include short courses, conferences, a pre approved program of field visits, or as a contribution to the costs for a certified training course. The Bequest can be used for fees and associated travel costs.



At the SNELCC end of year function, **Jody McNally** was announced as the inaugural recipient of the John Winter-Irving Study Bequest. Jody is a driving force and current chair of the Balala Brushgrove Landcare Group. The Group was a National Finalist in the 2012 Landcare Community Group award and State winners in 2011. We look forward to hearing from Jody on how she has utilized the Bequest later in the year.

Our thanks to Ona, Alice, Airlie and Sarah Winter- Irving for this generous initiative.



In Safe Hands Workshop

Conservation Volunteers Australia will be delivering a training workshop for community groups, land managers and agency staff in Armidale on Tuesday the 9th of April, 2013 from 2pm to 6pm.

In Safe Hands is a Safety Management System designed for community groups in practical conservation. The content and processes have been adapted from Conservation Volunteers Australia's own system and are based on their 30 years of knowledge and experience in managing volunteers in practical conservation.

The *In Safe Hands* training package is aimed at supporting individuals, groups and volunteers to improve their health and safety practices on the ground. It will help develop practical skills and ensure people understand their legal obligations. This workshop is very timely with recent changes to the Work Health and Safety Act (WHS Act 2011) to now include volunteers. The *In Safe Hands* Toolkit and Instructional DVD are available free from <http://www.insafehandstoolkit.com.au/>. For more information or to register online for the workshop visit the above website or contact the Landcare office.



Soils for Life Field Day

Holistically Managing for Nature and Production

"Lana" Uralla

Wednesday 10th April 2013

Register 8.30am begin 9:30am to 3:30pm

Lana was selected as one of 19 properties across Australia to showcase leading practice in regenerative landscape management as part of the Soils for Life program.

This field day will demonstrate Tim Wright's transition to Holistic Management practices on "*Lana*" and the positive environmental and production outcomes he has achieved.

The proposed program includes:

- Keynote speech by Major General (ret'd) Michael Jeffery, Australia's first Advocate for Soil Health and Chairman of Soils for Life
- The farmer's story presentation by Tim Wright, property owner
- Presentation by Nick Reid and Judy Earl – farm environmental consultants
- Presentation by Rob Dulhunty, Chair, Landcare NSW Inc.
- Facilitated farm tour

Morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea will be provided.
A fee of \$20 per person contributes to catering costs.

To register call Southern New England Landcare on (02) 6772 9123 or register through the website: www.snelcc.org.au

Visit www.soilsforlife.org.au/events.html for further information.



Network Chairs

Representing natural resource managers

Threat to Landcare funding from reforms to Government services for farmers and landholders

The announcement by the NSW State Government late last year that support services for rural landholders are to be significantly reformed is causing concern for the Landcare movement across the state.

The reforms will mean that our main source of base funding - the Catchment Management Authorities - will disappear and its roles and services will merge with the Livestock Health and Pest Authorities (LHPAs) and NSW DPI Extension Services. New semi-autonomous entities called 'Local Land Services' will administer the services currently provided by these agencies across the State from January 2014.

Landcare Networks across the Northern Rivers and Border Rivers - Gwydir regions understand that the annual funding received from NSW Government that has enabled CMAs to provide a level of support to Landcare is currently not available beyond June 2013. Whilst some funding from BR-G CMA will still be forthcoming, this overall reduction because of State level funding cuts will seriously threaten the existence of the 5 community based Landcare networks that support our landcarers. This support includes help for landholders looking for project funding, development and running of local Landcare projects and information services (including this newsletter!).

The NSW Government hopes these changes will reduce duplication and increase efficiencies in delivery of services to rural landholders. A Reference Panel chaired by Dr John Keniry AM (Natural Resources Commissioner) has been appointed to build the new Local Land Services (LLS) structure. Mick Keogh, Executive Director of the Australian Farm Institute, will work alongside Dr Keniry and specifically with community groups, stakeholders and staff to develop LLS. The Reference Panel is comprised of representatives from NSW Farmers, LHPAs, CMAs, NSW DPI, Landcare NSW, Greening Australia and the Local Government & Shires Association.

The panel's key focus will be to outline the core and non-core functions LLS will provide; a new governance structure which "*ensures appropriate accountability to the NSW Government and other funding contributors*" and "*information on a cost recovery and complementary service-pricing system*". Analysts believe that this bureaucrat-speak really means that the current LHPA landholder rating system will be expanded to cover a broader range of services but that direct government spending on services such as farm extension and support for landholders through incentive programs will be reduced.

The formal inclusion of Landcare on the LLS Reference Panel (through the NSW State body **Landcare NSW**) is heartening, but there are serious challenges ahead for organisations like ours, especially in the coming transition period whilst the LLS is being set up. Over the years Landcare funding has had a number of crises but none seem to be as clear and present as this one. We will be making representations to our politicians and the relevant Ministers in the coming months and will look to you, our members, for your support.

To this end, keep up to speed with developments through the Landcare NSW on-line forum at <http://www.landcarensw.blogspot.com.au/>. You can also comment on the LLS proposals at the NSW DPI feedback LLS site <http://haveyoursay.nsw.gov.au/locallandservices>.

Finally, the LLS Reference Panel are hosting a series of community consultation sessions around the State. Our closest meetings are listed below and we urge you to go along and ask how the new LLS arrangements will support Landcare.

February 26	9-12 pm	Moree, Moree RSL, 3 Albert St
February 26	3.30-6.30 pm	Glen Innes, Glen Innes and District Services Club, 120 Grey St
February 27	2-5 pm	Gunnedah, Gunnedah Services Club, 313 Conadilly St

Estate Planning: eliminating the uncertainty



Armidale 6774 8400
Glen Innes 6739 7600
Narrabri 6792 9700

www.rm.net.au



**ROBERTS
& MORROW**
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

BUSINESS SUCCESSION AND ESTATE PLANNING

Part I of this article in the November/December edition focused on business succession planning for primary producers. Part II below focuses on estate planning. We again note that business succession and estate planning need to be interlinked and carefully managed.

Wills

Statistics from the New South Wales Trustee & Guardian suggest that 45% of Australians do not have a valid will. If you die without a will, your estate is distributed in accordance with prescribed rules - which may not be consistent with your intentions. Of the 55% of Australians that do have a valid will, many are out of date and require amendment to reflect any changes in circumstances since the will was drafted. When was your will drafted? Has anything changed?

How are “your” assets legally owned?

Even if you have a valid will, it is important to note that the only assets you can deal with in your will are those that are legally owned by you. A large proportion of the wealth of many farming families is not held by individuals and will not pass in accordance with the terms of an individual’s will. You might for practical purposes consider all of the farming and non-farming assets of the family to be “yours”: but how are those assets legally held? For example, assets held as joint tenants will automatically pass by operation of law to the surviving joint tenant.

Many assets are held in a company or trust and increasingly, in a superannuation fund. The key issues to be considered and potentially dealt with in your will may include:

- what assets do you legally own and how are they to be dealt with upon your death?
- how will the control of your group structure change upon your death?
- in determining how to distribute “your” assets, have you considered any inherent tax liabilities which may pass to different beneficiaries?
- are the debts associated with various assets located in the appropriate entity?
- is there a convenient split between on-farm and off-farm assets to allow for the farming business to continue? If not, should you consider restructuring?

- how are your shares in the family company to be dealt with upon your death?
- who is the trustee of the family trust and who has the power to appoint and remove the trustee?
- if the trustee of the family trust is a company, how are your shares in the trustee company to be dealt with upon your death?
- if you have a self-managed superannuation fund, who will control the fund upon your death?
- if you are passing a trust to the next generation:
 - how many years does the trust have left before it terminates?
 - who are the potential beneficiaries of the trust?
 - does the trust deed require amendment?

Effective estate planning requires a thorough understanding of your entire group structure and your personal goals and family circumstances.

Keep beneficiaries informed

As part of the estate planning process, you may wish to make it clear to all family members how assets and the control of entities will be dealt with upon your death. In initiating these difficult family discussions, it is important to point out that an “equal” division of assets between siblings may not necessarily be a “fair” division of assets in the particular circumstances. Transparency throughout the estate planning process and feedback from the beneficiaries will also allow you to identify any anomalies or oversights - thereby reducing the risk of your estate being dwindled away in costly litigation after your death.

Tax planning opportunities

There are a number of potential tax planning opportunities which may be considered as part of the estate planning process. For example, you may be able to implement strategies to reduce the incidence of taxation on the payment of death benefits from your superannuation fund. You may also consider incorporating testamentary trusts into your will for asset protection and tax planning purposes. For example, if you have children who are financially vulnerable (i.e. at risk from creditors, litigants or themselves), it may not be appropriate for them to receive a large distribution directly from your will. Depending on your circumstances, a testamentary trust for the benefit of your child and their family members may therefore be desirable.

Estate planning is an ongoing process

Effective estate planning is an ongoing process and should not be viewed as a one-off exercise. Once your estate plan is in place it should be periodically reviewed to ensure that it will produce the desired outcome as your circumstances and the circumstances of your family change.

Peace of mind

As the old saying goes, *“Failing to plan is planning to fail.”*

You’ve worked hard to develop and look after your property. If you want peace of mind about your future financial security take the time to talk to a qualified adviser that understands the challenges you face on the land.

Australia’s ageing population means there is a significant amount of wealth held or controlled by “baby boomers” of or approaching retirement age. At Roberts & Morrow we see business succession & estate planning as an area of need for our clients as many of them approach retirement. To review these needs we have a Specialist Tax & Estate Planning division that provides an ideal blend of accounting, tax and legal skills headed by our Tax Counsel. For further information or assistance with your business succession or estate planning needs, contact Paul Williams, Tax Counsel on (02) 6774 8400.

Black Gully Music Festival (a.k.a Soggy Sunday)



Sunday February 10th saw the second annual Black Gully Music Festival in Armidale. Following on from the success of the first festival last year, SNEL put together a program of 7 bands, food and wine, jumping castle, tree planting, community garden tours and Landcare displays at the outdoor stage behind NERAM.

Sadly, a series of storms meant we had to cancel the event half way through. Before we were washed out, 200 people had enjoyed the great music and there was a real buzz around the place. But heavy rain and electrical equipment don't mix, so we had to abandon ship.

Why is Landcare putting on a music festival anyway you might be asking? From experience we know that people are often too busy to attend an event that is specifically "Landcare" or "Environment". Instead, we need to get our messages to places or groups where they already go, or give them an event that is fun and rewarding. Then we can slip a Landcare message in on the side. It's called "Passion Mashing". This has worked successfully for Landcare with Armidale City Bowling Club, Mental Health Week and O'Week at UNE.

Not many people had time to inspect the Landcare display before the rain came, but the event was clearly associated with Landcare. Lots of people heard about it through a Facebook page which was also linked to the Landcare website. We can now legitimately

invite these people to future Landcare events.

Black Gully Music Festival was very much aimed at the urban community in Armidale. The approach is different to what we would do in rural areas. While events like this attract more active volunteers for urban groups like the Tree Group and the Rivercare Group, they also raise the profile of Landcare. Making urban residents more aware of Landcare and willing to support Landcare increases our social "licence to operate", which improves our chances of attracting funding for all of our activities, not just the urban ones.

Landcare is one of the community groups now associated with Black Gully; the others being SLA (Community Garden) and Armidale Tree Group. Together we have transformed this public space into an area for entertainment, passive and active recreation, nature conservation and improved water quality. The area will be managed as part of the new Moran Oval Trust which includes all the crown lands in the area including Moran Oval.

We must acknowledge our partners and sponsors for this year's Black Gully Music Festival: NERAM Harvest, Armidale Tree Group, Black Dot Music, Armidale Dumaresq Council, Caring for Our Country and Be Natural. All the musicians who got to play on the day donated their time as well.

So now we will carefully study the climate averages and find a time when it is less likely to rain, it's still warm and the evenings are still light. (And if you want a T-shirt, we have plenty of small and medium ones for sale for \$15 each).

Learn Tips and Tricks for Successful Pest Control

Wild dog, feral pig, feral cat and fox control will be the topic of two Feral Animal Control and Training Days to be held at "Europambela", Walcha on the 13th of March 2013 and the Wongwibinda Hall on the 14th of March 2013 from 9:00am to 3:30pm each day.

These training days will be hands on and are an opportunity for people to learn skills in identifying signs of pest animals, using different bait types and laying techniques and undertaking effective monitoring of pest animal impacts on their property.

Participants will learn skills to maximise the success of their control programs for wild dogs, foxes, feral cats and feral pigs.

Technical and Industry experts will demonstrate a number of different sensor trail cameras and show landholders how to set up and utilise these resources in their pest control program.

Pest animals impact the whole community and cause significant losses to agriculture and the environment. Many farmers and graziers have viewed first-hand the result of a wild dog, fox or even a feral pig attack on livestock. People often think it is only sheep producers who suffer losses from pest animals but this is not the case. Although sheep producers suffer the highest proportion of predatory losses there are significant impacts to other enterprises through the spread of weeds and disease, including *Neospora caninum*, a parasite that causes abortion in

cattle. There have been confirmed cases of *Neospora* antibodies on a number of properties on the New England Tablelands. A fact sheet on this parasite and its symptoms has recently been produced and includes a case study of two properties in the region experiencing losses. This fact sheet will be available at the training days.

Wild Dogs and foxes also spread a number of other diseases that infect livestock, pets and in some cases even people. These diseases include Mange, Canine distemper, Hydatid tapeworm and Encephalitis. There have been reports of an increase in Parvovirus cases throughout the New England North West area, a disease that is also spread by foxes and wild dogs.

For more information regarding the field day or to register contact SNEL on 02 6772 9123. Please RSVP by 8th March for catering purposes.

This project is funded by the Australian Government's Caring for our Country program and supported by the New England North West Landcare Networks, National Parks and Wildlife Service, NSW Department of Primary Industries, Border Rivers Gwydir CMA, New England LHPA and North West LHPA.

Professional trapper, Mark Lamb will show landholders how to identify signs of pest animals at upcoming training days



Racecourse Lagoon Family Fun Day

Southern New England Landcare and Uralla Shire Council held a family fun day (morning) at Racecourse Lagoon, Uralla on Saturday the 9th of February to celebrate World Wetlands Day. World Wetlands Day promotes public awareness of the significance of the earth's wetland environments and is celebrated around the world in early February each year.

The day started off early with keen bird enthusiasts arriving at 7am to watch the mist rise from the lagoon. The weather was perfect and there were many waterbirds on the lagoon and enjoying breakfast around the waters edge. Black Swans, Purple Swamp Hens, Dotterels and Stilts to name a few had participants glued to their binoculars.



By 8:30am fifty people had arrived to enjoy the delicious bacon and egg rolls supplied by the Uralla Lions Club. The morning's activities continued with flora walks, information about pest animal control and current Landcare projects occurring in the region.

Local Uralla historian, Arnold Goode had the audience captivated with tales of a bygone era when there were 16 hotel licensees around the parameter of the lagoon and historic accounts of Captain Thunderbolt. Racecourse lagoon was noted as the prettiest race course in the state with regular horse racing activities engaging those near and far.

Racecourse Lagoon was once again utilised as a race track for the day's events, but these races did not involve four legs. Instead children took part in three-legged and sack races throughout the morning. The egg and spoon races were also a hit but with 'special' eggs. Stephanie McCaffrey from Uralla Shire Council had been very busy painting eggs to resemble those of waterbirds. There were green eggs, brown eggs and eggs with black spots, all

highlighting effective camouflage.

The theme for this year's World Wetlands Day was 'Wetlands and Water Management'. In our local area this is of particular relevance to the management of our unique Upland Wetland environments. Upland Wetlands are listed as an Endangered Ecological Community (EEC) of national significance. They are formed by shallow depressions that may contain water permanently or dry out when water sources such as rainfall or groundwater become scarce. Upland wetland environments occur mainly on the basalt plateaus of the New England Tableland, often on private properties.

Racecourse Lagoon is very unique in that it has formed on a granite base and includes a number of large granite outcrops throughout the lagoon. Upland Wetlands provide critical habitat for endemic (or local) flora and fauna species as well as migratory birds. As a result, the future management of these communities is crucial to their survival.



Uralla Shire Council signed a Voluntary Conservation Agreement in 1999 to environmentally manage the lagoon and is committed to the continued conservation of this unique area. USC is currently undertaking flora

surveys and hydrology assessments of the lagoon to inform their ongoing management of this upland wetland. These activities are being supported by the High Country Wetlands and Woodlands project currently being delivered by SNEL and funded by the Australian Government's Caring for Our Country program.

The celebrations concluded by 11am but not before some very positive feedback from participants and requests to look at other wetlands in the area at future events. The SNEL team hope to hold an event each year to celebrate World Wetlands Day and we are open to suggestions for next year's venue.

New Soil App out now

The national soil database can now be accessed in real time online through the iPad app SoilMapp developed by CSIRO. SoilMapp provides open access to information on soil depth, acidity, salinity, carbon and water-holding capacity across the country.

It delivers detailed scientific information for landholders using the Australian Soil Resource Information System and APSoil.

More information:
Claire Harris, CSIRO
0428 116 185.



Photo: Anita Kazis
Armidale Dumaresq Council.

The Armidale Australia Day Mayor's Award for a Group or Organisation was awarded to Sustainable Living Armidale (SLA). The Mayor said, "This organisation has been a driving force in establishing Armidale as a leading city in environmentally sustaining practices."

Mayor, Cr. Jim Maber presenting the trophy and certificate to SLA's Iain MacKay and Barbara Finch.

Current funding opportunities

Community Landcare Grants ranging between \$5,000 and \$50,000 are available to support local sustainable agriculture and community engagement projects, as part of the Australian Government's \$2.2 billion Caring for our Country initiative.

Funded activities could include, but are not limited to:

- demonstrating, trialling and adopting management practices that improve soil condition and reduce wind and water erosion
- fencing of riparian zones, wetlands, and native vegetation to reduce impacts of agriculture on the environment
- undertaking weed and pest projects that address issues at the local scale that have been identified in national strategies or demonstrate and promote innovative methods of management, or will result in the eradication of a new or emerging outbreak
- developing the leadership and capacity of community organisations, including support for the community to build awareness and share learnings and successes
- hosting field days or conferences showcasing innovative sustainable agricultural practice and associated Landcare or natural resource management group activities

- conducting surveys or other sustainable agriculture awareness raising activities
- building the capacity of Indigenous Australians or people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to engage in natural resource management, sustainable agriculture and/or Landcare activities, or
- marketing and supply chain-based initiatives that promote sustainable production and support adoption of sustainable farm practices.

Funded project activities must occur after 1 July 2013 and be completed within an 18-month period. Applications close 5:00pm (AEDT) on 20 March 2013. To find out more visit www.nrm.gov.au

2013 Coles Junior Landcare School Garden Grants

Coles provides School Garden Grants of up to \$1,000 to schools and youth groups to help create gardens in their grounds or community, such as bush tucker gardens, water wise gardens or veggie gardens. These programs encourage students to learn about the environment through "outdoor learning" and interaction in developing their own school gardens.

Round 2: closes 5pm (AEST) Friday 10 May 2013.
Round 3: closes 5pm (AEST) Friday 2 August 2013.

For more information visit:
www.juniorlandcare.com.au

HiCUB a winner again

While the High Country Urban Biodiversity Project (HiCUB) officially ended in June 2012, the accolades continue. The project won Division B of the Local government Excellence in the Environment Awards 2011-2012. The Awards were presented by the Minister for the Environment, The Hon Robyn Parker MP, last month at Dockside, Darling Harbour.



At the NSW Local Government Excellence in the Environment Awards with (L-R) The Hon Robyn Parker MP, HiCUB Project Director David Carr, Ros Hall from Office of Environment and Heritage and ADC Cr Rob Richardson

The HiCUB Project is one of the largest environmental projects to be run on the Northern Tablelands of NSW. The project focused on improving the condition of urban riparian and bush areas, improving collaboration between council and community groups, and building engagement between the urban community and their local biodiversity.

The most significant outcome of HiCUB was the strong partnerships built between Councils and community organisations, with Landcare acting as the intermediary.

Interested community members may keep up-to-date with what is happening in the New England region by contacting SNELC 6772 9123 or visiting www.snelandcare.org.au

New NSW Farmers Wind Farm Guide available

With help from the NSW Government, NSW Farmers has developed the **Wind Farm Guide for Host Landholders**. The guide is aimed at helping members understand the process for wind development from the initial stages right through to decommissioning. While the guide will not contain every answer, it is hoped that it will encourage informed decision making and help landholders ask the right questions before committing to wind farm development.

<http://www.nswfarmers.org.au/news/global-news/wind-farm-guide-for-host-landholders>



ENVIRONMENTAL TRUST FUNDING

The NSW Environmental Trust are running workshops which will provide information on available grant programs and how to design and deliver successful projects, as well as the opportunity to build and share knowledge.

The all day workshop is free of charge and includes refreshments, lunch, morning and afternoon tea.

Time: 9.00am to 4.30pm

Place: Tamworth Quality Inn Powerhouse

Date: Wednesday 6th March

To Register: send an email to

info@environmentaltrust.nsw.gov.au or phone 02 8837 6320

Organic Farming/Gardening Courses

T.A.F.E. New England (Armidale - Rural Skills Centre) has 2 courses in Organic Farming/Gardening (Certificate IV & Diploma levels) this year.

Course modules include crop production, soil management, animal production and all aspects of converting a farm to organic production.

Past students have commented that the courses are 'life changing' and have enabled them to achieve their farm goals, become fully sustainable or simply produce nutrient dense, healthy food.

Courses can be studied over 1, 2 or 3 days per week from 9am-4pm.

For more information contact Derek Smith on 02 6779 1722 and email dsmith@auzzie.net

What's New

"Innovations for Regenerative Landscape Management"

by Outcomes Australia supports the work of Soils for Life. It contains case studies of the 19 properties across Australia involved in this project, including the Wrights at Balala. **Download a copy or chapters from www.soilsforlife.org.au**

"Property Planning AgGuide Series"

new from NSW DPI, provides a simple, step by step approach to improve farm viability and biodiversity on farms.

NSW DPI Bookshop—146PP \$30.00

The new Farm Doctor Profitability and Rainfall Use Efficiency calculator

has been launched on the Border Rivers-Gwydir CMA website. The Farm Doctor is an easy to use tool to assess how well your various farm enterprises are performing, given the amount of rainfall received. Find it at www.brg.cma.nsw.gov.au Click on the link to the EDUCATION & TRAINING page, then the FARM PLANNING tab. Download the Farm Doctor software which will allow you to easily convert typical individual paddock and stock measurements into useful productivity indicators. The program also contains a financial management component.

Dept. of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries

has released a new report investigating the relationships between land management practises and soil condition and the quality of ecosystem services delivered from agricultural land in Australia. The report concluded that addressing soil carbon, acidity, and erosion results in better yields of agricultural products and public benefits such as clean water, protection from wind and water erosion and floods, reduced risks from pests and diseases and reduced need to use agricultural chemicals.

A copy of this report can be viewed at www.daff.gov.au

What's New

Soil Carbon fact sheets - www.soilquality.org.au

has a range of fact sheets on soil carbon, including "How much carbon can soil store"

UNE Living Soils Website - www.une.edu.au/livingsoils

This website covers soil organisms, their roles, the food web and management effects.

Soil Health Knowledge Bank - www.soilhealthknowledge.com.au

has been developed for farmers and the wider community to provide an overview of current soil health knowledge and tools to assess soil condition.



Southern New England Landcare Ltd
ACN 099 357 454
Resourcing Landcare in our region



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Landchat
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Landchat

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Landchat presents a forum for the expression of a range of opinions.

The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent those of Southern New England Landcare or its employees.

While every effort is made to publish accurate information, Southern New England Landcare and its employees do not accept responsibility for statements made and opinions expressed in this newsletter.



General Meeting

6.30pm Wednesday 20th February 2013.
Uralla Community Centre (cnr Hill & Maitland St)

All members are invited.

Please contact your group's SNELCC Representative if you wish to accompany them to the meeting.

Dinner will be provided for a small charge.

**Please RSVP by
Tuesday 19th February 2013
for catering purposes.**

Tel 6772 9123 • mail@snelcc.org.au
www.snelandcare.org.au



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