



**CONSERVATION
COUNCIL** ACT REGION

**SHAPING A
SUSTAINABLE
FUTURE**



Executive Directors Report 2021-2022

(Prepared by Helen Oakey, ED 2021-2022)



Conservation Council ACT Region

Our vision is for a healthy planet for humans and all other life, where the natural environment is protected and communities respect and live in harmony with the environment.

Our work

We speak up for a healthy environment and a sustainable future for our region. We campaign for a safe climate, to protect biodiversity in our urban and natural areas, to protect and enhance our waterways, reduce waste, and promote sustainable transport and planning for our city.

We work in the ACT and region to influence governments and build widespread support within the community and business to deliver environmental outcomes. We put forward evidence- based solutions and innovative ideas for how we can live sustainably

Our community

- Member Groups
- Supporters
- Donors and major donors
- Volunteers - regular and irregular
- Interns and students
- Partner organisations
- Academics
- Politicians



Member group representation 2021–2022

350.org Canberra
ACF Community Canberra
ACT for Bees
ACT Herpetological Association
ANUSA Environment Collective
Australian Association for Environmental Education ACT Chapter
Australian Electric Vehicle Association, ACT Branch
Australian Native Plants Society Canberra Region Inc
Australian Network for Plant Conservation
ASEN Canberra (Australian Student Environment Network)
Canberra Bushwalking Club
Canberra Environment Centre
Canberra Forest Alliance
Canberra Indian Myna Action Group
Canberra Ornithologists Group
Climate Action Canberra
CPR Inc
Extinction Rebellion ACT
Field Naturalists Association of Canberra Inc
Food Cooperative Shop Ltd
Friends of Aranda Bushland

Friends of Black Mountain
Friends of Grasslands
Friends of Jerrabomberra Wetlands
Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra
Ginninderra Catchment Group
Ginninderra Falls Association
Invasive Species Council Inc
Kosciuszko Huts Association
Living Streets Canberra
Molonglo Conservation Group
National Parks Association of the ACT
Pedal Power
People's Climate Action Coalition (People's Climate Assembly)
Public Transport Association of Canberra
Red Hill Bush Regeneration Group
SEE-Change
Slow Food Canberra (Canberra Capital and Country Convivium)
Southern ACT Catchment Group Inc
Southern Tablelands Ecosystems Park Inc
Upper Murrumbidgee Catchment Network
Woodlands and Wetlands Trust
Zero Waste Revolution

Strategic objectives – 5 year strategic plan

1. Achieve positive environmental outcomes for the ACT and region
2. Speak up for the environment within government and the community
3. Maintain a strong and resilient organisation



1. Achieve positive environmental outcomes for the ACT and region.

Save Lawson Grasslands

Project delayed by at least 18 months as a result of campaign, and significantly until after Federal Election. Issue received significant media and public scrutiny.

Significant political and government advocacy undertaken, including in the lead up to Federal Election. Significant community engagement and awareness raising work.

Determined as a controlled action under the EPBC. Ongoing advocacy, legal strategy and public work.



Planning Reform

Ongoing engagement with Government (EPSDD) throughout the year, including Technical Advisory Group.

Worked with a planning expert to assist with development of response to Planning Bill. Made substantial submission to EPSDD on Planning Bill.

2 engagement meetings with member groups.

Met with Greens and Liberal MLAs

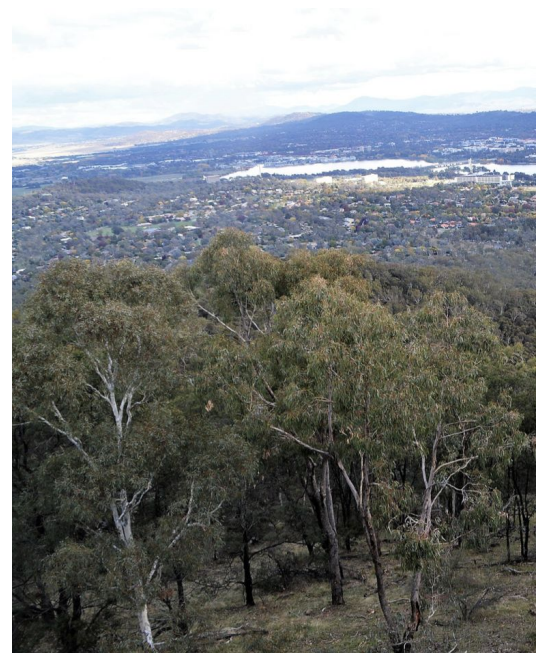
Opinion piece (not widely picked up!)



Protected Areas

“Protected Areas Paper”, now commonly known as the ‘Biodiversity Network’ developed as proactive work from Biodiversity Working Group, With engagement with member groups, and environment and planning officials.

Paper will be finalized shortly and presented to Government stakeholders and MLAs - outlines how to assure protection for areas that are off reserve, and thereby drive appropriate management to conserve biodiversity values.



Sustainability alliance building

- Objective was to raise community, business and government awareness of a) the opportunities in developing a circular economy, b) open discussions about economic models that don't rely on depletion of the earth's resources, and c) the embodied emissions and life-cycle impacts of products brought into the ACT.
- *Circular Economy Symposium was held in **September 2022** with 180 attendees, significant corporate sponsorship, hosted with external funding. Successful event from which now presents an opportunity to develop network.



Sustainable transport

- Make the Move Program completed successfully.
- TCCS indicated interest in leveraging off MtM and extending community engagement.
- Attended event at Early Childhood Australia with Minister Steel to introduce him to the Make the move program.
- Collaborated with Pedal Power, CEC & SEE-Change to propose to extend MtM to respond to the /light rail disruption.
- Funding was not allocated in the 2022 Budget for community engagement on active travel - ongoing advocacy required.



Gas Free ACT

- Worked on highlighting gas in new developments - DOMA Canberra Brickworks project.
- Ongoing advocacy to Government - called for modelling of closing network, not maintaining for hydrogen or biogas.
- Engagement through Energy Consumer Policy meetings and Evoenergy Consumer Engagement forum.
- Mandate for gas in greenfield developments was removed. Ban on gas in greenfields has not yet in place, but rollout abandoned by Evoenergy in early 2021.
- Engagement with the Property Council - discussion now occurring in building sector.

***4th August 2022 - ACT government announced electrification agenda - phase out of gas network.**



Reduce plastic pollution

- New campaign webpage on single use plastic developed.
- Ongoing engagement in the Plastic Reduction Taskforce throughout the year as Government seeks to extend Single Use Plastics Bans.
- Submission to Single-Use plastics – tranche 2 consultation in January.
- Occasional engagement with Boomerang Alliance helped with collaborative work on SUP policy asks
- Attended Zero Waste Festival and launched Race to Zero online petition – developed in collaboration with ad hoc waste working group.
- Engagement with ACT Nowaste.
- Presented to View Clubs, National Seniors Club and Probus Club on single use plastic with view to expanding our audience.
- Phase out of SUPs ongoing – Government needs to speed up implementation, be strategic about sequencing and build in avoidance targets.



Urban biodiversity

- Budget allocations for Urban Tree Program - \$14m over 4 years for 54k trees.
- Release of Action Plan for Mature Native Trees - very delayed. Provided feedback to Government in consultation with member groups.
- Submission to draft Urban Forest Bill, and *Legislative Assembly inquiry.
- New funding for Healthy Waterways was announced - committing an additional \$14 million through to June 2023. Total committed: \$20.5 out of the \$30m in the Parliamentary Agreement.
- Weeds sub-group (of BWG) developing a call on Government to undertake an audit of lists using particular criteria for species selection and site selection etc.
- Ongoing advocacy to see implementation of mechanism on Mature Native Trees either via Urban Forest Bill or Territory Plan (/estate Development Code).



Supporting national climate action

- CANA joint statement published in major newspapers across Australia – calling for targets.
- COP 26 Road to Zero Petition.
- Ongoing collaboration with CANA gas demand working group, with plan to hold workshop in late Jan/early Feb 2022.
- Joined organising committee for CANA climate conference.
- Election campaign work – distributing Climate Action Now signs in collaboration with CANA.
- Stall at Folk Festival with 350.org and other groups.



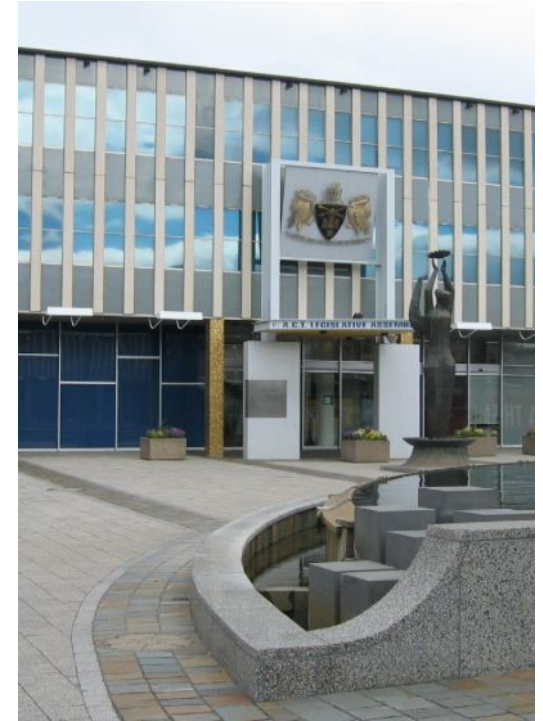
Other progress

- Wood smoke strategy
- Rental standards legislation - good, but not enough - wouldn't have liked to have seen additional measures
- Cat containment Bill - provisions commenced July 2022. Good to see started but concern still re: old cats vs new cats.
- EV car announcement - no new fossil powered vehicles from 2035 - opinion piece questioning how radical policy was.

2. Speak up for the environment within government and the community

Advocacy work – politicians and government

- Engagement with political representatives:
 - Meetings with Environment, climate change and transport ministers
 - Regular meetings with Environment Advisor
 - Meeting with Shadow Minister for Planning, Climate change, and Environment
- Worked with Marisa Paterson on Bluetts Block petition.
- Strong engagement with Alicia Payne on Lawson.
- World Environment Day Dinner saw representation from all political parties.
- 40 meetings with ACT / Cth government officials – including various stakeholder forums.
- ACT Budget – engagement with Treasury pre and post Budget



Submissions

July

Canberra Brickworks Redevelopment Environmental Impact Assessment 201900047

Submission to ACT Government

August

Draft Amendment to the Plan of Management: Snowy Mountains Special Activation Precinct

Submission to NPWS Planning Evaluation and Assessment

Gang-gang Cockatoo Listing Assessment

Submission to Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water, and the Environment

October

Draft Variation 357 End-of-trip facilities general code

Submission to ACT Government

November

Lawson North Development Public Consultation

Submission to Defence Housing Australia

Briefing Paper: Lawson Grasslands

National Construction Code Regulatory Impact Statement

Submission to the Australian Building Codes Board

Proposed Changes to Conservation Planning Decisions under the EPBC Act

Submission to the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Water, and the Environment

Draft Kosciuszko National Park Wild Horse Heritage Management Plan

Submission to the NSW Minister for Energy and Environment

December

Minimum energy efficiency standards for rental homes in the ACT

Submission to ACT Government

December

William Hovell Drive upgrade

Submission to ACT Government

January

Review of the Murrumbidgee River Corridor Management Plan

Submission to the ACT Government

Single-use plastics – Tranche 2

Submission to the ACT Government

February

Denman Prospect 2 Estate EIS Exemption

Submission to the Chief Planning Executive

Capital Food and Fibre Discussion Paper

Submission to the ACT Government (EPSDD)

May

Draft Action Plan to Prevent the Loss of Mature Native Trees

Submission to the Conservator of Flora and Fauna

6 Steps to Active Travel

Submission to Jo Clay MLA

June

Draft Planning Bill 2022

Submission to EPSSD, ACT Government

Urban Forest Bill

Submission to Transport Canberra and City Services, ACT Government

Stakeholder fora

- Biodiversity Conservation Forum (new - co-chair)
- Plastics Reduction Taskforce (ACT Government)
- Energy Consumers Reference Council - Evoenergy
- Icon Water consumer panel
- Environment and Planning Forum
- Technical Advisory Group - ACT Planning Reform (new)
- NRM Advisory Council
- Independent Competition and Regulatory Commission (limited attendance)

Partnership work

- State and Territory Conservation Councils
- EPBC Reform - Places You Love Alliance
- Energy Policy Consortium with ACTCOSS, Better Renting and CARE Financial
- Hands off our Charities Alliance (HOOC, now renamed as
- Healthy Homes Alliance
- National Gas groups

Community Engagement events

July

Single Use Plastics View Club, Gungahlin (12)
Make the Move Environment Exchange, Online (38)
Single Use Plastics Probus Club Tuggeranong (40)
August Role of Advocacy - UC lecture (20)
Online Nature Trivia (125)

October

First Nations people & environmental justice - co-hosted with ACF
Canberra Community, online (139)
Ministerial Budget Briefing, Ministers Vassarotti and Rattenbury, online

November

Environment Exchange: Human right to a healthy environment, online
(77)

December

Environment Exchange: Food waste: treasure, not trash, online (42)

April

Federal Election Forum Polish Club (85)
Zero Waste Festival - stall Kambri (100-120)
Junior Heritage Walk, Jerrabomberra Wetlands (~12)
National Folk Festival stall with 350.org and others
Junior Heritage Walk, Hall Cemetery (10)

May

Junior Heritage Walk Kama Nature reserve (~10)
Plastics Talk View Club
Country Women's Association - climate change
Lawson Grasslands Community Rally (70)
Plastics Talk- National Seniors Southside Group

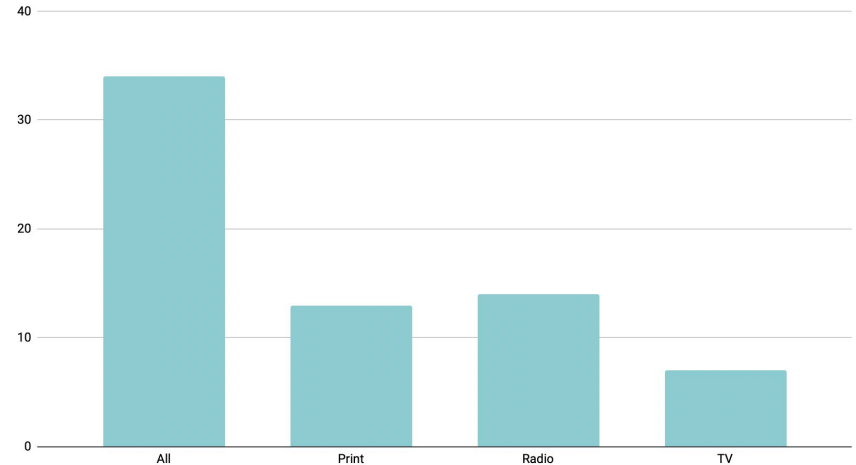
June

World Environment Day Dinner - Veena Saharjwalla (380)
Wellbeing Economy: benefits all round (94)

Communications outputs

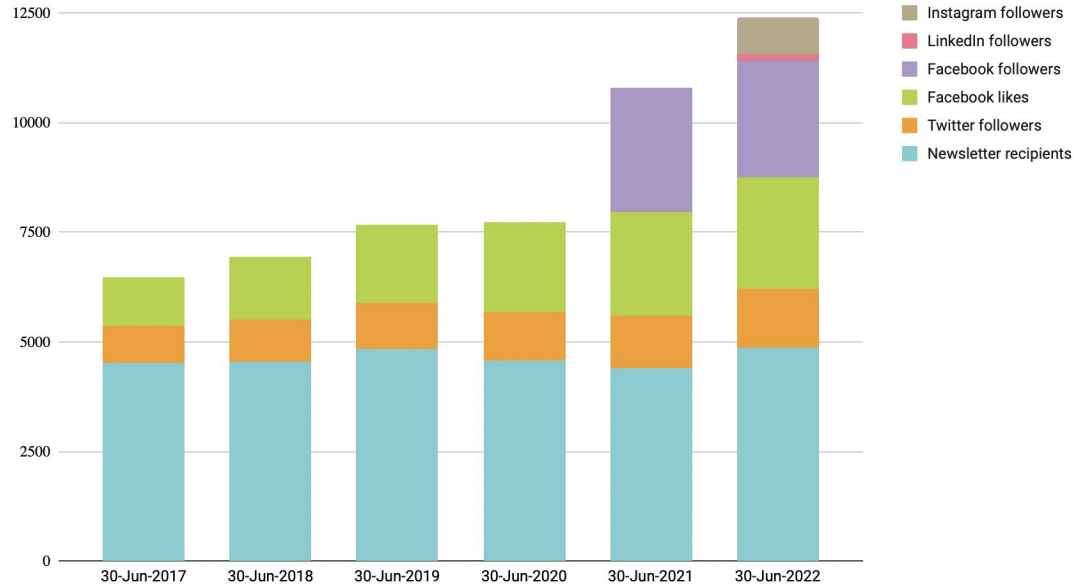
- 34 member group newsletters “Weekly Wrap”
- 10 supporter newsletters “Yellow Box”
- 17 “blogs” including opinion pieces and media releases
- 34 media appearances
- Social media - Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn
- 8 Campaign emails

Media Appearances 2021-2022



Communications

Social Media



Key grant-funded projects



Additional \$45k grant awarded for 2022–2023 to focus on giving up gas cooking



Project finalised in June 2022 with 4 workplaces completed, including Early childhood Australia and Icon Water. Program was disrupted due to COVID lock down and slow return to work. TCCS indicated initial interest in leveraging off program.

3. Maintain a strong and resilient organisation

Member group engagement

Working Groups

- Biodiversity Working Group
- Lawson Working Group

Ongoing and proactive consultation with member groups in regards to development of submissions and advocacy work.

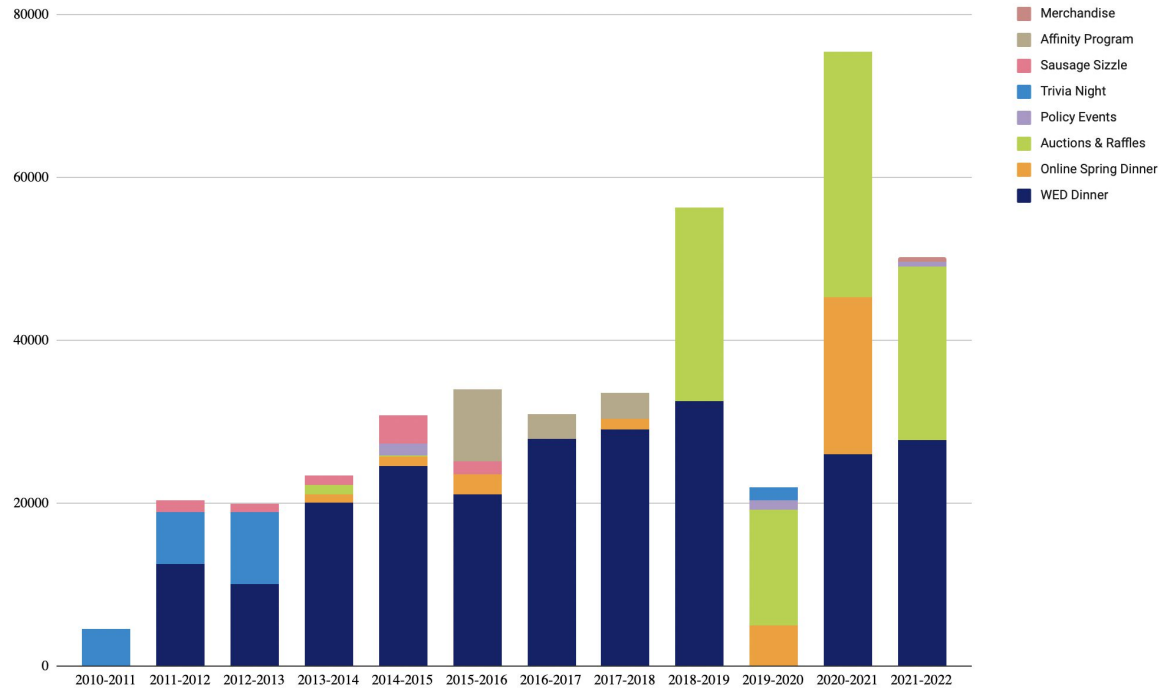
Partnership community engagement work with member groups including Canberra Environment Centre, SEE-Change, Pedal Power, Friends of Grasslands, ACT Electric Vehicle Assoc.

Fundraising – update

- Live events continued to be challenging.
- Held World Environment Day Dinner in June 2022 – return to previous model, numbers were lower, and bookings slower to come in.
- Good fundraising capacity.
- Small growth in regular donor income.
- Growth in one-off donations over past two years, with notable major donations.



Events income (incl merchandise)

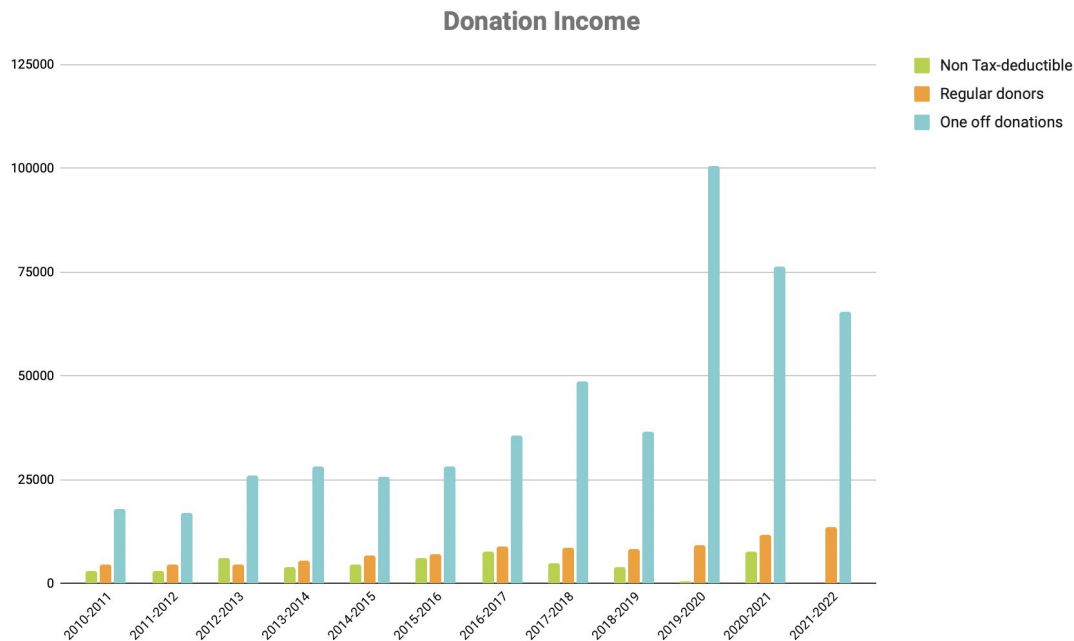


Donor income

*Of note that in 2019 & 2020 we received two substantial donations that totalled \$60k.

One off donations in 2021-2022 appear to have declined as a result, however, are still significantly higher than 2018-19 and any year prior to this.

The number of individual one off donors increased from 212 people to 387 people, important moving forward.



Organisation

- Staffing challenges due to skills shortages, high mobility, COVID related shifts.
- Lost dedicated Fundraising and Events position – new focus required by ED to drive forward.
- Capacity reduced on FR & comms in first half of 2022.
- Commenced update of policies and procedures – ongoing at organisational level
- Ongoing upskilling and development of staff.



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"At a time when we need to reimagine a better future, we understand that the changes we need will only happen with the collective support of our community."





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