



**GOULBURN  
BROKEN**

CATCHMENT  
MANAGEMENT  
AUTHORITY



# COMMUNITY NRM ACTION PLAN 2020-2025



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# INTRODUCTION

The Goulburn Broken Catchment covers 2.4 million hectares, extending north from near the outskirts of Melbourne to the River Murray on the border with New South Wales. The Catchment boasts a diversity of landscapes, including seasonally snow-covered alpine areas, forests, granitic outcrops, gentle sloping plains, box woodlands and red gum floodplains. With a varied landscape comes a diverse community, across our catchment we have people who commute to work in Melbourne, others that are full time production farmers, tree changers out of the city to retire and people who live in our urban townships. Natural resource management means different things to all of these communities, however its implementation across the whole of our catchment is paramount. With the help of our community NRM groups and other partners we tailor messages and delivery mechanisms to address local need.

Partnerships with the community, and other organisations, have been critical to the successful management of the Goulburn Broken Catchment for more than two decades. Future success will depend on the continued effort and investment of individual land managers and groups across the Catchment. Recognizing this, the Goulburn Broken CMA has always taken a pro-active role in engaging with the Catchment community and supporting them to build capacity and implement improved natural resource management practices. The Goulburn Broken CMA Community NRM Action Plan 2019 - 2024 documents the Vision and Goals identified by the community and the priority actions for the Goulburn Broken CMA to continue to engage and support individuals and community groups.

The Goulburn Broken CMA Community NRM Action Plan 2019 – 2024 has been developed following a review of the previous Community NRM Engagement Plan and through a series of workshops with representatives from the many Community NRM Groups within the Catchment. The Plan articulates the way that the GB CMA will assist the Community NRM groups and networks of the region to achieve common goals delivering on shared outcomes. The aim has been to identify a flexible and adaptable plan that will be reviewed annually to ensure its relevance to changing community and catchment priorities.

Regionally, this plan will be a sub-strategy of the Goulburn Broken Regional Catchment Strategy (GBRCS) delivering actions across community NRM groups and network boundaries in a way that supports the Social Ecological System thinking described in the GBRCS.

## PURPOSE

The Goulburn Broken Community NRM Action Plan 2020-2025 is an adaptive plan that outlines key local NRM community priorities and government direction. The driver for this document is the Victorian Landcare Program and it reflects the priorities of the relevant state strategies such as the “Victorians Volunteering for Nature” - Victoria Volunteering Plan and “Protecting Victoria’s Environment” - Biodiversity 2037. Community NRM is supported by both federal and state government in our region and this plan demonstrates achievement across multiple programs.

# COMMUNITY NRM WITHIN THE CATCHMENT

Landcare first started in the Goulburn Broken Catchment in 1986. There are currently 97 community NRM groups & 12 networks across the catchment involving over 5,000 volunteers. These organisations activities address Natural Resource Management (NRM) issues such as revegetation, water quality, pest plant and animals, threatened species, soil health, sustainable agriculture, community education and wetland protection. Across the catchment, community NRM actively raises public awareness and engages the broader community in NRM within the catchment.

In 2003 the first of now five Conservation Management Networks (CMNs) was established within the Goulburn Broken CMA. The Broken Boosey CMN was established through legislation as a result of the Box Ironbark Forests and Woodlands Investigation by the Environment Conservation Council (2001). The five CMNs currently have over 1,300 members. CMNs although also community-based differ from Landcare in several ways:

- CMNs are bounded by specific vegetation communities, not geographic boundaries
- CMNs are tenure blind operating across both public and private land
- CMNs engage both agencies and private land managers as members of their network
- CMNs are biodiversity focused

The catchment is fortunate to have many Landcare, Conservation Management, Friends of, Sustainable Farming, Environment groups and networks all operating within its boundaries. Collectively we now title all of these groups as “Community NRM”. The Goulburn Broken CMA does not delineate nor favour any of these groups over the other. The works and activities of community NRM groups strongly contributes to the management of natural resources within the catchment, significantly assists in the delivery of the GBRCS, and a range of State and Commonwealth Government Strategies. (See Appendix 1 – Strategic Alignment)

The NRM groups and networks with the GB CMA agreed that the key areas where they will work together for catchment consistency are:

- Collaborate to develop, implement and review the GB Regional Catchment Strategy and its sub-strategies.
- Actively participate in the GB Community NRM Network Chair’ Forum and Coordinators’ Forum.
- Collectively review the Statement of Partnership every two years.

# PRINCIPLES OF THE PARTNERSHIP

The Community NRM groups and networks and the GB CMA agreed to the following principles that underpin their working relationship:

## SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

The Goulburn Broken CMA and Community NRM groups bring a commitment to a healthy environment, strong communities and sustainable agriculture.

## ORGANISATIONAL RESPECT

Each party will respect the interests the other represents, and what the other can contribute in achieving NRM outcomes.

## COMMUNICATING EARLY AND OFTEN

Setting priorities, designing projects and negotiating roles all need time. Discussion will start early, in anticipation of future opportunities and not only as a reaction to immediate demands.

## REPRESENTING COMMUNITY VIEWS

Each party will bring to the table their understanding of demands and opportunities in communities and in policy, and draw out the implications for wise action.

## DEVOLVING RESPONSIBILITY

Devolution means that those who are close to an issue are given a major say in what should be done, and supported to take necessary action. Outcomes and resources should be agreed, and the responsible organisation given freedom to get results the best way it sees fit.

## BUILDING CAPACITY

People and organisations at all levels can build their capacity for decisions and action. They need to take responsibility for this and be well-supported by others.

## GIVING FEEDBACK

The partners will give each other honest feedback on what is working and not working in the relationship, to maintain and improve the partnership.



# SUPPORTING COMMUNITY NRM

Landcare and Land Management groups, Landcare networks, CMNs, and Sustainable Farming groups are currently supported by 8.7 (FTE) facilitators and coordinators employed by the Community NRM networks to assist and maximise the volunteer effort.

Within the Goulburn Broken CMA, the following positions work to strengthen and support Community NRM:

- Regional Landcare Coordinator: funded by the State Government this person coordinates the implementation of the Community NRM Action Plan and supports the work of the coordinators and facilitators across the catchment.
- Regional Landcare Facilitator: funded by the Commonwealth Government this person also supports Landcare, farm and industry groups with sustainable practices.

Landcare groups also receive varying levels of support from officers employed by a number of partner organisations, such as Department of Environment, Land, Water, & Planning (DELWP) and Local Government.



# VISION AND GOALS OF THE COMMUNITY NRM ACTION PLAN

## VISION

Our vision for Community NRM and Landcare is:

*“As a motivated and enthusiastic community we will achieve sustainable and productive agriculture and protection and enhancement of the catchment’s natural resources*

## GOALS

The goals of the Community NRM Action plan were drawn from the challenges and areas that the groups identified that they would like assistance from the GB CMA (see Table 1) as part of:

- The 2018/19 survey that self-assesses the health of each of the group/network.
- Workshop with the Chairs of each of the Networks, and
- The review of each of the Local Social Ecological System Plans.

**Table 1: Goals and Challenges**

Goals	Identified Challenges/areas requiring assistance
Building the capability of local groups to enable them to better deliver on the vision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural heritage – clarity/how to manage</li> <li>• How to embed resilience</li> <li>• Sharing knowledge/expertise between group</li> <li>• Understanding and aligning with government priorities</li> <li>• Managing the gap between local community priorities and the Government priorities.</li> </ul>
Grow the influence of community groups and volunteers to increase the rate of progress towards achieving the vision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to media</li> <li>• Access to politicians/senior Bureaucrats</li> <li>• Development of collective and coordinated impact stories</li> <li>• Feedback of the challenges to government</li> <li>• Ability to influence policy/funding decisions</li> </ul>
Increase and improve the sustainability, efficiency and effectiveness of the resources available to deliver on the vision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing administrative requirements</li> <li>• Increased need for reporting/impact stories/mapping</li> <li>• Options for funding pest plants and animals</li> <li>• Developing and implementing a new sustainable business model</li> <li>• Funded facilitators have become critical to meet government requirements</li> <li>• The amount of funding that has been leveraged by the networks has been dropping for the past 6 years and is now 39% of what it was and this is reflected in a reduction in the ha revegetated, protected and number of engagement events.</li> </ul>
Support the health of the groups and network to maintain membership and enthusiasm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in the number of members over the last three years although the number of groups is steady.</li> <li>• Health of individual groups is steady although the health of the network has declined.</li> <li>• The Network Terms of Reference and Statement of Partnership with the GB CMA is due for renewal.</li> <li>• Facebook and Twitter usage has declined to zero.</li> </ul>

# PRIORITY ACTIONS

The GBCMA will support the Community NRM groups to achieve their goals by resourcing and implementing a set of agreed priority actions. The relative priority of these actions has been agreed by the Network Chairs, Coordinators and Facilitators Group and the GB CMA (see table 2). How progress is monitored and measured is outlined in the following section.

Goal	Priority Action	Priority				
		1	2	3	4	5
<b>Building the capability of local groups to enable them to better deliver on the vision.</b>	Use the GB CMA Media group to build the capability and capacity of the groups to prepare impact stories and key messages.	●				
	Support shared Cultural Heritage training to build capability to identify and then manage to protect cultural heritage.				●	
	Develop and promote a program of activities to embed resilience in the groups and the works they complete.		●			
	Provide on-going information on the changing priorities of both the State and Federal Governments.			●		
<b>Grow the influence of community groups and volunteers to increase the rate of progress towards achieving the vision.</b>	GB CMA to develop a template for groups to use when raising issues with Politicians and senior bureaucrats.		●			
	Support groups prepare and use visual communication records and stories.	●				
	Include the Network on the itinerary for Politicians and senior bureaucrats.					●
	Publish stories that showcase Landcare in the GB catchment in publications such as the Victorian Landcare magazine.				●	
	Coordinate training/professional development of the Network Landcare facilitators.			●		
	Support groups to communicate the challenges to implementation that community and Landcare groups/networks are experiencing.				●	



Goal	Priority Action	Priority				
		1	2	3	4	5
<b>Increase and improve the sustainability, efficiency and effectiveness of the resources available to deliver on the vision.</b>	Deliver an annual small grants program and utilise the groups to implement projects across the catchment.	●				
	Utilise the existing EOI process to flag opportunities for community NRM groups to access funding from a variety of sources.		●			
	Support groups to develop funding applications and grants.			●		
	Develop a shared story of the outcomes of VLG funding and the implications of the reduced funding.		●			
	Conduct a review of administrative requirements to improve the support provided to groups.					●
	Explore alternative funding opportunities and funding models for discussion by the Network.			●		
	Advocate for the on-going funding of the Landcare Facilitators.	●				
	Support groups to advocate and secure funding for pest plant and animal control.				●	
<b>Support the health of the groups and network to maintain membership and enthusiasm.</b>	Annual Landcare awards night hosted by the GB CMA.			●		
	Support the groups to utilise electronic information sharing tools and social media promotion.	●				
	Convene the Network Chairs meeting every quarter.		●			
	Conduct annual group health survey and produce and promote the annual Community NRM report card.			●		

As part of the documentation the priority actions have also been assessed for alignment with the key focus areas of the State Government ‘Victorians Volunteering for Nature’ plan (replaces the Victorian Landcare Program Strategic Plan) and the strategic objectives of the GB CMA Regional Catchment Strategy (see Appendix 1).

Priority Action	Biodiversity 2037	Volunteer Plan				GB CMA Strategic Objectives					
		Sustain	Expand	Value	Understand	Embed resilience	Strengthen partnerships	Adapt land-use change	Adapt water policy reform	Adapt climate variability	Adapt inc. farm production
<b>Goal: Building the capability of local groups to enable them to better deliver on the Community NRM vision</b>											
Use the GB CMA Media group to build the capability and capacity of the groups to prepare impact stories and key messages.	4 5 10					●	●	●	●	●	●
Support shared Cultural Heritage training to build capability to identify and then manage to protect cultural heritage.	13 14 15 16				●		●				
Develop and promote a program of activities to embed resilience in the groups and the works they complete.	7 9 10 11					●		●	●	●	●
Provide on-going information on the changing priorities of both the State and Federal Governments.	3 6 19					●	●				
<b>Goal: Grow the influence of community groups and volunteers to increase the rate of progress towards achieving the Community NRM vision.</b>											
GB CMA to develop a template for groups to use when raising issues with Politicians and senior bureaucrats.				●	●	●	●				
Support the network to develop collective and coordinated impact stories.	4 5 10			●	●	●	●				

Priority Action	Biodiversity 2037	Volunteer Plan				GB CMA Strategic Objectives					
		Sustain	Expand	Value	Understand	Embed resilience	Strengthen partnerships	Adapt land-use change	Adapt water policy/reform	Adapt climate variability	Adapt inc. farm production
Support groups prepare and use visual communication records and stories.	4 5 10					●	●	●	●	●	●
Include the Network on the itinerary for Politicians and senior bureaucrats.	19			●	●						
Publish stories that showcase Landcare in the GB catchment in publications such as the Victorian Landcare magazine.	4 5 10			●	●		●				
Coordinate training/ professional development of the Network Landcare facilitators.	1 2 9 10 13 14	●				●					
Support groups to communicate the challenges to implementation that community and Landcare groups/networks are experiencing.					●	●	●				
<b>Goal: Increase and improve the sustainability, efficiency and effectiveness of the resources available to deliver on the Community NRM vision.</b>											
Deliver an annual small grants program and utilise the groups to implement projects across the catchment.	9 10 11						●	●	●	●	●
Utilise the existing EOI process to flag opportunities for community NRM groups to access funding from a variety of sources.	2 6 11 12 19				●	●	●	●	●	●	●

Priority Action	Biodiversity 2037	Volunteer Plan				GB CMA Strategic Objectives					
		Sustain	Expand	Value	Understand	Embed resilience	Strengthen partnerships	Adapt land-use change	Adapt water policy reform	Adapt climate variability	Adapt inc. farm production
Support groups to develop funding applications and grants.	19					●					
Develop a shared story of the outcomes of VLG funding and the implications of the reduced funding.	3				●						
Conduct a review of administrative requirements to improve the support provided to groups.		●			●						
Explore alternative funding opportunities and funding models for discussion by the Network.	9 10 11					●					
Advocate for the on-going funding of the Landcare Facilitators.	9 10	●				●					
Support groups to advocate and secure funding for pest plant and animal control.	9 10 11					●	●	●		●	●

Goal: Support the health of the groups and network to maintain membership and enthusiasm											
Annual Landcare awards night hosted by the GB CMA.				●			●				
Support the groups to utilise electronic information sharing tools and social media promotion.	3 4					●	●				
Convene the Network Chairs meeting every quarter.						●	●				
Conduct annual group health survey and produce and promote the annual Community NRM report card.				●	●	●					

# MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The main aim of the monitoring, evaluation and reporting component of the Plan is to provide a process for understanding progress and the achievements and impacts. In addition, the monitoring and evaluation will need to capture lessons learnt, things that worked really well and any unexpected outcomes. This can help to inform the development of the plan by informing improvements to the priorities and actions.

Community consultation will be a key component of the review process. The evaluation will include the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data. The quantitative data can be sourced from the annual data collected through the Community NRM Report card. The qualitative data can be gleaned from ongoing CMA consultation with the community or sourced specifically from structured discussions with Community Groups and the Network Chairs at their planned meetings.

The findings of the monitoring and evaluation and the planned improvements will be reported annually to a Network Chairs Meeting and to the GB CMA Board.



## APPENDIX 1

# STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

### GOULBURN BROKEN REGIONAL CATCHMENT STRATEGY 2013-2019

The Regional Catchment Strategy has been developed using a resilience approach that emphasises the need to develop resilience in and connections between our biodiversity, land, water and people. Some of the key strategic priorities identified in the Regional Catchment Strategy that the Community NRM Action Plan will focus on and contribute to include:

- Adapt to climate variability risks
- Respond to and recover from climatic events
- Use water efficiently on farms
- Capture opportunities from a low carbon future
- Manage risks to agricultural production
- Establish sustainable agricultural practices
- Increase biodiversity in agricultural land use

### PROTECTING VICTORIA'S ENVIRONMENT – BIODIVERSITY 2037 PRIORITIES

1. Deliver cost-effective results utilising decision support tools in biodiversity planning processes to help achieve and measure against the targets
2. Increase the collection of targeted data for evidence-based decision making and make all data more accessible.
3. Raise the awareness of all Victorians about the importance of the state's natural environment.
4. Increase opportunities for all Victorians to have daily connections with nature
5. Increase opportunities for all Victorians to act to protect biodiversity
6. Embed consideration of natural capital into decision making across the whole of government, and support industries to do the same.
7. Help to create more liveable and climate-adapted communities.
8. Better care for and showcase Victoria's environmental assets as world-class natural and cultural tourism attractions.
9. Establish sustained funding for biodiversity.
10. Leverage non-government investment in biodiversity
11. Increase incentives and explore market opportunities for private landholders to conserve biodiversity.
12. Adopt a collaborative biodiversity response planning approach to drive accountability and measurable improvement.
13. Support and enable community groups, Traditional Owners, nongovernment organisations and sections of government to participate in biodiversity response planning.
14. Engage with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Victorians to include Aboriginal values and traditional ecological knowledge in biodiversity planning and management.
15. Support Aboriginal access to biodiversity for economic development.
16. Build capacity to increase Aboriginal participation in biodiversity management
17. Deliver excellence in management of all land and waters
18. Maintain and enhance a worldclass system of protected areas
19. Adopt a whole-of-government approach to implementing the Plan.
20. Establish a transparent evaluation process to report on progress towards delivering the Plan.

## VICTORIAN VOLUNTEERING FOR NATURE PLAN

### Purpose

Victorians Volunteering for Nature – Environmental Volunteering Plan is a coordinated and revitalised approach to environmental volunteering that will support and foster a sustainable, modern, effective and valued environmental volunteering sector in Victoria.

### Key focus areas

We have condensed the top ten ways to overcome barriers into four focus areas, as shown below. Each focus area lists actions and further ideas to be considered.

#### *Sustain*

To sustain existing environmental volunteering programs and networks. Support and respond to the evolving needs of the environmental volunteer landscape by improving access to grants, guidelines, technical assistance and training, while streamlining administration requirements.

#### *Expand*

To regenerate environmental volunteering and encourage more Victorians to act for nature. Facilitate opportunities for all Victorians to volunteer by developing innovative ways to act for the environment.

#### *Value*

To value and recognise the contributions of environmental volunteers. Communicate and celebrate the efforts of environmental volunteering so that volunteers know they are making a difference.

#### *Understand*

To understand the diverse needs of the environmental volunteering sector. Understand motivations, barriers and opportunities concerning volunteering to inform program design and continuous improvement.

### Top ten ways to overcome barriers

Based on our survey, research and extensive consultation with the environmental volunteering sector and related organisations, here are the top ten ways to overcome barriers to environmental volunteering.

#### *1. Make administration easier*

Make it easier for people to volunteer, deliver programs and comply with administrative obligations with simplified and fit-for-purpose administration and legal requirements.

#### *2. Build capacity and capability*

Support volunteers and groups to develop better skills and deliver greater results.

#### *3. Improve sector collaboration*

Encourage government agencies to work together and share resources to improve governance. Promote tools that support better collaboration between networks and groups of volunteers.

#### *4. Involve more young people*

Create volunteering opportunities that appeal to young people.

#### *5. Attract more diverse volunteers*

Create broader programs that encourage participation of volunteers from all backgrounds, cultures, nationalities and abilities, so that everyone has the opportunity to feel connected to their local community through volunteering.

#### *6. Reimagine volunteering*

Look for flexible, event-based and short-term volunteer opportunities to entice more people to volunteer. Develop new ways to match volunteers' skills with the right activities. Encourage communities to initiate volunteering opportunities that are relevant to them.

### **7. Harness technology**

Help volunteers use existing tools and systems and develop new ways to communicate and collaborate, for example, social media, apps and drones.

### **8. Partner with Aboriginal communities**

Engage Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Victorians to participate in volunteering projects and build relationships between volunteer groups and Aboriginal communities.

### **9. Understand more about environmental volunteering**

Monitor, review, research and report on volunteering efforts, activities, achievements and outcomes, so we have good data to develop programs and promote the sector.

### **10. Celebrate and promote volunteering**

Volunteering is rewarding and often fun. We need to showcase, share and value the contribution and achievements of volunteers. By repositioning and promoting volunteering, we can appeal to new volunteers and help Victorians see how it benefits them, their community and the state's environment and biodiversity.

## AUSTRALIAN FRAMEWORK FOR LANDCARE 2010-2020

The Australian Government, thru the Australian Landcare Council (part of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry), have identified seven key elements to guide and support a sustainable future:

- Opportunities to be involved - all people are inspired to participate
- Effective information and knowledge sharing - mechanisms are available for generating and sharing knowledge and information
- Acknowledging change- the differences Landcarer's make are measured and acknowledged
- Links to plans at all levels - the Landcare approach is intrinsic to the big picture of sustainable resource management in national, state, regional and local planning
- Succession planning - the vitality of people involved is maintained into the future by engaging all generations and cultures
- Celebration - the achievements of Landcarer's are recognized and celebrated by all Australians, together with the potential of the Landcare approach to meet future environmental challenges
- Professional credentials established- individuals, groups, support staff and networks involved in the Landcare approach achieve high standards of governance and professionalism





