

Community Participation

HRLN LEP-028 03



Bringing together traditional and contemporary ecological knowledge for better understanding country.

The issue

The Hunter Region has a geological and ecological history going back 320 million years and a human history going back at least 20 thousand years giving the region a botanical and archeological richness matching any in the world. The past 200 years of European colonisation has brought great changes to the landscape and a fracturing of traditional knowledge. Much of the ecological and human history is not known in the wider community

The solution

Three field days were held looking at sites from a traditional cultural perspective and a contemporary ecological perspective looking at issues such as land use and resource availability, fire and grazing history and giving a slight peek into the deep time history of the locations. Presenters Allison Warry (Hunter Local Land Services, Worimi Nation) and Paul Melehan (Hunter Region Landcare Network) customised the workshops according to local conditions utilising the presentation dynamic they'd previously developed presenting on bushfoods for a sometimes meandering but informative discussion on Aboriginal sites, food resources, ecological communities and implications for Landholders.

Workshops were delivered at Scone, Merriwa and Bulga with an average of around a dozen people at each workshop. Uncle Warren Taggart, a Wanaruah elder welcomed people to the Bulga workshop and discussed the cultural significance of the site as well as showing some and discussing some resident artefacts.

The impact

Around 40 people attended the three field days with wide ranging discussions on artefacts, legislation, plants, ecology and people's interaction with the environment. There is a lot of interest however for an area with such a rich cultural and biological landscape written information can be scarce or is scattered about numerous publications and much is extrapolated from other areas.

There are plans to build on these field days to a wider audience around the Hunter Region.



- The Hunter Valley is geologically complex with a range of landforms and landscapes leading to a very high biological diversity.
- Vegetation has changed over time as a result of geological processes, paleoclimate change and human activities.
- The Hunter Valley is one of the archeologically richest areas on the planet with human occupation going back at least 20,000 years.
- Erosion of the O and A soil horizons over the past century and a half brings challenges into the future of how we are going to manage a rapidly changed landscape.

Project Partners



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