



The National Landcare Facilitator

Newsletter - May 2011

Caring for our Country 2011/12 Grants Round - Now Open

Proposals for landcare and environment projects are now being invited under the Caring for our Country 2011-12 business plan. Up to \$178 million will be made available to fund natural resource management projects through the Caring for our Country 2011-12 business plan. The 2011 Caring for our Country 2011-12 business plan sets aside up to \$66 million for base-level funding for regional NRM organisations, with the remainder for projects that contribute to achieving outcomes in line with the six national priority areas for Caring for our Country.

These priorities are: Increasing the National Reserve system, biodiversity and national icons, coastal environments and critical aquatic habitats, sustainable farm practices, remote and northern Australia and community skills, knowledge and engagement. The Government is seeking one and two year proposals in which project milestones, budgets and deliverables can be completed by June 2013. More information on the Caring for our Country 2011-12 business plan and about how to apply for funding is available from www.nrm.gov.au or by phoning 1800 552 008.

Funding proposals for the 2011/12 CFOC Business Plan close 30 May

Review of Caring for Our Country Program – Closes May 20th

The Federal Government under the Caring for Our Country (CFOC) initiative is investing \$2 billion over five years to achieve environments that are healthy, better protected and support sustainable production in a changing climate. However, as the CFOC program is due to be completed by the end of June 2013, the Federal Government has decided to conduct a review into the efficacy, effectiveness and appropriateness of the current CFOC program and what the options may be for the future.

This is a major area of investment for the Federal Government and is of significant interest to communities and land managers across the country as it covers critical areas such as pests and weeds, sustainable agriculture, Landcare, Coastcare, biodiversity conservation etc. While the review will be covering the operations of the current CFOC program, it is important that people do not confine their input to this. We need to look at the lessons from the current and previous programs when considering how we best approach the complex and interrelated issues regarding natural resource management and how this integrates with other related challenges such as climate change, food production etc.

Your input is needed on how to best to engage with the community across the country in a way that is appropriate to diverse issues, landscapes and communities. Government has an important role, but the active participation of the community is also essential. Landcare for example has played an important role in this area for the last 21 years, but we need your thoughts about how best to approach the future.

The government recognises that some people may not wish to make a detailed submission, but would like the opportunity to comment or make suggestion. Therefore an online forum has been initiated at <http://caringforourcountryreview.com.au/>. To allow people to log in and to take part in a public discussion about Caring for our Country – what you have found works well, what can be done better or completely new ideas. In this forum you can air your views and experiences, contribute to existing discussions, catch up with community or industry partners, and find out what others are saying about Caring for our Country.

Your views, ideas and suggestions are important in helping to shape future Australian Government support for natural resource management. Submissions to the CFOC review close on the 20th May and can be emailed to thereview@nrm.gov.au. More information is available from the nrm.gov.au website or by calling 1800 552 008.

2011/12 Community Action Grants

It is expected that in the next few weeks the Federal Government will call for applications for its 2011/12 Community Action Grants which are the small grants component of the Australian Government's Caring for our Country initiative. \$5 million has been allocated to the Community Action Grants to support conservation of the Australian landscape and help rural, urban and indigenous community groups across the country protect the environment and adopt sustainable land management practices.

The Community Action Grants are for between \$5000 and \$20 000 (GST exclusive). Individuals are not eligible for Community Action Grants and projects must be completed within 18 months. Importantly the Community Action Grants can be used for on ground works or capacity building within the community. This gives groups greater flexibility in developing a project that best meets the needs of their local group/community.

These grants were instituted in direct response to feedback from the community about the need for a small grants process for groups to undertake work in their local areas. In 2010/11, Community Action Grants for Landcare related works totalling \$4.2m were approved and covered a range of local activities such as monitoring soil properties, erosion control, invasive pests and weeds management, riparian restoration, benchmarking sustainable resource management, trialling various farming and grazing practices, soil health and dung beetle projects, rainforest and bush regeneration, wildlife corridors, wild dog and rabbit control, managing salinity and recording and use of traditional ecological knowledge.

Also small groups which are not incorporated can participate by being sponsored by an incorporated organisation that is willing to apply on their behalf. For example a local branch of a farming organisation could approach their State Farming Organisation as their sponsor or a local environmental or productivity group could approach their regional NRM body or CMA. For more information on current Community Action Grants or on how to apply for the current round of funding go to nrm.gov.au. Also, if you need a hand, try your Regional Landcare Facilitator and their contacts can be found at <http://www.nrm.gov.au/contacts/landcare.html>.

Community Action Grants – In Action: Farmers in the dryland broadacre agricultural region of WA's Upper Blackwood Basin have been busily improving the environmental condition of their properties, thanks to two Community Action Grants. Managed by the Katanning LCDC, the local district Landcare group, 6.2km of fencing has been erected and 17,000 native seedlings planted through the "Greening the Eastern Blackwood" project, with a further 7.8km of fencing and 9180 native seedlings through "Kent Farmers Protecting Biodiversity". (Salmon Gum country fenced off for stock exclusion)



The project works have seen more than 170 ha of remnant bushland fenced off from stock to encourage regeneration, and 37 ha of bare areas of paddock revegetated – not only protecting against erosion but also increasing the area of native bushland available for local animals, including the endangered Carnabys Black Cockatoo. Funding received provides part costs for the farmers, who contribute their labour, machinery and some material costs to their projects.

Conservation Agriculture Conference – Call for Papers



From the 26-29th September, Brisbane will host the 5th World Congress on Conservation Agriculture and the 3rd Farming Systems Design Conference with delegates from around the world in Brisbane to discuss current and future developments of sustainable agriculture. Landcare since its inception has been at the forefront of developments in this area and this has been recognised with conference organisers having one of the areas for discussion being: achieving impact through more effective consultation, participation and knowledge sharing – Landcare & participatory natural resource management.

Conference organisers are open to submissions from anyone interested in submitting a paper for possible presentation to the conference. If you are interested please visit the web site for more information. The co-location of WCCA and FSD provides a great opportunity to explore the application of conservation agriculture practices and principles in a systems context. The common objective is the design of more productive, economic, and sustainable farming systems to meet the challenges of expanding population, global change, and environmental degradation.

Conference program options and tours will cater for different interest groups, and take advantage of Brisbane's proximity to intensive, extensive and sub-tropical farming, as well as to world leading research groups and facilities. For more information go to: <http://www.wcca2011.org>.

Victorian State Budget Landcare News

Last week in the State Budget, the Victorian Government announced the following Landcare related measures;

- \$20 million *Community Green Fund Grants Program* to provide grants of \$10,000 to \$150,000 for community-based and volunteer groups for on-ground action, including biodiversity conservation and preservation, elimination of feral pests, weed control, cleaning up waterways, revegetation and environmental awareness;
- \$12 million *Landcare support package* to back our vital Landcare network by providing part funding for 60 co-ordinator positions across Victoria;
- Wildlife Shelter Capital Grants – \$1.2 million over four years to help cover the costs of volunteers who care for injured and orphaned animals;
- A GPS boost for rural areas, providing \$1.6 million over four years to increase access for landholders and other industries to the Global Positioning Satellite network.
- \$4 million over the next four years to reinstate a fox and wild dog bounty.

Landcare in the USA – Grayson County Landcare

Several years ago in Grayson County (Virginia - USA), farmers and forest owners began working with the New River Land Trust to find ways to protect land and increase agricultural income. Grayson LandCare was one of the first Landcare groups in the United States and their goals are to protect the rural character of their county and help local citizens make a living wage on their land in an environmentally sound and sustainable manner. Recently Jerry Moles kindly put together the following article about the current direction of Landcare in Grayson County. For more information go to: <http://www.graysonlandcare.org>.



Facilitating LandCare in SW Virginia USA (by Jerry Moles) - Introducing landcare without government or corporate support requires organisational skills and a vision of a plausible future that benefits all who join in the effort. Sharing the goal of the triple bottom-line, a better quality of life through (1) higher incomes and improved economic security, (2) improved community services meeting shared needs, (3) and a vibrant and healthy environment; people in Grayson County were asked to evaluate present circumstances and think of ways their lives might improve.

Since there is no infrastructure dedicated to a landcare movement, expertise and services were sought from existing governmental and civic organisations. Helping hands were extended by the Colleges of Natural Resources and Environment and of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Virginia Tech, a land grant university; Virginia departments of Agriculture and Consumer Services and Conservation and Recreation; the Natural Resource Conservation Service and Forest Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture; Farm Bureau, a national farmer organisation; and the New River Land Trust that promotes restrictive easements protecting open farm and forested lands. The forging of new relationships among members of Grayson LandCare and these organisations is a step toward institutional change. Success in achieving the various missions of each demonstrates the value of new collaborative ventures with communities.

Grayson LandCare formed committees addressing livestock, forestry, water, energy and communication. The livestock committee decided to develop markets controlled by local farmers, to increase their profit margin. With the support of then Congressman Rick Boucher, a regional conference was held on value added beef; and the farmers formed Grayson Natural Foods to enter the discriminating pasture-raised beef market without the use of antibiotics or hormones. Today the group sells to upscale restaurants in Washington and nearby cities and to Virginia Tech and Wake Forest University.

Existing abattoirs are unable to serve the growing demand; thus Grayson LandCare requested support from both federal and state government to plan a new facility. Receiving US\$100,000, consultants are currently employed and, along with Farm Bureau and Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, an abattoir is being designed that will serve both Grayson Natural Foods and other regional farm groups responding to the demand by the local food movement. The participating farmers also cooperate with the Natural Resource Conservation Service to improve management through rotational grazing and protect regional water supplies.

More than half of the land in SW Virginia is forested, and local mills serve both national and international markets, leaving a large residue of sawdust and wood chips. These by-products are currently shipped at significant expense from the region to be used in the manufacture of particleboard and paper and, when mixed with coal, for energy production. The forestry and energy committees are currently working with investors on the construction of a plant that will produce diesel fuel from the residue, saving on shipping costs and creating jobs.

Grayson LandCare supports an annual stewardship contest for secondary school students to create visions for our area with the triple bottom-line in mind. Because of limited opportunities in agriculture and forestry and the closure of both textile and furniture factories over the past two generations, a majority of the youth leave the county to find a future elsewhere. Can we take existing assets--both natural and human resources--

-and find a future that will sustain present and future generations? This is a question that rural America must answer.

Other initiatives are underway with active community support. While there is no funding for facilitation, volunteers have stepped into the breach with landcare as an organising principle and creative minds re-evaluating the present in the search for sustainable futures on resilient and healthy landscapes.

Landcare Storybook - Corangamite

Corangamite CMA and Landcare Victoria have produced a great publication called "Landcare Impressions – sowing the seeds of change in Corangamite". This book provides an insight into the inspiring individuals involved in Landcare in the region and their commitment and passion to protecting and restoring the landscape. If you are aware of any similar publications, it would be great to know about them. <http://corangamite.landcarevic.net.au/resources/regionalinformation/landcare-impressions-story-book/>.



Other Funding Opportunities

Fresh Food Future Grants - Grants of up to \$10,000 (excluding GST) are now available to Australian farming groups and organisations as part of the Woolworths Fresh Food Future Open Grants. A total of \$150,000 (excluding GST) is available to support projects that will improve water use, nutrient management and the carbon footprint of farming. Applications close at 5pm (EST), Monday 30th May, 2011. Please read the information on eligibility and grant guidelines before submitting an application form. For more information go to: http://www.landcareonline.com.au/?page_id=91.

Coles Junior Landcare Grants - Through the Junior Landcare Grants Program, any school or organisation (including youth groups, scouts groups, pre-schools, primary schools, high schools, day care centres) that would like to involve their students in landcare projects, in conjunction with local landcare groups, can apply for grants to assist them with the cost of their projects. Closing date for **Round 2**: Friday 13th May, 5pm For more information on Junior Landcare Grants visit: www.juniorlandcare.com.au

\$1 billion for Regional Development -The Minister for Regional Australia Simon Crean announced a \$1 billion five-year Regional Development Australia Fund last month. The Fund will commence allocation of grants from 1 July 2011 and is intended to focus on local solutions and long-term economic benefits and apparently only applications backed by local RDAs will be considered for funding. Mr Crean said this allocation of resources is the result of the agreement struck with the Independents last September. Further details on the fund, including guidelines and criteria can be found at: <http://www.regional.gov.au/regional/programs/rdaf.aspx>.

IWC Water Leader Scholarships 2012 - Scholarships are now open to study the International WaterCentre's Master of Integrated Water Management (Australia).

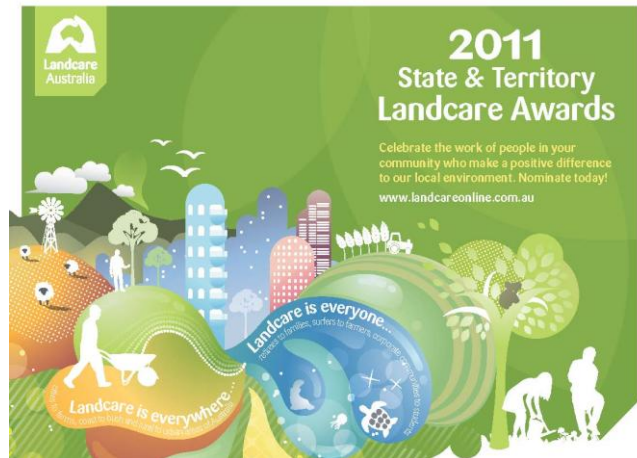
- Full tuition scholarships - AU\$41,520
- Partial tuition scholarships
- Open to international & domestic students
- Applications close **1 August 2011**
- Program starts in February 2012 (The University of Queensland, Brisbane)

The MIWM program equips students with the integration, leadership and managerial skills to become part of an elite group of water leaders with sustainable and holistic solutions to global water and climate change challenges. For more information go to: www.watercentre.org/education/programs/apply.

Landcare Awards

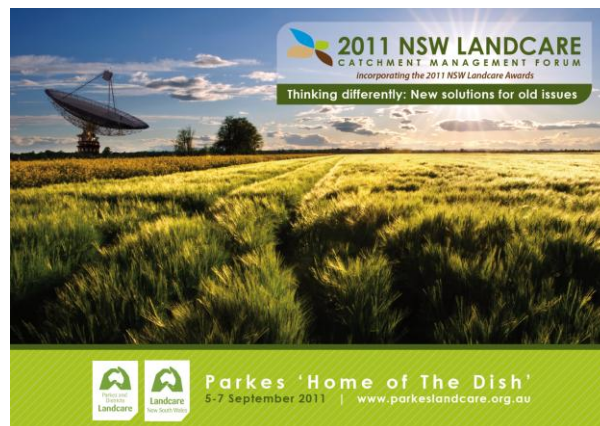
Groups or individuals with a story to tell should make a submission to the State and Territory Landcare Awards. In the next 2 months, a cycle will kick off that will culminate in 2012 with the national Landcare awards.

This year, it is the states and territories that have the task of selecting their winners, which will then go onto the National awards in 2012. There are 12 categories in total, covering aspects such as primary producers, local government, indigenous, education, youth and Coastcare. For more information go to: http://www.landcareonline.com.au/?page_id=2930.



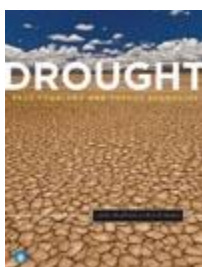
State Landcare Conferences

- NSW, Parkes 5-7th September – www.parkslandcare.org.au.
- Queensland, Ayr 22-23rd September – www.landcare.org.au/CONFERENCE.htm.
- Tasmanian, Stanley 9-10th October – www.taslandcare.org.au/tlca.html.



Publications

For copies go to: <http://www.publish.csiro.au/nid/18.htm>.



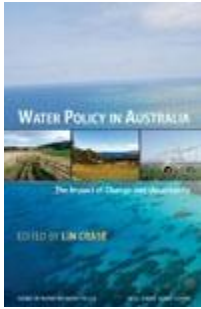
Drought

Past Problems and Future Scenarios

Justin Sheffield, Eric F Wood

Provides a review of the historical occurrence of global drought and assesses the likely potential changes over the current century under climate change.

DUE May 2011 - Earthscan - 192pp , Hardback - \$119.95



Water Policy in Australia

The Impact of Change and Uncertainty

Lin Crase

Presents a comprehensive account of the country's critical water issues and provides expert perspectives from behavioural and institutional economists, engineers, hydrologists, sociologists, and water law specialists.

DUE May 2011 - RFF Press, USA - 280pp

Hardback - \$156.00

Paperback - \$72.00



Invasive and Introduced Plants and Animals

Human Perceptions, Attitudes and Approaches to Management

Ian D Rotherham, Robert A Lambert

Addresses the broader context of invasive and exotic species, in terms of perceived threats and environmental concerns.

DUE May 2011 - Earthscan - 352pp

Hardback - \$122.00



Valuing Ecosystem Services

The Case of Multi-functional Wetlands

R Kerry Turner, Stavros Georgiou, Brendan Fisher

Provides guidance on the valuation of ecosystem services, using the case of multifunctional wetlands to illustrate and make recommendations.

DUE May 2011 - Earthscan - 192pp

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Regards,

Brett de Hayr - National Landcare Facilitator

Ph: 07 3289 6295, Mobile: 0457 750 815

Email: brett.dehayr@nrm.gov.au The National Landcare Facilitator Project is funded by the Federal Government through the Caring for Our Country Program and this newsletter is circulated with the assistance of LAL.

