Women Toward Sustainability
E-Leaders 2014

A Evaluative Report into
Online Leadership, Learning and Networking
for Rural Women

National Rural
Women's Coalition

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About The National Rural Women's Coalition

The National Rural Women's Coalition (NRWC) works to support and grow vibrant rural, remote and regional Communities throughout Australia. The National Rural Women's Coalition (NRWC) provides a collaborative national voice for women living in rural, regional and remote Australia and does this by:

- Representing the diverse views of women in rural, regional and remote Australia.
- Providing advice to the Australian Government on policy issues relevant to the views and circumstances of rural women.
- Contributing to building a positive profile of rural women, their achievements and issues.

The core activities of the NRWC revolve around:

- Advocacy for women.
- Influencing policy and decision-making.
- Building capacity within women's organizations and for rural, remote and regional women.
- Reflecting the diversity of the women's sector.
- Delivering innovative leadership projects. More information at *www.nrwc.com.au*

Current NRWC Directors representing the Australian Local Government Women's Association; Australian Women in Agriculture; Country Women's Association of Australia; National Rural Health Alliance; Women's Industry Network Seafood Community; one rural Aboriginal Woman and one Independent Director, bring with them a wealth of experiences, awards, qualifications and passion to enrich the lives of rural, remote and regional women.

The National Rural Women's Coalition is funded by the Office for Women in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. Funding for the *Women Towards Sustainability* E-Leaders Program was provided by the Department of Agriculture, "Caring For Our Country" grant.

ALGWA AUSTRALIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Australian Women in Agriculture Ltd.

CWAA non-party political non-sectarian

NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH ALLIANCE INC.

From the Desk of the NRWC President

As a proactive, national organisation committed to environmental sustainability of rural, remote and regional communities, the NRWC has been delighted to enable another group of women to share the knowledge of various experts, engage with their peers, extend their networks and develop their leadership knowledge and skills through a very productive *Women Towards Sustainability* program, designed by Karen Tully and Kerryn Suttor. The NRWC appreciates their commitment, their passion and support.

NRWC's strength is the ability to link and connect women around and across Australia. This report follows the personal and professional growth of 20 women across our nation as they were given an opportunity to enhance their community's environment through innovative projects. Their creativity has been harnessed through the "planning for future generations" presentations of a group of expert women and men who challenged the participants to find alternatives to sustain their environment.

I was privileged to be part of the team of selectors – I thank the other members of the team, Irene Mills and Alwyn Friedersdorff, as it was difficult to ensure we met the criteria. I, along with Alwyn, also had the privilege of mentoring the women – an activity which was amazing – such talent, such resilience, such a multi-talented group. I had my first experience of moderating a session on-line with Jenny Shaw who took us snorkeling; Dr Sarah Eady took us through the carbon footprint and Michael Croft's challenge of *"everything is connected and no on gets out alive!"* – all awe-inspiring.

We can make a difference and everyone has the potential to grow in many different ways. The women took the opportunity and their growth is amazing.

The NRWC Directors have enjoyed this journey and we recommend the report in which Karen has captured the experiences of the women as we share their journey.

Dr Pat Hamilton

President – NRWC

About Women Towards Sustainability E-Leaders

The National Rural Women's Coalition (NRWC) has embraced emerging technologies as a tool to offer short web-conferencing webinars for women who live in rural, remote and regional locations. With no down time, babysitting fees or travel costs, women can take part in learning and networking experiences from the convenience of their own homes. The added benefit of this is that there is no guilt that is often associated with caregivers leaving home, business and family to attend training and information sessions. The web conferencing software used is free for participants and allows for open and collaborative communication and is proven to foster strong networks amongst the women who join the sessions.

The NRWC has a strong desire to improve the leadership skills of rural, remote and regional women so they can represent themselves, their communities and industries and work towards building a vibrant, sustainable and viable future for rural, remote and regional Australia. In 2014, the NRWC offered an online e-leaders webinar course over the period June – October, on a weekly basis. Further weekly webinars were offered in January – March 2015 to further embed learning and leverage the projects that E-Leaders were working on. Twenty rural, remote and regional women from all corners of Australia were selected to do the course from a total of twenty-five applicants. Participants were able to interact in a virtual classroom and network with rural, remote and regional women from all corners of Australia. Throughout the course, women were invited to provide feedback on the course in the form of 'weekly reflections' and it is these weekly reflections from which the majority of the data for this report was captured. However, pre and post surveys were completed by the women to gauge knowledge and skill levels in generic leadership areas. Quotes taken directly from the surveys are written in italics throughout this report.

Executive Summary

The *Women Towards Sustainability* E-leaders course saw twenty-five women place an expression of interest with the National Rural Women's Coalition to participate in the program, and twenty women were accepted after a rigorous merit selection process had been completed. Of these twenty women, eighteen completed all the requirements of the program. There were fifteen formal learning sessions offered in 2014, and the average attendance was 13.25 sessions per e-leader. There were an additional six webinars offered in 2015 for the 17 E-Leaders who were interested in continuing their learning.

The growth in learning in different generic leadership skills and knowledge sets can be measured by the following data:

Being A Business or Community Leader – At the start of the course, 31% of e-leaders agreed that they had strong and adequate skills in enabling them to be a leader within their business or community. Upon completion, 77% had strong or adequate skills to be a leader.

Writing Quality Grant Applications – Only 50% of the women self-assessed themselves as having skills and knowledge that would enable them to write quality grant applications. By the course completion, all women agreed that they had skills in this area.

Understanding Sustainability in National and Global Landscapes – 60% of the e-leaders rated themselves as having strong or adequate skills in understanding sustainability in the context of national and global changing landscapes at the start of the course. By the end of the course, 100% of women believed they had this understanding.

Effective Advocacy Partnerships – Prior to the course, 62% of the women rated themselves as having the skills to build effective advocacy partnerships. By the end of the course, all women believed they had skills in this area.

Fostering Effective Working Relationships - E-leaders were asked to self-assess their level of skills and knowledge on their ability to foster effective working relationships. Prior to the start of the course, no one believed they had strong skills in this area and only 40% agreed they had some skills. At completion, 100% self-assessed themselves as having strong skills at fostering effective working relationships.

E-Leader Comment

"Support from other like-minded people was very inspiring. Ideas given and learnt while doing the course. While doing this course, other groups including youth have come on board with projects to help our environment, and improve our community. It has been satisfying to see that others in the community have similar views to myself, and support my projects. It just needed someone to kickstart the idea. Enjoyed having knowledgeable speakers whom I would not have contact with otherwise. (We have limited speakers in the rural country area about interesting environmental issue. Usually have to travel or fly interstate to have the opportunity to hear or see these speakers. Time and money usually rules out going to these types of activities or forums".

About the Data Gathering Tool - the Weekly *"Reflections"* Survey

It is important to have a process that critically examines the *Women Towards Sustainability* E-Leaders program in order to make judgments about the learning, to improve the effectiveness of e-leaders and to inform the funding agency (*Department of Agriculture Caring for Our Country Sustainable Environment and Sustainable Agriculture).* E-Leaders 2014/15 employed an ongoing weekly evaluation process of collecting information about the impact of the E-Leaders content upon the participants. This enabled the NRWC to identify areas for improvements as the course unfolded. Summative evaluations were also completed once the course was completed to determine the extent that E-Leaders had achieved its goals. The NRWC Program Manager undertook the evaluation.

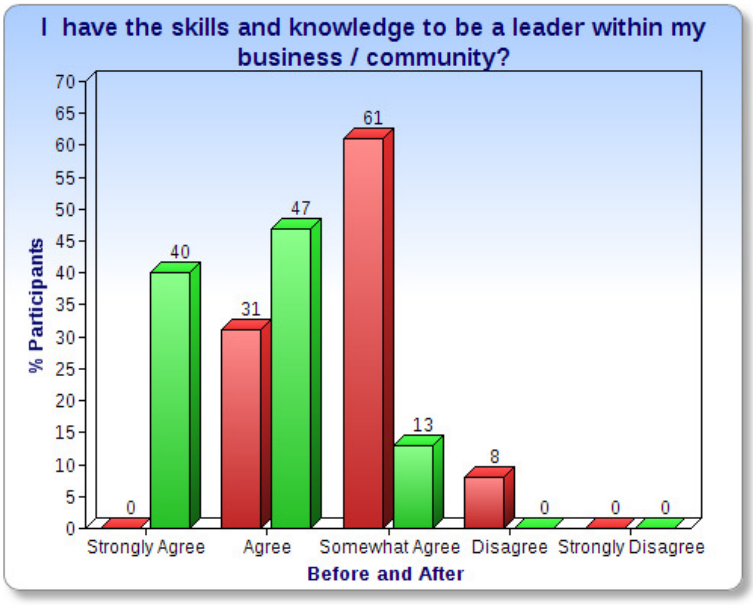
After each webinar, the Program Manager would use a customised survey administered by survey monkey and invite E-Leaders to undertake reflection and provide feedback on the session. A desirable trait of effective leaders is that they are reflective practitioners. The survey comprised of 5 questions, thus ensuring that the time commitment to complete the survey was not too onerous. The surveys contained selected response items using a Likert scale, with four or more options presented as well as open-ended items for which the respondent constructed the response. The five questions were ordered in a straightforward and logical manner. Responses were anonymous unless participants chose to identify themselves. The responses were then collated and shared with the group so the reflections contributed to the group learning. This process could be likened to the debrief chat after a meeting or lecture – however it was done virtually.

At the conclusion of the E-Leaders Program, the Program Manager collated the findings to inform this report. This report will be used to inform the Department of Agriculture Caring for our Country – Community Landcare Grant funders and future strategic and operational planning for the National Rural Women's Coalition.

E-Leaders Participant Marnie Ellis, Victoria

Evidence of E-Leaders Growth of Skills and Knowledge

A longitudinal study was undertaken which asked e-leader participants to self-assess their level of skills and knowledge in certain areas. In this trend study, questions were asked of e-leaders prior to the start of the course, and six weeks after course completion. These two surveys measured the growth of skills and knowledge of the e-leaders from start to close of the course.



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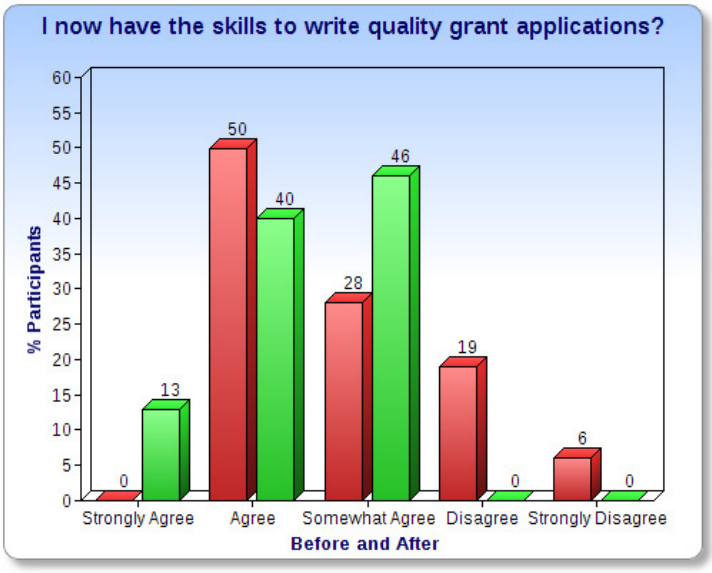

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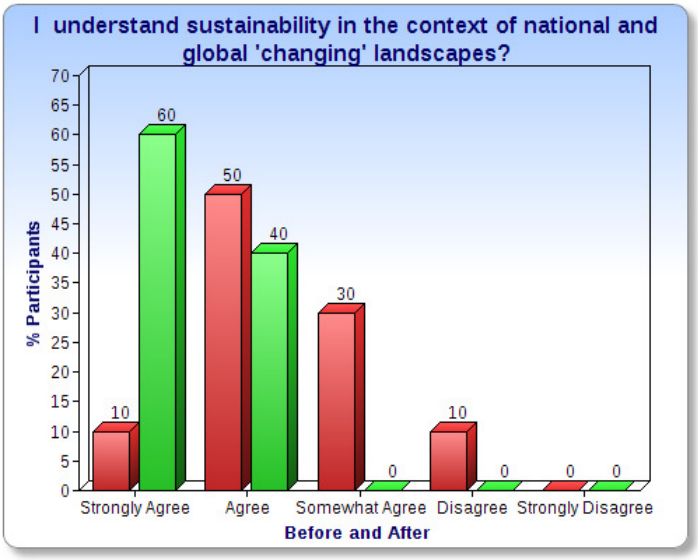

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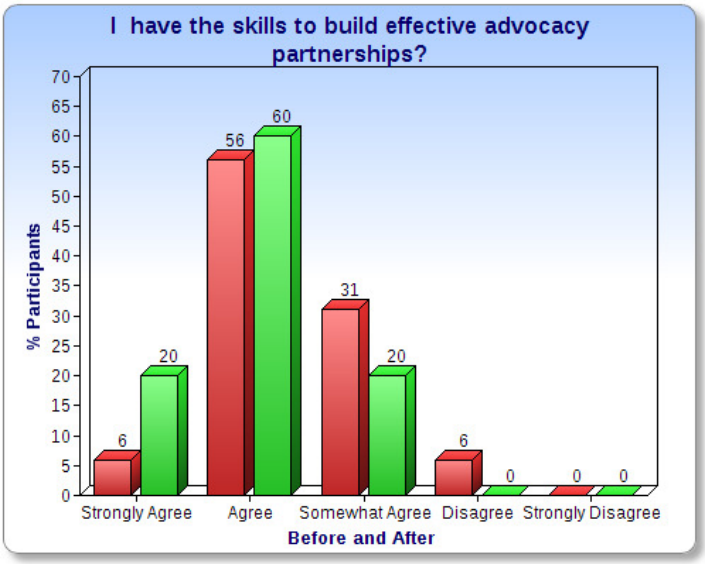

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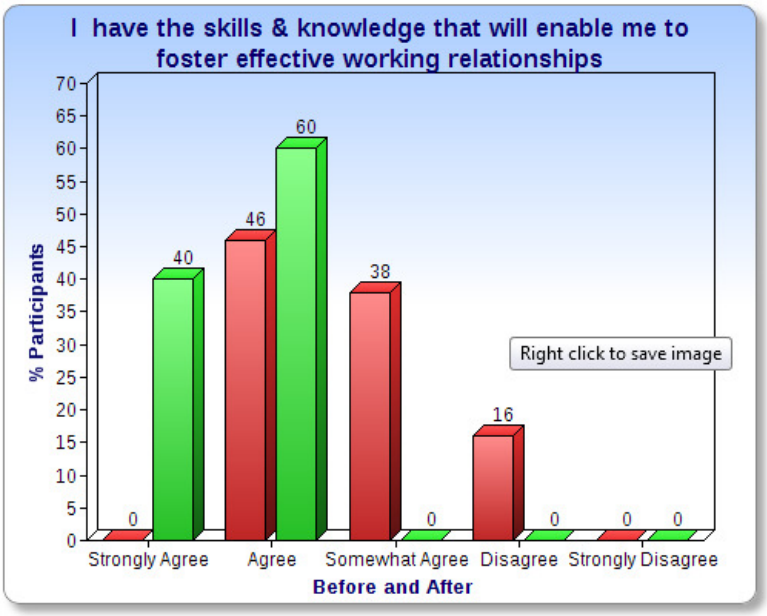
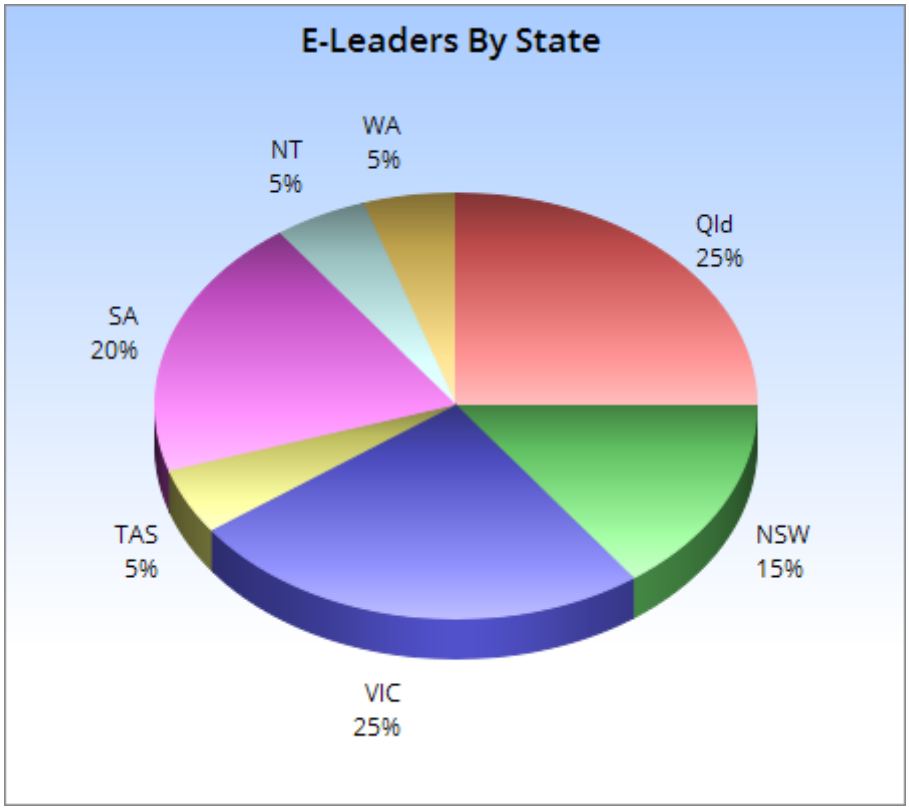


Fostering Effective Working Relationships - E-leaders were asked to self-assess their level of skills and knowledge on their ability to foster effective working relationships. Prior to the start of the course, no one believed they had strong skills in this area and only 40% agreed they had some skills. At completion, 100% self-assessed themselves as having strong skills at fostering effective working relationships.

Emma Stilts from New South Wales joins in a webinar session

About the E-Leaders

All of the twenty women who were selected to undertake the *Women Towards Sustainability* E-Leaders Course had not engaged with the National Rural Women's Coalition before. All participants had active Facebook accounts, with 11 using Facebook also for their business. Five had Twitter accounts and seven used LinkedIn. Seventeen of the women were in formal employment.



Two E-Leaders identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) and one E-Leader identified as a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) women. There was an even spread of ages amongst the E-Leaders, with six being aged between 25 and 35 years; seven aged between 36-45 years and seven aged over forty-five years old. The occupations of the women included owning their own primary production farm/ farmers, managing a wild life sanctuary, graphic designer, Landcare Coordinators, Women's Centre Coordinator, Project Officer, Environmental Scientists, Consultant, Education Officer, Executive Assistant, Nurse and working in Natural Resource Management. The most common occupation was primary production.

E-Leader Comment

"Just would like to say that this program is giving me a lot more that what I initially thought. It has made me grow as a person in my community and at understanding myself better".

E-Leaders Participation

Twenty women were selected to do this course and eighteen women completed all of the requirements of the program and participated in sessions on a regular basis. As the sessions were recorded, women who were not able to attend were sent a link and were able to listen to the recording after the session. Personal reasons not related to the content of the program prevented the two women who did not complete the course from participating fully. There was a total of 15 webinar sessions offered in 2014. The course had an average attendance of 13.25 sessions per e-leader in 2014.

A further six webinar sessions were offered (with approval from funders) in 2015. Upon hearing the news of the additional webinars, the following supportive comments were received from E-Leaders.

"Great way to start the New Year focused on leadership! And a wonderful opportunity to further develop and refine the skills we learnt through the program last year".

"It is awesome! The opportunity to build on the knowledge from 2014 is excellent".

"I think this is terrific".

"I love this program and would love to see any extension of the wonderful work done here".

"Wonderful, really helps to keep the momentum plus I miss the sessions. I'm very appreciate of this opportunity to extend my learning about all things to do with Leadership".

E-Leader Comment

"I guess I have always had the vision and the passion to stand for a cause I feel strongly about, and now as a result of the learning provided by the NRWC I feel confident to not only make a stand, but to assume leadership roles where I can increase awareness about those issues.

Can I please extend my thanks to all of the people involved in the NRWC, Kerryn, Pat and Karen in particular, but also the wonderful presenters throughout the course, the mentors, the guest speakers, the great support the presenters offered after their presentations with follow up contacts. Julie Telford is a gem and Sally Thompson felt like an old friend. The other wonderful advantage has been to have contact with the amazing group of women from across Australia who have been co participants with me. It has really been a most extraordinary journey".

Lyn from Victoria

Project Planning – Sally Thomson

Fostering Effective Working Relationships - E-leaders were asked to self-assess their level of skills and knowledge on their ability to foster effective working relationships. Prior to the start of the course, there were not any E-Leaders believed they had strong skills in this area and only 40% agreed they had some skills. At completion, 100% self-assessed themselves as having strong skills at fostering effective working relationships.

The first two sessions of the Women Towards Sustainability E-Leaders program assisted the E-Leaders to formulate their project plan for their identified on-ground project. They also learnt ways to put their ideas into a workable action plan. Goal setting was also covered.

The presenter was Sally Thomson and Sally is passionate about prosperous communities and sees local ownership and systems thinking as key ingredients for creating lasting change. She has over ten years of experience in community engagement and project management and an ongoing interest in her family farm business in Woodanilling, Western Australia. In 2009, Sally started Sowing Seeds, a rural development business that supports the agricultural industry to turn ideas into action. Her current clients include the Grains RDC, Nuffield Australia and local grower groups.

First Session

The first session was held on the 10th June 2014. In the post session reflective survey, e-leaders were asked about their key learning's from the Project Planning webinar. Responses included

"A detailed project plan agreed to before project commencement is imperative. Developing the plan using effective project techniques incorporating project planning, continuous monitoring and reporting of the progress, as well as effective resource management is essential for a project to not only be delivered successfully but efficiently".

"That planning needs to take into consideration a great deal of information including, scope, time management, cost management and managing risks".

"Importance of planning, how our 'style' of management affects how we manage a project, importance of understanding your community".

E-Leaders were asked how useful was the content of the Project Planning Webinar and associated workbook. 100% of E-Leaders found the webinar useful.

Second Session

At the close of the second session on the 17th June 2014, e-leaders were asked what areas did they now need to work on with their on-ground project planning. Some responses received were:

"Need to work on my goal setting to make sure they are measurable, agreed, realistic, time bound, and ethical and recorded".

"Getting things written down. Because I really only have myself to work with to date a lot of my stuff is just in my head, and I sort of just potter along. Writing things down makes me accountable, and as I'm learning if I want to engage with other people or find out what inspires them or will motivate them to partner in any way to advance what I propose to them, then it must be clearly defined and structured for it to have any meaning or credibility to others".

"Gathering other interested players, or partnerships. I have local organisations on board, and the Youth Advisory Committee have wanted to help with the Lake Bxxxxx Project. How can I put it all together- Coordinate it in a time frame. Changing some peoples thinking will be a challenge- e.g. saving unused roads as corridors-leave them as bush tracks, they are for the people! Councillors in our Wxxxx Regional Council area, all older members with set ways) still have the idea it will save money for the council to get rid of as many old roads as possible. Not thinking about the destruction of heavy grazing and loss of bird and animal corridors".

When asked what single idea in the project planning webinars had the biggest impact on them, women responded with the value of undertaking a community assessment, mind mapping, using the SMARTER structure and building partnerships.

E-Leaders were invited to reflect upon what they have learned about themselves as a leader. Some responses included:

"I actually need to start considering myself as a leader and project that to those I interact with. It is not my nature to bring the spotlight onto myself so to speak, and I am much more comfortable being a worker in the background. I actually need to step up to the plate and take this on".

"Not to spread myself too thin!!!! And focus on a single action at a time".

"I have realised I actually have more sources, and contacts to achieve my goal. Instead of thinking I am only a small voice in a small community. I am a farmer, nurse, volunteer at many sporting groups, Progress committee member, etc., etc. I have life skills, I have local knowledge, and I have a huge network of various people and varied professions and interests".

Other comments and reflections about the Sally Thomson Project Planning webinars included:

"Really enjoy Sally's personable style of teaching".

"I loved this part of the program because it has given me the scaffold I have needed to make sense of this community interface where I have not been comfortable in the past. I am so grateful to be able to be a participant and wish to extend my thanks".

"I enjoyed the sessions and hearing the other participants experiences".

"I am enjoying the program. It is great to hear about other fantastic projects. Very inspiring. I am interested to hear about other participant's interests and goals".

Leadership In Action – Bianca Jurd

Being A Business or Community Leader – At the start of the course, 31% of e-leaders agreed that they had strong and adequate skills in enabling them to be a leader within their business or community. Upon completion, 77% had strong or adequate skills to be a leader.

The leadership in action session offered the E-Leaders opportunities to learn about the qualities that make a successful leader. They were able to analyse a leadership model that identified the various stages of leadership development and undertook a mapping exercise that enabled them to define their own personal leadership connect. As a result of tracking their own leadership pathway, there were able to choose areas to focus on for their own personal growth.

Bianca Jurd facilitated these two webinar sessions. Bianca is a facilitator and program coordinator for The Australian Rural Leadership Foundation. She facilitated many of the Foundations programs including the flagship program, The Australian Rural Leadership Program (ARLP). Bianca also designs and coordinates customised programs. She gathered her experience from a diverse background spanning 15 years and five Australian states and territories. Her dual passions for experiential education and breakthrough thinking drive her to invest in assisting Australia's rural leaders, giving them those skills needed to face the industry's toughest challenges.

First Session

This session was held on the 24th June, 2014. In the first webinar session, E-Leaders had to identify the work that they were planning to do in the coming weeks that would stretch them out of their comfort zones, as leaders working on their respective projects. A selection of responses of what they need to do to get to where they want to be included:

"In person networking is my stretch zone one that I am about to enter head-on. The nurturing I am receiving from my participation in this program is mostly all I needed. My interpretation of what I have learnt is that: Ethics are essential, Opportunities exist and Innovation is rife. So I'm ready to jump in at the shallow end and progress to the deep".

"Talk to more people within my community and conduct a community survey about groundwater knowledge. Additionally working with the other e-leaders and learning is pushing me into the stretch zone".

"For my project I will develop a survey for women in land management which I haven't don't before and try lock in some dates for workshops with other stakeholders which is a bit scary as not sure how much of community will be interested".

"I am going to address a number of core groups from various community groups to outline my project to them. I will be putting the invitation to visit the farm to assess the trial plots in progress. I will need to bolster my self-confidence, and not be shy about sharing my knowledge".

Participants were also asked to reflect upon what they have learnt about themselves as current or aspiring leaders. Comments included:

"That I need to work through the fears but also know when I am pushing too far and need to ease of the accelerator so I don't fall into the panic zone".

"That leadership is a continuing journey. I am still unsure of where I actually stand on the scale but it is great to understand the landscape and realise the journey/potential ahead".

"My views are minority views. I don't think like most people I know. I think this was explained in the outer leadership circle which is outside current culture. To be a better leader I have to care less about what the 85% might say about me".

"I learned that I still have a long journey ahead of me and that leadership comes with experience".

"To become a leader I need to work on knowing more not about content but about people in my community, what do they want and need what drives them".

"I realized that I probably already do possess a number of the attributes of a leader, and although some of those facets may not be my most comfortable zone, I can perform them and do on a fairly regular basis".

Second Session

The second webinar on leadership with Bianca Jurd was held on the 1st July 2014. E-Leaders were asked to comment on the usefulness of the content from the two Leadership webinars. Feedback included:

"The Leadership sessions with Bianca have been extremely useful and enlightening. I am gaining the confidence for the next part of my journey: networking in-person".

"The content was useful to me, as it has allowed me to understand what a leader is. This has given me confidence that I am on the right path".

"The leadership session has been very helpful and useful to me in order to know myself better and how do I sit in the leadership stages".

"I think a lot of the information is good food for thought in my development as a leader. It was also very interesting to try to identify some of those traits in others in various meetings throughout the week".

"Excellent - a lot of new theory I was not aware of before".

"Really helpful to understand what leadership skills I have, what I need to develop and how I can develop as a leader".

"After having listened to Bianca, I have become much more reflective of my own actions and reactions to others in relation to aspiring to be a leader".

Personality in Leadership - Angela Bollard

Effective Advocacy Partnerships – Prior to the course, 62% of the women rated themselves as having the skills to build effective advocacy partnerships. By the end of the course, all women believed they had skills in this area.

E-leaders were given the opportunity to use an accredited personality assessment (Myers Briggs Type) indicator so they could learn more about their personality type and how to better communicate with those around them. Discussions took place on how to foster effective working relationships and enhance capacity to communicate effectively through better understanding of how others might perceive you. Angelia Bollard presented this session on the 8th July 2014. Additionally, each e-leader had a 30 – 40 minute phone consultation with Angela where they discussed their MBTI in depth.

The presenter, Angela Bollard has led a varied and successful career, with experience in executive management, policy and governance. Angela worked as a lecturer at the University of Western Australia and the Curtin University of Technology for nine years. As a qualified coach and mentor, Angela also runs her own mentoring and executive coaching practice and particularly enjoys working with women as they prepare for leadership positions. She is an accredited Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) practitioner and has broad experience in the design and delivery of skills development programs for adult learners. Working as a policy advisor and speechwriter for two NSW Premiers, Angela has first-hand experience working with leaders. She has also worked extensively with boards and senior executive teams.

E-leaders were asked what was the one thing that they had learned about themselves as a result of completing the MBTI, which had implications for their on-ground project. Comments included:

"That my type is only 2% of population which is why sometimes I might feel different but also my type are natural born leaders with good people skills which should assist me working with a diverse group".

"When people are belligerent to my ideas I will acknowledge that they don't agree and move on without feeling (as much of) a heavy weight descending upon me".

"I need to take into considerations people's feelings and to learn to network".

"As an introvert I need to manage my energy. I also am a completer/finisher though so confident I will get the project finished".

"That I am a thought leader"

"It was interesting to get the confirmation that my need to withdraw to get clarity of my ideas is actually ok. It is just a part of who I am and I don't necessarily need to alter that about me".

"That I need to learn how to 'chunk it up' and 'chunk it down' depending on my audiences. In the past, I have found it difficult to get a message across to others. Knowing what I now know about MBTI, I am going to have to break it down so EVERYBODY gets the same message".

"I found it interesting that I can adapt the way I interact with other people, by understanding the way the way they work in the world, to get the best from both them and myself. I have never really understood how to work with people in this manner, other than liking to work with some folks more than others, and probably because they have similar traits as I do".

Other comments offered in relation to the Personality in Leadership webinar included:

"Personality profiling was amazingly accurate and could strongly identify with a lot of the traits. The session with Angela made me more accepting of the traits that bother me".

"Rather than feeling challenged verification of my type indicator has buoyed me to progress my project with added energy which in turn has led to a few very creative and ambitious changes"

"This session was really helpful, excellent resources too. Angela was very insightful in her delivery and knowledge of MBTI".

"Angela touched upon many other facets of my life (other than the e-leaders course and project) and provided some fascinating insights".

"Was absolutely fantastic having the one-on-one session with Angela. Also I have done MBTI a few times now and I just keep learning more about myself and others"!

"Really useful session. Angela was very knowledgeable and her guidance was really useful and well worthwhile".

"These mentoring sessions have opened new doors for me, in regards to relationship with others including family, friends and work".

"This session has probably been the most influential in the planning and implementation of my project so far. This has given me real, applicable people skills. I needed these".

On the 27th January, Angela Bollard delivered an additional webinar as part of the extension of the program. The topic was "Personality in Leadership" and the following comments were provided.

"This time around the concept of personality in leadership made so much more sense to me. Was good to reflect on the personalities and then take it a step further to concept of attitudes and working with teams".

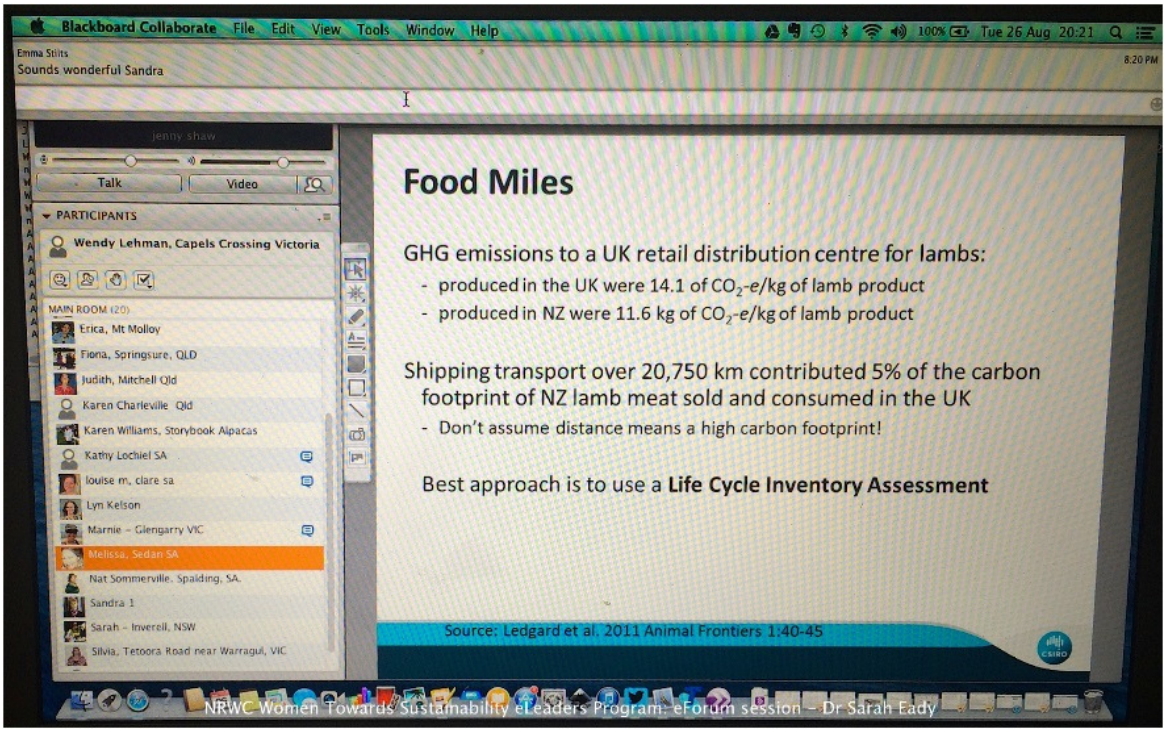
"It was good to look at personality in leadership and how to use the personality you have to be a good leader".

"Great and is always a real enlightenment into our own and others behaviours. I am always inspired to rethink the way I interact with others when I remember Angela's comments".

"The session helped me understand just what I can bring to a Leadership role. Interestingly I have the same personality type and most of us attending the session are Introverted. Angela's in-depth

understanding of the different personality types and her skill in imparting her knowledge worked well to further my understanding about how everyone has Leadership potential".

"It was good to recap what we had learnt last year and to keep in mind when we meet people that they may want to engage or work in a different way to ourselves and how to bring out the best in different personalities".



Webinar in progress

A Changing Landscape – Simon Divecha

Understanding Sustainability in National and Global Landscapes – 60% of the e-leaders rated themselves as having strong or adequate skills in understanding sustainability in the context of national and global changing landscapes at the start of the course. By the end of the course, 100% of women believed they had this understanding.

This topic looked at national and global sustainability. Climate change, water conservation and big picture sustainability issues were covered. The *Women Towards Sustainability* E-Leaders were able to learn more about our 'changing landscape' and discussed the implications of this for primary industry producers.

Simon Divecha has two decades of expertise in the conditions for the growth of sustainable organisations and societies at international national and local levels. Simon currently coordinates the University of Adelaide's Business and Carbon Management Program, whilst undertaking a PhD. He managed the approval of a cutting edge $75 million sustainable housing development and played a leading role in the successful b id to establish Adelaide as Australia's first Solar City. Simon is also involved in the Adelaide University Environment Institute's Spencer Gulf Ecosystem and Development Initiative.

A sample of the E-Leaders comments after the webinar included:

"It was a very intense session. It was helpful to have worked previously on Leadership - so the terminology was not all alien. But some of the ideas were obviously too big to be easily explained. The presentation did spark my interest in Action Logic, and the Unilever case study was a very positive and happy start to the night - making it seem anything IS possible".

"Better understanding of how decisions are made especially within government departments and big business. Understanding that this is probably a very specific thing for each organisation. I need to find a champion within these organisation to push my project".

"Simon was a great speaker".

"Was interesting to get a world view perspective of things".

On the 17th February 2015, Simon Divecha delivered another two webinars on the topic of "Changing Landscapes". Some of the feedback provided after the sessions included:

"Enjoyed the sessions. Great to have had the opportunities for education at home with well known academic Simon Divecha. My son had told me about him, as a university student. We had lots to discuss once we realised the subject content. I was able to expand on my knowledge, learnt different ideas, and new thinking processes. Enjoyed the interaction with others around Australia with like minds. Sparked my life, and I enjoyed the new knowledge".

"I really enjoy hearing from Simon. He brings a new and thought provoking perspective to problem solving and general world view. I always go away from his session thinking we all need to have eyes like flies to gain enough perspectives to solve wicked problems"

It was great going over the levels of leadership again in particular about how each type of leader may fit into a workplace and challenges they may experience".

E-Leader Comment

"I just love that once a week I get to mastermind with someone who has some fantastic ideas. With fewer people in a rural community there are fewer people to master mind with. Also adding to networks is super helpful".

Erica from Queensland joins the evening webinar

Sustainable Primary Industries– Julia Telford

Writing Quality Grant Applications – Only 50% of the women self-assessed themselves as having skills and knowledge that would enable them to write quality grant applications. By the course completion, all women agreed that they had skills in this area.

Julia Telford presented four webinars (29th July, 5th August, 12th August and 19th August 2014) on natural resource sustainability for primary producers, including management and conservation strategies. Analysis of best practice case studies and how to form effective advocacy partnerships were discussed. A session also examined what funding is available for sustainability projects and grant writing tips were provided.

Julia Telford hails from rural Queensland and has ten years of experience working with Landcare and catchment groups. She has worked for government, industry, non-government and community groups. In 2013, Julia started her own consultancy business and her work involves a range of projects including on-ground technical training, strategic planning support, natural resource management and project development. Julia's vision is to contribute to the viability and vibrancy of regional Australia. As such she is involved with several key organisations at a national state and regional level.

Participants were required to complete a sustainability self-assessment questionnaire on their project prior to the webinar. Comments on this process included:

"It was a very thorough document based on NRM. It was a great example of an engagement tool".

"I think the assessment questionnaire is useful because it helps you to think about all of the aspects of production. I think the extent of the questions highlights the difficulty in the environment for small operators".

"It was a good exercise to make us think about several different ways to be sustainable and how to improve".

"I found this an interesting exercise, mostly because it really brought home the fact that there are different ways of doing things, and yes we have knowledge about these different ways of doing things, and yes we have plans of doing things differently, yet so often we don't ACTUALLY do things differently".

"It made me realise we need to revisit some of the things we are doing, and decide if we are still heading in the right direction".

"Certainly broadened the areas of thinking of sustainability on our property".

After the E-Leaders had completed the four webinars, they were asked to note their key learnings from the sustainable primary industries sessions and the implications for their on-ground projects. Comments included:

"The importance of culture for participation".

"Marketing of our project to a wider audience by taking into consideration other peoples contexts, social and economic aspects of our projects, things we have in common with people from other contexts, monitoring and reviewing our practices".

"Find key people who have an interest, to come on board with your project. Don't be afraid to ask well-known people for help".

"I think that it is important to know the "so what" factor of what we monitor. It is all well and good to record stuff but at the end of the day we have to know what we are going to do with that information".

"You can't improve what you don't measure - set some metrics up to track improvement (whatever that improvement might be)".

"Broad subject, lots to consider and lots of opportunities for engagement".

Other comments on the four webinars included:

"I really like Julia's ability to make conversation a part of the sessions".

"I really enjoyed the sessions with Julia, she has a different perspective, and this is making me re-assess how I am going to do some things".

"Great presentations, very engaging and interactive".

"Julia's webinar's have been full of interesting and useful information".

"Julia is great presenter and extremely engaging and easy to listen to. Thanks".

On Monday 2nd March 2015, E-leaders attended a webinar titled "Project Development" facilitated by Julia Telford. Comments provided after the session included:

"Enjoyed the session. Gave an insight on how to project develop my ideas, and make them happen. I have the ideas, but making them happen to a time frame, and to do the actual process has been my challenge. The process to do the tasks was my key learning".

"Julia brings such a truthfulness to her presentations. This empowers me to think that great things can be achieved in a very normal way, by people who are everyday citizens".

E-Leader Comment

"This program has given me inspiration, motivation and confidence to have a go at some things that prior to this experience I would never have done. It is one thing to have an idea or a dream, but it is another thing to be able to act on doing something to make it more of a reality than a dream. A bit like the saying that a goal is a dream with a time frame, the E-Leaders program gives a road map to turn a dream into a reality".

Social Media and Using Facebook– Leanne Isaacson

A webinar hosted by Leanne Isaacson on Social Media use of Facebook was held on the 3rd February 2015. Leanne is a rural business coach who has over 20 years' experience in the coordination and delivery of numerous training programs as well as 25 years as a partner in a farming enterprises at Currency Creek, Milang and the Murray Mallee of SA. She has served on many local and state boards and committees including the Adult & Community Education (ACE) Council, Agriculture and Horticulture Training Council, Murray Mallee Strategic Task Force and numerous others.

In recent times, she has had great success in creating an online presence for businesses through the creation and registration of targeted domain names, website creation, Google advertising and other paid and free online advertising.

Feedback on this session included:

"I am a very basic user of Facebook on a personal account so this session really helped me to understand how Facebook actually works and the potential for communication".

"I enjoyed Leanne's statistics on Facebook".

"Excellent material. Most of the Facebook tips I hadn't heard of before and I hadn't realised about how the photos were used".

"Great take home tips, and re-inspired me to get back into this realm which is not my natural comfort zone".

"I've attended other social media workshops but Leanne is the best. She understands sustainable farming / natural resources industry and how we can best market our business and products".

E-Leader Comments

"I want to note that the speakers for this course have been outstanding. The support from the admin team has been remarkable".

"Marvellous presenters, interesting and informative sessions. Well done everyone and thank you".

Social Media and Using Twitter – Fiona Lake

A webinar hosted by Fiona Lake on Social Media use of Twitter was held on the 10th February 2015. Fiona lives in Townsville in Queensland and specializes in rural, outback & agricultural writing and photography. Since 1984 she had had a particular interest in the largest cattle stations.

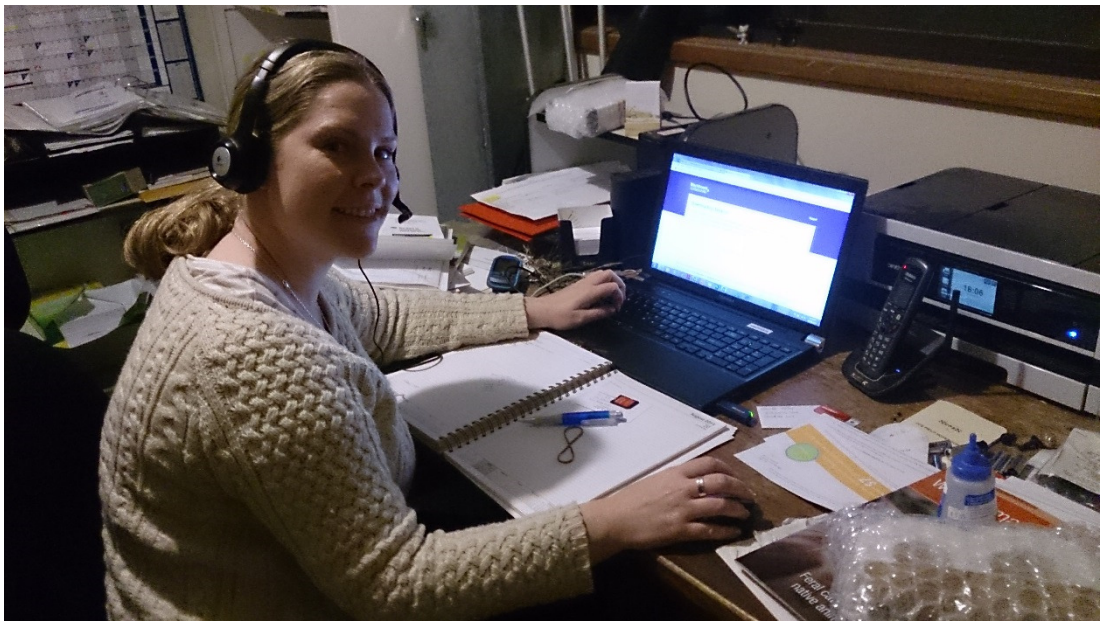
Feedback on this session included:

"This session was great to learn best ways to use twitter and tips as I really didn't know much about it before and now see Twitter as an opportunity not daunting".

"Very useful. I can see how rural people can use it more like a conversation. It was a good example".

"Very useful. Learnt about Twitter - I had no idea about it before Fiona's session".

"I have a Twitter account but have not spent much time using it. So hearing her hints and tips and suggestions was very interesting".



Melissa from South Australia logs into the webinar platform.

Towards Sustainability Forum – Michael Croft, Jenny Shaw, Sarah Eady.

E-leaders had the opportunity to work with a panel of three guest speakers in a forum moderated by the President of the NRWC, Dr Pat Hamilton on the 26th August 2014. This interactive question and answer style webinar gave participants the chance to examine and debate burning issues in sustainable agriculture. Prior to the webinar, E-Leaders had to complete pre-reading on the topic.

The three panelists at the Towards Sustainability Forum were:

Michael Croft operates a vertically integrated farm located west of Canberra. He is passionate about biological farming, diversity and resilient food systems. Michael is an advocate for the 'triple bottom line' and promoting eating as an agricultural and ecological act. Michael is the President of the Australian Food Sovereignty Alliance. He is a Fellow of the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation, a leader in the Slow Food Movement and Terra Madre delegate, the Australian civil society mechanism delegate to the Un/FAO Committee on World Food Security, a member of the International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty and he is on the international advisory board of Food Tank.

Jenny Shaw works at the Western Australian Marine Science Institution as Principal Investigator of a Fisheries Research and Development project on Climate Change Adaptation; building industry and community knowledge. Jenny is also completing a PhD at the Curtin University Sustainable Policy Institute in Fremantle, Western Australia. Jenny has worked in marine related areas all of her life in both government and industry in Australia and overseas. She continues to be an active member of the Women's Industry Network Seafood Community and involve in projects with the seafood industry.

Sarah Eady is a Principal Research Scientist based at CSIRO Animal, Food and Health Sciences, Armidale, NSW. Dr Eady is a geneticist with expertise in developing national breeding programs and implementing them on-farm. Her current activities expand her expertise in farming systems in the area of life cycle assessment, determining the carbon and water 'footprints' for agricultural products, on farm greenhouse gas emissions profiles and opportunities for bio sequestration of carbon. She is a senior member of the Sustainable Agriculture Flagship team, working on science to support policy for greenhouse gas offset design with the Carbon Farming Initiative.

E-leaders were asked how the Towards Sustainability Forum assisted them with their on-ground sustainability project. Comments included:

"I enjoyed reading the food carbon footprint paper, I thought that presented some interesting points".

"It was good to hear key speakers about subjects that I have limited knowledge of. Course has given me the confidence to tackle issues in our community that many either think it is impossible, or too hard to achieve. Making changes in peoples thinking has been a challenge. With the knowledge from the course I have been able to speak confidently about what I am passionate about".

"Reinforced the ideas/notions of collaboration - and thinking beyond the current generation"!

"My 'ah ha' moment was about the economic world that we live in and how we are trying to influence people's perspective so that they can see that there is something more than economic gain - trans-generational thinking".

"From Jenny's project- using Art/Photography as a communication/engagement tool allows people to talk about themselves/their community in a non-threatening way. As well as tell the communities stories".

The information was outstanding for me especially the info Michael Croft supplied. I think this information would be valuable for my project".

"I really liked Jenny Shaw's addition of governance to the sustainability triple bottom line and looking at these wicked problems of the food system".

"The notion that no degree of knowledge by participants should be taken for granted. Like the light going on with fishers as primary producers, so my project may be the source that turns someone else's light on regarding soil".

"Everyone has a different reason for thinking and acting sustainably. It is important to keep an open mind when talking about sustainability so that you can include people in your conversation".

"Great Session - really enjoyed it - especially Michael's presentation and comments".

"Was a great forum, really amazing panelists. I am still thinking about the different ideas that were thrown around. Very thought provoking - especially content provided by Michael".

"Wish we had more time with the speakers! The background reading was great".

"I know time constraints are in place and that people volunteer their time so we should be thankful for what we receive but I wish it had have been longer with more time for 2 way dialogue between guests and participants. Thanks NRWC for providing such a wonderful opportunity for us all".

"The speakers were really great. It was excellent to get an insight to their experience and knowledge".

Women Towards Sustainability Projects

Each E-Leader had to nominate an on-ground project that they would like to undertake, as part of the application process. The project had to be one where the E-Leader applicant had to show that they would develop their leadership capacity as they worked on their project as emerging community leaders or champions who were looking to make a difference to Landcare and sustainability in their own community. Many women were already involved in their local Landcare or sustainable farming / industry best practice groups. The *Women Towards Sustainability* E-Leaders training course was able to give women the confidence to enact this change in their community. Taking a wider 'whole of community approach', the E-Leaders were expected to ensure that their project would have wide reaching effects in raising awareness and educating others.

There were 6 women who worked on projects related to small farms or urban farming; another 6 who had on-ground projects in the biodiversity/ conservation sphere; 5 who worked on soil; 2 in sustainable agriculture and 1 in water.

General Project Topic	Specific Examples of On-Ground Work Undertaken
Small / Urban Farms	Aquaphonics; wicking beds; permaculture; free range egg farming; vermiculture; food gardens; drought resistant gardens.
Biodiversity / Conservation	Solar farm; sustainable energy awareness; conserving native trees and pastures,; fauna surveys; preserving roadside and reserve vegetation and mapping the landscape's water ways and wildlife habitats.
Soil	Soil biology; fertilizer alternatives; regenerating degraded paddocks; managing land, fire, weeds and feral animals.
Sustainable Agriculture	Youth and innovation; alpaca breeding.
Water	Ground Water.

A clearly articulated and documented project plan was submitted by all E-Leaders on the 4th July, 2014. There were two project-mentoring sessions built into the program, on the 15th July and 23rd September led by Dr Pat Hamilton and Alwyn Friedersdorff. The NRWC recognizes that mentoring is a powerful personal development tool that would also assist the E-Leaders in progressing their projects so that the full potential of the projects was realised. Two wise mentors were appointed to assist the E-Leaders to reflect upon the options, confidence, idea exploration and progress within their projects as the course unfolded. All E-Leaders submitted a final project report on the 14th November.

It should be noted that the E-Leaders on-ground project has been the starting point for many projects and work has continued to unfold since November 2014. Examples of the outcomes from undertaking E-Leaders can be found in the following case studies written by three women who reside in different parts of Australia and worked on diversely different on-ground projects.

Project Case Study One

Ana from Tasmania

Project Summary

King Island farmers (and Australians in general) have been dependent on inorganic forms of fertilizers to maximise grass production, most times without recurring to soil tests and using inadequate amounts of it. This has a potential negative impact on soil biology. This project will help farmers and community in general understand the importance of soil biology and its (free) processes for food production, sustainable agriculture and even profitability.

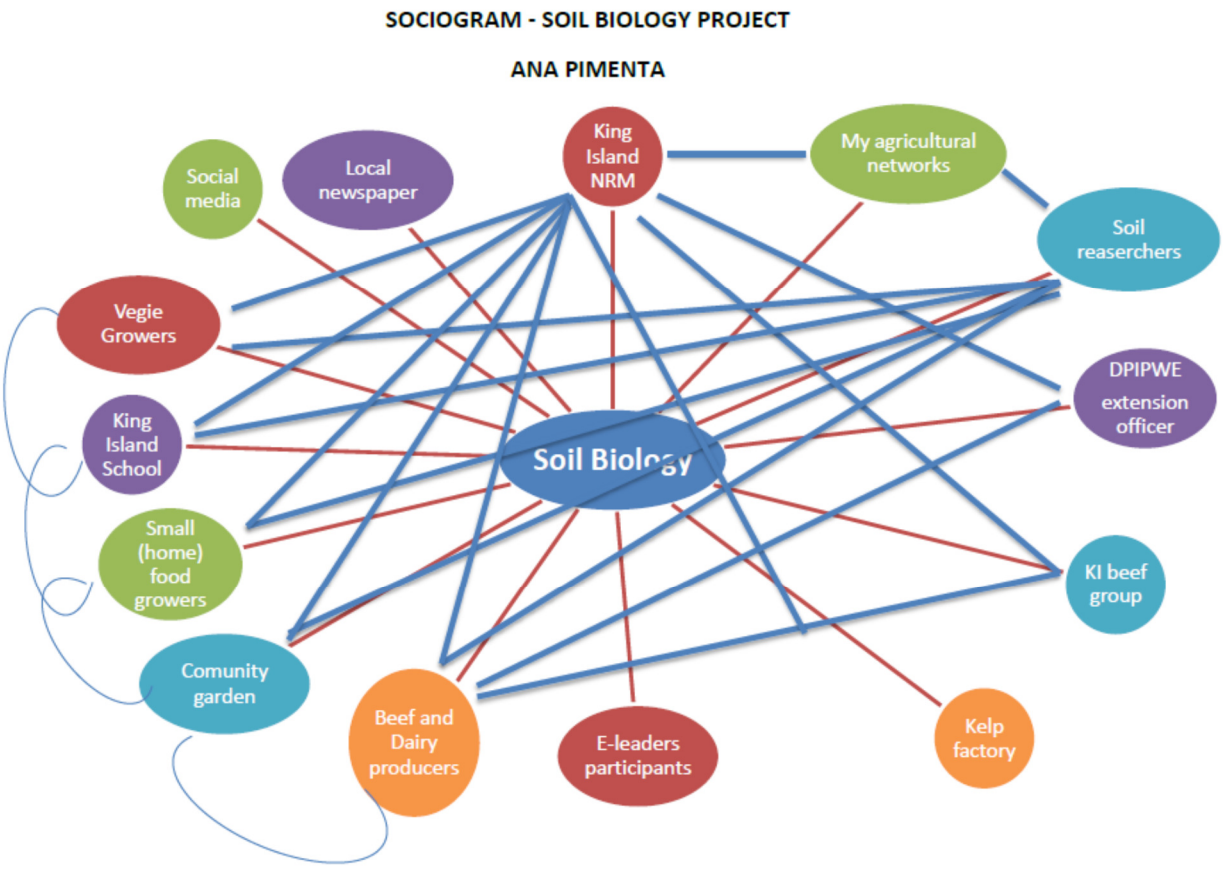
How Participating in E-Leaders Helped

I believe that the e-leaders program has had a big influence in the success of this project. I have learned what leadership really means and its different stages and identifying my stage of leadership. This has made me more comfortable with myself. I have also learned new techniques to get the message across to the audience I want to engage and how to use my personality qualities to achieve that, understanding and respecting others' personalities. Being a woman in agriculture, and being an e-leader participant gave me more determination to engage more women in this project and in agriculture, and although this wasn't an initial goal of the project, it became a priority for me. This made me think outside the square and find ways of engaging women, and I strongly believe I have achieved that, proof of this was the participation of women at the last workshop (generally only about 2-5% of King Island women attend to agricultural workshops, 30% of the attendants to this last workshop were women). I have shared with my group of friends and networks my experience with the program and the other e-leaders' energising and inspiring projects and this, I believe, had a positive impact on other women and how much can be achieved by having a proactive involvement in agriculture and in sustainability. During this final workshop, I asked people for some feedback in relation to the project. Everyone was very happy with the content of the workshop and understood the importance of maintaining/improving soil biology. 60 people attended the final workshop and another 40 attended previous activities, so I believe I have influenced at least 100 people, as I have also promoted sustainable agriculture through articles in the local paper and Facebook page.

This project and the e-leaders program had a big influence on me and my future. I have learned so many new things, from soil microbes to improving relationships and communication channels. I am considering a PhD in reducing carbon emissions through improving soil biology processes.

Project Outcomes

The farming community is more aware of the environmental impacts of the industry, the benefits of soil biology and its processes for sustainable agriculture, understands the importance of environmental sustainability and is able to take up on better agricultural practices, such as reducing the amounts of inorganic fertilizers applied, that can sustain the industry into the future and improve the environment.



The connections and networks as a result of the E-Leaders Project visually represented.

Project Case Study Two

Suzanne from Northern Territory

Project Summary

Balancing pastoral productivity with biodiversity conservation is of high concern for the sustainability of the Northern pastoral industry yet there is a considerable knowledge and resource gap in recent data and understanding of existing fauna diversity. My project is addressing this concern through engaging women to work together to develop a pilot program for monitoring fauna on their Pastoral Stations. The project is focusing on enabling local women to undertake simple monitoring activities and develop skills and knowledge applicable to their local environment, and also getting the station kids involved to foster an interest in biodiversity and sense of sustainability in the next generation as well. The knowledge gained and trends identified will inform the business and the community of the level of overall sustainability and assist with measuring more clearly the impact of the pastoral operation within our environment.

How Participating in E-Leaders Helped?

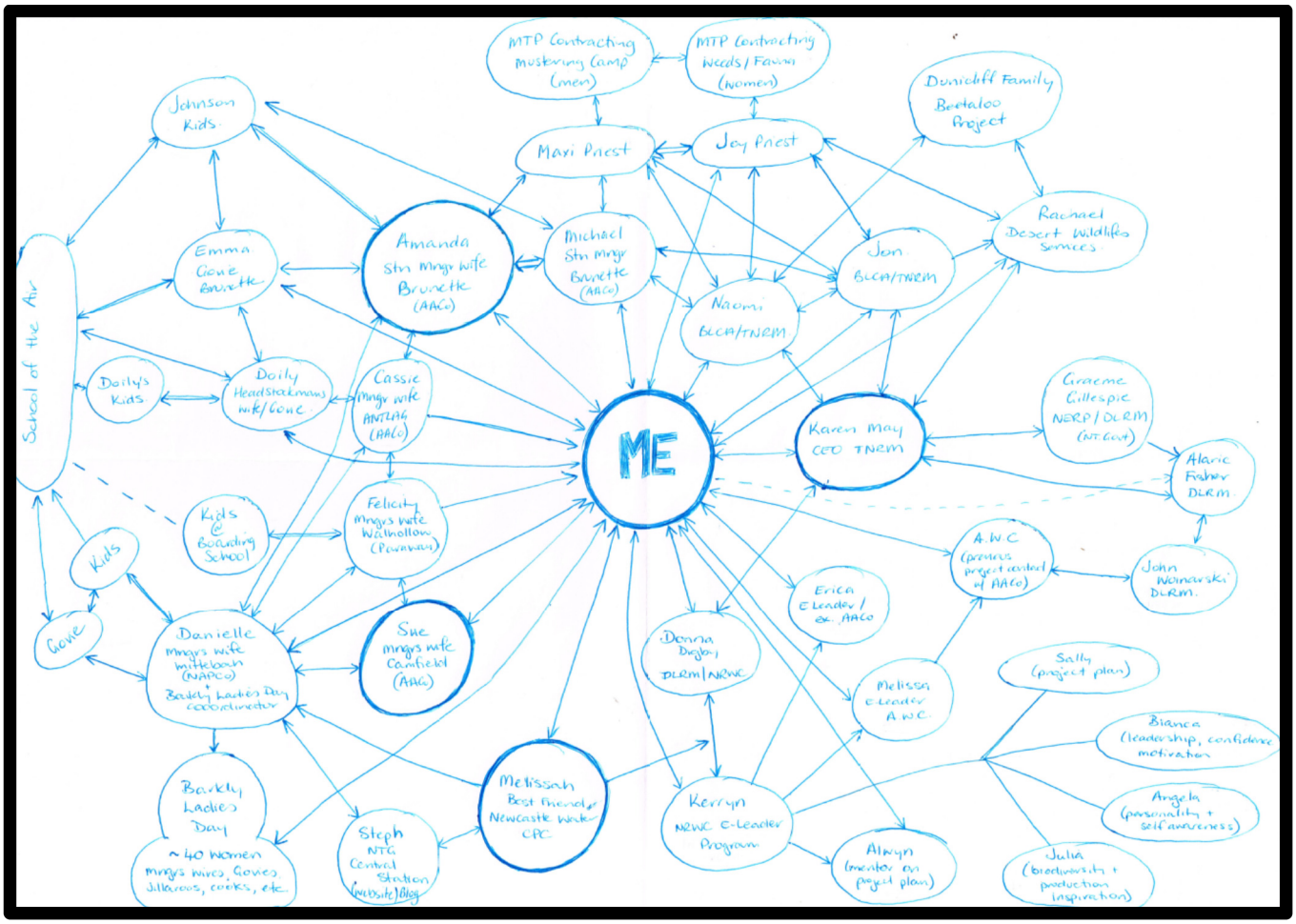
Participating in e-leaders has helped me build self-awareness and self-confidence. Learning to identify the traits that leaders have and the different stages of the journey was very useful. This allowed me to figure out what areas I needed to work on for my own personal growth. I learnt about the need to be more personally aware and more reflective. The early presenters on leadership, personality and project planning were most effective and inspiring for my learning.

The confidence and motivation inspired by participation in this project has led me to networking opportunities and a public speaking feat which would probably not have happened otherwise. As a result, I influenced or at least inspired, 5 women at the workshop to commit to participating in my project. There has been some discussion since and further reports about anecdotal observations which I have taken as proof that the other 30 women present on the day were influenced by what I presented. The knowledge that these other women were interested has further increased my confidence and motivation to undertake the project and a realisation that I do have something worthwhile to offer.

Project Outcomes

- Key participant Station committed site for biodiversity monitoring pilot program.
- Engaged support from Territory Natural Resource Management (NT State Catchment Body), Northern Territory Regional Landcare Facilitator and Regional Coordinator.
- Development of Regional Biodiversity Handbook / Toolkit is in progress.
- 5 women confirmed interest in participation on their station in Barkly region, 1 non AA Co station, 1 confirmed outside Barkly region.
- Barkly Ladies Day Workshop – attended by 40 women (including Station Managers Wives, Governesses, administration staff, Cooks, Jillaroos etc.) from pastoral properties across the Barkly Tablelands region, NT. Delivered presentation on sustainable rangelands management to raise awareness of environmental sustainability issues. It was a great way to engage with women from many different properties, ages and backgrounds. Presentation was well received, but most meaningful outcome was the discussion it promoted throughout the

remainder of the afternoon on biodiversity and sharing of stories from their own backyards. Discovered that a lot of these women are "looking" at this anyway – in their gardens, the stockyards, the bore run, the waterholes – just need an avenue for recording and collecting their experiences and knowledge.



The connections and networks as a result of the E-Leaders Project visually represented.

Project Case Study Three

Fiona from Queensland

Project Summary

Springsure is a town in Central Queensland. The closest major centre is Emerald which is located 70km to the North. Springsure has a predominately agricultural industry with 32% of all people employed by or working in this industry. The agricultural industry around Springsure includes cattle grazing and dry land cropping. The population is predominately living on rural properties with only 18% of the population residing in Springsure town. Recently there have been two coal mines open up in the area which is the second biggest employer with 9% of the population.

With the majority of people within the community living outside of town there is a reliance on water collected on property for domestic and agricultural uses. Water sources include rain water, dam water and groundwater. Many people have surface water (rain water and dams) when there has been sufficient rainfall and rely on groundwater as a backup. With the current drought conditions being experienced there is an increased reliance on groundwater as surface water dries up.

From community engagement, I have found that there is a deficiency of scientific understanding amongst landholders and the community with regards to groundwater. With many people relying on a water source that they know little about, for example: "what is an aquifer?" is a question often asked. With the recent addition of mining developments to the local area there are increasing concerns about groundwater availability and what impacts the mining industry will have.

The project involved two major components.

1. Water level measurements.

When you can watch a dam slowly empty or measure how much water is left in a tank there is an ability to plan for what will happen when that water runs out. But how do you measure groundwater? A resource that you cannot see, one of the ways to do this is to "dip" the bore with an electronic dipper tape. Measuring bores on a regular basis will allow landholders to see trends in their resources. These may show a decreasing trend and having access to the information will give you time to plan a contingency or to enact a plan that has been prepared.

Having access to a dipper tape and training on how to use one is part of this project along with data validation and the provision of monthly trend reports. This allows landholders to know their groundwater resources and what to expect.

2. Groundwater Information Day – Raising Awareness Plan

A groundwater information day is planned to fill the knowledge deficiencies that exist within the community. In order to inform this day a community survey will be completed to ensure that the majority knowledge gaps are being filled.

This information will not only inform about the groundwater resource that many people rely on but will also address the potential risks associated with the mining industry.

Project Outcomes

Overall Getting to Know Your Groundwater has achieved its initial goals of collecting water level information in landholder bores and facilitating a groundwater training day. The raising awareness target was reached.

Initially the project was designed in two parts one being water level monitoring with landholders and the second being a community training day. The training day was nominated to fulfil the raising awareness component. Whilst the training day was successful and drew a group of 13 - working with landholders and their families has been an unexpected and unplanned awareness raising activity. The project has been able to address landholders on their own ground and from their own perspective. It has been able to use their bores as a starting point to learn about groundwater resources. Therefore the total reach for the raising awareness has been 31.

Getting to Know Your Groundwater will continue to work into the future. New landholders are signing up on a regular basis to collect water level data. During advertising for the Emerald training day expressions of interest were received from Alpha, Bundaberg and Townsville, so there are early plans to take the training day on the road.

1. Water Level Measurements

Since beginning the project in May 2014 the project has attracted 16 property owners. These properties were visited and each has been successfully collecting groundwater data for validation. The water level measurements will continue into the future with the addition of landholders throughout Central Queensland. Water levels are being measured with a mixture of dipping and installed air-lines. Water level data will be supplied to the Queensland Department Natural Resources and Mines where it will be uploaded to the Queensland groundwater database. This database is accessible by the public through Queensland Globe.

2. Groundwater Information Day

The groundwater information day was held on the 30th October 2014 at the Emerald Agricultural College. The day attracted landholders and local NRM authority groups from all over Central Queensland. Topics covered included:

- Groundwater 101 presented by Fiona Murchie
- Potential Impacts from Development, Facts from Fiction presented by Department of Natural Resources and Mines
- Groundwater Impact Assessments presented by Australian Groundwater Engineers
- Groundwater in our Local Area: Where do we find it and why? Presented by Geo9.

In order to keep costs down and provide high quality speakers, two of the presentations were completed via Skype. This meant that the information was, high quality and relevant to the

attendees. During the Geo9 presentation landholders were able to volunteer their own properties for a geological assessment to see what potential there was for groundwater.

Feedback from the day was excellent, attendee were asked “Did the training meet your expectations? Why?” Some comments are provided below:

- *Lots of questions answered.*
- *The presenters covered topics well, going from basics to more detailed information.*
- *The AGE talk was excellent. The DNRM was also very useful. Skype worked excellent to bring experts to the table Fantastic!*

Fiona working on her project.

Post E-Leaders Feedback on Women Towards Sustainability Program

"E-Leaders has been a great learning platform and it has definitely encouraged me to extend myself beyond what I thought I was capable. Until I wrote out my initial E-Leaders application I had never realised just how much our small farming enterprise had to offer in terms of both fresh food and as a learning platform. By having to explain my project in detail, I was able to see the opportunities that existed.

To date I have had 88 visitors attend the open day / farm tour with another 12 registering for a 'Getting started in free range farming' workshop and 25 people paid up and ready to attend our 'Introduction to Permaculture' workshop on the 15th and 16th November. Some of the registrations for the workshops were from people that attended the open day however, my estimation would be that I have influenced around 100 people to date".
Marnie from Victoria

"Since commencing the E-Leaders program I was encouraged to participate in more activities with the community, so applied to be part of a program offered in my region, called Inspiring Women in Agriculture. As a participant in that program I met a wonderful group of women, and have forged many friendships and networks across much of Victoria. This group was also a platform for the dissemination of knowledge concerning soil health to farming families and communities.

The E-Leaders program also introduced me to LinkedIn and I am now a contributor to a number of online forums relating to soil health and agriculture, particularly organic farming, and I have a growing number of connections via this platform.

I am continuing to provide primary school education programs with components including – Why is soil important?; Who lives in the soil?; All about worms; and Composting. I have also recently been invited to participate in a Carbon planning group for the region, facilitated by the North Central Catchment Authority (NCCMA). I have also been invited to contribute to a soil health poster being developed by the NCCMA".

Lyn from Victoria

"I believe e-leaders helped me, as I felt more confident asking people for help. I was able to put in for grants – wasn't successful, but I felt I knew what I was doing. The speakers were very inspiring, but they were also people like me, they had a passion and followed it; so if they could do it, so could I".

Sue from Victoria

"This project has helped me grow my leadership skills dramatically by encouraging me to step out of my comfort zone and discuss contentious issues with my community and government departments. Having the support of the NRWC behind me gave me a platform to address a passion of mine no strings attached. I have learnt to be influential in a different arena then what I'm used to and have learnt to be resilient and never give up, just modify and try again! I predict I've influenced over 30 people to date however once my full project is complete I will have influenced hundreds. The networks gained have been invaluable".

Nat from South Australia

"The NRWC E-leader program helped me immensely with my leadership by giving me confidence, teaching me about different personality and leadership styles, assisting good project management and inspiring speakers. It was also wonderful to hear from so many other talented rural ladies trying to make a difference in the sustainability field.

I believe I have influenced at least 44 people throughout this program through education and information sources, assisting them with networking with others that can assist, capacity building and training and getting the community together on issues that affect us all".

Melissa from South Australia

"Personally this course has put me in a better place to take on bigger roles within my organisation and I will be looking into other courses to add to my management skills. I don't know if it will come into fruition but my boss is looking at me potentially to run a big upcoming project if it goes ahead, so watch this space!

I think most importantly the NRWC E-leaders program has assisted me personally, to understand that I am a leader in my field and how best to work and give back to my community. I enjoyed learning from the speakers who have had the same challenges and still inspired change. It was also touching to meet the lovely NRWC staff and the other E-leaders who are all amazing in their own right.

Personally I enjoyed the Myers Brigg and Leadership Personality sessions which assisted me in my leadership style and how I relate to others, project planning assisted me in different ways to plan and assess progress such as mind mapping and sustainable industries which reminded me to think of our project from other contexts which may assist in how we market our projects.

The project component of the course helped me connect with my community, gain confidence in my abilities and showed me how resilient I am that I completed the project through some challenging personal events".

Melissa from South Australia

A Message to the Funders – DAFF Caring for Our Country

E-Leaders made the following comments in appreciation of the funding providers.

"Well worth the funding. The projects that have been achieved by our group would not have been completed without the knowledge and guidance that was taught, and encouraged in this Program E Leaders. I would recommend this program for other women to do, especially those that live in rural areas. We have limited opportunities living in rural areas, to further our knowledge due to distance, family and time restraints. This was a program where I enjoyed every session, and was supported by my husband and family who could see the benefits of learning at home, the spark was ignited every session. Learning, sharing, my passion, and doing the community good as well!"

"I wish to thank the funders for the wonderful opportunity this program offers for rural women. The group of women who have been involved in this program are a diverse dynamic and highly active sector of the community who have made great advancements in many facets of sustainability with the skills gained from participating in the E-Leaders program, and many are continuing in their leadership capacity beyond this course. The networks and friendships made are a wonderful part of being in this".

"I just think it is a great program especially as rural women often have limited training opportunities. I would and have recommended it to other rural and remote ladies and I hope it continues. Kerryn and Karen do an amazing job and use really good speakers who are generous with their time".

"This program is such great value for rural women, connecting them with others, giving them information and access to marvellous presenters, and just boosting confidence and self-esteem".

Conclusion

As identified throughout the report, the *Women Towards Sustainability* E-Leaders program was successful in enhancing the personal and professional skills and knowledge of rural, remote and regional women and assisting them to undertake on-ground projects in their local community, develop leadership skills and share their learnings about Landcare and Sustainability issues across the group.

The E-Leaders program was a key part of the 2014 – 2015 workplan for the National Rural Women's Coalition. The e-leaders course assisted the NRWC to achieve its strategic goals.

This report will be used by the NRWC to provide feedback to the following:

- **NRWC Board of Directors** – The report will inform the Board of the outcomes from the *Women Towards Sustainability* E-Leaders course and will provide feedback which can be used to modify future webinar based learning to rural, remote and regional women.
- The DAFF **Caring for our Country** Community Landcare Grants Program – Sustainable Agriculture stream as part of the required reporting associated with the funding grant.
- **NRWC Contractors** – There are a number of contractors who worked diligently to deliver the e-leaders program and this report will be shared with them so that continual improvement of their services can be engaged.
- **Office for Women** – this findings in this report assist in keeping the Office for Women fully briefed of not only the work of the National Rural Women's Coalition, but also the outcomes.
- **Rural Women** – All participants in the *Women Towards Sustainability* E-Leaders course will be sent an electronic copy of this report.
- **Marketing** – the NRWC will use this to assist in the marketing of future E-Leaders courses, and to inform policy and decision-making bodies.
- **Information** – the NRWC will share the findings in this report with relevant persons who might be interested in the work of the NRWC. This may include government ministers and departmental staff and any future funding applications which the NRWC may generate.

National Rural Women's Coalition

Acknowledgements

The National Rural Women's Coalition thanks the following people for their support to this successful *Women Towards Sustainability* E-Leaders Program.

- NRWC Directors Dr **Pat Hamilton, Alwyn Friedersdorff** and **Irene Mills** AM for their support in the merit selection process of applicants, and Dr Pat Hamilton and Alwyn Friedersdorff for their ongoing mentoring role.
- NRWC Contractor **Kerryn Suttor** for her skillful and diligent leadership provided to the planning and operationalization of *Women Towards Sustainability* E-Leaders.
- Course Presenter's **Sally Thomson, Bianca Jurd, Angela Bollard, Simon Decheva, Julia Telford, Michael Croft, Jenny Shaw, Sarah Eady, Leanne Isaacson** and **Fiona Lake** for enthusiastically sharing their vast knowledge with the *Women Towards Sustainability* E-Leaders.
- NRWC Program Manager **Karen Tully** for oversight to the program, and for undertaking all aspects of the evaluation of E-Leaders.
- NRWC Bookkeeper **Keli McDonald** for financial management.
- The Department of Agriculture **Caring for our Country** Community Landcare Grants Program – Sustainable Agriculture stream for providing the funding to use for the advancement of rural, remote and regional women.
- All the rural, remote and regional women across Australia who participated in the *Women Towards Sustainability* E-Leaders.]

Appendix 1 – Networks of E-Leaders

Kent/ Nornalup Councillor for Denmark Shire and Chair 3 committees

Member of a regional community group of conservation managers

Vice President of Northern Inland Council for the Environment

New England Climate Action Group

Earth Hour

100 Renewable New England Energy Futures

Swimming Club Treasurer

Hall Committee

Newsletter Committee

Preschool and Primary School Committee

Womens Support Group

Womens Centre Drop in Committee

International Womens Day event committee

Clare Valley Young Professionals Network

Ag Excellence Alliance Committee

Mid North Ag Education Initiative

Hart Field Site Group

South Australia Rural Women's Gathering – Executive

Landcare

Inverell Community Garden

Inverell Farmers Market

Pre School Committee Member

Nursing Mothers Councillor

Long Day Care Centre President

Parents and Citizens Association Member

School Council

Hospital Auxiliary

Tennis Club

Netball Club

Football Club

Landcare

Church

Kind Island Beef Producers Group

Royal Flying Doctor Service

Mud Run

Church Fete

Mt Worth and District Landcare Group

Connecting Kids in the Community

Kindergarten Committee

Warragul Play Group

Street Party Committee

Primary School Committee

Pre Schools Governing Committee

Yacka – Moorundie Landcare Group

Partners in Grain South Australia Reference Group

Group Coordinator Mid North area of South Australia Partners in Grain

Traralgon Farmers Market

Healthy Together Latrobe

Lochiel Progress Association

Lochiel History Group

Mid North History Group

Lake Bumbunga NRM

Clean Up Australia

Snowtown Ambulance

Community Church

Hummocks Netball Club

Tennis Club

Basketball

Trees for Life

Brinkworth Australia Plan Association

Northern Gulf NRM Group

Next Gen Beef Up Forum

Croydon CWA

Croydon P&C

Croydon 2nd Saturday Book Club

Poddy Dodgers Festival

Croydon Pre School

Picton Agricultural and Horticultural Society

Camden Youth Shoe

Australian Alpaca Association

Sydney Coastal and Highlands Alpaca Association

Illawarra Community Options

Royal Agricultural Society

Australian Youth Alpaca Committee

Barkly Landcare and Conservation Association

Barkly Research Advisory Committee

Alice Springs Weed Reference Group

Victoria River District Conservation Association

Reynolds Catchment Group

ABC Race Club

Soils for Life Group

Central Highlands Agribusiness Forum

Australian Science Communications

The Friends of Merri Creek

Victorian National Parks Association

Bush Heritage Australia

Melbourne University Mountaineering Club

Bowerbird Australia

Redgum Food Group

Murrabit Heritage Society

Landcare Group

National Rural Women's Coalition

Appendix 2 – Summary of E-Leaders Projects

PROJECT 1

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Overarching Project Goal:

- To raise public awareness of the benefits of healthy soil biology as a sustainable farming option.'

Scope of Project

Over the course of the project I will conduct a 3 plot trial on our farm in Drummond in Central Victoria, comparing conventional management for pasture growth with a control plot and a plot utilizing biological management.

These trial plots will be the focus for on farm visits in November by groups of interested persons from the extended community. These on farm visits will be facilitated by collaboration with the North Central Catchment Authority, local Landcare Groups, Mount Alexander Shire Sustainable Communities Direction, Trentham Food Hub and Glenlyon Progress Association.

During the farm visits, a PowerPoint presentation will be given describing the stages of monitoring, including ground cover, species diversity, penetrometer readings and biological microscopic soil assays. Photographic records will be used to display changes over time.

When the pasture is mature, measurements of Brix meter readings and accumulated dry feed matter will be data added from the trail.

Goals for the project

Establish trial plots.

-Trial plots established in April 2014. Initial measurements collected. Continue with sequential data collection over period of project.

Establish communication links with the facilitator groups:
-Carolyn Wallace, Mount Alexander Shire Sustainable Communities Direction

-Ashley Rogers, North Central Catchment Management Authority

-Justin Walsh, Trentham Food Hub

-Joy Durston, Glenlyon Progress Association

-Landcare Groups from Glenlyon, Baynton-Sidonia, Malmsbury and Macedon Ranges

Disseminate dates for on farm open day/trial plot visits once finalised with other facilitator groups.

Local press notification and flyer distribution about open farm days.

Existing activities underway that raise public awareness about healthy soil and associated biology:

-Enhancing community awareness of soil health through community speaking engagements at Glenlyon Progress Association and the Trentham Food Hub

-Primary school education project comprising of four lessons,

-Why is soil important?

-Who lives in the soil?
-Worm Farms

-Composting Well

Ongoing Liaison with Daylesford Macedon Produce to arrange speaking at their quarterly meeting and contributing to their web page blog.

PROJECT 2

Manilla Community Solar Company

Community Overview

Manilla is a small rural town in North West of NSW. Population of 2000 people or so. The town is situated along the Namoi and Manilla River, and it well known for great fishing. It is also famous for it paragliding, holding the world championships in 2007 and competitions through summer every year.

Manilla is part of the Tamworth regional shire local government area. Though it had its own shire council up until 2004. This change has led to a feeling of loss of power/community voice and self-direction.

Manilla is a close knit community, but economically it is not as strong as it could be. Many shop fronts in the main street are closed. Manilla was the place of the first Multi-purpose Hospital in New South Wales. The MPS is funded by NSW health, and delivers emergency, maternal, and general health care as well functioning as a permanent aged care facility for 20 permanent residents.

Project Summary

Manilla Community Solar Company (MCSC) is community owned solar project. It is a collaboration with the local business, organisations and individuals of Manilla.

Currently MCSC consists of a steering committee of 10 people from the Manilla area, who see the potential for solar power in our town. By creating a community owned solar company local businesses, and residents will all benefit from the economic, environmental and community building aspects of the project. As well as being a sustainable energy example for rural communities.

The MCSC has already had a number of community meetings. These have been well attended by members of the general community, though we have not been able to reach business leaders – who are potential partners in the project.

Goals and Objectives

The goal for community owned solar farm project is to make contact with key business owners and community leaders to make them aware of the solar farm and ask them to engage with our project, to consider if their business/organisation is suitable for the solar energy and whether or not it could be part of the community farm.

I plan to create a simple check list that potential business partners could complete to see if they are viable partners for the project. This would list the criteria required for partnering i.e. north facing roof space/ or ground space, use electricity every day. This would also explain the benefits of partnering for their business as well as the wider community of Manilla and the environment.

Myself and members of the MCSC committee would make appointment with business/organisation managers to go through the checklist and invite them to complete it and then follow up this meeting in a week or so. If the business/organisation appears viable and keen to engage we could then enter the next phase which would be to analyse their electricity usage/costs and begin the formal (and expensive) feasibility study.

Currently the MCSC has identified around 10 potential business partners and I aim to make contact with all of these as part of this project. Towards the end of October, we plan to have at least 1 feasible business partner (hopefully more) agreeing to participate with the project.

Knowledge Transfer

In early November the MCSC will hold a public meeting in Manilla to publicise the solar project – showing its progress, the potential for sustainable energy generation in rural communities and ask for more businesses/individuals to be involved. We would ask local media to attend as well as publicise through social media and email contact lists.

PROJECT 3

ENGAGING YOUTH IN SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE PROJECT

1. Goals and Objectives

The Goal of the engaging Youth in Sustainable Agriculture Program is to engage youth in the Northern Gulf Region (ages 15-20) in Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resource Management. The main objectives being to:

- engage youth of this age group in innovative agriculture that they may be able to implement in the region as adults
- equip students interested in agriculture and natural resource management with a tool kit of resources showcasing pathways to careers in this field
- overcome the barriers, of remote and boarding school education, to discover exciting career opportunities in home communities.

2. Community Overview

The community for this project is across the Northern Gulf Region, an area of 196,000 km², encompassing the catchments of the Norman, Gilbert, Staaten and Mitchell river systems.

The area is sparsely populated (on average 1 person per 20 km²) and includes the townships of Karumba, Normanton, Croydon, Georgetown, Forsayth, Einasleigh, Mt Surprise, Irvinebank, Dimbulah, Chillagoe, Mount Molloy, Mount Carbine and Kowanyama. The rural communities are mostly grazing focussed except for the Mareeba-Dimbulah Irrigation area, and the newly developing Gilbert River Irrigation Scheme.

Challenges faced by this community revolve around distances, remoteness, climate and future development. The beef industry in the Northern Gulf Region has been placed under increasing pressure over the past few years by natural disasters including the 2009 floods, Cyclone Yasi in 2011, NWQ Wildfires in 2012 and drought has been declared in Etheridge, Croydon and Carpentaria Shires in 2013 and 2014.

In the 2011 ABS Census the average % of youth (0-25) for the Northern Gulf region was greater than 35% of the total population. By targeting the youth population we will be having a wide impact over the whole community. The challenges of delivering Natural Resource Management (NRM) and Sustainable Agriculture (SAg) to youth in the region include the high turnover of teaching staff and principals in remote schools and the majority of high school children are studying (and living away from home) outside of the region at boarding school. There are three high schools in the region (Normanton, Kowanyama and Dimbulah), all of which go to Year 10. High school students in the region not in these towns or who wish to continue into year 11 & 12 have the options of studying by distance education or at boarding school (accept those in the eastern part of the region who are able to bus to high schools in Mareeba). Students who study at boarding school may board in Cairns, Townsville, Charters Towers, Mt Isa or Brisbane.

3. Project Summary

The Engaging Youth in Sustainable Agriculture Project aims to target high school students from the Northern Gulf Region in Natural Resource Management and open their eyes to the opportunities available for careers in innovative and sustainable agriculture.

The Gulf of Carpentaria has been earmarked as the next food bowl of Australia. This is an exciting opportunity for improving the economy of the region and an opportunity for young people to have fulfilling careers in their local community. This project aims to resource youth of the region with knowledge of their local environment and the passion to ensure that the development that does occur happens in a sound, sustainable, best practice way.

The Engaging Youth in Sustainable Agriculture Project will be done in stages with projects which will incorporate ideas for addressing the challenge of engaging remote students and/or boarding students spending there term time outside of the region. These will include:

- using social media to engage students in remote areas and living outside the community initially through a facebook page that will promote SAg, NRM and career opportunities and pathways through posts, utube clips and links to other relevant sites. Competitions will be used as a way to engage this age group in the social media aspect of the program. A further step will be to introduce a Linked In Group for young people with AG Careers in the Region and those looking towards Ag Careers in the Region as a mentoring program.
- Showcasing NRM and SAg at Career Expos in Cairns and Townsville, where the majority of students from the Northern Gulf region attend boarding school.
- Hosting a Youth in Sustainable Agriculture Camp. A camp on innovative agriculture and career opportunities for yr10-12 students considering careers in agriculture and natural resource management during the school holidays. This would involve tours of best practice and new innovations on the Atherton Tablelands, Mossman and Cairns areas, team building / leadership activities, information on scholarship opportunities, interaction with partner organisations, industry mentors, universities and colleges.

3.1 Raising Awareness Plan

The Raising Awareness Plan will be implemented through establishing a facebook site to engage students from the region, who are living remotely or at boarding school, in sustainable agriculture and natural resource management opportunities. This will include uploading posts of:

-competitions to promote the page and start youth conversation on SAg and NRM
-environmental / sustainable ag stories of interest that are relevant to the region
-utube clips encouraging ag careers
-links to camps at Ag Colleges and Universities offering SAg / NRM subjects
-links to existing scholarship opportunities
-links to Career Days

The Competition aspect will involve providing each entrant with a USB with NRM / SAg resources relevant to the region and of interest to high school students such as the MLA Virtual Farm http://virtualfarm.mla.com.au/ , the Environment and Natural Resource Management education website http://www.environorth.org.au and links to Ag Colleges, University Courses and scholarship opportunities.

Timeline:

June / July 2014	Engagement, research and establishment of Facebook page
August 2014	Launch Facebook page, encouraging yr10 students living in region to be involved through school network and media releases
September 2014	Run first competition to boost 'likes' targeting September school holidays when students are home from boarding school
October 2014 - ongoing	Provide regular posts regarding: - Sustainable Ag / NRM resources - Scholarship opportunities - Course info, and alternative pathways - other humor / of interest posts

November 2014 Evaluation and final Report

It is envisaged that the social media aspect of the project, depending on success of the Facebook page, will be expanded in 2015 to include a LinkedIn Group for young people already in AG Careers in the Region and those looking towards Ag Careers in the Region as a mentoring program.

4.

5. 4. Action Steps and Timelines

Stage 1 (June-July 2014): Engagement with students, parents, school principals, school careers counsellors, School Ag teachers, industry representatives, universities and agricultural colleges, to identify needs and strategies to engage youth in sustainable agriculture careers and natural resource management.

Stage 2 (June-July 2014): Develop project plans, budgets and prospectus, engage partner organisations

Stage 3 (July-September): Source funding through grants and sponsorships

Stage 4 (July-August-ongoing) Develop and implement communications / media plan

Stage 5 (July-November-ongoing) Transfer of Knowledge Project - Establish facebook site to engage students from the region who are living remotely or at boarding school in Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resource Management Opportunities.

Depending on demand may develop the social media aspect by developing a LinkedIn Group for young people with SAg / NRM Careers in the Region and those looking towards SAg / NRM careers in the region as a mentoring programme

Stage 5 (April-June 2015 – ongoing, annual): Hold displays at Career Expos in Cairns and Townsville to promote SAg and NRM Career opportunities in the Northern Gulf Region in collaboration with partner organisations who are not currently represented at these Career Expos.

Stage 6 (September 2015 – ongoing, annual): Youth in Sustainable Agriculture Camp. A camp on innovative agriculture and career opportunities for yr10-12 students, who are considering careers in agriculture and natural resource management, during the school holidays. This would involve tours of best practice and new

innovations on the Atherton Tablelands, Mossman and Cairns areas, team building / leadership activities, information on scholarship opportunities, interaction with partner organisations, industry mentors, universities and colleges.

Stage 7 Evaluation and Reporting (November 2014 – ongoing after each project stage). Evaluation of projects by assessing the amount of engagement and through feedback forms for the prominent stages (this stage will be weaved throughout the project as each stage is implemented).

5. PARTNERSHIPS

Potential partnerships that may support this project include the following organisations, many which already have close links to the Gulf Kids projects supporting primary school age children across the region:

Northern Gulf Resource Management Group

Frontier Services – Savannah Regional Health

QDAFF – Beef Team

QDAFF – Biosecurity

Gulf Savannah Development

Meat and Livestock Australia

Fruit and Vegie Growers Association

James Cook University

University of Queensland, Gatton College

Australian Agricultural Colleges Corporation

Australian Agricultural Company

McDonald Holdings

Stanbroke Pastoral

PROJECT 4

Mitchell Urban Farming Project

"Be the change that I want to see." Mahatma Gandhi

"Make sure you don't go to the ocean with a teaspoon. At least take a bucket so the kids won't laugh at you." - *Jim Rohn*

1. Overview

1.1 Context Analysis (STEEPO):

- Cost of land is very high due to real-estate push and compared to return on investment in agriculture. Global economy has run its course, viable export markets are running out. Movement of agricultural footprints brought about by climate change & lack of agricultural community to adapt fast enough.
- Cost of food is relatively low – political push since 1980s and monopolies of Coles & Woolworths supermarkets. Use of cheaper readily available 'fillers' such as water and palm oil.
- Technology & the knowledge economy – disconnected from the land. Rich tapestry of constructed reality (i.e. Consumerism). Lack of meaningful work.
- Toxicity in the environment – sensitivity to chemicals – both human &an animal. Overuse of hormones and antibiotics in Agriculture. Feeding animals on cheap byproducts. Lack of control in the food chain.
- Industrialisation of agriculture – attempting to replace rising labour costs with technology.
- 'Producer' mentality in the supply chain – lack of ability to value add. Fascination with 'producing more with less' – alarmingly still present in policy.
- High exposure to marketing through TV and other media & resulting consumer perceptions.
- Lack of consumer trust in agricultural certification processes and especially brands.
- Modern consumer diet – high meat eating with no concern of the real cost of producing meat.
- Locally – poor soil structure, high rates of water evaporation and leeching of nutrients due to poor soil structure.
- Lack of local products at the Roma Farmers & Artisans Markets.

1.2 **Community Overview** – The Mitchell Booringa Action Group (BAG) is a community group for the Mitchell District, around 600km west of Brisbane in South West Queensland. BAG represents the interest of the local community promoting economic prosperity, social and cultural fulfilment and quality of life. In 1990, the Maranoa River at Mitchell was dammed with a weir. On the southern (town) side of the Weir a number

of 5 acre blocks were set out with irrigation facilities from the weir. On the northern side of the Weir a number of 80 acre blocks were set aside for larger agricultural work. Initial reports demonstrated that more profit could be gained from irrigation than from grazing cattle. To date, the small holding agriculture is a 100 tree date palm orchard and a hydroponic saffron business. A honey bee apiary was also established and later destroyed by flood. The primary agriculture in the region is cattle grazing. Most enterprises have switched from sheep grazing to cattle grazing. The blocks are too small to run cattle and cattle have recently suffered from low market returns and a high cost of feeding. Cattle markets are mostly wholesale to feed lotting operations or directly 'on-the-hook'. The good years when cattle thrive are too few and far between for producers to catch up on the drought years. Producers are slowly taking up live stocking buying and selling rather than breeding. This allows the enterprise to sell during drought. However, it relies on the producers analytical and decision making skills to buy low and sell high.

2. Project Summary

Approach – through my strength of thinking leadership I will be creating a public project garden and then demonstrating an upselling of that produce to a retail space.

Vision – wicking beds will be to Australian small holdings farming what hoop houses have been to the United States small farms industry.

Scope - Why is the project important to my community? Food security, water conservation, soil nutrition, lifestyle, health conscious, links with the land.

How will I achieve the outcomes? Through raising awareness of the wicking bed technology and starting a learning journey.

What is a reasonable time frame? Within the time frame of the eLeader program I will be able to create the wicking bed with the community information board and signage, plant a crop and harvest that crop and create a small snack from it.

Raising Awareness Component: Impart knowledge to at least 25 people in the community.

Outcome: Annotated cantacts list of at least 25 people who have made contact either through the wicking bed information board or through the act of sharing the cooked produce.

Key stakeholders – Mitchell & Districkts Landcare, Booringa Action Group, Mitre 10, Gardeners, Roma Community Gardens, Roma Farmers and Artisans Market. People who watch what they eat, school veggie gardeners.

Who will drive the project – Mitchell & Districts Landcare

What is the need? Gardening in Mitchell Soil. Understanding small-scale farming.

What is the evidence to support the need? Mitchell people know that gardening is difficult out here as the area lacks nutrients & regular water.

What is the project? Create a raised garden wicking bed in a public place and plant a demonstration crop. Harvest and prepare the crop. Cook and eat the crop as part of a celebration of the wicking bed garden approach with the BAG community. E.g., red kidney beans – harvested and prepared in preserving jars and then eaten with grated cheese, wrapped in freshly cooked tortillas.

Demonstrates small-scale agriculture. Low input farming. Retail chain value adding.

Initial Community and Stakeholder Consultation

Initial consultation with the BAG community showed that although aquaponics is a good solution to the sandy soils of Mitchell, it is a very technical (requires electricity for a water pump) solution and therefore would not be adopted widely into the community. The BAG community suggested that I try wicking garden beds instead. Wicking beds are much more practical and they don't have to cost much. Wicking beds use existing raised garden structures and can use cypress pine raised beds from the local saw mill. Wicking beds are aquaponics without the fish and water pumps. Wicking beds use a gravel media, builder's plastic and old shade cloth or even recycled carpet. Up to 75% of the soil can be local sand and the sand can be enriched with cow manure for nutrients. Seaweed extracts and other natural fertilizers can be added to the water.

When people buy even a small block out here – they think that the only option is to put cows on.

Roma has a farmers and artisan's market which runs monthly during the tourist season. The Roma Community Gardens provide a small amount of seasonal food in the raw state. Other fresh fruit is supplied by a commercial company from Caboolture. There is one boutique local beef business, a small offering of fresh eggs and 1kg honey. My vision is to expand out the offering through town farming businesses. It provides the community with local food, it gives the community another capability – self-reliance, it connects people with the land and it engages the younger members of the community who are more collaborative.

3 Goals & Objectives

Goal: Create awareness around urban farming opportunities.

Short – complete the project summary by the 4th of July

Raising awareness idea – create the wicking bed and a white board to share notes with the community.

Engage with mentor – identify what I want help with. Tools to help with singularity in focus.

Medium – complete the project plan by November

Create the wicking bed project.

Long – Viable urban farming opportunities for the 2,5 & 80 acre blocks that have access to irrigation from the Mitchell Weir.

How will this project benefit my community? – Bringing in new interest & agricultural businesses in Mitchell.

How will I pass this information on to others? – Social Media, newspaper, email lists.

Objective 1: Demonstrate a climate friendly growing opportunity (drought tolerance).

Objective 2: Demonstrate value adding in the retail chain from a primary product.

PROJECT 5

LOMANDRA EFFUSA

REGENERATION

PROJECT PLAN

Katie Preston, Hampden SA

Community Overview

Hampden is a small community on the outskirts of Eudunda. Eudunda has a population of 1500 and has an average 450mm rainfall, based in the Mid North of South Australia between the Barossa and Clare Valleys. Eudunda sits on the edge of three ecological zones of Mallee Scrub, Tussock Grassland and Tothill Ranges (Eudunda sits within the Grassland zone) the area generally has cropping and sheep enterprises.

Project Summary

To propagate and plant out in different areas, of a managed area, Irongrass '*Lomandra Effusa*' to see where this plant survives best.

To plant out native trees and shrubs within the local area.

Raising Awareness Plan

Eudunda is a town that hosts a Diploma of Agribusiness and an Advanced Diploma in Agribusiness group run by Linda Eldridge from Eldridge & Associates. I have spoken with Linda and she has been very encouraging that I present to these groups my learnings from the e-Leaders program along with details, goals and impact of my projects.

I will present to the group and have a power point presentation to discuss with the group about my projects and e-Leader journey.

St Johns School in Eudunda participates in a Junior Environmental Programme with the local NRM group. Should the school programme allow I would be able to also present to the students involved with the Junior Environmental Programme.

National Rural Women's Coalition

Project Outline

Part A - Project Plan part A is to propagate and then plant Irongrass '*Lomandra Effusa* out into areas of a paddock which we are currently strategically managing in order to conserve the Irongrass that is present and to also reestablish good growth of this plant, establishing where best and types of soil that the Irongrass plant is best suited to so it could be re-established in other areas of the community. The reason for starting this project came about when a paddock we own was identified as having a number of Irongrass plants which should be conserved given that Irongrass has become somewhat of an endangered and rare natural ecosystem in SA and has therefore become the highest priority of protection.

Part B - Given Part A is a long term project we have also over the last ten years, planted native trees and shrubs within our local community and will continue this project in the shorter term. The trees are sought through Trees for Life so they are known to be suitable for this area.

In the past there has been an amount of agricultural clearing done, we have successfully over the last 10 years been replanting native trees and shrubs around our property and over the last 2 years in the local community area. The visible impact this has made has been immense with neighbouring properties also now planting trees.

Trees have started to be planted at entrances to the Eudunda township and we will continue that this year.

The project benefits the whole community in helping with the overall appearance of the township and providing biodiversity.

This project is important to our family as we have a paddock that has been identified

as having a number of Irongrass plants and working with the NRM we are now strategically managing this paddock to encourage the Irongrass.

Planting trees around our property improves the appearance of the property and also encourages biodiversity.

The Irongrass '*Lomandra Effusa* project will be completed by our family but other community members do assist with planting the trees and shrubs into the local area.

Resources

500 trees from Trees for Life at the cost of a membership

Lomandra Effussa seeds purchased from a seed company until we are able to harvest ourselves

Tree guards with stakes, supplied by local council for trees being planted out in the community

Time for planting - volunteers

Goals and Objectives

To re-establish Irongrass '*Lomandra Effusa* in this area.

To plant native trees and shrubs within our local community

To raise awareness about environmental sustainability within the Eudunda area

Action Steps and Timeline

Currently;

Propagate Lomandra Effusa seeds in (1) a free draining moist seed sowing mix 2mm deep and kept at 20 degrees C

(2) soak seeds in warm water for 24 hours then

sow just below surface of a sandy peaty mix kept at 25 degrees C in dark moist environment

Planting out native trees and shrubs within the local community.

August 2014;

Lomandra seeds should have germinated (takes approximately 45 days but Lomandra is very erratic!)

September 2014 (and onwards as this is a long term project);

Commence planting out, any Lomandra ready, in to different areas of varying elevations and soil types of the managed paddock.

Observe newly planted Lomandra to see how they survive in different areas and at different times of the year depending on when they were planted out.

October 2014;

Transfer knowledge gained to Agribusiness group

PROJECT 6

Project Proposal

Lights - Camera - NRM Action

Project Summary

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide a well-planned and coordinated overview of actions and activities that will be delivered through project Lights - Camera - NRM Action Lights - Camera - NRM Action as part of the National Rural Women's Coalition 2014 E-Leaders Program.

Business and Policy Context

Participants of the National Rural Women's Coalition 2014 E-Leaders Program are required to elect an onground project to work on during the course of the program. The project is required to have an environmental sustainability outcome or a primary industry enterprise outcome.

Every project incorporates the goal of raising awareness about environmental sustainability in the local area of participants.

Working Title for the Proposed Project

The working title for the project is Lights - Camera - NRM Action.

Objective(s)

The objective of Lights - Camera - NRM Action Project is to raise awareness of environmental sustainability in the South Australian Northern and Yorke Natural Resource Management Region. Through the project, an additional 25 individuals will be imparted with knowledge about natural resource management in this region.

Project Complexity

The project will be of low complexity. All actions and activities to be delivered will be in scope with the end of project timeframe of November 2014. Activities will also be aligned within available resources – HR, financial, time and other.

Potential Benefits

It is anticipated that the project will enable general public to develop greater knowledge of natural resource management projects and activities taking place within the Northern and Yorke Region. It is anticipated that this will assist the vision of building greater community knowledge of projects, objectives and drivers associated with managing natural resources in the region.

It is further anticipated that the story telling approach of the project will assist audiences become motivated toward involvement in natural resource management opportunities and initiatives across the northern and yorke region.

Feasibility Statement

The feasibility of the project is reliant upon confirmation of community groups welcoming invitation from Natural Resources Northern and Yorke to showcase information of initiatives they are involved in through social media/video activities.

Business Assessment

Situation Assessment and Problem Statement

Engaging members of the northern and yorke community in natural resource management initiatives is an ongoing process. Over the last twelve months, a number of initiatives have been put in place to build modern tools of communication that can better assist community relationship with natural resource management. These include launch of 2 new online newsletters that are released each month, launch of a new regional website and introduction of a new style agency branding.

Adopting further communication tools is anticipated to assist growth of public awareness and participation in natural resource management across the region.

Financial constraints impose limitation on use of social media tools such as You Tube, Facebook and Twitter. However through this project, in kind development of a small number of You Tube video clips can be actioned.

Proposed Scope

The initial proposal approach to the E-Leaders program was to develop a stand-alone presentation that could be delivered to community groups around the region in a personal capacity about key natural resource management initiatives in the region, accompanied by generating you tube clips that showcased career opportunities in NRM that may not traditionally be thought of by jobseekers as a possibility of where a career in natural resource management/sustainable agriculture may take them.

After further consideration and analysis, and consideration of the South Australian Governments “Better together Principles of Engagement” strategy, I identified that my proposed scope was disjointed and possibly would not leave audiences with a “then and there” opportunity for getting involved.

With further research, I have identified that story telling of grass roots activities is a very valuable way to build public understanding and interest in how individuals may become involved in natural resource management and sustainability initiatives.

For this reason, I see incredible value in building some case study examples of natural resource management initiatives that are currently being delivered within the Northern and Yorke Region to showcase opportunities for public participation.

Scope Definition

Objective To raise awareness on environmental sustainability in the Northern and Yorke Region.

Outcome To engage a minimum of 25 people in natural resource management in the Northern and Yorke Region.

Output 6-7 You Tube video clips which highlight natural resource management initiatives taking place across the Northern and Yorke Region. The videos will showcase

1. Get involved – Water: 4 Catchments
2. Get involved – Coast: Friends of Hooded Plover
3. Get involved – National Park: Friends of Innes National Park
4. Get involved – Regional Plan: Conservation Action Planning
5. Get involved – Volunteer: Yakka Moorundie Landcare Group
6. Get involved – Pest Management: Fox baiting
7. Get involved – Sustainability Education in your school

Quality Criteria Involving project staff in the video content development will be an important way to assess project quality. Relationship of content to project priority and need wil also be valuable.

Customer(s) Residents of the Northern and Yorke Region. Broader audience in other regions who have a holidaying interest in the northern and yorke region may also benefit from this production project.

Assumptions

It is essential that assumptions made during the planning process are recognised and recorded, for example resource availability, environment, technology, security etc.

The main assumptions are:

- Project managers have the time to work with me in developing content
- Capacity to develop the skill set required to develop appropriate standard video content
- Video development can be performed through in-kind assistance from co-workers
- Final product will be to a promotional standard
- Final product will be used on a repeatable basis by staff to promote activities to varying audiences
- Final product will motivate members of the community to get involved in natural resource management opportunities.

Constraints

Constraints are known limitations within which the project must work, for example deadlines, finance and budget, legislation etc.

The main constraints are:

- Timeframe of NRWC project
- Financial
- Appropriate approval processes for filming and content publication
- Engaging staff in content development

- Willingness of volunteers to participate

Implementation Strategy

Personnel resources

- Louise McIntosh – Lead Project Manager
- Project managers of the agency Natural Resources Northern and Yorke
- Project participants.

Financial resources

- Computer hardware – in kind (Louise McIntosh)
- Filming hardware – in kind (Louise McIntosh)
- Microsoft movie maker software – in kind (Louise McIntosh)
- Website video hosting – in kind (Louise McIntosh)
- Time associated with content development (in kind from all personnel resources identified).

Project Schedule

- Drafting a refined project scope – 4 July to 15 July 2014
- Drafting video content – 4 July to 30 August 2014
- Filming and photography of content – 4 July to 30 August 2014
- Editing content – 30 July to 15 August 2014
- Review content – 15 October 2014
- Final content production and launch – 30 October 2014

Budget Estimate

The project has been designed to be delivered through complete in-kind contribution. This approach has been taken to assist in establishing future repeatable base of further content development of other activities and initiatives occurring in natural resource management across the Northern and Yorke Region.

Project Governance

- Project Sponsor: National Rural Women's Coalition
- Business Owner: Natural Resources Northern and Yorke
- Project Manager: Louise McIntosh

Key Risks and Issues

List any major risks or issues identified through consultation. Keep in mind that assumptions, constraints and issues related to project schedule, budget estimate and resources identified in this proposal may also need to be considered as issues and risks to the project.

These major risks or issues will be investigated further should the project proceed:

- Time constraint
- Unforeseen financial commitment
- Content development proves to be of greater complexity than anticipated
- Final product does not reach intended audience reach
- Final product does not reach intended audience engagement outcomes
- Unforeseen loss of content
- Unclear messaging in project outputs.

PROJECT 7

Project Outline

BACKGROUND

I operate a small pastured free range egg farm in the foothills of the Great Dividing Range with my husband and two sons. We live in a small rural farming community known as Glengarry West. This area is predominantly a beef and dairy farming area and is also becoming better known for some award winning wines produced in the area.

The closest township is Glengarry (approx. 5km) which has a local post office, store, primary school and pub and serves a community population of approximately 700 people.

A ten minute drive will take you to the town centre of Traralgon. Traralgon boasts a population of 24000 people and many of the residents here are directly involved in open cut coal mining, power generation or the paper mill.

To put it on the map, we are:

- 5 minutes from our local store
- 10 minutes from a major town centre
- 2km from the bush
- 1 hour from the snow
- 1 hour from the beach.

My husband and I share a passion for all things permaculture and we use a holistic management approach to our small farming operation, removing the need for any chemical fertilisers.

Diversity is the key to our small acreage farm and in recent months we have also started to supply pastured beef direct to our customers.

PROJECT SUMMARY

Title: Small Acreage Farming

Overview:

To run a number of small farming workshops

Including –

- An introduction to permaculture
- Getting started with pastured free range farming

- Making money from small acreage

I have observed over many years that more families are moving out of town onto large residential blocks or small acreage, and more often than not they spend all weekends mowing lawns or the area grown weeds. I believe people can learn new skills and find that there are many things they could do to turn their unproductive small acres into productive areas of food and income generating ideas.

Raising Awareness

On September 14th 2014, we are opening our farm up to the public for a farm walk and discussion. The open day will be suitable for families, farmers and anybody in the community who is keen to see a small local farm in operation.

Aside from eggs, the day will also be an opportunity for visitors to see the many things that are happening including small scale beef farming, vegetable growing and an orchard to name a few.

I plan on using this day to engage the community and promote the three workshops mentioned above.

Goals and Objectives

Goals	**Objectives**
To empower individuals to grow more of their own food and utilise available space in their backyards.	Run an 'Introduction to permaculture' workshop
To encourage individuals to think outside the square and understand that an income can be made from small acreage without chemicals	Promote and run a 'Making money from small acreage' workshop
To share our knowledge about starting up a free range farming enterprise and utilising chook manure	Run a workshop 'Getting started in free range farming'

PROJECT 8

Location: King Island - TAS

Contact details:

Email: gadomanagement@gmail.com

Mobile: 0427118903

Address: 3470 North Road, King Island 7256 TAS

Project title

'Reduce reliance on inorganic fertilisers imported to King Island'

Community overview

King Island is situated in the middle of Bass Strait, half way between Melbourne and Tasmania. It is a very small island (60km long and 30km wide) and with a very small community – estimated 1300 residents.

King Island is well known by its cheese, beef and seafood (crayfish).

Most of the King Island community members are farmers. King Island produces over 20% of Tasmanian beef!

Most of King Island properties are beef farms, some are dairy farms and very few are vegetable growers and pure forest (King Island has about 30% of native vegetation left).

Being a farm community, sustainable farming is something that should be a hot topic on King Island in order to promote best management practices so that the industry and the environment can both benefit into the future.

Project description/ summary

King Island pays an extra 25% for fertilisers than the mainland! This is a pretty strong fact to consider other local alternatives and to be more efficient when it comes to fertiliser applications.

Inorganic fertilisers are used to improve nutrients in the soils and plant growth; unfortunately they can also negatively impact on the microbiology of the soils, reducing soil condition. Excessive amounts of fertilisers are also a direct cause of environment pollution to waterways and atmosphere.

The aim of the project is to raise awareness of about environmental sustainability on King Island through sustainable farming and to engage and share knowledge with at least 25 additional people in my community.

There are several practices that can be adopted in order to improve soil biology. Some of the ones that are being explored on King Island are:

- **Organic fertilisers:** we have trialled composting with cow's manure and spoiled hay and mortality compost with wallabies. The first proved to be quite challenging as nitrogen was a limiting factor on King Island. The mortality compost was very easy and successful, and a great way of utilising the dead wallabies.

- **Improving management practices by, but not limited to:** maintaining ground cover (do not overgraze); cell graze; improving fertiliser management (SOIL TESTS SOIL TESTS – know your soils); avoid compaction and waterlogging.
- **Re-introducing dung beetles species:** Dung beetles burry dung deep into the soil and help with carbon sequestration. What species can be successful on King Island?
- **Introducing earthworms:** A farm nursery is being trialled on King Island with earthworm - *Aporrectodea longa*. Earthworm activity is associated with increased soil fertility, enhanced soil microbial activity, quicker incorporation of lime into the soil profile, increased water infiltration and reduced soil compaction. *Aporrectodea longa* operates at a greater soil depth than other earthworm species, and researchers have identified that these benefits include improvements to the chemical, physical and biological properties.
- **Liquid kelp:** Liquid kelp is a soil conditioner. Although liquid kelp is not a fertiliser, it helps with plant growth
- **DNA soil samples:** In late 2013, we collected samples from 12 sites across the island, covering all soil types. These soil tests use an innovative technique and the results are quite exciting! So much that we don't know about our soil microbiology. So much to look forward!

Raising awareness plan

The importance of maintaining a healthy ecosystem, adopting sustainable management practices and economic benefits are the focus of this project. This could not be done without community engagement/ awareness and education.

The methods used in this project for the transfer of knowledge are:

- Field days and workshops – sharing researchers' knowledge and application of ideal practices in the real world, sharing results from trials and soil tests;
- Articles in the local paper – articles regarding the importance of maintaining and improving soil systems and sharing practices that improve soil condition;
- Facebook updates in relation to the progress of the project, photos of adopted trials and awareness/education of sustainable farming;
- Website;
- King Island Natural Resource management Group newsletter – *Paperbark*

There is one method of creating awareness, educating and the sharing knowledge that cannot be forgotten, especially on King Island where everyone knows each other – the *word of mouth*. This is a powerful tool that cannot be ignored and that I plan to use in this project.

Goals and objectives

- **Short term goals (next 5 weeks):**
  - Do some trials such as: earthworms farm nursery and kelp liquid applications;
  - Engage with researchers for future workshop;
  - Engage with local farmers that have adopted sustainable management practices;
  - Set a date for the workshop;

  - Plan subjects for the workshop taking into consideration what do the community needs and what will bring them to the workshop;
  - Obtain email contacts of KI landowners.
- **Mid-term goals (next 2-3 months):**
  - Obtain results from DNA soil tests;
  - Advertise workshop;
  - Organise and deliver workshop;
  - Obtain workshop evaluation forms and points of interest from participants;
  - Share results with other members of the community that didn't participate in the workshop.
- **Long-term goals (3 months onwards):**
  - Know my community needs and plan follow up projects;
  - Create more connections/networks for my group, myself and for my community;
  - Encourage sustainable practices to be up taken by the community;
  - Uptake sustainable practices in my own farm so it becomes an inspiration to others;
  - Engage more community members in NRM.
  - Deliver final report to the funding institution as per grant agreement and to the NRWC.
  - Complete a PhD in a subject related to sustainable farming such as reducing carbon emissions and sequestering carbon in the soil, in order to find more solutions for better farming systems and a better environment for all.
- **Overall outcome/vision/practice change for the community and industry:**
  - The farming community is more aware of the environmental impacts of the industry and understands the importance of environmental sustainability and is able to take up on better agricultural practices that can sustain the industry into the future and improve the environment.
  - A better understanding of soil biology.

PROJECT 9

PR0JECT SUMMARY REPORT

Inverell Community Garden - Nurturing Plants and People

1. Community Overview:

Inverell is a country town in northern inland NSW about 350km West of Coffs Harbour, 500km South West of Brisbane, and 700km north of Sydney. Inverell is a lovely town set amongst the hills with an approximate population of 12,000 people, situated on the Slopes, between the Tablelands and the Plains. Also known as the "Sapphire City" for its gem prospecting value, Inverell is surrounded by mixed farming operations - predominantly graziers, mostly cattle with a few sheep farmers still out there. Croppers in the area include; sunflowers, canola, and wheat, among others. Inverell can also boast close proximity (40km) to Copeton Dam (our major water supply) which holds approximately 3 times the volume of Sydney Harbour and is said to be a "fishermen's haven with Cod, Yellowbelly, Silver Perch, catfish and redfin in plentiful supply. Trout are often caught in the Gwydir River below the dam wall where white water rafters and adventure canoeists often frequent.

Inverell has a large abattoir (export only) – Bindaree Beef (owned by Cargill) employing approximately 600 people. Recently opened, we have an organic flour mill!! We are also fortunate to have a local certified organic pastured beef property, local olive oil, and a cherry orchard and strawberry farm (among other wonderful enterprises) which is great if you don't grow your own!

In 1916 a local booklet called "Twixt Tablelands and Plains was published as a result of Inverell winning the District Exhibit at the Royal Easter Show 2 years earlier. It painted a very detailed picture of Inverell at that time. It was a completely self-sufficient town.

There was a flour mill, brewery, tannery, honey, cheese factory: Inverell wines won 1st prize in Paris; we grew virtually all our own vegetables, we grew our own fruit. This little book points out that Inverell does indeed lie between the tablelands and the plains - which means that we can grow cherries and citrus side by side – something that is not easily done in many places.

As a result of this little book, a local lady initiated the start-up of the Inverell Community Garden. Food energy and Food security was key to her motivation: -*"If we did it in 1916, we could do it again. We are a fortunate country, with many rich, natural resources. We believe it is wrong that we expend fossil fuel transporting food across such long distances if you have the capacity to produce it locally. The quality of the food suffers – and so do we. I recently attended a lecture by Dr Christine Jones from UNE. A fact she pointed out that I found very disturbing was that in the latest nutrition tables released, an apple today has less than 50% of the vitamins and minerals that they had 50 years ago and it is possible to find oranges in the supermarkets that contain absolutely no vitamin C."* – (Jenny Cracknell – Chairwoman, Inverell Community Garden.) **Sarah Priest** – Landcare Coordinator – Gwymac Inc. and Treasurer - Inverell Community Garden

In addition to this, recently, Inverell was reported to be in the top 10 most overweight towns in NSW. Therefore, health and nutrition is another point of education within community gardens that our community could benefit from. Though many people in Australia have a backyard, not nearly enough of them take advantage of the fact and produce fresh food for themselves. They need encouragement and mentoring, both of which are roles for a community garden.

2. Project Summary:

Inverell Community Garden was established in November 2012, is run by volunteers, and is working towards providing a productive, educational, and socially inclusive place of interest for residents and visitors to the Inverell area to come and visit and participate in.

Community Gardens have a large number of benefits including social, cultural and environmental. Our garden is about "nurturing plants and people" of all walks of life through recreation and learning, socializing, local food/produce swaps and farmers markets, and entertaining outdoors whilst growing wholesome healthy food and demonstrating sustainable practices.

We host regular events including: market days, workshops and working bees, and intend to include: cook-offs, festivals, music, art, culture, displays. These events will build and grow social networks and our community. – Well this is the plan!

Our garden is working to encourage the adoption of healthy diets and lifestyles by providing the above opportunities to involve community members, and by providing public picking/gardening areas for easy, local access to fresh and nutritious edibles. Gardening has been proven to improve the health and self–esteem of participants and this garden encourages all members of our community to come together, get to know each other, and work to provide healthy organic produce to consume and share.

We meet regularly with community organisations to encourage participation from all groups, including the disadvantaged. We currently have the following groups participating at the garden:

- Inverell Community College
- Macintyre High School
- Inverell Autism Support Group
- Inverell Accommodation Services
- Gwymac Inc. (Landcare network in Inverell)
- BEST Employment - *Work for the Dole*

We have recently established a Farmers' Market which is on the second Saturday of each month. Each market day includes a workshop/demonstration and a relevant documentary film screening.

The aim of this project is to continue diverse monthly workshops – increasing attendance at market days, increasing membership and volunteer numbers. We will also host a Spring Open **Sarah Priest** – Landcare Coordinator – Gwymac Inc. and Treasurer - Inverell Community Garden

Day at the garden – to invite the community to come and have a look at what has been achieved so far.

3. Goals and objectives:

☐ The purpose of this garden is to bring the whole of our community together to grow plants, socialise, learn to grow, prepare and preserve seasonal organic produce and share culture, music, art and events. The possibilities are endless. Once established we believe it will become a "must-see" for visitors and tourists to the region.

☐ Our community garden aims to act as a demonstration site to raise awareness and showcase sustainable farming practices.

☐ We plan for the garden to be an "environmental hub", showcasing many methods, mentoring in sustainable living, bringing back heirloom plant varieties, providing public picking areas as well as leasable plots, ethnic and indigenous – bush tucker gardens, fragrant and sensory gardens, herbal and medicinal gardens.

☐ We'd like to include poultry for eggs, fertilizer and pest control, bees hives for honey, possibly some pigs (we currently host sheep from Macintyre High School which are keeping the grass down for us), and continuing successfully growing the Farmers' Markets. Possibly our grandest plan for now (subject to finding some funding) is to install a commercial kitchen to fully cater for workshops, events, preserving produce for sale and for the members to be able to prepare their produce for sale.

☐ Back to building community – through this project we hope to encourage as many people and community services and organisations (involvement) as we possibly can. Including schools, clubs, churches, disability and indigenous groups, agricultural, natural resource management, health and mental health, music and the arts, local business and any and all others that I may have forgotten.

☐ Have you ever heard of the "Eden Alternative Philosophy"? – Which aims to combat loneliness, helplessness and boredom? if not, this is where a community commits to creating a human habitat where life revolves around close and continuing contact with plants, animals and children, as it is these relationships that provide the young and old (as well as those with physical, intellectual and psychological health concerns) with a pathway to a life worth living - to quote the 2nd principle of the Eden Alternative Philosophy - It has been proven that growing things is extremely beneficial for people with mental health disorders, helping them to heal through plants, and sunshine, and contact, and breaking down barriers and isolation.

3.1 Raising Awareness Plan:

1. Monthly Farmers' Markets to continue providing our community with fresh local products and produce. As mentioned earlier, these include a workshop and documentary screening – need to work on increasing attendance through varied promotion and marketing strategies:

Newspaper

Sarah Priest – Landcare Coordinator – Gwymac Inc. and Treasurer - Inverell Community Garden

o Radio
o Social Media – including trialling paid advertising on Facebook
o Website
o Word of mouth
o Events

2. Host Vermiculture Workshop at the Garden – Friday 11th August.

3. Host Spring Open Day at the garden to showcase works, activities presenting '*environmental sustainability in our area'* – September 2014.

4. Host Natural Beekeeping workshop at the Garden (before December 2014)

5. Increase participation, volunteer drives and membership:
o Media campaign
o Meet with groups (churches, organisations, schools, retirement villages, and businesses, service clubs etc)
o Host Spring Open Day
6. Apply for funding for children's play area to make garden more attractive for families to attend.

7. Encourage a shift in thinking and action on an individual and community level in relation to health, our environment, farming and food production, and each other, while building a stronger, healthier and better connected community.

PROJECT 10

Enterprise Overview:

in 2007 I established Ecosustain to address the imbalance in our environment by developing a program for the regeneration of our ECO-system for a SUSTAIN-able future.

in 2010 I purchased Wyalong Farm with the aim to develop a best farming practice: effective, efficient and contributing to global well-being. !

Wyalong Farm is situated on 61 hectares in North Central Victoria alongside the Loddon River and surrounded by State Nature Reserves. !

Established in 1895 the farm was held within the same family until I purchased in 2010 as a run-down ex-dairy farm with huge potential. !

“Going Back & In To The Future” Wyalong Farm's Blueprint combines natural farming with natural resources management and operates as Gannawarra Gourmet Goat and Ecosustain Dexter Cattle Stud. !

ECOsustain is now an upcoming permaculture education and demonstration centre within Wyalong Farm which will be designed to offer a variety of real-life experiences in landbased sustainable living and agriculture, environmental practices and local history. !

I am keen to follow the outline of the Permaculture Master Plan, designed by the Permaculture Research Institute Australia and thus become an affiliate. !

The aim is to establish an Incorporated Committee of Management (CoM) and Not For Profit Trust to operate the centre. !

The vision of ECOsustain’s program is to provide an abundant, thriving model of profitable permaculture in action, on a large farm scale. This will have effects, not only on our local community and Victoria, but Australia-wide and internationally, through the education c!entre.

Project Summary:

Plan And Establish A Food Forest and Forage Plantation

The project involves the redesign of two degraded paddocks into a 2.5 ha fodder

Plantation and a .5 ha food forest.

Goal: is to create awareness of ECOsustain and to further its vision to be a Permaculture showcase whilst providing a Permaculture experience for the beginner to the advanced.

Objective: create a food garden that can:

1. Empower people and promote food security by allowing people to take control of their food production.

2. Facilitate community pride and give individuals a sense of being able to take positive action to improve the quality of their lives.

3. Affirm traditional eating habits, design systems and indigenous knowledge through understanding the eco-system.

4. Facilitate people to take control of their own health through permaculture.

Components:

Raising Awareness: *Finding Tribe by Putting the Project on the Map*

• Establish Social Media presence

- Recently established:

Facebook Group: Permaculture North Central Victoria

https://www.facebook.com/groups/PermaculturеNorthCentralVictoria/

ECOsustain FB Page

https://www.facebook.com/ECOsustain.com.au

Twitter @PermChatOz

#PermChatOz Twitter chat Mondays: 7 - 8pm (Aus EST)

@PermChatOz PaperLi

- Determine additional social media strategies

- Conduct a survey to establish needs and wants !•

Permaculture Design Course:

- A prerequisite to be on the board of ECOsustain will be a Permaculture Design

Certificate (PDC)

I am currently undertaking my PDC course

As a part of the course I will be designing the project Food Forest and

Forage Plantation

Network with other students of my PDC 2014 (FB group).

Beyond Awareness: *Tribe Connecting*

• **Establish CoM for 'Permaculture North Central Victoria'**

- affiliate with Permaculture Victoria and define roles:

Chair:

Treasurer: Me

Secretary:

Assistant Chair:

Assistant Treasurer;

Assistant Secretary

Determine events to be held based on survey feed-back:

Current ideas:

• **Key Influencer Guest Speaker:**

List of Possibilities

• **Fair Food Week Event 10 -19 Oct**

- Gannawarra Gourmet Goat launch

- Beyond the Supermarket

Video and Talk

Resources:

beyond the trolley http://beyondthetrolley.com

supermarketfree.com http://supermarketfree.com.au

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M1et_HBmLYw

documentary about Walmart, “The High Cost of Low Prices”

- Advertise Weekend workshop events for establishment of Food Forest and

Fodder Plantation

Moving Along: *Tribal Gathering*

• **Weekend events for the establishment of the Food Forest and Fodder plantation**

- Workshops:

- Document:

Video

Publication:

Information brochures

Teaching aid material

How To Guide

examples:

Food Forests in Drylands

Soils Health

Mulch pits

PROJECT 11

After you make a list, after you've exhaustively chronicled your options, will you choose, however there is no perfect answer, but knowing which way your compass points (and saying it out loud) is the best way to move forward.

(Godin, Seth. July 2014)

Background/Introduction

My original submission for selection into this program was the implementation/development of a Fleece processing plant to be able to offer local/Australian competitive financial options for breeders to process their fleece (their whole fleece). Whilst this long term is still my overall aim, it is not a project that will be completed in line with the time constraints of this program. However, this program is able to allow me an enormous staring point.

Overall, I see this program as a starting point for this opportunity to investigate more fully the establishment of a Processing/Fleece Processing Plant for the long term usage of alpaca fleece - at a not only a commercially competitive rate for financial sustainability of not only the grower but the processor of the fleece.

Alpacas are native to South America and have been domesticated for thousands of years. They are to the South American people comparable to the Australian Merino - industrially and commercially. Up until the 1980s alpacas were only bred in their native homeland of South America. Now, The Australian Alpaca Industry reports some 2000 registered breeders Australia Wide and numbers of animals in Australia estimated at 250,000 – 300,000 animals.

Enterprise Overview and/or Community Overview

I am somewhat unashamedly narrow-minded and borderline obsessive about the importance of Alpacas as part of the big picture of agriculture in Australia. This passion and conviction for alpacas and their part in “rural sustainability” is based upon -

- A quality of life - the joy of living a rural life is a sense of fulfilment, happiness,

family and community involvement

- A sense of national identity/heritage with an akin to the land and the “things” it produces

- Economic contributions as a large percentage of our exports still originate from rural areas with agriculture encompassing a significant proportion of the nation’s exports.

- And finally and if not the most important is a love of these beautiful magical creatures - ALPACAS, unique, remarkable and now very much developing Australian industry.

My project summary in a nutshell is to share this passion and knowledge of Alpacas with others by promoting the benefits of the animal and the sustainability of alpacas to our local rural environment

Raising awareness Plan (Transfer of Knowledge Project)

During the course, the duration of this program I will focus on awareness raising on the benefits of alpaca as an serious long term player in Australian agriculture. I intend to work and develop more relationships with several local highs schools (who teach Agriculture as part of their curriculum) on promoting the uses and benefits of raising alpacas. Partnership programs – with these schools and Storybook Alpacas will see youth write their own Storybook’s”” on their journeys with agriculture and hopefully Alpacas..

Working with youth about alpacas and agricultures is not only a rewarding experience, but life affirming, changes lives and shaping futures which in turn provides another “sustainable “path for agriculture – making my project a dual success – educating youth and Alpaca awareness raising

Alpacas are gentle and inquisitive by nature, easy to handle and can be halter-trained to lead. They are truly elegant creatures. Alpacas fibre (fleece) is silky soft, lightweight yet tough - extraordinary attributes that meet the needs of the a diverse range of products from home wares through to the high end – haute couture fashion houses of the globe.

The sustainability and use of the whole of an Alpaca (fleece usage - high and low micron as well as meat production) is important for the serious development of the industry as a viable part of Australians Agriculture

Goals & Objectives

The handyman brings attention to detail and craftsmanship to the jobs that need to be done. The genius relentlessly tries one approach after another until the elusive solution is found. And the mad scientist is idiosyncratic and apparently irrational—until the magic appears. (Godin, Seth. June 2014)

Overall Goal is to become the Mad Scientist – but seriously …..

Alpacas are now a world-wide market with breeders not only in Australia but internationally enjoying the financial and lifestyle choices that this animal brings. To impart this knowledge to others and work towards the larger overall long goal of a processing plant is big aim/objective. Specific objectives and goals are listed below. I have recorded short and longer term goals. Goals need to fall into the SMART(ER) process, are to be monitored, tracked and open to adjustments during the course of the project.

Short Term Objectives

Within the time frame of this program

- Enhance and develop my communication skills to allow me to function better as an individual in my community
- Engage and work with 2-3 local high schools to impart through visits and information sessions the animal ALPACA
- Continue to work with the Australian Alpaca Youth Committee on the various programs that they are undertaking for the remainder of this year – National Show and Alpaca Youth Camp – roles are both advisor and mentor
- Participate in community events – the local Craft Market (September – October) and Picton Show (October 2014). This would involve the “display “of animals and

alpaca products promoting the animal to the community

- Promote the “business “of Storybook Alpacas to the general community through he use of social media (Facebook, Instagram and through the development of our web page – www.storybookalpacas.com.au (measure in terms of likes)

- Establish links with like-minded resourceful individuals – local spinners, artists and groups like the Illawarra Feltmakers on “projects” with fleece and alpacas (this will be measured in terms of exhibits, sales of “art” and farm visits

Longer Term Objectives

Again like short term goals need to be monitored and measured (where possible)

- Improve my own long term and our own sustainably as a farmer, breeder and an individuals committed to the improvement of alpacas industry in Australia. This will be reflected in “happiness levels ”as well as financial returns on sales of animals and ribbons at show due to successful breeding (short, long and ongoing goal)

- Work towards (5 year plan) being financially secure and be able to work not for others but work full time (with these beautiful animals)

- Host Farm Open Days annually to invite others into to understand and experience the joys of Alpacas and the possibilities of processing their fleece

- Become a spokesperson/advocate for the Rural women network and encourage other women to get involved in rural activities in their communities

- Continue to participate in agricultural shows (Canberra, Camden, Hawkesbury Sydney, Charles Ledger and Nationals)

- Promote, Participate and Pass on any and all knowledge of Alpacas committing to always being surrounded by these special magical souls

- Encourage, support and provide help to any new breeders of The Australian Alpaca Industry

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Storybook Alpacas Website – www.storybookalpacas.com.au

National Rural Women's Coalition

PROJECT 12

Northern Pastoral Sustainability Biodiversity Monitoring Project Plan

Summary

Balancing pastoral productivity with biodiversity conservation is high concern for the sustainability of the Northern pastoral industry. There is quite a knowledge gap in recent data and understanding of biodiversity fauna across the pastoral holdings in much of the rangeland area of the Northern Territory.

This project will focus on developing a pilot program to give women on Northern Cattle Stations the opportunity to learn more about the sustainability of the pastoral enterprise through biodiversity monitoring. Involvement of the station children will enable fostering an interest in biodiversity and sense of sustainability in the next generation as well.

The project should enable the community to gain information which will more readily inform the pastoral operations of overall level of sustainability and measure more accurately or widely the impact of the pastoral operation within our environment.

Objective:

Develop pilot program for monitoring fauna on pastoral properties.

Goals

Short term:

1. To identify location to conduct biodiversity monitoring fauna surveys.
2. To have engaged local station and indigenous women to particiapte in biodiversity monitoring and share passion for country.
3. To have engaged support from BLCA, TNRM and one or more professionals with expertise in biodiversity monitoring.

Mid Term:

4. Provide toolkit of information on the value of biodiversity in the local region to stakeholders.
5. Initate sharing of tradional ecological knowlege between local indigenous women and station women.
6. Develop guidelines for a monitoring program which can be set and carreid out by local women and children.
7. Conduct two biodiversity fauna surveys.
8. Raise awareness of environmental sustainability in local community.

Long Term:

9. Replicate monitoring program over to other AACo Stations in other regions across North Territory.
10. Contribute to the existing NT biodiversity datasets to increase understanding and awareness of the improtance of diversity on the sustainability of the pastoral industry.

Action Plan

1. To identify location to conduct biodiversity monitoring fauna surveys.
    a. targeting AACo Barkly properties – Brunette Downs.
2. To have engaged local station and indigenous women to particiapte in biodiversity monitoring and share passion for country.
    a. Hold meeting with station women, School of the Air teachers & governess, local indigenous women to determine level of knowledge, areas of interest, support required.
3. To have engaged support from BLCA, TNRM and one or more professionals with expertise in biodiversity monitoring.
    a. Contact TNRM and BLCA for technical & funding support.
    b. Contact professionals with expertise in biodiversity monitoring.
4. Provide toolkit of information on the value of biodiversity in the local region to stakeholders.
    a. Review previous research studies conducted.
    b. Obtain relevant mapping from NT Government.
    c. Investigate tools to help with monitoring of different species.
5. Initate sharing of tradional ecological knowlege between local indigenous women and station women.
    a. Field trip to site to learn from indigenous elder.
6. Develop guidelines for a monitoring program which can be set and carreid out by local women and children.
    a. Hold workshop to determine what speices to monitor, where, when and why.
    b. Reflections on intial meeting with local women on level of knowledge and interest.
    c. Recommendations from conservation experts.
    d. Review of research and literature.
    e. Reveiw of tools available for schools / School of the Air.
7. Conduct two biodiversity fauna surveys.
8. Raising awareness of environmental sustainability in local community and imparting knowledge to at least 25 additional people in community.
    a. Workshop on biodiversity monitoring involving station women, Governess, School of the Air, indigenous women, Landcare, Catchment Group, Govt agenicies.
    b. Field trip to demonstrate indigenous ecological knowledge.
    c. Presenations to AACo Managers meeting.
    d. Articles for AACo magazine, BLCA, TNRM, NTCA.
9. Replicate monitoring program over to other AACo Stations in other regions across North Territory.
    a. Review and improve program where needed.
    b. Conduct program on Anthony Lagoon – Eva Downs
    c. Conduct program in Victoria River District.
10. Contribute to the existing NT biodiversity datasets to increase understanding and awareness of the improtance of diversity on the sustainability of the pastoral industry.

PROJECT 13

NRm community workshops and engagement with women in land management

community overview

My local community is the Mid Murray of SA situated between the Barossa/Mt Lofty Ranges and Murray River. There are a lot of smaller towns with low-mid level income and low-mid level education levels and are predominantly made up of small sheep and cropping farms, hobby bush blocks and other conservation land. NRM issues such as feral animals, fire and total grazing pressure impact on all of our environments however there is not a lot of information, resources, training or services for the community.

I currently am a sanctuary manager at Yookamurra Sanctuary a 5208ha property run by Australian Wildlife Conservancy in the Mid Murray region of SA. I am the only female and second youngest sanctuary manager in our organisation. In this job I run all the land management e.g. fire, weeds, ferals, infrastructure maintenance project and take care of OH&S and administration. Over years working in land management I find if you are not involved in the science/research stream it can be hard to get to know best practice management and new techniques and it's hard to find training and resources. I have also seen a lack of women doing the ground land management work in the conservation industry (may be different in agricultural sector). Women in my experience are usually involved in the research, policy and planning and community work. I am not sure whether this is due to the appeal and physically demanding aspects of the field work or there are more cultural barriers such as discrimination or stereotypes of it not being seen as a feminine job.

In regards to community engagement my workplace take school educational camps from primary to tertiary, researchers and volunteers to teach them about conservation. One sector of the community however that is missing this message is our own local community of adults. To some degree these are the people that are able to make the biggest local difference in the present.

project summary

To run a series of NRM topic based community workshops for adults in the local region. These will engage, bring together, inform and hopefully upskill sectors of the community and get them more involved in best practice land management in the region. This will be run over the next year however my goal is to do at least 2 workshops by November involving at least 25 people.

To engage with women interested and/or involved in land management (fire, weeds, ferals etc.) and see what aspects interest them, what they are involved in and what barriers there are for getting women into this sector. From my experience in the NRM industry there are a lot of women involved with the research, community engagement, planning and policy of land management issues but a lot less women working doing the 'hands-on' work.

goals and objectives

1) Engage and bring together community to discuss NRM/land management topics
2) Inform community on new technologies/approaches and best practice

3) Where possible involve community in projects and build their capacity
4) To find out what NRM topics are most important to the community
5) To study how women fit into the land management sector in our community and any barriers they may face e.g. interests, discrimination, capacity to do the work.

community engageMent strategy

- Talk with other experts in the field of topic/NRM sector in regards to needs of the community and environmental issues that need addressing
- Try and get other speakers on that topic including community members if possible.
- Develop informative and promotional material in relation to the workshop
- Develop survey and discussion topics for women in land management to identify interests, involvement and barriers to the sector
- Distribute information on NRM workshops at relevant locations including NRM, local shops, Elders, council buildings etc. Look into use of social media and stake-holders information such as their newsletters etc.
- Organise logistics and resources for workshops e.g. facilities, tea/coffee,
- Evaluate if topics meet needs of communities based on feedback e.g. ask community for future workshop topics, do they feel more informed/empowered?
- Evaluate input from women on the needs of the sector to be more inviting to women e.g. through a survey and discussion at the NRM topics workshops. Perhaps hold an event also just for local women in land management.
- Techniques will involve direct communication (email, phone, face to face, surveys), information- (advertising, educational handouts), direct events (community workshops/activity days)

risk assessment

Risks	Likely consequences	Likelihood of risk occurring (see matrix below)	Consequence of risk occurring (see matrix below)	Risk rating (see matrix below)	Management strategy
Not adequate funding	Will limit ability to engage with different sectors of community e.g. offer meal and advertising, can limit capacity	Unlikely	Major	Moderate	Have already secured funding for community workshops for one year through NRM Connecting Communities Grant for workplace. Workplace also supports this work and will cover any in-kind necessary. Project not an expensive one to run as long as speakers don't require funding.

Workshop topic isn't important to community	Will limit engagement and attendance in events.	Possible	Moderate	Moderate	Topics I think we will role out into workshops are already based on community feedback. However these can be reviewed and changed based on discussions If finding it really hard to get community engaged in NRM based forums I will try doing general get together community events where I will be available to talk to women in land management and take info on NRM topics e.g. Plan B
Not enough time to get community support or involvement for workshops	Lack of community knowledge of events or not though out planning will likely result in less attendance	Possible	Major	High	Good planning, realistic goals, flexibility to work with stakeholders and get engagement right, having a plan B
Community workshops- low attendance	Information and skills training doesn't get out to a large section of the community it may benefit	Possible	Moderate	Moderate	Recent Open Days have been at capacity (40 pax.) so we should be able to generate enough interest with good planning and advertising. If external speakers pull out both staff have a lot of experience in the subject matter. If need to be cancelled for some reason or low attendance we could look at repeating or rescheduling.
Not all key players (e.g. other speakers)	Other stakeholders could lead to	Likely	Moderate	High	Engage other potential speakers early in process. Work with them on availability

committed to project or want to postpone	delays in rolling out certain workshops based on their readiness and availability				and importance of workshop and make sure they are prepared for discussions that may arise Look for alternative speakers If worse case scenario happens and can't get other speakers on topic both staff here have a lot of experience in both the topics and community engagement so program can still go ahead but may not get as much community diversity
Capacity (i.e. my time) limited due to factors out of my control	Workshops could get cancelled or postponed due to personal or work circumstances	Possible	Major	High	Disruptions to planning may occur due to external circumstances but workshops can be rescheduled or postponed and other workshops take their place. Workshops will still be held but may not be 'on time'.
Can't find enough women interested/involved in land management willing to talk to me	May not find out any barriers to women in this sector. But if there is just a lack of women involved and not to do with engagement that in itself is a finding	Possible	Major	High	Look for different avenues to find and discuss this issue with women e.g. may need to engage in a less formal setting Good planning and advertising Speak to stakeholders about women they know that may be interested in taking part

	Likelihood of risk occurring

		Rare	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Almost Certain
Consequences of risk occurring	Catastrophic	**H**	**H**	**H**	**E**	**E**
	Major	**M**	**M**	**H**	**H**	**E**
	Moderate	**L**	**M**	**M**	**H**	**H**
	Minor	**L**	**L**	**M**	**M**	**H**
	Insignificant	**L**	**L**	**L**	**M**	**M**

PROJECT 14

Management of Road Reserves

1) Community Overview

- Identify key industries and characteristics
- Lochiel is a small rural community in the Mid North of South Australia.
- Wakefield Regional Council
- The main industry in the area is agriculture with majority of land owners undertaking broad acre cropping and breeding stock. Other major developments in the area include chicken farming and a wind farm.
- The environment is diverse, particularly in the Lochiel area with salt lakes a major feature.
- Outline other key environmental feature such as mallee etc.
- Outline current major stresses on the environment
- Overview of current road reserve leasing processes

2) Project Summary

- A research project that looks in to the rich environmental importance of roadside and road reserve vegetation and makes key recommendations into the management of these areas into the future. A report to Council/business case for local government and/or landowners about how these areas could be managed to ensure their sustainability going forward and where to go for assistance. The project will also provide information to landowners about management of road reserves and roadside vegetation and how they can 'do their bit' to preserve this important part of our environment for the future.

2.1) Raising Awareness Plan

- Workshops hosted by key professionals relevant to roadside/road reserve management aimed at landowners, Local Government Elected Members and relevant staff and other interested individuals. A practical case study based on current road reserves in the Council area which community members and other groups (such as Society for Growing Australian Plants) will be targeted to attend.
- Report to Council and engagement with Council about possible options for preservation of these areas
- General community information transfer via the media, social networking and other sources
- Engage with the Wakefield Regional Council Youth Advisory Committee in regards to their project along Lake Bumbunga
- Attend Conservation Action Planning meetings and discuss roadside/road reserve management as a relevant topic

3. Goals and Objectives

- Outline current environmental mapping of vegetation types (Conservation Action Plan workshop data, NRM and other key environmental data). Rich remnant vegetation source?
- Overview of current practices on these roadsides and road reserves
- Interview/engage with landowners about uses of this type of land (grazing? fenced off? access tracks?)
- Research case studies of other local government areas and how they are managing these areas. Best/better practice- how are they doing it? What is working? Lucindale example?
- What are the 'laws' about how to manage these vegetation types? Native Vegetation Act, advice from the NRM Board and other key organisations.
- Research existing plans to ensure alignment and relevance and help build a case for better management of these areas- NRM Plans, Council Plans, Regional Development Australia etc.

- Case study of current roadsides, road reserves and comparison of their management. E.g. compare a grazed parcel of road reserve verses an 'untouched' road reserve. What are the differences? How can this information be used with desktop reviews and research to make a case for preservation?
- Liaise with Council for permissions to access road reserve maps, data, policies etc. relating to Council owned road reserves.
- The output is a report to Council/landowners outlining key recommendations as a result of the research, contact details/where to go for more information.

PROJECT 15

Project: Getting to Know Your Groundwater

Project Summary

My Community

Springsure is a town in Central Queensland. The closest major centre is Emerald which is located 70km North. Springsure has a predominately agricultural industry with 32% of all people employed by or working in this industry. The agricultural industry around Springsure includes cattle grazing and dry land cropping. The population is predominately living on rural properties with only 18% of the population residing in Springsure town. Recently there have been two coal mines open up in the area which is the second biggest employer with 9% of the population.

Groundwater and My Community

With the majority of people within the community living outside of town there is a reliance on water collected on property for domestic and agricultural uses. Water sources include rain water, dam water and groundwater. Many people have surface water (rain water and dams) when there has been sufficient rainfall and rely on groundwater as a backup.

With the current drought conditions being experienced there is an increased reliance on groundwater as surface water dries up.

From community engagement I have found that there is a deficiency of scientific understanding amongst landholders and the community with regards to groundwater. With many people relying on a water source that they know little about, for example: what is an aquifer? is a question I am often asked.

With the recent addition of mining developments to the local area there are increasing concerns about groundwater availability and what impacts the mining industry will have.

Getting to Know Your Groundwater

The project that I am running will involve two major components.

3. Water level measurements.

When you can watch a dam slowly empty or measure how much water is left in a tank there is an ability to plan for what will happen when that water runs out. But how do you measure groundwater? A resource that you cannot see, one of the ways to do this is to “dip” the bore with an electronic dipper tape. Measuring bores on a regular basis will allow landholders to see trends in their resources. These may show a decreasing trend and having access to the information will give you time to plan a contingency or to enact a plan that they already have.

Having access to a dipper tape and training on how to use one is part of this project along with data validation and the provision of monthly trend reports. This allows landholders to know their groundwater resources and what to expect.

4. Groundwater Information Day – Raising Awareness Plan

A groundwater information day is planned to fill the knowledge deficiencies that exist within the community. In order to inform this day a community survey will be completed to ensure that the majority knowledge gaps are being filled.

This information will not only inform about the groundwater resource that many people rely on but will also address the potential risks associated with the mining industry.

Goals of the Project

1. Give access to dipper tape so that monthly water levels can be measured, ongoing.
2. Survey community to determine questions about groundwater, planned for July 2014.
3. Complete Groundwater Information day to answer questions from 2, planned for September 2014.

National Rural Women's Coalition

PROJECT 16

PROJECT SUMMARY

My project is to create an indigenous drought resistant garden at Lockwood South Primary School (where I am the OSHC Co-ordinator), and another at the Inglewood Primary School (where I am an Integration Aide, and Co-ordinate the "Mates – Reading Buddies Program").

With the assistance of the local Landcare groups, the students and I at both schools will work out which shrubs and plants will be suitable to plant. The schools are approx. 30 ks. from each other, so some plants may not be suitable in both areas.

We will then, with the help of other school staff, parents, and community members, get the garden beds ready for planting. I will go to the local native nursery and purchase the plants for both schools, which we will then plant.

The students will help me to maintain the gardens, but we are also going to produce a booklet about the plants/shrubs, and their care; this we are going to release to the communities by having an afternoon when community members attend the school, and the students will share information, we distribute our booklets, and allow everyone to see our garden.

I will then take this knowledge, and run a similar program at the local Redesdale-Mia Mia Primary School, near where I live. They have recently had their garden redone, but the knowledge of what plants/shrubs grow in the area, will be beneficial in later years.

I am currently applying for funding to help buy the plants and composting materials etc., for both schools. If this doesn't work, I will try other avenues to raise funds – talk to some business people I know to see if they will sponsor us. The students and I will be producing the booklets, and having the information afternoons for the community members either way, but it will be lovely if we can have the gardens done as well.

Redesdale is approx. 30 ks. from the Lockwood South School, and all three schools are small, rural schools. Inglewood has 33 students, Lockwood South has 23 students, and Redesdale-Mia Mia has 25 students. I have attached a map which shows the location of the 3 schools.

National Rural Women's Coalition

PROJECT 17

WHAT DIFFERENCE LANDCARE???

Introduction

The Mount Worth and District (MWD) Landcare group was established in 2002 and covers an area of approximately xxxxha and has a membership in 2014 of 35 paid members. Since its inception the MWD Landcare group has been reasonably successful in obtaining grants to assist with fencing and tree planting for riparian habitat, land stabilisation and wildlife corridors. The aim of this project is to map the landscape pre and post the Landcare group activities and to estimate the areas of planting achieved through the efforts of the Landcare group and make some comment on the impact on local waterways and wildlife habitat.

Project Objectives:

1. To estimate the impact that the local Landcare group has had on the landscape through estimating the change in vegetation coverage pre and post landcare group activities.
2. To promote the value of Landcare activities by presenting the resultant analysis to the Landcare group, to the environmental team at the local shire and to the general community via articles in the local newspapers.
3. To provide some feedback to Landcare Australia on what the activities of a single Landcare group in West Gippsland, Victoria has achieved.

(The latter two objectives meet the Raising Awareness requirement of the project).

Proposed Approach

1. Geographically define the area covered by MWD Landcare Group
2. Access the archives of the MWD Landcare Group to determine the number of planting projects funded and estimate the area planted since the inception of the Landcare group activities.
3. Retrieve LandSat images of the MWD Landcare Group area taken in 2000 and obtain recent (2014) images of the same area, run it through the a vegetation mapping software and estimate the change in vegetation cover over the 14 year period (with the assistance of colleagues from CSIRO Land and Water Flagship).
4. Determine what proportion of the increase in vegetation cover can be attributed directly to the MWD Landcare Group, how much should be attributed to the closely aligned Friends of Mt Worth State Park and how much should be attributed to landholders not part of the Landcare network.

5. Discuss the potential impacts of the change in vegetation cover on the local waterways, potential carbon fixation capacity of the landscape and local wildlife.

6. Compose a report along the lines of a scientific paper for possible publication in an environmental journal.

7. Develop several project summaries suitable for distribution to:

    - The local Landcare group
    - The local shire (Baw Baw Shire)
    - Landcare Australia as a stand alone project report, and for inclusion in the Landcare publications
    - The local newspapers as media releases (the Warragul and Drouin Gazette, the Trader, Warragul Citizen)

8. Present seminars to the local Landcare group, Shire and in any other forum as appropriate.

NB All of the above presentations and publications will acknowledge the support of the National Rural Women's Coalition through the e-Leaders Women Towards Sustainability Program.

Proposed Timeline

	July 4 2014	August 2014	September 2014	October 2014	Nov 2014		
Project Outline rand seek permissioin to access data from MWD Landcare group and Friends of Mt Worth State Park							
Access data via Landcare archives and satellite images							
Vegetation mapping component							

Report preparation						
Media activities						
Project completion						
Seminar presentations						

Risk Analysis

Identified Risk	**Chance of risk occurring**	**Risk Impact**		
		Low	**Medium**	**High**
Data access	low			high
Ability to assess vegetation cover	low		medium	
Inability to finish project on time	medium		medium	
Local media do not pick up story to spread to wider community	low	low		
Project does not comply with e-Leaders Women Towards Sustainability Program	Low			High

Risk Mitigation

Preliminary discussions with colleagues at CSIRO indicate that the project objectives should be able to be achieved with the help of software used by the group, and that the geographical data should be available.

Having deadlines will ensure that the project is completed as specified, and the project timeline about will assist with not leaving everything to the last minute.

The local community media is likely to pick up the story, provided some easily digested information accompanies the media release.

To date it appears that although this project is much narrower in scope than many of the other proposed e-Leader projects, that this project meets the requirements of a project for the e-Leaders Women Towards Sustainability Program.

Project Evaluation:

1. Number of publications achieved with media releases in local press, landcare press and scientific publications – aim for at least 5
2. Number of seminars presented – aim for 3
3. Project meets the requirements of e-leaders Women Towards Sustainability Program.