

Lockyer Uplands Catchments Inc

...local landholders caring for native habitats

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT Annual General Meeting 10:00am Sunday 19th March 2017

As this is LUCI's first AGM, a report on activities since incorporation in May 2016 needs a little context....

Our association and projects grew out of the work of the Friends of Dwyers Scrub (FoDS). The initial group met on 12th July 2015 in Dwyers Scrub to discuss options for protecting the long term health of the park. We recognised from these early discussions, that the health of the park and the viability of native habitats and wildlife in the surrounding landscape were interdependent.

With the concept of landscape connectivity in mind, FoDS embarked on a vision to engage local landholders in caring for native habitat and wildlife on their properties; one iconic species at a time. We began with the Lockyer Uplands Glossy Black Cockatoo (GBC) Project.

To undertake the GBC project with grant monies, FoDS became a subgroup within Citizens of the Lockyer Inc. At the completion of the GBC project, FoDS members moved to become a separate incorporated association.

In addition to the GBC project, LUCI has continued the FoDS' weed management project in Dwyers Scrub. Some members are registered volunteers with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and undertake mapping and eradication of Cat's Claw vine in the semi-evergreen dry vine forest (SEVT) in the park.



A. Incorporation 20th May 2016

As part of incorporation, LUCI's objectives were formalised as:

1. Raising awareness of natural systems
2. Encouraging better land management options
3. Improving environmental outcomes

LUCI's approach has been to: encourage landholders to express their environmental commitments on their own land; provide environmental education activities for members and supporters; and host landholder get togethers that combine socialising with knowledge exchange. Currently, LUCI has 20 financial members.

LUCI's activities are covered by a public and products liability insurance policy, provided free of charge as part of our membership of Queensland Water and Land Carers, <http://qwalc.org.au/>.

B. Projects May 2016 – March 2017

In ten months, LUCI has undertaken a number of activities which have achieved one or more of our three objectives. Our citizen science projects (e.g. Glossy Black Cockatoo surveying, koala surveying and inputs into the Junior Citizen Science Project) raise awareness of natural systems and encourage interest in native habitat conservation. Our project involving landholders protecting Semi-evergreen vine thicket (SEVT) and the Dwyers Scrub weeding program contribute to better land management and improved environmental outcomes. Details of our activities over the past ten months are described in the following table.

Project	Activity	Results	Comments
Lockyer Uplands GBC Project	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. August 2016 follow-up GBC workshop with Griffith University researchers 2. GBC Conservancy's Birding Day in the Lockyer Valley 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 25 people attended and learned of GBC presence/distribution on properties surveyed. – Recruited/ coordinated 15 volunteers who participated in surveying; and collated data on day's sightings. 	<p>LUCI needs to assess members' interest in Phase 2 of the GBC project, guided by Griffith University researchers.</p> <p>Next GBC Conservancy Birding Day is 14th May and volunteers and properties for surveying will be sought.</p>
Protecting and improving the natural assets of the Lockyer Uplands: Phase 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Erection of 2 kilometers of fencing of SEVT on two private properties 2. Application of bio-control measure to address invading Cat's Claw creeper in over 15 ha SEVT on another private property. 3. Application (ongoing) of chemical treatment for tree pear (3 ha) and lantana (32 ha) on two private properties. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Impacts of grazing reduced on over 50 hectares of SEVT. – Results yet to be assessed. – Positive results on tree pear already discernible. 	<p>Connectivity between Dwyers Scrub SEVT and SEVT in surrounding landscape is enhanced.</p> <p>LUCI needs to assess members' interest in an ongoing focus on SEVT as it is an endangered ecosystem and one that is present on a number of LUCI members' properties.</p>
Friends of Dwyers Scrub Project	<p>Since this project commenced in October 2015, volunteers have contributed a minimum of 250 hours of labour to the control of Cat's Claw vine in the SEVT section of the park.</p> <p>The FoDS group has met with QPWS representatives on three occasions to discuss the weeding program and to receive their induction as volunteers.</p> <p>Two LUCI members have completed training in use of chemical herbicides.</p>	<p>An area approximately 4,000m² has been weeded using the manual cut and spray method .</p>	<p>Weed regrowth management is ongoing.</p> <p>Mapping the extent of Cat's Claw and creating a data base on other weed species in the Cat's Claw infested area are yet to be accomplished.</p> <p>Volunteers are yet to receive their first aid training to be organised by QPWS.</p> <p>A major challenge is attracting more volunteers.</p>

Junior Citizen Science Project 2017	LUCI members participated in science day at Mt Sylvania State School as part of our partnership with the Principal to pilot a new learning approach in the 3 rd -6 th year students' science curriculum.	Information on GBCs (identification, feeding habits and habitat needs) provided to 32 students from Mt Sylvania and Ma Ma Creek schools.	Students will prepare a presentation on their year's work for inclusion in LUCI's October breakfast program.
Koala Monitoring Project 2017	<p>August 2016 workshop – Lockyer Community Action (LCA) members provided LUCI members with an overview of koala populations in SEQ and koala surveying methods and training in koala scat identification.</p> <p>LUCI members have undertaken random scat surveys on two properties, participated in a survey using Grid SAT methodology on another property at East Egypt and participated as field assistants in a Griffith University koala survey of Lockyer National Park.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Seventeen LUCI members are now trained in koala scat identification. – First steps in understanding the presence and distribution of koalas on LUCI members' properties. 	LUCI needs to assess members' interest in an organised koala surveying project guided by Griffith University researchers.

C. Community activities May 2016 – March 2017

LUCI is keen to communicate its activities and share knowledge with a range of landholders, interested individuals and conservation/land management organisations. To this end, this past year has seen LUCI undertake the following:

Activity	Details and results
LUCI's newsletter, the <i>Quarterly Update</i>	LUCI's seventh quarterly newsletter has now been distributed via email to members and a network of individuals and organisations involved in conservation/land management activities.
Weed weaving workshop	September 2016 saw LUCI's hold its first workshop in weaving Cat's Claw vine recycled from Dwyers Scrub. The workshop was organised and facilitated by Judy Whistler and Jim Kerr. Fifteen people attended and feedback was very positive. Enquiries have been received as to another workshop.
Breakfast at the Darvalls	Peter and Elspeth Darvall have a tradition of hosting community breakfasts in their home featuring at least one guest speaker. They generously allowed their October 2016 breakfast to be a platform to promote LUCI and donated the proceeds of the breakfast to LUCI. Guest speaker was Cr Jim McDonald from Lockyer Valley Regional Council who spoke about his Environment Portfolio within Council. At least 50 local landholders and invited guests attended including representatives from SEQ Catchments Members Association, Citizens of the Lockyer, Lockyer Community Action, Friends of Lake Apex and Junior Landcare Lockyer Valley and Toowoomba. Feedback from attendees was very positive, especially in relation to the opportunity to connect with other conservation groups in the Lockyer Valley.

Groundwater meeting	LUCI members organised and attended a meeting with Dr Jim Galletly and other community members at Glen Rock Regional Park to discuss the source and flow of groundwater in the Lockyer Valley. The Gatton Star featured an article on the meeting following which, a number of letters to the editor have appeared on the subject of groundwater.
LUCI display at the February Gem festival event	LUCI members staffed a display and information stand which resulted in a new member and an additional person to LUCI's mailing list.

D. Network activities May 2016 – March 2017

LUCI's associations and network of contacts provide a number of benefits. For example, our activities are insured, our projects receive support with technical advice and/or funds, our members have the opportunity to keep up to date with relevant conservation/land management information and LUCI gains opportunities to promote and share our members' knowledge/skills.

Type of contact	Details of contacts
Membership of environment/catchment management organisations	Queensland Water and Land Carers
	SEQ Catchments Members Association
	Protect the Bush Alliance
Partnerships in projects	Griffith School of Environment, Griffith University – Discussions are underway with Griffith University researchers and Lockyer Community Action to design a long-term GBC and koala surveying project across the Lockyer Valley.
	Lockyer Community Action – (see above GBC and Koala surveying project)
	The Principal, Mt Sylvia State School – Junior Citizen Science Project
	Queensland Agricultural Workforce Development Network, Growcom – a joint initiative to promote education and research in Dwyers Scrub, which would see students in the vocational and tertiary sectors, who are studying conservation and land management, as a potential source of “weeders” and “mappers” in the park. The initiative has the support of the Department of Education, Training and Skills (Darling Downs South West) and local vocational educators (Rural Training Queensland and UQGVEC).
Support given/received/sought	Friends of Escarpment Parks – members have assisted in our Friends of Dwyers Scrub Project with technical advice and manpower.
	Toowoomba Field Naturalists – LUCI members, Peter and Elspeth Darvall provided TFN members with morning tea and a ‘pit stop’ on their November field trip to Dwyers Scrub. TFN members also visited the eastern boundary of Dwyers Scrub via Judy Whistler's and Jim Kerr's property where they enjoyed a picnic lunch.
	Department of Education, Training and Skills, Darling Downs South West – contribution to the Department's Ag Inspiration Tours by providing a talk to secondary school students at Dwyers Scrub and accompanying students to the drone technology centre at UQ Gatton campus.
	School of Agriculture and Food Sciences, UQ Gatton – Following a meeting in December 2016 with A/Professor Victor Galea at UQ Gatton, LUCI sent a proposal to Dr Galea outlining opportunities for collaboration in mapping, weeding and species surveying activities in Dwyers Scrub. While no feedback has been received as yet, the QAWN (Growcom) local officer is following up on the proposal as part of the initiative outlined in partnership projects above.
	Tanya Bonner, Jagera Traditional owners – follow up letter to Tanya after a chance meeting at a community event. Tanya indicated some members of the Jagera community might be interested in visiting, and participating in the weeding program at, Dwyers Scrub.

