

REHABILITATION OF KYLA PARK GRAZING LANDS AND ADJOINING LAKE FORESHORES

overview of the project

This project by the Tuross Lakes Preservation Group has rehabilitated 21 hectares of land on the property of Kyla Park in the catchments of Coila and Tuross Lakes. Over 8,000 trees, shrubs and sedges were planted and 3.3 kilometres of fencing was erected to control erosion on five drainage lines that flow into these lakes. Over 2900 hours of volunteer time was dedicated to achieve this outcome. The quality of water entering these lakes is a major concern as Tuross Lake is used for oyster production and recreational fishing and Coila Lake is used for commercial and recreational fishing and water sports. This area is also culturally significant to the local community, as it was the first landholding settled by the non-indigenous community in the area and it played a significant role in the development of the region.

In addition to the on ground works, 15 workshops, events, field trips and training sessions were held to promote the methods used and work done at this site. These events were attended by 340 people and more events are planned for the future. A case study has also been produced on the project to raise awareness in the community of the degradation issues that have occurred at the site and the importance of the management of this land.



A sign raises awareness of good catchment management around the lakes

how the project was carried out

Major erosion control works were carried out on three of the five drainage lines. Rehabilitation works included re-shaping and re-contouring eroded gullies, creating sediment ponds and installing rockfill at the bottom of the drainage line. Sites were also fenced to exclude stock and revegetated with 8,000 native plants of 50 different varieties. While the vegetation was establishing silt fencing was erected to stabilise the area and protect against erosion. The remaining two drainage lines were fenced and revegetated.

Lake Tuross and Coila Lake foreshores have been re-fenced with a 100m buffer zone to the lake foreshores, to exclude stock, filter runoff and protect water quality. To increase public awareness, information signs have been erected in the paddocks bordering the road. By educating the public it is hoped that they will implement similar rehabilitation works on degraded areas of their own land.

outcomes now and in the future

The plants established through this project have provided additional native habitat, shade for livestock and have linked



Rehabilitated wetland at Kyla Park

up natural corridors along the lake foreshores. As the plantings mature it is hoped that native animals that are no longer found at the site will return. A five year monitoring program has begun that will record the number of native animals in the area.

This project has successfully reduced the amount of sediment entering the waterways and improved the quality of water arriving at Lake Tuross and Coila Lake. The group used a water testing kit to demonstrate the improvement in water quality. Through this project they have realised vegetation plays an important role in filtering water, sediment and other pollutants from running into watercourses.

benefits, challenges & lessons learned

Finding suitable contractors proved to be a challenge due to the smaller numbers of contractors available in rural areas and lack of interest in small-scale projects. It also proved difficult to engage a suitably skilled person to supervise the project over a couple of years. This role was filled by volunteer members who had suitable knowledge and experience in supervising contract workers, field inspections, arranging meetings and field days and reporting. The group has learnt that prior to tackling a project of this nature they need to ensure that the group has the necessary skills and experience to manage the project.

Access to the site proved to be an ongoing problem due to the steeply sloping nature of the land. The heavy clay soils at the site were hard to excavate when dry and difficult to work in when wet.

Maintenance will be ongoing for many years at this site, but the group is aware that with projects of this nature the full life cycle of rehabilitation needs to be considered including ongoing maintenance and monitoring.