

# THE MORE THE MERRIER

We all know 'many hands make light work' ... but how to get them all working together for the same cause in the most efficient and effective manner, within relatively short project timeframes?



This is the question the Dairy Youth Australia took on the moment they took on the challenge of "Farm ready tools for sustainable dairying in high conservation value landscape".

Most community engagement projects involve a wide range of participants with significantly different:

- background and experience
- skills and expertise
- professional authority and responsibility.

Ultimately, the motivating forces of each and every participant are unique. This, combined with an increased need for including a more diverse range of stakeholders to get the best possible outcomes, requires input from many stakeholders such as:

- the Landholders and their families,
- the Land Manager (if different to the Landholder),
- large companies (often multi-national),
- small private consultants and companies,
- universities and/or research agencies,
- federal, state, local government and NRM bodies,
- neighbouring farmers and residents,
- Industry,
- Landcare networks and 'Green' organisations,
- volunteer organisations, and critically
- the wider community representing the common good.



Dairy Youth Australia brought all these players together by providing the skills and opportunity to 'own' their respective part of the project delivery, which itself was drafted with all players in mind and/or contributing directly from the start.

The resulting images speak for themselves: people old, young, male, female and from very different walks of life all working shoulder to shoulder to achieve Farm ready tools for sustainable dairying in high conservation value landscape".

Not only are greater outcomes achieved by strategic collaboration, project resources can be grown significantly as was achieved by a single dairy family's original intention to farm sustainably.

Altogether Dairy Youth Australia created a project team of over a dozen organisations, involving more than 150 participants to deliver triple bottom line benefits to the broader Minnamurra River catchment



# CHALLENGES

The project area is located on the NSW South Coast. Located within the area is Clover Hill Dairies a highly productive dairy farm. Almost 50% of the dairy farm is high conservation value rainforest. The farm is part of the "Tangalla Community Streams and Rainforest Inc" Landcare group which provides a mechanism for the dairy farm and its rural lifestyle neighbours to live cooperatively side by side, resolve potential conflicts and enhance their unique environment.

Dairy Youth Australia identified major riparian zone issues including:

- weed infestations,
- erosion hazards,
- fragmented native vegetation,
- disconnected remnant rainforest,
- low quality riparian habitat,
- risks to water quality from,
- sedimentation, and
- eutrophication.

In response, the Tangalla Community and Clover Hill Dairies embarked on a challenge to achieve Best Practice Riparian Management by actively working together and engaging their local community.



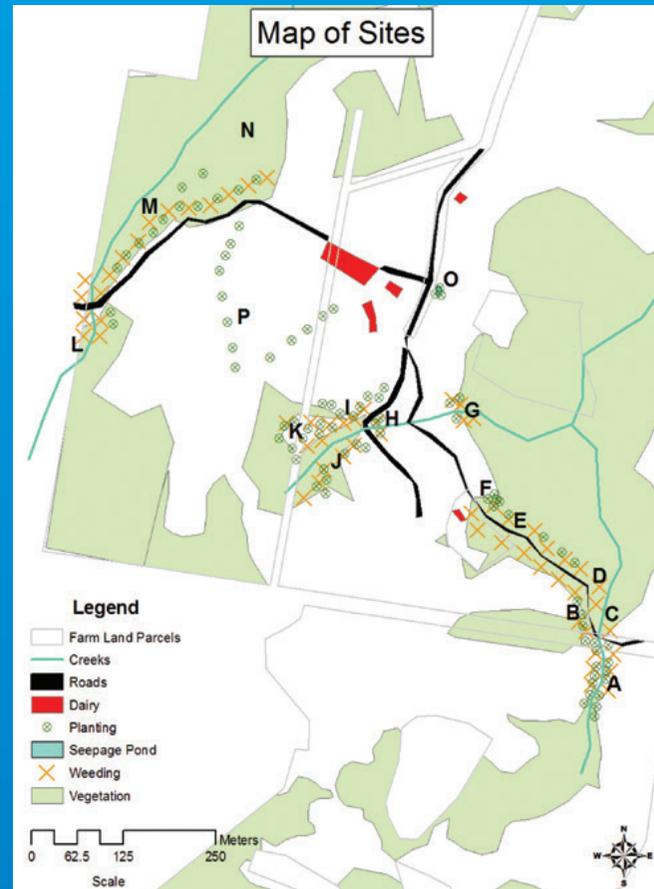
# WIN WIN

The Landcare group community areas, dairy production zones and riparian biodiversity areas were mapped to a whole farm plan, including the commissioning of a scientific ecology report conducted by a qualified environmental scientist\*.

Analysis of both dairy productivity and riparian biodiversity objectives led to 16 site-specific strategic actions, listed as A to P in the below Map of Sites.

Learning materials were developed to establish Best Practice benchmarks, train on-farm participants and residents, and to raise coastal community awareness regarding:

- Weed Fact Sheet: Madeira Vine
- Weed Fact Sheet: Lantana.



# SUCCESSSES

Increasing the technical capacity of all project participants and as community of Best Practice Rainforest and Riparian Managers enabled this project to:

1. Deliver on-farm management of trees and other vegetation to improve the resilience of farming systems and provide soil, water quality and biodiversity benefits
2. Increase community Skills, knowledge and engagement
3. Deliver grazing management strategies and practices to achieve appropriate regional ground cover targets
4. Reduce impact of weeds of national significance (WONS)
5. Increasing participation in natural resource management
6. Increase native habitat

\* Lake, E (2009) Restoration on Private Land: Management Practices and Motivations of Landowners, A Case Study of Jamberoo Valley, NSW, unpublished thesis, University of Wollongong, NSW



CARING FOR OUR COUNTRY

