

# Key Program Reports 2004 - 2005



Catchment Information  
Native Vegetation Management  
Natural Heritage Trust  
Pest Plant & Animal  
Private Forestry  
River Health & Water Quality  
Second Generation Landcare  
Sustainable Dryland Agriculture & Land Management  
Community Engagement

**Upper Goulburn Implementation Committee**

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*Pd/AR2005*

The Upper Goulburn Implementation Committee recognises the valuable input from our community and funding partners and thanks the following investors for their support.

**The Australian Federal Government—The Natural Heritage Trust—The National Action Plan for Salinity & Water Quality— The National Landcare Program—Victorian State Government—Second Generation Landcare— Recreational Fishing Licence Program.**

**Photographic acknowledgement : Waterways staff, Andrew Ashton Photography,  
Poppe Davis, Tony Kubeil..**



## Chairmans Report

Chris Doyle

The 2004-5 year has seen many developments in implementing the Regional Catchment Strategy with local communities. Following the introduction of the sub-catchment programs aligned with the three local municipalities, meetings have been held at, and with, Mansfield, Murrindindi and Mitchell Shire staff and councillors. These meetings have allowed discussion on local implementation issues and areas for continued project development. The program has also been supported by the alignment of the Landcare coordinators with the three areas. Close working relationships have been developed through the development and publication of Sustainable Land Management Directories in Mansfield and Murrindindi shires, and with 'new landholder' welcome packs with all three shires.

Strong relationships continue with the three Landcare networks through regular roundtable discussions on Regional Catchment Strategy direction and priorities for investment opportunities and communication needs. Catchment Management Authority/Landcare highlights this year have been the launch of the Goulburn Broken Community Landcare Support Strategy and the Regional Landcare Forum in Seymour.

Significant investment has been attracted for Upper Goulburn rivers under the Restoring Riparian Corridors program. There has been a high level of engagement with these communities through a Upper Goulburn Waterway Working Group meeting in Mansfield and well attended community meetings at Howqua, Jamieson and Woods Point. The associated investment has resulted in significant extra waterways works being undertaken along the King Parrot Creek and Upper Goulburn, Howqua and Jamieson Rivers.

For the first time this year, the Upper Goulburn Implementation Committee (UGIC) has been involved in an arts program initiated by the Tallarook Arts Society. Together with the Shires of Mansfield, Mitchell and Murrindindi, the Implementation Committee has recently acquired four artworks capturing the natural beauty and high environmental values of our landscape. The artworks have been formed into a travelling exhibition shown in prominent positions through out the upper Goulburn catchments on a rotating basis. The UGIC thanks the three shires for participating in the sponsorship

of this unique collection.

During the year Bob Dare resigned after 5 years service on the Upper Goulburn Implementation Committee. It has been difficult to find a suitable replacement to such a dedicated community member. Other changes during the year have seen Russell Wealands retire, as foreshadowed in my last report. We were fortunate to welcome Lillian Parker to the position of Executive Officer in the upper Goulburn in late January. Our new Community Program Manager, Katie Brown, commenced in February and Lillian and Katie have progressed many current and new programs with; Landcare networks, South West Goulburn communities, Murrindindi schools cluster, the Lower Hume Primary Care Partnership, and Taungurung Clans Aboriginal Corporation, as well as our partner agencies.

Finally I offer my sincere appreciation to fellow committee members as I step down from the Chair of the UGIC. A great deal has been achieved since the formation of the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority however there is still much to achieve in the future. My one regret in leaving the Chair is our patent inability to materially influence the resourcing and roll out of the Pest Plant and Animal Program. It is my sincere hope that this will be overcome in future.

In standing down I have confidence in the ability of our new Chair, Neville Barwick, to take the UGIC forward to a greater level of community influence on the natural resources program in the upper Goulburn.

*Chris Doyle*

Chair

Upper Goulburn Implementation Committee



# Executive Officers Report

Lilian Parker



During 2004-5 implementation of natural resource management programs has seen \$5.9 million spent in the Upper Goulburn catchment. On ground activities for waterways grants and projects plus environmental management incentives exceeded agreed targets and most other projects areas met targets and goals set in the Regional Catchment Strategy. All participating landholders are acknowledged for their contribution to upper Goulburn programs.

Notable achievements from this last year include:

**Extension** into the Upper Goulburn of the Bush Returns project where landholders can be offered ongoing payments to manage large areas of land for regrowth and natural regeneration.

**Preparation** and launch of a Wildlife Guide for the Upper Goulburn which will assist in identifying native animals and birds through the foothills and upper catchment

**Development** of the Whole Farm Planning process into a 3 level approach for different land management needs and the collation of relevant aerial and satellite imagery, salinity priority area mapping, ecological vegetation classes and cadastre information to support the planning process.

**Sponsorship** of the Wallaby Creek restoration project with Murrindindi Shire and local schools

**Sponsorship** along with the Shires of Mitchell, Murrindindi and Mansfield of artworks depicting our natural environment in the Upper catchment for a travelling art display.

**Review** of the various incentives and grants programs by technical staff and community members to ensure they meet funding criteria and value for money, as well as provide comment on the efficiency of the delivery systems.

**Launch** of the Goulburn Broken Community Landcare Support Strategy to guide ongoing support for Landcare groups and their coordinators and facilitators.

**Assistance** in the organisation and conduct of the Regional Landcare Forum in the upper catchment, in Seymour.

Displays, presentations, workshops and snapshots were

held on the first day followed by the Forum Dinner. A regional bus tour on the second day showcased some Landcare projects, land management techniques and tastes of the Highlands!

**Accelerated** restoration of upper Goulburn rivers and creeks, including Howqua, Jameison, Upper Goulburn Rivers and King Parrot Creek, based on actions from the River Health Strategy and funded by the Restoring Riverine Corridors program.

**Sponsorship** of an Australian Master Tree Growers program, convened by Rowan Reid (Senior Lecturer in Forestry and Agro-forestry at the University of Melbourne) with over 40 landholders participating in an 8 day program which commenced in June 2005.

The implications of the White Paper "Securing our Water Future together" on the SWG project were identified, and initiated broad discussion on water yield issues between Victorian government departments, DAFF, CSIRO and the GBCMA. The research and modelling will be further tested to determine the extent of accelerated revegetation projects on catchment and downstream water supply reliability. Evaluating multiple outcomes and offsets will assist in determining sustainable options in this rapidly developing area.

Since taking this role in January I have learnt a whole new language in Victorian natural resource management and wish to thank Russell Wealands for assisting in the transition. I wish to also thank other CMA staff, our agency partners and the UGIC members and the Upper Goulburn community for welcoming me to this unique area.

*Lilian Parker*

Executive Officer  
Upper Goulburn Implementation Committee





# Pest Plant Program

Ian Walton  
Department of Primary Industry

Forest Management, Parks Victoria, DSE Crownland Management, Goulburn Broken CMA, Goulburn-Murray Water and various Shire's met to discuss a collaborative approach towards priority weed control within the various sub-catchments this year. Focussed on priorities in the Goulburn-Broken Weed Action Plan, discussions emphasised project areas covered by the Community Landcare Facilitator program.

Significant on ground achievements were accomplished through the Community Landcare Facilitator program with funding from Weeds of National Significance, the Box/Ironbark program and the Second Generation Landcare program. Efforts were focused on contacting landholders from previous projects, with several new projects commenced where resources permitted. Programs targeting perennial weeds (blackberry, furze, sweet briar) have proven to be more successful in reducing infested areas than programs targeting annuals such as Paterson's Curse. Reports suggest it may take 5-10 years before we see the true benefits from programs targeting annual species.

Catchment Management Officers continued to attend Landcare Group and Network meetings when requested to help facilitate weed related issues, applications for funding, distribution of biological control and whole farm planning exercises.

The extensive utilisation of regional and local media to promote technical advice for priority weed species and prosecutions remain an important means of communicating our success stories. These articles have been well received by the media and community alike. The loss of 5 Pest Plant and Animal staff from Mansfield, Wangaratta and Benalla during the 2004-05 period lead to decreased service delivery from these locations and an overall reduction in outputs within the Goulburn Broken catchment.

Areas covered by projects include Bonnie Doon, Mansfield, Tolmie, Gobur-Molesworth, Eildon-Taggerty, Thornton-Maintangoon, Redcastle-Costerfield, Graytown-Bailleston, Mangalore, Ruffy-Dropmore, Highlands, Sunday Ck and Glenaroua areas. A total of 608 landholder properties were visited over the year resulting in excellent levels of co-operation from landholders within project areas. Two Land Management Notices were issued to non-compliant landholders of which both undertook satisfactory control work on their weed infestations.

### *Agency consultation*

Managers of major linear reserves such as the Melbourne to Sydney rail reserve, Hume Freeway and major highways within the catchment were also contacted to develop management plans to limit the spread of priority weeds. In addition, owners of known quarries were contacted to develop work plans to limit weed dispersal from these sites.

### *Compliance*

Two significant and successful court cases were heard regarding landholders that failed to comply with Land Management Notices in 2003. Both cases related to Paterson's Curse and had been listed for court on a number of occasions without resolution. Both cases were finally settled after a contest hearing in the Magistrates Court. One case in particular was undoubtedly the most serious, challenging the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994. Significant resources and planning were required to prosecute the case and the end result was encouraging considering departmental procedures were thoroughly tested.

### *Emerging Weeds*

Monitoring of Serrated Tussock outbreaks along the southern boundary remains a high priority within this sub-catchment with all known infestations receiving significant input to control and monitor infestations.





## Biodiversity

Kate Brunt

Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority

Environmental Management Incentives (EMIs) and Waterway Grants continue to be a vital tool in biodiversity management across the Upper Goulburn Catchment. This year 288ha was revegetated and 221ha of remnant vegetation protected through EMGs and Waterways Grants. Works included revegetation and protection of existing vegetation. Works are targeted towards priority areas and all activities have some biodiversity benefits.

### *Trust for Nature*

One of the year's highlights for Trust for Nature was the success of the Upper Goulburn rate rebate project. Five shires were approached about the possibility of introducing rate rebates for covenanted land. To their great credit, Mansfield and Mitchell Shires have both decided to participate in this program and will now offer rate rebates for all covenanted land in their municipalities. In addition, Mitchell Shire agreed to covenant some of its own land at Seymour Bushland Park, the first such covenant with a municipality in the catchment.

In addition to this 770.6ha have been permanently protected through the TfN covenant program and other permanent protection schemes. These activities play a significant role in improving the quality of the often rare and endangered Ecological Vegetation Communities (EVCs) in the upper catchment.

### *Bush Returns*

Bush Returns is a landscape restoration trial of the Goulburn Broken Catchment. The objective of the project is to *develop and trial a new incentive mechanism for achieving large-scale increases of native vegetation on private land.*



Phase 2 of Bush Returns began in April 2005 opening up the opportunity to all private landholders within the Upper Goulburn to participate. Round one was limited to a small area in the Mid Goulburn Region. The expression of interest (EOI) period closed on the 5<sup>th</sup> August 2005, after which time site assessments and management plans will be completed, and landholders will be submitting bids to offer their land management services. At the close of the EOI period 47 EOIs were received from Upper Goulburn, more than other Goulburn Broken sub-catchments.

Bush Returns uses a tendering process which allows landholders to nominate the financial return they are seeking to manage their site over a period of time. Successful landholders are invited to enter into a management agreement that is registered on the property title for a fixed-term, under the *Conservation Forests and Lands Act 1987*. Incentive payments are made on an annual basis for five or 10 years, based on performance against agreed actions within the management plan.

While the focus of the trial is on testing a new approach to delivering incentives, a long-term, on-ground monitoring strategy is also in place to improve our limited knowledge on the climatic, site and management factors influencing natural regeneration success. The University of Melbourne and Arthur Rylah Institute for Environmental Research are assisting with this work.

### *Biodiversity Integration Strategy*

*"From the Fringe to the Mainstream: A Strategic Plan for Integrating Native Biodiversity"* was published and distributed this year. As the title suggests, this strategy is about bringing biodiversity issues to the core of



# Biodiversity



Decision making and program implementation. Since biodiversity is potentially affected in both positive and negative ways by pretty much everything we do, it is essential that biodiversity impacts are routinely considered in all decisions and programs of the CMA and partner agencies..

This rationale is reflected in the Regional Catchment Strategy's Biodiversity Mission Statement:  
*"The community will work in partnership with Federal and State Governments and other agencies to protect and enhance ecological processes and genetic diversity to secure the future of native species of plants, animals and other organisms within the Catchment".*

Strategic objectives underpin the CMA's mission statements. This document outlines strategic priorities to guide actions that enable the objectives to be achieved. The strategic priorities include:

- Strong strategic partnerships
- Priorities for allocating resources based on rigorous methodologies
- Cost share fairly
- Efforts focused in results at large scales
- Cultural heritage issues included in decision making
- Stakeholders who clearly understand their responsibilities
- Adaptive management systems in place.

## ***Biodiversity Action Planning***

Biodiversity Action Planning (BAP) is a data collection and collation process that brings together information on flora and fauna values of all known remnant vegetation in designated areas (Landscape Zones). Priority mapping is close to completion in all of the Upper Goulburn BAP Zones.

The maps and associated information will be available to

extension staff, Landcare groups and landholders in the near future. The BAP steering committee has focused on how the BAP information can be used and how the information is best presented to stakeholders. As a result, a trial was undertaken in the Upper Goulburn Catchment. Several high priority Grassy Woodland sites have been targeted and a Grassy Woodland field day and information package has been produced following BAP information being used in the Eildon BAP Zone.

## ***The Missing Link – Soil Microbial Field Day***

The Regional Catchment Strategy highlights the need to develop a better understanding of non-vascular plants, invertebrates and soil micro-organisms. Recent research has identified some very strong relationships between the health of above ground biodiversity and soil biodiversity. The GBCMA, along with The Department of Primary Industries Rutherglen, held a field day in the Upper Catchment outlining the beneficial role soil microbes play in revegetation. People attending the field day increased their understanding of the importance of soil biodiversity. A brochure was also developed to outline the crucial role soil microbes play in the health of native biodiversity.

## ***CMA Biodiversity Partner***

In addition to the programs mentioned above there are a number of vital biodiversity activities been undertaken by a number of partner agencies including DSE with particular reference to their work with threatened species, Biodiversity Action Planning, liaison with local government, Land for Wildlife and Carbon Tender. DPI and their role in delivering EMI's and whole farm planning. Parks Victoria plays a vital role in conserving some of the catchments most important biodiversity sites across the catchment. Landcare and community groups also play a huge role in implementing activities for biodiversity outcomes through field days, revegetation and general awareness raising.





## Salinity & Soils

Rick Felton

DPI Regional Program Leader, Sustainable Landscapes  
NE/GB

Seasonal conditions during the 2004/05 year were quite favourable for revegetation and other environmental works, compared to some recent years.

### *Incentives*

Landholder uptake of Environmental Management Incentives (EMI's) was very strong in the Upper Goulburn. Overall, Environmental Management Incentives totalling \$347,589 were paid to landholders, resulting in 172.2 ha of remnant native vegetation protection and enhancement, 219.8 ha of indigenous revegetation, 20.6 ha of private forestry plantation, and 3.5 ha of lucerne establishment.

Some \$97,140 in Offstream Erosion Management Incentives was provided to landholders in the Upper Goulburn area to assist implementation of soil conservation works. This resulted in 668.9 ha of erosion stabilisation, with an additional 128 ha of erosion stabilisation achieved through staff working with landholders without the use of incentives. Responses were provided to around 219 statutory planning referrals from local government.

Incentives to promote sustainable irrigation practices, funded through the Water for Growth program, were provided to a number of landholders. Incentives were available for Irrigation Drainage & Environmental Plans, purchase of Soil Moisture Monitoring Equipment, and to assist change of irrigation system from flood to pressure system. Several Irrigation Management Courses and Irrigation Information days were run.

The efforts of DPI Catchment Management Officers and the Community Links Officers have been instrumental in the successful delivery of these grants programs, and the myriad other natural resource management extension services provided across the catchment.

### *Whole farm Planning*

A concerted effort was put into developing a coordinated approach to Whole Farm Planning in the GB Dryland under the banner 'My Farm Our Landscape'. Farm Planning is now occurring at 3 levels:

*Level 1 - a basic introduction to Whole Farm Planning* issues, delivered with landholders by extension staff as a pre-requisite to accessing incentives, using lap-top computers and digital aerial photography, and covering basic soils, salinity, and biodiversity information.

*Level 2 - a 4-day Whole Farm Planning course* accredited through Melbourne University is generally done in groups. Participants cover a broad range of issues and develop a detailed farm plan using aerial photographs and overlays.

*Level 3 - specialist Whole Farm Plans* (eg. irrigation design or raised bed cropping layout) and advanced specialist modules (eg. soil or biodiversity management). Discussions have commenced with local Shires on the use of Level 3 Whole Farm Plans as a requirement for approval of Planning Permit Applications.

Surveys of previous participants of Level 2 Whole Farm Planning courses have shown over 90% have committed to catchment works through take-up of Environmental Management Incentives.

Sub-catchment planning, through the development of Local Area Plans (LAP's) with local community groups, has progressed with revision of Glenaroua, Dabyminga, Hughes Creek & Kinglake areas. Several reviews of the program's approach to emerging issues were also undertaken: the Impacts of Raised Bed Cropping, Soil Health & Land Condition, Revegetating Steep Slopes, and Discharge Management.

### *Community Projects*

The Glenaroua Land Management Group and the Rotary Club of Northcote had approximately 160 people participate in their planting day. The project, which is in its 10th year, involves Rotary clubs and other community groups from outside the Goulburn Broken Catchment working together to tackle salinity.

Focused on reducing the very high salt loads created in the south west Goulburn area, the project is unique in the way it involves the community in all stages of implementation from seed collection in the Glenaroua area by local landholders to propagation by Rotary Club members in Melbourne.

Further catchment modelling of salinity processes in the South West Goulburn area was completed, and detailed geological investigations and mapping were undertaken in priority areas. A Native Pastures project was commenced to deliver extension services related to native pasture management in priority areas across the Goulburn Broken Dryland, along with some incentives for land class fencing.





# Salinity Infrastructure

Stephen Feiss

Goulburn-Murray Water

Engineering options program is part of the Goulburn Broken Dryland Salinity Management Plan (GBDSMP), undertaking several sub-programs including salinity monitoring, support for the dryland Implementation Committees and Regional Catchment Strategy. It manages a groundwater incentives program and undertakes technical work associated with identification of sites where engineering options could and should be implemented. Goulburn-Murray Water has input to the Regional Catchment Strategy as one of several partner agencies to assist in developing and implementing various programs.

## Monitoring

The program includes monitoring of stream flow and salinity at 10 key sites (7 in the Upper Goulburn area and 3 in the Mid Goulburn Broken catchments).

Salt loads are estimated by measuring stream flow and stream salinity. Comparisons of lower salt loads to the longer term average continued this year, mostly as a result of lower average stream flow.

Whiteheads Creek sub-catchment contributes the highest salt load per unit area of catchment (36.8 Tonnes/km<sup>2</sup>/year).

## Groundwater

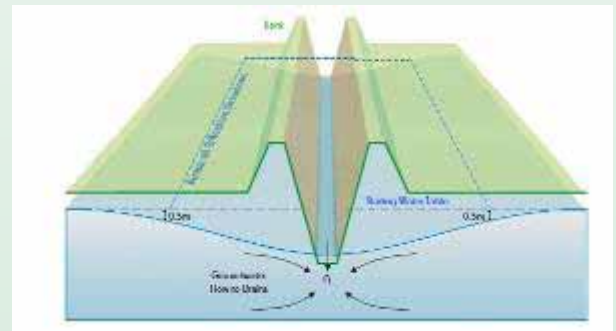
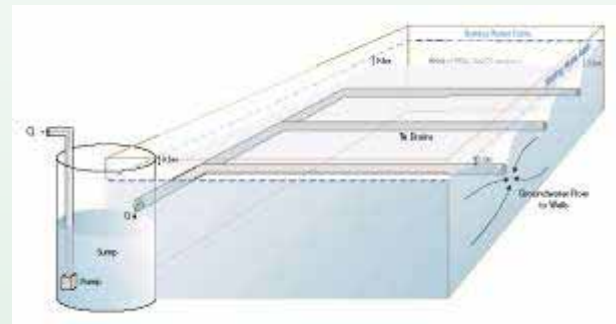
Goulburn-Murray Water continues to manage the groundwater pumping incentive program in the dryland. Pumping for irrigation purposes in salinity priority areas can provide local and regional benefits if well targeted. The incentive program, Farm Exploratory Drilling Scheme (FEDS), also provides additional incentives to assist with installing a groundwater pump.

This year the program has completed 3 exploratory investigations and resulted in 1 pumping site in the Kilmore area. Several other investigations were initiated.

The program has not performed as well as hoped and G-MW has initiated a review of the scheme which is expected to be completed in the first half of 2005/06.

The Engineering options project has provided a summary of known salinity data and knowledge that can give us better direction to plan investigations of salinity processes and determine salinity risk. A workshop and field trip in the Whiteheads Creek area in February 2005 enabled community and agency staff to explore local issues and provide feedback to this project.

Determination of what implementation actions will be beneficial will continue in 2006.





## Waterways and Riverine Health

Tom O'Dwyer

Upper Goulburn Waterways Engineer

The Goulburn Broken Regional River Health Strategy was refined and finalised this year, recognising the importance of protecting and enhancing the condition of our river environments. We aim to identify high value rivers for protection and enhancement. The River Health and Water Quality program, within the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority has continued to support the advancement of knowledge through the involvement and linkages to research, strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation projects

### *Stream Condition*

Success of the river health program was measured, using the State-wide Index of Stream Condition (ISC), which reflects the various aspects of river health, at a number of sites including the Goulburn River catchment.

In addition a further 46 'new' sites were assessed within the Goulburn Broken catchment to extend on the base assessment. These sites are located on tributaries of waterways that were assessed in the 2004 round of ISC assessments and information collected will be used to benchmark the condition of additional reaches of stream not previously assessed within the Goulburn Broken Catchment. This information will be used to provide a more comprehensive overview of catchment condition and will assist in the regional prioritisation of stream health works as guided by the principles of the draft Regional River Health Strategy.

### *Waterways Grants*

Landholder grants totalled 91 this year with a total value of approximately \$287,000 consisting of 41 km kilometres of fencing to exclude stock access to waterways and protecting 7.9 ha of remnant vegetation.

Remaining 93.8 ha were enhanced or revegetated with

59,380 seedlings planted

74 ha enhanced

20 ha revegetated

31 off-stream watering points established

Of the above, \$26,000 was paid for works on the King Parrot Creek, Delatite River, Howqua River, Upper Goulburn River and the Jamieson River through the Riparian Corridors Project, to protect 4.5 km of frontage and enhance/revegetate 9.5 ha.

A further \$28,000 has been committed for works to be completed in 05/06.

Overall, the Upper Goulburn has an additional 90 committed (approved) grants to be completed and paid in 05/06, with a further 33 grant offers made but yet to be approved (signed off by landowner).

The committed grants in the Upper Goulburn equate to \$378,870, consisting of 52 km of fencing, protection of 117 ha, 76,000 seedlings to be planted for revegetation and enhancement works, and installation of 51 off-stream watering points.

### *Case study – Lunker structures*

Investigation of eroded bends in the Goulburn River, between the Rubicon River confluence and Tumbling Waters at Thornton, resulted in the installation of Lunker structures to minimise further erosion and promote fish colonies. The project was funded from the Fisheries Revenue Allocation Committee as part of a program to undertake habitat works on the Rubicon River.

A preliminary investigation of the river bank identified exotic vegetation, bank erosion and damaging stock access. Stem injection of 3km of willows was undertaken as part of a rock beaching project on 3 sites, where around 300 tonnes of rock was used for stabilisation.

Another 8 sites were treated with Lunker structures covering a total of 360 metres and using 975 tonnes of rock, including an additional 6 large rocks to aid in the decrease of water velocity.





## Waterways and Riverine Health

### *Case study – Bed & Bank Stabilisation*

Following work already in progress on Ford Creek in Mansfield, a project to clear and restore a section of creek on private land was completed this year.

The restoration of Ford Creek is an ongoing project that includes willow removal and stabilisation of the stream bed and banks for a distance of more than 3km through the Mansfield township.

With assistance from the landowner, Gary Leatham, who was agreeable to a cost share for the project, willows were poisoned and removed along two tributaries, Rifle-butt and Black Creek, where no native vegetation was present due to early clearing.

Bed and bank stabilisation included three riffle pads and two medium rock chutes designed to modify in-stream gradient changes that can cause erosion, but at a height to encourage upstream pooling for establishment of aquatic habitat. 240tonne of rock of varying diameter was used for the rock chutes, which took four days to construct.

Fencing for stock exclusion was completed and students from Mansfield Primary School planted over 600 native plants as part of the schools environmental awareness and community engagement program. A 20 metre riparian corridor has been established along 1.2km of stream frontage, which will create 3.36 ha of native vegetation.

### *Case Study - Jamieson River Restoration*

Ten students from the Bendigo Campus of Latrobe University helped plant 340 seedlings on the river frontage at Noel Jenson's Jamieson property last week as part of the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority's (CMA) River Health Program.

Recent willow removal along the Jamieson River has opened an opportunity for the Jenson family to take advantage of a waterway revegetation grant to replant the site with native trees and understorey.

With assistance from the Goulburn Broken CMA Waterways team the river has been cleared of exotic vegetation, fenced to protect the works from stock, an alternative stock watering system is to be installed as well as revegetation of the 560m frontage.

When the revegetation project is finalised a total of 800 new indigenous plants will have been planted to rehabilitate the frontage on both sides of the river.

In addition, 21 Jamieson Primary School students have been instrumental in planting out 200 trees for the Jenson project.

More than 4km of river frontage has been treated for blackberry and willow control under the Waterway Riparian Corridor project with several sites already cleared for revegetation.

Latrobe University students who participated in the project, as part of their Outdoor Education Degree, want to become involved with future Goulburn Broken waterways projects.





## Landcare

Bertram Lobert

Upper Goulburn Landcare Coordinator

It has been another busy year! Welcome to Bridget Clarke and Geoff Boyes, our two new part-time Landcare Coordinators. Coordinators supported a growing Landcare awareness in the Upper Catchment. The expanding Upper Goulburn Catchment Group comprises 12 Landcare Groups, with others receiving Coordinator support (Eildon Township Landcare, Mansfield & District Land Management Group) in an effort to spread coordination more effectively across the region.

### *Landcare Coordinators*

Coordinators work closely with some LCGs, but only infrequently with others depending on the Groups' needs and Coordinator availability. Within Landcare, Coordinator roles include, technical support, project development, funding applications, project management and reporting, and broader information management (filtering, sorting, collecting, interpreting, presenting). The broader community is engaged through local newspaper articles, organised field days, displays at local shows, a quarterly Landcare Calendar of Events, on-going natural resource management projects and the many community land management activities held annually in the catchment.

### *Projects and Activities*

The Upper Goulburn Catchment Group has been active in a wide variety of activities in 2005. Community highlights have included: Managing Native Grasslands Field Day at Gobur, Revegetation of No. 1 Ck at Kinglake, producing a local plant identification guide, Yea River Ferals Project, opening of the Merton Common, roadside clean-ups in Strath Creek and Homewood and the Regional Landcare Forum.

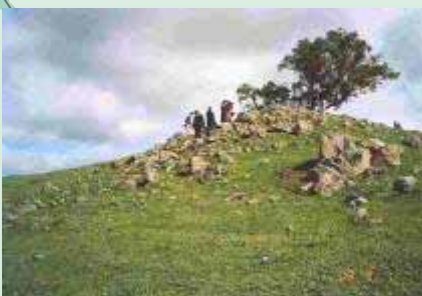
### *Major Projects & Activities*

- *Pest Plant & Animal Management*
- *Upper Goulburn Implementation Committee-liaison*
- *New landowner Welcome Pack- published & distributed*
- *Biological Farming- skills development*
- *Indigenous Seed Collecting*
- *Goulburn Broken Landcare Forum*
- *Yea River & Wetland health & restoration*
- *Community Landcare Support Strategy- development and launch*
- *Salinity & Water Quality Awareness- bus tours*
- *Calendar of Events- quarterly publication*
- *Local Government- engagement & dialogue*
- *Dung Beetles- restoring the balance*
- *Striped Legless Lizards- survey, monitoring & education.*

### *Issues in Our Catchment*

Important issues confronting Landcare in the Upper Goulburn have not changed much in recent years. Difficulty in attracting Office Bearers, the spread of environmental and agricultural weeds and ever decreasing level of local Departmental support remain, more or less, intractable. Others, such as promoting sustainable farming practices, rehabilitating riparian zones and presenting community priorities to Government representatives offer better opportunities for success.

As a grass-roots movement, Landcare has an important role to play at the local and regional scale, and it's effectiveness is improved by having paid Coordinators/ Facilitators.





## Landcare

Peter Mitchell

### South West Goulburn Landcare Coordinator

The South West Goulburn Landcare area comprises six Landcare Groups in two Collectives.

*Dabyminga Catchment Cooperative* (Tallarook and Reedy Creek Landcare Groups) had 7 new members and a mailing list of 82 by June 2005. The Cooperative completed one Envirofund Grant to restore native vegetation along Reedy Creek, and commenced two new Envirofund projects, at the Tallarook Arboretum and Tyaak Reserve. Community Salinity Grants for water monitoring equipment encouraged more involvement in the Dabyminga Waterwatch Project.

*Glenaroua Land Management Group* mailing list rose from 89 to 98 during the year. Sites for the annual Rotary/Landcare Planting Day were partly funded by the Group's Envirofund for Erosion Control through the Department of Primary Industries. Once again, Northcote Rotary Club grew trees and shrubs from local seed and organized the planting day with the Group in August 2004. Around 200 people from 18 Rotary Clubs in Melbourne, Melbourne's Iraqui community, the Pajero 4WD Club and local members planted more than 7500 trees and shrubs. The barbecue shelter built at the Glenaroua Fire Shed was supplemented with a new tank, both thanks to Mitchell Shire Community Grants.

*Nulla Vale Pyalong West Landcare Group* membership was 59 at the end of the year including several new members. Several working bees saw the Forest Link Project closer to completion (hopefully in 2005/6). Rabbit Buster and weed control programs continued, but at a reduced level due to the successes of previous years. An Envirofund grant was obtained for a seed orchard at Nulla Vale, and work began with removal of willows. A Catchment Bus Tour funded by a Community Salinity Grant attracted 29 participants.

*Sunday Creek/Dry Creek Landcare Group* has 24 members. The Group has initiated work to update the arboretum and establish a seed orchard at Kilmore East, and have obtained an Envirofund Grant for the project. The Group also obtained a Community Salinity Grant for a Catchment Bus Tour (attended by 19 people) and for salinity meters to further encourage the Group's Waterwatch Project.

*Willowmavin Landcare Group* has 21 members and is part of the Sunday Creek Sugarloaf Subcatchment Inc., which continued to obtain funding for its Gorse Control Program and for the South West Goulburn Landcare Coordinator.

The Paterson's Curse Control Program with Glenaroua Land Management Group and Nulla Vale Pyalong West Landcare Group continued during the year. Issues of privacy impeded progress. Weeds continue to be an ongoing concern and frustration, with limited resources for government support of programs and issues of weeds along linear reserves.

Information about Landcare reached a wider audience during the year by targeting landholders with brochures mailed with the Mitchell Shire Land Management Rebate forms. The first SWG newsletter was developed this year, with Autumn and Winter editions mailed to 350 landholders and distributed to local outlets.





The Hughes Creek Catchment Collaborative has consistently delivered substantial assistance to the landholders in its catchment for a number of years. 2004-2005 is no exception.

The Regional Extension Program has proved enormously successful in our catchment. Fifty kilometres of Hughes Creek frontage plus all tributaries and adjoining properties are well on the way to being declared blackberry free with only 16 kms of Hughes Creek frontage still untreated. The Landcare Collaborative and Department of Primary Industry staff have worked in partnership to achieve this outstanding result.

With rabbits and weeds no longer at critical levels, the Collaborative is looking towards issues like soil health, water quality, and protecting biodiversity for future projects.

The Goulburn Broken Landcare movement has seen great change and achievement in the past 12 months. The launch of the Goulburn Broken Community Landcare Support Strategy, has identified key areas required for continued success and growth for Landcare in our region, and is now an important reference tool for all regional stakeholders.

### *Growth*

The year 2004-05 was an exciting year for Landcare growth and achievement with two new staff in the Upper Goulburn region, enabling Landcare to align its community support with Shire boundaries, in conjunction with CMA programs. At the close of 2004/05, Upper Goulburn Landcare also had 4 networks and 28 Landcare groups, with Kinglake Landcare Group and a new Landcare group at Eildon, joining the Upper Goulburn Catchment Group.

### *Projects*

Weeds have remained a key community focus; the 2004 Weed Forums as an example, but Landcare continues to diversify in the region into exciting areas including biological farming, threatened species, and native pastures management.

## Landcare Janet Hagen Hughes Creek Landcare Coordinator

A wide range of educational opportunities have been provided this year for landholders interested in learning more about topics relevant to Landcare. Across the whole Upper Goulburn region many field days, courses, forums, newsletters and displays have been shared.

We are looking forward to new challenges in 2005/06.



## Regional Landcare Network Katie Brown Community Project Manager

Landcare retained its strong partnerships approach with the Lower Hume Primary Care Partnership, in helping run its annual Community Conference "Strengthening our Communities: Thriving, not just Surviving" at Trawool in April. Keith Woolmer and Michael Kaponica won the 2004 Upper Goulburn Award for Landcare Excellence, and Hubert Miller Trophy, respectively

### *Reporting*

In addition, much time has been spent establishing a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Reporting Framework for Landcare staff across the Goulburn Broken, Staff complete reports that acknowledge not only the community events that they run, but also the significant amount of time they spend in planning and communication, to support Landcare and natural resource management across our region. These reports are submitted quarterly to the relevant Implementation Committee, the GBCMA Board, and the Victorian State Landcare Team. The reports demonstrate the important role that Landcare Coordinators play in engaging and supporting our evolving regional community, in best practice natural resource management.



## Communications & Community Education

Poppe Davis

Dryland Community Liaison Officer

Communications in the upper Goulburn catchment is a continuous round of press releases, launches and events plus involvement with planning the community education program. More than 40 press articles were generated on numerous subjects throughout the year with a high level of support from the media. Stories ranged from reports on community involvement with waterways revegetation projects, through funding successes and advertising campaigns to launches of new projects, awards and a visit by Elaine Carbines from the Department for the Environment.

### *Annual Seminar & Awards*

The Implementation Committee held its annual community event at Trawool Resort in August, titled "Reality Bites", *Water in a Changing Landscape*. The Forum looked at the impacts of water quality and quantity issues with presenters from the Living Murray Initiative and Goulburn-Murray Water, as well as a presentation on the Victorian Government's 'White paper' by CMA Board Chair, Steve Mills. The UGIC Awards were also presented during the forum with the Landcare Award for Excellence going to Keith Woolmer from Ancona Landcare and the Hubert Miller Perpetual Trophy awarded to Michael Kopanica of Seymour.

### *Book Launches*

Upper Goulburn Landcare and the Shires of Mansfield and Murrindindi collaborated to produce Sustainable Land Management Directories for distribution to all new landowners in the two Shires. The book was launched at Bonnie Doon, virtually on the border of Mansfield and Murrindindi.

The Upper Goulburn Wildlife Directory was produced in collaboration with Department of Sustainability & Environment staff and launched with an outdoor luncheon at Mt Piper, Broadford.

### *Wallaby Creek*

The project to restore a public access point to the King Parrot Creek at Kinglake has been completed this year with the installation of steps on a steep and eroded path, multi lingual signage to encourage responsible usage of the area and recycling bins to discourage littering. A degraded area of the site has had a path installed and was revegetated with assistance from students from Kinglake West Primary School. Funding for this project came from the Department of Infrastructure Area Improvement Program

### *Arts Sponsorship*

Another significant project this year was the UGIC sponsorship of paintings from the Tallarook Arts Exhibition, in conjunction with the Shires of Mansfield, Murrindindi and Mitchell. Four paintings were acquired, each depicting an element of natural resources in the upper Goulburn and all are on display as a travelling exhibition throughout the upper Goulburn catchment.

### *Community Events*

Our participation in National Water Week and Salt Week this year included a huge range of events with free movie screenings in Mansfield, Swanpool and Alexandra, twilight river and wetland walks in Avenel, Yea and Mansfield, photography and short story competitions, and the schools poster competition.

Landcare Coordinators participated in all outdoor activities for Water Week (*Water Olympics*) and Salt Week (*Salty Sports*) contributing to an enormously successful community education program.

I personally did classroom presentations at Kilmore, Euroa and Merrigig plus assisting at the Salty Sports with press releases and photos. Salt Week presentations are thoroughly enjoyable for presenters and an excellent learning tool for the children.





Rear: David Ritchie, Mike Dalmau, Nigel Waterhouse, John Thompson (Deputy Chair), Chris Doyle (Chair), Greg Smith.  
Front: Russell Wealands (Executive Officer retired), Neville Barwick, Margaret Hatton, Sally Abbott-Smith, Lilian Parker (Executive Officer).

## Upper Goulburn Implementation Committee

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