

From the **city** to
the **country**,
from **river source**
to the **sea...**

Thousands of volunteers
are working for
sustainability

QWaLC

annual report 2004-2005





“Volunteers are the backbone of

communities across Australia, providing valuable

services in a range of areas including health,

education, emergency services and environment.”

Landcare Conferences

- QWaLC supported the NRM volunteer statewide as a major sponsor of the 2004 and 2005 Landcare & Catchment Management Conferences in Toowoomba and Barcaldine respectively
- QWaLC managed the 2005 Expression of Interest and Selection Process for the 2005 Catchment Management & Awards Host, and selected the Desert Uplands & Build Up Development Strategy Committee

Organisational development

- Developing clear definition around QWaLC's pivotal role as the organisation responsible for representing and advocating for volunteers in regional arrangements. Documenting the strategies required to implement this role in the QWaLC Strategic Plan and negotiating the 2005-2006 Service Agreement with the Department of Natural Resources and Mines.

This process has been fundamental in consolidating perceptions of the roles and functions of our relatively new organisation.



partnerships and relationships

QWaLC is a collaborative and inclusive organisation. This follows the wishes of its member groups outlined in the responses to the Landcare and Catchment Management Council survey conducted in 2002, that provided the guidelines for the formation and operation of QWaLC.

A proactive approach to building relationships raises awareness of the importance of volunteers and QWaLC demonstrates this by:

1. Australian Landcare Council Representation on the QWaLC Board and attendance of the QWaLC Chair at ALC meetings
2. QWaLC representation on the Board of the Landcare Australia Limited
3. Ongoing engagement with other stakeholders important to the volunteer sector including Australian and State government representatives, Regional Groups Collective, Queensland Landcare Foundation and Conservation Volunteers Australia to better develop understanding on common issues and identify opportunities to work together

In 2006 QWaLC will continue to focus resources towards:

- Ensuring effective two way communication with its members
- Disseminating information and delivering services to member groups, that enhances the knowledge and capacity of individuals within groups, for example delivery of Risk Management training to Registered groups
- Advocating for continued and improved support to the volunteer sector across Queensland
- Developing and maintaining networks and linkages with stakeholders to assist provision of support and advocacy
- Raising the profile of QWaLC and the work of its member groups, with all tiers of government and the broader community
- Ensuring sound governance from the Board and effective interaction between Directors and their Regional Member groups
- Preparation for Queensland delegation to the National Landcare Awards in 2006
- Preparation for State Landcare Conference 2007

Registration of Community NRM Groups

- QWaLC has successfully managed applications from 200 groups applying for Registration as a Community NRM Group.

(The Department of Natural Resources & Mines supports community volunteers by providing a suite of insurance policies for free to Registered groups.)

Queensland's Natural Resource Management **Volunteer** Sector



QWaLC is the Peak Body for Natural Resource Management (NRM) volunteers in Queensland. Volunteers are the backbone of communities across Australia, providing valuable services in a range of areas including health, education, emergency services and environment. In Queensland we are fortunate to have thousands of volunteers involved with community groups in maintaining, conserving and restoring both our natural environment and productive farming land, ensuring sustainability for the natural resources that underpin our quality of life.

What is a **volunteer** and why do people volunteer?

Volunteering Australia defines a volunteer as someone who is involved, of their own free will and for no financial payment, in activities or projects organised through not for profit organisations. The motivation for volunteer involvement ranges from wanting to give back to the community, doing something worthwhile, personal satisfaction, using skills and learning new ones, being active, social interaction and networking.

QWaLC's member groups are made up of a diverse range of individuals that encompass the spectrum of modern society: the young and the old; murris (indigenous people); migrants and Australian born. They also bring with them an extensive skill base ranging through the professional to academic to experienced land managers - the one thing they have in common is their willingness to contribute their time and knowledge to ensuring a sustainable future for their communities.

Given the extensive area of Queensland that is used for agriculture the involvement of Primary Producers with the NRM volunteer sector is fundamental in extending land management beyond the bounds of profitability and into sustainability. This is clearly demonstrated in the high level of producer support for government incentive programs such as Envirofund and Natural Heritage Trust that require a demonstration of public benefit over private gain.

NRM volunteers value add significant in-kind contributions to match cash attracted to Queensland's economy through funding programs such as Envirofund and the National Landcare Program (NLP). In 2004-05 Queensland's NRM volunteer network attracted:

- 24% of the national allocation of Natural Heritage Trust equating to \$5.8M, matched with cash and in-kind community contributions to the value of \$11.8M; and
- 28% of the national allocation of Envirofund amounting to \$2.28M, again matched with cash and in-kind to the value of \$5M.

Nearly \$25M of Federal funding to Queensland each year!

Queensland Water and Land Carers is a **non-government, not for profit community organisation** with a mission to **support community volunteers in achieving sustainable natural resource management.**

With representation on the Board of Management from across Queensland, QWaLC is uniquely positioned to effectively represent our members, raise issues and participate in regional arrangements.

QWaLC
profile

key achievements for 2004-2005

communications



Queensland Landcare Awards

Conducting the first ever State Landcare Awards produced by a non-government, not for profit community organisation, QWaLC is the only Peak Volunteer NRM body in Australia to manage the State Landcare Awards process.

The Awards presentation night held in Barcaldine, in conjunction with the 2005 State Landcare Conference, was extremely successful. The importance of the occasion was highlighted by the presence of the newly appointed Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, the Honorable Henry Palaszczuk who presented the winners with trophies.

QWaLC was extremely proud to be able to showcase the remarkable work of the volunteers to the Minister, other guests on the night and the Queensland public through extensive media coverage. Additionally, the outstanding success of the Awards process, culminating in the Awards presentation, clearly showcased QWaLC's ability to manage and coordinate a high profile statewide project.

- QWaLC is the lead organisation in the regular distribution to member groups and stakeholders of the Landcare Magazine, a quarterly National publication, taking over that role from the Department of Natural Resources and Mines.



communications

- Circulation of QWaLC's Talk quarterly newsletter to keep members informed on relevant Queensland NRM, volunteer issues and the QWaLC Board's activities

- Establishment of a website portal www.landcareqld.org.au to ensure continuous improvement in two way communications with our members and provide regular updates on activities, events and news

L to R: John Teakle, Glens Herrod and Adie Bode, Award recipients from Towerhill and Torrens Creek Landcare Group, with Brenda Walhain, QWaLC's Executive Officer, and the Honorable Henry Palaszczuk, Minister for Natural Resources and Mines

Advocacy of Volunteers

- QWaLC developed a comprehensive submission to the Queensland Government's "Options for future community engagement in natural resource management". Supporting option 1.2 to maintain the current system with some specific improvements including stronger links to other planning processes, QWaLC's submission was developed from comments received from member groups and highlighted the important contribution of volunteers to sustainable natural resource management and outlined improvements to enhance delivery by volunteers. QWaLC's submission also outlined specific improvements deemed necessary for the NRM volunteer sector.
- QWaLC participated in key negotiations with the State, Australian Governments, the Regional Groups Collective and regional body staff to ensure fair and effective delivery to volunteers of the National Landcare Program in Queensland.
- QWaLC advocated to key stakeholders the significant contribution of volunteers to sustaining and improving Queensland's natural resources through presentations to Regional Arrangements Advisory Group (RAAG) and communications with relevant Ministers and stakeholders.
- QWaLC successfully lobbied the Queensland Government for negotiations with insurance brokers to reduce the insurance excess on the Landcare Public Liability Policy.
- QWaLC represented the volunteer sector at key state government forums such as EIANZ environmental forums, Australian Landcare Council meetings and the National Landcare Program Conference at Geelong.



Pictured Right : Minister Palaszczuk voices his support of NRM volunteers to QWaLC Chairperson Esma Armstrong at Barcaldine in August 2005