



NSW Environmental Trust ANNUAL REPORT 2010–11

Cover photographs:

1. The Macquarie Marshes. Photo courtesy of Neal Foster, NSW Office of Water
2. Planting new gardens at Curl Curl North Public School. Photo courtesy of Curl Curl North Public School.
3. Historic Beulah purchased this year through the Growth Centres Program. Photo courtesy of OEH
4. Marsh clubrush in the Gwydir wetlands. Photo courtesy of Daryl Albertson, OEH

Published by

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OEH 2011/0802

ISSN 1445-3177

November 2011

Printed on 100% recycled paper. Elemental chlorine free.

Contents



■ About the NSW Environmental Trust	1
■ Highlights of 2010–11	2
Trust Programs and Achievements	3
Land Acquisition	4
Restoration and Rehabilitation	5
■ Restoration and Rehabilitation Program 2010–11	9
■ Protecting Our Places Program	12
■ Contaminated Land Management Program	14
■ Emergency Pollution and Orphan Waste Clean-up Program	16
Environmental Education	19
■ Environmental Education Program 2010–11	21
■ Eco Schools Program	23
Environmental Research	26
■ Environmental Research Program 2010–11	29
Major Environmental Grants	31
Waste and Sustainability Program	35
River Red Gums Program	41
Private Native Forestry Program	44
Growth Centres Biodiversity Offset Program	46
Urban Sustainability Program	47
NSW RiverBank	50
Dissemination Program	52
BioBanking Trust Fund	55
Finance	57
Appendices	75
Administration of the Trust	76
■ Internal Audit and Risk Management Statement for the 2010–11 Financial Year for the Environmental Trust	80
Membership of the NSW Environmental Trust	81
■ Membership of Trust Subcommittees	82
■ Membership of Trust Technical Committees	84
Contact Information	86



The Honourable Robyn Parker MP
Minister for the Environment
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney

Dear Minister

I have pleasure in presenting to you the 2010–11 Annual Report for the NSW Environmental Trust. The report has been prepared in accordance with the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983* and the *Annual Reports (Statutory Bodies) Act 1984*.

The NSW Environmental Trust funded \$90.7 million of environmental programs in 2010–11. These programs will result in a diverse range of outcomes including on-ground restoration works, greater awareness and engagement of the community in environmental issues, research into important environmental issues, the protection of valuable habitats and threatened communities, and achieving greater sustainability through partnerships with local government, businesses and communities.

A highlight this year is the significance of the biodiversity outcomes that have been achieved. The purchase of a large property in western NSW through the Land Acquisition Program will protect over 17,000 hectares of endangered woodland communities, while the joint purchase of historic 'Beulah' near Appin and associated biodiversity credits will permanently protect 60 hectares of endangered communities through the Growth Centres Biodiversity Offset Program.

This year has also seen the largest delivery of environmental water to wetlands in NSW since inception of the NSW RiverBank Program four years ago. This contributed to the recovery of several key wetland complexes and successful large-scale waterbird breeding events in the Lachlan, Gwydir, Macquarie and Murrumbidgee valleys.

Yours sincerely

LISA CORBYN
Secretary, NSW Environmental Trust
October 2011

About the NSW Environmental Trust



Functions of the Trust

The NSW Environmental Trust (the Trust) is an independent statutory body established by the NSW Government to support projects that will enhance sustainability and environmental values in NSW. Funding is provided through a diverse range of programs including the Trust's annual contestable grant programs, major projects, the City and Country Environment Restoration Program, and other grant programs managed by the Trust.

The Trust is chaired by the NSW Minister for the Environment. Members of the Trust are the Chief Executive of the Office of Environment and Heritage and representatives from the Local Government and Shires Associations of NSW, the Nature Conservation Council of NSW and NSW Treasury. The Trust generally meets four times annually and is administered by the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH). Further information on administration of the Trust and its membership is provided in the appendices of this report.

The Trust is empowered under the *Environmental Trust Act 1998*. The objectives of the Environmental Trust are:

1. To encourage and support restoration and rehabilitation projects in both the public and the private sectors that will or are likely to prevent or reduce pollution, the waste stream or environmental degradation, of any kind, within any part of NSW.
2. To promote research in both the public and private sectors into environmental problems of any kind and, in particular, to encourage and support:
 - research into and development of local solutions to environmental problems
 - discovery of new methods of operation for NSW industries that are less harmful to the environment
 - research into general environmental problems
 - assessment of environmental degradation.
3. To promote environmental education and, in particular, to encourage the development of educational programs in both the public and private sectors that will increase public awareness of environmental issues of any kind.
4. To fund the acquisition of land for national parks and other categories of dedicated and reserved land for the national parks estate.
5. To fund the declaration of areas for marine parks and related purposes.
6. To promote waste avoidance, resource recovery and waste management (including funding enforcement and regulation and local government programs).
7. To fund environmental community groups.
8. To fund the purchase of water entitlements for the purposes of increasing environmental flows for the state's rivers, and restoring or rehabilitating major wetlands.

Staff of the Trust are employed within the Environmental Funding Programs section of the Sustainability Programs Division of OEH. For all issues of compliance (such as disability plans, equal employment opportunity, multicultural policies and services program, occupational health and safety etc.) refer to the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet Annual Report for 2010–11.

Changes to the Trust

Following the March 2011 elections in NSW, the Honorable Robyn Parker was appointed Minister for the Environment and became Chair of the Trust.

2010–11 saw the introduction of a significant new program for the Trust which will assist communities affected by the recent protection of more than 100,000 hectares of internationally significant river red gum forests in the Riverina region. From July 2010 the Trust became responsible for administering \$50 million of the \$97-million river red gum support package. This package provides restructuring assistance to the forestry industry and affected communities and includes business and worker exit assistance, support for affected NSW Forestry staff and a Regional Employment and Community Development Fund which will provide grants to community organisations, councils and businesses to create new employment opportunities.

Amendments to the *Forestry Restructuring and Nature Conservation Act 1995* were made following the introduction of the *National Park Estate (Riverina Red Gum Reservations) Act 2010* to enable these programs to be administered by the Trust.

Highlights of 2010–11

The Trust spent \$90.7 million on environmental programs in 2010–11. The following highlights demonstrate the diverse range of outcomes achieved.

- \$9.5 million dollars in assistance was delivered to communities in the Riverina during the first year of the River Red Gums Program. The new Community Development Fund is helping to create new employment opportunities following reservation of the region's river red gum forests as national park in 2010. A further \$27.9 million dollars is being provided to support industry restructuring and adjustment for affected workers and timber industries.
- Eight new properties were purchased under the Land Acquisition Program to strengthen the NSW reserve system. This included a significant property in the Lachlan Valley that will protect over 17,000 hectares of endangered woodland communities.
- The Major Environmental Grants Program concluded this year with continued success and achievements from each of the three projects:
 - The Great Eastern Ranges Initiative has focused on transitioning from a NSW Government-led program to a partnership between conservation organisations, community groups and state government agencies. It has continued to expand its project partners in five key regional areas and gain strong support for the Initiative across many sectors including community, industry and government.
 - The Clean Air, Healthy Communities Program funded a second round of Air Education Grants for councils, commenced the heavy vehicle component of the Fleetwise project and completed a database and emissions inventory for aerosols and solvents.
 - 26 Land Alive trainees graduated in June 2011 with a Certificate III in Conservation and Land Management. Other achievements this year for the Land Alive Program include the funding of three Aboriginal land management plans (bringing the total number of plans completed to 12), and continued support for Aboriginal participation in the BioBanking scheme.
- 7,702 megalitres of water entitlements were purchased in the Murrumbidgee Valley through the NSW RiverBank Program. Wet conditions across NSW generated the opportunity to deliver approximately 61,500 megalitres of environmental water purchased through NSW RiverBank to enhance natural inflows to wetlands in the Gwydir, Lachlan, Murrumbidgee and Macquarie valleys. These environmental flows contributed to some outstanding environmental outcomes, reviving drought stricken wetland vegetation and supporting successful breeding events by waterbirds and frogs.
- A new bush regeneration grant program was approved by the Trust to commence in 2011–12. The program will provide up to \$10 million for major bush regeneration projects. This new grant program recognises the growing desire for larger projects that tackle bush regeneration at a regional scale. They will also provide small grants for work by individual landholders who have entered into formal conservation agreements.
- Two more biobanking agreements were signed this year. 'Brownlow Hill' is a privately owned property at Camden that protects 24 hectares of Cumberland Plains woodland. The second agreement is on the historic property of 'Beulah' at Appin. The purchase of this property was partly funded by the Trust's Growth Centres Program in partnership with the Historic Houses Trust. It protects 60 hectares of shale sandstone endangered transition forest and Cumberland Plains woodland.
- The Trust awarded \$16.2 million in competitive grants to community groups, state and local government, industry and Aboriginal communities. These grants provided funding for environmental restoration and rehabilitation projects, environmental education projects, research into climate change, biodiversity and environmental pollution, and regional employment and capacity building.
- \$10 million was provided for waste and sustainability projects that are helping NSW meet key targets in waste avoidance and resource recovery. Key outcomes for the year include:
 - continued improvements and participation in recycling in regional NSW through the work of eight Voluntary Regional Waste Groups
 - 43 successful CleanOut events to collect hazardous household chemicals
 - investigation of 5,247 illegal dumping incidents involving 231,000 tonnes of waste
 - recognition of 63 businesses for outstanding environmental achievements with Gold, Silver and Bronze awards through the Sustainability Advantage program
 - development of more than 80 strategic partnerships to minimise food waste in the Love Food Hate Waste Program
 - registration of over 12,000 recycling businesses in the first year of the Business Recycling online directory.
- Building on the success of the Trust as an efficient manager of environmental funding, the NSW Government announced new grant programs that the Trust will be administering from 2011–12:
 - Flying-Foxes will subsidise the installation of netting to protect orchard crops from flying-foxes in western Sydney, Blue Mountains and the Central Coast. Supported by the NSW Farmers Federation, Humane Society International and the Nature Conservation Council of NSW, this program will enable NSW to phase out the licensed shooting of flying-foxes.
 - Devil Ark will contribute towards the running of a specially developed facility at Barrington Tops for the conservation of Tasmanian devils.

Trust Programs and Achievements





Land Acquisition

The Land Acquisition Program is a permanent program of the Trust that provides money for additions to the State's reserve system. Purchases made under the program target four important conservation issues: building foundations for the reserve system in Western NSW; improving park boundaries; protecting Aboriginal cultural values and preserving coastal lowlands and wetlands.

The Trust provided \$4.33 million for the Land Acquisition Program in 2010–11. This contributed to the purchase of eight properties covering 18,678 hectares. In addition, 22 properties covering 28,451 hectares that were previously acquired with Trust funds were formally gazetted this year under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*.

Hunthawang

The most significant property purchase in 2010–11 was 'Hunthawang', a 17,754-hectare property in the Riverina bioregion. It lies ten kilometres north-east of Hillston with frontage to the Lachlan River and Willandra Creek. The property was reserved as an addition to the Lachlan Valley State Conservation Area. It is surrounded by large natural areas including Nombinnie Nature Reserve on its northern boundary and Lachlan Valley Regional Park to the south. Some 250,000 hectares, stretching nearly 120 kilometres, are now under protection for this part of central-western NSW.

'Hunthawang' supports a number of ecosystems which are very poorly represented in the reserve system at the state and national level. Of particular importance is the 9,000 hectares of grassy open woodland dominated by weeping myall (*Acacia pendula*) which is listed by the Australian and NSW Governments as an endangered ecological community. The property also includes about 6,000 hectares of black box (*Eucalyptus largiflorens*) woodland which is currently poorly reserved across its range (only 2.7 per cent of its current extent is reserved within NSW and Victoria combined). Other significant communities include river red gum forest, lignum shrubland, bumble box woodland and small areas of white cypress pine (*Callitris glaucophylla*) woodland on sandhills which is listed in NSW as an endangered ecological community.

Its considerable frontage to the Lachlan River and Willandra, Merrowie and Middle creeks provides refuges from which species can disperse into the surrounding landscape during favourable conditions. Several threatened species have been recorded or are expected to occur on the property including the barking owl, Major Mitchell's cockatoo, little eagle and hooded robin.

In a region with limited attractions for tourism, 'Hunthawang' has the potential to provide future opportunities for public

visitation and recreation centred on the Lachlan River and billabongs and the indigenous heritage contained within the reserve.



Open Boree woodland in Hunthawang

Strengthening the reserve system

In 2010–11 the Office of Environment and Heritage focused on improving management efficiency for seven of its parks with the purchase of five properties that lie wholly within a reserve and two properties that lie on the perimeter of reserves. The parks benefiting from these purchases are South East Forest National Park, Torrington State Conservation Area, Maria National Park, Hortons Falls National Park Community Conservation Area, Brindabella National Park, New England National Park and Paupong Nature Reserve.

The purchase of these properties and their future incorporation into the reserve system will enhance the management of these parks and their cost effectiveness by creating clear and practical park boundaries, allowing for a holistic approach to conservation management and control of pests, weeds and fire, as well as providing safer access into parks for visitors and staff.

Restoration and Rehabilitation



Achievements

The Restoration and Rehabilitation Program aims to enhance and restore natural environments by funding a diverse range of community and government projects. Some of the many activities that are undertaken through the program include rehabilitating degraded vegetation communities, restoring wetlands and riparian zones, cleaning up contaminated land and illegally dumped hazardous materials, supporting the recovery of threatened species, and enhancing coastal and marine environments through restoration, erosion control and catchment management activities.

Eighty-six restoration and rehabilitation projects were completed this year. Achievements include:

- protection, restoration and enhancement of high conservation value vegetation and habitats, key wildlife corridors and habitat for threatened species, including endangered ecological communities and a Ramsar-listed wetland
- partnership building between community groups, schools, Green Corps teams and Aboriginal communities who have worked alongside professional bush regenerators; participants have increased their capacity and skills through training
- weed management and removal to protect native species and habitat; weeds targeted include madeira vine, privet, asparagus fern and cat's claw creeper
- marine surveys, aquatic weed and rubbish removal and educational initiatives carried out along the NSW coast by volunteer divers
- research into which species are best to plant following weed removal, in order to reduce re-invasion
- regional strategic control of pest species including Indian mynas and cane toads in the mid North Coast
- fencing of the only known location (worldwide) of the endangered diuris 'Oakland' orchid.

Restoration and Rehabilitation grant projects that commenced in 2009 are progressing towards their expected outcomes. Over 86,000 plants have been planted (just over one third of the total expected) and so far 268 hectares of land have been rehabilitated (just over one quarter of the final figure expected from all 2009 projects).

Case studies on the following pages highlight four projects completed this year that have successfully contributed to protecting and restoring the environment.

Program evaluation

An independent evaluation of the Restoration and Rehabilitation Program was finalised in September 2010 by the Centre for International Economics. The program was last reviewed in 2004. The current evaluation considered the appropriateness, effectiveness and efficiency of the program, and included:

- a desktop review of a random sample of 120 projects (representing 26 per cent of all projects funded since 2000) and 40 unsuccessful applications
- an online survey that was sent to all successful and unsuccessful applicants
- site visits to 20 projects
- phone interviews with various program stakeholders

The review concluded that the Restoration and Rehabilitation Program is making a significant contribution towards meeting the environmental needs of NSW. The program is accessible to a wide range of community groups and state and local government organisations, and the review found that many of the funded projects would not have gone ahead in their present form without Trust funding (or would have been significantly delayed). The Trust's strategy of promoting the program through its website, major metropolitan papers and natural resource management networks is consistent with the NSW Government's *Good Practice Guide to Grants Administration*.

The review concluded that given the already high demand for Trust funding, the provision of quality information to allow for selection of the best projects was essential. The ability to use funding as leverage, the security provided by up to three years of financial support, and the flexibility of the Trust were the main factors for the program being held in high regard.

As a whole the program has been effective in meeting its objectives and those of the Trust in general. The desktop review found that around 80 per cent of projects largely met their objectives, while another 15 per cent met at least some of their objectives. The evaluation suggests that the new monitoring and evaluation requirements generally help projects to meet their objectives and that there is evidence of improved project outcomes since their implementation. 70 to 80 per cent of survey respondents thought that the monitoring and evaluation requirements were appropriate given the level of funding received.

A number of issues were identified that were considered to be affecting the efficiency and effectiveness of the program. These include the timing of the grant cycle, the limited feedback to the Technical Committee on performance of past projects, and a lack of resources to report on the collective

achievements of funded projects. These issues are currently being addressed through revised timing of the call for grants and through data collection and implementation of the Trust's Monitoring and Evaluation Program (see Administration of the Trust for further information).

New bush regeneration grants

In May 2011 the Trust approved a new grant program to commence in 2011–12 which will run for six years. Grants will be available for large-scale, community-led bush regeneration projects under two specific funding streams.

One of the major issues grantees encounter with the current Restoration and Rehabilitation grants is that funding is for a maximum of three years. Most bush regeneration projects need around 10 years of work before the ecosystem is able to maintain the restoration trajectory. The provision of funding over a six year period is intended to ensure a successful rehabilitation outcome.

Grants of up to \$250,000 will be available to place-based community groups over six years to undertake bush regeneration and other ecological restoration. Priority will be given to projects that reduced threats to endangered species and ecological communities, improve connectivity within and between ecosystems, involve coordination with public land managers, and are able to attract in kind and other financial contributions. These grants are intended to meet the growing desire of groups, or coalitions of groups, wishing to undertake large-scale regional projects. These projects may involve three or four groups working at a subcatchment scale (50–100 hectares) or may target specific issues across large geographic areas (such as river restoration or creation of wildlife corridors across multiple properties).

There is also an increased demand for medium-scale projects that require around \$100,000 over three years. The Trust has made a decision to help meet this demand separately by increasing the budget for contestable grants under the Restoration and Rehabilitation program by \$1 million per year.

The Trust also recognised a need to assist those landholders who have put some form of covenant or agreement on their land. While there are a range of programs that offer financial assistance, they are not available in all regions and are not able to meet the demand. Under the new program, small grants will be available to community groups and individual landholders who have entered into some form of binding conservation agreement and can demonstrate high conservation outcomes.

Major project

Hotspots 2

The Hotspots project is developing an integrated fire and natural resource management program promoting sustainable fire management practices that protect biodiversity while at the same time protecting life, property and cultural values. Phase 1 of this successful project, which is managed by the Nature Conservation Council of NSW, was completed in 2008. The Trust is currently providing a further three years of funding (\$600,000 in total) for the project.

In 2010–11 Hotspots expanded its delivery into the Namoi and Hunter-Central Rivers regions which were introduced to the project in 2009–10. The project will continue to deliver workshops in these two Catchment Management Authority (CMA) regions in the final year.

A great achievement for the project in 2010–11 was a workshop delivered for the first time to indigenous Green Team members in the Northern Rivers CMA. The project has also seen an increase in the geographic information system (GIS) capabilities of the Hotspots fire management plans, and the project will endeavour to incorporate GIS as an integral component of these plans.

Since its inception, the project has delivered over 62 workshops to 631 landholders and managers, resulting in the development of 183 fire management plans for over 100,000 hectares across NSW.

■ CASE STUDY

Indian myna control on the mid North Coast

The Indian myna bird was introduced to Australia in the 1860s to control insect pests in market gardens and sugar cane fields. It is now widely dispersed across the east coast of Australia. The Indian Myna aggressively competes for food and shelter with native birds and hollow-dwelling native animals. Growing community frustration at myna bird numbers on the North Coast prompted Nambucca Valley Landcare Inc. to apply for a \$100,000 grant under the Restoration and Rehabilitation Program to implement a community-based program of Indian myna control.

The comprehensive program developed by the Landcare group included training and support for trapping by volunteers across Nambucca, Coffs Harbour and Belligen Council areas; collecting data on Indian myna distribution and abundance; coordinating professional control solutions (such as nest removal and netting); engaging community organisations in trap building; and promoting community awareness through workshops, brochures and an Indian myna handbook.

The project has successfully created a network of volunteers across the region who can assist community members with trapping techniques, while other volunteers are involved in surveys and trap building.

Over 2,000 Indian mynas were culled from the region by 295 community volunteers over the two-year project. Volunteers have reported rapid recolonisation by native bird species once Indian mynas were removed from an area.

The Indian Myna project was widely promoted through a range of communication tools including a website, brochures, telephone hotline, media releases and radio interviews. 27 training workshops were held across the region with over 800 people receiving training in Indian myna control.



Members of Nambucca Men's Shed with a completed myna trap

■ CASE STUDY

Which species are best at preventing reinvasion by bitou bush?

The establishment phase is the most important stage in determining the invasion success of bitou bush through both seed availability and seedling competition with native species. With a grant of \$88,465 through the Restoration and Rehabilitation Program, the University of Wollongong conducted a series of controlled experiments to determine whether the species planted and the order in which they are planted can reduce reinvasion by bitou bush.

50 mesocosms (in this case large planted containers) were established and planted with various combinations of shrubs, grasses and herbs. Each mesocosm contained six native foredune species and ranged from monocultures of grass, herb or shrubs to mixed cultures containing all three vegetation structures. After seven months of establishment bitou seeds were added and germination success, seedling survival and bitou bush cover were monitored.

Glasshouse trials investigated the competitive hierarchy between bitou bush and 18 native species that occur in foredune communities.

The project confirmed that bitou bush is a highly effective competitor and few native species were able to reduce bitou biomass by more than 50 per cent. Native shrub species were found to be the best competitors. In particular the coastal saltbush species *Rhagodia candolleana* was highly competitive under both drought and non-drought conditions. Two herb species, *Tetragonia tetragonoides* and *Carpobrotus glaucescens* were also good competitors, but grass species were found to be poor competitors. Generally native species were better able to compete with bitou bush under non-drought conditions.

An unexpected outcome of the research was that the order in which native species are established is unimportant in determining resistance to invasion. This finding has important implications for restoration projects as it means that regenerators do not need to follow a particular planting sequence to minimise reinvasion of bitou bush.



Bitou bush is a serious threat to coastal environments

■ CASE STUDY

Wingham Riparian Reserve 'Stepping Stone' canopy consolidation

Greater Taree City Council has built upon previous regeneration work in Wingham Foreshore Reserve to enhance an endangered lowland rainforest community known as the Wingham Brush. Along with the adjoining Wingham Nature Reserve, the Wingham Foreshore Reserve contains 10 per cent of the remaining lowland floodplain rainforest in NSW.

A grant of \$99,100 through the Restoration and Rehabilitation Program allowed the council to undertake a program of rehabilitation, to restore the vegetation of the reserve, act as a buffer to the endangered Wingham Brush and reduce weed invasion following floods.

The Stepping Stone project was achieved by a range of community and volunteer groups working together under the guidance of two professional bush regenerators. Fencing of the site was undertaken to exclude cattle that previously grazed within the reserve. Nearly 9,000 native trees were planted in the reserve with survival rates of around 85 per cent.

Stream bank erosion was suppressed through the regeneration of riparian areas resulting in the re-establishment of native vegetation along 95 per cent of the foreshore. This revegetation work has consolidated the previous fragments of lowland floodplain rainforest and increased the overall extent of the ecological community by 7 per cent.

A new heritage trail provides community access to the site and links areas of cultural and environmental significance. The trail highlights the environmental significance of the site adjacent to the Manning River and Wingham Brush, and the historical values of the heritage town of Wingham.

The completion of the Stepping Stones project has transformed the site from an open and highly degraded foreshore environment to a healthy regenerating riparian site. Increasing numbers of small mammals and birds are now returning to the reserve for the first time since grazing began.



Endangered Wingham Brush rainforest community in Wingham Nature Reserve

■ CASE STUDY

Remediation of upland swamps in the Blue Mountains

With a \$98,688 Restoration and Rehabilitation grant, this project by Blue Mountains City Council has been a key driver in the development of soft engineering techniques for the rehabilitation of highland peat swamps in the Blue Mountains. The project has trialled innovative rehabilitation and rehydration techniques pioneered in the alpine wetlands of the Australian Alps and adapted them to the local conditions of the Blue Mountains swamps.

Working through council's Save Our Swamps program, this project resulted in the regeneration of 17 hectares of swampland across 15 sites, resulting in the protection of more than 30 hectares of vulnerable areas downstream.

Swamp remediation structures were installed in a wide variety of degraded swamp systems. Structures included small detention basins to stabilise incised channels, level spreaders to distribute flows across a wider area, the packing of channels with straw bales and coir logs, and coir log walls to stabilise stream banks. Through adaptive modifications, the design, placement and materials used for these structures were progressively adapted to the local conditions.

To support the on-ground works, the project developed an integrated whole-of-catchment approach to reducing the stormwater impacts that were degrading many of the Blue Mountains swamps. This included closing or remediating 2.5 kilometres of tracks and fire trails, installing sedimentation structures, revegetating degraded areas and introducing rebates for rainwater tanks in target catchments.

The innovations and knowledge acquired through the project were brought together in a manual which documents best practice guidelines for remediation of highland peat swamps in the Blue Mountains, Southern Highlands and Gosford area. The manual, *Soft-engineering solutions for swamp remediation – a 'how-to' guide*, is available on the Save Our Swamps website.

Before (top) and after (below) photos show rapid recovery of vegetation in Braeside Swamp at Blackheath in just six months.



The program's objectives are to:

- Following review of the Restoration and Rehabilitation Program in 2010, the Trust has changed the cycle of funding for the program. The new cycle will allow projects to commence in July each year and continue for up to three years. It is anticipated that organisations will be advised of the outcome of their applications around April each year. This should assist all organisations to better commit and manage their budgets as grant agreements will be signed and first payments will be received early in the financial year.

The 2010 Community Grants Program received 77 applications and funded 18 projects to the total value of \$1,506,735. The State and Local Government Grants Program received 79 applications and funded 17 projects to the total value of \$1,579,350.

During the year additional funds became available, allowing the Trust to fund a further 13 grants. Seven reserve projects totalling \$437,303 in the Community Grants Program and six reserve projects totalling \$420,816 in the State and Local Government Grants Program were approved. This brought the total funded projects during the year to \$1,944,038 for the Community Grants Program (Table 1) and \$2,000,166 for the State and Local Government Grants Program (Table 2).

The 2010 round of grants are expected to result in bush regeneration of more than 2,100 hectares of land, revegetation of 217 hectares and the planting of around 150,000 native plants.

A one-off grant was approved by the Trust in June 2011. The Trust approved a grant of \$1,155,433 to the Office of Environment and Heritage under the Restoration and Rehabilitation Major Grants Program. The grant was to clean up contaminated water from a fire at Integra Water Treatment Solutions at Kurnell. The fire resulted in large volumes of contaminated water, which was at risk of being discharged into Marton Park Wetland, a sensitive site that is connected to the Ramsar-listed Towra Point Nature Reserve. It is expected that the funds will be refunded once legal action is resolved.

Table 1

Restoration and Rehabilitation community grants awarded in 2010–11

Organisation	Project title	LGA	Amount
Big Scrub Rainforest Landcare Group Inc.	Rehabilitating border ranges endangered lowland rainforest	Various	\$100,000
Booroongen Djugun Aboriginal Corporation	Jidaanga Cultural Project – Endangered <i>Phaius australis</i>	Kempsey	\$99,393
Bush Habitat Restoration Cooperative Ltd	Extension to Ropes Creek restoration and community project	Penrith	\$44,600
Condobolin and Districts Landcare	Revitalising Lachlan catchment riverine environments	Lachlan	\$99,898
Dirawong Reserve Trust	Dirawong, Evans Head, conserving the past, protecting the future	Richmond Valley	\$92,165
Dundundra Falls Reserve Trust	Duffys Forest endangered ecological community restoration	Warringah	\$56,440
Dunedoo Area Community Group Inc	Talbragar river restoration near Dunedoo NSW	Warrumbungle	\$23,400
EnviTE Inc.	Eastern Dorrigo plateau restoration and rehabilitation	Coffs Harbour	\$99,972
EnviTE Inc.	Red Rock Reserve coastal dune and EEC restoration project	Coffs Harbour	\$99,999
EnviTE Inc.	Richmond River Nature Reserve restoration and rehabilitation	Ballina	\$97,731
Friends of Lane Cove National Park	Dalrymple Hay – restoration of endangered blue gum high forest	Ku-Ring-Gai	\$56,040
Hastings Landcare Inc.	Hastings and Macleay Indian myna control program	Various	\$98,778
Karangi Landcare Inc.	Community education through Landcare action at Karangi Public School	Coffs Harbour	\$16,420
Loreto Normanhurst	Loreto Normanhurst bush regeneration project	Hornsby	\$76,950
Macleay Landcare Network Inc.	Dungay Creek river restoration project	Kempsey	\$77,809
Nambucca Valley Landcare Inc.	Indian myna control program – mid North Coast Stage 2	Various	\$100,000
Nature Conservation Trust of NSW	Restoring high conservation value habitats and corridors in NE NSW	Various	\$99,948
Nimbin Rocks Cooperative Landcare Group	Protection of biodiversity – Goolmangar Creek	Lismore	\$96,902
Norah Head Lighthouse Reserve Trust	Norah Head headland, restoration and rehabilitation	Wyong	\$99,000
Pacific Palms Community Association Inc.	Wallis Lake foreshore rehabilitation	Great Lakes	\$31,200
Riverina Highlands Landcare Network	Ridgelines to rivers – Riverina highlands Box Gum project	Various	\$86,000
Sandon Point, Casuarina Forest (Collins Creek) & Whartons Creek Bushcare Groups	Riparian and headland restoration and regeneration in Bulli	Wollongong	\$45,000
Tallyan Point and Smith's Bay Bushcare Group	St Georges Basin Foreshore Protection Project	Shoalhaven	\$48,575
Tuggerah Lakes (Pioneer Dairy) Reserve Trust	Restoration of remnant vegetation at Pioneer Dairy Oxbow	Wyong	\$97,860
Wetland Care Australia Pty Ltd	Lower Hunter wetlands corridor – shorebird protection program	Various	\$99,958
Total			\$1,944,038

Table 2

Restoration and Rehabilitation state and local government grants awarded in 2010–11

Organisation	Project title	LGA	Amount
Ballina Shire Council	Marom Creek Weir riparian rehabilitation project Ballina	Lismore	\$98,460
Bellingen Shire Council	Connect with your river: riparian corridor restoration program	Bellingen	\$100,000
Byron Shire Council	Protecting and managing significant roadside vegetation in Byron Shire	Byron	\$99,000
Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust (CPMPT) and Waverley Council	Model yacht pond (MYP) restoration and rehabilitation works	Waverley	\$100,000
Office of Environment and Heritage	Cane toads in Sydney – avoidance, surveys and eradication	Sutherland	\$36,154
Eurobodalla Shire Council	Planting for potoroos – habitat restoration on the South Coast	Eurobodalla	\$99,987
Hawkesbury–Nepean Catchment Management Authority	An adaptive approach to managing woody weeds at Jenolan Reserve	Oberon	\$100,000
Hawkesbury–Nepean Catchment Management Authority	Reinstating wader bird habitat at Pitt Town Lagoon	Hawkesbury	\$85,000
Hunter Councils	Black Creek riparian vine project: Cessnock	Various	\$95,550
Hunter Councils	Rehabilitation of EECs on roadsides and community lands	Various	\$99,620
Lord Howe Island Board	Battle of Transit Hill Stage 2 – saving the little muttonbird ground	Lord Howe Island	\$98,346
Maitland City Council	Controlling African olives in Maitland to protect native vegetation	Maitland	\$54,100
Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authority	Landscape-scale restoration of the Hay Rangelands	Various	\$66,162
NSW Department of Primary Industries	Fish-friendly farms in the Tweed (FFFT)	Tweed	\$100,000
Port Macquarie–Hastings Council	Repairing the Limeburners Creek to Sea Acres coastal link: Stage 1	Port Macquarie–Hastings	\$100,000
Shoalhaven City Council	Shoalhaven Madeira vine control Stage 2	Shoalhaven	\$47,794
Shoalhaven City Council	Working on country – Indigenous bushcare team – Shoalhaven	Shoalhaven	\$96,749
South East Regional Organisation of Councils (SERO)	South east regional waste management strategic plan	Various	\$100,000
Tweed Shire Council	Koala connections	Tweed	\$99,844
Tweed Shire Council	Protection and restoration of the Pottsville wetlands	Tweed	\$100,000
Upper Hunter Weeds Authority	Reducing the African olive threat to native vegetation in the Hunter	Singleton	\$100,000
Wagga Wagga City Council	Biodiversity habitat corridors across the Wagga Wagga LGA	Wagga Wagga	\$23,400
Wagga Wagga City Council	Narrung wetlands – creating community assets from degraded lagoons	Wagga Wagga	\$100,000
Total			\$2,000,166

Protecting Our Places Program

The Protecting Our Places (POP) Program supports projects that restore or rehabilitate Aboriginal land or land that is culturally significant to Aboriginal people, or that educate Aboriginal and other communities about the environment. The program provides for up to \$500,000 in funding per year to Aboriginal organisations to achieve these aims.

In 2010–11 the Trust awarded 12 grants totalling \$347,932 (Table 3). Nine workshops were held across NSW prior to the call for applications for the 2011 grants program in March. These workshops attracted 84 participants, providing them with information on how to prepare a high quality grant application, information on managing projects, and examples of outcomes from successfully completed POP projects.

Achievements from some of the POP projects completed in 2010–11 include:

- restoration of a reserve in Tibooburra including rubbish removal and tree planting using local eucalypt species propagated from seed; interpretive signage explains the Aboriginal cultural significance of the area
- removal of dumped waste and control of invasive environmental weeds on significant Aboriginal land at Tweed Heads
- installation of interpretive signage explaining the connection of the Wiradjuri Aboriginal heritage and wetland areas at Leeton
- establishment of an indigenous native garden at Wadalba Community School to teach students about garden maintenance, native plant identification and traditional plant uses.

■ CASE STUDY

Shannon Creek walking track

Shannon Creek Dam near Grafton is a key component of the Clarence Valley and Coffs Harbour regional water supply system. With a \$34,977 grant through the Protecting Our Places Program, the Barra:way Wa:jad Traditional Owners Group and Grafton Ngerrie Local Aboriginal Land Council have worked in partnership with Clarence Valley Council and EnviTE NSW to restore an area downstream of the dam and establish an interpretive walking track.

The project aims to educate the community about indigenous land management, traditional uses of the environment and the cultural and environmental significance of the Shannon Creek area. This is achieved through educational signage, resting places and demonstration plantings established along the length of the track. Six signs installed along the track provide information on:

- Gumbainggir Nation traditional lands
- water conservation and importance of healthy riparian areas
- biodiversity values of the surrounding escarpment
- cultural heritage of the Shannon Creek area
- wildlife corridors
- significant flora and fauna.

The project also produced a promotional brochure on Shannon Creek Dam and its environmental management, including information about the walking track and the restoration project. The walking track and the cultural information gathered through the project are used in school



Local schools helped out with replanting along Shannon Creek

education activities at the site, and have been included in primary and high school education packages used by the local council's Water Efficiency Coordinator.

Five members of the Aboriginal community completed studies in Conservation and Land Management (Certificate II) while a further two obtained Certificates of Attainment for completed subjects. All trainees gained related work experience in track construction, bush regeneration, weed control, seed collection and propagation techniques. These works have helped the council to improve the riparian area of Shannon Creek and implement on-ground actions to enhance the biodiversity of the site.

The walking track was officially opened in October 2010 by the Mayor of Clarence Valley Council who presented the Aboriginal trainees with their certificates. Children from two local primary schools then assisted the trainees to install 200 plants along the banks of Shannon Creek and along the walking track.

Table 3

Protecting Our Places grants awarded in 2010–11

Organisation	Project title	LGA	Amount
Bahtahbah Local Aboriginal Land Council	Pinny Beach restoration, conservation and education project	Lake Macquarie	\$33,224
Brewarrina Business Centre	Brewarrina fish traps and surrounds pathways	Brewarrina	\$30,000
Cobar & Western Region Enterprise Development Inc.	Murdi Paaki job compact bush nursery project	Cobar	\$35,000
D'harawal Traditional Descendants and Knowledgeholders Circle	Mangami: D'harawal plants and their uses	Various	\$30,000
Illawarra Aboriginal Corporation	Bush medicine plants in the Illawarra	Various	\$29,100
Jerrinja Local Aboriginal Land Council	Protecting and understanding the cultural landscape	Shoalhaven	\$32,098
Merana Aboriginal Community Association for the Hawkesbury Inc.	Yellomundee Aboriginal Bushcare Group	Hawkesbury	\$27,830
Merrimans Local Aboriginal Land Council	Wallaga Lake – reclaiming country	Eurobodalla	\$21,360
Uambi Aboriginal Corporation	Uambi youth and community centre development: Stage 2 community garden	Gilgandra	\$35,000
Waagan Waagan Project Group	Yindyamarra restoration project	Wagga Wagga	\$19,420
Winangakirri Aboriginal Corporation	Native plant propagation and revegetation at Mawonga	Carrathool	\$35,000
Wiradjuri Wellington Aboriginal Town Common Corporation	Wellington Wiradjuri River restoration	Wellington	\$19,900
Total			\$347,932

Contaminated Land Management Program



Contaminated sites can pose a major risk to human health and the environment. They can be a source of ongoing pollution of aquifers and waterways, degrade habitats, preclude beneficial use of natural resources, prevent the development of land and threaten water security. Through the Contaminated Land Management Program the Trust has provided a total of \$6 million over four years to investigate and remediate these sites.

The program provides funds to 'innocent owners' who unwittingly find themselves responsible for the remediation of serious land contamination because the polluter cannot be found or no longer exists. The granting of Trust funds ensures that prolonged delays in remediation and potential risks to the environment are kept to a minimum. The program also assists local councils in the investigation and remediation of former gasworks sites. These former gas manufacturing plants have left a legacy of contamination of soil and groundwater at these and adjoining sites.

The Contaminated Land Management Program is delivered on behalf of the Trust by the Contaminated Sites Unit of OEH. It is overseen by a Trust subcommittee with representation from industry, non-government organisations and local and state government.

Under the Innocent Owners Scheme grants of approximately of \$440,000 were provided this year for remediation of a former battery recycling site in Young (Table 4).

The Council Gasworks Program awarded a total of \$506,058 for the investigation of seven gasworks and \$1,000,000 for the remediation of two gasworks (Table 4). Two major grants of \$500,000 each were provided to Cabonne Shire for Molong Gasworks and Wingecarribee Shire for Bowral Gasworks.

Molong Gasworks operated from 1892 to 1977. A substantial amount of coal tar waste is present in the soils at the site which is posing a risk to limestone karst aquifers. Cabonne Shire Council will use the funds to excavate the coal tar, and treat and dispose of it appropriately.

Bowral Gasworks operated from 1889 to 1970. The site has been declared as significantly contaminated because waste from the site is migrating to the Mittagong Rivulet. Council will use the funds to undertake remediation works at the site boundary and in the Rivulet.

Work on remediation of the Cootamundra Gasworks, funded by the program in 2009–10, is well underway with excavation works complete and bioremediation of contaminated soils occurring on site. The Yass Gasworks remediation, also funded last year, is in the planning phase with site works expected to commence over the coming months.

In November 2010 the Trust approved a further \$6 million in funding for the Contaminated Lands Management Program over three years. The new program, commencing from 2011–12, will also incorporate the remediation of derelict underground petroleum storage tanks. This new aspect of the program will focus on supporting local government authorities to investigate and determine the best tools for dealing with abandoned underground petroleum storage sites.

The program will aim to investigate and remediate a range of underground storage sites in order to assess the scale of this issue facing local governments in rural areas where low land values may preclude site clean-up. Funding limits for the program will be set at \$50,000 for each detailed site investigation and \$200,000 for each site remediation.

Table 4

Contaminated Land Management grants awarded in 2010–11

Council gasworks

Organisation	Project title	LGA	Amount
Cabonne Council	Former Molong Gasworks Remediation	Cabonne	\$500,000
Cowra Shire Council	Cowra Gasworks Investigation	Cowra	\$130,000
Deniliquin Council	Stage 1 Investigation – former Deniliquin Gasworks	Deniliquin	\$50,000
Hay Shire Council	Stage 1 Investigation – Former Hay Gasworks	Hay	\$71,109
Lithgow City Council	Lithgow Gasworks – additional funds for further investigation	Lithgow	\$31,620
Maitland City Council	East Maitland Gasworks Investigation – Stage 2	Maitland	\$150,000
Wingecarribee Shire Council	Bowral Gasworks – Stage 2 Investigations	Wingecarribee	\$58,789
Wingecarribee Shire Council	Former Bowral Gasworks Remediation	Wingecarribee	\$500,000
Yass Valley Council	Yass Gasworks – Stage 3 Investigation	Yass	\$14,540
Total			\$1,506,058

Innocent Owners

Owner	Project title	LGA	Amount
Mrs Marcia Milne & Mrs Jill Finn	Young Battery Recyclers – Investigation	Young	\$39,563
Mrs Marcia Milne & Mrs Jill Finn	Remediation of former battery recycling site at Young NSW	Young	\$400,000
Total			\$439,563

Table 5

Emergency Pollution and Orphan Waste Clean-up grants awarded in 2010–11

Organisation	Incident	Date of incident	Amount
All Saints Anglican Church	Clean-up of organophosphate (phosphine tablets) at All Saints Anglican Church, Waitara	28 Nov 10	\$302.18
Blacktown City Council	Clean-up of asbestos at Watch House Road, Prospect	13 May 10	\$1,770.00
Blacktown City Council	Clean-up of asbestos at Honeman Close, Huntingwood	1 Jun 10	\$6,480.50
Blacktown City Council	Clean-up of asbestos at Penelope Crescent, Arndell Park	18 Nov 10	\$1,632.00
Blacktown City Council	Clean-up of asbestos at Hobart Street, Riverstone	14 Jan 11	\$4,270.40
Blacktown City Council	Clean-up of hydrocarbon from Whalan Reserve, Whalan	29 Jul 10	\$7,060.91
Office of Environment and Heritage	Clean-up of asbestos at Cuumbeun Nature Reserve, Captains Flat Road, Queanbeyan	2 Feb 10	\$560.00
Office of Environment and Heritage	Clean-up of asbestos beside Glen David Road, Capertee, Gardens of Stone National Park	10 Dec 10	\$3,750.00
Eurobodalla Shire Council	Clean-up of liquid contamination at Tuross Lake, Batemans Bay Marine Park	1 Jun 10	\$3,411.61
Fairfield City Council	Clean-up of asbestos at Wilcock Street, Carramar	2 Mar 10	\$3,326.00
Fairfield City Council	Clean-up of asbestos at Ferrers Road, Horsley Park	1 Feb 10	\$2,700.00
Fairfield City Council	Clean-up of asbestos at corner Newton and Victoria Street, Wetherill Park and at Smithfield Road, Edensor Park	20 Sep 10	\$16,332.00
Hawkesbury City Council	Clean-up of asbestos at Geakes Road, Glossodia	10 Mar 10	\$1,340.00
Hawkesbury City Council	Clean-up of asbestos at Midson Road, Oakville	10 Jun 10	\$2,600.00
Hawkesbury City Council	Clean-up of asbestos at Gavin Lane, Richmond	25 May 10	\$2,154.00
Hawkesbury City Council	Clean-up of asbestos at Bells Line of Road, Bilpin	6 May 10	\$2,000.00
Hawkesbury City Council	Clean-up of asbestos at the Bells Line of Road truckshop, Bilpin	24 May 10	\$2,000.00
Hawkesbury City Council	Clean-up of asbestos at West Portland Road, Lower Portland	13 Sep 10	\$2,000.00
Hurstville City Council	Clean-up of asbestos at The Crescent, Beverly Hills	29 Jan 10	\$5,100.00
Land and Property Management Authority	Clean-up of asbestos at Bloodwood Fire Trail, Blaxlands Ridge	10 Jun 10	\$4,531.82
Lane Cove Council	Clean-up of asbestos in bushland behind Ronald Avenue, Greenwich	25 Oct 10	\$7,743.50
Liverpool City Council	Clean-up of asbestos at Heathcote Road, Pleasure Point	25 Feb 10	\$1,781.80
Liverpool City Council	Cleanup of asbestos at Yarrunga Street, Preston	1 Apr 10	\$897.00
Liverpool City Council	Clean-up of asbestos in the reserve near Cabramatta Avenue, Miller	8 Mar 10	\$1,913.00
Liverpool City Council	Clean-up of asbestos at Riverside Drive, Chipping Norton	24 Feb 10	\$699.00
Liverpool City Council	Clean-up of asbestos at Kelso Park, Junction Road, Moorebank	11 May 10	\$2,425.45
Liverpool City Council	Clean-up of asbestos at Park Road, Liverpool	20 Aug 10	\$1,789.10
Liverpool City Council	Clean-up of asbestos at Twenty-seventh Avenue, Liverpool	28 Jul 10	\$543.64

Emergency Pollution and Orphan Waste Clean-up grants awarded in 2010–11 (cont)

Organisation	Incident	Date of incident	Amount
Liverpool City Council	Clean-up of asbestos at Goverment Road, Cecil Hills	30 Sep 10	\$1,619.10
Liverpool City Council	Clean-up of asbestos at Wonga Parade, Lurnea	6 Jul 10	\$1,272.73
Liverpool City Council	Clean-up of asbestos at Cuthel Street, Badgerys Creek	28 Jul 10	\$330.91
Liverpool City Council	Clean-up of asbestos at Gurner Avenue and Devonshire Street, Kemps Creek	22 Jul 10	\$1,903.64
Marrickville Council	Clean-up of 400 litres of diesel at Tempe Wetlands	18 Jun 10	\$698.50
Strathfield Municipal Council	Cleanup of asbestos at Madeline Avenue, Strathfield South	10 Nov 10	\$1,179.00
Strathfield Municipal Council	Clean-up of asbestos at Wentworth Street, Greenacre	11 Oct 10	\$1,059.00
Strathfield Municipal Council	Clean-up of asbestos in a laneway off Madeline Street, Strathfield South	7 Jan 10	\$4,317.00
Strathfield Municipal Council	Clean-up of asbestos at Parks Road, Homebush	16 Jul 10	\$923.00
Strathfield Municipal Council	Clean-up of asbestos at Cleveland Street, Strathfield South	13 Dec 10	\$5,681.00
Strathfield Municipal Council	Clean-up of asbestos at Pilcher Street, Strathfield South	8 Oct 10	\$1,578.00
The Council Of Camden	Clean-up of liquid waste dumped in stormwater sump draining to Narellan Creek, Smeaton Grange	22 Feb 11	\$132,033.00
Transpacific Industrial Solutions	Clean-up of tar-based creosote spill at Tuross Lake	8 Jun 10	\$3,284.24
Total			\$246,993.03

Environmental Education



The Trust's Environmental Education Program aims to facilitate changes in community behaviour and to develop and promote educational projects with positive environmental outcomes.

Grants are available to community groups, councils, government organisations and training providers for projects that will build the community's environmental knowledge and skills, enhance their commitment to protecting the environment, and promote sustainable behaviour.

Achievements

Projects completed under the Environmental Education Program produce a diverse range of environmental outcomes. Some of the achievements from the 25 education projects that concluded this year include:

- the development of educational resources including a workshop and guidebooks on conserving and restoring high conservation value freshwater areas, a rural landholders guide to environmental law, and a climate change action kit for schools
- sustainable living initiatives including an environmental sustainability program for local businesses, engaging young people and families to reduce greenhouse gas emissions at home and at school, and the development of sustainability resources in local libraries
- community engagement and knowledge building including an environmental media campaign for the Chinese community, and engaging communities to contribute to the protection of their local waterways, wetlands and reserves

Education projects that were awarded grants in 2009 have so far engaged 4,700 people in workshops, field days and other project activities, and this is expected to rise to 6,800 people by the time projects are completed. Over 200 people have received training at 23 different events.

Two of the successful environmental education projects completed this year are featured in the following case studies.

■ CASE STUDY

eFlora: The Vascular Plants of the Sydney Region

eFlora is an interactive web-based application that contains descriptions and keys to over 3,000 vascular plants found in the Sydney region. This online resource developed by the University of Sydney provides educators, biologists and land managers with an electronic version of the widely used botanical text *Flora of the Sydney Region* by Carolin and Tindale.

With their \$96,039 grant through the Environmental Education Program, biologists from Sydney University have updated the content of the fourth edition of the Flora of the Sydney Region and turned this into a searchable web-based application for the identification of vascular plants.

At the outset of the project key stakeholders were consulted in the use, design and presentation of the electronic taxonomic information. These stakeholders included designers of Australian Flora online, and botanists from state and national herbariums.

Despite the wide support and botanical expertise available, the project encountered a number of technical challenges, the most difficult of these being the reformatting of the text and keys for web delivery. Early in the project it was discovered that the descriptive tags used by Australian Flora online were either not directly transferable to the project's taxonomic data, or would significantly restrict the way the data could be deployed on the web. After investigating other web-based taxonomic keys it was determined that no standard set of tags were being used and the project would have to develop its own tagging system in order to deploy the data as it was originally intended.

The taxonomic keys are navigable forwards and backwards, with the full extent of the keys visible to users if they choose. This full integration of keys and the flexibility of entry points is a unique feature of eFlora compared to other web-based products.

A final outcome of the project was the publication of the fifth edition of the Flora of the Sydney Region which is available from the website as a 700-page print-on-demand document.

eFlora: The Vascular Plants of the Sydney Region is hosted by the website of the University of Sydney Library.



The eFlora homepage

■ CASE STUDY

Water for Wetlands is Water for Life

Bringing inland communities together to learn about conserving and restoring high conservation wetlands was the primary aim of a \$99,941 environmental education project by the Inland Rivers Network (IRN). The three-stage project involved the development of educational tools, the delivery of a series of workshops across inland NSW and finally the combination of knowledge and outcomes into a workshop report.

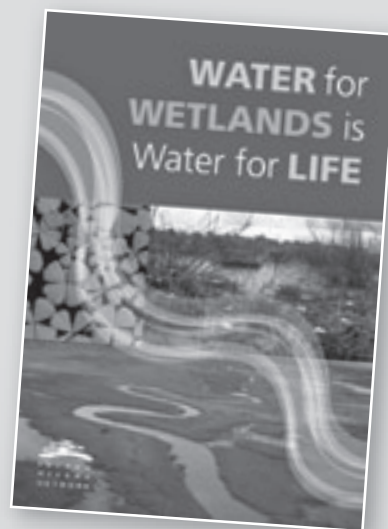
Five workshops across regional NSW (Coonamble, Nyngan, Booligal, Lake Cargelligo and Boggabri) focused on different high conservation wetlands. These workshops included presentations that were highly specific to each area, allowing the local community to fully engage with the wetlands in their environment. A final workshop held in Sydney considered the wetlands of the Murray–Darling Basin as a whole.

The workshops were supported by the production of a high quality 'guidebook': Water for Wetlands is Water for Life, which provides information on the value and health of wetlands in inland NSW, as well as practical sources of information for landholders and community members. The booklet was provided to all workshop participants and is available for download from the IRN website. Further exposure for the project was achieved through regular articles in the IRN newsletter and on the IRN website.

Workshop attendees comprised a diverse range of participants including landholders, indigenous community members, high school students, local conservation groups and irrigation and farming groups. 90 per cent of attendees found the workshops interesting and valuable, with 72 per cent reporting that they had learnt new information about their local wetlands.

The final phase of the project involved the compilation of local knowledge, scientific information, community concerns and management issues for each of the high conservation wetlands into a final workshop report.

As well as raising awareness and knowledge of local wetland systems, the project has had a number of other positive benefits. These include the renewal of local Landcare groups, the formation of new groups of like-minded people to more effectively engage with water availability issues, and the development of new relationships between the IRN and local communities, particularly indigenous groups.



Water for Wetlands guide by Inland Rivers Network

Environmental Education Program 2010–11

The Environmental Education program provides \$1,000,000 annually to community groups and state and local government organisations. The program aims to:

- fund projects that attain one or more outcomes in the NSW Government's *Environmental Education Plan: Learning for Sustainability*
- change behaviours and address specific environmental problems
- develop and promote education projects that improve the environment.

The Environmental Education program continues to attract a high level of interest, making it a very competitive grant program. The Trust received 173 expressions of interest for its 2010 grants. This was 18 less than in the previous year

but still a very high number of applications for the funding available. As in past years, \$500,000 was available for community projects and \$500,000 was available for state and local government projects.

The Technical Committee invited 35 organisations to submit full applications. Ten community projects were funded for a total of \$396,366 (Table 6) and nine state and local government projects were funded for a total of \$509,885 (Table 7).

The Education Program will be subject to an external review in 2011–12 as part of the Trust's rolling program of evaluations.

Table 6

Environmental Education community grants awarded in 2010–11

Organisation	Project title	LGA	Amount
Australian Seabird Rescue Inc.	Marine incident response training for wildlife	Various	\$8,620
Baptist Community Services NSW and ACT	Green cleaning practices for community care workers	Statewide	\$39,500
Environmental Defenders Office Ltd (NSW)	Mining and the Law: a guide for the community	Statewide	\$63,440
Gwymac Inc.	Empowering rural women through environmental education	Inverell	\$5,942
Molonglo Catchment Group Inc.	Sustainable horse property management for small farms	Yass	\$23,409
Murray Darling Association	Implementing a teacher NRM handbook through professional development	Various	\$49,500
Nature Conservation Council of NSW	The food waste challenge	Statewide	\$71,990
NSW Early Childhood Environmental Education Network (ECEEN)	Eco smart early years – quality standards model for sustainability	Statewide	\$80,020
Pambula Wetlands and Heritage Project Inc.	Community biodiversity program at Pambula wetlands	Bega Valley	\$7,325
Total Environment Centre	Lessons and tools from existing office building leaders	Statewide	\$46,620
Total			\$396,366

Table 7

Environmental Education state and local government grants awarded in 2010–11

Organisation	Project title	LGA	Amount
Australian Museum	Museum 2 You – M2U	Statewide	\$99,500
Coffs Harbour City Council	Orara River rehabilitation project landholder booklet	Coffs Harbour	\$23,565
Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences	Powerhouse museum EcoLogic website	Statewide	\$70,000
Orana Regional Organisation of Councils	Environment on the agenda – an integrated training approach	Various	\$48,000
Sydney Metropolitan Catchment Management Authority	Environmental education strategy for coastal boaters and fishers	Various	\$99,955
TAFE NSW – North Coast Institute	Living Smart: Creating sustainable communities in the Macleay Valley	Kempsey	\$28,536
TAFE NSW – Riverina Institute	Turn your place green	Various	\$55,146
University of Wollongong	Mobile marine touchpond – marine conservation for primary schools	Wollongong	\$35,451
Wagga Wagga City Council	Wagga Wagga community sustainability challenge	Wagga Wagga	\$49,732
Total			\$509,885

Eco Schools Program

The Eco Schools Program gives schools the opportunity to involve their students and community in developing and implementing environmental management projects. Small grants of \$2,500 are available to assist schools to develop best practice in environmental education and innovative solutions to environmental issues.

Eco Schools projects help students to develop knowledge and skills in environmental sustainability, and provide an opportunity for students to design, implement and monitor environmental solutions that will improve the quality of their school and local environment.

Teachers can integrate environmental projects into school programs to maximise environmental learning. A whole-of-school approach to sustainable management of school operations is encouraged as is the development of links with the wider community and other schools to address local environmental issues.

The 2010 grant program attracted 83 applications requesting a total of \$207,500. 60 grants were awarded totalling \$150,000 (Table 8). The Technical Committee considered that the availability of Australian Government funding (Building the Education Revolution) may have contributed to a reduced number of applications for the program this year.

The 2010 Eco Schools grants are anticipated to engage 1,471 primary and secondary school students in improving environmental awareness and sustainability.

■ CASE STUDY

Where are the bugs, lizards and butterflies?

When the children of Curl Curl North Public School were learning about the diversity of living things and their reliance on one another, it became clear that the barely vegetated school grounds were the reason that the children saw very few animals around the school. With the assistance of an Eco Schools grant, teachers, students, parents and volunteers have worked hard to bring the school gardens to life and create outdoor areas where students can be involved in interactive learning experiences.

Various garden beds have been established to attract different types of animals. A frog pond was installed which has already hosted its first eggs and tadpoles. Another garden provides lizard habitat and two native bird gardens have been created. An enclosure for leaf insects was added to the school grounds after visiting a similar exhibit at Taronga Zoo.

All of the gardens were designed and planted by the children after researching and learning about what species were required to attract different animals, where to plant them and how to plant them. Hands-on planting, mulching, watering and building of plant protection tubes allowed the children to connect with and be involved in the care of their playground and surroundings. Students are responsible for maintaining and monitoring specific sites which they report on at school assemblies.

Initially only a few areas were marked for development, but the creation of the initial garden areas created an infectious enthusiasm within the school community. As the project progressed so too did the desire to involve more children in the planting, which resulted in the creation of additional

new garden areas. A total of 300 students were engaged in the project with support from the school's parent 'Green Team', volunteers and local sponsors who donated soil and landscaping materials.

A total of 120 m² of new habitat is now available in the school grounds along with 20 m² of regenerated habitat. Parents have noted changes in their children's attitudes at home and an increased awareness of sustainability. The children of Curl Curl North Public School have also become very protective of the new plants and animals in their school grounds.



Planting a new tree for wildlife habitat

Table 8

Eco Schools grants awarded in 2010–11

Organisation	Project title	LGA
Abbotsleigh	Eco garden – interacting and understanding our environment	Ku-ring-gai
Albion Park High School	Bush food fusion garden	Shellharbour
Ashbury Public School	Ashbury community garden	Canterbury
Barkers Vale Public School	Barkers Vale kitchen garden – eat, grow, eat	Kyogle
Bellingen Public School	Caring for Gumbaynggirr country	Bellingen
Berkeley West Public School	Fab fresh food	Wollongong
Berrima Public School	School in the garden – Berrima’s outdoor learning space	Wingecarribee
Bhaktivedanta Swami Gurukula School	Sustainable vegetable ecogarden and notice board	Tweed
Bishop Tyrrell Anglican College	Indigenous tree planting	Hunter
Broughton Anglican College	Saving water at Broughton with a smart meter system	Campbelltown
Buronga Public School	Aquaponics – sustainable use of water at Buronga Public School	Wentworth
Byron Bay High School	Aquaponics – an ecologically sustainable food production system	Byron
Caroline Chisholm College	‘Turning food scraps into vegies’ school outreach program	Penrith
Casino West Public School	Knowing and growing	Richmond Valley
Central Mangrove Public School	Living off the land	Gosford
Cherrybrook Technology High School	Outdoor biodiversity learning area	Hornsby
Chullora Public School	Greenies	Bankstown
Clovelly Public School	Garden of edible native plants and outdoor learning circle	Waverley
Coogee Public School	Learning green – outdoor classroom and playspace	Randwick
Doonside Technology High School	Establishing a frog pond	Blacktown
Edgeworth Public School	Native reflection garden	Lake Macquarie
Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School	FMAHS Organic-biodynamic-permaculture community garden	Tamworth
Fern Bay Public School	Fern Bay School’s vegetables and native garden project	Port Stephens
Forestville Montessori School	Conservation of the natural bushland at Dundundra Falls	Warringah
Gwynneville Public School	Indigenous bushfoods garden and cultural studies zone	Wollongong
Iluka Public School	Iluka Public School SEMP: educating, integrating and activating	Clarence Valley
Jamberoo Public School	Conversion of current herb garden into the ‘living classroom’	Kiama
Jannali Public School	Creating native garden to enhance hands-on learning	Sutherland
Keira High School	Organic compost and vegetable garden teaching space	Wollondilly
Kirrawee Public School	Creating a native garden for hands-on learning	Sutherland
Main Arm Public School	Bushtucker and edible garden	Byron
Matrville Soldiers’ Settlement Public School	Matrville leafy greens	Randwick

Eco Schools grants awarded in 2010–11 (cont)

Organisation	Project title	LGA
Medowie Christian School	Organic school gardening program	Port Stephens
Mitchell High School	Gardening – tidying up the school	Blacktown
Monteagle Public School	Indigenous learnscape, native flora and vegetable garden	Young
Moruya Public School	Moruya Public School kitchen garden	Eurobodalla
Mount Pritchard East Public School	An outdoor learning area in a garden setting	Fairfield
Northmead Public School	Northmead's gardening adventure	Parramatta
North Sydney Boys High School	Plastic bottle reduction scheme	North Sydney
Nowra High School	Sustain through knowledge and inclusive practice	Shoalhaven
Oyster Bay Public School	Oyster Bay Public School waste reduction initiative	Sutherland
Peterborough School	School leavers bio-intensive garden jobs (B.I.G. Jobs)	Shellharbour
Primbee Public School	Primbee Public School environmental education club	Wollongong
Queanbeyan Public School	Queanbeyan Public School pupils learn to grow vegetables sustainably	Queanbeyan
Rainbow Ridge School for Steiner Education	Rainbow Ridge School biodynamic kitchen garden	Kyogle
Rathmines Public School	Sustainable organic vegetable garden for Rathmines Public School	Lake Macquarie
Richmond North Public School	Building on our Hawkesbury heritage	Hawkesbury
Royal National Park Environmental Education Centre	Sustainability education and learning centre	Sutherland
Sacred Heart School Coolah	Rehabilitation of school grounds	Warrumbungle
St George School	Land clearance to create outdoor learning area	Rockdale
St Ignatius College Riverview	Developing the Riverview environment walk for community use	Lane Cove
St Joseph's Primary School – Port Macquarie	St Joseph's outdoor learning area	Port Macquarie–Hastings
Southern Cross School	Waste wise project	Richmond River
Temora Public	Temora Public School native gardens project	Temora
Urunga Public School	Urunga Public School's ecofriendly, tasty and educational gardens	Bellingen
Vacy Public School	Playground garden to create environmental education resource	Dungog
Vincentia High School	Get down and dirty with the worms	Shoalhaven
Waverly Action for Youth Services	Smart choices garden to kitchen project	Waverley
Wingham High School	Wastebusters: Waste avoidance and recycling at Wingham High School	Greater Taree
Young High School	Waterwise, productive & sustainable garden	Young
Total		\$150,000



Environmental Research

The Research Program provides funding to projects that investigate solutions to environmental problems, reduce the environmental impact of major industries, increase our knowledge about environmental issues and improve the assessment of environmental degradation. Seeding grants are also available that allow researchers to trial new theories, techniques or indicators before embarking on a major research project.

Did you know?

Researchers from the Office of Environment and Heritage have shown that biological and chemical processes in the tidal zone of rivers can remove as much as 95 per cent of nitrogen loads and 78 per cent of phosphorus loads from the water.

Achievements

Four research seeding projects and ten major projects concluded this year. These projects have contributed to some interesting areas of research including:

- the previously unknown phenomenon of aerosol formation in Australia's native forests, contributing to a better understanding of the air environment
- the role of plane trees in the development of respiratory problems of inner-Sydney residents (the study shows that these trees do not have a major impact on allergic reactions as was previously thought)
- new and useful methods for analysis of fine particle composition in air pollution and the contribution of vehicle emissions.

Projects concluding this year have also produced some significant findings that will enhance our management of aquatic environments, such as:

- the development of novel genetic techniques for assessing the health of estuarine sedimentary environments
- better understanding of nutrient transformation and attenuation processes in tidal rivers
- investigations into the impact of marine noise on invertebrate dispersal and settlement
- improved management techniques for salvinia in temperate aquatic ecosystems
- confirmation of the usefulness of sponges as natural biomonitors in estuaries.

The case studies highlight two of the interesting projects completed this year.

Major project

In 2009–10 the Trust funded a \$750,000 three-year major research project that will increase understanding of intense low pressure weather systems known as East Coast Lows (ECL). The project aims to understand the causes and variability of these weather systems, their impacts on the NSW coastline, and how climate change may modify these extreme weather events.

East Coast Lows

East Coast Lows are one of the most dangerous weather systems to affect the NSW coast. These low pressure systems develop off the coast and often intensify rapidly overnight, generating gale force winds, heavy widespread rainfall that leads to flash or major flooding, and heavy swells that can damage the shoreline. The rainfall resulting from these storm events plays an important role in replenishing catchments on both sides of the Great Dividing Range.

The project, which commenced in March 2010, is being undertaken by the Eastern Seaboard Climate Change Initiative, a cooperative research consortium led by OEH. Members include other NSW government agencies, the Australian Bureau of Meteorology, the Sydney Institute of Marine Studies, Macquarie University and the University of NSW. The aim of the research consortium is to address information gaps in the nature and impacts of climate change and climate variability on the Australian east coast, ranges and inshore marine environments.

This year has seen significant progress on three of the six subprojects.

Eastern Seaboard Climate Hazard Tool

This tool will provide information about significant weather events that have had major impacts on the eastern seaboard of Australia in terms of rainfall, wind, extreme waves and storm surge. A cyclone tracking feature will enable identification of ECLs that have impacted on the east coast. Work completed this year includes investigation of the potential for automated tracking technology to capture and map ECLs, research into thresholds for identifying ECLs, and geographic definition of the Eastern Seaboard region and construction of a GIS-based map.

Projections of future ECL frequency and intensity

The goal of this project is to determine whether ECLs will change in frequency or intensity in the future. A pilot project commenced this year which will evaluate modelled simulations of major historical ECL storms. Four different ECL events were simulated 36 times using a different combination of physical parameters each time. These simulations are now being analysed to determine the parameters which are most useful to simulate ECL events.

Understanding long-term natural variability of ECLs

This project will examine whether ECLs have been a long-term phenomenon in NSW, and measure their frequency and intensity over the past 1,000 years. Information will be derived from paleo-indicators such as oxygen isotopes in tree rings, coral cores from the eastern Pacific, and stalactites and stalacmites in caves in NSW. The information from this subproject will provide input to the modelling in subproject 2 by defining the likely range of frequency and intensity of ECLs that have been experienced to date.

A project team has been established that will work closely with a climatologist from the Bureau of Meteorology. The major part of the project work will be undertaken in 2011–12 through the appointment of a full-time researcher. A scientific paper has been prepared and accepted for publication by the *International Journal of Climatology*.

■ CASE STUDY

Nutrient transformation and attenuation within tidal rivers

Aquatic ecosystems have the capacity to transform and alter nutrient levels in a variety of ways. They can be stored temporarily by organisms, buried in sediments or removed via denitrification. Previous work has focused mainly on rivers and estuaries, and little is known about the processes that occur as nutrients pass through the intermediate tidal zone between these two systems.

Researchers from the Office of Environment and Heritage received a \$30,000 grant through the Trust's research program to determine the dominant biochemical processes within tidal rivers that transform and attenuate (or reduce) nutrient delivery to estuaries.

The project was carried out on the Hawkesbury River which is subject to significant impacts from human activities. The tidal region of the river, extending from Yarramundi to Wisemans Ferry was divided into four functional zones based on nutrient inputs, water quality, presence of submerged macrophytes and the degree of tidal influence.

Water quality was sampled at 18 stations along the river for an 18-month period. Incubations of water samples and sediment cores were performed four times over the study period to account for seasonal variation in productivity, nutrients, and organic matter. Each set of sediment and water samples underwent both a 'light' and 'dark' incubation period to determine daytime and night time flux rates.

To understand the transformations of nutrients within the tidal portion of the river a nutrient budget was developed. This provided a concise model of the transformations that are occurring and highlighted seasonal, longitudinal and between-species differences.

The study found that the high levels of dissolved inorganic nitrogen and phosphorus entering the river from South and Eastern Creeks were transformed to dissolved organic and particulate matter through uptake, excretion and grazing of phytoplankton downstream. The particulate detrital material produced was then deposited on the sediment surface which appears to act as an important substrate for bacteria in the lower zones. The researchers found that these and other interactions resulted in a switch from a dominance of dissolved inorganics in the upper zones to dissolved organics in the lower zone. The research also revealed significant attenuation of nutrients over the tidal region resulting in up to 95 per cent removal of nitrogen and up to 78 per cent removal of phosphorus loads. These transformation and attenuation processes are highly variable both longitudinally and seasonally.

The interesting and unique findings generated by this project will greatly enhance the understanding of nutrient transformations within the Hawkesbury River and tidal rivers in general. The studies have shown that nutrient transformation in the tidal zone dramatically alters the composition of nitrogen and phosphorus pools, and that through attenuation, nutrient inputs to the estuary are greatly reduced.

■ CASE STUDY

Sponge Watch: Using sponges as biomonitors

Previous studies on the use of marine organisms to monitor metal contaminants in marine and estuarine environments have focused on mussels and other bivalve molluscs such as oysters. However, until now there has been little attention paid to sponges which are often abundant in marine environments. A seeding grant from the Trust allowed researchers from the University of Wollongong to test the suitability of sponges as biomonitors of trace metals in aquatic ecosystems.

Sponges have great potential as biomonitors as they are filter feeders that are adapted to a variety of habitats and can be readily transplanted. Studies in the northern hemisphere have shown sponges to have a high capacity for accumulating heavy metals but no Australian species have been tested.

Two common sponge species (*Mycale* sp. and *Suberites* cf. *diversicolor*) were collected from three coastal lakes in NSW with differing levels of urban and industrial development (Lake Macquarie, Lake Wallis and Lake Conjola). Trace metal concentrations of zinc, copper, lead, cadmium, selenium and mercury were tested at four different spatial scales – between lakes, between sites within lakes, between sponges within sites, and within individual sponges.

The results showed that the highest variations in trace metal concentrations occurred between lakes, closely followed by variations between sites within the same lake. The heavy metal levels of the sponges reflected the differing environments and levels of pollution. By contrast, variations in trace metals between sponges at the same site, and within individual sponges were consistently low for four of the six trace metals being measured. Mercury and cadmium levels showed greater variation due to the very low levels being measured.

This research has successfully proven the untested assumption that the relatively homogenous sponge tissue (which lacks complex organs) would show low levels of variation in trace metal concentration. Of the two species studied, researchers found the massive growth form of *Suberites* sp. to be much easier to sample and it potentially provides the most reliable results as it is less prone to contamination by foreign material.



Transplanted sponge fragments survive well and grow rapidly

- generate new knowledge or information to facilitate local solutions to environmental problems
- discover new methods of operation for NSW industries that are less harmful to the environment
- provide knowledge about general environmental problems
- assess environmental degradation.

- climate change (targeting priority areas from the NSW Climate Change Research Plan)
- biodiversity and conservation (including threats to biodiversity, conservation planning, marine parks research, ecological research and restoration ecology)
- integrated landscape management (including natural resource management, links between pressures and impacts, and the effectiveness of management activities)
- environmental pollution (including environmental contaminants, and air, water, land and noise pollution)
- resource efficiency and sustainability (including research on waste avoidance and management and resource recovery, and innovative technologies for improving efficiency of resource utilisation).

The Research Program is due for external review in 2011–12 as part of the Trust's rolling evaluations.

Table 9

Environmental Research grants awarded in 2010–11

Organisation	Project title	LGA	Amount
CSIRO Entomology	Restoring biodiversity in NSW through biocontrol of mistflower	Various	\$95,016
CSIRO	Sustainable energy deployment within the Metropolitan Air Quality Study region	Various	\$99,980
Macquarie University	A new approach to extracting hydrological history from river red gum	Statewide	\$20,000
Southern Cross University	Multigenerational impact of climate change on marine life histories	Statewide	\$195,786
University of Newcastle	Char from black coal tailings for fertiliser and carbon storage	Statewide	\$99,930
University of New England	Biodiversity resilience under climate, land cover and land-use change	Statewide	\$150,000
University of New South Wales	An integrated instrumental approach for tracking pollution to source	Statewide	\$99,958
University of New South Wales	Dynamically downscaled climate projections for the eastern seaboard	Statewide	\$199,856
University of Sydney	Benchmarks for ecological function in urban ecosystems	Various	\$99,882
University of Wollongong	Climate change impacts on bushfire fuels	Statewide	\$196,619
University of Wollongong	A rapid pre-screening technique for bioavailable metals in sediment	Statewide	\$79,000
Total			\$1,336,027

Table 10

Environmental Research seeding grants awarded in 2010–11

Organisation	Project title	LGA	Amount
Macquarie University	Assessing groundwater fungi as novel bioindicators of contamination	Sydney City	\$19,264
NSW Department of Primary Industries	Developing next generation sequencing for biodiversity assessment	Statewide	\$20,000
Southern Cross University	What lies beneath? A new method to map subsurface acidity	Lismore	\$20,000
University of Newcastle	Local sea level rise in the coastal waters of NSW	Newcastle City	\$20,000
University of Wollongong	Microbial filtration using carbon nanotube membranes	Unknown	\$14,950
Total			\$94,214

Major Environmental Grants



This was the final year for three projects that are funded under the Major Environmental Grants Program.

- Great Eastern Ranges Initiative (\$6.7 million over 4 years)
- Clean Air, Healthy Communities Program (\$5 million over 4 years)
- Land Alive: Aboriginal Land Management for Biodiversity Program (\$5 million over 4 years).

These large scale multi-objective projects were led by OEH and overseen on behalf of the Trust by appointed subcommittees with membership from stakeholder groups.

Great Eastern Ranges Initiative

Over the past three years the Great Eastern Ranges Initiative has combined the efforts of land managers, the conservation and agriculture sectors, researchers, media organisations and other industries to achieve a grand vision for eastern Australia:

To conserve and manage a 3,600-kilometre 'continental lifeline' of habitats, landscapes and people that will support the continued survival of native plants and animals along the Great Eastern Ranges from the Grampians in Victoria to far north Queensland, and maintain the natural processes on which they depend.

It has created an unparalleled opportunity for public and private sector organisations to work together to conserve the nation's unique and precious natural heritage. The Initiative has established a foundation for widespread and lasting change in how society approaches the enormous challenges posed by climate change, the ongoing threat of habitat loss, pest and invasive species, as well as the need to think and act at much bigger scales than ever before. It provides an

adaptive response to conserve and enhance Australia's most biodiverse ecosystems which contain the majority of our threatened plants and animals and provide clean water to 93 per cent of the population of eastern Australia.

The Great Eastern Ranges Initiative was established in July 2007 with funding from the Trust of \$6.7 million. In 2010–11, the last funded year of the Initiative, the focus has been on transitioning from a NSW Government-led program to one led jointly by non-government conservation organisations, community groups and state government agencies acting in partnership. A Lead Partners Group was formed in mid 2010 to take on a leadership role as champions for the Initiative's vision. This group consists of four non-government organisations – Greening Australia NSW, Nature Conservation Trust of NSW, National Parks Association of NSW, and OzGREEN – and the Office of Environment and Heritage and the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet. The Initiative is delivered by a team of five regional facilitators, with central coordination provided by a program director, reporting to the Lead Partners Group.

The Trust provided \$500,000 to deliver the Initiative in 2010–11. These funds supported significant progress in transitioning to the new governance model. In total the \$500,000 investment from the Trust leveraged an additional \$2.95 million of cash and in kind co-investment. This included:

- a continued program of coordination through partner workshops, working group meetings, newsletters, media coverage and day-to-day collaboration in project delivery
- sourcing of major project funding to deliver community engagement activities via web-based tools (Atlas of Living Australia, \$300,000), deliver on-ground works, community events in the Southern Highlands (Caring for our Country Program, \$500,000) and negotiate long-term vegetation management activities through Property Vegetation Plans in the Hunter Valley (Xstrata, \$1.5 million)
- development of funding applications and public grant bids in each partnership, returning small grants under Caring for our Country to allow community engagement and stimulate business involvement in the Kosciuszko to Coast and Slopes to Summit partnerships.



Kosciuszko to Coast Partnership - winner of the Murrumbidgee CMA Landcare Award for 2011

Did you know?

The NSW portion of the Great Eastern Ranges contains 261 national parks and reserves, occupying 48 per cent or 4.4 million hectares of the Great Eastern Ranges corridor.



Great Eastern Ranges regional partnerships

During 2010–11 there was a steady expansion in membership of the five existing regional partnerships (Border Ranges, Hunter Valley, Southern Highlands, Slopes to Summit and Kosciuszko to Coast) with eight new regional bodies becoming involved. Through these partnerships an additional 23 in-perpetuity conservation agreements were negotiated in 2010–11, protecting 4,300 hectares of important wildlife habitat.

There has been continued growth in program visibility and acceptance across many sectors, including conservation, natural resource management, scientific, local government, industry, and local and national media. This was heightened by a feature article showcasing the Great Eastern Ranges Initiative in the 100th edition of the *Australian Geographic* magazine (October 2010). Local media was also generated through the Great Eastern Ranges Touring Exhibition which featured in National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) Visitor Centres and other venues in Tumut, Jindabyne, Fitzroy Falls, Scone, Byron Bay and Minnamurra Falls.

Having successfully implemented the project in NSW, planning is now underway to expand into Victoria and Queensland based on increasing interest from state government agencies, CMAs, non-government organisations and community networks who are interested in becoming lead partners and affiliates in the Initiative's national enterprise.

Clean Air, Healthy Communities

The Clean Air, Healthy Communities (CAHC) Program received a total of \$5 million over four years to fund a suite of complementary projects that aimed to reduce vehicle emissions, fuel consumption, and car dependence in order to improve public health, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve local air quality.

Four projects concluded in 2009–10 (Stage 2 Vapour Recovery, Diesel Retrofit, Woodsmoke Management and On Your Bike). Four projects remained in operation in 2010–11 and have continued to achieve some outstanding environmental results in their last year of funding from the Trust.

Air Education Support

The Air Education project provides resources and support to increase community understanding of air pollution issues. This year the project administered the first round of the Air Education Grants Program (awarded in 2009–10) to six air education projects in the Sydney, Central Coast /Hunter and Armidale regions. These projects target behaviours ranging from reducing wood smoke pollution, to training in environmentally friendly driving practices and encouraging commuters to use sustainable modes of transport. The second round of the Air Education Grants were also promoted, assessed and awarded to five councils in the Illawarra and Riverina regions this year.

The project has continued to maintain the Let's Clear the Air website (www.cleartheair.nsw.gov.au) which provides air quality information for NSW residents, businesses, non-government organisations, local councils and government agencies. This year also saw continued promotion and distribution of the Air Education Resource Kit to councils across NSW.

Sustainable Mobility Initiatives for Local Environments (SMILE)

SMILE is assisting councils and communities to reduce the negative impacts of urban transport by encouraging commuters to swap their cars for more sustainable forms of transport.

This year the project completed a demonstration project in partnership with Randwick City Council. Four sustainable mobility initiatives were implemented from September 2009 to December 2010 including workplace travel plans, encouraging increased walking and cycling, a local rewards program and car sharing.

SMILE hosted four workshops with seven local councils to capture 'real world' experiences in delivering sustainable mobility initiatives. The data provided by councils on initiatives implemented in their local government areas was used to further test the validity of the SMILE modelling tool.

Further progress was made this year on the Transport Management Association pilot project at Macquarie Park. An online survey was conducted with medium to large-sized employers within Macquarie Park to better understand employer perceptions of transport issues. The surveys were followed up with one-on-one interviews with key businesses and state government organisations.

Local Emissions Air Project (LEAP)

The last year of the LEAP project focused on completing Stage 2 of the aerosols and solvents project. The project found there was potential for significant reduction in volatile organic compound (VOC) emissions from aerosols and solvents if the VOC content of a small number of product types were reduced in line with overseas regulations. Appropriate policy options to reduce emissions from these sources have been identified and a national emissions inventory for aerosols and solvents has been completed. The project has identified 15 high-priority products that account for an estimated 58 per cent of the emission load from aerosols and solvents.

In partnership with the Premier's Council for Active Living, SMILE contributed to the development of a draft NSW Walking Strategy. Funding was used to commission key supporting documents, including a data analysis and an evaluation of the costs and benefits to the community of financial investment in walking programs in NSW.

FleetWise

The NSW FleetWise Partnership for light vehicles was officially launched at the Clean Air Forum in August 2010. The OEH Sustainability Programs Division will be responsible for continued rollout of the program as part of the Sustainability Advantage Program. There are currently 23 fleets comprising 1,800 vehicles participating in the program. They come from the private, not-for-profit and government sectors.

Discussions have been ongoing with other jurisdictions on the national roll-out of FleetWise. A licensing agreement has been promoted by NSW for jurisdictions to access FleetWise data (similar to the framework used for the National Australian Built Environment Rating System – NABERS). The National Energy Efficiency in Transport Working Group has been identified as the potential steering group to oversee national rollout of the program.

The Heavy Vehicle Benchmarking Program commenced in December 2010 with 30 fleets participating. This is the first phase of the heavy vehicles component of FleetWise, which involves establishing an innovative in-service heavy vehicle emissions benchmarking approach, using automated emissions measurement equipment to benchmark vehicles across a range of operational duty cycles. The benchmarking period was due to conclude in August 2011.



Fleetwise booklet on alternative vehicle technologies

Did you know?

A vehicle is generally less fuel efficient when travelling at high speeds. For instance, vehicles use up to 25 per cent more fuel travelling at 110 km/hr than when travelling at 90 km/hr.

Program evaluation

A program-wide monitoring and evaluation plan was developed for CAHC including key performance indicators along with individual project evaluation and monitoring frameworks. ARTD Pty Ltd were appointed to progressively evaluate the success of the CAHC program and its component projects. The final evaluation was completed in June 2011.

The review found that the completed projects were successful in achieving a high degree of engagement from the industries, communities, businesses and government agencies that they targeted. A key outcome for many of the CAHC projects has been the development of constructive relationships with local government in order to achieve program objectives. In particular the On Your Bike, Diesel Retrofit and Woodsmoke Reduction projects all worked intensively with local governments. The evaluation also acknowledged the important role of the Trust's CACH Subcommittee in developing meaningful and productive relationships between stakeholders and the project team.

Small measurable reductions in emissions have been achieved through the two technology based projects. The Diesel Retrofit is estimated to have resulted in a reduction in particle emissions of 0.9 tonnes per year, while the Stage 2 Vapour Recovery project has resulted in 72.7 tonnes of VOC emissions avoided from the eight petrol stations for which technology has so far been installed. The Vapour Recovery project was considered to be the most sustainable of the CACH projects in the long term because it was achieved through the use of legislation and regulation, and emission reductions will continue to improve as the technology is installed at more service stations.

On Your Bike was probably the most well-known of the CACH projects with the broadest media and community awareness due to involvement of many people, organisations, and media promotions. One of the most important outcomes of this project has been the establishment of successful partnerships with other government departments through cross-agency development of the NSW Bike Plan.



Land Alive cultural site training at Jervis Bay

Land Alive: Aboriginal Land Management for Biodiversity

Land Alive was funded by the Trust over four years to build the capacity of Aboriginal landowners to be effective land managers and become involved in the BioBanking program. The project aimed to build understanding of the biodiversity and cultural values of land holdings, develop practical experience in land conservation and deliver accredited training in conservation land management to the Aboriginal community.

In its fourth and final year, the Land Alive project funded management plans for three Aboriginal land owners bringing the total number of plans completed through the project to 12. Land Alive also funded a biobanking assessment for an Aboriginal land owner on the Central Coast and is continuing to support the preparation of two further biobanking agreements.

30 Aboriginal trainees continued their training in conservation land management, including completing an Aboriginal Cultural Site Awareness program at Jervis Bay in May 2011. This provided trainees with experience in identifying, recording and registering a cultural site containing artefacts and remains. 26 trainees graduated with a Conservation Land Management Certificate III in June 2011. Land Alive contributed funding to a further three existing conservation land management traineeships on the far South Coast in

conjunction with NPWS, a Local Aboriginal Land Council and the Southern CMA.

This year a number of educational resources were completed:

- *BioBanking 'Q&A'* for Aboriginal land owners to help Aboriginal communities understand the BioBanking scheme
- *Cultural Connections to Biodiversity*, a CD-based resource that highlights cultural values of native flora and fauna on the far North Coast; this will be made available to the general public
- *Pathways*, a DVD-based resource distributed to the Aboriginal land owner network; this promotes conservation and working on Country, and provides insights into conservation from an Aboriginal land owner perspective.

The Land Alive project also provided support for a NSW Aboriginal Land Council staff member who is dedicated to assisting the Local Aboriginal Land Council network with the BioBanking scheme. Guidance and resource material specifically relating to BioBanking and the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983* are being developed. This position also ensures that relevant internal policies and approval processes are capable of assessing BioBanking land dealing applications.

A comprehensive evaluation of the Land Alive project will be undertaken in 2011–12.

Waste and Sustainability Program



Achieving a reduction in waste generation and turning waste into recoverable resources are priorities for NSW. The Waste and Sustainability Program is designed to support the implementation of the NSW Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy which provides the framework for reducing waste and making better use of resources.

The majority of projects in the program are delivered by the Sustainability Programs Division of OEH which works in partnership with state and local government, businesses, non-government organisations and the community. Most projects focus on the key strategies of waste avoidance (including reducing the amount of waste generated by households, industry and government) or resource recovery (including reuse, recycling, reprocessing and energy recovery).

The Waste and Sustainability Program is overseen by a Trust subcommittee which provides advice and recommendations on strategic issues, funding allocations and progress

of projects. Over \$10 million was provided to OEH in 2010–11 for delivery of the program (Table 11). Some of the achievements for the year are highlighted in the following pages.

Waste avoidance and resource recovery progress

The 2010 *Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Progress Report* (published in February 2011) provides a snapshot of how well NSW is tracking towards its 2014 recycling targets. Recycling by councils increased from 30 per cent in 2002–03 to 44 per cent in 2008–09 while recycling in the commercial and industrial sector increased from 34 per cent in 2002–03 to 52 per cent in 2008–09. Recycling of construction and demolition waste increased from 64 per cent in 2002–03 to 76 per cent in 2008–09.

Table 11

Waste and Sustainability Program 2010–11

Program area	Amount
Local Government	\$2,965,699
Business	\$3,160,000
Community Organisations	\$715,000
State Government	\$175,000
Homes	\$1,650,000
Sustainability Support	\$805,000
Environmental Protection & Regulation Programs	\$570,000
Total	\$10,040,699

Regional and Local Government Support

RENEW NSW, the collective identity of the Voluntary Regional Waste Groups, is a key stakeholder on resource recovery and environmental sustainability in rural regional NSW. This collaborative OEH program provides statewide coverage of projects delivering improved waste management and resource recovery. The Trust provided \$1.56 million to OEH to support the projects of the eight Voluntary Regional Waste Groups in 2010–11 across the 96 local councils they represent.

The success of the program is evidenced through the improvements in the domestic resource recovery rates that have increased from 27 per cent in 2005 to over 45 per cent in 2010. This represents 199,796 tonnes of materials recovered from the waste stream for recycling and equates to savings of 99,672 tonnes of carbon pollution – the equivalent of taking 23,938 cars off the road. This is a good result considering the issues that affect resource recovery in rural regional areas, such as a low population base, high transport costs and remote townships.

Regional contracts facilitated by the Voluntary Regional Waste Groups on behalf of their member councils are keeping valuable resources out of landfill. Preliminary data indicates that in 2010–11 these regional contracts recycled:

- 40,000 tonnes of scrap metal
- 350,000 cubic metres of garden organics
- 400,000 agricultural chemical drums
- 550,000 litres of used oil.

E-waste continues to be a growing issue. This year RENEW NSW has been actively focusing on this issue and has provided advice to industry on how the TV and Computer Product Stewardship scheme could be implemented in rural regional NSW. The regional groups facilitated events for the collection of discarded televisions and computers from households across their regions in 2010–11 which received over 250 tonnes of e-waste for recycling.

The regions are running organic composting programs to keep garden and food organics out of landfill. In 2010–11 the Riverina Eastern Regional Waste Group commenced an organics trial involving the councils of Cootamundra, Gundagai, Coolamon and Junee shires. The six-month trial of garden and food waste collection for reprocessing is expected to divert eight tonnes of waste that is currently going to landfill from the 800 households participating across

the shires. These households represent just over 10 per cent of the total households across the region that have a kerbside collection system. Residents taking part in the trial have been delighted with the new service and feedback has been very positive. Following completion of the trial a cost benefit analysis will be undertaken to inform the next three-year regional waste strategy.

Household chemical collection

The Household Chemical CleanOut program has been delivered in partnership with local government since March 2003. CleanOut enables households to dispose of common household hazardous materials in an environmentally acceptable manner and helps to reduce community exposure to chemicals and waste.

Through the establishment of well-publicised temporary collection sites, CleanOut has facilitated the collection, treatment, recycling and safe disposal of household hazardous materials throughout NSW.

In 2010–11:

- 43 collections were held throughout Sydney, Hunter and Illawarra regions
- 26,690 households participated in the CleanOut program
- 982,751 kilograms of hazardous materials were recycled or safely disposed.

The CleanOut program has historically been the largest household chemical collection program in Australia in terms of the number of local government areas involved, population served, annual number of collections, number of participants and quantities of materials collected.

Collection events for 2010–11 have shown that community support and participation rates continue to grow. As a result of this growth, a detailed study has been completed to review the current program, identify trends and evaluate options for different collection methods for the future. This evaluation study reported that the NSW Household Chemical CleanOut program is the most effective and efficient program of this type in Australia.

Regional Illegal Dumping Squads

The Trust provided \$552,433 to support two Regional Illegal Dumping (RID) Squads in 2010–11. The RID Squads investigate incidents and take action against offenders, organise clean-ups, track down illegal landfills, identify changes and trends in illegal dumping across a regional area and educate community members about illegal dumping.

The Western Sydney RID Squad comprises Bankstown, Fairfield, Holroyd, Liverpool, Penrith and The Hills Shire councils and has been operating since 1999. Parramatta City Council joined the Western Sydney RID Squad in 2010–11. From 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2011 the Western Sydney RID Squad investigated 4,716 illegal dumping incidents involving approximately 226,000 tonnes of waste. These investigations resulted in 93 clean-up notices and 733 penalty notices being issued. Since its formation the Western Sydney RID Squad has investigated over 20,000 illegal dumping incidents and issued over \$1.6 million worth of penalty notices.

The Greater Southern RID Squad is a partnership between Shoalhaven, Wingecarribee and Eurobodalla councils, the



Gundagai resident and council staff with the new compost bin

Sydney Catchment Authority and OEH's National Parks and Wildlife Division. Since its establishment in 2004 the Greater Southern RID Squad has identified substantial dumping sites and investigated illegal dumping of household waste, garden organics, building and construction material, asbestos, and illegal landfilling. From 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2011 the Greater Southern RID Squad investigated 531 illegal dumping incidents involving approximately 5,000 tonnes of waste. Investigations resulted in 29 clean-up notices and 99 penalty notices being issued.

Sustainability Advantage

Since 2007 Sustainability Advantage has been helping medium to large organisations improve their environmental performance, reduce costs and add other value to their business. The \$1.2-million-per-year program helps members identify and implement projects in practical areas such as resource efficiency (energy, water, waste, raw materials), supply chain, staff engagement and carbon management.

Members are assisted through workshops and one-on-one support from experienced consultants to use resources more efficiently, integrate environmental strategies into their business planning and engage key stakeholders including employees on environmental issues.

The 530 members are grouped in 34 clusters (17 in Sydney and 17 in regional NSW) around a geographic or industry grouping. These clusters facilitate networking, peer learning and support and cluster projects. Participants are drawn from many industry sectors, including manufacturing, commercial property, registered clubs, health and aged care, transport and education.

In 2010–11 Sustainability Advantage has had a particular focus on industrial ecology, helping members think about their waste as a valuable resource. The program is actively working with 30 members in three industrial ecology clusters in Sydney, Wollongong and Newcastle. In association with the Waste Management Association of Australia the program hosted four industrial ecology information and networking events in Wagga Wagga, Dubbo, Newcastle and Wollongong. Attendees were able to exchange information on available by-products, waste materials, energy, and water as well as promote the shared use of assets, logistics and expertise.

At the third Sustainability Advantage Recognition Event in June 2011 the Hon. Robyn Parker, Minister for the Environment, recognised 63 businesses for their outstanding environmental achievements with Gold, Silver and Bronze awards. This year the award winners include recognition of the first two Gold Partners: Converga and Focus Press, 15 Silver Partners and 46 Bronze Partners.

Did you know?

Sustainability Advantage members are achieving ongoing savings of \$60 million a year from improved productivity and reductions in electricity (106,000 megawatt hours per year), gas (538, 000 gigajoules per year), water (3,836 megalitres per year), CO₂ (150,542 tonnes per year) and waste (80,000 tonnes per year).

■ CASE STUDY

Sustainability Advantage – Creative partnership around waste

Dunlop Flooring and Ontera Carpets have partnered with the Salvation Army to turn a landfill problem into an opportunity. In 2009 Dunlop Flooring successfully trialled the use of recycled carpet offcuts from Ontera and mattresses from the Salvation Army as an alternative to raw materials for foam underlay.

Used mattresses and carpet are reusable materials that contain polyurethane and rubber, and are an ideal resource for industrial ecology.

An investment of \$500,000 in new equipment has resulted in Dunlop saving \$1.5 million a year by incorporating 92 per cent recycled content in their foam underlay without reducing product quality. Dunlop plans to build on its success and expects to process an additional 5,000 tonnes of old carpet and used mattresses in 2012.

■ CASE STUDY

Sustainability Advantage – Weston Aluminium achieves zero waste

When Weston Aluminium joined Sustainability Advantage in 2009 it recognised that sustainable growth depended on a better understanding of how its waste could be converted into value-added products for other organisations. Its belief in the opportunities available in industrial ecology led to a \$1.5-million investment in a new start-up business, Weston Matrix, to recover waste resources from other companies for reuse in road construction and civil works.

With support from Sustainability Advantage, Weston Matrix is now diverting thousands of tonnes of commercial and industrial waste generated by other members, including coal combustion products (coal fines and ash), crushed glass, foundry sands and drilling mud. Over 10,000 tonnes of by-product waste generated annually at Weston Aluminium's Kurri smelter is now recycled as raw material inputs for the building products sector. As a result of this initiative, Weston Aluminium became the first Sustainability Advantage member to achieve zero waste.

Weston Aluminium is a foundation member of the Waste Management Association of Australia Industrial Ecology Network, established in 2009. The Network currently provides support to 30 Sustainability Advantage members across three industrial ecology clusters in Sydney, Newcastle and the Illawarra.

Litter and illegal dumping pilot training for local government

OEH has committed to reducing litter and illegal dumping within NSW as a key result area of the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy 2007. OEH recognises that councils play a crucial role in managing and preventing illegal dumping in their local areas. During the year OEH developed and delivered a two-day pilot training course on litter and illegal dumping for council officers. The course aimed to build the capacity of council staff to proactively combat litter and illegal dumping in a comprehensive and strategic manner. Building on the OEH manual, *Crackdown on Illegal Dumping: Handbook for Local Government*, the course elements included:

- conducting investigations and enforcement activities for littering and illegal dumping
- developing integrated litter and illegal dumping action plans that address prevention, infrastructure, education and enforcement.

19 council officers including rangers, environmental health staff, waste officers and education officers attended the pilot course. The course evaluation will be used to inform future OEH litter and illegal dumping programs.

Love Food Hate Waste

NSW households each spend an average of \$1,036 per year on food that is wasted. Across NSW this totals \$2.5 billion. More than one third of the average household garbage bin is filled with wasted food each week.

To tackle household food waste the NSW Government has developed the Love Food Hate Waste program that provides tips and tools for reducing food waste at home. The program aims to raise awareness about the environmental and financial impacts of food waste in NSW and to reduce the amount of 'good' food being sent to landfill. A website (www.lovefoodhatewaste.nsw.gov.au) and supporting resources have been established to promote easy and practical solutions for buying, cooking and storing food.

More than 80 strategic partnerships have been forged to promote and extend the reach of the program. Partners include Woolworths, the Australian Food and Grocery Council, the Local Government and Shires Associations of NSW, NSW Health and the NSW Food Authority. More than a third of all NSW councils are program partners, along with community organisations, businesses and other government agencies. Partners involved in the program make a commitment to promote the program to their stakeholders, customers and communities.

In 2010–11 grants were offered to help program partners – councils, non-government organisations and community groups – deliver community education projects. 14 projects involving 48 partner organisations have been funded to the value of \$201,655.

Love Food Hate Waste aims to significantly reduce the 1.1 million tonnes of food waste produced by households (800,000 tonnes) and businesses (300,000 tonnes) in NSW each year. In 2010–11 the focus has been on households but the program will expand to target food waste avoidance in businesses in 2012. The program will also help in achieving the NSW Government's Waste Avoidance and Resource

Recovery (WARR) Strategy 2007 municipal waste reduction target of 66 per cent and commercial and industrial waste reduction target of 63 percent by 2014.

Did you know?

NSW households throw away \$2.5 billion of edible food a year. Across the state that totals 800,000 tonnes per year.

Business and industry resource recovery

BusinessRecycling.com.au

Since its launch at NSW Parliament House on 24 June 2010, the Business Recycling online directory (BusinessRecycling.com.au) has been extensively used by businesses to find nearby reuse and recycling services. This national online directory was developed in 2009–10 by Planet Ark with the NSW Government and Pitney Bowes, an international agency dealing with stationery supplies and document management systems, as its foundation partners. The Queensland Department of Environment and Resource Management joined as another foundation partner in late 2010 with Zero Waste South Australia becoming a regional promotional partner in early 2011.

The online directory is a practical tool designed to assist over 670,000 small to medium-size businesses in NSW increase their recycling. The directory offers the opportunity for recycling businesses to register their services free of charge. The directory makes it easy for businesses to find recycling facilities. Drop-off facilities are listed by distance from the inquirer, assisted by a map function. Available pick-up services are listed for over 80 material types including food, plastic, timber, paper/cardboard, electrical/electronic, metals and construction/demolition materials.

In the first twelve months of its operation over 12,000 recycling businesses have registered their services and over 200,000 site visits have been recorded. The website also provides useful information on material characteristics,



The BusinessRecycling website provides information on local recycling services

relevant news and events, case studies and research and advice on how to choose the right recycler.

Planet Ark is currently in discussions with the other states seeking their active involvement and looking at ways to expand the directory to include suppliers of waste and recycling equipment and collection services to make the site a 'one-stop shop'.

Training for the waste and recycling industry

In 2009–10 OEH engaged Sustainable Learning Australasia to develop a manual and training program for waste management staff at local councils and operational staff at waste and recycling facilities across NSW. The purpose of the training program was to provide waste management staff with the knowledge and skills to work with the public to increase and improve the quantity and quality of materials being recovered in an environmentally responsible manner, and in compliance with occupational health and safety requirements. Sustainable Learning developed an initial draft in consultation with WorkCover NSW, NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) and the waste and recycling industry in NSW.

The draft manual primarily contained information related to health and safety issues and material acceptance and handling practices at waste and resource recovery facilities. Given the rapidly changing industry practices and technology, OEH considered it was more appropriate for an industry association to take ownership of the manual and deliver the associated training program across NSW.

The Waste Contractors and Recyclers Association of NSW (WCRA) was contracted to update and publish the manual and run eight workshops to train a minimum of 80 staff in 2010–11. By the end of June 2011, WCRA had successfully trained 229 people at five workshops in Sydney and four in regional NSW. Trainees were from local councils, waste and resource recovery facilities, OEH and charities. The feedback received from the participants was very positive with over 80 per cent stating that the quality and relevance of the workshop material were very good to excellent. OEH is considering funding more workshops in 2011–12.

Recovery of timber packaging material

A survey of the commercial and industrial waste stream carried out in 2008 revealed that out of nearly 300,000 tonnes of timber that is disposed to landfill over 140,000 tonnes consists of pallets and crates. In 2009–10 OEH engaged the Timber Development Association of New South Wales (TDA) to look at the scope of recovering this material through repair and reuse of wood packaging, and researching and marketing shredded packaging as an alternative to sawdust and clean shavings in poultry bedding.

TDA carried out a desktop study on the life cycle of wood packaging material in NSW, the characteristics of this material, the current practices and needs of manufacturers, users and recyclers of timber packaging material and the use of timber packaging in the NSW poultry industry.

Based on the findings of this study, TDA undertook two separate tasks in 2010–11. The first task was developing an online tool that calculates the carbon benefits of repairing and reusing wood packaging and various recycling options for using shredded, clean wood packaging as mulch,



A new pallet made from recovered timber

poultry bedding and fuel. This calculator estimates the carbon savings attributable to these options compared to sending the material to landfill. The calculator is available on the National Timber Product Stewardship website (www.timberstewardship.org.au/calculator) for the industry to use and offer feedback before it can be finalised.

The second task was developing specifications for the supply of clean, shredded timber packaging for use in poultry bedding in NSW. The specifications are based on similar requirements in Western Australia which have been adapted to meet the appropriate legislative and industry requirements in NSW. An initial study and field trials suggest there is a sound demand for this material as an alternative to the traditional use of sawdust if the poultry industry can be assured of a consistent supply of clean material that meets the required grading and moisture content. An industry reference group has been convened and further demonstrations of the potential use of this material are scheduled for 2011–12 so the specifications can be finalised and a market established.

Recycled organics

In NSW almost two million tonnes of organic residues are diverted into composting facilities. Much of this material would otherwise have created environmental problems by emitting methane either from landfills or from poor land application practices. OEH continues with its comprehensive program to assist market development for composted products, working in partnership with local government, winemakers, farmers and the recycled organic industry to promote the use of mulch and compost. Research studies and trials use compost to show how soil, vineyard and turf quality can be improved, leading to greater yield, lower water use and an increase in the sustainability of playing fields.

Three highly regarded Hunter Valley Semillon vineyards have produced astounding results demonstrating the role that mulch can play in improving the quality of the region's leading wine grape variety. The research will help viticulturists to select a mulch application according to targeted responses in relation to grape variety, climate, soil type, water savings and finished wine quality. Use of mulch in the vineyards has also led to a reduction in the use of synthetic inputs. Buoyed by the success of the Semillon vineyard trials, the viticulture

industry has given enthusiastic support to the ongoing work in this field. While work on the established Semillon sites continues, trials have now been expanded to include three poorly performing Shiraz sites in the Hunter Valley.

The development of an innovative new tool (an 'app') that uses research into compost use on playing fields was trialled through a series of evaluation groups. The 'app' design assists council managers to extend playing field use by improving the fields' sustainability. The results from this work will mean that playing fields can support more foot traffic on resilient turf that uses less water.

OEH is continuing to work with farmers in the Sydney basin to promote the use of compost as a tool for sustainable agriculture. Four trials in 2010–11 with vegetable farmers and turf and flower growers from the Hawkesbury Harvest network have used compost applications to replace some synthetic fertilisers and raw chicken manure. Working with very diverse communities, the Sydney basin trials are continuing to promote changed management practices to demonstrate how using compost to improve soil quality can lead to a better yield, better water efficiency and an improved bottom line.



Applying recycled organics to a potato crop

Aboriginal Lands Clean-up

The Aboriginal Lands Clean-up Program brings together Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALC) and local government to develop collaborative projects that prevent illegal dumping on Aboriginal-owned lands. The overall aim of the program is to reduce the incidence of litter and illegal dumping in Aboriginal communities to improve health, social wellbeing and education.

To date, the Trust has provided more than \$1,300,000 to 29 LALC and local government partnerships to clean up illegally dumped materials on Aboriginal-owned lands, deter further illegal dumping, maximise recycling and resource recovery from illegally dumped materials and foster relationships between Aboriginal communities, government and the wider community.

Eight projects that received funding in 2009–10 were implemented during 2010–11:

- Bowraville LALC and Nambucca Shire Council

- Brungle/Tumut LALC and Tumut Shire Council
- NSWALC (on behalf of the former Koompahtoo LALC) and Lake Macquarie City Council
- Forster LALC and Great Lakes Council
- Illawarra LALC and Wollongong City Council
- Jali LALC and Ballina Shire Council
- Darkinjung LALC and Wyong Shire Council
- Ngulingah LALC and Lismore City Council.

These projects resulted in the recycling of 126 tonnes and appropriate disposal of 58 tonnes of illegally dumped waste.

This year more than \$177,000 in funding was awarded to five LALCs and their partnering councils for implementation of projects during 2011–12. The grant recipients were:

- Bega LALC and Bega Valley Shire Council (\$15,910)
- Deerubbin LALC and Penrith City Council (\$30,000)
- Moree LALC and Moree Plains Shire Council (\$32,175)
- Wanaruah LALC and Muswellbrook Shire Council (\$49,176)
- Wilcannia LALC and Central Darling Shire Council (\$50,000).

Did you know?

Since 2005 the Aboriginal Lands Clean-up Program has resulted in the reuse of 2,993 tonnes, the recycling of 579 tonnes and the appropriate disposal of 753 tonnes of illegally dumped waste.

River Red Gums Program



The Riverina Red Gums Forestry Restructuring Program (River Red Gums Program) commenced in July 2010 after the NSW Parliament passed the *National Park Estate (Riverina Red Gum Reservations) Act 2010*. This Act permanently protects around 107,000 hectares of red gum forests in the Riverina area of southwest NSW through a range of reserves including national parks, regional parks and Indigenous Protected Areas.

To assist the timber industry in the Riverina to adjust to these changes, various assistance packages have been made available to workers and businesses in the timber industry. These packages are being administered by the Trust under amendments to the *Forestry Restructuring and Nature Conservation Act 1995*. The Trust is responsible for delivering \$50 million of the \$97-million river red gum support package:

- the Forestry Industry component provides \$36.5 million until June 2013 for business exit assistance, worker exit assistance and industry development assistance
- the Murray Program provides \$1.5 million until June 2012 for affected Forest NSW staff in Deniliquin who work on relevant river red gum related projects
- the Regional Employment and Community Development Fund provides \$12 million until June 2013 for grants to help local businesses and community groups in the Riverina to create additional employment opportunities.



Flooded river red gums in Millewa Forest

Around \$27 million was provided for business exit assistance, work exit assistance and industry development assistance in 2010–11 (Table 12). Funding of \$750,000 provided through the Murray Program has supported enhanced capacity and skills in landscape management across a range of areas within Murray CMA (Table 12). In particular it has enhanced the capacity of the indigenous community for future management of the proposed Werai Indigenous Protected Area, and enhanced environmental outcomes along the Edward–Wakool River system and the newly created national parks along the system. As well as these environmental outcomes, the program has funded an additional five staff. These staff will allow the CMA to administer funding and provide specialist advice that will assist the local community to identify and understand opportunities created by the NSW Government's decision to protect the Riverina red gum forests.

The Regional Employment and Community Development Fund seeks to minimise the potential social and economic impact of a contracted forestry industry on the Riverina communities surrounding the protected reserves. These include the residents, businesses and workers in the local government areas of Balranald, Deniliquin, Murray, Conargo, Wakool, Berrigan and Murrumbidgee. The objectives of the fund are to generate substantial and sustained local employment, improve access to development and training, build community capacity to participate in the regional workforce, and help offset the cost of business and sectoral expansion in the region.

The first round of grants under the Regional Employment and Community Development Fund was announced in August 2010. As \$12 million was available for allocation, the Trust decided to run a two-stage application process (a call for expressions of interest followed by a shortlist of invitations to submit a detailed application). A total of 189 expressions of interest were received and after assessment by the Technical Committee the Trust invited 75 applications. 62 invitees submitted formal applications, with the Trust awarding 41 grants totalling \$9.48 million (Table 13). Grants varied from \$5,000 to \$1,000,000 and will fund a range of activities including the establishment of new businesses, expansion or upgrade of existing businesses, purchase of equipment, and the development of facilities and infrastructure to support tourism in the region.

The first round of the Regional Employment and Community Development Fund saw \$3.08 million invested in the local economy in 2010–11. A further \$5 million is scheduled to be allocated in 2011–12 and \$3.92 million in 2012–13. The main outcome will be the creation and/or retention of around 100 jobs in the Riverina region, with a further 120 'indirect' jobs created or retained to accommodate the expected boost in economic activity.

Table 12

Forestry Industry Restructuring and Murray Program payments in 2010–11

Program area	Amount
Forestry Industry Restructuring	\$27,195,724
Murray Program	\$750,000
Total	\$27,945,724

Table 13

Riverina Red Gum Regional Employment and Community Development Fund grants awarded in 2010–11

Organisation	Project title	LGA	Amount
Balranald Inc.	Community development officer / events manager	Balranald	\$210,360
Balranald Organics Pty Ltd	Balranald Organics gypsum product innovation	Balranald	\$390,000
Balranald Shire Council	Development of the tourism industry in and around Balranald	Balranald	\$980,000
Balranald Tyre Service	Wheel alignment equipment and service	Balranald	\$29,000
Barham Hotel	Roof structure over existing outdoor area	Wakool	\$35,000
Barham Retail Group	Visitor information maps with points of interest and accommodation	Statewide	\$5,000
Barham Riverside Café	Upgrade of shop frontage at the Riverside Café, Barham	Wakool	\$27,000
Chetwynd Park Pty Ltd	Packing shed extension and staff amenities	Wakool	\$600,000
Darlington Point Investments Pty Ltd	Mulching for compost project	Murrumbidgee	\$350,000
Deniliquin Council	Deniliquin Council industrial subdivision	Deniliquin	\$290,000
Deniliquin Council	Deniliquin Medical Centre	Deniliquin	\$1,000,000
Deniliquin Sports Park Inc.	Deniliquin sports park and gymnastics club expansion	Deniliquin	\$55,000
Emflow Pty Ltd	Emflow increases Australian manufacturing	Statewide	\$310,000
Finley Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture Inc.	Finley by the Lake Tourism Information Centre and (authentic) Farmers	Berrigan	\$50,000
Finley Hospital Auxiliary Inc.	Building maintenance and expansion	Berrigan	\$61,000
4 Post Youth Camp Inc.	4 Post Edward River adventures	Statewide	\$113,844
Gleeson Excavation	Employment of engineer / estimator / project manager	Wakool	\$135,000
Intereach NSW Inc.	E-Commerce and regional branding for NSW rural business	Deniliquin	\$25,000
Intereach NSW Inc.	Deniliquin family centre	Albury	\$550,000
Jonesys Dairy Fresh Pty Ltd	Jonesys dairy fresh manufacturing facility	Statewide	\$1,000,000

Organisation	Project title	LGA	Amount
KI Crump and JA Smith	Timber cutters museum and restaurant	Murray	\$580,000
Kilsyth Nominees Pty Ltd	Riverina fencing	Wakool	\$12,000
Koondrook–Barham Baptist Church	Trainee pastor project	Wakool	\$69,400
Koondrook–Barham Baptist Church	Trainee pastor project	Wakool	\$69,400
Mathers and Sons Transport Pty Ltd	Equipment purchases	Wakool	\$280,000
Mathoura Bulk Grain & Fertilisers Pty Ltd	Business expansion and capital investment	Murray	\$204,000
Mid Murray Fire Protection Pty Ltd	Consolidation and expansion of Mid Murray Fire Protection Pty Ltd	Murray	\$800,000
Moulamein Arts and Craft Council	Moulamein Art Gallery and café	Wakool	\$60,000
Murray Shire Council	A Tribute to Timber – Sculptures of the Long Paddock	Murray	\$103,000
Murray Shire Council	Establishment of the Backroads Trail	Murray	\$85,000
Murrumbidgee Shire Council	Darlington Point nature trails	Murrumbidgee	\$25,000
NRP Pty Ltd	NRP charcoal production establishment initiative	Balranald	\$242,500
Padon Food Group Pty Ltd	New factory facility with retail outlet and increased distribution	Murray	\$70,000
Rita Kim Berryman	Mathoura Service Station and roadhouse redevelopment	Murray	\$35,000
Riverlife Property Group Pty Ltd	Winery development	Wakool	\$50,000
Sun Valley Australia Pty Ltd	Computerised dehydration system	Berrigan	\$338,233
Tocumwal Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Inc.	Purchase/erection of town entrance signage	Berrigan	\$41,000
Tocumwal Visitor Information and Technology Centre	Destination visitor survey	Berrigan	\$17,000
Tocumwal Visitor Information and Technology Centre	Recruitment of employee part-time	Berrigan	\$20,000
Turps Tendercut Butchery	Cryovac meat and smoked speciality	Statewide	\$45,000
Wakool Shire Council	Maximise tourism potential in Barham	Wakool	\$115,270
Total			\$9,478,607



Private Native Forestry Program

The Private Native Forestry Program is supporting changes in the forestry industry following implementation of the Private Native Forestry Code of Practice (the PNF Code). This code aims to improve silvicultural and environmental practices in the private native forestry industry.

This was the fourth year of the Private Native Forestry Program which is due to conclude in June 2012. The Business Plan for the program was revised in 2009–10 in response to a reduced level of demand for assistance. The current program budget allows for:

- \$1.22 million in industry assistance to help businesses that become unviable, or workers made redundant, due to the introduction of the PNF code
- \$4.2 million for certification, training and accreditation of forest managers, landowners and logging operators
- \$4.68 million to support implementation of the PNF code and package by OEH and Department of Primary Industries

Under the PNF Code, the harvesting of timber for the purposes of private native forestry requires a property vegetation plan. This year 511 property vegetation plans were approved covering around 91,000 hectares of private native forest. A monitoring program is in place to measure compliance with vegetation plans. In 2010–11 there were 125 operational inspections or audits. This resulted in five penalty infringement notices being issued, with fines totalling \$20,550.

Did you know?

As of 30 June 2011 the PNF Code of Practice has resulted in 1,801 property vegetation plans being approved covering over 390,000 hectares of private native forest.

Industry assistance and training

Nine businesses and five workers received industry assistance this year and one further application is currently being finalised. To date over \$586,363 has been paid to businesses wanting to exit the industry, \$371,877 has been provided to support business owners and \$44,864 has been paid to assist workers to leave the industry.

The second key element of the program is the delivery of training to forest managers and landowners in sustainable private native forestry. Over the past four years, 382 people have received training in sustainable forestry practices through the Private Native Forestry Program. This year 35 training sessions were held in 10 different locations bringing the total number of training courses delivered to 106.

Training encompasses soil and water protection, silviculture, biodiversity protection and cultural heritage management. Online training in occupational health and safety for forestry workers is also available.

Training to assist contractors and landholders planning their own native forestry operation is delivered through TAFE NSW. Eight courses were delivered by TAFE NSW this year on the NSW north coast.

Landowner Awareness Field Days increase awareness of the PNF Code and promote interest in native forestry as part of a farm business. These field days have been developed in partnership with Department of Primary Industries. In 2010–11 there were 20 field days held across NSW which were attended by 282 participants.

Landholder assistance packages

Landholders and forest growers adversely affected by the PNF Code are eligible to apply for Sustainable Farming Grants and Farmer Exit Assistance (previously administered through the Native Vegetation Assistance Package). Two Sustainable Farming Grants were awarded this year to the value of \$217,000. These funds will allow the grantees to improve existing roads on one property and undertake new fencing, dam construction and pasture improvement on the other property. Seven grants have been awarded through the program, in total worth \$727,000.

Table 14

Private Native Forestry payments in 2010–11

Organisation	Amount
Office of Environment and Heritage	\$2,000,000
Total	\$2,000,000

Table 15

Sustainable Farming payments in 2010–11

Organisation	Amount
Office of Environment and Heritage	\$200,000
Total	\$200,000



Growth Centres Biodiversity Offset Program

The Growth Centres Biodiversity Offset Program is now in its third year of operation and is proving to be an effective way of conserving bushland as the population of western Sydney grows. Over these three years it has delivered some significant conservation outcomes and now protects 320 hectares of land.

This program aims to permanently protect some of the best remaining bushland in western Sydney and surrounding regions. An estimated 180,000 housing lots will be released in these areas over the next 30–40 years. The program ensures that where vegetation clearing is unavoidable this development will be balanced by an increase in the area protected through national parks and private conservation agreements in the greater Sydney region.

The Trust provided \$2,010,000 to OEH in 2010–11 for the Growth Centres Biodiversity Offset Program (Table 16).

The major achievement of the year has been the joint purchase of a second biobank site which protects 60 hectares of high conservation bushland and koala habitat on the historic property of 'Beulah' near Appin. The property contains some of the best Cumberland Plain woodland remaining in private ownership. 'Beulah' was purchased in partnership with the Historic Houses Trust in order to restore its biodiversity and heritage values (it contains the original 1830s home of the explorer Hamilton Hume). This has been a great example of the NSW Government collaborating across portfolios to achieve better conservation outcomes.

The establishment of the 'Beulah' biobank site created 526 biodiversity credits. All of the credits will be purchased with funds from the program for the total cost of \$1,029,467. These funds will be paid into the BioBanking Trust Fund to cover the cost of managing the site in perpetuity. The purchased credits will also be 'retired' so they cannot be used for any other offsets.

Management of the first biobank site at Douglas Park (purchased through the program in May 2010) is now well underway. Fencing of the site has been completed and

bush regenerators are treating weeds in the bushland. The landowners are pleased with the work and are enjoying watching the site regenerate. Fencing of the Cranebrook site, purchased in 2009 as a new reserve, is now also complete.

In May 2011 the Trust agreed to continue its administration of the Growth Centres Biodiversity Offset Program for a further four years from 2012–13.

Did you know?

The Growth Centres Biodiversity Offset Program has so far protected 223 hectares of threatened ecological communities, 55 hectares of critically endangered Cumberland Plain woodland, seven threatened plant populations and habitat for six threatened fauna species.



Spotted gum forest at Beulah, part of the endangered ecological community known as Shale Sandstone Transition Forest

Table 16

Growth Centres Biodiversity Offset payments in 2010–11

Organisation	Amount
Office of Environment and Heritage	\$2,010,000
Total	\$2,010,000

Urban Sustainability Program



This was the fifth and final year of the Urban Sustainability Program which has been assisting councils and other eligible organisations to improve sustainability in urban areas. It focused on a number of important issues including urban water management, resource conservation, urban creeks and bushland, environmental quality and organisational performance.

In previous years of the program, councils (or alliances of councils) were able to apply for funding through three different streams:

- seed funding, to assist councils to develop local sustainability plans in partnership with their local community
- major project grants, for projects addressing sustainability issues in an integrated manner
- the Urban Waterways Initiative, for projects looking to enhance sustainability in the priority urban catchments of Cooks, Georges, Hawkesbury–Nepean, Central Coast/ Lower Hunter and Sydney Harbour catchments.

All three of these funding streams have now concluded and there was no call for applications during 2010–11. However, two new major projects were funded by the Trust in this financial year.

The Malabar Stormwater Quality project, a partnership between the Trust, Randwick Council and Sydney Water, aims to improve water quality at Malabar by moving the existing stormwater outlet away from the beach. A total of \$400,000 in funding was awarded to this project.

The Local Government and Shires Associations of NSW (LGSA) were provided with total funding of \$1.5 million for the NSW Roadside Vegetation Implementation project. Through this project the LGSA will provide grants to local government to implement existing Roadside Vegetation Management Plans to protect biodiversity in roadside reserves.

The Urban Sustainability Program officially concluded on 30 June 2011. At that time, approximately 50 per cent of projects were complete, with the remainder expected to be finalised by late 2012.

Table 17

Urban Sustainability major grants awarded in 2010–11

Organisation	Title	LGA	Amount
Local Government and Shires Associations of NSW (LGSA)	Roadside Vegetation – USP – WASIP	Statewide	\$1,500,000
Total			\$1,500,000

Table 18

Urban Sustainability waterway grants awarded in 2010–11

Organisation	Title	LGA	Amount
Sydney Water	Malabar Stormwater Project	Randwick	\$400,000
Total			\$400,000

■ CASE STUDY

Tweed Byron Bush Futures

This award winning program is a partnership between Tweed and Byron shire councils who were granted \$1,710,278 towards a three-year project to improve urban and peri-urban bushland sustainability in the two shires.

The influence of urban settlement on the viability and integrity of remnant bushland on the far North Coast has resulted in the degradation of remnant vegetation by weed invasion, inappropriate use of natural areas (such as trail bikes and stock access), stormwater and urban pollution of bushland and adjacent waterways, rubbish dumping, and the impacts of exotic fauna including domestic pets, cane toads and Indian myna birds. These impacts have been compounded by the lack of institutional support for improved management at the urban bushland interface.

The Tweed Byron Bush Futures project has employed a multi-disciplinary approach to sustainability across the two local government areas. To date the project has:

- completed a Tweed Byron bushland audit which assessed over 66,000 hectares of bush remnants and recorded the structure, composition and condition of bushland vegetation together with current threats, recommended remedial actions and associated costings
- started regeneration work at 52 bushland sites covering 225 hectares, with a significant reduction in weed density and severity observed. Site Action Plans have been prepared for 43 of these sites covering 145 hectares of bushland
- delivered two rounds of the Sustainable Streets Program which aims to reduce resource consumption and connect people with their neighbours

- successfully engaged the community in the education and control of invasive flora and fauna species
- rolled out a bush regeneration training program for indigenous people and delivered Landcare workshops to volunteers and community members
- produced a range of educational resources, including a manual for making and installing nesting boxes, guidelines for working near flying-fox roosting sites, and bush-friendly garden fact sheets

The project was awarded the 2011 Northern Rivers Landcare Award in the Local Government Partnership category. It will come to a conclusion in 2011–12 having delivered some outstanding achievements and made a significant contribution to urban bushland sustainability for future generations.



Sugar gliders have moved into nesting boxes installed in Byron Shire

■ CASE STUDY

Target Sustainability @ Marrickville

This \$250,000 project by Marrickville City Council aims to reduce the carbon footprint of small to medium business enterprises through the adoption of voluntary sustainability targets. These targets are focussed on

- reducing waste to landfill
- reducing potable water use
- reducing carbon emissions and energy costs
- contributing to community and social sustainability.

The program encourages small businesses to recognise and understand how their operations impact upon the environment and then set targets to reduce their environmental impact. The implementation of data collection and verification processes into their business operations allows them to measure, manage and communicate their sustainability performance.

To date the program has engaged 107 active businesses. Over the past 2.5 years this has resulted in the abatement of 919 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions, the diversion of

1,527 tonnes of waste from landfill and generated water savings of more than 28,000 kilolitres.

Businesses are provided with a range of resources and opportunities to assist them with implementing best practice resource reduction. Those who successfully achieve sustainability targets are included in a business directory and their achievements promoted to the community via the council's website, a sustainable business newsletter, and the annual Marrickville Business Environment Awards. Businesses can be identified by using one or more logos that indicate the targets they have met.

A recent addition to the program has been the introduction of a Marrickville Sustainable Business Network which allows business owners to meet informally over breakfast or after work to discuss issues relating to business sustainability. Currently the project is also trialling an innovative community composting scheme in Stanmore with a local café kitchen.

Organics are separated from the café's waste stream and composted in a nearby council reserve. The finished compost will be available free to interested residents for use in their gardens.



■ CASE STUDY

Regional Environmental Sustainability Action Plan

Parkes Shire Council has led the development of a Regional Environmental Sustainability Action Plan for the NetWaste Central Subregion with an Urban Sustainability grant of \$50,000.

NetWaste is a voluntary regional waste group with 28 member councils divided into four subregions. Parkes Shire Council worked in partnership with Blayney, Cabonne, Cowra, Forbes, Lachlan, Weddin and Wellington Shire Councils to prepare the sustainability action plan.

Environmental sustainability plans have been identified by NetWaste councils as a key driver for change in meeting the future challenges of the region. The plans allow member councils to work together to address environmental challenges consistently and efficiently while embedding sustainability considerations into all areas of council, including decision-making processes, reporting, operations and planning.

The development of the plan commenced with a review of the current areas in which the eight councils were undertaking sustainability work. This helped to provide a benchmark of current regional action, outline the positive steps already taken towards sustainable communities, and identify where further action was required. The review considered existing council plans and policies and included a survey of 70 staff across the eight council areas.

The review identified six key regional priorities for action: water, waste, planning and development, community engagement, climate change adaptation and biodiversity and vegetation. Management actions were then proposed to address each of these priority areas.

An added benefit of the project was a significant increase in awareness of sustainability issues across the member councils. It also allowed for the development of networks and links with other councils and regional partners which has increased their capacity to work cooperatively.

The project achieved a high level of integration and cooperation resulting in a well-structured Regional

Environmental Sustainability Action Plan that has been integrated into each of the partners' Council Management Plans. The plan can now be used as a template for other NetWaste regions interested in undertaking the same process.



Community brochure and final plan for the Regional Environmental Sustainability Action Plan

■ CASE STUDY

Lower Georges River Sustainability Initiative

The Lower Georges River Strategic Sustainability Initiative aims to ensure the sustainable management of the Lower Georges River and enable more efficient and strategic planning of the entire Georges River catchment. Led by Rockdale City Council, in partnership with Kogarah, Hurstville and Sutherland councils, the project received a \$1,999,506 grant for a three-year project under the Urban Waterways program.

Good progress has been achieved in contributing to the improved health of the Georges River catchment and the project is a good example of inter-council and community group cooperation. Key outcomes include an increase in community education and action, restoration of riparian vegetation and other environmentally sensitive areas, improved waste and stormwater management, improved recreational experiences and the establishment of new volunteer groups.

The project has promoted a sense of community and ownership in the care of the Georges River. The Community Partnership Program has been particularly successful in its development of the following initiatives:

- Carss Park Community Garden where community members have developed a garden and straw bale community shed to host events and activities
- Oyster Growers and Ocean Watch, a program that assists the Botany Bay oyster industry to improve farming practices and manage environmental risks
- expansion of the Food Connect Sydney program into southern Sydney; this social network connects city residents with local organic farmers
- Linking Communities Through Permaculture, a community-driven project that combines sustainable living, permaculture and information sharing among culturally and linguistically diverse communities
- Birds in Backyards workshops (by Birds Australia) to help residents in southern Sydney improve backyard habitat and reduce impacts from stormwater, erosion and degradation.

The final year of the project (2011) will see the completion of six water-sensitive urban design works that will significantly contribute to the restoration and sustainability of the lower Georges River. These include constructed wetlands, a water treatment system for stormwater harvesting and reuse, a green roof garden and roof runoff collection systems.



Oatley Flora and Fauna Society facilitated a plant giveaway as part of a Birds In Backyards workshop



NSW RiverBank

The NSW RiverBank Program provides funds to buy and manage water for the rehabilitation and protection of stressed rivers and important wetlands in NSW. 2010–11 saw the largest delivery of NSW RiverBank water to wetlands since the program commenced in 2006.

This year \$6.8 million was spent on purchasing water entitlements. NSW RiverBank acquisition targets have now been achieved in the Gwydir, Macquarie, and Lachlan valleys and so all acquisitions this year were from the Murrumbidgee Valley (Table 19). The 7,702 megalitres of general security entitlement purchased this year brings the total acquisitions to 81,040 megalitres of entitlement from around 150 individual water purchases. NSW RiverBank buys and manages water rights from willing sellers with licences held by the Minister for the Environment and managed by OEH under the Minister's delegation.

NSW experienced its third wettest year in 111 years of record (after 1973–74 and 1955–56) with 820 mm of rain falling across much of the State. The delivery of environmental water, which supplemented local rainfall, high river flows and overbank flooding, demonstrated the boom-and-bust nature of the Australian environment. Dying river red gums re-sprouted, waterbirds congregated to breed, and frogs and fish emerged from their drought refuges, demonstrating the restorative power of floods.

Gwydir Wetlands

The Gwydir catchment was one of the few catchments in NSW that did not experience substantial flooding. However, late winter rains and river flows combined with 22,783 megalitres of environmental water saw the largest and most extensive inundation event in this region since 1998. In 2010–11 the primary aim for the Gwydir Valley was to support six to eight months of continuous inundation across a large portion of the Gwydir Wetlands, including areas known as critical refuges for fish and waterbirds. The prolonged duration of watering aimed to provide the required conditions to allow restoration of the wetland system and to support the ecological processes that underpin the completion of life cycles for many wetland species. 4,800 megalitres of environmental water were contributed from NSW RiverBank holdings.

Macquarie Marshes

At the start of 2010–11 the Macquarie Marshes had experienced ten successive years of less than average inflows and had received no large-scale flooding since 2000. The protracted dry period had resulted in a reduction in the extent of wetland vegetation, and no large-scale breeding of

colonial waterbirds had occurred since the beginning of the drought.

The application of environmental flows in conjunction with tributary flows in recent years had only been able to maintain wetland vegetation in the wettest areas of the Marshes. A key watering objective was to extend and restore healthy and resilient ecosystems across 20,000 to 30,000 hectares of the Macquarie Marshes to benefit large tracts of stressed river red gums in the northern Marshes, which would also benefit large areas of water couch, common reed and mixed marsh in the northern and southern Marshes. During one of the wettest years in the past 50 years, and boosted by environmental water delivery of around 200,000 megalitres, approximately 175,000 hectares of the Macquarie Marshes were flooded by January 2011. 33,000 megalitres of environmental water were contributed from NSW RiverBank holdings.

Lachlan Wetlands

Prolonged dry conditions continued in the Lachlan Valley until September 2010 when rainfall and storage inflows to Wyangala Dam enabled general security licence holders to receive their first allocation since October 2005. In January 2011, Wyangala Dam reached its highest level since 2000 and significant flows occurred downstream of the dam, replenishing the lower Lachlan creeks.

The primary aim of environmental watering in the Lachlan Valley was to improve vegetation condition and enhance feeding and nesting habitat for waterbirds along the Merrowie Creek system. Great results were delivered, with flows reaching areas that have not received water since the beginning of the drought. In Merrimajeel Creek, the combination of stock and domestic replenishment flows, environmental water and translucent flows filled Murrumbidgee Swamp and partially filled Lake Merrimajeel at the end of the creek. The Booligal Wetlands experienced one of its largest and most successful waterbird breeding events with approximately 120,000 young straw-necked ibis successfully fledged and breeding of 1,000 pairs of glossy ibis. Of the 10,500 megalitres of environmental water delivered in support of these outcomes, 3,700 megalitres were provided from NSW RiverBank holdings.

Murrumbidgee Wetlands

Drought conditions in the Murrumbidgee Valley gave way to significant rainfall during spring and summer of 2010. The environmental watering aims for 2010–11 were to retain and improve the condition of wetland vegetation, black box, river cooba and river red gum forests, to create and sustain bird breeding events and to encourage the population expansion

of the threatened southern bell frog. NSW RiverBank holdings contributed around 20,000 megalitres of water to a total of 400,000 megalitres of water delivered.

The environmental flows and the subsequent over-bank flooding that occurred in late 2010 revived vegetation, triggered and sustained numerous significant waterbird breeding events and enabled partial recovery of the southern bell frog populations in some wetlands. In the Lowbidgee, inundation of the Nimmie–Caira Wetlands established two large ibis rookeries of approximately 30,000 pairs. Also recorded at these sites were threatened species such as freckled ducks, Australasian bittern and blue-billed ducks, and the re-colonisation of several wetlands by the southern bell frog, a promising development for the recovery of this threatened species.

Yanga National Park received significant inflows which completely inundated the southern section of the park and filled Yanga Lake, providing the most extensive watering of the area since 2000. River red gum, lignum and black box vegetation have demonstrated clear improvements in condition. Southern bell frogs have been recorded from Piggery Lake and several pairs of blue-billed ducks were observed breeding on Yanga Lake. At Tarwillie Swamp 200 great egrets were recorded and a further 80 great egrets were observed at Top Narockwell Swamp along with little pied cormorants.

In the Mid-Murrumbidgee, in addition to natural flows, environmental water deliveries filled hundreds of wetlands and inundated thousands of hectares of fringing river red gum forest along the river system, in the most significant wetland filling event in this region since at least 1996.



Straw-necked ibis colony at Booligal wetlands

Table 19

NSW RiverBank payments in 2010–11

Catchment	Water access licence type	Unit shares	Funding	Amount
Murrumbidgee River	General security	956	Fully funded	\$831,720
Murrumbidgee River	General security	120	Fully funded	\$105,600
Murrumbidgee River	General security	486	Fully funded	\$422,820
Murrumbidgee River	General security	1,360	Fully funded	\$1,190,000
Murrumbidgee River	General security	1,796	Fully funded	\$1,546,356
Murrumbidgee River	General security	1,000	Fully funded	\$868,000
Murrumbidgee River	General security	200	Fully funded	\$170,000
Murrumbidgee River	General security	972	Fully funded	\$1,069,200
Murrumbidgee River	General security	147	Fully funded	\$140,385
Talpee Creek	Unregulated pumping licence	665	Fully funded	\$435,575
Total licences purchased		7,702		\$6,779,656
Administration and other charges				\$1,356,879
Total				\$8,136,535



Dissemination Program

The Dissemination Program aims to extend the knowledge and experience gained from successfully completed grant projects to a wider audience, and to build capacity for environmental change through information and training. The Trust allocates up to \$200,000 annually to this program. Dissemination staff work closely with the grantees throughout the delivery of the project to further extend the knowledge and resources while at the same time offering some mentoring support to the grantees. This work, for a small investment, extends the knowledge to a much larger audience.

Since the program's inception in 2005 over 2 million people have been reached by the 43 completed projects.

Achievements

Seven dissemination projects were successfully completed and five new projects were developed during 2010–11 (Table 20). 13 new case studies were added to the Trust website. This brings the total to 84 case studies that are now available to showcase the variety of successful projects completed by grantees.

This year saw a range of events hosted through the program. Events included workshops on the importance of mussels in the environment and a training program to help council staff and other land managers to educate others about looking after the environment from their own backyards. Promotional materials have been developed to encourage people to effectively dispose of fishing line and to raise awareness of plant diseases that can be spread while bush walking. More detail on the completed projects follows.

Did you know?

A total of 787 organisations have been directly engaged by dissemination projects.

More than 3,690 people have attended workshops and training sessions conducted through the Dissemination Program since 2005.

Completed projects

Fishing line recovery for inland waterways

This project by OceanWatch Australia encouraged inland recreational fishers to dispose of their fishing line responsibly by installing 43 TAngler bins across inland NSW. 70 per cent of land managers responsible for the bins have acknowledged the value of the bins and their educational message in their region. In addition to the installation of bins, 1,600 flyers, 1,700 stickers and 32 posters were distributed to tackle shops, caravan parks and local government offices to extend the message to locals and visitors to the region.

Preventing further degradation of freshwater mussel populations

This project by OEH worked with coastal CMAs to raise awareness about the importance of catchment management in protecting vulnerable mussel populations. Nine presentations and two media articles highlighted the importance of mussels as environmental indicators. One of the lasting legacies of this project is the production of a PDF brochure and a website on the important role of freshwater mussels in the environment. Over 800 brochures were distributed, and over 400 page views occurred during the first month of the website's operation (which is promoted through the OEH website).

Minimise and manage the spread of *Phytophthora cinnamomi*

Phytophthora cinnamomi is a plant pathogen which can cause leaf death and branch dieback, often resulting in the death of infected plants. The Royal Botanic Gardens Trust has promoted the role we can all play in preventing the spread of this pathogen through three workshops along the NSW coast and one workshop for National Parks and Wildlife staff. The NPWS workshop resulted in this information being included in the National Parks Operations Manual. Two different educational brochures were developed and distributed, one targeting land managers, park officers, councils and CMAs, and the other aimed at visitors to the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Centre, the Mount Tomah Botanic Garden and other national park visitor centres across the State.



Phytophthora poster

Biodiversity response to fire regimes under climate change

Through this project OEH produced a booklet entitled *Vegetation, Fire and Climate Change in the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area* for land managers and the community. The booklet summarises current research on fire history and puts this in the context of other information on the vegetation, fire regimes and climate change projections specific to the World Heritage Area. The booklet was launched at the 10th anniversary celebrations of the listing of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area; to date over 2,000 copies have been distributed. The main elements of the booklet have been summarised in an A4 fact sheet.

Long-stem planting guide

The central component of this grant, undertaken by Gosford City Council and the Australian Plants Society, was the development of a *Long-stem Planting Guide* which brings together information from previous studies on long-stem planting and outlines the techniques used in a variety of habitats. This innovative method of planting enhances a plant's ability to access subsoil moisture, avoids root competition with weed species and ultimately results in higher survival and growth rates. The guide was promoted in *The Land* newspaper (with a weekly readership of over 155,000) and in *Australasian Plant Conservation*, the bulletin of the Australian Network for Plant Conservation Inc. The guide is also available for download from the Trust's website. Over 1,700 copies of the guide have been distributed.

Eco-friendly youth centres

North East Waste Forum ran a series of three workshops on sustainable youth centre management and presented project findings at the NSW Youth Action and Policy Association conference. These events were attended by 57 different youth organisations and a further 3,300 people have accessed information on this program through the Waste Forum's website. The conference, workshops and website provided participants with information on the benefits of integrating waste reduction and energy and water conservation into work activities, programs and youth centre management. Five centres that attended the workshops participated in a mentoring program and some outstanding outcomes were achieved including the development of environmental action plans for four of the five centres and greater involvement of young people in implementing sustainable initiatives.



Promoting eco-friendly youth centres

Cape Byron sustainability trail

The Cape Byron Sustainability Trail has resulted in the development of a 1.5-kilometre interactive walking trail on the high-profile Cape Byron Headland Reserve. Developed by the Cape Byron Trust, the walk includes seven interpretive signs and a brochure that provides additional information on the walk and a checklist to assist visitors in implementing their own lifestyle changes to protect the environment. The walk and brochure were officially launched in June 2010 and have proven popular with those visiting the headland. In the 15-week period following the launch approximately 55,000 people accessed the site. A survey has shown that 100 per cent of people would recommend the walk to others and over 80 per cent were going to change some of their actions as a result of the walk.

Table 20

Dissemination projects awarded in 2010–11

Organisation	Title	Project description	Amount
Bangalay Botanical Surveys and Eastcoast Flora Survey, on behalf of the Australasian Native Orchid Society	Predicting and preserving preferred orchid habitat	This project aims to improve the understanding of land managers and consent authorities about preferred habitat for rare plant species. The lessons learnt through the original grant will be more widely promoted through relevant journals and magazines and a fact sheet for local land managers.	\$14,000
Blacktown City Council	Regenesis – expanding the vision of future proofing NSW	This project will provide local government, state government and other land managers with the foundations to implement the Regenesis model in their local area. This urban sustainability project has engaged with communities and businesses to enhance biodiversity, sequester carbon and enable participation in carbon emission trading schemes. Land managers will be trained through seven full-day workshops.	\$43,050
Central NSW Councils (Centroc)	Mentoring – expanding sustainability knowledge	This project will extend a successful mentoring program developed through the initial grant to other councils in regional NSW, and develop a new peer-to-peer mentoring program.	\$49,500
Department of Primary Industries	Stop salvinia strangling our waterways	This project will develop a practical field manual and deliver five field days and three training courses to give local government, state government and other land managers a better understanding of how to effectively control salvinia.	\$36,700
WetlandCare Australia	A network of Educators delivering 'Starting in your Backyard'	This project will extend a successful model for environmental education that was trialled by WetlandCare Australia involving residents living adjacent to East Ballina Creek. The development of a training kit and five workshops will allow CMAs, councils and other land managers to deliver the Starting in your Backyard Program in their local area. A mentoring component and a trial of web-based technology for training are additional features of this project.	\$49,900
Total			\$193,150

BioBanking Trust Fund



The BioBanking Trust Fund is designed to reduce the loss of biodiversity in the landscape by supporting private investment in private land conservation. The fund is an element of the Biodiversity Banking and Offsets Scheme (BioBanking scheme) which allows for the negotiation of long-term conservation agreements (biobanking agreements) between land owners and the Minister for the Environment.

The Environmental Trust is the appointed Fund Manager for the BioBanking Trust Fund until July 2013 and is currently managing invested funds for three biobank sites covering 164 hectares. The Trust is expecting to receive funds to cover a further 1,650 hectares which are expected to become biobank sites in 2011–12.

Proceeds from the sale of biodiversity credits are invested within TCorp (NSW Treasury Corporation) which is the central financing authority for the NSW public sector, and a leading issuer of semi-government securities in the Australian market. Each biobank site has an individual account in the BioBanking Trust Fund which provides annual payments to the landowner to enable them to carry out the management actions defined in their biobanking agreement.

Two new biobanking agreements were entered into in 2010–11:

- 'Brownlow Hill' biobank site is located on privately owned land at Camden. This site protects 24 hectares of Cumberland Plains woodland. The biobanking agreement was entered into during January 2011.
- 'Beulah' biobank site is on land owned by the Historic Houses Trust near Appin. This site protects 60 hectares of shale sandstone transition forest and Cumberland Plains woodland. The agreement was signed in May 2011.

The existing biobank site ('St Marys Tower' near Douglas Park) was purchased in 2009–10 through the Growth Centres Biodiversity Offset Program and consists of 80 hectares of high quality Cumberland Plain woodland. The agreement was entered into in May 2010. Fencing of the site was completed this year and a program of weeding and restoration is currently underway by professional bush regenerators.

The investment return during this financial year was \$42,902 (Table 21). This was a good result with all sites having an operational surplus, which continues to allow these sites to fund conservation efforts in perpetuity.

A review of the BioBanking scheme will be conducted in 2011 which will include public consultation and amendments to the BioBanking Assessment Methodology.



Bush regenerators controlling weeds at St Mary's Tower biobank site

Table 21

BioBanking Trust Fund 2010–11

Details	Amount
Cash balance at the beginning of the financial year	\$498,880
Receipts by the BioBanking Trust Fund	\$1,501,840
Return on invested funds	\$42,902
Annual management payments	-\$282,250
Cash balance invested in the BioBanking Trust Fund	\$1,761,372

Finance





GPO BOX 12
Sydney NSW 2001

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Environmental Trust

To Members of the New South Wales Parliament

I have audited the accompanying financial statements of the Environmental Trust (the Trust), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2011, the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity, statement of cash flows and a summary of compliance with financial directives for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Opinion

In my opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Trust as at 30 June 2011, and of its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards
- are in accordance with section 41B of the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983* (the PF&A Act) and the Public Finance and Audit Regulation 2010.

My opinion should be read in conjunction with the rest of this report.

The Trustees' Responsibility for the Financial Statements

The Trustees are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the PF&A Act and for such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

My responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial statements based on my audit. I conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require that I comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal controls relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements 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 entity's internal controls. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the Trustees, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

My opinion does not provide assurance:

- about the future viability of the Trust
- that it has carried out its activities effectively, efficiently and economically
- about the effectiveness of its internal control
- about the security and controls over the electronic publication of the audited financial statements on any website where they may be presented
- about any other information which may have been hyperlinked to/from the financial statements.

Independence

In conducting my audit, I have complied with the independence requirements of the Australian Auditing Standards and other relevant ethical pronouncements. The PF&A Act further promotes independence by:

- providing that only Parliament, and not the executive government, can remove an Auditor-General
- mandating the Auditor-General as auditor of public sector agencies but precluding the provision of non-audit services, thus ensuring the Auditor-General and the Audit Office of New South Wales are not compromised in their role by the possibility of losing clients or income.



Steven Martin
Director, Financial Audit Services

19 October 2011
SYDNEY

Environmental Trust

STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE TRUST

Pursuant to Section 41C(1C) of the Public Finance and Audit Act 1983 and in accordance with a resolution of the Environmental Trust, we state that:

- a) the accompanying financial statements exhibit a true and fair view of the financial position of the Trust as at 30 June 2011 and the transactions for the period then ended, and
- b) the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983*, the *Public Finance and Audit Regulation 2010*, and the Treasurer's Directions.

Further, we are not aware of any circumstances, which would render any particulars included in the financial statements to be misleading or inaccurate.



Robyn Parker MP

Chairperson

October 2011

17 OCT 2011



Lisa Corbyn

Secretary

17 October 2011

ENVIRONMENTAL TRUST

START OF AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2011

	Notes	Actual 2011 \$'000	Budget 2011 \$'000	Actual 2010 \$'000
Expenses excluding losses				
Operating expenses				
Other operating expenses	2(a)	2,021	1,482	1,749
Grants and subsidies	2(b)	88,704	94,739	77,471
Total Expenses excluding losses		90,725	96,221	79,220
Less:				
Revenue				
Investment revenue	3(a)	1,479	1,173	1,396
Other revenue	3(b)	615	300	2,574
Total Revenue		2,094	1,473	3,970
NET COST OF SERVICES		88,631	94,748	75,250
Government Contributions				
Recurrent appropriation	4	92,066	96,832	78,368
Total Government Contributions		92,066	96,832	78,368
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR		3,435	2,084	3,118

ENVIRONMENTAL TRUST

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2011

	Notes	Accumulated Funds \$'000	Total \$'000
Balance at 1 July 2010		14,562	14,562
Surplus/(Deficit) for the Year		3,435	3,435
Balance at 30 June 2011		17,997	17,997
Balance at 1 July 2009		11,444	11,444
Surplus / (Deficit) for the Year		3,118	3,118
Balance at 30 June 2010		14,562	14,562

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS AT 30 JUNE 2011

	Notes	Actual 2011 \$'000	Budget 2011 \$'000	Actual 2010 \$'000
ASSETS				
Current Assets				
Cash and cash equivalents	6	28,454	17,147	15,063
Receivables	7	1,601	1,947	2,174
Total Current Assets		30,055	19,094	17,237
Non-Current Assets				
Total Non-Current Assets		-	-	-
Total Assets		30,055	19,094	17,237
LIABILITIES				
Current Liabilities				
Payables	8	12,058	2,448	2,675
Total Current Liabilities		12,058	2,448	2,675
Non-Current Liabilities				
Total Non-Current Liabilities		-	-	-
Total Liabilities		12,058	2,448	2,675
Net Assets		17,997	16,646	14,562
EQUITY				
Accumulated funds		17,997	16,646	14,562
Total Equity		17,997	16,646	14,562

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2011

	Notes	Actual 2011 \$'000	Budget 2011 \$'000	Actual 2010 \$'000
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES				
Payments				
Grants and subsidies		(79,818)	(94,739)	(78,853)
Other		(4,756)	(1,959)	(4,525)
Total Payments		(84,574)	(96,698)	(83,378)
Receipts				
Interest received		1,558	1,173	1,910
Grants and Subsidies		-	-	-
Other		3,871	777	4,081
Total Receipts		5,429	1,950	5,991
Cash Flows from Government				
Recurrent appropriation	4	92,536	96,832	78,368
Net Cash Flows from Government		92,536	96,832	78,368
NET CASHFLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES	13	13,391	2,084	981
NET INCREASE/(DECREASE) IN CASH				
Opening cash and cash equivalents	6	15,063	15,063	14,082
CLOSING CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS		28,454	17,147	15,063

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements

SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE WITH FINANCIAL DIRECTIVES

	2010				2009			
	Recurrent appropriation \$'000	Expenditure/ net claim on Consolidated Fund \$'000	Capital appropriation \$'000	Expenditure/ net claim on Consolidated Fund \$'000	Recurrent appropriation \$'000	Expenditure/ net claim on Consolidated Fund \$'000	Capital appropriation \$'000	Expenditure/ net claim on Consolidated Fund \$'000
Original budget Appropriation/expenditure								
Appropriation Act	96,832	92,066	-	-	94,588	90,857	-	-
Additional Appropriations	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
s21A PF&AA – special appropriation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
s24 PF&AA – transfers of functions between departments	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
S26 PF&AA – Commonwealth specific purpose payments	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	96,832	92,066	-	-	94,588	90,857	-	-
Other Appropriations/expenditure								
Treasurer's advance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Section 22 – expenditure for certain works and services	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers to / From Another Agency (section 28 of the Appropriations Act)	-	-	-	-	(16,215)	(12,489)	-	-
Total Appropriations	96,832	92,066	-	-	78,373	78,368	-	-
Amount drawn against appropriation		92,536		-		78,368		-
LIABILITY TO CONSOLIDATED FUND		470		-		-		-

The summary of compliance is based on the assumption that Consolidated Fund moneys are spent first (except where otherwise identified or prescribed).

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2011

1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

(a) Reporting Entity

The Environmental Trust, constituted by the Environmental Trust Act 1998 as a reporting entity, comprises the normal operating activities of the Environmental Trust, namely supporting the environment.

The Environmental Trust is a not-for-profit entity (as profit is not its principal objective) with no cash generating units. The reporting entity is consolidated as part of the NSW Total State Sector Accounts.

In July 2008, the Environmental Trust was initially appointed by the former Minister for Climate Change and the Environment as the Fund Manager for the BioBanking Trust Fund pursuant to section 127ZY(1) of the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* (TSC Act) for a period of two years finishing in July 2010. However the Environmental Trust's appointment has now been extended for further three year period until July 2013. The BioBanking Trust Fund is an element of the Biodiversity Banking and Offsets Scheme (BioBanking Scheme) established under Section 127A of the TSC Act.

These financial statements have been authorised for issue by the Environmental Trust during October 2011.

(b) Basis of Preparation

The Trust's financial statements are general purpose financial statements which have been prepared on an accruals basis and in accordance with:

- applicable Australian Accounting Standards, which include Australian Accounting Interpretations and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board;
- the requirements of the Public Finance and Audit Act 1983 and Regulation;
- the Financial Reporting Directions published in the Financial Reporting Code for Budget Dependent General Government Sector Agencies issued by the Treasurer.

Financial statement items are prepared in accordance with the historical cost convention.

Judgements, key assumptions and estimates made by management are disclosed in the relevant notes to the financial statements.

All amounts are rounded to the nearest one thousand dollars and are expressed in Australian currency.

(c) Statement of compliance

The consolidated financial statements and notes comply with Australian Accounting Standards, which include Australian Accounting Interpretations.

(d) Insurance

The Trust's insurance activities are conducted through the NSW Treasury Managed Fund (TMF) Scheme of self insurance for Government agencies. The expense (premium) is determined by the Fund Manager based on past claim experience.

(e) Accounting for the Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except that:

- the amount of GST incurred by the Trust as a purchaser, that is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of an asset or as part of an item of expense and
- receivables and payables are stated with the amount of GST included.

Cash flows are included in the cash flow statement on a gross basis. However, the GST components of cash flows arising from investing and financing activities which is recoverable from, or payable to, the Australian Taxation Office are classified as operating cash flows.

(f) Income recognition

Income is measured at the fair value of the consideration or contribution received or receivable.

Additional comments regarding the accounting policies for the recognition of income are discussed below.

(i) Parliamentary appropriations and contributions

Parliamentary appropriations and contributions from other bodies (including grants and donations) are generally recognised as income when the Trust obtains control over the assets comprising the appropriations/contributions. Control over appropriations and contributions are normally obtained upon the receipt of cash.

An exception to the above is when appropriations are unspent at year end. In this case, the authority to spend the money lapses and generally the unspent amount must be repaid to the Consolidated Fund in the following financial year. As a result, unspent appropriations are accounted for as liabilities rather than revenue.

(ii) Investment revenue

Interest income is recognised using the effective interest method as set out in AASB 139 *Financial Instruments: Recognition and measurement*.

(g) Receivables

Receivables are non-derivative financial assets with fixed or determinable payments that are not quoted in an active market.

These financial assets are recognised initially at fair value, usually based on the transaction cost or face value. Subsequent measurement is at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less an allowance for any impairment of receivables. Any changes are accounted for in the operating statement when impaired, derecognised or through the amortisation process.

Short term receivables with no stated interest rate are measured at the original invoice amount where the effect of discounting is immaterial.

(h) Investments

Investments are initially recognised at fair value. The Trust determines the classification of its financial assets after initial recognition and, when allowed and appropriate, re-evaluates this at each financial year end.

The Hour-Glass Investment Facilities are designated at fair value through profit or loss using the second leg of the fair value option; i.e. these financial assets are managed and their performance is evaluated on a fair value basis, in accordance with a documented OEH's risk management strategy, and information about these assets is provided internally on that basis to the Trust's key management personnel.

Designation at fair value through profit or loss is consistent with OEH's Financial Arrangements and Investment Risk Policy.

The movement in the fair value of the Hour-Glass Investment facilities incorporates distributions received as well as unrealised movements in fair value and is reported in the line item 'investment revenue'.

(i) Impairment of financial assets

All financial assets are measured at fair value and are not subject to an annual review for impairment. An allowance for impairment is established when there is objective evidence that the entity will not be able to collect all amounts due.

(j) De-recognition of financial assets and financial liabilities

A financial asset is derecognised when the contractual rights to the cash flows from the financial assets expire; or if the Trust transfers the financial asset:

- Where substantially all the risks and rewards have been transferred; or
- Where the Environmental Trust has not transferred substantially all the risks and rewards, but has not retained control.

Where the Trust has neither transferred nor retained substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership or transferred control, the asset is recognised to the extent of the Trust's continuing involvement in the asset.

A financial liability is derecognised when the obligation specified in the contract is discharged or cancelled or expires.

(k) Payables

These amounts represent liabilities for goods and services provided to the Trust and other amounts. Payables are recognised initially at fair value, usually based on the transaction cost or face value. Subsequent measurement is at amortised cost using the effective interest method. Short-term payables with no stated interest are measured at the original invoice amount where the effect of discounting is immaterial.

(l) Budgeted amounts

The budgeted amounts are drawn from budgets as formulated at the beginning of the financial year (State Budget) and with any adjustments for the effects of additional appropriations under s.21A, s.24, and/or s.26 of the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983*.

The budgeted amounts in the Statement of Comprehensive Income and the Statement of Cash Flows are generally based on amounts disclosed in the NSW Budget Papers (as adjusted above). However, in the Statement of Financial Position, the amounts vary from the Budget papers, as the opening balances of the budgeted amounts are based on carried forward actual amounts, i.e. per the audited financial statements (rather than carried forward estimates).

(m) Early adoption of standards

At reporting date a number of Australian Accounting Standards have been issued by the AASB but are not yet operative. These have not been early adopted by the Trust. These standards have been assessed for their possible impact on the financial statements, if any, in the period of their initial application. The assessment concluded that there will be no material impact.

(n) Assistance provided by other organisations free of charge

The maintenance of the Trust's accounting records and provision of other administrative services is provided by the Office of Environment and Heritage. The fair value of such services is charged to the Trust.

2. EXPENSES

(a) Other operating expenses:

Auditor's remuneration (audit or review of the financial statements)	28	28
Stores and minor assets	5	8
Information dissemination	71	42
Personnel services	1,898	1,656
Travel	19	15

**2011
\$'000**

**2010
\$'000**

2,021

1,749

(b) Grants and subsidies:

Federal Government	242	412
State and Local Governments	81,105	71,551
Other	7,357	3,539
Consolidated Fund for initiatives under the <i>Forestry Restructuring and Nature Conservation Act 1995</i>	-	1,969

88,704

77,471

3. REVENUES

(a) Investment revenue

Interest on bank account	1,479	1,396
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**2011
\$'000**

**2010
\$'000**

1,479

1,396

(b) Other revenue

Other	615	2,574
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615

2,574

4. APPROPRIATIONS

Recurrent appropriations

Total recurrent draw-downs from NSW Treasury (per Summary of Compliance)	92,536	78,368
Less: Liability to Consolidated Fund (per Summary of Compliance)	(470)	-

92,066

78,368

Comprising:

Recurrent appropriations (per Statement of Comprehensive Income)	92,066	78,368
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92,066

78,368

5. SERVICE GROUPS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL TRUST

Service Group Competitive Grants and Major Programs

Service Description: This service group covers grant funding to community groups, Aboriginal organisations, research bodies, and state and local government agencies to undertake restoration and rehabilitation, education, research and urban sustainability initiatives. It also provides grant funding to government agencies for programs addressing key environmental initiatives and government priorities.

6. CURRENT ASSETS – CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000
Cash at bank and on hand	13,599	965
Cash at T-Corp	14,855	14,098
Closing Cash or cash equivalents (as per Statement of Cash Flows)	28,454	15,063

7. CURRENT/NON-CURRENT ASSETS – RECEIVABLES

	2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000
Current		
Debtors	-	11
Accrued Income	-	250
Interest	435	515
GST	1,166	1,398
	1,601	2,174

No provision for doubtful debts has been made as all amounts are considered to be collectable.

8. CURRENT/NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES – PAYABLES

	2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000
Current		
Creditors	86	47
Liability to Consolidated Fund	470	-
Accrued expenses	11,502	2,628
	12,058	2,675

9. COMMITMENTS FOR EXPENDITURE

(a) Capital Commitments

There were no capital commitments as at 30 June 2011 (2010 - nil).

(b) Operating expenditure commitments

The Trust's commitments totalling approximately \$53.7 million (2010 - \$49.5 million) for the funding of Trust's environmental initiatives are proposed to be financed from future funding provided by the NSW Government. The commitments (inclusive of applicable GST) are as follows:

	2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000
Not later than one year *		
State and Local Government Grants	26,751	38,625
Community Grants and Other	7,312	3,437
Total (including GST)	34,063	42,062
Later than one year but not later than five years*		
State and Local Government Grants	15,927	6,454
Community Grants and Other	1,765	994
Total (including GST)	17,692	7,448
	51,755	49,510

*As a consequence of the Goods and Service Tax (GST), a contingent asset is included in the commitments above. The value of this contingent asset is \$1,976,000, which represents commitments contracted for at balance date but not recognised in the statements as liabilities.

10. CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

There were no contingent liabilities as at 30 June 2011 (2010 – nil).

11. BUDGET REVIEW

(a) Net cost of service

The actual net cost of service was \$88.6 million compared to a budget of \$94.7 million. The variance of \$6.1 million was largely due to delays in expenditure relating to the Trust's grant program.

(b) Net assets

Net assets were higher than the budget by \$1.4 million. This variance was mainly due to higher than budgeted cash, partly offset by increased current liabilities (year-end accruals).

(c) Cash Flows

The net increase in cash holdings was \$11.2 million higher than the budget. This variance was primarily due to delays in the expenditure relating to the Trust's grant program and higher than budgeted year-end accruals.

12. BIOBANKING TRUST FUND

In July 2008, the Environmental Trust was initially appointed by the former Minister for Climate Change and the Environment as the Fund Manager for the BioBanking Trust Fund pursuant to section 127ZY(1) of the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995 (TSC Act)* for a period of two years. The Environmental Trust's appointment has been extended for a further three years until July 2013. The BioBanking Trust Fund is an element of the Biodiversity Banking and Offsets Scheme (BioBanking Scheme) established under Section 127A of the TSC Act. The scheme provides long term arrangements for biodiversity conservation on private lands through agreements between the Minister for the Environment and land owners. The BioBanking Trust Fund holds and invests financial assets to pay for the future management of BioBanking sites.

The role of the Environmental Trust as the Fund Manager of the BioBanking Trust includes:

- Act as a trustee of money vested in the BioBanking Trust Fund;
- Invest funds held in the BioBanking Trust Fund to generate return into the future; and
- Administer the accounts and make payments to the biobank site owners.

BioBanking Trust funds are excluded from the financial statements of the Environmental Trust as these cannot be used by the Environmental Trust for making any grants payments for the achievement of its objectives.

In 2009–10 the first BioBanking agreement was transacted, with two more transactions during 2010–11.

	2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000
Cash balance at the beginning of the financial year	499	-
Add: receipts by the BioBanking Trust	1,502	556
Interest on invested BioBanking Trust funds	43	(3)
Less: annual management payment	(282)	(53)
Less: management fee-OEH	(1)	(1)
Balance invested in the Trust Fund	1,761	499

13. RECONCILIATION OF CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES TO NET COST OF SERVICES

	2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000
Net cash used on operating activities	13,391	981
(Increase)/decrease in creditors	(8,913)	1,351
(Decrease)/increase in receivables	(573)	786
Cash Flows from Government appropriations	(92,536)	(78,368)
Net Cost of Services	(88,631)	(75,250)

14. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The Trust's principal financial instruments are outlined below. These financial instruments arise directly from the Trust's operations or are required to finance the Trust's operations. The Trust does not enter into or trade financial instruments, including derivative financial instruments, for speculative purposes.

The Trust's main risks arising from financial instruments are outlined below, together with the Trust's objectives, policies and processes for measuring and managing risk. Further quantitative and qualitative disclosures are included throughout these financial statements.

The Trustees have overall responsibility for the establishment and oversight of risk management and reviews and agrees policies for managing each of these risks. Risk management policies are established to identify and analyse the risks faced by the Trust, to set risk limits and controls and to monitor risks. Compliance with policies is reviewed by the Audit Committee on a continuous basis.

(a) Financial Instrument Categories

Financial Assets	Note	Category	Carrying Amount	Carrying Amount
			2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000
Class:				
Cash and Cash Equivalents	6	N/A	28,454	15,063
Receivables (1)	7	Receivables (at amortised cost)	435	776
			28,889	15,839
Financial Liabilities	Note	Category	Carrying Amount	Carrying Amount
			2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000
Class:				
Payables (2)	8	Financial Liabilities (at amortised cost)	86	47
			86	47

(1) Excludes Statutory Receivables (i.e. not within the scope of AASB7)

(2) Excludes Statutory Payables (i.e. not within the scope of AASB7)

(b) Credit Risk

Credit risk arises when there is the possibility of the Trust's debtors defaulting on their contractual obligations, resulting in a financial loss to the Trust. The maximum exposure to credit risk is generally represented by the carrying amount of the financial assets (net of any allowance for impairment).

Credit risk arises from the financial assets of the Trust, including cash, receivables and authority deposits. No collateral is held by the Trust. The Trust has not granted any financial guarantees.

Credit risk associated with the Trust's financial assets, other than receivables, is managed through the selection of counterparties and establishment of minimum credit rating standards. Authority deposits held with NSW TCorp are guaranteed by the State.

Cash

Cash comprises cash on hand and bank balances within the NSW Treasury Banking System. Interest is earned on daily bank balances at the monthly average NSW Treasury Corporation (TCorp) 11am unofficial cash rate, adjusted for a management fee to NSW Treasury. The TCorp Hour Glass cash facility is discussed in para (d) below.

Receivables and Trade Debtors

All trade debtors are recognised as amounts receivable at balance date. Collectibility of trade debtors is reviewed on an ongoing basis. Procedures as established in the Treasurer's Directions are followed to recover outstanding amounts, including letters of demand. Debts which are known to be uncollectible are written off. An allowance for impairment is raised when there is objective evidence that the entity will not be able to collect all amounts due. This evidence includes past experience, and current and expected changes in economic conditions and debtor credit ratings. No interest is earned on trade debtors. Sales are made on 30 day terms.

The Trust is not materially exposed to concentrations of credit risk to a single trade debtor or group of debtors. No provision for doubtful debts has been made as all amounts are considered to be collectable.

2011	total	Past Due but not Impaired	Considered Impaired
< 3 Months Overdue	-	-	-
3 months - 6 months overdue	-	-	-
> 6 months overdue	-	-	-
2010			
< 3 Months Overdue	11	11	-
3 months – 6 months overdue	-	-	-
> 6 months overdue	-	-	-

The ageing analysis excludes statutory receivables, as these are not within the scope of AASB 7.

(c) Liquidity Risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that the Trust will be unable to meet its payment obligations when they fall due. The Trust continuously manages risk through monitoring future cash flows and maturities planning to ensure adequate holding of high quality liquid assets.

The Trust's exposure to liquidity risk is deemed insignificant based on prior periods' data and current assessment of risk.

The liabilities are recognised for amounts due to be paid in the future for goods or services received, whether or not invoiced. Amounts owing to suppliers (which are unsecured) are settled in accordance with the policy set out in Treasurer's Direction 219.01. If trade terms are not specified, payment is made no later than the end of the month following the month in which an invoice or a statement is received. Treasurer's Direction 219.01 allows the Minister to award interest for late payment.

The table below summarises the maturity profile of the Trust's financial liabilities, together with the interest rate exposure.

Maturity Analysis and interest rate exposure of financial liabilities

Interest Rate Exposure		Maturity Dates		
2011	Weighted Average Effective Interest Rate	< 1 year	1-5 years	> 5 years
Payables:				
Creditors	N/A	86	-	-
2010				
Payables:				
Creditors	N/A	47	-	-

The amounts disclosed are the contractual undiscounted cash flows of each class of financial liabilities, therefore the amounts disclosed above will not reconcile to the balance sheet.

(d) Market Risk

Market risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. The Trust's exposures to market risk are primarily through price risks associated with the movement in the unit price of the Hour Glass Investment facilities. The Trust has no exposure to foreign currency risk and does not enter into commodity contracts.

The effect on profit and equity due to a reasonably possible change in risk variable is outlined in the information below, for interest rate risk and other price risk. A reasonably possible change in risk variable has been determined after taking into account the economic environment in which the Trust operates and the time frame for the assessment (i.e. until the end of the next annual reporting period). The sensitivity analysis is based on risk exposures in existence at the balance sheet date. The analysis is performed on the same basis for 2011. The analysis assumes that all other variables remain constant.

Interest rate risk

This risk is minimised by undertaking mainly fixed rate borrowings, primarily with NSW TCorp. The Trust does not account for any fixed rate financial instruments at fair value through profit or loss or as available for sale. Therefore for these financial instruments a change in interest rates would not affect profit or loss or equity. A reasonably possible change of +/- 1% is used, consistent with current trends in interest rates. The basis will be reviewed annually and amended where there is a structural change in the level of interest rate volatility. The Trust's exposure to interest rate risk is set out below.

\$,000					
		-1%		+1%	
	Carrying Amount	NCOS	Equity	NCOS	Equity
2011					
Financial Assets					
Cash and Cash Equivalents	28,454	(285)	-	285	-
Receivables	435	(4)	-	4	-
Financial Liabilities					
Payables	86	1	-	(1)	-
2010					
Financial Assets					
Cash and Cash Equivalents	15,063	(151)	-	151	-
Receivables	776	(8)	-	8	-
Financial Liabilities					
Payables	47	1	-	(1)	-

Other Price Risk – TCorp Hour Glass Facilities

Exposure to 'other price risk' primarily arises through the investment in the TCorp Hour Glass Investment facilities, which are held for strategic rather than trading purposes. The Trust has no direct equity investments. The Trust holds units in the following Hour-Glass investment trusts:

Facility	Investment Sectors	Investment Horizon	2011	2010
			\$'000	\$'000
Cash Facility	Cash, Money market instruments	Up to 2 years	14,855	14,098

The unit price of each facility is equal to the total fair value of net assets held by the facility divided by the total number of units on issue for that facility. Unit prices are calculated and published daily.

NSW TCorp as trustee for each the above facility is required to act in the best interest of the unitholders and to administer the trusts in accordance with the trust deeds. As trustee, TCorp has appointed external managers to manage the performance and risks of each facility in accordance with a mandate agreed by the parties. However, TCorp, acts as manager for part of the Cash Facility. A significant portion of the administration of the facilities is outsourced to an external custodian.

Investment in the Hour Glass facilities limits the Trust's exposure to risk, as it allows diversification across a pool of funds, with different investment horizons and a mix of investments.

NSW TCorp provides sensitivity analysis information for each of the facilities, using historically based volatility information. The TCorp Hour Glass Investment facilities are designated at fair value through profit or loss and therefore any change in unit price impacts directly on profit (rather than equity)

Impact on profit/loss			
	Change in unit price	2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000
Hour Glass Investment Cash Facility	+/- 5.37%	798	757

(e) Fair Value

Financial instruments are generally recognised at cost, with the exception of the TCorp Hour Glass facilities, which are measured at fair value. As discussed, the value of the Hour Glass Investments is based on the Trust's share of the value of the underlying assets of the facility, based on the market value. All of the Hour Glass facilities are valued using 'redemption' pricing.

15. AFTER BALANCE DATE EVENTS

There are no known events that would impact on the state of affairs of the Trust or have a material impact on the financial statements.

End of Audited Financial Statements

Appendices





Administration of the Trust

Statement of Affairs and Administration of the Trust

Indicators of activity in administering the Trust

	2009–10	2010–11
Total expenditure on environmental initiatives*	\$75.5 million	\$63 million
Number of major programs	6	6
Number of grant programs running	14	16
Number of current major projects	7	7
Number of new grant projects approved and started	180	211
Number of applications/expressions of interest processed**	561	873
Number of grant payments processed	362	418
Number of emergency pollution and orphan waste clean-ups funded	61	41

Notes

* This does not include spending on forestry restructuring adjustment payments under the *Forestry Restructuring and Nature Conservation Act 1995*.

** Total includes applications invited / received as a result of the Expression of Interest stage.

The Environmental Trust, under Section 15 (5) of the *Environmental Trust Act 1998*, waived the condition of requiring a grant to be expended within three years after it is made for the following grants:

- Coonabarabran Local Aboriginal Land Council – Aboriginal environmental education on Burra Bee Dee Mission
- The Crossing Land Education Trust – The Sea2Snow Sustainability Challenge – Leaving smaller footprints
- Landcom – New Estates Sustainable Living Education Program
- Edgerton/Kwiemba Environmental Heritage and Cultural Aboriginal Corporation – Revegetation and habitation of river restoration project
- Moree Local Aboriginal Land Council – To establish a native bush tucker garden on Aboriginal land
- University of Wollongong – Natural versus human impacts: Management of the Macquarie Marshes
- Singleton Shire Landcare Network Inc. – Implementation of catchment and Rivercare plans in the Upper Hunter
- Coomaditchie United Aboriginal Corporation – Restoration of native vegetation at Coomaditchie Lagoon Reserve
- Daroo Orange Urban Landcare Group – Restoring rehabilitation Wentworth Reserve yellow box woodland
- Australian Ecosystems Foundation Inc. – Newnes Plateau Reserve habitat protection and threat abatement
- Brunswick Valley Landcare Inc. – Reconnecting lowland riparian corridors on the Brunswick River
- Hunters Hill Council – Sediment control and mangrove and saltmarsh rehabilitation
- Maitland City Council – Revitalisation of Woodberry Swamp
- The City of Newcastle – Newcastle Glenrock to Blackbutt Green Corridor
- Wyong Shire Council – Tuggerah Lakes saltmarsh regeneration project
- Cooma–Monaro Shire Council – Rehabilitation and conservation management of Old Cooma Common
- Port Stephens Council – Dune and koala habitat restoration at One Mile Beach
- Department of Trade and Investment, Regional Infrastructure and Services – Construction of a high- and low-flow fishway at Brewarrina Weir

- Bellambi Dune Bushcare Group – Bellambi foredune restoration Wollongong NSW
- Friends of Colo Inc. – Willow and weed control and monitoring Colo River and catchment
- Friends of Mangerton Park – Restoration of Mangerton subtropical rainforest community Wollongong
- Shearwater, the Mullumbimby Steiner School – Shearwater Wetlands restoration
- Lachlan Catchment Management Authority – Boorowa River Recovery – Better water to Boorowa
- Southern Councils Group – Business Treading Lightly
- Ashfield Municipal Council – Cooks River to Iron Cove GreenWay ‘Making Sustainability Work’
- South East Resource Recovery Regional Organisation of Councils – Sustaining our Towns – Taking action today for a better tomorrow
- Marrickville Council – Target Sustainability @ Marrickville
- Wollongong City Council – Illawarra biodiversity and local food strategy for climate change
- Central NSW Councils (Centroc) – Growing capacity in climate change adaptation in central NSW
- Willoughby City Council – Sustainable business – North Shore
- Ku-ring-gai Council – Riparian improvement, stormwater treatment and re-use: Bicentennial Park
- Fairfield City Council – Improving Prospect Creek’s riparian corridor for water quality and habitat
- North Sydney Council – Sustainable and integrated management of a highly urbanised area that includes much-loved creeks
- Penrith City Council – Werrington Creek rehabilitation and community engagement project
- Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (WSROC) – Water in the Landscape – Regional community engagement for water management

- developing and managing governance arrangements for programs
- providing technical and other assistance to grantees
- coordinating assessments by the Trust’s technical committees
- servicing Trust meetings, technical committees and subcommittees to facilitate good decision-making
- negotiating grants and agreements, project plans and making payments
- monitoring and acquitting funded projects
- disseminating and promoting successful Trust-funded projects and
- reviewing and evaluating the Trust’s programs and procedures.

Grants Administration

All grants from the Trust have a number of conditions that must be met, covering matters such as project timetable, payment schedule, progress and final project reports, financial reports, project variations and other administrative requirements. Except where a project is of a short duration or small amount, the Trust pays the grants either in instalments in advance or through milestone payments.

The Trust’s technical committee representatives assess and recommend grant projects and review project progress and final reports. This process keeps the Trust progressively informed about the quality of the work and the outcomes of each project. Where appropriate, a copy of the final report is placed in the OEH Library.

All major programs are overseen by program-specific Trust subcommittees. These subcommittees are comprised of technical experts in the relevant field. They provide input into the development of program business plans, monitor program implementation and progress, and provide ongoing advice to the Trust.

Structure and Management of the Trust

The Trust is guided by the governance structures outlined in the *Environmental Trust Act 1998*. It is comprised of three parts: Trust members, Trust committees, and Trust staff who are housed within the Office of Environment and Heritage (part of the Department of Premier and Cabinet). The Trust funds the costs of administering the Trust’s programs, including staff salaries, while OEH provides all support services for the Trust such as finance, human resources, and information technology.

Day-to-day management of the Trust’s programs and activities is the responsibility of the Environmental Funding Programs section within the Sustainability Programs Division of OEH. The section’s major functions are:

- researching, developing and implementing new programs for the Trust
- promoting and managing the Trust’s grant programs

Organisational Performance

The Trust’s support staff are employed within OEH and are therefore subject to the administration and organisational performance programs of that Office. These include occupational health and safety, multicultural policies and services, Aboriginal affairs priorities, action planning for women, equal employment opportunity and disability planning. Environmental programs that include waste reduction and purchasing, resource recovery and recycled material are also included. Further information on these issues and other organisational issues can be found in the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet Annual Report for 2010–11.

Assets

The Trust does not have any physical assets that require risk management or associated insurance activities, as it utilises the resources of OEH.

Risk Management

The Trust's risk management includes independent grant assessment processes, formal authorisation and payment procedures under explicit delegated authority, written grant agreements and approved business plans with grantees. A clause in the grant agreements indemnifies the Trust, and there are processes for tracking the progress of grants and payments of grants, a procedures manual and regular audits of procedures.

Further information on risk management policies and guidelines, fraud and corruption control strategies and the internal audit program applicable to the Trust can also be found in the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet Annual Report 2010–11.

External Reviews

The Trust is subject to a range of external audits, including annual review of its financial statements by the Audit Office of NSW. To ensure Trust funding is achieving the best possible results for the environment, the Trust has also implemented a five-year evaluation plan for each of its annual grants programs. This year the Restoration and Rehabilitation Program, and the Emergency Pollution and Orphan Waste Clean-up Program were subject to independent reviews. Further information on the outcomes of these reviews is provided under the relevant program within this report.

Monitoring and Evaluation

In 2008 the Trust began implementing a system of monitoring and evaluation to improve its reporting on a variety of performance indicators that relate to measurable environmental outcomes. These indicators are consistent with the national Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement Framework, and will enable the Trust to report progress towards environmental goals on a statewide basis, and ensure that its programs are contributing towards NSW 2021 State Plan priorities.

Grant Application

- Details the project objectives
- Provides for project planning
- Identifies project measures and projected amounts (refer to *Schedule C – Project Measures Definitions*)
- Outlines to the Technical Committee the feasibility and relevance of the proposed work

Successful applicants complete Schedule C – Project Measures

Schedule C – Project Measures

- If an application is successful, *Schedule C – Project Measures* is completed by the new grantee and submitted to the Trust

Successful applicants also complete a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

- Final step in project planning which identifies how progress will be monitored and how success will be evaluated

Successful applicants periodically report progress

Reporting

- Reports on the implementation and ongoing application of the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
- Compares expected project measures to actual project measures
- Evaluates the success of the project

The monitoring and evaluation process begins from the grant application and follows right through to the final report

This more-rigorous monitoring also assists grantees to track the progress of objectives and be able to measure and report on the effectiveness of their projects. In the past many grantees have had difficulty in implementing appropriate monitoring strategies for their projects resulting in data that was of variable quality and limited use for the Trust's reporting requirements.

The appointment of a full-time Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Officer in May 2010 has allowed the Trust to review and improve the quality of plans submitted by its grantees. Close scrutiny of the plans prepared for 2010 grants revealed that many grantees are struggling to clearly articulate their objectives and then measure and report on the effectiveness of their projects. A review of the monitoring and evaluation system was undertaken this year, and changes have been made to improve the continuity from the initial grant application stage through to final reporting on project completion (see the diagram on previous page).

Grantees are now asked in the application to clearly articulate their project objectives and then to think through the activities they will need to undertake to ensure that objectives are fulfilled. In addition, the Trust has extended its reporting program to Environmental Research and Eco Schools grantees who are now required to report on a number of performance indicators relating to measurable environmental outcomes.

Progress of 2009 contestable grants

Progress reports submitted so far following the 2009 round of the Restoration and Rehabilitation Program indicate that:

- over 86,000 trees and other plants have been planted, and this is expected to rise to more than 240,000 once all projects are completed
- approximately 268 hectares of land have been rehabilitated which is slightly more than one quarter of the final expectation of 1,024 hectares
- 1,435 people have been engaged in project activities (including 745 volunteers who have contributed over 28,000 hours).

In the Environmental Education Program progress reports submitted to date from the 2009 grants show that these projects have so far:

- engaged 4,700 people in workshops, field days and other project activities, and this is expected to rise to 6,800 people at completion of the projects
- trained 203 people through 23 training events
- involved nearly 1,200 school students in educational activities
- disseminated their message to over 7,300 people through media, flyers and websites.

Expected achievements from 2010 contestable grants

2010 grantees have predicted that collectively their projects will reach over 3.6 million people through various means including radio, media stories, advertising and invitations to workshops. It is anticipated that through these projects over 19,000 people and over 1,100 organisations will be directly engaged in environmental projects.

The 2010 Eco Schools Program is anticipated to involve 1,471 primary and secondary school students in projects aimed at improving environmental awareness and sustainability.

Grantees in the Research Program are planning to present project findings at around 30 scientific or technical conferences and publish at least 47 related articles in journals and other scientific publications.

Expected outcomes from the 2010 Restoration and Rehabilitation Program include the regeneration of more than 2,100 hectares of native vegetation communities, revegetation of 217 hectares of land and the planting of around 150,000 native plants.

Membership of the NSW Environmental Trust



As defined in Section 6 of the *Environmental Trust Act 1998*, the Trust consists of five members. They are:

- Minister for the Environment (as Chairperson)
- Secretary of NSW Treasury
- Director General of the Department of Premier and Cabinet NSW
- A person appointed by the Minister from a panel of three nominated by the Nature Conservation Council (NCC) of NSW

- A person appointed by the Minister from a panel of three nominated by the Local Government Association of NSW and Shires Association of NSW (LGSA).

The Trust met three times in 2010–11.

The Trust would like to extend its thanks and appreciation to Councillor Genia McCaffery who resigned in December 2010 after serving six years as a member of the Trust.

Members of the Trust and meeting attendance

Member	Position	Meetings attended by member or deputy	Meetings eligible to attend
The Hon. Frank Sartor MP	(Chairperson) Minister for Climate Change and the Environment (statutory appointment)	2	2
The Hon. Robyn Parker MP	(Chairperson) Minister for the Environment (statutory appointment)	1	1
Mr Michael Schur	Secretary of NSW Treasury (statutory appointment)		
Mr Michael Lambert	A/ Secretary of NSW Treasury (statutory appointment) from April 2011		
Permanent Deputy: Ms Lindsey Williams	Director, Natural Resources and Environment Branch, NSW Treasury	3	3
Ms Lisa Corbyn	(Secretary) Director General, Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (statutory appointment)	2	2
Mr Chris Eccles	Director General, Department of Premier and Cabinet		
Permanent Deputy (from May 2011): Ms Lisa Corbyn	Chief Executive, Office of Environment and Heritage	1	1
Mr Rob Pallin	Representing the Nature Conservation Council of NSW	2	3
Delegate: Professor Don White	Chairperson, Nature Conservation Council of NSW	1	1
Cr Genia McCaffery	Representing the Local Government Association and Shires Association of NSW	1	2
Delegate: Mr Robert Verhey		1	1

Membership of Trust Subcommittees

The Trust had eight subcommittees in operation under S9(3) of the Act during 2010–11 to assist with the management of its grant programs and finances. Trust subcommittees provide input into the development of program business plans in consultation with external stakeholders, oversee program governance arrangements and provide ongoing advice to the Trust. Membership of each subcommittee follows.

Waste & Sustainability Programs Subcommittee

Ms Lisa Corbyn (Chairperson)

Chief Executive, OEH and Trust Secretary

Dr Tony Wilkins

Manager Environmental Secretariat, News Limited

Professor Don White

Chairperson, Nature Conservation Council of NSW

Mr Robert Verhey

Strategy Manager Environment, Local Government and Shires Associations of NSW

Mr Greg Sullivan

Deputy Chief Executive, Environment Protection and Regulation, OEH

Mr Bernard Carlon

Divisional Director Sustainability Programs, OEH

Finance Subcommittee

Ms Lindsey Williams

Director Natural Resources and Environment Branch, NSW Treasury

Mr Bernard Carlon

Divisional Director Sustainability Programs, OEH

NSW Riverbank Subcommittee

Ms Lisa Corbyn (Chairperson)

Chief Executive, OEH and Trust Secretary

Mr Simon Smith

Deputy Chief Executive Environment and Heritage Policy and Programs, OEH

Mr Bill Stanhope

Principal Financial Analyst, NSW Treasury

Mr Ian Hunter (delegate Nicole Campbell)

Assistant Director, NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet

Mr Digby Jacobs

Manager River Works and Management, NSW Office of Water

Mr Austin Whitehead

Director Water and Resources Policy, Department of Trade and Investment, Regional Infrastructure and Services

Prof Richard Kingsford

Professor of Environmental Science, University of New South Wales

Dr Terry Hillman

Member of the Independent Sustainable Rivers Audit Group

Mr Howard Jones

Chair, Murray Wetlands Working Group

Mr Mike Young

Research Chair Water Economics and Management, University of Adelaide

Mr George Warne (delegate Amit Chanan)

CEO, State Water

Great Eastern Ranges Initiative Subcommittee

Mr Tom Grosskopf (Chairperson)

Director Landscapes and Ecosystems Conservation, OEH

Dr Graeme Worboys

Vice Chair, IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas

Mr David Lee

Representing the NSW Aboriginal Land Council

Ms Lorraine Cairnes

Representing the Nature Conservation Council of NSW

Ms Bronwyn Petrie

Representing the NSW Farmers Association

Prof Chris Dickman

Professor in Ecology, University of Sydney

Dr Judy Henderson

Chair, Northern Rivers Catchment Management Authority

Cr Jan Barham

Mayor of Byron Shire Council

Mr Kevin Evans

Representing the National Parks Association of NSW

Ms Kathryn Jones

Central Region Manager (Forests), Department of Trade and Investment, Regional Infrastructure and Services

Mr Peter Dixon

Manager Environmental Funding Programs, NSW Environmental Trust

Land Alive (Aboriginal Land Management for Biodiversity) Subcommittee

Mr Tom Grosskopf (Chairperson)

Director Landscapes and Ecosystems Conservation, OEH

Ms Kathryn Ridge

Solicitor Director, Ridge & Associates

Mr Norman Laing

Executive Director Cultural Heritage Division, OEH

Ms Kate Aubrey-Poiner

Senior Policy Officer BioBanking, NSW Aboriginal Land Council

Ms Margaret Bottrell

Aboriginal Community Support Officer, Sydney Catchment Management Authority

Mr Peter Dixon

Manager Environmental Funding Programs, NSW Environmental Trust

Clean Air, Healthy Communities Subcommittee

Ms Zoe De Saram (Chairperson)

A/Director Climate Change Air and Noise Branch, OEH

Leisl Baumgartner (Chairperson)

A/Director Climate Change Air and Noise Branch, OEH

Mr Henry O'Clery

Director, Future Climate Australia

Mr Jack Haley

Vehicle Policy Specialist, NRMA Motoring and Services

Cr Genia McCaffery (delegate Ms Kirsty McIntyre)

President, Local Government Association and Shires Association of NSW and Mayor, North Sydney Council

Mr Bruce Dowdell

Senior Environmental Specialist, Roads and Traffic Authority

Mr Chris Selwood

Director World Solar Challenge

Dr Natalie Pelham (delegate Ms Geraldine Andrews)

Director Transport and Reform, Transport NSW

Mr Michael Wright

General Manager State Fleet Services, Department of Finance and Services

Mr Nathan Aust (delegate Ms Hanisah Corner)

Senior Policy Analyst, NSW Health

Mr Peter Dixon

Manager Environmental Funding Programs, NSW Environmental Trust

Contaminated Land Management Subcommittee

Mr Craig Lamberton (Chairperson)

Director Specialised Regulation, OEH

Mr Jeff Smith

Chief Executive Officer, Environmental Defenders Office

Mr Robert Verhey

Strategy Manager Environment, Local Government and Shires Associations of NSW

Mr Adam Capon

Manager, Health and Risk Assessment, NSW Health

Ms Kylie Lloyd

NSW Manager, Golder Associates

Mr Peter Dixon

Manager Environmental Funding Programs, NSW Environmental Trust

Marine Parks Buyout Program Subcommittee

Mr Mick O'Flynn (Chairperson)

A/Director Reserve and Wildlife Conservation Branch, OEH

Mr Peter Dundas-Smith

Chairman, Seafood CRC Company Ltd & Director, OceanWatch Australia

Mr Adrian Toovey (delegate Dr Rodney James)

Manager Aquatic and Karst Protected Areas, OEH

Mr Bill Talbot

Director Fisheries Conservation & Aquaculture Branch, NSW Department of Trade and Investment

Mr Peter Dixon

Manager Environmental Funding Programs, NSW Environmental Trust

Membership of Trust Technical Committees

Under Section 9(1) of the *Environmental Trust Act 1998*, the Trust has established several technical committees. These committees assess and recommend grant applications, review progress and final project reports and provide guidance in implementation of the relevant program. The membership of each committee during 2010–11 is set out below.

Eco Schools Program

Ms Maria Rickert (alternate Ms Sue Burton) (Chairperson)
Manager Education, OEH

Mr Mark Caddey
A/Leader Environmental Education Unit, Department of Education and Communities

Ms Janelle Hatherly (deputy Ms Felicity Foster)
Community Education Manager, Royal Botanic Gardens Trust

Mr Gary Carey
Archdiocesan Science Adviser, Catholic Education Office

Ms Elizabeth Dark
Representing the Australian Bush Regenerators

Environmental Education Program

Ms Roz Hall (Chairperson)
Director Business and Community Programs, OEH

Ms Clare Porter
National Manager Technical Programs, Australian Water Association

Mr Richard Davies (deputy Ms Nicole Ribera)
Manager Visitor and Community Programs, OEH

Ms Niki Carey (State and Local Government Program)
Assistant Strategy Manager Environment, Local Government and Shires Associations of NSW

Ms Sue Martin (Community Program)
Senior Policy Officer, Local Government and Shires Associations of NSW

Ms Jane Smith
Executive Officer, Community Environment Network Environmental Research Program

Environmental Research Program

Dr Klaus Koop (Chairperson)
Director Environment and Conservation Science, OEH

Dr Derek Van Dyk
Director, Innovation and Economic Analysis, NSW Office of Trade, Business and Energy

Dr Graeme Batley
Chief Research Scientist, Centre for Environmental Contaminants Research, CSIRO Land and Water

Professor Deirdre Lemerie
Director and Professor of Agricultural Innovation, NSW Department of Primary Industries

Protecting Our Places Program

Mr Peter Dixon (Chairperson)
Manager Environmental Funding Programs, OEH

Mr John Lennis
Catchment Officer Aboriginal Communities, Hawkesbury–Nepean Catchment Management Authority

Mr Robert Macfarlane
Senior Cultural Programs Support Officer, OEH

Mr Anthony Seiver
Principal Policy Officer (Culture and Heritage), Department of Human Services, Aboriginal Affairs NSW

Ms Margaret Bottrell
Indigenous Community Support Officer, Sydney Metropolitan Catchment Management Authority

Restoration and Rehabilitation Program

Mr Greg Sullivan (Chairperson)
Deputy Chief Executive Environment Protection and Regulation Group, OEH

Mr Robert Verhey (deputy Ms Kirsty McIntyre) (Community Program)
Representing the Local Government and Shires Associations of NSW

Mr Geoff Hudson (State and Local Government Program)
Natural Resource Management Facilitator, Local Government and Shires Associations of NSW

Mr Greg Bugden
General Manager, Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authority

Ms Cilla Kinross
Representing the Nature Conservation Council of NSW

Mr Andrew McIntyre
Manager Biodiversity and Conservation, OEH

Ms Sandra Morse
Representing the Australian Institute of Landscape Designers & Managers

Riverina Red Gum Regional Employment and Community Development Fund

Mr Richard Bull (Chairperson)

Retired

Mr Chris Chapman

General Manager, Wakool Shire Council

Mr Brian Mitsch

Mayor of Deniliquin Shire and Board Member RDA Murray

Ms Jennifer N Weller

Board Member RDA Murray, and local business owner

Ms Deanne Stevens

Senior Private Native Forestry Officer, OEH

Mr Kevin Atkinson

CEO, Cumeragunja Local Aboriginal Land Council

Mr Peter Whitehead

A/Assistant Regional Director, Department of Trade and Investment, Regional Infrastructure and Services

Ms Heather Dearing

Training Advisor, Department of Education and Communities

Ms Phyllis Miller

Convenor, NSW Natural Resources Advisory Council

Shortened forms

CAHC	Clean Air, Healthy Communities
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
CMA	Catchment Management Authority
ECL	East Coast Lows
EEC	endangered ecological community
EPA	Environment Protection Authority
GIS	geographic information system
LALC	Local Aboriginal Land Council
LEAP	Low Emissions Air Project
LGA	local government area
NPWS	National Parks and Wildlife Service
NSW	New South Wales
OEH	Office of Environment and Heritage
PNF	private native forestry
POP	Protecting our Places
RID	Regional Illegal Dumping
SMILE	Sustainable Mobility Initiatives for Local Environments
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
VOC	volatile organic compound
WCRA	Waste Contractors and Recyclers Association of NSW



Contact Information

Public Access

Further information on the NSW Environmental Trust can be obtained by contacting:

Grants Administrator
PO Box 644
PARRAMATTA NSW 2124
Telephone (02) 8837 6093

Information on the Trust's Grant Programs is also available on the Trust's website at www.environmentaltrust.nsw.gov.au.

Offices

The Trust office is located at:

Level 2
1 Fitzwilliam Street
PARRAMATTA NSW 2150

The office is open from 9.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday.

Publications

The following publications are available from the Trust:

- guidelines and grant application forms for all grant programs
- Environmental Trust Annual Reports from 1992-93 to 2010-11.

550 of the 2010-11 Annual Report have been produced at an external production cost of approximately \$18.48 per copy. The report is also available to download from the Trust's website at www.environmentaltrust.nsw.gov.au.

A range of case studies highlighting successfully completed grant projects are available from the Trust's Dissemination webpage at www.environment.nsw.gov.au/grants/casestudies.htm.

Public access to government information

The *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (GIPA Act) replaced the *Freedom of Information Act 1989* on 1 July 2010, and introduced a new right-to-information system. It relates to personal and non-personal information held by government.

There are four ways in which the Trust's information is made available.

Mandatory release: Via the website and other mechanisms, certain information must be disclosed free of charge. This includes policy documents, the current publication guide, disclosure log of information formally released under the GIPA Act and register of government contracts. This is referred to as 'open access information'.

Proactive release: The Trust is required to proactively release as much government information as possible, in an appropriate way and free of charge (or at the lowest reasonable cost). Members of the public can also ask the Trust what information it will make available, in addition to the information contained on the website.

Informal request: Members of the public can ask for specific information on an informal basis. The Trust should release information without the need for a formal application, unless there are good reasons to require one.

Formal application: This is the last resort if a member of the public has not been able to get information in any other way. They can formally request specific information under the GIPA Act. In these circumstances, access to information will require a formal access application.

The Trust received one request for information under the GIPA Act as detailed below.

Requested by	Information requested	Response
Matthew Cross Advisor to Barry O'Farrell MP	Information on grants awarded in 2009-10 and 2010-11 from the NSW Environmental Trust and NSW Climate Change Fund. • Names of organisations awarded grants • Summary of projects • Monetary value of grants awarded	Applicant was advised of relevant links where the information could be accessed.

Photographs:

Page	Title and source
3	Open day at Beulah biobank site in May 2011. Photo courtesy of OEH
4	New England National Park. Photo courtesy of Barbara Webster, OEH
4	Open boree woodland on Hunthawang. Photo courtesy of David Egan OEH
5	Land for Wildlife workshop. Photo courtesy of Hunter-Central Rivers CMA
7	Members of Nambucca Mens Shed with a completed Myna trap. Photo courtesy of Nambucca Valley Landcare Inc.
7	Bitou bush is a serious threat to coastal environments. Photo courtesy of OEH
8	Endangered Wingham Brush rainforest community in Wingham Nature Reserve. Photo courtesy of Peter Woodard
8	Before and after photos show rapid recovery of vegetation in Braeside Swamp at Blackheath in just six months. Photos courtesy of Blue Mountains City Council
12	Local schools helped out with replanting along Shannon Creek. Photo courtesy of Greg Wilkinson, Clarence Valley Council
19	Students from Cabbage Tree Island explore their wetland. Photo courtesy of Adam Gosling, WetlandCare Australia
20	The eFlora homepage
20	Water for Wetlands guide by Inland Rivers Network
23	Planting a new tree for wildlife habitat. Photo courtesy of Curl Curl North Public School
26	Hawkesbury River at Yarramundi. Photo courtesy of Rosie Nicolai
28	Transplanted sponge fragments survive well and grow rapidly. Photo courtesy of Andy Davis, University of Wollongong
31	Spotted tailed quoll. Photo courtesy of Ken Stepnell
31	Kosciusko to Coast Partnership – winner of the Murrumbidgee CMA Landcare Award for 2011. Photo courtesy of Greening Australia
32	Great Eastern Ranges regional partnerships. Photo courtesy of Greening Australia
33	Fleetwise booklet on alternative vehicle technologies
34	Land Alive cultural site training at Jervis Bay. Photo courtesy of Marcia Ella-Duncan, OEH
35	Love Food Hate Waste team at the Good Food and Wine Show 2011. Photo courtesy of OEH
36	Gundagai resident and council staff with the new compost bin. Photo courtesy of Rochelle Nicholls, Gundagai Independent
38	The BusinessRecycling website provides information on local recycling services
39	A new pallet made from recovered timber. Photo courtesy of Mark Jackson, OEH
40	Applying recycled organics to a potato crop. Photo courtesy of Annie Kavanagh, OEH
41	River red gum on the Murray River. Photo courtesy of Stuart Cohen, OEH
41	Flooded river red gums in Millewa Forest. Photo courtesy of Rob Jung
44	Property of Estuary Creek purchased under the Farmer Exit Assistance Package. Photo courtesy of Nature Conservation Trust of NSW
46	Koala habitat is being protected through Growth Centres Program. Photo courtesy of Martin Schultz
46	Spotted gum forest at Beulah, part of the endangered ecological community known as Shale Sandstone Transition Forest. Photo courtesy of OEH
47	Tweed Sustainable Streets Program. Photo courtesy of Tweed Shire Council
48	Sugar gliders have moved into nesting boxes installed in Byron Shire. Photo courtesy of Tweed Shire Council
48	Sustainability logo
49	Community brochure and final plan for the Regional Environmental Sustainability Action Plan
49	Oatley Flora and Fauna Society facilitated a plant giveaway as part of a Birds in Backyards workshop. Photo courtesy of David Khun, Georges River Combined Councils' Committee
50	Woolshed Creek Regulator directing flows to Yanga Wetlands. Photo courtesy of Paul Childs, OEH
51	Straw-necked ibis colony at Booligal Wetlands. Photo courtesy of Paul McInnes, OEH
52	Cape Byron Sustainability Trail. Photo courtesy of Leah Andrews, NSW Environmental Trust
53	<i>Phytophthora</i> poster
53	Promoting eco-friendly youth centres
55	Cumberland Plain Woodland on Beulah. Photo courtesy of OEH
55	Bush regenerators controlling weeds at Saint Mary's Tower biobank site. Photo courtesy of OEH
57	Artarmon Library sustainability mural. Artwork by Wendy Bishop
75	Snow gum, Great Eastern Ranges. Photo courtesy of Amoi Salakas, NSW Environmental Trust
76	Revegetation at Shannon Creek Dam. Photo courtesy of Greg Wilkinson, Clarence Valley Council
81	Rainbow lorikeet. Photo courtesy of Rosie Nicolai
86	Leafy greenhood orchid. Photo courtesy of Ken Stepnell

