

From: **Melanie @ Nature Conservation Council** <melanie@nature.org.au>
Date: Thu, 19 Dec 2024
Subject: One more thing - December Nature News

DECEMBER 2024 NATURE NEWS



Photo: Flowering gums taken by our Executive Officer, Jacs Johnson. If you have a photo to share for the next edition of Nature News please send them to mbooth@nature.org.au.



Hello - we've been flat out trying to wrap up a busy year for nature, we forgot to tell you about the Annual Conference updates!

Check out the updates below:

- [A message](#) from the returning NCC Chair
- Conference minutes online [here](#)
- 2023- 24 Impact report [here](#)
- Resources from workshops will be made available on the conference website [here](#)

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CEO Update

Dear Janine,

From all of us here at NCC, we would like to wish you a very happy holidays! We hope you have some time set aside for rest, reflection and celebration at this turning of the year.

The NCC team will be taking a short break after this week to ready ourselves for another year of fighting for NSW rivers, forests, wetlands, wildlife and climate in 2025.

As an organisation we will be transitioning into our 70th birthday next year and all signs are pointing to it being a watershed year for NSW's forests, the momentum of the renewable energy transition, habitat protection in NSW's nature laws and reviving our rivers.

Thank you for your support of NCC and your contributions to the environment movement in NSW. It is heartening to think of everyone out there working toward the same goals in different ways – the dedication and commitment of the people that make up this movement is inspiring.

Have a peaceful, restful New Year and see you on the other side, ready to work together to win the best outcomes we can for nature in 2025.

– **Jacqui Mumford**

Updates from the NCC Team

Forests

In 2024 the campaign to end native forest logging NSW hit some fantastic milestones. The Forest Alliance of NSW was established in April and this has been paying off. For the first time a State Government review of forestry has put an end to public native forest logging on the agenda. This is huge!

In 2025 we will have announcements on the Great Koala National park (GKNP) and the future of the native forest logging industry. The GKNP announcement is already overdue and we continue to push hard for this.

Parliamentary Petition

Over the coming months we will be gathering 10,000 signatures and we need your help. Contact [Steve](#) to get your petition kit today!

The **Woodford Folk Festival** will host a joint NCC and QCC stall, so let [Steve](#) know if you are in Woodfordia, drop by and help out or just say hi.

Inland Rivers

It's bittersweet to be reflecting on the year we've had advancing water management policy while fish kills are already occurring in the Barwon River, and dangerous blue-green algae makes its way to Menindee from Wilcannia in the Darling/Baaka River. NCC has managed to win some meaningful commitments from the current government this year – but these changes will take time and on the ground, nothing has changed yet.

In 2025 we will continue our push for rules to reconnect our rivers to be implemented ASAP - [SIGN OUR PETITION HERE.](#)

Coastal Wetlands

How can a statewide policy for metering irrigation pumping called 'No Meter, No Pump' allow 40% of pumps in the state to remain unmetered?

That's quite a loophole! Smaller pumps, like those used in many undammed rivers on the coast don't require to be metered, which leaves catchments like the Richmond with 90% of pumping unmeasured.

Were asking the NSW Government how they can manage pumping to maintain river health when they don't measure the pumping? [WRITE TO THE MINISTER HERE](#)

Check out what happened when we joined Ozfish Unlimited monitoring a salt marsh in Ballina [WATCH VIDEO HERE](#)

Habitat Clearing

Waving farewell to 2024 means getting ready for a very busy 2025 in the NSW nature laws space.

Early in 2025 we expect some changes to land management rules to be made, following the government's commitment in its response to the 2023 review of NSW nature laws. The NRC will ramp up its reviews of land management policy options. We will also see several opportunities for consultation on changes to the Biodiversity Conservation Act and the development of the NSW Nature Positive Strategy.

Be sure to stay tuned in to NCC communications to make sure you get your say during this incredibly important year for nature in NSW.

Climate

The NSW Upper House has established an inquiry into the impact of Renewable Energy Zones (REZ) on rural and regional communities and industries in New South Wales.

We have [put together this submission guide](#) to assist those in our network to make their own submission, either as an organisation or an individual. **Submissions close on the 31 January 2025.**

This is an important opportunity to demonstrate to the NSW Government support for a timely and nature positive transition to renewable energy to reach our emissions reductions targets, minimise the impacts of climate change on our environment, provide reliable energy for our state, and bring down energy prices to alleviate cost of living pressures.

Bushfire Program

Our Bushfire Program held a workshop with our dedicated volunteers who provide input into local Bushfire Management committees. Guest speakers from the NSW Rural Fire Service presented on a new web-based information system helping our representatives in their roles.

Abstracts submissions are now open for our 14th Biennial NCC Bushfire Conference 21-23rd May 2025 'Can we burn to learn? Sustaining people, nature and Country'. [More information here.](#)

Conference sessions will be an in-person event held in Sydney, at the Teachers Federation Conference Centre, [37 Reservoir St, Surry Hills NSW 2010](#), with virtual options available.

Stay tuned for more information to come.

To sign up to the conference mailing list please

contact: NCCBushfireConference@nature.org.au or (02) 9516 0359.

Large Forest Owls

What a year! The team have just wrapped up the spring acoustic monitoring, with Songmeters at over 50 sites to monitor the presence of owls and a range of other nocturnal fauna. In the last 18 months we have undertaken the equivalent of 8884 survey nights collecting many terabytes of data for analysis. Our nest box program has involved the installation of over 400 nest boxes to increase habitat for hollow dependant fauna. We now have a network of 744 nestboxes across the project area. Over spring we checked in on 627 of these nestboxes to see what was using them and the results showed they are providing much needed homes for wildlife. 476 nestboxes (76%) were either occupied or had evidence of use. Squirrel gliders were the most common species, and we also recorded common brushtail possum, sugar glider, brush-tailed phascogale, brown tree creepers and microbats.

Hotspots

The Hotspots team have just completed a detailed fire ecology report for Upper Yango Landholders Association following on from the Wollmbi-Laguna Hotspots workshop. Dr Belinda Kenny presented at the Ecological Burning workshop at Kulnura, organised by NCC member group Community Environment Network.

Scoping is well underway for Hotspots workshops for next year at Congewai/Paxton (Lower Hunter) and Taralga/Wombeyan (Upper Lachlan), Coolagolite (south) and Chillingham (north). [Find out more here](#), and stay tuned for the Hotspots newsletter out soon!

Organising

At the NCC Members Forum last week we had a packed agenda of updates and an exciting announcement: **the next Regional Conference will be held in Blayney, NSW cohosted by member group Blayney Eco Hub in June/July 2025**. More info TBA.

You can read up about [Blayney Eco Hub here](#). Thanks all for being part of a big and busy year. I hope you have a nice refreshing break - looking forward to seeing you afterwards at our next Members Forum on the 5th of March - [find more info and RSVP here](#).

NCC in the News

Media Releases

2 December - [One year on, Restoring Our Rivers Act revives hope for a healthier Murray-Darling](#)

14 December - [Forestry Corporation NSW loses \\$29m of taxpayer funds, annual report reveals](#) | Coverage: [AAP](#), 2SM Radio

17 December - [Forestry Corporation posts huge loss as independent review questions the economic viability of native forest logging in NSW](#) | Coverage: [Yahoo News](#)

17 December - [Biodiversity conservation fund must be reformed to protect nature, says IPART](#)

18 December - [Governments urged to get cracking on new Murray-Darling reconnection roadmap](#) | Coverage: Radio 97 Tweed Heads, 2BS

Collaboration Opportunities

If you have any actions you'd like collaboration on from the broad and knowledgeable NCC Network, please email mbooth@nature.org.au for it to be included in Nature News. This can also be a call out for advice, editing, submissions etc.

NCC First Nations Advisor

NCC is currently looking for a First Nations Advisor to join our Reconciliation Action Plan Group.

[Download the full position description here.](#)

EOI closing date is 17 January 2025. Email jjohnson@nature.org.au

Abstract Submissions Now Open for NCC's Bushfire Conference 2025

When: 21st and 22nd May 2025

Where: Teachers Federation Conference Centre, Sydney

Theme: *'Can we burn to learn? Sustaining people, nature and Country'*

The NCC Bushfire Conference provides a unique platform to engage with a wide audience of over 300 delegates from agencies, academics, experts, Traditional Owners, on-ground practitioners and community members.

Submit an abstract and be part of this multi-disciplinary conference, exploring why, when and how can we best use fire across landscapes to protect what we most care about. Make sure your voice is part of the conversation.

Don't miss out! Click here for more info.

Lithgow Locomotive Workshop

Lithgow Environment Group is seeking petition signatures to support the return of the Lithgow Locomotive Workshop to active use. This initiative would create jobs for many trades people while the region transitions away from coal, and develop new areas of economic development for their region. The community needs to find over 20,000 people willing to sign the petition by 3 February 2025. [Sign here.](#)

Survey: Impact of heat on people experiencing financial stress

We're already getting hit with hot summer temperatures. We know this poses a dangerous risk to the health and wellbeing of many members of our community.

While some can afford to pump air conditioners and fans to stay cool, others will be risking heat stroke and going without food and medicine to pay their energy bills. ACOSS is running a survey in partnership with the First Nations Clean Energy Network and National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Association to capture the impacts of heat on people experiencing financial stress, to form the basis of a report to be shared with the media and politicians.

[If you're struggling to cool your home in hot weather, will you complete the survey?](#)

Join your local marine park advisory committee

Nominations are invited from community members interested in becoming members of their local marine park advisory committee along the NSW coast.

An initial call for nominations will close 5pm Friday 20 December 2024. For more information or to submit a nomination form, [visit here](#).

Research Grants

The Australian Wildlife Society's University Research Grants are offered to honours or postgraduate students at Australian universities conducting research that contributes to the conservation of Australian wildlife (flora or fauna). [More information here](#).

First Nations Solidarity

READ: [Why it's time to move beyond truth-telling to Indigenous resurgence](#)

DONATE: If you have the means, please consider supporting these great organisations: [Aboriginal Legal Service NSW](#) | [Dharriwaa Elders Walgett](#) | [Deadly Science](#) | [Firesticks](#) | [First Nations Clean Energy Network](#) | [Original Power](#) | [Pay The Rent](#) | [Seed Mob](#)

Good News



The [First Nations Clean Energy strategy](#) has been released. It will work to ensure that governments and industries prioritise First Nations access and partnerships in the transition to clean energy and ensure Traditional Owners self-determine their role in this critical transition.



The Nature Conservancy has received [\\$2 million of federal government funding for a reef-building project](#) to return locally extinct flat oysters to the Georges River.



Researchers from South Australia have [estimated that every visit to a national park](#) saves you almost \$100 on your health bill.



[Seven solar, wind and hybrid projects in NSW](#) have been successful in Australia's largest ever renewable energy tender – part of a total 19 winning projects nation-wide.

What's New on Socials

We printed and folded the 12,000 plus signatures on our Stop Logging in the Great Koala National Park petition into a giant Christmas card and hand-delivered that card to the NSW Government.

Watch the reel of the big card reveal on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#).



NCC is funded thanks to our donors. You can help by giving a [monthly donation](#), or by making a [one-off donation](#) now.



We acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands and waters of Australia. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders past and present, and aspire to learn from their Traditional Knowledge to help nature thrive.

CONTACT US

Phone: (02) 9516 1488

ncc@nature.org.au

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Authorised by Jacqui Mumford, Nature Conservation Council of New South Wales · [180 George St](#), Level 3, Salesforce Tower, Sydney, NSW 2000, Australia