

Annual Report

2022 - 2023

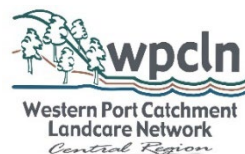


*We acknowledge the Traditional Owners,
the Bunurong and the Boonwurring,
of the places in which we live, work and play.
We recognise and respect the enduring relationship
they have with their country, and we pay our respects
to elders past, present and future.*



Bass Coast
Landcare
Network

Our Partners



BCLN Board Executive

The Chair – Linda Bowden

Deputy Chair – Roger Lee

Treasurer – Don Creed

Secretary – Bill Irving

Portfolio Holders

West Gippsland CMA – Paul Speirs

Melbourne Water – Linda Bowden

Audit and Finance – Don Creed, Roger Lee, David Bateman, Cheryl Marchant, Robbie Gray

Risk and Compliance – Bill Irving, Linda Bowden, David Bateman, Robbie Gray

People Culture and Capability Committee

Jean Coffey, Ken Connor, Helen Norman, David Bateman, Robbie Gray, Mark Rowe

Groups and Representatives

Bass Valley – Helen Norman

3 Creeks – Nick Sibly

Anderson Inlet – Ken Connor

French Island – Linda Bowden

Kongwak – Libby Lambert

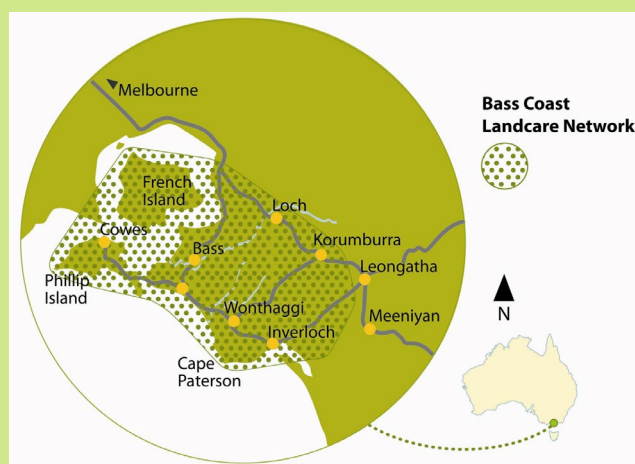
Korumburra – Don Creed

Phillip Island – Carolyn Atherton

Powlett Project – Paul Speirs

GTSAG – Dave Sutton

Background and History	3
Our Core Purpose	4
Our Vision	4
Our Mission Statement	4
Our Values	4
Our Strategies and objectives 2018-2025	5
Governance and Planning	6
BCLN Organisation Structure	7
Chair's Report	8
Treasurer's Report	9
Executive General Manager Report	11
People Culture and Capability Report	13
Child Safety Statement	15
Public Fund	16
BCLN Statistics 2022-2023	17
Group President Reports	18
Maps	28
Natural Resource Management Portfolio	30
Ecosystems Services Portfolio	34
Invasive Species Program	35
Works Crew	40
Bass Landcare Indigenous Nursery Group	44
Sustainable Agriculture Portfolio	46
Education, Training and Communications Portfolio	51
Audited Financial Statements	55



Background and History

The Bass Coast Landcare Network (BCLN) was formed in 2003 as an affiliation of the Landcare Groups in the region, enabling them to better position themselves for investment from government, local, state, federal and corporate programs. Sixty percent of the 1,400 rural properties in the Network area are involved in and supported by the BCLN.

Under the direction of the Groups and the Network Board, our Landcare Staff manage a variety of programs including;

- Education and Training - Engaging the next generation, supporting a community of practice
- Sustainable Agriculture - Providing pathways to resilient and profitable farming
- Natural Resource Management - Remnant vegetation protection and revegetation
- Invasive Species Control - Integrated management and control
- Works Crew - Assisting landholders, partners in on ground works and offering traineeships
- Indigenous plant nursery - Volunteers growing local indigenous plants for Landcare projects
- The River Garden - A community trials, education, demonstration space and future food hub
- Practical Sustainability - Community action for sustainable farms and homes
- Partnerships in Action - Engaging and delivering partnerships in the corporate and agency sector
- Ecosystem Services Delivery - Valuing biodiversity and providing consulting services

The Bass Coast Landcare Network falls in two Catchment Management Areas, West Gippsland and Port Phillip and Western Port. The top of the catchment is characterised by steep hills with slopes from 20 to 40 degrees whilst the lower catchment area is flat and prone to flooding and salinity. Within the catchment there are several small rural settlements surrounded by agricultural enterprises, such as dairying, beef cattle, sheep, and vegetables, which support the majority of the population. Tourism, small rural allotments, and extractive industries are other typical land uses within the catchment.

The Network has the twin focus of changing the understanding and the practices of landholders. In recent years the Network has conducted education and training programs for landholders and facilitated farmer discussion groups to highlight the issues of land management, best practice farming techniques and whole farm planning. In addition, the Network has been successful in gaining funds to support landholders and urban groups to complete works to improve their land. This includes re-vegetation, soil health, salinity control, sustainability, greenhouse reduction, wetland restoration, coastal rehabilitation, pest plant and animal control, improving water quality and monitoring biodiversity.



Our Core Purpose

Educate – Grow – Feed

Our Vision

Our vision is to be a community engaged in supporting a productive, biodiverse landscape incorporating sustainable agricultural practices and innovative environmental enterprises.

Our Mission Statement

To collaborate with our groups, the community, and partners and to enable the delivery of innovative land and environmental management practices to support healthy and resilient communities and ecosystems.

Our Values

The BCLN core values have been drawn from a consultative process between the Board and BCLN staff. They are not rules but represent guiding principles that we should test all decisions and actions against.

Excellence: To strive for high standards in everything we do to create the best outcomes for the community and future generations.

Respect: To maintain a respectful and professional attitude to embrace individuality and different viewpoints and values.

Teamwork: To create a healthy, cohesive, and supportive work environment to ensure collaboration and cooperation are cornerstones of our organisation.

Optimism/resilience: to continually adapt and evolve to change while remaining optimistic and confident in our values.

Integrity: To take pride in working professionally and honestly to achieve outcomes that reflect our values and enhance our reputation as a trustworthy organisation.

*As an organisation we value and support **biodiversity and the natural environment**.*



Our Strategies and objectives 2018-2025

To achieve our core purpose, six key strategies and their objectives have been identified. These strategies and objectives will guide the selection and focus of the activities undertaken by the Network.

- 1. Strong communities engaged and connected through Landcare**
- 2. Grow and protect a connected biodiverse landscape**



- 3. Lead an innovative sustainable agricultural community**
- 4. Capitalise on Carbon**



- 5. Best Practice Governance and Safe, Skilful Operations**
- 6. Deliver leading edge experiences, education, and training**



Best practice governance and safe, skilful operations

Governance and Planning

The BCLN Board has the ultimate responsibility for BCLN projects, funding, and activities. It is assisted in fulfilling its responsibilities by the Network Coordinators and other Network managed staff. Specifically, its role is as follows:

Broad Aims

- Pursue core purpose, mission statement of the Bass Coast Landcare Network.
- Develop clear aims and objectives for the BCLN and provide leadership in their implementation.
- Provide support to all member groups.
- Coordinate the activities of member groups in relation to Network wide projects.

Overall Operations

- Approve the strategic plan for the Network.
- Delegate authority to staff and member groups appropriately.
- Demonstrate Leadership.
- Recommend the auditor's report be approved at the AGM.
- Ensure effective communication between Landcare Groups and other stakeholders.
- Establish ethical standards for the BCLN.

Performance

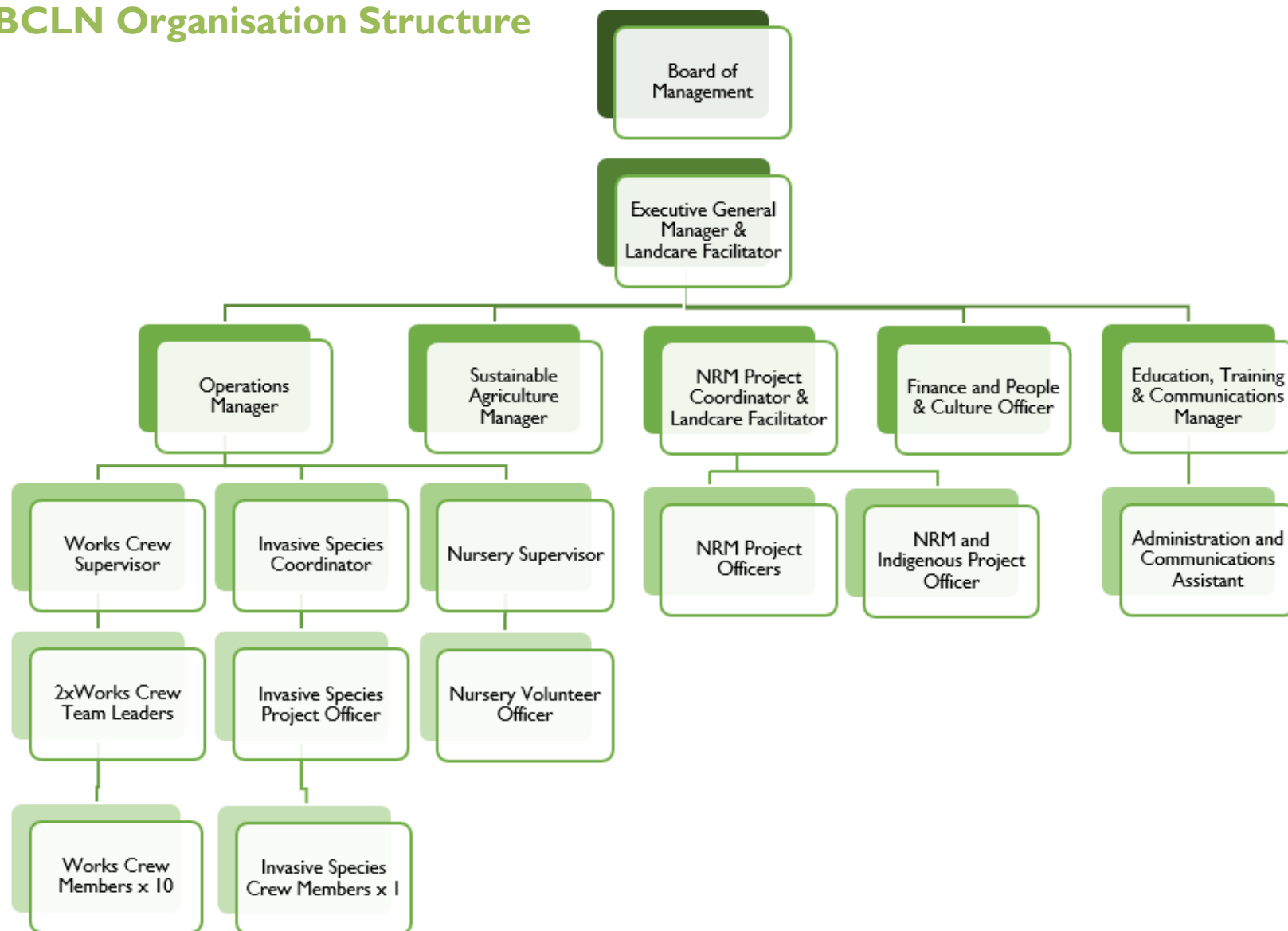
- Ensure the long-term viability of the BCLN.
- Oversee the implementation of the strategic plan.
- Ensure development of project proposals across the Network and seek funding in line with:
 - Strategic directions and resources capabilities
 - Member groups action plans, their needs, and capacities to achieve stated outcomes
 - Ensure proper disbursement of any funds received in line with funding agreements
 - Monitor developments in the Landcare field and the operating environment.

Legal Conformance

- Understand and protect the financial position of the BCLN.
- Require and monitor legal and regulatory compliance including adherence to the conditions of funding.
- Approve annual accounts, annual reports, and other public / sensitive reports.



BCLN Organisation Structure



Chair's Report

Linda Bowden

They say from little things big things grow. That was the question asked at a Board meeting – why is it that the Bass Coast Landcare Network is so successful. So being Landcarers, we went digging. It has been a journey that started in the Boardroom, took us out to our member groups, even made its way to the launch of a new Network in Bendigo – the Nature Network. It was inspiring to see what this new network has developed. There was certainly something more for our Network to take home.



We were motivated to keep digging and search for the source of our success. Next focus was the Board's attention this year on updating our Strategic Plan. Surely what we had been doing for the past 5 years has played a big role, but it felt like there was something missing or maybe something more, so we put it out there to our members and partners, anyone really who has been involved in Landcare in some shape or form. We received some great feedback and what we found out is we're still on that great Landcare mission – to Educate – Grow – Feed.

It turns out that Landcare has this great reputation that goes back to the late 80s and that when you partner with Landcare it just works out. Landcare has certainly evolved and it's not just about farmers, it's about all people caring for the land. Landcare projects in the Bass Coast region are happening on private and public land. We have a great staff team and volunteer base all supporting that same principle, caring. There is a recognition that partnering with Landcare will get the job done in a professional way. It turns out we're not afraid to get our hands dirty and that doing this kind of work takes a certain commitment and dedication when you're out and about with nature. We do it well and we continue to be asked to roll up our sleeves and have a go. There's plenty to share around and the Bass Coast Landcare Network is helping in its small way to really making a difference.

So, when you ask yourself that big question it is worth the effort to investigate further. We're a little early on our Strategic Plan, but it felt like the right time to review the plan. Belinda Brennan has been a stoic Landcarer for a very long time, and her professionalism and support in helping develop our new Plan is without exception. We hope you like the new Strategic Plan, and we look forward to incorporating it into our direction over the next 5 years.

I would like to thank everybody and in no particular order – partners, staff, volunteers, board and committee members – those same people that come back year after year because they really do care, and it makes us all feel good to see the positive impact Landcare has on this part of the world.

I am again very proud of what the Network has achieved over this last 12 months. I look forward to this next chapter with the launch of our new Strategic Plan. The Network continues to enrich this beautiful region that we are all custodians for.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Linda Bowden".

Linda Bowden
Chair Bass Coast Landcare Network

Treasurer's Report

Don Creed

The financial year 22/23 delivered a surplus of \$123,900, a very pleasing result for the Network.

Income

Total Income for the year came in at \$2.547M, 15% above prior year. Partnerships continue to be our main source of income, but it was pleasing to see our Fee for Service up 12% on prior year.



Expenses

Salaries and Wages continue to be our biggest expense and this year it comprised 77% of the Total Expenses per P&L. With budgeted income for 23/24 remaining flat this is an area that will need to be closely monitored going forward. Overall other expenses came in close to budget expectations.

Cost Centres

In past years we have divided the Network's activities into five cost centres for management reporting purposes. As advised at last year's AGM, this year we have added a new cost centre for separately monitoring Invasive Species. The current six cost Centres are:

- Admin,
- Operational,
- Works Crew,
- Invasive Species,
- Nursery,
- River Garden.

Most returned positive results for the year with the exception being Invasive Species and the River Garden. Admin – Income looked high to budget but was aided by an increase in interest rates on term deposits during the year. Works Crew – is our largest cost centre and continues to support other areas of the business. Invasive Species – made a small loss during the year due to an increase in wages brought about by a work cover incident and unexpected repairs to a buggy. Nursery – Continues to do well and was able to contribute \$20,000 worth of plants to our Groups during the year. River Garden – the Network continues to support the activities in the Garden.

Balance Sheet

We continue to have a very healthy Balance Sheet with Cash Reserves at the end of the year totalling \$2,162m broken into a working account and term deposits maturing every 2 months. (This cash is not all ours, some of it represents unspent funds in the various projects being undertaken by the Network). Our working capital ratio of current asset and current liabilities as at 30 June 2023, remains at a healthy 1.8.

The Network has a policy to maintain sufficient reserves to cover at least six months operating expenses and staff entitlements. The Audit and Finance team spoke to our auditor on what should make up this amount and will undertake a review in 23/24 to make sure our reserve figure is still adequate.

Assets have continued to grow with continued investment in the Nursery, Plant and Equipment and Vehicles. We have no significant overdue outstanding debtors.

One line on the balance sheet that is worth explaining is “Project balances carried forward”. We undertake projects via grants or partnerships that can extend over several financial year ends. Sometimes the funds for these projects are provided up front, prior to the project being started. When a project is established, it sits in the balance sheet as a liability waiting for its funds to be spent. If these funds are spent internally, for project management, works done by the works crew or for plants grown and sold by the Network then income is brought to account when this work is performed and appears as income in our management reports. If the funds are spent externally on fencing subsidies, plants etc., they are brought to account in the P&L as “direct on ground works expense” as a single line in both Income and Expense. This year the external items spent totalled \$335,971. We exclude this figure from the Management Reports to better reflect the activities and performance of the Network. To make sure we have accounted for the Projects correctly year to year, we do the reconciliation, shown at Note 7, showing Projects at the Start **plus** Projects coming in, **less** Funds transferred internally, **less** funds spent externally, leaving Closing project balances as shown in the Balance Sheet as - Project balances carried forward \$785,979. These projects will be completed, and funds expended in coming years.

Looking Ahead

Our budgeting process is well established and draws on the experience of Dave, Robbie, Cheryl and Cost Centre managers to come up with realistic figures that they can own during the course of the year. We have budgeted for another positive year in 23/24.

We have developed a system of recognising assets at the end of their working life and will continue to turn them over as they come up for replacement. We also have a planning permit and working drawings ready for quotes for a meeting room for our office.

We are proposing to change our reporting year from a fiscal year end to a calendar year end. The on ground work and project management performed by the Network primarily revolves around the planting season. With our financial year end currently being June 30, it splits the planting season across two financial years. Going to a calendar year end will contain the planting season in one reporting year. It will better reflect our income and reporting cycle, make it simpler for Groups to report plantings in a single calendar year and make it simpler for Network budgeting. Bookkeeping wise to achieve it we would run a one off 18-month year.

Thankyou's

As Treasurer I rely heavily on the professional team making up the Audit and Finance Sub Committee. Thank you, Cheryl, for the hard work putting together the accurate monthly management reports that we rely on, professionally running the day to day office administration and payroll and at year end working co-operatively with our auditor to produce these audited reports. Thank you, Dave and Robbie, for your insights into the figures and thank you Roger for your most valued considered opinions and covering for me while out of the country. This will be my final time as Treasurer, it has been a privilege and pleasure to have worked with all of you.

Executive General Manager Report

David Bateman

It gives me great pleasure to report that BCLN has had another fantastic year delivering a wide array of on-ground works, educational activities, sustainable agriculture programs and facilitation of our 10 Landcare groups. This year we were responsible for the highest number of plants in the ground in our 20-year history. Our team has done a great job working with our Landcare groups to facilitate over 450,000 plants in the ground, a huge amount of on ground action and many enjoyable activities.



Our Works Crew has continued to grow over the past 12 months establishing a new partnership with GreenFleet and continuing to work well with our major existing partners including Bass Coast Shire Council, Parks Vic, Westernport Water, West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority and Melbourne Water. Our Invasive species team has also established itself as a reliable professional unit working on new projects with Parks Vic on Quail Island and continuing their great work on the Hooded plover project. We have continued to deliver great experiences for our community and local schools through our education program, and this year included BCLN hosting the Bass Coast Sustainability Festival at our River Garden, which was a great success. Our Sustainable Agriculture program supported our Farmer Discussion groups, the National Capital Accounting project and delivered a great variety of field days for our Landcare community. Our Community Nursery continues to be a great place for our volunteers to come along and help grow plants for our BCLN projects. Our nursery also grew a record number of plants, with 120,000 plants grown this year.



*BCLN works crew on French Island with
Linda and Ken from the BCLN Board*

One of the biggest highlights of the year was our Hooded Plover fundraiser dinner supported by the BCLN Public Fund. We had close to 100 people attend the event and raised over \$10k for our Hooded Plover protection program. Sarah Thompson, our Public Fund Philanthropy Manager, did a great job putting the event together with support from our dedicated Public Fund Trustees. We will aim to run an event like this one annually.

All of the above could not be possible without the support of our Landcare community including our independent and strong 10 Landcare groups and our dedicated and knowledgeable Board members. Our BCLN Board led by our Chair Linda Bowden, continue to provide great support to our staff team and provide a high level of governance for the organisation. Our Board has been working on a new Strategic Plan with the support of Jane Lowther, who help kicked the process off on French Island in Feb 2022 followed by Belinda Brennan who has done a fantastic job collating information from our Landcare community and Board members. Our BCLN Board Sub Committees have worked really well again this year and include many dedicated people who provide excellent support to our organisation.

I would like to thank all our key partners including Bass Coast Shire Council, Bunurong Land Council, West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority, Melbourne Water, Parks Victoria, Westernport Water and Phillip Island Nature Parks for their support. I would also like to acknowledge our corporate partners Liminal Wellbeing, Greening Australia, Green Fleet, TUROSI, Beveridge Williams and Hills are Alive Group. I would also like to recognise our innovative and passionate staff team who continue to support the development of mutually beneficial partnerships throughout our region and are always on the lookout for opportunities for our Landcare community. I am very proud of what BCLN has achieved this year and look forward to supporting our Landcare community to continue this vitally important work into the future.



BCLN Staff team at our Team Building Trip at Walkerville March 2023

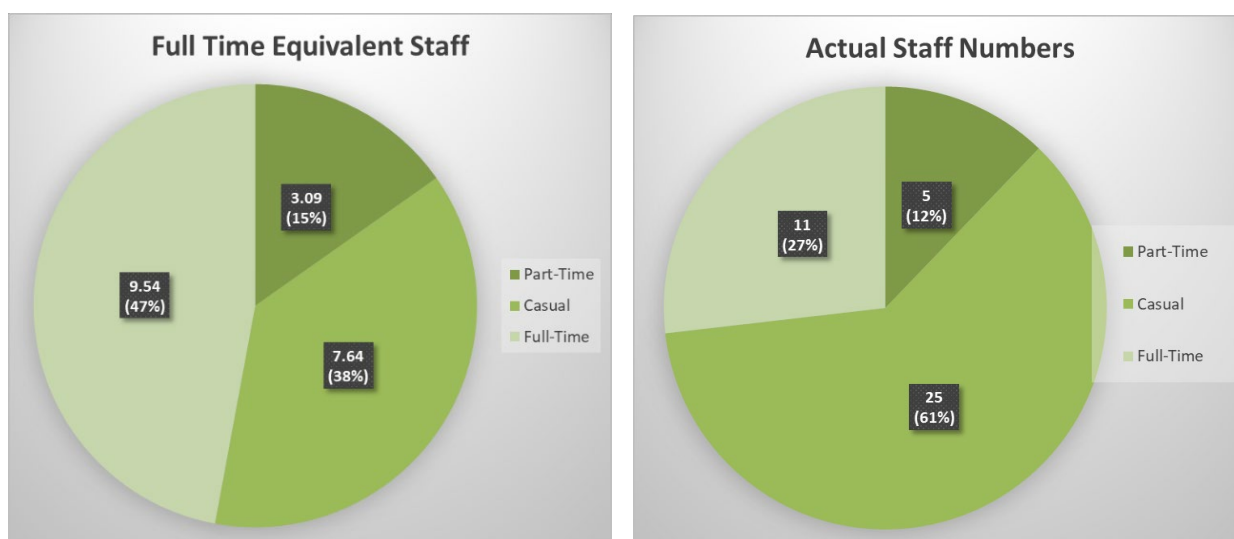
People Culture and Capability Report

The PCC Sub Committee reviewed the Time in Lieu, Maternity Leave, Working from home, Remuneration, Travel and Employee assistance HR Policies this year. Improvements were made this year to the Maternity Leave Policy. BCLN conducted a review of similar organisations and landed on the Greening Australia EBA. We now offer our staff 8 weeks Maternity/Paternity Leave on top of the Government program.

BCLN introduced a Wellbeing program for all staff, from Liminal Wellbeing. This Program gives staff support to engage with wellbeing activities and check in with their mental health. The program also offers the organisation insights into the staff wellbeing as a whole. This program also offers staff the opportunity to talk to trained counsellors to help work through work and life issues.

A review of salaries of comparable organisations showed that they were higher than Landcare. It was considered this was a major factor in the high turnover of staff. As a result, the PCC Sub Committee recommended to the Board (and was approved) that Works Crew salaries be increased by 12.5% above the Horticultural award. Alongside this decision a banding system was introduced to recognise staff achievements and give them a pathway to progression on the BCLN Works Crew.

Statistics



Employee Status during 2022 2023			
	Female	Male	Total
Casual	5	20	25
Full-Time	1	10	11
Part-Time	3	2	5
Total	9	32	41

Staff team Building trip - Walkerville

In Early April our staff team travelled down to beautiful Walkerville foreshore camping reserve to participate in our annual team building and training trip. This year we had 24 of our staff attend. One of the main focusses of the trip was the introduction to our new staff Wellbeing program,

“Liminal Wellbeing”. This program enables our staff to use an app on their phones to check in on their physical emotional and social health. It also provides resources for the team in regard to helping improve their physical and emotional wellbeing. Will Hams, the creator of the program came down to Walkerville and introduced the program and led our team through a series of wellbeing exercises including box breathing and a shock to the system cold water therapy session.

As part of the program our team will be checking in with their Wellbeing at least once a week and utilising the app to do a 15-minute activity to help improve their physical/emotional wellbeing. I believe this program will provide great benefits to our team and show an extra level of care to our staff team that we value so much at BCLN.

We were very fortunate to have our former staff member and Landcare Legend Geoff Trease come down and give our team a comprehensive weed and plant id session both in the Hall and out in the field. Our Works Crew team leader Mark Rowe also spoke to the group about how to control each of the weeds Geoff brought down for the talk. The team also worked on revisiting our staff values and team goals to check in on our progression and look into potential new opportunities. I believe Staff wellbeing and training are integral to maintaining a productive, high functioning staff team.



BCLN Staff Team Plant ID walk



Plant ID training with the very knowledgeable Geoff Trease

Training and Development

People, Culture and Capability provides a variety of training and development opportunities aimed at building employee ability to deliver services, meet strategic needs and align with BCLN mission, strategic plan, and values. BCLN continues to sponsor staff training – short; informal; and nationally recognised vocational training. This continues to enable us to develop better programs and activities.

Training activities this year included;

- Level 2 First Aid Training
- Liminal Wellbeing training
- Mental health first aid
- Natural Capital Accounting
- Project Management
- 4wd Course
- Agricultural Chemical users Chemcert
- Chainsaw level 1 and Level 2

BCLN encourages staff to undertake other outside studies improving their professional and personal skills. Our people are independently undertaking or completing vocational and

postgraduate studies, further developing the knowledge base and experience within the organisation. We continue to support in other ways – not just direct financial contribution.

Work Health and Safety Injury Management

We continue to review and improve our work health and safety policies, procedures and guidelines. This is important to help identify, adopt and develop best practice in health and safety management processes. We have implemented the Take 5 app across all operational activities. This app helps the staff team take 5 minutes to identify hazards and controls on site. We are continuing to work through our Work Safes OHS essentials plan, which has involved having a Work Safe consultant visit our workplace and create a list of priority actions and policy review.

Child Safety Statement

Board of Management

Bass Coast Landcare Network is committed to the safety of children and young people who participate in our programs. BCLN has developed a thorough and clear policy that both defines this commitment and the steps to be taken to ensure compliance.

BCLN will demonstrate its commitment to applying the eleven standards and three principles of Child Safety Standards and outlines by having;

- a clear written commitment by the BCLN Board of Management to child safety
- a communicated policy of zero tolerance for child abuse
- actively working to listen to and empower children
- having systems to protect children from abuse and takes allegations and concerns seriously
- actively promoting cultural safety for Aboriginal children and those of a culturally and / or linguistically diverse background or with a disability.
- actively ensuring all persons involved with BCLN have been trained in and subscribe to the BCLN child protection and safety policy and code of conduct.



Public Fund

Peter Mulherin - Chairperson for the Trustees of the BCLN Public Fund Trustees: Kelsey Tong, Jon Hauser, Peter Nuttman, Warren Thompson, Lew Potter, with Dave Bateman representing BCLN Landcare

This year has been action-packed, setting the stage for an even more transformative 2024. We said goodbye to Susan Pryde and appreciate her invaluable contributions. We're excited to welcome our new trustee, Kelsey Tong.

Sarah Thompson was appointed as a Fundraising Manager which was made possible through joint funding from Bass Coast Landcare Network and the Public Fund.

Financially, we had successes like the Hooded Plover dinner, raising over \$10,000, and the Mangrove appeal, garnering more than \$6,000. These accomplishments were collaborative efforts, thanks to Sarah, Dave, and the rest of the team. On the project front, we have five active initiatives, including our long-running Hooded Plover program and the innovative 'tree in a cart' collaboration with Wildlife Cruises and Peninsular Hot Springs.

Operational strides have been made with the appointment of a fundraising manager, and refining in-house processes for project approval and community engagement. Despite initial challenges in grant-seeking, individual and corporate outreach is promising, offering the potential for a strong ROI within 6 to 12 months. Our key pillars of Conservation, Climate, Collaboration, and Community are more aligned than ever.

Outreach has been a focal point, involving meetings and partnerships with potential donors, stakeholders, universities, businesses, and community groups. As we look ahead, the focus will be on exploring a variety of funding sources, including grants, bequests, and other avenues.

In conclusion, a big thank you to everyone who has been part of this journey. The time for community and corporate engagement is ripe, and we are open to conversations from those who wish to contribute to our mission. Our back-end systems and procedures have been solidified to support this growth, making us optimistic for the future.



Hooded Plover Conservation Dinner 2023



Hooded Plover Conservation Dinner 2023

BCLN Statistics 2022-2023

We have achieved:

- 43,515 Volunteer hours involved in Landcare activities
- 49 x 10-year Management Agreements established for ongoing management of revegetation and remnant protection projects
- 450,660 Indigenous plants established
- 161 hectares of land revegetated through Hiko plantings and Direct seeding
- 30,758 metres of fencing
- 27.3 hectares of Remnant vegetation protected
- 33.1 hectares of Remnant vegetation enhanced through weed control
- 336 kilometres of roadside weed control
- 2002 hectares of rabbit control works
- 11,725 hectares of fox control
- 3 sustainable agriculture demonstration sites

Events summary:

- 31 Community/Landcare Group Planting days
- 13 Farmer discussion group sessions
- 48 Nursery Group Volunteer sessions
- 56 River Garden Volunteer & Training sessions (including Schools)
- 47 School activity sessions (excluding River Garden Schools)
- 16 Field Day, Webinars, Training, Workshop, or Event sessions



Strong communities engaged and connected through Landcare

Group President Reports

Powlett Project – Paul Speirs

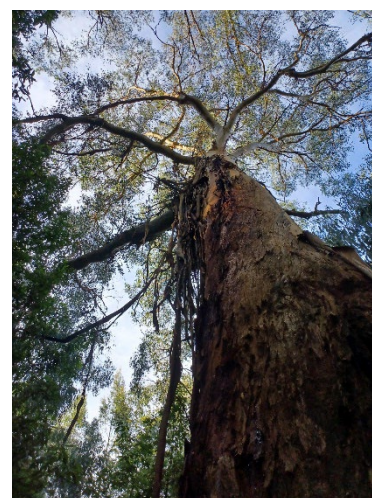
An article (authored by Martin Fuller) in the Westernport Landcare News of Autumn-Winter 1996, states “The Powlett Project will see a number of groups working together throughout the Powlett catchment, to tackle major land degradation problems. It is also hoped that the project will help initiate a number of local groups throughout the area, who will act locally to help rehabilitate the Powlett river and its tributaries.”

“At this stage the intention is to have the program run over three years, with the possibility of corporate sponsorship and widespread media coverage. Planning for the project will be done locally at a grass roots level.”

....And so it came to pass.

This year, thanks go to Joel, Jye, Luke, Dave and others, who carried the load of project management and implementation, allowing “Decrepit Landcare” to meet occasionally to review projects, pontificate and cogitate.

Small highlights of 2023 include: A good meeting, splendid sausage rolls and drop into Brendan Phylands 15 year-old revegetation of steep incised gullies: it’s a warm/temperate rainforest in there!



Planting of the year: A combined effort with the Threatened Species Group, planting *Melaleuca ericaefolia* into a rice paddy, like swamp.

Kugerungmome and all our partners, thank you.

Paul Speirs.

In the Powlett Project Landcare group area, 59,760 plants were planted, and 3,730 metres of stock proof fence was established.

Anderson Inlet – Ken Connor

Post Covid-19 saw Anderson Inlet launch into what Landcare does best, with 82,860 plants put in the ground this year. This involved 9 properties of which 4 were community plantings (77 volunteers involved). This can only be judged as a great success for the local community and the environment.

One of the projects in our area involved the planting of 52,000 plants around a newly fenced off substantial wetland on a rural property. The surrounds of this large water body (8.7ha) was previously grazed but now is excluded from stock and revegetated. An evening BBQ and walk around this wetland was enjoyed by our group. In addition to this, an AGM was held in November followed by a farm walk.

We have carried out a joint project with the South Gippsland Conservation Group (SGCG) cutting and pasting *Pittosporum* on private property along Screw Creek.

The future is looking bright with the following projects under consideration:

- Investigate future projects in partnership with SGCG (*pittosporum* eradication, tree planting days, mangrove planting, biolinks investigations).
- Ongoing planting of trees on farms with the aim of linking existing biolinks.



In the Anderson Inlet Landcare group area, 56,860 plants were planted, and 3,890 metres of stock proof fence was established.

Bass Valley – Lew Potter

As a community support service, Bass Valley Landcare Group has excelled on a number of fronts. Providing information and guidance to prospective and new landholders as well as ongoing assistance to existing residents. The dynamics of rural lifestyles and intensive agricultural activities creates interest in a variety of directions. Our group continues to swell in diverse directions.

Revegetation Projects The ongoing maintenance along the Bass River creates entertainment for adjoining landholders, and the damaged gullies and inhospitable hillsides provide environmental challenges for managers. As you drive up the Krowera Road and Glen Alvie Road you will observe the impressive fruits of the recent labour of energetic members.

Membership and Staff Support The 40 plants incentive to members continues to encourage us to keep our eye on the ball and revisit our projects. Our group numbers continue to grow as new people move into the area. When a property changes hands, our observant recruiting team visits, not to sell Tupperware or religious news, but to promote the preservation of our pristine environment. Without exception, every new owner has shown interest in coming on board in the future.

Future Direction An obvious consideration will be cultural significance in the present political climate, and promoting our Brand to existing landholders remains a work in progress task. I know it's difficult to impress a younger generation of agricultural operators to be active whilst their enterprises are their main objective, but our ageing members seem to be carrying the can at the moment. So hey, look around at the agroforestry events unfolding before our eyes, Jeanette Allen's plantation at Almurta will be a showpiece to admire. Dare I mention the over the hill timber business of the Hausers; not our patch but we'll claim them from 3 creeks. (Trading firewood whilst passionately growing cattle and lambs)

Thanks must go to our management team, our fearless leader Dave Bateman and his works and nursery teams for making our lives happier and our magnificent Bass valley a great place to live. Thanks to all for your efforts and involvement.

Lew Potter President **Ric Oldham** Vice-President **Mez Oldham** Secretary
Rob Parsons Treasurer **Helen Norman** Board representative

In the Bass Valley Landcare group area, 183,500 plants were planted, and 6,985 metres of stock proof fence was established.



Angela and Evonne at Angela's Bass Valley Planting day, June 2023



Janette Allen Jacinta Vansteklenberg and Gwen Wiggins at Archies Creek

French Island – Linda Bowden

The French Island Landcare Group has had a busy year focused on the building of our new nursery and community garden which is located near the French Island Community Hall and CFA shed. There will be an official opening soon. Thank you to Westernport Biosphere for providing us with a grant for this project. We would also like to make a very special mention to Lyn Hatton and the extended Hatton family for being the home of the French Island Landcare Nursery since 2003. There have been some tremendous projects undertaken from the nursery and the number of Landcare plantings across the island are a testament to Lyn's passion for Landcare and her vision of getting trees in the ground.

Thank you to Terry Martin who is our outgoing President and is staying on the committee as a member and our keen photographer.

The Feral Cat Eradication Project continues on French Island. Stakeholders are working together on eradication tools and funding to ensure the overall success of this project. Thank you to landholders who have given consent to have trapping contractors enter their property when feral cats were detected in an area. The support of private landholders is another crucial element in achieving eradication. Landcare have also recently received additional funding to help with rabbit control and woody weeds. This will continue to be rolled out across the island.

We also had a successful French Island Farm Walk with Chris Alenson on Sue Jenkins' property. It was a great day with more farm walks on the island to continue. We have again been successful with the grants from Melbourne Water.



The new Landcare Nursery and Community Garden

Linda Bowden	President
Glenys Ralph	Secretary
Cindy Davenport	Treasurer

In the French Island Landcare group area, 3,000 plants were planted. As we were not successful in our grant applications, no stock-proof fencing was established for 2023.

Kongwak Hills – Grace Couchman

The Kongwak Hills Landcare Group (KHLG) celebrated 10 years of operation with a community BBQ in November 2022. It was great to see old and new faces joining us to celebrate and step into the next 10 years of supporting our environment and biodiversity. Thank you to the South Gippsland Shire Council for a community grant to support this event.

We have continued to establish baseline data for our Citizen Science Project (funded by Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA)). This project provides 129 nesting boxes (produced by the Wonthaggi Men's shed) for bird and marsupial habitat across properties in Kongwak, Moyarra, Bena and in the Pioneer Reserve at Kongwak. Baseline data will enable us to monitor changes in box use. In addition, our waterway restoration of the Foster Creek catchment project has almost been completed across 3 properties in Bena with funding from the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority.



Tapping into Planet Ark's National Tree Day, KHLG hosted a vibrant and joyful regeneration of the Pioneer Reserve at Kongwak at the end of July 2023. It involved all the children from Kongwak Primary School on National Schools Tree Day and then the Kongwak Hills community on the following National Tree Day. Many stories were shared about the Reserve over the last 70 years. What a mammoth effort with the planting of 2,000 plants and their protection with tree guards so that our wallabies and plants can co-exist until plants are strong enough to fend for themselves. We were grateful to Planet Ark funding for trees and guards, a community grant from South Gippsland Shire Council, guards and stakes provided by South Gippsland Shire Council, and a generous donation of mesh guards from BCLN.



It has been a fun year with a few successful experiments in engaging our community with support from

a range of organisations. Special thanks to Katie Davis, our Treasurer, and Libby Lambert, our Board representative. We have continued to enjoy working closely with Joel Kilgour, our BCLN facilitator on grants and plantings.

In the Kongwak Hills Landcare group area, 35,880 plants were planted, and 4,785 metres of stock proof fence was established.

Korumburra – Melynda Dawson

What can we say, it has been a very big 12 months for us. Lots of plantings and a few great events over the last 12 months. July 2022 started off with a change of guard, with Luke Phillips taking over as facilitator from Geoff Trease. We thank Geoff for his time with us, his seed collection and plant ID knowledge will be missed, but we welcome Luke, and we are loving his enthusiasm.

Three plantings in July saw a community planting in conjunction with Friends of Richie Reserve, where the ground was very hard, Fiona and Matts planting where most of the plants were in before the rain, and about 30 people turned up for Vanessa Graleys planting getting 1,500 of the 2,000 plants in.

In August we had two plantings, Brian and Maritels, where we were treated to Maritels friends doing some traditional singing, and Karolien and Aarons, the steepest, muddiest site by far. September was the last planting at Jim Ahon's where we had Burra Foods workers come along and get some plants in the ground.



Fiona and Matt's planting

We held our AGM in November, having guest speaker Paul Haar speak about agroforestry, his love of trees and timber, held at The Middle Pub in Korumburra. We welcomed Rosemary Lyne in as Secretary and thanked Brian Griffin for the last 12 months. Jim Ahon and Melynda Dawson switched positions, and Don stayed on as Treasurer.

Paul and Liz gave a fabulous walk and talk on their property in February. Their green wedge planted a few years before looks fantastic and lush... always good to get inspired by successful plantings.



Tom May's fungi walk and talk

Almost 3 years in the making, we finally had Tom May a mycologist at the Royal Botanic Gardens and all-round fungi expert give a splendid presentation and then a walk at Outtrim Nature Reserve.

Then before we knew it, it was planting season 2023. We had two plantings in June, both really boggy, wet slippery due to the rain. Karolien and Aaron set the season off, well organised and a great lunch in the cold weather, next was Brian and Maritels planting, the site was prepped well, and we were sheltered from the wind.

I would like to thank all members of the committee; without them, we wouldn't have the great events and guest speakers. Thanks to Luke Phillips, and Bass Coast Landcare Network, for their ongoing support and help with grant applications.

In the Korumburra Landcare group area, 25,780 plants were planted, and 2,643 metres of stock proof fence was established.

Phillip Island – David Rooks

Last year's report discussed the animal predation issues we face on Phillip Island's flora. Wallabies, Possums, Swamp Hens, and Rabbits all impact our revegetation efforts and Cape Barren Geese reduce pasture levels. This year through our Victorian Landcare Grant we began a trial of seven temporary exclusion plots. The plots are wallaby and rabbit proof and will be monitored using photo points, survival rates and infrared cameras to help us understand the impact of animals on revegetation efforts. The results of the trial will measure the impact that various animals are having on our revegetation efforts and the general flora of Phillip Island.

The 2,000 gifted plants from the Bass Coast Landcare Network Nursery were again appreciated. The plants are well received by all, but particularly landholders who have 1 to 5 acres of land. These landholders tend to be too big to fit into our urban landholder programs and too small to attract our bigger grants. Thanks again for this gift that supports our group and its members.

Our Island Bush Care program is slowly growing. This program allows community members to reduce their carbon emissions by purchasing plants through our group. We invite them to join us on one of our planting sessions to experience the land and the pleasure of giving back to the environment.

Finally, I'm stepping down as Chair of the group after 7 years. I've thoroughly enjoyed the experience. As I've said before, I love being with Landcare people as they care for something more than just themselves. I will still be active as a committee member and group member.



One of our happy planters



Our island bush care sticker that anyone who participates receives



Island Bush Care planting day for Wildlife Coast Cruises

In the Phillip Island Landcare group area, 19,940 plants were planted, and 2,100 metres of stock proof fence was established.

Three Creeks – Ray Kirk

Our group had a good year, with membership growth and the involvement of new members, thanks to Anna's encouragement. Anna, Ann and Libby organised three social events; two at the Old Dalyston Church, where we invited members of other groups, were well attended and everyone had a good time. Our third was a bird spotting evening with Dallas at Jarryd's West Creek property. Few birds were spotted but we had a very enjoyable walk and supper.



Social at Old Dalyston Church.

According to Roger, we finished the year in a sound financial position. Much of our income was due to the fundraising efforts of our board rep, Nick, and we were able to place an order with the BCLN nursery for 3,000 plants for next season.

Kylie's output on our Facebook page was terrific with features on events, weeds and cuddly wombats. She also smartened us up with new caps, beanies, and vests.

On National Tree Day, our group of stalwarts met at Hawkins Road and planted 3,000 plants along 6 kilometers of the Bridge Creek biolink. A tiring but satisfying day.



Happy Landcarers

In total, our group volunteers planted 12,000 plants this season. 400 year 8 and 9 students from Bass Coast College also carried out two major plantings. There were an awful lot of onions, sausages, and burgers to cook, and our volunteers did a great job of catering at the Woolamai Racecourse.

As always, we are indebted to our volunteers, committee members and BCLN staff for their efforts. Thank you all.



Last planting of the 2022 season at Woolamai

In the Three Creeks Landcare group area, 62,940 plants were planted, and 6,625 metres of stock proof fence was established.

Wonthaggi Urban Landcare Group – Tina Mayling

Our core group has had a busy year getting on top of weeds and making space for some enrichment planting of less represented indigenous plants on Parks Victoria sites, and Bass Coast Shire sites in the Wonthaggi township. We have held 16 working bee days this reporting period.

At Tank Hill, special plants that we cherish such as the Elderberry Panax (*Polyscias sambucifolia*), will be able to expand where encroaching kikuyu and periwinkle has spread. We are seeing good results in enhancing vegetation through weed control across the patches that we volunteer in. Our aim is to plant cleared areas with appropriate EVC species to retard weed re-growth and achieve greater biodiversity.

We welcomed our new Facilitator, Luke Phillips and look forward to shaping some new ideas with him. We thank Robbie Gray for his support, knowledge and involvement.

We are slowly building a new membership. Two founding members have now passed away. Leo O'Brian has retired, at age 90 from our group! We thank all past members for their contributions and what they started here in Wonthaggi.

We held a field day and casual weed identification workshop at Tank Hill with Bass Coast Adult Learning (BCAL) students. This was a very successful day and enjoyed by all the students. They were very keen to put their skills to work and were amazed by the indigenous plants they were introduced to. A weed identification workshop also took place at the back of the BCAL site. We hope to build an ongoing connection with BCAL's horticulture courses and provide a very local context for their learning.



Gippsland Threatened Species Action Group – Dave Sutton

A busy 2022-23 year sees GTSAG continue to work across the region on advocacy, developing partnerships and on-ground projects to increase biodiversity extent and resilience across the landscape.

Outtrim Cemetery Nature Conservation Reserve

GTSAG secured a Victorian Landcare Grant of \$19,500 to undertake weed control and some infill planting to enhance the EVC Damp Heathland which contains an important stand of remnant Bog Gum (*Eucalyptus kitsoniana*) - 'Critically Endangered' in Victoria. The grant has seen our members, and the Bass Coast Landcare works crew begin to carry out weed control of *Pittosporum*, *Watsonia*, and Blackberries over a 2-year period. Planting and guarding of 500 plants, including Bog Gum, are planned in spring of 2023.



Outtrim Cemetery Conservation Reserve

Walk at Herb's Bushland

In May, GTSAG members were invited to a walk on Herb Wilde's bush block at Nerrena. The property of approximately 2502ha is largely untouched Shrubby Foothill Forest, Lowland Forest, and Swampy Woodland, including the 'Critically Endangered' Strzelecki Gum (*Eucalyptus strzeleckii*). A rare and highly significant biodiversity hotspot in South Gippsland.

Giant Gippsland Earthworm Project

The Giant Gippsland Earthworm project is well underway with a number of GGE colonies to be permanently protected. An invertebrate ecologist and botanical ecologist are identifying and locating GGE populations and undertaking assessments of current land use as well as establishing permanent vegetation monitoring sites. Risk mitigation outcomes will inform guidelines for future indigenous revegetation of GGE habitat.

Wonthaggi – Inverloch Biolink

GTSAG and BCLN are using wildlife cameras and acoustic monitoring equipment to search for threatened species on a member's property near Inverloch, which will be impacted by construction of the Bass Coast Shire's proposed inland cycling/walking track from Wonthaggi to Inverloch. The threatened Lace Monitor has now been sighted three times and we are hoping acoustic monitoring on the site will detect the Growling Grass Frog at the large wetland.

Bass Coast Biolinks

GTSAG is actively involved in developing biolinks and working to increase vegetation extent, resilience, and biodiversity to mitigate climate change impacts on the environment that is vital to us all. Watch this space for progress.

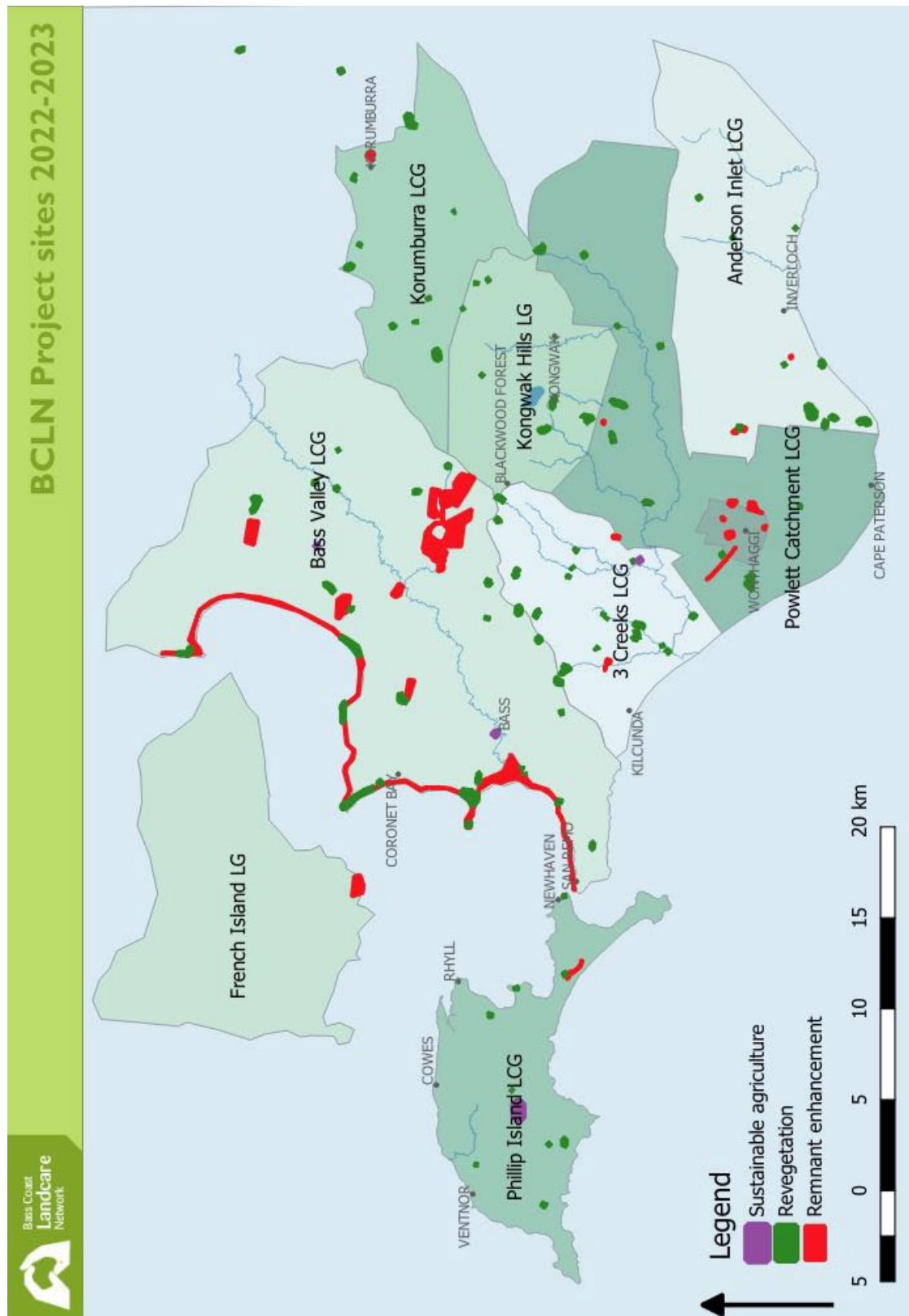


Lace Monitor sunning itself at a member's property in Inverloch

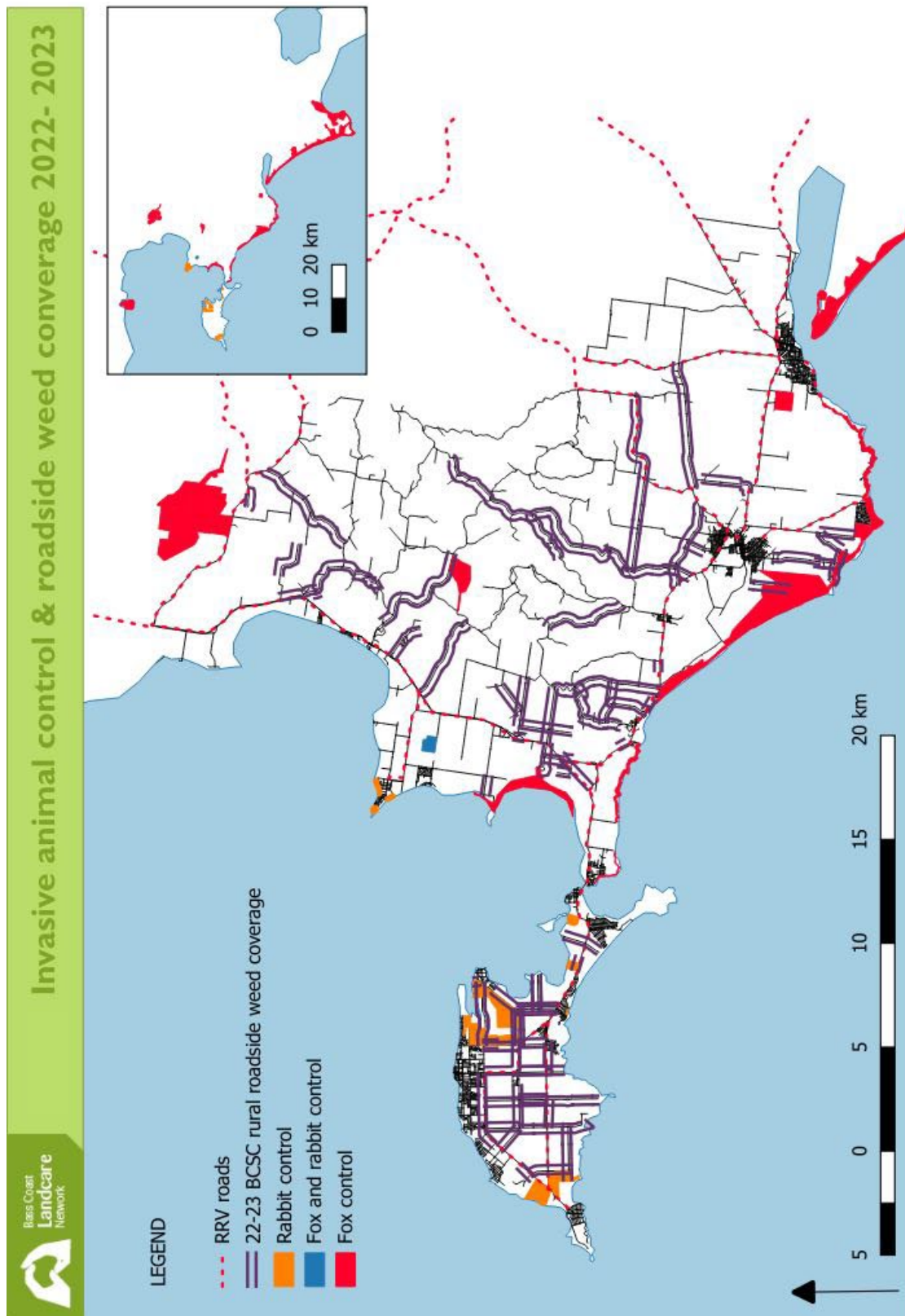
Grow and protect a connected biodiverse landscape

Maps

Revegetation, Remnant, and Horticulture Works



Invasive Animal Control and Roadside Spraying Projects



Portfolio / Program Reports

Natural Resource Management Portfolio

Jye Andersen - NRM Project Coordinator & Landcare Facilitator

Joel Kilgour, Luke Phillips – Project Officers

The Natural Resource Management (NRM) team coordinates and manages our revegetation, weed control and coastal restoration projects, as well as facilitating key partnerships with landholders, groups and managers.

This year, we are very proud to report by far our greatest year on record, of 450,660 plants in the ground, through a combination of seedling and direct seeding plantings. Of this total, 14,755 mangroves were planted over the 2022/23 summer at multiple sites.

We engaged more than 1,450 volunteers through school, community, and corporate planting days over 50 events, assisting in the establishment of 161 hectares of vegetation.

Our Biolinks project stood at the forefront of this program, allowing us to attract co-funding through a number of other avenues to deliver large-scale revegetation.

Key project funders included Bass Coast Shire Council, Melbourne Water, West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority, Parks Victoria, Greening Australia, as well as many corporate sponsorships.

A major highlight of the year was the work completed at the Plowright property, within the Western Port Woodlands region. The site has a large tract of remnant vegetation, and last year it saw the attention of combined funding from Melbourne Water, Biolinks and Greening Australia, allowing us to plant over 10,000 plants and complete over 6 hectares of direct seeding. The seeding has been incredibly successful, with at least 14 species observed after germination and monitoring, showing more than 10,000 plants per hectare actively growing.



The NRM team representing BCLN at the National Landcare Conference in Sydney in 2022



Volunteers cheerily planting 8,000 plants at the Richards property in Ryanston, a core planting of the Biolinks Project. Thanks to Hills Are Alive Group for sponsoring BCLN and co-hosting this great event!

Biolinks

The Bass Coast Shire's Biolinks program, once again paved the way for large-scale revegetation across the network. The 3-year tender was the biggest investment we have seen, helping us achieve such a large total. This was underpinned by an additional contribution to the project through Integrated Water Management funding through DEECA which boosted the size and number of sites that we could target for the year. The project allows BCLN to combine projects across public and private land, concentrating on creating linkages along waterways, roadsides and coastal areas and to link together patches of remnant vegetation in the region.

Reel Big Fish

Our Mangrove Restoration Program reached a significant milestone during the past summer as it entered its final year of funding, coinciding with the planting season, thanks to support from Melbourne Water as part of the Australian Government's Fisheries Habitat Restoration Program. BCLN contributed to the planting of 14,755 mangroves across four key locations: Scenic Estate on Phillip Island, Grantville Foreshore, Tenby Point, and Queensferry, with the aim to protect these coastal areas from erosion, king tides and storm surges, as well as well as providing shelter, breeding, and feeding grounds for young fish and invertebrates.

During this year's project there were two community planting days held. The first event took place at Tenby Point, drawing participation from local residents and individuals who travelled from as far as Melbourne to join us. Additionally, we hosted a memorable mangrove planting day



Our Works Crew planting mangrove seeds amongst a remnant stand in Tenby Point through our Reel Big Fish project

at Scenic Estate, collaborating with the enthusiastic Year 9 students from Bass Coast College. These engagement events were well received from the community who were thoroughly engaged in understanding the importance of mangroves in our ecosystems.

We will continue to monitor these sites diligently, allowing us to assess both the successes and setbacks of our plantings. This ongoing assessment will provide valuable insights into the optimal timing, methodologies, and seasonality for future endeavours, enhancing our knowledge and ensuring the continued growth and prosperity of our mangrove restoration efforts.

Kugerungmome (Powlett River) Partnerships Project

The Kugerungmome (Powlett River) Partnerships Project is a component of the Integrated Catchment Management (ICM) initiative led by the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority. Kugerungmome, which is the traditional Bunurong name for the Powlett River, holds significant importance in this project. We express our gratitude to Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation for their valuable contributions, which include artwork, stories, and cultural education during our planting events. Within the project, the NRM team is overseeing the Bridge and Woolshed Creek sub-project, which focuses on the restoration and fencing of

these two creeks as they traverse private properties in the Lower Powlett Catchment. In our second year, out of a total three-year project timeline, we successfully planted 23,000 plants, and we have plans to plant an additional 42,000 in the upcoming 2023 planting season. This initiative is dedicated to restoring wildlife connectivity along our waterways and enhancing the quality of water that flows into the Powlett River estuary and ultimately into Bass Strait. A highlight of this project is the engagement of Bass Coast College year 8 and 9 students in participating in tree planting days. Over 400 students attended and planted 15,000 plants across 2 days.

As part of the Kugerungmome Partnership Project, a second sub-project has been initiated, known as the Lower Powlett Catchment Rehabilitation. The primary objective of this sub-project is to employ mechanical methods to control the spread of willow infestation within the Lower Powlett Catchment. Following this control effort, the plan includes re-vegetation and the installation of fencing along these managed waterways. The eradication of willows from these watercourses will facilitate a more natural water flow and, in addition, the re-vegetation will help mitigate erosion and sedimentation rates. Simultaneously, it will create vital habitat for native wildlife, contributing to increased biodiversity within the landscape.

Greening Australia

In 2022, we successfully delivered a substantial project, supported by funding from Greening Australia, during which we planted more than 136,000 plants across 13 properties. Our focus was on the Powlett catchment region, with sites in ranging between Wonthaggi and Korumburra.

Our Works Crew was responsible for critical tasks such as weed control, spot spraying, planting, and guarding as part of the project.

One of the standout accomplishments of the year was the planting of 26,000 plants at Marj Scott's wetland site, situated between Wonthaggi and Inverloch. This undertaking holds significance as it not only creates a habitat for native fish, eels, and birds but also contributes significantly to the establishment of a crucial biolink within the area.



Post Willow control work at Kilcoy meats in Lance Creek



Planting at Charles Davidson's in Kilcunda

Natural Resource Management Outputs

Overall on-ground outputs

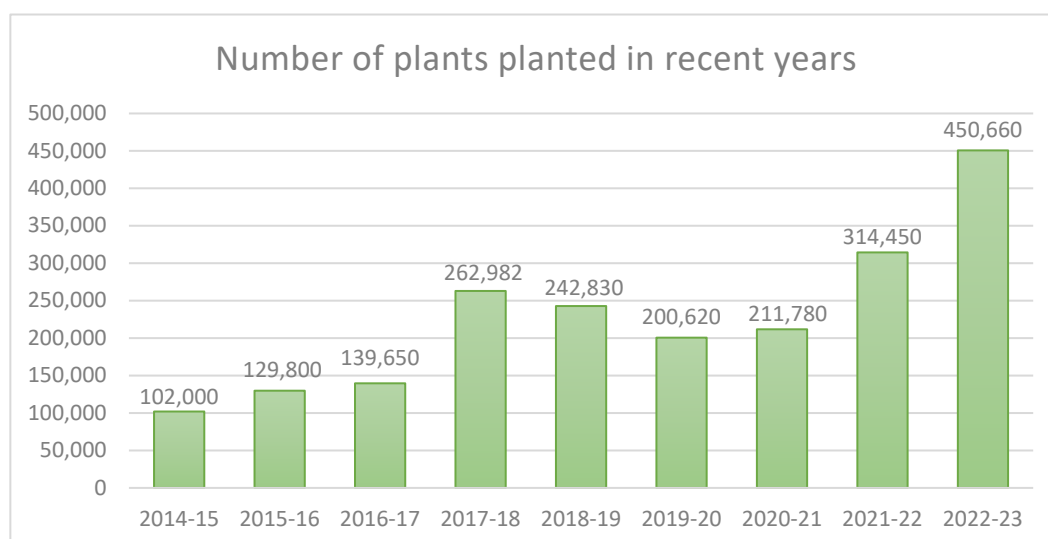
- 30,758 metres of fencing
- 451,660 indigenous plants in the ground

Outputs by each BCLN Landcare Group

- In the Three Creeks Landcare group area, 62,940 plants were planted, and 6,625 metres of stock proof fence was established.
- In the Korumburra Landcare group area, 25,780 plants were planted, and 2,643 metres of stock proof fence was established.
- In the Powlett Project Landcare group area, 59,760 plants were planted, and 3,730 metres of stock proof fence was established.
- In the Kongwak Hills Landcare group area, 35,880 plants were planted, and 4,785 metres of stock proof fence was established.
- In the Phillip Island Landcare group area, 19,940 plants were planted, and 2,100 metres of stock proof fence was established.
- In the Bass Valley Landcare group area, 183,500 plants were planted, and 6,985 metres of stock proof fence was established.
- In the French Island Landcare group area, 3000 plants were planted.
- In the Anderson Inlet Landcare group area, 56,860 plants were planted, and 3,890 metres of stock proof fence was established.
- Gippsland Threatened Species Action Group was formed.

Natural Resource Management Outcomes

- 161.3 Ha of land revegetated through Hiko plantings and direct seeding.
- 27.3 Ha of Remnant vegetation protected.
- EVCs re-established include Damp Forest, Wet Forest, Lowland Forest, Swamp Scrub, Damp Sands Herb-Rich Woodland, Swampy Riparian Woodland, Mangrove Shrubland, Grassy Woodland, Heathy Woodland, Riparian Forest, Gully Woodland, Damp Heathy Woodland.
- 49x 10-year Management Agreements established for ongoing management of revegetation and remnant protection projects.



Ecosystems Services Portfolio

Robbie Gray - Ecosystem Services Manager

The Works Crew continues to grow to meet demand, and Mark Rowe has successfully juggled staff availability, training, and yet again a larger number of jobs. The Works Crew finished the financial year strongly, getting through a lot of woody weeding and planting heading into winter. Bailey Anderson joined Bill Barry as another Team Leader, allowing Mark more time to manage a very full and complex schedule.

The Nursery has seen continual growth, amazingly increasing numbers grown by 50% year on year for the last several years. Stevie has expertly overseen the nursery for the last couple of years, expanding the diversity of species grown as well as the nursery hardening off areas to accommodate increasing orders. Dani has again coordinated volunteer effort well, and in an ever-friendly fashion, and the volunteers have been invaluable to operations. Over 120,000 seedlings were grown, including the 20,000 seedlings BCLN gifts to its groups.

The Invasive Species team has had another big year working with partners to successfully consolidate, link and expand fox control. Aaron was busy coordinating programs from the eastern shores of Western Port all the way through to Waratah Bay, focusing on protecting threatened species such as the Southern Brown Bandicoot and Hooded Plover. A Birdlife Australia study on Hooded Plover breeding success at the mouth of the Powlett River showed a doubling in fledglings from the previous year. Jack undertook a similarly successful role with rabbit control on Phillip Island, with the community subscribing to the rabbit control subsidy in large numbers.

The Works Crew and Invasive Species cost centres earned a combined \$182,000 above their fee for service budgeted income, a 7% increase on last year. The entire Ecosystem Services portfolio transferred a little under \$300,000 to BCLN Administration and Operational cost centres for staff support services.



Invasive Species Program

Aaron Stephens – Invasive Species Coordinator

Jack Harriss – Invasive Species Officer

Justin Smith – Invasive Species team member

Parks Victoria

Southern Brown Bandicoot Program

BCLN worked alongside Parks Victoria for a third year of the Southern Brown Bandicoot Protection Program in Wonthaggi Heathlands and Adams Creek Nature Conservation Reserve (ACNCR). The program will continue into its fourth and final year in 2023-24. Fox control in both these locations has yielded some fantastic results for the endangered small mammal. In total, 20 foxes were removed from the Wonthaggi Heathlands and windfarm. BCLN conducted two trapping pulses within ACNCR which yielded three trapped foxes. Through consultation with Parks Victoria, it was decided that we would conduct a large-scale baiting program around the perimeter of ACNCR. The baiting program utilised the land owned by the three surrounding quarries. After extensive liaising with quarry officials and overcoming logistical issues, we implemented a successful baiting program in which 8 bait takes were attributed to foxes. Recent surveys in ACNCR has shown significant drops in fox density and many SBB sightings.



Aerial view of the bait stations at Lang Lang as part of the Southern Brown Bandicoot Program

Westernport Protection Program

The Westernport Fox Control Program enjoyed a very successful 2022-2023 financial year. This program combats the devastating effects of predation from the European Red Fox (*Vulpes vulpes*) on the vast array of threatened native and migratory shorebirds. Bass Coast Landcare Network acted as the contractor responsible for implementing fox control within Westernport Intertidal Coastal Reserve, Reef Island and Bass River Mouth Nature Conservation Reserve.

Over the duration of the 2022/23 financial year, BCLN recorded 180 bait takes attributed to foxes as part of the Westernport Fox Control Program. The native fauna that inhabits the intertidal zone of Westernport Bay and the Bass floodplain will benefit enormously from the reduction in the local fox population. Westernport Bay provides critical habitat to many species of migratory birds, and their roosting sites will be further protected from predation as a result.



A sand pad with clear fox prints at the bait station. This bait was taken and attributed to a fox take.

Phillip Island Nature Parks

Phillip Island Nature Parks (PINP) engaged Bass Coast Landcare Network for an eighth year to conduct rabbit control work in priority areas. The priority areas identified by PINP were Fisher's Wetland and Sunderland Bay. PINP previously installed a rabbit-proof fence around the Sunderland Bay Biodiversity Area to prevent further browsing by European Rabbits on endangered flora species endemic to the area. BCLN have conducted regular rabbit monitoring within both Sunderland Bay Biodiversity Area and Fisher's Wetland. Due to limitations in the control methods available to us, pindone baiting under exclusion cages has been employed within Sunderland Bay. Fumigation and spotlight shooting have been employed at Fisher's Wetland. BCLN have witnessed a reduction in rabbit abundance within Sunderland Bay, as well as no obvious signs of warrens or breeding activity within the rabbit exclusion zone.

Hooded Plover Protection Program

The Hooded Plover Protection Program (HPPP) was a program of high importance for the Invasive Species Team in 2022-2023. A federal government grant secured by South Gippsland Landcare Network enabled BCLN to implement fox control work from San Remo to Waratah Bay, encompassing a total area of 8,386ha. The HPPP consisted of two soft-jaw trapping pulses spanning from San Remo to Inverloch, as well as four baiting pulses covering areas of both national park and private land from Venus Bay to Walkerville. The program worked in conjunction with other BCLN grants and generated fantastic results for the endangered Hooded Plover. As well as an intensive predator-control program, the grant also fostered a significant community engagement leg. Multiple stakeholders like BirdLife Australia, South Gippsland Landcare Network, Friends of the Hooded Plover and Bass Coast Shire Council were invested in the outcome of the program. In total, baiting pulses through the HPPP saw 217 bait takes attributed to foxes, and we removed 13 foxes through the two soft-jaw trapping pulses. The two techniques both have their advantages, and it was fantastic to be part of a program that was able to utilise both. The great news is that Hooded Plover fledgling rate in Bass Coast Shire increased 100% from the previous year.



Aerial view of the vast area covered by the Hooded Plover Protection Program. Note that blue dots indicate the locations of soft-jaw traps and yellow shows 1080 bait stations.

Melbourne Water

As part of Melbourne Water's Ramsar Protection Program BCLN'S Invasive Species Team were contracted to conduct predator control work at Quail Island and Reef Island. Mapping of Reef Island indicates that the island is absent of rabbit warrens. Fox control in this area is complemented by the Westernport Protection Program being completed through Parks Victoria. Quail Island Nature Conservation Reserve is an intertidal island southwest of Tooradin. It comprises of a variety of critical roosting sites for endangered migratory shorebirds. Quail Island creates a few logistical challenges to predator control because of the variability in the ephemeral nature of the island. BCLN conducted one baiting pulse on the island which generated 11 bait takes attributed to foxes. We also deployed six wildlife cameras on the island to help establish a greater idea of densities of foxes and the presence of other pest species. Fox populations appear to be in low densities on the island. Pest control works will continue in 2023-24 to protect shorebird and wader birds, as well as working to eliminate deer species on the island.



A fox can be clearly seen retrieving a bait from a buried 1080 bait station on Quail Island

Ross Trust – Teaming Up to Tackle Rabbits

The Teaming Up to Tackle Rabbits program enjoyed a productive second year. The first year of the program consisted largely of establishing the program, developing a clear direction, and mapping key biodiversity areas. The second year aimed at building upon the work done in the first year of the program. Further mapping was undertaken, as well networking and engaging with landholders with properties adjoining key biodiversity hot spots. BCLN organised rabbit warren ripping for the first time ever. Ripping warrens on five different properties required significant organisation but was worth every minute. It is laborious in nature but extremely effective reducing rabbit populations. Five landholders in Ventnor and Rhyll allowed us to rip a plethora of warrens on their properties. Results have been extremely positive, with no instances of ripped warrens being re-opened. The subsidy program has continued to gather momentum over the duration of the grant. BCLN have assisted 57 Phillip Island residents in their efforts to remove rabbits from their properties.



Aerial of warrens destroyed or modified during the 'Teaming Up to Tackle Rabbits' program. Note the number of warrens excavated, indicated by purple dots

Westernport Water

BCLN further developed a fantastic professional relationship with Westernport Water. The primary focus of works for Westernport Water were at Candowie Reservoir and King Rd Treatment Plant due to their importance as wading bird sites. Both sites had two 10 day soft-jaw trapping pulses. Candowie Reservoir produced a record pulse for us, in which 12 foxes were trapped. This result was monumental for both us and Westernport Water. King Road's first pulse resulted in 7 trapped foxes which is another fantastic outcome. King Road is another important site for wader birds, as well as reptiles and amphibians. To trap 19 foxes over four pulses was a very positive result and is one that we look forward to building upon in 2023-24.

West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority

WGCMA contract BCLN's Invasive Species Team through the 'Our Catchment, Our Community' (OCOC) program. The program entered its second year from 2022-23. The fox control component centres around the Mouth of Powlett River and is aimed at protecting endangered shorebirds from fox predation. BCLN is required to conduct eight soft-jaw trapping pulses annually, encompassing both the eastern and western sides of the river mouth, extending from Kilcunda cemetery to Williamson's Beach. The second year of the program doubled our total foxes trapped from 6 in year 1, to 12 in year 2. However, the major achievement from the 2022-23 financial year was the equal record number of Hooded Plover fledglings recorded by BirdLife Australia and FoHP. Data recorded by BirdLife Australia states that Hooded Plovers on the Bass Coast produced 22 fledged chicks. This figure is double the amount from the 2021-22 year and is an equal record for the region. The data recorded for Hooded Plover pairs who nest adjacent to the Powlett river mouth shows that chick survival rate improved by 30% this year. These results are extremely exciting, and further demonstrate the success that can be achieved by interagency collaboration and targeted pest animal control.



BCLN's Aaron Stephens pictured with Steve Johnson and enforcement officers from the Victorian Fisheries Authority

Albert Ruttle Estate

Bass Coast Landcare Network was once again contracted by the residents of Albert Ruttle Estate to conduct Red Fox predator control within the estate. As a haven for native wildlife, it is important to protect the habitat from the devastating impacts of fox predation and the spread of disease. The control was conducted using soft-jaw traps and ran from 21/06/23 – 28/06/23. 16 landholders signed on to partake in the program which was a fantastic amount. This figure allowed us great coverage of the estate, and also enabled us to utilise the extensive boundaries with farm paddocks. We observed lower levels of fox activity than expected. The timing of this pulse was centred around the fox breeding season between June/July. It is a critical period in their life cycle, and early intervention in this period prevents increases to the local fox population. This pulse yielded three trapped foxes which was a fantastic result. Of the three foxes trapped, two were vixens at reproductive capacity weighing 5.3kg and 4.5kg respectively. The third fox was a dominant male fox weighing 8.9kg. Trapping a fox of this weight is a record for BCLN and promises to relieve some predation and fox population pressure in the Estate.

Team Movement

The Invasive Species Team bid farewell to Andrew Smith this year. Andrew worked for BCLN for 5 years, of which the last three were spent building up the capacity and skills in the Invasive Species Team. Andrew was an invaluable member of the team and champion fox trapper, and we thank him for his hard work and commitment to protecting the native wildlife that inhabit the Bass Coast. Justin Smith has further entrenched himself as an integral team member of the Invasive Species Team. Justin conducts a significant portion of the on-ground pest control works, and he is an asset to our team. Being a small team, we require assistance from Works Crew team members from time to time. Special mentions to Corey Green, Fraser West and Logan Tilbury for their assistance.

Works Crew

Mark Rowe - Works Crew Coordinator

Bailey Andersen and Bill Barry - Works Crew Leading hands

Works Crew Members – Up to 15 staff at a time

The 2022/2023 financial year has been a year of new beginnings and growth.

Events and Plantings

We began the 2022/2023 financial year in the middle of the planting season. This year the Greening Australia project was the major funding source of the tree planting that we undertook this season. The good thing about the Greening Australia project is the variety of locations.

Chris Nieven's project on the Bass-facing hills above the Woolamai racetrack is a perfect example of this diversity. We planted 10,000 native indigenous plants in amongst his remnant vegetation. There was an abundance of wallabies at the site, so we installed extra robust wallaby-proof guards. The guards are made of heavy gauge wire at 900mm high with 2 x 1.2m long hardwood stakes for 5,000 of the more vulnerable species.

Access was a major obstacle due to a narrow steep unmaked track. We arranged to bring all the guarding supplies into the site going the long way around through Charles Peake's neighbouring property and cutting the boundary fence. Which ended up being a fantastic decision. The team worked well together on this challenging site, given many of them were new to guarding.

Marj Scott's wetlands in between Wonthaggi and Inverloch is another example of the diversity. This project should have been completed last season but due to the topography of the site and a few things out of BCLN's control it wasn't able to be done in time. So as a result, we agreed to carry the 26,000 plants through the Summer on behalf of Greening Australia.



Chris Nieven's Greening Australia site



Marj Scott's wetland planting

Partnerships

Our biggest partnership this season was with Parks Victoria on French Island, where we were contracted to start eradicating the pittosporums in the Blue Gum Reserve. We utilised Neil LeServe's kindness, catching a ride in his boat to and from Corinella to French Island every day. Neil is French Island's postman. The Crew really embraced the opportunity to work on French Island.



Bill and Fraser enjoying one of the perks of working on French Island for Parks Vic

West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority engaged us to undertake heavy chainsaw work removing willows from the Lance Creek on Tabro Meat's property. The Crew worked exceptionally well with Terry Pennycuick and his excavator, clearing the whole section of at least 600m in 3 days which was a phenomenal effort.



Santo in action removing Willows on Lance Creek



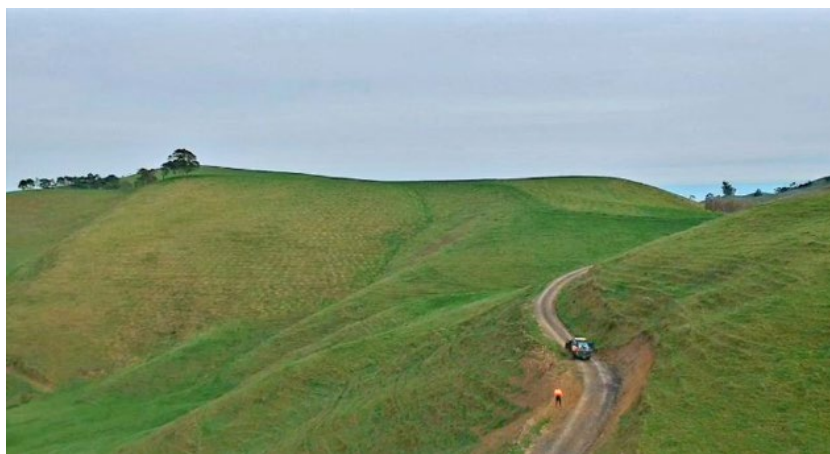
Lance Creek after willow removal



Rob & Karen Rodgers property willow removal Foster creek

They then moved onto Rob and Karen Rodgers' property on Sheepways Rd in Krowera and cleared more willows from Foster Creek within one day, again a fantastic job. This job was a continuation of willow removal work we did 2 years ago on the neighbouring property downstream.

GreenFleet also have given us the opportunity to work with them this season, with a variety of tasks and locations. From constructing 1,400m of rabbit proof fence at a property at Tarwin Lower, to hand weeding ragwort at Fish Creek, to spraying a total of 120,000 spots across two of their carbon revegetation sites at Boolarra South and Strzelecki. We were also lucky enough to plant 13,000 plus indigenous hiko tubes on their Tarwin site. I am currently nursing and encouraging this partnership.



GreenFleet Bromfields site Strzelecki

The Regional Roads Victoria project is focusing on strategic sections of VicRoads roadsides in our shire. We have done one pass in the areas in question for mapped sprayable weeds. Paul Speirs will be happy to know that we have finally targeted the Spanish Heath in between Densley's road and Powlett road. We have also started doing the woody weeding component for these sections.

South Gippsland Landcare Network has engaged us to do woody weeding work along the Great Southern Rail trail from Koonwarra to Meeniyang, with funding from Regional Roads Victoria. We frill'n'filled all the woody weeds working as a team and using Fulcrum to map our progress. Ritchie's Reserve in Korumburra also benefited from the same project where we continued the same work.



Green Fleet Tarwin Lower Rabbit Proof fence

We teamed up with Phillip Island Nature Parks on a project that has been a long time in the making on the Sunderland Bay foreshore. They created a rabbit exclusion area to demonstrate the impacts rabbits are having on the native herbs and lower storey plants. They trailed small areas using chicken wire and reinforcement beforehand to demonstrate the project's potential. We were engaged to remove a thin strip of vegetation to be able to erect the fence.

Through good networking and positive relationships with Holcim, we have been engaged to do weed control work at an extra Holcim-owned quarry site at Tynong. This adds to Grantville's 2 sites, Leongatha, and Jeeralang.

Moving with the Times

With the demand and size of the workload we have welcomed several new Crew members this financial year who have all brought varied knowledge and experience to our organisation.

Our two new trainees, Eli Richards and Billie Sammonds are proving to be more than component in all aspects of the Works Crew. They both have a very bright future in the environmental field.

James Wilkinson has also joined us from Indigenous Design where he previously worked for the past 9 years. He has a wealth of knowledge and experience with some well-established and ingrained leadership skills.

Grace Mattingley has also joined us from Narkbundah Nursery's works crew, where she completed an apprenticeship doing Certificate 3 in Horticulture gaining plenty of on-ground experience and knowledge. She also had a big part in the running of their nursery.



Clockwise from top left: Eli Richards, Billie Sammonds, James Wilkinson, and Grace Mattingley

Training

The staff attended a Giant Gippsland Earthworm field day organized by Joel Geoghegan at Dave Sutton's property in Arawata to explain and demonstrate the different areas earthworms live and how to look out for telltale signs of areas earthworms may live. We all completed our first aid and CPR training. As the new staff came on board, they were all provided training and certificates in Chemical Users Permit and Safe Operating and Maintenance of Chainsaws. From the training we have completed, our skills are more refined and further developed. As a result, we were able to have up to 15 active people working on the Works Crew on a regular basis.

Bass Landcare Indigenous Nursery Group

Stevie Wynen - Nursery Manager

Dani Mathysen-Carr - Nursery Assistant

It's been another productive year for the BCLN nursery. After finishing our Bird Box project which we ran last winter, we started preparing for the coming propagation season. Amongst organizing all the soil, seed, and fertilizer to grow the plants, we also converted our shade house into another hot house and set up another hardening off area. This conversion and expansion allowed us to increase our growing capacity to 120,000 plants per season (another 50% increase in production from last season). With all three hot houses we can germinate approximately 40,000 seedlings at once. The hot house kit was bought and delivered from Hortitech, and the Works Crew gave us a hand to put the plastic skin on under the shade mesh.

The expansion of the hardening off area was also critical to allow us to house the increased volume of stock. To expand this area Mark, Logan and Santo from the Works Crew removed some large dead eucalyptus trees and mulched them with a hired chipper. The area was then prepared and levelled, and stone was spread by Mat Manks from MRM Earthworks. Hyline Chain Mesh Fencing then came and extended the fencing to enclose the new area. The Nursery team laid weed mat over the area and installed the shade mesh on the fences to give some wind protection, and Mark Rowe helped install the new irrigation to the area.

While all the expansions were going on, the Nursery team and the dedicated volunteers were busily pumping the little seedlings through the hothouses, shovelling soil into the hiko trays, and ensuring all three hot houses were full, seeding, pricking out, weeding, and caring for each of the 120,000 seedlings. To achieve this large number of plants we had to ensure we were on schedule and time germinations, having 3 rotations of seedlings through each of the hot houses during the three-month germination window.



3rd Hothouse now set up and full of soil, ready to be seeded



Stone laid for the nursery expansion



Expansion ready for plants, weed matting and irrigation

We have also been doing some research and are implementing a new sterilisation method for the reused Hiko trays as well as to wash down the nursery areas. This came about after we had lots of deliveries from external nurseries which brought in large amounts of liverwort and other pesky weeds. To combat this invasion of pests we are going to start using a product called Phytoclean to sterilise the hiko trays before reusing them and will clean down the hardening-off areas and hothouses in between seasons. This product is designed to protect against phytophthora and other spore-born nursery weeds such as liverwort and moss.

As the propagation season slowed, Danielle organised a few excursions for the volunteer group including a trip to the Cranbourne Royal Botanical Gardens where we were lucky enough to have a chat with Clarence Slockee from Gardening Australia. We also got the opportunity to see the amazing facilities they have as we received a tour of their onsite nursery from Mandy Thomson (Team Leader of the Nursery).



Volunteers weeding trays of *lomandra longifolia*



Nursery volunteers seeding



Nursery volunteers at Cranbourne Royal Botanical Gardens getting a selfie with Clarence Slockee from Gardening Australia

Lead an Innovative Sustainable Agricultural Community

Sustainable Agriculture Portfolio

Joel Geoghegan – Team leader, Sustainable Agriculture

Building on the success of the 2021/22 program, the Sustainable Agriculture program again went from strength to strength. It was a year that continued the momentum of the 'Smart Farming in Westernport' Project, in particular the farmer discussion group program. The Australian Government funded 'Farmers Digging Deeper' project was also rolled out. Other projects included the Enhanced Knowledge and Protection of the Giant Gippsland Earthworm project, Natural Capital Accounting on Bass Coast Farms project and the Bass Coast Landscape Rehydration Demonstration- Investigation and concept development project.

Project: Smart Farming in Westernport - National Landcare Program 2

2022/23 marked the final year of the 5-year Smart Farming in Westernport project funded through the National Landcare Program 2. This project is a continuation of the previous Demonstrating Sustainable Agriculture project. The project is operating across the entire Westernport Catchment and is a partnership between the Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority, Westernport Catchments Landcare Network, South Gippsland Landcare Network, Mornington Peninsula Shire, Melbourne Water and Agriculture Victoria.

In 2022/23 the project undertook the following activities:

- Monitoring at one ongoing soil carbon demonstration site at Bimbadeen on Phillip Island.
- Monitoring at one ongoing soil carbon demonstration site at Kernot.
- One 'Restoring Landscape Function with the Mulloon Institute' field day attended by 37 people in November 2022.
- One 'Integrating remote sensing technology into farm planning' field day attended by 15 people in May 2023.
- 13 discussion group events attended by 240 people.



In the paddock at the property of Brad and Dani Carr, June 2023 'Benefits of Biodiversity on Farms' Field Day.

The project also produced the following final resources:

- Carbon on Farms- Bimbadeen <https://vimeo.com/836084009>
- Improving pasture productivity <https://vimeo.com/836086045>

Discussion Groups

In 2021/22 the Smart Farming in Westernport Project hosted 13 Discussion group events with a combined attendance of 240 people. This included 6 Kongwak Ellipak Discussion Group events and 7 Regenerative agriculture discussion group events.

Thank you to Faye Tughton for coordinating the Kongwak Ellipak discussion group events. Also, a big thank to all our on farm hosts and our guest speakers for the 2021/22 year.

Future priorities for all these groups include:

- Securing longer term funding to continue the very popular farmer discussion group program.
- Planning to develop long term group priorities.
- Encourage increased participation in the discussion groups.
- Further integrate regenerative agriculture into our programs in 2023/24 and beyond.



In the paddock on Sue Jenkins' property, French Island. 'Understanding Soils Test Results and Integrating Regenerative Agriculture Management Practices On-Farm'. Farm Walk June 2023.

Project: Farmers Digging Deeper – Increasing Soil Knowledge by Testing, Training, Talking and Ground Truthing Regenerative Soil and Groundcover Benefits in High Rainfall Zones.

This project commenced in July 2022. The project is funded by the Federal Government under the Smart Farms Small Grants program. The Smart Farms Small Grants has 2 program outcomes that are to be achieved through the activities funded:

- Outcome 1 – Increased adoption of best practice sustainable agriculture.
- Outcome 2 – Increase the capacity of land managers to adopt best practice sustainable agriculture.

Project outputs include:

- Facilitate the design and monitoring on one 'on farm' demonstration site.
- Host one field day.
- Host one, 2-day, soils workshop program.
- Coordinate side by side comparative soil testing at 4 Bass Coast properties.



Soil Carbon testing at the Kongwak property of Lee Storti, October 2022.

- Coordinate soil carbon testing at 5 Bass Coast properties. These sites were previously benchmarked as part of the Scarp project about 15 years ago.

Project progress to date includes:

- One demonstration site set up and monitoring is ongoing.
- Hosted 2-day soils workshop program with consultant, Declan McDonald from Regen Soils in May 2023. The workshop was attended by 16 people on both days.
- Side by side comparative soil testing completed.
- Soil carbon testing undertaken at 5 Bass Coast Properties.



Soil Carbon core from the Woodleigh property of Lew Potter, March 2023.

Enhanced Knowledge and Protection of the Giant Gippsland Earthworm project

Funded through to September 2023 this project commenced implementation in July 2022.

Project outputs include:

- Location and mapping of GGE populations on 9 properties.
- Botanical survey (quadrating and monitoring of all 9 properties)
- Produce planting guidelines and EVC species lists for revegetation in GGE habitat.
- Permanently protect in perpetuity GGE habitat on two private properties with Trust for Nature Conservation Covenants.
- Establish nine binding, non-perpetual landholder agreements for site access and on-ground works.
- Fence repairs and new fencing to exclude livestock.
- Weed control of GGE habitat sites.
- Produce Factsheets on revised EVCs and guidelines for GGE habitat to be published on electronic platforms.
- Collation and production of media materials and distribution through social media and websites.
- Compile two case studies on separate sites on how to locate GGE sites and manage revegetation on the site based on expert advice utilising drone technology and social media.

- Training of Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation Natural Resources Management Crew in GGE habitat and revised planting guidelines.
- Field day to improve land managers knowledge and capabilities. approval of project
- Revegetation works at 5 sites in accordance with preliminary findings and recommendations from the GGE site assessment and planting guidelines.

Originally scheduled to finish in March 2023 this project was extended to end September 2023 with funder approval. On June 30th 2023 all project outputs were in progress with the majority of the project scheduled for completion on 30th September 2023, outside of this annual reporting period. For further information on this project go to

www.giantearthworm.org.au/2022-2023-project-profile.htm

The link below will take you to a time lapse video for one of the project sites.
<https://vimeo.com/790305277>

Natural Capital Accounting on Bass Coast Farms

Funded through Landcare Australia Limited, this project was completed on March 31st 2023. The projects aim was to demonstrate how Level 3 natural capital accounting can be used to measure the condition of native vegetation over time and inform management practices to improve its condition for eco-credentials. A secondary aim is to provide evaluation feedback on the process to ensure a continued process of improvement.

Specifically, the project worked with 3 Bass Coast farming enterprises to:

- Develop reference benchmarking data (native vegetation and soils) for their property
- Perform field assessments to collect field data following the Landcare Level 3 methods for soils and native vegetation.
- Register property accounts and have these verified by Accounting for Nature, including information statements with assumptions made and noteworthy issues.
- Develop 3 case studies and an associated multimedia video resource to showcase key, key learnings and to promote the benefits to the broader Southern Gippsland farming sector.
- Support a field day/workshop to showcase the 3 case study accounts, the results /results and what management practices they will implement over time to continually improve their property.
- Investigate the opportunity to access further funding to support future programs and on ground projects within Bass Coast and Southern Gippsland.



In the paddock at the Natural Capital Accounting results field day, March 2023.

Karen Thomas from Melbourne Water also secured similar finds to with another 3 Bass Coast Farms. This equates to 6 case study farms all up.

At completion, the project achieved the following outputs:

- 6 Bass Coast farms successfully registered. Refer to following website. <https://www.accountingfornature.org/certified-accounts>
- One field day successfully hosted on March 6th and attended by 15 people.
- Case studies successfully completed.
- Staff accreditation training undertaken.

For access to videos produced as part of this project click on the following link:
<https://www.basscoastlandcare.org.au/naturalcapitalaccounting.html>

Bass Coast Landscape Rehydration Demonstration - Investigation and concept development.

Funded through Melbourne Waters Liveable Communities Liveable Waterways program, this project was completed on 31st March 2023. Funded as a preliminary pilot trail this project aimed to develop preliminary plans for landscape function restoration works at a Case Study farm in Woodleigh. The project produced the following outputs:

- Preliminary concept development report for Case Study farm.
- Multimedia case study video story. Refer link
- One field day in November 2022 attended by 37 people. This field day was co funded through the Smart farming in Westernport project.



*Field Day participants at the Kernot Hall.
 'Restoring Landscape Function with the
 Mulloon Institute' field day - November 2022*

Note that all partners involved in the project are in continuing discussion regarding funding for the next stage of this project. For further information on this project click on the following link:
<https://www.basscoastlandcare.org.au/landscape-restoration.html>



*Aerial drone
 photo of
 participants on
 the farm walk.*

*'Restoring
 Landscape
 Function with
 the Mulloon
 Institute' field
 day- November
 2022.*

Deliver leading edge Experiences, Education and Training

Education, Training and Communications Portfolio

Lisa Wangman - Education, Training and Communications Manager

Administration and Communications Assistant - Anna Brayley

Project Support Officer - Luke Phillips

With the first 'normal' year in a while, our team were finally able to get back into taking a full range of activities, events, training, and school groups at the River garden and across Bass Coast this year.

Training Programs and Events

Fee for service Training Days & programs

Lisa led a Propagation Workshop at the Nursery in December, ably assisted by Stevie and Dani for the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority Landcare training program, where participants learnt the basics in a very hands-on session. Lisa also took a series of 4 Plant and Weed Identification sessions for the Phillip Island Landcare Group Home Garden Visit Volunteers, with some fantastic walks through different coastal, woodland and scrub vegetation. Lisa also assisted to design a survey program to help increase research into the issue of Dieback across Phillip Island and Bass coast and had the pleasure of working alongside a team of passionate farmers, scientists, and land managers to create this citizen science program and an information day.

Sustainability Festival

This year's Sustainability Festival was back to a large one-day event format in May this year, attracting a wide range of stallholders, community groups and organisations, speakers, and food stalls. The River Garden and Bass community buildings were transformed for the day by our festival staff team, including Luke, Joel G., Anna and Dave, led by Lisa and assisted by David & Bhavani Rooks from Event Support. Electric vehicles were on display, a dedicated kid's zone had lots of fun activities, the hall had movie



Propagation Training Day at the BCLN Nursery



Dieback information day at Oswin Roberts Reserve



Sustainability Festival at the River Garden in Bass

screenings and Eco-Arts workshops, plus the River Garden had a large speaker marquee and garden workshop area and numerous stalls. The blustery day reduced expected numbers but didn't stop our community coming out to see how they could get involved with local groups and businesses to lighten their impact.

Looking at the Landscape with Landcare tours

This year we were able to hold the first in a series of 'Looking at the Landscape with Landcare' tours funded through our DELWP Distinctive areas and landscape program grant project. This funding will allow us to run school Environmental Detectives activities, a series of place-based tours and construct an education shelter in the River Garden.

For our first tour, we worked with the Phillip Island Landcare Group, where Carolyn came up with some fantastic locations for a full day tour, including a visit to the Our Lady Star of the Sea School Landcare plantings, to Jim McFee's farm in Rhyll, Kym plant's revegetation at Forrest Caves and a walk-through Scenic estate with the very knowledgeable local environmentalist John Eddy. A delicious lunch at the Wild Food Farm was also included in this very enjoyable day. Next year we plan to work with other Landcare groups to show you the special places in their areas in future tours.



Looking at the Landscape with Landcare tour on Phillip Island.

Environmental Detectives Schools programs and Catchment Custodian Kids

Our flagship schools Environmental Education program, Environmental Detectives, still has free activity spots and bus trips available from our DELWP Distinctive areas and landscape program funding, and this year we were able to properly resume our range of activities. Tree planting days, Coastal Bush Pantry walks, Macro-Invertebrate sampling, Water Chemical testing, Seed collection and propagation were the most popular this year.

There are currently 10 activities in the Environmental Detectives program, run at parks, reserves, farms or as incursions to schools. We tailor our activities to school needs or units of study, and all information including a booking form can be found on our web page at <http://www.basscoastlandcare.org.au/education.html>

Our funding from both the Port Phillip and Westernport (now Melbourne Water) and West Gippsland Catchment Management Authorities for the Catchment Custodian Kids programs allowed us to bus some large groups of students to tree planting sites this year, including some big



Bass Valley Primary School Students on a Seed collection walk at the Gurdies

days with all the year 8's and 9's from Bass Coast College, and some mangrove planting days as well. Students got to tie mangrove seed onto bamboo stakes before planting them on the mudflats. Good fun!

Between both programs this year, 1259 students from 16 different Schools, Homeschooler groups, Early Learning Centres and YMCA holiday programs participated in 47 activities, with even more students participating in River Garden programs as outlined below.

River Garden

The River Garden at Bass is a Iha community, educational garden and trials site in bass that began development in 2017, as a co-creation with community. There is currently an orchard, nuttury, hops, swale beds, berry trellis, espaliered fruit trees, kitchen garden demonstration, annual vegetables, and a dung beetle nursery. This year were able to add wicking garden beds into the mix with a generous donation, thanks to the Cape Community Farm.

We are thankful to have the opportunity to continue working with our Interchange volunteers on most Wednesday's, where Luke leads a range of maintenance activities. School groups also were back helping out this year, with regular visits continuing from Bass Coast Specialist school students up until the end of 2022, as well as Bass Coast College Ag and Horticulture classes learning how to grow a range of foods. Altogether there were 110 students that participated in 12 River Garden activities this year. These activities are funded by our Vic Health 'Reimagining Health' program grant for our River Garden Kids project.



Bass Coast College Students planting mangroves at Scenic Estate, Phillip Island



Interchange volunteers sheet mulching fruit trees at the River Garden



River Garden Blitz Volunteers at the Seed saving Day.

Our River Garden Blitz Volunteer monthly hands-on learning sessions attracted over 150 people this year at 9 different sessions. The same Vic Health grant allows us to engage a professional speaker at each session, covering a range of seasonal topics throughout the year, this year including, companion planting, seed saving, cool weather and spring/summer vegetable gardening, as well as pruning and no dig gardening.

Future plans for the River Garden include using our successful Victorian Landcare grant to turn the wetter lower parts of the River Garden into a conservation zone and enhance our wetland, which will also allow us to increase biodiversity, grow a range of indigenous plants and take plant identification and seed collection sessions here as well, to add to the educational opportunities on offer. Our Education Shelter is still in the planning phase, and we are hoping to see this built next year too. See you down at the River Garden, there is always lots happening!

BCLN Communications activities

Our Communications activities this year included assistance for some of our Landcare groups to use the West Gippsland Catchment Management membership portal, to manage payments and records, which has now sadly been closed. We will continue investigating ways to assist our groups manage their membership payments.

Anna drove the design, coordination and production of a fantastic video, in conjunction with Seagrass Films, on the Works crew services, which can be found on our website at <https://www.basscoastlandcare.org.au/works-crew.html>

Our website continues to grow, with the addition of Donation pages, including a revamp to the Public fund page, and new Regular giving and Leave a legacy pages, created by Anna and Sarah Thompson. Sustainable Agriculture pages have been added as more projects managed by Joel G., including Natural Capital accounting and Gippsland Giant Earthworm resources.

Our Social media pages are still the best way to get the most up to date information, as well as our monthly Enews. Sign up at the links below if you haven't already to stay up to date with everything Landcare across Bass Coast.

<https://www.instagram.com/basscoastlandcarenetwork/>

<https://www.facebook.com/BassCoastLandcareNetwork>

We are always looking for contributions from our Groups and their Members, so if you have anything interesting to share, a story, photo, news, event, ideas or opportunities that you think your fellow Landcarers would like to know about, please email us at info@basscoastlandcare.org.au



Facebook

- 2000 in June 2021
- 2340 in June 2022
- 2736 in June 2023



Instagram

- 450 in June 2021
- 490 in June 2022
- 665 in June 2023



E-news

- 1500 in June 2021
- 1821 in June 2022
- 1987 in June 2023



Audited Financial Statements

Bass Coast Landcare Network

Bass Coast Landcare Network Public fund

BASS COAST LANDCARE NETWORK INC.

A0048273Z

FINANCIAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED
30 JUNE 2023

BASS COAST LANDCARE NETWORK INC.

A0048273Z

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

	NOTE	2023	2022
Revenues from ordinary activities	2	2,547,956	2,204,805
Employee expenses		(1,615,551)	(1,375,423)
Depreciation expense	3	(68,499)	(56,901)
Other expenses from ordinary activities		(740,006)	(764,002)
Interest expense		-	451
Operating surplus		123,900	8,930
Other comprehensive income		-	-
Total comprehensive income attributable to the members of the association		123,900	8,930

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

BASS COAST LANDCARE NETWORK INC.

A0048273Z

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS AT 30 JUNE 2023

	NOTE	2023	2022
Bendigo Bank cheque account		552,197	606,321
Bendigo Bank – term deposits		300,000	1,533,231
National Australia Bank – term deposits		1,309,363	-
Total cash and cash equivalents		2,161,560	2,139,552
Accounts receivable		98,139	82,032
Less provision for doubtful debts		(91)	-
Total accounts receivable		98,048	82,032
Accrued interest		20,768	461
Prepayments		15,050	5,182
Sundry debtors		-	1,688
Total other current assets		35,818	7,331
Total current assets		2,295,426	2,228,915
Plant & equipment	3	404,176	308,228
Total non-current assets		404,176	308,228
TOTAL ASSETS		2,699,602	2,537,143
Accounts payable & accrued expenses		135,210	100,291
Bendigo Bank BCLN Mastercard		1,718	1,318
Project balances carried forward	7	785,979	746,287
Income received in advance		8,314	-
Employee entitlements		218,437	235,286
BAS payable		41,165	69,082
Total current liabilities		1,190,823	1,152,264
TOTAL LIABILITIES		1,190,823	1,152,264
NET ASSETS		1,508,779	1,384,879
BCLN reserve		600,000	600,000
Retained surplus		784,879	775,949
Current year surplus		123,900	8,930
TOTAL EQUITY		1,508,779	1,384,879

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

BASS COAST LANDCARE NETWORK INC.

A0048273Z

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

	Retained Surplus	Reserves	Total
Balance at 1 July 2021	775,949	600,000	1,375,949
Surplus attributable to members	8,930	-	8,930
Balance at 30 June 2022	784,879	600,000	1,384,879
Surplus attributable to members	123,900	-	123,900
Balance at 30 June 2023	908,779	600,000	1,508,779

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

BASS COAST LANDCARE NETWORK INC.

A0048273Z

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

	NOTE	2023	2022
OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Receipts from customers and funding bodies		2,799,275	2,514,500
Payments to suppliers and employees		(2,629,352)	(2,327,122)
Interest received		12,227	3,475
Net cash provided by operating activities	2	182,150	190,853
INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		(168,844)	(121,013)
Proceeds from disposal of plant and equipment		8,702	-
Net cash used in investing activities		(160,142)	(121,013)
FINANCING ACTIVITIES			
Transfers from term deposits (net)		(76,132)	(732)
Lease repayments of finance lease		-	(1,669)
Net cash used in financing activities		(76,132)	(2,401)
Net increase / (decrease) in cash for the period		(54,124)	67,439
Cash at beginning of period		606,321	538,882
Cash at end of period	1	552,197	606,321

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

BASS COAST LANDCARE NETWORK INC.

A0048273Z

NOTES TO THE STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

NOTE 1: RECONCILIATION OF CASH & CASH EQUIVALENTS **2023** **2022**

For the purposes of the statement of cash flows, cash includes:

1) Cash on hand and in at-call deposits with banks or financial Institutions:

Cash at bank	552,197	606,321
Cash on hand	-	-
Total	552,197	606,321

NOTE 2: RECONCILIATION OF CASH FLOW FROM OPERATIONS WITH OPERATING SURPLUS

Net operating surplus	123,900	8,930
Non-cash flows in operating surplus:		
Depreciation & amortisation	68,499	56,901
Profit on disposal of assets	(4,305)	-
Changes in assets and liabilities:		
(Increase) / decrease in receivables & accrued income	(44,503)	41,827
Increase / (decrease) in tax payable	(27,917)	(18,184)
Increase / (decrease) in project income in advance	48,006	43,470
Increase / (decrease) in trade creditors & accruals	35,319	33,591
Increase / (decrease) in employee leave entitlements	(16,849)	24,318
Net cash & cash equivalents provided by operating activities	182,150	190,853

BASS COAST LANDCARE NETWORK INC.

A0048273Z

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

NOTE 1: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The financial statements cover Bass Coast Landcare Network Inc. as an individual entity. Bass Coast Landcare Network Inc. is an association incorporated in Victoria under the *Associations Incorporations Reform Act (Vic) 2012*. Bass Coast Landcare Network Inc. is also registered as a charity under the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.

The financial report was authorised to issue on 24 October 2023.

Basis of preparation

The financial statements are general purpose financial statements that have been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures of the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulations 2013* ("ACNC Regulation"). The association is a not-for-profit entity for financial reporting purposes under Australian Accounting Standards.

Material accounting policies adopted in the preparation of these financial statements are presented below and have been consistently applied unless otherwise stated.

The financial statements, except for the cash flow information, have been prepared on an accruals basis and are based on historical costs, modified, where applicable, by the measurement at fair value of selected non-current assets, financial assets and financial liabilities. The amounts presented in the financial statements have been rounded to the nearest dollar.

a. Income tax

The association is exempt from income tax as a not-for-profit entity.

b. Goods and services tax

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Tax Office. In these circumstances, the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of an item of the expense. Receivables and payables in the balance sheet are shown inclusive of GST.

Cash flows are presented in the cash flow statement on a gross basis, except for the GST component of investing and financing activities, which are disclosed as operating cash flows.

c. Property, plant and equipment

The association does not own any land and buildings. Leasehold improvements related to the building utilised by the association are capitalised and amortised on a straight-line basis over the shorter of either the unexpired period of the lease or the estimated useful lives of the improvements.

Plant and equipment are measured on the cost basis less depreciation and impairment losses. The carrying amount of plant and equipment is reviewed annually by the Board to ensure it is not in excess of the recoverable amount from these assets.

Depreciation

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets is depreciated on a straight-line basis over the asset's useful life to the entity commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use. Leasehold improvements are depreciated over the shorter of either the unexpired period of the lease or the estimated useful lives of the improvements. The depreciation rates used range from 2.5% to 30% dependent upon the nature of the asset.

BASS COAST LANDCARE NETWORK INC.

A0048273Z

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

NOTE 1: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

d. Impairment of assets

The carrying amount of plant and equipment is reviewed annually by the association to ensure it is not in excess of the recoverable amount from those assets. The recoverable amount is assessed on the basis of the expected net cash flows which will be received from the assets employment and subsequent disposal. The expected net cash flows have not been discounted to present values in determining recoverable amounts.

e. Employee benefits

Provision is made for the association's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to balance date. Employee benefits expected to be settled within one year have been measured at their nominal amounts. Employee benefits payable later than one year have been measured at the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made for those benefits.

Contributions are made by the association to an employees' superannuation fund and are charged as expenses when incurred.

f. Leases

Contracts are assessed at inception to determine if the contract is, or contains, a lease. That is, if the contract conveys the right to control the use of an identified asset for a period of time in exchange for consideration. No right-of-use assets and corresponding lease liabilities have been recognised.

The short-term lease recognition exception is applied for short term leases (i.e., those lease that have a lease term of 12 months or less from the commencement date or where the lease term is not specified and does not contain a purchase option). It also applies the low-value assets recognition exemption to leases that are considered to be low value. Leases payments on short-term leases and leases of low-value assets are recognised as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

The temporary exemption allowed under AASB16 and AASB1058 for below market lease terms and conditions for not-for-profit entities to be measured a cost rather than fair value has been applied. The existing terms of the lease is disclosed in Note 5.

g. Revenue

Revenue is recognised in accordance with AASB1058 Income of Not-for-profit Entities and recorded as income when received unless the income is related to a service contract (refer below).

Revenue is recognised when the entity obtains control over the funds which is generally at the time of receipt.

Interest revenue is recognised on a proportional basis taking into account the interest rates applicable to the financial assets.

h. Unexpended Funds

Funding is recognised as income upon receipt, unless where the grant funding is provided in accordance with specific contractual obligations. In this case, the grant funding is only recognised as income when the specific contractual obligations have been fulfilled.

The reconciliation of the movement in the balance of unexpended project funds is recorded in Note 7.

BASS COAST LANDCARE NETWORK INC.

A0048273Z

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

NOTE 1: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

i. **Accounts receivable**

Accounts receivable and other debtors include amounts due to from residents and other parties for services provided in the ordinary course of business. Receivables expected to be collected within 12 months of the end of the reporting period are classified as current assets. All other receivables are classified as non-current assets.

Accounts receivable are initially recognised at fair value and subsequently measured at the estimate recoverable amount taking into account any provision for impairment.

j. **Accounts payable**

Accounts payable and other payables represent the liability outstanding at the end of the reporting period for goods and services received by the association during the reporting period that remain unpaid. The balance is recognised as a current liability with the amounts normally paid within 30 days of recognition of the liability.

k. **Comparative figures**

Where required by Accounting Standards, comparative figures have been adjusted to conform to changes in presentation for the current financial year.

l. **Critical accounting estimate and judgments**

The Board evaluate estimates and judgments incorporated into the financial report based on historical knowledge and best available current information.

Key estimates — project balances

The Board have estimated the value of project income received to 30 June 2023 that has not yet been expended in accordance with the relevant funding deeds and the balance has been recorded as a current liability.

Key judgments — doubtful debts provision

The Board have estimated the value of debt which may not be recoverable and determined an appropriate provision for doubtful debts at 30 June 2023.

m. **Change in accounting policies**

There has been no significant change in accounting policy during the financial year.

Any new, revised or amending Australian Accounting Standards or Interpretations that are not yet mandatory have not been early adopted.

BASS COAST LANDCARE NETWORK INC.

A0048273Z

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

NOTE 2: REVENUE	2023	2022
Grants and partnership income received	1,828,073	1,596,920
Project management/network services	45,599	58,862
Fee for service income	612,752	545,121
Interest income	32,534	3,021
Profit on disposal of assets	4,305	-
Sundry/other income	24,693	881
Total operating income received	2,547,956	2,204,805

NOTE 3: PLANT & EQUIPMENT

Leasehold improvements	127,003	115,203
Accumulated depreciation	(54,670)	(47,394)
Capital works in progress	19,253	-
Written down value	91,586	67,809
Plant & equipment	272,553	244,503
Accumulated depreciation	(159,009)	(135,435)
Written down value	113,544	109,068
Office furniture & equipment	28,403	28,403
Accumulated depreciation	(25,697)	(22,286)
Written down value	2,706	6,117
Motor vehicles	334,536	245,968
Accumulated amortisation	(138,196)	(120,734)
Written down value	196,340	125,234
Total plant & equipment at written down value	404,176	308,228

Movements in carrying amounts

Movement in the carrying amounts for each class of property, plant and equipment between the beginning and the end of the current financial reporting period.

	Leasehold improvements	Plant & equipment	Office furniture	Motor vehicles	Total
Balance at start	67,809	109,068	6,117	125,234	308,228
Additions	31,053	32,875	-	104,916	168,844
Depreciation	(7,276)	(25,720)	(3,411)	(32,092)	(68,499)
Disposals (net)	-	(2,679)	-	(1,718)	(4,397)
Balance at end	91,586	113,544	2,706	196,340	404,176

NOTE 4: RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

Members of the Board act in an honorary capacity and do not receive any payments for performing this role. Members of the Board do not receive any benefit other than those available to any member of the association.

Where a Board member provides services to the association in a professional capacity, any payment is approved by the Board. There have been no transactions to be disclosed during the financial year.

BASS COAST LANDCARE NETWORK INC.

A0048273Z

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

NOTE 5: KEY MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL(KMP) REMUNERATION

Any person having the authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the entity, directly or indirectly, including directors, is considered key management personnel.

Members of the Board at the date of this report are:

- Linda Bowden (Chair)
- Roger Lee (Vice Chair)
- Bill Irving (Secretary)
- Donald Creed (Treasurer)
- Carolyn Atherton
- Libby Lambert
- Nicholas Sibly
- Helen Norman
- Ken Connor
- Paul Spiers
- Melynda Dawson

As disclosed in Note 4 above, no member of the Board received remuneration during the financial year.

The only employee defined as KMP is David Bateman, Executive General Manager. Given there is only one person defined as key management personnel who received remuneration for the financial year, disclosure of this amount is exempt.

NOTE 6: LEASES

The office premises from which the association operates at Bass School Road, Bass and the Depot and Nursery at Hade Avenue, Bass are leased from the Bass Recreation Reserve Committee of Management Inc. The current lease is valid until 2025. The annual rental for each site is considered to be a below market lease.

NOTE 7: PROJECT BALANCES

	2023	2022
Opening project balances	746,287	700,817
Income received into project accounts	915,338	866,902
Funds transferred to Bass Coast Landcare Network	(539,675)	(437,079)
Direct on ground expenses paid (recognised as income)	(335,971)	(384,353)
Closing balance	785,979	746,287

NOTE 7: CAPITAL COMMITMENTS

At the date of this report has committed approximately \$100,000 for an extension to the Bass office. There is a current planning permit in place and quotes are currently being sought. There are no other significant commitments for future capital expenditure.

NOTE 9: SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

There are no subsequent events to be disclosed in the financial report.

NOTE 10: ASSOCIATION DETAILS

The registered office and principal place of business of the association is:
Bass Coast Landcare Network
2 – 4 Bass School Road
BASS VIC 3991

BASS COAST LANDCARE NETWORK INC.

A0048273Z

STATEMENT BY THE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

In the opinion of the committee of Bass Coast Landcare Network Inc., the financial report as set out on pages 1 to 11:

- i) Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of Bass Coast Landcare Network Inc. as at 30 June 2023 and its performance for the year ended on that date, in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures of the Australian Accounting Standards Board and the requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act (Vic) 2012* and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.
- ii) At the date of this statement there are reasonable grounds to believe that Bass Coast Landcare Network Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Bass Coast Landcare Network Inc. and is signed for and on behalf of the Bass Coast Landcare Network Inc. by:

Chair


Linda Bowden

Treasurer


Don Creed

24 October 2023

**INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF BASS COAST LANDCARE NETWORK INC.
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023**

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial report of Bass Coast Landcare Network Inc., which comprises the Statement of Financial Position at 30 June 2023, the Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income, Statement of Changes in Equity and Statement of Cash Flows for the year then ended, notes to the financial statements including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the declaration by members of the Board.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of Bass Coast Landcare Network Inc. is in accordance with Section 100(2) of the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act (Vic) 2012* and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, including:

- a. giving a true and fair view of the association's financial position as at 30 June 2023 and of its performance for the year ended on that date; and
- b. complying with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosure Standards and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulations 2013*.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report.

We are independent of Bass Coast Landcare Network Inc. in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the "Code") that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

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

Other Information

The Board of the association is responsible for other information. The other information comprises the information included in the association's annual report for the financial year ended 30 June 2023 but does not include the financial report and our auditor's report thereon.

Our opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and accordingly we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial report, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of the members of the Board for the Financial Report

The Board of the association is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosure Standards, the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act (Vic) 2012* and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*. This responsibility also includes such internal control as the Board determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the Board is responsible for assessing the association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Board either intends to liquidate the association or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

The Board are responsible for overseeing the association's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but it is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, other the override of internal control
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the association's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and relates disclosures made by the Board.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the Board's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the association's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the association to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the Board regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify from our audit.

CARDELL ASSURANCE & AUDIT



Lyndal J. McKenzie
3A Billson Street
WONTHAGGI VIC 3995

30 October 2023

COMPILATION REPORT TO BASS COAST LANDCARE NETWORK INC.

We have compiled the accompanying special purpose financial statement of Bass Coast Landcare Network Inc comprising the detailed income and expenditure report for the Bass Coast Landcare Network Inc. for the financial year ended 30 June 2023.

The specific purpose for which the special purpose financial statement has been prepared is to provide financial information to the Board.

The Responsibility of the Board

The Board of Bass Coast Landcare Network Inc is solely responsible for the information contained in the special purpose financial statement, the reliability, accuracy and completeness of the information and for the determination that the basis of accounting used is appropriate to meet their needs and for the purpose that the financial statement were prepared.

Our Responsibility

On the basis of information provided by the Board we have compiled the accompanying special purpose financial statement in accordance with the basis of accounting and APES 315: Compilation of Financial Information (issued by the Accounting Professional & Ethical Standards Board).

We have applied our expertise in accounting and financial reporting to compile this financial statement in accordance with the basis of accounting described in Note 1 to the financial statement. We have complied with the relevant ethical requirements of APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants.

Assurance Disclaimer

Since a compilation engagement is not an assurance engagement, we are not required to verify the reliability, accuracy or completeness of the information provided to us by management to compile these financial statements. Accordingly, we do not express an audit opinion or a review conclusion on these financial statements.

The special purpose financial statement was compiled exclusively for the benefit of the Board who are responsible for the reliability, accuracy and completeness of the information used to compile them. We do not accept responsibility for the contents of the special purpose financial statements.

CARDELL ASSURANCE & AUDIT



Lyndal J. McKenzie
3A Billson Street
WONTHAGGI VIC 3995

19 October 2023

Bass Coast Landcare Network
Profit & Loss
Financial Year ended 30 June 2023

	Jul 22 - Jun 23	Jul 21 - Jun 22	\$ Change
Dept Industry, Innovation & Science	30,541.20	4,723.00	25,818.20
Dept of Envir, Land Water	155,343.40	164,978.60	(9,635.20)
Pt Phillip & Wport CMA	-	104,430.09	(104,430.09)
The Ross Trust	67,716.30	-	67,716.30
West Gippsland CMA	89,276.16	24,777.00	64,499.16
Total Grants	342,877.06	298,908.69	43,968.37
Bass Coast Shire Council	389,249.92	470,812.90	(81,562.98)
Greening Australia	222,074.60	143,092.82	78,981.78
Holcim	23,587.60	22,516.76	1,070.84
Landcare Australia	3,800.45	1,890.00	1,910.45
Melbourne Water	158,732.58	29,640.06	129,092.52
Parks Victoria	44,612.56	21,285.25	23,327.31
Phillip Island Nature Parks	25,020.00	36,147.25	(11,127.25)
South Gippsland Landcare Group	176,247.00	80,000.00	96,247.00
Vic Health	12,120.00	17,460.00	(5,340.00)
Westernport Catchment LN	75,675.00	71,087.50	4,587.50
Westernport Water	18,104.88	19,726.00	(1,621.12)
Total Partnerships	1,149,224.59	913,658.54	235,566.05
Bass Valley Landcare Group	8,125.00	31,080.00	(22,955.00)
French Island Landcare Group	-	5,000.00	(5,000.00)
Korumburra Landcare Group	1,750.02	1,749.98	0.04
Other Landcare Groups	29,624.00	-	29,624.00
Phillip Island Landcare Group	3,300.00	6,782.00	(3,482.00)
Powlett Project	595.00	9,315.00	(8,720.00)
Three Creeks Landcare Group	1,710.00	4,500.00	(2,790.00)
Wonthaggi Urban Landcare Group	495.00	435.00	60.00
Total Project Management/Network Services	45,599.02	58,861.98	(13,262.96)
Fee for Service - Administration	2,000.00	9,592.50	(7,592.50)
Fee for Service - Invasive Species	44,903.63	-	44,903.63
Fee for Service - Nursery	116,694.70	60,688.50	56,006.20
Fee for Service - Operational	38,459.65	53,070.18	(14,610.53)
Fee for Service - River Garden	-	10.00	(10.00)
Fee for Service - Works Crew	410,693.82	421,759.69	(11,065.87)
Total Fee for Service	612,751.80	545,120.87	67,630.93
Interest Income	32,533.61	3,020.71	29,512.90
Sundry/Other Income	24,693.52	880.78	23,812.74
Profit on disposal of assets	4,305.26	-	4,305.26
Total Other Income	61,532.39	3,901.49	53,325.64
TOTAL INCOME PER P&L	2,211,984.86	1,820,451.57	387,228.03
Income per P&L	2,211,984.86	1,820,451.57	391,533.29
Add direct on ground works expenss paid	335,971.00	384,353.00	(48,382.00)
TOTAL INCOME PER FINANCIAL REPORT	2,547,955.86	2,204,804.57	343,151.29

Bass Coast Landcare Network
Profit & Loss
Financial Year ended 30 June 2023

	<u>Jul 22 - Jun 23</u>	<u>Jul 21 - Jun 22</u>	<u>\$ Change</u>
Administration Expenses			
Asset & Equipment Purchases	21,303.01	22,316.74	(1,013.73)
Audit Fees	4,300.00	4,200.00	100.00
Bank Charges	317.04	332.27	(15.23)
Board/Governance Charges	21,394.41	12,604.43	8,789.98
Computer Expenses	26,637.71	23,184.68	3,453.03
Depreciation	68,499.37	56,900.45	11,598.92
Doubtful Debts Expense	90.91	800.00	(709.09)
Insurance - General	18,894.74	16,314.15	2,580.59
Member/Group Support Ser	181.82	229.09	(47.27)
Office Expenses	9,598.94	7,519.01	2,079.93
Repairs & Maintenance	16,433.64	19,332.17	(2,898.53)
Sundry Expenses	2,477.52	1,404.00	1,073.52
Telephone & Internet	11,431.64	8,868.47	2,563.17
Total Administration Expenses	<u>201,560.75</u>	<u>174,005.46</u>	<u>27,555.29</u>
Operating Expenses			
Works Crew Expenses	84,948.34	86,565.62	(1,617.28)
Advertising & Promotion	6,281.00	1,278.23	5,002.77
Contractors/Consultants	7,729.50	17,610.47	(9,880.97)
Event Expenses	3,539.71	3,761.52	(221.81)
Weed Control	-	115.97	(115.97)
Total Operating Expenses	<u>102,498.55</u>	<u>109,331.81</u>	<u>(6,833.26)</u>
Salaries & Wages			
Wage payments	1,462,019.72	1,252,973.63	209,046.09
Superannuation/On costs	153,530.99	122,449.67	31,081.32
Total Salaries & Wages	<u>1,615,550.71</u>	<u>1,375,423.30</u>	<u>240,127.41</u>
Other Employment Costs			
FBT Expense	3,362.03	1,650.58	1,711.45
Health & Safety	17,798.71	16,112.66	1,686.05
Medical Costs	1,517.68	816.59	701.09
Motor Vehicle Expenses	74,864.70	62,136.95	12,727.75
Phone/Internet Allowance	1,415.00	1,547.27	(132.27)
Recruitment	-	1,703.46	(1,703.46)
Travel km Reimbursement	14,782.99	12,378.18	2,404.81
Travel - Other	1,000.33	2,411.16	(1,410.83)
Staff Amenities	1,850.94	729.60	1,121.34
Staff Clothing/Uniforms	5,470.48	6,446.66	(976.18)
Training & Development	29,558.67	37,498.27	(7,939.60)
Workcover Insurance	16,852.96	9,780.48	7,072.48
Total Other Employment Costs	<u>168,474.49</u>	<u>153,211.86</u>	<u>15,262.63</u>
Other Expenses			
Interest Expense	-	(450.90)	450.90
Total Other Expenses	<u>-</u>	<u>(450.90)</u>	<u>450.90</u>
Total expenses per P&L	<u>2,088,084.50</u>	<u>1,811,521.53</u>	<u>276,562.97</u>
Add direct on ground works expenss paid	<u>335,971.00</u>	<u>384,353.00</u>	<u>(48,382.00)</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES PER FINANCIAL REPORT	<u>2,424,055.50</u>	<u>2,195,874.53</u>	<u>228,180.97</u>
NET SURPLUS PER FINANCIAL REPORT	<u>123,900.36</u>	<u>8,930.04</u>	<u>114,970.32</u>

BASS COAST LANDCARE NETWORK

PUBLIC FUND

ABN: 13 136 824 392

SPECIAL PURPOSE FINANCIAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

BASS COAST LANDCARE NETWORK PUBLIC FUND
ABN: 13 136 824 392

INCOME STATEMENT

FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

	2023	2022
Donations received	11,617	3,720
Interest received	1	1
Total income	11,618	3,721
Audit fee	340	250
Bank fees	158	107
Contractors/consultants	9,131	-
Event expenses	5,683	129
Total operating expenses	15,312	486
Operating surplus / (deficit)	(3,694)	3,235
Less grants provided	-	-
Net surplus	(3,694)	3,235

BALANCE SHEET AT 30 JUNE 2023

Bendigo Bank account	16,463	13,105
Trade receivables	-	3,299
GST receivable	420	4
Total current assets	16,883	16,408
Trade creditors	4,169	-
Total current liabilities	4,169	-
NET ASSETS	12,714	16,408
Opening balance equity	16,408	13,173
Current year surplus / (deficit)	(3,694)	3,235
TOTAL EQUITY	12,714	16,408

This financial report should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

NOTE 1: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Commonwealth Government Department of the Environment as the fund is listed on the Register of Environmental Organisations as a Deductible Gift Recipient. The trustees have determined that the fund is not a reporting entity.

Basis of preparation

The financial report has been prepared in accordance with the significant accounting policies disclosed below, which the trustees have determined are appropriate to meet the financial requirements of the Department of the Environment. Such accounting policies are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated.

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

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

Accounting policies

a. Income tax

No provision for income tax has been raised as the association is exempt from income tax under section 50-5 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

b. Fixed assets

Fixed assets are treated as an expense item when incurred.

c. Revenue

All revenue is recognised when the entity obtains control over the funds which is generally at the time of receipt.

d. Goods and Services Tax (GST)

The fund is registered for GST using the registration of Bass Coast Landcare Network Inc. Income, expenditure and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation office (ATO).

e. Comparative figures

Where applicable, comparative figures have been adjusted to conform to changes in presentation for the current financial year.

f. Rounding

Figures are rounded to the nearest whole dollar.

BASS COAST LANDCARE NETWORK PUBLIC FUND
ABN: 13 136 824 392

STATEMENT BY THE TRUSTEES

The trustees have determined that the Public Fund is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial report.

In the opinion of the trustees the financial report as set out on page 1 to 3:

1. Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of the Bass Coast Landcare Network Public Fund as at 30 June 2023 and its' performance for the year ended on that date.
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Bass Coast Landcare Network Public Fund will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

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



Peter Mulherin
Trustee



Jon Hauser
Trustee

Digitally signed by Jonathan Hauser
DN: cn=Jonathan Hauser,
o=Xcheque Pty Ltd, ou,
email=jon@xcheque.com, c=AU
Date: 2023.10.19 16:45:07 +11'00'

19 October 2023

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF BASS COAST LANDCARE NETWORK PUBLIC FUND

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of Bass Coast Landcare Network Public Fund, which comprises the balance sheet as at 30 June 2023, the income and expenditure statement for the year then ended, notes to the financial statements including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the statement by the Trustees.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report, in all material respects, gives a true and fair view of the financial position of Bass Coast Landcare Network Public Fund at 30 June 2023, and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial report.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report.

We are independent of Bass Coast Landcare Network Public Fund in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the "Code") that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

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

Emphasis of Matter – Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling Bass Coast Landcare Network Public Fund's financial reporting responsibilities under the *Department of the Environment* as a Deductible Gift Recipient entity. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Other Information

The trustees of the Fund are responsible for other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Fund's annual report for the financial year ended 30 June 2023 but does not include the financial report and our auditor's report thereon.

Our opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and accordingly we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial report, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of the Trustees for the Financial Report

The Trustees of the Fund are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report and have determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 to the financial report, is appropriate to meet the requirements of the *Department of the Environment* as a Deductible Gift Recipient entity. This responsibility also includes such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, management is responsible for assessing the Fund's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Trustees either intends to liquidate the Fund or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report


Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but it is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, other the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Fund's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and relates disclosures made by the Trustees.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the Trustee's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Fund's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Fund to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the Trustees regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify from our audit.

CARDELL ASSURANCE & AUDIT



Lyndal J. McKenzie
3A Billson Street
WONTHAGGI VIC 3995

23 October 2023