Mulloon Institute

For environment, farming and society.

Annual Report

2024

“Nature is the greatest teacher”

Uncle Max Dulumunmun Harrison

CONTENTS

About us 1
Chair Message 2
CEO Report 5
Mulloon Law Committee 9
Science Advisory Committee 11
Mulloon Creek Natural Farms 12
Mulloon Consulting 15
Learning Programs 16
Where we work 18
Sustainable Development Goals 19
Mulloon Rehydration Initiative 20
Beyond the Back Fence 23
Queensland 23
Australian Capital Territory 24
Tasmania 27
South Australia 28
Western Australia 31
Queensland 32
Victoria 35
MRI Conference 2024 36
Marketing-Communications Report 38
Legacy of Environmental Innovation 40
Mulloon Finance Report 41
Financial Statements 42
Our Supporters 64

Mulloon Institute acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the places in which we work and honours the deep cultural, social, environmental, spiritual and economic connection they share with their lands and water.

About us

Mulloon Institute is a celebrated global leader in landscape rehydration and restoration, at the property and catchment scales.

Our world-class scientific research, education and capacity building programs are creating the evidence-based knowledge required for farmers and First Nations peoples to design and create resilient, productive and profitable farming landscapes and to heal Country and build stronger and more cohesive communities.

Mulloon Institute unlocks a systems approach to landscape restoration. The focus is on the capacity of a landscape to retain and cycle its vital resources, recover from shocks (drought, bushfire and flood), restore biodiversity, soil health, water quality, agricultural productivity and maintain resilience.

Our work has been acknowledged by the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network and we actively work towards helping achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

We are committed to building resilient rural and regional communities by supporting the long term, sustainable growth of Australian agriculture.

Vision

As global leaders in landscape restoration, we aim to rehydrate landscapes using world-class scientific research, education and demonstration in partnership with rural communities, First Nations and collaborators to rebuild climate-resilient landscapes that provide food and water security and support healthy ecosystems.

Mission

We actively demonstrate, validate and share landscape rehydration learning, expertise and skills to deliver restoration and nature repair to meet the challenges of climate change and create sustainable, profitable, and resilient agricultural and environmental systems, now and into the future.

Actions

We will promote the repair of landscape function through the delivery of landscape rehydration infrastructure, conducting research, educating the public and supporting farmers and First Nations communities to heal country and adapt to climate change.

Values

We are an innovative, collaborative, and community-oriented organisation that operates with principle and accountability, maintains a strong commercial focus, embraces ambition and entrepreneurship, and is deeply committed to First Nations engagement.

Mulloon Institute
For environment, farming and society.

PO Box 126, Bungendore NSW 2621 AUSTRALIA
info@mullooninstitute.org | mullooninstitute.org

Front cover & inside cover photos by Soils For Life, at the Boots on Ground day in the Swan Brook catchment, Northern Tablelands, NSW.

Chair Message

Matt Egerton-Warburton
CHAIR

Mulloon Institute
For environment, farming and society.

Mulloon Institute continues to grow and is becoming a significant national organisation that is now attracting further international recognition.

Our revenue from delivery of services grew 26% in the 2024 financial year to $2.3m with on ground works now planned and/or delivered in most states and territories around the country.

STRATEGY, VISION AND SUCCESS

Our strategy and vision is clear – to repair and rehydrate landscapes.

To deliver our strategy we:

- have a team of landscape planners and engineers within Mulloon Consulting to plan and repair landscapes
- partner with scientists to study the results of our interventions, report our findings and provide the data to improve our techniques
- have a team of educators to build the capacity of land managers, and communication specialists to get our message to the community
- manage our farms to produce highly nutritious and sustainable eggs and beef
- work with the Mulloon Law Committee to lobby governments to reduce the regulatory burden in order to facilitate landscape repair
- have a capable Executive to advance the organisation whilst at the same time maintaining strong systems and internal controls.

Success occurs when we:

- repair and rehydrate 2.5 million hectares of land
- produce high quality scientific papers and data that impact and influence academics, professionals and institutions
- positively change how our farmers and land managers build and care for their natural capital
- run a profitable, sustainable and healthy farm using our practices,
- reduce the significant compliance and regulatory burdens imposed by governments to conduct our work.

To achieve success, we need to grow and maintain the confidence of our stakeholders – which includes our members, farmers, First Nations groups, governments, academics, environmental groups, land managers and water authorities. In 2025 we plan to continue building on our reputation as an organisation that is visionary, practical, scientific and commercial.

2024

2024 was a year of transition for our board. Gary organised his transition off the board, I was appointed as Chair and we appointed Wilf Finn to the board. While we miss Gary's counsel, Wilf has been a significant contributor and presence

Above: The life of The Hon. Gary Nairn AO was commemorated with a State Funeral at The Barn, Home Farm, Mulloon.

on our board. The new board has benefitted from working from the strategic foundations Gary created.

Throughout the 2024 financial year, Carolyn and the team worked hard on applying for substantial, long term grant funding. It is pleasing to announce that early in the 2025 financial year we were able to win those grants that will help secure the financial health of the organisation for many years. We have also entered into a long-term partnership with WaterNSW to deliver an innovative, community-led water stewardship program. Mulloon Institute has built a reputation with government of delivering on its commitments and we have been able to attract new grant funding as a result of this hard-earned reputation.

Jono and the Mulloon Consulting team are the engine room of our organisation – they do the work of repairing landscapes. 2024 was a year of planning, stability and growth for Mulloon Consulting, and our challenge for 2025 will be to deliver our current projects and grow a substantial pipeline of significant new projects.

Jim and his team have worked hard all year managing the farms. Jim has shown strength and resilience in both his plans to grow and manage our successful egg enterprise, and to overcome a series of major hurdles this year. We appreciate his dogged spirit, and we are providing him with the financial resources to fulfil our vision of a significant, profitable and sustainable farm and egg enterprise.

As an organisation we gain great credibility through solid science. Carolyn, Peter and the team hosted the successful Mulloon Rehydration Conference in May where we showcased almost 20 years of data from our work rehabilitating and repairing 50kms of the Mulloon Creek.

We are conscious that it is not enough to do great science, we need to do great science communication. We are always looking at new and innovative ways to package and deliver our message to our various audiences. I encourage you to view the innovative "Water in Healthy Landscapes "five-part YouTube series, produced by Dr Laura Fisher and our education team for an example of our creativity and vision.

While difficult to measure, we feel our message and our profile has grown considerably this year through the excellent messaging and constant flow of information provided by Carolyn, Rob Langtry, Cass Moore, Peter Hazell, Laura Fisher, Tam Connor, Jono Forrest, Lance Mudgway and others. We speak at seminars, we publish papers, we conduct bootcamps, we host schools, we champion local heroes, we grow our networks, and we are always looking for new and innovative ways to get our message to our intended audiences. This year we have even gone global with Carolyn representing the organisation in Zambia.

2025

In 2025 we plan to:

- expand our footprint throughout Australia by implementing on ground works and educating landholders
- improve our philanthropic strategy
- grow our commercial sponsorships
- continue to advocate for tangible legislative and regulatory changes
- achieve strong growth in our farm and consulting businesses
- produce a document showing the proof points that support the many benefits of our work
- grow our board, filling our identified skills gaps.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

We have this opportunity because of the substantial philanthropic gifts of Tony and Toni Coote and their generosity in establishing this unique Institution. We hope we honour their gift through our work.

Our love and support go to Gary's wife Rose and his children Ben, Deborah and Halo along with their broader families. It was a great honour to stand next to them in grief and celebration to host Gary's memorial event at the Mulloon Home Farm. Thank you for allowing Gary to spend so much time with us over the years.

To my fellow directors – Carolyn, Kathy and Wilf – thanks for all the meetings, the discussions and the hard work. It has been a year. You have served the organisation well and you have my thanks.

To our members – as a board we are your representatives. Please think creatively about how you can support our organisation in 2025 and together let's fulfil our vision to rehydrate and repair Australia.

Regards

Matt Egerton-Warburton
Chair

Below: Some of the Mulloon team celebrating the successful Mulloon Rehydration Conference in The Barn, Home Farm, Mulloon.

CEO Report

Carolyn Hall
CEO MANAGING DIRECTOR

Mulloon Institute
For environment, farming and society.

This year, Mulloon Institute has made significant progress in strengthening the key elements needed to scale landscape rehydration and restoration.

Our efforts have been focused on advancing our science and research program, expanding educational and capacity building initiatives, fostering strategic partnerships, and establishing demonstration sites. Despite challenges—including the loss of our Chairman, Gary Nairn AO, and significant financial constraints—the Institute has remained committed to its mission. This year, the following key themes have defined our work:

- resilience
- partnerships
- growth
- recognition.

RESILIENCE

Mulloon Institute faced a difficult year with the passing of our Chairman, Gary Nairn AO, in June 2024, following a courageous battle with cancer. Gary's unwavering belief in, and advocacy for, our mission remained evident until the end. In recognition of his extraordinary contributions, Motions of Condolence were passed in both the Australian House of Representatives and the Senate. His life and legacy were further celebrated in a State Memorial held at Home Farm in November 2024, fulfilling one of his final wishes.

Our challenges continued with a significant decline in philanthropic support, and flood and pests impacting our farming operations. In response to these challenges, we have remained focused on our core work of landscape restoration, embodying the resilience that Gary championed. His definition of resilience "recovering strength and spirit quickly"— remains an apt description of both our work and our organisation's ability to adapt and continue moving forward in the face of adversity.

PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships have continued to play a vital role in Mulloon Institute's success. In November 2023, we made our debut on Channel 7's Morning Show, made possible through the generous support of our corporate partner, Vitasoy Australia. This partnership has flourished, with Vitasoy's new CEO, Sange Iyer, reaffirming the company's commitment to supporting our initiatives. New strategic partnerships have also been forged with Aurecon and Australian Wool Innovation, both of which align with our shared focus on sustainability and building natural capital.

Our longstanding collaboration with Agronomeye has been revitalised through the development of a landscape rehydration concept plan on the AgTwin platform. We have also strengthened our partnership with Back to Country, established by the late Uncle Max Dulumunmun Harrison, widely respected elder of the Yuin Nation and good friend of our late founder Tony Coote AM. Grant funding from the Australian Government will support a broader First Nations engagement program across Australia in coming years.

Above: Welcome to Country by Paul Girrawah House to open the Mulloon Rehydration Conference, May 2024. ©Nviro Media

Below: Celebrating the life of The Hon. Gary Nairn AO at The Barn, Home Farm, Mulloon.

A key partnership was formed in 2024 with WaterNSW, to support an innovative community-led water stewardship program. This initiative, underpinned by funding from WaterNSW and a grant from the Ian Potter Foundation, aims to drive collaborative landscape-scale projects that empower communities to restore local water cycles, improve water quality, and enhance catchment health.

GROWTH

Mulloon Institute's strategic planning process has underscored the need for growth, particularly through the expansion of strategic partnerships. Our central mission remains the restoration of Australian agricultural landscapes through landscape rehydration. However, in order to scale this work to meet the challenges posed by a changing climate, growth is essential. This includes expanding Mulloon Consulting, increasing the scale of our projects, and broadening the scope of our partnerships.

This year, the increase in revenue reflects this focus on growth. We welcomed new team members and have focused on securing larger projects to foster a more sustainable financial model for the Institute. Additionally, we have made significant investments in infrastructure across our farms to support expansion of our egg and beef cattle enterprises.

Importantly, we have continued to focus on the culture of our organisation, making Mulloon a place where people feel heard and valued as well as making a significant contribution to our shared future.

RECOGNITION

In 2024, Mulloon Institute received public recognition for its contributions to sustainability. We were finalists in the Nature Positive category of the National Banksia Sustainability Awards. The Mulloon Rehydration Initiative was also Highly Commended in the NSW Landcare Awards in the NSW Government Climate Innovation category.

On the international stage, the Institute received global recognition. In June 2024, I was part of a delegation to Zambia, funded by the Gates Foundation, to advocate for the implementation of an education program and demonstration site aimed at assisting Zambian farmers experiencing severe drought and famine.

Recognition of our work continues to grow with Government Agencies and Ministers across the States and at the federal level. Strategic relationship building with Ministers and key advisors has contributed to increased understanding of the benefits of our work. Despite widespread calls for regulatory reform to support landscape restoration, further regulatory reform remains elusive and so the Mulloon Law Committee continues its important work.

OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

A key highlight of 2024 was the completion of the Australian Government's NLP2 funding program for the Mulloon Rehydration Initiative. This culminated in a highly successful conference in May 2024, where we welcomed 180 delegates to the Bicentennial Hall in Queanbeyan and our farms. The conference provided valuable insights into the latest scientific research, regulatory reforms, and case studies of landscape rehydration from across Australia.

Our commitment to education and capacity building was further strengthened with funding from the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund for our Communities of Practice Project (CoPP). This allowed us to deliver a series of nation-wide boot camps, mentoring programs, and professional intensives, as well as First Nations engagement around water stewardship. These initiatives laid the groundwork for the successful Climate-Smart Agriculture First Nations Water Stewardship Certificate program.

In addition to these highlights, Mulloon Consulting has seen continued success, grant and partnership funding has increased, and our strategic planning process has resulted in a clear pathway for future growth.

Above: The Regenerative Agriculture and Livestock Delegation to Zambia from left to right: Cristina Talacko, CEO of Coalition for Conservation, Deane Belfield, a regenerative farmer and Director of Regenerative Farmers Australia, His Excellency Ambassador Dr Elias Munshya, Carolyn Hall and Miss Felistus.

Whilst this report is about the 2024 financial year so much has already happened in the 2025 financial year at the time of writing. This includes:

- regulatory approval by the NSW Government of the Carwoola Landscape Rehydration project
- two successful grant applications under the Australian Government Climate-Smart Agriculture Program
- attendance at the Ecosystem Leadership Program Asia Pacific 2024
- co-presentation of the Economics of Drought report with the Economics of Land Degradation Initiative (ELD) and partners at COP16 of the UNCCD Convention to Combat Desertification in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia in December 2024.

We will continue to focus on growth in the coming year, with a concentration on expanding philanthropic support for our work.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to our Mulloon Institute and Mulloon Consulting team members, our work is possible because of you. Thanks to the Mulloon Creek Natural Farms team and Jim Steele General Manager MCNF who have faced adversity this year, we look forward to working together. To the executive leadership team including Kathy Kelly, Jono Forrest and Nolani McColl, and to my fellow Board Directors Kathy Kelly, Wilfred Finn and Matt Egerton-Warburton for their dedication and hard work in turning the vision of Mulloon Institute into a reality.

Thank you.

Carolyn Hall
CEO Managing Director

Mulloon Law Committee

Matt Egerton-Warburton
CHAIR

When I first met the late Gary Nairn AO in 2019, he stated that one of the major impediments for landscape rehydration was the burdensome regulatory hurdles encountered when seeking to place leaky weirs in our creeks and streams.

As a result we established the Mulloon Law Committee in 2019 to advise the Mulloon Institute on strategies to reduce significant and burdensome government approvals needed for implementing catchment remediation projects.

The committee met monthly in 2023-24 with regular attendees including Matt Egerton-Warburton (Chair), Carolyn Hall, Wilfred Finn, Dr Gerry Bates, Jamie Kerr, Peter Hazell, Dr Emma Carmody and Dr Laura Fisher. We also entertained a variety of other academics, regulators and lawyers.

We had two main focusses in 2023-24 – implementing the National Landscape Rehydration Code and having our works declared as not "impounding" water in NSW.

LANDSCAPE REHYDRATION CODE

The major hurdle we face in repairing our creeks and streams is (ironically) environmental, planning, water and heritage regulation. The very laws meant to protect our natural assets are currently acting to prevent environmental repair.

To solve this problem, the Mulloon Law Committee (principal authors Dr Gerry Bates and Dr Laura Fisher) published the Proposal for a National Code of Practice for Landscape Rehydration & Restoration in early 2023. The concept is that farmers and communities who place Code compliant landscape rehydration structures into their creeks and streams are exempt from the need to receive approvals from various state departments and local governments. They can simply place Code compliant structures in their creeks and streams to repair and rehydrate their land.

Our legal experts believe this is a neat solution to a complicated problem. We now need to convince our politicians and regulators to implement the Code.

We have spent a lot of time this year reaching out to and lobbying regulators, politicians and the media to have either the NSW or Federal governments implement the Code. At a federal level we have met with senior representatives from Ministers Plibersek's and Watts' offices as well as David Littleproud, Senator Perin Davey (Federal Shadow Water Minister), Senator Jonno Duniam (Federal Shadow Environment Minister), Senator David Pocock and others. We have also reached out to Independents and the Greens.

At the NSW level we have met with Minister Sharpe (Environment), Minister Jackson (Water), Deputy Environment Minister Trish Doyle and senior advisors to these ministers and the Cabinet Office. From the NSW opposition we

have met with Stephanie Cook (NSW Shadow Water Minister), Scott Farlow MLC (NSW Shadow Planning Minister), the Hon. Michael Kemp (Member for Oxley) and the Hon. Tim James (Member for Willoughby).

Most politicians think the Code is a great idea but our environment needs their positive action. We have a nature positive, community empowering solution and we now need our politicians to embrace this opportunity and have their departments enact and implement the Code. We will continue to push this opportunity in 2024-25.

A big thank you to all the members of the committee for their time and commitment to the cause. We will continue to work hard for a significant breakthrough in 2024-25.

Matt Egerton-Warburton
Chair

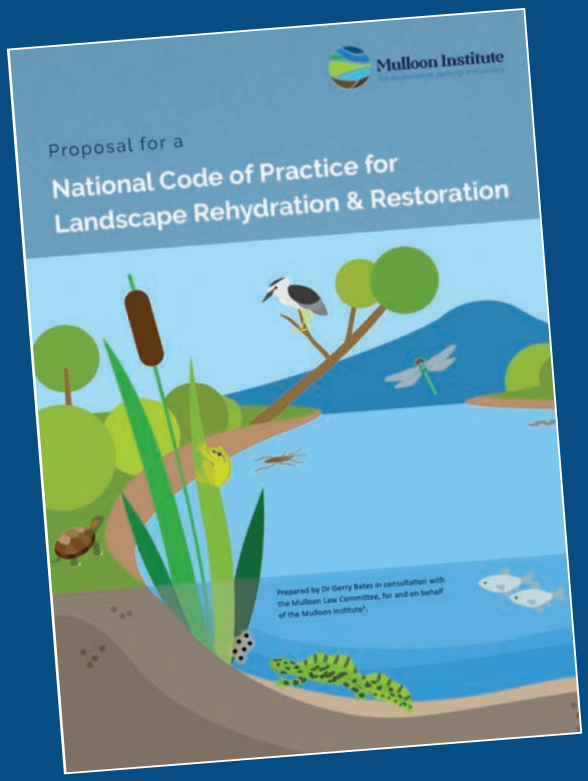
IMPOUNDING WATER

The NSW Water Minister can make a declaration that our landscape rehydration infrastructure works are not impoundment under the NSW Water Management Act. This declaration will smooth the way for regulatory approval under Water Sharing Plans across the State and give our regulators certainty in the determination process.

Claire Smith of Clayton Utz has drafted a significant, learned paper on this issue which we will supply to Minister Jackson (Water) and Minister Sharpe (Environment). Claire argues that since our works are permeable and only operate to slow, not stop, water, and the plain English definition of "impoundment" means "complete confinement" or "complete barrier", there is a strong argument our works do not meet the definition of impoundment.

We hope for a positive response.

Thank you Claire and Clayton Utz for your pro bono support.



FURTHER INFORMATION

- State Environmental Planning Policy Amendment (Miscellaneous) (No 2) 2022

  https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/pdf/asmade/epi-2022-742

- National Code

  https://themullooninstitute.org/advocacy#MLC-papers

  https://themullooninstitute.org/mlc-rfp

Science Advisory Committee

Emeritus Professor Stephen Dovers
SCIENCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHAIR

Mulloon Institute's Science Advisory Committee (SAC) was established over a decade ago to provide independent, expert advice on Mulloon Institute research and monitoring.

The Institute values the best available science, and generates knowledge to inform and enable our own initiatives and those of other groups.

OUR EXPERTISE

Committee members are qualified in disciplines including ecology, hydrology, agriculture, food and nutrition, geology, plant sciences, natural resource management and climate adaptation. They serve on a voluntary basis and are affiliated with universities, other research organisations and land management agencies. Members review reports, assist with funding applications, and advise on technical matters, extension and partnerships. The SAC meets quarterly with Institute staff attending in ex-officio capacities.

MULLOON REHYDRATION INITIATIVE (MRI)

In 2024 effort has focused on reviewing the MRI monitoring system and reviewing data sets – the Mulloon catchment is arguably the most comprehensively studied catchment in Australia. Long term ecological monitoring requires years of data to detect responses, and recent droughts and floods have complicated data collection and analysis. In October, over twenty researchers and staff met, and now are planning reporting of results thus far, to be submitted for peer review.

The very intensive monitoring system for the MRI is evidencing the benefits of Landscape Rehydration, but will be difficult to afford for the many rehydration projects across Australia. The MRI experience will inform the new Institute project to establish more accessible approaches – Landscape Function Toolkit: Equipping Australia with a Systems-Approach to Landscape Climate Resilience (LiFT).

PUBLICATIONS

The SAC is dedicated to the wide dissemination of research findings from the MRI, with monitoring reports publicly available on the Mulloon institute website, covering topics including frogs, aquatic invertebrates, fish and hydrology: https://www.mullooninstitute.org/baseline-surveys-ongoing-monitoring

A description of the MRI and its monitoring is available in a 2022 peer reviewed article: https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/emr.12549

82 GROUNDWATER BORES

66 SURFACE WATER MEASURE SITES

2 AUTOMATED WEATHER STATIONS

65 ECOLOGY TRANSECTS

Mulloon Creek Natural Farms

SOUTHERN TABLELANDS, NSW
Ngunnawal, Ngambri, Yuin, Ngarigo
& Gundungurra Country

Jim Steele
MCNF GENERAL MANAGER

Mulloon
CREEK NATURAL FARMS

The 2024 financial year presented unprecedented challenges for the Mulloon Farms, yet demonstrated our remarkable resilience and adaptability.

Despite facing significant natural and biological threats, we emerged stronger and better positioned for future growth.

NATURAL DISASTERS

The Boxing Day floods of 2023 brought historic levels of devastation to our operations, particularly affecting our northern paddocks. The impact was most severe along Sandhills Creek, a tributary flowing into Mulloon Creek at our Duralla property. This event, unprecedented in local records, coincided with ongoing challenges from fox predation that affected our egg production. However, our farm team's dedication enabled us to rebuild infrastructure and restore our flocks. A fortunate decision to purchase pullets instead of day-old chicks proved invaluable during this recovery period, with new sixteen-week-old chickens arriving in early January 2024.

BIOSECURITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT

The detection of H7N8 strain Avian Influenza in Canberra during June 2024 prompted us to enhance our biosecurity protocols. We implemented more stringent protective measures and initiated planning for upgraded chicken housing facilities. These improvements align with our commitment to maintaining the highest standards of animal health and safety.

OPERATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS

We completed several significant capital projects during the year, including:

- an expanded brooding facility
- enhanced predator exclusion fencing
- fnalisation of the implementation of an off-grid solar system at Duralla
- installation of an on-site grain mill for custom feed production.

Our investment in feed-milling capabilities has given us precise control over nutrition content, allowing us to optimise feed formulations based on specific flock requirements.

MARKET POSITION AND PRODUCTION

Mulloon Creek Eggs has experienced continued growth in production volumes, positioning us advantageously during industry-wide egg shortages resulting from the phase-out of caged eggs and avian influenza impacts. Our partnership with Harris Farm Markets remains strong as our primary retail channel.

ECOLOGICAL HEALTH

The MCNF annual Ecological Outcomes Verification report by Australian Holistic Management CoOp for our 5th year indicates continued improvements and positive increases across all areas giving us an Ecological Health Index rating of high. The results are very pleasing and new initiatives are planned to increase our index further by undertaking corrections to the mineral cycle and adding to our biodiversity.

CATTLE OPERATIONS

During the 2024 financial year our focus was to reduce the age of our herd. This was achieved with the successful sale of 130 aged PTIC cows. Whilst our breeder numbers are down in the short term, our age structure is more sustainable and our projection of 250 breeders will be achieved in 2025. Steer weaner sales were again well supported with strong demand and above average prices being realised.

STRATEGIC OUTLOOK

Looking ahead, our capital investment strategy focuses on modernising our mobile chicken housing infrastructure. This two-year program will enhance operational efficiency in egg collection while strengthening biosecurity measures and improving predator protection. These improvements will support both flock health and productivity, ensuring sustainable growth for our operations.

Additional capital works are planned across the farms including upgrades to stock fences and water systems which will enable greater grazing capacity and more efficient utilisation of our pastures with improved holistic grazing methods.

Above: 8km of exclusion fencing has been put in place to protect our chickens from predators

Above: The state of the art Nabel egg grading and packing machine has helped position us as a market leader with our egg sales at Harris Farm Markets

Mulloon Consulting

Jono Forrest
GENERAL MANAGER

Mulloon
CONSULTING

With ongoing wet conditions across a lot of the areas where we work, it was a very quiet year in terms of construction activity.

The only exception was projects near Crookwell and Braidwood in NSW. Otherwise, we remained reasonably busy with design work and completed all remaining aspects of the NT Centralian Project.

The team have also been very busy delivering our Learning Programs (plus the development of an online learning module for one of our clients), as covered in the Education report.

In May our team assisted with the Mulloon Rehydration Initiative (MRI) Conference, both with logistics, but also some of the presentations. This was a great opportunity to not only showcase the MRI, but also communicate more broadly about the work we're doing as an organisation.

Some specific work of interest for Mulloon Consulting includes the following:

- Working with the Western Murray Land Improvement Group (WMLIG) on design of landscape rehydration infrastructure to support the restoration of Sheepwash Lagoon as part of a Landscape Impact Program than they have developed with Regen Farmers Mutual.
- Designs for the restoration of a section of Larry's Creek near the ACT, which is an extension of other work we've done in the past at Tidbinbilla Station.
- Catchment plan and working with individual landholders on property plans in the Gabby Quoi Quoi catchment near Konnongorring in WA.
- Working with Councils (Armidale NSW and Townsville Qld) that have taken an interest in the positive impact of landscape rehydration on the health of their catchments.

Sam Skeat left our team during the year, but fortunately, he has been contracting to us to continue our projects in Queensland. New team member, Annabel Manning has a keen interest in regenerative agriculture and is settling in nicely.

The rest of our effort was in securing work and Grant opportunities for the FY25 year (and beyond) and we're very eager to share our stories of that work going forward.

Left: Participants in the CoPP Bootcamp at Old Cameron Downs in the Northern Territory surveying a stream channel using a dumpy level

Learning Programs

Tam Connor
LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Dr Laura Fisher
CREATIVE ADAPTION & PARTNERSHIPS

With Learning Programs now well established, the team hit the road delivering 21 Field Days and seven Bootcamps to more than 650 people in communities across six States and Territories, including Communities of Practice Project locations.

We presented at six conferences and webinars to over 400 Landcarers, educators, and farmers, and engaged with schools and advocacy groups at Mulloon Farms.

COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE PROJECT

Our 'Communities of Practice Project' is working alongside five farming communities in NSW, QLD, VIC, NT, and WA to upskill land managers and natural resource professionals in planning, designing, and undertaking landscape rehydration projects using low-risk, nature-based solutions for greater drought resilience. Utilising our Programs' scaffolded learning journey, this 2-year project (2023-25) consists of field days, bootcamps, mentoring programs, and on-ground community events thanks to funding from the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund.

In this first year of the project, we delivered 10 field days and bootcamps at all locations, with 36 properties continuing with one-on-one support in the mentoring program. Several projects have been completed and implemented by the land managers, with community leaders and mentees beginning to report some great results.

For the first time, we delivered a Professionals' Intensive 4-day course, achieving a significant milestone with 29 natural resource managers receiving technical training and building a social network amongst the cohort.

The NSW community held a highly successful and well-attended 'Boots On Ground' community event. The Soils for Life video captured the heart of this community's enthusiasm and positive impact and illuminated Mulloon's commitment to fostering ongoing relationships for the benefit of catchments and communities.

TOURS & SITE VISITS

Mulloon's farm welcomed over 600 secondary, tertiary, and vocational students for an interactive experience learning how to restore landscape function that benefits ecological and enterprise outcomes. We also hosted ten tours for 50 people learning about our vital advocacy work.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION

The NSW Environmental Trust funded Landscape Rehydration Capacity Building: developing curriculum project has progressed this year. We have been actively implementing the landscape rehydration curriculum we developed to assist landholders to improve landscape function and resilience. A cohort of 20 landholders are involved in the project with 15 having completed works on their properties, and the remaining five engaged in our mentoring program.

CREATIVE SCIENCE & CURRICULUM RESOURCES

The year saw us finalise our Citizen Science grant funded by the Australian Government Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources, and

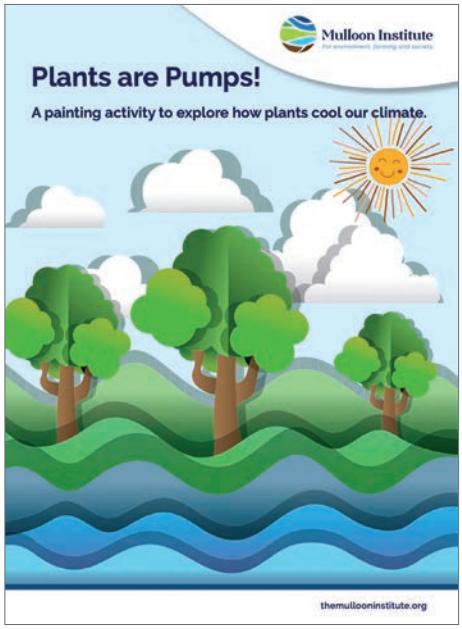
bring to fruition many fantastic resources created in collaboration with talented artists and designers. These included two educational publications 'Creating Models to Learn About Landscapes' and 'Plants are Pumps!', freely available on our website and a vivid Water Cycle poster painted with... watercolour!

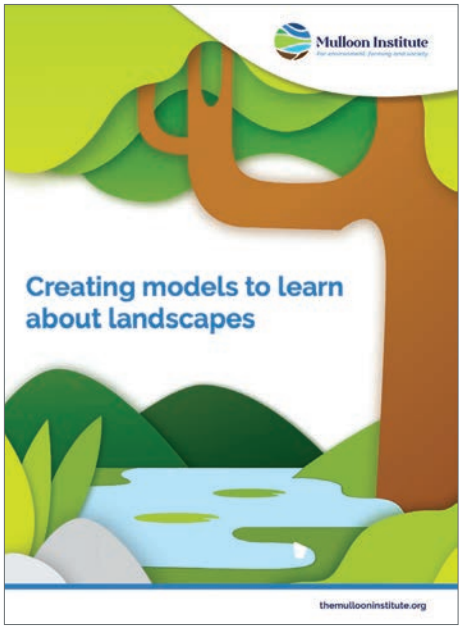
In addition, a range of expertly made interactive hydrology and geomorphology models are now seeing plenty of action in our learning programs. They include a mini-Mulloon landscape that can pump water, illustrating typical land degradation patterns and a range of solutions, two clay silt models and an innovative knitted floodplain model based on soil core samples created by ANU design students.

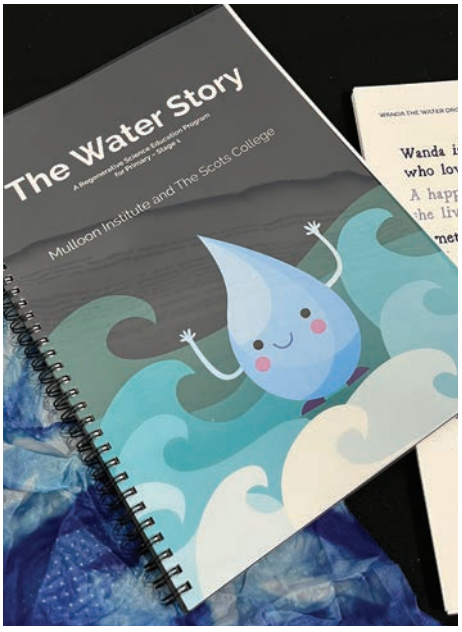
Perhaps most exciting of all is our vibrant new animation series, wedding science and story to highlight key processes such as erosion/ deposition, the small water cycle and soil infiltration.

And finally, 'The Water Story' – a 94-page, comprehensive 10-week program for primary school teachers, created in partnership with The Scots College, was also finished and is available for download.

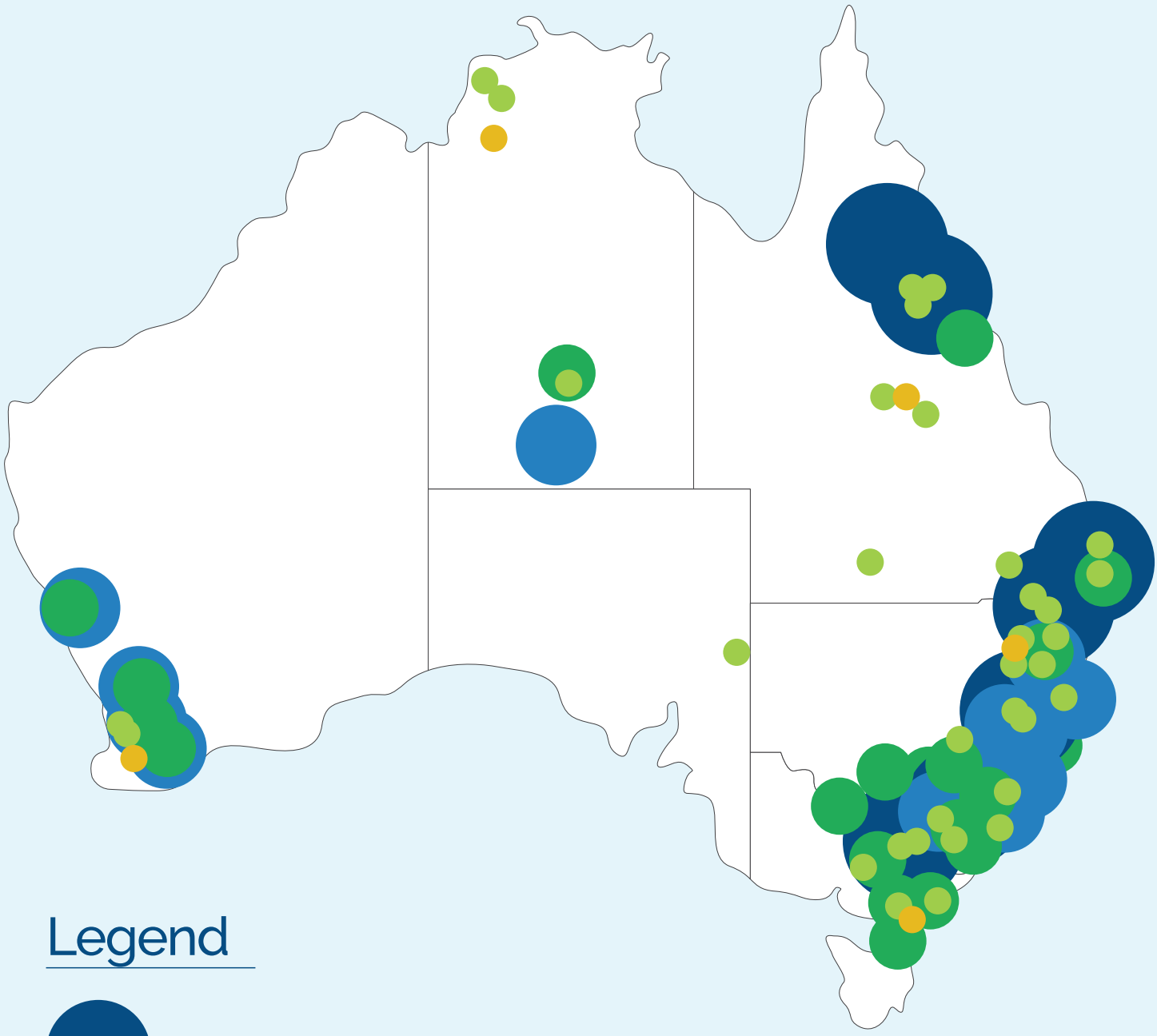
Clockwise from top left: Watercolour Water Cycle poster; modules Plants are Pumps! and Creating models to learn about landscapes. The Water Story (these are available for download from our website: https://www.mullooninstitute.org/learning-community), Gary McGuigan, Tam and Laura present the mini-Mulloon model, and Erin and Peter present at the first Professionals Intensive bootcamp.







Where we work



Legend

- CATCHMENT SCALE PROJECTS
- ON-GROUND WORKS
- PROJECTS
- WORKSHOPS
- COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

Note: icons representative only and NOT drawn to scale.

Map updated March 2025.

Sustainable Development Goals

Our landscape rehydration and regeneration work around Australia is working towards many of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals.

SDG2 – Zero Hunger

Restoring natural landscape function revitalises ecosystems and boosts landscape resilience to climatic extremes. Implementing regenerative agriculture progressively improves land and soil quality and ensures ongoing nutrient dense food production.

SDG3 Health and Wellbeing

Rebuilding landscapes and revitalising wetlands recreates natural filtration systems that keep waterways clean for healthier landscapes and healthier food production.

SDG4 – Quality Education

We educate farmers in landscape rehydration and regenerative agriculture, with a comprehensive training manual created and plans for digital learning opportunities.

SDG6 – Clean Water and Sanitation

Our work rehydrates landscapes and rebuilds natural landscape function, using creek interventions that slow and filter water flow, increasing its quality and abundance.

SDG11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities

Regenerating landscapes protects and safeguards them for future generations. Restoring natural landscape function boosts its resilience to climatic extremes. Training landholders in regenerative and sustainable agriculture helps them to adapt to a changing climate and mitigate its effects.

SDG13 – Climate Action

We rebuild and regenerate landscapes for enhanced climate change resilience through soil carbon sequestration. We educate farmers in rehydrating and restoring landscapes using regenerative agriculture.

SDG14 – Life Below Water

We provide important habitat for a range of aquatic flora and fauna by restoring eroded waterways and transforming them into healthy, vibrant and complex ecosystems.

SDG15 – Life on Land

Rebuilding the catchment's natural functionality and resilience supports threatened and vulnerable species, including eleven threatened bird species and two threatened frog species.

SDG17 – Partnerships for the Goals

Our strong partnerships include the UNSDSN, key Australian universities, First Nations groups, state-based NRMs, the National Landcare Network, federal, state and local government agencies, NGOs, community groups, industry bodies and landholders.

Mulloon Rehydration Initiative

SOUTHERN TABLELANDS, NSW
Ngunnawal, Ngambri, Yuin, Ngarigo
& Gundungurra Country

Peter Hazell
PRINCIPAL LANDSCAPE PLANNER

The Mulloon Rehydration Initiative (MRI) reached a significant milestone in 2024 with the successful completion and acquittal of the Commonwealth funded $3.5m Landcare Smart Farms Grant.

Commencing in 2019, this grant enabled Mulloon Institute to plan and complete many leaky weir structures on several Mulloon properties, set up its catchment-wide monitoring array to determine the effectiveness of rebuilding the function of Mulloon catchment with leaky weirs, and to further develop its now Australia-wide capacity building program. The MRI has been a transformational project which has captured the imagination of the public.

In May 2024, Mulloon Institute held its inaugural conference in Queanbeyan, NSW, attended by nearly 200 guests, to showcase the results of the MRI and to demonstrate how this multi-landholder, catchment-scale project has also propelled the Institute into multiple arenas. Since the MRI's inception in 2014, the Institute's onground and capacity-building activities have expanded to every State and Territory in Australia. The MRI has highlighted the mal adaptations in environmental law, which are creating barriers to environmental restoration throughout the country. This has led to the establishment of the Mulloon Law Committee and to some initial regulatory changes in NSW. The Law Committee is going further, proposing a national landscape rehydration code of practice.

The MRI has been featured on ABC's Australian Story and Landline. It has been the subject of multiple videos produced by like-minded groups such as Soils For Life, Nviro Media and Grow Love Project. As a flagship project, the MRI has helped the Mulloon Institute achieve notoriety throughout Australia for all the right reasons.

The MRI itself, however, is far from complete. It is intended to be a long-term, fully monitored catchment restoration project. Many interventions designed to slow the movement of water and rebuild landscape function remain to be constructed. Much fencing and many thousands of trees still need to be planted. Importantly, the landowners and managers in the Mulloon catchment need to continue to adapt their operations to ensure the environment continues to improve.

The extensive monitoring of the project is beginning to demonstrate the many benefits that come with rebuilding the function of the Mulloon catchment. As a result of the instream works, the multiple floods of the past four years have become fertility events again, not destructive events as floods these days so often are. 18 years worth of stream flow monitoring has demonstrated that the installation of around 60 leaky weirs so far has had no detrimental effect on flow and has most likely improved flows. Impoundment of stream flow is the number one concern for Water Authorities when approving or otherwise landscape rehydration initiatives. Directly addressing this concern with long-term stream flow monitoring of the project is a massive outcome.

Biodiversity measures are showing positive trends across all measures. Native fish numbers are up, invasives are down, frogs numbers and species richness are on the rise, waterbird numbers and species richness are on the rise, and invertebrate numbers are exploding. Native vegetation is rapidly regenerating once the creek is fenced and leaky weir structures put in place. It also appears as if the primary productivity of the Mulloon floodplain itself is on the rise. This has been identified with both satellite imagery and landholder observations.

Moving forward, there is still plenty of instream and other interventions, which we call natural infrastructure, to construct throughout the catchment, and landholder motivation needs to be maintained, so that catchment function continues to improve. Also of critical importance, though always difficult to find funds, is for the monitoring effort to continue into the long term.

SHOULD BENEFACTORS READ THIS REPORT, ANY SUPPORT WOULD BE GREATLY APPRECIATED AND ACKNOWLEDGED.

Top: Mulloon Creek at Westview, 2015

Bottom: Mulloon Creek at Westview, 2024

Above: Construction of a rock chute at Cadfor

Below: Recently constructed weir flowing over at Bungawarra

Beyond the Back Fence

LACHLAN RIVER CATCHMENT, NEW SOUTH WALES
Wiradjuri and Gundungurra Country

Construction of landscape repair projects designed to prevent erosion and reduce sediment loads contributing to the 170+ km sand slug in the Lachlan River.

Construction work was completed at two separate properties within the Lachlan River catchment this year at Cadfor, on Binda Vale Creek, and Bungawarra, on Grahams Creek. A key focus in the Lachlan River catchment has been to implement strategies that will reduce the high sediment and nutrient loads currently experienced. The formation of an extremely large sand slug in the Lachlan River has caused negative impacts across the system including poor water quality and the loss of habitat for numerous aquatic and terrestrial species. There are currently multiple government funded projects aimed at assisting landholders to implement erosion control measures and revegetation works to improve the health of the catchment.

The construction at Bungawarra was undertaken as part of a Hovells Creek Landcare Group Project. A series of six in-stream structures, including five rock weirs and one rock crossing, were designed to reduce stream power in an unnamed tributary flowing into Grahams Creek. These structures will be assisted by bank battering and revegetation works to halt erosion of the stream banks and increase sediment capture closer to the source.

Multiple failed erosion control projects at Cadfor have resulted in the formation of active headcuts and ongoing erosion of the highly vulnerable soils. The project involved extensive earthworks to construct new diversion banks, spillways and rock chute to divert water safely to a well vegetated and protected re-entry point in the creek. These interventions were designed to withstand a 5% AEP (Annual Exceedance Probability) design event. Repairs to the failed rock ramp were also undertaken to help convey water during high rainfall events.

Ongoing structure management and vegetation monitoring will ensure that the landscape rehydration works will provide ongoing benefits to the health and productivity of the property and wider catchment including:

- reduced sediment and nutrient load in waterways
- extending baseflow conditions and buffering peak floods
- enhanced aquatic and terrestrial habitat.

The works undertaken on these properties will serve as successful demonstrations of landscape rehydration and contribute to the goal of improving the health of the Lachlan River catchment.

THE ‘CADFOR’ PROJECT IS PRIVATELY FUNDED.
‘BUNGAWARRA’ IS FUNDED BY THE HOVELLS CREEK LANDCARE GROUP

Beyond the Back Fence

CANBERRA DEEP SPACE COMMUNICATIONS COMPLEX, AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY
Ngunnawal Country

Landscape rehydration works will involve the construction of 31 in-stream structures for flow control, bank battering for creek bank stability and extensive revegetation works.

The Canberra Deep Space Communications Complex (CDSCC) is a state-of-the-art research station operated by the CSIRO as part of NASA's Deep Space Network. It is located approximately 30 kilometres west of Tuggeranong in the ACT and sits on a 131-ha rural property.

Before the site was purchased in the 1960s to establish the research station, the property was predominately used for livestock grazing and cropping. The extensive clearing of land since the 1800s to allow for these industries has resulted in a dehydrated landscape, with a degraded creek bed and ongoing erosion causing a loss of nutrients and lowering of the water table.

Even though stock have been primarily excluded, and some revegetation works have been undertaken along the reach of the creek, there is still evidence of major erosion events occurring within the last five years.

To overcome the loss of landscape function on the property, Mulloon Consulting has developed a detailed design to install 31 in-stream structures and undertake earthworks to moderate the flow energy and stabilise the creek banks. The installation of these structures will be supported by revegetation works around the structures and within the riparian area, providing strength to the structures while also capturing sediment and providing habitat for a wide variety of species.

The work at CDSCC aligns with Mulloon Institute's philosophy of providing landscape rehydration works at a catchment scale. The CDSCC property sits within the Paddys River catchment and borders Tidbinbilla Station, where Stage 1 of its landscape rehydration works were completed in 2023, and Stage 2 is planned for construction later in 2025.

Undertaking landscape rehydration works at a whole-of-catchment scale provides more than just environmental and economic improvements, it also allows for the project to provide social benefits through knowledge sharing, learning opportunities and strengthening relationships across the whole community. The ongoing benefits of this style of project has been proven through the Mulloon Rehydration Initiative (MRI), which encompasses the 23,000 ha Mulloon Creek catchment and over 20 landholders along the 50km stretch of creek.

THIS PROJECT IS FUNDED BY THE CSIRO/NASA DEEP SPACE NETWORK PROGRAM

Above: Deep incision at Larrys Creek

Below: Active erosion of creek banks at Meander Bend in Larrys Creek

Above and below: Revegetation works underway after historical clearing for grazing

Beyond the Back Fence

TROUSER POINT FARM, TASMANIA
Palawa Country

Extensive revegetation and swale construction will increase water retention across Trouser Point Farm with the intention of improving the natural function of the landscape.

2024 involved Mulloon Consulting's first trip off the mainland, with a two-day visit to the rural property on Flinders Island, culminating in a detailed landscape rehydration farm plan.

The 20-ha property is located on the south-western coastal heathland plains of the island, which sits approximately 50 kilometres off the north-eastern coast of mainland Tasmania. Excluding the riparian area surrounding the reach of Fotheringate Creek that runs through the property, native vegetation has been completely cleared. This extensive clearing allowed for the area to be heavily grazed as part of the previous beef and dairy enterprises. Revegetation will be vital to achieving the landholder's goals of regenerating the landscape and increasing the water holding capacity of the soil. Their goal is to restore soil health and increase biodiversity to create a scenic, regenerative farm and wildlife refuge.

Although Fotheringate Creek was observed to be a stable and well-functioning streamway, flows are confined within the creek. This, combined with the lack of vegetation throughout the property, has limited the ability of water and nutrients to cycle through the landscape.

The farm plan focused on capturing, distributing and retaining freshwater across the property to help re-establish the natural functions of the landscape. The recommend interventions for the property included:

- construction of a single swale to re-distribute water to drier areas of property
- establishment of a constructed wetland between two existing dams and using water diverted by swale
- installation of rock-weir in creek to reduce stream power and extend natural pools
- bank battering sections of undercut creek bank
- extensive revegetation works to complement previous shelterbelt plantings.

The combined rehydration interventions and revegetation plan are designed to achieve the landholder's objectives of restoring the natural functions of the landscape by regenerating soil health and maximising the water holding capacity of the land. By spreading water across the landscape and growing native perennials, micro-climates will establish within the farm landscape to harvest water vapour and reduce the impacts of climate extremes.

THE TROUSER POINT FARM PROJECT WAS PRIVATELY FUNDED.

Beyond the Back Fence

BOOLCOOMATTA RESERVE, SOUTH AUSTRALIA
Adnyamathanha and Wiljakali Country

The rangelands rehydration field day was held to introduce both land managers and extension officers to the benefits of undertaking landscape rehydration projects.

Boolcoomatta Station Reserve is a 63,000 ha former sheep-station that has been actively managed for conservation by Bush Heritage Australia since 2006.

The property, located approximately 100km west of Broken Hill, receives variable rainfall with an annual average of only 190mm. Open mulga woodlands and saltbush plains are intertwined with ephemeral wetlands and creek beds lined with majestic River Red Gums. The reserve has been destocked, and conservation works have been undertaken to overcome degradation issues on the property caused by historical overgrazing from stock and feral animals, mining ventures and the location of access tracks.

The two-day event was hosted by Bush Heritage Australia and supported by South Australian Arid Lands as part of their 'From the Ground Up' project focusing on soil health and land management practices. The field day was designed to build knowledge and provide practical skills in understanding and managing the flow of water through a landscape.

Some of the key objectives were to increase both land managers and extension officers understanding of landscape processes including:

- identifying symptoms and causes of erosion
- understanding the role of vegetation in stabilising soil and managing the water cycle
- identifying the range of tools and interventions available and their application area
- reading the landscape and prioritising issues.

Due to the variable nature of rainfall in many arid regions of Australia, it is extremely important for landscapes to be functioning well to capture and retain rainfall when it finally arrives. Landscape rehydration techniques assist in slowing the flow of water and allowing time for water to be absorbed into the surrounding landscape.

Engaging in knowledge and skills building field days allows landholders and extension officers to gain confidence in scoping and planning landscape rehydration works that provide environmental, economic and social benefits. This is core to Mulloon Institute's triple bottom line approach to regenerative land management across Australia.

THIS PROJECT IS FUNDED BY THE SOUTH AUSTRALIA ARID LANDS 'FROM THE GROUND UP' PROJECT

Above: Field day attendees discuss the symptoms and causes of erosion at an active headcut site

Below: Aerial view of active headcut and attempted mitigation methods

Above: Evidence of salt scald in land used for cropping

Below: Lack of vegetation and ground cover are symptoms of both waterlogging and salinity issues

Beyond the Back Fence

GABBY QUOI QUOI CATCHMENT, WESTERN AUSTRALIA
Noongar Country

The development of a catchment scale approach to regenerative agriculture will provide a template for Wheatbelt NRM to continue delivering catchment scale projects across WA.

Mulloon Consulting was engaged by Wheatbelt NRM to partner in implementing a collaborative catchment management approach in the Gabby Quoi Quoi catchment.

The 22,000-ha catchment flows into the North Mortlock River in WA's central wheatbelt region, approximately 140km northeast of Perth. The region is dominated by mixed cropping and livestock grazing, with the North Mortlock River identified as one of the highest contributors of nutrient load in the entire Swan River catchment. Utilising Mulloon Institute's approach to regenerative agriculture and experience in implementing catchment scale projects, Wheatbelt NRM aim to increase the uptake of regenerative practices through a coordinated catchment scale project.

The two most significant issues across the region continue to be salinity and waterlogging. This is common across much of south-western WA, which has more than one million hectares of agricultural land severely affected by salinity. Extensive clearing and historical erosion have dehydrated the landscape and raised the saline water table. The aim of the project was to create a coordinated approach to tackling these issues through the application of landscape rehydration techniques.

The key deliverables of the project included:

- development of a catchment plan template to allow for the Wheatbelt NRM to continue delivering catchment scale projects in the region
- production of farm plans for eight landholders within the project area to undertake earthworks and revegetation works to restore the hydrological cycle
- development of how-to guides and online factsheets for implementing landscape rehydration techniques in WA.

The catchment scale approach to landscape restoration will continue the positive work undertaken to date by the Gabby Quoi Quoi Catchment Group. Landholder engagement and willingness to innovate are essential to overcoming land degradation issues stemming from extensive clearing, overgrazing and high-input farming practices.

It is hoped the project will become a demonstration for the triple bottom line approach to landscape rehydration in WA, providing environmental, economic and social benefits across the whole catchment.

THIS PROJECT IS FUNDED BY WHEATBELT NRM
FOR THE STATE NRM PROGRAM OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Beyond the Back Fence

LANSDOWN CATCHMENT PROJECT QUEENSLAND
Wulgurukaba, Bindal, Nywaygi and Gugu-Badhan Country

The Lansdown Catchment Rehydration Initiative is a landscape rehydration demonstration site near Townsville that supports six local landholders in developing a catchment-scale rehydration initiative.

Since European settlement, the Lansdown catchment has lost its ability to manage, capture and store water in the landscape. The loss of landscape function is most visibly expressed in the deepening and widening of Lansdown Creek, which flows into the Ross River Dam. Loss of landscape function in Lansdown Creek and in the broader catchment is leading to losses in ecological value, agricultural productivity and poorer drinking water quality for Townsville.

With the majority of the catchment grazed by cattle, the Mulloon Institute has been working with graziers to integrate landscape rehydration into the management and development of local properties. Workshops have been held in the Lansdown community on identifying, designing and implementing landscape rehydration measures across the catchment.

The project included implementing landscape rehydration measures such as leaky weirs, dams, fencing, grazing infrastructure and regenerative landscape management. Some of these practices were implemented in 2022 with the aim to create a more drought resilient landscape that better manages, captures and stores water, and results in increased soil carbon and biodiversity, while also reducing in-stream erosion. By working closely with landholders, tailored landscape rehydration designs were developed to meet their goals, enterprise and landscape.

The final round of initial monitoring work has now been completed with ongoing photopoint monitoring to be delivered by participating landholders. The results of the monitoring program have shown clear visual indicators of the positive effect the landscape rehydration works have had across the properties. Some of these benefits have included:

- increased ground cover
- increased water storage
- increased plant diversity.

Recent training days held with the Townsville City Council will also provide professionals with the skills and knowledge to further assist landholders across the region plan and implement landscape rehydration practices. Community engagement in the catchment is vital for fostering grass roots enthusiasm for landscape rehydration and the opportunities that come with it. It is hoped that future development of the project will be defined by an enthusiastic and engaged community base that is working to a common goal of landscape repair.

THIS PROJECT IS FUNDED BY THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT'S FUTURE DROUGHT FUND AND THE NRM DROUGHT RESILIENCE GRANTS PROGRAM

Above: Weir structure after construction in August 2022

Below: Same weir in March 2024, with vegetation growing over the structure

Above: Active headcut occurring within the project area

Below: Areial view of project stream channel and surrounding landscape features

Beyond the Back Fence

MT PLEASANT – BASS COAST LANDCARE NETWORK, VICTORIA

Bunurong Country

The objective of the demonstration site is to benefit the local community by showcasing practical approaches to restoring landscape function, while also providing a valuable property improvement for the owners.

Mt Pleasant is a 168ha beef grazing enterprise located in the Bass Coast region of southern Victoria. The region was extensively cleared during European settlement and artificial drainage and landscaping systems have been implemented to overcome waterlogging issues caused by the high rainfall levels in the area. A section of stream was selected as the demonstration site as the channel incision and active gully erosion identified at this site were typical landscape degradation issues experienced throughout the surrounding region.

The objective of the demonstration site is to benefit the local community by showcasing practical approaches to restoring landscape function, while also providing a valuable property improvement for the owners. This demonstration site will help to promote landscape rehydration and regenerative land management on the Bass Coast, which will encourage other landholders to adopt improved land management practices.

Aligning with the visions and goals of community stakeholders is key for Mulloon Consulting, and we recognise that a successful landscape rehydration demonstration project must align with the goals of communities and organisations in the Bass Coast region.

The scope of works for the demonstration site is focused on in-stream structures designed to achieve the following outcomes:

- provide stabilisation to eroded banks
- slow and dissipate erosive force of streamflow
- build and raise stream bed within incised parts of the channel
- submerge and stabilise active head cuts within the stream channel
- promote the establishment of riparian and instream vegetation in the structure vicinity
- reconnect flow to adjacent floodplain system and rehydrating pastures
- moderate micro-climate extremes.

The in-stream works will be complemented by riparian fencing and grazing management to rehydrate the natural floodplain system. Community involvement is key to the success of the project and multiple field days, capacity building workshops and boots on ground days have been delivered at Mt Pleasant as part of the demonstration project and the Communitites of Practice Project. The progress of the project will continue to be monitored to showcase the demonstration site as part of Melbourne Water's Liveable Communities, Liveable Waterways Program.

THE MT PLEASANT (VIC) PROJECT HAS BEEN DEVELOPED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE BASS COAST LANDCARE NETWORK (BCLN) TO ESTABLISH A DEMONSTRATION SITE FOR LANDSCAPE REHYDRATION PRACTICES IN THE BASS COAST REGION

Mulloon Rehydration Initiative Conference 2024

The Mulloon Rehydration Conference, held on 1–2 May 2024, brought together 180 members of the Mulloon community from across Australia for two days of knowledge sharing, collaboration, and celebration.

The event showcased the success of the Mulloon Rehydration Initiative (MRI) and highlighted our vision for scaling landscape rehydration efforts nationwide. Key themes included the establishment of national demonstration sites, regulatory reform to support landscape rehydration works and the expansion of our national education program.

Day 1 of the conference was held at Bicentennial Hall in Queanbeyan and featured a mix of keynote speakers, discussion panels and films. Delegates heard directly from our catchment landholders including Sue and Uli Tuisk and Gerry Carroll about the success of landscape rehydration on their properties. Presenters shared the latest data and results from the Mulloon Rehydration Initiative, followed by expert panels exploring the way forward now that the initial round of funding has concluded. Day 2 took participants out to the farms on two coaches, where they saw firsthand the results of the MRI on the Mulloon Creek floodplains at Duralla and Home Farm.

We extend our gratitude to all who joined us in this important conversation. Your contributions help drive our shared mission of restoring ecological function, building resilience to climatic extremes, future-proofing agriculture, and enhancing biodiversity and natural capital for a sustainable future.

A special thank you to Paul Girrawah House, Ngambri-Ngunnawal custodian of the Canberra region, for his Welcome to Country.

We could not have hosted such a successful event without the generous support of our sponsors: Climate Friendly, CarbonLink™, Umwelt Environmental & Social Consultants, Vitasoy Australia, Cibo Labs Pty Ltd, HydroTerra Pty Ltd, JG Earthworx, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, and the NSW Government.

Thank you to all our presenters who contributed their insights and expertise to the event, including MC Suzannah Cowley (Nviro Media), Simon Goodhand (Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry), Stuart Naylor (WaterNSW), Rob Stokes (former Minister for Planning and Public Spaces), Phil Tickle (CIBO Labs), Dr Leah Moore (Australian National University), Carolyn Hall, Matt Egerton-Warburton, Peter Hazell and our MRI Landholders.

We also acknowledge and appreciate the valuable contributions of our expert panelists, including Skye Glenday (Climate Friendly), Carmel Onions (Commonwealth Bank Australia), Andrew Ward (Wardy from Regen Farmers Mutual), Hannah Tilakumara (Eco-Markets Australia), Sam Patmore (Path Co), Damon Oliver (NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water), David Holmes (Umwelt Environmental & Social Consultants), Wilf Finn, (Director of Mulloon Institute and Mulloon Law Committee), Dr Emma Carmody (Mulloon Law Committee), Andrew Walsh (Northern Tablelands LLS), Fiona McBean (Eva Valley Meats, NT), Ben Taylor (Nature Glenelg Trust, SA), Warren Pensini (Blackwood Valley Beef, WA), Mike Clark (Top End Conservation Management), David Gallacher (Charles Darwin University Northern Hub), Professor Justin Borewitz (The Australian National University), and Turlough Guerin (Landcare NSW).

THE MULLOON REHYDRATION CONFERENCE 2024 REINFORCED THE IMPORTANCE OF COLLABORATION IN ADDRESSING LANDSCAPE DEGRADATION AND WATER SECURITY CHALLENGES. WE LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUING THIS VITAL WORK ALONGSIDE OUR PARTNERS, STAKEHOLDERS, AND THE BROADER COMMUNITY.

CONFERENCE MEDIA

The conference received extensive media coverage, with outlets highlighting the MRI's success and its potential for broader adoption. Key quotes include:

The Land

"*The Mulloon Institute's Rehydration Initiative is a game-changer for regenerative agriculture. The results speak for themselves: healthier landscapes, thriving communities, and a brighter future for farming.*"

"The conference was a testament to the power of collaboration, with farmers, scientists, and policymakers united in their commitment to sustainable land management."

ABC Rural

"Mulloon Institute has proven that regenerative agriculture isn't just a buzzword – it's a practical solution to some of the biggest challenges facing farmers today.

"The Initiative's success in improving water retention and biodiversity is a model for other regions to follow."

Above: Day 2 of the MRI Conference with participants viewing firsthand the impacts of the Inititative on Mulloon Creek. Photo ©Nviro Media.

Below: Peter Hazell facilitates the MRI Landholder's discussion panel on Day 1 of the MRI Conference. Photo ©Nviro Media.

Marketing – Communications Report

Rob Langtry
CHIEF MARKETING OFFICER

Mulloon Institute focused on promoting regenerative agriculture, community engagement, and environmental sustainability throughout the 2023/24 fiscal year.

Alongside the MRI Conference, other key highlights included:

EDUCATIONAL CAMPAIGNS

We hosted workshops, webinars and field days to educate farmers, students and the public on regenerative farming practices.

We shared success stories and case studies from the Mulloon Rehydration Initiative, displaying improved land health and water management.

SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

Consistently posted on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn to highlight on-ground projects, research findings, and community events. We used visually compelling content, including videos, infographics, and testimonials, to engage followers and drive awareness.

COLLABORATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

We partnered with universities, government agencies, and NGOs to expand the reach of regenerative agriculture initiatives and featured guest posts and interviews with experts to build credibility and attract a wider audience.

IMPACT ACROSS MEDIA

The following are normally termed vanity metrics since there is no straightforward way to link them with commercial results. We will enhance and continue to collect this type of data, especially when the new website is launched, to help us fine tune these elements of our marketing activity.

- social media - 15% increase in followers, 20% higher engagement rate, enhanced audience interaction
- website - 25% more traffic, 30% longer average session duration, improved information dissemination and user engagement
- email campaigns - 40% open rate, 10% click-through rate
- events - 200+ participants across workshops and field days, strengthened community ties and capacity building
- media coverage - 10+ features in external publications and podcasts.

THIS SUMMARY REFLECTS A YEAR OF IMPACTFUL MARKETING EFFORTS, DRIVING AWARENESS AND ENGAGEMENT FOR MULLOON INSTITUTE'S MISSION.

Above: CEO Managing Director, Carolyn Hall welcomes conference participants to Bicentennial Hall on Day 1 of the MRI Conference. Photo ©Nviro Media.

Below: Board members Matt Egerton-Warburton, Carolyn Hall and Kathy Kelly with Paul Girrawah House, Ngambri-Ngunnawal custodian of the Canberra region, following his Welcome to Country to open the MRI Conference.

20%
INCREASE IN SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

25%
INCREASE IN WEBSITE TRAFFIC

40%
EMAIL CAMPAIGN OPEN RATE

200+
PARTICIPANTS ACROSS EVENTS + WORKSHOPS

10+
FEATURES IN EXTERNAL MEDIA COVERAGE

A Legacy of Environmental Innovation

With thanks to our Founders
TONY & TONI COOTE

THE COOTE ESTATE

Our annual report provides an opportunity to evaluate our progress in fulfilling the visionary mission established by our founders, Tony and Toni Coote.

ESTABLISHING A FOUNDATION FOR CHANGE

In 2011, driven by concerns about Australia's food and water security, Tony and Toni Coote founded Mulloon Institute. Their vision was to develop and disseminate innovative regenerative land management practices to benefit Australian agriculture—a mission that remains central to our work today.

The agricultural properties Tony bequeathed to the Institute upon his passing in 2018 serve dual purposes: they function as both a living laboratory demonstrating the effectiveness of landscape rehydration techniques and as a sustainable agricultural enterprise supporting the Institute's ongoing operations.

THE MULLOON REHYDRATION INITIATIVE: INNOVATION AT SCALE

Our flagship project, the Mulloon Rehydration Initiative encompasses 23,000 hectares and stands as a testament to successful catchment-scale restoration. This comprehensive project demonstrates how targeted interventions can effectively rehydrate landscapes and restore ecosystem function.

We regularly host site visits to showcase the tangible impact of our work. Whether viewing the project's scope from the Duralla hilltop vantage point or examining the practical application of leaky weir technology on the floodplain, visitors consistently find these firsthand observations compelling and enlightening.

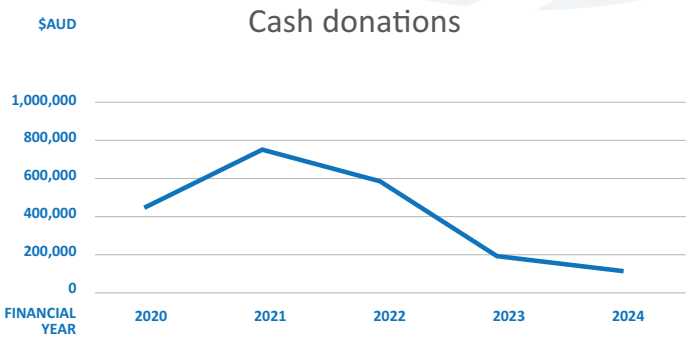
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The continued success of Mulloon Institute's mission – demonstrating the transformative potential of landscape rehydration – is made possible through Tony and Toni Coote's extraordinary foresight, dedication, and philanthropic commitment. Their legacy continues to inspire environmental innovation and sustainable agricultural practices across Australia.

Mulloon Finance Report

Kathy Kelly
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER/COMPANY SECRETARY

2024 presented financial headwinds for Mulloon Institute, with our team's exceptional dedication enabling us to meet our objectives despite declining philanthropic support.



While our grant and consulting revenue expanded, operating costs rose in parallel.

In alignment with Tony Coote's vision of the farms contributing to the funding of the Institute, particularly our egg enterprise, we invested substantially in farm infrastructure and equipment. Summer floods and pests severely impacted our poultry operations, and our Farm General Manager Jim Steele and his team successfully rebuilt the flocks, restoring profitability. The detection of avian influenza in northwest Canberra late in the financial year requires ongoing vigilance.

Market volatility continues to affect our investment portfolio, prompting both a strategic transition toward greater resilience and selective share sales to support operations.

The completion of our Australian Government DAFF grant marked a significant milestone, enabling the expansion of the Mulloon Rehydration Initiative (MRI). This flagship demonstration site now encompasses 23 landholders across 23,000 hectares, supported by comprehensive scientific instrumentation and expertise. The $3.5m grant has established a foundation for nationwide expansion. While we have secured partial funding for the MRI and scientific program in 2025, sustainable long-term financial support remains crucial.

Despite abundant growth opportunities, resource limitations affect our ability to disseminate our message and expertise.

We extend our gratitude to Vitasoy Australia and our loyal donors for their continued support, as well as to Commonwealth Bank of Australia for their steadfast partnership.

Looking ahead, the 2025 financial outlook is encouraging, bolstered by new long-term grants, partnerships, and a robust consulting pipeline.