



# Community Engagement – Waterways Program

## Achievements in Southern ACT

### 2019-2020

#### **Program Objectives and Outcomes**

This contract had 3 broad objectives delivered in 3 workplans:

1. For Healthy Waterway sites in Southern ACT: develop broad community interest, establish active care groups and develop a greater awareness in local communities
2. For Community Water Education: improve stormwater literacy amongst local communities and the dissemination and impact of H2OK messages into the community
3. For Urban Open Space land: build stronger community connection, support existing Landcare groups and expand community stewardship and activities.

#### **1. Healthy Waterways Stewardship**

Community engagement through face to face events with local schools, business, and residents increased neighbourhood connection and knowledge of the function of the sites. Delivery of events pivoted to contact-less in March. A walking tour of with key information, a wetland scavenger hunt and information about group formation was delivered to maintain engagement during periods of isolation. Activities and events were held around the following healthy waterways sites:

- Isabella Pond and wetland
- Upper Strangers Raingarden
- Kambah Pond
- Curtin Raingarden
- Gowrie Playing Fields Raingarden
- Mawson Pond (postponed- communications delivered)

#### **2. Community Water Education Program (H2OK)**

Early in the program it was identified that there was a basic lack of understanding within the community of what stormwater was. Activities to bridge this knowledge gap included videos and interviews exploring the basic concepts of stormwater and pollution from University of Canberra academics and public education sessions with the Urban Water Education Officer. Communications included social media, SACTCG newsletters, website profiles of stormwater champions, filmed interviews and ABC radio interviews. Local engagement at all events demonstrated good community interest and uptake of H2OK messages.

A notable highlight was World Wetlands Day which was celebrated at Curtin Raingarden with support from community councils and residents' associations.

#### **3. Urban Open Space Stewardship Program**

Supporting community to seek funding under grant programs formed a significant part of the delivery of this program. Under Adopt-a-Park grants alone SACTCG submitted 11 applications, 8 of which were successful, including:

- Community visibility for Griffith Woodlands
- Green of Croton Crescent Park
- Revegetation of Hughes Garran Woodland
- Rejuvenation of Simpsons Hill
- Improving habitat and water management at Weston Creek Orchard.
- Improvement of the local environment and community education (Strangers Pond)
- Grass ID Training for UPP groups
- Promotional kits for UPP groups

Successful SACTCG *ACT Environment Grant* applications for projects to support UPP groups include:

- Bird and bee friendly gardens in the Holder Wetland Precinct
- Enhancing Bird Habitat at Hughes Grassy Woodland
- Adopt-A-Tree Biodiversity Planting on Simpson Hill.

Facilitation for new groups on TCCS land involved a large swath of administrative, interpersonal, and on-ground support. Established groups on local urban patches collaborated further with SACTCG for expertise, administration and project management. Volunteer recruitment events have assisted to increase awareness of groups on TCCS tenure in this period.

### **Summary of achievements**

For the **55** outputs contracted for delivery SACTCG delivered a total of **128**.

#### **Key Outputs**

- 19 events
- 17 grant applications
- 59 individual communication pieces

#### **Partners and stakeholders**

- 11 small community groups, members of SACTCG, were supported under this program, including 3 new member groups.
- 18 partners were engaged in the delivery of the 3 workplans. Below is a sample list:
  - University of Canberra
  - SEE-Change Tuggeranong
  - Tuggeranong Community Council
  - Woden Community Council
  - Curtin resident's association
  - Wanniassa Shops Association
  - Australian Association of Environmental Education (AAEE) ACT Chapter
  - Holy Family Primary School Gowrie
  - Lake Tuggeranong College
  - Bunnings - multiple locations

#### **Future work**

These programs have built significant momentum in community stewardship of public lands in Southern ACT. They have established strong foundation partnerships for both the delivery of community engagement and education activities that will grow these programs in 2020-2021.

SACTCG is highly grateful of the support of ACT Government for the funding in 2019-2020 and 2020-2021.