

Nature Conservation Council Regional Conference 2023 Program - Bungambrawatha/Albury



Saturday 24 June and Sunday 25 June (field day) 2023.

The Conference has three broad themes encompassing:

- **Connections:** between groups that have nature, climate and sustainability at their core. Connections with the wider community, policy and decision makers
- **Community:** growing the reach of local groups (nature, climate and sustainability), keeping local groups healthy, vibrant, relevant, inclusive and part of a wider movement
- **Change:** including transitions of climate and energy, influencing community practices, influencing government and effecting change

Registration link is now live at - <https://events.humanitix.com/2023-regional-conference>

Day 1 - Saturday 24 June (Charles Sturt University, Albury-Wodonga, 386 Elizabeth Mitchell Dr, Thurgoona NSW 2640)

| | |
|------------------|---|
| 8:30am 9:00am | REGISTRATION Tea and coffee on arrival (biscuits and fruit) |
| 9.15am | Welcome to Country |
| 9.30am | Housekeeping and Overview – Dr Jonathon Howard |
| 9.35 | ‘The Magic Basin, a Royal Commission on behalf of all beings of the Murray Basin’ <ul style="list-style-type: none">• script by Ines Judd and Bob Hughes, performed with projections and recorded songs MC Carolyn Loton |
| 9.55am | NCC Chief Executive Address – <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction to NCC and regional conferences - Jacqui Mumford |
| 10.05am | Our diverse regional groups: - a showcase of some of the groups in the local region. A range of local/regional groups will provide the audience with a snapshot of the activities they are undertaking. It will showcase the efforts of a cross-section of community groups ranging from Landcare and sustainable farming to climate change and repair cafes. |

| | |
|----------|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WATCH and Gardens4Wildlife – Lizette Salmon • Parklands Albury Wodonga – Ant Packer • Inland Rivers Network – Bev Smiles • Holbrook Landcare Network and Biodiversity on farms – Paula Sheehan • Repair café - Lynette Keys • Murray Lower Darling Rivers Indigenous Nations (MLDRIN) – Brendan Kennedy • Albury Conservation Company – Sophie Enders • Friends of Nail Can Hill - Michael Mitchell <p>Moderated Carolyn Loton, NCC Chair</p> |
| 10.55am | <p>Welcome and addresses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cr Kylie King (Mayor) – Albury City Council <p>MC – Carolyn Loton</p> |
| 11.10am | MORNING TEA |
| | FOOD FOR THOUGHT PLENARY SESSIONS |
| 11.30am | <p>“Where the Water Starts” Three rivers whose headwaters are in the Kosciusko National Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frontyard Films, introduced by Richard Swain, Wiradjuri. Ambassador for the Invasive Species Council • Basin animation <p>MC – Carolyn Loton</p> |
| 11.50am. | <p>Plenary Session 1: - Thinking outside the box.</p> <p>This session gets everyone thinking about innovation. It will showcase novel, and non-traditional approaches that community groups and landholders could get involved in ranging from emerging technologies and iconic species to art and novel farm management practices. Find out what are the ‘hooks’ and triggers that can stimulate further interest in your group’s activities. It will get you thinking: how can we be more inclusive?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jill Coughlan: Earth Canvas, artists and farmers coming together to increase understandings about the complexity of the land, environment and food production. • Ben Humphries: BirdLife Australia – saving our species, engaging with farmers and community • Amber Croft: Sustainable Farms, Australian National University – sharing science to empower landholders • Brian Furze: Professional social scientist working on a range of community development programs <p>Facilitated by Jonathon Howard</p> |
| 12.25pm | Plenary session 2: - The business of sustainable practice |

| | |
|--------|---|
| | <p>How do organisations and business approach sustainability? How does sustainability become a priority? And how does an organisation choose what to do first? In this session you will hear from a range of organisations: from large and small, from government to private enterprise about their approach to sustainability. You will be able to ask questions and seek advice on what your group can do to encourage wider organisational change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Edward Maher: Manager of sustainability at Charles Sturt • Steven Millet: Service Leader - Assets, Sustainability and Environment. Albury City Council • Matthew Charles-Jones: Totally Renewable Yankandanah - • Nick Fitzsimons: Co-Founder OzCircle. Circulating resources away from landfill <p>Facilitated by Cr Ashley Edwards</p> |
| 1.00pm | LUNCH - Tour of the CSU sustainability campus from 1.30pm (optional) |
| 2.00pm | PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE WORKSHOPS |
| 2.00pm | <p>Workshop 1 –Enhancing nature on private land/ landscape succession planning</p> <p>Now participants have listened to our diversity and some novel approaches, the purpose of this workshop is to consider what new ideas, together with the science, might be used to enhance nature on private land. Are the triggers different across the urban and rural landscape? What are the icons, flagships, and hooks that can be used to provide opportunities and stimulate new ideas?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amber Croft, North East Victoria Sustainable Farms. The Australian National University • Jill Coghlan, Earth Canvas • Ben Humphries, Birdlife Australia <p>Moderated by Jonathon Howard</p> |
| 2.00pm | <p>Workshop 2 – Healthy Rivers, Healthy Communities.</p> <p>We examine how critical it is that our river systems are looked after as a connected whole. Rivers must connect to each other, their floodplains, wetlands, aquifers and to the sea. Everybody wants a healthy river, yet water management is letting us down. The purpose of this workshop is to consider this dilemma, and what the community can do to become ambassadors for a healthy river.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MILDRIN – Murray Lower Darling Rivers Indigenous Nations • Bev Smiles – Inland Rivers Network • Richard Swain – Invasive Species Council <p>Moderated by Mel Gray, NCC</p> |
| 3.00pm | AFTERNOON TEA - Tour of the CSU sustainability campus (optional) |
| 3.40pm | <p>Stocktake: What is the collective knowledge arising from this gathering?</p> <p>Coming together and workshop summaries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderated by Cr Ashley Edwards |
| 4.00pm | INTERACTIVE CAPACITY BUILDING BREAKOUTS - NCC |

| | |
|--------|--|
| 4.00pm | CONNECTING and COMMUNITY: If you want to learn how you can better connect with the broader community to attract new people to your group's activities, then this capacity building breakout will help. It covers some of skills and considerations needed to: make your group more prominent in the eyes of the wider community and grow the reach of your group. This interactive session will also cover how to change hearts and minds using the power of story. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitated by Ed Mortimer, Nature Conservation Council |
| 4.00pm | CHANGE: The reason why many of us become active citizens engaged in local issues is because we want change. This breakout session will look at how we can become 'agents of change' and cover 'power mapping', meeting your MP, public events to create influence and how to write a media release. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitated by Mel Gray and Kristina Dodds, Nature Conservation Council |
| 4.55pm | The opportunities local groups can have with the Nature Conservation Council Jacqui Mumford |
| 5.00pm | CLOSE |
| 6pm | Conference Dinner at Kinross Woolshed Hotel Albury |

Day 2 – Sunday 25 June

FIELD DAY

Focus on: Water and Closing the Loop.

9:00am Start CSU's Aquatic Research Facility: A tour of CSU's fish laboratory and work done to conserve freshwater species. The Aquatic Research Facility is a 150-square-metre laboratory with two hyperbaric chambers, recirculating culture systems, otolith laboratory and microscopes. It supports research on fisheries ecology, breeding and behaviour, hydropower and irrigation infrastructure impacts on fish migration, fish passage solutions and dish screening technologies.

9.45 The Kerr Sustainability Centre: We move onto the Kerr Sustainability Centre which is a large community garden based at Charles Sturt University (Albury/Wodonga). The centre provides a space where community members and students can share skills and knowledge on environmental, social and economic sustainability. It has become a base for many multicultural communities that have moved to Albury Wodonga. Since it operates as a non-hierarchical network of individuals, the ethos of the centre is constantly evolving and reflects the focus and interests of the members involved at the time.

10.30 (tour will take 1.5 hours) The Halve Waste Program: We then move onto look at the Albury Waste facility and the regional half waste program. Halve Waste was founded by Albury City Council, City of Wodonga, Federation Council and the Shires of Greater Hume and Indigo. The Halve Waste program implements local solutions to reduce all waste to landfill by 80% by 2030. The Waste Management Centre is a drive-through facility that allows you to deliver all sorts of recyclable products and has invested in both ancient as well as modern technology to become an award-winning recycling operation.

12.30 The Wonga Wetlands: Located downstream from Albury along the floodplain of the Murray River, Wonga Wetlands is one of the city's must-see destinations. In 2014 the Wonga Wetlands Tourism Development Masterplan was developed. The ambitious plan identifies nine strategies aimed at creating an integrated suite of nature-based adventures that draw their distinctiveness from the more unique character of the Wonga Wetlands. With careful management and a continued focus on conservation, Wonga Wetlands is set to continue its transformation from one of Albury's great assets to a regional tourism and birdwatching treasure.

Light refreshments will be available during the day.

Presenter Biographies

Aunty Edna Stewart

Ines Judd and Bob Hughes

The Magic Basin: a Royal Commission on Behalf of All Beings of the Murray Darling Basin, a musical comedy by Ines Judd & Bob Hughes.

- Synopsis: A gang of assorted ruffians capture a magical basin, a basin that keeps on giving, and holds it captive for their own profit. A Royal Commission enquires into whether this captivity is unlawful. Various beings, fish, birds and other creatures, provide testimony using poetry, music and songs. Ines & Bob asked, "how can we stimulate awareness of the plight of the Murray Darling Basin, the environmental catastrophe we have brought on ourselves?" They looked to theatre and song – make 'em laugh, make 'em cry, make 'em ask why, why – to invite people inside a story of mutual responsibility. Today's performance will be a 15 minute sample using projections and recorded songs.

Jonathon Howard

Jonathon Howard is Chair of the Thurgoona Community Action Group, a member of AlburyCity's sustainable advisory committee, on the Executive of the NSW National Parks Association and is a member of Woolshed Landcare Group and the Inland Rivers Network. He has been appointed to the NPWS Western Regional Advisory Committee and the regional community consultative committee for the Murray Darling Basin Authority. He is employed as an academic at Charles Sturt University and (for fun) writes occasional articles for the Border Mail's 'Living Lightly' section.

Carolyn Loton

Chair of the Nature Conservation Council Board, Carolyn is passionate about nature and Australia's biodiversity. She believes that immediate action to address climate change is imperative. Prior to becoming the Chair of NCC in 2022 she held the role of Treasurer. As Treasurer, she led the formalisation of the NCC Evans Wetlands Bequest policy and associated initiatives; and was also involved in developing clearer internal reporting formats. Carolyn is a co-founder of Professionals Advocating for Climate Action, established in response to the 2019/2020 Australian Bush fires, and with a membership of over 400 people in NSW and across the country. Carolyn works fulltime in the marketing agency she founded in 2006. She is a Qualified Practicing Researcher

(Australian Research Society) and a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. She originally trained and worked as an Occupational Therapist and holds an MBA from the University of Edinburgh Scotland.

Jacqui Mumford

Jacqui first joined NCC in 2017 as Network Organiser. She has since run multiple regional and annual conferences, member trainings, and visited regional communities and member groups on the frontline of climate and environmental destruction. Jacqui Mumford has a diverse background in strategic leadership, philanthropy, organising and environmental compliance. She brings this wealth of experience into her new role as CEO of the Nature Conservation Council of NSW, alongside a passion for climate action and environmental protection. “My focus as CEO is to continue the great work we are already doing, protecting the Murray Darling Basin, ending native forest logging, and ramping up NSW’s commitments on climate action”

Lizette Salmon

Lizette is a health professional turned environmental advocate. She’s convener of Wodonga Albury Towards Climate Health (WATCH) and employed as Gardens 4 Wildlife project officer with Wodonga Urban Landcare Network. For five years she was the founding coordinator of Albury-Wodonga’s popular Repair Café. Lizette received Environment Victoria's Community Environmental Recognition Award in 2014 and was named Albury Zonta Club's Outstanding Woman of the Year in 2016. Repair Café Albury-Wodonga was awarded Wodonga Council’s Community Organisation of the Year in 2020 and Gardens 4 Wildlife Albury-Wodonga received Victoria Landcare’s 2021 Environmental Volunteer Award.

Lizette’s interests include nature walks, bird-watching, growing vegies and op-shop jigsaw puzzles.

Ant Packer

Ant Packer has worked with Parklands Albury Wodonga for over two decades, partnering with many of the other speakers here today, to connect community with nature and bring about landscape scale change on the ground. Ant is an innovative, strategic community leader passionate about regional development, community development and helping nature adapt to the changing climate.

Paula Sheehan

Paula has a Bachelor of Forest Science from Melbourne University, and has worked in natural resource management in Victoria, Tasmania and NSW. As a natural progression from this Paula became involved in landcare as a Project Officer, then as Local Landcare Coordinator, and is currently the Regional Landcare Coordinator in the Murray Region through the NSW Landcare Program.

Brendan Kennedy

Brendan Kennedy is a Tati Tati and Wadi Wadi Traditional Owner who has deep knowledge and extensive work experience in the areas of Indigenous culture, language, art, science and advocacy.

Brendan is the current Co-Chair of the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Language; a Tati Tati delegate and Vice Chair of Murray Lower Darling Rivers Indigenous Nations (MLDRIN) where he has been instrumental in elevating the profile of First Nations Water Rights in the Murray Darling Basin; a member

of the First Peoples Yulendj Group, who collaborated with Museum Victoria to produce the award-winning First Peoples exhibition; and has served on the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee.

Sophie Enders

Sophie is the executive officer for the Albury Conservation Company and a project officer with 'Swamps, Rivers, and Ranges'

Michael Mitchell

Michael helps coordinate Friends of Nail Can Hill activities. Friends of Nail Can Hill is an informal unincorporated group whose aim is support land managers enhance the native flora and fauna diversity of Nail Can Hill and to promote community appreciation, understanding and engagement with the Nail Can Hill environment.

Bev Smiles

Bev is the President of Inland Rivers Network and the Vice President of the Central West Environment Council. She has been involved in community campaigns against the expanding Upper Hunter coal fields for decades. With Inland Rivers Network she has been advocating for healthy rivers, wetlands and groundwater in the Murray-Darling Basin since 1991.

Matthew Charles-Jones

Matthew is a passionate and tireless advocate for sustainability, community and community energy. To drive this advocacy, he draws heavily on a teaching background in the secondary, tertiary and vocational spheres. These teaching skills are underwritten with qualifications in education, ecology, sustainability and energy efficiency.

With Totally Renewable Yackandandah, Matthew has worked on several small microgrid and grid resilience projects, driving for quality installations of rooftop solar and batteries and expanding a virtual power plant program.

During 2020 Matthew was a nominee for Victoria in the Australia Day Awards. Also, during 2020 a project that Matthew managed, the Public Virtual Power Plant received the Victorian Premiers Sustainability Award for Community, and a second award for Regional Recognition.

Kylie King

Kylie is the Mayor of Albury City Council- Breakfast Announcer 2AY & 3NE - Communications Strategist. Kylie first called Albury home when she took up a role as sports reporter and presenter with Prime Television in 1995. As founder and managing editor of online publication www.bordercafe.com.au since 2016, Kylie has demonstrated her passion for regional media and promoting the lifestyle of the broader Albury Wodonga region. Kylie runs her own communications business, is a local radio breakfast co-host and has a personal interest in supporting women in leadership, business, sport and media.

Richard Swain

Richard Swain grew up with a connection to Country. His father taught him the history of the Australian landscape, and his grandfather taught him how the Aboriginal people moved through and respected the country. He completed his trade as a carpenter in 1989. He spent his younger years playing football and travelling Australia during a three-year remote 4WD trip. After spending a year travelling overseas, Richard came back to his home in the Snowy Mountains shocked at the impact modern societies were having on the entire earth, and the lack of desire to live in harmonious balance with the planet. He found a piece of country next to the cleanest river in the district to build his off-grid home and rear his children. Richard works as an indigenous river guide, running his own ecotourism business in Kosciuszko National Park. He has a long history of volunteering on local environmental and community projects and has first-hand understanding of the huge impact feral animals are having on Australia's natural environment. Richard is an ambassador for the Invasive Species Council, raising the profile of the role Indigenous people have in caring for country, and protecting it from invasive species.

Jill Coghlan

Jill Coghlan and her husband Ian, live on their family farm Eurimbla at the foothills of Table Top Mountain. It's not surprising that Wiradjuri legend has it that this is where the Creator Biame rested after he created this landscape because it's so beautiful. **Earth Canvas** is about reading and delving deeper into the landscape. It's about valuing and nourishing our biodiversity. In this context, the Coghlan family's Vision for their farm is to provide the best habitat for the most life.

Ben Humphries

Ben works on Wiradjuri Country in Albury for BirdLife Australia as the Southern NSW Woodland Bird Project Coordinator. Ben enjoys engaging with landholders and community groups to promote the Birds on Farms Southern NSW project by raising awareness of the need to protect, create, enhance and maintain woodland bird habitat to help save birds in our landscape.

Amber Croft

Amber is an ecologist and science communicator based in North East Victoria. She is the Engagement and Communications Officer for Sustainable Farms, an initiative of the Australian National University. Amber is passionate about sharing science and building connections that promote a collaborative approach to environmental conservation and sustainable land management.

Brian Furze

Brian has been working as a professional social scientist for 30+ years in various places around the world, but in particular Australia and Asia. Brian has worked with communities in conserving and protecting forests, in their efforts to protect endangered species (mostly tigers), their contributions to national park management and their initiatives in welcoming travellers into their homes, communities and landscapes. Brian's start and end point? People. Brian says he's "been fortunate to have worked with amazing young people, women and men who have contributed to the sustainability of their communities, their landscapes and our futures. They are important reminders that, given opportunities, we are all able to engage with issues of sustainability and sustainable landscapes – we all have contributions to make".

Ed Maher

Manager of sustainability at Charles Sturt. Ed has over ten years of experience in the sustainability field, with qualifications in Environmental Science and Carbon Management. He is an active participant in local natural resource management groups and gets a buzz about finding ways to do the same things using fewer resources. Ed is passionate about making a real change for the future by assisting students and staff to understand what they can do to act sustainably at Charles Sturt, at home, and in their future careers. You will most likely see Ed pedaling around the Wagga Wagga Campus!

Steven Millet

Steven is the Service Leader Assets Sustainability & Environment (ASE) Cluster at AlburyCity. With more than 25 years' experience in Local Government working across asset management, environment and GIS disciplines Steven brings together multi-disciplinary Teams with sustainability at its heart. Our Assets, Sustainability and Environment Service Cluster is charged with looking after our future. Its purpose is to manage the city's natural and built environment and assets in a structured and sustainable way to ensure the future well-being and liveability of our city for generations to come. Outside of work Steven has three active daughters and is heavily involved in water polo and soccer and when time permits loves to get out on our local trails and the Hume Weir with his border collies.

Nick Fitzsimons

Nick is a Co-Founder of OzCircle, an Albury/Wodonga based startup moving households, and now community/commercial settings towards zero waste via a Sort-At-Source-System which captures & collects 100+ everyday items (resources) that too often go to landfill. These resources are then connected to circular economy processors & vendors.

Cr Ashley Edwards

Ashley is an archaeologist with over 15 years of experience in cultural heritage management. She now works in the public sector on heritage policy and conservation. Ashley has great respect for the long history of Albury or Bungambrawartha, particularly the Murray River or Millewa which continues to be culturally significant to Wiradjuri and First Nations people. Elected to Albury City Council in 2021, Ashley is passionate about climate action, diversity and inclusion and sustainable planning and development which she believes are key to maintaining Albury as an attractive, vibrant, liveable and climate-resilient city with green streets and spaces for current and future generations to enjoy.

Ed Mortimer

Ed is based in the Northern Rivers and has been with the NCC for five years, including organising three Regional Conferences - Lismore, Batemans Bay and Armidale. In his role as Organising Director, Ed is focused on connecting and empowering communities across the state to fight for nature and justice.

Mel Gray

Mel has been voluntarily running local grassroots groups and community led campaigns in the Murray Darling Basin since 2017, when she completed ACF's River Fellowship and became a Healthy River Ambassador. Mel has been a Community Organiser and Campaigner with NCC since 2021. She has developed working relationships with community groups, federal and state politicians and senior Department staff through years of engagement in water policy development and campaigning.

Kristina Dodds

Kristina has been working in the not-for-profit sector for over 25 years, predominantly in health-related organisations. She has a Masters of Education and a background in training and development. In the last 5 years Kristina has become active in her local community to preserve nature, urban bushland and wildlife corridors. Kristina is on the executive committee of the Willoughby Environmental Protection Association (WEPA). WEPA has just celebrated its 40th year and is an NCC member group that actively promotes to preserve nature in Willoughby. Kristina joined the NCC in November as a Community Organiser and is delighted to be involved in organising her first conference for the NCC in Albury.