

Report on Upper Deua Catchment Group

Araluen Creek Restoration Project Community Engagement

for Upper Shoalhaven Landcare Council 19 April 2023

Overview

Upper Shoalhaven Landcare Council has partnered with Upper Deua Landcare Group and will be assisting the Araluen Creek Restoration Project with community educational workshops; project videography, a revegetation advice and species list, as well as using project materials for community awareness of the Bridge to Bridge project including display boards for a natural and cultural historic display walk.

Update – Administration

- Clare, Larry and Erin attended the 17 April Committee Meeting of UDCLG.
- Clare's contract finishes on 31 April.
- Due to the challenges of this project we have done two contract extensions however these were not additional \$\$ just extending the end date.
- Clare has now used all her hours and so can't commit to anything new, just finishing agreed tasks such as the display boards and managing completion of the video.
- Neither the video or the display board will be finalised by 30 April but close to. So ensuring finalisation of these will be a carry over. Again no extra \$\$ is needed to cover Clare's time on this.
- Clare is compiling a final report and doing a financial acquittal for UDCLG
- Clare has proposed a meeting to discuss transitional arrangements and end of project wrap up (see email)

Update – General

- The project gained a presentation spot at the South-East Landcare Muster on Wednesday 26 April. Clare is preparing a powerpoint presentation and Penny Hayman, Secretary UDCLG will present. Cath Harrison has prepared a report which may also be available, although it is hoped (subject to agreement, that this will be formally released along with the showing of the Clare Young video as an end of project wrap up.
- The issue of the soil erosion cost overrun has been a major issue for the group which has been handled by UDCLG. However our focus has been on the LLS grant to USLC and the option of using some of these funds to pay Soil Conservation services. Clare wrote a briefing paper on this which has been circulated to the USLC Committee.

Update -- Workshops

Completed since last report

- **Saturday 25 February** – Apical Weeds Workshop completed 20 people attended.
 - Media – pre-event article in Braidwood Bugle and Regional Independent, post event article in USLC email newsletter
 - Apical tips for blackberry, creepers and grasses in process
- **Sunday 2 April** – Community Planting Day, approx 25 people attended. 400 plants in the ground, on property of Ken Harrison, next to area that has had creek erosion control measures
 - Media – pre-event publicity – Braidwood Bugle, 22 March, Braidwood Changing Times 22 March 2023, Regional Independent 29 March page 3, Landcare Partnerships article in Braidwood Bugle 4 April 2023, page 26 (attached), Braidwood's Changing Times 5 April 2023 page 5 and Regional Independent 12 April, page 6 (attached)
 - Info sheets – planting list as well as tips for a community planting day in process

Previously completed

- Saturday 3 September – Seed collection and propagation – 17 people attended
- Saturday 27 August – Riparian Workshop – 25 people attended
- Saturday 25 June – Apical Weeds Workshop – 25 people attended
- Saturday 28 May – Soil Erosion Workshop – 15 people attended
- Saturday 26 February – Geology of Araluen – 30 people attended

Update – Video

- Clare Young attended the Community Planting Day in April and filmed the whole day. She now has had the first version of project footage. She has reviewed it and we have identified some gaps, notably phone video footage of fires and / or flood events.
- We have also $\frac{1}{2}$ day of filming still available and have identified this for footage of kids at sites, tree planting.
- Drone footage – Clare Henderson has confirmed a drone person and we will do this at the same time as the film $\frac{1}{2}$ day of filming.

Update – Re-vegetation

- Successful completion of one community planting day. This effectively meets our contract obligations however there are over 1,000 plants still left to be planted and only one site has been re-planted. UDCLG has asked for assistance in additional re-vegetation. A decision needs to be made re this request and if yes, funding / capacity of staff to assist (refer email).

Update – Bridge to Bridge Display Boards

- Outcome is five display boards on natural / environment/ landcare aspects as part of the Araluen Historic Trail. In conjunction with Araluen Progress Association.
- Brief prepared and agreed. Quotes obtained. Liaison with Araluen Progress Association established.
- Text and graphics for Boards underway.
- Board topics are:
 - Geology of Araluen
 - 27 years of Upper Deua Catchment Landcare Group (UDCLG)
 - Specific ecological features of the Valley
 - Looking after Araluen Creek (before and after photos)
 - Upper Deua Catchment Landcare Group (UDCLG) – now and the future



**UPPER DEUA CATCHMENT
LANDCARE GROUP AND UPPER
SHOALHAVEN LANDCARE
COUNCIL INVITE YOU TO OUR**

COMMUNITY PLANTING DAY

APRIL

SUNDAY

2

9 AM

2023

**RECREATION GROUND
5969 ARAUEN RD, ARAUEN**

MORNING TEA AND LUNCH PROVIDED

PLEASE RSVP TO:

UPPER.SHOALHAVEN@GMAIL.COM OR TO 0412 425 665



This is a Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Fund project through the joint Commonwealth/State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangement



Standing: Annette Briggs, Paul Briggs, Nichole Overall, Peter Smith; Sitting: Cathy Cooper, Kerrie Beers, Ros Maddrell, Jill Clarke.

More funds for Museum

Braidwood & District Historical Society media release

Nichole Overall, member for Monaro paid a visit to Braidwood Museum on Saturday to announce a funding top-up for the construction of the Braidwood Heritage Centre.

In making the official announcement Nichole spoke with enthusiasm about the benefits of the project for Braidwood, the district and the state. She thanked the Braidwood & District Historical Society committee and volunteers

itage Centre is now about to become a reality. We have also incorporated some significant improvements that will provide additional benefits.

There will be opportunities for artisans and blacksmiths to practice and demonstrate their crafts, and to run classes as part of our college of lost crafts. The onsite accommodation will provide an experience and support our workshops. The café will enable visitors

Braidwood Bugle

News for Braidwood & the district
Page 27 22nd March 2023

Action needed to forestall a feral future for NSW

Ahead of the NSW election, the Invasive Species Council has sounded a warning that NSW faces a pest and weed disaster due to the cumulative effect of recent natural disasters, climate change, underfunding and a lack of political will. The Council has released a comprehensive policy platform, Combating Invasive Species: Priorities for the next NSW Government, which identifies policies, funding and reforms needed to strengthen the biosecurity system and address key environmental threats from pests, weeds and exotic diseases. The Council is calling for investment in an additional 300 FTE frontline pest and weed officers across the National Parks and Wildlife Service, Local Land Services, the Department of Primary Industries and local government at a cost of \$37.5 million per year.

'NSW is facing an invasive species crisis due to the cumulative effect of recent natural disasters, climate change, underfunding and a lack of political will,' said Invasive Species Council advocacy manager Jack Gough.

'Our frontline pest and weeds agencies are understaffed, underfunded and have been under enormous pressure over the last four years as they responded to fire, drought, floods, COVID-19 and the varroa mite outbreak.'

'The cumulative impact of these natural disasters is now impacting routine operations and preventing ambitious environmental action on invasives.'

'Invasive species are the highest impact driver of extinctions, directly endangering 70 per cent of threatened wildlife and ecosystems in NSW. They degrade and damage waterways and bushland, kill native wildlife and prevent regeneration. 'Weeds like lantana and madeira vine are smothering our native plants, feral foxes and cats prey upon our birds and small mammals, and streams and wetlands are being trampled by hard-hoofed feral deer and horses. New threats on our doorstep like red imported fire ants or tilapia fish could cause new extinctions if they make it into NSW.'

'Invasive species are also a direct threat to First Nations' cultural heritage and connection to Country. Weeds, feral animals and pests lead to the destruction of sacred sites and cultural landscapes and the extinction of Indigenous totem species.'

'Whoever wins government in NSW must tackle invasive species, including the key issues of highly damaging feral horses in the Snowy Mountains, stopping the spread of feral deer, ending the sale of weedy plants through nurseries and enacting responsible cat ownership rules which protect our native wildlife.'

'Key regional independents like Joe McGirr in Wagga Wagga and the NSW Greens have already come out in support of many of the policies and funding we are recommending. We hope that their leadership in this area will be matched by ambitious action by all parties and candidates,' said Mr Gough.

Key invasive species priorities for the next NSW government include:

- Investing in an additional 300 FTE frontline pest and weed officers across the National Parks and Wildlife Service, Local Land Services, the DPI and local government.
- Amending the Companion Animals Act to allow local councils to introduce pet containment policies (in line with every other state/territory except WA).
- The urgent removal of feral horses in Kosciuszko National Park and repeal of the Brumby Protection Bill.
- The creation of an Indigenous Commissioner for Country to advise on the management of invasive species and their impact on indigenous culture and country.
- Ensuring weedy plants cannot be sold through nurseries and an increase to the Weeds Action Program to \$20 million/year.
- Establishing dedicated statewide feral deer and feral pig coordinator roles.
- A commitment to stopping the spread of feral deer, including into the Blue Mountains, western NSW and the Northern Rivers. The Invasive Species Council election policy platform, Combating Invasive Species: Priorities for the next NSW Government, is available for download [here](#).

Re-vegetating Araluen Creek – stabilising the creek with plants

The Upper Shoalhaven Landcare Council is assisting the Araluen Creek Restoration Project with the Upper Deua Catchment Landcare Group. The chunky part of the project is the actual large scale works along the creek.

In addition to substantial erosion control works on the actual creek, there are other necessary elements to look after Araluen Creek, such as riverbank health and waterwatch monitoring, re-vegetation, weed control and measures to keep stock out of the creek line by fencing and providing alternative water sources. We have also looked at small scale erosion control measures. The final component of the project is re-vegetating near the site works after fences are in place. This is another key way of stabilizing the creek. So come along if you like to assist us with re-vegetating along Araluen Creek at several sites where the big earth works are complete and are fenced off.

Araluen Creek Community Planting Day – Sunday 2 April 2023

Araluen Recreation Ground (directions given on RSVP) When: Sunday 2 April 9am Why: Another component to stabilise Araluen Creek. Morning tea and a light lunch provided.

Interested? Then sign up. RSVP to: upper.shoalhaven@gmail.com or to Clare on 0412 425 665 (text and voicemail are good too)

The Araluen Creek Restoration Project is funded through the Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Fund.

LANDCARE PARTNERSHIPS

Community planting for Araluen Creek

Larry O'Loughlin, Chair, Upper Shoalhaven Landcare Council



Lyn Ellis, Braidwood local and farmer nursery manager, Cath Harrison, UDCLG Community Liaison, Erin Breckley, USLC Coordinator explaining planting techniques Photo: Clare Henderson

Last Sunday an enthusiastic group gathered along Araluen Creek for the Upper Shoalhaven Landcare Council and Upper Deua Catchment Landcare Group Community Planting Day.

Four hundred trees, shrubs and grasses were planted, fertilised, staked, watered and protected with tree guards and weed mats. Penny Hayman, Secretary of the Upper Deua Catchment Landcare Group, sent a note to the organisers saying: "Wonderful day. Top organisation. Please send everyone a photo with a gold star."

Gold mining took off in the Araluen Valley 170 years ago starting a process of massive environmental impacts. Over time the Valley has converted to agriculture which has also had its impacts. In the late twentieth century community groups worked to build partnerships to re-balance economic activity and environmental resilience and to repair some of the natural environment, particularly the waterways.

The Upper Deua Catchment

Landcare Group (UDCLG) in 2020 obtained bushfire recovery money to try to deal with the ravages on Araluen Creek of a quick succession of drought, fire and flood. "We saw the damage that had been done with the loss of good farmland, the falling of mature trees and the reduction or disappearance of fish and eels," said Cath Harrison, UDCLG Community Liaison Coordinator.

The UDCLG worked with the Upper Shoalhaven Landcare Group, South-East Local Land Services and several local landholders to do earthworks to stabilise the creek and build its resilience to future flood events. This included managing stock access to the creek and tributaries and replanting appropriate local species. This will help reduce erosion by holding soil in place, reducing debris and taking energy out of the water in flood events.

On Sunday 2 April a great group of volunteers dug through rocks and clay to plant about 400 plants

along Long Flat Creek, a tributary of Araluen Creek, on the property of Ken Harrison. The focus was on trees with around 260 trees planted for canopy along with about 130 grass and shrub plants.

"It's great to have active involvement from landholders and Ken has gone 'above and beyond' in this project," said Tony Peters, UDCLG President. "He has not only fenced off an active watering area and replacing it with troughs, he also actively assisted on the day and has established ongoing watering and weeding processes while the new plants get established."

The volunteers used an array of tools to break through river debris brought down from previous floods to dig holes deep enough to give the plants their best start in their new homes.

Some of the plants were also raised by volunteers who participated in an earlier workshop given by Lyn Ellis, formerly of Curnajungle Creek Nursery, who attended on the day. "Some of these trees that have been in their pots for a long time and have grown very tall will be suitable to plant as long-stemmed tube stock. They can be planted deeper than normal as long as they have a fairly thick sturdy

stem," said Lyn Ellis. "New roots will form from leaf nodes and the extra depth will give the trees less temperature fluctuations, more moisture availability and additional stability in their early lives especially in flood zones and increase their chances of survival."

The volunteers worked under and out from the existing majestic river casuarinas along the creek. However, some of these trees were impacted by the drought and one was singed by fire and they might be dying.

"River oaks will start sprouting with the stock excluded and the additional plantings from this Landcare event will be a great help," said Ken Harrison. "I want to thank everyone who came today and to Landcare generally for making such a difference. I couldn't have done it without them."

Local videographer Clare Young was on-site for the day, gathering more footage for a forthcoming video on the Araluen Creek Restoration Project. Watch this space for more news on this part of the project.

The Araluen Creek Restoration Project is funded through the Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Fund.



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Landcare partnerships in action – Community planting for Araluen Creek

By Larry O'Loughlin, Chair, Upper Shoalhaven Landcare Council

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Lyn Ellis, Braidwood local and former nursery manager, Cath Harrison, UDCLG Community Liaison, Erin Brinkley, USLC Coordinator explaining planting techniques.
Photo: Clare Henderson



The group at work. Those rocks and the terrain made it a difficult site to plant on, however these new plants will over time stabilise this rocky bank.
Photo: Clare Henderson