

President's Report 2023

- **Autumn 2023 project to restore native vegetation** - Over the past 12 months, *TreeProject* volunteers have grown approximately 1,800 trees and shrubs native to our district for distribution to locals who want to plant them on their properties. The growers are now delivering their seedlings to the organiser in Elwood who is checking the seedlings ready for collection. In total, there are 44 Styrofoam boxes of seedlings.
- **Tree distribution to locals** – Several locals expressed interest last year in getting trees for their properties and most also said they would appreciate planting guidance and/or assistance. We need to go back to the community to confirm ROIs and offer help with planting in the next 4-6 weeks – I recommend flyer via Post Office.
- **Tree planting** - One of the *TreeProject* growers has asked to be involved. Also, Bettina Chant, the Senior School Coordinator at Neerim District Secondary College has asked if nine or more of her students can assist with planting. I think an NDLG representative should be on site at each property on the day.
- **Requests from new property owners** – Have responded to several invitations to inspect properties and advise on revegetation, weed issues [usually blackberries or thistles] or pest animals [mainly deer]. Directed to appropriate assistance where practical.
- **Reinstatement of Frog Festival** – Keen interest locally and from council but the requirements of a public event post covid, as well as traffic and parking challenges, meant that it was problematic in the timeframe unless significantly resourced.
- **Liaison with BBSC** - I have continued to utilise my role on the BBSC Environmental Advisory Committee as a means of conveying concerns about local issues relating to both public and private land – including supporting people with specific concerns such as zoning changes, vegetation removal and lack of action on reserve weed infestations.
- **Tarago Reservoir Catchment Healthy Farms Project** – Contracted funding has been renewed for another year, but NDLG's involvement and outcomes should be reviewed given the group's responsibilities, Melbourne Water restructuring and the increasingly intense government scrutiny of how public money is spent – more oversight.
- **Tarago Reservoir Park reopening** – The state government has committed to re-opening Tarago Reservoir for recreation including motorised (electric) boating and fishing. Stage 1 is a \$12.4m commitment including \$8M to Melbourne Water for water treatment upgrades with remaining funds used for the construction of a boat ramp, toilet facilities, 20 trailer car parks and 10 single car park spaces. The launching facilities are to be constructed on North Jindivick Road, Jindivick. Stage 2 is respected to be wider use of the park. NDLG should have a position on the use.
- **Landcare member advisories** – Through the Treasurer we regularly send out member EDMs to our database on various environmental events, opportunities for research or farm project engagement, and diverse activities of interest.