



# NSW ROADSIDE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23



## **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.

<b>ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>CORPORATE</b>
<b>Fauna and Flora</b>	<b>Staff</b>
Weed and biosecurity management	Safety (of personnel conducting works in the corridor as well as travelling public)
Native vegetation as habitat (including hazard tree management)	Training
Wildlife including road kills	<b>Operations</b>
Bushfire management and fire regimes	Planning
<b>Heritage</b>	Data management
Indigenous heritage	Compliance
Non-indigenous heritage	Incident response
<b>Illegal activities</b>	Disaster management
Firewood collection	Regulator relationships
Illegal dumping & litter (waste management)	<b>Stakeholder engagement</b>
<b>Pollution</b>	Community expectations
Contaminated land	Community education
Acid sulphate soils	Communications
Water quality	
Contaminants	
<b>Other</b>	
Scenic amenity	
Noise	
Rest areas	
Signage	
Livestock management	

## Achievements

In 2022-23, 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:
  - Managing Travelling Stock Reserves for Sustainable Conservation Outcomes managed by LLS (\$4.75 million over three years)
  - Council Roadside Reserves Project managed by LGNSW (\$2.08 million over three years).
- Sponsoring the NSW Roadside Environmental Management Award as part of the 2022 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 11 years.

Unfortunately, there were no submissions for this award in 2022 and it was decided to not continue this award sponsorship into the future.

- Following up 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. Many participants were added to the REC's mailing list and continued to network with the REC during 2022-23.



*REC Forum*

- Updating the REC logo (see new logo in report cover page).
- Implementing the REC Communication Plan (Action 2.3). Measures of the performance of the Communication Plan implementation in 2022-23 include:
  - Mailing list of stakeholders increased from 430 to 450 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 REC newsletter was revamped (see below)



NSW REC

## Newsletter

MAY 2023 • EDITION 54



### Roadside vegetation management training for Council works crews

In March 2023, Mid-Western Regional Council hosted training on Roadside Vegetation Management for over 100 Roads Crew, Supervisors, Engineers, Contractors and other council employees who have an active role in managing roadside reserves.

Training was delivered by Neil Duffy from Water Technology Pty Ltd and funded by Local Land Services. It supplements Council's recent Roadside Vegetation Revision Project which mapped Threatened Ecological Communities and Threatened Plant species present along the roadsides within the Mid-Western LGA.

The revised Roadside Vegetation Management Plan includes Twelve Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), as well as vegetation mapping to assist roadside crews in protecting high value conservation roadsides and ensure the protection of roadside vegetation communities well into the future.

The Roadside Vegetation Training was well received, with participants enjoying activities using the revised Field Guide, lively group discussions with real life scenarios and hands-on activities using the newly devised SOPs.

Overall, participants felt they had a better understanding of their role in managing roadside vegetation, as well as the importance of protecting roadside vegetation as seedbank and wildlife corridors in a predominantly grazed and cleared rural landscape.

For more information contact Katie Larimar at Mid-Western Regional Council [Katie.Larimar@midwestern.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Katie.Larimar@midwestern.nsw.gov.au)

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- Actively continuing the REC Facebook and Twitter sites during 2022-23 (Action 2.4). The Facebook site has 120 followers (up from 111 in June 2022) and the Twitter site has 193 followers (up from 181 in June 2022).
- Responding to numerous community and stakeholder enquiries via the REC Secretariat (Action 2.3).

The REC carried out a range of other activities in 2022-23 related to the Strategic Plan. The activities included:

- Developing the 2023-26 REC Strategic Plan
- Contacting DPE and suggesting that vegetation profiles be included in the Trees Near Me app
- Receiving a presentation on TfNSW Biodiversity Policy (Julie Ravallion, TfNSW)
- Receiving a presentation on the Extent of Roadside Vegetation in NSW (Kris Le Mottee, TfNSW)
- Receiving a presentation on the Evaluation of the Linear Reserves Program (Alex Beneke, Natural Resources Commission)
- Holding interagency sharing sessions to improve linear reserve environmental management practices across NSW (Action 1.1).

## Meetings

The REC met four times during 2022-23. Due to mainly to the COVID-19 pandemic, all were virtual meetings using Microsoft Teams.

The following persons represented the member organisations on the REC during 2022-23:

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 & ACT)  
 Carys Parkinson (LGNSW)  
 Lucian McElwain (DPE)  
 Paul Harper (Crown Lands)  
 Eve Bleuel (Ausgrid)  
 Bridget Bartlett (LLS)  
 Stuart Ross (ARTC)  
 Bruce Thompson (BCT)  
 Wajid Javed (UGL Regional Linx)

The following persons acted as alternates to the above:

Jane Gye (NCC)  
 Kirsty McIntyre (LGNSW)  
 Kris Le Mottee (Transport for NSW)  
 Annie Peoples (IPWEA NSW & ACT)  
 Aaron Smith (LLS)

Molino Stewart Pty Ltd (now Water Technology Pty Ltd) was contracted by Transport for NSW to provide secretariat services to the REC during 2022-23. Neil Dufty of

Water Technology was the Executive Officer of the REC and was supported by Dr Kelsey Sanborn and Ruth Fernando of the same company.

**For more details about the REC go to its webpage**

<https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/operations/roads-and-waterways/committees-communities-and-groups/committees-and-groups/roadside>

# 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	H	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

## 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	Annual	Transport for NSW, Secretariat

*Cover photo – Travelling Stock Reserve in South East LLS Region (photo: Local Land Services)*