



NSW
ROADSIDE
ENVIRONMENT
COMMITTEE



ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

The NSW Roadside Environment Committee

The NSW Roadside Environment Committee (REC) was established in 1994 by the NSW Government in recognition of the environmental values of linear reserves. The REC is an umbrella body of state agencies and environment groups that promotes and coordinates leading practice in linear reserve environmental management across the State.

The vision of the REC is:
Environmental values of linear corridors are actively managed in
balance with other functional needs.

The REC currently comprises thirteen organisations with interests in the environmental management of roadside and other linear reserves in NSW. The REC member organisations are:

- Ausgrid
- Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC)
- Biodiversity Conservation Trust (BCT)
- Essential Energy
- Institute of Public Works Engineering Australia (IPWEA) NSW & ACT
- Local Government NSW (LGNSW)
- Local Land Services (LLS)
- Nature Conservation Council (NCC)
- NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE)
- NSW Department of Industry - Crown Lands
- Rural Fire Service (RFS)
- Transport for NSW
- UGL Regional Linx (Country Regional Network)

The REC is funded by Transport for NSW. Member organisations provide in-kind support.

Strategic plan

To work towards its vision, the REC developed a strategic plan for 2020-2023. The plan is provided in Appendix 1.

There are two outcomes in the strategic plan:

1. REC members understand and share good practices
2. Stakeholders aware of REC's key initiatives

Key issues

In developing its 2020-23 Strategic Plan, the REC identified the following key issues that it will focus on.

Environmental Management

Fauna and Flora

Weed and biosecurity management

Native vegetation as habitat
(including hazard tree management)

Wildlife including road kills

Bushfire management and fire regimes

Heritage

Indigenous heritage

Non-indigenous heritage

Illegal activities

Firewood collection

Illegal dumping & litter (waste management)

Pollution

Contaminated land

Acid sulphate soils

Water quality

Contaminants

Other

Scenic amenity

Noise

Rest areas

Signage

Livestock management

Corporate

Staff

Safety (of personnel conducting works in the corridor as well as travelling public)

Training

Operations

Planning

Data management

Compliance

Incident response

Disaster management

Regulator relationships

Stakeholder engagement

Community expectations

Community education

Communications

Achievements

In 2021-22, the REC carried out actions related to the 2020-23 Strategic Plan. These actions included:

- Supporting and promoting the outputs of the Linear Reserves Program funded by the NSW Environmental Trust (Action 2.1 in the Strategic Plan). The Linear Reserves Program consisted of two programs:
 1. Managing Travelling Stock Reserves for Sustainable Conservation Outcomes managed by LLS (\$4.75 million over three years)
 2. Council Roadside Reserves Project managed by LGNSW (\$2.08 million over three years).
- Sponsoring the NSW Roadside Environmental Management Award as part of the 2021 Local Government Excellence in the Environment Awards initiated by LGNSW (Action 2.6).

The Awards are open to all local councils and council organisations in NSW and aim to recognise outstanding achievements by NSW Local Government in managing and protecting the environment.

The REC has sponsored the Roadside Environmental Management Award for the past ten years.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the awards ceremony was held virtually in November 2021. The NSW Roadside Environmental Management Award recipient was:

Winner Division C (population of more than 70,000) and Overall Winner of the 2021 Roadside Environmental Management Award:

Penrith City Council for its Roadside Vegetation Management Project, which was established to create a framework for Council to better manage its roadside vegetation and to assess and identify areas within the local government area that had been identified as having significant value in Council's Roadside Vegetation Management Plan. This was achieved through reviewing the Roadside Vegetation Management Plan, creating a Review of Environmental Factors (REF) and Test of Significance template, implementation of procedures to undertake REFs, employment of a dedicated REF staff member, installation of roadside markers, and the education of Council staff.

More details about the winner: https://www.lgnsw.org.au/Public/Public/Members-Services/Environment-Awards/2021-winners/REM_award.aspx



Roadside marker – Penrith LGA

- Running the 2022 NSW Linear Reserve Environmental Management Forum (Action 2.5). The Forum was held on 17 May 2022 in Sydney with over 80 participants. Seventeen speakers from around Australia presented on developing, evaluating and promoting good practices in the environmental management of linear reserves.

All Forum presentations are available at <https://www.molinostewart.com.au/2022-roadside-environment-committee-forum/>

Participants provided very positive feedback about the Forum and ideas for future improvements. A summary report of participant feedback is available at <https://www.molinostewart.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2022-REC-Forum-feedback-report.pdf>

- Implementing the REC Communication Plan (Action 2.3). Measures of the performance of the Communication Plan implementation in 2020-21 include:
 - Mailing list of stakeholders increased from 430 to 440 individuals/organisations during the year
 - Hits on the REC website averaged 140 per month
 - Four editions of the REC newsletter were produced and distributed electronically to stakeholders during the year as planned.
 - The 50th edition of the REC newsletter was distributed in May 2022 (see below)



May 2022 Edition 50

In this issue

- 50th edition of this newsletter
- Supporting councils to manage roadside environments
- 2022 NSW Roadside Environmental Management Award
- Ausgrid bird diverter installation by drone
- NCC and linear reserves
- ARTC launches Environment Principles
- First action plan - Crown land 2031
- Roadside trees stitch the ecosystems of our nation together
- Citizen science data are crucial to understand wildlife roadkill
- Roadside verges support greater ecosystem functions than adjacent agricultural land in a grassy woodland

Latest news from the REC

The NSW Roadside Environment Committee (REC) recently organised a forum highlighting good practices in linear reserve environmental management.

The forum was held on Tuesday 17 May 2022 at the NSW Teachers Federation Conference Centre, Surry Hills, Sydney.

A recording of the forum presentations can be accessed at <https://www.molinostewart.com.au/roadside-environment-committee-forum-2022/>

50th edition of this newsletter



This is the fiftieth edition of the NSW Roadside Environment Committee newsletter. The newsletter highlights good practices in the environmental management of NSW linear reserves which include roadsides, travelling stock reserves, rail corridors and utility easements. Previous editions of the newsletter

1

- Actively continuing the REC Facebook and Twitter sites during 2021-22 (Action 2.4). The Facebook site has 111 followers (up from 93 in June 2021) and the Twitter site has 181 followers (up from 172 in June 2021).
- Responding to numerous community and stakeholder enquiries via the REC Secretariat (Action 2.3).
- Adding the UGL Regional Linx to the REC member organisations (Action 1.5).

The REC carried out a range of other activities in 2021-22 related to the Strategic Plan.

The activities included:

- Discussing and sharing ways to manage linear reserve environments after the devastating 2019-20 bushfires. This included the post-fire management of hazardous trees.
- Presenting on linear reserve environments and the role of the REC at the Conservation in Action Conference in Orange (May 2022)
- Receiving a presentation on TfNSW rehabilitation and revegetation initiatives
- Receiving a presentation on the ARTC Environmental Principles
- Receiving a presentation on the review of Part 5 assessment guidelines
- Receiving a presentation on roadside restoration contracting
- Holding interagency sharing sessions to improve linear reserve environmental management practices across NSW (Action 1.1).

Meetings

The REC met four times during 2021-22. Due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, all were virtual meetings using Microsoft Teams.

The following persons represented the member organisations on the REC during 2021-22:

Martin Driver (NCC) - Chairperson
 Chris Dunn (Essential Energy)
 Julie Ravallion (Transport for NSW)
 Lloyd Van Der Wallen (RFS)
 Luke Durrington (Transport for NSW)
 Josh Devitt (IPWEA NSW)
 Kathy Godfrey (LGNSW)
 Lucian McElwain (DPE)
 Paul Harper (Crown Lands)
 Eve Bleuel (Ausgrid)
 Bridget Bartlett (LLS)
 Stuart Ross (ARTC)
 Bruce Thompson (BCT)
 Michael Hooper (UGL Regional Linx)

For more details about the REC
 go to its website

<https://roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au/about/what-we-do/committees/roadside-environment-committee.html>

The following persons acted as alternates to the above:

Jane Gye (NCC)
 Kirsty McIntyre (LGNSW)
 Kris Le Mottee (Transport for NSW)

Molino Stewart Pty Ltd (now owned by Water Technology Pty Ltd) was contracted by Transport for NSW to provide secretariat services to the REC during 2021-22. Neil Dufty of Molino Stewart was the Executive Officer of the REC and was supported by Dr Kelsey Sanborn and Ruth Fernando of the same company.

Appendix 1 - NSW Roadside Environment Committee Strategic Plan 2020 - 2023

Outcome 1 - REC members understand and share good practices

Action	Measure of Success	Priority	Timing	Responsibility
1.1 Share tools and approaches to manage vegetation for environmental & transport safety objectives	- Information supplied	H	Ongoing	Infrastructure members of the REC
1.2 Share rapid assessment tools and spatial products	- Information supplied	M	Ongoing	REC members
1.3 Focus REC meetings on key issues and share policies, procedures, learnings etc.	- Meetings on key issues	M	Annual	REC members Secretariat
1.4 Brief each REC member on all relevant major government reforms and changes to legislation	- Briefings occur on new reforms and legislation	M	Ongoing	REC members
1.5 Identify gaps in REC membership and add if required	- New members added when required	M	Ongoing	REC members Secretariat

Appendix 1 - NSW Roadside Environment Committee Strategic Plan 2020 - 2023

Outcome 2 - Stakeholders aware of REC's key initiatives

Action	Measure of Success	Priority	Timing	Responsibility
2.1 Disseminate outputs from the Travelling Stock Reserve (TSR) and Council Roadside Reserves (CRR) projects	- Outputs promoted to land managers including local councils	M	Ongoing	LGNSW, LLS, Secretariat, REC members
2.2 Communicate ways to manage priority issues to stakeholders	- Hold at least one regional meeting to discuss local issues	H	Annually	Secretariat REC members
2.3 Communicate the REC's purpose and activities	- REC communications strategy used including REC website, Annual Report, Speaker's Kit	M	Ongoing	REC members Secretariat
2.4 Promote examples of good practices	- REC newsletter - Social media posts - REC website	H	Ongoing	REC members Secretariat
2.5 Organise a state-wide linear corridor forum	- Forum successfully held	H	April 2022	REC members Secretariat
2.6 Sponsor the NSW Roadside Environmental Management Award	- Award sponsored annually	M	Annually	Transport for NSW, Secretariat