



# Newsletter

## President - Trevor Clark

As I write my report the water amendment bill, Restoring our Rivers, has just passed (with the support of the Greens and a number of independents) through the Federal Parliament. This will reintroduce buybacks to meet the requirements of the Murray Darling Basin Plan.

While we all support healthy and flowing creeks and rivers, we much question where this will leave our YCS. Do we keep the money promised to finish the Yanco SDLAM project or is this money taken to be used elsewhere (buybacks or other projects)? Will more water be sold out of our system? We have seen what buybacks do not only to the viability of the YCS but also to the viability of our surrounding communities.

Having read many of the published submissions to the senate inquiry, 70% were against buybacks and not one local Basin council supported buybacks as they are aware of the potential impacts.

While the willing sellers get reimbursed, and usually leave the area, the people left behind are then required to support current infrastructure, whether it be the cost of getting water delivered or trying to maintain present communities with less water. With more than 1 million ML still required to complete the Basin Plan it will have large impacts across the entire Basin and change communities for ever. Every ML removed from productive use removes somewhere between \$400 and \$2,500 from the farm gate, with much of this money going directly back into the communities.

The other question is will it fix our water quality issues (clear water), will it see the reintroduction of aquatic plants into our river channels or the removal of invasive species, such as European carp, unfortunately I don't think adding more water will address any of these issues. Speaking of clear water, if you have any stories or photos of clear water please forward to Andrea, Tanya or myself as when talking to bureaucrats they tend not to believe us when we talk about how the creek used to run clear water.

I am sure there is going to be much discussion on the new amendments moving forward, so stay tuned, get involved and any feedback will be welcomed.

Cheers Trevor

## Merry Christmas

It is hard to believe we are near the end of 2023. It has been a year of floods and variable weather conditions. Lets hope 2024 will bring less fluctuations and a stable outcome. Our small team at YACTAC wish you a happy and safe break.



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### EMAIL OPTION

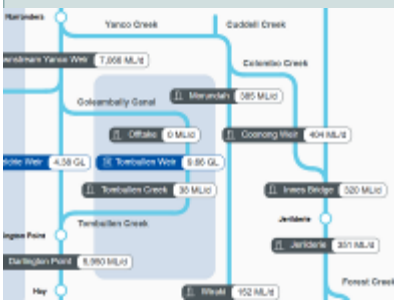
- Take advantage of the links to additional information.
- Please contact Tanya on **0408 833 801**

## E-Water Deliveries

- 1 December flush.
- Up to 900ML/day at Yanco Offtake for 7 days.
- Then receding by 10% per day.

## WaterNSW

- Block bank repairs needed on Forest Creek below Warriston Weir.
- Blow grass causing flow issues in Yanco Creek.
- Inflows from Yanco Offtake preferred due to blow grass issues.
- [Water Insights](#) website



upgraded.

- View flows via Water Insights, also contains information on:
  - \* System view
  - \* Allocation
  - \* Storage
  - \* Gauges
  - \* Trading
  - \* Losses
  - \* Rules

## Facebook

Follow the 'Yanco Creek System' page on Facebook.

## Project Officer - Andrea Mitchell

Thank you to all who have helped me in 2023. Projects, events and workshops cannot happen without your support. Have a great Christmas and New Year.

Warm regards Andrea

### Rolling Out All Resources (ROAR) Project

On a mild November morning eleven participants rolled up their sleeves, donned their gumboots and waders to plant over 300 metres of Billabong Creek frontage at Conargo TSR. Five emergent species were planted: jointed twig rush (*Baumea articulata*), river club rush (*Schoenoplectus validus*), water ribbons (*Cyanogeton procerum*), giant sedge (*Cyperus exaltatus*) and grey sedge (*Lepironia articulata*).

The instream planting event occurred as part of a Refreshing Rivers project to restore and protect Eel-tailed catfish (*Tandanus tandanus*) habitat and address key threats such as habitat degradation and water quality decline. It is also showcasing planting methods to use more broadly across the Central Billabong.

YACTAC, Murray Local Land Services, Deniliquin High School and Deni-Kolety Lagoons Landcare (DKLL) were all involved on the day. The event was made possible due to funding from Refreshing Rivers Program and YACTAC. Planting would not be possible without the hard work of collecting, sorting and preparing plants by Dan Hutton and guidance of Roseanne Farrant who also provided plants she grew herself.



### Kids Fishing Day - Jerilderie

YACTAC and Refreshing Rivers were at the Jerilderie Fishing Club's Kids Fishing Day supporting a creative activity with a waterway theme. YACTAC commissioned Indigenous artist and Jerilderie local, Ros Lockhart, to make wood cut-outs of eel-tailed catfishes (*Tandanus tandanus*), to be painted by community on the day, and create an installation in town.

The activity aimed to promote the eel-tailed catfish, a species which once dominated the Billabong, Yanco, Colombo and Forest Creeks. Currently eel-tailed catfish are considered an Endangered Population (NSW Government's Threatened species list). Their decline is due to a range of impacts including invasive species, habitat degradation, cold water pollution and fishing pressures.



## Project Officer - Andrea Mitchell

### Platypus Citizen Science Afternoon - Morundah

It is so good when platypus receive the memo about the Platy-project event and show up on cue! On Wednesday, September 27<sup>th</sup>, YACTAC as part of Refreshing Rivers Program and Murrumbidgee Landcare Inc came together with the community for an enjoyable afternoon of platypus spotting on the banks of the Colombo Creek, Morundah. Other than the magnificent platypus which emerged and dived, there were also the obligatory kangaroos and an inquisitive echidna which entertained everyone. Dr Joanne Connolly, platypus expert, shared interesting facts about this iconic species such as only males have venomous spurs, at the confluence of waterways is where platypus action is likely to occur, and there are both nesting and resting burrows used.

Organisers hope this will be an annual event. The citizen science data collected directly helps researchers fill knowledge gaps about platypuses, and the findings go to the UNSW's platypus sighting database.

### Carbon, Emissions and Natural Capital 101" roadshow - Wanganella

A workshop in Wanganella helped 19 attendees (farmers/landholders/industry) begin their Carbon, Emissions and Natural Capital journey.

Presenters Cam Nicholson (Nicon Rural services agronomist) and Clare Edwards (DPI On-Farm Carbon Advice) provided an introduction on carbon farming and on-farm emissions. Carbon farming is managing land to reduce or remove carbon from the atmosphere. It can be achieved by storing carbon in the soil (sequestration) or avoiding greenhouse gases being released (emissions avoidance). Cam and Clare helped farmers understand the importance of baselining their greenhouse gas emissions, as well as see the potential for increased access to markets and productivity gains.

Andrea Mitchell, YACTAC, spoke on Refreshing Rivers and Kathleen Bartlett, MLLS, presented on Natural Capital. Natural Capital on properties are the natural assets such as the creeks, plants, animals, soil, air, plants and all living things. Landholders in the Central Billabong interested in baselining their natural capital were encouraged to sign-up for a free natural capital profile.



There is lots happening on the Yanco Creek System with several dates to remember:

Electrofishing carp and monitoring Billabong Creek, Conargo, Monday 11 Dec

#### Upcoming in 2024:

- Release of 22,272 golden perch fingerlings, Billabong Ck, Conargo (early Jan) – Refreshing Rivers project
- Release of eel-tailed catfish

**Save the date:** Chicks in the Sticks – Jerilderie on 17 March: Moulamein 4 July

## YACTAC

### Committee change

- Geoff Ham retired after more than 20 years on the committee. Geoff has held the role of treasurer since 2017. Geoff loves the creek system and still strongly advocates for all YACTAC members. Please express your gratitude when you next see Geoff.
- Welcome Bernie Pinnuck, Jerilderie.

### CEWO funded MER

- Planning the next 5 years monitoring is taking place.
- CSU is conducting monitoring.
- On site field trips are in full swing.
- Experienced team led by Skye Wassens.
- Website information available [here](#).

## NSWIC

- Strongly advocates for all irrigators.
- Spent many weeks in Canberra prior to the Restoring our Rivers bill.
- [NSWIC website](#) has a vast amount of useful information.

## 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
Bernie Pinnuck	0439	028	719

**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

**e: [eo@yactac.org.au](mailto:eo@yactac.org.au)**

**Project Officer**

Andrea Mitchell 0419 841 834

**e: [env@yactac.org.au](mailto:env@yactac.org.au)**

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.



## Executive Officer - Tanya Thompson

We had a small attendance at the September AGM. Some may say that we must be doing things right otherwise farmers would turn up to have their say. But the timing was a hinderance as September is a very busy time on the farm. The late AGM was later than usual as I was overseas in August. Next year the AGM will be held in Jerilderie in the usual month of August. We sadly said farewell to a valued member of our Board, Geoff Ham and presented him with a farewell gift. Geoff put in so many volunteer hours over the many years of his tenure and I for one will miss him dearly. Enjoy your extra free time Geoff.

Bernie Pinnuck from Jerilderie was nominated and accepted the position without the need for an election. Bernie has a wealth of knowledge of the creek system around Jerilderie and is keen to learn about the other sections of the creek. We kindly welcome Bernie.

We are actively seeking an administration/bookkeeper to join the team as the level of activity is just getting too much for one part time person (me). By the next newsletter we hope to have someone in this position.

There have been so many submissions put forward to support the continual flow in the Yanco Creek System over the last few weeks. The value of this work sometimes feels like a waste of effort but every now and again you realise that the submission was recognised and made a difference. YACTAC is now seen as a professional, progressive and active member of the group of representatives supporting irrigation and the environment.

I was re-elected chair of WaterNSW CAG again (final term) and this position brings access to the decision makers within the organisation. We were able to quickly address flow issues in the Yanco Creek and provided a tour for the newly appointed Customer Service Manager, Brendan Maher, when he attended our AGM.

refreshing **rivers** Check out our brand new Refreshing Rivers website.

Check it out today!  
[www.refreshingrivers.org.au](http://www.refreshingrivers.org.au)

The Refreshing Rivers Program is a collaboration between government, industry, research, and community organisations, led by Local Land Services. This Program has been assisted by the New South Wales Government through its Environmental Trust.

NSW Government, refreshing rivers, YACTAC, Holbrook Landcare Network, Griffith University Social Marketing @ Griffith