

Landcare in North Central

2020-21 Report Card



Local hands make light work of Landcare

The past 12 months have seen Victorians in several periods of lockdown and restrictions, however the overwhelming story coming from our regional Landcare community has been that of their group members or local communities banding together to take action and deliver projects within townships, public lands and on-farm.

The ongoing commitment of environmental volunteers to restore creeks, waterways, forests, farms and gardens benefits us all. During COVID-19, people are seeking these types of natural spaces, they are immeasurably restorative, provide refuge from the home office or classroom and inspire people to really see their local area with fresh eyes and engage with people in their communities who are passionate about it.

Although Landcare Groups have faced significant challenges in accessing students, volunteer labour, project sites and materials, we've seen groups welcome new members with open arms, and people previously unaware of the amazing things we do, have engaged in the projects and activities hosted around the catchment.



"We developed excellent relationships with the local landholders, who assisted in a voluntary capacity when the circumstances permitted. Accordingly, our group received some new interest and awareness in the local area."

~Donald History and Natural History Group

Victorian Landcare Grant achievements

Beginning in July 2019, the 2019-20 North Central VLG program devolved \$236,000 for groups to undertake NRM work across the catchment. The funding was made up of 18 project grants and 52 support grants.

Groups welcomed the announcement of a six-month extension to their delivery phase after the impacts of COVID-19, with volunteers successfully completing their projects in May 2021.

In summary the 2019-20 North Central region VLG program achieved the following outputs

- 7.5 ha direct seeding
- 165 ha tubestock plantings
- 150 ha treated for weed control
- 4.4 km fencing installed protecting 29 ha
- 4 Flora and 1 Fauna Assessments
- 65 Nest Boxes built and installed
- 19 engagement events involving 708 participants

"Our plantings took place without a hitch. It seemed that everyone was grateful to have something worthwhile, practical and energetic to do, as well get outside and off the computers working face to face for a change!"

~Friends of Cornish Hill



Regional Landcare Coordinator

The Victorian Government invested \$161,586 into the Regional Landcare Coordinator program. The RLC enables communities to take action for a healthy environment by supporting Landcare and environmental volunteering in the region.

Key Achievements

- Sponsored Lets Pivot- community volunteer resilience leadership training series delivered by Jumbleads Make-A-Change Australia. Launched in October 2020, more than 250 participants joined the 8-month program.
- 33 Landcare support staff enjoyed the 'Cascade Connections' Landcare Facilitator peer-support event, a collaboration between Goulburn Broken, North East, North Central and Corangamite CMAs.
- Hosted the eighth annual Chicks in the Sticks event. 2020 focussed on mindful connections- supporting wellbeing through social, cultural and ecological connectedness. 45 women participated in the online event.
- Coordinated online meetings with the Landcare Facilitators, Landcare Network Chairs and RALF.
- Produced 10 editions of the North Central Chat distributed to 1700 readers monthly.

Regional Agricultural Landcare Facilitator

The RALF program is funded and supported by the Australian Government's National Landcare Program Regional Land Partnerships Initiative. The RALF supports farmers to continue, and take up, sustainable land management practices and adapt to the challenges of changing market demands and climatic conditions.

Key Achievements

- Facilitating and participating in three communities of practice. These groups meet regularly to support each other through practice change, exchange ideas and build community capacity.
- Facilitating the North Central CMA Regional Sustainable Agriculture Steering Committee, participating on the Greater Bendigo Farming and Agribusiness Advisory Committee
- Supporting community groups to apply for funding, resulting in successful applicants securing \$100,000 to deliver sustainable agriculture projects in the region.
- Supporting four farmer groups involved with the Regenerative Agriculture project to deliver regenerative agricultural practices that increase soil carbon, soil health and maintain ground cover.
- Monthly email to keep the community engaged and informed on agricultural related events, reports, or general information.

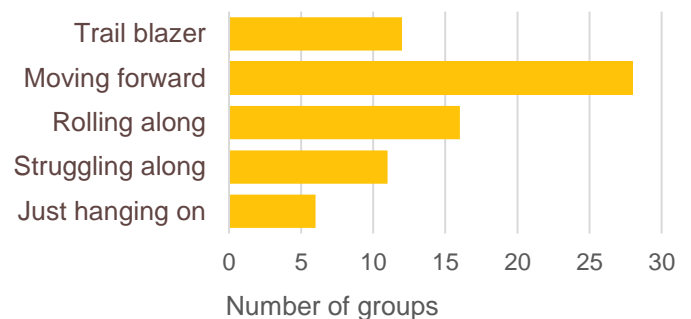
Landcare Group Health

In the most recent Landcare Group Health Survey, 74 groups provided a reflection of their past 12 months (July 2020-June 2021).

The survey data showed:

- **506** new members joined Landcare
- Average group membership is **40.7**
- **1645 children from 33 schools** were engaged in Landcare activities
- **2253** active group members clocked up **50,437 hrs** volunteering valued at more than **\$2M**

Group Health rating



Top priorities for Landcare



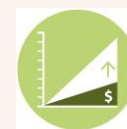
Vegetation protection & enhancement



Threatened species



Improving land managers skills and knowledge



Project funding

For more information

Telephone 03 5448 7124 or visit www.nccma.vic.gov.au

