

NSW Environmental Trust 2019 Environmental Education Program

Clarence Cane Toad Community Education Project

2019/EDT2/0008

Project Overview May 2020



Project Summary (From application form)

Clarence Landcare will raise awareness of the Cane Toad issue and increase community control measures by collaborating with Clarence Valley Conservation in Action Landcare Group (CVCIA), Yaegl Elders, community and local and state authorities. We aim to increase volunteer community collection with CVCIA by 50% and household collecting by 81 people hours/week by rolling out 2200 household cane toad collection kits and providing the training, incentives and support to ensure it is done in an ethical and effective manner. We will deliver education workshops in 7 schools to 1500 students and deliver 9 training/community events on the identification/reporting/control of Cane Toads to 270 community members, business & agency field staff.

We will do this by:

- ◆ Promoting existing **community frog identification** platforms and **cane toad reporting**. Eg. Frog ID App and Toad Scan
- ◆ Development of **household cane toad collection kits** with a major focus on correct ID (this includes a research and testing phase with community)
- ◆ **Training/ Workshops/ Events:**
 - **Community** Cane Toad Collection Workshops
 - **School** Visits using “Toad Talks”
 - **Citizen Science Day** run by EnviroDNA—education and water sampling for the project <https://www.envirodna.com/>
 - **Celebrating** Community Cane Toad Success Event—eg. Film Night
- ◆ **Professional Development:** Training workshops for agency field staff, Plumbers and Beekeepers

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Other Project Outputs include the development and distribution of:

- ◆ Pamphlets promoting Frog ID and household control
- ◆ Stickers
- ◆ Review and reproduce CVCIA Cane Toad Collection Training Manual
- ◆ Cane Toad awareness signage for public areas

Project Size and staff: The project is funded for \$250,000 over two and a half to three years—given the Covid-19 situation we are unsure exactly what the new timeframe will be. The project allows the employment of 2 casual project officers—Kelly McRae a qualified teacher who developed and delivered the Toad Talks education package to schools in the Clarence as part of our 2018-19 Cane Toad Control Project and Annette Cook part for our current control team and very well qualified and experienced in the Cane Toad field. Debbie Repschlager Landcare Coordinator will manage the project. Fig Forest will continue to manage the operations of the DPI funded Cane Toad Control project and provide valuable insights and assistance regarding landholder / community liaison and control for this project.

The key goals of this project are to maintain the status of the exclusion zone (maintain the containment line), protect key environment assets (species at threat from Cane Toads) and support community awareness and management programs.

Community engagement and participation is seen as a key component and has the capacity to make a marked impact on this issue. With no cohesive community wide approach existing along the containment line, we envisage that an education program as proposed by Clarence Landcare with outcomes that exceed the length of the funding, will create sustained systemic and behavioural changes that supports the work of the CVCIA and significantly contributes to the key objectives for managing this pest species.

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Proposed Community Changes as a result of the Project

With a community wide education campaign (workshops, school visits, community events, visual media) followed by the roll out of the Toad Collection Kits, it's expected that the increased awareness and engagement of the community will support long term systematic and sustainable Cane Toad management practices.

Cane Toad Collection Kits:

The proposed kits include compostable plastic bags to pick up the cane toad with, a small plastic tub to put them in (marked as a Cane Toad Kit with identification and instruction tips). The kit is to be placed in the fridge then freezer for 2 days, then placed in the green bin for composting in the councils facility.

The aim is to establish routines around council recycling and waste management designed to be easy and convenient to adopt (“bin night is collect a cane toad night”). Like the current understandings around the need for recycling systems the need for community wide cane toad management is intended to insert permanently into the social norm.

The training and resources will be designed to overcome barriers for participation and to showcase how the community can make a difference in reducing the population of Cane Toads, protecting pets and native fauna and preventing the spread of this invasive species.

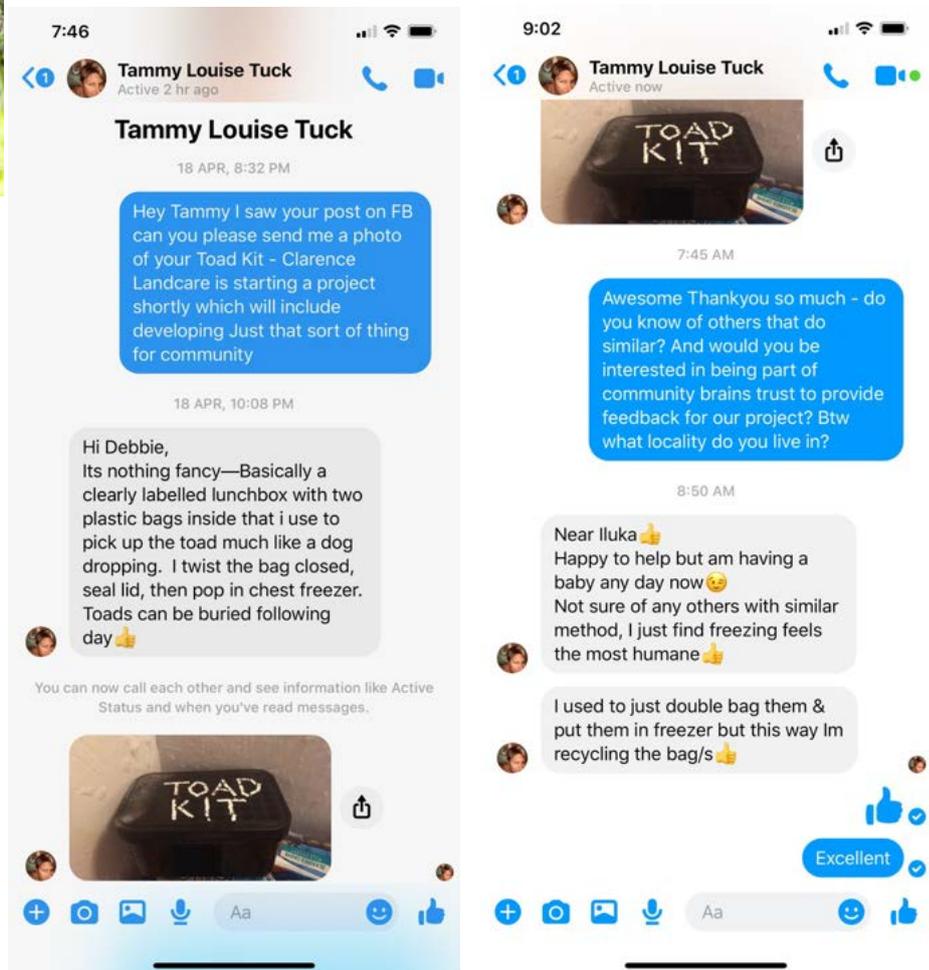
TESTING PHASE The initial phase of testing will include trialling the bucket/container to be used in the collection kit. Factors to be considered will be the quality and durability, size and materials of the bucket, with the aim to use recycled/reuse materials if possible. In addition to the testing around the collection bucket will be the efficacy of the compostable/biodegradable bags we are considering providing in the collection kit. These would be similar in nature to those provided by the CVC for their kitchen caddies so that the bags and toads can be put in the green waste bin in the same manner.



Cane Toad Collection Kits continued:

The next phase will include engaging members of one of the communities from the target area (potentially Woodford Island) to undertake a small scale pilot project. This group will be provided with various versions of the collection kits, training and ongoing support from project staff; while social media platforms (offered by Clarence Landcare and CVCIA) will also provide real time support to participants, as well as offering an opportunity to network with others, share experiences and offer encouragement. To take place over a period of 6 months, this process should allow us to gain regular feedback and information from our participants around any challenges or difficulties our current model presents as well as enable us to measure the uptake in activity and the number of toads collected over this period.

To the right is a messenger conversation had with a local who has already created her own Toad Kit. We have also spoken to a number of community members about Cane Toad Collection, people have differing opinions of collecting/control methods and can be quite particularly about putting toads in their fridge and freezer. Each is happy to join a discussion group about the topic.



Cane Toad DNA testing of waterbodies <https://www.envirodna.com/>

Another important component of this phase will be the DNA testing of water bodies during the pilot stage (baseline) and throughout the period of this project. This will included taking water samples from key areas to detect the eDNA of toads. This will enable us to accurately measure the presence of Cane Toads including the number and distribution of toads and the changes overtime.



Kelly

Fig

Debbie

Meet the Team

Clarence Landcare

Kelly McRae : Education Project Officer

Fig Forest: Project Officer

Debbie Repschlager: Project Manager and Landcare Coordinator

Annette Cook: Project Officer

Scott Lenton: Employed as a casual Cane Toad Control Officer and is the volunteer Coordinator of the community Cane Toad control within the Clarence Valley Conservation in Action Landcare group (CVCIA).

Suzanne Lynch: Environmental Officer (Education) Clarence Valley Council

Caroline Blackmore: Senior Conservation Planner NSW NPWS

Bill Walker: CEO Yaegl Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corp.

Nigel Blake Senior Lands Services Officer NC LLS

Grant Wilcock Ranger NSW NPWS

Ian Turnbull Invasive Species Officer NSW DPI



Annette



Scott



Suzanne



Caroline



Bill



Nigel



Grant



Ian

