



Local Land  
Services  
Hunter

# *Wybong Catchment Health Improvement Project*



**GLENCORE**

# Natural Resources Commission audit of HCRCMA (2009)

- Stated that there was not enough buy-in by industry into the CAP and supportive of Investment Strategy
- Chair of the Board wrote directly to coal companies; Glencore was one of the many responses received.

# A Partnership with Glencore Coal

- HCRCMA submitted a proposal to Glencore's Corporate and Social Involvement Program, an annual competitive funding program delivered by Glencore. Proposals were invited across a range of community, social and environmental fields.
- The proposal was for a three year catchment-scale project in the Wybong catchment, developed by HCRCMA staff.
- The former CAP identified Wybong Creek as a priority catchment for salinity, soil health, biodiversity corridors, soils improvement and climate change adaptation.
- In addition, the Wybong catchment has been identified as part of a critical biodiversity corridor in the Great Eastern Ranges Initiative (GERI) project.

# Priorities for investment

1. Australian Government Caring for our Country targets.
2. Catchment Action Plan targets.
3. Threatened species conservation
4. Health of the Catchment Monitoring Initiatives (Bird Monitoring Program )
5. Great Eastern Ranges initiatives (connective migration corridor along the Eastern seaboard)
6. Aboriginal Cultural Heritage objectives

# Key Project Components

Project management and support

Landholder engagement

On-ground works

Monitoring, Evaluation and  
Reporting



# Project Structure

- Glencore investment of \$500K per year for 2 years, then \$250K per year for 2 years. March 2011 to March 2015
- Landholder contributions at least equivalent to Glencore investment in on-ground works
- Expenditure to be based on H-LLS investment structure
  - On-ground works & Project Management 80%
  - Capacity Building 10%
  - Monitoring, Evaluation & Reporting 10%
- Investment delivery based on H-LLS's incentives delivery model

# Development of a Collaboration Agreement

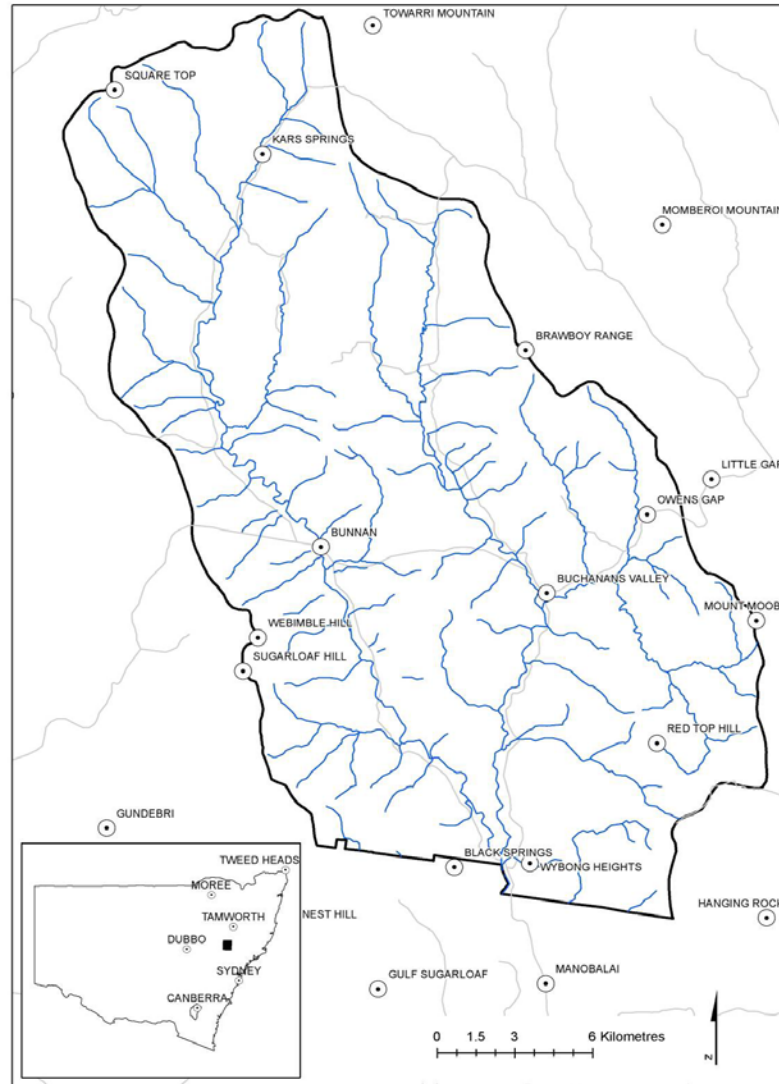
- Collaboration Agreement is signed off by both parties and considered a 'Living Document'
- Objectives - what is in scope what is out?
- Project Plan
- Communications Plan
- Clear boundaries to prevent compromise on other unrelated dealings. e.g. Major Projects EIS and DA

# Some of the Business Rules

- Agreement on actions and activities
- Media releases
- Goals
- Sustainable change
- On-ground works
- Landholder engagement and capacity building
- Good science MER program



# Location Map (10km West of Scone, Hunter Valley)



# Wybong Catchment Overview

Approx. 190, 000 ha (78% freehold)

Over 420 properties > 50ha

Mix of freehold, Crown Land, nature reserves.

60% forest and woodland

40% scattered timber, grassland, improved pastures and agriculture

24 native vegetation communities

Mixed farming enterprises

# Wybong Creek: a priority area for 11 CAP targets under the former CAP.

MT 02 - Regenerate native vegetation

MT 05 - Manage Aboriginal cultural and heritage landscapes having physical, cultural or spiritual significance to Aboriginal people

MT 10 - Revegetate highly erodible soils

MT 11 - Stabilise actively eroding soils

MT 12 - Revegetation of salinity recharge areas with deep rooted vegetation

MT 14 - Stabilise salt affected areas

MT 15 - Implement sustainable grazing management practices

MT 16 - Develop and implement property plans on agricultural land

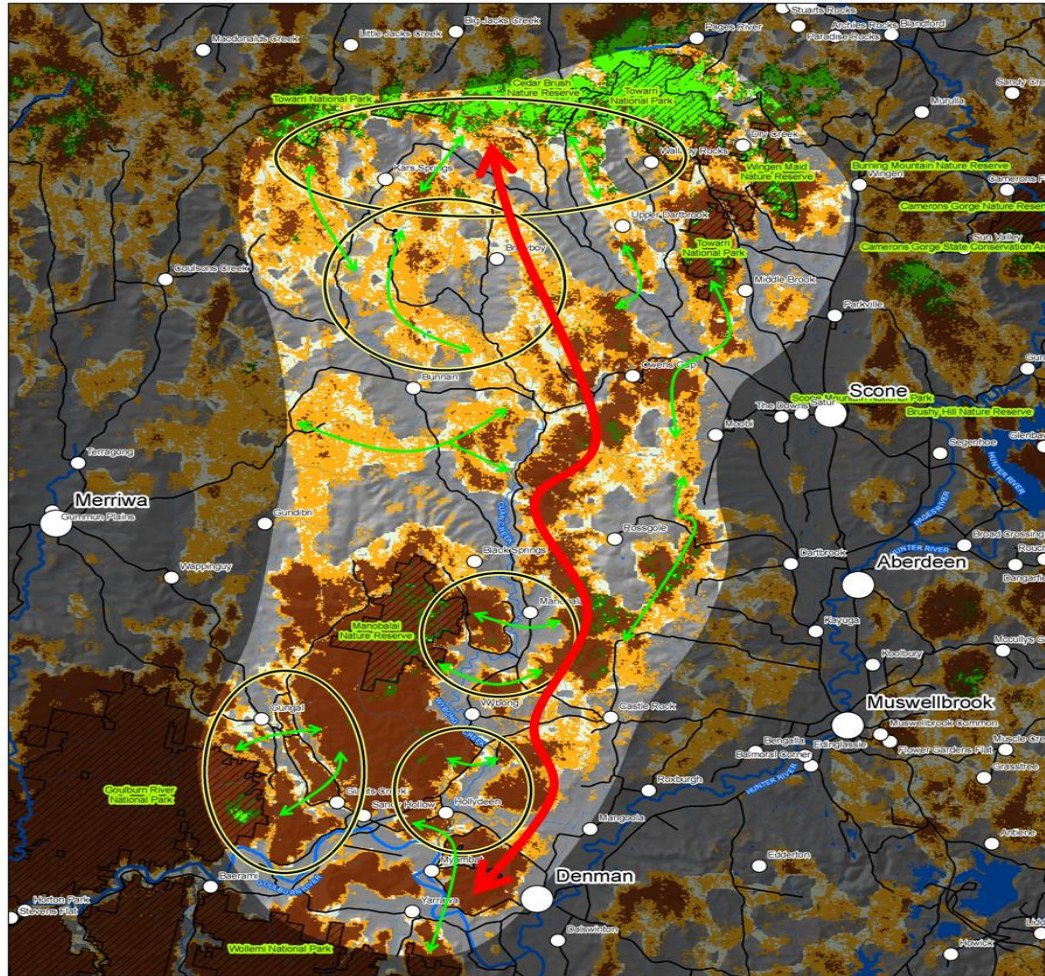
MT 18 - Regenerate degraded native riparian vegetation

MT 20 - Stabilise unstable or degraded stream channels

MT 21 - Restore in-stream habitat of stream channels



# Corridor Linkages



**Legend**

- Minor Towns
- Major Towns
- Roads
- Waterbodies
- Rivers
- NPWS Reserves
- Localities chosen for further investigation & investment

**Modelled Habitats and Linkages**

- Dry Forest Edges & Woodland Habitat
- Denser 'Core' Dry Forest Habitat
- Moist Forest Habitat
- Very Moist Forest Habitat (including Rainforest)
- Potential 'Least Cost' Paths Between Habitat Patches

Regional Scale Paths  
 Subregional Scale Paths

**Upper Hunter Focus Area 1  
Habitat & Corridor Models  
& Potential Movement Paths**

0 5 10 20 Kilometers

Scale: 1:250,000  
Produced by Tom Barrett  
Department of Environment and Climate Change  
20 November 2009

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# Project Delivery

- H-LLS technical staff assist with project design
- On-ground works may involve third party contractors
- Payment of funds on completion of milestones
- Attempt to “cluster” projects
- Provide a range of priority areas / themes for investment
- Encourage applications from priority areas
- Direct approach for some projects (cost sharing soil erosion projects).

# On-ground works

On-ground works to be delivered across priority areas of the Wybong catchment with a focus on:

- Regenerating and protecting native vegetation
- Improving stability, health and productivity of soils
- Reducing the severity and impact of salinity
- Developing and implementing property plans and sustainable grazing management on agricultural land
- Improving riparian zones, stream bank and bed stability and improving aquatic habitat
- Improved farm enterprises and sustainability
- Social and economic health and wellbeing



# On Ground Outputs – December 2013

<b>On-ground Outputs</b>	<b>Outputs to December 2013</b>
<b>Riparian protection</b>	<b>29ha</b>
<b>Stream length fenced</b>	<b>1km</b>
<b>Stock proof fencing</b>	<b>45km</b>
<b>Terrestrial vegetation protection</b>	<b>542ha</b>
<b>Sustainable grazing improvement</b>	<b>2,814ha</b>

# Delivery

Individual negotiation and contracts with landholders

Examples:

- Property Vegetation Plans (PVPs); In-Perpetuity / 15 years
- Land Management Tenders (LMT) / 10 years
- Payment on delivered milestones and timelines
- Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting in contracts
- Spatial recording

# On-ground works example



# On-ground works example





# Subdivisional Fencing - Exclusion Fencing



# Community Engagement Table - 2013

<b>Output</b>	<b>Outputs at December 2013</b>
<b>Landholders engaged</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>Landholders trained</b>	<b>53</b>



# Integrated Land Management Program

- Soil Health
- Drought Conditions
- Stock Feeding
- Mental Health
- Property Planning
- Plant Identification
- Grazing Management
- Pasture to Pocket
- Farm Keeper
- Dung Beetles



# Integrated Land Management Program



# Monitoring, Evaluation & Reporting

- Monitoring of outputs in individual projects
- Use of bird monitoring to evaluate broader project
- Evaluation of project development and delivery
- Evaluation of outcomes
- Reporting to LLS by landholders for each project; progress and final reports
- Reporting to Glencore every six months



# Monitoring, Evaluation & Reporting



# Bird Monitoring



Birds have been proven to act as valuable indicators of landscape health and responders to land use change.

Results from bird monitoring surveys showed a total of 1,212 birds were observed and recorded from 79 different species. This included the Speckled Warbler and Diamond Firetail which are classified as threatened species under NSW state legislation.



Wybong CHIP 17

# What Worked

- Good communication and forward planning
- Strong trust and open transparency between partners
- Continuity of middle management with proven experience throughout project life cycle
- Innovative on-ground works and education programs including MER engagement of land holders (bird monitoring)
- Next partnership being developed



# Issues and lessons learnt

- Difficulty of selling and marketing a partnership between NRM organisation and coal industry to landholders
- Coal mining and the accumulative impact of mining major issues
- Coal seam gas investigations hit the area as project was initiated
- Drought – limited economic viability of farms

# Issues and lessons learnt

- Major restructure of both partner organisations – staff changes
- Need 12 months community engagement prior to on ground works
- Use of preferred providers for fencing, water supply, etc may assist with timely delivery

# Acknowledgements

- Craig Strudwick and Nigel Charnock - Glencore
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