Natural Environment Protection & Enhancement: On-Ground Works

Winner Division B and Overall Winner
The Durness - Borland Landcare Corridor: Great Lakes Council's Involvement, Great Lakes Council

The Durness - Borland Landcare Corridor is a connectivity conservation success story. The project was funded through a bequest and an effective partnership involving Landcare Australia, private landholders and Local and State Government and has delivered significant on-ground outcomes. It has established functional corridors that fill a significant gap in the sub-regional vegetation framework. Over 500-hectares of corridors and core habitats are permanently protected and managed for conservation and 65,000 native plantings have been established. The corridors are aligned to protect riparian zones, steep land and eroding areas and will have a positive outcome for water quality in the Port Stephens Estuary. The on-ground works integrate with enhanced sustainable agricultural practices by the landholder contributing to the overall project outcomes. The project is assisting Council in developing its Tops to Lakes strategic connectivity initiative, and has demonstrated the positive and important role that Local Government can play in large scale conservation and restoration outcomes.

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Winner Division C
Orara River Rehabilitation Project, Coffs Harbour City Council

The Orara River Rehabilitation Project has been delivering incentives for the conservation of biodiversity on private land along the Orara River, Urumbilum River, and Bucca Bucca Creek and their tributaries, within the Coffs Harbour LGA since 1996. The project has been funded through the Coffs Harbour City Council Environmental Levy. Incentives are provided to private landholders to protect the riparian zone through stock management, structural erosion control works, and the regeneration of Lowland Subtropical Rainforest, an Endangered Ecological Community (EEC). The project builds community capacity through landholder participation in on ground works and the delivery of landholder workshops and field days addressing knowledge gaps identified by the landholders. A new Orara River Rehabilitation Project Landholder Booklet has also been produced and is complemented by quarterly project updates sent to landholders and other NRM practitioners in the area.

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Highly Commended Division B
Mugga Hill Restoration Project, Dubbo City Council

Mugga Hill Reserve on the edge of Dubbo has been transformed from an area used as a refuge for rubbish dumping, motorbike riding, drug use and infested with weeds to a shared use recreation trail, with the community and council actively managing to transform the area. This council and community partnership has involved installation of physical traffic barriers to stop access for anti-social activities and encouraging community use of the site through the creation of the recreation trail, transforming a previously unloved patch of remnant bush. Both parties have worked hard on improving weed control (particularly the Weed of National Significance Tiger Pear), a now a previously degraded and neglected area of remnant native bushland is a healthy and popular area attracting residents and visitors alike to enjoy the natural beauty and diversity of the western plains.
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