

LANDCARE VICTORIA NEWS

From the CEO

I'm pleased to provide Landcare Victoria's November newsletter.

The Government plan to allow **camping on licensed water frontages** has been a significant point of concern for many in the Landcare community in the last few weeks. We reported on the issue in the October newsletter and provide an update in this issue.

The Landcare community is expressing widespread concern about the imminent end of the current round of funding for the **Landcare Facilitator Program**. Landcare Victoria is in regular contact with DELWP about the issue. See the report in this newsletter.

The very good news about the decline in the number of Victorian COVID19 cases and associated easing of restrictions means that **volunteer group activities can re-commence** with appropriate care.



Andrew Maclean
Chief Executive Officer

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Funding for Landcare

The search for funding to support our Landcare aspirations is never ending and we must be alert to new opportunities. Some currently open programs are listed below. Landcare Victoria can assist unincorporated groups to apply for funding under our sponsorship/auspicing arrangement. Groups wishing to take up that opportunity should contact Claire Hetzel at Landcare Victoria as early as possible in the application development process.

Bushfire Recovery for Wildlife and Habitat Community Grants Program

This \$10 million program will support communities to undertake on-ground recovery actions from the 2019-20 bushfires, with grants from \$5,000 to \$150,000 available. **Closes 27 November.**

The Guidelines for this program, including eligibility requirements, are now available at

<https://www.business.gov.au/Grants-and-Programs/Bushfire-Recovery-for-Wildlife-and-Habitat-Community-Grants-Program>

Indigenous Fire and Land Management Workshops Program

This \$2 million program will support the delivery of workshops to strengthen traditional knowledge and build wider understanding of Indigenous fire and land management practices. This program is available Australia wide to Traditional Owners, Indigenous organisations and Indigenous enterprises. **Closes 10 December.**

The Grant Opportunity Guidelines, sample application and sample grant agreement are now available

at <https://www.business.gov.au/Grants-and-Programs/Indigenous-Fire-and-Land-Management-Workshops>

Future Drought Fund – Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation

Eight Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hubs will be established in Australia's major climatic and agricultural zones across regional Australia. Hubs will be networks of researchers, primary producers, industry groups, community groups and others.

Although this program is focussed primarily on researchers, it is important that Landcare be recognised as an important pathway for adoption. Landcare Victoria has commenced discussion with a research group with this in mind. Groups and networks interested in a possible future role should contact LVI to discuss their ideas.

<https://www.agriculture.gov.au/ag-farm-food/drought/future-drought-fund>

Citizen Science Grants

The Australian Government Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources has opened a grant round to support citizen science projects. This grant opportunity funds projects that provide all Australians with opportunities to participate in scientifically valid citizen science projects. Landcare Victoria is considering ways of engaging the Landcare sector in this program. If your group would be interested in participating, please contact Claire Hetzel at LVI with your ideas. **Closes 17 December.**

<https://www.grants.gov.au/Go/Show?GoUuid=e09c9f2c-eb55-8183-247b-f9989371594d>

Environment Restoration Fund - Safe Havens Grants

This grant opportunity is to support the creation of safe havens for threatened species. Safe havens are areas where invasive predators such as feral cats and foxes have been permanently removed from fenced areas and islands to provide long term protection for native wildlife. The objective of this program is to reduce extinction risk to nationally listed threatened species through strategic expansion of the safe haven network. **Closes 11 January 2021.**

<https://www.grants.gov.au/Go/Show?GoUuid=9d675c62-e4a3-6f4e-bfe0-8e983726f836>

Parks Victoria Volunteer Innovation Fund

The Victorian Government has an exciting new opportunity to inspire ideas and encourage innovation by funding community-led projects that consider new ways of volunteering in and for the environment. Launching in Spring 2020, there will be multiple competitive funding rounds between 2020 and 2023, with funding up to \$20,000 or \$50,000 available per project. This \$2 million investment is part of the [Victoria's Great Outdoors](#) program, to encourage innovation, inspire more Victorians to volunteer for nature, and attract a greater diversity of people volunteering in parks and forests. **Round 1 closes 23 November 2020.**

<https://www.parks.vic.gov.au/get-into-nature/volunteering/volunteering-innovation-fund>

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Policy and Planning

Landcare Facilitator Program

The present round of Landcare Facilitator funding comes to an end on 31 December. Landcare Groups and Networks and, of course, our terrific team of Facilitators themselves are naturally concerned about the future of the program. Landcare Victoria has been in regular contact with DELWP in relation to renewal of the facilitator program for the last several months, consistently urging for early announcements about a future program. It is clear to everyone that it is too late now to conduct a round of EOIs for continued funding before the end of the year. Plan B must be put into place.

At this stage of the process, Landcare Victoria can only advise members that it is confident that DELWP is supportive of a continuing program, that it has a feasible Plan B, and it is aware of the need to make early announcements about its future. It's best for everybody's peace of mind to avoid rumours about the future of the program. Let's wait for the official announcements from DELWP.

Camping on Licensed Stream Frontages

Many landcarers are concerned about proposed changes to the Victorian *Land Act 1958* that will remove the current prohibition on camping on licensed Crown water frontages. The amendments will also provide for regulations to be made concerning camping.

Notwithstanding these concerns, the amendment Bill has now been debated by the Legislative Council and returned to the Legislative Assembly with some minor amendments proposed. Assuming it passes through the Assembly where the Government has a majority, the amendments will come into effect no later than September 2021, after the making of regulations.

Landcare Victoria will engage in the regulation making process, which as a matter of routine provides opportunity for community engagement. The Board's position is that Crown frontages are generally unsuitable areas for camping, so the regulations should continue to generally prohibit camping, unless there is a proper assessment of the suitability of a particular site for the activity. This would need to consider the environmental values of the site, the interests of licensees and other nearby residents, practical access issues, and DELWP capacity to monitor camping use.

Landcare Victoria has been concerned that Government communications with licensed frontage holders has been insufficient, creating a lot of possibly unnecessary anxiety. There is some detail about the proposals on the Victorian Fisheries Authority website here: <https://vfa.vic.gov.au/recreational-fishing/targetonemillion2/crownland>

COVID Safe Landcare

Victoria's achievement in suppressing COVID infections in the community means that some restrictions have been eased. Environmental volunteering is now a permitted activity provided appropriate precautions are observed. DELWP has posted information on the Landcare Gateway that provides more information: <https://www.landcarevic.org.au/state-government-news/update-121120-landcare-and-community-programs-volunteering-and-grants-covid-19-update-2/>

Landcare Governance Handbook

Congratulations to West Gippsland CMA, which has released a governance handbook for Landcare Groups that is likely to be of interest to groups well beyond the green fields of the West Gippsland region. <https://www.wgcma.vic.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/WEB-VERSION-WGLandcare-Handbook-final-web-V2.pdf>

Weeds after Fire

Don't forget to register for the very interesting webinar series on managing weeds after fire: https://www.swifft.net.au/cb_pages/weed_management_after_fire_-_webinar_series.php. The webinars are being organised by DELWP's Kate Blood who many landcarers will know for her long service to better weed management in Victoria.

National Landcare Conference Webinar Series

COVID has required a deferral of the National Landcare Conference, but a webinar series is filling the gap. You can register for the series [here](#). The next topic is Landcare as a Business on 19 November.

Strategic Management Prospects for Biodiversity

Landcare Groups undertaking project planning often need to show how their locally important projects contribute to regional and State conservation planning priorities. Victoria's Arthur Rylah Institute has developed an on-line resource that will assist in this task. See the ARI Quarterly Update for more information:

https://www.ari.vic.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0039/497487/ARI-Terrestrial-Quarterly-Update-November-2020.pdf

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Draft Management Plan for Gariwerd

Landcarers in and around (and even beyond) the magnificent Gariwerd landscape (the Grampians) may be interested in commenting on the draft management plan recently released. [Greater Gariwerd Draft Landscape Management Plan](#)

Regional Development Australia – Call for Chairpersons

Regional Development Committees play an important role in, well, regional development. The Government is currently inviting applications for the role of Chair of the various committees. It would be terrific to see Landcare voices on these committees to reflect the especially important role the Landcare movement plays in the development of our regions. See [this link](#)

Landcare Victoria News

Landcare Victoria is Moving...

... but not very far. After many years in space provided by the Victorian Farmers Federation on Level 5, 24-28 Collins Street, we are moving up to Level 10 in the same building, sharing space with the Landcare Australia Melbourne office. Our postal address remains the same and so for the time being will our phone number. Landcare Victoria staff (Andrew, Claire and Amanda) will continue to work mainly from home until further relaxation of the COVID rules.

Landcare Farming Project

Landcare Victoria along with other State and Territory Landcare organisations, the National Landcare Network and Landcare Australia are collaborating in the delivery of the 'Landcare Farming' project. The project, which will run from 2019 – 2023 is a national, federally funded program, designed to increase awareness, knowledge and participation in the adoption of best practice and leading research and extension outputs. The project's aim is to strengthen the connections between Landcare and the agricultural sector and increase our contribution to agricultural and community resilience across Australia. Victorian landcarers were consulted about the design and priorities of the project in a zoom workshop last week. For further information go to: <https://landcareaustralia.org.au/landcarefarming/about-landcare-farming/>

CLEA – Community Learning for Environmental Action



You're only as good as the people you have around you. We each have a contribution to make, and we're stronger and smarter with good networks. But that means looking after your personal networks, not letting them happen to you. Project leader Ross Colliver suggests eight people it's good to have in your personal network. <https://www.lviclea.org/post/good-people-to-have-in-your-network>

Insurance - Reminder

Membership of Landcare Victoria requires that members hold insurance to protect both the member and the wider incorporated association that is Landcare Victoria Inc. Rule 17.7 provides that: *The Committee shall, from time to time, determine the type and amount of insurance cover Member Groups shall be required to have in effect. Such levels of insurance cover as determined by the Committee shall be compulsory for all Member Groups.* The insurances provided by Landcare Victoria conform to the standard of rule 17.7.

Membership Renewals

Landcare Victoria members who have not yet renewed their 2020/21 memberships are requested to give the matter prompt attention. It is important to remember that financial members are not entitled to the benefits of membership, including insurance. If you have any questions, please contact the Landcare Victoria office by email at info@lvi.org.au. Landcare Victoria acknowledges that group activity has been substantially constrained by COVID, but we are not in a position to offer partial year memberships or insurance.

Although your group may have been "inactive" in recent months, things like holding virtual meetings, planning future events, giving members advice, hiring contractors, etc. do constitute activity, and claims may arise from disputes between members/volunteers and committee (not just from injuries sustained during on-site activities). Claims may arise years after the incident occurred. Not renewing their LVI membership and insurance puts your group at risk of not being covered for any claims arising from the period that you were not members.

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- Public Records Office Victoria
- Our 600 Member Groups