

MOLONGLO CATCHMENT GROUP Inc.

ABN 78 210 867 987



15 August 2014

Standing Committee on Environment and Communications

References Committee

By email: ec.sen@aph.gov.au

Inquiry into the National Landcare Program

The Molonglo Catchment Group (MCG) is a non-profit community Landcare network supporting 17 Landcare and ParkCare groups in the Molonglo catchment, spanning parts of the ACT and adjacent NSW. The MCG welcomes the opportunity to comment on the National Landcare Program.

A community model for NRM delivery

Since its inception in 2003, the Molonglo Catchment Group has been a partner with the ACT and its regional natural resource management body, the ACT NRM Council, to deliver its Regional Investment Strategy (RIS). Over that time, the group has received \$1.65M RIS funding which provided the capacity to leverage a further \$1.02M in other grants from the Commonwealth, New South Wales and the ACT Governments and a further \$0.42M in landholder contributions. (These amounts do not include volunteer in-kind labour, which could exceed the cash total.)

Because of its small size and its community base, the MCG has been able to implement small on-ground projects that larger organisations may find daunting in that they present a high transaction cost. For example, during 2004-2007 and again in 2009-10 the MCG delivered a total of 109 small projects which collectively protect almost 38km of riparian zone, revegetating 266 ha and establishing over 330Ha of perennial pasture. This pattern is a reflection of the many small properties in and around the ACT.

The model that this relationship presents enables the community to be a strong partner and enhance the objectives of the regional body in delivering natural resource management by encouraging the community to take ownership of the issues and their resolution. Partnering an organisation able to work across borders when adopting a whole-of-catchment approach to natural resource management is an obvious benefit to an otherwise jurisdictionally restricted regional body.

Over this time we have seen some frustrations and some outstanding successes. The Natural Heritage Trust (NHT) / National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality (NAP) delivery mechanism was frustrating in that there was a delay of 3 years before the NAP Bilateral Agreement was finalised, leaving just 2 years to implement projects. The outstanding successes are demonstrated by the over-delivery of outcomes for the regional body. The MCG is now acknowledged by many within Commonwealth and State/Territory levels of government as a valuable partner in the regional delivery process.

We look forward to the report from the Inquiry.

Yours sincerely,

Lynton Bond, President