

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

Environmental Planning and Assessment Act



DA NUMBER: 19/41

LOCATION AND DP LOT: 60A and 62 Cullen Street, Nimbin
(Lot 1 DP 587552 and Lot 13 DP 5446)

APPLICANT: Newton Denny Chapelle

DESCRIPTION: AMENDED PLANS & ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
for DA5.2019.41.1 To undertake the redevelopment of 60A & 62 Cullen Street (former Nimbin Museum site), which was the subject of a fire in 2014 and has remained vacant for a period of over four (4) years. The redevelopment seeks approval for: A mixed use development comprising retail shops, food and drink premises, a health services facility (medical centre), outdoor communal space areas (outdoor seating, viewing deck, deck, garden and landscaping) and associated civil works, infrastructure services, vegetation removal, the demolition of on-site structures and strata subdivision

CLOSING DATE: 22 January 2020

If you wish, you may make a submission to the Council in relation to the development application. The above development applications and Statement of Environmental Effects may be inspected at Council's Corporate Centre, 43 Oliver Avenue, Goonellabah, during ordinary office hours or via DA Tracking at www.lismore.nsw.gov.au.

Further information relating to written submissions is available on Council's website. There are laws regarding the mandatory disclosure of political donations in relation to planning matters. Political donations disclosure reporting forms are available from the Department of Planning at www.planning.nsw.gov.au.

Expression of Interest

The newly formed Nimbin Disaster Recovery Committee is seeking someone to document the community response to the recent (November 2019) fire event in the Mt Nardi, Tuntabale, Terania area.

It is expected that this will take 2 weeks and will be overseen by the Nimbin Disaster Recovery Committee, who will assist with liaising with the various groups, identifying key individuals.

It is expected that a draft detailed written report will be completed by mid-February 2020 for the committee to review, and the final report completed by end February 2020.

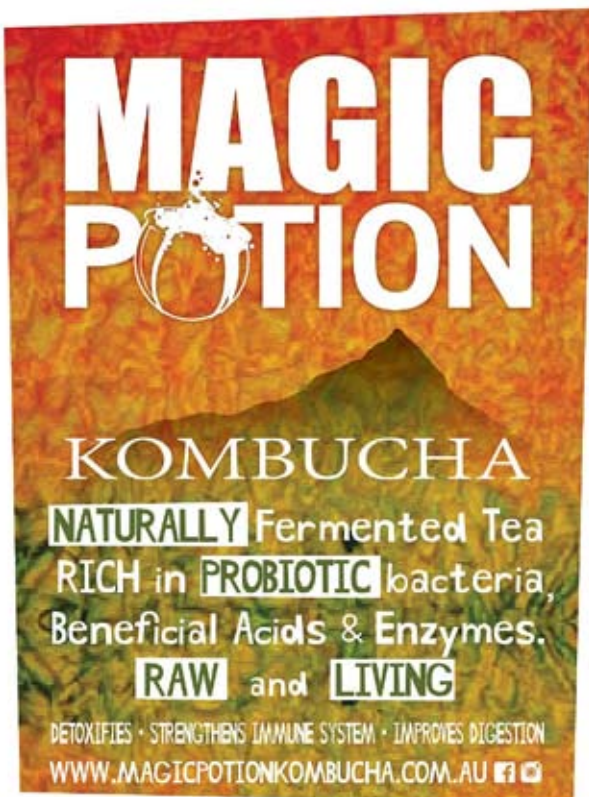
Requirements:

- 1) Demonstrated interviewing and report writing skills.
- 2) Good communication skills.
- 3) Tertiary qualification or equivalent
- 4) Sensitivity to the fact that some individuals who will be providing information will be still experiencing the after effects of this disaster. And/or they may be still involved in ongoing fire defence.
- 5) Ability to be flexible and to work within the set timeline.

Remuneration: \$35.00 per hour

Applications: Please apply to Ashoka Joblin by Friday 17th January, 2020

Inquiries: Phone 02 6689 1637 or 0497 236 976 for fuller description. Email: bizjoblin@gmail.com



Locally Produced & Available at: Nimbin Co-Op, Nimbin Pizza & Trattoria, Nimbin Bush Theatre

Letters

nimbin.goodtimes@gmail.com

Hospital needs resources

It was before the local devastating fires that I found myself having to make a decision when I was carried into the outpatients medical centre at Nimbin Hospital, in mid-September.

The decision was to either find a caring acquaintance to drive me to Lismore, or go home when an ambulance would arrive to carry me in to Lismore Base Hospital the next morning.

My injury, according to experienced nurses and doctor on duty at the time, was most probably a broken leg, close to the ankle. In my past, I had suffered a life-threatening fatty embolism from a similar leg injury, and as a result I was somewhat worried.

The doctor and nurses could not be sure of the extent of my injury, as an x-ray was needed, but here is the rub: the x-ray machine had been removed due to cost-cutting and the ambulances from Lismore were all engaged, and not coming out to Nimbin that evening.

I was caught between a rock and a hard place, waiting to be taken to Lismore Base or go home, and wait till the next morning.

After four hours of waiting for an ambulance, which did not arrive, a very caring person drove me into Lismore. In response to my then situation, I wrote to the *GoodTimes* last month requesting that x-ray and ambulance be available at Nimbin hospital.

Nimbin Hospital supports a population of around 14,000 who live around our area. It is critical to our community and does an excellent job.

It is extremely pleasing to note the situation has been reported to Wayne Jones, the Chief Officer of Northern NSW Local Health in writing, by our local member of the NSW Parliament, Janelle Saffin.

Janelle is well-known for her hard-working support and care for all of her constituents. I am thankful for her letter of support. Not many Members of Parliament would have acted, as quickly as she did.

The NSW Government should better resource our local hospital which is in need of an x-ray machine and ambulance. I would not want anyone else to go through what I endured.

Mark Pestell
Nimbin

Submarines

The *Canberra Times* has released figures that Australia's new submarines will cost the Australian

NGT welcomes letters and other contributions received by email or post prior to deadline. Letters longer than 300 words may be edited for length, and articles for accuracy. Please include your full name, address and phone number for verification purposes. Opinions expressed remain those of the author, and are not necessarily those of NGT.

taxpayer \$225 Billion.

The original figures started at \$40B then \$50B then \$80B now \$225B.

Was the contracting for this incompetent acquisition done over a few wines at a French brothel?

\$225B for submarines that the Chinese have already stated their outdated YU8 missile can destroy at a moment's notice.

Imagine the prosecutions a car dealer would incur if Fair Trading saw a deal such as the above.

No money for drought relief, yet unlimited billions for outdated useless military weaponry to be built by France, a nation that exploded atomic bombs off our coast in the 1970's.

This country is currently hell-bent on destroying our wine and cheese industries with dodgy patent applications, so why is our govt dealing with them in the first place?

Claire De Ellae
Urbenville

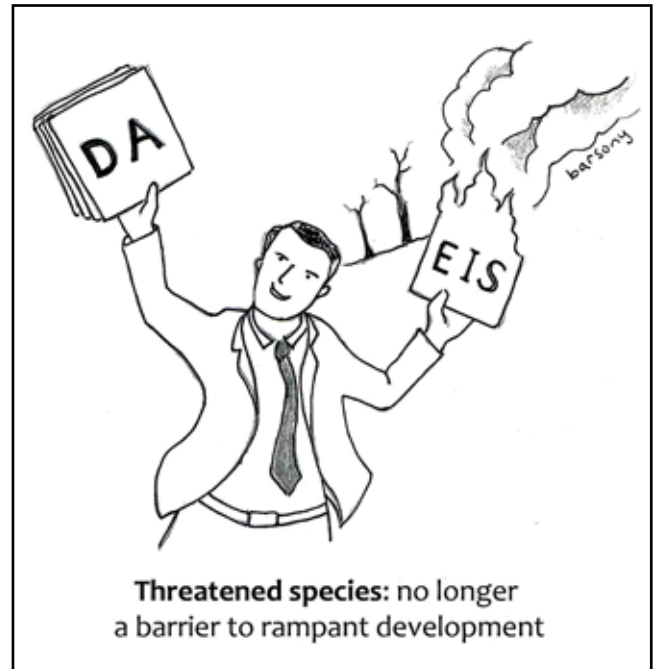
Bleak future for planet

Well Aidan Ricketts, it seems like you've got the blues (NGT December 19), but as you well may know, it isn't easy being green.

I know that myself, from being an activist since my early teens in England (Keep Britain Tidy Campaign and saving foxes from the vicious hunt). Yes, we've had our successes, most being small, and many have since been reversed.

We have to remind ourselves that humans have been raping this planet and killing each other almost since we got here: the Moguls, Persians, Romans, Europeans etc. Here on this huge island, it didn't take long to inflict irreparable damage to the land and to its original inhabitants, all before the Industrial Revolution.

And then in modern times, this land was used to test nuclear weapons, which today are far more destructive than those used on Japan (don't forget, it was the Labor Party that breached its international agreement by selling uranium to India, a nuclear weapons state). There are currently 13,865 nuclear weapons in the hands of



Notices

Al-Anon family groups

Is your life being affected by somebody else's drinking? Al-Anon Family Groups can help. Meetings held in your district. For more information: www.al-anon.org.au or phone 1300-252-666.

Free notices

Keep it short, under 50 words, and to the point, and if your notice is not-for-profit and of interest to our readers, get it to us by deadline and we'll run it for you for free.

people who are only too willing to play god.

For some time now, NASA has been blowing craters in the moon, hoping to find water. All of this is made possible by scientists, all of whom have studied at university or work in them.

It's a well-known fact that most, if not all universities are driven and funded by corporations for profit, as are most things these days: health, sport, entertainment, education etc... and very few governments will challenge them.

The Greens Party may pretend to be different, but at the end of the day they support military intervention, endorsed by the UN, eg Libya, Afghanistan, and horrendous sanctions on the innocent people of Iraq, which all goes to profit arms dealers and manufacturers, one of the largest industries in the world today. (Australia is getting in deeper.)

Another huge component of the raping of our planet, including Australia, in my lifetime is the spiralling population growth. Today it's 7.8 billion, in 1949 it was 2.5 billion (approx), something The Greens party doesn't seem to acknowledge.

My intention is not to bring you down Aidan, it is just to remind you of the realities of life on earth today. The best we can do is be responsible, love one's friends and neighbours if possible, and live simply, so we can all simply live.

Food for thought.

Mick Stacey
Ballina

Correction

Due to a production error in the last edition, our story about the Blue Knob knitting group, 'And the band knitted on for Nepal' (p.38) was incorrectly attributed to Helen Simpson, although the author was Gail Wallace.

We apologise to both women for the error.

About us

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And find us on Facebook

NGT is published by the Nimbin Aquarius Foundation, 81 Cullen Street, Nimbin.

NEXT DEADLINE:
Wednesday 29th January

Email nimbin.goodtimes@gmail.com or put stuff in our pigeonhole at the Nimbin Community Centre.

The Nimbin GoodTimes acknowledges the Bundjalung people, the traditional owners of the land and waters on which we work and live, and pay our respects to the Elders both past and present.

How secure is Nimbin's water supply?

by Diana Roberts
Nimbin Advisory Group

Where is our water sourced from?
Nimbin village water supply is sourced from the weir installed on Mulgum Creek at the end of Gungas Road. Alongside the village, some rural consumers were allowed to tap into the water main running past their property but new connections have not been permitted for many years.

Water is also stored in the DE Williams Dam, constructed off Cecil Street around 1994. DE Williams Dam provides some drought security. Water to the village is always drawn from DE Williams Dam, however during normal conditions the level of the dam remains full. When flows in Mulgum Creek fall below consumption, the storage available from the dam is drawn upon and the level of the dam will drop.

Council is currently in the process of upgrading the supply – a \$5m-\$6m undertaking once complete. Stage one (new water mains for rural consumers) has been completed, but will not come online until stage two is complete. This stage, scheduled for completion in approximately two years, involves construction of a new water treatment plant that will deliver a water supply not affected by the wet weather events that leave the water turbid.

This upgrade will also mean more of the water stored in the dam can be utilised. Also, properties along Gungas Road that have a water main running past but are not connected will be allowed to connect to the new main when it comes online.

Do we have enough water?
To determine the population that can be supported by any water source, there is a process undertaken to determine what is known as the "secure yield". This is a theoretical calculation based on historical flows in the water source and is supposedly conservative in nature.

According to Council, the calculation of the secure yield that can be derived from Mulgum Creek shows that it has ample capacity to supply water to Nimbin, including a modest allowance for future developments and associated connections. The question is, given the extreme drought we now find ourselves in, are those calculations conservative enough?

Of concern to many in times of drought and water restrictions is how reliable are estimates of water demand, especially given the amount of water being trucked from the supply by water carriers has increased in recent times and the fact that developments within the village given approval to draw from the supply have yet to come online?

The levels in Mulgum Creek are currently so low that there is no flow below the Mulgum Creek weir, a situation that is unlikely to change until we receive significant rain. Council is currently investigating the use of an existing bore located on land owned by Council, or drilling of a new water bore, to increase the capacity of the water supply but this initiative is at the investigation stage only. As a last resort, trucking of water to Nimbin will be undertaken, but every effort is being made to avoid this.

When are restrictions introduced?
Under the terms of the Nimbin Drought Management Plan, water restrictions commence at Level 2. As stated in this plan: "Due to the small storage available within the Mulgum Creek weir and DE Williams Dam, the Nimbin water supply is sensitive to reduced rainfall and limited time is available to respond

to a drop in storage level. Therefore, Level 1 restrictions are not used in the Nimbin restriction regime and the first restriction level is Level 2."

Since the DE Williams Dam was constructed, Nimbin has been placed on restrictions in 2002, 2004 and in November 2019. There are no absolutes as to when Council implements restrictions, and consideration is given to maintaining supply for those customers connected between the weir and the dam.

Sometimes Council takes water from the weir and then leaves the weir to recover its levels. If it gets to a situation where the rural customers between the weir and the dam are using more water than the creek can supply, it may become necessary to have water trucked to those consumers.

Incentives to conserve water:
Pricing of water is a mechanism that is used to encourage all customers to reduce their demand on the supply and is particularly effective for those buying water to fill tanks.

By example, for those connected to the reticulated water supply, the charges are applied in two parts. There is a fixed charge of \$287.20 pa per residential property (20mm service) plus the cost of the water consumed at \$3.91 per kilolitre. The fixed charge effectively covers the cost of the infrastructure to deliver the water, and the variable charge covers the cost of consumption.

For a person not connected to the reticulated water supply and relying on a private water carrier, they will pay different amounts depending on the price charged by each water carrier. The licensed water filling station in Nimbin is managed by Rous County Council who charge all water carriers \$5.75 per KL.

For comparison's sake, if we use 250KL per annum for a typical residential household, the total annual cost for water is approx. \$1265 for a town water user, and approximately \$5,500-\$6,500 for a rural customer not connected to the water supply.

To further encourage conservation of water in times of drought, Council undertakes education campaigns in conjunction with Rous County Council for all residents, whether connected to the reticulated supply or not. While Council regularly monitors overall water consumption, there is currently no program of enforcement for people not complying with restrictions.

However, as restriction levels increase, if Council does not see a reduction in consumption, it does have the power to enforce these restrictions using various means including fines, prosecutions and the installation of flow restrictors.

Are we conserving water?
Disturbingly, after a few weeks on Level 2 water restrictions in Nimbin, there was no reduction in consumption. At time of writing, Nimbin is on Level 3 restrictions and water carters can no longer fill from the village supply. By the time you read this article we may be on Level 4 unless we've managed to reduce our use of the water storage. Level 4 does not allow for any outside garden watering.

It is vitally important for everyone to follow the restrictions in place as failure to reduce our consumption will lead to Council implementing much harsher water restrictions. With no significant rainfall forecast, the situation is serious. **A Strategic Plan for Nimbin – have your say on future land use and strategic planning for our village.** We know that many are concerned about the pace and nature of

development around our village. For years numerous groups have been asking for the Nimbin Village Development Control Plan to be revisited, as it's not only out-of-date, but often not honoured in Council decision-making.

Lismore Council has a new Director of Partnerships, Planning & Engagement (read: anything not roads and bridges), Dr Sharon Harwood. Sharon attended our November NAG meeting and provided information on how Council is planning to address our concerns.

Council will be engaging with the Nimbin community in 2020 as part of a process to review its 10-year Community Strategic Plan and develop a Local Strategic Planning Statement. This process includes holding workshops in Lismore, Nimbin and other rural areas to get broad community input into these plans.

At these workshops, Council staff will be asking the community if the goals and strategies in the current Community Strategic Plan remain relevant or if these need to change to reflect the changing needs and aspirations of residents. This is an opportunity to help shape the broad strategic objectives for Nimbin through to 2030.

Council is also preparing a Local Strategic Planning Statement, which looks specifically at land-use. Council is inviting the community to help develop a 20-year vision for land use in our local area and have input into what special characteristics contribute to local identity, shared community values to be maintained and enhanced, and how growth and change can be managed in decades to come.

We would encourage all of you with an interest to input into this process. How should development in the Nimbin area be managed and what do we want our village lifestyle to look like into the future? How will traffic be managed and how will pedestrian safety be addressed? Don't wait until it's too late to have your say. The NAG will work hard to ensure you are kept informed and that community views and values are taken on board.

A community engagement workshop will be held in Nimbin on Monday, 10th February at Birth & Beyond from 5.30pm. Anyone is welcome to get involved. To register your interest in attending visit: www.yoursay.lismore.nsw.gov.au and select the Planning for Lismore's Future option.

Other Nimbin issues

Economic Development: Following submissions made to Council's draft economic development strategy there is now a village section within the strategy.

If Council's rate increase is supported funds will be allocated to support initiatives identified in the strategy which will include the vision developed through our village master planning process.

Cecil Street pedestrian bridge:
The original plan was for a pedestrian footbridge next to the existing roadway, but Council discovered that the culvert itself needs to be replaced.

As a result, Council is now working on a new design to incorporate both culvert replacement and the pedestrian walkway.

A letter will be sent seeking community feedback on this design with a view to work commencing in the first part of 2020.

To everyone – our best wishes for 2020. If you want to contact the NAG about anything send an email to: nimbinadvisorygroup@gmail.com



POSITION VACANT

We are looking for an
OFFICE SUPPORT PERSON
starting in Term 1 on 24th February 2020.

- Criteria for this position:**
- Office/reception qualifications and/or experience
 - Computer and data entry skills
 - Problem-solving skills
 - Work under instruction, and occasionally independently
 - Good presentation and communication skills
 - Reliability
 - Ability and willingness to work as a team member throughout the school community

Job Description
Administration and reception procedures

Conditions of Employment
One-year contract with opportunity to become a permanent part-time position.
6 hour/day for 3 days per week, 40 weeks during term time, paid Leave/Holidays 4 weeks.
This position is classified as School Administration Services Officer, Level 3.1 paid at above award rate of \$23.61 per hour.


Please address the selection criteria and send applications with a covering letter and resume to:

Rainbow Ridge School for Steiner Education
279 Lillian Rock Road, Phone: 02-66897033
Email: admin@rainbowridge.nsw.edu.au

Applications close on Monday, 20th January 2020 and interviews will be conducted Friday 31st January 2020.

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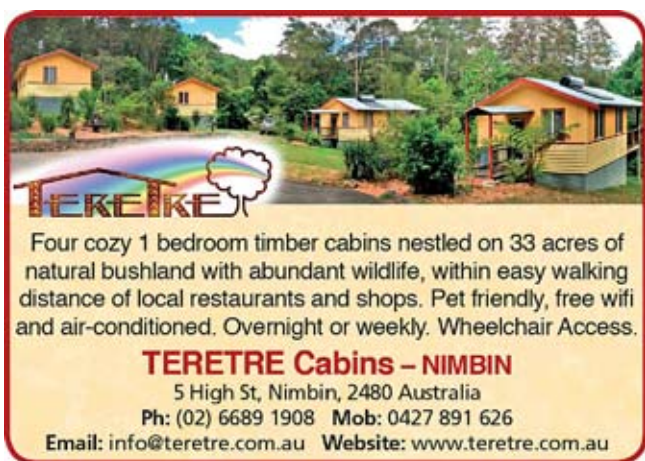


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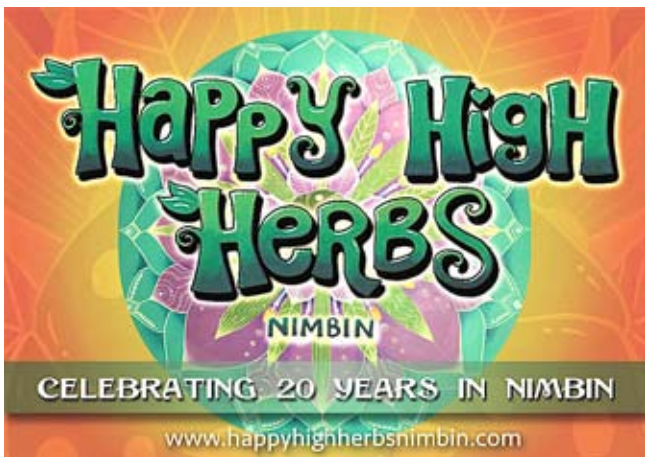
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Decision time for rail trail

by Lydia Kindred,
 Northern Rivers Railway Action Group
 (NRRAG) and Trains On Our Tracks
 (TOOT)

The NSW state government is preparing to take away the current protection of our Casino – Murwillumbah railway corridor.

Geoff Provest, Nationals MP for the Tweed, has stated that the NSW government will request that parliament make a change to the legislation that protects our line in February.

Rail trail enthusiasts say the rail corridor will be protected under the new legislation, but they've been misled. This legislation change will close our railway and make it crown land, so that it can be transferred to another department and sold off. Everything and everyone will continue to go by cars and trucks on our already damaged roads.

A recent Southern Cross University report on freight for the Northern Rivers states:

"Modelling shows that compared with unit price rate for B-doubles across the same journey, a shuttle service from Casino, or Grafton, Casino, Kyogle could reduce freight cost in the order of 40% to 66%.

A rail shuttle would become a part of the supply chain solution and, generally, road transport would continue to run in parallel with rail transport." (*From Roots to Routes – A ground-up approach to freight and supply chain planning for the Northern Rivers NSW*, SCU)

Surely this could also relate to our part of the track? What a boon for local businesses, along with some of



Rally for trains in Murwillumbah

the 2.2 million visitors to Byron Bay accessing the rest of the region's shops, accommodation, galleries and festivals, in comfort via trains, with connecting mini-buses.

In our research, we've found that the great majority of locals and visitors to our region, as well as more than 90% of businesses, want the return of rail services to the Northern Rivers. They've never been asked what their transport needs for the future are.

This stands in stark contrast to current premier Gladys Berejiklian's statement, when she was state transport minister, that rail trails would not be introduced unless there was overwhelming public support for them.

At best, there is lukewarm support for a bike/walking track, pushed by the few with vested interests of 'glamping' or bike-related businesses, when the majority would rather see both, running side-by-side, as happens in other places – a win-win situation.

Currently Tweed Shire Council has tenderers poised to offer one of two alternatives – either both rail and trail co-existing (giving older people unable to use the bike track a rail option to get around the shire), or pull up the tracks and simply have the bike/walking path in place of the railway line.

We ask that if you support the introduction of regular passenger rail services to the Northern Rivers line, please contact your local councillors and MPs to tell them you want rail and possibly a bike trail nearby. These especially include State MPs such as Janelle Saffin, Tamara Smith and all Tweed, Lismore and Richmond Valley councillors.

And please sign our petitions at shops and markets so we can present our petition in parliament before they vote in February, or we stand to lose our railway line forever.

Contact: nrrailwayaction@gmail.com for petitions and other info.

Landcare ideally placed for watershed initiative

by Janelle Saffin,
 Member for Lismore

Late last year I visited Dr Nathan Kesteven and his partner Jessica Lowe's farm on Branch Creek, Whian Whian, to check out some great work being done by the local Landcare group there.

Nathan is Dunoon's GP, and we were joined by his neighbour Martin Novak, who is President of the Sub-Tropical Farm Forestry Association, and Southern Cross University Professor of Environmental Economics and Policy Caroline Sullivan.

We were looking at what can be done in regard to mitigating flood risk, improving soil moisture, carbon retention and enhancing biodiversity.

We looked at examples such as rotational grazing, weed control, enrichment plantings and wetland construction in orchard crop catchments.

Rous Water's Watershed Initiative would provide small grants to local farmers for innovative projects aimed at regenerating riparian zones and improving the long-term health of rivers and creeks within our water catchments.

Landcare groups are ideally placed to do this work, as many members are highly knowledgeable and skilled.



Lismore MP Janelle Saffin, centre, with from left, Martin Novak, Jessica Lowe, Dr Nathan Kesteven and Professor Caroline Sullivan inspect the regenerated banks of Branch Creek, Whian Whian

I am championing the Watershed Initiative, as is the Northern Rivers Joint Organisation, led by Kyogle mayor Cr Danielle Mulholland, but we need to convince the NSW Government to provide over-arching funding.

Nathan and Jessica bought their 200-acre property, Imogen's Farm, in 1997 but it remained overgrown with lantana and camphor laurel until they started weed removal and regeneration a decade later.

A turning point was Nathan reading a copy of Alan Savory's book, *Holistic Management*, which he absorbed and then put into action.

Rotational, managed or cell grazing is based on the

following principle:

Put simply, one sets up enough paddocks on your farm to allow grass time to grow back and recover from grazing – mimicking what Savory had observed in the grazing lands of Africa.

Over the past 12 years, Nathan has built up the herd from a few cows to 50 cows, and their paddocks from four to more than 30, which are cheaply fenced with electric fencing on star pickets.

There are strategic watering points across the property and barbed wire boundary fences. Cattle are allowed to graze on each paddock for two or three days at a time.

It is early days but by arrangement, Nathan's cattle explored Martin's

macadamia orchard for a few days in the spring.

The dung beetles then worked the soil several feet down, enriching carbon storage. Martin expects that this will be an added boost to his crop come harvest time.

Rotational grazing has been practised by Dyraaba cattle farmer Trevor Wilson and his wife Kay at their 155-acre One Foot farm since the Millennium Drought, increasing productivity by 50%.

I remember attending an informative field day led by pasture ecologist Dr Judi Earl at Trevor's farm when I was Federal Member for Page. The Kestevens also were there.

Trevor prefers to call it managed grazing, and says it's about not looking at the cattle, but looking at the land and not degrading it. He says it requires a shift in thinking; you rest it (the land) rather than graze it, building up carbon in the soil.

As governments develop a thoughtful response to this once-in-a-century drought, perhaps it is farming methodology which needs to change for farming to remain sustainable in the longer term.

I hope that readers of the *Nimbin GoodTimes* enjoyed a safe and enjoyable festive season, and I look forward to representing you in 2020.

Antidotes to despair

The year 2020. And just like that, here we are, looking at a new decade.

I always find the New Year an interesting concept, because as we well know, life doesn't really stop, things don't go back to the beginning and the slate isn't wiped clean. All those things are just a construct, a way to frame our world and our view of things.

This year particularly, the crisis we are in just keeps unfolding, deepening and intensifying, and we watch more and more communities being impacted by this incomprehensible bushfire crisis.

I come to Woodford Folk Festival each year, and I am writing this in my camp. Last night was the closing ceremony – it is traditionally a fire event that culminates in the burning of a large bonfire to symbolise letting go of the last year and moving into the next.

This year, the decision was made to not light any fires either at the welcome ceremony or at the closing ceremony. It was absolutely the right decision to make, not just because of the bushfire risk and the dry conditions but also because of the nation wide community trauma we are currently experiencing.

Our natural world is out of balance and these fires are a clear symptom of how bad things are. Climate change is here, it will get worse and we



The Woodford closing ceremony

Word of the Bird by Cr Elly Bird

need to be preparing ourselves for this new reality.

So, with this new decade, even though we can't hit 'refresh' on our situation and start over, we have an opportunity to reframe our thinking and our approach to the new world we find ourselves in. We each need to find the thing we can do, find the way we can approach this life, the part of the puzzle where we can fit.

We need to strengthen our networks, we need to work together, we need to learn each others' strengths and weaknesses and to support each other to become a community that can be stronger and greater than the sum of the individuals within it. We are stronger together,

and no problem will be so great that we cannot face it together.

The antidotes to despair are action, compassion, creativity and community. The closing ceremony culminated with a powerful call to action, celebrating and honouring the work of the many environmental groups who do such important work on our behalf.

To quote the words of Alex Podger the creative director, "We are the fire. We are the ancestors of tomorrow, and we have work to do."

So dear readers, I wish you all well for the year ahead. Let's embrace every opportunity we have to take action, both at the local level and in the political sphere, and in doing so let us become stronger and more resilient as we face this uncertain future together.

The PM is engulfed in a PR firestorm of his own making, having absconded just as the nation faced its largest ever existential threat – a climate-crisis-driven conflagration that is engulfing every state.

It has wiped out entire species, destroying billions of dollars of homes and infrastructure and bringing into being Australia's first wave of environmental refugees.

The Murdoch media hegemony is desperate to keep a lid on it and save their favourite son, but the country's cultural icons are lining up to deride the creep.

His press conferences are greeted by a barrage of firey faces with scolding commentary, who rejoice in pointing out just how deceitful and despicable his faux figures and artless shows of compassion really are.

The harder he tries to rectify his enormous and unconscionable blunder, the deeper he sinks into the morass.

And the more he repeats his misinformation about our emissions, the more the international press indulge themselves in Smoko-bashing.

Revenge of the Loon by Laurence Axtens

He is between a smouldering stump and a very hot place, as the ill-affected (ie the nation as a whole) try to breathe the unbreathable, or fossick through the smoking ruins of their houses, or attend the funerals of their courageous friends.

He isn't directly to blame, just as climate change isn't directly responsible for the fire season, he's just one of the exacerbating force that has turned our fire-prone land into a seemingly unrelenting fire storm, where we are ill-prepared and under-funded to face the challenge.

What will remain of his political capital after these fires are finally flooded out it is hard to say. His billionaire friends in the coal and mining industries are working to save him, almost as relentlessly as the Rural Fire Service volunteers are to contain these uncontrollable fires.

For all our sakes, I hope he is finished and we can get some actual leadership in Australia.

Long road to recovery in 2020

Happy New Year to everyone living in Nimbin village and the surrounding communities.

2019 had some wonderful highlights throughout the year – another successful MardiGrass; some much appreciated creative poetry at the Poetry Cup; the well attended 100th Annual Show; the Blues and Roots festival; art shows and exhibitions.

The 2019 calendar of events at Nimbin was full of creative, innovative ventures, put on by individuals, groups and the Chamber of Commerce, showcasing the diversity of talent and activities in the village and local communities.

2019 also set some fairly hefty challenges for us all to work through. The hot dry weather in the lead-up to the fires had Council and emergency services very concerned about the preparedness of the communities in case of fire.

The shortage of water throughout spring and early summer, and the limited road access in many areas, increased the difficulties in preparing plans for emergency responses – this problem still applies to many areas in the region that have not yet been assessed.

The fires brought out the very best in people throughout the region. The community, charities, and council all worked together to establish the evacuation centre and to provide essential services, links for accommodation and government assistance.

Together with the RFS, we provided information sessions to keep everyone updated on the fire response and what each of us could contribute to assist.

It was the Community Defenders, who prepared their lands and homes and worked with the RFS, that made all the difference to the outcome of the fires.

Their response to the fires



by Darlene Cook, Deputy Mayor, Lismore City Council

is not over – patrols of the containment lines continue every day and will continue until we get good rains to put out all the smouldering logs and pockets of fire in inaccessible areas.

While the response to fires will continue for some time, the government is moving forward to the next phase in disaster plans: the recovery phase. This will be co-ordinated by the Office of Emergency Management, led in this area by Ross O'Shea. There was an initial community meeting held to start this conversation in the Nimbin Town Hall on 17th December.

The OEM controls enormous funding resources under the Natural Disaster Resilience Program and grants that can be made available to assist NSW communities to prepare for and withstand the effects of natural disasters.

One of the main funding streams that we could access to help our recovery will be the Community Resilience Innovation Program: this can be used to enhance our capacity to plan for and prepare for any future disaster event, by using the lessons we have learned from this one as a template to what worked and what did not for future reference.

The plan proposed is to have Lismore Council as the lead agency with a dedicated staff person to liaise with

and advocate on behalf of the community to the government.

Ross suggested that the people attending the initial meeting establish a pilot Recovery Committee to discuss ways of setting up representative sub-committees to assess the impacts to and funding needed in the areas of animals and agriculture; health and wellbeing; infrastructure damage and waste; the environment; and any other area relevant to each individual community.

Disaster recovery is the co-ordinated process of supporting affected communities in the reconstruction of infrastructure and the restoration of emotional, social, economic, and physical well being.

Recovery is also a partnership between the affected community and the broader community, governments, non-government agencies and the private sector.

There are no rules for how long a community will take to recover from a disaster; people will move through the recovery process at their own pace: most people recover from even the most intense stress situations within six to 16 months, but others will take much longer.

Successful recovery is community led, community centred, responsive and flexible, engaging with all elements of the community and encouraging them to move forward.

This will be an ongoing process and there will be further meetings and information sessions in the village which will be publicised during 2020.

For more information on the Office of Emergency Management and Disaster Recovery, go to: www.emergency.nsw.gov.au/Pages/emergency-management/recovery/NSW-Disaster-Recovery.aspx

On the same PAGE

by Kevin Hogan, Member for Page

It was great to be at Nimbin Central school assembly recently. My book prize was awarded to Amelie Sledge for 'borrowing the most library books in 2019' Congratulations Amelie.

I hope everyone had a great Christmas and enjoyed spending quality time with their family and friends.

I would also like to thank all those who are working through the Christmas period, especially our emergency services and volunteers who are keeping us safe.

2019 delivered many challenges as our communities were hit by bushfires and our farmers battled drought, but as we have faced these tough times it was great to see our amazingly resilient communities coming together.

I would like to wish you, your family and friends a wonderful 2020. Let's hope the new year has more rain than the last one.

The Australian Defence Force (ADF) has been working with Emergency Management Australia to assist with firefighting efforts since directed by the Minister on 8th November.

The Army provided logistical support for 250 firefighters at the RFS staging ground in the Northern Rivers Region.

The Lismore Depot of the 41st Battalion, Royal New South Wales Regiment, has been available to provide logistical support to firefighters from outside the region.



Book prize presentation at Nimbin Central School

The Army is providing NSW RFS with ground logistic support for the movement of vehicles, stores and equipment in the Casino and Hawkesbury areas.

To view all the Defence support please visit: <https://news.defence.gov.au/national/defence-continues-bushfire-support>

The Farm Household Allowance is for farmers doing it tough. Payments are available now and eligibility can be checked by calling 13-23-16 or online at: <https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/farm-household-allowance> Please enquire about this.