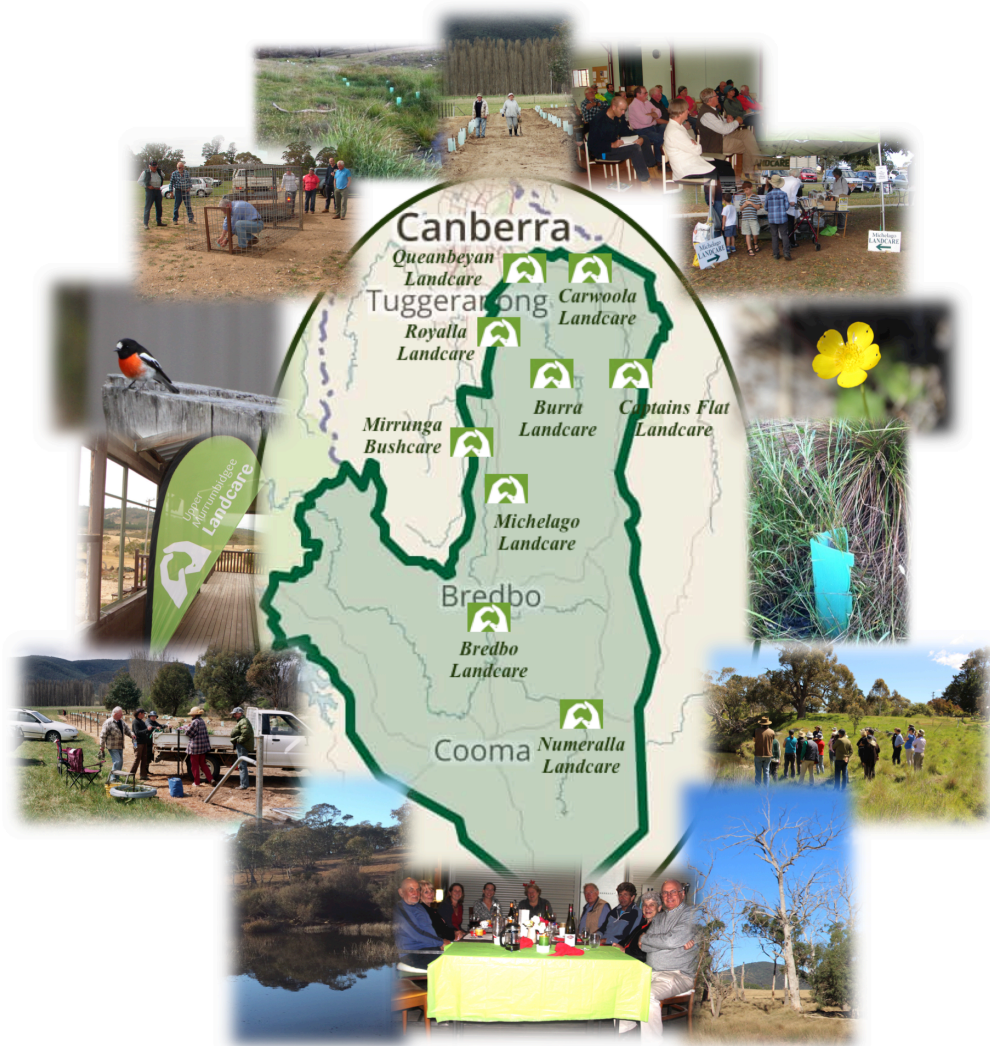


Report on the Health



Check of Upper Murrumbidgee Landcare Groups

2018 Survey



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1. Acknowledgements

The Upper Murrumbidgee Landcare Committee would like to thank members of the Landcare groups who participated in this survey. Their time and effort is greatly appreciated. We will endeavour to use the outcomes of this survey to continue our support for local groups and target this support to the areas nominated by their members.

2. Summary

This report documents the results of a Health Check survey provided to Landcare groups within the Upper Murrumbidgee Region. The survey aimed to assess the any change in Landcare groups over the last two years and gauge the level of support provided by the Landcare coordinator.

Over the last two years there have been some small changes in the number of active members within groups, with an overall reduction throughout the region. Despite this the majority of groups feel their group health is at least stable. Groups felt they were capable of planning, providing activities and engaging with their community and other organisations. The area that most groups felt they were less successful was the recruitment of members for their group or committees.

The general feeling amongst groups was that the coordinator has provided an adequate level of support across all areas. Groups were particularly satisfied with the general support and support provided for grant applications. Enhancing connections with landholders was an area identified where support could be increased. Overall the results of this health check indicate that the coordinator role has been a welcome addition to the Landcare movement in the Upper Murrumbidgee region.

3. Introduction

The 2015-2019 NSW Landcare Support Program and the Local Land Services Community, Industry and Landscapes Fund have helped support the Upper Murrumbidgee Landcare (UML) coordinator since 2016. In 2016 Local Landcare groups within the UML completed a Health Check survey to identify various aspects of each group, such as current group status, past and present activity, future direction, governance and communication. The outcomes of the health check were used to direct and coordinate the activities of the Landcare coordinator, so as to best support each group within the UML region. The aim of the current survey was to examine the success of the coordinator in supporting groups over the last two years.

The questionnaire was sent out in May 2018. All of the 9 groups returned the completed survey.

4. Responses

4.1 Group information and Governance

Each group was asked to review the group information and governance collected in 2016 and highlight any changes. Groups were also asked to reflect on how they perceived their group health. All groups active in 2016 remained to be active in 2018, however there were changes in the number of active members in some groups. Two groups remained unchanged, two increased and 5 decreased (Table 1). These changes did not always reflect how the group felt about their health. The two small groups, Captains Flat and Mirrunga Bushcare, were the only groups considered barely active. The remaining groups felt they were at least stable, although Bredbo, Queanbeyan and Numeralla were on the cusp between stable and struggling a little. Three groups also reported a change in committee chairs. For governance issues, there was no change to the responses given in 2016, with all groups meeting their governance requirements.

Table 1. Activity of groups of the Upper Murrumbidgee region between 2016 and 2018.

Group	Active in 2016	Active members 2016	Active in 2018	Active members 2018	Membership change	Group health
Bredbo	Yes	10	Yes	8	Decrease	Stable/struggle
Burra	Yes	32	Yes	23	Decrease	Stable
Captains Flat	Yes	2	Yes	3	Increase	Barely
Carwoola	Yes	25	Yes	30	Increase	Rolling
Michelago	Yes	14	Yes	10	Decrease	Stable
Numeralla	Yes	9	Yes	7	Decrease	Stable/struggle
Queanbeyan	Yes	10	Yes	10	Unchanged	Stable/struggle
Royalla	Yes	20	Yes	15	Decrease	Rolling
Mirrunga Bushcare	Yes	1	Yes	1	Unchanged	Barely
Total Groups/ members	9	123	9	109		
						Queanbeyan-Palerang Shire Council Snowy-Monaro Shire Council

4.2 Group health element assessment

The next section of the health check asked groups to assess their capacity to conduct different elements that relate to the groups overall health and rank them between 1-7, very poor through to exceptional. There was a large variation in responses between groups and elements (Table 2). In keeping with their barely hanging on description, Captains Flat ranked a poor or very poor score for all elements. Other groups considered their health to be fair or above for all elements, with the exceptions of recruiting capacity of Bredbo, Carwoola and Queanbeyan, who felt they were poor and very poor at recruiting committee and general members.

While recruiting members was identified as a challenge for many of the groups the remaining health elements ranked as fair or above. Overall groups felt their capacity to plan the direction and activities of their group was good or better and their engagement with the community and other organisations at times excellent.

Table 2. Health element score for each of the Upper Murrumbidgee groups.

	Bredbo	Burra	Captains Flat	Carwoola	Michelago	Numeralla	Queanbeyan	Royalla
Long term direction	Fair	Very good	Poor	Fair	Very good	Very good	Fair	Very good
Planning activities	Good	Excellent	Very poor	Good	Very good	Very good	Good	Very good
Recruiting committee members	Poor	Fair	Very poor	Poor	Very good	Very good	Very poor	Fair
Recruiting members	Poor	Good	Very poor	Good	Fair	Fair	Very poor	Good
Engaging with the broader community	Good	Excellent	Poor	Good	Good	Good	Fair	Good
Engaging with other groups	Good	Excellent	Poor	Fair	Very good	Very good	Fair	Very good

4.3 Landcare coordinator support assessment

The other main consideration for this health check was the support that groups had received from the Landcare coordinator in the last two years. The majority of groups felt the coordinator had supported their groups in all areas at a good or better capacity. Captains Flat has a strong partnership with another regional support group, Molonglo Catchment Group (MCG), so felt that some of the areas of support from UMLC were not applicable. One area where they felt the UMLC coordinator had not performed adequately was with support for developing partnerships with local landholders. The recent change of committee members in Queanbeyan meant the committee were unfamiliar with the level of support from the coordinator and therefore did not complete this part of the survey.

4.1 NSW Landcare support assessment

The last component of the 2018 health check was to assess the uptake of two services recently provided by NSW Landcare. The first service is the option for groups to have a free group website supported through the NSW Gateway website. Only 3 groups, Bredbo, Carwoola and

Michelago have secured a website through the NSW Gateway site and Numeralla had started the process. Other groups still have a web presence, Queanbeyan through their own website and Captains Flat through the MCG website.

The second service was the NSW Landcare supported insurance policy. All groups except Captains Flat, Queanbeyan and Mirrunga took up the NSW Landcare insurance. Due to their group size Captains Flat Landcare obtain their insurance as a member under the MCG policy and Mirrunga Bushcare does not undertake activities that require insurance.

Table 3. Coordinator support score for each of the Upper Murrumbidgee groups.

	Bredbo	Burra	Captains Flat	Carwoola	Michelago	Mirrunga	Numeralla	Royalla
General group support	Good	Excellent	Good	Good	Exceptional	Exceptional	Excellent	Excellent
Resources and grants	Good	Excellent	n/a	Very good	Excellent	Exceptional	Very good	Excellent
Network partnerships	Very good	Excellent	Good	Good	Excellent	Exceptional	Very good	Excellent
Landholder connections	Very good	Excellent	Poor	Good	Excellent	Exceptional	Good	Excellent
Community engagement & education	Very good	Excellent	n/a	Very good	Excellent	Exceptional	Good	Excellent
Events of interest	Very good	Excellent	n/a	Very good	Excellent	Exceptional	Good	Excellent
Communication and promotion	Very good	Excellent	Good	Very good	Excellent	Exceptional	Good	Excellent

5. Conclusion

The 2018 Upper Murrumbidgee Landcare health check has identified that groups within the Upper Murrumbidgee region are relatively stable and in general feel positive about the capacity of their group. Recruitment of members was identified as the major issue of concern for all groups despite assistance from the coordinator. Coordinator support was considered to be at least good across all areas, except on one response. Support from NSW Landcare was also generally well received. Overall the results of this health check indicate that support from the coordinator role has been a welcome addition to the Landcare movement in the Upper Murrumbidgee region.

6. Appendix

Group information

Group	2016	2018
Contact name		
Incorporated		
Total membership		
Active members		
Meeting frequency		
Meeting notification		
Constitution		
Financially responsible		
Public liability Insurance		
WH&S obligations		
Assets		
Asset insurance cover		
Asset list		

Group health

How would you best describe your group?

Trail blazers	Our group has it's own identity and strives for excellence. We are clear on what we are trying to achieve and our role in achieving it	
Thriving	We are very motivated and have an action plan that we actively work towards. We have good geographic representation from our local area and/or wide membership in our interest group.	
Rolling along	Our group has an action plan or plans to develop one. We feel we are making progress and are working on our current capabilities.	
Stable	Our group is in a stable situation and achieving what it needs to.	
Struggling a little	A funding round or a call from the support person often prompts our activities. Our group feels like it is dwindling in interest and numbers	
Surviving	Our meetings are irregular and only a few core members come. There are little or no on-ground works happening.	
Barely hanging on	We have effectively stalled. We meet rarely (or have chosen to be in recess) and are not currently undertaking any group activities or projects	

Choose a score for each health element that best describes your group.

Very poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very good	Excellent	Exceptional
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

How good is your group at having a long-term direction?	
How good is your group at planning activities?	
How good is your group at recruiting committee members?	
How good is your group at attracting and retaining members?	
How good is your group at engaging with the broader community?	
How good is your group at engaging with other groups and organisations?	

Coordinator support

Choose a score that best describes the support from your coordinator.

Very poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very good	Excellent	Exceptional
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Provided general support to your group	
Provided support to secure resources and project grants	
Increased Landcare links and partnerships with other organisations and networks	
Increased Landcare links with local landholders	
Increased community engagement and education opportunities	
Provided events that were relevant to your groups interests	
Provided useful communication and promotion material	

NSW Landcare support

Have you secured a NSW Gateway website for your group?	
Did you take up the NSW Landcare insurance?	