



United for Nature

Molonglo Conservation Group
Jerrabomberra Wetlands
2 Dairy Road Fyshwick ACT 2609

jeannine.fromholtz@molonglo.org.au

Web: www.molonglo.org.au

ABN: 78210867987

Budget Proposal

for Community Landcare FY 2024-2028

Prepared by Molonglo Conservation Group

for the Australian Capital Territory Government

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Budget Submission for Molonglo Conservation Group

Introduction and Backgrounds

Molonglo Conservation Group (MCG) is a not-for profit grassroots organisation working with local communities to rebalance nature for a stronger, more resilient future. MCG was formed in 2003 with the principal objective of developing the Molonglo Catchment Strategy. MCG now works to implement this strategy, currently supporting 25 Volunteer Landcare and Park care groups. Our activities cover urban, peri-urban, rural and conservation landscapes in and surrounding the Molonglo catchment.

We exist to strengthen the health of communities and ecosystems for mutual benefit. Through our work we build a more harmonious and helpful relationship between people and nature, for everyone's future. We engage communities and collaborate with government and other organisations to raise awareness and implement practical initiatives with positive environmental Outcomes. We combine evidence-based practices and people power to protect and preserve our natural environment.

The Molonglo catchment comprises approximately 212,000 ha within the Murrumbidgee catchment in south-eastern NSW and the ACT. It includes all the land that drains into the Molonglo River and Lake Burley Griffin, including the Queanbeyan River and creeks such as Sullivans Creek, Jerrabomberra Creek, Woolshed Creek, Yarralumla creek and the many tributaries. Our Catchment is part of the Murray-Darling Basin.

Program Partners

Ginninderra Catchment Group, Southern Catchment Group, ACT NRM, ACT Gov Environment Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate, Member Urban Landcare and Parkcare Groups.

Other Key Stakeholders

ACT Transport Canberra and City Services, ACT Parks and Conservation Service, Landcare ACT, Aboriginal groups, ACT and Region Frogwatch Program, Upper Murrumbidgee Waterwatch Program, Friends of Grasslands, Canberra Ornithologists Group, Community Councils and residents' groups, Conservation Council, Wildlife Groups, Schools, businesses, Universities, users of local lakes, ponds and creeks, Upper Murrumbidgee Catchment Network, New Urban development, Suburban Land Agency, Murray Darling Basin Authority.

Key Objectives

1. **Supporting Member Groups:** Actively assist nearly 20 urban and rural member groups in carrying out local initiatives that contribute to the protection of natural landscapes.
2. **Community Engagement and Education:** Enhance environmentally responsible behaviors and improve environmental literacy through various community activities and education programs.

Achievements under Current Funding Program

In the 2022-2023 financial year, Molonglo Conservation Group has achieved significant environmental and operational outcomes, including and not limited to:

- Commonwealth Urban Rivers Project: Secured a \$2.775 million grant over 3.5 years in partnership with Landcare ACT and sister organization to conduct significant on-ground restoration works along Molonglo River.
- Continued partnership and guidance with First Nations through Interpreting Ngunawal country activities.
- Citizen Science Monitoring: Conducting regular Waterwatch activities, including training volunteers and organizing surveys to track local wildlife populations.
- Number of Environmental projects scoped (20+)
- Number of applications for funding submitted (32)
- Number of Information Brokerage session (8)
- Number of contributions to consultation reports (11)
- Volunteer and Member groups supported (25)
- New landcare member groups (6)
- Number of communications activities (20+)
- Number of events hosted/coordinated (15+)
- Engage partners Networking Connections (22+)

Supported Member and community Groups

Supported community to care for local landscapes through a range of membership services and activities that built local land stewardship.

- Project development and management
- Funding support
- Coordination of on-ground and capacity building events and activities
- Administration support and financial management
- Communication services and IT support
- Resource provision (tools, equipment and community hub)
- Establishing new community groups and revitalizing stagnant or dormant groups
- Information Sharing, knowledge brokerage and representation

Community Engagement and Education

Improved the knowledge, awareness and participation by the community to increase environmental literacy and encourage adoption of new behaviours within the Molonglo Catchment area.

- Coordination of community capacity building events and activities
- Promote Landcare and NRM to grow the resource and volunteer base, through events like market days, public stalls and other community events
- Targeted information dissemination through newsletters, website, social media, mainstream media interviews etc.
- Cultivating partnerships with regional catchment and NRM organisations, including Waterwatch, Frogwatch, Vegwatch, UMCN etc

Budget Request

We are requesting total recurrent funding of \$250,000 per annum from the ACT Government. This funding is crucial to enable us to maintain and expand our capacity to deliver the high demand and expectations from stakeholders, community and other organisations to continue developing our services and support for increasing landcare member groups and expanding community engagement, education, work opportunities and to maintain the wellbeing of staff. Current funding only covers 1 Full time staff and 1 additional staff 1 day per week. This places extreme pressure on existing staff to manage the operations of an NFP whilst also delivering on-ground at a large scale across the catchment and often work in-kind overtime to deliver to the needs of the community and stakeholders. MCG is currently dependent on program funding to continue operations.

Breakdown of Requested Funded (example)

1. Program Coordination (Org Executive Officer): \$87,750

- **Responsibilities:** Overseeing all MCG programs, strategic planning, stakeholder engagement, and project management.
- **Expected Outcomes:** Enhanced overall coordination and execution of projects, improved engagement with stakeholders, and efficient strategic planning and implementation.

2. Volunteer and Community Support: \$68,250

- **Responsibilities:** Facilitating project development, funding support, administration, resource provision, and communication services.
- **Expected Outcomes:** Enhanced project execution, better resource allocation, increased group activity, and improved community engagement.

3. Broad Community Communications & Education: \$68,250

- **Responsibilities:** Organising community events, promoting Landcare activities, and maintaining partnerships.
- **Expected Outcomes:** Increased volunteer participation heightened environmental awareness, and stronger community partnerships.

4. Admin and Organisational Support: \$25,750

- **Responsibilities:** Overseeing project planning, partnership management, financial management, and reporting.
- **Expected Outcomes:** Improved administrative efficiency, better financial management, and streamlined operations.

Specific Functions and Expected Outcomes

1. Program Coordination (Org Executive Officer)

Function: The Executive Officer will oversee all programs, ensuring alignment with strategic goals and effective stakeholder engagement.

Outcomes:

- Enhanced overall coordination and execution of projects
- Improved engagement with stakeholders
- Efficient strategic planning and implementation

2. Volunteer and Community Support

Function: Provide direct support to member groups, including project development, funding support, and resource provision.

Outcomes:

- 15 projects scoped with members
- 10 funding applications submitted
- 20+ groups supported
- 10 communication activities
- 20+ community users accessing the Catchment Group Hub
- 5 stakeholder engagement sessions
- 3 contributions to consultation reports

3. Broad Community Communications & Education

Function: Organise and promote community events, enhance communication channels, and foster partnerships.

Outcomes:

- 2 on-ground community events
- 2 education activities
- 10 new partners engaged
- 15 activities/events promoting stewardship and environmental literacy

4. Admin and Organisational Support

Function: Manage project planning, partnership and contract management, financial management, and reporting.

Outcomes:

- Mid-term Report by 25th February
- Final Report by 31st August

We appreciate your consideration of our funding request and look forward to the opportunity to further discuss how we can continue to work together to achieve our shared environmental goals.

Our vision

We seek to achieve a healthy, resilient, productive landscape with diverse interconnected ecosystems and communities

Our values guide our relationships.

Collaborative

We're dedicated to making a positive change in the world and in doing so we're committed to the success of our programs and initiatives. We are open and accepting, we listen to, learn from, and collaborate with member groups, neighbouring catchments and communities and to First Peoples as we work together for our natural environments.

Respectful

Nurturing an equitable, respectful and a caring culture is at the heart of our success. Being friendly and approachable, open and honest is an essential foundation for building relationships that endure.

Transformative

Whilst our approach is adaptable, we are always respectful and professional. We know that small actions can have lasting and meaningful impact in transforming our environment.

Integrity

Being authentic in our words and actions is key to our success. Neither our focus or dedication strays from the job in hand. Always striving to build mutual understanding and ongoing respect