

Fish Creek Landcare Group Strategy 2023-28



Aim: To make a real difference to the Landscape and Biodiversity of the Fish Creek Landcare group area by promoting and facilitating sustainable land use practices

Vision: By 2030, a healthy and respectful collaboration of community, interest groups, institutions and government has substantially increased the biodiversity of our area

Values:

The FCL group acknowledges the traditional owners of the FCL area and pays respect to their past and present Elders. We honor and celebrate their spiritual, cultural and customary connection to country and the biodiversity that forms part of that country.

Landholders drive protection and restoration measures on THEIR properties, learning & adapting through their activities.

Our primary considerations are safety of people and connecting and strengthening our community. We listen to all views respectfully.

We will work to protect our unique biodiversity and reduce the impact of harmful human activity, while recognizing the value of agricultural production to our area.

Objectives:

Protect and enhance native vegetation, protect our waterways and increase biodiversity

Improve water quality in our streams

Protect our soils and monitor and control the Impacts of pest plants and animals

Build a strong Landcare Community

Key Initiatives and Programs: (Detail on page 2)

- Continue to implement the Fish Creek Catchment Project
- Establish a broad scale protection and enhancement program for native vegetation throughout the FCL area

- Establish a water monitoring program in conjunction with the WGCMA and adjoining Landcare groups
- Map riparian vegetation
- Establish programs to keep nutrients on farms

- Encourage the control of pest plants and animals by members
- Monitor the impacts of feral deer and the outcomes of our program

- Build our membership
- Work productively with our SGLN partners and establish links with agriculture
- Encourage partnerships with other environmental agencies and the broader Tarwin Catchment community
- Encourage dissemination of information

Metrics:

- Kms of riparian fencing
- Area of land protected from grazing
- Trees planted
- Areas of Seeding

- Water testing parameters established and reported on
- Compliance with EPA guidelines noted

- Reports to Feral Scan
- Deer monitoring programs across the groups
- Areas of weeds controlled
- Rabbits, Foxes and cats controlled

- Attendance at Landcare events
- Record number of Landcare events, information disseminated and educational opportunities
- Monitor liaison with other Landcare groups

Context for the Fish Creek Landcare Strategic Plan

We are landholders in the Fish Creek, Waratah Bay, Shallow Inlet & Corner Inlet catchments of South Gippsland. We are united by a common purpose to “make a real difference to the Landscape and Biodiversity of the FCL group area by promoting sustainable land use practices”. We collaborate through the South Gippsland Landcare Network and partner with Commonwealth, State and Local Governments and their agencies as well as the private sector.

Protect and enhance native vegetation, protect our waterways and increase biodiversity

- Move to stage two of our Fish Creek Catchment project – Map remaining areas of the catchment – Apply for grant funding for its continuation
- Consider the parts of the FCL area that do not fall within the Fish Creek Catchment and seek funding to encourage landowners to protect and enhance existing vegetation and riparian areas
- Arrange training in correct methods of protection and planting & equipment use
- Establish landholder resources for field days and information sessions
- Educate the community on the value of excluding livestock from waterways
- Encourage the broader community to value native vegetation
- Continue our involvement with the Cape Liptrap Deer Control group
- Partner with others to protect the Corner and Shallow Inlet shoreline
- Liaise with and support Prom Coast Ecolink

Build a strong Landcare community

- Work productively with SGLN members and participate in Network activities
- Work with the West Gippsland CMA on joint projects.
- Organise community field trips and information sessions
- Keep our Landcare and broader community informed of our activities

Monitor and control the impacts of pest plants and animals

- Encourage the wide use of FeralScan to report deer activity across the regions. Work with neighbouring Landcare groups and landowners
- Work with research partners to assess numbers of feral deer and their movement (eg 4G camera trial)
- Work with community groups and neighbours to identify and control weeds and feral animals
- Establish trials to evaluate the environmental impact of feral deer
- Work with landholders for commercial deer harvesting
- Support fox and weed control initiatives by Parks Victoria and council

Improve water quality in our streams

- Document the process and value of a water monitoring plan
- Continue planting and fencing riparian areas throughout the FCL area
- Engage the local community and enrol more landholders in innovative ways to “love their streams”
- Keep landholders informed of the ongoing actions we are taking and the learnings from our program
- Join with other Landcare groups in the Tarwin Catchment to develop a whole of catchment plan for the Tarwin River
- Keep landholders informed of the ongoing actions we are taking and the learnings from our program

Objective 1 Action list

- Plan for and secure grant funding from Government and philanthropic sources
- Create Biolinks and vegetation corridors, reconnect disconnected landscapes.
- Communicate with SGSC councillors regarding the worth of biolinks and their value to the community
- Build sustainable farming practices into our plans
- Be alert for Carbon farming initiatives and information
- Investigate agroforestry projects as a revegetation option and carbon farming opportunity
- Have an advisory service for new Landcare members

Objective 3 Action list

- Monitor the Rail Trail, Hoddle Mountain trail and the creek area in Fish Creek township, roadside reserves and rail trail easements for weeds
- Establish Fox and feral cat removal programs, Indian Myna reduction
- Encourage members to control soil erosion
- Encourage members to monitor soil carbon and regenerative farming initiatives
- Cooperate with adjoining groups on deer control

Objective 2 Action list

- Work with Waterwatch through the West Gippsland CMA
- Increase the percentage of farm dams that are fenced and revegetated
- Establish targets for the percentage of waterways fenced to exclude stock
- Use citizen scientists in our monitoring programs eg Frog ID Museum of Australia
- Implement Fertosmart and Grazfert programs in collaboration with Ag Vic

Objective 4 Action list

- Work with traditional owners, in particular the Gunai Kurnai who have purchased land in the FCL area
- Work closely with Prom Coast Ecolink Landcare group, Greening Australia and other environmental groups, WGCMA, Parks Vic., South Gippsland Water and the South Gippsland Shire Council
- More active social media presence. Regular research reporting. Newspaper and newsletter articles. Education stalls at markets
- 'Adopt a roadside' campaign. Community gardens. Resources and tools for members. Liaise with universities re research opportunities
- Multi generational involvement – Engage and educate the general community – At least two events a year – Engage community elders to facilitate
- Engage volunteers for on ground works. Up to date resources and lists of contractors