

Revitalising a Landcare Group in times of Drought

Murrumbidgee Landcare Inc

When landholders are facing a major drought, Landcare can provide important grass roots community support to farmers.

The issue

Drought can hit hard on Landcare activities as landholders find themselves extremely busy feeding livestock, managing on-farm water issues and weighing up options in the planning of their stock numbers and income streams. In such unpredictable times, on the other hand, Landcare field days and BBQ gatherings can also provide farmers with a welcome break from the stresses of farm activities.

The Junee Landcare Network had experienced a number of very active years, however with the persistent drought and the loss of a Landcare Coordinator, Landcare activities were greatly reduced.

The solution

A successful grant application for Landcare to provide financial assistance for landholders to implement on-ground works to enhance native vegetation and/or to revegetate their properties using best-practice shelter belt design and management was a catalyst for the local Landcare group to become reactivated.

A series of field days were designed and delivered in partnership with ANU Sustainable Farms and three events over an eight month period provided local farmers with the opportunity to network with neighbours and other landholders on the topic of improving farm productivity and enhancing biodiversity and habitat for native fauna through the provision of paddock shelter belts.

The impact

The field days saw some of Australia's most experienced ecologists and environmental scientists talk about the significance of biodiversity for healthy landscapes and for local Landcare members to open their properties to demonstrate the work they had done.

They talked first hand about the environmental and production changes and benefits they had experienced on their properties. Particularly in such terribly dry times walking through the shelter belts and observing the growth in biodiversity in these areas was uplifting and provided an important chance for farmers to chat, network and share ideas for future Landcare activities.



Key facts

- Particularly in times of drought, Landcare can assist farmers to network and to share stories about the ecological and personal well-being benefits of improving biodiversity on their farms.
- Partnering with knowledgeable experts to deliver field days is a win-win for all.
- Collect feedback immediately on what topics landholders are interested in following up on.
- Funds for on-ground works are a great trigger for landholders to come together and to visit each other's farms.



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