

# Collaborations

## Managing Dry Times

Hovells Creek Landcare Group Inc



### Workshops to help landholders manage during times of drought.

#### The issue

Like many others in NSW, HCLG members went through three years of drought from 2017 to 2020. Landholders were feeling the impacts not just financially and environmentally but also emotionally and socially. We decided to run a program throughout 2019-20 to provide helpful information to Landcare members on issues from climate change and decision-support tools for farming to mental health coping strategies as well as bringing people together to reduce isolation. The drought also had an impact on people's capacity to put effort into doing volunteer work for Landcare, so the program needed to be able to manage that issue as well.

#### The solution

We received a FRRR 'Tackling the Tough Times Together' grant which allowed us to run a series of workshops, meetings and events, with one every two months throughout the year. We used part of the grant to pay for the Local Landcare Co-ordinator to arrange:

- \* two local workshops where expert guest speakers presented on a range of relevant topics;
- \* a field trip for members to the Mulloon Institute at Bungendore which demonstrates on-ground regenerative agricultural practices;
- \* co-sponsoring of a symposium on 'Resilient Farming Communities - Planning for Climate Uncertainty';
- \* a guest speaker at a members' meeting who presented on the implications of climate change on the welfare and distribution of the endangered Superb Parrot; and
- \* at our next general members' meeting, a discussion about how everyone managed during the drought.

#### The impact

We overcame volunteer fatigue by using the grant to pay for extra hours for the co-ordinator to manage workshops. We helped to reduce social isolation in the community by running interesting and relevant events in a relaxed social setting. We collaborated with experts to help the community learn more about subjects including the implications of climate change on pasture growth and animal production and the latest research on predictive tools and farm strategies. One of the most important presentations was on good mental health where members learned tips and strategies for engaging in safe, trustworthy, and collaborative interactions which minimise stress, de-escalate challenging situations and enable recovery.

#### Learnings

The workshops and guest speakers were well received by both Landcare members and landholder members. Good information is readily available online but local presentations by experts enhanced its relevance. Follow-up is necessary to reinforce the key messages. Discussion over lunch and tea breaks is valuable.



### Key facts

- Six events during 2019-20 to build resilience during times of drought
- Funded by the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal and Stockland Care Foundation
- Providing landholders with expert information and strategies to manage during drought
- Targetting not just financial issues but social and emotional as well

### Project Partners



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