

**Mitta Valley Landcare Group  
Annual General Meeting 6<sup>TH</sup> December, 2020.**

**President's Report**

**OUR VISION: "A magnificent Mitta Valley with healthy landscapes and a vibrant community."**

This past year has continued to demonstrate the importance of the work that the Mitta Valley Landcare group continues to deliver through its various Grants to support projects and events in our community.

There is no denying it has been a challenging year characterised by the devastating bushfires that ravaged our Upper Murray region in the North East through the Summer months and threatened the Mitta Valley as fire ran unchecked through our bushland coming threateningly close to the Dartmouth community. We were incredibly lucky this time only suffering from smoke effects. On the other hand our neighbouring Upper Murray community has a long road to recovery.

By March the pandemic (Covid19) was having an impact, changing the way we work, the way we live and the way we interacted, as the health and wellbeing of our families and communities became our top priority. While our Landcare group ceased face-to-face meetings and cancelled or postponed events scheduled for this year, we found new ways to meet via digital platforms. Most meetings we held were delivered via the Zoom platform and many of us learned a new "tech lingo" in order to keep up and stay connected to families community and the business world.

Even though our group was not meeting physically it gave us pause to commit time to completing some other projects, particularly in the administration and marketing areas.

Some actions of note were:

- Events: From September 19 October 20 we managed to hold community events that were very successful the first one was;  
a Dung Beetle Day held at Judy and Alec Cardwells in September 19 with Bernard Doube as guest speaker.
  - Event two was the Frogs and Waterways Project another highly successful and well attended event at the Witches Garden in November 2019, with guest speakers from Charles Sturt University. Due to Covid19 the second in this series will not be held until Spring 2021.
  - We had some active work through the M2M Bag BioControl Group this year with Simon and Klaus travelling interstate in Dec 19 to collect Spear

Thistle weevil, Slender Thistle rust fungus and depositing them back in nursery sites in our region and once numbers are viable hope to distribute them in our region. It was noted that the Broom, mite was working successfully in parts of the Upper Snowy and this could be an opportunity for a field trip in 2021 to collect mites for distribution in our area.

- July 20 Simon Feillafe along with Belinda Pearce visited Eskdale Primary School and engaged the children in an information day on Dung Beetles. Consequently a tent was set up on the site and monitoring will happen and a follow-up session will happen in November 20 (Covid allowing). It was a really successful day and a great way to engage the future generation.
- The Moroney' wetland and reveg project was completed in October 2020 also.
- Grants: From the months of March to November due to CoVid19, there was not much opportunity to apply for Grants applicable to our projects however in November 20 three Grants have been applied for totalling \$240,000. We await the result of our applications in the New Year.
- Facilitator Program: Our Landcare group has been very fortunate to have our own Facilitator since 2013. Klaus Boelke tenure over 5 years ended in June 2020 and he decided not to re-apply for the position. We were notified in May 20 that the LCFP funding was being extended until December 2020. This extension allowed the VLFP to implement improved processes to the Facilitator program following the 2019 Vic Landcare Facilitator Program Review which I attended on behalf of the MVLG. These new processes and direction are due to be implemented in July 2021. We were very fortunate to appoint Simon Feillafe to fill the role to December 20. In November 2020 there was an announcement of the extension of the current Facilitators program contracts to June 2021. From January an application process will open for Facilitators to apply for Facilitators positions commencing in July 2021.
- Internal Training: This year a Governance training webinar running over two days was held for Landcare Executives and committee members through a program run by DELWP. Our Treasurer attended this session along with our Secretary. The training covered the basics of governance and legal structures. This was a recommendation taken from the feedback obtained through the Facilitator review held in 2019. This was a great opportunity and was held free to participants.
- MVLG Website - Last year the Mitta Valley Landcare Group Launched its own website. The person we hired to do the job had a change of

circumstances so while the build was completed, the content has been slower to get into place.

The Executive made a decision to contract a professional person to help us keep our site up-to-date and relevant. This will be a great promotional and marketing tool for us going forward.

Finally, I wish to thank our hard working Executive for “staying the course” in what has been a very challenging year. Thank you particularly to Irene Lewis who stepped into the Treasurers role in late 2019, your contributions and knowledge are already reaping rewards for our group. A huge thanks also to our Secretary, Anita Reynolds, the Secretarial role is not an easy one and often the most time consuming. Your efforts are very appreciated by our group. We have operated this past year by nominating a President to run each meeting and this has been rotated between myself, Doris Razeng and Robyn Scales, thank you for stepping into this role on a rotational basis.

Robyn Scales has been instrumental in making sure our Facebook page is well populated with regular up-loads and a flow of articles included in our local newspaper the Bush n Bull. Thank you Robyn for keeping us so visible on-line and in print. With the addition of the website “spreading the word” on events we hold and interesting articles on the activities we run, it is promotion for the Landcare movement generally and gives visual on how being a member of your local Community Landcare group, can benefit one personally, socially and as a community, with the focus being on ensuring a sustainable and healthy environment.

As we edge towards 2021 I look forward to our group continuing to strengthen and grow and if applications for projects are any indication it is looking to be a promising year.

Thank you for your time today and I wish each and everyone of you a happy and healthy Christmas season.

Karen Moroney,

President Elect for the MVLG AGM 2020