



LODDON
PLAINS
LANDCARE
NETWORK

Annual Report

2020 - 2021

Healthy environment . Healthy landscapes . Sustainable communities
To protect and enhance biodiversity across the Loddon Plains



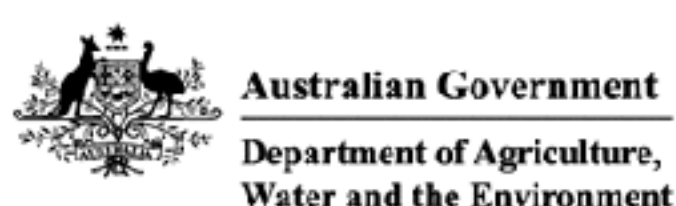
Our Member Groups

- ▶ Bendigo Creek Floodplain Group
- ▶ Canary Island Landcare
- ▶ East Loddon Landcare
- ▶ Fairley Bael Bael Sandhill Lake Landcare
- ▶ Friends of Kooyoora
- ▶ Friends of Terrick Terrick National Park
- ▶ Inglewood Urban Landcare
- ▶ Kamarooka Landcare
- ▶ Loddon Vale Landcare
- ▶ Mologa Landcare
- ▶ Mt Korong Eco-Watch
- ▶ North Central Landcare
- ▶ Northern Plains Conservation Management Network
- ▶ Northern United Forestry Group
- ▶ Salisbury West Landcare
- ▶ Terricks Ridge Landcare
- ▶ Wedderburn Conservation Management Network
- ▶ Wychitella District Landcare

Our Supporters and Stakeholders



Project partners



Photos: top to bottom, L to R:
Planting project - Lake Bael Bael (DP), weather station being installed on local farm (DP)



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The GOANNA logo image depicts images of circles, dots, wheat grains, water droplets, leaves, and solid wavy lines embedded into the shape of a goanna. These images represent the People, Agriculture, Irrigation, Conservation, Diverse Communities, Corridors and Biolinks of revegetation throughout the Loddon Plains.

This image embodies the guiding principles of our Network, illustrating that by working together, the potential for socially acceptable landscape change and long term sustainable agriculture can be realised. The GOANNA acronym represents 'Group Organised Action Nurturing Natural Assets' which is what we are achieving. It also is a great image as our Network's area has two species of Goanna, the Tree Goanna (*Varanus varius*), sometimes known as the Lace Monitor, and the Sand Goanna (*Varanus gouldii*).

Loddon Plains Landcare Network acknowledges the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land on which we live and work.

We acknowledge the rich living cultures, traditions, and connections of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people, their intrinsic connection to land and place, and the significant contribution that Traditional Owners have made to managing and caring for Country for thousands of years.

LPLN conducts its work on Dja Dja Wurrung and Barapa Barapa & Wemba Wamba Country.

We pay our respect to Elders and leaders past, present and emerging for the contributions that they have made, those that they will continue to make and support them in their actions of self determination and leadership.



Presidents Report



The ever-changing Covid-19 rules and restrictions resulted in our groups having to modify the way we operated and functioned over the past 12 months. Most of the operations were limited to electronic means with very little in-person activities. This impacted on the amount of on-ground work to some degree.

The Committee of Management (CoM) held regular monthly meetings via Zoom (a video conference application). Some members experienced difficulties due to poor network access or other technical issues, but in the main, the CoM meetings were very well attended.

I'd like to thank our Vice President, Malcolm Brown for chairing some of the meetings and Danny for setting up and handling the Zoom traffic.

Some of the projects and activities undertaken during the year were:

- ▶ Rabbit control works program covering 30 landholders and directly impacting 4500ha
- ▶ Delivering four online LPLN sustainable agriculture events in Feb-March 2021 on the topics:
 - Grazing practices and native pasture
 - Benefits of Agro Forestry
 - Community regenerative farming adoption practices
 - Connecting local primary producers to local communities
- ▶ Mapping the Pale-yellow Water Lily in the Gunbower region by drone
- ▶ Running a Cert. III in Agriculture course based in Inglewood
- ▶ Applying for and being granted funding for the Victorian Landcare Facilitator Program for the next 2 years, Thanks goes to Llywellyn and Kate for the hard work, and group members who submitted letters of support.
- ▶ The acquisition of a new vehicle for LPLN operations that is fit for purpose for the new project work LPLN is delivering
- ▶ Wheel cactus control operations at several locations, including Buckrabanyule, Kamarooka East, Sunday Morning Hills, and Kooyoora.
- ▶ Successfully obtaining funding from NCCMA to set up a Regenerative Agriculture Group - the Loddon Plains Future Farming regenerative agriculture group.
- ▶ Meeting with the Minister for Agriculture and Minister for Regional Development.
- ▶ Moving our headquarters to the Inglewood Goods Shed. These new premises are much larger and suitable for our growing operations. I like to invite you all to come the AGM being held at these premises and perhaps consider nominating for a committee position

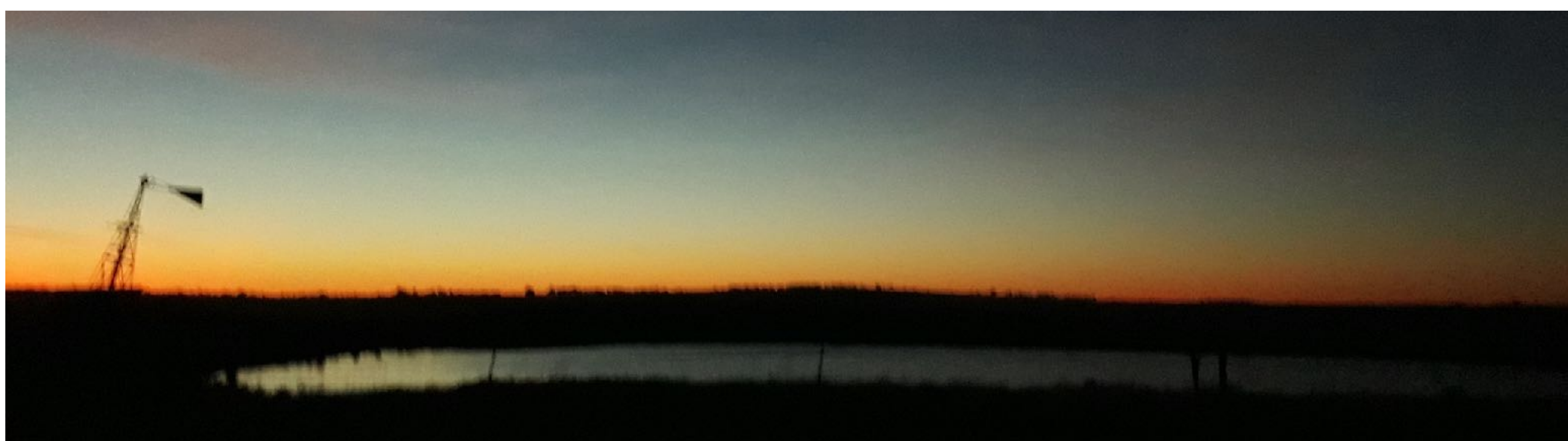
The above list is only a small sample of the actions and activities conducted in the past year. I would like to thank every member of the CoM for their contributions and work. A special thank you to our outgoing secretary Llywellyn Staiff for her great work and I wish her a wonderful time with her family in South Australia.

To our dedicated outgoing Treasurer, Kate Lee, thanks for your service and hard work.

The success or failure of any organisation is directly linked to its core personnel. The Loddon Plains Landcare Network would not be where it is today without the energy and dedication of Danny Pettingill. So, thank you Dan.

In closing I would encourage you all to seriously consider putting up your hand up for a position on the Committee, you would be very welcome and your contribution will only enhance our group.

Fred Belli
LPLN President



Photos: top to bottom, L to R:
Sunset over a paddock adjacent to Terrick Terrick National Park (DP)



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Operations Report



In this changed world, the year has taught us many things - resilience, adaptation, unique and novel approaches to problem solving and project delivery, retention of our social systems and our connection to communities. It has also provided a chance to reset and revisit priorities, understand what is important to us as a Landcare community and to discover other ways to stay in touch, come together and to provide support through education, community leadership and social structures.

Moving through these challenges has not been easy, but it has been a great series of lessons and a wonderful opportunity to take stock before launching into new methods to deliver environment programs across the Loddon Plains, but also to extend the reach of activities and messages from the Loddon Plains Landcare Network and its tremendously dedicated community to audiences across Victoria and Australia.

The year has brought with it some exciting developments for LPLN including new project opportunities, securement of funding sources for the mid to long term, and moving our base to the Inglewood Goods Shed, providing an opportunity for the Network to expand when necessary whilst also providing for key community and education initiatives including events, workshops and housing other like-minded community groups. I look forward to sharing these developments as they emerge.

This year, LPLN has been represented at a number of conferences, seminars, talks and other features including the National Landcare Conference, the Clean Energy Regulator carbon video series, education institutions, and at community events talking on a range of topics including biodiversity, pollinators, agriculture and farm monitoring, drone and aerial technologies and the importance of viable carbon markets to deliver landscape projects that provide greater incentives and enterprise opportunities to farmers.

We have provided feedback and assisted in the development of key biodiversity strategies including the NCCMA Regional Catchment Strategy, DELWP Biodiversity 2037, Biodiversity Response Planning strategies and others. This involvement has provided an important opportunity to advocate for priority landscapes and projects in the Loddon region, and provided a strong community voice to these outcomes and priorities moving forward.

The year also provided us the opportunity to develop our *LPLN Priority Landscape Strategy 2021 - 2024*, providing five priority projects to deliver into the future and laying out a clear direction for the LPLN in the coming years, it has also provided greater opportunities in attracting investment and expanding our support network in order to deliver key priorities in the region from agency, philanthropic and local or regional investors.

We have published our *LPLN Sustainable Agriculture Strategy*, believed to be the first community-led regional strategy delivered by a Landcare Network in Victoria, I thank Michael Moore, Mal Brown, our workshop participants, the wider community and the Wottenhall Environment Trust for assisting and supporting the development of this key piece of work for the Network, placing LPLN firmly as a leader in sustainable and regenerative agriculture in Victoria.

This strategy has already provided important direction and guidance, contributing to projects including:

- ▶ a partnership with Bendigo Tafe to deliver a *Certificate III in Agriculture* out of the LPLN Goods Shed in Inglewood, utilising properties and farmers on the Loddon Plains for on-ground course work and providing employment and development opportunities to students through our Landcare community,
- ▶ providing the basis for funding the *LPLN Sustainable Farming, Sustainable Landscapes webinar series*
- ▶ assisted in securing and delivering the *LPLN & Salisbury West Landcare Soil & Moisture Monitoring project*
- ▶ assisted in the Network securing two years of funding to develop the *Loddon Plains Future Farming regenerative agriculture group*.

Our GOANNA project has continued to grow and evolve, with LPLN delivering key landscape outcomes with North Central CMA and others including:

- ▶ *Community Landscape Assessment and Impact project*, collecting impact stories from landholders that have been supported by landscape initiatives
- ▶ providing vital community support for members of our Fairley Bael Bael Sandhill Lake group and other landholders to deliver our *Kerang Ramsar Rabbit Control Program*
- ▶ expanding our services into aerial monitoring through our *Pale Yellow Water Lily Aerial Monitoring Program* on Gunbower creek

None of this would be possible without the strong support the Network receives from its community, member groups, Committee of Management and other supporters and stakeholders. I thank everyone for the contributions that they have made to the outcomes the LPLN has delivered, and for the support they have shown in moving the Network forward in order to provide greater opportunities to deliver projects and community support in conservation and agriculture across the region.

I would specifically like to thank our outgoing Committee executives, Secretary Llywellyn Staiff, and Treasurer Kate Lee for their tireless efforts and support in driving the LPLN forward. I thank them both for their contributions.

I am confident that there are some extremely exciting times ahead for LPLN, and I look forward to sharing these with all our supporters in the coming years.

Danny Pettingill
Operations and Projects
Landcare Facilitator



Photos: top to bottom, L to R:
Bendigo TAFE Cert III Agriculture making use of the LPLN Goods Shed (DP),
Pale Yellow Water Lily infestation on Gunbower Creek (DP)



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Landcare

Though on-ground activities have been largely restrictive for most groups and volunteers, our Landcare program still provided some very good outcomes this year. It is with great pleasure that LPLN can say that we have secured another three years of funding for its Landcare activities and to support member groups through the State Government Victorian Landcare Facilitator Program.

This funding will provide vital support to the LPLN, its member groups and volunteers to continue to develop and deliver on-ground activities over the next three years.

Our Landcare activities continued, largely online, presenting to the 2021 National Landcare Conference, providing education sessions and presentations to schools and other education institutions and extending our engagement to community groups.



Landcare activities provided 26 events and workshops throughout the year, attended numerous group meetings both in person and online, and delivered key projects with Landcare groups these activities having a direct link to the LPLN GOANNA and sustainable and regenerative agriculture programs, providing a strong example of the value that Landcare and local communities play in delivering large scale landscape projects through complimentary programs.



A number of our groups continued to be active with:

- ▶ **Mount Korong Eco Watch** continuing its incredible work in managing wheel cactus on Mt, Korong and conservation efforts including its Spiny Rice Flower monitoring and propagation efforts and providing plants to the community from its indigenous plant nursery
- ▶ **Salisbury West Landcare group** completed the delivery of its soil monitoring station network, contributing to better decision-making in farming practices for the community
- ▶ **Friends of Kooyoora** continuing to develop its work in documenting the immense documentation work of its members,
- ▶ **Friends of Terrick Terrick National Park** providing vital guidance and management of the park
- ▶ **Northern Plains CMN** contributing to the conservation, public engagement and habitat protection for the Plains Wanderer
- ▶ **Fairley Bael Bael - Sandhill Lake** group providing significant support and on ground work in coordinated rabbit control works with North Central CMA, Parks Victoria and Agriculture Victoria to protect the significant Ramsar wetlands of Kerang
- ▶ **Wedderburn CMN** contributing to community engagement and delivery of revegetation efforts and promoting the importance of pollinator friendly gardens, particularly for butterflies and solitary native insects

We have also seen groups such as **Loddon Vale**, **Terricks Ridge Landcare** and **Inglewood Urban Landcare** groups come out of recession in 2021 and LPLN looks forward to working with these groups in the years to come.

A key priority of our groups continues to be the highly invasive Wheel Cactus across the landscape. There has been some gains in actions towards this plight, with Bush Heritage Australia committing to the management of the species and Djarra providing leadership and management of this extremely damaging species in the Buckrabanyule and Wychitella areas. LPLN is committed to building strong collaborative programs with BHA, Djarra, community and others to see successful control of this species. LPLN member groups and the wider community are welcoming of this work and we all look forward to contributing toward better management practices focussed on the Loddon Plains landscape..



Photos: top to bottom, L to R:
MKEW and WCMN members taking Bendigo TAFE students on a tour of Korong Ridge Conservation Reserve (DP), LPLN staff member Danny Pettingill delivering a monitoring workshop, MKEW members monitoring Spiny Rice Flower plantings from local propagation (KL), friend of LPLN and wetland ecology specialist Damian Cook giving a field talk to members (KL), weather station unit included in Salisbury West Landcare group soil monitoring project (DP), propagation and planting workshop at Korong Ridge (KL)



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GOANNA Landscape Projects

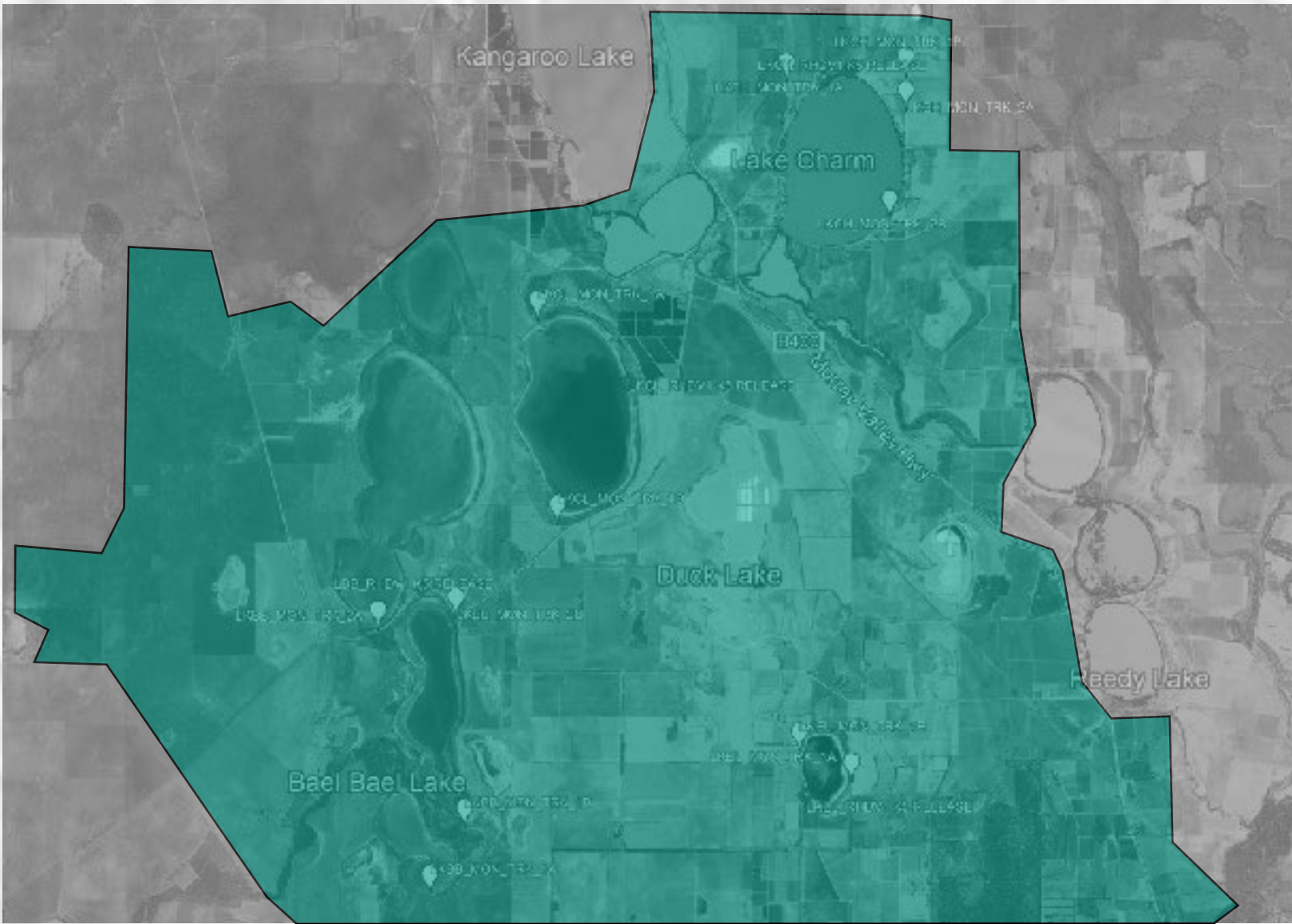
The GOANNA Project (Group Organised Action Nurturing Natural Assets) is Loddon Plains Landcare Network's landscape-scale restoration project delivering community projects, monitoring and education programs across the region. The Loddon Plains is home to diverse natural and cultural assets. The importance of the region as a primary food production area both locally and internationally is also recognised, through this program LPLN delivers community-led project outcomes in collaboration with our supporters such as the Wettenhall Environment Trust and North Central CMA.

2021 provided an opportunity for LPLN to revise its approach to the GOANNA Project, resulting in the organisations new **Priority Landscape Strategy 2021 - 2024**. This strategy has come from a long consultation and survey process, identifying five key landscapes, identified by the community, for protection or restoration. Identifying these landscapes and developing this strategy has allowed LPLN to focus on investment opportunities and provides a valuable focus for our work in providing community values and priorities to strategies developed at Federal, State and Local levels.

Kerang Rabbit Baiting project

2021 marked the second year of delivering this project with the support of North Central CMA and LPLN member group Fairley Bael Bael Sandhill Lake Landcare group. LPLN has worked with landholders and agencies toward collaborative control actions in the Kerang region with activities to date providing access to 44 landholders and managers to deliver the following outcomes:

- ▶ Engaged 28 landholders in 2021 to deliver rabbit control programs on private land
- ▶ Facilitated and assisted in the delivery of more than 2200 hectares of direct bait treatment
- ▶ Impacted 16 000 hectares of private land
- ▶ Provided chemical handling training and accreditation to 18 local land managers in the area in order to participate in the programs
- ▶ Provided assistance to 22 local land managers in designing and delivering individual pest management plans
- ▶ Created a strong link between community and public land management programs that has provided effective rabbit control across the Kerang Ramsar area through aligned public and private pest control programs



Pale Yellow Water Lily Gunbower monitoring project

This year has seen LPLN extend its project capacity to include drone programs for land management and farming practices. With this extension in capacity, LPLN was engaged in a three year monitoring program to collect and report on management of Pale Yellow Water Lily (*Nymphaea sp.*) infestations on Gunbower Creek. This project will work collaboratively with stakeholders to understand the impact of current management practices for the species by conducting monitoring flights pre and post treatment from 2021 to 2024, and will provide further decision making tools for land managers and contractors whilst also playing a key role in community engagement - providing imagery and interpretive data to better understand the effects of current management and the invasiveness of the species on the Gunbower Creek.



Landscape Assessment & Landholder Stories project

The LPLN Landscape Assessment and Landholder Stories project has been supported by North Central CMA, with an aim to capture the impact that Landcare and other projects have delivered through public funds invested in stewardship practices for landscape improvement works, and the contribution these projects have made on a landscape scale.

LPLN has been engaged to conduct these surveys, mapping the progress of private land projects and collecting the stories of landholders involved. Delivering this project has uncovered some delightful stories of proud landholders eagerly showcasing the landscapes they have so crucially contributed to, whilst also recounting some incredible stories of the impact that such efforts have had on the landscape. This project will extend to the end of the 2023 financial year and will include the delivery of on ground outcomes that extend, maintain or reenforce the surveyed landscapes.

Photos: top to bottom, L to R:
Indicative area covered by rabbit control efforts undertaken by LPLN in collaboration with local landholders in the Kerang area, LPLN conducting drone monitoring program at Gunbower Creek (DP), Assessing results of landcare based projects as part of LPLN's Landscape Assessment project for NCCMA (DP)



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Sustainable and Regenerative Agriculture

We have seen some exciting outcomes in our efforts to establish consistent support of sustainable and regenerative agriculture for the Loddon Plains community, having secured investment for a number of projects in 2021 and presenting at a number of events and forums including to a national audience as part of the National Landcare Conference in the Sustainable Agriculture stream on the topic *On-Farm Value of Biodiversity Through Sustainable Agriculture Practices*.

LPLN has been successful in securing two years of funding for a Regenerative Agriculture group in the region, the *Loddon Plains Future Farming Regenerative Agriculture group*, thanks to the support of North Central CMA and the National Landcare Program. This group has begun in its establishment, with fund and activities commencing in the 2021-2022 financial year to include a soil monitoring program, workshops, trials and other events to support farmers in the transition toward more regenerative techniques.

Bendigo TAFE Certificate III Agriculture Partnership

With LPLN moving its operations to a new building came new opportunities, one of which was a partnership with Bendigo TAFE to deliver a Certificate III in Agriculture out of the LPLN Goods Shed in Inglewood.

By facilitating this program, LPLN was able to support students in their journey into agriculture, promoting sustainable and regenerative practice, connecting students to working farms in the region and providing opportunities to regularly get out onto farms for field work and skills consolidation.

More importantly, this program provided an accessible opportunity for the local community to undertake formal study without the need to travel to a regional centre and provided employment opportunities for some students in the cohort.

Salisbury West Soil Moisture and Weather Monitoring Network

LPLN supported Salisbury West Landcare group to complete the delivery of its network of three soil and weather monitoring probes in the district.

This network has provided vital minute to minute data for daily farming operations, whilst also providing snapshots of soil and moisture data including moisture profiles, temperature and rainfall.

This type of information has been invaluable when assessing harvest, cropping and stock management decisions, with the ability to better understand trends, water availability and prevailing conditions to forecast management decisions.

Data is available to anyone in the region for a small fee that goes toward membership of Salisbury West Landcare group and to the service and data hosting fees for the stations. Anyone wishing to gain access can contact LPLN staff member Danny Pettingill with enquiries.



LPLN Sustainable Farming, Sustainable Landscapes webinar series

As part of our commitment to supporting and introducing new, innovative and alternative methods in land stewardship practices for adoption and transition toward sustainable and regenerative landscapes, LPLN presented its *Sustainable Farming, Sustainable Landscapes web series* in March and April 2021.

The series presented four events focussing on a range of topics including holistic management practices, development of native pasture and grains for market, group led adoption, agroforestry and local markets:

- ▶ *Native Pastures for Sustainable Landscapes*
- ▶ *Regenerative Farming Through Group Adoption*
- ▶ *Agroforestry; Making trees work for you*
- ▶ *Being Local; Connection to local markets and strong communities*

The series was highly successful, receiving nearly 200 registrations and over 100 participants.



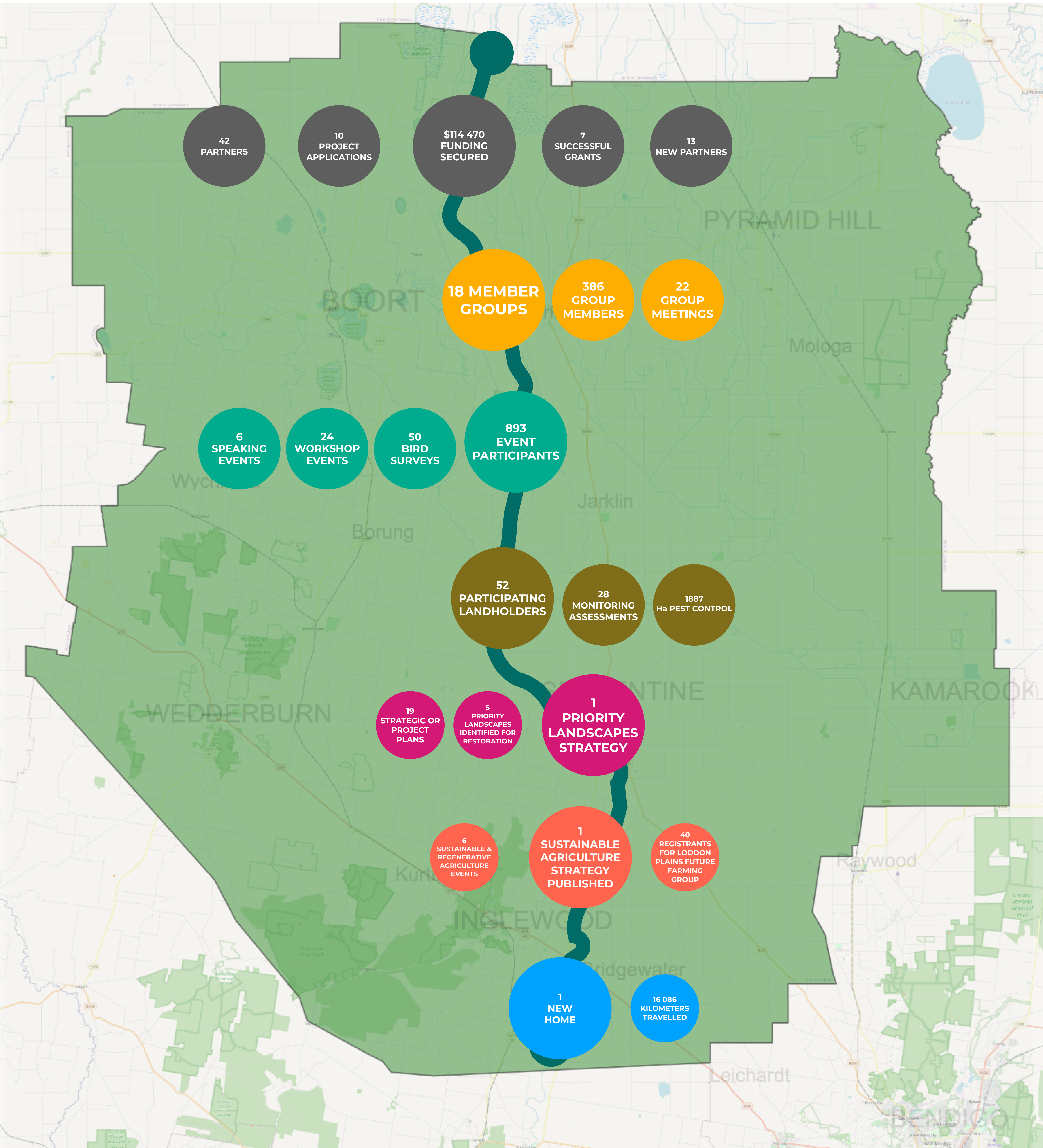
Photos: top to bottom, L to R:
BKI students doing soil assessments on a working farm in the region (DP),
indicative map of the Loddon Plains Future Farming Regenerative Agriculture
group (DP), undertaking paddock monitoring on farms in the region (DP)



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Achievements at a Glance



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Financial Report - Profit and Loss

INCOME	
Projects	
Victorian Landcare Facilitator Program	56571
Kerang Rabbit Control Project	31091
Salisbury West Soil Monitoring	17000
Lake Bael Bael Project	12087
PIIC Landscape Assessment Project	11250
Sustainable Farming Sustainable Landscapes Project	3500
Pale Yellow Water Lily Monitoring - Gunbower	1584
Pyramid Hill Farming for Sustainable Soils	1162
Total Income (Projects)	134245
Other	
Job Keeper	7500
Cash Flow Boost	10000
Other Income	0
Member group auspicing fees	80
Interest Received	142
Total Income (Other)	17722
TOTAL INCOME	151967
GROSS PROFIT	151967
PROJECT EXPENSES	
Victorian Landcare Facilitator Program	2274
Sundries	385
Training Expenses	1890
Kerang Rabbit Control Project	7413
Community Engagement	153
Community Baiting	7260
Salisbury West Soil Monitoring	15500
Equipment and Training	15500
Lake Bael Bael Project	11463
Pest Control	11447
Consumables	17
PIIC Landscape Assessment Project	219
Sundries	219
Sustainable Farming, Sustainable Landscapes Project	2250
Presenters - webinars	2250
Pale Yellow Water Lily Monitoring - Gunbower	1440
Contractors (Drone services)	1440
Farming for Sustainable Soils	1480
Soils Assement	1480
Employee costs	77138
Superannuation	6620
Payroll Expenses	70519
Operational Costs	17022
Travel and vehicle expenses	6954
OH&S	728
Office Expenses	3803
Insurance Fees	2310
Bank Charges	66
Administration	1700
Accounting	1460
Vehicle	1722
Vehicle Depreciation	1722
TOTAL EXPENSES	137921
NET POSITION	14046
SUMMARY	
TOTAL INCOME	151967
TOTAL EXPENSES	137921
NET POSITION	14046



Financial Report - Balance Sheet

ASSETS	
CURRENT ASSETS	-
Bank - Debit Card	1,692
Bank- Charity Fund	1,655
Bank - Operating Account	29,448
Bank - Trust Account	15,872
NON-CURRENT ASSETS	-
Vehicle Purchase	34,441
Provision for depreciation	1,722
Total Vehicle at Cost	32,719.42
TOTAL ASSETS	87,573

LIABILITIES	
2021 LIABILITIES	
Accounts Payable	8,178
Pale Yellow Water Lily Monitoring - Gunbower	1,694
Member group Auspice Account	452
Funding in Advance - Sustainable Soils (Pyramid Hill)	5,178
Payroll Liabilities PAYG	4,038
Super Payable	1,529
GST Payable	- 2,821
TOTAL LIABILITIES	18,248

NET ASSETS	69,326
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EQUITY	
Retained Earnings Surplus/(Accumulated Losses)	55,280
Current year earnings	14,045
TOTAL EQUITY	69,325

SUMMARY	
Total Assets	87,573
Total 2021 Liabilities	18,248
Net Assets	69,326
TOTAL EQUITY	69,325

* Reports current, year ending June 30 2021



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Loddon Plains Landcare Network Inc. Committee of Management

President	<i>Fred Belli</i>
Vice President	<i>Mal Brown</i>
Secretary	<i>Llywellyn Staiff</i>
Treasurer	<i>Kate Lee</i>

Members	<i>John Childes</i>
	<i>Colleen Condliffe</i>
	<i>Colin Gitsham</i>
	<i>Andy Hay</i>
	<i>Melissa Ludeman</i>
	<i>Laurie Maxted</i>
	<i>Ian Penny</i>
	<i>Chris Rothacker</i>
	<i>Jenny Spence</i>
	<i>Trudy Nelsson</i>



2020-21 Annual Report prepared by Danny Pettingill for Loddon Plains Landcare Network Inc.
 Published by Loddon Plains Landcare Network Inc.
 February 2021
 Photos: Danny Pettingill unless otherwise credited.
 Photo Credits:
 DP - Danny Pettingill
 KL - Kate Lee
 SH - Shirley Hope

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Photos: top to bottom, L to R:
 Aerial photo of Loddon River capturing revegetation efforts (DP), Bendigo Tafe students undertaking field monitoring (DP), Powlett Swamp after rain (SH), new building - LPLN Goods Shed (DP)



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