

## Communities Caring for the Environment

### Clarence Landcare Inc



### Building social capital to increase land conservation activities

#### The issue

#### The challenge

Building social capital and broadening personal development to increase landcare volunteerism in a small rural areas where landcare has either been inactive or is relatively unknown.

#### The solution

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The local Landcare Coordinators Initiative has enabled Clarence Landcare Coordinators to campaign and work in consultation with community and council staff in group planning sessions.

These sessions allowed us to explore topics that could identify personal motivations and outcomes of volunteering initiatives; establish purposes and goals for Landcare groups, identify the council managed areas and key "Koala Habitat" that could be supported by landcare group activities. Coordinators also provided brainstorming activities for event planning and technical assistance with planning for site management including the use of spatial data and other management tools for on-ground work and use in monitoring.

With volunteer energy high, several training days were organised to provide "new to landcare" volunteers with native plant/weed identification and demonstration in weed control techniques to ensure safety for volunteers and successful management of environmental zones.

#### The impact

In six months, two new groups were formed, 29 "new to Landcare" members are now working on the ground, 8 working bees held, funding for equipment & training obtained and 5 events held with more being planned with other community organisations. One native nursery being established and 5 properties connected through riparian management.

Building social capital in a group setting and directly harnessing the energy and passion of individual community skills and aligning those skills to direct roles in a Landcare group as well as early planning with spatial data etc., substantially facilitated the successful establishment of two new groups in the Grafton Local Government Area.

Providing continued support as mentors with new local landcare leaders provides empowerment and confidence for group management. Branding new groups as early as possible with their very own Landcare logos also creates ownership and is an excellent stimulation tool for groups to grow and begin their activities and gain membership.

### Key facts

- Two new Landcare Groups formed - 29 Landcare Volunteers working on the ground
- 1 x National Tree Planting Day held - 3 Community groups, Council staff & 22 School Students attended, 1 politician
- 8 Working Bees held
- 2ha of Remnant floodplain forest being rehabilitated - 1 koala sighted
- 200 native plants planted
- 5 properties connected with riparian management

### Project Partners



The Local Landcare Coordinator Initiative Program that enables the promotion of these case studies on the Gateway, is funded by the NSW Government and is supported through the partnership of Local Land Services and Landcare NSW

