

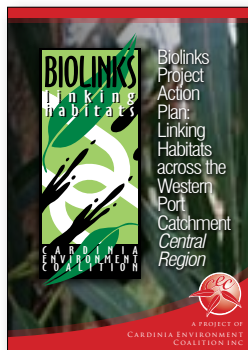
Biolinks Project

Biolinks Action Plan – Linking habitats across the Western Port Catchment Central Region Release

The Biolinks Project Action Plan was officially launched at the CEC's AGM on 28th August this year. The plan spells out why biolinks are important, what benefits they can bring to farms and the environment, and how we can create them in the most strategic and effective way. There are a number of fold-out maps that show features of the landscape that will help us to identify the best places to put in biolinks, including native vegetation cover, Crown land, existing Landcare projects, waterways, salinity hazard areas and planning zones. The next step will be to develop "Local Biolinks Plans" for each of seven local areas by working together with our communities to map out where we think the biolinks should go such as along roadsides, streams, and through private properties. Landcare and other CEC member groups will be invited to take a leading role in organising community workshops in their areas to map biolinks. The CEC's Biodiversity Project Officer Sarah MacLagan has already started to come around to different Landcare groups to discuss this process. Sarah hopes to begin running the community workshops in early 2009.

A copy of the action plan has been given to each CEC member group and it is available to download in electronic form from the website: www.cecbiolinks.net.au. There is also a library set at the CEC office for people to borrow a hard copy if they wish.

For any further information on biolinks or how you can become involved in the Biolinks Project, please contact Sarah on 5941 8446, or smacLagan_cec@dcsi.net.au



THE CARDINIA ENVIRONMENT COALITION INC (CEC) is an umbrella group comprising 30 local Friends, Landcare and conservation groups. In this edition of our newsletter you will find lots of information about our work and our local groups.

The CEC works across the Central Western Port and part of the Southern Yarra Ranges catchments.

OUR VISION By 2020 our catchment is an area where people live ecologically sustainably, aware that they are connected to their environment which is protected and enhanced by their action.

OUR MISSION Leading significant positive environmental change through community based awareness and action

OUR STRUCTURE The CEC is best reflected by the six portfolio areas shown in the diagram.

Update from the President

Joan Szalman

There is an old curse "May you live in times of change!!" It certainly seems that we all "cursed" at the moment! Change is all around us and particularly in the environment sector. Change can be viewed as good or bad depending on your perspective but one thing for sure is that change is always challenging! In our own organization we have had significant change with a new committee and president and new staff members. There is change in the way we are funded and this is only going to continue in the coming years as carbon trading is introduced in 2010 and as vegetation offsetting expands and corporations become more concerned with ethics and their place in the community. This will mean significant changes in the way revegetation is funded and carried out on private land. At the moment I know of several schemes such as: Landcare's Carbon Smart, Eco tendering, Bush Tendering and Bush Brokering. We are currently investigating all of these schemes and have had a meeting with DSC regarding Eco Tendering and held a public forum with Matthew Reddy, Managing Director of Landcare Australia's Carbon Smart scheme to ensure that we are ready to take up these new challenges.

Our staffing has experienced many changes lately and we welcome Craig Bryant, Yanggai Ecological Services Manager, Bridgett MacCallum Landcare Coordinator and Carolyn Schroen our Business Manager to our hard-working, committed team.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
As mentioned we have a new committee elected at our Annual General Meeting in August. They are: President: Joan Szalman, Vice President: Kelly Brooks-McMillan, Secretary: Kym Murphy, Treasurer: Geoff Hudson, Committee members: Margaret Cromb, Kerrie



Thorpe, Susan Davies, Alison Chatfield and Jim Armstrong who is also the new chairperson of the WPCLN. As your new president I feel privileged to be elected to lead this dynamic organization for the next 12 months and I would like to thank Margaret Cromb, former president. Kelly Brooks MacMillan, Elizabeth Fraser, Danny Hayes and Jim Armstrong for the great job they did as an interim committee. I would also like to thank Anthony Hooper and Julie Weatherhead for their mammoth part in starting the CEC and steering it to the position it now enjoys. Their energy, vision and commitment are greatly appreciated and will not be forgotten.

At the AGM our new website was launched, the address is www.cecinc.net.au I encourage you all to get into the habit of browsing the website as we are going to use it as our main method

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CARDINIA ENVIRONMENT COALITION

POSTAL: PO Box 875, Pakenham 3810
OFFICE: 10 Main Street Pakenham
Hours: 9am - 5pm
Phone: (03) 5941 8446
Fax: (03) 5940 4466
email: cec@dcsi.net.au
website: www.cecinc.net.au

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Beaconsfield Nature Conservation Reserve

Management Plan Release

This environmentally significant, 170ha bush reserve in Beaconsfield became a Nature Conservation Reserve by a 2005 Act of Parliament. The CEC was named Committee of Management for the Reserve

The BNCR Management Plan is now available on the CEC Website for public comment and feedback is encouraged before the end of January 2009.



after strong support of DSE Crown Land's Kim Soo and Tammy Lobato MP, and campaign leadership of Anthony Hooper with the CEC Committee.

The aim of BNCR is to provide permanent protection and enhancement of unique natural, cultural and industrial heritage.

The Cardinia Environment Coalition has developed a Management Plan to ensure aims are met and direct ecologically sustainable management activities for the next 10 years. The Management Plan is now available on the CEC Website for public comment and feedback is encouraged before the end of January 2009.

KWR Swamp Pipeline Objection

Westernport Swamp Landcare, in conjunction with CEC, presented a submission about the water pipeline EES to the Desalination Hearing Panel. The main concerns were loss of vegetation and loss of connectivity. The pipeline will go through a Koo Wee Rup property destroying landcare plantings of 278 trees plus other mature trees. This will be a loss of volunteer efforts and Government funding.

In the KWR swamp where it is estimated that only 2% native vegetation remains, each little remnant is precious! There is concern about

Bandicoot Corner

Bandicoot Corner has had an eventful year. In February, the first live bandicoot in years was seen, snuffling around amongst the grasses and native raspberry. Since then, we've had

Bandicoot Corner Management Plan has been written to guide management of Bandicoot Corner into the future. The draft is now available on the CEC website (www.cecinc.net.au) and your comments are welcome.

many more sightings, including when Erland and Troy caught one in a cat trap whilst trying to catch a feral cat! Apparently bandicoots have a taste for Kentucky Fried Chicken, which is what they were using as cat bait. In February we installed six specialised bandicoot tunnels and put sand pads next to them to see if they were being used. After no



Bandicoot Corner's predator-proof fence they are (all going well) safe from foxes, cats and dogs.

Part of the long-term plan for Bandicoot Corner is to link up with the Bayles Fauna Reserve using the Yallock Outfall Drain as a corridor. Negotiations are currently underway with Melbourne Water to find ways to revegetate and provide habitat without preventing the drain from effectively drawing away water in a flood event.

The GreenCorps team did a lot of work at Bandicoot Corner, monitoring the fence and sand pads and building a small lockable shed for storing tools on site.

Year 8 students at Pakenham Secondary College donated some nest boxes which have been put up and are almost all being used by birds of various kinds, including a kookaburra!

A number of new facilities - a composting toilet, shelter, small shed, water tank and signage - will be built early next year using money from a DSE Facilities Grant. These facilities will improve accessibility and enable increased community use of the reserve.



This recent Bandicoot sighting shows how approachable they are as they busily forage.

possible loss of endangered species: Southern Brown Bandicoot, Growling Grass Frog, Dwarf Galaxia, Giant Gippsland Earthworm. Concern about loss of topsoil, bare exposed earth, clay patches, and loss of remnant habitat pockets, taking a long time to regenerate, especially with the forecast drier climate.

It was suggested though, that the pipeline easement could be revegetated with appropriate native shrubs, grasses, sedges and herbs to create a major bandicoot / ground fauna corridor to offset the loss of flora and fauna

during and after pipeline construction, along with ongoing weed control and maintenance. Likewise for the overhead powerlines, which could be created into another wildlife corridor if revegetated appropriately with indigenous groundcovers and small-medium shrubs.

The panel's attention was directed to strategic plans already in existence such as the PPWCMA Native Vegetation Plan, CEC Biolinks Linking Habitats and the Spirit of the Bunyip- 100 km of biolinks in 20 years.

[Susan Davies, Westernport Swamp Landcare]

President's Report from page 2

of communication to our members and to the general public. This is your website and we want to showcase all our groups and all the great work we do so please contact the office or Glenn MacMillan or Peter Carter to get a webpage for your own group. It is not all that hard to do and there is plenty of help available. I would like to thank Glenn for his efforts in giving generously of his time to set up the website and also Peter Carter for his input.

BIOLINKS ACTION PLAN

The Biolinks Action Plan - Linking habitats across the Western Port Catchment Central Region was also launched at the AGM. This important publication written by staff member

Sarah MacLagan will be the strategic plan which will guide our Landcare and public land activities into the future, and assist with advocacy for the CEC too. Sarah has produced a clearly readable, concise and informative guide to direct our revegetation plans so that we achieve multiple benefits for the environment in our area.

Another exciting development is that we have finalized the draft management plans for the Beaconsfield Nature Conservation Reserve and Bandicoot Corner. A lot of work has gone into producing these plans and I would like to thank Kym Murphy and Kelly Brooks MacMillan, in particular, for their part in completing the BNCR management plan and Sarah MacLagan for writ-

ing the plan for Bandicoot Corner and to everyone else who has contributed to these important documents. The management plans will be on our website and we invite you to read them and add your comments. Please see articles in this issue for further information.

So with all the changes we are undergoing come challenges and opportunities which as you can see often bring out the best in us.

On behalf of the CEC committee and staff I would like to thank all our members for their support and assistance throughout the past year and wish you a very Happy Christmas and a safe and relaxing New Year.

[Joan Szalman, President]

MEMBER GROUP UPDATES

Cardinia Catchment Landcare Group

PLANTING SEASON

Our last planting day was in August and was the end of a successful autumn/ winter planting season. There were eight planting days in all with a number being completed by a Landcare Greencorp team, one by Yanggai Ecological Services and another by IPrimus staff in Beaconsfield.

This totalled 4,000 plants in all. Many thanks to everyone who participated in our planting days and welcome to those new land-owners who were most supportive and enjoyed the experience – we hope to have you all back for next years plantings.



NEW COMMITTEE

We held our AGM in September and the following were elected to the committee:

- President – Ian Chisholm
- Vice-President – Glenn MacMillan
- Secretary – Sandra Denyar
- Treasurer – Peter Carter

WEB SITE

Peter Carter and Glenn MacMillan have been working on our website. The address is www.cclg.net.au – it is linked to the website of the Cardinia Environment Coalition. In future we will be alerting you to our website for event updates.

For further information contact Sandra Denyar 5944 4005 or Ian Chisholm 9707 1435

Neerim & District Landcare Group

The Neerim & District Landcare Group are the newest group to join the Landcare network, and we welcome them into the fold.

The Neerim & District Landcare Group is somewhat different to most other landcare groups in that it:

1. Includes members who have their properties over a geographically large area, roughly from Rokeby all the way to Icy Creek and Fumina in the shadow of Mt Baw Baw
2. Straddles two catchment management regions, Port Philip & Westernport and Lake Wellington (within the PP&W region, we also take in a substantial 'sub-catchment', the Tarago Reservoir catchment)

We have a fairly large membership with a mailing list of around 100 addresses. Our membership comprises a rich mix of commercial farmers (dairy, beef, potatoes and so on) and hobby/lifestyle farmers (alpacas, beef, olives and so on).

A working group manages the Tarago Catchment Sustainable Farms Project (TCSFP), comprising members of the Neerim & District Landcare Group (in fact, a member of the group chairs the TCSFP working group), and representatives from the Baw Baw Shire Council, Dept. Primary Industries at Ellinbank and Melbourne Water.

For further information contact Mike Haughton 5628 1419 (email: mike@tagsforpots.com.au)

Labertouche Landcare Group

We have just direct seeded approximately 2.7km and planted 2000 trees this year. We have two new members and more are coming on as there is more interest in fencing off remnant bush.

In January we will be having a bus tour of Labertouche to look at tree planting 10 years on, and the biolinks we have created. We also will be reviewing the concept of a 10 year plan for the development of the area as we have several streams and rivers. Gavin Brock from Melbourne Water and Sarah MacLagan will be joining us to see first hand our area. We hope as many people as possible will come and have their input into the future blueprint for Labertouche.

For further information contact Rocky Murdica 5629 9386

Deep Creek Landcare Group

This year Deep Creek Landcare has continued with weed removal in our area. We have had a large planting of shelterbelts at Mark Nankervis property and Nevil Clark has also completed a planting. Meryl Waterhouse our longstanding, very dedicated president has unfortunately been ill and Michelle Ferrier has taken aboard the role with Shelly McClaren continuing as secretary. 'Go Country' was a success we welcome three new members to our group. We have a number of projects lined up for next year and with the biolinks beginning with our group we should have quite a busy year in 2009.

Cannibal Creek Landcare Group

Cannibal Creek Landcare Group was formed in 1994 it covers Garfield, Garfield North Tynong North and Iona. Cannibal Creek Landcare is now concentrating its activities to include the creation of wildlife corridors across the region.

Cannibal Creek in recent years has give special emphasis on planting of Green Scent-bark (e. fulgens) which is a local gum which has become quite rare because of land clearing. In the foothills area we have also planted Silver-leaf Stringybark (e. cephalacarpa) commonly known as "Apple Jack"

We have also in recent years concentrated our efforts to combat salinity which is a growing problem in the area especially on the Swamp Fringe around Garfield. The endangered Southern Brown Bandicoot (*Isodon obesulus*) has also become a matter of special interest to the group. We are keen to locate any remnant populations and to protect and enhance any remaining habitat in our area.

For further information contact Linda Byrne 5629 1172

CEC STAFF UPDATE

Carolyn Schroen has commenced as Business Manager for the CEC, with her aim being to provide a high level of professional support and backup to all committee, staff and stakeholders associated with the coalition.



Carolyn has extensive background in business operations, having worked within a leading automotive aftermarket business for more than 17 years. Franchise Management, Supply Chain, Logistics, Marketing and Communications are all hands on skills developed while progressing her career through to senior management and executive level.

Carolyn's advanced communication and organisational skills will assist in ensuring the continuing refinement of processes and operations within the CEC and it's network of stakeholders. Her business acumen and corporate knowledge will assist in ensuring that all operations maintain the high level of professionalism required to ensure ongoing funding and support for the operation of the network.

She looks forward to working with the committee, staff and stakeholders to gain a greater understanding of the needs of the business to ensure her support and time are directed towards the most needed areas.

Carolyn can be contacted by email on cschroen_cec@dcsi.net.au

VALE

Bob Thompson, very active in our local environment sadly passed away in July this year aged 65. Bob in recent years became very active in Landcare and planning issues on Phillip Island, as well as a climate change activist. Bob will probably be locally remembered most for his love of, and action on the Fishers Loop Track in the Bunyip Forest; his passion, technical knowledge and lobbying against logging. Bob's determination, tenacious purpose and strength to stand up and argue the truth of the case no matter what, will be sorely missed.

Western Port Catchment Landcare Network - Central Region

Landcare Chairperson's Report

The last 6 months I have been visiting some of the Landcare groups. I am extremely proud of the groups. The smaller groups have made a mark on their communities with the work they do in the tree planning, weed removal etc.

The larger groups with larger farms are doing more direct seedling and larger tree stock planting.

There are a lot of activities happening and I hope you can all send a representative to our Landcare network meeting. We welcome Bridgette McCallum our new Landcare Coordinator and look forward to working with her.

I would urge all groups to watch out for unwanted weeds going to seed, especially ragwort and Paterson's Curse – as one plant can spread thousands of seeds. If you are unsure of these weeds, please ask someone to identify them for you.

For further information contact Jim Armstrong 5628 7777



Bunyip Urban Landcare Group (BULG)

The Bunyip Whole Town Environment Plan is progressing and is expected to be in full swing early next year, and we are seeking your help to gather data for the project.

The purpose of the plan is to map selected weeds, significant native plants, bandicoot populations, orchids and saline areas in the Bunyip township area from the Princes Highway to the Bunyip River. The information gathered will be used to produce a Whole Town Environment Plan that can assist with long term planning and benchmarking for the Bunyip area. The plan will also be a valuable tool to use to apply for funding to remove weeds and restore remnant vegetation around the township.

Bunyip is blessed with some rare plants and animals such as the Green Scent Bark and the Southern Brown Bandicoot as well as areas of remnant rich in a wide variety of native plants.

Bunyip is also under threat from encroaching

weeds, degradation of remnant vegetation and salinity.

Venture Scouts will organize the mapping to help obtain their Environment Badge as part of gaining their Queen's Scout Award. The Scouts will be seeking out local volunteers to work with them on gathering the data across

the town. You can be part of this innovative project that will become a model for other towns to follow.

Leaflets will be distributed throughout the town to provide more specific information on the project and how volunteers can help. It is expected that the mapping will happen early in 2009.

The project will be logging any sightings of the Southern Brown Bandicoot. If you see any of them around the area (dead or alive) please call the Project Coordinator, Julie Weatherhead on 5942 8580 and have your sighting recorded.

For information on free plantings at your place, to join BULG or get advice on native planting please contact Tamara Griffiths on 5629 5918.



SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

Yanggai Ecological Services Pty Ltd

Yanggai Ecological Services has a new Manager, Craig Bryant. Craig has considerable experience in Bushland management and substantial field experience. He leads a small team of committed employees who specialize in weed management and revegetation techniques.



They are continuing to be successful in tendering for projects with the local councils and various agencies as well as private landholders and look forward to expanding our business and generating profits to return to the CEC.

Indigenous Nursery & Seedbank

The CEC nursery was set up 3 years ago as a business arm of the Cardinia Environment Coalition to help provide indigenous plants for environmental works, particularly for Landcare works. It was also anticipated that it would bring in funds to help the CEC to be more independent of government funding.

As an interim measure it was housed on a private property and then at Tynong North for a longer period. For some months an ongoing and protracted search has been on trying to locate a new site on public land.

Our hopes have been dashed on a number of



occasions and it is with great relief and delight that we can announce that the nursery has a new home! It will be housed at the Tynong Recreation Reserve on Department of Sustainability land. We will be working with member groups of the Recreation Reserve, namely the Tennis Club and look forward to the association. We are confident we can work together for our mutual benefit and for the enhancement of the Reserve. This result gives us long term tenure and enables us to apply for infrastructure funding.

It will take some months for the infrastructure to be built. In the meantime plants and materials have found new homes at various places and nursery work will continue under Adele's competent leadership.

Our thanks go to people who have generously made offers of land, to Cr Bill Pearson for his proactive support and to Ian Chisholm and Margaret Cromb who have worked long and hard for this result.

CAPS & CORKS WANTED

Dale Juner from Cannibal Creek Landcare Group is collecting beer caps and wine corks to raise funds for a charity that provides wheelchairs to those in need. This Christmas, please save your caps and corks (in separate bags) and drop them in to the CEC office for Dale to collect.

CEC STAFF UPDATE



Landcare has a New Facilitator

Hello Landcarers, Friends and others. I thought that I should introduce myself to you and let you know that I am available to

assist groups and individuals in undertaking Landcare work. My name is Bridgette McCallum and I am the new Landcare Facilitator for the Westernport Catchment Landcare Network. I am based at the CEC office in Pakenham. My background is in Natural Resource Management and prior to this job I was a Landcare Facilitator for the West Gippsland Landcare Network for three and a half years and prior to that I was a Green Corps Team Leader for 18 months.

I am looking forward to working with the Landcare groups in the network and also individual landholders. I am aiming to visit all of the Landcare groups over the next few months. Due to a very busy work schedule I will not be able to make it to every group meeting, I will however endeavour to make it to as many as possible, and also planting days, bus tours and other field days. Please feel free to contact me at the office on 5941 8446 or email bmccallum_cec@dcsi.net.au I wish you all a very happy and safe Summer.

[Bridgette McCallum, Landcare Facilitator]