

13th Annual Big Scrub Rainforest Day

There was plenty going on at this year's Big Scrub Rainforest Day at Rocky Creek Dam. After the early Bird Walk a very informative and interesting talk was given by Heather Harford and Jan Olley from the Brunswick Valley Landcare group. Gwen Harden the eminent rainforest biologist came to talk about a new DVD on the rainforest plants in our region. Gwen is a publisher and an author and her interest in rainforest floristics also involves advising and monitoring the regeneration of rainforest remnants in various areas. Her friend Germaine Greer was very proud to tell me that Gwen has a plant named in her honour - *Eidothia hardeniana* or Nightcap Oak - which is a newly discovered tree of the *Banksia* and *Grevillea* family and is only found in the Nightcap Range north of Lismore. Pirra the gorgeous and very well behaved fruit bat was on hand at the Wild Life Carers stand. Pirra has been hand raised from a very young age as she is not able to be released back into the wild. She earns her keep by meeting local school children and educating them about bats and the very important part they play in our ecological community. There were Rainforest planting site walks, flora walks and also a rainforest regeneration workshop. A massive thank you must go to Big Scrub Landcare, EnVite, Rous Water and all the volunteers and groups that make this such an enjoyable and informative day.

Paula McDougall



Left: Rainforest botanist and author Gwen Harden with Germaine Greer.

Below: Pirra the fruit bat

Below left: gathering for the Flora walk

Below right: Jan Olley and Heather Harford give their talk about local birds.



Future Water Strategy Studies Progressing

In 2009, Rous Water commenced work on a major study to develop a water strategy for the region for the next forty years. It is being assisted in the development of the Future Water Strategy by a project reference group (PRG), which includes community members and representatives from local and state government.

The Future Water Strategy will identify a full range of options and actions available to Rous Water to provide a healthy, reliable and ecologically sustainable future water supply. The PRG has identified several potential options to reduce demand or increase supply, which are being investigated as part of the development of the strategy.

A two-stage assessment process is being used to determine which option, or combination of options, should be included in the strategy. The first step involves scoping each of the options and

assessing it against a set of broad criteria to determine if it should be considered further. This first stage is well advanced and will be completed by early 2012.

Options that pass the first step will be studied in greater detail and will then be the subject of a second assessment to determine which options should ultimately be included in the strategy.

In parallel to these investigations, a separate study is being conducted into the viability of the Dunoon Dam proposal. This study will determine what, if any, role the proposed dam will play in meeting future water needs.

The draft Future Water Strategy will be completed in late 2012 and will be available for community feedback prior to being finalised and adopted by Rous Water.

Regular project updates are prepared

and information about the PRG and the water studies are available on the Rous Water website.

To find out more, please telephone the freecall number on 1800 159 882, email futurewaterstrategy@terracecomm.com.au or visit www.rouswater.nsw.gov.au

Pauline Bourke

Future Water Strategy

COMMUNITY UPDATE - DUNOON DAM INVESTIGATIONS

Rous Water previously resolved to develop the Dunoon Dam, should it be required to ensure the region's water security. The Future Water Strategy will assess if the Dunoon Dam is viable and determine whether it is required by comparing it to other water management options.

Since the last update, the following investigations have been progressed:

Terrestrial ecology assessment

The draft assessment has been updated to include comments and recommendations made by the project reference group (PRG) and to reflect current legislation. A third party review is being conducted prior to finalising the report. The review and final report will be completed and released by the end of the year.

Aquatic ecology and environmental flow assessment

This study will consider the impact of the proposed dam on the aquatic ecology of Rocky Creek. Draft environmental flow regimes, designed to protect and enhance low to moderate flows within Rocky Creek and Terania Creek, are currently being developed.

These flows may provide an opportunity to improve the current conditions within the downstream sections of Rocky Creek and Terania Creek.

Initial modelling indicates that the proposed Dunoon Dam may be able to provide additional water yield for the Rous Water supply while maintaining or improving flow-based ecosystem health downstream of the proposed dam. Work is continuing on this modelling and the overall study.

Cultural heritage

Surveys for Indigenous and European heritage have been undertaken and a draft report is being prepared. Consultation with Indigenous stakeholders in relation to the management of potential impacts on indigenous artefacts and cultural values associated with the proposed Dunoon Dam site is ongoing.



Future Water Strategy

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