



QWaLC
QUEENSLAND WATER & LAND CARERS

**ANNUAL
REPORT
2016-2017**



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Who are we?

Queensland Water and Land Carers Inc. (QWaLC) is the peak body for NRM volunteers in Queensland. We are an independent, non-government, not-for-profit organisation. QWaLC formed in April 2004 to fill an important need in supporting the valuable work of volunteer community groups in the Natural Resources Management sector across Queensland. We currently have a membership of over 350 groups with close to 30,000 individual members. We work on behalf of thousands of natural resource management volunteers across our vast state.



How do we operate?

The organisation is answerable to our membership, which is made up of a broad range of volunteer NRM groups. Members include Landcare, Coastcare, Waterwatch, Bushcare, catchment associations, conservation groups regional bodies and subregional organisations.

The organisation is incorporated and governed by a constitution* that sets out the objectives, powers and administrative arrangements.

QWaLC's network extends across the 14 NRM regions of Queensland, each of which is represented by a QWaLC Board Member elected from the regional groups. The Board Members participate on a board of management.

For QWaLCs constitution go to:

<http://QWaLC.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/2014.08.13.QWaLC-CONSTITUTION-Final.pdf>

What is our role?

As Queensland's peak body for NRM volunteers, QWaLC fulfils the following roles:

Networking—QWaLC is part of a large NRM network that encompasses volunteer NRM groups, regional bodies, government representatives and industry personnel. We facilitate the exchange of strategies, information, skills and resources. We develop and improve links between volunteer NRM groups, regional organisations and government agencies.

Promotion—QWaLC is dedicated to promoting the achievements of natural resource management volunteers across the state.

Representation—A community representative board is a core pillar to the overall make up of QWaLC – and these members ensure that community volunteers have an opportunity to participate and contribute to policies and issues that specifically relate to their region at a localised level. It is the role of your Board members to ensure that they actively engage with member groups and bring forward their views and opinions to be represented at a State and National levels.

Advocacy—QWaLC exists in Queensland to advocate specifically on behalf of NRM volunteers. The volunteer NRM sector is vital to the Queensland economy, investing many thousands of hours of volunteer's time into practical environmental outcomes. QWaLC role is to ensure that this contribution is an important consideration in any decisions made regarding the voluntary NRM sector.

Insurance—QWaLC assists groups in their practical work throughout the state by the provision of three vital insurance policies - Association Liability; Public and Products Liability; and Volunteer Accident.



O ur people.

QWaLC Board

QWaLC's Board plays an integral part of its role as the peak body for natural resource management (NRM) volunteers. The Board consists of a community representative from across each of Queensland's 14 NRM regions. Our Regional Board Members represent their regions and highlight the issues and achievements in each allowing QWaLC to be truly representative of the whole State and to keep in touch with on-ground volunteers.

The Board (*QWaLC Executive)

Region	Role	Name
Qld. Murray Darling	Chair	Geoff Elliot*
Southern/Northern Gulf	Deputy Chair	Mark van Ryt*
Burdekin/Mackay Whitsunday	Treasurer	Graham Armstrong*
Condamine	Secretary	MaryLou Gittins
Burnett Mary	Board Member	Phil Moran
Cape York & Torres Strait	Board Member	Jason Carroll
Fitzroy	Board Member	Michelle Hanrahan
South West Qld	Board Member	Scott Sargood
Statewide	Board Appointment	Peter Stevens
Wet Tropics	Board Member	<i>Currently Vacant</i>
South East Qld.	Board Member	<i>Currently Vacant</i>
Desert Channels	Board Member	<i>Currently Vacant</i>

Sub Committees

	Chaired by
Governance and Planning	Geoff Elliot
Communication, Marketing & Branding	MaryLou Gittins
Insurance and Risk	Phil Moran
Green Nomads	Mark van Ryt
Member Engagement	MaryLou Gittins
Finance and Audit	Graham Armstrong

Staff

Statewide	Executive Officer	Darryl Ebenezer
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Chair's Report



This marks the completion of my second year as Chairman of QWaLC. A personal observation is that whilst the workload seems to have doubled, the results have tripled.

QWaLC's Board and organisational structure has changed somewhat during this time. We have now moved to a formation of sub-committees to spread the workload, as opposed to an Executive Committee undertaking all of the operational and decision making functions. Acknowledgement and appreciation is extended to the whole Board for consistent input into the effective and smooth operation of the organisation over the year.

Our current Board members are Mark Van Ryt - Vice Chair (Northern and Southern Gulf), MaryLou Gittins - Secretary (Condamine), Graeme Armstrong - Treasurer (Mackay Whitsunday), Michelle Hanrahan (Fitzroy), Phillip Moran (Burnett Mary), Jason Carroll (Cape York), Scott Sargood (South West) and Peter Stevens (Board Appointee). Acknowledgement must also go to past Board members John Reghenzani (Wet Tropics), Naomi Edwards (South East Qld) and Helen Ogg (Desert Channels) for their input and time on the Board.

Recognition and thanks are also extended to our Executive Officer, Darryl Ebenezer, and contracted staff Lane Pilon (Administration), Glen Donoghoe (Project Reporting) and Melissa Robinson (Communications).

Operationally, meetings throughout the report period included two face-to-face Board meetings (held in Brisbane and Cairns) and two teleconferences, as well numerous sub-committee teleconferences and intermittent phone calls. Specifically, the Member Engagement Committee has had consistent organisational teleconferences leading up to the series of community forums held around the State.

On behalf of our many natural resource management volunteers, over the last twelve months QWaLC's activities have included:

REPRESENTATION

It's encouraging to see that our membership has continued to grow this year. As the peak body for natural resource management in Queensland, QWaLC provides key services for approximately 380 incorporated groups and in excess of 35,000 volunteers throughout the State.

ADVOCACY

QWaLC advocates on key issues on behalf of member organisations. Through information received from the member surveys it's been of interest to note that the priority issues of the last reporting period are still of major concern today.



Over the last 12 months QWaLC has continued to meet with sitting members, senior advisors and bureaucrats of the present government's NRM and Environment departments, as well as the Shadow Ministers for Environment and Heritage Protection and Natural Resources and Mines, in their respective electorates, in regard to current pressing issues affecting our members, in particular to secure funding for a continuing Landcare coordinator program. A precedent and working model for this project has been set by Victoria and NSW and we have proposed to the government a variation based on the best working parts of these existing programs.

More recently QWaLC has collaborated with NRM Regions Queensland to produce a strategic document 'Living Landscapes Local Livelihoods' which acts as an integral guiding tool outlining natural resource management purposes, goals and vision. This will allow both organisations to present a combined front when advocating to government for stronger community based delivery of natural resource management.

QWaLC continues to advocate on behalf of volunteers in protecting the Great Barrier Reef, being involved in round table discussions and the pressing need for a small environment grants programs. At present, a round of applications for Community Sustainability Action Grants are being assessed.

In light of an impending State election, I would encourage all volunteer to make contact with and talk to their local members of parliament on their relevant Landcare issues.

NETWORKING

On behalf of QWaLC I have continued to represent Queensland on the Board of the National Landcare Network (NLN) over the last 12 months. As well as regular teleconferences, the Network met at face-to-face meetings in Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra. The outcome from these meetings is knowledge sharing amongst the States and Territories, and through this process the opportunity for informal benchmarking.

A significant event occurring at present is the proposed merger between Landcare Australian Limited (LAL) and the NLN. Merger discussions are well under way and appear to be going in the right direction.

Other networking opportunities throughout the year occurred at the combined QWaLC & NRM Regions Queensland Executive meeting, the Natural Resource Management Forum at QUT, a gathering where NRMQ honoured past Chair, Mike Berwick, and the QWaLC Regional Forums held over recent months.

PROMOTION

QWaLC was again the proud sponsor of the Maleny Expo's annual 'Wootha Prize' and Junior Landcare Paddock event as well as the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection Premiers Sustainability Awards. Sponsorship support was also provided to other groups and activities throughout the year including the Queensland Coastal Conference, Night Eyes Water Watch & Landcare Group, Malanda Small Farms Field Day, the Wet Tropics Healthy Waterways Report Card, and the NRMQ/QWaLC (joint project with QUT).

INSURANCE

New applications continue to be received from NRM volunteer groups around the State seeking to become members of QWaLC. Due to restrictions placed upon us by our previous policy provider, a new provider of insurance has been negotiated and put in place to provide the best policies to meet the requirements of our members.

WHAT'S TO COME

Our Annual General Meeting will be held in Brisbane again this year on 24 November. The existing Board remains, however, we do have vacancies for appointments in South East Queensland, Wet Tropics and Desert Channels. With the State election looming, efforts are being made to meet with all sides of government to present the 'Living Landscapes Local Livelihoods' document outlining Queensland's sustainable future through stronger community based delivery of Natural Resource Management.

Acknowledgement should be expressed for the funding support received from the State and Federal Governments, as well as support received from the National Landcare Network, Landcare Australia Limited, NRM Regions Queensland and, most importantly, the encouragement from the many natural resource management volunteers throughout Queensland.

QWaLC is a resilient body representing grass roots members. As a group we possess a positive outlook, and I look forward to being involved with this effective organisation into the future.



Geoff Elliot
Chair

Executive Officer's Report



“The true meaning of life is to plant trees under whose shade you do not expect to sit.” –Nelson Henderson

Now I know what some might say. We don't just plant trees. Yes I know. We do however undertake many thousands of actions that will not only change the world we live in now, but will impact our world into the future. We make a difference every day and are influencing our fellow citizens by our actions not just words.

The end of a financial year is a time to gather information, reflect on tasks and projects achieved and then commence to deliver the next years planned activities.

As our Chair, Geoff, has commented in his report we have seen continued growth in our membership. Lets see if we can achieve 400 member groups in the next year.

By having a virtual office I have managed to visit many parts of the state and meet a diverse range of people from our member groups. Our board members have been engaged in their regions and participate in their own groups. When added to the many emails and phone calls received I have a great opportunity to see and hear the stories of many member groups and their volunteers and in some cases staff. When combined with our forums and surveys this gives us the confidence and the necessary information to progress sharing the needs of volunteer environmental groups and their members with any one who will listen.

Our membership of the National Landcare Network, Volunteering Queensland and Community Council for Australia expose us to a great deal of information and resource as well as giving us the opportunity to contribute at a national level. We are also able to provide feedback and information to them from our grass roots membership.

I hope you use the resources on our website and keep coming back as they are added to. Thanks to Gary and AON for their continued assistance with insurance coverage for member groups. This is only possible due to funding received from the Queensland Government through the Dept of Natural Resources and Mines.

I would like to thank Andrew Drysdale and Lane Pillon from the QLD Regional Groups Collective for their hard work and demonstrated commitment to working with us to provide a better environment for Queenslanders.

Working with Geoff and all the board is always enjoyable. I look forward to another year of challenges, action and diversity as well as meeting more people in our QWaLC community.



Darryl Ebenezer
Executive Officer

Treasurer's Report



I assumed the role of acting treasurer at QWaLC's December Board Meeting, taking over from John Reghenzani. As recommended at the last AGM a new financial auditor was appointed and hence QWaLC's 2016/17 external financial audit was conducted by Crowe Horwath.

I can report that the newly appointed independent auditors have found no deficiencies in QWaLC's financial statements for the financial year 2016/17. Please refer to the attached auditor's report and accompanying financial statements.

The 2016/17 profit & loss statement shows a net profit for the period of \$270,714. This is mostly due to the timing of incoming payments from the Queensland Dept. of Natural Resources & Mines (DNRM) for projects underway and these funds are expected to be fully expended during the 2017/18 financial year. This effect has flowed through to Balance Sheet which shows a total equity of \$458,173 up substantially from circa \$187,000 at the end of the previous year.

Income for the year was dominated by grants from the Department of Natural Resources and Mines and contract income via the National Landcare Network. Major outgoings were similar to those of last year, the costs being incurred in achieving contract and grant milestones and in ensuring the organisation functions in line with regulatory requirements. Significant expenditure line items were for Salaries & Consultants, Insurance Policies, EO & associated expenses and Board expenses. During the year there were also funds allocated to support specific events held by member groups.

The Treasurers role is supported by those Board Members on the Finance & Audit Sub-committee and I extend my thanks for their support in establishing the terms of reference for the sub-committee and for their participation during sub-committee meetings, particularly around discussions required in establishing the QWaLC budget for the coming year. I would also like to acknowledge the work of the EO, Darryl Ebenezer and QWaLC's bookkeeper Dorian Pozzan for their diligence in dealing with the organisation's financial processes & procedures.



Graham Armstrong
Acting Treasurer

REGIONAL REPORTS FROM THE BOARD

This year I had the pleasure of supporting The Rossville Landcare Group and The Wenlock Catchment Management Group to become members of QWaLC. This is a wonderful development for a region with very few Landcare groups. Both groups were encouraged by the support available to them from QWaLC, agencies and other NRM organisations on Cape York.

The last 12 months have seen some exciting projects beginning on eastern Cape York Peninsula that aim to reduce the sediment loads of rivers flowing out to the Great barrier reef. Below are 3 projects that showcase some of the work that Traditional owners, scientists and land managers are tackling in our region.

The Laura Rangers are partnering with DISITI and Cape York Water Monitoring Partnership to collect water quality data in the Laura – Normanby catchment.



The rangers collect flood samples which are analysed for sediment and nutrient loads. Additionally, they monitor oxygen, conductivity pH and turbidity throughout the year at six sites. They also have six automatic stage recorders which they upload every four months and record flow rates.

Through a Reef Alliance Grazing Project, South Cape York Catchments has been working in partnership with Cape York NRM, QDAF (QLD Department of Agriculture and Fisheries) and Cape York graziers to improve water quality on eastern Cape York cattle properties.

This three-year project includes training for graziers, funding of on-ground works to improve water quality, and specialist extension. On-ground works projects are currently being designed, and include cattle exclusion fencing of significant areas of poor-quality grazing land, wetland fencing, riparian fencing, and using water-points to spread grazing pressures. These projects will reduce sediment and nutrient loads in the river systems of the Stewart, Normanby and Bloomfield catchments.



CAPE YORK PENINSULAR JASON CARROLL



Erosion control on Balnggarrawarra Country is set to take a big step forward with Rangers securing a 4-year project to reduce sediment loss.



The Balnggarrawarra Rangers have trialled a number of different erosion control methods and products in an effort to decrease soil loss from their land. Old property tracks, feral cattle and over grazing have created a myriad of gullies which contribute up to 9 tonnes of sediment per year. This sediment flows down the Normanby river has a direct impact on the northern part of the Great Barrier Reef.



With the skills developed on smaller scale erosion the Rangers are keen to tackle larger gullies and many more kilometres of property roads. Combined with feral cattle management and good fire management they hope to see an increase in ground cover across the property which is most beneficial to controlling erosion and reducing sediment loss.

REGIONAL REPORTS FROM THE BOARD

In the two NRM regions I represent, land carers, like our population, are few and far in between. I represent ten groups in the Northern and Southern Gulf registered as members with QWaLC. I applaud the organisers who have volunteered on these various committees, also the wonderful folk who volunteer to support and help carry out projects – like the 'weekend weed warrior'.

My home country is in the Southern Gulf where I focus on organising activities at the grass root level. I am President of the Mount Isa Landcare Group and the Secretary of the Gregory River Landcare Group. The primary focus of both of these groups is the noxious weeds invading our beautiful range land and riparian environments.

The photos on these two pages demonstrate some of the landcare work undertaken by Mount Isa Landcare volunteers. I offer my sincere thanks to all the great volunteers in our region.



Mark finds a Belly Ache Bush



Chad with another Belly Ache bush.



Paul and Matt using a cut and spray method on Gregory River rubber vine.



Falcon and Paul helped to clean up the Road to East Leichhardt Dam.

SOUTHERN & NORTHERN GULF MARK VAN RYT



Hubert with a large cluster.



Mark the tour guide



RV working group.

REGIONAL REPORTS FROM THE BOARD

I would like to present my report for the South West Region. My first AGM was actually last year which I missed due a broken pelvis so things are looking better already.

My region is entering its 7th year of drought and although we have received minor relief from storm rain it does little else but encourage the cattle to chase the green pick and lose weight. We are still waiting for good general soaking rain to grow grass and fill dams. Every day is a day closer say the optimists. SWNRM kindly invited me to attend a Rangelands Conference in South Australia earlier this year which I regrettably had to decline due to the ongoing drought. By all accounts it was well attended and very informative.

Unfortunately, despite lots of encouragement we were unable to enter anyone into the Landcare awards. I really do think this drought has affected us all in more ways than we can think of.

I attended a QWALC Landcare forum held in Dalby in October. This was the first time a regional event like this had been held and was part of a series around the State. I believe the attendance was quite good. MaryLou Gittins needs to be commended for all her efforts in organising the event on behalf of the South West, Queensland Murray Darling and Condamine Regions. I was lucky enough to be invited to speak about my region which gave me the opportunity to explain in detail the problems that our region has on a day to day basis with the current vegetation regulations. It was interesting to see how many people, even though they were interested in Landcare, had no idea of the problems we face and what Mulga Harvesting actually is. I believe it was a very successful day for our Region and I would like to thank MaryLou again for her invitation.

Another major achievement for our region was the erection of a large billboard on the boundary of our property on the Warrego Highway, and I do mean large! The actual Billboard has 100sq metres of signage.

The idea is to educate passing motorists about Mulga Harvesting. So many travellers see the pulled Mulga and automatically think we are broad scale clearing. Feedback we have had to date has been wonderful. We have the support of three local Councils, Landcare, QWALC and the Bidjara people. Hopefully the "informed and newly educated" will pass on their new found knowledge to all their friends in the cities throughout Australia.

I would like to thank Geoff, Darryl and the rest of the team for their support to our region throughout the year and I look forward to being able to contribute further in the next 12 months.





REGIONAL REPORTS FROM THE BOARD

The 2016/17 financial year again produced challenges and opportunities for landcare within the Fitzroy River Basin area.

This year has brought further opportunities with the suite of Reef Trust programs, RT1, 2, 3 and 4, with areas including landholder engagement, practice change, property planning and erosion control.

Strong links between groups with the same goal of improving the social, environmental & financial aspects of our way of lives within Central Queensland has been the key to any and all successes our groups have been able to attain.

Photos – Jim Price & Alby Wooler

We have continued to engage with regional councils, state and federal members to deliver training and awareness opportunities for landholders and the wider community with a focus this year on improving land management practices and raising awareness of our natural resources and environmental values. We have also engaged these same representatives to develop plans for the future of our region and our groups.

Joint programs and initiatives continue including planning for the Small Landholder Day with Rockhampton Regional Council, which had to be rescheduled from April due to flooding following Cyclone Debbie, the launch of the Mt Archer Activation Strategy; and the Figtree Ck Working Group and the Environmental Taskforce with Livingstone Shire Council. Other joint activities included the establishment of the biocontrol facility for the treatment of cats claw creeper with Gladstone Regional Council.

Landcare Champions

2016/17 saw the passing of two great champions of Landcare in our region, Alby Wooler from Capricorn Coast Landcare in Yeppoon and Jim Price from Calliope. Both were members and supporters of Capricornia Catchments and willingly supported many landcare & community projects and activities. We remember these gentlemen for their years of dedicated service and passion for the local environment.





Our organisation continued to benefit from the services provided by Queensland Water and Landcarers (QWaLC) with support for local activities, including our nomination for the Premier's State Landcare Awards for the GenYadaba group who were finalists in the young achiever's category. Particular thanks to Livingstone Shire Council for their contribution and support for GenYadaba and to QWaLC for assisting with networking opportunities with other groups across the state.

Cyclone Debbie and the intense rainfall and flooding that followed impacted many landholders and communities across our area from Nebo and St Lawrence in the north and south to Gladstone and the Boyne Valley. This impacted on the landholder's priorities and the time available to achieve project works, though many eventually achieved completion.

Water quality continues to be an issue raised by our members and the priority areas identified in the Region's Water Quality Improvement Plan assist with the identification of higher risk areas across the basin.

Our volunteers at community events and those who offer support in our offices continued in 2016/17 and while there were many individuals who assisted during the year, a particular mention of the terrific fundraising efforts by the Mimosa Catchment Landcare Group's Chairty Golf Day and of Capricornia Catchments assistance at the Beach Day out (a Disability Action Week event) is deserved.

Photo – Disability Action Week's Beach Day Out at Emu Park



REGIONAL REPORTS FROM THE BOARD

The financial year 2016/17 was an interesting one. Local highlights include a crowd funding exercise to raise funds for cameras and sound recording equipment in order to assist in the search for the critically endangered Coxen's fig parrot [*Cyclopsitta diophthalma coxeni*]. Anecdotally this bird has been seen around Pinbarren on the Mary River system, and we have been working closely with Department of Environment and Heritage Protection to see if this species is still with us. A side benefit has been having very smart young people doing this work.

The National Landcare Conference was held in Melbourne in September 2016, where environment types from around the country gathered to share knowledge. This event also hosted the formation of the National Landcare Network Members Council. The National Landcare Network (NLN) is the representative body for Landcare groups across Australia and works to provide a voice for Landcare at the national level. The NLN is made up of representatives from each State and Territory, who come together to share their successes and support one another in overcoming challenges. QWaLC is represented on the member's council by our Chair, Geoff Elliott, Darryl Ebenezer [EO], myself and recently with the addition of Peter Stevens. I would encourage member groups to keep an eye on the QWaLC website for updates from the NLN. Our recent deliberations have centred on forging stronger relationships with the Regional bodies and Landcare Australia Ltd.

As part of a Noosa Biosphere funding we have been using LIDAR [Light detection and Ranging] technology to ascertain erosion hotspots in the Kin Kin catchment. This work is likely to be extended to the Mary catchment if funding can be sourced. It is a way to have scientific rigour to direct where on ground works are best carried out. Our thanks to our partners and Healthy Land & Water for mapping services. In addition to this work, we were able to have a 'breakthrough' partnership with Peppers Noosa Resort and Spa. Peppers has set aside \$2 for every function guest attending the resort, and this money was used to fund the planting of 2,200 trees. See drone photo.

Interesting times have also included the termination of the Federal Government's Green Army program. This program had its issues, however I need to record that some of the young people involved have been really keen and interested in our environment. They have assisted on a number of projects in our region, by weeding, planting and most importantly, maintenance! We are fortunate to have the State Government's Skilling Queenslanders for Work program, and the State's First Start program to fill gaps left by the cessation of the Green Army. This is a very well thought out program and groups involved are pleased to be involved. In addition to environmental benefits, the socio-economic benefits of this program are often overlooked. They are significant, and a true part of 'Landcare'.

Workshops around our region continue to be well attended and supported. Thanks to Kay Enkelmann from the Burnett-Mary Regional Group for her assistance across the region.

The Noosa Festival of Water was held at Lake Macdonald on 25th June, with over 2,000 people attending. This event was supported by Noosa Council along with Seqwater, Bendigo Bank, Unity water and Tourism Noosa. The event is organised by the Mary River Catchment Coordinating Committee [MRCCC], Council and Noosa Landcare. Thanks to Debbie Seal from MRCCC for her sterling effort.

BURNETT PHILLIP MORAN



QWaLC has held a number of teleconferences and one face to face meeting in Cairns. One of the highlights of these face to face meetings is to gain a better state wide perspective of Landcare activities. The insights provided at that meeting by QWaLC members such as Scott Sargood from the South West, Jason Carroll from Cape York and Mark Van Ryt from Northern & Southern Gulfs in particular put into perspective the size and diversity of Landcare groups in Queensland.

Darryl Ebenezer and our Chair, Geoff Elliott have worked closely with the various sub committees, and in my case this has been insurance issues. These have been worked through and are still being fine-tuned as different questions arise. I would like to thank Darryl for navigating through the nuances of insurance for member groups. I would also like to thank Lane Pilon for her support, and the contractors who carry out QWaLC's required milestones.

And lastly our Chair Geoff Elliott who continues to go above and beyond...Thank you Geoff



REGIONAL REPORTS FROM THE BOARD

This year has been one of increasing dialogue and cooperation between community groups and Regional NRM organisations. The North Queensland Dry Tropics (NQDT) and Reef Catchments (RC) NRM organisations have supported community groups as much as possible in a year of shrinking budgets which have affected the Mackay/Whitsunday/Isaac region in particular. As a priority, the incoming Chair of the Reef Catchments Board, Julie Boyd, met with representatives from local Landcare Groups to gain an understanding of their current situation and aspirations. At NQDT the CEO, Scott Crawford, organised and attended a workshop for the many regional volunteer NRM groups. The workshop formed the basis for the development of an NQDT community group support strategy and was a great example of volunteer and professional organisations working together to develop mutually beneficial outcomes.

In August I attended the Whitsunday Nature Celebrations event in Airlie Beach organised by the Central Queensland Conservation Council. The event was attended by a number of dedicated local community organisations and volunteer groups, including, to name a few, Whitsunday Sea Grass Watch, Whitsunday Catchment Landcare, ACT! Whitsundays, Save our Foreshore (Mackay Conservation Group), Order of Underwater Coral Heroes (OUCH), local High Schools participating in the Reef Guardian School program and the Healthy Rivers to Reef Partnership. It is heartening to note, that despite a long period of inactivity without funding, now with the support of Reef Catchments and OUCH, volunteers were once again ready and willing to undergo the required training and re-commence the much needed local Sea Grass Watch program.

Other examples of community volunteer input into NRM issues in this region were the holding of a Qld Weed Spotter Network Meeting in Proserpine, the membership and participation of Landcare groups in the region's Health Rivers to Reef Partnership and individuals from Landcare Groups sitting on the Steering Group of the Mackay/Whitsunday Regional Landcare Facilitator program.

During March and April, I spent some time contacting the region's community groups to update and verify the regions list of member groups. The net result was a decrease in the number of groups which now sits at 19. This was mainly due to a number of far flung grazing groups folding, there members now being serviced by the large Dalrymple Landcare group.

Alas, the last 3 months of the year became dominated by the advent of Cyclone Debbie and dealing with the storm's aftermath. Extensive physical damage to the coral of the Great Barrier Reef in the Whitsunday region was one highly publicised result. At Whitsunday Catchment Landcare, in which I am personally involved, it became quickly apparent that revegetation sites also needed urgent post-cyclone attention and so did the Native Plant Nursery. Volunteers quickly responded to calls to attend revegetation sites to remove fallen limbs and debris from newly planted areas and older saplings, now lying prostrate, were gently righted, braced and trimmed where necessary. The benefits of this quick action were readily apparent after a couple of months as the vegetation responded to the extremely wet conditions. WCL's main nursery shade-house had partially collapsed and tubes containing newly set seedlings had been tossed great distances. But a sense of order was restored after several days of effort. Funds were obtained from the QRAA Disaster Recovery Program and a Green Army team was enlisted to help with the re-building of the structure. Thus heralding yet another great example of different community targeted programs coming together to the benefit of an active, responsive community.

BURDEKIN/MACKAY WHITSUNDAY GRAHAM ARMSTRONG



Within weeks of Cyclone Debbie another QWaLC member group - Eco-barge Clean Seas, was back on the water and on the land with 90 volunteers visiting the Islands and mainland beaches and returning with 10,000 Kg of marine rubbish. To date this group's achievements have been epic but it is indeed sad to report that the efforts of founder, Libby Edge, and the eco-barge volunteers will be severely curtailed, if not ceased, by the end of this year due to a lack of secure ongoing financial support in the wake of the cyclone.

Since its inception Eco-barge Clean Seas has:

- Removed over 168 tonne of marine debris from the Whitsunday Islands
- Responded to over 100 turtle rescue calls and cared for over 64 turtles.
- Removed 23,860 thousand kilos of marine debris from the Mackay and Sarina Beaches.
- Conducted 60 land based clean ups to prevent this litter becoming marine debris.
- Currently has a database of over 900 volunteers.
- Over 5000 volunteers have helped to achieve these results!

There is no doubt in my mind that the dearth of dependable ongoing funding for NRM related activities is the major impediment to leveraging the huge effort and good will present within regional communities which is so often harnessed by community volunteer groups.



Ecobarge Clean Seas volunteers

REGIONAL REPORTS FROM THE BOARD

Our QWaLC membership is quite diverse in the Condamine Region. Householder' Options to Protect the Environment Inc (HOPE) is a national community-based not-for-profit environment organisation committed to providing Australians with information, advice and contacts to help them live more sustainably. Their activities range from partnering with Condamine Alliance for a day in Redwood Park for Youth (Youth week event) to community forum on "The Value of Heritage to Queensland (and the Darling Downs).

The Toowoomba World Environment Committee Inc held another successful event in 2017 for World Environment Day with a crowd of 1 500 people in the Park for the environment, indigenous issues, multiculturalism, peace, multi-faith, social, justice and anti-racism. The committee is already on the way preparing for 2018.

The Darling Downs Regional Landcare (formed several years ago), an affiliation of several umbrella landcare and catchment groups representing all landcare sub-groups across the region, enables me stay in close contact with the members. DDRL met a few times this year to share information and experiences plus discuss current and emerging issues. The member sub-groups have a diverse background, ranging from principally urban to more traditional farming culture. Graham Cooke does a great job chairing these meetings and the groups share the secretariat meeting to meeting.

Most larger groups to stay operational have reluctantly reduced or removed paid coordinator hours due to change in funding options. Currently there are 18 landcare groups registered with QWaLC from our region although there are several more that are under these larger groups. North East Downs Landcare is one of the larger groups that aids smaller functioning groups who are more interested in actions than the administration of a group. This helps maintain the Landcare Banner in the spotlight of our catchment.

There are many stories across the Condamine where local innovation and effort is scoring goals and improving the environment. Landcare in this area has been very successful (Photo of NED Landcare 21st Celebrations 2016). The aim being to raise awareness and support adoption of best practice.



A snapshot of recent projects includes - Control of boxthorn in Chinchilla and other areas; Addressing fertility decline in pastures near Chinchilla; Field day in the Brigalow Jimbour area about the future use of robot technology in agriculture; Weed identification and information workshop in the North East Downs area; Holistic land management in the North East Downs to improve pastures by adding the required nutrients to build groundcover and reduce soil erosion; Feral pig workshop & shoots in the Eastern and Western Downs; Tree planting for improved koala habitat and diversity in several locations including the Oakey urban area.



Partnering with the Condamine Alliance (the Regional Body) has enabled landcare groups to maintain activities across the catchments. South Myall Landcare Group has had three successful projects involving a day on a local property looking at a practical demonstration on how to remove an invasive African Boxthorn weed using specialist equipment rather than foliar spraying, Stubble retention with high density Grazing and Leucaena and Pasture Establishment. They were also successful in a National Landcare Project of High Density grazing and Fertiliser Application covering two properties.

Chinchilla Landcare has offered to their members a range of activities from First Aide to fertilizer application that is calibrating the fertiliser – they learnt event if it is a brand-new machine it still needs to be calibrated. Pasture management and establishment have been developed as land use changes occur within the area.

The Condamine Balonne Water Committee also have proved over the year that partnerships are the key to keeping active within the catchment. The partnership with Condamine Alliance, CCMA, Queensland Department of Natural Resources and Mines, the DSIT Laboratory in the Eco-Sciences Precinct and the Queensland Health and Scientific Services Laboratory has benefited the catchment with sound water quality monitoring data that can be used at a local, regional and state level.

CONDAMINE MARYLOU GITTINS



Dr John Standley (in photo) and Graeme Wockner have used their expertise to develop a strong data base.

An example of such data can be seen from a project undertaken by Condamine Catchment Management Assn and assisted by CBWC to extend water quality analyses across the Condamine and adjoining Balonne catchments, testing for new contaminants of concern for public and river health. Information from 6 samplings of 9 sites between 2014 and 2016 was summarised in the Final Report in October 2016.

Highlights included - No detections of BTEX, phenols and polycyclic hydro-carbons associated with coal mining and CSG activities; Dissolved metals concentrations well below drinking water guidelines and trigger values for fresh water, alleviating concerns about arsenic, chromium and lead; Clearer understanding of how flow rates affect the concentrations of major ions plus total aluminium and iron (associated with turbidity).

In addition, the project included on-site measurements of pH, electrical conductivity and turbidity in three snapshot surveys at many sites along Gowrie and Oakey Creeks between Toowoomba and Fairview near Dalby, providing valuable information for local irrigators in particular.

Typical of the Australian climate our region has experienced the throws of Cyclone Debbie, together with other heavy storm rain which has reminded us that soil erosion is still a real concern across the region. Added to this Condamine Headwaters Landcare group had been successful in obtaining Drought funding to support Multi Species Cover Cropping Day with Col Seis and Graeme Hand. Yes, drought to flooding rains within the same year or the other way around.



Allora Landcare has achieved great outcomes with the Allora Mountain Reserve. They have built with the support from the Diggers Gardening Group an information shelter. They have started a fund to support the reserve so if you would like to support this venture just search the internet.



Millmerran Landcare Group's AGM and Christmas celebration was held in December 2016. Over 60 people attended, enjoying the wonderful setting of the lagoon at Marc and Bec Perrins property. Dave Woods from Goondiwindi was the guest speaker talking about emotional health and how to identify and address the debilitating effects it can have on people and their closest friends and family. His information was very well received by all, as everyone knows someone that is affected in some way. Also on display was a fireweed info board and Harrisia cactus infected with mealy bug. Millmerran AGM just shows how as a landcare group you can be social, look after health of group and the environment in one sitting. Great work.

This is just a small snapshot of the great things that are happening in an ever-changing resource climate. The last year has been one of renewal and advancement. As a person who was involved in the formation of QWaLC it is both a challenge and a privilege to participate on the board with the current membership. I do believe though due to the strength of this movement, Landcare will continue if the community groups out there believe there is a need. How can you put a value on the heart of those who volunteer their time, expertise, belongings and other personal aspects of their life? This is the asset that every region in Australia has.



REGIONAL REPORTS FROM THE BOARD

This year hasn't varied greatly from previous years. Landcare Groups within the QMD region are still struggling financially. Unfortunately, a couple of the groups have had to suspend operations pending funding sources being found. All of the groups however are to be commended on the projects that have been achieved over the last 12 months, some of which are detailed below:

Waggamba Landcare

- Completion of 3 cluster fences in April at Mt Carmel, Talwood and Kindon.
- Harissa Field Trial Site workshops in November 2016 and March 2017 with over 40 attendees.
- Completion of the Tin Hut Project in April, which incorporated over 10km of vegetation/creek fencing and 4 off-stream watering points.
- Stall at the Goondiwindi Show in May with competition and prizes.
- Talwood Fence field day in June.
- Completion of the Whalan Creek catchment Harissa Control Program, which covered over 5000ha.
- Soil Pit and Health Workshop in July, which included free soil tests for 12 participants, followed by 2 follow up field days in August delivered by Soil Land Food to discuss the results.
- Completion of the Koala On Grounds Project in July, which included Harissa, Tiger Pear, Tree Pear and Rope Pear spraying on 40ha along the Croppa Creek and 2 wildlife carers attending the Koala Hospital in Macquarie.
- Beginning of another Harissa control program in the Whalan Creek catchment to cover a further 1500ha in July.
- Cleanaway Oil Muster collected over 37,000L of oil in August.
- Start of 2 new cluster fences in August and September at Bendidee Forestry and Kioma.
- Ongoing money available for Harissa Control in the northern containment zone.
- Kindon Fence field day planned for late November.
- Funding approved for a Community event in the early new year.
- Applications in process for solar panels at community clubs, RCS Pasture management course, Mother of Millions control in the Weir River catchment and waterway fencing along the Whalan Creek.

Murilla Landcare Association

Some of the workshops this year have included:

- Erosion Controls
- Vegetation Management Lawss
- Indian Myna Control in partnership with Miles Mens Sheds
- Weed Identification & Controls
- Pasture improvement with Legumess
- Use of Drones in Agricultures
- Legal info on Conduct and Compensation Agreementtss
- Climate Forecastings
- Grant Writing Workshopss
- Bi-annual Roadside Cleanup events on the Warrego Highway collecting over 300 kilograms of rubbish with just a handful of volunteers!

QUEENSLAND MURRAY DARLING GEOFF ELLIOT



- CSG Net program - a Water Bore landholder based monitoring and recording program of artesian bore pressures and sub-artesian bore water levels.
- Control of Salvinia in the Dogwood Creek in conjunction with QMDC Aboriginal Rangers

Millmerran Landcare

- Sub catchment planning with Dunmore group (approximately 20 landholders involved) and Upper Canning group (10 landholders). Main issues are gully erosion and weeds including Boxthorn, Harissa Cactus, Tree Pear, Mother of Millions, Night Blooming Cereus and native pine thickening.
- Coal Seam Gas groundwater level monitoring. Not many people measuring and reporting yet, so grants have been offered to cover costs of installing monitoring equipment. A few takers here in Millmerran and Cecil Plains. Hopefully measurements will start to be reported soon.
- Local schools projects including bush tucker gardens, recycling, and an energy and water efficiency grant through Community Sustainability Action grant. I have been a regular weekly visitor to the local State School to keep the project flowing. Possibility to develop a Junior Landcare group at both local schools.
- Moved office. Now in the old Post Office building, which is much better.
- Condamine Alliance weed and pest projects including field day with mulching demo and pig trap setup with remote access gate system. Traps are available for use by landholders. Also purchased cameras that are available to landholders.
- Field days focussing on fireweed and lippia, pigs and pests, Dunmore weeds, grant writing workshop, future of cropping, desmanthus field day, biosecurity and vegetation laws, 2 native bee workshops at local schools and community sessions with great attendance and engagement at both.
- Litter Project involving a corporate clean-up day, "Talking Rubbish" posters and advertisements.

Inglewood and Texas Landcare Association

- Completion of the Cats Claw Containment Project on the Dumaresq River (Qld/NSW state boundary). This was a \$350,000 combined effort between the Inverell, Tenterfield and Goondiwindi Regional Shire Councils, Local Land Services, Northern Tablelands and Inglewood and Texas Landcare, with additional funding from the Qld Everyones Environment Grant.
- Two rounds of baiting and aerial feral pig control treatment, carried out in the Dumaresq River and the Bracker Creek valley regions. Local Landholders contributed 50/50 to the program which has been run over a number of years and has been very successful.

Maranoa Regional Landcare Association

- Ceased operations at the end of 2016 Financial Year pending funding for a Coordinator

Mitchell Landcare Association

- Restructured their delivery model with more emphasis on community involvement. Not presently employing a coordinator.

QUEENSLAND WATER AND LAND CARERS INC.

47 727 586 273

Committee's Report

Your committee members submit the financial report of Queensland Water & Land Carers Inc. for the financial year ended 30 June 2017.

Committee Members

The names of the committee members at the date of this report are:

Graham Armstrong	Michelle Hanrahan
MaryLou Gittins	Peter Stevens
Geoff Elliot	Phillip Moran
Mark van Ryt	Scott Sargood

Principle Activities

The principal activities of the Association during the financial year were to act as the peak body for the volunteer NRM groups (Landcare, Coastcare etc) in Queensland and to represent and advocate for these groups.

Significant Changes

No significant change in nature of these activities occurred during the year.

Operating result

The profit for the year amounted to \$270,714 (2016 year loss was \$79,929).

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Members of the Committee.



Geoff Elliot, Chairperson



Graham Armstrong, Treasurer

QUEENSLAND WATER AND LAND CARERS INC.

47 727 586 273

Statement of Profit or Loss

	2017	2016
	\$	\$
Grants	707,519	430,000
'Reef, Range & Red Dust' Conference Income	-	68,245
Interest Income	1,066	1,257
Total Revenue	708,585	525,922
Audit Fees	2,200	2,200
Bank Charges	-	183
Bookkeeping	5,939	6,064
Computer Software & Expenses	3,781	3,423
Consultancy Fees	117,841	122,505
Consultants & Forums – Department of Environment	-	11,513
Donations & Sponsorships	23,409	10,655
Depreciation Expense	217	2,036
Dues & Subscriptions	5,183	2,398
Honorariums	11,491	8,848
Insurance	57,447	47,046
Meeting Expenses	2,080	5,240
Promotion & Marketing	6,292	11,183
Provision for Annual Leave	-	1,634
'Reef, Range & Red Dust' Conference Expense	-	118,448
Rent	3,895	3,687
Stationery, Postage & Printing	2,367	4,414
Sundry Expenses	0	254
Sundry Projects	2,000	3,571
Telephone & Internet	3,716	4,291
Travel and Accommodation	85,600	102,896
Volunteer Expenses	-	2,946
Wages & Salaries	100,270	127,581
Website Maintenance	3,362	2,264
Workers' Compensation	780	571
Total Expenses	438,144	605,851
Net Surplus/ (Deficit)	270,714	(79,929)

QUEENSLAND WATER AND LAND CARERS INC.
47 727 586 273

Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2017

	2017	2016
	\$	\$
ASSETS		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	168,248	167,437
Trade and other receivables	289,520	22,462
Other assets	34,270	19,896
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	492,038	209,795
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
Plant and equipment, at cost	45,768	45,768
Accumulated depreciation	(44,868)	(44,651)
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	900	1,117
TOTAL ASSETS	492,938	210,912
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Trade and other payables	22,969	6,955
Provisions	11,796	16,498
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	34,765	23,453
NET ASSETS	458,173	187,459
EQUITY		
Retained earnings	187,459	267,388
Net Surplus/ (Deficit) for the period	270,714	(79,929)
TOTAL EQUITY	458,173	187,459

QUEENSLAND WATER AND LAND CARERS INC.
47 727 586 273

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

Note 1: Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

The financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act Queensland. The committee has determined that the Association is not a reporting entity.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historic costs and does not take into account changing money values, or except where specifically stated, current valuations of non-current assets.

The following significant accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of this financial report.

a. Income Tax

The Association has self-assessed and understands that it is tax exempt.

b. Plant and Equipment

Depreciation on furniture and fitting and computers are depreciated between 10-66.67% using the diminishing value method.

c. Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents includes cash on hand and deposits held at call with banks.

d. Revenue and Other Income

Revenue is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable after taking into account any trade discounts and volume rebates allowed.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).

e. Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenue, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included in the statement of financial position under trade and other payables.

f. Employee provisions

Provision is made for the Association's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to the end of the reporting period. Employee benefits have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled.

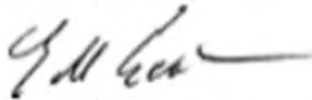
QUEENSLAND WATER AND LAND CARERS INC.
47 727 586 273

Statement by Members of the Committee

In accordance with a resolution of the committee of Queensland Water and Land Carers Inc, the members of the committee declare that:

1. The financial statements as set out on pages 3 and 4 present a true and fair view of the financial position of Queensland Water and Land Carers Inc. as at 30 June 2017 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements and the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act; and,
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Queensland Water and Land Carers Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is signed for and on behalf of the committee by:



Geoff Elliot, Chairperson

Dated this 15th day of November 2017



Graham Armstrong, Treasurer

Dated this 15th day of Nov 2017



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Queensland Water and Land Carers Inc

Independent Auditor's Report to the members of the Queensland Water and Land Carers Inc

Report on the audit of the financial report

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of the Queensland Water and Land Carers Inc (the Association), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2017, the statement of profit or loss, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the committee's report.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of the Association is in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial report, including:

- (a) Giving a true and fair view of the Association's financial position as at 30 June 2017 and of its financial performance for the year then ended.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the Association in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Emphasis of matter – basis of accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist the Association to meet the requirements of its constitution and the requirements of the *Association Incorporation Act 1981 (Queensland)*. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Crowe Horwath Audit Queensland is a member of Crowe Horwath International, a Swiss Verein. Each member of Crowe Horwath is a separate and independent legal entity. Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation other than for the acts or omissions of financial services licensees.

The title 'Partner' conveys that the person is a senior member within their respective division, and is among the group of persons who hold an equity interest (shareholder) in its parent entity, Findex Group Limited. The only professional service offering which is conducted by a partnership is the Crowe Horwath external audit division. All other professional services offered by Findex Group Limited are conducted by a privately owned organisation and/or its subsidiaries.



Responsibilities of the committee members for the financial report

The committee members of the Association are responsible for the preparation of the financial report and have determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 to the financial report is appropriate to meet the needs of the members and for such internal control as the committee determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the committee members are responsible for assessing the ability of the Association to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the committee members either intend to liquidate the Association or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial report is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at: http://www.auasb.gov.au/auditors_files/ar3.pdf. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Crowe Horwath Audit Queensland".

Crowe Horwath Audit Queensland

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "John Zabala".

John Zabala FCA
Partner

Brisbane
Date: 22 November 2017

People we work with.



Contact us:

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