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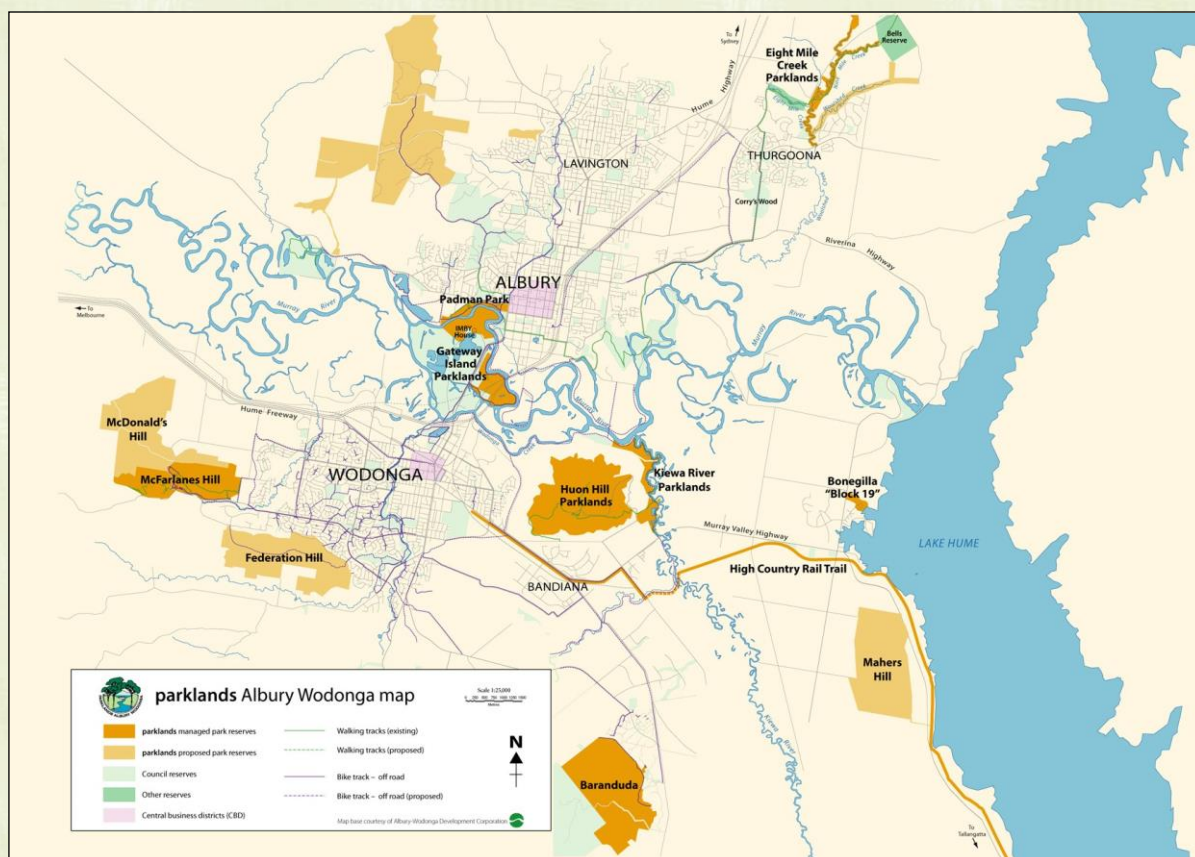


VISION

parklands, in partnership with the Albury-Wodonga regional community, will 'establish the most magnificent lifestyle through the development of its regional parklands', based on the best possible ecological principles, for the benefit of current and future generations.

MISSION

parklands will engage the regional community in a carefully planned and cost effective development of their regional parklands from a recreational and conservation perspective and will assist them to create a linkage of major parks, trails and facilities throughout the region in order to enhance the lifestyle opportunities for everyone.



CONSTITUTION OBJECTS



Object 1

Optimizing the biodiversity of the reserved land surrounding the cities.

Object 2

Educating the regional community about environmental issues and the wise use of resources such as soil, water and vegetation.

Object 3

Providing opportunities for volunteers and members of the general community to engage with and learn about the natural environment through the implementation of conservation works plans and programs, and the development of passive recreational opportunities in the reserves.

Object 4

Establishing and maintaining a public fund to be called the “Parklands Public Fund” for the specific purpose of supporting the environmental objectives of **parklands**.

Object 5

Providing international best practice environment and passive recreation management guidance to the community through the setting of policies, goals and priorities, by developing appropriate plans and by monitoring on ground outcomes.



Object 6

Involving the community through regularly seeking their views, advice and participation.

Object 7

Achieving financial independence through rigorous pursuit of government funding, corporate sponsorship and commercial practices which are compatible with environmental and heritage values; and

Object 8

parklands shall be organized and operated exclusively for the attainment of, and holds its assets and income on trust exclusively for those objects.



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Overview

The 2008 – 2009 year in review has been one of listening, reflecting and strategic planning.

Founder rebuilds foundations

We acknowledge the significant contribution made by Brian Scantlebury since the inception of Parklands Albury Wodonga (PAW), through the growth, expansion, contraction and rebuilding of this resilient community managed park management organization. Despite moving to Melbourne, Brian continued to commute to Wodonga for Board meetings for six months before resigning from the Chairperson role.

It is pleasing to report that self generated income over the past two years has enabled the organization to rebuild our financial reserves and shift the focus to planning for the future.

Board Governance

The Board has worked towards establishing an independent structure drawn from the community with an emphasis on relevant environmental and business skills. The Board has grown to nine members over the last twelve months. We welcome David Mitchell, David Sexton, Darryl Betteridge and Terry Hillman and the healthy diversity of views generated from the mix of new and more experienced Board members. We thank Craig McIntyre who retired in April after seven years on the Board.

Reviewing our Strategic Direction

Over the past year, the Board, staff and stakeholders have actively participated in both an Internal Review and a Parks Forum External Peer Review.

The Internal Review was undertaken by four Board members (Cliff Swatton, David Sexton, David Mitchell and Bernie Evans) and involved more than forty meetings and stakeholder interviews.

Parks Forum, the peak body for parks organizations in Australia and New Zealand facilitated a Peer Review

program. Three park management staff from Auckland, Hobart and the Gold Coast spent an intensive week interviewing ten of our stakeholder organizations, Board and staff. Most of their recommendations have since been incorporated into the 3 year Business Plan.

Relationships

We continue to have excellent relations with the Commonwealth through the agency of the Albury-Wodonga Corporation (AWC) and acknowledge their annual contribution in return for the work done by PAW on AWC land.

We are appreciative of the Victorian Government's support through the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE). Over the past year, the Board and staff have been working to build a similar relationship with the Land and Property Management Authority (LPMA) – the former Department of Lands NSW.

PAW acknowledges the annual contribution made by Parks Victoria as well as representation on the Board.

At the local government level PAW continues a close relationship with Albury City and City of Wodonga and acknowledges the valuable financial contribution both councils make. These service agreements are for working on local government environmental lands. The level of community involvement and outcomes on the ground are testimony to the old adage "together we can achieve so much more".

Staff

I would particularly like to thank the small group of loyal, dedicated and passionate staff who continue to provide outstanding service.

The Future

PAW has a promising future, as evidenced from stakeholder interviews. The Board will focus on strengthening these relationships in the coming year.

BOARD DIRECTORS

At 30 JUNE 2009

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Board will achieve its Mission by:

- developing policy in accordance with *best practice* social, ecological and recreational principles;
- considering the needs of present and future generations in all policy decisions;
- ensuring that the community has appropriate input into all strategic planning and policy development;
- facilitating a common public vision for the development and management of the **parklands** in order to ensure community 'ownership'; and
- ensuring **parklands** achieves financial sustainability.



parklands Board of Directors

RANGER'S REPORT

A year of looking forward...

The past year has been a year of moving on as we literally moved our offices and strategically, as we worked to secure a more diversified role as land and recreation managers working with the regional community

Acknowledgement goes firstly and most importantly to our honorary Board who have invested significant time and effort in reviewing the strategic direction of the organization.

Secondly, thanks go out to all our volunteers who have contributed more than \$520,153 worth of time in the last year assisting with the planning, development, management, maintenance and promotion of nearly 4,000 hectares of bush reserves!

It is pleasing to report that, in an effort to focus our energies on supporting our community and stakeholder's interests, 93% of all income received was invested directly into outcomes on the ground.

Working alongside the community...

Community volunteers are the lifeblood of parklands and are involved in all aspects of the organization.

In the past thirteen years, \$11.15 million of volunteer time was invested into our regional parklands. There has been an average of 20 to 30 volunteers in the field, working alongside Rangers each week. In the office, volunteers also undertake administrative, marketing, strategic planning and park projects.

Thank you to our invaluable Friends Groups; the Bonegilla Rail Trail Advisory Group, Tallangatta Rail Trail Advisory Group, Koetong Shelley Development Association, Baranduda Landcare Group, Bonegilla Migrant Experience Steering Committee and Friends of Padman-Mates Park. These groups set their own priorities, organize their own working bees and fun events, and effectively manage bushland reserves with limited supervision from parklands.

Corporate volunteers...

Thank you to Corrections Victoria for their ongoing and valued support. CV provided a supervisor for the Parklands Community Service Order team and also donated surplus mowers, brush-cutters and other equipment.

Department of Justice staff from Wodonga, Wangaratta and Shepparton rolled up their sleeves to plant trees as "Justice for the Environment" during winter 2009.


Albury Australian Taxation Office staff trekked up the steep Federation Hill fire trail twice during the winter to participate in the Federation Hill Gully Restoration revegetation project

Hume Building Society staff participated in their sixth successive Growing Green Offset project on Gateway Island. The water trailer donated by HBS a few years ago ensured these seedlings survived the dry spring and summer as a result of a few strategic waterings.

Youths and young adults...

The grass roots process of community involvement begins with educating, supporting and involving young people in the management of their regional parklands. Investing time, energy, support and hands-on training of our younger volunteers is one of our Ranger's core activities. Young people are our future and the health of our environment is dependent on the next generation developing strong ownership of their regional parklands.

More than 1,000 school students participated in tree planting activities over the winter months of 2008 and 2009. Thank you to Dyson Buses for their flexibility with regards the weather and drop off points. Thanks to the students and teachers of Glenroy Primary, West Albury Primary, St Patricks Primary, Thurgoona Primary, Springdale Heights Primary, Hume Primary, Melrose Primary, South Wodonga Public, Belvoir School, Victory College, Wodonga Catholic College, Albury High, James Fallon High and Tallangatta Secondary College for either clambering up steep fire trails or across



paddocks in order to access the planting sites.

Parklands ninth Greencorp team, the 'Murray River Restoration Project' was one of our most successful teams yet, thanks in no small part to their CVGT Team Leader, Steve Durie. During their six months traineeship, the seven team members installed a dozen pedestrian gates along the Murray River, erected 2km's of fences and planted thousands of seedlings alongside more than 500 school students.

Murray Valley Centre volunteers participated in the Parklands Ranger program for a third year. It is rewarding to see these young (and not-so-young) dis-Ability volunteers develop as sense of ownership of their regional parklands. We are appreciative of the large quantities of tree stakes we contracted their workshop team to fabricate specifically for our bush restoration projects.

Working strategically...

The Board, staff and stakeholders have actively participated in both an Internal Review and a Parks Forum External Peer Review. It has been a reflective process of listening to all our stakeholders and building on our strengths.

A consistent theme throughout this valuable process has been the limited understanding that our stakeholders have of what parklands does.

Essentially, Parklands staff sees its core business in bush restoration rather than bush regeneration. Bush restoration techniques are focused upon facilitating the environment's natural restorative processes. That is, through selectively controlling pest plants and animals, space is created for native species to naturally regenerate. The inherent restorative power of degraded environments is often overlooked and simply fencing out an area from stock is an effective way to determine how much natural seedbank remains in an area. Rather than simply planting trees, as is quite often the case with bush regeneration, bush restoration works with these natural processes and results in a healthier bush environment in the long term.

The following is a list of our core activities this financial year:

- Broadleaf & blackberry spraying 20km of river frontage & steep hill country
- Slash track verges & firebreaks
- Maintain over 150km of boundary fences
- Removal/poisoning of woody weeds (primary & follow-up)
- Maintain 70km of walking tracks
- Address risk management issues
- Writing and implementing management plans and works programs
- Implementation of Vegetation Offset Management Plans (VOMPs) for City of Wodonga
- 14.1km new environmental and farm fences & 5.9km repaired fences
- 5km new track established
- Pedestrian gates installed to allow public access to crown reserves
- Revegetation including:
 - 34,000 seedlings planted winter 2008
 - 33,000 seedlings planted winter 2009

Working with a longer term focus...

Natural restoration processes are a long term management option and it may take decades to restore highly degraded landscapes. Parklands' provided consultancy services to the Land and Property Management Authority (LPMA), formerly the Department of Lands NSW, to develop a twelve year Land Management Program for the 657 hectares of Albury Wodonga Corporation land that is in the process of being transferred to the Crown as part of the Thurgoona and Albury Ranges Threatened Species Conservation Strategies. This document showcased Parklands' ability to deliver large scale management projects. The final report was over 300 pages and 60,000 words with an accompanying budget in excess of 100 pages.

Parklands is working to build a working partnership with the LPMA to implement this strategy.

Funding agencies invest time and financial resources...

Thank you to our funding agencies for their ongoing financial support and time in participating in interviews with both the Internal Review Committee and the Peer Review team.

Albury Wodonga Corporation funding enabled ongoing restoration works on Albury Ranges and Thurgoona Threatened Species Conservation Strategy lands.

Albury City Council financial support incorporated weed removal, bush restoration and track work at Padman-Mates Park, Patricia Gould Park, Eastern Hill Reserve, Norms Lagoon, Mungabareena Reserve. A number of woody weeds were sprayed and hand cut in higher quality remnant roadsides including Urana Rd, Centaur Rd and Pearsall St.

Wodonga City Council funding focused on revegetation, environmental fencing, walking track maintenance and weed control works on sections of Wodonga-owned bush reserves (Huon Hill, Federation Hill and Klings Hill).

Parks Victoria's financial contribution supported maintenance works on Victorian Crown land reserves, including Gateway Island, Waterworks, Kiewa River, McFarlanes Hill, Swansona Reserve, High Country Rail Trail, Murray River Parklands (under development) and the Bonegilla Migrant Experience Heritage Park. We are also appreciative of Parks Victoria staff support in grading some of the Baranduda fire trails and undertaking environmental burns at Bonegilla Grasslands.

Building new partnerships...

Thank you to our new sponsors for their financial contribution towards the regional parklands. These grants enable us to further increase community involvement within parkland bush areas.

Fosters sponsorship has enabled development of Murray River Parklands. Tours by foot and 4WD have increased community awareness of this evolving project. We welcome community members with a passion for the Murray River to get involved in this project.

Ian Potter Foundation, Goulburn Murray Water and Wodonga APEX have supported development of the High Country Rail Trail, including restoration of the Ebdon Railway Platform, fencing, bollards, revegetation and pest control works.

Thank you to **Bunnings** for donating un-saleable timber seconds. This timber has been utilized on the High Country Rail Trail and other regional parklands.

We also thank the **Workways Foundation** for their continued support. In 2008/9, Workways sponsored the purchase of two new brushcutters which have been in constant use since their purchase. More recently Workways sponsored an intensive work experience program.

Parklands has accessed 12 Natural Heritage Trust grants over the past 13 years. It was with much delight that we were recipients of the last **Natural Heritage Trust Envirofund** funding round in June 2008 with the Federation Hill Gully Restoration project. This program no longer operates.


Victorian Multicultural Commission has sponsored a number of projects at the Bonegilla Migrant Experience Heritage Park over the years. This past year, their support focused on website development.

Our Parklands Public Fund has attracted \$36,140 of donations during the year from Foundations and local supporters. We thank Public Fund Management Committee members John Watson, Dougald Frederick and Bruce Grant for their supervision to ensure expenditure from the Public Fund complies with relevant ATO legislation.

Thank you to **Sustainability Victoria** for funding the IMBY House Project.

Towong Shire continues to work with the High Country Rail Trail Steering Committee, City of Wodonga and Parklands to secure Commonwealth funding to restore the Sandy Creek bridge.

Albury Library Museum, City of Wodonga, Bonegilla Migrant Experience Steering Committee and Parklands developed a Memorandum of Understanding to jointly manage this



National Heritage Listed site and improve visitor services. We acknowledge the financial commitment by the City of Wodonga in their 2009/10 budget.

Drought continues to bite...

The past three years of severe drought have taken their toll on the farming community. We are appreciative of the ongoing cooperation of our neighbouring landholders and our 45 licensees who graze 735 hectares of Crown land parcels which are yet to be developed into bush reserves.

Managing for fire...

Rather than duplicate resources, Parklands' works in partnership with the fire management agencies in Victoria and NSW. We are appreciative of the efforts of the Lavington and Thurgoona Rural Fire Brigades and the Bonegilla CFA for their coordination of environmental burns last autumn.

Building community capacity...

Active and autonomous groups create healthy people, healthy parks and community connection.

Community development processes are successful when Friends Groups become autonomous, setting their own goals and driving the process. Parklands' acknowledge the significant passion and commitment that Friends Groups continue to invest in our regional parklands. Whilst parklands will continue to support these Groups, it is important that this support is directed to areas identified by these Groups.

Bonegilla Rail Trail Advisory Group and Tallangatta Rail Trail Advisory Group organized another year of well attended Friends of the Rail Trail quarterly events with up to 90 participants participating per event on the Jarvis Creek Circuit, Tall Trestle Treadle, Off the Rails Huon Hill Hike and Kiewa River Ride.

Special mention goes to Mike Hamlin, who has retired after seven years as Secretary, Treasurer and Arm-Twister Extraordinaire of the Tallangatta Rail Trail Advisory Group and the High Country Rail Trail Steering Committee.

Congratulations to Dr Bruce Pennay of the Bonegilla Migrant Experience

Steering Committee for receiving an Australia Day award in recognition of his tireless efforts at the Migrant Centre.

When Parklands relocated from the Gateway Village offices in January, we were able to ensure that the Burraja Cultural Centre half of the building was retained. The Wodonga Local Indigenous Network have been issued with a lease for this space and have been successful in securing funding to re-open the doors as an Aboriginal managed cultural centre.

Five active groups from the Albury Wodonga Sustainability Alliance have been actively engaging the regional community in community education programs since their inception in late 2007. Unfortunately, the job share Community Sustainability Officers who were employed to support ELF (Eat Local Food), BERP (Border Eco Living Program), Pedal Power, Albury Wodonga Environment Centre (AWEC) and WATCH (Wodonga Albury Towards Climate Health) resigned. Whilst the IMBY House component of this project was wound up, these groups continue to forge ahead with creative community education projects.

The people behind the scenes...

Thank you to our Rangers: Reg Hinton, Danny Jones, Chris Price and Toby Grant. Their mix of technical, heritage, GIS and people skills are an asset, enabling the organisation to further diversify our land management activities and involve an increasingly diverse community. Thank you to Noeline Elvin for keeping a tight reign on the finances and order in the office.

Our Bonegilla Caretakers have kept the Beginning Place Interpretive Centre and the Bonegilla Migrant Experience Heritage Park open seven days a week, whilst volunteers have responded to phone calls, emails and provided a significantly increased level of tour guiding and merchandising services over the past year.

The future...

The benefits of working in partnership with the regional community and stakeholders in developing, managing, promoting and using our regional partnerships are endless.

Environmental studies have shown that the Albury-Wodonga region is very important to biodiversity conservation, particularly threatened species of plants and wildlife. The regional parklands play an important role in ensuring the long term survival of populations of threatened species and ecological communities.

Regional parklands working with regional communities across local and state government boundaries are really efficient and effective. Power to the people! To be successful communities must drive the process.

Thank you to the many supporters of **parklands** throughout this financial year.

Ant Packer
Community Ranger





INSURANCE OF DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS

At 30 JUNE 2009

During the financial year 2008/2009 Parklands Albury Wodonga Ltd paid a premium of \$3,438 to insure directors and officers of **parklands**.

The Directors of parklands covered, include: Hamish MacLennan, John Alker-Jones, Cliff Swatton, Kevan Porter, Bernie Evans, David Sexton, David Mitchell, Daryl Betteridge and Terry Hillman.

Past Directors: Brian Scantlebury, Craig McIntyre, John de Kruiff, Julie Hind, Stuart Baker, Ron Dennis, Richard Kennedy, Sue Brunskill, Julie de Hennin, Maurice Greal, Neil Lipscombe, Bob Martin, Annelies Willinck, Lyn Coulston, Rob Fenton, Phil Suter, Graham Wade, Bruce Gardiner, Christine Nesbit, Carol Bartley, Darren Baldwin, Kylie Kent, John Riddiford, Ray O'Toole, Peter Joyce, Steve Cooper and Tony Long.

The Officers of parklands covered, include Reg Hinton, Danny Jones, Noeline Elvin, Anthea Packer, Chris Price, Toby Grant, Tim Lucas, Candy Nichols, Lance O'Connell and Narelle Boal.

Past Officers: Ben Berry, Wayne Carlson, Toby Alker-Jones, Annie Tait, Caro Roach, Jessica MacGregor, Tracy Harrison, Toni Lancaster (Costello), Megan Graham, Craig Reid, Darryl Dear, John Stevens, Jessica Aitken, Mike Hansen, Brendon Kennedy, Barbara Martin, Richard McTernan, Richard Kennedy, Derrick Murray, Rick Pascoe, Terry Kelly, Christine Thorpe, Emma Knezevic, Steve Pollock, Georgina James and Donna Mitsch.

The liabilities insured include costs and expenses that may be incurred in defending civil or criminal proceedings that may be brought against the officers in their capacity as officers for Albury Wodonga Regional Parklands Inc. and or Parklands Albury Wodonga Limited.



STAFF

At 30 JUNE 2009

Ranger – Community
- Team Leader

Ant Packer

Ranger - Land Management
- Deputy Team Leader

Reg Hinton

Ranger – Field

Danny Jones

Ranger – Field / Technical
- Volunteer Coordinator

Chris Price

Ranger – Field / GIS

Toby Grant

Office Manager

Noeline Elvin

Bonegilla Migrant Experience
Heritage Park Caretakers

Candy Nichols
Lance O'Connell
Narelle Boal
Tim Lucas