

# Landchat

Landcare in the Southern New England, No. 118, July - December 2020



Southern  
New England  
**Landcare**

Our mission is to **lead, connect** and **enable** our communities to reach their sustainability goals in a changing environment.

## Welcome

Welcome to Landchat Edition 118 at the end of an extraordinary year.

As you will see, despite COVID-19 restrictions, Landcare in our region is alive and well, with active groups, new projects and plenty of successful grant applications.

We wish everyone a safe and happy Christmas and all the best for 2021. Enjoy!

## Diary Dates

Time out with friends Wongwibinda TBC .....10 Feb

Time out with friends Boorolong TBC ..... 6 Mar

Time out with friends Baldersleigh TBC..... 9 Mar

Time out with friends Balala-Brushgrove TBC.. 10 Mar

Time out with friends Lower Apsley River TBC . 16 Mar

Time out with friends Glen Morrison TBC..... 17 Mar

Greener Grazing with Global Warming:  
Jones & Earl..... 24-25 Mar 2021

30 Years of Landcare in Southern New  
England Celebration Dinner ..... 24 Mar 2021

Peri-urban Climate Risk Workshops x 3 .....Apr

Silvopasture 2020 .....2 May 2021

Check <https://snelandcare.org.au/group-events.html>  
for updates.

## 2020 John Winter Irving Bequest to Ray South

**In 2020, the John Winter Irving Bequest was awarded to Ray South for his long time dedication to Landcare and helping others learn more sustainable ways of approaching land management.**

Ray's interests include agroforestry, regenerative agriculture, revegetation and soil health, and he is also currently developing locally adapted vegetable varieties and seed saving.

Since completing a Permaculture Design Certificate course in 2006, Ray has worked together with Jane Pickard to develop their knowledge about soils and sustainable food production and have used permaculture design to plan Banded Bee Farm which incorporates agroforestry and regenerative agriculture techniques at Saumarez Ponds.

*Continued on page 2*

*Below - Vice President, Steve Harvey (left) presents the 2020 John Winter Irving Bequest to Ray South.*



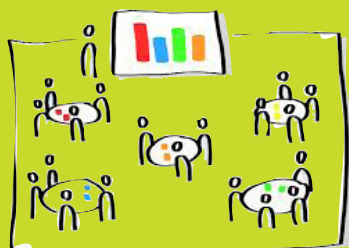
# SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND LANDCARE LTD

July 2019- June 2020  
Achievements



## Build & service our networks

4 Group action plans  
29 Groups supported  
225 Members & 752 friends  
2 Landchats & 43 eNews  
757 FB followers & X 7 FB groups



## Innovative ag & NRM initiatives for communities

9 Network-scale events  
326 event participants  
9 grants completed (\$514,515)  
9 grants commenced (\$568,588)

## Financial security for our organisation

30 Partner organisations  
8 Grants from 8 applications  
Financials reviewed quarterly  
Organisation audited annually



## Build & maintain team capacity

9 Volunteer directors  
3 Part-time staff  
6 Board meetings  
Strategic plan reviewed  
5 Team training opportunities

Our mission is to lead, connect and enable  
our communities to reach their sustainability  
goals in a changing environment.

Read more on news and projects at  
[www.snelandcare.org.au](http://www.snelandcare.org.au)

*Continued from page 1*

Ray was a founding member of Sustainable Living Armidale. He was a key driver in the HiCUB Advisory Committee and HiCUB Armidale Working Group. Ray has also been involved in Armidale Urban Rivercare Group and the Soil Health Forum. He was crucial in setting up the Armidale Community Garden and has been involved with The Armidale Tree Group for 15 years, serving on the management committee and as a volunteer in the nursery over a long period of time.

Ray is now doing great work with Jane Pickard at Banded Bee Farm, educating and building on the Silviculture information learned from Rowan Reid's Master TreeGrower Program. He is very community-minded, very open and encouraging of all those who attempt to nurture the Earth.

It was with great sadness that Southern New England Landcare experienced the sudden and unexpected loss of our highly esteemed and hard-working Chairman, Mr John Winter-Irving, in September 2011.

John died while working on one of the six properties that he ran with the help of his wife Ona on behalf of the family partnership.

John was in the third year of his Chairmanship of Southern New England Landcare and had been a dedicated volunteer for Landcare and particularly for our organisation for nearly 20 years.

John was involved with Landcare at the group, network and regional levels. In his role as Chairman, he was able to bring a perspective that balanced traditional agricultural with alternative environmental approaches.

In memory of John's ready smile and infectious laugh, his enthusiasm, and his dignified



and thoughtful approach to his job as Chair, the Winter-  
Irving family makes an annual  
bequest which will be awarded  
to a Southern New England  
Landcarer, to further his or  
her skills and knowledge or to  
provide leadership opportunities.

Congratulations Ray South – well-  
deserved.

## Coordinator's Choice to David Henderson



Above - Karen Zirkler presents David  
Henderson with the perpetual trophy for  
the Coordinator's Choice Award.

The Coordinators Choice Award  
is made each year in recognition  
of a member who provides  
significant assistance or support  
to Southern New England  
Landcare staff.

In 2020, staff congratulate  
outgoing president of the last

four years, David Henderson.

David lives in the Ward's Mistake  
area north east of Guyra, so  
getting to Armidale is no small  
trip, and he made time to call at  
the office most weeks to check in  
and lend his ear to proceedings.

David was no stranger to  
stepping up to help Landcare  
at the regional level, holding  
down roles as the Secretary and  
Treasurer of NENW Landcare and  
Chair of the New England sub-  
committee of that organisation.

David promotes pathways to  
mental wellness and he certainly  
brought attention to this in the  
Landcare space.

David's positive, no fuss attitude  
to his roles and the support  
he provided has been much  
appreciated by all our staff,  
hence our unanimous decision to  
make this award.

## New Board Elected

Members and friends gathered at  
Uralla RSL Memorial Hall on 29th  
October for our 2020 Annual  
General Meeting.

Congratulations to the following  
group representatives who were  
elected to the Board of Directors  
at the 2020 Annual General  
Meeting held in Uralla on 29th  
October:

- Richard Daugherty (Balala  
Brushgrove Landcare) -  
President
- Steve Harvey (Dangarsleigh  
Landcare) - Vice President
- Bevely Stubberfield (Uralla  
Rivercare) - Treasurer
- Bryan Johnston (Armidale  
Urban Rivercare) - Director
- Jill Moore-Kashima (Soil  
Health Forum) - Director
- Peter Metcalfe (Dumaresq  
Landcare) - Director
- Bill Perrottet (Malpas  
Catchment Group) - Director
- Rebecca Smith (BC<sup>2</sup>) -  
Director

Executive Officer, Karen Zirkler  
was appointed Secretary and  
Public Officer.

Steve Harvey thanked outgoing  
President David Henderson for  
his four years of dedication to the  
organisation as President.

The year's activities and  
achievements against the  
organisation's strategic plan  
objectives were presented as a  
summary infographic (far left).

The John Winter Irving Bequest  
and Coordinator's Choice Award  
were announced, and as neither  
recipient could make it on the  
night, a special presentation  
morning tea was held at the  
office on 8th December.

A great night of catching up with  
old and new friends followed.

Below - several board and staff members were present at a morning to celebrate Ray South and David Henderson receiving  
their awards.



# Regent Honeyeaters Nesting

By Candice Larkin

I am writing to inform you of the results of the Regent Honeyeater nest at Severn River TSR.

I have just finished my survey rounds for spring so can finally provide a full update.

The first nest of the pair was destroyed and it appeared they had not built a new nest when last surveyed in late September.

The pair were flying across the river frequently to other large She-oak and Yellowbox so it appeared they had relocated away from incoming lorikeets and friarbirds.

Upon returning in November,

I noticed two individuals flying back across river to flowering Yellowbox, but both were unresponsive to call playback when used.

The third individual (male that had Little Wattlebird call) was no longer detected on site.

I observed both adults catching insects and returning to the same point in a Yellowbox approx 40 m from first nest.

Two fledgling birds were in the tree being provisioned by parents.

The parents would subsequently fly back across the river and fledglings remained behind in Yellowbox.

Both birds were actively feeding on blossom and catching insects.

Birds remained at site for several more days, but I have not been able to locate them since the 25th of November.

The fledglings were large and capable of sustained flight, so have likely moved on with parents.

Due to the heat we are experiencing, many of the Yellowbox at Severn ceased flowering, however there are many beginning to flower towards Inverell and Bundarra and they may have dispersed there.

Great to have a successful record in our neck of the woods again.

*Below - a pair of Regent Honeyeaters in our neck of the woods. Image courtesy of Colin Ritchie.*





# Flying Start for New Group!

By Jill Moore-Kashima

"A week-long street stall? In sleepy Uralla? Well ... could work ... we need to raise some seed money for the Regent Honeyeater Revivalist Group somehow ... worth a try."

Well. As many of us know, Uralla is far from sleepy – and when we chose the week that NSW populations were permitted to explode out of Covid restrictions and take to the road for school holiday R&R, Uralla really hopped.

From Monday 8th September to Sunday 4th October, slices, cakes, eggs, books, sewn items such as bags and aprons, plants – plus information about birds – were all snapped up not only locals, but cheerful and interested travellers from all over the State.

Sydney people seemed dazed at the sight of cash, having been restricted to card transactions for months.

Luckily an ATM was close by, and the visitors thought it all added to our refreshing country charm!

Almost tripling our best hoped-for takings was a great surprise, but the other surprise was how much fun it was.

Uralla locals such as the Z-net team unexpectedly turned up to donate baked goods and plants, and everyone bought raffle tickets as a gesture of community support.

I was on the stall all week and was amazed at how interesting the tourists were once engaged in conversation – such a variety

of backgrounds including ornithologists and ecologists.

One man commented he'd been on the expedition giving rise to a book on the Tarkine someone had donated to the stall, and we found his name in the acknowledgements.

Another, who was camping at Warrabah National Park, gave me information about sighting Peregrine Falcons near our property. So information flowed both ways!

Everyone was interested in the Regent Honeyeater.

A number of people said, "Oh, I've got them in my garden" which segued easily into discussion about there only being about 400 or so left in the wild but there are a few lookalikes.

The Bird Life Australia giveaway pamphlet on identification proved very useful, and it's likely those who were interested

enough to take these will be further informing/educating their neighbours.

So through these many conversations awareness was raised about the ongoing problem of destroyed habitat for all birds, and also the varied role of Landcare.

There was a noticeable change of demeanour when customers saw the logo and realised that our Group exists under the Landcare umbrella.

Landcare is clearly recognised well beyond our usual "catchment" and seems to engender trust that volunteers are genuine and accountable.

What will we do with the raised seed funding? Plans are BIG ... watch this space as we take on more than Uralla!

*Below - Jill Moore-Kashima and Chris Baker displaying the group's wares at the Street Store. Image courtesy of Margaret England.*



# Regenerating Rural Landscapes

By Rachel Lawrence

**This two-day workshop was the first of two events held by Southern New England Landcare Ltd around variations on Natural Sequence Farming, funded by our Mustering Members for Climate Change Challenges National Landcare program grant.**

David Hardwick of Soil, Land Food teamed up with Damon Telfer (specialist geomorphologist and river restorer who is doing lots of valuable work in Reef catchments).

In his usual style David presented fabulous information around how the farm landscape functions as a whole and then drilling into more detail about fundamentals of groundcover, composition and managing riparian and forest areas appropriately to support biodiversity as well as farm logistics and functionality.

David encouraged people to see the farm landscape as a mosaic of different patches that may have

different management requirements and provide a range of benefits to farm businesses.

It was fantastic to hold an event amidst glorious spring days post-Covid lockdowns, and to witness the country recover on two beautiful and quite different New England properties.

Damon impressed everyone with his in-depth knowledge on river restoration but also emphasized that major intervention in streams is something that comes well after appropriate, sustainable and potentially regenerative practices in the broader landscape.

It was thoroughly enjoyable watching the open and engaging, sometimes challenging but always respectful discussion among participants.

Several participants commented on the value of seeing their farm as a mosaic of different patches that may have different management goals, a

new perspective.

Sincere thanks go to Gordon and Wendy Williams for hosting day 1 at Eastlake and to Karen and Craig Zirkler for hosting day 2 at BimbiVale.

The outcomes of the event are featured in a Case Study prepared for the NSW Landcare Gateway website at <https://landcare.nsw.gov.au/@casesudies-listing> (see case study on page 15 or download at <https://snelandcare.org.au/resources/publications/878-case-studies-2019-2023.html>)

*This event was supported by the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, through funding from Australian Government's National Landcare Program.*



## Rehydrating Roumalla Creek Catchment

By Rachel Lawrence

**Thirty plus enthusiastic landholders came together at Balala Station on 22nd October 2020 (after a false start pre-Covid) to listen to Stuart Andrews of Tarwyn Park Training demonstrate the principles behind Natural Sequence Farming and rehydrating degraded farm landscapes.**

After a night of beautiful rain, the day started with an engaging presentation by Stuart with lots of audience interaction and possibly some aha moments when Stuart talked about making the most of the two free energy sources available to farmers (gravity and sunlight).

Stuart drove home why it is so important to nurture the growth of plants, plants, plants and to support as much plant diversity as possible as this maximises the capture of solar energy and keeps water in the landscape.

He then did a great demonstration building a model contour bank with a hoe while showing water movement across the slope in response to this.

The group then went to a few sites on Balala to hear Stuart talk about how water moves into and through floodplains and further up the hill to look at natural steps in the landscape and how you might go about constructing contour banks to move water out of fast flowing and eroded gullies and onto ridges (taking nutrients with it).

Stuart emphasized the importance of working high in the landscape and how this will protect regenerated areas downstream.

An end of day session made it clear that there were two key take home messages from the day. These were the value of keeping plants, plants, plants in the landscape and to start by taking care of areas high up in the landscape.

While weeds were mentioned during the day, with the exception of one cheeky individual, they were certainly not considered to be worthy of too much attention compared to more fundamental management actions that support regeneration and rehydration!

The group clearly enjoyed the opportunity to get together following a very odd few months with Covid restrictions.

A huge thank you to Richard Daugherty and Sarah Burrows for hosting the day at Balala.

*This event was supported by the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, through funding from Australian Government's National Landcare Program.*





# First Koala Conservation Officer

**Southern New England Landcare is excited to introduce Des Andersen as the first dedicated Koala Conservation Officer for the Southern New England region.**

Des will deliver the Northern Tablelands Koala Partnership Project, which will draw on recent and historical data to identify koala populations and engage and inform the community to help deliver 'on-ground' action.

"I'm keen to work with the community to give our local koala population a helping hand," said Des.

"As an iconic Australian animal, the koala is immediately recognisable around the world, and its survival broadly reflects Australia's attitude toward looking after our natural environment," he said.

Recent drought and bushfires coupled with climate change and human activity have significantly impacted Koala habitat.

"I'll be drawing information and data gathered by local ecologists into an operational plan," he said.

"A lot of the preliminary data gathering has been done, and it's helped identify both where koala populations exist and provided a focus for conservation actions", said Des.

The Northern Tablelands region has been identified as an important area for the future of koalas.

It has several koala populations that are not subject to the same population and development pressures as those on the coast.

The region may also be more resilient to the impacts of a changing climate.

The project will involve engaging communities around Guyra, Armidale and Uralla to raise awareness of the contributions everyone can make to conserving this iconic species.

"Whether its providing habitat, reducing the role of key threats such as dog attacks and vehicle strikes, providing watering stations in dry times or just knowing who to contact when a sick, injured or threatened koala is sighted, the project will be helping community members understand what to do," said Des.

Southern New England Landcare Executive Officer, Mrs Kàren Zirkler said, "We are pretty excited to host this position, thanks to a project funded by the NSW Government's Saving Our Species Partnership Program."

At present, there are corresponding projects being delivered within the Southern Highlands, the Mid North Coast and the Far North Coast of NSW.

Des has been involved with Landcare in the New England since 2013 and holds a master's degree in environmental management.

He has 14 years' experience as an environmental practitioner with a passion for Koala conservation.

"It's great to have someone of Des' calibre on our team, and I'd invite anyone wishing to know more about the project to contact our office," said Karen.

Community information sessions will commence in early 2021 with invitations to be distributed through Southern New England Landcare's eNews and the Armidale Express.

The project will run from October 2020 to June 2021 with the possibility of an extension, pending additional funding.

The project is part of the NSW Government's Saving our Species (SoS) program for threatened species conservation.

More information at [www.snelandcare.org.au](http://www.snelandcare.org.au).



*Left - Des Andersen (left) will be assisted in the Koala Conservation Project Officer role by Landcare Coordinator Struan Ferguson.*

# Time Out with Friends

## Winterbourne Landcare group event

Winterbourne Landcare group gathered for a long overdue catch-up on Wednesday 18th November 2020.

The Winterbourne community as had a wild few years with the big Walcha storm, drought and then spring/early summer 2019 fighting fires.

Rachel Betts from New England Weeds Authority came along to assist with weed identification, and find out about any weed issues emerging in the area.

Rachel Lawrence talked about future possibilities for recognising environmental stewardship by

farmers using a natural capital accounting approach.

Lovely grazing platters (Covid safe!) were provided by Hayley Bird from Happy Graze Days, Walcha.

Thanks to Jordie Muller for hosting the group.

This event was the first of eight that Southern New England Landcare will support across the region between now and 31 May 2021.

## Wollomombi highlights

Wednesday 9th December 2020 saw locals gather at Chandler Woolshed for the Wollomombi Time Out With Friends Event.

Guest speakers included:

- Rachel Betts from New England Weeds Authority on weeds to watch for since the fires and drought
- Eva Knorles on a wellness and resilience approach for pasture, beast and farmer alike, and
- Rachel Lawrence on future possibilities using a natural capital accounting approach.

Lunch and morning tea were provided by the Wollomombi Store.

Glen Chapman from Southern Blue Regenerative then took interested folks on a paddock walk at Tarinore Farm during the early afternoon.

*Below - Winterbourne Landcare Group members relax while hearing from Rachel Betts from New England Weeds Authority.*





# Upcoming Time Out With Friends Events...

Watch eNews for more information on the following upcoming events:

1. Wongwibinda area –  
Wednesday 10th February  
2021 TBC
2. Booroolong area –  
Saturday 6th March 2021  
TBC
3. Baldersleigh/Wandsworth  
area – Tuesday 9th March  
2021 TBC
4. Balala-Brushgrove area –  
Wednesday 10th March  
2021 TBC
5. Lower Apsley River  
Landcare area – Tuesday  
16th March 2021 TBC
6. Glen Morrison –  
Wednesday 17th March  
2021 TBC

Southern New England Landcare secured \$16,460 through the Primary Health Network (PHN Hunter New England and Central Coast) to facilitate eight 'Time Out With Friends' events around our region.

The events aim to support mental resilience and wellbeing within the community.



## Koalas Featured at Special Forum

**A productive Regional Stakeholder Forum was held on 15th December 2020 for the Northern Tablelands Koala Partnership Project.**

Representatives from Local Councils, Local Aboriginal Land Councils, lead State Government agencies, the University of New England and community organisations from across the region contributed.

Contributions will support key activities of the project and direct a diverse range of "on ground" activities including the role of our community in assisting koala conservation.

This includes identifying, conserving and establishing key koala corridors around the fringes of Armidale and into bushland areas.

The project will also develop a strategy outlining how koala care networks including first response care and transport to hospitals can be improved.

The activities pave the way for a number of community-based events to be held in the first half of 2021. More information at [www.snelandcare.org.au](http://www.snelandcare.org.au) or by phoning 6772 9123.

## General Jeffery Award for Soil Health

A new award was launched by Landcare Australia in early December 2020 to coincide with World Soil Health Day.

This prestigious award honours Australia's first National Soils Advocate General Jeffery.

The General Jeffery Soil Health Award is open to any individual farmer, land manager, extension specialist or educator who is making an outstanding contribution to improving soil health in Australia.

Nominate someone at <https://landcareaustralia.org.au/general-jeffery-soil-health-award-nomination-form/>

## Thank You!

Southern New England Landcare was recently congratulated by Regional Australia Bank for its successful participation in their Community Partnership Program.

As a result of participating in the program, Southern New England Landcare received a bonus payment of \$6,715.08!

These funds will be very helpful in ensuring our organisation continues to serve our own members to the best of its ability.

We'd like to thank all the community members who nominated Southern New England Landcare as their preferred community organisation recipient. We appreciate it!

We also thank Regional Australia Bank for instigating such an innovative and unique program that helps thousands of community groups across regional Australia fundraise each year.



# Greener Grazing *with* Global Warming

- *Dr Christine Jones* -  
- *Dr Judi Earl* -

Two fabulous presenters  
who both began with Southern New England Landcare

**24-25 March 2021**  
**Uralla**

**Principles. Paddocks. Party.**  
**Potential.**

**A milestone event to celebrate our journey.**

Watch eNews or [www.snelandcare.org.au](http://www.snelandcare.org.au)  
for more details as they become available.





# Frog Dreaming Awarded LNSW Seed Funding

**Chair of Southern New England Landcare (SNEL) Network, David Henderson, welcomed funding from the Landcare NSW Natural Disaster Seed Fund this week to help with post-bushfire and drought recovery activities in the local community.**

The funding will help Southern New England Landcare host the Frog Dreaming two-day community workshop for primary school students and Armidale Urban Rivercare members undertake revegetation work at the fire affected site adjacent to St Peter's Preschool

Southern New England Landcare was one of 16 Landcare organisations who received funding across NSW.

Landcare NSW CEO, Dr Adrian Zammit, said the funding will help support Landcare groups such as SNEL re-establish projects and sites that have been affected by drought and bushfires.

"It is so important to support our NSW Landcare community through these times. With so much damage and loss, this is just one small way we are supporting our communities back to recovery."

"As the state peak body for Landcare, our aim is to provide

resources to help Landcarers in NSW to care for our land, environment and communities. By releasing 100% of the funds from our fundraising appeal we are ensuring that our communities have the support and resources they need to deal with the challenges they have all faced," said Dr Zammit.

Mr Henderson said the funding will help bring together community members to work together to restore the natural environment.

"Our communities have had incredible challenges thrown at them over the past couple of years. These projects will be a way of bringing all members of our community, from primary school children to retirees, work together to undertake activities that support our native flora and fauna and the local community," said Mr Henderson.

These projects are supported by Landcare NSW as part of funding received through the Landcare NSW Natural Disaster Seed Fund.

While Frog Dreaming normally occurs during October each year, Southern New England Landcare made the decision during COVID-19 restrictions, to delay the event until first term of 2021.

## Revegetating Urundangie Creek Grant

Malpas Catchment Group recently obtained \$5000 through Northern Tablelands Local Land Services so that landholders adjacent to Urundangie Creek could protect this important tributary to the region's water supply (Malpas Dam).

Work is well underway on several properties and will be completed once good rain makes final plantings possible!

## Short Film – Maximising Plant Survival

Southern New England Landcare recently secured \$5000 from Northern Tablelands Local Land Services for a grant to make a short film on maximising seedling survival in revegetation project areas.

The film will star local identities and should be finalised towards the end of February 2021.

It will feature on our Youtube and social media channels so watch eNews for details of its release!

# Silvopasture<sup>2020</sup>

## Demo & Intro Field Day

**Trees and pastures  
for resilience and  
long-term profit**

**Sunday 2nd May 2021  
LIVE ONLINE EVENT!**

**Rowan Reid** - Australia's #1 advocate for agroforestry, author of 'Heartwood' and founder of the International Master TreeGrower program and Australian Agroforestry Foundation

- Species selection and establishment
- Maintenance and integration
- Production and harvesting
- Ecosystem services with Prof Nick Reid
- Field's Environmental Solutions
- Kentucky Tree Nursery

Photo by Michael Taylor

**More at [www.silvopasture.com.au](http://www.silvopasture.com.au)  
or [www.snelandcare.org.au](http://www.snelandcare.org.au)**

**Tickets \$26, \$36 or \$66  
by 16th April 2021 at  
[stickytickets.com.au/XT1BD](http://stickytickets.com.au/XT1BD)  
or by calling 02 6772 9123.**



This event is supported by the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, through funding from Australian Government's National Landcare Program, and Harnham Landcare Group - a sub-group of Southern New England Landcare Ltd.





# New Partnership with Sustainable Living Armidale Inc

**Southern New England Landcare Ltd has partnered with Sustainable Living Armidale Inc to secure \$13,500 for a pilot project called *Peri-Urban Dwellers and Climate Risk - Education and Capacity Building for Adaptation and Mitigation*.**

The project will begin to address climate risk among the Armidale Regional Council Local Government Area community.

It has been observed that landholders on larger properties with a stronger commercial focus are beginning to identify and address climate change risk with assistance from Landcare and Local Land Services.

Peri-urban/lifestyle block/hobby farm property owners on the other hand, operate differently. They usually have a much higher proportion of off-farm income, and less focus on property management issues that could reduce climate change risks.

The project will draw on the experiences and knowledge of landholders on smaller lifestyle or hobby farm properties during the recent unprecedented drought, with respect to the risks and dangers they became aware of, and what they can do for the future to improve adaptation.

We will do this through three 'pilot' workshops run using participatory leadership processes. The goal is capacity building through sharing personal experiences within and across local community hubs as well as summary documentation and sharing across the community.

Southern New England Landcare will engage SLA's Annette Kilarr as a part time project officer, and support the workshop events. SLA membership and peri-urban and Landcare community members will provide in-kind volunteer contributions.

Participants will be invited to attend one of 3 half day workshops at either Kelly's Plains/Dangarsleigh, Black Mountain/Guyra or Dumaresq/Invergowrie between March and April 2021.

A Final Forum in mid May 2021 will present findings and facilitate discussion among the three communities and the wider public.

While this is a small scale pilot project, we envisage the outcomes will support an expanded program of capacity building in the following financial year, if further funding is secured.



# Recent Grant Submissions

Southern New England Landcare staff have been busy supporting grant applications, with several recently submitted.

## Smart Farm Small Grant

Rachel Lawrence worked on a grant for the Smart Farm Small Grants called 'Plotting for Resilience and Regeneration: graziers connecting to revisit fundamentals and explore new approaches to sustainable grazing management'.

This grant will support group members to conduct simple grazing trials.

## Environmental Trust Restoration & Rehabilitation Grant

Another application was made to the NSW Environmental Trust in partnership with Armidale Regional Council called 'High Country Habitat - R&R at Guyra Dams'.

This grant will protect and enhance important remnant vegetation around Guyra Dams with the cost of new fencing provided by ARC and the cost of enhancement seedlings and community events provided by the grant.



# PEER GROUP MENTORING SERVICE FOR AGROFORESTRY



## FARMER TO FARMER EXTENSION

FOR FARMERS  
MANAGING TREES  
FOR REASONS THAT  
MATTER TO THEM!



## WHO ARE THE MENTORS?

- LOCAL EXPERIENCED TREE GROWERS
- MASTER TREEGROWER PROGRAM GRADUATES
- TRAINED MENTORS



## WHAT SERVICES ARE PROVIDED?

- FARM VISITS SUPPORT YOUR IDEAS & GOALS
- TECHNICAL EXPERTISE AND INFORMATION
- SITE REPORTS



## WHAT TOPICS CAN BE COVERED?

- Shade and shelter
- Farm aesthetics
- Natives or exotics
- Tree establishment
- Habitat
- Farm tree planning
- Native forest management
- Species identification
- Trees for timber

## HOW DO WE KNOW IT WORKS?

Most significant change technique tells the story...

*The suggestions and guidance of what species to try, planting locations, when and in what season to plant, as well as planting designs have all been of tremendous value.*

Helen Nix & David Menzies, Castlebrook, Urella

*The mentors passed on valuable insights about the diversity in my forest and helped me see it as a whole ecosystem. They also provided useful practical tips which filled out much of my own opinions on where to go with its management.*

Rob Laurie, Brigadoon, Nowendoc



[WWW.SNELANDCARE.ORG.AU](http://WWW.SNELANDCARE.ORG.AU)

A project of the New England Agri-Woodland Network (NEAWN), a sub-group of Southern New England Landcare Ltd. This project is supported with funding from the Australian Government and in-kind contributions from the Australian Agroforestry Foundation.





## Community Participation

LP-010-003

### Saving Soil Health & Hydration

Southern New England Landcare Ltd



#### Variations on Natural Sequence Farming

##### The issue

Past practices on many farms have reduced our ability to hold water and slow run-off. The consequence is a dehydrated landscape with vegetation, soils and riparian areas unable to hold water.

Instead, rain that does fall is largely lost as either evaporation or run-off taking valuable soil and nutrients with it, and causing erosion or unwanted nutrient enrichment downstream. This is bad for business as costly inputs are lost and plant growth is way less than optimal, and bad for downstream biodiversity.

##### The solution

Using National Landcare Program Funds, we investigated 'variations' on Natural Sequence Farming, and demonstrated what some local landholders were doing to improve on-farm results, through two events attended by 70 local farmers:

1. **Regenerating Rural Landscapes Bootcamp** with David Hardwick and Damon Telfer on 16-17 September 2020.
2. **Rehydrating Roumalla Creek Catchment, an Introduction to Natural Sequence Farming** with Stuart Andrews on 22 October 2020.

##### The impact

Restoring hydration to farms comes from supporting healthy, diverse perennial plant communities on all areas of the farm, and using management practices to slow water flow naturally, especially high in the landscape. A diversity of plants builds soil during good times and protects soil during difficult times. 'Groundcover, grass and more grass' and 'Slow water at the top before it creates a problem at the bottom' were common reflections among participants.

In the New England, we can strive to maintain 100+% ground cover and substantial herbage mass so that rainfall infiltrates rather than running off. Conditions in 2019 were challenging but the higher the diversity of plants, including unpalatable ones, the more likely there are strong perennial grasses that respond quickly when rain falls, slow overland flow, holding water in the landscape.

Participants learnt to see their farm as a mosaic of patches. 'Even though I had divided my place into a patchwork of systems, I hadn't really noted it, and so by noting it, it is easier to see the benefits and use those benefits to improve further' (participant).

People were enthusiastic about some of the more physical interventions, but recognised they need more knowledge and experience before implementing. 'Depends on cost of creating contours', and 'Would need to do the full course to confident to carry out major changes in the landscape' were typical comments.



##### Key facts

- Two events supported 70 local farmers to better understand landscape rehydration.
- Supporting diverse and healthy perennial plant communities restores hydration to farms.
- There exists a clear desire for deeper understanding in group settings, perhaps through demonstration sites.
- 'Landscapes can be regenerated and it's not as expensive as you think' (participant).
- #traptherain

##### Project Partners



This initiative made possible by the NSW Landcare Program. A collaboration of Local Land Services and Landcare NSW Inc. supported by the NSW Government.



17 Dec, 2020

# Membership Renewals

**As a financial member, you will have received a full colour hard copy of this Landchat in your letterbox.**

Only current financial members receive a hard copy of Landchat in their letterbox, so if you received this landchat via email only, chances are your membership is not current!

Members also get occasional special treats like free or discounted tickets to events.

You can become a member or check your membership at <https://snelandcare.org.au/membership/membership-signup.html>

Watch for email reminders when your membership renewal anniversary comes around. The email provides a clickable link for easy renewal.

If you have missed your renewal email, or are unsure of your membership status, please contact [mail@snelandcare.org.au](mailto:mail@snelandcare.org.au) or on 02 6772 9123 and us to check for you.

# Thinking about an agroforestry project?

Southern New England Landcare has six local landholders who have been trained in Peer Mentoring for Agroforestry projects. Here's how it works:

1. Make contact with us and tell us a bit about what you think you would like to do. It might be some kind of food tree production, native trees and shrubs, shelter belts or any other agroforestry idea.
2. We then make contact with those of our peer mentors who
3. who have skills in the area of your interest, and set up an appropriate time for 2-3 of them to visit you on your property.
4. The mentors spend 2-3 hours with you on your property, taking a look around and asking you lots of questions and discussing ideas and taking some photos.
5. The lead mentor will then prepare a site visit report for you (approx 12 pages), detailing everything discussed, including possible ways forward, with

useful links, contacts and even species lists.

5. You then have access to another 2 visits from your chosen mentor over the next 12 months to support you in your endeavours.

The cost of the program is \$100 plus GST. We will invoice you when you receive your site report.

For more information or to book a site visit, contact [karen.zirkler@snelandcare.org.au](mailto:karen.zirkler@snelandcare.org.au) or phone 02 6772 9123.

If undeliverable return to Southern New England Landcare,  
Suite 10, 128 Beardy Street, PO Box 85, Armidale 2350.  
Tel 02 6772 9123, mail@snelandcare.org.au.

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# Landchat

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Landchat presents a forum for the expression of a range of opinions. While every effort is made to publish accurate information, Southern New England Landcare and its employees do not accept responsibility for statements made and opinions expressed in this newsletter.



## Need Insurance

**for your farm, equipment, car or household?**

We recommend Wesfarmers Federation Insurance, proud supporters of Landcare.

Mention you are a member of Southern New England Landcare, and 3% of the value of your premium is returned to SNELandcare to support projects! Contact David de Ferranti on 1300 934934 or 0412 328 911.



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