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Latest news from the REC

The NSW Roadside Environment Committee (REC) will sponsor the NSW Roadside Environmental Management Award for the seventh year in a row.

The Award is part of the 2017 Local Government NSW Excellence in the Environment Awards to be presented on Wednesday 11 October 2017 at UTS, Sydney. More details at <https://www.lgnsw.org.au/event-s-training/environment-awards>

Councils and county councils that are members of LGNSW are eligible to enter. The nominations for the Award close on **5pm Wednesday 31 May 2017**.

Support to councils to streamline their roadside environmental management

The advertisement features the Local Government NSW logo (a blue 'G' with 'LOCAL GOVERNMENT NSW' text) in the top left. The background is a collage of images: a road with trees, a green circular graphic, and a road sign. On the right, the text 'Council Roadside Environmental Grants' is displayed in a green and grey font, with a green button below it that says 'APPLY NOW' in white capital letters.

Local Government NSW (LGNSW), with support from the NSW Environmental Trust, has developed a Council Roadside Environmental Management Framework

(CREMF) to assist local councils to streamline their roadside environmental management across their organisation.

Councils identified many challenges in the long-term management of roadside environments including barriers such as difficulties with integrating natural and built asset management procedures, funding consistency, the need to balance legislative responsibilities, separation of staff responsibilities and staff capacity. Based on suggestions from stakeholders this new framework aims to embed roadside environmental management into councils' Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework to help address some of these barriers.

The framework looks at councils' many complex road responsibilities holistically and aims to support councils in NSW to navigate complex legislation, meet regulatory requirements, minimise risk and make the process of improving roadside environments more efficient and cost effective. Embedding roadside environmental management within IP&R has the benefit of streamlining the process by linking it with existing planning, reporting and asset management systems.

The framework provides simple tools to help councils assess and improve the value of roadside reserves. It also includes case studies from councils that have successfully implemented innovative solutions to manage roadside reserves as part of their existing built assets and infrastructure processes. The framework recognises the diversity amongst councils, as well as the variety of stakeholder interests and responsibilities regarding roadside reserve management. It may be used in discrete portions as required and aims to help councils to trial innovative approaches to improved roadside management.

A contestable grants round closed on 9 May 2017 and submissions are currently being assessed. Grants will be allocated to trial the framework concepts and improve the management and long-term environmental value of their roadside reserve assets. \$1.4 million is available to councils with successful applicants expected to be notified in June 2017.

Full details and copies of the framework and associated tools are available at: <http://www.lgnsw.org.au/policy/roadside-environmental-management/council-roadside-reserves-project>

Riverina TSR Biodiversity Project

The Riverina Travelling Stock Reserve (TSR) Biodiversity Project has been a joint effort by Riverina and Murray Local Land Services to improve biodiversity on these significant environmental assets. The project has been run over five years and will come to completion in 2017.

Environmental consultants were engaged to undertake assessments on hundreds of reserves in the Riverina and Murray Local Land Services regions to assess the level of biodiversity present and make recommendations to enhance and improve key threatened species and overall biodiversity. Additionally, local indigenous representatives were engaged to carry out cultural heritage assessments to identify and record these valuable sites.

The data collated from the assessments was then used in a process of prioritisation to determine which reserves could most benefit from various works.

Some of the works carried out included rabbit control, pest weed spraying, strategic revegetation, strategic grazing management, as well as fencing off of sensitive areas.

Over the past five years increases in biodiversity on several reserves has been observed including key threatened species and endangered ecological communities.

The project has highlighted the value of TSR's and their importance to various stakeholders and the need to effectively manage these important areas in a sustainable way.

For more details contact Michael Fayle, Riverina Local Land Services, on 02 6990 1306



Riverina LLS TSR Ranger James Gillespie and CSU Work Placement Student Taneisha Shields assessing a TSR

Model agency collaboration turns roadwork tree removal into an environmental asset

Roads & Maritime Services (RMS), Central Tablelands Local Land Services (LLS), Upper Lachlan Shire Council, NSW Fisheries, the Central Acclimatisation Society and local fishing clubs have teamed up in a model example of interagency collaboration, turning trees removed during road works into an environmental asset.

Large box gum trees removed during road widening at Junction Point west of Crookwell were recently placed into a local river to create habitat for native fish.

"This is a great news story for fish and for anyone with an interest in cooperative, collaborative efforts to improve the natural environment," said Casey Proctor from Central Tablelands LLS.

"We have created a partnership between the RMS, Local Government, and fishing groups to deliver a long term environmental benefit and foster community and agency ownership of the project."

"These trees could have been recycled as mulch, but instead they have become valuable native fish habitat," Mr Proctor said.

RMS Environment Officer, Thomas Pinzone, was instrumental in identifying an opportunity to reuse the trees earmarked for removal.

"We had the resource, we just needed a project that could make good use of the felled timber," said Mr Pinzone, who worked in partnership with Council and Local Land Services to find an appropriate site to recycle the trees.

"Upper Lachlan Shire Council took charge of the ground works at the site on behalf of RMS, including transportation of the snags."

The junction of the Tuena Creek and the Abercrombie River was identified as a site of significance to several threatened and endangered species including Macquarie perch, silver perch, catfish and Murray cod. The deep water at this spot is a drought refuge and a biodiversity hotspot in the headwaters of the Lachlan River system.

For more information about this project contact Casey Proctor on 02 6341 9318



Gary Anable, Works Manager with the Upper Lachlan Shire Council inspects box gum trees before roadside removal and recycling into fish habitat

Using agronomic principles to enhance understorey restoration

Surveys of revegetation initiatives conducted in Spring 2016 across 19 sites established over the last 20 years south of Wagga Wagga found that the understoreys were dominated by grasses, both pasture (phalaris, ryegrass) and introduced weedy (wild oats, barley grass, brome grasses, Yorkshire fog) species. Those broad-leaved species that were present were agricultural weeds and generally occurred in patches.

The NSW Environmental Trust is currently supporting a research project led by Dr Peter Orchard at CSU Wagga to enhance understorey restoration using the principles commonly applied to crop and pasture establishment, including planning, site preparation, selection of species, sowing rate/plant density and reducing competition on the sown species pre- and post-sowing. It is recognised that any methods developed must not be time or resource consuming.

A crucial element of the project has been to map roadsides and reserves to determine where native species can be found and to develop a sense of what is missing from revegetation efforts, as well as to identify accessible sites, particularly along roadsides, where the general public can become acquainted with the native flora. Initial mapping is being carried out using the iNaturalist platform, a web-based community of amateur and professional naturalists, and species data collected in this process will be used to generate site maps to aid revegetation efforts. The data from iNaturalist will be used to design a more user-friendly data visualisation output which will be linked from the current Wagga Flora site (<https://scci.csu.edu.au/waggaflora/>).

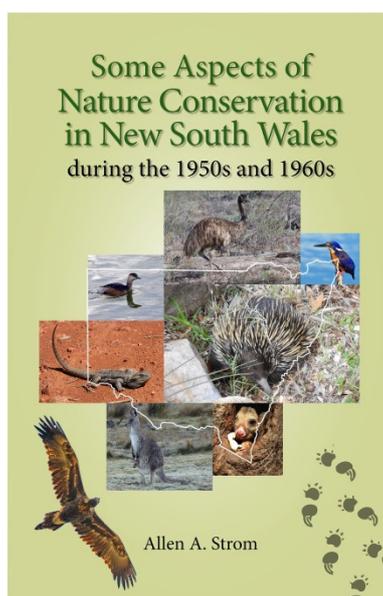
Sites around Wagga Wagga and Cootamundra have been mapped using these techniques with additional sites to follow. Those running the project would be interested in hearing of roadsides and revegetation sites preferably in southern NSW where mapping and/or sowing could be undertaken.

Contact Peter Orchard, Graham Centre for Agricultural Innovation, CSU Wagga (porchard@csu.edu.au) Mob 0411 128 447



Roadside trial showing excellent establishment of Rhagodia spinescens

New book gives insight into the development of NSW nature conservation



A newly published e-book gives an excellent insight into the formative years of nature conservation in NSW. During the 1950s and 60s, the NSW system of national parks, nature reserves and wildlife refuges was largely developed by the Fauna Protection Panel established under the *Fauna Protection Act, 1948*. The Panel also developed innovative ways to manage wildlife on private lands including kangaroos, koalas, waterfowl and possums.

The story is told by Allen A. Strom, Chief Guardian of Fauna for 10 years and a member of the Panel throughout its existence, prior to the founding of the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service in 1967. Allen Strom was a leading conservationist in Australia and this book describes his experiences and difficulties in improving nature conservation, particularly when dealing with some politicians and the machinations of bureaucracy. But it also demonstrates what can be done to make change on a shoe-string budget, with few staff, and plenty of will and passion.

Allen Strom wrote this book in 1980 and he passed away in 1997. The book was never published and was 'lost' until a team of environmental educators recently located the manuscript and had it digitally transferred into this e-book. It is a must-read for anyone who wishes to make environmental change for the better, particularly through government.

The proceeds from the book go to the Australian Association for Environmental Education (NSW).

The book can be accessed at https://www.amazon.com.au/Aspects-Nature-Conservation-South-during-ebook/dp/B071RNRK8H/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1493589595&sr=8-1&keywords=Some+Aspects+of+Nature+Conservation+in+New+South+Wales+during+the+1950s+and+1960s

19th NSW Weeds Conference



Weed conferences held throughout Australia offer an opportunity for weed professionals, land managers and researchers to progress the challenges faced and share ideas, best practice and current research. Starting in 1971 as “Weeds schools” for Local Government Weed Officers, and then continuing as Biennial Noxious Weeds Conferences from 1981, the New South Wales Weeds Conferences have evolved to become one of the primary forums within the State for the management of weeds that impact primary production, the community, societal values and the environment.

The 19th Biennial NSW Weeds Conference will be held at the University of New England campus, Armidale from 16 – 19 October 2017.

With the introduction of the new *Biosecurity Act 2015* and proposed Regulation in 2016 that provides a framework for the prevention, elimination and minimisation of biosecurity risks posed by pests, diseases, weeds and contaminants to the economy, environment and communities of NSW, coupled with the Invasive Species Plan 2015-2022 objectives, there has never been a more important time for weed professionals to be able to meet the challenges of the practical implementation of these changes within the industry.

The conference theme of ‘Experience the highs – working smarter together’ looks to build on the successes of the past whilst looking to the future for the transition into this new era in weed management and control, an approach that must be based on regional cooperation as well as providing a common focus for the actions of the numerous land managers across all tenures. With this in mind Session themes will broadly revolve around Biosecurity in Action; Technology & Innovation; Community, Extension & Social Marketing; Collaboration & Case Studies with a special feature being the Open Debate.

More details about the conference:

<http://conferencecompany.com.au/weedsconference/>

Hands-on experience at native plant identification workshop

The final event in the Western Walkabout native plant identification and management workshops series has been declared a great success, with landholders gaining valuable knowledge about balancing production and sustainability on their farms.

Around 20 landholders and interested community members converged on Naree Station, via Fords Bridge, where Australian Network for Plant Conservation Project Manager and REC Chairperson Martin Driver presented the workshop.

Martin used the workshop to focus on a number of key topics including how to identify native plants, the benefits of retaining native plants on your property, and how to manage these plants to benefit productivity. During the day, Martin took attendees on a paddock walk, which gave them valuable hands-on experience identifying plants in the field.

Senior Local Land Services Officer Kyra Roach believes that attendees learned some valuable things that they will be able to implement on their own properties. 'All the participants took particular interest in identifying the vegetation that was present, and then using their knowledge to implement management strategies around increasing desirable species on their own properties', said Kyra.

The workshops were organised by Local Land Services Western Region with support from Western Landcare and the NSW Environmental Trust. More details at http://riverina.lls.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/712483/Aut_April2017_web.pdf

Release of Australian 2016 State of the Environment report



The Minister for the Environment and Energy, Josh Frydenberg recently released Australia State of the Environment (SoE) 2016. This is the fifth national assessment of the state of Australia's environment, reporting on the current condition of and likely outlook for the environment.

SoE 2016 follows the same structure and approach as the previous report, improving capacity to make comparisons over time. It also continues the SoE 2011 approach of 'report card' assessments of pressures, condition and trends; discussions of risk and resilience; and future projections or 'outlooks'. SoE 2016 includes an examination of the drivers of environmental change; nine detailed thematic reports on atmosphere, built environment, heritage, biodiversity, land, inland water, coasts, marine environment and Antarctic environment; and an overview.

The most important innovation in SoE 2016 is the new digital platform [SoE Digital](#). For the first time readers can track change over time and filter content by theme, trend, grade or reporting framework. It also includes interactive maps and graphs, and over 300 accessible datasets.

Nature Conservation Council Bushfire Conference

Nature Conservation Council's 2017 Bushfire Conference



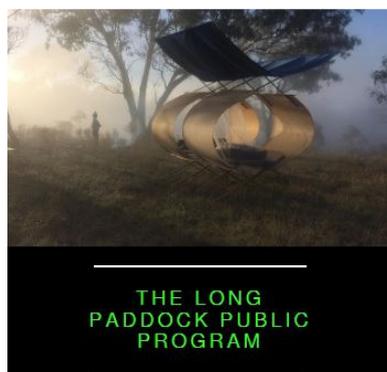
30-31 May, Conference: NSW Teachers Federation Conference Centre, Sydney

The Nature Conservation Council of NSW is proud to present its 11th Biennial Bushfire Conference. This multi-disciplinary conference will explore how fire management can support ecological values across the landscape: from our backyards through to the bushland interface and beyond. The program will examine the interactions between fire and fauna across a range of ecosystems and look at integrated approaches to managing fire, native fauna and flora, weeds and pest animals.

Building on themes from previous conferences we will continue to showcase on-ground fire and restoration projects and Aboriginal burning initiatives.

More details at <http://www.nature.org.au/healthy-ecosystems/bushfire-program/conferences/2017-ncc-bushfire-conference/>

The Long Paddock Public Program



'The Long Paddock' is the colloquial name given to the vast network of Travelling Stock Routes that cross throughout Australia.

The New Landscapes Institute is collaborating with artists and architects on a long-term project exploring the Long Paddock. In 2017 The New Landscapes Institute commissioned nine new works which explore the past, present and future of TSRs. The first public exhibition will take place at Wagga Wagga Art Gallery from May 6 - July 16, 2017. While the exhibition takes place inside the gallery, the exterior landscape permeates the space with audio, visuals and architectural interventions.

Alongside the artworks, the New Landscapes Institute has also commissioned the architecture collective, Grandeza, to design a contemporary adaptation of the traditional drover's plant. This new "Plant" is a mobile object that houses an expanding collection of audio stories, international case studies and research. Elements move outside the gallery to facilitate a nomadic public program and speculative on-site scenarios.

Alongside The Long Paddock exhibition, a diverse public program will open up further discussion and views into the current and future state of TSRs. The opening weekend includes artists and curator talks, "*Future Acts*" – an off-site conversation into the history and politics of the TSRs, and the activation of "The Plant" outside of the gallery. Other events include The Catalogue Launch, Performances and a Mini-Symposium exploring Art and Agriculture.

More details about the Long Paddock Public Program at <http://newlandscapesinstitute.org/project/the-long-paddock/>



Update on TSR review

A [public consultation](#) paper has been released which will examine the current and future needs of the Travelling Stock Reserve (TSR) network for livestock producers and include a thorough assessment of other important land uses such as cultural, Aboriginal, social and environmental purposes.

The aim of the TSR review is to determine which TSRs are still used or required for the original purpose they were set aside for and to determine if they are important for other reasons. This information will be used to determine future management decisions for this land and will also be used to develop a comprehensive map of the TSR network in NSW.

The NSW Government is seeking the community's input on the TSR network in NSW to ensure it remains connected, viable and well maintained. Discussion points have been included in the consultation paper and an online mapping tool has also been developed to provide an opportunity to investigate TSRs in a local area.

[Submissions](#) close 5pm 22 June 2017

Public Exhibition – Draft Revised Bush Fire Environmental Assessment Code



*Photo: Berkley Vale Brigade at Norah Head 2016
Photograph: Dr Ross Peacock*

The Bush Fire Environmental Assessment Code is a 'one-stop shop' environmental assessment and approval process for bush fire hazard reduction works.

The Code is used by the NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) and certain public authorities to issue certificates that approve hazard reduction on private and public lands.

The Code is an environmental assessment mechanism that takes into account potential environmental impacts whilst providing for works that improve the protection of homes and other assets from bush fire.

The NSW RFS in consultation with identified stakeholders and external agencies has reviewed and proposed amendments to the existing Bush Fire Environmental Assessment Code 2006. The NSW RFS is now seeking public comment on the proposed changes.

Changes that may impact on linear reserve environmental management include:

- provision for managing weeds using burning
- inclusion of an approval process for fire trails
- improved provision for strategic fire breaks along public roads and rail corridors
- an increase of the duration of bush fire hazard reduction certificates for up to five years
- improved capacity to apply Strategic Fire Advantage Zone burns
- incorporation of an improved process for determining Asset Protection Zone distances
- applying best practice science,
- extending the Code to provide an approval process for control lines that will be used by vehicles.

Further details on the review process, including the main changes to the Code and how to make a submission are available on the NSW RFS website www.rfs.nsw.gov.au.

The draft revised Code will be on public exhibition from 15 May 2017 until **25 June 2017**.

For further enquiries call 1800 264 525, email bushfirecode@rfs.nsw.gov.au, or contact your local NSW RFS District Office.

The aim of this newsletter is to share information about the management of NSW linear reserve environments and profile the NSW Roadside Environment Committee (REC). For more information on the REC, including how to develop roadside vegetation management plans, go to:

<http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/about/what-we-do/committees/roadside-environment-committee.html>

Please contact the REC Executive Officer if you wish to subscribe or unsubscribe.



NSW
Roadside
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