



Newsletter

President - Trevor Clark

It was great to see so many people attend the AGM in Jerilderie. The guest speakers were well received and attendees said it was well worth the effort.

El Niño is here again for the third year! While generally good for the creek system there are a few issues with bank slumping and some of our upper creek landholders having land inundated for long periods of time. But in general, the YCS looks magnificent after 3 good resource years, but you never know when the next dry period will begin. I remember attending a conference nearly 20 years ago when Tim Flannery told the audience that the dams were never going to fill again and the Murray was going to die from the mouth up!

Tanya and I have arranged to meet with upper creek landholders, as well as, landholders who have recently moved into the area.

SDLAM Modernisation project continues to consume most of our time. While moving the weir design from the original two gate design to eight (2 metre wide) gates, we are now discussing four (4 metre wide) gates. The frustration is not getting decisions made so we can move forward. The EIS cannot formally start until the designs are finished. We kept saying 'no surprises' yet each meeting something is thrown up. The operations plan nears completion but with the forecast of 2 to 3% reduced end flows we are now arguing that the efficiency of the new weirs we should have higher end flows which are credited to the Basin Plan. If savings are created, they should run down the YCS and not another river system. As the finished time frame of June 2024 is unachievable it is now up to the federal government to extend the timelines to allow completion. Five SDLAM community update meetings have just been held with community numbers disappointing. YACTAC will continue to work for the best interests of the entire creek system.

Andrea continues with her environmental projects, willow removal, tree planting, reed planting as well as monitoring. Andrea has run a number of field walks along the creek with good numbers turning up. Andrea runs the Yanco Creek System Facebook page with some great videos and stories highlighting the system.

As usual Tanya continues to meet with the SDLAM project team (YSAG, YTAG, DFG), NSWIC, DPI, Water NSW (chair Murrumbidgee CAG, Air Space, Local Operations), EWAG, RRC and other groups which are all necessary to advocate for the welfare of the creek system.

Cheers Trevor Clark



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EMAIL OPTION

- Take advantage of the links to additional information.
- Please contact Tanya on **0408 833 801**

WaterNSW

Monthly YCS Operating meetings

- Continued high flows for the foreseeable future.
- Flows as high as experienced in August will occur later this week -7,200ML/day at the Yanco Offtake.

Customer Advisory Group

- Meeting on 1 November.
- Up to 50% of the agenda comes from members.
- Meet the new CEO
- SDLAM Operations Plan.
- What are losses?
- Ongoing operational charges
- Cultural water policy
- SDLAM Re-regulation savings
- WAVE update
- MDBA presentation on sand slug
- NRAR presentation
- WaterNSW restructure
- Valley operations
- Maintenance program.

WaterNSW Air-space

- Meeting weekly.
- YACTAC feels there is too much water being kept in the dams, pre-releases should be made due to El Nina forecast.
- However the dams do need to be full prior to the next dry cycle.
- WaterNSW continually states that it is essential dams are kept full. DPE also stressed this policy.

Facebook

Follow the 'Yanco Creek System' page on Facebook.

Executive Officer - Tanya Thompson

YACTAC is being well represented in both the water space and on environmental works. We are recognised as a leading organisation with a wealth of knowledge and skills, which is rewarding.

SDLAM is agonisingly slow, but it is not stagnant. The state government is going cap in hand to MINCO to seek more funding for the Reconnecting River Country and the Better Bidgee projects. Time will tell what the federal government's response is. With the high flows over many months, landholders in the upper section of the Yanco Creek would welcome some engineering at the Yanco Offtake. They have been smashed over the past three years with consistently high creek levels.

Claire Miller from NSWIC was one of the guest speakers at our AGM. She was impressed with the knowledge and understanding of the attendees and welcomed the many and varied questions that came from the floor. The feedback I received from attendees was that they felt Claire was impressive and had total grasp of the dynamic water industry.

YACTAC is transitioning from manual invoicing to utilising Xero and emailing membership notices. This transition takes time and has held up this newsletter publication, as invoices are sent out with the spring newsletter. But once up and running it will be more efficient.

WaterNSW has received feedback that the Customer Advisory Groups weren't functioning as well as in previous years. Attendees felt WaterNSW used the time to push information out but didn't respond to any feedback. As a consequence the chairs met in Sydney to finalise the Charter for the CAG. We were able to influence the Charter by allowing up to 50% of agenda items to come from the membership.

NSWIC AGM will be held next month with 3 director positions up for renewal. It is expected to be a packed two days in Sydney, with many guest presenters. There has been a number of properties change ownership over the last six months. If you have a new neighbour please inform them of how they can be represented through YACTAC and pass on my contact details.

SDLAM - Modernisation

Regular meetings are being held with the WINSW team. Trevor and Tanya had a one on one session with David Clarke to delve into the information being presented through the Design Focus Group, specifically looking at the details of each design proposal, prior to agreeing to move to the next phase. YACTAC has printed copies of the design proposals for each of the sites:

- Part 1: Upper Yanco wetlands, Wanganella swamp, lower Forest anabranch
- Part 2: Hartwood, Picaninny (to be renamed), Wanganella and Caroonboon regulators.
- Part 3: Wilson's Anabranch
- Part 4: Forest Creek return regulator
- Part 5: Cheverells Creek offtake
- Part 8: Weir removal (Old Wanganella and 4 Mile)

If you would like to see the designs please contact us.

Given part 2 now has to go through the EIS phase it will not be completed by 30 June 2024. However other parts of the Modernisation project will hopefully be finished by that date.

Project Officer - Andrea Mitchell

Refreshing Rivers Central Billabong workshop

On 6 September at Jerilderie, between the lake and Billabong Creek, twenty community members came to talk about community visions and ideas for the Central Billabong. John Conallin and Dan Hutton from JC NRM Consulting led the discussions for the Water Management Plan (in development phase) which will essentially guide the RRCB project. It was great to see children contribute to the discussions. Thank you to everyone who attended. Consultation has now occurred in Morundah (July 5th) evening event; Wanganella through the general store and mail out; Conargo at the local primary school (late July); and through distributed surveys.

SAVE THE DATE: 2 November for WMP and Co-Design workshops across Central Billabong.

Spring into October Market Day - Jerilderie

YACTAC will be hosting a stall at Jerilderie Spring into October Market Day on Saturday 22nd. We will be displaying current projects and have invited **Keith Bell**, carp catcher and dispatcher to come along. He will be talking about carp control and have a carp cooking demonstration! For more information [Spring into October Market Day](#) or follow Yanco Creek System on Facebook.

Colombo Creek Fish Habitat

On the weekend of September 3rd fifteen volunteers rolled up their sleeves to plant and guard 900 native tubestock on the Colombo Creek at 'Coonong Station'. It was a perfect spring day to restore a creek meander. It was great to see people of all ages lending a hand, with the youngest just two years old! Morning tea, followed by a sausage sizzle went down a treat to feed the hungry helpers – thanks to Tom Holt and Gary for cooking. The site was fenced earlier in the year with 19 kms of direct-seeding completed in July. The project is funded by NSW DPI Recreational Trust Habitat Action Grant and YACTAC. Thank you to everyone that helped and made the day a good one!

September 14th saw a big day in the field with Deniliquin High School helping YACTAC with wetland planting at 'Coonong Station' on Colombo Creek. Two species of rush were used, each with a particular niche, particularly for water bird and fish habitat. The students have been trained in wetland planting and didn't mind getting a little cold as they were equipped with waders and other necessary tools. They also erected kangaroo-proof tree guards for recent plantings (Sept 3rd event). It was also a perfect day for a BBQ sausage under the shade of gum trees. Thanks to students, teachers Allana Moore and Tim, and Dan Hutton, Edward Wakool Angling Association, and Roseanne Farrant, Deniliquin Kolety Lagoons Landcare.



DPE - Environment and Heritage

- YACTAC has been invited to the Technical Advisory Group for environmental water planning on 27 October.

CEWO

- Bidgee Bulletin highlights:
- Focus: Spring - vegetation, Summer - waterbirds, Autumn - Fish, Winter - Frogs
- Target areas mentioned: Yanco Creek at Broome, Billabong Creek at Hartwood, Wanganella Swamp on the Forest Creek.
- Plenty of frogs heard calling.
- Murray Cod and native catfish caught and recorded.

Field Trip Equipment

- With more activity taking place on the creek system we are looking to expand our resources.
- YACTAC is looking into purchasing equipment to test water quality, DO reading kits and field trip equipment.

YACTAC Website

Google: landcare YACTAC

<https://landcare.nsw.gov.au/groups/yanco-creek-and-tributaries-advisory-council>

**YANCO CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES
ADVISORY COUNCIL INC.**

PO Box 53

HOWLONG NSW 2643

Upper Section Committee:

Tom Holt	0417	422	630
Lawrence Simpson	0448	189	001
Glen Baxter	0428	852	623

Mid Section Committee:

Sam Armytage	0427	534	622
Katie Gordon	0408	612	467
Geoff Ham	0427	942	336

Lower Section Committee:

Bob Crawford	0427	875	955
Trevor Clark	0429	691	010
Colin McCrabb	0428	847	558

Executive	Officer		
Tanya Thompson	0408	833	801

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Project	Officer		
Andrea Mitchell	0419	841	834

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Please contact us to discuss any matter regarding the creek system, riparian areas or concerns you may have.

If you know of any change of ownership of property please send details to the Executive Officer, so our records can be kept up to date.



Project Officer - Andrea Mitchell

Wind Down the Willows

Coleambally Central School agricultural students with YACTAC came to 'Colombo' on the Colombo Creek on September 19th to plant and guard 300 native tubestock plants. Everyone worked hard and each student learned how to make and install kangaroo-proof guards. They also had much fun climbing the willow pile and a red gum tree. Through the grant the site was cleared of willows in June and needed revegetation once the soil settled. Thanks to teacher Briony Fattore, her fabulous students and helper Di Chirgwin, Riverina Revegetation. In a show of appreciation, a sausage sizzle was cooked, and morning tea provided by YACTAC. It was a great day spent on the Yanco Creek System.



Bidgee Bulletin

Our own Andrea Mitchell was guest interviewee on the latest edition of the Bidgee Bulletin. Great work Andrea!

A link to the edition will be emailed to you.

STOP PRESS: Southern Bell Frogs and catfish

Southern Bell frogs have been heard calling in the Molley's Lagoon area. This area will be monitored by the MER team to grasp a better understanding of what exactly is living around Molley's Lagoon.

Freshwater catfish have been found and recorded in a backwater off the Yanco Creek at Broome. We have been saying for years that the Yanco Creek System has catfish and now it has been verified.

YACTAC has been pushing for the entire system to receive some monitoring work so a fish report could be compiled with new data. We hope to build upon these sightings to gain funding for a full monitoring program.

