Loch Nyora Landcare President's report 2019-20

 Wow....what a year! 2020 has proved challenging and unprecedented.

Mark Walters, SGLN chairman announced on March 18th to cease all Landcare activity with the following statement....

"Landcare activities, although vital are not critical to our short term existence." All Landcare meetings and outdoor activities were paused.

The threatened Covid-19 virus became real.

Over 2019-2020, we have built on our integral place in our community, increasing our membership and working on a number of projects of local importance. We’ve continued important work with our local kinder, assisting with several planting days with the kinder kids at their bush kinder site on the bank of Allsop Creek, under the suspension bridge at the Loch Reserve.

To assist our community in identifying and managing weeds, we have purchased removable weed signs to be installed when appropriate at the entrances to Nyora and Loch. We’ve honoured long-time Landcare member and supporter Graham Wark by installing an impressive wooden seat at Cape Horn, overlooking our district towards Nyora and providing visitors a place to sit and contemplate our beautiful region.

The unloved truck stop at South Road has been planted and tidied by the team. John and Trish planted at the proposed Nyora Rail Trail. And we completed our project to screen plant the CFA scrap metal/training yard on Wonthaggi Road Loch.

Two properties have been involved with the "Enhancing Soil Biology" trials and although visits to these plots have been hampered by Covid restrictions the comparative results will be available at some stage soon. We are also pleased that a new landholder and new member is involved with the Giant Gippsland Earthworm protection project.

The latter half of the year has been marked by the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic but it has not stopped our group from being productive. In July, we managed a huge effort to replace a removed pine plantation with a locally-native planting, an important installation along a gully and traversing two neighbouring farms signifying the cooperation amongst our local community.

Our membership sits at about 45 families, comprising many lifestyle property owners, a handful of farmers and including the local community groups.

We communicate via regular emails and 4 newsletters produced seasonally. We feature in each issue of the Loch Express....a bi-monthly publication.

 A brochure to highlight our group's achievements, successes, aims and contact details is being prepared for distribution to our member base and our broader community.

Our partnership with Melaleuca Nursery at Inverloch continues and to support our travel restricted members, we collected and distributed the 10 free tube stock as ordered.

In 2020, our committee meetings have been held online via Zoom, but previously we met at the club rooms of the Loch Memorial Reserve, a key supporter of our group.

Loch-Nyora Landcare is celebrating an important milestone in 2021, we will have reached a quarter century! Our group is active and we have achieved much since our first meeting in May 1996. Our focus has been getting trees on farms in the Loch and Nyora areas, working with the local schools and kinders, looking after local reserves, roadsides and our waterways, particularly Allsop Creek in Loch. We look forward to the rail trail completion to Hilda Falls.

The coming year will see the celebration of our 25-year history with the Loch and Nyora communities. It will be a consolidation of our connections with the community and the inclusion in the way forward after Covid. We need to engage our members and encourage participation and involvement and with our healthy finances it will be easy to initiate some community projects..

Many, many thanks to our Secretary, Christine Connelly,

Treasurer, Gary Martin

and committee Ron, John, Daryl, George, Dallas and Steve.

A wonderful team of support and enthusiasm.

and from the Victoria Landcare Gateway

"Landcare represents thousands of people across Victoria, working together to increase biodiversity and promote the sustainable management of land."

**and to finish...."we're all in this together"**

Rosemary Knox President Loch Nyora Landcare group