



“Many hands – one voice”

Questions

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Landcarers in the ACT – who are they?

The ACT has individuals and groups of people who look after natural places that are close to where they live, or that they are passionate about or connected to in some special way. These include around 60 urban, rural, junior and Aboriginal Landcare groups, Parkcare groups, as well as “Friends-of”, Waterwatch and Frogwatch groups. It also includes farmers who look after land that they farm and traditional Aboriginal custodians who care for the land of their ancestors. These are the diverse “landcarers” in the ACT and region. To some it is their living, some their home, and for others it is a focus for voluntary stewardship of the “bush capital” and its surrounds that we all live in.

What do landcarers do?

Landcarers pull out weeds, plant trees and shrubs and restore habitat, prevent erosion, monitor wildlife and water quality, look after tracks, share knowledge and tell stories about the land. In rural areas, landcarers are also involved in improvement of land management and agricultural practices.

How are landcarers supported in the ACT?

To enable people to “do landcare”, requires some administration and operational support – planning, organizing equipment, training, access to knowledge and expertise, health and safety information, and insurance etc. Operational support for landcarers in ACT currently comes from:

- Three catchment groups, each with a catchment and waterwatch coordinator, in support of their respective network of members. This support is largely funded by the Australian Government’s National Landcare Program delivered through a Regional Investment Strategy by the ACT government. The catchment groups are independent incorporated bodies, which were set up to respond to community issues, undertake the administration of programs and small grants, facilitate community action, disseminate information and build community capacity.
- In addition to the support provided by the Catchment Groups the ACT Government Parkcare program is responsible for 35 Parkcare and Urban Landcare Groups, working in ACT parks and reserves and urban open space. Support includes a Parkcare Facilitator and support officer as well as some assistance from Rangers who manage reserves.

- An Australian Government-funded Regional Landcare Facilitator hosted by the ACT government, also provides support and assistance in delivery of the National Landcare Program, with particular focus on rural landholders in the ACT to undertake practice change.

Who funds community-based landcare?

Apart from the private investment of farmers, community landcare has largely been funded by government - administered by the ACT government, as the Regional Body for natural resource management, on behalf of the Australian Government. This reliance on government funding inevitably means that support of community activities can be affected by changes in government policy and priorities. The catchment groups and the volunteer groups they support seek to reduce reliance on government funding and attract additional resources and partners. Working in partnership with government benefits community landcare by providing a united voice.

Who is Landcare ACT and what will it do?

Landcare ACT is a new independent incorporated “peak” body with membership inclusive of the diversity of landcarers in the ACT, including catchment groups, rural landholders and Aboriginal traditional custodians. As a “peak body” it has been initiated to provide one strong voice for community landcare. to work with the ACT and Australian governments, and to increase investment by promoting landcare to the wider community, seeking further partners and diverse funding sources.

The development of Landcare ACT has been funded by the Australian Government through the National Landcare Network as part of “strengthening community landcare”.

What will Landcare ACT do for landcarers?

Landcarers in the ACT and their government partners will both benefit from Landcare ACT in a number of ways. It will provide a formal link between the community and ACT and Australian governments, where issues of importance, community views and information about community efforts can be highlighted and discussed collaboratively in the context of government policy and programs.

Landcare ACT will also provide a strategic perspective to assist landcare networks and groups to go about their operational business in the most efficient and effective ways, and provide a “think tank” for local innovation and collaboration as well as opportunities for sharing knowledge and experience.

To find out more about Landcare ACT you can contact:

Anne Duncan on 0466 108 432, or any of the Catchment Coordinators in the ACT (Molonglo: Megan Dixon on 6299 2119; Ginninderra: Karissa Preuss on 6278 3309; Southern ACT: Martine Franco on 6296 6400)