Collaborations

LP026-004

Landcare helps to connect farmers with Aboriginal communities

Boorowa Community Landcare Group

South East Landcare together with Hovells Creek and Boorowa Community Landcare Groups held a two-day Aboriginal cultural heritage workshop for local farmers to recognise and record sites on their properties.

The issue

Local farmers and land managers are often unsure how to identify indigenous artefacts and what to do to protect and preserve cultural sites on private tenure. This event was designed to spread understanding of cultural heritage and work together with Aboriginal communitites to dispel myths. This 2 day event with dinner and a camp out was a very special opportunity to walk on Wiradjuri Country with traditional experts
and Local Land Services Aboriginal Support Officers Graham Moore & Greg Ingram.

The solution

Organisers chose to focus efforts on a workshop where Aboriginal people could teach farmers about their culture in a supportive and non-threatening context and look at co-operative ways of protecting it on farms. Day 1 was held at Frogmore Hall; with a Welcome to Country and smoking ceremony by local Wiradjuri man Murray Coe, followed by a day of classroom learning then an overnight campover. On day 2 attendees put their new knowledge into practice, recording sites on a local Wyangala farm for the Department of Environment's Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System.

The impact

The program was funded under the NSW Landcare Working Together program, which aims to build engagement between Aboriginal communities and Landcare and to help share traditional land management practices.The teachers freely shared a whole range of knowledge with attendees, including various uses of plants and how Aboriginal cultural heritage is a living thing. In the evening around the campfire, Doug Sutherland gave people an insight into Aboriginal stories in the stars and how the position of different constellations at different times of year tell Aboriginal people about food resources and land management.

Learnings

Farmers learned some simple management strategies to avoid damage to sites. Aboriginal sites found in NSW can be recorded and documented in the Australian Heritage Information Management System.

Click here to learn more.

Key facts

- Feedback from the farmers attending was uniformly enthusiastic and positive.
- I felt really comfortable asking what could be considered difficult questions.

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.