



The Goulburn Valley Environment Group Inc.

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July President's report

GVEG continues to be a busy group involved in both local environmental issues and on a State and Federal level with the Murray Darling Basin Plan and building relationships with our State Labour government and Suzanna Sheed our new independent member for Shepparton.

During the month of April GVEG met with two new State Government Ministers, they being Lisa Neville, Minister for Environment and Climate Change and Lily D'Ámbrosio, Minister for Industry, Energy and resources. Both meetings were organised by our local member Suzanna Sheed who also sat in on proceedings. We received a good hearing from both ministers and were able to convey key concerns and promote future projects.

GVEG has unfortunately had to be active in objecting to numerous planning applications put to COGS that have involved the unreasonable clearing of native vegetation.

Unfortunately regulatory changes made by the previous State Coalition government have made it easier for landholders to gain approval to clear native vegetation, in some cases self-assess.

Protecting our native vegetation is fast becoming a huge workload for us all and I think indicative of our present political environment on so many fronts not the least the federal governments attack on environment group's tax-free status in relation to donations

We have recently lost Nick Roberts to Environment Victoria where he is now campaign manager. We congratulate Nick on this new position and still enjoy his input and advice; however his hand on presence in Shepparton is missed.

Our monthly meetings are now held in the Goulburn Murray Landcare Network office at the corner of Wyndham and Knight Streets on the 3rd Thursday of each month at midday. Any member who would like to drop into the occasional meeting would be made most welcome.

We have been successful with grants from the GBCMA in support of projects designed to achieve positive outcomes for the environment, our soils and regional productivity. The projects are based on the region working together in Cluster arrangements utilising our strengths and connecting to emerging scientific developments and research from around the world. This area of involvement is new for GVEG and not without its challenges as some of our detractors have successfully tainted GVEG with an anti-development reputation. This is our way of turning this image around and we are currently working with the Goulburn Broken CMA, the Committee 4 Shepparton and industry groups on projects ranging from improving soils to recycling. Professor Ross Garnaut and York Universities Professor James Clarke are just two speakers secured for "GV21-Collective Opportunities" in early November.

I encourage all our members and friends to continue your membership and association with GVEG as our joint efforts are more important than ever on a fast expanding number of fronts to secure the type of environment that we can proudly hand on to future generations.

All the best, John Pettigrew.