

Group Activities

Community Landcare groups contribute a substantial amount of their time voluntarily through a diverse range of activities. Over **17,500 hours** were contributed in 2007-08 on onground works. Many more unrecorded hours were spent on the countless activities that Landcare groups undertake, including planning and co-ordination, promotion and engagement and learning and training, as listed below.



"Now the Landcare group is our local social group, it is something we have in common, we all meet in each other's homes and all are welcome. All the locals are in it and we always invite new people in the area to come along and meet everyone"

Jean McClymont, Salisbury West Landcare Group.

Landcare activities include:

Onground works

bird surveys; salinity control; habitat creation; protecting remnant vegetation; plant rescue and relocation; species monitoring; biological control of weeds; creating wildlife corridors; erosion control; orchid surveys; fox control; waterways fencing; weed control; revegetation; seed collection; plant propagation; waterwatch; school working bees; protection of native grasses; rabbit control; weed control; rubbish cleanup; nestbox construction; willow removal

Planning and co-ordination

network forums; meetings; roadside weed management plans; action plans; biodiversity blueprint mapping; funding applications; project planning; weed action plans

Promotion and engagement

indigenous plant workshops; indigenous plant giveaways; soil pit field days; lobbying for preservation of roadside vegetation; street stalls; biodiversity information nights; community newsletters; community creek walk and BBQs; aerial photo exhibit demonstrating landscape change; bushwalks; district bus trips; tours; junior landcare group formation; weed brochures; interpretation; fire safety talks; schools weed warriors program

Learning and training

field days; grassy weed field day; waterwatch training; grant application training; property planning



North Central Catchment Management Authority

The North Central Catchment Management Authority (North Central CMA) is the lead natural resource management agency in north central Victoria, managing diverse and valuable natural resources in an area covering over 13 percent of Victoria with a population of over 200,000 people. The North Central CMA was established in 1997 under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* and also has powers and functions under the *Water Act 1989*. It is one of ten Victorian CMAs established to ensure the protection and sustainable development of land, vegetation and water resources.

The North Central CMA has a vision of a well-informed, resourced and actively committed community protecting and improving the natural resources for the environmental, social and economic benefit of our region.

Our mission is to lead, coordinate and integrate sustainable natural resource management for the benefit of our rivers and the communities that depend on them.

The North Central CMA works to protect and improve rivers and the natural environment in North Central Victoria. Using the best available sciences it undertakes projects to restore river health, and funds onground works to protect and improve the environment. The North Central CMA oversees the use of environmental water to improve the region's rivers and wetlands, and invests in biodiversity improvement, along rivers and other sites with high environmental values. It also continues to monitor the effectiveness of its activities to achieve the best results for investment.

Further Information

For further information on becoming a Landcare volunteer, contact:

North Central Catchment Management Authority
Telephone: (03) 5448 7124
Website: www.nccma.vic.gov.au

Victorian Landcare Gateway
Website: <http://northcentral.landcarevic.net.au>



An initiative of the Victorian Action Plan for Second Generation Landcare



North Central Landcare Annual Report Card

07-08



North Central Landcare Highlights

Landcare's achievements, which are summarised in this document, only go part way to describing the enormous range of positive impacts Landcare has in the North Central region. Beyond the measurable outcomes such as onground works, field days, training opportunities and awareness raising events there are the less tangible contributions such as the social cohesion and overall community health that Landcare groups have helped support.

The region's highlights for 2007-08 include:

- The filming and launch of the Landcare DVD, entitled "The Birthplace of Landcare". The launch was held at Sutton Grange winery, with 350 Landcarers attending from all over the catchment.
- The State Landcare Forum was held in Creswick, with over 250 participants, and showcased three stories from groups in North Central.
- \$680,000 of New Generation grants were delivered to Landcare networks in North Central.
- E-Farmer farm planning software and Governance training was rolled out by the regional Landcare team across the region.



"The Landcare Group is the catalyst and the group members can be the innovators...What we're doing is for the benefit of future generations. If 20 out of 100 farmers do something similar (to us), then we have achieved something for the country"

Ken Czuczman, Campaspe Runnymede Landcare Group.

The North Central CMA Region

The North Central CMA region is an area of diverse landscapes and land-use in North Central Victoria that covers 13% of the state. It is bordered by the Murray River to the north, the Central Highlands to the south and the Mt Camel range to the east, covering approximately three million hectares.

The region is part of the Murray-Darling Basin and has four main waterways: the Campaspe, Loddon, Avoca and Avon-Richardson rivers. It contains important and diverse natural environments and biodiversity, including the Box-ironbark forest, iconic River Red Gums, threatened riverine grasslands and internationally-significant wetlands. The region is rich in Indigenous and European cultural heritage.



NORTH CENTRAL
Catchment Management Authority
Connecting Rivers, Landscapes, People

Group information

Number of Landcare groups formed per year



The Group Health Story

The Group Health survey is designed as a self-assessment tool for groups to collectively discuss their current health status. It also provides a framework for groups to look at specific areas of their wellbeing such as financial and information resources.

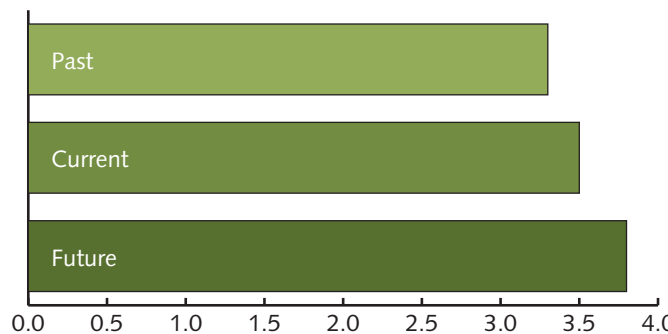
When the trends for individual areas within the survey are analysed as a whole it can highlight areas for support, training and resource gaps that can then be addressed by the Regional Landcare Team.

Overall group strength has increased in all areas from 2006-07, except in the area of 'existing human capital', which relates to a group's skill base and experience in relation to its activities.

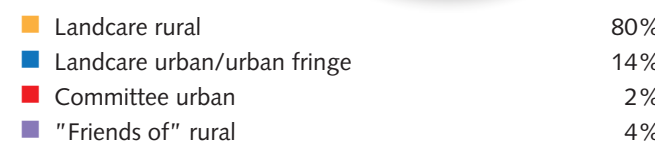
Overall group strength

The graph below illustrates overall group strength, as measured by groups themselves, and is an aggregate of the group health elements as listed in the Elements of group strength table to the right.

1 = very poor, 2 = poor, 3 = ok, 4 = good, 5 = excellent



Group type



Elements of group strength

The group strength table below is an average of group health as measured by each individual group for previous years, the current year and where they would like to be in a year's time.

1 = very poor, 2 = poor, 3 = ok, 4 = good, 5 = excellent

| | 2006 | 2008 | 2009 |
|------------------------|------|------|------|
| vision/direction | 3.2 | 3.4 | 3.9 |
| purpose/role | 3.4 | 3.5 | 3.9 |
| planning | 3.2 | 3.5 | 3.9 |
| succession | 2.5 | 2.5 | 3 |
| internal systems | 3.2 | 3.6 | 4 |
| external profile | 3 | 3.2 | 3.8 |
| financial resources | 3.5 | 3.6 | 4 |
| people resources | 3 | 3.2 | 3.6 |
| information resources | 3.6 | 3.8 | 4 |
| networks | 3.3 | 3.4 | 3.8 |
| confidence | 3.3 | 3.5 | 3.8 |
| existing human capital | 3.6 | 3.9 | 3.4 |
| building human capital | 3.2 | 3.4 | 3.7 |
| social capital | 3.7 | 3.8 | 4.1 |
| external support | 3.7 | 3.9 | 4.1 |

Ongoing works

Group funds and activities are often aimed at producing an onground output. In 2007-08, **over 17,500 volunteer hours** were spent completing onground activities, equating to an in-kind **contribution worth \$525,000.**

(time calculated @ \$30/hour)

Ongoing activity summary

| | measurable outcome | in kind hours |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| fencing (km) | 146.85 | 560 |
| weed control total (ha) | 19,394.50 | 5747 |
| revegetation (ha) | 381.4 | 5961 |
| pest animal control (ha) | 20,539 | 1985 |
| rubbish/cleanup (ha) | 22 | 1923 |
| signage | | 15 |
| direct seeding (km) | 2.75 | 316 |
| remnant vegetation protected (ha) | 182 | 1000 |
| number of plants planted | 268,095 | |
| total in kind hours | | 17,507 |

Ongoing activities summary for waterways

| | km | % activity on waterways |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| waterways fenced (km) | 49.4 | 37 |
| waterways revegetated (km) | 38.5 | 29 |
| waterways weed control (km) | 27.6 | 21 |
| waterways pest animal control (km) | 3.5 | 3 |
| waterways rubbish/cleanup (km) | 10.2 | 8 |
| waterways direct seeding (km) | 2.75 | 2 |
| total waterways km worked on | 131.95 | |

Supporting Landcare groups

In 2007-08 the regional Landcare team in North Central Victoria delivered a total of 144 capacity building events and assisted Landcare groups to develop 30 group action plans.

The Landcare support team helped facilitate courses and training, forums, field days and information sessions, tours and facilitation including:

Volunteering – The People Factor held at Bridgewater; Orchard Survey; Sustainable Water Management Course; Issues for Conservation/Environmental Action; Photopoint monitoring workshop; How to Write a Grant Application Information Workshops; E-Farmer Training; Drought Assistance Planning; Field Trips; Waterwatch; Frog identification; Stream restoration; EMBP courses; OH&S; First Aid; Ecosystems Risk & Climate Change; Conservation & Land Management; Oral History nights; Farm Chemical Users License; A-CUP; Network dinners; Pattersons Curse & Bathurst Burr control; Gorse Management Field Days; Soil Carbon Workshops; Willow Control; 1080 use

Data limitations

This snapshot has relied on the willingness and goodwill of volunteers involved in groups to provide the data used to create the report. The Landcare team at North Central CMA sincerely thank the 88 groups that completed the survey in 2007-08. This represents over 50% of the 161 community organisations that the survey was distributed to. As such this snapshot is simply an indication of the huge voluntary contribution all groups make towards caring for our land and water in this region.

Return for Investment

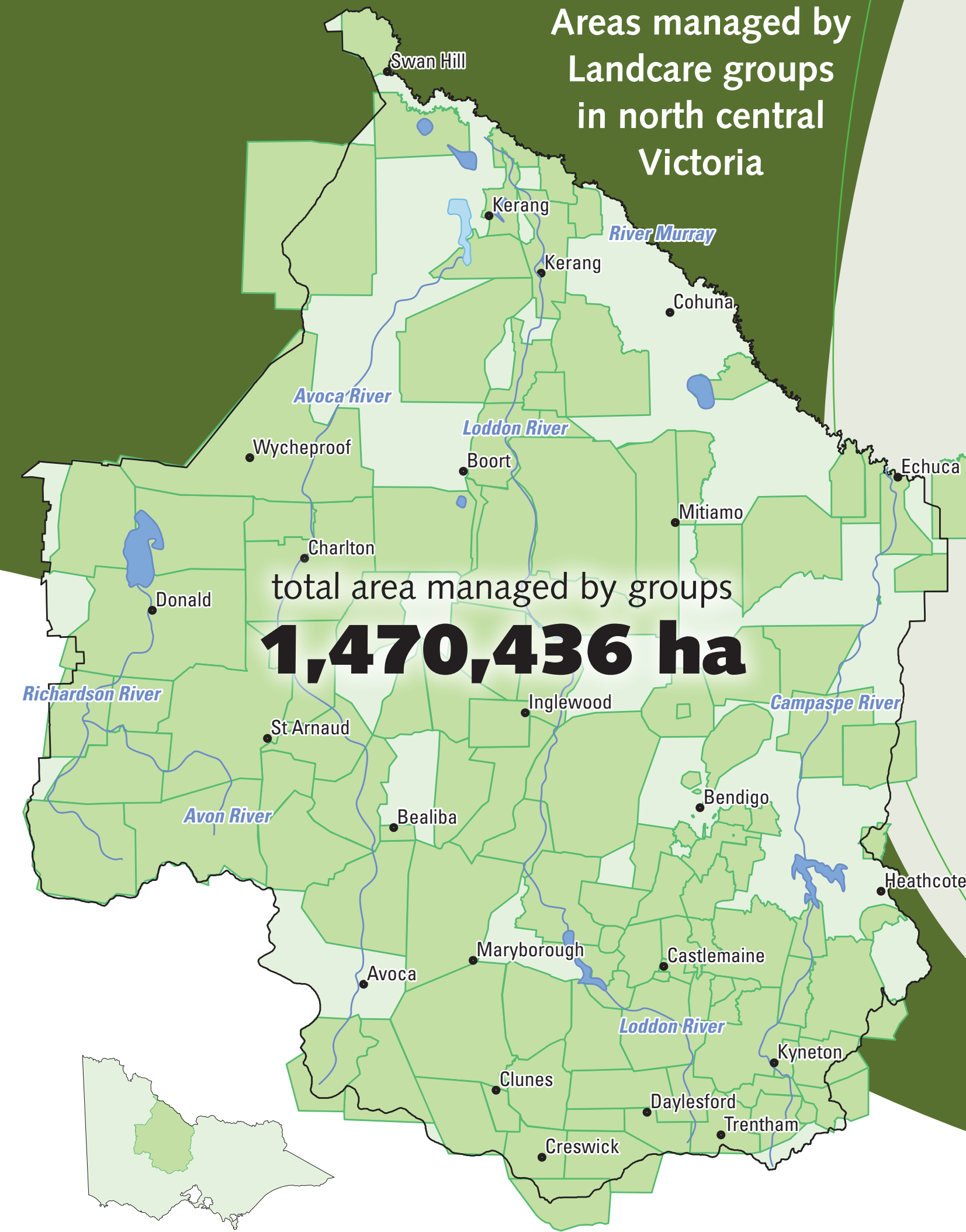
The regional investment (via North Central CMA) for Landcare support totalled \$655,000 for 2007-08, employing eight Shire based and one Regional Landcare Co-ordinator. This support helped leverage an additional investment of \$1,222,344 through 131 successful Landcare group grants and \$525,000 in in-kind contribution (calculated at \$30 per volunteer hour).

Planning

While the process can be challenging to community groups, good planning is essential in building resilient and strong Landcare groups for the future. Developing actions plans allows groups to feel that they are part of a 'bigger picture' and to think strategically. Strategic planning can help Landcare groups make a stronger case for securing funds and gaining sponsorship.

Over 50% of the groups participating in the survey have developed action plans.

Total number of groups with action plans: 46



Landcare highlights for 2007-08

Mt Alexander and Macedon Shires

- The Friends of the Box Ironbark Forests initiated the Connecting Country project, which obtained funding to develop a blueprint for environmental restoration across the entire Mount Alexander Shire.
- A very successful networking dinner, including speakers and mini workshops on Landcare issues, was held for Shire of Mount Alexander landcarers and over 60 people attended.
- Two successful gorse and blackberry compliance projects at Barkers Creek and Malmsbury, involving Landcare and non Landcare group members.

Greater Bendigo Shire

- Northern Bendigo Landcare Group was launched and the group ran a 'Sustainable Living' forum.
- A successful National Tree day, including Schools Tree Day, involved several hundred participants.
- Axe Creek Landcare Group worked with Parks Victoria to have Stony Crossing added to Pilchers Bridge Nature Conservation Reserve.

Campaspe Shire

- Campaspe Landcare bus tours were run to Loddon Shire and Broadford areas to look at Landcare projects (run in Landcare Week, September).
- A native grass field day was held in November 2007, with over 100 people attending.
- A Campaspe Landcare brochure was developed.

Gannawarra Shire

- The Kerang Landcare group successfully removed willows along the Loddon River near Kerang and revegetated with natives in Sept-Oct 2008.
- The Cohuna and District Landcare group began in July 2008.
- The Fairley Bael Bael Sandhill Lake Landcare group held a very successful bus tour in Sept 2008 to the Grampians and surrounding catchment area with Kerang Landcare members. This event allowed children on the tour to learn about Landcare and Landcare members to learn more about landcare in other areas of Victoria.

Loddon Shire

- 10,000 seedlings were planted by the Loddonvale Landcare Group from Boort to Durham Ox.
- Revegetation and weed control at Timms Lake was undertaken by the Terricks Ridge Landcare Group.
- The Bullock Creek Education Project at East Loddon was launched.

Hepburn, Pyrenees and Central Goldfields Shires

- Over \$56,000 in Second Generation funding was secured by groups across the area.
- Successful gorse target projects and field days were held in Glenlyon and Drummond.
- A planting day was held with 100 Primary School students at Blampied.

North Grampians and Buloke Shires

- 94% groups participated in Environmental Best Management Practice workshops and 80% of groups were involved in Drought Employment program projects.
- Groups were represented in the State Landcare Network Readiness project.
- \$486,144 of Envirofund, New Generation and Second Generation funding was secured by groups across the area.

"What I want to do is get that **passion** (for Landcare) going. I see myself as a **caretaker**, I want to look after the land, to put a bit back, to make it **better**, and each day to try to **make a difference**"

Ian Tinetti, Shepherds Flat Landcare Group