



Tamar NRM

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'Naturally Yours'

Farewell Tamar NRM

One of the positives of time is it allows you to reflect on progress, something I did this week by scanning through the President's reports I had written over the last twelve years.

There are many and varied standouts that we can all be proud of, but four things, in my mind stand out that enables us to do what we do. Firstly, the support and encouragement of the three councils - Launceston City, George Town and West Tamar; secondly the huge amount of work and the variety of it that has been delivered; thirdly the enormous input from the community in every aspect of Tamar NRM from its management, research, design, delivery, advice and monitoring, something that other organisations can only dream of and lastly the different funding programs from the Australian Government.

Time also has a bad habit of diluting memories. It is worth looking back at how Tamar NRM was born. The first seeds were sown by the Tamar Valley Branch of the Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association (TFGA) who were keen to apply catchment management principles to the Landcare works they were engaged in the Tamar Valley as well as having a more cost effective delivery model.

At this time planning was being talked about to pull together people to form a group to get the concept off the ground. We were lucky in the Tamar Valley, the idea of regional or sub-regional environmental or Landcare works was nothing new. The Tamar Valley Weed Strategy was already delivering regional weed management, and was seen as a great model that has now been adopted in many parts of Australia.

In 1997 the Australian Government was also investigating setting up a regional model to deliver its funding. Lee Drummond who was working in the Natural Heritage Trust (NHT) unit in Hobart suggested the Tamar Valley be an perfect area to research this idea.

In 1998 with Australian Government funding, Christine Materia and Amanda Banks were employed to work with the Launceston City, West Tamar and George Town Councils and the community to prepare the Tamar Region Natural Resource Management Strategy. This was to be a case-study for the development of a regional approach to natural resource management in Tasmania. The same model the Australian Government now uses to deliver the majority of its funding programs throughout Australia.

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"excellence in natural resource management"



Tamar NRM is supported by



Farewell drinks for Ian:

Ian Sauer (centre) with community friends

In 1990 Tamar NRM was legally formed. Don Defenderfer was the Interim Chairperson until our first AGM in September of 1990. The first elected Chairperson was John Beswick, a past Deputy Premier of Tasmania, who had the enormous task of steering Tamar NRM in the early days through uncharted waters. It was John's steady hand and management that laid the foundation stone for Tamar NRM to be built on.

Another influencing factor was the Blackwood Co-ordinating Group (BCG) in South West, Western Australia, who in the late 80's and 90's were, and still are, seen as a highly innovative model for bottom up community driven natural resource management. The BCG were delivering with the community huge environmental and production benefits for the region.

At this time Susan Masterton who was involved in the early setting up and implementation stages of the BCG was now living in Tasmania. Her credentials for the development and implementation of regional initiatives were well recognized and sought after in Australia and indeed overseas.

Members of the Tamar Valley Branch of the TFGA decided to seek Susan Masterton's advice, and were impressed with her process and vision for sustainable catchment management.

A series of community meetings were then called by Tamar NRM in December of 1990 where Susan spoke on the Blackwood experience. It was these meetings that brought together the work that Christine Materia, Amanda Banks, the community and the newly formed Tamar NRM had been doing into a practical 'can do' process, that Tamar NRM is still known for.

It was from here that the project grew, and Tamar NRM became known as an independent, not-for-profit natural resource management group that brings together a wide range of community, Landcare, education, business, Local and State Government representatives.

Tamar NRM did and still encompasses the Launceston City, West Tamar and George Town municipalities. Its role has been to encourage, support, promote, and manage a wide range of activities aimed at ensuring the Tamar Region is an attractive and prosperous place to live and work based on a healthy environment.

This has been and still is done by addressing the priority issues and actions defined in our strategic plans with a focus on sparking community action, co-ordination, pooling of resources and working together. Our activities are principally aimed at enhancing community involvement in natural resource management and forming positive community, government, business and industry partnerships.

Tamar NRM has always delivered practical activities in the areas of ecological sustainability, agricultural sustainability, environmental management and community capacity building and involvement.

Since the end of 2000, Tamar NRM has attracted over \$6M of funding into the Region to implement a range of projects including but certainly not limited to:

- Securing the support of the Launceston City, West Tamar and George Town Councils
- A \$1.8 million devolved grant that focused on both urban and rural issues
- Forums, field days, and exhibitions
- An air quality forum that preceded the wood heater buy back scheme
- Hosted a three day national Biodiversity Conference with local, national and international speakers
- Coastal rehabilitation workshops
- School projects and developing partnerships
- Native food days
- Whole farm planning
- On-farm emissions auditing where Tamar famers were sequestering more carbon than they emitted
- Partnering with CSIRO to develop the Tamar Sustainability Index (TSI)
- Setting up the still existing Weeds, Sustainable living and George Town Costal working groups + working groups now disbanded - Air Quality and Urban Salinity
- Declaring the Tamar Region a Serrated Tussock Weed Free Zone
- The Annual Ragwort Raids, Boneseed Blitz and Paterson's Purge
- Feral Cat Management Projects in Weymouth, Bellingham and Tamoshanter
- Managing Remnant Bush Project

Many people have tried to argue that Tamar NRM does not have the capacity to deliver large or complex projects - how wrong they have been. One that stands out is "Implementing priority on-ground actions of the Tamar Region NRM Strategy". The main purpose of the devolved grant project was to implement a range of on-ground activities addressing native vegetation, water quality, land use, habitat loss and biodiversity education issues. Total Natural Heritage Trust funding for the project was \$1.8 million.

The devolved grant process commenced in January 2001 and went through to September 2002 with all projects completed by June 2003 on time and on budget.

There are some fantastic statistics from this project: in total 1,492 landholder projects were funded for a total of \$592,191 devolved to landholders across the Tamar Region. For those registered projects \$905,708 was recorded for their in-kind contribution towards their projects. A total area of 1879.26ha has been protected for remnant vegetation communities and riparian areas; a total of 498ha has been protected under a Covenant Agreement; a total of 203km of fencing, 194 alternative off-stream stock watering points and 62,350 local native plants planted and 46.75km of direct seeding through revegetation activities that have been completed. All these projects were signed up to ten year Management Agreements. I challenge anyone to argue a project like this does not make an environmental and productive difference.

Tamar NRM has always cultivated partnerships not for one off projects or a photo opportunity but for long lasting collaboration. We have partnerships where we have worked with, and continue to work with Local, State and Australian Governments, State Government agencies, Industry, NRM North, Community groups, Landcare Groups, CSIRO, University of Tasmania, University of New England, Tamar Valley Branch of the TFGA and the list goes on.

We also have school partnerships with Scotch Oakburn College, Launceston Church Grammar School, Youngtown Primary School & Port Dalrymple School in George Town and with students from Star of the Sea College who assisted us with our penguin rehabilitation project at Low Head. The students built penguin homes and planted the areas around each home to give protection from feral animals.

Tamar NRM is the first organisation in Australia to develop the Sister Landcare Partnership concept developed with the Woody Yaloak Catchment Group in Victoria & Grayson Landcare Group in Virginia, USA. These partnerships allow us to share information and ideas and it is interesting that be it in Tasmania, Victoria or overseas we all have the same barriers and opportunities.

All of this work we know is good, but it is even better when you are judged by your peers and you win awards and we have been recognised many times at a State and National level. We have won:

- Qantas Landcare Innovative Community Group Award - 2013
- Finalist for the Community Group Award – 2011
- Won Landcare Australia People's Choice Award – 2009
- Finalist for the Toshiba Community Group Award – 2009
- Won the Tasmanian Sensis Landcare Catchment Award – 2003

It needs to be remembered that all of this would not be possible if it were not for the community and their huge contribution to the Tamar Region that clearly value adds the investment from the three councils and Australian Government funding streams.

For example to the end of 2012 Tamar NRM had 31 events = 759 community attendances 131 hours = 99,429 volunteer hours that gives approximately a **\$2.2M** community contribution. If you averaged this out over twelve years then the community contribution is around \$24 million dollars - not a bad return on investment.

Why does this happen?

Four reasons:

- 1) Partnership with the three councils
- 2) Dedication, vision, and skills of the Management Committee who are all extremely busy people but contribute to Tamar NRM so freely with time and skills - we are indeed lucky to have such a great group of people driving the strategic agenda of Tamar NRM
- 3) Without a doubt the staff, both past and present, have gone over and above what is required to make Tamar NRM function so well and
- 4) The community for their huge contribution, trust and involvement.

I see a very bright future for Tamar NRM. We have a relatively new Strategic Directions 2012-2016 document, a new Corporate Structure that will be implemented in part early next year, and discussions with the three councils to formalise our relationship to further value add what we do. These changes will certainly create more efficiencies and allow even more community input.

As you may be aware this is my last President's report. Roger Tyshing will be the new President. We are indeed lucky to have him bringing new skills, visions and enthusiasm to the position.

On a final note can I say a huge thank you to all the people who have trusted, been involved or interacted with Tamar NRM over the years.

Without your input and ownership there would be no Tamar NRM.

It has been truly a privilege and pleasure being President of Tamar NRM. I will, however, still be a member of the Members of Association (known as the Reference Group) and have involvement in Tamar activities.

Thank you to all, and a very merry Christmas, a happy and prosperous New Year to you and yours.



Farewell drinks for Ian:

Ian Sauer (centre) with Albert van Zetten (left), Mayor, Launceston City Council and Ian Dickenson (right), Vice-President, Tamar NRM

Ian Sauer

going zero waste

Before making the decision to adopt a zero waste lifestyle, it's probably important to understand just what zero waste actually means. In our context, it simply means nothing goes to landfill. We recycle, up-cycle, compost and bury our waste. It doesn't mean we don't flush the toilet, stop bathing or otherwise adopt a cave person way of life.

The first step in going zero waste is carrying out an audit of your current waste patterns. We looked at what we bought, how it was packaged and how much of that packaging ended up in the rubbish bin each week. The easiest step to take is actually cutting out food waste. A lot of food waste can be composted, and that which is unsuitable for composting can be buried. Just doing this decreases the weekly rubbish load by a considerable amount. Food waste makes up a large portion of that which goes to landfill.

The next step involves eliminating packaging waste, and this is arguably the most difficult stage in our modern, over packaged world. Everything we buy must come in recyclable metal, plastic or paper. Paper can be composted or recycled. This approach is often difficult, unless planning has been done, or sacrifices are made. For example, if we are out and about and have forgotten our Keep Cups, we forgo coffee. It's not a big deal, but it is something we must be prepared to do. Convenience and instant gratification are two modern 'givens' that must necessarily become casualties of the zero waste lifestyle.

We buy predominately fresh or bulk foods, which we then store in our own containers at home. When we go to the butcher, we take our own containers and get them filled up with whatever it is we purchase. If we do have take-away meals, we limit ourselves to food that is wrapped in paper, or comes in recyclable plastic containers.

We have discovered that it is very difficult to eliminate all rubbish going to landfill. Because we have to buy prescription medicines for instance, we have no choice but to bin the foil packaging they come in. Also, vacuum waste is a difficult thing to deal with. The majority of it is dust, hair and the like, but it also contains plastic from various items, synthetic materials from carpet and other non compostable items. At the moment, we have no option but to throw this out. Also, we have many items around the house from purchases made before we adopted the zero waste approach, and when they are used, obviously the packaging must be disposed of.

Overall, we have minimized our waste markedly. Since starting in April, we have put our rubbish bin out two times. Most of that has been unavoidable waste as mentioned above or waste generated by our dogs being naughty and destroying things.

Zero waste is not really that hard to do. Even if we put the bin out six times a year, that's better than fifty two times.

If everyone adopts even the basics, that's a lot of rubbish taken out of landfill.

Duncan St Clair



Left - Fennel Seedlings; Right - Parsnip Seedlings



Left - Peas Flowering; Right - Broad Beans Flowering



Left - Freckle Lettuces; Right - Chives



Left - Garlic; Right - Weeds

What happens in the veggie garden...

Sue Woinarski decided to make a pictorial tribute to her home garden for other community members to see especially those with 'black thumbs' (like me!!).

The following photos show what happens over the months (September to November 2013).



Left - Newly Germinated Tomato Seedlings; Right - Late Sowing of Peas Germinated



Left - Broccoli Flowered; Right - Kale Flowered



Left - Spring Onions Flowered; Right - Thistle



Left - Silver Beet Flowered; Right - Chives Flowered



Left - Purple Podded Peas Flowered; Right - Fennel Flowered



Above - Beans Germinated



Left - Banana Passionfruit Ripened; Right - Parsnips Flowered

Thank you...

Sue has resigned as Chair of our Sustainable Living Working Group. Tamar NRM would like to thank her for the enormous contribution she has made to our organisation, the working group, the Sustainable August events and the many articles sent to the office for inclusion in our quarterly newsletter. Sue has promised to keep sending the articles and coming along to our events. Thank you again Sue for such wonderful support. If Tamar NRM was a living, breathing organism, it would be smiling...so here is a smiley for you...keep on rockin' green fingers!



Photovoltaics

So, you don't have solar panels on your roof but you are not sure if you should. This may help you to decide "yes" or "no".

What is "photovoltaics"? Solar panels have thin sheets of silicon. When sunlight falls on these silicon atoms an electron jumps off. What is an electron? It's a tiny thing that whizzes around an atom. It does many things, but the important thing here is that it has a negative electric charge. These electrons that jump off the silicon atoms are persuaded to run along a wire. Where electrons run along a wire you have electricity. This electricity is direct current (DC) as in batteries, but unless your house is wired for DC it will need to be changed to alternating current (AC). This is done by an inverter. So you will need an inverter to go with your solar panels.

The first thing you need to consider if you want solar panels is do you have unshaded roof space north, east or west facing? No unshaded roof space, no solar panels. Next, do you have a solar hot water system? If not, do this first or instead. You will reduce your electricity consumption far more by installing a solar water heater than anything else.

Still interested? Now you need to consider how much electricity you want to generate. To work this out you need to know your daily electricity consumption. This is on your electricity bill. Next you need to need to work out where the electricity is used. A power use meter will tell you this, then go about reducing wastage and removing power guzzling appliances. By this stage you may have reduced your electricity consumption and saved so much money you may decide not to go ahead.

Now you need to decide why you want solar panels. Do you want to produce as much electricity as possible and sell it into the grid, or do you want to offset your daily use? In the early days of photovoltaics thinking was that you should sell as much as possible back into the grid. This thinking came largely from places that had feed-in tariffs much higher than the retail price of electricity. Tasmania has never had these high feed-in tariffs, rather 1:1 or same price in as out. Now that these high feed-in tariffs have gone, and in many places electricity sold into the grid earns less than the retail price, thinking has changed. Now people aim to produce enough electricity to minimise what they purchase from the grid and sell as little back as possible.

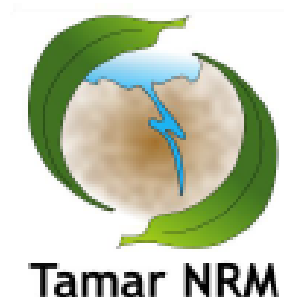
So, how much do you want to generate? To produce your daily requirements you will use the "four times rule". In Tasmania for every kilowatt of panel capacity the panels will produce an average of 4 kilowatt hours of electricity daily. This will mean more than 4kWh daily in summer and less in winter. But your consumption will be the reverse – less in summer and more in winter. Thus you may decide to partly cover your use and sell none back into the grid, or with a larger array produce all you need and sell excess in summer.

What does all this cost? I can't help you here as prices continually change. You will need to talk to a supplier or installer. Over the last decade Government rebates have fallen gradually, whilst the cost of panels has fallen dramatically, and the cost of electricity has continued to rise. Panels have become more powerful for the same physical size and more efficient. Price will vary with the brand of panels and brand of inverter. I can give you two pieces of advice – don't shop around for the cheapest deal, rather find a supplier who has been in the market for some time and take their advice.

Sue Woinarski

community invitation...

Tamar Natural Resource Management



invite you to our

Public Meeting

regarding Tamar NRM's *Constitutional Change*

Wednesday 4th December 2013

4.00pm

Afternoon Tea

4.30pm - 5.45pm

'Tamar Talks': "Local Energy and Local Resilience"

David Hamilton, Chair Dorset Renewable Industries Group Pty Ltd

5.45pm - 7.00pm

Constitutional Change

(review draft document, go to www.tamarnrm.com.au)

**The Tramsheds
4 Invermay Road, Inveresk**

RSVP:

Friday 29th November 2013

tel: 6323-3310 or email: amanda.bruce@launceston.tas.gov.au

...snippets...

Daikin Australia has just released a new reverse cycle air heater and air-conditioner 'all-in-one' that is more than 7 times as efficient modern electric or gas heater
Climate Spectator 291013

Volkswagen stops forwarding emails to staff half an hour after a worker has left for the day - this allows them a break from being constantly being 'accessible' and 'on' for work
AFR 011113

Recent work out of MIT in the US showed that technology was destroying jobs - traditionally when productivity increases, jobs increase - amid the massive new wave of automation, starting around Year 2000, this has ceased to be true
Innovation Catalyst 011113

The plundering of salmon has removed one of the jellyfish's few predators - without a curb on their population, growing hordes of jellyfish start eating the eggs of smaller fish as well as their food supply - they also wreak havoc on the food chain when they're introduced to new ecosystems, usually via ballast water
Innovation Catalyst 171013

Cane toads were released in 1935 as the latest innovation in pest control, backed by a level of consensus support that a scientist could only dream of: they were supported by a published scientific paper - had international scientific peer review - were endorsed by Australia's peak science body, CSIR - championed by industry - promoted by the Queensland Government and its premier - met quarantine regulations - were approved by the Commonwealth government - and endorsed by the Prime Minister
The Conversation 081113

There was only one public opponent - retired New South Wales Chief Entomologist, Walter Froggatt - he forecast that cane toads may become as great a pest as the rabbit or Prickly-pear - but Froggatt's peers rebuked him - eminent scientists branded his views "decidedly pessimistic", "radical and biologically impossible apprehensions", and accused him of holding "an incurable bias" - today, some might label him a toad "denier"
The Conversation 081113

The state-run 'Beijing Evening Daily' estimated in 2010 that there were 200,000 mistresses living in apartments in Beijing alone - since then, apartment prices have rocketed
The Innovation Catalyst 111013

'Slacktivism' is defined as a 'feel-good' measure in support of a social cause - it has little or no practical effect other than to make the person doing it feel satisfied e.g. on-line petitions
Innovation Catalyst 171013

1 in 10 Australian homes has solar panels - however, the amount of electricity that will be generated by these households can be as difficult to predict as the weather itself
The Conversation 071113

New US census figures show that 47 million Americans receive food stamps and 1 in 6 Americans are living in poverty
In Plain Sight 061113



Facebook - here we come...

Tamar NRM has finally arrived (or maybe AB has) into the 21st century with a Facebook page - to view it and please 'like us' just click on the following link: <https://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Tamar-NRM/251475738210175?fref=ts> or go to our website: www.tamarnrm.com.au and go to it from there.

p.s. you can look at this page even if you do not have a Facebook account

congratulations jayne



Jayne Shapter (left) with Brian Wightman (Member for Bass) on receiving her award for Landcare Facilitator/ Co-ordinator Award at the Tasmanian Landcare Awards on 6th October 2013

Jayne has co-ordinated our Ragwort Raids for many years.

Low Head Wind Farm



Update

After three years of dedicated wind farm investigation, the Low Head Wind Farm's Development Application is now complete.

The wind farm has been designed with the input of the local community, and will return to the local community ongoing benefits throughout its 25-year operational life.

These benefits include:

- A strengthened and sustained contribution to the local economy, supported by our commitment to train and hire local contractors first;
- A community fund valued at over \$250,000, managed by local committee members, for projects proposed by the local community;
- A complementary tree planting/screening service for local households;
- Increased fire protection through dedicated land management practices and 24-hour emergency response personnel access; and
- Additional regional attraction to benefit local branding and tourism.

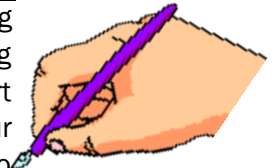
If you have any questions, or wish to register your interest in becoming a committee member or receiving tree planting/screening options, please contact our Community Liaison (Maddy Skerritt) on 0400 090 344 or info@lowheadwindfarm.com.au.

www.lowheadwindfarm.com.au

Shane Bartel (0408 997 735)

TAMAR NRM newsletters can be found on our website www.tamarnrm.com.au

Would you like to contribute an article to our newsletters – we are always interested in receiving news of completed projects funded by Tamar NRM and how they are progressing and being maintained by the landholder or community group. If you have always wanted to write a short story, then grab pen and paper (or as we all now use a computer) and start writing about your project. Please email any article (preferably with an after photo but if you have a before photo of the site, this would be fabulous) to amanda.bruce@launceston.tas.gov.au. It would be great to see how a project started and how it has developed over time.



Next 'Naturally Yours' edition due: February 2014

As we come to the end of another year, Tamar NRM would like to wish everyone a wonderful Christmas, a happy New Year and enjoy all with family and friends. Thank you for continuing to support our organisation. We know without you, our community friends, Tamar NRM would not be functioning as it does - thank you comes from the heart. Take care over the holiday period and see you at one of our events in 2014. Thank you, too, for the contributions made by the community to our newsletter and eTamar and especially for those who have attended our events this year - you are fabulous (a big thumbs up).

