

South Gippsland Landcare Network Annual Report 2014/2015



South Gippsland Landcare Network

Statement of Purpose

South Gippsland Landcare Network, through community action, helps to preserve, protect & enhance the long-term sustainability of farming and the environment in South Gippsland.

Network Overview

The South Gippsland Landcare Network (SGLN) was formed in 1995 by a key group of volunteers. The South Gippsland Landcare Network today covers 4000 square kilometres across the South Gippsland Shire and areas of Cardinia, Bass Coast and Baw Baw Shires. The Network encompasses 19 Landcare Groups from Nyora in the West across to Welshpool in the East and from Mirboo North down to our southern most group, Fish Creek which extends to Wilson's Promontory.

The SGLN is managed by a volunteer Board of Management, Executive and administration support is provided by the Network Coordinator - Jenny O'Sullivan.



A Network Snapshot:

2014/2015

- 1 Agnes River Landcare
- 2 Allambee Community Landcare
- 3 Allambee South Landcare
- 4 Arawata Landcare
- 5 Fish Creek Landcare
- 6 Foster North Landcare
- 7 Franklin River Landcare
- 8 Friends of Turton's Creek
- 9 Hallston Landcare
- 10 Loch Nyora Landcare
- 11 Mardan/Mirboo North Landcare
- 12 Mt Eccles/Wild Dog Valley Landcare
- 13 Mt Lyall Landcare
- 14 Nerrena Landcare
- 15 Poowong Landcare
- 16 Tarwin Landcare
- 17 Tarwin Valley Landcare
- 18 Triholm Landcare
- 19 Equine Landcare (not geographically based)

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Executive Summary

We have had a fantastic year. The groups and network have been very active. We have also been successful with receiving funding for new projects through State funding with the Communities for Nature Program and Federal funding through the 25th Anniversary Landcare grants.

The achievements for South Gippsland Landcare Network for 2014-2015 include:

- 56,545 plants in the ground
- 8 kgs of seed sown
- 18.8 km of fencing
- 33.7 ha of revegetation
- 147 ha of remnant protected
- 149 ha weeds controlled
- 30 field days or information sessions run
- 7 training courses run with support from DEPI and private consultants
- One pasture trial established at Buffalo
- One fox action group in Corner Inlet

These figures only accounts for the works funded through the 15 projects run by SGLN this year. This doesn't include all the individual work done on farm that is self-funded by land owners as well as the group activities that are self-funded and driven.

Working with others is critical for our success. We have had ongoing support from West Gippsland CMA and Port Phillip CMA, South Gippsland Water, South Gippsland Shire Council and The Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR) formerly DEPI and Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning (DELWP). We have built many new relationships this year that have assisted us to be more effective. Key partnerships developed/consolidated this year are included in our partners report.

This year we reviewed and updated our strategic plan. We had a great meeting in December at Ian and Helen Hasty's property where we discussed what the groups and Network are doing and opportunities to improve in the key areas of Caring for the Land, Landcare Groups and Membership, Funding, Education, Communication & Promotion, Collaboration and Partnerships and Governance. This formed a foundation for updating our plan.

This year the Foster North Landcare Group became a sub-group of SGLN.

On top of delivering projects we are very active with communications and community engagement. Key activities this year include:

- SGLN website, facebook page and twitter updated

on a regular basis. Our South Gippsland Landcare Network facebook page now has 309 likes. We have also created a Weeds in West Gippsland page.

- Ran a partners day at Mark Walters, to thank those that support us and sponsor activities. Was a great day.
- Jenny O'Sullivan and Belinda Brennan presented on Working with CMA for the National Landcare Conference in September, 2014
- SGLN ran a tour linked with the National Landcare Conference thanks to Mark Walters with 37 people on the tour. Phil Piper attended the whole conference funded by WGCMA and helped with the tour.
- Staff and board attended WGCMA and Port Phillip CMA Landcare Forums
- Meeting with South Gippsland Shire Council to reinvigorate the Real Carbon Action partnership
- SGLN AGM held on Saturday October 4th at Lucinda Estate, Leongatha with guest speaker Prof. Kate Auty Vice Chancellor's Fellowship at the University of Melbourne exploring the environment, climate change and the community. 58 people attended.
- SGLN is an active participant of Gippsland Sustainable Agriculture Network.
- Jenny presented to Foster Rotary on South Gippsland Landcare Network and the activities in the region.
- Radio interview with Rochelle Hunt, ABC rural 774 on Bee day and local regional ABC
- Jenny presented on Landcare and sustainable agriculture at the Port Welshpool Seadays Festival on in January 2015.
- Staff attended 2 day On Country cultural heritage training in East Gippsland facilitated by WGCMA and GLaWC.
- Staff attended numerous group meeting and AGM's
- SGLN staff are on many committees overseeing projects in the region.
- Staff attended South Gippsland Sustainability Festival with a display with Bass Coast Landcare Network.

Thanks to the board members for their significant contribution to the Network function. They are all very active and contribute in many ways supporting and encouraging the team in the office.



Chairperson Overview

June 30 2015 concluded my first year as Chairman of the South Gippsland Landcare Network. I have been impressed with the achievements of the Network and members in improving the environment and agricultural practises across South Gippsland.

Since the beginning of the financial year, 56,545 indigenous plants have been planted across 33.7 ha and 147 ha of remnant vegetation has been protected. None of this work would have been possible without support from a range of stakeholders.

We continued to work with long term valued partners and appreciate our new relationships that have formed this year as outlined in this report. Through a number of community tree planting days, the Networks relationship with Korumburra, Leongatha and Mirboo Secondary Colleges has also gone from strength to strength.

In recognition of the important role partnering agencies and local businesses have, a supporters lunch was held at my Loch property in August 2014. The lunch provided a great opportunity to learn more about the businesses and agencies Landcare deals with, as well as explore options for future collaboration.

This year has seen the continuation of a number of longer term projects including the 'Friends of Strzelecki Koala- Habitat for Life' project which commenced in 2012. The project, which is funded by the Victorian Governments Communities for Nature program, has this year seen the planting of 19,705 indigenous plants across 16.2 ha.

Two other longer term projects are the Healthy Soils and Demonstrating Sustainable Farm Practices projects supported by the West Gippsland CMA and the Westernport Landcare Network, through funding from the Australian Governments National Landcare Programme. These projects have enabled innovative sustainable agricultural practices to be trialled and implemented in both the West Gippsland and Westernport Catchments across the Landcare Network area.

To plan for the future of SGLN, Network members, Board and staff held a SGLN strategic planning session at the property of Board member Helen Hasty in December 2014. Those who attended shared their Landcare stories and ideas for future opportunities. This was the first step in developing a Strategic Plan for the next 5 years.

Coal Seam Gas remains an issue in South Gippsland. All the Landcarers I talk to unanimously don't want CSG. The main concern is the risk of contamination of our water and loss of the best productive land in Australia.

Ongoing funding has been a real concern for Landcare. Networking is vital if we are to grow in the modern age. Facebook and the like are necessary ways to do this. We need to network so if funding dries up we will survive.

Don't tell me you don't have internet. Get a smart phone. Your children will be able to help you. If you are into Landcare you need to get connected. Get with it or get left behind. Tell us if it's a problem and we can help you use your phone.

A special thank you to all the Board members who put in many days of voluntary work. They are an awesome group.

Thank you for all your support and I look forward to the next year and beyond.

Mark Walters

Chair - South Gippsland Landcare Network



Photo top: Mark Walters talks at the Demonstrating Sustainable Farm Practices in Western Port, Port Phillip and Yarra Catchments Project field day held on his property.

Photo bottom, demonstrating the hiko planter at the field day.

Board Member Profiles

Board Meetings

Meetings held in the 2014/15 financial year were:

- **Board Meeting 37:** September 9th, 2014
- **Annual General Meeting:** October 4th, 2014
- **Board Meeting 38:** November 10th, 2014
- **Board Meeting 39:** January 12th, 2015
- **Board Meeting 40:** March 6th, 2015
- **Board Meeting 41:** May 4th, 2015
- **Board Meeting 42:** June 26th, 2015

Mark Walters- Chair

[Attended 6 of 6 board meetings]

Poowong Landcare Group

Mark Walters has operated an Accounting and Financial Planning business in Melbourne for the past 25 years, more recently moving into property development.

Five years ago he purchased 240 acres of rolling hills at Loch. He runs beef cattle on the property. The farm had very little vegetation on it and Mark is in the process of revegetating the gullies and providing shelter belts for stock. Both Landcare and Melbourne Water have provided assistance for this. He has also put in 25 ha of commercial timber plantation for saw log timber.

Mark was involved in the Slow the Flow project in Westernport as a cluster representative and was appointed to the SGLN Board in 2010.

Frank Dekker – Vice Chair

[Attended 5 of 6 board meetings]

Hallston Landcare Group

Frank has been a resident of Hallston his entire life. He is married to Jeanne and together they have two beautiful daughters Evie 15 and Simone 14. He is heavily involved in numerous sporting clubs particularly tennis, badminton and golf.

While he spent a short period of his life teaching, his working life has predominantly been spent as a dairy farmer. Initially as a farm hand, then as a share farmer and now owning the family farm.

The Landcare movement has long interested Frank and he feels the principles of sustainable agriculture need to be explored to care and protect our valuable land. The Hallston Landcare Group required a new secretary and with experience in this type of role,

Frank was only too happy to follow Mike Carnell's excellent role model as past secretary. The Hallston Landcare Group has a strong core of members and is steadily expanding its membership.

Dawn Marotti - Secretary/Treasurer

[Attended 4 of 6 board meetings]

Arawata Landcare Group

Dawn and her husband Mark made a tree change from Melbourne to South Gippsland in 1993. They started tree planting on their small acreage but quickly ran out of space. In 2000 they bought 60 acres of steep hill country in Kardella, that was known locally as 'ragwort hill'.

After 18 months of intense weed spraying they had made a significant impact and were fortunate enough to have their hard work recognised, winning the Dick Howarth Award for Individual Landcarer. Dawn has been an active member of Arawata Landcare for the last 14 years and held the position of Secretary/Treasurer for the past 9 years.

Dawn and Mark have planted over 6,000 trees on the creek and steep gullies on their farm. They are particularly interested in establishing wildlife corridors to connect with surrounding plantations and a sanctuary for the Giant Gippsland Earthworms which are prevalent along their properties creek banks. Dawn joined the SGLN Board in 2008 and values the opportunity this provides to contribute to the regional network.

Mark Uren

[Attended 6 of 6 board meetings]

Mardan Mirboo North Landcare Group

Mark has been a member of the SGLN Board for over 10 years. Mark originally comes from Melbourne where he worked as an IT Manager.

In 2003 he established a native seed business and developed several novel techniques to collect and process native seed for specific revegetation projects.

Mark has collected large quantities of seed for projects such as the Basslink Offset Project in Giffard and the Delatite Arm Revegetation Project on Lake Eildon. More recently he has been involved in Bushfire Recovery work in the Latrobe Valley and most



recently was the Project Manager for the GippsTAFE Bushfire Recovery and Community Jobs Project which employed about 40 trainees and works crew to assist with bushfire recovery activities in the Latrobe Valley. Mark also took on the role as Chair of the South Gippsland Community Weeds Taskforce in 2013.

Stephen Hoole
 [Attended 1 of 6 board meetings]
Allambee Community Landcare Group

Stephen has been a Board member for six years. He is a member of the Allambee Community Landcare Group. He has been involved in Landcare for about 9 years now after purchasing a 40 acre bush block in Allambee at the end of 2005.



Stephen and his family's initial interest were to meet people in the local area and learn more about caring for the land in general. The enjoyment that knowing local people and the property brought attracted Stephen to Landcare and he joined the SGLN Board in 2009. He has enjoyed the experience immensely.

Stephen and his family are now living at Allambee having finished building a house as an owner-builder. Stephen is currently working as a Family and Youth worker based in Morwell. He hopes to remain in the area and continue his involvement in Landcare and the local community for a long time to come.

Rosemary Trease
 [Attended 5 of 6 board meetings]
Mardan Mirboo North Landcare Group

Rosemary has been a member of the SGLN Board for eight years. Graeme and Rosemary Trease farm 130 hectares (320 acres) of country, first selected by Graeme's family in 1884.



The property, "Seven Streams" is named for the tributaries of Berry's Creek, part of the Tarwin River catchment that flow through the property.

When Graeme first bought the land from his father, there were no trees on it at all, apart from some rows of conifers. This was one half of the present farm, in 1987; the Trease's bought the other half from Graeme's uncle. The property is a dairy farm, farmed organically for the past nine years.

As part of her Diploma of Agriculture studies, Rosemary developed a whole farm plan which aimed to improve the productivity of the farm, whilst increasing

biodiversity and the water quality in the property's waterways. Rosemary received a highly commended in the DPI Sustainable Farming Award - West Gippsland at the State Landcare Awards.

Arie Bos
 [Attended 4 of 6 board meetings]
Agnes River District Landcare Group

Arie Bos has been involved with the South Gippsland Landcare Network for many years as a landholder of 200 acres and some roads and perches.



Arie has fenced off and planted all the creek banks and a couple of steep bits over the years. Arie has had the honour to receive a number of Landcare awards - local and state. He is a passionate gardener, and is engaged in running a small food garden with the pupils of Toora Primary School.

Arie is a life member of the Welshpool Horticultural Society and Chair of the Agnes River District Landcare Group. Arie has achieved a body of work that includes working with volunteers, management committees and Landcare Groups to restore the environment in his local area and is rightly recognised by all as a Landcare champion.

Jean Carnell
 [Attended 6 of 6 board meetings]
Hallston Landcare Group

Jean made a tree-change with husband Mike from Melbourne to Hallston in 2000. They were lucky to find a beautiful small acreage with bush, birds, animals and a creek. They joined the Hallston Landcare Group and quickly became part of the local community.



Jean and Mike have planted about 2000 trees on the property to provide wild-life corridors; many have survived in spite of the predations of the local wallabies. Jean became a member of the SGLN Steering Committee and since then has served on the various Network Management Committees and the Board. Jean's passion is for the improvement of biodiversity in our region, and has been President of the South Gippsland Seed Bank for over 12 years.

Jean received a highly commended for the Australian Government Individual Landcarer Award at the State Landcare Awards in 2011.

Diana Droog

[Attended 3 of 6 board meetings]
Franklin River Landcare Group

Diana is a semi-retired business woman, who has a passion for native fauna and flora.

Diana was a Financial Controller, Compliance Officer and Company Secretary for Cumpston Sarjeant for 15 years. Normally residing in Hawthorn, Diana and her husband regularly come to South Gippsland to revegetate their 15 hectare property on Corner inlet, south of Toora.



She is an active member of Franklin River Landcare Group and has been on the SGLN Board since October 2011.

Phil Piper

[Attended 5 of 6 board meetings]
Mardan Mirboo North Landcare Group

Phil joined Landcare in 2001, was a founding member and inaugural Treasurer of the Mardan/Mirboo North Landcare group which formed in 2002.

In 2006 he went from Treasurer to President, a role which he has only just handed on. In the 2007 Better Farming Landcare Awards, he won the Dick Howarth Individual Landcarer Award.



Phil and his wife Kate live fairly self-sufficiently on a steep 10 acre block near Mirboo North. Phil with the help of Landcare and the group has revegetated all the steep gullies of his property and the 55 acre property next door with tube stock, which now looks nearly like natural bush.

Phil has always been passionate about the care of our beautiful land and is particularly concerned about the threat of coal and coal seam gas to our environment. Phil joined the Board in 2012.

Sally Jelbart

[Attended 6 of 6 board meetings]
Tarwin Landcare Group

Sally was born in the UK and grew up there and in Canada before travelling extensively and finally settling in Australia in 1983.

Sally has farmed in her own right for the past 25 years as well as helping her husband, Don, in his enterprise, working off farm and raising a family. Sally has worked in banking, the organic food industry and 10 years ago trained as a myotherapist.



In the mid 90's through Gippsland Natural Sally and Don became involved in an extensive biodiversity survey on our property, a process Sally thoroughly enjoyed. Having been involved with Landcare since it started down here, Sally has seen the benefits to the whole area over the past 24 years.

Helen Hasty

[Attended 3 of 6 board meetings]
Allambee Community Landcare Group

Helen has been an active member of the Mardan Mirboo North Landcare group since 2004. Their Landcare group plants trees and has a BBQ afterwards. Helen and her husband, Ian live full time on our South Gippsland beef property where they have planted over 10,000 trees for waterways, landslips, shelterbelts and koalas.



The Hasty's have been members of a conservation group where they lived in Melbourne that did planting and weed eradication in parks and flora and fauna reserves for about 25 years. In Melbourne the Hasty's ran a lighting manufacturing business and have since taken up farming.

Helen is a keen beekeeper and gardener. She likes to milk cows and walks and is learning to ballroom dance.

South Gippsland Landcare Network Staff

SGLN employed three staff members in the 2014/15 financial year. Staff profiles, roles, time allocation and funding source are listed below.

Jenny O'Sullivan,
Network Coordinator - 2.5 days per week

Kate Williams,
Landcare Project Officer - Corner Inlet, 3 days per week

Nicole Walsh,
Landcare Project Officer FOSK, full time, May 2013 onwards

Jenny O'Sullivan Network Coordinator

Time: 0.5 FTE (2.5 days/week)

Funding: Victorian Local Landcare Facilitator Initiative, Healthy Soils Sustainable Farms and Project Management Funding.

Profile: Jenny is passionate about sustainable agriculture, particularly in Gippsland where she and her husband run a 680ha beef and sheep property.

Jenny's interest in developing sustainable food systems began in 1998 when she initiated the development of Gippsland Natural beef. In 2002 she managed the Gippsland Beef and Lamb Environmental Management Systems (EMS) Pilot Project. Meat sold from properties with the Gippsland EMS is marketed under the brand Enviromeat.

In 2007, Jenny was the driving force behind the "The Future Food and Fibre Project". This project explored the concept of sustainability across a range of Gippsland agricultural businesses, and paved the way for the Healthy Soils, Sustainable Farms – tackling soil acidification in West Gippsland project.

More recently, Jenny and her husband Paul have created an exciting agri-tourism business, Gippsland Food Adventures, that is promoting Gippsland as a premium food region. Food and wine lovers are taken onto the farms, vineyards and into the restaurants where good quality Gippsland produce is made or served.

Roles:

- Executive support to Board and Public Fund Management Committee
- Strategic planning and partnership coordination
- Budget development and management including preparation of funding applications
- Staff Management
- Liaison and partnership development, South Gippsland Shire
- Corporate sponsorship and business partner support
- Project Management – Turtons Creek Strategic Plan
- Delivery of Victorian Local Landcare Facilitator Initiative

Liaison/ representative role

- *Gippsland Sustainable Agriculture Network
- *Corner Inlet Steering Committee
- *Regional and State Landcare



Kate Williams Project Officer

Time: 0.6 FTE (part time)

Funding: Corner Inlet Connections (Federal Government), Victorian Environmental Partnership Project (State Government), Victorian Landcare Grant 2013/2014 (State Government)

Profile:

Kate has been employed by the Network as a Project Officer since March 2010. Prior to working with the Network, Kate has fulfilled environmental roles within State (Vicroads, Metro North West Region, Sunshine Vic) and local government (Mitchell Shire Council, Broadford Vic). Past and current roles have focused on pest plant and animal extension/ education, natural resource management and environmental project management. Qualified with a Bachelor of Environmental Science majoring in Conservation Ecology (Deakin University) and a Diploma of Environmental Management (Swinburne University of Technology).

Roles:

- Coordination and delivery Corner Inlet Connections project
- Working with WGCMA for the delivery of the Cape Liptrap to Bunorong Biodiversity Project in the Tarwin and Fish Creek areas
- Coordination and implementation of Network Information System for all SGLN membership and contact data
- Site assessments and assisting with the delivery of the Friends of the Strzelecki Koala-Habitat for Life project in the southern half of the Network area
- Coordination and delivery of the Victorian Landcare Grants project; Waging war on weeds through Landcare Network collaboration
- Executive Support for the Community Weeds Taskforce
- Assisting with delivery of the communities for Nature E. *Strzeleckii* project with Tarwin Valley Landcare group
- Editor of South Gippy News (quarterly newsletter)
- SGLN weeds and Network website - maintenance and further development



Nicole Walsh Project Officer

Time: 1.0 FTE (full time)

Funding: Project Funding - Friends of Strzelecki Koala, Demonstrating Sustainable Farm Practices, Latrobe Koala Corridor Project, TLS and Giant Gippsland Earthworm

Profile:

Nicole has been with the Network since May 2013. Nicole had worked for 14 years in Northern Tasmania. She worked for a number of years as a Planning Officer with the Parks and Wildlife Service before moving into natural resource management in 2005. Nicole worked for Tamar NRM for three years as Project Officer where she managed a grant to help landholders fence remnant bush and riparian areas from livestock. She has Bachelor of Education majoring in Environmental Science and a Graduate Diploma in Natural Resources from the University of New England, Armidale.

Roles:

- Coordination and delivery of Friends of Strzelecki Koalas – Habitat for Life Project
- Executive support for the South Gippsland Koala Working Group
- Upgrading and maintenance of FOSK interactive website
- Targeted Land Stewardship - Westernport region
- Communities for Nature – Latrobe Valley (Northern Strzelecki) Koala Project
- Coordinating the Giant Gippsland Earthwork Project
- Participation in Demonstrating Sustainable Farm practices- managing two projects



South Gippsland Landcare Network Partners

SGLN is primarily funded with projects that have been developed in partnership with other agencies. Partnerships with all sectors of the community are vital for the Network to deliver high quality projects.

SGLN partners include:

West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (WGCMA)

WGCMA hosts the Network staff and provides human resources support as a package of employment. A Landcare Employment Policy and Procedure developed in conjunction with Landcare Networks in West Gippsland demonstrates the commitment of WGCMA to Landcare and supporting their outcomes. The Network delivers a range of projects on behalf of the WGCMA. WGCMA are able to access larger scale funding and the Network provides access to the community and the on ground delivery of projects. SGLN plays an active role in the Regional Landcare Forum throughout the year.

Port Phillip Westernport Catchment Management Authority (PPWCMA)

As SGLN covers two CMA regions, we have partnerships with both CMAs. We work closely with the PPWCMA in the delivery of services to landholders in the Westernport part of the Network.

South Gippsland Water (SGW)

SGW is a long term supporter of the Network providing \$10,000 in 2014/15 for our One Million Trees project. This is the sixth year they have supported the project. We also ran a planting day with South Gippsland Water at their site in Meeniyah with Leongatha Rotary groups hosting Melbourne groups.

Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (formerly Environment and Primary Industries [DEPI])

SGLN works cooperatively on a number of projects with DEDJTR. The Corner Inlet project is just one example where local Department staff were involved in site assessments, development of Soil Erosion Management Plans and conducting Ifarm training. We also work closely with the branch in Melbourne delivering an Ecotender monitoring contract and the use and development of the EnSym program for all site visits, project mapping and calculations of the environmental benefit of all on ground projects. DEDJTR also were an important partner with the GGE project.

Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning (DELWP)

We have worked closely with Susan Taylor, senior

biodiversity officer with our GGE project. She has been very helpful with any work we do with threatened species.

We have also worked closely with Suzette Fullerton from Regional Services with the Friends of Turtons Creek sub group. She has been instrumental with getting new infrastructure in place and signage.

HVP Plantations

Over recent years, SGLN has developed a relationship with HVP with our Friends of Strzelecki Koala Project. HVP are undertaking Koala census work on their properties which is helping feed valuable information into research on the plight of our Strzelecki Koalas.

HVP was also actively involved in the development of the Turtons Creek Strategic Plan as one of the largest landholders in the Turtons Creek catchment.

Michael's Supa IGA

The South Gippsland Landcare Network is now part of the Michaels Supa IGA Community Rewards Program. All funds raised as part of the program are directly allocated to SGLN's One Million Tree Program. Effectively points for trees (more correctly indigenous plants). The money will be used for grants to Landcare members to protect and enhance our natural environment.

Recently Michael Lorenz handed over a cheque for \$560 for last years' community rewards points. This will go directly to plants as part of our OMT project. Last year we were also successful receiving a grant of \$1000 for our bee project. We also sold plants on a market day for bee friendly gardens.

Federation University – Gippsland Campus

The Friends to Strzelecki Koalas project is working closely with Federation University. Part of the citizen ecologist program has been to help educate community members on the collection of koala scats for DNA testing. This information will help determine the range of the Strzelecki Koala population.

Dr Wendy Wright, Senior Lecturer in Biology & Ecology, School of Applied Sciences & Engineering, Federation University Gippsland Campus is on the FOSK steering committee.

South Gippsland Shire

We have been working with the South Gippsland Shire to build a better relationship and ideally get more actively involved in the joint delivery of services for the South Gippsland environment. The Shire and SGLN work closely a number of issues including

- Actively working with Shire on Sustainability Network and sustainability projects
- Actively involved and supporting the development of the Strategic Plan for Turtons Creek.
- Actively involved in the South Gippsland Community Weeds Taskforce.

Melbourne Water (MW)

SGLN works with Melbourne Water (MW) staff on improving awareness of riparian and water management and accessing advice and funding to conduct works on Landcare member properties. Melbourne Water was a significant contributor to the Giant Gippsland Earthworm project.

Landcare Networks in West Gippsland

SGLN is one of five Landcare Networks (LN) (Yarram Yarram LN, Latrobe Catchment LN, Maffra and District LN, Bass Coast LN) in West Gippsland. We play an active role in working with the other Networks to promote Landcare across the region and deliver high quality outcomes. The joint delivery of projects such as "Healthy Soils Sustainable Farms project" is another way we work closely with our neighbouring Networks. SGLN is a key player in the Regional Landcare Forum.

Landcare Networks in Port Phillip Westernport

As SGLN covers two CMA regions, we play an active role with the Westernport Landcare Network and the Bass Coast Landcare Network in the delivery of the Targeted Land Stewardship Project and the Demonstrating Sustainable Farm Practices Project.

GippsDairy

SGLN has worked closely with Gillian Hayman, NRM Technical Specialist Dairy Australia, to deliver Fert\$mart and the "Farmer Fisher day".

SGLN nominated GippsDairy for the sustainable agriculture award for their great work with natural resource management for the WGCMA Green Carpet awards.

Rotary Clubs of Leongatha, Chadstone, East-Malvern and Malvern Clubs

SGLN worked with the Leongatha Rotary to organise community planting days to encourage Melbourne Rotary groups to visit our area, get involved with Landcare and learn about the region. We ran two planting days in June in Leongatha South and Meeniyan.

South Gippsland beekeepers and Gippsland Agribusiness

SGLN worked closely with South Gippsland Beekeepers and Gippsland Agribusiness to organise and facilitate a bee day in February. This day was very well supported with over 130 people attending. We are keen to continue these important relationships and encourage Landcare members to work closely with our local beekeepers.

Melbourne University

Melbourne University has been involved the South Gippsland Koala Working Group. Pam Whiteley has been involved with presentations on wildlife surveillance and biosecurity and is a member of the group.

Dr. John Ford was the instigator of the Farmer Fisher day and worked closely with the Fishermen from Corner Inlet to connect them with local farmers.

Origin Energy

SGLN worked with Linda French, Community Relations Specialist from Origin Energy to connect with local groups and scope possible projects that they could support.

Australian Deer Association

SGLN ran a deer forum this year to highlight the numbers of deer building up locally and options to control them. We worked with Paul Hockridge, Coordinator with the Australian Deer Association.

Business Partner Program

For the past three years, SGLN has a business partner program which provides benefits to our members as well as supporting our local businesses. We welcomed Brown and Wigg as a supporter, they are offer a generous discounts on all herbicides. We have six businesses came on board offering a range of discounts depending upon the products and services they offer. We also work directly with a range of community organisations to support and promote environmental initiatives.

We ran a day this year to thank our supporters at Mark Walters property. We discussed our joint passion for Landcare and highlighted the value and outcomes achieved through Landcare.



Supporters celebration held at Board Chair Mark Walters property earlier this year.

Landcare Group Reports

There were 19 Landcare Groups in the South Gippsland Network area in 2014/15, including the sub-groups. **There are currently 405 families registered with the FLTA in the South Gippsland Landcare Network area.**

See Appendix 3: SGLN Landcare Group Boundaries Map

Landcare Group	President	Secretary	Treasurer
Agnes River Landcare	Arie Bos	Garry Ardley	Anne Bowden
Allambee Community Landcare	Evelyn Lillie	Judy Lackman	Klaus Jansen
Allambee South Landcare	Tom Butcher	Lyn Butcher	John Bilney
Arawata Landcare	Syd Whyte	Dawn Marotti	Craig Jackson
Fish Creek Landcare	Merran Wilde	Robin Stevens	Pat O'Malley
Franklin River Landcare	Judy Bacon	Hugh Sarjeant	Rae Knee
Hallston Landcare	Steven Reinisch	Frank Dekker	Frank Dekker
Loch Nyora Landcare	Ron Barnacle	Peter Tacey	Peter Siggins
Mardan/Mirboo North Landcare	Helen Hasty	Denyse Menzies	Suzanne Wightman
Mt Eccles/Wild Dog Valley Landcare	Vicki Kenney	Sonia Holt	Pat Spinks
Mt Lyall Landcare	Geoff Ferrier	Frank Bugeja	Lyn Mitchard
Nerrena Landcare	Kevin Hughes	Jill Vella	Coral Hughes
Poowong Landcare	Mark Walters	Peter Jacques	Jeff Clark
South Gippsland Equine Landcare Group	Larissa Judd	Iznaya Kennedy	Fleur Stefani
Tarwin Landcare	Rod Cope	Ray Saunders	Val O'Loughlin
Tarwin Valley Landcare Group	Mick Stuart	Jenny Keitley	Sharon Fisher
Triholm Landcare	Tania Murray	Wilma Mackay	Lyn Skillern

There are currently 69 Network members. This includes the Foster North sub-group, the Friends of Turtons Creek falls, the Network Board and staff and general members the Network.

	Contact person		
Friends of Turtons Creek	Peter Gannon		
Foster North	Corrie Greven		



Left - Tarwin Landcare group exploring local dunes
Right - on the Paddock to Plate tour

Agnes River District Landcare Group

At a group level the Agnes River District Landcare Group had a quiet year. A number of members were involved with the Corner Inlet Blackberry Action Group assisting with planning and undertaking weed control within targeted areas of the Corner Inlet catchment in partnership with the Yarram Yarram Landcare Network.

Several landholders in the Hazel Park area continue to work together in coordinating their fox control efforts. The Gordon's hosted a fox control demonstration day in November 2014.

Protecting and enhancing the Agnes River and its tributaries remains a priority for landholders in the area. A number of members fenced off and revegetated riparian areas as part of the Australian Governments Corner Inlet Connection program administered by the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority. This work not only creates biodiversity linkages but reduces the amount of nutrient and sediment run off to Corner Inlet, benefiting the seagrass meadows that support a range of marine life.

Allambee Community Landcare Group

This year the group held its 20th Annual General meeting. Whilst only four formal meetings have been held throughout the year, all have been well attended by our steady group of financial members. Our informal end of year social gathering at Mt Worth was well patronised as usual, with the relaxed atmosphere providing the opportunity for much discussion on Landcare and other issues.

Our Landcare membership numbers have remained similar to past years with approximately 15 financial families showing good support for each of our scheduled events for the year. Our group made an application for funding from the Communities for Nature Small to Medium grants program in 2014, however as the program was significantly oversubscribed with a large number of highly competitive applications, unfortunately our submission was not successful.

The achievements of member's Landcare projects was the main focus last year, and after viewing the Lackman property mid-year, we held a farm walk at the Evan's property in November. David and Leanne Evans have owned their property for 15 years and when originally purchased it had been used for grazing dairy cattle and was completely devoid of trees, apart from a few trees around the house. With the aid of funding from various Landcare grants and numerous planting weekends with friends and family involved, they have fenced off many steep gullies and marginal land and revegetated these areas. David took us around the property to show us the extensive tree planting (using in excess of 15,000 trees), slip prevention measures and land improvement done on their property. The walk was followed by a BBQ dinner

outside on the lawn completing a very enjoyable day.

Our New Year's social get together is normally held at Mount Worth, however, due to the poor weather conditions the venue was changed to Allambee Camp. Despite the weather, this event was well attended, and it was great to have the use and comfort of their facilities on such a cold miserable January evening.

In June this year our group visited the Warragul & District Historical Museum, with a specially guided tour to view their displays, record files and exhibits. After the tour, a member of the historical society presented a most informative talk on the early history of selection and settlement of the Allambee district with the subsequent extensive logging and timber milling activities which were prevalent in the early 1900's. This afternoon was well supported and members were keen to look at the many maps and other resources held in the museum which related to our district. It is interesting to think that many of our landholders are now revegetating much of this area with indigenous species to return it to its former status prior to clearing by the early settlers.



Photo above: On the Evans Property farm walk, Allambee Community Landcare group members view the revegetation areas. Note: the trees on the top of the hill were the only trees on their property when it was originally purchased.

Allambee South Landcare Group



Photo above: Students from Mirboo North Secondary College lending a hand with tree planting on the Butchers's Allambee South property on August 14 2015.

The group had a recent planting day on Friday the 14th August. South Gippsland Water allocated \$500.00 grants to local catchment farmers for trees grown by Mirboo North Sec College. Allen Riseley bought about 20 students/cadets out to Tom and Lyn Butcher's place in the morning to plant out 650 trees along the Tarwin River, and a similar number were planted at Frank and Jennie Dekker's property at Hallston in the afternoon.

We all then met at the Hallston Hall for a BBQ lunch. It was a very successful day and with all the rain that has followed the planting I'm sure the plants are now well watered in.

Arawata Landcare Group

SGLN through Nicole Walsh has assisted members in lodging applications for projects, koala habitat and landslips project funded by DEPI through Nick Dudley and CMA with Tony Gardner.

- Adam & Tori Martin qualified for a koala project
- John and Linda Fiddelaers and Jenny Wilsher & Jedda McDonough had a SEMP "Soil Erosion Management Plan" developed for their property as part of the Healthy Sustainable Farms Project
- Also a Federal grant realised \$20K that will be shared between 3-4 recipients

The SGLN was informed of its shortcomings regarding consulting back with the groups on approval of projects as one was not eligible according to our criteria and the farm has degraded since it was purchased. Consultation should be mandatory as some applications would be reviewed regarding their participation and good land management practice.

The Reservoir project has cranked up again throughout this year with considerable pine harvesting including the Hyland reservoir with older stock. The next phase will be more difficult as it is all on the North side of the Western Reservoir as well as some very steep terrain. South Gippsland Water have migrated the project to the Bellview reservoir on the western side of Arawata. Several locals have engaged the contractor to harvest private plantations.

Weeds were again on the agenda through attendance at the Community Weeds Task Force with Rob and Linda as well as Syd who is an inaugural member as is Martin Chatfield. Again we have gone through yet another name change DEPI as the enforcement body, no surprise as they can isolate the community again. Syd also attended the Weed Society AGM and 2 day field days at Phillip Island and French Island. Rob & Craig upgraded the spray trailer motor/pump configuration.

Weeds are prominent on the Arawata Landcare agenda and several landholders are to be approached regarding their situation.

The SGLN through Jenny O'Sullivan has engaged on more realistic day events which encompass the whole farming activity network in a field she is familiar with. This will give the forums a stronger base and have

rewards for all landcare and emerging agricultural landholders.

Fish Creek Landcare Group

The Fish Creek Landcare group continues to focus on encouraging the local community in ecological management of remnant bush and farm land, with protection of creeks and drains, and maintenance of a healthy balance between agriculture, remnant vegetation and wildlife.

We are encouraging farmers, interested locals and a significant lifestyle/weekender population to meet this focus with education, native vegetation planting, fencing, weed management and organising interesting local walks.

Our group has 51 members which is less than the past few years, but we have had a significant review of our current financial membership resulting in fewer numbers. We plan to survey our members to put into place activities to meet their needs.

Activities for the past year include:

- Working with the Fish Creek Development group to maintain and encourage use of the Mt Nicoll circuit track.
- Continuing to liaise with the WGCMA with their works of willow removal and weed eradication along the Fish Creek near the township.
- Cheryl Glowry, a local and published historian, spoke at the last AGM on the "History of Fish Creek before the Railways arrived in 1892"
- Jonathon Stevenson, a marine biologist and member of Parks Victoria, presented an evening talk on "The Unique South"
- We are currently working with the Fish Creek Community Garden to re vegetate a steep slope adjacent to the garden and a small section of the rail trail.

Our group has 70 members (this includes families) with very diverse needs and involvement, and an executive committee of 8. Our meetings are bimonthly and we encourage all members to attend and participate in discussion.

Foster North Landcare sub-group

Earlier this year the group moved from being an independent group to a sub-group of the Landcare Network because executive officer positions were unable to be filled. The group will remain a sub-group until a time when interest is shown to fill the positions once again.

Following this, there have been a couple of events over the year. A day at the Sandiford's blueberry and hazelnut farm on Amy's Track was popular. Those that attended learnt about how Ian and Chris manage their land to produce blueberries and hazelnuts. People were keen to find out if blueberry production was suitable for their properties and what the economics of production were.

In June a wild deer information session was held at the Stony Creek Racecourse. Several members attended to learn about their options for the control of wild deer that are having an impact on the local environment.

The group are next catching up over dinner at the Foster Pub on October 3rd 2015. Former group Secretary and Treasurer Rob and Vivienne Jones are moving out of the area. The dinner will provide an opportunity to say thanks to the Jones's for their involvement with Landcare and wish them well with their future endeavours.



Photo above: Ian Sandiford (on the right) explaining the growth and life cycle of blueberries to the group as part of the farm walk in May 2015.

Franklin River Landcare Group

The group was involved with a bike ride event in partnership with SGLN earlier in the year as part of the Sea Change Festival. The bike riders rode along the rail train from Foster and learnt about the history of the Koala Reserve off Rae Knee. We then visited Alan and Judy Bacon's Toora farm on the Franklin River to look at the tree planting works they have undertaken over many years before heading north to the Franklin River Reserve for a BBQ lunch at the Rotunda catered by the group.

Aside from the bike ride event, we also had a walk and Xmas breakup at Diana Droog and Hugh Sarjeant's property right on Corner Inlet at Toora in December 2014. There was some entertaining discussion about local history over drinks and apple strudel for desert. Hugh and Diana were involved with blackberry spraying over summer as part of the Corner Inlet Blackberry Taskforce project.

Friends of Turtons Creek

Not even a fallen Eucalypt blocking the road could stop more than 50 people attending the event to celebrate the beauty, history and future plans for Turtons Creek in January. The tree had fallen in the morning and blocked traffic in either direction. Undeterred, over 50 attendees sat up their deck chairs up on the road around the tree and hosted their meeting looking over the creek. The creek and surrounding area also has a rich history, and was the site of a gold rush in the 1870's. Many of the attendees, such as Maurice Pyle, grew up in the area and spoke about this history. This day was followed

up by looking at the ecological values of the area in March.

The group has opened a new track earlier this year, connecting the main Turtons Creek Falls to the Little Falls upstream. Recently the DELWP (Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning) staff descended on the Little Falls picnic area to install a picnic table, a viewing bench, and a fire pit. They also put up a new interpretive sign with shelter downstream at the main falls area. Signage has been put up around the area through project funding.

The picnic table had been made to order by the Mirboo North Community Mens' Shed, and it came with a very pleasant surprise in the form of an inscribed picnic bench, thrown in as a freebie by the Wednesday Warriors. The surprise bench has been put in a lovely spot, directly overlooking the Little Falls and the creek crossing to the new fern-shaded track. Many thanks to both the Men's Shed and the Wednesday Warriors for contributing to the ongoing improvement of this area.

Many thanks also go out to Jenny O'Sullivan (South Gippsland Landcare Network) and Suzette Fullerton (DELWP) for not only organising the new infrastructure, but also for being so instrumental in the formation of the Friends of Turtons Creek. Their contribution to this little corner of bush is greatly appreciated. These projects have been funded by State Government through a Communities for Nature grant and the South Gippsland Shire Council.



Photo above: The newly installed park bench made by the Wednesday Warriors is already being put to use.

Hallston Landcare Group

Over the past 12 months the group have been involved in a couple of tree planting days and several members of the group are actively undertaking works on their own properties.

Loch Nyora Landcare Group

The Loch Nyora Landcare Group (LNLG) is approaching its 20th anniversary, having been established in May 1996 and the contribution it and its members have made to the local environment is very clearly seen throughout the district. In fact, its work has been so successful, one of our problems today is retaining interest as many who live in the area get the impression that all the hard work is done.

However, as new people come to live in this beautiful region and development continues, there remains much work to be done in the fields of endangered species, wildlife habitat, protecting remnant bush, extending planted corridors, education and much else. Consequently, the LNLG has, over the past couple of years, refocused its attention towards new membership and new and innovative projects on private and public land.



While ongoing projects like the rehabilitation of Hilda Falls at Loch are managed by the group, in others we work closely with the South Gippsland Landcare Group, and other groups in the network, to support field days on private properties around the value of revegetation for livestock and pasture, the protection of endangered species like the Sword Grass Brown Butterfly, sustainable farming on small acreages, improving soils to name just some.

Today, the LNLG has a strong and diverse committee, a sound financial position and a commitment to continue the good work done by previous committees and members over nearly two decades.

Mardan Mirboo North Landcare Group

For the last year our group has been a bit quiet on the tree planting focus. This has been for a couple of reasons, one being most of our members did not have any major projects on the go and the changes in the funding have impacted.

We have had meetings or social occasions every second month and our guest speakers have been from our realms. Erica Corr spoke on flower essences and their benefits. Alec Campbell spoke on European wasps and their eradication. Helen Hasty on ricotta and butter making. We have had a movie and pizza night watching "The Land of the Lyrebird" a short movie made by the Mt. Worth Landcare group. It is well worth watching.

Many of our members over the year have taken advantage of the activities offered by the South Gippsland Landcare Network. These include a 3 day Paddock to Plate trip, blackberry rust presentation and an owl presentation at the old mill site from the Latrobe region. Quite a few of our members also attended a Landcare- South Gippsland Bee Club

Presentation and supper at the Berry's Creek Hall. The numerous network activities have been informative and enjoyable.

Looking forward to next year.

Mt Eccles/Wild Dog Valley Landcare Group

The group held two working bees/meetings at Hamanns bush in 2014, one on the 5th July and the other in September.

There have been two group planting days over the last twelve months at Warren & Vicki Kenny's place; one on the 31st of May and the other on the 27th of June 2015. In total, 3,000 trees were planted over the two days by group members.

There was a vermin control day at the Kenny's in June with Landcare members, and South Gippsland Field and Game.

The group held it's AGM on the 28th June 2015, followed by a general meeting.

Mt Lyall Landcare Group

The Group held the 23rd Annual General Meeting and Dinner at the Poowong Hotel and was attended by 25 members.

The guest speaker was Mr. Stan Glowacki who provided us with an outstanding and well informed presentation on both native and European bees and included a wide variety of specimens. Stan owns Jeeralang Apiary Supplies and enjoys a keen interest in bees particularly native bees. In conjunction with the Australian native bee research centre in Canberra collects and identifies native bees in and around Jeeralang Junction.

Some interesting highlights included;

- Require 600 to 800 hives to make a reasonable living.
- Five hives produce about 80kgs honey per year.
- Native bees and European bees can live together in the same area.
- Leaf cutter bees eat rose petals to line their burrows in the ground.
- Bees uniquely have four wings. When a bee's wings are damaged they are expelled from the hive.
- Bees need pollen and nectar to remain healthy and need fresh water all year round.
- Generally bees handled quietly will not attack. If bees get nasty they will sting.
- Any bird attracting plant will also attract bees.
- In hot weather bees use an evaporative cooler technique at the entrance of the hive to keep cool.

Our first committee meeting was held in October at which the following Executive was established.

President, Jeff Ferrier; Vice President, Paul Cook; Secretary, Frank Bugeja; Treasurer, Lyn Mitchard; Newsletter Editor, Leesa Grant; Equipment Officers, Bill

Loughridge and Harold Hillberg; Committee: Anne-Mette McNamara, Gilmore Douglas and Rudy Youssef.

The Group Membership has been maintained at around 40 landholders and our financial position continues to be very sound.

Early this year the Group farewelled Marlene Marsden who has moved to Melbourne because of ill health. Marlene has been a member of Landcare for many years and actively participated at both Group and Network levels. In 2011 Marlene was recognised with a Silver Award on the Landcare Honour Roll.

Members participated in CMA/Landcare and Melbourne Water projects and educational initiatives throughout the year and attended many interesting and informative field days and demonstrations. In particular the Group decided to participate in the Red Sword Grass Brown Butterfly project.

Members also attended/participated in the National Landcare Conference and attended the Network AGM.

Following on from an earlier AGM presentation on Eucalypt dieback, a field day was held in May. We were privileged, indeed fortunate to have this activity led by Mr David Smith from DEDJTR. David is a Forest Pathologist/Entomologist/ Forest Biosecurity Officer within the Office of the Chief Plant Health Officer of Biosecurity. David's experience and knowledge is unique in Victoria, even Australia. Attending members were given a broad but detailed overview of basic methods for the lay person to use to determine the health of a remnant forest. Examples of a number of obvious pests and diseases were identified at various locations visited. Samples from four different eucalypt die back locations were collected under David's guidance and have since been analysed. Two sites were positive for *Phytophthora cinnamomi*, one site positive for *Ophiostoma* and one site positive for another fungus species. A detailed discussion on causes of diseases, the presence of pests and the methods that might be employed to manage situations of dieback continued at all the sites visited. David made a limited number of copies of his book "A Field Guide to Plantation Health Surveillance in Victoria" available to our members.

Members continued to monitor the weed situation at former Mt Lyall Primary school site and a working bee is planned for this Spring. Our Group planted out this site with natives 10 years ago.

The group continues to provide members with an inventory of plant and equipment for weed control for loan and/or hire and is very ably maintained by Harold Hillberg and Bill Loughridge. The Mt Lyall Group Newsletter was produced and delivered by email and/or post to all members during the year. Our 24rd AGM was held on October 7th, 2014 at the Poowong Hotel.

Nerrena Landcare Group

On 6/9/2014 Nerrena Landcare group hosted 15 keen participants at our 'Pedal to Produce' event, who took advantage of wonderful spring weather to celebrate Landcare Week. Meeting at the Koonwarra Farmers Market with their bikes, the Landcarers and friends took the opportunity to buy some of the delicious produce that was for sale.



The bike ride start was delayed as riders kept ducking into the market for just one more thing! After stashing our purchases in the support bus esky it was time to start our tour de Koony, riding south to Sewells Road and our first stop.

At the farm of Veronica and Stuart Greaves we were able to look at their latest Landcare project, a landslip rehabilitation site. Standing on top of the hill we had a great overview of the problem and the solution that was devised to overcome it. We also had a great insight to the how the Greaves have restored and enhanced the remnant bush on their property, fencing off areas next to the creek and other remnants, and developing linkages. We were able to see some of the Wiltipoll ewes and lambs that Veronica and Stuart farm. After some welcome morning tea, it was back to the bikes to continue our journey.

Riding from the Greaves' property to our next stop at Jill and Michael Vella's venison farm through bush lined country roads was a pleasure in the spring sunshine, with birds and animals aplenty to observe on the way. The bike riders were way too scary for an echidna who quickly dug itself into the trackside for safety. During a venison sausage lunch an informative roundtable discussion about food production on small properties was held. A tour of the Vella's deer farm finished off the day.

We met on 30/1/2014 at the Koonwarra Recreation Reserve to walk the rail trail and check out the work being done on the trestle bridges. This was an informal get together to walk, have a BBQ (thanks Richard and Zoe!) and a chat. We were impressed by the scale of the work and marvelled at the turn of the last century engineering that built bridges capable of supporting a

laden train over such challenging ground essentially by hand.

On 21/4/2015 a walk and informal meeting was held and the Koonwarra Recreation Reserve along with Michelle Harris who is a local recreation consultant who has been engaged by the Committee of Management to develop the Koonwarra Recreation Reserve Master Plan. The plan will identify a range of facility improvements and infrastructure projects to improve the reserve over the next 10 years. The Committee is looking to formalise the informal pathways to the Tarwin River west in the bushland area in between the oval and the river and would like some input from the Landcare group. Given the weather is dark and cold in the evening at this time of year, we went to Coral and Kevin's place for BBQ and meeting.

The group applied for and was awarded a 25th Anniversary Landcare grant for Smarter Farm Planning - Environmental Action and Food Production. This project will engage 11 local land holders to improve land management by developing management plans. Activities include a farm ecology workshops for risk identification and mitigation. Action plans will tackle priority issues such as riparian and grazing management, ground cover, soil management and remnant vegetation. The grant was for \$22,000.00. The success of 11 implemented Environmental Management plans was celebrated at Moos in Meeniyah with a dinner using all our produce on Sept 17th.

On 14/6/2015 we joined with Rotarians from Malvern and Chadstone for a tree planting with members of the Leongatha Rotary Club. The event was held at the Meeniyah Wastewater Treatment Lagoons and Wetlands managed by South Gippsland Water. As well as the tree planting, Martin and Bree from SG Water provided a guided tour of the wetlands. We learned about the processes involved in turning wastewater to a level that can be reused by nearby farms, businesses and sporting grounds. After a fabulous effort planting all those plants a BBQ lunch courtesy of the Leongatha Rotary Club was enjoyed by all.

On 17/8/2015 the group together with Leongatha Secondary College year 11 students at Koonwarra had a tree planting at Ben and Jemima's Koala project site. Lots of lovely habitat for our furry friends was created.

The Nerrena LC group is currently applying for funding from the Shire of South Gippsland to appoint Michelle Harris to prepare an action plan for revegetation and development of the Black Spur Creek wetlands. The group identified this area of public land adjacent to the rail trail during our walk (and during many previous discussions) as in need of protection and restoration. We could have walking tracks down to the river, plantings to restore the riparian and wet land areas and informational and educational signage. As VicRoads has finalised (but not funded) the route of the South Gippsland Hwy realignment we are

able to plan with certainty. The Shire, Catchment Management Authority, VicRoads, SGLN, The Rail Trail committee, DELWP and the Society for Growing Australian Plants are supporting our application for a planning grant, which we can use to attract proper funding for the project. Kate Walsh is coordinating this for the Nerrena group, with support from Jill Vella. The scale of the project is beyond the scope of the group to do by ourselves, so we need proper funding to achieve our goals.

Our AGM will have Jill Plowright from Foster to talk to us about birds. We will meet at the Waratah Hills winery in Fish Creek for Lunch.

South Gippsland Equine Landcare Group

It has been another busy year for the group with plenty of events and group interaction via social media.

In April 2015, Fleur Stefani (group Treasurer) and of Prom Coast Barefoot Trimming showcased the modifications she has been making on her Fish Creek property as part of a property walk incorporating the groups AGM.

As part of the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authorities 'Green Carpet' showcase, the group was acknowledged for their efforts as an innovative Landcare group. Larissa Judd and Fleur Stefani represented the group at a special presentation lunch held at the Taralgon Winery in April 2015.

On the 19th of June 2015, the group held an evening presentation in Leongatha with guest speaker, Amanda McCartney who is an Equine Specialist with Zoetis. Zoe discussed equine parasites, when to worm, what to worm for, with and how often.



Poowong Landcare Group

It's been a busy year for Landcare at Poowong.

Many members have attended field days and thousands of plants have been put in the ground.

One of the field days was about more economical ways to put plants in the ground at Mark Walter's farm. It's very pleasing to notice that there has been a swing away from tube stock planting to Hiko planting. This has been in both South Gippsland and Bass

Coast Landcare groups. Hikos have almost identical outcomes to tube-stock. Hikos are half the cost, so why would you not use them? The proviso is that you are planting out at least 1000 plants. Direct seeding is considered the best option if the land is tractorable. Incidentally, Hikos are the preferred planting method for Landcare groups all over Australia.

Members have participated in a number of other field days, including a 'bees in your bushland' evening; this was attended by over 130 people. Poowong combined with a Bass Coast Group on a farm walk, followed by drinks and pizza at the Kernot Store.

There were numerous other field days on topics of interest such as koalas, wild deer, growing blueberries, managing wet soils, composting and the sword-grass Brown Butterfly project.

A special thanks, to Wendy Davis who after 6 years as secretary is stepping down. Her contribution has been exceptional.

Other major contributors to Poowong Landcare include Jeff and Elvie Clark, John Jefferis, Geoff Douglas, Steve and Bernie Halliday, Peter and Sue Jacques and Ray Boys. Once again, thank you all for your support and I look forward to seeing you all at meetings and out in the field.

Tarwin Landcare Group

This year the Tarwin group has celebrated the history of the area. In December they met at the Tarwin Cemetery to hear local history of the cemetery from Ken and Marg Fisher and learn about the native grasses from Michael Buckley.

In March, an interesting 'History of Cape Liptrap' event was held at Mittag's property. The group learnt about the early history of the area from members of the Wisser family, finishing with a walk at the beach and discussion of indigenous history of the area.



Several group members have been busy over the last 12 months as part of their involvement with the Cape Liptrap to Bunurong Environmental Partnership Program delivered in partnership by the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority and SGLN through funding from the Victorian Government.

Group members have also been involved with trials as part of the Healthy Soils Sustainable Farms' project delivered in partnership with the West Gippsland

Catchment Management Authority through funding from the Australian Governments National Landcare programme.

The groups focus has been on the enhancement of the flora reserve next to the Tarwin Lower Recreation Reserve and this will likely continue into the near future.

Tarwin Valley Landcare Group

This year has been a quiet one as a collective group, but a huge year for our individual landholders.

After missing out on the trust for nature grant we applied for last year, we dusted ourselves off and got back in the ring for another shot at the grants on offer for this year. With a lot of help from Kate Williams at Landcare HQ we were lucky enough to secure \$50,000 for the "Preservation and Recruitment of *E. Strzeleckii*".

This grant has allowed a majority of our group's member to complete fencing, planting and preservation works on their respective properties. This has been a great outcome for the endangered eucalypt.

In May the group came together at Mick and Cara Stuart's property for a bbq meet and greet. The group purchased 2000+ tube stock and these were allocated for all those members that could attend. The day was a great success, with a lot of not so active members coming along for a chat and a snag.

With all of our individual member busy planting and fencing, there hasn't been much time for socializing. With all the hard work done for this year hopefully there will be time in the upcoming year for some more BBQ's and planting days. Bring on 2015-16!!

Triholm Landcare Group

We currently have 23 financial members and the current office bearers were re-elected at our AGM on the 7th of September 2015.

A number of members have accessed their own funding through various funding opportunities and continue to revegetate or carry out other sustainable activities such as eradicating weeds on dams.

As a group we had a very interesting meeting at Paul Stewart and Ann Bullen's place where they have planted out 45 acres of their 75 acre property to bush. They have planted over 55,000 trees and understory and of the 50 species used, 30 are self-propagating. The property is a credit to their tireless hard work and dedication towards eradicating all weeds.

We also had a combined meeting with the Poowong Landcare Group where Bob Wilson, Biosecurity Area Leader Gippsland with DEDJTR, spoke on the operational position for the coming weed season and answered many questions on our local weed problems.

The group is preparing to be proactive this coming weed season by purchasing signs which will be displayed in the area, and a letter drop to all landholders encouraging people to deal with their weeds, which is obviously still our main focus.

Network Projects 2013/2014

Waging War on Invasive Plants through Landcare Network Collaboration

The 'Waging War on Invasive Plants through Landcare Network Collaboration' project builds on the success of last year's project of the same name. The project is being delivered in collaboration with neighbouring Bass Coast Landcare Network.

The project had four key objectives;

- To develop strategic objectives for pest plant control across the region;
- To build communities capacity to undertake weed control (through education and one-off incentives);
- To deliver targeted on-ground weed control across Bass Coast and South Gippsland and;
- To facilitate landholder training in the safe and effective use of chemicals (herbicide) by subsidising the cost of an AgVet Farm Chemical Users Course

In early 2015 a 5 years Strategic Plan (the Plan) for the Community Weeds Taskforce (CWT) was developed in consultation with Landcare group representatives on the CWT along with and a range of partners.

The Plan is based on the four key themes of; advocacy, education, on-ground action and collaboration. Developing the plan has enabled the CWT to focus its efforts by providing a road map to work off.



Photo above: members of the Community Weeds Taskforce: (from left) Martin Chatfield, Environment Officer with South Gippsland Water, Matt Stephenson, former Pest Plant and Animal Officer with the Bass Coast Landcare Network, Kate Williams, Project Officer with the South Gippsland Landcare Network, Brian Enbom, Korumburra Landcare Group and Syd Whyte, Arawata Landcare Group.

To assist new landholders with invasive plant identification and control, a short video is also being produced as part of this project for distribution on via social media and on the South Gippsland Weeds Website (www.southgippslandweeds.com.au).

On-ground weed control works are to occur in the spring-summer period of 2015 in priority areas of the

Strzelecki Ranges, Corner Inlet and Bunurong Coastal Landcare Priority Areas (West Gippsland CMA Regional Catchment Strategy 2013-2019). Invasive plant species targeted will include ragwort, blackberry and thistle. The target area for the project is 40 ha.



Corner Inlet Connections

This year marks the second year of the Corner Inlet Connections program supported by the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority, through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme.

The over arching project, supported by the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (WGCMA), continues to protect the Corner Inlet Ramsar site by addressing critical threats including reducing sediment and nutrient loads from the catchment as well as threats within the site.

This year the SGLN component of the CIC program focused largely on protecting coastal saltmarsh and mangrove vegetation from Yanakie across to Welshpool. Sites were assessed using the vegetation-focussed protocol developed by wetland ecologist, Paul Boon in 2014. Four projects were approved for funding with works to be completed by November 30 2015. Thirty one point two hectares of saltmarsh/mangrove will be protected as a result of the project, well exceeding the original target of 10 ha.

Another focus of SGLN's program was to build community skills, knowledge and engagement on the importance of the Corner Inlet Ramsar site and enable coordinated fox control near the Corner Inlet Ramsar site.

In February 2015, more than 30 people attended a Discover Corner Inlet event held in partnership between the Yarram Yarram Landcare Network and SGLN.

The successful event involved a range of speakers who were experts in the fields of marine biology, wetland ecology and ornithology specific to the Corner Inlet Ramsar site; John Ford, Marine Research Scientist with Melbourne University, Paul Boon, Ecological Consultant with Dodo Environmental and Bird Life Australia's Program Manager, Dan Weller.

As part of the biennial Prom Coast Seachange Festival, the Franklin River Landcare Group in partnership with SGLN hosted a 'pedal to paddock' Landcare bike

ride. The event showcased the environmental and economic values of the Corner Inlet catchment and Ramsar site via a relaxed bike ride along the Rail Trail from Foster to Toora and back.

Along the way, riders learnt about the history of the area and visited Alan and Judy Bacon's Toora farm on the Franklin River to look at the restoration works they have undertaken over many years. The group then headed north to the Franklin River Reserve for a BBQ lunch at catered by the group whilst sharing stories of the area and its significance.

With foxes recognised as a threat to resident and migratory shorebirds, a fox control demonstration day was held in Hazel Park in October 2014 designed to build landholder knowledge on the techniques and timing for integrated fox control. The day was hosted by the Agnes and Franklin River Fox Action Group and attended by 12 landholders in the area. Following this, the group convened again in May 2015 to plan fox control activities for lambing in July-August.



Photo above: Matt Key and a co-worker from Gippsland Forestry and Fire Service demonstrating how to set a soft jaw trap for fox control to a group in Hazel Park as part of the 'fox control demonstration day' in October 2014.



Photo above: Wetland Ecologist, Paul Boon describing saltmarsh habitat to the group at the Discover Corner Inlet day in February at Port Welshpool.



Photo above: participants in the 'pedal to paddock' event looking at a section of the Franklin River on the Bacon's farm at Toora that has been fenced off to exclude stock



Improving habitat and the recruitment of *Eucalyptus strzeleckii*

This project, (delivered in partnership with the Tarwin Valley Landcare Group) has worked to enhance habitat quality and connectivity for *Eucalyptus strzeleckii* (Strzelecki Gum) in Dumbalk, Stony Creek, Dollar and Middle Tarwin.

Strzelecki Gum is endemic to the Strzelecki Ranges and is listed as Vulnerable under the Commonwealth Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 and is listed under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988.

The project aligned with 4 of the 7 Key Recovery Actions of the National Recovery Plan for Strzelecki Gums by protecting populations on private land, and addressing threats such as livestock grazing and invasive plants.

All on-ground works are scheduled to be completed by September 2015 and will involve the planting of 12,237 plants, (a mix of Strzelecki Gum and indigenous understory species) spreading of 120g of native seed, and the erection of 5.356 km of permanent stock proof fencing across 15 sites.

Building community support for the conservation of Strzelecki Gums was another outcome of the project.

In May, the Tarwin Valley Landcare Group hosted a BBQ at the nursery operated by Group President, Mick Stuart.

Mick explained the processes involved with plant propagation following on from the group learning about key biological functions for the recruitment/regeneration of Strzelecki Gums last year from Harley Schinagl. Harley completed a research project on the spatial distribution of Strzelecki Gum with Federation and James Cook University.

To engage the broader community in the conservation of Strzelecki Gums, a planting day was held on Monday June 15 at Tarwin Valley Landcare Group member, Fran Church's Dollar property. Year 12 outdoor education students from the Leongatha Secondary College attended under the guidance of Teacher, Aimee Morehouse. The students were exceptionally well behaved and highly motivated.



Friends Of Strzelecki Koalas Habitat for Life Project



This is Year 3 of the Friends of Strzelecki Koala (FOSK) Habitat for Life Project which is a community based four year program aiming to protect and support the unique Strzelecki Koala population in the Strzelecki Ranges.

The project aims to do this through a combination of strategic on ground projects on private properties across South Gippsland and an extensive community education and volunteering program. This project is managed by the South Gippsland Landcare Network and has been supported over four years by Victorian Government Communities for Nature Funding.

The Strzelecki Koala population is unique in Victoria as they are believed to be a genetically intact

example of a wild population of koalas, unlike other regions around the State which have been affected by repopulation translocations from island colonies with a low genetic base. It is therefore feasible that this population will better withstand threats such as disease and climate change than other populations in Victoria. Maintaining this population could be crucial to the future survival of koalas in Victoria.

The overall aim of this project is to protect, enhance and restore vegetation in South Gippsland as part of a strategic network wide attempt to improve Strzelecki Koala Habitat. This will be done through the identification of priority areas for habitat preservation and revegetation activities that will enhance existing habitat and improve connectivity across the landscape.

Who: All groups in the South Gippsland Landcare Network, but specifically those in areas likely to contain Strzelecki Koalas such as Hallston, Allambee Community, Allambee South, Mt Eccles/Wild Dog Valley, Arawata, Tarwin Valley, Nerrena, Mardan/Mirboo North and Foster North Landcare Groups.

Funding source: Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (formerly DEPI): Communities for Nature Program.

Achievements for 2014/15:

Project Officers undertook 35 sites visits to assess projects across the SGLN Network area. All sites were mapped using a Samsung Tablet and data entered into an environmental modelling system called Ensym. Projects ranged from fencing neglected remnant bush in the Strzelecki hills, to creating corridors across pasture to allow safe passage for koalas from livestock and controlling woody weeds within remnants.

- A Koala Community Forum with three guest speakers was held at the Koonwarra Hall.
- School visit were made to Koonwarra Village School, Fish Creek Primary School and to Foster Cub pack to deliver koala awareness activities tailored to specific age groups.
- Koala presentation given to visitors at Wilsons Prom National Park.
- Talks on koalas were given to Mirboo North Environment Team (Year 9) and Korumburra Secondary College (Year 11).
- Two community planting days were held at Hallston and Leongatha South.
- A koala monitoring training session was delivered to 13 community members.
- A tree planting event involving students from Korumburra Secondary College was held.

The FOSK website has recorded over 100 koala sightings so far. The website is an important tool for engaging the community and increasing awareness

of koalas in South Gippsland. The Project Officer provided executive support for three South Gippsland Koala Working Group meetings to discuss koala conservation and research at a regional level.

Facts and Figures:

- 40.38 hectares of remnant protection was approved for funding.
- 16.23 hectares of revegetation was approved for funding
- 19,705 local native plants.
- 6.63 kilometres of remnant and revegetation fencing.



Photo above: Planting day with Korumburra Secondary students at Mardan – June 2015



Photo above: Strzelecki Koala Planting Day at Hallston – May 2015

Protecting the unique Strzelecki Koala and its corridors in the Latrobe Valley and surrounds

This project was intended to address the shortfall in funding for landholders in the northern Strzelecki Range to protect, enhance and restore koala habitat. The primary aim of the project is to assist in the

establishment of a habitat corridor across public and private land to connect Boolarra Regional Reserve to Morwell National Park, a distance of approximately 10 kms. This project recognizes that koalas are distributed through-out the Strzelecki Range and in a variety of different vegetation communities.

This project has targeted those properties that have been identified as key linkages by the West Gippsland CMA's Biodiversity Blueprint. A direct mail-out to those properties occurred early on in the project and it was also promoted to local Landcare groups.

The on ground works targets for the project are:

50 hectares of habitat protection

10 hectares of weed control

10 hectares of revegetation

Outcomes for the project include:

- On ground works such as fencing, weed control and revegetation works
- 2 training sessions to monitor koala density and habitat preference
- Community education through the publication of a "Guide to Living with Koalas" brochure, planting events and a field day

Who: South Gippsland Landcare Network is working closely with the Latrobe Catchment Landcare Network, Latrobe City Council, Hancock Victorian Plantations, Boolarra South and Yinnar/Yinnar South Landcare groups to deliver this project.

Funding source: Victorian Communities for Nature Program

Achievements for 2014/15:

A total of ten Expressions of Interest for funding were received.

Of these, nine project sites were approved for funding. The sites are located in clusters around Boolarra South, along the Morwell River and Yinnar South.

A koala monitoring session was held in March 2015 which was attended by 17 community members from the local area. The training was delivered by Dr Steve Phillips. There will be a follow-up session to establish monitoring plots in Morwell National Park in November 2015.

It is hoped that the Latrobe Catchment Landcare Network will be able to use this project as a foundation for future projects in this area.

Facts and Figures:

- Nine project sites were approved for funding. However one very good applicant had to withdraw as they decided to sell their property.
- One of the projects included a significant remnant of 43 hectares.
- Landholders received \$22,572 to undertake 6.45

ha of vegetation projects to fence and establish vegetation corridors along creeks or in gullies and extend buffers to existing remnants.

- This included 4215 metres of fencing and 8200 tubestock.
- 20 hectares of blackberry control was undertaken by contractors on six properties.



Photo above: Gully planting at Lucy Simnett and Jim Rasmussen's property at Yinnar South

One Million Trees for South Gippsland.

The South Gippsland Landcare Network in partnership



with South Gippsland Water, Michaels Supa IGA and the South Gippsland Landcare Fund aims to revegetate the South Gippsland catchment with indigenous, endemic species.

Landholders who undertake a One Million Trees for South Gippsland funded works project improve the environment for all South Gippslanders by;

- Improving landscape connectivity creating biolinks to allow movement of animals and birds through the landscape leading to improved genetic diversity.
- Increasing productivity on farms by providing shelter and therefore creating microclimates where the soil, animals and waterways are protected from extremes of temperature and wind. Production in sheltered areas can improve by up to 20% compared to unsheltered areas.
- Improve water quality by protecting waterways and reducing erosion. Waterway plantings filtering high nutrient runoff from paddocks.
- Sequester carbon in the trees and plants.

Funding source: South Gippsland Water.

Achievements for 2014/15:

Seven projects were funded during the 2014-2015

financial year. Six of these projects occurred in waterways that form part of the South Gippsland catchment, on tributaries of creek or river systems. One project planted above a former landslip site to help stabilise the slip and prevent further sediment movement into the Little Bass Creek.

Facts and Figures:

In total 10,797 locally sourced endemic plants went into the ground across the seven project sites which resulted in the revegetation of 8.13 hectares for Landcare members in the South Gippsland catchment.



Photo above: Students and Landcare members help plant out a tributary of the Tarwin River (West Branch) at Hallston – May 2015



Western Port Targeted Land Stewardship



The Western Port Targeted Land Stewardship provides support and funding

to landholders to deliver effective environment management on their land. The program uses a land stewardship approach, encouraging and paying farmers for land stewardship activities that provide ecosystem services that benefit the wider community (such as healthy waterways from revegetation) that are not absorbed in current markets.

These outcomes include:

- On ground waterway and biodiversity works
- Payment for soil improvement works
- Whole Farm Planning and computer mapping training courses
- Soil Health Training courses
- Discussion groups and field days

Who: South Gippsland Landcare Network is working with farmers in the Loch/Nyora, Poowong, Triholm and

Mt Lyall area as part of this program. These four groups fall within the Western Port Catchment.

Funding source: Victorian Investment Framework

Achievements for 2014/15:

Due to this being the final year of the 2014/2015 Land Stewardship program, funds from previous years were reallocated to provide grants up to \$3000 for revegetation or weed control within high quality native vegetation remnants.

Projects were of a high standard and will contribute to improved environmental outcomes in the Westernport Catchment.

Of the four projects approved for the SGLN area, three were completed. One landholder failed to return their management agreement and the project was cancelled.

Facts and Figures:

- SGLN landholders received \$7,635 to undertake 0.86 ha of vegetation projects including fencing and revegetation of a wet area, establishment of a shelterbelt and weed control within a fenced remnant.
- This included 640 metres of fencing and 2060 tubestock.



Photo above: Brendan Spence has established a 420 metre long shelterbelt to protect livestock and pasture from south west winds at Poowong.

Michaels Super IGA Community Fund Grant Bee Project

SGLN received a small grant to the value of \$1,500 as part of a Michaels Super IGA Community Fund Grants in 2014/2015.

The project, which was delivered in partnership with Agribusiness Gippsland and the South Gippsland Beekeepers, had the objective of increasing community awareness on the important role bees (honeybees and native bees) play in pollinating agricultural and horticultural crops as well as producing honey.

A bee forum was held at Berrys Creek in February 2015. Nearly 130 people heard from local apiarists and Mark Leech, an expert on bee-friendly vegetation. Attendees were a mix of landholders interested in how bees could help their production and beekeepers looking to establish hives.

Following the event, Agribusiness Gippsland developed a 'wanna-bee' facebook page to link beekeepers looking for a location for their hives, with farmers with suitable land. The wanna-bee website can be found on Facebook by searching Wannabee-Linking-Gippsland-farmers-and-beekeepers.

On Thursday the 26th of February, SGLN Board members and staff sold 'bee friendly' plants at Michaels Super IGA in Leongatha to raise money for the project.

Additional support the project was received by; Agribusiness Gippsland, the Local Food Network, (through South Gippsland Shire Council), South Gippsland Beekeepers and the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority.



Photo above: Howard Stevens with members of the South Gippsland Beekeepers explaining how they got into the business of beekeeping at the February 2015 event.



Healthy Soils Sustainable Farms

Healthy soils are important to maximise production and improve environmental conditions. By using nutrients more effectively, improving ground cover, soil organic matter, plant health and dry matter yield, a healthy soil can improve water use efficiency and quality, reduce erosion and nutrient loss through run off and leaching, sequester carbon and reduce emissions such as nitrous oxide, methane and carbon dioxide.

The West Gippsland Healthy Soils -Sustainable Farms project assists farmers to access and make sense of the latest science, identify constraints or excesses within their production system, implement best practice and demonstrate innovative approaches to manage these issues.

As a part of the project the SGLN has facilitated five management plans being completed on farms. Consultants used are Chris Alenson; Lisa Warn and Declan McDonald.

We facilitated three training courses

1. A soil course run with twelve businesses in September and October with Chris Alenson
2. Supported GippsDairy with a Fert\$mart course run in Meeniyah area with 12 dairy businesses involved
3. An iFarm course in April with eight farm enterprises involved.



Photo above: we are trialling the Soilkee renovator at the Buffalo Demonstration site

We have also set up a demonstration site at Ross Batten and Madeline Buckley's Buffalo property.

Chris Alenson conducted a soil management plan for the property. On one of the poorer paddocks we are trialling improving constraints with aeration and direct seeding using the Soilkee. The paddock was ripped and sown in Autumn and areas will be resown again in Spring 2015. Monitoring has been occurring to track soil and pasture changes. A field day will be run in early summer to discuss the project and see outcomes.

This project is supported through SGLN through funding from the Australian Government's National

Landcare Programme and the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority.



Building capacity to manage Giant Gippsland Earthworm (GGE) habitat on farms

The project aims to work with farmers in South Gippsland to apply design strategies to revegetation works to mitigate the negative effects of lowered groundwater levels under regenerating trees on the survival of GGE colonies. Revegetation works will be maintained by participating landholders and function as demonstration sites. An interactive website and revegetation guidelines for typical GGE habitat have been developed for the community to provide information on best practice farming for GGE conservation.

The project will:

- increase the number and area of farms in South Gippsland trialling innovative approaches to revegetation to improve the management of GGE habitat;
- increase the number of farmers in South Gippsland with improved knowledge and capability to protect GGE habitat on their properties;
- provide opportunities for the South Gippsland community to assist in conservation efforts for GGE through an interactive website.

Funding source: Federal Government Caring for Our Country Grant and the Victorian Environmental Partnerships Program.

Achievements for 2014/15:

- A GGE website has been developed www.giantearthworm.org.au
- A GGE fact sheet and revegetation guidelines were developed and can be downloaded from the website.
- Two demonstration sites have been fenced and revegetated in accordance with the revegetation guidelines.
- Signage was installed at the two demonstration revegetation trial sites.
- Profiles of the participating landholders were developed and can be downloaded from the website.
- A management and monitoring field day was held in October 2014 to showcase the two demonstration sites.
- A site visit was made to one of the demonstration

sites by delegates from the National Landcare Conference.

- Submitted a final project report to the Federal Government in March 2015.

Facts and Figures: Two SGLN landholders received funding to undertake the establishment of a demonstration site of each of their properties.

Site 1 (Hallora) had 8500 locally sourced endemic plants planted during winter 2014. Melbourne Water provided funding assistance for fencing for Site 1 which is a south facing slope with a significant landslip. This project has protected 7.7 hectares of land with three separate GGE colonies.

Site 2 (Poowong) has 559 metres of fencing and 1870 plants to protect 1.1 hectares of GGE habitat along a creekside with numerous GGE colonies on the eastern side of the creek. A further 1000 grasses were planted in autumn 2015.



Photo above: Giant Gippsland Earthworm and tunnel that can become exposed during earthworks or by a landslip. Photo: Beverley Van Praagh.

Smarter Farm Planning, Environmental Action and Food Production

Eleven paddock to plate businesses commenced the Certified Land Management program in April delivered by the Australian Land Management Group (ALMG).

These producers considered environmental and animal welfare constraints, exploring catchment and legal requirements, with a commitment to embrace best practices and continually improve performance in these areas.

Great progress has already been made with tree breaks, improved fencing, weed control, mulching and rotational grazing put in place.

The group visited Paul and Sam Crock's Fish Creek property in June to see improvements they have made to the property over the years. All gullies have been fenced with seed collected from the few existing remnants on the property.

Pastures have been improved and an organic fertiliser program used for many years. The pastures looked fantastic. Most impressive were the new yards recently

built to improve livestock handling and safety for both animals and people.

The brands involved in the project are:

Selling beef:

- Gippsland Natural, Gippsland wide (6 businesses)- underpinned by MSA
- Scorrybreck Farm- Highland cattle, Foster (establishing brand)

Selling lamb:

- O'Neil's Lamb, Fish Creek
- Koony Natural Lamb, Koonwarra
- Glen Alvie Lamb and forestry, Glen Alvie
- Malabar Lamb, Gippsland Food Adventures, Walkerville

Selling Pork:

- Amber Creek Pork and sawmill, Foster

Selling venison and deer products:

- Terramirra Park Deer Farm

Case studies have been developed for all these projects. You can find most of these brands on Facebook or by searching for their website if you are interested to find out more.

A huge celebration event was run at Moo's at Meeniyan in September to promote the outcomes of the project and the great stories of these local producers.

This project has been funded by the federal Government as part of Smarter Farm Planning, Environmental Action and Food Production project run by SGLN and Nerrena Landcare Group.



Photo above: Farmer participants in the Certified Land Management program with trainer Darren centre front



Demonstrating Sustainable Farm Practices in Western Port, Port Phillip and Yarra Catchments Project

The sustainable farm practices project assists farmers to make sense of the latest science, identify constraints within their system and trial innovative or proven practices to manage constraints.

As part of the project SGLN supports farmer training and networking across the catchment. Farmers are encouraged to set up demonstration sites on farm to trial innovative practices.

We have four trials established in our area.

1. Tania Murray - looking at her free range egg and lamb operation. The trial considered- how nutrient, biological activity and soil structure changed over time with the following management;

- Continue to manage pastures as have previously been doing (no nutrients added)
- Apply chicken manure to the paddock
- Mulching pasture (topping of paddocks) after grazing during late spring/summer

We ran a field day launching the project in June with over 60 attending. Benita Kelsall from DEDJTR conducted the research and presented on the day. This trial finished in June 2015, Benita Kelsall has completed a report on the outcomes.

2. Bob Grey- Agroforestry trial measuring growth rates of trees on different slopes. Bob Gray has established a 40 ha forestry operating targeting sawlog production. The property is located on steeper Strzelecki hills which are subject to slipping, tunnel erosion and pugging damage especially by cattle. The project has established 5 monitoring sites looking at 3 species with 2 aspects (West and South facing) to measure tree growth. This will provide objective information to compare economics of sawlog production versus traditional grazing enterprises.

A field day was run at the beginning of the project demonstrating the monitoring methods to be used. Clinton Tepper from Heartwood Plantation is conducting the monitoring for the project.

3. Bob Grey- Azzola. Red Azolla is an aquatic weed which infests dams especially in the Gippsland hills. It is a problem as it reproduces asexually and can rapidly cover dams to the extent that it asphyxiates fish and other vertebrates, blocks pumps and makes the water putrid when it eventually perishes catastrophically. It is spread by water birds and thrives where nutrients are high (especially P and N) due to runoff or erosion and exacerbated by wombats, causing sediment loading. This project explores ways to lower the existing nutrient levels and explores impact on Azzola on dams.

A field day will be run in summer 2016 to promote the monitoring methods used and early results.

4. Jonathon Koolstra- tunnel erosion. This project

is trialling remediation methods for tunnel erosion around his property. Monitoring is being conducted to measure impact of management

A tunnel erosion information session and farm walk was run in March with 7 attending, Wayne Burton from DEDJTR was the expert speaker. An excavator was on site and doing some remediation works. The different treatment methods on multiple sites were discussed. On-going monitoring will look at how far the tunnels are moving/growing under different treatments i.e. lime, revegetation, grass, rock work etc.

We have also run a series of days with a focus on sustainable farming. We have run:

- A Wet Soils day run in September 2014 at Heath Hill with 40 in attendance.
- A Fert\$mart course in Poowong with 12 dairy farmers attended working with GippsDairy and Bass Coast Landcare Network
- A Garlic day run at Loch exploring how to grow organic and biodynamic garlic and herbs
- A Shade and Shelter workshop at Ron Barnacle's property at Loch with Port Phillip CMA
- A day exploring how to grow trees cost effectively at Mark Walters Poowong property
- A three day bus tour around Port Phillip looking at Paddock to Plate businesses. Thirty people attended with nine people from SGLN.

This project is supported through SGLN through funding from the Australian Government's national Landcare Programme and the Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority.

Photo above: Nicole measures the width of a tunnel erosion on site



Farmer Fisher day at Port Franklin

SGLN was asked to organise and facilitate a collaborative meeting between farmers of the sea and farmers of the land at Corner Inlet in May for the local fishermen and John Ford from Melbourne University.



Over forty people, including commercial fishermen, farmers and researchers, came together to discuss the problem of declining seagrass meadows within Corner Inlet.

Dr John Ford of Melbourne University explained that just as farmers rely on good quality pasture to feed their stock, Corner Inlet's fishermen rely on good quality seagrass to produce their catch.



Representatives of Corner Inlet's commercial fishing industry took participants on a tour of the Inlet and spoke of the impact that declining seagrass cover is having on their livelihoods. They explained the vital role that seagrass plays in providing nutrients, habitat and protection for marine life, and their own efforts to create a sustainable fishing industry.

After a seafood lunch, the group visited a local dairy farm managed by Dan and Cindy Knee. The Knee's have implemented best management practices to keep nutrients and sediment on-farm and out of the Inlet. Nutrient and sediment run-off are regarded as the two greatest threats to seagrass meadows around the world, and there is genuine concern about seagrass levels in the Inlet.

Land uses contributing to sediment and nutrient loads entering the Inlet include farming, forestry and urban development. Because the waterways at the western end of Corner Inlet are smaller, steeper, have erodible soils and are in a high rainfall area, they are more susceptible to the impacts of these land uses.

Discussions acknowledged the efforts that many farmers are taking to keep nutrients and sediment on-farm in partnership with agencies such as Landcare and the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority, (through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme).

These include vegetating and fencing off creeks and drainage lines, siting laneways to avoid runoff, maximizing ground cover to reduce soil loss and following best management practices when applying fertiliser.



The day also raised awareness of the measures that the Corner Inlet fishermen and Dairy Australia are taking to ensure their industries are sustainable.

Fishermen have a self-imposed Code of Practice that, alongside government regulation, restricts fishing to weekdays only, caps the number of fishing licences, sets net and mesh sizes, and allows only two net shots a day to prevent over-fishing.

Similarly, Dairy Australia encourages dairy farmers to adopt best management practices to protect their natural resources such as recycling effluent, soil nutrient budgeting and fertiliser planning and preventing erosion with pasture management.

The day was funded by the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation and was delivered by representatives of Melbourne University, GippsDairy and the South Gippsland Landcare Network.

A case study and video have been produced by SGLN as part of the project.



FRDC
FISHERIES RESEARCH &
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION



THE UNIVERSITY OF
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25 Year anniversary Landcare Grant Arawata Landcare Group

The Arawata group received \$20,000 from the Federal government as part of the 25 Year Anniversary Grants to assist with erosion control (fencing and revegetation) plus community engagement i.e. tree planting day and sharing learnings with surrounding groups affected by landslips.

This project is a partnership project with Nick Dudley from the DEDJTR and Tony Gardner from WGCMA. The project due is for completion June 30, 2016.



Photo above: Dawn Marotti with Russell Broadbent MP, Jenny O'Sullivan and Syd Whyte.

Red Fruit Saw Sedge & Sword Grass Brown Butterfly project

The four Port Phillip groups have come together to fund and trial a project to increase the understanding of native animal survival by using the relationship between a rare native butterfly and indigenous plant species. This will demonstrate the need of indigenous vegetation to maintain native fauna.

The Sword Grass Brown Butterfly caterpillar is totally dependent on the plant known as the Red Fruit Saw Sedge (*Gahnia sieberiana*).

As a result of clearing for agriculture, the Red Fruit Saw Sedge (RFSS) has been dramatically reduced from most of its former range in the southern and western Gippsland region as is also the situation for the Sword Grass Brown Butterfly (SWBB).

In the past, indigenous nurseries found growing the RFSS difficult but in recent years, the propagation of the plant has been more successful. This has allowed the RFSS to be planted in specific areas to encourage the natural recolonising of the SGBB.

200 RFSS tube stock will be given free to 100 voluntary Landcare members with suitable wet areas. Along with the RFSS the land owners will also be provided with two species of *Olearia* to provide food for the adult butterfly.

A field day is planned for summer 2015/16 to learn more about butterflies and their ecological needs. This project is being led by Malcolm Brown of Loch Landcare group with Support from Nicole Walsh of SGLN.

This project is funded by the four groups: Loch Nyora, Triholm, Poowong and Mt Lyall.



Landcare numberplates for Victoria

Victoria is the first state to have special interest number plates dedicated to Landcare thanks to the efforts of the South Gippsland Landcare Network. The number plates have a distinctive Landcare look with green lettering and Landcare's iconic hands. Each Landcare number plate has the slogan "Supporting Landcare" and motorists can choose a number between 001-LC and 100-LC, depending on availability.

The funds raised from the Landcare number plates will assist the South Gippsland Landcare Network to continue their work for the environment and community in protecting remnant vegetation, creating koala habitat and rehabilitating land slips.

70 number plates have been sold with 30 still available.



Photo above: Mark Walters, Fosky and number plates

Financial Overview 2014/2015

Financial Report –Landcare Network

Opening Balance: 1st July 2014	\$258,173
Closing balance: 30th June 2015	\$458,825

For the 2014/2015 financial year SGLN received an income of \$836,760 an increase of \$234,911 from the previous year. This reflects a number of new projects being funded from the CMA and State and Federal Governments.

Total expenses for the year were down by \$27,048 to \$636,108. The reduction in expenses occurred due to streamline in operations put in place by the board to reduce costs with minimal impact on services. In this tough environment SGLN has managed to maintain on ground works in the region of \$250,887 whilst increasing trees planted, and areas protected.

Profit and loss statement and balance sheets are in Appendix 1 with the auditor's report.

Financial Report- South Gippsland Landcare Fund

The South Gippsland Landcare Network Inc. (ABN 52166526533) and its public fund South Gippsland Landcare Fund, was entered into the register of Environmental Organisations on the 16th December 2009 and is entitled under the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997 item 6.1.1 subsection 300-55910 to receive tax deductibility donations.

The South Gippsland Landcare Fund was established to receive public donations for Landcare projects in South Gippsland. This will allow SGLN to access a greater range of funding opportunities as many philanthropic trusts require deductible gift recipient (DGR) status when granting funds.

The objective of the fund is to support the environmental objectives of the SGLN as defined in the role and statement of purpose.

The South Gippsland Landcare Fund has not been active in this financial year.

Opening Balance 1st July 2014	\$3,501.25
Closing balance: 30th June 2015	\$3,517.03

Profit and loss statement and balance sheets are in Appendix 2 with auditor's report



Appendices

1. SGLN Audited Financial Statement 2014/15
2. South Gippsland Landcare Fund Audited Financial Statement 2014/15
3. Map of Landcare Group Boundaries
4. South Gippsland Landcare Network Strategic Plan 2015-2020

Appendix 1: SGLN Audited Financial Statement 2014/15
SOUTH GIPPSLAND LANDCARE NETWORK INC. A0011936S

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

INCOME	2015	2014
Grant Income		
Bass Coast Landcare Network	-	6,500
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	20,000	50,000
Department of Environment and Primary Industries	378,136	158,000
Federal Government	-	3,950
Melbourne University	10,000	-
EMS	20,000	-
South Gippsland Shire Council (Turton's Creek)	5,000	-
South Gippsland Water	10,000	10,000
Westernport Catchment	36,000	30,280
Westernport Water	-	4,000
W.G. Catchment Management Authority	297,690	302,000
Total Grant Income	776,826	564,730
Other Income		
Annual Dinner Ticket Sales	1,243	1,064
Bee Day	2,288	-
Deer Forum Funds	1,132	-
Donations	635	3,990
Foster North Landcare	4,246	-
Interest Income	6,994	6,701
Landcare Group health funds	4,400	-
Memberships	4,903	4,282
Miscellaneous Income	2,890	2,847
Newsletter Income	2,498	5,182
Number Plates	1,200	10,500
P2P Participants	5,272	-
Returned Funds	9,092	-
RKP brochure development funds	2,000	-
Training	3,141	826
Sponsorship	-	1,727
Sustainable AG tour funds	8,000	-
Total Other Income	59,934	37,119
TOTAL INCOME	836,760	601,849
EXPENSES	2015	2014
Board expenses	2,734	733
Employment	315,846	304,745
Operating		
Accounting	5,987	6,352
Audit	1,470	1,420
Grants and Awards	4,400	9,450
General	8,945	28,621
Information Technology	3,134	4,015
Insurance	1,799	2,354
Meeting Expenses	3,918	2,956
Printing & Stationery	307	557
Telephone	150	60
Travel & Accommodation	631	262
Total Operating Costs	30,741	56,047
Promotions	34,291	34,175
On Ground Works		
Chemicals	6,277	4,623
Contractors	48,931	40,464
Fencing	83,790	77,807
General	40,669	74,536
Native Plants	71,220	68,925
Seed	-	150
Weed Management	-	-
Total On Ground Works	250,887	266,505
Training & Education	1,609	951
TOTAL EXPENSES	636,108	663,156
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT) FOR YEAR	200,652	(61,307)

The accompanying notes form part of this financial report.

SOUTH GIPPSLAND LANDCARE NETWORK INC. A0011936S

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30 JUNE 2015

	NOTE	2015	2014
ASSETS			
Cheque account		59,161	265,524
Cash reserve account		407,804	-
TOTAL ASSETS		466,965	265,524
LIABILITIES			
Accounts payable		1,825	-
Credit card		704	219
GST payable		5,611	7,132
TOTAL LIABILITIES		8,140	7,351
NET ASSETS		458,825	258,173
MEMBERS' FUNDS			
Opening balance		258,173	319,480
Surplus / (deficit) for year		200,652	(61,307)
TOTAL MEMBERS' FUNDS (Refer Note 2)		458,825	258,173

The accompanying notes form part of this financial report.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

NOTE 1: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

This financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act (Vic) 2012*. The Board has determined that the association is not a reporting entity.

The financial report has been prepared on a cash basis and is based on historic costs and does not take into account changing money values.

The following significant accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of this financial report.

- (a) **Income Tax**
No provision for income tax has been raised as the association is exempt from income tax under Div 50 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.
- (b) **Fixed Assets**
All fixed asset purchases were treated as an item of expense.
- (c) **Revenue**
All revenue is recognised when the entity obtains control over the funds which is generally at the time of receipt.
- (d) **Goods and Services Tax (GST)**
Income and expenditure are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Tax Office. In these circumstances the GST is recognised as part of an item of the expense.

SOUTH GIPPSLAND LANDCARE NETWORK INC.
A0011936S

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

NOTE 2: MEMBERS' FUNDS

The association receives funding from numerous sources relating to specific projects. The balance of each specific project is calculated at the end of the financial year as outlined below:

Project	2015	2014
SGLN activities	2,517	9,393
Collections and memberships	1,337	931
Koala bequest program	-	9,200
Ecotender monitoring	659	659
Landcare number plates	3,200	7,000
Arawata erosion project	20,000	-
Turton's Creek Falls	46,706	42,489
Victorian Landcare grant – Bunurong	2,360	3,700
Bunurong erosion	19,520	21,608
Healthy soils 2- sustainable farms	86,421	(9,788)
Demonstrating sustainable farms	24,231	12,322
Old project	-	6,000
Targeted land stewardship	6,490	6,500
Bee project	538	-
Environmental management systems	15,048	-
Farmers/fishers	9,108	-
Regional community support	2,727	-
Pest, plant & animal project	126	62
Corner Inlet catchment project	2,798	26,191
Waging war on invasive plants	40,616	20,652
Prom Plains sub group funds	2,397	2,397
Tarwin Valley Strzelecki project	18,554	-
Cape Liptrap Bunurong	949	949
Foster North	3,951	-
Habitat for Life – FOSK	118,350	51,255
One Million Trees project	12,060	13,530
SGLN newsletter	3,914	3,649
Regional koala project	12,975	-
Giant Gippsland earthworm project	-	29,474
Sword grass brown butterfly	1,273	-
Total Members' Funds	458,825	258,173

SOUTH GIPPSLAND LANDCARE NETWORK INC.
A0011936S

STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE BOARD
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

The Board has determined that the association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

In the opinion of the Board the financial report as set out on pages 1 to 6:

- I. presents a true and fair view of the financial position of South Gippsland Landcare Network Inc. as at 30 June, 2015 and its performance for the year ended on that date.
- II. at the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that South Gippsland Landcare Network Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board and is signed for and on behalf of the Board by:

MARK WALTERS
CHAIRPERSON

DAWN MAROTTI
TREASURER

28 August 2015

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF SOUTH GIPPSLAND LANDCARE NETWORK INC.

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of South Gippsland Landcare Network Inc. which comprises the balance sheet as at 30 June 2015, the income statement for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the statement by the Board.

Board's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The Board of the association is responsible for the preparation of the financial report, and have determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 to the financial report, is appropriate to meet the requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act (Vic) 2012*. This responsibility also includes such internal control as the Board determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the association's preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view, in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the association's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the Board, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Auditor's Opinion

In our opinion, the financial report gives a true and fair view of the financial position of South Gippsland Landcare Network Inc. as at 30 June 2015 and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Section 100(2) of the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act (Vic) 2012* and the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial report.

Basis of Accounting and Restriction on Distribution and Use

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist South Gippsland Landcare Network Inc. to meet the requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act (Vic) 2012*. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.

CARDELL ASSURANCE & AUDIT

Lyndal J. McKenzie
3A Billson Street
WONTHAGGI VIC 3995

31 August 2015

Appendix 2: SGLN Landcare Fund Financial Statement 2014/15
SOUTH GIPPSLAND LANDCARE FUND INC. ABN: 52 166 526 533
STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE for the year ended 30th June 2015

INCOME STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

	2015	2014
INCOME		
Donations	-	-
Interest	15.78	16.05
TOTAL INCOME	15.78	16.05
EXPENSES		
Audit fee	-	286.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	-	286.00
SURPLUS \ (DEFICIT) FOR YEAR	15.78	(269.95)

The accompanying notes form part of the financial report.

NOTE 1: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

This financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Commonwealth Department of the Environment as a Deductible Gift Recipient on the Register of Environmental Organisations.

The Board of the South Gippsland Landcare Network Inc. act as trustees for the Public Fund and have determined that the Public Fund is not a reporting entity.

The financial report has been prepared on a cash basis and is based on historic costs and does not take into account changing money values.

The following significant accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of this financial report.

- (a) **Income Tax**
No provision for income tax has been raised as the association is exempt from income tax under Div 50 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.
- (b) **Fixed Assets**
Fixed asset purchases are treated as an item of expense.
- (c) **Revenue**
All revenue is recognised when the entity obtains control over the funds which is generally at the time of receipt.
- (d) **Goods and Services Tax (GST)**
Income and expenditure are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Tax Office. In these circumstances the GST is recognised as part of an item of the expense.

STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE BOARD
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

The Board of South Gippsland Landcare Network Inc. have determined that the Public Fund is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

In the opinion of the Board the financial report as set out on pages 1 to 4:

- I. presents a true and fair view of the financial position of South Gippsland Landcare Fund as at 30 June, 2015 and its performance for the year ended on that date.
- II. at the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that South Gippsland Landcare Fund will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board and is signed for and on behalf of the Board by:

MARK WALTERS
CHAIRPERSON

DAWN MAROTTI
TREASURER

28 August 2015

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 30 JUNE 2015

	NOTE	2015	2014
ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents		3,517.03	3,501.25
TOTAL ASSETS		3,517.03	3,501.25
LIABILITIES		-	-
TOTAL LIABILITIES		-	-
NET ASSETS		3,517.03	3,501.25
EQUITY			
Opening balance		3,501.25	3,771.20
Surplus / (deficit) for year		15.78	(269.95)
EQUITY		3,517.03	3,501.25

The accompanying notes form part of the financial report.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF SOUTH GIPPSLAND LANDCARE FUND

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of South Gippsland Landcare Fund, which comprises the balance sheet as at 30 June 2015, the income statement for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the statement by members of the Board.

Board's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The Board of the fund is responsible for the preparation of the financial report, and have determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 to the financial report, is appropriate to meet the requirements of the *Department of the Environment*. This responsibility also includes such internal control as the Board determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the fund's preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view, in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the fund's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the Board, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial report gives a true and fair view of the financial position of South Gippsland Landcare Fund as at 30 June 2015 and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial report.

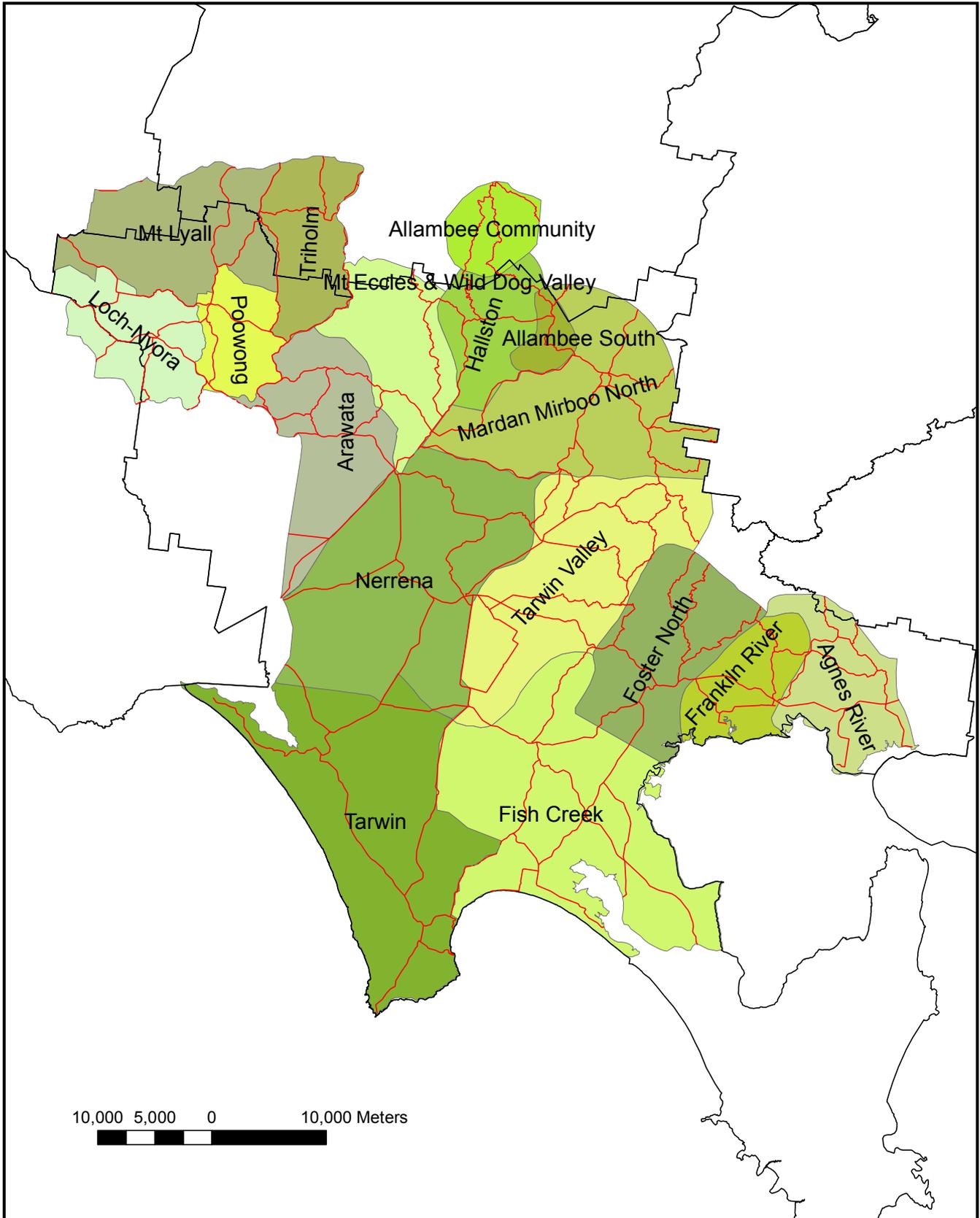
Basis of Accounting and Restriction on Distribution

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist South Gippsland Landcare Fund to meet the requirements of the *Department of the Environment*. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.

CARDELL ASSURANCE & AUDIT

Lyndal J. McKenzie
3A Billson Street
WONTHAGGI VIC 3995 31 August 2015

Appendix 3: SGLN Landcare Group Boundaries Map



Appendix 4. SGLN Strategic Plan 2015 - 2020

South Gippsland Landcare Network Strategic Plan 2015-2020

In 2014/15 the SGLN reviewed and updated their strategic plan for the next 5 years. The plan focusses on 6 key themes.

Key Theme: *Caring for the Land*

OBJECTIVES

- Promote best land management practice landscape change and sustainable farming through best land management practices
- Work to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the region
- Facilitate weed and pest control in partnership with community, government and individuals

Key Theme: *Landcare Groups & Membership*

OBJECTIVES

- Encourage, support and sustain members and groups to ensure their continued survival and growth
- Service the needs of the members and groups
- Identify priorities for on ground works
- Build and retain Landcare membership

Key Theme: *Funding*

OBJECTIVES

- Identify areas for funding across the SGLN
- Seek funds for priority projects through government grants, corporate business, philanthropic organisations and other avenues

Key Theme: *Education, Communication & Promotions*

OBJECTIVES

- Educate members and the community about sustainable land management
- Communicate clear Landcare messages to increase the profile of Landcare
- Lobby political organisations to secure funding and recognition
- Provide information services to all landholders so they can look after their land

Key Theme: *Collaboration & Partnerships*

OBJECTIVES

- Work with other groups and organisations to enhance outcomes for the Landcare members, groups and Network priorities
- Deliver projects for partner organisations to achieve mutual aims

Key Theme: *Governance*

OBJECTIVES

- Ensure the members are clear on their roles, purpose and priorities
- Ensure everyone works within the rules of the constitution

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The following local businesses support Landcare in South Gippsland



Insurance



The South Gippsland Landcare Network thanks the following organisations for their support in 2014/2015



Cardell Assurance & Audit



National Landcare Programme



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SGLN 2015 Annual Report prepared by J Vella - 0419 382379 | Printed by Larkin Printers - 5662 3284