

## Landcare NSW Incorporated

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*Many Hands, One Voice*

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## MEDIA RELEASE

*For immediate release*

### LANDCARE SET TO SURGE AHEAD

Almost 200 Landcarers, from Landcare and volunteer conservation groups across NSW that will host the coordinators, gathered recently to mark the launch of the new four-year \$15 million Local Landcare Coordinators initiative.

The initiative has employed 66 new part-time positions in local community organisations statewide to help build and support local Landcare and community networks. This initiative is a sign of a reinvigorated partnership between Landcare and Local Land Services and the result of a \$15m funding commitment over four years from the NSW Government.

Held at Stockton Beach, near Newcastle, the Local Landcare Coordinator Initiative Induction and Training Workshop ran from 21-23 March. Newly-employed Local Coordinators met with representatives of the 62 community-based organisations that will host them during the four year program. The event was designed to train the network of Local Coordinators and outline the role they will play in their communities.

Rob Dulhunty, Chair, Landcare NSW, welcomed the NSW Government's Landcare policy which he said was a catalyst for a resurgence in Landcare.

"Landcare's strength lies in the fact that it is a 60,000-strong grassroots, community movement – it's about local people doing work on the ground to provide local solutions to local problems," said Mr. Dulhunty. "These new Local Landcare Coordinators will help to move this work forward and encourage even more local community involvement."

The Local Landcare Coordinator initiative will support the network of hard-working volunteers and landholders in local communities who manage and restore the natural environment, improve the sustainability of agricultural production and build the resilience of communities.

'Share, Learn and Connect' was the theme of the Stockton Beach meeting which involved workshops to develop participants' skills in understanding people and community organisations, facilitation, planning, governance and communicating the Landcare story to the broader community.

Participants were briefed on the *Sustaining Landcare* project which has been established to research appropriate models to secure and manage ongoing funding so Landcare support structures are funded into the future. The project is part of the NSW Government's **2015-2019 Landcare Support Program** and recognises that the current funding is finite and that by 2019, a planned transition to a sustainable model to support the work of volunteer Landcare NSW groups is necessary.

“Over these few days so many people have remarked to me what an exciting time it is to be part of Landcare,” added Mr Dulhunty. “It’s up to us to make it happen – all of us, Landcare NSW, Local Land Services, Local Coordinators, host organisations and of course our 60,000 strong Landcare movement.”

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