

UPPER SHOALHAVEN LANDCARE COUNCIL



Upper Shoalhaven Landcare Council
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I am writing to confirm the Upper Shoalhaven Landcare Council's (USLC) support for the Upper Deua Landcare Group's (UDLG) Project and grant application under the Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Fund.

Upper Shoalhaven Landcare aims to support local landcare as a community-based approach to managing and protecting our natural resources. Our purpose is to provide services to the local landcare groups and community, including knowledge-sharing, education, promotion, participation, capacity building, funding, expertise and knowledge and project delivery. Our mission is to engage and enhance local communities to build and maintain landscapes with sustainable productivity and resilient biodiversity.

The UDLG project aligns with our broader objectives of a community-based approach to managing and protecting our natural assets. Soil and water are some of our most important assets and since the fires many steep slopes have been exposed leaving the soil bare to erode away into the river systems with the increasing rains. The active erosion and impact on water quality is evident and concerning for local residents which left untreated will continue to impact on the health and well-being of not only the aquatic ecosystems but the local community.

USLC has a long collaborative history with UDLG and have successfully developed management plans and projects together in the past. In 2014 Upper Shoalhaven Landcare with help from Local Lands Services developed a management plan for Araluen Creek and the Upper Deua Catchment. The management plan aims to continue successful efforts to rehabilitate Araluen Creek and extend these efforts strategically into the surrounding tributaries. The vision for this rehabilitation includes good water quality, low levels of weed infestation, increased stability and maximising the retention of surface and groundwater for the benefit of the catchment, and Araluen and downstream water users. This management plan and vision is all the more important given the damage caused by the recent bushfires.

USLC will partner with the UDLG to provide support in project management and assistance in the role of community engagement, outreach and capacity building along with providing methods of knowledge building and sharing between the local and regional landcare network. USLC strongly believes that this project will help provide the community with a sense of stewardship of their local river systems and this will support community recovery, connectedness and well-being. Working together as a community on large issues such as the impact of the recent fires can help build community and landscape resilience for future challenges.

It is our opinion that the Upper Deua Landcare Group can successfully manage and execute this project to excellent standards. We wish this project every success and look forward to partnering with UDLG on this project and providing assistance, should the application for funding be successful.

Kind regards,

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Network Coordinator
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