

Tree planting goes ahead after massive rain event on the Monaro

Upper Snowy Landcare showcases its four Dieback Project plots
along the highway between Cooma and Berridale

Upper Snowy Landcare Committee (USLC) is overjoyed to embark on the tree planting phase of its large scale revegetation project amongst the dieback scarred hills between Cooma and Berridale this week.

Robin Sevenoaks (Chair of USLC) was on site at Kelton Plain to celebrate the first day of planting, “Over the last few months, USLC have engaged willing landholders, carefully prepared each of the four plots and patiently waited for this godsend of recent soaking rain to sow trees and shrubs as part of our important Dieback Project.”

The 5000 trees and shrubs being planted across the four dieback revegetation plots is accepted by USLC as a small but still very important reaction to an extremely large dieback episode. Species being re-established will mimic what has been lost whilst adding more diversity in a mix of 8 eucalyptus species, 4 acacia species along with 5 species of shrubs including tea tree and callistemon.

The jury is still out on the primary cause of death of the trees with endless opinions ranging from; the past drought causing the trees to weaken becoming more prone to Eucalyptus weevil (native) attack which then ultimately kills them; lack of seasonal cool ground cover burning; soil fungus or the trees just naturally dying off at the edge of their range.

Despite the cause, the tree loss has fractured habitat connectivity making life difficult for animal species such small bush birds, reptiles, terrestrial and arboreal mammals from moving under the safety of the tree canopy to feed and breed. Also the tree loss has opened up country to new erosion events and weed incursion, not to mention the tremendous loss of shelter belt benefits and the danger of trees falling on people and fences.

Ms Sevenoaks states, “The Monaro Tree Nursery (MTN) who are contracted to grow and sow the regionally appropriate and acclimatised seedlings for our Dieback Project have suggested we follow a specific recipe for successfully sowing native plants on the Monaro and we have been very careful to follow this formula particularly as the MTN have had great success establishing tree plots over the years.

This important revegetation work initiated by the USLC will be followed up in future years under a 10 year Bush Connect Grant which is a partnership of USLC with Greening Australia and CSIRO to establish further trial sites to investigate the benefits of planting more robust and persistent species, test cool burning to enhance soil quality and target planting of connectivity links between existing remnants.

For information on the Dieback Project contact Lauren Van Dyke, USLC Dieback Project Manager,
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See photos and captions below.



Annie Platts from Monaro Native Tree Nursery with Robin Sevenoaks, Chair, Upper Snowy Landcare – very excited about the first day of planting at Kelton Plain Dieback re-vegetation plot.



Michael Platts from Monaro Tree Nursery putting in tree guards into the soft prepared ground at Coolringdon re-vegetation plot.



Sam Platts from Monaro Tree Nursery using the tree planting device to sow the seedlings hanging from his belt.



Annie & Lily Platts from Monaro Tree Nursery at the Kelton Plain Dieback re-vegetation plot