



Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority

Community Landcare Support Strategy

2005

Summary



GOULBURN
BROKEN
CATCHMENT
MANAGEMENT
AUTHORITY



Foreword

The future of community Landcare Support for the Goulburn Broken Catchment is strong. We have set out in this document a framework for support over the next five years.

The Community Landcare Support Strategy has been developed with input from the Landcare volunteers, the Landcare Facilitators and Coordinators and Local Area Planning Implementation Officers in consultation with key stakeholders and partner agencies.

While the need for continued funding of on-ground works, which underpins Landcare activity, is essential, this strategy is about identifying ways in which we can support Landcare Volunteers to ensure that community Landcare in the Catchment not only survives, but thrives, as an active long term partner.

The strategy highlights the importance of a shared responsibility for the protection and enhancement of our natural resources. For community Landcare to thrive, more people need to be involved. Sharing information and knowledge is essential to providing a greater understanding of the issues and opportunities for action.

Community Landcare does not work alone; it accepts a shared responsibility with partner organisations and sustaining and enhancing those partnerships across the catchment is a vital element of this strategy.

Landcare is about people socialising and enjoying making significant contributions to environmental change within

their landscape and the strategy will put in place measures to support these volunteers.



The strategy recognises the vital role that Landcare support staff plays in the success of community Landcare. Measures to recognise the professional nature of these positions, as well as programs to support them will be put in place as a result of the strategy.

Without volunteers there would be no community Landcare. The CMA is committed to supporting regular opportunities to recognise the commitment and achievements of Landcare volunteers across the Catchment.

The local promotion of Landcare activities and achievements across the Catchment is vital to raising broader community awareness and encouraging greater community involvement in Landcare activity.

The strategy presents a vision for community Landcare support in the Catchment which recognises the need to balance social, economic and environmental values, with the provision of opportunities to build and enhance the success of Landcare in the Catchment.

Stephen Mills

Chair, Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority.

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For a full copy of the Goulburn Broken Regional Landcare Support Strategy visit the website www.gbcma.vic.gov.au

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What is a Community Landcare Support Strategy?

The Community Landcare Support Strategy outlines how the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority will support Landcare volunteers and landcare support staff over the next five years. This is a summary of that strategy.

While the continued funding for on-ground works, which underpins Landcare activity, is recognised as essential, the purpose of this strategy is to identify ways to support the Landcare volunteers who undertake these works.

Why do we need a Regional Community Landcare Support Strategy?

In May, 2002, the Second Generation Landcare Taskforce produced its report titled; "Healthy Landscapes - Sustainable Communities. Victorian Action Plan for Second Generation Landcare"¹.

One of the recommended actions of the taskforce's report was for each Catchment Management Authority to develop a five-year Community Landcare Support Strategy.

How does it fit in with the Regional Catchment Strategy?

The Goulburn Broken Community Landcare Support Strategy is a sub-strategy of the Goulburn Broken Regional Catchment Strategy (RCS). It outlines the Action Plan for supporting community natural resource management activities within the Goulburn Broken Catchment and

explains how these activities will be supported to meet the challenges of the next five years.

How was it developed?

The strategy was developed over five months, through detailed consultation with Landcare groups, Landcare Facilitators and Coordinators, Local Area Planning (LAP) Groups, LAP Implementation Officers, environment and conservation groups, Victorian Farmers Federation, local government, State Government agencies, Goulburn-Murray Water, Goulburn Valley Water, and local members of State and Federal Parliament. A meeting was also held with the North East Cultural Heritage Committee, at which a commitment was given to exploring opportunities for further discussions and to continuing on-going dialogue between the indigenous community and Landcare.

The strategy describes how community Landcare is currently supported and outlines the major influences affecting future community involvement in natural resource management. The strategy also sets out a future action plan, including responsibilities and time frames. The strategy will only be effective if it continues to reflect the needs of the community and facilitates community involvement in natural resource management throughout the catchment. In order to achieve this, the strategy includes monitoring and evaluation criteria which will assess the performance measures built into the strategy.



1. Victorian Action Plan for Second Generation Landcare Healthy Landscape - Sustainable Communities, May 2002.

Landcare in the Goulburn Broken Catchment - The Asset and Current Support Arrangements



Landcare in the Goulburn Broken Catchment

Landcare first started in the Catchment in 1986 with the Warrenbayne Boho Landcare group. There are now 92 Landcare and Land Management groups, and eight LAP groups, across the catchment, involving approximately 3,500 people.

Community Landcare what is the asset?

An asset based approach was used to develop the strategy. The key assets were identified as the Landcare volunteers, their skills, experience and knowledge, and a shared vision for their Catchment.

Across the Catchment, community Landcare groups have raised public awareness of natural resource management issues within the wider community. They have encouraged participation in Landcare activities from a broad range of individuals and organisations. Interestingly, this has not been limited to the local community, but also organisations based outside the Catchment.

The assets are also the activities which volunteers undertake which add economic value to the Catchment as a whole. The breadth, depth of knowledge and experience, held by community Landcare across the Catchment, is a significant asset. This is reflected in the broad range of activities that they are interested and involved in. These include:

- Sustainable farming;
- Weed removal and management;
- Pest animal control;
- Biodiversity enhancement;
- Working with community employment programs;

- Encouraging broader community involvement;
- Riparian restoration;
- Wetland protection;
- Water quality monitoring;
- Erosion control;
- Salinity control;
- Education and awareness raising;
- Building community knowledge and skills;
- Fostering a sense of community;
- Community business partnerships;
- Community and Government agency partnerships;
- Urban community action;
- Waste removal; and
- Influencing regional planning and policy.

Current support of community Landcare

The consultation process established that community Landcare in the catchment is well supported in many areas, primarily provided by Landcare Co-ordinators and Facilitators and LAP Implementation Officers. However, the valuable support from other partners and stakeholders is wide ranging as summarised on page 3.

Threats and Opportunities to Community Landcare and the Vision for the Future

Gaps in community Landcare support

The consultation process identified gaps in community Landcare support as follows:

- Not all Landcare groups currently have access to support from a Facilitator or Co-ordinator.
- The support currently offered to groups is considered limited and not effectively contributing to the viability of smaller groups that are struggling to maintain an executive committee.
- Knowledge sharing between government agencies and Landcare could be improved.
- There are no standard conditions of employment for Facilitators or Co-ordinators across the Catchment.
- There are limited monitoring and evaluation tools available to assist Landcare.
- Administrative support packages for Landcare are limited or outdated.
- There are limited resources available for local promotion of Landcare activities and achievements.
- Signage of Landcare across the catchments is not consistent and recognisable.
- A lack of equipment such as a data projector, lap top computer and other resources that are beyond the financial scope of individual groups to purchase, could be shared between groups.
- Lack of knowledge regarding resources/equipment held by groups which could be shared by other groups.
- Increasing demands by government for administration is diverting the current resources from other activities such as community education and project co-ordination.
- Strategic community capacity building and community development support has been limited to date.

- There is limited strategic communication occurring.

Threats and opportunities

The strategy describes the threats and opportunities for community Landcare in the catchment. The threats reflect the concerns expressed by community Landcare about their ability to survive and continue to contribute towards meeting the natural resource management targets of the catchment. The opportunities are ways in which some of these threats can be addressed to ensure that community Landcare in the Catchment not only survives, but thrives, as an active long term partner.

The detailed actions recommended in the strategy provide opportunities to improve the level of support and address the gaps and the threats identified during the consultation.

The vision

The strategy presents a collaborative vision for community Landcare support in the catchment that has evolved as a result of the consultation. The vision recognises the need to balance social, economic and environmental values, with the provision of opportunities to build and enhance the success of community Landcare in the Catchment. The vision is:

“Together, as a motivated, enthusiastic and well informed community, working in knowledge sharing and supportive partnerships, we will achieve sustainable and productive agriculture, protect and enhance our regions natural resources and enjoy living in viable participating communities.”



Priority Areas For Action



The priorities for the next five years were identified by the Landcare groups, Landcare Coordinators and Facilitators LAP groups and LAP Implementation Officers as follows:

- Grow and promote Landcare;
- Build sustainable communities;
- Enjoying Landcare;
- Value Landcare Volunteers;
- Value Landcare support staff;
- Share and grow information and knowledge; and
- Create sustainable long-term partnerships.

The strategy recommends actions to address each of these priority areas.

Promote community Landcare activities locally

Local promotion of Landcare activities and achievements is vital in raising broad community awareness and encouraging greater involvement.

Action	Responsibility
Develop, and produce GBCMA Landcare promotional material (e.g. TV advertisement, style guide, signs, display material, brochures, stickers, bookmarks, magnets etc)	Regional Landcare Co-ordinator, GB CMA, with outside assistance as required.
Develop, and produce local Landcare promotional material (e.g. signs, display material, brochures, stickers, bookmarks, magnets etc)	Landcare Support staff, Landcare Volunteers with outside assistance as required.
Prepare a regular Landcare feature for local and regional media.	GB CMA, Regional Landcare Co-ordinator, Landcare Support staff
Identify and implement opportunities to promote Landcare and Landcare activities more widely in the local community (e.g. community notice boards, community billboards, local events etc).	Landcare Support staff, Landcare Volunteers Regional Landcare Co-ordinator with outside assistance as required.
Develop and regularly update web-based Landcare information (e.g. GB CMA Website, Victorian Landcare gateway etc.).	Regional Landcare Co-ordinator, Landcare Support staff, Landcare groups.
Develop and implement a range of activities to occur during Landcare Week.	Regional Landcare Co-ordinator Landcare Support staff Landcare Volunteers with outside assistance as required. GB CMA



Grow Landcare

Everyone in the community needs to accept a shared responsibility for the protection and enhancement of our natural resources.

For community Landcare to thrive, more people need to be involved and to provide encouraging social networks.



Action	Responsibility
Identify opportunities for increased involvement in Landcare projects. (e.g. Opportunities to target broader community, other community groups etc)	Landcare support staff, Landcare volunteers, Regional Landcare Co-ordinator as required.
Encourage the continued distribution of "Welcome Packs" within Local government areas where these have been developed.	Local government, Regional Landcare Co-ordinator, Landcare support staff, Landcare volunteers.
Develop and distribute "Welcome Packs" within Local government areas where these have not been developed.	Local government, Regional Landcare Co-ordinator, Landcare support staff, Landcare volunteers.
Welcome, support and encourage new members.	Landcare volunteers, Landcare support staff.
Encourage the development of Urban Landcare.	Regional Landcare Co-ordinator, Landcare support staff, and local government.
Provide access to administrative support, as required, to all Landcare and LAP groups within the catchment (e.g. Photocopying, postage, computer use etc).	GB CMA ICs, Regional Landcare Co-ordinator, Landcare support staff, Landcare volunteers.
Provide access to co-ordination support to all Landcare and LAP groups within the catchment.	GB CMA IC's, Regional Landcare Co-ordinator, Landcare support staff.
Investigate the availability of a suitable financial management package to assist groups track and report on funding.	Regional Landcare Co-ordinator and Landcare support staff.
Continue to support and expand environmental education activities (Landcare and schools).	Regional Landcare Co-ordinator, Landcare support staff, Landcare volunteers.
Encourage and support succession planning within Landcare groups.	Landcare support staff, Landcare volunteers
Continue to identify, promote and support all funding opportunities. (e.g. funding schedule, assistance with applications etc).	Regional Landcare Co-ordinator, Landcare support staff, Landcare volunteers
Design, develop and trial local community grants	GB CMA IC's, Regional Landcare Co-ordinator, Landcare support Staff



Enjoy Landcare

Landcare is about people socialising and enjoying making significant contributions to environmental change within their landscape.

Action	Responsibility
Support Landcare and LAP groups in providing a social component to Landcare activities and encourage family involvement.	Landcare volunteers, Landcare support staff, Regional Landcare Co-ordinator.
Encourage a social component to Landcare meetings.	Landcare volunteers, Landcare support staff, Regional Landcare Co-ordinator.
Encourage social events between Landcare groups.	Landcare volunteers, Landcare support staff, Regional Landcare Co-ordinator.

Recognise Landcare volunteers

Without volunteers there would be no community Landcare. Regular opportunities need to be provided to recognise the commitment and achievements of Landcare volunteers.

Action	Responsibility
Develop and implement a process in the SIR to recognise Landcare volunteer accomplishments on an annual basis.(e.g. Landcare awards)	IC Executive Officer and IC members, Landcare support staff, Landcare volunteers.
In the Upper Goulburn IC and the Mid Goulburn Broken IC continue to recognise Landcare volunteer accomplishments on an annual basis (e.g. Landcare Awards).	IC Executive Officers and IC members, Landcare support staff, Landcare volunteers.
Regularly publicise Landcare volunteer accomplishments	Regional Landcare Co-ordinator, Landcare support staff, Landcare volunteers.
Identify and prioritise training and development needs for Landcare Volunteers.	Regional Landcare Co-ordinator, Landcare support staff and Landcare volunteers.
In partnership with local training institutions provide, accredited training and development opportunities for Landcare volunteers.	Regional Landcare Co-ordinator, Landcare support staff.

Value Landcare support staff

Landcare support staff are vital to the success of Community Landcare. The professional nature of these positions needs recognition and programs put in place to support them on an on-going basis.



Action	Responsibility
Continue to seek funding for Landcare Facilitator and Co-ordinator positions.	Regional Landcare Co-ordinator, Landcare support staff and Landcare volunteers.
Continue to provide on-going support for East Shepparton Liaison Officer.	GBCMA SIRIC Regional Landcare Co-ordinator, Ethnic Council, Multicultural Facilitator, SPC Ardmona.
Continue to seek funding for LAP Implementation Officer positions.	IC Executive Officers and IC Members, Regional Landcare Co-ordinator.
Review Landcare support positions against the recommendations of the "Landcare Support Positions in Victoria Part A; Employment Recommendations" to ensure equity and consistency in standards and conditions for Landcare support positions.	IC Executive Officers and IC Members, Regional Landcare Co-ordinator.
Identify and prioritise training and professional development needs for Landcare support staff.	Landcare Support Staff, Regional Landcare Co-ordinator.
Provide opportunities for Landcare support staff to undertake accredited training and professional development.	Landcare support staff and Regional Landcare Co-ordinator.
Continue to provide regular networking opportunities for Landcare support staff to meet and exchange information.	Regional Landcare Co-ordinator and Landcare support staff.



Enhance communication and knowledge sharing

Information and knowledge sharing is essential to providing a greater understanding of the issues and opportunities for action.

Action	Responsibility
Develop and implement effective Landcare communication strategies for each of the three IC regions.	Regional Landcare Co-ordinator, Landcare support staff, IC Executive Officers.
Continue to support and implement bi-annual Catchment Landcare Forum.	Regional Landcare Co-ordinator, Landcare support staff, Landcare Volunteers.
Collect and document Landcare stories.	Regional Landcare Co-ordinator, Landcare support staff, Landcare Volunteers.
Promote and encourage knowledge sharing between all stakeholders, partners and Landcare, including other Landcare or LAP Groups. G-MW, GVW and GB CMA.	Regional Landcare Co-ordinator, Landcare support staff, Landcare Groups, DPI, DSE.
In the SIR, continue to promote and encourage opportunities for information and knowledge sharing between the IC, Landcare Support Staff, Landcare and LAP groups (e.g. attendance at some IC meetings).	Regional Landcare Co-ordinator, IC Executive Officer and IC Members.
In the MGBIC, continue to promote and encourage opportunities for information sharing between the IC, Landcare support staff and Landcare (e.g. Community Forums. Landcare Café, attendance at some IC meetings).	Landcare support staff, IC Executive Officer and IC Members.
In the UGIC, continue to promote and encourage opportunities for information sharing between the IC, Landcare support staff and Landcare (e.g. round table discussions, attendance at some IC meetings).	Community Programs Manager, IC Executive Officer, and IC Members.
Continue dialogue with local indigenous community members and investigate potential forums for information exchange.	Regional Landcare Co-ordinator.
Develop and encourage opportunities for knowledge sharing and communication between Landcare and local indigenous community members.	Regional Landcare Co-ordinator Landcare support staff, Landcare volunteers.

Strengthen existing and develop new partnerships

Community Landcare does not work alone; it accepts a shared responsibility with partner organisations. Sustaining and enhancing long term partnerships with a wide range of community, government and corporate partners and stakeholders are vital for the future support of community Landcare.



Action	Responsibility
Develop, promote and encourage new and existing partnerships with broader community organisations.	Regional Landcare Co-ordinator, Landcare support staff, Landcare volunteers.
Develop, promote and encourage new and existing partnerships with local Indigenous community.	Regional Landcare Co-ordinator, Landcare support staff, Landcare volunteers.
Develop, promote and encourage new and existing partnerships with government agencies.	Regional Landcare Co-ordinator, Landcare support staff, Landcare volunteers, GB CMA, DPI, DSE.
Develop, promote and encourage new and existing partnerships with local government.	Regional Landcare Co-ordinator, Landcare support staff, Landcare volunteers, local government.
Develop, promote and encourage new and existing partnerships with local business.	Regional Landcare Co-ordinator, Landcare support staff, Landcare volunteers, local business.
Develop, promote and encourage new and existing partnerships with local representatives of corporate business.	Regional Landcare Co-ordinator, GB CMA.

