

Building knowledge around fire management techniques and weed identification for local landholders in the Tarcutta Valley and Kyeamba Valley Landcare Groups

The issue

The Tarcutta Hills Reserve is a 738-hectare Reserve on the lower western slopes of the Great Dividing Range in central west New South Wales. This Grassy White Box Woodland is home to 100 different bird species including vulnerable Superb Parrots, Diamond Firetails, the critically endangered Swift Parrot and nationally Endangered Gang-Gang Cockatoo. Areas such as this are under threat from the seemingly insurmountable and uncontrollable invasion of weeds and are susceptible to bushfires as experienced in the bushfires of 2019/20. Management to control weeds and increase resilience to bushfires is critical in protecting the reserve's ecological value.

The solution

A workshop was held to provide an opportunity for combined knowledge sharing between the Rural Fire Services Hot Spots Program, South East Aboriginal Consultancy, Wagga Wagga City Council's Invasive Weed Management Team and Local Land Holders. The workshop focussed on weed identification and how working collaboratively enhances weed control outcomes. It involved visiting the Tarcutta Hills Reserve to see the outcome of a cool burn undertaken earlier in the year and learn how fire is a useful tool in weed control, building resilience to bushfires and its importance both ecologically and culturally. The workshop was supported by the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Trust and Landcare NSW.

The impact

The workshop showcased managing woodlands with the use of mosaic style Cultural Burns to create bushfire-resilient landscapes, minimise invasive weeds and benefit native vegetation and wildlife.

The key to the workshop's success was bringing like-minded land managers together to share knowledge and strengthen relationships. Being on Country and seeing the results of a Cultural Burn was inspiring as it showed evidence of reduced invasive weeds and natural regeneration of native plant species.

Land managers learnt about opportunities provided by the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Trust to dedicate portions of their property to conservation and receive annual payments. Further information can be found at www.bct.nsw.gov.au or info@bct.nsw.gov.au



Key facts

- Bringing a range of different land managers and experts together on Country was invaluable and resulted in building of stronger working relationships.
- Controlled fire as a tool for land management is proving to be a positive resource.
- Building relationships is key to managing areas such as the Tarcutta Hills Reserve, particularly tackling invasive weeds.
- The site showed natural regeneration post cool burn of eucalypts and Cypress. The understory plants regenerating included Small-leaf Bush-pea and Many-flowered Mat-rush along with many other species which provide food source and nesting sites for the native fauna.
- Building healthy Landscapes for healthy people, plants and animals can be achieved when we all work together. We were also able to support local Indigenous Businesses developing in our communities.

Project Partners



Learnings

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This initiative is made possible by the NSW Landcare Enabling Program, a collaboration between Local Land Services and Landcare NSW supported by the NSW Government.